

The Montague Reporter

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also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Pandemic Shortages Blamed For Trash Issues, Bridge Cost; Health Board Advocates Masks

By JEFF SINGLETON

A long selectboard agenda on Monday included ongoing problems with curbside trash and recycling pickup; reconfigured funding for the new pedestrian bridge over the Turners Falls Canal; a new director for the town's library system; and the preliminary warrant for the upcoming October 14 special town meeting.

The board also approved a "certificate of substantial completion" for the long-awaited renovation of Spinner Park on Avenue A, and approved the placement of a plaque honoring former town administrator Frank Abbondanzio on a building

adjacent to the park.

The selectboard did not vote to recommend masks in town buildings, but on Wednesday the board of health voted to recommend such a measure, and will bring the topic back to the selectboard next week.

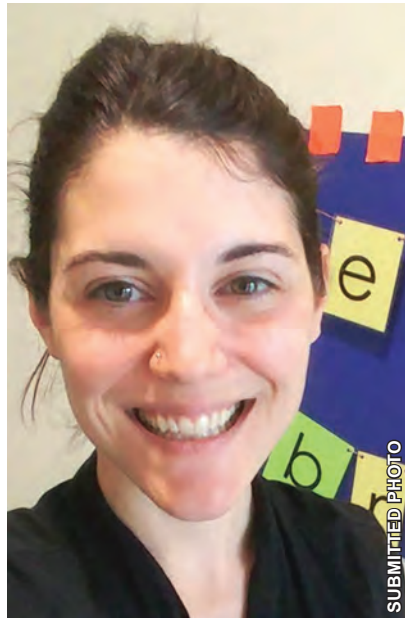
Chair Rich Kuklewicz and Chris Boutwell were the only selectboard members in attendance on Monday, as Michael Nelson has resigned, and his replacement was due to be elected Tuesday.

Early in the meeting, health director Daniel Wasiuk presented the board with the latest COVID-19 metrics. The health board's estimate of the number of new positive cases see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Montague Announces New Public Libraries Director

By JEFF SINGLETON

The trustees of the Montague Public Libraries, an elected board



Caitlin Kelley, who has worked in library systems in Springfield, Connecticut, and Nantucket, starts next month.

with the power to appoint staff, have chosen a new director for town's public library system. Caitlin Kelley will replace head librarian Linda Hickman, who will be retiring in mid-October. The official announcement was made at Monday's selectboard meeting.

Kelley currently serves as assistant librarian at the Rockville Public Library in Vernon, Connecticut. Prior to that she worked at the Mason Square Branch of the Springfield City Library as the adult reference librarian, and before that at the Nantucket Atheneum. She attended Hampshire College as an undergraduate and received a master's degree in library science at Simmons College in Boston.

Library trustee Margot Malachowski, who works as an education and outreach specialist at the University of Massachusetts National Library of Medicine in Worcester, see **DIRECTOR** page A5

High School Sports: Fall Season Underway

By MATT ROBINSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – This week marked the third week of the 2021 fall high school sports season, at least for golf. While the Turners field hockey team began their season on September 13 and the volleyball team played their first match on September 8, the golfers have

been competing since August 31.

Turners Falls students who are participating in co-op teams for football and soccer at Greenfield and Franklin Tech likewise started their seasons in September.

And although the season started back in August, I wasn't able to attend any matches until this week. see **SPORTS** page A5



Turners Falls' Brooke Thayer dribbles past two Westfield defenders as the Thunder hosted the Westfield Bombers last Thursday. Thayer scored Blue's sole goal in the 8-1 contest.

Lord Wins Board Seat By One-Vote Margin



Matt Lord was sworn in as Montague's newest selectboard member by town clerk Deb Bourbeau shortly after the tally was announced Tuesday night.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – The four-way race for a vacant seat on the Montague selectboard ended in a nail-biter Tuesday night, as Matt Lord apparently edged out a win over second-place Joanna Mae Boody by a single vote. The results are unofficial until certified by the state, but Boody says she does not plan to contest the results.

An hour and 20 minutes after polls closed, town clerk Bourbeau read the totals aloud at town hall: Matt Lord 193; Joanna Mae Boody 192; Mark Fairbrother 148; David Jensen 135.

With a 10.7% turnout of registered voters, shorter than usual voting hours, the town's new electronic tabulating machines, polling consolidated into three locations, and no write-in ballots, town clerk Deb Bourbeau said the special election went "smooth, done and over" in record time.

Lord and Jensen were in the hallway as the tallies were called out, having responded to a request for the winner to be sworn in Tuesday night, if possible, in order to restore the selectboard to its full three-member complement before an important joint meeting with the finance committee scheduled for Tuesday.

"By one vote!" Jensen exclaimed. "Well, congratulations."

"I'm excited, but I was hoping for a little bit more relief than 193 to 192 provides," Lord told a member of the press.

At 8:30 p.m., Bourbeau swore Lord onto the board, where he will fill a seat vacated by Michael Nelson for the remaining year and a half of its term.

"My heart was pounding," Bourbeau said on Wednesday of Lord's razor-thin margin of victory. "That has never happened to me in all the years I've been in this office – I've never had a race be one vote different. For clerks, when you have an election, you always want the winners to win big, so that you don't have to hear that word that begins with an 'R.'"

A candidate may request a recount with a petition gathering ten signatures from each precinct and explaining why they think the election was in error.

"I will not be asking for a recount," Boody told the Reporter

when asked for comment on the matter.

A Beachhead on the Hill

Each of the four candidates topped the vote count in at least one of Montague's precincts. Jensen led with 36.3% of the vote in Precinct 2, which includes Millers Falls and his own village of Lake Pleasant; Fairbrother was the most popular in Precinct 3, the eastern section of the Hill neighborhood of Turners Falls.

Boody, meanwhile, dominated in Precincts 5 and 6 – encompassing downtown Turners, the Patch, and Montague City – earning more votes in this territory than her three opponents combined. According to Boody, this reflected face-to-face campaign time. "I spent a lot of time in downtown Turners out and about, especially this summer with the farmer's market, the block parties, the Great Falls Apple Corps free table," she said. "A lot of my campaigning was outside on the ground, meeting individuals where they're at."

Precincts 5 and 6 were also, however, the wards with the lowest voter turnout.

Lord's strongest showing was in the two places with highest turnout: Precinct 1, his own village of Montague Center, where twice as many residents voted as in any other part of town, and Precinct 4, the Hill's western section, which stretches downtown to the Food City plaza.

"I do have some folks there," Lord said, when asked about his Precinct 4 following. "There are people on the planning board who are there, who have been longtime residents in that precinct, and I think that that could have helped."

(A review of the six-member planning board, on which Lord serves, indicates that two of his colleagues live in Precinct 1 and another two in Precinct 3. Only vice chair Frederic Bowman lives in Precinct 4. It is, however, home to a number of other prominent figures at town hall, including town planner Walter Ramsey, town administrator Steve Ellis, moderator Chris Collins, the majority of the finance committee, and both men Lord joins on the selectboard, Rich Kuklewicz and Chris Boutwell.)

That said, more than half of see **ELECTION** page A4

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Town Officials Push Back at \$4.3 Million Garage Plans

By KATIE NOLAN

The Erving selectboard continued its discussion of a proposed \$4.3 million public works office and storage building Monday night, in a joint meeting with the finance, capital planning, and public works building feasibility committees.

In August, assistant planner Mariah Kurtz had presented the board with a preliminary cost estimate for a six-bay garage and storage building, with an attached two- to three-person office space for the highway and water and wastewater departments. Board members and other citizens expressed concern about the estimate, which was prepared by Weston & Sampson, and the board agreed to continue discussing the building.

Town administrator Bryan Smith began Monday's discussion by asking whether Weston & Sampson had reviewed the existing space in its design, whether the feasibility committee had provided them information about the town's needs, and whether its recommendation for a six-bay storage building with two offices has general support.

If the answer was no, he said, there was more work for Weston & Sampson and the feasibility committee to do. If the answer was yes, the design and estimate should be submitted to the finance and capital planning committees to explore funding options.

"Why are there so many bays?" asked selectboard chair Jacob Smith.

Kurtz, a member of the feasibility committee, replied that the town see **ERVING** page A4

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Fall Decisions Will Hinge on Federal COVID Relief Funds

By JOSH HEINEMANN

For its September 15 meeting the Wendell selectboard returned to Zoom, saving several people a drive to town on a cold rainy evening. The board scheduled an extra meeting for an off week Wednesday, September 22, to explore the town's options for federal ARPA and CARES Act money.

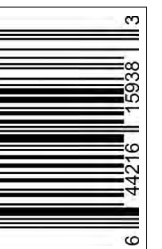
They also tentatively scheduled a special town meeting for Saturday, October 16 at 10 a.m.

The dates will allow the required two weeks for posting the warrant after the extra meeting, when the town's financial picture will be made a little clearer. A money managers' meeting is scheduled for the hour preceding their regular September 29 meeting.

Selectboard member Gillian Budine opened the three responses to see **WENDELL** page A8

Super Special Snack-Sized Edition!

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The Montague Reporter

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August 2002

Ever Looking Back

As our regular readers know, the *Montague Reporter* has made an obsession of browsing the archives of our namesake paper, the *Turners Falls Reporter*. Soaking up history so far removed, but at the same time so near by, can have a particular dizzying effect. The archive is all online – search for “Montague Advantage Preservation” – and we recommend it highly.

One hundred years ago this week: nothing seems to change. “The lower suspension bridge over the Connecticut river has been closed to traffic, while the work of repairing and strengthening the structure is in progress.” The game wardens are stocking the brooks and streams of this vicinity with fingerling trout. The fire district posted a warrant for a meeting to borrow money to extend the water mains.

By September 1921, the *Reporter* was on its last legs. Did it seem like it to readers then? Nine months later, its elderly and de-ranked editor Cecil T. Bagnall would sell it to the *Recorder*, who shut it down immediately. Two months after that, he would die.

There was real news going on, but we only catch glimpses: the International Paper Company took out an ad to refute rumors spread by “officers of the Labor Unions claiming to represent the former employees of the Company, who have been on strike since the first of May.” Meanwhile the *Reporter* was feebly publishing announcements for church basement whist parties and local society gossip, and six of its eight pages, where for decades it had been four, were taken up by syndicated content.

It's still worth a read, even on its last legs, because the announcements constitute a rich social history of the place we now live. The early '20s were a time of cautious prosperity, especially here in Power-town in the era of hydroelectricity. America was recoiling from the trauma of the Great War and arming itself against the spectre of a global revolution, and it played out in tiny ways in Turners.

There are, as always, annals of injury: “Richard F. Clapp of Gill, aged 17, a student of the Turners Falls high school, lost three fingers and the thumb of his right hand by getting it caught in an ensilage cutter last week.” The pervasive clamor of material disaster: “The rear wheels of a truck belonging to a Springfield company which was loaded with paper, went through the flooring of the bridge over the canal at Fifth street Thursday. The machine had to be jacked up to get it out.”

And even sports: “The Brown Sox of Springfield, a colored team, were defeated, 15 to 0, by the Turners Falls Knights of Columbus team at the High school grounds, Sunday afternoon. The game was cut short in the last half of the fifth inning by the rain, which sent everybody scuttling for shelter.”

Even the ad copy is good for a chuckle: “Adler-i-ka acts on BOTH upper and lower bowel, removing foul matter which poisoned stomach and which you never thought was in your system.”

But the tidal wave of syndicated content is grim, swamping the once-scrappy village paper with insipid platitudes, colonial racism, and the zombie commercial culture that would come to define the 20th century. “The Sleeve’s The Thing in New Autumn Frocks,” advises one column, presumably for the ladies.

And in this context, even a century ago, pointless fretting about the ongoing apocalypse: “Tragedies Traced to Oil (Pipe Lines and Overflows Responsible for the Deaths of Many Animals and Birds).” It feels clear this last genre is never a call to action, but a form of entertainment meant to flatter a certain type of reader that they are rightly horrified at modernity.

How will this issue of the *Montague Reporter* read in 2121? It's a shorter edition, a little threadbare. Does it reflect the exhaustion of our era? Or just a week when the writers were busy with other stuff? Does it convey a call to action, or just flattery to the professionally horrified? It's yours to decide...

Concessions

My many thanks to Montague residents, voters, and institutions for their interest and participation in the just-completed Selectboard race.

In particular, to the *Montague Reporter* and MCTV for their service to the public – please subscribe! – and the many individuals who supported, encouraged, and motivated

me in the election endeavor.

And finally, to the victor, may the new Selectboard prosper from his experience, hard work, wisdom, and good luck.

David Jensen
(Former) Selectboard candidate
Lake Pleasant



Our own features editor, Nina Rossi, is captured in this illustration getting training from her 27-year-old son Jon Bander before assisting him on a steel sculpture commission this month. (Yes, Nina's coming back!)

Letters to the Editors

Above & Beyond

In my time of need, I want to give a public shout out to Nik at Sadie's Bikes, a great little bicycle sales and repair shop located near the canal in Turners Falls.

My story begins when I stopped there to purchase a new seat for my stationary bike. I made my selection, and away I went. In trying out the seat at home, it still did not feel quite comfy, so I brought it back. No problem, was able to simply exchange.

