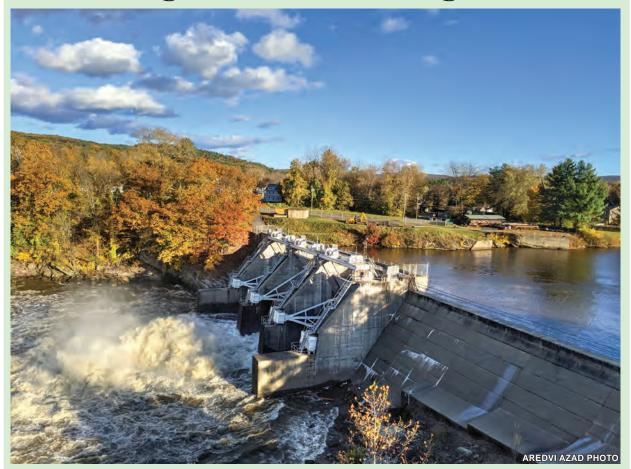
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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

River Access: Public Gets First Look At FirstLight Recreation Negotiations



As part of its hydroelectric license renewal, the company is expected to invest in public access to the river, but negotiations with stakeholders over the details have been kept behind closed doors. A newly released document shows the working proposal.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – For over nine years, First-Light Power has been working on applying for new licenses to use the Connecticut River to generate electricity at two major sites: the giant pumped-storage battery at Northfield Mountain, and Turners Falls, where a dam diverts water into a canal feeding two hydropower stations. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) grants 30- to 50-year licenses for hydro projects in a cumbersome process designed to address environmental concerns, and to make sure the public gets something in exchange for the use of rivers by private interests.

FirstLight's old licenses expired in 2018, and are now automatically extended each year as the process drags on. The company turned in a final application in December 2020, and last summer it restarted side negotiations, which had previously broken down, with the towns and organizations FERC considers official stakeholders in the matter.

from FERC setting the terms of a proposed license by itself, though state and local governments will still seek public input before any licenses are finalized.

In exchange for a seat at that negotiating table, however, FirstLight has required all parties – groups like the Connecticut River Conservancy and American Whitewater, state and tribal agencies, and the towns of Montague, Erving, Northfield, and Gill – to agree not to discuss the talks publicly.

This posed a problem for town selectboards, required by the state's open meeting law to *only* discuss town business publicly; one by one, they agreed to send agents to negotiate, trusting them to keep the public's interest at heart. The towns were invited specifically to discuss FirstLight's planned investments in recreational access to the river, one of a number of interlocking topics the company must stitch together into a comprehensive settlement.

This week, those agents emerged with a draft

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD School District Staff to Grow; Town Funds Family Program

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard began their meeting an hour earlier than usual on Monday to make time for a presentation of the Gill-Montague school district budget. They were joined by a quorum of the finance committee, as well as their counterparts from Gill, in order to discuss the district's assessments to the towns.

Gill-Montague superintendent Brian Beck stressed the need to make significant additions to the staff, which he portrayed as necessary to help students make up for lost learning time during the pandemic. The proposed budget would add 15 new positions, including 10 paraprofessionals.

The total "all funds" school budget was estimated at \$26,432,435, approximately half of which is projected to be funded by the "affordable assessments" to Gill and Montague, and much of the remainder by state aid and federal COVID relief funds.

The spike in Chapter 70 state aid of more than 9% over the current year, or \$648,195, was a reflection of a projected increase to the district's "foundation enrollment" of nearly 50 students, as well as continued implementation of the state Student Opportunity Act, which gives more weight to the cost of key categories of students.

On the negative side, district business manager Joanne Blier pointed out, a large percentage of the enrollment increase counted under the state formula occurred among students who are leaving the district through school choice and charter school programs. These

see MONTAGUE page A7

Leverett Pond Plan Approved, Minus Winter Drawdowns

By SARAH ROBERTSON

LEVERETT – The Leverett conservation commission removed winter drawdowns from the Friends of Leverett Pond's (FLP) aquatic weed management plan on Monday night, then approved the remainder of the group's plans in a 5-1 vote, pending conditions the con com will set next week.

"Their decision to not allow winter drawdown as a management tool at this time is understandable, although disappointing to FLP as it presents a non-herbicide alternative to assist in managing milfoil," FLP president Tom Hankinson wrote in an email to the *Reporter*. "We do understand there is interest in studying, and eventually employing drawdown once more information is gathered."

Herbicide application, hydro-raking, hand removal, and benthic barriers remain in the "toolbox" of methods outlined in the FLP's Notice of Intent (NOI). The group proposes to use the chemical ProcellaCOR to treat invasive Eurasian milfoil, either by spraying it on the pond's surface or injecting it underwater.

"I don't think there's any part of me that's willing to vote in favor of any type of chemical use in the

Reaching a "comprehensive settlement" with these stakeholders could help FirstLight avoid the prolonged and litigious response that sometimes results Agreement in Principle (AIP) on recreation improvements, and because the selectboards are asked to approve it, the public can finally see what the next 30 to 50 years may bring for the river rats.

see **RECREATION** page A2

Won't You Be My (Good) Neighbor?

By DONNA PETERSEN

WENDELL – Having good neighbors is a blessing. I personally have some great ones. And in Wendell, the Good Neighbors Food Pantry is a perfect example of community members working together to help each other. It seems like Western Massachusetts has many food pantries, food banks, and community meal locations, but the longevity of this small town volunteer-run pantry and the amount of food it gives away is surprising.

Back in the early- to mid-1980s, Rosalie Rosser of Wendell had the seed of an idea to help folks in town who had difficulty putting enough food on the table. From a modest beginning in the basement of an old town building, the pantry took shape with Nancy Graton becoming a vital force and volunteers chipping in. After some growing pains, it eventually became more formalized, and is now a 501(c)(3) Massachusetts non-profit.



Volunteers Mez Ziemba and Ina Peebles help staff last Sunday's food pantry.

Good Neighbors serves Wendell as well. and New Salem residents. After I spo ings in Wendell, it has settled at the town hall. Deliveries can be made to immunocompromised residents

I spoke with Mez Ziemba, president of the board of directors, and she spoke of the early efforts of those with "a vision to provide food

see NEIGHBORS page A4

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GILL SELECTBOARD

School Budget, Pot Shop, Settlement Talks on Docket

By JERRI HIGGINS

The Gill selectboard and finance committee joined their Montague counterparts Monday evening for a presentation on the FY'23 Gill-Montague Regional School District (GMRSD) budget.

Superintendent Brian Beck highlighted various programs and curriculums in the schools, along with the district's educational goals and achievements. Business director Joanne Blier presented fiscal analysis, capital needs, and enrollment details. Higher-than-expected Chapter 70 state aid numbers were released the day after Beck and Blier had met with the school committee, and these new numbers were integrated on Monday.

"It is nice to see that we are out of hold-harmless," said Gill selectboard chair Greg Snedeker. "That is a relief. It is also nice to see the [Student Opportunity Act] money kicking in again."

The nearly \$26.5 million budget included revenue and expense adjustments of "about \$400,000," said Blier, including increased costs for choice-out students. Blier said that while the "foundation enrollment" increased, the largest increases were from students choicing out, which

see GILL page A5

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Talks FirstLight, Too

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Erving Selectboard held a special meeting on Wednesday devoted almost entirely to a discussion of the draft proposal by First-Light Power for public recreational upgrades around its two hydroelectric projects, identified as Northfield Mountain and Turners Falls. First-Light is attempting to wind down negotiations with local stakeholders prior to submitting a proposal to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for new long-term licenses for its two project areas – the Northfield Mountain Project and the Turners Falls project.

The proposal, which Erving officials had only received the previous day, included only four project upgrades in Erving – to allow climbing at Rose Ledges, as in the

see ERVING page A5

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RECREATION from page A1

So, what's in the working proposal?

In Northfield, FirstLight would build two new "pocket parks" on the river, relocate a boat dock, conserve land and create an interpretive trail at Bennett Meadow, and build a new "paddle access" campsite. Five miles of mountain bike trails would be added at Northfield Mountain, and the company would pledge to donate sports equipment to youth groups.

In Erving, two popular rockclimbing spots, Rose Ledge and Farley Ledge, would be conserved and made official. Gill would get a paddle-access campsite at Barton Cove, a place to lock up canoes, and sports equipment.

By far the most development would be in Montague, in particular around Turners Falls.

"What you'll see, I think, is a process that reflects compromise," town administrator Steve Ellis told the Reporter. "One of our major priorities was to see significant improvements in river access, and in general, conditions in the area immediately below the Turners Falls dam."

The AIP details five new spots people would be able to put in boats at Turners Falls. The first would be near Unity Park, likely at the northernmost point of the informal "dog park"; according to Ellis, it would be as far as possible above the dam for safety reasons. "I think that in the long term, there will be a proposal for an access road," he said.

Across the canal bridge from the Discovery Center, FirstLight is offering to build a public "viewing platform and picnic area... with the best feasible view of the a good and due process," Ellis Great Falls and their surrounding natural environment." A map attached to the AIP appears to indicate two more "putin" spots, one below that platform and the other a little further downstream on the site locally known as the "brick beach," the piled remnants of the former John Russell Cutlery factory. Ellis said that following a tour of this locale, company representatives also agreed to "remediate unsafe features" including the open foundations of older mills, which tend to accumulate standing water and debris. "We had the opportunity to walk them through, to better visualize their own assets in some cases," he explained.

tric Station No. 1, near the former Railroad Salvage site. "This is one of the locations at which where they would do the dam releases on the weekends," Ellis said.

A new portage trail would be built at Rock Dam, and the existing put-in on Poplar Street in Montague City would be improved with stairs, a boat slide, a floating dock, and a port-a-potty. Ellis said the town is still hoping to ensure traffic and sanitation do not become an issue in "what is, quite frankly, a residential neighborhood."

"From the standpoint of reconnecting our community to the river below the dam, this is a unique opportunity," Ellis said in summary. "It comes in the context, we understand from the initial filing, of there being more water in the river on a regular basis, so that the overall ecology of the river is healthier." He added that the prospect of more walking traffic from visitors "would be pretty exciting" for downtown businesses.

Ellis said two of Montague's priorities have been unsuccessful: the development of a "larger waterfront resource" on the townowned former Indeck property, recently the unlicensed Turnside skate park; and the redevelopment of the buildings at Cabot Camp, FirstLight's land where the Millers River meets the Connecticut. Both were "non-negotiables" for the company, he said, though First-Light is offering to work with the town to "find a qualified organization within the first three years of license issuance" to preserve the Cabot Camp buildings.

"We wanted to make sure they didn't have a simple pathway to remove the buildings without explained. "This became an issue with [Farren owner] Trinity Health New England recently, so we really want a commitment in this written agreement – which we didn't have with Trinity – to work collaboratively in conducting a market and redevelopment study."



Corey Wheeler replaces front end components on a Chevy truck with 190,000 miles on it at Mark's Auto in Montague one recent afternoon. He started with tractor repair at age 15, and just kept going. His pet repair peeve? Battling with mice – dead and alive – that take up residence in cars and trucks.

Letters to // the Editors

Wrecking Ball for the Farren

Having lived in Montague City for over 40 years I witnessed the Farren Memorial Hospital being operational and its loss as a valuable local resource.

The conversion of the buildings to a long-term care facility and office space required a large investment, extended the structure's usefulness, and provided jobs. It took a lot of federal Medicaid money, and the hard work and creativity from a large maintenance crew led by David Galbraith, to keep these old buildings functioning all these years.

When I worked in the Building Maintenance Department of the Farren Care Center with the Sisters of Providence 25 years ago, the 100-year-old original building was occupied by Franklin County Home Care for seniors.

It was in rough shape then. It was dark, poorly ventilated, crumbling, and without central air. The very old oil boilers ran 24/7 year round, providing both heat and hot water, guzzling oil from large underground tanks. They remain wasting energy and polluting while the building awaits its fate.

lived their usefulness, and need to come down.

I have not seen any viable plan, or need, for their continued existence. I can see no value or reason to preserve a so-called "historic" building that is ugly, poorly designed, energy wasteful, and a biohazard as some kind of monument to a romanticized past with the magical thinking and "Cargo Cult" mentality that preservation will result in the return of prosperity to Montague City, to a time when canals, factories, and electric trolleys spurred development.

Trinity Healthcare misled the town as to its intentions, and should be treated accordingly, but there are reasons it is opting for demolition. Asbestos? Soil contamination?

It is not advantageous to the residents of Montague to leave these buildings standing. While there is a need for low-income housing in Franklin County, it is not a viable option here. These old buildings were built with the availability of cheap energy for heating and cooling under different social and political conditions. We didn't know about climate change, resource

depletion, and global overshoot. Growth is not our friend.

The future will bring changes, including less energy-intensive lives and less travel. Local resources will become more important.

I am in favor of Trinity's plan to demolish the buildings, clean it up, and turn the land over to the Town of Montague for an Open Space Community Park with some trees and flowers planted. Some paths connecting to the bike path. Some benches and picnic tables. Playing fields. Community gardens. Open spaces for large gatherings.

Some portion of the property could be preserved for a future senior center and/or public library. The newer single-story building that housed offices could be saved from demolition for restrooms, equipment storage, and maybe a Recreation Department office. The current maintenance garage could be used for grounds care equipment. Looking forward, it's time to turn the page.

