

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 18 – NO. 7

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

DECEMBER 12, 2019

INVESTIGATION

Getting to Know Our New Secondary School Principal



Joanne Menard started this summer as principal at the middle and high school.

By ANTHONY PETERSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Ms. Joanne Menard, pronounced *Jo-nee*, is the new principal of Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School. She started working this July after Ms. Annie Leonard departed.

Ms. Menard has been bringing positive change to the school. One example is during the weekly morning meetings, when she asks for ideas from the student body about improving the school. Another example is the “Principal’s Chat” she holds twice a month: once at the school, and once in the community. The next one will be held at TFHS/GFMS on Thursday, December 19 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

This being Ms. Menard’s first year, I thought I should ask some fun questions so that the community can get to know her.

Montague Reporter: Where did you grow up?

Joanne Menard: I grew up in northwest Ohio – Findlay, Ohio – which at that time was about 40,000 people. I graduated from a large public high school as my graduating class was 574 students strong!

MR: Why did you want to go into teaching?

JM: As an undergraduate at the Ohio State University, I majored in Marketing, so I worked for years as a Sales Manager for both Waste Management and Browning-Ferris Industries in Columbus, Ohio until I was married.

Right after I was married, my husband and I moved to South Korea for his job. After three years, we returned to the States and started our family. I was very lucky as I was able to stay home with them
see **PRINCIPAL** page A5

Athol Daily News Shuts Down Athol Office

By SARAH ROBERTSON

ATHOL – Two years after acquiring the *Athol Daily News*, the regional newspaper chain Newspapers of New England announced on Tuesday that it is closing the paper’s downtown office and laying off more staff members at two other daily newspapers.

“We spend every day working hard to be innovative to create a sustainable business model,” publisher Michael Moses told the *Reporter*. “We’re living in some strange times, and I don’t think hyperlocal news and community dailies have ever been more important. So that’s our mission: to sustain those products.”

Management announced the layoffs weeks before Christmas, around the same time of year that the *Daily News*’s former publisher, Richard Chase, announced the sale of the paper in 2017.

“I think it’s a shame, to tell you the truth,” said David Small, president of the Athol Bird and Nature Club and chairman of the town’s planning board. “It does seem that ever since they were bought out they’ve slowly – well, not even so slowly – they’ve really cut back on the number of employees covering news, and I think it shows.”

“As you may know,” Moses wrote in an email to employees
see **DAILY NEWS** page A6



The paper’s parent company plans to gather and edit the news at the Greenfield Recorder office.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Meals Picked To Head Up Waste Plant

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard, at its December 9 meeting, has offered Eric Meals, who currently supervises the Hatfield wastewater treatment plant, a contract to serve as the permanent superintendent of the town’s water pollution control facility (WPCF).

Meals, who worked at the plant in 2011 and 2012, will replace Bob McDonald, who abruptly resigned from the position at the end of last summer. Since then the plant has been supervised by chief operator Kevin Boissonnault and former superintendent Bob Trombley.

Meals was selected for the job by a search committee that included Boissonnault, Trombley, several other WPCF employees, and members of town hall staff. Trombley introduced Meals to the board on Monday night. “This is like Old Home Days,” said Trombley, who served as wastewater superintendent for many years.

Trombley noted that Meals had served as superintendent in Northfield and Hatfield since leaving the Montague plant in 2012. “He’s had a learning curve over the years,” Trombley said, “and we think this is the right time and the right fit for him in his career path and for the
see **MONTAGUE** page A7

GILL SELECTBOARD

Hydro Split a Done Deal; Highway Super Wins OT

By GEORGE BRACE

At their Monday night meeting the Gill selectboard reviewed a notice from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that it had denied local environmental journalist Karl Meyer’s request to rehear its approval of FirstLight Power transferring its local hydro-electric licenses to two separate subsidiaries. They also discussed a pay change for the highway superintendent, and continued looking at a fiber-optic cable proposal.

Earlier this year, FERC approved the transfer by FirstLight of its li-

censes to operate the Northfield Mountain pumped storage project and the Turners Falls generating facilities under separate entities. Town administrator Ray Purington said the notice stated that procedural errors were enough reason to reject Meyer’s request, but went on to explain that FERC would rule against the request in any case based on the material Meyer presented.

Purington said his “big takeaway” from the rejection was just how strict the commission’s process is.

“Basically,” said selectboard chair John Ward, “it was because he
see **GILL** page A5

GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Superintendent Search Forums Scheduled for Next Tuesday

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – On Tuesday night the district school committee discussed the timeline for screening and hiring a new superintendent this winter. It agreed to hire a consultant from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to manage the process – for a fee of \$9,500, plus up to \$2,500 in expenses – and set

next Tuesday, December 17 as the date for a first round of forums to hear input about the process.

Forums will be held for the public, administrators, staff, and students. “I know that it will be wise to get this feedback as soon as we can,” said Montague member Jennifer Lively, “but if it’s coming up that soon, we need to be really focused on making sure word gets out strongly.”

see **GMRSD** page A3

SCRIMMAGING



Turners Falls’ Brooke Thayer drives into the lane as Blue hosts the Green Wave for an early-season scrimmage at TFHS. Our coverage of the winter season of local high school sports will begin next week!

General Pierce Bridge: On Track for 2020

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE CITY – The project to rehabilitate the General Pierce Bridge, which spans the Connecticut River between Montague and Greenfield, appears to be on track to begin bidding and construction next summer.

“The first design submission was received by MassDOT and is currently under review,” wrote Department of Transportation (DOT) communications official Judith Reardon Riley. “The project remains a priority and is being ex-



A 2015 hole in the bridge’s deck.

pedited as much as possible.” The MassDOT project inventory website says the design being reviewed, was received on November 27, and covers 75% of the project.

see **BRIDGE** page A8

A “Wonderful” Walking Night Friday

REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – Once again, our downtown readies for It’s A Wonderful Night In Turners Falls, the annual late-night shopping event taking place for the eighth year this Friday, December 13 from 3 to 9 p.m.

Holiday activities have been planned for the whole family up and down the Avenue, including art exhibitions, live music, pop-up shops, restaurant specials, holiday promotions, and unique gift-buying

opportunities. Shops will be open late, many until 9 p.m. The event is coordinated by RiverCulture.

Starting in the afternoon, enjoy a variety of activities on Friday, starting with **making bird feeders** at the Great Falls Discovery Center from 2 to 5 p.m. Adults and children can learn about the birds that are likely to show up at their feeders and what they like to eat, and then make feeders to bring home. This craft activity also repeats on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

It looks like a wonderful night for

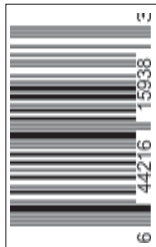
dance, too. **Awesome Art in Motion**, a Turners Falls-based creative dance company for elementary-school children, will give an informal showing of their newest dance piece in the Great Hall at the Discovery Center at 5:30 p.m. Their performance will explore what it means to be at once a unique individual and a member of a group. Admission is free.

Shoppers at the LOOT store, 62 Avenue A, can enjoy a **fiddle performance** by Annika Amstutz from 5 to 8 p.m. along with light
see **WONDERFUL** page A2

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

Editorial Group

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Technical Administration

About Face Computing

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August 2002



Profit and Loss

Fans of this newspaper should be well aware by now that we are harbor an obsession with our name-sake, the *Turners Falls Reporter*, published weekly on and off Avenue A from 1872 to 1922.

Hearing this week's bad news from our colleagues at the *Athol Daily News* (see page A1), and reflecting on the idea that the money we pay its sister paper in Northampton to do a fine job printing *this* paper has been a revenue stream subsidizing local news-gathering, has got us thinking about the other *Reporter*.

Its editor, Cecil T. Bagnall, in his regular pathetic pleas to his subscribers to come in and pay their overdue subscriptions, used to admit that the paper operated at a loss, offset by his sideline in job printing.

As Bagnall's "right hand woman," Antonia J. Stemple, would later write in the *Turners Falls Herald*:

The circulation and advertising of the new paper was all that could reasonably be expected for the first decade or two but not large enough to provide an adequate livelihood for the eager spirit at its head. Mr. Bagnall early recognized this and enlarged the job printing department, furthermore going far afield for printing orders. He soon became one of the leading bank printers of New England, filling orders from banks and large businesses and institutions from all sections.

Earlier this year a friend of ours dropped a gift off at the office: an envelope containing three little treasures.

