

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 19

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 18, 2021

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Town Weighs Event Permits, Given Uncertain Reopening

By JEFF SINGLETON

This week the Montague selectboard inched forward to plan several events in the coming months, amid great uncertainty about the level of public participation and state policy in the context of the pandemic. The latest local metrics show a decline in the number of COVID-19 infections from their early winter peak, and a significant increase in the number of residents vaccinated despite confusion caused by the state rollout.

On Wednesday, Governor Charlie Baker announced an aggressive timetable for expanding the vaccination program. Residents over 60 and many essential workers will be eligible next week, those over 55 in early April, and the entire adult population as of April 19.

Massachusetts is also moving to a less restrictive policy for outdoor and indoor gatherings. Baker recently ordered a return to Phase III, Step 2 of the reopening plan, abandoned last December due to the holiday spike in cases, and plans to move to Phase IV on March 22. This will allow larger outdoor events, but under “strict capacity limits” and a plan approved by the state Department of Public Health.

But will these trends continue until this spring’s annual town meeting – which is technically not subject to state-imposed limits, but certainly to the safety concerns of elected members? Until a summer music festival in Montague Center, and a soapbox derby in the fall?

The Montague selectboard responded to these unknowns, and see **MONTAGUE** page A7

GILL SELECTBOARD

Mud Season Arrives On Local Roads

By JERRI HIGGINS

The Gill selectboard’s meeting Monday night dealt mainly with a personnel committee recommendation for the board of assessors’ clerk salary, discussion of asbestos remediation and other potential work at Gill Elementary School, and mud.

A resident’s letter to the selectboard asked why an 8/10 of a mile stretch of Barney Hale Road is not paved, while the rest of the road is.

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker said that his presumption for why the road had never been paved is because there are no houses on that stretch of road. He noted that the mud ruts are usually navigable, or avoidable by accessing the other end of Barney Hale Road.

“It is more convenient to go through that way, unless there are ruts,” added selectboard member John Ward. “We are a western Massachusetts hill town, and I think every single hill town has to be cognizant of mud season.”

Highway superintendent John Miner said that his crew had inspected the section Monday morning after having filled and graded the road last Thursday.

“When we went back there this morning,” Miner said, “from the weekend traffic on it, the ruts were almost a foot deep.”

“Yes, it is money, but it is not that much money to repair,” Miner said in answer to a question from Ward about the costs of maintaining that section of road. Miner also said that while blacktop roads are safer because salt and sand do not get washed away as easily as on dirt roads, they only last about ten years before needing major repairs.

Miner presented the selectboard with a paving estimate of about “\$208,000 for that gravel section of Barney Hale Road,” having used

see **GILL** page A8

A New Shop in Millers That’s Good for the Sole



Grace Martensen has been trained by Felipe Gonzalez to take over his cobbler business, Mariachi Shoe Repair. She has bought all the equipment and moved the shop to 30 Bridge Street in Millers Falls.

By KAREN GUILLETTE

MILLERS FALLS – Mariachi Shoe Repair on Avenue A in Turners Falls has been a popular and highly appreciated business for the past five years. However, owner and master cobbler Luis Felipe Gonzalez has closed shop and is returning to Isla de Mujeres, Mexico, to his beloved home by the sea. Gonzalez is only 50, but has been working since age eleven. He decided to retire now and enjoy life rather than work until 65. He now plans to start a family business renting apartments in Isla de Mujeres with his sister, providing Mexican cooking lessons free to the renters!

Shoe owners need not mourn the loss of this important service, as it has literally been reborn in Millers Falls. Gonzalez has passed on his knowledge, equipment, customers, and passion for shoe repair

to a skilled and equally passionate cobbler and leatherworker: Grace Martensen.

Martensen, owner of Barefoot Leatherworks, has set up shop at 30 Bridge Street in the center of Millers Falls. Barefoot Leatherworks offers cobbling, leatherwork, and miscellaneous leather repairs, as well as custom leather accessories and tools. It is one of only three shoe repair businesses in the Valley.

Martensen’s passion for leatherworking evolved through a long, slow process. She was thoroughly steeped in mythology as a young woman, and Artemis the Hunter became her favorite Greek goddess. She decided that, like Artemis, she needed a quiver. She set about learning everything she could about leatherwork and created a beautiful, hand-tooled leather

see **COBBLER** page A4

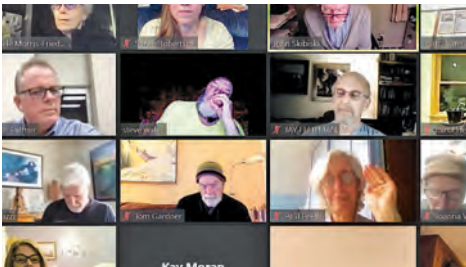
Gazette Management Hosts Its Own Forums

By SARAH ROBERTSON

NORTHAMPTON – Three weeks after the Pioneer Valley NewsGuild held a forum to discuss the union’s concerns about the future of the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, the newspaper’s publisher, Shawn Palmer, hosted a similar event with two of the company’s editors.

“I wouldn’t have moved here and taken over this role with the company if I didn’t feel like it mattered,” said Palmer, who took over as publisher of the *Gazette*, *Greenfield Recorder*, and *Athol Daily News* in January. “We’re in a great situation because we’re an independently owned company.”

On Tuesday night about 70 people attended the first of two public Zoom forums organized by the



About 70 attended the Zoom event.

publisher. Palmer, Massachusetts editor-in-chief Joan Livingston, and *Gazette* managing editor Dan Crowley fielded questions from attendees, listened to praise for their work, and heard complaints about the newspapers’ shortcomings.

The company, Newspapers of New England (NNE), had declined an invitation to send a representative to the February 25 forum hosted by the NewsGuild and featuring US representative Jim McGovern.

see **FORUMS** page A5

Turners Teacher Rewarded for Excellence

By LILY WALLACE

TURNERS FALLS – Megan Bendiksen, a world language teacher at Turners Falls High School, will be honored alongside more than a hundred other outstanding western Massachusetts educators working in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties.

“Especially this year, when teaching remotely, I’m so thankful for the relationships I’ve built with students over the years, and proud of my students for putting in so much hard work despite the difficult circumstances,” wrote Bendiksen.

The Harold Grinspoon Foundation’s Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards program annually honors western Massachusetts educators and seeks to motivate teachers at all stages of their careers. Winners are normally celebrated at a series of banquets attended by their families, colleagues, and friends along with many dignitaries. Due to COVID-19 precautions, these events will be held virtually this year.

“We are honored to have such a well-respected, skilled and dedicated colleague selected as the Gill-Montague recipient of the Grinspoon Award for Excellence in Teaching,” wrote Gill-Montague regional school district superintendent Brian



Megan Bendiksen was surprised Tuesday at school with flowers, balloons, and a citation read by Gill-Montague superintendent Brian Beck.

Beck. “Congratulations and thank you to Megan Bendiksen!”

Award winners also receive a cash prize, along with an engraved plaque, significant course tuition incentives at eight participating

see **TEACHER** page A8

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Annual Budget Constraints Bring Scrutiny to Salaries

By GEORGE BRACE

The Leverett selectboard hosted a townwide budget hearing at their Tuesday night meeting, continuing to wend their way towards creating a FY’22 budget for residents to vote on at town meeting in May.

Finance committee member Ann Delano began the meeting with a brief overview of the budget process, after which the fin com and selectboard went through the entire draft with questions and discussion on individual items. Economic uncertainty and changes brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic contributed to an already complicated process,

but the three-hour-plus meeting ran smoothly. Topics generating concern and debate included equitable pay levels for town employees, changes in the police budget due to state mandates, and school funding.

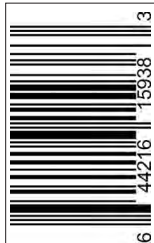
Delano said the budget process began in October with the fin com providing guidance to town departments on raising or lowering their budgets. This year, citing economic uncertainty, the guidance was an increase of no more than 1.3%, matching the official rate of inflation. The fin com then consulted with each department in January, culminating in a draft budget, then formal

see **LEVERETT** page A4

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The Montague Reporter

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Cleaner Rivers For Massachusetts

By JULIA BLATT

CAMBRIDGE – As Massachusetts observes World Water Day this year, our state’s communities have particular reason to celebrate. The Massachusetts legislature recently enacted (and Governor Baker signed into law) a state sewage notification bill. This important new law has been a long time coming.

World Water Day falls on March 22 of each year. Since it first became a United Nations Observance Day in 1993, World Water Day has served as a time to think about, and take action to address, the water crisis. In 2021, World Water Day focuses on the environmental, social and cultural value people place on water. The day provides Massachusetts residents an opportunity to consider the importance of clean water. Clean water is not something to take for granted.

On this year’s World Water Day, Massachusetts Rivers Alliance, the Voice of Massachusetts Rivers, is celebrating a major step the state has taken toward ensuring safer rivers. For years, Mass Rivers led advocacy efforts with many partners to pass a state law requiring sewer operators to establish a notification system. The goal was to let the public know when there is a sewage discharge into a public waterbody, so residents could avoid contaminated waters.

Fecal bacteria poses many public health threats, including ear and eye infections, skin rashes, hepatitis, and inflammation of the intestines. Emerging research also suggests that fecal bacteria can spread COVID-19.

Many cities in the Northeast combine sewage and stormwater collection systems, a relic of long-ago urban engineering. These systems are designed to bypass wastewater treatment facilities if the volume of water is too much for the facilities to handle. For these aging systems, heavy rain sends a mixture of untreated sewage and stormwater into local waterways. Until now, there was no way for the public to know when these discharges occurred, leaving people downstream at risk of contact with contaminated waters.

In 2018, an especially large volume of sewage pollution was discharged into the Merrimack River. As a downstream commu-

nity, Newburyport bore the brunt of all this sewage winding up in their waters.

The problems experienced in Newburyport, however, are not unique. Sewage discharges regularly harm water quality in our state. In Massachusetts, there are 181 combined sewer overflow (CSO) outfalls, and 24 CSO permittees. In a typical year, Massachusetts’ waterways receive almost 3 billion gallons of untreated and partially treated sewage mixed with stormwater from CSOs. These outfalls are concentrated in urban areas, like Fall River, Lawrence, and Lowell, making CSO pollution an environmental justice issue, as the closest waterways to residents of urban neighborhoods may be contaminated without their knowing.

The Massachusetts sewage notification bill was filed during five consecutive legislative sessions. Finally, in the summer of 2020, the bill passed the Massachusetts House of Representatives unanimously, and was sent to the Senate, where it sat until the final hours of the legislative session in January 2021. In quick succession that night, the Senate voted to pass it, and the House agreed to Senate modifications, sending the bill to the Governor’s desk. Governor Baker signed the bill on January 12, 2021.

Raw and partially treated sewage should never be discharged into our waters. Public notification of sewage discharges is an important first step, and Mass Rivers hopes the new law will lead to a greater public willingness to invest in much needed water infrastructure, including separating these combined sewer systems. These are expensive projects, but these investments are critical to protecting our environment, public health and safety, and ensuring environmental justice and climate resiliency. On World Water Day 2021, Mass Rivers encourages all Massachusetts residents to pledge themselves to the goal of clean, safe water for all.

Julia Blatt is executive director of the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance, an alliance of 80 organizations across the Commonwealth. Founded in 2007, Mass Rivers works to strengthen statewide river policies concerning water quality, streamflow, wildlife habitat, and investment in green infrastructure.



Raven Norwich poses in the paint department at Steve’s Aubuchon in Turners Falls. He’s worked in the hardware store since graduating from high school three years ago. For Raven, it’s become the place where everyone knows his name. He especially enjoys mixing paint for people.

Letters to  the Editors

In a Time of Options

Big question: Why is more negative time spent on defaming those who do not agree with us? Arguing usually precludes listening. It feels terrible. It detracts from our being the creative beings we aspire to become.

In claiming to know “True Scientific Facts,” are you aware of being a know it all? Or that just uncontrolled expressiveness blazing fearfully from your eyes above the mask?

What is the main source of your political, environmental and virus related news? Few major media, CNN, FOX, MSNBC, NPR, NY Times, *Democracy Now*, *Good Morning America*... present balanced dissension, especially about viral considerations. Yet few of us would disagree that children thrive outside in a creative environment.

