

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 16

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 25, 2021

Translating Dog, and Training Owners, at Canine Head Start



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Graduation day at the Canine Head Start in Montague.

By DONNA PETERSEN

MONTAGUE – Just got a new puppy? Maybe you rescued a Dixie dog, or a dog someone had to surrender? And maybe you are looking for some help with training a pup or dealing with problems such as barking or jumping up?

Well, help may be up at the big blue building on East Chestnut Hill Road in Montague. That is the home of Canine Head Start, a dog training center owned by Elise McMahon since around 2002.

I've known Elise since about 1995, when I spoke to her about coming to UMass to do graduate work there in the then-Wildlife and Forestry Department. Even then she was experienced with canid/dog behavior, having worked with grey wolves at Wolf Park in Indiana and with African wild dogs in Philadelphia. Plus, she had co-developed a Puppy Problem Prevention Program at the University of Pennsylvania veterinary hospital behavior clinic. She did come to UMass where she did doctoral research on Darwin's foxes in Chile.

Elise always had dogs and became passionate about applying learning and behavior theory to our canine companions. When she got her Briard puppy Tai back in 2002 and looked for classes, she found a dearth of options based on the science of learning and dog

behavior, so she trained Tai herself using all she knew about training.

Amy Plavin, then the owner of Windy Hollow Veterinary Clinic and with a new pup herself, saw the results and said, "Why don't you offer puppy classes?" And so Canine Head Start was born.

Elise is a Certified Training Partner and has taken many continuing education courses and workshops. There are differing approaches to dog training. Elise has strong feelings about the positive approach, and has spent many hours researching and developing her philosophy and methods.

"You combine learning and behavior theory for any animal species, then look at canid learning and behavior," she explains, "and then you communicate that theory to humans, and teach them what the dog is doing and why. And then apply the learning theory to modify behavior to that which is wanted."

In talking to Elise it is obvious that it is primarily the human who is being trained so they can train their dog right.

While positive reinforcement training is always used, puppies and dogs are trained differently. When she gives puppy classes, she says she wants to "teach the human to understand that a puppy is an infant of a different species."

see **CANINE** page A6

Open Seats Expected On G-M School Committee

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Papers are available now for any candidates who wish to run for the regional school committee, and neither of Montague's representatives whose terms are up this spring are currently planning to run again.

"I am glad to have served on the committee," Jennifer Lively, who was elected in 2018, told the *Reporter*. "My life circumstances have changed since the start of my term... I don't think I have as much time to dedicate to the committee at the moment."

Haley Anderson cited family

see **GMRSD** page A4

Union Calls For Effort to Save Local Journalism

By SARAH ROBERTSON

NORTHAMPTON – Members of the Pioneer Valley NewsGuild, the union representing workers at the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, organized a public forum Wednesday night to share their concerns about the future of the newspaper. Congressman Jim McGovern and state representative Lindsay Sabadosa took part in the online discussion, which focused on the importance of finding new business models to sustain local news.

"Over the past year we've witnessed massive staffing cuts and those of us left at the paper are, to put it mildly, feeling overwhelmed," *Gazette* reporter and union member Dusty Christensen said in an

see **EFFORT** page A4

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Weighs Tough Options For Church Street Bridge

By KATIE NOLAN

ERVING CENTER – "Bite the bullet. Close the bridge. That's my plan, shut it down," selectboard member William Bembury said at Monday's selectboard meeting.

Early this month, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) District 2 engineer

told Erving officials informally that the Church Street bridge at the North Street intersection over Keyup Brook is in poor condition and must be closed or made one-lane only. Once MassDOT sends a formal letter to Erving about the bridge, the town will have two weeks to take action.

see **ERVING** page A8



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

Traffic at the intersection has already posed a problem for the town.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Coronavirus Cases Down; Vaccine Scene Still Chaotic

By JEFF SINGLETON

At its meeting Monday night, the Montague selectboard heard some good news and some bad news during the town health department's update on the COVID-19 pandemic. The good news was that the number of new cases in a two-week period had declined significantly from highs during the early winter holidays. Public health director Daniel Wasiuk reported a total of 16 new cases between February 7 and February 20, down from

a high of 37 in mid-December.

Town administrator Steve Ellis added a "small elaboration": "These numbers reflect only a few households, so... what we are not seeing is a dispersion of lots of cases across parts of town."

This was quickly followed by some not-so-good news about the ability of eligible local residents to be vaccinated. On February 18 the state abruptly expanded the number of residents eligible in Phase 2 to include seniors over 65 and residents

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Hybrid Vigor: Tech Teachers Weigh In

By CHARLOTTE VALLE

TURNERS FALLS – In last week's edition, I wrote about how Franklin County Tech School has been running, from my own perspective as a student and from the perspective of the school's principal

Brian Spadafino. The school has been open in a hybrid model since September.

I also interviewed staff from both the Academic and Shop sides of the building, asking their perspectives on how online learning and safety precautions are affecting the school.

They include Maura O'Connor (MO), the Hospitality instructor in the Culinary Arts program; John Passiglia (JP), one of the teachers in Welding and Metal Fabrication; and Matthew Gancz (MG), our school's physics teacher. The fourth teacher asked to remain anonymous (AN).

I asked all four the same questions. Here are their answers.

MR: *What are your personal opinions on the way that our school is handling the virus? Do you think that the precautions they have us take, such as the hybrid model and in-person spacing, are helpful?*

MO: I think our administration is doing an amazing job coping with the pandemic. Their number-one priority is the health and safety of our students and staff. When they are faced with adversity they pivot and try another angle, never giving up.

JP: We have been hybrid and I think we have done a really good

see **TECH** page A5



VALLE PHOTO

The author's Period 5 Early US History class on Wednesday.

Democracy Dies In Typos

Editorials and Letters.....	A2
Illustration: Weed Bouncer.....	A2
Local Briefs.....	A3
Remembering Ferlinghetti.....	A3
Wendell Selectboard Notes.....	A5
10 Years Ago This Week.....	A7
Local Author Speaks.....	B1
West Along the River.....	B1

Virtual Theater Review.....	B1
Sex Matters.....	B2
Montague Police Log.....	B3
A Man of the People.....	B4
Movie Review.....	B5
Our Monthly Poetry Page.....	B6
Five Comics and a Puzzle.....	B7
Great Falls Apple Column.....	B8



AT LARGE

Dual Use Solar Development: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing?

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – The backers of a sprawling solar project that would blanket three large swaths of historic farmland off Pine Meadow Road presented their case to the Northfield planning board on February 18 via Zoom.

The project is a joint effort between BlueWave Solar of Boston and Four Star Farms, to wit Gene and Bonnie L'Etoile. Their son Nathan is the take-charge guy. He has spent years on the boards of various agricultural bureaucracies, and currently is the New England Regional Director of American Farmland Trust.

Nathan wants to build three solar arrays on his parents' farmland. He also wants to make money doing it, and the best way for that to happen would be to go "dual use" and build the stanchions higher and the panels

farther apart than standard arrays.

Despite the added sunshine, the New England climate would limit growth to pasture grass. Jesse Robertson-Dubois refers to it as "idled land."

Robertson-DuBois is a sheep farmer. He was also Nathan L'Etoile's predecessor at the American Farmland Trust. They know each other, and now they are helping each other.

In order to qualify for dual use subsidies, the aforementioned "idled" land must be used for agriculture. Enter Jesse, who will use the solar fields as a "winter base" for a breeding flock of 500 sheep.

This is crucial to getting solar arrays on prime farmland. Give us something, the bureaucrats say, and we'll give you something back, sheep for subsidies. How this unholy alliance got green-lighted is a

see **AT LARGE** page A6

The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

Editorial Group

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

Production Group

Annie Levine, *Business Manager*
Lyn Clark, *Interim Distribution Manager*
Charlotte Kohlmann, *Layout Assistant*
Christopher Carmody, *Layout Assistant*
Sarah Brown-Anson, *Podcast Producer*

Technical Administration

About Face Computing

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August 2002

Timely Reminder

This pandemic has certainly dragged on for quite some time. As a program to provide coronavirus vaccination to all the Earth's people is underway, we are supplying this information in case anyone should find themselves in military control of a territory not actually incorporated into one's own state.

The attached text is a relevant excerpt from the Fourth Geneva Convention, adopted in 1950 and since signed by 196 countries.

Article 55. To the fullest extent of the means available to it, the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate.

The Occupying Power may not requisition foodstuffs, articles or medical supplies available in the occupied territory, except for use by the occupation forces and administration personnel, and then only if the requirements of the civilian population have been taken into account. Subject to the provisions of other international Conventions, the Occupying Power shall make arrangements to ensure that fair value is paid for any requisitioned goods.

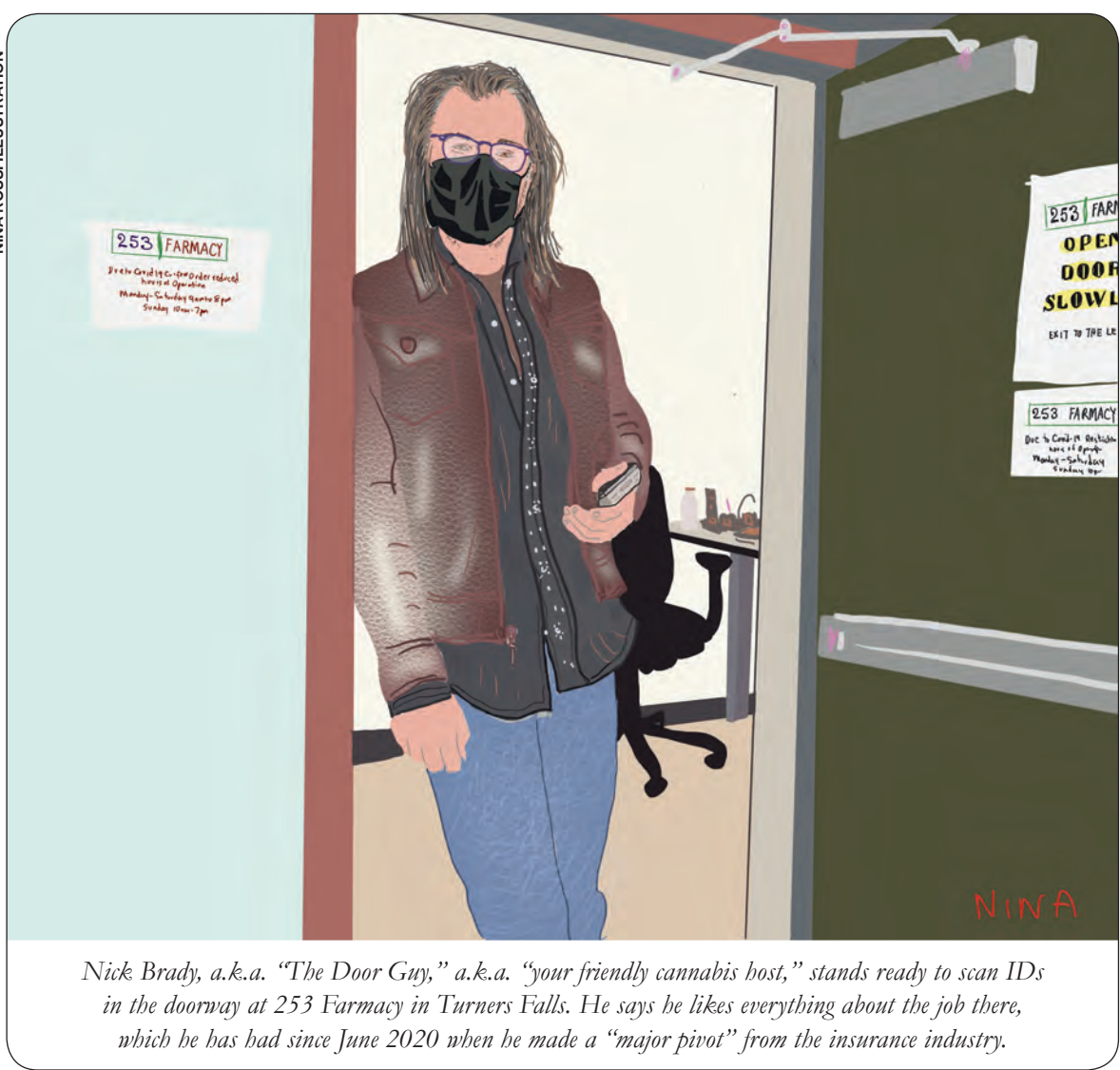
The Protecting Power shall, at any time, be at liberty to verify the state of the food and medical sup-

plies in occupied territories, except where temporary restrictions are made necessary by imperative military requirements.

Article 56. To the fullest extent of the means available to it, the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring and maintaining, with the co-operation of national and local authorities, the medical and hospital establishments and services, public health and hygiene in the occupied territory, with particular reference to the adoption and application of the prophylactic and preventive measures necessary to combat the spread of contagious diseases and epidemics. Medical personnel of all categories shall be allowed to carry out their duties.

If new hospitals are set up in occupied territory and if the competent organs of the occupied State are not operating there, the occupying authorities shall, if necessary, grant them the recognition provided for in Article 18. In similar circumstances, the occupying authorities shall also grant recognition to hospital personnel and transport vehicles under the provisions of Articles 20 and 21.

In adopting measures of health and hygiene and in their implementation, the Occupying Power shall take into consideration the moral and ethical susceptibilities of the population of the occupied territory.



Nick Brady, a.k.a. "The Door Guy," a.k.a. "your friendly cannabis host," stands ready to scan IDs in the doorway at 253 Farmacy in Turners Falls. He says he likes everything about the job there, which he has had since June 2020 when he made a "major pivot" from the insurance industry.

Letters to the Editors

Praise for New Writer

I want to applaud the young writer of an informative and well written article on the front page of the February 18 edition of the *Montague Reporter*, entitled "Handling the Coronavirus at Tech."

Charlotte Valle, a freshman at the Franklin County Technical school (FCTS), writes about the collaborative planning process which occurred over last summer (involving administrators, teachers, the school psychologist, a nurse and a parent), who developed guidelines-adapted from state health guidelines-which

have enabled FCTS to be open since September 2020, using a hybrid model. The hybrid model initially developed and modified as needed, has allowed students to have in-person learning, both hands-on in shop as well as academics, while keeping students and teachers/staff safe.

Ms. Valle gives credit to her teachers, described as "amazing, supportive and understanding," as well as to her fellow students who have done a great job at "keeping up with the rules... to keep each other safe." The article's author notes

she has found that people around her want to be in school more than ever before, and that the school has helped them make the most of their time in school.

Without pointing any fingers, it is difficult to understand why some other local schools have been unable to offer their students virtually any in-person school time, faced with the same challenges posed by the pandemic.

Barbara Carulli
Leverett

GUEST EDITORIAL

Wheelchairs Ahoy

By HANS HERDA

LEVERETT – You don't suppose there is wheelchair mathematics, but of course there is. And physics, too.

Take indoors. Doorways must all be wide enough to get through. Yet I have bruised knuckles on both hands from close calls. The remedy is easy: use your hands to grasp the doorway sides well above the wheelchair's large rear wheels and push.

A 1/8 inch threshold is no problem if you're strong enough. 1/4 inch thresholds may require you to ask for help. In that case the threshold can be fixed with a shim to let you cruise alone. Asking for help is not demeaning. People love to help the wheelchair-bound. They are happy to be on two feet and able to walk around.

Now, for the mathematics. Riding a wheelchair can be compared somewhat to riding a bicycle or driving a car. You have to negotiate curves. Think of your rear end. It must be in line with the center of a high enough table, for instance, with the wheelchair pointing to the table. This often requires several back-and-forth movements, sometimes also needing the skirting of a nearby wall, to get into the above position.

These movements are mathematical, geometric, difficult to describe fully, but they can be learned practi-

cally by the rider. Bicycles and cars are different, yet the geometry is the same.

In many older houses the doorways have narrower widths. Your wheelchair has to fit through all of them. Fortunately, wheelchairs of different widths are available.

In old houses there are doors with latches. To open or close these doors there exists a "grabber" stick about 2-1/2 feet long with a curved plastic grabbing arm at one end which is actuated by a pistol grip at the other end and a line joining the two. Just applied physics.

This grabber can reach many objects in the fridge or on the floor, even seltzer bottles. It can also actuate water at a kitchen sink having the proper faucets. Most dishes are out of reach and require a helping hand. Cookery is for helpers.

Transfer to and from bed or commode is best done using a specialized board and with a trained spotter helping by standing in front of the patient transferring on the board. Dressing and undressing is a mixed bag. Aid is needed for one's hind quarters and also for feet and lower legs. Clothing must be washed and dried by someone else. Pity the person living alone and without relatives or friends.

Hans Herda lives in Leverett.

CORRECTIONS

The brain power at our office seems to be flickering a bit, as this very special pandemic winter wears on and on. Two corrections are in order:

In our February 11 edition, the photo caption for *West Along the River* (Page B1) incorrectly identified the author's great-uncle Doug Smith as "Doug Brown."

And in the print edition of last week's paper, the article on Page A1, "Boston Investors Purchase Retail Property on Avenue A," incorrectly attributed one quote to Joshua Sander. All comments were provided by his brother, Jacob Sander.

(We caught that one before publishing our digital edition. We'll rarely publish different versions but it seemed appropriate. If you got a print copy, hold onto it; errors increase the resale value.)

We apologize to our readers!

Wood Heat Still Just As Stylish As Before

I'm glad that Gary Sanderson is still writing. I usually enjoy his rambling anecdotes, and have missed him in the *Recorder*, to which I subscribe.

After reading his last column I have to admit to some attached-woodshed envy! I take issue, though, with his comment about wood heat being passé because of climate change.

I would posit that a well-managed local wood lot has a *total* carbon footprint (when used for *local* home heating) that is on par with, if not smaller than, any other source.

Michael D. Joyce
Wendell

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

PHONE: (413) 863-8666
Please note new email addresses:
editor@montaguereporter.org
features@montaguereporter.org
ads@montaguereporter.org
bills@montaguereporter.org
circulation@montaguereporter.org
events@montaguereporter.org
poetry@montaguereporter.org
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org

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

Advertising and copy deadline is
MONDAY at NOON.

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

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

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS!
(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)

Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

editor@montaguereporter.org

Sign Me Up!

\$20 { 8 months (31 issues) for our walking routes
6 months (23 issues) for our driving routes
4 months (15 issues) for mailed subscriptions

The Montague Reporter

177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Name: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____
Email (optional): _____



By NINA ROSSI

Are we alone in the universe? Humans' search for life beyond Earth is in the news with NASA's Perseverance rover landing on Mars. Examine the possibilities with astronomer Kelly Beatty, online this Thursday, February 25 at 7 p.m., presented by the Dickinson Memorial Library of Northfield.

