The Montague Reporter

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

YEAR 20 – NO. 26

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

MAY 12, 2022

Scant Town Meeting Quorum Approves the Entire Warrant

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Montague's first indoor annual town meeting since 2019 was almost a failure Saturday, after too few elected representatives showed up to convene the meeting on time. Town clerk Deb Bourbeau paced the Turners Falls High School lobby, calling absent members on her cell phone, until the required quorum – 64 of the 126 seats – was achieved.

Number 64 was Edite Cunha of Precinct 5, who told the *Reporter* she had originally decided she was too sick to attend the meeting. Cunha's arrival allowed the meeting to begin, over an hour later than scheduled, with the election of Ray Godin as temporary moderator.

The first big debate came early, with **Article 4**, a proposal to create

an Assistant Town Administrator position. Michael Naughton of Precinct 2 complained the proposal had been "presented early on as the solution" to a problem he acknowledged existed with overworked town hall staff.

"We've been talking about this problem for years," said fin com chair Jen Audley. "We don't have to get it perfect.... Adding more capacity at the selectboard office will make our government more responsive."

The article eventually passed by a 39-25 vote. **Article 5**, to create an administrative assistant position in the selectboard department, passed unanimously.

Only a few lines of the town's \$11,176,944 operating budget were held for discussion. David Jensen of Precinct 2 singled out \$6,000 the town is spending on electric vehicle

see **MEETING** page A2

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

No Action on Virus Wave

By JEFF SINGLETON

With spring in full swing, the annual town meeting just completed, and local elections around the corner, the Montague selectboard met on May 9 to discuss a variety of warm-weather events and construction projects. The meeting also featured discussion of public health issues, with public health director Daniel Wasiuk and members of the board of health present for the second week in a row after a long winter hiatus.

Although a quorum of the health board was present, Michael Nelson and Melanie Zamojski, their participation had not been posted as a meeting. Nelson said he would defer to member Zamojski, apparently to avoid violating the state open meeting law. Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said this would be legal "as long as we don't discuss any policy actions by the board [of health]."

The meeting began with Wasiuk's presentation of the latest local COVID data, which he said had risen to 50 so-called "active cases" during the two-week period from April 24 through May 7.

As was noted the previous week, the data may represent a significant undercount of cases, since the data set includes only PCR tests, which have become less frequent due to the closing of testing facilities in the region and the popularity of antigen "rapid tests."

Wasiuk was not asked about the see **MONTAGUE** page A7

High School Sports Week

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – The Franklin Tech softball team is riding high, mercying most of their opponents this week while the Turners Falls Softball Thunder fought and scrapped for every run. In baseball, Turners held off Mahar to win by a run.

The Franklin Tech/Turners Falls co-op boys' and girls' track teams both defeated Athol in home meets.

Track and field is one of those team sports in which individuals

can qualify for the post-season. So far, three Tech boys have qualified for the Western Mass Invitational, while their relay team needs to shave a half-second off their time to join their teammates at the tournament.

(Two girls have also qualified for the track postseason, and their last meet of the regular season is this Thursday; attempts to reach the coach have been unsuccessful as of press time, but we will update you in the coming weeks.)

see **SPORTS** page A4



Turners Falls' Jaade Duncan wins the 100m dash with time of 13.7 seconds as the Thunder hosted the Athol Bears for a track meet last week. Final score: Turners 84, Athol 14.

Staff Bias Concerns Aired In Final Week of Election

By MIKE JACKSON

MONTAGUE

With a four-way race for an open seat on the board of health coming to an end next Tuesday, the biggest debate is not over coronavirus response, housing inspections, or mosquito spraying, but the involvement of one of the candidates in an election-eve publicity campaign sponsored by the health department itself.

Kathy Burek credited "the opposing forces" this week for the idea that a plan to mail a glossy double-sided

postcard with her name to 1,200 Montague dog owners may have been an intentional effort to promote her candidacy. "It's what you call dirty politics," she said.

Burek has served for about a decade as the town animal and barn inspector, and said that "in a way" this made her a natural fit for a new initiative by department staff to encourage owners to pick up after their pets.

"She knows animals much more than we do," public health director Daniel Wasiuk told the *Reporter*, though he said that while the town's pooper scooper regulation, which established fines in 2010 for the non-collection of cat and dog waste, "has been on the books for years," "nothing has really been done" on the issue until this point.

"It just seems so biased – it seems so wrong," Maureen Mc-Namara, a rival candidate for the seat on the board, said of the poop campaign. "They've been trying to get her in since she pulled out papers. I feel like I just did a whole bunch of work for nothing."

Education Outreach

McNamara, who lives in downtown Turners Falls, has said she was inspired to run by the department's inaction on quality-of-life issues including, explicitly, dog waste.

"I miss Gina McNeely. When Gina was Montague's health director, there was minimal to no dog feces downtown," McNamara began a March 3 letter to the editors of the *Montague Reporter*. "She was always out checking the neighborhoods, and she'd write a \$25 fine for dog owners that didn't pick up."





Clockwise from top left: Kathy Burek, Catherine Dodds, Rachel Stoler, and Maureen McNamara.

Wasiuk said he brought the dog waste issue to the March 23 board of health meeting in response to a "rash" of complaints downtown, and that he, health board member Al Cummings, and health clerk Anne Stuart then "devised a plan" to incorporate Burek in addressing the issue, and that the four brainstormed a strategy of "education outreach before enforcement."

Burek, who attended the March 23 meeting, said she volunteered to help. According to Cummings, the decision to involve her did not come from the board. Wasiuk said he was not aware at that time that Stuart was campaigning as a private citizen, to promote Burek's candidacy in the May 17 election.

Burek told the *Reporter* she was the author of a public service announcement (PSA) submitted to our newspaper last week promoting the effort, which includes the installation of a number of "poop stations" in town. Like the postcards, the PSA was signed with her name.

Town clerk Deb Bourbeau, who provided Stuart with the addresses of all licensed dog owners in town for the mailer, said she advised against the idea. "I learned that [Anne's] intention was to have it come from the animal inspector's name, and I said that's not a good idea," she said. "She's on the ballot... as far as elections are concerned, you're promoting a candidate for name recognition."

"It would be one thing if it was done on an annual basis, and Kathy was the one doing it," Bourbeau added. "But she never had, and they never have done a mailing like see **STAFF** page A8

Wendell Puts Final Touches On Solar Zoning Bylaws

By JEFF SINGLETON

On Wednesday evening the Wendell planning board held a public hearing over Zoom seeking input on a new zoning bylaw governing solar installations. About 15 people participated in the hearing including members of the planning board, historical commission, and several

other town committees.

The meeting began with a slide presentation, narrated by planning board chair Molly Doody with the assistance of member Seal LaMadeleine Franklin Regional Council of Governments planning director Peggy Sloan, describing the main features of the proposed bylaw.

see **SOLAR** page A5

GILL SELECTBOARD

Ambulance Fees Proposed for Towns Without EMS Contracts

By JERRI HIGGINS

The Gill selectboard met Monday evening and discussed a letter to the town from Franklin County Emergency Medical Services committee president Matt Wolkenbreit warning that towns like Gill which do not contract with EMS services are straining the response system.

Wolkenbreit's committee is part of Western Mass Emergency Medical Services (WMEMS), a Northampton-based nonprofit designated by the state Department of Public Health to coordinate among emergency responders and hospitals in the region.

The letter, addressed to "Selectboards, Town Administrators, and others responsible for the provision of emergency services," warned of a "significant strain" on EMS delivery services in communities that do not have a contracted ambulance service. When ambulances are dispatched by 911 but no patients accept emergency transportation, no one can be billed.

The group proposes two options for those services: ambulance services charging a \$350 fee for every service call to towns that do not have EMS contracts – a fee it said had

see GILL page A8

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Leverett School Staff Asks for Facilities Help

By SARAH ROBERTSON

Selectboard members heard about issues facing Leverett Elementary School staff and elders living in Leverett at Tuesday night's meeting. After a lengthy discussion of the Council on Aging's ongoing survey of aging residents, interim principal Annemarie Foley Ruiz shared that her staff could use more help managing the maintenance of the school building.

Over the winter, two sprinkler heads at the elementary school burst and required repairs, posing a problem for administrators unfamiliar with the building's inner workings. Ruiz said that the situation would have been easier to deal with had her staff had more information about the building.

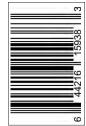
"It has been tricky to step in and know that there's a bunch of history I don't know that has been coming across my desk as hearsay," Ruiz said. "I'm feeling like there are divisions between the school facilities position and the town facilities position that I don't understand."

School committee member Becky Tew said that custodial staff need more help finding contractors for maintenance. Tew added that

see **LEVERETT** page A5

Fewer Pages Than Normal, Due To Fewer Thoughts

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The Montague Reporter

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MEETING from page A1

charging stations. "We subsidize the availability," selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz told him. "The proliferation of electric vehicles and charging will continue to grow, and will continue to help offset the cost."

"It's a business subsidy," added Ariel Elan of Precinct 1, "that helps attract people who drive electric vehicles, or who are promoting the net-zero economy, to think that this is a cool place to be."

Naughton asked police chief Chris Williams about the recommendations of the two review committees that studied his department from 2020 to 2021. "We were told the conversations about the relationships between the police department and the community would be unfolding," he said.

"There hasn't been any further conversation, really, with anybody other than myself andthe board of selectmen," replied Williams.

"Any expansion of community outreach is limited by the staffing," explained selectboard member Matt Lord, adding that Williams has made it clear that a requested sergeant position would "right-size" the roster, and further expansion beyond that would be a prerequisite of any community engagement effort.

"The committee basically showed we were doing a good job," Williams said. "My door's always open."

The operating budget passed by majority vote, but Williams later returned to the podium for Article **30**, a proposal to remove the department from the state civil service.

"Fewer and fewer people want to be police officers," he said.

"Do we only want the officers who are willing to jump through these bonkers levels of hoops to get to serve?" asked Elizabeth Irving of Precinct 1. "Or, do we want to be able to expand the pool of people that we can choose from?"

"The last thing we want to do is bring in people that bring down your reputation," Michael Ketcham of Precinct 2 told Williams.

"Anyone who's going to carry a gun and a badge should have to jump through hoops," argued Laurie Callahan of Precinct 5.

"I think this is the greatest idea," said Sam Lovejoy of Precinct 1, reminding everyone that not long ago, the police union was lobbying to keep the chief position under civil service. "We're getting rid of a layer of stupidity."

The article passed unanimously. Assessments for the Gill-Montague and Franklin County Technical school districts were both approved unanimously, though the GMRSD came under sharp criticism for its continued enrollment loss to school choice, and for not providing an analysis of why students choice out. A new career-training and internship track, Innovation Pathways, was also criticized for competing with the vocational school.

Three articles spent money from "impact fees" paid by cannabis companies to Montague as a host community: one to fund full-time substance counselors at both schools, another to fund an after-school program in technology, and a third to improve the intersection at the entrance to the airport industrial park.

Jensen asked town planner Walter Ramsey what had changed at the intersection to require intervention, and Ramsey pointed out that there was more pedestrian traffic due to joint sports teams between the two high schools, the county housing authority's new headquarters, and the cannabis shop.

Articles to create a "smart growth" zoning overlay to encourage housing development on Power Street and First Street, and to allow the selectboard to bid out town-owned parcels in those zones, were approved.

Bookending the meeting with another big debate, Article 35 introduced a new bylaw empowering the historical commission to temporarily delay demolition of many eligible town structures. Naughton amended the bylaw to remove the broadest criterion that any building older than 100 years be eligible – and this passed 25 to 12. Defanged, the law as a whole then passed 27 to 15.

Noticing that this totaled fewer than 64 members, one man objected, demanding to know how this was legal. This created a teachable moment. "Unless there is a formal count, there is a presumption that there is a quorum at all times after it has been announced," said town counsel Gregg Corbo.

It was then spelled out that if a loss of quorum were recorded, town meeting would be required to reconvene at a later date to discuss the one remaining article - Article 36, a non-binding resolution encouraging Massachusetts to tax the ultra-rich at a higher rate to fund schools and roads. The objection was sheepishly withdrawn, and after a short round of soapboxing, the meeting affirmed the idea by majority vote. A little after 4 p.m., with all 36 articles on the warrant passed, if just barely, Godin officially adjourned the meeting.

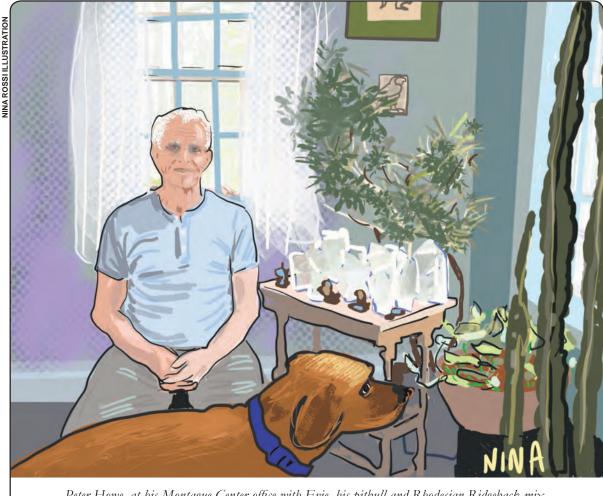
ers show up for their Annual Town

Meeting, and they are less than a quarter our size. On Saturday Montague could barely muster 64 representatives, out of the 126 elected to represent us, and attendance declined after that, according to the Reporter.

Times have changed. Representative Town Meeting can be abolished. A lot more people would show up if it were Open.

It used to be the consensus that elected representatives would study the issues and consistently weigh in on all of them, not just the hot topic of the day. Those days are gone. We should unchain democracy, and give everyone a stake in how our Town policy and budget are established.