Educators have been directed to mainly instruct via computers. Indoor air is not an ideal atmosphere to promote a healthy balance for the lungs or spirit. Innovative educators willing to confront the elements can devise outdoor programs which

oxygenate the brain. Outdoor curriculum can improve strength and weight, but also raise the spirit while students absorb prescribed anti-COVID vitamin D.

Since majority rules in this country – a democratic decision our Congress still upholds – we may do better locally if we prioritize health, education, and curiosity about those who differ. Why does my sister demonize Jill Biden, think the COVID bailout is going to the wrong people, and that it has little to do with the relief package? I asked her and tried to understand her opinion.

Walking classes, curriculum of the sky, measuring the boundaries of the school, estimating numbers of bricks or building blocks, interviewing construction, sanitation and highway crews, mapping the neighborhood, comparing measurements on scale models to actual size, writing about the architecture, plot size, community makeup, drainage systems, the curbs, the weeds, the gardens and trees, how other residents creatively work on their

homes, apartments, trash and recycling, interviewing residents about how they spend their time, what they read or create, chart the emotional changes in friends and adults, how to make do without spending money, money...

Understanding differences is especially essential during this time of societal and family divisiveness. If we devote time for family respect and on discussing how to accommodate healthy practices for school environments rather than on hurtful arguments about who has injected “the shot” or wears the “correct” mask, then outdoor leadership could guide.

I want to hear outcry about stifling our children in bedrooms and behind masks for hours a day while they absorb electronic, digital rays.

The cold shoulder from allies and sisters we once embraced is not high minded. Let us take the educational system to the streets and breathe air in. It’s still free.

Nina Keller
Wendell

Forum: Access to Housing

We need to change how we view housing. Housing is something that everyone should have as a right. It should be affordable, meet health and safety codes, and be accessible to all. There will still be luxurious homes and those that are more modest. But no one should live on the streets or in a tent in the richest country in the world.

On Saturday, March 27 at 9 a.m., a virtual series on the development of affordable housing in Franklin County will begin. Greening Greenfield and Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution have joined together to develop “Housing is a Human Right: We Can Make It Happen,” a nine-session virtual forum that will consider options for affordable housing and engage

the residents of Franklin County and the North Quabbin in making these opportunities into a reality.

The planning committee has met for 18 months to plan this forum, which will cover analysis of why housing has become a commodity, the real-life situations of those who have difficulty acquiring a home, and community responses that can increase the availability of affordable, appropriate permanent housing.

Please go to our website, housingishumanright.com, for more details about the conference and to register for any or all workshops and the keynote.

Doug Selwyn
Greenfield

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By NINA ROSSI

Artworks by nearly 40 local artists are on display at **Looky Here** for their annual submission show, “Looky Here 2021.” Gallery viewing and shop hours are Saturdays, 3 to 6 p.m., or by appointment until the show closes on May 1. Masks are mandatory and the gallery is limited to seven guests at a time. Appointments can be made by emailing LookyHereGreenfield@gmail.com. The gallery is located at 28 Chapman Street in Greenfield.

The Amherst Center Cultural District (ACCD) invites artists to **transform Amherst** into an art gallery. Artists are invited to showcase art in downtown Amherst windows on streets, walkways, and municipal areas from June through Labor Day weekend.

There is no fee to apply. Visit www.amherstcenterculturaldistrict.org for details.

Five new exhibits open at the **Brattleboro Museum & Art Center** (BMAC) today, Thursday, March 18, including an exploration of flowers as a way to mark loss; new work by Jennifer Mack-Watkins that, “[uses] aesthetics as a form of resistance against the erasure and invisibility of African American culture,” in the artist’s words; a kinetic sculpture installation by Adria Arch; drawings by Kenny Rivero; and the biennial GLASSTASTIC exhibit, including a look back at the first 10 years of this popular collaboration between K-6 students and glass artists.

A reception with the artists and curators will take place later in the spring. All five new exhibits will be on view through June 13, 2021.

CISA’s website has a new map showing **Healthy Incentives Program retailers** in western Mass. If you have SNAP, you can earn an instant rebate on fresh fruits and vegetables purchased at any of the locations on the map through HIP. CISA will keep the vendors on this map updated every month. Visit www.buylocalfood.org to view.

Also, the same group is looking for writers, performers, and others

with **stories to tell about farms and local food** for their “Field Notes: An Evening of Storytelling and Connection” this spring.

Do you have a story you’d love to share? Pitch it to them by March 26 and you could be part of this year’s COVID-conscious, online show! Find more information at www.buylocalfood.org.

This Friday, March 19 at 4 p.m. you may watch a YouTube premiere of **Revival/50:4, four musicians improvising** to the Augusta Savage Gallery’s theme of “Healing Bodies.” Angelica Sanchez, Avery Sharpe, Reggie Nicholson, and Joe Fonda reflect on questions that explore what needs healing in this world, and what keeps our bodies healthy and whole.

Along with the music you will see photos, scores, simple phrases, and longer dialogue in response to these questions. This event is free and open to the general public. For information, email asg@umass.edu or visit fineartscenter.com/4Musicians.

The Franklin-Hampshire Career Center offers an online **stress management session** with guest speaker Dr. William Sharp on Thursday, March 25 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

“What Now? Long Term Stress Management” will guide participants through ways to identify and manage long term stress created by the “new normal” we find ourselves living in. Log in to the session and share your experiences with Dr. Sharp, a psychoanalyst and teaching professor.

Advance registration at masshire-careers.org is required.

The **Fine Arts Center** at UMass announces two upcoming virtual performances for school age audiences, available to educators and students free of charge.

On Tuesday, March 30, Global Arts presents “Infinitely Yours,” a visually intriguing, multi-media work by animator Miwa Matreyak. Suitable for Grades 5 through 12, “Infinitely Yours” is a visual experience exploring the news headlines we see every day. “See Miwa’s shadow shape-shift to experience the world from various perspectives: an earth overflowing with trash, a

person drowning in a plastic-filled ocean and a school of fish caught in a trawling net,” reads the press release.

The second event happens on April 9 and features Manual Cinema’s version of “Leonardo & Sam.” Inspired by the beloved children’s books by Mo Willems, the work is full of mind-bending projection, DIY cinema, immersive sound, and music. Students in pre-K through grade 4 are invited.

To register for these events, go to www.umass.edu/facforms/GAReservation.

Organizers for the **Green River Festival** have decided to schedule the event for this year. They have moved it to August 27, 28, and 29, and the location will be at the Franklin County Fairgrounds instead of Greenfield Community College.

Tickets are now on sale, and all tickets held from the 2020 festival will be honored for 2021.

Information is available at www.greenriverfestival.com.

Are you dealing with someone who has dementia? **Dementia Friends** are folks who have attended a one-hour information session to learn five key messages about living with dementia, and the simple things everyone can do to make a difference for people touched by dementia. **Village Neighbors** is offering a Dementia Friends information session on Tuesday, March 23 at 4 p.m. with Nancy Spittle, RN. You may RSVP for the Zoom session by emailing generalinfo@villagenighbors.org.

Silverthorne Theater presents an **online, interactive theater production called “The Waiting Room,”** written and directed by Steve Wangh. The play moves through two worlds and invites audiences to enter the Bardo, the liminal space between one earthly life and the next.

“It’s a fantastical live-on-Zoom play,” reads the announcement, “a comedic, gender-bending theatrical tour-de-force in which actors and audience can all reflect on the repercussions of the *annus horribilis* we’ve just endured, and perhaps even alter our personal karma. Creatively testing the limits of the Zoom platform, this dramatic experiment in cyber-rebirth takes us beyond our personal and societal divisions to affirm the very essence of what it means to be a human.”

It’s happening on two weekends, March 26 and 27 and April 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. with 3 p.m. matinees on March 28 and April 4. Tickets and more information available at [\[thornetheater.org/special-events\]\(http://thornetheater.org/special-events\).](http://silver-</p>
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Great Falls Books Through Bars hopes to get specific requests for **books to incarcerated folks** in western Mass. A list of titles is maintained on the Massive Bookshop website. You may order from them, or check the titles to see if you already have one you can donate.

Any books or check donations can be mailed to PO Box 391, Greenfield, MA 01302 or dropped off Saturdays from 12 to 3 p.m. – or by appointment – at 113 Ave A in Turners Falls.

The list is here massivebookshop.com/collections/gfbb-local. Get in touch with GFBTB by emailing gfbbooksthroughbars@riseup.net.

Mass Humanities is pleased to announce a new sponsorship that will **support local history organizations** in providing online programs and events. The Bridge Street Fund for Local History will sponsor free online programs hosted by Massachusetts historical societies, centers, museums, or historic sites, helping these institutions recover lost income, and enabling free access to the humanities.

Organizations can apply for sponsorships for up to three online programs per eligible applicant, at \$500 per program (\$1,500 maximum). Programs must be open to the general public and must be free to attend. Grants will be awarded every 3 to 4 weeks. For more information, contact Sara Seng at sara@heardstrategy.com.

Registration is now open for **NELCWIT’s annual fundraiser and celebration**, “The Power to Persevere: Rising Together!” The virtual celebration will be held on April 15 from 6 to 7 p.m. and will include Priscilla Ress, formerly of Channel 40 News, as emcee, and GCC President Dr. Yves Salomon-Fernandez featured speaker. Join The Friends of NELCWIT and listen to upbeat music with locally grown, all-girl rock and roll band Kalliope Jones.

“The Power to Persevere event offers a time for the community to come together and support the amazing work that NELCWIT has been doing in the community for over forty years,” writes Mary Kociela of the Friends of NELCWIT. “The Friends are excited to host this wonderful celebration of the power and resilience of survivors.”

For more information, contact Carla at info@nelcwit.org.

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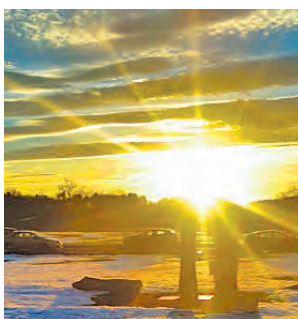
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Sunwheel Live Broadcasts Mark the Equinox

AMHERST – The public is invited to join UMass Amherst astronomers for live broadcasts from the Sunwheel this Saturday, March 20, the first day of spring. The webinar-format broadcasts will begin at 7 a.m. for sunrise and 6:30 p.m. for sunset, and will be streamed live from the center of the Sunwheel. Because of the COVID pandemic, the **public is asked not to come to the Sunwheel** during the equinoctial sunrise and sunset this year.

The UMass Sunwheel is a solar calendar made up of a stone circle, like England’s famous Stonehenge. Also like Stonehenge, the Sunwheel’s standing stones mark the location of the rising and setting sun during equinoxes and solstices.

Each of this spring’s broadcasts will begin with a 20-minute introduction to the Sunwheel,



followed by an opportunity, weather permitting, to see the alignment as the sun rises and sets against the Sunwheel’s tall stones. This unique calendar circle was designed by the late UMass professor of astronomy Judith Young, and has hosted public events celebrating the change of seasons since 1997.

During the presentations Stephen Schneider will explain the changing positions of the sun, moon, and Earth, and how the standing stones of the Sunwheel act as a calendar to mark the start of each season. He and other UMass astronomers at the webinar will be available to answer questions about the Sunwheel as well as other questions about astronomy.

On the day of the March equinox, the sun crosses the celestial equator, passing from the southern to the northern half of the sky. This year, the crossing occurs at 5:37 a.m. EDT, which

marks the astronomical start of spring in the Northern Hemisphere. On this date, the length of day and night are nearly equal, which gives us the term *equi-nox*, or equal-night.

On the equinoxes, the sun rises nearly due east and sets nearly due west everywhere on Earth except close to the poles. At the North Pole, this date marks the start of six months of sunshine, and at the South Pole, six months of night.

Again, please do not come to the Sunwheel on the equinox this year. Visitors are welcome at other times, and should wear masks and be prepared for especially wet footing. The Sunwheel is located south of McGuirk Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road, or Amity Street, about one-quarter mile west of University Drive.

The public webinar will be hosted on Zoom: umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/92907531333. For more information, visit the UMass Department of Astronomy’s homepage.

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COBBLER from page A1

quiver, which can be seen hanging on the wall of her shop.

This interest in leatherwork has provided her with a deep knowledge of animal skins, including how to tan pelts with hemlock and other tree barks to create subtle differences in the coloring of the leather. She relishes each part of the process of creating and working leather products, noting that she finds it “incredibly satisfying” and says she falls “in love with it more every day.”

