

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 1

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 29, 2020

ServiceNet CEO, Business Owners Among Landlords Filing to Evict

By SARAH ROBERTSON and MIKE JACKSON

GREENFIELD – The Franklin County sheriff’s office has served at least 19 eviction actions since the state moratorium ended almost two weeks ago, according to records received by the *Reporter*.

In Massachusetts, the statewide emergency eviction moratorium expired on October 17; Franklin County housing court is now open and landlords have begun sending notices to quit for nonpayment of rent. While a federal moratorium issued by the Centers for Disease Control continues until the end of the year, renters must submit an affidavit to their landlord proving that they have sought other forms of assistance to qualify for its protections.

Most of the landlords seeking to evict their tenants own multiple properties in the county, according to land records reviewed by the *Reporter*. Sixteen tenants have received initial notices to quit, and three have been served with a summary process summons and see **EVICT** page A5

D’Errico Quits Leverett Board After 13 Years

By MIKE JACKSON

LEVERETT – The nearly fifty Leverett voters who convened in the elementary school parking lot Saturday afternoon withstood a light drizzle, quickly dispatched with 11 articles of town business, and were gearing up to adjourn when longtime selectboard member Peter d’Errico raised a point of privilege.

“You know I enjoy speaking extemporaneously,” d’Errico told the assembly, “but today I have something to say, and I want to be brief and clear – I’m going to read a prepared statement.”

D’Errico then announced that he was resigning.

“The dysfunctions of American politics have reached Leverett,” he said. “Polarization, demonization, bombast, and recrimination have invaded the selectboard. The long-standing selectboard tradition of striving for consensus before every decision has been disrupted by tactics aimed to sharpen disputes, rather than to aid in reaching consensus.”

D’Errico, a retired professor in the Legal Studies Department at UMass-Amherst, was partway through his fifth term on the board, having first been elected in 2007. Reached for comment after the meeting, he referred to his written statement.

“Recent selectboard meetings have left me feeling physically brutalized and emotionally distraught,” he read. “The stress has become more than I am willing to bear.”

D’Errico’s announcement took see **LEVERETT** page A6

Unique Election Draws to Crescendo

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – Huge increases in early voting during this election season have strained the capacity of local small town clerks like Montague’s Deb Bourbeau. So have the wild cards thrown her way by state officials reacting to unexpected developments in other cities and towns.

At Monday’s Montague selectboard meeting Bourbeau, who was not on the agenda, unexpectedly appeared during “public participation” time to announce that a ballot drop box in Boston had been lit on fire, so the Secretary of State had issued new regulations requiring that drop boxes be more closely monitored. She said this required that Montague’s box in front of town hall be locked every evening, and then unlocked at 8:30 a.m.

She added that the box will be locked up at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Halloween, to prevent “shenanigans.” Today she told the *Reporter* that the box will also be locked at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, and reopen the next morning at 8:30. Daytime hours will continue until Election Day, next Tuesday, when the drop box will be closed at 6 p.m.

This is a large metal box in front of the town hall on Avenue A which is “closed” with a bar. It is emptied every evening, and several times a day. Whether it is in danger of catching fire was not discussed



In light of an arson on the far end of the state, Montague’s official ballot drop box will be locked overnight from now on.

at the selectboard meeting nor, apparently, with the Secretary of State, but Bourbeau is not happy that it see **ELECTION** page A7

Board Approves a Graveyard Bash As Reduced Halloween Approaches

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – There will be no traditional Rag Shag Parade down Avenue A in Turners Falls this year, but the Montague selectboard has endorsed a very non-traditional Halloween party for children and

their families at an obscure town cemetery on East Mineral Road. “I’m not sure we’ve had a request to use a cemetery since I’ve been on the board,” said Rich Kuklewicz, who chaired the meeting that approved the cemetery event.

Annie Levine of the town cem-

etary commission presented an ambitious program for the party, which included a fire pit, a “performance,” pumpkin carving, and s’mores-making, all with masks – presumably COVID-appropriate – and social distancing.

Levine said the group was changing the proposed time for the party from Friday afternoon, when the weather is supposed to be “horrendous,” to this Saturday, October 31 from 2 to 5 p.m.

The party will be limited to a maximum of 100 people, in accordance with state guidelines for outdoor gatherings, although Levine did not seem to expect that many attendees. The rules for the party will be similar to those at the Turners Falls Farmers Market, which Levine helps organize. Cemetery commission chair Judith Lorei also attended the selectboard meeting.

“I’m just trying to envision the cemetery,” said selectboard

see **HALLOWEEN** page A4



The East Mineral Road cemetery will host a socially distanced party Saturday.

PERSPECTIVE

Employee Owned... By Essential Employees

By KAYLYN ZIMMERMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Food City is the only full-service grocery store in the town of Montague. It is centrally located in the village of Turners Falls. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, many changes have been implemented within the store in an effort to keep the community safe and stop the spread of the devastating virus.

My name is Kaylyn Zimmerman. I am an employee at Food City. I started working at Food City in January 2020. Prior to the pandemic, it was a nice, chill place to work. It was a reliable and steady job that had a consistent number of customers coming in to buy groceries for themselves and their families. Customers were friendly, and would often chat with me as they checked out their items.

In March, the store changed. One of the first changes I noticed was when bright red handmade masking tape arrows covered the floors and aisles. The arrows



The only full-service grocery store in the town of Montague.

provided visual cues to point in the direction customers were mandated to walk. Tape arrows in the aisles guided direction, and tape lines behind the checkout showed people how far apart they must stand while waiting in line. The store was now comparable to a school’s busy

see **ESSENTIAL** page A5

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Town Hall COVID-19 Cases Disrupt Early Voting

By KATIE NOLAN

On Thursday, October 22, Erving town hall was closed to staff and the public after officials learned of a positive case of COVID-19 in an employee. According to the town website, “After the potential exposure was learned about... Town Hall was closed, and a cleaning company was hired to conduct a deep cleaning of the entire facility as an additional precaution.”

In an October 25 update, the website reported a second positive case associated with town hall. People who conducted business at town hall between the dates of Saturday, October 17 and Wednesday, October 21 were urged to monitor for COVID-19 symptoms, consult their medical provider, and stay home if they do not feel well.

After the deep cleaning on October 22, early voting resumed and, according to the website, “alternative staff has been brought in to conduct the election.” Voting will continue as previously scheduled, with early voting on October 29 and 30 and election day voting on November 3.

Voters are required to enter through the back door to the town hall and proceed to the ground floor using the stairs or the elevator. After submitting their ballot, they are expected to exit through the side door to maintain one-way traffic flow. Voters are asked to remain at home if they are ill, and required to wear a face covering and maintain a see **ERVING** page A4

GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Finally Names Date For Annual Town Meeting

By JERRI HIGGINS

The Gill selectboard met Monday evening, working through their typical business in this atypical year. A provisional date for Gill’s annual town meeting, postponed since the spring, was put forth, as was an application for a second round of reimbursement under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, along with two other grants, and approval of November’s “one-twelfth” budget.

While there was no specific COVID-19-related business, in the wake of rising virus cases, selectboard chair (and regional health agent) Randy Crochier offered a general reminder to “wear masks, stay socially distant, and wash hands.”

“Does that mean it is OK to hoard toilet paper again?” town administrator Ray Purington joked.

“Yes, we can start doing that again any time now, too,” Crochier retorted.

Out of the total \$131,282 allocated to Gill under the federal CARES Act, Purington said the town received \$5,399 during the first funding period that ended on June 30. The board approved the see **GILL** page A8

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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Pulling the Lever

“Science, which unscrupulous-characters have for years been unscrewing from public policy, has come loose entirely, and is simply one weapon among all the others. The very function of expertise has turned to burnt ash and blown away in the wind of public discourse, since education and experience are increasingly taken as hallmarks of corruption.

“And everywhere, it’s men who seem to be snapping. Yesterday morning a white man in Des Moines ambushed and killed two police officers, apparently because he was angry at police officers for stopping him from waving a Confederate flag in the faces of black women at a high school football game.

“‘I was offended by the blacks sitting through our anthem,’ he announced, to nobody in particular, on the internet. ‘Thousands more whites fought and died for their freedom. However this is not about the Armed forces, they are cop haters.’

“The fact that people like this are not well is beside the point. Everyone is less healthy, everyone more at risk, in a culture that feeds each person’s paranoia, vindicates their suspicion, in isolation.

“This culture is partly encouraged by certain leaders, and it is partly the unintended consequence of wiring so many of our interactions through consumer electronics.

“But it also stems from a third source, which is the *absence* of contexts in which we have to research, engage with and analyze the structures of power collectively.

“Fifty or a hundred years ago, our society was being actively shaped by movements and struggles for freedom, safety, comfort and inclusion; there were powerful and oppressive forces, but sometimes they could be made to contend with popular will.

“Today, we are anxious and tired, and we are presented with images of innumerable famous, wealthy, powerful people; their well-being is somehow connected to the whole unjust system, but not always in easily comprehensible ways.

“But it’s easy to find out bad things about these famous people, if we look for it; it may not shed light on how the world works, but it confirms that they are corrupt and undeserving.

“Nothing that happens in this election, or because of it, will fix this root problem: a growing number of people feel cheated, feel ashamed, feel confused, and want revenge.”

That’s what we wrote in this space on November 3, 2016, five days before the last presidential election. And here we are again.

We don’t know what the outcome will be. We’ve been told to brace for doubt and contention.

The idea of the vote as a popular tally by consent is old-fashioned and naïve. The raw material authority, the sheer potential to unleash force, invested in the US state has meant that every step of the process has been made a battle. Judges, lawyers, the Census, the postal service, the redrawing of legislative districts, the interpretation of the law: it’s all just power clawing endlessly over power.

We’ve spent four years at the mercy of a camp that is barbaric but coherent. America should be a fortress ensuring the interests of its citizens over the other 96% of humanity, they argue. If scientists claim business as usual will throw the planet’s life systems into hopeless imbalance, well, maybe scientists should be stuffed into lockers and replaced with newer, more loyal scientists before anyone really thinks out the implications of what they are saying.

Everything else was built on top of that. Our broad inability to respond with comprehensive, coordinated action to the COVID-19 pandemic was the end result.


And the problem is, the opposing faction is little more than that – oppositional. There’s no coherent rival bloc facing down the nationalists, because internationalism is taboo; the best we can hope for is a coalition that wedges itself between them and the nuclear state.

“It is exactly the terrifying lack of any global coordinating force that makes anxious little tyrants the world over believe that there must be a *secret* global coordinating force at work,” we offered glumly on November 17, 2016.

The last four years have been mostly terrible, but we didn’t plunge into any actual world wars. We should count our blessings. The next four may well be worse – or better. Americans have learned a lot of lessons during this recent ordeal. Maybe we’ll have an opportunity to put them to good use.

A system that depends on endless growth is confronting its absolute ecological limits. Until we have the tools to move forward through this impasse, we will remain vulnerable to chest-thumping hucksters offering dreams of a bygone world.

NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



David Carr reports that business this summer “was insane” at his shop, Basically Bicycles on Third Street in Turners Falls. Carr has been in business since 1994, and specializes in recumbent bikes and trikes like the one he is assembling in this picture.

NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Slow March Toward Hybrid Continues Amid HVAC Delays

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – The first handful of district students returned for in-person learning last Thursday: ten at Sheffield Elementary and six at Turners Falls High School, with each group split in half. Another 20 or so – students identified as “social/emotional learners,” or with special therapeutic needs – will likely be added next Thursday.

The Gill-Montague school committee heard a report on the gradual progress toward reopening the schools in hybrid, and took no vote on the matter, approving superintendent Bryan Beck’s deliberate course of action. Beck shared updates about upgrades to the buildings’ ventilation systems, and in all buildings, the news was that the upgrades were going slower than anticipated; final reports were not available for any building, and only certain spaces are currently deemed to have high enough air flow to allow teaching.

Beck said the eventual decision to call in all students whose families wish for two days a week would be based on a combination of three factors: the HVAC repairs; staffing capacity; and “trends of the virus in the area.”

The state Department of Health’s weekly town-by-town report on official COVID-19 data shifted last week from a Wednesday to a Thursday release, complicating timely tracking of the virus’s apparent resurgence in Massachusetts by both the district’s pandemic response advisory committee (PRAC), which meets each Wednesday, and this newspaper, which usually goes to press early Thursday morning.

Beck said the district had been granted a “reprieve” by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which

had sent a letter several weeks ago demanding a timeline for hybrid reopening, after DESE reviewed the local plan and found its logic sound. “We want to have kids in school, we want to do it safely, but it’s a local decision,” Beck said.

The superintendent also reported that the PRAC intends to send a survey to district families investigating the challenges of remote learning, which will continue for at least part of the week even if students return part time.

During the meeting’s public comment period, elementary school phys ed teacher Ron Wood expressed concerns over the plan for him and four other specialists to deliver in-person instruction to up to 463 elementary students in 28 different classrooms in three schools.

“That is a lot of exposure,” Wood said. “We are not trying to get out of our teaching duties, by any stretch of the imagination, but we want to do it safely.” Given the mandates for masks and social distancing and against sharing equipment, Wood argued that the district gets “more bang for the buck” teaching physical activities while in remote learning.

“I’m being forced into a very difficult decision,” he told the school committee. “Having had a heart attack a year ago, I am being told that I’m a risk factor.”

The committee approved a wage hike for paraprofessionals, custodians, and cafeteria support staff from \$12.75 an hour to \$13.50 on January 1, to keep up with an increase in the Massachusetts minimum wage. Substitute teachers, accordingly, will get a raise from \$100 a day to \$120.

The committee heard a report from Beck, who began the job in the summer, about his strategic goals for district improvement this year. “This is an odd entry situation for

any superintendent,” he observed. His major goals included “effectively manag[ing] the district’s school re-opening plans” and developing a plan to market the district once school choice is back in effect.

Beck also floated the idea of developing a “proposal to become a biliterate school district,” in which all students and staff would be encouraged to pursue fluency in English and Spanish.

“Unlike many other school districts, our young people have an opportunity to speak Spanish with their peers in the community,” he said. “I believe it could be an effective school choice draw.”

Montague member Haley Anderson praised the idea, and pupil services Dianne Ellis noted that in 2019, Turners Falls High School graduated its first recipient to earn the state Seal of Biliteracy.

Tech director Tina Mahaney gave the committee a presentation about technology tools the district is using this year, though she said she couldn’t share much about security measures, for security’s sake.

The committee appointed Cassie Damkoehler, who volunteered after much awkward Zoom silence, to represent it at the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) conference on November 7, and voted unanimously in favor of all ten resolutions MASC will consider. These include endorsing a moratorium on high-stakes testing during the pandemic, reimbursement of all pandemic-related expenses, and a softening of discipline toward districts for low attendance this year.

Bill Tomb volunteered to rep Gill-Montague at the Collaborative for Educational Services, after even more collective reluctance.

The committee’s next meeting is planned for November 10 via Zoom.

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LARKIN-ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

By NINA ROSSI

The Mass Cultural Council urges all creatives, both organizations and individuals, to fill out their **COVID-19 impact survey** by the end of the day this Friday, October 30. Take a few minutes to fill it out at www.massculturalcouncil.org.

The information from the survey helps guide decision-making in the state capital as the FY'21 budget is formed and the 2020 Economic Development Bond Bill is written. The data will help sharpen the message from the MCC in support of the arts.

The Great Falls Apple Corps will share their **produce, applesauce, and soup** made from gleanings at a table set up outside the Great Falls Market at 109 Avenue A this Saturday, October 31. It is all free, so stop on by and help yourself to the harvest between noon and 3 p.m.!

Check out **gravestone carving** at Historic Deerfield this Saturday, October 31. Karin Sprague will demonstrate this historic craft for visitors between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 80 Old Main Street, Deerfield. You will need to purchase a timed ticket to this demonstration at www.historicdeerfield.org.

You may also join a tour of the Old Burying Ground at 11 a.m. on Albany Road and learn about the life and times of 18th-century gravestone carver Solomon Ashley, who created many of the beautiful and unusual stones in the cemetery. Also by reservation and with museum admission.

