

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 20 – NO. 2

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 11, 2021

Underdog Thunder V-Ball Advances In State Playoffs



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

It's Turners! The 22nd-ranked Thunder celebrate their 3-1 win over the No. 6 Westport Wildcats in Tuesday's MAA playoff game at Westport. The Thunder advance to the Division 5 state quarterfinal against No. 14 Mount Greylock.

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Three playoff teams from Franklin Tech and Turners Falls hit the road for the MIAA postseason tournament this week. Each traveled hundreds of miles and won their first game against higher-ranked foes.

Both the Tech Field Hockey Eagles and the Tech/Turners hybrid soccer team found themselves in tied contests at the end of regulation, and both went the extra mile to win their respective overtime

battles. The third team, the Turners Falls girls' volleyball squad, won both their games, and are slated to return to an all-too-familiar foe.

Also this week, the Franklin Tech Football Eagles won another close one in a non-playoff game against the Pathfinder Pioneers. This game had it all: a stop inches from the goal-line at the half, a roughing penalty negating an interception, a fumble on the 5-yard line, and a touchdown on the first play. The Turners Falls cheer team

see **SPORTS** page A6

State Testing Finds High PFAS Levels In Leverett

By SARAH ROBERTSON

LEVERETT – A number of private wells in Leverett are contaminated with potentially dangerous levels of toxic man-made chemicals, according to test results collected by the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and UMass Amherst, with some wells requiring immediate intervention. The source of the contamination is unknown, and who will pay for the fix hinges on where it came from.

“How do we help people who, through no fault of their own, have their water contaminated by PFAS?” state senator Joanne Comerford said in an interview with the *Reporter*. “We have to feel the urgency and take the leap to ban PFAS in the Commonwealth.”

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, are used in a wide range of commercial and industrial products as a water repellent, fire retardant, and nonstick coating. PFAS are considered an emerging contaminant that does not break down in the environment and bioaccumulates in living things, earning the nickname “forever chemicals.” The health impacts of PFAS are not fully understood, but they are believed to cause problems of the liver, thyroid, and kidneys, and are linked to certain types of cancer.

“I don't think we have a real understanding of its lifetime in the

see **PFAS** page A2

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Trinity Fails To Produce Farren “Reuse Study,” Recommends Demolition

By JEFF SINGLETON

Two officials from Trinity Senior Communities, which own the Farren Care Center, a historic structure in the village of Montague City, told a packed Montague selectboard meeting on Monday that the former Catholic hospital will be demolished in the coming winter. Residents and others connected to the Farren proposed alternative uses for the building, but Trinity officials cited huge cost estimates for renovation, compared with large but much smaller estimates for demolition.

The company did not provide supporting documentation for the estimates it cited, despite what appeared to be a commitment a year ago by Trinity to work with the town

on a “reuse study” for the building and property.

The Farren was built at the turn of the 20th century as a Catholic hospital by a group led by Barney Farren, a principal in the corporation that created the village of Turners Falls in the 1870s. Several generations of local residents were born in, or helped staff, the hospital. The Farren became an “acute care” hospital in the 1960s, and in the early '90s was transformed into a long-term care facility serving a population rejected by other facilities in the state.

Last year, after much opposition from resident advocates, staff, and community members, the state approved the closing of Farren's doors. Most of its clients were moved

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Montague Pump Benefits As State Pumps Money



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

Montague selectboard member Chris Boutwell (left) and town administrator Steve Ellis (center) join state Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy on Wednesday as he announced funding to replace sewer pumps in the station behind them.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – “It's always a great day when Secretary Mike Kennealy comes to your town,” Steve Ellis, standing at a podium at a sewer pump station in an industrial park, began. Ellis, Montague's town administrator, was tasked with hosting the state Housing and Economic Development Secretary on the last stop of his statewide tour announcing a batch of small-town development grants.

The winter sun was low in the

sky when the Secretary and his entourage arrived Wednesday afternoon. Public officials from Erving, Orange, Williamstown, and Hopedale joined the local set, as did state representative Natalie Blais, various members of the press, and several owners of businesses in the airport industrial park.

Montague's grant, for \$169,000, is earmarked for the replacement of a wastewater pump within the fenced enclosure that served as a backdrop for the press conference.

see **PUMPS** page A8

MORE TO EVERY STORY

Owners Respond to Blighted Neighborhood Portrayal



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

The new owner of the former Masonic Lodge on Masonic Avenue (pictured), the new owner of the Rod Shop on Rod Shop Road, and the founder of Cold River Mining all told us the area is doing better than we portrayed last week.

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE CITY – “I am a businessman, and when someone calls me I call them back,” said George Marchacos, who owns property on 17 Masonic Avenue in the village of Montague City. Marchacos told the *Montague Reporter* he had spent \$25,000 and over 300 man-hours cleaning up in the area of Rod Shop Road and Masonic Avenue, where he owns three properties.

Well, you know people are reading your local newspaper when its editors and reporters are bombarded with criticism for unfair journalism! Last week the *Reporter* published a front-page article that included con-

cerns put forth by a new civic organization called the Montague City Improvement Association about the status of buildings and property in the village's “Rod Shop” area, named after a former factory that made nationally famous bamboo fishing rods until it closed in the 1950s.

Our article focused on the rumor that a building on Marchacos's Masonic Avenue property, recently vacated by a company founded by Marchacos that makes recreational mining equipment, could be replaced by a large solar storage battery. The town planner, we learned, was investigating the permitting process for solar storage at the request of the

see **OWNERS** page A3

LEVERETT CON COM

A Hobbled Con Com Again Punts Pond Plan

By SARAH ROBERTSON

LEVERETT – A public hearing on the Friends of Leverett Pond (FLP)'s aquatic weed management plan continues to be delayed after the conservation commission failed to gather a quorum earlier this month, and a scheduling conflict prevented the nonprofit group's hired consultant from attending the hearing rescheduled for last Monday.

At the meeting, board of health member Mary Ryan expressed frustration with the commission for the repeated delays, miscommunication, and the extensive discovery and documentation process involved with the FLP's Notice of Intent for the plan.

“When you cancel meetings and you request documents, you're sort of moving the goalposts, and you require more and more as these months go by,” Ryan said. “The power has gone to all of your heads,

see **CON COM** page A4

GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Residents, Owners Skip Public Meeting For Pot Shop

By JERRI HIGGINS

The Gill selectboard met at 6 p.m. on Monday evening, a half-hour later than usual, to allow members enough time to attend an informational community meeting for a proposed recreational cannabis dispensary. Other selectboard business included a public hearing for a used car sales license application at 235 French King Highway.

A remotely held community meeting presented by representatives of Leaf Joy, a new cannabis retail business, detailed the company's plans for the purchase and renovation of the former Green River

Powersports building at the Route 2 and Main Road intersection. Community outreach is a required step in the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission's (CCC) licensing procedures.

Moderating the meeting, which drew 11 local attendees, was Leaf Joy's Philadelphia-based consultant Jennifer Edwards and attorney James McMahon. Only two of the people attending the remote meeting were residents who were not also town officials. Neither of Leaf Joy's owners attended due to scheduling conflicts.

The meeting covered aspects of

see **GILL** page A5

Editing This Seemingly Endless River Of Words Just For You

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August 2002

PFAS from page A1

environment, because it hasn't been present in the environment long enough for us to observe its degradation," said David Reckhow, the professor leading the team of researchers behind the PFAS testing program at UMass. "PFAS is going to be with us for a while."

The prevalence of PFAS in our food, water, and bodies is well-documented scientifically. Last fall, Massachusetts set its first drinking water safety standard for PFAS at 20 parts per trillion (ppt). In March the MassDEP began a free public and private water testing program to better understand the scope and source of the contamination statewide.

Of the 37 private wells tested in Leverett so far, at least six contain detectable levels of PFAS, and three are above the state's safe limit. The highest include two wells on North Leverett Road with 110 ppt and over 160 ppt.

According to board of health chair Michael Fair, PFAS was first discovered in Leverett prior to the state's free testing program, in the groundwater pollution plume near an old landfill on the eastern side of town. Thankfully, he said, some of the affected homes already had filtration systems installed to address known pollution problems.

"That's really no surprise, because all kinds of stuff was put in the landfill, and the landfill was never capped properly," Fair told the *Reporter*. "So we have this plume of contamination that we've been dealing with for a few years that's almost resolved."

The two wells with the highest levels, however, are far from where the plume is believed to have spread, and are served by a separate aquifer. By MassDEP's standards, any PFAS levels over 90 ppt are an "imminent hazard" requiring immediate intervention, so in these cases the state is providing bottled water and will install activated carbon filters in residents' homes.

"The others that are concerning are in the same stream valley, so that's where we'll probably continue testing, and the state will find out where it came from," Fair said.

Early Detection

An elementary school on the Wendell-New Salem border, the Swift River School, remains the only public water supply in Franklin County known to this newspaper to have PFAS levels exceeding the standard state. Recent tests showed that the well water had 48.5 ppt in August and 64 ppt in September, the highest levels recorded since initial tests detected 53.8 ppt last November.

The school is currently using bottled water for drinking and cooking, and installed two carbon-filtered water bubblers over the summer. MassDEP has already approved one potential long-term solution: installing a \$40,000 activated carbon filtration system, to be paid for by the towns of Wendell and New Salem. The towns have opted to look into the possibility of drilling a new well before making their decision.

"Since we still do not know the source of the contamination, we will first test Swift River's neighboring wells," read a statement from the school administration. "[I]f they are also contaminated, the plan for a new well will most likely be scrapped, since we will assume the PFAS contamination is wide-spread. However, a new, contaminant-free well would be the most cost-effective solution in the long run, since a filtration system will have to be maintained, and the cost of this maintenance is unclear at this time."

Barbara Craddock of the Wendell board of health told the *Reporter* that the town's decision "depends on finding out where the PFAS are coming from, which as far as I know has not yet been determined."

Leverett Elementary School was tested on April 14 and contained 4.5 ppt of PFAS in the drinking water, according to principal Annie Foley Ruiz. "We will continue to monitor, but there is no risk at this time," Ruiz told the *Reporter*.

The two other schools in the Union 28 district, the Shutesbury and Erving elementary schools, found no PFAS when they were tested in April, according to superintendent Jennifer Culkeen.

Mapping the Problem

As new testing programs discover PFAS in unexpected places, attention is turning to the causes of contamination. Possible sources of PFAS could include landfills, airports where firefighting foam has been used, farmland that uses recycled sewage sludge fertilizer, aging septic systems, and hazardous waste sites. Based on recent samples of tributaries of the Connecticut River by the US Geological Survey, wastewater treatment plant effluent can also contain PFAS.

"I think there are a number that have to do with land application of sewage sludge," Reckhow said. "There are some that seem pretty certain."

Sampling of the private wells, which is limited to households that opted in to the program, is nearly complete in Leverett and Wendell, according to the state website, but testing has yet to start in Erving. Montague and Gill did not qualify



Caitlin Kelley of Easthampton is the new director of the Montague Libraries, on the job less than a month. So far, she's planning to add a seed bank to the library's offerings as well as some new adult programs during the winter.

for the free program because fewer than 60% of their residents rely on private wells. Public water tests have not found actionable levels in these towns yet, according to MassDEP data available online.

"I think Leverett holds the record for the western region of the state," Reckhow said. "We know there's a corridor called the PFAS corridor in the central region that includes a couple towns we haven't sampled yet because there are some ongoing waste site cleanups."

By far, the state's highest PFAS level in a private well came from the town of Carlisle, where one well revealed a PFAS level of 396 ppt. The North Leverett Road sample is the third-highest result of the roughly 760 published so far statewide.

In Shutesbury, five wells of the 40 tested exceeded the safe drinking water standard, with the highest at 85 ppt, the fifth-highest in the state. Four of the 14 highest concentrations in Massachusetts thus far have been measured in Shutesbury. Attempts to reach town officials for comment received no response as of press time.

Three of the 20 wells tested in Wendell had detectable levels of PFAS, but none violated the standard. Of 27 tested in Pelham so far, the highest was at 37 ppt, and three others found detectable but safe levels. Only four wells have been tested in New Salem, with one showing a detectable level of 2.4 ppt, well below the safety threshold.

A Costly Fix

Outside of the "imminent hazard" situations greater than 90 ppt, it seems that homeowners and institutions are responsible to remedy their own contamination – unless a source and responsible party are identified.

"There is a chance that the remediation could be the financial responsibility of another party, if that party is deemed responsible for the contamination that was released to the environment and the contami-

nation has migrated to or impacted the downgradient or adjacent property or properties," Kathleen Fournier, a spokesperson for MassDEP, told the *Reporter*.

Some homeowners have expressed a reluctance to get their wells tested to avoid the legal and financial liability of fixing it, in addition to a potentially significant impact on their property value. During a Facebook livestream last month about PFAS, a constituent of Comerford's shared why she chose not to have her well tested: she was pregnant, and afraid her water was contaminated with PFAS, but could not afford the necessary steps to fix the problem.

"Because people have raised this issue, this pretty acute bind of wanting to test their wells and water sources but being afraid of the personal responsibility... it has brought it to such a fever pitch that we have to do something about it," Comerford said.

In May, the Baker administration announced that the state had committed \$20 million to a Clean Water Trust to help communities address PFAS contamination issues, of which \$8.4 million went towards the statewide sampling program, and around \$6 million has been granted to dozens of public water systems statewide. The results of these tests, to be collected and analyzed in a final report by Reckhow and his team at UMass, will help inform MassDEP's mitigation strategies.

"It's a complicated analytical method, more complicated than anything we've done with drinking water up until this point," Reckhow said. "And it's pretty expensive. It's a lot more expensive than lead."

The residential testing program is targeted toward towns that rely on private wells; 84 of the 351 municipalities in the state qualified. According to Reckhow, the team expects to gather results from 1,600 public water supplies and 3,500 private wells by the end of the program.

Whack-A-Mole

Another point of concern, Comerford and Reckhow explained, is that the state is only testing for six of the thousands of variations of PFAS chemicals in existence. These are PFOS, PFOA, PFDA, PFHpA, PFHxS and PFNA, a short list referred to collectively as "PFAS6."

While the Biden administration has promised to take steps to classify PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances, there is no current federal ban on any PFAS chemicals; some manufacturers have been phasing out their use on a voluntary basis. This summer, Maine became the first state to enact a ban on the chemicals, outlawing the sale of carpets containing PFAS in 2023, and all consumer products as of 2030.

"The regulatory action right now, picking on individual compounds, is a whack-a-mole process," Reckhow said. "Tell them 'no, you can't have PFOA' and then they go to C4 compounds or C6 compounds instead."