Meanwhile, Martensen has a rather unusual relationship to shoes. She grew up in Montague, was homeschooled during her early years, and spent much of the time not wearing shoes, even in the winter. She still goes barefoot whenever possible. Unlike many young women her age, she never gave shoes much thought.

But that all changed last year when she was introduced to Gonzalez at Mariachi Shoe Repair. Her mentor began learning leatherwork in Mexico when he was only eleven years old, and shoes became his passion.

Gonzalez has nothing but praise for Martensen and her skill and dedication to her work. He notes that of the six students he has trained over the years, she was the most focused, determined, and passionate about the work and about the business. He urges customers to be a bit patient, as she is doing this alone and is just starting out. But he knows she will succeed, he says, because she has *las ganas* —

the strong desire to do this work.

Martensen is equally appreciative of her mentor. As she notes, his mentoring style perfectly matched her learning style. He encouraged her to puzzle out the challenge of each repair job, and then showed her his solutions. This allowed her to become completely immersed in the process and helped to develop her own passion for shoe repair.

When Gonzalez offered to sell her his business after nearly a year of mentoring, she leapt at the opportunity.

According to Martensen, “I’ve had a wealth of opportunities and have developed the habit of saying yes to them.” To date, she says, this approach has led her in good directions.

“Barefoot Leatherworks is an homage to my barefoot roots, and to the practices Felipe taught me,” says Martensen. She cherishes the 100-year-old leather sewing machine and all of the traditional cobbling tools she purchased from Gonzalez. She is committed to ensuring that the dying art of cobbling is not lost to future generations.

This art has been threatened in recent decades due to the popularity of shoes made to be thrown away, rather than repaired, in order that new shoes have to be purchased. Martensen points out that it is very satisfying to repair shoes that might otherwise end up in the landfill! Happily, there are plenty of leather shoes in need of repair, and many would agree that a good cobbler is a valuable community asset.

One of Martensen’s visions for

Martensen operates her 100-year-old leather stitching machine at Barefoot Leatherworks.

her business is to “repurpose anything I can.” She looks forward to taking old leather jackets that are no longer wanted, or purses that can’t be repaired, and giving them a new life as new leather creations, or even as patches for leather shoes.

Barefoot Leatherworks is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon. Check out www.barefootleatherworks.com or call (413) 768-7723 for more information.

LEVERETT from page A1

budget hearings. The committee eventually recommends a budget to the selectboard, who brings it before the town to be voted on.

The fin com is a “review and recommend committee,” Delano explained. She suggested attending school committee hearings to learn more about the school budget, and noted that the draft budget documents were on the town’s website for residents to see. She wrapped up by noting, “Every year a different department has something unusual come up. That’s the cycle.”

Turning to the budget itself, expenses for town employees were discussed at length, and illustrated some of the challenges involved.

Police and Fire

Police chief Scott Minckler was questioned on the police budget, which came in higher than fin com’s guidance. Minckler pointed to a full-time officer being hired at a step higher than budgeted for due to experience, and said he had a five-year plan for winnowing down the part-time staff, but still needed to backfill time off for full-time officers with part-timers.

He then reiterated that his sense, from meetings with Massachusetts professional police organizations and other information he has seen, is that the state is going to end support for part-time policing in favor of full-time, and not cover large expenses associated with the change, such as contractual obligations towns have to pay officers while they attend the full-time academy. The chief said the town was going to “have a lot of thinking to do.”

Chair Julie Shively commented that she wanted legislators to know that the rumors she’s hearing about the change are “simply not workable,” and that communities need more information from the state “right now” so they can plan for the future.

Resident Becky Tew brought up the idea of looking into hiring social workers as a way to meet some policing needs and save costs. Minckler responded that he thought the department got 20 calls per year which might fit in with that idea. He said the small number might make hiring a social worker unfeasible, but it was “difficult to say.”

Delano commented that as has been done in the past, the community will have to make a de-

cision on how much risk they can afford.

Raises over the 1.3% guidance for the fire chief and deputy chief were also questioned. The raises in the budget were the second half of an increase agreed to the previous year, which the chiefs postponed. Fire chief John Ingram said he is paid for 19 hours per week, but sometimes puts in 30 to 40, and the department was at the Joshua Hill fire every day for a month. He also cited the amount of time spent filling out paperwork for grants, which brought in \$30,000 last year.

Shively said part of the reason the raise was split between two years was to see if the town could handle the expense, and that down the road, the town will have to look into a full-time chief.

Town Clerk

A yearly bonus of \$1,000 for the town clerk position, based on completion of a state certification program, was questioned by Shively due to budget concerns, and it being a new annual expense once adopted. Shively said she was in favor of a lower amount, but wanted to look more deeply into it and take it up next year.

Board member Tom Hankinson said, “I think it’s a good idea for the amount of money involved,” and he liked that the program involved recertification, so clerks would stay current.

Town clerk Lisa Stratford responded that there was a lot of work that went on at town hall that isn’t acknowledged on the pay line, and that she will be also be asking for an increase in hours next year from her current 12 per week. Stratford said the training in state law was invaluable due to constant changes in all aspects of the job, which includes “everything from dog-licensing to running a federal election.” She also noted that the town clerk and administrator don’t have a union to advocate for them as those in other town departments do in presenting the request.

Tew said she wanted to bring up the value of personal contributions in looking at the amount of the stipend request, compared to large expenses in other departments on “objects.”

Resident Kip Fonsh said he thought the public discussion was “a little disconcerting,” and asked about personnel policies on such discussions. Delano responded that it was brought forward as a special article at town meeting, so it wasn’t discussed in a personnel setting.

High School Assessment

Dissatisfaction with state regulations for choosing an assessment method for regional school funding, and the town of Shutesbury’s role in the Amherst-Pelham district, dominated a discussion of the education budget.

School committee vice chair Stephanie Seeger said there was a vote coming up for the district the following Tuesday, in which the district budget and assessment would be chosen, and different scenarios were presented at the meeting.

One of the problems cited was the possibility of the four towns not agreeing on an assessment method, which would trigger reversion to a “statutory method” in which Shutesbury would pay less than in methods favored by the other three towns. Shively said she has written to state senator Jo Comerford asking for special legislation changing the law, but has not heard back.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis suggested taking a vote indicating Leverett’s choice, in order to go on record, as Shutesbury has done. The fin com and the selectboard both voted to endorse one assessment method. Shively voted against it, smiling at the irony of casting a protest vote, as she favored a different choice.

A noisy dog hearing was postponed to 8:45 due to the length of the budget discussion, but the complainant failed to show up for a second time. The selectboard heard the dog owner’s side of the story, commented on the inconvenience of two canceled hearings, and suggested the two sides seek mediation.

Other Business

Tom Hankinson said the selectboard had received four or five letters on the subject of some Leverett police officers not yet choosing to get vaccinated.

Chief Minckler responded that he is continuing to work on persuading the officers, and said he felt the rollout of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine showed promise in regards to the situation.

The chief also responded to a complaint from a resident who saw three police officers chatting with someone in a car with no one wearing a mask. Chief Minckler said one of the three was a Leverett officer, and he has reminded him masks are required.

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FORUMS from page A1

While most attendees said they were loyal readers of the *Gazette* and proud of the newspaper, some criticized a lack of investigative reporting, sparse coverage of some community events, and a general decline in the quality and volume of news over the years.

A second forum will be held today, Thursday March 18 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required.

“A lot of us on this call are concerned looking at the landscape of journalism in this country,” said attendee Tom Gardner. “I imagine a lot of us would like to hear from you about the financial health of the *Gazette*.”

Palmer answered that times are difficult right now, but that he is optimistic about the paper’s future.

Soon after closing the onsite printing press last summer, NNE put the *Gazette*’s Northampton headquarters up for sale for a price of \$4.2 million. No one invited to ask questions or share comments during the forum broached the topic. Questions submitted by the *Reporter* prior to the forum went unanswered, and this reporter was not called to ask any questions during the live event. The chat function was disabled throughout the discussion.

“The company is doing okay right now. We are looking at having a much better year in 2021,” Palmer said. “As the advertising increases and the paper gets bigger, there’s room for more content, and there’s room for more journalists.”

Union Negotiations

Towards the end of the discussion, Jeff Jones, president of the Western Mass Area Labor Federation, brought up NNE’s ongoing negotiations with the NewsGuild.

“At what point does the *Gazette*’s ownership intend to finish contract bargaining with the NewsGuild?” Jones asked. “That would go a long way to demonstrating the commitment to the stability of the paper, which I think everybody at tonight’s event here wants to see.”

Palmer said he was unable to comment on the status of negotiations with the NewsGuild.

“We all want the same things, and nothing would make us happier than having the NewsGuild in the building,” he said.

For almost two years the NewsGuild, a “wall-to-wall” union representing all non-managerial workers at the *Gazette*, has been negotiating its first contract with NNE. The union was formalized by a 40-29 vote in December 2018. According to union members, the company has resisted clauses protecting against outsourcing and ensuring scheduled cost-of-living increases. Seyfarth Shaw, a top-tier union avoidance law firm, represents the company in the negotiations.

Jones and other attendees asked whether the company has considered other business models, such as com-

munity ownership, worker ownership, or nonprofit status.

“Maybe the best way to sustain a newspaper isn’t by private ownership or advertising,” said *Gazette* reader and contributor Claudia Lefko. “When I was Googling independent newspapers that depend on grants and foundations, they are not driven by revenue from advertising.”

Palmer replied that he would present proposals from the community to NNE president and CEO Aaron Julien, who did not attend the forum.

Former *Gazette* employees used the forum to compare their past experiences with the present day. A former newspaper delivery person, Steve Wales, said he was dismayed by the paper’s relatively small size and the fact that digital-first news outlets like MassLive often beat it to breaking news.

“After 35 years of growing up in this town and [the *Gazette*] being a local newspaper, it doesn’t seem to be local anymore,” Wales said. “I’m just curious as to why it doesn’t seem local. Nobody seems to catch things before somebody else does.”

Crowley, who has served as managing editor at the *Gazette* for almost five years, said he receives around 100 emails per day from readers with news tips, comments, and requests for coverage. “The phone calls and emails and letters that we’ve gotten during this last year have really been appreciative,” he said. “I got a real sense how valued this newspaper is to the community.”

When asked how many reporters the newspaper has on staff, Crowley said there were seven, including the sports and arts reporters. The *Gazette* covers a region of over 200,000 people, including all of Hampshire County, Holyoke, and some southern towns of Franklin County.

Since NNE outsourced printing to the media conglomerate Gannett’s facility in Auburn last summer, the newsrooms must meet an earlier nightly deadline of 9 p.m.

“It’s a bit of a challenge with our earlier deadlines, but we’re probably going to use our online services more,” Livingston said. “If things turn around, and I’m hopeful they are, then we can invest more in community coverage.”

Both editors agreed that given more resources they would like to devote more coverage to police and the judicial system.

Managerial Changes

“I’m learning more about our communities again, and I’m really pleased with the response I’ve received from the staff here and the readers,” Livingston said.

The Northampton newsroom manages various aspects of the *Greenfield Recorder* and *Athol Daily News*. In December 2019 NNE announced it would close the Athol office of the *Daily News*, two years after purchasing the independent newspaper.

The *Gazette* lost more than half its staff in 2020 in multiple rounds of layoffs, including the outsourcing of print operations and other work. In December NNE fired the *Gazette*’s last editor-in-chief Brooke Hauser, a move that surprised newspaper staff and left the paper without a lead editor. Livingston’s role was expanded to “Editor-in-chief for the Pioneer Valley” the next day.

Livingston, a mystery novelist residing in Shelburne Falls, emphasized her depth of experience in the news industry, and her hopes of leading the newspapers towards a brighter future. She began her career covering the town of Worthington for the *Gazette* on a typewriter before moving to New Mexico to serve as editor of the *Taos News*. She moved back to western Massachusetts three years ago to be near family, not intending to take another newspaper job, she told readers in a letter announcing her new role.

Several attendees at Tuesday night’s forum mentioned that they missed the arts coverage and events listings in *Hampshire Life*, a magazine that ceased publication before Palmer took over as publisher.

“I have to be honest, I had to look it up,” Palmer said of the magazine. (The “Contact” page on the *Gazette* website provides information on how to submit news and events to *Hampshire Life*.)

