

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 23

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 15, 2021

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Board Votes for May 22 Town Meeting, Under Tent

By JEFF SINGLETON

“Outside is fine. I don’t have a problem with it,” said Montague selectboard member Chris Boutwell on Monday night. “Whenever it is, we have to do it.”

“Yes, we have to do it,” said chair Rich Kuklewicz, followed by member Mike Nelson: “Let’s do it outside and have it done with.”

“It” in this case refers to the Montague annual town meeting, which the selectboard has been discussing for at least a month. To the apparent relief of all concerned, the board voted Monday evening to hold town meeting out in the spring air on Saturday, May 22 – most likely under a tent, if one is available.

The vote followed a detailed and complex analysis by town adminis-

trator Steve Ellis of a survey gauging the preferences of town meeting members. The survey, to which 75% of those members with email responded, appeared to show that a virtual town meeting over Zoom was the preference of a small majority. But a closer analysis showed that the “first choice” of a majority was for an outside meeting, with the numbers split between those with differing tent preferences.

Furthermore, a significant number of respondents had a Zoom meeting as their last choice. “This shows the undesirability, for a part of our population, of a remote meeting,” Ellis pointed out.

After this analysis both Boutwell and Nelson immediately voiced support for an outdoor meeting similar see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Leverett Pond Herbicide Plan Included on Con Com Agenda



The manmade pond’s longtime stewardship group is accused of prioritizing recreational use over ecological concerns in its plan to address invasive plants.

By SARAH ROBERTSON

LEVERETT – Residents critical of ongoing weed management practices on Leverett Pond are urging the conservation commission to reconsider the terms of a permit that would allow for continued use of herbicides and hydro-raking by the Friends of Leverett Pond, a private group dedicated to its stewardship.

After hydro-raking by contractor SOLitude Lake Management was halted suddenly last June for lacking proper permits, some locals are giving the wetlands permitting process renewed scrutiny, saying the herbicides cause harm to animals and native vegetation.

The weed management plan will be discussed at a conservation commission meeting on May 3.

According to Friends of Leverett Pond (FLP) member Mitchell Mulholland, the plan focuses mainly on fighting an invasive species called variable milfoil and preserving the ecological balance of the pond. “The herbicide is carefully dosed to just kill the targeted species, and does an excellent job of that,” Mulholland wrote in an email to the *Reporter*. “The use of herbicides is not a long-term solution to control of invasive plants and the FLP does not propose its use as such. It is one tool that helps control them.”

Among the Leverett residents who oppose the use of herbicides is Kemper Carlsen, a former wildlife biologist with the Nature Conservancy. Carlsen said the “targeted” application of chemicals in a water

see **POND** page A4

Tree Advisors Brush Up Bylaw, Still Hope for Spring Meeting

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – The Montague tree advisory committee updated a proposed new tree bylaw on Tuesday evening based on input at a public hearing a week earlier, and hopes the document will be placed on the annual town meeting agenda this spring. Committee members believe that the bylaw is time-sensitive, in part because they will be receiving and planting hundreds of new trees this summer, funded by a state grant.

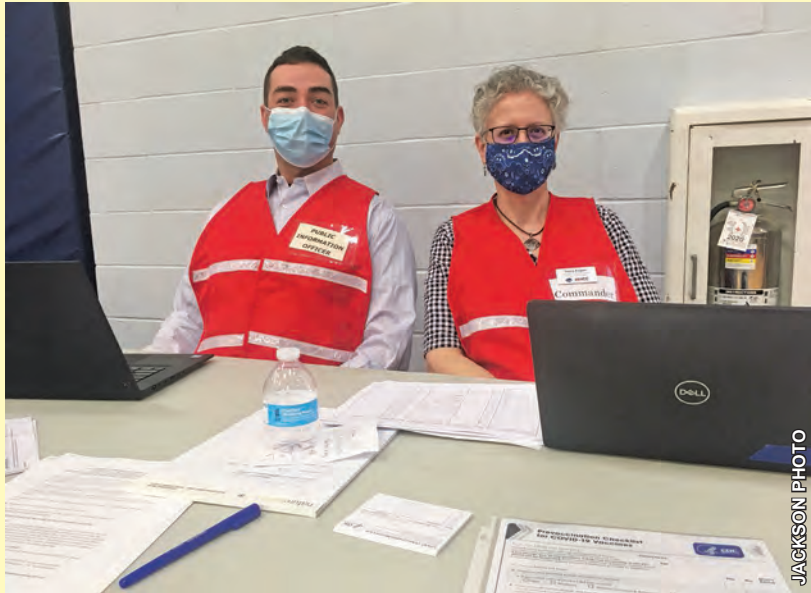
“This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to replace large numbers

of trees that have been cut down in recent years,” said tree advisory chair David Detmold, noting that the goal is to protect the new plantings from damage from roadside parking, or from pruning and cutting for construction.

Most of the proposed bylaw tracks closely with the state’s public shade tree law, Chapter 87 of the Massachusetts General Law. The tree committee has also consulted the tree bylaws of other towns in the region and added some features that are unique to Montague.

The bylaw includes sections see **TREE** page A7

GETTING THERE



Xander Sylvain and Tracy Rogers of FRCOG sign in patients last Friday.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – “We got a lot of extra doses, so that makes it a little hectic, but we’re happy with it,” Tracy Rogers told me last Friday after registering me as the 561st patient to receive a Moderna COVID-19 vaccine in the Franklin County Tech School gymnasium. “I think we had 561 doses, total.”

Rogers manages the emergency management program at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), which has been running “spoke” clinics like last week’s in several towns, though it will soon concentrate operations at Greenfield Community College. “The vaccine isn’t flowing very quickly, so it will be more efficient in one spot for a while,” Rogers said.

As of last week’s clinic, a full 40% of Franklin County’s roughly 70,000 residents had received at least their first vaccine dose, according to state Department of Pub-

lic Health figures, and 23% were fully vaccinated. The county had been shipped 39,014 doses.

“Well over 11,000” of those were administered by the Franklin County Regional Vaccination Collaborative, comprised of FRCOG along with the city of Greenfield, the towns of Orange and Montague, the sheriff’s office, LifePath, the Franklin County Medical Reserve Corps, the Northwest MA Incident Team, local boards of health, and a handful of other players.

The Collaborative’s website at franklincountymavaccine.org is a good one-stop shop for clinics, support services, and even data on how the effort is going so far.

My own shot, I am glad to report, was expertly given. Volunteers, who had been processing doses and patients and data in the gym for eight straight hours, were starting to get loopy, and I had to locate and administer my own *I Got My COVID-19 Vaccine!* sticker.

Face to Face: Village Neighbors Celebrates Its Volunteers In Person

By LILY WALLACE

LEVERETT – Village Neighbors will host an annual volunteer appreciation day this Sunday in person at the Leverett Village Co-op. While social distancing protocols made gathering unsafe during the COVID-19 pandemic, an increase in vaccination rates and some good weather led to the decision to host the event in person, socially distanced.

“We all feel a little isolated, and I want to provide ways for members to connect with each other and our volunteers safely,” said Elizabeth

Fernandez O’Brien, the group’s public relations and events chair. “We are missing that in-person, member to member connection.”

Village Neighbors strives to help aging adults and those with dementia in rural communities to age in place and live for as long as possible in their homes. The organization serves the towns of New Salem, Leverett, Shutesbury, and Wendell, with 120 members and around 80 volunteers.

“If it were not for COVID-19, we would have had this event months ago,” said Fernandez O’Brien. “We

see **VOLUNTEERS** page A6

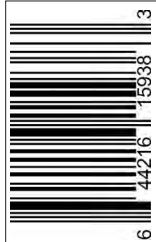


Village Neighbors volunteer Don Stone delivers a pandemic relief gift bag containing masks, hand sanitizer, soap, tea, and other items to a Wendell resident last spring.

We Apologize If It Snows This Week

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ERVING SELECTBOARD

Former Police Chief Comes Back On As Deputy Chief

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the Erving selectboard appointed former police chief Christopher Blair as deputy chief of the Erving police department. The board also voted to sign a two-year contract with newly-hired chief Robert Holst, who had served as lieutenant when Blair was chief.

Blair, a 20-year veteran of the Erving department, has been on leave since August 2020. In August, town administrator Bryan Smith said the leave was not disciplinary. Holst has served as acting chief from August until he was hired as chief.

Holst thanked the board for ratifying his contract as chief and said he was “very excited” to start his term as chief.

The board held an hour and 40-minute executive session April 5 and a one-hour executive session on April 12, both called to discuss strategy for negotiations regarding the chief of police and collective bargaining with the New England Police Benevolent Association.

The *Montague Reporter* contacted Smith for a comment about the see **ERVING** page A6

Towns To Share Mental Health Clinician for Police Response

By JEFF SINGLETON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – The Greenfield, Montague, and Deerfield police departments could soon be partnering with a local social service agency to employ a “masters-level clinician” to assist police responding to mental health emergencies. According to a press release from the agency Clinical & Support Options (CSO), the goal of the program will be to “provide expertise in the areas of emotional and mental health as well as behavioral de-escalation.”

Another goal, according to Greenfield deputy police chief William Gordon, is “to divert, where appropriate, individuals from the criminal justice system to behavioral health treatment” and “lower the footprint of police involvement in behavior health crises.”

“Police are not always the appropriate response to these calls,” Deerfield police chief John Paciorek is quoted as saying. “Being 911, however, we are often the first on the scene. The faster a person in crisis can be deescalated and identify avenues for treatment, the better the experience will be for them.”

Montague police chief Chris Williams told the *Reporter* the current plan is for CSO to work with the Greenfield department over the spring and summer in a “pilot,” while the three towns develop a

see **CLINICIAN** page A8

The Montague Reporter

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CORRECTION

In our April 8 edition, we incorrectly identified Montague board of health candidate Melanie Zamojski as a resident of Millers Falls. She lives in Montague City. We apologize for the error.

Many Hands

As we approach the fifty-percent mark for COVID-19 vaccination in our county, as our schools and parks continue to reopen, it’s a little mind-boggling to think of the possibilities for the coming months.

This is the 49th issue of the *Montague Reporter* published since the general quarantine began. The first four were digital-only, so this is the 45th back in print.

We’ve continued making every edition available for free online in PDF form, only asking nicely for readers to do their part by subscribing. We know we’ve picked up many new readers in the past year, so that’s a silver lining.

But we’ve been operating for a long time on a skeleton crew, collaborating almost entirely by phone, Zoom, and Google Docs, and we’re tired. Some items in our Avenue A office have been left unmoved, and

un-dusted, since March 2020.

Several writers who started with us this year haven’t met any other participants in person.

And we’re tired!

So if you have any free time, we urge you to get out and volunteer this year, as soon as you’re able. Not necessarily with the *Reporter* – there are dozens and dozens of worthy groups operating in our towns who we’re sure could use the fresh blood.

Our communities’ volunteer spirit did continue on through the past year, but soon it will be able to blossom in its social and spiritual benefit, unmasked and un-socially distanced. In a little while there’ll be concerts and parties, sure, but also an opportunity for an unfettered civic life that we never quite understood we were so lucky to enjoy.

Pitching In

A campaign was started, last week, by the Firemen’s Relief association, to buy an automobile for the use of the district nurse, Mrs. Alice Brown, so that she will be able to cover her territory more quickly than now, when she is compelled to make her rounds on Shank’s mare, or by trolley.

With an auto, much waste of time will be eliminated, and the machine will tend to greatly increase the scope and efficiency of the nurse’s beneficent work.

The Firemen’s Relief association made an initial subscription of

\$100, and other contributions from the manufacturing and business concerns, lodges, individuals, etc. are coming in in such volume that the purchase of the machine soon seems assured.

When the auto is secured, the matter of its upkeep and repair will have to be reckoned with, but those backing the scheme feel that this matter will be readily solved, and in a manner which will give satisfaction all around.

– Turners Falls Reporter,
April 13, 1921

Milling Around

“I just wanted to share the milling and paving schedule we received from Northern Construction for Route 2 and Avenue A at the Turners Falls Bridge,” Montague town administrator Steve Ellis wrote to us this week.

It didn’t fit anywhere else in the edition, and readers may find the information useful, so here goes:

Friday, April 16: milling of existing pavement. *Tuesday, April 20:* paving – base course. *Wednesday, April 21:* paving – top course.

“Traffic patterns on Route 2 will be adjusted throughout the day. Turners Falls Bridge is expected to be closed for each day,” he adds.

OK. We’ll see what happens with the weather, but heads up.



Three worker-owners of the Compost Cooperative, which collects compost curbside and from restaurants, talk about their organization and what it means to them. “I love working and owning Compost Cooperative,” says head of operations Wolf Valentin (left), “because as an ex-offender I have a family here, and this allows me to earn a meaningful wage and at the same time do something for our environment.” “We’re proud to be diverting more than a quarter million pounds of compostables per year away from landfills and into composting operations,” Revan Schendler (center) tells us, “as we build economic democracy and affordable curbside service for residents in Franklin County.” And Trena Loftin (right) says, “I love my work with the co-op. Being able to not only cultivate meaningful, living-wage work for folks impacted by incarceration and also initiate strategies for increasing access to affordable housing and doing right by the environment brings me incredible joy.”

Letters to the Editors

Montague: Opt Out of Aerial Spraying

A new law allows Massachusetts to mosquito spray in every town, aerially or by truck, historically using Anvil 10+10. No town is exempt unless they Opt Out.

If the state concludes there is an “elevated risk,” which is not defined, they can spray. In 2020, EEE was found in a mosquito from Orange. Orange and Athol were then listed as “moderate risk.” State mosquito control will be charged to municipalities through deductions of local aid funds. The *Boston Globe* reported that aerial spraying cost more than \$5 million in 2019.

Mosquito control is an important issue. We should not ignore arbovirus; instead, we should address this intelligently and safely. The only way to do that is to Opt Out and take local control of how this is done.

Aerial and truck spraying are the most toxic and least effective methods. Massachusetts state records document the ineffectiveness of aerial spraying: half of spray events kill zero mosquitoes, and there is no proof of disease reduction.

Safer alternatives include public education on eliminating standing water; CO₂ traps for monitoring; and BTI and Altosid for larval control. The most effective mosquito control is a biodiverse ecosystem, which Montague has, and which aerial spraying damages.

Montague has rare, threatened, and endangered species. The Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area is a globally rare habitat, with more than 50% of Massachusetts’ bee species. Land here drains to watersheds.

Wildlife management areas, watershed land, private beekeepers, and some rare species habitats are not excluded from spraying, despite what Anvil’s literature states: “Toxic to aquatic organisms; highly toxic

to bees... Runoff from treated areas into water may be hazardous.”

On human health, Anvil’s label states it is “largely untested; Harmful if absorbed through the skin, and an OSHA-defined ‘Hazardous Chemical.’” The EPA states Anvil is a suspected carcinogen, and a GI and liver toxicant. NIOSH states Anvil is also a suspected kidney and neurotoxicant.

A 2017 study published in *Frontiers in Pediatrics* found children who lived where aerial pyrethroid pesticide spraying occurred each summer in upstate New York were 37% more likely to have autism or documented developmental delay than a control group who lived where pesticides were only applied by standard methods. Anvil is a pyrethroid.

To Opt Out, Montague must submit a mosquito plan by May 15, after holding a selectboard meeting where a vote must be taken. That meeting must include input from the board of health and allow for

public comment.

A concern is that it will be too hard to create an Opt Out plan on time. At the April 8 conservation commission meeting, Kyla Bennett testified that her organization, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), will work with and offer resources to Montague, including template Opt Out forms and town educational materials that they have already produced. My understanding is that this virtually solves Montague’s difficulty in filing.

