

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 19 – NO. 43

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 7, 2021

Spinner Park Open Again



A short ceremony last Saturday marked the restoration of the park and its statue.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – After a nearly 16-month absence from its pedestal, the Spinner statue was reinstalled and unveiled last weekend in a park looking very different than the one it left in the first months of the pandemic.

A crowd of about sixty fit comfortably into Spinner Park last Saturday morning to hear speeches, check out what \$330,000 in federal funding can do to a 2,500-square-foot “pocket park,” and watch as a tarp was ceremonially removed from the statue.

see **PARK** page A6

A Bridge Over Untroubled Waters

By DONNA PETERSEN

MONTAGUE CENTER – Forget the Golden Gate Bridge, the Brooklyn Bridge, London Bridge, the Bridge Over the River Kwai, le Pont D’Avignon, or Billy Joe McAllister’s Tallahatchie Bridge. Montague’s Big Dig bridge at

the intersection of Chestnut Hill Road, West Chestnut Hill Road, and Chestnut Hill Loop has been (un)officially opened at a gathering on Saturday, October 2.

Not to be outdone by the Lake Pleasant party celebrating the reopening of the Bridge of Names, see **BRIDGE** page A6



Bob Mabler read a proclamation at Saturday’s unofficial bridge reopening.

High School Sports Week

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – The Turners Falls volleyball team stayed perfect this week, the Franklin Tech football team evened their record, and Powertown’s field hockey team won a tie.

In professional sports, Tom Brady returned to Gillette, the Red Sox stayed alive, Cleveland dropped their mascot, and Mr. Bush was on TV. On Tuesday, the Boston

Red Sox knocked out the New York Yankees 6-2 at Fenway Park in a single elimination playoff game. The victory keeps the Sox’s pennant dreams alive and avenges the 1978 one-game playoff loss to the dreaded Yankees.

In other baseball news, Cleveland played their last game as the Indians. It seems Turners Falls was way ahead of the curve on this one.

Also in this week’s column: a see **SPORTS** page A4



Wes Berdugo (left) and Quran Gillerson (right) compete on the Franklin Tech field as the Eagles overpower the Duggan Academy Jayhawks 7-2. Berdugo, a Turners Falls High School student, plays soccer with the Eagles in a coop between the schools.

ERVING SELECTBOARD

No FEMA Aid Available After Flood Damage

By KATIE NOLAN

Erving selectboard chair Jacob Smith opened Monday’s meeting with “unfortunate news.” The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) determined that the statewide cost of damage from July’s heavy rain and flooding did not meet agency thresholds.

Therefore, there will be no federal assistance for Erving for repairing damage on North Street, Kavanaugh Lane, Poplar Mountain Road, Wheelock Street, Moore Street, and Lester Street. The Swamp Road and Church Street bridges were also damaged in the flooding, and need repair.

By August, the town had spent \$67,050 removing the Swamp Road bridge and \$22,500 on the North Road embankment. At that time, Jacob Smith estimated the cost of replacing the bridge at \$1 million or more, and said the Poplar Mountain Road repair could cost “millions.”

Town administrator Bryan Smith said he requested, but did not receive, “clarity as to what the state threshold is.”

Selectboard member William Bembury told the board he had contacted state senator Jo Comerford, who “will continue to look for other sources [of aid], and continue the fight.” He recommended that other communities that had flood damage contact their legislators.

Jacob Smith commented that the town needed to have a plan “if we don’t have state or federal support.”

see **ERVING** page A5

LEVERETT CON COM

Pond Plan: Consultants Recommend Drawdowns

By SARAH ROBERTSON

LEVERETT – Dense patches of aquatic weeds causing low dissolved-oxygen levels are the primary concern cited in a recent habitat study of Leverett Pond. Conducted by SWCA Environmental Consultants on behalf of the Friends of Leverett Pond (FLP) and submitted to the town last Friday, the report recommends annual winter drawdowns and targeted use of herbicides to combat invasive and nuisance vegetation around the pond’s edge.

“We understand the reluctance to apply aquatic herbicides, yet this method has been successful in the past in reducing invasive species in Leverett Pond, and this method needs to be part of the overall toolbox for keeping the invasive plant species in check,” read the report. “It is not realistic to try to eradicate the invasive plant species. The goal will be to reduce the growth of the invasive species to promote the growth of native aquatic plant

see **LEVERETT** page A7

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Navigating Public Safety

By JEFF SINGLETON

After passing a mandate last week requiring masks in both town buildings and private businesses open to the public, the Montague selectboard grappled with how to apply the policy to a range of upcoming events, including the October 16 special town meeting and a film opening at the Shea Theater this coming weekend. The board also struggled to determine what metrics to use to evaluate future COVID-19 policies in Franklin County and neighboring towns.

The town meeting discussion occurred toward the end of Monday’s meeting, under the heading of “Town Administrator’s Report.” The previous week the board had

changed both the date and location of the meeting to an outdoor venue – the Franklin County Technical School – due to the region-wide rise in COVID cases commonly attributed to the “Delta variant.”

“The board was not specific relative to whether masks should be worn at all times,” said town administrator Steve Ellis. “My minimal understanding is that we are going to make sure there is an ability to observe social distancing.”

“My understanding is that outside is much safer,” said board member Matt Lord. “I don’t personally think it’s necessary to have a requirement. I think most people who are coming to town meeting will be conscientious, and will be wearing

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Mark Stevens Retires from DPW



Stevens, who also serves as tree warden, has worked for the town for nearly four decades.

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – Mark Stevens, who retired last month from the Montague department of public works (DPW), told the Reporter in a recent interview that he has worked taking care of the Montague parks and other grounds for “almost 38 years.”

That puts the beginning of his tenure around 1983, a time when the DPW looked quite a bit different than it does today. There were less equipment, more employees – and Stevens was initially employed by the parks and recreation department,

which was in charge of the parks.

But the real shocking statistic that emerged from our interview was the claim that the Stevens family has worked for Montague for an aggregate of nearly 100 years. That includes the tenure not only of Stevens, but his brothers Butch, who retired last August, and Reggie, who retired in November 2019.

The total also includes Mark’s sons Alex, Ben, and Sam – the latter now works at the water pollution control facility – as well as Butch’s son and nephew.

So it is almost the end of an era, see **STEVENS** page A6

HEALTH REPORT



Changes are underway at Baystate Health Primary Care, formerly Connecticut River Internists, in Montague City. Columnist Chip Ainsworth has the scoop on Page A4.

Reelin’ In The Years

Illustration: Goats.....	A2	Retro Police: More Misdeals.....	B1
Local Briefs.....	A3	Sex Matters: The Spark.....	B2
Ainsworth At Large.....	A4	Montague Police Log: Stuff Missing.....	B3
Notes from the Wendell Selectboard.....	A5	Living With Cancer: Wishes.....	B4
10 Years Ago This Week.....	A7	Indie Mama Diaries.....	B4
Source to Sea Thank-You Ad.....	A8	Arts & Entertainment Calendar.....	B6
Theater Review: Irma Vep.....	B1	Five Comics Again (And A Puzzle).....	B7
ValleyView: Mystery Marshal.....	B1	Sinchancee Premiere Announcement.....	B8



The Montague Reporter

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If It Bleeds, It Leads

Just for fun: a recap of our headlines from between February 2020 and March 2021. Crazy times, huh?

Town pushes for better effort on bridge. New leadership, volunteers keep coop open. Logging bill folded into forest study proposal. Wendell planning board recommends moratorium on cannabis business. Most local towns go for Sanders. New boss at WPCF is "impassioned about wastewater treatment."

Local towns, schools prepare for arrival of COVID-19 virus.

Schools closed, gatherings banned as virus concerns overtake economy. Jail, courts face challenge of pandemic preparedness. Mutual aid networks form amid bleak economic news. Town adapts to emergency; health director out on leave. Jail staff work to lock the virus out. Relief for tenants by April 1 unlikely. Amidst crisis, staff work to keep a city running.

Shop owners feel the impact of shutdown. Dance classes go digital. Town closes playgrounds, citing coronavirus concern. Local agencies preparing for virus's anticipated surge. Board of health requires plastic shields at all checkout counters. In a crisis, some create.

School gears up to attempt distance learning. Carpenters' safety stoppage delays DPW construction. Basic needs station opens on Third Street. Leverett holds off on scheduling town meeting. Montague board of health officially encourages mask use. Restaurants focus on takeout option as shutdown continues. All town employees offered hazard pay for public interaction.

Shuttered businesses hope for rent relief. School district braces for state budget cuts. Advocates fear a hidden rise in violence.

Official virus court falls. Cautious reopening begins, but gym judged too small for annual town meeting. State legislators warn against budget austerity. PPE still in high demand, but other shortages ease up. State's first phase of reopening includes recreational cannabis. Body in river identified as missing woman.

Protest wave hits local towns. No charges for gunman after racist threat video. Town opens skate park, allows dining outdoors. School year draws to an uneasy close. Outdoor town meeting goes pretty smoothly. Montague level funds its police, and looks to the future.

Town hall will reopen on Thursday. Safety rules, budget for fall re-

main unclear. Sludge deal with paper mill moves forward. Evictions delayed until October as crisis looms. Forest commission bill may die in committee. Tree plantings on hold.

Spinner Park reconstruction hits a snag. Pan Am trains spew diesel for days at Lake Pleasant. Farren announces plan to close, move patients south. Erving police chief out on indefinite leave. School semester will begin with at-home learning. Second yoga studio closes in Turners Falls. At-home classes begin.

State pressures schools to return to buildings; teachers argue against. Businesses make investments to adapt to a long pandemic. Widespread damage from storm; hardest impact in Lake Pleasant. Gill allocates CARES funding to school ventilation. Eviction moratorium ends this Sunday. Area boarding schools vary in approaches to pandemic.

Town hall COVID-19 cases disrupt early voting. Process woes dog wastewater plant. Fundraising begins for bridge rebuilding. Insects downstream wait on dam relicensing. Latest cannabis operation proposed at industrial park.

Schools return to fully-remote. Eviction backlog grinds through housing court. Town hall hopes to avoid COVID enforcement fines. Voo shuts down for winter. State closes another bridge. Virus spreads throughout Franklin County. Montague enters the red zone.

Police search Leverett woods for missing man ahead of storm. Food programs ramp up, prepare for a tough winter. Healthcare workers, first responders line up for early coronavirus vaccines. Leverett cops get body cams. Hopes to return to hybrid in February, as impacts of remote school grow clear.

Supply problems loom for vaccine "phase two." State aid to schools lower than hoped. Dakin reassessing care for pets during pandemic. Schools scramble to hire staff.

No evictions yet as aid, moratorium stretch out. Weeds on a beloved pond spawn contentious debate. More eligible for vax, but supply in question. Union calls for effort to save local journalism. Virus ebbs; teachers prioritized for vaccine. Attention to synthetic toxins grows.

Schools required to reopen fully. Town weighs event permits, given uncertain reopening. Parents in college struggle with overwork in pandemic. Mud season arrives on local roads. Town OKs events, watches new cases.



Danielle Barsbak gives a bucket of apple drops to Daisy, her two-year-old milking goat, at Little Buddy Farm on Cave Hill Road in Leverett. Daisy's kid, Schmitty, is named after Dr. Bob Schmitt, who delivered him and a twin kid who didn't make it.

Letters to the Editors

Things Worse Than Polarization

A few thoughts on the Braver Angels movement:

I would treat any statement referring to the election of 2016 as "America's most divisive election in our history" with skepticism for a number of reasons.

Firstly, that election played out closely to the script of every election of the last 50 years. Trump ran on the same basic platform as Romney, McCain, both Bushes, Dole, Reagan, Ford, Nixon and Goldwater.

Their campaigns all developed and exploited various platforms of divisiveness. In particular, the "Southern strategy" is a well-known tactic. Over the years, conservative politicians played up racial and social differences largely to court white voters.

Trump didn't invent political divisions – he openly and proudly weaponized existing divisions. The only real difference between 2016 and those prior elections is that Trump realized he could benefit even more if he said the quiet part out loud.

But 2016 wasn't even the first controversial election in recent memory. The 2000 election was essentially stolen by the Republican

party, providing a wakeup call to many people both of the divisiveness that was present in society, and opening up new possibilities for really abusing those divisions.

Many people would say the election of 2008 was more divisive than 2016. After all, a sizable portion of the electorate spent the next eight years convinced that Obama couldn't possibly be a legitimate president, going so far as to question his well-established birthplace. 2008 led to the Tea Party and continued the rise in right-wing authoritative movements.

Furthermore, in 2020, this nation literally faced both an insurrection and a coup attempt, as conservatives mapped out a national strategy of invalidating any election results that didn't please them. There's no reason to assume this won't happen again.

But while there's a relatively recent history of troubled elections, the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1862 was without a doubt the most divisive election of US history, and it seems like this would be obvious to any group that derives their name and ethos from his first inaugural address.

In closing that speech, largely targeted towards southern states that were already in various stages of secession, Lincoln said: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

With these lines, Lincoln signaled just how willing he was to avoid a conflict with the South. He did not want to fight a war.

But I bet his words rang hollow to any of the enslaved people who managed to hear them. Lincoln was willing to trade the indefinite servitude of four million people in order to maintain the Union for a few more precious years. Did his attempt to bridge the partisan divide with his political opponents have a positive outcome for them?

Finding common ground with your neighbors sounds great on paper, and for a relatively privileged subset of our community, that work represents a challenging but ultimately very safe activity. I wish anyone participating the best of luck.

But what are you supposed to do if your neighbor doesn't think you have a right to bodily autonomy? What if your neighbor thinks you should be deported? What if your neighbor rejects your right to express your gender? What if your neighbor rejects you based on the color of your skin or your birthplace?

Is it honestly your responsibility to sit down with those people and gain an understanding of why they question your right to live your life?

When work towards depolarization is politicized, as it is by Braver Angels, it must be viewed through a political lens. Ultimately, I fear that the Braver Angels dialogue process works mostly to provide cover and legitimacy for a conservative movement that has successfully pulled this nation further and further to the right in the last few decades.

Encore

Praise where praise is due; the park is gorgeous, and beautifully done. Thanks to all!

As for the Spinner Lady sculpture, I'm pretty near certain that when you restore a piece, you're supposed to mend the holes, not highlight them.

Robert J. Steinberg
Montague Center

Colin Mitchell
Montague Center

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Come see **live eagles, hawks, owls, and buzzards** – as well as the new park layout and refurbished sculpture – at the Spinner Park, Avenue A and Fourth streets at 11 a.m. this Saturday, October 9.

RiverCulture is sponsoring this visit with Tom Ricardi of the Massachusetts Bird of Prey Raptor Rehabilitation Facility. Ricardi has been delighting folks of all ages with his program called Birds of Prey, and over the years his team has successfully rescued, rehabilitated, and released hundreds of birds back to nature. This is a free, outdoor event that is wheelchair accessible and appropriate for all ages.

Find a list of events like this at www.riverculture.org.

Richie Richardson is hosting a “FAB 4” **fall fashion sidewalk runway show** this Saturday, October 9 at 4 p.m. Come to the FAB gallery at 67 Second Street in Turners Falls to see what the models are exhibiting – it’s free!

More to do this Saturday in Turners Falls: a cool line-up of **vintage motor bikes and cars** on display at Nova Motorcycles, with DJ Overtime spinning vinyl and shaved ice from Nice. Snack Parlor, tacos from Santo Taco, and beer at the Pioneer Valley Brewery. It’s all happening from 3 to 7 p.m. on Second Street by the Unity Skatepark.

Walk’n Mass Volkspport Club and the American Volksmarch Association present **5K and 10K walks** on the Canalside Rail Trail and through Turners Falls this Saturday, October 9. Register from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. outside the Great Falls Discovery Center, or in the Great Hall if it’s raining. Walkers finish up their strolls by 3 p.m. All are welcome to participate, with a small \$2-3 fee to support the non-profit walking club.