Getting the new seat to fit was another problem. I called for a solution, hopefully over the phone. Nik, the owner, suggested perhaps a part was missing.

With help from a neighbor, we loaded the bike in the back of my car, and over I went. Yes, an adaptor was needed. Not only did I get the part at no cost, but I was also lucky enough to have an expert fix the seat to the adaptor onto my bike!

This little hide-away shop was a life saver for me! I appreciated the courteous, prompt, and professional service that I was given. I understand the business is being forced to move, and I certainly hope they relocate in the Town of Montague. I would highly recommend checking out Sadie's Bikes for any sales, service, or repairs.

Jean Coyne
Millers Falls

Recovery Zone

The Montague Planning Department invites you to a Public Presentation of the Downtown Turners Falls Rapid Recovery Plan. It will occur next Tuesday, September 28 at 6:30 p.m. You may attend in person at Town Hall or via Zoom. The Plan is supported by the State's Rapid Recovery Program. The Planning Department has worked with community stakeholders to identify 12 priority action items to help the downtown recover from the effects of COVID-related measures.

The 12 priority projects are: downtown navigational signs; building the town hall annex into a multi-purpose space for media and the arts; accelerating downtown street-scapes improvements; advancing master planning and site preparation in the Canal District; implementing high-visibility public art projects; expanding support for the creative economy; implementing policies and practices to optimize downtown parking; improving river access below the Falls at the Indeck property; making improvements to the bandshell at Peskeomskut Park; advancing new housing in downtown; developing design guidelines for downtown; and expanding support for business development.

Find Zoom login info, a list of priority actions, and more information at www.montague-ma.gov.

Walter Ramsey
Montague Town Planner

On the ARC's "Failing Issues"

It is such a deep heartbreak and shocking to read about the United ARC "failing issues" – lack of medical care, etc. – so published in the newspaper.

Before they had the Turners Falls ARC office, long, long ago, I was an employee of the ARC of the Greenfield Office under CEO Ed Porter. I did some relief work in the residential homes, and also recreation companionship for numerous individuals. Educating social skills and also home teaching, as more than one client had been in the state institutions.

My training under the ARC included first aid, medication training, and CPR, and staff meetings... But

I also had a B.A. in education, and worked in classrooms for the disabled in Franklin County.

Since I never worked "in the state institutions," I had an open mind to integration and socialization. One of my students was also under the ARC, and we enjoyed each other's company not only in school but outside the classroom. I dedicated myself to this particular family for over 15 years.

I also had many of these wonderful folks in my Special Olympics programs, as I was a certified swim instructor, bowling coach, and horse back riding teacher. More than once we went to state Special Olympics events.

I recall such a great working team

at the ARC residential homes, also such great financial support by some well-known professional parents and guardians... What happened?

Surely my past good memories carry forward beyond the years with the ARC, as an ADA Leadership Award recipient who works on ADA access issues for Montague.

But there is *huge* work to be done... and I hope positive interventions begin sooner than later, and build successful glory days like years ago, but most importantly prevent further injury to such a vulnerable population.

Betty Tegel
Turners Falls

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Compiled by
TROUBLE MANDESON

NEPR and Hawks & Reed are co-hosting the seventh **Valley Voices Story Slam** tonight, September 23, from 7:30 to 10 p.m. at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center. Come out and hear your friends and neighbors tell outrageous and heartwarming stories in under five minutes. Tickets are \$10 each, and can be purchased at www.eventbrite.com.

Greenfield Recreation is screening Disney's PG-rated movie **Raya and the Last Dragon** at Beacon Field tomorrow, September 24 at 7:15 p.m. The event is free.

The **Gill Cultural Council** is pleased to accept arts and culture applications from Gill and adjoining communities. This year they would also like to hear from Gill residents about their priorities for arts and culture projects. Please go to www.gillmass.org for links to the application, October 15, and survey forms, or email lcc@gillmass.org for information.

The North American Flyball Association, NAFA, is holding their first **canine flyball tournament** in two years, called Organized Chaos. The event starts tomorrow, September 24, and runs through the weekend at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. Look for "Mass Chaos Flyball" on Facebook for more information.

The self-guided **Story Walk** series at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls offers fresh air, exercise, and a children's storybook. On display from September 24 through October 20 is **Honk Honk: A**

Story on Migration, by Mick Manning and Brita Granström, for readers ages 4 to 8 and all fans of geese. Likewise, the theme for the Friday, October 1 Kidleidoscope Story Hour program at the Discovery Center for kids 3 to 6 is also geese. You can find more information at greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org.

We previously shared news that neighbors in the Patch neighborhood of Turners Falls are holding a **Patch Clean Up** this weekend in conjunction with the Connecticut River Conservancy's annual Source to Sea Cleanup. The time has changed – that cleanup will now be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. only, this Saturday, September 25. Meet at the corner of G and 10th streets; gloves and bags will be provided.

Participants will be awarded a t-shirt or bandana – wear it to Nice. Snack Parlor later that day for \$1 off a shaved ice treat!

The Friends of the Montague Public Libraries are holding a **used book sale** under the tent at the Carnegie Library this Saturday, September 25 from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. All proceeds from the sale of adult and children's books, DVDs, CDs and audio books will benefit the Friends of the MPL. Volunteers are also needed for this event; call (413) 863-3214 for more information. The rain date is Saturday, October 2.

A discussion led by project director Joan Featherman about **The Road to Freedom: Greenfield and the Underground Railroad**, a 2007 partnership of the Greenfield Human Rights Commission, the Greenfield Historical Commission, and the Pioneer Valley Institute, will be

held at the LAVA Center in Greenfield this Saturday, September 25, 1 to 2:30 p.m. You can read a copy of this fascinating history of Greenfield by downloading the 12-page booklet produced by the project at greenfield-ma.gov/files/Road_to_Freedom_Guide.pdf.

Apex Orchards, on Peckville Road in Shelburne, hosts Tom Riccardi's **Birds of Prey** this Sunday, September 26 at 12 p.m. Tom brings various bird species and provides a fun, interactive, and educational experience. Arrive early for a seat.

Local author Terry McConnell's new book, **Breaking Through the Line: Bobby Marshall, the N.F.L.'s First African American Player**, will be released this Friday, and an **official book release event** will be held in the Community Room of the Y in Greenfield on Saturday, October 2 at 10 a.m. Masks are required. To attend, please RSVP at runnerwithasthma@gmail.com or by calling (413) 834-9041.

A **Community Baby Shower** will be held in Court Square next to the Greenfield Farmers' Market next Saturday, October 2 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Franklin County Perinatal Support Coalition, there will be multiple family support agencies on hand to connect families with valuable community resources.

There will be raffle prizes and other free gifts for parents and parents-to-be, and families can "shop" for free maternity and newborn clothing and supplies at the Village Closet pop-up truck, sponsored by It Takes a Village. For more information, please visit www.hilltownvillage.org or call (413) 650-3640.

Poetry and performance art collaboration Exploded View announces a **call for two- and three-dimensional art** for a community art exhibit to run from November 6 to December 1 at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls. The theme of the show is "Repair."

Artists may submit up to three pieces by October 25 and should include their full name, address, and phone number in an email to explodedviewma@gmail.com. Find ExplodedViewMA on Facebook and at explodedviewma.blogspot.com.

Greening Greenfield presents **climate change-themed short play readings** where community participation is encouraged, on Thursday evenings and midday Saturdays in October and November at the LAVA Center in Greenfield. Contact info@localaccess.org or call (413) 376-8118 for more information. Find the complete schedule by searching for "Climate Change Theatre Action 2021" on Facebook.

Light Up the Franklin County Fairgrounds has put out a call for entries for "thoughtful, well-crafted" **holiday light displays** for a three-week drive-through event in November and December, with cash prizes. Individuals and businesses must enter by November 5 and there is no entry fee. Contest rules and entry forms can be found at www.whai.com, bbbs-fc.org, and www.bear953.com.

The event is a fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Franklin County, Franklin County Sheriff's Office Regional Dog Shelter, and the Franklin County Fairgrounds.

Are you an artist in western Mass? **Sawmill River Gallery** is looking for a new member artist to join this November, just in time for the holiday season. The Montague Mill is a destination for locals and tourists alike. Visit www.sawmillriverarts.com to apply. Artists in all media may apply, and applications are due by October 4.

The US Postal Service is now hiring over 40,000 seasonal employees for the 2021 holiday season. Visit www.usps.com/hiring to search for open positions and job fairs.

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OP ED

Advocating for a River's Rights

By **LEONORE ALANIZ**

THE GREAT FALLS – For the third time, concerned citizens gathered last Saturday on behalf of "the nation's hardest-working river," this time at the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. We carried descriptive signs that drew attention to an overdue issue: disclosure about the vitality of the Connecticut River, now and in the future, and the relicensing of FirstLight Power, the current operator of the Northfield Mountain pumped-storage station and Turners Falls dam.

Owned by the Canadian-based Public Sector Pensions Investments, FirstLight has control over large stretches of the river's biosphere. Karl Meyer of Greenfield has recorded for years in his blog, karlmeyerwriting.com, the effects of massive interference in the vitality of the Connecticut River. He documents specifically the demise of the river's shortnose sturgeon, which thrived here for millennia. His blog beams a red light on FirstLight's practices, and on the federal and state agencies that bow to an entity that exploits a river and channels the proceeds abroad.

The rights of aquatic life to migrate in the river were legislated in the 1800s, but have been ignored by federal and state agencies. FirstLight reverses the river's natural flow at the Northfield pumped-storage station, killing billions of aquatic lives on site. The river's current is throttled at Barton Cove, and more damage is done below the dam.

Indigenous species cannot thrive in their an-



BART BOURICIOUS PHOTO

cestral habitat. Literally on the other side, in the canal, non-native fish, such as numerous carp specimens, attract sports fisherfolk from near and far to Barton Cove and the canal. Is this an ethical trade-off? Who has dominion over others, be they humans or other forms of life? Who decides who shall live, merely survive, or die?

The massive homicide of 1676 at Turners Falls has not been forgotten. To ignore *ecocide* is also unacceptable. Ecocide has been defined by legal experts advising the International Criminal Court at the Hague to adopt it as its "5th Crime Against Peace." They anticipate that young people will be galvanized by legal definitions, such as the Rights of Nature, and their implications.

Such fundamental principles are informed by the values indigenous people live by. They practice *right relations* with all of Life. This stands in stark contrast to the way FirstLight intervenes with Nature: by systematically killing aquatic life; by mowing significant pollinator habitat at the river's embankment every spring.

Last year, the plants recovered somewhat.

This year Red Clover, Milkweed, and other flowering plants did not reach their blooming stage. Habitat and food sources for small birds were decimated by the mowing. In the spring of 2021, FirstLight also logged the woods between the lower canal and the riverbed, felling majestic, healthy pine trees. The result is less air quality, loss of beauty, altered geological integrity, less carbon sequestration, and less diversity of organisms invisible to the naked eye.

In observing FirstLight's behavior, one witnesses a "Death by Corporation." This is the title of a book that describes the power of corporations over the sanctity of all life, published in 2019 by Dr. Brian Moench, a former Harvard Medical School lecturer.

Local "river keepers" will take the next step and organize, perhaps as a citizens' science group dedicated to tracking and restoring the Connecticut River's vitality. We will cultivate alliances with river and water keepers nationwide, and will dialogue with legislators and organizations that care.

While relicensing procedures were held in the past behind closed doors, an informed public is realizing that all members of society are stakeholders, and that public involvement is crucial to steward the ecology of our bioregion, and to reduce the consumption of electricity and implement lesser-known technology that yields clean electricity. More information on all topics will emerge, and every citizen's participation is welcomed.

Leonore Alaniz lives in Turners Falls.

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ERVING from page A1

needs room for a van, a loader, a backhoe, an F-350 pickup, a dump truck, and an enclosed trailer. She added that after meeting with the board in August, her committee and Weston & Sampson had changed the design of a stairway and mezzanine storage area, and placed a pipe rack on the side of the building to make better use of the proposed space.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache asked whether a four-bay garage would work. Highway superintendent Glenn McCrory, calling in from his vacation, said the equipment was “sitting outside right now,” and asked what the town’s plan for storing it was.

Fin com member Charles Zilinski suggested storing the vehicles and equipment in a three-sided shed.

Water and wastewater superintendent Peter Sanders said his department currently stores vehicles and equipment in a former wash bay, with “a lot of stuff crammed in” and exposing them to “high moisture.” He added that the department will need more storage space when it gets riding mowers.

Bastarache commented that, if the board and committees approve the project, they would need to justify “the need for all this space” at town meeting.

“This one building is going to solve a couple of problems,” Sanders replied.

“We spent more than this on a library,” said Jacob Smith. “Infrastructure to support a town is not cheap.” He said that he thought it “makes sense” for McCrory and Sanders “to have offices near where they work,” and pointed out that proper storage prolongs equipment life.

Debra Smith, a member of the finance and capital planning committees, asked about other funding sources. Kurtz said the US Department of Agriculture was a possible source, but wasn’t clear whether Erving would qualify.

Jacob Smith asked Kurtz to check with Weston & Sampson about the potential cost savings of reducing the number of bays.

Zilinski asked about separate buildings for the offices and the dry storage. Sanders replied that with a three-sided shed, equipment would still get wet.