The first was the *Annual Report of the School Committee and Superintendent of Schools of the Town of Montague for the Year Ending Jan. 30, 1904*. "The year has been one of growth and prosperity in the schools of the whole system," the report began.

This 40-page, side-bound booklet is full of curiosities: there was a new course in Physiology and Hygiene ("to teach the child to respect and care for his body to the end that he may grow up to maturity with a clear ideal before him of the consequences that result from a disobedience of Nature's laws"); district enrollment dropped off steeply after 8th grade; the truant officer reported 130 visits to families and was paid a \$145 salary; etc.

But the part that interested us most was the mark: "Printed by Cecil T. Bagnall." And, listed in the district budget under "Incidentals," we find that the schools paid Bagnall \$55.45, presumably for printing the previous year's report.

By comparison, the newspaper

was sold for 5 cents an issue, or \$2 for a year's subscription! And that \$55.45 fee comes to about \$1,600 after inflation is figured in.

The second was an envelope addressed to R. K. Caldwell Esq. of Northfield, unfortunately empty, with a return address of the *Turners Falls Reporter*.

But the third, also addressed to Mr. Caldwell, was the real treat: a commercial quote Bagnall sent to the Northfield selectmen in February 1884 for printing the town report. The bid, at 90 cents per page for 24 pages, came to \$21.60, a little over \$600 today.

"If this bid is not lowest, two things are certain: Either 'the other fellow' is losing money or your Report is less difficult than I suppose, because my modern machinery will turn out more and better work than any other office outside of the cities, and my expenses are 35 per. cent. less," proclaims the bid, mailed from the "Turners Falls Reporter Steam Printing Establishment."

So, how is local news-gathering subsidized? How can a community maintain an independent intelligence agency? For the *Montague Reporter*, your home subscription is important, but to be honest, we generally spend two-thirds of what we earn in subscriptions and newsstand sales on distributing the paper.

To cover our bare-bones costs of reporting, editing, laying-in, and keeping an office – all of which we spend less on than a normal paper, because a substantial amount of our effort is either volunteered or openly underpaid – we rely on advertising, and a little bit of donation.

Consider this our annual appeal, then, if you find yourself with any extra scratch left over at the end of the year. We don't have a steam-powered printing press hidden in the back office to help fund the paper, though maybe we should.

Some people believe that any activity providing social value should be able to find profit in the market. If we take a historic view, journalism seems to be an excellent counterexample. Where it disappears, the people suffer – studies have shown that local newspaper closures have a negative impact on municipalities' bond ratings, for starters – and where it turns a profit, it tends to be indirect and temporary.

News reporting was always uneasily yoked to print advertising. Real journalism is not harvesting attention in order to sell it. It is society's attempt to understand itself. It requires a social contract. If the *Montague Reporter* is to thrive, it can only do so with your support.

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Letter to the Editors

The Coop Needs A Plan

Thanks for Isabel Koyama's excellent article on the Leverett Co-op member meeting on December 3 (December 5, *Coop Members Take a Turn Discussing Store's Future*, page A1). I support fundraising to save the Co-op, but I have concerns about whether that will be sufficient.

For the Co-op to survive, the Board needs to develop a convincing and clear survival plan. The endless reiterations of business plans developed so far, one of which is posted on the Co-op website, are not realistic given the present Co-op debt.

One of the objectives of we Co-op members who organized this December 3 member meeting was to air the member demand for such a survival plan. We need a plan that develops a budget of expected costs, including paying down the debt, with a realistic projection of revenues. Ongoing comparisons of actual profits and losses (P&L) should be compared to budget expectations

to maintain controls, ensure that projections are accurate, and allow for timely adjustments.

Such a survival plan that balances revenues and expenses is needed to allow the Co-op to stay in business for the next six months. We hope the Board will provide members with such a plan at the Co-op Annual Member meeting, now scheduled for Wednesday, January 22.

Ann Ferguson
Leverett

WONDERFUL from page A1

refreshments, lots of fun stocking stuffers, and one-of-a-kind gifts.

LOOT will also be distributing game cards for this year's **Holiday Open Door Promo**, which you make on your way down the Avenue. Visit the participating businesses listed on the card and get a sticker from each – no purchase is required. Put one sticker in each square of your game card for a minimum of twelve different stickers, and then fill in your contact information and return the card to LOOT or Black Cow Burger Bar by 1 p.m. on Friday, December 21.

Two winners will be drawn, who will each receive \$150 in gift certificates to be used for goods and services at these 26 participating businesses. The winners will be notified by phone on Friday the 21st so that they may use them to shop that weekend.

Two **pop-up holiday shops** on the corner of Avenue A and Third Street offer handmade and vintage items. One, at the Turners Falls Family Center on the northwest corner, starts at 4 p.m. On the southwest corner, where Flourish used to be, is the Great Falls Gift Mart. The Gift Mart has regular hours posted throughout the month, but the Family Center shop is one night only.

Set your sights on the Brick House Community Resource Center, a few doors down from there at 24 Third Street, for a **Holiday Green Screen Photo** of you and yours in your favorite winter scene.

While there, check out the **youth Art Show** at the Brick House teen drop-in center. Arts, crafts, and gifts will be there to purchase, with wrapping paper, refreshments, and kids' activities available for free, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Mystic Pinball will have specials on t-shirts and gift certificates, and next door at 106 Avenue A, Two Birds will serve **mulled hot cider** in their shop full of hand-

made gifts and chic vintage housewares. They also offer a 10% discount on any purchases over \$20 that night.

The Upper Bend brunchonette at 112 Avenue A will be open just to serve you **cozy drinks and sparkly tunes** – no food service – between 5 and 8 p.m.

Children and adults alike are encouraged this week to put a wish list for **Santa** in the **Magic Mailbox at Spinner Park**, as well as notes of hope for friends, family, and the world! Santa is scheduled to arrive at 6:30 Friday, roaring downtown on a fire truck to pick up the letters and dispense some candy canes and *ho-ho* cheer. Bring the little ones to say hi to St. Nick, chug some hot chocolate, and listen to live music in the park.

Don't forget to cross the Avenue and visit us at the *Montague Reporter* office at 177 Avenue A to wrap your gifts in some of our very handy leftover back issues, provided with an assortment of decorative strings and ribbons. We also have t-shirts, mugs, and gift subscriptions for sale for anyone looking for stocking stuffers.

Mosey back up the avenue to **Black Cow Burger Bar**, where Scotty Kusmeskus will play an acoustic set as the staff concocts seasonal cocktails and Christmas burgers. While you are over there, dip into tiny **Nina's Nook** next door to see cool creations by Nina and other local artists. Then cruise along to the Great Falls Harvest at 50 Third Street to get an **Angel Card Reading** for only \$5.

As if that's not enough, you can settle into a seat at the Shea Theater at 7:30 p.m. to cap off this Wonderful Night with the 35th annual performance of **Welcome Yule: A Midwinter Celebration**. Tickets are \$12 to \$15, and kids under four are free. For more information about the event, visit turnersfallsriverculture.org.

As of press time, shopkeepers and *flâneurs* may be watching the forecast for rain, but this celebration of what downtown Turners Falls has to offer is well worth breaking out the umbrellas.

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS!
(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

It's A Wonderful Night in Turners Falls! This annual town-wide tradition is a great way to get into the holiday spirit. On Friday, December 13 from 2 to 9 p.m., downtown Turners Falls comes alive with family activities, live music, pop-up shops, restaurant specials and unique gifts.

Santa arrives at Spinner Park at 6:30, and the 35th Annual Welcome Yule performance begins at the Shea Theater at 7:30 p.m. For more information about these events and the schedule, go to www.turnersfalls-riverculture.org/category/events/.

Don't forget to pick up your **Open Door Promo** card, and collect stickers from at least 12 of the participating downtown shops. Return your completed card by 1

p.m. on Saturday, December 21 for a chance to win one of two \$150 gift certificates. No purchases are necessary.

On Friday, December 13 from 2 to 5 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls you can **make your own bird feeder** and learn about winter birds. Bird feeder making continues Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For all ages.

The Discovery Center is open five days a week, Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Take a break from the holidays and stop by the Center's investigation stations, explore the habitat dioramas, try a scavenger hunt for animals in our Connecticut River Watershed, or draw your own Junior Duck Stamp. It will be closed

on Christmas Day, but will be open December 26 through January 5 for the school vacation, including New Year's Day.

Cynthia Thomas of First Mountain Design, which produces locally designed and sewn clothing, wanted us to know that they are holding their annual **Holiday Studio Sale** on Friday, December 13 from 3 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, December 14 from 10 a.m. to noon at 142 Depot Road, Leverett. Their website is www.firstmountaindesign.com.