Moving downstream, fishing and non-motorized boats would be able to put in near the hydroelec-

Asked for comment on the now-public draft proposal, First-Light government affairs head Len Greene shared a written statement with the *Reporter*.

"We are grateful to all of the participants for their considerable investment of time, insight and valuable dialogue," he wrote. "Although the parties have agreed not to comment publicly on the specific details of the proposal or the process by which we came to see **RECREATION** page A8

These old buildings have out-

Peter Hudyma Town Meeting Member Montague City

Page B5 Photo Jogs Family Memories

(Last week we published an old black & white photo acquired by Sandy Fortier showing her father, grandfather, a locally famous truck, and two unidentified men. A reader responds to Fortier...)

This is an amazing photo!

The third man from the right after Albert (Pop) Jarvis and Ray (Bimp) Jarvis is my father Nicholas (Nick) Demo. He would have been in mid-20s at that time, having served in WW2 in the Pacific, and not yet married to my mom Ruth (Graveline) Demo.

I think that Pop Jarvis took my father under his wing and taught him a lot, both around the garage and as a role model. My father deeply respected him and stayed in contact throughout his life. I can remember as a boy

around 5 or 6 visiting the shop with my dad sitting around the Franklin pot belly stove and them talking. I remember because one of them gave me a dime to buy my very own bottle of coke from the vending machine.

He told me stories of your grandfather, and we occasionally saw him around town including a food raffle at Fosters where he won \$30 worth of groceries.

> John Demo Greenfield

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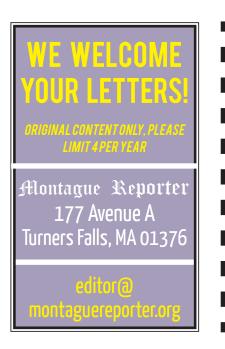
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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The Friends of Montague Public Libraries' monthly book sale is this Saturday, February 5 in the basement of the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Hundreds of recent adult fiction, non-fiction, young adult, and children's books will be sold, as well as DVDs and jigsaw puzzles. Proceeds will benefit the Montague Public Libraries programs. COVID precautions will be in effect, including a mask requirement for all.

This weekend is the centennial Greenfield Winter Carnival - a citywide event. There will be fireworks, an LED glow show, live ice carvings, a cardboard sled race, and more, Friday through Sunday. View the schedule at www.greenfieldrecreation.com.

Don't be alarmed if you find a bunch of people wandering around Turners Falls this weekend with their heads swiveling around. They are birders on a trip to Turners to view our waterfowl, grassland birds, eagles, and gull species.

The Athol Bird and Nature Club and the Anti-Racist Collective of Avid Birders are sponsoring the tour, which runs from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 5. If you have interest in events like this, check out www.atholbirdclub.org.

They say that snowshoeing is easy to master and fun to do. Perfect for all ages, it has surprising health benefits. Join Kim Noyes at First-Light's Northfield Mountain for an

OP ED

Saturday, February 5 or February 19 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Introduction to Snowshoeing this

Learn tips on equipment, technique, and clothing, and why "snowshoeing is the best bangfor-the-buck, fat-burning workout in winter" according to Dr. Ray Browning at the University of Colorado's Health Science Center.

Participants must be 18 years or older and comfortable hiking over moderate terrain. Snowshoes are available to rent for \$16. Masks needed for group gathering. Pre-registration is required at www.bookeo.com/northfield as group size is strictly limited for this program.

Springfield is the site of one of the state's largest crow roosts, according to information posted by Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary. If you are interested in seeing over 10,000 crows settling down to roost on Sunday, February 6, register with the group and be prepared to come to the spot between 4 and 5:30 p.m. Email arcadia@massaudubon.org or call (413) 584-3009. There is a fee.

The Brick House and Tapestry Health are offering an online workshop on healthy relationships and consent for teenagers 13 and up next Tuesday, February 8 at 5 p.m. Attendees earn a goodie bag and a \$5 gift card. Email mrichardson@ brickhousecrc.org for the link.

If you meet certain low income requirements, you may qualify for free tax assistance from the VITA program of Community Action.

Volunteers with IRS tax training are ready to help folks get the maximum refund and reduce taxes due. Their services are available through April. Find out more at www.communitvaction.us/freetaxassistance.

You may sign up for a free, 28day series of emails on Black History during February. 28 Days of Black History includes cultural artifacts, action steps and discussions to start conversations, all offered by the Anti-Racism Daily. Sign up on www. 28daysofblackhistory.com.

The Coalitions Connections newsletter lists five places that people can get free warm winter outerwear: the Community Closet at Community Action, Tapestry Health Syringe Access Program, the Village Closet, the Really Really Free Store, and the Great Falls Apple Corps Free Store. Get this newsletter and find out the details by emailing *ilana*(a) frcog.org. All these places are also accepting donations of clothing.

The Art Garden Winter HooPla is coming next Saturday evening, February 12 at the railyard of the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum. A magical evening of light and art are planned from 6 to 9 p.m. Installation artists are looking for people to make flowers, and for any broken snow shovels that might be donated to the event. Call (413) 625-2782 to arrange to pick up supplies and instructions to make flowers, or to drop off your broken shovel.

The Sojourner Truth School is offering nine free classes beginning in February. Topics include "Branding Critical Race Theory," "Writing for Visionary Organizing," "What Defund the Police Really Means," and more. Go to truthschool.org/events for more information on these and other programs.

The Friends of the Greenfield

Calculating Montague's 'Affordable Assessment'

Public Library are seeking poems for the 31st Annual Poet's Seat Poetry Contest. The contest is open to all Franklin County residents, and students ages 12 to 18 who attend school here. Each entrant may submit a maximum of three poems. Entries via USPS must be postmarked by March 22, and emails must be date stamped by that date.

There are first, second, and third prizes in the adult category, and two unranked winners in age categories of 12 to 14 and 15 to 18. The first-place adult winner takes home the Poet's Seat chair for a year. Find the details online at www.friendsofgpl.org.

The competition is held in honor of Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, a Greenfield resident from 1847 until his death in 1873. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Tuckerman shunned law in favor of botany and writing poetry, and he was considered by his contemporaries - Emerson, Thoreau, and Tennyson - to be a gifted poet. Although he never achieved wide public acclaim, his poems are often included in anthologies of noted American poets.

The sandstone observation tower on Mountain Road in Greenfield, Poet's Seat Tower, was built in 1912 to replace a wooden tower originally built in 1879. Tuckerman had referred to this contemplative location as a "poet's seat."

Applications are now available for Art Angels Arts Grants. Art Angels provides funding to artists and non-profit organizations located in the Connecticut River Valley in Western Massachusetts. They tend to fund collaborative, diversified art projects with demonstrable community benefits. If you think your group might qualify, email apply@theartangels.org. Applications due by April 15.

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By JOHN HANOLD

\$500,000 of "Excess Taxing Capacity" will ap- cember and communicated to the school commit- Franklin County Technical School districts for pear in Montague FY'23 budget, now in prepa- tee as a rough guide for their budget preparation. the services of school resource officers (SROs); ration, as it did in the approved FY'22 budget. I wrote about it in the January 6 edition of the Reporter, but there is still the question of how the town treats this figure in our calculations of other financial policies.

during the budgeting cycle as new information, brings the number up to \$21,562,804. principally state aid and local receipts, becomes

5) Local receipts were adjusted to exclude MONTAGUE – As of today, it is likely that available. The first version is calculated in De- reimbursements from the Gill-Montague and

Mike Naughton wrote to the finance committee in December, on behalf of himself and Jeff Singleton, about the treatment of Excess Capacity in calculating the "Affordable Assessment" (AA), used to set the annual assessment from the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

They are two experienced former members of the finance committee, and each served as its chair. Their letter is worth a reply because a decade ago - along with Tupper Brown of Gill - they successfully established the approach the finance committee has used ever since.

Several decisions contribute to our calculation of the Affordable Assessment, reflecting both the town's commitment to sharing its resources and the changes in those resources over the last ten years. Throughout this period, the ground rule underlying our practice is to estimate expenses at a realistic level - because they are mostly within Montague's control - and to estimate revenues more cautiously, because they depend on events we cannot control in the time before the budget is balanced.

The AA is a dynamic number, re-calculated

Since the initial calculation was made, we have revised it as internal and external information has been received. The internal portion was a re-estimate of both local receipts and "abatements & exemptions." The external portion was the announcement of Governor Baker's proposed budget, which contains an Unrestricted General Government Aid figure 2.7% above this year's level, which had been a part of the initial calculation.

For FY'23, this is how the Affordable Assessment is currently calculated, and the decisions we have made in doing so:

1) We start with the town's gross tax levy – including "new growth" in the value of the property taxed, and minus tax abatements: \$21,378,954.

2) We then subtract the \$500,000 in "Excess Capacity," because the finance committee and selectboard have decided that it is not "available for use" by either party. (This decision resulted in the FY'22 tax rate being 41 cents lower, or about \$100 lower for an average home.) This leaves \$20,878,954.

3) We subtract the "Excluded Debt" figure, \$1,183,694, because it is not part of the town's operating budget. This gives us what is called the "Levy to Use," 19,695,260.

4) We add \$1,867,544 in state aid to the town projected under the Governor's proposal. This

those costs are already part of the school budgets. Also, to recognize that Kearsarge's lease payments have a limited life, only half are included in local receipts; this will cushion the transition when those payments stop. Adding most recent estimate of "adjusted local receipts," \$1,583,548, brings the total to **\$23,146,352**.

6) At this point we take 48.5% of that figure, the share of the town's wealth that we agree under the Compact to contribute to the Gill-Montague District's *operating* budget: **\$11,225,981**.

7) Finally, we need to add back the school district's share of the excluded debt, or \$115,471. We arrive at the total Affordable Assessment of \$11,341,452.

These updated data are reflected in the AA figure given to the GMRSD school committee this past Monday at their meeting with the selectboards and finance committees of Gill and Montague, to support their creation of the final District budget.

The District will present this budget in a public hearing at the school committee meeting next Tuesday, February 8. Residents are encouraged to listen to this important event.

John Hanold is a member of the Montague finance committee. The views expressed are his own.

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NEIGHBORS from page A1

and services to the community of Wendell." Tom Chaisson, Rosser's son, told me that early food donations came from Stop & Shop, the Food Bank of Western Mass, and some local farmers.

Former Wendell Free Library director Rosie Heidkamp said that Rosser and others proved to the large grocery stores that there was a commitment to pick up the donated goods while they could still be legally and safely given away, before they went into the dumpsters. "Trader Joe's, Hannaford, Whole Foods, and Walmart are regular donors, with occasional donations from Diemand Farm," said Ziemba. The Food Bank of Western Mass is an ongoing source of food, for which they charge 19 cents a pound.

Ziemba added that sometimes local farmers donate seedling vegetable starts for gardeners, and there will often be other unexpected donations, including flowers, pet food, and paper goods.

The food and any other goods are currently distributed every Sunday morning on the lawn outside the town hall. Ziemba said that the pantry is very grateful to the selectboard for allowing the use of the town hall, and that the board of health worked very closely with them to ensure people's health during the pandemic. Early on in the pandemic, both local newspapers ran photos of pantry volunteers in full hazmat suits during food distribution. These days, Ziemba said, "masks and gloves are provided and protocols are strictly enforced."

Everyone I spoke with about Good Neighbors - Ziemba, Chaisson, Heidkamp, and Graton - stressed the long-term efforts and commitment of the volunteers that have been vital to the pantry's success. On distribution day, Ziemba noted that there are usually 12 volunteers at a minimum, "a tight-knit, finely tuned machine for setup and breakdown" comprised of "long-standing volunteers who are very, very dedicated." Some of Rosalie Rosser's children still volunteer occasionally to honor her legacy.

Ziemba and Heidkamp both talked about the support of state representative Susannah Whipps and state senator Jo Comerford for the pantry. "Whipps assisted in getting a governmental infrastructure grant to buy a new refrigerated van so the pantry could comply with new Food Bank of Western Mass refrigeration rules," said Ziemba. "Jo Comerford came to the pantry with a large donation of fresh produce during the summer."

Additional support comes from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts and other grants, and a "large chunk" of funding comes from the North Quabbin Food-A-Thon, a 17-year-old fundraising event aired on Athol-Orange Community Television.

Numbers! Ziemba estimated that "10,000 pounds of food is distributed each month, with about 50% of Wendell residents receiving food; that's about 131 households and 295 individuals, and about 15% of the New Salem population comes to the pantry. Each person or household gets a banana box to fill - yes,



Shopping at Good Neighbors last spring.

as in the banana box you see at a grocery store cardboard stash."

It can be hit or miss as to what is available, but there is often nice organic produce and other healthy foodstuffs. Massachusetts changed the law about stores donating food; they can now keep track of donations and take tax credits on them. Ziemba expressed surprise when she saw the official value of what Trader Joe's donated one month -a lot of \$

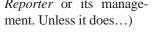
I asked Ziemba whether Good Neighbors is seeing an increase in need these days. She said that over the past decades the need has increased a good deal, and now with COVID, the pantry efforts are even more valuable.

I am aware of numerous folks who have worked all their lives, and when they retire after often earning insufficient wages - amid the ever widening wage and wealth gap in America, with our \$7.25 minimum wage - they have to apply for food stamps and/or patronize food pantries. And families with kids or special dietary needs can require extra help to stave off food insecurity.

