

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 18 – NO. 27

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 7, 2020

McGovern: No Return to “Status Quo”

By SAMANTHA WOOD

GREENFIELD – “Everything needs to be on the table,” Congressman Jim McGovern said during a visit to Greenfield on Tuesday. “This is a crisis that is like no other crisis we’ve ever seen, and it affects every aspect of our economy.”

McGovern’s comments came during a joint press conference with local and state leaders, in response to a question about a proposed federal rent and mortgage freeze.

“There is discussion about it. [Minnesota] Congresswoman Ilhan Omar has introduced a bill to freeze rents and mortgages,” McGovern said, “and I think we need to be open to looking at whether that’s a possibility.

see **McGOVERN** page A5

Dean’s Beans Helps Fund School Meals

By MIKE JACKSON

ORANGE – “It seems like our business is succeeding because people are suffering,” said Dean Cycon, owner of Dean’s Beans Organic Coffee Company, which is seeing brisk sales for home delivery during the pandemic. “I thought, ‘what can we do to remedy that a little bit?’”

Cafés are closing, and revenue has fallen by 80% in the Orange-based company’s wholesale accounts, Cycon said but that loss has unexpectedly been outweighed by online sales. So, the company is rolling the windfall – \$26,000 and counting – directly into local school districts to support their meal programs.

“I had heard that child hunger had gone up dramatically because of all

see **BEANS** page A5

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Annual Town Meeting Slated for Turners Falls High School Gym

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard voted unanimously to hold the annual town meeting, scheduled for June 13, at the Turners Falls High School gymnasium, rejecting alternatives such as in a tent in Unity park or an online meeting. Monday’s decision came after several weeks of discussion, as board members grappled with uncertainties created by the

COVID epidemic, and responded to a poll of Montague’s elected town meeting members.

Town administrator Steve Ellis noted that the selectboard, and many town meeting members, had expressed “great concerns” about an electronic meeting, the option that appeared to have the widest support of members polled. He said that 74% of respondents said they

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

UMass Students Present Visions for Erving Center



NINA ROSSI PHOTO

Last week, participants in the “Erving Center Visioning Project” shared their recommendations and proposals with town officials and the public.

By KATIE NOLAN

ERVING – “We needed these fresh eyes and these new ideas to spur our creativity and our interest,” Erving town administrator Bryan Smith commented after a presentation on the future of Erving Center on April 29.

The fresh eyes were those of the students from Dr. Erika Zekos’ UMass architectural design studio, who developed the Erving Center Vision Plan. The new ideas included safer crosswalks across Route

2, permanent eastbound and westbound bus stops, a greenhouse and farmer’s market at the former Usher Mill, a visitor’s center and historical museum at the Pearl B. Care building, a bike and pedestrian lane along Route 2, public art installations, and repainting “Welcome to Erving” on the town’s iconic water tower.

Starting in January and continuing until COVID-19 emergency declarations, the students met with Erving Center business owners, senior center participants, children at

see **ERVING** page A8

LASTING MEMORIES

That’s Another Story: *Part II*

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Last week we began a three-part interview with George F. Bush, who moved from Fifth Street to Fourth Street at the age of 8, and has lived on Fourth Street for another 85 years. He told us about growing up downtown during the Depression years, shining shoes, delivering newspapers, and playing ball at Unity Park.

At the end of Part I, Mr. Bush was telling us about how his older brother Lou Bush, “the greatest athlete to come out of Turners Falls,” ended his baseball career to serve as a tank captain during the second World War.

“But that’s another story,” he told us.... so we went ahead and asked. The transcript has been re-ordered and edited for clarity.

MR: So if you were a sophomore in ‘42, you would have graduated in ‘44?

GB: I was in the Navy. When I got to be 18, you were going to be drafted. I didn’t want to go in the Army, and I certainly didn’t want to go in the Marines! I said “the safest is the Navy.”

Our boot camp was up at Samson, New York, and we had 10-week boot training there. I went in in October, the ten weeks were up the first week in January, and I got sent to Florida.

I went down to Miami for a week, and they sent me to Hollywood, Florida, and that’s where I



JACKSON PHOTO

Mr. Bush came into the Montague Reporter office in April to talk about... well, a lot of things!

stayed for two or three months. I was a Seaman Second Class, but I was very ambitious, and I said “I want to be a petty officer.” What was opening was a storekeeper position, so I started learning how to type. I couldn’t type, because when I was in high school we were taking college courses, and you had commercial courses...

So I started to learn how to type. And then the base in Hollywood – one hotel on a beach, that was our station: seamen in the basement, and officers and WAVES in the upper apartments – was asked to send a Storekeeper Third Class to this ship that was

see **STORY** page A6

A Bright, But Distanced, Start To Market Season



WOOD PHOTO

Customers lined up alongside city hall to enter the Greenfield Farmers Market.

By SAMANTHA WOOD

GREENFIELD – Warm temperatures and sunshine greeted the first day of the 2020 farmers market on Court Square Saturday morning.

With COVID-19 protocols in place, market organizers and volunteers controlled foot traffic, answered questions, and helped people use their SNAP and HIP food benefits, some for the first time.

The market used 10 feet as a guidepost for how far apart people should be, rather than the 6-foot minimum more widely cited. Most people were wearing masks. Six volunteers were helping direct traffic at mid-morning, and nearly a dozen people were lined up waiting. The wait was roughly 10 minutes, sometimes less, for a turn to shop.

Customers waited patiently in line on the sidewalk that runs the length of town hall, and were ex-

pected to use the hand sanitizing station before entering the market. Each vendor had a table at the front of their stall and conducted transactions without physical contact. Customers could ask questions and look, but weren’t allowed to touch the products until they made their purchases.

Some customers moved swiftly, others took a bit more time. No one was rushed through.

Market manager Sue Lahoski kept close watch on the number of customers in the market, and used that to gauge when to let the next customers in.

“We want it to be right,” Lahoski said. She had worked out all the details to prepare for the day, and tracking the traffic flow during the market was her immediate concern. Early in the day, Tim Newton, an inspector from the health department,

see **MARKET** page A4

Farms Find Success in New Collaborative

By LAURA RODLEY

SUNDERLAND – The owners of Warner Farm, Kitchen Garden Farm, and Riverland Farm are all

friends, and had been tossing the idea around for a while of combining forces and becoming a collaborative, or cooperative.

So, when the COVID-19 virus

news hit Massachusetts full force in mid-March, “we met to talk about it and flush it out,” said David Wissemann, who has worked with his father, Mike Wissemann, for the last ten years on the 150-acre Warner Farm. The farm has been in their family for 10 generations and is named for his mother’s side of the family.

As all the farms are in Sunderland, Massachusetts, they named their collaboration the Sunderland Farm Collaborative. They were already slated to provide their high quality organic produce and products for local schools and colleges such as UMass, Amherst, and Smith College, and local restaurants. Then came the cascade of school and restaurant closures.

Rather than despair, Wissemann, Emily Landeck of Riverland Farm, and Caroline Pam and Tim Wilcox of Kitchen Garden Farm quickly realized that with the added benefit of being joined as a collaborative, they

see **FARMS** page A4



RODLEY PHOTO

Left to right: Tim Wilcox, Kayden Moore, Ava Blum-Carr, Lilly Israel, Joe Manning, Hannab Logan, and Caroline Pam staff the new Sunderland Farm Collaborative packing center at Kitchen Garden Farm.

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The Montague Reporter

“The Voice of the Villages”

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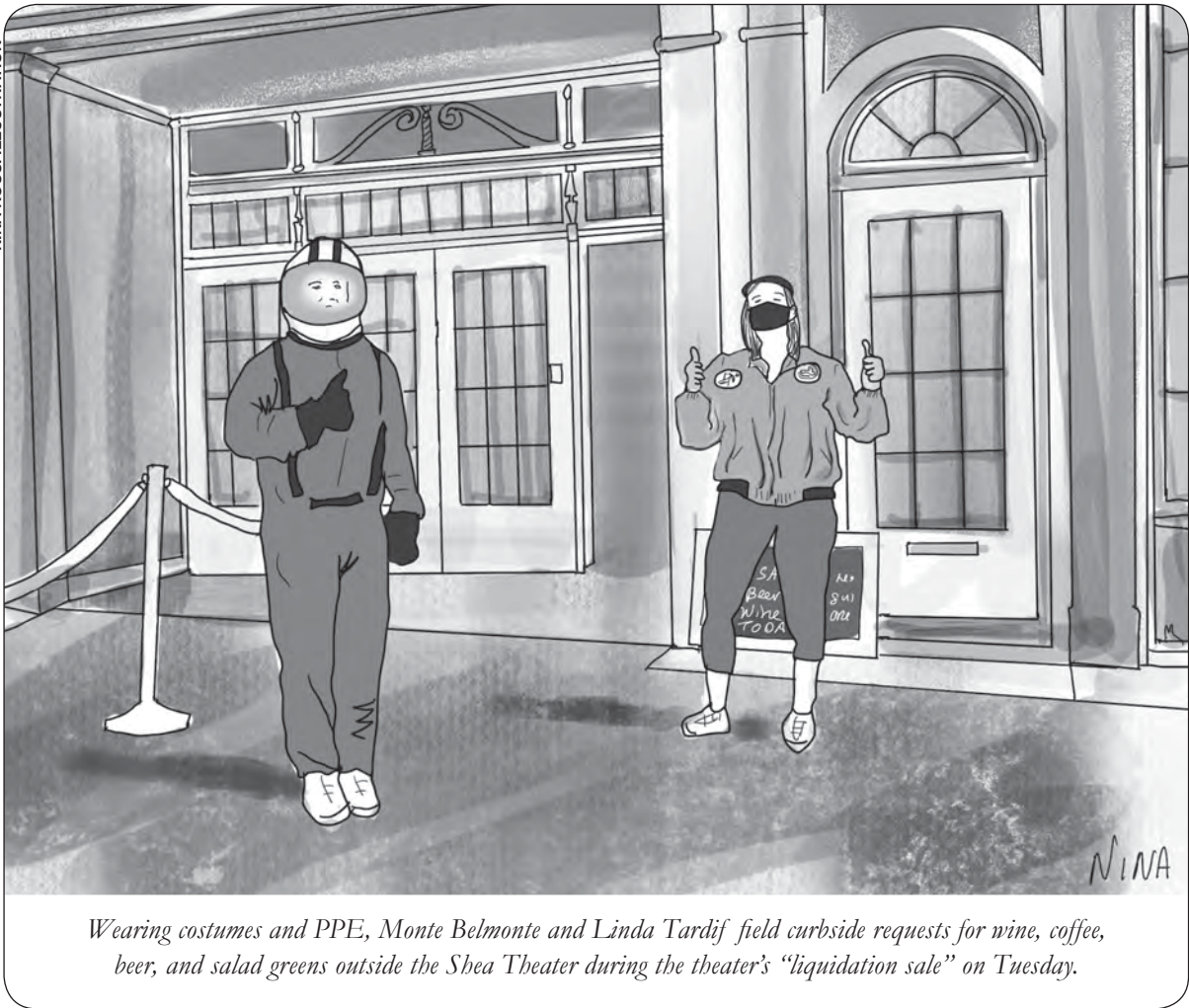
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About Face Computing

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August 2002



Wearing costumes and PPE, Monte Belmonte and Linda Tardif field curbside requests for wine, coffee, beer, and salad greens outside the Shea Theater during the theater’s “liquidation sale” on Tuesday.

Soldiers of Fortune

Weeks after the Parkland school shootings, a former Green Beret and entrepreneur named Jordan Goudreau formed a private security company called Silvercorp USA. His business plan, according to the Associated pres, was to “embed counter-terror agents in schools disguised as teachers.”

“The company’s website features photos and videos of Goudreau firing machine guns in battle, running shirtless up a pyramid, flying on a private jet and sporting a military backpack with a rolled-up American flag,” the AP article continues.

Silvercorp was hired the next year to provide private security in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, and in 2018, Goudreau and his employees found work as muscle at a series of Trump rallies in North Carolina and Texas. “Protecting our Greatest Assets,” the company wrote of that job in an Instagram post.

The company landed a contract to help with security at Venezuela Aid Live, a benefit concert on the Colombia-Venezuela border funded by Virgin Group founder and billionaire Richard Branson.

Goudreau was apparently deeply inspired by the event, and for the last 15 months threw himself into the cause of overthrowing Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro. He made contacts among Venezuelan military deserters living in camps along the border, and developed a relationship with Cliver Alcalá, a retired general who was planning a guerrilla invasion of the country.

Silvercorp raised funds internationally from opponents of the Venezuelan government and trained a small army, but the plan fell apart in March after a shipment of weapons was intercepted by the Colombian government and Alcalá surrendered himself to the US to face narco-trafficking charges.

The AP published a detailed, 3,000-word investigative article last Friday about the failed plot.

On Sunday, Goudreau’s men nevertheless attempted to invade Venezuela by sea, fight their way to Caracas, foment a revolution, seize the airport, and arrest Maduro. This did not work. Eight men were killed

and 13 arrested before the boat even landed, including two American mercenaries, Airan Berry and Luke Denman. Both are US Army special forces veterans: Denman served in Iraq; Berry served in Kosovo and Iraq, and his own social media postings show an interest in the “Qanon” conspiracy theory universe.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows 368,000 formally unemployed US military veterans, as of March 2020; nearly another 4 million are listed as “not in labor force,” not counting older veterans likely to have aged out of it. Those numbers are likely skyrocketing during the current pandemic.

Though most unemployed vets are as normal as the rest of us, this sizable pool of jobless people with military training creates a ripe recruitment ground for an industry that is also growing: private security contractors.

We live on an extremely economically polarized planet, with a large share of wealth hiding offshore to avoid national taxes. The response to the coronavirus, a truly universal challenge, is disheartening, with each country left to fend for itself rather than forging international response.

(Our own government has intercepted medical equipment bound for poorer countries and withdrawn funding from the World Health Organization, and its two parties are competing to see who can more belligerently scapegoat China.)

If this pandemic inspires solidarity – and more egalitarian and redistributive policies within some countries – those countries will face a challenge: international solidarity, too, among the planet’s wealthy hoarders. This 21st-century conflict is just beginning to come into clearer view, and those hoarders are building their own armies.

It’s easy to laugh at the cut-rate Instagram mercenaries who bumbled their way into the international spotlight this week. But Jordan Goudreau was only trying to be Erik Prince, the billionaire founder of Blackwater/Academi.

After all, the richest 1% of the planet own half the planet’s wealth – and they aren’t likely to give it up without a fight.

Letters to the Editors



Town Dems Stick With Ed

The Montague Democratic Town Committee has endorsed Ed Markey to be the Democratic candidate for US Senate, and we hope to see him re-elected.

Senator Markey has represented us well, and has shown particularly important leadership in the battle against catastrophic climate change, introducing the Green New Deal legislation with Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

This Congressional resolution calls on the federal government to wean the United States from fossil fuels and curb planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions across the economy, while guaranteeing millions of new high-paying jobs in clean energy industries.

Mark Wisniewski
Chair, Montague Dems
Montague

Reader Feedback

Hi, As you read this, please imagine my voice screaming these words in the most obscenely emphatic manner: I would like to make it known, both to the greater public and to the team that makes the *Montague Reporter* every week, how much I appreciate them and the work that they do.

I cannot overstate the value of this little paper as an essential civic institution of our town and region. This is unsexy work – asking questions, keeping a record, asking more questions, and most importantly opening up a quieter, judgment-free space for analysis and reflection. All of this is no small feat, and for the team that does this every week, often comes with little reward and recognition.

The *Montague Reporter* is like a cozy home. One that is warm, dry, relatively orderly, has very clean windows and mirrors and has a nice view of a full garden. Perhaps I will elaborate on this metaphor another time, but for now, I would like to continue cheering on this paper’s efforts and mission.

Thank you for so clearly and simply drawing connections among the often grindingly dull mechanisms of local politics, markets, and budgets, and how they all tie into the wider regional, national, and global picture.

Thank you for staying laser-focused on decisions made at the lower and middle levels. It is in these places where we participate as neighbors that the world is often not as black and white as the clowns at the top so desperately want us to believe.

Thank you for refusing to bother with the sensationalism that we see in other crime- and drama-obsessed local news.

