

YEAR 20 – NO. 22 CISU EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

Love for the Work Clear in Low-Budget 'Money Game'



Director Julian Lowenthal (right) meets with crew on the set Wednesday. The Greenfield Airbnb was transformed into a family home for the shoot.

By MIKE JACKSON

GREENFIELD – "Everybody here is really nice and helpful," actor Krishna Mitchell reflects on Wednesday in a brief moment after hair and wardrobe and before being driven to the day's location for shooting Money Game, an Airbnb across the street from Lunt Silversmith. "This is my first feature film, so this is new for me." A fifth-grader from Boston, Mitchell said she was hired to play the character Imani after signing up with a casting agency who sent out a call for a taped audition. The experience, she says, has been more enjoyable than she expected.

"Now, watching movies, I'm imagining the process of what happens – how they have to shoot from different angles, and how many takes they have, and what the people have to do," she explains. "It's very interesting."

When *Money Game* is released it is slated for spring 2023 – Mitchell will have a film credit and eligibility to join the Screen Actors Guild. She is also joining a burgeoning regional film industry in New England, and though this film may be a low-budget project by a first-time director, its cast and crew includes a network of colleagues who have honed their chops collaborating across a number of projects. Some even worked on 2021's Coda, winner of the Academy Award for Best Picture. "We have a ton of work right now," Terri Stevens, a production designer from Nashua, New Hampshire and a member of IA-TSE Local 481, says of the industry. "It obviously died down during COVID, and now there's a lot of stuff ramping up, which is great."

a month in Turners Falls, Deerfield, and Greenfield, as "kind of an A Team doing a small project." "Maybe 75% of the crew we've been working with for over ten years – a lot of us started at a similar time," she adds. "And we're friends with Julian, and we kind of did it as a passion project for him."

Making Opportunities

Money Game director Julian Lowenthal grew up in Amherst, and says he knew at the age of 12 that he wanted to make movies. As a teenager he acted in New Renaissance Players productions at the Shea Theater, and he moved to Turners Falls in his early 20s, moonlighting behind the camera at Montague Community Television while making hundreds of Youtube shorts on the side, slowly developing his hobby into a career.

"My very first film was the first feature film shot in Turners," Lowenthal tells the Reporter. "I spent a year working at a call center, saved up \$5,000, and invested it in a \$5,000 B-horror feature that primarily takes place at the Shea." When another Turners Falls director brought home a taste of Hollywood in 2017 – the filming of The Man Who Killed Hitler and Then Bigfoot - Lowenthal dove in, working as a production assistant and taking an uncredited turn as a Nazi guard. This brought him a job with local lighting and grip house FastLights, and a springboard into the larger industry. His big break finally came last year while he was working as a grip on Don't Look Up in Eastern Massachusetts, where he met Chris Galizio, a portfolio manager who wanted to make a movie showcasing his views linking American wealth inequality with see LOVE page A6

Turners Dam Leaks Oil for Months

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Oil-based hydraulic fluid has been leaking from the pistons that open and close the bascule gates on the Turners Falls dam since at as early as December, according to documents filed that month and in February by owner FirstLight Power.

Whitewater kayakers went public on Tuesday about what they describe as a botched cleanup job and a lack of oversight by the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The power company maintains that safety conditions under the dam prevented attempts to contain or stop the latest leak until Wednesday.

"When I went there two weeks ago, the smell of the oil was so unbelievably strong," Matt Guertin told the *Reporter* on Wednesday. "You could smell it from a half mile away – I'm not exaggerating at all. It's getting better now, but unfortunately, it's only getting better because all that oil has been washing downstream."

Guertin, a Greenfield farmer and a member of American Whitewater, claims to know the stretch of the Connecticut River below FirstLight's dam "better than most people." He periodically organizes litter cleanups of the area, and has been active in whitewater

see OIL page A2

GILL SELECTBOARD Defunct Rec Committee

By JERRI HIGGINS

Revitalized

The Gill selectboard met Monday evening to vote on replacing the police department's 2013 cruiser, to designate federal COVID-19 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and to consider a request from residents to reestablish the town's recreation committee and allow non-residents to join it, among other business.

The police department was unanimously approved for \$60,000 to replace their 2013 Ford Explorer cruiser, which includes police equipment installation. The new cruiser will be a hybrid Ford Explorer, the second hybrid vehicle for the department.

Selectboard member Randy Crochier said he had asked for the police cruiser replacement agenda item after meeting with the capital improvement planning committee and discussing recommendations with them.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD Opinions Split Over Admin Staff Proposal

By JEFF SINGLETON

The April 11 Montague selectboard meeting began with an hourlong "community information session" to explain a proposal to add a new assistant town administrator, and an assistant to the executive assistant, to the town hall staff. The proposal, which has been discussed numerous times over the past six months, should appear as Articles 4 and 5 on the annual town meeting warrant on May 7.

Town administrator Steve Ellis began with a presentation explaining the rationale for the proposal. He argued that an assistant administrator is needed to fill important gaps in the town's capacity, particularly in the areas of facilities management and human resources. "The key functions of modern organizations are underdeveloped in this town," he said.



A containment boom reportedly failed several weeks ago as a piston continued to leak fluid.

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD Dangerous Junction Will Be Revamped

By GEORGE BRACE

At their Tuesday meeting, Leverett's selectboard approved the creation of a "T" intersection with three stop signs at the intersection of Shutesbury and Cushman roads. The board also approved two grant applications from the Leverett Historical Society which seek more than \$1.3 million in funding for renovations to historic buildings.

The board approved a plan to modify the layout of the intersection of Shutesbury and Cushman roads, currently consisting of one stop sign and two yield signs, by repaving the area to create a "T" intersection with three stop signs. Construction was tentatively set to take place in July, and will include new signage. The move came at the request of a group calling themselves the East Leverett Residents for Safer Roads, who said that while the issues of

Stevens describes *Money Game*, which is shooting over the course of



Money Game's COVID compliance officer David Jester (right) administers tests to crew arriving at the location in the morning.

see GILL page A8

Towns increasingly rely on grants, see **MONTAGUE** page A7

see LEVERETT page A5

danger and property damage have

High School Sports Week: Ups and Downs

By MATT ROBINSON

The Franklin Tech boys' track team won their second straight meet this week, reaching triple digits in Friday's win over Pioneer as 12 different athletes earned points for the Eagles.

Tech's softball team, too, piled on the points with two more one-sided victories. They worked together for a perfect game on Monday, though when Hoosac came to town on Tuesday, not only did they record the first hit off the Eagles but they even scored a run. However, it was negated by Tech's prowess at the plate. Across the road, the Turners Falls Softball Thunder played two back-and-forth games, ending the week with their first loss in over a year.

Turners, who went winless last year in baseball, saw a threegame win streak crash to a halt; Tech's baseballers, who had lost a one-run opening day battle against Turners, won three in a row of their own; and an undermanned tennis team dropped three.

Track

Last Friday the Franklin Tech coop boys' track team defeated the Pioneer Panthers, 100-40. Tech dominated in the field and on the track, taking first place in 13 events and with scoring dispersed between 12 different athletes. Brayden McCord finished first in the triple jump and the 100m dash and placed second in the long

see **SPORTS** page A4



Turners Falls High School student Owen LaValley, competing on the Franklin Tech coop boys' track team,

clears 8'0" for first place in the pole vault as the Eagles host the Pioneer Panthers for a meet at TFHS.

– Featuring Our First Special All-Photo Section!

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Signs and Portents



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OIL from page A1

flow studies, lobbying for more water to be let over the dam as a requirement of the company's next federal license.

Earlier this month, Guertin and two fellow kayakers found equipment intended to contain and absorb oil from the river – floating containment booms and absorbent socks – stranded on the island at the center of the dam, along with a "quarter mile of braided nylon rope hanging out into the current," with a visible oil slick on the water below the boom. They contacted MassDEP.

On Tuesday, frustrated by what he saw as a lack of action, Guertin posted photos and video to the public Facebook group "Where's the Whitewater at?" showing the water's oily surface, sections of absorbent boom washed downstream, and additional absorbent material still staged on the land in unopened bags.

"It was almost like they went down there and started work, and then the four o'clock whistle went off and everybody just dropped what they were doing and went home," he said. "It's unbelievable to me. They know that they have sturgeon habitat right downstream from there."

Shortnose sturgeon, a federally listed endangered species, have a key breeding habitat in the river's so-called bypass stretch.

Guertin ventured a guess to the *Reporter* that hundreds of gallons of oil may have spilled into the river.

According to the state Waste Site & Reportable Releases Information database, FirstLight reported on December 27 that a week earlier a

dam." "FirstLight personnel are assessing the situation and are attempting to plan any remedial actions possible due to the large amount of ice," read this second report, also received by Joel Rees at MassDEP. This form estimated a spill of three gallons.

Reached late Wednesday for comment, Rees referred the *Reporter* to a press contact for the department, who said she would be unable to respond as of press time.

Leonard Greene, director of government affairs and communications for FirstLight, responded after regular working hours on Wednesday with an explanation of the situation in the seven weeks since that second filing.

According to Greene, "icing on the river" had prevented the company from responding until March 3, at which point it installed "a boom and absorbent 'socks' across the gate and the cove below the dam." On March 22, Greene wrote, "[h] igh river flows caused the boom to come loose," and "high flows over the dam have prevented the reattachment of the boom and the installation of additional booms downstream despite several attempts to do so. Thankfully the absorbent material remains in place."

The company sent the *Reporter* a photograph, date-stamped March 29, showing the broken orange boom as well as the absorbent line still stretched across the middle channel of the river below Gate 4.

Greene added that on Tuesday night the "last piece of ice" fell off the dam, and contractors were on site on Wednesday "to inject material around the leak and it has been stopped." He said the hydropower company has "regularly updated" MassDEP through the process. A second kayaker who visited the site with Guertin in early April, who spoke on condition of anonymity, described the absorbent line as being "completely saturated" by that time. "Below the boom, somewhat spanning the width, was an oil slick," he said, "and the rightmost gates, which are called Tainter gates, were dumping out, 10 or 12,000 [cubic feet per second of water]. So whatever had leaked was in the flow, and was just flushed downstream in the Connecticut River." Andrea Donlon, a river steward with the Connecticut River Conservancy, said she first heard about the leak from a concerned resident in mid-February and encouraged them to contact Mass-DEP. "I got a call again in late



Grace Martenson and her apprentice, Bri Leue, repair shoes at Barefoot Leatherworks in Millers Falls. They do cobbling, leather repair, and custom leatherwork. Catch them at the 30 Bridge Street shop between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, or between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays.



Very Grateful for the Lady K.

I am writing this encomium to the manager and staff of the Lady Killigrew Café. For the last fifteen years I have been a regular patron, and this letter is long overdue.

I am a depressive and as a result lead a somewhat reclusive life. Nevertheless, I have often looked for a hangout café because conversational interactions are important to me. Also, laughter is crucial to my self-therapy. Due to the always open and friendly atmosphere of the staff at the café I found my fa-

vorite hangout ever.