Then on Sunday, November 1, the Museum hosts live demonstrations of **dressmaking, shoemaking, and tailoring** between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Halloween is Saturday, though some parades and gatherings have been canceled this year, including the Rag Shag in Turners Falls. Pre-wrapped candies handed out by gloved hands – or served in ways that involve no rummaging through a bowl – are a necessity. Here are a few other local happenings:

Come join the Lovelights Theater troupe and the Montague Cemetery Commission for a **Halloween Party** at East Mineral Cemetery on East Mineral Road this Saturday from 2 to 5 p.m.

There will be pumpkin carving (BYO pumpkin if you can), cider, a fire pit with s'mores, and a quaint old-fashioned Halloween play.

See the witches dance and hear the ghosts sing! Any children who come dressed as witches or ghosts may join in if they dare. Masks and social distancing required, participants limited to 100.

Avenue A will have some **Halloween photo booth** opportunities: check these out at the Carnegie Library, Swanson's Fabric, and Nina's Nook. Pop in with a mask on and say Boo! at Buckingham Rabbits Vintage, closed since March, while they are open this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

Pick up a **Day of the Dead** coloring sheet and free crayons at Montague Catholic Social Ministries at 78 Avenue A while supplies last, this Thursday between 2 and 4 p.m.

Greenfield Farmers Market is extending their **Saturday morning outdoor market** season this year to November 21. The group still hopes to find a location large enough to hold an indoor winter market this year. The previous winter market location is not large enough to allow for social distancing in the time of COVID.

This Sunday, November 1, Deb Habib and Ricky Baruch will discuss their book *Making Love While Farming* during a free Zoom book group held from 11 a.m. to noon. This presentation is part of the ongoing Northfield Authors and Artists Festival.

The authors are the founders of Seeds of Solidarity Farm and Education Center in Orange. Their

solar-powered family farm uses all no-till, regenerative methods. They organize the North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival with their neighbors, and they will share some of their passion and methodology for making good community here in the valley as part of the discussion about their book. Find the event link at authorsandartistsfestival.wordpress.com.

The LAVA Center is having their first Monday **Lit Up the Night** session on November 2 featuring poet, musician, and essayist Nina Gross. There will be a spoken-word open mic following Gross's presentation which starts at 7 p.m. Register in advance for the Zoom event through the Center's website, www.localaccess.org.

The Communities That Care Coalition has published results of a **survey of local youth** taken in February and March of this year, right before the shutdown. The survey looked at school climate and substance abuse.

There was a slight dip in perceptions of safety at school and sense of belonging among some students in Franklin County, but all within a range deemed favorable by researchers. Good news was had in vaping rates among students which showed a rapid decline, down from 32% of students in 2019 to 20%. The Coalition believes that the drop is the result of new laws, school intervention, and community awareness campaigns.

Great Falls Books Through Bars is having one final **outdoor volunteer day** on Sunday, November 15 at Just Roots Farm in Greenfield. Help pack books to ship to incarcerated people across the country or help write letters to them. Sign up to work on several shifts from 12 to 5 p.m. at www.greatfalls-bookssthroughbars.org.

The Piti Theater Company in Shelburne Falls completed another **Your Town project**, this one in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and the podcast series about Ridgefield, called *Hindsight*, is airing in several installments.

The theater company has previously produced Your Town about Colrain, and will take on the town of Deerfield next in partnership with the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, and then go up to Putney, Vermont to partner with NEXT Stage for a production there.

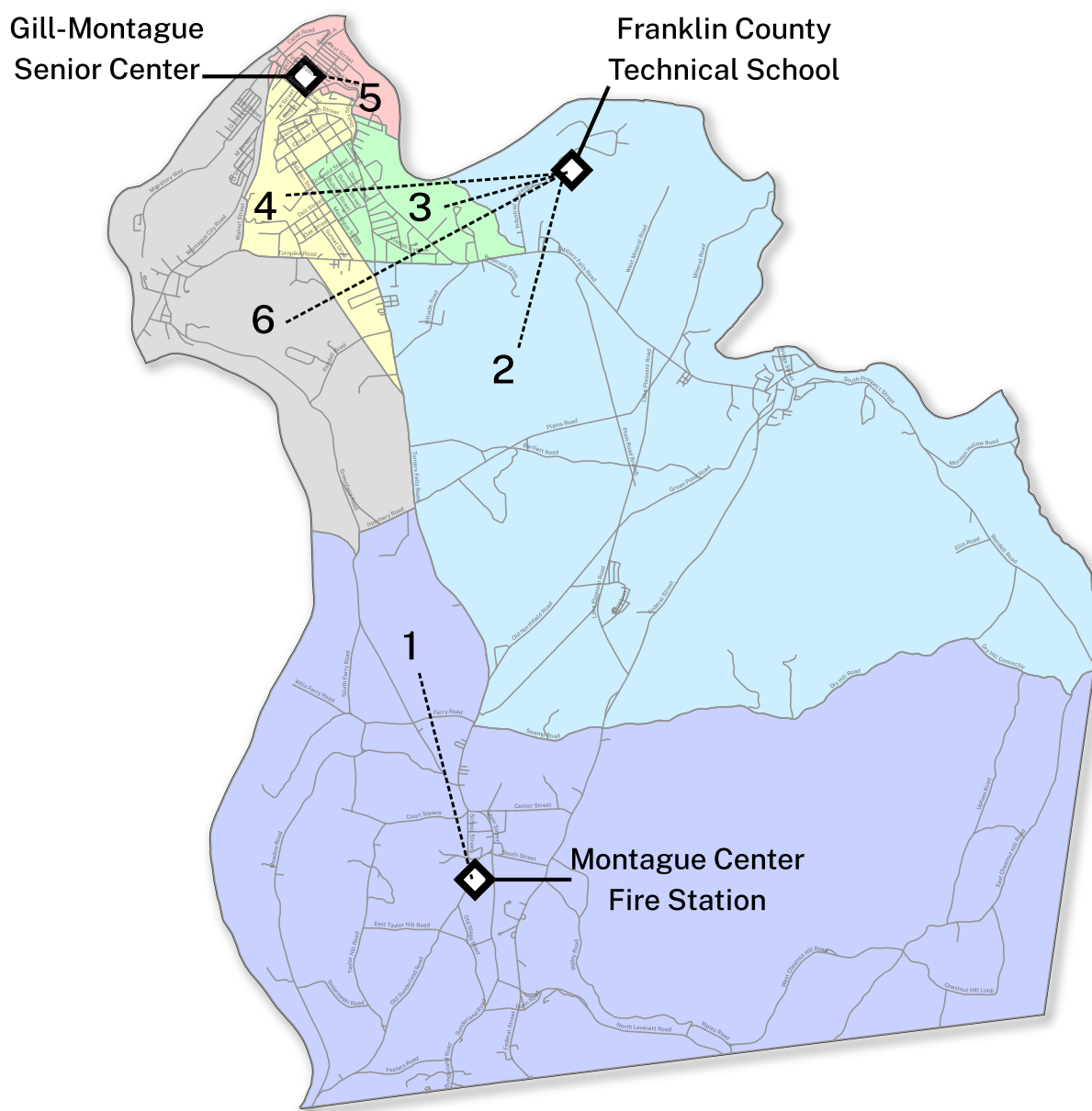
To hear the podcast series, log on to www.ptco.org/hindsight/.

Got a LEGO builder in your household? The Brattleboro Museum will be taking entries for their **annual LEGO Contest** on Monday, November 9 and Tuesday, November 10 from 3 to 7 p.m.

Get those bricks lined up and fill out the online entry form for this all-ages contest at www.brattleboro-museum.org. All creations will be on display at the museum from Friday, November 13 through Monday, November 16, with a Zoom judging event Saturday, November 14 at 5 p.m. There are categories for all age groups, and the event is more of a community building exercise than a serious competition. Call with any questions: (802) 257-0124.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Montague 2020 General Election Polling Locations



Polling Locations By Precinct

Precinct 1: Montague Center Fire Station - 28 Old Sunderland Road, Montague
Precinct 2: Franklin County Technical School - 82 Industrial Blvd, Turners Falls
Precinct 3: Franklin County Technical School - 82 Industrial Blvd, Turners Falls
Precinct 4: Franklin County Technical School - 82 Industrial Blvd, Turners Falls
Precinct 5: Gill-Montague Senior Center - 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls
Precinct 6: Franklin County Technical School - 82 Industrial Blvd, Turners Falls

09/21/2020. For The Montague Reporter by Travis Drury. Data from MassGIS.



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ERVING from page A1

six-foot distance from others during voting. Erving voters who feel ill on election day may call (508) 230-0530 for options on voting from home.

The Erving town hall has been open only for limited hours since March, with daily sanitization of high-touch surfaces. Staff members who work at town hall are provided with hand sanitizer, gloves, and masks, and Plexiglass shields were installed to minimize contact between employees and the public.

At Monday's selectboard meeting, all three selectboard members, each of whom had been present at town hall at some time during the potential exposure window, said they were either waiting for results of COVID-19 testing or had a test scheduled.

Tax Rate, Water Rate

Erving's 2020 real property tax rates will increase slightly over last year after the selectboard approved a 65% "minimum residential factor" at a tax classification hearing Monday night. The 2020 residential rate is expected to increase by \$0.05 to \$7.59 per thousand dollars of property value, and the commercial and industrial rate is expected to increase by \$0.13 to \$12.37 per thousand.

The split rate shifts the tax burden away from residential property

owners to commercial or industrial property owners. Under the rates approved this week, the Northfield Mountain Project will pay over 80% of real property taxes owed to the town.

Seven parcels in town are eligible for a "small commercial" exemption from the higher commercial and industrial tax rate.

As a result of a state audit that indicated that there was a shortfall in the amount of income generated from water user fees, the board, in their role as water commissioners, voted to raise the water rate from \$4.80 per thousand gallons to \$5.20 per thousand.

The last water rate increase was approved in 2013. The board members agreed to evaluate water rates annually, and review the income from water rates as part of the annual budgeting process.

Draft Policies

The board reviewed draft policies regarding the police department drug recognition expert (DRE), the disposal of surplus property, electronic vehicle charging, and credit card purchases.

The DRE is a police officer trained to recognize impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs other than alcohol. Acting police chief Robert Holst told the board that Erving has provided DRE services to other towns since 2017,

when two officers received certification. One of the officers has since left the Erving police department. The program was halted when the DRE responded to a request from a Worcester County town.

Selectboard member William Bembury asked about police coverage in Erving when the DRE is on an out-of-town call. He said that the department and the chief need a firm grasp of the policy so that Erving is not adversely affected.

Holst told the board that Erving and other county departments regularly participate in mutual aid, and that if an emergency occurred while the DRE was on an out-of-town call, another town's police department would provide coverage.

Minor edits were suggested for the other policies, and the board will consider them further at its November 2 meeting.

State Grants

The town was awarded \$399,596 in a state Department of Transportation "Complete Streets" grant. According to the award letter, the program promotes safety, access, and mobility for all roadway users.

Town administrator Bryan Smith said that the money will be used for work on Park, Central, Pratt, Gunn, and Pleasant streets, and the work is expected to be done by June 30, 2022.

Assistant planner Mariah Kurtz

said that she, selectboard chair Jacob Smith, and Bryan Smith had spoken with representatives of the state development agency Mass-Works about the town's \$2.5 million grant application for construction of an access road at the former International Paper Mill.

Kurtz told the board that the agency asked the town to withdraw the original application, and re-submit it with a new scope of work for a project costing \$500,000 or less. Engineering consultant Tighe & Bond worked with Kurtz to develop a \$493,000 project to resize the forced sewer line from the mill and construct a new pump station.

Kurtz said that changing the scope of this project would change a separate site readiness grant application. She asked if the board still wanted to apply for a grant that included demolition of Buildings 3 and 5 and part of Building 1, which would have been demolished for the access road project.

Board members responded that the buildings were deteriorating, and should be demolished for safety and liability reasons.

Kurtz said several developers have expressed interest in the property. Bryan Smith said the town will release a request for proposals from developers this winter, and begin reviewing proposals in March.



HALLOWEEN from page A1

member Michael Nelson. "Is this taking place within graved areas?"

Levine responded that most of the activities will take place in a "small little clearing" next to the cemetery. "The stones provide atmosphere, but we're not dancing over anyone's grave," she said.

"Okay. That's when I got a little nervous," said Nelson. "I'm not sure Grandma's going to want anyone dancing on her."

The vote to approve the party was unanimous. "I had some of the same questions," said Kuklewicz. "I think both Judith and Annie understand the importance of maintaining the sanctity of the cemetery. They lend themselves to a Halloween gathering, but even though there has not been anybody interred there for many, many years, it still is a historic cemetery."

This is the second year that the town has seen discussions of Halloween, not generally considered an official public holiday, at a selectboard meeting. Last year a number of towns in the region, including Greenfield, attempted to restrict Halloween activities in response to an impending tropical storm. This led to complaints that regulating the holiday represented "overreach" by local government.

Montague avoided that criticism last year, and this year has assured residents there will be no attempt to micromanage trick-or-treating.

Meanwhile, the residents of Montague Center have been struggling with what to do with their annual Halloween event. The neighborhood has become Halloween ground zero for many Montague families, as well as visitors from nearby hill towns without neighborhoods suitable for trick-or-treating. The Center has reacted to its newfound popularity with elaborate pumpkin displays, spooky houses, and even grilled food and a reggae band on Gary Turn's front lawn.

The closest thing Montague Center has to a village government is the neighborhood's fire district. Earlier this month the Firefighters Association issued a letter (printed in the *Reporter*) noting that while Montague Center has become a Halloween "mecca," many residents were "opting out of the Halloween festivities" this year out of concern that crowds gathering on their front lawns would violate COVID-19 safety protocols.

The memo stated that residents of North Street "have already regrettably announced they will not play host," and urged "everyone to adhere to the wishes of the individual homeowners and respect their decision."

In publicly announcing the likelihood of reduced festivities, the Firefighters Association's strategy was similar to the one taken by the town of Shelburne, which surveyed homes in the popular Shelburne Falls neighborhood and then issued a regional press release warning that "of the 52 households responding, 70 to 80% reported that they do not plan to hand out candy on Halloween night."

Emily Monosson, who lives on North Street in Montague Center, said she hoped the impression was not being created that "we ganged up against trick-or-treaters. *That is not the case.* We are all sad not to have trick-or-treaters, but also feel that the crowds down the street from all over is just not safe."

Some residents have stated they plan to give out candy, but tone down the festivities and follow safety protocols, wearing masks and limiting gatherings on their property. There will be no BBQ or reggae at Gary Turn's house, but his daughter will hand out candy to properly distanced trick-or-treaters wearing masks.

A number of other Center residents appear to be following the same approach. Jeanne Weintraub, who lives on the small section of North Street section that borders the village common,

sent the *Reporter* the following email:

"I feel that in these times we are called to balance our need for safety with our need for social interaction, and to find ways to bring joy to the lives of those around us – especially children, who've had so many activities taken away from them. I believe we are challenged to explore *what is possible* when precautions are taken, and that we should resist the urge to reflexively announce we will shut down any activity that involves a group of people.

"Our household plans to turn the lights on and give out candy this Halloween. We are constructing a pumpkin monster whose hands will deposit candy in two 6 feet+ apart locations, about 10 feet away from where we sit on our porch. Seven months into this pandemic, we trust that people know to wear masks and stay distant, but we will add some visual cues for reminders.

"We anticipate that the number of trick-or-treaters who show up will be much lower than in previous years, and the number of people will self-limit when the candy runs out. But we will look forward to shouts, squeals, and screams of trick-or-treaters taking in our display and feel the rewards of giving families something fun to talk about."



Jeanne Weintraub's North Street house is decorated for the holiday.

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ESSENTIAL from page A1

gymnasium floor which marks all the different courts, lanes, and games.

In April, the store installed plastic plexiglass shields for separation between the customers and the cashiers. Employees were required to wear masks in the store. Customers started to come in more frequently, clearing the shelves of toilet paper and other cleaning supplies.

Binge buyers stocked their carts with multiple family packs of chicken. The demand was so high, the store had to put limits on the amount and type of meats sold per person. The supply food trucks sometimes ran late, and items we normally ordered were unavailable due to high demand.

