

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD **Criticism of Farren Closure Mounts**

By JEFF SINGLETON

At Monday's Montague selectboard meeting, town administrator Steve Ellis presented the letter the town has sent to the licensing division of the state Department of Public Health and to Governor Baker, raising concerns about the imminent closing of the Farren Care Center.

The Farren, currently owned by Trinity Health of New England Senior Communities, is a "unique facility" serving clients with multiple physical and mental health needs. It is also a mainstay of Montague's economy, built at the beginning of the last century and currently employing over 140 area residents, It is scheduled to be closed at the end of the year, and its clients moved to an underutilized facility in Holyoke, the Mount Saint Vincent Care Center. That facility, in turn, is being purchased by a for-profit health corporation called iCare.

Last week David Roulston, a Greenfield lawyer who represents a number of Farren clients, presented the board with a letter of his own, objecting to the transfer of patients during the pandemic as a "cynical joke" and predicting that administration by a for-profit company with "mediocre ratings" will "kill this loving community." The Farren's current owner has justified the move



The long-term care center's owner hopes to close it by December.

as necessary due to the deteriorating condition of the Montague City building. iCare has told the Reporter that it has extensive experience serving clients with see FARREN page A7

2nd Franklin Candidates Set Collegial Tone





By JEFF SINGLETON

ATHOL - The high level of partisanship in recent American elections has been noted by commentators and voters of all persuasions. It is also, apparently, a concern to the candidates running for state legislature in the 2nd Franklin District this fall, incumbent Susannah Whipps and her challenger Will LaRose.

Interviewed by the Reporter, both Whipps and LaRose mentioned the high level of polarizing political rhetoric nationally, and said they had recently spoken on the phone pledging to maintain a civil tone during their campaign for the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

"We don't need to add to the toxic environment," said LaRose. These comments were echoed by Whipps, who called her decision to register tisanship, Whipps and LaRose tend as an independent (technically "un- to take similar stands on issues. They enrolled") "the best decision I ever made," due in part to the fact that it

appealed to the large number of similar voters in her district.

Both Whipps and LaRose noted that, unlike the 1st Franklin District which contains mostly "blue towns" like Montague, the 2nd Franklin is "purple." The district as a whole fell for Hillary Clinton by a narrow margin in 2016, but its three most populous towns - Orange, Athol, and Templeton – all went for Donald Trump.

The district, which achieved its current form in a 2011 state redistricting, also includes Gill, Erving, Warwick, New Salem, Wendell, Royalston, Phillipston, Petersham and part of Belchertown. These towns run the gamut of partisan political orientation, which suggests that living in the woods, on a farm, or in a declining mill town does not necessarily predict how you vote.

Perhaps reflecting their lack of par-

At-Home Classes Begin

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Remote learning began for all Gill-Montague schools on Monday, with teachers and students logging onto computers to interact in a Google Classroom environment. Attendance is being taken, and lessons presented live via Google Meet video conferencing. As in many school districts across the country, this has meant parents, grandparents, and other guardians are at home during the day while students learn.

Though school officials are preparing buildings for a possible limited return to in-person learning, particularly for "priority" students expected to benefit most from faceto-face support, for most students the framework established this week will be the default form school takes for the foreseeable future.

Over the coming weeks, the Montague Reporter will cover various aspects of the complicated new reality faced by many families in our community. Students, the adults

see AT-HOME page A6

Going Remote: The Tech

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Not quite brave enough to bug any of the parents I know who are struggling to adjust to the remote-learning regime this week, I decided first to learn a bit more about how it's supposed to work.

Tina Mahaney, the school district's director of information technology, was generous enough to set aside time to answer some of my questions. Mahaney has been at Gill-Montague for five years, but this pandemic has changed everything. It became her job to equip over 900 young learners with computers, and support their teachers in engaging with them online.

We talked about the nuts and bolts of the project, and even snuck a look at the bigger picture. (This transcript has been abridged and edited slightly for clarity.)

MR: What would you say your two most challenging days of school have been?

TM: I think it was the day when we decided to go remote, and then when we opened the school year



Gill-Montague information technology director Tina Mahaney, shown here in blurry form at a Zoom meeting.

for teachers in remote learning.

MR: Are you working remotely? **TM:** I'm in my office, and so are Mike and David; they have been since we started in March. Katie chose stay at her office at Hillcrest, because it gave her all the facilities that are needed to do the work.

MR: Back in the spring, when remote learning kicked in, you said at a school committee meeting that your daughter said this is your turn to sparkle!

TM: It's really quite an experience for technology to suddenly be such a necessity. I had to kick in all 25 years of instructional technology experience I had just to figure out how we were going to navigate this whole remote teaching thing

Rep. Susannah Whipps Lee (top) faces a challenge this year from fellow Athol native Will LaRose (bottom). both stressed support for recent rural see 2ND FRANKLIN page A5

Advocates Plan Rally for Bridge Barrier

By SARAH ROBERTSON

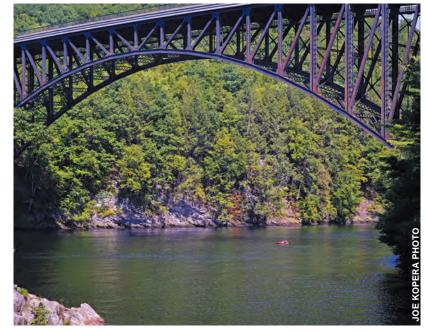
ERVING/GILL - Advocates for suicide prevention will gather near the French King Bridge over Columbus Day weekend to draw attention to the long-delayed installation of suicide prevention barriers on the historic bridge. The public is invited to participate in the standout, scheduled for Saturday, October 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"I needed to be able to keep doing something, and saying something," said Stacey Hamel, an Oxford resident organizing the event.

Hamel lost her stepson, Bryan Hamel, a Navy officer visiting home on leave, to suicide at the bridge in February 2018.

"It's a complex grief, a situation where you've got anger and frustration and sadness," Hamel said. "I think enough time has passed. Lets stop worrying about when the next one is going to happen, and stop the next one from happening."

The goal of Hamel's demonstra-



The state has agreed to build barriers on the French King Bridge, but not this year.

tion is multi-faceted, she says. She first wants to raise awareness about the need for the barriers, pressure the state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to prioritize the project, and get local people involved in the

discussion and design process.

"At the same time, it's a huge tourist attraction, I get that," she said. "It's a beautiful view." Built in 1931, the French King see **BRIDGE** page A4

So Much More Than Just Regular Fake News

..A2 ..A3 ..A3 ..A4 ..A5 ..A7 ..A8

Editorial
Letters and an Illustration
Local Briefs
Shaved Ice Window Opens
Gill Selectboard Notes
Erving Selectboard Notes
Ten Years Ago This Week
Faces and Places: Droughtbusting
Tuees and Theess Dioughtbusting

A Local Family History	B1
ArtBeat: Pigments and Dyes	B1
Sex Matters	B2
Montague Police Log	B3
Indie Mama Diaries	B4
Our Monthly Children's Page	B6
Five Comics and a Puzzle	B7
The Authors' Corner	B8

yesterday. When I really think about it, I've probably had more challenging days, but the crisis modes are the toughest.

MR: How many people are in your department?

TM: I have a network administrator, Mike Holloway, who takes care of hardware and the network system infrastructure, and a technical assistant, David Brown, who does a lot of the support.

I also just added an instructional technologist, Katie Hopp - she used to be the technology teacher over at Hillcrest Elementary School, but I made a special request to move her to my team as an instructional technologist, so we can provide support

But it's very interesting that it had to happen in a pandemic, right, in a crisis. Is that what you call ironic? Is that something I really wanted?

MR: Are there networks of people in your position at all the other schools in the country?

TM: There's a whole plethora of online resources, blogs and everything. But to be honest, the big guns – Google and Microsoft and Zoom - they've really upped their game. Those are the resources we've really been dependent on.... It's amazing

see **THE TECH** page A6

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Deals Near With Amherst, Wendell On Water, Police

By GEORGE BRACE

At their meeting Tuesday night, the Leverett selectboard moved forward on the Teawaddle Hill Road water line project, heard a report on the Wendell joint policing project, and appointed a member of the town social justice committee to the police hiring committee. The board also rejected a preliminary proposal from the Union 28 school district to allow teachers to bring their own, non-district-student children into work with them.

Amherst's recent approval of Leverett's proposal to construct a water line connecting Leverett

residents dealing with contaminated wells to Amherst town water cleared the way for Leverett to authorize a final design study by the engineering firm Tata and Howard, which had been on hold. The board approved the cost of the study, which had risen to \$12,500 from an original \$11,000 estimate in March.

With the advice of town legal counsel Donna MacNicol, the board decided they could sign the inter-municipal agreement (IMA) authorizing the project with Amherst themselves, rather than send the matter to town meeting. Members

see LEVERETT page A8

The Montague Reporter

Editorial Group

Mike Jackson, Managing Editor Nina Rossi, Features Editor Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, Poetry Page Victoria Maillo, Spanish Page Beverly Ketch, Children's Page Lisa McLoughlin, Science Page Gloria Kegeles, Editorial Assistant

Production Group

Annie Levine, Business Manager Lyn Clark, Interim Distribution Manager Charlotte Kohlmann, Layout Assistant Christopher Carmody, Layout Assistant Sarah Brown-Anson, Podcast Producer Technical Administration About Face Computing

 Founded by

 Arthur Evans
 Harry Brandt
 David Detmold

 August 2002
 David Detmold
 David Detmold

Top Cheese

Imagine, if you will, that the United States of America has been divided into nearly two hundred sovereign nations. Bear with us...

Los Angeles and Orange Counties, home to 4% of the population of the former USA, are now a very powerful fortress state. The Anaheim Republic, as it is known, came out on top of two traumatic civil wars, and its powerful cartels helped the rest of us rebuild. Anaheim's military keeps outposts in 70 other microstates, and its businesses control farms and factories from coast to coast.

Anaheim maintains weaponry capable of laying waste to the rest of the continent, but it is a hegemon in decline. When it can't control alliances, it jealously sabotages them instead. For as long as anyone alive can remember, we all keep a nervous eye on Anaheim. Most of our local politicians seek its favor, though others know they can gain attention by tapping into our resentment of its glitz and haughty manner. We all know well enough to grit our teeth and flatter its spoiled tourist children.

Whoever rules the Anaheim Republic holds life-or-death power over the rest of us – but they are selected, periodically, by election. The Republic is split into fifty-four precincts, but only twelve of them matter: precinct captains deliver votes *en bloc* to the count, for a reason nobody can quite remember.

Burbank, Pasadena, El Segundo: Which way will these swing precincts fall this year? Two powerful business associations compete for their votes. Polling agents scamper back and forth. Malibu and Greater East Los Angeles are lined end to end with political billboards. American elections in 2020. With 4% of the planet's population, we cast an extremely outsized shadow.

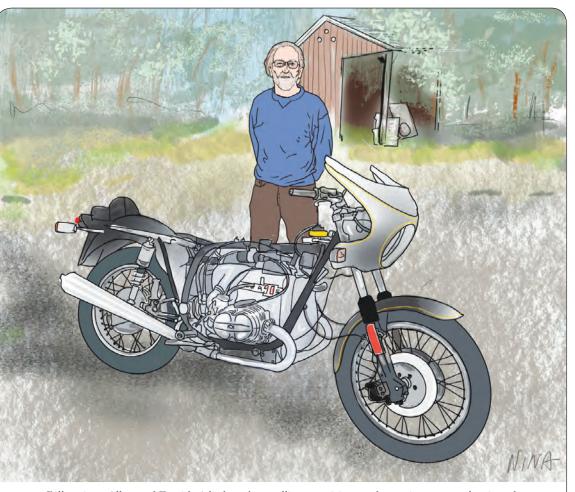
Industry and agriculture are largely global systems, and their impact on the Earth's life systems disregards national boundaries. The ice sheets all slide into one big wet sea, the methane accumulates in one atmosphere, and the hurricanes and wildfires bop about every year wreaking a tiny bit more death.

But there's no global governance, since that would be unspeakable tyranny, and no serious person would ever endorse such a thing. And there's really not much global coordination. Where there is, it's certainly not to advance policies anyone ever gets to *vote* on.

As a result, there's an information war, with the US federal government as the single biggest winner-take-all material prize available on the globe. Every four years it gets worse. Wired together ever more elaborately, we all clash and spew particles of argument skyward until the air chokes with the haze.

Reality itself begins to bend around the sheer weight of planetary power concentrated in this single scheduled event. Mailboxes unbolt themselves from the sidewalk and fling themselves onto the beds of sinister trucks. The Republicans are all secretly Russian, the Democrats Chinese. They reenact the Sino-Soviet split in an elaborately coded dance.

The forests of the West are burning, because the secret agents of this repressed but ever-present global government have paid us not to rake the debris out from



Gill natives Allan and David Adie have been selling, repairing, and restoring motorcycles since the early 1970s. The brothers have at various times specialized in BSA, Norton, BMW, and Triumph motorcycles, but these days they are a Moto Guzzi dealer. David poses with a '74 BMW R90S he is restoring for a customer in the backyard of their shop, AJ Cycle, located on Route 2 in Gill.

Letters to the Editors

State Must Hear Tree Science Now

September 16 was the court date for 29 plaintiffs from the Wendell State Forest Alliance (WSFA) to defend their right to be heard in court. Attorney General member Kendra Kinscherf had refiled her motion to dismiss the case against the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR's) logging of our public forests. The plaintiffs believe there is a very strong, and critically important, case against DCR's commercial logging practices in our state forests. WSFA members passionately requested that the court reject the motion to dismiss.

We are currently experiencing a dire state of climate emergency. There is no time left for our state agencies and government to take time to take immediate action to reverse the damage that wreaks havoc for life on our planet. We need to dramatically convert from fossil and biomass to true renewable energy forms like wind and solar, and use less energy. We need our local, state and national governments to re-examine the status quo, reversing damaging policies corrupted by private interests.

When information provided by concerned citizens about hazardous behaviors and policies are ignored by the very agencies we depend on to review and hopefully correct them, citizens need to be able to present their case

to a fair and impartial court. It is a travesty for democracy when the Attorney General's office hampers this effort by presenting a motion to dismiss such a critical case.

Independent scientists have reported that trees, especially older trees, and their soils in naturally grown forests are our best, most efficient, and most effective solutions to sequester carbon and reverse climate change. Citizens have been bringing this information to DCR and other state agencies for years now, to no avail. They continue to commercially log our state-owned forests. Unless changes are made, life on our planet is at stake.

We can no longer stand for the status quo while the future for our children, grandchildren, and future generations lies in irresponsible and misguided, misinformed and biased decisions of power brokers and elected officials. Citizens need to get involved and demand to have health, life, and climate become a top priority in the policies and decisions made. It is also unconscionable for a recommendation to be made to dismiss the case, and thereby bury the very information that deserves to be heard and weighed upon.

> Miriam Kurland Goshen

And the rest of us poor losers can only watch, numb, hoping for a good outcome.

Actually, we don't just watch. In this completely tiresome thought-experiment future we have a functioning Internet. We can talk all the time with Anaheim people, even pretend to be them online. There are 24 of us for every one of them, and when it comes to the swing precinct weirdos, the odds are even better: for every one of them, there are 65 of us who can't cast a ballot in the A.R., but have a keen stake in the process. Since we can't vote, aren't we at least tempted to poke around in the fishbowl with the few tools we have?

What we are describing, of course, is the nature and motivation of "foreign influence" on between the trees. Black-clad antifascists, the *real* fascists, are sneaking around from town to town starting the fires with their riot weaponry in an effort to dupe our impressionable grandchildren into believing in climate change.

The nearer Election Day draws, the more obvious it becomes that the Chinese state unleashed this alleged novel coronavirus – a cunningly designed biological weapon no more harmful than a seasonal flu – in a last-ditch effort to defend a global cabal of pedophiles and critical race theory consultants from mass arrest by the West's last true band of heroes, who are only by *sheer coincidence* all heirs to pyramid-scheme fortunes.