It remains something of a mystery exactly why I am always welcomed so effusively – the staff is quite young and I am seventy-five but no one ever calls me "boomer," at least not to my face. I even have my own cup and the manager always tells new hires that Bill has his own cup. It's remarkable!

In addition the manager always notifies me when she will arrive with her one-year old daughter, because what could be more beautiful to a

March, saying that there are booms notify t and the oil was getting out beyond may ha it," she said. "I was surprised it hadn't been dealt with." tograph

"I really don't get why something didn't immediately happen after it was called in to DEP again in the last few days in March," she added. "It's been a couple weeks now. And this is the beginning of the season where shortnose sturgeon are spawning, so it's a really critical time to make sure this is contained." Donlon shared correspondence from a colleague who said they had spoken with Rees on Tuesday. "FirstLight is supposed to pad the piston by tomorrow and Joel said the oil was 'mostly contained' behind a boom, but that they've been having some trouble with the containment system," the email read. "They do not know how much has leaked out at this point, but DEP is telling them 'very sternly' that it needs to be taken care of."

notify the public that hydraulic fluid may have been continually present in the river below the dam. (*See photograph, page B3.*)



septuagenarian than the smiling eyes of an infant? One member of the staff even gifted me with a ticket to the ballet! One by one my curmudgeonly credentials are dissipating.

It has been such a pleasure, in my twilight years, to converse with the people at the café that I must express my gratitude in a public manner.

With sincere regards,

Bill Johnson Leverett

CORRECTION

Two mistakes were noticed in our April 7 article on repatriating to the Lakota items from the site of the massacre at Wounded Knee kept at a private museum in Barre, Massachusetts, Lakota Delegation Reviews Library's Looted Artifacts (Page A1). Visiting Barre on behalf of descendants of survivors of the Wounded Knee massacre from the Cheyenne River Sioux Nation was Manny Iron Horse. His name was printed correctly in a photo caption, but misprinted in the article's text. Peter d'Errico also noticed a second inaccuracy. Numbers were accidentally inverted in a sentence describing the way four Hotchkiss Mountain Guns operated on the killing field at Wounded Knee. While we wrote that these guns "began lobbing 50-pound exploding shells at a rate of two per minute into the melee below," the phrase should have read "lobbing 2-pound exploding shells at a rate of 50 per minute."

sheen of oil had been spotted "below Gate #1, which was recently refurbished," and estimated that four gallons of hydraulic oil were spilled. Joel Rees at MassDEP acknowledged receiving this form.

On February 18 the company filed a form attesting that contamination had been removed using absorbent booms and that the threat of further release had been abated. Engineers Tighe & Bond submitted a 20-page report repeating the "four gallons" estimate and stating that "it is our opinion that site conditions are commensurate with a condition of No Significant Risk and a Permanent Solution with No Conditions is appropriate."

Six days later, FirstLight filed a new report saying that "a yellow staining was observed emanating from a hydraulic piston associated with [b]ascule Gate 4 in the

At no point during the last seven weeks did MassDEP, FirstLight Power, the town of Montague, or the Connecticut River Conservancy On Wednesday evening, Guertin updated the whitewater Facebook group with a new photograph showing a ladder laid against the piston on Gate 4. "Looks like DEP made them start fixing the leaking hydraulics," he wrote.

We apologize for these errors. And thank you to Mr. Derrico!

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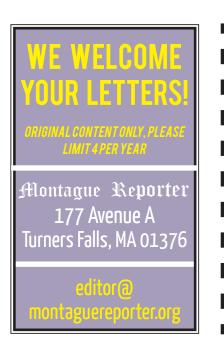
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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

I'm pleased to share that this Friday evening, April 15 at 6 p.m. Jon Bander and I will have a reception for *Submerged*, our mother-and-son art show at Hawks & Reed in Greenfield.

Jon and I had a similar exhibit there almost exactly five years ago, and we are coming back with sculpture, mixed media, and paintings that have an undersea theme. Check out our octopus, nautilus, jellyfish, boxfish, seahorse, flounder, and ammonite sculptures, have some refreshments, and say Hi between 6 and 7 p.m.!

This Saturday, April 16, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. join the LAVA Center in Greenfield for a **Visual and Literary Art Workshop** in connection with their June exhibit, *Words on Words*. LAVA will provide three stations with paper, markers, and other materials to play with words and images, and many quotes about language and words to stimulate your imagination. Submissions to *Words on Words* are due April 30. Find out more at *localaccess.org*.

The Montague Common Hall Open Mic series returns this Saturday, April 16 at 6:45 p.m. These Montague Center open mics will occur on the third Saturday of every month. Doors open at 6:15 and performers should sign up by 6:30 p.m. Names will be drawn, and a random

order will be created.

Expect to play two to four songs, depending on the number of performers. Bring your own drinks and food. Donations are welcome. Masks are optional, though unvaccinated attendees are encouraged to wear them. For more information email *gstamell@gmail.com*.

Enjoy another round of **free movies at the Shea Theater** this Saturday, April 16, the next Cinemastorm. The mystery double feature is "double-fisted" this time. Join the beer and film club by showing up at 7:30 p.m. at 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

The Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls will host school vacation week activities at its **Earth Week Investigation Station** on the theme of taking care of where we live. Activities are available daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., April 16 to April 24. Activities include a "What's wrong in the Watershed?" scavenger hunt, a spring outdoor bingo game, an outdoor StoryWalk featuring *One Earth* by Eileen Spinelli, and a Habitat Habits memory game.

On Wednesday, April 20, local gardener Michael Naldrett will present a workshop at the Carnegie Library on **Seed Starting for Beginners**. If you aren't sure how to start your garden, you can find out which seeds are best to sow in the ground and which you should start inside. Naldrett will fill you in on how to start seeds indoors without buying expensive equipment, too.

To register, email *librarydirec-tor@montague-ma.gov* or call (413) 863-3214. The workshop starts at 6 p.m. and will be located upstairs at the library.

Peter Christoph shares how he captures intimate portraits of birds in their natural habitat in **The Art of Bird Photography**, a presentation at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Thursday, April 21, at 7 p.m.

Christoph covers essential gear for photographing birds and discusses important settings and camera features that are useful for wildlife photography. He shares his approach to the art of bird photography in terms of lighting, composition, action, environment, and background. The event will be held in the Great Hall at the Center in Turners Falls.

Curious about what's happening these days in the world of electric cars? Keep up with all the changes by attending a streaming event for the documentary *Electrified: The Current State of Electric Vehicles,* followed by a panel discussion. Bring your questions. Sign up for the virtual event, which takes place Thursday, April 21 at 7:30 p.m., at *www.solarunitedneighbors.org.*

Buy local produce at a mini **popup farmers market in Northfield** on Friday, April 22 from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. at Fiddleheads Gallery, located at 105 Main Street. This special market complements "From Fields to Table," the art exhibit running through April 24 at the gallery.

The Deerfield Valley Art Association, which is sponsoring its **annual Photography Show** at the gallery, is looking for photographers to submit their framed work for the show by appointment on April 22, 24, and 25. There is no theme, and all work must be for sale.

The exhibit will run from April 29 to June 12. Submission fees are \$10 for one photo, \$20 for three, or \$25 for four to six, and prizes will be awarded. To apply, contact Marge Anderson at *margedvaa@gmail.com*.

Greenfield musician Michael Nix has put together a **New Amer**ican Banjo Festival for Saturday, April 23 at the Shea Theater. The festival will explore performance styles old and new with American old time, folk music, ragtime, and early jazz, with a focus on classic fingerstyle banjo.

Detroit banjo virtuoso Aron Jonah Lewis joins Nix, playing compositions from the New Classic Banjo Project with Chris Devine (fiddle) and Joseph Fitzpatrick (hand drums). Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 on festival day. The live festival stream is free, although donations are appreciated. Ticket and streaming information can be found at *www.sheatheater.org*.

The New Salem Public Library celebrates Earth Day with "Earth Rhythms: Songs for the Environment" on Saturday, April 23 at 11 a.m. with local musician and storyteller Roger Tincknell. This is a participatory program of songs, stories, and legends that celebrate and teach environmental awareness and responsibility. The program will be held outside (weather permitting) or indoors if needed. To register, call the library at (978) 544-6334 or email *n_salem@cwmars.org*.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Colrain Veterans Memorial Fund Tournament Thomas Memorial Golf & Country Club Saturday, May 7 (Rain date May 8) 9:00 AM Start 4-person scramble: \$260 per team Cash prizes, Raffles Free hot dogs for golfers on the course To benefit Colrain

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GUEST EDITORIAL

By DAVID DETMOLD

PITTSFIELD – It was spitting sleet and snow, the wind was gusting from the west as about 200 people marched in a solemn procession down North Street in Pittsfield on Sunday afternoon, April 10, to protest the fatal police shooting of

Justice for Miguel Estrella!



The park was ringed with placards of women's faces and slogans in various languages saying things like *Men, You are Not Entitled to My Body.* The blowing snow melted on the cheeks of the listeners, mingling with their tears.

"With his loving heart for his Mama and his struggling commu-



Miguel Estrella.

Estrella was a 22-year-old Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity employee aspiring to be an electrician who, in the midst of a mental health crisis on the night of March 25, was reportedly cutting himself with a knife in front of his apartment building on the 200 block of Onota Street when family members called 911 for help. EMTs responded to the call and took the knife away, but Estrella refused treatment.

Minutes later, family members called 911 a second time, detailing Estrella's history with mental illness. Police officers responded before EMTs arrived. Finding Estrella again in the street with a knife, police first tried using TASERs on him before one of the officers shot him twice in the chest, killing him.

Estrella's death remains under investigation by Berkshire County district attorney Andrea Harrington, who had met with the NAACP Berkshire branch only three weeks earlier to discuss her "Blueprint for Safety and Justice" and to answer questions about improving ANAELISA JACOBSEN PHOTO

Family and friends of Miguel Estrella gathered at Pittsfield's city hall Sunday.

police-community relations in Pittsfield. The police incident report, and the names of the officers involved in the shooting, have not been released afe

to the public. The central streets of the city were blocked to traffic Sunday afternoon. DPW workers, rather than police officers, were providing safety for the march.

"We can keep each other safe," said Meg Bossong of Invest in Pittsfield. "We are here to remember and honor Miguel Estrella, a son, a brother, a mentor, and a dreamer."

Bossong was among many who had called on the Pittsfield City Council to reduce the \$11.5 million annual police budget in 2021 – and to increase funding for mental health services in the city.

"I know how this city treats its people of color," said Kamaar Taliaferro, NAACP member. "Enough is enough!"

"Justice for Miguel!" responded the crowd, after the march paused in front of the city hall and police station to observe a moment of silence.

The march continued down North Street to Park Square, where Estrella's family and close friends stood beneath the Civil War statue, under the prominent bas relief of the Massachusetts Seal, with an upraised sword poised above the figure of an Indigenous person. The lovely tree that once shaded the central green had been cut down to a stump two years earlier and not replanted. nity, Miguel has touched us!" said Anaelisa Jacobsen of Manos Unidas Multicultural Educational Cooperative.

