

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 20 – NO. 23

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 21, 2022

Ushering In a New Era Of American Banjo Music



Michael Nix plays his seven-string “banjar” in his Greenfield studio. At his right is his old six-string Whyte Laydie model.

By EASTON SMITH

TURNERS FALLS – “My new one comes on Thursday!” That was the first thing Michael Nix said to me when I came into his office for our interview. Nix, normally mild-mannered, lit up like a child with a new toy when talking about the seven-string banjo he’d commissioned from Seeder Instruments in Southern Vermont.

“The new one has many upgrades,” he said, even as he proudly showed off his old “banjar,” an instrument that he designed himself more than 20 years ago. It looks much like a typical five-string banjo, but with two wide-gauge strings added to the top of the thick neck. “So it’s got that low sound, which I really like,” Nix explained, plucking something that sounded like a mix between a flamenco guitar riff and an old time fiddle tune. “But it still has the high sound.”

Nix is trained in classical guitar, and can play several styles of traditional banjo music – full disclosure: I take lessons from him – but what he enjoys the most these days is writing original compositions

on his banjar. His unique musical style, and his new instrument, will be on display at the New American Banjo Festival this Saturday, April 23, at the Shea Theater.

The festival, which Nix organized, is slated as a “journey through the back roads of American old time, folk music, ragtime and early jazz.” That may sound like a lot of genres to cover, but Nix likes to be at the nexus of all these musical traditions. Weaving them together into his own unique sound is his passion.

His Own Musical Path

Michael Nix’s office is located in the Local Access to Valley Arts (LAVA) Center in downtown Greenfield. The building is an old TD Bank office that casts a drab, windowless, Soviet-style facade. Inside is another story.

Beautiful works from local artists adorn the walls, a library of books about local history and culture are displayed on a row of shelves, and activist literature sits out on a brown card table. Nix’s office is located in the back. The

see **BANJO** page A5

Wendell Floats Draft Bylaw: No Solar Arrays Over Ten Acres

By SARAH ROBERTSON

WENDELL – On Monday night, planning board members unveiled the first draft of a new bylaw which, if passed by town meeting this spring, would set limits on the size, location, and battery storage capacity of commercial ground-mounted solar arrays built in Wendell. No more than one acre of forested land could be cleared to make way for ground-mounted solar arrays under the new rules, and the largest installations allowed in town would be no more than 10 acres.

The 18-page amendment is the result of over a year of deliberation by a planning board subcommittee in consultation with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). It intends to “provide additional protection for Wendell’s natural and cultural resources and to protect public safety” amidst the rapid state-incentivized development of solar energy in rural Massachusetts.

“Looking at the uniqueness of our town, our situation, and our forests, it’s [about] protecting ourselves against corporations,” said planning board chair Molly Doody. “It’s not an ideal, it’s not this wonderful solar concept; it’s the practice of these large companies coming into our town, and us making sure that our

see **SOLAR** page A6

WENDELL SELECTBOARD School Water PFAS Could Lead to Fines

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Near the end of the Wendell selectboard’s April 14 meeting and under the heading of “topics not anticipated by the time of posting,” selectboard chair Dan Keller summarized a letter addressed to town administrator Glenn Johnson-Mussad from Deidre Doherty, drinking water and municipal services chief at MassDEP’s Bureau of Water Resources.

Doherty’s letter stated that Wendell and New Salem must take definitive steps to ensure that drinking water at Swift River School contains PFAS levels no higher than the Massachusetts limit of 20 parts per trillion (ppt).

Since testing was introduced last fall, the school well’s levels of the manmade chemicals have varied but have consistently been higher than 20 ppt, though lower than the federal government’s advisory recommendation of 70 ppt. If found in non-compliance, Wendell and New Salem are subject to a \$100 per day fine. The letter offered two solutions: a filter, or a new well.

Late last year the New Salem selectboard met with the Wendell selectboard with the proposal they were given, to install a \$40,000 filter

see **WENDELL** page A8

FirstLight Reports Leak Fixed; Estimates 300 Gallons Spilled



As of last weekend, an absorbent line was re-attached across the middle channel below Gate 4 to contain and help soak up a still-visible rainbow sheen of oil.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – FirstLight Power reports that workers have been able to stop oil-based hydraulic fluid leaking from a piston on the Turners Falls dam, but estimates that hundreds of gallons may have

been released from the piston since February. A report detailing the event and its response is due from the company on Monday.

“Contractors injected material around the leak on 4/13 and it has been stopped,” FirstLight Power

see **LEAK** page A5

McGovern Hears from Vets Opposed to Leeds VA Closure

By SARAH ROBERTSON

FLORENCE – “I am fed up to the ears with bureaucrats in Washington making decisions that are bad for veterans, bad for their families, and bad for their community, and we’re not going to let this medical center close,” US Congress member Jim McGovern told dozens

of veterans gathered at the Florence VFW on Wednesday night. “We will do everything we can to fight them, and I believe we will prevail.”

Last month the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reported that the VA Medical Center in the Northampton village of Leeds needed \$121 million in upgrades,

see **VETS** page A2

Four-Way Health Board Race Enters Final Month In Montague

By REPORTER STAFF

MONTAGUE – With longtime board of health member Al Cummings out declining to run this year, four Montague residents have thrown their hats in the ring.

The annual town election will be held on Tuesday, May 17.

This week we asked (in alphabetical order) Kathleen Burek, Cather-

ine Dodds, Maureen McNamara, and Rachel Stoler to each share up to 700 words of their own with our readers. We prompted them to comment on what they feel has been going well with the health department, and what they would change.

All four candidates opted to take fewer words to say their piece. We hope Montague voters will read on.

see **HEALTH** page A4

ANALYSIS

Will Cannabis Equity Legislation Undermine Local Agreements?

By JEFF SINGLETON

BOSTON – New legislation currently working its way through Beacon Hill would significantly expand the social and economic “equity” provisions of state marijuana policy. The effort is best embodied in Senate bill 2823, which unanimously passed that chamber on April 7 and now moves to the House, which is expected to either take it up or offer rival legislation of its own.

Legislators and advocacy groups on all sides of the issue have supported S.2823’s direct “equity” provisions, which focus on providing assistance to firms run by entrepreneurs who are low-income

or come from communities disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs. The legislation has been influenced by criticism that under the state’s existing cannabis policy, few such firms have been approved for operation.

But S.2823 would also significantly change the process by which municipalities negotiate agreements with cannabis firms – particularly concerning so-called “impact fees,” which can be a significant source of revenue for cities and towns – and appears to enhance the power of the state Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) in monitoring those agreements.

see **CANNABIS** page A7

Sports: Thunder Bests Eagles

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – On Monday, the Turners Falls Softball Thunder traveled down Millers Falls Road for a JV/Varsity double-header hosted by the undefeated Franklin Tech Eagles. The JV game was a hit parade, with Tech outscoring Turners 29-16, but varsity was

more of a defensive matchup, as Turners upended the Eagles 9-2.

It was uncomfortably cold on Monday, but the fans showed up in droves. Dressed in winter coats and huddled under blankets, fans from both schools lined the sidelines, the access road, and the parking lots.

Both teams managed to load the

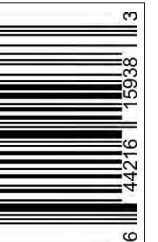
see **SPORTS** page A5



Grand slam! Turners Falls’ Madi Liimatainen blasts a four-run homer out of the park and into the Franklin Tech parking area. The Thunder won Monday’s cross-town contest 9-2 at Franklin Tech’s Nancy Gifford Park.

Every Edition a Perfectly Unique Specimen

Letter to the Editors.....	A2, A3	Montague Police Log.....	B3
Local Briefs.....	A3	TFHS/GFMS Honor Roll.....	B4
10 Years Ago This Week.....	A7	The Gardener’s Companion Is Back!.....	B4
Science Fiction Book Review.....	B1	No Separating Cosby.....	B5
Paintings at the Disco Center.....	B1	Montague Police Log.....	B6
West Along: Tree Listenin’.....	B1	Our Monthly Spanish Page.....	B6
Your Sick Friend.....	B2	Arts & Entertainment Calendar.....	B7
Our Dissociative Superhero.....	B3	Three Comics and a Puzzle.....	B7



The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

Editorial Group

Mike Jackson, *Managing Editor*
Nina Rossi, *Features Editor*
Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, *Poetry Page*
Victoria Maillo, *Spanish Page*
Beverly Ketch, *Children's Page*
Spencer Shorkey, *Science Page*

Production Group

Annie Levine, *Business Manager*
Lyn Clark, *Distribution Manager*
Charlotte Kohlmann, *Layout Assistant*
Jae Southerland, *Layout & Subscriptions*
Christopher Carmody, *Layout Assistant*
Sarah Brown-Anson, *Podcast Producer*
Technical Administration
About Face Computing

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August 2002

VETS from page A1

and recommended the facility be closed.

At least 50 veterans attended the listening session Wednesday night, organized by McGovern with state senator Jo Comerford, Northampton mayor Gina Louise-Sciarra, and other local representatives to speak out against the potential closure. Comments were recorded, and will be sent to VA Secretary Denis McDonough, McGovern said.

"For someone to even think about closing this facility is just crazy," said Larry Parker, a Turners Falls resident and veteran jet mechanic. "They say they're going to build a new facility, they're going to do this, they're going to do that. You're talking 20 years down the road. So where's everybody in between? And the millions of dollars they're spending at this facility, what was that for?"

"Many of the improvements they say they need to make have already been made," McGovern said of the facility's recent \$100 million renovation. "The money has already been spent to bring the facility up to the standards that the VA wants. That is not reflected in the recommendation."

Veterans passed around the microphone for nearly two hours, sharing stories of their experiences at the Leeds VA. Some suffer from cancer and other ailments related to their exposure to nuclear weapons, Agent Orange in Vietnam, or the "burn pits" in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome,

and said they sought services at the Leeds facility because of its specialized mental health and substance use disorder treatment.

Several said the VA Medical Center in Leeds saved their lives.

"If we do not invest in modern infrastructure at our VA facilities, then our veterans will face the risk of privatization and decreased access to real care," said Western Massachusetts Veterans' Service Officers Association president Eric Segundo. "The already overburdened healthcare system in our region is not postured to accommodate the needs of veterans here, many of whom have chronic mental health and physical disabilities."

The recommended closure is part of a nationwide VA consolidation plan that would close dozens of medical centers and shift services to new or expanded facilities, or to private care. Veterans receiving nursing home and rehabilitation care in Leeds would be expected to move to a facility in Newington, Connecticut, while outpatient and mental health patients would receive services from the VA clinic in Springfield and a network of private providers.

"Privatization of the VA is not the answer," said John Perry, an Afghanistan veteran and former employee at the VA and the Holyoke Soldiers' Home.

"This is the first step in a long process, it's far from a foregone conclusion," McGovern said. "I'll go to Biden if we have to go to Biden on this, but I'm telling you right now: This cannot happen."



"Is it in our veterans' best interests to move our VA substance use disorder and mental health services hours away?" McGovern asked, to a resounding "No!"



Michelle Pratt, co-owner with Annette McLean of Country Garden Florals and Gifts, says the flower shop has been going strong for two years now in its present location across from Stop & Shop in Greenfield. The pair provide floral services by wire, walk-in, and local delivery of their custom bouquets.

Letters to the Editors

Mattiace: Stoler for Montague Health Board

What better person to elect to Montague's Board of Health than someone who is passionate about community health?

Rachel Stoler has been involved with regional public health efforts in Franklin County for more than a decade; she is young (relatively speaking) and energetic, enthusiastic and committed.

Rachel's work has focused on two areas that are key to a community's long-term health: youth health and well-being and chronic disease prevention. She has familiarized herself with the workings of the Montague Board of Health and is excited to be considered for such important work on behalf of the citizens of Montague.

Please vote!

Mary Kay Mattiace
Montague City

Big Photos Are a Win – And Tonic

Definitely a winning decision to have a feature photo section. And what a fine collection you chose! A tonic for these days of, sigh, world despair.

Jude Wobst
Leverett

Foundational Theft Hides Behind 'Private' Property

The April 6 event in Barre, Massachusetts, where the Lakota attempted to retrieve stolen artifacts from their relatives slain at Wounded Knee, did not, by any reckoning, produce a particularly good outcome. I attended both the ceremony across the way from the library and a viewing of the stolen goods.

Today, all I can do is sit here shaking my head in complete dismay over the continued harassment and disrespect of Native Americans. It is disheartening and infuriating all at the same time.

And yet, Shutesbury displayed a similar disrespect in 2017, when they decimated a Native American Burial Place, protected by MGL Chap. 114, Section 17.

As I read your article, I notice the same snatch going on where the library museum claims to be "private." So did the town of Shutesbury – the planning board in particular, when it issued the special permit – in its claim that the sacred land dug up for a solar was on "private" land. These claims seem to put these people above their own laws. But Shutesbury had even further abuse going on, when the "landowner" issued No Trespass orders, delivered by an armed sheriff, to anyone who spoke out against the decimation of sacred land, including tribal historical preservation officer(s).

The fact that there is more tape, hiring "experts," etc., for the Lakota to cut through, costing lots of money I am sure, is an outrage. Chief Henry Red Cloud, although he was happy for the meeting itself, told us, "It'll take a year, maybe a year and a half." Simple, common sense of the matter is that nothing in there

belongs to any of its keepers.

While I was viewing, along with tribal visitors from Cape Cod, we were actually being watched by prison guard look-alikes. And I know what they look like, and how they act; I have visited a prison(er) before. Two very tall white people stood, one at one end of the display – which was, by the way, under lock and key, so I do not know what they were worried about being stolen (funny thing, what is it when someone steals a stolen item anyway?) – and another guarding the doorway, just in case there was a lock jack among us.

They told us to shut off our cell phones, lest someone take a photograph which would be further proof these stolen items are not property of the library museum.

I am also writing about the chosen location of the article and wonder how, or better still who, decided to place it? Its location raises the curiosity of the reader to see the photograph of our visitors, all the way from South Dakota, under an article of a very large, ugly, worm.

I write as an individual, although I am a member of the Shutesbury Historical Commission. Thank you.

Mary Lou Conca
Shutesbury

The editors reply: The article on invasive worms got more visible billing for many reasons, including that was within our core coverage zone, we felt it was important to sound the worm alarm on newsstands, and it was finished earlier.

We apologize if anyone featured in other articles that week felt slighted.

Published weekly on Thursdays.
Every other week in July and August.
No paper fourth week of November,
or the Thursday closest to 12/25.

PHONE: (413) 863-8666

Please note new email addresses:
editor@montaguereporter.org
features@montaguereporter.org
ads@montaguereporter.org
bills@montaguereporter.org
circulation@montaguereporter.org
events@montaguereporter.org
poetry@montaguereporter.org
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org

Send address changes to:
The Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Advertising and copy deadline is
MONDAY at NOON.

This newspaper shall not be liable for errors in advertisements, but will print without charge that part of the advertisement in which an error occurred. The publishers reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason and to alter copy or graphics to conform to standards of the newspaper, such as they are.

Annual Subscription Rate:

\$30 for walking subscriptions;
\$40 for driving route subscriptions;
\$70 for mailed subscriptions.
Call us or contact
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org
with any questions.

**WE WELCOME
YOUR LETTERS!**

ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE
LIMIT 4 PER YEAR

Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

editor@
montaguereporter.org

Sign Me Up!