Then be sure to visit the **Leverett Crafts and Arts** holiday sale, which continues this weekend and next weekend from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Leverett Crafts and Arts Center is located at 13 Montague Road, Leverett.

Yee Haw! Grab your dancing boots, your cowboy hat and mosey on over to Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A in Turners Falls! Kick up your heels with the **North County Line Dancers** as they perform to some holiday favorites at the bank this Saturday, December 14 at 10 a.m. Learn some new moves and have fun with the members all at the same time! Free of charge.

The town of Northfield's **"Special Day"** celebrates its 14th year on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. with old-fashioned holiday fun for all ages, including Victorian carolers and visits with Santa.

Travel around the beautiful, historic town in true New England style with free horse-drawn hayrides and enjoy seasonal foods, theater and musical performances, crafts, and local shopping. A community bonfire, caroling, delicious snacks, history, art and more all round out this Special Day. For the full schedule, go to visitnorthfieldarea.com.

On Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to noon, bring the kiddos to the Carnegie Library, 201 Avenue A to **make gingerbread houses**.

Take refuge from the elements this Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. at La Mariposa (115 Avenue A, Turners Falls) at **Great Falls Books Through Bars'** monthly volunteer day. As always, we'll be reading letters and packing books to send out to prisoners. No experience is needed, and all ages are invited to work any amount of time you can offer.

If you can't make it to the work bee, you can still help by checking

out the new Book Donation Wish List through Broadside Bookshop in Northampton: www.broadsidebooks.com/wishlist/69. Paperback dictionaries, thesauruses, and other books, manila envelopes, paper bags, packing tape, and money to help cover the cost of postage are also most welcome. Find out more at www.greatfallsbooksthroughbars.org.

This Saturday at 7:30 p.m. join Masala Jazz and Ch'Chunk for an evening of spirited jazz fusion and blues music **to benefit the family of a beloved teacher and musician** from Leverett. The evening will be a celebration of a life taken much too early, Parmatma Singh Khalsa, who loved jazz and touched so many with his joyful spirit.

"Parmatma Singh Khalsa was a dear close friend of our band members and admired by hundreds of people in the surrounding community," says SiriNam Khalsa of Masala Jazz. "He was an inspired teacher of elementary students, a musician, athlete, father of two beautiful children and husband to an inspiring woman, Jai. His sudden death caught us all by surprise and this jazz concert is one of several ways we are honoring his beautiful life with uplifting heartfelt music."

The concert will be held at The Perch at Hawks and Reed, 289 Main Street, Greenfield. For tickets, see hawksandreed.ticketfly.com.

Clinical Notes, Baystate Franklin Medical Center's women's *a cappella* chorus, will perform its **annual holiday concert**, Tidings of Joy, on Tuesday, December 17, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the hospital's main conference rooms at 164 High Street, Greenfield. The concert is free and open to the public. Contributions to help defray the cost of music are welcome.

The nine-member chorus, established in 2003, consists of present and former hospital employees and volunteers, and family members of staff. Members come from Franklin County and surrounding areas; most have been with the chorus since its beginning. Clinical Notes performs two annual concerts: a holiday concert and a summer solstice concert.

For more information on Clinical Notes' holiday concert, contact Phyllis Stone at (413) 834-2436 or par2453@gmail.com.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Annual Snow Contest Gets an Early Start

By LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – The annual Snow Off the Avenue Contest has returned earlier than usual to the Carnegie Library. Last year it was held in March.

Guess the date when the giant

snow pile in the Food City parking lot across from the library will melt. One free raffle entry per person, please.

The winner(s) will receive a Second Street Baking Co. gift certificate. Entries are due at the Library by December 31.



The pile grew during Tuesday's storm.

GMRSD from page A1

The next steps will be to compile a brochure describing the position, in order to attract candidates, and appoint a screening committee.

Chair Jane Oakes said "people have already expressed interest" in serving on the screening committee, but will not be appointed until screening dates are set. "Once the screening committee has determined the finalists, then the school committee gets to work," she said.

Heather Katsoulis read through a proposed timeline: applications due January 31; an intensive screening process during February; the referral of final candidates to the school committee in the first week of March; site visits and another round of public forums; and final interviews during the last week of March.

The goal is to make a job offer and hire a new superintendent in April. Michael Sullivan, who has served as superintendent since 2013, has announced his resignation effective the end of June.

Budget and Accreditation

Sullivan gave a presentation on the district's preliminary FY'21 budget. At this early point in the process, Montague is expected to be able to afford \$10,035,821 and Gill \$1,634,027; Erving

tuition is estimated at \$940,000; Chapter 70 state aid at \$6,441,443; and another \$731,568 available from Medicaid, transportation and charter school reimbursement, debt assessments, and interest.

That totals \$19,782,859, and the desired operating budget is \$20,032,859. The administration proposes to pull \$150,000 from the excess and deficiency fund to close the gap. The remaining "initial budget shortfall" is \$100,000, though many factors are expected to change before spring.

The school committee voted 7 to 0 in favor of Gill-Montague willingly letting Turners Falls High School's accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) lapse, at administrators' recommendation.

"Before the days when DESE was really involved in our lives, it played an important role," said Sullivan. 247, or 64%, of the state's 386 public high schools are NEASC-accredited. The committee was convinced by the argument that the \$4,622 annual expense outweighed the benefits.

School Climate

The meeting began with a public comment by Cindy Marshall, the parent of a seventh-grade student at Great Falls Middle School who was recently hospitalized by another student. "It's never

going to happen again, ever, to any kid, and especially my child," Marshall said, calling on the district to improve its violence prevention practices.

Marshall also asked whether the district is able to contribute to medical expenses the family's insurance does not cover. By policy, the school committee is unable to reply directly to public commenters, though individual members spoke with Marshall after her statement.

The meeting ended with a review by Sullivan of a student survey conducted last spring by the state, focusing on school climate. "This is older information, and I'd like to think we did a lot of work since the spring," he said, citing a previous presentation on a more recent internal survey.

Only 47% of Sheffield Elementary students reported that their peers respect each other – compared with an 80% statewide average – and 46% of Great Falls eighth-graders reported seeing peers with weapons, compared with 13% statewide.

"I would be hearing if there's serious weapons being burnished at the school," Sullivan said, highlighting "significant improvement on almost every indicator" recorded in the fall survey. He ended with an appeal to continue the district's focus on supporting social and emotional learning among both children and adults.



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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Wendell, Leverett, and New Salem Consider Sharing a Single Police Chief

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard postponed for one week their meeting that would normally have been scheduled for Thanksgiving's eve. They met instead on an off week, December 4. The meeting lasted just under an hour.

Selectboard chair Dan Keller reported that the succession committee voted to accept Municipal Resources Inc. of Meredith, New Hampshire to help with the process of finding a new police chief. Leverett has already authorized \$10,000 for their services, and is considering a shared chief with Wendell and New Salem.

A region made up of New Salem, Wendell, and Leverett but without Shutesbury would have a large hole in the middle. It might be possible to include Shutesbury in negotiations. Talks between Leverett and Shutesbury about a shared chief broke down once, but that was some time ago.

Anna Seeger, speaking for the board of assessors, said they had chosen Joanna Moest as their preferred candidate to replace Helen Williams who has left the position of assistant assessor. Moest has limited experience, but Seeger said she is very organized, and has already started taking the first online course. As was previously authorized, the

assessors hired Erving's assistant assessor, Jacquelyn Boyden, to help Moest begin her work. Boyden has already found some areas that need attention.

Seeger said that her board's work has increased dramatically, and members hope for some increase in compensation. Chris Wings, the board's chair, is working 80 hours a week.

Keller said that the town's reserve fund might cover that additional expense, and that the assessors should talk with the finance committee about increasing their compensation.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato said the kitchen committee hoped to lower the fee for kitchen use from \$25 to \$10 for the first two hours of use, but keep the rate of \$5 for each additional hour.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich reported that Ivette Mateos is the only person using the kitchen regularly, and that she has been excellent in leaving it clean and orderly. A new agreement would include a rate for the kitchen only, for the town hall itself only, and for both. Other board members agreed to lower the fees.

DiDonato asked to attend the annual Massachusetts Municipal Association meeting, held in Boston January 23 through January 25. The fee is \$150, within the select-

board budget, and DiDonato said she would stay with family and save Wendell the cost of a hotel.