“Since *Hampshire Life* disappeared I’ve taken over the job of reporting on classical music events in my own publication, *Good News About Classical Music* email newsletter,” said attendee Peter Jones. “More of this type of thing is going to happen where individual people, whether affiliated with the *Gazette* or not, are going to take on jobs of reporting....”

“You have to maintain journalistic integrity. Everybody needs an editor, and too many people don’t have one.”



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Two Town Meetings

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the Erving selectboard, finance committee, and capital planning committee met to review the draft warrant for the May annual town meeting.

The draft warrant included a general operating budget for FY22 of \$5.07 million, \$5.35 million for elementary, secondary and technical school expenses, and \$415,000 for capital improvement projects. The warrant also includes putting \$273,000 into the stabilization fund and \$150,000 into capital stabilization.

Town administrator Bryan Smith said the final version of the annual town meeting warrant will be ready for selectboard and fin com approval at a meeting on March 27, held before a special town meeting on the same date.

Warrant articles for the March 27 drive-up STM include extra money for the police department, to cover retirements and training of new officers; clarifying the title to the former school building at 17 Moore Street; rescinding authority to borrow \$17.9 million for sludge dryers at POTW#2; paying for assessment and consulting regarding decorative street light repairs; buying a solar-powered message board; and funding the purchase of an emergency generator for POTW#1.

At the March 1 joint meeting at the selectboard and finance committee, the fin com voted to recommend all seven articles. The STM will be held in the Erving Elementary School parking lot.

Sewer Lines

The wastewater pipe going from the Route 2 pump station to POTW#2 froze during a cold snap

several weeks ago. After inspection, it was determined that the repair could cost as much as \$48,000.

Bryan Smith told the board that the state Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance had approved the town’s request for an emergency waiver to speed up procurement. He said he would solicit three quotes from contractors, and present a recommendation at the next selectboard meeting.

Engineering consultant Tighe & Bond provided an estimate of probable construction cost for replacing the wastewater force main under Arch Street at \$1.83 million. This is higher than an estimate prepared two years ago, which the 2019 annual town meeting used to authorize \$1.57 million for the project.

Bryan Smith said there were reasons for the increased cost, such as reducing harm to wetlands associated with Keyup Brook and obtaining an easement under the railroad tracks.

He asked the board to authorize publishing the invitation for bids on March 17. The deadline for submissions is April 14.

COVID Restrictions

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith asked whether the town should consider relaxing some COVID-related safety protocols once town employees are fully vaccinated. He said the protocols should be relaxed for employees alone in their offices or in vehicles.

Selectboard member William Bembury cautioned that the Centers for Disease Control recommends continued social distancing and mask wearing after vaccination. However, for employees working alone, he also felt relaxing the rules would be acceptable.

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on March 17, 2011: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Montague Precinct Boundaries and Town Meeting Representation Discussed

Seven people turned up to participate in a public hearing last week to discuss the possible reduction of the number of precincts and polling places, and elected town meeting members, in the town of Montague.

Town clerk Deb Bourbeau told attendees the state requires towns to examine their precinct boundaries in light of new census data every ten years, and make adjustments to keep precincts roughly equal in total population. She said John Barr, the state’s precincting coordinator, had asked her, “Why do you have six precincts?” when Montague, with a population of approximately 8,500, is only required to have three.

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell said he could remember when Montague used to have three precincts – up until the time it voted to move from open town

meeting to representative town meeting in 1964.

Bourbeau calculated it would save the town about \$1,600 a year to cut the number of precincts by half. She said the town may someday be forced by the state to abandon its time-honored practice of counting paper ballots from a hand-cranked box, and reducing the number of polling stations would be a proactive move to cut down on the expense of electronic voting machines.

Reaction to the proposal among the seven people in attendance was generally favorable.

Bourbeau also raised the question of reducing the number of town meeting representatives from 126. “The last couple of years we have had trouble getting a quorum,” she said.

“Do we need to have representative town meeting?” asked Peter Golrick, a representative of Precinct 2.

“I thought that would be a good start to a charter commission,” said selectboard chair Pat Allen, suggesting the town separate the open town meeting question from the immediate proposal to reduce the number of precincts. “It’s time to take a look at the structure of the town.”



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The Children's Page

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DOT & NOVELLA LOVELIGHT

WORDS BY BEVERLY KETCH & PICTURES BY HANNAH BROOKMAN

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MY HEART HAS CROSSED A MUSICAL BRIDGE INTO THE LAND OF JOY AND EASE! ALL DANCERS ARE SPUN INTO ONE, IN THE SWIRLS OF YOUR SOUNDS!

THEN QUEEN AUTUMN ROSE TO HER FULL GRAND HEIGHT AND QUIETED THE ROOM IN AN INSTANT, RAISING HER WAND HIGH.

COME FORWARD FLORA AND FAUNA! THIS BALL IS IN YOUR HONOR, FOR MAKING HUMAN FRIENDS AND SAVING OUR SWEET DOMAIN IN THE MIDST OF THE HUMAN WORLD! IF WE WERE DRIVEN FURTHER AWAY FROM HUMANS, THEIR HEARTS WOULD GROW EVEN COLDER TOWARDS MOTHER NATURE AND WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY WOULD DO NEXT!

BUT YOU HAVE FOUND US IMPORTANT NEW ALLIES THAT WE MAY WIN OVER ENTIRELY TO OUR CAUSE OF FLOWERS AND BRANCHES, CATERPILLARS, BUMBLEBEES, FOUNTAINS, WINGS AND WONDERS ALL IN MINIATURE TO THEM BUT TO US THEY ARE EVERYTHING!

AND WITH HER WORDS A SHIMMER ROSE FROM HER WAND AND A GRAND CROWN OF GREEN JEWELS APPEARED ON FLORA'S HEAD.

SHE CURTSIED BEFORE HER AND TURNING TO THE CROWD OF FAIRIES, RECITED A POEM, AS WAS THEIR CUSTOM ON SUCH OCCASIONS.

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PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

MONTAGUE from page A1
perhaps even some unknown unknowns associated with them, by gingerly taking a few steps forward Monday night.

The most immediate problem is the timing and venue for an annual town meeting, which by a state enabling law is scheduled for the first Saturday in May. This year that falls on May 1, so given the need to finalize budget recommendations and distribute materials to elected town meeting members, the date is fast approaching.

The board has reviewed a range of options, including an outdoor meeting at Turners Falls High School, similar to last year; an indoor meeting in the high school gym; a meeting in a tent; and a virtual meeting, similar to last month's special town meeting.

The outdoor option generated discussion of the need to delay the town meeting until late May or early June, as was done last year. This would also give town committees more time to finalize and distribute the warrant, but would potentially cause the meeting to occur after the annual election. Last year's election was moved until late June, but the state has not given towns that option this year.

The virtual town meeting option produced a good deal of sentiment in favor of breaking the meeting into several pieces on different days.

All of the possibilities were discussed at length again Monday night, giving the meeting a certain *déjà vu* quality. "I guess we still really don't know what exactly we should do," selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz began. "We do know a little more now, but only enough to be dangerous."

Town administrator Steve Ellis listed the "four, or maybe five, options" described above, including holding the meeting under an "enormous tent." He said the town has "an evolving situation, which to our relief has been evolving in a positive direction, but we don't know how we'll feel in four weeks or eight weeks." He added that changing conditions could affect "town meeting [members'] perceptions."

Kuklewicz said he believed a virtual town meeting would have to be broken into two meetings, with a preference for consecutive nights. Town meeting moderator Chris Collins said he would not be available

on Saturday, June 12, and raised the possibility of having meetings on several weeknights. He wondered whether town meeting members would be comfortable meeting outdoors, or in the school gym.

Kuklewicz called for a vote delaying the meeting, but waiting to decide on an exact date and venue after polling town meeting members.

Ellis said it was important to "lock in" the town's busy legal counsel for a spring date, and noted that weekends in June could face conflicts with high school and college graduations. He floated the possibility of taking a closer look at June 5.

Kuklewicz then suggested a meeting on June 19, but finance committee chair Jen Audley noted that this was a state holiday that celebrates the end of slavery in the United States. That idea was dropped.

Ellis noted that the May 18 annual election posed a "challenge" for a June town meeting due to the election of new members. Town clerk Deb Bourbeau said that it often takes her several weeks to get in touch with new members, particularly those elected through write-ins.

The board voted to postpone the annual town meeting to a "date to be determined," and to poll town meeting members on their preferences. The warrant would be targeted for completion on May 21. Kuklewicz advised "working on the logistics more."

Music Festival

The board also continued a discussion from the previous week about a proposed global music festival in Montague Center called Barbès in the Woods. The event was a great success in 2019, but had to be canceled last summer due to the pandemic. The previous week the board discussed a variety of issues with two representatives of the event organizer, Laudable Productions, but did not issue a provisional permit due to a potential conflict with the Center's traditional "Old Home Days" event on August 21.

On Monday, Cassandra Holden of Laudable Productions told the board that she had "reached out" to the organizers of Old Home Days, and was told they were still "forming" their plans. Holden said that the traditional event was "likely to wrap up at 4," and suggested that Barbès change to a two-day event with a later starting time.

Kuklewicz then announced the town had received a communication from the Old Home Days sponsors saying that they would be "looking at a different date" for their event, although the "Mug Race" would still be held on the morning of August 21. "That's new information," said Holden.

Town executive assistant Wendy Bogusz reported that the Montague Center fire chief had endorsed a permit for the festival, pending approval of a parking plan and "the attendance figures set in the controlled plan for admission."

"Right now we don't know what capacity would look like, or what kinds of state regulations we'll be working with," responded Kyle Homstead of Laudable Productions. He suggested that state capacity restrictions could impact the language of the final permit, or even cause Laudable to cancel the festival.

Kuklewicz noted that one comment from a Center resident said they enjoyed Barbès two years ago, but was concerned about the lack of communication about this year's event. They complained that they first read about it in "the Montague paper."

Holden said her company would hold "listening sessions" when more information became available, but that as of last week there was nothing concrete to report to local residents.

The board unanimously approved a "provisional permit," with a final permit pending more community input and further discussions about capacity, parking, and safety protocols.

Downhill Race

The board also considered a proposal by parks and recreation director John Dobosz to use public property – First Street in Turners Falls, next to Unity Park – on September 19 for a revival of the Soapbox Derby, a popular late-summer event that was discontinued seven years ago due to lack of a sponsor. This year's event is being sponsored by Parks and Rec in partnership with Montague WebWorks, Nova Motorcycles, and 253 Pharmacy.

Dobosz said the committee planning the derby wanted "to maintain their momentum, making sure the event stays ahead of us or we stay ahead of the event, however way you want to look at it." His application stated that the event would begin at 7 a.m. and end at 6 p.m., with an es-



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETING

The Montague Planning Board will hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 23, 2021 to consider a special permit and site plan review application submitted by Hydroflower, LLC pursuant to Montague Zoning Bylaw Sec. 8.10 and 5.2.9(b) to permit a marijuana cultivation and manufacturing establishment within an existing mill building (known locally as the Southworth Mill). Notice is also hereby given that a Community Outreach meeting will be held concurrently with the hearing. The proposed facility is located at **36 Canal Road**, Turners Falls, MA and the property is identified as Assessors Map 3 Lot 2. The public are encouraged to ask questions and share comments. Application, plans describing the project, and project contact information is available at www.montague-ma.gov/calendar. Hearing will be held remotely via ZOOM due to COVID emergency orders.

ZOOM Meeting ID: 979 1965 8908
Passcode: 551284
Dial-in: (646) 558-8656

Ron Sicard, Chair.

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timated 50 racers and a crowd of between 1,000 and 2,000 "spectators." "We are currently working on a management plan to anticipate pandemic guidelines," he said.

Several board members raised the problem of the "sketchy" condition of the pavement on First Street coming down the steep hill toward Unity Park. Dobosz said he had not raised the issue with public works superintendent Tom Bergeron, but planned to do so.

The selectboard approved a permit for the soapbox derby.

FURTHER NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Priorities for Pols; Parking Lot Paperwork; Earth Day Drive-Through

By **JEFF SINGLETON**

Much of the Montague selectboard's Monday night meeting concerned planning for public events (*see article, page A1*).

In other news, the board discussed issues to be raised next Monday at a half-hour meeting with state senator Joanne Comerford and state representative Natalie Blais.