Responding to a written comment, Kurtz said the feasibility committee had decided not to use the former library building for the highway and water and wastewater offices.

“I don’t feel the [former] library is a good fit,” Debra Smith explained, because it needs a roof and other repair work. She asked the committees to consider the building project in a 20- to 25-year time frame, and said she felt the mechanical/IT room in the proposed plans might be too small.

“Conceptually, I’m for it,” Bastarache agreed. “Is it big enough?” Still, he said, he didn’t want a “wish building,” but one based on “what our need is for now and the future.”

“Conceptually,” selectboard member William Bembury said, “I don’t have a problem,” but he wondered whether a smaller footprint might be possible. Bembury reminded the officials about projects that should take priority over a new building, including the Church Street bridge reconfiguration, the demolished Swamp Road bridge, and the washed-out Poplar Mountain Road.

Church Street Bridge

Jacob Smith said the town’s traffic and sign-

age plans for the Church Street bridge at North Street, recently rated at a three-ton capacity, had been submitted to the state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for approval.

Bryan Smith said signs would be installed this week, and that McCrory had ordered orange traffic barrels and other road markers. He said traffic barrels will be placed along North Street and Route 2 near Flis Market to protect pedestrians and restrict parking.

North Street resident Peter Mallet asked about putting a truck exclusion sign at the Northfield town line on North Street to keep trucks from traveling through. McCrory said that once trucks are on Northfield’s Gulf Road or Maple Street, they have no place to turn around, and just keep traveling onto North Street.

Bryan Smith said once MassDOT approves the town’s plan, the town would be able to meet the September 30 deadline for having the signs and barriers in place.

Other Business

The selectboard appointed Janice Vega-Liros to a vacant planning board seat, and plans to meet jointly with the planning board to discuss proposed bylaw changes on October 4.

Bryan Smith told the selectboard that the library architect and owner’s project manager were working on a reply to the general contractor, who had attributed some items on the final library construction punch list to the dry atmosphere in the building, rather than to the construction work.

The board appointed Bembury, Garry Betters, and senior center director Paula Betters to the screening committee for a cook and van driver at the senior center.

ELECTION from page A1

Lord’s votes came from within his own Precinct 1. “I put a lot of effort into where I was locally, in Montague Center, and it worked out well for me there,” he told the Reporter.

According to Bourbeau, the only two write-in ballots cast were both in that precinct: one each for Ann Fisk and W. Conner.

Rounding the Bases

“It goes to show people that your vote does matter,” said Boody. “Getting out the vote is super important; I’m excited that people came out, but I would hope that more people would want to be engaged in general.”

Boody expressed thanks to all the voters, and in particular those who voted for her. “Overall I think it was a well-run race, with a qualified and passionate field of candidates,” she said. “I’m proud of the campaign that I ran, and both the old and new connections that were made within this community.”

Lord, a disability attorney who moved to town in 2017, said he was pleased that Boody was the closest runner-up. “Joanna campaigned hard, and did really well with that all over town,” he said.

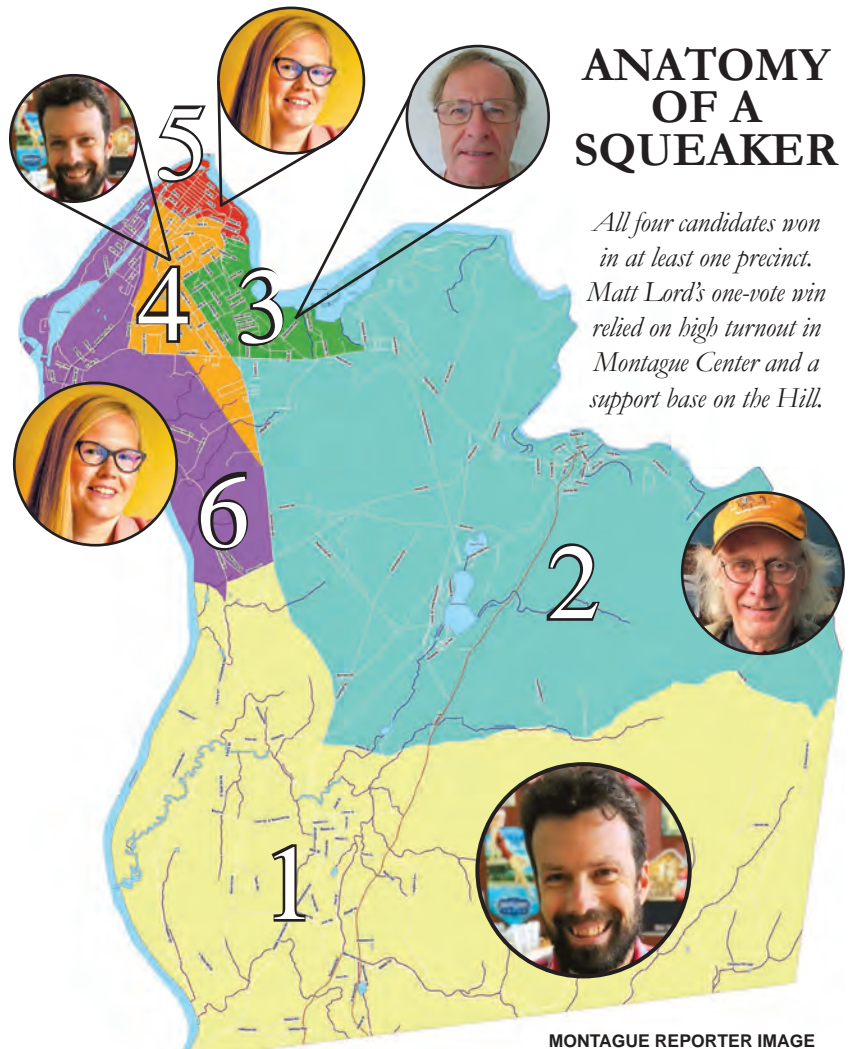
According to Bourbeau, the townwide turnout was higher than during the regular spring election in June. “Eight to ten percent is usually average for local elections across the state,” she said. Between 90 and 100 of the 671 ballots, she estimated, were cast as absentee or

mail-in votes.

On Wednesday, Lord joined a short selectboard meeting via Zoom dedicating to reorganizing roles on the board. By unanimous accord, Kuklewicz remained chair, Boutwell graduated from clerk to vice-chair, and Lord was named clerk. All three then logged in to a joint meeting with the finance committee to review articles for the special town election in October. Fin com members congratulated him on his win.

Boody told the Reporter she plans to continue serving on town meeting and the Gill-Montague regional school committee, where she was appointed this summer to fill a vacant Montague seat until the annual election next spring.

Asked whether she will run again for the selectboard in that election, when Boutwell’s fourth term on the board ends, Boody was noncommittal. “I may very well run again,” she said, “but I’ll cross that bridge when we come to it.”



ANATOMY OF A SQUEAKER

All four candidates won in at least one precinct. Matt Lord’s one-vote win relied on high turnout in Montague Center and a support base on the Hill.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL
LORD	99	9	27	36	13	9	193
BOODY	39	29	17	31	42	34	192
FAIRBROTHER	52	20	30	20	9	17	148
JENSEN	31	33	20	25	17	9	135
WRITE-IN	2						2
BLANK			1				1
TOTAL	223	91	95	112	81	69	671

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SPORTS from page A1

On Tuesday I finally made it to two events. (Three, if you count JV volleyball...)

Golf
TFHS 14.5 – Easthampton 9.5

On Tuesday the Turners Falls Golf Team out-shot the Easthampton Eagles at Thomas Memorial Country Club. Technically, it was Blue's first home match, although they did play as the visiting team against Franklin Tech on the same course.

Tuesday's victory gives the Thunder a 3 – 1 record. Their only loss was against those same Franklin Tech Eagles.

Having middle school kids play varsity golf is not unusual for the Blue Thunder. This season, two

sixth graders and two eighth graders are on the squad. And like many young boys, they sometimes let their anger and frustration get the best of them.

"He's mad at himself," one of the dads remarked when his son stamped his feet after missing an easy putt.

"It's mind over matter," another father whispered after his son shanked a drive. "Now it's in his head."

Despite these emotional setbacks, the Powertown Six did manage to win the day.

Turners is led by Joey Mosca, who believe it or not is now in high school. Joey is one of those kids who started playing varsity golf in the sixth grade. In this match, the veteran Mosca blanked his opponent 4-0 to even his record as lead

golfer to 2-2.

Sixth-grader Jackson Day, the other golfer in Turners' first four-some, won his match 3-1.

The Powertown golfers in the next quartet didn't fare so well. Reese Ewell was shut out 4-0, and Grady Deery lost 3-1.

The last group down the fairway was actually a threesome. Braeden Talbot won his duel 2.5-1.5 while Jack Jette played just for fun and scored 4 unopposed points, giving Turners the 14.5 to 9.5 win.

Powertown goes back on the greens this Thursday when they take on the Mohawk Trail Warriors.

Volleyball
TFHS 3 – Mohawk 0

After the golf fight I drove to the high school to watch volleyball. Like most sports at Turners, the volleyball roster also has its share of pre-high school players.

Turners defeated Mohawk 3-0 in Tuesday's game to improve their record to 5 – 0.

Thunder won the first match 25-17, but the next two victories were razor thin. In the second set, Blue scored the last two points to pull off a 26-24 extended-game victory. The third contest was just as tight as Powertown won by a mere 2 points, 25-23.

Turners' next match is on Thursday, when the Franklin Tech Eagles cross the road and try to spoil the Thunder's perfect record.

DIRECTOR from page A1

said she has known Kelley for a number of years. "She has great energy," said Malachowski, "and is very strong in the area of outreach and collaborating with community organizations."

Malachowski said she got to know Kelley when she worked in the Mason Square neighborhood of Springfield, which she called a diverse and politically involved "social justice" neighborhood. "She will be a good fit for Montague," said Malachowski.

Kelley was named one of *BusinessWest's* "Forty Under 40" in 2018 in recognition of her community collaborations in Springfield. A TEDx Easthampton talk she delivered that year, "Public Libraries: Filling Gaps, Planting Seeds," can be viewed on YouTube.

Outgoing director Linda Hickman emphasized Kelley's grant-writing and administrative experience, but also said Kelley's enthusiasm and "energy" were perhaps the key factors in landing the job.

Kelley will replace a popular fixture in Montague who has been employed by the library system for over 23 years. Hickman first served as the children's librarian, and then for the past seven years as the director. During that time the Carnegie Library in downtown Turners Falls initiated the popular weekly Music and Movement program

TOWN OF LEVERETT
Town Treasurer and Collector

The Town of Leverett is hiring a Treasurer and a Collector. These are separate positions that can be completed by the same person. Combined duties include, but are not limited to, receiving and accounting for funds, paying bills and wages, negotiating borrowing, sending bills and collecting taxes, completing municipal lien certificates, completing yearly reporting requirements, and regular reconciliations with Accountant's office. Combined position is approximately 32 hours per week. Hours flexible with regular public hours required. Combined salary between \$35,000 - \$50,000 per year. Must have experience in municipal finances and collections or related field and demonstrated spreadsheet and communication skills. Job descriptions and application are available at townadministrator@leverett.ma.us or at leverett.ma.us. Resumes, cover letter and application should be received by October 7, 2021 to email address above.

Applicants for either or both positions are encouraged.

Leverett is an AA/EOE.

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the Inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that **Element Brewing Company, LLC**, d/b/a Element Brewing Company, Daniel Kramer as manager, with a Pouring Permit, Farmer Brewery (Malt Beverages Only) has applied for an alteration of Licensed Premises at 16 Bridge Street, Millers Falls, MA. The proposed alteration would give permanent approval to the 29' x 17' (493 sq. ft) outdoor patio area to the north-east of the building that was granted temporary approval during the COVID emergency. If approved, it would connect it to the approved 26'6" x 17' patio area, 945.2 total sq. feet, adding an additional 28 seats outside; tables and seats will be built from reclaimed materials. Current location is approximately 9,300 square feet (total building) with 1100 square feet as public area. One front entrance, one side emergency exit and one rear emergency exit.

Date and place of hearing: **Monday, October 4, 2021** at 6:31 P.M. at the Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room, One Avenue A, Turners Falls and via ZOOM.

Montague License Commissioners

FACES & PLACES



Above: Volunteers relocating creatures from the drained Turners Falls power canal to the river last Sunday came across a common mudpuppy (Necturus maculosus) drying out on the canal floor. Below: Gage Stanislawski released the aquatic salamander into the merciful wet waters of the Connecticut, reminding us all that second chances are still possible, and a stranger may be our salvation.

and a home science program. The "Friends of the Library," volunteers who help maintain the plantings on the library grounds and stock the used book room, were also organized during her tenure.

Hickman said getting financing for building repairs needed at the Carnegie Library has been one of her bigger challenges. "Montague has a lot of old, at-risk buildings," she told the *Reporter*, "but we would always hear that the town was going to build a new library so why repair the old one?" The department has recently completed two evaluations of the Montague Center branch library, housed in a building constructed in 1858 as the town hall.

Hickman said she is proud of the response by library staff to the recent COVID-19 emergency. "We expanded some of our programs, and did a lot of work on the collections behind the scenes," she said, noting that the Montague libraries

have not encountered the staffing problems experienced by some other systems in the region.