When I asked my supervisor, Colleen, what her feelings were about working during this pandemic, she shared, “It was complete chaos. People panicked and took a lot of their scares and worries out on us. Shelves were cleared, and products weren’t coming in. It was a scary thing to be an essential frontline worker. In my position, as a supervisor, I was also always worried about the employees. It was physically and emotionally exhausting.”

Presently, in October, we still get a lot of customers who do not wear masks. My coworkers and I do not feel comfortable when we see our customers without a mask, but we are not allowed to ask them to put one on.

My coworkers have witnessed customers discussing the legality of wearing a mask, and we have overheard comments like, “I don’t have to wear a mask, it’s my right!” It was hard for me to hear that, when I feel the weight of the responsibility to keep the safety of my customers a priority by wearing my own uncomfortable, inconvenient, and hard-to-breathe-in mask. I want my customers to feel safe when entering our store so they may shop for their needed groceries without additional stress.

I asked my former coworker, Emily, how she had felt when customers entered Food City without wearing a mask. “When someone came in without a mask, it kinda felt like a slap in the face,” she told me, “like they didn’t care about us workers and how many germs we are already around. Working during COVID was, and still is,

nerve-racking, because we can’t just sit home and not do anything. We have to see hundreds of people daily, and be around them and touch all those germs they have. Working during COVID has been mentally and physically draining as we run around more.”

The store has hired more employees. I asked one of them, “How does it feel to be working during COVID as a new Food City employee?”

Shelby answered me: “My dad is very immune-compromised, so we had to be super careful this entire time since COVID started, so taking any job was a concern. Working in the public was especially worrying, but I already know everyone here, and know the community so now that some time has passed and COVID cases have died down, I thought it was all right.”

I am an essential worker at Food City. My name is Kaylyn Zimmerman. I never expected working in my town’s local grocery store would make me an essential worker. However, it has.

It is my constant worry and stressor to be “essential.” It is nerve-racking when a customer comes in without a mask, because my family and I have compromised respiratory systems. I have intense asthma, yet I still wear my mask. I feel hurt and frustrated. I feel as though people do not care enough to think about the outcomes if I or one of my colleagues gets sick.

My mother bought my mask for me. I wear it for six-plus hours a day while I work at Food City. It is a thick, homemade, 3” x 5” swatch of pink paisley fabric that lays over my face.

I work because I need the money to support myself. It is something that I *have* to do, because my mom can not afford it all herself. I need the money and the job. I have to work through this pandemic. It is not my forever plan to work at Food City, but it is for now.

If I can wear my mask for six-plus-hour shifts, I would hope that my customers can do it for the hour that they shop.

I am an employee at Food City. My name is Kaylyn Zimmerman. I am essential.

Kaylyn Zimmerman is a senior studying journalism at Turners Falls High School.



EVICT from page A1

complaint, a request to appear in court.

“It’s a tough situation. We certainly feel for some of these people, because it’s not their fault,” said Scott Parker, director of civil process for the Franklin County sheriff’s office. “Really it’s not up to us – it’s the courts that decide whether these people get evicted. We just serve them.”

Just one legal eviction has been carried out in Franklin County since the COVID-19 pandemic began, according to Parker – a tenant with a drug-related conviction – but nobody has been evicted since the moratorium was lifted.

The sheriff’s office served notices to quit to two tenants on behalf of Icarus, Wheaten & Finch, a management company belonging to Jordi Herold, who owns several Greenfield properties. Herold, a prominent landlord in Northampton and co-founder of the Iron Horse Music Hall, purchased three buildings on Bank Row in 2009 under the name Spike Segundo LLC, and rents ground-floor property to Greenfield Coffee, Magpie, and Manna House.

After Herold purchased new residential properties in Northampton over the summer under a different name, Ampersand Sprout LLC, a group of tenants formed the “Association of the Buildings of Jordi Herold” to oppose rent hikes he implemented.

Attempts to reach Herold by phone and email were unsuccessful as of press time.

Notices to quit were also served to separate tenants by Redfoot, LLC and Aida, LLC, two companies owned by Jody P. James of Northfield. Reached by phone, James, who owns several residential prop-

erties in Greenfield, Buckland, and Northfield as well as the Northfield Food Mart and Mim’s Market, declined to comment for this story.

In Shelburne Falls, a summary process summons was served to a tenant of Barry Goldstein at a multi-unit apartment building on Bridge Street.

Goldstein, who lives in Northampton, co-owns the building with his wife Susan L. Stubbs, the current president and CEO of ServiceNet, a nonprofit network of mental health and human services providers that employs nearly 1,500 people in western and central Massachusetts.

Stubbs did not respond to an emailed request for comment as of press time.

According to its website, ServiceNet provides counseling, addiction, and housing and vocational support to over 12,000 people every year.

At least three ServiceNet employees attended a meeting of social service providers hosted by the sheriff’s Opioid Task Force last Friday. The meeting, which about 75 people attended via Zoom, was convened “to discuss a community response to housing and homelessness issues in the 30-town region of Franklin and the North Quabbin, especially since the COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium was lifted on October 17,” according to the Task Force’s public invitation.

Jay Sacchetti, ServiceNet’s vice president of housing, vocational and addiction services, updated attendees on the number of shelter beds soon to be available at their Wells Street shelter in Greenfield. He said the renovations, funded by the Channing Bete Company, would be complete by mid-December, and allow for about a dozen more beds.

“We need to band together and get the legislation passed that will actually keep tenants safe during this pandemic,” Pamela Schwartz, director of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, told attendees of Friday’s meeting.

In the meantime Community Legal Aid, a free service for low-income and elderly people lacking the resources to navigate the court system on their own, will be using state money to hire more staff. Additional housing attorneys, intake workers, and case managers will help them deal with the anticipated increase in eviction cases over the coming months.

“Our case managers will assist tenants in navigating rental assistance programs that can help them pay off rental arrearage, thereby avoiding eviction and maintaining housing stability,” said Jennifer Dieringer, the managing attorney of Community Legal Aid’s Franklin County office. “While the threat of eviction can be scary and intimidating, there are attorneys and advocates who can help tenants negotiate agreements that keep them stable in their homes.”



At right: Photographer and local historian Ed Gregory visited the ongoing demolition of the former Keith Paper Co. smokestack in Turners Falls last week. “Workers are removing bricks, and they (the brick) take flight,” he wrote. “Workers are at the 97-foot height.” The Keith mill complex, now owned by the town, is commonly known as the Strathmore, a later name. Thanks to Ed for the photo!



ED GREGORY PHOTO



On the Job: Cohn & Company Welcomes Cyd Scott

GREENFIELD – Cohn & Company Real Estate is pleased to welcome Cyd Scott to their team of real estate professionals. Cyd is a full-time REALTOR® and is an integrated member of the Franklin County community. He has been involved with 100s of weddings and events all over Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut during his illustrious career as a musician. He brings years of skilled negotiating and team collaboration to you as his client. No doubt you will feel at home working with Cyd on your transactions, he strives to make everyone feel like family. Connect with Cyd at (413) 275-9359 or: cyd@cohnandcompany.com.

NOTICE OF COMMUNITY INFORMATIONAL SESSION

The Montague Planning and Conservation Department will moderate a remote meeting with the principals of **Greenhouse Cannabis Group, Inc.** d/b/a Greenhouse Mobility Solutions, who are planning to locate a web-based cannabis delivery business within a storefront at **41A East Main Street** in Millers Falls. The specific use will be an administrative and technology development office. No cannabis products will be stored or sold on-site. The project will require a Zoning Special Permit and a Host Community Agreement from the Town of Montague as well as a license from the State Cannabis Control Commission. This is an initial chance for dialogue between the community and the project proponents.

Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 5:30 PM
ZOOM Meeting ID: 987 1493 6923 Passcode: 387266
Dial In: 1 (646) 558-8656

More information and direct links can be found at www.montague-ma.gov

Town of Montague Selectboard REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

500 AVENUE A DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

In accordance with the provisions of MGL, Chapter 30B, §16 the Town of Montague seeks written proposals to purchase and redevelop the so-called **Montague DPW Garage** (Assessor’s Map 5, Lot 27). The Town-owned former highway department headquarters is located at 500 Avenue A in the village of Turners Falls.

The Site is 0.87 acres and is developed with one single-story, 11,250-square-foot commercial building that includes two (2) small attached garages, and one (1) large multi-bay attached garage. The property has been the Montague DPW maintenance facility since 1963. The Department is vacating the facility in December 2020.

The Town hopes to hear from a variety of individuals and organizations who will present proposals for the redevelopment of property in a manner that will enhance the southern corridor of Avenue A.

Proposal Requirements: Due to the fact that the Town is seeking redevelopment of a property that requires rehabilitation and based upon a recent real estate appraisal, a minimum bid price for the Property has been established as \$50,000.00. Proposals that meet the minimum requirements in Section II will be rated as “responsive,” and shall be further evaluated in accordance with the comparative evaluation criteria outlined in Section IX.

The Town reserves the right to reject in whole or in part any and all proposals. This RFP may be cancelled if the Town determines that cancellation serves the best interests of the Town. The Selectboard has final approval of all awarded contracts. Minority and women-owned business are encouraged to submit proposals.

Proposal Submission Deadline is 10:00 a.m. Thursday, December 10, 2020. The Town will conduct an informal session and tour of the site at 2:00 p.m. Thursday, November 12, 2020. Physical distancing protocols will be in effect.

All inquiries regarding to this RFP shall be directed in writing to: Walter Ramsey, Town Planner: planner@montague-ma.gov. Copies of this Request for Proposals (RFP) and supporting reference documents may be obtained at www.montague-ma.gov.



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LEVERETT from page A1
his fellow selectboard members, Julie Shively and Tom Hankinson, by surprise – though perhaps not entirely. They decided Monday night to try to serve as a two-person board until the annual town meeting (*see article, same page*).

Shively told the *Reporter* that she joined the board in 2009, and “it feels like it’s been forever.” D’Errico, she said, “had just been tired for a while.” She said she has not decided whether to run again for her own seat when her term ends next spring.

“It’s changed a lot since COVID,” Shively said, “in part because of the remote participation.... I can’t even see who’s on, and then people just start talking into thin air.”

The most recent controversy discussed by the board, concerning requests that the selectboard endorse Black Lives Matter on behalf of the town – an issue d’Errico and Shively both said they supported personally, but held should be taken up by town meeting – “isn’t really any different than some other things we’ve gone through in the past,” she said, “but the nature of having to have a meeting now obviously has changed things.”

“We’re not legislative,” Shively explained further. “There’s a lot of stuff that’s just day to day making sure the business of the town gets

done.... We want people to participate, to a degree, but not if it starts to sabotage the meeting.”

Reached after Monday’s board meeting, Hankinson said he was “not particularly concerned” that a two-person board might result in deadlock, “considering the number of... unanimous decisions we have made as a three-person board – hundreds of votes in my 5-year tenure.”

Still, he pointed out, a petition by 20% of the town’s registered voters could override the board and force a special town meeting to fill the seat before the spring.

The special town meeting’s previous 39 minutes had been uneventful. Voters agreed to patch another \$31,778 onto the current fiscal year’s town budget, pay three bills left over from the previous year, and spend \$8,800 on a new snow plow. (“It snows in Leverett,” Hankinson explained of the need for this item.)

When it came to raising and appropriating \$2,300 to replace three ice water rescue suits for the fire department – the existing suits having recently been found pervious to ice water – resident Dan Williams asked why the money was being raised and appropriated, rather than coming from free cash.

Fin com member Phil Carter explained that the town had gotten to

the end of the truly free cash. In response to the next logical question, town administrator Margie McGinnis said the tax rate was now looking to rise about \$1.36 per thousand dollars in valuation to \$21.04, instead of 81 cents to \$20.49, though she added there could be better news when the assessors finish valuing properties.

This satisfied the voters, who approved the suits and went on to approve another \$7,225 to replace the HVAC system at the fire department, which had recently been found to be broken.

The four final articles on the warrant concerned money from another pool than the town’s general budget: the Community Preservation Annual Fund. \$119,510.20 came in Community Preservation funds this year, and

the voters agreed to allocate 10% of that sum into each of three buckets – open space, historic resources, and community housing – and put \$4,500 toward overhead, with the remainder rolling into a reserve fund.

They then agreed to award \$12,500 from that reserve to the historical commission, which has been developing a historic assets plan for the town and holding educational events. Wes Goscenski raised a question about spending on the research efforts during a tight budget year, but said his concerns were somewhat allayed by the money coming from Community Preservation funds.

The one article that was turned down was a request to move \$17,120 from the Community Preservation reserve for a design study to reno-

vate the track and field behind the Amherst-Pelham high school.

No one from the regional school committee came to promote the article, though McGinnis noted that they had not been invited. Bethany Seeger, who serves on both the Leverett and regional school committees, offered to speak for it, but d’Errico discouraged her.

“When what was being proposed by the district management – we’re not talking about the school committee – was done at two different four-town meetings,” d’Errico said, “I can assure you there were serious questions about the overall planning, which was looking at the expenditure of several million dollars.”

The meeting agreed to pass over the item.



Saturday’s special town meeting was held in the parking lot at Leverett Elementary School.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Shively and Hankinson Will Try Two-Member Board, Time for Public at Meetings

By GEORGE BRACE

Leverett’s selectboard met with only two members last Tuesday night, following the surprise resignation of Peter d’Errico at a special town meeting on Saturday. The board discussed filling the vacancy, the format and accessibility of their meetings, and next steps on the library solar and recreation field pavilion projects.

Chair Julie Shively explained that the board had two options on replacing d’Errico: calling a special town meeting (STM) to elect a new board member or waiting until the annual town meeting, “hopefully in April,” to do so. Shively said that if a new member were elected at an STM, their term would only run until the annual town meeting, when a new election will take place.

Board member Tom Hankinson said he was in favor of waiting until the annual meeting, but seeing how things go and calling an STM if necessary. Shively said she was torn, and that normally she’d be in favor of an STM, but the extra burdens related to COVID safety made an already difficult process more so, and the time and effort involved would be taken from other matters. Hankinson added that the most of the burden falls on town administrator Marjorie McGinnis, who already has plenty to do.

Sophia Buford asked the board to talk a little bit about the process of running for the seat. “Mostly we’re begging people,” said Shively. McGinnis said the process begins with town clerk Lisa Stratford listing the available positions in the town newsletter, then in the next newsletter noting any incumbents who plan to run again, as well as statements from potential candidates.

In Massachusetts, the step after that is unique to the town of Leverett, in which candidates are nominat-

ed on the floor of town meeting, and the vote only goes to a ballot if it is contested. McGinnis said candidates do not need to be present, and some additional processes were involved, but Leverett doesn’t have the formal deadlines and signature requirements that many other towns have.

Resident Josh Nugent replied that he would be willing to run the sound again if an STM were called, and received a round of applause. Multiple participants complemented Nugent on the sound at the STM on Saturday. Nugent thanked them and pointed out that it was a team effort with McGinnis. Hankinson jokingly cautioned Nugent about volunteering, saying with a smile, “One Saturday I volunteered to sort cans and bottles at the transfer station, and ended up doing it for five years... five friggin’ years.”

The board decided not to call an STM, and to see how things go.

The board discussed the accessibility and format of their meetings, in response to technical difficulties residents have been experiencing in participating remotely, and an uptick in interest in participation.

Shively gave an overview of the functions of different town bodies and offices, saying that town meeting is the town’s legislative body, and the selectboard is tasked with carrying out the will of the town meeting, as its agent. “We’re not really the place for the democratic input, if you get my drift,” she said.

Acknowledging the difficulties and safety considerations people are facing, Shively presented some thoughts. Amherst’s town council, which unlike the selectboard is a legislative body, requires anyone wishing to speak to sign up for specific agenda items ahead of time. Shively said she definitely didn’t want to go this route, but was also concerned about the board being

overwhelmed, particularly with issues that were really under the purview of town meeting.

Hankinson said he liked the idea of “delivering democracy to a broader base in Leverett,” but also liked the idea of people coming to town hall if they had something to say, but he also agreed with the concern over the issue of excluding people who aren’t able to come in.