DiDonato also relayed a question from town center resident Jonathan von Ranson about connecting private homes to the town septic system. Town facilities engineer Jim Slavas has said that the system is suffering because the microorganisms that maintain it are starving from insufficient use. None of the buildings it serves is occupied full time, and no showers or laundry feed it.

Keller said that the legal tangle required by a private connection to a public septic system would be prohibitively expensive.

Town counsel David Doneski of the law firm Kopelman and Paige answered Wendell's letter that followed some slow, seemingly reluctant responses by the firm to Wendell's inquiries and requests. He mentioned personal issues, and promised an improvement, which seems to have taken place already.

Doneski has spoken with C2 Energy Capital, LLC, the company that bought contracts that Wendell offered to host from Seaboard Solar. Wendell's promised benefit of reduced electric cost has been honored, but instead of payments, Wendell has been getting bills from C2. Doneski said he speaks to a new person every time he contacts them.

Resident Anna Boyden said that the light over the back entrance to the town office building has stayed on overly long. The light is activated by a motion sensor and is timed to turn off after only a few minutes, enough time to light someone's late night walk from the office back door to a vehicle in the parking lot. Boyden said it has been staying on much longer.

The board discussed the motion detector switch and the idiosyncrasies of its operation. If it does not turn off as it should, the town will replace it.

Selectboard member Christine Heard said the Warwick selectboard sent a letter to the state Department of Conservation and Recreation in support of reasonable forest management and scheduled controlled tree cutting.

Al McIntire cited the book *1491*, which stated that before European contact, Native Americans used controlled burns to guide the forest and make it more useful to them.

Heard cited a *New Yorker* article about controlled burns in the present West. The small fires get trees to thicken their bark, making larger, disastrous fires less likely.

Keller suggested that the Wendell selectboard write a letter similar to Warwick's, indicating that not all of Wendell is opposed to all forest management.

FACES & PLACES



Greenfield Garden's new owner Isaac Mass (left) and old owner George Gohl (right).

By JOE R. PARZYCH

GREENFIELD – Greenfield Garden Cinemas had a grand opening during Small Business Saturday, under new owners: Isaac Mass, a local attorney and at-large member of city council, and his wife Angela Mass, who teaches math at Greenfield High School. They were joined by their daughters Aquinnah and Auburn and former owner George Gohl during the ribbon cutting.

Gohl owned a chicken restaurant in the '90s, and another Greenfield movie theater – the Cinemas at Mohawk Trail Plaza – from the '80s through the early 2000s before owning Greenfield Garden.

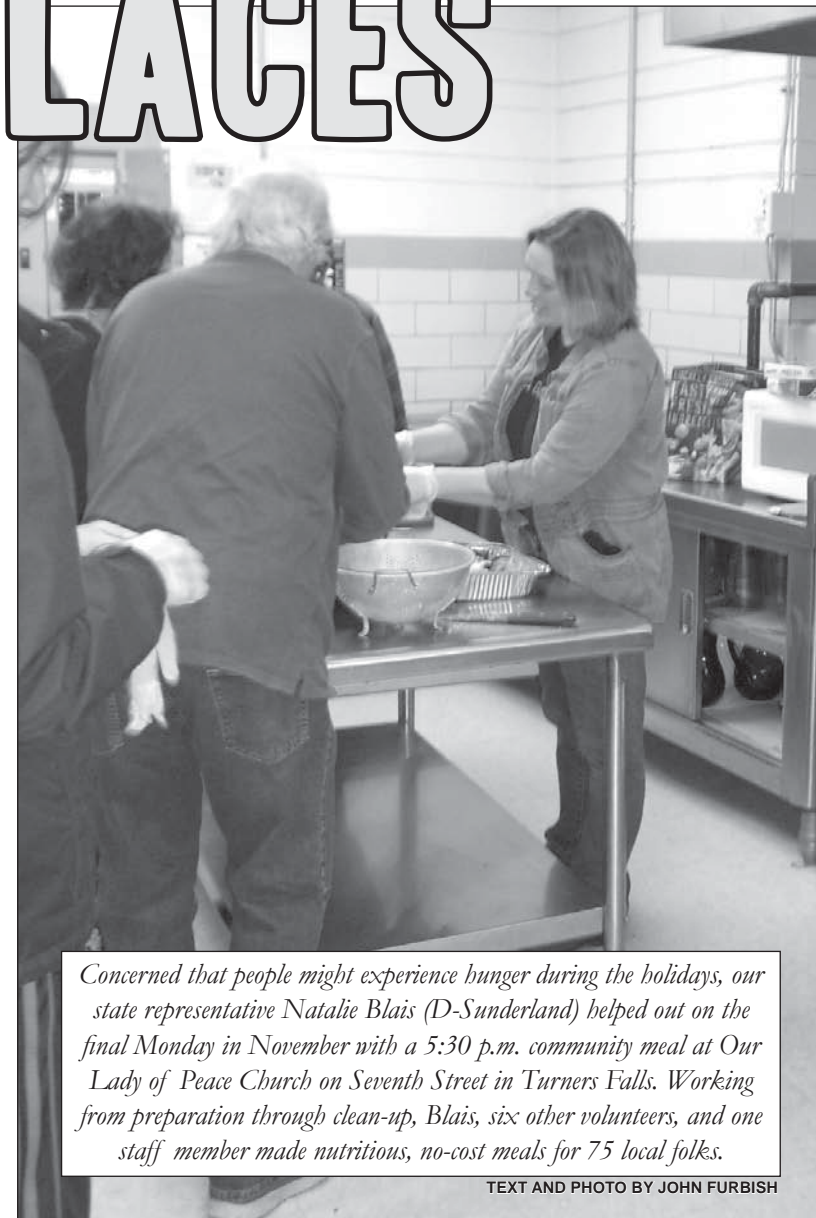
Local radio station Bear Country was there for the event, and Mass offered raffle prizes. Greenfield Garden Cinemas is a historic movie theater, running since the 1920s days of black-and-white silent films

to the present, and staying very popular for over 90 years.

People still come to this day to the family-owned, independent theater, though there have been changes over the years, such as from running reel-to-reel films to digital ProJet projectors. Local historians Ed Gregory and Peter Miller have old photographs and information on the historic cinema from their research over the years.

People have a great time at the movies. For a fun fact, my grandfather Joe Parzych, the late local author of *Jep's Place: Hope and Other Disasters* and the Gill Gourmet columnist for the *Montague Reporter*, recalled in his childhood walking from Gill to Greenfield with a friend in 1942 to see a movie, a horror film called *Cat People*.

After the movie, they both walked back from Greenfield to their houses in Gill. They both got scared after seeing that movie on screen, in



Concerned that people might experience hunger during the holidays, our state representative Natalie Blais (D-Sunderland) helped out on the final Monday in November with a 5:30 p.m. community meal at Our Lady of Peace Church on Seventh Street in Turners Falls. Working from preparation through clean-up, Blais, six other volunteers, and one staff member made nutritious, no-cost meals for 75 local folks.

TEXT AND PHOTO BY JOHN FURBISH

which a person turned into a cat. They were still walking as it grew dark. They were scared to death, but they finally got home safe.

In those days, when people didn't own a TV, and rarely owned a radio – or a car, or a phone – it was a rare treat to see movies. Back in the day, they also showed a newsreel or cartoon before the movies came on the big screen.

Isaac Mass worked at the movies when he was going to school and college, years before he became the proud new owner of a movie theater. Greenfield Garden Cinemas advertises on radio, in newspapers, online, and by word of mouth. They are on Facebook. See www.gardencinemas.net or call (413) 774-4881. The theater is located at 361 Main Street in Greenfield.

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GILL from page A1

didn't have a heading in front of every item he brought up."

"What, are we in high-school English?" asked board member Randy Crochier.

Purington said that the splitting of the licenses is essentially a "completed issue," and the next step would be to strategize for FirstLight's final filing of their application to renew the two licenses, and consider what actions the town might want to take at that point.

Purington said he wasn't sure when that filing might take place, but that it seems like the prerequisite studies are winding down. He said he thought there was less time remaining in the process than has elapsed, but did not have a projection beyond that.

Ward and board member Greg Snedeker commented on their dissatisfaction with their ability to learn how the license split might affect the company's financial and environmental responsibilities in operating the facilities. Ward said that the breakdown in settlement negotiations last March between FirstLight and local towns, fish and wildlife agencies, and other concerned parties was a blow to all interested parties.