\$20 { 8 months (31 issues) for our walking routes
6 months (23 issues) for our driving routes
3 months (13 issues) for mailed subscriptions

The Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Name: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email (optional): _____



Saturday, April 23 from 1 to 5 p.m. at Four Phantoms Brewing Company, 301 Wells Street in Greenfield. Artists include Babe Gang Patches, Slime N Grime, Jatternack Creative, Artmuffin Studio, Branch + Beak, Scott Murphy Illustration, coldhatkid, Michael Grover, and Bog Nymph.

Farmers Market on Wednesday, May 4. More details about the 2022 season will be provided in our Apple Corps column next week, but if you are interested in vending at the market, you may apply now at www.tinyurl.com/gfmarketapp. Market manager Annie Levine can answer any questions at greatfallsfarmers-marketturners@gmail.com

Mesa Verde

Eat In or Take Out!

BURRITOS, BOWLS, SOFT TACOS, QUESADILLAS

Now Serving BBC Steel Rail

(413) 772-2531
10 Fiske Ave - downtown Greenfield
Hours: Mon - Sat 11:30 am - 9 pm

Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Greenfield Community College visual and performing art students are once again presenting their work at **GCC's Arts Night** tonight, Thursday April 21 from 7 to 9 p.m. Theater students will perform a scene from *Elephant Man* in the gallery around 7:15 p.m., and music students will play a variety of music. The visual art students have been working hard preparing work for the exhibition and putting it up on the walls.

This year's exhibit is dedicated in loving memory to Professor Emeritus Tom Boisvert (1948-2022). Note that masks and a vaccine card are required. Unlike in past years, there will be no food.

Join the Leverett Historical Commission for a **virtual visit to the Graves Scythe Shop** on North Leverett Road this Friday, April 22 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. "Powered by water diverted from the Sawmill River through a levee system that mimics Lowell's, this manufacturing mill turned out scythes and their handles (snaths), tools in high demand before machinery, to mow fields and lawns alike," reads the description.

Since this is an online event, registration is required at gravesscytheshop.eventbrite.com.

There will also be a live, in-person visit to the wooded site this Sunday, April 24. Beware of weather, uneven terrain, ticks, and COVID-19. If you are interested in the live event, note it on your registration.

These events are part of the ongoing project, "A Sense of Where You Are, Finding and Interpreting Mill Foundations in the Landscape." For more information, email Susan Mareneck at leverethhistoryinfo@gmail.com.

The Leverett Community Building Committee announces the second annual **Leverett Earth Day Cleanup**. The town energy committee, the Leverett Elementary School, and its PTO are co-sponsors of the event. The town-wide event will be held from 9 a.m. to noon this Saturday, April 23 (rain date Sunday). Resi-

dents are asked to sign up online at www.bit.ly/3IItDjC and designate what area they will clean.

Volunteers are encouraged to bring their trash to the transfer station before 1 p.m. and then head to the Leverett Coop to celebrate with neighbors and friends. The fees are waived this weekend for cleanup trash. Last year's event removed hundreds of pounds of trash from streets and streams thanks to the efforts of over 60 groups. Any questions or concerns can be sent to LeverettCommunityBuilders@gmail.com.

Great Falls Books Through Bars is holding a volunteer day this Saturday, April 23 at 113 Avenue A in Turners Falls from 1 to 4 p.m. This time around they are not requiring sign-ups, and the event is open to everyone. Masking is required, doors will be open for airflow, and there will be sanitizer available. Help pack books and write letters to send to incarcerated people!

There's a **spring art market** this



On Monday, the first day of school vacation, Second Street residents Jadis and David created a hopscotch court stretching all the way uphill from L Street to Avenue A!

The **New England Learning Center for Women in Transition** is holding its annual celebration and fundraiser next Thursday, April 28 at 6 p.m. The event will be online only and hosted by Judge Bertha Josephson and Carla Oleska, with keynote speakers Tahirah Amatul-Wadud and Rachel Rybaczuk. Find out more about the annual fund at nelcwit.org.

The LAVA Center in Greenfield offers a **workshop by JuPong Lin**, an interdisciplinary artist-researcher, writer, and educator, as part of its "Social Justice in the Arts and Media" series. The workshop will take place Saturday, April 30, at 1 p.m. at the LAVA Center, 324 Main Street. Lin will share qigong and lead a poetry and paper-folding ceremony called "How do your people call the Earth?" Learn about the artist at www.juponglin.net. Seating will be limited. Reserve a space at www.thelavacenter.eventbrite.com.

May is just around the corner, and with the new month comes the opening of the **2022 Great Falls**

If you missed the first **Pique Assiette Mosaic Workshop** with Edite Cunhã at Looky Here in Greenfield, you have another chance to attend one on April 30, from 3 to 6 p.m. at the same location.

Bring any bits of china, crockery, shell, tile, and glass you might want to incorporate into your mosaic. You will learn about tools, process, and design with Edite. For more information and to register, contact editecunha161@gmail.com or lookyheregreenfield@gmail.com. There is a sliding-scale fee.

Healthy Kids Day at the Y is coming up on Saturday, April 30 at 11 a.m. Franklin County's YMCA will offer fun, free activities for kids and families in the parking lot behind the Y, weather permitting. Learn about local organizations, summer camp and childcare options, and more. There will be a bounce house, gaga ball, arts and crafts, and entertainment includes a gymnastics demo and a 12-year-old DJ.

There will also be a bike and helmet give away. Register for a time slot to choose one of 100 free bikes for ages 3 to 12, provided by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Franklin County and the Rolling Waves Foundation. They will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis for size, color, and style, so sign up as soon as you can.

Even if there isn't a bike the right size or style for your child, there will be free helmets, provided by the Kiwanis Club. There will be a fun mini-obstacle course for young cyclists to test their skills, or for kids who ride to the event. Find out more and register at www.your-y.org/hkd.

The Center for Community Resilience after Trauma (CCRT) offers **groups to reduce isolation** and build resilience and coping skills. The groups meet on Zoom, and their spring offerings can be surveyed online at www.tinyurl.com/ccrtevents.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

LAST CALL FOR FOAM

FREE Styrofoam Recycling Collection for Montague residents only

Saturday, 4/23
9 a.m. to 12 noon
Montague Transfer Station

Foam blocks & sheets only (#4 LDPE, #6 PS, and foam insulation board). **NO** food-related items, packing peanuts, or wet/dirty materials. See photos at www.recycleyourfoam.com

For more information, email info@franklincountywastedistrict.org or call (413) 772-2438

NANCY L. DOLE BOOKS & EPHEMERA

20 State Street, Bucklandside
Shelburne Falls
413-625-9850
ndole@crocker.com

OPEN AGAIN 3 days a week
Tues, Weds, Thurs - 11 to 6



Another Letter to the Editors

Feels the Prez Is Underappreciated

Wouldn't it be ironic if steady, ethical, constructive effort in Washington were being rewarded with a shrug? By us citizens and a news media whose interest in national affairs has been jaded by a period of thrall to a diabolically clever, petulant child in politician's clothing?

Unconsciously, we citizens and the press may feel let down after years of gaping in fascination and disbelief at an individual whose need for attention, practiced over decades, created such skills at self-aggrandizement. Yes, there's a lot happening. But might this letdown I'm talking about - as much as monetary inflation and the "weakness" of resisting war - help explain the low marks we're giving Biden in the polls?

The President today is only mildly charismatic. He's old in years. But he's old-school in a re-

freshing, public service way. He puts his efforts into a pretty nuanced vision of a society and future that has functionality and justice at its core.

His administration has invested in clean water in six states. He's laid out a way to learn about and apply for over a hundred funding programs for rural infrastructure, thus opening funds, according to Heather Cox Richardson, "to expand rural broadband, clean up pollution, improve transportation, fix rural bridges and roads, funds to ensure clean water and sanitation, prepare for disasters including climate change, upgrade the electrical grid, and so on." He's expunged many student loan defaults, and improved fairness in drug availability and health care in general.

This is not, unfortunately, the call for a re-trenched, fair (less capitalistic) more local-

centered economic system that could echo what I feel life on Earth is calling for. In that sense I'm a critic. But his recognition of the deep, underlying issues I don't just applaud - I fall to my knees in gratitude! It feels that good after the blatant, omniscient rich-folks-enrichment program of the recent past.

Joe Biden's spirit I believe reflects that of US democracy. Let's celebrate that fact. And keep essential faith with said democracy as Washington continues to air out the theater in which we, the audience, were asked to suspend our appreciation for the real, "today" art of politics: serving life in its basic, egalitarian nature.

Jonathan von Ranson Wendell

THE LADY KILLIGREW:

*Awesome Beer
Amazing Food*

Awesome, Amazing Employees!

440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA
7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least)
(413)367-9666

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

Rau's Auto
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIR

(413) 367-2475

531 Turners Falls Rd. Montague

24 hour emergency towing
Best service licensed Mechanics

Overwhelmed by stuff? Try Franklin County's Most Convenient

IN-TOWN SELF STORAGE

UPPER END OF WELLS STREET, GREENFIELD

413-883-7323

Easy in-town location
Secure 24-hour access

VARIETY OF SIZES THE BEST PRICES

OFFICE AT 11 WELLS COURT, GREENFIELD, MA

Contractors, Flea Marketers, Tradeshow Vendors and Artists encouraged to inquire

Brian R. San Soucie
LOCKSMITH - CRL
certified - bonded - insured

863-2471
28 Montague St
Turners Falls, MA

Trusted for over 25 years, installing all types of locks & entry devices for business & homes

- Dead BOLTS
- Household Lock Sets
- Master Keys & Re-keys
- Safe Combinations Changed

HEALTH from page A1...

Montague Board of Health Candidates: In Their Own Words

Kathleen Burek

I am Kathleen Burek, a candidate for a position on the Board of Health here in our town. This board is required by state statutes and regulations to perform many important and crucial duties relative to the protection of public health, the control of disease, the promotion of sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution.

These requirements reflect the legislature's understanding that many critical health problems are best handled by the involvement of local community officials – the health board – familiar with local conditions.

As the animal inspector I have witnessed much of this by checking all barns and livestock and quarantining affected animals. Montague residents do a great job of caring for their animals.

The health department is responsible for a vast variety of duties, just to mention a few: record-keeping of housing and dwellings, hazardous waste, solid waste, food permits, nuisances, pools and beaches, etc.

I could go on and on. However, as a candidate for the Board of Health, I will certainly uphold and add new ideas to the board – we are on a mission to improve our town through all

these regulations.

The Board of Health has done a very good job by working hard to serve the citizens of Montague in every aspect of the definitions of their job duties as explained above, and then on top of that, being exposed to the COVID pandemic and what steps to take. Dealing with numerous calls from concerned citizens of Montague in a polite and professional way.

When elected I would make a strong effort to ensure that all duties are carried out not only by the Board of Health but all other departments with a connection to them. There is always strength in numbers, and working together locally definitely succeeds.

I have been involved in many community functions over the years. I was instrumental in introducing peer education to the High School on the drugs and alcohol problem; I am a past president of the *Montague Reporter* board; I served on the police advisory committee last year; I drove bus for Kuzmeskus.

With that being said, I would like to continue to serve you, the citizens of Montague, and will appreciate your vote for the Board of Health on May 17th. I thank you in advance.

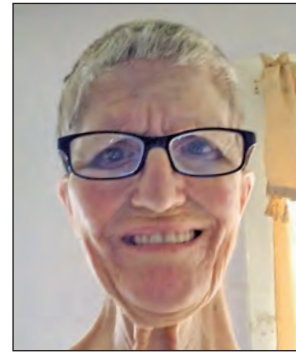


Maureen McNamara

I have lived in Montague for 13 years. I worked in long-term care facilities for 15 years, and in home health care for eight. I've also volunteered taking care of flowers in a small hardware store for four years, and on the Bridge of Flowers for three.

I know most of you from taking my excessively friendly Chihuahua on walks.

I'm drawn to the Board of Health because of dog droppings that don't get picked up, complaints that get ignored, trash that litters the neighborhood streets that the Board ignores, which the wind blows around the neighborhood streets



and into yards, and furniture that is left on the side of streets for months that needs to be enforced.

If trash barrels are left out year round, there would be less trash downtown.

There also needs to be stronger education and knowledge on the pandemic, other than just signs on business doors. If there is another uptick, pamphlets, leaflets, and flyers should be made accessible to all.

This community is a great place, and if the Board of Health and the Montague Highway Department work together, it will be healthier and cleaner for all.

Rachel Stoler

My name is Rachel Stoler and I would like your vote for Board of Health on May 17! I have lived in Turners Falls for 19 years, and raised two children here. I have been a town meeting member for the past three years and am interested in participating more actively in town operations.

I am passionate about community health! I work with the Communities That Care Coalition (CTC), which focuses on youth health and well-being in our region. I am also involved in chronic disease prevention through addressing community-level risk factors such as access to physical activity and healthy food, as well as regional Age-friendly efforts.

I love walking on Montague's roads, trails, and beloved bike path, enjoying the local arts scene, and eating at local restaurants!

I would like to contribute to Montague being a place where the healthiest choices are the easiest choices for all people in the community, and which attracts a diverse population because everyone feels welcome.

Over the past few years, the Board of Health has been able to:

- Address the local implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic, as the pandemic and recommended responses evolved. This included contact tracing, Connecting with regional vaccination efforts, and recently setting up a testing site.

- Work with and support a new health director, who replaced a long-serving veteran health director, in fulfilling the day-to-day operations including but not limited to health inspections, addressing health code violations, mosquito control policy, and public health nurse services.

- Adjust from having two members of the Board of Health also on the Selectboard to having no overlap, and needing to bridge communication between the two boards.

- Take an interest in opportunities for funding for shared services with other towns, and exploring ways the state of Massachusetts is creating to support local and regional public health efforts.



In addition to contributing to all of the current functions of the Board of Health and supporting Health Department staff to do their best work, I am particularly interested in expanding health-related services through collaborating with other towns when possible, and taking advantage of new opportunities offered by the state.

I would also like to increase collaboration with other town departments, as well as with the school districts (Gill-Montague and Franklin County Technical School) and community groups, to communicate positive messages related to community health.

For example, Montague passed a Complete Streets policy in 2018 and has since received two rounds of funding from MassDOT for roadway improvement projects that increase access to all users (pedestrians, cyclists, users of wheelchairs, users of public transit). This contributes to more Montague residents and guests being able to engage in physical activity and active transportation... which is good for physical health. It is also good for local businesses, traffic safety, crime reduction, and improvement of the natural environment – all of which contribute to community health!

I am interested in the conversations we can have with the Board of Health, Selectboard, RiverCulture, Montague Police, local businesses, schools, cultural groups, conservation groups, and others to ensure that all of them can recognize the importance of this initiative, and that all residents can benefit from it.

We can have these kinds of conversations in the realm of food access, mental health, and social factors that impact the well-being of our current and future residents.

I will encourage others to run for town offices and otherwise participate in town decision-making, and would especially like to reach out to young people and others in the community whose voices are not regularly heard in these spaces. More folks stepping up and taking responsibility in town operations help increase the health and vitality of the town.

Dr. Catherine Dodds

I first came to Western Massachusetts while working as a traveling (locums) doctor in Greenfield and Northampton in the summer of 2018. I relocated here permanently in June 2019, recruited by Baystate to help transition the primary care practice in Turners Falls.