Nugent spoke in support of “opening up access as much as possible.” He said he was a newish person in town, still seeing how things work, and understood it was hard, but sees increased participation as “an exciting thing that’s happening in town.”

Speaking again of town meeting, Nugent said he was aware that there were long traditions involved, but said that for a number of reasons, even as a person with lots of privilege, he feels uncomfortable saying “no” when everybody else in the room is saying “yes,” and wondered if it was possible to move to private ballots.

Shively said Nugent was not alone in that concern, and the town has decided to use paper ballots on controversial issues in the past. Town clerk Lisa Stratford said it was a long-standing critique. Shively said Leverett’s structure was a pre-Revolutionary form of government, and can be cumbersome, but is considered to be one of the most democratic, because everyone in town can weigh in on things like the budget.

Jed Proujansky, a former Northfield selectboard member, suggested designating a section of time at each selectboard meeting for citizen concerns, saying while these may not be

in the board’s purview to address, they can help people navigate resources and serve an instructional or helpful function. “People need that guidance in town,” Proujansky said: “‘Town, I need to deal with this.’” He also said he thought it was important that the town continue to expand people’s ability to participate.

Shively responded that the helping function is currently an unstated role of the board, town clerk, and administrator, and noted that there was an issue involved in the board hearing matters not listed on the agenda, which residents not at a meeting can’t offer input on.

Sophia Buford asked about the possibility of using COVID relief money to improve the remote connection systems, and McGinnis replied that she will know more about that possibility in December. Buford also suggested the possibility of getting a volunteer to run the technical equipment, which Nugent may also help with.

The discussion ended with an agreement to try a short citizens’ concerns section at the next meeting, and continued incremental improvement on improving the remote connections.

Other Business

Library trustee Chris Condit gave a presentation on the status of planning for the installation of solar panels at the library. Condit said the solar project was selected in part to pursue the library’s goals of becoming carbon-neutral, along with saving the town money on electricity costs, anticipated to grow due to the need for supplemental electric heat

in the facility. Funds would come from a \$92,000 bequest to the library from a town resident.

Condit said he’d received two bids on “tracker” systems, in which the panels move to follow the sun; a bid from the Solar Store of Greenfield came in at \$81,000, and one from a multi-state company came at \$71,000. Condit seemed to prefer the local bid, pointing to a lack of contact with E2SOL.

Multiple options for placement of the 21’ x 18’ trackers were discussed. Shively noted that the recreation and school committees were also working on plans for a pavilion in the same field, and that there were underground water and utility lines, and other technical considerations.

Dianne Crowe of the recreation committee said they had a volunteer to design and plan the pavilion, and that there had also been discussion of putting solar panels on its roof. She noted that the footprint of the trackers is said to be 21’, but when looking at a current installation they take up more room than that, and the recreation field is the only space the town has for community events.

Shively summed things up by saying the selectboard, recreation committee, school committee, and library trustees need to meet to coordinate the projects, which also include addressing soggy ground in the baseball diamond.

The board approved several grant applications, and the posting of the town’s aggregated electricity purchasing figures on the state Department of Public Utilities website, as requested by the town’s aggregator, Colonial Power.

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ELECTION from page A1

needs to be shut down at night.

“We spent a lot of money on that box, and it is being used a ton,” she told the *Reporter*, noting that one of the key justifications for the \$2,300 purchase was to allow working people to cast their votes in the evening.

So the box will remain open through Election Day, but locked down early on Saturday and Sunday. Meanwhile early voting, which has been taking place at the senior center in Turners Falls, will end at 4 p.m. October 29, the day this paper comes out, but ballots can still be mailed and postmarked through Election Day. These must be received by November 6 to be counted, according to Bourbeau, so “the last minute” is fast approaching.

As of Wednesday, there are 2,309 completed ballots sitting in the Montague town clerk’s office. This includes mail-in votes, early votes from the polling station at the senior center, and traditional “absentee ballots,” which often come from voters with disabilities or those out of town on Election Day.

Traditional Election Day is November 3, of course, and Bourbeau asked us to remind traditional voters of the new polling places. Precincts 2, 3, 4, and 6 will all vote at the Franklin County Technical School; Precinct 5 will vote at the senior center on Fifth Street in Turners

Falls; and Precinct 1 will vote as usual at the Montague Center fire station on Old Sunderland Road.

This all raised a question in the mind of this reporter: How are the people manning those traditional polling stations next Tuesday supposed to know who has voted early, or by mail? Wouldn’t the system allow voters intent on fraud to vote twice?

Bourbeau told me that votes taken prior to November 3 will be registered with her office, and with the Secretary of State. Poll workers will receive updated printouts indicating those on the list who had already voted.

But then, what of voters who vote by mail at the last minute, whose ballots are not received until after Election Day? The answer was that if they also vote on Election Day, they will be checked off the master list, and then their mail-in ballots would not count.

The *Reporter* apologizes to Bourbeau and the voters of Montague. This newspaper has no evidence of a local conspiracy to commit voter fraud, and the scenario just mentioned does not seem to have been on anyone’s radar screen until we brought it up. But with conspiracy theories about mail-in voting bouncing around the political culture, especially in rural areas which now have good access to the internet, we felt we had to ask the question.



MONTAGUE BOARD OF HEALTH STATEMENT

Regarding Halloween

The Montague Board of Health wants to convey their point of view on how to keep Halloween both spooktacular and safe this year for all Montague residents!

Halloween door to door trick or treating is happening at the discretion of individual households located in Montague, with the following safety tips:

- The limit of indoor gatherings remains at a maximum of 25 people with social distancing protocols in place.
- The limit of outdoor gatherings at private households and private backyards remains at a maximum of 50 people with social distancing protocols in place.
- Outdoors gatherings at event venues and in public settings will have a limit of 100 people in Step 2 communities, which Montague is.

The annual Rag Shag parade has been **canceled** for this year, and the committee hopes to see everyone in costume for the parade in October 2021!

Sincerely,

Daniel Wasiuk, Director of Public Health
Albert Cummings, Chair, Montague Board of Health

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Process Woes Dog Wastewater Plant

By JEFF SINGLETON

Chelsey Little, superintendent of Montague’s water pollution control facility (WPCF), met with the town selectboard at their meeting Monday night to discuss ongoing issues at the plant, which she was hired to supervise in March.

Little reviewed orders from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The “Google news” was that the EPA had accepted a response to a Clean Air Act violation from the previous fall, and the facility is about “half-way through” a response to a Clean Water Act violation.

The bad news is that the facility has also received a “notice of non-compliance” from the DEP for violating *E. coli* bacterial counts, as well as daily maximum chlorine residuals, in its effluent into the Connecticut River on a number of days in the spring and summer.

“They want us to submit a corrective action plan,” Little said. She shared some data on the screen, and explained that “the big problem is that we have too many solids in the system and we can’t get rid of them.”

As she has in the past, Little said that the facility’s relatively new “Fournier press,” which was ideal for pressing out more “gritty” solids from the old paper plants, is not effective for the new, relatively more liquid waste now coming through the system. “The problem is we don’t have the paper mills any more,” she said.

Little said the department had hired an outside vendor to help with removal of the solids, but that they had recently “crept back up.” She also said that when there is a “rain event” sending more water into the town’s sewer system, it “washes out” excess solids through the process, which she suggested account for the effluent violations.

Unfortunately, I think we need a new press,” Little said. She added that there had been a “demonstration” of a new press recently, and that she plans to submit a proposal to the capital improvements committee in November.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz told Little about complaints he had received about unpleasant odors emanating from the plant. Little reviewed efforts that have been made to address the problem, including the

use of a new product called “Cherry Smells.” “We talk about every day,” she told the board, and apologized to the neighborhood for the smell.

Little also presented a revised staffing chart for the department to the board. She proposed eliminating one labor operator position at the bottom of the chart, and adding a second “technician” position just above it, explaining that this would allow the technicians to be trained for more skilled positions such as lead operator and lead mechanic should they be needed. The board approved this request.

Additional Capacity

The cemetery commission, represented at the meeting by Annie Levine and chair Judith Lorei, was approved to use a cemetery on East Mineral Road for a Halloween party this Saturday (see article, page A1), and also presented an initial proposal to transfer the Highland Cemetery on Millers Falls Road to the town.

Lorei said the commission had been looking to acquire a new town cemetery since the 1970s, portraying the current town cemeteries – there are seven – as “full.” According to Lorei, a member of the board of the non-profit that owns the Highland Cemetery recently approached the commission with an offer to “gift” the property to the town.

Lorei said the cemetery was in “beautiful condition,” and came with a small endowment. Acquiring it would significantly increase town cemetery capacity and allow for “green burials” in woods on the property.

She estimated that the annual cost of the new cemetery would be \$5,000 for insurance and maintenance, and that there might be a revenue of as much as \$6,500 from the sale of plots once the cemetery “got going,” but that with “start-up costs,” the cemetery budget request for next fiscal year might see an increase of \$4,250.

Kuklewicz said he was “not as optimistic” about annual revenue from the burials, but said the proposal should not be thought of just as a “business proposition” but as a “service to the community.” He said he “endorsed moving forward with the process.”

The board did not take a vote on the issue. Finance committee chair Jen Audley urged the commission to

come before the fin com with a proposal for the next fiscal year.

Streets and Spaces

The board approved a proposal for on-street overnight parking in downtown Turners Falls this winter. Town planner Walter Ramsey, who portrayed the previous two years’ experiment to allow permitted parking on three designated streets as a success, presented the proposal to the board.

Parking will be allowed on the east side of L Street between Seventh and Fifth; on the west side of Prospect between L and Central; and on Ninth between L and K. Ramsey said 14 permits were issued last year, and there is “definitely demand for that again.” Half of the permits have been allocated to landlords.

The permits are dated to apply from December 1 to April 1, the duration of the on-street parking ban, and may be purchased for \$25. They are available at the town hall, but not at the police station.

Ramsey announced that Montague had been awarded \$399,386 “Complete Streets” grant to construct sidewalks on Keith Street, Montague Street, and Turnpike Road. Construction should begin next summer after the project is awarded, and the town is responsible for funding the “design and specs.” Ramsey noted that the Turnpike Road proposal was the result of a citizen petition. The board voted to execute the grant.

Ramsey also updated the board on the implementation of a state “Safe Spaces” grant. The funded projects, which have been “substantially completed,” were designed to improve the “pedestrian experience” walking from downtown Turners Falls to Unity Park. Ramsey said these are temporary improvements which can be replaced in the spring.

Other Business

The board approved a request from the Turners Falls Fire Department for \$7,268 in federal COVID-related CARES Act funds received by the town. The funds will be used to compensate for high overtime costs incurred when firefighters were out on quarantine in the early months of the pandemic.

The Gill-Montague regional school district was designated by the board as the “lead applicant” for a \$56,800 grant awarded to Gill

LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

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

**Winterizing
The Strathmore**

“It’s getting to be winter again, and the Strathmore is still there,” said building inspector David Jensen, as an introduction to his Monday update to the Montague selectboard on the status of the old mill building complex along the Turners Falls power canal. “We’ve got one roof that’s still open, and a portion of a wall that needs repairs.”

After a 2007 arson fire destroyed and damaged buildings at the sprawling complex, the town spent \$300,000 in repairs to secure the property against fire and the elements.

Now that the town of Montague owns the mill buildings outright – as of February of this year, since John Anctil, the former owner, failed to pay back taxes – the town must winterize the buildings and secure them to protect its investment.

A Phenomenal Pumpkin Fest

The old town was hopping Saturday night with a crowd of Biblical proportions. Police estimate 8,000 people gathered for the First

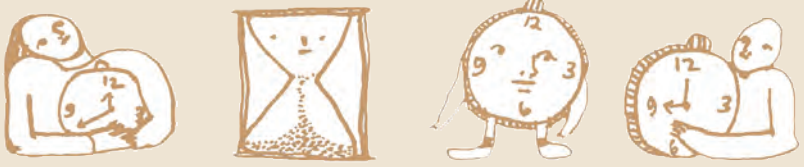
Annual Pumpkin Festival, by far the largest turnout for Turners Falls in anyone’s memory.

Everyone was in a party mood, strolling the Avenue and checking out the jack-o-lanterns. The one policeman on duty gave kids a chance to try out the department’s Segway. No one at the beer enclosure needed an escort off the premises. The mellow crowd stretched from traffic light to traffic light, or swayed to the music of the bands in the park.

“It was phenomenal. The event far exceeded anything I ever expected, and truly showed the community support of downtown Turners Falls,” said organizer Michael Nelson.

Nelson worked with 48 volunteers and spent a year in advance registering vendors, lining up talent, advertising, and coming up with pumpkins, carving tools, paper towels and candles for young pumpkin sculptors and their animated parents. Their imaginative designs stood on curbs, tables, planters, benches and the stone ledge of the fountain by the traffic lights.

Turners Falls merchants who took advantage of the event enjoyed a brisk business. Turners Falls Pizza, Dudek’s Donuts, the 2nd Street Bakery, and La Bodega were turning out food as fast as they could make it. The Montague Fire Department couldn’t keep up with the demand for French fries.



and Montague for “remote learning student services.” Kuklewicz said the town of Gill had made the same designation.

Council on Aging director Roberta Potter told the board she would be “working at home as much as possible” during the next week when the senior center on Fifth Street will be the site of early voting. Potter also reviewed the activities of the COA during the pandemic, during which the senior center on Fifth Street has maintained limited hours.

Potter said that over the spring and summer, “we have given out a

tremendous amount of food” from a variety of programs. She said the COA had also organized outdoor chair yoga behind the Discovery Center on Avenue A, and that a knitting and crafts group has been meeting behind the town hall.

Deb Bourbeau reported that the Secretary of State had issued new regulations requiring that ballot drop boxes have more security, and that Montague’s box outside the town hall will now need to be locked overnight (see article, page A1).

The next selectboard meeting will be held on Monday, November 2.

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GILL from page A1

\$67,834 Purington recommended seeking during the second round, which covers allowed expenses from July through December. Purington said he hopes that Gill will be able to carry over the remaining \$58,049 for use in 2021.

The largest expense included in the application is \$50,000 toward heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) upgrades, along with air purifiers, at Gill Elementary and Turners Falls High schools.

The sum also includes Gill's 25% portion of the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) funding: \$4,750 toward a third full-time police officer through December 30, \$427 toward first-responder personal protective equipment (PPE), \$66 toward PPE used in reopening the library, and \$18 toward travel costs for picking up and delivering the PPE.

Another \$1,809 is the town's 25% match on \$7,236 the board previously approved for expanded public health by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments' Cooperative Public Health Services. Extra election preparations have cost \$1,787 for new voting booths, extra postage, and hiring election workers whose duties will include disinfecting the voting equipment and area.

The remaining expenses included \$360 for teleconferencing and two professional Zoom licenses; \$4,541 for a tax collector software license; and \$2,272 for air purifiers at the town hall, library, and highway department office and break-room. \$1,555 will be used for air purifiers in the police department offices and lobby, fire department offices, and emergency operations center, with \$249 going to replace the digital door lock at the police station, which stopped working due to "overexposure to sanitizer, disinfectant, and chlorine wipes," according to Purington.

Purington said he separated out the air purifier costs for the emergency services because they might qual-

ify for FEMA first responder funding. "Not all of these items will end up being eligible," Purington noted, "but I am going to try anyway."

Green Communities Report

The town's Green Communities grant report for FY'20 was approved by the selectboard. The narrative requires towns to report their top three energy-using buildings, which Purington said are the elementary school, town hall, and public safety complex.

"In FY'19 the library was third, and then we converted them over to mini-splits... which got them out of the top three," said Purington, "so I would not be surprised to see the town hall moved down in the next couple of years, once we have data related to the mini-splits here."

The Green Communities program's goal is for towns to reduce their energy usage by 20% from the 2010 baseline year. Purington told the board that the town used 22.8% less energy in FY'20 than in FY'10.

"We are really just going to be pecking away at energy usage," said Purington, "until the elementary school roof replacement project gets funded."

"[The energy commission] is going to work with all three departments in the public safety complex," said energy commission member Claire Chang, "to try and come up with ideas and possible solutions to reduce energy use, and/or convert to electricity."