"After briefly surveying the amazing diversity of life on Earth and the theories of how it started here, we'll sample possibly habitable planets in our solar system and worlds around other stars, exploring whether any of them might be suitable for life," the library's announcement reads. "And we'll catch up on efforts to contact alien civilizations directly, via radio transmissions and other means."

Beatty has been explaining astronomy to the public since 1974. He is a senior editor at *Sky & Telescope* magazine and an occasional guest on National Public Radio and the Weather Channel. Email dmemlib@gmail.com to register for the program.

The Brattleboro Museum & Art Center presents "**Unboxed: A Cultural History of Sneakers**," an online talk by Elizabeth Semmelhack, at the same time – Thursday, February 25, at 7 p.m. Semmelhack will interlace the history of sneakers with stories of technological innovation, complex cultural politics, and shifting ideas of gender, tracing how these influences transformed sneakers into the cultural icons they are today.

This free event is presented in connection with the installation

"Andy Yoder: Overboard," on view at the Museum until March 6. Inspired by the Great Sneaker Spill of 1990, an incident in which five shipping containers containing 61,820 Nike sneakers were lost at sea, Yoder's showroom contains 240 Jordan 5 replicas, each one made from recycled packaging or promotional materials.

Register in advance for Semmelhack's talk at brattleboromuseum.org.

The **Authors and Artists Festival** takes place this weekend, February 27 and 28, online and for free. Find a Zoom link at their website, authorsandartistsfestival.wordpress.com. The festival features cultural activists, essayists, presenters, artists, and poets sharing relationships to the natural world.

Next Wednesday, March 3 at noon, Greenfield Community College presents an **artist's talk with Terry Jenoure**. A writer, artist, musician and educator, Jenoure was born and raised in the Bronx into a Puerto Rican and Jamaican family. Her goal is always to blend the many aspects of her creative work.

A self-taught visual artist who works with assemblage, fiber figures, and watercolor illustrations, she began exhibiting in 2005 and her hand-stitched dolls are carried by the Smithsonian Institute gift shop and in private collections. This is an Art Department Zoom event; register at gcc.edu/events.

MASS MoCA's Assets for Artists program has a series of **free financial and business webinars** for Massachusetts artists. "Making a

Plan in a Time of Uncertainty" with Laura Baring-Gould is a two-part webinar to help artists and others develop building blocks for strategically planning their creative career. Learn how to maximize opportunity and stability in the midst of crisis. The two-hour workshop is held on two Thursdays, March 11 and 18, at 2 p.m. Details can be found at assetsforartists.org.

COVID-19 housing and eviction prevention assistance is available through Western Mass Community Legal Aid. Go to communitylegal.org or call and leave a message at (855) 252-5342. The federal moratorium to prevent evictions has been extended through March 31 for qualified tenants who submit a written declaration to their landlord.

For assistance in Franklin County, you may also call Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority at (413) 863-9781 or visit ferhra.org.

The **Center for Self-Reliance** in Greenfield has moved to its new space at 156 Main Street. The Center is open every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Wednesdays from 4 to 7 p.m.

There is a food pantry where you may choose from a variety of grocery, dairy, produce, and frozen protein options. Masks are required. Prepared bags of groceries will be available for curbside pickup in the back entrance via the Wells Street parking lot. You may order online.

In addition, the Center offers delivery service for Greenfield, Montague, Shelburne and Buckland residents. Diapers and formula are available onsite for families with young ones. Call the team at (413) 773-5029 to learn about their services and how to participate.

A **workshop about building healthy relationships**, de-escalating conflicts, and developing leadership skills aimed at young people

who identify as boys and young men ages 14 to 21 in the Pioneer Valley and surrounding area is starting on Friday, March 12. The group is sponsored by the Communities That Care Coalition.

Participants will earn \$200 for attending the ten workshops in this series, meeting on Fridays at 3:30 p.m. The application deadline is March 3, and participants are limited to 15. For questions or a PDF of the application form, please text or call Monica Moran (413) 230-6938. Facilitated by James Arana.

Fill your heart and soul during an evening marrying romance and comedy with the **Pioneer Valley Symphony** and some favorite Valley artists, from Happier Valley Comedy, Enchanted Circle Theater, and the Straw Dog Writers' Guild. Explore heartache and romance through singalongs, improv, spoken word, and live poetry readings at the "Fools In Love" online event on Saturday, March 6 at 7 p.m.

The program also features the world premiere of "But Not for Me," a PVS Virtual Choir Project. "Join us as we celebrate and poke fun at love – the one thing that can make fools of us all!" reads the Symphony's announcement. Get more information at pvsoc.org/event-details/fools-in-love

Big Top Quilts in Easthampton offers a self-paced online class featuring **meditation and fabric collage**. Using simple guided imagery exercises and playful fabric or paper collage, participants will work to create individual expressions of their uniquely created happy places. Craft kits containing fabric scraps and fusible web will be provided for the first 20 registrants. Registration is open until April 14, and it is free to all. See bigtopquilts.com, or contact Audrey Hyvonen at (413) 230-0771.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

In Memory: Lawrence Ferlinghetti (3/24/1919 - 2/22/2021)

By CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUÇANNO

"Contrary to popular belief, I won't live forever." Those were the last words Lawrence Ferlinghetti said to me when we talked on his 100th birthday. I told him he would because he would always live in our hearts, and in the world of literature. He seemed OK knowing that.

All of Lawrence's adult life was devoted to literature and the arts and social justice and making beautiful things happen. He was an ardent activist; he was a phenomenal publisher and bookseller and editor. He was the rarest of poets in that his books sold in the millions.

He once told me that he never expected to make a dime off his writing. "It just happened. I've never been quite sure why."

He was unfailingly generous, not just to me but to thousands. He always had time to listen and advise. If I left a message on his phone it would not be long before he returned the call. Postcards and letters arrived regularly in the post: 72 of them are now deposited in my papers at the University of California.

I first met him in 1970. I was then a senior at UCSB and my teacher Kenneth Rexroth was being forced into retirement because of his age. Since at that time we protested everything, we decided to protest Kenneth's termination. But we did it in a unique way: we invited poets to read in honor of Kenneth and to state that poetry mattered, that Kenneth mattered, that his students mattered, and that he was a gift to the University.

I wrote Lawrence. Within a few days I heard



Lawrence Ferlinghetti in 2012.
(Creative Commons photo by Christopher Michel.)

back. "Yes," he wrote. "I'll come and I'll bring a few pals." A week later I heard from Allen Ginsberg who said he was coming too. So were Gary Snyder and Diane DiPrima.

I think we were all a little surprised. Kenneth wasn't. They all owed him. And poets don't often forget.

We invited the president and the dean to the reading, and the dean came. There was an overflow crowd; the reading was stupendous and raucous. After the reading I got to talk a little with

Lawrence and with Allen. They said they were both excited to be there, excited, as Lawrence said, "to make sure poetry goes on."

Amazingly, the university decided to keep Kenneth on as a special lecturer. We won. Kenneth won. But most of all poetry won.

In the early 1980s, Lawrence became my editor when City Lights took my book of Mayan poems. Lawrence sent my manuscript back with notes scrawled in the margins. That was when I realized that he had a nearly infallible ear. He seemed to catch each place the rhythm was off, where a word just didn't seem right. I took all of his suggestions.

I suppose that was truly the start of our friendship, which lasted until he died. He edited two of my other books, introduced me at a couple of readings at City Lights. He helped me organize a reading on behalf of Shakespeare and Company in Paris after a fire had scorched part of the famous shop.

Even after I had moved on from City Lights, Lawrence remained a friend. We wrote to each other regularly, occasionally spoke on the phone. He tried very hard to get me to write another book for him, but at the time I just couldn't do it. I wish I had. I did write about him in my book *The Continual Pilgrimage*. The City Lights reprint is still in their catalogue.

Lawrence, may you rest in poetry. And we will do our best to make sure poetry goes on.

Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
is the Reporter's poetry editor.
He lives in Turners Falls.

Shop locally!
Support
Montague Reporter
advertisers.

NANCY L. DOLE
BOOKS & EPHEMERA



20 State Street, Bucklandside
Shelburne Falls
413-625-9850
ndole@crocker.com

OPEN AGAIN 3 days a week
Tues, Weds, Thurs – 11 to 6

Formerly Jay K's – bigger & better!

Connecticut River
Liquor & Wine



Open Mon-Thurs 10am-10pm
Fri & Sat 10am - 11pm • Sun Noon-8pm

123 Avenue A • Turners Falls
863-5066

GREENFIELD
FARMERS COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE
Locally Owned Since 1918

269 High Street - Greenfield
(413) 773-9639

Local
Farmer-Owned

Products for the home,
farm, pets, yard & garden

If you
Feed it - Seed it - Weed it
We GOT it!

www.greenfieldfarmerscoop.com

THE LADY KILLIGREW:

Awesome Beer
Amazing Food

Amazing, Awesome
Employees!

440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA
7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least)
(413) 367-9666

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

Dudek Tax Service

10 Masonic Ave
Turners Falls
MA 01376

Frank J. Dudek

413.863.5394 - Office
413.775.3327 - Cell
frankd_74@yahoo.com

Overwhelmed by stuff? Try Franklin County's Most Convenient

IN-TOWN SELF STORAGE
UPPER END OF WELLS STREET, GREENFIELD
413-883-7323

Easy in-town location
Secure 24-hour access

VARIETY OF
SIZES
THE BEST
PRICES

OFFICE AT 50 CHAPMAN STREET, GREENFIELD, MA

Contractors, Flea Marketers, Tradeshow Vendors
and Artists encouraged to inquire

Brian R. San Soucie Locksmith - CRL

certified - bonded - insured

863-2471
28 Montague St
Turners Falls, MA

Trusted for over 25 years, installing all types of
locks & entry devices for business & homes



- Dead BOLTS
- Household Lock Sets
- Master Keys & Re-keys
- Safe Combinations Changed

RECYCLE

PAPER
Week of March 1
in Montague

more info? call: 863-2054

WE HEAT
FRANKLIN
COUNTY

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



(413) 773-3622

spelling
grammar
punctuationTroubleMandersonCopyEditing
@gmail.comCopyediting
Proofreading
Document Review

ESL and academics welcome

(413) 668-6997



"It's just a stone's throw from reality."
Groceries - Videos - Home Baked Goods
Beer - Wine - Liquor
MON - SAT 7-9, SUNDAY 8-8
978-544-8646
Lockes Village Rd.
1/2 mile south of Wendell Center

EFFORT from page A1

interview. "I think it's time the community does know how *Gazette* employees feel about the direction of the paper."

The *Gazette* lost about half of its staff in successive rounds of layoffs last year, including two-thirds of the union's membership, and shut down its printing press.

The newspaper's five remaining reporters cover all of Hampshire County, Holyoke, and some southern towns of Franklin County, a region of over 200,000 people. Parent company Newspapers of New England (NNE) has outsourced advertising, design, printing, and distribution work to the Gannett Company, the largest newspaper distributor in the country.

Union members say they fear the trend could foreshadow a corporate buyout similar to national trends, but management has said there are no plans currently to sell the paper. The *Gazette's* Conz Street headquarters is currently listed for sale at \$4.2 million.

"We cannot continue to go on this way at the *Gazette*," said union chair Bera Dunau. "We are worried about Newspapers of New England selling the paper to a larger corporation or hedge fund, which would further cut local coverage."

Though the company owns the *Gazette*, *Greenfield Recorder*, *Valley Advocate*, *Amherst Bulletin*, and the *Athol Daily News*, in addition to three New Hampshire-based publications, the *Gazette* is currently the only one with a union.

The NewsGuild, affiliated with the Communications Workers of America, represents all non-managerial workers at the paper, and has been negotiating a contract for the last 18 months demanding scheduled cost-of-living increases, protections against further outsourcing, and an agreement not to sell the paper. NNE is represented in the negotiations by Seyfarth Shaw, a law firm with a long history of fighting organized labor.

Last month NNE fired *Gazette* editor-in-chief Brooke Hauser and replaced her with *Greenfield Recorder* editor Joan Livingston, a newly dubbed "editor-in-chief of the Pioneer Valley." A new publisher, Shawn Palmer, replaced Michael Moses, who left after less than two years on the job.

Staying Alive

Around 160 people listened to Wednesday's Zoom call, "Saving Our Local News," which was also livestreamed to Facebook. President and CEO Aaron Julien chose not to participate, and did not acknowledge an invitation to send a representative of the company, according to organizers.

During the discussion Dunau announced the union's intent to form a community working group in the coming weeks to "begin the process of envisioning a better future for the *Gazette*." Together with members of the public, the NewsGuild plans to discuss whether other business models, such as becoming a non-profit or a cooperatively owned business, could save the newspaper.

"Unfortunately, last year was part of a larger trend," said Dunau. "Some 200 US counties now have no local paper, and experts are warning of an extinction-level event for many local newspapers amid the COVID-19 pandemic."

McGovern and Sabadosa, Northampton's elected officials at the federal and state level, both emphasized that community reporting is essential to a healthy democracy. They mentioned legislation like the Local Journalism Sustainability Act pending in Congress, and a com-



From top left: *Daily Hampshire Gazette* reporter Dusty Christensen, union chair Bera Dunau, US Rep. Jim McGovern, journalists Ben Brody and Shaheen Pasha, labor activist Alicia Fleming, and Massachusetts Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa spoke on Wednesday's panel about saving local journalism.

mission recently mandated by Massachusetts to study the state of "journalism in underserved communities in the commonwealth."

"The bottom line," McGovern said, "is that the decline in objective and fact-based journalism has created an environment where information can be weaponized and conspiracy theories can radicalize people into believing things that happened, didn't even happen."

The Congressman shared an anecdote about meeting a man who argued with him that the January 6 insurrection inside the Capitol had been entirely staged. "We need to constantly be correcting falsehoods, and certainly conspiracy theories," McGovern said.

Sabadosa expressed her support for the union's efforts. "I'd like to see a *Gazette* owned by its workers," she said. "If any place in the state of Massachusetts can do it, it will be Northampton."

Keeping It Local

Two journalists who lead nonprofit newsrooms discussed various ways they find support for their work, and the importance of taking time to build relationships within the community a reporter covers.

"With these massive job cuts and layoffs, one person is doing the jobs of five people," said Shaheen Pasha, co-founder of the Prison Journalism Project at Penn State. "Your reporting is maybe an email, a phone call – that is not how you build relationships."

"While local news is facing unprecedented cutbacks and layoffs, local photography has had it an order of magnitude worse," Ben Brody, director of photography for GroundTruth's Report For America program, told the panel. "The truth now is that local photojournalism has to resell its value to the newsroom."

"Photographers need time and agency to go hang out in communities, to create community-driven works," Brody added. "A stronger *Gazette* would double down on hyperlocal coverage, in specific coverage gaps."

Alicia Fleming, co-executive director of Massachusetts Jobs with Justice, said that as local news coverage dwindles, the perspectives of marginalized communities are represented less in local media, allowing established power structures to shape the public narrative. She pointed

out that the *Gazette's* only reporter of color was among the 13 staff members laid off last March.

"Local news coverage is an integral part of our struggle for equity in our communities," Fleming said. "We don't hear the voices of marginalized people, we don't hear about the multitude of victims of police brutality in our communities."

Pasha said her idea for the Prison Journalism Project came from teaching a journalism course to inmates at the Hampshire County Jail with her UMass students. Her vision of covering the incarcerated community of about 2.3 million people in the United States required more resources, which she found through Penn State and the Institute for Nonprofit News.

She emphasized that different alternative funding models – public, cooperative, philanthropic, and nonprofit – pose different challenges for newsroom autonomy. "These are real fears that come through when you talk about alternative models and alternative funding," Pasha said.

Finding The Time

The Pioneer Valley NewsGuild is not alone in seeking new ways to sustain local journalism. The Baltimore Sun announced this month that it will be purchased by a philanthropist and turned into a nonprofit, saving it from Alden Global Capital's recent takeover of Tribune Publishing.

In New England, digital outlets like VTDigger and DigBoston are experimenting with independent nonprofit journalism, and across the country, the blockchain-backed Colorado Sun and the nonprofit Texas Tribune are both producing in-depth investigative journalism.

"The wolves are at the door. They always have been. That's not just for our paper – that's for every paper nationwide," Christensen said. "At the end of the day, decisions about the future of the newspaper will be made by Newspapers of New England."

To better engage with the community and represent marginalized voices on a local level, Sabadosa emphasized the need for a reciprocal relationship between the newspaper and its readers.

"If you see things happening in the community that aren't being covered, you do need to write to them," Sabadosa said. "It's not because a local journalist doesn't want to cover them – it's that they don't have the time to."



GMRSD from page A1

commitments in her decision not to seek a second term. "I'm ready to bow out," she said. "It's been a ride – I've learned a lot. I have faith in the school committee group and the administration to continue to manage things well."

Valeria "Timmie" Smith of Gill said that she has not decided whether to seek another term.

Nomination papers for candidates are due on March 29. Voters from both towns vote for candidates from both towns in the spring election.

Anderson said she would "highly encourage" interested community members to run. "They should educate themselves as to what the position entails," she added, "what the school committee has control over

and what we don't – what our purview is – and then jump in if they are so inclined."

Lively commented that it has been "a hard and exhausting year in general." "Maybe 2020 has taught us to slow down a little," she said. "I'm looking forward to being slightly less busy, and having more evenings with my family."

Tuesday evening's school committee meeting was an easy one for the members who Zoomed in, over and done in just over an hour. Students returned for hybrid learning on Monday, and superintendent Bryan Beck reported that he was "happy to have our kids and staff back in the buildings."

The district is still trying to fill a number of positions, including facili-

ties staff, a nurse's aide, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers.

Business manager Joanne Blier reported that the FY'23 budget gap has been closed by rolling over about \$196,000 in emergency grant money and pulling \$150,000 each from the excess and deficiency fund and transportation revolving account.

Montague member Cassie Damkoehler praised Blier for balancing the budget without eliminating any planned positions. "Having the people in place to support the kids is the most important thing," she said.

The budget will go before the towns' finance committees next week. Montague's assessment is expected to rise by about 2%, and Gill's to fall about 4%.

The committee voted not to set

a local cap on the number of district students who may participate in Commonwealth Virtual Schools. Gill-Montague's ratio crept over 1% this year – 9 out of 852 children – but the board decided, in the words of chair Jane Oakes, that a cap "wouldn't be encouraging parents to do what they feel they need to do in this unusual year."

Beck reported on staff plans to evaluate students for both social and emotional well-being and academic learning loss. "All of our students could be struggling with something," he said. A number of schemes to offer extra learning time are under consideration, including Saturday classes and collaboration with local summer camp programs.