I encourage everyone concerned to advocate. Attend and speak at the board of health (April 21 at 5 p.m.) and selectboard (April 26 at 6:30 p.m.) Zoom meetings. For a form letter to write to these boards *with deadlines approaching*, or for more information, contact *Montague-OptOut@gmail.com*.

Jane Alessandra
Montague

Sunshine and Woolen Fiber

I very much appreciated Mike Jackson’s detailed interview about the proposed Northfield solar project (projects?). This article explained to a degree nothing else had exactly what is proposed, and in what manner it might work as a dual use project.

My feeling has long been that the solution to carbon pollution *must* include generation – energy conservation is important, but it cannot offset the total energy needs of displaced fossil fuel use. I have never been comfortable with the attitude to displace generation somewhere else – most recently I guess that’s Quebec hydro, complete with the host of problems it has created. Re-

gionally, if we consume it we also ought to generate it. Multiuse solutions seem a much better approach than single-use solar projects.

I also was fascinated by the proposed use of sheep. That touches on another aspect of displacing the use of petrochemicals: 200 years ago wool was a critical source of fiber. Totally natural and sustainable. Fascinating intersection of uses. (Anyone who is interested in the history of wool in America might want to read the book *Wool* by Peggy Hart, which I found out about from a review in this paper.)

George Drake
Leverett

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By NINA ROSSI

We at the *Montague Reporter* are happy to help you out with your **spring mulching** needs by letting you take some of the high quality, full color back issues stockpiled in our 177 Avenue A office for free. Our pages might also be good for crafting, painting, *papier-mâché*, wallpaper, fish-wrapping, padding for packages, even building simple furniture – or a canoe!

Yup, while looking up the correct way to write *papier-mâché* online I read about people making boats out of paper in the 19th century. Apparently, paper was “stretchier” when wet back then, so we wouldn’t want to seriously recommend this to our readers.

But here’s a historical curiosity for you: one man paddled his 58-pound paper canoe from Quebec to the Gulf of Mexico in 1874-5. The 2,000-plus mile journey along the shoreline of this continent inspired him to write a book. His name was Nathaniel H. Bishop, and the book is called *The Voyage of the Paper Canoe*.

At any rate, if any of these creative ideas for our back issues “float your boat,” please email editor@montaguereporter.org to arrange for a pickup.

The **Nice. Snack Parlor** at Nova Motorcycles on Second Street announces that they are opening for the season this weekend with their shaved ice and snack offerings, plus live music on Saturdays.

Their hours through May 5 will be Fridays and Saturdays 12 to 5 p.m., and Sundays 12 to 4 p.m. This Saturday will feature music from 1 to 4 p.m. by Woody: Man, Myth, Musician. If it rains, the music will happen on Sunday instead.

Nice. offers snacks plus local organic shaved ice, custom soda blends, and Nova Motorcycle’s signature cold brew iced coffee. April 24 will feature DJ-ing and visual art by Casey Williams, and May 1 will be Luke DeRoy. Be Nice. and stop by!

The **Western Mass Fibershed** group are sharing their 2020 yarns, cloth, and blankets at Swanson’s Fabrics, 106 Avenue A in Turners Falls, this Saturday, April 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please see the announcement on Page B8 for details.

Village Neighbors Volunteer Appreciation Day at the Leverett Coop has been rescheduled to April 18 at 1 p.m. Village Neighbors is a nonprofit member- and volunteer-run organization dedicated to helping seniors stay in their homes in Leverett, Wendell, New Salem, and Shutesbury. Please see our article on Page A1 for more about the group and this event, which will feature live music from the Diggers and the Wranglers.

Find the Leverett Coop at 180 Rattlesnake Gutter Road, and Village Neighbors at www.villageneighbors.org.

The **Montague Libraries** will be closed on Monday, April 19 for Patriots Day, a Massachusetts holiday. Next week is school vacation week, though, so there are special events scheduled including a Story-Walk and life-sized Candyland.

The Storywalk can be done all week outside, with pages labeled and positioned at least six feet apart. Activity bags for Candyland with instructions, playing cards, books, and other fun things are available at the Carnegie Library curbside pickup hours. Make-and-Take craft bags are also available at all the library branches during vacation week.

Find out the details at www.montaguepubliclibraries.org.

On a job hunt? MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center is holding a **Home Care Virtual Job Fair** next Tuesday morning, April 20, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Register at masshirefhcareers.org.

The event offers a live, interactive chat with the employers Arcadia New England, Associated Home Care, Catholic Charities, and O’Connell Care at Home, who are hiring for a range of positions including home care companion,

home health aide, personal care assistant, and certified nurse assistant.

Interested in learning **how to play chess**? Glenn Davidson is holding an online beginners’ class through the Greenfield Public Library on Tuesday, April 20 at 7 p.m. The tutorial will show you the fundamentals of chess as a strategy game. In this hour you will learn how to set up the pieces and move them, along with strategies, special moves, tips for better games, and even “how to win a game of chess in four moves.”

Register by contacting librarian@greenfieldpubliclibrary.org. The program is free and open to all.

The LAVA Center in Greenfield announces their second **online short play festival**, “Facing the Future: Climate Change Theater.” Plays by 13 playwrights acted out by 28 performers from as far away as Ireland and New Zealand will be available online all day on Thursday, April 22 in honor of Earth Day.

According to the announcement, characters in these plays range from “cerulean warblers, insects, brown bull catfish, and fire, to a wide age range of humans,” as well as “a couple of time-traveling aliens confronting questions of our collective survival.” The plays are written by Lindsay Adams, Sara Becker, Kay Bullard, Patricia Crosby, Colette Cullen, Stephen Fruchtmann, Nina Gross, Jan Maher, Rex McGregor, Michael Nix, Candace Perry, Vanessa Query, and Karen Shapiro Miller. Find out about attending by visiting localaccess.org. Tickets are sliding scale donations from \$1 to \$15.

Leverett is having an **Earth Day community cleanup** on Saturday, April 24 from 9 a.m. to noon. The rain date is April 25. The event is a project of the Leverett Community Builders Committee with the town’s energy committee, the Leverett Elementary School, and its PTO as co-sponsors.

The town highway department has offered to pick up any bags of trash or recyclables left on the side of the road the following Monday, if participants are unable to bring them to the transfer station. The selectboard and transfer station have waived fees for cleanup trash that weekend.

Residents are asked to sign up online at bit.ly/3fw4Hzs and use an app, CleanSwell, to document the

trash they find. The app contributes to a global database used to identify trends and advocate for trash-free solutions. Email LeverettCommunityBuilders@gmail.com for more information.

The **New American Banjo Festival** will take place online on April 24 and 25 with streaming concerts and Zoom discussions. The festival will explore interesting performance styles old and new, focusing on the banjo in New England and beyond.

Performers include classic fingerstyle virtuoso Aaron Jonah Lewis; Ken Perlman, internationally known as a pioneer of a style known as *melodic clawhammer*; old-time string band Shingle the Roof; and Michael Nix, performing music from his New Classic Banjo Project.

Kate Spencer will give a video presentation and answer questions about the Arthur E. Smith Banjo Company, one of the first revival banjo manufacturers, which was located in Franklin County, and *Linefork*, a film featuring Kentucky banjo legend Lee Sexton, will be screened followed by live talkback with co-director Vic Rawlings.

Register at nixworks.com or find the New American Banjo Festival on Facebook. Admission is by donation.

State senator Jo Comerford returns for another **People’s Town Hall** on April 26, from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m., via Zoom. “In addition to timely updates, we’re going to look forward – together – to a post-COVID world and the future of our district,” Comerford writes. “I want to hear your ideas about the ways we must build back better, stronger, more equitably.”

Register at www.senatorjocomerford.org/town-hall-registration.

Barbès in the Woods, the Montague Center music festival that debuted at the Bartlett Farm in 2019 and was canceled last summer, has decided to return for 2021. Save the date for Saturday, August 21.

Barbès in the Woods is a festival homage to an eclectic dive bar venue in Brooklyn that – before the pandemic – hosted over 700 shows a year. The festival is described as “a stage and sanctuary for global music culture, creativity, and exploration.” Organizers will release a lineup and ticket information in due course.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

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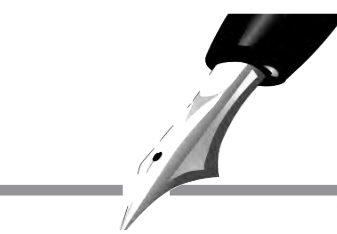
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More Letters to the Editors

Good News!

The Whistle Stop has reopened.

The Whistle Stop in Millers Falls was our regular “go to” stop for breakfast and an occasional lunch on my return trips to Maine. I was saddened by its closing in March of 2020. Its friendly, family- and community-oriented atmosphere, very good food, pleasant staff, and very fair prices have been missed.

It was a pleasant surprise while driving through Millers Falls on my way to Turners on Thursday, April 1, to discover that, indeed, it had just reopened.

Best wishes, Dan!

Tad Runge
Chebeague Island, Maine

Cottontail Acknowledgments

On Saturday, April 3, Peter Cottontail held his first ever Drive-Thru EGGstravaganza at Unity Park in Turners. The Drive-Thru consisted of vehicles driving through the parking lot and having volunteers hand goodie bags of toy and candy-filled plastic eggs to children ages 3 and up. Maintaining proper social distance guidelines, children were able to wave to Peter on their way out. A few dozen vehicles drove through the park, and the event proved to be a big hit.

The Drive-Thru would not have been possible without the assistance of Chief Chris Williams of the Montague Police Department and his officers for traffic control, Jay Fritz, Linda Ackerman, Kelly Trinque, Haleigh Greene, Sarah Hanley,

Abby Holloway, Gabby Weeden, Stephanie Peterson, Kasia Dobosz, and Kyleigh Dobosz.

This was truly a team effort, and we couldn’t be more fortunate to have received their help.

We would also be remiss if we didn’t acknowledge Peter Cottontail himself! Everyone appreciates Mr. Cottontail for setting aside time from his busy schedule to attend and greet the children.

We look forward to returning to our traditional egg hunt next year, and hope everyone stays safe and healthy throughout the year.

Jen Peterson, Clerk
Jon Dobosz, Director
Montague Parks & Recreation Dept.

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OP ED

Why Walk? For Great River Justice This Earth Week

By ANNA GYORGY

WENDELL — A public service announcement in last week's Montague Reporter described plans for the Earth Day-related Great River Walk. On April 24 we can see for ourselves, together, the section of the mighty Connecticut River most affected by the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Station (NMPS).

The Walk takes place two days after Earth Day, on Saturday morning, April 24, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The route starts from Dorsey Road in Erving, near the base of the majestic French King Bridge, then leads directly 1.5 miles to the intake tunnels of the pumped storage project. And back again.

Child friendly, bring masks, bikes, but please no pets.

On Easter Sunday my partner and I walked the walk, to check it out. It's a beautiful stretch of river, very peaceful, with a good flat road and bike route running alongside.

On April 24 we'll learn more about what we're seeing — and aren't.

For how the powerful pumps affect the river and aquatic life can't be seen. The powerful suction occurs at night, with unlucky fish and more forced up the mountain to a reservoir, never to return.

The often dramatic reversal of river current at night that results from the extreme pumping action is likewise missed, by humans at least.

After a year of pandemic, the idea of a "spaced out" community

walk along the river is in itself appealing, but there is a goal and hope for this event.

The goal is to inform ourselves about the Northfield Mountain pumped storage project, and learn about the efforts of its owners, the Canadian FirstLight corporation, to win an operating permit for 50 years into the future.

Along the route we will hear from energy and wildlife experts. And that's important, for if the facility's actions appear hidden, the results are certainly not.

As environmental journalist Karl Meyer recently reported: "NMPS's massive suction kills everything it inhales. Federal studies on American shad show tens of millions of eggs and larvae extinguished annually, plus the deaths of over 2 million juvenile shad sucked in on migrations to the sea. Its unstudied impacts on 20 odd other resident and migrant species leave plenty more death to ponder."

Why is this happening?

The rationale for this project may have appeared to make sense in a bygone era of nuclear expansion and lax environmental review. Here is some "background," from a June 2020 report commissioned by FirstLight:

In late 1964, Connecticut Light & Power, Hartford Electric Light Company, and Western Massachusetts Electric (all of which are legacy companies of Northeast Utilities and now Eversource), applied

for construction of the Northfield project. A final license was issued in August 1968. Northfield became operational in 1972.

As with most pumped storage plants, Northfield includes an upper reservoir, intake channel, powerhouse, and tailrace tunnel, which links the pumped storage facility to the Connecticut River.

Northfield originally was expected to consume excess energy produced by a number of planned nuclear units during evening hours and generate electricity during peak hours when power was needed most. During the 1970s, construction of some of those nuclear units did not come to fruition.

So what a good idea that seemed! As these grid-feeding colossi (twin 1,500 MW nuclear reactors were proposed for the Montague Plains in late 1973) must be located near rivers, to supply the massive amounts of cooling water for the reactors — killing more fish and heating the rivers — why not use that "extra" nighttime power to pump river water up to a holding pond, to release through turbines later?

The fact that "construction of some of those nuclear units did not come to fruition" is of course thanks to a dedicated grassroots movement supported by a few scientists revealing the immense dangers involved. After years of government lies, these were hard for the general public to believe — until the 1979 nuclear meltdown at one of the Three Mile

Island nukes near Harrisburg, PA. What you can't see can harm you.

The nuclear plant in Rowe was closed and nuclear plans in Montague canceled. Finally, in 2014, the dangerous Vermont Yankee plant succumbed to sustained citizen pressure — and its own history of leaks and accidents.

But one quite tragic "appendix" to the nuclear story is the related pumped storage, now using other energy sources to provide its rationale for using more energy than it produces, at tremendous cost to fish and friends.

Back before fracked gas pipelines threatened, local residents in Western Mass learned about and fought to stop the nukes. Me too. But I admit that I was not aware of the related aspect and dangers of the pumped storage project.

In this era of climate crisis, biodiversity loss and awareness of the need for environmental justice — for human and all living communities and beings — every energy source should be non-violent and fossil-free, produced and used as close to home as possible. And only after taking all possible actions to conserve and save energy, resources — and finally ourselves.

Anna Gyorgy was author-editor of the 1979 "bible" of the anti-nuclear movement, NO NUKES, Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power, and active with the Clamshell Alliance in the late 1970s. She lives in Wendell.

POND from page A1

body cannot be confined to one location or species. "The poison does not target only the non-natives, it kills everything," she said. "Amphibians are particularly susceptible to toxins. These same toxins stay in the water and pass through the food chain."

According to the FLP, the invasive species of concern are Eurasian and variable milfoil, swollen bladderwort, curly-leaf pondweed, and brittle naiad. In the future the group plans to use additional means of weed management, such as winter drawdowns, which would lower the water level in the pond by several feet, killing all exposed vegetation along the perimeter.

The FLP has yet to submit a final Notice of Intent (NOI) to the commission outlining its plans, but a draft plan was submitted this winter and returned to the FLP for edits.

Conservation commission chair Isaiah Robison told the Reporter the commission keeps in close contact with the FLP to make sure the permit application process goes smoothly. They do not expect a completed plan before the May 3 meeting, he said, but the issue is on the agenda for discussion.

Two scientific assessments must be completed first to determine the baseline health of the pond: one by a wetlands consultant hired by the FLP, and another by the Mass Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. FLP member Mitchell Mulholland called invasive plants "a major threat to the ecology of Leverett Pond," requiring intervention.

"It is clear to me that the proposed use of herbicides by the Friends of Leverett Pond is primarily intended to control weeds from a few landowners' waterfront property and channels through the shallow areas so that they have easier boating and swimming access," Carlsen wrote in a February 1 letter to the commission.