Insurance Association Grant

The selectboard approved a \$10,000 risk management grant application to the Massachusetts Inter-local Insurance Association (MIIA), which has a November 6 deadline.

Besides about \$100 for hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes for the library, Purington said the highway department requested three storage cabinets for flammable liquids – one for gasoline, one for motor oils, and the third for grease or other substances. The fire department is requesting



PATRICIA CROSBY PHOTO

"She somehow got in with the dry cows in the Upinngil field between Main Road and Boyle Road, below the current strawberry patch, and couldn't figure out how to get out," Patricia Crosby explained after sharing this photo. "After several hours, I'd say, Clifford came over from the farm and opened the gate so she had a place to escape."

one storage cabinet for all liquids. Purington said the "ballpark figure" for the cabinets is about \$4,700.

The highway department also requested three high-visibility rain jackets, costing about \$270, and \$135 toward chainsaw helmets with face shields and ear protection.

Other requests are for a heating oil tank monitoring system at the public safety complex, "costing between \$200 and \$500," Purington said; a \$2,000 town hall computer server upgrade; and \$1,500 for "proactive plumbing repairs" on the town hall boiler. "They are seeing a green copper patina on the piping, which is an early sign of a hole starting to form," the town administrator told the board.

Other Business

A tentative date of Saturday, November 21 was approved for the annual town meeting, with the "venue to be determined," said Purington. The board discussed holding the meeting outdoors, as well as potential indoor sites.

Purington told the selectboard that November's town budget meets the "grand total magic number" of \$305,367, representing one-twelfth of Gill's FY'20 total budget, which the state Department of Revenue requires while the town is operating month to month.

Purington said that to get to the required amount, \$174,416 was paid ahead for the Gill-Montague regional school district third quarter, and \$130,951 was assigned to the town side of expenses, including an energy bond payment and a payment on the loan for the Mariamante parcel, a property acquired by Gill in 2004.

A motion was approved to designate George Sansoucy of Sansoucy Associates, an outside expert appraiser of hydroelectric facilities, as a special municipal employee. Sansoucy was the only bidder for the contract to appraise FirstLight's properties in Gill and Montague, which Crochier said is required every five years.

Because Sansoucy also does appraisals for the state Department of

Revenue, he is required to get an ethics waiver from the state in addition to being designated as a special municipal employee by both towns.

"That designation rides with the position, not with the person or the company," Crochier explained.

The recent flu clinic at Gill Elementary School was reported to be a success. "Just about 100 people showed up – and a moose tried to," said Crochier, who went on to tell the board that there had been a moose "hanging out in the pasture with the cows" last Saturday. He said the moose was in the field when he went by after 9 that morning, and still there when he came to pick up the signs he had put out for the clinic just after noon.

"A couple people came to see the moose but then saw there was a flu clinic, so they turned around after seeing the moose to come get a shot," Crochier said. "So that was good."

The selectboard approved Gill resident Meredith Durkee as an election worker.



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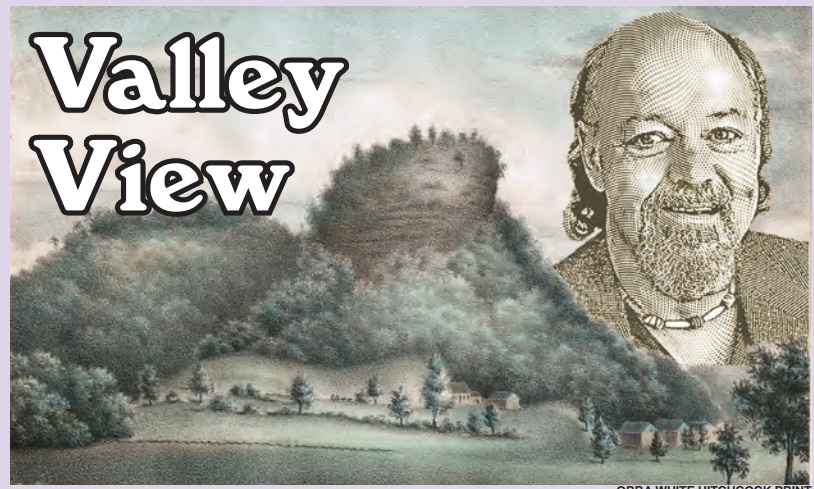




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By GARY SANDERSON

This is a tale that took place decades ago. I’ve told it many times in conversation but never written it. Now, with camouflaged bowhunters occupying local tree stands, why not, for posterity, put it in black and white?

I’d estimate that it unfolded in the mid to late 1980s, when I was a young man in my 30s. I owned my late grandfather’s home in South Deerfield and hunted with townie friends like Timmy Dash, Big Stosh, Fast Eddie, Hopper White, and the Young Count. We’d start the fall in the October swamps, overgrown fields and orchards, wing-shooting pheasant, grouse, woodcock and an occasional duck behind my black Lab, Sara. Then we’d close it out on December hardwood ridges during the shotgun and blackpowder deer seasons.

Which of my hunting buddies accompanied me on that Sunday-morning deer-scouting mission in the deep woods of the Williamsburg quadrangle I honestly don’t recall. My best guess would be Big Stosh, an old baseball teammate and friend since grammar school. It doesn’t matter. This story about the unlikely of discoveries can stand on its own.

To tell the truth, I can’t even remember the name of the Hatfield bowhunter I’m writing about. All I can say is that he killed a monster whitetail buck, one of a size most commonly associated with the Northwoods. The trophy buck tipped the scale at a smidge under 240 pounds, with an incredible antler mass and spread. I know the hunter had a Polish surname, one beginning with M and ending in ski. I think his first name was Rich. But don’t hold me to it. It was long ago. He may by now be dead. But I’d wager that the impressive wall mount is still on display somewhere in the valley.

Back then, as sports editor of the *Greenfield Recorder*, I was in the early years of cranking out a weekly Thursday outdoors column titled “On the Trail.” Come archery deer season each November, I’d dig out my detailed, annotated list of western Massachusetts deer-checking-station phone numbers and call every last one of them weekly looking for good copy about remarkable hunts. I’d

publish a weekly 200-pound club report. That is, hunters who had taken bucks weighing a minimum of 200 pounds. Occasionally, I’d lower my standards and dip into the 190s when checking-station personnel raved about the animal.

Though I’d often learn by word of mouth about local hunters’ success, even then I’d get confirmation from the men and women who weighed and recorded deer kills at state fish hatcheries and private gun shops. I was on a first-name basis with many station attendants stretching from Worcester to Pittsfield.

When they provided successful hunters’ names and town of residence, I could, in the days before cell phones, easily find their home phone numbers in the telephone book – a convenience unknown to modern scribes. In fact, I’d take a wild guess that there are many 30-somethings today who have never once opened a telephone book looking for a number.

If my memory serves me well, this particular monster buck was recorded at the long-ago shuttered Pioneer Valley Sporting Center on Damon Road in Northampton. But again, that’s superfluous information by now, not by any stretch critical after all these years.

What I do vividly recall is that the man who owned the sports shop and entered the kill into the books, himself a veteran deer hunter, was in total awe. He remarked that bucks like that are rare indeed in this neck of the woods.

After I had obtained all the facts I could gather from the man named Bill something-or-other, I phoned the Hatfield hunter to get his story. Still on cloud nine, he was more than willing to share how his hunt played out, recounting every minute detail: from the scrape line the buck had pawed into the forest floor, to the placement of his stand and buck lure, to the animal’s cautious approach, to the entry-point of the mortal arrow. He was proud, more than willing to recreate the total experience of taking a buck for the ages.

However, if there’s one question no hunter likes to answer, it’s stand location. Bowhunters are particularly secretive, extremely protective of their favorite tree stands. They view such

see VALLEY VIEW page B4

Above: The decorations on Fifth Street in Turners Falls reflect the various spirits of the season.

ArtBeat

by Trish Crapo

Art in a Field for No Reason

MONTAGUE CENTER – Kathy Lynch and I stand on the edge of a broad, green field below her historic 1840s home on Center Street in Montague Center. Along the edges of the field’s naturally circular shape four local sculptors have installed work, creating an outdoor exhibit that will be up through the winter and into next spring.

Lynch, who owns and runs the Montague Village Store, jokingly describes the exhibit as “art in a field for no reason.” But in fact, as our conversation unfolds, it turns out there are lots of reasons.



Lindsey Molyneux’s large, driftwood horse sculpture seems to be cantering along the edge of the field.

Lynch and her husband Dean Garvin, who grew up three houses down from where the couple lives now, offered their land for the exhibit as a way to support artists, and to create something safe for people to do during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

“We’ve all been cooped up for so long,” Lynch says.

The idea for the exhibit sprang from a conversation she had with a friend, Holyoke sculptor Kamil Peters. “We were asking ourselves, what could we do that’s acceptable, that could work, and in a way that people could interact with art but not be in danger?”

Peters reached out to sculptors and curated the exhibit, which includes work by John Landino, William Brayton, and Lindsey Molyneux, as well as Peters’ sculpture, entitled “Wink,” of an oversized praying mantis made from welded metal.

Seen from afar, the insect’s huge scale makes it look like an alien life form, dropped from outer space. Standing under its huge, raptorial forelegs, I feel small and vulnerable, potential prey.

The sculpture was first shown at Art in the Orchard in Easthampton, Lynch says. That annual outdoor sculpture trail on the grounds of Park Hill Orchard was a major inspiration for Lynch, who became excited by the concept of placing contemporary art in nature, rather than a traditional gallery setting.

“It creates a different and new experience,” she says.

see ARTBEAT page B3

From Bohemia to the Bay State, Part III

The Descendants Connect

TURNERS FALLS – In our October 15 and 22 editions, we shared Jim Bridgeman’s story of his Bohemian forebears, the Schuldas, who arrived in Franklin County in the 1860s and eventually brought over 80 relatives to settle in Turners Falls. In this final installment, Jim and two of his cousins tell the story of how they connected over genealogical research.

Jim Bridgman

I became interested in genealogy when I was a teenager, but it wasn’t until the 1980s that I started tracking my mother’s Bohemian roots. For years I concentrated on her ancestors’ lives *after* they arrived in the United States, mistakenly assuming that there simply were no records back in “the old country.” The closest I came to locating the family’s place of origin was from a naturalization record of one of the sons, who listed Kattau (Klatovy) as his birthplace.

Then came a major breakthrough. In 2019, I purchased from an online auction site the original naturalization certificate of Joseph Schulda, the patriarch of the family. How this record came into the possession of a paper dealer in Florida I will never know, but when it arrived in my mailbox, I was thrilled to see a place of birth: Korit, a common abbreviation for Koryta, a tiny village five miles west of Klatovy.

My cousin and fellow family historian Deb Lawton suggested I join a Facebook page devoted to Czech genealogy, and within 24 hours amateur researchers from around the world were finding birth, marriage, and death records for our ancestors, records that had been scanned and were available online. Within weeks, we were able to track the family back ten generations to the 1600s.

In 2012, I had brief email contact with Marilyn, but

at that point we were not quite sure how we were connected. Seven years later, when Marilyn saw my posts

see BOHEMIA page B5



Jacob and Barbara Neydl, great-grandparents of Russ Neydl. This photograph was taken in Turners Falls.



CHRISTOPHER CARMODY COLLAGE

“JACKIE”

Jackie is the perfect little companion for someone looking for a new best friend! She will greet you every morning with her little meow.

We don’t know much about Jackie’s past. She was abandoned in an apartment for three months. Someone was stopping by to feed her, but it may not have been enough, because she has an issue with her liver. Jackie’s adopter should understand we do not have a clear picture of her health, but we believe her to have a good

quality of life right now and she appears to feel great. Her health may decline in a few months, or she may live for many years. Working closely with a veterinarian will give you more information about her life expectancy.

If you are interested please e-mail Dakin at springfield@dakinhumane.org your name and phone number and tell us your previous experience with feral/outdoor kittens. For more information, call (413) 781-4000 or see www.dakinhumane.org.

Senior Center Activities

NOVEMBER 2 THROUGH 6

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

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

ERVING

Erving Senior Center director Paula Betters writes that the Center is closed until 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

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

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

LEVERETT

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

WENDELL

Wendell senior activities have been canceled. The Wendell Senior Center is closed. The 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 Fields Market:	Senior hours from 9 to 10 a.m. Curbside pickup available. Order by 8 p.m.; order ready for pickup between 1 and 6 the following day. Delivery also available. \$6 per delivery inside Greenfield. \$8 outside Greenfield.	(413) 773-9567
McCusker’s Market:	Only six customers allowed in store at a time. Curbside pickup available. Order between 12 and 1 p.m. for pickup the following day. Delivery available. \$10 per delivery. Email pickup@franklincommunity.coop	(413) 625-2548
Stop and Shop:	Senior hours from 6 to 7:30 a.m.	(413) 774-6096

Mercury in Retrograde

By **MISHEL IXCHEL**

TURNERS FALLS – It feels like an old, bad joke at this point, but if you feel like your life is completely upside down right now, it’s likely because Mercury is currently in retrograde. This time usually signals havoc, and there are countless memes out there that make light of this astrological phase – though in all honesty, when they’re happening, it really doesn’t feel like a joking matter.

And get this: Mercury will be in retrograde until November 3. What are the odds!

My life has definitely felt nothing but chaotic in the last four days. Inner turmoil that is easily maskable. I was still able to move through this world as a functioning adult, parenting being part of that equation, with a smile on my face. But there’s only so much one can stuff down before the seams start to rip.

If I am really honest, I don’t think it’s fair for me to blame my personal and relationship hardships on Mercury. Nor the fact that as a single mother, scouting for childcare and support, is its own tangle of stress. But my relationship problems and lack of childcare collided this past weekend, and sent me spinning into a whirlwind the likes of which can only be attributed to the planet gods.

I think that everyone, in some way, can relate to the broad subject of “relationship problems” especially as it pertains to romantic relationships. But I believe that only single parents and caregivers truly understand the anxiety that comes

with feeling the immense pressure of having to be both provider and nurturer. Especially when childcare is a puzzle to be figured out, with efforts to connect with babysitters or friends to help fill in the gaps. And more so when neither friends nor babysitters are available, and the weight of it all makes it hard to breathe. I’m talking about *that* anxiety.

I’ve been navigating these waters for years now, getting by with and without support. It’s gotten easier now that my son’s a little older, but no one saw this pandemic coming, and here we are. Like everyone else, we are trying to rebuild our lives, recover our routines.

And like a lotus flower growing out of the mud, I am bewildered seeing my child respond to my stress. The other day I found myself sulking as I washed the dishes, lost in a labyrinth of thought and planning, until out of the blue I felt myself wrapped in my little one’s hug. He can reach up to my hips now, so I felt his little arms circling as much as he could wrap. As I looked down in surprise, he followed his hug with a kiss, and in that instant, all the stress melted away.

This blew me away for so many reasons. In the last few months, as he transitioned from being four to being “a whole hand!” I have noticed him becoming more of a boy and less of a toddler. And with this transformation comes wiping away my kisses, or pushing me away when I sneak a hug, which is why feeling his hugs and kisses this past weekend really surprised me.

A few weeks ago, when my child



Indie Mama Diaries

was with his father and I had some time for myself, I stumbled upon a free webinar for parents. The premise was as follows: there are ways to get one’s kid to listen that don’t involve shouting, repeating oneself, or losing one’s cool. I felt I had gotten really good at doing all three, but I felt defeated enough to give the webinar a listen.

At the end, the presenter gave us one tool, which I immediately applied when my kid came back to me. And miraculously, it worked. (If you’re a parent and you’re curious about this, follow [@positiveparentingsolutions](https://www.instagram.com/positiveparentingsolutions) on Instagram for more information.)

I got the presenter’s book, because as she warned, while it’s good to have one tool, you need multiple in your toolbox. I’m now reading one chapter at a time, passing it back and forth with my co-parent.

It may feel chaotic, and I might not always feel like I have the support that I need, but as I navigate this world of parenting – Mercury in retrograde or not – at the end of the day, it does feel like I must be doing something right.

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.

High School Sports: The Week In Review

By **MATT ROBINSON**

GREENFIELD – Under the clouds of Zeta, the Turners Falls field hockey season grinded to a halt on Wednesday against Greenfield.