Kelley realizes she is filling big shoes, and said that the next decade will be a challenging but "exciting" time for the department. Plans initiated nearly a decade ago to build a new central library are still on hold waiting decisions about other town buildings, such as the senior center on Fifth Street, and for the town to make progress on paying construction bonds from projects such as the public safety complex and public works facility. This will likely lead to further discussions about the status of branch libraries at Montague Center and Millers Falls.

"I'm in it for the long haul," Kelley, who currently lives in Easthampton, told the *Reporter*. She said she plans to take some time off over the next few weeks before the Montague job starts to "hike in the woods with my dog."

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the
poetry
page

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

– William Carlos Williams

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

September Poetry Page

Fixilation

for Lawrence Fixel

A long time ago, an old Jewish writer who isn't famous but should be
gave me a gift of three words:
Lineage / Linkage / Legacy.
It was one of his Three Word Worlds,
which if he were famous more people would know about.

Tonight I'm trying to paint a thought portrait of him.
To find a single image that encapsulates the essence of the man.
Near midnight what emerges is this:
Take any letter from the Hebrew alphabet
then imagine that letter is a leprechaun
who never stops telling long complicated jokes.

I think of the not-so-famous Jewish writer as a reverse infinity mystic
with a Socialist twist, soaked in optimistic sorrow,
who somehow ended up living on Mount Parnassus,
or at least Parnassus Heights in San Francisco.

Earlier tonight I was at the book party for his *Collected*,
finally published 17 years after his death.
Edited by someone I used to know but can hardly remember,
who has the same first name as my stepfather —
who I can hardly remember.

Maybe memory isn't so important.
Maybe memory just makes it seem like the world really existed
the way you believe it existed.
Maybe the world never existed
the way I thought it did, other than mistakenly.
The exception rather than the rule. The creative inverse
to all the dark matter that fills what we call space.

At the book event a photographer stood up and recalled having dinner with the writer
and his wife at their home in San Francisco
one evening when the writer was particularly glum and disparaging.
Nothing was good anymore.
No one remembered the great struggle,
all the poems that had been written and read,
all the minds that had been illuminated, ignited even.
He just didn't see the point.

Finally the photographer got frustrated and turned to him and asked,
"So, nothing excites you anymore?"
After a long pause, during which dessert was served,
the old Jewish writer finally responded:
"I get excited when tall ideas are dancing."

– Thoreau Lovell
Berkeley, CA

being afraid

i've had a mustache and a beard for seven years
i nibble at my mustache and toy with my beard
i've been in this world for twenty-seven years, minus two days
today is september 10th, my beard is long, i've a mustache
the tea steams up, the pen has ink, the table on four legs
there is contentment and cruelty everywhere
four walls, many commas, some smelly sweat around
minus two days, i've been in this world for twenty-seven years
i am hair and beard,
tea and rage i am in this world
sadness, diffidence, selfishness i am
still in this world.
minus two, twenty-seven
why doesn't the world resemble me
the world: i washed my face at night
as to save face
i woke up in the morning, undried.
the world keeps opening my eyes
the smell and the sound keep opening my eyes
whether i dress in white or black
i seem weak against the world
the black on my face with my beard and mustache
oh, the world! burn your spirit in mine.
not with a bang but with a whimper
five calls for prayer, eight istanbuls, three ankaras.

– Mehmet Said Aydın
Istanbul
Translated by Öykü Tekten

This Magical Rain

In memoriam Faysal Mikdadi

What happens to the rain
falling
on the flowers of my imagination?
Will it come again
so I can drink in
your loss, set in train
thoughts
brought by this tunnelling pain?
To recognise all you gave me
I must relive our conversations
stolen from the daily round of life
in cafes, pubs and coffee bars,
in the comfortable chairs
at The Duchess of Cornwall
and The Gallery on the Square
where you talked, intimately,
of secret messages from your sister
still stuck in Beirut,
before moving on
to tell me my latest poem
stood tall with others
already included
in your fast expanding file
for my new book of poems.
But where's the rain gone
that waters the creation of such
beautiful friendship
and meets the thirst
for love and recognition
all exiles need -
where's it gone, this magical rain,
will it come again
can it ever come again?

– Julian Nangle
Dorchester, Dorset, UK

Contributors' Notes:

Thoreau Lovell is a poet and prose writer who lives in Berkeley with his wife, daughter and two dogs. He is the author of *Wilson Wiley Variations* (WCP) and *Amnesia's Diary* (Ex Nihilo), as well as the publisher and co-founder of Wet Cement Press. This poem is from his new book *Anecdotes from the Western Bubble*.

Born in Diyarbakir, Turkey, Mehmet Said Aydın is a Kurdish poet and editor. He has published three books of poetry: *Kusurlu Bahçe* ["Tainted Garden"] (160 Kilometre, 2011), *Sokağın Zoru* ["Rocks of Streets"] (Everest, 2014), and *Lokman Kasidesi* ["Qasida of Lokman"] (Everest, 2019). His autobiographical narrative, *Dedemin Definesi* ["My Grandfather's Treasure"] (Edebi Şeyler, 2018), was published in a trilingual edition and will be published in English by Pinsapo Press. He works as a newspaper columnist, and currently lives in Istanbul.

Öykü Tekten is a poet, translator, and editor living between Granada and New York. She is also a founding member of Pinsapo, an art and publishing experience with a particular focus on work in and about translation, as well as a contributing editor and archivist with Lost & Found: The CUNY Poetics Document Initiative. Her work has appeared in the Academy of American Poets, Words Without Borders, *SAND Journal*, *Jadaliyya*, the *Markaz Review*, *Oversound Poetry*, *StatOrec*, and *Gazete Duvar*, among other places.

Julian Nangle, poet and bookseller, lives in Dorchester, England. His newest verse collection is *Poppy and Other Poems of Grief and Celebration* (Paris & London: Alysamps Press, 2019). A new collection will be out in the UK in early 2022.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

in Montague for the week from September 12 to 18 was eight, and the two-week estimate beginning on September 5 was 18.

Wasiuk presented a graph showing a significant increase in cases since mid-July, but a drop over the previous two weeks. He said that the town's emergency management team had agreed that if the case numbers doubled to 16 or 17 over the next week, they might make "a recommendation for mask use."

Town administrator Steve Ellis said that he believed the team had agreed that if Montague moves into the state's "red" designation, with 25 or more new cases over a two-week period, "that would be a clear signal that we should consider re-implementing masks in town buildings specifically."

A number of cities and towns in the region, including Greenfield, Amherst, and Northampton, have implemented mask mandates for all buildings open to the public, including markets, bars, and restaurants.

The health board's metrics and policy recommendations on masks were questioned by some in attendance. Leslie Cogswell, who said she has two children in the regional school district, asked if the board's statistics counted people who were testing positive "in their homes," but not necessarily reporting the results. "I know that is certainly happening," she said.

Wasiuk responded that "without concrete laboratory positivity, we don't consider it."

Cogswell noted that some children in the school district come from other towns but are in Montague "for 40 hours a week."

David Harmon, a member of the library trustees, noted that the health board was presenting "Montague specific" data, but said he would like to hear that officials were considering Franklin County "as a whole." "Our town has a lot of people coming and going," he said. "This idea that we're looking at the rates for just our individual town, and not the whole county where rates are going up, is a little puzzling to me."

Wasiuk said he would discuss the issue with the health board at its meeting on Wednesday. "I agree with you," he said. "We could do a better job of taking into account that data."

At Wednesday's meeting, the board of health reversed its position. The vote came after several in attendance, including Harmon, again expressed concern that the board was only considering Mon-

tague's metrics.

Board of health member Melanie Zamjoski expressed concern that positive cases identified by the school district might not be making their way into the database used by the health department.

The vote was 2 to 1, with Zamjoski and Michael Nelson voting in the affirmative and chair Albert Cummings voting no.

Curbside Mess

The selectboard held a lengthy discussion of the continuing problems with the weekly trash and recycling pickup by the firm Republic Services, a national corporation operating in 41 states but with its regional headquarters located in Chicopee.

This has been a frequent topic at recent meetings, with increasing amounts of trash and recycling attributed to labor shortages during the pandemic, which result in both a shortage of vehicles to respond to the demand and a shortage of workers who know the street configurations in towns like Montague. Complaints from residents are channeled from the town's public works department to a company dispatch system that is frequently overburdened.

Kuklewicz said that town staff met with representatives from Republic Services over the past week, and he had been able to sit in on the meeting. "It doesn't look like [the challenges] are going to get better quickly," he said.

Ellis, who said that he and public works superintendent Tom Bergeron had been in "constant contact" with Republic Services over the past several months, stressed the staff turnover at the company. "At the end of the day, when you're driving through neighborhoods and you don't know the neighborhoods... you are both inefficient and you make mistakes," he said. He said Republic has had "something of a revolving door" for drivers in Montague, but now have someone who "they believe will stay."

Ellis also said that the company was now sending two trucks to Montague on Wednesdays, "something that was not anticipated in their contract." He added that the town has "really pushed" the regional managers to improve the efficiency of the dispatch line which local residents call.

"Nobody wants this," Ellis told the Reporter. "It obviously does not work for Montague, but it doesn't work for Republic either. It costs them more money."

Bridge Money

Ellis gave the board an update on the Fifth Street pedestrian bridge, which is to be built over the power canal to the southwest of the automobile bridge owned by the state. The bridge has been in the planning stage for nearly a year and is about to go out to bid for construction, but recent cost estimates have cast doubt on whether the project as designed can be funded under the state MassWorks grant of \$2.16 million.

Ellis said that the likely increased cost was due to a variety of factors, including relocation costs, state and federal requirements, and new footings needed to stabilize the structure. He proposed that several elements of the project – sidewalk and enhanced lighting – be taken from the "base bid" and bid as alternates.

He also proposed that an additional appropriation for the project be placed on the upcoming fall town meeting agenda. The issue was discussed at Wednesday night's joint meeting of the selectboard and finance committee, and the finance committee voted to recommend the appropriation.

Further Development

The board issued a "certificate of substantial completion" for the Spinner Park renovation project on Avenue A, and approved a payment of \$36,185.50 to the Sciaba Construction Corporation for work on the project. A celebration of the small park's completion is scheduled for Saturday, October 2 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The board also informally approved installing a plaque dedicated to former town administrator Frank Abbondanzio on the Powertown Apartments building beside the park. "It's very fitting," said Kuklewicz.

Town planner Walter Ramsey made a number of requests, including a notice to proceed on an "enhancement project" at the south end of Second Street as it approaches Unity Park. The street would narrow to slow traffic, and a plaza with benches would be constructed. He also requested approval for three projects funded by a state Green Communities grant. The board approved all the requests.

Ellis reviewed a number of grant submissions to various state agencies he is working on with town hall staff, including grants to improve assessing software, to implement a new wage and classification study, and to install automatic door openers on a limited number of town buildings. The board encouraged him to move forward on these applications.

Other Business

Library trustee Margot Malachowski announced that the trustees had appointed a new library director, Caitlin Kelley, to replace Linda Hickman, who will be retiring in mid-October. Kelley, who currently serves as assistant director of the Rockville Library in Vernon, Connecticut, was one of two finalists for the Montague position. (See article, Page A1.)

Kelley attended Monday's meeting remotely and said she was "really excited about this opportunity."

The selectboard approved a café license for Between the Uprights to use its sidewalk on Avenue A on Saturday, October 23, the date of Great Falls Festival, and then approved a one-day license for the bar to serve food and alcohol in that space.

Kuklewicz reviewed the preliminary warrant for the October

14 special town meeting, with 16 articles including appropriations of \$235,000 for a flood relief project on Montague City Road, up to \$200,000 for the Fifth Street pedestrian bridge, \$114,382 for a "robotic sewer camera," and \$50,000 for an "evidence-based" program to address substance abuse, funded by the town's cannabis stabilization fund.

By the end of Wednesday's joint meeting with the finance committee, which lasted over three hours, three of the articles had been withdrawn. The finance committee voted to recommend the remaining 13 articles unanimously, with the exception of the sewer camera; two members abstained on that vote.

The selectboard will vote on the warrant articles at its next meeting, which will be held Monday, September 27.



**LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK**

Here's the way it was on September 29, 2011: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Lake Pleasant Rallies To Save Its Post Office

Residents of Lake Pleasant were recently informed that its century-old post office is on the government hit list, part of a planned contraction by the US Postal Service that involves shuttering over 3,000 facilities nationwide.

Ironically, news of the "discontinuation feasibility study" was delivered by mail to the same post office the government is eyeing for closure.

In a letter dated September 12 and addressed to Lake Pleasant postal customers, US Post Office operations manager Carla Surprise detailed the reasons for the proposed closure. The missive is a classic example of bureaucratise: twelve paragraphs of words in 8-point type that offer little consolation other than to offer alternatives: "Retail services would continue to be available through a variety of channels beyond traditional brick-and-mortar facilities.... The Montague [Center] Post Office has retail hours from 800 to 1300 – 1400 to 1630 Monday through Friday."

For those willing to read the fine print, the gist of the surprise letter was summed up by a dozen words in the third paragraph: "This office has experienced a steady decline in revenue and/or volume."

In other words, "United States post offices are open to make money, and Lake Pleasant's ain't making any."