Dubois Thomas, neighborhood revitalization director for Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity, said he recognized Miguel's leadership potential when Miguel first became involved in building shelter for his neighbors at the age of 15. "He was determined, knowing that the road to becoming an electrician is very long," Dubois said. "His success would be for the success of the community."

"Our system killed Miguel," he added, "and it is up to us to change that system now."

"Miguel lives in our hearts," said his mother, Marisol Estrella. "He is a marvelous person. He is joy. He always gave me joy. The question is, 'What happened to Miguel on the 25th of March?' I want an answer."

David Detmold is a founding editor of the Montague Reporter. He lives in the village he would prefer be called Great Falls. 413-625-9850 ndole@crocker.com

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SPORTS from page A1

jump, which was won by Joe Little. Brody Williams won the shot put and javelin, and he finished second in discus. Anthony Gallo had wins in the mile and two-mile and finished third in the 800m.

Cameren Candelaria broke the tape in the 200m race and took second place in both the triple jump and the 100m dash; Grayson Rollins won the discus and finished second in the javelin; Owen LaValley won the pole vault and finished third in the 400m hurdles, which were won by Patrick Connell, Jr.

The 100m hurdles, meanwhile, were won by David Stowe, who finished third in the pole vault.

Travis Eastman took second place in both the 100m and 400m hurdles, and Alexander McKay also placed second in two events, the mile and 400m. Bradley LeBlanc finished second in the 200m, David Rodriguez took third in the 100m dash, and Gabriel McCassie earned a point in the shot put with his third-place finish.

And Candelaria, Little, McCord and Rodriguez gave Tech 5 additional points, winning the 4 x 100m relay.

Softball

The Franklin Tech Softball Eagles won by a combined total of 24-1 this week, defeating the Smith Academy Falcons 12-0 on Monday and Hoosac Valley 12-1 on Tuesday. The lopsided victories bring their season run surplus to 47-1.

Tech's home field does not have a fence, but the girls are still hitting homers, with four different batters registering four-baggers in the first three games.

In Monday's dustup, Hannah Gilbert cracked the ball deep into center, rounded second, and was waved home by coach Joe Gamache for a two-run home run. Lauren Ross and Kylee Gamache had to settle for triples, and Cordelia Guerin hit a double.

Defensively, it was a perfect game. The Tech fielders made zero errors, and in the circle, Ross allowed no runs, no hits, and no walks and struck out 13 of the 15 batters she faced.

The Lady Birds gave up their first run of the season on Tuesday. The Hoosac Hurricanes scored in the second inning and kept Tech off the scoreboard until the fourth,



Turners Falls' Levin Prodecki makes the play for an out as Mohawk's Owen Lake slides into second. The Thunder blanked the Mohawk Trail Warriors 5-0 at TFHS.

when they answered with two.

The Eagles finally exploded in the fifth, tallying 9 more runs, and put up a final insurance run in the sixth.

Ross saw her no-hit streak come to an end as the Hurricanes managed to get in five hits.

At the plate, Gilbert hit for the cycle, going 4-for-4 with a single, double, triple, and home run. Kendra Campbell also hit an inside-the-park homer, and Kaitlin Trudeau clocked a triple.

The Franklin Tech Softball Eagles host the Turners Falls Thunder next Monday.

The Thunder lost their own first game in over a year this past Monday, in a seesaw battle against the Easthampton Maroon Eagles.

Blue scored two runs in the first inning, and held onto that lead until the top of the fourth when Eastie tied it up. The Eagles then went ahead by two in the fifth, but Blue scored three in the bottom of the sixth to leapfrog to a 5-4 lead.

But when the Eagles put up four more in the seventh, Powertown was unable to answer, and Easthampton defeated Big Blue by an 8-5 final.

Coach Gary Mullins is not about to make excuses for the loss, but one of my sources who was at the game did. "We have three eighth-graders playing varsity," he explained, "and Easthampton is in a higher division."

So it seems that the Thunder is a work in progress, but I would never rule them out of any game.

Cady Wozniak, Morgan Do-

bias, and Madison Liimatainen all hit doubles for Turners and Emily Young went 2-for-4. In the circle, Liimatainen allowed five hits, gave six walks, and struck out 14.

Powertown faced another seesaw game on Tuesday but came out on top, out-slugging the Taconic Golden Braves 11 to 9.

Liimatainen finished with a home run, a double and four RBIs; on the mound, she gave up eight hits, walked six, and struck out 16.

Emily Young went 4-for-4 with a homer and a double, Paige Sulda had two doubles, and Dobias went 3-for-3 and knocked in four runs.

Baseball

The Baseball Thunder, meanwhile, saw a winning streak come to an end this week. Winless last season, the Thunder rocketed out to a 3-0 record before coming back to earth on Wednesday.

Last Friday they shut out Mohawk, scoring four in the first and another in the third. Both defenses buckled down, but Turners held

on to win 5-0.

They traveled to the Berkshires on Monday, where they doubled up the Hoosac Hurricanes 8-4. This game was an even contest through four innings, but Powertown scored four runs in the top of the fifth to take a 6-2 lead. Each team then put across two more runs.

Alex Quezada and Levin Prondecki each went 2-for-4 at the plate, and Derke Wissman batted in one.

Powertown's balloon came back to earth on Wednesday as they were blanked, 10-0, against the Pioneer Panthers up in Northfield shortly before press time. On Thursday, Blue will host the McCann Green Hornets.

Franklin Tech, meanwhile, is now on a 3-0 streak of their own, defeating Smith Academy 7-5, Pathfinder 10-5, and Mohawk 13-0.

Tennis

Frontier 4 – TFHS 1 Pope Francis 5 – TFHS 0

Pioneer Christian 5 – *TFHS* 0

The Turners-Tech boys' tennis team continues to have growing pains. Because of low numbers, they've had to forfeit two matches in every contest. This does not take away from their sportsmanship.

Last Friday, Mike Boyle won first singles in a third-set tiebreaker, 7-5, 3-6, 10-5. In the Pope Francis match the following Monday, he won eight games 6-4, 6-4, and the next day at Pioneer Valley Christian Academy, he forced his opponent to win seven games in both sets, 7-5, 7-5.

Other players making noise are Alex Sabin, who lost a third-set tiebreaker 1-6, 6-4, 10-7 in second singles against Pioneer Christian, and Jacob Reich and John Carmichael, playing first doubles.

Turners is not the only squad suffering from a dearth of athletes - at least two area schools didn't have enough boys to field tennis teams at all this year.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS Community Walk & Scavenger Hunt

TURNERS FALLS - The Brick House Community Connections Coalition is organizing a community walk on the Turners Falls Bike Path, which involves a sensory nature scavenger hunt. It (Earth Day) and people of all ages are welcome to join us.

We'll meet at the Discovery Center at 4 p.m. and will end up back there afterward, where we'll get a tour of their exhibits and enjoy some snacks and beverages. For more information, please will take place on Friday, April 22 contact Stacey Langknecht at slangknecht@brickhousecrc.org or (413) 800-2496.

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Montague Community Television News

Tree-Pruning Vid

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – The tree advisory committee of Montague has produced a Tree Pruning workshop with Michael Marcotrigiano, a former committee member and retired director of Smith Botanical Garden, and Walker Korby, a current of tree advisory committee member. Do take advantage of this recording to learn how trees grow, and what you can do to help them grow strong and healthy!

The Montague selectboard meeting from April 4 comes in two parts. Be sure to view both on the MCTV Vimeo page, along with Montague's finance committee meeting from April 6 and the cable advisory committee meeting from April 7.

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

linked to montaguety.org under the tab "Videos." All community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 17, as well as featured on the Vimeo page.

MCTV is always available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided. We are also still looking for board members, so if you would like to stop in for a meeting, even just to check the vibe, email infomontaguetv@gmail.com for a link to the Zoom! The next meeting is coming up on April 21.

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

New Creative Pathways for Artists

TURNERS FALLS – Calling artists from all creative realms: join Terry Jenoure composer, violinist, vocalist, and her sextet The Portal to collaborate, improvise, and create a new piece of art together.

The ensemble will lead workshops for local artists at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, June 6 and Tuesday, June 7. If you are yearning for inspiration, collaboration, a fresh way of experiencing your art, this is for you.

Artists from all disciplines are invited to come and collaborate with these veteran musicians. Experience possibilities for blending improvised music with your own creations. All artforms are welcome - bring poetry, drama, paintings, dance, instruments, voice, or other works and be part of this workshop. Poets, playwrights, composers,

painters, visual artists, sound artists, sculptors, vocalists, or artists of any art form imaginable are invited to come to the Shea to open up new creative possibilities with these world-class musical improvisers to create a new piece of art.

Collaborating onstage with Jenoure are Angelica Sanchez, piano; Wayne Smith, cello; Avery Sharpe, bass; Joe Fonda, bass; and Reggie Nicholson, drums. Twenty artists will be chosen to participate.

If you are interested, send one sample of your work no later than May 1 to jenoure@admin.umass. edu and fill out this short form: tinyurl.com/CreativePathways . All entries will be juried and final decisions made by May 15. To learn more about Jenoure's work, visit www.terryjenoure.com. Hear The Portal perform at terryjenoure. hearnow.com.

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LEVERETT from page A1

been brought before the board multiple times over a period of decades, they believed the problem has worsened due in part to the roads appearing in GPS directions services.

Highway superintendent Matt Boucher, police chief Scott Minckler, and selectboard member Tom Hankinson recently met at the intersection and came up with the threestop-sign idea.

All who spoke at Tuesday's meeting agreed that changes needed to be made, and discussion was mainly on the best solution. The idea of a "T" intersection, along with a "pile of signs" intended to reduce speeds and notify drivers of the upcoming stop, was the result. Boucher said the idea was "to start small and work forward," and this change could be easily modified in the future if it didn't work out.

placement of three to four speed humps on Two Mile Road in response to a request from residents. The request was prompted by a recent accident and reports of increased speeding; residents said several new families with small children had moved into the residential

Historic Experience

neighborhood in recent years.

Historical commission member Susan Lynton received approval for two grant applications to fund the renovation of the Slarrow sawmill and the Field and Moore's Corners museums in order to create "one participatory museum experience with co-working and business rental spaces." If awarded, the first grant would provide \$150,000 for planning, the second \$1.25 million or more for renovations.

Lynton touted the project as The board also approved the promoting economic development

alongside historical preservation.

Board member Melissa Colbert said it sounded like a good idea, but that the amount seemed low. Lynton responded that the amount was a rough estimate, and the amount might be raised in the application as further estimates are forthcoming; either way, she said, further funds could be raised if necessary. Responding to questions about maintenance if the project goes through, Lynton said she had an "operational model" in hand.

Work on the project and applications was completed by the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill, the Leverett Historical Commission, the Leverett Historical Society, and others. The Leverett Historical Society (LHS) was named on the applications due to being the only one of the groups having the 501(c)3 non-profit designation required by the grants.