Whatever happens in November, just remember that this is the best possible system, it has malfunctioned purely by accident, and the first step toward fixing it is to make the right man king of the Earth.

Please Stop All This Communism

Remember the tariffs? Radio: The Republicans are spending hours every night talking about China, but not a word about those tariffs. What changed? Doesn't Trump still have lots of trademarks, issued by Communist China, ready to use in Communist China? How many trademarks does Ivanka Trump have? Have her shipments from China been exempted from tariffs?

Election: Tariffs >> Silence! Socialism? Late-night Republicans love socialism when big business is on the dole, but hate giving one cent to the rest of us Americans! Do you remember the ten-year, trillion-dollar tax break all those rich socialist US businessmen got after Trump took office? Since COVID, those rich businessmen got millions more! Those rich socialist US businessmen find every loophole, and never pay taxes. Isn't that socialism for rich Americans? Socialism for the rich, but nothing for us, even though *we pay their share of taxes, and our own, too!*

Don't you agree that any business in the United States which received that tax break, or gets direct subsidies or lower taxes, should move out of Communist countries? Under Communist rule there is no free speech, no freedom on the internet, so Google and other tech companies need to get out from under Communist rule. I've never heard those Republican radio men telling American businesses to protect their companies by moving back to America, or relocating to a non-Communist country. Employ Americans: to make all campaign materials, hats, flags, clothing. Make everything in America!

Why is your medicine made in a Communist country? Check labels for "Distributed by," but without a country of origin! Ask your doctor: where is your medicine made? If your medicine was made here, it should proudly claim *Made in America*.

Why are American companies working with Communists and Communist governments? No freedom of the press, no freedom of speech! Check labels. Consider buying articles made in the USA, or made in non-Communist countries. Employ Americans!

> M. Michie Russell Colrain

"Make America Great Again"!

Published weekly on Thursdays.

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

PHONE: (413) 863-8666

Please note new email addresses: editor@montaguereporter.org features@montaguereporter.org ads@montaguereporter.org bills@montaguereporter.org circulation@montaguereporter.org poetry@montaguereporter.org subscriptions@montaguereporter.org

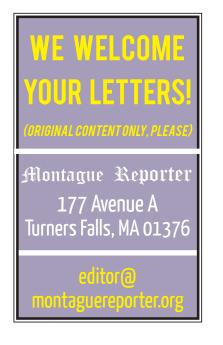
Send address changes to: The Montague Reporter 177 Avenue A Turners Falls, MA 01376

Advertising and copy deadline is **MONDAY at NOON.**

This newspaper shall not be liable for errors in advertisements, but will print without charge that part of the advertisement in which an error occurred. The publishers reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason and to alter copy or graphics to conform to standards of the newspaper, such as they are.

Annual Subscription Rate:

\$30 for walking subscriptions; \$40 for driving route subscriptions; \$60 for mailed subscriptions. Call us or contact subscriptions@montaguereporter.org with any questions.



Sign Me Up!	
\$20 { 8 months (31 issues) for our walking routes 6 months (23 issues) for our driving routes 4 months (15 issues) for mailed subscriptions	
The Alontague Reporter 177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376	
Name:	
Address: State: Zip: Town: State: Zip: Email (optional):	



By NINA ROSSI

The Nolumbeka Project presents "We Are the Story, We Are the Land" this Saturday, September 19 at 2 p.m., part of their *River Stories* series. You are invited to join Larry Spotted Crow Mann, Mixashawn, Rhonda Anderson and Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines, Jr. for what is described as "an engaging, thoughtful, musical and uplifting presentation that will focus on the spiritual, cultural and social significance of place and the art of story of the Indigenous peoples of the Northeast."

Zoom attendance is limited to 100 people, but the event will also be livestreamed on Nolumbeka's Facebook page. The Zoom link may be found at *www.nolumbekaproject.org*.

A free shredding event will be offered at the Franklin First Credit Union on Newton Street in Greenfield this Saturday, September 19 from 9 a.m. to noon. Any individual in Franklin County – but no businesses – may bring up to two full grocery bags of sensitive papers for shredding. This is a drive-up and drop-off event: remain in your car, wear a mask, and have the materials accessible in the trunk or cargo area. Leave your pets at home, please.

Nova Motorcycles is hosting a **Nice. Ice Social** this Saturday, September 19 from 1 to 5 p.m. Stop by for some shaved ice and cold brew coffee, and close out the summer with family and friends, at the old Williams Garage, 147 Second

Street in Turners Falls.

Stop in to the LAVA Center, 324 Main Street in Greenfield on Saturdays in September and October for their **free local art happening**, **Saturday Salon**. Listen to music pre-recorded by Peace & Rhythm, Inc. and pose in a "photo booth" set up by Em Langevin. Other popup art vendors will be there, and the LAVA gallery space is open between 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Masks, social distancing, and hand sanitizing are required.

The public is invited to observe sunrise and sunset live – but online – on the day of the **autumnal equinox** among the standing stones of the UMass-Amherst Sunwheel, next Tuesday, September 22 at 6:30 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. Weather permitting, the sun will be observed as it rises and sets over the Sunwheel's eastern and western standing stones.

UMass-Amherst astronomer Stephen Schneider plans to hold the two events to mark the change of seasons, when days and nights are nearly equal in length around the world. Schneider will discuss the astronomical cause of the sun's changing position, and explain the design and history of the Sunwheel and how it marks the changing positions of the sun and moon.

Details for joining will be posted on the Astronomy Department's website at *www.astro.umass.edu*, and the Sunwheel website at *www. umass.edu/sunwheel*, the day before the event. In case you missed the press release in last week's paper, the Leverett Village Co-op is hosting a fundraiser called the **Rattlesnake Gutter Festival**. Streaming live from the Co-op next Friday, September 25, this telethon for the grocery store and café features a silent auction, local entertainment, virtual tours, and a membership drive. All proceeds will go towards the Coop's revitalization. The organization received a challenge to match a pledge of \$7,500, so they hope to raise at least that much.

The telethon will feature performances by the Wildcat O'Halloran, the Wendell Warriors, Boys of the Landfill, Laura Botkin, and the Crescent Dancers belly dance troupe. Special guests will join throughout the day, including filmmaker Steve Alves and Dean from Dean's Beans. Find links at *www.leverettcoop.com*.

Have you been enjoying the rivers of Western Mass? Consider helping the Connecticut River Conservancy in their **month-long Source to Sea cleanup** along the Connecticut River.

You may register on their website to find – or start – a group cleanup of trash from along the shoreline of the area's largest waterway, or tell them about a trouble spot that needs attention if you can't clean it up yourself. Use *#riverwitness* to post photos of your river experiences.

On a related note, the Art Garden in Shelburne Falls is giving away **cardboard fish cutouts** (and tempera paint, if needed) for people to decorate at home. Write to *csartgarden@gmail.com* to arrange pickup.

Jane Wegscheider writes, "In these stressful times, it is easy to forget how essential creative play is for all of us. And even though the Art Garden's studio is currently not open due to the pandemic, we hope to be able to support your creativity and nurture your spirits with Art Garden To-Go prompts and supplies." She also suggests sharing photos of the completed fish online using *#riverwitness*.

The Augusta Savage Gallery at UMass is hosting a digital performance series called *Revival/50* in honor of their 50th anniversary this year. Check out performances by Kamaya Diggs, Pamela Means, Terre Parker, Criolla Clasico, Jin Hi Kim, and more when they premiere on YouTube, Fridays at 4 p.m., through links on *fac.umass.edu*.

In conjunction with the gallery's 2020 theme of "Healing Bodies," the featured artists will also speak about their process, and about well-ness. Their performances will each remain available for one week.

It was exciting to think that the **Montague Soap Box Derby** was coming back to life, but we got the word that the derby is **cancelled for this year**. Let's keep hoping for another run down that hill in 2021.

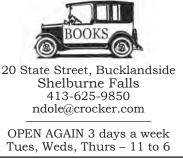
Remember the spectacular headover-heels crash maneuver that John Landino walked away from after his cape got wound up in the wheels of his outrageously decorated Dada cart? I think that was the first year of the derby. It went on for a few more years, and it was a fun event with something for everyone.

Find a list of **Pick-Your-Own** orchards on the CISA website, *buylocalfood.org*. It's the perfect time of year for such an outing, whether alone or with friends and family. Bring us along with you and take some pictures – we don't get many *Montague Reporter on the Road* photos these days, and we miss seeing your faces. Maybe we can try *Montague Reporter in the Orchard* instead!

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.









Some Nicer News Pops Up For Once

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS - The global pandemic has brought uncertainty for small businesses everywhere, but even as some are closing their doors for good, at the end of Second Street a window is quietly opening. Nice. Snack Parlor - "it's like, 'Nice.,'" co-owner Marcy Gregoire explains of the extraneous period in the name – held a soft "pop-up" last Saturday afternoon, serving cones of shaved ice out of the side of the Nova Motorcycles garage, and plans to repeat the event Saturdays into the fall. "So. Much. Fun.," Gregoire, reached by phone this week, says when asked to reflect on last weekend's event. (These periods were spoken, but clearly in there.) "So. Much. Fun. More fun than we expected - there was actually a small line at a couple of points! We purposely did not tell people about this." Gregoire and her co-owner Kara Bennett served patrons shaved ice in nine flavors, ranging from classics like lemon-lime to such dentist's-chair exotica as bubblegum. This reporter tried the blueberry ice topped with sweet cream, a delightful treat that delivered brain freeze and a spiralling sense of late summer in the park.



Greenfield to prep the food, which means that in regulatory terms, "it's as if we are a food truck." A Plexiglass rectangle dangled down over most of the snack window last Saturday as the pair passed cone after cold

After a positive response last weekend, Nice. co-owners Kara Bennett (left) and Marcy Gregoire (right) plan to continue the Saturday events into the fall.

"We're really focused on getting healthy snacks," says Gregoire, a music and art teacher and children's music performer. The Nice. Snack window is located about 50 feet from Unity Skatepark, and will be the nearest spot by far for skaters and scooter kids seeking replenishment. Once in full-time operation, the focus will be on soups, salads, and sandwiches, as well as coffee and other hot and cold beverages.

Gregoire describes the parlor's interactions with Montague town hall thus far as "dreamlike – honestly, so easy. The town was so open." She and Bennett are renting kitchen time at Guiding Star Grange in cone through the slot remaining.

Gregoire says Nice. aims to make its own flavor syrups out of local, organic ingredients, though the organic bubblegum blend will probably always be special-ordered from out of town. This weekend the parlor will premiere a homemade strawberry syrup. The coffee, roasted by Esselon in Hadley, is sold iced or by the bag.

Cartographers and urban planners should make note that this little zone on the edge of Unity Park will now feature hot yoga, shaved ice, vintage motorcycles, and a world-class concrete skate park; a block away, a microbrew is also building out a pouring room. Come next spring, it might be a very nice place to take a break from the burgeoning apocalypse.

In the shorter term, though: on Saturday, from 1 to 5 p.m., Nice. will hold its second "social," this time featuring the aforementioned strawberry syrup as well as live music by Woody, who, according to Gregoire, is a really great singer and jams on guitar. 440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA 7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least) (413)367-9666

Amazing, Awesome

Employees!



- System 2000 (Energy Kinetics)
- Thermo Pride
- Weil-McLain
- Other Major Brands
- Expert Burner Service













Shop locally! Support Montague Reporter advertisers.





BRIDGE from page A1

Bridge is a scenic landmark and tourist attraction along Route 2 between Gill and Erving. Mass-DOT owns and maintains the bridge, which has a reputation as a location for suicide attempts.

Gill town administrator Ray Purington wrote an open letter to MassDOT in June on behalf of the Gill selectboard, pleading for urgent action. He said that in 2018, after many years of coaxing, MassDOT finally proposed the installation of a curved picket barrier beyond the existing railing and began a design process, but building funds have not been included in the state's Capital Investment Plan (CIP).

"The safety and security of this bridge is the most important transportation priority for our town," Purington wrote. "However, the work is slow and the timeline is uncertain, largely because there is no guarantee of construction funds since the project is not included in the CIP."

This year, as the state budget was upended by the COVID-19 pandemic, money expected to be allocated for the barrier design in the 2021 CIP was removed. Some estimates place the total project cost at \$3 million.

"Over the last several years the Town has worked to convey to our local elected officials and the administration at MassDOT how devastating the impact is to Erving and our neighboring communities each time our first responders have to stage a search and rescue in the Connecticut River, witness a suicide or prevent an attempt, and grieve with the family members of a lost individual," Erving town administrator Bryan Smith wrote in a May 28 letter to MassDOT. "The removal of this critically needed project from the CIP update is beyond disappointing."

On August 25, state senator Jo Comerford and state representative Susannah Whipps met with town officials and MassDOT representatives at the bridge to talk about the barrier installation project. Hamel was there, too, listening and learning about the funding delays.

"From the towns of Gill and Erving, and other public officials, I couldn't ask for better support or more cooperation," Hamel said. "The two town managers, both chiefs of police, and the fire chief are so on board to get this done, because it's their first responders that are at risk every time this happens."

Seeking Help

"The barriers are so important... because if there's an interception by a person or physical barrier like that, the percentage of those that try again is so low, it's remarkable," Hamel said. "If they're stopped in that moment, it gives them a chance to ground themselves again, and seek help."

Hamel's stepson's body was never found, despite his family searching the river with their own sonar-equipped boat for months after first responders called off the search. "If my husband had his way, he'd still be in the river every weekend," she said.

About one year after his death, Hamel joined a support group through the Samaritans' Worcester location, which helped her cope and connect with others experiencing tragic loss. Locally, the Greenfield Suicide Loss Support Group meets on the second Monday of every month, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., at Baystate Franklin Medical Center.

"Suicide grief is different," Hamel said. "There's so many unknowns. There's no mental preparation. Everyone has different levels of guilt, anger and a sense of, *why?* Why didn't they know how loved they were? Why didn't they know things could have worked out?"

According to a November 2017 study, there were an average of two suicide attempts and 1.5 deaths at the French King Bridge between 2009 and 2016. Since the coronavirus pandemic began in March, local police have been alerted to at least three possible attempts.

If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide, please reach out and speak to someone about it. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a hotline for individuals in crisis, or those looking to help someone else. To speak with a certified listener, call 1-800-273-8255. For text messaging, counselors behind the Crisis Text Line can be reached by texting 741741.

Clinical and Support Options, an acute social services and intervention network, also offers a general 24-hour crisis hotline for Franklin County residents, among other forms of support, at (413) 774-5411.

Last April a woman living in Colrain became the most recent suicide victim at the location. Follow-up investigations revealed that she had used Google to research the "French King Bridge" prior to going missing.

"Economic depression, mental depression, COVID fatigue, and other mental health issues are on the rise," Purington wrote in his letter. "While traffic-related infrastructure is still important, at this time a project involving suicide prevention barriers needs to be recognized, prioritized, and funded."

Participants in the October 10 demonstration are asked to stand on the roadside at either end of the bridge – not on the bridge – and make signs with one of four or five predetermined messages. Hamel is posting updates for the event, including meetings times, parking, and transportation, on the "French King Bridge Suicide Prevention Barrier Project" page on Facebook.

"It's not a protest – that's not what's going on," Hamel said. "We don't want people on the bridge with signs, that's dangerous."

"If I can stop it from happening to someone else in this place," she added, "I'll

have felt that at least I have done what I could to help some other mother."



Upgrading Technology; Reflecting On History

By JERRI HIGGINS

Fire chief Gene Beaubien and deputy fire chief William Kimball joined Monday night's Gill selectboard meeting to review switching Gill from the current, outdated, county emergency services radio system to the state's Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS). The selectboard also discussed at-home "learning pods," the purchase of new tax collection software, and plans for a historical walking trail and native herb garden.

The selectboard authorized town administrator Ray Purington to sign a memorandum of agreement being on through FRCOG "is much cheaper than the county trying to fund a replacement for an obsolete radio system."