"If we want to have a clear path out from the public boat launch area, we should use hand removal," Carlsen said, recommending a manual alternative. "Landowners could petition to use hand removal in front of their homes."

Dredging and Dosing

Last June, Leverett resident Macaylla Silver sent a video and letter to MassDEP to bring at-

tention to the unpermitted hydro-raking SOLitude Lake Management was conducting on the pond. The agency confirmed in a November letter that proper permission was not obtained.

"It was brought to our attention by a member of the public that the paperwork wasn't lining up... in regard to the hydro-raking and the definition of dredging versus not dredging based on volume calculations," Robison said.

For years, the FLP has hired the lake management company Aquatic Control Technology to apply herbicide and hydro-rake vegetation from the pond's perimeter. Around 2016, Aquatic was acquired by SOLitude, a conglomerate that treats water bodies in almost every US state, but operates primarily in New England. The company is, in turn, a subsidiary of Rentokil, which describes itself as "one of the largest business services companies in the world" working in the pest management, disease control, interior landscaping and food safety industries. Reached for comment by the Reporter this week, SOLitude representatives consulted with members of the FLP before responding.

SOLitude environmental engineer Dominic Meringolo said the company's primary goals are invasive species control and maintaining the ecological balance of the water they rake and treat.

"The management that we've done is really focused on invasive species," Meringolo said. "The hydro-raking is probably a little more trying to reduce some areas of the native nuisance vegetation, but it's been pretty limited to keeping safe areas in front of people's houses for recreation, and not building up the organic debris on the bottom.... The Wetlands Protection Act is really limiting in what we can do for recreation purposes."

SOLitude has also used chemicals to manage plant growth on the pond, including Diquat and ProcellaCOR, the latter of which was first used in 2019 to curb the spread of milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed. The FLP's draft plan calls for spreading eight acres of ProcellaCOR along the perimeter of the pond annually, as needed.

A Delicate Balance

Other communities have been fighting the use of herbicides on water bodies by SOLitude Lake Management. Last year the conservation commis-

sion in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, was sued by a stewardship group it had refused permission to use the herbicide Fluridone on a body of water known as the Stockbridge Bowl. The group, the Stockbridge Bowl Association, eventually won a \$19,000 settlement from the town for legal fees after a Superior Court ruling that it had the right to use a product the EPA had determined to be safe.

Last week, the state of Vermont approved the use of ProcellaCOR on Lake Iroquois after an initial denial, appeal, and stiff public opposition.

"They look upon the life of the pond as something to be manipulated, controlled or destroyed," said Sarah Greenleaf, a local resident involved in opposition to the herbicide plan. "They do not take into consideration the delicate balance of life, nor the need to restore balance within the pond's ecosystem after the injurious effects of repeated applications of toxic chemical herbicides."

Years ago, Greenleaf says, her dog had a seizure soon after it swam in Leverett Pond on a day that Diquat had been applied. Mona, a beagle, died two years later of bone cancer. Greenleaf has been urging Leverett residents to write to the conservation commission in opposition to the vegetation management plan.

According to Meringolo, Diquat comes with no health advisories regarding contact with humans or pets. "None of them have any specific labeling for restriction in the water for pets like dogs," he said. The chemical does, however, come with a warning that no livestock should drink from a pond treated with Diquat in the last 24 hours.

"Everybody has their own beliefs," Meringolo said, of criticism of herbicide use. "Management techniques are really for the good of the lake and pond. Everybody has their own opinions, and their own decision process, on whether they think the products we use pose an acceptable risk."

Meringolo said that ProcellaCOR was chosen to target the milfoil on Leverett Pond based on its selectivity at low doses. "Every herbicide affects a selection of species," he said. "No herbicide only affects one plant only, and no herbicide affects all plants."

SOLitude and the FLP have worked together on the management plan in Leverett, but according to Meringolo, the FLP is spearheading the

see POND next page

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

At-Large Dogs; Solar Discount

By JERRI HIGGINS

A nuisance dog hearing and a community solar program presentation were the largest agenda items during Gill’s selectboard meeting Monday evening.

Regional animal control officer Kyle Dragon recommended that the selectboard order immediate restraint measures for Lucy, a six-year-old boxer mix belonging to resident Wesley Johnson, and Mozzi, a nine-month-old pit bull belonging to Rufus Thomas, of the same Main Road residence. Both men attended the remote meeting. Chelsea Phothirath, who described herself as Johnson’s helper, was also on the call advocating for Johnson – and for the dogs.

Dragon said that Lucy had been “at-large” and picked up by Gill police officers 15 times in 2020, and four times this year, while Mozzi has been loose and picked up five times this year. Dragon related that multiple warnings and citations to Johnson and Thomas had not resulted in corrective action, and asked the selectboard to authorize seizure of the dogs if the requested restraint orders fail to keep the dogs contained.

Phothirath said that since Johnson and Thomas received notice of the hearing on April 9, the dogs have been kept inside, or chained up while outside. She also said that the owners have only been letting one dog out at a time to help keep a closer watch on them.

Dragon recommended that the selectboard order the dogs be restrained, that kennels be constructed to contain them when they are home, and that they are leashed or harnessed when they are “off property.”

Phothirath told Dragon and the selectboard that Lucy is Johnson’s

“lifeline” who means “everything to him,” and emphasized that she would be responsible for ensuring that the orders were followed, and that the dogs would not get loose again.

“I understand where you are coming from, as someone who has had dogs,” said selectboard member Greg Snedeker. “But I think you realize at this point that it has come to the selectboard, which makes it a serious matter.” Snedeker said he would sign an order for constraining the dogs, but warned Johnson and Thomas that he would not hesitate to order seizure of the dogs if they run loose again.

Selectboard chair Randy Crochier agreed with Snedeker’s statement, but selectboard member John Ward went further, saying that his dog had “been away from me and out of my control twice” in his 16 years of dog ownership.

“I want you to make promises to not let those dogs get out of your control, and I want you to be really, *really* serious about that – for the sake of the dogs, and for the sake of Wesley,” Ward said. “I want this to be the end of it.” He also pointed out that the selectboard was not pursuing unpaid fines the pair had accrued from the incidents. “There needs to be something with more teeth,” he said.

The restraint order was unanimously approved, and Johnson and Thomas agreed to all conditions. The two men were given an April 26 compliance deadline, at which time Dragon will inspect their premises for compliance.

Community Solar Power

Energy commission member Claire Chang recommended the town adopt a new low-income community solar option within its cur-

rent “community choice” municipal power aggregation agreement.

Chang introduced Colonial Power Group (CPG) president Mark Cappadona, who told the selectboard about the new offering. Gill contracted with CPG in 2018 to help create the town’s municipal power aggregation agreement, under which Eversource customers pay for electricity generated by renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, unless they opt out.

Cappadona said that the new option would “dovetail with the current program.”

Chang explained that low-income residents who have not already opted out of the town program would save 2% off their current bills with the new option, and would be automatically enrolled if they already receive a discounted rate through Eversource. (Any residents receiving state or federal aid likely qualify for that discounted rate, and anyone not sure about their eligibility can contact Eversource or Community Action for more information.)

The town would sign a “memorandum of understanding” or an MOU, and the contract would go out to bid. Cappadona said residents could opt in or out of the option at any time. “There are no hooks in this program,” he said.

One hook for town, however, is that the solar energy would be purchased under the state Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program, which requires a 20-year term. If Gill decided it wanted to opt out after the end of its three-year contract with CPG, the company would ask the town for enough time to move all the accounts off of the discount program, and replace them with low-income residents from other towns.

NOTICE of INTENT TO APPLY

The Brick House Community Resource Center will be applying for the FY2022 Massachusetts 21st Century Community Learning Centers – Supporting Additional Learning Time Grant. The purpose of this federally funded, competitive grant program is to support the implementation of academically enriching programming during Out-of-School Time (OST) and/or Expanded Learning Time (ELT, a longer school day or year for all students) that helps to close proficiency and opportunity gaps, increases student engagement, and contributes to a well-rounded education.

If funded, the Brick House plans to offer an academic enrichment program that will serve youth at the Turners Falls High School. Academic enrichment will include STEM, the arts, health/wellness, homework support and college readiness, project-based learning, and social emotional skill development. If you would like to provide feedback on the submission of the application or have any questions in regards to the 21st CCLC, please contact Kwamane Harris, Executive Director, by email at kharris@brickhouseccrc.org.

Crochier asked if regular rate-payers would absorb the discount to low-income participants. “It does not cost us more than any other time,” said Cappadona. “All of us pay for the SMART program on a tariff on the utility bill.”

The selectboard unanimously voted to enroll Gill in the program, contingent on whether the 20-year term would require a town meeting vote.

Fire lanes must be left open at all times for fire and medical services, and the club must hire a police detail for crowds over 300. The building inspector also recommended that exit pathways be maintained, and emergency lighting provided if required. All COVID-19 guidelines must be followed.

Crochier recused himself from discussion and voting due to his membership at the club.

Gill’s lawn mowing contract was awarded to Artscape Landscaping for their bid of \$157.50 per biweekly job. Crochier again recused himself, this time due to a family member’s business being among the bids received.

Other Business

The cost of the Gill Elementary School floor replacement project is not likely to greatly increase, town administrator Ray Purington told the selectboard. Recent asbestos testing of the floor tile and adhesive in the newer part of the building came in negative.

Purington said that the original estimates of either \$103,394 to contain the asbestos, or \$263,297 to remove it entirely and replace the flooring, are still “good ballpark numbers” to bring to town meeting.

The Cielito Lindo food truck completed its mandated lighting adjustments, and will be issued an updated operating license.

The Turners Falls Schuetzen Verein was granted a public gathering permit for various dates at the club grounds contingent on “the usual conditions,” said Purington.

Purington was unanimously approved as Gill’s alternate representative to the regional animal control advisory committee.

The fire department was awarded an \$8,500 firefighter safety equipment grant through the state Department of Fire Services, which will be used for a set of turnout gear and radio accessories.

Fire chief Gene Beaubien told the selectboard that he saw signs up on the Turners Falls-Gill bridge that it will be closed this Friday, as the state is working on repaving the Route 2 intersection. He said that the intersection will “be a mess for Friday, Monday, and Tuesday.”

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permit application process, unlike most of SOLitude’s clients. He credited Mitch Mulholland with local expertise. “He does a lot of the survey work,” Meringolo said of Mulholland. “He pays close attention to the pond, and is very knowledgeable.”

According to Mulholland, it is necessary to use the herbicide in combination with hydro-raking because milfoil can fragment and spread easily around the pond if it is harvested alive.

The FLP also works closely with the conservation commission. The version of the group’s plan discussed during a February 1 con com hearing were part of a draft Notice of Intent [NOI], according to Robison, the commission’s chair.

“After our first meeting, there were studies the commission wanted the Friends of Leverett Pond to complete before the NOI was submitted for review,” Robison told the *Reporter*.

“The relationship between the Friends of Leverett Pond and the conservation commission has been so positive over the past... that we wanted to make sure that we were maintaining communication with [them],” Robison said, “so that we could point out missing information as soon as possible, so that when they came to the table with the completed NOI, we weren’t drawing out the process after the fact.”

Asked what information was missing in the FLP’s earlier draft, Robison did not provide a specific answer. “I’m fairly certain we received a draft, but it was not the end-all be-all,” he said. “Truth be told, I cannot think of specifically what was missing.”

In her February 1 letter, Carlsen questioned the FLP’s jurisdiction over the pond at all. “This is inappropriate to say the least, with their private interests superseding the health of our precious wetland. The pond should be managed by the town and the state,” she wrote. “While the pond is man-made, we now have the legal responsibility to manage this wetland appropriately.”

“With such significant loss of wetlands in the US,” she argued, “any wetland is a precious resource.”

If approved, the new permit will remain in effect for three to five years.



NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Short Political Opportunity Opens Up

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – At their meeting Tuesday night, the regional school committee discussed the requirement to try to fill the seat left vacant this spring by the resignation of Gill member Valeria “Timmie” Smith. Letters of intent from Gill residents volunteering for the position must be submitted, in person or by email, to superintendent Brian Beck by April 27.

At the committee’s following meeting on May 11, members will review candidates and vote to select one. If they successfully fill the position, the new member would be expected to come back for meetings on May 25, June 8, and June 22.

On June 23, the committee will reorganize. Town elections are held on two different dates this year – May 17 in Gill, and June 22 in Montague. No names are on the ballot for Montague. In Gill, one is on the ballot: Valeria Smith, who has decided to run after all.

“I’m very appreciative of how seriously families in the communities have taken the virus, and are looking to protect one another’s children as well as our staff,” superintendent Beck told the committee.

Only eight Gill Elementary students are still learning from home, and two of them are expected to return after next week’s April break – a 95% rate of return. At the high school level, which is still in

person for two days each week but scheduled to return full-time later this month, 65 of 256 students are staying remote.

“Students opting remote at both the middle school and high school are high, but that might change,” Beck said.

Large tents have been set up outside each school, and are expected to be used to allow for socially distanced mealtimes, supplementing cafeteria space.

Student rep Audrey O’Keefe reported that technical issues are causing a hindrance. “One of the concerns that’s been going on in the high school is the wifi is very insufficient,” she said. “It’s come to surface that many students have to use personal hotspots, which I think is unreasonable, as students shouldn’t have to worry and use their own personal devices to get into class and complete assignments.”

Last Thursday, April 8, a natural gas scare shut the high school down for the day; buses bringing students to school in the morning turned around and deposited them back in the remote classroom. “No trace of hazardous materials were found in the building,” Beck recounted. The working theory is that the odor was caused by something that had grown in the unused plumbing being freshly activated by moisture.

Nearly a thousand swabs have been taken in the district’s COVID-19 pool testing program. A vaccine clinic held at Sheffield on Tuesday benefited 53 staff

members. During April break, bags of groceries will be dropped off at the homes of district families, thanks to public donations to the food service department.

Other Business

Middle and high school principal Joanne Menard gave a presentation on new course offerings in the fall related to the new Innovation Pathways program, which places people early on a track to career skills in growth industries.


Under Healthcare and Social Assistance, the new courses are Certifications in Health and Introduction to Nursing and Allied Health. Courses will result in participating students, who do not all need to be in Innovation Pathways, with CPR, first aid, and OSHA safety certifications.

The Advanced Manufacturing track has prompted Introduction to Technical Drawing and Blueprint Writing, Lean Principles and Techniques of Manufacturing, and Physics, which had not recently been available except in Honors.

Multiple proposals for after-school and vacation learning programs are taking shape, including a Little Scholars STEAM program for the coming break, and a tentative 6-week summer camp at Sheffield Elementary.

Not many teachers were interested in coming to work for six weeks this summer, said Beck, so the new idea is to break it into three two-week gigs.

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Town Meeting Too Soon To Designate A Holiday

By GEORGE BRACE

A suggestion to promote participation in town government by making town meeting day a holiday in Leverett highlighted the town’s April 13 selectboard meeting. Board members were reluctant to make such a change on short notice, but discussed alternatives, and commented that they were open to exploring the idea for next year.

The board also approved a town budget to go before voters at the annual town meeting on Saturday May 1, and gave permission for a volunteer group to clear brush in the center of town as part of an effort to spruce things up for the town’s 250th anniversary in 2024.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis asked the board and attendees if any changes in town meeting format were desired, saying she “should hear now” as the date was soon approaching, and she wanted to make sure things were “on the right track.”

Resident Josh Nugent brought up the idea of closing the transfer station on town meeting day and making the day “like a town holiday” as a means to increase voter participation. He pointed out that the library is closed that day, and the transfer station is closed on Easter, setting precedents for the idea.

Selectboard chair Julie Shively and member Tom Hankinson expressed their reluctance to make the change on short notice, instead favoring a shifting of hours at the landfill, and noting that a non-resident worker had volunteered to cover time at the facility so resident workers could take part in town meeting.