Board chair Julie Shively recused

Wendell Town Meeting Declines **Posting Future Town Meetings Online**

By JOSH HEINEMANN

On the evening of April 6 more than 30 Wendell citizens came to a special town meeting and, in the course of 40 minutes, approved all but one of the articles. That one article would have made the town website eligible as an alternate public posting place for meetings, and it was passed over after selectboard chair Dan Keller so moved.

Citizen Doug Smith said many Wendell citizens were not even aware of this town meeting because there is now only one public posting site, the entryway to the town office building. He suggested placing signs on roadsides around the town.

Voters unanimously moved \$637,656 from free cash into stabilization, and used \$30,000 from stabilization to add to the highway department's non-snow and ice account.

With three dissenting votes, the town moved another \$35,000 from stabilization into a new capital equipment account. The original article had specified putting that money toward a new highway department tractor.

Highway commission chair Phil Delorey said the

old tractor is dangerous, with no roll bar or other protection for its major use, pulling a brush hog on roadside slopes. Though its transmission has been rebuilt, the tractor's longevity is considered limited. Citizen Adam Zaykoski said he runs a farm tractor from the 1940s that is still dependable.

With the wording changed, voters approved the article by hand vote.

Voters approved using \$20,000 from the town rehab loan payback account for painting the town hall, and \$20,000 for a grant match toward installing solar panels and battery storage at the highway garage. The highway garage has the best south-facing town-owned roof.

They approved putting \$40,000 from the municipal light plant (MLP) retained earnings fund into an emergency and unanticipated reserve fund, \$30,745 into an MLP stabilization fund, and \$8,728 to the town's general fund for the broadband debt service payment.

Voters approved an amendment to Wendell's wetland protection bylaw after conservation commission member Ward Smith explained it did not change the scope of that bylaw, passed in 2017, but rather complemented and clarified it.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Inflation Hits Trash Hauling

By KEITH WATERS*

At Monday's meeting, the Erving selectboard heard that COVID numbers are low – there were only three

Bembury both agreed that on the application, a reference to future housing on Care Drive should be amended to specify it as "senior housing."

enumerated a number of other options, all about the same, more expensive. Casella owns its own dump site in Holvoke, and has offered disposal there, but the price they offer was not much better, and they specified that it would increase each year by either 5% or the Consumer Price Index, whichever is higher. Did someone say inflation? While the selectboard considers the best plan, it agreed to ask Brian Smith to ask Casella if they would haul at the rate offered in their contract offer before it is signed. Community Eco Power's bankruptcy becomes final April 15, so it needs to get settled soon.

herself from the deliberations due to her membership in the LHS, though she expressed her personal opinion in favor, and assured the board that the LHS was in good shape to fulfill its role if the grants are approved.

Celebrate in Our Pages

The board discussed several requests from Sam Black of the Leverett Village Co-op, beginning with a request that the town accept advertising in the town newsletter. Black said Leverett was widely spread out and saw the idea as a way to bring the town together, and that he thought of it "less as advertising, more as celebrating."

Planning board member Richard Nathhorst said he guaranteed there would be objections, and wondered how they would be resolved. Suggestions were made that if such advertising was accepted, it would need to be confined to local businesses, and simple, such as including only names, locations and contact information.

Resident Shannon Gamble quipped that in case of objections, there were several mediators in town.

Black also inquired about advertising on the town website. Town clerk Lisa Stratford said she felt that was out of the question.

Others noted that other town websites contain advertising. Board member Tom Hankinson said a dedicated commercial page might work.

Black also asked about posting directional signs along roadways with mileage to the coop, saying the facility was of general interest and hosted a large number of events.

"Go for it," Shively responded. "Wait for the blowback."

Other Business

Response to the board's switch from GoToMeeting to the Zoom system for remote participation in town meetings was positive, with multiple residents reporting improved sound quality coming along with the increased functionality that prompted the change.

The board signed the slate of warrant articles for town meeting on April 30. They tentatively scheduled the meeting to be outdoors again, with the school as a backup in case of rain, but will post a decision closer to the date.

The board appointed Andrew Jablonski to the position of firefighter.



HOUSING REHABILITATION SPECIALIST Full-time position in Turners Falls, MA.

Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority is hiring for a full-time Housing Rehabilitation Specialist. This position provides technical support to the grant-funded housing rehabilitation programs administered by the authority's Community Development Department.

Essential Functions:

- · Inspect homes to identify violations of building and sanitary codes. · Identify potential energy efficiency upgrades.
- Prepare work write-ups, cost estimates, and bid specifications.
 Oversee the bidding and construction phase of each housing rehabilitation project.
- General Experience and Qualifications: • 3 years experience in building construction trade, housing rehabilitation, or
 - code enforcement.
 - Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite.

· Ability to maintain accurate records and reports on multiple projects. Other:

• Valid driver's license, safe driving record, and access to reliable transportation required. Travel is required to all 26 towns in Franklin County.

Interested candidates should submit a resume to fcrhra.hr@gmail.com and visit fcrhra.org/careers for more information.

INFORMATION SESSION

Wednesday, April 27 - 6 p.m. Montague Center Volunteer Fire Dept. 28 Old Sunderland Road, Montague

The Montague Parks & Recreation Department and Montague Center Park Planning Committee will be hosting an information session regarding the design of Montague Center Park on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 at 6 p.m. The meeting will be neid in the Community Room at the Montague Center Volunteer Fire Department, located at 28 Old Sunderland Road, Montague Center. Public participation is welcomed. For additional information, please call Montague Parks & Recreation at (413) 863-3216.

new cases in Erving last week.**

The bulk of the meeting was spent on the discussion of two topics: a possible application to the Complete Neighborhoods Partnership (CMP), and trash removal. There was some discussion of the warrant for the May 11 annual town meeting; some typos are to be corrected.

The CNP is a project of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), which "was founded in 1985 as a statewide, nonprofit quasi-public organization," according to its website. Erving has been invited to join a regional Franklin County application.

The selectboard seemed interested in the possibility that the CNP could help the town envision best methods to improve public transportation and affordable housing. The board acknowledged that there is some vocal opposition to affordable housing in Erving, but seemed open to the idea of trying to figure out what it could possibly look like in the town.

Scott Bastarache and William

Assistant planner Mariah Kurtz pointed out that as a town with zero affordable housing, Erving is not in the position to specify a certain future housing development as "senior," the state would likely not accept it. All seemed to agree that it would be a good plan to get some other affordable housing in town first so that a development on Care Drive, next to the senior center, could then be designated as senior housing.

It was agreed to continue working on the application.

About two years ago, the town entered a three-year contract to have Casella Waste Systems haul its trash to a site in Agawam owned by Community Eco Power. That company has just finalized its bankruptcy and its current contracts are being bought by multiple entities. A firm called F&G Recycling is buying the portion that includes the town of Erving's contract, and the rates are going up – F&G is offering a contract at about a 16% increase.

Town administrator Brian Smith

The next selectboard meeting is on April 25, and the town election is the following Monday, May 2.

* The town of Erving has a new website. It looks good, but was not fully functional on this reporter's computer, I couldn't get to the "Selectboard" link from the dropdown "Government" section.

** Although – perhaps as an example of the wideness of human experiences in this world - this reporter has heard of the most cases reported by friends in the last few weeks, none serious thankfully.

TOWN OF ERVING RECREATION COMMISSION HIRING for SUMMER PARK COUNSELORS

Are you looking for a fulfilling summer job? Do you enjoy interacting with children? Then look no further, the ERVING SUMMER PARK PROGRAM is the place for you! We are currently seeking Summer Park Counselors to join our 2022 team.

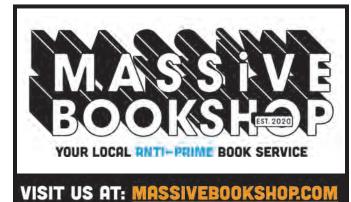
Requirements:

- Must be at least 16 years of age
 Energetic, Punctual, Responsible, Cooperative, Flexible, Creative, and have experience with children
- Counselor/childcare experience not required, but preferred
- Lifeguard certification is a PLUS! (potential for certification reimbursement)
 Training/planning begins in May. Summer Park Season runs July 11 August 12

This position is a seasonal employment opportunity. This position and the Town's ability to operate the Summer Park Program are subject to restrictions of any State of Emergency issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as the Town of Erving related to COVID-19. The position description is available online. Applications can be completed by visiting www.erving-ma.gov/employment.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Preference is given to applications received by April 30, 2022. A CORI check will be performed on the successful candidate. The Town of Erving is a drug-free workplace. The Town of Erving is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Questions can be sent to careers@erving-ma.gov.







LOVE from page A1

the evils of central planning.

Galizio is Money Game's executive producer and, according to Lowenthal, its number-one investor and the source of its "story," though the first script credit goes to one of his college hockey teammates.

"If inflation is higher than it is today starting to impact people's pocketbooks then we're going to have a massive hit," Galizio said last November in an online interview with a precious metals analyst. "The theme of the movie is, capitalism requires risk to allocate scarce resources; when the feds started intervening in markets, you saw stocks go up, but you saw the real economy slow."

After an initial round of courting investors, the pair decided to move forward with a \$950,000 budget. Lead actor Daniel Washington signed on in the fall, and helped Lowenthal develop the script; just after Christmas Russ D Martin, a 25-year industry veteran, signed on as producer.

"Pretty much everyone else came in afterwards," Martin says. "We put a whole circus together real fast."

Changing Locations

"This film is showing the beauty of Turners Falls," Lowenthal, waiting on a breakfast order at the Shady Glen, tells the Reporter. "Truth is, it's a small-budget film, so the amount of money I'm bringing in is much smaller than the amount of attention and awareness of how beautiful the area is."

To scout locations Lowenthal enlisted Jules Findlay, a Greenfield native, Northfield Mount Hermon alumnus, and equity stage actor; the two met on a Netflix set in Boston.

No façades, literal or otherwise, are necessary – Money Game is set in Turners Falls, in 2021. (Lowenthal jokes that the only departure from reality is that in the film universe, Hubie's Tavern is still open.)

There are around ten filming locations, including a mansion in Deerfield and the Greenfield Airbnb where Wednesday's scenes are being shot, which needed to be "dressed down" to become a lived-in home of a working class widower and his daughters.

Some of the locations have had to change - for example, one spot in Millers Falls was dropped when it was determined it could not safely accommodate parking for the project's three box trucks. And Franklin County Technical School, it turns out, can serve as four different places in the script.

"I think it's going to be kind of a love letter to our area," says Kat Miller, another Greenfielder and the movie's second-second assistant director. "He's excited to be shooting it locally, using a lot of local talent and regional talent."

A graphic designer by trade, Miller first met Lowenthal while working as a stills photographer on the Hitler-Bigfoot project; she now works in the industry "when it comes to town."







"The union kind of gives us a baseline way of working," Desanti explains. "It's very set, and it kind of leads our protocols - when we have an 11 o'clock call time, we always have to have lunch six hours later. It gives us a routine, kind of in a good way."