Thank you for the weekly reporting, the selectboard notes, the book reviews, exit interviews, town meeting reports, police logs, the comics, the cat pictures, the poetry, the dedication and love that you all show for this place.

Thank you for continuing to publish online during the first couple of weeks of the pandemic. It was a relief to know you were there with us. I was especially enamored with last week’s interview with George F. Bush. What an astute observer and cool dude!

One of the two things that I have consistently brought up when waxing about what I love in this place over the last 15 or so years that I have lived here has been the *Montague Reporter*.

The other thing is the river.

My imaginary yelling madman voice is now ragged, but no matter how hoarse, I will forever holler my support for the quiet constant that is this little paper and its dedicated staff.

Lovingly submitted,

Neil Young
(yes, that’s my name)
Turners Falls

Water Bills: How to Pay

The Turners Falls Water Department semi-annual water bills were mailed May 1.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Water Department office is currently closed to the public. Payment can be made by mail, online at www.turnersfallswater.com, or in our drop box located to the left of our front door. Cash payments are discouraged at this time. Thank you for your understanding.

Thanks!

Suzanne Leh
Clerk/Collector
Turners Falls Water Department

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

We trundle forward in our new reality for yes, another week. No matter what your situation, taking things at the slow rate of *one day at a time* is probably a good practice!

Can we eat today, love someone or something today, make some minute improvement today, even if it is just to clean one particular spot in one room somewhere, or pick up one piece of trash? Remember to smile, drink lots of our great local water, and get outside and move your body, if at all possible.

There are also easy-to-do lung exercises that can help us be more robust in defense against COVID-19. Find recommendations on lung exercises and other coping strategies from the wonderful resource, villageneighbors.org. Designed as a mutual aid network for those over 60 in Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell, I think a lot of the information in their online newsletter can be helpful and informative to the rest of us too. Check it out!

Cindy Marshall wrote to us after reading Karen Guillette’s article about wearing masks in last week’s paper (“To Be or Not to Be...Wearing a Mask?,” page B1) to let us know that she makes **cotton face masks** and “they are free to anyone who asks. I have made over 400 with my sister who does all the cutting and I sew and deliver. We never charge for small or large orders, just work off donations of fabric and supplies.”

Contact Cindy by email at creekscowboy@aol.com or by phone at (413) 362-9024.

Also, **Mariachi Leather and Shoe Repair on Avenue A** sells face masks in a variety of colors, patterns, and styles. Owner Luis Felipe Gonzalez is asking \$8 for his very stylish creations, but will work with customers on a sliding scale fee or for free when necessary.

Call to place an order, and arrange curbside pickup between

9 and 3 p.m. during the week: (413) 824-6792.

Element Brewing is making and selling hand sanitizer now, according to a feature story aired on WGBY’s “Connecting Point” show on April 29. The Millers Falls brewery has given away gallons of the stuff to local first responders, fire and police departments, food pantry workers, and a host of other organizations who need it.

It is also available for the general public to buy at their location, 16 Bridge Street in Millers Falls. Their tap room is closed for tasting on site, of course, but you may purchase all their products in sealed containers to take home.

Sad news about the Green River Festival and the Newport Folk and Jazz festivals this year. On the heels of those announcements came news that the much, much smaller – but very beloved – **Good Music Makes Good Neighbors** porch festival in Montague Center has also been canceled.

Organizers Matthew and Nicole were putting together the sixth annual day of concerts, hosted at homes and venues throughout the village, for May 30, but of course, pandemic requirements for social distancing make the idea of people moving from house to house an impossible one.

I want to mention an online resource for **discounted science kits, motors, and miscellaneous junk** for making contraptions, and devising mechanical mayhem for nerdy families: the American Science & Surplus store. They print a catalogue with funny descriptions that make for excellent bathroom reading, even if you never buy anything. (Also, handy outhouse TP.)

You can shop online for some ridiculously cheap, oddball items – as well as truly useful ones. Think carefully before releasing some of these on your kids! (Particularly any child-

sized parachutes. Speaking from personal experience here.)

A free Zoom program on **Creating an Inner Sanctuary** is being offered during May. Sponsored by the Three Sisters Sanctuary in Goshen, the series hopes to offer ways to “keep up your resilience, renew our hope, and feel support from community.”

Host Linda Tumbarello is a psychotherapist, body-mind centering practitioner, and author. The sessions are on four Thursdays at four p.m. starting May 7. RSVP and get a Zoom link by emailing linda@lindatumbarello.com.

The Shea Theater, Hawks & Reed, Dwellings, and the Stone Church have been hosting an ongoing **online concert series called Quarantunes**. You can watch live through a feed at facebook.com/quarantunesforyou/.

One scheduled for this Friday, May 8 at 9 p.m. features New York City indie-folk artists Fort Vine. They are duo Trevor Tunison and Nyna Nelson, making “feel-good music... strong harmonies... meaningful poetry and happy grooves.” On Saturday, May 9, Hawks & Reed presents Lily Sexton performing at 7 p.m.

Nice to see collaborative efforts like this filling some small part of the void in the local music scene.

Eggtooth Productions has released the first of several new **immersive art walks** by producer John Bechtold, adapted to our experience of social distancing. *Promenades* is a series of audio-curated walks set in inspiring outdoor locations in the Valley. Each walk is designed to offer a heightened experience for an active participant while on site. “Think of a supersaturated sensory experience that lifts your awareness of what you see, hear, and feel on the journey,” they write in a press release, “and also offers you agency in how you explore it throughout.”

Intended for solo walkers or small groups respecting social distancing measures, participants can download an app, choose their Promenade, and receive instructions to their phones in advance of their adventure. Once at the site, just let the soundtrack guide you along.

No special technology or know-how is required, and it is available for free. Promenade #1 is ready for

download, with more to come in the weeks ahead. Find out details at Eggtooth.org.

Great Falls Books Through Bars is having an online volunteer day this Saturday, May 9 from 1 to 2 p.m. “Join us briefly or for the whole time to chat, catch up, and check-in. We’ll also be writing to incarcerated people.” Link to the meeting at meet.jit.si/GreatFallsBooksThroughBarsMayVirtualVolunteerDay.

Since the shutdown the collective has been continuing to send out books, a zine about COVID-19 for prisoners, and info sheets aimed at informing incarcerated people about best practices for staying healthy.

Great Falls Books Through Bars also encourages people to reach out to political prisoners by writing letters. “We don’t have a strict definition of what that means, but it’s important to maintain connections and show support to people who have ended up in prison because they’ve bravely stood up to oppression, or who have organized against the inherent repression of the prison system since being incarcerated,” they write. To find out more, get in touch at gfbooksthroughbars@riseup.net.

The 17th annual **North Quabbin Food-A-Thon** will be held on Tuesday, May 19 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Food-A-Thon provides support to local food pantries and feeding programs. Its recipients are the Orange Food Pantry and the Community Meals Program in Orange, both parts of the Franklin County Community Meals Program; Our Lady Immaculate Pantry in Athol; the Salvation Army Pantry and Meal Program in Athol; St. Vincent DePaul Pantry of St. Mary’s Church in Orange; and the Good Neighbors Pantry in Wendell.

The event’s goal this year is to raise \$60,000, which would put the total funds raised by the event over 17 years up to half a million dollars. All money raised is divided equally among the five pantry and feeding programs. Donations may be sent by mailing a check to the Tully CCC (a non-profit fiscal agent) at PO Box 484, Orange, MA 01364, or by going to www.NQFoodathon.com and donating online.

Got news, local resources, or other tidbits to share with our readers? Let us know by writing to editor@montaguereporter.org.

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Virus and the Climate Challenge

By FERD WULKAN

MONTAGUE CENTER – While the coronavirus has certainly gotten our attention, the climate crisis is likely to be even more deadly and life-changing, both in the US and globally. But maybe we can learn some things from the current situation that can help us address global warming more vigorously.

We have seen that the federal government has a virtually unlimited amount of money, power, scientific expertise, and persuasive ability to address a crisis. Some critics of drastic action to slow down global warming argue that we don’t have the money to do what scientists say is needed. The stimulus package and other efforts by the feds – and governments around the world – while not yet sufficient, show that money is not the problem.

Experts like Robert Pollin tell us that between 1.5% and 2% of gross domestic product invested properly can fund a Green New Deal. (See *The American Prospect*, “How Do We Pay for a Zero-Emissions Economy?,” December 2019)

We recognize that the economy will need

to be drastically retooled in a short period of time to limit the catastrophic impacts of climate change. How we build, move people and things, make things, and grow things will need to change in order to limit carbon emissions. Critics – and not just climate deniers – say we can only make these changes slowly and gradually (or hardly at all).

A look at how enormous changes to economic structures have happened in the past two months shows that when the will and understanding are there, giant changes can happen quickly.

Scientists are now seen as heroes by many more people. Even many on the right recognize that evidence-based science – funded and promoted by the federal government – is critical in the fight against the virus. Maybe, just maybe, this can now be seen by almost everyone to apply to our approach to the climate as well.

I’ve heard people say there are some positive aspects to how they are now being forced to live their lives – more emphasis on family and friends (at a distance), appreciation of nature, finding value in books and art, looking out for each other, and a generally slower pace of life. I don’t

advocate a return to pre-industrial times, but we will need to change our lifestyles and personal habits in the face of climate change. Maybe that won’t be so bad after all – and we’ll even be able to hug our friends and family.

The climate is having one of its best couple of months in a long time as the current economic slowdown has led to significantly reduced emissions and pollution. Maybe we can learn from this, and not just return to the status quo when the virus crisis eases. Maybe we as a global society can learn how to address the other gigantic looming crisis we face.

As with the virus, we have lost precious time in addressing global warming. Just as with the virus, this must not lead us to despair or hopelessness.

We just have to redouble our efforts, make up for lost time, and do what needs to be done to make the next crisis merely bad – and not catastrophic.

Ferd Wulkan is a member of Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution. He lives in Montague Center.

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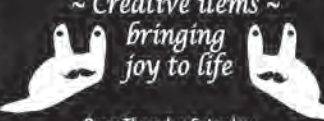
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FARMS from page A1

could funnel what they already planned to produce to the people in the surrounding communities.

Furthermore, to help people comply with the stay-at-home directive, they could provide home delivery twice weekly to the towns of Sunderland, Whately, Deerfield, Hadley, Hatfield, Montague, Amherst, Northampton, Florence, Easthampton, Greenfield, and Turners Falls. A \$10 delivery fee is added for all home deliveries.

They made their first deliveries during the first week of April. Since then, “we have been able to fulfill 350 orders at a time and go out twice a week,” said Wissemann, totaling “700 orders a week, to 3,000 unique individuals.”

The Sunderland Collaborative has an online platform at www.sunderlandfarmco.com, where people can register as customers and order from all the different products available. Not only does the Collaborative offer products from its three main farms, it offers products from 25 other producers as well, including flour from Ground Up Grain in Hadley, eggs from Cream of the Crop Farm in Russell, apples from Shelburne’s Apex Orchards and C&C Orchards, cider from Carr’s Ciderhouse, tortillas from Mi Tierra Tortillas, Sfoglino Pasta, goat cheese from Thomas Farm, mushrooms from Myco-

terra Farm, and bread from Rise Above Bakery.

The site also offers products from Narragansett Creamery and Williams Farm Sugarhouse, and provides coffee from different suppliers, including YUP Coffee Roasters.

After orders are placed, the producers get a harvest list and are given a day to harvest or produce the products. The next day, they are expected to bring them to the packing site.

For doorstep delivery, customers receive a call when the order is delivered. Their drivers all wear masks and gloves, and their vehicles are sanitized.

The Collaborative also offers four different drop-off sites, which gives the added advantage of drawing people to that site. Two are local breweries, Abandoned Building Brewery in Easthampton and Progression Brewing Company in Northampton. “Local breweries have been seeing decreased business,” said Wissemann. “They really like seeing these orders come in. They also have refrigeration space, which is a requirement, making sure everything stays cold, like milk.”

The other drop-off sites are at Millstone Farm Market at Warner Farm in Sunderland and Leverett Village Co-op in Leverett.

“I think the thing that surprised us the most

was the tremendous demand. The first couple days we were selling out of capacity,” said Wissemann. As quickly as they could, they had to streamline their delivery routes to meet demand. “We only have so many vehicles, and we had to work out how to use them as efficiently as possible. We have four vehicles that we can throw out there.”

People have heard of the Collaborative through word of mouth, but also through the local radio station, 93.9 FM WRSI, which featured the collaborative over the airwaves, part of the station’s grassroots effort to support local businesses by letting listeners know which are still open, where they are, and how to contact them.

The farms have been working hard to scale up to meet demand, but they can’t hurry Mother Nature. According to Wissemann, “We understand it’s a rough time for produce. We are anxiously awaiting radishes, and asparagus.” On Warner Farm alone, they are waiting for their approximately 10 acres of asparagus to finish growing and ripen.

Not only are these farms all still in business, they are thriving and helping the other local businesses with an overflow of customers that does not look like it will taper off any time soon.

MARKET from page A1

had come by to check the market, and he came through again to shop later in the morning. Lahoski said Newton approved of the social distance and hygiene procedures.

She said she was grateful to the mayor’s office and the licensing board for their support, and that the market had set up its plans to comply with recent guidelines from governor Charlie Baker’s office as well as the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources.

Making Adjustments

Lahoski said she expected the market to run much the same way in future weeks, though she might make some minor adjustments in the layout of the vendors’ stalls to prevent bottlenecks.

“We had a lot more people when we first opened at 8 o’clock,” Lahoski said. “I think people thought it would be slower at that time.”

“This is one of the places people can earn the HIP bonus,” Lahoski said, and that’s one reason the market’s organizers were determined to open. HIP, the Healthy Incentives Program, is a state benefit for those using SNAP, sometimes known as food stamps. The program reimburses SNAP purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables, up to a monthly cap related to family size. According to the farmers market website, “Households of 1-2 can earn up to \$40 per month, 3-5 members \$60, and households with 6 or more members can earn up to \$80.”

Lahoski said that last year the farmers market made a push for training to help people use these benefits. This year, because of COVID-19 layoffs, the numbers of people receiving SNAP have gone up by as much as three times the year before, Lahoski said, and she was meeting a lot of people new to using those benefits.

Foot traffic was steady, but it looked thin because the numbers in the shopping area were kept low, with about one person at each stall at any given time. The crowded feel of the farmers market is no longer the measure of its success.

While socializing was discouraged, and the music was canceled to reduce the attraction to lingering in Court Square, people were enjoying the opportunity to greet each other at a distance as they walked through the market.



Miles of aisles: the Greenfield Farmers Market has a decidedly different look in this time of social distancing.

Ben Clark of Clarkdale Farm in Deerfield wasn’t selling at the market this early in the season, but he was helping direct customers around town hall. Blue arrows on the sidewalk marked the traffic pattern, but the market crew and volunteers were kept busy helping mildly disoriented shoppers find their way. Clark is on the market’s steering committee, and is expecting his first crops, cherries and apricots, in July.

Anna Meyer, of Hart Farm in Conway, was selling greens and a few other things. “There’s not much growing yet!” Meyer said with a laugh.

A customer approached with a question: “What’s a ramp?”

“They’re awesome to do a quick sauté,” Meyer advised.

After a bit more conversation, the customer made a selection. Meyer tallied the purchase, slid an empty baking pan across the table, and the customer dropped her bank card into it. Meyer pulled the pan back across the table. With gloved hands, she picked up the card and ran the transaction through on a tablet, and returned the card in the pan. She bagged up the greens and set them on the table and backed away. The woman stepped forward and retrieved them.

“Everyone seems happy,” Meyer said a few moments later. “It feels generally the same, a little more tentative.”

Meyer, who is also on the steering committee, said helping develop the protocol prepared her for this new choreography as a vendor.

Worth the Wait

Caitlin Bukolsky and her daughter, Kali Bean, 10, of Buckland had come to the Greenfield market in search of plants for their garden and to support local farmers.

“I feel for the farmers,” Bukolsky said, gesturing toward the sparsely populated Court Square. “Usually this is full.”

They stopped by Peter Kretzenger’s stand. Kretzenger owns PK Industries in Turners Falls, and was selling jams and potted perennials, including rhubarb and daylilies.