> **Deb Radway Montague Center**



Peter Howe, at his Montague Center office with Evie, his pitbull and Rhodesian Ridgeback mix. Howe has been an alternative health practitioner since the late 1970s, working in a wide array of modalities including nutritional counseling, deep tissue work, lymphatic drainage, energetic work, and kinesiology.



What About the Bill of Rights?

Two Observations

Re: Domenica Djaafar's letter and your May 5 editorial: I'm no legal scholar, but what about our Bill of Rights?

1st Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." Clearly this means we can have no laws that force on everyone religious beliefs that are held solely by a minority.

14th Amendment: "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States... nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The privacy of medical decisions made between patient and doctor is a legally protected privilege. As for "equal protection,"

Montague is so fortunate to have

four viable candidates for one open

seat on the all important and pow-

erful Board of Health. Any one of

was impressed with her statement

of candidacy and her 20-year com-

mitment to Franklin County com-

munity wellness. I hope the unsuc-

cessful candidates turn their sights

Montague was challenged to

secure a quorum for annual town

meeting again this year. We elect

people to represent us and attend

two to three meetings a year, and

they can't show up or worse. Worse

Leverett had 80 registered vot-

is that no one wants to do the job.

on the Selectboard race next year.

I will support Rachel Stoler. I

them can capably do the job.

does this Right apply only to men and their doctors?

I, too, am a retired Labor & Delivery RN. I am old enough to remember botched back-street abortions, and the suffering of women forced to carry to term fetuses whose anomalies were known to be incompatible with life. And of course, if RvW is struck down, the girls and women who will be most affected will be those who are too young, too poor, or too afraid of bounty hunters (cf. Texans) to travel to a Pro-Choice state or country.

None of that matters, apparently, to the Anti-Choice people, a group that includes a majority of SCOTUS. But it still is worth mentioning.

> **Anne Bent** Montague

Dresser: For Burek

I am asking for Montague residents to join me in voting for Kathleen (Kathy) Burek on May 17, 2022 for the Montague Board of Health.

Kathy is the longtime Animal & Barn Inspector for the Town of Montague. In this position she inspects, monitors & cares for our animals well being. This position requires general reporting of transmittable diseases associated with animals including but not limited to rabies, brucellosis & tuberculosis.

Although the Board of Health is dedicated to preserving and protecting public health, the much larger goal on a daily basis consists of a wide variety of responsibilities including but not limited to:

- ensuring minimal standards of human habitation are met,

- ensure safe food handling through inspection services,

- licensing everything from vendors, restaurants to funeral directors to camps,

- preventing the spread of disease and sickness,

- handling and following up with a mirage of complaints on various

- protecting groundwater by over seeing septic and well locations.

Being an internal part of community through this position gives Kathy the unique insight of not only the duties of the Board of Health but how she can best contribute her knowledge and talents to helping address the concerns and needs of the community as an active Board member. Please vote Kathy Burek!

> James Dresser III, LPN **Turners Falls**

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Historic Deerfield is planning to be overrun with sheep this weekend, May 13 to 15, from 10 to 4 p.m. each day. "Sheep on the Street" is a celebration of heritage breed sheep and an exploration of their importance in the agricultural history of early New England. There will be multiple opportunities to meet sheep and lambs, and learn about the industries associated with their wool. Kids will enjoy hands-on craft projects and a scavenger hunt.

The event is free for kids under 12, \$5 for teens, and \$18 for those 18 years old and up. Leave dogs at home, though. Historic Deefield members and residents of South Deerfield and Deerfield can attend free of charge. Find out more at historic-deerfield.org.

A special documentary about resettling refugees is being screened at the Latchis Theater in Brattleboro from May 13 to May 19. Utica: The Last Refuge follows a family from Sudan who settle in Utica, New York, a rust belt city struggling to rebuild itself. Leigh Rae of Montague Center is an associate producer.

The film "offers our audience a chance to see how refugees positively impacted another small town. Never before has a film so carefully documented this aspect of resettlement and its contribution to the wider community," reads the promotional material.

This Friday night at 7 p.m., the screening will be followed by a Q&A with director Loch Phillipps and Brattleboro community members working in refugee resettlement. A suggested donation of \$10 is requested, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. See latchis.com for exact showtimes.

Here's some local poetry updates from Paul Richmond of Human Error Publishing. Richmond has been co-hosting poetry, spoken word, and stories open mics at Gateway City Arts in Holyoke the first the LAVA Center in Greenfield ev- the Energy Park in Greenfield next ery third Tuesdays. The third Tues-

featured readers will be Jan Mahar and Nina Gross. There will be an open mic at 7:20, and the featured readers start at 8:30 p.m.

Richmond has also just announced that he will host Poetry and Tacos at the Unity Park food court across from Nova Motorcycles on two Sundays, May 22 and June 19 at 1 p.m. Bring your own chair, and something to read if you wish, and enjoy good food from the food trucks and the Nice. Snack Parlor.

The Poet's Seat Poetry Contest will announce their annual winners next Tuesday, May 17 at 6 p.m. at the Stoneleigh Burnham School in Greenfield. Finalists will read their submissions from the three contest categories: adult, youth ages 12 to 14, and youth ages 15 to 18. Seating will be distanced, and masks required except when eating or drinking.

This contest draws poets from across Franklin County. The winner in the adult category will host the honorary Poet's Seat chair for one year, and have their name added to a brass plague on the chair's back.

On Wednesday, May 18 from 7 to 9 p.m. there will be a presentation and conversation about racism and community health with the Western Mass Health Equity Network at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls.

The event is the film premiere of MOSAIC, a documentary commissioned by the Network featuring local leaders of color and others from Western Mass with a focus on the intersection of racism and health.

There will also be a photo exhibit called "Sow Well Tots!," the name of a Bernardston organization that brings together Afro-folk arts, nature, and early childhood development. Attendees can also learn how libraries support community health with Andre Gaines-Roberson, a Minikesu Mosq Metah and Nipmuc citizen and Montague librarian, who will share a stomp dance and round dance. This is a free event.

The 20th Annual **Mental Health** Wednesdays of every month, and at & Wellness Fair takes place at on Saturday, May 21. Starting at 7 Wednesday, May 18 from 10 a.m. to day this month is May 17, and the noon. featuring live music, vendor

booths, community partners, a food truck, games, and activities. The theme of this year's Fair is "Stronger Together."

The event is a production of the Green River House and Quabbin House, two clubhouse-model peer support programs of nonprofit community behavioral health organization Clinical & Support Options. The fair offers free admission, and is welcoming to all.

On May 19 at 7:30 p.m., as part of its Thursday Play Reading series at the LAVA Center in Greenfield, Silverthorne Theater will present a reading of Iranian playwright Naghmeh Samini's The Language of Wild Berries. In this play, a young couple is followed by someone on a visit to a seaside town to celebrate their anniversary, throwing them into an examination of their marriage. Register to attend this free event, as seating is limited, through the link on silverthornetheater.org.

The UMass Amherst library hosts a free 'Falconference' on May 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., over Zoom. This is the second annual event focusing on falcons. They will discuss nest box updates and an open-access falcon curriculum, and the event includes Tom Ricardi's live Birds of Prey program. Here is the website with registration: scholarworks.umass.edu/falconference/.

On Friday, May 20 join the Leverett Historical Commission for a virtual visit to the site of a fulling mill and tannery, once powered by a mill pond created by diverting water from Roaring Brook in Leverett.

The commission also invites you to a subsequent live, in-person visit to the site on Saturday, May 21 at 7 p.m. They note to beware of weather, uneven terrain, ticks, blackflies, and COVID and bring water if it is warm. If you are interested in the live visit, indicate it on your registration at roaringbrook.eventbrite.com.

This event is part of the ongoing project, A Sense of Where You Are, Finding and Interpreting Mill Foundations in the Landscape, and is funded in part by the Leverett Community Preservation Commission. For more information, email Susan Mareneck, leveretthistoryinfo @gmail.com.

partment is holding an Open House a.m. until 10 a.m. a pancake, bacon and sausage breakfast will be offered, and the cost is a donation to the Fire Association.

The open house will run until noon and feature Smokey Bear and the wildfire crew sharing forest fire safety information. The Safe Trailer will be open to teach home fire safety, and a fire hose will be charged and ready to aim at a water target for all to use. Members of the fire department will be on hand to answer any question you have about being a call firefighter or EMT, and the station will be open for you to explore and view historic photos.

On Saturday, May 21, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., celebrate World Fish Migration Day with a visit to the underwater viewing windows at FirstLight's Turners Falls Fishway. Learn about the journeys of migratory fish as they travel upriver during their spawning run, and pick up a copy of the Fishway quest game.

Designed for all ages, this one-

mile scavenger hunt on the bike path leads you from clue to clue while you learn about migratory fish and the history of Turners Falls. Solve the clues to find the secret location of the Quest box, then share the location with the Fishway staff and receive a gift certificate for an ice cream cone at the Wagon Wheel Restaurant across the river in Gill.

Join the Nolumbeka Project on Saturday, May 21 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls to celebrate of the release of the video series *Indigenous* Voices: Stories from the Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts A Series of Short Videos about Native Life Past and Present.

From 1 to 3:30 p.m. there will be a commemoration of the 346th anniversary of the Great Falls Massacre, either outdoors or in the Great Hall, depending on the weather.

Members of the Tribal and non-Tribal public are welcome. Speakers will include filmmaker Robbie Leppzer; video producer Jennifer Lee; Doug Harris, one of the organizers of the Reconciliation Ceremony in 2004; and Robert Peters, a Mashpee Wampanoag artist whose paintings will be on display. Find out more at www.nolumbekaproject.org. Co-sponsored by the Nolumbeka Project and Mass Humanities.

The community is also invited to Unity Park at noon on Saturday, May 21 to join the Montauge parks and recreation department and local dignitaries as they dedicate the Unity Park ballfields to Mr. George F. Bush of Turners Falls. A permanent bronze-and-granite memorial marker will be unveiled.

Mr. Bush has been a stalwart presence in the community for decades, and the hope is that many in the community will be able to attend. This event will be held rain or shine.

A program called "Conscious Dying: Preparing for the Final Journey" will be presented at the Second Congregational Church in Greenfield on Sunday, May 22 from 4 to 6 p.m. It will be led by Patrizia de Libero, who has a Masters in Death Studies and is a death coach and doula helping raise awareness of death and dving.

The program, sponsored by the The **Montague Center Fire De-** Interfaith Council of Franklin County, is useful for "anyone interested in death, facing the fear of dying, or in acquiring the tools needed to help support loved ones as they face their end of life conditions," according to the event announcement.

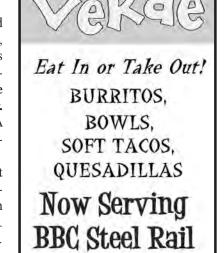
> The Brick House Community Resource Center in Turners Falls is holding a community design workshop on Sunday, May 22. Help design the outdoor spaces at the Third Street center so that they can be more functional, beautiful, and useful to the community, neighbors, and the general public! There will be free snacks from 12 to 1, and the workshop is from 1 to 3 p.m.

> The Leverett Coop is hosting a Rattlesnake Gutter Market again on Second Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., plus a "Spring Fling" on Saturday, May 21 from 12 to 4 p.m. If you are interested in vending, they are taking applications; see the link at *leverettcoop.com*.

> > Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

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Another Letter to the Editors **Appreciated Remarks**

O'Kane for her letter to editor in

the May 5 edition. As a white male there are many aspects of the Black experience I don't have as much appreciation of as they deserve. Some of Max Hartshorne's remarks seemed odd even to me. But Ms. O'Kane's let-

I appreciate her sharing her reality. Certainly there are many forums in which they'd be dismissed

ter threw them into stark relief.

Just a brief note to thank Ms. with the kind of nonsense that was being mouthed by those who wanted January 6 to simply be ignored and dismissed.

> We all share the history of this nation, and somehow we have to work to understand and appreciate the impact of the actions of the past and attempt to not repeat them.

> > **George Drake** Leverett

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Sixty-Six Civic Minutes

By ELIZABETH IRVING

TURNERS FALLS - 8:32 a.m. Duly elected, I arrive "on time" for the 8:30 Annual Town Meeting. I decide to sit front row center so I can overhear both the muttered comments of all the Town Meeting Members behind me and the susserations of the Town Officials behind the rail on the stage.

8:40 a.m. Wordle is very difficult today.

8:50 a.m. Got it: "MISTY." I notice that we haven't started Town Meeting yet, and start listening to the humans around me. What is going on?

8:51 a.m. I gather that we are a few Members short of a Meeting. Apparently, not everyone thinks this is as much fun as I do.*

8:54 a.m. While we are waiting for quorum, I'm eavesdropping on the group behind me. They're reminiscing about filing for Freedom of Information Act papers to find out why the FBI was investigating the Montague Board of Health in the seventies about the No Nukes movement, and why neighbors wouldn't allow kids to play with specific hippies. I decide to record my observations for historical purposes.

9:00 a.m. Our saintly Town Clerk is calling absent members to remind them about our meeting. I just went to the bathroom and had to dodge someone who once tried to hug me during a pandemic while telling me I had a good aura.

9:04 a.m. From their position behind the

blue-curtained table on the stage, the Selectboard is getting restless. They have started good-naturedly heckling the Members. Some of the more obscure-rules-obsessed Members have started conferring with Town Counsel about maneuvers that could result in exciting rules violations. The Members behind me, meanwhile, are suggesting that attendance could be improved if there were two different Meetings: one for the people who like to talk, and another for the people who want to finish business and get back outside.

9:08 a.m. We are waiting for just one more Member to make quorum. The villagers are now arguing about which signature cocktail would make for the best Town Meeting attendance.