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

Renaissance Excavating, Inc.

COMPLETE
SITE WORK

Septic & Drainage Systems | Sand, Gravel & Loam
Main Road, Gill
Douglas Edson 413.863.4462
renexc@gmail.com cell 413.834.2201

INFO@RENBUILD.NET
413-863-8316

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



SINCE 1970.
LICENSED, INSURED
INTERIOR/EXTERIOR PAINTING, ALL PHASES
POWER WASHING

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

TECH from page A1

job of that. Our academics and shops are separated physically in the building, which lends itself naturally to maintaining a 50% population. We have many protocols in place to maintain a clean space. All the students have been taking the protocols seriously.

It has been great to have students in the building. In some ways it has been better, like how when we are in a shop, the students are there for the whole day and there are no distractions or interruptions. They come in focused and ready to work. Students are more engaged than ever.

MG: I am very proud to be an employee at Franklin County Technical School. Our administration has done an excellent job making sure that students and staff are safe, while at the same time getting our doors open for students this past fall.

Certainly, I would like the school to be able to fully open its doors; I would also like to have all of my extended family over for a meal, but these are things that we will need to wait a little longer to do.

I believe that FCTS has done an outstanding job balancing the needs of our students and the needs of the at-risk population within our community. I am confident that the school’s administration will continue to make decisions in the best interest of our community at large, and I am very thankful for their leadership skills.

AN: Overall I think we are doing a very good job handling the virus here at FCTS. Our administration has taken the safety of our staff and students very seriously. They have put many protocols into place to allow us to run a successful hybrid model. We have plenty of PPE, one-way hallways, desk spacing, and air purifiers, just to name a few.

I believe that we took a leap of faith to open with a hybrid model in the fall but all of the time spent planning really paid off.

MR: *Have you found that teaching online can be easier than teaching in person at times? If yes, in what ways was it easier?*

MO: I’ve been trying to stay positive about online teaching, so I started to write down the pros and cons. At first, I did not have any pros. However, I do now, one of them being I have become technically savvy and I have learned to become proficient with Google applications, especially Classroom. And sometimes my commute is much easier.

JP: I teach the related content remotely, so when [students] come in they already have the background knowledge of what they are doing.

MG: Sometimes you need to shake the dust off of things – public education is no exception. In some ways, the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has made people question things like seat time.

For example, our school day, as many are, is directed by bells. At home, students are free from this Pavlovian stimulus, and are free to direct themselves. We expect students to learn how to manage their own time, and for the first time in my career, we are actually giving them the freedom to practice that.

Online learning has allowed us to tear the veil on our assumptions of how public schools must work, and sometimes that makes teaching easier, sometimes it makes it harder. At the end of the day, what matters most is that the energy that a teacher expends – both mental and physical – is rewarded by a transformation amongst the student body and the local community.

I don’t always feel like I am personally hitting the proverbial nail on the head, but FCTS as a whole certainly is!

AN: I don’t think “easier” is the word I would use to describe remote teaching! It is so different from an in-person model.

I have found that it is a nice way to work one-on-one with students who don’t feel comfortable asking questions in class. I have also found that I can take my time and break topics into shorter chunks that students can digest.

One positive that has come from my remote teaching is the new ways in which I can engage students and deliver the curriculum. I feel that I will use a lot of the technology in future years.

MR: *Was there anything that you were looking forward to doing with your students that you, unfortunately, can’t do because of different restrictions?*

MO: Yes! So many things, so until further notice, just to name a few, to have the Apprentice Restaurant open to the public again. Field trips: two of the places I want to have the students experience are a coffee roaster and the Seeds of Solidarity Farm in Orange, and I have put off contacting the proprietors until we are allowed to resume these activities.

MG: I teach physics, and I try my best to integrate the content of my course with tangible projects and the

local community. I have had to truncate certain projects and use online simulations/resources to replace other projects.

While I am confident that I am teaching the curriculum of my course, I fear that I am not doing as good of a job with the connections of my course. The porosity that normally exists between FCTS and the local community is nothing short of radical when compared to many other educational institutions. For this year, our bubble seems much smaller than normal.

I have to keep reminding myself of the words of my 107-year-old great aunt, “This too shall pass.” I guess remembering the 1918 pandemic gives you that sort of perspective!

AN: I love when students are able to collaborate in a classroom, and this year that can’t happen. I also pride myself on my relationships with students. I like to get to know each student on a personal level but it has been a challenge this year with the hybrid schedule.

Being a technical school I know how much students appreciate hands-on learning, which has been a challenge this year. Many of the projects I have designed require group work and hands-on activities, so I have had to scrap those this year.

MR: *Because of the virus, what has changed for you compared to normal years, and what has stayed fairly close to the same?*

MO: Last year was my first year at FCTS and I became full time in February and then COVID-19 happened, so it’s been a rollercoaster for the last year or so. But it’s all good because the support and team effort from everyone at FCTS has been amazing. I do not have much to compare to at this time, it’s kind of become the norm.

JP: Most of our seniors are out on co-op, which is a mixed blessing. In one regard they are getting valuable experience in their field, but on the other, they are missing out on some of the valuable practice time welding.

Freshmen exploratory has been tough, especially for the students. Typically we have the junior students teach freshmen, but now it mostly falls on myself and Mr. Burrows. Also, exploratory has taken longer to complete mostly due to it being disjointed, being alternating between remote and in-person.

I have been really impressed by what the freshmen can accomplish in such a short time.

MG: High schoolers are high schoolers, pandemic or not. They are vibrant, enthusiastic, and at an incredibly exciting point in their lives.

School looks different right now, but our priorities haven’t changed: to provide high quality academic and vocational education that will propel students into full and successful lives.

AN: My daily work routine has stayed pretty much the same. I still enjoy coming into work and conversing with colleagues when I can.

One thing that has changed is the way in which meetings are run. It is so different to sit on a Zoom call. This time last year I never would have thought that would happen! I also never thought I would be teaching classes from my house, but I have done that too!

The biggest thing that has stayed the same for me is my love and passion for teaching. As hard as this year has been I still feel that joy when a student finally grasps a concept or it all “just clicks.” I love those moments.

MR: *Do you have anything else related to the way our school is handling the virus that you would like to add?*

MO: I love the fact that we have stayed open for most of the semester. Yes, we’ve had to take some precautions due to a few positive cases. However, our administration, our nurses, and our maintenance team curtailed it so quickly by following proper protocol which allows us to get back into the building as soon as it’s safe.

AN: I am so proud of how our students have responded to our hybrid model. They have all adjusted to the protocols in place, and it has been as smooth as it could have been.

I am so grateful that I can work in a district like ours. The way we have handled everything has made me so proud to be a teacher at Franklin Tech.

Overall, I think the community at Franklin Tech has done an amazing job finding a way to make their hybrid model work the best way they could so far for students and staff, although I’m sure that updates will be made to continue keeping everyone safe.

The optimism coming from both students and staff in the building is amazing to see, and has really helped everyone make the most of the 2020-2021 school year.

Charlotte Valle is a ninth grade student at Franklin County Technical School.



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Electric Buses; Optical Scanners; Voice Over Internet Protocol...

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard’s February 17 meeting went quickly and ended in near record time, with several agenda items only requiring board members to be aware of information.

With little discussion the board set Saturday, June 12 as a tentative date for the annual town meeting. That day is late enough in spring to give the finance committee as much time as possible to develop a budget for FY’22, and with luck, warm enough for an outside distanced gathering with still some freedom to delay for inclement weather.

The board plans to set the date more firmly at their next meeting, after checking when town clerk Anna Wetherby and moderator Katie Nolan can attend.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said it is time to solicit budget requests from town departments. Selectboard member Gillian Budine brought up a capital improvement plan and projects that selectboard members know of. Grants may be available. The town hall needs painting, as does the bottom foot or so of the office building where water coming off the roof has splashed onto the wall. The copy room ceiling needs paint. Glycol in the office and library heating systems is due for replacement.

It is also time to solicit contributions for the March town newsletter. Selectboard member and energy committee member Laurie DiDonato suggested contacting highway commission chair Phil Delorey to write about the coming mud season, especially if he expects the mud to be deep or long-lasting this year.

Selectboard chair Dan Keller said there should be an update soon on policing in town. Budine said she has heard favorable reports of good encounters with Leverett officers even from drivers who were stopped. Leverett chief Scott Minckler said they are not speed traps, but areas for safe driver training.

The meeting began with DiDonato bringing up the idea of trying to replace the diesel buses that serve Swift River School with electric buses for the next contract. Three years remain on the present contract, which allows time for talk,

consideration, and a grant process.

DiDonato said grant money is still left from the fines that Volkswagen paid for designing and installing an emission test cheat for their diesel cars.

DiDonato is now a member of the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) environmental policy committee. She said it was not a big deal, and that she is there as a citizen, not as a town official.

Working from old town reports, selectboard clerk Joy Gorzokoski compiled the town bylaws into almost 100 pages of written material: all in one place, but not in an easy to use, easy to search form. Those 100 pages could be copied into Word, and once in that format they can be organized and cross referenced into a functioning document.

Wendell’s computer reference, Robert Heller, said there are machines that can optically scan a written document and translate it into a text document. Keller said he was willing to look for such a machine.

DiDonato asked whether there is a plan for adding new bylaws as they are passed.

In a telephone call with Aldrich, a citizen offered to type up the bylaws. In that form they can be organized into whatever order seems best, cross-referenced, and organized differently if another system works better. New bylaws can then be inserted where appropriate as they are passed.

A quarterly update from the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority shows Wendell and Shutesbury have 18 home improvement projects in progress. Some projects were less expensive than was allotted for them, so a 19th project has been allowed. No money has yet been returned to the housing authority by people moving from homes which they received a community development block grant (CDBG) to repair.

Because the town office building now has internet service through the town’s fiber-optic network, there is no need for Crocker Communications to provide as much bandwidth as they have been providing for the building. Crocker can provide no more bandwidth than is needed for VOIP, and reduce Wendell’s monthly bill from \$670 to about to \$70.

Franklin County Bar Association Announces Community Fund Scholarships

GREENFIELD – The Franklin County Bar Association Community Fund is proud to announce that it will be awarding Thomas W. Merrigan Memorial Scholarships, in the amount of \$1,000, to each of two deserving high school students in Franklin County.

To qualify for the scholarship award an applicant must be a Franklin County resident, a senior in high school, and in pursuit of post-secondary education of any kind. The application has been sent to all area schools and is available on the FCBA website, www.franklincountybar.org or by emailing fcbar@franklincountybar.org. The deadline for submission is April 2, 2021.

The Scholarship Committee will be considering academic achievement and quality of an essay. The essay prompt is reflective of the American Bar Association Law Day 2020 theme: *Advancing the Rule of Law Now*.

The scholarships honor Thomas W. Merrigan who was a zealous legal advocate, writer, and believer in the importance of education.

For more information, contact Franklin County Bar Association executive director Christine Baronas at fcbar@franklincountybar.org or (413) 773-9839/ (Please note: Assistant executive director Jennifer Lively may view and respond to emails sent to Christine.)

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

**FEDERAL STREET BOOKS**

8 Federal Street, Greenfield
federalstreetbooks.com

Lic #36550-EL 1-413-345-1687

ELECTRICIAN
CHRIS M. STRAKOSE

RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL
ALL ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS AND REPAIRS
EMERGENCY SERVICE

9 SWAMP ROAD
MONTAGUE, MA 01351
EMAIL: CSTRAKOSE.ELEC@GMAIL.COM

FULLY INSURED FREE CONSULTATION

**OrigamiUSA**

Origami is for anyone, anywhere, anytime!

Join us at: **OrigamiUSA.org**
Email: **admin@origamiusa.org**
Tel: **212.769.5635**

- Find a local community origami group
- Fold from diagrams in our publications
- Shop for origami paper and books
- And much more!

CANINE from page A1

Expecting a puppy to just know what is expected of it puts the onus of behavioral responsibility on the pup, and it needs to be on the human. Elise emphasizes that from four to sixteen weeks of age is the critical window for puppies to be socialized.

Older dogs may have behavioral issues due to past experiences or their individual personality, or even a behavior common to a specific breed. These dogs are more suited to individual evaluation and training sessions where problems such as aggression, reactivity to situations or people (such as the scary UPS truck), barking, fear, and “counter surfing” can be addressed.

A clicker, food rewards, a whistle, or verbal cues are used for “marking the trigger” and “shaping behavior,” techniques that Elise says “make new neural pathways and create muscle memory” that help the dog to learn.

Elise talked about some of her “students,” and mentioned one client who lived in a busy town where



Obi, owned by Noah Rockland, on the skateboard.

walking their dog was a nightmare on the busy streets. Using these methods, the owners were able to condition a different response to those things that triggered the unwanted behavior, and so there were much happier walks for both the dog and its people!

If you visit the Canine Head Start website, you can see descriptions of the different classes offered. Be

aware that some classes are not offered currently due to COVID constraints.

There are three levels of Puppy Head Start for your pup: Beginner Basics, for older dogs or pups with no previous training; three levels of Companion Dog; Canine Good Citizen; and a few specialty classes, including Agility. Individual sessions are held at Elise’s training facility. The training center is 1,600 square feet, climate controlled, and there are about 55 acres behind the building for walks with your pooch.

At this point, Elise says she has worked with “hundreds and hundreds” of people and their dogs. Some folks take one class and are satisfied, while others continue and move onto more advanced or specialized classes.

COVID-19 has changed some of the training at Canine Head Start. There is a new HEPA filter system in place, plus hand sanitizing stations, and the mandatory use of masks. There is 15-foot spacing for the size-limited classes, and no



The Canine Head Start facility in Montague.

more than two people are allowed per dog. All individual sessions are at the center now, and some specific classes are not being held.

There are, however, lots of puppy classes, due to so many folks getting puppies.

The puppy boom may create some issues when things get back to normal someday. When people return to jobs and students go back to school, what happens to the new dog when everyone is gone for hours? Elise stresses that “separation anxiety” may set in, and it is best to teach the dogs or puppies how to be alone for periods of time.

She also suggests that while we are isolated, dogs still need socialization. She recommends “putting the dog on a six- to ten-foot leash and going for a walk where the dog has a chance to meet people, by first sitting, and then being allowed to greet the person, and then coming back to you.” She also suggests “if someone you know is COVID-cautious – follows the protocols! – ask if you can bring the puppy to their home for five to ten minutes.” You would of course keep the appropriate distance and

both be masked.

You may want to do some at home training yourself with your new or old dog. Elise stressed to me that “you do no harm if you are using positive training – even if you do it badly – but punishment training can do a lot of damage.” So get those clickers or treats ready for class.

The Canine Head Start website has a reading list that ranges from the more scientific and theoretical to the practical and applied training methods. Elise recommends the Fenzi Dog Sport Academy array of online webinars for great training ideas, and Susan Garret’s online agility training.

There is also a “Canine Head Start” Facebook page, with videos.

If you are interested in classes or individual lessons at Canine Head Start, go online to Canine-HeadStart.com or call (413) 367-0094. Best of luck with your furry friend adventure! If you are curious about the Briard dog breed, McMahon has a separate website devoted to her Briard dogs at tintagelbriards.com.



Dogs demonstrate a “Down Stay” command at the center.

AT LARGE from page A1

story for another time, but it’s going to line investors’ pockets for 20 years.

At the end of Thursday’s four-hour marathon session, one tired consultant revealed to planning board member Joe Graveline that the subsidies, tax credits, call them what you will, would return 20 cents a kilowatt hour opposed to the wholesale rate of 3.5 cents. It was an incredible admission.

Opponents are worried a yes vote would establish precedent and where once there were farm vistas there would now be acres of solar panels.

BlueWave submitted a letter of intentions on January 11, and a check for \$10,000 for an independent consultant – Beth Greenblatt of Integrated Management Solutions. She sat amidst a backdrop of blue sky and solar panels and occasionally intervened, but her presence was insignificant. Where do I get a job like that?

Besides Robertson-DuBois and Greenblatt, others present on behalf of BlueWave Solar were project development director Jackie Firsty, project engineer Richard Riccio III, and agricultural consultant Iain Ward (who grows cranberries for Ocean Spray). The guy with the biggest title was Mike Zimmer, the managing director of solar development at BlueWave.

Four Star Farm owners Gene and Bonnie L’Etoile both participated, as did Nathan L’Etoile.

Four of the five planning board members were present; Tammy Pelletier had a “horse emergency”, said planning board vice-chair Meg Riordan. Board chair Stephen Seredynski, Homer Stavely, and Graveline were also present.

Riccio gave three presentations, showing maps of each array, their space consumed by rows of solar panels. After

members of the board asked questions, Seredynski opened it to the public.

Electrical inspector Tom McDonald warned about labor rules. “One electrician, one helper,” said McDonald. “We’re chasing unlicensed electrical workers off these sites all over the place.”

Rich Holschuh of the Vermont State Division for Historic Preservation said the Abenaki and other Native Americans lay claim to the riverland and that their ancestral footprint will never leave. “All the land is extremely sensitive,” he said.

Pine Meadow Road resident Chris Kalinowski got in his licks. “This solar array isn’t agricultural, so they’re throwing sheep under it to say it is,” he said. “Wild animals, it’s their land too. Northfield is losing its small town feel, one project at a time.”

The showstopper was Bee Jacque, who chairs the Northfield Historical Commission. “If there’s an assumption that nothing exists in this area, then that’s a faulty assumption,” said Jacque, who went all-Joni Mitchell: “Our history hasn’t been paved over like it has in Springfield or Northampton. I don’t even think of Greenfield as an historic area anymore because so much has been done without thought.”

She pointed out the implications of disturbing land below the plow line. The project involves pile-driving 26,000 steel poles deep into the ground, along with miles of trenches two-and-a-half feet deep to bury electric conduits.

“Bye bye artifacts,” an observer texted.

“This area has been used for farming for thousands of years,” said Jacque. “You’re digging up the history of our cultural ancestors.”

Another observer texted: “Bee threw them a helluva monkey wrench. They didn’t expect this hayseed town to know

about cultural history.”

The farming plan is far-fetched. Robertson-DuBois presented an infrastructure consisting of no more than an exterior fence, three hoop houses, and two wells. There was no mention of feed storage, trucks, stock pens, a lambing shed, sheep shearing, tail docking, castrating, or weaning.

Nathan L’Etoile said the land had been tilled for 200 years and needed a break. “We could probably squeeze another 100 years out of it,” he added.

Then he gave his John Boy talk about how awful the previous owners’ land ethic had been, of seeing 1,000 cows around an open sewer that drained into the Connecticut River. It’s as if he’s saying, Look at all we’ve done!

And it is a handsome farm, complete with a brewery for parched cyclists riding the bikeway. They’ll be able to stop, order a beer, take it outside, and admire the solar fields.