If you can make it across the river, Artspace in Greenfield is hosting

a free **West African Dance Class** at 12:30 p.m. this Saturday outside in their backyard with instructor Tara Murphy. Get your feet moving and heart pumping with three drummers for an hour! They are located at 15 Mill Street.

The Shelburne Falls Historical Society is planning an **Indigenous People’s Celebration** this Sunday, October 10 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Society’s home, the Arms Academy in Shelburne. Most of the event is scheduled for out of doors, but the museum will also be open for masked visitors.

There will be make-and-take craft stations with the focus on Native artisans, historical displays, and an art exhibit by Cara Finch, who uses acrylic painting techniques to explore her Abenaki-Wyandot native ancestry. The event is free.

On Monday, October 11, come to the **Migrations Festival** at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls from 1 to 4 p.m.. There will be a Guatemalan arts and crafts exhibit in the Hall with outdoor activities for families and refreshments.

Paintings are curated by a local fair-trade project, Guatemala Art and Culture Connection. Colorful works depict scenes integral to village life, Mayan culture, and the history of Lake Atitlan. Topics include planting and harvesting, the outdoor marketplace, typical foods, traditional ceremonies, and Mayan “Cosmovision.”

A special performance by the Fiesta del Norte Mariachi Band will happen at 2 p.m. The free event celebrates Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Find out more at www.riverculture.org.

For ten years, children at the Leverett Elementary School have enjoyed learning about nature inside their own greenhouse, right at the school. During COVID, this outdoor learning space was particularly important. But now, the roof and irrigation system need replacement. More chairs and benches are needed

for outside learning. A toolshed and compost bin are desired.

The Leverett Education Foundation and the LES PTO have launched a **fundraising campaign for the school greenhouse** at leveretteducationfoundation.org. There will be a Greenhouse Tour and Guided Nature Walk event on October 23. For information, email info@leveretteducationfoundation.org.

Philippe Simon, local filmmaker and production coordinator at GCTV, is holding a discussion at the LAVA Center in Greenfield on **Social Justice and Media**.

Learn how you can engage with creating community media and be involved with developing stories around social justice events and topics at this talk on Saturday, October 16 at 1:30 p.m. There is no charge to attend. Email info@localaccess.org for more information.

The Post Office sent a reminder that there will be **no mail delivery next Monday**, October 11 due to the federal holiday that is still called Columbus Day. All services will resume on Tuesday.

Sally Dillon is showing a retrospective of her work at the **Leverett Crafts & Arts Center** during the month of October. The reception is this Sunday, October 10, from 1 to 3 p.m. Dillon will show her bronze castings from the 1960s, stuffed sculpture from the 1970s, hand-painted silk clothing and quilts from the 1980s and 1990s as well as more recent felted pieces, oil paintings, and watercolors.

The gallery is at 13 Montague Road in Leverett, and online at barnesgallery.org.

Fond of both apples and art? Take a sculpture tour called **Art in the Orchard** at Park Hill Orchards in Easthampton this fall, and enjoy cider and apple products from the farm store while taking in the installations created by local artists along a meandering walking trail. This is the Sixth biennial exhibit, and it is available dawn to dusk every day of the week until November 28.

The **use of psychedelic medicine to treat people** suffering from PTSD, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and other conditions has been steadily growing with suc-

cessful results reported by therapists who are using MDMA, LSD, mushrooms, and other substances. The online and in print journal *Double Blind* routinely sponsors webinars with leaders in this new field.

A webinar is scheduled at noon on Sunday, October 17 that explores the use of 5-MeO-DMT, or “the God molecule,” with Dr. Joseph Barsuglia and Patricia Eastman. They will talk about how this very strong psychedelic medicine is administered, what it is used for, and more. Viewers may submit questions at the end.

Registration is required; find out more at doubleblindmag.com.

You may be wondering, if you were frequenting open mic poetry readings in the Valley, whether the **Great Falls Word Festival** would rise from the COVID embers this year. Word has come from organizer Paul Richmond that yes, a day of words will mark the 11th Word Festival on Sunday, October 17. There will be a stage set up between Santo Taco and the Pioneer Valley Brewery for readers to do their thing.

Richmond writes in the event description that he is “Encouraging anyone who has taken part in any of the festivals throughout its history to come join us... the schedule is who is there. Writers will get in line, read two pieces, and then you can either sit down or get back in line whenever you want. When new people arrive they will be able to cut in line.”

Get ready to assemble with fellow writers and your favorite lines starting at 1 p.m.

After reading Michael Pollan’s book *Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation*, in which he delves into the four main ways we transform our food (earth, air, fire, and water) I was amused to receive an email from Red Fire North announcing the 42nd birthday of **baker Paul Voiland’s sourdough starter!**

The starter was originally fermented from bread that came from the Elm Street bakery in Cortland, New York, and may actually have contained microbes from decades of baking at that location.

Stop by the Montague Center grocery for a loaf of this legacy sourdough bread and help celebrate the long rise!

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Further Letters to the Editors

Fuel Costs Rising

As we have gas heat, I have been keeping tabs on the gas price crisis in Europe and the pricing changes here in Mass. as well. This winter will see a 20% to 30% increase in natural gas prices vs. last winter.

Until September 1, the off-peak rate was 36 cents per therm. For September and October it has gone up to 55 cents per therm. On November 1, it will be 79 cents per therm (vs. 60 cents at the same time last year).

The delivery portion of the bill will be the same or slightly (2%) lower. Oil prices are also up about 20%. Electric, with our longer term contracts and municipal aggregation, will remain about the same for a little while longer.

If this is of concern to you, it is worth contacting Mass-Save (www.masssave.com), or our local Community Action heating assistance department at www.communityaction.us/home-energy-assistance.

Garth Shaneyfelt
Greenfield

Second Bridge Standout

On Saturday, October 9, during Indigenous Peoples’ Day weekend, those caring about the health of the Connecticut River, key to life in our area for millennia before colonization began, are invited to gather for a second 11 a.m. to noon Standout on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

With banners and signs, masked and distanced, we will oppose a possible 50-year extension of Canadian corporation FirstLight’s control of key parts of the river, including the wasteful and destructive Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage project (NMPS), responsible for the death of massive amounts of fish and aquatic life over decades, with net energy loss.

Environmental writer and river expert Karl Meyer tells us: “There are crucial times when the public has to do the job left undone for a half century after the Endangered Spe-

cies Act and Clean Water Act became the law of the land on the Connecticut River. It’s a half dead river carcass in so many ways – a watercourse that does not even meet the definition of a living river in Massachusetts.”

Find out why at his blog (www.karlmeyerwriting.com/blog/) and a recent interview on WHMP radio (whmp.com/podcasts/the-afternoon-buzz-8-10-21/).

With secret talks going on related to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensing process, we need to keep up the pressure, educate ourselves and our communities, and express our belief that NMPS – and FirstLight – have no place in a green energy future.

Anna Gyorgy
Wendell

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AT LARGE

Primary Care Practice Feels the Squeeze

By CHIP AINSWORTH

MONTAGUE CITY – In its heyday Connecticut River Internists (CRI) was a bustling health care business that served about 10,000 patients in and around Montague and Franklin County. Nearly everyone, it seemed, was a patient, or had a friend or relative who used CRI for routine visits, physicals, and lab work.

“In a rural area, they saw us as our doctor and they felt comfortable,” said Dr. Wayne Gavryck. “Trust is so important, especially with personal health care. When you don’t have it, anxiety goes up.”

Located in a modest one-story building set back from Montague City Road, CRI was founded by doctors in search of a venue after the Farren Memorial Hospital was shuttered.

The original group was composed of interns Al Ross, Bruce Van Bockel, Larry Klein, Joe Viadero, and Adam Blacksin. When Ross retired they asked Gavryck to join the practice.

Gavryck was from upstate New York and owned Montague Internal Medicine. When he joined the group he sold his practice to Baystate Health. Within a year, most of his staff had left.

Almost two years ago, CRI’s practice was sold to Baystate Health and re-named Baystate Primary Care of Turners Falls – and now Gavryck has a bad case of *déjà vu*.

“We had started looking for a buyer,” he said. “We were all getting older and knew that retirement was coming up. They decided that each year starting in 2016, one of us would leave and be replaced by a Baystate physician. But each year that passed, they never came up with anybody, so it kept being delayed.

“Our experience was they’d say one thing and do what they wanted. Finally, in 2018 or 2019, we said ‘we’re still sticking with this.’”

According to Wikipedia, Baystate Health owns five hospitals, over 80 medical practices, and 25 reference labs throughout central Massachusetts and parts of Connecticut. It was founded in 1883 as Springfield Hospital, and today employs 12,000 people, including 1,600 doctors. It also owns Health New England, a for-profit health insurer also headquartered in Springfield.

Instead of having four doctors at Baystate Primary Care, the company decided to have one doctor and several mid-level providers – registered nurses, nurse practitioners, licensed practical nurses, an office manager, and clerical staff.

They approached Dr. Catherine Dodds, an honors graduate from Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons. “Catherine worked for Baystate as a *per diem* in Greenfield and Belchertown,” said Gavryck. “We talked to her. We liked her. She’s knowledgeable and compassionate, a good person. We thought it would be a good fit, but wondered how one person could replace four doctors, all with full-time practices.”

Dodds was joined by three nurse practitioners, one registered nurse, one licensed practical nurse, and an office manager who would serve the needs of about 8,000 patients, most in their 60s and 70s.

After Blacksin, Viadero, Klein, and Gavryck left on New Year’s Day 2020, their former patients were greeted by photos of the staff and framed signs that said, “Meet Your Teams for 2020 at Baystate Primary Care in Turners Falls.”

As the months passed, the staff became overwhelmed and looked elsewhere for work. Today only a handful remain from the original teams, two medical assistants and the office manager.

In August patients received a form letter from Baystate informing them that Dr. Dodds would leave on October 1. “I came in with an understanding of what would happen, and it was not going in that direction,” she said, according to a

reliable source. “Baystate’s all about getting numbers to look good. Our system is such a game.”

One story making the rounds, perhaps apocryphal, regards a nurse who stayed for a while but subsequently left. A patient reportedly called her and said, “My blood pressure’s high,” and the nurse told her to come in. The patient’s BP was indeed high, but when the nurse tried to get immediate help, she was told rules were rules and it would have to go through central scheduling.

As recently as three weeks ago, patients saw the “Team” signs on the walls, but the year hadn’t been updated, and staff photos had been replaced by empty spaces. Face mask mandates are printed on dog-eared sheets of copy paper and taped to the doors, and the reception area is ringed by mostly unoccupied chairs. Granted, COVID-19 and its Delta variant have had a lot to do with it, but the place looks stark.

Instead of getting physicals and bloodwork, patients get wellness checks. Why? “Medicare pays more for wellness checks than it does for physicals,” said Gavryck.

As of press time, Baystate’s public affairs team has not returned phone calls asking for comment.

A physician shortage in Montague means Baystate gets an extra three or four percent more from Medicare than in Greenfield. “I think they’ll turn it into an Urgent Care, that would be the best thing,” said Gavryck, who’s still upset by the outcome.

“We’re extremely disappointed. We felt terrible; we still feel terrible. We wish we could’ve left it in better shape. They had all these plans and said they were going to spend a million dollars, but right up to the end they kept trying to nickel and dime us.”

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

SPORTS from page A1
humble retraction.

Football

FCTS 21 – Mahar 0

Tampa Bay 19 – New England 17

On Friday, October 1, The Franklin Tech Football Eagles defeated the Mahar Senators 21-0 off a balanced offense, a stingy defense, and the toe of Jack Reynolds. The road win evens Tech’s record at 2 – 2.

It was the first cold weather game of the season, and fans were huddled under winter coats and blankets while the Mahar Homecoming Royal Court shivered in their elegant ball gowns.

Mahar opened the game with an onside kick, but Tech wasn’t fooled, and took over on their own 47. The Birds ran eleven plays and advanced to the Senators’ 13, but a sack and an incomplete pass gave the ball back to the Politicians.

For the rest of the quarter and into the second, both defenses dominated, and the score remained 0-0.

The football field in Orange is covered in artificial turf; it’s like playing on a pool table. And with 2:50 left in the half, Tech took full advantage. On 2-and-4 from Mahar’s 29, Chad Adams found a crease, cut to the nearside, and was off to the races. And just like that the Eagles went up 6-0. Reynolds’ PAT was partially blocked, but it careened upward and through the goal posts to give Tech the 7-0 lead.

In the first series of the second half, the Tech defense forced a punt, but a block-in-the-back moved the rock back to their own 20.

Adams isn’t the only offensive weapon the Franks employ. Tech ran ten plays using five different ball carriers, and with 5:57 left in the third quarter, Josiah Little scampered 8 yards into the end zone to give the



TFHS student Ari Wiles moves the ball past Duggan Academy defender Joel Grant.

Birds the 13-0 lead; Reynolds kicked the PAT to move Tech ahead 14-0.

(Note: John Little, who played on the 1971 undefeated Turners Falls football team, is Josiah’s grandfather and was at the game.)

Tech’s last score came with 7:05 left to play. QB Gabriel Tomasi crashed into the end zone from a foot out to put the Eagles up 20-0. There was a penalty on the PAT, but Reynolds still split the uprights and the Franks held on to win the game 21-0.

The Tech victory was a ground-and-pound team effort. Max Bastarache (70) teamed up with Ryan Demers (63), Adams (56), Tomasi (40), and Little (20) for a combined 249 yards on the ground. Tomasi supplemented the ground attack with 37 passing yards.

Defensively, Landen Hardy led the team with nine solo tackles and a sack, Logan Call snagged an interception and recovered a fumble, and Charlie Boyden made a sack.

Next week the Eagles host the undefeated Ware Indians. As I’ve said before, when Ware finally de-

cides to change their mascot, I hope they become the Ware-Wolves.

On Sunday, Tom Brady and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers defeated the New England Patriots 19-17. It was the first time that Brady returned to Gillette after getting traded.

If you watched the news, you may have seen the pre-game interview with Turners Falls’ own George Bush, who has been a season ticket owner since 1971. “The reporters came to my row before the game,” Mr. Bush explained. “They interviewed me because I’m turning 95 on Friday.”

The game was decided on a Nick Folk miffed field goal as time ran out. It’s too bad. The Pats could have used Tech’s Jack Reynolds!

Volleyball

TFHS 3 – Pioneer 0

TFHS 3 – Wahconah 0

Last Thursday, September 30, the Turners Falls Volleyball Thunder defeated the Pioneer Black Panthers 3-0. Then on Monday the Ladies in Blue traveled to Dalton and beat the

Wahconah Warriors, giving Powertown a perfect 10-0 record.

Last week I wrote, “I don’t remember Turners ever beating Greenfield in volleyball, even as a kid.” It turns out I was wrong.

“We beat Greenfield all the time,” Coach Kelly Liimatainen told me during Thursday’s JV game.

So, the Turners Falls Volleyballers have beaten Greenfield, as well as nine other teams in the region, by a combined tally of 30 matches to 1 this season. It looks like they have the potential to carry their winning ways deep into the playoffs.

In the Pioneer contest, Turners held the Panthers to single digits in all three matches, 25-9, 25-6, 25-3.

Against Wahconah, Blue won 25-10, 25-17, 25-19.

Field Hockey

TFHS 1 – Northampton 1

On Tuesday, the Turners Falls field hockey team tied the Northampton Blue Devils 1-1 down in Northampton.

I count this as a victory, not only for the team but also for first-year coach Renee Tela. Coming into the contest, Big Blue had only one win and had only scored two goals in their previous seven losses.

Tuesday’s game was a defensive struggle from the outset as both teams kept the ball away from their own net. And it was a clean, disciplined contest, with each team only awarded three corner shots during the entire game.

Neither squad could find the net in the first half. It wasn’t until 12:01 of the third quarter that Turners finally broke the scoreless tie, as Avery Tela snuck one past the goalkeeper to put Powertown up 1-0. But Northampton tied it up in the fourth, and Turners Falls came out with a well-deserved tie.