9:10 a.m. They have started calling for "margaritas!"

9:11 a.m. It occurs to me that if we'd enacted my Tax Payer Funded Bounce House proposal, this would be going a lot better.

9:15 a.m. The Members are getting anxious to legislate, and a bunch of people on the east side of the auditorium are suggesting some mild voter fraud. 9:17 a.m. The Town Administrator just ap-

preciated everyone for waiting. The fiestiest of the seated members were the first to holler their thanks.

9:18 a.m. Two of the missing Members are on their way! Legislating will commence anon! Town Clerks are worth their weight in gold.

9:20 a.m. A group of the older Members are demanding that next year's Town Meeting be a pajama party.

9:25 a.m. The entire Finance Committee just snickered at the same time. I long to know the

9:28 a.m. I just noticed that our Town Accountant – who has absolutely participated in previous meetings from behind a Darth Vader mask - has her calculator on stage with her and plugged in. She's Ready To Go. She's usually one of my candidates for Town Meeting MVP.

9:32 a.m. The partner of one of the Selectboard is threatening to riot, and the Town Administrator pointed out that if she gets herself removed from the meeting, we again won't have quorum.

9:34 a.m. QUORUM! Time to legislate!

9:35 a.m. The Town Accountant and Town Clerk are arguing happily on live mike about electing a temporary Moderator. The words "ass" and "hullabaloo" have already been amplified.

9:38 a.m. We are a "go" on representational democracy! One hour late, but I've brought snacks, and Scotty's is providing lunch.

Town Election is next Tuesday, May 17, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. There are a number of open seats accross Town Government for a variety of committees and Town Meeting seats. Please consider joining. You, too, could have this much Town-sponsored fun.

Elizabeth Irving is a member of the Montague planning board and board of registrars, but she writes this strictly in her capacity as a town meeting member from Precinct 1, Montague Center.

- * Humor aside, there are many elements that prevent people from having equal access to this riotously good time. Care-giving responsibilities, work schedules, gate-keeping, pandemics, language barriers, and transportation issues all interfere with a genuinely accessible representational democracy.
- ** At no point during these 66 minutes did any participant in this Town Meeting seriously endorse any voter fraud, electioneering chicanery, or intent to riot or to bring alcohol into a school building. All of the comments I overheard were good-natured jokes, and I have paraphrased them for publication.



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SPORTS from page A1 **Softball**

FCTS 24 – Mahar 1 FCTS 15 - McCann Tech 2 FCTS 23 - SIHS 0 FCTS 7 - Hopkins 2

The Franklin Tech Softball Eagles won four games this week, scoring 69 runs while only allowing five.

In the Mahar game played on Star Wars Day (May the Fourth), the Lady Birds scored all 24 runs in the first inning. I asked coach Joe Gamache how he kept his team from scoring more in the ensuing innings. "After the first inning, we made substitutions and let the girls take their atbats," he said. If his players reached base he would have them keep running until they were tagged out.

Hannah Gilbert hit a home run, Kaitlin Trudeau hit a triple, and Lillian Ross, Kendra Campbell, Shelby O'Leary, and Gilbert all clocked doubles. In the circle, Lillian Ross earned the win and Gilbert the save.

The next day the McCann Tech Green Hornets came to Tech and were defeated 15-2. The Eagles scored four in the first inning, eight in the second, and three more in the third, winning the mercy-shortened game 15-2. In this one, Trudeau hit a home run while Lauren Ross, Cordelia Guerin, and Gilbert all hit triples.

Then on Monday, the Eagles flew down to Springfield and upended the Sabis International Burgundy Bulldogs, 23-0. Tech scored in all five innings, and the game was mercifully called at 23-zip. Gilbert and Lillian Day hit homers in this rout while Campbell and Day hit triples.

Then on Tuesday, the Eagles defeated the Hopkins Academy Golden Hawks 7-2. I thought I misheard Gamache when he told me the score. After all, the Eagles have been scoring so many runs, seven sounded a little strange. But this was no cake walk: Tech was unable to score until the third inning, and by that time, they were losing 2-0. They halved the score in the bottom of the third, and tied it up in the fourth.

Winning the close ones is a hallmark of good teams. The Lady Birds eventually tore it open, scoring four runs in the fifth to go up 6-2 and adding one more in the sixth. They held off the Hawks in the top of the seventh and extended their win streak to 11 games. Trudeau parked a home run in the win, and Lillian Ross a double. Pitcher Lauren Ross gave up five hits and struck out eight.

Wahconah 1 – TFHS 0

TFHS 11 – Mount Greylock 7

This week the Turners Falls Softball Thunder lost a game without allowing a single earned run. (They beat the same team last Monday without earning a run themselves.) Then on Tuesday, the Thunder posted a wild come-from-behind victory.

The Wahconah Blue Warriors came to Turners last Thursday seeking to avenge a 5-1 loss three days earlier. This game could have gone either way. Several calls were disputed by fans, coaches, and players.

The Warriors finally broke the scoreless tie in the sixth. With two outs and a runner on third, the batter bunted. The throw to first hit the batter, and the runner scored. "Interference!" several spectators called, and an official conference was held.

In professional baseball, there are two baselines. If the runner is toeing the wrong line and blocks the throw, it's interference - an easy call. But in high school softball there is only one baseline. So the umps upheld the call, and the run scored.

There were other highlights of course: spectacular catches, errors, wild pitches, a crisp double play, and in the final inning, Thunder had their first two batters on base with no outs. But the defining play in this game was that throw to first. Madison Liimatainen pitched an exceptional game, limiting the Warriors to two hits while striking out 10 and allowing no earned runs. Emily Young accounted for Powertown's only hit.

Turners then faced another Berkshire team on Tuesday, the Mount Greylock Red Mounties.

"You know," one of the regulars observed, "when the team is winning, this place is filled." Sure enough, as I peered around, the fan base appeared significantly reduced.

After Liimatainen struck out three of the first four batters, Turners' offense came to bat. Young led off with a base hit, Liimatainen advanced her, and Paige Sulda batted her home.

The second inning was all Red. A base hit and a hit batter put two Mounties on base with no outs. Liimatainen struck out the next two batters, but that's when it fell apart for the Thunder. Walks, errors, wild pitches, and an ill-advised throw to first gave Grey a 7-1 advantage after an inning and a half. Thunder got one run back in the third as Young placed one in the gap, a wild pitch got her to third, and an error got her home. In the fourth, two Mounties seemed to score on sac flies, but never tagged up so neither run counted.

In the bottom of the fourth, the Red pitcher began to struggle, and the crowd came alive. Two walks, a Young RBI, a Liimatainen double, and a Morgan Dobias RBI put Powertown up 8-7 after four. Blue added three insurance runs in the fifth off a Liimatainen three-run homer. In the circle, Liimatainen gave up eight hits, walked four, and struck out 16. Offensively, she had a home run and five RBIs, Young three hits and two RBIs, Sulda two singles, and Olivia Stafford a double and two RBIs.

Boys' Track

FCTS 107 – Athol 33

On Thursday, Cinco De Mayo, the Franklin Tech co-op track team defeated the Athol Red Bears 107-33. In doing so, Cameren Candelaria, Brayden McCord, and Josiah Little qualified for the Western Mass Invitational Meet to be held May 21 up at Mohawk High School.

The 4x100 relay team, consisting of McCord, David Rodriguez, Little, and Candelaria, is only .6 seconds shy of qualifying. The other relay

team, the 4x400 – Owen LaValley, Joey Valvo, Anthony Gallo, and Tyler Willey – won for the first time all season against Da Bears.

Tech swept the 100m hurdles (David Stowe, Grayson Bowse, Patrick Connell, Jr.); 100m dash (McCord, Little, Rodriguez); 400m (Colby Leete, Gallo, LaValley); and 400m hurdles (Stowe, Bowse, Connell). They took first and second in the long jump (Little and Connell), pole vault (LaValley and Stowe), 200m (Candelaria and Rodriguez) and 2-mile (Gallo and Alexander McKay); first and third in the mile (Gallo, McKay); and first in triple jump (McCord) and high jump (Bowse).

In other events, Tech finished second in shot put and javelin (Brody Williams) and discus (Greyson Rollins), and Valvo added 3 points by finishing second in the 800m.

Baseball

TFHS 3 - Mahar 2

On Tuesday, while the softball team played Mount Greylock, across the field the Turners Falls Baseball Thunder were in a battle against the Mahar Senators. Neither team could buy a run, and after five and a half scoreless innings, the Thunder broke the goose egg in the bottom of the sixth. Alex Quezada, Lincoln Coleman, and Levin Prondecki all crossed the plate before the Mahar defense regained their composure.

In the seventh, four Senator batters reached, two of whom scored. But with one out, two on, and leading by a run, Powertown managed to shut the door. A pop out to right field and a strikeout retired the side and preserved the one-run victory.

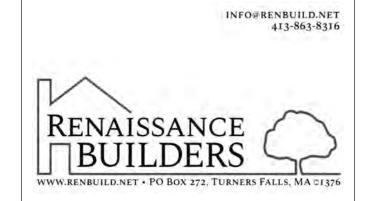
Prondecki had two RBIs and a double, Derek Wissman batted in the other run, and Lincoln Coleman and Cam Burnett also had base hits in the victory .On the mound, starting pitcher Joey Mosca struck out five and let up three hits while relief pitchers Quezada and Kainen Stevens allowed



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one hit apiece.

SOLAR from page A1

The bylaw would cap solar installations at a maximum of 10 acres, and allow very large arrays only within the town solar overlay district. Medium-sized ground mounted arrays, defined as those up to a quarter acre of land, would require a site plan review, although not a special permit, and roof-mounted arrays or those on land of up to 1,000 square feet would be allowed "by right" with a building permit.

The bylaw would also place significant restrictions on battery storage units, allowing them only as accessories to solar arrays. The slideshow and ensuing discussion emphasized recent fires at standalone storage facilities housing lithium batteries.

The bylaw prohibits the location of arrays on any "prime agricultural land," and limits any "forest removal" for solar projects to one acre. Noise limitations would be placed on the arrays, particularly between seven in the evening and seven in the morning,

The construction of solar arrays would also be required to be consistent with a 2017 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the town and Native tribes in the region, allowing tribal preservationists to monitor the construction process to preserve "ceremonial stone landscapes." Lisa Hoag of the town historical commission, who attended the hearing, suggested she would be adding new language to the bylaw based on the MOU.

Sharon Gensler said she thought the 50-foot buffer the bylaw required around ceremonial stones was "not much of a buffer." Hoag said this buffer had been increased from 30 feet, and that the bylaws needed to strike a "balance" between preservation and the rights of landowners.

Doody added that the regulations also needed to appear "reasonable" to avoid being rejected by the state attorney general's office, which reviews local bylaw

Chris Queen asked how a narrow "wildlife corridor" of 30 feet between an array and a road would protect wildlife more than a corridor of 100 feet, as implied by the bylaw slide show. LaMadeleine said there would be "less intrusion" into narrower corridorS, and thus less confusion among the wildlife.

Daniel Leahy, a member of the open space committee, noted that Wendell is considered an "environmental justice" community by the state and this might be noted in the bylaw to encouraged approval by the attorney general. Doody said this point had been raised earlier in the process, but had "gotten lost" during the crafting of the bylaw.

Leahy also expressed concern that the requirement that any array be on a paved road might be circumvented by a developer paving a dirt road after the fact.

There was a good deal of discussion of the so-called "Dover Amendment," part of a Massachusetts General Law that "prohibits or unreasonably regulates the installation of solar energy systems... except where necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare." Planning board members argued that virtually all the prohibitions and regulation in the bylaw could be justified to conform to the criteria in the amendment.

The planning board will meet on Monday, and may vote at that meeting to approve the bylaw, with some revisions based on input at the hearing. If approved, it would then go to the selectboard to be placed on the warrant for the June 4 annual town meeting.



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

School Well Will First Be Checked for Cracks

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard started their May 4 meeting just over an hour early so they could meet with two members of the New Salem selectboard, Hugh Mackey and Carl Seppala, to discuss the state's administrative consent order (ACO) concerning PFAS in the water at Swift River School, and the plan for eliminating it.

New Salem board of health chair Jenny Potee and health agent Timothy Newton, Swift River principal Kelley Sullivan and maintenance supervisor Eric Shufelt, Union 28 operations director of operations Caitlin Sheridan, Jared Whitney and Adam Bergeron of water testing firm WhiteWater Associates, and Wendell finance committee chair Doug Tanner also joined the meeting.

The ACO requires the two towns to submit a plan for providing clean drinking water at the school to the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) within 60 days of signing it.

Wendell selectboard member Dan Keller said he had spoken with MassDEP western region drinking water chief Deirdre Doherty, and relayed that what she requires is only an orderly movement toward a solution.

Newton said MassDEP had already accepted a plan for a filtration system, but Tanner said that evidence points to infiltration of surface water, which can be addressed by putting a camera down into the well to look for flaws in the casing or in the joint between the casing and bedrock.

An earlier problem with sodium in the well was cured when the New Salem road crew stopped using salt in the parking lot, and Tanner pointed to the parking lot or possibly the boiler room as a possible source of the PFAS. The well is under the school's boiler room. Shufelt said cleaning supplies were ruled out as the source of PFAS.

Newton said the well company Henshaw estimated the cost for sinking a camera into a well to be \$6,800.

Potee said the school did not choose to check the well in 2017, when the estimate was half that. Later she brought up residents' concerns about what would be done with the water taken from the well for the camera work.

Whitney said said there are four parts for the long-term corrective action plan: analyzing the feasibility of alternatives analysis; determining their effectiveness; estimating their cost; and scheduling the implementation. He said the towns' plan needs a professional engineer's stamp.