Deputy chief Kimball agreed, saying that the grant will cover \$2,280 per radio unit, but "does not cover the install, extra batteries, chargers, or the microphone." "It is a large hit, in a lump sum, for the towns," he said, adding that the state fees for the radios "are a fraction of the price of what it would be without this grant."

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker said he thought the agreement was the town's best option, but worried about how the town will cover the fees in the future. to VADAR systems, and all training, will happen remotely, with video and user guides available online.

The board agreed to add cloud storage security at an extra cost of \$1,590 per year, which Purington said is level-funded for the next five years, and has "almost no net impact" over Gill's current software, which "currently goes up 4% every year" in price.

History in the Making

Historical commission member Lynn Stowe Tomb called into the meeting to request space for "a smallish sign in a couple of places" on a proposed walking trail in Captain Turner monument located on state-owned land next to Riverside, "is supportive of almost any direction that people want to go in" regarding plans toward addressing a Native American point of view on or near the current monument.

Other Business

Selectboard chair Randy Crochier said that recent guidance from the state Early Education and Care department advises municipalities that they will be responsible for all safety aspects of any "learning enrichment centers," colloquially termed "learning pods," not run by an already-licensed childcare provider. Crochier



Protect Your Future

Since 1891

25 Millers Falls Road Turners Falls, MA 01376 tel: 413-863-4331 www.pzinc.com

renexc@gmail.com

Douglas Edson 413.863.4462

cell 413.834.2201

tween Gill and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FR-COG), with an October 15 deadline, to help offset the cost of joining CoMIRS, the 800-MHz statewide emergency services radio system. CoMIRS will eventually replace the 400-MHz system currently used by police, fire, and other emergency services in Franklin County.

"The key part of the agreement," said Purington, "is that FRCOG will collect the user fees – when it comes time to have user fees for the new system – and they will be the sole point of contact to CoMIRS."

Under the agreement, FRCOG will own and maintain the equipment until the town's current system is fully decommissioned, which Beaubien said he thinks will not be complete for another few years. Purington said he is hoping for the grant to be allotted in December, and the system "brought online by early 2021."

While towns can opt out of the agreement with FRCOG and upgrade to the new system on their own, Purington said that sign-

Exciting New Tax Software

VADAR systems, a Massachusetts based company, was the only respondent to a request for quotes sent out by Purington for new tax-collection software. The selectboard awarded the company \$25,124, covered by a Community Compact Information Technology grant the town received in January.

"Fortunately, VADAR systems is the company that has the software we want to install," Purington said.

"This originally started because we were looking for a software that would bridge with the assessors easier," said Gill tax collector Thomas Hodak, "as well as [with] the new ATLAS program that the Registry of Motor Vehicles has instituted."

Hodak said that data entry redundancy will be "kept at a minimum" using VADAR's system, giving an example of a motor vehicle bill that currently "takes me 16 keystrokes per bill in order to complete the posting, down to five keystrokes." Hodak told the board that migrating Riverside.

Tomb has been meeting with Suzanne LoManto, assistant planner of Montague's planning and conservation department, on getting a technology grant to set up an interactive walking trail in Montague and Gill. Tomb said each sign would have a small amount of information as well as a QR code or address directing walkers to a website developed by LoManto's department, where they could learn more information. She suggested the Riverside municipal building as one potential space for a sign.

The commission is discussing another project, a medicinal native herb garden, in conjunction with the Nolumbeka Project, a local Native American educational organization. Tomb said a small space behind the elementary school could be a good placement for the herb garden, and that she plans to apply for a grant to fence off the garden area.

Tomb also told the board that Timothy Neumann, executive director of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, which owns the said the new guidance has not yet been an issue for Gill, and the selectboard will address it as needed.

The board approved the town's updated hazard mitigation plan, authorized Purington to sign contracts from the recent Green Communities grant award – \$45,900 toward two air-source heat pumps at the town hall and \$7,500 toward an electric vehicle charging station – and approved him to sign a sitehost agreement with Eversource for the charging station's "makeready" work.

The board accepted a \$7,904.13 quote from Advanced Energy for the dual-head electric vehicle charger, along with a five-year, \$658 per year, cloud data plan for the station. The town will be able to monitor the number of vehicles using the station, and the day, time, and length of charging. If a fee for charging is eventually established, the town will be able to use the platform to bill the drivers.

A flu clinic will be held at the Gill Elementary School on Saturday, October 24, from 10 a.m. to noon.



WWW.RENBUILD.NET • PO BOX 272, TURNERS FALLS, MA 01376

BRIAN MCCUE, PRESIDENT 240 GREENFIELD ROAD • MONTAGUE, MA 01351 PHONE & FAX: 413-367-9896 • RENAISSANCEPAINTINGCOMPANY.COM

Radio, Sludge, Overtime, and More In 4-Hour Meeting

By KATIE NOLAN

The current Franklin County Emergency Communication System (FCECS) used by the region's fire and police departments "has been limping along for years," town administrator Bryan Smith told the Erving selectboard Monday night. However, he said, at the end of last week, the town was told to "hurry up – move!" to a new system.

Fire chief Philip Wonkka said the state has been considering an upgrade to the emergency communication system "for the last three to five years," but Franklin County towns can now be included in a statewide system.

According to information on the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) website, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Intercommunication Radio Migration System (CoMIRS) has been available in the eastern part of the state for a while, but infrastructure needed to be upgraded before rural western towns could join.

Towns will be able to purchase new radios and other equipment needed to join CoMIRS with grant funding from the state Executive Office of Technical Services and Security (EOTSS), but will be responsible for the cost of installation and accessories. Towns must sign a memorandum of understanding with FRCOG by October 15, and the agency will apply for a state grant and distribute it to the individual towns, likely in December.

Wonkka told the board that he estimated the remaining cost to Erving would be \$75,000.

Special Town Meeting

The selectboard, finance committee, and capital improvement committee approved a five-article warrant for a special town meeting on Saturday, October 3, including transferring \$75,000 from capital stabilization for the CoMIRS expense.

The most consequential fiscal article authorizes the town to borrow up to \$17 million to fund a sludge dryer at POTW#2, the wastewater treatment plant in Erving Center owned by the town and operated by ERSECO, a subsidiary of Erving Industries. The description of the article indicates that Erving Industries will be responsible for repaying the loan.

Article 4 would move the \$544,029 library construction grant payment from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners into the town's general stabilization fund. Other articles include \$1,354 in bills from the previous fiscal year, and authorizing money from the now-obsolete dog fund to be spent on the library.

The meeting will be held outdoors at Erving Elementary School, starting at 9 a.m.

Police Overtime, Chief Search

Acting police chief Robert Holst informed the selectboard that, with a reduced number of staff because former chief Christopher Blair is on leave, department overtime expenses are high. He said there is no immediate shortage in the overtime budget, but wanted to keep the board informed.

The board and fin com decided to monitor the expense and consid-

er increasing the police overtime for elected positions with stipends, budget at a spring special town meeting, if necessary. for employees. The proposed stipends

The board asked Bryan Smith to draft a scope of work for a consultant to help the town with its search for a new police chief. Once the scope of work is developed, the town will invite firms to bid on conducting the search.

French King Bridge

Stacey Hamel spoke to the board about an October 10 "stand-out" demonstration she has organized to call for state funding for suicide prevention barriers on the French King Bridge. (*See article, page A1.*)

Hamel said she expected between 30 and 100 people, and that the demonstrators would not assemble on the bridge or on Route 2, and would park their cars west of the bridge.

"We appreciate your advocacy," selectboard chair Jacob Smith told Hamel.

"I plan to be part of the group on Saturday," said member William Bembury.

Bryan Smith said that the state Department of Transportation planned to hold a "20% design" hearing this fall, at a date to be announced, for soliciting public comment about the project.

Other Business

The board accepted the resignation of Jacqueline Boyden from the planning board, where she has served for 18 years. "It's time for me to move on and explore other interests in my life," Boyden wrote in her resignation letter.

The board reviewed draft policies

2ND FRANKLIN from page A1

policy initiatives, including the proposal for an Office of Rural Policy which is now before the legislature; infrastructure investments in the region, particularly broadband; and tweaking the state education formula to be more favorable to regional school districts with declining enrollments.

Both candidates also have somewhat similar biographies, being born into multi-generational Athol families and attending the town's high school. Whipps has helped direct her family business, which designs equipment for water and wastewater systems. She served on the Athol selectboard before winning her current House seat in 2014. LaRose, after a brief stint in college, joined the army and was stationed for four years in Texas. He has also earned a masters degree in public administration from Cornell. has taken has been advocacy of restrictions on logging in state forests. Partially in response to protests in the town of Wendell, she sponsored a bill that would eliminated logging on state land, but that measure was set aside in committee in favor of one that would create a state commission to investigate forestry issues.

Although she initially supported that new bill, Whipps said that she and other advocates allowed it to die in committee because the proposed commission did not include a broad enough range of stakeholders. She plans to introduce new legislation on the issue during the next session, but has not decided what form it will take.

LaRose stated that he considers himself a "moder-

and for educational incentives for employees. The proposed stipends, would be \$4,500 per year for selectboard members, \$4,000 for assessors, \$2,500 for the tree warden, \$250 for the moderator, and \$1,000 per year for other elected positions. Employees who "increase their job worth" with educational programs would be eligible for an increase.

The board decided to collect more information, and made no decision on either policy.

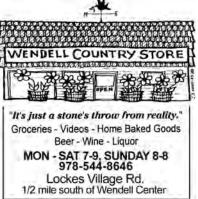
The board approved an additional \$4,447 for nursing services from FR-COG, to be used for contact tracing.

The board, fin com, and capital planning committee reviewed guidance for department heads completing FY'22 budget and capital requests, and the selectboard reviewed a draft of an informational flyer about curbside trash collection.

The meeting started at 6:30 p.m. After the joint session with the fin com and capital planning ended, Bembury checked the time and was surprised to find it was already 9:30 p.m. "I'm going to get my pillow," commented selectboard member Peter Sanders. The board continued the meeting, however, until the agenda was completed at 10:30 p.m.



Eat In or Take Out! BURRITOS, BOWLS, SOFT TACOS, QUESADILLAS **Now Serving** BBC Steel Rail (413) 772-2531 10 Fiske Ave - downtown Greenfield Hours: Mon - Sat 11:30 am - 9 pm



Wendell Town Meeting Includes Cannabis Bylaw

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard scheduled an outdoor special town meeting for 9 a.m. next Saturday, September 26, with a rain date of Sunday, September 27 at 10 a.m. The warrant is posted at the town's only official posting site, the front entrance to the town office building, but it can also be found on the town website.

The board held a short, last-minute meeting via Zoom on Thursday, September 10 to work out the details in time to post the warrant two weeks before the town meeting.

personal property exempt from excise tax from \$10,000 to \$5,000.

Article 12 would authorize the selectboard to acquire easements for the town to allow the construction of new dry hydrants at McAvoy Pond and next to Farley Road, west of Kemsley Academy. These are needed to replace the dry hydrant next to Wendell Depot Road, which gets water from Bowens Pond. The dam that holds Bowens Pond is slated to be removed by the state office of dam safety.

Articles 14 and 15 offer a choice between an elected or an appointed Municipal Light Plant (MLP) for the operation phase of Wendell's fiber-optic network. Article 16 is a five-page proposed bylaw for adult-use recreational marijuana facilities. The first page is taken up with definitions. If passed, the bylaw would require setbacks and screening, and an estimate of water use, including a plan for recovery of runoff, and a certified hydrologist to determine what aquifer any water used by the facility would come from. Lighting, including security lighting, must be dark-sky certified, and at least half of any electricity used must be generated on site, "where feasible." Odors may only be mitigated by plants in a buffer zone, and the facility would be required to provide the town with the names and contact information of all owners and people authorized to be on the site. The planning board or zoning board of appeals would be the special permit-granting authority, and would be allowed to waive or reduce provisions of the bylaw in special situations.

At the same time, important differences emerged in the candidates' interviews with the *Reporter*.

Whipps stressed her experience navigating the politics at the State House, and the connections she has made on Beacon Hill. "There was a learning curve," she said. "But I had served on the selectboard, so I had a grasp on community service." Whipps noted that when she came into the legislature there were a number of members from the region, like Stan Rosenberg and Steve Kulik, with years of experience that she learned from. "Now, it's a younger delegation," she told the *Reporter*. "But that is good, too. It's all about relationships."

Whipps currently serves on committees dealing with mental health, labor and workforce development, revenue, and the judiciary. She has sponsored bills to reform local police policies, limit evictions and foreclosures during the COVID-19 emergency, and to provide hazard pay for essential workers during the pandemic.

She linked the need for greater infrastructure development, particularly broadband service, to the goal of attracting more young residents to the region. She noted that the aging population in communities in her district had led to declining school enrollments, which threaten the viability of regional districts.

One of the more controversial positions Whipps

ate Democrat," stressing his military service. Noting that the last time a large number of veterans served in legislatures and Congress was also a time of bipartisanship, he pointed to the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps as a model for what he called a "Massachusetts Service Corps."

LaRose calls for a greater focus on rural broadband, tweaking the state education formula to include a "rural factor," and increasing state payments to local communities for state-owned land (called "payments in lieu of taxes"). He pointed to the "brain drain" in rural districts, and said COVID-19 "has exposed the policy gaps" in the state.

LaRose called Whipps "a lovely person, and I respect anyone who gets into the arena." But he also said that she was "not strong on articulating a vision for the district.... She needs to lay it out."

LaRose has been endorsed by a number of organizations, including a group called "New Politics" which a campaign press release calls "a national organization that aims to revitalize American democracy by recruiting, developing and electing servant leaders that put community and country over self." His Facebook page includes a video of the candidate jogging, presumably at a facility in his district, while urging viewers to volunteer to raise funds for winter clothing for needy children.

A debate between Whipps and LaRose is currently planned for Tuesday, October 13. Articles 1 through 5 would authorize a total of \$2,566.96 to pay bills from prior years for the animal inspector, the fire department, Crocker Communications, and the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO).

Article 6 would take \$10,000 from stabilization to pay Wendell's share of repairs to the McAvoy Pond dam spillway, which were completed in early September.

Article 7 would amend the annual town meeting appropriation by adding \$10,000 for legal fees.

Article 8 would add \$13,409 to the Mahar school assessment, and Article 9 would add \$695 to the debt service for the Mahar building renovation. Article 13 would raise and appropriate \$500 for upgrades to the veterans' memorial. The total increase in spending over what the town authorized in June would be \$37,170.96.

Article 10 would allow an exemption from personal property tax for farm equipment, and Article 11 would drop the amount of



THE TECH from page A1

what kind of a global village has been opened to us.

Locally, all the tech directors in the area met every week remotely when we started doing this. Right now we can't, because it's too crazy for all of us.

MR: What were the big challenges that happened when school opened on Monday? I saw some chatter online about some issues with connectivity.

TM: There seems to have been a connectivity issue at our buildings. The buildings are actually empty – only administrators were there, and our support team. The beauty of all this is, because it's remote, the teachers and families and students were not affected; the issue was only within our infrastructure.

But then, of course, once the news was "technology's going down, technology's going down" to me, that was a harrowing experience, because it was my responsibility. I had to deal with that one. Otherwise our support was running, because everybody was pretty much in remote, and I had my own ways to deal with that problem.

And the first day of school meant that [students and teachers] had to go onto Google, and do a Google Meet; I believe that there was a certain problem with some of the extensions in Google. I think it was because of the load that was put on Google-I'm talking about an international load!

I'm confident in the ability of our teachers. We had a really good ten days [of training], and three days of technology workshops, getting them into the groove of remote teaching and using the tools that we have. Staff, I really felt, was smart.

Based on our support tickets granted, I was on emails to 12:30 in the evening – but it was high-level stuff, my support tickets were not filled with "I can't connect." I'm in reflection right now; I'm quite impressed I wasn't answering any little questions.

MR: How widely are Google Classroom and Google Meet being adopted right now? Are those the standard across the country?