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ERVING from page A1

Zoning Bylaws

Planning assistant Mariah Kurtz and the planning board presented draft zoning bylaw changes to the selectboard, including Planned Unit Development (PUD) overlay districts near the French King Bridge, the Renovator's Supply building, the former International Paper Mill, and Erving Paper Mill.

According to Kurtz, a PUD is similar to a campus or an office park with a cohesive design, providing flexibility for developers. Allowing PUD zoning may attract more developers to the former IP Mill property.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache asked the planning board to include Care Drive in a fifth PUD zone, to support the potential for senior housing there.

In addition to the four PUD overlays, the proposed changes listed by Kurtz include: changing the west side of River Road from "Rural Residential" (RR) to "Village Residential" (VR) zoning; changing the zoning along River, Warner and Strachan Streets from RR to VR, "to match the existing development style of the area"; changing the zone on the west side of Gunn Street from "Central Village" (CV) to RR; extending CV zoning north along Route 63, and south along Route 2; removing Erving State Forest land from the CV zone; and changing a large parcel on Swamp Road from VR to RR.

Planning board chair Michael

Shaffer said the draft bylaws will be revised based on the conversation with the selectboard to include the fifth PUD zone.

The revisions will be reviewed by the selectboard on October 18, presented at a public hearing, then voted on at a town meeting.

Church Street Traffic

MassDOT approved a permit for changed traffic patterns at the Church Street bridge, which was recently classified as a 3-ton bridge.

Bryan Smith reported that barriers had been placed on the bridge to restrict traffic to one lane southbound, and cones and barrels were in place. He said he would contact mapping apps, such as Google Maps and Waze, to ask them to update their databases with the new configuration.

"People are ignoring the 'Local Traffic' signs," Jacob Smith said. He recommended changing the signs for the northbound lane to "Road Closed."

Old School Building

Bryan Smith told the board that four developers attended a site walk at the town property on 18 Pleasant Street, the former grade school, and additional firms had asked to attend a second walk. He said two had asked if the town would allow its Request for Information (RFI) to include the former library building as well.

Bastarache noted that the rec-

reation commission was using the former library for equipment storage and, once they meet in person, would need a meeting space.

"We don't want to displace Rec," said Jacob Smith, but asked: "If we have a developer interested, is it a better direction than having to renovate the building ourselves?"

"Storage is one issue, but not the only issue," said Bembury. "We need to consider both sides."

The board asked Bryan Smith to write an addendum to the RFI, setting a new walk-through date and extending the deadline into November. He said he would also draft an addendum allowing the old library building to be included in the responses.

Other Business

The new library building has been open for a year, but several construction issues remain, including delaminated doors. Bryan Smith said building contractor Marois Construction had not responded to letters from the architect and owner's project manager.

"These systems need to be addressed," he said. "They were pointed out during the warranty period."

Bembury asked, "How long are we going to continue this process before we say, 'fix it or we'll hire an attorney?'"

The board decided to accept change orders from A. Martins and Sons, the contractor installing and

Public School Regionalization Planning Facilitator

The Gill-Montague Regional School District will accept price quotes for a Facilitator for a Public School Regionalization Planning Study. The project is made available by grant funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.

The RFQ can be found on the district website, www.gmrtd.org, or at www.gmrtd.org/welcome-gmrtd/departments/business-and-operations.

All quotes should be submitted by Wednesday, October 20 at 11 a.m., to:

Gill-Montague Regional School District, Joanne Blier, Director of Business and Operations, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, MA 01376 **or to** joanne.blier@gmrtd.org.

Quotes may be emailed, mailed, or hand delivered. They should be clearly marked "Facilitator (Regional Planning)." Facilitators may call Blier at (413) 863-3251 if they have questions. The Gill-Montague Regional School District, which is the awarding authority, reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotes, in total or in part, as they deem in the best interest of the public.

The Town of Erving

has two **redevelopment opportunities** available:
an RFP for the former grade school at 18 Pleasant Street,
and an RFI for the former IP Mill complex.

More information at www.erving-ma.gov/bids

repairing sidewalks along Central, Gunn, and Pratt streets.

One, funded by the state's Complete Streets program, is for \$22,618.75 to work on the sidewalks along Amidon Street. A second is to repair the walkway in front of Erving Elementary School for \$11,700, with funding from a roadway account.

A \$3,600 change order, to plant trees in locations where they were removed for sidewalk repairs, will be funded by the tree warden's budget. Sugar maple, honey locust, and crab apple trees will be planted.

The board accepted a \$214,212 bid from Baltazar Construction, Inc. to install the Flagg Hill Road sewer extension.



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Wendell, New Salem Explore Options for PFAS Contamination

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The level of PFAS detected in the Swift River School drinking water is below federal drinking water limit, which is 60 to 80 parts per trillion, but above the new state limit of 20 parts per trillion. The Wendell selectboard took a good part of their September 29 meeting conferring with school and New Salem officials about how to correct the situation.

PFAS are man-made chemicals, found in carpets, soaps, and detergents, said New Salem selectboard member Wayne Hatchey. They are not likely to originate in the drilled well's water. The well is inside the school building, under the boiler room.

Swift River principal Kelly Sullivan said some parents now send

drinking water in with their children, and the school supplies bottled water for all students to drink. She said the school has been working closely with Housatonic Basin Water Sampling and Testing.

Superintendent Jennifer Culkeen said the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) let the Union 28 district know that continued non-compliance may make it subject to prosecution. DEP wants to know by June 7 how and what the school plans to do, though an extension may be possible.

Wendell facilities engineer Jim Slavos said the likely source of PFAS is infiltration from surface water, due to a flaw in the well's casing. To test for a flaw a dye could be injected into the well, and then looked for in test wells; a

waterproof camera can be lowered into the well casing.

When salt was previously detected in Swift River's water, the problem went away after winter sanding of parking lots and the traffic circle was stopped.

Union 28 finance and operations director Bruce Turner offered one option for correcting the contamination, if the towns help pay. A filtration system would cost \$40,000 to \$45,000 to install; canisters that hold the PFAS-capturing resin cost \$5,500 each, and two are needed to start so a backup is ready when the first one is filled. Filled containers must be disposed of as hazardous waste, another expense.

Culkeen said the company that supplies the filtering system should also provide an estimate of how long each container will last. Later in the discussion, Wendell finance committee chair Doug Tanner predicted container and disposal costs will only go up.

Turner said the high cost estimate requires putting the project out to bid. "Where are Dow Chemical and Dupont?" he asked.

Wendell selectboard chair Dan Keller responded that they were not much help with Agent Orange after the Vietnam war.

Keller said that when the salt was found in the water, 25 years ago, drilling a new well was deemed too expensive.

Sullivan said the field near the school, where students have recess and gym classes, is not a good choice for a well as it is close to the septic tank and leach field. Siting a well in the woods behind the school would involve some difficulty, as the water would need to be piped under the stream which runs between the school and any likely site.

Wendell board of health chair Barbara Craddock said that in response to the original PFAS news, 25 Wendell households had their wells tested, and all came back negative. Some New Salem residences are near the school, and Hatchey recommended those people should have their wells tested, and mentioned one resident who has already agreed.

Keller said the first step is testing existing wells near the school, then drilling test wells upgradient.

Wendell selectboard member Gillian Budine said Wendell and New Salem's ARPA money may pay for the work, as it concerns improving water public safety and water quality. Turner said that ARPA education money may only be directed towards mitigating social, learning, and emotional loss resulting from COVID restrictions and distance learning.

Future Joint Chief?

Although the wait time for a new vehicle is a year and a half, New Salem is starting the process of buying a new police cruiser, then passing the old cruiser to the fire chief. The cost of converting the vehicle for fire department use is \$8,000 to \$10,000.

The New Salem police department is independent of Wendell, but the fire departments of both towns work together, and fire chief Joe Cuneo has a contract with both towns though he is not a joint chief. Keller said Wendell should pay half the cost of converting the vehicle's systems, and half the value of the vehicle.

Cuneo is close to retirement, and New Salem selectboard member Randy Gordon said that when he retires, the new chief should have a single contract with both towns. "We know what we want, but we need a contract with

the right words," he said.

Other Business

A state Community Compact grant is available for best information technology (IT) practices, especially involving regionalization of services. Wendell might logically connect with New Salem, and also Leverett and Shutesbury, for IT oversight.

Wendell town coordinator Alisha Brouillet suggested contacting Warwick to see if that town is interested. Budine said she would contact Swift River School. Tanner suggested an alternative of working with an IT firm that serves several towns.

The grant proposal is due in October, so board members voted to start the process now so they can sign the necessary forms at their next meeting on October 13.

Applications for use of CARES Act money are due October 30. That money may be used for paying the town's Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN) nurse, for the web cameras and computers that have allowed teleconferencing, and laptops at the library.

The town will pay for CodeRED to begin a reverse-911 system in town, and allow the CARES money to pay the town back.

Keller said the September 25 auction of town property, including furniture from the police station, brought in over \$2,000. It was fun, he reported, and a non-running vehicle sold for \$200. What did not sell will go to the free store.

When board members go to the office to sign the warrant, they also will sign the warrant for the special town meeting, still scheduled for next Saturday, October 16 at 10 a.m., and planned to be held on the common.

Wendell STM Warrant

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The 13-article warrant for Wendell's Saturday, October 16 special town meeting has two articles that would cover road repair expenses that resulted from heavy rainfall, three articles that move MLP money, six bills of prior years, and one that would pay the retired town coordinator for sick time she did not use. **Article 13** allows for business not anticipated when the warrant was posted, and normally closes the meeting.

Article 1 would take \$76,000 from stabilization to cover extraordinary road repair expenses. **Article 2** would also raise and appropriate \$50,000 to cover these expenses.

Article 3 would put \$40,000 from the municipal light plant (MLP) enterprise retained earnings

fund into the MLP unanticipated expense fund. **Article 4** would move \$30,745 from retained earnings into the broadband capital expense stabilization fund, and **Article 5** would reimburse the town general fund with \$8,728 to pay for debt service for the broadband project.

Articles 6 through 11 would raise and appropriate \$3,410.05 to pay bills of prior years from the school committee, the WRATS, the assessors, the cemetery commission, the town office (for the newsletter), and police radio expense.

Article 12 would pay the retired town coordinator for sick leave she did not take.

The meeting will start at 10 a.m. on the town common in front of town hall. Participants are required to practice social distancing and requested to wear masks.

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STEVENS from page A1

but not quite. We shall see. We shall also see if Stevens wants to continue on as the tree warden, an elected position that will be on the ballot next spring.

Stevens is a hometown boy who grew up in Turners Falls in a building on the corner of Third and L Street where the FL Roberts gas station is now located. There was a car repair garage up the street, where the Pioneer Valley Brewing Company is now, and a gas station behind that on Second Street where Nova Motorcycles now sits.

Stevens says Second Street, which will soon be narrowed to slow traffic, ran through Unity Park, and remembers when there was a wading pool and a skating rink where the Unity parking lot is now.

Stevens went through the Montague public school system, including the old Central Street Elementary School which is now an early childhood education facility. He also attended the Franklin County Technical School.

It goes without saying that he has seen numerous changes in Mon-

tague's public works system during his tenure. In addition to taking over parks groundskeeping, the DPW now oversees cleaning and lining the sewers. The department will be requesting a new high-tech camera to assist in that work at the October 16 special town meeting.

Stevens' time at the public works department also coincides with the aging of old infrastructure, and worries about a changing climate. The department has recently dealt with repeated embankment collapses along Millers Falls Road, and flooding in downtown Millers Falls, both related to drainage challenges.

On the positive side, the department also has a large new facility on Turners Falls Road, replacing the much older and at-risk structure at the end of Avenue A.

Stevens did not give a precise date as to when he first became tree warden, but estimated that it was around "30 years ago." Despite some controversy six years ago around the removal of some historic "Klaiber Trees" – named after the former tree warden who planted them – Stevens has generally re-



From left to right: Mark Stevens recently joined his brothers Reggie and Butch in retirement.

ceived high marks for his work.

A Turners Falls "Tree Inventory" published in November 2015 found that the local tree population generally lacked diversity, but was generally complementary of the town's policy. "You guys are way ahead of other towns," said Mary Prius of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, adding that Stevens was

doing a "fantastic job."

In recent years Stevens has been assisted by – and has had to navigate – a new tree committee which has obtained hundreds of grant-funded trees, created a wood bank, and successfully pushed a new tree bylaw through town meeting. Stevens says he has "learned a lot" by collaborating with the committee, particularly

from Michael Marcotrigiano, a recently retired professor and director of the Smith College Botanic Garden who lives in Montague Center. Marcotrigiano has retired from the committee, but according to Stevens, "he's off, but he's on."

We shall see if the same will be said of Stevens when next summer rolls around.



Good bridges make good neighbors: Chestnut Hill people meet each other at last Saturday's celebration.

PARK from page A1

"We'd like to thank the tenants and management of Powertown Apartments next door, and all the residents and businesses in downtown Turners Falls, for having to live in a construction zone with noise, inconvenience, and dust throughout these last 18 months," said Gina Govoni, director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, which oversaw the park project on behalf of the town.

A 1980s replica of a late 19th-century French sculpture, the Spinner was first installed during the village's first streetscape improvement campaign as a tribute to the women who worked in the mills during



Teachable moments: Leonore Alaniz brought a spindle and fiber to show how a real pre-industrial weaver would have practiced her craft.

Turners Falls' industrial heyday.

Jack Nelson, the Canal Street sculptor who worked to refurbish the statue, became emotional as he said that it honored not only these historical women, but "the generations that are coming."

The statue followed a popular motif, River-Culture director Suzanne LoManto explained, of the three Fates of Greek mythology; she would have been "Clotho, a goddess that controls and weaves the thread of human life."

"The Spinner has witnessed it all," LoManto told the audience: "a community working to regain a foothold in the modern economy while maintaining history, a sense of place, and a rather unique identity."

Nina Rossi, a local artist and this newspaper's features editor, spoke briefly about the time capsule Nelson was about to insert into the statue's base. It contains photos of 40 local women and non-binary people standing on the empty pedestal holding symbols of their professions, and essays by ten imagining how those professions might have changed after 75 years, when the capsule is due to be opened.

Town planner Walter Ramsey pointed out other features of the refurbished and rearranged park: metal leaves, draped over the edges of the stone benches to stymie skateboarders; a set of bright red chairs which parkgoers may move around, and will hopefully not disappear; and a brick circle, one of three the town plans to feature at downtown gathering spaces "in contrast" to the village's gridded layout.

The park includes newly planted shrubs and trees, all of which Ramsey promised would grow.

"It's also the powerhouse and water supply for all of the downtown streetscape," he added. General contractors Sciaba Construc-

tion Corp. encountered a major unforeseen conduit when they began excavation, forcing delays as architects Berkshire Design Group redesigned the project accordingly.

At one point, the project also brought opposition from a group of downtown residents who complained that public input did not guide the design, and criticized the decision to move the statue from the center of the park to its rear.

The final feature Ramsey highlighted was a new plaque on the adjacent Powertown building honoring Frank Abbondanzio, the former town administrator who spearheaded downtown streetscape improvements throughout his 36-year career at town hall. Abbondanzio retired in 2016 and died in 2018; his wife and children attended the event.

"I will never have the opportunity to have as grand an impact as he had," Abbondanzio's successor, Steve Ellis, told the crowd.

Ellis credited the Montague selectboard with the idea to make the park project more elaborate and expensive than was first planned. "What really strikes me now is the process, and the moments that bring you here to this moment," he said. "It is for the future for people to decide what conversations they want to have in this park.... Everything that's going to happen in this park is going to come out of the imaginations, and the moments, of the people who live here."

After the lifting of the tarp, many of the onlookers obeyed encouragement to crowd around the statue and peer at it more closely.