Tanner said Wendell's fin com is firmly committed to a long-term solution, and does not consider filtration to be one. The school building is worth \$4 million, he said, and keeping it supplied with good water is worth some expense. Later in the meeting, Tanner said ARPA money is earmarked for this project and that New Salem, the lead town, should spend that money first.

Newton agreed to connect with engineering firm Tighe & Bond to develop a plan and a method, first to check the well for infiltration and then patch it if possible. The camera work is relatively inexpensive. If leaks are not found or cannot be patched, Tighe & Bond can then oversee siting a new well.

A neighbor has offered an easement for a new well on his property, but he needs to be made aware that requirements for a public water source are more stringent than for a home well. The one private well in the neighborhood that has been tested came out negative for PFAS.

The two boards agreed to continue meeting together.

Other Business

Before the joint meeting, the Wendell selectboard voted unanimously to elect Laurie DiDonato as chair.

DiDonato is still working with Robert Heller to sort out and close out as many Verizon phone lines as possible, then have telephones connected through Ooma and the fiber-optic network. She said the town has been paying for Ooma service since Whip City sent the equipment here, but she hopes we can

The selectboard continues to move toward making the town website the official posting place for meetings. Committee chairs may send agendas to town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad, who can transfer them to the website, or with some instruction, chairs can put them directly onto the website.

Keller said there are people in town who do not use the internet, and that ease of use is not the relevant criterion.

DiDonato suggested a soft start, using the website for postings while committee chairs learn how to use it, but keeping the board outside the office building as the official posting site.

Budine reported back with estimates from Zero Tolerance for insect and mouse abatement in town buildings. The first mouse treatment involves a box with botanical ingredients that cause the mice to become euphoric, then go outside and bury themselves. The box stays put, but the ingredients need replenishing every three months.

At the town hall and at the office building the first treatment would cost \$175 each, followed by \$99 treatments at three-month interval. The senior center's first treatment costs \$100, and its three-month treatments \$44. The library has already had its first treatment.

No vote was taken on the matter. Village Neighbors (VN), a community organization that coordinates help for seniors so they can stay in their homes, asked to use the town common Saturday July 23, with a rain date of July 24. The board consented. VN will need access to the town hall for the bathrooms.



LEVERETT from page A1

in other towns, public facilities managers also oversee projects happening at schools.

"It just makes sense, from an oversight and assets perspective, that the town's assets not be divided in a certain way," Tew told the board. "We thought it would be best to... have this conversation here about how these responsibilities get delegated and what makes sense."

Ruiz requested regular communication between town facilities manager Will Stratford and school custodial staff, but selectboard member Tom Hankinson said Stratford is not in a position to take on any new responsibilities.

"This is a practical issue, and I have a practical answer for you," Hankinson said. "He was hired for seven hours a week, and his thoughts are that on average this would double the number of hours per week he would work. Quite frankly, he's unwilling to do that."

Hankinson suggested the school advertise for a position to fill the role of a facilities consultant, but selectboard member Melissa Colbert said other solutions should be explored first. "I see a lot of room between doing nothing, and doing that," she said.

"I just want him to collaborate with my custodial staff," Ruiz said. "If there was regular communication happening, an ongoing conversation, it would be a lot easier when something were to come up like the sprinkler."

School staff and selectboard members agreed to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

Elder Care Survey

The town Council on Aging is engaged in a survey of the needs of Leverett's aging population. Leverett residents Tim Shores and Jya Plavin, through their business Town Common Research, are helping the Council conduct the assessment, which focuses on residents 50 years old and older. "This is going to be something that can inform future projects, but also really strengthen the ability to get funding and apply for grants," Plavin told the board.

The team has been conducting interviews and surveys, and will compile a report of their findings. The project is in partnership with LifePath, a nonprofit specializing in home-based elder and disability care, and funded by a grant from the state Department of Revenue.

"Having that body of evidence is a good organizing tool," said Shores, a planning board member. "It gets us closer to the community ourselves as people who live here. To be able to do this work it just feels like we're helping to build things up." He told the Reporter the survey had garnered about 280 responses, and that the completed study could also help guide other town committees towards new initiatives and projects.

Town officials and LifePath representatives met on April 27 to dis-

cuss the preliminary results, which show that the most pressing issues for seniors in town are access to services, and seniors' reluctance to ask for help.

They heard that professional caregivers struggle to meet Leverett residents living in remote areas, services offered can be complex, and that there appears to be an overreliance on police and first responders for issues better served by a volunteer group such as Village Neighbors, or by LifePath's professional services.

Shores said the final report should be complete by the end of July.

"The research will ultimately lead to a comprehensive needs assessment," Colbert said, "looking at both needs and assets, and guidance on how to create and support sustainable, relevant infrastructure and elder services in the Leverett community."

Other Business

Diane Crowe and Apple Ahearn of the town's recreation committee addressed the selectboard and suggested their committee be dissolved. They cited a number of organizations, public and private, organizing the kind of events the rec committee used to do, and a recent failure to recruit any new members or build an expensive new pavillion.

"I'm having a hard time accepting your resignation," Hankinson said. The discussion was continued until a later meeting.

Selectboard members approved a contract for \$11,000 during FY'23, a sum already approved by town meeting, to monitor three wells in the Teawaddle Hill neighborhood where groundwater is believed to be contaminated by a capped townowned landfill.

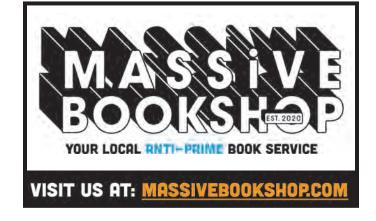
Newly elected selectboard member Patricia Duffy, whose home was one of several in the neighborhood connected to the Amherst drinking water system last year, noted the steep cost. "I would think just connecting them [to the water line] would be the cost of one round of testing," she said.

The library department requested a reserve transfer of \$2,000 to help pay for electric bills. The board approved the amount, after some discussion of whether the building's geothermal system is working properly, and planning board member Richard Nathhorst suggested the library seek advice from a consultant.

Attendees spent some time discussing how to continue to fund and implement childcare services at town meeting, identified last year as a priority for the town. "This is reducing barriers to voting," said Duffy, citing a recommendation of the social justice committee. "The more voters we get, the better."

The selectboard agreed to pay Jacob Laney \$75 to draft a manual on how to organize these services. Tew reported that over \$300 had been raised from the public to support the effort, which could cost between \$120 and \$160 per meeting.

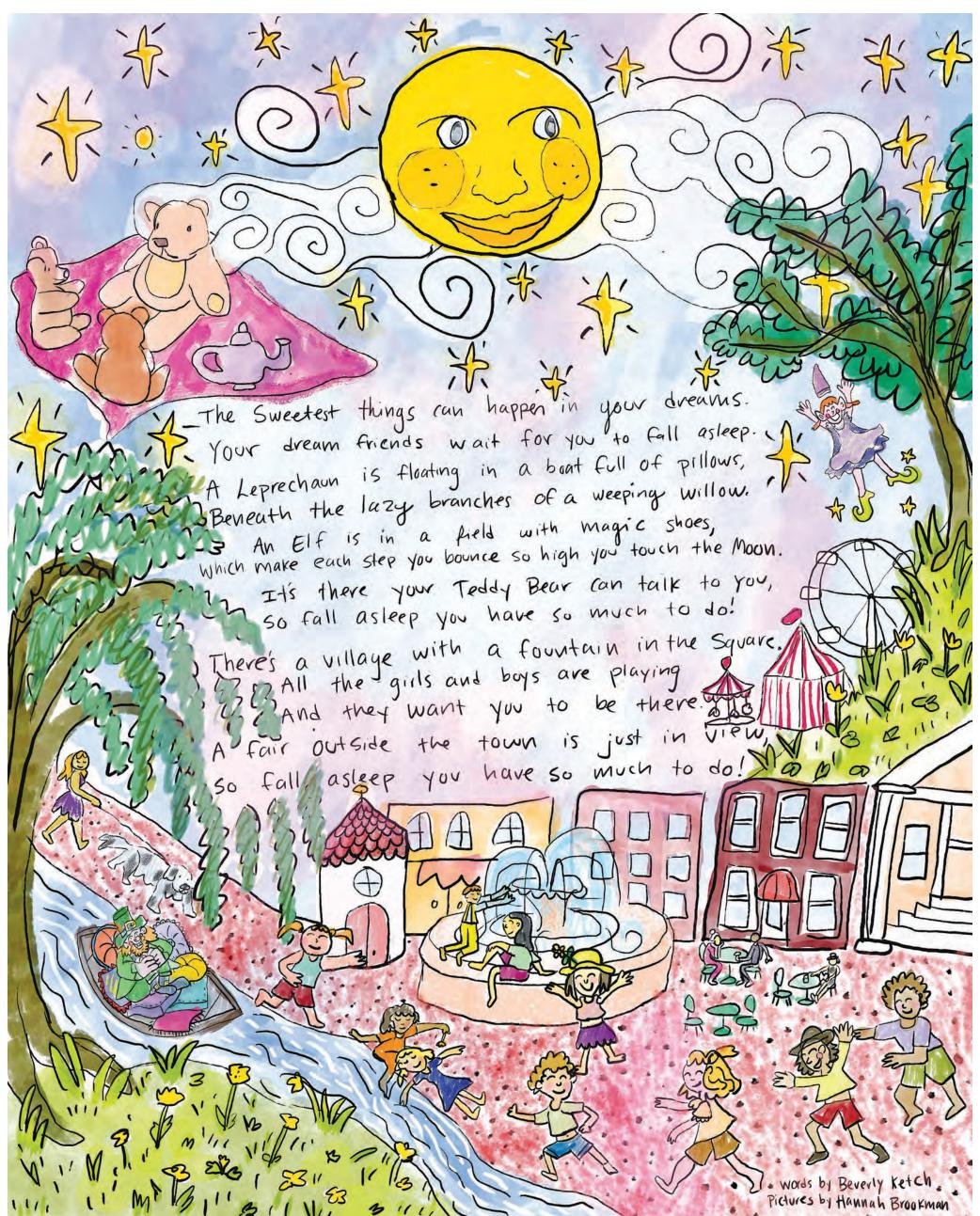
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MONTAGUE from page A1

public health policy implications of the latest spike in COVID-19 cases, and did not discuss the topic. The federal Centers For Disease Control and Prevention has recently rated Franklin County "high risk" for contracting the virus, and the Greenfield health board on Monday "recommended" wearing masks indoors at public places.

COVID-19 did appear on the agenda of the most recent Montague health board meeting on April 21, although a number of residents asked why the board had not advised town officials on the decision to hold the annual town meeting indoors.

Monday's meeting continued with a discussion of Montague's application to opt out of statewide aerial mosquito spraying for the second year in a row. Wasiuk said that the latest application form requires a town to plan three educational and outreach activities. In addition, a "certified vote at a public meeting and public comment" is required on the application, which is due to the state by May 27.

Wasiuk discussed the requirement for source reduction, including the elimination of standing water at both public and private locations and ditch and culvert cleaning, which will be done by the public works department.

Selectboard member Matt Lord, who also serves on the planning board, suggested coordinating with the conservation commission to address mosquito control without violating the Wetlands Protection Act.

"No one is a fan of spraying," said selectboard member Chris Boutwell, "so we need to do all we can to reduce mosquitoes." The selectboard approved the health department's opt-out application.

The board then approved an application to the state Department of Public Health for an "excellence grant" for shared services. Zamojski explained that the grant would fund the program currently providing a contact-tracing nurse and epidemiologist to four towns in the region. The additional grant would cover a health agent to "assist" six towns – Montague, Greenfield, Leverett, Shutesbury, Sunderland, and Deerfield - "when the schedule is very busy, Daniel is out sick," or someone is needed in the office. Zamojski said the person would "move around to the different towns."

Zamoisky added that the health department would be looking at more shared services with future state public health legislation. In response to a question from Kuklewicz, she clarified that the program would be implemented through the Greenfield health department, not the Franklin Regional Council on Governments.

In response to a question about an announcement of a "pooper scooper" initiative featuring the name of a candidate for the board of health on health department documents, town clerk Deb Bourbeau said she had contacted the state Elections Division, and informed the health department that the candidate's name needed to be removed from any pre-election announcements. (See article, Page A1.)

"This is the first Melanie and I have heard about this," said Nelson, who asked Bourbeau to forward him any information she had on the issue.

Festivals & Fluids

In other springtime news, parks and rec director Jon Dobosz requested that the board execute a \$1,500 grant from the state Cultural Council for a festival on June 11 at the "lower end" of Second Street next to Unity Park. Dobosz said there would be music and a "makers market" at the festival, which is co-sponsored by RiverCulture and Nova Motorcycles. The board executed the grant.

Dobosz announced that the Unity Park ballfields would be dedicated to Turners Falls resident George Bush at an event at noon on May 21. He explained that Mr. Bush had been the town playground director in the '50s and '60s, and a "presence" at sports events.

A request for the use of Peskompskut Park for Montague Community Band concerts in June and July was approved by the board, as was the use of the Montague Center common for the traditional Memorial Day celebration, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 29.

Town administrator Steve Ellis reported on another springtime event, discovery of a hydraulic fluid leak

from the Turners Falls dam into the Connecticut River in early April. Ellis said the town had originally been told of a leak in December but was not notified of the February leak in the dam, which is owned by FirstLight Power.

The letter from remediation contractors Tighe & Bond stated that a "yellow staining" had been observed on the ice near the hydraulic system on February 23, and that FirstLight had managed to notify the state Department of Environmental Protection of the problem on February 22. The letter, which refers to an "Immediate Response Action Plan" to address the leak, was dated April 22.