After a disappointing tie in Athol last Thursday, the Blue Thunder traveled across the river and was shut out by Greenfield 9-0 in the Franklin County Bubble Contest.

Right at the opening bell, Greenfield put pressure on Haleigh Greene and the Blue D. Power-town did their best to deflect and intercept, but midway through the first quarter, a clearing attempt failed. A large divot flew away and the ball dribbled right to a Green stick.

That was their first goal. Immediately after, a perfect pass put the Green Wave up 2-0.

The third goal came when most of the players stationed themselves inside the Blue Circle. After a ferocious battle and a few ricochets, Greenfield went up 3-0.

The field was wet from the remnants of the storm, and Turners simply couldn’t adjust. As they slipped and slid, Greenfield always seemed to be a step ahead. Most



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Taylor Murphy scores Turners’ first goal against the visiting Green Wave on a pass from Brynn Tela last Tuesday, October 20. The final score was Greenfield 5, Turners 2; Greenfield would also win the teams’ rematch this week.

of the Green attacks were team efforts: they stacked their players on the sidelines, drove up the field, and hit the player who was open in front of the net. Turners’ attacks were limited to one or two players taking the ball into Green’s territory, where five Green kilts waited for them to arrive.

Ten minutes into the second quarter, Greenfield scored again, and seconds later they went up 5-0 on a long hard shot. Greenfield continued their onslaught, and by the time the fourth quarter rolled

around, they were up 7-0.

Turners had their chances in the final quarter, but one shot hit the goal post, and Brynn Tela and Olivia Whittier each had close misses.

So the Turners Falls field hockey season finally came to an end. But I don’t think many of the players were disappointed. Field hockey is one of the few sports that was allowed to play this year. And for the players on the team, they at least got the chance to play the sport they love one more time.

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William Brayton's sculpture, "Jugo," is named for a destructive Croatian wind.

ART BEAT from page B1

As an example, she points out Lindsey Molyneux's large horse sculpture. From where we're standing on the opposite side of the field, the horse, formed of driftwood, seems to canter along in front of a backdrop of bushes and trees, many of them still studded with red or yellow leaves.

"But what happens is that, from far away, from my porch, I can't see it," Lynch says. "I have a clear view of it, but I can't see it because the colors blend in. But there are certain ways the light hits it at certain times of the day, where it becomes backlit, and emerges from the background. I think that's a really interesting way to interact with artwork. That wouldn't happen if it were inside, against a white wall."

John Landino's sculpture, an installation created using the lower halves of white, female mannequins, has a similar effect, Lynch says, appearing elongated or truncated depending on how the light hits them.

Landino will be reworking the installation, she adds, as it has not been holding up well in its first location. For now, the stark white half-figures suggest a surreal chorus line stepping forward from a thicket of red leaves.

Conway artist William Brayton's piece is titled "Jugo," the name of a destructive wind in Croatia. Its off-center, rounded shape made of thin wooden pieces seems to be on the verge of flying apart. And its curved form is offset, and highlighted, by the stark vertical lines of a stand of black walnut trees planted in strict rows behind it. Brayton uses techniques he learned in an early apprenticeship in wooden boatbuilding, such as steam bending wood and copper riveting, in his sculptures.

Creating Opportunities

Lynch is on the Montague Cultural Council and has long been interested in exploring new ways of interacting with art, both for individuals' enjoyment, and for economic development. Last year, she and her husband hosted a global music festival, Barbès in the Woods, on their land. The festival, named for an iconic bar in Brooklyn, drew roughly 200 people, and included an immersive theater piece by Eggtooth Productions that led the audience through the woods. She'd like to host more events, she adds, once it is safe to do so.

"We're not rich people," Lynch says of herself and her husband, "but we try to use the resources we have to support organizations that have relevance for us, or for our neighbors."

Creating what she calls "community partnerships" can make projects possible that you wouldn't be able to accomplish on your own, she adds.

"I mean, I'm not an art curator, but I have land. And I know a lot of artists. So, how do we create that experience? I'm pretty good at planning and implementing things, and Dean's really good at building a road with the neighbors. And so you make those connections and see what can grow out of that. And see what you can support with what you have. You don't have to be a millionaire to be a patron of the arts, you just have to bring something to the table."

Where to see it: 27 Center Street, Montague Center, during daylight hours. Some simple, common-sense rules are posted at the top of the trail, including one that's good to know before you go: Absolutely no dogs.



Some of the movement and lines of Kamil Peters' praying mantis sculpture, "Wink," are echoed in the vines and branches of the nearby woods.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Mishaps At Work; Flag Theft; Bridge Street Brawl; Mowing Past Seven; Dog-Sized Raccoon; Surveillance

Monday, 10/19

11:05 a.m. Report of a white tractor-trailer unit near Edward Avenue and Turners Falls Road that has part of its trailer roof ripped off, but still attached, and is catching it on the power lines as it drives. Officer requesting inquiry with Greenfield PD; states approximately one hour ago he copied via radio a call re: a tractor-trailer hitting a bridge. GPD provided plate info for TT. Officer located TT at Judd Wire and spoke with operator; advised him he cannot drive the TT on the roadways until it is repaired. Operator advised he will contact his company.

Tuesday, 10/20

9:42 a.m. 911 caller from Federal Street reporting that he and another guy are doing work in a home and may have started a fire in the back of the home. TFFD and MPD responding. Officer requesting DPW respond with road closure barriers to be placed at the ends of Lake Pleasant Road and Green Pond Road. Officer blocking traffic at Highland Street until DPW arrival. Turners Falls C1 responding from Chicopee; ETA 40 minutes. 7:19 p.m. Shelburne Control transferring 911 caller reporting an intoxicated male who just left an East Main Street address in a blue Jeep. Area checked extensively; unable to locate. 7:27 p.m. Officer looking into suspected drug activity on G Street.

Wednesday, 10/21

7:19 a.m. Caller from Turnpike Road states that someone stole the political flags from his front yard and damaged his flagpole. Caller is headed to work but will call later today to have an officer come by and take a report. 10:04 a.m. 911 caller from Mormon Hollow Road reporting the neighbor across the street keeps coming over and yelling at him for being on the property. Caller has been hired by a bank to do a cleanout. Both parties spoken to and advised of options.

1:52 p.m. 911 caller from East Main Street reporting that two men named John and Lucky are threatening him and causing a disturbance in the building. Caller advised of options.

4 p.m. Report of a female party who was operating a scooter with no license plate in front of Greenfield Savings Bank. Caller states scooter is now parked in the Third Street alleyway. Units advised.

6:15 p.m. Report of four teenagers in the G Street alleyway building bicycle jumps and causing a disturbance. Officer spoke with kids and their father; bicycle jump moved; no

further issues at this time. 11:38 p.m. Multiple calls reporting a fight going on in the street on Bridge Street. Two males yelling at each other. Unknown injuries or weapons. Fourth caller stated that one male had been punched and was at her house yelling and threatening her neighbor.

Thursday, 10/22

8:35 a.m. Report of two or three people sleeping in a grey SUV in the parking lot next to the Dorsey Road footbridge off East Mineral Road. Back hatch open with two people sleeping in back; possibly third person sleeping in front; trash accumulated on roof of vehicle. Parties are homeless and were looking for a place to stay. Advised that FirstLight does not want people staying/sleeping there. Parties will be moving along. 9:53 a.m. Motor vehicle accident at Second and L streets; no injuries; waste management truck and DPW vehicle involved. 4:35 p.m. 911 misdial; spoke with male who advised he is driving and a tool fell onto his phone. No signs of distress.

6:49 p.m. Report of hit-and-run accident in the Aubuchon Hardware parking lot. Involved female states that all occupants of her vehicle are uninjured and there are no smoke or fluids coming from the vehicle. Other vehicle described as a black Toyota sedan with front end damage. Unable to locate. Report taken.

7:12 p.m. Noise complaint from Court Square; caller states the Turn Mowing Company is operating lawn mowers and is requesting an officer to ask them to end for the night. Officer advised; states it is OK to be mowing at this time. Caller called back; advised caller that officer did not find it to be late enough to tell them to end for the night. Caller requested call back from officer. Officer spoke with caller and advised

him that during the summer, people continue to do yard work until later hours. Officer responding to area to inquire about a time frame. Officer spoke with involved party who advised he is done for the night. Officer would like it noted that he was not able to hear the lawn mowers until he exited his cruiser and walked a little ways.

11:21 p.m. Caller reporting loud gathering taking place kind of in her backyard somewhere off Federal Street; unsure of address. Parties advised of complaint and will turn music down.

Friday, 10/23

2:20 p.m. Caller from Montague Avenue reports that there are three trees that look unstable since the last storm; concerned because she has seen kids playing near them. Advised caller to leave message for DPW. Officer advised.

6:31 p.m. Caller states that a vehicle almost struck her children while they were crossing in the crosswalk near FL Roberts. Caller showing address in Greenfield. GPD advised.

8:57 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street states that there is a dog-sized raccoon on her porch and its babies are under the shed. Per officer, advised caller to allow the raccoons to get off the porch and leave them alone for the night. Caller called back stating the raccoons are hissing at them. Advised there is no animal control officer on at this time; will pass call along to day shift.

11:33 p.m. Caller complaining of a loud party on Turner Street. Officers spoke to involved; stated the noise was not excessively loud. Officer advised homeowner was interested in finding more information on Montague's by-laws regarding noise and what their rights are, as they state there is an ongoing issue with complaints about their location; referenced how close together the houses are in this area.

Officer will speak to lieutenant about issue.

11:46 p.m. Caller complaining of a group of kids skateboarding at Third Street and Avenue A for the last two hours and being very loud. Caller called back to advise same group is now setting off fireworks. Officers spoke to several parties on Avenue A who indicated the fireworks were coming from the direction of the bridge. Unable to locate; will continue to monitor.

Saturday, 10/24

1:49 a.m. Multiple callers complaining that the occupants of a Turner Street address are yelling and making a lot of noise. Ongoing issue. Officers spoke to neighbors; did hear minimal noise upon arrival. Also stated there was yelling over the fence between houses, calls of people being liars, etc. Again, officer stated this is a difficult situation as houses are very close together.

2:20 p.m. Report of male party looking in car windows in a parking lot on Walnut Street and taking pictures with his cell phone. Area checked; negative contact.

Sunday, 10/25

7:42 a.m. Caller from Montague City Road reporting that her and her husband's vehicles were broken into overnight; nothing missing, but they do have the subject on surveillance. Officer advised images were too dark to identify subject.

1:22 p.m. 911 call reporting past breaking and entering into vehicle on Montague City Road; purse and wallet taken.

5 p.m. 911 abandoned call received. Upon callback, female stated that her daughter was out of control but was calming down. 6:54 p.m. Caller advising they found a dead cat in the road on Walnut Street near Thomas Golf. They moved it to the side of the road and left some cardboard around it. Message left for DPW.

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!

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Library Trustee Needed

MONTAGUE – Would you like to help support the Montague Libraries? Are you available for one or two evening meetings a month? The meetings are usually held on Monday evenings, and are currently done on Zoom. One interim Trustee is needed until the

next town election in May. If interested, please send a letter or email by Tuesday, November 17, to the Montague Public Libraries, 201 Ave. A, Turners Falls, MA 01376, librarydirector@montague-ma.gov. For more information call Linda at 863-3214.

Leaves, Yard Waste Are Prohibited from Trash

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Did you know? Leaves, grass clippings and brush have been prohibited from the trash in Massachusetts for many years and are included on the state’s “waste ban” list.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), “Waste bans are intended to encourage reuse and/or recycling of certain waste materials, conserve disposal capacity, and reduce adverse environmental impacts from waste materials.” (See www.mass.gov/doc/fact-sheet-your-municipality-waste-ban-compliance/download)

Leaves, grass clippings, and brush can be composted at home or brought to a municipal drop-off site. The following town transfer stations accept leaves and yard waste from their residents: Deerfield, Leverett, Montague, and Orange. The Erving Highway Department also accepts yard waste from Erving residents. All Franklin County residents can bring leaves, yard waste, and brush to the Greenfield Transfer Station for a fee. Visit tinyurl.com/GreenfieldTS for hours and fees.

In western Mass, many households put piles of leaves and yard waste in wooded areas around their home to biodegrade. If you have a backyard compost bin, fall leaves

are a carbon source. Carbon is a necessary component of the composting process.

Leaves can also be “cold composted” by placing larger amounts of leaves in a simple chicken wire circle. After a year or so, the wire circle can be opened to shovel or spread finished compost from the bottom of the pile. Leaves can also be used as fall mulch for gardens, shrubs, and trees.

When mowing the lawn, consider leaving grass clippings where they fall. Grass clippings left on the lawn will decompose and act as a natural organic fertilizer. For more information on “grasscycling” see www.mass.gov/doc/dont-trash-grass/download.

Commercial composting sites such as Martin’s Farm in Greenfield and Clear View Composting in Orange accept leaves, grass clippings and brush from anyone, free of charge. Contact these facilities for more information.

For more information, visit www.franklincountywastedistrict.org or contact Franklin County Solid Waste Management District: (413) 772-2438, info@franklincountywastedistrict.org. MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1 (800) 439-2370 (TTY/TDD).

Sometimes Pleasant, Lake Pleasant: Tricking the Trickster!

By MURIEL E. RUSSELL

LAKE PLEASANT – Halloween: Trick or Treating, 1953. Tom came home, planning to pull off a Trick. Several years before, he said, one of his friends got caught in a Trickster’s Trick, and Tom thought he could even the score, because he had watched that trickster arranging his old trick.

Before supper, Tom told my mother what he wanted to do, got permission, and arranged to have a few friends help. Our house had a porch too, so Tom acted out how to upend the trick, intending to prevent that Trickster from tricking young Trick-or-Treaters.

(Looking back, I think Tom was the victim of that Trickster’s earlier trick.)

Before supper, I begged to go with Tom, so Dick started asking too. Ma said okay, but of course, Tom and the older boys had to make sure we were safe while Tricking the Trickster.

Thinking his plan would work, Tom got a bucket and we walked down the street, turning east over the foot bridge. Once over there, we met up with several boys Tom’s age. I don’t remember my other older brothers, Jim or Bill, being there. We walked up beyond our target, and checked to see that the man had reset his trick. Then we circled back.

By then it was dusky. Tom went down a path to the lake and filled the bucket, while Dick and I found a place to hide in some bushes under evergreen trees. One of the older boys was on our side, so we felt safe. From there, we watched that door, knowing that we could



run for the bridge after Tom put that water to use. We knew we had to run for home whether Tom succeeded or not.

The house we were watching had a softly lit window to the right of the screen door, and the door was opened using your left hand, just like ours at home. For the trick to work, Tom had to create some sound effects, but we had to provide background Trick-or-Treating noise.

So, Tom stepped up on that porch, and walked over to the door. He knocked and said “Trick or Treat,” and the man said “Come in!” Then Tom made some sound effects, hitting the door frame or something. Then he dumped that bucket of water, yelled, stomped around, and ran away from us, stopping nearby to watch the action.

As we watched, the trickster opened the door. As the man stepped out onto his wet porch, the special gadget Tom had described to our mother, attached to the top of his screen door, hit the bucket and tipped it over onto him.

Dick and I, and the other boys, yelled “Trick or Treat!” and then ran as fast as we could in two different directions. I was nine, and Dick was seven, but we didn’t slow

down until we got more than half-way across the foot bridge.

Excited, we walked home. Then we went out Trick or Treating on our side of the bridge, and went to the Halloween party at the Temple. Tom had Tricked the Trickster!

Transitions! When we moved to Lake Pleasant, it had already transitioned away from being a Spiritualist campground, but they still held meetings in the Temple. The men and a few women, parents of my schoolmates, left for the day to work at GTD, the Turners Falls Paper mill, and Millers Falls Tool. We would run around barefoot, play in the streets, investigate the brook in the valley below the bridge, and wander in the surrounding woodlands.

I was eleven when we moved to Montague Center, shortly after the Temple fire, but I have lots of memories of living in Lake Pleasant.



NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATIONS

VALLEY VIEW from page B1 information as strictly confidential, reserved only for family and dearest friends, if that. Anyone interviewing a successful hunter must respect this confidentiality code. If you can get an accurate town of kill, you’re doing well. But pinpointing the site? Good luck.