Comerford, who chairs the Joint Committee on Public Health and sits on the PFAS Interagency Task Force, introduced a bill that would "turn off the tap" on consumer goods manufactured with PFAS-like cosmetics, furniture, and food packaging. She told the *Reporter* she does not think the state and federal government are as engaged as they need to be to address the magnitude of the problem, but is hopeful that money from the federal infrastructure bill will garner more resources to remedy contaminated sites.

The Biden administration has announced it will sign the bill passed by Congress, which includes \$10 billion to remove contaminants from drinking water, next week.

"PFAS is an emerging science, and an acute public health issue," Comerford said. "Every day we're learning more about it and it hasn't reached full public awareness, but me and my team feel that's something that needs to occur."

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Thursday, November 11 is Remembrance/Armistice Day, marking 103 years since World War I ended in Europe. This year, the Traprock Center for Peace & Justice and Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution (FCCPR) Peace Task Force will mark the anniversary during their weekly vigil at the Greenfield Town Common. Their “Stand Out for Peace” is this Saturday, November 13 from 11 a.m. to noon on the Greenfield town common.

“We will be out to support calls from Veterans for Peace and World Without War to return Armistice Day to its original meaning, a day to advocate for the ending of all war,” explains Marty Schotz of the Peace Task Force. All are welcome to join this call for peace. For more information, visit traprock.org.

Volunteers are needed this Saturday, November 13, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. to help stack cordwood, which will be provided free for low- and moderate-income seniors who burn wood in Montague. Last year, the wood bank assisted 24 low- and moderate-income households with free cordwood from the woodbank, including some who were experiencing genuine heat emergencies.

Spend an hour or two this Saturday morning at the Montague transfer station on Sandy Lane (turn right at the entrance) with other volunteers for a healthy outdoor activity, to benefit those in need of heat assistance in our community. Bring work gloves!

The wood bank is a project of the Montague tree advisory committee. For more info, call (413) 863-9296.

Come see the new **jewelry, ceramics, paintings, and fiber work** of 13 emerging and established artists of western Mass this weekend at the You + Me Gallery in Greenfield. You + Me is a semi-outdoor pop-up gallery and classroom space fostering the interdependence of creatives. Check it out at 115 Hope

Street on Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Instagram @youandme.gallery.

On Saturday, November 13 from 1 to 3 p.m., come to the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls to meet the **artists in the Maintenance & Repair exhibit**, curated by Exploded View, an arts group I am part of. Light refreshments in the courtyard.

There will be a large screen showing of our **short film, Bitter Sweet Feast**, at 2 p.m. Enjoy performative readings by Exploded View in conjunction with the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association’s Big Read Weekend, a wrap-up to this year’s NEA Big Read of *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel. A limited number of copies of the novel will be available to give away.

Also in the courtyard at the Discovery Center on Saturday, from 1 to 3 p.m.: **The (Giant) Listening Ear**, with Christian McEwan. In a world dominated by cell phones, computers, and other entrancing devices, the Listening Ear is intended as a joyous and subversive antidote, reminding us of the special pleasure to be found in face-to-face conversation. Talk about anything that happens to be on your mind, or pick a question from the basket, if you prefer.

The Shea Theater in Turners Falls announces the **return of CINESTORM** with two free movies this Saturday evening at 7:30 p.m., sponsored by local lighting company FastLights. The double feature starts with the 1990 *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* movie, followed by *C.H.U.D.*, a 1984 sci-fi horror film with a similar underground theme.

Sunday afternoon is a good time for **poetry with four Slate Roof authors**: Amanda Lou Doster, Susan Glass, Richard Wollman and Audrey Gidman. Join them online at 2 p.m. for an hour’s worth of readings. Get the link at slateroofpress.com/events.

Also on Sunday, November 14, enjoy a free **family concert of klezmer music** at the Great Falls Discovery Center courtesy of Musica Franklin. The klezmer band Klezmir plays from 3 to 4 p.m. All ages are welcome.

This weekend is the annual **Crafts of Colrain tour**. Artists’ and artisans’ studios will be open for visitors Saturday and Sunday, November 13 and 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. Crafts of Colrain’s website, craftsofcolrain.com, has a map, videos of the artists and artisans, and their websites and online shops, so you can reach them year-round. You can also find a listing of those who are not opening their studios this year due to the pandemic.

Note as you plan your route that there is little or no cell service in Colrain.

Come to Shelburne Falls this weekend for **A Country Christmas Fair** at the Shelburne-Buckland Community Center at 53 Main Street. The fair offers unique country crafts, sewn, crocheted, and knitted items, hand-crafted Christmas ornaments, home décor gift items, stained glassworks, homemade candies, baked goods, attic treasures, themed gift baskets, a “Straw Draw,” and a “Tea Cup Auction” on Saturday, November 13 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sunday, November 14 from 9 a.m. to noon.

There’s also going to be a **big raffle** featuring a \$200 cash prize, plus a \$150 BJ’s certificate and a \$100 Foster’s Market certificate. Masks are required. For more information call (413) 625-6405.

Closer to home, you can also check out the Montague Congregational Church’s **Fête Noel** this Saturday – see their ad on this page for more information!

Looking for work? Check in to a **Virtual Job Fair** hosted by the Franklin Hampshire Career Center on Monday, November 15. Veterans are invited to log on at 10 a.m., and everyone else is invited at 10:30 a.m. The event ends at noon. Register at masshirefhcareers.org.

The Western Mass Food Bank has **mobile food banks that come to Turners Falls** on the third Wednesday of each month, from 1:30 to 2:30

p.m. in the parking lot of the senior center on Fifth Street. All are welcome! The food bus will be there next Wednesday, November 17.

The LAVA Center hosts another **Silverthorne Theater Thursday** on November 18 with the reading of *Testimonies* by Ellen W. Kaplan at 7:30 p.m. *Testimonies* is based on interviews with Ezidi (Yezidi) women in camps in Northern Iraq in 2019. The Ezidi are a Kurdish-speaking religious minority who trace their roots back to ancient Mesopotamia. In the mid-’70s, Saddam Hussein had Ezidi villages destroyed and their inhabitants transferred to collective settlements. In August 2014 thousands were massacred, kidnapped, enslaved, raped and tortured by ISIS.

The play reading includes sensitive subject matter. Register to attend at silverthornetheater.org – attendance is limited.

Join FirstLight’s Northfield Mountain staff on Sunday, November 21, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. on a **Hermit Castle and Valley View Hike**. They have packed it all into one 4.5-mile loop hike: views of the Millers River Valley, stories of the Hermit Castle, beautiful rock formations, and a forest of late fall color.

The group will begin on the back side of Northfield Mountain hiking a section of the New England Scenic Trail. Hikers must be 18 years or older and be comfortable hiking over somewhat hilly terrain with total elevation gain of 700 feet. Pre-registration is required at www.bookeo.com/northfield as group size is strictly limited for this free program. Masks are required for group gathering.

Join **Stone Soup Café on Thanksgiving Day** to acknowledge, celebrate, and honor Indigenous resistance, and share a delicious holiday meal that welcomes everyone on Thursday, November 25 from noon to 1:30 p.m. The meal is at 399 Main Street in Greenfield, and it will also be available for curbside pickup or delivery. Sign up for a meal or volunteer opportunity, and learn more about the history of Thanksgiving, online at thestonesoupcafe.org. Suggested donation for the meal is \$10, and you must order in advance.

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OWNERS from page A1

planning board after a Boston-based solar company had requested information on the process.

We stand by the basic narrative, and most of the specific details in the article, and we think that quoting the current views of members of the Improvement Association about some of the properties in the Rod Shop area was perfectly appropriate journalism. But our reporter – me! – made insufficient efforts to contact several of the property owners themselves, which created a rather one-sided story.

In Marchacos’s case, it turned out I was calling the wrong number.

Marchacos told us that he has worked hard in recent months to clean up the Masonic Avenue parcel, which he said was “strewn with garbage,” and he also helped clear up some confusion about the identity of the company that formerly manufactured recreational mining equipment on his property. He told the *Reporter* that he had sold “the assets” of his company to Robert Houchens, who formerly leased the Masonic Avenue property and then moved to Kentucky.

While Marchacos continues to hold all the offices of the company he founded, Cold River Mining, Inc., on Silver Street in Greenfield, the Kentucky-based business with Houchens as

its president is now called Cold River Mining Corp., according to Massachusetts Corporations Division records.

And although Marchacos says he is still committed to beautifying the Rod Shop area – one of the parcels he owns is adjacent to the northeast side of the shop – he has perhaps soured a bit on the town of Montague. He shared with us that about a decade ago he won a town auction for property on the opposite side of Masonic Avenue, but local officials refused to sell it to him because, he said, “they did not like me.”

Marchacos is also reconsidering donating some of the land on a larger wooded parcel along Rod Shop Road to the town for a park.

The current owner of the former fishing rod shop on the opposite side of the road, Dave Keenan, vouched for Marchacos and suggested they were working together to beautify the area. “George has done nothing but help me,” he told the *Reporter*. Keenan said that he has spoken to town planner Walter Ramsey about a potential “pre-development” plan for his property, but that it could take up to five years to implement.

Another caveat: we reported last week that the Rod Shop ownership had been cited for “nonpayment of back taxes.” This was true, but Keenan told us that after he recently took ownership

of the company, he worked out a plan with the “town lawyer” to pay back the taxes over a three-year period. Montague treasurer-collector Eileen Seymour verified that a plan had been negotiated with the tax title attorney.

In an effort to further round out the picture of the Rod Shop area, we spoke to Dale “Skip” Descavich, who owns the former Masonic Hall building at the end of Masonic Avenue. This attractive building, once a school, appears in good condition for a structure that dates back to the 1880s. Descavich said he is “cleaning it up as best we can,” and that his daughter may be setting up a dance studio in the property.

The Masonic building sits on a five-acre parcel that hugs the bike path, and now includes the adjacent piece of land Marchacos describes winning at auction back in the day.

Descavich, who also owns a plumbing and heating company in Greenfield, was quite upbeat about dealing with town officials and the future of the area. He said he was “amazed” at the amount of traffic in the area coming off the bike path, and was considering donating some of his land to a land trust so they could build “bat houses” for insect control. “It’s pretty swampy and buggy around here,” he told the *Reporter*.

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CON COM from page A1

and there's some incompetence here that needs to be addressed."

Con com member Gail Berrigan took issue with Ryan's criticism: "Your claim that the board is incompetent I find objectionable," Berrigan said. "We have a conservation agent who is basically volunteering her time now to run these meetings. This is an all-volunteer board."

After an initial search found no viable candidates for the conservation agent job, the commission is still searching for a part-time agent to handle various administrative tasks. In June the town's conservation agent, Tessa Dowling, took a full-time position elsewhere and has been helping the town, in the interim, do the "bare minimum to keep it legal."

"Because we are essentially paying our agents what people are making at Burger King flipping burgers... I'm not confident we are going to find someone with the regulatory experience, political expertise, or savviness with the public that we need," con com member David Powicki said.

The Leverett selectboard has approved a proposal to raise the wage for the conservation agent position to \$20 per hour. There is also still a vacant seat on the con com, following members' decision last month to remove Andrew Young from the roster after he did not attend

meetings for several months.

Tom Hankinson, a selectboard member who also serves as president of the FLP, said his offer to help the town find an agent was declined. "I did my part trying to find a conservation agent," he said.

Other business discussed at Monday's meeting included a restoration plan for a number of trees removed last year from property on Putney Road owned by Claire Hopley, within the 100-foot buffer of Leverett Pond.

"This was an error on our part, but it's not true that we didn't inform the conservation commission," Hopley said at the meeting. "We did, and it's also not true that we thought the trees fell within the 100-foot zone."

The issue was first brought to the attention of the con com in January, and further discussion was continued until next week to give members time to review the restoration plans.

Planning board member Richard Nathorst joined the meeting to discuss two major upcoming projects of interest to the commission. He reported that the selectboard had voted unanimously in favor of taking over the historic North Leverett sawmill, via a non-profit foundation, to repair and potentially repurpose the dam.

An *ad hoc* committee appointed by the selectboard is looking into the feasibility of turning the dam into a "micro-hydropower" oper-

ation that would feed electricity back into the local grid and potentially lower electricity costs for the town.

"The existing dam isn't in terrible shape," Nathorst said. "That wood section is a perfect location to build a sluiceway and a power house, and mount for an Archimedes' screw-type hydro generator."

The *ad hoc* committee is talking to a Beverly-based New England Hydropower LLC about the possibilities, and has provided the company with old engineering studies of the dam and sawmill.

Nathorst also discussed the eventual need to hire a floodplain administrator to implement new town bylaws in line with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) redrawn floodplain maps. The administrator would oversee the applications for work to be done in floodplain areas and manage flood insurance policies.

"We have a number of people in town who have FEMA flood insurance, and probably want to keep it because, if not, they're going to have a very expensive or a very hard time getting flood insurance," Nathorst said.

The next meeting of the con com is scheduled for Monday, November 15 at 7 p.m. The public hearing on the Leverett Pond management plan was continued until the December 6 meeting at 7 p.m.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Sergeant Promotion Slowed Down

By GEORGE BRACE

On Tuesday, Leverett's selectboard held a joint meeting with the finance committee to receive recommendations for guidance on departmental budget requests for FY'23, which begins next July. The board also decided to postpone appointing a police officer to the position of sergeant until a formal interview by the selectboard was held.

The officials saw increases in budget requests from town departments as a given, due to rising inflation over the past year. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics "all items" Consumer Price Index showed a rate of 6.2% inflation for the 12-month period ending in October. The board considered guidance for increases of between 2% and 4% in town departments, and settled on 3%.

Guidance to town departments is a first step in the annual budget process. Selectboard chair Julie Shively noted that it is not binding, but helps departments develop their requests so the town can "see where it puts us" when they come in. She expressed a desire for Leverett to not move closer to overshooting the state's 2.5% cap on property taxes by large budget increases.

Suggestions were made for departments to shoot for 2%, and also to submit separate scenarios if going above 3%. Shively offered the suggestion of 3% as a compromise, noting that requests might come in higher but warning that "whatever we do this year, we'll be stuck with next year," as departments use each year's budget as the basis for planning the following year.

Police Sergeant Appointment

Police chief Scott Minckler's request to appoint an officer to the position of sergeant, which was vacated five years ago, was met with suggestions from residents and board members that the appointment be delayed, and the process be used to improve community relations and involvement with the police.

After discussion, the board decided to hold a formal interview of the officer at their next meeting

rather than make the appointment that night.

No questions were raised concerning the need for the appointment, or the qualifications of the candidate for promotion, Steve Gould, who was recommended by the personnel board. However, residents and board members expressed the desire to learn more about applicants generally, and use the process as an opportunity for more transparency in the department.

Board member Melissa Colbert said the promotion "sounds promising," but suggested slowing down the process, and conducting a formal interview in an effort to "build confidence." Colbert said there were questions she had not heard being addressed, and the interview would be "beneficial to the town."