Town administrator Steve Ellis had developed a list of ten potential topics, but the board decided to emphasize four: holding the regional school district harmless for COVID-induced enrollment declines in the calculation of Chapter 70 aid; ensuring that all solar facilities are taxable; setting up a state bridge fund similar to the Chapter 90 road repair fund; and "assist[ing] in efforts to redevelop the Farren Care Center."

The complete list can be found in the "meeting materials" accessed via the town website link to the March 15 meeting.

Town clerk Deb Bourbeau requested an upgrade of the position of assistant clerk from grade three to four. She said the position, now

held by Kathern Pierce, had "evolved," requiring more responsibility and technical expertise, partly as a result of the state placing more responsibility and work on the clerk's office. Bourbeau also noted that expanded requirements for early and mail-in voting "aren't going anywhere."

Ellis said that he would work with Bourbeau on a "revised job description" for the position, and a calculation of the "cost implications." Any change will need to be negotiated with the National Association of Government Employees, the union that represents the assistant clerk.

Finance committee member John Hanold said this might be an opportunity to consider making the town clerk position appointed, rather than elected.

Police chief Chris Williams presented a new patch for police officer's uniforms, created by a student at the Franklin County Technical School named Lydia Barrett. The patch shows the names of all five villages of Montague surrounding an eagle. At the bottom of the emblem is the number 5, the badge number

of Teddy Martin, an officer killed in the line of duty. The board approved the new patch.

The board signed an affidavit attached to an easement the town had granted to the regional housing authority for property next to the Cutlery Block in Turners Falls. The apartments are owned by the housing authority, which was granted the easement in 2000 for its Third Street parking lot, on town property.

The affidavit cites a "Cold Spring Report" referenced in the initial easement, but according to Ellis and housing authority director Gina Govoni, no one can find that report.

The housing authority needs to clean up the paperwork because it is seeking to refinance the Cutlery.

Chelsea Little, superintendent of the water pollution control facility, requested the use of public property for a "drive-through event" on April 22, Earth Day, from 3 to 5 p.m. She said that initially she hoped to provide tours of the wastewater plant, but due to COVID restrictions, visitors would remain in their vehicles. Little said they will be given "goodie bags" along with informa-

tion about the water cycle, conservation, and recycling. The board approved the request.

Airport manager Bryan Camden requested that the board approve several federal grants recently awarded to the airport. These include grants for an emergency backup generator, an excavator, a weather reporting system, and work on the solar canopy over the airport parking lot.

The board also appointed Matthew Jordan to be a grounds maintenance intern at the airport beginning this coming summer.

At the end of the meeting, the board discussed what to do with money currently contained in the cannabis impact stabilization fund, whose source is fees provided by cannabis companies under so-called host community agreements. Ellis presented a number of options for spending some of the money, which he estimated totaling \$20,000, but advised leaving a significant portion in the stabilization fund due to uncertainties associated with that industry.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be on March 22.

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GILL from page A1

the FY’21 Franklin Regional Council of Governments materials bid for that figure.

According to Miner, Gill maintains about nine miles of dirt roads, costing “about \$500 each time we grade one mile of road, which typically happens twice a year.” That cost includes the grader rental and fuel, he said. However, during mud season the cost can significantly increase. Miner said his department has spent “about \$2,000 for crushed stone, so far this season,” for the dirt section of Barney Hale Road.

Crochier opined that perhaps that section of road could be closed during the worst weeks of mud season if no one would be kept from their homes as a result.

The selectboard ultimately decided that the dirt section of Barney Hale Road will remain unpaved, but maintained, for the foreseeable future, while the highway department tends to higher priorities on its list.

Assisting Assessment

A months’ long debate concerning the assessors’ clerk salary was concluded with the selectboard’s salary recommendation for that position.

Town administrator Ray Purington reminded the selectboard that at last year’s annual town meeting, a warrant question to increase the hours of the assessors’ clerk’s position was not discussed. The assessors’ request would have increased the position from 20 hours a week to 30. The measure was voted down at the request of the board of assessors

and the selectboard, because the selectboard had not had enough time to meet with the personnel committee for a recommendation before the November meeting.

After considerable discussion, the selectboard unanimously approved a recommendation of \$29,000 to fund the position in the FY’22 budget. The vote also approved changing the position’s title to “Assistant to the Assessors,” as well as moving it from Step 4 to Step 5 on theayscale grade level.

The recommendation will allow the board of assessors to set the hours worked within that salary. “Our assessors are an elected board, so I think it is up to them to decide how they work with their people – but it is our responsibility to set a budget number,” selectboard chair Randy Crochier said regarding his recommendation to set the salary, but not the number of work hours.

Repairs Talk Tabled

The topic of floor replacement at Gill Elementary School was tabled until March 29 while more information is pursued about several scenarios for work at the school, and their associated costs.

“The very initial pricing I have seen was around \$110,000. That removes some of the asbestos tile, and encapsulates most of it,” Purington told the selectboard of the remediations needed at the school.

“Before we really nail down the final project that we are going to do, we owe it to current and future taxpayers to get a price of

abating all of the asbestos tile.”

Other Business

The selectboard unanimously approved Purington’s recommendation to draft a letter to the Franklin Regional Retirement System (FRRS) board, which will meet on March 31 to vote on the retirement system’s cost of living adjustment (COLA) for FY’22.

The letter expressed that the selectboard wants the FRRS to consider the difficult times the county is in at their annual meeting, and hopes that they will choose to stay within state guidance, and not the 3% that they are allowed by law.

Massachusetts has set this year’s baseline COLA for retirees at 1.3%, which also happens to match the COLA increase for Social Security this year, though Purington said he was not sure if the state based its rate increase on the federal increase.

The COLA applies to the first \$17,000 of a retiree’s annual benefit, and Purington said that Gill and other towns “have been successful in getting the retirement system board to at least start talking about what the right amount is,” in the past. According to Purington, the retirement system’s guidelines allow each board to increase their COLA to a maximum 3%, which the FRRS has almost always voted for.

The Turners Falls Schuetzen Verein’s seasonal license renewal request was approved, with Crochier abstaining from the vote because of his membership in the club.



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TEACHER from page A1

colleges and universities, and memberships to local YMCAs, the Springfield Jewish Community Center, and New England Public Media.

A graduate of UMass Amherst’s Latin Master of Arts in Teaching program, Bendiksen has been teaching at Turners Falls High School since 2012, teaching both Latin and French. “I love teaching both languages for very different reasons,” she said. “Each provides a rich wealth of compelling content for students.”

As the only French or Latin teacher at Turners Falls High School, Bendiksen noted she often gets to see the growth of the same students for four years in a row. “Seeing them progress from 9th to 12th grade and getting to know them along the way is one

of the most rewarding and motivating parts of the job,” Bendiksen told the Reporter.

While Bendiksen looks forward to a day when she can see her students in person, she also is well aware of the challenges a return to in-person learning will pose with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“The risks and stress of teaching in-person are real and present every day,” she said. “It’s definitely a challenge to keep track of safety concerns while also teaching content. All the teachers at our school have been going above and beyond to support our students and each other since last March, and I’m very thankful to work in this community of educators.”

Bendiksen will be celebrated at a virtual banquet on May 6.



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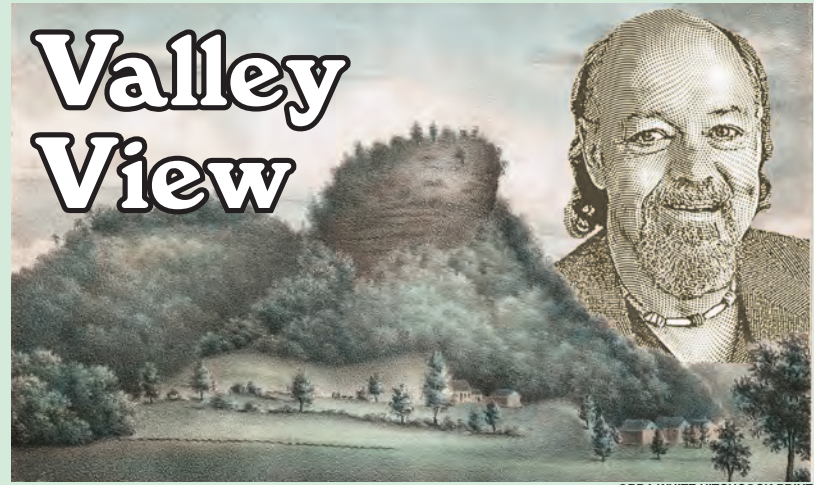
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FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER MARCH 18, 2021



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – Some four months after rupturing my right Achilles tendon, Vernal equinox looming, I resumed my daily morning walks and sent my wheels spinning back to the Sixties.

The maiden voyage began just after dawn. I was greeted by neighborhood deer runs carved through patches of shady corn snow, one within a stone’s throw of my front door. Though neighborhood white-tails are basically edge creatures, they’ll march down Broadway in the black of night, the gray of dawn and dusk, and sometimes even at midday, slinking on high alert through foggy, drizzly veils.

It had been a long COVID- and injury-complicated winter, only exacerbated by the vexing deep-freeze we endured for almost three weeks following Presidents’ Day Weekend. I have learned to expect that annual long mid-February weekend to be the gateway to spring. Not this year. Instead, we got one last loud, grumpy snort from Old Man Winter.

My walks began on pavement, not my way. I prefer wooded maneuvers on ridgetop spines and swampy perimeters, but did not want to start on challenging terrain, where I could easily run into trouble coming off a torn Achilles. Why risk slipping and falling on hidden ice or slick mud? Heading toward 68, caution was wise until calf-strength was rebuilt. Setbacks caused by foolish, freewheeling rambles would have been stupid.

I’ve learned that brisk, solitary walks stimulate deep thinking. Get your legs moving and your heart pumping and one never knows what a fertile imagination will deliver. I don’t seem to arrive at that creative place by walking through noisy neighborhoods, surrounded by homes, people, passing cars and other sounds that disrupt or even preclude freewheeling streams of consciousness. It’s natural sounds that carry me off to the pensive place I seek – things like rattling streams, trickling springs, whistling winds and joyous birdsong. That’s what delivers me to that warm, elusive internal chamber I cherish.

Too bad I’m not yet traveling those thinking trails. I have lots to ponder. My last few weeks have been spent revisiting readings from

my high school and college years. The impetus was recent films focusing on events like the 1968 Democratic Convention, the resulting Chicago Seven Trial, and the Chicago police murder of Black Panther leader Fred Hampton.

My college mentor, Howard Ziff, had a front-row seat for all of the above as night editor of the *Chicago Daily News*. Disillusioned by what he knew were slanted, willfully inaccurate press reports, he changed professions, soon to establish UMass Amherst’s Journalism Department. Talk about being at the right place at the right time. I was there.

The old books I recently retrieved from my study’s shelves were Tom Hayden’s *The Trial*, Bobby Seale’s *Seize the Times*, and late, great Hunter S. Thompson’s *Fear and Loathing in America: The Gonzo Letters (1968-76)*, in that order. The Thompson capper pretty much covered it all – from the ugly ’68 Chicago convention, to his own Freak Power run for sheriff, to Kent State, Woodstock, and Watergate, and his friendship with “Rock and Roll President” Jimmy Carter.

Long ago I learned that if interested in what someone really believes, read their correspondence. Which is not to suggest that Hunter S. Thompson, Doctor of his own twisted Gonzo branch of New Journalism, ever held back in print. No, not the case.

I suppose I could have dug even deeper by re-examining Norman Mailer’s *The Armies of the Night* and Eldridge Cleaver’s *Soul on Ice*, penned from Algerian exile. But I didn’t need them. Those first three reads provided more than enough info about the political theater I lived through during the Sixties and early Seventies. Memory alone cannot always be trusted after a half-century, particularly those of us who sampled the forbidden fruits of the times.

Although today’s youth may find it difficult to conceptualize, the Sixties were hopeful, idealistic times of which open defiance of authority and protest in the streets was borne. The first protest I recall occurred in junior high school, when we participated in “skip days” organized by upperclassmen and women who opposed a strict dress code. Draconian rules see **VALLEY VIEW** page B2

Above: Scarlet runner beans, past their prime.

by Trish Crapo

Greatly Liberating:

A conversation with Christopher Sawyer-Laumann

TURNERS FALLS – I’ve been thinking a lot about the Beat writers since Lawrence Ferlinghetti died. He died on February 22, at 101 years old. If he’d lived just about a month longer, he would have turned 102 this month, on March 24.

