

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 20 – NO. 11

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 27, 2022

G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

State Aid for Gill-Montague Schools Higher Than Expected

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – “As soon as the state numbers come out tomorrow, I’m going to be back to the drawing board,” Joanne Blier, business manager for the Gill-Montague regional school district, told the school committee Tuesday evening.

Each year the district, towns, and state perform an intricate dance in building the following year’s budget, and this week the committee’s task was to approve a “preliminary” budget that will be reviewed by the towns next Monday.

It was a somewhat abstract exercise, as one of the largest pieces of revenue, Chapter 70 aid from the state, would not be announced until Wednesday. Blier made a guess that Gill-Montague’s Chapter 70 would grow by 3.5% over the current year, to \$7.38 million, and used it to build an operating budget of \$22,585,566.

Even with some late-breaking news that the town of Montague see **GMRSD** page A5

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Weighs Options for Voting Location

By KATIE NOLAN

At its meeting on Monday at the senior and community center, the Erving selectboard proposed changing the location for voting from the basement of town hall to either upstairs in town hall, the senior and community center, or the Erving Public Library.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache explained that the current location at the town hall basement was “not a viable option,” because of equipment stored there and the recreation commission’s office space.

Town clerk Richard Newton said he was not in favor of moving voting from town hall, in part because his dedicated data line to the secretary of state is located in his town hall office, and he uses the line when there are questions about a voter’s registration.

Newton also said that before moving the voting location, the town would be required to mail notification of the change to every registered voter.

Bastarache and selectboard chair Jacob Smith asked Newton to consider the upper floor of town hall for voting, if the offices on that floor were closed for voting day.

Newton said he would report back to the February 7 selectboard meeting with an evaluation as to whether voting check-in and booths would fit on the upper floor, and more information about the process for moving a voting location.

The board approved the purchase see **ERVING** page A4

THE BIG PICTURE

Ask Your Local Weather Nut



Is the big one coming? Probably not, says Dave Hayes... But there are a lot of factors. (See page B1 to learn more about this Fourth Street alley!)

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – It’s looking like snow Saturday, so like a lot of people do, I went online to see what Dave Hayes The Weather Nut had to say about it. As of Tuesday it was looking like an awfully big storm is going to come up the coast and Hayes, a self-described “weather curator,” was indeed posting long, manic explanations about what we did and didn’t know from his South Deerfield headquarters.

I reached out for an interview, and by the time we talked Wednesday night, it was looking more certain the brunt of the storm will be off the coast. We talked about patterns of energy, weathermen and their sensors, and that elusive dream, making a living doing what you love. (The transcript has been edited for length and for clarity.)

MR: I see you’re just about to hit 50,000 followers on Facebook, and I think that this might make you the biggest figure in western Mass media – and certainly a leading light of the local DIY scene. Why do you think there’s such a demand for your services here?

DH: That’s a good question! I think part of it is that most traditional media, whether it’s radio or TV or print, is a one-way street; you kind of get a forecast delivered to you, and you consume it, and then that’s it. With social media I’m able to interact with people, and answer their questions when I can and have a conversation around it, and around some of the impacts.

I think I also just happen to fill an area where there’s a bit of a hole: the National Weather Service in Albany covers southern Vermont and see **NUT** page A6

‘Getting Young Women Talking To Real Tradeswomen in the Field’

By CHARLOTTE VALLE

TURNERS FALLS – In continuation of my previous article on the Tradeswomen of Tomorrow program, published in the December 23, 2021 edition (page A1, *Tech Program Focuses on Women in Trades*), I interviewed some of the members of the panel. This panel, which addresses Franklin County Technical School freshman girls each year, is made up of women in a number of different fields in our community.

My first interview was with Chelsea Fenton, a union laborer of nine

years from Colrain. She told me her job includes a number of different tasks “including but not limited to landscaping, curb and sidewalk installation, grading, trench work, pipe work, asphalt work, concrete work, scaffolding, tending other trades, demolition, final cleaning, operating lulls/forklifts, etc.”

She has been a member of the program for one year, and said she looks forward to continuing sharing her experience with the students in the future.

A big part of the Tradeswomen see **TRADES** page A5



Laborer Chelsea Fenton of Colrain, addressing a panel of Franklin County Technical School freshman girls earlier this school year.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Assistant Town Administrator, Police Sergeant OKed in Budget

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard held lengthy, back-to-back meetings on Monday and Tuesday, grappling with issues ranging from proposed police and town hall staffing increases and the status of the March 3 special town meeting to the award of the former highway garage to a developer and the demolition of the Farren hospital.

Monday’s meeting began with the usual update on COVID case counts. In the absence of the health director Daniel Wasiuk, the job was handed to town administrator Steve Ellis, who reported that the two-week “rolling” count of new positive tests had declined from 274 as of January 15 to 206 as of January 22.

“If one is reading the news media at this point in time, and looking at the public health statistics... it is what we would expect to see,” Ellis said. “We have been shot up a cliff of sorts, but there is an expectation that the Omicron variant will

begin to wane.”

Ellis did not propose any changes in policy in response to the data, because “we still have extraordinarily high case counts.” He then discussed the status of 1,000 new rapid COVID test kits that the town has recently acquired using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

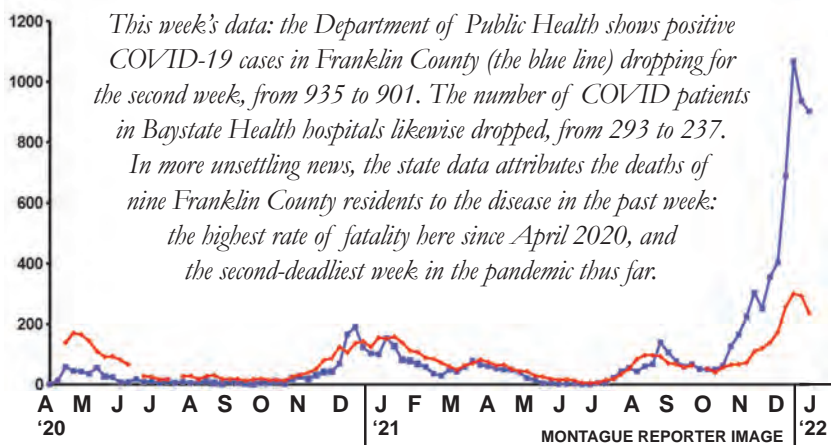
Ellis said that he and the emergency management director John Zellman would distribute these kits at the town hall annex this Friday, January 28 between noon and 3 p.m. Each kit contains two tests, and Ellis suggested that because a previous round of over 2,000 tests had been distributed to “economically disadvantaged” residents through social service agencies, a “substantial portion” of the new round should be made available to the “general public.”

Police Expansion

Virtually all of Tuesday’s meeting was dedicated to reviewing the see **MONTAGUE** page A7

ANALYSIS

Town Health Boards Face COVID: Is Statewide Reform the Answer?



By JEFF SINGLETON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges to local small-town boards of health, which are often understaffed, unaccustomed to making politicized decisions about mandates, and lacking in the training or desire to evaluate complex data to guide those decisions. But the experience of the past two years has also produced new experiments in regional collaboration, and the potential for new state funding and reform.

In Montague, the division of labor between the health department

and selectboard has led to frustration on both sides. The two boards have often been meeting together to review data and discuss policy, but the process has been inconsistent and bumpy.

In the midst of the most recent spike of COVID cases the health board had to cancel a December meeting, leaving it up to the town’s emergency management director, the former fire chief, to advocate for a mask mandate to the selectboard.

Two weeks later, the selectboard devoted nearly an hour to discussing policy for distributing COVID rapid tests, with no recommendation from see **HEALTH** page A8

RECAP

Farren Demolition Debate Continues in Tight Circles

By MIKE JACKSON

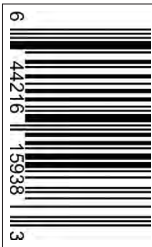
MONTAGUE CITY – “I’ve never witnessed a disconnect like this between the central question that advocates were bringing and how the board is responding,” resident Ariel Elan told Montague officials during Monday night’s selectboard meeting.

On the agenda was planning for a February 7 forum regarding the site of the Farren Care Center on Montague City Road, privately owned and slated for demolition. To the visible frustration of selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, several op-

ponents of the demolition spoke to again town hall for not continuing to press owner Trinity Health over a promise made last year to partner with the town on a reuse study.

“We’re not here to debate what happened,” Kuklewicz said at the beginning of the discussion.

“I’ve seen three or four pieces of documentation now, both written and a sound tape as well, that the commitment that this organization, Trinity, made to the town has been violated,” said Jerry Lund of Leyden, a board member of the Community Health Center of see **CIRCLES** page A2



All Readers Subject to Non-Disclosure Agreement

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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About Face Computing

Founded by
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August 2002

‘Community Input’

Two years into the COVID shakeup, the governments of our small local towns are in a strange shape. As with everything, the pandemic has intensified already-existing dynamics: a small portion of the population makes a hobby of civic participation, and a thin layer of volunteers is required to help paid staff keep the apparatus functioning.

Early on, there was an opinion that the silver lining of lockdowns would be that remote meetings would make participation more accessible, and therefore more widespread. In hindsight, those early gains can probably be better attributed to more people having free time on their hands, a resource that has dried up. We see the usual suspects, minus those who don't use computers, plus a few who only use computers.

And what's odd is that money, finally, is flowing down from the federal and state levels to fill gaps. Yesterday's unexpected Chapter 70 windfall in Gill-Montague is only the latest; some towns have been scratching their heads trying to figure out what to do with all their

American Rescue Plan Act money.

The last time the government was making such large investments was a full two generations ago. At that time – the so-called “Great Society” of the early 1960s – robust federal spending was met with powerful, organized constituencies from the great social mass. Labor unions and community groups mobilized members by the hundreds and thousands to engage with and contest the shape of government.

Much of the jargon we are left with today in the public sector – community input forums, grants that require prior planning documents that require prior visioning sessions – is the legacy of that great clash. These are artifacts of the attempt to absorb, head off, and redirect the challenge of power from below.

This is the missing piece these days, and the whole dance looks ridiculous without it. A clique of three or four activists managing to work together is an aberration, and such formations frequently speak as if representing movements.

When movement returns, that's not what it's going to look like.

CIRCLES from page A1

Franklin County, an organization founded in the Farren building in 1997 and now headquartered in Greenfield.

“I have heard repeatedly... ‘I don't want to take questions, I don't want to discuss this,’ said Montague City Improvement Association member Lilith Wolinsky. “For citizens who want to discuss this, this is our forum.”

Selectboard member Matt Lord said the board was in agreement that there are “a very limited set of tools for the town and this board to influence” Trinity's decision.

“One of the conundrums is that we don't have necessarily a tremendous sense of efficacy relative to the site,” said town administrator Steve Ellis. “A private interest is clearly moving towards demolition.”

“We had no contract,” said Kuklewicz.

Town planner Walter Ramsey has been tasked with facilitating the February 7 forum, which is focused on hearing about community priorities for reuse of the property post-demolition. Trinity has indicated it intends to grant it to the town.

“We really want to know what the community wants for this parcel, however the parcel may stand, when and if it comes to the com-

munity and we have power to do that,” said Ellis.

“We're not looking to have an antagonistic relationship with Trinity regarding the outcome,” Lord said.

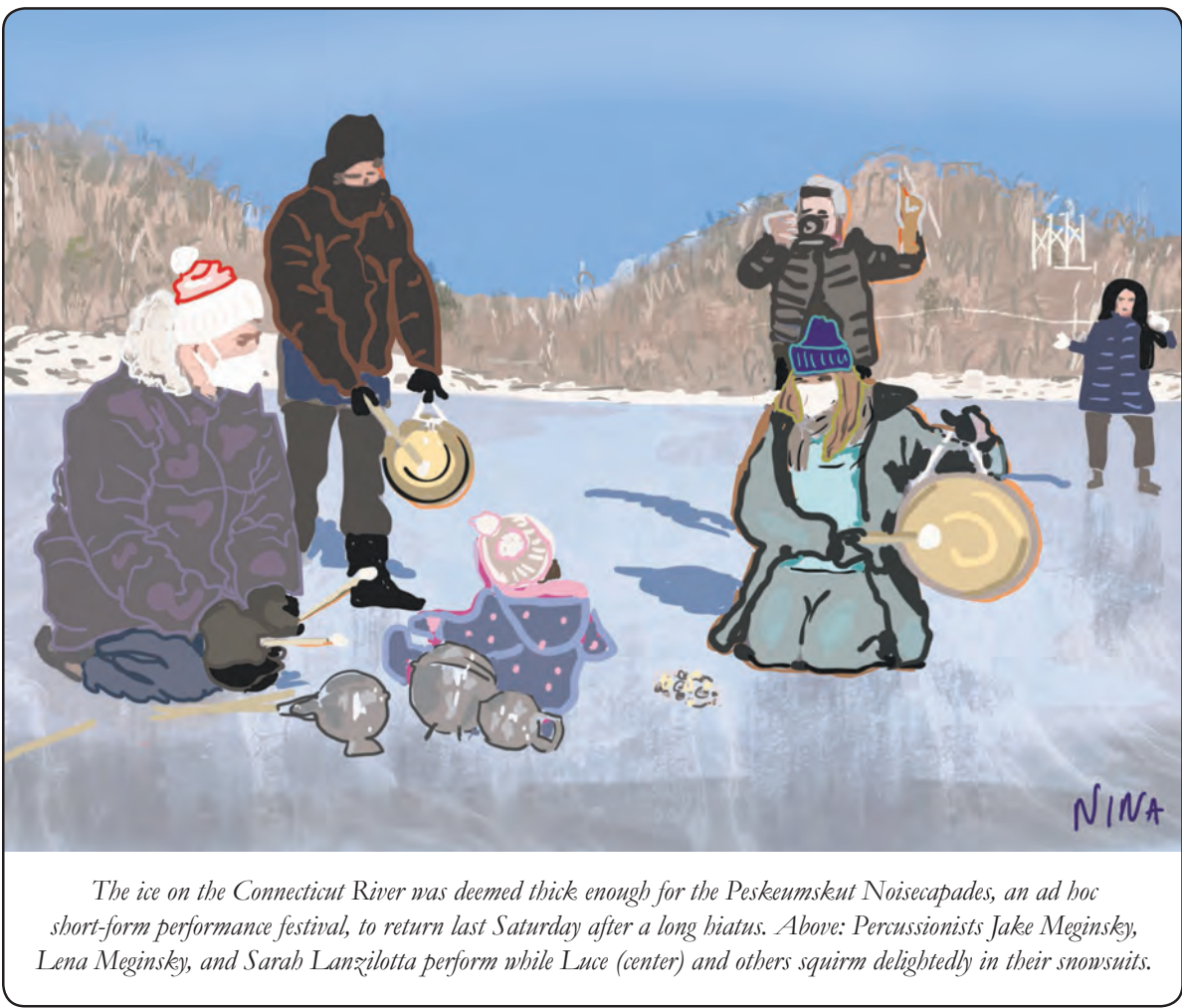
Ramsey said he would provide an “overview of the property,” including zoning, and “some of the practical realities surrounding the redevelopment of the site.”

Kuklewicz suggested that the redevelopment could be a project to benefit the “underhomed and homeless.”

“We have several people who've been on [these] meetings who make their points very clear, and are very well understood,” he said of the demolition opponents. “There's as many people I've talked to, who probably won't come to the [forum], who have different opinions.”

Wolinsky criticized the choice of Ramsey to facilitate the February 7 session. “Walter has been pretty frank about his bias in regard to this building and this land, and it's not really fair to have a community forum facilitated by someone who has clearly and consistently expressed that kind of bias,” she said.

After a 24-minute discussion, Kuklewicz called an end to the conversation, and the board moved on to the next topic on the agenda (see article, Page A1).



The ice on the Connecticut River was deemed thick enough for the Peskeumskut Noisecapades, an ad hoc short-form performance festival, to return last Saturday after a long hiatus. Above: Percussionists Jake Meginsky, Lena Meginsky, and Sarah Lanzilotta perform while Luce (center) and others squirm delightedly in their snowsuits.

OP ED

You're Invited: Montague Fin Com to “Investigate” Budget Requests

By JEN AUDLEY

MONTAGUE – By the time you read this, the Montague selectboard will have concluded its initial deliberations about the town's budget for next year and passed the baton to the finance committee. From now until we reconvene in joint session with the selectboard on March 9, our weekly meetings will focus on investigating what has been proposed.

This investigation will include discussion by the committee, conversations and correspondence with staff, and opportunities for the public to give your input and ask questions. Our goal will be to decide whether we will recommend the budget we received to Town Meeting, or suggest modifications.

You can see us in action at our meetings, which typically begin at 6 p.m. on Wednesday evenings and last about 90 minutes. We expect to continue holding meetings online at least until March; you can find the Zoom link on the meeting agendas, which will be posted at montague-ma.gov/calendar. Our meetings are also broadcast and recorded by MCTV on Channel 17, and can be watched online at vimeo.com/mctvchannel17/videos.