Board member Tom Hankinson agreed, noting that there was no questioning of Gould's judgment or qualifications behind the idea of holding an interview, but the board could "build opportunity" into the appointment process to address general policing concerns among Leverett residents.

These concerns became more prominent following the national Black Lives Matter protests in 2020, with incidents involving the defacement of BLM signs in Leverett that year leading to an expressed desire among many in town for greater transparency and engagement with the police.

Gould was praised by Minckler and others for his performance, experience, and qualifications, but residents expressed the desire to know more about someone being put into a leadership position in the department, and asked for assurance that training and programs related to racial equity and police interactions with the public were in place in Leverett.

"We all have that background," Minckler said, adding that all officers receive required training with "lots more being rolled out," but that budget considerations also come into play.

Resident Aaron Buford said that for Minckler, the reasoning behind

the promotion "may feel obvious," but that he appreciated an opportunity for more dialogue.

Resident Becky Tew said she didn't think mandatory training was enough, and wanted to see officers "make some of us feel that they get it," by demonstrating "a sincere feeling of care and awareness" beyond Black Lives Matter-related issues.

Community forums with the police, and a post-COVID return to the informal "coffee with a cop" program, were also suggested. Shively encouraged residents to send any specific questions about the promotion to Minckler or town administrator Marjorie McGinnis before the next selectboard meeting.

More Police Business

McGinnis reported that the signing of the intermunicipal agreement to finalize a joint-policing agreement with the town of Wendell would be delayed again, while attorneys for the two towns reconcile minor wording in the contract terms, such as "janitorial services" and "cleaning."

In a related matter, the board authorized Shively to sign the lease on the Wendell police station, and released money for work on plumbing and HVAC renovations of the building.

Minckler reported that his department has been inundated with complaints of speeding "downtown." He said the department is doing what it can to address the problem, and that hopefully the situation will improve when the detour is removed.

He added that most offenders are from out of town.

Finally, Minckler reported that a water pump had failed on one of the department's cruisers, necessitating a \$3,000 to \$3,500 repair, which will "wipe out our maintenance budget" for the year.

Mosquito Spraying

Colbert reported that she had received an email from state senator Joanne Comerford seeking support for the work of a taskforce seeking to overhaul the state's mosquito control program, and the process by which towns may opt out of aerial

spraying. Colbert said she had already sent a letter of support herself.

Hankinson reiterated concerns expressed by many earlier this year over the lack of transparency in the program, and the need for towns to have more information about the criteria used by the state to determine when spraying is mandated.

Colbert said she was "hopeful" in regards to the taskforce.

Streetlight Project

McGinnis sought the board's advice and approval on the selection of LED streetlights to replace the high-pressure sodium bulbs currently in use. At issue in one of the final steps in a process that began several years ago was a consultant's suggestion of using higher-lumen, brighter lights than the ones being replaced.

Shively said that people are not going to want brighter lights, and the board recommended selecting lights with the same brightness as those in current use. The new ones will probably seem brighter at first in any case, it was noted, as the current bulbs are old and have dimmed over time.

Other Business

The sustainable economy committee reported that they'd been informed by the state Department of Revenue that more assistance is available related to a state Community Compact grant the committee had received, if the selectboard requests it.

The board appointed fin com member Jed Proujansky to represent the fin com and selectboard as an observer in contract negotiations with unions representing town workers.

The board appointed Jill Palmer to the position of library assistant for 10 hours per week, as a component of a reorganization at the library.

A property tax classification hearing was postponed, and the board approved a required license for the Leverett Village Co-op.

The board selected the date of November 30 at 7 p.m. for the next meeting, due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

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GILL from page B1

the business such as how the cannabis would be packaged, handled, monitored, and delivered to the dispensary, security measures and protocols in and on the premises, and the company's ability to share those measures with Gill's police chief via live-feed security cameras.

McMahon said that there would be no on-site cultivation, processing, or consumption of cannabis, and no one under 21 would be allowed in the dispensary at any time.

Asked by town administrator Ray Purington if non-cannabis items would be sold, McMahon said that some cannabis paraphernalia would be sold there, and the business would like to feature local products. McMahon related that he was surprised to hear from several cannabis retailers he has worked with that those selling candles are running out of them faster than they can restock them.

Not only would Leaf Joy try to source their cannabis from "licensed Gill and Franklin County growers and cultivators," but they would also acquire their products "from across the Commonwealth," according to McMahon.

Supporting local farmers wanting to get into the cannabis industry is another aspect that Leaf Joy would like to pursue, with McMahon saying that farm businesses could be "cross-advertised," and events such as farmers markets, or that otherwise "fit the cannabis ecosystem," might be held on their lot.

Gill residents would be given preference in hiring within the CCC's requirements, and roughly 20 to 25 jobs would be created, McMahon said, ranging from security personnel and inventory control to "budtenders" and administrative positions.

Asked about an expected opening date if their license application is approved, McMahon said that it is typically a nine-month process to get everything approved, and that he anticipates an opening date no sooner than the fall of 2022.

Purington asked whether security patrols would be contracted out or use Leaf Joy employees. McMahon said the business plans to use Leaf Joy employees for security patrols. When a resident asked about the "optics" of having uniformed security, he said that

security personnel would likely wear "jeans and a polo shirt." He added that cannabis businesses are required to post security staff with a CCC badge and an electronic identification checker outside the entrance, and that no firearms will be allowed on site.

Some of the benefits to Gill the company touted, outside of property upgrades and site landscaping, would be the 3% local sales tax on cannabis businesses previously adopted by the town, as well as another 3% impact mitigation fee for any town expenses related to hosting the business.

Another participant asked about having an advisory board, and McMahon said that Leaf Joy would defer to the town's desire to create one, but said that the business would like to include one in the host community agreement that it will enter with the town. He added that an advisory board would be composed of "a Leaf Joy representative," town "stakeholders" and those with "a relevant interest in the property, as well as several residents," and would "allow transparency, foster open dialogue, and give town residents a chance to ask questions, and talk about plans."

A full video recording of the meeting can be viewed at www.ilikebetter.com/leafjoy.

Member Randy Crochier chaired the selectboard meeting while Greg Snedeker, who was sick at home, attended it by phone.

"I would say it was an interesting meeting," began Crochier about Leaf Joy's community meeting. "Personally, I was a little disappointed that nobody from the ownership was there - again." Crochier said he was not impressed that the presenters "only had an attorney there, and some third-party company that was doing this meeting. The lawyer really likes to push that they are a good family operation, and they really want to be part of Gill, and I will be the jerk that says that they did not have time to show up to either one of these."

"I agree that I would like to get to see, and know, and meet the applicants," said Purington, who said he had emailed McMahon after the presentation ended about the owners not being present.

Snedeker said that he wanted to talk with the Montague selectboard

about their retail cannabis licensing process, but had not gotten a chance to before the community meeting. He noted that the Turners Falls dispensary "is a nice-looking building," with a nice area around the business, as Leaf Joy said it would do with their site.

Purington suggested that if the business is approved, some of the community impact mitigation fees could be used for a traffic study on West Gill and Main roads. "If we can demonstrate higher traffic on those roads," he said, "then conceivably some of that impact fee could be used on the roads themselves."

Crochier also discussed potential increased foot traffic across the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge that might necessitate more crosswalks, sidewalks, or lights at Main Road, which the town could also put in its state Complete Streets grant application.



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FURTHER NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Grumbles as Used Car Lot Approved

By JERRI HIGGINS

By a 2-1 vote on Monday, the Gill selectboard granted Arrow Auto Sales owner John DeSotle a Class II used auto sales license for "no more than 40 vehicles on the lot at any given time, compliance with the conditions of the special permit issued October 26, 2021, and the special permit remaining in effect and in good standing."

DeSotle's business will operate at 235 French King Highway, which previously housed a used auto sales company. He said his business was not changing the site's use. "We are just going to do a better job," he said.

Selectboard member Randy Crochier expressed concern at seeing "cars on site, and already a sign on the building," when he happened to drive by last Saturday. "That is putting the cart before the horse," he said. "I think it sets a dangerous precedent, and I am going to vote 'no,' no matter what the other two members do."

"I welcome you to Gill," Crochier continued, "but it sets a precedent that a business was started before this hearing. For that reason, I have to vote 'no' so we can still establish that there are processes that should come first."

"The cars on site, I would say, is my doing, not John's," said town administrator Ray Purington, explaining that DeSotle had asked if it was all right to put cars on the lot rather than having to store them elsewhere. Purington said he knew that the Zoning Board of Appeals had already acted, and that "the selectboard was on tap," so he did not think it would be an issue "as long as [DeSotle] wasn't conducting business or engaging in sales until he had the license from the selectboard."

DeSotle said that he hired Hale Custom Signs to "clean up" his previous business signs, and when Hale asked if they could put up the signs last Saturday, DeSotle said he hesitated, but thought it would not be an issue because his licensing hearing was the following Monday.

"We would not be doing our job as elected officials if we did not point those things out," said selectboard chair Greg Snedeker. Snedeker told DeSotle that Crochier "is incredibly fair, and really cares about our community," and that

Crochier's "no" vote "should not be taken personally."

DeSotle replied that he understood, and did not take it personally.

Snedeker disclosed that he is "an abutter within 300 feet" of the business property, but said he did not see a conflict of interest requiring him to recuse himself from voting.

Dan Trenholm, who attended the meeting as a direct abutter of the property, said that the previous business had washed vehicles in violation of state restrictions against "washing cars, degreasing motors, or doing any mechanical repairs or oil changes." "There is a storm drain out in front of that business that goes under Route 2, and exits right on my property," Trenholm continued, "and we want to keep any soap, chemicals, or any grease from gravitating into the aquifer, or making its way to the river."

DeSotle responded that he would use other facilities for those services, and that he had the same restrictions at his previous Shelburne Falls auto sales store. He then seemed to quibble, saying that he "would not be opposed" to being able to rinse off vehicles as an option "here and there."

Crochier urged DeSotle to use off-site facilities for anything other than auto sales. On learning that the building was acquired by the owner through mortgage foreclosure, Crochier asked whether there had been a Title 5 inspection of the property. "You told us that [the previous owner] was possibly using the septic system for something it was not designed for," continued Crochier. "That is a very important reason to look at that septic system and see if it is still working correctly."

"I assume it is, sir," said DeSotle. "I honestly don't know. All I want to do is rent the building."

Crochier said that in his other capacity as a regional health agent, he would be ordering the property owner to do a Title 5 inspection.

"Why?" asked DeSotle. "Because anytime there is a change of use or a sale -," began Crochier.

"- There is no change of use," interrupted DeSotle.

"Sorry," said Crochier, "You did not hear me, I said: 'change of use or sale' - a Title 5 inspection is required."

The board approved DeSotle's license, with Snedeker and Charles Garbiel voting in favor of the motion and Crochier voting against.

Still No Kennel!

Purington told the selectboard members that animal control officer Kyle Dragon found that a kennel had not been constructed at a Main Road property as ordered when Dragon reinspected the property on November 1.

Purington was approved to write a letter requested by Dragon, "essentially saying that there will be one final inspection on or about November 16. If the kennel has not been constructed at that time, then the dog will be removed from the property," said Purington.

Asked by this reporter if the family members who previously fostered the dog had been followed up with for permanent adoption of the dog, Purington said he did not know if that conversation happened.

"Normally I would not be in favor of that," said Crochier, "but based on the history, that is something I could support. A family member had the dog for quite a while without any issues or concerns. It is not like we would be saying 'let us just try it,' but I would defer to Kyle and the shelter there."

A vote to send the letter was unanimous.

Other Business

Purington told the board that he will be posting information on the town website about the vaccination clinic and "VAX Bus," a vaccination campaign beginning this Friday, November 12, and continuing at several area schools through the end of the year for youths ages five to 18.

"It is actually open to anybody five and above," clarified Crochier. "It is geared toward children, but anybody can sign up for their COVID-19 booster, or their first shots."

The board reviewed and unanimously approved an intermunicipal agreement with the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District for fiscal years 2023 through 2025, and a Green Communities Report for fiscal year 2021.

Emily Samuels was appointed to the Council On Aging through June 2023.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

to a former Catholic nursing home in Holyoke recently purchased from Trinity by a for-profit corporation called iCare.

In October, when the state approved the closure plan, town administrator Steve Ellis told the selectboard that the town should “shift its energy to making sure there was responsible stewardship, and the transition of the building to a new use.” He told the board at that time that Trinity had committed to a “redevelopment study.”

Last December, Trinity spokesperson Christine Looby told the *Reporter* that Trinity “will develop a comprehensive redevelopment study of the Farren Care Center property in partnership with the town of Montague...”

But in June, Ellis warned the selectboard that “the process [for evaluating the Farren] does not look precisely like the process we discussed last fall,” and that Trinity’s “real estate division” would evaluate the relative costs of renovation, including the market value of a final product and demolition.

At Monday’s meeting Janice Hamilton-Crawford, president of Trinity Health of New England Senior Communities, told the board that Trinity’s real estate department had completed a “facility assessment” the previous August, which had focused on “the current replacement value of the building.” She said the preliminary estimate was \$24 million, “just to bring this building up to code within the first year.” Year Two, she said, would add \$260,000, Year Three would “another \$3 million,” and the additional cost in Year Four was cited as “\$130,000.”

Hamilton-Crawford said that due to the cost estimates, a recommendation was made to “demo the building.” There was no mention of any other potential use for the building, and no documents were provided to support cost estimates, including a \$6 million estimate to demolish the building. Hamilton-Crawford said Trinity would “clean the site” and donate the land to Montague.

Lilith Wolinsky of the Montague City Improvement Association pointed out that the Farren “building” is in fact two buildings, one of which dated to the turn of the 20th century. She asked if “any thought had been given to preserving any part of the older structure, which really is a neighborhood anchor.”

“No,” Hamilton-Crawford responded, “we have not given any thoughts to that.”

Ellis said the selectboard would have to think “long and hard before accepting that portion of the building as a standing structure. It is a very unhealthy building...”

Janelle Nockleby, who works at the Great Falls Discovery Center, a state museum which once was a factory, said that as someone who works at a “historically preserved building” she hoped that a little more “time and thought could be put into this.”

Jerry Lund of Leyden, who identified himself as a member of the executive committee of the Franklin County Opioid Task Force and said that his deceased partner once ran the regional Community Health Center when it was located within the Farren, suggested that the buildings should be considered for temporary living spaces to address the “acute housing crisis” in the region.

Hamilton-Crawford was asked if a Trinity statement which appeared in this newspaper the previous week,

stating that no decision had been made by the company about building demolition, was “an untrue statement.” She responded that the demolition decision was only “a recommendation,” and that the Montague selectboard “could say no, they don’t want that – so that’s why a decision has not been made.”