Numbers-crunchers aren't known for their empathy, so retired architect John Anderson will hit them with a cost analysis claiming it would be more cost-effective to keep the post office open and reduce window hours than it would be to convert to rural route delivery, or install cluster boxes.

Anderson also argued it would cost village residents almost \$600 a year in gas and maintenance to drive to the next nearest post office

in Montague Center.

"Clearly we know if we don't put up a fight we won't win," said Anderson.

Northfield Mountain Prepares for Pump-Turbine Repair

FirstLight Power, owned by GDF Suez, in which the government of France owns a controlling interest, proposes to take generating Unit 2 out of service at the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage facility on November 28 this year for major repairs and efficiency improvements. The estimated completion date for the repairs is mid-May 2012.

In a letter to Gerald Cross of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, station manager John Howard listed three things the Northfield Mountain project plans to accomplish during the outage.

The project will involve replacing the original Unit 2 pump-turbine, which is at the end of its useful life due to metal erosion and cavitation, with a design identical to the Unit 1 pump-turbine. The Unit 1 turbine was replaced in 2004 with a more efficient turbine runner and no change in hydraulic capacity. The original Unit 2 motor-generator stator bars will be rewound, as they are at the end of their useful life. This will extend Unit 2's useful life and achieve an additional 22 megawatts of output when combined with the more efficient turbine runner. The original stator of the Unit 2 starting motor will also be rewound to extend its life.

The pump-turbine and motor-generators serve dual functions. When filling the upper reservoir on top of Northfield Mountain during periods of low power usage, the motor-generator functions as a motor to turn the turbine as a pump. During daylight hours of peak power demand, water is released and surges down from the upper lake to spin the runners, now acting as turbines, to turn the motor-generators in the opposite direction as they function as generators.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Call for Mural Art at the Montague WPCF!

MONTAGUE CITY – The Montague Water Pollution Control Facility (MWPCF) is seeking an artist, or a group of artists, to design and paint a 10-foot circular mural for installation on their building, located at 34 Greenfield

Road, Montague.

The intent of the mural is to highlight water ecology, our interdependence with the aquatic ecosystem and the environment more generally, and the local wildlife of the Connecticut River Watershed including

plants, birds, fish, and other animals.

Compensation for the mural is \$2,500 which includes all design and labor. The MWPCF will also reimburse the artist for the reasonable cost of materials, including exterior paint and top coat materials. The primed aluminum substrate will be provided to the winning artist as two semi-circles, which may be painted on or off site. The MWPCF will be responsible for installation.

The deadline for submissions is 3 p.m. on Monday, October 25, 2021. Documents must include an artist statement, sketch(es) of the proposed design, images of completed past work, and references. Full details are available on the RiverCulture website: www.riverculture.org.



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WENDELL from page A1

the request for proposals (RFP) for the town-owned house and property at 97 Wendell Depot Road, and read the cover letters. All three proposed restoring the house, but with differing emphasis and inclusion of detail.

The response with the most detailed timeline and expense estimate did not include the necessary \$500 security check, and board chair Dan Keller said he would check with a lawyer to see if it is legal to contact the applicant and ask about that omission after the published deadline. The three bids came in at \$10,000, \$15,000, and \$20,000.

Selectboard members will study the RFP packages over the next two weeks, and after a proposal is accepted, 30 days are allowed to sign a purchase and sale agreement, plus 60 days between then and closing, for a total of 90 days during which time all the proposals are active.

Brian McHugh, director of community development at the Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, saved his drive to Wendell, Zooming in instead to ask for a three-month extension to the September 30 deadline of the 2019 loan program to bring houses up to, or closer to, code.

Between Wendell and Shutesbury the original proposal was for 18 houses, but because some projects cost less than was allotted, and \$92,000 in prior loans were repaid into the revolving loan fund, 20 projects have been completed so far, six are under construction now, and one more is in the bid process.

The selectboard's unanimous vote allowed the extension.

Consultant Mike Edwards told board members that the state is looking to spend \$2 million in state Community Compact grants. Those grants are aimed towards "best practices" in several disciplines including education, reducing energy consumption, mitigating climate change impact, and public health, including a potential regional response to COVID infections.

Edwards answered a question from Budine about IT, saying grants are not likely to include hardware but may be available to assess the town's needs. CARES Act or ARPA money might be applied to hardware and security upgrades.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato asked about mitigating PFAS in the Swift

River school's water supply.

Edwards said he doubted that a Community Compact grant would pay for filtration or a new well, but said it might be used to hire a consultant to find a contractor to evaluate the water and deal with PFAS. A grant may also be used to hire a consultant who would help find a contractor to do the necessary work of capping, evaluating, and monitoring the town's old landfill.

Edwards told the board the grant application is simple, and the state will award money to towns until the fund is used up.

Town coordinator Alisha Brouillet reported a new bid for insulating the town hall floor with green materials, at \$17,550. She said the bidder seemed really eager to do the work. Any work done will have to be coordinated with use of ozone generators to kill the mold first, and with Good Neighbors, who use the town hall. The work needs warm weather, and therefore must be done soon or wait until spring, but by then the current bids will have expired.

As the meeting closed, board members scheduled the times on Thursday that each of them would come to the office to sign necessary documents, and look over the bid documents.

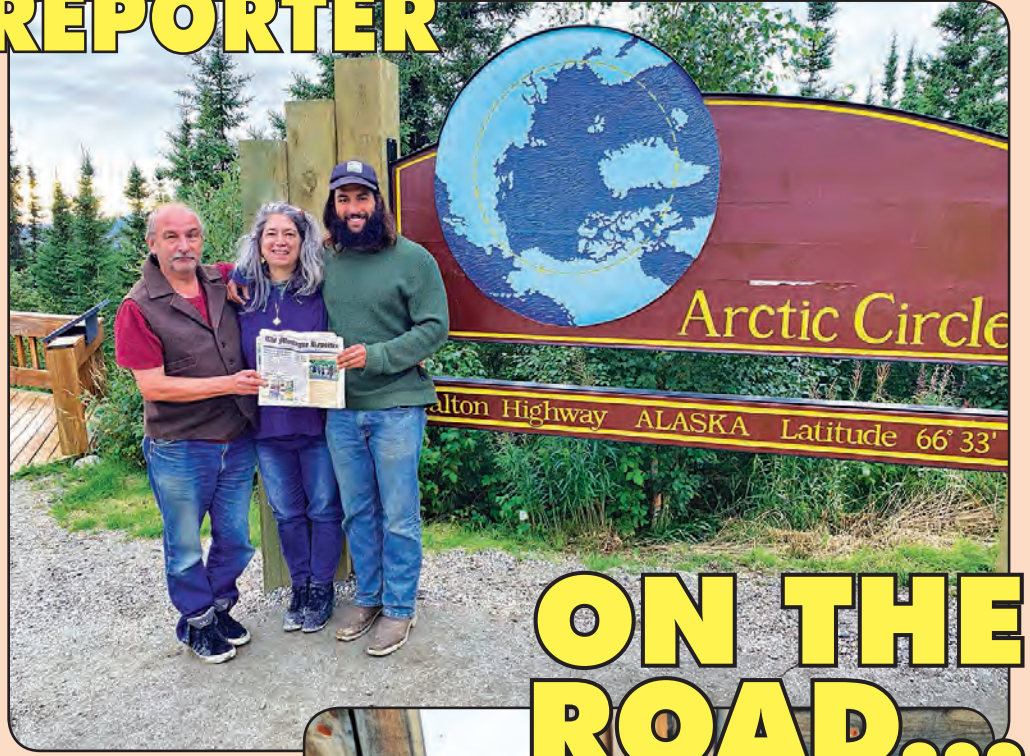
Town clerk Anna Wetherby recommended that Wendell continue as a single-precinct town and save the trouble of two polling places, two vote counts, and double the number of election workers. Board members agreed. Wendell's population counted in the 2020 US Census was 924 people.

Auction of town surplus items including what was taken out of the police station will be at the highway garage at 10 a.m. this Saturday, September 25. Keller will be the auctioneer, and treasurer Carolyn Manley will be in charge of the money.

Budine said that town custodian Eric Shufelt repainted the office building wall by the entrance where splashing damaged the original paint. He did not paint the building skylights, and the board will create an RFP for that work.

The town's three-year contract with CodeRED for a reverse-911 emergency service is still waiting for board members to sign. The cost is \$1,250.87 per year for the duration of the contract, to be paid from the selectboard expense account if ARPA or CARES Act money may not be used.

THE MONTAGUE REPORTER



ON THE ROAD...

Above: Jim and Terri Skarzynski of Montague Center visited their son Daniel where he works in Coldfoot, Alaska, 60 miles above the Arctic Circle.

At right: Cooling in the shade of the Wendell Community Garden toolshed, Montague Reporter reporter Josh Heinemann and his granddaughter Elizabeth Walsh enjoyed the August 19 issue of the MR.

Josh was explaining that the platform on the Montague Fire ladder truck, pictured on Page A1 of that issue, was just like the one on her toy ladder truck.



... AND AT HOME

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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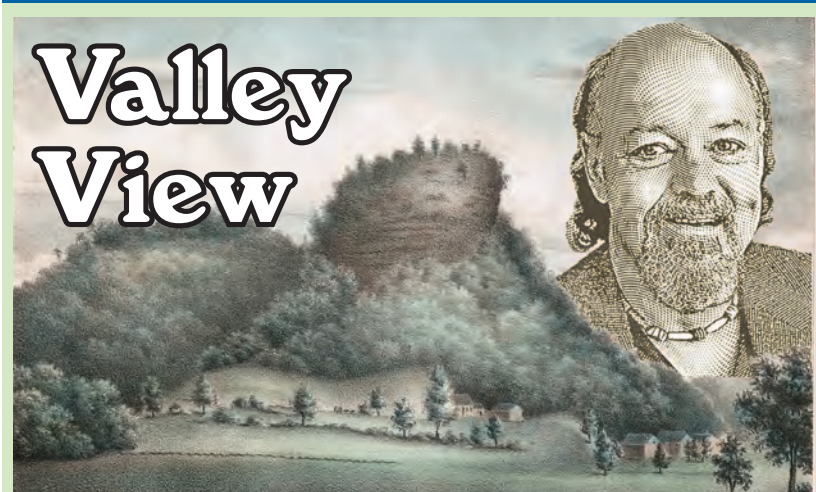
SARAH ROBERTSON PHOTO

Above: Dr. Alex Haro and Steve Walk electro-fish in the Turners Falls power canal, taking advantage of the canal's annual maintenance drawdown to collect juvenile sea lamprey for behavioral experiments at the Conte lab. "In a month they'll be back in the river and on their way," Haro said.

FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORER.ORG

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021



Valley View

ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – I crack open my left eye to the twinkle of dawn penetrating the east window behind my upstairs bed. Silence. Not so much as a bird-chirp.

I don't linger in bed. An interesting book awaits me downstairs on the table next to my recliner. Mind fresh, day young, light low, quiet, there is no better time to read or write than early morning. At least, not in my world.

In semi-darkness, I lift my blue bathrobe from its overnight resting place on an old, wooden quilt rack near the door. I slip it over my shoulders, tie it around my waist, make the bed and step into the dark, narrow hallway – one door to the left, three to the right – pointing west toward the steep back stairs, where the wing joins the house's main block.

On the other side of the closed staircase, a heavy iron squirrel doorstop holds the ballroom door open, gray light filtering through seven double-hung, 12-light windows, extending my view all the way to the wide back door leading into the carriage-shed attic. It's about a 75-foot run down the hallway and through wing to the back ballroom door, where many years ago the angled back wall of a small, enclosed fiddler's box drove sound over the heads of revelers in the vaulted-ceiling, spring-floor dancehall.

The long interior perspective is a beautiful way to start the day during the warm months, when air-conditioning is not needed and windows and doors can be left open to promote air flow. It speaks to the building's spiritual antiquity.

At the base of the stairs – dining room left, taproom right – I turn left. My clothes are hanging on a birdcage Windsor chair at the tail of an old mahoganzed-cherry harvest table, its drop leaves down. It's always darker and cooler downstairs in the summer, and darker inside than out.

I take off my bathrobe, temporarily lay it across a burgundy leather wing chair, and dress before going into the kitchen to push on the coffee-maker. Then I backtrack through the dining room and narrow staircase base to the taproom and bathroom, where I hang my robe on the back of the door and

tidy up at the sink for the new day.

In the west parlor, I flick on the TV to catch up on overnight scores and the latest Donald Trump outrage, and rise to pour a cup of coffee after hearing the machine gurgle its last breath. I don't know what's worse, that coffee-maker's last gasp or the screeching rooster across the street.

Coffee in hand, I head for the study, walking through the dining room, the parlor, and a small enclosed hallway behind the Federal fanlight front door. I want to quickly go through my email, and maybe glance at a few local and historical/genealogical Facebook sites I often peruse before opening that book awaiting me near the TV, which I'll turn off.

In the study I notice two printed sheets of paper on the Oriental carpet, and another folded piece of white scribbled-upon notepad paper resting on the corner of a large gold couch to the left of my desk. Hmmmm? Overnight winds must have stirred things up through the open window behind my desk.