As one of the only remaining industries in the US where workers set working conditions to this extent, entertainment's approach to work during the COVID-19 pandemic has been unique. The Screen Actors Guild, IATSE, Directors Guild, and the Teamsters published a joint report in June 2020 titled "The Safe Way Forward," which became the industry's core standard for managing the disease's risks and has been gradually amended ever since.

Production is split into concentric zones, each with its own rules including frequency of testing and, in urban environments, the extent of isolation from the general population.

"In rural areas like here, we're allowed to be a little more lax," says David Jester, the movie's COVID compliance officer. Jester, a firefighter-paramedic from Brunswick, Maine, first worked with several other members of Money Game's crew on a Stephen King production in his home state.

Though Jester usually administers special disposable PCR tests, everyone who shows up on Wednesday is receiving a rapid antigen test; he scrawls initials and start times in Sharpie on each test as it cures. "If everyone's safe and everyone's healthy, and we keep this testing going," he says, "we can keep the production going."

According to Desanti, as of this week there have been no positive hits, though one "scare" prompted a change in production schedule.

Nice and Small

Wednesday's challenge is bees, which emerge unexpectedly from the front lawn of the Airbnb, where the gaffers have been setting up heavy lighting equipment. There is chatter about EpiPens over the walkie-talkies.

Once the cameras, lighting, and set dressing are all in place, the call is made for the cast to be driven over. They have been worked over by wardrobe, hair, and makeup and are fitted with hidden lavalier microphones.

A generator hums softly in the backyard as crew who are on standby peruse the craft table. Curious neighbors slow down and peer as they pass by, but with all of today's action hidden away indoors, there is not much to see.

"We can be a lot," Stevens acknowledges of a film shoot's presence in a small town. "You show up with a lot of trucks You get mixed feelings: people sometimes love film crews because you can give a lot of local businesses a lot of extra business, but you can also really tick off the neighbors if you're not really cautious of where you're setting up, and noise and timing."

"A nice thing, when it's small, is every dime is getting spent locally," says Russ Martin, the producer. "On the higher end, the

"Graphic design is very individual," Miller says. "Working on a film is such a collaborative process; it's a very unique kind of creative experience. You get to meet so many amazing people from all over the place who have incredibly different skills."

Taking Precautions

"Every day it's a new office, it's a new space, it's a new day – there's nothing that's the same, which I think is the coolest part of what we do," says Grace Desanti. "I have an office role in this, but my office is contained in a Cheez-It box, and it goes with me wherever I need to go."

Desanti gestures at what is, indeed, a Cheez-It box stuffed with folders and envelopes. She has worked on previous projects as a script supervisor, but on Money Game she is an associate producer - running payroll, running daily reports tracking production targets, and ensuring that the various protocols set by union contracts are being followed.

While the actors have one union, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) is an umbrella encompassing locals organized by craft, including the national Cinematographers Guild and the regional Studio Mechanics.

Top: Filming in front of Great Falls Market in Turners last Saturday. Above: Gaffers prepare lighting on Wednesday atop a hill of bees. Below: Actor Krishna Miller is outfitted by (clockwise from left) sound, wardrobe, and mom. Bottom: Gear is staged on the lawn.

pay is better, but it's actually a little more exhausting spiritually."

Over the course of his career, Martin says, he has watched this industry grow enough in the Northeast that professionals can now maintain careers here without having to travel to California. "Everybody's been doing this for pretty good long while, so everybody's calm and relaxed," he adds. "And we have one of the best teams in New England on this one. That's sheer luck, and the fact that Julian knows everybody."

Josh Matusz, a production assistant from Turners Falls, reports that he is "absolutely pumped" to be working on his first film set. He has otherwise been working at music festivals, and he found out about the job directly from Lowenthal.

"One of the reasons I want to do this to produce jobs that will pay more than the average job," Lowenthal tells the Reporter. "The more work that I can produce, the more people I can get in - get a toe in, and if they enjoy it, make it full time."

"This is the first time a lot of these people are put in these positions," he continues. "And man, it's beautiful... When we're filming, it's a very magical, special energy of everyone coming together."



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MONTAGUE from page A1

he added, particularly for economic development, and that while Montague has been successful in applying for them, the process - including bidding under state procurement - is extremely labor-intensive.

He then showed a chart of the proposed division of responsibilities between his position and his proposed assistant's. The new position would focus on economic and community development, building and facilities planning, among other responsibilities, and would serve as the town's Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator. This would allow the chief administrator to focus on "governance and related policy," human resources, collective bargaining with the town's unions, and "personnel management systems."

If both proposals pass, the selectboard's departmental budget would increase by \$119,000, including a projected \$86,000 cost for the assistant town administrator. This estimate does not include any benefit increases for the two positions.

The meeting was well-attended, with a number of speakers expressing skepticism of the proposal. Finance committee member John Hanold, who has been critical of the staff expansion, said he remained uncertain about the division of labor between the town administrator and the assistant. He expressed concern that the assistant position may be "over-spec'd," increasing the supply of work without an equivalent increase in the number of staff hours.

Town meeting member Mike Naughton said he felt the shift away from "stable funding" such as Chapter 90 highway aid, which has been level-funded for nearly ten years, toward grant funding of local programs was a "bad policy decision on the state level." He argued that towns should more aggressively "push back" against this trend rather than just trying to "take advantage" of it.

Naughton also suggested that the added staff capacity should go into departments themselves, such as the department of public works (DPW), rather than being centralized at town hall.

"We are running a \$20 million business," said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, who has generally supported the staff expansions. "But we don't even do annual [staff] reviews, from an HR perspective."

pollution control facility (WPCF) into a three-part "Article 4."

There was confusion about whether the board had voted to endorse some articles it placed on the warrant at that meeting, so on April 11, the board re-voted a series of articles to make it clear they were also being recommended. But "Article 4," which was subsequently broken up into three separate articles, was not revoted.

Meanwhile, at its April 6 meeting, the town finance committee failed to endorse the new staff positions by a 3–3 tie vote. Although a quorum of the selectboard was present and although they appeared to support the expansions, they did not take a formal vote.

Steve Ellis has told the Reporter he believes the board has officially endorsed the new positions, but as of this writing we have been unable to confirm when that vote took place.

On Wednesday night, the fin com voted unanimously to endorse what is now called Article 5, for the assistant to the administrative assistant at town hall, and Article 6, for the WPCF laboratory manager. The vote on Article 4, now limited to the creation of an assistant town administrator position, remained at 3–3.

Member Greg Garrison, who has supported the assistant town admin, objected to the warrant saying the fin com "does not recommend" Article 4 and only mentioning the reasons for the nay votes. He said this would not reflect "the tenor of the finance committee discussion" of the issue.

The board agreed to record the tie vote and allow Garrison to insert reasons for the "yes votes" onto the warrant or separately in materials mailed to town meeting members.

Road Money

The April 6 finance committee meeting which gridlocked on the staff positions did resolve a controversy involving the funding of a "discretionary account" for emergency purchases and repairs of equipment at the DPW.

The account has recently been funded at \$100,000 annually, and that was the amount originally requested by DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron. However, the capital improvements committee, followed by the fin com and selectboard, initially recommended that this be reduced to \$50,000, pointing to a large unspent balance earlier this year. Bergeron objected to the cut, noting higher projected spending from this fund later in the fiscal year, and on April 6 the fin com and selectboard endorsed a compromise, worked out by Bergeron and the capital improvements committee, to fund the article at \$75,000.

concerns of Turners Falls tree committee member David Detmold.

Selectboard member Matt Lord asked whether the outdoor seating would conflict with the pollinator gardens, a project sponsored by the Brick House Community Resource Center, and was told by RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto that members of the planning department would inspect the area this Thursday. "We'll get it all straightened out," she said.

The board voted to approve a seasonal wine and malt beverage license for Santo Taco, a trailer serving Mexican food owned by Ivette Mateos Reyes and Eric Dew, at the end of Second Street. Dew noted that they rent the space from Nova Motorcycles.

Kuklewicz supported the license, but said the owners of the food stand needed to "make sure that the beverages don't leave the area."

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell asked if the proposed license put Montague over the state's liquor license limit, requiring the legislature to approve an additional license. Administrative assistant Wendy Bogusz said that according to her research, the town was allowed one additional "seasonal license." The license will be valid from April 1 to January 15, though the truck will probably not operate for that entire period.

Cultural Front

The board appointed Montague Center resident Kathy Lynch to the steering committee of RiverCulture, and approved the use of the Montague Center Common for the annual May Day Festival at the request of Suzanne LoManto.

LoManto told the board that this is the first year RiverCulture will be sponsoring the event, which for several decades had been organized on an "informal" basis.

Rachel Ackerman of Musica Franklin requested a license for outdoor music at Unity Park on June 4, and tree committee member David Detmold asked the board to approve a proclamation for Arbor Day which is Friday, April 29. The board approved both requests.

Detmold read a list of tree-planting events scheduled for different town villages that Friday.

Urban Planning

The board voted to execute a purchase and sale agreement with Nova Real Estate, LLC for the property at 500 Avenue A, the former DPW garage. Ellis said the town still needs to negotiate a land development agreement with Nova, then finalize the transfer of the deed. Ellis also told the board about an invitation from the state agency MassDevelopment to participate in the Portico Project, an application for a federal technical assistance grant for economic development. The board voted to approve Montague's participation. He gave an update on the Fifth Street pedestrian bridge project, which may entail the temporary closure this summer of the adjacent auto bridge across the power canal. Ellis said Montague has an opportunity to apply for a federal "earmark," a process where representatives in the US congress add "shovel-ready" projects to existing legislation, if it can submit a proposal to representative Jim Mc-Govern's office by this Thursday. He suggested that the most fully

Volunteer Opportunity MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Town of Montague has two openings on its Finance Committee! One is available immediately, and the other as of July 1, 2022. The Finance Committee is an advisory group comprised of seven residents who are involved in the development of the Town's annual budget and other matters related to the town's finances and fiscal health. Serving on this committee is a great opportunity for a person who wants to learn about municipal finance and local government. The current vacancies are for a 3-year term that ends in 2025 and a two year term that ends in 2024.

The Finance Committee meets on Wednesday evenings; weekly from January-May and as needed at other times of the year. These meetings are open to the public, and we encourage potential candidates to attend a few before submitting a letter of interest to the Finance Committee and the Town Moderator at Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

Members of the committee welcome questions, and would be happy to talk with you about what the role entails. For more information, visit the Finance Committee's pages on www.montague-ma.gov, and contact the committee members listed there.

The Town of Montague is an equal opportunity provider and employer, and strongly encourages candidates from diverse social and economic backgrounds.

developed design in the town's "pocket" is a portion of the ongoing Avenue A streetscape project. The board approved.

The board executed a \$17,000 contract for painting and sealing the basketball court and walkway at Unity Park, as well as a \$17,500 contract for HVAC improvements at the "old Town Hall," which houses the Montague Center branch library.