Ellis said he was “surprised” by Hamilton-Crawford’s comment, and said he thought the selectboard had “no ability to veto a private organization’s decision.”

Hamilton-Crawford apologized to Ellis and said “we certainly want to take the town into consideration...”

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell, noting that the chair Rich Kuklewicz was not present, said that “this will be something the board needs to review.” The board did not take a vote on the issue.

Six-Town School Region

Lynn Reynolds, a member of the study committee currently evaluating the pros and cons of a six-town regional school consolidation, came before the board to schedule times for “public input” on potential consolidation plans. The towns represented on the planning committee include Gill and Montague from the Gill-Montague regional school district and Leyden, Northfield, Warwick, and Bernardston from the Pioneer Valley Regional district.

Reynolds noted that the committee was completing its research on the potential costs and benefits of consolidation and was shifting toward seeking input from the public, which might include larger meetings and smaller focus groups. She presented a list of times in November and early December when the facilitator the committee has hired, Mary Broderick, will be available. After a lengthy and sometimes confusing discussion, the board seemed to settle on Thursday, November 18 as a possible meeting date.

When Reynolds suggested December 7 as a date for a focus group, selectboard member Matt Lord said he was “starting to get a little swimmy as to the where and when.”

Ellis said it would be hard for the board, “in this public forum, to pick through what the dates are.” He suggested that Reynolds pick the dates for the “general public meetings,” and the *Reporter* and the *Greenfield Recorder* would be glad to publicize them.

As of this writing no firm dates had been selected.

Other Business

Ellis, in the absence of the public health director and his oversight board, reviewed the local COVID case count metrics for the previous two weeks. He said that the two-week count for Montague had been three cases, and the count for the previous single week was zero. He added that the two-week count for Franklin County, which has been declining, was “flat.”

The board, which last week rescinded the local mask mandate, took no action.

Town planner Walter Ramsey came before the board with a variety of requests that were all approved. These included a proposed application for a FirstLight Municipal Grant, which will supplement a state grant for a Peskeompskut Audio Walking Tour; a \$20,980 agreement with the engineering firm SVE Associates to design a culvert on South Ferry Road in Montague Center; and a \$2.34 million contract with David

G. Roach and Sons Inc. to construct the new Fifth Street bridge over the Turners Falls power canal.

The board executed an agreement with the Communities that Care Coalition and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to oversee and monitor a request for proposals to select an organization to implement a substance abuse prevention support program. The allocation, which will be funded from cannabis impact fees, was approved by the October town meeting.

A request of the Four Rivers Charter School Dance Club for a series of 12 “shows” and rehearsals at Peskeompskut Park in May 2022 was approved. Ellis urged the club’s representative, Leah Plath, to coordinate with the local farmers market, which uses the park on Wednesday afternoons.

At the request of department of public works (DPW) superintendent Tom Bergeron, the board approved the annual “landfill monitoring services” agreement with the engineering firm Tighe & Bond. The agreement, required by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and state Department of Environmental Protection, evaluates the former landfill at the end of Sandy Lane, on which several solar arrays have recently been constructed.

Bergeron also sought and received approval for a cell phone stipend for a new DPW employee, Brandy Patch.

The board voted to appoint Bob Reuter to the energy committee until June 30 of next year, and John Martineau to the capital improvements committee.

Ellis briefly discussed the status of several obscure accounts that the town occasionally draws on for funding. He said such accounts, including those associated with federal “recovery” programs and community development block grants, contain more money than usual at the present time due to federal aid and land sales.

“People often say, ‘well, where did that money come from?’” Ellis noted.

The next selectboard meeting will be held November 15.



**MONTAGUE PLANNING BOARD
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**
Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (MEDIC)
2022 Economic Development Plan

In accordance with MGL Ch. 121C, the Montague Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the MEDIC 2022 Economic Development Plan on Tuesday, November 23 6:30 p.m. MEDIC is a corporation established in 1984 by Montague to implement economic development projects. MEDIC has the powers and duties imposed by Chapter 121C to undertake and carry out the economic projects covered in the plan. These powers include the ability to purchase, sell, and manage property and the ability to receive local, state and federal grants, among others. Projects have been identified at the Airport Industrial Park, Sandy Lane, Canal District, 38 Avenue A, and the Farren Care Site. Review the plan at www.montague-ma.gov. The Hearing will take place at Montague Town Hall Second Floor Meeting Room with an option for remote participation.

Join Zoom Meeting: us02web.zoom.us/j/85059846351 **Meeting ID:** 850 5984 6351
Dial in: 1 (646) 558-8656 **Passcode:** 811207

**Montague Selectboard seeks proposals for the redevelopment of
500 Avenue A (Former DPW Garage)**

- 11,250 square foot garage on 0.87 acres.
- Zoned for industrial and commercial use
- Environmentally compliant property
- Minimum asking bid is \$75,000

The Town hopes to hear from qualified proponents who can commit to a redevelopment of the property in a manner that will enhance the southern corridor of Avenue A in Turners Falls.
Visit www.montague-ma.gov/BIDS for more information.

Site briefing 11/18/2021 • Proposals are due 12/9/2021



**The Six Town Regional Planning Board
invites you to participate in a Focus Group and Survey
to share your perceptions about the concept of
a six-town regional school district,
merging the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley RSDs.**

Please visit the Planning Board’s website:
<https://sites.google.com/view/strpb/home>
to learn about Focus Group dates and times.

Fill out a survey by December 3 at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GillMontagueStudy>

**For more information, please contact
Mary Broderick, 860-608-1763 or Mary-broderick@att.net**



NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Gown Freedom, Focus Groups, ACAB

By **MIKE JACKSON**

GILL-MONTAGUE – The regional school committee met Tuesday and set the tuition rate for students from Erving, discussed dates for “focus groups” concerning the feasibility study for a new six-town district, tweaked the harassment policy, and heard updates about information technology, families of English-language learners, and salad.

Superintendent Brian Beck announced awards for two high school seniors. Paige Sulda won an award for “academic excellence” from the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, and Kiley Palmquist one for “academic growth and student leadership in learning” from the National School Development Council. Beck praised both students for their accomplishments and the committee congratulated them.

A previous decision to have the senior class select one color scheme for graduation outfits was unpopular with the class, and committee unanimously approved a motion to allow

each student to choose a blue or white gown, and a blue or white cap.

“Food service remains stable,” Beck reported. “However, we remain concerned about the potential impacts on menus given the challenges of the supply chain.” Boxed salads have been introduced at the middle and high school.

An event for the families of English-language learners was very well attended, and a parent advisory council has been formed. “We’ve managed to resolve some problems with their suggestions,” Beck said, “so we’re looking forward to having those families as a working group.”

Enrollment from Erving students has dropped, business manager Joanne Blier reported, though not for special ed students. The committee approved raising the base rate from \$11,948 to \$15,413 per student, and lowering the special ed rate from \$40,594 to \$37,859. Blier noted that “about half” of Erving students who attend GFMS transfer to FCTS.

Information technology director Tina Mahaney gave a presentation

on the district’s IT, and she praised her team profusely.

The committee approved changes to policy ACAB, which concerns the district’s response to harassment and discrimination, to reflect current procedures as approved by lawyers.

The study group appointed by Gill, Montague, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick to investigate a new district is entering its public phase, and a facilitator is aggressively scheduling focus groups. After a prolonged discussion the committee recommended Monday, November 22 for a series of meetings with staff and the public. “We’re going to continue this process into next spring,” said Bill Tomb, who represents Gill on both committees, “so if somebody misses the boat this time, they haven’t missed the boat, they just didn’t get on that passage.”

The committee will hold a “working” meeting November 16 to decide what its goals are, and return for a regular meeting November 23. November 24 is a half day, and schools are closed November 25 and 26.

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PUMPS from page A1

The pump has dutifully gathered sewage from the factories and schools in the airport industrial park and forced it up westward into the town's gravity-fed sewer system since the 1980s, but would not have been able to do so for very much longer.

"What we are about to do today is see the realization of a critical infrastructure update," Ellis said, highlighting the centrality of the industrial park, including the Franklin County Technical School, to the county's economy. "This pump station is what allows all of that educational enterprise, all of those businesses, to actually happen."

"It's been a very trying period for all of us," Kennealy, assuming the podium, told the crowd. "And it's been great to be out here on the road now, announcing these grants and seeing the hard work that goes on, under the most trying circumstances."

Kennealy explained that the Baker-Polito administration had created the program that gave the pump its grant, the Rural and Small Town Development Fund, based on feedback it received during its first term. "The needs and opportunities of rural and small towns are different and unique," he said.

Kennealy also touted the new Community One Stop for Growth portal, a clearinghouse that allows towns to apply for funding on the basis of need and be matched with appropriate grants, rather than having to keep track of numerous state programs and departments.



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

The convergence of public figures was carefully documented by their aides, attendants, and the local press.

"It's one of these nerdy, good-government things we're trying to get done," he said. "I think it's going to have a big impact."

State representative Natalie Blais thanked Kennealy for the grants, and for visiting the western part of the state. "What the administration has done in terms of right-sizing programs is really important," she told him. "You've heard from all of us, during our listening sessions, that we're struggling with capacity... You're supportive of these smaller grants that really reflect what our smaller communities need."

Linda Dunlavy, executive director of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, praised the administration for creating a fund geared toward the "financial and social and

societal challenges faced by Massachusetts's rural municipalities."

"Currently Montague and the Council of Governments have a partnership where we're trying to come up with a regional sludge [disposal] solution," she told Kennealy. "If it works, and if we get regional support - welcome back!"

And Kim Williams, co-owner of the Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts, which operates a daycare, driving school, and theater program in the industrial park, underlined the impact of the pump replacement with humor. "I'm just going to say what everyone is thinking," she said. "If all those people came and we can't poop, we've got a problem!"

"I can't imagine the interruption in service that would happen if peo-

ple couldn't go to daycare, if people couldn't go to dance," Williams added. "Thank goodness for the people who work tirelessly so that we can do what we love."

Town planner Walter Ramsey told the Reporter that the One Stop grant portal helped him avoid "twenty different applications with different processes, and different time frames" in seeking funding from higher levels of government. Montague applied for five projects in the current round, and was approved for four, including a master plan for the canal district and a re-use study for the town-owned Strathmore mill complex.

"It's really time for a massive federal investment in redevelopment," Ellis said of municipal

wastewater systems. "The infrastructure is old, and relatively few communities have been able to keep pace with its demands."

Ellis pointed to the challenges faced in Montague, where the closure in 2017 of the Southworth paper mill, the water pollution control facility's largest customer, means that the system's cost burden now "rests on a more limited number of users." "It's a perfect storm," he said, citing also "the downsizing of families, and more efficient water-using devices."

The pandemic's disruptions - and the major wave of infrastructural investment anticipated from the federal level - come atop of a long-brewing crisis in the nation's wastewater treatment systems. Regionally, for instance, the number of places solid sludge can be safely disposed of is declining, and disposal costs are rising sharply.

Montague has made a number of major investments at its water pollution control facility, most recently a new sludge-dewatering press to replace the Fournier press, which was no longer working efficiently in the absence of influent from the Southworth plant. "We have far less pulp and fiber now," Ellis explained.

And while the allocation for water and wastewater investment under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was good to see, Ellis said, "the reality is that it will barely begin to get us started on the range of improvements that are actually necessary."



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JOE KOPERA PHOTO

FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORER.ORG

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

NOVEMBER 11, 2021

Above: "We never know what they think, and they look at us with dry eyes as though we were unimportant," Pablo Neruda wrote of chickens. Thanks to Joe Kopera!

Jinx's War: A Grow'd-Up Soldier

This excerpt from "Transition: A Journey from Youth to Manhood" was written by Turners Falls native Jerry "Jinx" Collins about the experiences he and his brothers had in the US Armed Forces. This excerpt details some of Jinx's basic training in the Army in the early 1950s.

We have periodically run other excerpts from his memoir of growing up in Turners Falls, "Jinx: A New England Mill Town Urchin's Life, the Depression through 1952," which is available at the Carnegie Library. Collins lives in Arizona now.

By JERRY "JINX" COLLINS

TURNERS FALLS – At 18 years old I was going through a stage of life even more dramatic than puberty. I was becoming an independent thinking adult, but I was still feeling lost and unsure about what my future held in store. One sure thing was the fact that with the Korean War still raging, the draft was facing me sooner or later. With all the confusion and uncertainty I was feeling, I decided to face this inevitable event sooner and volunteer for induction. I had a physical in June. The shooting in Korea had ceased in July.

On August 18, 1953 I became a G.I. (government issue) non-person known as US 51 21 6996.

Training began at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. For two weeks there it consisted of marching, classes on military law and justice, and what we referred to as "A & E" exercises. We would be instructed to form a straight line, side-by-side, across one end of the parade ground.

Upon orders of the Sergeant in charge, we would bend over and look for and pick up any trash (especially cigarette butts) as we proceeded to the other end. All along the way we would constantly hear the sergeant yelling at us, "I don't want to see anything

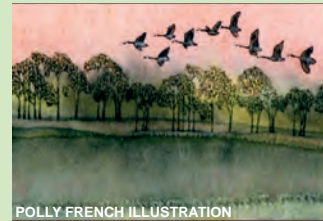


but assholes and elbows. Keep moving!"

I then arrived at Fort Dix in New Jersey to begin 16 weeks of infantry basic training with the 9th Infantry Division, along with George Bunk, Pat Carroll, and Charlie Sanginet. They were older than I – George at 27, Pat at 23, and Charlie at 24 – but they would take me under their wings and watch out for me all the while we served together as if I had been their little brother.

I had stayed in pretty good shape since high school, and had no problems with the physical requirements. The discipline also proved to be easy enough to handle – although I thought the continuance of A & E went a

see **JINX** page B6



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

WEST ALONG THE RIVER

NOVEMBER GHOSTDANCE

By DAVID BRULE

*Listen...
With faint dry sound,
Like steps of passing ghosts,
The leaves, frost-crisp'd,
break from the trees
And fall.*

– Adelaide Crapsey
(1878-1914)

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – We live in two worlds out here, in November. Cold nights, warming days, bright sunshine: is this summer, fall, or the threshold of winter?

One early morning in November, cedar waxwings wheeze their early morning call high up in the black locust tree. Why they are up there only they know, nothing really to eat in that tree. Yet you can tell that their slender, soft gray and tan plumage fading to pale yellow wash below blends perfectly with the pods hanging down from the locust branch.

Camouflage is the reason, and they know it. Later in the winter they'll spend the night among rhododendron leaves for the same reason. Their sleek form, crest, and black-banded eyes blend in magically with leaves that droop in the cold. The only ever-so-slight giveaway is the scarlet red sealing-wax drops on the tip of their wings. Their breezy one-note call reaches a crescendo, and like the waxwing Tao philosophers in a Richard Wilbur poem, they blow away on the breezeless morning air.

