

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 2

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 5, 2020

## Trump Maintains Share of Local Votes; Dems Make Gains On Third-Party Losses

By MIKE JACKSON

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – The United States held an unusual national election on Tuesday, and it was still taking place early Thursday morning when we went to press, with votes in five key swing states still being counted. Locally, preliminary vote tallies were released on Wednesday, though mail-in votes postmarked by Tuesday will continue to be counted through the end of the week.

Within the *Montague Reporter's* main coverage towns – Montague, Gill, Irving, Wendell, and Leverett – Donald Trump, the Republican presidential incumbent, appears to have won a total of 23.9% of the ballots cast.

His share of the same five towns' votes in 2016 was 23.9%.

The Democratic nominee, Joe Biden, appears to have won 72.1% of the total ballots – a gain for the party over 2016, when only 64.6%



Four of Montague's six precincts voted together at the Tech School gym.

of voters pulled the lever for Hillary Clinton.

Since it doesn't come from Trump's share, the opposition party's 7.5% gain in our towns can be accounted for entirely from other sources: a decline in support for Libertarian Party candidates (from 4.6% to 1.6%), for Green-Rainbow

candidates (from 4.3% to 1.0%), and blanks and write-ins (from 2.7% to 1.2%).

Turnout was strong this year, even though Massachusetts is not considered a swing state at the national level. Amid a pandemic, the count was buoyed by mail-in see **VOTES** page A5

## Fundraising Begins for Bridge Rebuilding



The downed trees have been cleared, and the broken west end of the Bridge of Names has been dismantled.

By DONNA PETERSEN

**LAKE PLEASANT** – When a strong storm blew into the area on Wednesday, October 7, the village of Lake Pleasant in Montague was hard hit. Trees came down all through the small community, crushing at least one vehicle, damaging some houses, and blocking roads.

One victim of the tempest was the local landmark, the Bridge of Names. On this pedestrian span connecting the two sides of the village of about 170 residents, there were over 1,400 "pickets" – slats of wood carved with names of past and present residents, as well as some surprising names. As resident Scott Nickerson sat on a bench near one end of the bridge, the strong wind blew down a large tree at the same end, and the tree took down a whole section of the bridge. Nickerson was lucky to have only a few bumps and bruises, and the scare of a lifetime.

The village of Lake Pleasant has an interesting history as an active spiritualist campground meeting community founded in 1870. Today, it includes the headquarters of the National Spiritualist Alliance.

The history of the bridges that have spanned part of the lake to connect the two sides of the village is just as interesting. I spoke with David James, the local post office person and historian, who had the names, dates, and events in detail when I asked him questions. The original bridge was built in 1888 through the work of Frank

see **BRIDGE** page A4

## "Uber for Cannabis" Special Permit Approved by a Grumpy Zoning Board

By JEFF SINGLETON

**MILLERS FALLS** – Several years ago, the Montague selectboard set up a process to negotiate "host community agreements" for cannabis businesses. The process requires a company to hold a community outreach meeting and receive approval of a special permit by the zoning board of appeals prior to negotiating a final agreement with the selectboard.

So, on Wednesday evening, the town held an outreach meeting on a proposal by a business operating under the name of Greenhouse Mobility Solutions to set up a

see **PERMIT** page A8



No cannabis is intended to be onsite at the business's East Main Street office.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## MA Issues New COVID Orders, Approves Farren Closure Plan

By JEFF SINGLETON

At its meeting the day before the national election, the Montague selectboard heard public health director Daniel Wasiuk announce a new set of more stringent state "orders and advisories" in response to rising numbers of COVID infections and deaths in Massachusetts since Labor Day. At the end of the meeting, town administrator Steve Ellis announced that he had just received a letter from the state Department of Public Health approving the closure

of the Farren long-term care facility on Montague City Road by the first of next year.

Wasiuk described the new state orders as targeted to mask usage, limitations on gatherings, business restrictions, and including a stay-at-home advisory. "There was a lot that was sent out today," he said. "I'm really looking at assimilating this new information."

According to the website of the governor's office, the regulations will include a requirement to wear

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

## Whipps Handily Defends Seat In 2nd Franklin House Race

By JEFF SINGLETON

**ATHOL** – "In a time where many people feel they have to vote for the 'lesser of two evils', the people of the Second Franklin District had two good people to choose from. I wish Mr. LaRose the best and thank him for running an honorable campaign." So wrote Susannah Whipps, re-elected to represent the Second Franklin District in the state legislature. Whipps also thanked not only the voters of the district, but also "our town clerks and poll workers who did a great job providing a safe and accessible election for all."

Will LaRose, the Democratic challenger who ran an aggressive campaign against Whipps expressed similar sentiments. He



State rep Susannah Whipps.

congratulated Whipps and said he was "thankful for all the support throughout the district." He said he will continue to work "to help the Second Franklin," perhaps in a

see **WHIPPS** page A3

ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Erving Industries Alters Scheme For Sludge Machine Ownership

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the Erving selectboard considered a revised plan from ERSECO for financing a sludge-drying system at the town-owned POTW#2. According to town administrator Bryan Smith, the Erving Industries subsidiary initially proposed to purchase the \$5 million dryer unit, which would belong to the town as part of the treatment facility's assets. However, the company's current proposal is that the dryer would be owned by ERSECO, which operates the plant, until the loan for its purchase is fully paid.

Finance committee member Debra Smith commented that the loan for sludge dryer was a "hot topic" at the October 3 special town meeting (STM), and that ERSECO owning the dryer for the duration of the loan was "not what the town was told – not what the town was expecting."

Voters at the STM unanimously authorized the town to borrow up to \$17.9 million from the state revolving loan fund for the sludge dryer project. At that meeting, Erving Industries chief executive officer Morris Housen told them

see **ERVING** page A4

GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Date for Reentry Nudged Ahead As Virus Advances

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – Back on September 29, the regional school committee authorized superintendent Brian Beck to proceed with a plan to bring students back into school buildings, mostly for two days a week, pending upgrades and repairs to the buildings' ventilation systems.

As the COVID-19 pandemic wears on, the public health focus has turned toward air flow as an important factor in reducing the risk of transmission, which is now believed to be disproportionately clustered in "superspreader" events.

Gill-Montague students and teachers have been meeting remotely, and while some families and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have been encouraging the district to reintroduce face-to-face learning, Beck says that he has decided to slow down his initial plan. While a handful of students with special needs are meeting with staff in the buildings, the next students will not be introduced until at least the third week of November, the superintendent reports.

"It is clear that our entire nation is in the midst of a significant

see **GMRSD** page A3



### Anxiously Clicking Refresh On All These Pages

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## Make Every Vote Equal

It would be folly to sound off in a weekly local paper about the national election. Nevada, Arizona, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Georgia have still not been called as of press time and the outcome remains unclear.

During this window, however, we may as well wave a little flag for an evergreen good idea: the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. Massachusetts, 15 other states, and Washington, DC have entered the agreement, representing 196

Electoral College votes. It’s pending in four more states, representing another 60 – that’s 256. If it hits 270, it goes into force, and American politics change forever: each state would pledge electors based on the *national popular vote*.

Wouldn’t it be a wonderful idea to abolish swing states? Presidential candidates would have to make the same appeal to everyone in the country, and nailbiters and recounts would be extremely rare. It’s an idea whose time has come.

## Twelve Legislators to Governor Baker: Keep Farren Open!

Governor Baker,

We are writing regarding the proposed change of ownership for Mount St. Vincent Care Center and the proposed closure of the Farren Care Center in Montague.

Urged on by tremendously concerned constituents, we ask you to consider using executive authority to prevent the imminent closure of Farren during the COVID-19 crisis, the change of ownership at Mount. St. Vincent and the transfer of patients away from Farren and to other facilities, including Mount St. Vincent, for at least the duration of the State of Emergency. The closure of these facilities and the transfer of ownership and patients during a public health pandemic presents an additional and unnecessary hardship for families and their loved ones.

Farren and Mount St. Vincent serve very different populations. While Farren provides specialty care to residents with both psychiatric and chronic medical needs, Mount St. Vincent is primarily a skilled nursing facility, and no guarantees have been made that Farren residents will maintain the same dual specialty care following this transfer. Combining

these groups not only increases the risk of spreading COVID-19, but also puts immense pressure on care providers and staff to adapt quickly to meet these differing needs during an incredibly difficult time.

Our concerns are heightened when we consider the pending closures of both Baystate Franklin and Providence Hospital’s behavioral health facilities and Holyoke Medical Center’s birthing facility. The exodus of local, high quality services for our constituents point to a troubling trend in the region.

Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders and her team have been deeply and thoughtfully engaged in this process, and we are grateful for their work and engagement. Through them, we have understood the extent of the Commonwealth’s abilities and procedures to prevent Trinity Health from closing Farren and transferring operations for Mount St. Vincent to iCare – and accordingly we turn to you.

We are also including last week’s front page *Globe* article on the Farren closure.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Rep. Natalie M. Blais, *1st Franklin*  
Sen. Jo Comerford, *Hampshire, Franklin, Worcester*  
Sen. John C. Velis, *2nd Hampden, Hampshire*  
Rep. Aaron Vega, *5th Hampden*  
Sen. Anne M. Gobi, *Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex*  
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Sen. Adam G. Hinds, *Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin, Hampden*  
Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa, *1st Hampshire*  
Rep. Mindy Domb, *3rd Hampshire*  
Rep. Daniel R. Carey, *2nd Hampshire*  
Sen. Eric P. Lesser, *First Hampden and Hampshire*



Behind the scenes at the Reporter: Brian Faldas of About Face Computer Solutions, who provides us with on-call, pro bono tech support, puzzles over the managing editor’s main desktop computer on Tuesday. Brian replaced the machine’s power supply and spent a little time “cleaning up” background processes. As of press time, it seems his intervention worked – the computer stopped freezing, and you’re reading a newspaper! We recommend About Face unreservedly.

## Letters to the Editors

### Open Letter to Local Law Enforcement

To Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan,  
Montague Police Chief Christopher Williams,  
and Officers of Law Enforcement:

I wish to speak to the versions of yourselves not bound by the badge to perpetuate your livelihood, only to the men of character buried beneath that badge. You are not your uniform, your gun or your rank. It is impossible to communicate unless you are sons, husbands, fathers, brothers, and people first before you are lawmen. The bluster and the bloodthirst subside with that in mind.

So I ask you this: is your skin blue? I’ll wait while you check... Do you realize that the slogan “blue lives matter,” spouted by the people who refuse to accept that Black lives matter, seeks to dehumanize you by only recognizing your function as the oppressive carnival of violence that routinely kills, injures and traumatizes people of color and those who love and support them?

These “pro-cop” people do not care for you – the people who wear the badge; they support the pervasive problem with our country’s law enforcement and penal system that police represent: racism. The flag with the blue stripe is a symbol of hate. Those who dispute the fact that Black lives matter will cheer the boot of tyranny as long as it doesn’t step on “whites” because they are cowards.

All hate is cowardice. In these polarizing times, I ask you to make the effort to rise above it.

Look, I know all the infamous racist police killings haven’t happened under your watch, but the public perception that the police are an inherently racist institution is what people are responding to.

You have a chance to do the right thing by publicly acknowledging that Black lives matter and condemning

white supremacy. I ask you to issue an immediate and earnest statement to this effect, and ensure that you will defend the citizens of your jurisdiction against white supremacist violence. You have the chance to turn the tide by reclaiming your humanity. We’re all just people, after all.

I write this as a white man who has admittedly benefited and continues to benefit from white privilege, the meaning of which grows more grave when one becomes complicit in the systemic evil that seeks to divide the one human race against itself. Human decency and any God you could choose would never let a good man bear to be silent on this matter.

I hope that you can see in this letter that I have compassion for you and recognize that you have a hard job (partly because too much community work that is beyond police training is heaped on the institution of law enforcement).

I even have compassion for these Trump supporters who are too ashamed to admit that they are wrong and would rather double down and flail violently against fictitious sleights. I honestly cannot fathom how anyone could love an egomaniacal hateful tyrant born with a golden spoon and told to help himself over any other American, but I feel a deep sense of pity that they have allowed themselves to be misled.

I am engaged in the constantly difficult and tender task of caring for humanity. We must treat each other the way we want to be treated. It’s really that simple.

With abiding hope for all humankind, sincerely,

**Norman Hale**  
**Lake Pleasant**

### Heartfelt Thanks to Anna Greene!

Because of the restrictions caused by the pandemic, we were not able to have a retirement sendoff for our Montague Center librarian Anna Greene, who retired a few weeks ago. We were not able to thank her for all her help, dedication, and support of our community.