Other Business

Ellis shared news of the settlement of a lawsuit against manufacturers who have produced and distributed products containing opioids. Massachusetts will receive approximately an approximately \$5 million allocation, of which 40% will be divided among municipalities.

He also noted that new cannabis legislation which recently passed the state senate, intended to produce greater equity in the emerging industry, showed "progress with regard to community voice" in terms of its impact on existing agreements towns have negotiated with cannabis firms.

After another discussion of appointing a town representative to regional school district collective bargaining, Lord somewhat reluctantly volunteered to assume the role. "At least, if we go through it procedurally and I am able to show up, we've got somebody there," he said.

The board retired into an executive session to discuss collective bargaining. Its next scheduled meeting will be held April 25.



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

Here's the way it was on April 12, 2012: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Wendell: Kentfield Road Fire

At about 12:30 p.m. on Monday, state fire marshal Phil Gilmore drove a mile and a half up Kentfield Road to investigate a report of a fire called in by a Kent- sor Gerald Friedman of the UMass field resident who passed by on his travels. He found a rapidly spreading brush fire extending over a tinder-dry mountain ridge.

the state has declared a Red Flag fire warning. On Monday the wind was strong and gusty, and it pushed the fire uphill from the road until it covered five spotty acres.

An Economic History Lesson From Occupy Franklin County

Last Thursday, April 5, profes-

Iown meeting member Ariel Elan argued that the overall budgetary effect of the increases would be relatively small and that there would be virtually no tax impact, simply a smaller "cushion" below the town's tax levy limit. Ellis responded that the cushion would remain the same, but taxes could rise by \$19.65 annually for the average homeowner to pay for the assistant administrator.

"It's worth five times that," said Elan, who described herself as a low-income homeowner. "One hundred times that, to me."

Will This Be On the Test?

The hearing ended without the board taking a vote. As of press time it is not clear whether the selectboard has technically voted to endorse the annual town meeting warrant articles providing for the staff increases.

At its April 4 meeting, the board voted to place a total of 34 articles on the warrant. At that time the town hall positions were bundled with a laboratory manager at the water

On Monday, Ellis announced that the town will be awarded \$343,831 to supplement current Chapter 90 highway aid under the state emergency Winter Recovery Assistance program.

Parkside Fun Zone

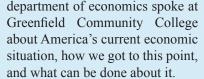
The board voted to endorse a proposal to, in the words on the agenda, "close" a 125-foot section of alley between the Pioneer Valley Brewery and Unity Park until December 1 so the brewery can create outdoor seating for its customers, similar to last summer.

It turned out that the walkway would not be closed to foot traffic, but only to vehicles, allaying the

Over the next hour, Gilmore called for mutual aid, from Warwick and Orange to Greenfield and Leverett.

According to Orange fire chief Dennis Annear, two men in their 40s from the Somerville area got their car stuck in the mud on Kentfield Road on Sunday night, and decided to stay overnight and keep warm by a campfire rather than walk out for help. "At some point in the night, the campfire got out of control," Annear said, burning approximately four and a half acres of Wendell State Forest. The fire came within a half mile of residences, according to numerous reports.

Air has been dry for weeks, and

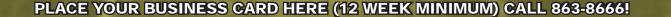


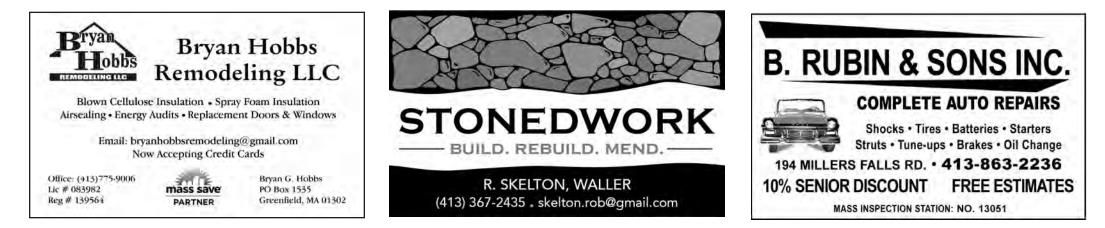
Friedman's talk was sponsored by Occupy Franklin County, a grassroots coalition of people fed up with the growing power of America's richest 1%.

Friedman spoke about rising wealth disparity around the world, and especially in the United States.

"We are living in the worst economic crisis facing America. facing the world, since the 1930s," he proclaimed. "Like the Great Depression... the crisis was caused by the success of the 1% in massively redistributing income to themselves. And it will be relieved only by policies that restore equity in our economy."







GILL from page A1

"I would like to get the cruiser moving sooner than later," Crochier said. "Last year we chose not to replace the 2013, and it punished us with a \$4,500 repair job about two weeks later."

The department had placed a request for the new cruiser with MHQ of Marlboro, Massachusetts, one of the state vendors that police chief Christopher Redmond said the department has often contracted with.

During a funding discussion, town administrator Ray Purington said that the town's ARPA monies and the Northfield Mount Hermon emergency services donation account together contained enough funds to pay for the cruiser outright. Selectboard chair Greg Snedeker said he wanted to have the financial committee weigh in before making a final decision on what funding sources to use.

Getting a Ball Rolling

Gill resident Isaac Bingham, who also serves as the town moderator. came before the selectboard asking to restart the recreation committee, which has been defunct. As a parent of a kindergartener and a second grader at Gill Elementary School, Bingham said he was approached by Phil Galluzzo, another parent, who wanted to start up a soccer program at the school but was hesitant about running a committee.

"It scares people, because they think it is just showing up and teaching soccer, and that is all they have to do," said Crochier, "but unfortunately there is public money, so there has to be a little public accountability."

"Sometimes the best coaches are not always the ones who want to be on a committee," said Bingham, adding that he had offered to help Galluzzo with the "paperwork and logistics side of it to get things going."

"He will be on the committee, but really, he will be the coach," Bingham explained. Hopefully we will have more on the committee eventually, but we have three – the third is my wife, Sorrel Hatch." He said the committee would start with a first, second, and third grade soccer team because only two parents are available to coach the students, and their children are in that age group.

Bingham also told the selectboard that he was seeking a bylaw change

He spoke about a parent from Gill on the previous recreation committee who had to leave the committee when she moved to another town. "It seemed a little silly, because we have a lot of people who choice into the school," he said.

"Right," Crochier responded. "Our rules were written when school choice did not exist."

Snedeker asked whether the bylaws require three members to form a committee.

"You could have two," said Purington, "but then you could have a tie vote - or if two people do not get along, then you are essentially stuck." He recommended the committee have three to seven members.

Discussion centered on whether to consider extended family or other interested parties to serve on the committee as well.

"I would like to look at not making it hard to get on the committee," said Crochier. "We have killed ourselves trying to keep it funded for many years hoping that somebody would show up. If I have somebody from out of town who is interested, and they pass the CORI [check] and do what they need to, I'm good."

Because Bingham is the town moderator, and it is the moderator who appoints the recreation committee, Bingham received assurance from Purington that it was acceptable for him to appoint himself.

ARPA Spending Plan

Purington told the selectboard that the town has received half of the \$437,899 ARPA funds it is due, and the board unanimously authorized using it to make up for the town's "lost revenue" during the pandemic.

"One of the steps for spending ARPA money - and also, importantly, being able to file the first report on ARPA," said Purington, "is having the selectboard take a vote declaring that we are going to use all the money coming from the 'lost revenue' category."

Purington explained that this is the most "flexible" rationale for use of ARPA funds, which overall encompass "four or five different categories for eligible uses." He said the money will allow the town to "do all the things that we have been talking about doing for almost a year now."

The board authorized spending an estimated \$260,000 of the funds on the Gill Elementary School flooring

uled for completion this summer.

Snedeker asked whether another \$75,000 in ARPA funds that had been earmarked for improvements at the school could be used to "backfill" a portion of the \$140,000 the town spent on Phase I of the flooring project last year. Purington was unsure if that would be allowable.

Crochier suggested that if the funds could not be transferred into the capital improvements account, the \$75,000 could be used to install heat pumps at the school.

The board also approved spending \$10,000 to replace the multi-function copier at the town hall.

Super Pumped

Highway superintendent John Miner, who could not attend the meeting, requested \$25,000 of the ARPA funding to install a magnetic inductive flow meter, also known as a magmeter, at the wastewater pump station in Riverside.

Miner sent the selectboard a detailed proposal explaining that the facility's current metering device had not been calibrated "for many years," and that "the numbers were being adjusted on a monthly basis" prior to his becoming the highway boss.

Miner wrote that he was "uncomfortable with adjusting numbers and putting my neck on the line," so he created a formula to accurately determine the daily gallons of wastewater pumped during each cycle.

He described the "old and fragile metering system" that has made replacing the meter seem dangerous. As Miner described it, there has been "the fear that if something breaks while trying to replace it we will be in a lot of trouble because there is no way to stop the flow."

His proposal also described the metering device as being housed in "a pit" outside the facility, which would be considered a confined space, necessitating a ventilation system and special training to manage the device. Miner said his department has neither. He described the magmeter as a more accurate pump-cycle measuring device that will be housed inside the pump station and would not require ventilation or special training.

"This new system will do away with the old metering system so no one will ever have to go into that pit again," he wrote.

Gill-Montague **Regional School District** SUMMER FOOD SERVICE **JOB OPENINGS**

June 22 to August 19, 2022, Monday to Friday 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. (30-minute unpaid break)

Program Manager/Monitor

Up to 32 hours/week, \$22.00/hour

(some hours prior to June 22 will be required)

Responsibilities include staff supervision, menu planning, accurate recordings of meals prepared and served, inventory ordering and management, preparation of food, transportation and service of meals. Adherence to USDA meal component guidelines and CDC Covid-19 safety and procedural guidelines for food and sanitation, as well as federal state and local food regulations. Qualification requirements include ServSafe Certification, experience in a supervisory position, a valid Massachusetts driver's license and the ability to lift 50 pounds. Driving a district van will be a requirement of the position.

Food Service Assistant with Driving responsibilities Up to 24 to 30 hours per week, \$18.00/hour

Responsibilities include preparation of food, transportation and service of meals at schools and remote sites, and adherence to USDA and CDC Covid-19 safety guidelines for food and sanitation, as well as federal state and local food regulations. A valid Massachusetts driver's license is required. ServSafe preferred as well as the ability to lift and carry up to 50 pounds. Driving a district van will be a requirement of the position.

Food Service Assistant

24 hours per week, \$16.00/hour

Responsibilities include preparation of food, service of meals at schools and remote sites, and adherence to USDA and CDC Covid-19 safety guidelines for food and sanitation, as well as federal state and local food regulations. ServSafe preferred as well as the ability to lift and carry up to 50 pounds.

Dish Machine Operator & General Laborer

12 to 20 hours per week, \$14.25/hour

Responsibilities include assisting in the preparation and packaging of food, putting away food orders, and washing, rinsing, and sanitizing of pots, pans, cookware, utensils, dishes, other cleaning tasks, assist with the preparation and transportation of food to remote sites and schools and other duties as assigned by the Program Manager. Must be able to lift and carry up to 50 pounds.