"Now that this has happened once," said Kuklewicz, "they should have more of an immediate remediation or emergency plan together."

Planning & Development

The board approved a \$1,700 change order for work on the Avenue A Streetscape project in front of the Shea Theater. Kuklewicz said the construction company, H.M. Nunes and Sons Construction, had executed the project at a "fantastic pace."

At the request of town planner Walter Ramsey, the board added \$100,000 to the contract for the Fifth Street pedestrian bridge to restore previously cut oversight hours, and approved a change order for construction of \$13,125 to monitor the canal wall using a tilt meter.

In response to a question from Lord, Ramsey said that the town was waiting for an "updated schedule" for completing the bridge project. He also said the road from Greenfield over the White Bridge would rarely be closed during construction, and residents would be given advanced notice when it was.

Ellis announced that Montague's representatives in the legislature had managed to insert in the state budget a \$50,000 "set-aside" for roof work on the Shea Theater and town hall. He also said that state senator Joanne Comerford was trying to insert funding in the budget to offset the cost of the new generator at the wastewater plant, and that the legislators would work to insert \$5.5 million into an economic development bill for funding the partial demolition of the former Strathmore Mill complex, though he called the last earmark "a long shot."

The board executed five federal grants for the Turners Falls Airport. Their purposes ranged from a study of the recently purchased Pioneer Aviation property, to funding "overages" in the cost of the facility's solar array, to purchasing a John Deere vehicle for plowing and mowing.

Ellis reviewed the complexities of applying to the state clean water revolving loan fund, which the town may use to help finance work on its combined sewer overflow system.

Other Business

A "follow up" discussion about the recent annual town meeting led to a question, raised during that meeting meeting, about how to review the town's progress on implementing the recommendations of the police advisory committees last year.

Ariel Elan, who facilitated one of the committees, suggested the recommendations may never have been finalized, some were being implemented, and there had been a "pause" in the process until the coming summer. Ellis recommended putting the issue on a future agenda.

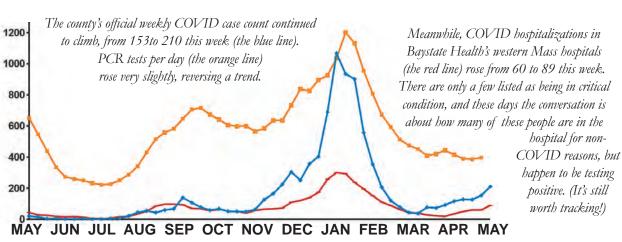
Ellis was also asked about concerns that town counsel believed that the state attorney general's office might not approve the demolition delay bylaw as passed at the town meeting. Ellis said he had spoken to Ramsey, who had worked on the bylaw, and they were not aware that counsel had expressed those concerns.

Ellis reviewed the results of a national legal settlement with companies that produced products containing opioids. He said that Montague is slated to receive just over \$61,000 in damages, potentially spread over 17 years, and that localities may need more guidance on how that money can be spent. .

The board appointed Easton McKay Smith and Laurie Swartout to non-union positions as part-time library assistants.

The board retired into an executive session to discuss collective bargaining strategy. The next scheduled meeting will be on May 16.







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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on merous boards. In fact, Hastings May 10, 2012: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Hastings Challenges Ward for Gill Selectboard

John Ward is seeking his second term on the Gill selectboard, but former highway superintendent Ernie Hastings has other ideas about Ward's plans.

Asked what he thinks the big issues are facing the town, Ward sites the deterioration of infrastructure, such as boilers, and, most immediately, roofs. The roof on the town hall needs to be replaced this year, for the most immediate example; roof tiles above the selectboard table on the second floor collapsed recently after being soaked with dripping rain.

Ward feels he brings to the board a different point of view from each of the other selectboard members, but the three work together well to find consensus. He described himself as one who likes to get things done. In his first term on the selectboard, he has seen significant progress made in reducing municipal energy use and the amount of money the town spends on energy.

Ernest "Ernie" Hastings, the challenger in this election, traces his family back five generations in Gill, and believes he can bring a sense of the history of Gill to the board - something he feels is lacking at the moment. Hastings said several people have asked him to run for the position.

Hastings has been active in Gill since 1963, and has served on nuis still serving as the town tree warden. He was also superintendent of the highway department for 25 years.

He believes the big challenge facing Gill now is the continuous increase in the cost of operations; how to maintain town services and stability in a zero-growth situation.

Erving Approves School Budget

The Erving annual town meeting on Wednesday, May 9, passed every warrant article, including the Erving Elementary School FY'13 budget of \$2,411,531, a 13% increase over FY'12.

The finance committee offered an amendment to hold the school's budget to a 5% increase. Finance committee member Daniel Hammock contrasted the per pupil expenditure at EES, which the finance committee calculated at between \$14,600 and \$19,000, with much lower per pupil expenditures in Orange, Petersham, and Florida – approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000, according to Hammock.

But school committee chair Jarod Boissonneault told the meeting the increase was needed to fund a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, and special education teachers to meet needs that have been present at the school for a long time. The finance committee amendment failed, by a vote of 23 for holding the increase to 5% and 50 against. The higher budget amount proposed by the school committee was then approved by majority voice vote.



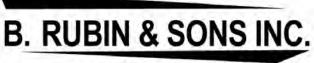


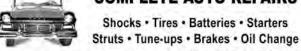


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STAFF from page A1

this – the timing is concurrent with the election."

After the cards arrived at town hall on Monday, Bourbeau said, she spoke with William Campbell, the director of the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance, who agreed with her assessment and warned her that Wasiuk could be "personally fined" for approving the use of town resources for the mailer.

At that point, the health department staff agreed to postpone mailing the postcards until after the election, and both Stuart and Bourbeau requested that the Reporter remove Burek's name from the PSA.

"We're adhering to that – we don't want to cause any problems," said Wasiuk, though he said he has yet to be shown any law explaining why such a mailer was prohibited.

Four Candidates

Like McNamara and Burek, Rachel Stoler's name is on next Tuesday's ballot for the board seat.

"Obviously, that's totally inappropriate what the health department did," said Stoler, who read about the suspension of the mailer in Tuesday's Greenfield Recorder. "I looked up what the responsibility of an animal inspector is, and it has nothing to do with dogs."

Stoler said that she won't "dwell" on the mailer after the election: "There's no reason to hold a grudge," she said. "People support different candidates all the time, that's totally normal."

Stoler, who lives on the Hill in Turners Falls, manages the Communities That Care Coalition, a group fiscally sponsored by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) that focuses on youth health outcomes.

"The board of health has to deal with a lot of nuts-and-bolts things like mosquito control, dog poop, and inspections," she continued. "What I also bring to the conversation is broadening the conversation about, what is community health? That doesn't necessarily mean regulations and legislation – it's how do you get information around with our collaborators, which are the other offices in town hall, organizations around the town, the schools – anybody who is actively participating in town life."

On Wednesday afternoon Stoler and McNamara met each other for the first time, campaigning at the farmers market in Peskeumskut ministrator] Steve Ellis, and they Park. The rivals discussed at least see themselves as under siege," one shared concern: the number of Levenson said of her interactions

newly redistricted downtown residents from Precinct 5 to Precinct 4, who must now find a way to get to the Franklin County Technical School to vote next Tuesday.

Besides the downtown hygiene issues she has made her bread and butter - enforcement of the pooper-scooper statute, convincing the highway department to leave public trash cans downtown through the winter - McNamara criticized the department for not communicating proactively with the public about COVID-19 upticks, and singled out Wasiuk's inspection practices.

"There was a time I had with him trying to do an inspection on rodents," she said, "and he used the excuse of COVID.... When he does get there, they're poor inspections. He won't go into a basement. If you open a cabinet up, he will look inside, but he won't do it willingly."

"There's word around town that the board of health does nothing," Burek told the Reporter. "The board of health does a lot of stuff – people aren't giving them credit for that."

If elected, Burek said, she is interested in using "whatever capacity the board of health has in their power" to meet people's needs, while continuing in her role as the town's animal inspector.

Burek also condemned the Recorder article. "They don't want me to be on [the board], whoever put that article in there," she said. "They should not have put that article in the paper."

"I am a newcomer to politics and a relatively recent addition to Montague, but I'm also a physician with a professional background that would be relevant to helping shape the future of public health for Montague," the fourth candidate, Catherine Dodds, wrote when asked for comment on the latest developments in the race.

"And perhaps being a newcomer and outsider is a good thing, when the existing government figures are so interconnected that they don't even see the conflict of interest noted in the [Recorder article]."

Taking Over?

One local resident who contacted the Reporter about the race, Marje Levenson, said Stuart asked her if she knew anyone interested in putting up Burek's lawn signs. "They believe that the board of health has been micromanaged by [town adwith Stuart and Wasiuk.

Levenson also shared the following message about Burek, which she says Stuart sent her in early April: "We are trying to avoid a for [sic] FRCOG sweep on the board. She is currently are [sic] animal and barn inspector and does a wonderful job and has helped us out on many occasions because I was not running again so we need somebody fair and it's not in Steve's pocket."

Asked whether that message was written by him, Cummings clarified to the Reporter that it was not. Stuart declined to comment at all Wednesday as to her involvement in Burek's campaign, and we have been unable to confirm its origins.

"Nobody asked me to run for the Montague health department for any FRCOG purpose," Stoler said. "I have any power or any any power conferred on me by FRCOG - they just happen to pay my paycheck, they're the fiscal agent for our coalition." Stoler said she was inspired to run for the board of health by a colleague from Belchertown. "She told me about her responsibilities, and it sounded interesting," she said. "At the time, I still had kids in school... This year was really the time that worked for me."

"I've never heard of FRCOG before, and now I'm hearing all about it," Burek told the Reporter on Wednesday. "It's trying to take over all the boards of health in all the smaller towns."

Burek said that the other two members of the board, Mike Nelson and Melanie Zamojski, were FRCOG members. "I think that the board of health should govern themselves - I don't think a government thing should step in," she said.

Nelson, who works for the state Department of Public Health, said that his only involvement with FR-COG was when he was formerly on the town selectboard, and served as Montague's alternate representative to the FRCOG council.

Zamojski said she stopped doing any work as a contact tracer under the organization's Cooperative Public Health Service last October, and now only works as a nurse educator at Greenfield Community College.

The election will be held from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. next Tuesday, May 17, and the next board of health meeting on May 18. During our reporting, Bourbeau said the new member will be effective upon election, and Cummings

said his term extends through June.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Attention: Dog Owners and Dog Lovers

needs your help.

As being a responsible dog owner that we know you are; the respectful thing to do is to please scoop your dog's poop.

We strive to keep Montague a healthy & safe environment for all... Please join us in solving this

The Montague Board of Health growing problem in our town.

We are installing some poop stations around town so please use and dispose of your animal's waste responsibly. We thank you for working with us to help keep our town clean!

Montague Board of Health Staff

GILL from page A1

been agreed to by all ambulance services in the county – or having towns contract directly with the companies.

"I have been talking to [town administrator] Ray [Purington] about the possibility of getting charged," fire chief Gene Beaubien told the selectboard, "because we do not have any formal contract with American Medical Response [AMR] yet."

Beaubien referenced a spreadsheet he created showing the town's emergency service calls from 2001 to 2022. "In 2001 we had the ambulance come to town 91 times," he explained. "In 2022 we had the ambulance come to town 133 times." In the intervening years, he said, "you can see the numbers steadily go up and down."

Beaubien said AMR is "leaning towards charging" the town for calls, and that the company agreed to provide the town with a quote in a few weeks.

"I guess we will wait to see what kind of contract they can come up with," said selectboard chair Greg Snedeker.

"I know Northfield [EMS] is looking at a big emergency service building," said selectboard member Randy Crochier. "I do not necessarily want to be paying for part of that – if anyone wants to change where they are, I don't want to pay for that. But I do not mind paying for service."

"Is this for service if [patients] do not have insurance?" asked board member Charles Garbiel of the proposed \$350 charge.

"If you take the ride," Crochier answered.

Crochier expressed his discontent with the idea that if someone refuses transport by ambulance, the town would still be charged the fee. "Why should the town be on the hook for a \$350 charge?" he asked.

"It is messy," said Snedeker. "This does not sit well with me either.'

Crochier asked Beaubien what he knew about the WMEMS. "It just

feels really weird," he said. "It is quasi-public, quasi-private... I don't know anything about them."

Beaubien said that the group formed "years ago," and is mostly composed of "ambulance directors, and a chief whose town does not have an ambulance service." He added that AMR, as well as an emergency medical doctor from Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, attends its meetings.

"It is too much of a mix of private and public, and it is just ugly and dirty, and I think it has been mishandled," Crochier continued. "I guess it just comes down to do we need an ambulance service, and who do we want."

Purington said he would contact ambulance service companies and report back to the board. Beaubien reported that in 2021, Northfield EMS responded 20 times to Gill. while the Turners Falls ambulance responded 15 times, though Turners does not offer advanced life support.

Other Business

A Clean Sweep bulky waste recycling day will be held this Saturday, May 14 at 9 a.m. Purington said the closest waste collection site for the town is the Northfield highway garage, located on 49 Caldwell Road off Mount Hermon Station Road (Route 142). More information can be found on the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District website.

The historical commission will host Peter Mars, a Robert Darr Wert historian and collector of Wert's Country Prints art, for a presentation on Saturday, May 21 from 1 to 3 p.m. on the second floor of the town hall.