So no cake, no reminiscing, no chance to hear of plans for the future. However, we want to take this opportunity to publicly thank Anna for all her wonderful work in our village.

Anna was known for her unfailing willingness to go that extra mile to find information and whatever resources her patrons needed, and to always make that personal connection with folks. She even brought in

flowers almost every week throughout the year!

We will really miss her, and wish her the best in whatever adventures await her in retirement. Thanks so much, Anna.

**Peg Bridges; Paul and Marcelle Lipke; the Davidson-Carroll Family; Judith Lorei; Ann and Mark Fisk; Jeri Moran; Ruth Helmich; Marcia Power; Betsy Laczynski; Rebecca Sabelawski ...and many, many more who wanted to be included, who have enjoyed Anna’s knowledge and help through the years,**  
**Montague Center**

**Published weekly on Thursdays.**  
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LARKIN-ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

By NINA ROSSI

**Free produce, applesauce, and soup** will be available in front of the Great Falls Market at 109 Avenue A this Saturday, November 7 courtesy of the Great Falls Apple Corps. Stop by between noon and 3 p.m. and share in the bounty.

The Montague Board of Health will be giving **Flu Shots by appointment only** starting the week of November 16. The hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Please call Anne at the Board of Health office to schedule your appointment: (413) 863-3200 x 205.

Do you enjoy singing? Have you noticed your voice has changed with age? The Pioneer Valley Symphony is presenting a Zoom talk with Karen Brunssen, an authority on the topic of aging and vocal music.

The event, titled **The Evolving Singing Voice**, will take place on Saturday, November 7 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Tickets can be purchased online at the PVS website, [pvsoc.org](http://pvsoc.org). Complimentary access to PVS events is also available through a partnership with over 30 regional libraries. Ask your local library about free access to PVS events.

The deadline for application submissions for the **Local Cultural Councils' FY'21** grant cycle has been extended until December 16. Submission guidelines for artists, performers, and educators may be found and applications filed online at [www.mass-culture.org](http://www.mass-culture.org).

Village Neighbors, a volunteer

organization helping residents over 60 years old in Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell, announces that they have **help with home repairs for seniors** available now. Capable volunteers are standing by to help elders in those areas to assess and fix a variety of small projects around the home.

Repairs ranging from adding handrails to removing air conditioners to refitting doors may be done for free by these volunteers, with grant money from the Church Street Home Fund, managed by LifePath. Membership in the organization is free; sign up at [villageneighbors.org](http://villageneighbors.org) or call (413) 345-6894. Help also available for household and yard chores.

Village Neighbors also invites you on a **two-hour nature walk** on a "flat trail" passing a waterfall and pine cove. The North Quabbin Trail Association (NQTA) will provide a safe, distanced, guided walk on Wednesday, November 11 at 11 a.m. (That's 11/11 at 11!) Rain date Thursday, November 12.

To register, respond to [pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org) by November 7. You will then receive directions and a trail map. Contact Bobby C. directly for more information at (978) 549-1747 or [info@NQTA.org](mailto:info@NQTA.org).

Would your youngster like to receive **Art-In-A-Box** once a week? The Art Garden is offering this opportunity to get art supplies as well as prompts, surprises, ideas, notes, and guidance for those who sign up by emailing [csartgarden@gmail.com](mailto:csartgarden@gmail.com).

Because the pandemic has been a financial hardship for so many, the boxes are offered on a pay-what-you-can basis, with the full cost being \$50 for four weeks

(four boxes). The boxes will have to be picked up at the Art Garden in Shelburne Falls on Wednesdays between 3 and 5 p.m.

The LAVA Center announces an **art show about community** at their gallery in Greenfield during November and December.

According to the press release, "Community is a large topic for an art show and it allows for tremendous differences in interpretation. Community was chosen because we have been separated from it so much during this pandemic, and we need to find ways to keep it awake in our lives. This show is an attempt to safely bring people together and remind them not only of the importance of community, but of the benefits as well."

Each Saturday will be staffed by different artists who have work on display. See the schedule of artists, and more information, at [localaccess.org](http://localaccess.org).

MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center is offering **paid positions in food service** at the Amherst Survival Center, Food Bank of Western Mass, and Highland Valley Elder Services. The eight-week stints are full- and part-time, and pay \$17 to \$20 an hour. Part timers may still qualify for unemployment benefits.

Check out this and other opportunities through the Center at [masshirefhcareers.org](http://masshirefhcareers.org).

**Silverthorne Theater** gets ready to present the one-man show, *The Tattooed Man Tells All* by Peter Wortsman, on November 13 and 14 at 7:30 p.m. This will be a live broadcast of a performance by Keith Langsdale, professional actor and director. A discussion with the playwright will follow Friday's performance at 9 p.m.

The play uses strong language, and parental discretion is advised. Get tickets and information at [silverthornetheater.org](http://silverthornetheater.org).

The **Greenfield Public Library** is letting people into the library

stacks again. You may browse the books on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon and Thursdays from 4 to 6 p.m.

Only ten people will be allowed in the building at a time, and no appointments will be taken. Staff will be available for tech support and questions, with limited computer usage available. Face coverings are required. For more information, email [librarian@greenfieldpubliclibrary.org](mailto:librarian@greenfieldpubliclibrary.org) or call (413) 772-1544.

Turners Falls' **Carnegie Library** is open by appointment only on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Call the library to arrange a visit, or a book drop-off and pick-up: (413) 863-3214.

They are running many programs online these days, including Storytime and Music and Movement. Find out what is available at [montague-publiclibraries.org](http://montague-publiclibraries.org).

RiverCulture seeks businesses for a holiday campaign called "It Takes Five Villages." The goal of the campaign is to **boost holiday sales in Montague**, and to help businesses through the winter season.

The RiverCulture website will link shoppers directly with local artists, crafters, authors, musicians, publishers, shops, restaurants, houseware, health and beauty services, and more. "It Takes Five Villages" will be widely advertised through traditional and social media.

People living or working in Montague, Erving, Gill, Leverett, and Wendell are eligible to participate. RiverCulture encourages all businesses to offer gift certificates. Participation is free. Email [riverculture@montague-ma.gov](mailto:riverculture@montague-ma.gov) for details on what to submit for the promotion.

The deadline is 5 p.m. on Monday, November 23, and the campaign goes live through social media on Tuesday, November 24. Questions? contact Suzanne LoManto at (413) 863-3200 x 115, Monday through Thursday. RiverCulture is a 14-year-old program working to support the creative economy in Montague.

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

## WHIPPS from page A1

volunteer capacity. "I'll be back in some fashion," he told the *Reporter*.

The final vote was not particularly close. Whipps won the district, which is composed of 11 towns and one precinct of Belcher-town, with just over two-thirds of the vote as of this writing. (Final returns await the counting of absentee ballots postmarked by Tuesday but received this Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday; the final count for the town of Athol might be next Monday.) Whipps won virtually every town in the district.

This will be the fourth term for Whipps, who changed her enrollment from "Republican" to "Un-enrolled" or independent in 2017. LaRose, who was an officer in the Army and has a masters degree in public administration, was a first-time candidate. Both grew up in Athol and both pledged to set a respectful tone during the campaign, contrasting the contest with the "partisanship" of national politics.

The 2nd Franklin, compared to its cousin the 1st Franklin to the west, is a "purple district." In 2016 the district went for Hillary Clinton by a very small margin, but the three largest towns –

Athol, Orange and Templeton – went for Donald Trump. According to the initial tallies this year, Athol and Orange have flipped to Joe Biden, while Templeton has remained with Trump by a margin of 51 to 46 percent.

On the federal level, the towns of the 2nd Franklin fall entirely in Massachusetts' 2nd Congressional district. Incumbent Democrat Jim McGovern appears to have carried the region relatively easily, including big wins in Athol and Orange.

His Republican opponent Tracey Lovvorn, who has been accused of endorsing the conspiracy theories of the group QAnon, lost in the 2nd Franklin as a whole, but received half the votes in the town of Templeton and a 53% majority in neighboring Phillipston. The 2nd Franklin also includes the very rural town of Wendell, ground zero in the movement to oppose timber cutting in state forests, where Lovvorn received only 16.5% of the vote.

So in their race for the state legislature, Whipps and LaRose were apparently required to navigate a good deal of political diversity in the woodsy and post-industrial towns of west-central Massachusetts.



## GMRS D from page A1

spike in COVID-19 cases," Beck wrote to district families on Tuesday, urging caution in holiday travel plans. "It is incredibly important that we all work together to significantly reduce the likelihood of transmission by continuing social-distancing, mask-wearing, and hygiene; as well as carefully considering whether holiday travel is a safe decision for your family."

Beck has said he will make the decision to call students back in for a "hybrid" learning situation based on three factors: the prevalence of the virus in the community; a feasible staffing plan; and data confirming that upgrades to the school buildings' HVAC systems have significantly improved air flow.

All three factors seem to have contributed to the slowdown of the plan, now by about three weeks. As the eastern part of the state appears to be well into a "second wave" of the outbreak, confirmed case counts in Franklin County are low, but growing: 5 during the first half of September; 12 during the second; 17 in the first two weeks of October; and 42 in the month's final two weeks.

"The district's still waiting for updated air-exchange reports on our four school buildings," Beck told

the families. Last week, he passed along a progress report to the school committee detailing progress, but delays in every building. At Gill Elementary, it was discovered that an underground electrical conduit was damaged during the summer; the central control system at the high school was still being overhauled; and a ventilator at Sheffield needed a new transformer.

As for staffing, negotiations with the district's union, the Gill-Montague Education Association, continues behind closed doors, but the schools are hiring. Beck told the Reporter this week that the administration is "buried in hiring and setting up potential new positions and substitutes."

The district has announced it is hiring medical waiting room attendants, a certified nurse's aide, a special ed teacher, a number of paraprofessionals, a long-term math substitute, as well as "substitute teachers – all levels and programs," and a secondary reading teacher.

"At this time, we are targeting the week of November 16 to begin increasing the number of students and work our way towards safely bringing all students back to full hybrid," Beck wrote in his message to families.



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ERVING from page A1

that the company had reduced the scope of the project to \$10 million, with the company picking up the cost of the \$5 million dryer and the town borrowing \$5 million for infrastructure.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith called the new plan for ERSECO to own the dryer “a significant change in the proposal,” and asked Bryan Smith to consult with town counsel about the town’s options. The board asked Bryan Smith to brief them about the legal advice at their next meeting, when they will meet jointly with the finance committee.

Policy Reviews

The selectboard reviewed and approved a “disposal of surplus property” policy, after confirming that all unclaimed property turned into the police department would be held for one year, then either returned to the finder or sold at auction if unwanted by the finder.

The board reviewed and approved a credit card purchasing policy, which will allow department heads to use their town credit cards to make purchases up to \$2,000 as long as the purchases are within their departments’ budgets.

The board also reviewed and approved an electric vehicle charging policy, as well as Police Department Policy 1.21, which concerns management of the department’s drug recognition expert.

The board and finance committee reviewed a draft educational incentive policy, but decided to put it on hold. Fin com chair Benjamin Fellows said he was “not in favor” of increasing employee pay after completion of education programs.

Jacob Smith said that the town pays for job-related education and training costs, but questioned whether the town wants a program that increases an individual’s pay

after the training is complete, outside of the town’s step and grade compensation plan.

The board also decided to ask departments to separate education and training costs in their budget requests.

The board and fin com reviewed a draft policy on elected official compensation policy, which would set the stipends for most elected officials. The draft stipends ranged from \$250 per year for town moderator to \$4,500 per year for selectboard members. The stipend for board of assessors members was set at \$4,000, the tree warden at \$2,500 per year, and other elected officials at \$1,000 per year.

Fellows asked how the amounts were arrived at. The town administrator, selectboard members, and fin com members did not have an answer for his question.

Bryan Smith was asked to contact the board of assessors and other elected officials to find out the basis for the proposed stipend amounts, and report back to the selectboard.

Other Business

The board approved using the senior and community center for SHINE counseling appointments during the fall Medicare enrollment period. Asked about the safety protocols, Bryan Smith told the board that each appointment would be individual, the counselor would be behind a Plexiglas shield, participants would wear masks, and hand sanitizer would be available.

The board approved two change orders for the River, Warner, and Strachan streets project: upgrading the signposts, at \$598, and shimming the road base layer during paving to make it even, at \$8,282.21.

The board awarded the virtual server design and data migration project to Suzor IT of Athol for \$2,500.