Anybody can need help at some point and, thankfully, we in Western Massachusetts have organizations like the Good Neighbors Food Pantry to turn to. The pantry gladly accepts donations of funds at Good Neighbors, PO Box 222, Wendell, MA 01379.

And apparently, you can also donate a very small percentage, 0.05%, of your Amazon purchases to them through their "Smile" program.

(What a guy that Bezos is! Not.) (This last comment is the writer's opinion, and does not reflect the views of the Montague Reporter or its manage-



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD Future of Public Safety Goes to Committee

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Fire captain Asa DeRoode joined the Wendell selectboard at its January 26 meeting for a discussion anticipating fire chief Joe Cuneo's approaching retirement, as well as his own.

DeRoode said the whole county is in trouble with local departments needing money and volunteers. In Franklin County eight fire departments are sharing a chief. Emergency medical services are stretched thin, and Wendell is fortunate to have Orange ambulance service nearby, though the town's assessment is likely to go up next year as calls to Wendell have increased.

DeRoode said he thought a large committee would be cumbersome, but selectboard chair Dan Keller said the numbers would likely drop to a core working group, as happened to the police chief succession committee.

available for a community-based orchard and for pollinator friendly space. He thought the land in front of Fiske Pond would be a good place for an orchard of native fruiting trees, and said he and volunteers could help maintain it.

Keller liked the idea. The land is under a conservation restriction, and DiDonato said she would check to see what is allowed. Keller said there is a long list of other town-owned properties that might also work.

Dornbusch's second proposal was to plant the triangle where Morse Village Road meets New Salem Road with native wildflowers. Acting selectboard clerk Anna Wetherby said he should be certain to keep the highway workers informed if he does that. She said former road boss Dan Bacigalupo planted wildflowers across from where she lives now, but road crews working since his passing mow the area year after year, and only a few wildflowers have survived.

planning, and help developing solar and battery bylaws. The third choice took some longer discussion.

DiDonato relayed an email from agriculture commissioner Laurel Facey suggesting two things, diversity and equity training, and business assistance, especially for agriculture. Tanner said Wendell already checked diversity training along with some other towns.

Speaking for herself, DiDonato suggested help with brownfields, a likely need if the town acquires the property at 131 Locke Village Road, or for capping the former landfill at the WRATS. Tanner said \$75,000 of ARPA money is allocated for the WRATS and DLTA money is for technical assistance, not for the actual project. The board agreed to make brownfield

- Thermo Pride
- Weil-McLain
- Other Major Brands
- Expert Burner Service





The selectboard appointed DeRoode, Cuneo, emergency management director Lonny Ricketts, firefighters Matt O'Donnell and Matt Reiner, former firefighter Josh Heinemann (this reporter), fin com member Thomas Richardson, and DiDonato to the public safety study committee. Keller said he thought some unaffiliated citizens might be also good for the committee, and member Laurie DiDonato suggested broadcasting available appointments on the town listserv.

Wood and Wildflowers

The conservation commission and open space committee looked at possible sites for Wendell's wood bank, and found a spot off Davis Road. There are two unoccupied buildings in poor shape, and since the site is already degraded, taking them down and preparing the site would be an improvement, so it would not be an issue for the con com.

Tree warden Cliff Dornbusch said he still preferred siting the wood bank at the WRATS, but Keller and highway commission chair Phil Delorey reminded him the old landfill needs capping, and other expensive site work is needed before it can be used.

Dornbusch had two more thoughts beyond the wood bank. He said there is grant money

Personnel

Wendell recently rehired a road crew worker who worked 10 years for the town, left for a year, then started again in January. Delorey had argued at earlier meetings that since he has all the licenses and skills and knows the town, his probationary period should be skipped. At this meeting, Delorey argued that his health insurance should have also started from his first day at work; since his hiring, the worker's family contracted COVID and ran up serious hospital bills.

Outgoing acting coordinator Doug Tanner and the three selectboard members agreed. DiDonato said that ARPA money should cover the expense, and added that there should be a public hearing for a possible change to the personnel policy.

Technical Help

The board made final choices for this year's direct local technical assistance (DLTA) requests to the state. Tanner said each town's top three priorities are likely to get support, and after that, choices are more likely to be funded if several towns can meet together for group help.

Wendell's top two choices are public safety

development and support the third priority.

Other Business

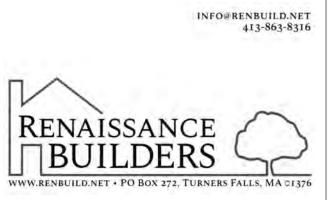
With Leverett selectboard member Julie Shively and town administrator Marjorie McGinnis attending, the board unanimously approved two agreements with Leverett, one for police services and one renting Wendell's police station to the Leverett police department. McGinnis said Leverett would likely approve the agreement February 1.

The board created a memorandum of understanding with Hilltown Network. Hilltown operates a through-the-air internet service, separate from the town's fiber-optic system, for several houses close to the town center. They will be allowed to continue using space in the attic of the police station, and pay their minimal electric bill once a year rather than \$2 or \$3 every month.

Hilltown meets in May, and the agreement will renew at the beginning of each fiscal year when they pay the electric bill. They may not add any customers, and when a house changes hands, its subscription ends. Wendell may also end the agreement with a 90-day notice.

The selectboard started creating articles for a special town meeting, including money transfers for the MLP fund and free cash, a possible con com regulation, and painting the town hall. They did not go as far as setting a date.







GILL from page A1

went from 201 to 216, and going to charter schools, which went from 63 to 77.

"That is the biggest increase we have ever seen in charter enrollment," Blier said, adding that the current cost per charter school student is between \$20,000 and \$25,000.

Other adjustments included 19 new full-time employees to address remote learning deficits and increased social and emotional needs, including "interventionists" to help bring students up to grade level in several subjects. A new special education teacher or interventionist at Gill Elementary School, which Blier said had not made it into the initial budget, is being re-examined. A public hearing on the budget will be held February 8, with a final vote March 8.

The Gill selectboard signed out of the presentation during the question period for their scheduled 6:45 p.m. meeting, where they reviewed police chief Christopher Redmond's contract; reviewed the FirstLight Power recreation settlement, and discussed a cannabis retail host community agreement.

"I want to start by thanking [GMRSD] for all their hard work, and having an amazing presentation," said selectboard member Randy Crochier, "but I also want to change our process." Crochier said his "gripe" was with not having the 69-page presentation until a half hour before the meeting.

"If they send something to Montague, they have to send it to Gill as well," he said. "It is a *Gill*-Montague Regional School District. I realize they base their assessments off of Montague's affordable assessment and all, but we need that information – we still have to support it and vote on it."

Crochier said he would like to change either the time or date of Gill's selectboard meeting when they meet with the district and town committees, as the meeting overlap did not leave enough time to process the information or ask further questions.

"There was a lot of information," agreed Snedeker, but he said he appreciated Beck's presentation. "It was kind of exciting to see some of the changes they are making to the curriculum," he said. "Brian is taking a different approach, which I think is kind of nice."

Police Contract, Grant Opportunity

The selectboard unanimously approved a three-year contract, from July 2022 through June 2025, for chief Redmond at a yearly salary of \$98,000. Snedeker said Redmond will have served Gill for 30 years this July.

"We are lucky to have him," said Crochier, "and I am glad he is willing to stick around for another three years."

Redmond told the board his department was approached by Erving police chief Robert Holst about a state grant for a Jail/Arrest Diversion Program, which would be written and administered by Erving. "It relies heavily on the Department of Mental Health," Redmond said, "which, if awarded, gives departments a mental health clinician to be a responder with police, or sometimes on follow up calls by themselves."

Redmond told the board the grant, which would provide \$90,000 for a licensed mental health clinician to work with the towns for one year, would expand the services Gill can provide to the public. Each department can also apply for additional funding of "critical incident training for staff and officers," which would for further discussion and possible vote," Purington explained.

The board discussed a new paddle-access-only campsite at the Barton Cove campground, to be created in coordination with the Appalachian Mountain Club, and FirstLight's offer to donate sports equipment to local youth organizations.

"The region around the river is getting a lot more recreational opportunities than what had been originally proposed," said Purington.

Purington also noted that no riverbank erosion mitigation measures were included in the agreement, even though the town had asked for their inclusion. He cautioned the board that if erosion is not included in the eventual "comprehensive settlement agreement," the town should consider not signing it. Gill would not be limited in pursuing other "legal channels" after a license is issued, he said, but that anything the board signs onto is binding for the duration of the agreement, which could be up to 50 years.

Crochier lauded the "good work" that has gone into the settlement talks, but expressed concern about the ability for emergency responders to get to a paddle-access-only site. "Any time you have something like that, it is also a liability in your town," he said. Snedeker and Purington said there would be a locked gate for emergency responders to access the site, similar to the one at Munn's Ferry in Northfield.

The agreement will be revisited at the board's February 14 meeting.

Hosting Cannabis

Leaf Joy, LLC, which has recently purchased the property formerly occupied by Green River Powersports at the intersection of Route 2 and Main Road, is in the process of obtaining a retail license from the state Cannabis Control Commission, and the town is drafting a host community agreement with the company.

The board agreed with Purington's recommendation not to "start the clock ticking" on the five-year community impact fees until "day one of sales." Purington said that he would also like the town's sewer regulations codified into the agreement.

The town plans to ask Leaf Joy for a small contribution outside of the agreement to help cover the expense of having legal counsel Donna MacNicol review the documents before final approval.

Other Business

Purington told the board his top three priorities for state "district local technical assistance" are the First-Light relicensing, a roadway condition study, and an inventory of abandoned and distressed properties.

"I put the roadway at number two," he said. "Hopefully, by showing a little higher priority, it gets us a spot or two earlier on what I am sure will be a waiting list. It is good news that this fall we are on the list for culvert assessments." Purington's recommendations were unanimously approved.

The fire department was granted approval for \$3,164 to purchase fire hose, and \$1,512 from the Northfield Mount Hermon (NMH) donation account to purchase radios programmed with NMH's frequencies.

According to fire chief Gene Beaubien, NMH replaced their old radios with new ones that do not work with the department's new tri-band radios. Asked if he

TOWN OF LEVERETT Notice of Hearing on Licensed Premises Alteration

The Select Board will hold a hearing at the request of the Village Cooperative Corporation (Village Co-op) for addition of a patio to its licensed (Wine and beer) café on Tuesday March 1st 2022 at 7 p.m. at the Leverett Town Hall. All interested parties may question or give testimony at that time. Written comments will be received by the select board at PO Box 300, Leverett, MA 01054 until Feb 28th 2022 at 5 p.m. and will be opened, publicly read, and incorporated into the minutes of the hearing.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR



New Salem Public Library is looking for a Library Director who enjoys creating engaging programs for all ages; has strong managerial, people and technical skills; and would like a rewarding 19-hour a week position in a small rural town with a supportive community. For more info about the position and a complete job description, go to *www.newsalempubliclibrary.org*

To apply by February 28 deadline: Submit a cover letter and resume to *mackay.selectman@gmail.com* or New Salem Public Library, Attn: Sue Dunbar, 23 South Main Street, New Salem, MA 01355.

ERVING from page A1

existing license; to "permanently conserve" Farley Ledges, defined as "off license"; and to maintain its visitor center and add up to five miles of mountain biking trails on Northfield Mountain.

The proposal also pledged to conserve a 1.3-mile portion of the New England National Scenic Trail on the eastern side of the Northfield Mountain reservoir, also in Erving, although whether this would be part of FirstLight's new license was not specified.

Town administrator Bryan Smith began the discussion with a brief history of the relicensing process, which he said, with perhaps dry humor, "has been going on for a few years now." He noted that the current proposal dealt with recreational facilities only, and issues such as safety and environmental impacts in the project areas would be forthcoming.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith asked whether Erving's support for the document, which appeared to be forthcoming early in the discussion, meant the board was formally endorsing this portion of the relicensing agreement. Bryan Smith said he had talked to town counsel, who said the document was more of a "status update," and was not "ironclad." positive evaluation by noting that the map in FirstLight's document showed Rose and Farley Ledges virtually next to each other, "when in fact they are not." Farley Ledges are just off Route 2, while Rose Ledge is to the northwest, closer to Route 63 and accessed by Poplar Mountain Road.

Boyden also noted that there was only limited private parking on the road accessing the Rose Ledge, in contrast to the FirstLight's current proposals for Montague, which pledge to improve parking on several Connecticut River access points.

Bryan Smith said the Rose Ledge proposal had not been part of the original discussions with First-Light and "came as news to me."

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith suggested that the board say "we are in favor of [the proposal], but need more substance with how to deal with access and parking." Board members nodded in agreement, but did not take a formal vote.

Bryan Smith said he would communicate this sentiment to First-Light, and the board could take up the issue at its next meeting.

Other Business

At the beginning of the meeting, the board briefly discussed the town's response to COVID-19 and a change order for the Arch

allow the clinician to accompany officers on calls.

The board voted unanimously for Redmond to send a letter of commitment to the Erving police department, and to apply for the additional grant.

FirstLight Settlement Talks

Town administrator Ray Purington told the selectboard about the recently released public draft of First-Light Power's "agreement in principle to develop a relicensing settlement agreement," with commitments the company would make to improve recreation on its property under a new license to operate Northfield Mountain and the Turners Falls dam and canal.