I pick up the two printout sheets on the floor and place them back on the pile they came from on my desk, then retrieve the folded notepad page that must have been buried underneath. It had been torn from one of those narrow reporter's notebooks that fit in your pocket. Being a lefty, and thus needing to awkwardly curl my wrist to write on such pads, I never had much use for them, preferring something wider pinned to a clipboard. But that's just me. Right-handers seem to prefer the pocket-sized variety.

I open the wrinkled scrap paper to inspect the scribbles and discover a note written in ink, and pencil jottings of web addresses, telephone numbers, and little reminders about this and that. I must have first used it as a bookmark to keep it handy, then removed it from the book and dropped it on my desk, soon to be forgotten.

The initial note probably dated back to 2018, my last year at the *Greenfield Recorder*. It was a news tip about winter moose mortality from a former newsroom colleague who'd retired from the *Springfield Union News* and picked up a part-time job at the *Recorder*. News-gathering was in the man's blood. He just couldn't stay away.

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3

Off To The Races!

Sunday saw the return, after an eight-year hiatus, of the Montague Soap Box Races at Unity Park. Crowds of spectators lined First Street to watch daredevil engineers compete in timed heats for speed and style prizes.

Right: Myra Glabach of Gill raced in the Kids' division in a cart painted to raise awareness of chronic recurrent multifocal osteomyelitis, or CRMO. Myra wrote about her experiences with the rare bone condition in an April 2020 edition of the Montague Reporter.



RYNE HAGER PHOTO

Below: Elizabeth Terrilliger (center) holds aloft her first-place trophy in the Kids' division, flanked by third- and second-place finishers Quill Bullock and Cooper Hobbs.



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

Right: Hobbs and Bullock compete in a heat.



ED GREGORY PHOTO

See page B2 for more photos from Sunday's event!

THE AUTHORS' CORNER: FARIDAH ÀBÍKÉ-ÍYÍMÍDÉ

By IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS

TURNERS FALLS – Happy September! A couple days ago, I finished the most amazing book. *Ace of Spades* by Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé is so suspenseful, dramatic, and fabulous! In today's article, I am going to be reviewing *Ace of Spades*, and interviewing Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé. I hope you enjoy!

Ace of Spades is about a girl named Chiamaka, who is seemingly perfect. She has the perfect grades, the perfect popularity status, the perfect style, etc. *Ace of Spades* is also told from the perspective of Devon, a music student at Niveus High School, who is hoping to be admitted to Juilliard.

Chiamaka and Devon could not be more different – that is, until the whole school starts receiving text messages from someone called Aces revealing scandalous secrets about Chiamaka and Devon. The Aces situation quickly spins out of control, leaving it up to Chiamaka



IMAGE COURTESY IZZY V.C.

Back in the swing of things: Our correspondent absolutely loved this book, and spoke with the author!

and Devon to solve the mystery of who is behind the texts!

Ace of Spades is so amazing. In the little author's note at the end of the story and in my interview, Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé wrote about how much of her inspiration for writing this story came from the television series *Gossip Girl*. I inquired if there was a specific episode or season of *Gossip Girl* that inspired her

especially.

"This is such a good question! I also love *Gossip Girl* but I don't think any particular scene or episode inspired *Ace of Spades*," she told me. "It was more so the characters and the world. Blair was a big inspiration for me when writing *Ace of Spades*, particularly Chiamaka's character. Dan in some ways

see **AUTHORS** page B6

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

“ORCHID”

Hi, I'm Orchid! Are you looking for a beautiful, sweet, new friend? Do you like your pets to be musical-inclined? Well then a parakeet like me may be just the critter for you!

I should get out-of-cage time every day to stretch my wings and relieve boredom. Provide me plenty of toys, swings, and perches, then sit back and watch for hours of entertainment! I like to eat a variety

of pellets, seeds, fresh veggies, and fruits.

Interested in adopting me? 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.

more derby pics

Right: Cameron Freeland of Gill wipes out on the course, one of several spills of the day. Racers were afforded multiple attempts, and their fastest two runs determined the award winners. James Roberge and Ben Terwilliger, the fastest racers, bombed down the hill in under 23 seconds repeatedly.



RYNE HAGER PHOTO



MELANIE GAIER PHOTO

Left: Thomas Tortoriello raced in the red “Octo Box,” stylized as a submersible with an octopus crawling on its topside. The Octo Box crossed the finish line once, in under 74 seconds.



SARAH ROBERTSON PHOTO

Right: Turners Falls sculptor Jon Bander's racer incorporated a repurposed shopping cart.



ED GREGORY PHOTO

Left: Eric Matt of Newfane, Vermont raced in a metal structure with a triangular rear wheel. Mr. Matt crossed the finish line once in just under 143 seconds, earning the “Peter Dudley Memorial Simian Overreach Award” from the style judges and Flintstones comparisons from several onlookers.

Senior Center Activities

SEPTEMBER 27 to OCTOBER 1

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. Senior Health Rides are now available. Contact Susan von Ranson at (978) 544-3758 to set up a ride.

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For more information call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

Monday 9/27

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Knitting & Crafts Circle

Tuesday 9/28

3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 9/29

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 9/30

10 a.m. Chair Yoga at GFDC
1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 10/1

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and billiards. Fitness room also open. Exercise classes will be limited to 15 people per class.

No lunch will be served. We will continue with Brown Bag the first Thursday of each month. For any questions or concerns, please call Paula at (413) 423-3649. Masks are optional. Proper handwashing and social distancing are still required.

Mondays

9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
10:30 a.m. Zumba Gold Floor

Tuesdays

9 a.m. Stretch & Sculpt
10:30 a.m. Line Dancing

Wednesdays

9 a.m. Chair Class
10:30 a.m. Zumba Gold Chair
11:30 a.m. Bingo

Thursdays

9 a.m. Restore & Re-Emerge
10:30 a.m. GOOD for You

Fridays

9 a.m. Quilting Workshop

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Zoom on Wednesdays. For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

Senior Grocery Hours

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. Curbside pickup & delivery is available on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. (413) 773-9567

McCusker's Market: Curbside pickup available from 10 to 11 a.m. Order by 1 p.m. for pickup the following day. Delivery available Monday to Friday. Email pickup@franklincommunity.coop (413) 625-2548

Stop and Shop: Senior hours from 6 to 7:30 a.m. (413) 774-6096

BOOK REVIEW

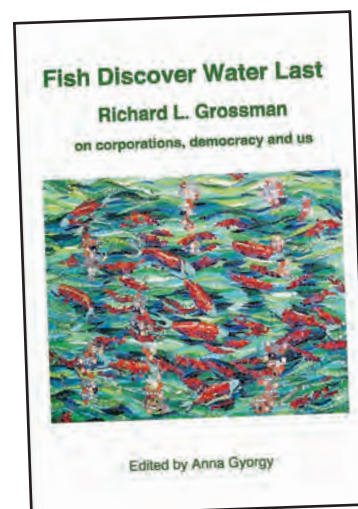
Recognizing the “Water” We Swim In

By JONATHAN VON RANSON

WENDELL – A local lawyer was addressing folks who wanted to reclaim abandoned industrial buildings as housing for some of their more disempowered, dispossessed community members. “Don’t come across as opinionated or righteous” in dealing with the municipal boards that make regulations and issue permits, he said. “Be humble, almost obsequious. You’ll do a lot better.”

The late Richard Grossman, whose talks and writings Anna Gyorgy has assembled into this 80-page book, would have noted the irony. Citizens, pressing for what’s logical, let alone just, advised to suck up to their town’s public servants...? He’d have noticed the “tail” of authority, conferred under a sneaky impostor – the property-law system – wagging the dog of America’s founding ideals.

Fish Discover Water Last: Richard D. Grossman on Corporations, Democracy and Us is edited by Gyorgy, and published by her fellow Wendellite Paul Richmond’s Human Error Publishing. Gyorgy herself is the author of *No Nukes*,



the bible of the 1970s anti-nuclear power movement.

A tireless social and environmental speaker, writer, and activist, Grossman was afire with the conviction that, unrecognized by most Americans, We-the-People governance had been created hollow and only gotten worse from there. The Constitution, he said, favors property rights (think slavery) – thus the inevitable 1%.

Grossman deplored corporations influencing the operation of government, local, state and federal, but struggled still more with the structure that’s been imposed by compul-

sive profiteers to place property itself above morality and good spirit. He urged an approach to citizenship that refuses the few crumbs of power the founding fathers effectively left most of us, and works to see that the sales pitch of America is implemented.

It’s easy to ridicule corporate leaders who, as Grossman once said, want to put pig genes in fish more than to create a fair and functional society, but Grossman’s message is more challenging and unsettling for the reader than that:

It’s not about the corporate leaders. It’s not about the corporations. It’s about us and what kind of government we impose, because we organize enough, and are smart, persistent and stubborn enough, and intelligent enough, to actually demand and then get what we want.

Grossman’s blunt words burn, egging a reader forward in the work of replacing one’s easy beliefs with this tougher, truer perspective.

Fish Discover Water Last (Human Error Publishing, 2021) is available for \$15 and can be ordered through local bookstores. See fishdiscoverwaterlast.net for more information.

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Montague Community Television News

Opera Stars & Soapbox Cars

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – This week our footage from the Tundi Opera, which performed at Peskeomskut Park on August 20, is up for viewing on the MCTV Vimeo page, as are recent meetings of the Montague selectboard, the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee, and the Montague finance committee. The election for Montague selectboard was on Tuesday, but you can learn about the candidates in the forum with Mike Jackson.

And finally, if you missed the Soapbox Derby on Sunday, or the MCTV live coverage of the event, you can catch our recording of the race on the MCTV Vimeo or on air on Channel 17.

All MCTV videos are available on our Vimeo page, which can be

found linked to montaguetelevision.org under the tab “Videos.” Community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 17 and featured on the Vimeo page.

MCTV is always available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for check-out, and filming and editing assistance can be provided.

MCTV is 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.



VALLEY VIEW from page B1

I must have originally saved the note as a reminder to further explore the topic, then added my own random jottings. But why, after recently retrieving the useless notes from the sofa, I didn't drop them in the wastebasket, well, you tell me. Still to this day, it sits on my desk.

Now, fast-forward a few days, and the story gets intense. A few days later, about 7 p.m., the TV's on and my wife and I are sitting in the parlor after supper. I'm looking through papers I've printed about Quantrill's infamous Civil War attack on Lawrence, Kansas as she fiddles around with her smart phone, making the rounds through texts and email and Facebook and obits and whatever else tickles her fancy.

On a whim, I rise from my seat and move to the charging laptop on my desk. Sitting there checking email, Googling additional information to augment what I've just read or whatever, my wife calls out to me from her parlor chair.

“Hey, Honey, did you know Ralph Gordon died?”

Honestly, I didn't even know she knew I knew the man.

“Nope,” I answer, “can't say I did. When?”

“Oh, I don't know. Recently.”

“Well, wait till you hear what I'm about to tell you,” I respond as I rise from my chair. “It borders on bizarre.”

Before I go any further, let me say that I didn't really know Gordon all that well. I had met him in passing over the years on the street or at Greenfield High School football games I was covering when he was still working for Springfield Newspapers. By the time he came to the Recorder, circulation and revenues were in freefall, the hair-triggered circular firing squad had formed, insecure blame was being directed every which way, and, well, let's just say the newsroom was toxic. No, definitely not the friendly, light-hearted place I had known for most of my tenure. Even folks coming in off the street with news tips were made to feel uncomfortable, like unwanted trespassers. No way to run a news-gathering operation.

Anyway – not to digress any further – that narrow, folded sheet of scribbled-upon notepad paper de-

posited by a rogue overnight wind on the corner of my gold sofa had been penned by none other than the Ralph Gordon who had died. He wanted to share the alarming news report he had read about New England moose mortality caused by tick infestation and hair loss.

By now, most people have seen a story or two about this tick-borne moose plague causing much winter suffering and death. But back then it was fresh and Ralph, an old news hound, deemed it worth sharing with an outdoor columnist. Written in cursive, his tip was short and sweet, reading verbatim:

Gary
I thought you might be interested in some moose problems in Me., Vt., & N.H. & maybe Mass. – & other items I have earmarked.

Ralph
He must have attached an Associated Press clipping. I can't recall. I will, however, never forget the message delivered by that rogue wind or some other spiritual power riding the dark night air to a resting place in plain sight. It was at least a 100-to-1 shot that any wind-blown piece of paper would land where Ralph's note did. Not only that, but why did that devilish wind decide to disturb only three of many stacked sheets, the third of which was his note in bold, blue ink?

Surreal? Yes. Simple coincidence? No. I don't buy it. I think it was meant to be – a sign that Ralph's smirking, wind-blown spirit had passed through. He had left me another tip, his last, one announcing his passing.

Why do such things occur if not to remind us there's a power out there that's beyond our comprehension? It arrives in many ways from sundry sources, including dark night winds, rattling rivers, trickling springs, and somber morning mists wafting through the wetland tangles.

Some of us try to remain alert and receptive, inviting these mysterious messages – always looking and listening, seeking clues and hidden signs. Others flock to the chapel to drop their weekly contribution into long-handled baskets in the name of their God, and only theirs.

Count me among the lookers and listeners, humble interceptors of spiritual unknowns.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Catalytic Theft; Sophisticated Scam; Done With Female; Many Problems Disappear Before Officers Arrive

Sunday, 9/12

11:34 a.m. 911 misdial from Twelfth Street.