Transitioning a medical practice was a tall order – enough work to keep me busy by itself. And then the COVID-19 pandemic arrived less than six months later. It was something none of us could've predicted. And it completely changed our day-to-day lives.

As a primary care doctor, I had a front row seat to COVID-19, for better or worse. I saw firsthand the confusion and mixed messages. In the early days, it felt surreal and bewildering. Patients were asking me questions to which there were no clear answers. Every day brought new information to absorb and understand and incorporate.

As time has gone on and COVID-19 has become a routine part of daily life, the focus has shifted to how to provide clear and accurate information and how to best protect everyone during this public health emergency. But COVID-19 still feels overwhelming at times.

What I have noticed over the past three years, as both a physician and a resident of Montague, is the lack of proactivity from our local public health leadership. Until a neighbor suggested that my professional skills could be valuable on our lo-

cal board of health, I wasn't aware that Montague even had its own board of health. I imagine other newcomers, to the local area as well as to politics, are also unaware that we do. Perhaps there was a lot of good work going on behind

the scenes. But part of the role of public health is to be visible at the forefront, openly communicating plans for improving the local population's health and well-being.

Massachusetts' state-wide guidelines and updates were easy to follow. Our local medical systems developed and communicated evolving strategies for addressing COVID-19. Across the river, Greenfield's updates to mask mandates and testing sites were well-advertised. But even as I was working and living here, Montague felt in the shadows, a step behind, merely reacting.

If elected to the Montague Board of Health, my medical background will serve as a foundation upon which to build public health expertise. The role will be a way to contribute to my new hometown of Montague, both during this COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, when the focus shifts to other more predictable but nonetheless essential services that public health can provide. I will accomplish this as a physician with a deep understanding of human health, as a millennial eager to use technology and crowdsourcing to make local government more accessible to all residents, and as an outsider with no rooted prejudices about what can or can't be done here in Montague.



RECYCLE

PAPER
Week of April 25
in Montague

more info? call: 863-2054

PZ Insurance

We have more than insurance; we have experience

Auto | Home | Business
Since 1891

25 Millers Falls Road
Turners Falls, MA 01376
413-863-4331
www.pzinc.com

GREENFIELD FARMERS COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE
Locally Owned Since 1918

269 High Street - Greenfield
(413) 773-9639

Local Farmer-Owned

Products for the home, farm, pets, yard & garden

If you Feed it - Seed it - Weed it We GOT it!

www.greenfieldfarmerscoop.com

WE HEAT FRANKLIN COUNTY

- System 2000 (Energy Kinetics)
- Thermo Pride
- Weil-McLain
- Other Major Brands
- Expert Burner Service

MACKTIN FUEL TRUCKING SAND & GRAVEL

(413) 773-3622

Formerly Jay K's – bigger & better!

Connecticut River Liquor & Wine

Open Mon-Thurs 10am-10pm
Fri & Sat 10am - 11pm • Sun Noon-8pm

123 Avenue A • Turners Falls
863-5066

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

Renaissance Excavating, Inc.

COMPLETE SITE WORK

Septic & Drainage Systems | Sand, Gravel & Loam
Main Road, Gill
Douglas Edson 413.863.4462
renexc@gmail.com cell 413.834.2201

INFO@RENBUILD.NET
413-863-8316

RENAISSANCE BUILDERS

WWW.RENBUILD.NET • PO BOX 272, TURNERS FALLS, MA 01376

Fred Holmgren Piano Tuning & Repair

Stay tuned!

(978)544-5494
fredholmgren@gmail.com

BANJO from page A1

small room is made smaller by the sheer number of banjos inside. Nix keeps at least four of the instruments, along with a guitar or two, against one wall. His computer sits along another. Memorabilia from a lifetime in music adorns the walls: diagrams of early banjos, Nix's music degrees, and concert posters from his performances across the world.

In one corner there's a psychedelic *papier-mâché* frog with a banjo in his hand, a gift that a friend gave him after he played her "an evening's worth of Bach" on the banjo.

I asked Nix, with just a hint of skepticism, about playing Bach on the banjo. "That's part of what I do," he replied simply, "I play classical and classical crossover music on the banjo."

But that's not all that he does. While Nix was in school studying classical guitar, he would make his money on the weekends playing in a bluegrass duo. "I put on a tux [to play classical concerts], then put on the cowboy boots and went to play bluegrass," he quipped. Nix became a virtuoso with both instruments, but he still felt a persistent creative itch.



Nix's newest Seeder seven-string.

"At some point," he said, "not that I got tired of it, but I wanted to answer the question: how do you distinguish yourself with a singular voice as a creative instrumental musician?" To answer that question, Nix delved into the past.

Michael Nix can talk for a long time about the banjo's history. ("That's more than you wanted to know," he said to me after a tangent about racist minstrel music and Mickey Mouse.) But the focus of his study was on the fingerstyle banjo styles that originated in the 1870s. He found a lot that he liked in the fingerstyle music, but concluded that it lacked the range he wanted. Hence, his creation of the seven-string banjo with two additional low strings that can "keep an integral bass going" throughout an entire composition.

"I began seeing the beginnings of a new repertoire that I could write," Nix said of the seven-string. "So I began writing solo music for it, and I started integrating this instrument into classical chamber music."

Now, Nix's repertoire includes everything "from Mozart's *Rondo Alla Turca* to African or Brazilian or Irish folk-based stuff, arranged

through a classical lens." He calls it a "classical world-music crossover aesthetic," and that's what he'll be playing in the New American Banjo Festival this weekend.

He'll be performing alongside Chris Devine on the violin, viola, mandolin, and guitar. Also performing will be Aaron Jonah Lewis, a virtuoso banjo player in the classic fingerstyle. While "festival" might sound like a lofty title for a show with just two live performances, it's representative of Nix's larger vision for the event – and for banjo in the region.

Banjo Incubation

Michael Nix thinks that the Shea Theater in Great Falls is the perfect place to have a banjo festival.

"New England has, since the late 1800s, been a hub for banjo activity. Boston, New York, and Philadelphia were the large manufacturing centers," Nix told me. While western Massachusetts may not have been a manufacturing center, it has "incubated" many banjo enthusiasts, from bluegrass groups to old time clawhammer players.

"This is my home... So, I thought, why not? I have the people, I have the infrastructure at the Shea Theater. I have all of these connections to pull together festivals and banjo-related activities," Nix said.

His vision for the banjo festival isn't just about the local scene. He wants to use the idea of "arts tourism" to bring more pickers into the area. "Last year the banjo festival was online, and we got an international audience – Netherlands, Thailand, people from all over watched the stream or a recording of it," he explained.

"That's the other thing that I've always done with my own career, I've run this continuum from local, regional, national, to international." Nix hopes that in future years



A gift from a friend.

he'll be able to expand his audience even more, as well as the focus of the festival. "I've decided to focus this year on classical banjo," he told me, which is why he and Aaron Jonah Lewis will be performing. But next year he wants the festival to focus on "women in banjo."

After more than 40 years playing the banjo, Nix still hasn't tired of exploring the instrument's potential. "The big thing for me," Nix said, "is that it's a continual exploration of possibilities, exploring what's next, what could be done next."

The New American Banjo Festival will begin at 7:30 p.m. this Saturday, April 23, at the Shea Theater on Avenue A in Turners Falls. The festival is sponsored by Nix Works, Greenfield Cooperative Bank, RiverCulture, the Shea Theater, Allyance Productions, and the Mass Cultural Council. Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door, and the event will be livestreamed for free at couchmusic.live.

Celebrate Arbor Day

Tree Plantings organized by the Montague Tree Committee

Friday, April 29, 2022

9 a.m. Fairway Avenue Cemetery
Montague City / Turners Falls
Fairway Ave. near Walnut St.
Sugar maple

9:30 a.m. DIAL/SELF

Corner of H and 11th, the Patch
October Red Maple

10 a.m. FL Roberts gas station

Third and L, Turners Falls
Thornless Hawthorne & Hackberry

11 a.m. Peskeomskut Park

Ave. A and Seventh St., Turners
Red Oak & Dogwood

11:30 a.m. Over Unity Park

70 Prospect Street, Turners Falls
Red Oak

12 p.m. Turners Falls Fire Station

Turnpike & Turners Falls roads
Eight Lindens on Turners Falls Road

4 p.m. Lake Pleasant

Between P.O. and Bridge of Names
Peach

5:15 p.m. Carroll's Market

33 East Main Street, Millers Falls
Japanese Tree Lilac

Saturday, April 30, 2022

11 a.m. Montague Center Common

Across from First Cong. Church
Hot Wings Maple

Bring gloves, and any helpful tools like a shovel and a full watering can. Bring friends and neighbors and children. Songs and musical instruments are welcome.

Help Keep Montague Green and Growing!

For information, call Bill Codington at 863-5674.

SPORTS from page A1

bases twice in the first three innings, but only Turners was able to put runs across the plate.

Turners loaded the bases in the first, but Lauren Ross pitched her way out of the jam with two consecutive Ks to end the inning. In the bottom of the first, Turners ace Madison Liimatainen struck out the side with only 11 pitches.

In the second, Turners again loaded the bases with only one out. An infield fly kept the ladies on base, giving Tech the second out of the inning, and with two down, Liimatainen stepped up to the plate.

With the count 1-1, she parked the ball deep into left center. There is no fence at Franklin Tech but this ball was definitely a home run. The ball bounced off a car in the parking lot and careened out of play. And just like that, the score was 4-0.

The Lady Birds answered in the bottom of the inning, as their first three players reached base, and suddenly the cleat was on the other foot. But Liimatainen, facing bases loaded with no outs,

threw three straight strikeouts to end the threat.

Ross struck out two more batters in the top of the third and Tech came to the plate with the score still 4-0. They loaded the bases once again in the bottom of the third, and once again they couldn't convert. After three complete, the score remained 4-0.

Turners got another run in the fourth courtesy of a Paige Sulda triple and a Liimatainen sac fly, and in the fifth, Tech began making errors and the Turners Ladies took full advantage as four more runs crossed the plate for a healthy 9-0 lead.

In the home seventh, Cassidy Trudeau crossed the plate and Hannah Gilbert hit a solo homer to make the final score 9-2.

As a side note, until they start a little later in the evening, this reporter can only attend games on Monday afternoon. Luckily, there is usually a softball game on Mondays, and this week I was lucky the Franklin Tech and Turners Falls teams were in action against each other!

LEAK from page A1

government affairs director Len Greene told the *Reporter* this week. "Subsequent inspections show the absorbent pads at the pistons to be clean.... A very rough estimate of the release is 300 gallons, but some of this fluid may have gone into the piston pit, which means it did not release to the river."

The company first reported the spill, the second at the dam this winter, to the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) on February 24. FirstLight maintains that conditions of ice and high water prevented workers from reaching the leak for seven weeks, and that an initial system of booms set up to contain the spill which broke on March 22 also could not be repaired due to safety conditions.

"It's a privatized process," MassDEP spokesperson Catherine Skiba said on Wednesday. "DEP's responsibility is to ensure that they follow the regulations, and do the cleanup as necessary.... We give verbal approval to whatever remedial actions they deem appropriate."

Last week's repairs came a day after whitewater kayakers shared video on social media documenting the oil on the water and scattered pieces of broken boom, and voiced concerns that a large volume of oil appeared to be washing downriver. According to FirstLight, the last piece of winter ice fell off the dam that same day, allowing repairs to finally be made safely.

Skiba confirmed that no MassDEP staff inspected the site while the oil was leaking into the river, but said FirstLight kept the agency updated throughout the

process and sent photographs, and that a staff member was present last Wednesday "to observe the repairs and site conditions and make sure the proper remedial actions were being taken."

In response to inquiries about the lack of public notification of the ongoing leak, Skiba pointed out that MassDEP's February 28 Notice of Responsibility letter was electronically copied to the Turners Falls Fire Department, Montague board of health, and Montague selectboard and town administrator Steve Ellis.

Ellis told the *Reporter* on Wednesday that while he had discussed the previous leak reported at the dam in December with town staff, he could not locate the February 28 notice in his email.

The December leak was reportedly corrected within a week, and comprised of four gallons of hydraulic fluid. Greene clarified that this earlier incident was not caused by a piston leaking, but rather a cracked supply line.

Skiba would not provide comment on the company's "rough estimate" of 300 gallons leaking from the piston between February and April, and declined to answer whether the agency was surprised to hear it. "That volume has not been reported to DEP," she said. "I can't comment on the volume – it has not been reported to us. They're responsible for providing that information to us."

FirstLight is required to file an Immediate Response Action Plan 60 days after its initial report, or April 23. MassDEP spokesperson Kathleen Fournier said, the report is not expected until Monday, as April 23 is a Saturday.



Close call: Franklin Tech's Kaitlin Trudeau slides safely into third as the throw goes to the Thunder's Cady Wozniak.



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

MASSIVE BOOKSHOP
EST. 2020
YOUR LOCAL RNTI-PRIME BOOK SERVICE
VISIT US AT: MASSIVEBOOKSHOP.COM

Our discounts are in full bloom!
SINCE 1888
A.H. Rist
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.
Competitive rates and discounts for all of your insurance needs!
159 Avenue A Turners Falls 413.863.4373 ahrist.com

New Bakery Open!
411 MAIN ROAD, GILL
OPEN 7 DAYS, 8 AM - 7 PM
413-863-4431
WWW.UPINNGIL.COM
UPINNGIL
Food You Need from the Land You Love

SOLAR from page A1

forests and our town isn't taken advantage of."

Monday's meeting featured a presentation, after which board members answered questions and responded to feedback about the proposed bylaw, which is still subject to change.

"Something we'd like to highlight overall, with the work and concepts in this bylaw as a replacement for our existing bylaw," Dooody told the *Reporter*, "is an emphasis on how it will protect our forests for the value of the climate change mitigation services the trees provide and for their positive effects on water and air quality, not just for our town but for the benefit of the entire state."

The new rules outline the criteria for small, medium, large, and "very large" solar arrays. Perhaps the most notable change would be a 10-acre cap on "very large" installations, allowed only in the town's two solar overlay districts at the transfer station and the old landfill on Mormon Hollow Road. The current zoning bylaws define extra-large-scale arrays as occupying more than 10 acres of land or generating more than 2 megawatts of power, and set no upper limit on the size of these arrays.

Small-scale solar installations, 1,000 square feet or less, would be allowed by right as an accessory to an existing business or home. Medium-sized arrays occupying between 1,000 square feet and one quarter-acre of land would require a site plan review, detailing basic elements of the project such as the size, construction plans, access points, and stormwater management plans. These projects must also meet basic local and state zoning laws.

"It can be denied, but under very limited circumstances," FRCOG planning director Peggy Sloan explained of solar arrays that only require a site plan review. "There's very limited circumstances, because you're just looking at the design of the project on the site and you're not balancing the impacts, which is what happens during the special permit process."

A large-scale project, between one quarter-acre and five acres, would require both a site plan review and a special permit from the planning board. Special permits give the board the authority to impose conditions to mitigate environmental or public health impacts. Before issuing a permit, the board may consult with outside legal experts on aspects of the project including stormwater management, fire suppression, hazard mitigation, de-

commissioning, and financial surety.

Planning board member Seal LaMadeleine said the five-acre limit allows developers to generate about 1 MW of electricity on any site, including outside the solar overlay districts.

"We thought that was significant enough, and provides some level of offering to have solar here, while taking into account that we're mostly forested," said LaMadeleine.