Anne Delano of the finance committee added that there were pay issues involved in altering town employees’ schedules, and that she would like to talk to them before making any changes like the proposed closing.

Delano, Shively, and Hankinson all expressed interest in the holiday idea, saying they were not opposed, but needed more notice before making a change of this type. Nugent took note of the positive response for the possibility of implementing the idea next year, but added that he “doesn’t want the idea to get lost,” citing the example of a recent discussion on childcare for town meeting which was also seen as being “too late.” A final suggestion that the meeting should just be held at the transfer station was met with laughter, and McGinnis commenting that “we’d get more people.”

Annual Budget

The board and finance committee approved a budget for residents to vote on, which came in at a 3.9% increase over the FY’21 budget. The final budget proposal was the culmination of a lengthy process of meetings and discussions with town departments and officials, and passed with a minimum of comment.

In response to a suggestion for a small change in the fire department’s budget, Delano said that a lot of time was spent “trying to

make the changes equitably,” and that making further changes now would “open the door” to others requesting the same thing.

School committee chair Craig Cohen said he had not seen a posting online for the previous week’s fin com meeting, at which the school budget was discussed. “A bunch of us looked for it and couldn’t find it,” added resident Becky Tews.

Board members and McGinnis pointed out several locations where the meeting had been posted on the town’s website, but McGinnis said that since she had posted it rather than the town clerk as usual, it may have posted differently in some way.

Beautification

Hankinson reported on an initiative to spruce up the area from the town hall to the Leverett Crafts and Arts center in advance of the town’s 250th anniversary in 2024.

Hankinson said he’d discussed the idea of removing brush along the route with Steve Woodward of the First Congregational Church, who in turn mentioned it to church council members.

Woodward said the council got a work party together and began cutting, thinking they were on church property, but subsequently realized the property they were cutting on was owned by the town. Woodward was seeking selectboard approval for the brush removal, which was granted.

Woodward said that removing the scrub brush would provide a nice view of the Emerson garden, expose a stone wall which could be restored, and give a vista view to Leverett Pond (known once as “ye Fish Pond”). He invited the town and others to collaborate on the project, which may include the planting of daffodils or other features at some point.

Highway superintendent Matthew Boucher said he’d be happy to help, either through the department or on his own time, so that “whatever needed to happen there” would happen.

Other Business

A single bid was received for the town’s FY’22 landfill monitoring contract. The contract is still under discussion, as it will have to be modified if the houses on Teawaddle Hill affected by the landfill are connected to Amherst town water next year.

The board congratulated fire chief John Ingram and deputy chief Brian Cook on receiving accreditation for their positions from the Massachusetts Fire Commission. The accreditation exists in part to establish consistent credentialing for fire personnel across the commonwealth, who must meet commission requirements on training and education.

Board members commented that it was a big accomplishment for a small-town fire department, and commended the officers.

Candidates for town office are invited to state their case at the next selectboard meeting, which will be held Tuesday, April 27 at 7 p.m.

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changes in the police department, but he did not respond by press time.

Fixing Errors

Weston & Sampson Engineer William Storti submitted a memo to the board stating that Weston & Sampson, Erving highway superintendent Glenn McCrory, Garrity Asphalt, Warner Brothers Paving, and Jack Goncalves & Sons contractors participated in a walk-through at River, Warner and Strachan streets to review a corrective action plan for the road and sidewalk work completed last fall.

Goncalves and Erving have been discussing corrective measures since October 2020, when McCrory noticed problems with stormwater drainage in the roadway.

The board agreed to pay \$63,602.50 for work at the site that the town agreed was acceptable, with \$104,655 to be paid when all the work is completed satisfactorily.

Other Business

Eight bids were submitted to the town for the pur-

VOLUNTEERS from page A1

try to do one every year, and we are looking forward to a time when enough people are vaccinated to do more in-person social events.”

The afternoon event will feature live music by the Diggers and the Wranglers, t-shirts for volunteers, and recognition for their work. Passersby are encouraged to honk their horns.

“Without volunteers, we would be four towns full of members that are pretty isolated,” said Fernandez O’Brien. “Our volunteers help members by providing transportation, helping hands for small tasks at home, friendly visits, and computer help. All of our volunteers are vetted and dedicated to helping seniors.”

While Village Neighbors hosts virtual events on legal and health issues, the group is planning to hold more fun social events for both members and volunteers. “We are hoping to start initiating events, safely and socially distant,” said Fernandez O’Brien, adding that a flat path hike is planned for June.

Wendell resident Nancy Spittle said that she was inspired by the town’s communal nature to help form a group to help neighbors. “There are a lot of things people in Wendell do for each other organically, but there are those who might not be involved, so I wanted to make something less informal,” said Spittle. “But we were too small to make it work alone.”

Spittle joined the original task force for Village Neighbors, which launched in 2018. “I got started from a volunteer point of view,” she said, “but all of us on the original task force signed up as members to test out our programming before it even opened... Everyone has something to offer. You offer what you can when you can, and then it will be there when you need it.”

Russell Greco of Shutesbury, who volunteers doing small jobs to help his neighbors stay in their homes, said that connection to the community is what drew him to Village Neighbors.

While Greco is a retired carpenter and contractor, his fellow building volunteers range from retired wildlife biologists to a retired pediatrician. Village Neighbors does not work on projects large enough to require permitting, but the smaller projects its volunteers complete can have a big impact on the recipients.

The group has eliminated membership fees, but accepts donations. Fundraising and grants help fund the repair work.

“We want to make their house safer and easier to get around,” said

chase and installation of an emergency generator for the POTW#1 treatment plant. The board accepted the low bid of \$107,875 from CDS Unlimited, LLC of Bennington, New Hampshire.

The board gave final review and approval to a FY’22 operating and capital improvement budget of \$12,355,314. Bryan Smith noted that this represented a 0% change from the FY’21 budget of \$12,352,028.

This budget will be considered at the annual town meeting on May 12. Smith said the budget and associated information will be prepared for publication this week. Copies will be sent to every residence in Erving.

The board signed the order of taking for the former library property at 17 Moore Street, an action authorized by the March 27 special town meeting, in order to clarify the town’s title to the property.

They also authorized Smith to petition the planning board for an “Action Not Required” decision from the planning board for setting a new boundary between 17 Moore Street and 18 Pleasant Street. The change would make 17 Moore Street a buildable lot.



Greco, who pointed out that many seniors find it difficult to find help from trusted individuals within their price range. “There is a level of trust you simply can’t get, because there is no money changing hands,” said Greco. “It makes a difference if they know you are from their town, or a neighboring community – that we have someone in common.”

During the pandemic, Village Neighbors had to adapt.

“As soon as COVID hit and everything had to close down, we immediately said we cannot send people out to people’s homes and to offer rides,” said Spittle. “We pivoted to being online, but it was challenging learning how to do zoom meetings.” Many of the group’s members did not initially have access to broadband, or were unfamiliar with video conferencing software, which posed a challenge.

Volunteers made friendly phone visits, and helped with socially distant yard work, small repairs, and grocery and medicine delivery.

“We got a grant for COVID response and we sent out gift bags with locally made hand sanitizer and masks and a letter explaining COVID safety measures,” said Spittle. “We made phone calls to all the members to check on them. I was amazed at how resilient people were in these challenging times.”

Now that many volunteers are fully vaccinated the group has be-

gun offering rides to vaccine appointments for members.

“Being a volunteer, if you can just take someone for a ride or bring them a meal once or twice a month, it doesn’t have to be a lot of hours to make a big difference,” said Spittle.

Enrollment in Village Neighbors has increased in recent months, and the group is recruiting to meet the growing need. “We have had quite a few new members – at least 20 since the first of the year – and very few new volunteers,” said Spittle. “That’s something I hope will correct itself as more people get vaccinated and feel safer volunteering.”

“To me personally, it was a way to reconnect with people,” said Greco, who returned to Shutesbury last year from working in disaster relief in New Orleans. “Since moving back, I felt isolated, and I really enjoy service.”

“Every time I have talked with someone, they say that the work just makes you feel good,” said Spittle. “You gain out of giving to your community in that way. I met great people from other towns, and hopefully we can get back to community events where we can all gather.”

For more information about Village Neighbors, stop by the event from 1 to 2:30 p.m. this Sunday, April 18 at the Leverett Village Co-Op, or visit www.villagenighbors.org.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VILLAGE NEIGHBORS

Volunteers pack gift bags for members last spring.

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PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

MONTAGUE from page A1

to that held in the spring of 2020. “We tried it a year ago and it worked really well,” said Nelson. “The weather is generally lovely in May.”

Town meeting moderator Chris Collins voiced his doubts about an open-air meeting, as he has in the past. “My preference is to do it remote because we proved that worked really well,” he said. “Understand, if we have inclement weather, that narrows our options considerably for another meeting.”

Collins also expressed concern about a future spike in COVID cases. “The only way to do it safe is to do it remotely,” he said.

Kuklewicz said that “outside, the biggest risk is the weather,” noting that finding a rain date would be a “challenge.”

There followed a lengthy discussion of the “logistics around a tent.” Ellis said the biggest problem might be availability: “We would have to get on it and confirm, because rentals of tents are going quickly.” Ellis also discussed the possibility of “an under-tent and an outside-of-an-under-tent scenario.”

“I’ll do whatever is the consensus, but I still feel we need to do something,” said Kuklewicz. The board then unanimously voted “to have the meeting outside” and then, after more discussion, to amend the motion to hold the meeting in a tent if possible.

Ellis said that if, after “scouting around,” he found no tents were available for May 22, he would bring that fact to the board at its joint meeting with the finance committee the following Wednesday.

“Well. Good, bad, or indifferent, we’ve made a decision,” said Kuklewicz.

The Warrant!

Following this discussion, the board briefly reviewed the current draft warrant for the annual town meeting itself.

TREE from page A1

listing the duties of the elected tree warden, guidelines for cutting and planting public trees, and fines for violations. An appendix to the document – not technically part of the bylaw itself – lists trees that are appropriate for planting on roadsides and under wires.

At the previous week’s hearing, town planner Walter Ramsey reported that town counsel had recommended several changes to the proposed bylaw. One was that it make a clearer distinction between a public shade tree – defined in state law in terms of being in the public right of way, particularly near a highway – and a “public tree,” as used in the town bylaw. The latter would be any tree on town property. A definition of a “hazardous tree” was also recommended.

Counsel also urged that the language of the law make clear that any fines would be administered, in Ramsey’s words, as a “fine process” similar to a parking ticket, not as a “criminal process.”

Detmold told the *Montague Reporter* that the revised bylaw would also give the tree warden “discretion” in issuing fines, perhaps by giving a warning.

A number of public comments at the hearing also led to small changes in the proposal. Several speakers objected to the requirement that homeowners who needed to trim public trees impeding their proper-

Evaluating the potential warrant’s length and complexity, Ellis said the number of articles at this point totaled 25, including a petitioned article that opposes state subsidies for biomass plants and a new town bylaw regulating trees. He also explained that three articles involve the siting of a new Fifth Street pedestrian bridge, which will require a change in easements and “eminent domain articles” for access, and that four covered multiple elements grouped together.

Kuklewicz summarized all the articles with favorable comments, except the new tree bylaw. “This is one I would personally ask the board if we could hold off until the fall,” he said.

Ellis said that the tree committee would prefer the bylaw be voted in this spring, but added that “bylaws are always tricky things to bring to town meeting, because they are so big and complex.”

Kuklewicz suggested that the bylaw could be placed on the warrant, but if the meeting continued for too long there could be a motion to “table it or set it aside.”

However, Jen Audley of the finance committee said she had read a summary of town meeting law by town counsel, which found that “tabling is not an option.”

Ellis pointed out that a simple “no” vote could delay the motion until the fall, but said he would check with legal counsel whether this would create “jeopardy” for a bylaw.

The board did not vote on the draft warrant. The deadline for town meeting articles has previously been set for noon next Tuesday, April 20.

Cannabis Impact

The board held a lengthy discussion of a number of requests for program funding from the town’s new “cannabis impact stabilization fund.” These will appear on the town meeting warrant. The fund is financed by community impact rev-

ty must file a written application, and receive the written permission of the tree warden. The amended text approved Tuesday allowed pruning with the documented permission of the warden, without a written application.

Several speakers at the April 6 hearing wondered if the new bylaw would significantly increase the workload of the town’s part-time tree warden.

Detmold said that the committee had consulted with the current tree warden on the bylaw, and that he believed the provisions did not “add new duties, but simply clarified existing duties under state law.”

Another question was whether the trees recommended in the appendix were native species. Tree committee member Michael Marcotrigiano, a professional arborist, said this was a “frequent question,” and that while he valued native species, “most native trees do not fare well with salt, sand and a constricted root zone.”

Marcotrigiano went on to say that there have been “decades of experimentation” with roadside trees, and that diverse, non-native species are “the way to go.”

Whether the bylaw will appear on this spring’s annual town meeting warrant or wait for a fall “special” meeting is still unclear. At Monday night’s selectboard meeting the sentiment seemed to be in favor of waiting in an effort to keep

enues from the local firm 253 Farmacy, as required under state cannabis licensing law.

Funding requests include \$8,000 for program development by the Communities that Care Coalition; \$46,200 for prevention and counseling at the Gill-Montague Regional School District; and an amount “to be determined” for similar programs at the Franklin County Technical School.

Gill-Montague school superintendent Brian Beck said the district was leaning toward contracting out for cannabis counseling services, due to “ethical concerns” which might arise if counselors were district employees.

Pupil services director Diane Ellis said that the data showed that Gill-Montague’s “prevention efforts” have historically been “pretty effective overall,” but that over the past year during the COVID pandemic students have been reporting “anxiety, different types of stress, [and] economic pressure,” potentially causing higher risk of substance abuse.

“Well, I really think we need to do something and curb substance abuse as much as possible,” said Boutwell.

“This is the perfect use for these funds,” said Kuklewicz. “Even more than putting a traffic light at a busy intersection.” Kuklewicz was no doubt referring to safety improvements near the cannabis dispensary on Millers Falls Road.

The board voted to authorize Ellis to “continue moving forward” with the funding proposals. A fourth proposal that appeared on the agenda, for funding \$7,000 in “cannabis intoxication/enforcement” training by the town police department, was not discussed.

Disease Control

The board held its now-regular joint meeting with the town board of health during which the latest

the May 22 meeting short. On the other hand, the board understands that the tree committee wants trees planted this summer to be protected by the bylaw, and if the spring meeting moves quickly there would be more time to address it.

A suggestion was made to put the bylaw on the annual town meeting agenda, but table it or vote it down if the meeting extends late into the afternoon. This encountered the objection that the Montague town meeting may not be allowed to table a motion, and voting it down might be legally recorded as a rejection.

Town administrator Steve Ellis has checked with town counsel on these issues. “The motion cannot be tabled, as per section 23 of our Town Meeting Acts,” Ellis wrote by email to the *Reporter* and others.

“Counsel supported staff opinions that a no vote would not prevent future consideration of the tree bylaw as it is a general bylaw, not a zoning bylaw,” he continued, “but also suggested that it may be more elegant to refer the matter to the Planning Board for study, so as not to put people in the position of voting against a bylaw they may in principle support.”

So, an “elegant” solution may be found that puts the tree bylaw on the May 22 annual meeting warrant. The deadline for warrant articles is next Tuesday, April 20.



local COVID-19 metrics were reviewed, along with an update on regional vaccination policy.

Public health director Daniel Wasiuk said that there had been 19 new cases during the previous two weeks, but Ellis noted that during the second week, the number had fallen to 6. He called this “a reversal of the upward nudge we have been seeing in the data.”