Then there was a morning just a few days ago after a two-day rain the weather wags called a nor'easter. It was not like any nor'easter we've seen in a while. No snow, just pelting rain. But that same morning, orange dawn reached out to the landscape, that ephemeral light faded to grey-blue clearing skies with sheep-flock clouds floating slowly by up there.

Just below the clouds, plain-

tive distant calls of a dozen robins winging over us drift down from the sky. They're not really heading south; they hardly ever do that anymore. They're just moving about the local landscape, maybe eyeballing the bumper holly berry crop, which just like the exceptional apple bounty this year, will serve them later in the winter when robin food gets scarce.

That holly production is not lost on the bluebirds, however. Sky-blue as the firmament, blue as Mary's veil in medieval paintings, bluebirds dropped into the sullen and rain-soaked yard, patches of blue sky on brown earth, floating softly over the crimson fruit. They lingered a while, ate their fill, and moved on to some other berry patch. They'll be back, come December.

This will be a good day to set things out to dry. This day's a respite before the next weather event.

Luckily we got the winter's woodpile moved up to the house ahead of the rain storm. Now five month's worth of cookstove firewood is safely stacked on the back porch under the woodshed roof where we can get it without trudging through the snow. That wood was split and stacked out back two years ago – that would make it 2019? So long back and so much has happened in the two years since then, since our world has changed. Now the wood, oak, cherry, maple and birch, all will warm us and provide heat to cook roasts, chicken, breakfast sausage and eggs all winter.

The old adage is that firewood warms you twice: harvesting it and burning it. Most of us experienced with burning wood would say it actually warms you five times: cutting it up, splitting it, stacking it, maybe moving it, and burning it. How's that for renewable energy, both human and nature-provided?

see **WEST ALONG** page B3



LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES ILLUSTRATION

Cedar waxwing, Bombycilla cedrorum.

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE

BY TROUBLE MANDESON

By TROUBLE MANDESON

GREENFIELD – The Radish. An unassuming round or oblong root that can be spicy or mild and presents in colors ranging from pure white to yellow, pink to deep purple, and even black. It offers up a distinctive crunchy, peppery bite; an earthy flavor followed by a sharp blast of heat. This heat comes from glucosinolates, and an enzyme called myrosinase, which is also found in mustard, horseradish, and wasabi.

The word radish comes from the Latin word *radix*, meaning root. It originated in China many thousands of years ago and eventually made its way west to Greece, Rome, and Egypt, where it was cultivated extensively during the time of the pharaohs. Radishes were eaten even before the pyramids were built, and radish oil was used before the discovery of olive oil.

These colorful, crunchy delights made their way to North America via Germany in the 13th century, England in the 16th, and by the 17th century they were being cultivated in Massachusetts.

You can now find radishes grown in every state, with the bulk produced in California and Florida and fall and winter crops coming from Wisconsin. About seven tons of radishes are produced a year worldwide, while hungry Americans crunch through 400 million pounds annually.

As with their root vegetable cousins in the brassica family they are full of vitamins and minerals and they

see **HEARTFELT** page B5



MANDESON PHOTO

Red Globe radishes, as big as a lemon!

Pet of the Week

DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY PHOTO



“ROXIE”

Give your paws up for Roxie! Roxie is a 3-month-old baby panther. She is a sleek and slender gorgeous girl with the softest coat you have ever seen. She loves hammocks and high perches. Her old eye injury and scar won't hold her back from being the sweetest girl.

Roxie gets along with everyone and has so much love to give. She knows how to be cool and she is the most mellow cat we have ever met!

Roxie has a best buddy, Coffee, and they would love to be adopted together. They love each other and snuggle together all day long.

Interested in adopting Roxie? 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.

Learning to Fly Fish: Part XX

By ARIEL JONES

I have been on a kind of sabbatical from my work in photography. After so many years I felt I needed to regroup, rest, and let things just be for a while. Consequently, I have been sorting and editing my work and doing a variety of odd jobs to pay the rent and purchase flies.

A couple of weeks ago I worked for a friend catering a wedding. The wedding dinner for 200 was to be held outside under a tent. When I arrived at noon to set up, the ground under the tent was soaked. There were puddles everywhere, and the wind was blowing so hard the roof of the tent shook violently. All of us were slipping and sliding until the straw arrived and was laid down to absorb the moisture and to provide a safer passageway.

By the time the guests arrived, all was under control and looking beautiful. Around 4 p.m. on Saturday the 15th of October, the rain stopped, the temperature dropped several degrees, and the sun burst through.

Everyone cheered and laughed. Despite the horrendous rain and wind, we had pulled the event off. Immediately I thought to myself, “Oh, good, tomorrow I can finally go fishing!”

I woke up late Sunday morning feeling pretty sore and stiff. I waited awhile to make sure I could wade safely, then took off for Belchertown.

After that great evening on the Swift, tying on infinitesimal flies under Rudy's tutelage and actually landing a decent fish, it was very frustrating for me to not be able to go out and practice what he had shown me.

It wasn't the rain that kept me off the river so much as the wind. While the hooks I use are very small, they are very sharp. I have hooked my hand and fingers up past the barb on a few occasions, but do not want to experience that same pleasure near my eyes.

Being Teachable

When I arrived at the Y Pool and the wind came up strong I was dismayed, but decided to keep to short casts and see how it went. The wind was fortunately behind me, so with a strong backcast, the forwardcast took care of itself.



Looking for the right fly.

It was pretty cold, but the sun was still out and that made everything else OK. I put on one of the size 32 midges Rudy had given me and began to cast.

I worked a section slowly and carefully, taking my time, and not pulling the line off the water until the fly began to drag and lose its imitation of a natural drift. Watching the water where I guessed the tippet end to be, I gently tightened the line when I detected a movement there. I had three or four strikes before I landed a lovely 13- to 14-inch rainbow.

Years ago someone told me that one definition of humility is being teachable. Perhaps I am moving in the right direction after all.

Senior Center Activities

NOVEMBER 15 THROUGH 19

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. for drop in visitors. 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.

The Gill Montague Council on Aging has access to grant money to help low to moderate income seniors make home repairs, particularly those related to home safety. Please call 863-9357 for eligibility criteria and more information.

Monday 11/15

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

Tuesday 11/16

10 a.m. Knitting Circle
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 11/17

9 a.m. Veterans' Agent Hours
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Bingo
1:30 p.m. Mobile Pantry
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 11/18

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 11/19

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

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8:30 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. Mask required if not vaccinated. Proper handwashing and social distancing are still required.

Monday 11/15

8:30 a.m. Foot Clinic
9 a.m. Re-Store & Re-Emerge
10 a.m. Tai Ji Quan

Tuesday 11/16

9 a.m. Good for YOU
10 a.m. Line Dancing

Wednesday 11/17

9 a.m. Strength & Conditioning
10 a.m. Tai Ji Quan

Thursday 11/18

9 a.m. Re-Store & Re-Emerge
10 a.m. Stretch & Balance

Friday 11/19

9 a.m. Quilting Guild

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.

Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School

1st Quarter Honor Roll

– Grade 6 –

FIRST HONORS Freilyn Abarua Corona, Valerie Bazemore, Shelby Beck, Cameryn Carner, Jackson Day, Grady Deery, Reese Ewell, Ameliya Galbraith, Jaclyn Galvez Martin, Lilya Glabach, Jazzlyn Gonzalez, Madison Haight, William Hutchison, Addison Lively, Braeden Moore, Jocelyn Ovale Roblero, Vinicio Palazzo, Sophie Petracchia, Nicole Porter, Scarlett Pouliot, Emma Ramos, Kendra Steiner, Olivia Wolbach, Chloe Womsey	SECOND HONORS Kenzie Alicea, Kairi Chubb, Samuel Eichorn	THIRD HONORS Autumn Dimare, Trevor Lyons, Jordyn Martin, Yolemi Ovalle Mejia
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– Grade 7 –

FIRST HONORS Augustus Beauchaine, Owen Blanchard, Jacob Broga, Leeanna Castagna, Ethan Damkoehler, Kimberly Ramirez Martin, Brayden Slauenwhite, Addison Talbot, Braeden Talbot, Marketa Vachula-Curtis	SECOND HONORS Ophelia Gallup, Rachel Juarbe, Gianna Marigliano, Layla Mathieu, Brayden Sloan	THIRD HONORS Caeden Cottrell-Bouchard, Myra Glabach, Piper McMahon, Kaleb Shaw, Stella Shipley-Aja
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– Grade 8 –

FIRST HONORS Orrin Anderson, Erin Banister Potter, Miguel Bartolon, Camden Bonnett, Maxon Brunette, Laken Chessie, Jackson Cogswell, Lincoln Coleman, Madisyn Dietz, Ethan Eichorn, Shayla Freeland, Elsee Galvez Martin, Jaylice Gary, Clara Guidaboni, Aryanna Hale, Jack Jette, Cameron Johnson, Nathan Johnson, Nathaniel Kolakoski, Noah Kolodziej, Zoey Kus, Skylei LaPan, Vaughn LaValley, Este Lemerise-Reinking, Emma Little, Cole Marshall, Shayly Martin Ovalle, Janelle Massey, Anna Norwood, John O'Malley, Yolvin Ovalle Mejia, Mario Pareja, Talia Pederzini-Curtis, Alyssa Peters, Miles Riley, Khalifa Seck, Alexis Smith, Kailey Steiner, Kainen Stevens, Nathaniel Trinque, Michael Waite, Naomi Wilson-Hill	SECOND HONORS Allysia Corbin, Suvannarose Cormier, Brody Girard, Christopher Halla, Olivia Hastings, Kevin Perez Cueto, Ariel Peters, Mila Skiff, Brooke Tirrell, Alexis Truesdell	THIRD HONORS London Ferrer, Jenna Petrowicz, Hunter Pratt, Julia Shaw
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– Grade 9 –

FIRST HONORS Marilyn Abarua Corona, Kessik Beck, Tatiana Carr-Williams, Maya Deramo, Ella Guidaboni, Kharieliex Huertas Hernandez, Mia Marigliano, Sofia Moreno, Anthony Prizio, Ledwin Villafana Abarua	SECOND HONORS Cameron Anderson, Maren Batchelder, Starrli Bell, Juel Caraballo, Samantha Carr, Lainey Chagnon, Madison Limatainen, Sheni Ovalle Roblero, Alexander Quezada Abarua, Alexander Sabin	THIRD HONORS Avery Miner, Gabriel Page
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– Grade 10 –

FIRST HONORS David Damkoehler, Cloe Fulk, LGrayson Bowse, Michael Boyle, Kyleigh Dobosz, Fiona Hutchison, Logan Johnson, Syna Katsoulis, Aiden Kelly, Anne Kolodziej, Ella Kolodziej, Audrey Lapinski, Holly Myers, Ricky Pareja, Jillian Reynolds, Avery Tela, Jack Trombi, Isabella Vachula-Curtis	SECOND HONORS Sheala Arce, Ian Bastarache, Cameron Burnett, Taylor Greene, Katelyn Grise, Owen LaValley, Megan Leveille, Jasmine McNamara, Joseph Mosca, Raygan Pendriss, Deven Sloan, Brandon Truesdell, Derek Wissmann
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– Grade 11 –

FIRST HONORS Anna Baskowski, Morgan Dobias, Cloe Fulk, Madison Gadreault, Luz Galvez Perez, Nikolas Martin, Abigail Moore, Antonia Prizio, Levin Prondecki, Adeline Riley, David Stowe, Tyler Tetreault, Corin Wilewsky	SECOND HONORS Jelani Jean Charles, Silas Koyama, Brayden McCord, Matyah Sutton	THIRD HONORS Makayla Gray, Zachary Malcolm
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– Grade 12 –

FIRST HONORS Dylan Burnett, Jayden Hosmer, Britney Lambert, Jacob Lyons, Jordyn Muniz, Jacob Norwood, Kiley Palmquist, Blake Pollard, Brandon Pollard, Olivia Stafford, Paige Sulda	SECOND HONORS Armani Barre, Olivia Delisle, Bryce Finn, Julienne Kinsman, Maximas Morgan, Odalis Ramirez-Martin, Dylun Russell, Melany Sanchez Abarua, Leidy Villafana Abarua, Emily Young	THIRD HONORS Oliver Farrington, Chloe Sumner
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WEST ALONG from page B1

What's more, the stack outside will passively warm me too, given that I move my winter office quarters from the open deck into the morning-sun facing woodshed. That warming rising sun heats me and the stack of wood behind me, along with the required strong black coffee, of course.

Now at the end of the first week in November, the morning frost graces the landscape in sparkling shock-white glazing. Four nights of freezing leaves the summertime far behind. In our small domain, *la belle jardinière*, house gardener Monique, has cut back the towering sunflower stalks, pulled down the red-flowered climbing beans from the trellis, saving a few pods for next year. We trundle the tangle off to the compost.

Our lovely flowering *capucines*, nasturtium to English-speakers, had spent the month of August sending their rampant tendrils out across the brick pathway. Now they lie sadly shriveled and brown, betrayed by the killing frost. Monet's garden at Giverny comes to mind. The last time we visited his property, those capucines covered the alleyways with a living carpet of color. I doubt that the Impressionist often worried about killing frosts, but it did snow there sometimes, especially during his grainstack paintings period. Now ours lie curled in upon themselves like an unfortunate spider dead on the windowsill.

Dogwood leaves hold on, edges tinged with white. A single droplet thirty feet away on a branch catches a ray of sun and twinkles like a brilliant green holiday light. I watch it for a fleeting minute, marveling how that prism, catching the sun, also catches my eye. Does this mean something? Or is it just

a lovely coincidence offered to the quiet observer?

In the very late afternoon, as the sun is going down, I head down the path into great-grandfather's woods, golden in the last burst of sunset. The gold is reflected in the last clinging leaves of the poplar, some birch, old gold maple. Down here at this time of year I strangely feel closer to the old folks dead and gone, spirits lingering for some reason in these woods. Maybe with the approach of Thanksgiving and those memories, it all comes back at this time of year. Things are certainly getting more simple after the riot of summer and autumn color.

In among the birches the undergrowth that once was trillium, trout lily, and random grasses lies crumpled in the cold. Yet some ferns manage to stay a lingering green all winter, even under the cover of snow. When it gets even colder, I will look forward to spending time here among the dormant trees, when I keep myself busy with my winter harvesting chores: perfect time to take in more firewood for next year, small saplings have to be thinned out, the wild blowdown cherry tree trunk I sectioned last spring needs to be brought up closer to the house on a sled, if there's snow.

A year ago on a December eve in the woods, I met the Darkling Thrush lurking in a nearby barberry bush, there and in a poem that goes back centuries. Has a year really gone by?