Local weaver Leonore Alaniz gave an impromptu demonstration of how the spinner would have worked: holding a distaff wrapped with flax in her left hand and spinning thread from it with her upstretched right hand, from which would have been dangling a spindle.

BRIDGE from page A1

over 50 people gathered to celebrate the replacement bridge.

A proclamation was read, the winning name in the vote for a name was announced, and the oldest resident, Bob Walker, and the youngest resident at four months old, cut the ribbon to open the bridge. The baby had some help from mom.

The bridge was colorfully decorated, the official Chestnut Hill flag flew rather limply from the guard rail, and Bay the horse was in her finest regalia. Two resident musicians played drum and saxophone to the enjoyment of all.

The soaring span was admired as it towered over the, um, raging trickle below that could be crossed

in a long stride. And 200-foot plus of guard rail will offer protection to the abutters' woodpile. The abutters live in the old former Chestnut Hill Schoolhouse, and the winning name was the Old Schoolhouse Bridge.

While probably as costly as the Boston Big Dig per Smoot (those of a certain Cambridge age will understand), fire trucks can now cross the streamlet without fear of crashing into the streambed.

New and old neighbors met and mingled, and surprising connections were discovered while muffins, scones, cider, and coffee were enjoyed. All in all, a fine time was had, one that brought neighbors out to celebrate the bridge and togetherness.



The Spinner statue, with a distaff and spindle.

"Several people thought the Spinner is a dancer," Alaniz told the Reporter. "The technique is still practiced worldwide, primarily today with wool, for recreational purposes but also as a life skill in rural villages."

As the gathering thinned out, one neighbor took a seat on a new bench with an old guitar and tested the park's acoustics.

"There are places I'll remember," he began, "all my life, though some have changed...."



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MONTAGUE from page A1

masks... I will be wearing a mask.”

Selectboard chair Rich Kulewicz said he agreed with Lord, as long as there was distance between seating. “I would say, as long as you’re vaccinated, it’s your choice,” he said.

The board did not take a vote on the issue, but a bit later in the meeting David Harmon warned the board that “given the percentages... in Montague we should assume that there is going to be a selection of participants [in the meeting] who are not vaccinated, so I would encourage you to make your plan knowing that there will be unvaccinated people at that event.”

The Shea discussion focused on a plan, which the board approved, to eliminate parking spaces directly in front of the Avenue A theater so a limousine could park there and let off celebrities. The film, *The Secret of Sinchanee*, made heavy use of Turners Falls as a setting, and this will be its New England premiere.

“I know we’re in unprecedented times right now with COVID,” writer-director Steven Grayhm told the board. “We’re going to do everything we can to make everyone safe – and tell your friends: this Saturday at seven o’clock.”

According to its website, the Shea Theater Arts Center’s policy is to allow only “vaccinated individuals” to attend its indoor events, and they will be required to wear masks “unless they are eating or drinking [at] concessions.”

The board approved a request from Element Brewing Company on Bridge Street in Millers Falls for “permanent approval” of a pouring

permit to continue to serve beer on an expanded area of its front patio. The permit for the expanded space was originally granted under a state emergency license which may expire next spring. “Basically, we’re seeking to continue what we’re already doing,” said Element owner Dan Kramer.

The board also approved a request from Alyssa Comeau of Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School for a band concert at Peskomskut Park on Sunday, November 14 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Comeau, who is the music teacher at both schools, said she planned to make the concert a “little festival” by selling cider, hot chocolate, cheese, and other items, including baked goods made by sixth graders who “have their own bakery company.”

Comeau said she was going to encourage families to sit together in small “picnic parties,” and try to remain distant from other families. No questions were asked about mask wearing or vaccinations.

Most of these decisions followed a presentation by public health director Daniel Wasiuk on the latest COVID metrics. As in the past Wasiuk reported on only the latest Montague numbers, not those for the region. He said there had been 22 cases for the two-week period from September 19 to October 2, but only 6 during the second half of that period.

Ellis then shared a chart of new cases for towns in the region for the period September 12 to September 25. The chart, created by the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, reported 45 “new cases” for Greenfield and 34 for Montague. The chart did not show the total for

Franklin County, but the sum for all the towns appeared to total well over 170 for the two-week period.

However, board of health member Melanie Zamojski reported that a different data set she had obtained showed 39 “current cases” in the county, but for some reason this total did not include the two largest towns, Greenfield and Montague. Ellis said this report was “very helpful” and noted that Zamojski’s more recent data set suggested a decline in Greenfield’s new cases, which he called “hopeful.”

Audio Tour Grant

In non-pandemic news, RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto reported that her program had received a \$20,000 “Expand Massachusetts Stories” grant. The money will be used to create a “Peskeomskut audio tour” to explore our “narrated history” along the Connecticut River, “particularly on the bike path” in Turners Falls.

LoManto said the tour will feature “voices that have gone unrecognized or excluded from public discussion,” including “indigenous and local history partners.” It will begin with nine stories, and “over time will expand to a wide range of interests and ages.” Listeners will connect to the tour through an application on their cell phones.

The selectboard voted to execute the grant.

Former DPW Buildings

The board approved a proposal by Ellis to designate the capital improvements committee (CIC) to review bid proposals for 500 Avenue A, the former public works garage.

The town is waiting for the results of a Phase II environmental assessment of the structure and the site it sits on before putting the property out to bid.

Ellis said the CIC, which is actually an arm of town meeting, has the diversity of expertise, and the time on its current schedule to do the job in the coming months.

He then gave the board an update on the large prefabricated blue structure behind town hall, which he called a “shed,” that has also been vacated by the public works department. “I think many of us are anxious to have it no longer be part of our streetscape,” he told the board.

Ellis said that before the town attempted to sell the structure, the department would decide whether it wishes to move it to another location, presumably near its new facility on Turners Falls Road.

Other Business

Ellis reviewed requests by departments for spending the remaining funds available under the federal CARES Act, a COVID relief measure. He said there had been a request from the health department

for more contact tracing hours, “or other COVID responsibilities that the town nurse might have.” He reported that October 29 was currently the end of the “state’s responsibility” for administering those funds.

Under “topics not anticipated” at the end of the meeting, Ellis reported that opening the bids for the Fifth Street pedestrian bridge construction, scheduled for the previous week, had been delayed until Tuesday due to “a few questions that came in.”

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell noted the large numbers of redundant telephone poles that have been accumulating around town. The problem, caused when the electric company constructs a new pole but fails to move the old one, has been a frequent complaint of the selectboard. “We’re going to be looking at them next spring, the way it’s going,” said Boutwell.

Ellis said he would communicate with the electric company about the issue.

The meeting then retired to a non-public executive session to discuss “potential litigation.” The next selectboard meeting will be held October 18.



LEVERETT from page A1

species, and to slowly improve the fisheries habitat.”

A public hearing on the proposed weed management plan for Leverett Pond, scheduled for Monday night’s conservation commission meeting, was delayed until November to leave time for the commission and public to read through the 53-page study, available on the town website. The con com discussed the report with the consultants, as well as the ongoing search for a new conservation agent and a newly vacant seat on the commission.

“We have a number of people here who are here because they had been following this all summer hoping that they could make a comment or ask a question,” FLP president Tom Hankinson said. “It’s been all summer before we’ve had this meeting... and now you’re saying that you’re not going to take any comments or questions.”

“This is not the meeting we’ve all been waiting for, because we haven’t had time to digest the final report,” con com chair Isaiah Robison replied.

Mickey Marcus, a senior scientist and business development director for SWCA, and his colleague Naomi Valentine briefly summarized SWCA’s findings and answered questions from commission members.

The report cited dissolved-oxygen levels near zero in sections of the pond most heavily infested with milfoil. Marcus said Eurasian milfoil covers over 40 acres of the 102-acre pond, and is “very invasive.”

“In parts of the summer we’re creating dead zones in the pond,” he said. “[It] really needs to be controlled. It’s not good for fish; it’s not good for aquatic life. We’re seeing a trend towards eutrophication.”

The assessment was commissioned by the FLP to inform the notice of intent (NOI) the group plans to submit to the con com for approval to continue their stewardship practices. In the past, the FLP has used herbicide and hydro-raking to control weeds. According to Hankinson, the group has taken no action to address milfoil for the past three years.

Among the report’s recommendations is an annual winter drawdown of up to three feet. The new dam at the northern edge of the pond, completed in 2019 with money raised by the FLP and Community Preservation Act grant funds, would make a drawdown physically possible.

During Monday’s meeting, con com member Jono Neiger said that permitting a drawdown would be a complicated matter requiring a separate application, further

studies, and another NOI. Neiger also noted the report’s lack of data on the pond fisheries between 1994 and 2021.

The consultants are not recommending hydro-raking “at this time,” and noted that any mechanical removal around the fire hydrant by the boat launch would also require a separate NOI. In the past, hydro-raking in front of private homes was conducted by the company that applied herbicides.

A hearing for a separate proposal by the FLP to hand-pull milfoil from select areas of the pond was also continued until November. The SWCA report said this method is “not a long-term management solution, particularly for the Eurasian Milfoil, but it may provide short-term benefits in controlling excessive vegetation or when a non-chemical solution is warranted.”

Hankinson did not respond by press time as to whether the FLP had submitted their final NOI.

Finding People

The commission also discussed its search for a new part-time conservation agent. Members felt that neither of the two candidates interviewed last week had the experience necessary to carry out the complicated administrative tasks required of the agent. They agreed that the pay scale for the position must be raised to match the desired candidates’ experience, and plan to approach town administrator Marjorie McGinnis to ask how to best fund the position.

In the meantime, Tessa Dowling has returned to fill in as conservation agent, on top of her full-time job with the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust.

“I feel like I’m not able to give the hours the commission needs to keep up with the email response in any reasonable time for the public,” Dowling said. “I feel like I’m doing the bare minimum to keep us in line with regulations.”

Andrew Young has not attended meetings of the commission for several months, and at Monday’s meeting members agreed to remove his name from the on-line roster.

Macaylla Silver, a former applicant for the conservation agent position and a vocal opponent of the FLP’s stewardship plans, told the *Reporter* he wants to fill the vacant seat, but has been told that another candidate is “first in line.”

The con com’s next meeting, which will include a hearing on the pond plan, will be held November 1 via GoToMeeting.



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

Here’s the way it was on October 13, 2011: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

company’s previous surveys.

Residents Demand Action on Flooding Problem

Angry residents of the Bull Hill Road area of Leverett flooded the selectboard with complaints on Tuesday. They were mad about the slow pace of response to neighborhood demands for action on drainage problems along Long Plain Brook that led to water in basements and closed roads earlier this year – and on multiple occasions before that.

After heavy rains at the end of winter, the central north-south artery Route 63 was closed and traffic detoured on Monday, March 7, when residents in the affected area reported up to a foot of water in their basements. At the time, neighbors on Bull Hill Road and Long Plain Road came to the board calling for action to prevent a repeat of the flooding, which has occurred up to a half dozen times over the last decade or so, they say.

The residents, some of whom have backgrounds as engineers and water department employees, point to three interlocking factors contributing to the problem, but said the simplest, quickest solution would be to replace an undersized culvert on Bull Hill Road with a much larger cement box culvert.

“This is the fourth time we’ve been up here,” said an irate Bill Sieruta. “It’s flooded out before. That’s why we’re ticked off. It’s progressively getting worse. My brother and I pay \$20,000 a year in taxes, and we can’t get a simple box culvert put in on Bull Hill Road.”

Board chair Rich Brazeau defended the selectboard’s approach, saying an engineering study and permits would be needed before the town could act.

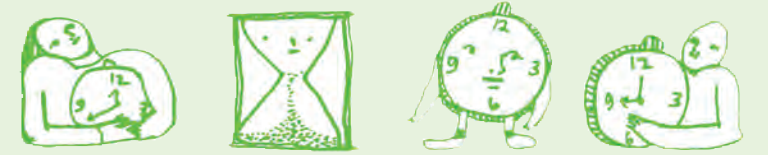
Gill Weighs In on Riverbank Erosion

Treading very carefully, the Gill conservation commission is entering the turbulent debate between landowners along the Connecticut River concerned about erosion to their land and engineers at the Northfield Mountain pumped hydro project of FirstLight Power Resources, charged, as a condition of their federal license, with mitigating areas of riverbank erosion that may be caused by the operations of their facility.

The landowners, working in association with the Connecticut River Streambank Erosion Committee (CRSEC) and the Connecticut River Watershed Council, have actively disputed the most recent (2008) *Full River Reconnaissance Report*, commissioned by FirstLight Power, which generally found the utility’s erosion control methods along the river to be working satisfactorily as planned.

As a condition of their operating license, FirstLight Power must survey the banks of the Connecticut River from the Vernon Dam to the Turners Falls Dam – an area of the river the utility considers the “lower reservoir” of the Northfield Mountain station – to show the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that erosion is being successfully mitigated.

But landowners along the river in Gill and Northfield, and members of the CRSEC contend that in the 2008 report, First Light changed the methodology of measuring changes to the riverbanks, making it difficult to compare the results with the



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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holiday Festival

TURNERS FALLS – The public is invited to the 5th Annual Migrations Festival, A Celebration of Human and Natural Diversity, next Monday, October 11 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls.

Paintings and crafts courtesy of the GuateMaya Art and Culture Connection will be exhibited in the Great Hall with outdoor activities

for kids, refreshments, and a special performance by the Mariachi Band Fiesta del Norte from 2 to 3 p.m. This event is free and wheelchair accessible.

Sponsored by DCR, Montague Catholic Social Ministries, RiverCulture, the Nolumbeka Project, Friends of the Discovery Center, the GuateMaya Art and Culture Connection, and people of Turners Falls.

The Use of Media

GREENFIELD – The LAVA Center is proud to present “Social Justice and Media: How Community Media Can Help,” a presentation by Philippe Simon, local filmmaker and Production Coordinator at GCTV, this Saturday, October 16 at 1:30 p.m.

The presentation’s purpose is to create discussion surrounding this topic, and engage audience members as to how they can become community media producers involved with developing stories around social justice events and topics.

Philippe Simon is a graduate of Greenfield Community College and has been working in community media production locally since 2008. He originally comes from Boston, where he spent his early years being active in school de-

segregation, learned how to drum and then became a performing reggae music drummer, and graduated from the Connecticut School of Broadcasting.

Simon lived in New York City for seven years, working for international businesses and performing in bands before moving to Franklin County in 2001. He is currently the Production Coordinator for Greenfield Community TV and Media.

The LAVA Center is an arts incubator, black box theater, and community space located on the first floor of 324 Main Street in Greenfield. It is run by Local Access to Valley Arts, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation (see localaccess.org).

This event is free to attend – donations will be accepted.

2021 Source to Sea Cleanup

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Thanks to the funding and strong muscles of the folks listed below, trash was removed from 21 beautiful natural areas in the towns of Erving, Gill, Greenfield, Leverett, Millers Falls, Montague, Northfield, and Turners Falls.

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 Franklin County Technical School after-school team
 Franklin County Technical School Landscape & Horticulture Shop
 Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation
 Northfield Mount Hermon School Mountain Biking Team
 Patch Neighbors • Trash Slinging Trashers
 Turners Falls High School (two teams) • Turners Falls Hot Tickets
 UMass Students • Wards of the Woods
 Dozens of individuals and families



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Top right: Volunteers bag trash in the Patch neighborhood.

Left: A crew prepares with bags and gloves near Turners Falls' Station No. 1 hydro plant.

Bottom right: Northfield Mount Hermon School Mountain Biking Team took on the former Indeck property, long a site of dumping.