The new bylaw makes no changes to roof-mounted solar systems, which are allowed by right on any residential home or business. "We very much support roof-mounted solar systems," LaMadeleine said.

Farms, Forests, and Fires

The bylaw proposes that arrays are not to be located on prime farmland unless they are designed for "dual use," meaning the land can support some form of agriculture or grazing.

For fire safety reasons, a special permit would be required for any solar arrays that include on-site battery storage. Standalone battery storage facilities are prohibited under the new bylaw, which states that batteries "shall be sized to accommodate only the electricity generated on the site and shall require... a safety review approval from the town fire officials."

"We felt like acres of just batteries was not prudent for Wendell, where we have a voluntary emergency response team," said LaMadeleine. "If they are not an accessory system, they are not allowed in town, is what is proposed."

Planning board member Mary Thomas pointed out that lithium battery storage for solar arrays can be the size of railroad cars, and the flammable chemicals inside are a fire hazard. For that reason, the bylaw also states that large-scale arrays may only be located off paved roads. About half of the roadways in Wendell are dirt roads – about 23 miles' worth, according to the highway department website.

Lisa Hoag, another attendee at Monday's meeting, mentioned a recent fire at a large Tesla battery facility in Australia that took 150 firefighters four days to extinguish.

The only attendee to express trepidation about the proposed bylaw change was Dave Charbonneau, who joined about one hour into the two-hour meeting. The owner of a 10-acre property on Lockes Village Road, Charbonneau asked whether he would receive a tax break because he was no longer allowed to build a solar array to the scale he

would have liked to on his property.

Members sympathized with Charbonneau about the property tax rate, but assured him other means exist to get tax breaks on property that remains forested, such as the state's Chapter 61 program.

The amendment would replace solar regulations passed in 2017. In September 2019, more than 70 Wendell residents packed a public hearing about a proposed 10-acre array on Morse Village and New Salem roads. The project had been proposed by Sunpin Solar Development Inc., and concerns over the array's size, forest cutting, and proximity to potential wetlands drew ire from townfolk. The following month, voters at a special town meeting unanimously passed a moratorium on new applications for commercial solar projects to give the planning board time to craft new rules.

Sunpin withdrew the application, the last that preceded the moratorium, by February 2020. At a special town meeting last December voters extended the moratorium for a second time, until December 2022.

Ceremonial Stone Sites

A major topic of discussion at Monday night's presentation was how the town can protect Native American ceremonial stone sites, including those yet to be discovered.

"We have been looking into how to protect any cultural resources that may exist on a property," Thomas said. "We haven't quite landed on the appropriate wording or restrictions yet for the cultural resources."

The proposal now reads: "To protect the cultural resources, only the permitting authorities and project applicant shall have access to the report submitted by the [tribal historic preservation officer] or their designated agent. A 35-foot boundary shall be established around archeological sites and/or Ceremonial Stone Landscapes inside of which no work or other disturbance shall take place."

Bettina Washington, a tribal historic preservation officer for the Wampanoag Tribe of Bay Head (Aquinnah), joined the discussion and said she will send suggestions to the board on how to help preserve these sites.

"This is an industry, this is a business, and our cultural features will be a hurdle for the developer," Washington said. "We're trying to save these so in the future our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren, can actually do the

work and have these features exist so they can rediscover what our people left behind."

Ceremonial stone structures are "much more prevalent in the western part of the state," Washington said.

Hoag brought up a 2018 memorandum of understanding between the town of Wendell and four tribes – Wampanoag, Pequot, Mohegan, and Narragansett – to identify and protect sites of significant cultural heritage. The memorandum asserts the state failed to adequately consider culturally significant sites in allowing logging in Wendell State Forest.

State laws require that any information received by a local historical commission regarding the location of cultural artifacts not become part of the public record.

"We have an opportunity as a town to set some slightly stronger precedents than state law would allow," Hoag said. "It would be a nice opportunity for us to create a precedent of acknowledging ceremonial stone landscapes as genuine cultural resources."

A formal public hearing on the amendment will be held May 11, and townfolk will be asked to vote on it at the June 4 town meeting. To replace the existing bylaw Wendell voters must pass the amendment by a two-thirds majority, then send it to the state attorney general's office for final approval.

One hurdle could come from a 1985 Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40 Section 3, which prohibits towns from "unreasonably" regulating solar energy. A case currently underway in the state Supreme Judicial Court between the city of Waltham and a solar developer in an adjacent town could set a precedent in how this law is interpreted. Wendell, Pelham, Shutesbury, and Buckland have signed an amicus brief in support of Waltham's right to deny the developer's application for an access road through a residential area.

"There is a lot going on, at the state level and activism-wise, to try to change this to allow for more town oversight, but it has not been changed," LaMadeleine said, adding that state senator Jo Comerford and others have attempted to expand the grounds on which towns can regulate solar projects. "That did not pass through the Senate; the House version is still in process."

Discussion of the bylaw will continue at this Thursday's planning board meeting at 6:30 p.m.



TAKING ORDERS FOR 2022 CSA SHARES

Place your order soon as shares are selling fast!

FALLS



FARM

With rising food costs order your Spring/Summer farm share now

fallsfarmllc.com

Falls Farm LLC, 202 Old Sunderland Rd. Montague, MA 01351

CANNABIS from page A1

The provision of S.2823 which has garnered the most attention – and support – is a section that would annually transfer 10% of excise tax revenues imposed on pot firms to a “Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund,” that would provide loans and grants to firms who qualify as “social equity program participants and economic empowerment priority applicants.”

The law also establishes a social equity trust fund board, including individuals “from, and with experience advocating on behalf of, communities that have been disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and enforcement” to develop regulations for administration of the fund. Cities and towns would be given an incentive to sign agreements with social-equity applicants by directing a small portion of the taxes such firms pay to the state back to municipalities themselves.

Other provisions of the bill provide a mechanism for local communities to vote whether their municipality should license firms that allow the on-premises consumption of pot – so-called “cannabis cafés” – and establish a “special commission on drugged driving” to evaluate research on testing drivers for impairment by cannabis use.

When Senate committees began fashioning the legislation earlier this year, the consensus among interest groups about the equity goals was somewhat dampened by concerns among town and city officials that existing contracts already negotiated with cannabis firms, known as “host community agreements,” would be retroactively undermined. The criticism was raised by the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), which advocated for amendments to the proposed law.

Athol town manager Shaun Suhoski, circulated a letter among local officials warning that any retroactive changes affecting host community agreements would “spawn ill will and legal challenges.”

The version of the Senate bill that eventually passed has been applauded by municipal leaders for eliminating some of the more blatantly retroactive features they saw in earlier versions of the legislation. But it still appears to make radical changes in how future agreements between municipalities and cannabis firms can be negotiated, particularly in the area of impact fees.

The Town’s Cut

The bill would explicitly end the common practice of calculating fees on the basis of cannabis sales, and require instead that any payments

to host communities would be reimbursements, based on clear documentation of the impact of a firm’s local cannabis business.

The fees, which would be negotiated during an “annual renewal” of the agreement or prior to a new license, would be based on impacts during the prior year, and the calculated impact must be shown to be greater than that “created by a non-cannabis industry.”

Furthermore, a public document presenting the municipality’s impact analysis must be transmitted to the cannabis firm within one month of the “annual [license] renewal,” and “if the information documented is not reasonably related to the actual costs imposed on the host community,” then the licensee is empowered by the proposed law to bring a lawsuit for “breach of contract.”

The CCC would be empowered to review and approve the host community agreements and renewal licenses, presumably to help monitor the rationale given to such fees.

The current agreement between Montague and the firm 253 Farmacy, which runs a cultivation, manufacturing, and retail operation on Millers Falls Road, explicitly sets the impact fee as a percentage of sales, and contains no mechanism for directly calculating the cannabis-related impact on the town. A second host agreement with Flower Power Growers Inc., which is constructing a second cultivation and manufacturing facility in the industrial park, contains similar provisions.

Both agreements require donations to local organizations and for events not explicitly related to cannabis consumption, an approach that would be prohibited under the bill – although firms may still “voluntarily” make contributions after the host agreements are signed.

While the 253 Farmacy agreement was negotiated several years ago and the Senate bill is said to have eliminated “retroactive” features, the law as written is fuzzy as to whether the new criteria would apply in full to the “annual reviews” it stipulates, and which the CCC must approve.

A New Burden of Proof

Revenues from the impact fee in Montague currently flow into a targeted cannabis-related stabilization fund, and have been used to finance substance counselors at the two regional high schools.

Articles on the annual town meeting warrant this spring would expand those counseling services, fund a math, technology, science, and engineering enrichment program for students as an alternative to pot smoking, and help pay for a

design study for crosswalk and sidewalk improvements on the corner of Millers Falls Road and Turnpike Road, adjacent to 253 Farmacy.

The Senate legislation does not explicitly refer to the expenditure of impact funds, but one might expect that the CCC, which has been charged with evaluating and developing criteria for local agreements, would consider the expenditure of mitigation funds to correspond with the criteria for setting them.

Under the “breach of contract” provision, the law appears to set the burden of proof on a town or city to prove that a firm has created a given negative impact on the public bottom line, and also that the impact is caused specifically by its product being cannabis.

Sources on the staffs of Senators who helped craft S.2823, including the staffs of Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz and Pat Jehlen, told the Reporter that these provisions simply clarify the intent of the original 2017 legislation, which required that impact fees be “reasonably related” to the cost imposed on local communities by cannabis.

They also told us that the relatively large payments to cities and towns that have evolved since then have benefited larger firms, and have created barriers to social and economic equity firms.

The MMA, which supports the equity portions of the bill, is not so sure.

“Micromanagement of community impact fees is a very real concern, and we respectfully ask that you recognize the burden this would place on cities and towns,” MMA director Geoff Beckwith wrote in a statement to legislators just before S.2823 was approved. “There is a significant level of disagreement around how to quantify and recognize these fees, exacerbated by the multi-billion-dollar cannabis industry’s highly effective campaign to minimize the direct and indirect impact of the industry on municipalities...”

“The best method of reaching agreement is to allow the parties to do so directly, without state or industry interference,” he argued.

Montague town administrator Steve Ellis told the Reporter that documenting the community impact of pot sales on an annual basis could be a challenge for local officials, adding to the burden of what is already a labor-intensive negotiating process. Ellis also characterized those negotiations as “very collegial,” and said he felt comfortable that the town could rely on the “goodwill” of local cannabis firms in adapting to any future changes in state policy.



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.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR



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

To apply by May 16 deadline: Submit a cover letter and resume to mackay.selectman@gmail.com or New Salem Public Library, Attn: Sue Dunbar, 23 South Main Street, New Salem, MA 01355.

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

Here’s the way it was on April 19, 2012: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Mysterious Stone Circles Uncovered in Unity Park

Employees from the Mass West Construction Company of Granby,, working on the first phase of reconstruction at Unity Park, have uncovered mysterious mortared stone circles as they prepare for repaving the parking lot.

The stone circles are not the remains of Native American habitation or the ancient ruins of Druids. They are the coal silo foundations of the former Turners Falls Coal Company, later purchased by Shanahan’s.

The New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad ran railroad tracks along the east side of the canal and the along the Connecticut River to deliver coal to several wooden silos, built by Dan McCarthy, who established the Turners Falls Coal Company in 1899. McCarthy had a scale house at 60 Second Street, opposite from where the Second Street Bakery is now located.

Leverett School Committee Chair Steps Down, but Leaves Much to Think About

Farshid Hajir, completing his fifth year, will step down from the Leverett School Committee on April 28th. He cited increasing

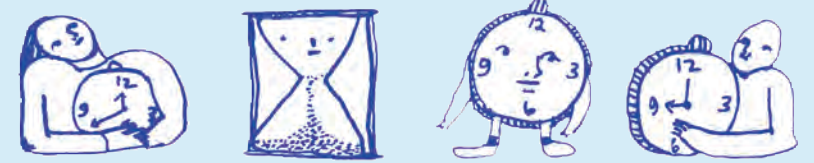
responsibilities at his work as a professor in the math department at UMass Amherst.

Recalling his first days on the school committee, Hajir used the phrase “guardian of the schools” to describe what he believed he would be doing when he was first elected in 2007. Hajir described himself in those years as a “novice to town government, including the role and duties of the school committee. That first year there was a lot of talk about budget cutting, but there were no real budget issues.”

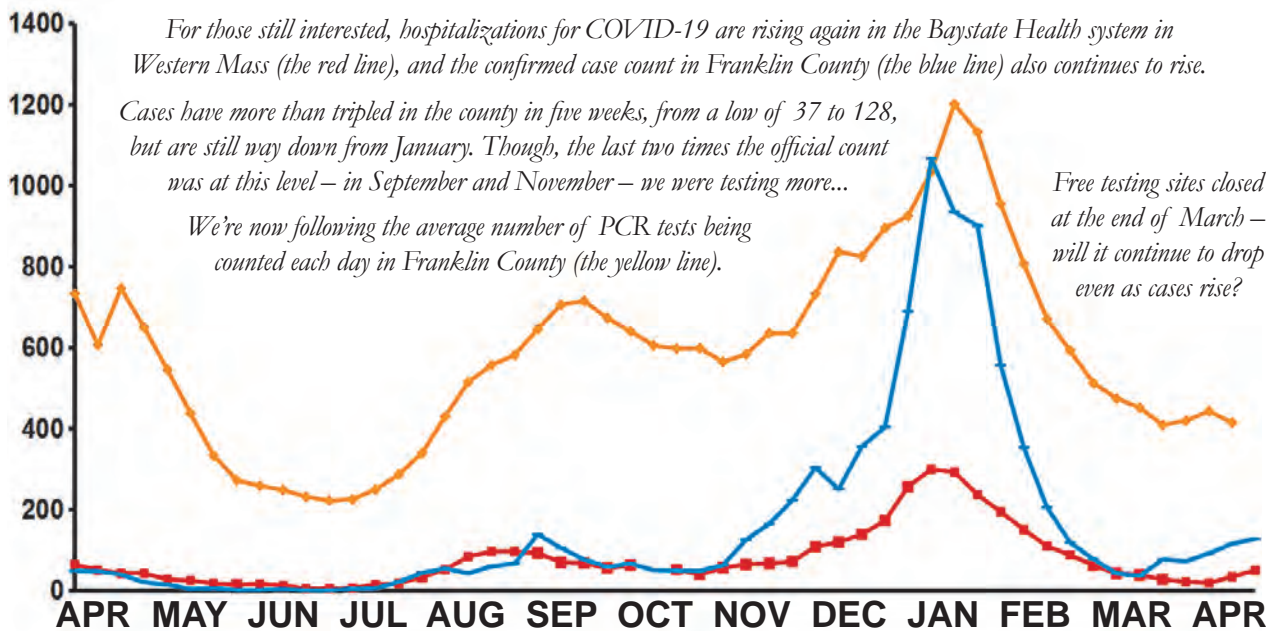
In his second year, having been made chair, he focused on learning what the school committee was supposed to do. He became central to budget discussions. He felt at that time the governance structure of local schools was threatened by initiatives at the state level, namely the from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Executive Office of Education, which were looking to regionalize local districts into larger entities so that, for example, if Chicopee could educate 10,000 students in one district, Franklin County, with a similarly sized student population, could do the same.

It soon became clear that Franklin County towns were not conveniently laid out close together and were also eager to keep their local schools going.

Hajir feels it is important for towns to maintain control over their own school districts.