“At what point,” asked Graveline, “do we stop and see how well this experiment works?”

BlueWave needs the planning board to give it a special permit because the agricultural district isn’t zoned industrial. Seredynski wanted it wrapped up in one night. He thought the three presentations could be made, the public would talk, the board would deliberate and they’d vote, but after four hours he realized the tractor was stuck in the mud.

He moved to adjourn until the board’s next regularly scheduled date on March 18, giving both sides a chance to regroup.

Chip Ainsworth writes commentary and news for the Montague Reporter, and sports for the Greenfield Recorder. He lives in Northfield.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Learn How To Perpetrate Scams – Or To Avoid Them

FRANKLIN COUNTY – The Northwestern District Attorney’s Office Consumer Protection Unit is sponsoring two Zoom events next Monday and Wednesday to educate consumers about scams, including the Number 1 scam reported to the Federal Trade Commission in 2020, the Imposter Scam.

Posing as anyone from a Social Security Administration official to a local sheriff’s representative or your grandchild, scammers stole \$1.2 billion from a half million consumers in 2020, with a median loss of \$850.

Scammers reached their victims most often by telephone or text message.

“Scammers prey on the young and old,” said Northwestern district attorney David E. Sullivan. “Scammers are professional and smooth. Don’t give any personal information over the phone. It’s usually a scam to help you part with your hard-earned savings.”

The interactive events, hosted by consumer specialists from the NWDA and the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office, are timed to coincide with National Consumer Protection Week, March 1 to 7.

Monday, March 1 at 10 a.m. is the **Senior Savvy Showdown**, a Jeopardy-style question and answer game. Players test their knowledge of scams, money matters, elder law, and senior safety. Wednesday, March 3 at 10 a.m., is the **Scam Alert & Avoiding Financial Exploitation** event. Learn the tricks criminals use to steal your money and your personal information.

Consumers should RSVP to Anita Wilson at NWDA: CPU@state.ma.us or call (413) 437-5817.

Online shopping and negative reviews was the second most reported fraud category of 2020, according to the FTC with more than 350,000 consumers reporting median losses of about \$100, totaling \$245 million.

“With the pandemic came an increase in online shopping, and then a wave of reports about sellers failing to deliver on promises – or just failing to deliver, period,” the FTC says.

The NWDA’s Consumer Protection Unit is one of 18 local consumer programs throughout the Commonwealth working in cooperation with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office since 1973.

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

HUGE WASHERS!
HOT DRYERS!
Open 365 Days
6 A.M. - 10 P.M.

SUZEE'S THIRD STREET LAUNDRY
TURNERS FALLS
SUZEE'S THIRD ST. LAUNDRY
(413) 863-1376

413-256-6217
fine instruments
bought and sold
repaired and restored
Fretted Instrument Workshop
49 So. Pleasant St., Amherst, Mass. 01002

Pipione's SPORT SHOP
• Fishing supplies; Live bait
• Fishing & Hunting Licenses
• Paintball & CO₂ Refills
• Guns & Ammo
Open 7 am 7 days a week
101 Ave A, Turners 414.863.4246

MONTAGUE from page A1

with “underlying conditions” like heart disease or diabetes. Residents and staff of public and senior housing are also eligible.

This added over a million residents statewide to the eligibility list without much lead time for local agencies administering the vaccine. The governor’s unexpected announcement caused predictable stress in the existing system, and numerous question marks about future policy.

Wasiuk told the selectboard that he believed the website his agency uses to book many local appointments – a vaccination platform called PrepMod used widely nationwide – had crashed.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst, which has been vaccinating eligible residents from the region at its student center, advertised that it would post 500 appointments last Friday evening at 6 p.m. By 6:08, when this reporter finally registered, the center’s website was no longer taking appointments.

As of Tuesday the website of the John Zon Center in Greenfield, accessed through the state public health website, has been accessible to register for a waiting list, according to Gill-Montague Council on Aging director Roberta Potter.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has announced that the smaller regional centers they are coordinating will be operating as “private sites” for the time being after their bookings were automatically filled by an online “bot” the previous week. These sites are in Buckland, Bernardston, and South Deerfield, with another potentially opening in Montague the week of March 8.

Statewide Rollout

Over the past few months primary care physicians, particularly those linked to local hospitals, have been helping their patients obtain appointments and even, as in the case of the Valley Medical Group, administering vaccines. The role of primaries varies a great deal. Those attached to Cooley Dickinson Hospital, for example, reduced support for patients after the state abruptly ended distribution to the facility on February 11.

On Wednesday the *Boston Globe* reported that the state has reached an agreement with hospitals to resume vaccine distributions so primary care physicians may soon return to their role in assisting patients.

Some local stakeholders have expressed concern that the state may be moving toward requiring all residents in the region to drive to the larger state-run sites, such as the one in Eastfield Mall in Springfield, to receive vaccines. At his press conference yesterday, governor Charlie Baker stressed the role of the larger sites as the most efficient way to get “shots in arms” of the state’s residents.

As he has in the past, Baker blamed the frustrations and anxieties associated with the rollout on the lack of vaccines, and the lack of information on their availability, from the federal government.

On the other hand, the governor praised the smaller “regional centers,” specifically mentioning Franklin and Berkshire counties as models.

As of press time, the John Zon Center site can again be accessed for appointments, for the first time in over a week. The FRCOG-run

sites can be accessed through an email link from local public health departments, although appointments tend to fill up quickly. New openings should be posted on a weekly basis.

The main topic of the governor’s Wednesday press conference was the state’s effort to mandate “in-person” learning for nearly all elementary school students beginning in April. In making the announcement, Baker stressed a variety of protocols to promote safety for students and teachers, including social distancing, mask wearing, and better ventilation.

However, he rejected the calls from unions and others to immediately make teachers a higher priority on the Phase 2 vaccine list.

Pioneer Property

The bulk of Monday’s long Montague selectboard meeting was taken up reviewing financial projections for the town’s purchase of property owned by Pioneer Aviation, a private company that provides maintenance, storage, fuel, and flight training for airport users.

The airport commission fears that the property may be sold to a private company which would no longer provide those services, which are needed to make the airport viable.

While a purchase and sale agreement for the property has not been signed, the current cost of the purchase – including interest on borrowing and upgrades to the pioneer facility – is estimated to be nearly \$2 million, with approximately 90% of the purchase and upgrade funds coming from the federal government, and 5% from the state.

A special town meeting this Thursday, February 25 will vote on three articles to finance the purchase and increase this fiscal year’s airport budget to accommodate it.

Airport manager Bryan Camden has, at numerous previous meetings, provided projections designed to show that increases in airport revenues would cover both the town’s share of the cost, including interest on borrowing, and the increased airport budget. Both the finance committee and the selectboard have unanimously endorsed the purchase.

On Monday, Camden presented updated projects on the borrowing, in part because the construction of a new hangar had been removed from the town meeting agenda due to the potential for federal reimbursement for that portion of the project in a few years. Camden and town treasurer Eileen Seymour have also more closely evaluated the relative virtues of paying off the bulk of the borrowing in 10 years, rather than 20.

Camden shared new projections comparing debt repayment over 20- and 10-year periods. The bottom line, he suggested, was that paying off nearly all the debt in the first ten years would significantly reduce costs to the airport in the following decade. He then presented the boards with a spreadsheet showing how this option would be integrated into the airport budget.

After a lengthy discussion, during which all members of the finance and selectboard commented individually, both boards again unanimously approved the purchase.

Tightness, Not Disaster

The selectboard briefly reviewed a list presented by Steve

Ellis of the potential staffing needs of town departments. Ellis said the list had been generated using documents from department heads during the FY’22 budget process, which is now underway.

Ellis said that current revenue estimates are not “disastrous” but “tight,” and that the town has asked for level-services budgets from all departments, but also asked department heads for “open and honest communication” about their needs.

Several items on the list – including two new grounds staff at the department of public works, the restoration of a position at the water pollution control facility to full-time, and a position upgrade at the treasurer’s office – were included in proposed FY’23 budgets.

Other needs included increased police staffing to allow for enhanced community policing; increases in the information technology budget; expanded project management capacity; and the need for more staffing at the town clerk’s office due to increased early and mail-in voting.

Ellis said that the current gap between revenue estimates and budget requests is approximately \$225,000, which can probably be addressed during the budget process. “There’s a lot of work to be done,” he said. “And a lot of decisions to be made.”

The selectboard unanimously voted to enhance the position at the treasurer/tax collector’s office and to restore the WPCF position from part- to full-time. Both boards decided to engage in further discussions of the DPW position requests in this year’s budget.

Other Business

Town planner Walter Ramsey gave an update on the capping of the old burn dump on Sandy Lane and the project to construct a solar array at that site.

He requested, and the board approved, a motion to allow the Ever-source electric company access to the site to implement an interconnection with the array.

Ellis reported back on two practice sessions held the previous week for the upcoming remote town meeting, and on the latest plans for the meeting itself. He urged town meeting members who had not attended the practice sessions to look at emailed training materials, and to register early for the meeting.

He also said space may be available at the town hall to participate in the meeting with “tech support professionals.” Non-meeting members must contact the town clerk’s office to attend.

Concerning the General Pierce Bridge reconstruction, Ellis announced that the state Department of Transportation has requested a more detailed proposal from Northern Construction, which is managing the project and has proposed a more extensive project involving the upper part of the bridge. Northern Construction also proposes a total closure of the bridge to speed up the construction timeline.

The board approved a request from an organization called Musica Franklin, which organizes a music program for elementary school students, to use Peskeompskut Park in Turners Falls for events on alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays, including snow dates, from February 2 through June 30.

The board also approved an ex-

tension of the 2019 Community Development Block Grant to June 30, 2021.

The FirstLight power company has announced its annual service outage for September 20 through 25 to empty and inspect the Turners Falls power canal.

The board postponed discussion of an upcoming Franklin Regional Transit Authority meeting, and of a potential meeting with state representatives this spring.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be held on Monday, March 8.



Support the Reporter!



Sizes M, L, and XL remain. Order yours at montaguereporter.org, email info@montaguereporter.org, or call (413) 863-8666.

LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on February 24, 2011: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Public Health Nurse Works
With Reduced Budget

Billie Gammell, Montague’s public health nurse, carries on a long tradition of health care in Montague, and she’s proud of it. In fact, one of the first things she’ll tell you is that this town has had its own public health nurse since 1915, when town meeting first appropriated \$500 for “the express purpose of providing free health care to the residents of the town.”

That care is still available, said Gammell, even though town meeting in 2007 reduced the hours for the public health nurse from 20 hours a week to five hours a week. The position was subsequently cut even further, to its current minimal level. Future proposed cuts could endanger some of the programs Gammell still offers, and cut the state supply of flu vaccine by as much as 50%.

A 50% reduction in state supplied flu vaccine would leave many people unvaccinated, increasing the health risk for individuals and also for the community, since “community immunity” is created through high rates of vaccination.

“I want people to know I’m here. It’s a free service. Nurses can be very powerful in a community, and I’m very proud to be serving the people here,” said Gammell, who grew up in Turners Falls and currently lives in Greenfield.

Food Distribution
Volunteer Sought

For over a decade, parishioner Allan Adie, who lives in Riverside in Gill, has made a commitment to distribute the groceries that get dropped off every week at Our Lady of Peace Church by those attending weekend masses.

Adie divides the items into two batches, and delivers one for the Head Start program, at the Parent Child Development Center on G Street in the Patch, and brings the other to the Montague Catholic Social Ministries on 3rd Street.

Adie is 95 years young. But now, he has to stop this service

commitment. It’s not that he doesn’t want to continue bringing the groceries to people who need them. It’s mostly because he has had a valve installed in his heart recently, and has been advised not to continue with strenuous exertions at this time.

Also it’s rough for his daughter Bev Demars, who has been chauffeuring her dad, and its rough on her car. Sometimes it’s her husband, Emil Demars, or son-in-law Guy Sibley, who helps Adie deliver the goods. So now, for the good of the community, a new volunteer is needed to take over the weekly food distribution for Our Lady of Peace. Not to replace Adie, that would be impossible. But to follow in his footsteps, so to speak.

Herrick Property Future at Issue

The fate of one of the oldest houses in town – the former home of Marion Herrick on Wickett Pond Road – took a good part of the February 17 Wendell selectboard meeting. A number of groups and individuals came to make comments, showing widespread interest in the property, which is now owned by the town.

The property is on the north side of Wickett Pond Road. The house sits close to the road, on a north – south ridge, with wetlands on both sides, one of which includes a tributary of the Millers River.

The area was heavily wooded until the 2006 tornado passed through and pretty much cleared all the trees. Remarkably, the 1780s-era house was spared.

It may be the oldest standing house in town, and although it needs some attention, the roof is sound and its overall condition is good.

The property is surrounded by state land, some of which was also cleared by the tornado. An aerial photograph taken after the tornado and before the cleanup showed the downed trees lying in a swirl, looking like a school of fish circling.

Ward Smith of the conservation commission opened the discussion, saying the conservation commission had not reached a consensus in their discussion about the property, except that their board does not want to see the entire acreage subdivided into individual house lots.



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

Enjoy the Comfort of Insurance Protection

Competitive rates and discounts for all of your insurance needs!

SINCE 1888

A.H. Rist INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

159 Avenue A Turners Falls MA 413.863.4373 ahrist.com

MASSIVE BOOKSHOP

EST. 2020

YOUR LOCAL ANTI-PRIME BOOK SERVICE

VISIT US AT: MASSIVEBOOKSHOP.COM

Ariens Snow Blowers \$549 & up

Backed by 50+ years of service & parts experience!

SIRUM EQUIPMENT COMPANY, INC.

SIRUM

FARM - TURF - INDUSTRIAL

413-367-2481

MONTAGUE, MASSACHUSETTS

Local pick-up & delivery available!

sirumequipment.com

facebook

Rte 63, Montague 413-367-2481

ERVING from page A1

Bembury, selectboard chair Jacob Smith, the finance and capital planning committees, Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. professional traffic operations engineer Lisa Slonus and vice president William Storti, and approximately a dozen citizens participated in the Zoom meeting.

Slonus said that before making a decision about what to do, the town needs to have the letter from MassDOT to find out what the specific issues are. She said the town has three options: a single-lane bridge with alternating traffic controlled by signals; one-way traffic only; or closing the bridge. She called making Church Street one-way southbound “beneficial.”

Slonus told the meeting that closing the Church Street bridge entirely would push traffic to North Street, and that an alternating traffic scenario would require the purchase of three movable sig-

nal lights, at \$40,000 each.

Jacob Smith described safety issues at Church and North streets, especially with tractor-trailers exiting onto Route 2. Town coordinator Bryan Smith commented that, although Erving placed a truck exclusion on North and Church streets, “the truck exclusion continues to be a challenge.”

Linda Downs-Bembury said she lives on Church Street, and hears tractor-trailers on the road early in the morning and late at night. “I think they know they’re not supposed to be driving on Church Street,” she said.

Bryan Smith said the town has reported the truck exclusion to GPS companies, with no changes in the route directions provided.

Jacob Smith wondered if it would be possible to make North and Church streets “local only.” He questioned why the town should pay the estimated \$1 million for bridge repair, “when it doesn’t serve

the citizens of Erving. Why are we replacing the bridge?”

Slonus suggested improving the intersection of North Street and Route 2 to make it safer. Bembury said that would require taking property.

“What about closing Church Street and monitoring traffic on North Street?” asked Jacob Smith. Later, however, he commented that he was “reluctant to go to closure.” His final comment was that the board should “wait to see the letter, then decide.”

Bembury replied, “Close the bridge and move on.”

Bryan Smith said he would start drafting a response to the state, considering the several plans for the bridge. Slonus agreed to work on plans for revised signage at Church and North streets.

Police Chief Search

Current acting police chief Robert Holst and David Rice were presented as the two finalists for the police chief position.

Police chief screening committee chair Scott Bastarache said the committee received eight applications, reviewed resumes, and conducted interviews with seven candidates after one withdrew.

The board will interview the two finalists next Wednesday, March 3, with the first interview at 6:15 p.m. and the second at 7:15 p.m. Members of the public will be able to attend the virtual interviews and participate in a question-and-answer session. Information will be provided on the town website.

Fiscal Year 2022

Bryan Smith presented the draft FY’22 budget, with the estimated revenue at \$12.686 million and estimated expenditures at \$12.644 million, showing a potential deficit of \$42,000.

The board, fin com, and capital planning committee searched through departmental budgets,

Seamstress/Cutter Needed!



Part to full time (preferred) 32-40 hrs/week to start, M-F days only. Industrial sewing machine operation, hand and machine piece cutting and assembly. Must have experience. Non-apparel items. Paid holidays, vacation and health leave. \$15/hr+ start, negotiable for very experienced. Rapid adjustment with commitment and positive attitude. Pleasant, safe, and flexible workplace. English language and measurement reading skills required, reliable transportation necessary. Located in Turners Falls Industrial Park. Mail or email resume and/or a detailed letter of interest describing skills/experience. Product site: mowstore.com/product-category/thermal-bags/ Email info@mowstore.com or postal (do it soon if snail mail!): Attn: Sewing, Nutri-Systems Corp., PO Box 49, Turners Falls, MA 01376



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

The original concrete bridge that carries Church Street over Keyup Brook was built in the summer of 1912, though a MassDOT online bridge inventory lists the current bridge as dating to 1940.

looking for amounts that could be reduced. Bryan Smith said purchasing a new software package for the assessors could be put off for a year.

Other suggestions included reducing the assessors’ overlay account, removing funds for the design and construction of a boat launch at Riverfront Park, reducing line items for grounds maintenance and for electricity and chemicals at POTW#1, and delaying town-wide sign replacement.

“It seems like we’re looking under the couch cushions for change,” said Downs-Bembury, a member of the capital planning committee.

The board and fin com asked Bryan Smith to prepare a revised draft FY’22 budget for review at their next joint meeting.

Special Town Meeting

Bryan Smith presented a seven-article draft warrant for a special town meeting to be held in March.

One draft article proposed expenditure of \$80,000 for repair of the decorative streetlights on Main Street. “Why not replace them?” asked fin com and capital planning committee member Debra Smith.

Bembury said the lights need repair, because “you can’t see at night,” but wondered if fewer lights

could be used.

Jacob Smith said it might cost more to cap and close the conduits for lights that were removed.

Debra Smith suggested doing more research and postponing the article until the annual town meeting.

“I would feel more comfortable with the article written as a design article to get information to go forward,” said fin com chair Benjamin Fellows.