“It’s better to be here than the grocery store. It feels safer,” Bukolsky said, noting the fresh air.

“I didn’t know it was going to be open,” Kali said of the market. She was looking for vegetable plants and flowers for her garden.

“I’m glad they opened,” Bukolsky said.

“Fewer vendors,” Kretzenger replied when asked about what was

different this opening day, specifically mentioning that craft vendors weren’t yet included in the mix. “I think it’s the best we can expect,” he said, looking out over the market and the line of people waiting to get in. “These masks are going to suck when we go into the heat — hopefully in a month we can drop some of these restrictions.”

Waiting in line to get into the market, Kathryn Chang of Reed Farm in Sunderland said she had come for vegetable starts for her garden and to say hello to the farmers. She was hoping to find ground cherries and Thai basil. “I think this is great that they put safety protocols in place and let the market be open,” she said, adding that she visits the market every week in the summer.

Also on the lookout for plants for her garden, Diana Tidlund of Greenfield said she didn’t mind waiting. “They are well organized,” Tidlund said.

Ari Zucker of Greenfield was on the way to the grocery store and saw the tents up and decided to stop. “I wasn’t expecting it at all,” said Zucker, who moved to Greenfield a few weeks ago and was shopping at the market for the first time. “I’m really glad it’s happening.”

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McGOVERN from page A1

“There’s another issue we’re looking into,” he continued, “with Congresswoman [Pramila] Jayapal of Washington state: a bill that would cover salaries directly, so we can keep people, basically, tied to their job rather than having them apply for unemployment. Germany’s doing this, other countries in Europe are doing it. It seems to be working,” McGovern said. “I think this is the time to think out of the box and to put everything on the table. We shouldn’t be afraid to have these discussions.”

Greenfield mayor Roxann Wedegartner hosted Tuesday’s joint press conference at the city’s emergency operations center, discussing government response to the pandemic with McGovern, state senator Jo Comerford, and state representative Paul Mark.

Also on Tuesday, McGovern’s office announced the FEED (FEMA Empowering Essential Deliveries) Act, which he plans to introduce along with US representatives Mike Thompson of California and Rodney Davis of Illinois, senators Kamala D. Harris of California and Tim Scott of South Carolina when the House reconvenes.

The FEED Act would reimburse local governments 100 percent of the cost of meals prepared for needy people by restaurants and nonprofits, with food bought directly from local farms and food producers. It is being promoted by Chef José Andrés of World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit that provides food relief to communities affected by natural disasters.

“Too many families are going hungry during this pandemic,” McGovern said in a press release, “and it’s not because America is running low on food.”

Signal Failure

Some western Massachusetts towns suffer from incomplete high-speed internet infrastructure, an issue highlighted with more people working from home, and school building closures requiring remote learning.

“When you’re talking about students, whether they’re K through 12 or higher education,” Mark said, “some students from towns like Peru, where I live, they’re not going to be on equal footing with their peers.”

When asked if there was any work to fast-track the decades-long effort to build out broadband networks, Mark, who joined the conference by video broadcast from his car, said the issue was a priority for legislators.

“The [Massachusetts Broadband Institute] has first of all been putting in wifi hotspots in some of the towns,” Mark said. “I know one’s going in in Hawley, [and] one’s going in in the town of Savoy.”

“There certainly have been conversations and a look at the kind of ways we could repurpose some federal money to Massachusetts for this last push,” Comerford said, “especially out here in western Massachusetts. It’s been a front and center issue for us.”

Regarding the federal money, McGovern followed up on Comerford’s comment. “In the next package that Congress is dealing with, this issue of broadband is also front and center,” he said. “Hopefully that will be some direct assistance for the states, to help them accomplish as quickly as possible what we all want.”

Small Businesses, Big Problems

Asked about local programs to help small business, Wedegartner said that MJ Adams, the city’s director of community and economic development, has set up a program of forgivable loans for very small businesses – what the mayor called “microbusinesses,” many with only one or two employees.

Wedegartner said Greenfield is waiting for “a little bit of a boost” to its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding provided under the federal CARES Act. CDBG funding to towns and small cities is administered through the states.

“We’re a nonentitlement city, so we haven’t received our money yet,” Wedegartner explained. “HUD has to release the money to the state.”

“It’s not just the big cities that need assistance,” McGovern said, pledging to the mayor to work to get the money released more quickly. “It’s the smaller and medium-sized cities and smaller towns that need help too. This next package [of federal aid] is to help bypass the bureaucracy that we have to deal with right now, and provide direct assistance to communities like Greenfield.”

Comerford said she is pushing for quick distribution of funds and reducing the paperwork required. “This money is taxpayer money. It’s coming from our federal government,” she said. “It needs to go to the communities that deserve it, and it needs to go immediately, with no hoops or strings attached.”

In response to a question about President Trump’s threats to deny aid to sanctuary cities, of which Greenfield is one, Wedegartner said, “I am too busy trying to figure out just how to keep our city together and economically viable after this is over. We are what we are. I stand by the executive order, and we will just deal with whatever comes our way.”

“I would say ignore him,” McGovern said. “I’m not even sure he can do what he’s threatened to do. But ignore him. We have an important matter that we need to deal with right now, and that is the safety and well-being of everybody in our community. And we cannot allow him to sidetrack us and take us down pathways that, quite frankly, he tries to take us down for his political advantage.

“Look, every single human being needs to be treated with respect. We’re in a pandemic; we need to make sure that we’re all in this together.”

No Going Back

Even as the group described efforts to provide direct aid to businesses and workers, McGovern made clear his goal is not to restore American society to where it was before the novel coronavirus hit.

“One of the things that this pandemic has illustrated is the inequities, the inequality in this country,” McGovern said. “Our challenge, quite frankly, is not just to get through this emergency, which we are going to do. It cannot be about returning to the status quo....

“Even before this happened, we had too many people in our community here who didn’t know where their next meal was going to come from. We had 40 million people in this country who didn’t know where their next meal was going to come from. So, we don’t want to return to the status quo. As we respond to this emergency, we want to come back and we want to fix some of these inequalities that existed even before.”



BEANS from page A1

the layoffs,” Cycon said on Wednesday. “We did a little research to see what school lunch programs were available, and how many kids they were feeding. The amount of child hunger in Western Mass is shockingly high.”

This week Dean’s Beans announced an expansion of the program to include a \$4,000 direct donation to Gill-Montague regional school district.

“That’s great!” said Gill-Montague superintendent Michael Sullivan, who told the *Reporter* he was just hearing of the gift. “We’re excited to have their help. It’s a great, selfless act of social responsibility.”

According to business director Joanne Blier, the district currently provides two meals a day to about 400 children, not all of whom are enrolled in district schools. Cafe

teria staff prepare and bag the meals, which are distributed to a number of drop-off sites by volunteers on buses rented from F.M. Kuzmeskus.

According to Cycon, the \$4,000 is not a “one-shot deal”: Deans’ Beans plans to “keep tranching out money, probably every two weeks, and reassess as time goes by.” Current recipients include Greenfield, Springfield, Amherst, Athol-Royalston, and Mahara, and the company will “expand toward Worcester” in future rounds.

Cycon said that though there are delays at ports, he does not expect significant disruption in the coffee supply. The company’s staff in Orange are splitting up their time on the floor and working from home to maintain social distancing, and the company may not need a recently received Small Business Administration loan.

“To be honest with you, I think

we’re just going to have to return it,” Cycon told the *Reporter*. “Our business is up, it’s running, we’re doing really well, we’re giving away money. I don’t want to deplete the federal treasury.”

In addition to the support for school meals programs, the company is donating coffee to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, and has given out 35,000 coffee bag tin ties to home mask makers. “They make the perfect nose bridge,” Cycon explained.

The superintendents and chief financial officers he has spoken with at area school districts are “overjoyed that a private company wants to give them money to do what they’re doing,” the coffee magnate reported. “I hope that we’re modeling for other companies that there are different entry points into supporting your community.”



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Hazard Pay Policy Further Refined; Golden Cane Awarded to Lena O’Dou

By JOSH HEINEMANN

On April 29, the Wendell selectboard continued to discuss hazard pay for town employees. The board had held an extra meeting on April 22 to discuss the issue, but the matter was not settled then, because poll workers were not considered.

To minimize their exposure, the town has already postponed the spring election until June 1, allowing town clerk Gretchen Smith time to mail out applications for mail-in ballots, and for citizens to receive those ballots, fill them in, and return them. Still, the law requires polls to be open on election day, and there is no way to compel citizens to vote by mail.

The original suggestion for hazard pay was made by highway commission chair Phil Delorey to increase WRATS workers’ pay by \$5 an hour, amounting to \$90 a week. That figure was extended to the road crew, for whom contact with the public is less part of the job, but still occurs.

Though there was a thought to extend the offer to all town workers, town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said she, treasurer Carolyn Manley, and tax collector Penny Delorey generally work by themselves in a locked building, and do not feel it is warranted.

At that meeting, the board approved hazard pay for these workers retroactive to March 10, the day Massachusetts declared an emergency, and until either the Commonwealth declares the crisis over or the end of the fiscal year.

On April 29, selectboard chair Dan Keller brought up election workers. They work only one day, but their exposure to the public is part of the job, and occurs within a confined space. Election workers’ hours vary, and after polls close the vote counters work only the hour or so it takes to count the votes.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato said she thought it odd that the same increase was suggested for workers who work a full schedule and for workers who work less, some as little as an hour a week.

Discussion revolved around trying not to make the treasurer’s job too complicated, and trying to include every worker who deserves inclusion. In the end, the board vot-

ed to increase weekly pay by \$90 for people who work five hours or more, and \$45 for people who work fewer than five hours.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said her contacts with FEMA and MEMA told her that hazard pay will not be reimbursed unless it is already part of the personnel policy. Besides that, she had no new COVID-19 updates to report.

Fire chief Joe Cuneo and emergency management director Lonny Ricketts did not connect to the meeting, which was held by telephone and Zoom.

97 Wendell Depot

Anna Seeger wrote to say that she is not ready to move forward with the plans she had for renovating the house at 97 Wendell Depot Road.

Selectboard member Christine Heard said she was nervous about the building staying vacant with a cellar full of water. Keller said progress on that front seems unlikely now.

The community solar project planned for the property, on hold until National Grid increases the capacity of its Wendell Depot substation, would have a fence line too close to the house lot to fit with Wendell’s zoning bylaws.

DiDonato suggested creating a request for proposals (RFP) that might preserve a basically sound and historic home. She said she would contact Northeast Solar president Greg Garrison, who has worked with the community solar project, because there are new rules, and the incentives have changed.

Heard said she would talk with building inspector Phil Delorey about how the parcel can be divided into a house lot and a solar field, and Keller said he would talk with Seeger to learn if her plans are viable.

Citizen Adrian Montagano has had contact with descendants of the family who built the house, who want it to remain intact. Montagano wanted at least to make a photographic document of the building. He will be invited to the next selectboard meeting.

Herbmen Hustling

The lawyer for Appleguy Flowers LLC sent Wendell an insistent email asking for progress toward

creating a host agreement between the town and the potential marijuana growers, and offering a sample host agreement.

Heard said that in the absence of a moratorium, Wendell should negotiate slowly.

A public hearing over a moratorium, or about the project itself, will be difficult to arrange in this time of keeping apart. The state Cannabis Control Commission has said virtual meetings have to be set up by the applicant.

Keller said the sample host agreement should be sent to town boards for their input. He suggested changing the sample’s offer of 1.75% of the gross earnings to 2.75%.

Aldrich said the state might override anything the town does.

Other Business

The board chose three possible dates to present Wendell’s golden cane certificate and pin to the town’s new oldest citizen, Lena O’Dou.

They assembled with some neighbors, her grandson, and friends at her house on a beautiful sunny and warm Saturday, May 2. Keeping away from each other, they presented the certificate and pin. (See Faces and Places, page A8.) The actual cane will stay in Wendell’s office building.

Residents parking at the town office lot to use internet can make it difficult for staff to enter the building while maintaining proper distance from other people. The selectboard decided to put traffic cones at four parking spaces by the rear entrance to reserve for people who work in the building, and post signs around the lot advising people to keep apart.

The broadband committee accepted a bid from Suburban Propane to install a propane tank for the internet hut’s backup generator: free tank, \$665 for installation.

The quote for the generator itself was \$16,000. Canning Electric in Orange has a generator available for \$4,000 plus installation. Board members approved that expense, which does not require three bids as it is under \$10,000. DiDonato said she would check to see if prevailing wage for installation will raise the price too much.

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STORY from page A1

built in Bayonne, New Jersey, a brand new ship. They needed to get the crew, and everything.

Well, the commander said, “we’re not going to give up one of our experienced storekeepers, but here is George Bush, he’s trying to be a storekeeper, so we’ll promote him.” Shipped me up to Brooklyn Navy Yard. I got up to New York. Being storekeeper, I had to get all the supplies.

MR: *We’re talking March of ‘45?*

GB: Yeah, maybe February. It was an amphibious ship, an “AKA,” auxiliary kargo assault.... Those ships were the ships that had the small boats that you saw landing at the different beaches. That’s what the ship was built for: landings in the Pacific, the islands and so forth. We had an amphibious crew, specially trained... We had these great big booms that lowered everything down.

We got orders to get to Pearl Harbor, but our first stop was in Norfolk, and that’s when the war in Europe had ended. We went through the Panama Canal and out to Pearl Harbor.

We were there for maybe a week or two, and then, in order to get the crew acquainted with one another, we went on what was called a “milk run”: we went to Guadalcanal, Saipan, the Marshall Islands, Eniwetok – that’s where the battles were held, but they were now occupied – and we ended up at the New Hebrides, just outside of Australia. We picked up some cargo there and brought it back to Pearl Harbor.

On the way back to Pearl Harbor, that’s when they dropped the bomb.

MR: *How did you hear about it?*

GB: Well, you had the radios on the ship and this and that, so you knew that.

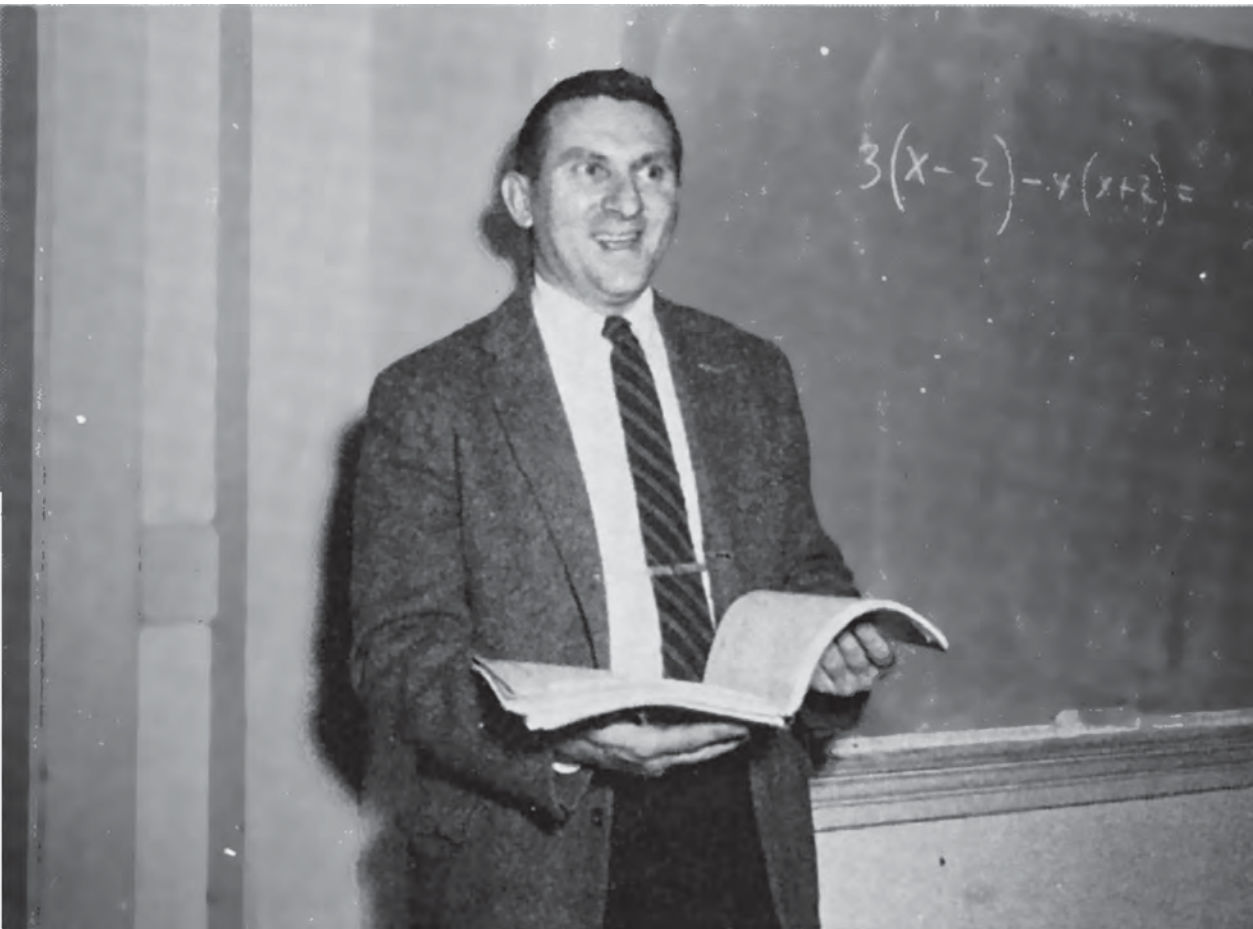
MR: *Were there any rumors that they had been building something on that scale?*

GB: Oh no, we didn’t know that that bomb was going to be so destructive as it was.