"We acknowledge that we have the public version tonight, do a little bit of discussion, put it out for public consumption, and then bring it back in two weeks

thought NMH might pay for the town's new radios, Beaubien said he did not think so.

"It does not make a lot of sense if they give us money to use to help us, and then they cause an expense," said Crochier. "It is not a lot of money, and we have the money in the fund that they pay for - it is just frustrating."

"I was thinking the same thing," said Snedeker, "but the most important thing is just making sure that they are safe."

"And that we can communicate with them," added Crochier.

The board unanimously approved a charge of 30 cents per kilowatt-hour for the electric vehicle

charging station at the Riverside Municipal Building, and a \$5,000 grant contract with the state for the Gill Cultural Council. Board member William Bembury asked if Erving had received "feedback from other towns" and was being asked to endorse the entire recreation plan, or only those portions that pertained to Erving.

Bryan Smith called this an "interesting question," saying that officials in the project areas had tended to focus on their towns, but certainly could express "broader concerns."

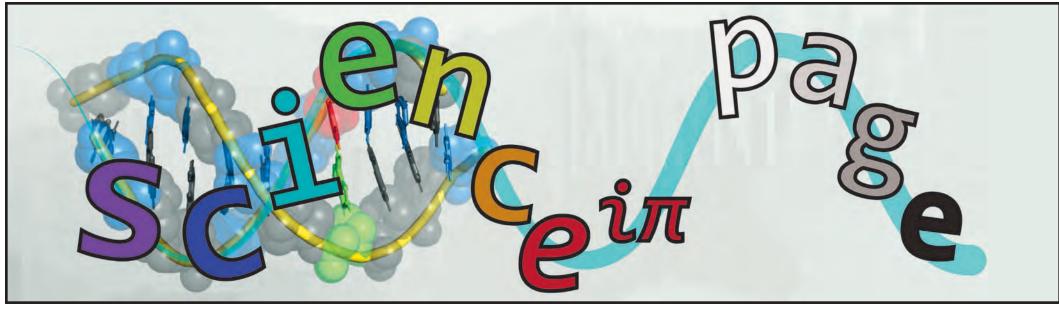
Town principal assessor Jacquelyn Boyden threw a small monkey wrench in the generally Street sewer main project. Bryan Smith said local cases were declining, and the "face covering order" would be revisited in February. The sewer main issue will be discussed at the next meeting.

Jacob Smith said he did not want to propose a "dedication" for this year's town annual report, so member Scott Bastarache agreed to "reach out to department heads" for input.

The board's next meeting will be held Monday, February 7.







FRONTIERS

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New Coronavirus Drug Paxlovid: Highly Effective, But In Short Supply

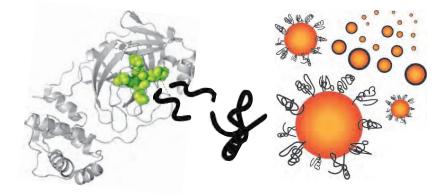
By SPENCER SHORKEY

MILLERS FALLS - No introduction to the topic of COVID-19 is needed. My deep gratitude to anyone working in health care over the past couple years, and sorrow for the near million lives lost due to coronavirus in this country, with over 20,000 counted in Massachusetts.

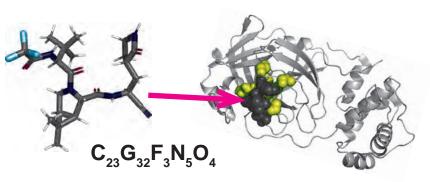
Distrust in medicine has heightened in recent years, coinciding with new, more complex therapeutic technologies being phased into modern medicine – although I think it may be better to say that trust in many institutions has been altered by the emergence of complex technologies in general.

The life-saving RNA-nanoparticle vaccine has become emblematic of modern biomedical technologies. In terms of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, vaccines are estimated to have saved over 200,000 lives, and prevented over a million hospitalizations. However, old medical technologies such as small-molecule drugs in pill form, or covering your face holes (wearing masks), are still useful for managing disease situations.

Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) were granted in late December 2021 by the Food and Drug Administration for two new coronavirus drugs, Paxlovid and molnupiravir. In clinical trials, these new small-molecule drugs each lowered the risk of hospitalization and death when administered to ac-



The coronavirus protease, a string of nearly 5,000 atoms, is shown as a cartoon resembling a strange-looking pasta noodle (left). This nano-machine cuts the virus components up into their correct forms, a crucial step of its replication. The spheres shown in green are atoms known to contribute directly to the protease's holding and cutting actions.



A Paxlovid molecule, shown in black spheres, jams this machine. The drug's nearly 70 atoms apparently fit well into the protease, and block its function. (The 3D view can be accessed in a web browser at rcsb.org/3d-view/7VH8.)

while ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine mechanisms are speculative at best - i.e., they are unknown or may not be real at all.

How is it that we can have positive lab test tube results, which do not hold up when tested in human bodies? Well, it's actually more common than you might think. Over cines Patent Pool to allow Paxlovid 90% of drugs entering clinical trials do not succeed. False positive results in drug-screening experiments can occur for a multitude of reasons, a common one being that the drug being tested could be too sticky or reactive, which can alter the experimental signal itself more than actually blocking its intended target.

of nanoscale molecular scissors. Paxlovid sticks to the coronavirus protease, and in doing so inhibits its function, preventing the virus from replicating itself. By jamming these molecular scissors with Paxlovid, no new viruses can be built.

Pfizer has agreed with the Medito be manufactured and sold in 95 countries, and plans to produce 120 million courses worldwide. Supply is limited at the moment, however: according to the National Institute for Health's online Therapeutics Locator, out of the 232,240 courses of Paxlovid that have been allocated. only 60,191 are available. (For molnupiravir, 370,730 courses remain of 758,500 allocated.) ABC News reports that California received just under 10,000 Paxlovid courses during the last full week of January, which is unfortunately an undersupply, considering the state saw hundreds of thousands of cases that week, and over a thousand deaths. ABC also found that only about a quarter of counties had Paxlovid on hand. Hannah Curtiss, PharmD, my cousin who runs a small town pharmacy in upstate New York, told me that Paxlovid and molnupiravir are "completely unavailable to community pharmacists at this point," and that the "largest drug wholesaler in the US doesn't even have it listed as available to order." This makes

MEDICINE Protect Your Heart!

By CATHERINE DODDS, MD

TURNERS FALLS - February is National Heart Month. As Valentine's Day approaches, our thoughts turn to the heart. Not only the proverbial heart that helps you find that Hallmark Movie-worthy special someone, but also the heart that beats in your chests to keep you alive.

Heart disease is a broad term. In my work as a primary care physician, patients often tell me heart disease runs in their family, but that can mean many things, including heart failure, atrial fibrillation, or heart murmurs. Medically speaking, heart disease usually refers to atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, a term that includes narrowing or blockage of blood vessels to the brain (cerebrovascular disease, including strokes), the heart (coronary artery disease, including heart attacks), or the legs (peripheral vascular disease).

So how can you tell when your heart is not working like it should be?

Early medical studies generally included only men, so there is a divide between classic signs of a heart attack such as central chest pain "like an elephant sitting on your chest," and so-called atypical symptoms that are actually more common in both sexes and may include nausea, dizziness, fatigue, sweats, palpitations/heart racing, shortness of breath, or even just feeling "off." Symptoms of heart disease often start during physical non-smoker is among the best exertion and improve with rest, but a sudden onset of these symptoms is concerning, even when resting or sleeping. You are the one who knows your body best, so if you are ever concerned you may be having symptoms of a heart attack, seek emergency care right away. Evaluation for a heart attack is straightforward - typically, an electrocardiogram (EKG) is done to look at the electrical activity of the heart and a blood test called troponin is checked to look for heart muscle damage.

coronary artery disease, a stress test may be done. In some cases, a direct view of the coronary arteries that bring blood to the heart is needed – this is called a cardiac (heart) catheterization.

What can we do to keep our hearts healthy and happy? Besides love, red roses, and dark chocolate - keeping the chocolate in moderation – there's a lot we can do to prevent heart disease. Even with all the available medical interventions and prescription medications, the basics are still important.

Eat a healthy diet with lots of vegetables and minimal processed or fast food. "Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension" (DASH) and a Mediterranean-style diet are two of the most widely recommended specific heart-healthy diets.

Your heart loves to work. In general, aim for a minimum of 150 minutes of exercise per week. Some people like aerobics classes for the social aspect. Some run marathons. Others are "weekend warriors" who are intensely active for hours, once per week. Some people stay active in their daily lives, walking briskly at least 10,000 steps (around 5 miles) per day in the course of their usual routine.

All of these have similar benefits for your heart. The most important thing about exercise is not the specific type, but simply to add more physical activity to your life.

If you smoke, make it a top priority to quit. Becoming a

tively infected patients. Paxlovid, made by Pfizer, reduced hospitalization and death by 88% - tenfold lower odds! Molnupiravir, marketed by Merck, showed a 30% reduction in hospitalizations and deaths.

Paxlovid is a protease inhibitor and prevents virus components from being built correctly, and molnupiravir is a nucleic-acid analog that causes faulty replication of the virus's RNA genome.

Other small molecules, ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine, apparently showed some ability to block coronavirus activities in lab tests, but have failed to yield any benefit in clinical trials. One clinical trial completed in November 2020, for example, found that "[i]n non-critical hospitalized patients with COVID-19 pneumonia, neither ivermectin nor hydroxychloroquine decreases the number of in-hospital days, respiratory deterioration, or deaths," as documented on the medical pre-print archive medRxiv.

Paxlovid and molupiravir have known molecular mechanisms for blocking coronavirus activities,

You may be wondering how exactly these new drugs which are proven to actually work in clinical trials impact coronavirus infections. I'll tell you about one of them, Paxlovid, in more detail.

Humans and viruses are built and maintained by molecular machines, nanoscopically small (microscopic at a nano-scale), which are susceptible to being blocked by small-molecule drugs. Imagine throwing a big wrench into some complicated industrial machinery with many moving parts. The wrench can get stuck, jam the machine, and block it from functioning.

In a virus, one such machine is the protease, an enzyme that cuts virus building blocks into the right shapes for proper assembly - a kind

If both of these are normal but symptoms are still concerning for

sense; given the currently limited supplies, the drugs must be rationed to higher-risk infections at this time.

"But," Curtiss added, "I am still getting a few calls a week asking whether we dispense ivermectin for COVID." She said these are scripts she will not fill, given the scientific evidence and advisories by both the FDA and the CDC against this usage. Curtiss mentioned that certain pharmacies in her region are still willing

things you can do for your heart, and for your health in general.

Heart disease is one of the most common chronic medical conditions, affecting half of us over our lifetimes, and it is the leading cause of death in the United States. Once heart disease is diagnosed, there are several prescription medications that have proven benefit to reduce risk of further heart damage. If you are concerned about heart disease risk or symptoms, consult with your healthcare provider.

> Catherine Dodds, M.D. lives in Turners Falls.

to fill ivermectin scripts, and certain MD's continue to write the scripts.

The over 100,000 Paxlovid courses administered thus far are sure to have saved lives during this current wave. The drug's availability and impact are likely to be greater during any future waves - Pfizer plans to provide the USA with 10 million doses by June, and 10 million more by September.

SHORKEY / MR IMAGES



MONTAGUE from page A1

losses create their own costs – Blier estimated a cost increase for charter school students of over \$500,000.

Montague selectboard member Matt Lord asked if there were "exit interviews" to determine why the district is losing so many students to the charter and choice programs.

Beck said there is "no formal process to engage school choice families, but we're in the process of putting together at least a minimal survey."

Montague finance committee member Francia Wisnewski asked about the status of the police officer stationed at the high school. Blier replied that this is the last year of the officer's three-year contract, and the district and towns are in the process of negotiating a new one.

Gill finance committee member Claire Chang said the district's new policy waiving athletic fees "sounds great," but asked whether the schools provide equal access for girls and boys. Beck replied that because there are more girls enrolled in the district than boys, there are two more girls' teams than boys' teams.

The meeting adjourned without a vote by the committees in attendance.

Families First

Another highlight of the selectboard meeting was a presentation by representatives of the Brick House Community Resource Center, the social service agency chosen to run a substance abuse prevention program funded by cannabis impact fees. Executive director Kwamane Harris presented on the program the agency plans to implement.

Harris said Strengthening Families, a program for parents and youth ages 10 to 14, would "strengthen parenting skills, build family strengths, [and] prevent substance abuse and other behavioral problems." He said the program "takes the family-first approach," noting that "we can do all we can with our youth, but they go home to the same environment..."

Harris said Strengthening Families was supported by "some major players," including the Department of Education, and certified by an organization called Blueprints for meeting "the highest standards of evidence through independent review by the nation's top scientists." He said the program has been demonstrated to produce an "uptick" in school attendance and academic success, and showed a series of charts comparing the prevalence of alcohol and drug use among former students in family-based programs compared with a control group that had not.

The program will be offered in two sessions, each composed of seven to ten families. Stacey Langknecht, the Parent and Family program director at the Brick House, said her staff had received training in Strengthening Families, and that there would be backup support from other organizations and child care for children under 14.

Harris and Langknecht were asked whether a program targeted to a small group of families would have an impact on the larger teen population and their families in Montague. Harris said the Brick House was going to try out a program "that works," and "learn from it."

Langknecht added that the school district was also hiring a substance abuse counselor with the cannabis funds, "so there's going to be a lot of pieces to the puzzle."