The memorial committee invites all who wish to attend Memorial Day services on Sunday, May 29, at 9:30 a.m. The service will be held at the First Congregational Church and will proceed to the Veteran's Monuments next to the Slate Memorial Library on Cen-



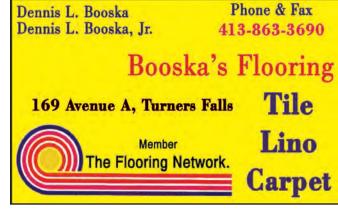
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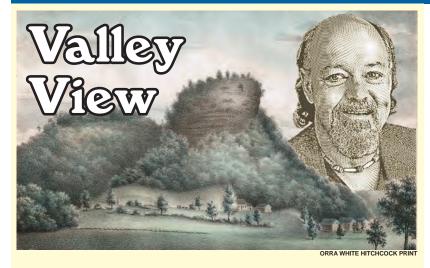


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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – Through observation and many close encounters during four years of retirement, I have gained new insight into the behavior of neighborhood whitetail deer, always lurking on the edges.

Although I no longer hunt deer, I have learned from my own interactions why farmers and trappers who often encountered deer on their daily rounds tended to be the best hunters. They understood their prey, shared their place with them, and thus had an uncanny ability to predict their movements, even after they ran off.

The number-one factor that's changed for me in recent years is timing. Back when I was an editor building sports pages for the daily newspaper, I was getting home after midnight and started my day around 8 a.m. By that time, the neighborhood is awake and active. Now, up with the first twinkle of dawn, I'm out the door for a walk before the sun peeks through the eastern horizon. When touring tree-lined hayfields at that early hour, I often intercept deer feeding before retiring to their brushy morning beds.

Also contributing to increased encounters is walking alone, without the dogs that typically accompanied me on my rambles during at least 60 years of existence dating back to my South Deerfield boyhood. Back then, mongrels Buffer or Ginger would scamper out in front and circle around me, investigating this scent and that. In adulthood, my four-legged companions were high-energy flush-and-retrieve gun dogs, starting with black Lab Sara and progressing to springer spaniels Pepper and Ringo, Lily and Chubby, to name the best. All of them roused for me many a wildlife sighting over the years.

By romping in wide quarters around me to investigate every alluring scent, my bird dogs would jump deer before I got near them. So, I only got glimpses – a white tail-flash here, heavy, invisible rustling of leaves there, but rarely face-to-face encounters.

Not so these days, alone and quiet, no shrill sound of the staghorn whistle hanging from a lanyard or loud vocal commands to telegraph my presence. As a result, I get right on top of deer, which typically freeze like Roman statues to stare me down before fleeing. Even then, they don't seem all that threatened by me.

That is not to say I had never before been close to deer. My preferred hunting method was to find a good stand where I could conceal myself and wait along well-traveled runs connecting feeding and bedding areas. I'd sit there quiet and still, early and late, waiting for deer to pass within range on their daily travels. Though it was rare, I had over the years been close enough to spit on occasional deer passing my stands. No lie. They'd get that close, totally unaware of my camouflaged presence - a head net covering my face while I rested comfortably against a large tree trunk, outcropping of ledge, or stone wall tall enough to cover my profile.

Hunting-season sightings were different, though. Once the shooting starts, deer know they're being pursued and become more cautious than those I bump into these days. Under my current conditions, the whitetails seem more relaxed and less alarmed by me, so much so that they don't alter their desired path to destination. Sometimes they run back into the woods, wait briefly for me to pass, and continue on their merry way across the open hayfield, stopping short of a narrow finger of trees following a spring brook. There, from the edge of that thin tree line, they watch from afar as I circle them. Other times they run right out in front of me, boldly continuing across the open field and stopping just short of the little brook.

Most often it's a group of five two mature does and three yearlings - but there is also a group of three larger animals and one solitary traveler I see less frequently. That one, feeding on clover in the open field one morning, saw me coming from far away, froze as I approached, and finally trotted off, disappearing into a thin alder row lining the same brook south of the previously mentioned observation site.

Headed west, I passed a long, narrow pile of manure and crossed the brook on a farm-road leading to a John Deere hay tedder resting on the finger's western edge.

see VALLEY VIEW page B6



GREENFIELD – Mmmmm, do I have a treat for you! Special Processed American Meat, it's deeee-licious! You may know it as SPAM®, the brand in the rectangular blue tin of canned, cooked "chopped pork and ham" created and marketed by Hormel Foods with a tagline of "cold or hot... Spam hits the spot."

The name Spam was created by Kenneth Daigneau, the brother of a VP at Hormel, who won \$100 for coming up with it. Makes you wonder what the other submissions were. Some believe the name comes from "spiced ham," but even that's too exotic for what it really is, a cut of pork shoulder that didn't sell well to the general public, which then became the primary ingredient.

Introduced in 1937, Spam quickly became a source of protein for troops during WWII with the military purchasing more than 150 million pounds of it for canned rations. It was durable and an easily transportable source of protein and, most importantly, did not require refrigeration, which gave it a competitive advantage. In an inventive twist, soldiers would use the grease from Spam to lubricate their guns and waterproof their boots.

In a Smithsonian article from July 5, 2017, the story of Spam's mete-



Above: Gill highway superintendent John Miner operates a grader during annual maintenance on Ben Hale Road.

Brown sugar and maple syrup brushed onto julienne-sliced SPAM, to be baked and caramelized for SPAM-dy candy.

oric rise from war ration to kitchen humorous in its advertising camered "one of the greatest business success stories of all time" with over eight billion cans sold in 44 countries, and it is as recognizable an American brand as Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and Pizza Hut.

Its success has been attributed to American ingenuity and resourcefulness. Hormel was creative and

staple is detailed. Spam is consid- paign and positioned itself as a patriotic, if eccentric, American food. In fact, a group of female WWII veterans formed a musical troupe and traveled the US performing songs and promoting Spam while also starring on radio shows across several national networks.

> Postwar housewives used it as a see **HEARTFELT** page B2

EXHIBIT

'Cleenckle' All the Way



Shelburne Historical Society's newest curator Urso H.H. Blackburn, at right, confers with a Society member working the treat table at Sunday's tea event.

By CHARLOTTE MURTISHAW

SHELBURNE FALLS - Sun-

day's Mothers Day Sweetheart Tea, staged annually by the Shelburne Historical Society, was full of sounds both archaic and timeless: the gentle clinking of little spoons

on porcelain; the indistinct murmur of background chatter in a halffull room; the melodic lilt of harp strings; the unmistakable brrrng of a vintage telephone bell as imitated by a patron's iPhone.

Announcing the one o'clock tea service, SHS curator Reba-Jean Shaw-Pichette noted to the assembled crowd that they could "actually ask for one lump [of sugar] or two, which itself is rather an archaic sound."

The focus on sound in the small local museum on Severance Street was a new feature at this year's tea, largely thanks to the historical society's newest curator, Urso H.H. Blackburn, who was honored in a ceremony directly preceding the Sweetheart Tea. As it takes shape, Blackburn's exhibit "Cleenckle Cleenckle: Extinct Household Sounds" will capture and preserve the sounds of objects housed by the historical society's museum.

"We don't really think about what the past sounds like," Blackburn explained. "All the exhibits are just silent, showing what it looked like. And we don't [really] get to see what it looks like [in context]; it's just in a glass case that says do not touch."

While many of the historical objects are too fragile to be handled by visitors, Blackburn aims to expand

see CLEENCKLE page B4

Pet of Week



"CHRIS P. BACON"

"Yawwwwn – you woke me up!" Hamsters are nocturnal, which means that we love to sleep during the day and play at night.

Hamsters have poor eyesight and are easily startled. When startled they may nip, so take it slow when picking them up. They are solitary animals and like to live alone. Hamsters enjoy spending time with people, though.

They eat fresh grains, nuts, veg-

gies, and fruits every two to three days, in addition to plain old hamster food from the pet store.

Interested in adopting? The hamster adoption fee is \$17. Animals at Dakin are available only in Springfield currently. Contact adoption staff at *springfield @dakinhumane.org* and include your name and phone number. For more information, call (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

Senior Center Activities MAY 16 THROUGH 20

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. Foot Care Clinic is held monthly. For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 2, 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. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For more information please call 863-9357.

Monday 5/16

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga in the Park
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Knitting &
Needlecrafts Circle

Needlecrafts Circle

Tuesday 5/17

Closed for Town Election 10 a.m. Tuesday Morning Knitters **Wednesday 5/18**

9 a.m. Veterans' Agent Hours 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise 11:45 a.m. Friends of the Senior

12 p.m. BYO Lunch to Bingo 1:30 p.m. Parking Lot Pantry 4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 5/19

1 p.m. Cards & Games 5 p.m. Meditation for Seniors (pre-register)

Friday 5/20

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.

Brown Bag lunch is the first Thursday of each month. Veterans Services the first Wednesday of each month. Erving van services available: Must call 24 hours in advance for a ride to any scheduled appointment. For more information, please call (413) 423-3649.

Monday 5/16

9 a.m. Interval 10:15 a.m. Stretch & Infusion Tuesday 5/17 9 a.m. Good for U 10 a.m. Line Dancing Wednesday 5/18

9 a.m. Cardio Low Impact 10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics 11:30 a.m. Bingo

Thursday 5/19

9 a.m. Core & Balance 10 a.m. Barre Fusion

HEARTFELT from page B1

breakfast and lunch meat, and the 1940s saw the first Spam recipe book with submissions coming from Spam fans. There has since been a Spamarama cooking festival (defunct since 2007), a Spam museum in downtown Austin, Minnesota (now offering virtual tours at www. spam.com), a Spam recipe contest (an annual tradition at county fairs known as the Great American SPAM Championship), and a Spam-sponsored NASCAR race car.

There's also the Monty Python Broadway production of *Spamalot*, a "gaudy climax of a long, unfunny tradition of post-Python exploitation," according to writer and member Eric Idle. It's basically a parody of the Arthurian legend and the search for the Holy Grail.

In the show, the word "Spam" was sung repeatedly by a group of Spam-loving Vikings in a restaurant. The word eventually evolved to become a part of western pop culture, taken to mean something that keeps repeating to great annoyance, such as junk mail and robo-calls.

Introduced to many other cultures around the world, Spam now finds its largest consumers in the Philippines where it is considered a staple. I found different accounts of where it's consumed the most, but the top places listed are Guam, the Philippines, South Korea, and the United States, especially Hawai'i, where even McDonald's offers Spam-based products. In some countries it's considered a welcome holiday or housewarming gift to bring a sixer of Spam.

Some popular Spam dishes include Spamsilog, a Filipino breakfast favorite served up with fried rice and a sunny-side up egg, and the ubiquitous *musubi*, featured in my last column, consisting of fried Spam atop a cake of rice, wrapped in seaweed. Musubi is available just about everywhere in Hawai'i, eaten for lunch or as a quick snack, much like a hot dog from America's convenience stores.

(Can I just interject here that several people I met in Hawai'i call the rest of the United States "America," as though they don't consider themselves part of the same country? I find that very interesting. And now, back to Spam.)

In the mainland US, a few eateries have put Spam on the menu. The *Smithsonian* article includes examples of Spam fried rice with *uni* (sea urchin) and mushrooms, served in San Francisco; *foie gras* with Spam at a Los Angeles eatery; and finally, Spam *agnolotti* with burgundy truffles, served in a New York restaurant. One challenger on the TV series *Top Chef* even used Spam in a culinary challenge.

I only discovered on my trip to Hawai'i that Spam comes in many different flavors, although not all are available in all countries. I did manage to buy a can of Teriyaki Spam in Hilo to bring home. It's an interesting combination of salty and sweet, and by that, I mean so salty it probably has an entire week's serving of sodium in each can. The sweet was provided by what they thought was Teriyaki but was more like, well, nothing I can actually name.

Other Spam flavors include bacon, jalapeno, Portuguese sausage seasoning, chorizo, hickory smoke, garlic, oven-roasted turkey, breaded patties, Filipino tocino seasoning, and Puerto Rican *mezclita*, a spreadable pork and cheese product. The weirdest I found of all the offerings were the Spam fries, described



Above: SPAM-dy, pictured in all its chocolate-covered glory, soon to be consumed by the author and her wife.

Right: The author's wife is clearly underwhelmed by this unique treat. It's a big "no" for SPAM-dy in this family!

as "fry-shaped pork fritters." And finally, Spam Lite and Less Sodium provide choices for every Spam consumer watching their sodium and fat intake.

Looking for Spam recipes? Oh, that's easy, just navigate to www. spam.com/recipes and off you go into a wonderland of strange and possibly tasty explorations into canned pork and ham. There are the basics like Spam stir fry with green beans or broccoli, or Spam served alongside various types of eggs, but have you ever considered substituting Spam for other meats in, say, fajitas, spring rolls, or chilaquiles?

Imagine a menu based on Spam for a day: for breakfast one could start with Spam baked French toast; lunch might be a hoisin-glazed Spam burger with pickled cucumbers and a Spam Cobb salad; and for dinner, creamy Spam risotto croquette or – I swear this exists – Spam meatloaf cupcakes. The imaginative combinations are endless.

Spam for dessert? Yes, there's a recipe for that called Spam-dy bars, a recipe I decided to try just because it was so bizarre. Picture this: julienne-sliced pieces of Teriyaki Spam brushed with a brown sugar-maple syrup-cinnamon mix that's baked, then dipped in chocolate, and topped with candied pecans and sea salt.

It tasted just like you'd expect, salty-sweet, caramelized meat covered in chocolate and nuts. I only got one other person to try it and they were unimpressed, as you can see by my wife's face in the photo. (Okay, yes, I ate all of it, even though it was a strange arrangement of flavors, do you think I'd let all that dark chocolate go to waste?)

I found a very thorough article on www.mashed.com about common mistakes made using Spam. The first suggestion is not to feel like you have to eat the whole can at once. Remember, it was a wartime ration, pre-cooked and loaded with sodium, which is a great preservative, but it still has to be refrigerated once opened. It can be eaten directly out of the can, but is much improved with cooking.