During February, the finance committee will dedicate time at the beginning of each of our meetings for hearing comments from the public. If you have thoughts you'd like to share “on the record,” please come prepared to speak briefly in person, or send us an email at montaguefinancecommittee@gmail.com.

Here are the topics we expect to focus on at each meeting:

February 2: Requests from departments in the Human Services, Culture & Recreation, and Public Works categories, including Parks & Rec; Libraries; Council on Aging; Cemeteries; Veterans; the Tree Warden; and the DPW. We may also discuss non-capital financial articles for the March 3 Special Town Meeting.

February 9: Requests from departments in the Public Safety category – including Police, Dispatch, Building Inspection, Emergency Management, and Animal Control – and the Board of Health.

February 16: Requests from departments in the General Government category, including the Selectboard, Accountant, Assessor, Clerk, Treasurer, Planning, and Information Technology.

February 23: Requests from the Town's “enterprise funds”: the Water Control Pollution Facility and the Turners Falls Airport.

There are also a number of other budget-related meetings coming up that are *not* hosted by the Finance Committee:

Monday, January 31 at 5:30 p.m.: the Gill-Montague Regional School District (GMRSD) FY'23 budget presentation for Gill and Montague town officials, hosted by the Montague selectboard.

Tuesday, February 8 at 6:30 p.m.: the GMRSD FY'23 budget hearing, hosted by the Gill-Montague school committee.

Wednesday, February 9 at 6:30 p.m.: the Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) District FY'23 budget hearing, hosted by the FCTS school committee.

Monday, February 28 at 5:30 p.m.: the FCTS FY'23 budget presentation for Gill and Montague town officials, hosted by the Montague selectboard.

Thursday, March 3 at 6:30 p.m.: Montague Special Town Meeting for Winter FY'22.

That's a lot of meetings, I know! And I know that meetings aren't everyone's thing... but these are your best opportunity to weigh in on some really important decisions being made in our town. I'd be happy to know you are watching, and I'd really like to hear from you.

Jen Audley is the chair of the Montague finance committee. She lives in Turners Falls.

CORRECTION!

A public service announcement that appeared in last week's edition (page B4, *Sand for Seniors*) listed the wrong number for Turners Falls fire captain Luke Hartnett.

Senior Montague residents in need of sand for icy steps and sidewalks can contact the fire department, DPW, or Greenfield Savings Bank to request home delivery of sand (sanding not included).

Here are the correct contact num-

bers to make arrangements:

Turners Falls Fire Department: Captain Luke Hartnett, (413) 863-4313, ext. 175.

Department of Public Works: Superintendent Tom Bergeron, (413) 863-2054.

Greenfield Savings Bank: Linda Ackerman, (413) 775-8261.

“I have gotten calls, made deliveries, and the [DPW] has gotten calls and will deliver,” Ackerman,

the bank's Turners Falls branch manager, reported to us this week. “Hopefully, with the correct phone number, the Fire Dept. will get calls also...”

We apologize for our role in the mixup... although, looking up the wrong number shows that it was for the loan department at Greenfield Savings Bank, so at least someone wasn't getting calls at home.

(Sand those sidewalks, folks!)

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Remember, this weekend is the **Get Down with Your Hometown online concert** series, presented by the Shea Theater. Nationally known and western Massachusetts-based musicians are featured, and the event benefits three great local organizations: North Star, the Institute for the Musical Arts, and the Shea.

Tune in online from 6 to 10 p.m. this Friday, January 28 and Saturday, January 29 by visiting www.getdownhometown.com.

There is also going to be a **Mystery Double Feature Cinemas-torm** at the Shea itself on Saturday night, January 29, from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Enjoy beer, trivia, and two flicks teasingly referred to as “strange animations.” The event is free! You must be fully vaccinated and masked to attend.

Also, don’t forget that all January the **Clark Museum offers free admission** to everybody. The Williamstown museum is waiving the regular \$20 fee and has two special

exhibits of prints, one focused on Japanese woodblock prints and one highlighting the adoption of color into art prints in France, with many examples of different prints. Find out more at www.clarkart.edu.

The National Spiritual Alliance in Lake Pleasant will be holding their **monthly Psychic Fair this Saturday**, January 29. The fair is always on the last Saturday of the month, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Thompson Memorial Temple at 2 Montague Avenue in Lake Pleasant.

Sit one-on-one with a medium of your choice for 25 minutes, for \$30. You must sign up for an appointment online at www.spiritual-allianceusa.org. You may take your chances and walk in to the event, but mediums are often fully booked.

Does your child love to cook? An online kids’ cooking class called “Kitchen 2.0” is starting this Monday, January 31 at 4:30 p.m. Presenter Laura Carbonneau shares cooking skills and children will learn basics in the kitchen, such as handling knives, some cooking

techniques, and garnishing. Presented by the Monadnock Food Coop, the event is free, and you may sign up at monadnockfood.coop/event.

The **Massachusetts Open Space Conference** begins on Thursday, February 3 and repeats on three more Thursdays in February. The conference is in its seventh year. Anyone interested or involved in community conservation is invited to attend the webinars. They run from noon to 1:30 p.m. with networking sessions afterwards which run to 2:20 p.m. Register at www.massopenspace.org.

Students at the Franklin County Technical School had a strong showing at a December **Future Farmers of America** event, according to a press release sent out by the school. Students competed in the Equine Showmanship and Horse Evaluation competitions. Showmanship paired students with a random horse to work with, and they were judged on their handling skills. Evaluation involved ranking horses by their breed characteristics, performance, and conformation. These FCTS students are part of the Veterinary Technician program. Nice work!

“Anti-Asian sentiment and hate crimes against Asians in the US have been increasing since the beginning of the pandemic,” writes local organization Racial Justice Rising. “This violence is directly

linked with the US’s current engagement in multi-domain ‘hybrid warfare’ with China.”

The group is hosting a program with Allison Lau of National Code Pink, “**Stop Asian Hate: China is Not Our Enemy**,” next Saturday, February 5, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. The program is free, but donations are welcome. Register in advance for this meeting at www.racialjusticerising.org.

Eggtooth Productions offers a **five-week online writing workshop** with Terry Jenoure called Write Now! during February and March, starting on February 6 and ending on March 6.

“Join a caring community where your words matter,” says Ms. Jenoure, a composer, violinist, writer and visual artist. “Whether you’re looking to jumpstart writing or you’re an experienced writer searching for fresh ideas, this five-week workshop is for you. Come ready to play. Release those words only you can – the gentle ones, the stony ones. Discover gems that lay buried and waiting... Experience the joy of writing with others!”

There is a fee to participate, but scholarships are also available. You can find out more about Jenoure at www.terryjenoure.com, and sign up for the Zoom workshops at www.eggtooth.org/upcoming.

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The Turners Falls Cultural District has received \$7500 from the Mass Cultural Council to support the creative economy downtown. Funding can be spent on events, artist support, public art, advertising, and other incentives to increase business and enhance quality of life.

YOUR INPUT IS REQUESTED
Please Complete The
2022 Cultural District Survey

Paper Survey

Available in the
Montague Town Hall Lobby
1 Avenue A

or

On-Line Survey

www.tinyurl.com/2022riverculture

Deadline 2/4. Questions?
Call RiverCulture: 413-863-3200
ext. 115

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Looking for a dedicated and reliable professional caregiver up to 20 hours per week for my elderly father. Duties to include: making meals, support personal hygiene, light housekeeping, providing company and overall support. References and proof of COVID vaccinations and booster required and willing to follow COVID safety precautions.

Hours can vary. Hourly rate plus bonuses. Please call or text Jenny at (413) 687-5667.

AT LARGE

Northfield Rejects Hearing Rule Relaxation

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – The Pioneer Valley Regional School was a busy place on Monday night. Inside the gymnasium the girls’ basketball team was taking it to Turners Falls, and in the auditorium, about three dozen Northfield residents settled in for a special town meeting. The notice had been posted on December 29, well ahead of the two-week minimum in accordance with Mass. General Laws.

The five-member selectboard, town administrator Andrea Llamas, and town clerk Dan Campbell all sat on stage and the six-member finance committee, chaired by Lois Stearns, sat below them facing the seating area.

Town moderator Nathan L’Etoile was out of the country on vacation, according to Campbell. Selectboard member Alex Meisner was nominated to pinch hit for L’Etoile by Mary Bowen-Sullivan and seconded by Bernie Boudreau, the two newest members of the recently expanded board.

Meisner strode to the podium in a tight-fitting gray sportcoat, dress shirt and tie, and dark slacks. “I feel I am worthy of this position,” he said with gravitas. “I am prepared for it. Let’s keep this formal and professional.”

The first eight articles passed without dissent, including motions to appropriate funds for a part-time assistant town clerk, send membership dues to the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District, and pay off \$854.22 in legal bills owed to a Boston law firm.

Things began to heat up when Meisner introduced **Article 9**, to wit the adoption of a state law that allows a member of any town board (think the planning board) to vote on a special permit despite missing a public hearing. The only requirement would be to sign a document saying they had read the transcript or watched a video of the missed meeting.

Currently in Northfield, and most other cities and towns, state law disqualifies a board member from voting on a matter if they aren’t present in person or on Zoom. This might be significant, because at least two individuals maintain that prior to the start of a planning board meeting last year, vice chair Meg Riordan said on Zoom that a fellow board member “had a horse emergency” and wasn’t present for what turned out to be a four-

hour public hearing.

Said planning board member subsequently provided the crucial fourth vote needed to grant a special permit to put 26,000 solar panels on 70 acres of farmland owned by the L’Etoile family. Without that vote the result would have been 3-1 in favor, short of the required 80% majority required to grant a special permit.

The lone dissenting vote that day was cast by Joe Graveline, who on Monday spoke in his capacity as a private citizen. Aware of Article 9’s implications, he sought to introduce a motion that would prohibit the law if passed from being retroactive.

“It is an incredibly powerful piece of legislation that we will live with for a long, long time,” he said. “This deserves a larger public debate.”

Dan Campbell rose from his seat and whispered to Meisner, who turned toward Graveline and said, “The motion must be in writing and submitted to the town clerk.”

Sullivan-Bowen argued that in the grand scheme, the law was of little import. “We’re only allowed to miss one [meeting],” she said.

Llamas, who had asked the selectboard to submit Article 9 because she is not a Northfield resident, said postponing a vote because someone missed one meeting would be costly: “There are times when if a member doesn’t show up, ads would need to be re-published because there wasn’t a quorum.”

Enter Joan Stoia, who resides on Main Street and operates the Centennial House Bed and Breakfast with her husband Steve. “The few towns that have adopted this are having a lot of problems with it right now,” she said. “It’s known as the ‘Mullin Rule,’ and applies to boards that do public hearings.”

A Google search of the Mullin Rule turned up this headline: “Avoiding a Mulligan on Your Next Development Project.” It was written by Atty. Nicholas D. Bernier and regarded *Mullin v. Board of Appeals of Brewster*, where the town’s planning board had granted a special permit to construct a housing development despite zoning restrictions. The Mass. Court of Appeals invalidated it because three planning board members had missed the only public hearing on the proposed development.

Ergo, wrote Bernier: “If a member of the local board in question misses a meeting, for any reason, the decision of that board could later be

invalidated.”

Article 9, said Stoia, “is deceptively simple. In my view this takes the ‘public’ out of public meeting. It’s important for board members to show up and listen to their [constituents].”

Meisner put it to a vote. “All in favor?” he asked.

Several scattered “Yea’s” could be heard.

“All opposed?”

“Nay” votes reverberated throughout the auditorium.

“Let’s do a hand count on this,” said Meisner, a move that drew snickers. The show of hands confirmed that the town’s residents had soundly defeated Article 9. (As a matter of transparency, I voted nay.)

“This motion fails,” said Meisner.

Someone, either Llamas or Bowen-Sullivan, sarcastically commented, “I hope you all sign up to be alternates.”

Surprisingly, the “nays” included several selectboard members.

There were other matters on the agenda – for instance, why won’t the town clear the snow and ice from the sidewalk along Winchester Road? Because it doesn’t have to, said Llamas, who suggested the matter be put on this spring’s town meeting warrant.

Selectboard member Bea Jacque called **Article 12** “a comprehensive and robust set of animal control bylaws.” Dog owners worried that if Fido happened to get loose and was apprehended by an animal control officer the dog would promptly be spayed or neutered.

Regional animal control officer Kyle Dragon allayed those fears, saying the bylaw stipulates it’s four-strikes-and-snip.

Charles Blanker of West Northfield claimed his dogs were taking the blame for coyotes howling in the neighborhood, and there were worries that potential rabies cases weren’t being properly reported. Leash laws, pooper scooping, and nuisance complaints were all discussed.

Despite a few complaints, voters decided not to throw the puppy out with the wash, and passed Article 12.

Chip Ainsworth writes news and commentary for the Montague Reporter and sports for the Greenfield Recorder. He lives in Northfield.

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PAPER

Week of January 31 in Montague



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ERVING from page A1

of an LHS Associates Image Cast voting machine for \$5,700 and provided formal authorization for use of the machine to the secretary of state. Newton said he expected the machine to arrive in a month.

Pleasant Street School

The board issued two addenda to the town’s request for proposals for the redevelopment of the town’s former Graded School property at 18 Pleasant Street.

The first addendum states that the board is “amenable to a friendly 40B proposal.” This means that the board would accept proposals creating affordable housing in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B, which allows zoning boards of appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20% (or 25%) of the units have long-term affordability restrictions.

Proposals for future residential development at the property at 18

Pleasant Street would likely include four or more units, which would not be allowed under the town’s current zoning bylaws.

The planning board has proposed new zoning bylaws that would change the definition of multi-unit dwellings and allow four dwelling units within a structure in any town district by special permit. The selectboard has placed the proposed bylaws on the warrant for a special town meeting, likely to be held in March.

The second addendum extends the deadline for proposals to February 10.

Technical Assistance

The board prioritized three areas of interest for the state’s direct local technical assistance (DLTA) grant program from a list developed by Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

Studying regionalization of “underserved services,” such as conservation agent and IT services, was

first on the board’s list. Second was a study of the feasibility of a public water supply in Erving Center, and planning for affordable housing in town as third.

DLTA grants are typically for approximately \$10,000.

The board decided that planning assistant Mariah Kurtz should send an “expression of interest” for a \$320,000 Division of Ecological Restoration grant for construction of culverts on Wheelock Street. The board may decide not to apply for the grant at a later date if the town decides it has too many active construction projects.

Roadway Layouts

At a roadway layout hearing January 3 for Highland Avenue, Care Drive, Pleasant Street, and Public Works Boulevard, several residents had raised concerns about the town’s layout for Highland Avenue. The hearing continued at Monday’s meeting.

Jacob Smith said town adminis-

trator Bryan Smith and the town’s surveyor had done additional research, and set new markers for the Highland Avenue extension. Highland Avenue resident Brian Pollard said he agreed with the road layout as presented at this hearing.

After the hearing was closed, the board issued orders of layout for the four roadways. The special town meeting in March will decide whether to accept the layouts.

Other Business

The board appointed police chief Robert Holst, sergeant Adam Paicos, officer Greg Moretti, highway superintendent Glenn McCrory, and selectboard member William Bembury to the patrol officer screening committee.

The board decided to wait until its February 7 meeting to consider FirstLight Power’s draft agreement with the four towns abutting its Northfield Mountain Project regarding recreational opportunities.

OP ED

The Gray Wolf: So Much for Progress

By PAUL DISTEFANO

MONTAGUE CENTER – Native American teachings view life as sacred. These lessons are inclusive of all that is in nature, all that is not “man-made.” In the ancient Native American ways, we are taught that strength, beauty, joy, and love is imbued from great spirit. Humanity must be willing to respect the sacred laws of those who came to the land before us before it can glorify itself.

The gray wolf was removed by the United States from the Endangered Species List, where it had spent the last 45 years, in October 2020. Since then, several Western states with a history of predatory viciousness – Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon – have passed laws allowing the unbridled killing and “harvesting” of both adult and wolf pups.

When Deb Haaland was confirmed as Secretary of the Interior in March 2021, she became the first Native American Cabinet Secretary in US history. Environmentalists rejoiced at the appointment; for it had the possibility of signaling an end to the regressive and brutalist assault on the environment that was allowed to occur over the previous four years. The protections of The Migratory Bird Act of 1918 were restored by Congress and adapted by Interior soon after Ms. Haaland’s arrival.

Of those revisions, Ms. Haaland said, “The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is a bedrock environmental law that is critical to protecting migratory birds and restoring declining bird populations. Today’s actions will serve to better align Interior with its mission and ensure that our decisions are guided by the best-available science.”

So much for progress.

Immediately after the gray wolf was removed from the Endangered List, several states, beholden to the sheep and livestock lobbies, began creating nearly limitless techniques in which a rancher, or a bounty hunter, or even a 14-year-old could legally kill the animal. Montana, which borders Yellowstone National Park, initiated the slaughter by allowing anyone to hunt on private land, even if the hunter is hired help, or better yet, the Governor.