Ferlinghetti, who apparently didn’t consider himself a Beat poet, is well-known for creating a hub for the Beat movement in San Francisco through his bookstore and press, City Lights. His passing seemed a sobering “end of an era” occurrence. But, as I re-read Ferlinghetti’s poem, *Poetry as Insurgent Art [I am signaling you through the flames]*, written in the late 1970s, it also seemed that he was urgently contemporary, a poet whose sensibility and voice we still need to guide us. He writes:

*The North Pole is not where it used to be.
Manifest Destiny is no longer manifest.
Civilization self-destructs.
Nemesis is knocking at the door.
What are poets for, in such an age?
What is the use of poetry?
The state of the world calls out for poetry to save it.*



Christopher Sawyer-Laumann in a publicity photo taken for the libretto he wrote for Andrei Kasparov’s Lorca: An Operatic Cycle in Five Acts, which came out in 2019.

Yes! I remember loving – and still love – this rallying cry that puts poets, and by extension, all artists, at the center of saving the world.

Urgent, and a Little Ragged

I first discovered the Beats as a teenager, when I was just beginning to write in a way that felt serious to me. Their urgency was part of what I loved about them. As often happens, I learned of the men first – Ferlinghetti, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder. So, to then discover two poets whom I thought of

as “the Dienes” – Diane Wakoski and Diane di Prima – set my heart afire.

Of course, by the time I discovered these writers in the 1970s, the Beat movement was twenty years on. But the work felt staggeringly new to me. The Beats gave me permission to write from my heart, even if – maybe especially if – it got messy. They allowed me to let a little raggedness and some rambling into my writing,

see **ARTBEAT** page B4

The Hounds of Montague, Part II:

A Police Log Retrospective

Compiled by EMILY ALLING Illustrations by NINA ROSSI

Tuesday 1/19/2016
1:58 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant Road advises that her dog recently received blood transfusions at the vet; when she let him outside earlier today he ran off into the woods and has not come home. Animal control officer advises that the dog returned as he was arriving at the residence.

Wednesday 4/13/2016
12:05 p.m. Animal control officer spoke with Chief Dodge, and party subsequently contacted MPD, regarding a female who threatened to blow up the kennel if her dog was not released to her. Advised of options.

Wednesday 4/27/2016
7:35 a.m. Caller from Randall Wood Drive reports that she noticed an animal

in her outside dog house this morning; believes it may be deceased, but is unsure. Animal control officer advises this is a deceased fox that appears to have mange. He has picked up the animal and will be taking for proper disposal.

Friday 7/22/2016
1:58 a.m. Caller reports she hears what she be-

lieves is a dog in distress at the kennel. Officer checked kennel and advised that one dog has a whiny bark, which may be what the caller heard. All appears to be fine.

Monday 8/1/2016
9:57 a.m. Report of decapitated dog in the wooded area between Griswold Street and Scot-

ty’s. Caller advises that the body of the dog is there but the head is not. Responding officer and animal control officer advised not as reported; animal was a cat and appeared to have been attacked by a fisher cat. No foul play suspected.

Thursday 11/15/2016
10:57 a.m. Caller reports that while he was at a doctor’s appointment, someone broke into his locked vehicle, stole his dog, and then re-locked the car. Officer found no sign of forced entry. Investigated.

Friday 12/15/2017
11:05 a.m. Report of a loose dog in front of Riff’s North. Dog appears to be cold. Dog is reportedly loose often and had icicles

see **HOUNDS** page B6





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Paper and Beluga are teaming up to bring smiles all around with their silly antics and outgoing personalities. These two came to Dakin from another shelter as part of a litter of six. Beluga clearly likes to be the class clown. Paper distinguishes herself from the crowd with her helicopter ears – cute! Double the love and the fun when you adopt this charming pair of sisters.

These rabbits need to either be adopted in pairs or go to a home

with an existing rabbit friend. They are only 2-1/2 months old and already 4 pounds, so expect large rabbits when they are full grown.

Interested in adopting? 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.



Interview by J. BURKETT

TURNERS FALLS – Ken is one of the secret music-magicians of the Valley music scene... and has been for quite a while now! And he is also playing in The B-52’s!

He said he has been in shut-in mode lately, so he had time to talk to us. Check out his solo recordings under the name Ribboncandy, look for his name of hundreds of local releases, and also look online for his old column in the *Gazette* called Clubland! It helped to inspire this column...

MMM: *You grew up in Massachusetts, right? Any early memories of playing music? What was your first instrument?*

KM: I grew up in East Springfield. My dad’s dad was the family musician, though by the time I came along, he was running a business, and his main connection to music was watching stars perform on TV rather than making any music himself. (*Hee Haw* was a favorite show.)

When I was around six he taught me “Bye Bye Blues” on his (adult-sized) acoustic guitar, and I taught myself how to play the Hartford Whalers hockey team theme (“Brass

Bonanza”) on his Kimball organ. He also had a banjo, an accordion, a Silvertone electric guitar, a partial drum set, a kid-friendly portable record player... As workaday as his life had become, he still really loved music.

And I’m thankful he shared that love of music with me. It changed my life.

MMM: *How did you get started writing about music?*

KM: I went to UMass and stupidly started out as a chemical engineering major. One of my classes was, like, “experimental calculus using population models” – I was in way, way over my head, and really on the wrong path.

It took me a whole year of math/science sadness and failure to realize that what I loved to do was write, so I became a journalism major. I did an internship at the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, reviewing records and interviewing local bands for the *Gazette*’s bi-weekly publication aimed at the college crowd, *Off Campus*. The editor liked my work and offered me my own weekly column in the paper proper. She wanted me to go see live shows and write about them (she lamented that the *Gazette*’s writers didn’t want to stay out that late).

It was a dream job. Go see more concerts? Yes please! I named my column Clubland after the Elvis Costello song.

MMM: *So, you are playing with The B-52’s? Anything you would like to say about that?*

KM: Yes, I’m still part of the backing band for The B-52’s. I’ve been playing keyboards and second guitar with them since early 2016.

They were one of my favorite bands as a kid. I remember catching a glimpse of them on *Saturday Night Live* when our family was on a summer vacation. We got back very late after a long day and turned on the tiny TV in the iffy motel, and they were on the screen. I was mesmerized.

A little later I got my first “boom box,” and taped songs off the radio... I loved “Private Idaho” and was excited when I caught that one on my Memorex. It’s a crazy dream to be able to play music with them.

MMM: *You were friends with Teri Morris, right? I thought she was the best (drummer and person)! Any thoughts about her you would like to share?*

KM: I lived with Teri on King Street in Northampton from 1996 until the landlords sold the house in 2002. Our bands (Tizzy and Ribboncandy) and others rehearsed in the craggy basement, with dirty old rugs covering the lumpy concrete.

Teri was so smiley and strong, an inspiring person and musician and a true force of nature behind the drums. She was really dedicated. She’d come home from work every day, go right into her room and close the door, turn on the metronome, and watch Oprah at top volume while doing drum exercises on her practice pad.

A lot of great music got made in that house. She was kind enough to play kick-ass drums on two Ribboncandy recordings, “April” and “Junk Food Addict.” I feel

see **MMM** next page

Senior Center Activities MARCH 22 THROUGH 26

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.

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.

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

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

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

forbade boys from wearing blue jeans, bellbottoms and sandals, hair below the collar, sideburns below mid-ear, and facial hair. Girls could not wear slacks or shorts, and their skirts could not wander above the knee. Skip days and open defiance of the rules brought fairly rapid change.

Then, in short order, the drinking and voting ages were dropped from 21 to 18. Philosophical justification for the latter was basic: if old enough to die for your country in Vietnam, then you were old enough to vote and drink. Simple logic, eh?

Of course, “traditionalists” pushed back with the disrespect card, but they were outnumbered, as evidenced by LBJ’s landslide win over ultra-conservative Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential election. Four years later, though, after assassins eliminated the Kennedys, Nixon re-emerged by pulling the segregationist, Southern Dixiecrats led by George Wallace and Lester Maddox into the Republican fold. He dubbed this new, law-and-order Republican voting block the “silent majority,” and rode it to a razor-slim win over Humphrey in 1968 and a landslide win over McGovern in 1972.

The political landscape had been changed for generations.

Something important to remember in light of what’s gone on recently: Wallace picked up a whopping 13.5 percent of the votes running as a third-party, 1968 presidential candidate. That same element survives today.

Fast-forward to 2016, when a controversial New York City real estate mogul, reality-TV star, and con man slid down the glittering Trump Tower escalator to announce his run for the presidency. Against long odds he won by energizing the modern-day silent majority and Southern vote with racist dog whistles. He spoke in incendiary, white-nationalist code and wrapping himself in cheap patriotism. Even worse, he invited

underground elements of the neo-Nazi/white-supremacist movement into plain view. These hate groups soon became the hard right-wing base that almost got him re-elected. Incensed by eight years of our first African-American president, they were responding.

Well, we know where this powder-keg empowerment of white nationalism got us. From Charlottesville to the Capitol siege, racist hate groups harkening back to the KKK and the John Birch Society were given a loud, public platform. We watched the “Unite the Right” mobs in hi-def, heard their hateful chants in Dolby sound.

Has anyone forgotten the anti-Semitic chants and tiki-torches of Charlottesville? Not likely. Some found the scene terrifying. Others cheered it on. Frightening indeed.

It’s too bad Hunter S. Thompson took his own life before the Trump-train whistles blew. He knew what was coming, consistently railing against what he called homegrown “fascists,” “greedheads,” “swine” and more profane monikers too spicy for the mainstream.

Long aware of creeping fascism in Amerika, I have bitten my tongue in print for four years. Friends of mine are Trump supporters. Though I can’t understand how anyone could support the narcissistic snake-oil salesman, why engage in irreconcilable political debate? But now, fresh off Thompson’s *Gonzo Letters*, chronicling an era I love to revisit, I cannot resist taking a few swipes at the man Spike Lee dubbed “Agent Orange.”

The made-for-TV spectacle we all witnessed during four, in-your-face Trump years only reinforced my long-held beliefs about who was behind the Sixties assassinations. They’re still here, very real and not hard to find. Just look for the swastikas, nooses and rebel flags, and listen for the fascistic, xenophobic rhetoric our European brothers know best.

An undercurrent before Trump, it’s mushroomed in the public square. Scary indeed.



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MMM from prev pg lucky to have known her.

MMM: *Who are your biggest inspirations in music?*
KM: I’ve always been inspired by artists who can play everything themselves – Paul McCartney, Stevie Wonder, Prince, Todd Rundgren, Adam Cohen in his early Mommyheads four-track days... For me there’s a unique extra energy, or flow, or lift, when one person creates an entire recording. Other favorite artists include The Monkees, Steely Dan, The Free Design, NRBQ, XTC, Eggstone, Joni Mitchell, Burt Bacharach, Thelonious Monk...

MMM: *How have the pandemic times affected you? Do you think things seem to be getting better? Maybe live shows will start again this year?*
KM: I’ve definitely been dealing with some depression and anxiety during the pandemic, though really it started two months before the lockdown when I slipped on ice, shattered my shoulder and needed surgery, which luckily went well. I was eventually able to play instruments again, and I’ve been musically busy, thanks to friends involving me in their projects (Kate Pierson, Spouse, King Radio, The Fawns, Henning Ohlenbusch, Miranda Brown). It’s a way to keep a

sense of community going during all this separation and it means a lot to me.
Mainly I try to remember the basics – get enough sleep, eat healthily, exercise regularly, breathe!
And as far as live shows starting again in 2021, I want to be optimistic. But I’m also the kind of person who has totally stayed inside my house for this past year, so it’s hard to imagine being in a crowd again, or in a building for hours, even with a mask on. I want to equate live music with joy and connection, not fear and alienation. I’m not rushing back to playing (or seeing) shows until it’s safe for everyone. Hopefully we can all get vaccinated ASAP, and the worst of this virus era will be in the rearview mirror.

MMM: *So your column in the Gazette is over now? You covered so much!*
KM: The paper let me go last January while my shoulder was broken. Clubland began on April 21, 1995, and the last one ran on February 6, 2020 – 1,046 columns in all. Basically 25 years, although it did not exist from February 26, 2004 to July 20, 2006, because that’s when I moved to Washington state for a bit.