BACKGROUND RISK LEVELS



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

Bryan Hobbs Remodeling LLC
Blown Cellulose Insulation • Spray Foam Insulation
Airsealing • Energy Audits • Replacement Doors & Windows
Email: bryanhobbsremodeling@gmail.com
Now Accepting Credit Cards
Office: (413) 775-9006
Lic # 083982
Reg # 139564
Bryan G. Hobbs
PO Box 1535
Greenfield, MA 01302
mass save PARTNER

STONEDWORK
— BUILD. REBUILD. MEND. —
R. SKELTON, WALLER
(413) 367-2435 . skelton.rob@gmail.com

B. RUBIN & SONS INC.
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIRS
Shocks • Tires • Batteries • Starters
Struts • Tune-ups • Brakes • Oil Change
194 MILLERS FALLS RD. • 413-863-2236
10% SENIOR DISCOUNT FREE ESTIMATES
MASS INSPECTION STATION: NO. 13051

WENDELL from page A1

with canisters that cost \$5,000 apiece to replace when full. At that time Wendell finance committee chair Doug Tanner said he thought the cost of the canisters would only rise, and that the towns should look at other possible solutions.

New Salem took the lead and hired an engineer, Chris Stoddard, to explore options. The least expensive is finding and sealing leaks in the present well, and the second is locating and drilling a new well. Wendell selectboard member Laurie DiDonato agreed to act as liaison between the two selectboards.

Since then Stoddard thought he might want to step back in favor of an engineer more familiar with the workings of MassDEP.

Keller said his first thought about the letter is that it says the towns should follow the law, and that has been the intention all along.

Tanner said the towns did get an engineering report, which New Salem did not sign. He repeated his position that a filter, which the MassDEP letter offers as a solution, is not a long-term solution, and that all evidence points to surface groundwater as the PFAS source. Keller suggested that a new well casing can be called a new well.

The letter must be signed and returned by May 4, allowing one more Wendell selectboard meeting before the town's response is due.

Town Down Two Annas

Library trustee Phyllis Lawrence joined the Zoom meeting later than her scheduled time. She forgot to consider the fact that meetings are still on Zoom, drove to the office building to find no meeting, then drove home and connected to the meeting late.

She said library director Anna Lawrence (no relation) is moving and leaving her position.

Notice was short, and Phyllis Lawrence asked the selectboard to approve an emergency six-month appointment for Miriam Warner, who has been serving as assistant librarian, to serve as interim director for six months starting May 6. Other libraries, she added, are having trouble replacing librarians who are leaving.

Vacancies in town positions is nearly a constant on the agenda, but this year assessor Anna Seeger is not running for another term, and after the May 2 town election, unless someone runs a write-campaign,

Wendell's board of assessors will have a single member, Martha Senn.

Assessing properties has become more technical and involved, and it is possible that Regional Resource Group (RRG), which already consults with the town, may take over the process. "There is a part of me that mistrusts outsourcing," said Phyllis Lawrence, who had stayed connected to the meeting.

"I had a good experience with RRG," said selectboard member Gillian Budine.

DiDonato said the board should invite Seeger, Senn, and Kelly Szocik of RRG to its next meeting.

Delorey Wants More

After overseeing several major projects, highway commission chair and building inspector Phil Delorey said he needs something for all the extra work he is doing. "I want to be retired," he said, or else receive some compensation for the extra work he does.

Tanner said the fin com supports some compensation for a project manager, a job that will vary in

the time needed from one year to another.

Delorey said he enjoyed managing the police station renovations more than being building inspector, but he spent 60 to 80 hours at it.

Treasurer Carolyn Manley suggested that pay for a project manager should be tied directly to each project. A project manager could have a stipend, which can be added to when a large project calls for long hours of work. Manley said she would check with the state Department of Revenue about funding a position from multiple sources.

Federal Relief

Johnson-Mussad said Wendell will have a total of \$262,440.19 available in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Money has already been spent on a work computer and docking station for his use, and allocated for other computer upgrades.

The entire amount can be spent under the general category of covering a "loss of public revenue" during the pandemic, and the board

voted to do that.

From there it is still restricted from some certain uses; Johnson-Mussad noted this included pensions. To spend the money on the public revenue category, the board can pick projects.

Tanner said the fin com has three large expenses in mind: a police cruiser, which Leverett chief Scott Minckler priced at \$70,000, and which should be bought in 2024 for 2025 delivery; a highway department tractor; and a newer fire department tank truck, which Wendell fire chief Joe Cuneo wished for when he was first hired. With a budget he can shop for a good used vehicle.

Information Superhighway

The April 6 town meeting passed over an article that would have made the town website an alternate posting place for meetings. The official posting place has been the entryway to the office building, but there is strong sentiment to make it the website instead. With the town's new broadband system, the website should be available to people at home.

Other people want to keep postings a physical reality. Wendell once had five posting places, requiring the constable to travel around the whole town to post each town meeting.

Board members agreed to wait for more feedback from citizens before making a choice. Town clerk Anna Wetherby, who is still acting as selectboard clerk, said when a decision is made, she needs to inform state attorney general Maura Healey.

Other Business

The board accepted a bid of \$12,855 from Bob's Painting of Old Deerfield to paint the town hall exterior, with an additional \$3,225 for the deck. They authorized using up to \$1,500 from the town building maintenance fund to paint the senior center interior.

Johnson-Mussad reported that the Fiske Pond dam is due for an inspection by November.

Budine said she had met with town custodian Eric Shufelt, who said town buildings need some form of pest control.



Fast. Local. Affordable.



Home Equity

LOANS

GREENFIELD Cooperative Bank  NORTHAMPTON Cooperative Bank A Division of Greenfield Cooperative Bank

   BestLocalBank.com

 MEMBER FDIC
MEMBER DIF

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666!

Start the Future Today!

- Wealth Management
- Trust Services
- Estate Settlement



GSB
Wealth Management & Trust Services

(413) 775-8335 • greenfieldsavings.com

Dennis L. Booska
Dennis L. Booska, Jr. Phone & Fax
413-863-3690

Booska's Flooring

169 Avenue A, Turners Falls **Tile**
Lino
Carpet

Member
The Flooring Network.

Gerri Johnson, Realtor
ABR, CRB, CRS, GRI, SRES
413-863-9736 • GerriJohnson@Realtor.com



Gerri Johnson & Associates
REALTORS

66 French King Hwy., Gill WWW.GJAR.COM
GERI JOHNSON, CRS 30 years of experience.

GREAT FALLS HARVEST
Market and Restaurant



Market and Café open
Thursdays through Sundays
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Takeout 5 to 7 p.m.



Market & Restaurant
109 Avenue A 50 Third Street
Downtown Turners Falls
863-0023

Peter Waters Painting Services



Interior/Exterior
Custom Residential
Fully Insured

Office: 978-544-6534
Cell: 413-461-5172
Wendell, MA
peterjwaters88@gmail.com

Turners Falls Pizza House




Family Owned & Operated
Serving Turners Falls area for 40 Years
Dave Argy, Family & Staff

**PIZZA, GRINDERS,
DINNERS, SALADS, BURGERS**


www.turnersfallspizza.com
119 Avenue A, Turners Falls ♦ (413) 863-8000

Local Solar PV Installers
for over 16 years
in western Massachusetts




GREENFIELD SOLAR

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



SolarGreenfield.com
2 Fiske Ave., Greenfield
(413) 772.3122
Call for free site assessment!

 PREMIER DEALER



MoRe

FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER APRIL 21, 2022

Above: An outtake from last week's special photo edition – "Life on Death" by Ed Gregory, taken during the 2014 drawdown of the Turners Falls power canal.

Joanne Belair Paints a Personal 'Watershed'

The local artist's solo debut offers a vision of seasonal renewal.

By NATHAN FRONTIERO

TURNERS FALLS – The title of Joanne Belair's new exhibit, "Watershed Moments," evokes not only the natural area of its subject matter and "the turning point to the spring season," as the artist's note explains at the gallery entrance, but also a personal milestone. The two dozen paintings, on view now through April 29 in the Great Falls Discovery Center's Great Hall, represent Belair's first solo show.

"This is kind of a bucket list thing for me," she says.

Belair is drawn to a traditional figurative style. Her show, comprising mostly oil paintings with some mixed media work, depicts the Connecticut River watershed and the flora and fauna along the river walkways in Turners Falls. Blending directly representational studies with evocative conceptual pieces, her brushwork exudes by turns the kineticism of the river's vernal awakening and the placidity and softness of other elements of natural reemergence.

Poppies, daisies, sunflowers, and apple blossoms bloom with warmth and dappled light alongside contemplative renderings of the sunrise over the cove and skyline. In one piece, the shadow of a heron's regal stance wriggles in the rippling water beneath it as the amber glow of morning peeks in at the upper edges of the blue-green surface. In others,



Joanne Belair stands with a painting from her solo exhibition, "Watershed Moments," at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

water rushes over itself and rocks, the harder gray and brown textures of earth ceding to the smooth and sinuous sinews of the current and its bursts of foam.

In the show's mixed media entry, stretches of canvas run beneath four oil sketches of riverside scenes like material tributaries, presenting images Belair witnessed on walks in Turners Falls specifically during the

pandemic: two gentlemen sitting socially distanced on the riverbank, a trio of geese amid a jaunt for food, a peaceful moment on the river surface with the cushioning background of trees and sky, and the ruddy rise of town's brick buildings seen from across the water.

"I've spent a lot of time walking and watching the water," Belair says.

see **WATERSHED** page B8

BOOK REVIEW

Lou Iovino, *Skybound* (LAB Press, 2021)

By JERI MORAN

MONTAGUE CENTER – Don't look for this book in your local library, at least not quite yet. Being self-published is a difficult road for a book to catch on, as most libraries don't buy them because they are not on the lists that their vendors provide (with deep discounts), and no one is going to pay the author to do a book tour.

However, getting an excellent review in a prominent book review magazine is a big plus, and *Skybound* got just that from Kirkus Reviews. Kirkus Reviews, founded in 1933, is considered one of the better, more discriminating, sources for reviews and gives out a yearly prize for fiction, non-fiction, and young reader's literature. I read it regularly – at kirkusreviews.com, which you can browse or search by title, author, etc. – and it's how I found this book, which they gave a starred review saying *Buy it*.

Kirkus's summary was "A spellbinding yarn about people caught in an open-ended space puzzle, told with force and gravity."

Skybound has the fast pace of a disaster film where several people, and their reactions to changing cir-



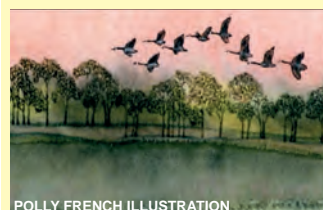
cumstances, are followed in alternating chapters. They are believable and sympathetic characters, and rather than being filled with lots of heroes, the book's main characters are primarily women who can be astronauts or physicists or just well-conditioned athletes who can wrest shotguns out of people's hands.

I even checked to see what was the scientific view of what *would* happen if the earth stopped rotating, and the answer held up well in Iovino's plotting.

While it is a well-written "sci-fi" book, there are some unanswered questions which are frustrating, like just what *is* this

object that appeared in the sky and caused the earth and moon to stop rotating and, after all the destruction, what will people even do if they get the world spinning again? However, this open-endedness allows for plot threads that involve theories about aliens, climate change, and end-of-days religious explanations. One gets the feeling that the author may have a sequel in store which will explain some things; one hopes so.

I will be donating my copy to a local library, which hopefully will then make it available for others to get a taste of this new author.



WEST ALONG THE RIVER OLD TREES TALK, YOU LISTEN

By DAVID BRULE

*Sometimes I go about in great wonder by myself,
And all the while,
A great wind is bearing me across the sky...*

(Adapted from an Ojibwe saying)

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – In the early spring evening, maybe you sit outside near the old trees. You say old, because these oaks are pushing two hundred years. The wind has come up, and they all begin waving their bare arms against the sky. They sway gently in rhythm. You recognize the secret zen of the tree-top wind. Some trees there are young, grown up in the last fifty years since you took over the old house. Those trees left to their own devices have grown straight and strong, reaching for the sky under the line of old oaks.

Those elder oaks, some going back to the 1850s, were already here when the first man dwelt in this house with his Scots wife. Back before the house was put up in 1872, this spot was known only to a few deer, bear, Nipmuck, and the passenger pigeons that clamored and roosted in the branches.

The Nipmuck called the oak by his ancient name, *nootimis*. For 10,000 years that was his name and the name of his ancestors. Long ago, the Nipmuck stopped passing through here, no longer paddled by these woods on the *paguag* river, now known as the Millers, on the way to Peskeompskut. But *nootimis* still responds to his old name, to his real name. You just have to say it.

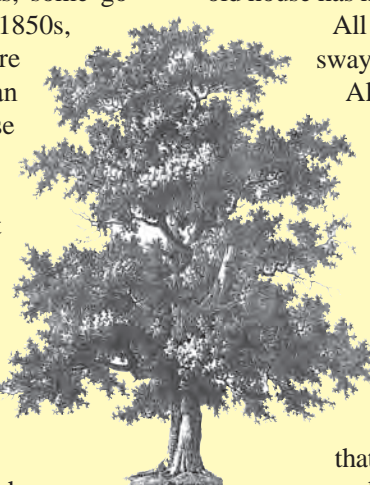
One old oak has lost a lower branch, and in the crotch where the branch had joined the trunk, the split revealed an antique doorknob put there by some boy long ago and forgotten. There's a swirled design on the brass knob which had been wrapped in the growing wood at some point and swallowed up, and gradually disappeared. Now exposed, the almost-glowing patina of verdigris on brass, startling green and blue, shows itself to the one who would look. The doorknob in the tree. What door does it open? What room is hidden in the oaken trunk? What would the tree say if you knew the language of the oak?

You don't want to guess, re-

ally, when you notice the doorknob from time to time. You don't want to render the mystery plain and banal with some plausible human deciphering.

So you look farther up to the tree arms waving at you, as they used to wave to the great-grandfather in the house who may or may not have noticed the trees talking to him. He was part Indian, his son told us long ago. He may have had a deep connection to the other creatures and these trees. Then again, maybe not. He may have paid no heed. No way of knowing if he had a way of speaking and listening to his neighbor the enduring oak. Not much and no one is left to tell the one who wonders.

But I myself noticed just last night that some kind of communication was going on. The old tree sighed in the evening breeze, not quite a wind. Tree may have been saying "Finally! Someone in that old house has heard me."



All the younger trees swayed in agreement.

Although I had lived for 50 years near the oak that is more than a hundred feet tall, it was the first time I noticed him speaking to me. Abenaki friends tell us that oak has spirit, that oak is a he,

that oak has his own agency and will. And when I was ready, I heard that voice.

This is a mystery to consider. I will leave tree to himself and his kin, and turn my thoughts to other matters.

Far down below those towering oak branches, here at ground level, the first leaf buds are greening up, the faint greenish tinge is emerging. On the hillside bowl that rises up from the oxbow and its valley here, maples are adding a rose hue again over the rushing river.

To help usher in springtime, the first red-eyed Eastern Towhee appeared among the blue-flowering scilla. Dressed in his old-fashioned suit of black above, chestnut sides, and white below, he was busy scratching for his breakfast below the lilacs.

In a few days we will be celebrating Earth Day. As if we need a reminder to acknowledge that the earth provides for us, even through all of the abuse heaped upon it. We need to remember that she needs all the help she can get.