By August 2021, more than 20 wolves were executed who had wandered, or were legally baited, beyond the park borders. Killing in the dark by spotlight light is legal. A hunter has the option to “harvest” the wolf or allow it to live if it has a tracking collar on it.

Idaho has deemed that 90% of the state’s wolf population is eligible for being trapped and starved to death. It’s acceptable to place dynamite in a wolf’s den and blow it up, to make certain that any pups who may be cowering inside are disposed of. A boy who murders infants is a savior in Montana, and even has a regal title. *Governor.*

Governor Greg Gianforte of Montana is a “man” who has repeatedly proven that regulations are not made for him to abide by. According to the *Independent Record* of Helena, Montana, leader Gianforte has run afoul of harvesting rules with several species. In 2000, he killed a Bull Elk in a restricted harvesting area. Gianforte said at the time he mistook tree branches for the Elk.

He shot at tree branches. He killed an elk. He was fined seventy dollars. He got to keep his harvest.

The *Independent Record* says, “Gianforte is a lifelong hunter and trapper who started trapping squirrels more than 50 years ago.” He was eleven years old.

Small hands.

A certification class is required in Montana before a person may hunt or trap a wolf. Governor Gianforte eschewed these regulations, and at the start of 2021 set traps on land owned by his fellow naturalist buddy, the director of Sinclair Broadcasting.

In February, one of Gianforte’s traps snared a collared wolf. If Gianforte followed the rules, the wolf may have been in the trap for 48 hours. Imagine two days outside in February in Montana with your neck unable to move from the steel claws that tear it apart every time movement is attempted.

No tears for the trapped in this lifetime.

The wolf the Governor trapped was known to National Park Service biologists as *Wolf 1155*. It was born in Yellowstone National Park and fitted with a radio collar in 2018 to allow tracking of its movements and death. The wolf was part of the Wapiti Lake Pack, the *Mountain West News Bureau* reported.

Montana harvesting regulations allow hunters or trappers to kill collared animals that would otherwise be legal to take. (Meaning: Anything that moves.)

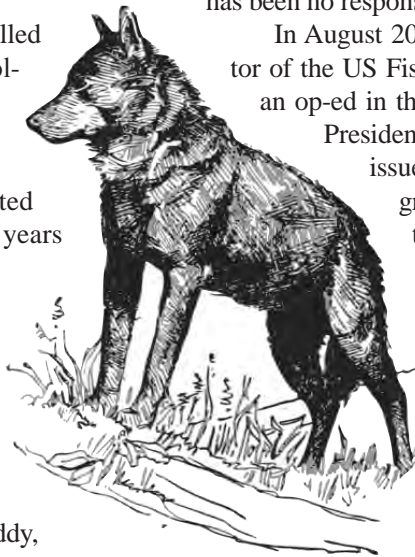
“I chose to harvest the animal,” Gianforte said. “I put a lot of time in over five years, and I chose to harvest the animal. When I arrived at the trap site, I dispatched the animal immediately.”

Governor Gianforte said he planned to have the wolf mounted.

Mounted.

The sacred symbol of Native American culture is mounted by the great white master. Strength, beauty, and joy as determined by the taxidermist. Gianforte’s sacred walls of skulls.

A comprehensive listing of allowable harvesting methods that Montana and several Western states allow in the pursuit of the elimination of the wolf is a putrid, blood-soaked interpretation of man’s darkest and cruelest fantasies, legally.



“Harvesting” sounds like picking carrots, but in Montana it’s a delicate word for genocide.

On May 26, 2021 an emergency petition was filed by the Center for Biological Diversity and the Humane Society of the United States demanding the gray wolves be relisted as endangered, and to immediately protect them for 240 days, as provided for in the Endangered Species Act. There has been no response from Haaland to the appeal.

In August 2021 Dan Ashe, a former director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post* requesting President Biden and Secretary Haaland issue emergency protections for gray wolves as allowed under the Endangered Species Act. No federal action has been taken as of this writing.

This outrageous ignorance, despite several other Congressional appeals to Secretary Haaland, displays an obvious lack of concern over the destruction of a sacred Native American symbol. Twice in 2021 Secretary Haaland canceled scheduled meetings with tribal leaders seeking her support for the further protection of the sacred wolf.

More than 200 tribal leaders sent a letter to Secretary Haaland in September 2021 demanding the restoration of gray wolves to the Endangered Species List. According to *Native News Online*, the letter states, “The failure to take action here, thus ignoring the concerns of tribal nations, would signal to Indian Country that President Biden’s promises to Indian Country are hollow.”

On January 19 of this year, Representative Peter DeFazio of Oregon discussed the survival of the gray wolf with Secretary Haaland during a telephone conversation. DeFazio wrote in a statement on his Congressional website, “I came away from the discussion disappointed. I stressed to her the dire need to issue an emergency relisting protection for the gray wolf under her authority through the Endangered Species Act. The Secretary assured me that she understood my grave concerns regarding the current slaughter of gray wolves happening in several states, yet she would not commit to declaring an emergency relisting.”

Everybody understands. Nobody commits. Ms. Haaland needs to act today on her interpretation of Native American disciplines; without doing so she imperils the metaphysical symbol of life itself. It will end up breathless and mounted on some white-boy Governor’s wall.

Paul DiStefano lives in Montague Center.

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TRADES from page A1

program’s goal is to help all females in the trades understand that discrimination of any kind is not something to be scared of, because everyone, especially women in male-dominant trades, are far more capable then stereotypes deem them.

I asked Fenton if there were any particular instances when she was underestimated. She told me that she once had a boss who allowed less experienced first-year men to do a difficult water valve replacement, while placing her on the job of directing the non-existing traffic in the area.

After a few days of working this job, Fenton told me, she went to her boss, where she asked why she wasn’t allowed to be a part of the installation. “[H]e told me he didn’t think I’d want to do the waterline because it’s difficult, and I might get dirty,” she said. “That to me felt like he had no trust in my abilities or integrity.”

Fenton told her boss she would switch with one of the guys and be a part of the installation. Since then she has been assigned to every installation, because of her qualification for that particular job.

The goal of the Tradeswomen of Tomorrow program is to help spread positivity to young girls who are looking into joining trades that they aren’t traditionally encouraged to join. I wanted to know what the most important part of the program is, coming from the perspective of one of the

older women who shares and encourages the students.

“The entirety of the program – getting young women talking to real tradeswomen in the field – is so unbelievably important,” she said, “to let them know they can have a successful career in non-traditional careers, and make a living with sustainable wages and benefits.”

I finished off my interview with Fenton by asking if there was anything that she would like to add that we had not yet talked about.

“Tradeswomen of Tomorrow should 100% be implemented in every single technical school and high school,” she told me. “It’s a program that all the trades should be a part of, so young women have a variety of choices and visuals of real-life successful tradeswomen.”

I personally couldn’t agree more. As a student who listened to the panel during my own freshman year, I now can look back at how encouraging it was for the whole group there.

Overall, the whole program has been not only encouraging for the students who attend, but also for the tradeswomen who get to share their experiences and help grow the next generation of women in trades.

Charlotte Valle is a sophomore studying welding at Franklin County Technical School. If you or anyone you know are a woman working in the trades who would be interested in taking part in the pro-



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

On-the-Job Training; Free Cash

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard met Thursday evening, January 20, instead of Wednesday for another weekly meeting. Selectboard chair Dan Keller expressed some hope that February would bring the board back to meeting biweekly, but still via Zoom.

Although not yet officially working as town coordinator, Glenn Johnson-Mussad stayed connected through the meeting. His official start day was Monday, January 24, and acting coordinator Doug Tanner said he planned to be in the office for at least part of that day to help with the transition.

Tanner said he thought two people working side-by-side and masked would be a bummer. He said he and selectboard clerk Joy Gorzocoski planned to put stickers on file drawers before Monday to help Johnson-Mussad with office organization. Former town coordinator Nancy Aldrich knew where everything in the office was.

Johnson-Mussad will work remotely sometimes, but agreed to be in the office Monday and Wednesday mornings for walk-in and call-in questions. The town accountant, Erin Degnan, comes to the office Wednesday mornings.

Tanner said he will work with Johnson-Mussad as needed, and will bring a hard drive home with the necessary files so he can be available for questions. Keller said selectboard members are also available.

During her 18 years tenure as coordinator, Aldrich had one task after another added to her responsibilities. The coordinator job involves skill in juggling demands, but so far has not required skill on a unicycle.

Public Health

Board of health chair Barbara Craddock met the selectboard with results of her inquiry into getting COVID test kits for distribution among town residents. First, she reported that Wendell had 24 new cases of COVID in the prior two weeks, bringing the infection rate to 15% – terrible, but still less than Orange, whose infection rate is 25%.

Craddock had agreed on January 12 to find the best way for Wendell to buy 1,000 test kits for Wendell, and for that she sent emails to six vendors. Three did not respond at all, and the other three had indefinite waiting lists.

Before this meeting, President Biden had announced that tests would be made available for all Americans. Keller said the president’s announcement brings the test kit cost closer to where it should be.

Selectboard member Gillian Budine said the schools are not sending kits home, but are testing weekly and following up with contact tracing.

Asks for Assistance

Tanner presented a draft proposal ready for Wendell’s requests to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for the state’s direct local technical assistance (DLTA) grant program. The town can list as many items as it sees fit, but the top three are most likely to get funding and support.

The first priority is to begin the process of finding a new fire chief. Eight citizens, including two firefighters and fire captain Asa DeRoode, have volunteered for that committee. Budine said it would be good to think beyond chief Joe Cuneo’s retirement to other town positions that have become more technical. The committee may be ongoing, and focus on public safety succession in general rather than simply the fire chief position.

The second priority would be guidance requested by the board of health on issues like short-term rentals such as Airbnb, recreational marijuana, and the regulation of tattoo parlors. A third item for help is general assistance in grant management.

The DLTA application is due Friday, January 28, and the board planned to make final adjustments to the list of priorities at their January 26 meeting.

Budgets and Planning

As finance committee chair, Tanner reported \$637,000 in free cash, enough to bring the stabilization account up to a more com-

fortable \$500,000, reduce the tax rate, and pay for some expenses that were deferred at the last town meeting, most notably \$30,000 in road repaving.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato said the MLP enterprise fund also has free cash, some of which can be returned to the town. Free cash requires a town meeting vote before it is used.

DiDonato said the planning board also has articles for a town meeting.

Keller said the town’s building rehab loan account has grown to \$60,000. That fund is aimed at energy efficiency, but Tanner asked if the energy committee would allow its use for other town needs.

The town hall needs painting, and there is a proposal for solar panels and batteries at the highway garage. DiDonato said the account can be a good source of matching funds for grants, specifically in municipal vulnerability planning.

Highway commission chair Phil Delorey proposed culvert replacement, and Budine suggested being ready for overruns in the police station construction. A town meeting vote is necessary to use the rehab money for any of those projects.

Other Business

Board members already agreed on agenda items for their January 26 meeting: besides finalizing the DLTA application they would discuss the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Hilltown Network, appoint members to the public safety committee, and discuss the next special town meeting.

Warrant articles for that meeting are expected to include painting the town hall, and moving free cash into stabilization. No date has been set.

Budine announced a training meeting on CodeRED, the town’s reverse-911 system, at 7 p.m. on Thursday, January 27. Topics will include what sort of situations should be announced over the system, and how to use it. Since Budine and DiDonato, a quorum of the selectboard, plan to attend, the training session needed to be posted as a selectboard meeting.

Gill-Montague Regional School District

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY23 BUDGET

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022 AT 6:30 PM

Per Governor Baker’s orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. Chapter 30A Section 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee Meeting. Notice is hereby given in accordance with Chapter 71, Sections 38N of the Massachusetts General Laws that the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee will hold a public hearing for the purpose of receiving comments on the Fiscal Year 2023 Proposed Budget on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

To access the FY23 Budget Documents for the Public Hearing please visit our website www.gmrtd.org on or after Friday, February 4, 2022. The link to the Zoom meeting will also be available on Tuesday February 8, 2022 by following this link: www.gmrtd.org.

The school Committee strives to meet the needs of all students while also employing sound fiscal management. The Preliminary FY23 Gill-Montague Regional School District budget was approved by School Committee at their last January meeting.

The Preliminary Budget is based on Montague’s Affordable Assessment and State Aid Revenue Estimates, but will be updated when the State Budget is released, prior to the Public Hearing. Some major factors influencing the budget include significant increases in the following areas: 1. Insurance and fixed charges; 2. Instructional staffing to meet student needs as a result of the pandemic; 3. Special Education Out of District Placements; and 4. Charter enrollment.

GMRSD from page A1

would be able to kick in more money, balancing this preliminary budget required cuts, ranging from textbooks and field trips to out-of-district special ed tuition and transportation, totaling about \$229,000. It was duly approved by the school committee.

On Wednesday, the district’s preliminary Chapter 70 estimate came in at \$7.78 million, or a 9.1% increase, meaning that the schools can expect \$400,000 more revenue than is counted in the preliminary budget.

The numbers will be discussed with town officials on Monday evening at 5:30 p.m., and the school committee’s February 8 meeting will include a public hearing.

Open Seat

Tuesday’s meeting began with a moment of silence for Mike Langknecht, a longtime school committee member who died unexpectedly on January 15. “Mike dedicated so much of his time and energy to our community, especially the Gill-Montague regional school district,” said chair Jane Oakes. “Mike’s efforts during his 17-year tenure have made the school district a better place. We will miss his intelligence, thoughtfulness, and sense of humor.”

There had already been one open seat on the committee, and on Tuesday members unanimously appointed John Irminger of Turners Falls to fill it. Irminger, who taught math for 24 years in California public schools, introduced himself. “I’d just like to fulfill a technical role,” he said.

Langknecht’s seat is now open, and the committee is seeking another Montague volunteer to fill it.

A number of subcommittees Langknecht sat on also needed to be replenished. Seth Licata agreed to join in on negotiations with Unit A, the union contract with teachers and nurses; no one stepped forward yet to serve as assistant treasurer.

Special Education

A number of staff members from Gill Elementary School attended the meeting with a letter, read by teachers Jenay Haskins-Hall and Sherry Wood during public comment. “It is important to fulfill current uncovered special education services, as well as dwindling reading intervention support,” Wood read. “These unmet needs are directly impacting student learning for both special education and general education students.”

The teachers said that a part-time interventionist covers all seven grades and helps with a growing special ed caseload, and requested an additional special ed teacher.

“With the current model, we are not able to give all students the [reading] intervention support they need,” read Haskins-Hall.

Next year’s budget includes 22 new full-time positions; the list includes two paraprofessionals and a part-time speech pathologist for Gill Elementary, but no special ed teachers or reading interventionists.

School Police Officer

The committee also held a “working” meeting January 18 to look over the budget in more detail, and both that day and Tuesday, Gill member Bill Tomb expressed disapproval of the proposal to shift more of the cost of Montague police officer who works at the schools onto the district. Tomb said he supported the position itself in principle.

“I understand fully that everyone is under pressure to try to maintain costs, but that’s a disturbing part of financial requests between two political entities,” he said. “The town of Montague said that they gave us an affordable amount that they wanted to put towards education, and then a totally separate department requests, essentially, a transfer of educational funds to their department – instead of the town reducing the amount of affordable assessment that they presented to the school committee, and just giving the money to the police.”

Superintendent Brian Beck shared the results of a recent survey from the middle and high school about the position. Of the 160 staff surveyed, 85% said the position was important, 89% said they felt safe with him in the school, and 71% said they felt comfortable talking to him. Of the 119 students, those answers were given by 85%, 88%, and 48% respectively, though 26 students rated their comfort talking with him as a “1” or “2” on a five-point scale.

“The numbers change a little bit on the student side, because not all students have a direct relationship with the school resource officer,” Beck said.

Other Business

Beck reported that the school will be opting into a new testing program offered by the state, in which at least one rapid test is sent home with each student every week.

The committee approved a donation of \$2,500 from the Montague Elks to the high school’s Helping Hands Athletic Leadership Council, which will be used to provide food for local families in need, as well as snacks for students participating in the upcoming production of *Mary Poppins*.



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NUT from page A1

Berkshire County, and Litchfield County in northwest Connecticut, and then Springfield covers all of western Mass. But there’s a lot of people, especially north, in Franklin County and the Berkshires and southwest New Hampshire, that don’t feel served by the traditional media, because it’s kind of a broadcast hole.

MR: *A meteorology desert.*
DH: Some people just have a satellite, some don’t have access to TV in these rural areas, and they’ve found me on social media. I’ve had a number of people say “You’re the one person I listen to,” or “You’re the only person I can get access to.” I started reporting on the weather just because I wanted to do it, because I enjoyed doing it. And then it got shared over time, because I guess it was useful for people, and they enjoyed how I wrote.

MR: *And then you also give a lot of information, and information that I think other sources would maybe view as technical, or above the audience. You really bring people in. Is that you bringing people in on your own self-education on this topic?*

DH: I mean, there’s still just a vast, vast chasm of stuff that I still don’t know or understand. I know what I know, and what I do know, and when I’m learning it, I like to share it. When I started sharing some of this stuff – talking to people about a low-level jet streak, trying to explain what’s going on – I just did it because I liked to write about it, but then I found that people like to be educated around it. And I know, fully, that some people read my reports and they just don’t get it, they don’t want to get it. They just want to know, “Am I going to get eight inches of snow, or not?”