MMM: *Thanks for all of your work! Hopefully you will keep writing about music!*



Montague Community Television News

We’ll Edit Your Videos!

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – There is a lot of new music up on the MCTV Vimeo page this week. “Northern Roots” is a traditional music festival out of Brattleboro, Vermont, featuring a variety of northern musical traditions including Irish, Scottish, English, French Canadian, and Shetland. Also up on MCTV is the new video album *Still Romantics* by Brattleboro musician Chris Weisman. Weisman collaborated with MCTV as well as with local musician Omeed Goodarzi and audio engineer Elie McAffee-Hahn to record a performance that was canceled due to COVID. The performance was recorded in front of a green screen, allowing each song to become a music video created in a different style. The town meeting recording is available for viewing, as are the Gill-Montague regional school committee, the Montague finance committee, and a joint meeting of the Montague selectboard and

board of health. All MCTV videos are available on the MCTV Vimeo page, which can be found linked to the MCTV website, montaguetv.org, under the tab “Videos.” All community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 17, as well as featured on the MCTV Vimeo page. MCTV is always available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided. The MCTV board is looking for new board members, specifically someone interested in filling the role of treasurer. The station is also looking to hire a producer to make Spanish-language content. Please email infomontaguetv@gmail.com with a resume to schedule an interview! Something going on you think others would like to see? If you get in touch, we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment. Contact us at (413) 863-9200 or infomontaguetv@gmail.com.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Raising Voices Against Racism

GREENFIELD – Six local teens and their new friends in Sierra Leone and Syracuse, New York have launched the Respect for Girls Project, the inspiration for a concert that has drawn an impressive international group of performers. The concert, called Long Line for Racial Justice, will be held online at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 21. The Respect for Girls Project addresses sexual harassment, and promotes empowerment of female voices and leadership. Associated with Traprock’s Common Threads program, the youth-led project now has its own website, www.respectforgirls.com. Greenfield teens Maya Baudrand, Carlie Kempf, Ella McDaniel, and Jyn Rankin along with Norah Benkley and Isodora Frazier from Easthampton, led by Sarah Pirtle, have met weekly since July 2020 in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. The March 21 concert will start at 3 p.m. Local performers from the Seeger Singalong Collective – Annie Hassett, Charlie King, Sue Kranz, Sarah Pirtle, and Annie Patterson – will join two dozen performers to emphasize many facets of stopping racism. Indigenous Canadian singer Faith Nolan will sing about missing and disappeared Indig-

enous women. Ending violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders will be emphasized. Sister and brother Elizabeth and Paul Kaku of Sierra Leone wrote the *Respect Girls* theme song that will be a highlight of the concert. National performers Emma’s Revolution from California will sing “We are One,” and Elise Bryant, who leads the DC Labor Chorus and helped organize the concert, will sing galvanizing songs from the African American tradition. The event is sponsored by Traprock Center for Peace and Justice and the national group United Against Hate. Traprock organizer Sarah Pirtle says it is a double celebration. March 21 begins a week of United Nations activities “in solidarity with people struggling against racism,” with this year’s theme, “Youth Standing Up Against Racism.” Attendees must register for the concert at www.respectforgirls.com/events. The event is free, but donations are very welcome. Donations made through Traprock.org will go to the Sierra Leone group of Respect for Girls to support their work to halt sexual harassment and encourage young women’s leadership.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Accusation; Loose Turkey; Just A Bonfire; Flattery; Derogatory Comments; ‘Spending Time’; Free Weed

Monday, 3/8
6:09 a.m. Caller states that he has been having issues with a male from East Main Street. Caller states that the male has been confronting him and yelling at him. Caller states that male party has caused his blood pressure to increase and he has a cardiac history. Caller states that he believes the male party is high on something, and might even be cooking something in the apartment. Officer did make contact with female party who advises her boyfriend works from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. and isn’t home yet. Female was advised to stop if there is anything going on; she stated they don’t really talk to anyone from the area.
12:31 p.m. Motorist reporting a large turkey standing at the end of a driveway on Greenfield Road. It appears he has gotten loose from a backyard pen. Made contact with homeowner. She left

the area, but will ask her son-in-law to stop by and put the turkey back.
5:16 p.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop in the Third Street public lot. A 45-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on a default warrant and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.
5:30 p.m. Caller from Powertown Apartments states that he just came home and found the front door to his apartment damaged, possibly kicked in. Report taken.
8:30 p.m. Caller reporting very loud music and what sounds like people skateboarding coming from the Jarvis Pools parking lot at the old garage. Caller advised it is so loud she can’t even hear her own TV. Caller advises this is an ongoing issue; her husband has called in the past. Officer advises he spoke with a male and advised him of the complaint; also advises there was not any music playing when he arrived.

Tuesday, 3/9
11:20 a.m. Caller calling on behalf of tenant who reported to her that a male stole a chair off her patio. Caller advised the owner of the chair to call herself to report the theft. Caller requesting to speak with officer re: an issue with the suspect, who is not on the lease and is not supposed to be residing there. Advised of options.
12:49 p.m. Report of male panhandling on Avenue A.
7:20 p.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road reported the barn behind her house has flames coming out of it. Caller was transferred to Shelburne Control. Officers in area staging if needed. Clear; officer advises TFFD is taking care of the bonfire; not a structure or brush fire.
8:57 p.m. A 33-year-old Sunderland woman was arrested and charged with unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and attaching plates to a motor vehicle.

Wednesday, 3/10
10:26 a.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop. Verbal warning for speed. Operator thanked officer for pulling her over, said she might have been going too fast and didn’t stop for the stop sign. She also said, “You sure aren’t what we are being told police officers are like.”
6:40 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reporting larceny of four patio chairs. Unknown when they were taken, but caller saw them listed on Facebook Marketplace by a named male within the past couple of days. Report taken.
Thursday, 3/11
12:04 a.m. Caller from

Third Street complaining that upstairs neighbor is stomping on the floors and he can hear loud voices. Officers advised involved parties of complaint; noted no noise on arrival; the tenant advised of ongoing issues with caller.
1:37 p.m. Caller from N Street reporting an ongoing issue with the neighbor’s dog coming onto his property and relieving itself. As a result of the dog’s behavior, the caller’s children are afraid to play outside. Caller advises he has reported this to the animal control officer several times, but the owner has not complied with making repairs to the fence so the dog won’t get out. Residents agreed to fix fence issue tomorrow. Officer will follow up.

Editors’ note: At 3:15 Thursday afternoon the Turners Falls-Gill bridge was closed for two hours for an emergency incident. No record of this was included in the logs provided to the Montague Reporter.

3:44 p.m. Report of several syringes along Canal Street. Delay due to call volume.
11:22 p.m. Vehicle pulled over for failure to stop. One party bailed; currently in back yard on Montague City Road. One party in custody. A 57-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, subsequent offense; failing to stop for police; resisting arrest; and no inspection sticker.
Friday, 3/12
5:13 a.m. Six calls to MPD business line making derogatory comments.
5:30 a.m. Caller from Unity Street reporting smoke in residence. Call transferred to Shelburne Control; TFFD notified as well. Command reports a working fire. PD clear; FD remaining on scene for ventilation.
7:36 a.m. Caller reporting use of vehicle without authority; allowed neighbor’s boyfriend to borrow her vehicle last night; he was supposed to return it by midnight, but he has not returned it and she cannot reach either of them now. Officer located vehicle in alley behind 25 Fourth Street; located male sleeping in passenger seat. Officer advises no exterior damage to vehicle. Owner has vehicle now.
11:25 a.m. Vehicle into one of the pylons at the footbridge gate on Greenfield Road just past Hatchery Road; negative for injuries/smoke/fluids. Report taken.

3:16 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant Road reporting that she witnessed a possibly intoxicated female drive by her and stick her tongue out while caller was walking. Caller advises she just wanted this on record.
4:45 p.m. Caller states that there are a few used needles at the end of the public parking lot at Third and Canal streets. Items retrieved.
4:58 p.m. Caller reporting two-car accident on Millers Falls Road; lots of debris. One vehicle trying to leave scene. Control notified; Rau’s contacted to tow one vehicle.
9:08 p.m. Officer checking on vehicle in parking lot on Grand Avenue. Male and female spending time together; no issues of concern. They will be leaving momentarily.
Saturday, 3/13
12:28 a.m. Two reports of noise coming from a Third Street apartment. Officer spoke with female party who stated all was well and she was just cleaning the house.
5:29 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reporting her vehicle was vandalized again; states somehow her passenger mirror was destroyed, and it happened while she was bringing groceries into the house. Three previous related calls. Investigated.
6:45 p.m. Two reports of an intoxicated party driving to the liquor store near Scotty’s. Officer made contact with party, who denied leaving her house at all; had a verbal disagreement with the neighbor. Situation mediated; party has agreed to stay in for the night.
Sunday, 3/14
1:01 a.m. Caller from Third Street states neighbors are banging around and possibly fighting; asking if anyone is going to get in trouble because this is like the 20th time he has called about the noise; believes neighbors may be doing it on purpose; can hear laughing and stomping. No noise upon officers’ arrival; no answer at apartment door.
1:16 p.m. Caller states that a male with a black hoodie and black backpack is standing outside Walgreens offering people “free weed.” Male party left area in taxi. Unable to locate.
1:44 p.m. Missing person report; party entered as missing in NCIC.
9:25 p.m. Caller from Third Street states a male downstairs keeps slamming doors to the building and has been banging on residents’ doors, including hers; she would like an officer to ask him to go back to Connecticut. Area search negative.

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ARTBEAT from page B1
to let go of my tendency for “perfection,” whatever that was.

So, when I read Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno’s tribute to Ferlinghetti in this paper, it made me eager to talk with him about his experiences. Sawyer-Lauçanno is a poet, translator, and biographer who lives in Turners Falls, and is editor of this paper’s Poetry Page.

He and I have talked about writing a fair amount over the years. I’d already known that he and his late wife, the poet Patricia Pruitt who, sadly, died in April of 2018, had been friends with some of the Beat writers. But I’d never broached the topic full-on. In truth, I’d felt embarrassed, too much like a starstruck fan of these writers I’d never met other than in the pages of their books. But Sawyer-Lauçanno was kind – even indulgent – and agreed to speak to me by phone last week.

Piecing together the chronology, Sawyer-Lauçanno said he first met Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, and Gregory Corso when he was researching a biography of the writer Paul Bowles. “I was spending a lot of time in Tangiers,” he said.

Apparently oblivious to what a great sentence that was to be able to say, Sawyer-Lauçanno cruised right along, sounding bemused at how simple it seemed now.

“I got the stuff I needed about Bowles pretty quickly, and we developed a sort of friendship, I suppose,” he said. “Then in 1988 and 1989, Patricia was doing her MFA at Naropa. So, of course that was the meeting place for all the old Beats.”

Sawyer-Lauçanno, who had been teaching writing at MIT, taught classes on translation and contemporary poetry, and one on narrative form in novels, at the Naropa Institute as a writer-in-residence.

“It was fun, I loved the students,” he said. “They were all MFA students. I loved their smartness. The classes were very open. Basically, anyone could wander in.”

Faculty attended each other’s classes, he said, and there were a lot of visiting writers, musicians, and painters.

“For me, Naropa during that period was one of the great educational experiences one could have,” he said. He laughed, adding, “One didn’t sleep a lot. There were a lot of parties. It’s hard to imagine now, in the time of COVID.”

Right Places, Right Time

“With Ferlinghetti it was a little different,” Sawyer-Lauçanno said about how the two met. City Lights had accepted Sawyer-Lauçanno’s book, *Destruction of the Jaguar: Poems from the Books of Chilam Balam* (1987), poems based on ancient Mayan texts. Though he wasn’t initially the book’s official editor, Ferlinghetti decided to get involved.

“We began to exchange letters and he became my editor. We just became, I would say, pen pals in a certain way. He liked to write, always in longhand, with thick ink. He was enormously helpful and encouraging to me,” Sawyer-Lauçanno explained.

The letters he received from Ferlinghetti, and others, are part

of the archive of papers Sawyer-Lauçanno has recently donated to the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he got his undergraduate degree.

“I think what a lot of people don’t know about Ferlinghetti is that he was a real intellectual,” Sawyer-Lauçanno said. “Most of the poems people know are not complex, not evoking prior literary traditions – they’re more upfront. People thought of him as a populist character, and certainly he was – his accessibility as a poet, his straightforwardness.