Wasiuk said the Jon Zon Center in Greenfield will be holding vaccine clinics during the week, and there would be a “first dose clinic” at Berkshire East in Charlemont. He also said the town of Montague was “pressuring” the state to give the public health department at least 20 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to serve “homebound” individuals, but getting the vaccines has been a “challenge.”

Kuklewicz noted that eligibility for vaccines would increase on April 19 to all residents over sixteen years old.

Other Business

The selectboard approved a request from the Nolumbeka Project for the use of Peskeompskut Park on May 15 for Native American commemoration of the 17th century massacre at Turners Falls. Nolumbeka president David Brule said the event will feature speakers from the Abenaki and Nipmuc tribes as well as music.

The board also approved a proposal from the United Arc, a social service organization, for a meeting of a “grandparents’ support group” at the park on April 22.

Brian McHugh of the Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority gave the board an update on the progress of the Spinner Park restoration project on Avenue A in Turners Falls. The board authorized \$47,120 to disburse to the restorer, Sciaba Construction Corporation.

The board’s next meeting is scheduled for April 26.



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on April 15, 2011: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Keller Runs for Third Term On Wendell Selectboard

Dan Keller is running unopposed for a third complete term on the Wendell selectboard. A professional video and film producer with Green Mountain Post Films in Turners Falls, Keller has also farmed for decades and raised a family on Cold Brook Road.

Before running to complete the unexpired term on the selectboard when Katherine Bentley left to take a job in Pennsylvania in September 2003, Keller served 18 years on the town’s finance committee.

So why is he running again?

“I like the job. It’s a great group of people in the town government, a lot of dedicated volunteers, and it’s a pleasure to work with everybody.”

But Keller said, “It’s a very big job, getting harder and harder to do, for a lot of reasons. The state makes things very complicated and that’s getting worse. The open meeting law is slowing down the work of town government because of onerous posting requirements it puts on town boards.”

Montague Makes Committee For Downtown Signage

This way to the new downtown wayfinding sign committee! Members of the committee are RiverCulture director Lisa Davol, town planner Walter Ramsey, Mik Muller and Chris Janke from the Montague Business Association, and Lou Ekus (also from the MBA) as an alternate.

Ramsey said the committee intends to evaluate the new signs in downtown Turners Falls for font size – perhaps a bit too small to

be read by the naked eye – and consider which events and slogans should appear on the larger, adjustable signs that point the way to Turners Falls from Route 2 in Gill.

The new signs were installed late last month in an effort to partially mitigate the impact of the Turners Falls-Gill bridge construction, which will last three or more years. They currently proclaim that Turners Falls is “easy to love” yet “hard to leave,” and note that the popular Block Party is the second Saturday in August.

High School Class to Host Donkey Ball

This is not a Senior prank.

The Turners Fall High School gym will soon be filled with a herd of donkeys, when the Class of 2014 plays host to Donkey Basketball on Friday, April 15.

The idea for this unusual fundraising effort came in the form of an advertisement from Green Mountain Donkey Ball. The class quickly decided to sponsor the event, which will raise funds for its prom, class gifts, and senior trip.

Teams will be made up of school and community members, with teams for students, teachers, coaches, and police and firefighters. Student players were picked by lottery, and could either sign themselves up or get nominated by fellow students. The players will ride trained donkeys around the gym, trying to stay in the saddle while otherwise engaging in a shortened game of basketball.

The doors open at 6:30 p.m., and concessions and a 50/50 raffle will be available. Tickets are \$7 in advance and can be purchased from Scotty’s, Equi’s, and Turners Falls Pizza House. Come watch students, teachers, and emergency responders make asses out of themselves!



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CLINICIAN from page A1

final Memorandum of Understanding and apply for a grant. The collaboration would begin in the fall, with most of the funding from the state Department of Mental Health (DMH).

“Pittsfield has been doing something like this for the past five years,” Williams said. “It has often kept the police from having to bring people to hospital emergency rooms.”

He added: “We know who many of these people are.”

Jennifer LaRoche, a vice president of CSO, described the dynamic this way: “Our local police are highly trained and caring people. But the very virtue of the power represented in a police uniform can set up a problematic power differential in mental health-oriented situations.”

CSO describes itself as a “community-based nonprofit behavioral health agency providing individuals and families comprehensive holistic clinical and support services.” The agency has 19 locations in central and western Massachusetts. For the past few years, Greenfield police have been partnering with the DMH to provide “advanced training” for officers in responding to “behavioral health crises.”

Planning for the newly announced program began in January, and has been previously mentioned at both finance committee and selectboard meetings in Montague. The civilian committee created last year to review local police policies and practice on “equity and the use of force” has had a number of discussions with depart-

ment officials on the challenges created when armed officers are thrust into mental health emergencies.

“I can’t make a statement on behalf of the committee, because we haven’t discussed this announcement,” said that committee’s facilitator, Ariel Elan. “However, anyone who follows our public meetings knows that we have talked several times about adding or substituting mental-health professionals as first responders to police calls that involve mental health crises. All of our members have voiced positive thoughts about this approach, although we may have differing ideas on how best to implement it.

“Speaking strictly for myself,” Elan continued, “I have admired Franklin County’s efforts to support what is called restorative justice and jail diversion – through the courts, the jail, and by connecting clients to recovery resources when addictions are involved. So I am excited to see this as another step that three communities are trying, in the direction of more respect and help for people, and less punishment.”

Williams said the final scope of the program has not been finalized, but it could provide mental health services in the three towns for up to 16 hours per day, and last for up to three years. He said the mental health expert would continue to be employed by the CSO, not become a member of the Greenfield department. “They will be a civilian working within the police department, whose salary and benefits will be paid by the



FACES & PLACES

At right: Drawdown Montague gardeners Kathy Schermerborn, Alice Armen, and Sarah Bliss organize produce last summer collected from local gardeners who share their surplus with the Franklin County Survival Center food pantry.

Below: A trunkful of produce and flowers, heading to the Survival Center.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



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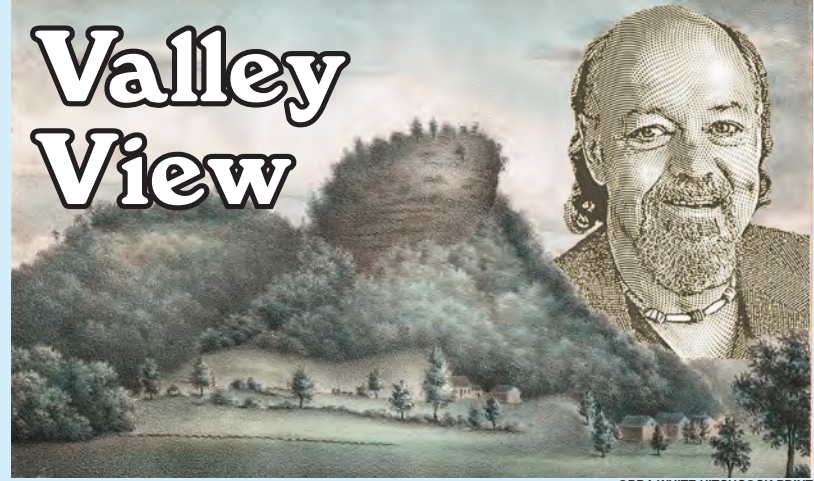
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APRIL 15, 2021



By GARY SANDERSON

Valley View

GREENFIELD – The question has lingered for nearly a century. That is, where did the first tavern in Bloody Brook, now South Deerfield, stand?

Everyone knows the building’s location in 1932, when South Deerfield building contractor William Gass moved it to its current setting behind Old Deerfield’s Indian House. Today, there it stands as Bloody Brook Tavern museum, Gass’ interpretation of the single-story, center-chimney colonial building as originally constructed.

But what lot did this building occupy when constructed around 1750? That’s the vexing question.

Greenfield’s *Daily Recorder-Gazette* was on the scene for the old tavern’s removal to Old Deerfield. The lead story on August 6, 1932 was headlined “South Deerfield ‘Old Bee Hive’ House Being Moved to Old Deerfield by Gass.” The article, no byline, was strong on tradition but weak on fact – leaving unclear the building’s original location while taking a speculative approach to the year it was moved to its 1932 site.

Because the structure had “stood just south of the Arms pocketbook shop for longer than the oldest inhabitant could remember,” the paper surmised that it must have been moved before or during the railroad’s 1846 arrival to South Deerfield.

After that move to what is today 89 Main Street, “improvements” were made with the addition of a second story, an ell, and an 18-by-27 ballroom that was eventually partitioned into tenement rooms. Almost 200 years old and falling into disrepair by 1932, the building was rescued by Gass.

To recount the tavern’s history, the *Recorder-Gazette* leaned heavily upon its own hardcover *Centennial Gazette 1792-1892*, which would have been readily available. That’s likely the source for the reference to “the former A.W. Fay place” as the building’s original setting. The Fay farmhouse, more commonly known in history as “the Sedgwick Cooley place,” may or may not exist today. It stood, and likely still stands, on what is today Yazwinski farm at 144 North Main Street.

Centennial Gazette readers

would have found the Fay reference helpful in identifying the original tavern site. Not the case for those reading the 1932 *Recorder-Gazette* story. By then, Fay had been gone nearly 40 years. Deeds show that Asa W. Fay of Springfield purchased the 84-acre Sedgwick Cooley farm and outbuildings in 1886 from William E. Thayer of Williamsburg. Eight years later, with Fay in financial distress, the property was sold at auction to townsman Azariah Cooley Boyden, who had had deep roots in South Deerfield’s first tavern.

Was it coincidence that Boyden’s mother, Sophia Cooley, had lineage taking her back to the tavern’s beginnings through its first two tavernkeepers – Samuel Barnard (1721-88) and brother-in-law successor Capt. Nathan Frary (1719-94)? Sophia was Sedgwick’s cousin, granddaughter of Azariah Cooley (1731-77), who was among the earliest Bloody Brook settlers.

Azariah’s widow, Eleanor Wariner, was from the tavern neighborhood, so to speak. Better yet, she had a hand in the Barnard, then Frary, taverns as the wife of both men. She married Barnard after her first husband died, then wed Frary after Barnard passed.

From her legacy arose two adjoining North Main Street farms, including two dwellings, many outbuildings, a prolific spring for drinking-water, and more than 120 contiguous acres. Fifty-five of those acres now comprise Bloody Brook Farm, owned by the Yazwinski family. That farm lost its upland acreage when North Sugarloaf was taken by eminent domain to create a state reservation.

These two consecutive “Cooley” farms show up east of the road and the brook on the 1855 Clark map of Deerfield and the 1858 Walling map of Franklin County. They are marked, north to south, as dwellings of “Mrs. E. Cooley” and “S. Cooley” – that is, widow Esther Packard Cooley (1811-58) and her brother-in-law Sedgwick Cooley (1804-69).

Esther was the widow of Sedgwick’s older brother Caleb Allen Cooley (1800-1845), and the daughter of Shelburne minister

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B8

Above: Magnolia buds about to burst during the first week of April on a small tree in a Turners Falls back yard.

Pop-Up Clinic Offers Alternative Care

By KAREN GUILLETTE

TURNERS FALLS – Have you been wondering what’s going on under the array of tents that appear every other Thursday in front of the Mariposa storefront on Avenue A in downtown Turners Falls? In the shade of these canopies is a team of dedicated alternative healing practitioners from the People’s Medicine Project (PMP), providing herbal, massage and acupuncture treatments to anyone in need... free of charge!

The People’s Medicine Project began in 2013 with a focus on herbal medicine. Leslie Chaison, the founder and director, had studied herbal medicine and became convinced that connecting with plant medicine was a powerful healing modality. When she finished her training with well-known local herbalist Bonnie Bloom, she thought deeply about what kind of practice she would have. She realized that she didn’t want to become an herbalist that many could not afford. Bloom provided further training and support to her in developing a clinic model of service, and the People’s Medicine Project was born.

The Project’s website explains that the name “People’s Medicine” celebrates the coevolved relationship between humans and plants since the beginning of human life. Plants have been used in every culture in the world not only as food but also as life-saving medicine. In recent decades, this knowledge and connection has been greatly diminished or completely lost, and the People’s Medicine Project is all about changing that.

“These services are not a replacement for the care of a medical doctor,” the site further notes, “but can be enormously helpful in alleviating many physical and mental health conditions, and empowering individuals



A client receives a massage at the People’s Medicine Project clinic in Turners Falls.

to have agency in their own health care.”

In the interest of becoming a bridge to herbal medicine, Chaison began collaborating with the Recovery Project in Greenfield to provide services to individuals struggling with substance abuse. The project soon

see **MEDICINE** page B4

ArtBeat by Trish Crapo

Seeing the Forest for the Trees



The imagery for Jacqueline Gallo’s tarot card “The Lovers” draws from her research into the meanings ascribed to apples in Celtic and other lore.

HATFIELD – Jacqueline Gallo has long been interested in the Tarot, a deck of cards with a history as mysterious as its uncanny powers of divination. While she’s never done readings for other people, drawing cards for herself during difficult or confusing times has often given Gallo reassurance about her path forward. Even cards drawn in a “spirit of fun” can help us to see what we already know but aren’t fully aware of, she said.

“The Tarot has always fascinated me visually, as well as its relation to a mystical/magical realm,” Gallo said. “I’ve always felt in my heart there is more than meets the eye to this world, and the Tarot can help us ‘see’ it slightly.”

Gallo, who lives in South Hadley and teaches art part-time at Southern New Hampshire University, recently embarked on the journey of creating her own deck, which she calls *Tree Tarot*. Now through June 18, you can see prints of some of the cards, as well as preliminary pencil sketches, in an exhibit at Black Birch Vineyard in Hatfield.

Fascinated by Trees

The most widely recognized Tarot deck is the Rider-Waite deck, sometimes called the Rider-Waite-Smith deck, to rightly honor its illustrator Pamela Colman Smith. Smith’s illustrations, centered in a medieval, human world, are likely what most people envision when they think of the Tarot. Yet, since 1909 when that deck was published, many artists, including Salvador Dali, have taken on the arduous task of bringing their own vision to the Tarot’s 78 cards.

see **TAROT** page B5

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

“FIFI”

Are you waiting for a spunky senior lady to join your life? Well look no further than Fifi. She’s got the sass that’ll keep you on your toes, the adorable tiny face to draw you in, and a personality to keep you laughing. She has no thoughts on slowing down, either!

Fifi does have some medical issues that will need ongoing care in the future, but as of right now is

a happy senior lady with quite the personality.

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.

Senior Center Activities

APRIL 19 THROUGH 23

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

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

ERVING

Senior Center director Paula Betteres writes:

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

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

LEVERETT

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

WENDELL

Wendell Senior Center is open for a foot care clinic the first-Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. Otherwise, there are no activities. The Senior Health Rides is also suspended until advisories change. For more information, call Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

Local Supermarket Senior Accommodations

Supermarkets in Massachusetts are now required to provide special hours for seniors and immunocompromised shoppers. Call ahead – this information is accurate as of November 30, 2020; 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



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

By **LESLIE BROWN**

MONTAGUE CITY – It’s my dad’s fault, but what’s a fellow to do? He had two daughters, no sons, and I was the eldest.

And so, from an early age, I became a Red Sox fan.

My dad was a fanatic about many things: no TV, listen to the radio, play records, read books.

Much later, when I was grown up and married, we bought tickets to a game and treated my parents. We brought a picnic with us which we consumed in a local garden at the Fens complete with French bread, cheese, and even a bottle of wine before it was time for the game.

The roar of the crowd at Fenway was deafening. We were playing the Yankees that late afternoon and everyone was taunting José Canseco, who had recently been traded and could not make a hit against his former team.

Of course the Red Sox won, and we drove home merrily in high spirits.