MR: *“Give me the map!”*
DH: And clearly that’s not my audience! I like to take my time with it and go through details. Part of the problem is that weather is so exceedingly complex, but the traditional media has never – which I understand, but they’re only given two minutes, like “Give ‘em the forecast and then we can throw to sports, and then we’re done!” So people have been fed the weather in as little detail as possible.

I grew up in eastern Mass, listening to and learning from the Boston meteorologists like Bob Copeland and Bruce Schwoegler, and Dick Albert and Harvey Leonard and Barry Burbank – and Don Kent, of course, he’s kind of the grandfather of all New England weather. And I would be drawn to the people who would explain why the weather was doing what it was doing... I wanted to learn more about it, and I’ve found through doing this that there’s other people that feel the same way.

MR: *Yeah, and it’s awesome! So do you have other specialties besides snowstorms?*
DH: I mean, what I’m most passionate about is winter weather. I like it because you see it coming from several days away. It’s a lot of energy coalescing over a large area, kind of this big, lumbering thing coming down the road, and you get to watch it slowly come together and make sense of it over time. Reporting on severe thunderstorms, when one moment it’s just hot and humid out, and then 15 minutes later there’s a raging thunderstorm over your head... That’s a bit nerve-wracking. I call it the difference between horizontal weather and vertical weather. All weather is horizontal and vertical obviously, it happens in three-dimensional space, but winter weather is what’s called “synoptic scale,” which means large scale, versus summer severe weather, which is called “mesoscale,” which means small scale. I tend to gravitate towards synoptic scale, I like to talk about that more. But I love all kinds of weather, so it’s all interesting.

MR: *Here in downtown Turners, those summer ones are sometimes really exciting, because they come right over the ridge and we never see them coming. It’s three minutes, and the sky is dark. A couple of the big bow echoes, there was nothing right before they hit.*
DH: Yeah, that’s scary. Those bow echo cells, when you see that on the radar, it’s time to get inside....



Hayes typically posts one to three reports each day on his Facebook page.

MR: *I guess this gets to what you’re saying about synoptic scale, but in today’s update you described a high pressure ridge over Mexico and a low pressure trough in Quebec as being among the factors determining where these two upper-level lows – which I understand are like cold cyclones in the troposphere? – are going to end up merging. Did I get that right?*

DH: Yeah! Everything’s connected – like everything else, I guess, in the world – you have this ridge out near Mexico, and then another ridge that kind of runs up from there into the very western part of the country. I was watching a meteorologist discuss how even to the west of that ridge there’s another trough. And all these things help dictate the flow of the atmosphere, the flow of these disturbances. The further what’s called “upstream” you get, where the weather’s coming from, these little differences, little changes between what the models think is going to happen and what you can actually observe, these pieces of energy, subtle changes can make a big difference in terms of the impact over a little area. I try to cover a 10,000-square-mile region, basically 50 miles in every direction from Northampton. And that sounds like a lot, but it’s a fairly small region. I’m learning more about this right in this moment, too, I’m trying to become a better observer....

MR: *When you’re looking at these winter patterns are you generally looking at the continent? Or do you zoom out to the hemisphere?*

DH: Mostly the North American continent. I’m not a meteorologist, you know, and I’m sure meteorologists are probably looking at the entire hemisphere, looking at the entire Arctic, or the entire Pacific, or China, really looking all the way around the other side of the globe to see what’s coming. I tend to keep it a little smaller scale than that....

MR: *And they also have more tools than they used to in terms of modeling, right?*

DH: There’s certainly a lot more modeling than there used to be, and also they’re able to sample more data points than they used to, so the resolution of the grid of data is higher.

MR: *Someone once explained to me how there’s diminishing returns when you’re modeling a system as complex as weather. They said that beyond Day X, whether it was Day 7 or Day 8, you would have to put a sensor every four feet on the planet’s surface.*

DH: Oh, did you read that? I’m not surprised. In the past couple years, when I started really understanding this idea of sampling data at different grid points, I was like: if we were able to sample every I don’t know, 10, 50, 100 feet – I just was kind of theorizing – if you could sample data at every 100-foot point in every direction, across the planet and up to the top of the tropopause, where the troposphere meets the stratosphere, and you do that every minute or every five minutes, you’d probably be starting to get close to 100% accuracy. I think this is part of the unpredictable nature of the weather: you can see a pattern, you can understand how it’s going to look, you can

look at all the observations and compare it to the modeling, you can use your understanding of a particular region and its microclimates... But at some point, inaccuracies happen, because there’s only so much data that’s being sampled that can actually be processed....

And that’s going to improve over time – I don’t know much about it, but I’ve seen stuff about machine learning and artificial intelligence, and how that can augment meteorologists’ forecasts and help improve them.

MR: *And eventually take the fun out of it.*
DH: [Laughs.] Right! Take the mystery out. If you read my report tonight, I wrote a little bit about how humans crave certainty, how they’re just desperate to know what’s going to happen in the future. Which is understandable, if something’s going to impact you...

MR: *You work these little meditations into your updates.*

DH: I try to! I think part of why I’ve developed the audience I have is that I just try to be myself. There’s lots of people just doing the weather. I’m sure some people read what I say and go, “This guy’s a whack job, what the hell’s he talking about?,” or go to the next notification on Facebook or whatever. But it seems like enough people appreciate these little bits I put in that it motivates me to keep doing it.

MR: *The things you can do when you don’t have a boss!*

DH: Exactly! I definitely feel fortunate that I can say what I want to say, and not say what I don’t want to say....

MR: *I see there’s sponsorship at this point, and also merchandise and stuff. Have you been able to make a full-time thing out of this?*

DH: Yeah. I have to knock on wood, year to year, but yes, it’s become my living. I do an annual member drive – I try to structure it not dissimilar to public radio or public TV, but people can just donate whatever level they want if they don’t want member gifts or anything like that. And I also have the sponsorship now, which is definitely helping, and I also sell a calendar every year that has photos of the local area, taken by fans. I put my weather haiku in there, and each month has a little educational piece.... And then sometimes I do merchandise sales, T-shirts and apparel and stuff through a company called Bonfire. Between all that, at this moment, it’s become the main way that I make my living, so I’m hoping that that continues.

MR: *I imagine it’s a little bit similar to a band or musician saying, at some point, “I think I could do this!”*

DH: Right! About the end of 2013, I had a couple thousand people following me. And I don’t know if you remember, but that winter, 2013-2014, was nasty. It was cold and snowy the whole way, it was a really, really powerful winter. And that was the winter I basically got discovered on social media; I went from about 2,000 people following me to 10,000 in the span of four months.... The Gazette did a story

on me, and I was hitting like a whirlwind. Around that time, I had three elders around me, and a couple of peers, who were like, “Do you think you can make a living at this?” And I was like, “I don’t know, I don’t even know what’s happening!” But that thought was kind of put in my mind early on. And then I said, well, people are doing crowdfunding for projects and different things, maybe people would want to support me. So I put the call out there and some people stepped forward, and then I kept doing it year after year, and it’s grown.

MR: *So, it was looking really exciting on Tuesday. As of press time Wednesday night, I saw your latest report, and you’re saying that the likely track for Saturday’s storm means winds and light to moderate snow for us here in Franklin County. But there’s still a chance it’ll knock west and we’ll get a huge one?*

DH: I don’t think we’re going to get a huge one.... I still think that it’s a light to moderate snowfall, and especially east of I-91, I think it could be like a 3-to-6, 4-to-8-inch type snowfall. And it might even be a little bit more than that... It’s tough, because this stuff can change all the way up into the event.

MR: *I imagine right now, with a big storm likely to happen and some degree of uncertainty about where it will happen, is the peak condition for attention turning toward you as the oracle. What does that look like for you?*

DH: Normally I’m up around 5. If the weather is really benign, sometimes I’ll just do a report a day. But usually I’ll do two main reports as the storm is kind of gearing up, one in the morning and one in the evening. I could possibly do more, but part of it’s the limitations of Facebook and its algorithm – if you post too much, they’ll bury you.... I’m kind of kind of hamstrung. I am planning on working on developing my own mobile app, actually, later this year, because I feel like it’s time for me to not be so reliant on them...

I post my morning report, and then I’m just kind of checking it through the day and seeing the data come in. And then getting back in the saddle and getting serious about writing a report mid-to later afternoon, trying to get something out by 7 or so for the evening. As we get closer, I’ll do three reports a day, usually. And then the day of, I’m just on....

MR: *When we finally do get a big snowstorm, do you get to go enjoy it?*

DH: No, I’m working! I’m sitting in front of a computer the whole time, that’s go time for me. I’m with people throughout, from the time it starts to the time it’s done.

MR: *You see everyone say, “Oh, it’s starting here in Cummington...”*

DH: Which is good – it’s nice to be able to get the ground truth, as it’s called.... Snow is funky. A lot of times it’s falling in colder air, it’s dry at the surface, so it starts snowing aloft but then it evaporates before it gets to the ground. So you look at a radar and you’re like, “Oh, it’s snowing over my house!” and it’s not doing anything. It takes a while for the atmosphere to saturate up, and then eventually it starts reaching the ground. So it’s always interesting to get those reports from people....

MR: *I’ve been watching your follower count climbing even since yesterday. It’s gonna hit 50,000.*

DH: It might on Saturday! Especially if we start kind of bringing the storm back a little bit more west and it turns into more of a solid, moderate snowstorm here to major snowstorm not too far to the east of here, if it starts becoming like a 4-to-8, 6-to-12 type of situation. Yeah, it could get over 50,000.

MR: *And then, in your 10,000-square-mile zone, you’ve basically got five sensors per square mile reporting to you.*

DH: Yeah!

MR: *Well, thanks for your time – I really enjoyed this. And good luck these next couple days, get some sleep...*

DH: Yeah, me too, I appreciate it. Thanks for reaching out to me!



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MONTAGUE from page A1

remaining department budget proposals that entail personnel changes. These include the selectboard itself, which is primarily the town administrator and staff; the police department, not including dispatch; and the Council on Aging.

Police chief Chris Williams proposes to elevate a patrolman to a new sergeant position, and fill the vacated patrol position. His presentation involved a complex discussion of police staffing, including the intricacies of shifts, changes in total staffing over the years, and new state regulations that eliminate part-time officers not fully trained at the state's police academy.

The proposal is expected to add at least \$83,000 to the operating budget in FY'23, and more in future years for retirement benefits. Williams said adding a sergeant would ensure more adequate shift coverage, and "alleviate" some of the administrative responsibilities of other staff "so they can spend more time on the street."

Williams portrayed this change as consistent with the recommendation of the town's police review committees, established in the aftermath of the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, for greater community contact. He said he felt that in the future, as many as two more officers would be needed to provide adequate community-level policing.

"The \$100,000 question is, can we afford it?" said Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, who supported Williams' proposal.

"I know, I understand, I get it," said Williams.

Williams also came before the board Monday to seek approval of new policies on sick leave, temporary "light duty" assignments, and traffic control. Williams said the sick leave policy had been "past practice" but was not formalized, and the temporary light duty policy, which regulates reduced activities for full-time officers with certain medical conditions, was new.

As for traffic control, Williams said the regulations eliminating part-time officers reduce the number available for traffic control. He proposed a solution, based on a model implemented in Greenfield, wherein retired police officers and firefighters who are fully trained be allowed to assume traffic control duties.

"They know they have no police powers, and no weapons," Williams explained. "They are now retired, now civilians – they're almost like flagmen."

Kuklewicz asked about the status of correctional officers who qualify for traffic control, but are not trained to be full-time police. Williams said the state Police Officer Standards and Training Commission "is still trying to figure that part out." The policy changes were approved.

Selectboard & COA

Ellis briefly explained his proposal, described in detail at previous meetings, to add a full-time assistant town administrator and a part-time assistant to the executive assistant, currently Wendy Bogusz. He again presented a chart showing the division of responsibilities between himself and his proposed assistant. The proposals would increase the selectboard budget by at least \$110,000 in wages.

Finance committee member John Hanold, warning that he was going to "rain on your parade," raised a variety of concerns about the proposal for an assistant administrator. He suggested that the "separation of duties" Ellis had outlined needed "more attention," and said much of the town administrator's work would be "devolved" to the proposed assistant.

Selectboard member Matt Lord said he was "puzzled" by Hanold's critique, but a lengthy back-and-forth between the two officials ended on a collegial note.

The Council on Aging is proposing to increase director Roberta Potter's hours from 17 to 21 per week. Potter justified this by pointing to the increasing "social service responsibilities" of her job, and leaving a position with benefits to whoever succeeds her.

Potter said that when she first came on the job 15 years ago, her main work was "sorting Scrabble cards and paying invoices," but that recently she had been "on the phone and email to get help for a gentleman who was being asked to leave his apartment before his lease expired by his landlord."

Town accountant Carolyn Olsen reviewed current budget and revenue estimates if all the department requests were approved by town meeting. She said that the final budget "looks pretty good," but the town would "be short \$63,000 in taxation." She attributed this to the fact that certain special articles, which the board had not discussed, would need to be funded from taxation according to "town policies."

Finance committee chair Jen Audley said she believed the selectboard "shouldn't worry about giving us a balanced budget," but should make recommendations about "what would be best for the town," and that the fin com should then consider the financing.

In the end, the board informally approved all the pro-

posals for personnel increases, except for the proposal of the health department, and sent the department budgets on to the fin com for review.

Old Highway Barn

Greg Garrison of the capital improvements committee (CIC) recommended on Monday that the town award Nova Real Estate LLC the right to purchase 500 Avenue A, the former town highway garage, for \$75,000 for redevelopment. Nova owns property on Second Street housing a vintage motorcycle repair shop and a number of workshop spaces.

Garrison described the criteria that led to the CIC's choice of Nova among the four qualified responses to the town's request for proposals (RFP). The committee gave the company the most points for its reuse plan, which specified potential tenants, and financing, which included letters of support from Greenfield Savings Bank and state finance agency MassDevelopment.

Kuklewicz asked if there was a timeline to complete the project. Town planner Walter Ramsey said that the next step would be for Nova and the town to negotiate a land development agreement prior to the sale, and that if Nova does not meet certain "benchmarks" established by that agreement, the town could "take action."

The board unanimously endorsed the decision.

The Impact of Cannabis

The board discussed a \$40,390 grant to the Brick House Community Resource Center, funded by Montague's "cannabis impact" revenue, to run the Strengthening Families program. The board held off officially awarding the contract until Brick House staff could attend a future meeting.

Ellis said the award was given to the Brick House after an RFP that produced one response. He said the program is "family-based and evidence-based," and would probably involve 24 families; the Brick House would run the program twice this spring and summer, with the assistance of the Communities that Care Coalition.

Ellis also discussed the potential for a town meeting article this spring granting cannabis impact funds for a substance abuse counselor to be shared between the Gill-Montague and the Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) districts. He said the schools may want to "scale up" the program and to create something "more holistic" than the current year.

Lord noted that Montague students are a relatively small percentage of FCTS's enrollment, and wondered if there could be some "cost-sharing" with other towns. Kuklewicz, who also serves as chair of the FCTS school committee, said he was concerned whether the program would be sustainable if COVID-related revenues change.

The board did not vote on the issue, but Lord was assigned to take the lead in monitoring a proposal from the schools.

Construction Projects

The board approved a request from Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, which administers the town's Community Development Block Grants, to pay \$5,025 to Berkshire Design Group to oversee the next phase of the Avenue A streetscape project. Berkshire is currently managing the bidding process for construction, which involves sidewalk and planter upgrades in front of the Colle building and Shea Theater.

Ellis reviewed the construction schedule for the new Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) maintenance facility on Sandy Lane. He said the company has cleared the site, begun excavation for footings, and "already ordered their building." It will be erected in April, and work on utilities, sidewalks, and curbing is projected from then until July, which Ellis noted will "lead to some degree of disruption."

FRTA is hoping to achieve "substantial completion" in November. Ellis said that the bus authority's current maintenance facility on Deerfield Street in Greenfield, owned jointly by Montague and Greenfield, "will no longer be of interest to us" after that.

Other Business

Ellis presented a preliminary warrant for the March 3 special town meeting, with 16 articles "at present," but the selectboard took no votes on it.

To hold the March 3 meeting virtually, Montague will require an extension of state legislation allowing virtual meetings for representative town meetings, which expired in December. Ellis said that state representative Natalie Blais has attached an extension to a bill that had passed the House and was soon to be considered in the Senate. The bill, H.4245, extends the right for towns to hold representative town meetings virtually until July 15.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 31 at 5:30 p.m.