TM: It seems to be - you'll always have Zoom and GoToMeeting and LogMeIn for video conferencing, but the concept about Google being the application is because of

TM: Early on – somewhere in April or May - I was given the directive by the former superintendent to go ahead and purchase as many Chromebooks as I could. That was a difficult task, in that I was moving against schools like Worcester that were buying 3,500 of them, and here I was, buying just enough to see us through. It was basically to speed up the 1:1 Chromebook program that we started three years ago.

I was able to purchase a number of them early on, which was key, because soon enough the national shortage happened: Dell and Lenovo, the big guns in this business, had problems with their production because there was a really high demand. We were one of the lucky schools that actually got ourselves a delivery of Chromebooks.

They get processed, and labeled, and prepared for all our students. We also had a fleet of them available, that had already been in school, so I had to gather all those. In the end, we were able to produce a 1:1 for our middle school and high school, but we had difficulty in doing a 1:1 for our elementary schools.

> "As much as remote learning is awesome, we're a school, we're part of a community... **Our kids depend** on each other for socialization."

At a certain point, I was thinking: are my numbers right or wrong? We had to make a call to our community, and say "Look, you know what, we really want to provide for everybody. Who really needs it?" and give them priority.

Some parents got back to us and said, "You know what? I don't need it - I already have a Chromebook." One parent got back to us and said, "This works for me, I only need [mine] in the evening, my child can use it." So they returned some, and some actually donated.

The only *snafu* that we had was that some parents showed up, and we said "oops, we don't have one for you." Over the weekend, therefore, [superintendent] Brian [Beck] had to go out to deliver to some of those families. We had to move fast, again, and try to process more. So right now the national shortage has got my hands tied. I do have my collection of sparkles, but a lot of moments that are really frustrating.

this with the Chromebook, because it's so much easier to manage. It's also because of efficiency: if it goes down, we're already prepared and experienced in being able to repair it.

If I had a fleet that was a variety, it would be very hard to support. It would also be hard for the teachers to support – if the teachers are in remote and they're trying to figure out what's wrong, they already know it's a Chromebook from school, a they know how to answer that.

MR: If readers of ours happen to have one of these lying around at home, would it be helpful if they donated it, and you can refurbish and repurpose it?

TM: At a certain level, yes, any kind of Chromebook is very useful for us. Later on we'll actually make a shout out for laptops to refurbish.

But at this moment, the waters we're sailing on are steady. It was a real roller coaster, the last two days before the weekend.

MR: What are teachers using to log in from their homes?

TM: They have school-issued laptops. Two years before I came on, they decided to go mobile for all our teachers - no desktops. I was able to renew all that in the last five years, so they're all very mobile.

MR: As someone who's been working in this field for so long and has seen some changes, do you think that what we're seeing right now -asignificant amount of our public education becoming directly dependent on a small handful of private companies - is going to lead to some shift in how they're regulated, or owned, or viewed by the public?

TM: Isn't it interesting – isn't that what happened when internet was the thing, with Comcast and all these big broadband providers?

To me, especially with technology, my thinking is that it's just going to explode to more resources. Right now Google is the big giant, and we are dependent on it, and that's kind of scary, right? But I have no doubt that this will cause us to have more resources, rather than just these big corporations - that competition, capitalist competition, will prevail. Because it brings out creativity.

I seriously believe that: if nothing else, this whole thing brought creativity into the technology field. Suddenly we're thinking about technology in a different way.... Even for me, I had to get myself out of what used to be, and just really think creatively. My trust in technology is there, in that it will allow us to step out of - Google's not going to stay the biggest giant there is.

AT-HOME from page A1

supporting them at home, and teachers are all encouraged to contact us at editor@montaguereporter.org to share their own experiences and perspectives. This week's edition features an interview with Tina Mahaney, the district's director of information technology, for a look at the software, hardware, and behind-the-scenes tech work supporting learning from home.

Reached by phone on Wednesday, superintendent Brian Beck, who started on the job this summer, was effusive in his praise for staff and parents alike in their efforts to prepare for the first day of school.

According to Beck and Mahaney, a last-minute shortage in tablet computers prompted the district to put a call out for donated devices late last week. "Within three hours of sending that out," said Beck, "we were getting devices added to that inventory... The community was very generous!" Over the weekend, the superintendent delivered computers and other supplies himself to a number of families that had been unable to pick them up.

Beck said that requests for meals from the food service department have also increased, and that staff and volunteers are working on a plan to provide families with food without disrupting learning time. "Our food service personnel have done an incredible job of keeping this community fed," Beck said.

The main concern from parents, he said, has been "the challenge that they face in trying to work from home, or work out childcare.... It's certainly very challenging for families."

The district's pandemic response advisory group is looking into ways to connect families directly with each other, and with advice about safely forming learning "pods." The schools are limited, for legal reasons, in what they can do to directly support

MR: How much does that cost? TM: That was like a \$24 a li-

cense. And that's the sale price, which ended in July, which I got.

MR: Is that per device?

TM: Per license – per [full-time equivalent] employee. Per teacher.

I had a conversation with the Department of Education - this parents coordinating care.

Statewide, Beck said, though the majority of districts announced that they would be starting out with a "hybrid" model, many have delayed that, and only about a third have begun hosting in-person classes. Superintendents have been meeting with state education commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley. On Wednesday, Beck said, some were asking the state about support for parents forming learning groups. "They're giving advisories and recommendations," he said, "but not offering any money, or real support, from the state level."

Standardized testing is another open question. SAT and ACT tests will not be held this year, and it is unclear what that means for college admissions. However, the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is still planning on administering Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests this year.

"The commissioner did indicate that there's still discussion about that," Beck reported. "They have to make a decision relatively soon, because the November retest is coming up." Parents who wish to give the state feedback on this topic, he added, can get in touch with their local state legislators, or contact the offices of commissioner Riley and governor Charlie Baker directly.

"The reality of the circumstance is that we recognize that it is incredibly challenging for families," the superintendent acknowledged. "On the other side, we've tried our best to assure them that the quality of the remote learning experience - whether we're in fully remote or hybrid – is going to be much more robust than it was in the spring."

Wednesday was a planned early release day, and this week principals announced that every Wednesday will now be a half day at the district's elementary schools.

just released, but it's very much an infrastructure and networking grant, and we're pretty much good on that, because of a grant we had three years ago to build our infrastructure.

MR: Are there other key people we should be having conversations like this with? It's awesome to understand how this is all working.

the concept of a paperless environment, which is basically what we need right now: a contactless, paperless environment....

For early childhood, we actually had another software called See-Saw, which is more of a kid-friendly kind of delivery method; we have our PlusPortals, which are student and parent portals, and Teacher Gradebook, which integrates with Google Classrooms. So basically we have three softwares - we've actually fully created a learning management software.

There are learning management softwares out there, like Blackboard and Schoology, but they're really huge and expensive. But this one here is something that our teachers have been trained on, and are more familiar with, so we stuck with this build. And it works - for me, based upon spring's remote learning and the experiences of our teachers – it's there, and it's workable.

MR: Tell me about the Chromebook distribution and rollout leading up to this week.

MR: How is a Chromebook a student gets from the school different than a typical tablet a consum*er would buy for their home use?*

TM: With the Chromebooks, it's managed, which means that with GMRSD owning it, we have some security features set up on it. That's one essential piece: when the student logs in, we're assured that they're filtered and safe. Secondly, we can follow up on where it is.

And third, it's easy for them to use: we've set it up so that when they turn it on - we're trying to figure this out right now, but when they turn it on, it actually goes straight to where it needs to go, so parents are not struggling with figuring out how to make it work.

Those are some of the important reasons we really wanted to do

MR: It's hard to think of such normally slow-moving institutions as school districts making the jump to adopting an entire suite from a *new competitor!*

TM: That's true – there's always that. It's so sad, because it always comes down to budgets. And I'm going put pressure on Google on this one: believe it or not, Google Meet, the video conferencing part of Google, was actually a paid service. When the crisis hit, they opened it for free to all educational systems. Same with Zoom – they took out the 40-minute limit.

But you know what? On September 30, Google is going to close it down - you have to purchase a license. So the district was forced to purchase licenses, because we need that service.

very close friend of the Commissioner had asked for a taskforce to be created, and I was invited to join in. We've already had two or three meetings. and I said to them, "Look, here's my biggest concern..."

Chromebook's device shortage was the biggest concern, of course, but here I was sitting on like 350 new ones that got delivered.

But I said, "Here's my second concern: I'm very dependent on Google; I have to pay Google for Google Meet. You need to come up with some kind of deal with them, because at this point, I'm held hostage on something like that."

MR: With COVID, is there extra aid that's coming down from the state and federal level?

TM: Yes – yes, very much. With regards to purchase of equipment, purchase of the hot spots for internet access, the purchase of software. That's the CARES Act grant.

[Business manager] Joanne [Blier] is working on a FEMA grant application, and I'm also looking at one that Lieutenant Governor Polito has

TM: The principals are all very open. One other person you really should talk with in the next two weeks is Dianne Ellis, the pupil services director. [Former superintendent] Michael [Sullivan] once told me, "You know what, Tina, right now you're going to be so busy, but after you, it's going to be Dianne." I'm just waiting for that!

MR: So you can get it all set up, but the real problems are with the actual teaching and learning, and figuring that out.

TM: Yes, exactly. And as much as remote learning is awesome, we're a school, we're part of a community, we're part of the town. That red schoolhouse, that's still very much a reality: our kids look at each other, they depend on each other for socialization.

And I you would love to be able to hear what their parents are feeling about remote. "Here's a view of the schools": I'd love to see their view of what they're seeing.

Stay tuned ...



FARREN from page A1

similar needs, pointing to a facility it owns in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Ellis's letter, endorsed in advance by the selectboard, did not mention the ownership issue, but rather "the Town's position that the best long term outcome would be for investment in the existing facility," which town officials have advocated for years. Ellis stressed the Farren "holds a monumental place in the history of Montague." Echoing Roulston, he also stated that the "pandemic would appear to be a problematic context in which to undertake the movement of operations and patients."

The letter ended with a plea that the current ownership consider "a change in course," or at least delay the closing "until the public health context normalizes." Ellis also called on the state to "require and support redevelopment of the Farren Care Center campus for its current use."

On Wednesday, the state Department of Public Health (DPH) held a public hearing, via video conference, on the Farren's closure. The hearing got off to a rough start when it was discovered that the call-in number on the official announcement was incorrect.

Nonetheless, approximately 16 "stakeholders" testified, including two officials from Trinity Health, state senator Joanne Comerford, representative Natalie Blais, Roulston, Ellis, and and nine others, many of whom have either worked at the Farren or have family members at the facility. With the exception of the two Trinity officials, all opposed the move, particularly under the conditions of the pandemic.

Trinity Health president Janice Hamilton-Crawford justified the closure as necessary to "sustain services to a vulnerable population in a more appropriate setting." She said that the Farren could no longer "supply needed care" for its residents. Echoing Trinity's July announcement of the decision, Crawford stressed the age and poor condition of the buildings, and "workforce issues."

Edin Thompson, the Farren's current administrator, defended the timing of the move, suggesting that though the region may be "living with the pandemic for a long time," the Farren has also "been struggling with issues for a long time."

Comerford and Blais both supported criticisms of the closure during the pandemic made by the selectboard letter, and noted that the closure was occurring at the same time as the projected elimination of the psychiatric wing at Baystate Franklin in Greenfield. They called for severance pay for employees, and a "comprehensive redevelopment study," should the DPH approve the closure.

Ellis said he had recently heard from families of Farren residents and employees who had expressed "feelings of uncertainty about iCare," the corporation seeking to buy the Holyoke facility.

Former Greenfield city council

FURTHER NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

member Karen "Rudy" Renaud criticized Trinity for "union busting," and called on them to "do the right thing, or we will beat the crap out of you up and down Route 91."

Leverett's Judy Fonsh, who served as director of social services at Farren for 20 years, said that the state Department of Mental Health decided to place many of its difficult clients at the Farren over the years, but "never put money into the process." She said that the state had an "obligation to have dollars come into the [Farren] buildings."

Several family members of Farren residents with serious needs mentioned that they had not been able to see their relatives since March, and questioned Trinity's ability to implement a humane transfer to a new facility with a different culture of care. Doris Bardwell, a retired nurse, said her mother was "thriving" at the Holyoke facility, but said she was concerned about a new management team's ability to organize extensive staffing changes during the pandemic. "My family has not been allowed in there since March," she said.

The public hearing ended after approximately 80 minutes of testimony. Sherman Lohnes, director of the DPH Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification, announced that due to the miscommunication about the call-in number, a second hearing would be scheduled for September 30, and the deadline for written comments extended to October 1.

Volunteer Opportunity: Montague Finance Committee

The Town of Montague has an opening on its Finance Committee! The Finance Committee is an advisory group comprised of seven residents who are involved in the development of the Town's annual budget and other matters related to the town's finances and fiscal health. Serving on this committee is a great opportunity for a person who wants to learn about municipal finance and local government. The current vacancy is for a 3-year term that ends in 2023.

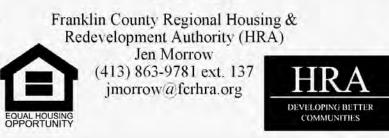
The Finance Committee meets on Wednesday evenings, weekly, from January to May and as needed at other times of the year. These meetings are open to the public, and we encourage potential candidates to attend a few before submitting a letter of interest to the Moderator of Town Meetings. Members of the committee welcome questions and would be happy to talk with you about what the role entails. For more information, visit the Finance Committee's pages on *www.montague-ma.gov*, or contact committee chair Jen Audley at (413) 863-3060 or *jaudley@gmail.com*.

The Town of Montague is an equal opportunity provider and employer and strongly encourages candidates from diverse social and economic backgrounds.

Attention FRANKLIN COUNTY HOMEOWNERS

Are you in need of home repairs?

HRA is in the process of updating our waitlist for the HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM. If you'd like to get on the waitlist or learn more about the program, please contact:



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was September 16, 2010: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Steel Company Expands

Mayhew Steel is expanding and consolidating at the same time.

The company is expanding their Turners Falls industrial park operation with a new \$2.1 million, 33,600-square-foot building, to make room for consolidating operations in Turners Falls from as far away as Pennsylvania.

"Mayhew Steel manufactures punches, chisels and pry bars, primarily for automotive and industrial applications," comptroller Larry Geiser said. "We buy hot and cold rolled steel, and cut, forge and harden it by heat treating. Some tools are ground, polished, and coated with a black oxide finish. We put gether in one central place."

On Monday, Montague town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said Mayhew anticipates seeking \$1.8 million in state investment tax credits to help with the financing package for the expansion.

Primary Results Are In

Denise Andrews, a former Procter and Gamble plant manager who has never held elected office before, emerged as the Democrats' pick to run for the state house seat being vacated by Chris Donelan (D-Orange) in the Second Franklin District primary on Tuesday. Donelan is running unopposed in November for Franklin County sheriff.

Andrews, who moved back to Orange two years ago, defeated three rivals – Lee Chauvette, David Roulston, and Roxanne Wede-

Public Art, Sewage, Road Details

By JEFF SINGLETON

At Monday's selectboard meeting, Montague town planner Walter Ramsey and RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto presented a 10page policy to regulate murals on public and private property.

The document includes detailed criteria for the location of murals (they are not allowed on the "front facade" of buildings, and discouraged on unpainted brick walls); outreach to neighbors; and applying for a permit or a RiverCulture grant. The document, which begins with a policy "flow chart," has little to say about the aesthetic quality of murals or the messages they may convey.

Chelsey Little. Little had suggested a 3% hike to generate more "retained earnings" for future capital projects. That approach was supported by finance committee member John Hanold, who stated that impact of projected capital projects at the sewer facility could "basically wipe out" most of the retained earnings.

But Kuklewicz said he supported a 2% increase, in part because taxpayers would soon be facing the cost of borrowing for the new public works facility. Board member Chris Boutwell agreed, and member Michael Nelson was not present.

Little did not estimate the cost to the average sewer user of different rates during the meeting, but she told the *Reporter* in a later email that a "rough estimate" of the difference between a 2% and 3% increase would be just over \$5 on the average annual \$480 bill.