So we arrived at Pearl Harbor, and that’s when the war ended. Because we had already had our next assignment – the invasion of the southernmost island of Japan. The last battle was Okinawa, that was the last island, and the next step was the southernmost island of Japan, which was Kyushu.

So we knew we were going to have to be in that if the war hadn’t ended – you could see how very fortunate I was. Here you are, 18 years old and so forth.

As it was, we did go to Japan, to the island of Kyushu. The main city on that island was Sasebo, and it was a naval base. We went there to bring in occupation troops – Marines that we’d picked up. They occupied the island. Other cities of Japan were occupied at the same time.



“Mr. George Bush—teaches Ancient and Medieval and Modern History,” read the caption of this photograph from the 1962 Turners Falls High School yearbook, Peske-Tuk.

MR: *Did you get off the ship in Japan yourself?*

GB: Yeah. They let us – very strange, you know, you come into the harbor and you’ve gotta have pilots bring you in. We were in this city, and the war had just ended, you’ve been fighting them all these years. Once or twice I got out – not to the main city, but I did get out there, got some pictures taken and everything.

We were very, very fortunate. People complain about dropping the nuclear bomb, but look at the hundreds of thousands of American soldiers’ lives it saved. It was going to be the biggest invasion ever.

Anyway, from there we went down to the Philippines and picked up some Army soldiers to relieve the Marines in Sasebo, and then we got orders to come back to the East Coast. We went through the canal again, and then up the East Coast. They wanted our ship to be anchored out in the harbor – they didn’t have any in Norfolk so they sent us back to Baltimore, Maryland. Our skipper must have known somebody in Washington! We were the only Navy ship in the harbor.

MR: *During the war, were you able to be in touch with your brothers?*

GB: No – just my stepbrother.

So, we’re in Baltimore for two months. The port would go for 30, and then the starboard would go for 30, so we were there for two months, which was very, very nice. And then we went back up to Norfolk, and we got into some of the maneuvers in the Caribbean, and we got back in ‘46 to Norfolk. This is when they were discharging all the soldiers.

I had a chance to get discharged when we were in Norfolk. Our ship already had our future assignment, and that was going to be to go to the Antarctic.

MR: *To round up the Nazis down there?*

GB: We had the first settlement there, it was called Little America, and we were part of this expedition to go there. My shipmates wanted me to stay until I got discharged, which would have been a couple more years.

Well, when I was in the Navy I applied to college, because I knew we were going to get out pretty soon. I applied to Williams, and I got accepted. So I said oh, no no no, you can’t get me there – I’m getting discharged, and I’m going to Williams in September of ‘46....

I got discharged in Boston, at the Fargo Building, with another friend of mine I knew from the South End [of Turners]. We bummed home. We used to bum in those days, you know!

MR: *Out Route 2?*

GB: Yeah! In those days, if you were driving a car, you didn’t have to worry about who you picked up. Same if you were bumming: you didn’t particularly care who picked you up, it was very safe.

Bumming was very common in my younger days – like bumming over to Greenfield.

MR: *It still happens today, but it feels a little riskier. I’ll pick people up on that road because there’s no sidewalk.*

GB: Right, yeah – and of course, you don’t know who you pick up.

We used to have fun when we bummed to Greenfield, because we’d be in a group of four or five, and it was hard for someone to pick you up. I remember coming back from Greenfield, right on the corner of High Street – there were bushes there, and there were four or five of us, so only one or two would come out [laughs]. And then we all hop in. That was part of all growing up.

MR: *What was it like when you got home?*

GB: Well. Of course, your parents are happy to see you and everything, safe and sound. And, of course... Well, that’s another story....

Now in those days at the movies, you had what they called the Pathé News. The cartoons, coming attractions, Pathé News, and the feature and so forth. During the course of one of their shows, they showed my ship at Little America!

When I got out of college – when I graduated from Williams, I was there from ‘46 to ‘50, and when I graduated I knew I wanted to be a teacher and also a coach, because I played basketball and baseball. We were a sports-minded family.

MR: *Sounds like it!*

GB: Well anyway, I wanted to be a teacher and a coach in the public schools in Massachusetts, and you had to have education courses. I had majored in history at Williams, so I went down to the University of Mass. for my education courses. I commuted every day – I eventually got a car, it was about 20 years old – and I was down there from ‘50 to ‘51 taking education courses.

At the same time, I got a job as the freshman basketball coach at UMass, taking education courses with undergraduates. I got that OK, and then I had to go for my master’s degree, and I got that in ‘52. I was still freshman basketball coach my freshman year there, and assistant basketball coach. When I was getting my master’s I also played for a semi-pro team for the Turners Falls Athletic Club.

MR: *What was that team called?*

GB: The Turners Falls Aces, or A.C. There were different sponsors of the teams in those leagues.... [The Athletic Club] had lots of years of basketball and baseball teams. I became a player-coach for them in basketball.

At the end of the season you’d have these tournaments – we would hold one here at the Hibernian Hall that the VFW sponsored, and in Shelburne Falls there was a tournament called the Kiwanis Tournament. We entered both tournaments. Being down to UMass, I got to know some of the players [laughs] from Amherst College, and also UMass, and I sort of recruited them for these tournaments being held. And we won both tournaments.

I got the master’s degree, so I’m now ready to get a teaching job. It was the seventh and eighth grade, called the grammar school in those days. I applied in 1952 and got the job, teaching and also coaching.

Being a history major, the history teacher was still there – in fact, the teachers that were there were all teachers that I had when I was going through the seventh and eighth grade. They were all elderly women, I was the only male.

In my time, the teachers were Irish – they were the educated. We had Argie and we had Daley, and Treble and Shanahan and Conway, and so forth. So I taught with them. The English job was open. What happened was a couple days before school started the teachers got together, and I found out I was teaching science and math!

In those days you didn’t need a certificate, but they figured I was qualified.

I did that for my first year or two. \$2,600 a year, teaching. And I coached three sports for \$250, no assistants.

And then the varsity basketball job opened up. I was in the grammar school for seven years, and in 1959 I went over to the high school. The teacher-coach got a coaching job at Wesleyan, so I got the basketball job – and, fortunately, history!


I was coaching basketball, and that was about it – not football or baseball. I also was a tennis coach for 20 years.

Read next week’s Montague Reporter for the third and final installment!



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MONTAGUE from page A1

would participate in “video conferencing,” 60% in a meeting in an outdoor tent, and roughly 50% at the high school auditorium.

Ellis expressed concern about the meeting’s ability to reach a quorum under the last option but said the risk might be reduced by moving the location to the more spacious gymnasium.

Selectboard member Mike Nelson asked what would happen to the town budget if the meeting does not reach a quorum and cannot be held until after the next fiscal year begins in July. Ellis said the state would impose a so-called “1/12 budget,” based on the current fiscal year.

Town accountant Carolyn Olsen said she thought the law meant that each monthly budget could not be “less than” 1/12 of the previous year, but could perhaps be higher. She and Ellis said they would contact the state Department of Revenue for clarification.

Town meeting member Ariel Elan said that the poll results might have been “very different” if it had mentioned the high school gym, because the gym is “ventilated extremely well, because you have to for athletes.”

Jen Audley, not speaking for the finance committee, wondered if there was a way the town’s six precincts could meet separately, and “do it remotely that way.”

Fin com member John Hanold said he doubted the selectboard would gain a “clearer idea” of the pros and cons of different options if they delayed a decision any further.

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell said he would prefer to have the meeting “under one roof,” because “you never know what the weather is going to be.”

Chair Rich Kuklewicz said he favored shortening the meeting agenda, but “I don’t think we can make many more decisions, because we don’t know what things are going to look like five or six weeks from now.”

After Nelson strongly advocated for a meeting at the gym – with masks provided by the board of health – the board unanimously voted to support that option. “Let’s keep our fingers crossed, and get our masks washed and ready,” said Kuklewicz.

The board discussed reducing the town meeting warrant to include only essential items, but decided to hold off a decision until it had met with the finance committee on May 6. Ellis encouraged members to review recommendations made by the capital improvements committee prior to that meeting.

In response to a request from town clerk Deb Bourbeau, the board voted to shorten the polling hours during the upcoming town elections, which will be held on June 22, to 12 to 7 p.m.

Bourbeau outlined steps she was taking to encourage voting by mail. Voters who wish to vote by mail will be required to submit an application to town hall for an absentee ballot. The application form can be downloaded from the town website, or picked up in the foyer at town hall..

Masks and Thermometers

The board of health discussed Governor Baker’s recent order requiring the wearing of masks in public places, both indoors and outdoors, where social distancing of six feet can not be maintained. The order requires the wearing of masks

in grocery stores and other retail establishments, as well as in taxi cabs and other public transportation. Those who refuse to wear masks can be barred from these establishments, and even fined \$300.

Last week the health board strongly recommended the wearing of masks, but did not make the practice mandatory, or stipulate enforcement measures.

Ellis urged the boards and the public to read the order “carefully,” because “the details matter,” and that he expected the Governor’s office or health department to issue regulations clarifying “the complexities of the order, as is often the case.” He added that he had spoken to state representative Natalie Blais, and they agreed that “this order is getting people ready, in terms of their practice and behaviors, for when we have reopening.”

Public health director Daniel Wasiuk said the “enforcement process will be done through the board of health... which is really going to emphasize education, and assistance, and warning.” He said it would be “much easier” to enforce the order because affected businesses are “already licensed and permitted by the board of health.” He said he was not going to focus on an occasional complaint about a clerk who failed to wear a mask, but rather make sure stores had the proper “systems in place.”

Police chief Chris Williams said that if the health department asks the police to enforce the order, his department could “have a quick conversation with somebody” not wearing a mask, give out masks to people who might not be able to afford them, and then levy the civil fine of \$300 if someone still refuses to wear a mask.

“It’s pretty steep,” Williams said of the fine, and “if all else fails,” an individual could be arrested for violating a state emergency order. Williams added that he “would not have the guys go out looking for people not wearing masks, but if we were called into a situation, we would handle it appropriately.”

Kuklewicz urged residents not to become “vigilantes” and try to enforce the order themselves but “leave that to the authorities... It could turn into a different issue for Chief Williams’ department to deal with.” The board did not vote on the issue.

The health board did vote to reverse a previous decision not to release town COVID data to the public. This followed a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the data, including the fact that the state’s recent numbers did not add up and were not controlled for the population of different towns.

Nelson, who sits on the selectboard and board of health and works for the state health department, said he was “not a big fan” of the data, but that it was now necessary to share it with the public, in part because it was being shown on the state website each week.

The boards discussed purchasing a Seek Scan temperature measurement kit, which allows a person’s temperature to be taken from a distance. A high temperature is one of the key indicators of a COVID infection. The board directed Ellis to purchase such a system, with the price not exceeding \$3,000.

Stimulus Grants

Town planner Walter Ramsey reviewed the complexities of re-routing Community Development

Block Grant (CDBG) funds to assist small businesses affected by COVID. The town has \$64,000 in CDBG balances from 2019, \$8,000 of which would be divided among four social service agencies.

The remainder, Ramsey said, should be allocated to a four-town small business relief fund administered by the Franklin County Redevelopment Corporation (CDC). The CDC has a \$60,000 balance to be divided among Montague, Greenfield, Buckland, and Shelburne.

Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, which administers CDBG funds for the town, said he believed Montague’s contribution would need to be directed toward businesses in Montague. “We’ll have to iron that out,” he said. He then said the process would require a public hearing, and a public services contract between the town and the CDC.

Ellis questioned the requirement in similar programs that a business had to be in operation for a year. Ramsey said the most recent criteria being considered was a three-month requirement.

The board voted to hold a hearing on reprogramming the 2019 CDBG funds “at the earliest appropriate time.”

Turners Falls Airport manager Brian Camden came before the board to review proposed expenditures financed by a \$30,000 grant under the federal CARES Act allocation. He said that every airport in the country has received “some type of stimulus allocation.” Camden proposed spending the grant on an increase in hours and benefits for the manager, repairs to the administration building, and solar upgrades. The time frame for these expenditures would be FY’20 through FY’22, although the payments for manager upgrades disappear in 2022.

John Hanold questioned the increase in Camden’s hours and benefits, suggesting they could permanently increase the overall airport budget just when the facility is nearly self-sustaining, and could be difficult to “walk back.” Camden assured Hanold that the increased costs after the stimulus expired would not fall on local taxpayers.

Ellis noted that by law, once a contribution is made to an employee’s retirement fund, payments must be made in future years. Camden said the Airport Commission had factored in the impact of retirement cost increases starting in 2022, which he estimated at \$1,980.

Kuklewicz asked Camden to discuss the potential long-term budget impact with Ellis and Olsen. The selectboard also voted to appoint Brian Poirier to the temporary position of grounds maintenance worker at the airport.

Other Business

The selectboard unanimously voted to execute a \$282,200 contract with Sciaba Construction Co. for the Spinner Park restoration project, funded with CDBG money.

“All I want to know is, when you are going to turn on that lava lamp, Rich?” asked Brian McHugh. Kuklewicz said that he had turned on the lamp, which appeared behind him at his remote location, but that “it only has one lava cycle.”

The board voted to extend the time frame of the state grant financing hazardous materials abatement at the Strathmore complex until July 31, a month after the current fiscal

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC MEETING
LEVERETT CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Leverett Conservation Commission, in accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act (MGL c.131 §40), will hold a public conference call meeting on May 13, 2020 beginning at 5:00 p.m. to review a Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by Kristen Chamberlin for drainage work at 23 Cider Mill Rd. The public can participate by calling the Leverett Town Hall (425-436-6363 access code 133125). The application is on file and is available for public inspection in the Conservation Commission Office by appointment at (413) 548-1022 ext. 3. This notice is also available at www.masspublicnotices.org.

year. The board voted to transfer \$94 into the Veterans District Assessment and \$4,000 into the town meeting line item, in case the town needs to rent a tent.

Responding to a request by the historical commission to remove an “incorrect plaque” on the Turners Falls-Gill bridge (which calls it the “Gill-Montague Bridge”), the board voted to ask the state to put up a correct one. The plaque honors the 2014 reconstruction of the bridge, originally completed in 1938.

Ellis updated the board on current tax collection and the status of the state’s project to repair the General Pierce Bridge. The board voted to endorse a letter of support for a federal grant to create GIS maps of the town sewer system.

The board retired to an executive session to discuss property owned by FirstLight Power Resources. Their next meeting will take place on May 11.



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LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was May 6, 2010: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Erving will Build New
\$2.4 Million Senior Center

Twice last year, town meeting turned down plans for a new \$2.4 million, 6,600-square-foot senior center to be built on town-owned land on Route 63, north of the elementary school.