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MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD
NOTICE OF INITIAL PUBLIC HEARING
PROPOSED 40R SMART GROWTH OVERLAY DISTRICT
Monday, February 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. via ZOOM

The Montague Selectboard will hold an initial public hearing to consider a petition by the Planning Board to amend the Zoning Bylaws to adopt a Smart Growth Overlay District pursuant to MGL Ch40R. The district is intended to incentivize the creation of new housing units in Turners Falls by permitting dense development wherein at least 20% of units are affordable. The district includes two subdistricts: A) Griswold Mill, comprising parcels 03-027 and 03-089 and B) First Street comprising parcels 04-0031 and 04-024. Remote meeting login instruction as well as the map and text of the proposed zoning amendment is available for review at www.montague-ma.gov.

Ron Sicard, Planning Board Chairman

LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on January 26, 2012: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Entergy Wins In Federal Court

In a ruling that impacts the State of Vermont's decision to shut down the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant in Vernon, on Thursday, January 19, US District Court Judge J. Garvan Murtha invoked the federal government's sweeping power to regulate radiological safety at commercial reactors to find for Entergy Louisiana on almost all counts in a widely-watched lawsuit against the state of Vermont and Vermont officials.

Judge Murtha struck down key aspects of Act 160, the law passed unanimously by the Vermont house in 2006 and subsequently approved by a margin of 18 to 5 in the Senate, which sought to grant Vermont's legislature, alone among the 50 states, a deciding role in whether or not to relicense a nuclear reactor within its borders.

Relying on Act 160, the Vermont Senate voted 26-4 in February 2010 to deny Entergy Vermont Yankee a certificate of public good, a legal requirement for the reactor's continued operation.

Significantly, even as Judge Murtha struck down Act 160, he left intact the Vermont Public Service Board's perquisite to issue or withhold a certificate of public good (CPG).

In 2011, in the days immediately following the explosions and core meltdowns at Fukushima, where the containment vessels of three General Electric Mark I boiling water reactors of nearly identical age and design to Vermont Yankee failed in the absence of offsite power after an 8.9-magnitude earthquake and resulting tsunami hit the Japanese coastline, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission granted Entergy Vermont Yankee permission to extend the operating license of the 40-year-old Vernon reactor for another 20 years.

Kulik Takes a Look at Governor Patrick's \$32.3 Billion Budget

"Overall, it's not bad news." That's how Steve Kulik (D-Worthington), the First Franklin District's 10-term state representative, characterized the \$32.3 billion budget released by Governor Deval Patrick yesterday. That figure represents a 2.98% increase in state spending over the current budget year.

The governor proposes to level fund unrestricted local aid, and increase state Chapter 70 aid for public schools by \$145 million.

Due to continued job growth in the Bay State – where the creation of 40,700 new jobs in 2011 drove unemployment down to a rate of 6.8% as of December, well below the national average of 8.5% – Massachusetts expects to receive an extra \$930 million in revenue this year.

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HEALTH from page A1

the health board. Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz expressed frustration that members of the health board were not present, and requested that the two boards resume regular joint meetings.

And two days after that, the board of health held an emergency meeting punctuated by complaints that the selectboard and town administrator were usurping their duties and “micromanaging.”

Joint meetings and better communication seem to have been reestablished, to some degree. Montague is now collaborating with Greenfield and two other towns in Franklin County on a state grant that funds additional staff for contact tracing, as well as an epidemiologist.

Town administrator Steve Ellis is upbeat about this development, as he told the *Reporter*: “[A]ll four communities are finding both the collegial exchange and the support to be very valuable, and I, for one, see this grant as an opportunity to create stronger regional relationships and collaboration on this – and perhaps other – endeavors. In this way, the grant is both providing important direct services and allowing us space and opportunity to forge stronger partnerships.”

But it is not clear that regional collaboration will move the town closer to resolving the “role of the health board in the pandemic,” to quote a recent agenda item.

“There needs to be some clarification of the role of the health board, versus the role of the health department, versus the role of the selectboard,” Montague board of health member Melanie Zamojski told the *Reporter*, noting that until just recently, two selectboard members were also on the board of health. “Our board is in transition.”

Results May Vary

There has also been public health instability in the town of Erving, where earlier in the pandemic the health board’s work was undermined by the frequent absenteeism of its members. At the end of last summer, the town’s selectboard asked two members of the health board to resign. One resigned, but so did the chair of the board, who was reportedly not one of the absentees.

At a January 3 meeting, selectboard member Scott Bastarache commended fire chief Phil Wonka for taking up the burden of the town’s COVID-19 response,

“which the board of health was not able to take on,” according to the *Reporter*’s Katie Nolan.

The Erving board has stabilized in recent months, according to health clerk Betsy Sicard. Two new members were appointed in October and November, whose terms will expire in June, and on January 13 the board issued an advisory requiring face coverings in indoor spaces for 30 days.

“This is the first advisory from the Erving BOH I have seen during the pandemic,” Nolan says.

Small towns seem to vary as to the stability of their health boards. Nolan reports that the board in Wendell, where she lives, “has been tireless, keeping up with state mandates and opportunities for supplies (masks, disinfectant, etc.), keeping townspeople informed about case status in town and providing advisories about masks, etc.”

Wendell selectboard member Dan Keller says his board follows the recommendations of the health board, which meets regularly. “They are on top of it,” he told us.

From the Top Down

The status of local boards of health, as well as their policies and state requirements, may be changing. Legislation on Beacon Hill sponsored by Franklin County’s own state senator Joanne Comerford, who co-chairs the joint committee on public health, would target funding to local health departments, which the state does not currently provide.

The bill, known as SAPHE 2.0 (Statewide Accelerated Public Health for Every Community), would also establish “minimum public health standards,” create an “effective data collection system,” and “encourage municipalities to share public health services,” according to a flyer from the Massachusetts Public Health Association.

The flyer blames the crisis in local health on the famous – and often criticized – decentralization and localism of governance in the state, arguing that “the [d]ecentralized structure of 351 separate boards of local health leads to inequities in public health protections across municipalities. Because viruses do not respect borders, the extreme variability of protections provided across municipal health departments increases exposure and harm to all communities, and puts the entire state at risk.”

A similar, if less dramatic, theme was sounded by a panel on Protecting Public Health and Preparing for the Next Pandemic, broadcast from the University of Massachusetts School of Public Health. Speakers including Comerford and Phoebe Walker of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) were critical of the decentralized system, but emphasized collaboration rather than consolidation.

Participants mainly stressed the “inequities” the system produces. “Your zip code should have no impact on the health services you get,” said Comerford. Walker noted that residents in rural communities are often poorer, and have more old buildings with lead paint and crumbling septic systems.

The webinar also saw some lively discussion of the potential dangers of funding public health needs through state grants, which some participants thought would benefit cities and wealthier towns with greater grant-writing capacity.

So regional collaboration, stronger state standards, and increased state funding are all being promoted as solutions to the challenges faced by local health boards during the pandemic.

Randy Crochier, who serves on the Gill selectboard and works as an agent for FRCOG’s regional health service, said he strongly supports SAPHE 2.0, but noted that the mandates endorsed by his collaborative still need to gain the support of local selectboards and boards of health.

And state-level reform may not address the politicization of public health, which has been intensified by the pandemic, either. “We have lots of people in our towns that complain when there is no mandate, and lots of people that complain in the other direction,” Crochier told the *Reporter*. “This thing has been political from Day One.”



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GILL & MONTAGUE – Volunteers from the AARP Tax-Aide Program will be doing free Massachusetts, federal, and Circuit Breaker **tax returns** at the Gill Montague Senior Center in February and March. Appointments are still available and will be accomplished remotely. Necessary documents will be submitted in advance and consultation will be by telephone. Please call the Senior Center at (413) 863-9357 for an appointment, or for more information.

The **Montague Wood Bank** has half-cord units of dry and split firewood available for low-income Montague residents. The wood is at the Transfer Station, and application is through the Senior Center at (413) 863-9357.

The Montague Council on Aging also has a limited supply of COVID-19 test kits available to Montague residents, at no charge. Please call (413) 863-9357 to request a kit.

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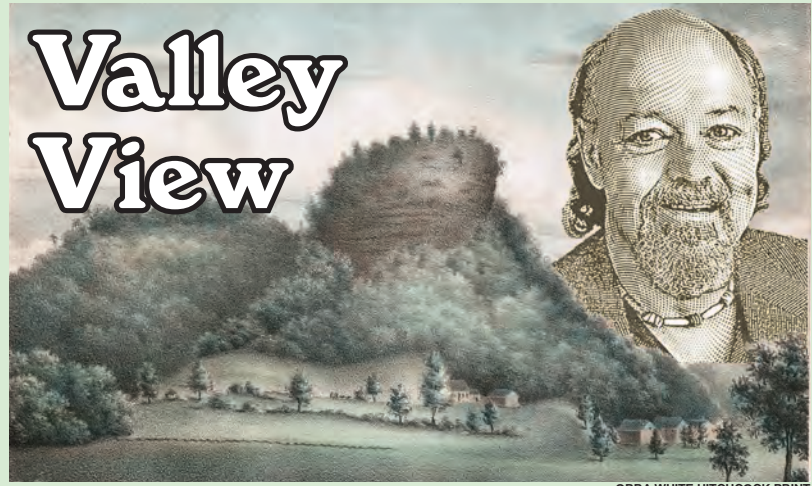
“When day comes, we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid. The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light. If only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.”
Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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PREMIER DEALER



FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER JANUARY 27, 2022



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – I have happened upon another interesting historical character – one who passed through South Deerfield on his way to railroad immortality. His name was Jonas Brown Wilder II (1813-1906).

I discovered Wilder during Greenfield-newspaper research on my Arms family. Searching for information on Dennis Arms, credited as the founder of South Deerfield’s 19th-century pocketbook-manufacturing industry, I saw the byline “J. Wilder” appear atop an 1894 *Gazette and Courier* guest column titled “Ten Years in the South.”

The dateline read “Bristol, Tenn., and Va.” So, which was it? Was he from Virginia or Tennessee? Come to find out, the state line runs right down Main Street of these “Twin Cities,” with Bristol, Virginia on the east side and Bristol, Tennessee on the west. Though Wilder lived in Virginia, it’s not unlikely that his expansive landholdings crossed into Tennessee.

It was not easy to find J. Wilder’s first name. The search took me on fruitless genealogical journeys through Conway and Sunderland Wilders before finally discovering my man was from Millers River country.

Jonas Brown Wilder II was the youngest of his namesake father and Rebecca Leach’s four children, all sons born in Wendell. His father was a farmer who dabbled in shoemaking and coopering, the son of Nathaniel Wilder, who was born in 1751 in Princeton, grew up in Belchertown and settled as a young adult shoemaker in Ware, according to *Wendell, Massachusetts: Settlers and Citizenry, 1752-1900* by Pamela A. Richardson. Before the Revolution, Nathaniel moved to Wendell, where he is buried.

The Jonas Wilder farm was located snuggled up to Shutesbury in the southwest corner of town, according to Jonas II, about a mile north of “Locks Pond” and “Locks Village.” Those two places show up on modern maps as Lake Wyola and Lockes Village. (Regarding the proper spelling of the surname Lock, well, flip a coin. There seems to be no consistency when reading through

genealogical records, which use Lock and Locke for the same people, the latter presumably gaining traction in Wendell and Shutesbury in modern days.)

The elusive Jonas Wilder identification came by way of a *Gazette and Courier* column published some 10 years after the first one I first discovered. Wilder, quite proud of his accomplishments, seems to have been a prolific newspaper contributor. His 1904 column titled “A Typical Yankee Career: Former Wendell Boy Tells his Life History” was penned two years before his death. The long narrative ended with a boldfaced shirttail identifying the author as Jonas Wilder.

At the time of the column, Wilder was living out his final years with a son in Woodstock, Vermont. He hadn’t in fact submitted the piece to the newspaper. He sent it to the Wendell postmaster desperately seeking any information about potential survivors from his old Wendell/Shutesbury neighborhood. Impressed by the letter’s local-history content, the postmaster should have shared it with the *Gazette and Courier* editor, who in turn published it as a guest column.

So, nearly 120 years later, I had my man – a fascinating local subject worth sharing with readers.

Our Jonas Wilder story begins in South Deerfield, his first stop as a wage earner. The Deerfield village was known as Bloody Brook upon his arrival as a 13-year-old, trees budding and blooming in the spring of 1827. He wouldn’t turn 14 until leaves were wearing their fall colors on October 2.

Bloody Brook was then known for its shoemakers and leather craftsmen, most notable among them Dennis Arms (1790-1854), who enjoyed a shoemaking partnership with older brother Erastus (1785-1830), my third great-grandfather. Because Erastus died young at 45, he is forgotten in history, but not in land records. From what I’ve seen, without exception Erastus is the first named on several joint deeds with Dennis, whose name would have appeared first if they were listed alphabetically.

Wilder chose the well-known see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3

The Alley Between Fourth & Fifth: A Montague Police Log Retrospective

Compiled by EMILY ALLING / Illustrations by NINA ROSSI

Thursday, 8/15/13
3:20 p.m. Possible drug activity reported in the alley on Fourth Street.

Tuesday, 5/27/14
12:14 a.m. Report of a small group of males at 8:34 p.m. Report of six or seven youths destroying a shopping cart in the Fourth Street alley. Verbal warning issued.

Saturday, 12/21/13
6:20 p.m. Complaint regarding noisy snowball fight in Fourth Street alley. Parties spoken to.

Wednesday, 2/19/14
5:41 p.m. Report of a heated argument taking place between two residents over snow removal in the alley between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Peace restored.

Saturday, 3/29/14
11:08 p.m. Witness report of attempted breaking and entry into vehicle in progress in Fourth Street Alley. Suspect saw a witness and took off running toward Avenue A. Investigated.

Monday, 4/21/14
3:02 p.m. Plates and title reported stolen from a vehicle in the alley between Fourth and Fifth Streets overnight. Plates located in Pesky Park near the bandshell, tagged, and held for the registered owner to pick up.

Tuesday, 11/11/14
5:17 p.m. 911 call from a female stating that she had been punched in the face three times by another female in the alley outside her residence on Fourth Street. Incident was reportedly filmed by a third female. Officer spoke at length with both parties and found that the “fight” was mutual; no injuries other than feelings. All involved have agreed to go separate ways.

Thursday, 12/18/14
1:49 p.m. Complaint regarding two pitbulls allowed to run around and defecate on neighbors’ lawns on Fifth Street, as well as in the Fourth Street alleyway. Referred to the animal control officer.

Tuesday, 2/3/15
12:45 a.m. Caller reports that the vehicle she is operating is stuck in the alley between Fourth and Fifth Streets; requests police assistance. Services rendered.

Monday, 9/28/15
12:34 p.m. Caller reports pigeon with a possible broken wing in the Fourth Street alley. It keeps trying to fly, but is unable. Animal control officer responded and got the bird.

see **ALLEY** page B8



Surviving Breast Cancer

By Julie Cunningham

Part 17: The Unkindness of Ravens

AMHERST – Lucas, one of the characters in *One Tree Hill*, one of my favorite series, creates a novel he names *An Unkindness of Ravens* after the school mascot at his former high school, where he met his wife. The series describes the often-tragic lives of three female and two male characters. Although I really like the series and the title for the fictional novel that Lucas created, I’m not sure I understand the relevance to the content of the series.

To me, a raven’s unkindness is what it symbolizes: the end of life, a soul ready to depart its body, the family left to grieve and mourn. This is what I thought about often when I was in the throes of my illness, and it’s what I think about now.

I think about it during the everyday moments we take for granted – driving home from work, vacuuming my son’s room, feeding my cats. The sweetness of the music playing in my car during my drive to and from work reminds me of what I would lose if I lost my battle. Picking up my son’s toys reminds me of what he would lose if I lost my battle. Taking care of my cats reminds me that they, too, would lose something if I lost my battle.

On a smaller scale, it’s overwhelming. On a larger scale it’s unbearable. The unkindness of a raven is the sweet feeling of the small moments we lose when we lose someone we love and care about.

Today, the unkindness of ravens is greater than just see **SURVIVING** page B4



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play, jumping on his person, running around and barking, but sometimes he doesn't know his own strength. He is completely house trained and is accustomed to being in a crate.

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

Senior Center Activities

JANUARY 31 TO FEBRUARY 4

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 Jonathan 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.

Monday 1/31

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

Tuesday 2/1

12 p.m. Tuesday Morning Knitters
1 p.m. Chair Yoga
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 2/2

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 2/3

10:30 a.m. Brown Bag
1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 2/4

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. 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.

Mondays

9 a.m. Re-Store & Re-Emerge
10 a.m. Tai Ji Quan

Tuesdays

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

Wednesdays

9 a.m. Strength & Conditioning
10 a.m. Tai Ji Quan
12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursdays

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

Fridays

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.

FEBRUARY LIBRARY LISTING

Montague Public Libraries

Turners Falls: Carnegie (413) 863-3214
Montague Center (413) 367-2852
Millers Falls (413) 659-3801

Erving Public Library (413) 423-3348

Gill: Slate Library (413) 863-2591
Leverett Public Library (413) 548-9220
Wendell Free Library (978) 544-3559
Northfield: Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455

MULTIPLE LIBRARIES

Tuesday, February 15: *Tracing Your Immigrant Ancestors.* In this Zoom workshop, the second of a two-part genealogy series, researcher Al Fiacrew will discuss finding records of your ancestors who entered different regions of the US during different periods in history. Co-sponsored by Leverett, Montague, and Pelham libraries. Call (413) 863-3214 or email librarydirector@montague-ma.gov to sign up. 6:30 p.m.