General Laborer

18 to 24 Hours per week, \$14.25/hour

Responsibilities include storing deliveries, organization of stock areas including refrigerator, freezer, and dry storage, assisting the preparation and transportation of food to remote sites and schools, and other duties as assigned by the Program Manager. Must be able to lift and carry up to 50 pounds.

Visit:

www.gmrsd.org/welcome-gmrsd/departments/human-resources

Other Business

By consensus, the board waived the town's right of first refusal to purchase 1.94 acres of Main Road land which residents Richard French and Emily Samuels requested to remove from Chapter 61 protection to give as a gift to their son.

Chapter 61, as described on the state website, is a state forest, farm, and open recreational land management program that offers a tax break for landowners "with 10 or more contiguous acres" in exchange for second floor of the town them keeping their land designat- hall from 1 to 3 p.m.

ed as forest, agricultural, or natural habitat land for at least 10 years.

The Baystate Roads Program recently named Miner a "Roads Scholar" for his attendance of over 35 hours of the program's courses.

The historical commission will host Peter Mars, a historian and collector of prints by Gill artist Robert Darr Wert (1915-1966), for a presentation on the artist's Country Prints studio work. The Saturday, May 21 event will be held on the

to allow non-Gill resident parents to join the recreation committee.

project, which was partially completed last year with Phase II sched-

His request was unanimously approved.





Whoops, we're doing something new. We often regret having insufficient space to run some of the great photos our readers and contributors send in to us.....



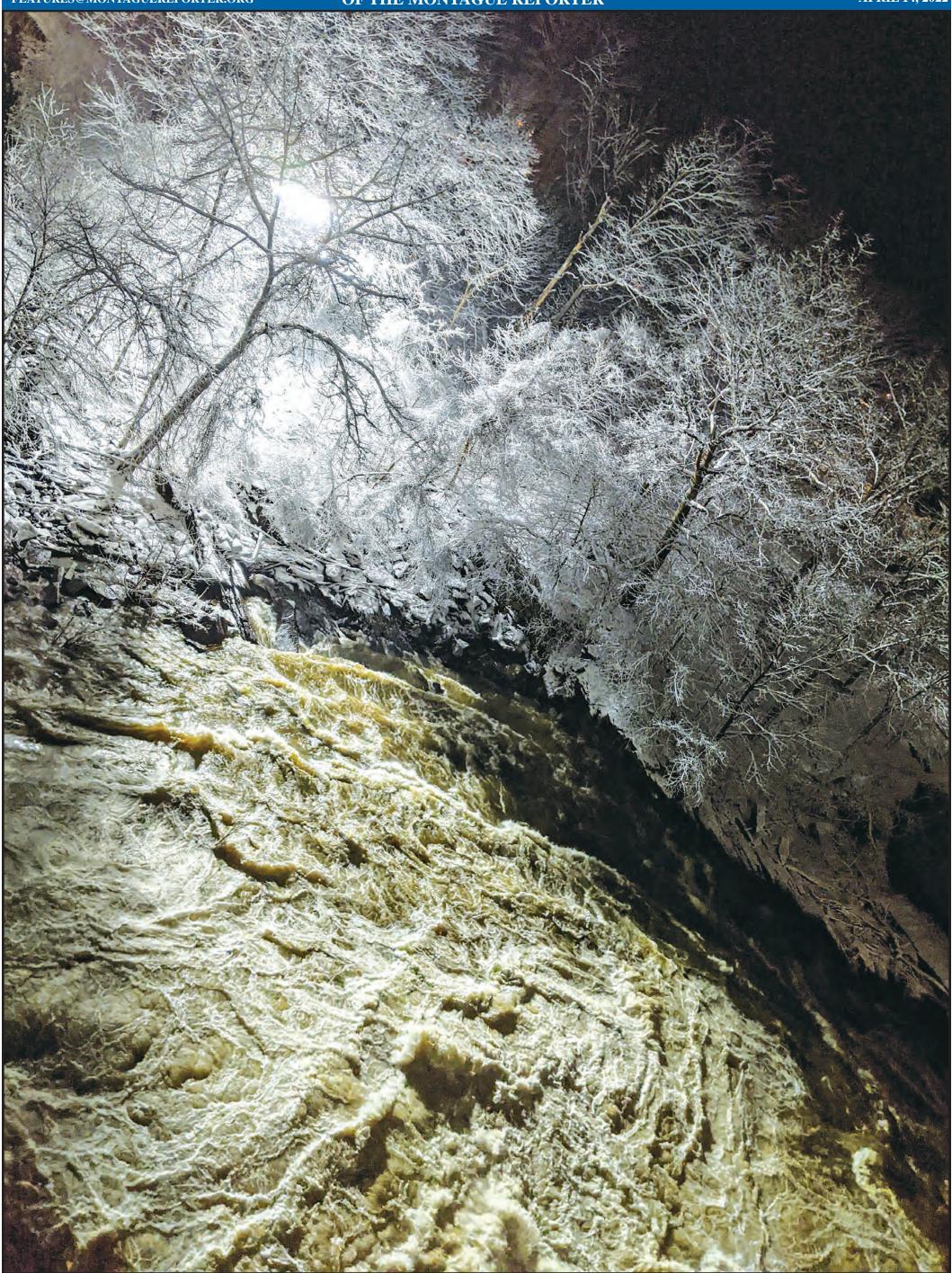
.... so we figured, why not dedicate an entire section to them? It's an experiment; we'll see how they print. Check out the contributor bios on the back page! – Eds.

YEAR 20 - NO. 22

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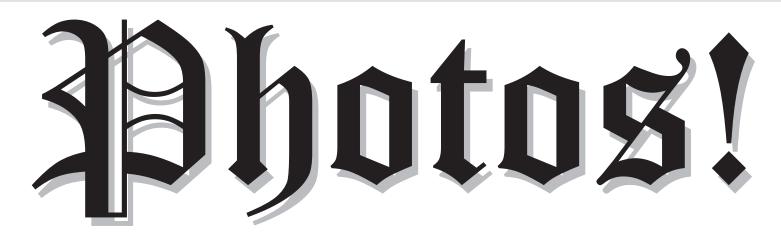
OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

APRIL 14, 2022



AREDVI AZAD PHOTO

The view from the Turners Falls-Gill bridge, looking down from the corner of the river bank right next to the dam, on a snowy night when the dam was open.





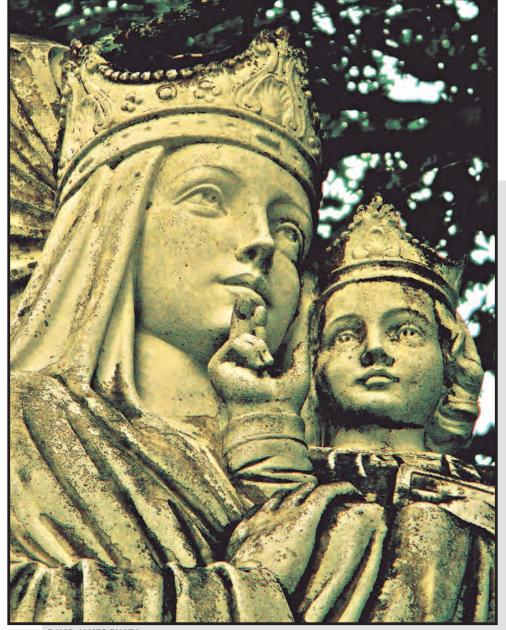
JACKIE LUCCHESI PHOTO

Mud season behind the athletic fields at Turners Falls High School.



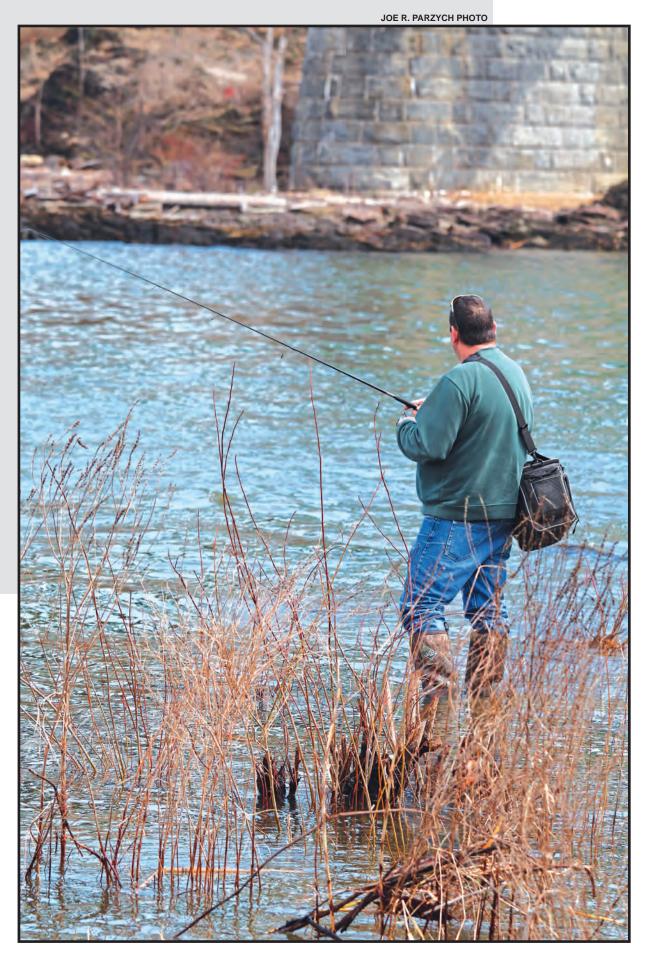
"At Barton's Cove, the quiet water, in the manner of a wise teacher, softly talks with me, enhancing my communion with nature," says Thierry Borcy. THIERRY BORCY PHOTO





According to Our Lady of Czestochowa records, the statue of Mother Mary and the infant Jesus was donated by Blanche Joseph and Frank Putala in memory of their mother Mary who died on July 12, 1957. The statue faces Avenue A in the Village of Turners Falls.

DAVID JAMES PHOTO



A fisherman enjoys his time

fishing below FirstLight's dam at Turners Falls on a Friday morning in mid-March. (See article, Page A1.)