The proposal fell just four votes shy of a two-thirds majority on May 6, 2009 (57-35) and again on June 22, 2009 (64-38).

But last night, the same proposal sailed to victory at annual town meeting, with the margin of support for the new senior center swelling to 77%, as the new senior center was approved 135 to 31.

“The much-needed center will contribute to the social, physical, and emotional wellbeing of our most deserving residents,” said Joyce Bissell. “They are Erving’s finest. They built this town. They served on all your committees. They fought in all your wars. They’re helping to raise your grandchildren. You should give them your utmost respect.”

Speaking for the majority of finance committee members who opposed spending a combination of \$1.25 million from free cash, \$500,000 from taxation, and \$650,000 transferred from unspent funds from other projects to build the new center, Dan Hammock said, “We just don’t think the taxpayers of Erving should spend \$2.4 million on it. We keep hearing the economy’s getting better. When all these road projects are done, what’s next? Look at Spain, Greece, and Portugal. There are no jobs for anyone to have.”

Three Vie for
Montague Selectboard

On Thursday, April 29, the three candidates in the running for a three-year term on the Montague selectboard took seats at the selectboard table and faced the television cameras for an hour and a half debate, broadcast live on Montague Community Television.

Margaret Pyfrom, a member of the Montague Center volunteer fire department, said she moved to Turners Falls from Shelburne Falls, a town she recalled as “drab, listless and dormant” until its downtown was rejuvenated by “progressive revitalization through the efforts of merchants and cooperative officials.”

Rachel Roy, of Turners Falls, said, “I’m asking you to elect me for your new town selectman. As Montague is struggling to provide needed services and make ends meet in today’s troubled economy, there are few decent jobs that pay enough to support our young families and our aging elders. This to me is a huge priority – getting businesses and industry into this town.”

Chris Boutwell, chair of the board of health and a Turners Falls resident, said, “I have been in public service for Montague for close to two decades, in multiple departments, and also at the county level.”

Answering a later question, Boutwell pointed out he has served on town meeting continuously for many years, and on the board of health, veterans memorial trustees, and county solid waste management district, and has been instrumental in implementing regional emergency dispensing sites in Franklin County.

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GOOD USED USABLES

ERVING from page A1

Erving Elementary School, and town officials to learn what residents want for Erving Center.

According to their presentation, held online via GoToWebinar, Erving residents wanted safer crosswalks, accessible parking, and public bathrooms in the center. The students said that the residents also wanted to attract and accommodate tourists, and enhance Erving’s “recreational brand.”

The students presented designs for specific needs, and specific spaces, in Erving Center.

Alyssa DiCenzo presented a traffic and pedestrian safety design, with a green buffer strip along Route 2, a mixed bike and pedestrian lane following the highway, and two new crosswalks equipped with pedestrian signs, flashers, and reflectors embedded in the road. Her design also included permanent bus shelters on Henson Court and Arch Street, with benches, maps and solar lighting.

Ryan Lehane designed a green space at the veteran’s memorial and town hall with additional trees, a renovated lawn, a unified memorial including veterans from all wars in one monument, and outdoor seating.

Kelly Gershkoff designed a historic-looking red barn for the Pearl B. Care building lot, to serve as a bus stop and provide public bathrooms. Abigail Fowler and DiCenzo each designed a renovation for the Pearl B. Care building as a visitor center and museum. Fowler included a café and gathering space and a pedestrian bridge over Keyup Brook. Diconzo’s design included a café patio overlooking the brook.

Henry Moores Francis, Victoria Capaldo, and Alexandra Vona provided three independent designs for the former Usher Mill building. Their designs included an event space, a greenhouse and community garden, an outdoor equipment rental business, a restaurant and bar, and a café.

At the end of the presentation,

several residents who had been watching and listening offered praise for the students’ work.

“It’s got me very excited,” said Jacqueline Boyden. She asked about how the town would be able to make changes along Route 2, a state roadway.

Smith said making the villages in Erving “intermodal” – allowing multiple means of travel, such as automobile and bicycle – had been discussed for a long while, and that there had been “preliminary talks” with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation about the issues.

Peter Mallett asked whether grants would be available to pay for some of the proposed renovation and new construction.

Smith replied that grant money was available from multiple sources, and assistant planner Mariah Kurtz said she was “on the lookout” for grant opportunities. Kurtz added that, for grant applications, the town needed to have a clear concept of proposed projects, and that the Erving Center Vision Plan was important as a source of detailed ideas.

Selectboard member William Bembury said he was “excited about moving forward,” especially with Riverfront Park expansion.

“You’ve given us lots of thoughts and ideas,” said selectboard member Peter Sanders, adding that he would like the town to “do a few of these things.”

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said that in five to ten years, the students might return to Erving and see some of their ideas and designs in place.

Kurtz said that the students’ presentation and the final report, which includes much more detail than the presentation, are available on the town website. (At www.erving-ma.gov, select “Administration” from the “Town Government” menu, and then find “Erving Center Visioning Project” under the “Planning” dropdown on the sidebar.) Once the library and senior center are open again, paper copies will

FACES & PLACES



JOSH HEINEMANN PHOTO

Lena O'Don, 91, received Wendell's Golden Cane on Saturday from selectboard chair Dan Keller. Lena and her grandson were waiting on her sunny front porch when the delegation arrived: Keller, his selectboard colleagues Christine Heard and Laurie DiDonato, council on aging chair Nancy Spittle, neighbors Kate, Ada and Sandy, and the press. Keller gave her an official pin and certificate, as well as the cane, to hold a short time before it is returned to the town offices. Lena spoke about her 91 years. She worked as a seamstress, and in Wendell she continues sewing. This year, since the pandemic began, she has sewn over 500 masks. (She had to pause to figure how many, as she is still sewing them.) She said this life is a gift, and gave this advice: “Make every day a good one.”

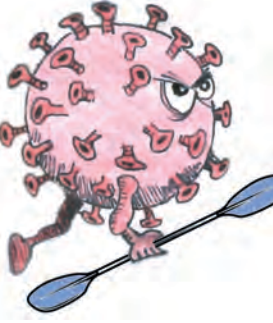
FirstLight Recreation Area Closures

The hydroelectric company released a list of closures this week:

Northfield: Munn’s Ferry Boat Camping Area: *Closed*
Bennet Meadow Wildlife Management Area: *Closed for events*
Boat Cruise and Riverview Picnic Area: *Closed*
Northfield Mountain Mountaintop Observation Area: *Closed*
Northfield Mountain Visitor’s Center: *Closed*
Northfield Mountain Trail System: *Closed*

Gill: Barton Cove Nature Area: *Closed*

Montague: Cabot Camp, Millers Falls: *Open*
Cabot Wood Fishing Access Area: *Open*
Branch Canal Area, Turners Falls: *Open*
Turners Falls Fishway Viewing Area: *Closed*
Canoe Portage Service at Montague: *Closed*
Poplar Street Access, Montague City: *Open for Self Hand Carry Only*



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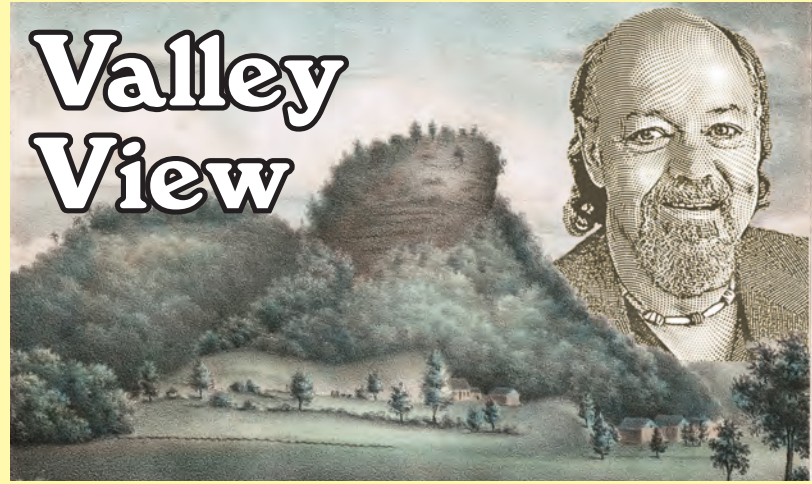
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NINA ROSSI PHOTO



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – As Main Street merchants, vendors, restaurateurs and bar owners count their losses and struggle to stay afloat, the online genealogy companies must be riding high. A right-place, right-time scenario, they are the beneficiaries of a captive audience, housebound and bored silly, that’s searching for anything to break the tedium of COVID-19 quarantine.

Count me among those using the unanticipated isolation for genealogical research. Not new to me, it never gets old, and now much of the most essential information is available at the tip of your fingers at home in cyberspace, necessitating fewer trips to the library.

I’ve been playing this game since 1989, starting in the weeks after my spinster great-aunt Gladys Sanderson died overnight during the summer of 1989. She was home when I left for a men’s softball game in Buckland, and dead at the hospital before I returned home. Just like that, a generation had evaporated.

I then owned the South Deerfield home where this woman we called Antie and her brother Waldo, my grandfather, were born. The last survivor of four siblings born at the dawning of the 20th century, she came with the purchase of my home after my grandfather’s sudden 1980 death. She was the unofficial historian of my family’s substantial South Deerfield branch. Tucked away in drawers, folders, envelopes, and metal boxes, and stacked on closet shelves, were documents, corre-

spondence, and photographs that she stewarded as precious records to be protected for posterity.

Quite an assemblage of family data, the material opened a window into my Woodruff and Sanderson ancestors, plus many peripherals relating to South Deerfield and Whately.

The impetus for what has become my own 30-year, on-again, off-again genealogical chase was a 19th-century King James Bible stored atop miscellaneous papers in a large, covered Tupperware box. It was the Woodruff Bible, which displayed on one of its first pages a hand-written family register, most likely penned by my great-grandmother, Fannie Woodruff Sanderson (1865-1947), who died six years before I was born. She recorded birth, death and marriage dates for the family members under her Pleasant Street roof, beginning with her father Asa Franklin Woodruff (1817-1891) and his wife Eliza Arms (1824-1898).

No, not a comprehensive, multi-generational lineage, yet more than enough to wet my whistle. That partial family record ignited genealogical research that continues to this day.

Really, my most focused research occurred during the early 1990s, before the chasing was good – back in the pre-Google days of library visits, laptop transcriptions into Family Tree Maker files, and CompuServe Genealogy Forum queries. Many people today have likely never heard of CompuServe, an early search engine that appeared in the 1980s and was

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B5



SANDERSON PHOTO

This structure on River Road in Whately, once a shoe shop, is one of the last surviving traces of the Sanderson family’s local leather-working operations.

ArtBeat

by Trish Crapo

Clucking Outrageous: Pat Little’s Cosmic Chickens

GREENFIELD – Forget about why the chicken crossed the road: Why did it ride a unicycle? Why did it go in for an X-ray?

Leyden artist Pat Little might know, although, then again, there may be no answer.

But Little can prove that it happened. Her *Cosmic Chickens* series of paintings, now on display in the cafeteria at Baystate Franklin Medical Center, provides a wacky look at these familiar barnyard birds.

The *Cosmic Chickens* are a fun departure for Little, who also paints abstract work. They’re meant to be not only cosmic but comical. In the press release she wrote for what she’d thought would be a public exhibit, Little led off with: “Cosmic Chickens Art Exhibit Might Be Clucking Outrageous.”

The exhibit of about 18 paintings, Little’s first one-person show, went up in the cafeteria on March 6. Shortly afterwards, the hospital closed to visitors because of the coronavirus pandemic. The cafeteria is currently open only to hospital staff members, who end up seeing the paintings on their way through the one-way, take-out-only line as it wends past the cash register.

“I think of it as an exhibit that only a few could see,” Little said.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Hurdling Hen, painting by Pat Little, one of her *Cosmic Chickens* series on view inside the Baystate Franklin Medical Center.

Yet, she observed, she’s luckier than some artists who have shows that are currently locked up in galleries or libraries.

Becky George, manager of the hospital’s volunteer services, and curator of its art shows, told Little that the show has been a hit with staff.

“The show went up on a Saturday and I got a call Monday morning from Becky saying, ‘We sold a painting,’” Little said.

Shortly after, a doctor purchased

three paintings, including one that shows a chicken receiving an X-ray. And George bought all 55 of the greeting cards Little had made and distributed them free to staff, some of whom were not able to get home to be with their families.

The cards may be familiar to some in the area, Little said, as they’ve been available for about a year at Deerfield Valley Art Association, where Little is a

see **ARTBEAT** page B8

GREAT FALLS APPLE COLUMN

By ANNABEL LEVINE

TURNERS FALLS – The last time my words graced the Great Falls Apple Corps column, I was having a hard time dealing with the changes that COVID-19 has thrust upon our world. Even though it was technically spring, it was snowing as I wrote, and the sun was still not warm. I had chosen to channel my fear and uncertainty by taking up a shovel and digging up a patch of the lawn to make a vegetable garden.

Now, six weeks later, signs of life are poking out of the dirt in my new veggie patch. The peas have stretched a few inches into the sky, just now putting out little tendrils to grab onto their trellis. The radishes, sown in a line, are showing their first set of true leaves. Lettuce starts from Laughing Dog Farm have successfully made the transition from greenhouse to my house, and young white kohlrabi plants sit in a grid, ready to grow up into a fleet of tiny vegetable spaceships.

The rest of the yard has emerged as well. Some new additions to the perennial landscape last year made it through the winter, including some ostrich ferns that died back in the heat of the summer that I had already mourned as lost. Self-seeded sunflowers are popping up along the sidewalk, and a pair of robins have built a nest in our forsythia, squawking loudly any time I have to walk by their three blue eggs.

While the robins are starting a family over at my house, the Unity Park Community Garden is also waking up from its winter slumber. The rainwater system is



LEVINE PHOTO

Robins built a nest in a forsythia bush in Levine’s yard.

fixed, and we wait patiently for the next downpour to fill the tank. The crabapple tree is in bloom, and we’ve got beautiful new signage in the process of going up. Seven public “u-pick” beds have been seeded with kale, carrots, beets, peas, and chard, and the paths are chock full of mint and strawberries. (Please take some!)

I’ve been heartened to see more and more

see **APPLE CORPS** page B3

Pet of the Week:

“An open Letter to my Quarantine Partner”

Week I. You keep your distance the first week, aloof in other parts of the house, addicted to your customary kingdom of solitude. I feel like an intruder. You watch my circle of activity widen, and pace the perimeter, throat softly rumbling with displeasure. At night, I feel you nudge me into rituals of head rubbing.

In the morning, as usual, you tell me exactly when to get up.

Week II. Zoom meetings dominate this week, my one chance to connect with the world and other people. Even you seem interested in the human faces. For the first time, I feel you over my shoulder, staring at the screen.

Afterwards, you take an annoying interest in my laptop and desk. I start to realize how your actions might begin to feel significant and dominate my lonely days. Objects begin to disappear, turning up later under furniture and along baseboards.

Still, I cannot establish a connection to you, no matter how soulfully I gaze into your amber eyes, searching for a sign that you might really care for me despite the am-

bivalence of your behavior.

Week III. You start complaining about not going out, but I am determined to keep you inside where you can lay on the couch all day – hell, stretch out on the floor, even. I keep your bowl full of munchies topped off 24/7. You’ve really no right to complain, mister.

You want to be on top of me, insisting on physical attention even while I try to write, draw, or sew. Inappropriate as the timing might be, I am eager to explore these boundaries with you. For instance, would you start letting me touch your soft white underbelly – the most vulnerable area? –

But no. Only at night, during your deepest slumber, can I risk snaking my hand down your torso and on to that deliciously soft furry roll of flab.

Week IV. I’m beginning to read the signals. A certain squinch of the eyes indicates that your touch tolerance is running out. When your ears start twitching, there might be a quick, scratchy rage episode coming on. How I wish we could merge,

nose to nose, eye to eye, and nap in each other’s arms all day until this shutdown is over!

You are never lulled so completely that we can forget our differences, though. Clearly, you won’t give an inch, and I’m beginning to think you are some sort of weird control freak, with a very short attention span.