BRIDGE from page A1

Bickford. That structure lasted until 1929, and was replaced through funds donated by a wealthy spiritualist from Utica, New York.

The rebuilt bridge deteriorated over time, and was called “a death trap” in a 1957 *Greenfield Recorder* article. It lasted another two years until it collapsed, possibly with an “assist” by an anonymous someone.

From 1959 until 1975, there was no bridge. Then the newly formed Lake Pleasant Village Association decided a new bridge was in order. Bob Begg, a resident retired from the Army who had some experience with building bridges and infrastructure, became a driving force in the effort. James told me Begg got Silvio Conti, the late Massachusetts congressman, involved, and also what was then called Western Mass Electric. Begg “rallied the troops, and got the whole village involved” in the effort.

Residents Toddy Winscott and her husband were heavily involved, as was Dorothy Zellman. Toddy seems to be the person who came up with the idea of selling the wooden pickets carved with names to line the bridge. The five dollars would help fund the construction. Much of the labor was donated by locals, and Western Mass Electric donated some of the heavy lumber required.

I visited the bridge at both ends on a chilly wet day last week, and read the carved names on the bridge’s undamaged end. I saw lots of family names grouped next to each other, and also enjoyed seeing Picasso and Johnny Cash inscribed in wood. I was told by James that yes, John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, Bob Dylan, the Big Bopper, Janis Joplin, the Beatles, and Carlos Castaneda were there as well.

The pickets now expand into the walkways approaching the bridge – with over 1,400 names, space is tight! The pickets are limited to 16

characters, and the price of a picket went up from \$20 to \$30 just a few months ago.

So now the effort begins to repair the bridge – using some volunteer work, but a contractor will be needed to do much of the construction. Cleanup and salvage has begun, but fundraising is primary at this point. With the COVID-19 virus limiting gatherings, it will be difficult to have events that bring in donations, although there is a limited Bingo game scheduled for outdoors this weekend.

A GoFundMe account has also been set up, and you can visit the Lake Pleasant Village Association’s Facebook page for more information, and to view historic and current photos. Direct donations (much appreciated, since GoFundMe takes a percentage of donations) can be sent to the LPVA at PO Box 7, Lake Pleasant, MA 01347.

One donor already stepping up is Penn Jillette of Penn & Teller fame; he has a picket on the bridge, and somehow through his Greenfield roots learned about the storm damage!

A village meeting was held on Monday with updates, and the rebuilding process timeline will depend on fundraising and the weather. The Village Association is committed by its charter to maintaining the bridge “in perpetuity.”

There is a plaque apparently still missing from the damaged end of the bridge. It is inscribed, in brass:

1888: Frank A. Bickford  
Whose Work Built The First Bridge

1975: Robert B. Begg  
Whose Dream Built The Second One

Once that plaque is found and rehung on the repaired bridge, a new one will need to go up, acknowledging all those whose efforts and donations helped repair Begg’s bridge of dreams.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

First Responders Ponder Emergency Notification

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Fire chief Joe Cuneo and emergency management director Lonny Ricketts attended a good part of the Wendell selectboard meeting on October 28, held via Zoom, to update the board on three issues the town is facing.

The first issue on the agenda was the house at 40 Gate Lane. The house and land were on the list of town properties to be auctioned October 3, but were removed from the list before the auction because the house is condemned. It has no electricity, no running water, and an unknown septic system.

Cuneo discussed the idea of using the structure for fire department training, and then a live burn. He said an opportunity like that is valuable, but Gate Lane offers challenges: it is a private road, maintained by residents, and too narrow for large vehicles to navigate safely. Trees and branches would scrape both sides of Engine One, and there is only one turnaround. Cuneo said if the road crew could grade it and cut branches back, the fire department might use the property after mud season.

As with the (former) house at 120 Wendell Depot Road, the live burn would be preceded by clearing around the building, and then by other training events.

Whether the road crew is allowed to improve a private road is a legal question, however, and town coordinator Nancy Aldrich was given the job of contacting either town counsel or a “friendly lawyer” for the answer.

Cuneo said the state Department of Environmental Protection requires anything

left after a burn to be removed from the site. He said that removal would be easy if the house is on a slab, but more difficult if it has a basement; he said it would be easy to check for a basement.

The second issue was about checking on town residents during an emergency, including a prolonged loss of electric service. The windstorm in early October, and the disruption in electricity it caused, brought that issue forward.

Cuneo said that normally, after two days with electricity out, emergency responders would initiate checking. Leverett police chief Scott Minckler, who had Zoomed in by then, said his department starts checking after an outage lasts much more than a day. He said that years ago a family was reduced to breaking and burning furniture for heat, a situation he would hope to avoid.

Responding to selectboard member Gillian Budine’s question, Cuneo said the fire department does not lend generators to citizens because of liability and uncertainty as to how appropriately they would be used. Minckler said the Leverett police department has maybe four generators, but he was not sure about the state of their maintenance.

The third issue involves money. Towns in the county are upgrading to a statewide emergency radio system, and Wendell’s fire and police departments need to replace their present radios with new ones. The basic model will be paid for, but the cost of anything extra, including software, will be the town’s responsibility. The estimated cost is \$6,126 for the fire department, and \$4,556

for police. Minckler said the state is talking about covering the cost of installation.

The October 7 wind and rain, which interrupted electric power for several days, also brought renewed interest in a reverse-911 system.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato said that many Wendell residents have VOIP (voice over internet protocol) telephone service, which is dependent on electricity and therefore useless in a blackout. Other residents have no land line and use cell phones instead. A reverse 911 system would reach them only if they provided their cell phone numbers. Some in west Wendell get telephone service from Montague and have a Montague exchange.

Ricketts, still connected, added that Wendell’s listserv was not that useful because it does not reach everyone.

Aldrich said the “Code Red” reverse-911 system used in Leverett cost \$1,250 a year, and Budine asked whether federal CARES Act money would cover the expense.

Grants and Reimbursements

The application for a second round of reimbursement for COVID-related expenses came due one day after this meeting. Wendell’s major expense for this round is the town’s share of an air-handling system at Swift River School. Aldrich said that contractors are so backed up they do not even respond to calls, and materials for the air-handling system are back ordered. She was able to get the application in.

DiDonato said that Wendell’s Green Communities grant fund has \$5,600 left, and

if that is spent by the end of the year, Wendell may apply for the next round of grants. She mentioned two projects that can use that money: installing a minisplit heat exchanger to replace or supplement the heating system in the senior and community center, and insulating the town hall floor.

Mold remediation under the town hall floor is a first step that should precede insulating there. Mold remediation is not an authorized Green Communities expense.

The senior and community center gets very light use, especially now with COVID restrictions, and so an efficient heating system might not qualify for a grant. Still, Budine and selectboard chair Dan Keller supported that project. The building temperature is maintained high enough all the time to keep the water pipes inside from freezing.

Assistant town engineer Alistair MacMartin says a minisplit would remove moisture more efficiently than the normal dehumidifier now in the senior center basement, a second virtue of a minisplit.

Appointments

At their next meeting, the selectboard will review letters of interest for the town’s Municipal Light Plant (MLP) board. That meeting would normally be held Wednesday, November 11, but since November 11 is Veterans Day and November 10 is a broadband committee meeting, the board agreed to meet Thursday, November 12.

Assessors are expected to be there to introduce a candidate interested in filling the vacant assessor position.

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**VOTES** from page A1

ballots and early voting. In Gill, for example, 367 mail-in ballots had been counted as of Wednesday, 242 residents voted early, and 370 showed up on Election Day.

“Gill voters are the best,” town clerk Doreen Stevens, enjoying her first year on the job, told the *Reporter*. “People were enthusiastic about voting, and everyone wore a mask and kept at an appropriate distance. All in all, it felt very successful.”

On Monday evening, Montague town clerk Deb Bourbeau sent a recorded message out over the town’s phone notification system, bragging that 90% of the mail-in ballots had been returned, and that 878 people had voted early. “You make me so proud to be your town clerk,” she told residents.

Turnout was up an average of 8% across the five towns, and 8% across the six precincts of Montague. “We’ve got streets that every single person has voted on,” said Sharon Girard, a poll worker for Precinct 3.

Four of the town’s precincts voted in the Franklin County Technical School gymnasium this year due to the pandemic. Gill-Montague school resource officer Dan Miner was on hand with Mack, the school comfort dog, in case anxious voters needed to hang out with him for a minute.

Masks were made available on entry. Volunteer Jennifer Peterson said that the masks were being taken even though all voters were showing up wearing masks. “They’re just taking them as extra because they’re free,” she explained.

Though Trump’s total percentage of the vote across the five towns remained consistent with his

2016 showing, there was variation among the towns, and also among Montague’s precincts.

The president lost vote share in Leverett and Wendell, where it was already lower, and gained in Gill and Erving, where it was already higher. In absolute terms, he shed Leverett voters – from 185 to 155 – though he gained them in every other town.

Within Montague, the largest swing from Republican to Democratic votes came in Precinct 3, the north section of the Hill in Turners Falls. This precinct was the strongest for Trump in 2016, for the non-binding resolution to keep the Indian mascot in 2017, and against ballot questions endorsing single-payer healthcare and freedom of gender identity in 2018. In recent years it has generally led Montague in – relative – support for Republican candidates.

But Trump lost a net of 8 voters in Precinct 3, while Biden gained 135 over Clinton’s count.

Trump’s strongest Montague support came instead from Precinct 2, Millers Falls, where the president added on 62 voters and a nearly 5% share of the vote.

The shift may have had measurable downballot consequences: Precinct 2 was also the highest showing for Kevin O’Connor, who ran against Ed Markey for US Senate on the Republican ticket, and for Tracy Lovvorn, who ran against US Representative Jim McGovern. Millers Falls was the only part of Montague to crack 30% for any of these three Republican candidates. Erving, across the river, was the only town to do so.

Voters also weighed in on two



At right: Lori Bastarache (left) and Sharon Girard (right) staff Montague’s Precinct 3 polling station at the Franklin County Technical School gym on Tuesday evening. The poll workers dispensed ballots, clean ballpoint pens, and hand sanitizer. “It’s been steady all day,” said Bastarache. “I’ve been happy to see it!”

statewide ballot questions. Question 1, which sought to protect consumers’ ability to repair automobiles, passed with a 74.9% vote in the state as a whole, but was more popular in our area – from 76.4% in Erving up to 86.4% in Leverett.

Question 2, which would have implemented ranked-choice voting, failed statewide, only garnering 45.4%. Erving (42%) and Gill (43%) voted against the idea, as did Precincts 2, 3, and 4 in Montague, but it was favored in Precincts 1, 5, and 6, as well as Wendell (70%) and Leverett (74%).

Ranked-choice advocates promote the idea as way to engage “third” parties in the political process without causing them to act as spoilers. In 2016, among our five coverage towns, 374 residents (4.6%) voted for Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson, and another 349 (4.3%) for Green Party candidate Jill Stein.

This year, Libertarian candidate Jo Jorgenson only earned 140 votes (1.6%), making the strongest standing in Millers Falls at 2.5%; Green-Rainbow nominee Howie Hawkins won 84 votes (1.0%), strongest in downtown Turners Falls at 1.9%. By all appearances, third-party enthusiasm was replaced with support for the Democratic candidate, even though he took the state 66% to 31%, the highest margin in the country.

In Montague two additional “non-binding” questions passed easily. Question 3, on renewable energy commitments, went 74% Yes; Question 4, asking state legislators to make their votes transparent, 87% Yes. (Votes, technically, are still being counted, because 2020.)



JACKSON PHOTOS

The free mask bin at Montague’s Precinct 5 polling station.

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](mailto:planner@montague-ma.gov). Copies of this Request for Proposals (RFP) and supporting reference documents may be obtained at [www.montague-ma.gov](http://www.montague-ma.gov).

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hereby provides initial notice of its decision to provide Pre-Disaster Mitigation program funding for an action located in a wetland. Funding would be provided through MA Emergency Management Agency to the Town of Montague to complete drainage improvements on Montague City Road and carry out a floodplain/stream restoration to mitigate flooding of the roadway. A map of the wetland areas is available upon request to [Karen.ValeVasilev@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Karen.ValeVasilev@fema.dhs.gov) or (202) 699-0650.

The proposed action is located on and south of Montague City Road between Walnut Street and Turnpike Road. The project is to install two new catch basins, a drainpipe, and new berm. The adjacent stream and wetlands would be dredged of sediment and debris, connected to the original floodplain, and stabilized with plantings. Total wetland impact area is 30,180 SF. Vegetation and approximately 20 trees would be selectively cleared. A variety of erosion control measures would be used, and staging is expected to primarily occur along the roadside and shoulder of Montague City Road.