The board voted to execute a contract with the Brick House.

Carbon Fee

Another spirited discussion was generated when the town's energy committee requested that the board endorse House Bill 3292, better known as the Green Futures Act. The legislation, according to energy committee co-chair Sally Pick, would impose a "carbon fee" to fund local investments to help communities reach their targets under the state's 2008 Green Communities Act.

Lord said he would not vote to endorse the bill without more research, because he believed the last bill to put a fee on carbon would have resulted in a "massive transfer of wealth from households to corporations, based on the way the fee and dividends were described throughout the bill." Jeff Clark of the Citizens' Climate Lobby, a man Pick described as "extremely knowledgeable," said the bill Lord was referring to had attempted to simply reduce fossil fuel use by driving up the price, while the new bill was mainly concerned with green infrastructure development. Pick read from a fact sheet which said that 60% of the spending needed to go to "environmental justice communities."

The board decided not to endorse the bill without more information and analysis, which Lord pledged to provide.

Other Business

The weekly report of the town health department was made by board of health member Michael Nelson, who struggled with the report because he was driving home from his job with the state health department. Town administrator Steve Ellis took over the presentation, which showed a continued decline, but still high levels of COVID-19 cases.

Ellis also reported that last Friday's distribution of rapid test kits at the town hall annex went well, but that there was a "slow uptake," and only 70 had been distributed. The town still has over 500 kits to be distributed to the general public. They are also available at the Carnegie Library and Gill-Montague senior center.

Montague library director Caitlin Kelley came before the board to ask that it endorse eliminating late fees for library books, which has been recommended by the library trustees. Kelley said that studies in recent years have determined that fines "disproportionately affect low-income people and people of color," and are barriers to library use. She added that of the 149 members of the CW MARS consortium, of which the Montague libraries are a part, 99 have eliminated fines.

Selectboard chair Kuklewicz wondered if the board needed to vote on the matter, and Ellis said he would "confess" he did not know whether it fell under the "trustees' realm." The board voted to endorse the policy, and also to approve the use of Peske-



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

ompskut Park on Saturday, June 18 for a Library Summer Kickoff Party.

Water pollution control facility superintendent Chelsey Little came before the board to present 10 sewer bill abatement requests. Following Little's recommendations, the board voted to accept three, reject three, and reject three but "update" estimated usage levels for the future. The final request, which had come in late, was sent to the state Department of Revenue for a decision.

The board executed a grant for the local Cultural Council, and "released" an outdated covenant associated with the funding of the renovation of the Colle Opera House.

Ellis and executive assistant Wendy Bogusz gave a progress report on the March 3 special town meeting. The warrant is to be "executed" on February 14, and former selectboard member Michael Nelson will be asked to fill in for moderator Chris Collins, who can not attend.

Ellis also gave an update on the General Pierce Bridge reconstruction project, saying he will continue to push the state to paint the upper portion of the structure.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, February 7 at 5:30 p.m.

)

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Police Plan Mental Health Program; Power Company Threatens Blackouts

By GEORGE BRACE

and a state Department of Mental Health of- forming residents of the situation.

his department is not responsible for fixing

At their Tuesday meeting, Leverett's selectboard signed an intermunicipal agreement (IMA) with Wendell finalizing a joint-policing arrangement. The board also approved a request from the police department to pursue a grant with four other area towns to provide a mental health clinician to accompany officers on calls, among other business.

The IMA was the final step in formalizing an arrangement requested by Wendell a little over a year ago when their police chief retired. Up until this point, Leverett has been providing police services to Wendell under an interim agreement while the arrangement was studied. Chief Scott Minckler reported that the collaboration had been working well, and other towns were looking at the IMA as a baseline for similar arrangements. "It's not ending with us," said the chief.

The board also approved a request from Minckler to join with Erving, Gill, Northfield, and Bernardston in seeking funding for a clinician to accompany officers on calls. The clinician would be transported from one town to another in a manner similar to the way officers respond to mutual aid calls. Minckler said he had attended a meeting between representatives of the towns ficial, and that a similar program in Greenfield, though in its infancy, is reported to be a great success.

Resident Shannon Gamble commented that there were many positives with such co-responder programs, but noted they are not a "magic wand," and that transparency and evaluation would be important.

The board expressed support for the town to help provide childcare at the annual town meeting, but said further research was needed to determine how to do it without triggering costly licensing and insurance requirements.

Gamble, a member of the social justice committee, said residents want to be able to count on childcare as they did 20 years ago, and reiterated the committee's finding that childcare at town meeting was a social justice issue which disproportionately impacted minority groups.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis informed the board that she'd received a notice from Eversource Energy of the possibility of planned electricity shut-offs in the future due to fuel shortages. Little information on the potential blackouts was available at the time of the meeting, and discussion centered on the board's opinion that Eversource should bear the responsibility and cost of inHistorical commission member Susan Lynton sought a letter of support for a Community Preservation Act grant application for approximately \$237,000 to "repair, renovate and preserve" the Field museum and the oneroom schoolhouse at Moore's Corner, with the intention of turning them into "working museums" in time for the town's 250th anniversary in 2024. Lynton said the renovations were part of a three-phase plan to preserve history and draw visitors. Board member Tom Hankinson said he was "very much in favor" of the committee's work.

Later, Hankinson presented an idea for mapping the strength of cell service in Leverett using an app which records signal strength. Hankinson said that dead zones were a safety issue, and a map could be used in efforts to improve service. The idea was well-received, and Minckler said his officers would be prime candidates for adding points to the map. More information will be forthcoming on the town website.

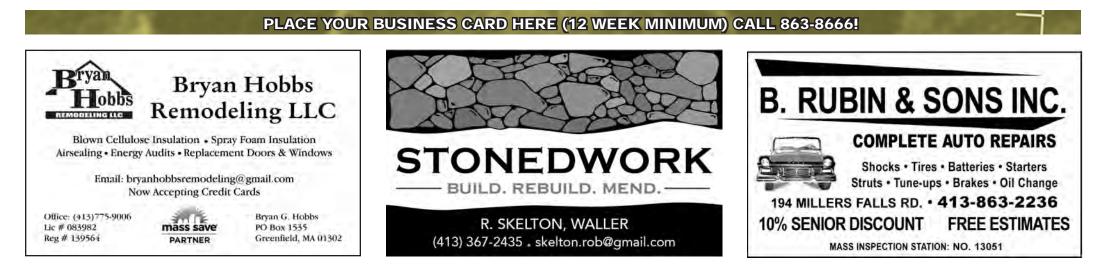
Highway superintendent Matt Boucher responded with an apology to a resident's complaint that his mailbox was knocked over during snow plowing, but said he looked at the situation, and did not believe the plow driver was at fault. Boucher noted a town policy that such fallen mailboxes, and said there was nothing he could do unless the policy was changed, but added that the department would be happy to help if there was a health issue or other special need. "It happens, unfortunately," he said.

Boucher also responded to an inquiry about repairing a damaged driveway, saying that it too was outside the department's responsibility.

Police and highway department budget hearings contained no major surprises, with both holding to the board's guidance that they not increase their budgets by more than 3%. Both Minckler and Boucher noted that inflation was having an effect on purchasing.

Minckler responded to questions on the financial impact of the IMA with Wendell, saying there was "no impact – it helps." Questions were raised about financial transparency related to the IMA, and the board agreed that additional information related to the IMA and the police budget was a good idea.

The board approved a three-year contract with Amherst for ambulance services. "They're great," said one resident. The board also approved a change order in the contract for the Teawaddle Hill water line project, reducing the cost of drilling from \$100,000 to \$51,000.



POND from page B1

pond," con com chair Isaiah Robison said at Monday's meeting. "I can't do it, and I think part of it is the bylaw we have written in the town. If the town wants to change the approach on that, then that should be a townwide thing, a public meeting."

Bylaws passed in 1968 and 1983 discourage or limit the use of herbicides on public property, but their wording is ambiguous, and the chemicals are allowed under state law.

Con com member Jono Neiger, the only member to vote against approving the NOI, said he opposes herbicide use on the pond, and would prefer to see methods like hand-pulling and benthic barriers used.

"It's been twenty-something years, and there's a town bylaw disallowing [herbicides]... It's a complex mixture of public and private ownership," Neiger said. "There's a lot of other tools in the toolbox. It's a hammer, and we don't need a hammer – we need to use some updated methods, more finesse."

Other members said chemicals are an important tool to combat an aggressive invasive species and keep the pond in its desired state.

"I'm inclined to approve the NOI in its entirety, and then to really strictly condition the pieces," said member Gail Berrigan. "The state of Massachusetts allows the use of herbicides for pond management – that's a tough line to cross. I think that some of these elements are not for the commission to decide, but perhaps for the town to decide."

Eurasian milfoil was first discovered in Leverett Pond in 1993, and currently threatens its ecology, according to SWCA Environmental Consultants, a firm hired to help with the FLP's proposal. Milfoil can out-compete native vegetation and intensifies a natural process known as eutrophication, lowering dissolved oxygen levels and negatively impacting other aquatic life.

"Part of the reason the pond is in as good a shape as it is is because the milfoil has been managed," said con com member Joan Deely. "There's kind of a cascade of biological processes that begin to occur in a pond once milfoil reaches a critical mass."

Leverett Pond is a manmade body of water, created by a dam in 1938. Without human intervention it would look more like a marsh, UMass professor of wetland ecology and conservation Scott Jackson told the *Reporter*.

"I imagine that the pond, left on its own, will likely fill in with silt and organic matter,"

he said. "As the pond becomes shallower I would expect emergent, herbaceous vegetation to colonize the areas that are now open water. This would create an emergent marsh system. I would expect this to last for quite a while, probably decades."

A new dam constructed in 2019, using money raised by the FLP and the town's Community Preservation Act fund, allows drawdown of the pond's water, a strategy used to expose and kill vegetation in shallow areas. Winter drawdowns are used to control plant growth on nearby Lake Wyola, but have never been used on Leverett Pond. According to SWCA, a three-foot drawdown would impact 31% of the pond's surface area.

Neiger, using maps of the milfoil's spread overlaid with a map of the proposed drawdown, argued that the method would be poorly targeted, as it would reach less than onethird of the 2.7 acres of milfoil mapped last summer on the 102-acre pond.

"I think it's a terrible idea. We haven't been presented with a good reason for it," he said. "It has massive consequences for the pond. I don't think people in town have any idea we're talking about this."

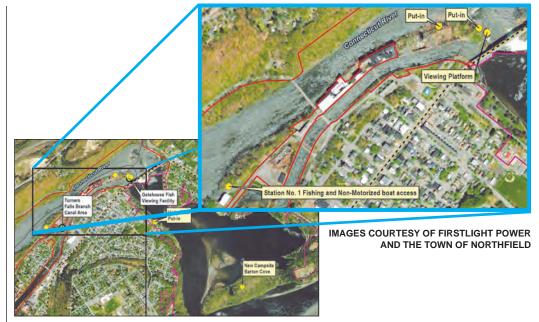
Neiger said more information about the projected impact on native species and the rate of water flow into the pond is necessary before the town should allow a drawdown. Abutters with shallow wells would also have to be notified.

Commission members agreed that increased data collection, monitoring, and reporting will be necessary, a responsibility that falls on the FLP. The group surveys 40 points on the pond, some treated and some not, each spring and fall, FLP vice president Mitchell Mulholland told the *Reporter*.

"FLP has been seeking a qualified individual or organization to conduct the survey," Mulholland said. "Thus far we have had no interest, but are working on it.... The more we learn about the Pond and the effectiveness of weed management efforts, the better."

Before treating the pond, the FLP will be required to notify the con com and outline when and how each action will take place. At next week's meeting the con com will set additional conditions, which could include limits on the amount of herbicides applied or acres raked, additional reporting requirements, the time of year treatment occurs, and any number of other stipulations.

The commission will meet at 7 p.m. next Monday, February 7.



Below the dam at Turners Falls: two details from the maps included in the publicly released AIP.

RECREATION from page A2

the AIP, this is an important step toward a comprehensive agreement that includes recreation and other issues."

Andrea Donlon, river steward with the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), was also reluctant to comment in any detail. The CRC is still participating in other segments of the settlement talks, which might overlap with the recreation agreement.

"We appreciate the effort made by all parties to reach agreement on recreation issues," she wrote. "CRC's interests are in enabling people to interact with the Connecticut River in a variety of meaningful ways, and for recreational use of the project facilities and the river to be an asset for the towns and the region. More work remains to define more details, but we are excited by the prospect of the recreation elements reaching implementation."

Ellis credited the CRC's advocacy with one item listed on the AIP, easy at first to overlook: a pledge by FirstLight to "provide real-time Turners Falls Impoundment water level information and real-time discharge information at Turners Falls Dam and Station No. 1 year-round on a website that will be accessible to the public." This would include anticipated flows "for a 12-hour window into the future at any given time."

"The CRC advocated strenuously to have that accommodation," Ellis said, adding that the organization "really played a leadership role throughout this process."

The AIP, which can be read online at *www.tinyurl.com/RecreationAIP*, was discussed by Gill's selectboard on Monday, Northfield's on Tuesday, and Erving's on Wednesday. Montague is expected to take it up next week.

If the towns – and seven non-profits, two businesses, the Council of Governments, Department of Conservation and Recreation, and National Park Service – all sign off, FirstLight will use it to build the comprehensive agreement.