Other Business

The board voted to increase the number of "details" – required police presence at road construction projects – allowed to police chief Chris Williams in his contract by an additional six.

Williams told the board that the department was receiving requests for more details than the staff could handle, citing work on telephone poles and the impending project to rebuild the General Pierce Bridge. He said the cost of details falls on the shoulders of construction companies. Town administrator Steve Ellis said that the additional detail hours would be "taken off" the chief's vacation and personal time, so the details would "take that time off the books of Montague, if you think about it." Public health director Daniel Wasiuk reported to the board on the local coronavirus statistics, as well as changes in state policy. He said the number of infections in Montague had not increased despite over 444 tests during the past two weeks. The board approved a request from Musica Franklin for the use of Peskeompskut Park on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday afternoons during the fall. The group provides musical instruction (and instruments) to children at Sheffield Elementary School in Montague and Leyden Woods in Greenfield. Ellis gave the board an update on the plan for the crumbling Railroad Salvage Building on Power Street. He said the building was still in tax title court, but that the federal Environmental Protection Agency may begin a hazmat clean-up before the town officially takes ownership.

LoManto explained that the policy was a response to questions that had "come to RiverCulture a lot" in recent years. "Right now it's like the wild, wild West in terms of murals," she said. She also said that the process began by "researching mural policies throughout the country."

Ramsey said the policy had been "shared with local landlords, and we didn't get anything but positive feedback." The document would not go to town meeting, like a bylaw change, but would be a "policy of the selectboard."

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said he had seen public art in the town that "looks like it's never been completed," and that "it will be good to have a plan to help."

The board did not take a vote on the policy, which was presented as a preliminary draft.

Sewer Rates

The board approved of a 2% increase in sewer rates, based on a presentation by water pollution control facility (WPCF) superintendent Little also discussed the unresolved problem of a high volume of sewage from Millers Falls being sent to a treatment plant in neighboring Erving. In recent years sewage from the village has exceeded the amount allowed in a contract between the two towns, and nearly overwhelmed the Erving plant. A recent project to reduce infiltration from groundwater failed to solve the problem, so Montague had planned to investigate the inflow from storm drains and other sources. Then the pandemic hit.

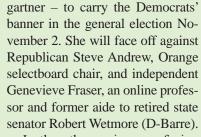
Little said she "did not want anyone to think this was falling though the cracks." She has met with the Erving officials, and former Montague superintendent Bob Trombley, who is consulting with Montague, has been "popping manholes" in search of the sources of the infiltration. A public outreach meeting is planned, but no date has been set.

The next selectboard meeting will be held on September 21.

handles on some of the larger tools. Some of that work takes place in one of our warehouses. Our pry bars range in size from seven or eight inches up to 58 inches."

Mayhew Steel's manufacturing plant is located in Shelburne Falls on the Deerfield River, where the company got its start a century and a half ago. Over the years, the company has acquired other businesses. Deerfield Packaging, at 199 Industrial Boulevard in Turners, is one of them, and it now houses the company's corporate offices, along with a 25,000 square foot warehouse and assembly room.

Mayhew has warehouses in-Shelburne, Turners Falls, and Greenfield. "In some of those warehouses, we do some assembly work, as well," Geiser said. "The whole idea of consolidating is to bring all these operations to-



In the other major race facing voters in our area in Tuesday's Democratic primary, Hampshire Register of Probate David Sullivan of Easthampton swept former prosecutor Michael Cahillane of Northampton in the first contested race for Northwestern District Attorney since 1982.

Facing no opposition in the November election, Sullivan is virtually assured of succeeding retiring Elizabeth Scheibel (R-South Hadley) to become Franklin and Hampshire County's next DA. Sullivan beat Cahillane 15,441 to 7,218.





SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

LEVERETT from page A1

said they intended to sign the agreement at their next meeting, after reviewing "small changes" requested by Amherst.

Board member Peter d'Errico said that while the matter will not come up again as an article at town meeting, he would like to see a presentation on all aspects of the project, with all the numbers, so the town is fully informed.

Police Merger

Police chief Scott Minckler reported that there will be a public forum on the Wendell town common on Saturday, September 26, at 9 a.m. to discuss the proposal for Leverett to take on the duties of the Wendell police department upon the retirement of Wendell police chief Ed Chase. Minckler said the event will be livestreamed on the department's Facebook page, and attendees will be able to ask questions about the project.

The towns' selectboards will make the final decision on the reorganization, but the chief said, "I have a feeling that around the first of the year, we will have absorbed Wendell PD, and will at least be answering calls for their town."

Chief Minckler also reported that the deadline for accepting applications for an open position in his department has been extended to September 28, and that after speaking with members of the town's new social justice committee (SJC), he recommended the inclusion of a member of the SJC on the police hiring committee. That member will join representatives of the selectboard and the town's fire, police, and highway departments.

The SJC asked to have two members, one voting and one non-voting, so as to learn more about the process, but the selectboard felt it was better to maintain a single representative from each town department or committee.

D'Errico and board chair Julie Shively pointed out that 80% of the hiring committee's activity is open to the public, and suggested that other SJC members could learn about the non-public meetings, which will cover information subject to confidentiality laws, through their voting member.

Electric Brush

The board reviewed a resident's complaint over tree-trimming work being done by Eversource.

D'Errico produced a law review article outlining a recent decision by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to issue guidelines calling for aggressive vegetation management near power lines, inspired partly by the wildfires in the western part of the country, to say that the matter was not in the board's control. He went on to point out that the town has also recently advocated more aggressive vegetation management as part of its hazard mitigation plan, to protect both its power supply and fiber-optic system.

The board also looked at a request from Eversource to purchase a parcel of land, reported by town administrator Marjorie McGinnis to be for the purpose of complying with an order the company is under regarding land preservation. D'Errico said he didn't see any frontage on the property, or reason the land would be valuable, but wanted to hear the board of assessors' opinion before approving the sale.

Kids at Work

The board discussed a request from the Union 28 superintendency district, of which Leverett Elementary School is a member, asking towns to look into the possibility of teachers bringing their own children to work with them.

McGinnis reported that Union 28 school district superintendent Jennifer Culkeen had circulated



Mark Girard, a former tree warden for the town of Montague, hauls two giant pickle barrels of water in his handsome

1938 Chevy truck. He has volunteered to go out during the extended drought to water some of the newly planted trees in Montague Center. Tree advisory committee member Michael Marcotrigiano, who submitted this photo, adds: 'If you have new town trees near your house, please give them a drink now and again to help them establish. The future of shaded streets, and a respite from the heat, is dependent on a healthy street tree inventory." Thanks, Michael!

the proposal, asking towns to review an insurance waiver associated with the idea.

McGinnis also reported that town counsel MacNicol had said the document "is not a waiver" and needed to be completely redone, and also noted that the town's insurance has a \$100,000 deductible for communicable diseases.

D'Errico said he would be willing to revisit the idea if a proper waiver was presented, but he, Shively, and fin com member Steve Nagy pointed out that there were other issues involved, such as the teacher's union, the specifics of what would be allowed under the proposal, and the fact that other town employees are facing similar hardships due to COVID-19 and would not be receiving the same benefit.

Other Business

The board received news that the town of Greenfield has received state Community Development Block Grant funding for micro-enterprise grants to small businesses affected by COVID-19. Leverett businesses are eligible for these grants; further information will be available at a meeting later this month, and will be posted on the town's website and included in the next newsletter.

The board also appointed Casandra Cote as a fire officer, contingent on her meeting standard qualifications.

The board changed the time and date of the upcoming special town

meeting to noon on October 24, at a location yet to be determined.





Tile **169** Avenue A, Turners Falls











Services

Interior/Exterior Custom Residential

Office: 978-544-6534

413-461-5172

peterjwaters88@gmail.com

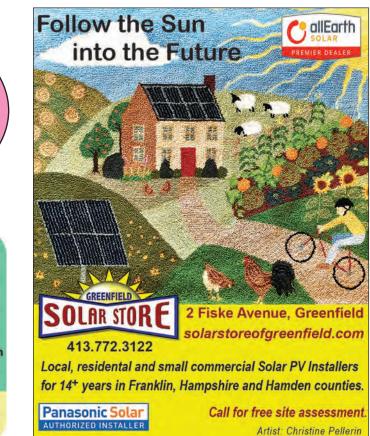
Fully Insured

Wendell, MA

Cell:

keep social distance but have your Smokehouse Dinner fix **Take Out Baby Back Rib Dinners** Wednesdays, September 9 and 23 Reservations at thediemandfarm.com/smokehouse





Reward Yourself with the FREE GSB Debit Card **BUZZ** Points Program. I OCAL IN **Earn Rewards with** Every Purchase! **BUZZ** Points Sign-up Bonus** Greenfield (413) 774-3191 . (413) 584-4441 greenfieldsavings.com Savings Bank *Double points earning offer (2X points) applies only to locally-owned businesses which are in the GSB-Buzz Points Database at time of purchase and is not applicable at local outlets of national or regional chain stores or businesses. Must open account and sign up for BUZZ Points by 10/31/20 to qualify. Member FDIC/Member DIF



YEAR 18 – NO. 41



FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Above: Ilah and Sadie watch Pete Wackernagel paint the walkway in front of the former Chick's Garage on Third Street.

One Family's Story in Early Turners Falls

By LOUISE BOUCHER CROLL

SOUTH HADLEY – Honoré Boucher, pronounced "Oh-nor ray" not "ornery," as the family joke goes, grew up in a village of fertile soil along a major river. A train station was near to the village, Saint-Antoinede-Tilly, located along the St. Lawrence River in Québec, Canada. Saint-Antoine-de-Tilly is considered one



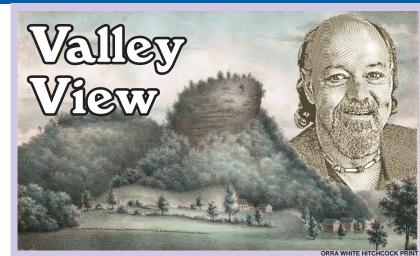
of the most beautiful villages in Québec. The Boucher family goes back deep in the fertile soil there, where local apple cider and Breton crêpes are the stars of the fair. With his wife, Elizabeth, and two daughters, Honoré boarded the southbound train, leaving the quaint red-trimmed houses behind. It was 1885.

When the Boucher family stepped off the train at Turners Falls, Massachusetts, they found a couple of similarities to the home they'd left behind. Here was a village on a major river with train lines running through it. Unlike their quaint farming village, Turners Falls was bustling. The town was growing by 200 persons annually and most were immigrants.

So many languages! French and German, English with a thick Irish brogue! Men and women making a home, working, growing the village, and building a community. Tall brick commercial blocks lined both sides of Avenue A. The same year, St. Anne's, the magnificent gothic revival Catholic church, was built on J Street.

When Honoré first saw the manufacturing village, he found suspension bridges linking his family's new home to both Gill and Greenfield. Turners Falls offered schooling opportunities through high school for his children's education.

Honoré's immigration in 1885 was a mere seventeen years after Alvah Crocker, with other investors, formed the Turners Falls Company. Crocker Avenue was named for the visionary investor who is in large part responsible for the grid layout, power canal, and significant industry of mid- to late-19th century Turners Falls. The Montague City Rod Company was formed in 1885 by Farren and Hazelton, also directors of the Turners Falls Company. From the beauty of his ancestral Canadian village, Honoré settled in the Patch.



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – Never too late to share a good story, this one occurred on a hot, humid July morning, just before noon. Long ago, yes. Still relevant.

It had been a typical morning. I had walked a couple of miles at daybreak, eaten a light breakfast, read, caught up on TV news, gone through emails, responding to a few, maybe even chatted on the phone, though that I do not recall. On some mornings, yes, a phone call is part of my routine. I place some, answer others. If the discussion is dynamic, let it roam. If not, move on.

I've squeezed in a lot of reading and local-history probes since spring, all the while maintaining a yard, harvesting my rhubarb, berries and meaty Romas, tidying the barn, observing wildlife - particularly neighborhood deer at the crack of dawn, when they're still out - and chatting with neighbors on my daily rounds. All this under a dark, ominous COVID-19 cloud, which complicates social interaction. Maybe this uninvited demon will disappear by summer. I hope so. What a freakin' fiasco, misinformation swirling like a meandering cyclone. Personal-distancing measures and fear of infection were palpable and rampant the day I met my new neighbor named Gilead, a 7-yearold boy whose parents bought a home down the street. I was out by the barn picking raspberries when I initiated our first interaction with some playful remark to his friend, Erin, a young girl whose parents live next door. The kids were busy playing near the brook, some 15 yards away, when I greeted them. I don't recall what I said. Something lighthearted. Erin is used to it. I often engage her in light conversation when we pass. I enjoy kids' curiosity and enthusiasm. Whatever I said drew the kids' attention. Sure enough, they had soon joined me, eating berries as fast as they picked them from the opposite edge of a narrow patch split by a slim stone wall. The backyard brook was trickling its soothing summer song as I introduced myself and learned his name. He said I could call him Gil. He lived in a home I pass in my daily rambles. His previous address was Montague Center.

I told him I liked his name, and that my late son Gary wrote a song named "Gilead." It's about a road near the Stowe Mountain Resort in Vermont, where his college friend lives.

"So, maybe I'll use your full name," I said. "Fair enough?" "OK."

My chore that day was filling a wooden, quart fruit box with berries, which I force myself to pick daily when in season. I freeze them in flat, layered Ziplock bags, which provide sweet, succulent, off-season breakfasts when mixed in cold cereal, steaming oatmeal and, every now and then, tasty muffins baked in cast-iron pans. The cool-weather treats justify my sweaty summer chore.

Honoré and Elizabeth Boucher, who came to Turners Falls in the late 1800s from Québec, Canada.

Honoré had heard about the need for laborers from friends who had already made the move to the

see BOUCHER page B5



COLRAIN - A sort of Euell Gibbons for the artist world, Marjorie Morgan has taken to foraging berries, acorns, and wildflowers on her walks, then bringing them back to her studio and grinding them up to make inks. She's also made inks from red cabbage and beets, and from rust.

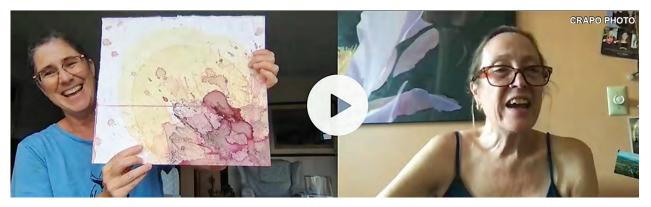
Greenfield Community College will be offering an artist talk, "Marjorie Morgan: Making Ink with Natural Materials" next Wednesday, September 23, from 12 to 1 p.m. Free and open to the public, the talk can be accessed through GCC's website.

Morgan and I hooked up recently via Zoom. I edited our conversation for clarity and length, but tried to keep the spirit of our exchange, which I enjoyed so much, intact.

MM: Here's what you should say: First of all, making ink is real-

ly fun. It's really fun, and very empowering to find your own materials and create something completely from scratch that you can make art with. That's the first thing.

And it's also just amazing to be able to take your leftovers and compost them, instead of throwing them out, or like with oil painting, I would have to go to the hazardous waste day and turn over my see ARTBEAT page B4



Colrain artist Marjorie Morgan shows Crapo, via Zoom, a work she created using beet juice and goldenrod inks.

As we picked, facing each other some six or eight feet apart, I saw Gilead eat a red berry I knew wasn't quite ripe, thus likely just a tad bitter. Displaying one between my thumb and forefinger, I encouraged him to select only the soft, purple berries, promising he'd be mighty happy with the results. He listened, immediately picked one, remarked how easily it pulled from the stem, put it in his mouth and savored the delicate sweetness.

His expression said it all. A satisfied smile. He had learned something worth knowing.

Over time, the kid undoubtedly would have figured out my little lesson on his own. Still, why not expedite the discovery process? Adult intervention doesn't detract from learning, just speeds the process with a nudge forward. Nothing wrong with that.