Week V. I expect some answers by now, but there are none. This silent treatment is awful! I’ve been mirroring our interactions, verbalizing my feelings about your behavior using “I” statements, but I get the same blank stare, even after all these weeks together.

Despite our one-sided communication, your insistence on physical contact has actually increased! My body has become an amusement park for you to slide, roll and jump all night long. When I lock you out of the bedroom so that I can sleep, the sounds you make by throwing your body against the door wash me in waves of panic and anxiety.

I start to dream about previous abusive relationships whenever I am able to grab a few hours of sleep.

Week VI. More than once, I have felt your teeth graze my skin



during our petting sessions, and I have noticed how you are now licking the hand towel in the kitchen that hangs off the refrigerator handle. Are you getting hungrier? It’s creepy. Your belly roll has gotten even bigger, but I am actually afraid to cut off your food supply.

One morning, I wake up to you raking and pawing my hair. I feel like we have become *too* close without ever really knowing each other at all. I can’t get away from your obsessive staring, and the way you keep rubbing your head on me drives me crazy, because you don’t really want to be touched – if I respond by fondling you, you get all brusque and stomp away. WTF.

Week VII. Things have significantly deteriorated around this

place, and it’s all because of you. I feel stalked in my own home, and your silent treatment is still driving me nuts. I’m about to use the final alternative and throw you out of the house! (However, I suspect you are not as tough as you think you are, and might slash all the screens trying to break back in again if I do.)

No matter what I am doing, you are two feet away, arms folded under your chest, gazing at me in that secretly critical way of yours. Even after I carefully explain to you the nuances of my craft, you’ll *walk right on top of it* the first chance you get, face full of innocence.

Oddly, you are also the cutest when you are doing the most damage!

When this is all over, I think I’ll get a dog.

Cat Lady by Circumstance Only Turns Falls



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

Live from the Pandemic... it’s “every day is the same” sexual health!

For April’s column I wrote a bit about handling love and sex during this time of physical distancing. I had hoped that life would be back to business as usual in May, turning to other topics I had planned to discuss, such as aging and potential changes in genital functioning. However, since Pandemic is taking its sweet time, for this month I’ll highlight my top five favorite fun and sexy websites and resources that you can enjoy from the comfort of your own quarantined room or home.

Favorite #1 on my list is Good Vibrations. *Goodvibes.com* has been around since 1977, when feminist sex activist Joani Blank opened her first sex toy store in San Francisco to provide high quality products, originally geared towards women’s bodies. I remember receiving their catalogs in the mail in the nineties, examining with delight all the types of toys and props made solely for pleasure! They have online ordering, plus ten physical locations, including two in the Boston area. Their San Francisco Polk Street location features the Vibrator Museum, which was closed due to “seismic retrofitting” even prior to Pandemic. Hmm. I’m very curious about that seismic retrofitting.

Good Vibrations was a worker-owned co-op for about 14 years, later becoming a corporation in 2006. In 1995 they declared May as International Masturbation Month, a “sex-positive response” to the firing of then-Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders. So, this month is particularly good timing to be stuck in our homes! If you Google their website, you can check out all the categories of toys for sale (gender play, vibrators, bondage, etc.), plus look under their “sex info” tab for lots of free information, sex tips, and tricks. Good Vibrations

also carries many erotic fiction and non-fiction books for your inspiration (i.e., best women’s erotica, best lesbian erotica, books on orgasm, feminist porn, polyamory).

For favorite #2, I’ve chosen Erika Lust and her website of feminist ethical porn, *erikalust.com*. Erika Lust made her first indie erotic short film in 2004 (“The Good Girl,” lol) and hasn’t looked back. She promotes ethics, cinematic quality, and empowerment of women in her erotic films. Her website contains her own film catalog, plus other directors’ films she has selected for their ethical and artistic sensibilities. This is porn you can feel very good about watching when you get tired of Netflix!

Favorite #3 includes several “how to” books perfect for quarantine alone time. *The Guide to Getting it On* is a classic by Paul Joannides, with new illustrated editions every year. Consider it your modern bible on everything sex-related.

Come as You Are, by valley local Emily Nagoski (mentioned in my October 2019 column), still has some of the best information on how to help people with clitorises experiencing orgasm and pleasure. If you are looking for a really fun task for your quarantine to-do list, consider getting your hands on that book, particularly if you have been orgasm-challenged in the past.

Betty Dodson, the mother of masturbation, wrote the sentinel book *Sex for One* in 1987. This is a great companion book for *Come as You Are*.

Favorite #4 is a website called *OMGyes.com*. Disclosure: this is a pay site. Luckily, it is a one-time fee (\$49 at last check) for Season One, which includes “practical techniques to enhance clitoral pleasure... over 60 short videos, 12 touchable simulations, and dozens of infographics.” No matter what “sexpert level” you might be at, if you are interested in

female-bodied pleasure, you will learn something new. Their practical pleasure techniques include “layering, hinting, signaling, surprise, orbiting, multiples, edging,” etc. Their information is research- and science-derived, and they state that the one-time fee contributes to ongoing research.

Favorite #5 is for our younger audience: teens through emerging adults. *Scarleteen.com* (“sex ed for the real world”) is a treasure trove of age-appropriate content for “inclusive, comprehensive, and supportive sexuality and relationship info.” A quick glance at their homepage netted the topics “gender, sexual identity, disability, abuse, sexual politics,” and quarantine-relevant articles on “How to Actually Date Yourself!” and “Self-Care and Social Distance.”

Lastly, I’d like to give a shout out to our local sex-positive retail shops for your future outings when Pandemic has passed:

Oh My Sensuality Boutique is a sex-positive retail store in Northampton (closed during Pandemic) that features carefully curated items by the mother/daughter duo, in business since 2003.

Adam and Eve has a local store in Greenfield, one of 76 US franchises, with extensive online shopping available, including love dolls (!) as well as the usual suspects – vibrators, lingerie, lubes, oils, bondage gear, etc. So, if you are solo during this quarantine, you can get everything you need to interact by yourself, or with another entity (albeit synthetic), right in our own backyard.

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

Senior Center Activities

MAY 11 THROUGH 15

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center is closed and will reopen when advised by state and local authorities that it is safe to do so. This measure is taken not lightly but with the utmost concern for the most vulnerable in our community.

The Council on Aging staff will be available for referrals and information from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, at (413) 863-9357 by telephone, and coa@montague-ma.gov by email.

ERVING

Erving Senior Center director Paula Betters writes that the Center is closed until at least May 4:

“All programs are canceled or postponed. With that said, I will be here or at least checking my messages daily. I want anyone to call me and leave a message if they have any questions or concerns regarding food or other services. I will call them back and if we can

help with services of any kind we will do so. I am working with other agencies so we can be sure to keep our seniors healthy & safe.”

Paula can be reached at at (413) 423-3649 or paula-betters@erving-ma.gov.

LEVERETT

Leverett senior activities are currently canceled. Further updates are being distributed via TTY telephone and email. For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

WENDELL

Wendell senior activities have been canceled. The Wendell Senior Center is closed. The Wendell Council on Aging will continue to provide transportation for essential medical visits if volunteers are available. For more information or for rides, call Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

Local Supermarket Senior Accommodations

Supermarkets in Massachusetts are now required to provide special hours for seniors and immunocompromised shoppers. Call ahead – this information is accurate as of April 8; hours and accommodations are still changing.

Big Y:	Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.	(413) 772-0435
Foster’s:	Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.	(413) 773-1100
Food City:	Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.	(413) 863-9591
Green Fields Market:	Senior hours from 9 to 10 a.m. Curbside pickup available. Order by 8 p.m.; order ready for pickup between 1 and 6 the following day. Delivery also available. \$6 per delivery inside Greenfield. \$8 outside Greenfield.	(413) 773-9567
McCusker’s Market:	Only six customers allowed in store at a time. Curbside pickup available. Order between 12 and 1 p.m. for pickup the following day. Delivery available. \$10 per delivery. Email pickup@franklincommunity.coop	(413) 625-2548
Stop and Shop:	Senior hours from 6 to 7:30 a.m.	(413) 774-6096

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APPLE CORPS from page B1 friends posting on social media about gardening. I’ve seen intricate raised bed set-ups with seedlings under grow lights, but I’ve also seen five-gallon bucket gardens and seeds sown in egg cartons. When I lived in my old apartment, I planted my first garden in an old metal sink I had picked up for free at the dump. If you’ve ever had that itch, now is the perfect time.

The Great Falls Apple Corps has received a large amount of donated seeds, so please be in touch if you are interested in growing your own

plants this year. We can also hook you up with garden space, plants, containers, and plenty of advice.

Lastly, we have a **wild edibles walk** coming up on Sunday, May 17 at 1 p.m. While there’s nothing we’d like more than to try and beat our record set last year of over 70 attendees, our second annual walk is going to be a remote one. For information about this event, or our group in general, check out our Facebook and Instagram or send us an email at greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com.

Now get out there – safely – and get growing!



Pea shoots coming up in Levine’s garden patch.



COMPARISON

Three Faces of Mxyzptlk

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – Mr. Mxyzptlk is a trickster character from the fifth dimension who first appeared in comics with Superman. I have seen basically three different versions of him. They have kept one thing about him the same from the comics, which is that to send him back to the fifth dimension, you have to get him to say his name backwards.

I first saw this character in an episode of *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*, a Christmas episode called “’Twas the Night before Mxymas.” Played by Howie Mandel, Mr. Mxyzptlk puts the main characters through a time loop. The way Mandel plays him is very enjoyable to see. He is a comedian, so this character being a trickster just works very well, and is a good fit for this actor.

I saw him again in Season 2 episodes of CW’s *Supergirl*, where he was played by Peter Gadiot. I don’t really know much other work of this actor. But from what I saw of him in those episodes, he did a lovely job playing a character who plays games with Supergirl and Mon-el, and dresses up in different costumes. You know, being a trickster.

That time, he was interested in marrying Supergirl. With this appearance, they still kept the idea of getting him to say his name backward, which Kara (a.k.a. Supergirl) gets him to do in the *Fortress of Solitude*.

In Season 5 of the same show he is played by Thomas Lennon. The change in actor is explained by the character saying that the first time around, he was trying to appeal to Kara when he wanted to marry her.

I saw an *ET Canada* video

where I learned that he would be in the role of the Clarence character in the 100th episode, called “It’s a Super Life,” which is clearly based on *It’s a Wonderful Life*. That’s ironic since I first saw Mxyzptlk, like I mentioned, in a Christmas episode. That is also explained in the plot by Mr. Mxyzptlk saying that he was made to make amends to people he wronged, and that “Kara was last on his list.”

It’s an interesting change of pace to undertake with this character this time around, and the show’s take on *It’s A Wonderful Life* made sense for that. I saw Mr. Mxyzptlk in the scene at the end of the previous episode before this, and he was being rather humorous, which is a good way for this character to be.

It was also a very nice way to set up him coming on scene for the 100th episode.

(Another ironic thing is, I believe, that was the same way he was introduced when Peter Gadiot showed up playing him. So they decided to do that again when he comes back.)

I should also mention that familiar faces return in this episode, including Mon-el. Kara learns what would have happened if she had told Lena she’s Supergirl at different times, and it wasn’t the greatest results. In one of the realities, she never became friends with Lena, like *It’s A Wonderful Life* does with George. With having Mr. Mxyzptlk and Kara experience things like George did, it’s actually a reasonably nice version of the movie for this show.

I think a funny version of Mxyzptlk works best, and that is what Lennon and Mandel do. Gadiot just doesn’t work for me.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Mental Distress; Flasher; Suspicions About Drugs; Bear, Fox, and Hawk; Some Strange Confrontations

Monday, 4/27

10:58 a.m. Report of car vs. pedestrian at Fourth Street and Avenue A. Female was not struck by vehicle, but did jump out of its way. Driver stated he did not see the pedestrian in the crosswalk. Written warning issued.

Tuesday, 4/28

5:24 p.m. Several motorists locked inside gate at Cabot Station.

Wednesday, 4/29

2:47 a.m. Caller from Vladish Avenue states there is a bear in the backyard lying down eating from the bird feeder. Caller states he knows there is nothing to do about it; just wanted to make PD aware there is a bear in the area.

7:13 a.m. Caller from Davis Road states that a hunter was trespassing on his neighbor’s property. He confronted the male hunter; the hunter then threatened him while holding a rifle, making threats such as “I know where you live” and “I’m gonna get you for this.” Both parties spoken to. Involved male advised that he is no longer allowed to hunt on the property. Caller was OK with just leaving it at that.

11:03 a.m. Caller from Fifth Street states the upstairs neighbors are always stomping on the floor and it is causing him mental distress. Advised of options.

1:18 p.m. Officers out with a traffic jam at Turners Falls High School.

5:26 p.m. Caller requesting assistance unlocking gate on Migratory Way so he can leave; states he has been fishing there for years, and has never seen the gate locked until today.

9:36 p.m. Multiple 911 calls for fight in progress at Third and Fourth streets. Caller states that she is injured but refused medical attention multiple times. Officer requests AMR be canceled; both victims refused medical attention.

10:49 p.m. Caller requesting to speak with an officer re: an incident that happened earlier this morning at Cumberland Farms. Caller states that she works in the medical field; she went to the gas station for a bottle of water and held the door for a woman coming out. The woman made a remark about the caller wearing her scrubs; caller told her that they are clean and she is on her way to work. The woman then stated that it is people like the caller who are causing this pandemic and that she hopes she and her family get the virus. Female took photos of caller’s vehicle. Caller is concerned that female party might try and find her. Officer spoke with caller.

Thursday, 4/30

5:25 p.m. Caller from Central Street reporting possible drug dealing in front of her house. States it’s the same silver Honda as reported in the past; a male party meets the vehicle and does a “drop off.” States male party has a tattoo on his left cheek that looks like three black lines. Responding officer reports vehicle is not on Central Street at this time.

5:31 p.m. Caller requesting assistance unlocking gate on Migratory Way so he can leave; called back to say that he was let out by an employee.

Friday, 5/1

1:39 a.m. 911 open line; caller states she has been in bed for a month because she was told to stay inside during the virus. Caller states she is a little drunk and is really sad about everything that is happening. Officers on scene. Caller states she just wanted someone to talk to because she was lonely. Officers clear; stating roommate has phone.

2:04 a.m. Caller from Griswold Street reporting loud neighbor disturbance. Officer spoke with both parties; everything is fine; they are going to bed for the night.

7:37 a.m. Report from Fifth Street of upstairs neighbor(s) slamming furniture for the past three or four hours. Responding units did not hear any slamming/banging coming from apartment in question and advise caller did not answer. Clear.

1:39 p.m. 911 open line plotting in Halifax, VT. Contacted Vermont State Police Westminster Barracks, who advised they do not follow up on 911 lines unless it sounds like there is an emergency.

4:59 p.m. Caller reporting intoxicated male in Spinner Park wearing blue jeans and shoes; states he is exposing himself by pulling his pants down and keeps trying to hug a woman. Officer reports

party gone on arrival.

5:37 p.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting a fight among seven male and female parties on Fourth Street. While on the line, callers stated that parties had dispersed. Officer spoke with one caller who stated that the fighting got intense but believes that nobody got hurt.

7:12 p.m. Report of three vehicles locked behind gate on Migratory Way. All parties let out. Officer reports the sign states the gate locks at 7 p.m., but it is actually locked at 6 p.m.

7:33 p.m. Caller from L Street requesting officer to speak with upstairs neighbor who has been causing a disturbance all day. States this is an ongoing issue; has contacted landlord. Officer advises party told to keep the noise down and that party was involved in another call from earlier today on Fifth Street.

9:55 p.m. Owner of K Street property states that a male party he rents to has been violent and argumentative towards him; states that party has knives in his room and is currently intoxicated. Caller would like party removed from residence but is worried he has nowhere else to go. Officer reports that they spoke with both parties; both agreed that there will be no further issues for the night. Confirmed that there was a physical altercation, but the caller does not want to pursue charges.

Saturday, 5/2

8:23 a.m. Report of fox lying in the grass a few feet from caller’s house on Taylor Hill Road. Toward the end of the call, caller advised the fox was biting her hose. No aggression reported; caller could not see any foaming at the mouth. Officer advised caller should stay away from the animal and call back if the animal shows signs of aggression or is foaming at the mouth.