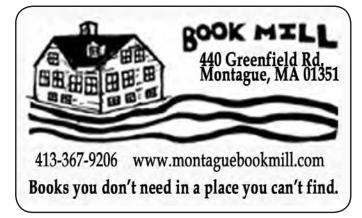
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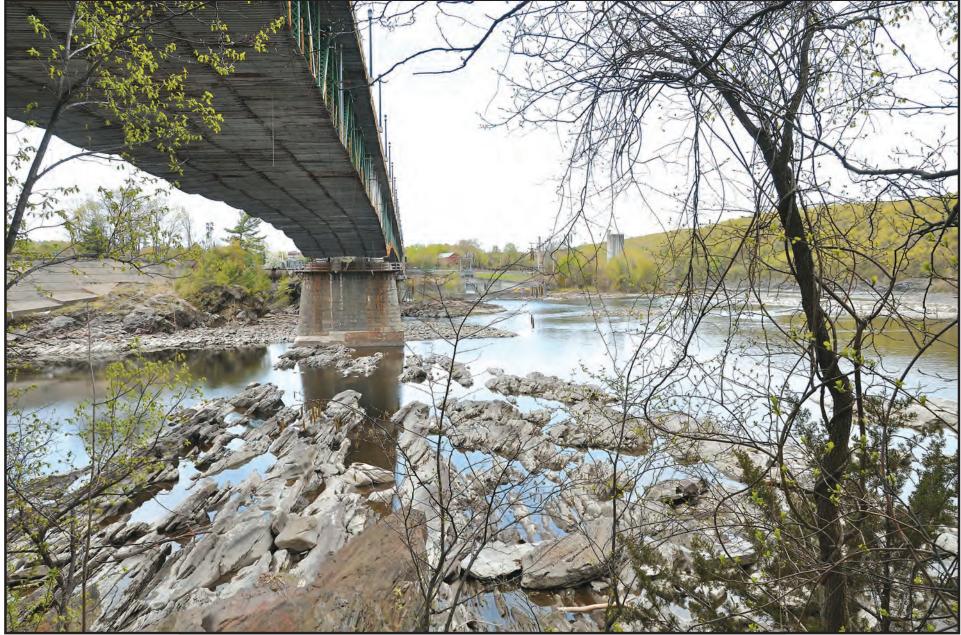








An undated photograph taken by an unidentified photographer, restored by Terri Cappucci. "The envelope this glass negative came from says 'Leo on the White Bridge," she writes. "This was taken in the village of Millers Falls in the town of Montague. The bridge crosses the river where it connects Millers and Erving."



Ed Gregory took this photo of the underside of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge from the Gill shoreline.

ED GREGORY PHOTO





Tiny mushrooms happily occupy a mossy hemlock log in the Montague Wildlife Management Area.

JOE KOPERA PHOTO



"I often pass the precious viewscape of Leverett Pond on my way home to Montague from UMass," Nancy Folbre writes. "I know that Leverett has been struggling with the issue of how to deal with invasive weeds there and am hoping for the best."

NANCY FOLBRE PHOTO

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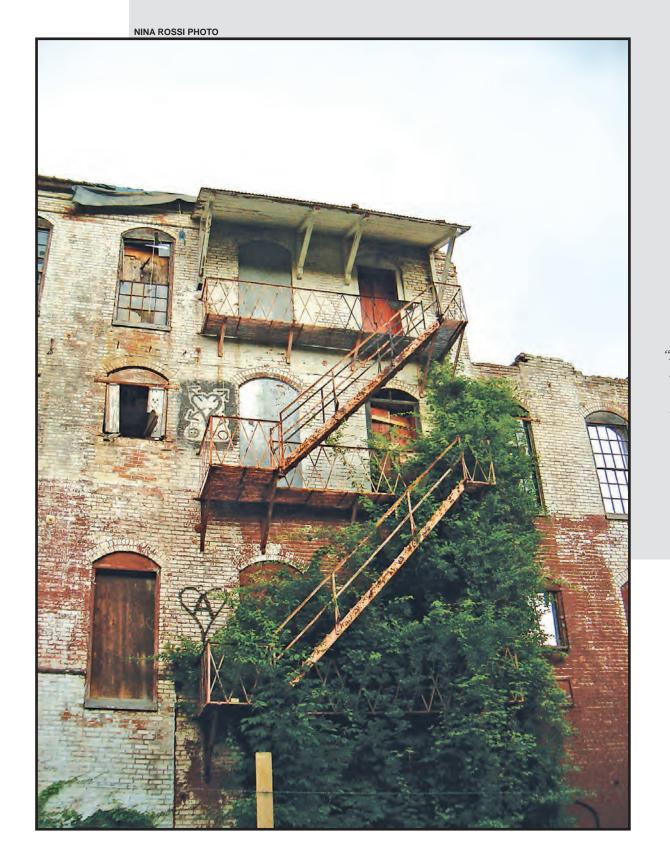


"A casual phone photographer, I was taking a walk across the Turners Falls-Gill bridge one foggy mid-October morning," Jerri Higgins writes.

"On the Gill side of the bridge, I looked down on the sidewalk and saw this piece of tin with a fallen leaf on it, looking like a planned art piece. Maybe it was too cool for the rest of the fish and left the river, and that's how fish evolved into land creatures."



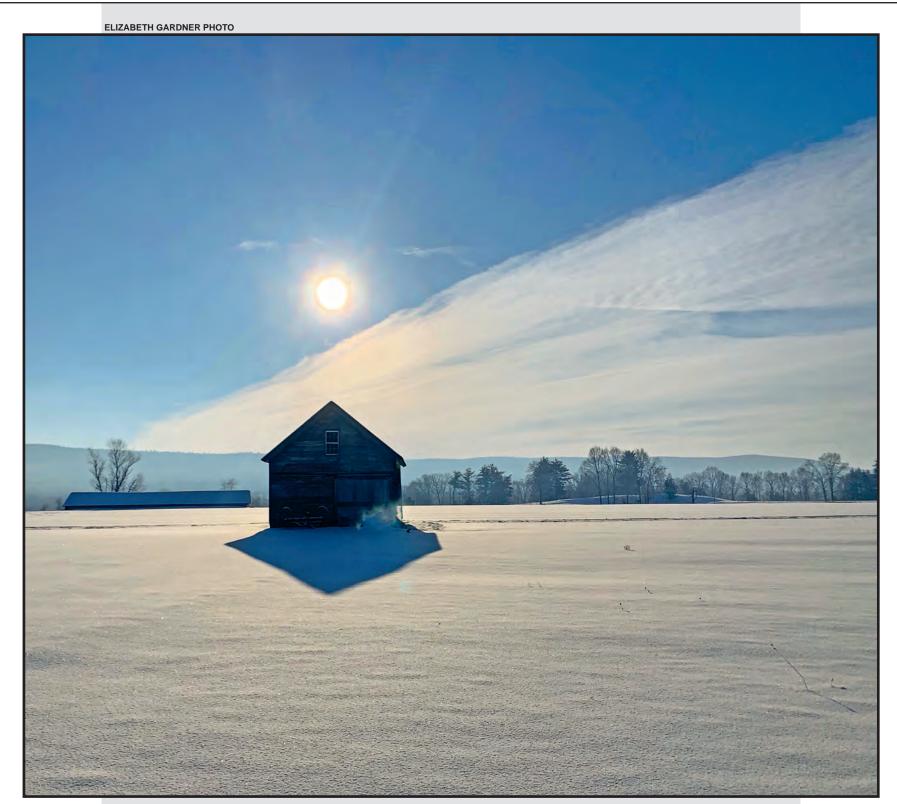
JERRI HIGGINS PHOTO



"Tve been photographing the decay of the old Railroad Salvage buildings

on the Patch in Turners Falls for many years, to use as references for my mixed media paintings and constructions," Nina explains. "This photo from 2009 shows nature slowly dismantling the old mill before a fire and the wrecking ball leveled it all the way."





Elizabeth Gardner writes: "Storms rage on, the landscape shifts and cycles endlessly – and the sky above splinters and mends and opens again, echoing my own heart. Throughout it all, the barn stands at the same time strong and vulnerable, bending ever so slightly to the elements but tending, too, to its own island of calm within – and to its place here, one eye skyward, the rest firmly rooted in the ancestral stories running deep in the land underfoot. Thank you for showing us the way, Barn."

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Aredvi Azad is a trans/non-binary artist and educator casually capturing natural transformations of Great Falls and the surrounding regions. Aredvi's photos focus on the magical moments embedded in the mundane, so that instead of saying "you had to be there," they can show you how it felt to be there.

Thierry Borcy is a visual creator and explorer

using the photographic arts to show the beau-

ty of the natural world. He makes his home

in the countryside of Western Massachu-

setts. He is on Instagram @borcy.art.photo.

Terri Cappucci is a documentary photographer and photo preservationist specializing in alternative photography practices including glass plate, tintype, and handmade photographs. As an artist, Terri has taken her photographic experience and merged her expressive and intentional compositions to create prints using historical photographic processes. She is documenting her project to preserve and restore thousands of glass plates, most of them local, at *SomebodyPhotographedThis.com*.

Joe Kopera is a geologist who has lived in Montague and Franklin County for

over 20 years. "I've spent a lot of time in the woods paying careful attention,"

he says. "Capitalism and global warming are destroying vast ecosystems engi-

neered by the ancestors of local Indigenous folks over the past 14,000 years here

in the Northeast. My photos are a sentimental love song to what we're losing."



A Contraction

Jackie Lucchesi has always enjoyed creative photography. "It made sense for me to record at least one photo from my daily walks to add to my exercise log," she says. "Most photos are taken within a seven-mile radius from my home in Turners Falls, with my cell phone as daylight ends. As I record my exercise 'stats' I find that I have an even greater appreciation of what was going on during all my outings with an image of that time."

Nancy Folbre is a lefty intellectual, rider, and sometime-artist who loves the wilds of Franklin County.







David James came to Franklin County in the spring of 1969 as a founding member of a mini-commune near the Warwick Minimum Security Prison Camp. With the exception of a year working for a newspaper in northwestern Vermont, a year taking a small bite of the Big Apple, and two years teaching English at a boarding school in Puerto Rico, James has been here ever since. "I am a 'factfiction' writer and a 'fauxtog-rapher," he says. "I look for worthwhile natural reality, then attempt to alchemize it into wondrous artistry."

Jerri Higgins writes for the *Montague Reporter*, and lives in Montague Center.

Jo liv and he

Joe R. Parzych is a freelance photo journalist who grew up in Gill and now lives in Greenfield. "I enjoy getting out in the community and interacting and connecting with all kinds of people, learning something new every day," he writes. Check out "Joe r. Parzych photography and ect." on Facebook.

Nina Rossi has been this paper's features editor and illustrator since 2015. She enjoys chronicling life in Turners Falls, and welcomes the return of spring.



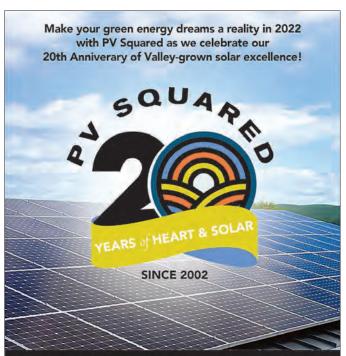


Ed Gregory was born and brought up in Turners Falls. His vast knowledge of the area reflects his interest in local history. **Elizabeth Gardner** is a Gill writer, photographer, and educator who has been happily immersed in the intersection of the educational and natural landscape – designing curriculum and nature-based enrichment programs for schools and local families, and working with students through her Flip Switch Coaching business. In 2020, Liz published *Here. In the undertow of wonder,* a book featuring her full-color landscape photographs and lyrical reflections. Find her at *www.thedustyroadpress.com* and on Instagram @*lizgard.*





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