Donors:

FirstLight Power
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 Town of Montague, Transfer Station/Highway Department
 Wagon Wheel Restaurant



BETH PELTON PHOTOS

Event Organizers:

Beth Bazler, Kim Noyes, Michael Pattavina, Beth Pelton & Carter Wall, FirstLight Power
 Stacey Lennard, Sarah Robertson, Andrea Donlon, Aliko Fornier & more, Connecticut River Conservancy
 David Boles, Deerfield River Watershed Association

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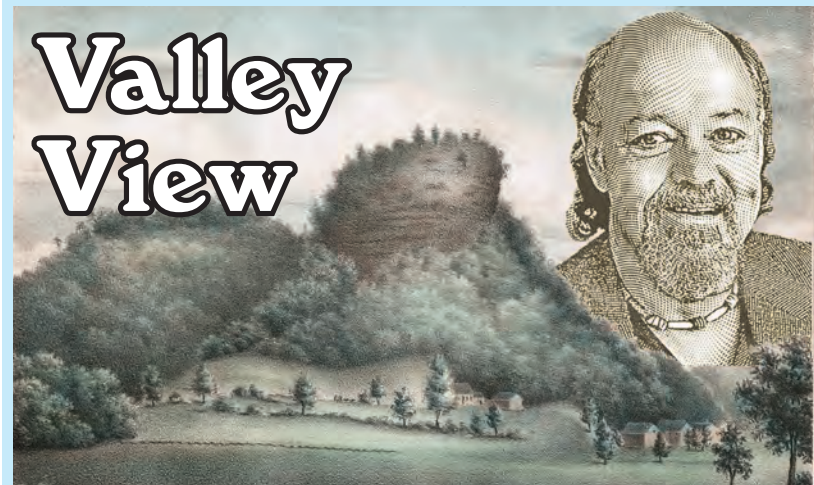


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OCTOBER 7, 2021

Above: A small crowd watches last Saturday's Spinner unveiling.



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – South Deerfield left its mark on the Wild West, including the death of Deputy US Marshal Leonard Arms, gunned down in the line of duty on April 20, 1860 in Topeka, Kansas Territory.

The shooting occurred less than a year before the first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter, Charleston Harbor, SC, and four years into a border war between Missouri and Kansas Territory over the slavery issue. The South Deerfield lawman was trying to serve what anti-slavery Free-Statists viewed as an invalid Missouri arrest warrant on John Ritchie at his Topeka home.

When Ritchie objected, explaining that the charges had been long-ago forgiven, he told Arms to get lost and went inside. The deputy followed, imploring Ritchie to surrender before the combatants raised their revolvers. When Arms ignored Ritchie's warning to come no further, Ritchie killed him instantly with a shot to the throat.

Ritchie, a devoted abolitionist and supporter of radical John Brown – yes, that John Brown, from his Bloody Kansas days – was a pillar of the infant Topeka community. Knowing all the town officials as friends and neighbors, he had little worry of severe consequence on the western frontier. He promptly surrendered, and was the next day acquitted on a murder charge by a friendly justice of the peace. The frontier judge ruled the shooting as justifiable homicide, and Ritchie walked away a free man.

Don't forget we are talking here about Wild West justice. Didn't a man have a God-given right to defend himself inside his own home when pursued by an armed invader?

Arms left a widow, Frances A. (Eldridge), and three daughters. His family lived in Wyandotte, Kansas Territory, where he managed a frontier hotel, the Eldridge House, owned by his brothers-in-law the Eldridge Brothers, a triumvirate of Shalor W. (1816-1899), Thomas B. (1825-1882), and Edwin S. Eldridge (1832-1907).

Second son Shalor was the best-known of six Eldridge boys born to Lyman and Phebe (Winchell) Eldridge of West Springfield and

Southampton. The other three thus far unnamed were Lyman Jr. (1814-1905), James M. (1819-1857), and Joseph L., who was born in 1823 and living in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1863, but seems to have left no death or gravesite record.

There were also two Eldridge sisters, Mary E. and Leonard Arm's aforementioned widow, Frances A. According to a story in Lawrence, Kansas' *Jeffersonian Gazette*, Lyman Eldridge Sr., his wife and all eight of his children were among the early residents of Kansas Territory. According to Kansas Historical Society data, wife and mother Phebe was helping son Shalor run the American House hotel in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1855. She died in 1856 in Southampton, and is buried in Holyoke.

Westward Émigrés

The Lyman Eldridge family was in Southampton, where the children attended school, by the mid-1820s. At age 20 Shalor started a prosperous, 11- or 12-year career as a railroad contractor, beginning with the Connecticut River Railroad and moving on to other New England and New York lines. That was likely what brought him to South Deerfield for the births of daughters Mary (January 5, 1842) and Josephine Phoebe (January 26, 1846).

Also residing in South Deerfield at the time was his brother James Monroe Eldridge. There is no evidence that either Shalor or James owned property in Deerfield, but they clearly did live there in the 1840s and early 1850s.

In 1841, J.M. Eldridge took Naomi Sprague as his first wife in South Deerfield, where she died three years later. Though there is no birth recorded in the Deerfield Vital Statistics, a son named James was born to them in 1843.

J.M. as a widower then married Mary Augusta Arms of that town in 1846. Their lone child, son Edwin C. Eldridge, was, according to the Greenfield newspaper, born in 1853 in the home still a stone's-throw north of the Bloody Brook Monument.

Still a teen working as a store clerk, young James Eldridge was murdered during Quantrill's Raid, a bloody daybreak attack unleashed upon Lawrence, Kansas, on August 21, 1863. On that fateful see **VALLEY VIEW** page B6

THEATER REVIEW

The Mystery of Irma Vep (Silverthorne)

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

GREENFIELD – As our town holds its breath, waiting to see what comes, a brilliant and frightening theater production bravely enters the fray. Keeping to the guidelines controlling the COVID-19 spread, with masking and vaccination requirements and improvements of air circulation in The Perch performance space at Hawks and Reed Performing Arts Center, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* opened this past weekend as the first production of Silverthorne Theater Company's 2021 season.

The show gives the appearance of a mid-Victorian play, set in the parlor room of Mandacrest, the Hillcrest family estate, suggesting this could be one of those slow-moving proper high-brow dramas. It is, in fact, none of that. This cross-dressing, raucous camp production includes ghosts, vampires, a werewolf – maybe a real wolf, too – and a mummy in a sarcophagus; two actors play so many parts in quick changes that the audience hardly notices there are only two of them.



Lady Enid (Noah Tuleja) drinks her tea as Jane (Sam Samuels) sits reluctantly next to her, still sad over the loss of her mistress, Irma Vep.

In a seamless performance where all characters are as real as if they weren't being played by just two actors, the play is full of laughs, twists and turns, but also dark melodrama. The events in this Egyptologist's home are not what would be expected.

As the well-mannered housekeeper, Jane Twisden, enters the

stage, it may take a moment to see the man beneath the wig. Jane clasps her hands together in a demure gesture, and curtsies when addressed. Actor Sam Samuels is perfection as he plays Jane with subtle humor, one of several parts this talented actor plays. He and his co-star, Noah Tuleja, who swishes onto the stage as

see **THEATER** page B8

Montague's Confirmed Misdials: A Police Log Retrospective – PART II

Compiled by EMILY ALLING / Illustrations by TROUBLE MANDESON

Wednesday, 10/3/18

9:02 a.m. Abandoned 911 call; upon callback, spoke with female resident who advised she meant to dial 411. Confirmed misdial.

7:28 p.m. 911 misdial; caller advises that he accidentally called 911 when he was paying his cell phone bill. Officer en route. Confirmed misdial.

Saturday, 10/6/18

4:06 a.m. 911 open line received from state police in which they heard two males shouting with no response. Upon callback, the cell number goes to a voicemail that has not been set up. Cell pinged to Third Street. Officer advises area quiet upon arrival.

11:25 a.m. Greenfield PD advising they took an abandoned 911 call from a cell line on Clark Avenue; called back; caller advised his sister was playing with the phone. Officer clear; confirmed misdial.

8:04 p.m. 911 misdial from Ferry Road; caller stated he accidentally dialed 911 while talking to a Verizon representative, working on

a phone issue. Confirmed misdial.

Tuesday, 10/23/18

12:56 a.m. GPD received an open 911 call from cell phone mapping to Industrial Boulevard. Machinery could be heard in the background. Upon callback, male party answered and stated that he pocket-dialed 911 by accident. He is currently at work, and machinery could be heard in the background. States that there is currently no problem and was cooperative with giving information.

Thursday, 10/25/18

8:01 a.m. Abandoned 911 call received. Upon callback, female stated she was trying to reach the RMV. Confirmed misdial.

12:25 p.m. 911 misdial received. Spoke to male party on callback who stated that he pressed the wrong button on his phone. Confirmed misdial.

Tuesday, 10/30/18

9:16 a.m. 911 abandoned call from Franklin County Technical School. Confirmed with staff member

that it was a misdial by a student.

Friday, 11/2/18

12:42 p.m. 911 misdial from Judd Wire. Caller advises he meant to dial 811 to get an outside line; no emergency. Misdial confirmed by officer.

Wednesday, 11/14/18

5:13 p.m. 911 hangup call; on callback, caller stated that his son was roughhousing with the dog with the phone in his pocket and accidentally dialed 911. Officer confirmed misdial.

see **MISDIALS** pg B5



Pet of the Week



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(her energy can be a turnoff to others). She needs home with older kids.

Interested in adopting Yuki? Animals at Dakin are available only in Springfield currently. Contact adoption staff at springfield@dakinhumane.org and include your name and phone number. For more information, call (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

Senior Center Activities OCTOBER 11 THROUGH 15

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 10/11

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

Tuesday 10/12

3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 10/13

Foot Clinic by Appointment
No morning classes; no bingo
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 10/14

10 a.m. Chair Yoga
1 p.m. Cards & Games & Pitch

Friday 10/15

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



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

NORTHAMPTON – I've had many clients over the years reveal that they and their partner have not had much sex recently. When I ask exactly what “not much sex” means, they often say they don't recall the last time they had sex. If they rack their brains for a while, they might reveal that the last sexual encounter was a couple years ago, often longer. About 15% of all marriages are sexless, which means no sex within the last six months.

For people having frequent sexual engagements with their partners, this lack of sex may be difficult to comprehend. However, most romantic relationships start off with high sexual frequency, and then decline somewhat over time. Hence the story about putting a bean in a jar with every time you have sex during your first year of the marriage or relationship, then removing a bean for every sexual event the following year – usually, the jar will still contain quite a few beans after that second year.

Many elements contribute to this gradual sex decline: stress, work, the advent of children, large chore lists at home, social and family obligations, unresolved trauma, negativity and resentment building within in the relationship, and more. All of these things can press on the sexual brakes. If both people's brakes are constantly being pressed, then, *voilà*, three years can sail by with nary a deep kiss.

What do you do if you wake up one day and realize that months or years have gone by, and sex has retreated like a hibernating bear? Figuring out how to break the ice is probably the first step. Even if you are feeling OK regarding the lack of sexual contact, what is your partner thinking and feeling?

Take a deep breath, gather strength by invoking Xena the Warrior Princess, Oprah, or the Duke from *Bridgerton*, and ask your partner for an appointment to sit and talk about intimacy. Try to remove any accusing or bitter tones and pretend you are a scientist interviewing a new species. Your goal is to simply understand the situation more, both for yourself and your partner. And yes, you can leave subtle hints around (like this article), or comment on sexual activity in a movie or TV show, but your partner may not catch the hint.

I often recommend that couples use Harville Hendrix's “Imago Dialogue” when they need to discuss something potentially provoking or distressing. Essentially, one person uses “I statements” to explain what they are going through. The other uses “active listening skills,” such as rephrasing and repeating what is benign, said to show they are truly listening.

The listener is not allowed to offer any opinions or their own feelings/reactions/thoughts about what the speaker is saying. Their job is to simply listen. Once the speaker has fully exhausted everything they want to say, the listener must summarize. If the summary is accurate, then the roles switch.

This process can often bring a lot of clarity and reveal surprising information. Perhaps one partner has been experiencing PTSD-related symptoms from a prior trauma and can't consider intimacy at the moment. This surge of PTSD symptoms can sometimes occur after a long period of emotional and life stability, or be brought to light by their own child reaching the age they were when they were abused. This resurgence can be very surprising

to the survivor and their partner. A little EMDR or trauma-informed therapy may help resolve this block.

One partner may be going through some aging, medical, or medication changes that decrease their interest or comfort regarding sex. Another partner may feel so overburdened by work, family, and home obligations that the thought of adding another thing into the mix like sex is completely overwhelming. And some partners may realize that incompatible sexual interests and sexual styles have developed, leading to disinterest.

The bottom line is that there are a million reasons why a couple's sex life may disappear. In fact, one of the most common reasons for initiating sex therapy is a desire discrepancy between the two partners. Over time this can result in a total lack of sex as the person wanting more sex gets tired of being rejected.

Getting the conversation started will absolutely be the hardest part of this process. But once the elephant in the room is named, keep the conversation going positively, at all costs. Spend the next few months reading great sex self-help books together or solo, such as *Come as You Are*, *The Guide to Getting It On*, or even the *Kama Sutra*. Start anywhere with anything, as long as it's sex-positive. Listen to sex podcasts together like *Savage Love* or Ester Perel's *Where Do We Begin*. Keep sex as a topic on the table like your life depends on it, because your relationship might. Think about contacting a sex or couples therapist.

Once you gain some comfort talking about sex, re-define and prioritize intimacy and sex. Sex is absolutely not just penetration. Sex can be defined as anything erotic between consenting adults (i.e. deep kissing, oral sex, manual sex, taking an erotic shower together, full body massage, exploring sex toys or props).

If penetration has not been satisfying due to pain, discomfort, or a lack of sustained erections, then take it off the table for a while and be open to anything that feels pleasurable and connecting. What about a tender shower or bath?

Famous sex therapists Schnarch and Gottman also advise couples add in a daily “hug to relax” – hug each other while standing until each of you relaxes. They also recommend a daily “6-second deep kiss.” The aim is to increase body and physical contact, making erotic energy a larger proportion of the air you swim in.

Gottman also offers a list of 13 things that couples regularly do to maintain a great sex life: www.gottman.com/blog/building-great-sex-life-not-rocket-science. My favorite items on the list include: kiss passionately for no reason; go on weekly dates; give surprise romantic gifts; make sex a priority over to-do lists and chores; and aim to comfortably discuss your sex life. Before sex becomes the unspoken elephant, get busy with this list.

And if these ideas feel like hell and not heaven, maybe it's time to get into couples therapy, or simply move on.

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

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

A “Swamp Show” at the Oxbow

NORTHAMPTON – The Swamp Show is a forthcoming outdoor exhibition of art set along the Connecticut River's Oxbow in Northampton. It is on view by limited appointment only and navigated by self-guided canoe rides. The show exhibits 27 local and out-of-state artists whose work ranges from paintings on recycled materials, to works of stained glass, sculptures, ceramics, wind chimes, and more. Pieces will be arranged on trees and submerged tree trunks on the coastline of the swampy inlet of the Oxbow's northeast basin.

For over three centuries, this landscape has been memorialized in countless drawings, sketches, and paintings. Canonically, it has been enshrined in Thomas Cole's 1836

painting *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm: The Oxbow*.

The term “Oxbow” is characterized as a natural horseshoe shape in a river or lake. Indigenous people in this area, like the Pocumtuc tribe, referred to what is now called “Northampton” as Nonotuck. This word translates to “far away land,” “middle of the river,” and is also interpreted as “land in the middle of the river.” The Connecticut River Oxbow, the site of this exhibit, technically is no longer a continuous U-shape meander. Due to various factors accounted for by human modification of the environment, industrialization, and natural major flooding; it now is dissected into three bodies of water with portions

connected through channels.

The Swamp Show, co-curated by *Montague Reporter* columnist and layout assistant Charlotte Kohlmann, is located in an inlet cove that is shaped like a crab claw. The project is produced in cooperation with Northampton City Council's Third Ward member, Jim Nash, and the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton, located on the southeast of the Oxbow. The Swamp Show will also be available to be seen online in the future, via film recordings and photographs.