Weather, etc. sometimes causes changes in library events; you may want to call ahead to confirm events.

kits available at the Carnegie, and also at Montague Center and Millers Falls when those libraries are open. Each bag contains instructions and the materials you may not already have. While supplies last.

Tuesday, February 15: *Tracing Your Immigrant Ancestors.* (See “Multiple Libraries.”)

Monday, February 21: Montague Public Libraries closed for Presidents’ Day.

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Multiple days: *Paws to Read.* Read to trained therapy dogs Rio or J-Lo to improve literacy skills. 1st Tuesday at the Carnegie Library, 1st Wednesday at Montague Center Library, 3rd Thursday at the Carnegie. Call (413) 863-3214 for details and to reserve a 15-minute spot for your child or teen. 4 to 5 p.m.

Tuesday, February 1: *Understanding Your Best Friend.* In this Zoom workshop Phil Klein, Certified Dog Listener, will teach participants to think like their dog and “speak” the language of canines. To register: library-director@montague-ma.gov or (413) 863-3214. 6:30 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Story Time Online.* Meet Meghan Doyle for stories, songs and a Take-and-Make craft. Craft bags available in the children’s room at the Carnegie Library. Find the link at montaguepubliclibraries.org/calendar. 10 a.m.

ERVING FREE LIBRARY

1st Monday: *Paws to Read.* A great opportunity for reluctant readers to read with a therapy dog. Grab a book and enjoy a nice session of petting and reading. Call (413) 423-3348 to reserve a spot. 4 to 6 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Story Time.* Special story time with Mother Goose on the Loose, Wednesdays from February 9 to March 9. Call ahead to check on this program as it may be online. (413) 423-3348. 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 13: *Puzzle Swap.* Bring a jigsaw puzzle, if you have one, and leave with a different one! Don’t have a puzzle to swap? No problem, we’ll give you one to get you started. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library. 2 to 4 p.m.

LEVERETT LIBRARY

All February: *Monthly Spice Tasting: Turmeric.* Stop in for a sample and suggested recipes. While supplies last.

All February: *Story Walks.* Every Thursday the Community Network for Children puts up a new Story Walk on the trail behind the library. Enjoy a seasonal story and get outside with your family!

Every Monday and Wednesday: *Online Qigong.* Calm your mind. Improve your balance. Enhance your health. Suitable for all levels of ability and any age. You may join this free class at any time. Taught by Dvora Eisenstein. For more info, email CommunityQigong@gmail.com. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, February 15: *Tracing Your Immigrant Ancestors.* (See “Multiple Libraries.”)

NORTHFIELD: DICKINSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Every Tuesday: *Story Hour.* Music and stories for toddlers, preschoolers, older siblings, and caregivers. Preregistration required. Contact Deb Wood for more info: woodd@pvrs-dk12.org. Online. 10 a.m.

Every Tuesday: *Drop-in Knitting.* Join fellow knitters and crocheters for an afternoon of chatting, sharing projects, and (maybe) getting work done on your current projects. Meet at the community table on the main floor of the library. All are welcome! 6 to 8 p.m.

1st Wednesday: *Readers Choice Book Group.* Book for February 2: *The Weight of Ink*, by Rachel Kadish. For more info, email dmemlib@gmail.com. 10 a.m.

Every Friday: *Kids’ Fridays.* 1st Friday: LEGOs. 2nd Friday: Games. 3rd Friday: MCBA Group Book. 4th Friday: Movie.

1st Saturday: *Friends of the Library Puzzle Swap.* We have dozens of new-to-you puzzles. Come to the back door of the library. Masks required. For more info, friendsofdml01360@gmail.com. 10 to 11:30 a.m.

2nd Wednesday: *Readings: Nonfiction, Fiction, and Poetry.* Book for February 9: *The Plague*, by Albert Camus. For more info, email dmemlib@gmail.com. 3 p.m.

2nd Thursday: *Environmental Awareness Group.* Book for 2/10: *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* by Suzanne Simard. For more info, email dmemlib@gmail.com. 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 10: *Blind Date with a Book.* Stop by the library between February 10 and 14 to pick up a “date” for Valentine’s Day. The book will be a surprise, but you’ll guarantee yourself a lovely evening by staying home and reading!

3rd Tuesday: *Friends of the Library.* 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 15: *Tracing Your Immigrant Ancestors.* (See “Multiple Libraries.”)

Wednesday, February 23: *Intro to Northfield Trails.* Online presentation by the town’s Open Space Committee. For more info, email dmemlib@gmail.com. 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 24: *Intro to the Benefits of Breastfeeding.* Online presentation by Dr. Lindiwe Sibeko, a breastfeeding and lactation specialist at UMass, with lots of time for questions. For more info about the event and the study, see northfield-publiclibrary.org/calendar. Pre-registration required: dmemlib@gmail.com. 6 to 7 p.m.

Saturday–Sunday, February 26–27: *Authors and Artists Online Festival.* authorsandartists-festival.wordpress.com

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THEATER PROFILE

Skeleton Crew Theater Productions

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – One of my favorite things to write articles about is the theater. I have written several about plays I have seen. I found out about this theater group called the Skeleton Crew Theater, and decided to write about them.

I ended up interviewing one of the crew members at the 2021 Great Falls Festival. Her name was Jane Finn and she has been a part of Skeleton Crew since 2008. During that interview, I also learned that Jonathan Chappell has been the founder of the group for 25 years.

On their website, the show is described as “part scavenger hunt, part theater.” Jane agreed with that description, saying the show is immersive and interactive. Jane mentioned that there are around 10 people in the crew. “It changes every year,” she added.

When it comes to the characters, they play ten of them as well. “The creatures are the same, but there are different stories,” she told me. I saw two of those characters, which were trolls, and they were very cool-looking. There are apparently three of them in the show and their names are Burt, Willyum, and Trent.

Skeleton Crew has performed mostly out of Gill. I have also seen them at the Franklin County Fair that occurred in 2021. They seemed to me like a very cool theater group. I would call them one that is not boring to watch.

Scavenger hunts are usually outdoors, and Skeleton Crew shows



Skeleton Crew's famous trolls.

have mostly been “outdoors in the woods” as well, but on October 28 through 30, they did an actual production of their show at the Shea Theater. Jane mentioned when I interviewed her that that show would be the first time doing it there.

“Some years, we have private shows. 30 to 40 people show up,” she told me. They did eight shows at the Renaissance Faire in Cummington, and “we had anywhere from 10 to 35 people at each show,” she said.

I asked Jane a question about their success, and in connection with that she said they’re slowly building their audience. Whatever they are doing to do that must be working, because I have seen them at two different social gatherings at this time, and they were doing the indoor show at the Shea.

If you wish to further look into the productions, then go to their Facebook page for images of what is in their shows. Their official website, www.skeletonscREWtheater.live, has some images to look at too. One of them is a nice image of two of the trolls that I mentioned. You can also find out the story behind Jonathan Chappell starting this group there.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Guitar Smashed; White Car Back; Carroll’s Scuffle; Skating Without Parachute; Some Guy In Greenfield

Monday, 1/17

6:35 a.m. Report of tree on wires blocking East Chestnut Hill Road. Shelburne Control notified. Officer sent. PD, MCFD, and Eversource could not locate the issue. DPW called back and stated the tree was on West Chestnut, not East Chestnut. Issue located by Eversource. 6:39 a.m. Officer assisting a vehicle stuck on the hill on Unity Street. Vehicle moved along.

8:12 a.m. Caller states that a line is down across Dry Hill Road and they have no power. PD and MCFD responding; Eversource notified.

Tuesday, 1/18

10:47 a.m. Owner of a Newton Street property reporting damage done to the building by a previous tenant. Not as reported; officer witnessed no damage done to the property at all. Advised of options. 1:20 p.m. Vehicle stop at Third and L streets. Operator has a “Cinderella” license.

1:28 p.m. Caller from Second Street states that a tall male is going door to door asking about electric bills. Unable to locate. 3:30 p.m. Caller states that the one-way hill on Canal Street is glare ice and is causing people to fall and cars to slide. DPW notified; sending a sand truck. 8:52 p.m. Officer mov-

ing a dead fox out of the roadway near St. Mary’s Cemetery. Message left for DPW to remove it in the morning.

Wednesday, 1/19

12:30 a.m. Following a motor vehicle stop, a 24-year-old Montague man was arrested on a default warrant.

3:54 a.m. Report from Third Street of third-floor tenant “banging around” and slamming doors. Advised of complaint.

7:58 a.m. Caller states that his wife is intoxicated and just smashed a guitar of his. She then took off in her car. Caller states she may be headed to Leverett but is not sure. Officer requesting county departments be advised to be on lookout for a well-being check.

3:58 p.m. 911 caller reporting hearing five gunshots on Lake Pleasant Road. Unable to locate. 4:20 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street stated that the white vehicle came back but left again; she did not see anything else. 5:37 p.m. 911 caller from Carroll’s Market reporting that a female broke everything in his store and then took off. Received 911 call from female party involved in disturbance; she stated that the store owner grabbed her and pushed her and she got mad so she knocked over

the Coke bottles. Officer out with involved female party. Courtesy transport provided.

Thursday, 1/20

12:03 a.m. 911 caller from Keith Apartments reports that her fire/carbon monoxide alarm is sounding. No smoke or fire reported. Caller transferred to Shelburne Control.

7:54 a.m. 911 caller reporting that she was struck from behind by another vehicle near the Water Department. No injuries reported.

10:50 a.m. Animal control officer advising that he picked up a cat on Millers Falls Road.

5:26 p.m. Party into station reporting that someone hit her car at the lights on Seventh Street and kept driving. Referred to an officer.

Friday, 1/21

2:47 a.m. Caller from Third Street reports people running up and down the stairs nonstop causing loud and bothersome noise. Officer advises no audible noise observed, nor anyone running up and down the stairs. Caller called back advising he can still hear the people upstairs being loud. Officer advises he spoke with tenant about noise level. Female party advises she just got home. Officer reports normal noise level of talking through the door upon arrival. Caller advised of findings.

8:18 a.m. Officer reporting that the street lights are out at Third Street and Avenue A. DPW advised.

12:23 p.m. 911 caller from Eleventh Street reports that there is a suspicious vehicle parked in their parking spot. Officer reports vehicle is parked legally in the street with its hazards on. Appears that somebody is loading the vehicle up.

4:46 p.m. Caller reporting that he observed three cars pull up to the camper that is parked in the bike path off First Street and go inside for approximately two minutes then leave. Caller stated he thought it was odd and suspicious. Referred to an officer.

6:01 p.m. Caller reporting that her purse was stolen at the Salvation Army at approximately 5 p.m. Caller is now home. Officer out at Salvation Army to check cameras. Purse retrieved. Caller came to the station and picked up her purse.

6:57 p.m. Caller reporting that there is a van in the Fourth Street parking lot with three dogs inside. Caller states the van has been there for six hours. Officer advises that the van is running, windows are open, and the heat is

on. Dogs appeared to be fine. Received second call regarding the van and the dogs. Officer made contact with owner, who is borrowing the van from her friend while her vehicle is getting fixed; she is waiting for her to come home, and they will be leaving. Officer advises the dogs are not in distress.

7:34 p.m. Caller stated that his neighbor texted him asking him to give the PD a call to have officers respond to her apartment because she told her son to walk home and when he gets home they will most likely get into a fight. Officer advised female party of options and told her to give us a call if there is an issue when he gets back.

10:03 p.m. Caller from Maple Street reporting that her neighbors have been banging and stomping around on the floor above her for a few hours. She does not want a police response at this time but will call back later if it continues.

11:53 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road complaining of a loud video game being played by the upstairs neighbors. No loud noises heard while officer was there. Advised to call back if noise continues.

Saturday, 1/22

6:06 p.m. Caller from Dell Street reporting a smell of gas outside of his residence. Call transferred to Shelburne Control. Officer advises that TFFD is remaining on scene investigating and will notify the PD if they need anything.

Sunday, 1/23

12:31 p.m. Multiple callers reporting that there are people out on the river trying to skate and that they have some kind of a parachute. Officer witnessed no parachute, just some people ice skating and ice fishing.

3:03 p.m. Callers reporting that the traffic lights at Third Street and Avenue A are flashing red and yellow. DPW notified and responding. There is nothing they can do now to fix it; they will get a technician in this week.

5:02 p.m. Report of two loose dogs near Hillcrest Elementary School: a brown Chihuahua and a black Boxer. Area searched; no dogs found.

7:23 p.m. Caller states she bought a washer from some guy in Greenfield; he came to set it up, but it didn’t work and was too big, so he told the caller he would get a different one. He has not called her back or shown up with a replacement. Caller wondering what she can do to get her money back. Advised of options.

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

and respected Arms shoe shop as the place to refine shoemaking skills he had picked up from his father. He names Dennis Arms as the shop owner, and never mentions the last name of another man working at the shop, which employed 15 journeymen cordwainers.

The shop didn’t offer apprenticeships, *per se*, but did take in Wilder as a 25-cents-per-day boarder and assigned him an instructor. His job – an early example of assembly-line shoemaking when most country shoemakers were likely still crafting entire shoes one at a time – was attaching leather soles to “ladies prunella shoes” made of strong silk or worsted fabric.

Interesting anecdotal information supplied by Wilder in his 1894 newspaper narrative speaks to what he believed to be alcoholic abuse by his fellow Bloody Brook workers. He could see that, minus drink, the workers would have been far more productive. Chalk it up an early life lesson that helped shape a successful, teetotaling businessman and likely temperance supporter. Politically, Wilder was an outspoken abolitionist and fervent Lincolnian Republican who was not bashful to express his views.

Wilder’s depiction of the Arms shoe shop employees as heavy drinkers begs the question of whether old Erastus Arms had a drinking problem, which might have contributed not only to his early death, but also to the financial difficulties revealed in his and brother-partner Dennis’s public record.

Jonas Wilder didn’t stick around South Deerfield long. His goal was to pay off his father’s debt of some \$900

on the family’s 172-acre Wendell farm that extended into Shutesbury. After three years, at age 16, he decided that the shoemaking assembly line was harmful to his health and well-being. He remedied the problem by taking a job as a teenage peddler, starting on foot with a tin suitcase in each hand before working up to a team of horses and wagon that supplied merchants and his own four-man crew of foot-peddlers.

The traveling-salesman work generated enough income to pay off his father’s debt by his 21st birthday, at which time he took a job clerking at Ivory Howe’s store at Whitmore’s Mills in North Sunderland, almost halfway home to his family’s Wendell farm from South Deerfield.

Wilder had known Howe as a Wendell storekeeper, and ended up managing the store briefly while Howe was away. As a gratuity, Howe then set him up at a friend’s Athol store before Wilder moved on to clerkships at stores in Jaffrey, then New Ipswich, New Hampshire, where he again went into peddling before selling out in 1843. That’s when he embarked on a distinguished, 40-year railroad career, moving from dusty roads to the steel rails of a burgeoning transportation industry that promised riches.

Wilder built an impressive list of accomplishments while serving in many roles on many different rail lines. Perhaps most notable was his invention of the refrigerator car, designed for the “butter trains” transporting the best butter money could buy from northern New York State farms across Lake Champlain and on to the Boston market.

Unfortunately, Wilder never “cashed in” with a patent on his invention, or

others noted by author Pamela Richardson for train buckboards and self-inking stamps. Apparently, he couldn’t be bothered to apply for patents – he had work to do. Instead, Western meat-packers such as the Swift Meat Co. became the impetus for the lucrative refrigerator-car patent secured in later years by W.A. Chandler of Union Star Lines.

The modest one-and-a-half-story farmhouse in the south of Wendell where Jonas and his father were born was still standing, minus the barn, when he wrote to the postmaster in 1904. According to Richardson, contacted by phone at her winter Florida residence, only the cellar hole survives today. When I told her I had discovered her book after completing the first draft of this piece, and feared that Jonas Wider might be old news in Wendell, she assured me that was not the case. She had only mentioned him in passing.

So, there you have bits and pieces of the story of Jonas Brown Wilder II, a Franklin County man worth memorializing. Newspapers at the time of his July 7, 1906 death at 92 treated him with respect and dignity. His obituary graced the front page of the *Gazette and Courier* in Greenfield, the *Daily Saratogian* in Saratoga Springs, New York, the *Bennington Banner* in Vermont, and likely many other papers of the day. Although he didn’t make the front page of New York City papers, they spared no ink in lengthy obits for a great railroad man from the rolling hills of Wendell and Shutesbury.

Remember, he got his start at the Arms shoe shop in blooming Bloody Brook village, which later became a railroad town in its own right.



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Stoner Will and the Narks,
A Narxist Critique
(Tiny Radars cassette, 2021)

MYSTRA REVIEWS #7



Review by JOSH B. & TROY C.