The project is within an area that contains forested, freshwater emergent, and riverine wetland habitats.

Comments about this project and wetland impacts are encouraged to be submitted within 15 days of the date of this publication to:

Eric Kuns, Senior Environmental Protection Specialist  
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Boston, MA  
[eric.kuns@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:eric.kuns@fema.dhs.gov); (202) 805-9089

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# Aquí se habla español



Esta es la página en español del periódico **The Montague Reporter**. Aquí podrán encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana, eventos de interés, curiosidades, y noticias en español. Si quiere colaborar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a: [spanish@montaguereporter.org](mailto:spanish@montaguereporter.org). Esperamos su participación.

## Reconectando con la comunidad: *Montague Catholic Social Ministries*

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

**TURNERS FALLS** – Heather Wood, es la directora ejecutiva de *Montague Catholic Social Ministries*, y recientemente ha conseguido una subvención del *Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts* con el propósito de reconectar durante la pandemia con las familias de la comunidad. *Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts* ha repartido un total de más de dos millones de dólares entre 70 organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro del oeste de Massachusetts que han sido afectadas negativamente por el Covid-19.

El proyecto de MCSM se llama *Keeping Connected Life and Learning* (Continuar conectados: Vida y aprendizaje) para poder reconectar las personas responsables de esta organización con sus clientes y familias en persona en estos momentos de grave crisis social y sanitaria. Heather durante la pandemia preguntó a las familias que colaboran con ellos que es lo que necesitaban y estas contestaron que por supuesto alimentos y un techo para vivir, pero que necesitan también ver a otra gente, hablar con ellos, contarles sus problemas y reconectar. Este es el motivo principal para realizar estos eventos.

MCSM han reunido materiales de uso cotidiano estos días que van desde pañales y alimentos, pasando por material escolar, libros y mascarillas/tapabocas que fueron cosidas por una de las personas que trabajan en la organización, hasta tarjetas de regalo para diversos supermercados de la zona.

Heather me explicó que es muy importante para MCSM en estos momentos ofrecer recursos a las familias de la comunidad en retorno por su tiempo.

El pasado viernes 30 de octubre ofrecieron gratis estos recursos, así como la posibilidad de poder colorear un gran mural con una calaverita para celebrar el Día de los muertos, y un sorteo entre todas las personas que se acercaron a la tienda montada fuera de su local en Turners Falls en ese día de lluvia.

Planean realizar otro evento justo antes del Día de Acción de Gracias, el 19 de noviembre de 2 a 4 de la



Mural para colorear calavera del Día de los Muertos.

tarde, este evento servirá para dar gracias.

El siguiente evento tendrá lugar antes del receso de invierno, el 17 de diciembre donde se encenderán las luces de invierno también de 2 a 4 de la tarde. Toda persona de la comunidad es bienvenida y siempre podrán encontrar recursos para las familias que los necesiten.

Mary King y Heather Wood han solicitado subvenciones y esperan que para esas fechas tengan un nuevo sistema de ventilación que les permita realizar estos eventos en el interior de su local situado en 78 Avenue A en Turners Falls.

Si quieren ustedes saber más sobre las organizaciones mencionadas en este artículo y colaborar con una donación o de otra forma, pueden ustedes visitar sus páginas web: [communityfoundation.org](http://communityfoundation.org) y [mcsm-community.org](http://mcsm-community.org).

MAILLO PHOTOS



Evento organizado para reconectar con la comunidad en octubre.

## Tablón de Anuncios:

• **Food Bank de Massachusetts** sigue ofreciendo alimentos gratis cada tercer miércoles de mes en el parking del Senior Center en Turners Falls cuya dirección es 62 5th Street. La próxima distribución de comida será el miércoles 21 de octubre de 1:30 a 2:30 p.m.

Por favor, asegúrense de traer sus propias bolsas, así como mascarillas.

Este programa se realiza en alianza con FCCMP y Montague COA. Si tienen preguntas, contacten con **The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts** en el teléfono (413) 247-9738.

## OPINIÓN Y si ganase...

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

lugares del país si el resultado no es el esperado.

**TURNERS FALLS** – The Montague Reporter me ha encargado la difícil misión de entregar mi artículo del mes un día antes de las cruciales elecciones presidenciales de este infame 2020. Sería ridículo escribir el artículo del mes de noviembre sin hablar de este importante evento, pero no puedo hablar sobre los resultados que supongo ocuparan muchas de las páginas de este periódico.

Mi marido me dio la idea de hacerlo formulando hipótesis acerca de lo que puede pasar si gana uno u otro candidato a la presidencia de Estados Unidos. Cuando ustedes lean estas líneas ya sabrán el resultado y por ello podrán leer estas líneas desde otra perspectiva. Por ahora, yo todavía puedo fantasear.

Si ganase el candidato republicano, Donald Trump, y con ello es reelegido presidente, esto es lo que nos espera:

- Trump ha hablado de la finalización de la crisis sanitaria del Covid-19 y el uso de las drogas que favorecieron su mágica recuperación, aunque no puedo contarles en estas líneas cuál será su línea de actuación porque no lo ha explicado en su campaña. Ha dicho en varias ocasiones que lo peor de la pandemia ha pasado cuando las cifras de muertos y contagios siguen aumentando. Aseguró que la vacuna estaría lista en dos semanas, hecho que ha sido desmentido por los científicos que lo están investigando mientras el país en el primero en número de contagios.
- Lo que si damos por seguro después de la toma de posesión de Amy Coney Barrett es de la abolición del ACA (*Affordable Care Act*) que hace posible el derecho universal a la salud de personas desfavorecidas. Trump ha abogado siempre por incentivar el servicio médico privado.
- Trump ha dicho que aumentará el gasto militar, aunque haya voces que dicen que en privado se burló de militares que habían perdido la vida en acto de servicio.
- Si Trump ganase las elecciones se eliminarán las trabas para la extracción de energías fósiles en general y al tracking en particular.
- La nueva juez del Tribunal Supremo, Amy Coney Barrett, nos dice mucho de lo que podemos esperar de las próximas decisiones judiciales en cuanto a planificación familiar. Barret se ha mostrado siempre en contra del aborto y por su posición cercana a la iglesia católica, suponemos que en contra de los métodos anticonceptivos.
- En cuanto a inmigración, ha asegurado que endurecerá las condiciones en la frontera y ya ha amenazado varias veces con acabar con el programa DACA.
- Ha criticado duramente el sistema de voto por correo y ha dudado en público varias veces del sistema electoral de los Estados Unidos. Esto unido a grupos paramilitares armados hasta las trancas puede desembocar en graves enfrentamientos armados en algunos

Si gana el candidato demócrata, Joe Biden y su vicepresidenta Kamala Harris, esto es lo que veremos en los próximos cuatro años:

- El expresidente tiene una posición muy diferente en torno a la pandemia. Ha expresado su intención de enviar ayuda a las familias trabajadoras más necesitadas, a los pequeños negocios y comunidades. Su intención es la de abrir escuelas y negocios siempre siguiendo unos planes de seguridad sanitaria.
- Como bien se ha encargado Trump de asegurar durante su campaña política, Biden trabajará por una medicina más accesible para todos en un proyecto que llegó a llamar *Bidencare* en homenaje al *Obamacare*, el otro nombre por el que se conoce familiarmente al ACA.
- En cuanto a la salida de la crisis, Biden es consciente de que no se puede salir de la crisis económica sin antes haber salvado la pandemia y recuperado del alto porcentaje de desempleo. La idea es enviar fondos especialmente a los trabajadores esenciales y no recortar presupuestos en profesionales de la salud y de la enseñanza pública. Otra vertiente para salir de la crisis y ayudar a las mujeres trabajadores es apoyar y financiar guarderías infantiles para permitir conciliar trabajo y vida familiar.
- Respecto a las minorías, cree firmemente en la implantación de medidas para superar la brecha salarial entre los nativo americanos, afroamericanos y latinos.
- Biden ha hablado de un programa de transición sostenible para llegar a reducir gases y la consiguiente creación de un gran número de empleos en este sector. En los últimos debates ha dicho que favorecerá las energías limpias.
- El candidato demócrata ha dicho también que pensaba eliminar el modelo de impuestos de Trump que favorece a las corporaciones y a las grandes fortunas. La idea es que los que tienen más, paguen más. Incentivar a las pequeñas y medianas empresas con bajadas de impuestos y subir las contribuciones de las grandes compañías.
- Biden apoya una reforma y modernización del sistema de inmigración y acabar con separación de padres e hijos en la frontera de México. Su campaña aboga por la reinstauración del derecho de asilo a los refugiados. Un punto importante es la protección de los *dreamers* y sus familias y finalizar las trabas que existen actualmente a los viajeros de países musulmanes. Importante en su programa la modernización del personal de inmigración de la frontera y ICE y la agilización de programas de naturalización.
- En su campaña se ha comprometido a refrendar el ERA (Equal Right Amendment) que aboga por la lucha contra la discriminación de la mujer en la constitución.

La suerte está echada. Solamente espero que mi país de acogida haga lo correcto.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

masks “in all public places even when they are able to maintain 6 feet of distance from others.” An advisory advises all residents to stay at home between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., with exceptions for work, “critical errands,” addressing health needs, and “taking a walk.” The orders contain a long list of businesses that must be closed after 9:30 p.m.

Indoor gatherings in private homes must be limited to 10 people, and outdoor gatherings to 25; all gatherings must “disperse” by 9:30 p.m. There are exceptions for religious and political gatherings, and a higher threshold for public gatherings and at “event venues,” particularly in “low risk” communities, which currently include Montague.

Local boards of health are listed in several of the governor’s orders as the enforcement mechanism for the new policies, but no mention of this was made at the meeting.

The decision of the state to accept the plan by Trinity Health Senior Communities, owner of the Farren, to close the facility was communicated to Ellis earlier in the day. The proposal had been opposed by virtually all local “stakeholders” at two public hearings, including the Montague selectboard and the town’s representatives in the state legislature.

The Farren, a former Catholic hospital built at the turn of the twentieth century, is a unique institution which houses clients with multiple health problems who have been rejected by other institutions. Trinity, part of a non-profit healthcare conglomerate based in Michigan, has argued that the building needs to be closed due to “chronic and serious infrastructure issues with the aging physical plant and ongoing workforce challenges...” It plans to relocate the majority of the patients to a nursing home in Holyoke, then sell that home to a private company.

On October 29, twelve state legislators from the region issued a letter to Governor Baker requesting that he use his “executive authority” to stop the closing of the Farren “at least during the state of emergency.”

Greenfield lawyer David Roulston, who serves as guardian for a number of Farren residents, criticized Trinity’s plan to relocate them without clear protocols for addressing their needs in the midst of a pandemic. “They never have articulated any kind of process, or the criteria for finding alternative spaces,” he told the *Reporter*.

At Monday’s meeting, Ellis seemed resigned to the closure. “Our legislative delegation really tried to go to the mat on this issue, and tried to go to the governor’s office,” he said. “No one has interceded on this issue... and so it appears it will happen.” He said the town should possibly “shift its energy to making sure there was responsible stewardship and the transition of the building to a new use.” Trinity has committed to funding a “redevelopment study” for the property, Ellis said.

**Fee Relief**

In other news, the board agreed to reduce fees for a range of licenses, primarily issued to restaurants and bars, by 75% for the next calendar year. The reductions are a response to the fact that most of these establishments have had significantly reduced business during the COVID-19 pandemic, and some have even been closed.

“I just wanted to pop in and thank everybody,” said Michael McCarthy of Riff’s North, a restaurant on Avenue A. “I didn’t anticipate this reduction, so thank you.”

Riff’s has been serving food outside for the past few months. Not so Between the Uprights, a sports bar and club owned by Lew Collins, which has been closed for eight months. “To hear this from you guys gives me hope,” Collins told the board. “Maybe I can continue to ride out the storm.”

**Mysterious Bridge**

A member of the Lake Pleasant Village Association named Matt Atwood came before the board to report on his group’s efforts to restore the Bridge of Names, partially destroyed during an October 7 storm. Atwood said several falling trees “completely demolished” part of the west side of the bridge, which connects the two residential sections of the village.

He said the village association was working with the Turners Falls Water Department to clear the area. The association is getting estimates for repairing the bridge, he said, and is planning fundraising activities. “My guess is we’ll come back to you with estimates and what we can raise on our own,” he told the board.