12:12 p.m. Caller reported party drinking at Peskeomskut Park. Not found by officer.

1:03 p.m. Park Villa Drive caller reported neighbors had observed another resident hit her car yesterday. Per investigating officer, the two vehicle owners will work this out between themselves.

1:31 p.m. Report of a woman walking down River Road carrying a gun and talking to herself. Referred to Deerfield Police.

1:39 p.m. Fire reported inside air cleaner at Mayhew Steel on Industrial Boulevard.

6:17 p.m. Report of man in black tank top urinating on the garbage on Fourth Street. Not found when officer arrived.

Monday, 9/13

1:41 a.m. Patrol officer spoke to two individuals under the Family Dollar overhang and advised them to move along when the rain lets up.

3:05 a.m. Report of three young men in the back alley of I Street. They left earlier when the caller turned on her lights, but now they are back and making a lot of noise.

5:13 p.m. Alarm company reporting alarm at Basically Bicycles on Third Street. No obvious issues found by officer. Owner arrived and no problems found inside the building.

5:15 p.m. Caller from Hillside Plastics reported her vehicle was struck in the parking lot.

8:54 p.m. Avenue A resident reported that her upstairs neighbor slapped her in the face around 4 p.m. today, and she wants to know what her options are. Officer called her back, but there was no answer and the voice mailbox was full. She called back the next day and was advised of options. After a third call, she was advised to go to court and file charges, and/or try to obtain a harassment prevention order.

Tuesday, 9/14

4:15 a.m. Park Street 911 misdial was confirmed by officer on duty.

6:22 a.m. Report of a loud crash at Old Greenfield and South Ferry roads. Caller saw a 4-door vehicle driving off after hitting the road sign. Recorded on video. Caller will send the video to the police department. A second caller came into the station and said the vehicle was a dark-colored older Honda.

6:34 a.m. Two different reports of a burglar alarm going off at the Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Lab. Both canceled by alarm company because they received a

call from someone with the correct passcode.

7:04 a.m. Report of erratic speeding, tailgating black Dodge Ram on Millers Falls Road near airport. Caller stated the same vehicle had done this before.

9:25 a.m. Horse on the loose on Turners Falls Road. A second caller reported chasing the horse into a yard with a barn, but not sure if the horse lives there. No answer when caller knocked on the door. Officer recognized the horse and called the owner, who was on the road. Owner said his sister should be in the trailer next to the barn and will secure the horses.

9:35 a.m. Walk-in caller reported theft of a catalytic converter on High Street. Not sure when it was taken, as he was away for a couple weeks. Vehicle is currently at Rau's.

9:47 a.m. Report of minor motor vehicle accident at Franklin County Technical School.

4:27 p.m. Several 911 calls received from a cell phone travelling north on the bike trail. Area checked – nothing found, so assumed to be pocket dials.

6:16 p.m. Cosmetic bag containing drug paraphernalia retrieved by police at the Fourth Street parking lot.

11:19 p.m. Caller reporting a fight on Turners Falls Road over custody of a child.

11:36 p.m. Report of a bald male wearing a hat creeping around a home on Randall Road. When caller's company left, he was outside the apartment and took off when greeted. Not found when officer arrived.

Wednesday, 9/15

7:52 a.m. Wendell Road caller reported a gray car pulled in front of his house and took his black dog “Stella.” Officer was later flagged down by the caller, who said he had received a text that his dog was running loose near Bridge Street in Millers. Caller now suspects the dog was running loose in the state forest and not stolen after all.

8:32 a.m. Third Street resident was arrested at Peskeomskut Park on an active warrant and transported to the courthouse.

9:25 a.m. DPW notified of complaint of a dead skunk near the Book Mill.

11:07 a.m. Person walked into the station to report a very sophisticated scam.

11:39 a.m. Report of two-car accident at Gunn and Federal streets with no injuries. Both cars were towed to Rau's.

3:32 p.m. Multiple calls regarding an accident at the corner of Seventh and Avenue A involving

a school bus. Gill PD assisted with traffic control. Rose Ledge contacted to tow the bus, and Rau's to remove the other vehicle. Father of juvenile driver was transported to the scene with insurance information. Father and juvenile were given a courtesy ride back home.

4:36 p.m. Turners Falls Road caller was advised of options regarding an ongoing issue with packages being stolen, possibly by neighbors.

4:56 p.m. Report of suspicious, possibly drug-related activity on Fourth Street near a fancy white car parked on the street.

8:53 p.m. Officer advised walk-in from Third Street who reported receiving harassing text messages.

9:17 p.m. Caller reported a suspicious person in a blue car parked at Franklin County Technical School. She had driven by the school several times and the car hasn't moved. Car was not there when the police arrived.

11:31 p.m. Call received from Fifth Street requesting officer to mediate a fight between caller and his dad – mostly verbal with some light chest bumping. Peace restored.

Thursday, 9/16

10:32 a.m. Complaint received about two people with laden shopping carts blocking the bike path behind the Town Hall. Gone before the officer arrived.

1:44 p.m. Report of child riding around on a motorcycle up and down both ends of the Fourth Street alley and riding across Avenue A. Child was gone upon officer arrival.

2:49 p.m. Caller on Randall Road reported someone trying to get into her apartment through an upstairs door or window. Caller asked the officers to leave after they arrived.

4:17 p.m. Montague Street caller requested to speak to an officer regarding paperwork. Caller said his mother is terrified of police, and there is no need to check on him. He was slandered and that is why we check on him. No reason to visit his house. Don't come without a warrant.

4:30 p.m. Two different complaints of loud motorcycle engine noises and racing around G and M streets. Officer located driver and advised of the complaints.

7:55 p.m. Caller reported assault & battery at Peskeomskut Park: a verbal altercation turned physical, and he was stabbed by a man in his 50s. He fought back with hands and feet. One person was arrested and read his Miranda rights, and both parties were taken to the station to be interviewed and then

returned to the park. 9:02 p.m. Greenfield Road caller reported a minor scooter accident involving youth. No police or ambulance necessary.

Friday, 9/17

1:31 a.m. Officer moved along a person sleeping at the bandstand.

3:31 a.m. Turners Falls Fire notified of smoke detectors going off on Maple Street. No smoke or fire was seen by the caller.

5:18 a.m. Caller reported a man and woman have been in her house again tonight. She claimed to have a restraining order against the female. Caller then started making threats against the intruders. Officer did not locate any intruders, and caller could not locate the restraining order.

8:05 a.m. Officer arrested a male party for public urination at Peskeomskut Park.

10:42 a.m. Report of a smoke detector sounding on Fourth Street.

10:45 a.m. Report of a smoke detector sounding on Park Street.

11:39 a.m. Officers investigating a 911 call from Moltenbrey Apartments on Avenue A spoke with male party entering the elevator. He stated he was not in the elevator when the call was made.

6:01 p.m. Officer reported an unchaperoned juvenile driving with a learner's permit at Fourth Street alley. Juvenile transported to station; mother notified and took control of the vehicle.

11:03 p.m. Report of a loud crowd outside the Millers Pub. All quiet on officer arrival.

12:03 p.m. Walk-in caller reported probable Facebook scam: he was chatting with a woman via Facebook, and she suddenly asked for a credit card number because she was in the military and stuck overseas. He did not give her any information.

12:03 p.m. Walk-in caller reported two malnourished-looking dogs running loose in the Dry Hill Road area. The dogs broke into their rabbit cage and killed one of the rabbits. Shortly after, a woman driving an older model blue Honda drove by looking for them. She claimed the dogs belong to her son who is in the process of moving, but the caller suspected they might actually belong to the woman in the Honda.

12:17 p.m. Millers Falls Road caller wants assistance to remove a female who lives with him as he is done with her. Caller was advised of his options.

12:55 p.m. Millers Falls Laundry called to request

see MPD page B4

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MPD from page B3

assistance with a broken water pipe from the fire department. 1:26 p.m. Complaint about a dog locked inside gray Honda Element with the windows rolled up. Owner located and advised of the complaint. 4:02 p.m. Walk-in to station asked to be fingerprinted for insurance purposes. 4:55 p.m. Crescent Street caller reported

a raccoon stuck in a water drain hole. ACO advised. A short time later, caller advised the raccoon was no longer around. 5:14 p.m. Complaint of a driver blowing through the stop sign on First Street near Unity Park. Caller thinks the sign may have been moved. Officer advised the sign is intact. 6:30 p.m. Officer investigating smoke

on Green Pond Road found residents enjoying a bonfire in a firepit. 6:34 p.m. Officer assisted a driver of a Ford Focus who locked keys in the car. 9:30 p.m. Complaint from G Street caller about loud music coming from across the street. Officer found neighbors having a cookout, and advised them of the noise complaint.



EVENT PROMOTION

Red Fire North Features Local Artist-Designer

By **MARY ELIZABETH STRUNK**

MONTAGUE CENTER – For artist-designer Ms.GreenJeanne, inspiration is everywhere. Her original fabric designs are drawn from nature and reflect her concern for the planet.

This month, Red Fire North is celebrating Jeanne Mason as its artist of the month. All of Mason's original fabric patterns are inspired by nature and reflect her concern for the planet. Her colorful TerraTotes celebrate sustainable technologies, from wind power to electric cars. Each of the whimsical designs features a touch of humor, often shown by the animal beneficiaries of green technologies.

On the side of one of her most popular totes, chubby pink earthworms spiral gleefully through a pile of ripe compost. On another, a snowy owl gazes approvingly at the glowing windows of a home lit by solar power. Each bag comes with a clever poem by Mason herself.

By day, Mason is the science grants person at Amherst College, a job that she continued from home throughout the pandemic. Without her daily commute, she suddenly had more time to devote to making art, and it became a daily comfort to seek and represent stories about all that was still possible and beautiful in the world. The process starts with a camera and sketchbook and ultimately gets "painted" on Mason's iPad.

Mason's affinity for fabric design began almost two decades ago, with a necktie that she couldn't locate.

Her husband, Chris, is Northampton's energy and sustainability officer and Mason wanted to buy him a necktie printed with wind turbines to wear to an upcoming conference. When no such tie could be found, Mason taught herself Adobe Illustrator so she could design her own. Mason will retire from her Amherst grants job this December and will launch Ms. GreenJeanne Designs as her full-time enterprise.

Will there be new TerraTotes? "Yes," confirms Mason. "I'm planning one design on carbon sequestration, showing how trees bring in carbon and how they're part of the solution to climate change. Another design will show how trees talk to each other through their roots, in a network with fungi and bacteria. I'm excited about having time to work on those." She says her fabrics are a message of self-expression and hope, which also aim to make the science of sustainable living both memorable and fun.

"I'm all about sustainability and the natural world and relationships between plants and pollinators," says Mason. "Red Fire North is all about organic farming and healthy food and sustainable living, so it makes sense to support each other."

A "Meet the Artist" event will take place this weekend, September 25 and 26, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Red Fire North, featuring a "match the pollinator to the flower" game, raffle, and local cider and muffins.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

FILM REVIEW

The Suicide Squad, dir. James Gunn (2021)

By **SEAMUS TURNER-GLENNON**

CHARLEMONT – James Gunn's been in the superhero game for three films now. His first two efforts in the genre, *Guardians of the Galaxy* and its sequel, helped catapult the current almost-inescapable batch of Marvel Comics-based movies into their latest and most massive wave of popularity. The unfortunate thing about them, though, was that while they did break the MCU mold to a greater extent than, say, the contemporarily released *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* or *Thor: Ragnarok*, they were still just as formally uninteresting, and for the most part irritating and inauthentic.

Gunn has moved to DC Comics, though, for his third and latest offering in the genre, *The Suicide Squad*: a sort of sequel/remake/reboot (it's profoundly unclear) of the previous attempt to make a movie based on the antihero team, David Ayer's 2016 *Suicide Squad* (note the lack of an article).

Ayer's a pretty consistently fine filmmaker, with some pretty definite



high points throughout his career – most notably 2014's *Sabotage*, an ugly, grisly, vulgarian DTV action reworking of Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* – but his *Suicide Squad* was a pretty undeniable instance of a movie which truly fired all cylinders and missed with every single one of them. ("So that's it?" asks Will Smith's Deadshot in one particularly infamous scene. "What, we some kinda Suicide Squad?")

Thankfully, though, *The Suicide*

Squad is a definite improvement on both Gunn's previous superhero efforts and on Ayer's previous attempt at adaptation. In the true spirit of the comics it's based on, the movie's primary focus is on two things: some of the nastiest, grisliest superhero action this side of *Punisher: War Zone*, and authentically well-crafted humor, which diverges from the half-baked Whedonite banter we've come to expect in recent years from superhero cinema.

And when I call that superhero action "nasty," I'm not just saying that. People are bitten in half, ripped to shreds by gunfire; an eye is pierced by a javelin. It's probably the nastiest thing released in mainstream theaters this year save for *Don't Breathe 2*, a startlingly grindhouse-oriented subversion of the Blumhouse aesthetic that dominates modern mainstream horror.

It's actually funny. It's actually emotionally potent. The action is kinetic and clear, and doesn't just feel like thirty minutes of a computer fighting itself. It's a breath of fresh air in a frankly exhausting era of superhero movies, and it's the best one I've seen in a damn long time.