Reservations are available by appointment only, from October 8 through 10, with a rain date of October 15 through 17. Reservations can be made through the Mundus Press website: Munduspress.world.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Court Dorsey at the Wendell Meetinghouse

WENDELL—On Saturday, October 9 at 2 p.m. Court Dorsey will present *Out with Dordei: Poems, Songs and Stories, Original Works*. The performance will take place at the newly renovated Wendell Meetinghouse, 3 Lockes Village Road, in the center of Wendell.

Out with Dordei is a series consisting of episodes created and performed either solo, featuring Court Dorsey, or with guests. This solo episode includes poems, songs, stories, and monologues written and performed by Court, as well as an excerpt from his newly completed novel, *Can of Worms*.

Court Dorsey is a theater artist, writer and playwright with a writing practice of more than 30 years. He has created hundreds of pieces, including poetry, short stories, monologues and songs. Many of these have been produced as theatrical works, guest sermons, solo and ensemble performances in concert settings, across the US, Canada, and Europe.

During the pandemic, Dorsey has been revising and completing

many of these works with pieces ranging from humorous monologues and “dark rhymies” to mystical prose, short essays, and songs. They provide humor in the darkness, reflections for human evolution, inspiration in challenging times, and often deal with political realities in a non-dogmatic way.

Reservations can be secured at tinyurl.com/OutwithDordei. Seating will be COVID-aware and socially distanced, in cooperation with the Wendell Board of Health, and masks will be required for all audience members, vaccinated or not. Good ventilation will be observed.

Suggested donations are \$10 to \$20 per person, or \$20 to \$40 per pod (up to four per pod) on a sliding scale. Pods are groupings of seats for those not requiring social distancing from each other. All proceeds will benefit the Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse, and its efforts to fully renovate this historic building.

For more information, call (978) 544-6978 or email court@crocker.com.



MEDIA ANALYSIS

The Earths of the Comic Books

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD—In some comic books, there is an idea of multiple Earths in the storyline. This is called the “Multiverse” theory. Several of the TV shows starring comic book characters that I have seen have decided to feature this in these storylines. The shows are *Arrow*, *Supergirl*, *The Flash*, and the latest one, the new *Superman & Lois*.

This idea being present in the shows has made for some very cool stories to see on TV. It was very useful in having a crossover between *Supergirl* and the *Flash* when *Supergirl* was on CBS for the first season of the show. They simply have Barry accidentally travel to her Earth.

The whole episode with him in it was great. Barry being so fast that he shows up on that Earth is what made his appearance on the show make sense. I mean, *The Flash* was on the CW and *Supergirl* wasn't yet on that network, so they kind of had to explain how this occurred, and that worked. That crossover still worked between them when *Supergirl* did get on the CW, and *Supergirl* showed up on *The Flash* show for a storyline.

One more thing I should mention is the second crossing between their Earths worked very well because both stars have a musical background. Her appearance on his show was in a musical episode. So both times, the pairing wasn't exactly a horrible mismatch.

The Flash had on it an Earth called “Earth 2,” which has a different way that the particle accelerator explosion which made Barry become the *Flash* could have gone down. The different way it went down certainly gave us some interesting versions of characters from the show.

They have us meet a speedster

named Jay Garrick, who is someone who comes from another Earth with its own version of the character called Trickster; Jay Garrick crosses path with Barry. I briefly saw the look of the Earth he came from in one episode, and it was another totally different Earth to see.

There is a famous comic series called *Elseworlds*. These stories are mashed-up and upside-down versions of some of the stories we all know, like *Superman's*. They decided to do one for a crossover between *Arrow*, *The Flash*, and *Supergirl*. It starts out with the *Arrow* switching places with Barry and then going to *Supergirl's* Earth for help. Then *Supergirl* has it be like a whole new Earth, where everything and everyone these people know is different.

Like I said, the different-Earths idea makes for some very cool stories. Another famous comic book story on TV was *Crisis on Earth X*, which featured an Earth where the Nazis have won World War II—they show up at Barry and Iris's wedding, for some reason. The *Arrow*, the *Flash*, and *Supergirl* were there.

Seeing some of these characters as Nazis was just too weird not to watch. I know from the comics a good version of Captain Cold, named “Citizen Cold,” is in this story. That's something to see too.

As for what is on *Superman & Lois*, the Luthor who shows up on that show is from another Earth. One could assume that this is just another Luthor who hates Superman, but it's not black and white. He's from an Earth where Superman is evil, so he sees this Superman becoming like his, more or less. I guess you would call him a good Luthor.

My two favorite Multiverse storylines are the two *Flash/Supergirl* crossovers, and the *Superman* one.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Stolen Go-Kart, Packages, Wood Pellets, Parking Spot; Suspected Pot Party; Tires Not Slashed; Deer Parts

Monday, 9/27

9:59 a.m. Report of hypodermic needle on the side of the road at G and Tenth streets. Needle picked up and discarded.

11:01 a.m. Caller would like an officer to call him ASAP about an issue he is having with a neighbor. Involved neighbor also called stating that the original caller is aggressive towards the neighbors for no reason, and they are sick of it.

12:32 p.m. Caller from Crescent Street states that an unknown vehicle has been parked in the driveway for over an hour. Vehicle has moved to a neighboring property. Officers spoke to driver. She is fine; wasn't sure where to park in this neighborhood.

4:13 p.m. Caller from Second Street had called previously regarding three bicycles being stolen and just realized that her go-kart is missing, too. Referred to an officer.

5:01 p.m. Officer advising of neighbor disturbance on Davis Street; disagreement over trash on the ground between two properties. Peace restored.

5:16 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that her packages and some of her neighbor's packages have gone missing/been stolen. She stated that she saw a kid take one off her neighbor's porch this morning; description provided. Referred to an officer.

Tuesday, 9/28

7:40 a.m. 911 caller reporting that a blue vehicle came speeding down Eleventh Street and almost hit her vehicle. The car stopped at a house for a moment then sped off heading north on Avenue A. Officers advised.

8:14 a.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road states that a vehicle hit a cement pole outside of his trailer sometime overnight. DPW notified about damaged pole.

9:47 a.m. Report from Second Street of a go kart that was stolen overnight. Go kart was found and brought back to the residence by the DPW.

5:36 p.m. Caller reporting that a car drove past him at a high rate of speed and almost hit his son when he was pulled over dropping his son off at a friend's house. Caller realized it was his neighbor and went to speak with him about it; they got into a verbal argument. Caller requesting to speak with an officer at his residence. Officer advised.

8:08 p.m. Greenfield PD requesting a female officer to assist with a search. Services rendered.

9:08 p.m. Caller from Davis Street reporting

someone playing their car radio loudly outside; also suspects they are having a “pot party.” Officer advises that the female party who was playing the music was advised of the complaint and turned the volume down.

Wednesday, 9/29

11:34 a.m. Caller reporting that a male party was parked at Unity Park near the basketball court and kept getting out of his car and urinating. Caller states he has since left; not sure why he was doing this. Referred to an officer.

5:34 p.m. Caller reporting that the car in front of her slammed on their brakes at Avenue A and Third Street and she tapped their back bumper, but the person did not pull over and kept driving. Caller could not see any damage but wanted to let MPD know in case they notice something later and report it.

5:59 p.m. Caller reporting a kid hitting the lights in Spinner Park with a stick. Officer advises no kids in the area.

7:10 p.m. Food City employee has someone on camera shoplifting and would like an officer to come look at the video. Officer advises that they have an idea who the person is, but were unable to zoom in due to not having knowledge of the system. They will review the video on Friday when an employee who is able to work the system better is back.

9:13 p.m. Caller from N Street reports that his neighbor's dog has been outside barking for two hours. Responding officer advises no dogs barking upon arrival. Caller called back stating the dog was barking again. Officer advised.

9:57 p.m. Caller from Turnpike Road reporting a raccoon on the side of the road; not sure why he

is just lying there. Officer responded to area to take care of the raccoon; advised he was going to use his .22.

10:13 p.m. Caller from L Street reporting that his tires were slashed by a male party he had a confrontation with earlier. Party was sitting outside of his girlfriend's apartment in his truck; caller asked him to leave, and he won't. Caller believes that when he went back inside, the male party slashed his tires. Officer advises that tires appear not to have been slashed. One tire was flat; all four were extremely bald.

Thursday, 9/30

12:19 a.m. Caller from Avenue A states that there is a white SUV in front of the residence that has been playing music very loudly for over an hour. All quiet upon officer's arrival; two females in a car said they did have music on but will keep it down.

7:37 a.m. Caller would like it on record that he hit a deer this morning and there is heavy damage to his vehicle. Deer ran off into the woods. Caller came to station to make an official report and have pictures taken for insurance.

11:03 a.m. Caller from Fifteenth Street would like it on record that four bags of wood pellets were taken from outside her home earlier this morning.

12:55 p.m. Report of wires down across road on Turners Falls Road. Officer requesting TFFD to assist with moving cable wires from the roadway. Shelburne Control, Comcast, and Verizon advised.

Friday, 10/1

7:57 a.m. Caller from Avenue A requesting to speak with an officer re: illegal dumping near her rental property. Officer attempted call back; no answer.

11:39 a.m. Anonymous report of people smoking in a car behind St. Mary's Cemetery. Parties were eating lunch; no smoking observed.

2:17 p.m. Shelburne Control requesting officer to assist Sunderland PD with searching an arrested female party. Services rendered.

6:31 p.m. Caller states that a bunch of guys are yelling at each other in Peskomskut Park. Nearby officer did not hear or see any disturbance, only two males on a bench.

7:51 p.m. 911 caller states that two males are trying to fight him after he “took” the parking space that they wanted at Third Street and Avenue A. Peace restored.

7:55 p.m. Caller from Second Street reporting that a woman in a neighboring apartment has been yelling and making a lot of noise and banging sounds. Just one female in residence who had been upset; was advised of service options but declined assistance at this time.

8:43 p.m. Motorist locked inside gates at Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center.

Saturday, 10/2

10:09 p.m. Motorist reporting that a big box truck struck a deer on Millers Falls Road near the airport. The truck kept going; the deer is deceased, and there are deer parts all over the road. Message left for DPW.

8:08 p.m. Caller states that people from a neighboring property keep dumping large items into her dumpster on Fourth Street. She is the landlord and lives out of town, but a tenant witnessed who did this. Caller advised to have tenant call and provide more information.

Fall Bulky Waste Day Canceled

Franklin County Solid Waste District's “Clean Sweep” Bulky Waste Recycling Day will not take place this fall. The decision to cancel the event is based on pandemic-related concerns and issues.

Franklin County residents can take most items that are collected at Clean Sweep to the Greenfield Transfer Station, open to non-residents for \$5 per load, plus specific disposal fees per item. The Solid Waste District website has town-specific information on the 17 transfer stations in the District, which remain open to residents for proper disposal of many items. For town-specific information, see www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.

Residents are encouraged to recycle computer equipment and televisions at their own town's transfer station, if an electronic waste collection program is available, or at Greenfield Transfer Station. Staples and Best Buy stores accept computer equipment free of charge; Best Buy accepts televisions for a fee. Various

charities and non-profits accept donations of working electronics, including Salvation Army and Goodwill stores. Reusable items may also be offered on an online sharing group (e.g. Freecycle.org or a “Buy Nothing” Facebook group).

Used building materials in good condition can be donated for re-use. The following organizations will accept some reusable items (call prior to delivery): [EcoBuildingBargains](http://EcoBuildingBargains.org), 83 Warwick Street, Springfield, MA, (413) 788-6900, ecobuildingbargains.org; Habitat for Humanity's ReStore 301 East Main Street, Westfield, MA 01085, (413) 642-8990, www.habitatspringfield.org/restore.

Questions about proper disposal of bulky waste, recyclables, hazardous wastes, yard waste, or food waste can be directed to the Franklin County Solid Waste District at (413) 772-2438 (leave a message with your phone number and town of residence), or email info@franklincountywastedistrict.org.

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Diaries

By **MISHEL IXCHEL**

TURNERS FALLS – I recently returned to my kitchen and I could not be happier. For months, I forbade any kind of cooking in the house. Looking back now, it's plain to see that since spring, we as a family have survived on take out and bland food. It happened when I was pregnant the first time with my son, and it happened again this round: the first three or four months of my pregnancy are hell on earth, and I am in a place that absolutely forbids any kind of food.

I'm kind of obsessed with eating well. That's one of the things I really love and appreciate about living in western Mass: the abundance of good local food all around us. I remember laying around in bed this past spring and summer, nauseous and low-spirited, longing for the days when I could return to do things like meal planning, prepping, and of course, eating.

The level of nausea I experienced was health-altering. At first, I OD'd on protein, because every publication I got my hands on suggested eating tons of the stuff in order to avoid morning sickness. Lo and behold, in my case, all that extra protein that my body simply wasn't

Food Is Medicine

used to only made me sicker.

By the time I figured out that what I needed to do was bring myself back to balance, I was too sick to be near food, let alone prepare it. And so, at the whims of what I felt I could stomach, I had my boyfriend running all over the place. Sometimes, despite all that effort, I still couldn't eat what he'd gotten.

The lack of nourishment and the inability to take care of myself by eating things I love and believe in the most – healthy, mostly plant-based food – took its toll. Physically I felt horrible. And then that feeling crept into my emotional and mental health. This was the perfect storm for depression. I sank in deep; for weeks and months I would go way down, come up just enough to take a breath, and sink back down.

First trimester is some kind of something, and I have never really gotten along with it well.

But here I am, mere weeks from the third trimester: chopping, peeling, grating, slicing, sautéing, baking, you name it. I appreciate my kitchen in ways I didn't before. I'm doubling down on making recipes that fit the season, using as many local ingredients as I can.

Like I said, I've always been obsessed with eating well, and now more than ever I feel on a mission to turn our kitchen into our biggest ally. I am dreaming of shelves and labeled jars, with ingredients that will

help us stay nourished through the winter months. Powders, elixirs, superfoods, spices – I want to turn my kitchen into my favorite restaurant.

I've also found it really helpful to prep my food in the morning. Chopping things up and setting ingredients to the side has made my life so much easier in the evenings, when all I have to do is come home and put it all together.

It is no surprise that after a few weeks of being back in the kitchen, my mental health has also improved. And then I take a look at my family unit, and notice how they themselves are bouncing back in different ways. "It's nice to have you back," my boyfriend said to me recently. I realize that all those months of feeling physically and mentally down also took a toll on my family. But it's also strengthened us, made us sturdier. We survived that, and we emerged from it feeling better than before.

And now that I'm "back," I cannot wait to fatten up and nourish my family, and do all the things over the coming months that will help us stay healthy.

Ecuadorian-born and New York City bred, Mishel Ixchel is mama to a five-year-old, and currently resides in Turners Falls where she practices and teaches the art of sacred self-care. You can find her on Instagram @indiemamadiaries.

MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN



SUBMITTED PHOTO

No. 39: Joseph Allred

Interview by **J. BURKETT**

TURNERS FALLS – Joseph Allred is a contemporary music player who grew up in Tennessee. He currently resides in Boston, and has played out here in West Mass a few times. He also has some releases on the Feeding Tube label in Florence. Normally he plays acoustic guitar, but also things like harmonium and even clarinet... sometimes he sings. Check out his stuff!

MMM: Hi Joseph! First of all... what do you think of West Mass? Did you like doing that show in Shelburne Falls a few years ago?

JA: Western Mass is really pretty and reminds me of the part of Tennessee I'm from, and yeah, that show in Shelburne Falls was a good experience. I liked the dog a lot.

MMM: Do you have any early music memories from your childhood?

JA: I have a lot of memories. My dad was in the choir and in a gospel quartet, so church music was a big part of the music I heard as a kid, and country, bluegrass, and gospel music were on the local radio station. That was all contrasted with my parents' record collection, hearing Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath at an early age, and being kind of spooked in a good way.

I was a metal-head when I got my first guitar in middle school, was especially into stuff like Metallica, Pantera, Slayer, etc. The Misfits carried me from metal into punk, and Dead Kennedys tapped into some of the social and political consciousness I was developing at the time.