Overtime for Road Boss

The board voted unanimously to change the highway superintendent position from one that was "essentially" salaried and not eligible for overtime pay to an hourly, non-salaried position eligible for overtime. The vote followed a lengthy discussion with residents attending the meeting.

Both the selectboard and the residents expressed multiple concerns about the change, including possible costs to the town, potential for abuse, fairness, the ability to attract employees in the future, and difficulties involved in monitoring the system.

At the outset, board members emphasized that the question was focused on the superintendent position itself, and not the individual in the position, John Miner. The state of the town's roads and the highway department's work during recent

snowstorms were both praised and criticized, but the overall focus of discussion was the position itself, and the best course going forward regarding compensation.

When Miner was hired a year ago, he took the job with the understanding that it was "essentially" a salaried position: he would be paid for 40 hours a week whether he worked 30 hours or 50, and the board would be willing to discuss compensation for extra work required in the wintertime. However, a policy of providing "compensation time" for such work ended with the retirement of previous superintendent Mickey LaClaire.

"[Miner] rolled the dice as much as we did," said Crochier.

Purington said that he didn't like the old system, as it allowed comp time to be carried over, creating a financial liability for the town. Crochier added that he did not think the position met the requirements for an overtime exemption anyway, due to the responsibilities involved, and Snedeker agreed with that assessment.

The board has held several executive sessions on the matter, and concluded that the simplest way to address the situation of "truly hundreds of extra hours" of work in the wintertime was to end the salaried pay scheme, and change the position to "straight-up hourly" with eligibility for overtime. This clarified the question as to whether the change would add overtime pay on top of a salary – it would not. Still, questions remained about the possibility of annual pay being higher than was reasonable due to the higher rate of overtime pay.

"That can get out of control," said resident Brian Peila. "I don't believe we need to be paying someone \$85,000 to do that job."

Crochier said people might be surprised how much highway supervisors are earning in other towns, noting that another local superintendent was paid \$100,000 a year. "I'd be worried about paying anywhere near that," he said. "Not that any of them aren't worth it. I'll never tell you what somebody's worth, because they're always going to be worth at least \$1 more

an hour than they're getting." This elicited laughter.

"Some days I'm worth an awful lot," one resident said, "some days I'm not worth [expletive] – I'll be quite honest."

The difficulty of establishing a pay rate that was "fair and just" were discussed, with Crochier pointing out that rates were "all over the map" in area towns.

Ward said that Gill "tried to take the easy way out" by copying other towns, "but every single one of them does something different." Ward argued that the town needs to stay competitive with other towns to avoid employees being poached, but at the same time, he was aware that rates can be "ratcheted up" since there is always one town that is lowest on the scale. "It's a tough balance to figure out," he concluded.

Crochier noted that in interviews for the position, the question of salary versus hourly with overtime pay was the biggest sticking point raised by applicants.

Snedeker said he shared residents' concern for the potential of abuse or dramatically increased costs with an overtime system, saying he was uncomfortable with someone having the ability to "give themselves work." "You have to start from a place of trust," he said, "but the records have to be there."

Snedeker said the change would create a need for "very meticulous records," both to provide an ability for oversight, and to protect the town and employees in the case of legal issues on work-related matters. Possibilities such as punch clocks were discussed, with more discussion to come later. As discussion closed, all three board members thanked the residents in attendance, and said their input was helpful.

Free Fiber

The board reviewed an email from Access Plus Communications (ACP) summarizing a proposal the company made at the previous selectboard meeting to install a fiber-optic cable through Gill to the Northfield Mount Hermon School using municipal space on utility poles. The cable would be a gift to

TOWN OF MONTAGUE FY 2020 CDBG PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

The Town of Montague will hold a public informational meeting on **December 16, 2019 at 7 p.m.** in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at the Montague Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA in order to solicit public response to the activities that the town should apply for in the FY 2020 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the application process and activities that the town should include in its application. Representatives from the Town and the Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will be present at the hearing to discuss potential activities. Any other activities that the town should consider for the FY 2020 CDBG application will be discussed.

Eligible activities include Housing Assistance, Public Facilities, Infrastructure, Public Social Services, and Planning Projects. All projects must meet the national objective to benefit low/moderate income people or eliminate slum/blight.

The Town of Montague will contract with the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to administer the FY 2020 Community Development Block Grant Program.

The Town of Montague encourages residents to attend the meeting where any person or organization wishing to be heard will be afforded the opportunity.

The Town of Montague is an equal opportunity provider.

Board of Selectmen, Town of Montague

MONTAGUE HEALTH DEPARTMENT PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 5:40 p.m.
Town Hall – Downstairs Meeting Space
One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

"Board of Health Regulation: Fats, Oil & Grease (FOG) Pretreatment Systems"

In accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 403, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111 section 31, and Title 5 of the State Environmental Code (310 CMR 15), the Montague Board of Health will hold a public hearing to adopt the regulation. The purpose of this regulation is to protect residents, businesses, public health, and the environment within the Town of Montague from blockages of the Town's sanitary sewer system caused by grease, kitchen oils, and other substances discharged from food service facilities. All references to 248 CMR shall mean the Code of Massachusetts Regulation for the Massachusetts State Plumbing Code.

the town, in exchange for the use of a small portion of it for the school.

Purington said he has been looking into the procedural requirements for accepting the offer, which the board expressed interest in.

Ward suggested the cable could be used to provide service to some of the 4% of Gill residents who do not have regular cable access currently, possibly through the use of repeaters. He said he'd spoken with state senator Jo Comerford about the idea, and asked Purington to contact her.

Crochier brought up the subject of connecting the cable to Gill Elementary School, but it was still unknown if it would be possible, due to the school's distance from Main Road and a division of authority between the town and school district. The board and Purington said they'd be taking a closer look at the proposal.

Other Business

The board approved a 2% sewer rate increase for the Riverside district effective in January 2020. Purington projected the increase would cover costs, and provide a small contribution to a reserve fund.

The minor increase came as welcome news on the heels of last year's 71% rate increase due to problems at the Montague facility which processes Riverside's wastewater.

The board approved the renewal of liquor licenses for Turners Falls Schuetzen Verein, the Gill Tavern, the Wagon Wheel Restaurant, and the Spirit Shoppe.

PRINCIPAL from page A1

until they started school.

During this time, I realized that I really wanted to go back to school to become a teacher and make a difference in the lives of children. Both of my parents were in education, so I knew the importance of the profession.

MR: Did you always want to be a principal?

JM: During my eleven years of teaching middle school math and science, I realized that I would like to become a principal, as it is a wonderful combination of skills gained from both the educational and business worlds.

So, after teaching, I took the next step and became a middle school STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) curriculum coach, and then finally an elementary principal for four years prior to coming to this welcoming community!

MR: What is your favorite candy?

JM: I have quite the sweet tooth, so I like a wide variety of candies. My favorite, though is a buckeye (remember, I graduated from Ohio State) – a candy that is basically like a Reese's Cup, but in a ball shape.

MR: What is your favorite pizza topping?

JM: Mushrooms.

MR: What is your favorite movie of all time?

JM: Probably all the *Harry Potter* movies.

As my children were growing up, I read them all of the books, so it was so enjoyable seeing them come to life!

MR: Who is your celebrity crush?

JM: I do not have one, as I have the best husband ever!

MR: If you could visit one place in the world, what would it be, and why?

JM: Throughout my life I have been lucky enough to travel to 48 states in the USA and to live in Asia for three years. When we lived in Asia my husband and I traveled all over the area, but I still have never been to Europe. I would like to start with Germany to see if I can find where my ancestors came from.

MR: What is your favorite food?

JM: My husband's homemade grilled hamburgers.

MR: Who is your favorite musical artist?

JM: U2.

MR: What is your favorite holiday?

JM: Christmas. My adult children and parents come in – tons of good times and laughter!

MR: What is your favorite book and why?

JM: The *Harry Potter* books – see [the movie question].

MR: What is your favorite local restaurant?

JM: Riff's – yummy food.

MR: What is your favorite sport, and why?

JM: Of course, the Ohio State Buckeye Football team. (Just saying – we are currently # 1 in the country!)

MR: What is your favorite color?

JM: Black, white, and red, used together.

MR: What is your favorite planet?

JM: Ours – Earth!

MR: Who is your favorite superhero, and why?

JM: Teachers that ignite a passion in students to be life-long learners!

MR: What is your favorite number?

JM: Tom Brady's number: 12.

MR: Who was your role model?

JM: My parents were my role models growing up.