After picking the most accessible berries, young Gilead was presented with the same problem that has confronted berry-picking hunter-gatherers since their ancient beginnings. The kid wanted to penetrate the patch of prickly canes to pick the ripe interior berries, but was discouraged not only by thorns but also pesky nettles, which in childhood I knew as seven*minute itch.*

"I wish there were paths to the ripe berries I can't reach," he said. "I don't want to touch the nettles."

"Can't say I blame you," I answered. "I don't like nettles either. I remove them on my side, wearing gloves to uproot them.

see VALLEY VIEW page B2

Pets of Week



"CLAUDE, ERNEST & BAXTER"

Guinea pigs are social creatures, and if we're already paired up here at the shelter, we need to stay together. We are three 3-month-old males. Our average lifespan is 5 to 7 years.

We need a spacious habitat equipped with hiding and napping spots, things to climb on, safe wood to chew, and toys. Our diet should consist of grass hay at all times, with a small amount of timothy pellets. We don't make our own vitamin C, so we must get it daily from our diet.

Snacks like red pepper, kale, mustard greens, dandelion greens, and other leafy greens will do the job nicely!

Animals at Dakin are available for adoption by appointment only, and only at Springfield currently. Call (413) 781-4000, email springfield@dakinhumane.org, or see www.dakinhumane.org for more information.



Senior Center Activities SEPTEMBER 21 THROUGH 25

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

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.

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

"I'll bet you didn't know that Indians made rope and string from nettles. The cordage of various widths was used for fishing nets and fishing line as well as baskets, sacks and strong, braided rope?"

Eye to eye, I could sense something wasn't hunky-dory. Then, peering up innocently through the drooping, tangled canes, the boy dropped the hammer, saying, "You're supposed to call them indigenous people."

I should have known better, given his previous place of residence - that UMass bedroom community known to sarcastic Trump supporters as The People's Republic of Montague Center. In that riverside hamlet, Native American debate is ripe as my purple raspberries. So, of course, the boy didn't hesitate to object

to my insensitive word choice. Indian is no longer acceptable in some circles, where Native American, or my friend's term, are preferred.

Oooops! Sorry, Kid. Old habits die hard.

So, now we are even. I gave him a lesson in berry-picking; he schooled me in 21st-century political correctness. Hmmmm? They call that reciprocity, don't they?

Sixty years younger, Gilead had reminded me that you're never too old to learn, too young to teach.

Whew! Good thing he didn't understand my interest in words and language. Then he may have taken our discussion a step further, and asked whether "indigenous" is upper or lower case? There seems to

be no short answer to that question today.

Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column by STEPHANIE BAIRD

Now that Pandemic is more under control here in Massachusetts, with low enough numbers to allow for in-person appointments at medical and other offices, we can take some time to check in with our overall genital health. This month we will focus on female sexual organs.

I won't be able to cover all varieties of genital trouble today, but the Mayo Clinic website, www.mayoclinic.org, has a lot of good information about vaginal health, nicely emphasizing that it's an important part of a woman's general health and that "vaginal problems can affect your fertility, desire for sex, and ability to reach orgasm."

While some folks with vaginal discomfort may call their doctor or midwife immediately, many of my psychotherapy clients have reported waiting years before getting help.

The Mayo Clinic website mentions several factors that can negatively impact vaginal health. Unprotected intercourse can result in a painful STI. Forceful intercourse or an injury to the pelvic area can result in vaginal trauma. I've had several clients over the years report both situations. Medical conditions such as endometriosis, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), and pelvic surgery scarring can also cause painful intercourse. Latex contraception, spermicide, diaphragms, and deodorants or douches can cause irritation as well.

Most medical professionals, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, recommend against douching, as it has little or no benefit, and actually can cause PID and vaginal infections. Some smell and discharge is often present in vaginas, but if yours changes dramatically, it may signal an infection. Regularly washing your genitals with warm water and soap is enough to keep it clean and let the vagina control the bacteria in its interior environment using its natural acidity. I recently watched an episode of the hilarious comedy Awkwafina is Nora from Queens where Nora was hit in the pelvic area during a sex toy tussle, resulting in pain and fairly constant "queefing," or releasing air or gas from the vaginal cavity. (This is a real thing, folks.) Vaginitis is inflammation of the vagina and can be related to an infection, or imbalance of yeast and bacteria, causing discharge, odor, itching, and pain. Lichen sclerosus is an uncommon condition that creates patchy, white skin that appears thinner than normal. It usually affects the genital and anal areas.

Anyone can get lichen sclerosus, but postmenopausal women are at higher risk. I've met folks who have mentioned all of these conditions over the years, so they do happen, and it's important to get help to alleviate undue suffering.

Tears can occur during vaginal childbirth. In some birthing instances, an episiotomy will be performed to increase the vaginal opening. Small tears will often heal up on their own, but larger ones may require stitches and even physical therapy. Vaginal delivery can also reduce muscle tone and create pelvic floor relaxation, with resulting complications such as a prolapsed uterus, bladder, rectum, and vaginal walls.

Many folks who have given birth vaginally (including myself) think it's normal to leak a little urine when coughing or sneezing. Seven years after my vaginal birth, this issue finally came up in my regular ob/gyn appointment with my midwife. I offhandedly mentioned the incontinence, probably looking for normalization. Luckily I had a well-educated midwife who was able to determine during the internal examination that my muscles had weakened, and absolutely assured me that life did not have to be this way.

She referred me to pelvic floor physical therapy, which changed my life. In just a few appointments, I learned easy exercises to practice throughout the day, including how to properly perform Kegels and how to pull up my pelvic muscles before a cough or sneeze. But mostly, I placed a long rubber band from foot to foot, and sidestepped ten steps in each direction. The pelvic floor physical therapist had mentioned the possibility of bladder sling surgery. However, following her expert suggestions was enough to reverse the problem and avoid this. She also noted that most people learn and perform Kegels inaccurately, and emphasized practicing correctly: pulling up and squeezing the pelvic floor muscles for both short and longer periods, and not practicing stopping urine midstream, or squeezing your abdomen or butt cheeks together. If you are having any issues with incontinence, please consider consulting a pelvic floor physical therapist before looking into surgery! Menopause or hormonal changes can result in the thinning or atrophy of vaginal walls. Science and beauty capitalists are always looking for ways to make a profit by optimizing Western notions of outward beauty through the cosmetics and plastic surgery industry, and

have now ventured inward to apply beauty standards to the vulvar and vaginal tissue.

One local company is offering "CO2RE Intima" for vaginas (along with the usual smattering of laser body sculpting and hair removal). CO2RE Intima purports to reduce dryness, painful intercourse, and urinary incontinence through CO₂ laser resurfacing of the vaginal or vulvar tissue, increasing cellular collagen and thereby claiming to improve skin tone, texture, and appearance. It is considered a nonsurgical, outpatient day procedure.

If you pursue this, check their medical credentials and experience, and notice which side of things the company pushes: appearance of labia and vaginal walls, or improved functioning. The local company offering this treatment places an emphasis on treating vaginal dryness, burning and itching, incontinence, and painful intercourse.

My physician has also been researching procedures that help vaginas regain elasticity and firmness, and prefers "ThermiVa." ThermiVa uses radiofrequency energy and heat to stimulate and rebuild collagen naturally. Unfortunately, the website thermiva.com mentions in the first paragraph that "when the skin has less collagen, it can lose its youthful appearance." I would hope that as we age, we actually care less and less about appearance - especially in areas that we don't often get a good look at, lol – and

is closed until further notice:

"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

FREE Mobile Banking APP

GREENFIELD

Cooperative Bank

Avenue A, Turners Falls | 413-512-5012

WENDELL

Wendell senior activities have been canceled. The Wendell Senior Center is closed. The Senior Health Rides program is also suspended until advisories change. For more information, 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 Field	s Market: Senior hours from	9 to 10 a.m. Cur

urbside 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 (413) 773-9567 Greenfield. \$8 outside Greenfield.

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@ (413) 625-2548 franklincommunity.coop

NORTHAMPTON

Cooperative Bank

Stop and Shop: Senior hours from 6 to 7:30 a.m. (413) 774-6096

care more about how we experience things, and how things feel.

There are also estrogen creams available that can replenish aging vulvas and vaginas by relieving dryness, atrophy, and thinness. Please consult with a trusted, feminist, medical professional who has your best interests at heart, one who is not just going after the bottom line of a dollar, or interested in upholding unrealistic beauty expectations. Do your Googling and other research, ask questions, and talk things over with trusted friends.

Many of the difficulties discussed in this article are related to vaginal intercourse. It's helpful to remember that much of female sexual pleasure involves the clitoris, which can remain relatively free of complications throughout a lifetime.

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.

OPEN DAILY BestLocalBank.com LUNCH and DINNER FREE Online Banking with Bill Pay, Transfers, Account Opening, Debit Card Controls & More! 24 Federal St., Greenfield 773-0333 / thepeoplespint.com with Mobile Check Deposit, Alerts, Freeze/UnFreeze & More!

The Pint Says: TURN THE KEY! When you idle your car's engine for more than 10-20 seconds, you're wasting fuel. Save on Gas - Save our Climate





PROFILE Dan Foley, MC of Storypalooza

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – When I went to this year's Storypalooza, at the Shea Theater in February, I got the idea that it would be good to interview someone, and I actually decided to talk to either David Bulley or Dan Foley. As it stands, now I have talked to them both for profiles!

Dan Foley told me that he has "been doing it my whole life." That is, being a comedian, juggler, storyteller, and musician.

"I learned to juggle when I was a teenager," he said. He studied theater at SUNY-Brockport, in upstate New York. He started to develop shows, and after that, he went to Europe "where I was involved in performing a number of shows, and that's where I developed my craft."

Dan was the MC at Storypalooza, and said he has been one many other times, at comedy shows which he produced in the Boston area. In 1996, he hosted something called "Jeff the Best," which was a new vaudeville show.

I found that he does well at that, at least based on my experience of him. At Storypalooza, he made jokes, juggled, and told a little story about staying awake while driving.

Dan says his various other per-

formances have included "hundreds of juggling shows, hundreds of music shows, and hundreds of comedy shows." He once did a poetry slam, and a puppet slam. He has appeared on the TV show Chronicle, and made appearances on PBS. Last fall, he was on Ellen.

One thing that would perhaps be fair to say about him is that some of the things in his act never get old – people seem to continue to like it. I say that because I read a review of him doing a performance at Plymouth State University in 2003 where he did a song about being a deadbeat dad, which he played for us at the Shea Theater. Why would he still be doing that song as part of his act, if people didn't still continue to like it?

As for himself, he said his family and friends enjoy his performances. I would personally describe him as being a very talented juggler. During the second act of Storypalooza, we saw him juggle under one leg, while talking at the same time. It seemed like pretty good juggling to me!

Dan said he loved the experience of doing Storypalooza, and would do it again if given a chance. His thoughts on the storytellers' stories that night were, "I enjoyed all of them." He said it was a fun event.



The Great Falls Farmers Market is looking for a donation of a

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG Hydro Plant Break-In; Altercations; Hits-And-Runs; Male Party Freaking Out; Female Lying/Sitting In Road; Male Party With Man Bun Causing Concern With Vehicle

Thursday, 9/3

12:39 p.m. Caller would like it on record that sometime between August 22 and August 28, someone stole the large metal "Highland Cemetery" sign that had been over the entrance to the cemetery. The sign was knocked down during a storm and was moved off to the side

the night of August 22. 5:36 p.m. Caller from Fosters Road reporting latest instance of ongoing issue of illegal gunfire within 500 yards of a dwelling. Second caller reports illegal gunfire involving multiple types of guns, one of which is very explosive. Caller states she has been attempting to speak directly with an officer, and has been playing phone tag, but would like to speak with an officer about this issue. Officer advises involved party is more than 500 yards from a dwelling, and 150 yards from the road. Involved male states he is done for the night. Caller was called back and sent to officer's voicemail. Friday, 9/4

9:38 p.m. Report from Mountain Project, who East Main Street of a large fire. Caller states he is looking out his bedroom window and that the fire is coming from behind the train tracks, possibly the Grout Circle area. Units and TFFD advised. Outdoor cooking fire coming from Grout Circle.

11:49 p.m. Caller from Central Street states that there are kids playing ping pong and drinking beer across the street on the porch with the windows open. Caller would like them moved inside for the night. Officer states quiet on arrival. Parties advised able to locate. of complaint; said they will turn down the music. Saturday, 9/5 11:57 a.m. Caller from Fifteenth Street would like it on record that she received a package with her name on it claiming to contain eyeglasses from China which she did not order. 9:02 p.m. A 26-year-old Orange woman was arrested and charged with possession of a Class B substance with intent to distribute; drug trafficking, Class B, 14 to 27 grams; and possession of a Class E drug. Summonses were also issued for two

5:18 p.m. Caller would like to speak with a senior officer about an interaction she had with Montague PD yesterday. Services rendered. Monday, 9/7 10:48 a.m. Message left

in general mailbox reporting a missing person with dementia who may be in the area of Seventh Street, where her brother lives. Area checked; unable to locate. Shelburne PD issued be-on-lookout advisory for a 71-yearold female, last seen with pink/purple shirt, jeans, blue/white sneakers, possibly carrying a dark green or blue reusable shopping bag.

12:08 p.m. Report of breaking and entering at Strathmore Paper Mill; caller found door pried open during his rounds today. Officer advises there does appear to be fresh damage; requests DPW come out to secure building. DPW superintendent advises that this is not a town-owned building, but is part of the hydro plant. Officer spoke with Northfield advised that this is not their building either.

6:13 p.m. Anonymous caller from Fosters Road reporting that the residents here are shooting guns in the yard again within 500 feet of other residences. Advised of complaint.

6:29 p.m. Caller states that she just witnessed a male party urinating in the middle of Peskeomskut Park, making no attempt at being discreet about it. Entire park as well as nearby stores and parking lots checked; un-

Fosters Road states that someone is shooting a gun on a neighboring property within 500 yards of her home. Officer out on foot in area found no one shooting; spoke to homeowner who advised her son is not home and she was not

shooting, either. 10:10 a.m. First of two calls from Avenue A requesting to speak to an officer about unwanted houseguests. Advised of options.

11:56 p.m. Caller would like it on record that her vehicle was sideswiped while parked on L Street. Information obtained from driver of other vehicle.

12:35 p.m. Motorist reporting hubcap in road on General Pierce Bridge. Hubcap removed.

2:54 p.m. Report of larceny of cash by employee at Lightlife Foods. Report taken.

8:31 p.m. Caller would like it on record that her granddaughter was playing at the park at the Parent & Child Development Center on G Street when a male party threatened her with a pocket knife. Medical attention declined. Report taken.

Wednesday, 9/9

1:07 a.m. Caller states that she watched two teenaged kids attempt to get into every vehicle on Davis Street. States that they were hanging around a neighbor's car for a while and that when she spoke to them, they took off towards Dell Street. Area

search negative. 11:44 a.m. Report of hitand-run accident on Fifth Street. Officer observed damage.

field. Shelburne Control and Eversource advised. Eversource supervisor on scene with MCFD; all set. 11:49 a.m. Report of ongoing harassment by neighbor on L Street. Officers spoke with parties. Peace restored. Female called back asking to speak with officer who responded.

12:40 p.m. Three calls received for female lying/ sitting in the middle of Fifth Street. Female appears under the influence of drugs. One caller observed what she believed to be drug packets that the female dropped in the middle of the road. Third caller advised female is now on Fifth Street behind Booska's Flooring. Units located female and determined she is able to walk; will monitor her as she goes to her aunt's residence.

1:43 p.m. Animal control officer reports receiving a complaint from a party on L Street regarding neighbors not cleaning up after their dog. ACO will follow up and refer to Board of Health.

10:02 p.m. A female was arrested following a vehicle stop at Millers Falls Road and Chester Street. Friday, 9/11

1:52 a.m. Officer spoke with male party who appeared to be sleeping in the back of a vehicle parked in the rest area of Kells Road. Party is a traveling artist.

6:11 p.m. Caller from Sherman Drive reports that her neighbor's lawn mower has been idling for over 45 minutes. Advised of complaint.