According to filings on the FERC docket, the company has already reached an AIP on whitewater boating, featuring a series of scheduled weekend releases of high water flow at the Turners Falls dam and Station No. 1. Separate negotiations still underway concern fish passage, stream flows, and "remaining operational measures," and the company also says it "has been engaged with... Native American Tribes" concerning cultural resources.

While the next step in the normal FERC process is a written notice asking the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to begin a review of the license application, MassDEP asked FERC last August to delay that notice in order to give the settlement talks a chance.

FirstLight asked for a further extension on Monday, saying that it hoped a comprehensive agreement can be finalized by the end of June.



















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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

Above: Power company infrastructure at Turners Falls, frozen in places.

FEBRUARY 3, 2022



Up to Newfoundland and Labrador

SOUTH DEERFIELD - Newfoundland and Labrador offer dramatic scenery, the freshest seafood, and plenty of wide-open space!

Newfoundland and Labrador have experienced a surge in visitors from all over the world, as more people realize how many interesting and inspirational things they can do there. The Canadian province is HARTSHORNE PHOTO

just four hours by air from Ireland. It's also easy to reach from Boston, with a one-stop flight to the capital of St. John's.

Newfoundlanders are patient with the many Americans who visit their fine province. They forgive us for not knowing how to pronounce the island - it's New-found-LAND. St. John's is a lively city, right

on the waterfront, and that's still a very active waterfront, with a cargo port and cranes to boot. The main drag, Water Street, is full of interesting options, from marijuana shops (it's legal!) to happening cafés with live music, and a string of great late-night dining options right down on the waterfront.

No Crowds

The best part about Newfoundland and Labrador is that there are no crowds, even at the most striking natural formations and tourist locations. The distances here are notable - to cross the island of Newfoundland, it's a nine-hour drive. Over on the other side of Strait of Belle Isle is the other half of the giant province, Labrador,



By DAVID BRULE

MONTAGUE CITY - In the 1860s, Bernard Farren, Esg, first appeared in the raw, recently-designed industrial village of Turners Falls, so named by Alvah Crocker. Farren and Crocker, so very like-minded, were to become fast friends and collaborators. Both had visions and development in mind.

What interests us most here was described and reported in the Turners Falls Reporter in 1899: Bernard Farren, "one of the leading citizens of the county, a man of exquisite culture and fine tastes, well-traveled, with the broad mind that comes of wide observation of all countries and people, has decided to create and endow for the benefit of mankind locally, a hospital..."

Indeed, Farren came to town with a wide range of experience and connections in high places. He was a gifted contractor, engineer, a wealthy stockholder, businessman, and philanthropist. It is noted that he had the ear of three

Company and the Turners Falls Paper Company. He was a board member of the Keith Paper Company, he owned considerable stock in the International Paper Company, and he started the Montague City Rod Company with a number of friends.

Bernard Farren's crowning achievement came in April 1899. He announced to the public his intention to "create and endow" a hospital in the village of Montague City, where he had resided for years. Farren wished to build the hospital as a memorial to his son,

B. Frank Farren, who died unexpectedly shortly after his graduation from Seton Hall College.

According to the newspapers of the time such as the Turners Falls Reporter and the Greenfield Gazette and Courier, the hospital "shall be the home and shelter of the invalid poor..." Farren, in his long career as engineer and contractor, "had often been stirred by the sufferings of men in his employ who had been injured while in the performance of his duties in the rough work in which they were engaged...and fully realized the want of suitable provision for their care and comfort. The hospital would be open to the public without regard to the patient's creed or religion." The design of the hospital was put in the hands of Wilson Eyre, Jr. of Philadelphia. It is noted in Wikipedia accounts that this architect was "arguably the best-known domestic architect in the US," and that it is likely that his work influenced Frank Lloyd Wright.



A dramatic view of Bonavista from Fishers Loft, a small hotel and conference center.

and that is much, much larger.

Our accommodations in the city were perfectly suited, right in the thick of things off Water Street at see TRAVELS page B4

MEDITATION On Dry Milk, Garlic, and Fish Tacos

By MAGGIE SADOWAY

TURNERS FALLS – My mother, with her 1939 four-year college degree in home economics, soon began decades of providing three meals a day for our family. Her choices were narrowed by nutritional needs and the changing tastes of growing children, seasonal availability, a slim budget, and family schedules.

Around 4 p.m. I often heard her sigh and say, "Now whatever am I going to cook for supper?" ("Dinner" meant a midday Sunday meal.) Her menu usually included plainly cooked beef, pork or chicken - rarely her favorite swordfish or flank steak; plain boiled, mashed, baked, or occasionally scalloped potatoes; and a vegetable, most often from our summer garden, canned in earlier years or frozen later on.

During our chicken-raising years in Ashland, Massa-



chusetts (1949-55), a once-a-week hearty chicken stew was a given: simple to make, and a depository for the week's leftovers. ("You found a bone? I left it in on purpose so you'd know it was real chicken!")

An economist himself with five children, Dad delighted in his favorite money-saving gambit: buying dry skim milk in 50-pound bags. He experimented until he found we could tolerate a mix of one quart store-bought whole milk mixed with two quarts reconstituted skim milk, then calculated his savings, factoring in the labor involved. (Yes, labor: Forced labor. Mine. I was paid 25¢ per week to thrash that nearly insoluble dry milk into a smooth beverage using a non-electric eggbeater, with the fine powder inevitably going up my nose.)

He would pour two identical glasses, one with his concoction, the other with "real" milk, and then, with a gleeful grin, challenge guests to tell the difference. Sweet taste of victory: they never could - or they politely said they couldn't?

In the spring, Dad would choose up to seven varieties each of melons and sweet corn to plant, meticulously label them, and assign Mom the complicated task of getting those foods to our table months later with labels intact. Somehow all seven of us would each take a bite of every one; Dad would record our favorites to plant the next year.

In the 1950s, with home freezers still a rarity, our local IGA food store in Williamston, Michigan rented out lockers in their walk-in freezer. We'd bundle up in coats no matter the weather, drive into town, and retrieve a bit of our own food. It felt like an Arctic

Mom's well-used 1937 Fannie Farmer cookbook

see DRY MILK page B3

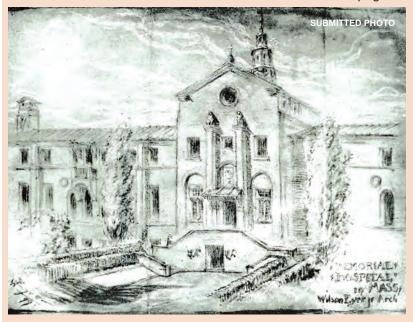
Massachusetts governors, Talbot, Rice, and Butler. He had even been received by the Pope!

At some point by the 1870s, Farren had become a fixture in Franklin County. He was particularly attracted to the village of Montague City, where he established his residence. Among the many projects that he oversaw were the construction of the railroad to connect Greenfield to the Hoosac Tunnel, the Turners Falls Canal Railroad, and the management of improvements to the Turners Falls dam. He landed the contract to widen and lengthen the canal for water power, and he participated in the creation of the doubledecker covered bridge that extended from Montague City to Greenfield, with the railroad tracks on top!

He was a busy man: he was president of the Montague Paper

Local architect and consultant Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno writes:

"The original Farren ... is an eclectic and restrained American Renaissance / Beaux Arts building. Among its features are symmetrical proportions, brick masonry construction, decorative columns, see WEST ALONG page B3



A drawing of the Farren by architect Wilson Eyre, Jr.

Pet of Week



'TEMPESTUOUS TASHA'

Webster's Dictionary defines tempestuous as "characterized by strong and turbulent or conflicting emotion." While Tasha loves to watch the world go by, and even likes to sit by her person (sometimes), she is not yet a fan of being touched. She is, however, absolutely adorable and has a bit of a Grumpy Cat thing going on with her cute little smooshed brows.

She can often be found peeking at us from behind her blankets, or watching us from her tower. Despite her 'tude, staff has come to love her and she makes us laugh every day. Tasha needs a hero – someone who is patient and understanding, and above all, understands the needs of shy, under-socialized cats.

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 FEBRUARY 7 THROUGH 11

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.

FACES & PLACES

Custodian and coach Scott Curtis (left) and junior David Stowe (right) are the newest recipients of the McGraw Uplift Award at Turners Falls High School. They were surprised with the honor, named after late assistant principal Earl McGraw, at an all-school assembly Tuesday morning.

Students and staff who nominated Stowe said he is "a very kind and caring person who doesn't get enough recognition or praise," "driven to his goals with the joyful energy he holds daily," and "an awesome person to be around." Stowe is an athlete, actor, and student leader. Teacher Jessica Vachula-Curtis said he had received a record number of nominations.

Mr. Curtis was described as an "extremely positive person" who "cares about all the students without judgment" and "goes out of his way to make people happy by giving them snacks or just saying good morning to them in the hallway."



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column by **STEPHANIE BAIRD**

For this month's column I wanted to take a closer look at our relationship to body hair. To get to the bottom of what folks are doing with their body hair right now, I created and broadcast a simple SurveyMonkey questionnaire to gather some data from my social network.

I don't know about you, but I've been frustrated at different times about the cost associated with manicuring body hair, as well as the societal double standard that ciswomen should shave armpits and legs and trim pubes, while cismen get to be furry anywhere they like, despite the rise of the metrosexual. I'm not sure if there are stereotypes yet for transgender or non-binary folks.

Also, I'll just mention that I happened to re-watch the 1997 film *Titanic* last weekend, and couldn't help but notice the nice tuft of underarm hair in the drawing of the young Rose. I found it refreshing to see such an elegant depiction, and it made me sad to think that societal trends have made cisfemale armpit hair something associated with liberals and hippies only. Independent, four as Green Party, and eight as "other." (Looks like either I have no Republicans in my network, or they do not care to discuss body hair.)

Most, 76%, said they had begun altering their body hair by the age of 15. Another 15% began altering hair between the ages of 16 and 21, and the last 8% started later, after age 22. Two folks skipped this question, perhaps indicating their bodies have never met razor or wax.

The body-hair-related questions asked about what areas of body hair folks alter (i.e. shave, wax, or trim) such as eyebrows, around lips, armpit hair, legs, and pubic area. More than half said they regularly shaved their armpits and legs. 16 (33%) said they shave neither area. 10% said they regularly (daily to weekly) shaved pubic hair, and 50% said they regularly (daily to monthly) trimmed their pubes. 41% said they leave the area *au naturel*.

Two respondents said they regu-

ite answer: "Do you like trimming, shaving, or waxing body hair and appreciate the results for yourself or others?" Possible answers included "I like trimming/shaving my body hair and appreciate the results," "I appreciate it when others trim/shave their body hair," and "I could care less... have better things to think about, like world liberation."

A full half said they enjoyed manicuring their body hair. Nearly 40% appreciate it when others trim their body hair, and half of respondents said "they could care less."

In conclusion, I have social ties with a lot of hairy Wookies. A few diligently shaved or trimmed in several body area places, but quite a few have divested of any pressure to do so.

In her awesome illustrated graphic guide How to Have Feminist Sex (2019), Flo Perry has an entire section devoted to pubic hair. She explains how beginning in the 1980s ciswomen started "ripping out" their pubic hair, yet cismen didn't follow suit. She muses that the pube pressure may have been backlash from the '70s feminist movement, noting that there is no good explanation why women's body hair "can't be seen in the first place" - including leg and armpit hair. Perry delightedly developed the "Pube Commandments," which I will leave you to ponder: 1) "pubes aren't disgusting" and it is not more hygienic to remove them; 2) someone stating pubes are a reason for not giving a vulva oral sex is a "knobhead"; 3) removing pubes doesn't make someone a bad feminist - it's hard to "fight the patriarchy"; and 5) "at least once in your life, grow your bush to its full potential for fun, curiosity, feminism, and laziness."

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and snacks daily. 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.

Monday 2/7

8:30 a.m. Foot Clinic
9 a.m. Re-Store & Re-Emerge
10 a.m. New class coming soon
1 p.m. Paper Quilling **Tuesday 2/8**9 a.m. Good for YOU
10 a.m. Line Dancing **Wednesday 2/9**9 a.m. Strength & Conditioning
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
11:30 p.m. Bingo **Thursday 2/10**9 a.m. Re-Store & Re-Emerge
10 a.m. Stretch & Balance

Friday 2/11

9 a.m. Open Sew Quilting

Monday 2/7

10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise 1 p.m. Knitting & Needlecrafts Circle **Tuesday 2/8**

12 p.m. Tuesday Morning Knitters
1 p.m. Chair Yoga
3 p.m. Tai Chi
Wednesday 2/9
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Bingo
1:30 p.m. Parking Lot Pantry
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 2/10

1 p.m. Cards & Games Friday 2/11 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise

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*. This was my first ever Survey-Monkey, so I learned a lot about how to make a survey from this experience. For example, for the free plan I could only ask 10 questions, so I had to combine a lot of bits into a few questions. I definitely made some mistakes, and would not consider this a professional survey, but it was fun to circulate and get nearly 50 responses from my email and Facebook blast. As it turned out, I still had to purchase a plan to see all 48 responses.