MR: What has been your favorite part of being principal of TFHS?

JM: My favorite part has been to become a member of this welcoming community! I cannot wait to begin the school-wide Culture and Climate Club with Mr. Gaffigan to continue to work with many students to make this an even better place for all!

Anthony Peterson is a senior at Turners Falls High School.



It's a Wonderful Night in Turners Falls... and the Montague Reporter is hosting an Open House!

Join us on Friday, December 13 from 4 to 7 p.m. at our office at 177 Avenue A.

We have t-shirts, mugs, and gift subscriptions for purchase, and a gift wrapping station so you can wrap the presents you just bought downtown in our back issues!

Come by to hang out, have a snack, and get a glimpse behind the scenes... Thank you for supporting your local, independent paper. See you on Friday!

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DAILY NEWS from page A1

on Tuesday, “earlier today we eliminated positions in various departments at the *Athol Daily News*, *Greenfield Recorder*, and *Daily Hampshire Gazette*. Although we’ve made tremendous progress over the past year, we have not been immune to the advertising revenue challenges that all newspapers have experienced.”

Based in Concord, NH, Newspapers of New England (NNE) publishes the *Recorder*, the *Gazette*, and the *Daily News*, as well as the *Valley Advocate*, *Amherst Bulletin*, and four New Hampshire newspapers.

Of the three staff members working in the Athol office, two were laid off and offered freelance work, while one was offered a position at the *Recorder*, NEPR reported. Two staff members from the *Recorder’s* office – a West County reporter and an advertising manager – and two non-union staff members at the *Gazette* were also laid off in the restructuring.

The company announced that it will continue publishing the *Athol Daily News*, still printing the paper in Northampton but producing its content from Greenfield. *Recorder* editor-in-chief Joan Livingston will oversee the Athol publication, which covers nine towns in the North Quabbin area.

Despite the company’s vows to continue the publication, some Athol residents say they are already mourning the loss of their local newspaper.

“ADN was vital to all the North Quabbin towns. It will be missed,” said longtime Athol resident David Runyan. “I’m hoping that a group of people decides to take advantage of the opportunity to assemble a new local paper, perhaps starting as an online version. Sad to see ADN closed, but I think we all knew it was coming.”

“I just really think they need people on the ground,” Small said. “We’ve been fortunate to have a local presence for a long time, and I’m just really saddened that it’s come to this.”

Challenging Times

On December 19, 2017, publisher Richard Chase announced the sale of the *Daily News*, which his family had owned for 83 years, to NNE, and began leasing the office at 225 Exchange Street to the new owners. NNE invited some employees to reapply for their jobs, but let about half go, including the entire printing staff.

The pages for NNE’s Massachusetts newspapers are sent to a shared production desk at the *Gazette* office in Northampton. In June 2018, another round of layoffs hit the Northampton office. At that time, the company outsourced four positions from its advertising and graphics departments to the Virginia-based media behemoth Gannett, according to a report in the *Gazette*, to design and place print and digital advertisements for all of its newspapers.

“It’s no secret that these are challenging times for newspapers,” then-publisher Michael Rifanburg wrote in an August 2018 note to readers, as he announced additional layoffs in the features and photography departments. “We just completed a year-long plan to save costs, shifting some resources from print to digital and reducing the cost of producing the print newspaper.”

That November saw a number of

additional changes. NNE president and CEO Aaron Julien abruptly replaced Rifanburg as the publisher of the group’s Massachusetts papers a week after a new union, the Pioneer Valley NewsGuild, went public with an organizing drive at the *Gazette* and *Valley Advocate*. A week later, the *Athol Daily News* announced it would reduce publication from six to four editions a week.

Moses, who joined the company as vice president of sales and marketing that November and succeeded Julien as the newspapers’ publisher last May, explained why the experiment ended after a few short months. “When I got here, I thought that was a mistake,” he said of the decision. “In Northampton, since [2018], we have built out our creative team, so some of the work is done here in house as well.”

Athol Public Library director Jean Shaughnessy said she felt the *Daily News’s* publishers responded to some readers’ criticisms in reversing the decision. “It was a very rough transition, and mistakes were made,” Shaughnessy said. “I think if it had been a smooth transition... they wouldn’t have lost so many subscribers.”

The Athol newspaper now reprints much of its content from the *Greenfield Recorder*. Despite the recent downsizing, Shaughnessy said she appreciates the newspaper’s continued coverage of the library’s events, and hopes the coverage continues from Greenfield. “Any publicity that the library needed or wanted, they always did nice stories,” she said.

No further changes to the publication will result from closing the Athol office, Moses said, except for the reduction in full-time staff members. “At this particular junction, I feel comfortable with the staff we’ve got to produce at six days a week,” he said.

Reporters from the Athol newsroom have been invited to keep contributing on a freelance basis. This reporter was told last year that the *Daily News* did not pay more than \$50 per freelance article, and that the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* paid entry-level freelancers around \$75 per article.

Gathering the News

“My focus is, with our budgeting, to create a model where we can invest in news gathering, because that’s our product,” Moses said, “regardless of how folks are digesting it, whether it’s print or digital.”

According to the publisher, NNE’s commercial printing operations in Northampton and Concord are doing well. “It is a healthy revenue stream for us, and it certainly helps us support other areas of the company as well,” he said. (The *Montague Reporter* has been printed at the *Gazette* press since 2012.)

Moses said that tariffs placed last year on Canadian newsprint turned out to be a non-issue for the company, despite a public warning by Rifanburg that they would strain the bottom line. The tariffs were lifted after a few months, and since then the cost of newsprint has come down.

Instead, Moses blames the cuts on the universal challenges faced by small newspapers: declining readership and declining advertising revenues. Newspaper staffing levels decreased by 47 percent between 2008 and 2018 nationwide, according to a Pew Research Center study.

NNE continues to contract work

out to the Gannett network, which finalized a \$1.1 billion merger last month with GateHouse Media, becoming the nation’s largest daily newspaper holder. The conglomerate publishes around 260 daily newspapers in the US, including the *Gardner News* to the east of Athol and the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette* to the south.

While NNE is consolidating its Athol news operation into Greenfield, the bulk of its operations in the state – including the publication of the *Amherst Bulletin* and *Valley Advocate* – takes place at the Conz Street office in Northampton.

“We have a shared desk because our press operation is here, obviously,” Moses said. “In Northampton, since [2018], we have built out our creative team, so some of the work is done here in house as well.”

Management at the Northampton location is in ongoing contract negotiations with the Pioneer Valley NewsGuild, an affiliate of the Communications Workers of America. The “wall-to-wall” collective bargaining unit, comprised of reporters, press operators, janitors, and other non-managerial *Gazette* and *Advocate* staff, was voted in by a 40-29 vote last year.

When the union went public, or-

ganizers cited concern over a lack of transparency in NNE’s managerial decisions, shifting job descriptions, and gender-based pay disparity as motivations to organize. The NewsGuild does not represent staff at the *Recorder* or *Daily News*.

Underserved Communities

The *Athol Daily News* was founded in 1934 when two weekly newspapers, the *Athol Chronicle* and *Athol Transcript*, merged to form one daily publication. At the time NNE purchased the newspaper, it had been in the same family since 1941, the year Edward Fairchild bought it from Lincoln O’Brien. Fairchild sold the enterprise to his son-in-law, Richard Chase Sr., in 1982, and he passed the business on to his son in 1989.

“I’m sorry to see it go – I’ve been a supporter of the paper forever,” David Small said of the *Daily News* office closing. “It just feels like the air is coming out of it.... If you don’t have the local staff reporters, I’m not sure how you’re going to be able to cover the Worcester County side of things.”

Years of consolidation and cost-cutting have resulted in “news deserts” throughout the state and country, raising concerns about

civic education and local political transparency.

A bill that would commission a study of “communities underserved by local journalism in Massachusetts,” H.181, is sitting in the state legislature right now, written by representative Lori Ehrlich of Marblehead. The study would look into “the adequacy of press coverage of cities and towns, ratio of residents to media outlets, the history of local news in Massachusetts, print and digital business models for media outlets, the impact of social media on local news,” and other factors.

“It’s a spiral,” Small said. “People are not going to renew subscriptions if they don’t feel like they’re being adequately covered.”

“We don’t know how they’ll do it from a distance, but we have nothing else local,” said Shaughnessy. “If you don’t support it, it won’t continue.”

Sarah Robertson is a contributing reporter at the Montague Reporter. She worked as a staff writer at the Daily Hampshire Gazette in 2017 and 2018, and the Athol Daily News in 2018 and early 2019.