6:47 p.m. Caller from Ma-2:12 p.m. Request from sonic Avenue requesting Athol PD that MPD PD to advise female to

new or used iPad or iPhone so we can upgrade our SNAP system in order to process Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) benefits. Device must run iOS 11 or higher.

Email us! greatfallsfarmersmarketturners@gmail.com

Montague Community Television News We'll Edit Your Videos!

By MICHAEL SMITH

Along with most businesses, MCTV encourages 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 infomontaguetv@gmail. com between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. We'd love to work with you!

Class B drug. Sunday, 9/6

10:08 a.m. Caller from Park Street states that her son's bike was stolen from their driveway last night; described as white Diamondback BMX-style bike.

counts of possession of a

8:17 p.m. Caller states that two people are having a heated argument at Turnpike Road and Dell Street. Another caller reports that two females got into a physical altercation; one of them slapped and choked the other and then sped off in a car. Victim declined medical attention and does not wish to press charges at this time. Advised of options.

10:58 p.m. Caller from East Main Street reports ongoing issue with people entering his apartment who are not supposed to be there. He would like them removed. Officers advise unwanted party was invited by another tenant. Caller advised of options to have him evicted.

Tuesday, 9/8

check a G Street address for a juvenile who ran away from a foster home in Athol around 2 this morning. Address checked: involved male does not live at this address, and residents have no information on him. 4:08 p.m. Report of tree on fire close to houses at Seventh and Park streets. TFFD advised.

4:38 p.m. Caller from East Main Street requesting MPD remove an unwanted party from his residence. Advised of options. Subsequent call from same address reporting a disturbance due to male party freaking out because he does not want to leave. Units advised. Peace restored. Thursday, 9/10

11:34 a.m. Wire down arcing on side of Dry Hill 9:03 a.m. Caller from Road close to a farm/hay

stop giving him the finger from her house across the street. Related to previous call re: lawn mower. Advised of complaint.

Saturday, 9/12

6 p.m. Hit-and-run accident reported on G Street. Vehicle that left scene described as dark gray or black Jeep Liberty that should have some rear end damage. Report taken; be-on-lookout advisory issued.

Sunday, 9/13

1:54 p.m. Caller reporting a male party with a man bun racing a green Nissan Altima through the Turners Falls High School parking lot where little kids are riding their bikes. Unable to locate. 2:58 p.m. Caller report-

ing that the residents on Fosters Road are shooting again. All quiet upon arrival.

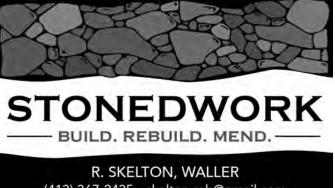
PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!



Dudek Tax Service 10 Masonic Ave **Turners Falls** MA 01376 Frank J. Dudek

413.863.5394 - Office 413.775.3327 - Cell frankd 74@yahoo.com





(413) 367-2435 skelton.rob@gmail.com

ARTBEAT from page B1

materials. So, it's a process that feels so much more in harmony with the planet and with each other.

COVID's a good time to make inks. People tend to have more time, and they tend to be at home. So, I guess it depends on where home is for you, but you can forage anywhere. You can make ink out of dirt if you want to.

TC: Have you?

MM: I make ink out of pigments. I make watercolor paint of pigments, and some of those are definitely just stuff I've scooped up from the ground.

TC: Just in these few minutes, I realize I don't know the difference between an ink and a dye, or a pigment.

MM: An ink is basically just a fluid form of color or tone, and most people use them for writing, ink wash, and printmaking. The inks that I make out of dyes are very fluid. They're looser than a watercolor. They're like this. [She holds up a small jar of thin, blue liquid and jostles it.] They're like India ink. Very, very fluid.

The GCC talk is about making inks from dyes, but I also create inks from pigment as well, which is different. Dyes are from materials that are from the earth up – like plants, vegetables, trees. Pigments are from the earth down – minerals, sediments, things like that. They're different in nature.

TC: And do they work differently?

MM: They work entirely differently. The biggest difference between them is that pigments have a very large particle size compared to dyes. And that's one of the reasons... You were asking about whether they were archival, and inks from dyes are not archival. They have a very, very tiny particle size, which means that they're fugitive. They chemically bond to the material that they're on, but they change over time. And they even change as they chemically bond.

This ink I made from elderberry - if I had two different papers, it would look different on those two papers. Because it's combining with the material of the paper.

TC: Is there a material you could stabilize it with, if you wanted to?

MM: I add gum arabic to them, which gives them a little more longevity and some-

times creates a tighter bond to the paper. Sometimes I spray with a natural fixative [Spectrafix, a non-toxic, casein-based spray].

And it varies. Some of my hardiest inks have changed very little over the last year and a half. Others change very quickly. So, it just depends on the material you're creating the ink from.

TC: The question of the inks being archival or not – years ago I took a hand bookbinding class with Peter Madden, a master bookbinder. He really liked to work with Elmer's glue, which is not archival. And I remember someone asking about that, and he said, "It's not the artist's job to make something archival. That's an archivist's job."

For me, it brings up almost a philosophical question. Does it matter whether the work we make lasts forever? Is that our goal?

MM: I think it's a good question. For me, it mattered a lot because I was used to working with traditional oils and acrylics. I was used to making something that was going to more or less stay the same, for at least a good chunk of time. Probably not forever but longer than me, probably.

It made me nervous to be spending all this time, and creating all this work that was going to change. And so at first I was spraying fixative on things all the time, and I was very nervous about it. But as time has gone on, first of all, I don't want piles and piles and piles of works that last forever. I really don't.

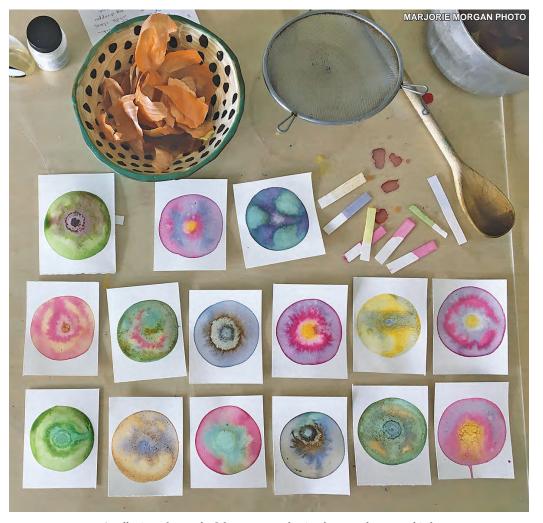
And I also think it's kind of lovely – and some people who have bought the work, they know that it's going to change, and they're completely fine with it.

So now there's work that I was going to be showing at the Oxbow Gallery in April, and that work is changing now. It didn't get to be seen at that highlight – or what seemed to be a highlight – moment, so I'm now working over it. And I'm printing on it. I'm layering in a way I don't think I would have before, because things are shifting.

TC: That's really interesting.

MM: Another difference between pigments and dyes is that pigments do last, for the most part, a really long time. Some of them are from rocks that are a hundred million years old. So they're *in it. [She smiles and makes a fist.]* They're lasters.

So I'm layering those on top of the inks, so what will happen over time is the inks are go-



A collection of samples Morgan created using homemade, natural inks.

ing to change, and the pigments will stay the same. I'm excited to see what happens. For the first time, I'm excited about the inks changing.

TC: Yeah, you could almost have two shows – whenever we can have shows again – with a big space of time in between, and hang the work in exactly the same way and have a look again.

MM: Yeah! It will be fun documenting. Instead of being disappointing, it will be really interesting now.

TC: Is most of the work abstract?

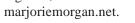
MM: It varies. At first it was mostly abstract, but now it's coming back into being landscape. They're loose landscapes. The landscapes I'm working on now, the sky and the sea are inks, and the horizon and the land masses are pigment. So, the things that actually would stay more constant in nature will stay more constant in the artwork, and the things that would shift, will shift.

TC: That is really, really interesting.

MM: And that just kind of happened. And some of it happened because of COVID, because I was like, "What am I going to do now? I have all this work that I was ready to go with, and it's not going to get seen, so what do I want to do?"

Go to gcc.mass.edu and search for "Marjorie Morgan" to find the Zoom link for the artist talk. If you'd like to have materials on hand, Morgan suggests black walnut hulls, acorn caps, or goldenrod flowers, and some heavy paper, such as printmaking or watercolor paper.

You can also access a series of Morgan's affordable, roughly half-hour video tutorials on making natural inks through Zea Mays Printmaking at zeamaysprintmaking.com, and visit her website at







Check Yourself.

he wouldn't hear of it. He wanted the treat for sure. But he didn't want to bare his body – no way, no how.

And just like that, the smooth checkup had suddenly turned into a stressful negotiation.

He seemed torn, and I was starting to lose my patience. He did

for the doctor to move away from him, because I knew in that moment that more than anything, he needed his personal space cleared.

After a few moments, I approached him gently, sitting down next to him. I repeated to him that he didn't have to do it, that we could just go home. When he realized that he could leave, he agreed, but then stopped short when he was told he couldn't have the lollipop. And just like that, we were back at square one. It didn't end well. In fact, I won't share how it ended. I mostly feel like I've failed him. This experience reminded me of how important it is to listen to my child's boundaries around other people, and support him in upholding those boundaries, no matter who it is or where we are.



By MISHEL IXCHEL

TURNERS FALLS – There we were, sitting together side by side on the examination table as we waited for the doctor. My kid, who just turned five, was looking around the room, asking me all kinds of questions. He wanted me to sit next to him, so I didn't hesitate to hop up on the table beside him. His imagination is more active, vibrant, and alive than ever. He proclaims himself to be a "builder, potion maker, and accessory keeper," which makes perfect sense to anyone who knows him.

We were looking around at the objects, and his eyes landed on the stuffed animal mobile which hung above the scale where babies are weighed. "Mama, what is the lion saying?" he asked, and one by one, I made up silly voices and pretended I was each of those animals.

Finally the doctor came in. We

exchanged pleasantries, and she sat down and started to ask my son some questions. By then, he'd begun to feel more comfortable being there, so he answered her in a lively way, without much hesitation.

When we'd first gotten there, he'd been closed up and didn't want to go in. This was odd, as he had not hesitated at all a few weeks ago when I took him to the dentist. This time though, he dug his heels in as we waited in the lobby, and I had to be somewhat stern when they called his name and he still didn't want to go in. The nurse that helped us was stellar. She actively listened to him as he told her what he's been telling everyone lately: "Guess what, I just turned five."

He had his vitals checked and acted like a champ, and when the doctor continued with the checkup, he seemed to go with the flow. It wasn't until she asked him to take his pants down that he freaked out.

Here's the thing: I'm fairly certain that my kid is one easy, gowith-the-flow kind of fella. He's easy going, and has always been like this. So when he firmly refused, at first I felt somewhat frustrated as I patiently explained to him that the doctor's job is to check our bodies, from head to toe. I mainly felt frustrated because I felt exhausted, having just had his birthday celebration and started work once again, all in the same week.

When he continued to resist, the doctor asked me if she could offer him a treat for completing his check up. I nodded, at first thinking this could entice him to let the doctor do her thing.

"Do you have bouncy balls?" he asked her, and she looked through the cabinet doors.

"No, just lollipops," she answered.

"The dentist has bouncy balls. You should call her," he replied, but still didn't seem to understand what we were asking him to do. When I told him that he'd get the lollipop once we finished with the checkup, not want to take his pants off. We tried to make him understand that it would be fast, that I would be there, and that the doctor is a safe person. I even said, "Look, you can pull your pants down yourself, or I can help you do it."

It was then that I snapped out of it. I realized I had closed in on him, encroaching his personal space. The doctor had done the same. She had rolled her chair closer in, and was saying something about it being fast, and that he would get the lollipop right after. She and I were speaking at the same time, over each other.

And him? He had his knees pulled into his chest, hyperventilating.

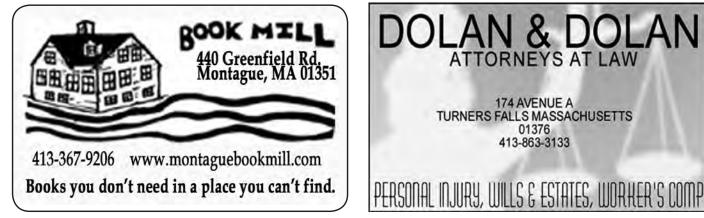
I snapped out of it, and pulled my body back. The doctor continued with the cajoling. After moving my body away from him, I said, "It's okay, you don't have to do it."

By then, it was too late. My sweet child sat there, disassociated, staring into the distance and holding his knees. He was experiencing some kind of trauma, and I had somehow contributed to it. I waited Instead, I will share what I desperately wish had happened instead.

I wish that at that point, I would have stood up and said, "It's okay baby. You did great at this check up. I can get you a lollipop at the store. Let's go, boo."

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





BOUCHER from page B1

growing manufacturing village. French Canadian stone workers dug the power canal and were now working in the expanding mills. Honoré was a plumber. His skills were in demand in Turners Falls. Fashionable Queen Anne style homes were under construction on High Street at the brow of "the hill."

Three more girls were born to Elizabeth and Honoré. "Boy" was born in 1892. Though named for his father Honoré, with five sisters at home, "Boy" is what my grandfather answered to. By 1900, the senior Honoré's eldest two daughters were working jobs as silk spinners for a nearby factory.

"Boy" appeared in the turnof-the-century census as Henry. Despite the fact that 40% of the immigrant population of Turners Falls was French Canadian when Honoré joined the workforce, his family Americanized their names for the census. Henry was able to watch the expansion of the canal and see the trolley connect the village to Greenfield through Montague City.



Henry Boucher, Sr., in front of the Montague Machine shop, now part of the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Henry Boucher Senior

Young Henry moved in with his older sister Rose and her husband Fred Lambert after his parents went to live with a daughter in Rhode Island. The Lamberts lived in Turners Falls, later moving to a farm in Gill. Henry's nieces and a nephew lived there too, including William and May. (May Lambert Szulborski, 109, is still living). William was working as a machinist in Turners Falls. Henry joined William as a machinist and toolmaker, working in a brick building at the end of Avenue A. That machine shop building is today part of the Great Falls Discovery Center.

When the United States entered the Great War, Henry did his patriotic duty. He enlisted and served in the US Army Engineers. He could speak both French and English fluently and served in France. After WWI, Henry Boucher returned to toolmaking and to the farm where he drove the farm wagon while also caring for the horses and calves.

He and Eva (Fugere) were married in a double wedding with her sister, in St. Anne's, "the French Church." St. Mary's Catholic Church, now Our Lady of Peace, was known as the "Irish Church," while Our Lady of Czestochowa was still only a dream for the later-arriving Polish Catholics. There were the German Lutheran and Methodist churches for German immigrants.

With so many languages, rather than to divide, these churches with associated clubs like the Schuetzen Verein helped to build a sense of community amidst rapid growth.

It was a cold January day in 1922 when Henry and Eva's first child, a son, was born in the family home on K Street. Eva wanted to name him Raymond. The proud *père* had his instructions when he gathered up the newborn to meet the priest at St. Anne's on J Street to be baptized. (Eva wasn't able to leave the house yet.) When the infant was returned to his *mère*, he was Henry Boucher, Jr.! Eva and Henry had another son,

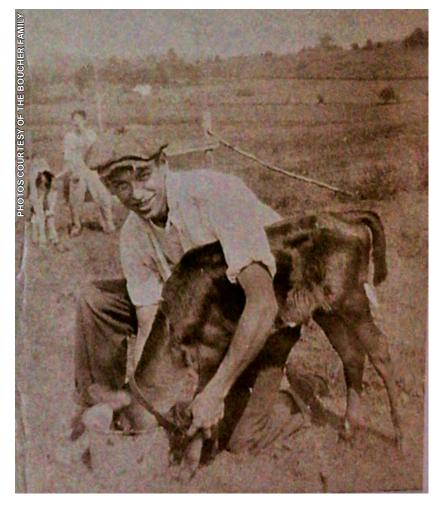
Bernard (Bernie), in 1924. Henry senior continued making tools while several paper mills, Russell Cutlery, McLane's Silk Mill, and Griswold's Cotton Mill, pushed out products. It was the "roaring twenties." The trains shuttled supplies, workers, and finished products onto the rail lines along both sides of the power canal. With the electrification of business, industry, and homes, the demand for electric power rose quickly. "Power Town" was meeting the demand, generating about 20% of the electric power used in the Commonwealth.