Ellis said the question of ownership and responsibility for repairing the bridge was “very complicated.” He said the bridge was on Turners Falls Water Department land, but town planner Walter Ramsey could find no records of ownership or land easements. “It seems to be as mysterious as it is beautiful,” Ellis said. He said he put the issue on the board’s agenda to “signal your interest in this project,” and “share any preliminary thinking you have.”

**Fresh Air**

The board approved agreements with the Gill-Montague regional school district and the Turners Falls Fire District to transfer some of the funds it has received under the federal CARES act to those two districts. The federal money is targeted to COVID-related expenses. The board had previously discussed and approved the transfers.

The school district will receive \$175,000, primarily for ventilation repairs and enhancements, while the fire district will be allocated \$7,268, mainly for overtime costs in response to quarantine orders during the early months of the pandemic.

The board was asked if it was concerned some of the needed ventilation repairs meant that high school students had not been breathing

fresh air prior to the pandemic. Ellis said that “the question is whether the building meets the current code requirements for fresh-air entry into the ventilation system.” Chair Rich Kuklewicz said the issue should be taken up with the school administration and school committee.

**Remote Town Meeting?**

Ellis also placed the possibility of having an upcoming winter special town meeting on the board’s agenda for some preliminary thinking. He noted that an outdoor meeting, or another meeting in a venue like the highway garage, where the last “special” was held, would not be realistic.

Selectboard member Mike Nelson asked if it was necessary to have a winter town meeting, to which Ellis replied that there were several potential agenda items that “leave us feeling compelled” to call one. He said the town might consider an upgrade to Zoom, as well as “professional facilitation.”

**Other Business**

The board held a brief discussion of the progress of the two police advisory committees, established last summer in response to Black Lives Matter protests. The committee members have attended training sessions with mediator and facilitator Paula Green of the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding in Amherst, and have requested documents outlining core police department policies and protocols, as well as data on arrests, use of force incidents, and traffic stops.

The general consensus on Monday was that the committee members were “dedicated to the conversation, and very passionate about making change in our community,” in the words of Nelson.

Ramsey presented the town’s annual Green Communities Report to the board for its approval. The report “tracks the communities compliance with the five criteria for becoming a green community and to be eligible for [state] grant funding.”

Ramsey reported positive trends in all five criteria. Town energy use had been reduced to 30% below “baseline levels” set in 2010, although this was “significantly” due to the closure and reduced use of town buildings during the COVID emergency. Ramsey’s report also pointed to “electricity reduction work” at Sheffield School and the Parks and Recreation building at Unity Park.

The board unanimously endorsed the report, which will be sent to the state Department of Energy Resources.

The board approved a request by library director Linda Hickman to approve a sixth month leave of absence for Melinda Georgeson, assistant Millers Falls branch librarian.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be held on November 9.



# Stressed Out? Reach Out

The Look4Help Public Resource Directory (*look4help.org*), a program of Community Action Pioneer Valley, is a free, web-based public information service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are close to 1,000 agencies, programs, or services at over 450 locations, available to serve you.

Look4Help was created in response to a community need for a centralized online tool to facilitate communication of available resources. The site provides a free, searchable listing of supportive local resources and detailed, up-to-date information about the services

of non-profit organizations, government agencies, health and human services, medical and mental health providers, and others. Look4Help serves the residents of Franklin and Hampshire counties and the North Quabbin region. Selected regional and state agencies are also listed.

Community Action Pioneer Valley assists people who have low incomes to achieve economic stability and security, and works to build communities in which all people have the opportunity to thrive. For more information visit *www.communityaction.us*, call (413) 774-2318, or email *info@communityaction.us*.

## LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

*Here’s the way it was on November 4, 2010: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.*

**Gill, Greenfield Tip  
Second Franklin Race**

Democrat Denise Andrews swamped Orange selectboard chair Steve Adam 389 to 196 in Gill, contributing to her overall victory in the race to succeed 2nd Franklin district representative Chris Donegan, who stepped down to run unopposed for county sheriff.

Andrews, a political newcomer from Orange who works as a diversity training consultant, won big in Greenfield too, and bested Adam, who piled up 500-vote margins in both Orange and Athol. Andrews took 6,885 votes throughout the district to Adam’s 5,552, and Gill played a large part in her win.

Genevieve Fraser, an online professor and former aide to state senator Robert Wetmore who ran as an independent, placed third in that race with 669.

**School District Agrees  
To Five-Year “Compact”**

On Tuesday, October 26, the Gill-Montague school committee voted to approve a five-year budget plan for fiscal sustainability for the district. The plan, which includes a 0% budget increase for the district for the coming year, coupled with one-time investments of \$200,000 each from reserve accounts for the town of Montague and the school district, was developed by a technical committee of the so-called oversight group, made up of school, town, state and DESE officials.

The technical group that hammered out the plan included G-M

superintendent Carl Ladd, finance committee members Tupper Brown of Gill and Michael Naughton of Montague, and Jeff Singleton, school committee member from Montague.

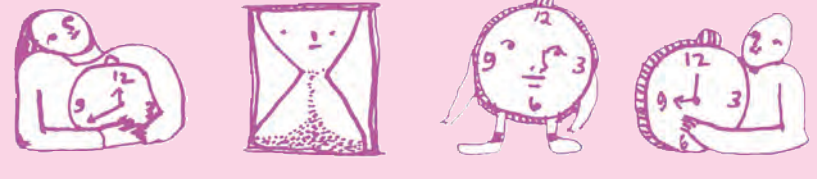
The plan assumes a 2% increase in state Chapter 70 funding in FY ‘12, followed by a 3% increase in state funding for the district beginning from FY ‘13 through FY ‘15.

**MA Voters Narrowly  
Repeal Alcohol Tax**

“The more money you give ‘em, the more money they want,” said Tom Murley, as he exited the polling station at the Gill fire station on Tuesday afternoon, in a statement that seemed to reflect the national mood in this week’s Tea Party infused mid-term elections. “And if you give ‘em that, they’ll want some more.”

Murley may have been in the mainstream of voters who kicked incumbent Democrats out of the House of Representatives to regain the speaker’s gavel for Republicans. But in Massachusetts he was crying in the wilderness, as Deval Patrick swept away his gubernatorial rivals and all House seats remained solidly in Democratic hands.

Murley voted in favor of repealing the state sales tax on alcohol, and 52% of the voters in the Commonwealth joined him on that one. The state will lose approximately \$100 million from the repeal of the year-old sales tax on store sales of alcohol. That money had been dedicated to drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs. But package stores in border towns like Gill will regain a competitive advantage with New Hampshire and Vermont liquor stores.



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**PERMIT** from page A1  
“delivery-only” cannabis business in Millers Falls.

The company, according to an introductory letter, wants to rent office space on 41A East Main Street to “develop and administer its proprietary online marketplace,” defined as “web-based reservation platforms that connect valets to drivers, patients to medical specialists, and business owners to payment services.”

The concept was described by town planner Walter Ramsey as “Uber for cannabis,” with the business operating an online platform that links cannabis producers with customers. The introductory letter assures the reader that the Millers Falls operation “will not have nor require the possession of cannabis onsite.”

The business model was developed by Joseph Price, who is the President and CEO of Greenhouse Mobility Solutions. The letter also said that Price is a member of the state Cannabis Control Commission’s “second tier equity cohort,” and only one of 11 participants statewide to receive a “pre-certification” to receive this type of license.

Price led the public input session, comparing the business model with DoorDash, a company that specializes in restaurant delivery. He stressed that the business was simply operating an online platform connecting purchasers to retail cannabis sellers, and that there will be no marijuana on the premises.

Price also said that for the first six months he would be the only person on the premises, and then presented a floor plan. The offices will be in two sections of the ground floor of 41 East Main Street.

The proposed host community agreement that Price reviewed stated that the company pledged 3% of gross sales revenue to the town, suggested a “target goal” of \$15,000 annually to the town for “community meetings and community ser-

vices,” and pledged 150 hours each year to “participate in community meetings and community service activities.”

Millers Falls resident Mike Naughton said he had heard that state legislators had complained that delivery services were not envisioned in the original legislation legalizing and regulating cannabis.

Price said that complaint applied to proposals where the delivery service also sold cannabis, but that his business was involved in “delivery only.”

Rachel Stoler asked whether the company’s delivery drivers would be employees, or “contractors” similar to Uber. Price said they were employees who would be paid an hourly rate plus a percentage of the delivery.

In response to another question, Price said the business would only be a venue for recreational, not medical, marijuana.

After approximately 40 minutes of questions, the public input session ended and a hearing of the zoning board of appeals (ZBA) began in another Zoom meeting.

The ZBA meeting got off to a rocky start as chair John Burek complained he had received an incomplete packet, without a floor plan, and that the application for a special permit referenced the wrong zoning bylaw. Burek said the application was “all wrong,” and suggested that the hearing be postponed.

The owner of the building, Bob Obear, said the problems could be “brought up” and clarified during the discussion.

“You guys want to kick the can down the road,” said Burek. “Obear’s not running this meeting, I am.”

After nearly 30 minutes of similar deliberation, a motion was made and seconded “to proceed.” It passed unanimously, and the hearing began.

ZBA vice chair Richard Ruth asked why the company was only signing a one year lease. Price said

# FACES & PLACES



*Sorrel Hatch of Upinngil Farm herds cows from West Gill Road onto Center Road Tuesday morning under the watchful eye of Gill police. “This morning around 7:30 a.m., the boys and Sorrel and I were on our way out the door to go vote together when we got a call that two of our cows were out,” her partner Isaac Bingham wrote. “It turns out that Polly and Beauty wanted to vote too – they were on their way to Gill Town Hall.” This is the second week in a row that Upinngil’s cows have made it on this page. Bingham explained that the cows hanging out with the moose last week were on Boyle Road, while these ones live on Green Hill Road. Strange timing, though. We wonder if Polly and Beauty got jealous and decided to try to make the news.*

the company had an option for more years, and that “most great sitcoms do not hit their stride until the third year. You can expect a minimum of three years.”

Millers Falls resident and former building inspector David Jensen asked about how many employees would be in the building when the staff reached its projected full strength after six months. Price assured him it would be only five to seven, to which Jensen responded that “to be ironic,” he was hoping for more commercial traffic.

Building inspector Chris Rice said that he had reviewed the special permit application with town planner Walter Ramsey and thought the business would be a “good fit for the space, and good

for the town’s revenue stream.”

After several other favorable comments about the proposal, a motion was made to close the special permit hearing, which passed unanimously. Then a motion was made to close the meeting, but Obear noted that the board had not approved the special permit.

After some contentious discussion, the board approved the special permit – “again,” in the words of one disgruntled member.

After some confusion about whether the special permit motion just approved had also included a site plan review, the meeting was voted to a close. “Thanks for putting up with us,” Jensen told Price, who nodded cheerfully.

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NOTES FROM THE

HEARTFELT CAFE

BY TROUBLE MANDESON

**GREENFIELD** – Behold the mighty squash! She comes in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, and even seasons – that is, summer and winter, just like your favorite fashions. Summer squash has thinner, edible skin, while its cousin, winter squash, are so called because they have thicker skins that allow for a long shelf life. They can last in a cool, dry place for weeks or months during the colder seasons.

There are a couple of exceptions to the generally inedible skin on winter squash. For example, a thinly sliced delicata with apples, tossed in olive oil, salt and pepper, and roasted with a drizzle of maple syrup, can be consumed with the skin on. (Hint: that’s the whole recipe.)

Did you know that squash and melons are related? It’s not so hard to imagine that once upon a time, a lush and lusty honeydew twined her tender vine up the stem of a robust butternut to beget a family of pumpkins and watermelons, now, is it? And what a splendid family of firm, fleshy fare they are. Squash is jam-packed with nutrients and considered by some to be a superfood because it contains more carbohydrates than even leafy greens. It is rich in vitamins and minerals, and loaded with protein and fiber as well as antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds.

Growing up in the megatropolis of Los Angeles, my experience with squash was strictly limited to green zucchini or the UFO-shaped summer squash. Without an actual fall or winter season to speak of, I don’t believe I even met a winter squash

until well into adulthood. An acorn squash may have shown up in the produce section of the supermarket, but only around Thanksgiving, and even then, only to be used as decoration along with a clove-spiked orange, and paper turkeys cut in the shape of small hands. Of course, pumpkins were only used for jack o’ lanterns and table decorations, and the only pumpkin pie I ever ate came out of a can and was baked into a frozen crust.