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting to this article.



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Budget Fun Begins Anew

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the Erving selectboard and finance committee met jointly to start developing the FY’211 budget. They reviewed budget requests for eleven town departments.

Several – including the treasurer, conservation commission, finance committee, and planning board – requested level funding with the current fiscal year. The selectboard is requesting an increase of \$17,785 over FY’20, seeking to fund the new planning assistant position, staff training, and the re-establishment of the personnel policy review board.

Software maintenance and expenses were cited as the cause of increases for the tax collector, information technology, and board of assessors.

The tax collector also requested an additional three hours per week for the part-time assistant. The town clerk requested \$5,560 more than in the current fiscal year, based on the ongoing bylaw and regulation codification project, software support, and election expenses.

The board and fin com will review these requests and requests from the other town departments over the winter months, then vote this spring on a final budget to present to the May 2020 annual town meeting.

Library Building Update

Administrative coordinator Bryan Smith told the board that construction of the new library building is on schedule.

The board approved spending up to \$9,999 for the circulation desk. Library director Barbara Friedman said that the lowest of three quotes was \$7,980, from a local woodworker who constructed the circulation desks for the Athol and Petersham libraries.

The board also approved ex-

pending \$14,300 for National Library Relocations, Inc. to move the collection into the new library, and \$6,000 for bookshelves for the children’s room.

Friedman proposed using two of the current library computers at the new library, but library building committee co-chair and IT coordinator Jacqueline Boyden said those computers had home versions of Microsoft Office rather than business versions. “I’ve been watching the pennies like my own, but I don’t want old equipment in new building,” she said. Friedman suggested holding off on buying some of the computers until the new building was in use.

Friedman also reported that library assistant Jean Daley is working on a grant to purchase 3-D printers.

School Re-Regionalization

Bryan Smith told the board that Gill and Montague have each identified three representatives to a school regionalization study committee. He asked the board if they wanted a representative at the discussion of possible regionalization between Gill-Montague and the six towns of the Pioneer Valley district. Currently, Erving Elementary School is part of Superintendent Union 28, and Erving students are tuitioned to Turners Falls High School.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said that representation was worth considering, and that the fin com should be consulted.

International Paper Mill

Administrative coordinator Smith told the board that transformers found on the ground at the former International Paper Mill, apparently the work of scrap metal thieves, as well as scrap metal pieces and 20 cubic yards of contaminated soil had been removed from the site by Environmental

Services, Inc. He said that the consultant will file a report with Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection by the December 25 deadline.

Smith said that labels and serial numbers indicated that the transformers were owned by Northeast Utilities. He said he had talked with town counsel, and would pursue reimbursement from Northeast Utilities for the cleanup.

Other Business

The board voted to approve the town’s new Hazard Mitigation Plan, developed by fire chief Philip Wonkka and Franklin Regional Council of Governments, and to send it to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Administrative coordinator Smith reported that the lights at the senior and community center had been retrofitted to more energy-efficient LEDs using the money from the Green Communities grant. The next steps the town will take under the grant are upgrading lighting at the police station and an energy audit at Erving Elementary School.

Smith noted that the energy use documented at the Ervings wastewater treatment plant POTW #1 has increased, in part due to greater volume of wastewater processed, and in part due to improved data collection. Smith theorized that there were gaps in the data collection in the baseline year of 2015, making it appear that energy use has increased. He said that planning assistant Mariah Kurtz would study the data in January.

The board accepted Peter Sanders’ resignation from the conservation commission. Chair Jacob Smith noted that the conservation commission, open space committee, and energy committee have vacancies.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

needs of the town.”

Town administrator Steve Ellis said the search committee had undertaken a “thorough reference check” of Meals, and “emerged unanimous that we would recommend him to the board.” The search process included a site visit at the Hatfield treatment plant.

“I think you guys have a great staff down there,” said Meals of the Montague plant. “I love the facility. I liked it when I worked there.” He added that “like any other infrastructure, it’s aging, but they’re in the process of addressing it.”

The selectboard did not discuss the budgetary challenges faced by the department in recent years, including the closing of the Southworth paper mill and the end of the “Montague Process” for reducing solids, which now have to be shipped to distant facilities. These factors have produced significant hikes in sewer rates over the past few years.

Ellis did say that Meals had met with town accountant Carolyn Olson, who served on the hiring committee and assists in the preparation of the WPCF budget. “She emerged confident,” Ellis said.

“Confident that he could get along with Carolyn?” asked selectboard member Mike Nelson.

“I like her,” said Meals. “I was in the military, so by the book, I like.”

The board voted to authorize Ellis and selectboard chair Rich Kukulewicz to negotiate a contract with Meals. If the negotiations are successful, Ellis said, Meals could assume his post “in or around the third week in January.” “Eric really takes his responsibilities to the town of Hatfield seriously,” Ellis explained.

Trombley, who will continue to serve on a consulting basis during the transition, remained in the room for a good part of the evening’s agenda in order to discuss a project to replace a fuel tank at the plant. He said the current fuel storage system is a 4,000-gallon tank below ground in a “concrete sealed vault,” but that the tank currently has “some leakage.” The plan is to replace it with four 330-gallon tanks in the administration building.

Ellis said that the low bid for the project, \$14,700 came from Boston Green Fuel Company Inc. The board awarded the bid and executed a contract with the company. Trombley said that “at some point,” the WPCF will be required to pull the tank and concrete vault out of the ground.

Focus on the Move

Town planner Walter Ramsey and Riverculture director Suzanne LoManto came before the board to discuss a report called “Millers on the Move,” a strategic plan for the village of Millers Falls. LoManto said she and Ramsey had decided to focus on “how this document came about and what we hope to accomplish,” as opposed to talking about

“all the projects, because it’s just too much to talk about.”

LoManto said the process that produced the document was funded by a \$15,000 grant the town had received in October 2018. She said the project was inspired by a “river walk” being created by the planning department, and by the fact that there was a Millers Falls Improvement Association of local residents. She said the project had conducted a survey last June and held “two really well attended working meetings” for community input.

Ramsey said that the project was modeled on the Turners Falls Livability Project, which focused on efforts to encourage the “creative economy” in that village. “We learned a lot of lessons in Turners Falls, and we thought we could deploy some of those in Millers Falls,” said Ramsey.

The results of the project are summarized in four pages of “strengths, weaknesses and opportunities” charts. The first of the “opportunities” the document listed was “increased access” to the Millers River by creating hiking trails. Much of the commentary at the meeting focused on this aspect of the plan. Ramsey said a riverfront access project, funded by a state grant, has already gone out to bid.

David Brule, from “the Erving side of Millers Falls” – Millers traditionally included sections of the towns on either side of the river – said “the riverfront park is really close to my heart.” He said the hiking trails would be “fascinating and accessible for both sides of the river.”

After other favorable comments by members of the audience, the board voted to endorse the plan.

Reports and Projects

Ramsey remained at the front table to discuss a number of other reports and projects. He requested that the board approve the previous fiscal year’s Green Communities annual report. The board approved the request.

Ramsey also updated the board on a brownfields hazardous materials assessment of the town-owned property on 8 Canal Road, once the site of a cutlery factory and then of a coal-fired power plant. “It is a relatively clean site,” he said. The assessment identified some lead and chemicals that may have resulted from “an old fuel spill,” but these remain in place “and are not “leaching into the [Connecticut] River.”

The board approved a commitment to use \$91,400 in state Chapter 90 highway funds for a 25% match to obtain a federal grant for the “Montague City Road Flooding Mitigation Project.” Ramsey said the project will probably be implemented during the summer of 2021. He also announced a “Hazard Mitigation Plan Public Forum” at the Montague Public Safety Complex on Wednesday afternoon.

The board, at Ramsey’s request, executed a \$180,300 contract with McMahon Associates for design and engineering services for the Canal District Gateway Improvement Project.

“Is this the grant we do not speak of?” asked Michael Nelson.

“It’s currently embargoed, yes,” replied Ramsey.

“The event is the 17th, but we’re going to be allowed to have public conversation about it in a day or two,” said Ellis. Ramsey said that the town is hoping to put the actual project out to bid – whatever it may be – in April.

Other Business

Suzanne LoManto received permission to use public property – Spinner Park on Avenue A – for the annual RiverCulture event “It’s A Wonderful Night” this Friday, December 13 from 6:15 to 7:30 p.m.

The board approved a “change of manager” request from the Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club for its on-premise liquor license at its facility off of Turners Falls Road.