My basic demographic questions included gender, age, political affiliation, and age when the respondent first began altering body hair. Ages ranged from 23 to 75, with most folks (21) in their 40s, which makes sense as I am in my 40s and this survey is drawing from a sample of my peers. Another six were in their 50s, and nine in their 60s. 38 identified as cisfemale, six as cismale, and six as non-binary/gender nonconforming. 34 identified as Democrat, 12 as larly completely remove pubic hair. Ten said they regularly wax within the face area, and one person regularly waxed around the pubic area.

Eight cisfemales said they never shave or trim anything, enjoying the Wookie life. About half of the gender non-conforming prefer *au naturel*, with the other half engaging in some hair removal.

To get a better understanding of pubic hair primping, I inquired if folks altered pubic hair for sexuality-related reasons (such as aesthetics), hygiene-related reasons, or both. 26% said they manicured their pubic hair for sexuality reasons, 9% for hygiene only, 31% manicured for both reasons, and 40% would never touch a single hair down there.

My favorite question was "Do you wish no one shaved anything (other than facial hair), and that we all looked like Wookies?" Surprisingly, only six folks (12%) said they love body hair completely *au naturel*. Over 50% prefer groomed Wookies, and a third said they weren't sure and that it's complicated.

This next question had my favor-

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

Section 20



triangular pediments, arched windows and doors, an elevated first story and ornamental chimneys and cupola. It is a unique building within the Town of Montague. Only the Neo-Classical Carnegie Public Library in Turners Falls, designed by William McClean, has similar stately features to those of the Farren."

The Thomas family of Montague played a significant role in Farren's plans. Daniel and John Thomas were noted as deeply involved in Farren's various projects as engineers and builders in 1882. They later established the Thomas brickyard, which furnished material for many of the local buildings we now admire in downtown Turners Falls.

Their nephew, Dr. Warren Thomas, was one of the most appreciated physicians in the county. Dr. Thomas, along with Doctors Higgins, Giknis, Jacobus, Charron, and Elgosin, were part of a generation of Old School doctors who cared for patients both at the Farren and at home.

During its history the Farren was run by the Sisters of Providence. According to the Town's 1754-1954 Historical Review Program, the hospital grew from 217 patients in 1902 to over 5,000 by 1953. It hosted a training school for nurses and later the Candy Stripers, and provided scholarships for GCC students. In later years the Farren evolved into the Farren Care Center, a safety net for patients who could not be treated anywhere else in Massachusetts. In 2000 Sister Joan Mullin prepared a history of the Farren Center for the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

In addition, many of us residents of Montague and other nearby towns born here between 1900 and 2000 drew our first breaths in the Farren, our parents worked there, and many family members drew their last breaths there.

DRY MILK from page B1

frozen outside for summer use.

adventure each time.

The old Farren has historical, architectural, and cultural value as part of the living fabric of this community.

But now it faces its darkest hour. The Farren is in the hands of a private corporation that owns the buildings and intends to tear it all down. The politics and business/profit imperatives of the huge Trinity corporation seem to determine that there is no need to preserve the building that has been iconic to the residents of the village of Montague City, the town of Montague, and indeed all of Franklin County.

The citizens of Montague and beyond are requesting that Trinity delay the plans to erase the building, to share with residents and town officials the feasibility study of re-use versus demolition they say they have conducted. The town, with support of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, could even endeavor to conduct our own independent study to determine the best outcome of this controversy. But time is short.

This piece of the town's history deserves all the protections and preservation that the law allows. Of course, not every old building and structure can be preserved. But a venerable institution such as the Farren does deserve careful and thorough consideration before the bulldozers move in.

Much depends on our willingness to honor the vision of Bernard Farren, and to honor the contributions of those who built the hospital and worked there over the past 122 years.

Thanks to Janel Nockleby for the extensive research on the history of the Farren mentioned here. While David Brule is the chair of the Montague Historical Commission, his opinions here are his own and not those of the Commission.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG No Answer At Shelter; Hitchhiker; Screaming Kids;

Light In Abandoned Building; Fiesta Takes Action

Monday, 1/24

8:42 a.m. Resident complaining of furniture left on the side of Park Street. DPW notified.

9:11 a.m. Vehicle stop on Turnpike Road. Vehicle has a tire that is going flat. Operator is pulling into the high school parking lot to deal with it.

3:47 p.m. Caller states that his grandfather backed into a delivery vehicle in a parking lot; no injuries. Citation issued.

5:26 p.m. Caller states that there is a female in the community room at Sunrise Terrace who is not supposed to be there. Caller states female no longer lives at that address, and should not be on the property. Officer requesting call be placed to shelter to see if they have a bed. Call placed; no answer at shelter. Female party left and refused any other assistance.

6:59 p.m. A 28-year-old Millers Falls woman was arrested and charged with conspiracy to violate drug law.

8:13 p.m. Caller states there is someone with a large bag who appears to be hitchhiking on Montague Street and they have been there for over 20 minutes. Same female as earlier.

Tuesday, 1/25

3 a.m. Officer requesting DPW to come in and treat the roadway due to snow. DPW advised.

DPW about a vehicle for DPW. that has been sitting on 9:56 p.m. Caller requestowner passed away. Bank is key; no services needed. supposed to make arrange- Wednesday, 1/26 ments to get the vehicle, 5:26 a.m. Spoke to 911 that his vehicle is broken firmed misdial.

down on the bridge over 1:01 p.m. Caller from jor traffic jam.

ty is sitting on his road in to locate. his truck. Officer advised 5:03 p.m. Caller reporting the truck and advised him Advised of options. of his options.

porting a chimney fire on parked on Paradise Park-Franklin Street; smoke way and has been there and flames are visible. Of- before. Caller could only ficer advises not as report- describe it as a Toyota ed; resident was cleaning Camry-type vehicle. Offiout his chimney.

7:29 p.m. Report of trash no vehicles in the area. of Dreams. Officer advises bag has been struck by a

11:09 a.m. Officer flagged vehicle and will need to be down on O Street by the cleaned up. Message left

the street for a couple of ing assistance with a lockweeks and is impeding out. Officer advises that snow removal. Vehicle female party had a spare

but they haven't yet. Offi- caller who advises that cer requesting tow compa- his granddaughter acciny respond to take the ve- dentally dialed 911. Callhicle. Sirum's responding. er states no need for PD, 2:24 p.m. 911 caller states FD, or AMR. Officer con-

the Connecticut River Sherman Drive states that closer to the paper mill. smoke is coming from her Officer requesting Rau's neighbor's backyard/gato tow vehicle due to a ma- rage area; possibly burning items in a fire pit. 3:57 p.m. Caller request- Shelburne Control notiing to speak to officer fied; toning out TF Fire. regarding harassment. 2:26 p.m. Caller states that Caller states that a male a male party is walking party has been calling him in the travel lane heading at work and at home re- down the hill from Scotgarding a vehicle he had ty's, causing a safety hazfor sale, and now the par- ard. Area checked; unable

caller of options and will that he received threatdrive by the area to see if ening phone calls from the vehicle is still there. someone claiming to be at Officer spoke to party in the Montague Bookmill.

5:32 p.m. Caller states 6:03 p.m. 911 caller re- that a suspicious vehicle is cer advises that there are

bag in roadway near Field 6:08 p.m. Caller states that a male party has been calling the Lady Killigrew Cafe and demanding to know all the female employees' names and ages; he is aggressive on the phone and wants to know who is inside the café. Officer advises that manager is concerned for safety of female employees. She was advised to call back if he calls again. 8:33 p.m. Caller from to road conditions and

office confirmed they had misdialed.

3:27 p.m. Received 911 call and it was just beeping, like a fax. Busy signal on callback. Ongoing issue with this building's phone system calling 911. Referred to an officer.

5:25 p.m. Motor vehicle accident at intersection of Turnpike and Turners Falls Roads. No injuries. One vehicle towed.

7:17 p.m. Caller states that FL Roberts should be open and the lights are on, but the door is locked and he can't see anyone inside. Officer advises he spoke with attendant; everything is all set.

8:51 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that her neighbor's children are screaming and crying. She stated that she also has a recording she would like the officers to hear. Officer advises that female party stated she has an open DCF case with a worker and she will be reaching out to them tomorrow regarding the ongoing issue with her neighbor.

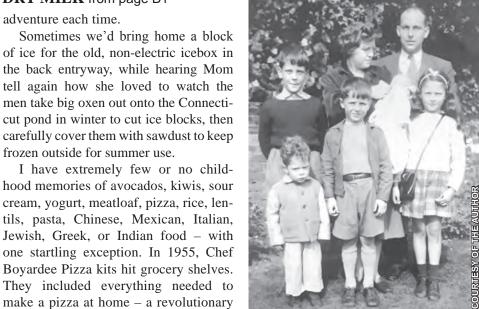
Friday, 1/28

10:28 a.m. Caller from Third Street reports harassing/threatening texts from the male in the downstairs apartment. Officer attempted to call male back. His phone is not accepting calls at this time.

Saturday, 1/29 3:19 p.m. Caller states that they are plowing at Tenth and H Streets and there is a grey and white pit bull running around in the middle of the road causing a traffic hazard. Dog gone upon officers' arrival.

Sunday, 1/30

2:54 a.m. Caller reports that he struck a tree on Lake Pleasant Road due Fourth Street reporting not seeing the sign. Call-



were best? Dad topped his toast and cottage cheese with jam??? Younger brother liked beets and chicken wings? Older brother actually liked tapioca pudding? Back then, grapefruit were very sour how could Dad enjoy them without a dusting of sugar?

As far as I know, I never saw garlic throughout my childhood. Mom's dogeared, marked-up, 800-page Fannie Farmer cookbook (now mine) rarely mentions it. Its recipe for tomato sauce calls for none; chili con carne, which she never made, suggests one minced clove for two pounds of beef. Once, when we barely knew each other, Jack cooked our evening meal, then asked the next day what I had done with the rest of the garlic. Threw it away, I said, I thought it was all used up. It's a wonder our relationship didn't end then and there. Soon he and I had a tradition of buying a braided strand of 50 garlic heads for our Athens kitchen each year; the wildflower wedding bouquet he made me included a whole garlic in its center – still in my china cabinet over 50 years later. It wasn't until I moved to Turners Falls and heard my son Solon order fish tacos at the Gill Wagon Wheel that I had ever heard of them. They are still so unfamiliar to me that I had to ask him to remind me of their name when he delivered some he'd made to my front door last night. It's possible I detected an eye roll when he texted me a two-word answer: "Fish tacos?" But, hey kiddo, thanks for a delicious dinner – and all the food memories you stirred up.

I have extremely few or no childhood memories of avocados, kiwis, sour cream, yogurt, meatloaf, pizza, rice, lentils, pasta, Chinese, Mexican, Italian, Jewish, Greek, or Indian food - with one startling exception. In 1955, Chef Boyardee Pizza kits hit grocery shelves. They included everything needed to make a pizza at home – a revolutionary idea at the time.

When willing to lower her nutritional standards and dent her food budget, Mom would infrequently buy one - maybe when she really needed a night off from cooking? Oh, happy day! We'd vie for the chance to open the tall box (think Annie's mac-and-cheese), grab the three containers inside, mix up and carefully shape the crust, apply the pizza sauce evenly, and sprinkle with the grated Parmesan and Romano cheese. I think we sometimes topped it with canned mushroom pieces, Mom's favorite.

Things she became adept at making, all from scratch, included turkey stuffing, hollandaise sauce, chicken drizzled with lemon and crisply cooked outdoors, pancakes, chocolate syrup, baked Alaska for a December birthday, warm vanilla pudding with chocolate chips slight-

The author, at right, in 1951, never having tasted garlic but adept at whisking milk powder.

ly melted, lemon sherbet in our handcranked bucket, shortcake for strawberries in June.

Once, when we were still in Ashland, she tried making deep-fried donuts; a few times she figured conditions were perfect for popovers that wouldn't collapse. Olives came stuffed with pimentos; pickles were always dill; beans were Boston baked with steamed New England brown bread from a can. Mustard was for hotdogs; catsup for hamburgs – no "ketchup" or "hamburgers" in our house. Eggs were fried, poached, boiled, deviled and scrambled, rarely made into an omelet.

Then there were those bewildering disparate tastes: How could one sibling like Wheaties, when I knew Cheerios

that she has been hearing screaming and yelling coming from her neighbor's apartment for a while. She stated she heard the mom threaten the kids and some banging. Ongoing issue. Officer advises he spoke with the mom and advised her of the complaint; officer also spoke with child. 10:19 p.m. Caller from Rod Shop Road reporting

that a light is on inside the brick building next to his residence; building is condemned and should be empty. Officer advises that a work light was plugged in, but it had to have been there before the last snowstorm because there were no footprints in the snow. Building was clear.

Thursday, 1/27

8:41 a.m. 911 misdial from Franklin County Technical School. On callback, an employee in the main

er reports that his airbags deployed and his head is sore. Officer requesting tow. Driver transported by AMR.

7:07 a.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop on Main Street. Verbal warning issued for impeded operation. Registered owner removed snow.

10:14 a.m. Caller states that he witnessed a Ford Fiesta smash through the locked gate at the entrance to the Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center parking area. First Light/Northfield Mountain notified of damaged gate.

3:13 p.m. Caller states that his backhoe is broken down in the middle of Turners Falls Road near Jarvis Pools and is causing traffic to back up; requesting officer to assist while he tries to get it moved. Machine is out of roadway.

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TRAVELS from page B1

the Murray Premises Hotel. The hotel has a nice little courtyard for outdoor dining and morning coffee, and rooms with views of the harbor. That's one thing that's pretty cheap here, ocean views are a dime a dozen... and they are everywhere!