Other draft articles include \$195,000 on engineering, permitting and consulting services for the Church Street bridge repairs; \$20,000 for a solar-powered message board; \$80,000 for the purchase and installation of an emergency generator at POTW#1; rescinding the authority for borrowing \$17.9 million for sludge dryers at POTW#2, the treatment plant owned by the town but operated by Erving Industries; and revising the lot line and clarifying the town’s title to the former public library property at 17 Moore Street.

Bryan Smith said it was likely that the special town meeting will be held as a drive-in meeting. He reported that the town of Orange has held two town meetings with citizens participating from their vehicles.



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

SHANAHAN CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY CO. INC.
SCSC “Rock solid service with level advice”
Complete Masonry Supply
Offering a complete line of pavers, wall stone, retaining wall block and more.
298 Avenue A., Turners Falls 413-863-4322
and at our new location 529 S. Main St, Brattleboro or 802-579-1800
www.shanahansupply.com

A BEAUTIFUL Smile Starts With Healthy Teeth
GEETU SHOKEEN, DMD

Montague Dental Arts General Dentistry
300 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376 • 413-863-2288

Peter Waters Painting Services
Interior/Exterior Custom Residential Fully Insured
Office: 978-544-6534
Cell: 413-461-5172
Wendell, MA
peterjwaters88@gmail.com

Corinne McFadden
Financial Advisor
55 Federal Street Suite 260
Hayburne Building
Greenfield, MA 01301
413-773-8063
Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
edwardjones.com

BUCKINGHAM RABBITS VINTAGE
REGULAR IN-PERSON SHOPPING SUSPENDED
CHECK WINDOWS & SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UPDATES-
102 AVENUE A TR MA 01376 @BUCKINGHAMRABBITS

MUSIC & MOVIES
BOOKMILL | MONTAGUE CENTER | 367.0309

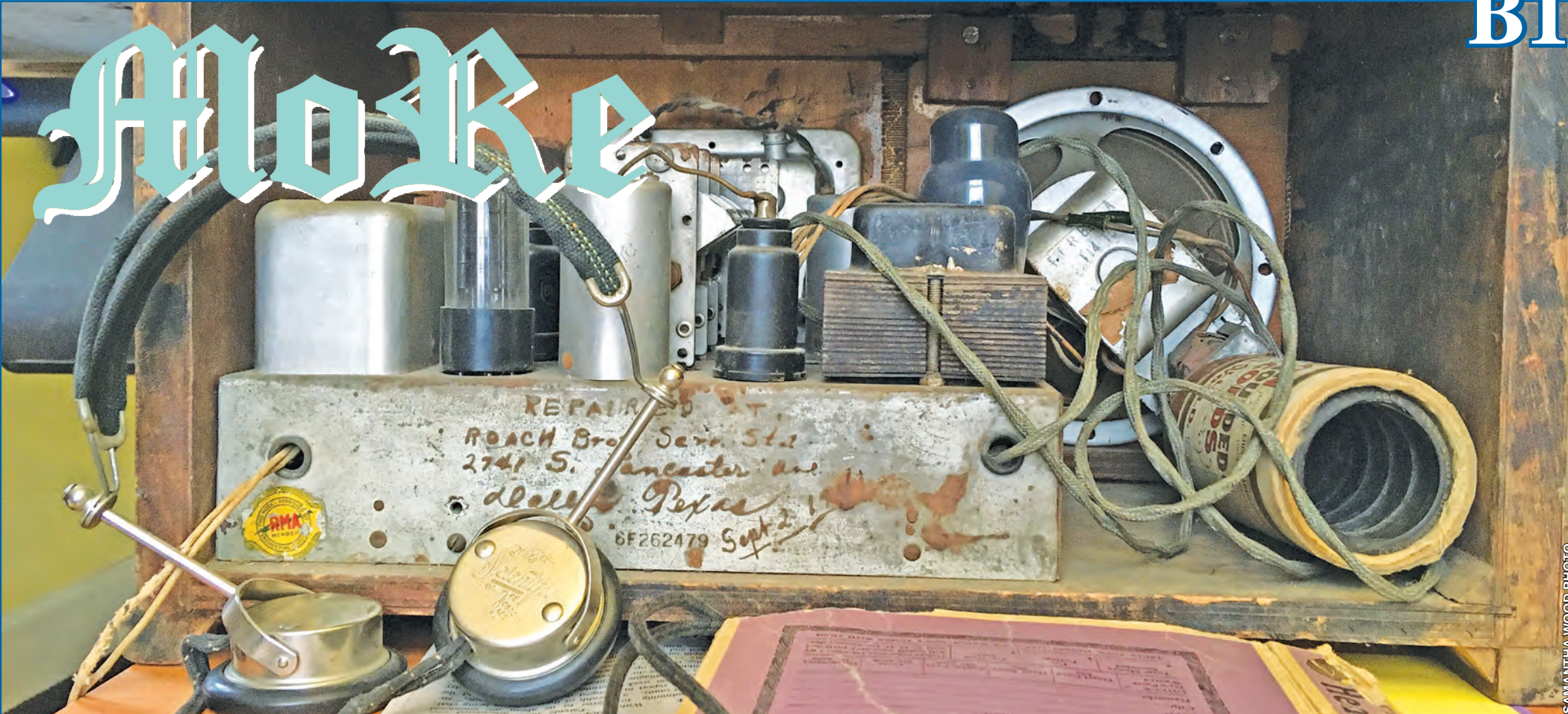
Reward Yourself with the FREE GSB Debit Card BUZZ Points Program.

Earn Rewards with Every Purchase!
\$10 BUZZ Points Sign-up Bonus**
(413) 774-3191 • (413) 584-4441
greenfieldsavings.com
Greenfield Savings Bank
*Double points earning offer (2X points) applies only to locally-owned businesses which are in the GSB-Buzz Points Database at time of purchase and is not applicable at local outlets of national or regional chain stores or businesses.
** Must open account and sign up for BUZZ Points by 06/30/2021 to qualify.
Member FDIC/Member DIF • Equal Housing Lender

WINTER IS COMING
DIEMAND FARM SOUPS WILL KEEP YOU WARM.
THIS UNPRECEDENTED YEAR IS ALMOST AT AN END.
WE THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT.
THEDIEMANDFARM.COM
126 MORMON HOLLOW RD. MILLERS FALLS, MA 01349

TURN'S LAWN CARE
Landscape Design & Maintenance
Accepting New Plow Customers
Within 7 Miles of Montague Center
522-2563
www.TurnLawnCare.com

“WE HAD A **WONDERFUL AND INFORMATIVE** EXPERIENCE, START TO FINISH. SO HAPPY WE CONTRACTED **PV SQUARED** TO SEE IF **SOLAR** WAS A VIABLE OPTION FOR US. THANK YOU!”
413-772-8788
PVSQUARED.COOP
GREENFIELD, MA
MA ELEC. LIC. A13764 MA HIC 140077



Above: The backside of an old vacuum tube radio.

INTERVIEW

Meet Indie Author Wendy Farley

By LEE WICKS

MONTAGUE CENTER – I thought I knew all the writers in Montague Center; there are a lot. And then I met another, when I stopped at a tag sale in Wendy and John Farley’s driveway on School Street.

In addition to the usual display of clothing, books and stuff, Wendy had converted her garage to resemble the café featured in her first book. Along with muffins and coffee, she was busy signing copies of *Season’s Strangers*, her first novel.

To date she has written three. She writes from her heart and a combination of work and life experiences. Her time as a school counselor gives her insight into adolescent learning, and her work as a victim advocate for the Northwestern District Attorney’s Office adds a sense of social justice. These, along with motherhood, her spiritual life, and an eye to current crises, such as human trafficking, inform her writing.

Since *Season’s Strangers* (2017), she’s written and published two more books, *Season’s Shadows* (2019) and *Secluded Summer at Hidden Havens* (2020). The books

are romantic mysteries informed by her strong faith and filled with sympathetic characters, some with disabilities. They are set in New England inns and Adirondack com-

and secondary school experiences. Eventually, in college, there was a summer course with a writing assignment I couldn’t avoid, and the professor complimented my writing. This was followed by my last semester of college when every course had a significant research paper required. I actually enjoyed most everything involved. It helped that all of the courses were in my major, which was psychology.

My actual writing of fiction happened when I had the time afforded by retirement.



pounds, and also overseas. One plot involving human trafficking took readers to Eastern Europe. Thanks to the internet, Wendy was able to trace routes and train and airline schedules so thoroughly that I thought she’d been there.

She’s modest and prolific, and I had more than a few questions for her. Her answers provide wisdom, encouragement, and tools for aspiring writers.

MR: When did you start to write?
WF: I actually avoided writing, if I could, throughout my primary

MR: You demonstrate great sensitivity to characters with special needs. Does this come from your work as a school counselor?
WF: The admiration I have for my special needs son, coupled with the many wonderful scholars who had learning differences, are definitely my inspiration for including characters with medical, neurological, and behavioral challenges.

MR: Do you do research in advance, or as the plot develops?
WF: Almost all of *Season’s Shadows* – book two – was researched by reading fiction and see **FARLEY** page B3

THEATER REVIEW

Stagehand: A Unique Theater Experience

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

GREENFIELD – Staged to resemble a video game, the live performance of *Stagehand* invites audience members to join the show from home via Zoom. It’s a virtual theater experience where the audience is a participant in the play as it unfolds. While many of us have spent time on Zoom in group meetings and such, this is totally different. It is, instead, an effort to create a real live theatrical experience within the constraints of the current pandemic.



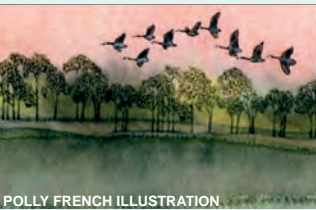
Actor Emily Pritchard, in a screenshot from a recent livestream performance of Stagehand.

Eggtooth Productions, the Academy of Music Theatre of Northampton, and the Shea Theater of Turners Falls present the live theatrical performance of *Stagehand* starting last weekend, and performances will continue this week on February 25, 26, and 27.

Eggtooth producer Linda McInerney said in a recent interview that the company was “offering a way for the audience to be in the theater,” with a “dedication to making theater in a pandemic.” The presenters asked themselves, “How can we create a live theater experience?” To that end, they made keeping actors and those involved in the development of the performances safe a priority. Producers kept to strict guidelines of masking and distancing, and everyone was tested for COVID-19.

To maintain social distancing, all scenes are shot with individual actors in separate rooms. This is accomplished mostly with one actor off screen, while only one character at a time is seen on screen. We hear the other actor speaking but they are not seen. Yet, through an effort of keeping it real, we always see something that makes us feel as if Charlie, the stagehand and character we follow throughout the play, is sitting right there running lines with the actor he’s speaking to.

The actors taking part in this play are all well-known local performers. They include Linda Tardif, Myka Plunkett, Jack Golden, Katherine Adler, and Linda McInerney. This is an ensemble cast with actors see **THEATER** page B5



WEST ALONG THE RIVER
THE IMPRESSIONIST
IN WINTER

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – The morning after an all day snow, like the artist would, I made my way to the same workshop where I always set up an easel, or in my case, my writing table, notebook and coffee. From this daily vantage point, I paint again the effects of light on snow, light on feather and rooftop.

My line of sight stretches to the southeast, where the early sun reaches my studio, which is actually my woodshed, and my workshop window, which actually is not a window, opens wide out onto the snow scene.

Over the years, I’ve told you about this perspective: the October-stacked wood is piled high behind me, although beginning to dwindle as the winter wears on. My chair and table drawn up just out of the weather. From time to time, snow filters in and onto my page. The carefully-arranged symmetry of the firewood wall reflects the first rays of the sun and warms my back.

For years, I’ve been trying daily to catch the fleeting impressions of light on the scene that is spread out before me. Other than that I don’t have much in common with the founding Impressionist, Claude Monet.

For one thing he’s dead. He’s moldering somewhere under the soil of France, and last I checked I’m still here pen-scratching away in my outdoor workshop along the west-flowing river. But Claude and I do go back a ways even though he had passed on at least 40 years before I first set foot in Paris and crossed his path. Back then I was an erstwhile student, a homesick New England boy, far from home in December, and lonesome for snow.

In those days of the ‘60s, a student could gain free entry into the museum called *Le Jeu de Paume* on the Place de la Concorde, where many of the Impressionists’ paintings were exhibited. With my student ID I could drop in anytime, and stand within five feet of familiar scenes of snow-covered landscapes as long as I wanted, with no guard to keep me moving. I could get my fill of visions of hills, forests, and roads under a new snowfall.

Once satisfied, I would go back to the busy, gritty streets of Paris into some of the most beautiful cityscapes in the world, but there was no snow to be seen and embraced.

I later visited Monet’s home before it was a world tourist attraction, sat on the benches in his garden, stood on the Japanese footbridge over the lily-pond. That was long ago.

But I do try what he tried to do, catching in words the fleeting moment of pinks and mauves, tones of red, purple and blue, the short-lived impressions of a particular moment. He was fascinated with capturing the effect of winter light and snowfall on the landscape. Like the master, my fingers freeze, my ink congeals, much as did his fingers and paints as he worked quickly to capture the moment before the light changed on the façade of Rouen Cathedral, or the grainstacks in Normandy. Here, I am dealing with the disappearing ink of my Pilot 700 pen.

This is where the metaphor stretches to the breaking point. Try as I can to catch the mood of a particular angle, bird, or dog that shifts like a wisp of snow blown before the wind, much is illusive and illusion.

So the snow did fall the whole day yesterday and now all is covered in white. After my railing against the lack of snow most of December and all January, February has made up the deficit.

Soft snow reflects barely any color until the sun rises a bit more and the first pale blues and gray shadow appear. The tree-top snow will soon turn gold dappled with blue jay see **WEST ALONG** page B8



Claude Monet’s 1869 painting La Pie lives at the Musée d’Orsay in Paris.



CARMODY COLLAGE

“MUPPET”

Hello, I’m Muppet! I am just about the cutest thing with my teeny ears and little spots on my face. I love to play, and my favorite chew toy is anything made out of cardboard. My last home describes me as “super sweet” and “friendly.” Also, I really like head pats!

Rabbits are intelligent animals who do well in families with humans who understand that they are prey animals, and do not enjoy being held or picked up. The best way to bond with rabbits is to spend

time with them outside of their pens, and shower them with plenty of fresh vegetable leaves. Rabbits are easy to litterbox train.

The adoption fee for rabbits is \$75 for a single or a pair. Animals at Dakin are available only in Springfield currently. Contact adoption staff at springfield@dakinhumane.org and include your name and phone number.

For more information, call (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

Mr. Russell Celebrates Milestone Birthday

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Mr. D.B. Russell of Greenfield, well known in these parts, achieved a milestone birthday at midweek.

“I would have gone to Hawai’i if it weren’t for the whole pandemic,” Mr. Russell disclosed in his typical phlegmatic manner when reached for comment. “That’s okay though.”

Born a full half century ago in Tennessee, Mr. Russell is nowadays gainfully employed by the Franklin Community Co-operative at its Greenfield headquarters. He serves on the board of the Greenfield

Business Association, and as treasurer of the board of directors of the *Montague Reporter* newsweekly at Turners Falls.

His cultural contributions have included membership in the musical acts The Frothy Shakes, The Laudable Pus, and Egg, Eggs, and he reportedly keeps busy at the sound synthesizer even into his older years.

Mr. Russell’s many friends and admirers will celebrate once it is safe to do so. In the meantime, well wishes can be addressed, care of this publication, via editor@montaguereporter.org or to Mr. Russell directly.



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

Since February includes Valentine’s Day – albeit climaxed by the time you read this column – I thought I’d share information about how attraction, love, orgasm, and ecstatic states can heighten one’s senses. One quick caveat: yes, Valentine’s Day is a Hallmark capitalistic marketing bonanza, designed to make millions from a sense of “duty” to buy our paramour(s) valentine gifts. Always take what you want from societal expectations/norms and ignore what does not work for you.

Our culture often references “love at first sight,” and many a penny has been made in Hollywood with this concept. Pop culture cataloguers sometimes call these moments “meet cutes.” This refers to the moment when two folks with attraction potential initially meet.

One lovely recent example that comes to mind occurs in the 2019 TV miniseries *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. This meet cute moment in an airport features non-white (albeit heterosexual and cis-gender appearing) folks, delightfully diversifying the cannon of meet-cutes in one direction. However, doing a quick internet search shows that there are very few examples of joyful and uncomplicated LGBTQ meet cutes in the media. If you know of one, please email me! Or better, yet, create some!

Some psychotherapists like to share Harville Hendrix and Helen LaKelly Hunt’s “Imago” (1980) concept with clients. Imago essentially means an unconscious idealized mental image of someone, especially a caregiver. To explain further, imago is the notion that when we initially meet potential romantic partners or even potential new best friends, our subconscious mind sizes up their subconscious mind in a matter of minutes and decides if this person’s imago fits our own imago and to what degree.

Imago is the much more psychologically sophisticated version of the “meet cute.” We are looking for someone who can fill the shoes of our caregivers, both in the sense of idealized positive qualities (i.e. nurturing, fun, capable), and negative elements that even the most “good enough” parents might get wrong (i.e. occasionally losing their temper or missing an important moment of recognition).

The problem is, we can never find an exact imago duplicate in the people we spark with, and we usually do not initially recognize or understand the “negative” imago matching characteristics with this potential partner. The good news is that Hendrix and

Hunt have laid out many steps in their books and workbooks (such as *Getting the Love You Want*, 1988) to help us hapless lovestruck denizens make sense of why those mind-altering early days devolve into something, months later, that does not fully resemble the honeymoon stage. I highly recommend their workbooks to help folks bring their prefrontal cortices back online and make their relationships as conscious and mature as possible.

Speaking of the brain, let me provide a refresher of the changes in brain chemistry that typically occur as we fall in love.

Research has determined that when someone is in love, areas of our brains associated with pleasure and reward get flooded with dopamine and oxytocin. The association between oxytocin and pleasure is so strong that it is even called the “love hormone.” Oxytocin is also released when nursing a child.

We also know that dopamine is associated with other pleasurable activities, like retail therapy or enjoying particularly good food. Kissing and hugging your loved ones can also release oxytocin, which reduces stress and increases calm and secure feelings. The dopamine released during physical contact improves mood and increases interest in sex. A nice benefit of this can be a reduction in pain perception.

And yes, all this oxytocin and dopamine can feel a bit like being in the throes of an addiction. Indeed, orgasms produce a surge of oxytocin and serotonin, along with muscular relaxation, often leaving the orgasm experiencers craving more.

Folks practicing polyamory or consensual non-monogamy (CNM) sometimes reference “New Relationship Energy (NRE).” This is the upsurge of happiness, pleasure chemicals, and hormones mentioned above that results from dating that new special someone. In a CNM relationship, the energy influx from this new addition to the polycule (group of people associated together sexually), even if only one person in the polycule is directly experiencing that new person, can also be enjoyed by all members of the polycule. Think of it as like a healthy and fun contagion.