Still, the question must be asked, and it was. After a brief, tell-tale pause, his furtive answer was Chestnut Mountain, a well-known deer-hunting ridge straddling the North Hatfield-West Whately line between Route 5 & 10 and Northampton’s Mountain Street Reservoir.

Many a big buck has been taken from those woods overlooking the so-called “Plantation” and West Brook. And believe you me, many a cagey hunter has over the years used Chestnut Mountain as clever cover for an actual kill site. It seems every town has a place like that, one that provides a convenient cover for the question hunters don’t want asked.

I reported what the man told me, knowing there was a good chance it was not true. What choice did I have? I would have preferred a humorous and evasive answer. You know, something like “under the old apple tree” or “in the white oaks” or “through the heart and lungs,” or even a simple “no comment.” Instead, I got the polite runaround, and printed it.

Well, little did I know that more

reliable data would soon appear in the form of an incredible stroke of good fortune. We’re talking about dumb luck, the improbability of which was greater than getting struck by lightning. Still, unlikely as it may seem, it happened. Like they say all the time in Chicopee: You can’t make it up.

Within two or three weeks of my big-buck column hitting the street, my friend and I decided to scout our favorite sections of the expansive woods known on topo maps as the Williamsburg quadrangle. Even then it wasn’t as heavily hunted as it once had been, because modern hunters were starting to drift away from big woods in favor of small suburban woodlots with high deer densities. Known to state wildlife biologists as “The Four Corners,” because Whately, Williamsburg, Ashfield, and Conway meet there, I preferred to hunt the ridges traversed by Henhawk Trail, an old Indian footpath and discontinued road leading from the Whately-Williamsburg line to Cricket Hill in Conway.

I had known those woods since I was a teen wandering the old roads with a high-school sweetheart on warm spring days. Back then I even happened upon a small Sixties artist commune hidden there, the members of which summered in twine-bound lean-tos off Henhawk Road. These same folks also had a small, winter cabin named “The Eagle’s Nest”

atop Dry Hill. Last time I checked, the Nest was still sturdy and standing amid outcroppings of ledge on the hardwood ridge.

At the base of the double-rutted road leading to the cabin was a private bridge crossing a small spring brook. Cresting the wooden frame defining the crossing was a carved sign sporting a coiled rattlesnake preceding a warning that read “Avril Wood: Don’t Tread on Me.” Apparently, the commune’s name was Avril Wood and the members didn’t enjoy trespassers. Nonetheless, I met the loin-clothed campers a few times and spoke with them. They were harmless hippies – friendly, in fact, once they understood they were not threatened.

Anyway, on a high terrace over the top of the ridgetop Eagle’s Nest there was an old overgrown apple orchard that produced plentiful fruit one year and virtually none the next. When apples were plentiful, deer frequently fed there. Thus, it was important to assess the apple crop before hunting season began.

Our pre-shotgun-deer-season scouting plan was to four-wheel my Jeep Cherokee up Henhawk to a spot between High Ridge and Dry Hill. Parking there, we’d scout High Ridge to a backdoor descent to the old Boy Scout camp, then hike up to the old orchard on Dry Hill’s gentle north slope. Interpreting deer sign along that circuitous journey, we’d

be able to assess their feeding and bedding habits.

Having finished the High Ridge leg of the mission, we crossed Henhawk, passed my Jeep, and were following a stonewall up Dry Hill when I stumbled on what felt like a vine or maybe a strand of old metal fence buried in fresh leaf litter. When I tried unsuccessfully to pull right through the snag, I backed off, freed my boot, and spotted a shiny cord of some sort.

Hmmmmmm?

With my curiosity piqued, I reached down to inspect the cord, which looked relatively new. When I pulled up on it, I could see it was attached to a small, rectangular plastic box attached about three inches up the base of a small tree to my right.

Then I followed it about three feet to the left, where it was anchored to another tree base, creating a tripwire.

I fiddled with the plastic box and was able to slide it off a frame secured to the tree. What I had discovered quite by chance was a hunter’s trail-timer, placed along a well-used deer run to track movement into the nearby orchard. A passing deer would hit the tripwire like I had and stop the timer inside to record the time of passing. It was an early version of the trail cameras deer hunters use today for the same purpose, although now, even better, motion sensors trigger

photos of passing critters.

Upon closer inspection, I found the owner’s name written on the inner panel. Difficult as it may seem to believe, that trail-timer belonged to none other than the Hatfield hunter I had featured in the big-buck column. I was dumbstruck. How was that possible?

From peak to peak, Dry Hill and Chestnut Mountain are separated by less than three miles – in the neighborhood, so to speak, but more than far enough apart for a hunter trying to conceal a favorite haunt.

To this day, I still can’t believe I found that device by total accident in such a timely fashion. Talk about a needle in a haystack, a random discovery like that, in deep woods no less, should never happen. The probability of hitting a Powerball jackpot is better, likely much better.

So now the story has finally been told in black and white. The statute of limitations long ago passed. That was no Chestnut Hill buck. It was a Dry Hill-High Ridge racker, and an extraordinary one at that.

That big buck wasn’t searching for apples. In the rut, he was looking for receptive does foraging the orchard. Our anonymous Hatfield hunter had done his homework and was in the right place at the right time.

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BOHEMIA from page B1

on the Facebook page, she reached out once again and we were finally able to fill in the missing links.

Today we are fellow researchers having the time of our lives tracing the roots of our common ancestors.

Russ Neydl

In 2006, my father asked if I could “look in that computer” and find our family history. I thought we knew the history: my great-grandfather Jacob Neydl came to the US in the late 1800s from Struhadlo, Germany and settled in Turners Falls, where he met and married his wife Barbara. Jacob and Barbara had three children there, and not long after moved to metropolitan New York.

From Jacob to my generation, there were only ten Neydls, but I said I would see what I could find, and began researching Jacob’s birthplace.

With some assistance from online message boards, I soon learned some interesting things: Jacob was born in “Struhadlo,” not “Struhadle”; Struhadlo was in the Czech Republic, not Germany; and Jacob’s surname at birth was “Nejdl,” not “Neydl.” I now had a new hobby – genealogy!

My father had visited Turners Falls when he was a child, and I was now curious about the town, so we took several trips there. We toured the town, went to the cemeteries, and most significantly, visited with some (non-Nejdl) second cousins still in the area. They hadn’t seen each other in over 60 years, and we had wonderful, special visits.

Early on in my research, I found some old records that showed there was a Lewis Nadle and a Joseph Neidl in Turners Falls when Jacob arrived; further research showed that these were Jacob’s uncles, Ludvik and Josef. I then made connections with several “cousins” here in the US descended from these other Nejdl’s and their spouses, including Marilyn Paul-Lewis, and more recently, Jim Bridgeman.

I have also connected with four Nejdl cousins in the Czech Republic, and my wife and

I have been fortunate to visit them and their families twice in recent years. Unfortunately, plans for us to meet Marilyn and Jim in person this past spring were indefinitely postponed by COVID. But we have that to look forward to.

Marilyn Paul-Lewis

I am fortunate to have inherited my great-grandparents’ marriage certificate, which they brought with them from Bohemia. Other than that, I had a little information about my Bohemian ancestors from my mother, but my research into the two branches of my great-grandparents’ families really jump-started in 2010 with my chance entry of “Ludwig Neydl” into my search engine. A noticeboard message from a Russ Neydl popped up.

Fortunately, Russ included an email, and when I contacted him, I discovered that I’d found the jackpot! Russ was ahead of me on his research, and I learned that my great-grandfather Ludwig – or Louis Nadle, as he was known in Turners Falls – was only one of three brothers and a nephew who had emigrated from the tiny village of Struhadlo in Bohemia. Russ, my third cousin once removed, shared his research, and also introduced me to another cousin in Nebraska.

I was fortunate, as my son was living in Bavaria at the time, to visit with my son and make a side trip to Struhadlo and Koryta, my great-grandparents’ two birth places. At that time we didn’t know any family members there that we could meet, but Russ was able to make more connections and meet distant cousins when he visited a few years later.

My second “discovery” came when I joined the Czech Genealogy Facebook page last year. When I typed in my Bohemian family names, I found two more (fourth) cousins, Jim Bridgman and Deb Lawton, on my great-grandmother’s side.

All these years I thought my great-grandfather was the one who had made the decision to emigrate to the US. Now I find that he probably came because his wife’s family, the Schuldas and Tomans, were already here, and he was the one who perhaps encouraged his brothers and nephew to come.



Above, left: Marie Tomanova Neydl (Mary Nadle), circa the 1920s. Marie, wife of Ludwig Neydl (Louis Nadle), was born in 1854 in Koryta, Bohemia. Above, right: Ludvik and Marie’s marriage certificate. (Photos courtesy of Marilyn Paul-Lewis)

Below: The former Neydl family home #20 in Struhadlo, where all the Turners Falls Neydls/Nadles/Neidls grew up. (Photo courtesy of Russ Neydl)

Last year through *Ancestry.com*, I met a descendant of Ludwig’s brother, Joseph. Now I have a new extended Bohemian branch of my family, and we are pooling our knowledge to try to learn more about our ancestors.

One interesting bit of family lore is that the three brothers and nephew each decided to spell their surnames differently, so that people

could tell the branches of the family apart. The four names are Nadle, Neidl, Neydl, and Nejdl.

We would love to continue to meet more family members who are interested in their Bohemian history. Feel free to email us: Marilyn Paul-Lewis, mpaullewis@gmail.com; Jim Bridgman, jimbridgman@comcast.net.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Car Vs. Bear; Stolen Political Sign; Screaming At Night; Unemployment Scams

Thursday, 10/1
9:41 a.m. Assisted FD and AMR in a medical emergency on Boyle Road.
12:38 p.m. Caller reports that a lawnmower on Main Road threw a stone at her car and damaged it. No personal injuries.
5:57 p.m. Caller from the French King Highway reports that a ladder came loose from a gray pickup truck with a trailer heading westbound and hit the bottom plastic part of the caller’s car.
9:19 p.m. Officer requested on West Gill Road for a disturbance.
Friday, 10/2
9:18 a.m. Report of a landscape company taking up the travel lane on Main Road on a blind hill.
10:58 a.m. Loose dog on Lamplighter Way.
Saturday, 10/3
4:25 p.m. Passerby reported disabled motor vehicles on French King Highway.
5:23 p.m. Caller requested a welfare check for a party on West Gill Road.
6:08 p.m. Medical emergency on West Gill Road.
9:37 p.m. Medical emergency on Chappell Drive.
Sunday, 10/4
1:17 p.m. Complaint taken about theft from farm fields at Main and Munn’s Ferry roads.
5:33 p.m. Abandoned 911 call. Spoke with the subject and everything is okay.
6:22 p.m. Assisted Greenfield PD with motor vehicle accident on the French King Highway on bypass. No injuries.
Monday, 10/5
7:11 a.m. Suspicious vehicle reported on the French King Highway.
12:19 p.m. Caller from Route 2 reported that a vehicle passed him and another vehicle unsafely and stayed in the opposite lane for an extended period of time.
2:56 p.m. Served a warrant on Chappell Drive.
7:14 p.m. A neighbor on Munn’s Ferry Road reported car lights in the pumpkin field.
Tuesday, 10/6
9:27 a.m. Responded to a medical emergency on West Gill Road.
5:37 p.m. Caller reported a suspicious vehicle on the French King Highway. The subject was outside the vehicle. Upon checking, he had pulled into an abandoned business to relieve himself.
6:37 p.m. 911 misdial on Lamplighter Way. Pocket dial; no need for response.
7:37 p.m. Officer assisted in obtaining medical care for a party on Main Road.
Wednesday, 10/7
7:28 a.m. Caller states

he came across a vehicle stopped in the middle of Bascom Road. He believes the party may be having a medical emergency.
7:47 a.m. Caller requested a welfare check on North Cross Road. Massachusetts State Police located the vehicle and took the subject into custody for OUI.
9:03 a.m. A burglar alarm from the front and rear motion detectors went off on a structure on Main Road. The alarm company will attempt to get in touch with the keyholder.
3:02 p.m. Caller from Franklin Road requested assistance in returning license plates.
3:14 p.m. Two dogs reported running loose down West Gill Road.
4:48 p.m. Tree reported down on the highway on Main Road. Advised Highway Department.
5:02 p.m. Tree down across West Gill Road involving utility wires.
5:08 p.m. Tree down on wires on Wood Avenue.
7:26 p.m. An officer was requested to help with a no-trespass order on Chappell Drive.
Thursday, 10/8
8:26 a.m. Fire chief reported that barrels put at the junction of Center and Ben Hale roads due

to a downed tree were placed too close to Ben Hale Road, and were run over last night by an unknown subject.
8:56 a.m. A caller asked for help. Her mother on West Gill Road does not have power and cannot turn on her generator.
9:03 a.m. Caller reported a black Volvo speeding down Chappell Drive. Car pulled into a neighbor’s driveway and then left.
1:47 p.m. 911 misdial on North Cross Road.
2:15 p.m. Caller reported a tree branch hanging on the utility service to a house on Riverview Drive.
8:10 p.m. Assisted Montague PD with a motor vehicle crash on Turnpike Road. All their units tied up on calls. No injuries.
Friday, 10/9
11:18 a.m. Caller from Trenholm Way reported a fraudulent unemployment claim.
6:29 p.m. Fire alarm on Memorial Grove Road.
7:05 p.m. Caller states he struck a bear on Route 10. There were no injuries.
Saturday, 10/10
11:05 a.m. A caller on the French King Highway states that a large group of motorcyclists were passing illegally.
11:10 a.m. A medical emergency was called in

from North Cross Road.
3:46 p.m. Caller advised that her ex-boyfriend is at the French King Bridge texting her that he is going to jump.
5:15 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with trespassing complaint on Papermill Road.
5:49 p.m. While clearing the previous call in Erving, the officer observed a young boy on Moore Street fall off his bike. Did not transport as the mother responded and took the child.
7:22 p.m. Call about a tree blocking the area of Main Road and Wood Avenue.
7:26 p.m. Caller reported a tree limb across Main Road; no wires involved.
7:39 p.m. Responded to a medical emergency on Riverview Drive.
8:45 p.m. Received a call into the station of fireworks on West Gill Road.
Monday, 10/12
12:36 p.m. Caller from the French King Highway reported a two-car accident with no personal injuries.
Tuesday, 10/13
11:01 a.m. Received a 911 call from Boyle Road. 911 open line sounded like a fax machine beeping. Confirmed misdial with the fax machine.
2:30 p.m. Returned found articles to a party from

Main Road at the station.
Wednesday, 10/14
10:09 a.m. Caller reported losing a pair of prescription reading glasses somewhere on Center Road.
Thursday, 10/15
10:30 a.m. Medical emergency on West Gill Road.
1:39 p.m. Caller reported a tree down across Lyons Hill Road. No utility lines involved.
5:07 p.m. Responded to a medical emergency on Memorial Grove Road.
6:31 p.m. Caller from Main Road reported that a political sign was stolen from their front yard sometime during daylight hours.
Friday, 10/16
9:50 a.m. Responded to a medical emergency on Wyart Road.
2:03 p.m. Assisted a resident of Main Road with out-of-state firearms’ fingerprinting at the Station.
Saturday, 10/17
3 p.m. Investigated reports on Mountain Road Estates Street by neighbors who are hearing screaming at night.
3:11 p.m. A caller from Barney Hale Road reported cars parked on both sides of the street and people standing in the middle of the road.
4:09 p.m. Received a report of a fight in progress

on Walnut Street.
[Records for 10/18 and 10/19 not provided.]
Tuesday, 10/20
9:35 a.m. A suspicious vehicle was reported on the French King Highway. Found that the vehicle was parked facing the woodline and there was hunting gear in the car. Most likely hunting in woods.
11:37 a.m. Assisted Erving PD with an accident on the French King Highway. No injuries.
3:42 p.m. Caller reported a possible truck stuck in the mud on Brattleboro Road. Assisted Bernardston PD in checking the disabled vehicle.
5:09 p.m. Confirmed 911 misdial on Main Road. Party had phone issues.
6:10 p.m. Assisted another agency on West Gill Road.
Wednesday, 10/21
3 p.m. Caller from Lamplighter Way reported that she had an unemployment claim opened in her name.
Thursday, 10/22
3:25 p.m. Received report of tractor trailer unit stuck on S-curves at Mountain and Main roads.
8:05 p.m. Assisted Northfield PD checking welfare of a subject under bridge on East Northfield Road.