1:20 p.m. Report of unwanted female sitting on

caller’s front porch on Fifth Street rocking back and forth, possibly waiting for another tenant upstairs. On arrival, party was crying and eating ice cream but advised she is OK. Party moved along.

4:39 p.m. Report of theft of kayaking supplies from a storage barn on West Street. Referred to an officer.

5:06 p.m. Caller requesting assistance unlocking gate on Migratory Way so they can leave; states there are a few cars behind him as well. Services rendered.

5:24 p.m. Landlord of property on Fifth Street reporting call from tenant who states that another tenant is yelling and it sounds like he is hitting the wall with a hammer. Officer reports everything quiet upon arrival; made contact with party, who stated that he was not banging on the walls.

Party advised to keep noise down if it was him.

8:08 p.m. Caller requesting options re: a baby hawk that her daughter hit on Route 2 and that is now deceased. Caller states that they have the hawk in a box at their residence. Environmental Police contacted; advise caller either bury remains or dispose of them through the trash.

Sunday, 5/3

7:47 a.m. Caller from Fifth Street reports neighbor is “crushing up drugs” and slamming furniture. When asked, caller advised he did not observe any drug activity but was speculating that there would be no other reason to make that much noise with furniture if drugs weren’t involved. Officer advised.

5 p.m. Caller from East Main Street states that a neighbor broke into her apartment and stole some groceries while she was outside. Officer spoke to caller; landlord was also there and advised that he was changing the locks and would be adding cameras in the next two weeks.

Montague Community Television News

We’ll Edit Your Videos!

By MICHAEL SMITH

Along with most businesses, MCTV will encourage people to stay at home and limit visits to the station. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updated station hours.

One way to connect with your community from the confines of your quarantine is to make videos! It’s easy to film a tutorial, a public service announcement, a story or a hike by using your phone, computer or one of MCTV’s cameras that are sanitized and available for pickup. Any editing


can be done by MCTV staff editors, or you can try it at home!

Residents of Montague can find MCTV on Channel 17, and the MCTV Vimeo page is available online. Email hannahbrookman@gmail.com for editing assistance or filmmaking questions.

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 or fomontaguety@gmail.com between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. We’d love to work with you!

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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

gone by the mid-1990s, never mind its Genealogy Forum.

As for libraries, well, my favorites were located in Old Deerfield, Springfield, and Northampton, but I did occasional travel to Connecticut and eventually even Boston. When I ran into a particularly vexing snag, I’d compose a concise query in the CompuServe forum and typically receive a prompt and professional answer with a greeting of “Hi Cuz” or “Hello Cuzzin.”

Oh, how times have changed. Similar on-line forums still exist today. In fact, they are multiplied tenfold, but there’s one significant difference. That is, there’s now a price attached for access to an interactive cyber-network that annually generates hundreds of millions of dollars. Ah, the joys of capitalism. Want family info? Pony up, fella.

Which brings us to my most recent genealogical caper – one sparked by the eBay purchase of a 19th-century leather wallet made by relatives and their South Deerfield neighbors at the old Arms Manufacturing Co. I’m not sure where this pursuit will lead me, but it’s already brought me back to my Sanderson family’s tannery and leather-working business, as well as the later leather-working industry founded and managed by my branch of the Arms family.

Now I’ve even discovered that another great-grandfather, William Fredrick Bardwell (1806-1885), was a pocketbook manufacturer, according to Whately historian James M. Crafts. Despite being left with more questions than answers at this early juncture, I’m making good progress and am confident many more answers will surface before this probe is finished.

Helpful in this recent hunt for data was my

inevitable acceptance of a frequently offered, free, two-week trial of *Ancestry.com*. With libraries closed for the pandemic and an immediate need of census and vital records, I finally succumbed to an offer that seems to appear every other day online. The lords of cyberspace know my interests well.

Once I grew comfortable navigating around the program, I was able to glean much new information about South Deerfield ancestors and relatives long ago entered into my Family Tree Maker program. However, with that project ongoing and far from finished, why bother piecemealing it out so early in the process, and chancing errors? I’d rather continue assembling the puzzle to save narrative for a future date. So, bear with me, please.

So, let’s switch gears to a related diversion that came to me in timely fashion by email from old friend Dereka Smith. A Whately Historical Commissioner and professional genealogist, she’s working on a book about old Whately homes and families and, out of the blue a few weeks ago, wanted to pick my brain about the Elijah Sanderson farmstead on the southern foot of Mt. Sugarloaf.

Razed in the summer of 2013, this Whately building represented the last standing of four consecutive Sanderson homes on the west side of the River Road consuming more than a half-mile of frontage on the 1971 Beers Atlas map. All that’s left of that family compound today is a decaying old leather and shoe shop that’ll likely soon be reduced to a pile of rubble. It stands diagonally across the road from Paciecnik’s Creamee.

Although Smith’s query opened a vein that loves to be bled, it forced me to double-check many details pulled from memory, first going to Crafts’ *History of Whately*, then cross-referencing with *Ancestry.com* files and local

newspaper reports gleaned from a cumbersome online archive without search capabilities. If you know the date, you’re OK. If not, well, it could take a while.

Surprisingly, the cooperative sources confirmed much of the information I had stored away in grey matter and, yes, brought in many interesting new twists. The bottom line is that there’s still a lot more to learn. It’ll take weeks, maybe months, of research to connect all the loose ends for an accurate picture. Why rush it and risk nagging future corrections?

Now, I’d like to conclude with an interesting little peripheral outtake: the tragic death of Rudolphus Sanderson, struck in his buggy by a Connecticut River Railroad “express train” at the old South Main Street crossing in South Deerfield.

The accident occurred on the evening of Wednesday, December 4, 1867, and is titled “Fatal Accident” in the December 9 *Greenfield Gazette*. The sensational story got big play in a newspaper full of short local-news blurbs. Messy accidents have always sold newspapers.

Anyway, Sanderson, married with an adopted daughter, was at the time sharing the original Sanderson homestead (built ca. 1765) with nephew Thomas Sanderson’s family of eight. The home was owned by Rudolphus’ brother and Thomas’ father, John Chapman Sanderson (my third great-grandfather), who had followed his father and grandfather into the tannery/shoemaker trade, and had built a home just north of his childhood home before 1860 to accommodate a growing extended family with two homes. It was a way of life. I have discovered many similar extended 19th-century families under one roof. My family was no exception.

The *Gazette* story reported that Sanderson was riding his horse and buggy home after a

“grist” at the Meadow Mills when struck by the train “at the north end of South Deerfield Street.” The rest of the story went like this:

“The train whistled at all crossings, but for some reason Mr. Sanderson evidently did not hear the whistle. The engine struck his buggy and threw Mr. Sanderson several feet to the side of the railbed. The first the engineer saw of Mr. Sanderson or his buggy, was Mr. Sanderson thrown up several feet in the air. The train was immediately stopped and backed down to the crossing and Mr. Sanderson was carried into Mr. Billings’ [home]. He was insensible and had a bad cut on his chin. He lived about an hour and a half.

“The horse, released from the buggy, was uninjured. The buggy body was cleared from the running part, and all the wheels, springs and shafts were broken. A buffalo robe was found on the top of the engine’s flag staff and one bag of meal on the cow catcher. Two of the cow-catcher bars were broken by the collision. Mr. Sanderson was about 60 years old and a much-respected farmer. Deacon D.W. Childs of Deerfield insured his life a short time since for \$1,000.”

Hmmm? Was there double-indemnity back then? Could it have been suicide? Homicide by horse? Drunk driving? Let’s not go there. Long ago.

Rudolphus Sanderson was my third great-granduncle. Here today, gone tomorrow. For those not familiar with railroad jargon, a “cow catcher” was an iron grill sturdily installed on the front of the train to protect the engine, clear obstructions, and prevent derailments. Apparently, roaming cows were a constant concern. Thus, the name.

Buffalo robe? Yes, appropriate for the day. Warm, too. Likely straight from the Sanderson leather and shoe shop.

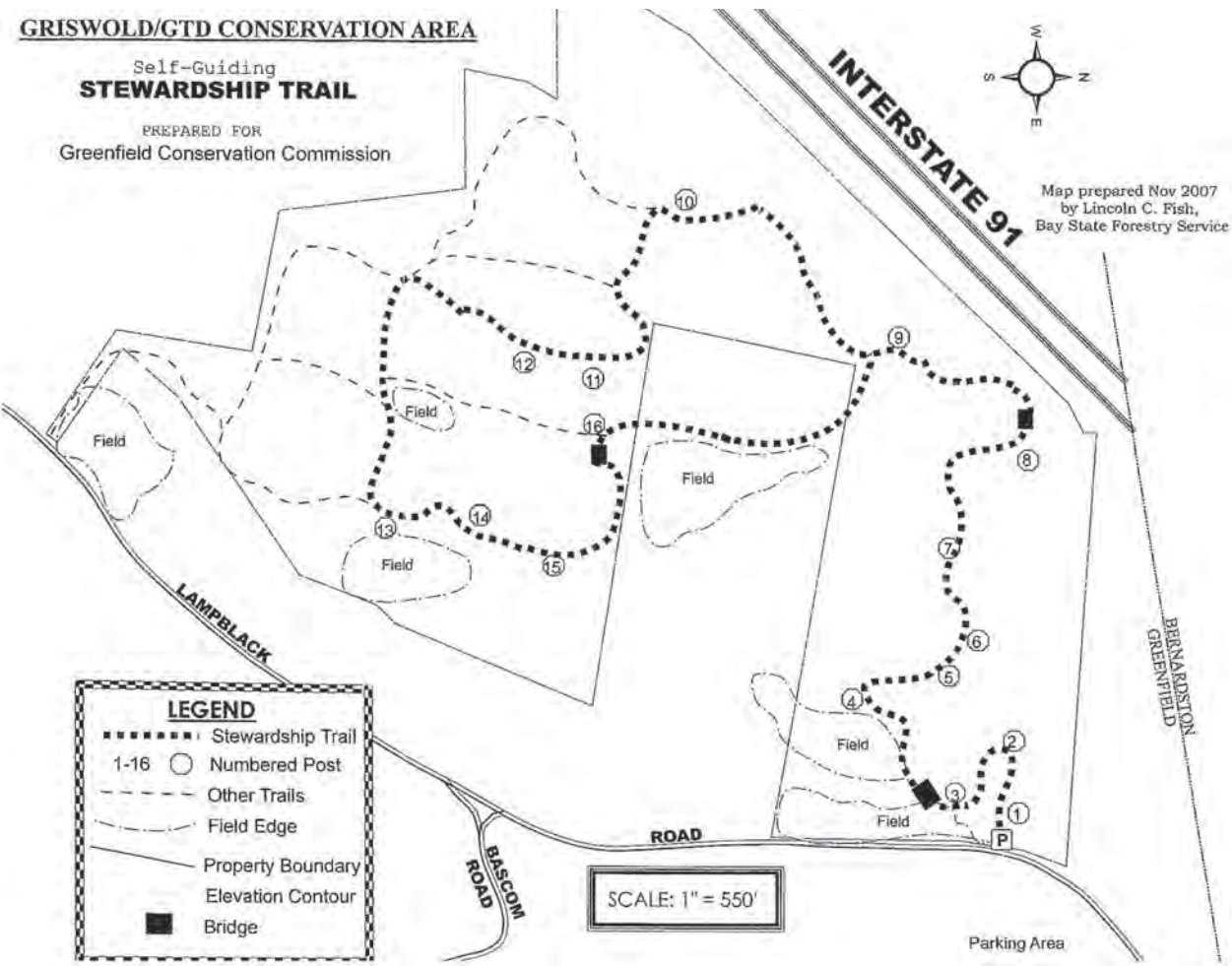


Self-Guided Trail: Griswold Conservation Area

GREENFIELD – This 200-acre conservation area (around 780 Lampblack Road, Greenfield) was donated to the Town of Greenfield by the Griswold Family and the Greenfield Tap and Die Corporation. This map will guide you through the two-mile-long Stewardship Trail, which contains 16 numbered stops, marked by posts, to be matched with the numbered descriptions.

Each stop showcases a demonstration of land stewardship. Follow the yellow diamond-shaped signs. Additional trails are available for longer or shorter hikes. Contact the Greenfield Conservation Commission for further information: (413) 772-1548.

- 1. Native Shrubs.** Most forestland contains native shrubs that provide wildlife food in the form of nuts, berries, and seeds. Many have flowers or foliage that make them attractive as landscape plantings. Using native species avoids the degradation to our wildlife habitat caused by exotic invasives such as burning bush and Asiatic bittersweet. Look for descriptive signs in front of each native shrub species.
- 2. Wetland Wildlife.** This swampy tangle of wildlife food and cover plants includes elderberry, blueberry, arrowwood, and winterberry. Rich leaf litter under the alder shrubs is preferred feeding habitat for woodcock. Dead snags provide nesting and foraging habitat for woodpeckers. Look for swamp-loving birds such as herons, flycatchers, song and swamp sparrows, red-shouldered hawks, and screech owls.
- 3. Road Stabilization.** Good stewardship often involves investing in access. This road provides access for hay-cutting, forestry, and trail mowing. In 1994, crushed stone was placed on this road to reduce erosion. A bridge will be added in 2008 to further reduce impacts to the brook. These fields are maintained for wildlife as well as hay through an agreement with a local farmer.
- 4. Brushy Habitat.** Brushy thickets are required habitat for many forest species, yet we are losing brushy habitat as abandoned fields revert to forest or become developed. Our fastest-declining group of bird species is dependent on brushy habitat. Examples: rose-breasted grosbeak, blue-winged



- warbler. Brushy habitat adjacent to grassy habitat will increase wildlife use of both, so this excellent location will be maintained as brushy habitat with additional cutting.
- 5. Oak for Wildlife.** Oaks are arguably the most important wildlife trees in the Massachusetts forest. They are widespread and their fruit (acorn) is nutritious and durable. Acorns have a tremendous impact on wildlife populations. Competing trees were removed in 1994 around the large-crowned oaks on this hillside in order to increase acorn production.
- 6. Dark Woods Contrast.** This hemlock stand has not been cut in many years. Its dense shade provides an interesting contrast to areas recently harvested. The relative lack of understory trees and plants creates conditions favorable to some species. Look for brown creeper, red-breasted nuthatch, black-throated green warbler.

- 7. Improvement Thinning.** This silvicultural treatment involves removing competing trees adjacent to desirable trees, which will then develop in response to the increased sunlight. The stand grows rapidly and concentrates growth on good quality trees. This stand was thinned in the 1970s and 1994. The large-crowned white oaks and straight pines provide excellent wildlife habitat and produce high-quality timber. Some hollow trees were left as wildlife dens.
- 8. Nesting, Denning, Perching, and Roosting.** A nest box for small owls (screech and saw-whet) was erected in 2007 about 15 feet high on the right hand side of this large pine. Dens and nests may also be formed as woodpeckers excavate a dead snag, created by girdling a dead tree. Dead branches will be perching habitat for fly-catchers and hawks. Loose bark clinging to dead trees provides

- roosting sites for bats.
- 9. Mast Trees.** This site supports a remarkable variety of “mast”-producing trees. *Mast* refers to fruits and nuts utilized as food by wildlife. If trees have enough space to develop large, spreading crowns, mast production can increase dramatically. Species identified by numbers: 1. red oak, 2. black oak, 3. white oak, 4. beech, 5. hickory, 6. blackgum, 7. ironwood, 8. hop hornbeam.
- 10. Regeneration Harvest.** This 6.5-acre area was thinned in the 1970s, 1986, and 1994, establishing advance pine and oak regeneration. Most of the overstory was removed in 2006 in order to release these seedlings. Pine, hickory, and oak are better adapted to full sunlight than partial shade. Many thousands of seedlings per acre will compete for space. When mature, an acre of trees will number 100 to 200 individuals.