Living with the seasons' cycle, I meet the fall of the year, and I meet up with the spirits of the old family that linger among the trees or on the frozen pebbly shore along the west-flowing river. There as in every November, we all join in the ghost dance, in calling back times past, in the fading light, of the fading year.



BUSINESS PROFILE

Soldier Solutions

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – Soldier Solutions is a place – at 60 Church Street, Wallington, Connecticut – that sells t-shirts, and uses the money from them towards providing service dogs to help vets. I found out about them when I went to the 2021 Franklin Country Fair. I have written a lot of articles on organizations that help or support veterans in some way.

I managed to talk to the business manager, Frank Quagliano, Sr., about the place. He told me they have been doing the Franklin County Fair for three years, and that he has been at his position since the company started six years ago. The owner is his son.

It turns out they help vets in more ways than just giving profits toward the service dogs. “Number one, we buy from veterans’ companies when we can,” he told me. Veterans are also employed by the company, which is something they have been doing since they started. One-third of the sales staff are veterans, though they change over time as some get back on their feet and move on to other opportunities.

One more thought I should mention is that, in his words, “a big part of proceeds goes towards service dogs for vets.” The name of the program that is involved with providing the service dogs is Train A

Dog, Save A Warrior. They're located in San Antonio, Texas. Their mission is in part to restore and improve the “Veteran's Quality of Life” with a canine “Battle Buddy,” at no charge to the veteran or the family. (See tadsaw.org.) That mission statement also says that they provide that action for any vet, whether they be retired, discharged, or on active duty.

The Soldier Solutions t-shirts have sayings on them, with examples such as “Defending Our Liberty,” “United We Stand,” and “We Got Your Six.” Mr. Quagliano told me that they have many designs for those shirts. “We always have new ones,” he told me, “and occasionally, we inactivate some of them for the seasons.” It is a very patriotic company.

They also sell non-apparel items, which include patches that I believe you can put on your jacket or other articles of clothing, sunglasses, old-fashioned American flags, and interestingly enough, a bottle or two of hot sauce of some kind. The patches have sayings on them, like the shirts do. Those sayings are “I'm Your Huckberry,” “Don't Mistake My Kindness for Weakness,” and “100% Savage.”

I assume that people really like some of the sayings that are on these items, which in turn makes this whole company very popular. To see more, go to soldiersolutionsllc.com.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Spooky Recordings; Aggro Turkeys; Smelly Cellar; Two Garbage Truck Accidents; Deer, Horses, Llama

Monday, 11/1

2:44 p.m. Report from K Street of two people soliciting door to door as reps from Eversource. Caller states they can't provide any information, but are asking for a lot of information from residents. Officer out with parties, one of whom was found to have an active warrant. A 24-year-old Springfield man was arrested on a straight warrant.

8:38 p.m. Caller from Avenue A would like it on record that the upstairs neighbor is continually banging on the floors and walls. She also yells at all hours of the night, disturbing and upsetting other tenants.

10:11 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road complaining of loud noise from upstairs; kids running around. Officer clear; they were advised.

Tuesday, 11/2

1:14 a.m. Officer out with a suspicious auto on Plains Road. Everything is fine; they are just listening to Halloween books on tape.

6:56 a.m. Caller reports that she just hit a deer on Millers Falls Road; believes deer is dead on the side of the road. Car has damage to hood. Report taken.

9:02 a.m. Officers checking area of Montague and Oakman streets for a report of a gaggle of aggressive turkeys; second time in a week that this has happened in this area. Unable to locate.

7:27 p.m. Caller reporting someone driving around on a motorized bicycle in the area of L and K streets; states it is loud. Referred to an officer.

Wednesday, 11/3

10:09 a.m. Caller states that a white sedan is parked out back on Fourth Street and she believes a drug deal is going down. Officer observed a male and a female engaged in normal conversation. Nothing suspicious noted.

5:01 p.m. Amherst PD requesting assistance with contacting a Bangs Street resident who was involved in a road rage incident in their town. They would like to speak with him. Officer attempted to make contact, but no answer at door.

6:51 p.m. 911 caller reporting a suspicious van on East Main Street; states that the person inside the van threatened her and she ran upstairs to her apartment. Caller also reports that her boyfriend is missing; she has not seen him in two hours. Caller sounds intoxicated. Officer advised. Caller called back and stated that her boyfriend is now home. Officer advises that everything is all set with the boyfriend; as for the van, she could

not describe how the van was threatening toward her but will keep an eye out for it in the area.

7:38 p.m. 911 caller reporting a loud noise, like a cannon, between Turners Falls High School and the police station. The noise was heard from the station. Officer checking area and surrounding streets. Everything seems OK; no evidence of an explosion anywhere.

Thursday, 11/4

4:31 a.m. Caller reporting several items dumped near the railroad tracks in Millers Falls; states that propane tanks were left in the bushes. Caller wants someone to clean it up. DPW advised.

5:29 a.m. Caller reporting that a deer ran into the driver's side wheel area of her car while she was traveling to work on Industrial Boulevard. Investigated. 1:17 p.m. Public waste truck stuck on the Federal Street and Old Sunderland Road crossover; Rose Ledge en route. Requesting officer for traffic control as one lane is blocked.

4:44 p.m. Party into station requesting that an officer escort him to his residence to get some belongings and his truck. Officer served party in hand in the station lobby. Officers escorting party to residence to gather belongings. Party charged with one count of larceny under \$1,200.

5:42 p.m. 911 caller reporting that he witnessed a male party slap a female party across the face, then the two parties walked over to the area of Food City. Officer advises no one in area matching description.

7:47 p.m. Caller reporting an erratic driver traveling south on Montague City Road. Caller states that the vehicle was hitting the curb, almost going off the road, and almost hit a few cars. Officer advises vehicle just went off the road at the rest stop near Cumberland Farms. Officer advises vehicle has been safely removed from the road.

8:07 p.m. Caller reporting that the landlord's brother is staying in her apart-

ment and she is away and he is being loud and rude to the tenants. All units tied up on another call. Referred to an officer.

9:34 p.m. Caller reporting horses loose in the road on Turners Falls Road. All units currently tied up on another call. Officer advises he traveled the length of Turners Falls Road and nothing was found.

Friday, 11/5

9 a.m. Caller from Fifth Street would like it on record that a Waste Management garbage truck hit the back of her house this morning, causing damage. Caller has already contacted insurance company. Advised to contact trash removal company. Officer advised.

1:59 p.m. Eversource requesting an officer for ten minutes to assist with traffic at a job site where they are fixing a street light for public safety at Main and School streets. Services rendered.

7:49 p.m. Caller requesting to speak to an officer regarding her options for attending a football game when a person against whom she has a harassment prevention order is also there. Officer advised caller of options; no violation at this time.

11:38 p.m. Caller from L Street reporting a very bad odor coming from their basement. Shelburne Control notified to tone TFFD.

Saturday, 11/6

12:11 a.m. First of two calls reporting that the neighbor upstairs is being loud while the caller is trying to sleep. Both times, officer found no noise upon arrival. Tenant advised of complaint.

10:52 a.m. Caller from South Prospect Street would like it on record that a train has been idling on the tracks behind his house for the last 24 hours. 2:24 p.m. Officer checking on a report of a bunch of nails in the road on Cross Street. Nails located and picked up.

4:13 p.m. Caller from Third Street states that people are arguing on the third floor porch. Officers searching for female who

fled on foot. Investigated. 4:48 p.m. Male with active warrant located on Second Street while officers were investigating another issue. A 24-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on a straight warrant.

11:38 p.m. Caller from G Street states the upstairs neighbors are being noisy with whatever game they are playing. Caller states the landlord has advised them to stop by 11 p.m., and they haven't, so the landlord advised the caller to contact the police. Advised of complaint.

Sunday, 11/7

3:04 a.m. Caller from Avenue A states that he burned some toast and now the fire alarm is sounding; he is not able to shut it off. Control contacted to dispatch fire.

6:26 a.m. A 37-year-old Turners Falls woman was arrested on two default warrants.

7:02 a.m. Caller states that a horse and a llama are in the road near Hatchery and Greenfield roads. Officer advised.

10 a.m. Caller states he just hit a deer while driving a U.S. Mail truck on Wendell Road. Caller believes the deer is still alive. Investigated.

1:05 p.m. Caller reporting that her buckskin horse got loose in the Plains; states the horse is wearing a black saddle and she is out looking for him right now. Received a call from someone who advised they have a horse on Lake Pleasant Road with no rider. Returned to home or family.

5:11 p.m. 911 caller reports that she was riding her bike on the path along Migratory Way when two dogs who were off leash chased after her and tried to bite her, tearing a hole in her jacket. Unable to locate dogs.

6:24 p.m. A 18-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery. 7:58 p.m. 911 caller states that the female neighbor downstairs just came upstairs and punched his wife in the face. Situation mediated. Parties advised of options.

Montague Community Television News

Municipal Creeps?

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – If you ever wondered what it would be like to secretly spy on a meeting, that's just what it's like to watch selectboard meetings on MCTV! This week we have coverage of the Montague selectboard up for your viewing pleasure.

All MCTV videos are available on the MCTV Vimeo page, which can be found linked to our website, montaguetele.com, under the tab “Videos.”

All community members are wel-

come to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 17, as well as featured on the MCTV Vimeo page.

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

Something going on you think others would like to see? If you get in touch, we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment. Contact us at (413) 863-9200 or infomontaguetele@gmail.com.

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Taking Tumbles... And Getting Back Up

By MISHEL IXCHEL

TURNERS FALLS – On a podcast I was listening to recently, the hosts were speaking about how they were feeling. One of them in particular had a moment of panic when she told the others that for months now she’s been answering “I’m fine” to that question. She then went on to say how far that is from the truth, and yet since she was a child, she was conditioned to correlate the word “fine” with moments in her life that hurt.

The example she gave, which really resonated with me, was how as a society (more or less), the way we react when our children take a tumble is to go up to them, brush them off, and say “you’re fine.” So as adults, is it no wonder that our tendency is to say “I’m fine” during moments of duress, pain, or stumbles?

One of the other hosts then shared something that has stayed with me: she said that having had these thoughts herself, the way she responds to her children when they take a fall is to ask them, “Did you hurt yourself? Or did that scare you?”

I thought about how I myself respond to when my kid stumbles or falls. I check in with him, sometimes in sheer panic (he broke his leg when he was two in a freak accident – he was standing on a yoga block, three inches off the floor, when the block tipped and he fell) or, if I can tell he’s somewhat ok, I try to keep

it cool and calm. It’s always a split second reaction, which is why I love the “did you hurt yourself, or did that scare you?” questions.

To me, that’s such a great response that both acknowledges the situation while simultaneously inviting the child to stay embodied and not dissociate. It helps them stay present in the moment, check in with their bodies, and even possibly the fear that they experienced. It’s definitely a parenting hack I’m putting in my back pocket.

I’m no stranger to walking around dissociated, answering “I’m fine” when asked. I don’t exactly believe that answering 100% truthfully every time someone asks me how I’m doing is the way to go. In many ways, smiling and saying “I’m fine” when interacting with folks in my day-to-day is the kind thing to do for myself. Putting on a mask in an attempt to have a positive and pleasant interaction with, say, your bank teller, somehow sweetens the day. Even though the last thing I want is to interact at all, summoning kindness always leaves me feeling a little bit better.

What I’ve realized is far more important is how truthful I am with myself. In some unspoken way, I know what it’s like to go through my day feeling completely banged up – from an emotional or mental toll, not so much a physical tumble – and in a million ways telling myself I’m fine. Because there is so much good in my life and so much to be grateful for, the “I’m fine” makes sense and fits right in. But since listening to that podcast

episode and thinking about how to better respond as a parent, I’m trying to figure out how that translates into my relationship with myself.

Which, oddly enough, reminds me of another parenting hack I picked up long ago, when my kid was maybe two or three. When a child takes a tumble, whether it’s a physical one or a temper tantrum, rather than try to calm them down, instead, get in on the pain with them. If they’re whimpering, hold them close and whimper yourself. Meet them where they are; sit in the pain with them for a moment. And once that emotion is released, then try to soothe or help them.

This tip has helped me bond with my kid so much. I know that when I sit with him in his moment of hardness, difficulty, or pain, he feels seen and heard. And it’s remarkable how quickly he transitions from the place he’s in to a receptive and calm state.

Parenting, to me, has been picking up little pieces of wisdom along the way that intuitively feel right. This in turn helps me parent that little kid within me that still needs me to keep her safe, to make her feel acknowledged, to sit with her in hard moments, and, when needed, to put on the kind mask to navigate the world.

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 @indiemamadiaris.

LOG from prev. page

reported his brindle boxer missing. Later located.
5:47 p.m. Caller reported a tarp in the road between the French King Bridge and the police station.
Sunday, 10/17
8:03 a.m. 911 open line on Cottage Row. No voice contact, and no response to silent call procedure.
8:05 a.m. Caller stated a silver van pulled out of the Gill Mill in front of her while she was traveling eastbound on Route 2. She went to pass the vehicle, and it sped up to 68 mph. Caller stated she had to pull back into her lane because of oncoming traffic.
11:14 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle, Gill boat ramp.
5 p.m. Unwanted person asking for money on private property on the French King Highway.
Monday, 10/18
4:08 p.m. Unwanted panhandler reported on private property on the French King Highway.
5:22 p.m. Medical emergency on Elm Street.
6:08 p.m. Bobcat observed in a driveway on West Gill Road.
Tuesday, 10/19
9:37 a.m. Suspicious vehicle reported on the French King Bridge. Located op-

erator. All okay.
1:34 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with disturbance on the French King Highway.
3:21 p.m. Motor vehicle accident with no injury on the French King Highway. Caller advised she was rear-ended by a black SUV. No injuries.
6:47 p.m. Caller stated there is a truck on the dirt section of the road on his property. Located owner out hunting. Advised of complaint, moved along.
Wednesday, 10/20
1:52 p.m. Caller reported a red Subaru driving all over the road on the French King Highway, coming out of Erving.
Thursday, 10/21
3:53 a.m. Call from the alarm company reported a commercial burglar alarm going off on Elm Street.
5:34 a.m. 911 misdial. Caller from Riverview Drive advised he does not have an emergency, was attempting to reset his iPhone.
6:31 a.m. Conducted a welfare check on the French King Highway of a party sleeping in the grass. Determined to have an active arrest warrant. Same taken into custody.
8:52 a.m. Major traffic issues at the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

1:42 p.m. Caller from the Gill lights called Montague dispatch with a complaint about backed-up traffic.
6:06 p.m. Officer requested on Connecticut River for boat problems out by the French King Bridge.
7:20 p.m. Suspicious vehicle reported on the French King Highway.
Friday, 10/22
3:09 p.m. Medical emergency on Vassar Way.
7:31 p.m. Assisted Montague PD on First Street. Open door. Montague PD en route, requesting an additional unit.
7:43 p.m. Conducted a welfare check on the Gill side of the French King Bridge. Female was sitting on the bench. Checks okay. Party is using their phone.
9:34 p.m. Found license turned in at the Gill Mill. Same brought to PD.
Sunday, 10/24
6:04 p.m. Minor motor vehicle accident with no injuries in the French King Bridge parking lot.
Monday, 10/25
10:26 a.m. Conducted a welfare check on the French King Bridge. Caller reported a female with short black hair wearing a black coat, standing in the middle of the bridge in the rain. Caller advises there is

a black vehicle parked on the Gill side of the bridge.
12:44 p.m. misdial, Peterson Way. Cell caller advised accidental dial in her cup holder. No emergency.
1:59 p.m. Caller from the French King Highway reported a fraudulent charge on her debit card.
Tuesday, 10/26
1 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with disturbance on the French King Highway.
Wednesday, 10/27
1:07 p.m. Motor vehicle accident with injury on the French King Highway. Rollover on Route 2.
Friday, 10/29
10:40 a.m. Noise complaint, French King Highway.
Saturday, 10/30
2:30 a.m. Abandoned 911 call from Main Road transferred. No one on the line.
12:15 p.m. 911 misdial from Mountain Road. Female party on the line stated there was no emergency. She would not verify her information, and hung up.
Sunday, 10/31
6:51 a.m. Unattended death on Main Road.
8:14 p.m. Checking on a suspicious vehicle on the Gill side of the French King Bridge. Subject fishing. He was advised not to park there next time.