By the way, the breeze that helped the trees to talk last evening was by now this morning a hundred miles away.

Pet of the Week



DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY PHOTO

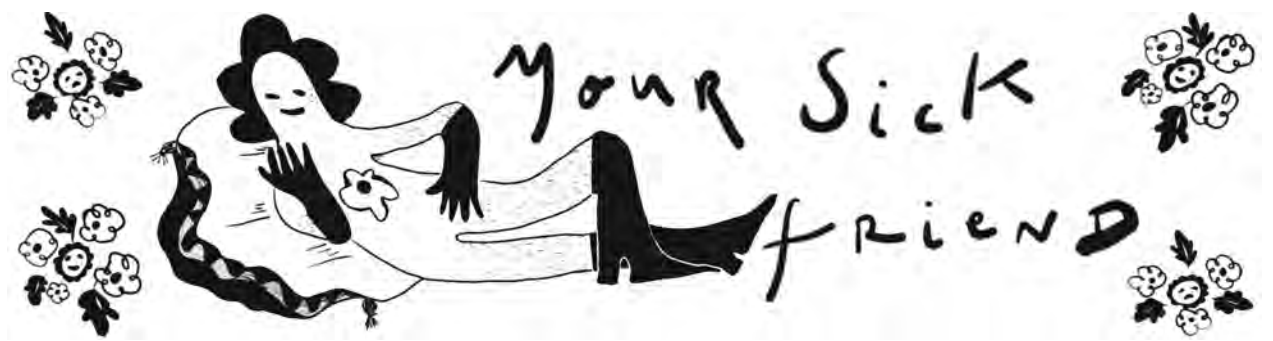
“LUCY”

Lucy is a beautiful and sweet cat looking for her new home. Her fur is oh-so-soft, and you won't be able to resist petting her! Her previous home describes her as loving, playful, and very social. She loves attention and likes to be near you wherever you are, even on your lap!

She is used to living in a home with one older person, and she has lived with cats and small dogs and done well with them all. She is ac-

customed to living indoors. Lucy also has specific litterbox needs. When you bring her home, she will need to be set up in her own room.

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



By CASEY WAIT

TURNERS FALLS – Hello again readers – your sick friend, Casey Wait here!

This month I'm going to be talking about grief – my own grief. It is such a big topic, such a heavy and multifaceted one, that this will likely be the first installment in a series. Or perhaps, as I suspect, grief will simply be a theme running through and fueling my writing for the foreseeable future.

I generally come off as a sunny, optimistic person. I am very skilled at the old “grin and bear it” routine. I'm so good at hiding my pain from others that I convincingly passed as healthy and able bodied until very recently, though I've been sick since I was born – I have a genetic condition called Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. In fact, for most of my life my main struggle has been trying to get people to believe something was wrong with me!

In part because it took so long to get anyone to believe I was struggling, my conditions went untreated for decades, and therefore progressed to the point where they can no longer be ignored. I am now so disabled by my conditions that I require the very tools that make my invisible disabilities “visible” to others: a cane, a walker, a mobility scooter.

Now when I meet someone new, the first thing they notice about me is that I am disabled. And while on the one hand I feel a sliver of satisfaction to finally be seen and heard in all my sick glory, I am now stuck with this reality: being sick with a progressive and incurable condition *sucks*.

I have spent much of the past month in tremendous amounts of pain due to a dizzying array of fluctuating but ever-present symptoms, including: dislocated ribs, collarbone, and shoulder; mouth sores so bad it hurt to talk, eat or drink; weeping patches of eczema made worse by the braces I have to wear to keep my joints in place; body aches so bad I couldn't sleep (a.k.a. pain-somnia); cramping shooting pain in my hands, after doing... literally anything with my hands; fatigue so severe I couldn't sit up, walk, dress, or bathe unassisted for much of the month. And probably more I forget now because, oh yeah, another symptom: brain fog!

All of this comes on top of the ongoing, seemingly never-ending pandemic. “In just two years, COVID has become the third most common cause of death in the US, which means that it is also the third leading cause of grief in the US,” writes Ed Yong in his most recent

piece for *The Atlantic*. “Each American who has died of COVID has left an average of nine close relatives bereaved, creating a community of griever larger than the population of all but 11 states.”

Indeed, in the month of March alone, one friend of mine lost nine people to the virus – all vaccinated, all boosted, all disabled. This same friend lost seven people to COVID-19 in 2021. That level of grief is unbearable and should not have to be borne alone. And yet, it sometimes feels like the only people I speak to who share this grief are my other sick friends – people very familiar with mourning without end.

Becoming disabled at such a young age, I've learned through experience that there is no limit to loss. Life doesn't care if you've had enough. Burdens are not doled out fairly. Just as I think I've accepted some recent limitation, such as the inability to go on long walks alone like I used to, a new one shows up, and I have to grieve all over again.

I was a prolific illustrator, and now I struggle to fill out paperwork at the doctor's office. I used to dream of grad school and writing books, and now I get most of my learning from podcasts and YouTube while laying in bed to distract me from bone-grinding pain. I used to be able to dress myself without the fear of dislocating my shoulder when pulling on a top.

The grief is ongoing, compounding, always with me. Pain is my most constant companion.

It has been alarming and enraging to watch so much of the world, particularly the media and the government, pretend the pandemic is over. What an outrage! What a slap in the face to all who have died and are dying, have lost and are losing loved ones! I understand hitting the wall. I understand wanting to just ignore the crisis and move on with our lives. But this isn't an option for the dead, the bereft, the sick and disabled.

I don't know how to wrap this up. Because the kind of grief I'm talking about – the grief that keeps on coming, yet so often goes unacknowledged – knows no closure. I'm never going to be “done” processing the decline of my health. And the very real trauma this pandemic has wrought in so many of our lives will take lifetimes to understand.

But the grief must be brought into the open, it must be honored somehow. I share my personal grief here as a way to honor it, and to open the conversation.

What are you grieving? Where does it hurt?

With love and rage,

Your Sick Friend

Senior Center Activities APRIL 25 THROUGH 29

WENDELL

Wendell Senior Center is open for a foot care clinic the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. Senior Health Rides are now available. Contact Jonathan von Ranson at (978) 544-3758 to set up a ride.

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Zoom on Wednesdays. For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Coffee and tea is available during open hours.

Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For more information call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

Monday 4/25

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

Tuesday 4/26

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

Wednesday 4/27

10:15 a.m. Aerobics

11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Bingo
Thursday 4/28
1 p.m. Cards & Games
Friday 4/29
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and snacks daily. Exercise classes will be limited to 15 people per class.

We will continue with Brown Bag lunch the first Thursday of each month. Foot Clinic is on the second Monday of each month and the first Wednesday of each month we will hold Veterans Services. For any questions or concerns, please call Paula Betterers at (413) 423-3649.

Monday 4/25

9 a.m. Re-Store & Re-Emerge
10 a.m. New class coming soon
Tuesday 4/26

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

Wednesday 4/27

9 a.m. Strength & Conditioning
10 a.m. New Chair Yoga
12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 4/28

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

Friday 4/29

9 a.m. Open Sew Quilting

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Watershed Moments*. Paintings by Joanne Belair of scenes along the Connecticut River. Through April. (*See article, Page B1.*)

Artspace, Greenfield: *Franklin County Annual Teen Art Show*. Through April.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Desi Lowit, INteRotINE*. Drawings and paintings. Through May.

Hawks & Reed Ballroom, Greenfield: *Submerged, an oceanic art odyssey* by mother and son artists Nina Rossi and Jon Bander. Mixed media, soft sculpture, paintings, welded metal sculpture, and ceramic works. Through June 15.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *In the Moment*, pastel paintings by Ruth Rinar. Also, *Imaginary Worlds* by Elsie Sturtevant, pastel images, April 1 to 26.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *From Fields to Table II*, an exhibit celebrating farms, farmers, and the food they produce. Through April 24.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Redemption*, daguerreotypes of enslaved people re-imagined in enamel and compassion by Jennifer Davis Carey. Through May 2.

Shelburne Arts Coop Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Longing for Green*, artisan members' work focusing on a theme of the unfurling renewal of the season. Through April.

Local Art Gallery, Mill District, Amherst: *Diane Nevinsmith*, selected watercolors. Through June.

Greenfield Savings Bank, Amherst: *History in the Making*, hooked rugs and wall hangings. Chris Pellerin learned to hook rugs using a traditional method thought to have originated in the Canadian Maritime Provinces, where her French Acadian ancestors were from. The rugs range in style from floral to landscape, abstract to realistic, Art Nouveau-inspired to original designs. Through May.

Augusta Savage Gallery, UMass Amherst: *Kabu MBII is NOLDA*.

Large-scale paintings created as a response to social, political, and world events. Through April 27.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Diane Steingart: Twenty-Three Pieces*, paintings and mixed media. Through April 30.

Anchor House of Artists, Northampton: *Collage: Departures and Adaptations*, work by Louise Laplante and Nan Fleming; *Drawing with Light*: photographs by Bill Arnold; *World War Four*, paintings by Charles Miller; *Color Skip*: paintings by Peter Mishkin. Through April.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: Work by M. Carmen Lane, Roberto Visani, Yvette Molina, Mildred Beltré Martinez, Sachiko Akiyama, Louisa Chase, and Anne Spalter. Information at www.brattleboromuseum.org.

PULP Gallery, Holyoke: *No. 28 with Roger Brouard & Tibi Chelca*. Brouard's work is a synthesis of art and his building of homes and boats. Chelca combines traditional art practices with digital technologies. Through May 8.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

 **OrigamiUSA**

Origami is for anyone, anywhere, anytime!

Join us at: OrigamiUSA.org
Email: admin@origamiusa.org
Tel: 212.769.5635

- Find a local community origami group
- Fold from diagrams in our publications
- Shop for origami paper and books
- And much more!

TNT Productions
DJ & Karaoke specialists



413-522-6035
www.tntprodj.net



REAL PICKLES

Locally grown vegetables
Fermented & raw
100% organic



A worker co-op in Greenfield, MA
www.realpickles.com | (413) 774-2600

MPD from page B3

cousin was just hit by a thrown scooter. Investigated.
 9:19 p.m. Officer out with vehicle parked near snack shed at Sheffield Elementary. Parties were at the playground. Moved along.
Tuesday, 4/12
 6:44 a.m. Report of bear on North Taylor Hill Road.
 3:27 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road states that a white vehicle hit some of her bushes.
 5:51 p.m. Multiple callers reporting an accident involving a school bus and

a truck at Avenue A and Seventh Street. No injuries reported; EMS responding as a precaution. Driver of truck transported to BFMC.
 7:08 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states that his car was vandalized in the parking lot next to his apartment building overnight. Report taken.
 9:20 p.m. Two calls requesting to have on record that a blue and white motorcycle has been driving around and revving the motor loudly on Avenue A and Keith Street. Advised of options.

Wednesday, 4/13
 4:56 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting it looks like someone shot something at his window while he was gone; there are little holes by the window. Referred to an officer.
Thursday, 4/14
 11:31 a.m. Postal carrier reporting smoke alarms sounding at an X Street address; no one appeared to be home. Shelburne Control contacted; FD responding.
Friday, 4/15
 8:32 a.m. Report of a dumpster blocking the Second Street alley. Triple

Dumpster contacted; they will have it moved.
 11:14 a.m. Caller from East Main Street reports larceny of pantry food two weeks ago. Investigated.
 3:20 p.m. 911 caller reporting a fire on the railroad overpass on Franklin Street, dropping down to the ground below. Officer advised.
Saturday, 4/16
 11:04 a.m. Report of a loose domesticated turkey on Greenfield Road.
 1:37 p.m. Caller reports "Gary" took two shopping carts from Riff's.



THE GARDENER'S COMPANION
Our Snowbirds Return North

By **LESLIE BROWN**

MONTAGUE CITY – As we have often done, we leave home in early January, heading for north Florida.

We have rented a condominium near St. Augustine and will expect to drive four days to arrive there. We have rented this condominium sight unseen except for pictures online.

Our trip takes as expected four days, and we arrive late afternoon. The owners, who happen to be Canadians, have sent us an entry code and we readily move in.

The condo has a full kitchen, two baths (one with a tub, the other a shower), two bedrooms, and a large living space looking out over two pools of water which we learn are occupied by ducks, swans, and geese, who come and go as they please dredging for fish and plant life. There are signs indicating that visitors are not to feed these birds, and we soon observe for ourselves that the critters do just fine on their own.

Since we have stayed in this area before, we have made a stop at the local grocery store and picked up all the fixings we need for the next few days.

After we unpack a bit we settle on the patio with beer and wine, watch the sunset, and admire our avian companions.

We sleep soundly after our travels with strange beds, a different stop each night, and awake more rested than during our traveling nights. We make coffee and take it out to the patio to watch our new neighbors.

After a slow start and some breakfast, we walk from the condo to a nearby walkway which leads to the beach and the Atlantic Ocean. We spend some time enjoying the sensation of soft white sand and the lively sound of the waves. This is a quiet area, because it is largely private, except of course for the beach itself. Even so, there are tourists from other hotels, rentals, and the like, but all of us are tourists.

We make a pattern of our new life: a small breakfast, a walk at the beach, lunch out at any of our favorite spots, a restful afternoon and a return to the beach again – or else time with a book – before the evening news, leftovers, and a kip.

Ken's nephews have a thriving business in Florida. They paint and refurbish new homes and apartments, and do so well that they never have to look for work, but

can also set aside time to be with us while we are here in north Florida. We plan to meet up at a favorite place called Three Bananas, on the lovely Crescent Lake.

There we feast on fish sandwiches, potato salad, and/or fries. The boys all have beer while I order my usual Chardonnay. The weather is balmy and clear. We plan to meet again in a few days at Scarlett O'Hara's at the edge of the city.

The city is busy, full of tourists riding around town in trolleys which take them all around the sights. We are fortunate to be with Keith, who has another day off to spend with us. He meets us at O'Hara's, where we enjoy another drink at the bar, followed by a fine meal, and then Keith gives us a walking tour of St. Augustine.

We play *touristas*, and see all the sights. We stop at one place which specializes in cigars; Ken and Keith each buy a cigar, which is accompanied by a free beer. At this point I am personally in need of a nap, but I hang in there, sipping one more glass of wine.

By the time we walk back to retrieve our car from the parking garage, I wait on the first floor for Ken and Keith, and am grateful for the ride back to our home away from home. It's been a special treat to be with Ken's cousin, but I am ready to find our way back to our condo and a good night's rest.

The rest of our trip is less eventful. It's been a wonderful trip, but for myself, I'm ready to head home and settle into our happy home with our cat.

We've been fortunate in having a kindly cat minder who loves animals as much as we do. Just the same, our cat Amiga is glad to see us, and asks promptly to go outside before returning for a lap nap.

Traveling is wonderful, but we are glad to return in time to enjoy the New England spring even as it is changeable, with warm sunny days followed by chilly days with a bit of snow. The green tops of bulbs which edge the foundation have pushed up through the cold earth, not at all deterred by the on-and-off weather.

Soon enough the bulbs will produce yellow and orange daffodils and a tiny blue crocus here and there.

The robins yank out beefy-looking worms and the fishermen arrive at the river nearby. Maybe they, too, have large worms, to attract catfish and the first trout.

**Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School
 3rd Quarter Honor Roll**

– Grade 6 –

- | | |
|--|---|
| FIRST HONORS
Freilyn Abarua Corona, Kenzie Alicea, Shelby Beck, Kairi Chubb, Isabel Cottrell-Bouchard, James Edson, Samuel Eichorn, Reese Ewell, Jazzlyn Gonzalez, Madison Haight, William Hutchison, Addison Lively, Trevor Lyons, Braeden Moore, Vinicio Palazzo, Lynx Petracchia, Nicole Porter, Scarlett Pouliot, Kendra Steiner, Olivia Wolbach, Chloe Wonsey | SECOND HONORS
Cameryn Carner, Allan Cordero Lopez, Ameliya Galbraith, Jocelyn Ovalle Roblero, Gabriella Trinque |
| | THIRD HONORS
Lachlan Banister Potter, Jaclyn Galvez Martin, Genesis Pereira |

– Grade 7 –

- | | |
|--|--|
| FIRST HONORS
Augustus Beauchaine, Owen Blanchard, Ethan Damkoehler, Michaela Klempner-Siano, Gianna Marigliano, Kimberly Ramirez Martin, Brayden Slauenwhite, Addison Talbot, Braeden Talbot, Marketa Vachula-Curtis | SECOND HONORS
Jacob Broga, Ophelia Gallup, Rachel Juarbe, Kaya Shipley-Aja, Stella Shipley-Aja, Brayden Sloan, Aleksandr Stytsenko |
| | THIRD HONORS
Robert Goff, Hannah Gordon, Elijah Torres |

– Grade 8 –

- | | |
|---|---|
| FIRST HONORS
Erin Banister Potter, Camden Bonnett, Dylan Brunault, Maxon Brunette, Laken Chessie, Jackson Cogswell, Lincoln Coleman, Madisyn Dietz, Ethan Eichorn, Elsee Galvez Martin, Jaylice Gary, Brody Girard, Clara Guidaboni, Christopher Halla, Olivia Hastings, Jack Jette, Cameron Johnson, Noah Kolodziej, Zoey Kus, Vaughn LaValley, Este Lemerise-Reinking, Emma Little, Cole Marshall, Shayly Martin Ovalle, Janelle Massey, Yolvin Ovalle Mejia, Mario Pareja, Talia Pederzini-Curtis, Alyssa Peters, Miles Riley, Khalifa Seck, Alexis Smith, Kailey Steiner, Kainen Stevens, Brooke Tirrell, Nathaniel Trinque, Michael Waite, Naomi Wilson-Hill | SECOND HONORS
Miguel Bartolo, Michael Berdugo, Allysia Corbin, Aryanna Hale, Nathaniel Kolakoski, Kevin Perez Cueto, Ariel Peters, Jenna Petrowicz, Julia Shaw, Mila Skiff, Dominick Stafford |
| | THIRD HONORS
Rojelio Galvez Mendez |

– Grade 9 –

- | | |
|--|--|
| FIRST HONORS
Marilyn Abarua Corona, Kessik Beck, Starrli Bell, Kamryn Berry, Rayne Bonfiglio, Juel Caraballo, Tatiana Carr-Williams, Ella Guidaboni, Khirieliex Huertas Hernandez, Madison Liimatainen, Mia Marigliano, Sofia Moreno, Alexander Quezada Abarua, Alexander Sabin, Ledwin Villafana Abarua | SECOND HONORS
Cameron Anderson, Maren Batchelder, Darian Burnett, Elliot Cook, Maya Deramo, Pamela Gomez, Aaliyah Gover, Kailey James-Putnam, Teagan Lavallee-Finch, Logan Leblanc, Sheni Ovalle Roblero, Anthony Prizio, Caden Swindell, Victor Velazquez |
| | THIRD HONORS
Briceidy Ovalle Perez, Carmelo Rivera |

– Grade 10 –

- | | |
|--|---|
| FIRST HONORS
Grayson Bowse, Michael Boyle, Cameron Burnett, Aaliyah Costantino, Jaade Duncan, Reyli Galvez-Martin, Fiona Hutchison, Logan Johnson, Syna Katsoulis, Aiden Kelly, Anne Kolodziej, Ella Kolodziej, Audrey Lapinski, Owen LaValley, Joseph Mosca, Holly Myers, Ayleen Ovalle Perez, Ricky Pareja, Jillian Reynolds, Avery Tela, Jack Trombi, Isabella Vachula-Curtis, Derek Wissmann | FIRST HONORS
Cloe Fulk, Abigail Holloway, Jelani Jean Charles, Nikolas Martin, Abigail Moore, Brooke Thayer |
| SECOND HONORS
Ian Bastarache, Kiri Corbin, Trent Dobias, Kyleigh Dobosz, Taylor Greene, Jasmine McNamara, Raygan Pendriss, Jacob Reich, Sydney Rivera | |
| THIRD HONORS
Ella O'Keefe | |

– Grade 11 –

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| SECOND HONORS
Logan Addison, Luz Galvez Perez, Makayla Gray, Alexander Johnson, Dany Mazariegos-Morales, Stephanie Peterson, Antonia Prizio, Adeline Riley, Tyler Tetreault, Corin Wisnewski | THIRD HONORS
Wesley Berdugo |
|--|---------------------------------------|

– Grade 12 –

- | | |
|---|--|
| FIRST HONORS
Dylan Burnett, Xavier Chagnon, Bryce Finn, Jayden Hosmer, Britney Lambert, Jacob Lyons, Jacob Norwood, Kiley Palmquist, Dalver Perez, Blake Pollard, Brandon Pollard, Hunter Sanders, Madison Sanders, Olivia Stafford, Paige Sulda, Leidy Villafana Abarua, Kamara Woodard, Emily Young | SECOND HONORS
Armani Barre, Maximas Morgan, Jordin Muniz, Odalis Ramirez-Martin, Haley Randall, Dylun Russell, Melany Sanchez Abarua |
|---|--|

52 episodes are now available!
 Look for us on Apple/iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, Anchor, Castbox, and elsewhere...
The Montague Reporter Podcast

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

ED L. Dealer in used Home Furnishings
 SMALL FURNITURE • COLLECTIBLES • DECORATIVES
 374 Deerfield Street • Greenfield
 Featuring: Lamps Mirrors Chairs Baskets
 Call (413) 834 - 3128 TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT
 MASK REQUIRED • EXCLUSIVE SHOPPING!

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

HEADSTONE CLEANING & Gravesite Maintenance
 Over 30 years experience in cemetery work. Serving Franklin County. (413) 489-3079

HUGE WASHERS! HOT DRYERS!
 Open 365 Days 6 A.M. - 10 P.M.

SUZEE'S THIRD STREET LAUNDRY
 TURNERS FALLS
 Suzee's THIRD ST. LAUNDRY (413) 834-1376

LIC #36550-EL 1-413-345-1687
ELECTRICIAN CHRIS M. STRAKOSE
 RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL
 ALL ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS AND REPAIRS
 EMERGENCY SERVICE
 9 SWAMP ROAD MONTAGUE, MA 01351
 EMAIL: CSTRAKOSE.ELEC@GMAIL.COM
 FULLY INSURED FREE CONSULTATION

BestLocalBank.com
FREE Online Banking with Bill Pay, Transfers, Account Opening, Debit Card Controls & More!
FREE Mobile Banking APP with Mobile Check Deposit, Alerts, Freeze/Unfreeze & More!
GREENFIELD Cooperative Bank **NORTHAMPTON** Cooperative Bank
 Avenue A, Turners Falls | 413-512-5012

Aquí se habla español

Esta es la página mensual en español del *Montague Reporter*. Aquí podrá encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana en el área, eventos de interés, curiosidades, y noticias mundiales en español. Si quiere participar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a spanish@montaguereporter.org.



Torrijas: Una receta típica de primavera

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

GREENFIELD – El origen de este dulce típico de primavera es muy antiguo. Se cree que las *torrijas* o *torrejas*, como las llaman en algunas regiones, se cocinaban ya en tiempos de los romanos ya que aparecen en libros de recetas compiladas a partir del siglo V y se consideraban un plato dulce.

La primera vez que aparecen recogidas en una obra escrita en castellano es en el *Cancionero* de 1496 del poeta Juan del Enzina, coterráneo de la que escribe estas líneas. Las denomina “torrejas” y dice que son muy recomendables para las mujeres recién paridas.

Estos son los versos en que las cita: “No piense que vamos, su madre graciosa, sin que le ofrezcamos más alguna cosa que es de gran valor, madre del redentor. En cantares nuevos, gocen sus orejas, miel y muchos huevos, para hacer *torrejas*, aunque sin dolor, parió al redentor.”

El famoso dramaturgo del Siglo de Oro, Lope de Vega, las menciona en algunas de sus obras y también dice que son un alimento adecuado para las parturientas.

La torrija desde siempre ha sido un plato de aprovechamiento para usar el pan del día anterior y hacer un postre fácil y sabroso, a la vez que económico. En el siglo XIX y XX se popularizaron en las cartas de muchos restaurantes y bares de toda España.

En otros países hispanos también se cocinan, aunque con alguna variedad. Por ejemplo, en Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, y El Salvador se bañan en pameña después de freírlas. Por el contrario, en Argentina, Uruguay se usa almíbar para darles el toque dulce. Y por último en Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, y México usan *piñoncillo* y clavos de olor.

Les dejo aquí la receta de las Torrijas a la española, muy fáciles de hacer, con ingredientes que todos tenemos en casa y que nos pueden salvar a la hora de servir una merienda o un postre para unos invitados inesperados.



Plato de torrijas.

Ingredientes

- Una barra de pan del día anterior.
- Un vaso de leche y uno de nata (crema de leche) o dos vasos de leche. Se puede sustituir la leche de vaca por cualquier leche vegetal.
- 2 huevos grandes.
- Una ramita de canela.
- Piel de limón. Evita usar la parte blanca para que no amargue.
- 4 cucharadas de azúcar o endulzante al gusto.
- Aceite de oliva virgen para freírlas.
- Canela en polvo (opcional).
- Ron u otro licor (opcional).

En primer lugar, ponemos en un cazo a calentar la leche y nata con la ramita de canela, la piel de limón y un poquito de ron si se quiere dar otro toque de sabor. Ponga también dos cucharadas de azúcar. Deje que la leche llegue a hervir y apague el fuego. Deje reposar para que los sabores se mezclen hasta que la leche esté templada. Cuele la leche para retirar los restos de canela y la piel de limón.

Parta la barra de pan en rebanadas no muy finas, unos dos centímetros de grosor y empápelas en la leche con mucho cuidado para que no se rompan. En un bol debes batir bien

los huevos hasta que queden de un amarillo uniforme. Pase las torrijas previamente bañadas en la leche por el huevo. Procure cubrir completamente cada rebanada.

En una sartén con un dedo o dos de aceite, caliéntelo, pero que no llegue a hervir, fría en ese aceite las torrijas. Deles la vuelta cuando estén doradas por uno de sus lados y deje que se doren por la otra. Colóquelas primero en papel secante o de cocina para retirar el exceso de grasa de las torrijas.

Por último, mezcle el azúcar con la canela en polvo y espolvoree con esta mezcla antes de servir las. ¡Disfruten!!



• **Voces inmigrantes: una celebración de las artes.** Este popular evento tendrá lugar el 22 de mayo organizado por Center for New Americans en Shea Theater Arts Center en 71 Avenue A en Turners Falls. Las entradas para el evento se pueden comprar

¿Racismo o interculturalidad en una boda de la élite del Perú?

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

GREENFIELD – Entre todas las noticias sobre la guerra en Ucrania, ha pasado casi desapercibida el espectáculo bochornoso y clasista que tuvo lugar en la boda de la hija del candidato presidencial peruano Alfredo Barnachea.

La empresaria e *influencer* peruana, Belén Barnachea, se casó el 9 de abril pasado en Trujillo (Perú) con el aristócrata español, Martín Cabello de los Cobos. La noticia no habría trascendido de las páginas de la crónica social o de revistas como *¡Hola!*, sino fuera por uno de los espectáculos elegidos para amenizar la fiesta después del matrimonio. La temática elegida por la novia para sus nupcias fue la época del virreinato. Los novios salieron de la iglesia en un llamado paseo, una de las tradiciones en el norte de Perú, que es el desfile de los novios desde la iglesia hasta el lugar del convite acompañados de músicos, bailarines o actores.

El problema surge con la elección de una de las *performances*: Hombres indígenas vestidos solamente con una especie de taparrabos y cargados de cadenas en sus pies y atados por sogas en sus manos como si fueran esclavos. Así mismo, mujeres indígenas peinadas con trenzas estaban en el suelo lanzando flores a la novia a lo largo del paseo.

Los videos de este paseo se hic-

ieron virales y es cuando empezaron las críticas, primero en las redes sociales y más tarde en los periódicos de talante político. Los internautas calificaban la boda de clasista y racista y que la novia seguía en la época de la conquista.

La novia, Belén Barnachea – que ha estudiado en Massachusetts, más concretamente en Emerson College – *salió* al paso de estas críticas diciendo que quería mostrar a sus invitados las diferencias culturales del Perú y honrar las tradiciones antiguas de su país. Añadió que quería representar la cultura Moche, que tuvo su época de esplendor entre los siglos III y VI, y por ello, dicha cultura nunca se cruzó con los conquistadores españoles ni con los Incas.

No ha podido justificar otro momento de la boda en la que aparecían actores disfrazados de soldados españoles de la época de la conquista con sus clásicos petos y armaduras. Hay videos de la fiesta posterior al banquete en el que se ven a los novios llevando en sus cabezas penachos como los que se han encontrado en tumbas de nobles Moche y bailando *reggaetón* junto con otros invitados vestidos de conquistadores españoles.

Estas críticas son el culmen a una controversia que lleva varios meses en la vida política de Perú. Hay políticos que opinan que las estatuas de Colón deben desaparecer de las calles, mientras que otros políticos de derechas quieren que sigan en pie.

online en www.cnam.org/evento/immigrant-voices. Se aceptan también donaciones para financiar las clases de sus estudiantes. Si no puede asistir en persona, existe una opción en directo a través de Zoom.

• **Food Bank of Western Massachusetts** sigue ofreciendo alimentos gratis cada tercer miércoles de mes en el parking del Senior Center en Turners Falls cuya dirección es 62 5th Street. Por favor, asegúrense de traer sus propias bolsas, así como mascar-

illas. Este programa se realiza en alianza con FCCMP y Montague COA. Si tienen preguntas, contacten con The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts en el teléfono (413) 247-9738.

• **La hora de español** en Soup Stone Café. Si hablas español o simplemente quieres practicarlo, tiene tu oportunidad el próximo sábado 23 de abril a las 12:30. Con la llegada del buen tiempo habrá una mesa enfrente de la iglesia en Hope Street. ¡Ven a decir hola! ¡Te esperamos!

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

SPIRITS, BREWS & FINE WINES

53C S. Main St. South Deerfield, MA
295 Amherst Rd. Sunderland, MA

New Location Now Open:
6 Main Road, in Gill
(formerly Jan's Package Store)
Come check us out!