For example, Billy and Dorian have been together for four years and have an open relationship. Billy now begins to date Audrey. The excitement of this new relationship bleeds over to his relationship with Dorian, infusing their four-year old relationship with revived zest and enthusiasm. Everyone is happy and

brimming with oxytocin and dopamine – until imago is revealed.

This is true for any relationship, CNM or not. Once the NRE fades away, then the real work of sorting out compatibilities, communication strategies, and compromises begins.

So, what are some other ways to nudge our brain chemistry in this positive direction of more oxytocin and dopamine (without illegal drugs or dangerous activities)? Since humans have had cognition there has reportedly been some kind of spiritual/ecstatic trance ability within most, if not all, cultures.

Trance is defined as a “temporary marked alteration in the state of consciousness or loss of customary sense of personal identity” (*International Classification of Disorders*, 1992). Meditation, shamanic practices, drumming, sweat lodge, ecstatic dance practices, and other movement practices can induce a trance or ecstatic state. Many other folks have written a great deal about these experiences (including Aldous Huxley back in the day), so I will sum up this section by pointing out that you don’t need any partners for this type of mind-altering experience.

Experiencing creative “flow” while playing music, creating art, or writing non-stop can be a version of trance, and help bring more full-body self-love. Finding healthy and comfortable ways to experience a trance state can be a wonderful gift of self-love.

Another angle to altering consciousness and chemistry in a positive direction towards sexual pleasure involves cardio exercise (because sometimes the sex itself is not cardio enough). Getting that heart pounding helps the body realize something is exciting – which may transfer to your partner(s), or even just to your handy Hitachi magic wand, WeVibe, or Pivot (see the December 2020 column). Any opportunity for blood flow is a chance for maintaining your sexual health!

In summary, the next time you experience a surge of zest and excitement while hugging your lover, enjoying a long meditation, or returning from a good run, thank your brain and hormones for the chemical lubrication.

Stephanie Baird, LMHC is an OWL facilitator, EMDR consultant and psychotherapist, certified in Advancing Clinical Excellence in Sexuality (ACES), and encourages her clients towards thriving sexual health. She welcomes feedback and suggestions at sexmatters@montaguereporter.org.

Senior Center Activities

MARCH 1 THROUGH 5

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

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

ERVING

Senior Center director Paula Betters writes:

“Erving Senior Center is still closed to the public. We are here daily taking calls and doing outreach work for seniors and their families. Call with any questions or concerns, need help with SHINE, SNAP. We are also taking calls to help seniors sign up

for their COVID vaccine. We are here to help make a difference.” Paula can be reached at (413) 423-3649 or paula-betters@erving-ma.gov.

LEVERETT

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

WENDELL

Wendell Senior Center is open for a foot care clinic the first-Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. Otherwise, there are no activities. The Senior Health Rides 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 November 30; hours and accommodations are still changing.

Big Y:	Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.	(413) 772-0435
Foster’s:	Senior hours from 7 to 8 a.m.	(413) 773-1100
Green Fields Market:	Senior hours from 8 to 9 a.m. Monday-Saturday and 10 to 11 a.m. on Sunday. Curbside pickup available. Order by 8 p.m.; order ready for pickup between 1 and 5 the following day. Delivery also available.	(413) 773-9567
McCusker’s Market:	Curbside pickup only 10 to 11 a.m. Order between 12 and 1 p.m. for pickup the following day. Email pickup@franklincommunity.coop	(413) 625-2548
Stop and Shop:	Senior hours from 6 to 8 a.m.	(413) 774-6096

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

BestLocalBank.com

FREE Online Banking with Bill Pay, Transfers, Account Opening, Debit Card Controls & More!

FREE Mobile Banking APP with Mobile Check Deposit, Alerts, Freeze/UnFreeze & More!

GREENFIELD Cooperative Bank

NORTHAMPTON Cooperative Bank

 Avenue A, Turners Falls | 413-512-5012

 MEMBER FDIC
MEMBER DIF



OPEN DAILY
LUNCH and DINNER

24 Federal St., Greenfield

773-0333 / thepeoplespint.com

The Pint Says: TURN THE KEY!

When you idle your car's engine for more than 10-20 seconds, you're wasting fuel.

Save on Gas - Save our Climate

REAL PICKLES

Locally grown vegetables
Fermented & raw
100% organic



A worker co-op in Greenfield, MA
www.realpickles.com | (413) 774-2600

FARLEY from page B1
nonfiction, and through online research for facts regarding human trafficking as well as geographical and geopolitical information. Everything else was a figment of my imagination.
I was more personally aware of the fictional locations represented by *Season’s Stranger* – book one, mostly New England – and *Secluded Summer at Hidden Havens* – book three, the Adirondacks and, to a much lesser extent, Miami.



Montague author Wendy Farley

MR: Do you start with an outline, or let the plot unwind as you write?
WF: Through my searching online about how to begin, I found a process called a “snowflake outline.” I used the concept as a springboard for my own method of creating an outline, which consisted of listing characters, naming (and sometimes renaming) them, and then writing a sentence, paragraph, or essay about their individual characteristics and what I wanted them to do in the novel.
Plot ideas and plans for the characters were woven together. Much of the dialogue and putting meat on the bones of the outline unfolded and developed organically as I typed. Lots of edits happened as I was trying to fall asleep with fingers crossed that I would remember the ideas in the morning.
Remembering them in the morning was not an issue with the first novel, however, since it was written during middle-of-the-night hours for the most part!
MR: There’s also a spiritual component in your books. Does that come from your own deeply held beliefs?
WF: I was determined to include the gospel message, clearly and concisely, in my first book. Neither of the first two books, though inspirational, are “in your face” in the realm of spirituality. Rather, they are brutal in their honesty about the foibles of and struggles brought on by and worked through (hopefully) by people of faith.
MR: Do you write every day, or wait until you have an idea?
WF: I do not write every day. I can go long periods without writing. But when I am involved with a work in progress, it is always on my mind and I often write every day until it is out of my possession.
MR: Do you get more pleasure from the actual writing or having written?
WF: The actual writing is so much fun for me – almost pure joy. The best. Hands down. Everything else is a struggle, even though I

enjoy meeting readers during book signings.
MR: What authors do you enjoy reading?
WF: I want to read all of the Detective Jackson novels by L.J. Sellers. I love her writing style and her ability to hold just the right level of suspense through her novels, as well as the likability of characters with a smattering of romance.
I like Susan Mallery’s books set in the Northwest, and I enjoyed several of Marcia Clark’s Rachel Knight novels. Colleen Coble’s suspense novels located in the Upper Peninsula are interesting, and I read just about all of the murder mysteries by Margaret Truman set in the various locations around Washington, D.C.
But I tend not to stay with just one author, since I loved *Lilac Girls* by Martha Hall Kelly. *Before We Were Yours* was so good. I get why *Where the Crawdads Sing* was a bestseller, but I got so sick of that bayou trip and digging crawdads! I have read multiple books by Frank Peretti and C.S. Lewis.
MR: Are you working on a new novel now?
WF: No. I haven’t committed to writing a new novel. But I haven’t ruled it out.
MR: What’s the best way to buy your books?
WF: They all are available to order via any bookstore and online at Amazon and Barnes and Noble. If searching on Amazon, the search must include my full name, Wendy Black Farley. There is another Wendy Farley who writes about theology, and that isn’t me!
Barnes and Noble in Hadley has been great to stock them, though the supply was depleted last I checked. Barnes and Noble in Holyoke has hosted me a couple of times, and should have the first two books in stock.
I am still hoping that book signing events will be a thing again. I have some available if folks want to contact me via the Facebook page “Season Your Reading.”
MR: How do you market yourself?
WF: The most successful and most enjoyable marketing efforts were in-person signing events. Barnes and Noble in Hadley and Holyoke have hosted me for several signings, as did Wilson’s Department Store. I also was able to have two events at Yankee Candle. I sold many copies of the first book at the Deerfield Craft Fair Holiday Sampler. Two of the book launches were at my own home.
But the single best thing that happened was entering *Season’s Shadows* into book award contests. It garnered a Readers’ Favorite Book Award and was a Finalist in both the American Fiction Awards and Indie Excellence Awards.
MR: What else would you like readers to know about you?
WF: *Season’s Stranger*, my first attempt, shows that it was a first attempt. Please don’t give up. The sequel, *Season’s Shadows*, won awards. Both books are stand alone, but I think it’s more enjoyable to read them both and in order. The third book, *Secluded Summer at Hidden Havens*, is not inspirational, and is not part of a series.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Bridge Hole; Package Theft; Creep; Slippery Roads; Train Filmer; Party In The Patch; Missing Medication

Tuesday, 2/16
6:43 a.m. Report of possible backed-up culvert at Greenfield and Randall roads. DPW advised.
8:09 a.m. Caller calling on behalf of operator of a single-vehicle accident on Newton Street. No injuries, airbag deployment, smoke, or fluids; pole is still intact. Eversource advised. Report taken.
12:37 p.m. Two-vehicle accident on South Street. No apparent injuries, smoke, fluids, or airbag deployment; parties are out of vehicles. Report taken.
1:45 p.m. Report of several mailboxes taken out between midnight and 10 a.m. on Kettle Hole Lane; unknown if accidental or intentional. Report taken.
1:47 p.m. Report of unshoveled sidewalk at Montague City Road and N Street. Officer confirmed sidewalk is not cleared; request 3-11 shift drop off town bylaw notice.
2:35 p.m. Chief Williams received a report of rebar sticking up on the General Pierce Bridge closer to the Greenfield side. Officer checked area and confirmed same; advised there is a hole in the upper decking; not an immediate hazard. Greenfield PD and MassDOT advised.
5:02 p.m. Caller from L Street states that he believes that a neighbor took a package of his from his porch. Caller has video footage of the package being delivered, but not of anyone taking it. Postmaster already involved. Officer will make contact with Postmaster.
8:14 p.m. Motorist reporting two large trees down across both lanes of traffic near the corner of Greenfield and Hatchery roads. No wires. DPW notified.
8:42 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states that a female in a neighboring apartment is pounding on the walls and screaming. Female advised to quiet down.
8:47 p.m. Caller from Avenue A believes that a male party who was over visiting stole her apartment keys. Caller will search apartment more thoroughly for the keys.

Wednesday, 2/17
9:14 a.m. Resident requesting DPW sand Randall Road and Randall Wood Drive due to icy patches in the road. Message left for DPW.
10:01 a.m. Caller states that there are very low-hanging wires on Adams Street. Not sure if they are power lines or not. Shelburne Control notified to tone out MCFD.
6:07 p.m. 911 caller from Chestnut Street states that her neighbor hit her parked car while attempting to pull out of her driveway. Parties exchanged information. Report taken.
7:56 p.m. Caller from Unity Street states that the neighbor’s music is so loud that it’s shaking his windows. Party advised they will turn it down.
11:01 p.m. Caller states she was on a walk with a friend and a male pulled up in an SUV asking “how are you?” in a weird creepy voice. Caller states they asked if he needed directions, and he was looking for a road in a town not near here; male then took off down the road. Caller states vehicle may have come back up the road, but they hid in the trees, unsure if it was the same vehicle or not. Referred to an officer.

Thursday, 2/18
11:15 a.m. 911 caller reporting that he was just in an accident at 7th and K streets. Report taken.
12:52 p.m. Anonymous caller concerned about two people ice skating on the Connecticut River near Unity Park. Caller thought it was against the law and unsafe. Referred to an officer.
12:59 p.m. Following a motor vehicle stop at Fifth and Canal streets, a summons was issued for unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle; attaching plates to a motor vehicle; operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration; and operating an uninsured motor vehicle.
5:01 p.m. Report of a decapitated rabbit on the sidewalk on Montague City Road. Officer moved animal off into woods. Message left for DPW.
5:45 p.m. Following a vehicle stop at Millers Falls and West Mineral roads, a 31-year-old Wendell man was arrested on a straight warrant.
6:04 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road states that his neighbor’s car exhaust is extremely loud and that he comes and goes at all hours of the night, specifically between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. Referred to an officer.

Friday, 2/19
3:37 p.m. Caller would like it on record that he received a scam call that stated they had a warrant out for him.
4:11 p.m. Report of poor road conditions on Third Street by Scotty’s. Officer reports that he just drove through the area and that the road conditions are acceptable. No need to contact DPW at this time.
4:58 p.m. Report of slippery road conditions on Third Street hill. DPW advised.
5:13 p.m. Report of a man who appears to be in distress, possibly with a broken-down vehicle, near the Lake Pleasant train tracks. Officer states he was in the area recently and there was a male matching the description who was filming some things outside. Will check area again when he clears from current call. Caller called back stating the male party was just filming the train and is OK.
6:58 p.m. DPW requesting officer respond to Turnpike Road for a report of a vehicle stuck in the road impeding traffic. Second caller reporting two-vehicle accident at same location; both vehicles have left scene. DPW requesting to cancel PD response.

Saturday, 2/20
12:31 a.m. Caller requesting an officer to G Street; neighbor has had company over and there has been a lot of yelling and loud going into and out of the building. Caller states it has been going on for hours and she is now trying to go to bed. Parties advised.
8:07 a.m. Alarm at Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center; “interior door lab building east hall south.” Alarm company advising that keyholder requests to cancel; keyholder not on site and did not elaborate as to what set off the alarm. Units advised.
4:23 p.m. Alarm company reporting burglar alarm at Carnegie Library, showing front door. Negative contact with keyholder. Officer reports front door open. Spoke with DPW employee who provides building maintenance for that location; states DPW maintenance is responding. DPW arrived; will lock door and reset alarm.
4:49 p.m. Snow removal paperwork served in hand on Madison Avenue.
7:22 p.m. Report of traffic light at Seventh Street and Avenue A not cycling properly. Caller states that the light on the Seventh Street side won’t change to green. Officer reports traffic light functioning properly; states Seventh Street side cycles approximately every 2.5 minutes.

Sunday, 2/21
1:38 p.m. Alarm activation at Greenfield Cooperative Bank; “ATM door heat and vaults.” Upon arrival, building appeared secure; units awaiting keyholder. Walk-through performed with keyholder; no problems found.
2:17 p.m. Caller requesting an officer push her vehicle; states her tires have no traction in the parking lot at Unity Park due to ice. Advised caller of options. Caller will call a friend who may be able to assist. Officer will check on vehicle but due to ice/liability, an officer cannot push the vehicle. Officer advises services rendered; vehicle is out.
8:39 p.m. Caller from G Street reports that she believes that three strangers she had in her home earlier today to move furniture stole some medication from her. Advised of options.

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

SPIRITS, BREWS & FINE WINES

53C S. Main St. South Deerfield, MA
295 Amherst Rd. Sunderland, MA

New Location Now Open:
6 Main Road, in Gill
(formerly Jan's Package Store)
Come check us out!

Deerfield: (413) 665-2456
Sunderland: (413) 665-5030
Gill: (413) 863-5730

BOOK MILL
440 Greenfield Rd.
Montague, MA 01351

413-367-9206 www.montaguebookmill.com

Books you don't need in a place you can't find.

Doug's Auto Body
Doug Smith - Owner

MA Reg. #RS2190

Ph. (413) 863-2785
Fax: (413) 863-0120
FREE ESTIMATES

39 Center Road
Gill, MA 01354
FREE LOANER CARS

REPAIRS ON FOREIGN & DOMESTIC CARS AND TRUCKS

Montv

MTN

MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

Blues Jr. - s/t



MYSTRA REVIEWS #2

By JOSH B.

TURNERS FALLS – This CD landed in our hands a year or two back, and though there is no info, no title or label, we knew right away the kind of zones that laid ahead for our ears... and that they would be of a deep and magical dimension.

Much like the best rap artists from the '80s to the present day, Blues Jr. has a language all his own, and his own fire and vision that will continue however possible to the infinite future.

He is probably known best to folks locally (and far away as well) for his involvement in super amazing acts like Bunwinkies, Adolf Dove, A.P.I.E., and Viewer Duo. But he is also known to many very lucky local folks who have witnessed the other dimensions he has helped unlock while also helping the local scene when booking and playing at all the best shows at the best venues for so, so many years and decades (including festivals... solo acts around camp fires... shows in the woods... and the best shows ever to happen

at the Voo!).

This CD brings us forward from all that history while still deeply embracing it. It's a new launching pad of sorts... mostly drums and guitar... letting you build off that with your present life and new dreams... keeping you company with great and unexpected music dimensions.

Then there is a sound like a record needle being taken off... it seems to be over, like so many things that have ended lately... but no! There is another track, even more crazy and full of life, with amazing synth this time. Pushing us into the future even further, but grounded, too.

Heck yeah. It reminds us of this quote from Derroll Adams, "If you have a light... let it shine," and also of the quote from Bob Arnold in the last MMM where he said music has always been with us, and always will be.

We are truly thankful today for the great music of Blues Jr.! Get in touch with us if you want to know more about this, or any of our other columns: mysteryentourage@yahoo.com.

FAMILIES

A Farmer – and a State Rep!

By JOE R. PARZYCH

GILL – In the old days it was common for farmers to run as legislator. Back then, you didn't need a college degree to run for state, federal, or local office – only a high school diploma or GED. Anyone could run. Not like today. Now you need a college degree.

My great-grandfather George Carlton, the father of my late grandmother Edna Carleton Parzych of Gill, also born and raised in Vermont, was a state representative of Vermont back in the 1920s and 1930s. He was also a part-time farmer, working and owning a farm and working in a saw mill. He was representative of his farming district, because it was common for farmers to run.

He traveled to Montpelier, Vermont every day while he was state representative part time. He was an activist during the Great Depression for supporting farmers and agricultural and factory workers, back in the old days when Franklin D. Roosevelt was president from 1933 to 1945. Roosevelt came up with great ideas during the Great Depression and World War II like the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, the CCC program, the Agricultural Act, etc.

People grew up in large families, working on farms or at mills or other jobs. In some case farmers couldn't afford a farm tractor but used horses to plow the fields, or made a sacrifice by converting their car of some sort like a Model T into a tractor, or went to auctions to buy used farming equipment and cattle. Some people couldn't afford cars, so they had to walk to work or to the store. It was a time when some people didn't have a radio or phone or electricity, and some did.

While my great-grandfather was on his day off from working as a state rep, he would be working on his farm, driving his tractor or using his horse to plow the fields for his crops. He milked the cows so he could sell the milk to the local markets, and also sold meat and vegetables.

Most farmers wanted to land a contract with Birds Eye Vegetables: it would have been a great idea at the time, to rent or lease the land to other farmers to pay the taxes on and so forth. It was great for business at the time, but it was too late: the Great Depression started.