TURNERS FALLS – This week we are reviewing a new release that we had no previous knowledge about. It was sent to the paper... It’s a cassette by Stoner Will and the Narks put out last fall by Tiny Radars.

Please get in touch if you have something you want reviewed, or if you have other ideas!

TC: Hi Josh.
JB: Hi Troy – how are you today?

TC: I’m doing good, thank you.
JB: So what do you think of this? Narks – maybe they will be the next Sparks? Did you watch the new Sparks doc, by the way?

TC: I’m listening to Stoner Will now. This is fun. I still am waiting on the Sparks doc – soon, though. Excited.

This group is cool, Josh. They are really good. Sounds like Jonathan Richman on the second track. But it reminds me of The Judy’s. They are a whole different thing, though.

It would be cool to talk to them. Is it someone from Gracious Calamity? The lyrics are amazing. Who is in the group, man? Lol.

JB: I’m not sure...
TC: Here is the label: *tiny-radars.net/stonerwill-tr-08*. Sounds great.

JB: They kind of max out my eardrums, but are not a noise band at all. It kind of reminds me of some ‘60s stuff, but more jacked.

TC: Yes. Really jacked, like not that subtle at all. It’s far out.

JB: It’s probably like some Feeding Tube album, but I don’t know which.

TC: There’s high end in the mix, or my hearing is blown. Track 5 is the most Dino/Mascis track so far.

Yes, it’s fun for sure, this music. Track 6 reminds me of Lou Reed. I was never this cool as a young person, lol. Here is an interview with the band: *www.tinyurl.com/Narxist*.

If it’s the same Astra Taylor who wrote the press release for this, I think she did an interesting film... She is a filmmaker. Very cool.

JB: What do you think of the interview? I guess I should read it

too... oh, it’s not loading. Weird.

TC: I like the interview. It’s fun because it’s different than what I would ask, so I really enjoy it, and all of the western Mass references. It reminds me of my friends on the west side of San Antonio at one time. I would not know what a lot of the dialogue is... well, there is this part: “There are no rock shows in the pandemic...”

JB: Oh... You wouldn’t understand their dialogue?

TC: I don’t, really. But in San Antonio some friends on the west side of where I was, there were some people who would not understand even what avocado toast is. Not a lot now... I’m sure it’s all over the place. So in this way I like it.

A lot reminds me of Zizek and many of the things he was saying in his books, too. He would get people upset because they would say he plagiarized his own books. LOL. For me it was fun, it made sense.

JB: This is a different scene than what I’m connected to, Troy. They definitely are cool and younger.

TC: It is very cool. They did a great job.

JB: Can you compare this music to anything?

TC: That’s the most amazing thing – it covers so much with such subtlety. There are parts that are not subtle, maybe on purpose, but they hide all these things that trigger memories. But can’t quite figure it to say ‘Oh, that’s like this,’ so it sounds unique. One song even reminded me of the Flaming Lips.

Have you had a chance to talk to any of them?

JB: No – we just got sent this out of the blue.

TC: Wow, good timing. They could play with APIE. I love this album right now – it’s really out there. Thanks for sharing this. “Neocolonial Self Care” is great, lol. A really stoned album, but maybe not pot. A different trip.

JB: Cool, yeah... I guess not a mellow one.

TC: My friend just said: “Reminds me of Neutral Milk Hotel mixed with Tenacious D... who I always get confused with Frank Black... perhaps oddly.”

JB: Oh, wild – I guess we could leave it at that, haha.

SURVIVING from page B1

my own personal battle. Someone I care about is fighting his own battle with an illness. Someone who is loved and adored far beyond just his family and friends. Someone who has touched many many lives through his work and his family’s work. Today, the unkindness of a raven is what we all would lose if he loses.

Each time a life is lost, something cherished is taken from the people that surround that life. The wisdom of a long life, the hopes of a life cut short, a community without a leader, a void so big we can’t even begin to fill it.

The unkindness of ravens, today, is the irreplaceability of a life well lived. The inability to duplicate, replicate, replace a unique person who has done his or her best to make the community stronger, more

resilient, more together. The unkindness of ravens is what we can’t see, what we can’t touch. A memory we can only access in our minds, a smell that brings us back to a time we can remember when we close our eyes and replay the memory as many times as it takes.

The unkindness of ravens is the memory of a moment. Standing in the kitchen with your partner, saying vows to one another for the rest of your lives. Making promises for the future, confessing your heart to someone you can’t live without. That memory, when the person is gone and lost forever, is at once happy and excruciatingly cruel. That memory, when you’re driving your car on your way home from work, is as real as the breath on your steering wheel. It’s as automatic as a turn signal, a curve you’ve driven around a thousand times before.

The unkindness of ravens is a song on the radio that reminds you of your grandmother who loved her little red Ford Mustang, and when she passed your mom took that little red Ford Mustang, and when that little red Ford Mustang was totaled everyone’s heart broke because it was so loved.

All it takes is one unkind raven – one battle lost, one person not saved – to break a thousand hearts. One unkind raven can break a thousand people. The unkindness of ravens is their power. A black, beautiful, powerful raven reminded me today to cherish the people in my life every day that they breathe life, and to cherish my own life every time I take a breath. When I’m sitting at home, bored, thinking about nothing, I thank the ravens for the kindness of life.



Montague Community Television News

Remembering Mike Langknecht

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – In loving memory of Michael Langknecht, who passed away on January 15, 2022, we would like to express our deepest condolences to his friends and family. Mike was a dear friend and the president of MCTV’s board. He was an active supporter in our community and will be greatly missed by all!

This month has provided a break from filming, typical in January, but increased due to Omicron event cancellations. This has given us time to spend with the massive amount of footage from Summer 2021.

Remember the full moon from the night of August 21, and how it shone down on the grassy dancefloor of Barbès in the Woods? Now on Vimeo – along with the current Montague and Gill selectboard meetings, the GMRSD and the Montague finance meetings – is the

MCTV recording of “Son Rompe Pera,” a punk marimba band from Mexico City. Stay tuned for more footage from this Montague music festival!

And remember, all MCTV videos are available on our Vimeo page, which can be found linked to the website, *montaguetelevision.org*, under the tab “Videos.” All community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 17, as well as featured on the 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 *infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com*.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Smithsonian Coming to the Discovery Center

TURNERS FALLS – Through a partnership with the world’s largest museum complex, the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center is proud to announce that they will join five other local Massachusetts organizations to host “Crossroads: Changes in Rural America,” a traveling exhibit produced by the Smithsonian Institution’s Museum on Main Street program in partnership with Mass Humanities.

The Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center will receive extensive training from the staff of the Smithsonian, along with a \$10,000 grant from Mass Humanities, to develop public events during the exhibit, which will be on display for six weeks. Organizations located in towns with populations of 12,000 or less were eligible to apply.

“Crossroads” will be on display in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center from February 5 through March 18, 2023, in collaboration with the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the town of Montague’s RiverCulture,

the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, the Shea Theater, Tilton Library, and New England Public Media.

“Situating on four beautiful acres of Massachusetts state park land, the Great Falls Discovery Center is the embodiment of the ‘crossroads’ theme; a restored 19th century mill building and machine shop now educating the public about the natural, cultural, and industrial history of the Connecticut River watershed,” said Friends board member Sarah Doyle.

“This grant will help bring Franklin County residents together as a rural community and broaden the audience for the Great Falls Discovery Center itself and for all of the many cultural amenities of Turners Falls,” Doyle explained.

“Crossroads” explores how rural American communities changed in the 20th century. The vast majority of the United States landscape remains rural with only 3.5% of the landmass considered urban. Since 1900, the percentage of Americans

living in rural areas dropped from 60% to 17%. The exhibition offers small towns a chance to look at their own paths to highlight the changes that affected their fortunes over the past century.

The Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center is a volunteer group that provides financial and program support for the Great Falls Discovery Center, a free Massachusetts state park operated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Friends members publicize exhibits and programs through outreach at local events and on their website, *www.greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org*.

Mass Humanities, a non-profit based in Northampton, conducts and supports programs that use history, literature, philosophy, and the other humanities disciplines to enhance and improve civic life throughout Massachusetts. It receives major support from Mass Cultural Council (MCC), the state agency for arts and the humanities. For more information, visit *www.masshumanities.org*.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Montague Nomination Papers are Now Available

MONTAGUE – Nomination papers for the Annual Town Election, Tuesday, May 17, are now available at the Town Clerk’s Office until Monday, March 28. They must be returned no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 30.

- Seats are as follows:
- **Selectman**, currently held by Christopher Boutwell;
 - **Assessor**, currently held by Ann Fisk;
 - **Town Clerk**, currently held by Debra Bourbeau;
 - **Treasurer/Tax Collector**, currently held by Eileen Seymour;
 - **Board of Health**, currently held by Albert Cummings;
 - **Parks & Recreation**, currently held by Albert Cummings;
 - **Tree Warden**, currently held by Mark Stevens.
- All the above seats are up for re-election, each for a 3-year term.
- **Library Trustees** have three seats available, each for a 3-year term, currently held by Nancy Crowell, Karen Latka, and Margot Malachowski.
 - **Soldier’s Memorial Trustees**

has a Veteran’s seat for a 3-year term, currently held by John Murphy.

- **Town Meeting Members** are needed to represent each of the six precincts in town. There are seven seats available in each precinct for 3-year terms. Precinct Three also has two open seats for 2-year terms and three open seats for 1-year terms; Precinct Five has four open seats for 2-year terms and one open seat for a 1-year term.

The Annual Town Election will be Tuesday, May 17, 2022. The deadline to register to vote is Wednesday, April 27.

Nomination papers regarding school committee seats are provided by the Gill-Montague Superintendent of Schools at 35 Crocker Avenue, 863-9324.

The Town Clerk’s office is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. For more information, please call the office at 863-3200 x 203.

Turners Falls Athletic Club Annual Membership Drive

The Turners Falls Athletic Club has begun its Annual Sponsorship/ Membership Drive. This begins the 88th year for the TFAC since being organized in 1934.

Members support the charitable giving each year through its Scholarship Trust Fund. Each year, through the efforts of some 125 members, many One Thousand Dollar (\$1,000) 2nd Semester College Scholarships are offered to seniors athletes from both the Turners Falls High School and the Franklin County Tech School.

Since 1954, the TFAC has awarded over \$112,000 in scholarships to over 180 deserving students.

Along with the College Scholarships, the Trust Fund is able to make donations to support various youth sports activities, in-

cluding: Babe Ruth Baseball; Newt Guilbault Little League; American Legion Post 81 Baseball; YMCA Summer Youth Program; Valley Storm Girls Softball; Montague Park & Recreation Summer Youth Program; and others.

Applications for the 2022-2023 Scholarships will soon be available at the guidance offices for both schools.

If you are interested in becoming a member or just want to support the TFAC, contact us at tfacinc@gmail.com or mail to TFAC, PO Box 11 Turners Falls, MA 01376.

Supporting Sports & Academics for the Youth of Turners Falls since 1934.

Tell a friend and support the TFAC.

TFAC Scholarship Committee



The Blizzard of 1978: A Narrated Slide Presentation

NEW SALEM – Next Friday, February 4 from 7 to 8 p.m. via Zoom, the New Salem Public Library will present “The Blizzard of 1978”. Michael Tougias, *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Finest Hours*, *Quabbin*, and more than 30 other books, will host this interesting and informative program.

On February 6 and 7, 1978, New England was knocked to its knees by incredible snow and wind, referred to as the “Worst Storm of the Century.” Tougias, author of *The Blizzard of ’78*, combines a unique array of photographs with riveting narration, bringing the Blizzard to life again.

Tougias first chronicles the period before the storm, then follows its progression, causing commuter nightmares and incredible devastation. From Cape Cod to Connecticut, Tougias explains how people survived the storm by spending up to 48 hours in their cars, and how coastal homes were first torn from

their foundations, then smashed to smithereens by giant waves.

He also recalls the lighter side of the storm, including neighborhood parties, the fun of cross-country skiers skiing down major highways, and the way people helped total strangers stranded by the storm. An in-depth analysis comparing this blizzard to the Great Blizzard of 1888 is also included.

For anyone who survived the Blizzard of ’78 and for those who have heard about its impact, Tougias’ presentation will bring back memories. For others, it may be a first look at this powerful natural disaster. Come join us on Zoom for a blast from the past.

This program is sponsored by New Salem Cultural Council funding. For more information on the author, visit his website: www.michaeltougias.com.

To register, contact the New Salem Public library at (978) 544-6334 or n_salem@cwmmars.org.

FACES & PLACES



Sandy Fortier, who sent us this photo, writes, “My cousin just shared this awesome pic with me! My dad (Ray Jarvis) is in the driver seat, his dad (my grandfather Albert Jarvis) is standing. Not sure who the other two fellows are? This photo was taken at my grandfather’s garage at the top of the hill in Turners, where my dad’s pool shop is now. Late ‘40s, I believe.”

Fortier posted the photo to the “Remember Old Turners Falls” Facebook page. Comments there mention riding the “40 ‘n’ 8” at local events. It was apparently very popular with children who got to ride the “train.”

“I’m not sure of its origins,” writes Fortier. “It was suggested to me that I should send this photo to you if it would make for an interesting article. My dad, Ray Jarvis, will be 92 years old this year. He was 15 when this photo was taken. He is still working as a welder in his shop. (I have pics of that too.) Anyway, I thought the community might find this interesting!”

Do any of our readers have memories of the “40 ‘n’ 8” to share? Send them to editor@montaguereporter.org!

High School Sports: Competition Mounts

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – This week both the Franklin Tech boys’ and Turners Falls girls’ basketball teams saw their respective winning streaks halted by conference rivals, while the Tech girls kept their own streak intact. The Turners boys, meanwhile, came within two points of their first win of the season.

Three teams are vying for the Franklin South Conference title in girls’ basketball: the Tech Eagles (7 – 1 in the FSC) and the Turners Thunder (4 – 1 FSC) are currently atop the conference, with the Pioneer Panthers (4 – 3 FSC) also in the hunt after defeating the Thunder on Monday up in Northfield.

In the boys’ brackets, Franklin Tech is second only to the Mount Greylock Mounties in the Hampshire North Conference. On Tuesday, the Mounties beat them for the second time this season, and pulled out to a two-game conference lead.

Girls Basketball
TFHS 46 – Mahar 28
Pioneer 38 – TFHS 31

Last Friday, the Turners girls defeated the Mahar Senators, because of strong defense and because they owned the boards.

Turners had the decided size advantage, but early on, Mahar countered this with accuracy. The Sens sank three early 3-pointers to take a 13-7 lead with two minutes left in the first period. Then Turners began getting the rebounds, and narrowed the gap to 13-11. A Powertown foul gave the Senators a 14-11 lead after one full.

The Politicians widened the gap to six points, but Turners turned up the heat, and their defense held the Senators scoreless for the final six minutes of the half. Turners went

into the locker room leading 21-17.

Mahar kept the game close for most of the third, but again, Powertown finished the quarter strong, and by the time the clock buzzed, they held a 34-23 lead.

Thunder got into foul trouble in the final stanza, but they boxed out on the free throw attempts and scored points on the other end to take the game going away 46-28.

Emily Young (16) and Madison Liimatainen (13) led the Thunder, with Morgan Dobias (8), Lily Spera (7) and Avery Tela (2) helping out.

On Monday, the Pioneer Panthers derailed Powertown’s six-game win streak. “You can’t win if you don’t score,” coach Jim Cadran said after the loss. And that was certainly true of the third quarter.

Powertown held the Cats scoreless in the second period, but could only score one basket of their own in the third, turning a 19-11 lead into a 24-21 deficit going into the final period.

The Panthers outscored Blue 14-10 in the fourth to take the game 38-31, revenging an earlier loss to Turners, ending Thunder’s win streak, and muddying the Franklin South Conference waters.

Young and Spera had 8 points in the loss while Liimatainen put up 7. Abby Holloway scored 4 points, Steph Peterson got 3 and Holly Myers sank a free throw.

This Friday the Thunder Ladies travel down to Springfield to take on the Putnam Beavers.

The other top dog in the FSC is the Franklin Tech Eagles. The Lady Birds have won eight of their last nine games. Their one loss in that streak came against the Turners Falls Thunder. On Friday, they host the Athol Red Bears as they attempt to extend their four-game streak and keep their title hopes alive.

Boys Basketball
Southwick 56 – TFHS 54
Mt. Greylock 56 – FCTS 43

Meanwhile in boys’ basketball, last Thursday, January 20 the Southwick Rams defeated the Turners Falls boys 56-54. It was the closest game of the season for the Thunder. I had to leave early, but in the last quarter, Powertown outscored the Rams by ten points and almost pulled off the upset.

On Tuesday, Franklin Tech dropped a home game against conference-leading Mount Greylock. The loss halts the Eagles’ five-game win streak and drops them two games behind the Mounties.

In this one, the Greys instituted a full-court press, and it worked to perfection. Tech scored the first two points, but after that, it was all Mounties. For the rest of the period, Greylock harassed the Tech ball-carriers, blocking passes and making steals. By the end of the first, the Mounties were up 17-2.