If you use some for a breakfast fry up or a sandwich, chop up the left-over meat later and use it in a *poké* bowl or add it to a curry sauce. You don't need to add other salty ingredients and it needs no oil to cook as it has plenty of fat to grease the pan.

The article suggests that the optimal thickness of a slice of Spam, especially for *musubi* or frying up



for sandwiches, is not paper thin as is advised for other meats, but one quarter inch thick is exactly enough to make it "the star of the show" and not shown up by the other ingredients.

With the high sodium content of Spam, you can reduce some of the saltiness by soaking it in cool or cold water, changing the water frequently, or boiling it before using it in some other way. Pairing Spam with potatoes is a winning combination as they can handle a lot of salt, and acidic foods like lemon juice and apple cider vinegar are complementary flavors to the fat.

Here's a simple Spam recipe called Spam® Fried Nice from www.spam.com, where you can find 100 things to do with Spam.

Trouble lives in Greenfield with Wifey and Mama Catt Elliott and manages the office part-time for a nearby farm. She loves to talk, read, write, garden/

talk, read, write, garden/farm, cook, and make art.

SPAM® FRIED NICE

1 12 oz. can of Spam, regular or Teriyaki, diced 2 Tbsp. oil, divided

2 eggs, beaten

1 carrot, diced

3 green onions, diced
1/4 cup fresh or thawed frozen peas
1/4 chopped bell pepper

2 cup cooked rice 3 Tbsp. soy sauce

Heat one tablespoon of the oil

in a large skillet. Add in the eggs, cook while stirring until desired doneness. Remove and set aside.

Heat the remaining oil in a skillet and add in Spam and vegetables, cooking for about four minutes until veggies are tender. Stir in rice and egg, and season with soy sauce.

Heat thoroughly and garnish with additional green onion.

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OUT OF THE PARK MAY 2022



UNITY PARK - Hello everyone, hope you are all doing well. It seems that the weather is finally taking a turn for the better this spring. It should start to get much warmer, and that means summer is on its way.

If your kids don't have any plans, may we suggest our **Summer** Camp? MPRD's summer camp is primarily an outdoor program, so it's a wonderful opportunity for your child to get some great exercise in the fresh air and make a few new friends along the way. Camp operates from June 27 through August 12, and aside from daily activities, we take weekly trips to Laurel Lake and offer special events and field trips.

Don't wait until the last minute to register. The school year will be ending soon, and you certainly want to be sure your child has someplace to go where they can stay active and have fun. Our camp is licensed through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. We operate Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with extended care available. For more information, visit www.montagueparksrec.com and click on the "Summer Camp" page.

We are also looking to fill some counselor positions, so if you know of someone 16 years of age or older who enjoys working and playing with children, have them contact

We are excited to help spon-

sor the Unity Park Festival that is scheduled for Saturday, June 11 from 2 p.m. until 10 p.m. at Unity Park and Second Street. This event will include music, food, and a "makers market" which will feature "the best local makers of useful art items to swap, sell, and demonstrate.... and where you can learn from gearheads, creators, woodworkers, and tinkerers."

We will also be hosting a Night Skate at the Unity Skate Park on June 11, where the park will be illuminated until 10 p.m. The Unity Park Festival is produced in partnership with Nova Motorcycles, Pioneer Brewery, Santo Taco, Nice. Snack Parlor, and RiverCulture, and is partially funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

And we are finalizing our film choices for the Movies in The Park series – mark your calendars for our show dates of June 17, July 8, and August 12. Movies in The Park is in partnership with RiverCulture. Check on our webpage or Facebook for announcements.

That is about it for now. We still have a bunch of additional information about the summer programs available on our webpage, so be sure to visit. If you have immediate questions, feel free to call us at (413) 863-3216. We will see you back here in June!

> Jon Dobosz is the parks and recreation director for the town of Montague.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Wheelie Kid; Grand Avenue Bear; Unity Park Fight; Barflies; Port-A-Potty Vandalism; Dirtbike Dirtbag; Crime Stories Cause Caller's Three Babies To Awaken

Monday, 5/2

found after a tractor-trail- delivered the package. damaged.

Unable to locate.

moved along.

port taken.

to speak to an officer about cer advises area is quiet. of his car had been hit playing Pokemon Go. with something and the Wednesday, 5/4 lot. Advised of options.

issues with a bear coming be taken. seeing an Amazon Prime derly conduct. package in front of the Thursday, 5/5 building near the doors. Tuesday, 5/3

5:05 p.m. Caller reporting inside her apartment.

party almost hit another officers. Investigated. at the building at Fourth lier today where she was sue trying to run him off the involved male. Street and Avenue A. No harassed by a male party the road on Unity Street. Saturday, 5/7 damage seen. Male party outside of the library. Re- While on phone, caller 8:59 a.m. Anonymous caller ferred to an officer.

and other cars are pulling uation mediated. 3:01 p.m. Caller would like up and driving away. Offi- Friday, 5/6

tague Machine. Officers left for DPW. 9:18 p.m. 911 caller from were unable to locate the 11:33 a.m. Caller states service necessary. Grand Avenue reporting males. Employee does not that he is receiving calls 9:46 a.m. Report of an that they have been having want any further action to from somebody stating injured or sick raccoon

onto the property and de- 9:13 p.m. 911 caller re- one calling him. Advised High Street area. Unable stroying things. Nothing porting that a female party of options. hours ago someone was advising they also re- other. Unable to locate. banging on her door, and ceived a 911 call for the 4:07 p.m. 911 abandoned age is being done. when she went to go look same female causing a dis- call; upon callback, female 1:31 p.m. Caller states no one was there. She now turbance. A 25-year-old states phone was in cup that somebody has damnoticed that her door is Millers Falls woman was holder and it dialed on aged the asphalt in the damaged. Officer advises he arrested and charged with its own. Caller states no First got pictures of the damage. assault and battery on a emergency; she is watch- Church parking lot on 11:56 p.m. Caller reports public employee and disor- ing a baseball game.

ed hitting him; advises he park in that lot anymore.

down to try on a coat. Re- them talking about drugs, one driving erratically. Sit- Vehicle appears secure.

is actively happening right assaulted a male party at 2:12 p.m. Caller from 12:31 p.m. Business owner now. Caller looking for Millers Pub and is caus- Fourth Street states that from Carsons Cans reportadvice on what to do. Di- ing a disturbance with the the same fancy white car ing ongoing vandalism rected to Environmental other patrons in the pub. is parked out behind the to the port-a-potties that Police and Fish & Game. Female party described building and people are they have in town. Caller 10:21 p.m. Caller from Ave- as a blonde with a back- walking up to it and ex- would like extra nighttime nue A reporting that a few pack. Shelburne Control changing things with each patrols in the Unity Park

7:23 p.m. Caller from Da- damage to the asphalt in vis Street states there has the parking lot. Greenfield Savings Bank. 2:04 p.m. East Main Street been a white pickup truck 7:26 p.m. Caller from N Officer advised of call na- building owner reporting parked in the parking Street reporting that a ture. Officer advises she that people from Apart- lot of the big school for male party on a red and checked the area and ob- ment 6 are intoxicated and the past three days, and black Honda dirtbike with served an Amazon package yelling at workers doing each night a green pick- a #31 on the front rode pushed to the side of the maintenance on the build- up backs up to the white through his yard and left ing. Female party agreed truck for a little while and marks. When the caller to be quiet and is staying then leaves. Tonight, call- asked him to clean it up, er states the green truck the party said "no." Rethat UPS delivered a pack-3:33 p.m. 911 caller states showed up and they got in ferred to an officer.

age at 11:21 this morning he was just assaulted by the white truck and left, 8:47 a.m. Caller from and it is not there. Officer a group of kids at Uni- leaving the green truck Montague City Road ad- advises that while on the ty Park; states they just behind. Operator was lovising of further damage phone with the caller, UPS came up to him and start- cated and advised not to er unit drove through the 7:12 p.m. Caller report- does have marks on his 11:41 p.m. Bar manager neighborhood. Her fence ing that while she was face. Medical attention de- from Rendezvous called and a large tree have been driving, a female driv- clined. Officer spoke with and advised he had a paer who lives in the area parents of a suspect and tron in the bar who was 11:52 a.m. Report of a man came up fast behind her advised them of the situ-causing a scene with one with a backpack on a bicy- and tried to smash into ation; they will call later of his bar employees; this cle weaving in and out of her; as that happened, the when they make contact was their third encounter traffic on Avenue A, doing caller turned onto anoth- with the juvenile. Caller at with the involved male, wheelies, causing a hazard. er street, and the female station to follow up with and each time, the involved male acted odd. Officer ad-1:10 p.m. 911 caller states car and a building. Caller 6:39 p.m. Caller states vised of call nature. Bar that a male party is outside stated that it is most likely multiple bikes were riding manager called back with throwing cans and bricks related to an incident ear- behind him causing an is- more information about

advised bikes stopped at reporting that a male party 1:15 p.m. Caller states that 9:42 p.m. Caller reporting FL Roberts. Officer spoke is cleaning a car that the while she was in the Salva- a group of three guys on with an operator of a mo- caller knows is not his, and tion Army, somebody stole the corner at Fourth Street torcycle, who stated that that seems suspicious to the her wallet after she put it and Avenue A; can hear the car operator was the caller. No one with vehicle.

Sunday, 5/8

2:15 a.m. Caller states that 5:59 a.m. Caller reports he the mother of his children threatening notes that 11:54 p.m. Car parked up came upon a deer that was has been up late tonight somebody is leaving on his against the baseball club- struck and appears to be watching and listening to truck. Advised of options. house at Sheffield Ele- injured on Mormon Hol- her crime stories and was 6:07 p.m. Caller reporting mentary School, windows low Road near the town requested several times to that on Friday he noticed down, unoccupied. Opera- line. Caller will stand by turn it down, which she that the back rear window tor was located in the field until an officer arrives to did, but she would then prevent a car from hitting turn the volume back up. the deer. Officer advises Caller indicated that the glass is broken. Vehicle 12:24 p.m. Report of three deer was dispatched; also noise has caused his three was parked on the middle males on bikes wearing reports debris in the road- babies to wake up. Caller school side of the Turners black hoodies smashing way from when a vehicle states that the female is Falls High School parking windows behind Mon- struck the deer. Message currently asleep and is not causing an issue. No police

that he, the caller, was the wandering around the to locate.

area, where the most dam-

Congregational North Street. Very minor

Montague Community Television News

In Case You Left Early

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS - MCTV was live at the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, but if you didn't catch it, or if you left early.... The whole meeting is available in three parts on the MCTV Vimeo page. And if that's not entertaining enough, do watch the Four Rivers Variety Show. Those kids are mad talented! The nose flute performance is stunning

All community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on TV and featured on Vimeo, which is linked to montaguetv.org under the tab "Videos."

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

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 infomontaguety@gmail.com.

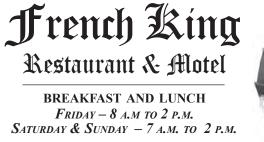
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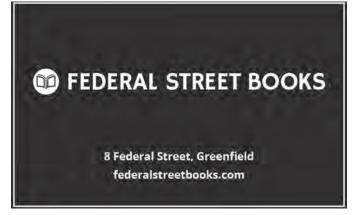
DINNER Friday & Saturday - 4:30 to 9:30 p.m.

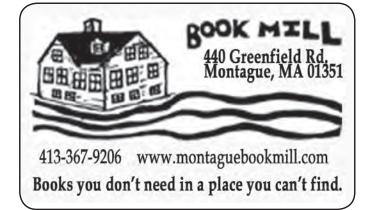
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CLEENCKLE from page B1

the range of experiences visitors can have, as well as who can engage with the exhibited objects, depending on their access needs.

Due to the curator's busy schedule - Blackburn is also a filmmaker, writer and publisher, numismatist, and full-time student – the only sounds put to tape so far are a telephone dial tone and horses' hooves. Production is expected to ramp up over the summer, with pending sounds involving objects such as an old-fashioned loom, a typewriter, and a vintage marching band drum.

Sounds are captured using a borrowed Tascam recorder, edited into snippets on GarageBand, then placed around the museum. Shaw-Pichette envisions labels with QR codes for each object, but regardless, the sounds will be available on the historical society's Facebook and SoundCloud pages in perpetuity.

The guest curation is the result of a new endeavor by Shaw-Pichette, whose years of work with students inspired her to advertise for a junior curator. "We're looking for young people interested in history to share with us what



The family car of curator Urso H.H. Blackburn, who is also the founder of the National Children's Union. (Blackburn refused to speak with our reporter on the topic, saying only: "What if they're trying to infiltrate?")



Chocolate bon-bons with real candied violets, and more, at the Sweetheart Tea.

the community museum needs," Shaw-Pichette said as she busied herself with tea preparations. "It's good for the junior curator, but the old lady curator too," she added jokingly.

The self-proclaimed "old lady curator" (who I can affirm, as a third-party reporter, is full of youthful vigor) is savvy about drawing people into the museum, which was bustling Sunday despite its glass-entombed exhibits, and is acutely conscious of the overlapping past and present. The "Sweetheart Tea" itself is a nod to the famed Sweetheart Tea Room (est. 1916), which has lain dormant since closing in 2003.

"Generations of people who worked there are still with us," said Shaw-Pichette. "We want to celebrate the whole tea house tradition."

The tea room is a good example of the uneven nature of time, not only in its diffident fate (maybe there is life after death: a new own-

er hopes to resuscitate the site as a brewery and restaurant within the year, retaining the iconic Sweetheart sign along Route 2 West) but in its legacies. In the early days, the original operator, Alice Brown, served up local foods including oddities like raccoon meat and maple sugar candy. Brown's gambit, Shaw-Pichette alleges, helped popularize maple sugar candy outside of New England.