It was Turners Falls' industry that had attracted Honoré. It was the rails that had brought the Boucher family from Québec. Turners Falls was good to the Honoré Boucher family and his family was good to Turners Falls.

Henry passed away at age 79. The attending doctor called him "a good man." Eva sold Avon in Turners for forty-seven years, until her death in 1980. Her son, Henry Jr., described his mother as more social worker than sales person. Henry Jr. brought bookkeeping to a high art at Greenfield Community College, served on the Carnegie Library board, and worked the polls. For twenty-two years, Bernie was the Montague town accountant. He retired in 1989, nearly a century after his grandfather, Honoré, stepped off the train at Turners Falls.

Louise Boucher Croll was born and raised in Turners Falls, graduating from Northfield Mount Hermon, GCC, and the College of Our Lady of the Elms (BA and MAT). She earned a JD from Western New England University in 1988. Croll has been a history teacher as well as a lawyer. Her practice has included court appointments in Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties. She lived with her husband and children in Longmeadow for 30

years, having only recently moved to South Hadley.



Above: Henry Boucher, Sr., on the Lambert Farm, Gill.

Below: Henry and Eva Boucher circa 1928 with their children, Bernie (left) and Henry Jr., Louise Croll's father (right). In the background on the left is the old ice house. Behind Eva is the bandstand that stood in Unity Park through the 1950s and '60s.



MONTAGUE LIBRARY NOTES Carnegie Library Opens Its Doors to the Public

By JERI MORAN

Word has come in to us from the Turners Falls Carnegie Library that it

MOVIE REVIEW I'm Thinking of Ending Things (2020)

By SEAMUS TURNER-GLENNON

CHARLEMONT - Charlie Kaufman, indie critical darling, whiz-kid screenwriter, and sometimes director, is back once again! In the past, Kaufman's been known for screenplays which confront topics of the mind and focus on ideas of identity. Indie film fans describe them as mind-blowing and deep – films like Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, Being John Malkovich, and Synecdoche, New York. Kaufman's latest effort, 2020's I'm Thinking of Ending Things, lives up to his reputation: it is a reality-bending, deeply inward-looking film which seems to be preoccupied with the same matters that Kaufman always has been preoccupied with. And yet, there seems to be one thing Kaufman nearly always seems to forget. Making a film which is hyper-fixated on being a capital-P capital-F Profound Film does not inherently translate into making one which is even vaguely competent. The plot of I'm Thinking is, by no real accident on the part of Kaufman, opaque and nigh-impossible to summarize. The best way one could even begin to describe it would be as a story about a young couple (Jessie Buckley as Young Woman and Jesse Plemons as Jake) who take a road trip and soon find reality bending around them more and more, quickly revealing to the viewer that what we are watching is not the traditional, narrative-driven film we might expect. Instead, I'm Thinking of Ending Things is a tour across a mindscape which deals especially heavily with themes of aging and existential dread.

like Kaufman clearly intended, but like a half-concocted string of vague vignettes designed not to really say something, but instead to simply make the viewer think "oh wow, Kaufman certainly said something

is open by appointment – call 863-3214 – for browsing and computer use, on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For the first time in six months, library users will be able to come in to the library again. They are also still offering curbside pickup six days a week. YAY!! From the library's webpage:

Call (413) 863-3214 to schedule a 30-minute appointment to briefly browse for items. Curbside pickup will still be available, for the time being. Please use the ramp door entrance only for your appointment.

There are four basic rules for entry into the library:

1. Faces and mouths must be covered.

2. If ill, please stay out.

3. Sanitize hands upon entry.

4. Minimum 6 feet social distancing at all times.

High-contact surfaces will be cleaned every morning and midday, and as needed.

Returns will be quarantined for 3 days before being checked in. There are no fines on late items owned by Montague Public Libraries. Only items in "lost"

MIKE SLIVA ILLUSTRATION

status, or owned by other libraries, will accrue fees or fines.

Two public computers will be available for no more than 30 minutes a day. Computer stations will be sanitized in between uses. Public bathrooms will not be available.

Details, and any other guidelines, will be described when you call to schedule an appointment. Days we are open and details are subject to change, depending upon state and local guidelines. We look forward to seeing you!



Or, at least, it sort of does.

Because that's what this thing really feels like: not some magnum opus or masterfully crafted statement

profound there."

Kaufman glides from one half-baked examination of a topic to the next half-baked examination with a grace and an ease which, at first glance, could be mistaken for beauty. Upon further examination this reveals itself to be nothing more than his adeptness at this particular style of cynical, pseudo-intellectual cinema, something which he seems to have spent his entire career honing.

And script aside – and let us pretend here that one can truly put script aside when talking about Charlie Kaufman – Kaufman shows himself to be a truly incompetent director. *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* looks, to put it as neutrally as possible, like utter garbage. Kaufman displays a near-total inability to create shots which enhance his script or theme, and instead chooses to use a style of cinematography so stale and so stagnant that anyone in their right mind is forced to focus on his dialogue.

That's a trick which has been used before – sometimes with good results. But Kaufman's screenplay is so dull, so lifeless, so self-satisfied with its own self-perceived brilliance, that all that really happens is some sort of filmic Stockholm syndrome: the viewer is almost forced into believing that they are witnessing a work of pure brilliance by their own unwillingness to accept that they would have simply wasted two and a half hours of their time watching a now 61-year-old screenwriter's soliloquy about how girls never wanted to talk to him about David Foster Wallace.

That Toni Collette's quite good, though!



THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

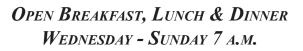


PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

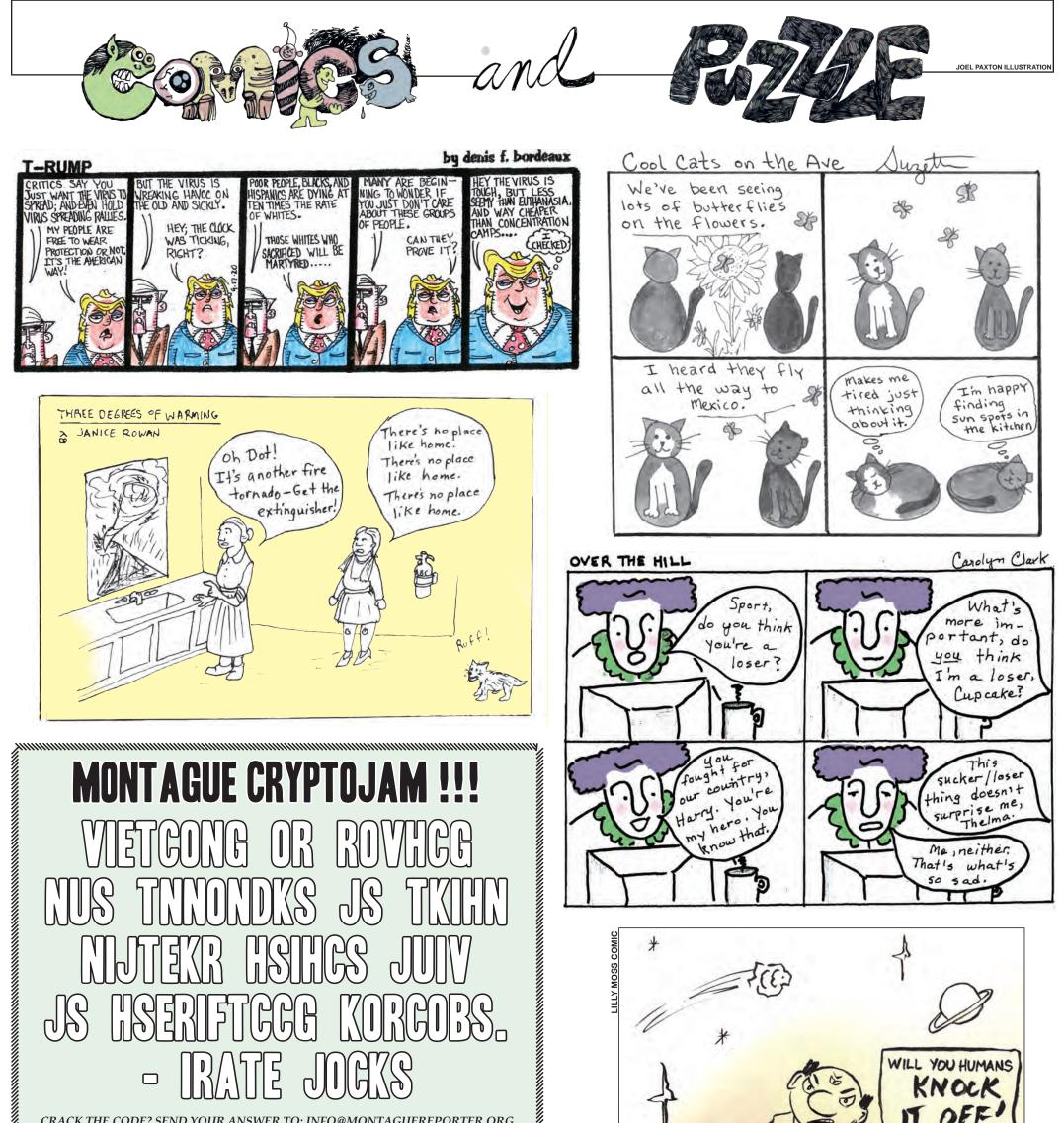


Fred Holmgren Piano Tuning & Repair Stay tuned (978)544-5494 fredholmgren@gmail.com











17 episodes are now available!

CRACK THE CODE? SEND YOUR ANSWER TO: INFO@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG



Look for us on Apple/iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, Anchor, Castbox, and elsewhere...

The Montague Reporter Podcast

Submit your comics and puzzles to editor@montaguereporter.org. Original & local creations only, please!

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

Edward J. Terault (413) 223-5494 www.REILCLEAN.com

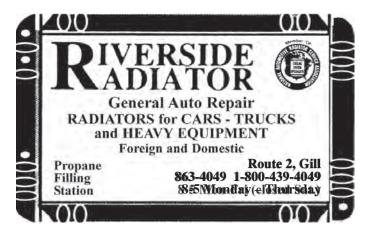


 Complete Custodial Services Bonded and Insured

"We Don't Cut Corners, We Clean Them!"

Cleaning Franklin & Hampshire Counties since 1972

BKONFONQEQWIYSS.IPY HMZGESCGQVQFHJW.MMO FONTLVPEAXQAHDO.SHC LJKEVOBFBFNAPGR.RED SECRETBROADCAST.NET a weekly secret message podcast





every-other-week service (413) 376-8076 www.thecompostcooperative.com thecompostcooperative@gmail.com



Dealer in used Home Furnishings SMALL FURNITURE . COLLECTIBLES . DECORATIVES 374 Deerfield Street • Greenfield

Lamps Mirrors Chairs Baskets featuring: Cookery Figurines End Tables I Make Open 7 Days a Week Lamps Lite!

GOOD USED USABLES



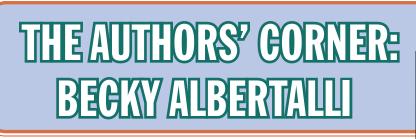
Email: bryanhobbsremodeling@gmail.com Now Accepting Credit Cards

mass save

PARTNER

Office: (413)775-9006 Lic # 083982 Reg # 139564

Bryan G. Hobbs PO Box 1535 Greenfield, MA 01302



By IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS

TURNERS FALLS – Happy September!! Today, I'm going to be reviewing *Love*, *Creekwood*, written by Becky Albertalli, and *Love*, *Victor*, a TV series based on Albertalli's books. I previously reviewed *Simon Vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*, which this TV series and novella are based on. Enjoy!

I'll start off by reviewing *Love*, *Creekwood*, a novella about the characters in *Love*, *Simon* and *Leah on the Offbeat*. This book is basically in the form of emails written back and forth between the characters. If you haven't read *Simon Vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* (which I very much suggest), Simon is gay, and *Love*, *Creekwood* is about Simon and his boyfriend being at different colleges, as well as away from their friends, Leah, Abby, Nick, Taylor, etc.

I loved *Love*, *Creekwood* because it was such a quick and fun book to read. It's very lighthearted, and a perfect read for the end of summer and the start of the school year. (It's a good book to use to help adjust from summer to academics!) I think readers of *Love*, *Simon* and *Leah on the Offbeat* will definitely enjoy this book, as well as people who like to read romance novels.

The Hulu original series *Love*, *Victor* is based on Albertalli's books. *Love*, *Victor* is about a high schooler named Victor who just moved, and is starting school at Creekwood High, the same school where the characters from *Simon Vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* and *Leah on the Offbeat* graduated from.

Victor is starting off at his new school pretty well. He's dating the most popular girl, and has already made a couple friends. Victor has been offered a spot on the school's basketball team, too, but there is one catch: the fee to play on the team is more than Victor can afford. Victor gets a job at a nearby coffee shop, where he meets Benji. Victor already has a girlfriend, but when he meets Benji, he starts to question who he wants to be with.

Victor's parents are Colombian-American, and they have strong Catholic beliefs, including believing in traditional relationships and gender roles. For instance, while Victor's grandparents are visiting, Victor's little brother is playing with a *Frozen* wand, and his grand-



Our correspondent, with the latest book by Becky Albertalli set at Creekwood High School.

pa tells him that he's playing with a girl's toy. As you can see, unlike Simon's parents, Victor's parents aren't very open-minded, so it's hard for him to find out who he really is.

Love, Victor is such an amazing show! (My mom and I watched the entire first season in two days.) It's funny, sad, and relates to things happening in the real world. I think it would be useful to watch because it's also very informative about the LGBTQ+ community and what they have to deal with. *Love, Victor* also includes special appearances by the characters of *Love, Simon*, which is exciting!

Thank you so much for reading this article. I hope everyone is having an amazing end of summer, and start of the school year!

MR Wrapping Paper Edition Artist Profiles: #2

By REPORTER STAFF

Back in August, we invited people to submit design proposals for a special Wrapping Paper Issue to be printed in November. This fundraiser for the *Montague Reporter* will feature full color designs printed on double pages of newsprint, meant to wrap presents in. Seven of these pages will feature the work of local artists chosen from the proposals we have received, with an in-house cover design as the outer page.

We announced our seven selected winners in last week's paper: Lahri Bond (Lake Pleasant); Hannah Brookman (Turners Falls); Emma Kohlmann (Northampton); Cecely Ogren (Turners Falls); Peter O. Zierlein (Northampton); Steve Schmidt (Amherst); and Jeanne Weintraub (Montague Center). The themes they proposed range from Christmas Chard to Holiday Botanicals to Grandma Moses does Turners Falls.

This special issue will go to press



on Thanksgiving week.

We have asked each artist the same three questions, and will run their answers over the coming weeks. **Hannah Brookman**, who proposed Grandma Moses-style Turners Falls scenes for her wrapping paper, answers our questions this time:

MR: What would you want your wrapping paper to say, and feel like, for the person it is being gifted to?

HB: I guess I would like it to feel special and personal, and I hope it is tied with a ribbon.

MR: What gifts would you want to receive wrapped in your paper?

HB: I like handmade gifts, especially if they are made by the gift giver, but I also appreciate handmade gifts that have been purchased from someone we know or admire. I think newspapers are especially good for wrapping soft items, like some socks or a scarf. I like the way it squishes and is so easy to rip off. I hope to get a nice knit hat.

MR: What other gifts have newspapers given you over the years?

HB: Newspapers make a great drop cloth or sewing pattern piece. But mostly, I love to papier-mâché! I make costume pieces and piggy banks, piñatas and puppets, even furniture. I also once made a stage curtain entirely out of newspaper.