All that stuff still influences me a lot, and I'm grateful it helped me find some sense of belonging when I felt like such an outsider in a bunch of ways.

MMM: How did you get started playing acoustic stuff?

JA: I started getting into folk music after a band I'd been in broke up and I found myself without a band to play in for the first time in the 10 years or so that I'd been playing guitar. A lot of it had to do with being interested in what all the acoustic guitar can do.

MMM: Do you like Sandy Bull?

JA: I do like Sandy Bull a lot, but I haven't spent as much time with his stuff as I have with Fahey & Basho's records.

MMM: What are your favorite kind of venues and shows? Have you played overseas?

JA: I like house shows a lot since the music I play tends to be quiet and works better in that type of environment, and it's endearing to have people invite me into their homes.

The last band I played in did a show in a train boxcar in Weed, CA with a view of Black Butte out the door that was one of the most memorable experiences I've had.

I haven't played overseas before except for an open mic I did in a coffee shop when I was in Nepal a few years ago for non-musical purposes. Hoping to do some overseas touring when it's safe to do so.

MMM: Do you feel like playing music in the South is different than up here? Do you think you will stay up here awhile?

JA: Playing here isn't that different than in the South really. Maybe this scene is a little more academically inclined. I'm not sure how long I'll stay here.

MMM: Okay! Anything else – any jokes? Have you heard Ralph White yet?

JA: I don't really have any jokes that I can think of. I have heard Ralph White. We played a couple shows together on the last tour I did before the plague set in, one in Nashville and one in Chapel Hill. I'm a fan.

MMM: And did you want to talk about your newest LP?

JA: I have a hard time keeping up with how much music I've recorded, so I feel really indebted to everyone who's helped me get my music out.

The latest solo LP I've had out is the *Michael* album that came out on Feeding Tube last summer, but I've got another one coming out called *Branches and Leaves*, due in October. It's the first album of mine that's mostly vocal stuff, and has more orchestration than most of what I've done so far.



Surviving Breast Cancer

By **Julie Cunningham**

Part 10: Angels and Demons

AMHERST – If you had a wish, what would it be? If you could have anything you asked for, but only once, what would you want?

I've asked myself this question several times during this cancer journey. Is there anything, anything at all, that I could wish for that would make having cancer okay? Is there anything that could take away the worry?

I think I would wish for an end to pain and suffering. That would end my pain and suffering, but it would also end the pain of others and we would all be happier. Regardless of money, age, education, or gender, everyone would have a certain level of happiness that couldn't be taken away. Anything unpleasant would be minor, and people would just be peaceful and happy.

Wishful thinking indeed. I am so lucky to be where I am, looking forward to surgery and being on the other side of this. Of course, every step of this journey has challenges and there will be more challenges to come, but I do have a good chance. I want to be old and cranky and bossy before I kick the bucket. I want to be 90 years old with great-grandchildren.

A lot of people would wish for money. A billion or so dollars. I wouldn't mind that if I could wish for anything, but that seems too easy. Of course, if you wish for money you'll have everything you want and you won't have to work. Who doesn't want that? You could wish for the ability to become invisible, or the ability to live out your favorite fairytale. There are so many possibilities.

Ok, now let's change the rules. You have one wish, but it has to be for something tangible, and it can't be valued over \$10,000. So you can't wish for the largest diamond ring in the world or a million-dollar house you could turn around and sell. One item, not very valuable. What would you wish for then?

I really think we get caught up in the monetary val-

ue of things, and lose sight of the emotional value. I know what I would wish for: I'd wish for my grandfather's dog tags from the war.

The story goes that one of my grandfathers, who fought in the Korean War, was a prisoner of war. He was missing in action and presumed dead. My grandmother was told that he was probably dead. She began to grieve. Well, somehow he and one of his friends were able to escape and return home. The story changes, honestly, every time I hear it because it was so long ago and I think some of it was never disclosed. But he fought his way back. Just like me. Come hell or high water, he came back to his family.

He died when I was ten, and I wish I had more time to appreciate the depth of what he went through and to ask questions. At the time, I barely knew him. I wonder what he would say to me sometimes, what he would think of this boyfriend or that boyfriend. He would have been the grandfather who stuck up for me, for sure.

He wasn't perfect, and after the war he had undiagnosed PTSD. At that time, there wasn't awareness about how PTSD impacted a war veteran. Eventually, he was able to find comfort in his work for a local church. For the last ten years of his life, he won the battle over his illness. Again, I was too young to appreciate the depth of what that meant. All I knew was that he worked at a local church for his retirement job.

So, through that, I know the ripple effect of that kind of PTSD. I can feel the loss of his stories, his wisdom, the pain that he went through to get back. I miss a man I barely knew. But I believe I would have been a completely different person in some ways if he had lived into my twenties and thirties. I believe we would have grown closer, and there is more of him in me than anyone realizes.

Cancer is an internal battle. It's a hell of a fight. And not everyone escapes.

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MISDIALS from page B1



Thursday, 11/15/18
5:45 a.m. Shelburne Control received a 911 misdial from a male party in Montague who stated he must have dialed the phone in his sleep and that there is currently no problem. Confirmed misdial.

2:24 p.m. 911 misdial; could hear mild background noise and what sounded like a child cooing in the background. The number "1" was pressed repeatedly during the call. No answer on callback; officer advises no answer at door.

4:30 p.m. 911 caller advising that he made a mistake and called 911 while trying to call information.
Thursday, 11/22/18
10:20 a.m. 911 misdial. Caller states that he accidentally dialed while making a repair on his daughter's car. Confirmed misdial.

Saturday, 11/24/18
11:23 a.m. 911 misdial received from an address that used to be a health center but is currently vacant. Area checked; no problems found.

Monday, 11/26/18
1:24 p.m. Shelburne Control received a 911 call from a male unloading a trailer at Hillside Plastics. Male advises it was an accidental dial. Officer confirmed misdial.

Monday, 12/17/18
4:06 p.m. 911 misdial received. Confirmed pocket dial while washing dishes.
Wednesday, 12/19/18
2:06 p.m. 911 misdial from town hall elevator.

Thursday, 12/20/18
7:40 p.m. Caller accidentally called 911 after getting a new cell phone that he does not yet know how to operate. Officer confirmed misdial.
Sunday, 12/23/18
4:18 p.m. 911 misdial received. Spoke to male party confirming misdi-

al after placing phone in cupholder.

Monday, 12/31/18
11:20 a.m. 911 open line; talking and music could be heard in the background; sounded like a pocket dial. Officer spoke with Park Street residents; all seems to be in order.

7:02 p.m. Greenfield PD advising of open 911 call from area of Montague Street; stated that it sounded like an adult talking to a child in the background about using the bathroom. Area checked; unable to locate.
Tuesday, 1/1/19
3:38 p.m. 911 open line in area of Unity Park dog park. Shelburne Control advising that they made contact with the calling party, who is in Riverside, Gill. All is well.

Friday, 1/4/19
5:08 p.m. 911 misdial. Confirmed. Caller's phone dialed while caller was trying to power it off.

Sunday, 1/6/19
9:01 a.m. 911 abandoned call received; no answer on callback. Misdial; no issues, but caller did have a complaint about a truck blocking the sidewalk.

Wednesday, 1/30/19
10:05 a.m. Open 911 line from Rite Aid with someone heard in background; no voice contact made.

Saturday, 2/2/19
7:59 p.m. Greenfield PD received a 911 hangup call from Farren Care Center. Upon callback, they spoke to a female who advised it must have been a pocket dial. Confirmed misdial.

Monday, 2/18/19
1:07 p.m. 911 open line; no identifiable background noise. Called back; rang and went to voicemail. Party called back after seeing missed call; advised her nephew was playing with the phone; no emergency.



Units advised.

Tuesday, 2/19/19
6:24 p.m. 911 misdial from Judd Wire. Upon callback, caller advised that she was trying to call an outside number and accidentally dialed 911. Officer confirmed misdial.

Friday, 2/22/19
12:05 p.m. Greenfield PD advising they received a 911 abandoned call from L Street. On callback, they spoke to a female who advised it was a misdial. Officer located female at the pizza house having lunch; no problems.



Tuesday, 2/26/19
6:16 p.m. Greenfield PD received a 911 misdial from Maple Street; spoke with male, who advised no emergency. Child heard screaming in background. Confirmed misdial; child playing with the phone.

Sunday, 3/3/19
1:04 p.m. Abandoned 911 call from South Street. Upon callback, male resident advised that his wife was cleaning the phone. Confirmed misdial.

Wednesday, 3/6/19
10:48 a.m. 911 misdial received from Farren Care Center. Employee states that they have just changed the phone code to dial out to "91" and then the number. MPD may get many misdials from this location because of this change.

6:01 p.m. Abandoned 911 call from Farren Care Center. Spoke with receptionist and supervisor who both advised no emergency. Supervisor is aware that the phone system was changed today to where they need to dial "9" then "1" for the area code; will bring that to the administrator's attention to try to limit the number of 911 misdials.
8:35 p.m. Abandoned 911 call from Farren Care Center. Officer con-

firmed misdial.
Friday, 3/8/19
11:30 a.m. Abandoned 911 call from Farren Care Center. Subsequently received another 911 misdial from a patient room. Misdial confirmed.

Saturday, 5/18/19
5:27 p.m. 911 misdial. Upon callback, female stated her watch must have dialed 911.

Thursday, 9/19/19
1:12 p.m. Abandoned 911 call from Franklin County Technical School. School resource officer confirmed the misdial was from the guidance office.

Friday, 9/27/19
8:34 a.m. 911 misdial from elevator inside building on Avenue A.
10:23 a.m. 911 misdial from Greenfield Savings Bank; just a beeping coming through the phone. No problems found.

Monday, 11/18/19
2:59 p.m. 911 misdial. Caller states his cell

phone froze; no emergency. Confirmed misdial.

Monday, 12/30/19
7:20 a.m. Greenfield PD reported a 911 misdial from a Masonic Avenue address; the third time they called back, a person answered sounding asleep and stated it was an accidental dial. Officer spoke with people in the building, none of whom placed a call. Multiple elderly females are all still sleeping. No male known at that address.

1:44 p.m. 911 open line with poor connection; attempted callback and heard male in background yelling "Hello?" Confirmed misdial.

Wednesday, 1/8/20
11:27 a.m. Abandoned 911 call; called back and spoke with caller, who is trying to program a medical pendant for his mother. Caller advised to call back if needed to test the pendant.

Tuesday, 1/14/20
1:58 p.m. 911 misdial. Caller advises no emergency; was trying to use her GPS on a new phone and is still getting used to it.

Wednesday, 1/15/20
8:36 p.m. Greenfield PD advised they received a 911 hangup call mapping in the area of Fourth Street. Spoke with a female at that number who

stated she is fine; she got a new phone and her ear-ring hit the button while she was using it. Confirmed misdial.

Thursday, 1/16/20
9:25 a.m. Shelburne Control received 911 open line from 911 prefix phone; unable to call back, but mapped closely to Carlisle Avenue; child singing on the phone. Officer located the source of the call; grandmother gave grandchild what she believed was a deactivated phone. Confirmed misdial.

Thursday, 1/23/20
11:03 p.m. Caller states he is a taxi driver and was at St. Kazimierz Society to pick someone up. Passenger was being belligerent, so he didn't want to drive him to Greenfield. While on the phone with the first caller, a second 911 call came in: it was the passenger stating that he recorded the whole thing and the driver was the problem. Officers advised. Abandoned 911 call had also come in; upon callback, found it to be the passenger, who stated he is all set now and is walking home. Another 911 call received from the passenger at 11:10 p.m.; still not giving his name; stated he didn't mean to call this number and hung up the phone. Officers checked the area; unable to locate passenger walking.

Friday, 5/1/20
1:39 a.m. 911 open line; caller states she has been in bed for a month because she was told to stay inside during the virus. Caller states she is a little drunk and is really sad about everything that is happening. Officers on scene. Caller states she just wanted someone to talk to because she was lonely. Officers clear; stating roommate has phone.
1:39 p.m. 911 open line plotting in Halifax, Vermont. Contacted Vermont State Police Westminster Barracks, who advised they do not follow up on 911 lines unless it sounds like there is an emergency.

Friday, 5/1/20
1:39 a.m. 911 open line; caller states she has been in bed for a month because she was told to stay inside during the virus. Caller states she is a little drunk and is really sad about everything that is happening. Officers on scene. Caller states she just wanted someone to talk to because she was lonely. Officers clear; stating roommate has phone.

Sunday, 10/18/20
12:22 p.m. 911 misdial from Our Lady of Peace Church. Could hear someone saying "hit cancel," then the line disconnected. On callback, male party advised it was a misdial. Officer confirmed misdial.

Friday, 1/15/21
6:31 p.m. 911 open line; could hear two women speaking about where to eat dinner. Spoke with female on callback; advised accidental dial. Negative signs of distress. Confirmed misdial.

Monday, 1/18/21
8:38 p.m. 911 misdial; spoke with male who advised that his son sat on his phone. Confirmed misdial.



Wednesday, 6/3/20
1:21 p.m. 911 misdial; motorist was driving and put her phone in the cup holder, and it dialed 911.

Friday, 6/12/20
3:48 p.m. 911 misdial received from Federal Street. Male party stated it must have been a butt dial. He is out back with friends hanging out. Confirmed misdial.

Wednesday, 6/17/20
12:28 a.m. 911 misdial; caller states he is camping out behind Stop & Shop and was trying to change the volume on his Bluetooth headphones. Multiple people on scene stated there was no emergency. Greenfield PD notified.

Thursday, 10/15/20
6:58 p.m. 911 open line; young child can be heard playing with phone. No answer on multiple callbacks. Officer advised.

7:09 p.m. Greenfield PD took 911 open line call; advised them that MPD just confirmed a misdial from the same residence. Officer stated the child was still playing with the phone when he left.

Sunday, 10/18/20
12:22 p.m. 911 misdial from Our Lady of Peace Church. Could hear someone saying "hit cancel," then the line disconnected. On callback, male party advised it was a misdial. Officer confirmed misdial.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Spirit Sprinkler*. New age & ambient night. Vax proof required. \$. 7 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Rosie Porter and the Neon Moons*. 6 p.m.

Palladium, Worcester: *The Black Dahlia Murder, After the Burial, Carnifex, Rivers of Nihil, Undeath*. \$. 6 p.m.

Calvin Theater, Northampton: *Tom Rush, Leo Kottke*. \$. 7 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Sue & Marvin of Falltown String Band*. Free. 7 p.m.

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.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *DJ Mentaldrift*. Free. 6 p.m.

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

New City Brewery, Easthampton: *Glen David Andrews Band, Khalif Neville*. Free. 7 p.m.

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

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

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*. Free. 8 p.m.

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Smokin' Leather*. Grateful Dead tribute. \$. 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Jackie Venson*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Rachel Baiman*. \$. 7 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Judy Collins*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 11

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Migrations Festival* feat. *Fiesta del Norte Mariachi Band*, art, crafts, refreshments, family fun. Free. 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Postmodern Jukebox*. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Samirah Evans & Her Handsome Devils*. \$. 7 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Lucero, Morgan Wade*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Mark Erelli, Mary-Elaine Jenkins*. \$. 7 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Danny Hescocock, Jr.* Free. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The Gaslight Tinkers*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Steve Forbert*. \$. 7 p.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Ordinary Elephant*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Calvin Theater, Northampton:

Ben Folds. \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Dead Man's Waltz*. Grateful Dead, Allman Brothers, The Band tribute. \$. 8 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Michael Olatuja*. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Bill Frisell Trio*. \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Caroline Rose, Joanna Sternberg*. \$. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Patty Griffin, Gregory Alan Isakov*. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21

Iron Horse Music Hall, Northampton: *Robyn Hitchcock*. \$. 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Robbie Fulks*. \$. 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Annie Hart*, analog synthesizers. Closing reception for *Luminous Bloom* exhibit. \$. 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

Great Falls Festival feat. *No Lens, Duh Band, Curly Fingers Dupree, AfterGlo, Fortified Blues*

Band, Tracy and the Valley Revival, and more. Free. 12 p.m.