We arrived in St. John's late, and we were famished. Where to eat? We ducked into the downstairs Boca Tapas Bar, and quickly got in a conversation with the friendly woman behind the bar. Like almost every other person we met during our trip, she was eager to share her delight and enthusiasm for living here, and like many of her friends, she went away for college and then returned to St. John's.

The city of about 250,000 residents contains half of the population of the whole province. There are many great places to dine in this capital city, and Raymond's Restaurant holds the crown as the most famous, priciest, and best joint in town. It's famous for using foraged vegetables from the pristine coast and other expensive and hard-toprocure fish.

The next night we were happy to join a throng at the very popular and highly recommended St. John's Fish Exchange, right on the harbor. There is something about a restaurant that's rocking and you hit it just right... the Saturday night excite-

ment and enthusiasm for the food, the ambiance, and the whole experience made for a memorable meal. Cod cheeks, local mussels, and panko-crusted cod from Newfoundland filled the bill.

Cod is back in eastern Canada, and that's a new development, since for decades fishermen were prohibited from catching their signature species due to overfishing. A carefully managed moratorium has been partially lifted so that there is a commercial season for this delicious specialty, and we tried it on nearly every stop in the province.

Exploring the Rooms

The next morning we got some exercise walking the hilly streets of the city, setting out to discover some local painters and museums. Our first stop was The Rooms, a giant museum built in 2005 by the province to showcase the art and history of Newfoundland and Labrador.

You can spend a lot of time in the four floors here, mixing history exhibits with the local art. One shows how Irish and English fishermen settled the island in the early 1600s, and a sculpture show by Billy Gauthier, a Kablunangajuit artist of Labrador, presents his fantastically intricate carvings made out of whale and other animal bones. I'd recommend stopping in to learn about the province, and to enjoy

RNE PHOTOS

Newfoundland's capital, St. John's, is famous for the multi-colored houses said to have been painted with colors left over from painting fishing boats.



HARTSHORNE PHOTOS



Dungeon Provincial Park, Bonavista, Newfoundland.

the views from the fourth floor.

Any trip to St. John's and Newfoundland requires some time on the water that's all around you. We joined Iceberg Ocean Tours on a whale watching trip in the afternoon, and it didn't take long for us to hit paydirt. All around us, 50foot fin whales cavorted, puffing out the air from their blowholes like tired horses.

Joining them were the dolphins merrily slicing through the wake of the boat, and after we got closer to shore, we got some close-up time with sea lions. These large beasts park themselves on the backs of boats, buoys, and anything else they can find. Boat owners aren't fond of them.

As the boat passed out of the harbor toward Cape Spear, we saw huge supply ships that venture hundreds of miles offshore to service the oil drilling platforms. We also saw many dilapidated but still scenic shacks that used to be part of the fishery here, but now stand in some cases disregarded, and in others restored.

To Bay Bulls

Newfoundland and Labrador is really a road trip kind of place. Taking off on a sunny August morning, we headed south from St. John's to Bay Bulls, and then turned north, up to the Bonavista Peninsula, with the namesake town at the very top. Bonavista is one of the towns that's received a lot of government funds to promote local industries using local products, including a salt seller, a clothing manufacturer, and a restaurant, the Bonavista Social Club. We drove up the winding road after we entered the village of Port Rexton and parked at the office of Fishers' Loft Inn - Wow! What a view!

That's what everyone must say when they look around at the magnificent view that surrounds this 33-room luxury property. Not only do they provide their guests with the killer view, but the Fishers also run an excellent restaurant here where the local seafood takes front and center.

John Fisher told us a few things about the peninsula, that's seeing more and more tourists in recent years. "Sophistication, imagination, and creativity, are the things we want this area to be known for, "he said.

Fisher has been very involved with the Bonavista Biennale, where 22 artists were commissioned to create art exhibitions that blend in with the local scenery and bring new ideas to the fore.

Fisher gives artists a chance to stay in the hotel for free once a year during the off-season to create art, a short term artist-in-residence program. He also displays paintings and sculptures in the conference center at Fishers' Loft.

"Tourism should be culturally driven," Fisher said. To that end, he's helped raise funds from businesses to promote the Biennale and to bring murals to the airport – and piano players, too.

deep wild. We enjoyed learning a bit of the history of the province and for that, we visited the Ryan Premises National Historic Site, where the original cod fishery of the 1800s was located.

Along a coastal road, we explored some dramatic large openings along the shoreline, called Dungeon Provincial Park. You might have thought there would be a big crowd to see such impressive sea caverns, called Sea Mounts, but there were only a few visitors there.

These natural archways are quite stunning, and many of the visitors also like to pet the horses along the roadside.

The one thing you can count on when you visit Newfoundland and Labrador: there is plenty of room up here!

Local travel editor Max Hartshorne writes about traveling around our region, and a little bevond. Max is the editor of GoNO-MAD Travel, a website published since 2000 in South Deer-

field. Find him online at www.gonomad.com.





At the Ryan Premises museum in Bonavista, the history and fallen fortune of the cod fishery is explained.

Exploring Bonavista

We set out on a hike to explore the big peninsula that sat out in the bay in front of Fishers' Loft Inn, and passed by more dramatic cliffside views... again, and as we expected, with no other hikers in sight. Newfoundland and Labrador are proud to have the most concentrated moose population of anywhere on earth, plus an abundance of black bears, and an ocean still brimming with fish. Life is good!

Bonavista is a windy and in some ways, desolate place, like an outpost just before you go into the

Murray Premises Hotel Murraypremiseshotel.com

St. John's Fish Exchange www.sjfx.ca

> **The Rooms** www.therooms.ca

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Bob Marley birthday tribute with I Anbassa, 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. 3 p.m.

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

Shutesbury Athletic Club: Lonesome Brothers. \$. 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, Weakened Friends, Melatonin. \$. 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. 6:30 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.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Psychedelic Thurs with DJ MentalDrift. 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: Sara Thomsen. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Guy Ferrari, Lucy, Fake Sisters, The Musical Chairs. \$8 p.m.

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

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Movie with live soundtrack, The Last Command (1928) with pipe organ by Jeff Rapsis. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24

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

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25

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

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

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Zydeco Connection, The Bourbon Street Blasters. \$. 7 p.m.

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.

TUESDAY, MARCH 1

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: Lucy Dacus. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 3

DCU Center, Worcester: Tyler the Creator, Kali Uchis, Vince Staples. \$. 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: Ste-





phen Marley. \$. 8 p.m. FRIDAY, MARCH 11

> Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: Iceage, Sloppy Jane \$. 8 p.m. MASS MoCA, North Adams: An-

imal 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. \$. 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, Bartees *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

Three Degrees of Warming

By Janice Rowan

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.

B5

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

SUNDAY, APRIL 3

Academy of Music, Northampton: Bela Fleck's My Bluegrass Heart. \$. 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.

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

Bombyx Center, Florence: Club d'Elf with John Medeski. \$.8 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Giraffes? Giraffes! \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

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

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

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



Submit your comics and puzzles to editor@montaguereporter.org. Original & local creations only, please!

MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

Rassenger pigeon Southern acormskill Mussel Maui'akpin Pyrencan Ibex Rom Thicktail chub Coose Phantom shiner Superson Bubol Hartebecst Woolly mammoth Green-blossom pearly mussel sloamin Nor thern White rhinoceros Ivory billed woodpecker Tasmanian tiger San Marcos gambusia plateau chub Kihansi spray tood Angled riffleshill Yellow blossom Narrow catspaw Forkshell Camberland leafshell Und pokethow A palachi cola ebony shell Haddleton lampmussel Black club shell Stirrorshi Kush pigte Maravillas red shiner Plateau chub Phantom Shiner Ash Mar Kush pigte Maravillas red shiner Plateau chub Phantom Shiner Ash Mar Kush pigte Maravillas red shiner Plateau chub Phantom Shiner Ash Mar Kush pigte Maravillas derter Madeiran Large White Polynesian tree Snail Rock

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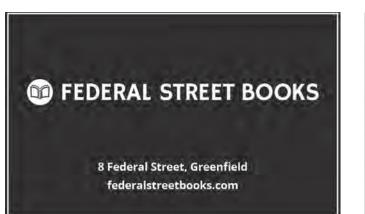
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High School Sports: Crosstown Competition

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – The Franklin South Conference got a little tighter in girls basketball this week as local teams eliminated also-rans. Putnam, the largest school in the conference, suffered disproportionately as they dropped three games against teams from Turners Falls.

Franklin Tech, leading by a game and a half at the beginning of the week, only played one conference game while Turners won three, so they remain a half-game ahead going into next Monday's match-up.

On the boys' court, the winless Thunder lost in the waning seconds of Monday's contest as Lee broke through a full-court press.

The Turners Falls/Franklin Tech cheer squad was riling up the crowd, preparing to compete in their own right. "Our routine will consist of stunts, pyramids, gymnastic, jumps, voice, and dance skills," said coach Sarah Underwood. They compete in South Hadley, Malden, and Dudley on February 13, 20, and 25.

Girls Basketball

The Putnam Beavers suspended their season due to COVID-19, and are now trying to squeeze in as many games as they can. Their precautions hadn't lifted when they hosted Turners last Thursday, and they didn't allow Thunder fans to attend. This didn't stop Powertown, as the girls from Turners pulled out to a 31-10 halftime lead. Putnam was more competitive in the second half, scoring 25 points to Powertown's 29 for a final score of **60-35**.

Turners doesn't restrict visitors, so Friday's rematch was loud and lively, but Blue won by an even greater margin.

Emily Young didn't play Thursday, but on Friday she caught the Putnam's coach's attention – every time she got the ball, he called, "Shooter!" Keying on Young didn't help the Beaver cause. From the getgo, Lily Spera hit one from underneath, Taylor Greene hit a field goal, and Young sunk two consecutive three-pointers; Turners was up 10-0.

Putnam got over the initial shock and began matching Blue, and the quarter ended at 16-7. In the second, Putnam had a difficulty keying on any one player, and by mid-game Turners was up 29-8. They pulled out to an incredible 41-14 lead in the third before the Beavers narrowed it to 43-21. In the final period Putnam grew desperate and began committing fouls, which didn't help their plight; Blue kept hitting free throws, and held on to win **61-31**.

Nine athletes scored for Turners, with four in double digits: Greene (15), Spera (14), Young (11), and Holly Myers (10).

The Blue Ladies went up to Mohawk on Tuesday and defeated the Warriors **45-37**. These three victories against FSC rivals improve their conference record to 7–1.

On Monday, the Franklin Tech Eagles hosted the Smith Voc Vikings. Despite a smothering Eagle defense, Smith managed to keep the game close for two quarters. Tech went hard, contesting every shot and pass. This chop-and-block defense led to tie-ups, and at least six jumps called in the first quarter. Another consequence was multiple Tech fouls, but it worked – the Eagles didn't allow a single field goal in the period, and Smith had to settle for foul shots. After one, the score was 10-5 Tech.

Smith broke through in the second, scoring two unanswered baskets to pull within a point. With three players in trouble Tech was forced to play less aggressively, and the half ended with a single-basket difference, 16-14. That's when I left to watch the Turners Boys against Lee.

Franklin went on to bank 15 points in the third while holding the Smiths to 4, and outscored them 13-2 in the fourth to take the game going away, **44-20**. Hannah Gilbert had the hot hand for Tech, hitting four three-pointers and finishing with 22 points.

On Tuesday, Putnam had the misfortune of hosting another team from Turners. Gilbert again led the Birds with 21 points, followed by Trudeau with 12 and Kendra Campbell with 9, in the **46-31** win.

The Eagles are now 8-1, the



Taylor Greene closes in on Putnam during last Friday's home game at TFHS.

Thunder 7–1. They go head-to-head Monday as Tech attempts to avenge a loss to their cross-road rivals.

Boys Basketball

The last time Turners played the Lee Wildcats, they were smoked by 19 points. It could have been home cooking or because the cheerleaders were revving up the crowd, but Monday's game wasn't decided until the closing seconds.

I got there at the beginning of the second and found Turners up 14-11. Lee scored 4 quick points to take the lead, but Blue scored the last 6 of the half to go into the break 20-15.

Blue switched to man-to-man in the third quarter. The lead seesawed back and forth until the final seconds, when a Lee player launched a halfcourt Hail Mary; the buzzer sounded

while the ball was in the air. When it landed, they had a 31-28 lead.

With 5:33 left in regulation, Powertown finally took the lead one more time, 35-34, but Lee went on a roll to go up by 5, and Cam Burnett fouled out. With 18.9 seconds left, Matt Crossman sunk two free throws to pull within 3. Thunder put on the full court press, but Lee broke through and scored as time ran out, taking the game **42-37**.

Brandon Truesdale had a whopping 18 points, Burnett and Levin Prondecki 6 each, Devon Sloan 3, Crossman sunk two key foul shots, and Alex Quezada and Blake Pollard each scored one from the charity stripe. The loss does not spell doom for the Boys Thunder. They played the Athol Red Bears on Wednesday – we'll have the recap next week!

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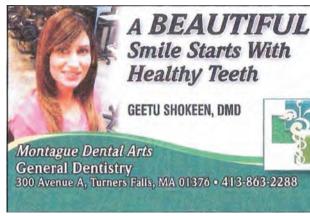
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