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WARREN ONDRAS PHOTO

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— Lisa McLoughlin, editor

Recycle Even More Plastic Than You Thought Possible

By LISA McLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – You can recycle more plastic than you probably thought. Some stores, including at Fosters, Food City, Stop and Shop, and Big Y, collect plastic packaging. Look for it the next time you go shopping – the container is like a big trash can with a lid sitting near the entrance and exit.

If you don't see a container where you shop, it might be good to ask for one, because any store can get into the extended plastic recycling program. It's also possible that these bins have been removed temporarily during the pandemic.

Here are some things you can recycle in these store drop-off bins: plastic newspaper bags; produce bags, both pre-packaged and bag-in-store types; one-use plastic retail bags (which sharks and turtles eat when they find them in the ocean, thinking they're jellyfish); the outside plastic wrap on cases of water bottles, nap-

CC IMAGE BY NELS ISRAELSON



A seal trapped in plastic pollution.

kins, paper towels, toilet paper, and diapers; bread bags; dry cleaning bags; Ziploc and other sandwich bags; and those air pillows Amazon included in the giant box in which they sent the tiny object you bought.

All plastics should be clean and dry. Pop the air pillows.

Note that you can't put these plastic packaging items in your own recycle bin. They won't get recycled this way, and they'll gum up the works at the recycling plant. Keep them in your reusable food shopping bags and drop them off in the bin on your way into the store.

For more information see how2recycle.info or sustainablepackaging.org.

Use Less Plastic

Of course, it's even better not to use plastic in the first place. Produce bags can be reused, as can the plastic boxes some produce like cherry tomatoes come in.

In the store, just put the veggies into your cart (carefully so they don't fall out while you shop), and at home, reuse the bags and boxes you already have. After all, they're see-through. Trust yourself to put jalapeno peppers in a cherry tomato box and be able to figure it out.

You can also selectively choose items that aren't in plastic, such as onions that don't come in a plastic net, and lemons you pick up one at a time rather than on a Styrofoam tray. I have started doing this, and there is no noticeable difference in my food bill. While the big one-at-a-time lemons cost more than the small trayed ones, I need fewer of them, and the loose onions cost the same per pound as the netted ones, with the added advantage of being able to choose whatever size you prefer for cooking.

Reducing plastic use feels good, and the ocean – where most of our plastic ends up – will thank you.

Cats Are Smart – Just Not Compliant



CC IMAGE BY FELINE DACAT

A guest at Tom's Cat Café in Seoul, South Korea.

By LISA McLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – Cat cafés, which they have in Canada as well as Japan, are cafés where there are multiple resident cats available to visit and sometimes to adopt. Atsuko Saito of Sophia University in Tokyo researched 78 cats, some resident in cat cafés and some living with human families. Her research shows cats will beg for food from humans who look at them and call their name, even if these people were not their “owners.”

Cats living with human families were really good at recognizing their names. They could distinguish between their name and other similar-sounding words.

Cats that lived in the cat cafés didn't have such a clear response to their own name. They seemed to respond to names of other cats as well, but they could still tell cat names from other words. Researchers speculated this was because in the cafés, multiple cats were often called at once in a group.

Recognition was tracked by ear and head movements, as well as tail swishing, because fewer than 10% of the cats bothered to get up and go to the person calling them. In addition, the timbre of their purring was different when soliciting food than at other times. Saito theorized cats learn to recognize their names because being called is associated with rewards like food and petting. So they may understand us, but that doesn't mean they respond.

The researchers made some comparisons between cats and other animals, saying that dogs have long been known to respond to their names, but that this and other obedient and responsive behaviors were selectively bred into them, whereas cats haven't had much

training. But Saito leaves ample space for social rather than biological influence, and suggests that as we spend more time socializing our cats, they will evolve to respond to us better. Besides dogs, parrots, dolphins, and apes can also understand human words at some level.

Saito began her career as an evolutionary animal psychologist studying primate cognition. This field is very well-developed in Japan, according to Frans de Waal, the author of *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* I think of this book as a really boring book on a fascinating subject. It grows on you, but in the first half I was just waiting for the answer to the title. De Waal spends a lot of time tracing the history of primate research. One message you can't miss is that primates are individuals who have motivations, emotions, and a way of thinking about the world and their existence that is non-human, but still sentient.

We have a lot to learn about animal behavior. For example, some primates (and maybe cats too) know what we want from them, but just don't think they should have to do it. I think they're right about that for the most part, but not – if they want to live in the house – about hygiene issues.

In closing, here are some lyrics from the great cat-observer and singer-songwriter Cheryl Wheeler from one of her many cat songs, “White Cat”:

*And they got this two bit sand pit
they want me to use
Sometimes I don't mind, sometimes
I refuse
Hey I am me, I'm free,
independence rocks
This ain't no new craze to find ways
to think outside the box.*

BOOK REVIEW

Robert MacFarlane, *Underland: A Deep Time Journey* (2019)

By LISA McLOUGHLIN

NORTHFIELD – This book is life-changing. MacFarlane travels to various underground places, some human-made, others natural. His narration of his adventures are threaded with myth, history, and analysis of why and how these places came to be and what that means. These are the sort of über-adventures that very fit people with climbing and caving skills and a nonchalance for human laws can have.

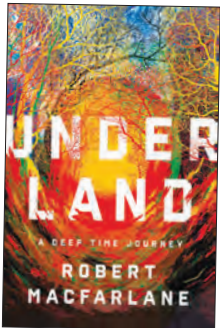
For example, I visited the catacombs under Paris on a tour, with a group of other people. And yes, they were amazing, and then I left and went to a museum. MacFarlane found people who make secret maps of rooms no one else knows

are there. He crawled through tunnels to see “teaching chambers” with carved spiral staircases, each with a specimen of a type of rock, used to instruct the stonemasons who built the catacombs. He researched their history during wartime – they were used for prisoners, and by the Resistance – and their use for burials after wars and disease. He slept with the weight of this history pressing down on him, hundreds of feet underground.

In Greenland, MacFarlane hiked a glacier and was lowered into a hole (called a mill, where water rushes through) to explore the blue crystal palace of its interior. He crossed vast

cold terrains alone, entering caves with art thousands of years old, where he experienced an epiphany. He spoke to researchers waiting in chambers deep in the earth for certain types of waves from space. He took tours of tunnels extending for miles: one a mine, the other a storage facility for nuclear waste.

MacFarlane's experiences in these dark places made me realize how amazing life can be, and how little-explored what lies below us is. It means something to us whether we've consciously thought about it or not, and it was an absolute pleasure thinking about it with this erudite yet congenial writer.



November 2020 Moon Calendar

Full Moon

Saturday, October 31

First Quarter

Sunday, November 21

Last Quarter

Sunday, November 8

Full Moon

Monday, November 30
Penumbral Lunar
Eclipse, 4:44 a.m.

New Moon

Sunday, November 15

Our moon's Wallach crater.

NASA PHOTO

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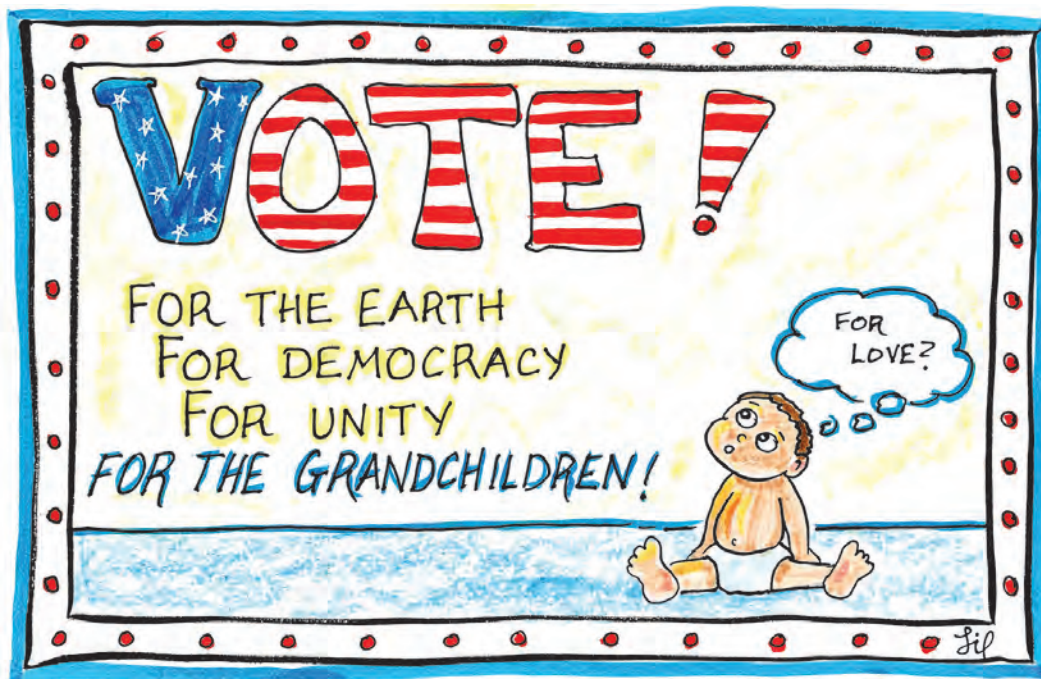
JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark

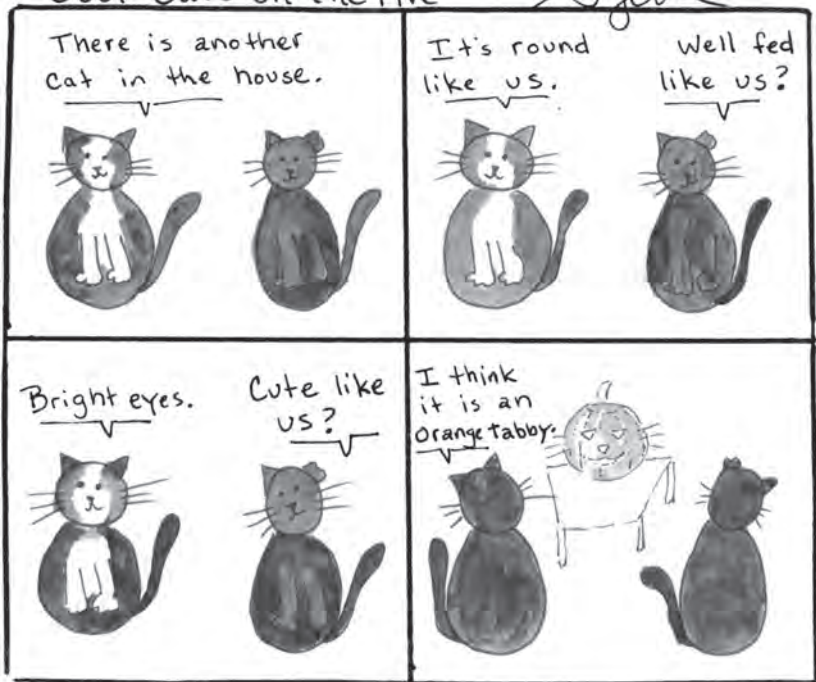


LILLY MOSS COMIC



Cool Cats on the Ave

Jyeth

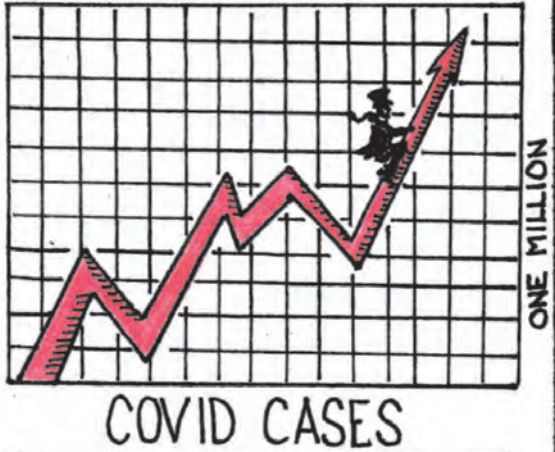


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THE AUTHORS' CORNER: JENNIFER E. SMITH

By IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS

TURNERS FALLS – Happy almost Halloween! I recently read *Field Notes on Love* by Jennifer E. Smith. This was definitely one of my favorite books I’ve read in quite a bit, so today I’m going to be reviewing it. Enjoy!

Field Notes on Love is about a boy named Hugo who lives in England. Hugo is a sextuplet, and is somewhat famous in his town because of this. Because Hugo and his siblings are sextuplets, which are very rare, they have all been offered scholarships to a very prestigious college in exchange for being good publicity for the school – like doing interviews, and so on.

When the story starts, Hugo has recently broken up with his girlfriend of four years, which is awful timing because they were supposed to take a train across America before they both go off to college. Hugo still wants to experience the trip, though – he has hardly ever left his town by himself, never mind his country.

The train, hotel rooms, and lunch and dinner reservations are all under his previous girlfriend’s name, Margaret Campbell. Desperate for an adventure, Hugo creates a post online looking for another Margaret Campbell to accompany him across America.

Mae Campbell is from New York, and is obsessed with making films. She plans on going to an amazing film school for college too, until she gets rejected from the film program. In need of an adventure, Mae responds to Hugo’s post, and says she would love to join him – a complete stranger – on his journey.

This book is quite literally the perfect book for me! I love reading about England, because it’s so beautiful and romantic, and this book takes place partly in Surrey, where Hugo lives with his family. This book is also super cute, and I loved reading about Hugo and Mae. It’s also very funny – one of Hugo’s siblings, Alfie, is so funny, and I love reading about him and his family.

I would recommend this book to anyone who likes happy or romantic books! *Field Notes on Love* is a lot like the *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before* series, *I Believe in a Thing*

Called Love, Somewhere Only We Know, and A Match made in Mehendi, so I think readers who have enjoyed those books will like *Field Notes on Love* a lot too!

I reached out to the author of this novel, Jennifer E. Smith, via Instagram, and she said she could do an interview!

Izzy V-C: *In Field Notes on Love, two complete strangers go on a train across America together, and fall in love. Were any parts of the book based on an experience you or someone else had?*

Jennifer E. Smith: I’ve always thought there was something romantic about long train rides. When I first got the idea for the book, I took an Amtrak from Denver to San Francisco and then down to LA, and even though I’d taken a lot of long train journeys, it was the first time I’d been on one overnight. It was slightly less romantic in actuality... but still seemed like an interesting place to set a love story!

IVC: *Who do you think you are most like in Field Notes on Love?*

JES: I always see a little of myself in each character – it’s how I find my way in. I’m definitely a planner like Mae, but I can also be dreamy like Hugo. Those two sides of the coin made them really fun to write.

IVC: *If Field Notes on Love was made into a movie, who would be your dream cast?*

JES: There’s actually a film in development with a couple of wonderful actors attached to play Hugo and Mae, so it’s hard to see anyone else in those roles now!

IVC: *If you were not an author, what would you want to be?*

JES: I was an editor for a long time too, so I’d definitely do that. I feel very lucky to have found two jobs I love!

IVC: *In Field Notes on Love, Mae has two dads, and Hugo is half black. Why do you think it’s important to see characters with different backgrounds being represented in books?*



Our correspondent has found the “perfect book for her!”

JES: Representation is so important. I’m white, and in the past, so were most of the characters in my books.

Over the last several years, I’ve learned a great deal from listening to POC and LGBTQ+ friends and colleagues in the industry, and while I would never want to take up space or tell a story that isn’t mine to tell, I also want to do a better job of reflecting the world as it is.

IVC: *Since part of Field Notes on Love is set in England, did you travel to England to do research for these parts of the book, or have you ever been to England?*

JES: I was lucky enough to go to grad school in the UK, and have always spent a lot of time over there. It’s one of my favorite places to write about – and visit!

Thank you so much to Ms. Smith for answering my questions! I hope everyone who decides to read this book loves it as much as I did, and that everyone has a safe Halloween!

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