Palladium, Worcester: *The Front Bottoms, Oso Oso, Sydney Sprague*. \$. 7 p.m.

The Perch at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Cloudbelly*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Brown Eyed Women*. All-female Grateful Dead tribute. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Soule Monde*. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Kal-bells, Ruth Garbus*. Vax proof required. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Unholy Roller*, skatepark benefit, feat. *Strange Fate, Eat Fire Spring, Boyfriend Machine, and Rocking Puppies*. \$. Skate jam at 12 p.m., contests, vendors; music at 5 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26

Majestic Saloon, Northampton: Screening, *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986) and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975). 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29

Palladium, Worcester: *Gwar, Napalm Death, Eyehategod*. \$. 7 p.m.

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

day, the victim's father had been dead six years and his widowed stepmother and 10-year-old half-brother, the aforementioned Edwin C., were visiting their Arms family back in South Deerfield.

The Leonard Mystery

But enough on the Eldridges. Back to their brother-in-law, Leonard Arms – a mystery man of sorts.

Arms is said by many sources to be from South Deerfield, where, according to the Greenfield newspaper, he was "widely known." Nonetheless, his lineage and birth have not to this day been pinned down.

Here's what we do know about the fallen sheriff:

- On September 19, 1842, according to a *Greenfield Gazette and Courier* notice, he was living in South Deerfield when he married Frances A. "Fannie" Eldridge in Vernon, Vermont;

- In September 1844, he was listed among Deerfield supporters of Democrat James K. Polk, in the presidential election against Whig candidate Henry Clay;

- In 1845, his daughter Frances was born in Deerfield;

- In 1848, he was listed as a member of the Adams militia;

- In the 1850 Census, he shows up as a shoemaker living in Adams with a wife and two young daughters.

Inaccurate information posted on Find A Grave and other online genealogical sources claim that Leonard Arms was the son of Erastus and Mary (Graham) Arms of South Deerfield. That would make him the brother of the aforementioned Mary Augusta Arms, wife of J.M. Eldridge, which would make sense given their contemporaneous western migrations to Kansas with the New England Emigrant Aid Company.

But the fact is that they were not biological siblings.

I know this because Erastus and Mary (Graham) Arms are my very own third-great-grandparents, and we grew up in the same South Deerfield neighborhood during different times. In my possession are old, detailed family genealogical records typed by my great-grandmother, Fannie



No photograph of US Marshal Leonard Arms is believed to exist, but several of his brothers-in-law were preserved (left to right): James M. Eldridge; Shalor W. Eldridge; and Edwin S. Eldridge.

(Woodruff) Sanderson, Erastus and Mary's granddaughter.

Although grandfather Erastus died long before my great-grandmother was born in 1865, she would have known her own grandmother well. They were neighbors until Mary Arms died at 93, when Fannie was 22 years old. There is no hint of Leonard Arms anywhere in Fannie's personal family register, which most likely was assembled with the help of neighborhood relatives.

An Earlier Sleuth

Is it possible that Erastus and Mary took in Leonard as extended family – perhaps the young son of a brother or brother's wife who died? This was not unusual at the time. But none of Erastus' brothers seem to line up, and none show the recorded birth of a son Leonard around 1820, when he is suspected to have been born.

The 1830 Census offers a faint clue, showing Erastus Arms as head of family with an unnamed male dependent between the age of 10 and 14. Could that be stepson Leonard, thus mistaken identity as a son in later Midwestern records? It's possible, and also a potentiality that stepsister Mary Augusta, some six years younger, called him brother in Kansas.

What's interesting is that I'm not the first person who's tried to figure out Leonard Arms' lineage. Greenfield historian Lucy Cutler Kellogg, author of the *History of Bernardston* (1902), was still trying to solve the

vexing riddle 35 years after her book was published. Why not? Arms was an interesting figure with local roots, he being the victim of a famous Wild West killing. Kellogg must have stumbled across his story while compiling the genealogies for her Bernardston book, and she was still furiously trying to document his lineage on September 7, 1937, when she posted this classified ad in the *Greenfield Recorder-Gazette*:

"PAYMENT OFFERED for exact date of birth about 1820 and place of same (probably Bernardston or South Deerfield) of LEONARD ARMS, son of Lucius and wife Melitta (Squires) Arms. Mrs. Lucy Cutler Kellogg, 34 Highland Ave., Greenfield."

I shared this ad with professional genealogist friend Dereka Smith of Hatfield, who set her investigative wheels in motion, confirming the Bernardston birth cited by Kellogg. There was a problem, though: That particular Leonard Arms survived less than three years.

The Kellogg citation did, however, introduce a new element that could contribute to solving our mystery. The Melitta Squires identified by Kellogg was from the same Bernardston family that produced Abigail Squires, the second wife of Josiah Arms, married between 1828 and 1830. And get this: Leonard Arms named his first daughter, born in 1844, Melita. So, it's obvious what stirred Kellogg's curiosity.

Revisiting Family

Josiah Arms was the youngest brother and next-door neighbor of the Erastus Arms family. His lone child with Abigail Squires was Obed Squires Arms, a future downtown Postmaster and boot and shoe dealer.

O.S. Arms' post office and store stood in the Putnam Block (also known as Pierce Block) on the northeast corner of South Main Street. Behind his place of business stood his home, somewhere between where Wolfie's Restaurant and the South Deerfield Polish American Citizen's Club stand today. It may have been the 19th-century house I recall being demolished to extend the Polish Club's parking lot.

Because the Squires family was a "late-comer" to Bernardston, arriving from Connecticut with stage driver and blacksmith Medad Squires (1774-1819) in the late 18th century, Kellogg's genealogies don't follow it. Online data on the family is also sketchy.

So, just one more dead-end in the Leonard Arms mystery. Data on Abigail Squires, second wife of Josiah Arms, is likewise sparse at best, and insufficient for definitively connecting the dots.

What we do know, however, is that, according to Greenfield newspaper reports, when Leonard Arms' daughter, Elizabeth Augusta (born 1855 in North Adams), and her husband, Dr. Charles N. Hart, were passing through the Connecticut Valley in the spring of 1897 in search of a boarding school for their daughter, they stayed with Obed S. Arms for a few days.

Why would they have chosen as their host Postmaster Obed S., and not one of at least three Erastus Arms siblings in the same neighborhood? *Hmmm*. Could it have had anything to do with the Squires link?

Or maybe a link to Josiah Arms – or his first wife Loana (Graham) Arms, the younger sister of brother Erastus' wife Mary?

Who knows? It's still a mystery, despite today's Internet-driven genealogy craze. All you can do is keep pulling loose threads to see what unravels. Sooner or later, some obscure reference may solve the puzzle. Then again, maybe not.

The challenge is captivating. The chase continues.



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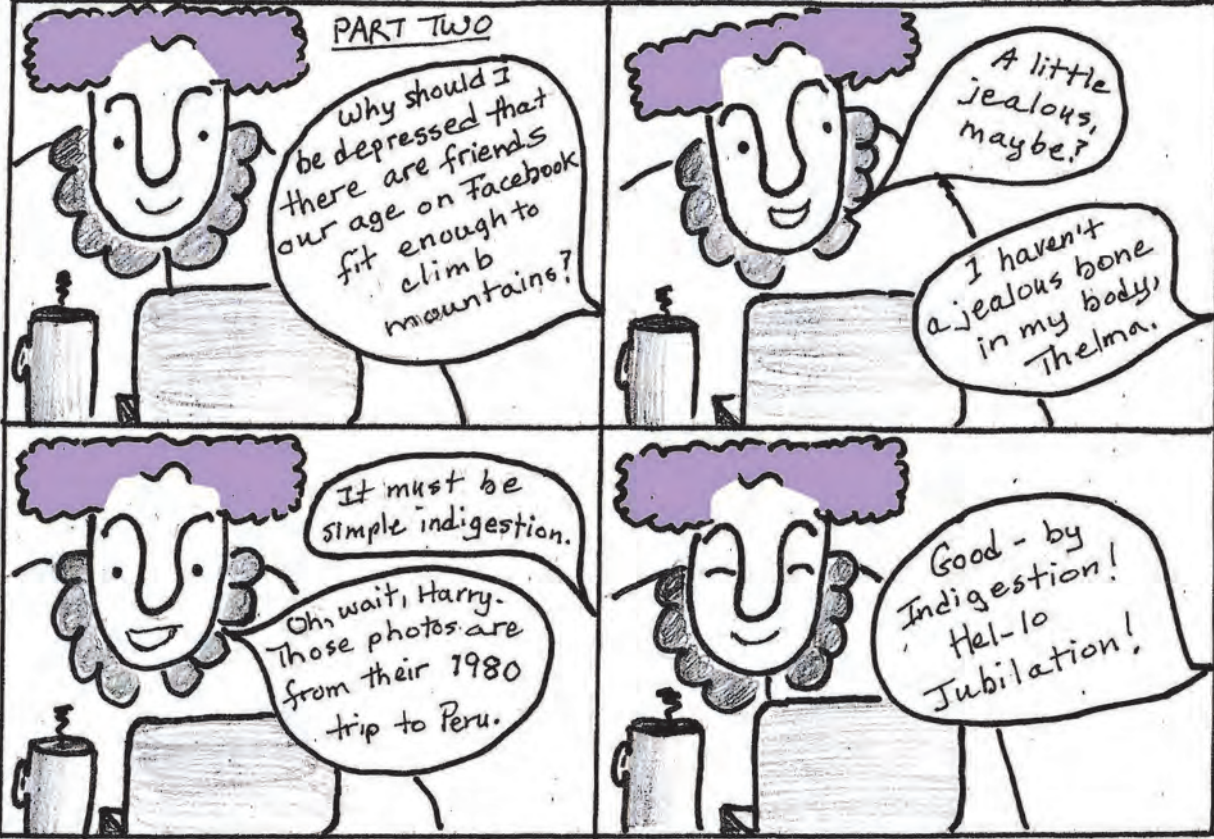
JUST GIVEN TONE

by denis f. bordeaux



OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark



Cool Cats on the Ave

Justin



Three Degrees of Warming

By Janice Rowan



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THEATER from page B1

a well-coiffed blonde in a big wig and a lace-covered, full-length elegant pink dress, create theater magic with great comic timing and chemistry.

Tuleja is playing Lady Enid Hillcrest, second wife to Lord Edgar, master of the household. Samuels, when he isn't Jane, plays Lord Edgar Hillcrest.

Lady Enid has arrived ahead of her husband, who is out hunting a wolf. The opening scene sets the stage for what follows, laying out the characters and backstory for Enid, who seems to not know all that has transpired before she married Edgar. When the lady steps away leaving Lord Edgar alone, Nicodemus Underwood, played by Tuleja, appears onstage, a tall, strong, generally melodramatic young man who helps Lord Edgar hunt the wolf that left him with a wooden leg. The audience may anticipate a few more actors to fill out the cast, but what they actually get are more characters played by the same two actors.

The Mystery of Irma Vep, by Charles Ludlam, written for two actors of the same sex, was first produced off-off-Broadway in New

York City's Greenwich Village in 1984 by Ludlam's Ridiculous Theatrical Company. It starred Ludlam himself as Lady Enid, with his lover, Everett Quinton, as Lord Edgar, and both playing a total of eight characters. It played for two years before closing, winning a special Drama Desk Award with Ludlam and Quinton winning the 1985 Obie Award for Ensemble Performance, according to the *Village Voice*.

The show has been performed many times since then, produced across the United States, in Brazil, and the West End of London. Most recently, a production ran in 2014 at the off-Broadway Lucille Lortel Theater in New York's West Village.

We are fortunate to have two seasoned actors starring in this performance that bring this play to life. Samuels returns to Silverthorne after having appeared as Orgon in a previous production of the original musical *Tar2f*. Other local appearances include *A Walk in the Woods*, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, *Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *Lend Me A Tenor*, and *Distracted* (New Century Theater), *LaBohème* and *Sweeney Todd* (Panopera), and many others.

Tuleja has also appeared in many regional theater productions, including Richard in *The Tuna Goddess* (Majestic Theater), Claudius in *Hamlet* (ArtFarm), Clown #1 in *The 39 Steps*, and Ira in *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (New Century Theatre), and many others.

Much credit goes to director Chris Rohmann for making what we see onstage so credible, the timing of scene and character changes so seamless. While everything happens very fast, to the audience all is a gradual movement from scene to scene, one character onstage to another. Rohmann's direction provides structure to the play, helping the actors maintain the continuity of the story.

Credit must also be given to the costumer, Christina Beam, for the beauty of the dresses for Lady Enid, with all that elegant lace work and the silken quality that lets those dresses flow so beautifully. She somehow dealt with the reality of how the actors can get in and out of their costumes for those quick changes. Her work on this production is outstanding. Beam is a graduate of UMass Amherst MFA program in costume design.

John Iverson continues to be the linchpin to all Silverthorne productions, with his technical expertise controlling all that happens onstage: lights, sound, set design assistance, and special effects. He holds a degree in Theater Arts from UMass Boston.

The Mystery of Irma Vep continues this weekend with shows on Friday and Saturday, October 8 and 9, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, October 10, at 3 p.m. The show continues the following weekend with performances on Friday and Saturday evening, October 15 and 16 at 7:30 p.m. with no Sunday matinee.

Tickets are \$30 general admission, \$25 for seniors and students. To purchase, go to silverthornetheater.org or call (413) 768-7514. Check the Silverthorne Theater Company Facebook page for additional discounts.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Shea Theater Rolls Out the Red Carpet for Premiere Of *The Secret of Sinchanee*

TURNERS FALLS – Enjoy a blockbuster movie screen experience for the premiere of *The Secret of Sinchanee* at the Shea Theater this Saturday, October 9 at 7:30 p.m.

The thriller was locally shot in Turners Falls and Erving (as featured in a January 9, 2020 edition of the *Reporter*). Vertical Entertainment, in association with Team House Studios, presents this premiere. Attendees will mingle with the stars of the film, described as a “hauntingly beautiful movie will have you on the edge of your seat and chill you to the bone while tugging at your heart strings.”

The premise of the movie: An industrial tow truck driver who suffers from insomnia, Will Stark (Steven Grayhm), returns to his childhood home after the untimely death of his father only to discover that a paranormal presence has been living in the house and haunting the sacred land it was built on.

Grayhm, who also wrote, directed, and produced the film, stars opposite Green Beret and ex-NFLer Nate Boyer (*Mayans MC*) and Tamara Austin (*The Walking Dead*), who play Boston homicide detectives lured to a small town after the disappearance of a single mother.

The Secret of Sinchanee also stars breakout Netflix child star Laila Lockhart Kraner (*Gabby's Dollhouse*), Jacob Schick (*American Sniper*, *A Star Is Born*), and Rudy Reyes (*Generation Kill*). Joe Newcomb, from the Academy Award-winning film *Dallas Buy-*



ers Club, is the film's executive producer.

Boyer and Grayhm recently formed Team House Studios, a production company committed to empowering military veterans by providing on-the-job training, in front and behind the camera, and the company employed ten military veterans and one Gold Star sister on this film.

The Secret of Sinchanee has been garnering praise on the international film festival circuit, winning Best Writer for Grayhm and Best Film Score at the 2021 Santorini Film Festival in Greece. It will make its UK premiere at the 2021 Raindance Film Festival.

Proper dress attire is desired for Saturday's event, which includes a red carpet at 6:30 p.m. Tickets include complimentary popcorn, the screening, and a question and answer session. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness.



BLANCHETTE PHOTO

Nicodemus (Tuleja) and Lord Edgar (Samuels) struggle over a sarcophagus that may hold the secret of reincarnation.

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