Now, living as a proud equal-vegetable-opportunist, the CSA share I receive in trade for my weekly labor on the Just Roots Community Farm in Greenfield has broadened my knowledge of vegetables and introduced me to new ways of preparing them. The early summer offerings have transitioned from leafy greens and asparagus to fall and winter root veggies, potatoes, garlic, onions, and a lot – I mean *a lot* – of squash.

Their skins range from pale yellow to dark orange, light blue-grey to dark forest green and even white; some are round or oblong, tall or squat, pale or striped, with long crooked necks or no neck at all. Their flesh runs the gamut from pale yellow to dark orange and is mostly sweet, save for the nonconforming spaghetti squash which, no, does not taste like spaghetti, but has flesh that separates into stringy shapes that look like noodles.

There are some basic methods to preparing winter squash. The simplest is to slice the squash in half from top to bottom, scoop out the seeds and fibers inside, spray or

see **HEARTFELT** page B4



A watercolor painting, by the author, of some of the many varieties of winter squash that may be found at the local market or farmstand.

Above: Don Plante took this one kayaking at Tully Lake and Long Pond. “The picture was taken as the sun was coming up,” he said, “so the light was filtering through the trees.” We’re grateful he shared it!

Montague Author Bruce Watson

Explores a “Kinder, Cooler America”

By LEE WICKS

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – By the time you read this, the election may be decided – or not. You might be happy, or in despair. Here’s an antidote: go visit The Attic to rummage around and see what mementos you might find that provoke stories about kindness and courage and the quirks that make us human.

I am referring to a virtual attic, the one Bruce Watson has created to help us all discover stories from a “kinder, cooler America.” While remaining scrumptiously non-partisan, the Montague Center historian and author writes short pieces once a week and offers them on The Attic ([www.theattic.space](http://www.theattic.space)) for free. If you subscribe, you will receive an email each Sunday linking you to the site, where you can read his newest entry and enjoy the archives as well.

Rummaging around in the content is a pleasure, and a welcome respite from the angry vitriol that pervades social media and the news. Each piece delivers a trip into history through a profile of someone who never made the traditional history books, or through an accumulation of thought-provoking – but also humorous – trivia. When I log on to The Attic, it feels like I’m putting myself in good hands.

“You don’t have to wallow in doom,” Bruce says. “As we tightrope walk over this abyss, those who keep their eyes on the far side will make it.”

In an Attic essay titled “When Tomorrow Closed,” about the World of Tomorrow at the see **WATSON** page B4



Montague Center author and historian Bruce Watson created his website The Attic in the aftermath of the 2016 election.



WEST ALONG THE RIVER

LOOKING FOR MASHALISK

PART ONE

By DAVID BRULE

**PESKEOMPSKUT / PASQUAMSCUT** – The most powerful woman the Connecticut River Valley has ever known is Mashalisk, *sunksqua* (woman sachem) of the Pocumtuck Tribe in the mid-1600s. She reigned as what the English called one of the “Old Queens” in the period leading up to just before King Philip’s War (1675-76). She and her son, Wattawolunskin, were hereditary stewards of the vast lands of modern-day Sunderland, Deerfield, Greenfield, and Montague.

This powerful woman, who held control over those lands extending to the Pasquamscut/Peskeompskut Falls, is missing, and has been for the last 344 years.

Mashalisk and her son were regional heads of the vast Pocumtuck Confederation of extended families, bands of kinfolk and associated tribes that included the Nonotuck/Norwottock, living on lands now known as Hadley, Hatfield, and Northampton; the Woronocco of Westfield; the Agawam of Springfield; and down into the modern state of Connecticut to include the Podunk and Tunxis Tribes.

As one of the main leaders of this confederation, Mashalisk was a very powerful woman indeed. Not much, and not enough, is known of her.

A few white historians of the last two centuries recorded what little was known of her through “Indian”

deeds of the 1660s and ‘70s, and through enduring oral histories.

Edward Pearson Pressey preserved some of that oral history in his 1910 *History of Montague*, and included the references and wording of some of Mashalisk’s land transactions.

Pressey places the principal residence of Mashalisk and her son Wattawolunskin in Montague, on the island of Mattampash situated just below the mouth of the Sawmill River. The son fell victim to the scourge of the Indigenous tribes during colonization: alcohol and ensuing indebtedness. Mother and son together represented “ownership,” or rather stewardship, of the land of Deerfield, and an indefinite part of Montague and Sunderland from Wequamps (Mount Sugarloaf) on both sides of the Connecticut north to the falls at Peskeompskut.

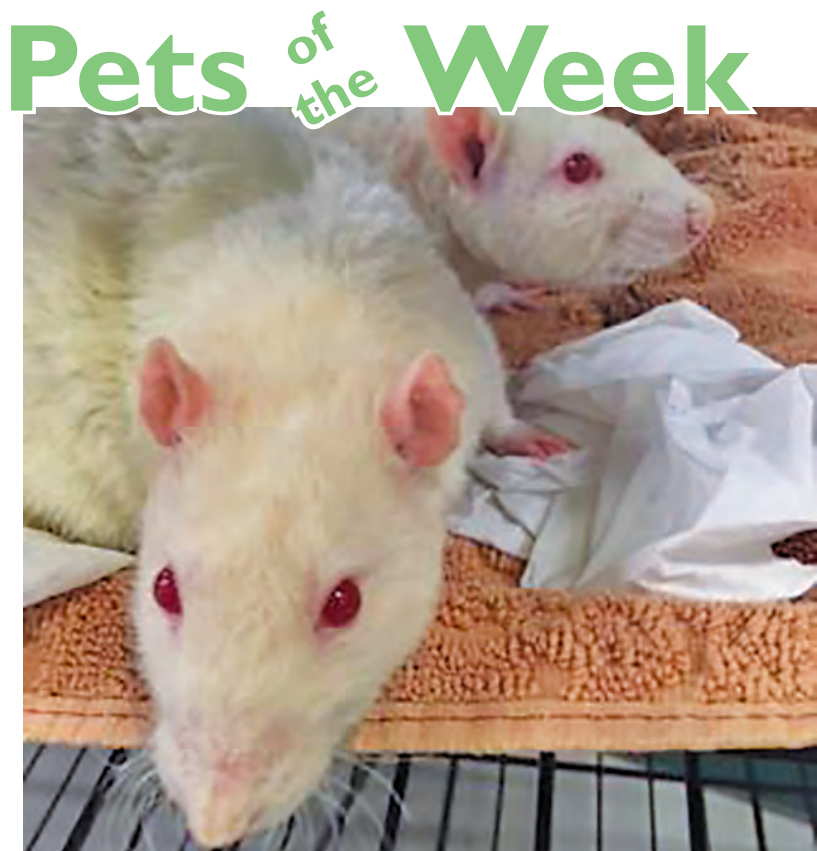
“Ownership” of lands is a word used by English speakers at the time of these transactions, but in fact, Indigenous peoples did not consider that they “owned” the land in the European sense.

Abenaki Scholar Dr. Marge Bruchac, in her essay “Native Land Use,” has this to say:

“The Algonkian sense of connection to the land was, philosophically, one of relationship, more than outright possession. Linguistically and spiritually, the land itself

see **WEST ALONG** page B2





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## Senior Center Activities NOVEMBER 9 THROUGH 13

**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](mailto: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@erv-ing-ma.gov](mailto:paula-betters@erv-ing-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](mailto: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

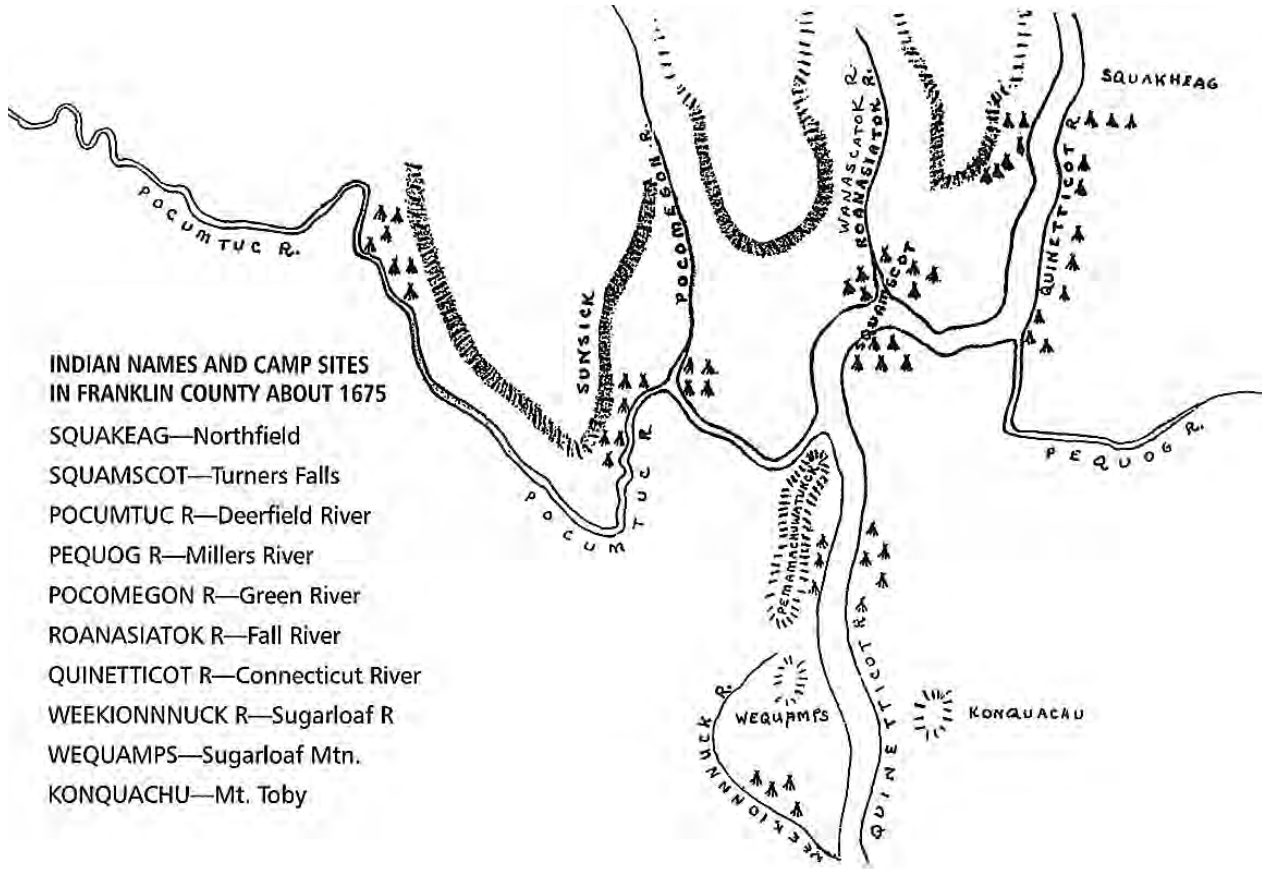
Supermarkets in Massachusetts are now required to provide special hours for seniors and immunocompromised shoppers. Call ahead – this information is accurate as of April 8; hours and accommodations are still changing.

|                             |   |                |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>Big Y:</b>               | Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.   | (413) 772-0435 |
| <b>Foster's:</b>            | Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.   | (413) 773-1100 |
| <b>Food City:</b>           | Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.   | (413) 863-9591 |
| <b>Green Fields Market:</b> | 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 |
| <b>McCusker's Market:</b>   | 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 <a href="mailto:pickup@franklincommunity.coop">pickup@franklincommunity.coop</a> | (413) 625-2548 |
| <b>Stop and Shop:</b>       | Senior hours from 6 to 7:30 a.m.  | (413) 774-6096 |

**WEST ALONG** from page B1 and many of the formations upon it, including rocks and mountains, were regarded as imbued with life and spirit, rather than seemingly inanimate rock and dirt.” Bruchac describes Indigenous stewardship of homelands as “a constantly negotiated set of reciprocal relationships... not as an inanimate commodity transferred and manipulated at will.” Deerfield historian George Sheldon (1818-1916) wrote of such an example in describing one of the many land transactions done in the Connecticut River Valley. In describing one of the foundational deeds signed by one individual named Chauk, Sachem of the Pocumtucks in 1667, Sheldon records that “...Where Chauk obtained his title and authority, does not appear. He is not heard of before or after this transaction; nor are the names of other grantors to be found elsewhere. These Indians were probably hangers-on about the settlements on the river below. Chauk may have been put in authority by the English.”