Then in the second, with the score 19-2, Tech hit a 2-pointer and the spell was broken. The Eagles did their best to narrow the gap, and cut the deficit to 12 points with two minutes left in the half. That’s when the Mounties went on another scoring spurt, and going into the half, the gap was again at 17 points, 34-17.

Although the Eagles had a strong fourth quarter, the double-digit lead held up, and the Mounties took the game 62-43, solidifying their perch atop the Hampshire North Conference.

Noah Ausikaitis scored 19 for Tech, Ty Sadoski netted 16, Robert Murphy scored 5, Vincent Renaud hit 2, and David Klempner-Siano put in a foul shot.

The Eagles fly to Lee on Friday, in a bid to start another winning streak.

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the
poetry
page

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

– William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Readers are invited to send poems to the
Montague Reporter at: 177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376
or to: poetry@montaguereporter.org

January Poetry Page

The Other Mary

I walked around the church of God,
Not much out of my way but rather odd.
Odd that God, with the friends He’s had,
Princes of Rome, the rich, the glad,
Would upon the peripatetic depend:
This tramp today His only friend!

A last circuit before this day,
A headscarf was dropped away.
In hope to remedy a virginal error,
I tapped a first satin shoulder.

“It isn’t mine,” she trothed my tap —
“You see each is dressed in black!”
And off all went for burial keen,
But she would say another prayer:
“*I exit His tomb like Magdalene,*
Are you perhaps the Gardener there?”

– Richard Hardie
Northampton

Being A Cloud

Not all of us
are made
to walk gently upon earth.

Some thunder, roar and
build as cumulonimbus,

or spread out thin, like cirrus,

traveling through life
billowing out
or observing what
happens on the ground.

Search for places
that need rain,

cast shadows on workers in a sunny field,
pour into parched rivers.

Be your unique
form of water.

Give yourself in
steam, ice or rain.

– Jesse LoVasco
Michigan & Vermont

The Day The Hummingbird Greeted My Wife

Blossoming barely a week,
the Rose-of-Sharons
love hummingbirds
as hummingbirds love
those bold, broad blossoms.
When my wife stepped out
the side door flanked by those bushes,
a hummingbird left a sweet flower
to hold and hover
right before her face.
She swallowed her breath,
didn’t blink.
She said she felt as light as air,
lighter, even, than air.
The bird returned to the Rose-of-Sharon
where its mate had finished
sipping nectar. They flew off
together into the tall trees
to share stories
of another day in their lives.

– Gary Metras
Easthampton

entangled

I wonder when
the leaf carries
the dew drop’s weight
if there is a togetherness
about them

or, if the weight
becomes like a stone
in the shoe – something to get used to.

just as we, entangled
in one another’s grief
these days cannot
carry it alone

are we more like
the leaf
or, more the stone?

– Maiah A Merino

26 seconds

Earthbeat pulses
Lost in wonder
Feet soil dancing
Wind as partner
Soaring skyward
Hawk as brother
Rapid descent
Catch the river
Otter rising
Making ripples
Calling brook trout
To the table
Grateful offering
We are oneing
All within this
Twenty six seconds.

– Richard Eugene Perry

All That Is

To be in this nameless place
As it was shaped by fire and ice
Touch the granite face
Wet and slick, monolithic
Rivulets growing like sinew
Twisting and turning
Carving through layers
Morphing eternally
All that is will never be again

To walk these hooded dales
Cloaked in mystery
Count the trunks of the giants
Now splintered into millions of pieces
Sit upon a mossy throne
The first of my kind to witness
An immense expanse, limitless
To take the first breath of rarified air
All that is will never be again

The earth unriven, its treasures held fast
Every next step unknown
Broad green valleys and white expanses
Teeming with creatures ever changing
Endless sustenance
Self-sustaining by divine design
Lain into primitive hands
A precious, living, breathing gift
All that is will never be again

– Marty Garcia
Erving

ALEXANDER ROTONDO PHOTO

Contributors’ Notes

Richard Hardie received his Master of Arts degree from Smith College in 1967, in Theatre, and Bachelor’s in Philosophy from Brooklyn College ten years earlier.

Marty Garcia, when not writing poems or watching sports or barbecuing, works at the S.O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center in Turners Falls.

SPECIAL NOTE: The following contributors, sent to the page by Lis McLoughlin (Thank you Lis and poets!) will all be reading in the Authors and Artists Festival: Writing the Land February 26 and 27, 2022. Free registration and more info at www.nature-culture.net/authors-artists-festival. These poets, and more we will publish next month, are included in Writing the Land: Northeast, a new volume edited by Lis McLoughlin, an anthology of 11 land trusts and 40 poets who wrote poems inspired by their adopted lands. See writingtheland.org.

Robert Eugene Perry is a native of Massachusetts. His most recent book of poetry *Surrendering to the Path* was published by Human Error Publishing (2020). As a metaphysical poet, he finds inspiration in nature and endeavors to draw connections between our higher selves and the natural world. He writes that “26 Seconds” came “from a writing meditation prompt by Kristen Leigh 5/15/21, regarding how the earth pulsates every 26 seconds. The phenomenon has a quantitative measurement but a mysterious origin.”

Jesse LoVasco (she/her), a poet and visual artist, resides in occupied lands of Anishnabe in Michigan and Abenaki in Vermont. Publications include a chapbook with Red Wolf Editions, *Imprinting Waves*, and a 2019 winner of the Homebound Publications Poetry Prize entitled *Native*.

Gary Metras is a retired educator, having taught high school and college. His poems have appeared in such periodicals as *America*, *The Common*, and *Poetry*. His newest of eight books of poems is *Vanishing Points* (Dos Madres Press, 2021). He was appointed Easthampton’s inaugural Poet Laureate in 2018. He is a fly fishing enthusiast who wades the streams of western Massachusetts as often as possible.

Maiah A Merino, a Chicánx poet and mixed-genre writer, recently published poems in *Flory Canto: Antología de poesía*, an international bilingual poetry anthology, *The Yellow Medicine Review*, and *The Raven Chronicles*. She is a 2021/22 Writing the Land Poet, and received the 2021 Artist Trust GAP Award.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Get Down With Your Hometown*, on-line festival. See getdownhometown.com for full lineup. \$. 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Get Down With Your Hometown*, on-line festival. See getdownhometown.com for full lineup. \$. 6 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Cinemastorm*, mystery movie double feature: "Strange animation." Free. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Ali McGuirk, The Mary Jane Jones*. \$. 8 p.m.

MONDAY, JANUARY 31

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Marlon Carey a.k.a. Inphynit*, online event with hip-hop storyteller. See localaccess.org for tickets, by donation. 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Bob Marley birthday tribute with *I Ambassa, Dave Noonan's Green Island*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *No Lens, Whalom Park*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *Stillwater Band*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5

The Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Little House Blues*. 6 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Max Creek*. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Editrix, Godcaster, Underwear*. \$. 8 p.m.

Iron Horse Music Hall, Northampton: *The Nields*. \$. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Palladium, Worcester: *Cattle Decapitation, Creeping Death*, more. \$. 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Mannequin Pussy*. \$. 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Della Mae*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

The Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *The Wildcat O'Halloran Band*. 6 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Peter Mulvey, Dylan Patrick Ward*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Tides, Bag Lady, Hollow Teeth, Unagi*. \$. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Owsley's Owls*. \$. 9:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Storypalooza 3: Danger!* \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Angel Bat Dawid & The Brothahood*. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Rublebucket, Carinae*. \$. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Palladium, Worcester: *Cannibal Corpse, Whitechapel, Revocation*, more. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Tree House Brewing, South Deerfield: *Iron & Wine*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Rublebucket, Home Body*. \$. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Movie with live soundtrack, *Peter Pan* (1924) with harp score by Leslie McMichael. \$. 7 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Bruce Cockburn*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *The Diamondstones*. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 3

DCU Center, Worcester: *Tyler the Creator, Kali Uchis, Vince Staples, Teezo Touchdown*. \$. 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Superchunk, Torres*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Pioneer Valley Jazz Shares presents *Michael Musillami Trio*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Lich King, Stone Cutters, Toxic Ruin*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Rickie Lee Jones*. \$. 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 8

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Stephen Marley*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 11

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Iceage, Sloppy Jane*. \$. 8 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Animal Collective, L'Rain*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Movie with live soundtrack, *The Arrival* (1983) with music by *The Empyreans*. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Son Volt, Jesse Farrar*. \$. 8 p.m.

Symphony Hall, Springfield: *Boyz II Men*. \$. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Sheer Mag, Topsy*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Henry Rollins*, spoken word. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *David Bromberg Quintet*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Car Seat Headrest, Barteas Strange*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

Hutghi's at the Nook, Westfield: *One Master, Ritual Clearing, Subterranean Rites*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Amy Helm*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

Northampton Center for the Arts: *mssv* (feat. Mike Watt), *Gloyd*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Hubby Jenkins*. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7

Calvin Theater, Northampton: *The Magnetic Fields*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Guerilla Toss*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 8

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The Suitcase Junket, Philip B. Prince*. \$. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Cowboy Junkies*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Cloudbelly*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Godspeed You! Black Emperor*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Mad Professor*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, APRIL 19

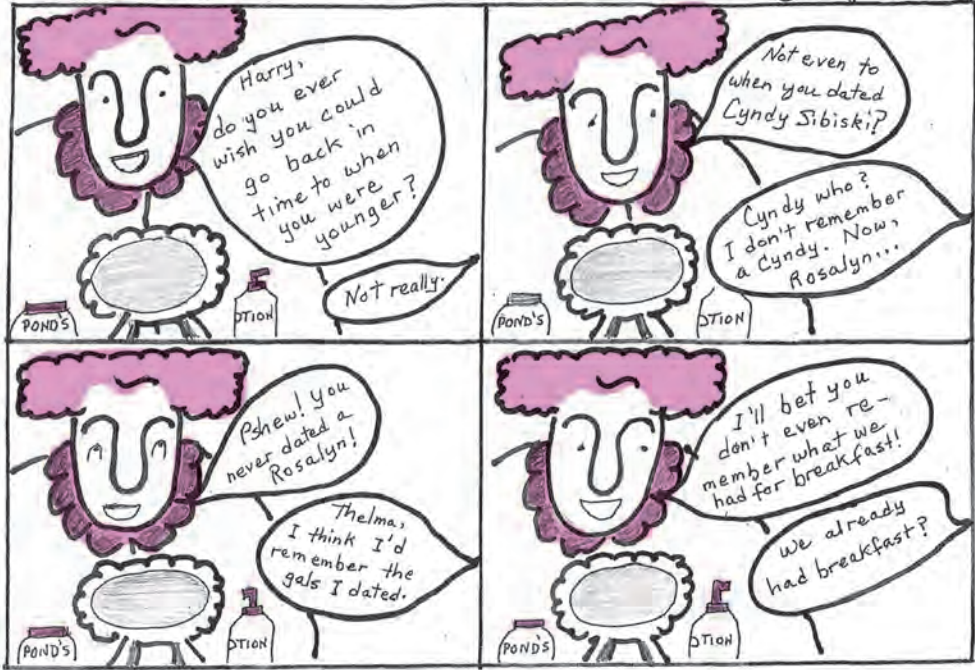
Colonial Theater, Keene: *Melissa Etheridge*. \$. 7:30 p.m.



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ALLEY from page B1

Wednesday, 1/6/16
2:57 p.m. Report of suspicious activity; caller observed a male party dump fluid out of a Mason jar. In the past, the caller has seen this party engaging in what appeared to be drug activity. Officer off on foot in alley between Fourth and Fifth Streets; found male party had been transporting a friend back and forth to Greenfield today to help fix friend's car.

Wednesday, 2/10/16
7:32 a.m. Caller reporting a hit-and-run accident involving his vehicle overnight in the alley behind Fourth Street. Caller advises that he has a witness with him that saw who was driving the other vehicle. Report taken.

Sunday, 6/12/16
12:02 p.m. Report of fight in alley between Fourth and Fifth streets; unable to locate. Caller frustrated with increased altercations in alley and requesting extra patrols.

Monday, 8/29/16
11:28 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street complaining of two males being loud on rear steps of apartment building. Area checked; officer advises all is quiet. Caller reports that males are still in the rear of the building being loud.



Officer advises that he just saw male mentioned by the caller; male was walking with another male in the Fourth Street alley. All was quiet. Officer spoke with a neighbor of the building, who stated that all was quiet in the area tonight.

Sunday, 5/21/17
8:45 p.m. Officer advising that someone is stumbling around in the Fourth Street alley. There is also a van in the area; looks like people may be camping out. Officers out with male party at Seventh and L. One male transported home.

Thursday, 2/15/18
5:56 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports that when he returned home, a male and a female were in front of his residence. Female asked if the caller lived on the second floor, and when the caller asked why she was asking, she said she was just curious. Parties then walked between some of the houses

on Fourth Street off the alley and are now back in front of the caller's residence. Officer spoke with parties; they are neighbors and were attempting to meet their neighbors.

Tuesday, 4/9/19
1 p.m. Report of skunk in alley between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Skunk is walking but is not exhibiting any outward signs of distress. ACO advised; unable to locate skunk.

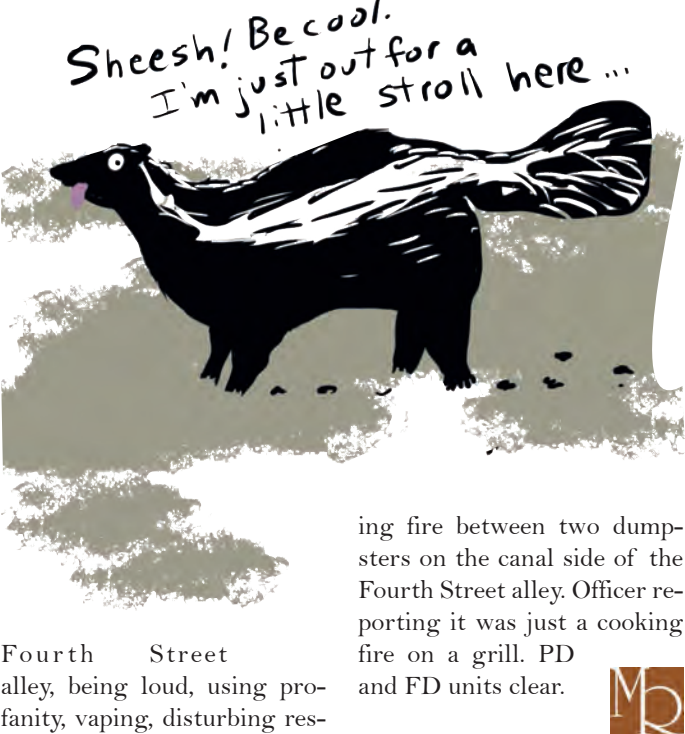
Monday, 5/20/19
2:56 p.m. Report of a group of teenagers loitering in the

idents. Caller requesting the officer to address same (in progress as well as an ongoing issue) and call back with her options.

Saturday, 6/1/19
11:41 a.m. Two calls reporting loud altercation near the Fourth/Fifth Street alley. Units clear; verbal only.

Monday, 9/30/19
12:48 a.m. Caller complaining that the driver of a vehicle parked in Fourth Street alley for the past two hours is being loud. Officer advises vehicle was exiting as he entered the alley.

Sunday, 2/9/20
7:36 p.m. Caller report-



ing fire between two dumpsters on the canal side of the Fourth Street alley. Officer reporting it was just a cooking fire on a grill. PD and FD units clear.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

A Survey of Older Adults

GREENFIELD – The Age-Friendly Communities Initiative led by LifePath is launching a regional needs assessment survey, in collaboration with FRCOG and local Councils on Aging and senior centers.

This anonymous survey is open to all elders living in Franklin County and the North Quabbin, as well as their caregivers. It takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The survey is the main component of the Age-Friendly Initiative's needs assessment process, which will also include focus groups and interviews with older adults. The information collected through this process will be used to create an Age-Friendly Action Plan for the region, and to apply for grants to improve conditions for older adults.

LifePath hopes to receive responses from a wide range of residents from all parts of the region, including elders of color, LGBTQIA+ elders, and people living with disabilities. In an effort to make it accessible to as many people as possible, they are accepting both online and print submissions. To fill out the survey online, please visit:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/age-friendly-survey
To request a printed copy be mailed to you, and for any other inquiries, please contact Age-Friendly program manager Nour Elkhattaby Strauch at nelkhattabystrauch@lifepathma.org or (413) 829-9274.

LifePath, a private non-profit, partners with elders and persons with disabilities to maintain independence and quality of life in their own homes and communities, with programs in all of Franklin County and some services to Athol, Petersham, Royalston and Phillipston.

The Age-Friendly Communities Network is a global initiative established by the World Health Organization and administered by AARP in the US. It has over 1,200 members worldwide, including over 600 American towns and cities. The network connects stakeholders in these communities to promote a common vision of making them better places for people as they age, by assessing and improving essential services including transportation, housing, and social participation.

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