It was common at the time for farmers to run for politics in Vermont, so agricultural districts could have a voice for farmers in need, who passed bills to support them. Banks were closing during the 1930s, and people were afraid to put their life savings in the bank, or losing their farms to the bank.

In the meantime, even before the war years, my



The author's great-grandfather George Carleton and his great-grandmother, along with his grandmother Edna and her siblings, in an undated photograph.

great-grandfather George took a third job as a mill worker in a sawmill, cutting logs and so forth. During scrap rubber drive for the war effort, including when people were using ration stickers to pay for gas to fill up their cars. On the weekends or his day off, our family would get together to have cookouts outside and have fun times.

They would put the car radio on to listen to music, or once in a while go to the movies with the family to see a movie for 25 cents. My grandmother Edna recalled her first movie was Disney's 1937 *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the first full-color animation film.

This picture was taken after a cookout while George was in his rocking chair, enjoying the day outside with my great-grandma, my grandma, and my great-aunts and uncles. One of Edna's older brothers was in the Army in World War I, and re-enlisted in the Navy during combat in World War II.

see **FARMER** next page

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Exhibit: “Lilian R. Jackman: Pears, Monks & Dogs in Boats”

SHELBURNE FALLS – Perhaps best known as the owner of the plant nursery Wilder Hill Gardens in Conway, Lilian R. Jackman is also a visual artist. You get that by visiting the gardens: color, texture, and line are all beautifully realized with plants, trees, stone walls, buildings, and pathways. The winter months are her time for working in 2D. Her chosen art form is letterpress and woodblock printmaking.

The prints for Jackman's current exhibit at Salmon Falls Gallery in Shelburne include three basic directions: woodblock illustrations for her children's book *Violeta: One Dog's Journey*, letterpress pieces composed from the typographic elements known as dingbats, and woodblock prints inspired by her graduate studies at Yale Divinity School.

Jackman returned to college while in her 50s. At Smith College, she was introduced to printmaking and the Art of the Book under professor Barry Moser. Jackman printed several limited-edition broadsides and hand-bound books, drawing the text from her studies in philosophy and comparative religion. Moser was kind enough to write a letter of recommendation for



“St. Pachomius and Eleuth (At the Burial of the Nag Hamaddi Library),” a woodblock print by Lilian R. Jackman.

Jackman's graduate studies at Yale University, in which he called her “pig-headed and good company.”

While at Yale, Jackman focused her studies on the third-century apocryphal texts including the Gnostic Literature, a wisdom tradition with roots in Judaism, early Christianity, and Greek philosophy. Her studies

left little time for printmaking, but provided a lifetime of inspiration.

After receiving her master's degree in 2012, Jackman returned to the gardens of Wilder Hill, and apprenticed with Carl Darrow of Greenleaf Press. Darrow, official printer to Historic Deerfield, generously shared his reverence for printing and his

collection of metal type and vintage presses. Exploring the type cases, Jackman became enamored with dingbats – the finely detailed, decorative borders and embellishments for a printed page, all cast in metal. Her printmaking expanded from text into the creation of images, some examples including *The Mandala Series*, *The Tree of Life*, and *Ivy Escapes In The Night*.

Excited by the artistic possibility of text and images together, Jackman spent winters exploring new techniques and styles in countries with traditions of relief printmaking. In Granada, Nicaragua, she studied at La Sirena Taller, and learned to carve linoleum and wood, resulting in the series, *Los Trabajadores de Granada* (The Workers of Granada).

On another trip to Nicaragua in 2013, Jackman encountered Alicia Zamora, who used her colorful prints to protest oppression and injustice. Zamora, who Jackman fondly calls “Mi Profesora Iconoclasta,” has a small gallery/studio in the bakery she runs with her husband. Fueled by good Nicaraguan coffee and tarts from the bakery, Zamora expanded Jackman's print-

making skills to include monotype, layering, and vibrant colors.

The winter of 2019 found Jackman in Oaxaca, Mexico, working on illustrations for the children's book she wrote, *Violeta: One Dog's Journey*. In that vibrant city with an incredible history and a press on almost every corner, Jackman observed “los perros libres,” the street dogs of Oaxaca, and learned of Xolos, the mystical dogs of Mexico. Both became crucial parts of Violeta's origin story.

Under the instruction of Federico Valdez of Cooperativa Graphica in Oaxaca, Jackman adopted the folkloric style of wood-cutting and high-relief printing that proved to be perfect for telling the story of the arduous migration of a Mexican street dog to America in the *Violeta* story she was working on. The prints you see in her current exhibit at Salmon Falls are a result of that collaboration.

This exhibit can be seen through April 25 at Salmon Falls Gallery in Shelburne Falls, Friday through Monday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and online. For more information, see SalmonFallsGallery.com or call the gallery at (413) 625-9833.

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

TNT Productions

DJ & Karaoke specialists



413-522-6035

www.tntprodj.net



HAWKS & REED

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

IN DOWNTOWN GREENFIELD

MUSIC - THEATER - PRIVATE EVENTS

FOR INFORMATION AND RENTAL INQUIRIES,

EMAIL US AT

INFO@HAWKSANDREED.COM

FULL SCHEDULE AVAILABLE AT:

WWW.HAWKSANDREED.COM

289 MAIN ST. GREENFIELD, MA 01301 413.774.0150

DOLAN & DOLAN

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

174 AVENUE A

TURNERS FALLS MASSACHUSETTS

01376

413-863-3133

PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

FARMER from previous page

Years later my dad emailed the state of Vermont and found out information on his grandfather George. He was born sometime in the late 1800s and died in 1945. There was a painting of him from when he was state representative.

This photo is the only one the family has of him. It reminds me of a Norman Rockwell illustration of old-time New England.

My grandmother’s mother remarried another farmer, a Cyrus Hale from Bernardston, Massachusetts, who ran and owned a farm, grew crops, raised cows, and sold meat and dairy to many local places. They lived on Huckle Hill Road in Bernardston after he passed away back in the ‘60s.


My great-grandmother moved down the road, where she lived next door to the late Bud Foster, owner and founder of Foster’s Supermarket in Greenfield since 1941.

I am dedicating this story to my

grandma, my dad’s mom. As a farm girl she used to walk to school all year round, including in snowstorms in Vermont, with a lantern. She came from a long history of farming stock. Her mother came from Norway, and her real father George came from near the border of England and Wales. She told me that our family’s ancestry tree traces back to the time period when Vikings were in Norway.

Please support your local farms, etc. Thank you.

Joe R. Parzych grew up in Gill and lives in Greenfield. He is a freelance photojournalist and has been a contributor to the Montague Reporter and Lee Newspapers, Inc.’s Country Folks farming magazine. He enjoys playing his electric guitar and spending time with his fiancée. Check out “Joe r Parzych photograph and ect.” on Facebook for more.



THEATER from page B1

playing various parts. Director John Bechtold is responsible for much of the staging and technology that makes it work.

With the foundation of the play focused around Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, and the flexibility required as audience members interject their choices, much of the dialogue includes actor improvisation, creating a totally unique experience.

The stagehand, Charlie, is the one we hear and follow throughout the show but we never actually see his face. Instead, what we see is what he sees. When he walks down a flight of stairs inside the theater, we watch his feet on the stairs as he narrates what he’s doing, and why. Charlie is the one who drives the story and pulls the audience into his world, the world of the theater.



Actor Maia Kinney-Petrucha in a recent performance of Stagehand.

This is actually a rare opportunity to see what most audiences never see: what lies backstage, behind the curtain, so to speak. As Charlie sits in Rita’s dressing room, she talks, changes into her costume behind a screen, and plays with various things on the small table full of cosmetics and costume props, and we listen while she and Charlie run lines from *Hamlet*.

Every once in a while, Rita asks Charlie to help her make a choice and Charlie asks the audience to help him decide. This is the opportunity for audience members to participate in the process and push the action in one direction or another. How often have you watched something and yelled at the screen when the character did something really stupid? Here’s your chance to help the characters make the right choice.

When Charlie follows Linda up into the perch to her secret place, we see a whole other part of a wonderful old theater. Dressing rooms

are not such secret spaces, but this play brings us to parts of the theater few people get to see – a real treat if you are, like many of us, a real theater lover.

The real magic is how the director, John Bechtold, has managed to create the conditions of live action theater within the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. So much live theater has been shuttered due to the difficulty of producing anything live on stage right now. McNerney says, “This has created, technologically, a real adventure and real innovation.”

Some of the secrets of this show are not to be shared, but suffice it to say that the end result is that the audience gets to watch live actors in real time as they lead us through an extraordinary theater experience. As a Valley-based company, Eggtooth Productions says they are excited to produce a show that is also a love letter to our local theaters that we love and miss.

Tickets are available through the

Shea Theater website at sheatheater.org. They are being sold a little differently for this show: group tickets called “pods” may be purchased at \$40 each for up to six people per pod ticket, so you may share the theater experience with friends. Individual tickets may be purchased for \$10 for the “wildcard” pod, where patrons with individual tickets will be placed together.

All performances will be viewed online through Zoom. Details of how all this works are shared on the website, but are not complicated and are easily available to anyone with basic knowledge of computer and Zoom technology.

After its opening last week, the show continues this week with performances on February 25, 26, and 27, with two shows each night at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Tickets are purchased separately for each specific time. Shows are limited to those 14 years of age and older.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

“It’s OK to Ask for Help”

GREENFIELD – Political unrest, economic challenges, COVID-19 concerns, vaccination questions... There’s much on the minds of western Mass individuals and families these days – and still another month of winter to get through to boot.

In any given year, winter is a time of increased depression and anxiety. Shorter days and colder temperatures make it hard to get outside for fresh air and sunlight. For many, this sort of “hibernation” can lead to oversleeping (hypersomnia), overeating/weight gain, social withdrawal, and other negative feelings. Add to those winter-pattern symptoms the many additional stressors our community is facing at this time, and it’s easy to understand why some will need to reach out for help.

For that reason, local nonprofit community behavioral health agency Clinical & Support Options (CSO) is conducting an awareness effort to let individuals know that 24-hour care is available for any level of concern.

Urgent Access to Services

Many of us grew up knowing the simplest way to get help: simply dial 9-1-1. But much of the time, a 911 call or an Emergency Room visit to the local hospital doesn’t quite feel like the most comfortable way to address emotional distress – whether it’s for oneself or for a loved one.

That’s why CSO is reminding western Mass individuals and families that urgent behavioral health care can be accessed from community locations or even from one’s own home.

“Many individuals may not be aware that they can access help any day, any time without calling 911,” explains CSO president and CEO Karin Jeffers. “Emergency services programs across the state, such as those CSO operates in Greenfield and Northampton, provide access 24/7, 365 days of the year, at CSO locations or by mobile response.”

In Franklin County, CSO’s Greenfield location can be reached at (413) 774-5411. In Hampshire County, the Florence location is

available by calling (413) 586-5555. Both crisis locations accept walk-ins and are even equipped with mobile response teams to meet individuals where they are.

In addition, CSO has recently partnered with Cooley Dickinson Hospital to add a community-based location there as well.

What Is a Mental Health Crisis?

As the short, cold days combine with a stressful pandemic and a highly charged political atmosphere, mental health challenges can take their toll. According to CSO, it’s important to remember that anyone can qualify for help, and that there is no one answer to the abstract question, “What is a mental health crisis?”

“Mental health is personal and individual,” Jeffers adds. “Anyone can seek help regardless of whatever level of crisis they may feel they’re experiencing. There is no ‘qualifying event’ that defines crisis.”

She adds, “We’re available around the clock to help anyone. You can call CSO whether you’re considering self-harm, feeling out of control, experiencing anxiety or depression, or just need to talk.”

To learn more about CSO’s urgent-access and crisis stabilization services in Hampshire County, visit CSOInc.org/help. To find your nearest CSO location and contact information, visit CSO-Inc.org/locations.

About CSO

Clinical & Support Options Inc. is a community-based nonprofit behavioral health agency providing individuals and families with comprehensive holistic clinical and support services throughout western Massachusetts.

With 19 locations throughout five counties (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden and Worcester/North Quabbin), CSO serves nearly 19,000 clients annually with a wide range of responsive and effective interventions and mental health, addiction and recovery, and family services. Visit csoinc.org for more information.

MOVIE REVIEW

News of the World (2020)

By SEAMUS TURNER-GLENNON

CHARLEMONT – English director Paul Greengrass (by the way, look up a picture of this guy – he has a genuinely astounding hairdo going on) established his career with movies made in his home country like *Sunday Bloody Sunday*. Greengrass didn’t truly rise to prominence amongst American audiences until Universal Pictures essentially handed him control of the Jason Bourne franchise, which (with a single exception) he’s stayed on board with since his start with the second entry in the series. He’s made other films in that time though, of course: *United 93*, *Green Zone*, *Captain Phillips*, and most recently, *News Of The World*.

Greengrass is a fine director – in some cases a very good one – but he’s never been an especially innovative one. To be trusted with a franchise like *Bourne*, one sort of has to be: there’s a reason that a then-still-unneutered Doug Liman didn’t stay on the franchise after his first entry.

His films feel like fake blockbusters which characters in a sitcom would see: competent, pretty straightforward spy thrillers with not-too-disorienting action and a protagonist’s story you can invest in for the two hours you spend in the theater, then forget about in time for your dinner date eating the food equivalent of Greengrass’s movies afterwards. And in *News Of The World*, his first step into the western genre, Greengrass proves that if nothing else he has a knack for applying this method to nearly any genre.

News Of The World would be best described as a sort of modern western for those who prefer the “modern” part of that phrase to the “western” bit. If I could take my Blu-ray copy of the Coen Brothers remake of *True Grit*, insert a straw into the disk, and suck out all of the life, I might end up with something like *News Of The World*.



We follow Captain Jefferson Kidd (Tom Hanks), a former Confederate officer (albeit one that talks like he listens to NPR in his free time) who now works as a sort of human news aggregate, traveling town-to-town summarizing goings-on across the world to the citizens. Along the way he takes in a young German (?) girl who he forms a bond with and, eventually, ends up adopting.

His wife is dead. He’s lonely. He likes democracy or something.

All of these character traits are communicated to the audience through the explicit, and really, they just exist to make it seem as though Kidd is more than a stickman drawn on printer paper. They mean nothing and carry no weight, just like every line of dialogue, shot, and set-piece in this movie.

Greengrass shoots the entire thing like he’s the artistic director for a Yankee Candle ad campaign. His only real point of stylization is one which seems to be accidental: every sequence in the dark is almost indiscernible for how badly simulated the darkness is.

It’s impossible to hate *News Of The World*, but it’s impossible to love it, too. By design, *News Of The World* is actively counterintuitive to strong opinions of any kind. It’s inoffensive, sure, but you can’t help but be left with the feeling that, had you simply taped wax paper to the TV screen and sat there for two hours, you would have had essentially the same experience.

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



Gretchen Wetherby, LMT
Bringing Peace to Tired Muscles

Massage Offices in Shelburne Falls and Millers Falls
— Re-opening when infection rates seem reasonable —
gretchenwetherby.massagetherapy.com
gretchenwlmt@gmail.com | 413-824-7063



EDWARDS TREE SERVICE
Matthew Edwards
Certified Arborist


Tree Climbing Specialist • Pruning And Removals
Stump Grinding • Practicing Fine Arboriculture
Residential / Commercial / Municipal
60 Ft. Aerial Lift • Brush Chipping
Fully Insured With Workers Comp. • Insurance and Liability
WWW.MATTEDWARDSTREE.COM
Wendell, MA
Serving Hampshire And Franklin Counties
413-325-7823 or 978-544-7452

Rau's Auto
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIR

(413) 367-2475

531 Turners Falls Rd. Montague

24 hour emergency towing
Best service licensed Mechanics



It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

– William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Readers are invited to send poems to the
Montague Reporter at: 177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376
or to: poetry@montaguereporter.org

February Poetry Page

The Worm-God’s Dream

Think you got your troubles, bud?
Well, I have plenty of my own;
Actually, I’ve only one,
Called Human Flesh and Bone

“Nothingness is blessed boy,”
The Buddha softly said.
The surgeon yelled, “It’s a disease.
For sure he must be dead.”

In order to compute the facts,
We must get one thing straight –
The facts are meaningless to me,
When I am used as bait

So tunnel through the soil, worm,
And till the earth that makes you weak;
As Mother Nature’s sacred germ,
I close my eyes and cease to speak

Let me analyze this now,
And see just what I am:
I’m subterranean divine,
An incandescent sham

But peace of mind still has its day,
Through battles never won;
Perspective finds its rightful place,
Though everything’s undone

And I remain carefree, you know,
Just like the chewing gum,
Detached from my anxiety,
And tolerably numb

Let’s all keep our enamel clean,
And work to help offset decay;
We’re all embedded in the dream,
All right as rain, confusion-gray

– Kevin Smith
Turners Falls

The Fabric

To many, it’s a breath of fresh air,
A restful time to heal and repair.
To others, it’s salt in their wounds,
A time of warfare.

Half of us, always knew
He was just hot air
Bloating the room
With a relentless squeak
Of sputtering fumes
From an ego frail and weak.

The other half assumed
He’s the answer to prayer,
Chosen by god, well groomed,
And deserving of his vanity fair.

They don’t see, self-consumed,
They think he’s treated unfair.
They don’t see the depleted buffoon
Building castles in the air.

Takes but one to spread the deadly spore
Of malicious words to deceive,
But it was them, who smashed the doors,
Scaled the walls and chose to believe
In marching off to the lunatic’s war.

Preserving the nation
Will not be done with Molotov cocktails.
The correctness of information,
Laid out in fine detail
With respect to service and obligation
Are required for democracy to prevail.

There is no time to rest on laurels
Soaking in that fresh air
Congratulating high standards and morals.
This was the prelude to a repetitive nightmare,
Where faith bears arms for a fictitious immortal
Until the fabric of reason, is no longer there.

– Jake Brown
Spokane, WA

If Kids Could Vote

If kids could vote the world would be a better place
There would be no war against race
If kids could vote schools would teach proper history
And climate change wouldn’t be such a mystery
If kids could vote pride would be everyday
Rainbow flags would line the streets all the way
If kids could vote immigrants would be greeted by the real
statue of liberty
Kids would not be held in captivity
If kids could vote gun laws would be set
School shootings would not be such a threat
If kids could vote the world would be set to the right pace
And we’d all live in a better place

– Vivian J. Anshutz
Rural Colorado

Existence

Composed of identical stuff,
wired to the same paradigm,
we are not,
nor could we ever be,
the same,
which is why
you cannot know my pain –
implying no failure
on your behalf
or mine.

Even if you have lived its circumstance,
that is your pain,
not mine.