Watching the game in person was a whole new level of enjoyment. We

had driven my little Saab, and thus were able to squeeze into a small parking spot and therefore escape the crowds before having to brave the long line back out of the city.

It was years before we went to a live game again. This time, my parents were divorced, and we took my dad to the park as a special treat. We sat in the stands once again and were nearly engaged in a fist fight between some Red Sox fans and those cheering on the Yankees.

After that, I had my own apartment and a television so we watched the game from a whole new perspective.

But nothing ever really competed with the game and the fans in person at Fenway.

My father has also to take responsibility for my desire to be a writer.

He himself aspired to be a published writer and began by writing children’s stories. To support a family of four he wrote text for Coronet films. We lived in a suburb of Chicago, and he went into the city on the train. When I was halfway through the fourth grade, we moved to Vermont so my dad could take up writing full time. This plan held up for the half year left of the school year, and then we moved again, so my dad could go to teacher’s college in Keene. My mom found a job teaching French

in a nearby high school.

Once my father had his teaching degree, both he and my mom secured teaching jobs at what was then Northfield School for Girls, and we really settled in for a while. As it happened, they both found they loved teaching but that also meant that my dad gave up on a career as a writer.

No one in the family ever had a real career in writing, although we all – my parents, my sister and I – dabbled in it.

In the end I became a teacher, too. There is joy in that as well.

In my first years I was barely older than my ninth grade students. Later I taught preschool, special needs students, adults, and middle school. Teaching and social work filled my working life. It was all about love for the language and interactions with others. What is communicated in speech and in the written word is so critically important.

Now, here I am in my seventies, playing at writing again. I love it and am frustrated by it. But I’ll keep at it because in the long run, it’s also satisfying. Maybe the best part is that my income isn’t dependent upon it, or my ego either. It’s the dessert at the end of the meal; it’s the candy in the toe of the Christmas stocking. When it’s going well, it’s just plain fun.

A Return to the Sporting Life



DAVID HOIT PHOTOS

Above: Green Wave running back Marcus Sanders (#20) gains yardage against the Frontier Red Hawks last Friday, April 9.

Sanders is one of five Turners Falls athletes competing in the Green Wave co-op team, which includes players from Greenfield, Mohawk Trail, Pioneer, and TFHS. The Wave blanked the visiting Hawks 14-0 in the Fall II competition.



Off and running: The Green Wave’s Brendan Driscoll slips through the Hawks’ talons.



It’s in!: Green Wave guard Ryan Duclos signals at the goal line as the Wave makes good on its second touchdown.

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LOCAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Greenfield: Friendship

GREENFIELD – Join psychologist, educator, author, and local neighbor/activist Daniel Cantor Yalowitz, Ed.D., for an informed and informative discussion about the challenges and joys of friendship during and beyond the time of COVID at the Greenfield Public Library this Thursday, April 15 at 7 p.m.

Learn about his new book, *Reflections on the Nature of Friendship*, his ongoing research, and his fervent desire to connect and re-

connect with his friends around the world and help you to do the same with yours, while we slowly emerge from this lengthy period of seclusion, isolation, and insularity, and loss of so much, with time at the end for questions-and-responses.

To register for the Zoom Link, contact us at: librarian@greenfield-publiclibrary.org. This program, sponsored by the Friends of the Greenfield Library, is free and open to the public.

New Salem: Anti-Racism

NEW SALEM – The New Salem Public Library is offering a two-part Zoom program, “Let’s Talk About Racism,” on Tuesday, April 20, with a follow-up book discussion on May 11.

Cate Woolner of Northfield and Jade Barker of Hadley will help participants understand how everyone in the United States, regardless of race, is exposed to the racist messages that permeate our culture. Using a mix of presentation and small-group discussion, they will help people explore how unconscious bias works, and the role that guilt and shame play in interfering with understanding and undoing racism.

A Zoom book discussion led by Woolner and Barker on May 11 at 7 p.m. will provide an opportunity for further self-reflection leading to further learning and action after people read *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad.

Woolner and Barker are professional trainers, facilitators, and

mediators who offer interactive programs that encourage people to consider their own role in the systemic racism of our country, and to take action in their communities.

“Sometimes in a homogenous, predominantly white community, racism can be invisible. People think that these problems don’t happen here,” explains presenter Jade Barker. “Yet when we examine our hard-wired, unconscious biases, we find some surprising messages and beliefs. We can’t undo racism until we rethink the narrative we all swam in growing up in the United States where white is the standard, the norm, the superior group.... [U]nderstanding how we might unknowingly perpetuate these harmful ideas, strengthens our community, brings us together, and invites us to be more welcoming and inclusive.”

Go to bit.ly/3ditZjC to register. For more information, contact library director Diana Smith at n_salem@cwmars.org or (978) 544-6334.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Turkey Abduction; Hissing Wire; Burning Trash; Third Street Parties; Fourth Street Fight; Opossum

Monday, 4/5
6:45 a.m. Recurrent harassing calls to the MPD business line. Caller making vulgar comments to dispatch, talking about terrorists, and commenting on recent news headlines.
1:26 p.m. Ongoing annoying calls to MPD, including recorded messages and the caller commenting “at least you’re getting paid.”
2:40 p.m. Turners Falls FD investigated brush burning on Keith Street without a permit.
9:39 p.m. Millers Falls Road caller reported his ID was hacked and his information was used in a fraudulent manner.

Tuesday, 4/6
12:02 a.m. Third Street caller complained about upstairs neighbors making a lot of noise. Second call stated lots of people are in and out of the apartment all the time for short visits. Third call reported a drunk-sounding female who claimed to be alone, but the caller said six people were in the apartment. All quiet when police arrived. Fourth call reported yelling and swearing upstairs.
4:42 p.m. Report of a medium-sized white dog by caller traveling south on

Turners Falls Road.
5:22 p.m. Caller on Masonic Avenue reporting a group of females have stolen more goods from his property.
10:37 p.m. TF Fire Department advised of an ongoing issue with a male party burning his trash on L Street.

Wednesday, 4/7
4:16 a.m. Millers Falls Road resident’s vehicle was found in Deerfield parked on a sidewalk, unlocked, with the steering column open. Officer reported the female party has been living in the truck for a week.
9:16 a.m. Caller from Bridge Street in Millers Falls reported his landlord has placed items outside his window so he can’t get out in case of a fire. FD followed up with the landlord. A tent was erected by another tenant, and the landlord will have it removed.
11:03 a.m. Randall Woods Drive caller reported scam calls and illegal dumping.
1:44 p.m. Caller reported erratic red Ford Focus driving erratically, passing cars, heading north on Montague City Road.
2 p.m. Walk-in reported an aggressive dog on Walnut Street that is frequently off leash, unsupervised, and continually charges her while she is out walking.
2:17 p.m. Caller from Fifth Street reported a pole with lines attached to it, one of which is hissing loudly.
4:25 p.m. Party on Eleventh Street stated she was driving on the Patch and a group of kids on bikes were weaving in and out of the road, and one of them came at her car head-on. She stopped and tried to talk to the kids, and they started laughing and acting like they wanted to fight. Officer spoke to kids; parent will keep an eye on them.

Thursday, 4/8
12:21 a.m. Third Street caller requested an officer due to loud noises sounding like a bowling ball being dropped on the floor. Officer could hear the noise from the street, and spoke to the upstairs neighbors. Second call reported noises are louder than before. (Noises could be heard by the dispatcher.) Quiet when the officer returned. Third call stated there is a party upstairs with people coming and going via the back steps.
1:42 a.m. Report of males fighting and threatening to kill each other on Fourth Street. All quiet when the officer arrived.
1:58 a.m. N Street caller complaining that neighbors are being overly loud around their bonfire. Officer talked to parties, who

agreed to quiet down for the night.
6:40 a.m. Caller reported an open door at the big red barn on the corner of Depot and Montague City roads. Officer reported the premises were empty; no sign of forced entry.
8:09 a.m. L Street caller advised of options regarding ongoing harassment from her neighbor.
8:14 a.m. Dell Street caller requested assistance relocating an opossum living under her shed. ACO is off duty for the next two days, but will be given the information.
3:55 p.m. Caller reported a dark colored Chevy Silverado swerved into his lane at the Canal Road bridge and their mirrors struck each other. The Silverado drove off. A BOLO was issued and neighboring police were notified.
4:20 p.m. Caller reported a Sunderland Road resident is driving a vehicle with Vermont registration. He admitted to a verbal altercation while he was at the residence doing work.
5:06 p.m. Caller reported a vehicle on Greenfield Cross Road stopped on the side of the road, put a turkey into the back seat, and drove off. Vehicle last seen pulling into a driveway on Greenfield Road. Owner of the turkey was notified; it had wandered off following some pedestrians. Tukey retrieved and returned to its home.
7:15 p.m. Anonymous caller from Randall Road reported a very loud small red car with engine/muffler issues routinely disturbing the neighborhood.
10:33 p.m. Meadow Road caller reported inebriated father giving him a hard time. Officer mediated, peace restored.
10:50 p.m. Montague City Road caller reported upstairs neighbor’s children being way too loud.

Friday, 4/9
12:32 p.m. Caller reports a silver Tracker cut her off at Cumberland Farms. She flipped off the other driver, who did the same, then proceeded to drive 19 mph along Montague City Road. Both vehicles are now stopped at the red light at the General Pierce Bridge. Caller advised not to engage with other driver, make further gestures, or follow the vehicle.
7:11 p.m. Caller from Cumberland Farms reported he and a friend were called racial slurs by a male party who threatened to shoot them and then left in a white car. Caller’s mother knew the female driver of the car, who advised the police officer that neither she nor her friends made contact with the kids at any time.

The driver is a friend of the caller’s mother and will contact her.
8:00 p.m. Caller reported her Turners Falls Road neighbor is inebriated, and whenever she and her 16-year-old daughter go outside he yells and swears at them. Situation mediated.
9:46 p.m. Caller reported a suspicious female standing outside his girlfriend’s residence staring at the house before running off into the woods.
9:52 p.m. Caller reported a suspicious person entered a neighboring residence. Homeowner confirmed, and granted permission for forceable entry. With Erving PD assisting, the officer spoke to an uncooperative male party through the window. Re-contacted homeowner, who advised the person actually did have permission to be there.

Saturday, 4/10
5:45 a.m. Repeated calls to the business line making nonsensical statements, playing pre-recorded news clips, referencing male genitalia, and calling the dispatcher vulgar names.
8:51 a.m. Bridge Street caller reported he has a surveillance tape showing someone he does not recognize stealing a package.
9:51 a.m. Two calls reporting vehicle versus riding mower accident on Industrial Boulevard. Driver of mower was thrown off. Transported by ambulance.
1:41 p.m. Leverett resident reported seeing a male on his porch looking in his windows earlier in the day. Caller is now driving and saw the same male walking in Montague on Federal Street near Center Street, looking in windows. Officers unable to locate the person.
2:47 p.m. Caller reported harassment via Facebook messages. Advised of options.
4:40 p.m. Report of two vehicles drag racing on Country Club Lane headed toward Griswold Street.
8:07 p.m. Montague Center FD responded to a report of a large unattended fire in a sand pit, creating a lot of heavy smoke.
8:24 p.m. Report of a dark SUV that nearly hit pedestrians near Unity Park and First Street while doing donuts in the parking lot by the old bridge.
9:22 p.m. L Street caller reported that three men walking by her apartment threatened to shoot her dog in the mouth after it barked at them.
11:17 p.m. A Main Street resident reported a loud party, loud music, and bonfire. Parties will put the fire out and head inside.

Dakin’s Annual Pet Food Drive

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – Dakin Humane Society, headquartered at 171 Union Street in Springfield, has been providing pet food aid for more than 15 years, according to a WWLP article I found online. This year, they are doing a pet food drive during the whole month of April. They plan on gathering up to 50,000 pounds of pet food.

“We are holding our first, month-long food drive to feed the animals in our care and to restock our shelves for our tremendously important Pet Food Aid program,” said Kaitlyn Holloway, the development and events coordinator at Dakin.

Kaitlyn also mentioned Dakin gave out 12,000 pounds of pet food last year in Franklin County. “This food can be the small difference that helps pet stay where they belong – in their homes,” she said.

Several locations have volunteered to be drop-off locations for the food. Those include several Stop & Shops in the area, a handful of Petco stores, and Smithland Supply stores. A couple of not-so-well-known pet stores are also drop-off locations. Dave’s Soda and Pet City at 151 Springfield Street in Agawam is one. Another is a place in West Springfield called Pet Supplies Plus.

There is one I know in Greenfield that is involved in this, and it’s called Animal Crackers. At



A volunteer’s car loaded with pet food donations.

the time I researched this, I saw a goal monitor on the Society’s official website that said they had collected 1,927 pounds in donations so far.

I also discovered through the same WWLP article that for a while, Dakin was getting pet food through a drive-thru event, which is kind of a cool way to do it. I think people would agree with me.

People certainly have a fair amount of enthusiasm for helping out with this sort of thing. The manager of Dave’s Soda and Pet City, a woman named Stephanie, confirmed that this is the first time they are participating in the drive. “We would do it again,” she said.

The manager named Gail at Pet Supplies Plus was also like that. “We encourage customers to donate to Dakin every day

of the week,” she said. This is the first time they have been involved in this drive, she told me. Animal Crackers is also doing this for the first time, like the other places I mentioned.

I think it would also be very cool if they reach their goal of 50,000 pounds of donations. I bet that would help with there being a second time around for some of those locations helping with this. I personally wonder if that goal they had in mind would be some kind of record-setting amount. I wish them the best of luck with reaching it.

There are online places you can give donations to Dakin through as well. One is *Amazon.com* and the other is *Chewy.com*. They both have wish lists on them to help with what you can donate.

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MEDICINE from page B1

grew to include acupuncture, massage, and an array of natural healing modalities and practitioners.

During the pandemic, the PMP created mobile outdoor clinics in Turners Falls, Greenfield, and Springfield in order to be able to continue to bring these services directly to local communities to address a wide range of health concerns.

According to Chaison, the mission of the project is to decrease health disparities related to systems of oppression that have affected people's access to wellness support within the healthcare system. She points out that although there are many herbalists, masseuses, and acupuncturists here in the Pioneer Valley, their services are primarily utilized by white, middle-class clients with resources.

There are also challenges to accessibility other than cost that her program has identified, she says. These include the need for trauma-informed practices and awareness of gender identity issues. The project's goal is to create a welcoming space and provide clients with both voice and choice in their health care.

Many local residents have taken advantage of these free offerings. Some have had experience with herbal medicine as part of their cultural heritage. For others, all of these practices are a completely new experience. All express gratitude for the generosity and caring provided.

Frances Rivera, a resident of Turners Falls with Cuban, Cherokee, and Blackfoot heritage, was receiving an acupuncture treatment this past Thursday at the mobile clinic when I stopped by. She shared that she has been a client of

the People's Medicine Project since 2019 when she was participating in the Recovery Project.

Ms. Rivera has frequently taken advantage of the acupuncture, massage, and energy work provided by the People's Medicine Project, and has found it has worked well for her. She points out that, in addition to her Christian faith, it has been helpful to incorporate these and other types of healing activities into her recovery and her life as a whole.

"Even small steps in the right direction," she said, "help push me forward for the betterment of my life."

Lynn Golan, one of several herbalists working in the PMP, has been on board since 2019. "I didn't 'get into' herbs," Lynn says. "They got into me!" She became interested in herbal medicine in college, and has been increasingly inspired by the many health benefits of herbs.

As she pointed out, "We wouldn't all be here today if our ancestors and others didn't understand, appreciate, and use herbs for healing long before modern medical practices became available." She got involved with the PMP as soon as she came to the Valley because she enjoys working in the community in this clinic capacity, supporting people's health.