- 11. Old-field White Oak.** This huge white oak at the end of the short spur trail is worth a special trip to see. The spreading growth habit indicates it is a relic from open pasture conditions. Note the cavity, which probably serves as a squirrel den.
- 12. View of Notch Mountain.** This vista was cleared in the 1970s, 1994, and 2008. The mountain with the steep eastern slope is Notch Mountain in Northfield, which blocks our view of Mount Monadnock.
- 13. Wildlife Habitat.** Nest boxes have been erected at the edge of this field for kestrel and bluebird. More than 40 wildlife species in our area utilize tree cavities, and many will accept nest boxes as substitutes.
- 14. Regeneration.** These young trees started growing in response to a harvest in 1984. Competing saplings were cut in 1994 and 2007. These pine, oak, and hemlock seedlings are now ready to be released (provided with adequate sunlight and space to grow) by a partial harvest of the overstory.
- 15. Wolf Tree.** A large multi-stemmed pine found among smaller, straighter trees, a “wolf” pine provides sites for raptor nests and roosting turkeys. The wolf pine and the old hedgerow of spreading hardwoods along the trail suggest that the area below the trail was pasture within the past 60 years. Note the large, downed black birch tree to the right of the post. Rotting logs on the forest floor provide necessary habitat for ground dwelling mammals, amphibians, and invertebrates.
- 16. Drumming Log.** The moss-covered log halfway up the opposite slope was felled in 1995 as a ruffed grouse drumming log. Male grouse will use such a log in brushy areas for “drumming” with their wings to attract a mate. Also note the small pile of flat rocks at the base of the slope, built as basking habitat for snakes. Snakes, being cold-blooded, need sunny areas where they can warm their body temperature, yet be able to quickly hide from predators.

The return trail now crosses a section of private property, thanks to the generosity of the owner. Please be respectful, remaining on the trail and on the uphill side of the fence.

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WARREN ONDRAS PHOTO

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— Lisa McLoughlin, editor

NASA Concerned About Ice Melt

By LISA McLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – One of the biggest problems with projecting the exact effects and pace of flooding due to the climate emergency is knowing how Antarctic marine ice sheets will react.

In Antarctica, some of the ice sheet is resting on bedrock, and some sticks out and floats on the ocean in large shelves or tongues. Where it floats is where icebergs break off. The grounding line is where the glacier stops being supported by rock and starts floating on seawater. The geology of the grounding line, es-

pecially the bedrock’s slope, is crucial to glacier stability, as this is the area where the ice will move up and down with the tide.

NASA scientists Robel, Seroussi, and Roe, publishing in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States* (PNAS), emphasize that because we don’t know all the forces internally affecting the ice sheets, we don’t have a very good handle on how they will react to global warming and other changes. Based on newer, more complex computer modeling, there is great concern that the ice may be or become unstable in grounding line

areas, and that this is interfering with prediction models.

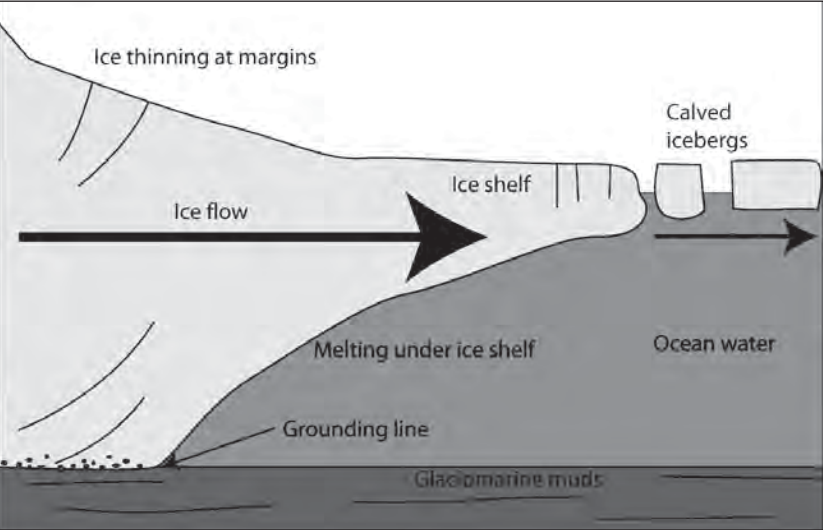
Marine ice instability “amplifies and skews uncertainty in projections of future sea-level rise,” meaning that we know even less than we thought we knew about how Antarctic marine ice will melt. It could collapse in unpredictable ways, for example in larger events rather than a little at a time, or through a self-sustaining, increasingly quick process. This makes “worst case scenarios of rapid sea-level rise” more likely than less drastic predictions, and it means all the predictions have to be taken with a bigger grain of salt.

Globally, sea levels currently rise about 1.8 mm per year. Most of this is from melting ice. But if ice sheets destabilize, using the average yearly increase will not be accurate. Current predictions for sea level rises by year 2100 range widely from 20 cm to 2 meters.

For example, if the West Antarctic Ice Sheet collapsed, it would raise sea levels by 3.3 meters and, although unlikely, if all of Antarctica’s ice sheet melted it would raise sea levels by 60 meters.

For reference, Turners Falls Airport is at 109 meters above sea level.

To see the sources of these statistics, or to see a video of cities flooded by the predicted amounts of sea rise, visit antarcticglaciers.org.



Simplified schematic figure of a grounding line.
(Illustration courtesy of www.antarcticglaciers.org)

USGS Surface Materials Maps

By LISA McLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – It took 81 years, but geologic Surficial Materials maps have finally been created for all of Massachusetts by the US Geological Survey (USGS). UMass-Amherst, which was part of the federal and state partnership that created the maps, announces that they are in the public domain, and are available electronically or printed.

Besides being beautiful, the maps show what kind of surface materials

are where, at a 1:24,000-scale level of accuracy, the same scale commonly used by hikers. Dr. Stephen Mabbee of UMass emphasizes that these maps are useful to anyone who digs in the earth, according to a March 2019 article on www.Phys.org, including “civil engineers, geotechnology firms, state, county and town planners, transportation engineers, geologists, developers” because running into obstacles underground can be expensive.

Importantly, however, the maps

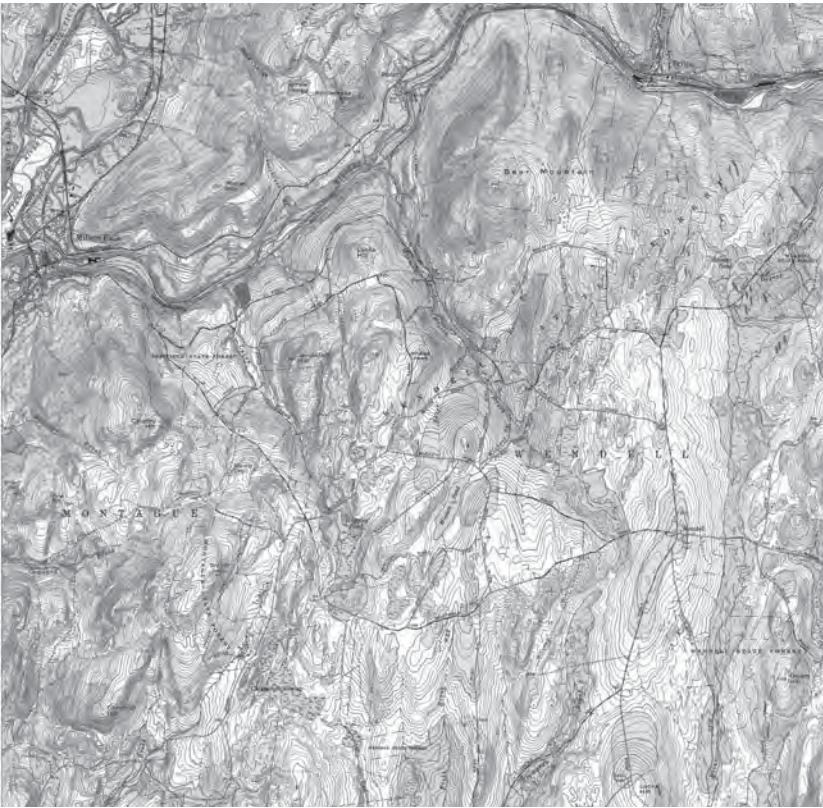
do not delve into what is underground – they map the surface conditions. While surface conditions often give a hint about what is underneath, they do not delve under the surface.

Professor Richard Little explains: “These maps are a wonderful look into our recent geological history such as glacial and post-glacial events recorded in sediment, but not older geologic events, such as plate tectonics and dinosaur fossils that are preserved in solid rock. You need bedrock maps for that, which are also available online. I love looking at these new surficial maps as they give so much information about what is hidden under field and forest.”

The maps are especially of interest to environmental regulators trying to enforce cleanup of superfund sites and the clean water act. According to Dr. Mabbee, the benefit-to-cost ratio of this work is 34/1, meaning “the taxpayer” (or, possibly, the developer?) saves \$34 for every \$1 spent on the study.

Mabbee says he is very excited about having revived the relationship between his post as state geologist and the United USGS, and for finally finishing this mapping project that was begun in the 1940s and then abandoned in the 1980s. Importantly, the layers are publicly available for GIS use. Anyone can access them via MassGIS.

An abstract that accompanied the release of the maps states that “Most of the surficial [surface] materials in Massachusetts are deposits of the last two continental ice sheets that covered all of New England in the



Detail from “Surficial Materials Map of the Millers Falls Quadrangle, Massachusetts,” compiled in 2018 by Janet R. Stone and Mary L. DiGiacomo-Cohen. Courtesy of USGS.

BOOK REVIEW

Helen Whybrow, ed., The Story Handbook: Language and Storytelling for Land Conservationists (The Trust for Public Land, San Francisco, CA 2002)

By LISA McLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – This book is a work in progress that seeks to help people protect land by learning to make strong cases via stories. The book emphasizes throughout that showing people how they already love and rely upon land, making visible those connections, is a more effective way to get people to act in defense of land.

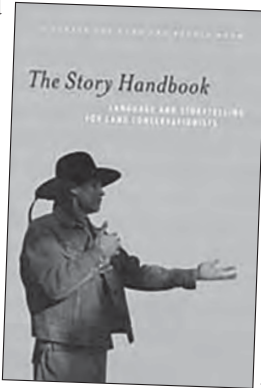
Some of the essays contain those stories: powerful and beautifully intimate stories about people and land. Some essays are more “how to” and include either practical hints like how to take photos that tell stories or how to write for the media.

Others, like “A Few Earthy Words” from the legendary nature writer Scott Russell Sanders, carefully unfold philosophical bases on which to build strong arguments. Still others are examples of how stories have saved land.

If you are interested in reading or writing about land, land conservation, activism in service of environmental protection, or just love nature, you will enjoy this slim volume packed with excellent ideas.

The last essay, “Caretaking Tales” by William Cronon, makes the argument that all lands need sto-

ries. He says that too often in land conservation we’re making arguments about crises. We need to also tell stories about caretaking, about our love and respect for land. He writes:



Not just wildernesses and parks and public green spaces need our celebration. So too do cities and suburbs, farms and ranches, mines and industrial forests, factories and homes. It's not just that the wildernesses and parks and green spaces will be destroyed by forces emanating from these other places if we don't do a better job of witnessing and taking responsibility for the relationships that bind all of them together. It's also that we human beings need to find honor and self-respect for ourselves and our children as much in our homes and workplaces as in the lands we set aside as special. We need caretaking tales for all of them together, because only then can we hope to find true salvation for them all.

To find an accredited land trust working to protect land in your area, visit www.landtrustalliance.org. (And then volunteer!) For more inspiring and absolutely beautiful writing about land, the kind that is featured in this book, see www.PeterForbes.org.

NASA PHOTO

Last Quarter
Thursday, May 14

New Moon
Friday, May 22

May 2020
Moon Calendar

Full Moon
Thursday, May 7

First Quarter
Friday, May 29

latter part of the Pleistocene ice age,” about 12,000 years ago, when glacial Lake Hitchcock melted.

“The glacial deposits are divided into two broad categories, glacial till and moraine deposits” – piles of unsorted rocks the ice dropped off – “and glacial stratified deposits,” sorted deposits with only certain-sized rocks left by meltwater.

“Widespread till deposits were laid down directly on bedrock or on semi-consolidated coastal plain strata,” meaning an ocean beach layer, partly turned into rock, partly sandy stuff, “by glacier ice. Tills in thick-till (> 15 ft. thick) drumlin landforms are found in all parts of the State.” These are oval hills with one steep edge and one gentle edge, and steep sides.

“Areas of shallow bedrock contain thin discontinuous till deposits and numerous bedrock outcrops, and are located chiefly in rocky upland areas. Moraine deposits related to glacial ice lobes of the last ice sheet are located mostly in southeastern Massachusetts. Glacial stratified deposits are concentrated in valleys and lowland areas and were laid down by glacial meltwater in streams, lakes, and the sea in front of the retreating ice margin during the last deglaciation,” about 13,000 years ago.

“Postglacial deposits, primarily flood-plain alluvium” (unconsolidated sedimentary deposits like sand) “and swamp deposits” (buried vegetation) make up a lesser proportion of the unconsolidated materials.”

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T-RUMP

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A FLUKE OF THE SYSTEM.

THEN THE MUELLER REPORT DIDN'T EXONERATE ME OF ANY WRONGDOING, BUT HERE I AM UNTOUCHED.

BECAUSE THE PARTISAN CONGRESS IS GUTLESS.

IN TOTAL THE CONGRESS VOTED 278 TO 249 TO IMPEACH ME, AND I'M STILL SITTING IN THE OVAL OFFICE. I AM "THE TERLON DON," NANCE!

FINE, BUT THAT ONE WAS USED BY A CERTAIN MR. GOTTI.

OKAY, THEN I'M THE SLIPPERY DON."

YOU'RE GETTING THERE... TRY OILY!

Cool Cats on the Ave

What's out there?

A bird!

What was it doing?

Feeding. Humans put out a bird-feeder

Wish we had a cat-feeder.

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ANNABEL LEVINE

OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark

You shouldn't go out, Sport. Not with your COPD.

But we're low on essentials, Thelma. Just a quick run out, I'll mask up.

I thought we were well stocked up. What do we need?

Well, um... beer, vodka, chips, salsa, pretzels, ice cream, cookies, peanuts...

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ARTBEAT from page B1

member; the Montague Bookmill; and the Greenfield Farmers Exchange, which is still currently open for business.

Little says George told her that art is particularly important right now.

“This is a great show,” George told Little. “People really like it. The paintings are very uplifting. They make people smile.”

“They’re just funny,” Little said of her chickens. I could sense the fond shrug, even over the phone.

A retired dialysis nurse, Little is pleased that the chickens can offer some levity to front line responders in such a difficult time. Little, in fact, started as a nurse at what was then Franklin Medical Center in 1993.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Unicycle Chicken, another of Pat Little’s fantastical chicken paintings.

From there she went to Dartmouth Hitchcock for several years, returning to Leyden in 2000.

She hadn’t originally thought she’d end up in nursing, she said. She’d pushed back against what seemed every little girl’s dream when she was growing up on Long Island.

“It seemed every little girl wanted to be a nurse or a secretary,” she said. “And all the boys wanted to be policemen.”

Little moved to California after high school and took art classes at Santa Monica City College, studying art history and print-making, among other things. But several turns of events brought her back to the East Coast to live near her brothers, who had moved to the Brattleboro and Marlboro, Vermont area. She began attending Greenfield Community College, met her future husband, and settled in Leyden.

Little’s Cosmic Chickens have been at the hospital for about two months now, and will remain in the cafeteria until it is safe for Little to go into the hospital to collect them. When staff members have purchased paintings, they’ve been allowed to remove them from the walls right away, rather than waiting until the show closes, as is standard. Little wants her chickens to spread joy.

Some of the titles of other paintings include *Hang Six* (a surfboarding chicken, its three-toed feet curling over the end of the board); *Coq au Vin*, a chicken holding a glass of red wine; *Chicken Salad*; and *Hot Yoga Chicken*.

Little has been raising chickens for years for their eggs, and spends a lot of time observing and drawing them. Her paintings are meant to be comical expressions of their personalities, not anatomically correct depictions. Still, she studies them.

“You have to really look at them,” Little said of chickens. “They’re funny creatures, and their funny-looking feet make me smile.”

“I have to think of things where I can really enhance their feet,” she added, “because they have the most beautiful feet. I’m working on one that’s a ballerina now. It will have a tutu, and it will be quite nice.”

To contact Pat Little, email corgifur2@gmail.com.



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