Chauk, in other words, was someone without tribal leadership authority, but willing to sign away tribal lands. The deed that Chauk signed does indicate at least some intention to preserve usage rights in that on the deed he “... doth reserve Liberty of fishing for ye Indians in ye Rivers or waters & free Liberty to hunt Deere or other Wild creatures & to gather Walnuts chestnuts and other nuts things &c on ye commons...” So, many of the so-called “Indian” deeds were understood by those tribal people who signed them as a sharing of resources on the land, rather than agreements to deed away land for private ownership. There were often such clauses indicating that the tribal people could continue to hunt, fish, farm, and gather wild fruits and nuts on the land they were willing to share with the English. However, the English clearly understood something entirely different, and soon erected fences to keep Indian “trespassers” out. The incidents leading up to the transfer of most of the lands on

both sides of the Connecticut River in these parts were rather tragic and in some ways, inevitable. Why Mashalisk signed away tribal lands to John Pynchon of Springfield in August 1672 had much to do with the manipulations of the infamous Pynchon, a wily and ruthless negotiator, entrepreneur, and military commander whose mind was set on complete control of the beaverskin trade and the eventual erasure of Indigenous people from the Valley. In Part Two of Looking for Mashalisk, we will explore the tragedy of Mashalisk and her son Watawolonksin, further machinations by John Pynchon, and the sale of Pocumtuck homelands. That sale by Mashalisk to Pynchon included Wequamps and the Pemamachuwatunck ridgeline known to her as the petrified remains of the Great Beaver. As we will see, that sale may well have given her the means to transfer the Beaver's curse onto Pynchon, and to have embodied her revenge for all time. Stay tuned...



From an 1872 map entitled “Indian names and camp sites in Franklin County about 1675,” prepared by George Sheldon for the third annual meeting of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. The map includes lands from Mount Sugarloaf to Peskeumpskeut conferred by Mashalisk to John Pynchon. Credit to Ed Gregory of the Montague Historical Commission and Lynn Stowe Tomb of the Gill Historical Commission.



Pressure at Thunder's goal: Turner Falls' Taryn Thayer (second from right) clears the ball as Greenfield's Amber Taylor tries to block the shot. Players left to right: Heather French, Taylor, Liv Whittier, Turners goalie Haleigh Greene, Thayer, and Taylor Murphy. The Green Wave blanked the Thunder 8-0 at the Greenfield-hosted rematch last Wednesday.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

# Start or Improve Home Compost Bins This Fall

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – Autumn, with its abundance of fallen leaves, decaying pumpkins, and garden waste, is a great time to start composting, or to improve your home compost system. Fall leaves are a helpful addition to home compost bins, as they add the carbon necessary for effective composting.

Composting is easy, and it can be even easier with effective, low-cost compost bins. Franklin County Solid Waste District sells “Earth Machine” home compost bins. The Earth Machine features a door in the bottom that can be opened to shovel out finished compost.

District residents can purchase an Earth Machine from the Solid Waste District for \$50. Residents of some District towns may purchase a compost bin from the Solid Waste District for \$25, due to a subsidized pricing incentive from their towns: Bernardston, Conway, Deerfield, Leverett, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Wendell, and Whately. To purchase bins, call the Solid Waste District at (413) 772-2438.

District residents may also purchase Earth Machine compost bins at the transfer stations in Colrain, Orange, and Wendell (pricing may vary). For more information on these locations, visit [www.franklin-countywastedistrict.org/compost-binsales.html](http://www.franklin-countywastedistrict.org/compost-binsales.html).

Greenfield residents may purchase Earth Machine compost bins and Sure Close compost pails at the Greenfield Transfer Station. Greenfield residents can call 772-1528 for more information.

The Solid Waste District also sells “Sure-Close” kitchen compost collection pails for \$5 each. This 2-gallon pail sits on the countertop or under the sink to collect compostables before taking them out to the home compost bin or municipal compost collection. The pinholes in the tightly locking lid allow moisture to evaporate, which reduces odor.

## Municipal Compost

In addition to home composting, commercial or municipal composting can greatly reduce trash volumes. Commercial composting goes beyond the backyard compost bin by accepting items not recommended for home composting, such as meat, bones, cheese, oily foods, compostable coffee cups, and BPI-certified “compostable plastic” ([www.bpiworld.org](http://www.bpiworld.org)).

Municipal compost programs at these ten Franklin County transfer stations accept separated food and paper waste free from residents or permit holders: Bernardston (and Leyden), Conway, Deerfield, Greenfield, Leverett, Orange, New Salem, Northfield, Wendell and Whately. (Greenfield transfer station accepts food and paper waste free from any Franklin County resident.)

The food waste and other materials collected in these programs is sent to a commercial compost facility such as Martin’s Farm in Greenfield or Clear View Composting in Orange. Residents can potentially save money by reducing the amount of trash in their



AMY DONOVAN PHOTO

“pay as you throw” town trash bags or stickered bags.

## How to Compost at Home

In the kitchen, collect fruit and vegetable scraps and peels, eggshells, coffee grounds and paper filters, stale bread and leftover grains. It is not recommended to put the following materials in home compost bins or piles: pet wastes, meat, bones, poultry, fish, dairy, and oily foods such as peanut butter and salad dressing.

When adding kitchen scraps to outdoor compost bins, cover the scraps with leaves, finished compost, or other carbon-rich materials. Covering the kitchen scraps reduces insects and odor and speeds up the composting process.

Ideally, a home compost bin should contain about 75% “brown” carbon-rich materials such as fall leaves, brown yard waste, straw, used paper towels, ripped up egg cartons, paper bags, or newspaper (printed with water-based inks); and 25% “green” nitrogen-rich materials such as food waste, coffee grounds, and grass clippings.

More about leaves: if possible, only add smaller amounts of oak leaves and pine needles to your compost bin. Maple and other local leaves are ideal for composting. Saving fall leaves in a covered trashcan or under a tarp makes it easy to add them to home compost bins all year long.

The composting process needs oxygen; mixing or “turning” the pile every few weeks with a shovel or pitchfork will speed up the compost process. Introduce helpful microorganisms to your bin by adding a few shovelfuls of garden soil or finished compost. Add water occasionally to make the contents as damp as a wrung-out sponge.

Compost is ready to use when it looks like crumbly, dark brown, sweet smelling soil. Save money by applying homemade compost to gardens and lawns instead of purchasing bagged garden soils and topsoil. Compost improves soil structure and water retention, adds nutrients and minerals to soil, and reduces waste. Composting reduces climate-changing gases that are emitted from landfills, waste-to-energy facilities, and long-distance trash transport.

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

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

# Scam Wave; Bear In Patch; Clown Costume; Abandoned Dog; Pregnant Cat; Missing Person

### Sunday, 10/25

2:58 p.m. Report from Bulkley Street of a cat that has been hanging around meowing by the caller’s fence. Provided caller with number for animal control officer and advised of ACO’s hours.

7:45 p.m. 911 caller advising that she is receiving threatening phone calls from a person who is threatening to harm her and her dog. Caller later received a text from an ex-boyfriend who stated that it was a friend of his who made the calls and that it was supposed to be a joke. Officer spoke to caller, who believes it was just a prank from a friend; no longer concerned.

### Monday, 10/26

7:52 a.m. School resource officer requesting DPW respond for a dead animal in the road by the entrance to Franklin County Technical School. Message left for DPW.

9:15 a.m. First of twelve calls regarding unemployment scams. Callers advised of options.

12:46 p.m. Caller from Bridge Street would like it on record that a package that was delivered this morning was taken from the porch.

5:25 p.m. Report of two loose dogs without collars at Vladish Avenue and Alice Street. Officer attempting to get dogs in cruiser. Dogs returned to owners on Turnpike Road.

8:51 p.m. Caller from East Main Street states that her upstairs neighbors are having a very loud verbal altercation. Units advised. Officer reports all verbal, not overly loud.

9:13 p.m. A 47-year-old Sunderland man was arrested and charged with assault and battery on a family/household member. Officer from Sunderland PD took possession of firearms, license to carry, and ammunition.

9:45 p.m. Caller from Bridge Street requesting perimeter check of residence because she keeps hearing a loud knocking sound but does not see anybody outside. Officer advised male party not to continue coming onto caller’s property and advised of consequences. Caller called back stating her dogs are going crazy and thinks party may be back outside. Officer checked area again; nothing found.

### Tuesday, 10/27

7:31 a.m. Caller from Seventh Street states that she let a friend use her vehicle on Saturday and her friend then let someone else use it. Both are now refusing to return it. Greenfield PD located vehicle at an

address in their town. No answer at door. Vehicle owner has a spare key; she is going to go to GPD and request an escort over to get the car back.

8:09 a.m. Caller from East Main Street states that the neighbors upstairs are yelling and throwing things. Involved parties deny any type of disturbance. Apartment appeared clean; no signs of things being thrown around.

4:24 p.m. Store manager from F.L. Roberts requesting officer remove an unwanted male party from the property who was attempting to shoplift before getting in a verbal altercation with the caller. Male party gone on arrival; possibly lives across street. Officer off with male party. Party verbally trespassed from store. Stolen property returned to store.

6:04 p.m. Report of threats being made among parties at a Third Street address. Parties advised of options.

8:13 p.m. Resident at Farren Care Center reporting that she was just involved in a physical altercation with one of the staff. Officer spoke with supervisor, who advised that she will speak with the caller and call back if they need assistance.

9:20 p.m. Report of female yelling obscenities into windows of caller’s Avenue A apartment. Party gone on arrival; unable to make contact at her residence.

### Wednesday, 10/28

8:55 a.m. Report of neighbor yelling at a tree crew blocking the road on Poplar Street. Area checked; no issues.

2:45 p.m. Caller reporting that someone abandoned a dog at Fourth Street and Avenue A. ACO advised. ACO currently unable to pick up dog; requesting that of-

ficer bring dog to kennel and ACO will follow up tomorrow. Services rendered.

### Thursday, 10/29

1:37 p.m. Caller found a pregnant calico cat in Turners Falls; advises she contacted Dakin and if not claimed, she would like to keep it. Dakin offered to take in kittens. Caller was given numbers for regional kennel and ACO.

4:46 p.m. Party into station to speak with an officer re: missing person paperwork. Officer speaking with caller. Missing person entered into NCIC.

5:28 p.m. Report of fight at Cumberland Farms among three apparent involved male parties. While on line, caller stated one male left in a sedan and two parties are walking in the direction of Food City. Officer reports no one in store observed altercation; caller gone on arrival.

### Friday, 10/30

2:27 a.m. Second of two calls regarding neighbor disturbance on Third Street. Caller states that a male party is talking loudly on the porch and people are being loud and stomping inside the apartment. Officers spoke to same involved parties from earlier call. Another neighbor also came out and asked the parties to quiet down. Involved were advised of second complaint and advised to quiet down for the night.

5:39 p.m. Caller has located a hypodermic needle on the ground in the parking area near the “dog park” on Unity Street. Services rendered. 5:45 p.m. 911 caller from East Main Street reporting that his ex-girlfriend started an argument with him and may have broken some items in his apartment before she left. Advised of options. Verbal argument only; parties will separate for the night.

10:25 p.m. Staff at Farren Care Center reporting resident-on-resident assault that occurred this evening. No police response needed.

### Saturday, 10/31

7:07 a.m. Caller reporting that a dog was left outside all night at Red Fire North (bakery); dog has been whining and crying for hours. Officer heading to owner’s residence. Contacted caller back; she advised that the owner is there now; he had let the dog out to go to the bathroom, and he took off. Officer advised.

1:31 p.m. Officer reporting very large tree down across East Mineral Road blocking access to Cabot Camp. Request DPW be notified; they will need a loader. DPW foreman advised.

2:14 p.m. Caller reporting suspicious vehicle on West Mineral Road; states he spoke to parties, who advised they were trying to retrieve items they had left behind. Units clear; parties have been moved along and advised not to return. Owner will look into posting land.

5:26 p.m. Caller from H Street states that a large black bear is walking in the area, going into people’s yard and possibly headed towards Seventh Street. Neighbors reporting that bear has gone into woods towards the golf course.

6:43 p.m. 911 caller from Montague Avenue concerned about a single person walking around with a clown mask on and carrying a balloon. Officer spoke to clown; no issues of concern. Just having fun.

### Sunday, 11/1

7:58 a.m. Shelburne Control advising deer struck near Sunderland/Montague town line. Unknown if deer is safely out of road. Deer was in Sunderland. MPD officer assisted with traffic while deer was picked up.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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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HEARTFELT from page B1

coat the cut side with olive oil and with the cut side face down on a baking sheet, bake at 375° until tender, about 30 to 45 minutes. You should be able to pierce the skin with a skewer or knife and have it slide all the way through.