You can no more grasp
what this horror is like for me
than I could know for you,
our agony,
composed of the same stuff
as ourselves,
never the same.

We cannot express its core,
share its gravity with one another,
living as it does
outside language.

We can only speak around it,
describe it in negative space.
I can tell you how happy we were,
you may share anecdotes of your life together,
neither more truly intimate,
more experiential,
than describing an electrocution
by explaining the physics of electricity.

This loss is an orgasm of pain,
blatantly universal
yet so stunningly personal,
fundamentally unshareable,
that even if
you’ve suffered passage
through this same gate
it opens to a different city
in a different world
from the one I occupy.

My city shrieks like yours,
your city screams like mine,
yet they are not the same.
We share so much
but we cannot share
the sensation of existence,
the one thing we truly have in common
and the insufferable divide
that finally separates us.

– Gary Greene
Greenfield

Contributors’ Notes

Vivian Anshutz writes about herself: “I am fourteen years old. I was born in Florida and adopted into a bi-racial family in Colorado. I love animals especially my horse Duelly and my dog Sarah. My ambition is to become a horse trainer. I identify as pan sexual and I love to play basketball.” Originally from western Massachusetts, Jake Brown is a painter of landscapes, a songwriter, and a poet. Kevin Smith, tuba player and frequent Poetry Page contributor, lives in Turners Falls with his wonderful and inspirational girlfriend, Stephanie. Gary Greene, a lifelong resident of Greenfield, was last month’s featured poet. *Poems In A Time of Grief*, his first book, is available through local book-stores and at Amazon: poemsinatimeofgrief.com.

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

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



• Complete Custodial Services •
• Bonded and Insured •

“We Don’t Cut Corners, We Clean Them!”

Cleaning Franklin & Hampshire Counties since 1972

BKONFONQEQWIYSS . IPY
HMZGESCGQVQFHJW . MMO
FONTLVPEAXQAHDO . SHC
LJKEVOBFBFNAPGR . RED
SECRETBROADCAST . NET

a weekly secret message podcast

**RIVERSIDE
RADIATOR**

General Auto Repair
RADIATORS for CARS - TRUCKS
and HEAVY EQUIPMENT
Foreign and Domestic

Propane
Filling
Station

Route 2, Gill
863-4049 1-800-439-4049
855 Monday - Thursday

Comics and Puzzle

JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

BORDEAUX WHINE

by denis bordeaux



Cool Cats on the Ave

Sytha



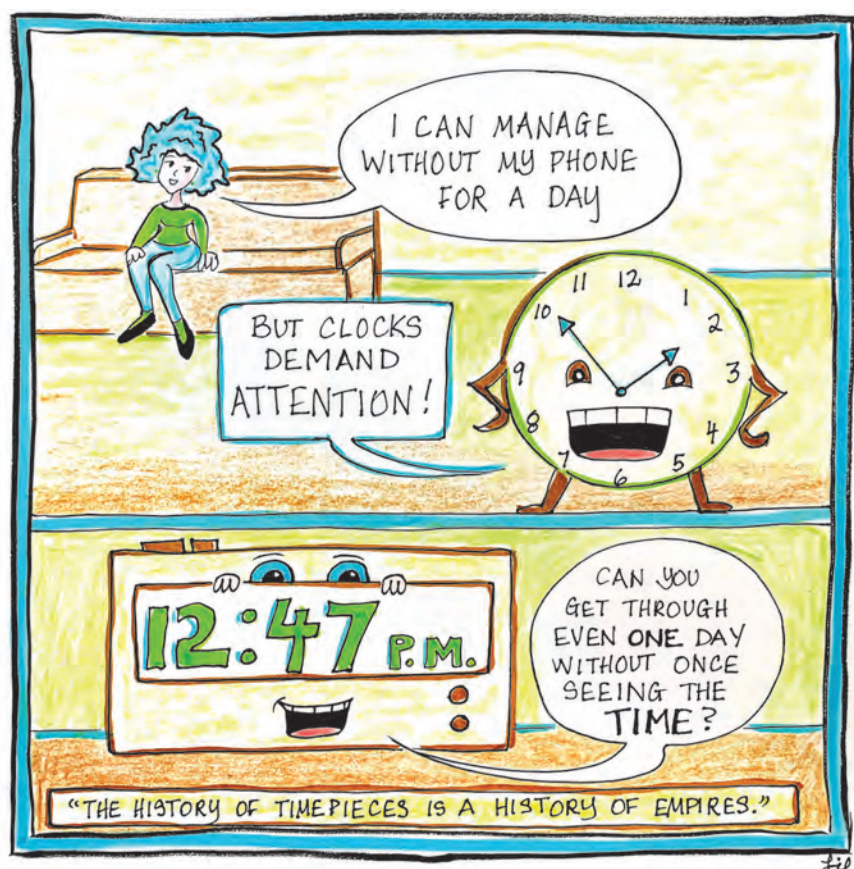
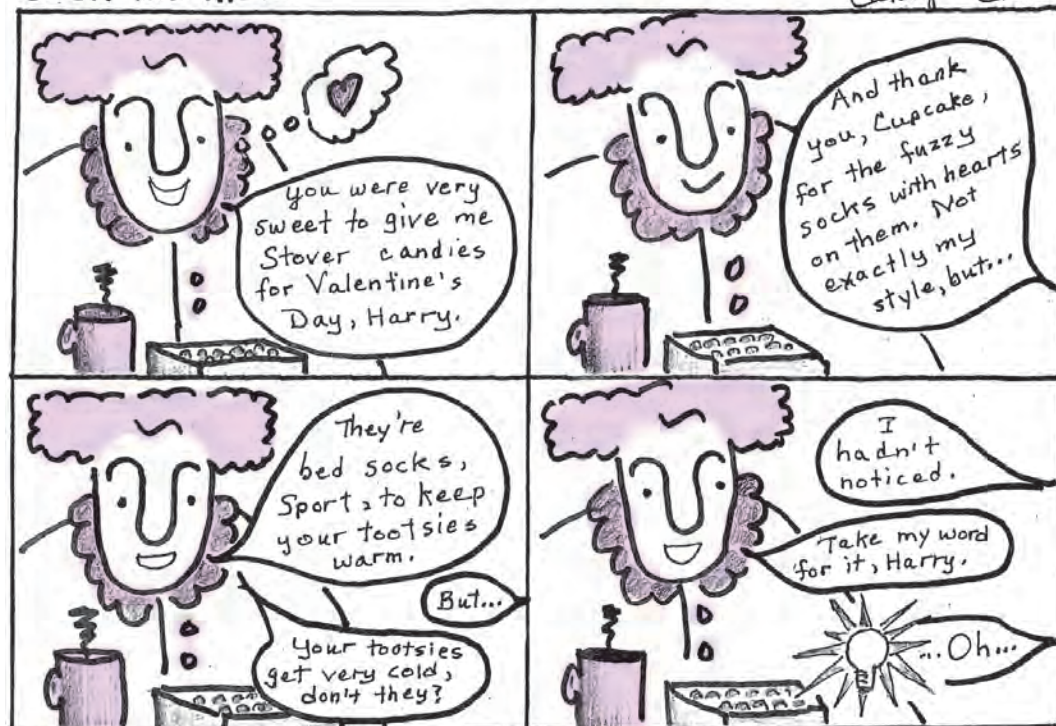
Three Degrees of Warming

By Janice Rowan



OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark



LILLY MOSS COMIC

28 episodes are now available!

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

The Montague Reporter Podcast



MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM!
SUPPERS ABVUT EY RA
ZTAWBUG. DAM QMYP NOLU
PA BELU BARS URAMSN.
- STAMINA GOTH

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

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

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

STONEDWORK
— BUILD. REBUILD. MEND. —
R. SKELTON, WALLER
(413) 367-2435 • skelton.rob@gmail.com

B. RUBIN & SONS INC.
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIRS
Shocks • Tires • Batteries • Starters
Struts • Tune-ups • Brakes • Oil Change
194 MILLERS FALLS RD. • **413-863-2236**
10% SENIOR DISCOUNT FREE ESTIMATES
MASS INSPECTION STATION: NO. 13051

Bryan Hobbs Remodeling LLC
Blown Cellulose Insulation • Spray Foam Insulation
Airsealing • Energy Audits • Replacement Doors & Windows
Email: bryanhobbsremodeling@gmail.com
Now Accepting Credit Cards
Office: (413) 775-9006
Lic # 083982
Reg # 139564
mass save PARTNER
Bryan G. Hobbs
PO Box 1535
Greenfield, MA 01302

SALES • SERVICE • INSTALLATION
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
DOORS & OPENERS
Devine Overhead Doors
Gerry Devine
106 West Street
Hadley, MA. 01035
Hampshire: 586-3161
Franklin: 773-9497

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

French King Restaurant & Motel
SERVING BREAKFAST AND LUNCH
SATURDAY & SUNDAY 7 A.M. TO 2 P.M.
CALL TO CONFIRM: (413) 423-3328

GREAT FALLS APPLE COLUMN

By ANNABEL LEVINE

TURNERS FALLS – The sap is flowing and so are our creative juices as we at the Great Falls Apple Corps prepare for our fourth season gardening and puttering around downtown Turners Falls. Around this time last year we were forced to reevaluate our whole season due to COVID, so this year we hope to be able to plan a return to outdoor programming in a structured, COVID-safe way.

To kick off the season, we’re having a party at the Unity Park Community Garden on Sunday, April 25 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.! This pandemic winter has been lonely and long, and so we wanted to ring in the new season by kicking our yearly clean-up event up a notch.

First way we’re bringing in the fun? Live music! After a year of precious little live entertainment, we’re very much looking forward to hearing some of those good vibrations in person. We’ll be able to put the work songs to use, as we’ve got a lot of tasks planned, including transforming the last untamed corner of the garden into a shady seated area and woodland medicinal garden.

Another party activity we have planned is something we’ve been thinking about for a while: putting up some art on the side of our garden shed! Last year we were able to put a notice box and a sign on the front of our shed, so now it’s time to put some love and care into adorning the First Street side with a beautiful mural inspired by the garden. We will be painting the mural live during the work day, and the public is invited to come check it out and cheer on the painters.

Both the live music and mural painting is made possible by a grant



A previous season’s calendula flower, about to burst open, in one of the Unity Park Community Garden’s “U-Pick” beds.

from the Montague Cultural Council. We appreciate their support in continuing to help us bring free programming to our community!

While we are still planning events for later in the season, one big addition to our roster this year is the continuation of our weekly free table. What started out as a one-time event has, four months later, become a weekly operation. Over the past few months we’ve given away over 500 24-ounce containers of applesauce, soup, and pickles, as well as pounds of produce, bulk rice and beans, masks, clothing, and more.

We are still working on a permanent location going forward, but if you want to find us this week we’ll be at Peskeomskut Park from 12 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, February 27 (weather permitting). Until we have a permanent home, you can find information about the current week’s location by checking our social media or sending us an email.

As we get closer to the nice weather, we will once again be

asking for volunteer help tending gardens, working the free table, and various other activities. Partly because of COVID, and partly in an effort to scale up our operation, we are gingerly stepping our toes into the waters of volunteer management. We have made a SignUp.com account (signup.com/go/cvCjrZn) to list upcoming volunteer shifts and offer folks a chance to sign up for a variety of volunteer tasks like watering and other garden maintenance.

Our immediate volunteer need right now is finding people to help with the free table, which includes both helping run the table on Saturdays, as well as mid-week prep to make soup and other prepared food. Last summer’s gleaned efforts, including the thousands of apples from the Fish Lab orchard, really laid bare the abundance that can be harnessed with enough community support. Each set of hands means being able to provide even more food for our neighbors.

Usually when it’s my turn to

WEST ALONG from page B1

high up there to catch warmth from the first rays reaching puffed-up breast. They perch, hunched, with plumes covering legs and feet in the cold. Warming white breast feathers they face east, with blue backs towards the west.

The sunshine that rises over the west-flowing river valley rim to warm the jays fooled me this year. I usually mark the progress of the season by sun’s movement through my sun-dial sentinel pines that overlook the valley. The sun moved away to the east rising daily between the first two trunks, and now has reached the number six white pine further eastwards with me hardly noticing the shift from January to now late February. The morning sun has been veiled most of the month.

But today, rays reach me at the woodpile *plein air* studio by 7:30. Snow dunes and paw print depressions in the snow blanket, like sand dunes on a summer shore, are suggesting blue shade and shadow, but with winter crystal sparklings.

Minutes later the sun angles on a straight level with my eye, knifing through the tinsel branches of the cherry tree. Each branch bears uncountable diamond beads bright enough to hurt the eyes. How could anyone ever paint that? Brilliant cardinal in crimson spring

garb in the midst of a million reflected lights adds an *accent aigu* that even Claude would envy.

As day progresses rapidly, so does the outside world intrude. The sun will rise brighter and stronger, the snow will resist for days. February’s rays work fast on the rooftops, dripping appears quickly, no time to form icicles. The same sun effect will awaken sap in the maple roots.

I put my notebook away, go inside to thaw my pen. The outside world with other tasks is calling.

Tonight we will light a campfire out of doors under a velvet dome of dark sky and starlight. The white pine branches I’ve carefully gathered and set aside for the occasion will send upward a shower of hovering and floating sparks to the heavens. We are told the moon will be high overhead, as high as it could possibly get this year. So high in fact that I hardly cast a moon shadow when I stand up, craning my neck to look straight up at the gibbous half-moon.

Good. I’m ready to write about that moonlight impression. I can capture that moment, not so fleeting, since the moon is holding steady for me and will be there for hours. I’m pretty sure that puts me one up on Claude Monet. So much for his sunlight and snow effects on the landscape.




write the column I tend to slip into some deep thinking, bordering on oversharing. Maybe if this column had been due last week the tone may have been more introspective, but I felt something change this week. Whether it’s really feeling the sun’s return, or just being extra grateful for heat and running water and a winterized grid, it seems like it’s been easier to think and exist and plan these past few days.

This winter hit deep and isn’t over yet, but with each passing day

we are brought closer to our coming together, masked, on a warm and sunny day to listen to some tunes and get our hands in the dirt. I am very much looking forward to it.

The Great Falls Apple Corps is a volunteer group that advocates for edible landscaping, community gardening, free knowledge, and free food in downtown Turners Falls. Check us out on Facebook and Instagram, and we can be reached via email at greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com.

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



Amherst Books
NOW OPEN NEW HOURS

Tues – Sat
10 AM – 4 PM
8 Main Street

413-256-1547
books@amherstbooks.com

Start the Future Today!

- Wealth Management
- Trust Services
- Estate Settlement



GSB
Wealth Management
& Trust Services

(413) 775-8335 • greenfieldsavings.com





FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CO-OP

144 MAIN STREET GREENFIELD, MA 01301 (413) 773-9567

3 STATE STREET SHELburnE FALLS, MA 01370 (413) 625-2548



About-Face
Computer Solutions

(413) 863-5447
176 Avenue A Suite 2,
Turners Falls
WE FIX COMPUTERS!
www.about-facecomputers.com



Dennis L. Booska
Dennis L. Booska, Jr.

Phone & Fax
413-863-3690

Booska’s Flooring

169 Avenue A, Turners Falls

Member
The Flooring Network.

Tile Lino Carpet



Turners Falls Pizza House

Family Owned & Operated
Serving Turners Falls area for 40 Years
Dave Argy, Family & Staff

**PIZZA, GRINDERS,
DINNERS, SALADS, BURGERS**

www.turnersfallspizza.com

119 Avenue A, Turners Falls ♦ (413) 863-8000

GREAT FALLS HARVEST
fresh • local • creative

Rich flavors from around the world
with a local state of mind.

**NOW TAKING RETAIL
AND PREPARED ORDERS**
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Pickup: 5 to 7 p.m.

863-0023
50 Third Street
Downtown Turners Falls

Professional Painting & Decorating Contractor Since 1900

Celebrating Our 120th Anniversary!

ICOUTURE BROS.

Christian S. Couture, President

★ Commercial
★ Residential
★ Industrial

Tel: (413) 863-4346 Fax: (413) 863-3740
400 Avenue A – PO Box 270 – Turners Falls, MA 01376
www.couturebros.com | HIC Lic. 100326

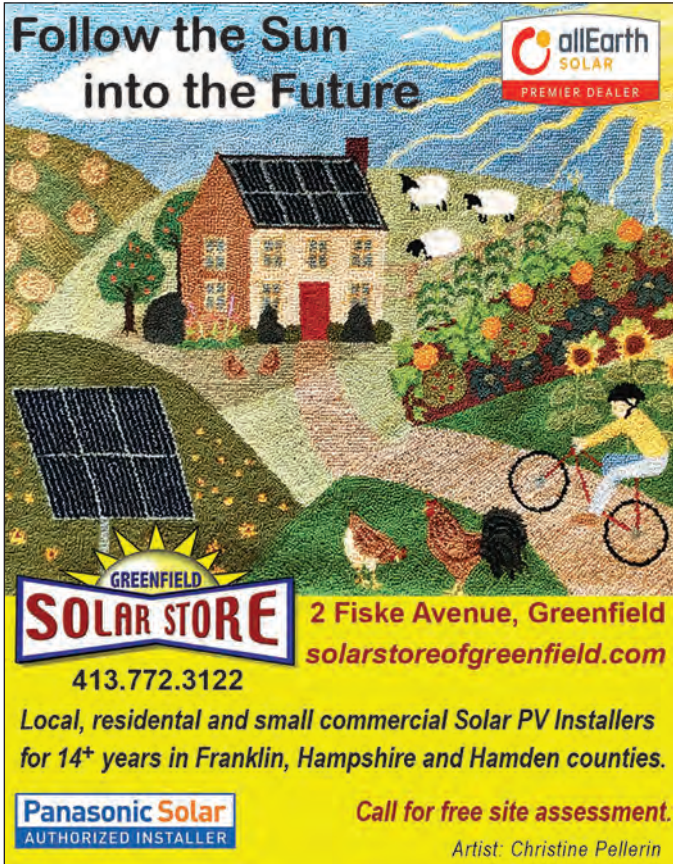
Geri Johnson, Realtor
ABR, CRB, CRS, GRI, SRES
413-863-9736 • GeriJohnson@Realtor.com



66 French King Hwy., Gill WWW.GJAR.COM
GERI JOHNSON, CRS 30 years of experience.



Follow the Sun
into the Future



allEarth SOLAR
PREMIER DEALER

GREENFIELD SOLAR STORE

413.772.3122

Local, residential and small commercial Solar PV Installers
for 14+ years in Franklin, Hampshire and Hamden counties.

Panasonic Solar
AUTHORIZED INSTALLER

2 Fiske Avenue, Greenfield
solarstoreofgreenfield.com

Call for free site assessment.

Artist: Christine Pellerin