Perched at a table outside and surrounded by family, Blackburn wondered and worried about what fades into the past and what sticks

One of the most elusive sounds, according to them? Silence. And not only is it hard to find, but... "I tried to record silence, but then you couldn't hear it."

In a yard across the street, two local kids bounced around on a trampoline. Commented

Blackburn: "I really hope that doesn't go extinct."

ARTIST PROFILE

Mance Granberg

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD - When I discovered that Cara Finch, an artist whom I am familiar with and have written a profile on, opened a gallery in Greenfield, I went in several times to check the place out and found in there a Native American artist's artwork being sold. It was to my liking, and I asked Cara for some contact info. She gave it to me, and they answered me very quickly.

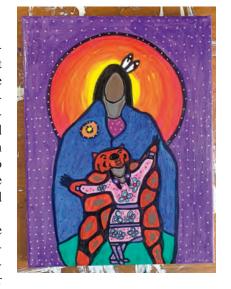
The artist's name is Mance Granberg, and they are a two-spirited Abenaki artisan from the Bécancour area of Québec. Their family originates from the Wolinak Abenakis. Cara had found out about them several months ago and contacted them wanting to display their art at the gallery; she ended up purchasing it.

Granberg's art involves images of Native Americans with no facial expression. It's kind of cool-looking.

According to Granberg, they have been an artist for 30 years, "but I have been professionally for one year." They live in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. "My art is based on my traditional culture, and centers around Abenaki traditions," they told me.

One art gallery Granberg has shown at recently is O'Connor Gallery in Gananoque, Ontario. It was a big success, in their words. Another piece of theirs, which apparently illustrates "the Indigenous ways of knowing in health care," was showcased by Queens University in Canada.

Cara Finch is not the only one who finds this Granberg's art to



An example of Mance Granberg's art.

their liking. "I am beginning to be successful in selling my art," they told me. They also mentioned most people like their art.

A quote from their Facebook page says this: "I gain inspiration from mother earth, and circles because of how there is no beginning and no end, and how we are all infinitely connected. Circles represent creation, Creator, Mother Earth, Grandmother Moon, and Grandfather Sun."

I also found on that Facebook page the name of a piece of their art called "Nokemis Council," which features three Native people with no facial expressions dressed up on the canvas. It is, like all of their other artworks, very colorful. It's also mixed media acrylic on canvas.

I personally would not mind staring at a piece like that all day. Also, to me, that quote about their inspiration shows a person who cares a lot about nature.

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Cast of Swans. Works on paper by printmaker and painter Karen Axtell. Through June 1. Reception Saturday, May 28 at 1 p.m.

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

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Tom Swetland. Collage, assemblage, mixed media, and junk sculpture of assembled found objects by self-taught artist and former Federal Street Bookstore owner Swetland. Through May. Struggle and Hope: Documenting Modern America, photography by Alphonso Neal showing social justice movements in the US and Mexico. May 20, 5 to 8 p.m. and May 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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: SEWN, improvisational quilts by Sheryl Stroud; Visual Sampler, paintings by Louise Minks. Through May.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: Photography. New England photographers. Through June 12. Reception Sunday, May 15, 1 to 4 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: 2022 Quilt Group Show. Quilts by Timna Tarr, Lee Sprou-II, Carson Converse, Wen Redmond, Sarah Stroud, Ann Brauer, Carol Anne Grotrian, and Audrey Hyvonen. Through June 27.

Shelburne Arts Coop Gallery, Shelburne Falls: Grace in Motion: From the Beat of the Hoof to the Beat of the Drum, paintings by Fabio and Sara Deponte. Through May.

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's rugs range in style from floral to landscape, abstract to realistic, Art Nouveau-inspired to original designs. Through May.

Gallery A3, Amherst: Cold Water and Millicent: Nancy Meagher. Oil paintings of water and color pencil drawings from her historical fiction book for children, featuring a fish named Millicent. Through May 28.

A.P.E. Gallery, Northampton: Phyllis Kornfeld's Cellblock Visions. Kornfeld's collection of artwork created by incarcerated people she has worked with since 1983. Through May 29. Reception on Saturday, May 14, 3 to 5 p.m.

Anchor House of Artists **Northampton:** *Drawing with* Light, photograms by Bill Arnold; The Kurds, paintings by Charles Miller; Peace Song Art, paintings by Robert Markey; Like Lace, new work by Beth Ann Bezio; A Peaceful Place, paintings by Emerald Glenn. All through May 31. Reception on Friday, May 13, 5 to 8 p.m.

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

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



FRIDAY, MAY 13

Mystery Train, Amherst: Willie Lane, Wednesday Knudsen / Kryssi Battalene duo, Pete Nolan / Violet duo, Megadeath. Free. 5 p.m.

Calvin Theater, Northampton Tom Rush, Leo Kottke. \$. 7 p.m. Palladium, Worcester: Action Bronson, Earl Sweatshirt, Alchemist. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Arthur Brooks Ensemble V, Liz Tonne, Jake Meginsky. \$. 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.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Signal Pine. 9:30 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 Weeeds and many more. \$. See kotvibes. com for lineup and info.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Zepparella. \$. 2:30 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: Stillwater Band. 7 p.m.

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

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Movie with live soundtrack, The General (1926, Buster Keaton), with pipe organ by Ben Model. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: The Monotonous Ringing, Motorhawk, The Musical Chairs. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY. MAY 15

10 Forward, Greenfield: Nat Baldwin/Jake Meginsky duo, Staubitz / Foam / Rawlings trio, Weston Olencki. \$. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 17

Bombyx Center, Florence: Son Rompe Pera, cumbia punk, with *DJ Bongohead*. \$. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Trio Mambo. Free. 8:30 p.m.

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 Dorii. The Huntress and the Holder of Hands and many more. \$. See novaarts.org for lineup and information.

FRIDAY, MAY 20

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Cinemastorm, free movie double feature. 7:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: Los Cumpleanos. Habbina Habbina, DJ Bongohead. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Vimana. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 21

Pushkin Gallery, Greenfield: John Sheldon. \$. 6 p.m.

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

Mount Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: Charlie King, Colleen Kattau. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: April Cushman. \$. 8 p.m.

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

SUNDAY, MAY 22

Black Birch Vineyard, Hatfield: Darlingside. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Bob Mould. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Immigrant Voices.\$. 7:30 p.m. Race Street Live, Holyoke: Vieux

10 Forward, Greenfield: Ned Collette, Idea Fire Company. \$. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25

Farka Toure. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Falltown String Band. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 26

Palladium, Worcester: Carcass, Creeping Death. \$. 7 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: Maurice

Louca. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: 1794 Meetinghouse, New Sa-Masala Jazz. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 27

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Gaslight Tinkers. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Men in Motion, male revue. \$. 9 p.m.

FRI-SUN, MAY 27-29

MASS MoCA, North Adams: Solid Sound Festival feat. Wilco, Bonnie "Prince" Billy, Terry Allen, Sylvan Esso, Iceage, Eleventh Dream Day, Sun Ra Arkestra, Nels Cline, many more. \$. See solidsoundfestival.com for info.

Camp Keewanee, Greenfield: StrangeCreek Campout feat. Dumpstaphunk, Max Creek, Badfish, Consider the Source, Bella's Bartok, Adam Ezra Group, Pancreatic Wiggle and many more. \$. See strangecreekcampout.com for info.

SATURDAY, MAY 28

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Opel, Whalom Park. 9 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 2

Race Street Live, Holyoke: NRBQ, Jake Manzi. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 3

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Annie Brobst. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4

Young Men's Club of Hadley: Country In the Country, feat. Rodney Atkins, Craig Campbell, Lindsey LaBelle, and more. \$. 3 p.m.

lem: Christine Ohlman, Rebel Montez. \$. 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: Yemen Blues. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: The Dearest Hearts, Hoonah, The Library Band, James Bird. \$. 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

Stone Church, Brattleboro: NRBQ. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Circuit Des Yeux, Dutch Experts, Humanbeast. \$. 8 p.m.

Colonial Theater, Keene: Jonathan Richman. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 10

Race Street Live, Holyoke: Superchunk, Torres. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11

Unity Park, Turners Falls: Unity Park Festival & Maker's Market, with Jimmy Just Quit. \$. 2 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: The Green Sisters. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12

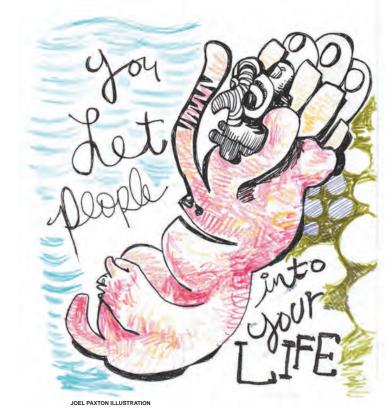
Belltower Recs, North Adams: Major Stars, Headroom, Emily Robb, Blues Ambush. \$. 5 p.m.

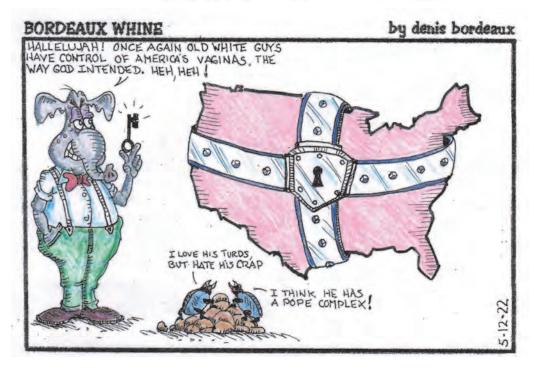
FRIDAY, JUNE 17

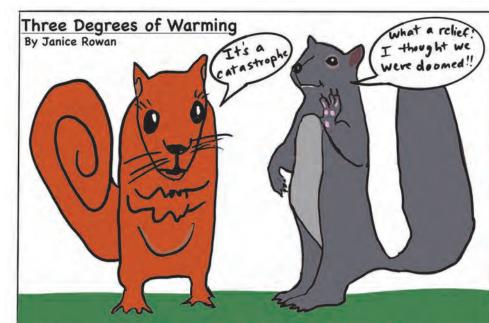
Colonial Theater, Keene: Bill Frisell & Thomas Morgan duo. \$. 6 and 8 p.m.











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THE MONTAGUE REPORTER MAY 12, 2022

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

As I broke into the open across the culvert, I looked down to my left into a little brown swale behind a small cemetery, but couldn't see the deer. I knew it was in there somewhere but couldn't see it.

Then, after turning north to face the homes on the southwest corner of Meadow Lane for the home stretch, I caught something out of the corner of my eye. Sure enough, the deer bounded past me, tail high, 50 yards away. It disappeared into a small patch of tall trees between homes on the east side of Colrain Road. I suspect it's a buck that will soon sprout antlers. Just a guess. Regardless, that deer knew exactly where it wanted to go, was fixed on a specific route and wouldn't allow me to change it.

I recall watching similar scenarios play out while hunting, after settling into my morning stands, but wasn't sure why and never really gave it much thought. I figured they had probably arrived and passed through after I got settled. Now, I'd say those deer had watched me pass, waited for the commotion to settle and, believing I had passed through, continued moving under extreme caution.

Even on mornings when I don't see deer, I assume they've probably seen me. Neighborhood deer know how to live in close proximity to humans and are often secretly within view. Most of the neighbors I question are fully aware of deer presence around their homes. They see them out their window, slipping through the trees following Hinsdale Brook or nibbling their ornamental bushes in the winter. Occasionally they even catch them boldly crossing between homes in broad daylight.

Deer are not always welcome guests, though. A friend from the Conway/Ashfield Shirkshire district recently emailed me about nuisance deer frequenting her property. She says they have no fear of her or her husband.













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"There was a day when we loved watching them in the yard," she wrote. "Not anymore. They're pests. They come right up to our deck totally unafraid and stand there looking at us when we yell at them to leave." She encouraged me to hunt her property and thin the herd.

Although I have not heard similar complaints of offers from my own neighbors, bed-and-breakfast guests used to beg me to hunt their Connecticut properties. "I don't care if you shoot them right off my deck," more than one pleaded. "Especially now that they bring with them ticks and Lyme disease."

When I don't bump into deer in

the hayfields during the first half of my walks, I'm apt to intercept them on my way home, always at the same road crossing 100 yards south of my front door. It's the same groups of five and three deer. They cross the road in orderly fashion, one at a time, using a heavily traveled run between houses to and from the western ridge. I stop to watch them, sometimes even speak warmly to them. Heading west, they stop 50 to 75 yards away in my neighbor's backyard and watch me pass.

On a recent noontime hike with a friend in the woods north of my home, across Hinsdale Brook, I jumped the familiar group of five deer. We were looking for an ancient, stationary, Native American trailside mortar stone I have been told is carved into a waist-high outcropping of ledge there. Facing west as I reached the peak of a spine, I caught movement far below. Sure enough, it was my five buddies fleeing up a draw to high ground. Strangers not.

Pregnant does will soon carve out temporary nests into which they'll drop their spring fawns in a month or less. I'll see the mothers feeding out in the open close to their nests, always alone and close enough to communicate with their spotted infants.

Then, when the hay is tall and ready for first cut, I'll see the doe, ears alert, standing head and shoulders above orchard grass and timothy seedpods. Not far away will be a fawn or fawns, their erect ears visible between seedpods, awaiting parental instruction. They usually don't stick around long. Fawns' lives are most perilous during the first couple of months.

By August, the little spotted ones will be fully capable of escaping predators and negotiating challenging terrain as bucks shed their antler velvet and scope out territory for the fall rut.

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