HEARTFELT from page B1

help to fight cancer, support kidney health, and regulate blood pressure. Did you know that radishes also help to slow the skin aging process... hmmm, has anyone seen my radish cream?

Some of the more common radishes are the smaller, round, red radishes found in most grocery stores. They are likely Cherry Belle or Red Globe, mild and best used in salads or eaten raw. You can also find French breakfast radishes which are slender with a dark pink color that fades to white at the tip – French radish tips, anyone? – and have an extra crunchy texture and pungent flavor.

Watermelon radishes look, well, a bit like watermelons when you cut them in half to find the outer green ring encircling white flesh with a dark pink center. From China, they are called *shinrimei*, loosely translated to “beautiful-at-heart radish.” Sweeter than most radishes, they’re great roasted and served with balsamic vinegar and goat cheese.

Daikon is another variety that’s easy to find. Many of our local farms grow them, and you can find them at the farmers market. They’re fat and long and range in colors from white to dark purple. Daikon can measure up to 18 inches long and 3 inches across. They are great eaten raw, pickled, baked, or roasted and enhanced by a toss with olive oil, lemon juice, and salt, and maybe some thinly sliced ginger root.

It’s one of the ingredients in the Korean dish kimchi, which pairs Daikon with napa cabbage, onions, garlic, ginger, and chili pepper, or *gochu* in Korean. Then there’s Daikon mochi, a radish cake from Japan combining the shredded radish with rice flour, dried shrimp, and other shredded or chopped vegetables which are sauteed in oil until browned.

There are quite a few unusual radishes, including the golden Helios, an heirloom radish named after the Greek god of the sun. It’s an olive-shaped, bright yellow radish with a sweet mild flavor. The Shawo fruit radish from China is a unique bright green radish from the north with a sweet flavor that inten-

sifies from their harsh winters. This variety is often served up at Beijing tea parties in winter as a sliced fresh “fruit.”

The Japanese grow the Sakurajima giant radish, a special cultivar grown in the south and known as the “King of Daikon.” It’s been known to reach upwards of 100 pounds, although the 15-pound range is the more common size. It is sweeter than most radishes and is delicious pickled. This radish is so large, it’s sometimes sold in souvenir shops!

Radishes are celebrated in Oaxaca, Mexico during the “Night of the Radishes,” an event which features carved radishes. In France, the humble radish is often found on peasant menus and packed in worker lunches with black bread, butter, and salt. And across Europe radish leaves are added to potato soup or sauteed and eaten as a side dish.

Between the time I wrote the above paragraph and now, I threw three types of radishes in the oven and roasted them at 400° for 30 minutes with a drizzle of olive oil, salt, and pepper. I was so surprised to find how sweet and juicy they were, and I do not know why I’ve never thought to add radishes to my own roasted root veggies but that is an oversight soon to be corrected.

There are a few other uses for radishes, including the aforementioned oil for cooking, such as a skin serum for hair and nails, and as a cure-all for dry, cracked skin. The oil has a unique fatty acid composition similar to silicone, which is used in shampoo. Its emollient properties make it easily penetrable to skin making it a great moisturizer. Radish oil is also used as a pesticide to keep bugs away due to its pungent smell.

I learned a lot about radishes in writing this article – I hope you did, too. I leave you with this very simple recipe for a new taste sensation.

Trouble lives in Greenfield with Wifey and Mama Catt Elliott and volunteers at many local agencies working with food insecure populations. She loves to talk, read, write, garden/farm, cook, and make art.

ROASTED RADISHES

Clean and, if preferred, peel the radishes – I did find the skin on them somewhat tough after roasting.

Slice them in half or in quarters, and drizzle them with olive oil, salt, and pepper.

Roast them in a pan on parchment paper at 400° for 30 to 40

minutes until soft and juicy.

Radishes are also good roasted with other root veggies like beets, carrots, sweet potatoes, and winter squashes.

They can be eaten by themselves right from the oven or added to salads, soups, and stews.



Sweet, juicy roasted radishes.

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JINX from page B1

little too far in achieving the goal of molding us into fighting machines.

Scrubbing the old wooden floors, with rough-bristled hand held brushes, I could understand. During one such midnight training exercise, an incident arose during which I lost it.

Throughout my young life I rarely lost my temper, but one of the other recruits refused to participate in "the enjoyment" and after much pleading by the others in our section, I jumped up, grabbed him, and pushed him to the floor. Not long into the fight my fellow recruits pulled me off him, as they thought I was about to beat to death this bloody lump that remained lying there. When he finally got up, he quickly grabbed a brush and joined the party.

Not all recruits had been raised in a clean environment. Some, having lived in utter filth in their civilian life and seldom bathed – even as late as the 1950s – and who were still lax in the latter, would be awarded a barracks punishment. The rest of the platoon would see to it that they would get the message by way of a G.I. shower: scrub-brushing them as if they were the barracks floor. From then on, they usually became the cleanest of all the troops.

The first eight weeks of the training cycle consisted of care and usage of weapons including rifles, pistols, Browning automatic rifle, bayonet techniques, and proper hand grenade throwing. (Not like a baseball.)

We were especially thoroughly trained in the M1 rifle, as we were slated to become a rifle company. We would quickly learn that if you did not get your thumb out of the way quickly after loading the ammo clip in, the results would be an M1 thumb. That is really painful, and oftentimes it would end up broken. Another caution to take was to not keep your face too close when sighting, as the strong recoil could leave you with a "bloused" (swollen) lip.

In addition to weapons training, we would receive dental exams and other necessary medical procedures. Of course, physical training, marching, KP, and guard duty would fill out a long day.

The initial eight weeks over, from knit-picking chicken-shit to assholes and elbows, the cadre started to loosen up and began to form us into a well-trained cohesive rifle company. There still would be instances of the former BS.

One of these instances that I still remember vividly occurred early on. As our platoon stood at attention for roll call, a young Sergeant First Class (SFC) dressed down George Bunk. Nose-to-nose he proceeded with, "Soun, what's wrong wit you. When are you goin' to start looking like a growd-up soldier?"

I could almost hear my insides laughing and thought the rest of the platoon were having the same experience. Now, it wasn't because of the "growd up" – it was due to the fact that George was 27 years old, and as the oldest recruit in the company, the rest of us called him "Pappy." The SFC was only 23.

In the last week of our training, we would learn a lot about the young SFC. He joined the army at age 17 with only an eighth-grade education, and had served in combat in Korea, where he had been bayoneted while still in his fox-hole during a nighttime surprise enemy attack.

When I asked him why he stayed in the Army, he replied, "I lived in the hill country growding up and the only shoes I had were my dead Pappy's ... which was too big for my feet. Hungry most of the time ... when I got old enough, I left for the Army. It's my home now. Where else could the likes of me git three square meals a day, my clothes for nuttin', shoes and boots that fit – and they even pay me. Where else could I get that?"

It was then that I finally realized how well off I'd been growing up compared to so many others like him that I was soldiering with now.

**In Flanders Fields** (John McCrae, 1915)

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

**Anthem for Doomed Youth** (Wilfred Owen, 1917)

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle? –
Only the Monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, –
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.



Aquí se habla español

Esta es la página mensual en español del **Montague Reporter**. Aquí podrá encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana en el área, eventos de interés, curiosidades, y noticias mundiales en español.

Si quiere participar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a spanish@montaguereporter.org.



Primer alcalde puertorriqueño elegido en Holyoke

Por SARAH ROBERTSON

Traducción de Victoria Maíllo de Aguilera.

HOLYOKE – Los votantes de Holyoke eligieron a su primer alcalde puertorriqueño, Joshua García, en las elecciones celebradas el martes 2 de noviembre. Junto a él fue elegido el abanico más variado de concejales en la historia de la ciudad.

"Solamente quiero que sepan que esto es un símbolo de progreso" dijo el recién elegido alcalde a sus partidarios durante la fiesta celebrada después de su elección. "Mi campaña, si no se dieron cuenta antes, estuvo basada en el compromiso con nosotros, los ciudadanos de esta ciudad, desde el oeste hasta el sur de Holyoke. Todos somos uno."

García consiguió el 56% de los votos emitidos y derrotó a Michael Sullivan, propietario de un negocio, que ha sido concejal durante tres mandatos en el puesto de alcalde que quedó libre después de que Morse lo dejase para convertirse en administrador de la ciudad de Provincetown a principios del 2021. García recibió 4.566 votos contra los 3.548 de Sullivan.

"Esto es también historia" dijo al *Montague Reporter* la concejala del Distrito 1, Gladys LeBron-Martínez. "Creo que esto tendrá una gran influencia en las nuevas generaciones porque muchas veces no creen que estas oportunidades estén disponibles para ellos, pero esto nos enseña que todos podemos postularnos para un cargo – un hombre latino que trabajaba en Boys and Girls Club."

García actualmente desempeña el cargo de administrador en la ciudad de Blandford y posee experiencia trabajando en el Departamento de Vivienda Pública en Holyoke, en su comité escolar, y también en la Comisión de Planificación del Pioneer Valley. García nació y creció en Holyoke. Es hijo de madre soltera que se mudó de Puerto Rico a la ciudad y durante su niñez sufrió una severa enfermedad. A ella le dedicó las primeras palabras de agradecimiento en su discurso de victoria.

No se olvidó tampoco de Gladys LeBron-Martínez a la que le dedicó estas palabras: "Gracias a líderes como ella que allanaron el camino a niños como yo, gracias por tanto." García añadió que si no fuera por líderes como LeBron-Martínez no hubiera estado allí esta noche.

"Él tiene la experiencia. Creo lo hará bien," dijo LeBron-Martínez que ha sido concejala durante 10 años. "Es un hombre joven al que conozco desde hace años desde que llegué aquí. Creció en nuestros vecindarios."

LeBron-Martínez en lugar de presentarse a la reelección por un sexto mandato en el distrito 1 hizo campaña en favor de García y por otros candidatos a concejales generales como José Luis Maldonado Vélez, Israel Rivera y Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, así como Jenny Rivera que se presentó a candidata a concejala por el Distrito 1. Los cuatro consiguieron sus puestos como concejales en las elecciones del martes 2 de noviembre.

La historia de Holyoke como centro de la historia latina comenzó hace más de un siglo y fue impulsada por una variedad de factores, incluidas las oportunidades laborales y los lazos familiares en el área. Un total de 53.9% de los habitantes de Holyoke hoy en día se identifican como hispanos o latinos según los datos

del censo de 2019 de los Estados Unidos.

"A aquellas familias que emigraron a Holyoke después del huracán María, las oigo. Y quiero que sepan que pueden contar con mi administración y con todos los que están esta noche en la sala para mejorar la calidad y las condiciones de vida en esta ciudad" dijo García después de que se anunciarán los resultados de la elección. "Pero, primero, y antes todo, debemos trabajar en ese presupuesto, ¡hombre!, ¡necesitamos una administración!"

En varias entrevistas anteriores a las elecciones, habló de sus planes para lograr estabilidad financiera en Holyoke, una ciudad que se encuentra en suspensión de pagos y conseguir cerrar las brechas entre las ramas disfuncionales del gobierno de la ciudad. García comenzará su mandato el 15 de noviembre en sustitución del alcalde interino y concejal por el Distrito 2, Terence Murphy, que no ha buscado la reelección este año.

Ayuntamiento de la Ciudad

El ayuntamiento de la ciudad de Holyoke está formado por siete representantes de distrito y seis concejales generales. Además de la histórica victoria de García, seis de los trece concejales de la ciudad serán personas de color según informó el *Daily Hampshire Gazette* y agregó que José Maldonado Vélez e Israel Rivera son solamente el tercer y cuarto candidato latino a concejal general en toda la historia de las elecciones de Holyoke.

"Me presenté a candidato a concejal general con la premisa de que necesitábamos diversidad, una perspectiva diferente y nuevas personas en el consejo para representar no solamente la afluencia de nuevos ciudadanos sino también a muchos de los distritos inferiores" dijo Israel Rivera. "Hay muchos puertorriqueños en la comunidad general. Soy puertorriqueño así que estoy tratando de representar a una gran parte de la comunidad."

Sosteniendo carteles que apoyaban a García fuera del ayuntamiento el martes por la tarde, Rivera reflexionó sobre el viaje personal que lo llevó a postularse a concejal general nuevamente después de que perdiera en las pasadas elecciones por solamente unos cientos de votos. Al igual que García nació y se crió en el sur de Holyoke. Asistió a las escuelas públicas que ya enfrentaban dificultades y trabajó para Boys and Girls Club.

"La idea es inspirar a la comunidad a intentarlo y que se puede lograr" dijo Rivera. "He combatido y derribado tantas barreras diferentes a las que me he enfrentado debido a mis antecedentes penales que mucha gente se ha sentido inspirada."

Después de graduarse de la escuela secundaria, Rivera estuvo cinco años en prisión por vender marihuana. Casualmente fue el anterior alcalde de Holyoke, Michael Sullivan, el que le ofreció su primer trabajo tras salir de prisión, aunque pese a ello seguía apoyando a García en las elecciones del 2 de noviembre debido a sus ideales políticos y sus vínculos compartidos al haber trabajado juntos en Boys and Girls Club.