Cool, then cut or scoop the flesh from the skin and use in any number of ways: mashed and seasoned with butter, salt and pepper; cubed and added to soups, stews, and cas-

seroles; or made into pies and even bread. I sometimes skin, then cut or slice the cooled flesh and freeze for later use.

With pumpkins and butternut, you can save the seeds, cleaned of all pulp, sprinkle them with salt and roast in the oven until browned. Eat as-is or sprinkle over salads and vegetable dishes, or atop the ever-popular avocado toast.

Here's a wonderful recipe for using cooked squash called Squash

Braid Bread. It's a fairly quick yeast bread, similar to Challah, with a soft orange color inside and a nice chewy crust.

*Trouble Mandeson is a West Coast transplant who lives with wifey and cat in Greenfield. She is a talker, writer, artist and all around mensch. Find her at troublemandesoncopyediting.com for your grant writing and copyediting needs.*



# SQUASH BRAID BREAD

- 1 package (1/4 oz.) active dry yeast
- 2 Tbsp warm water (110° to 115°)
- 1 cup cooked mashed butternut squash (may substitute with acorn, kabocha, pumpkin)
- 1/3 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
- 1/4 cup softened butter
- 1 egg
- 3 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 to 3½ cups all-purpose flour

GLAZE: 1 egg beaten with 1 Tbsp water

DIRECTIONS:

In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in the warm water. In another bowl, combine squash, milk, butter, egg,

brown sugar and salt; mix well. Add yeast mixture and 1-1/2 cups flour; mix well. Add enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.

Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6 to 8 minutes. (I use my KitchenAid mixer with the dough hook for this.) Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top.

Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down. Divide into thirds; roll each third into an 18-inch rope. Place on a greased baking sheet. Braid ropes together; pinch ends. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes.

Combine glaze ingredients; brush over braid. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the pan and cool on a wire rack.



A loaf of delicious braided squash bread, hot from the oven.

WATSON from page B1

1938 World's Fair, he wrote, "Those who look continually down into the depths risk falling. If yesterday's Tomorrow teaches us anything, it's this – how we talk about the future matters."

Flight of Fancy

Bruce began The Attic in October 2016. At the time, he explains, "I was flying over the Midwest, bound for Iowa to speak to classes about my book *Freedom Summer*. The ugly presidential campaign had all but trashed my remaining faith in America, and I realized that no matter who won – and I did *not* expect what happened – our history was in the tabloid toilet. It was being used and abused in the name of politics

and outrage. Gone from public view were the non-political Americana-type pieces I used to write for the *Smithsonian*. All was grudge and resentment, anger and fear.

"What if, I decided up in the air there, I could just do a little bit to correct that? So, I decided when the election was over that I'd start a website of short, phone-readable articles about American history, lit, lore, the aspects of America that I've always been drawn to."

Bruce set Inauguration Day 2017 as his launch date, which was when The Attic site "went live." He was adamant from the start that the site would not "do politics," and it doesn't.

"You never know what will be next," he says. "A history article

about suffragettes? A science article about Richard Feynman? A humor article about Robert Benchley, or Bill 'Spaceman' Lee? An article about Dolores Huerta or Judy Chicago? An inspiring Supreme Court case? A forgotten figure like 'Wrong Way' Corrigan? Rummage around."

Bruce adds, "The original name, conceived in flight, was The Compass. The Attic soon followed, and it's kind of a triple metaphor, because A) I do have a great attic where I often read or write; B) Smithsonian, for whom I used to write, is said to be "the nation's attic"; and C) my head is kind of an attic filled with stuff and stories from all my reading."

Building the Attic

It seems like a pretty vast undertaking, but Bruce says he did not need any technical help. "I thought I might, but Squarespace turned out to be easier than I thought," he says. "I got some design suggestions from my niece, a web designer, and some help with the mass email program, but the rest was pretty easy."

He grabs photos from electronic sources, but writes every piece himself. They now total almost 200, and there's a different theme each week. The opening of the baseball season, for instance, will yield a profile of a player. This week, unsurprisingly, is about "The Vote and How it Grew," and three stories about hope.

Bruce says, "I have a 'To Come' list that usually extends a few weeks ahead. November, for example, will be Comedy Month because we'll all need a laugh by then. And I try to spot important

WALK REVIEW

## Spooky Roundhouse Pumpkin Walk

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – With a major health crisis having come around and not exactly gone away, social gatherings aren't going on like normal, but it would seem that people are trying to still have things happen. One example was the Green River Festival, only the radio station connected to it had it be a literal on-the-air festival.

I believe someone decided to do a "Spooky Roundhouse" at the Franklin County Fairground in connection with not having the Great Falls Festival. It was held for three nights, from October 23 to 25 and I went to one night.

The crowd for this was actually a decent amount of people. A farm stand decided to show up out of Ciesluk Farm, along with a vendor selling fried dough.

The trees outside the Roundhouse's entrance were decorated with ghosts hanging from them, and pumpkins were present too. The greeters were dressed in costumes. One was supposed to be a wizard, I think, the other in a complete Spiderman suit.

While in the Roundhouse, you could basically Trick or Treat. The whole place was pretty much decorated for Halloween – mostly with pumpkins, like the event was called, but one section was also filled with Halloween masks.

Some of the carved pumpkins were actually very good! One had a character from the *Nightmare Before Christmas* movie on the front. Some of them were very good carvings of outlines of dinosaurs. One was a great one of a witch's face.



One was of a wolf howling. Others were of an owl (twice), a cat with the word "boo" under it, a scarecrow, a bat or two, a mouse, and some very nice faces.

I mentioned there was a section with masks in it. Along with that, scarecrows were present, and what I believe was supposed to be an Egyptian princess mummy. One particular Trick or Treat was in a nicely homemade Wolverine costume, and I told him so when I saw him.

When I asked the person behind the farm stand if it was this reasonably busy the first two nights, she agreed it was. "One night, they had the maximum number of people that could be present – 425," she said.

I like looking at the rows of pumpkins at the Great Falls Festival. I learned on Facebook about this being done by one of the founders of that event, which is probably why the pumpkin setup was so well done. It just looked good in there. If he wanted to have a good alternative to that festival, then he succeeded, both from what I was told and from what I saw personally.



Scrolling through American history on The Attic.



Bruce Watson with his new puppy, Maevae.

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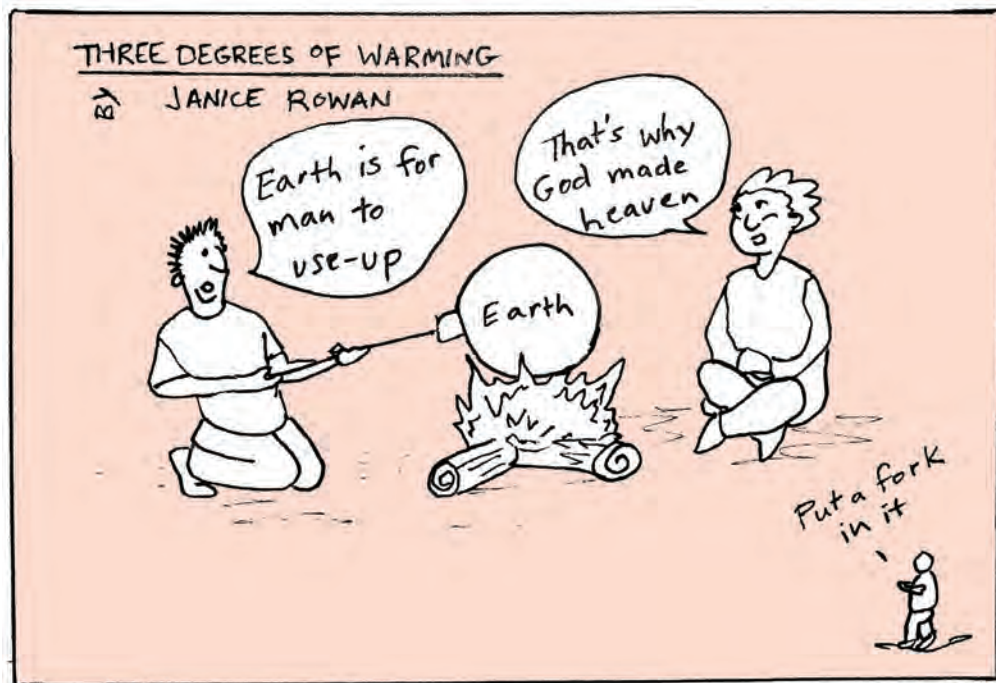
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# The Joys and the Sadness Of the Holidays

By **LESLIE BROWN**

**MONTAGUE CITY** – All Hallow's Eve came and went with little excitement here. The street was dark with the shortening days. No little gremlins asked for treats at the door.

Years ago, we lived in a suburban area outside of Chicago. The sidewalks were paved and perfect for roller skates of the kind that you fastened to your shoes, and small bicycles for those a bit older with good balance.

Like all neighborhoods, I remember that there was one spooky house inhabited by strange folks. We were forbidden to stop there. Otherwise, everyone was comfortable with everyone else. I was allowed to trick-or-treat and would come home with a pillowcase full of candy.

If I got up before the adults in my house, I could go across the street to the neighbors and have breakfast with them on any given Sunday. My friends and I walked the few blocks to the neighborhood elementary school – no bus need-

ed. If I got sick during the school day, the nurse would call my mother to say I was walking home.

We had only one car, which my father drove to the station to take the train into the city. While my mother cooked supper, dad read to me and my sister or sang to us from the book of American folk songs.

My dad wrote text for Coronet educational films and had the ambition of making a living as a writer. Thus, in the final month of my third grade year we moved to Jamaica, Vermont, where my folks rented a large house. This made it possible for my mom to take in boarders to pay the rent and for my dad to spend his days writing.

I was lucky to finish my third grade year in a one-room school while the new regional elementary was built.

One year of freelance writing proved a poor support for a family of four, so we moved the following year to Keene, New Hampshire, where my dad could attend teachers' college. My mom traveled to Alstead to teach French. Life moved on.

But the pulse of writing stayed in my blood. Now that I am retired I find myself writing, too. Writing is a form of self-reflection and a tool by which your thoughts get organized. Your memory is

your storyteller.

Now come the bleak days of November as the fall days close and the days grow shorter. The cat is in hibernation mode and spends much of her time on the rug in front of the woodstove or buried deep in the bed.

The traditional family holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas are no more. This year we will travel to Ken's family in Rhode Island for a family Thanksgiving. His sister recently became a widow, so we will all be trying to fill the gaps for Joyce. There will be a largish gathering, and everyone will bring something to share.

Christmas will be a small gathering. For many years the family has gathered at our house in Montague, but now my sister and her husband and their three kids are spread between Vermont and New York. Between the COVID and the need to self-quarantine following travel, it is likely that Ken and I and our cat Amiga will hang our stockings alone. That is not as lonely as it may sound. There are local activities to attend, and honestly, when you are in your seventies, calls to-and-from friends and family warm the heart equally well.

What more do you need than the blessings of love and sharing as the year ends and a new one begins?

## The Montague Reporter

is seeking writers to cover local board and committee meetings. Modest compensation and editorial guidance provided. A lot of these are being held via Zoom (etc.) during the pandemic, so you don't need to travel far.

No experience necessary, but please don't sign up because you have some weird ax to grind!

For information, contact (413) 863-8666, or [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).

## Bike Light Giveaway This Thursday!

**TURNERS FALLS** – This Thursday, November 5 from 3 to 6 p.m., MassBike and Sadie's Bikes will be giving away free bike lights, including a white front light and a red back light. Sadie's is located at 42 Canal Road in Turners Falls, across the canal from where GPS takes you. *Masks and social distancing are required.*

As we approach the darker months of the year and the fall time change, rider safety can become more challenging, so we want to light up the night and make sure riders are easily seen on the roadways. But too often - especially during this time of year - we find people caught on their bikes with inadequate lighting. Along with being compliant with the state law requiring a white front light at night, MassBike believes simply being seen is one of the most important ways to make a bike rider safer.

Sadie's Bikes is a full-service shop that offers used bikes, accessories, classes, and other creative curiosities, and aims to create a comfortable and inclusive space for folks in our community to learn more about the complex machines known as bikes.

The Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition (MassBike) promotes a bicycle-friendly environment and encourages bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation. To make a donation or volunteer for the Lights Brigade Campaign, visit [www.massbike.org/lightsbrigade](http://www.massbike.org/lightsbrigade).

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