Surviving Breast Cancer

By **Julie Cunningham**

Part 9: "A Dream About Aladdin"

AMHERST – Today I had something called a Sentinel Node Biopsy. Sounds like a party. It isn't. Let's break this down.

From my perspective, this biopsy is really important. I am nowhere near a doctor and I do not consider Google a replacement for a medical degree. However, after the biopsy I feel pretty good, because if there's a lymph node getting fed by my cancer I don't want it hanging around inside of me. Period.

The purpose of a Sentinel Node Biopsy is to identify what nodes are being fed by your cancer, remove them, and biopsy them to see if there is cancer in those nodes.

What happens during this process, or what happened during my process, is a number of steps. First, I was taken down to nuclear medicine and injected with this purple dye. While the initial needle going into my skin didn't hurt, the dye going in hurt like something else. It wasn't a bee sting – it was like someone taking a hot iron and injecting it into my skin. It only lasted a minute, but good God.

I stayed as still as possible after this process, lying on my back while a very large camera took various photos of the dye in my system. I was told the dye basically searches for the nodes, and that it would take anywhere from half an hour to an hour to identify them. There's usually one or two. For me, they found one in about a half an hour.

I was then wheeled back up to the surgical day care and prepped for surgery. That process was fairly straightforward. I was given anesthesia, and they answered any questions I might have. I wasn't worried because I trust my surgeon and the team at Cooley. I'm getting my care at the Cancer Center at Cooley and the Kittredge Surgical Daycare Center. It's important to trust your team, and we've built a good level of trust

over these past four to five months, so I was at ease even though this was a scary day.

The actual surgery took about an hour. I was told they could take another smaller camera to look again during the surgery for any nodes that were fed by the cancer. After the smaller device was used, I still only had one node taken out. Again, I'm not a doctor, and I don't fully understand what took place, but I do feel like one small node is much better than two to four large, unhappy ones. Anything can happen, but right now I'm taking the win.

So I got through all of this and woke up telling the nurse I had a dream about Aladdin. I remember the nurse saying something like, "I've never heard that before!" It was a comical moment. Then a very, very nice nurse whose job it was specifically to discharge patients and help them get ready came over and helped me get organized, gave me some water, and walked me to my car where my mom was waiting. I was happy to be done, and I was starving and in need of coffee.

Wherever you go for your care for a life-threatening illness, you need to trust your team, and if this reads like a love letter to the team at Cooley, it is. From the oncology team at Cooley to the surgical team, thus far the doctors and the nurses have been a saving grace. I've been able to relax a bit more because I know I trust them, and we are all fighting for my life. I hope that when this is over I can pay it forward.

Cancer changes you, and I am finding that I have a drive to help people in a way that's similar to how I am being helped now. I don't know what that means yet, but I am so grateful to be in good hands. I am so grateful to be able to come home and kiss my son and my five-month-old kittens, and be happy and cozy, and know that I am taking steps to be around for a long time.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Shamarr Allen*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRI-SUN, SEPTEMBER 24-26
MASS MoCA, North Adams: FreshGrass Festival fest. *Dispatch, Sam Bush, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Bela Fleck, Sam Bush, Amy Helm*, many more.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24
1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Mad Agnes*, contemporary folksong. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Christoph Irrniger Trio*, jazz. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *The Mountain Goats*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Radio Reptar*. Cover band dance party. \$ 9 p.m.

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Master Blaster, I-SHEA*. "All-star dub voyage." \$ 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
Palladium, Worcester: *NOFX, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Pennywise*, more. \$ 12 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Shelley Roberts & Charlie Widmer*. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Big Al Anderson and the Floor Models*. The NRBQ guy. \$ 8 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Sea Level Inferno*: Short films with live soundtracks by legendary jazz drummer *William Hooker*, saxophonist *Stan Harrison*, Roger Clark Miller (Mission of Burma, etc.), and *Gerard Smith* (Phantom Tollbooth). \$ 8 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Soccer Mommy, Squirrel Flower*. \$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Swing Sunday* with dance lesson at 3 p.m., *Butterfly Swing* at 4 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Peter Blanchette*. \$ 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
Look Park, Northampton: *Big Thief, Alex G*. \$ 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The*

Gaslight Tinkers. Free. 5 p.m.
Mystery Train Records, Amherst: *Joseph Alred, Russ Waterhouse & Mary S., George Hakila*. Free outdoor show. 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Session Americana, Ali McGuirk*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, : *Stillwater Band*. \$ 7 p.m.

Iron Horse Music Hall, Northampton: *Riders on the Storm: The Resurrection of the Doors*. Doors tribute band, lol. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2
Belltower Records, North Adams: *Mountain Movers, MV+EE, Honey Radar*. \$ 5 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Greenfield Police Association Comedy Night*. \$ 7 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Art Blakey Centennial Celebration* feat. five former members of Blakey's Jazz Messengers. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Film screening, *Phantom of the Paradise* (1974 Brian DePalma cult classic). \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *A Night of Simon & Garfunkel with Jim Henry and Tracy Grammer*. \$ 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *King Yellowman* feat. *K'reema & the Sagittarius Band*. \$ 8 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Anjimile, Christelle Bofale*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6
Bezanson Recital Hall, UMass Amherst: *Celebrating Bird: The Music of Charlie Parker with Fumi Tomita, Jeff Holmes, Tom Giampietro, and David Detweiler*. Free. 7:30 p.m.

Palladium, Worcester: *New Found Glory, Less Than Jake, Hot Mulligan, LOLO*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Alasdair Fraser, Natalie Haas*. Scottish & global music. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7
Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Okkervil River, Damien Jurado*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8
Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Sam*

Amidon, Zara Bode's Little Big Band. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Erin McKeown, Spouse*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kimaya Diggs, Wallace Field, and High Tea*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Brewbakers, Keene: *Diane Cluck, Davey F. Mandesea*. \$ 8 p.m.

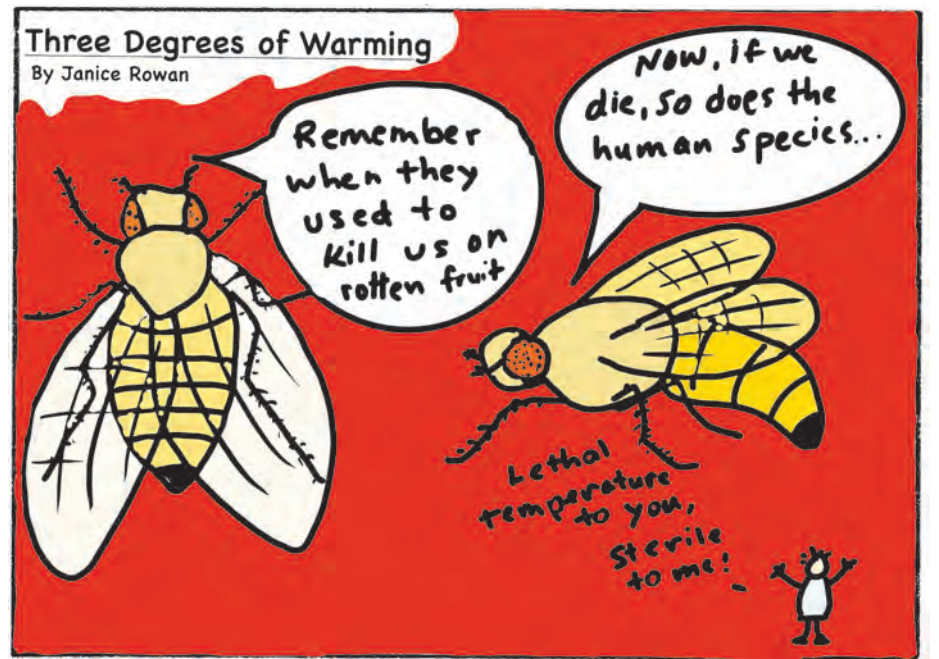
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9
Shutesbury Athletic Club: *Shokazoba*. \$ 5 p.m.

Pushkin Gallery, Greenfield: *Sam Amidon, Max Wareham*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Film premiere, *The Secret of Sinchane*. Shot at local locations. \$ 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Charmaine's Names, Father Hotep, Olana Flynn, DJ Krefthing*. Vax proof required. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23
10 Forward, Greenfield: *Rubblebucket, Ruth Garbus*. Vax proof required. Tickets on sale now. \$ 8 p.m.



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AUTHORS from page B1 inspired Devon.”

In the show, *Gossip Girl* is also an anonymous source who sends out revealing secrets about the students at Constance Billard; their signature thing is to sign every post “Xoxo, Gossip Girl!” *Gossip Girl* mainly focuses on Blair Waldorf, who is similar to Chiamaka in that she is seemingly perfect, and very much an overachiever; Serena Van Der Woodsen, who is trying to change her image after recently disappearing to a mysterious boarding school; Dan Humphrey, who is on a scholarship at Constance, and is an aspiring writer. Nate Archibald, who is always trying to defy his family’s expectations of him; and finally, Chuck Bass, who is very pompous, mischievous, and mysterious.

Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé said that she was also inspired to write this story because even though she loves *Gossip Girl*, she felt it should be more inclusive.

I asked which character from *Ace of Spades* Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé felt she was most like in high school. “I was probably a mix of Devon and Chiamaka,” she said. “I wasn’t a mean girl, but I did have some of the issues and insecurities that Chiamaka has. I also wasn’t a wallflower, but I really relate to Devon’s background as a working-class kid.”

One of my favorite parts of *Ace of Spades* is when Chiamaka and Devon are primping for their school’s Snowflake Ball. I love the fancy descriptions of their outfits and dresses, and how they do their

hair, makeup, etc.! I asked Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé which part of *Ace of Spades* was her favorite to write, and she replied, “I really enjoyed writing the scenes where Devon and Chiamaka bicker. They are total opposites and I found it so much fun creating their dynamic.”

I also thought this particular section of the story was really funny; it is really interesting to see how Chiamaka interprets a situation with Devon, to how Devon interprets a situation with Chiamaka!

I asked which perspective Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé prefers writing in, and she responded, “I loved writing them equally. Some days I found writing one character a lot more fun than other days, and vice versa, but in general I really loved being in both Devon and Chiamaka’s minds.”

I absolutely loved *Ace of Spades*! It was very much a suspenseful story – kind of like *One of Us is Lying*, by Karen M. McManus – but it was also really important to read, because it talks a lot about racism in modern life. It also had a bunch of romance-y scenes, which I always love! I would recommend this story to anyone who likes suspenseful mysteries, books with a romantic element, or books like *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone, which are awfully eye opening, and educational.

Thank you so so, so much to Ms. Àbíké-Íyímídé for letting me interview her. To my readers, I hope if you decide to read *Ace of Spades*, you love it just as much as I do!



The Bees of Greenfield, MA

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – Every June since 2010, Greenfield has had a Bee Fest, hosted by the Second Congregational Church of Greenfield. It started as a way to celebrate their 200th birthday and because Lorenzo Langstroth, a former Second Congregational Church minister, was known as the Father of Modern Beekeeping. This is probably why the festival features “highlighting the essential role of the honeybee in sustaining our environment.”

It has grown since then to have tons of people and presenters show up from across Massachusetts, and even the Atlantic, according to the official festival website. A fact I got off the website is that “Without bees, we would lose 35% of our food supply and up to 80% of all flowering plants!”

Beekeepers at this festival help people with making and maintaining honeybee hives like the one Langstroth invented in the 1800s. The festival wants to get across a message of caring for the environment, reducing pesticides, and increasing pollinator-friendly habitats. (See www.greenfieldbeefest.org.)

This apparently needs to be said because the website also mentioned that a decline in bee population has become a worldwide problem. In 2017, Greenfield Gallery owner Rachel Katz decided to do some sculptures of bees to help out with this

endeavor. They were sponsored by local businesses in the area.

Six of them were put up this year, called different names which include Butterfly Bee (sponsored by the Greenfield Savings Bank) and Steampunk Bee (sponsored by Baystate Franklin Medical Center).

I talked to Robert Markey and Andrew Easton, who painted the Butterfly Bee and Steampunk Bee, about being part of this art project. Both had been doing this for a long time. Markey painted the butterfly one blue with a bunch of different-colored butterflies on it, and the steampunk one resembles the look of a real-life bee with one mechanical part.

The Butterfly Bee isn’t Markey’s first time doing something like this. A couple of different sculptures have been painted by this guy. The list includes a sneaker in Springfield, a cow called “Amazon Rainforest Cow” in New York City, and a fish in Boston. He told me what two of those sculptures look like: “I painted dancers on the sneaker one,” he said, and lots of different animals from the Amazon Rainforest on the cow.

Andrew Easton’s previous artwork includes the carving of “a jack o’lantern, about 11 hundred pounds, for the Rag Shag Parade in Greenfield,” and snow and ice carvings for their Winter Carnival. His painting of his bee is “mostly because Steampunk resembles the dedication the bees have. Bees are dedicated to one



Bees painted by Andrew Easton (top) and Robert Markey (bottom).

thing and one thing only.”

I also got his opinion on these sculptures being created: “I thought it was an inventive way to express our thoughts,” he said. “I believe it brings awareness to people that there is a problem needing solving, in connection with those sculptures being built for awareness about the honeybee.”

I find that all of the artwork on the bees is very good. This should make it so the sculptures bring tons of awareness to what Bees do, and how they need protection.

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