Another PMP practitioner, Faith Enuol, has been doing massage for ten years. She loves the way that massage, herbal remedies, and acupuncture help support the body's innate healing ability. "It's a shame," she said, "that these remedies and practices aren't more accessible within mainstream medicine."

She participates in the PMP because she feels strongly that these alternative healing methods should be shared and used more widely. Like



Moon Mooney prepares herbal medicine for a client at the Turners Falls pop-up clinic.

all of the services provided by the PMP her massage is free to anyone who needs one. According to Ms. Enuol, "What we want is to create a world in which we take care of each other and experiment with different ways of operating outside of the economic/medical model."

Kathy Schermerhorn has been a practicing acupuncturist for twenty years, and currently has a practice at Abundant Splendor on Second Street in Turners Falls. Her reason for involvement in this initiative is

similar to all of the practitioners participating in the PMP: to bring more choices in health care to the community. Although acupuncture is getting covered by insurance more and more lately because it has proven so effective – particularly in addressing veterans with PTSD – many people in our community aren't covered by insurance, and have few resources to put toward self-care.

"Everyone is under stress these days," she said. "It's in every

breath we take. Nobody is immune, and the stress has a big impact on our bodies."

The acupuncture method Schermerhorn is using with clients is a well known protocol, a simple treatment with a profound effect on calming the nervous system and in creating a state of well-being. It is a painless procedure that involves putting five very small, thin needles in each ear lobe. Just sitting for this procedure and being able to de-stress for 20 minutes can help manage the many challenges of the moment.

Good nutrition is key to health and wellness, and in Turners Falls the PMP mobile clinic is located right next to a food distribution center staffed by members of the Pioneer Valley Workers Council. This group provides each recipient a big bag of fresh produce and a variety of other staples, free of charge and without proof of income eligibility.

The spring schedule for the PMP's mobile clinics in Turners Falls and Greenfield is as follows:

Thursdays in Turners Falls: April 22, May 6, May 20, June 3, and June 17 from 2 to 4 p.m., in front of the Mariposa storefront at 111 Avenue A

Mondays in Greenfield: April 26, May 10, May 17, May 24, and June 7 from 12:30 to 4 p.m.. at the St. James and St. Andrew's Church at 8 Church Street.

The People's Medicine Project is able to provide their services free of charge to the public and they depend on the generosity of donors and the occasional small grant to support their work. For more information or make a donation, go to www.peoplesmedicineproject.com or email peoplesmedicine-clinic@gmail.com.



Learning to Fly Fish: Part I

Ariel Jones, who recently passed away, once penned a series of 14 articles in the Montague Reporter on her experiences learning to fly fish. This is the first in the series, which ran from March 24 to August 11, 2005.

Jones, a pioneer of the art scene in downtown Turners Falls, moved here from New York City and opened a photography studio on Avenue A in 2000.

By **ARIEL JONES**

TURNERS FALLS – A few years ago, while still living in New York City, I began to daydream about learning to fly fish. I cannot remember anything in particular which led to this desire, so antithetical to my busy and

productive city life.

Along the way I received an inexpensive fly rod and creel for my birthday one summer, and a fishing vest some time later, but I still had done nothing about actually beginning to fish. By May of 2000, I had decided to leave New York and move to Turners Falls to open a photo studio in western Mass. Lurking in shadows behind all the preparation for the move gleamed fish.

Now I look back at that decision to leave New York and I have to wonder. Was I actually leaving in order to learn how to fish?

After living in Turners Falls for a few months, I became reacquainted with my college roommate and her husband. I had never really known Tom before. During one visit, I learned that he had been a fly fisher for some 25 years. I told him about

my interest – more like a daydream, really – in fly fishing and he said he would take me out sometime to see what it was like. We planned a date, and one hot July afternoon I drove out to their place in New Braintree, excited to finally have a chance to go out with someone who could show me how to fish.

Before going to the river, Tom gave me a casting lesson in their backyard. It was harder than I expected. I felt awkward and embarrassed by my clumsiness, but persisted until it was time to go.

Things I Hadn't Thought Of

As Tom was putting his gear in the van, I suddenly realized I hadn't given any thought to what one should wear while wading in a river. I only had an old pair of chinos and sandals with me. Oh well, it was only water. Right?

We walked through a field until we reached the bank of the Ware River. I followed Tom (who wore waders) down the embankment and was horrified to discover the reality of actually walking into a moving body of water. Trees overhung the banks and little swarms of mosquitoes buzzed above the surface. Apart from trout, what else was in the dark brown water?

Suddenly the inadequacy of my clothing struck me. If I went into this unknown water would something strange swim up my pant legs? Vivid pictures from the movie *African Queen* presented themselves, pictures of Humphrey Bo-

Montague Community Television News We'll Edit Your Videos!

By **HANNAH BROOKMAN**

TURNERS FALLS – It's volleyball season! The first home game is up for the Turners Falls Varsity Girls volleyball team. Also up on the MCTV Vimeo page is "The Lost Tribe," a live musical performance presented by CouchMusic at Hawks and Reed. The Montague selectboard has posted this week's meetings to the MCTV Vimeo page, and LifePath has posted a forum on "What You Need to Know About the COVID-19 Vaccine."

All MCTV videos are available on the MCTV Vimeo page, which can be found linked to the MCTV website, montaguetelevision.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 Vimeo.

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 infomontaguetelevision@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 infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com.



REPORTER FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF ARIEL JONES

Ariel Jones practices her casting technique.

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TAROT from page B1

Gallo shifts the imagery from the human world to the forest. Writing by email, Gallo explained, “Growing up in a rural part of northern Rhode Island, I was always drawn to the woods. I can remember, even as a child, being fascinated by trees, the colors they would turn in autumn, and understanding they held an important place in our world.

“In middle school I would do projects that focused on protecting the rainforests – I’m always trying to save the earth. Growing up, I became aware of the peace and solitude the forest would offer me and I fell in love with the idea that nature ‘centered’ me. Especially in the forest, I always feel like I’m the closest to myself I’ll ever be.”

She added, “I get the same feeling under a canopy of trees that I do when walking into a massive cathedral. It’s a sacred place.”

Gallo is committed to working to preserve this sacred place. She plans to use some of the proceeds of her deck, once it’s completed and published, to benefit education about forests and the conservation and protection of them.

Big and Little Mysteries

In the Tarot deck, 22 of the 78 cards are called the Major Arcana; the other 56 are the Minor Arcana, and are divided into four suits: Cups, Rods or Wands, Swords, and Pentacles. The word *arcana* comes from mid-sixteenth-century Latin, and means secrets, or mysteries.

Gallo has begun with the Major Arcana, and is drawing from her research of Celtic, Druid, and other lore pertaining to trees, to translate cards such as The Emperor, The Hermit, Death, or Strength into the world of the forest. The Hermit, for instance, is a lone fir, standing in front of a luminous full moon. The High Priestess is depicted as an elder, a tree Gallo imagines as a “sacred white lady,” who connects to “the very magical midsummer solstice, and the circle of life.”

The card that kicked off the whole project for Gallo was The Fool, which she represented as an aspen tree twisting against the background of more vertical trees.

“When I thought about The Fool and the fact that the aspen can represent adventure or recognizing our own traits of transformation or courage, I immediately thought about the images I’ve seen of curved aspens in Colorado,” explained Gallo. “Since I’m obsessed with autumn, I wanted my first card to reflect that season, as well as the idea of transformation.”

Once she’d had the idea for this card, she said, she knew there was no going back.



Gallo chose to depict “The Fool,” the first card she created, as an aspen tree curving against a background of more vertical trees.

Her card for The Lovers shows two apple trees whose branches reach toward each other to entwine in a curving embrace. Red apples lie in piles on the ground, invoking ripeness and plenty. There are overtones of the apple from the Garden of Eden, though nothing in the image specifically references that.

Gallo wrote about The Lovers card: “The apple is symbolic of love and faithfulness. Fertility and love-life are also ideas connected to the apple. There are so many attributes to the fruit of the apple tree that I personally adore – especially as autumn comes around.

“Apples are known for their many uses to nurture us and comfort us. I wanted to show the connection between trees, comfort, and the benefits they bring into our lives.”

Speaking by phone Gallo said that even though she’s aware of how ambitious her project is, the ideas and the compositions have been coming easily. She’s been able to create the cards in between the demands of her day job, and the details of building a home with her husband in South Hadley.

Right now, her studio hasn’t been built yet, so she’s been pleased to find that she enjoys bringing her hand-drawn sketches into a program called Adobe Fresco, which mimics the way individual materials work, “to the point where, if you use a ‘marker,’ and then put paint over it, it bleeds,” she said, a hint of amazement in her voice. The program also allows her to recreate the effects of materials such as gold leaf, that would be too costly to buy, and to create reproductions of her work.

“This is the first time in my life I’m not struggling,” Gallo said of her current art process. “It’s been really fun.”

Laughing, she added, “The agonizing part is more, ‘When can I get back to it?’”

See the exhibit at Black Birch Vineyard, 108 Straits Road, Hatfield. For more information call (413) 247-3300 or visit blackbirchvineyard.com.

In Greenfield, check out the mural at the new Wild Roots Eatery location at 201 Main Street, formerly Antonio’s Pizza. Gallo worked on the mural, which provides a fun selfie opportunity, with fellow artists Kerry St. Laurent of Hadley and Alicia Hanifin of Florence. Learn more about Gallo and her work at jacquelinegelfuso.com.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

Harsh Texts; Sugarhouse Steam; Brush Fires; Loose Horse; Scams

Monday, 3/1
10:36 p.m. Caller from Teawaddle Hill Road requested FD for a smell of smoke. Resident reports a burning smell when he turns on house lights. A tree has fallen on the electrical drop to the house, and a power line is down across the driveway. FD investigating.
11:28 p.m. Tree blocking most of Rattlesnake Gutter and Montague roads. No wires involved. DPW cleared the road of all debris.
Tuesday, 3/2
4:22 a.m. Tree and wires blocking Richardson Road. Power company advised the road is three-quarters blocked; cannot respond until tomorrow. FD advised.
6:44 a.m. Caller from Shutesbury and Number Six roads states that a tree is leaning on primary wires. No sparking, not blocking anything, wires not hanging down. Eversource has information.
Wednesday, 3/3
7:32 a.m. Medical emergency, Sprinkle Road. COVID screening performed and agencies sent.
Thursday, 3/4
5:57 p.m. Chimney fire on Broad Hill Road.
Friday, 3/5
11:51 a.m. Caller from Long Plain Road reported unemployment fraud. The Department of Unemployment notified her that someone attempted to obtain benefits using her SSN. She was told to report the incident to the PD.
6:52 p.m. Caller from Long Plain Road would like an officer to speak with her son who is picking on and hurting his younger brother.
8:39 p.m. 911 cell call from Pratt Corner Road. Nothing heard, no response to silent call procedures. Nothing found in record search. Got voicemail and left a message. Party called back and said it was an issue with their iPhone.
Saturday, 3/6
10:43 a.m. Caller reported his ex-wife had been texting him using harsh language; asking for an officer to ask her to stop. No threats were made. Officer spoke with ex-wife who said her former husband used harsh language first and she is considering asking to amend an existing restraining order to include no contact. She said she would refrain from using harsh language if he does.
Sunday, 3/7
2:33 p.m. Motor vehicle accident, Shutesbury Road. No injuries reported. Utility responding on scene.
Monday, 3/8
1:07 p.m. Report from Long Plain Road reporting smoke coming from a sugarhouse. All set.
Tuesday 3/9
3:53 p.m. 911 call from Amherst Road. On call back, got voicemail and left message. Party called to say she was resetting her Apple watch.
5:40 p.m. Medical emergency on Teawaddle Hill Road.
6:03 p.m. Large pine on Juggler Meadow Road uprooted, leaning over wires and Eversource pole. Highway boss notified..
Thursday, 3/11
9:02 a.m. Burglar alarm, Montague Road. Alarm company will notify keyholder. Officer found it was a book shipment.
Friday, 3/12
1:26 p.m. Caller from Putney Road called about a scam call stating she had charges to her Amazon account, but has not ordered from them in a long time. She did not give out personal information and wanted the scam to be logged.
Saturday, 3/13
2:58 p.m. Caller asked to speak to an officer about a trespassing issue. Rocks were removed from their wheelbarrow and stacked several feet away on their property. She thinks it may have been kids, but isn’t sure. Extra patrols requested.
10:38 p.m. Medical emergency on North Leverett Road. Party is not breathing and has no pulse. No CPR performed as sons stated the family just completed DNR paperwork this week. Amherst FD responded. As family could not provide DNR paperwork, CPR was performed until hospital duty doctor authorized ceasing procedures.
Sunday, 3/14
1:58 p.m. Caller reported an incident on the side of Hannabrooke Drive and Leverett Road. He was flagged down by male who was run off the road by a female driver who seemed to be in distress. She denied the need for EMS and thinks she can drive 300 feet to her driveway. Advised to wait on scene for PD.
6:15 p.m. Responded to a chimney fire, Hemenway Road.
Monday, 3/15
6:56 p.m. Brown leather couch dumped off the side of Cave Hill Road. Highway boss will remove it from roadway.
Tuesday, 3/16
9:43 a.m. Caller on Long Plain Road reports white smoke coming out of and from around the chimney. Officer determined steam from a sugarhouse, not smoke.
5:52 p.m. Caller reported that a large brown dog ran out into traffic near the three-way intersection on Depot Road. The dog has no collar and wouldn’t get in his vehicle. It took off and almost got hit a second time.
Wednesday, 3/17
1:54 p.m. Highway Depart-

ment reported an injured porcupine on Montague Road. Animal dispatched, and Highway Department removed it.
10:23 p.m. Medical emergency, Old Mountain Road. FD to handle with an ambulance.
Friday, 3/19
6:22 p.m. Tree down blocking Shutesbury Road. No wires involved.
Saturday, 3/20
6:44 p.m. Officer with a disabled motor vehicle on Shutesbury Road. AAA en route.
Sunday, 3/21
3:42 p.m. Out-of-control brush fire called in from Juggler Meadow Road. No permit issued for that location. Officer said it was approximately 30 by 10 feet.
6:13 p.m. Caller reported a lot of smoke at a location on North Leverett Road. Officer found fire extinguished; homeowner advised. All units clear.
Monday, 3/22
5:23 p.m. Brush fire reported on Long Plain Road behind the farm near the tracks. At 7:37 p.m. FD reported fire extinguished and cleaning up. Approximately 1 acre burned.
Wednesday, 3/24
7:26 a.m. Medical emergency, Old Long Plain Road. Subject requested an ambulance.
7:43 a.m. Officer and state police are on Dudleyville Road attempting to locate a missing person.
1:26 p.m. Highway worker locked keys in personal vehicle on Montague Road. Opened successfully.
Friday, 3/26
8:39 a.m. Attempted to serve a warrant on Long Plain Road. Property owner said the party hasn’t lived on the property in a month. Checked camper at rear of property, saw no sign of the individual.
1:44 p.m. 911 misdial on Long Hill Road. Female party can be heard asking if she should hang up. Male party comes on the line to advise it was a “stupid mistake.” Confirmed they did not need police, fire or ambulance.
2:10 p.m. Caller reported a tree on power lines on Juggler Meadow Road overhanging both lanes of travel. Power company advised.
5:03 p.m. Caller from Corner Road stated she was almost run off Route 9 in Hadley near Home Depot. Advised to contact Hadley PD.
8:14 p.m. Caller from Dudleyville Road reported that the dirt road is muddy. A vehicle got stuck and had to be towed out. Notified highway supervisor.
Monday, 3/29
9:40 a.m. Caller from North Leverett Road reported a loose horse, needs assistance with traffic. Canceled; horse was caught.