Deerfield: (413) 665-2456
Sunderland: (413) 665-5030
Gill: (413) 863-5730



SALES • SERVICE • INSTALLATION
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
DOORS & OPENERS

Devine Overhead Doors

Gerry Devine

106 West Street
Hadley, MA. 01035

Hampshire: 586-3161
Franklin: 773-9497

About-Face
Computer Solutions

(413) 863-5447
176 Avenue A Suite 2,
Turners Falls
WE FIX COMPUTERS!

www.about-facecomputers.com



DOLAN & DOLAN ATTORNEYS AT LAW

174 AVENUE A
TURNERS FALLS MASSACHUSETTS
01376
413-863-3133

PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

Doug's Auto Body
Doug Smith - Owner



MA Reg. #RS2190

Ph. (413) 863-2785
Fax: (413) 863-0120

FREE ESTIMATES
REPAIRS ON FOREIGN & DOMESTIC CARS AND TRUCKS

39 Center Road
Gill, MA 01354

FREE LOANER CARS

Pipione's SPORT SHOP

- Fishing supplies; Live bait
- Fishing & Hunting Licenses
- Paintball & CO₂ Refills
- Guns & Ammo

Open 7 am 7 days a week

101 Ave A, Turners 414.863.4246





ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



THURSDAY, APRIL 21

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Patriarchy, Pixel Grip, Lucie Rosenfield, Lorel, DJ Tallgirl*. \$ 7 p.m.
 Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dead Collective, Grateful Dead* tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Tredici Bacci, Dust Witch, Black Pyramid*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Echoes of Floyd*. Pink Floyd tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Juana Molina, Arthur Moon*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Onyx*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Aimee Mann*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Private Island*, ambient multimedia performance art, gin. 10 p.m.

SAT-SUN, APRIL 23-34

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Mas Grass* festival feat. *Leon Trout, Mila Baby, 3 The Hard Way, Rhythm Incorporated, Tuff Riddim*, and many more \$. See kotvibes.com for lineup and info.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The New American Banjo Fes-*

tival feat. *Michael Nix, Aaron Jonah Lewis*. \$ 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Footings, The Phroeggs, Musical Chairs, Prune*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Harvest & Rust, Neil Young* tribute. \$ 7 p.m.

Latchis Theater, Brattleboro: *Don MacLean*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Janis Ian*. \$ 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, APRIL 26

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

The Drake, Amherst: *Dinosaur Jr.* \$ 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

The Drake, Amherst: *Regina Carter*. \$ 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Deer Scout, Elijah Liguz*. \$ 7 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Hot Tuna Acoustic*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *High Tea*, indie-folk. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 29

The Drake, Amherst: *Gili Yalo & the Anbessa Orchestra*. \$ 7 p.m.

Latchis Theater, Brattleboro: *Livingston Taylor*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass & Beyond*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Rock 201*. 6 p.m.

Mystery Train, Amherst: *Sunburned Hand of the Man, SOP, Federico Balducci*. Free. 6 p.m.

Majestic Saloon, Northampton: *The Third, Cloudbelly, Father Hotep*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Professor Louie and the Crowmatix*. The Band tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Loudon Wainwright III*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Bella's Bartok, DiTrani Bros, Moon Hollow*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Masala Jazz*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 1

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Quiet Houses, Sedagive, V as in Victor*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Nova One, Home Body*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half-Shaved Jazz*. 9:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 5

Parlor Room, Northampton:

Suzzy Roche, Lucy Wainwright Roche. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *GCC Spring Concert*. 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 6

Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Rosie Porter and the Neon Moons*. 6 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Drew Paton*. 9:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Vapors of Morphine*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Whalom Park, No Lens*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 7

Space Ballroom, Hamden, CT: *Deerhoof, Edित्रix*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Nickodemus, Gabrielle Poso Duo, DJ Bongohead*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Power Trousers, Grammerhorn Wren, Drowning in Bones*. 9:30 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 9

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Eye-hategod, Come to Grief, Escuela Grind*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 13

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

Palladium, Worcester: *Action Bronson, Earl Sweatshirt, Alchemist*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Eggtooth Presents: Dragspringa*. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Sasha and the Valentines, Moxie*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Eggtooth Presents: Dragspringa*. 7:30 p.m.

FRI-SUN, MAY 13-15

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Peaks & Valleys Music and Arts Festival* feat. *Soul Keys, Carissa Angelo, Sylvia Pearl, Wild Weeds* and many more. \$. See kotvibes.com for lineup and info.

THURS-SUN, MAY 19-22

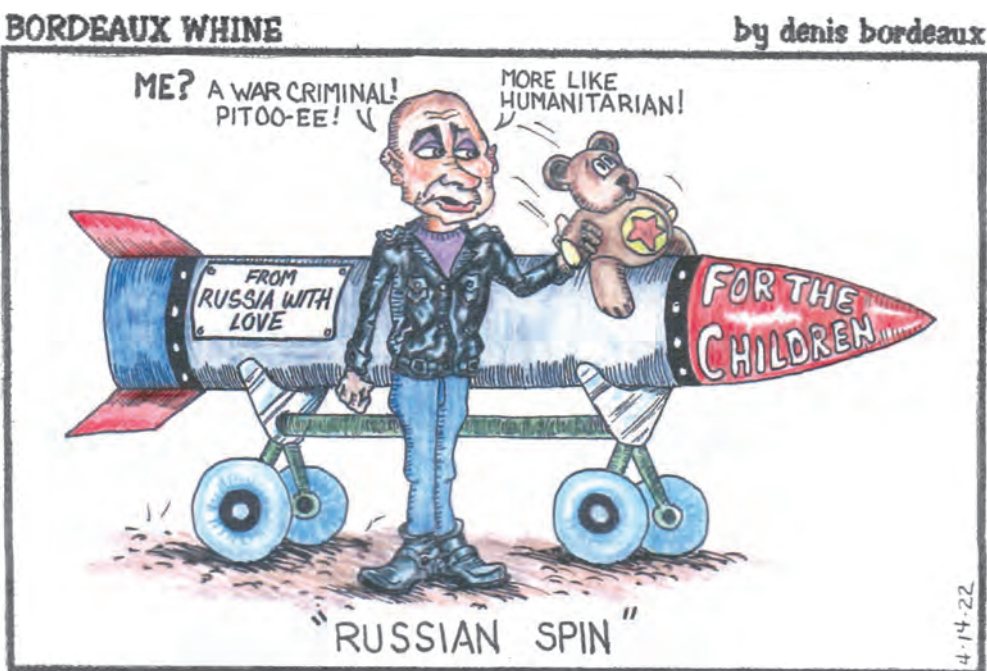
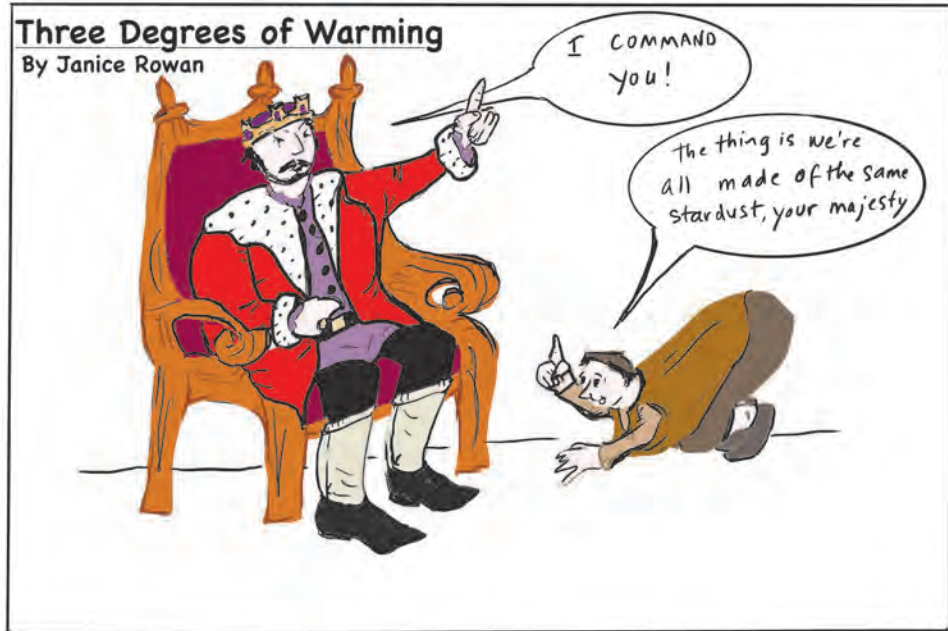
Nova Arts, Keene: *The Thing in the Spring* feat. *Sammus, Lee Ranaldo, Nat Baldwin & Stella Silbert, Jeff Parker, Myriam Gendron, Kimaya Diggs, Tashi Dorji, The Huntress and the Holder of Hands* and many more. \$. See novaarts.org for lineup and information.

FRIDAY, MAY 20

Epsilon Spire, Brattleboro: *Laraaji: Celestial Sound Immersion*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 21

Palladium, Worcester: *Turnstile, Citizen, 3 more*. \$ 7 p.m.



MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

TURF TN ONNX

AG GFRB JNRPN

ROX OYF GFRB TRBG.

- SAMURAI CYBERPUNK

CRACK THE CODE? SEND YOUR ANSWER TO: INFO@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

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

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

SHANAHAN CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY CO. INC.
 SCSC "Rock solid service with level advice"
Complete Masonry Supply
 Offering a complete line of pavers, wall stone, retaining wall block and more. **Idéal**
 298 Avenue A., Turners Falls 413-863-4322
 and at our new location 529 S. Main St, Brattleboro or 802-579-1800
www.shanahansupply.com

Reil CLEANING SERVICES LLC Improve Air Quality & Heating/Cooling Efficiency
DUCT CLEANING
 Free Video Inspections
 Air Duct • Baseboard • Dryer Vent Cleaning
 Log on to see our Rotobrush video Ed Terault, Owner
 Call 413-223-5494 or visit www.REILCLEAN.com

Amherst Books
 8 Main Street Amherst, MA

WATERSHED from page B1

“The source is just from looking around here. Especially during COVID, when nobody could visit, everybody was doing a lot of walking, distancing.”

Belair is a lifelong painter, though she was able to focus more on her creative passion after her semi-retirement. Beginning around 2016, she began taking senior painting workshops at Greenfield Community College with a group of supportive peers and instructors Penné Krol and Budge Hyde, which offered an additional catalyst. The seeds of some of the works included in “Watershed Moments” were planted in those few years prior to the upheaval of the pandemic.

“Over the years I’ve painted, put my paints down, picked them back up,” Belair explained. “But coming to GCC for the senior workshop – that was huge. It was great. I met a lot of wonderful people and it was like an incubator. And we had a dedicated space.”

As public health protocols ushered in the need to stay home, Belair’s creative efforts continued largely in her basement, with occasional, socially distanced meetings with friends from her workshops to discuss works in progress. For



In a mixed-media piece from “Watershed Moments,” Belair depicts scenes witnessed on walks in Turners Falls during the pandemic.

the paintings ultimately featured in “Watershed Moments,” her process varied between steady and spontaneous.

“These can happen very quickly. Leave it, put it away, let the paint dry. I do a lot of mixing on the canvas. But also sometimes you want to

preserve the brushstrokes. Just put it down, let the paint dry and set, and come back to it,” said Belair. “Adjust color, or not. A lot of times they’ll be adjustments of contrast and light. I do a couple different things. Blend on the canvas wet on wet, and then other times will be straight out direct. To step away, maybe it’s subject matter or day to day or whether it comes together – a lot of these things aren’t quite planned.”

After growing up in Turners Falls, Belair spent 40 years in West County, around “the Charlemont area of the Mohawk Trail.” She returned to help care for her mother, and after her mother and uncle’s passing, bought out her old family home, where she now helps nurture her granddaughters’ burgeoning interest in the arts.

“I have a grandma house,” she says. “We always have crafts and paints and papers and glues and everything out.”

Returning after four decades has brought the changes to Turners Falls

into sharp relief for Belair, who recalls early memories of watching the river run with dyes from the village’s former paper mills. But a through line, alongside the excitement of local development, has been the community with whom she’s been able to reconnect. The gift of those lasting friendships, and the observation of resilience amid crisis, inspires in her a similar wonderment to that of the natural brilliance she captures in her work.

“There’s so much tragedy and sadness,” she says. “It’s overwhelming. But I do appreciate the fact that there’s also so many positive, amazing things all around us. Sometimes I’m just dazzled by everything.”

“Watershed Moments” by Joanne Belair may be seen in the Great Hall at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, until April 29. The Center is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesdays through Sundays. Admission is free.



Belair captures seasonal change’s momentum with a blend of soft and kinetic brushwork.

MCTV News
Floods & Muds

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Learn about the Great Flood of 1936 in a recently uploaded video produced by UMass and Ed Klekowski in 2003. The film is well researched and uses incredible archival footage of the flood taking out bridges and flooding towns from Vernon through Springfield.

Next up from the “Mud Season” music festival lineup at the Shea Theater is Love Crumbs, a folk-rock indie Americana group. And, of course, we have the most recent meetings from both the Gill and Montague selectboards, and finance committee meetings from both villages as well.

The GMRSD school committee met on April 12, and you can find all these videos on the MCTV Vimeo page, which is linked to montaguenvideo.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 check-out, and filming and editing assistance can be provided.

MCTV is still looking for board members, so if you would like to stop in for a meeting, even just to check the vibe, email infomontaguenvideo@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 infomontaguenvideo@gmail.com.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666!

FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CO-OP
144 MAIN STREET GREENFIELD, MA 01301 (413) 773-9567
3 STATE STREET SHELburnE FALLS, MA 01370 (413) 625-2548

Make your green energy dreams a reality in 2022 with PV Squared as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary of Valley-grown solar excellence!

PV SQUARED
20
YEARS of HEART & SOLAR
SINCE 2002

Certified Corporation
BEST OF THE WORLD
ACCREDITED PV Installation Company
AMICUS
ADVOCATE BEST OF THE VALLEY BRADDER FOLK 2021
TOPSOLAR CONTRACTORS
ACCREDITED BUSINESS

MA ELEG. LIC. 3877 A1 MA HIC 140077
PVSQUARED.COOP
413-772-8788

Professional Painting & Decorating Contractor Since 1900
1900-2021 • Our 121st Year

COUTURE BROS.

Christian S. Couture, President

- Commercial
- Residential
- Industrial

Tel: (413) 863-4346 Fax: (413) 863-3740
400 Avenue A - PO Box 270 - Turners Falls, MA 01376
www.couturebros.com | HIC Lic. 100326

TURN IT UP!

MUSIC & MOVIES

BOOKMILL | MONTAGUE CENTER | 367.0309

MYSTERY TRAIN AMHERST

BUY / SELL / TRADE
MUSIC / MOVIES / BOOKS
WE BUY RECORDS

178A N Pleasant
413-253-4776

Remote Banking

with **Teller Connect/ATMs**

Talk to an actual GSB Teller via live video:

- Make a Withdrawal
- Cash a Check to the Penny
- Transfer Money
- Make a Loan Payment
- Make a Cash or Check Deposit—No Deposit Slips Required
- and More ...

(413) 774-3191 • (413) 584-4441
greenfieldsavings.com

Greenfield Savings Bank
Member FDIC/Member DIF

Come see what's Cookin'!

DIEMAND FARM

126 MICHON HOLLOW RD
MILLERS FALLS, MA
thediamondfarm.com
(578) 544-3800

A BEAUTIFUL Smile Starts With Healthy Teeth

GEETU SHOKEEN, DMD

Montague Dental Arts
General Dentistry
300 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376 • 413-863-2288

1. come in
2. put feet up
3. have drink
4. eat grub

THE VOO

78 3rd St TFMA

HOURS/SPECIALS
ORDER ONLINE:
thevoo.net