"A lo largo del proceso lo vi crecer y ahora puedo admirar a donde ha llegado. En cierto modo es el reflejo de mi situación," añadió Rivera. "Es una historia que Holyoke tiene que escuchar."

• **Food Bank of Massachusetts** sigue ofreciendo alimentos gratis cada tercer miércoles de mes en el parking del Senior Center en Turners Falls cuya dirección es 62 5th Street. Por favor, asegúrense de traer sus propias bolsas, así como mascarillas. Este programa se realiza en alianza con FCCMP y Montague COA. Si tienen preguntas, contacten con The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts en el teléfono (413) 247-9738.

• **Despensa del pueblo.** Reparto de comida y ropa gratis cada jueves de 2:30 a 4 p.m. en La Mariposa en 11 Avenue A.

• **Great Falls Apple Corps** ofrece cada sábado comida y ropa gratis delante de la casita de Unity Park en Turners Falls de 12 a 3 p.m.



• **Spanish Hour at Stone Soup Café.** Sábado 13 de noviembre a las 12.30 p.m. ¿Vive en Franklin County y habla español? ¿Quiere practicar tu español? ¿Quiere compartir un almuerzo con otros que hablan español en Stone Soup Café en Hope St. en Greenfield. Si tiene preguntas o quiere saber más escriba a estergonzmar@gmail.com.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Shawn Garland & Friends*. Veterans Day event; "veterans, Shawn will be taking care of your first beer!" Free. 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Lucy Wainwright Roche*. \$. 7 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *High Tea*. Free. 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Helen Keller event, screening of *Her Socialist Smile* (2020), sound bath before the film. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *BRNDA, Bucket, Space Camp*. \$. 8 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Supaman*. \$. 8 p.m.

Ballroom at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *milou*. \$. 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Brewbaker's, Keene: *Tobin*

Sprout, halvesour. \$. 7:45 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: CINEMASTORM presents *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1990) and *C.H.U.D.* (1984). \$. 8:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Telechrome Cloth feat. *Itchykisses, Cal Fish, Lucy, Tyler Rai, kirakirakira, Flubber Boiler, Blix, and DJ Lucie*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Danny Pease & the Regulators*. \$. 10 p.m.

The Wheelhouse at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Hip-hop night with *Chris Focus, Walt Arkain, Wiz the Merchant, Still Strange, Lil Souf, Suns*. \$. 10:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

The Swanery, Gill: *Tarp, Bev, Tony & Kryssi, Angry Baby*. Free. 3 p.m.

The Wheelhouse at Hawks &

Reed, Greenfield: *Vapors of Morphine*. \$. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Steve Kimock & Friends*. \$. 8 p.m.

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Owsley's Owls*. \$. 10 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Charlie Hunter & Scott Amendola Duo*. \$. 7 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *The Psychedelic Furs*. \$. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Greenfield Community College Music Concert* with the *Contemporary Music Ensemble*. Free. 7 p.m.

Calvin Theater, Northampton: *Little Feat*. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Kathy Mattea*. \$. 8 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *IFÉ, DJ Bongohead*. \$. 8 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Real Estate, Kate Bollinger*. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Landowner, Chris Wardlaw*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Rosie Porter and the Neon Moons*. Free. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Sean Rowe*. \$. 7 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Tom Shields and Barely Standing*. \$. 7 p.m.

Luthier's Coop, Easthampton: *Daring Coyotes*. 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Screening, *Linefork* (2016), on legendary Kentucky banjo player Lee Sexton. Opening performance by *Carling Berkhout*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Mystery Train, Amherst: *Shrinirs, Gracious Calamity, Liz Tonne & Vic Rawlings, Frozen Corn*. Free. 3 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kris Delmhorst*. \$. 7 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Underground System*. \$. 7 p.m.

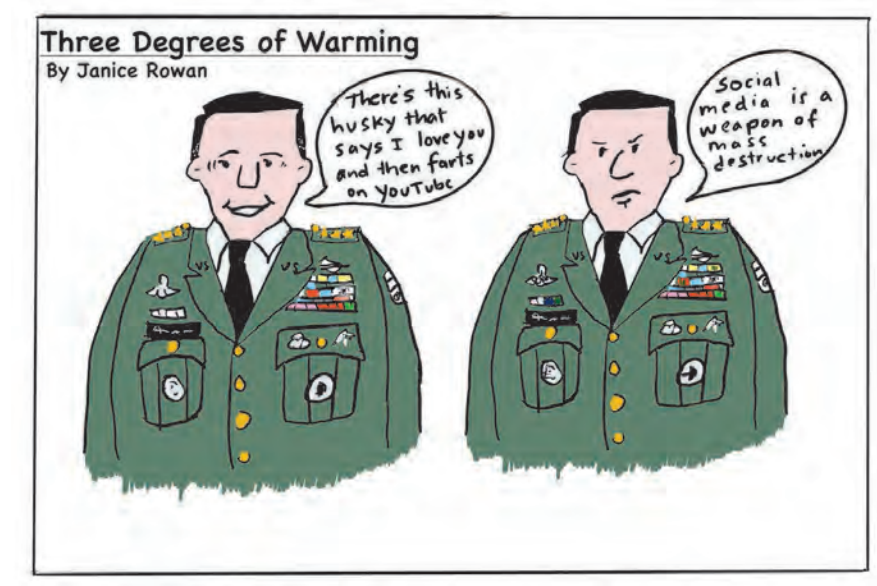
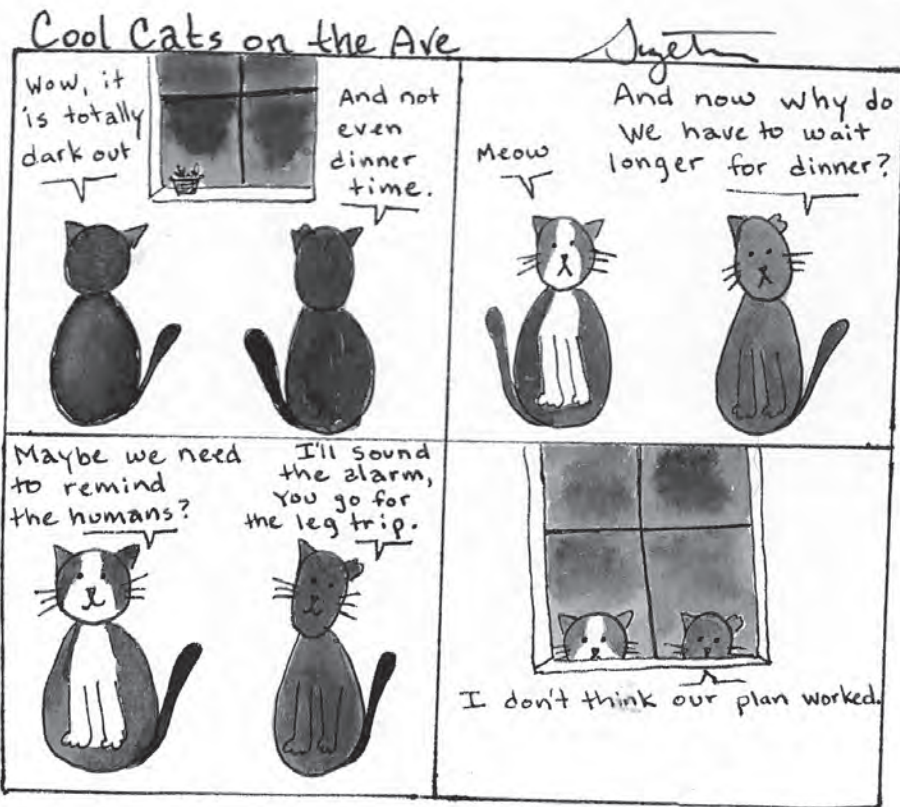
Calvin Theater, Northampton: *Melissa Ferrick, Carrie Ferguson*. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Pioneer Valley Jazz Shares presents *Avram Fefner*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

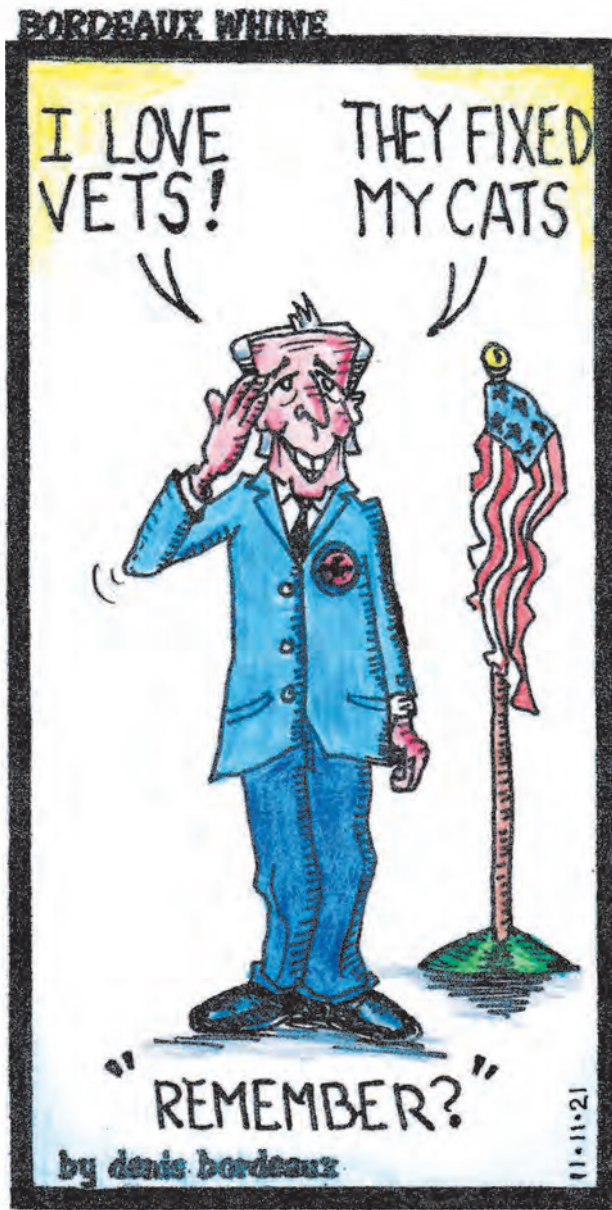
Academy of Music, Northampton: *Pat Metheny Side-Eye*. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *David Bromberg Quintet*. Seriously. \$. 8 p.m.



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An Offer of Care for Care Providers

By LEE WICKS

SUNDERLAND – While many people stayed safely at home during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers and home health caregivers caring for the elderly continued to provide their services every day. In response, the Care Collaborative in Sunderland (formerly known as the Tripp Memorial Foundation) is offering much-needed comfort and restoration to direct care professionals with the Giving Back Massage Therapies Program.

“Caregivers may neglect their own needs and become physically and emotionally depleted, because the focus of their attention and energy is on the health and wellbeing of those they care for,” said director Emma Golden. “As a result, direct care workers have some of the highest on-the-job injury and turnover rates of any industry.”

Massages offered through this new program will be deeply discounted for caregivers, and they will also be available to the public at reasonable rates. The program is offering a half-hour massage for \$15 and an hour-long massage for \$25 to Caregiver members. The cost to the general public would be \$40 and \$65, respectively.

Caregiver members are people who are “actively employed in the direct-care workforce,” said Golden. “Examples include home health aides, certified nursing assistants, personal care attendants, and resident care attendants.” Anyone who works as a direct care worker can apply to be a Caregiver member, which costs \$30 a year.

Caregiver members receive additional benefits, as well as these affordable massages. They get a 25% discount at the Giving Circle Thrift Store in South Deerfield, discounts at other local businesses, group activities and family events, wellness programs, and professional development opportunities.

Many massage therapists are available, and each one offers their own set of modalities. Golden said that massage therapists and cli-

ents always talk before a massage to determine what treatment will be most appropriate for the client on any given day. “I’d encourage people interested in having massages with us to read each massage therapist’s bio,” she added, “to learn more about what each has to offer.”

The benefits of regular massage, according to Golden, may include reduced muscle tension, improved circulation, stimulation of the lymphatic system, reduction of stress, relaxation, increased joint mobility and flexibility, improved recovery of soft tissue injuries, and more. Regular massage can help to renew and rejuvenate.

On the day I was there, Elissa Small, a home health aide who lives in Greenfield, emerged from her hour-long massage with Teresa Anderson, a licensed practical nurse and teacher with 20 years of experience as a massage therapist. Small said she felt relaxed and grateful. Her job involves lots of heavy work, and massage helps her muscles heal and her mind to relax.

“It is our belief that quality care is only possible with a well-trained and well-supported workforce,” Golden said.

The organization also provides consultation, support, and training to individuals involved with providing care to their friends and family. “For over 15 years, the Care Collaborative has provided a comprehensive nursing assistant and home health aide training program,” said Golden. “Our students are trained to provide loving, compassionate, and skilled care. Graduates of the program work in nursing homes, home care agencies, assisted living facilities, hospice, and other health care settings throughout western Massachusetts.”

COVID-19 put a stop to the training program, but Golden said the organization plans to restart its vocational training in early 2022 at their new site in Sunderland. “It takes some time with the state of Massachusetts to establish a new nursing assistant training site, and they are in process of that application,” she explained.

The Giving Circle Thrift Shop in South



Director Emma Golden, massage therapist Teresa Anderson, and client Elissa Small (left to right) at the Care Collaborative offices in Sunderland.

Deerfield provides much of the Collaborative’s funding. “We’ve received a grant every year from the Wells Foundation for the past three years,” said Golden. “We will be participating in Giving Tuesday this year, in just a few weeks. And we accept financial donations from people as well. When we have a training program running, that is also a source of funding.” Tuition is \$1,500, with some financial aid available.

The organization opened the Giving Circle Thrift Shop in 2018 as a way to expand support for caregivers. “Caregivers working in the direct care workforce make very little money,” Golden said, “and so we envisioned the Thrift Shop as a place where our community, that is rich in stuff, could donate their stuff to be sold at a discount to direct care workers.” Everything in the store is priced so as to be affordable, and Caregiver members get an additional 25% off.

“The Thrift Store is a meeting place, a

shopping place, and community place,” said Golden, “where people can shop knowing that their money is staying in the community and supporting caregivers. All of the items we sell are generously donated by the community.”

A person who is not a caretaker but seeking a massage can feel good in body and spirit knowing that a full-price massage will subsidize massages for Caregiver members and support the work of the Care Collaborative, where people provide for the well-being of community caregivers and work to increase the quality of community care.

All employees and massage therapists at the Collaborative facility in Sunderland are vaccinated. The facility leaves 30 minutes between appointments, and has an industrial-sized air filter running at all times when clients are being seen. The Collaborative is booking massages now – interested persons can call (413) 665-4835, or book an appointment online at thecarecollaborative.org.

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