“But he had a PhD. The man was exceedingly interested in everything. He had read everything. He was a formidable translator. Even later in his life, he was always wanting to read something more.”

“I’ve never taken it for granted,” Sawyer-Lauçanno said, of his connection to the Beats. “I happened, to some degree, to be in the right places at the right time.”

He added, “One of the things that I think worked for me with them is that I met them as they were. While certainly I’d read every word they’d written, I was also engaged in who they were at that present time. I wasn’t looking at them as the myths they had become. And I think that was refreshing for them.”

Though this statement made me feel self-conscious in contrast, I pressed for a little info about Diane di Prima, who also recently died, in October of 2020.

“Diane was amazing,” Sawyer-Lauçanno said. “She and Patricia were very close. The thing about Diane is she

was inordinately disciplined. But she loved to play. She always encouraged her students to play. She’d say, ‘Hey this is a really cool idea, push this one out a little bit.’”

He laughed in appreciation as he added, “And Diane could be fierce. One of her greatest lines was, ‘Stop being so constipated!’”

Expressing sentiments similar to my own, Sawyer-Lauçanno said that what he learned from all of these relationships was “a sort of permission to do anything” in his writing.

The message was, “You don’t have to do anything that’s been done already. You don’t have to live within a certain constraint.”

As a result, “I no longer had to be concerned about my internal censor,” he said. “It was greatly liberating.”

He laughed, adding, “I mean, not everything that came out of it was great, but it was liberating.”

As for what he’s up to now, Sawyer-Lauçanno has been publishing sections of his memoir in *Witty Partition*, an international online journal formerly known as *The Wall*. He’s also working on a book of poems, tentatively titled *Night Suite*.

“It’s all poems that I’ve written since Patricia died,” he said. “They’re not overtly about grieving, but it’s there. It’s trying to figure out how anguish can say what you want to say.”

He’s also warmed to online groups. For instance, he’s reading Proust with a group of Proust scholars in Paris.

“It’s not the same, of course, as in person, but it does create connections,” he said. “And they’ve mattered a great deal.”



A photograph Allen Ginsberg took of Lawrence Ferlinghetti in January, 1985, and gave to Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno.

My Pictures from A Gone World

Allen dropping his keys out the window so we could unlock the door and ascend those grungy stairs to his marvelous apartment and marvel at his marvels. Or sitting with him for hours at ours while he raved about Patricia’s pasta primavera amidst handing out advice, telling stories, interweaving Blake and Whitman with Kerouac and Trungpa, inquiring about us. He was tireless and fearless, always wanting and willing to give of himself.

And Gregory knocking on the door at 7:30 in the morning. “Hey man, got any beer?” And sitting on a hill overlooking Boulder Creek: “Don’t sweat it, Christopher. Don’t sweat the little stuff, and remember, Christopher, money ain’t the big shot.”

And William suddenly giving me alarm one afternoon in the bunker when we’d been talking for several hours and he suddenly said “My God what time is it?” And when I said “4:10,” and apologized for staying so long, he pushed me back in the chair. “I’m not asking you to leave.

I’m 10 minutes late for drinking time.” Out came the Old Cossack vodka and a liter of Coke. “Help yourself.”

And one evening over dinner witnessing a “routine” he composed on the spot, taking his cue from a conversation we’d had earlier about Paul Bowles. His version featured a Moroccan Halal butcher he called Dr. Mohammed severing Paul’s great sympathetic nerve complete with intestines spilled on the floor, blood coursing from every orifice.

“We’ll Patch him up. We’ll Patch him up. I’ve got it all under control.”

And Lawrence always there for me. “Count the syllables, count the syllables. Your ear will know when the line breaks.” “What are you reading?” “I’ll get that. I haven’t read that one.”

His generosity was unending. Introducing me at a reading at City Lights he said only this: “This is Christopher. He’s famous among the famous.” And my mailbox often had a new Ferlinghetti book, a postcard, a note or a letter. “Write what you need to write. Don’t pay any attention to anybody else.”

All gone now. All gone, yet still here. Allen told us “Don’t grow old. Don’t grow old,” and yet we did.

Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno

Ferlinghetti Tribute

Sawyer-Lauçanno will be leading a tribute reading for Ferlinghetti on the late poet’s birthday, March 24, at 8 p.m. The reading is hosted by Exploded View, of which I am a member. To request a Zoom link, email explodedviewma@gmail.com. You can also watch the livestream at facebook.com/exploded-view/MA; on YouTube at bit.ly/3qO5Epl; or on Twitter [@cornerrobot](https://twitter.com/cornerrobot).



MOVIE REVIEW

The Mauritanian (2021)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I decided to write a review about the movie *The Mauritanian* because I found I had a mild interest in doing one. It is going to be on Amazon Prime video streaming service on April 1, but I was able to find it on a streaming movie site called Bflix.

The movie is based on a memoir written by this guy named Mohamedou Ould Salahi about his experience at Guantanamo Bay. It also includes the effort to get him out of there by these two lawyers. One is played by Jodie Foster. The lawyer for the Marines who tries to convict him is played by Benedict Cumberbatch.

The Marine finds out for himself

what an unethical place the camp is, and how there may be no good evidence to convict Salahi. Which is kind of ironic because Salahi tries to get out through a writ of habeas corpus done by his lawyers. The writ means you have to show you have good evidence to try a person, or they’re released. The little evidence they have on him was just a phone call, which he didn’t know much about.

This reminds me of a movie called *Guilty by Association*, which features individuals in prison for really not doing anything wrong. One individual in that movie just did something similar to Salahi’s action and got locked up.

As the Marine lawyer discovers

how unethical the camp can be, he tries to get some of the facts about the case, and finds out how hard that is. On top of that, he learns that Salahi has been tortured and subjected to sleep deprivation there. He realizes that the facts he learned won’t hold up in court, and shouldn’t. The defense lawyers on Salahi’s case also have a lovely time trying to get info about the case, and even from the man himself. Tons of info connected to it gets redacted by the government.

With the amount of information that I have seen in the movie, I am a little surprised he managed to get his book published at all. It would seem that, like the information connected to his experience, people wouldn’t want to know his story or have it known. But the book was published.

The two lawyers played by the people I mentioned were the re-

al-life ones involved in the whole habeas corpus effort. I understand that lawyer played by Jodie Foster is still working with individuals such as Salahi. I would be surprised if she hadn’t gotten more of those individuals out of the camp. Jodie Foster spoke a line in the movie that seems to indicate this was the lawyer’s whole life, so maybe she has gotten some of them out.

The movie seems to indicate that Cumberbatch’s character shouldn’t have a problem with what they’d done to Salahi. But in real life, the man really did decline to try the guy due to all the unethical things he learned of. It would seem that this movie keeps in line very well with the facts of this story.

If the lack of good evidence and unethical moves are on track with what Salahi endured, then this guy more than deserved to be released.



I am glad that he was. I would have been in the welcoming home crowd, if I could, when he finally arrived home.

I also learned he has a decent life with a wife and child now, one that he deserved after all this. My mild interest turned out to have been worth it.

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Suyth

Hear that Luna?

Howling wind?

Birds chirping.

My stomach growling.

Geese honking.

Kids yelling.

Spring sounds on the Ave.

I'm staying inside.

Three Degrees of Warming

By Janice Rowan

Does my fossil make my butt look big?

The overlap of Paleontology + Cloning for the Titanosaurus...

OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark

You seem dis-fracted this morning, Thelma.

I was just thinking about my first boyfriend. I really don't know why...

As I recall he was visiting his grandma. We were ten years old. We tied strings around our wrists and pledged our undying love.

That's so sweet!

Should I be jealous?

I never saw him again. I wore that string until it disintegrated.

Cupcake, I think we should renew our vows.

Really?

Yes. I'll get the string.

사랑!

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HOUNDS from pg. B1 on his fur the other day. Caller took the dog in the other day to warm him and then brought him back home. Owner claimed that a dog sitter was responsible for the dog getting out; however, the dog is frequently seen loose downtown for hours at a time.

Tuesday 1/9/2018
10:37 a.m. Report of golden retriever that has been wandering around Avenue A recently and appears cold and malnourished. The dog tries to come inside the business when they open the door and has a handmade tag taped on his collar that states "Don't feed me."

Monday 2/12/2018
7:55 a.m. Caller from Montague Avenue requesting to speak with ACO; her dog got out yesterday, and when it came home, it vomited up rat poison and dog food. Dog is OK now, but caller is concerned that someone put out poisoned food to kill local animals. ACO advising it is more likely that the dog got into the poison separately from the food, and the poison will make a dog ill but is not fatal.

Monday 2/19/2018
1:51 p.m. Caller reports



that two small dogs followed her up Prospect Street and one of the dogs bit her on the side of her knee, breaking the skin. After the incident, the dogs took off the opposite way on Prospect Street. Located possible owners on Prospect and L streets; if dogs are one of those possible matches, they are all up to date on rabies vaccinations. Caller declined medical attention. Copy of call left for animal control officer.

Tuesday 4/10/2018
8:37 a.m. Party from Grove Street requesting to speak to supervisor re: ongoing harassment and complaints her neighbor is making about her dog and other noise issues.

Party states that she has spoken to several neighbors who have stated they do not have a problem with her dogs barking. Advised party that if calls continue, and it is the same person calling and no one else, MPD will advise caller to file a complaint in court or provide MPD with a written statement.

Wednesday 4/25/2018
6:40 p.m. Caller witnessed two loose dogs that live at the corner of Avenue A Extension and Rastallis Street running through the street. Caller believes that he witnessed one of the dogs act aggressively toward a man, who had to beat the dog off with a shovel. Caller later reported

that owner of dogs has returned home and secured them inside. Copy of call left for animal control officer.

Friday 4/27/2018
6:41 p.m. Caller from North Leverett Road reports that his neighbor came into his home, assaulted him, and stole his dog. At the same time, the wife of the neighbor called 911 to say that their neighbor was beating his dog, so her husband went over there to protect the dog and took it from him. ACO contacted. Officer transporting dog to animal shelter in Deerfield to be evaluated for injuries.

Monday 5/7/2018
12:19 p.m. Report from Bridge Street Apart-

ments of tenant who has not been taking her dog outside, resulting in the dog going to the bathroom inside the apartment. ACO advised.

Sunday 7/15/2018
1:06 p.m. Caller states that a white male with long hair is dragging a dog around in the grassy area near the water at Unity Park. Unable to locate.

Wednesday 9/5/2018
3:22 p.m. Shelburne Control received a call for a red pickup truck with two unsecured dogs in the truck bed. Two flags hanging off the back of the truck; one Confederate flag and one American flag. Last seen on Route 47 northbound passing Mt. Toby Kennel heading toward Montague. Referred to an officer.

Sunday 12/15/2019
9:52 a.m. Caller from the Patch states that she has called multiple times to complain about a woman's dog who is never on leash and runs and jumps on her and her dogs. Caller states that today around 9:20, when she asked the other woman about a leash, she replied, "We have our own philosophies on leashes." Officer will forward information to animal control

officer, who will return call tomorrow.

Wednesday 3/11/2020
6:49 p.m. Owner of Between the Uprights requesting officer respond to assist with a customer who came in with a dog and is refusing to comply with staff requests to keep dog on leash. He is letting the dog run around inside and letting him on the bar itself. Customer and dog left prior to officer's arrival.



Tuesday 5/19/2020
5 a.m. Caller from Vlach Avenue states that the three bears we have been looking for are in his oak tree. Officer in area states that bears are in tree; he is going to stay there in case anyone is walking their dogs, but the bears don't

appear to want to come down right now.

Wednesday 7/29/2020
7:31 a.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road states that while on a morning jog, a very aggressive dog came running toward her from behind a home. The rope that the dog was attached to broke, and the dog came out of the yard and ran at her, causing her to jump into the road. The dog backed off after she yelled at it. No answer at door, but responding officer could see and hear a dog inside that appears to be behaving aggressively.

Friday, 12/18/2020
1:41 p.m. Party into station to report that while he was driving in Montague Center, a dog ran into his vehicle. Caller spoke with owner, who was in the area. Caller advises he is not injured and the dog ran off. Caller advises owner told him that the dog was out running in the snow and that it wasn't the caller's fault that the dog ran into his vehicle. Dog's owner called advising that when her dog was struck, it ran off. Dog is one-year-old golden retriever; unknown if he is injured.



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