South Hadley artist Jacqueline Gallo, shown here in a selfie she took on a walk in her beloved woods.

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The Children's Page

YONEROD ILLUSTRATION

WORDS BY BEVERLY KETCH

DOT & NOVELLA LOVELIGHT
and the
FAIRY BALL

PICTURES BY HANNAH BROOKMAN

AFTER FLORA'S LOVELY RECITATION, QUEEN AUTUMN IMPULSIVELY WAVED HER WAND AGAIN AND FLORA WAS SUDDENLY WEARING A BEAUTIFUL NEW GOWN! SHE BLUSHED AND CURTSIED AS THE AUDIENCE GASPED AND APPLAUDED.

THEN, QUEEN SUMMER FLOATED TOWARD FAUNA.

BECAUSE OF YOUR ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT, I HAVE CHOSEN TO BESTOW ON YOU A MAGIC POWER.

THIS WAND IS FOR ONLY ONE PURPOSE: WHEN YOU WAVE IT OVER WATER, OR LIQUID OF ANY KIND, THE SURFACE OF THE WATER WILL TURN INTO A MAGIC MIRROR AND SHOW YOU FAIRY DOINGS AND FAIRY LANDS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

OH THANK YOU! SAID FAUNA AND SHE PLACED IT WITH HER ROSE THORN THAT SHE ALWAYS CARRIED IN A SCABBARD AT HER BELT.

SHE HELD HER HANDS UP MEDITATIVELY AND FROM THEM EMERGED A SOFT TWINKLING LIGHT AS SHE CONCENTRATED, HER MIND FORGED THE LIGHT INTO A WAND THAT APPEARED IN THE AIR. SHE SLOWLY MOVED HER HAND FORWARD AND IT LEAPT INTO FAUNA'S HAND!

FAUNA BOWED DEEPLY TO QUEEN SUMMER. THEN TURNING AROUND, SHE DECLARED:

I SEE THE MOON IS SINKING LOW! STRIKE UP THE BAND AND LET'S ALL DANCE AGAIN!

THE MERRY SONG AND DANCE SEEMED TO MAKE THE SHIMMERING LIGHT OF THE ORB BRIGHTER THAN EVER UNTIL IT SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED, LEAVING JUST A HEAVENLY FEELING IN THE HEARTS OF DOT AND NOVELLA.

SUDDENLY NOVELLA WAS AWAKE, AND LOOKING AT DOT'S FACE, SHE KNEW SHE HAD NOT BEEN DREAMING! THEY HUGGED AND STARED AT EACH OTHER WIDE EYED, AND THEN HEADED HOME, ARM IN ARM, AS THE DAWN BEGAN TO LIGHT THE FOREST.

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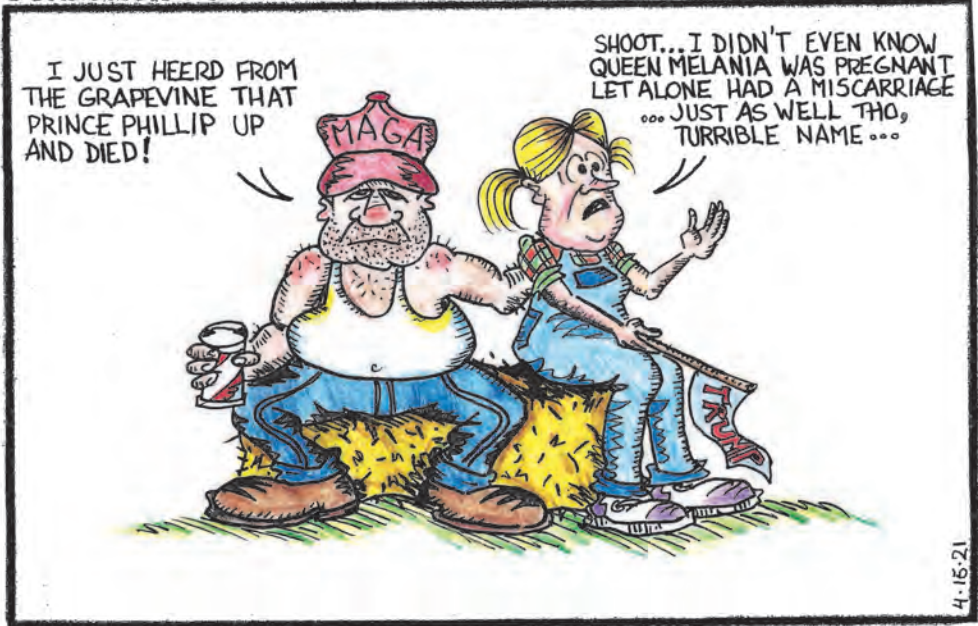
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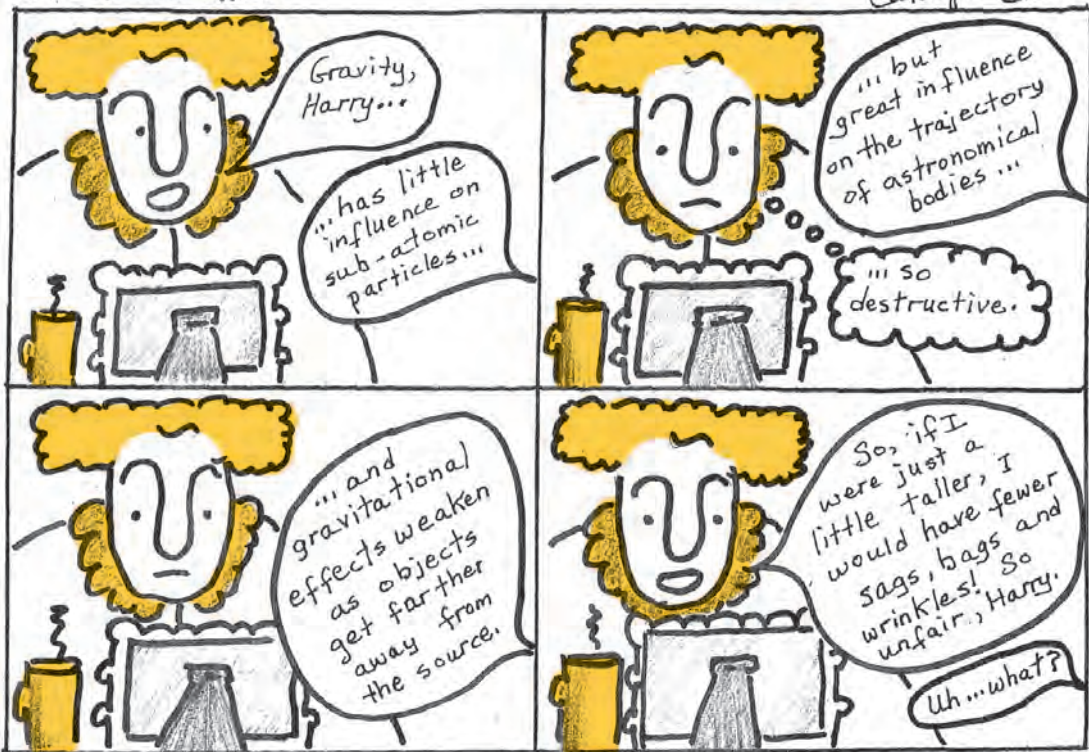
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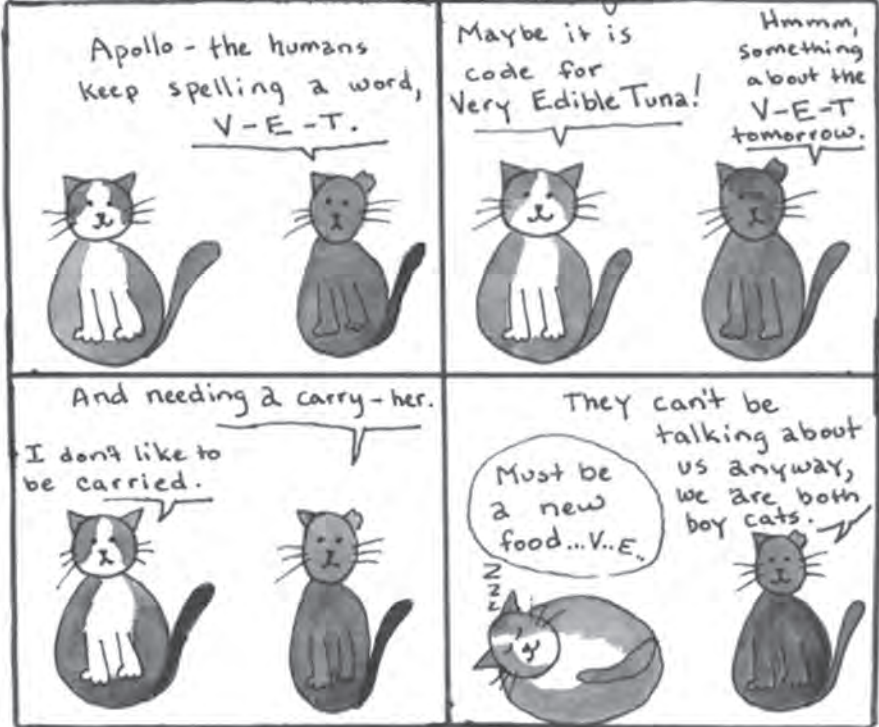
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VALLEY VIEW from page B1
Theophilus Packard, who, with his wife, shared their daughter's South Deerfield residence for eight years after leaving the ministry in 1846.

Both structures may well survive today, although current Yazwinski farm occupant Poppi (Yazwinski) Kelley offered a possibility that confuses the matter some. Her father was told by someone that his homestead had been moved from another site to its present location long before he bought it in 1950.

It's possible. Many South Deerfield buildings were moved during the 19th century, including two churches and the old tavern of our focus. But the Yazwinski property fits snugly into Connecticut Valley architecture of the 1830s, and could easily have been built right where it stands.

The crowded contemporary neighborhood layout suggests that the Yazwinski home was Segdwick Cooley's and another to the north, a Cape standing on Capt. Lathrop Drive that's likely older than Yazwinski's, was Esther Cooley's. That center-chimney home now resting on the north side of Capt. Lathrop was owned for many years by carpenter and town official Ed Crafts.

One fact of which we can be confident is that is that the old Barnard/Frary tavern stood somewhere within the old 84-acre Sedgwick Cooley parcel, bordered on the west by what is now North Main Street. Given the nature of public houses,

the building would have been close to the road. The question is where?

In my opinion, the tavern most likely stood between the road and Bloody Brook, within a narrow, 700-foot strip of land now occupied by five homes. Why would anyone build a colonial tavern on the other side of a brook flowing more than 100 feet from the road? It makes no sense. Taverns served mail routes, and didn't need obstacles for mail stages.

The average distance between road and brook in that narrow strip of land fronting Yazwinski acreage is about 130 feet. That's enough room for the string of houses now standing there, and more than enough for the historic Barnard/Frary tavern.

Who knows? Perhaps locating the old building's footprint will be difficult after all these years.

Then again, it could be hiding in plain sight. After all, has anyone ever made a serious effort to find it? A diligent investigator could probably find the buried foundation with a sharp probe.

Better still, a metal-detecting wizard could go to work in search of common tavern relics, especially colonial coins. Metal-detecting enthusiasts love old-tavern sites and have been known to bang on the doors of many seeking permission.

Take it to the bank: evidence exists. It's just a matter of finding it... and solving the mystery of where Bloody Brook's first tavern was built.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Local Cloth Event at Swanson's Fabric

SUBMITTED PHOTO



This year's Fibershed-produced "slow cloth" is offered in three twill patterns.

TURNERS FALLS – Western Massachusetts Fibershed announces their second "Local Cloth" pop-up event this Saturday, April 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Swanson's Fabrics, 106 Avenue A. They will offer locally sourced, one-of-a-kind yarns, cloth, and blankets.

The featured item is Massachusetts Fibershed tweed-like cloth in three coordinating twill patterns. It drapes like butter, and was designed for outerwear washable garments. Two-ply knitting yarn and blankets will also be for sale. Leonore Alaniz will demonstrate drop spindle spinning.

The Fibershed group hopes to produce local fibershed textiles annually in limited editions from uniquely blended natural colored fleeces, from animals raised by Franklin County small farmers. These will be skirted by Fibershed members, then washed, and spun on old-world equipment at the Green Mountain Spinnery in Putney, Vermont, an employee-owned cooperative.

The yarn is subsequently woven on many decades-old power looms by Peggy Hart of Bedfellows Blankets in Buckland.

"The textiles we live in, from underwear to furnishings and car interiors, are laden with toxic, non-biodegradable substances, and that we need not be indifferent to this fact," notes Leonore Alaniz. "Textiles af-

fect the soil, air, water, human labor and health throughout their life cycle and beyond. Every person who values nutritious, local and organic Slow Food, will appreciate knowing about Slow Textiles, and their healthful (anti-bacterial) attributes."


The name "fibershed" is inspired by "watershed." The latter designates the confluence of water into a river. The former designates a geographic radius in which fibers are sourced, processed, and consumed. Western Mass Fibershed is committed to agricultural restoration, biodegradable raw materials and processes that aid remediation of disturbed environs, and drawing down CO₂ from the atmosphere.

The group has received funding

from Fibershed California. Founders say that the project "demonstrates on a small scale how agriculture, industry and human creativity merge. Each one participates in the local economy, and sustains the balance between nature and the human desire to procure utilitarian goods that are beautiful and comforting." For information about the global Fibershed movement, see fibershed.org.

Attendees at Saturday's event will be asked to follow COVID-19 safety protocols, wearing a mask and social distancing. Children are invited to attend, and hand weaving and drop spindle spinning will be demonstrated. See information on westernmassfibershed.org.

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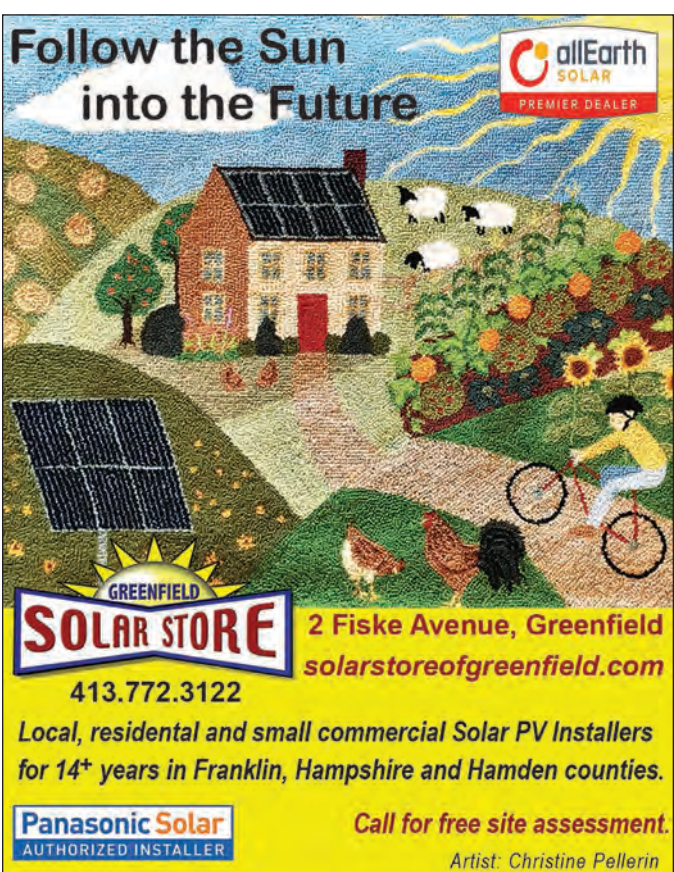
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