At the request of police chief Chris Williams, the board elevated Detective Peter Lapachinski to temporarily replace Staff Sergeant Lee Laster until Laster returns from an injury.

The board executed a contract with Berkshire Design for bidding and construction design services on the Spinner Park Restoration Project.

Ellis reviewed his revenue projections for the FY’21 budget process, which will begin soon. He also discussed a project underway to create a more detailed set of personnel policies, consistent with recent union contracts. He said the document would move the town away from personnel policies contained in town bylaws and toward a policy manual maintained under the authority of the Selectboard. He said the changes will probably be voted on by annual town meeting in the spring.

Ellis reviewed the progress of a Healing Communities Study, designed to reduce opioid use in the state. The study will identify and encourage “best practices” to address opioid use and deaths in cities and towns in the state. “We’ve yet to see the specifics and our community will not be engaged as soon as others,” he said.

Ellis also briefly gave an update on the progress of the lease agreement between the regional transit authority, of which Montague is a member, and the aging storage and maintenance facility it rents from the Greenfield Montague Transportation Area (GMTA), of which Montague is also a member.

He said he would report back to the board on the topic in the new year because there would not be a GMTA meeting prior to the selectboard’s final 2019 meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, December 16.



Town of Wendell LIBRARY DIRECTOR

The Town of Wendell (pop. 901) is accepting applications for the position of **Library Director**. The Library Director provides and promotes library services to the Wendell community. The Director works under the direction of and in collaboration with the Board of Trustees on present and future needs of the library and is responsible for oversight of the library’s budget, and for the day-to-day supervision of staff and volunteers. Position expected to begin May 2020.

The library director adheres to the policies and procedures of the Town of Wendell. Applicant should appreciate the role of a library in a small, rural community. This is a 32 hours/week, benefitted position with an annual salary of \$33,596. Job description and application available at www.wendellmass.us/index.php/about/librarian-director-job-opening.html.

Deadline for submission of application is February 10, 2020. Send resumes to Sylvia Wetherby, Trustee chair, PO Box 236, Wendell, MA 01379, or librarianjob@wendellmass.us. (AA/EOE.)

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was December 10, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive

State Puts Biomass Plants on Hold

In a December 3 letter, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) notified “stakeholders” in pending biomass energy projects – including Pioneer Renewable Energy’s 47-megawatt biomass facility planned for Greenfield’s Industrial Park – that the DOER would be “suspending consideration of biomass energy applications for qualification” under the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard, pending a study of the sustainability of biomass technology.

The study will focus on whether there are sufficient forestry reserves in the region to fuel such plants, and the potential climate change impact of the plants’ carbon emissions. The study and the DOER’s “subsequent regulatory processes” are expected to take about one year.

Matt Wolfe, principal of Pioneer Renewable Energy, expressed confidence that once the study is complete, the Greenfield biomass facility will qualify. He said PRE’s estimates of sustainability had been “appropriately conservative,” and that there were more than enough forestry reserves to adequately fuel the plant.

Williams Way Closure Would Make Way For Skate Park

The expansion of Unity Park to allow room for a permanent concrete skate park, and a private right-of-way easement over town land next to the former Williams Garage, lie at the heart of Articles 6, 7, and 8 on Montague’s special town meeting docket. Without approval of all three articles, the Great Falls Skate Park

may lose its chance to take advantage of available federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money.

“This is our last chance,” said Bryan Dolan, head of the skate park committee, of the upcoming town meeting. “If we don’t hit this, we’ll miss the CDBG, and it will all be over.”

In order to close the one block long, town-owned road that connects First and Second streets to create room for the skate park, town meeting voters will be asked to give abutter Tim de Christopher, who owns the former Williams Garage and the adjoining lot by First Street, \$1,000 in compensation.

The planned location for the skate park includes the 25 feet of land beneath Williams Way, which will be added to Unity Park if town meeting votes to close the road.

Selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt, who said she negotiated the deal with de Christopher, explained the proposal at a public hearing on Unity Park improvements on Wednesday night. “He feels he’s losing access to his property by the closing of Williams Way,” she said, “and that will compromise the value of his building.”

Pruitt called the \$1,000 “a small price to pay for his uncertainty.”

More UFOs!

The National Spiritual Alliance in Lake Pleasant is sponsoring a follow-up workshop on Unidentified Flying Objects on Saturday from 2 to 4 p.m.

The format will include a film entitled “Fifty Years of Government Cover Up,” information sharing regarding personal UFO experiences, and a question and answer period.

The workshop facilitator will be Kenneth Hopkins, a member of the National Spiritual Alliance board of directors and a UFO researcher since 2002.



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BRIDGE from page A1

The bridge, constructed in 1947, has experienced numerous closures over the past few years. It was shut down in July 2015 due to a large hole which “mysteriously” appeared in the structure’s deck. Last spring traffic on the bridge was reduced to one lane, with stoplights installed on both the Greenfield and Montague sides, after MassDOT found it “structurally unsafe.” Vehicles weighing over 20 tons, including large fire trucks, are now prohibited from crossing the bridge.

According to the MassLive website, the DOT inspected the General Pierce in early November, an

inspection that included a drone flying under the structure. State officials concluded that the bridge had not deteriorated significantly since the lane closing last spring.

Tom Bergeron, superintendent of the Montague department of public works, told the Reporter he had not received any new information on the bridge’s status. He said his department had plowed the General Pierce after the last snowstorm, and that “someone” had plowed the sidewalk.

Janine Greaves, reached at the Greenfield DPW, said her department had cleared the sidewalk because “someone com-



Sunwheel Events Mark Winter Solstice

AMHERST – The public is invited to observe sunrise and sunset on the day of the winter solstice among the standing stones of the UMass-Amherst Sunwheel on Saturday, December 21, at 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

The winter solstice occurs when daytime is shortest in the Northern Hemisphere. UMass astronomer Stephen Schneider will discuss the astronomical cause of the solstice, the seasonal positions of Earth, sun, and moon, and the design of the Sunwheel and other calendar sites such as the Temple of Karnak in Egypt and Chankillo in Peru.

Schneider will also answer other astronomical questions, such as why the earliest sunset occurs about two weeks before the solstice and the latest sunrise about two weeks later, or why the shortest day of the year is actually December 22. If it is clear during the morning session, a

telescope will be set up to observe the waning crescent moon. In the evening session a telescope will be set up to safely observe the surface of the sun.

Visitors who stop in on their own will be able to see the sun rising and setting over the winter solstice stones from roughly December 16 to 26. This is because around the time of the solstice, the sun appears to rise at a fixed spot on the southeast horizon and set in a fixed southwest direction for more than a week.

The Sunwheel is located south of McGuirk Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road (Amity Street) a quarter mile west of University Drive. Visitors should prepare for freezing temperatures and wet footing. Rain or blizzard cancels the events. Donations are welcome to help with the cost of additional site work and future events.

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JOE KOPERA PHOTO

Above: Joe Kopera shared this stunning photo of the Connecticut River, looking toward Deerfield from the Montague/Sunderland line.



Unearthing the Archives

By Charlotte Kohlmann

PART VIII: BERTA ALLERHAND LANDRÉ AND ERIC GOLDSCHIEDER



“So I am sitting here at last before this blank sheet of paper. At last, is it inertia or what else could it be? That I postponed this long planned project time and time again. From year to year. From day to day. Hopefully this will hold true. It is only the first step that is difficult. This first step has yet to be taken. Where do I start?”

These are the opening remarks of Berta Allerhand Landré’s memoir. Her life was punctuated by both World Wars and the Holocaust, followed by the physiological weight of devastating familial loss, resulting in repercussions of survivor’s guilt.

As a working-class Jewish woman, Berta earned her doctorate degree in 1925 for Geography at the University of Vienna. She later became a founding editor of a German children’s book imprint which is still in existence today, as well as a translator and published author.

While in her 70s, Berta spent five years writing over 3,000 pages of her memoir in German – and one month recording herself re-reading

it all onto thirty-five hours worth of audio-cassette tapes.

I recently sat down with Eric Goldscheider, an Amherst-based writer and former news reporter and Berta’s grandson. He has created a crowd-sourced translation project around his grandmother’s audio files, in hopes that one day an ambitious thread of audio-recorded English translations can be strung together to form a podcast of his grandmother’s stories with the help of strangers willing to contribute their voices.

Eric has digitized his grandmother’s tapes into 600 individual audio files. “She was steeped in story-telling when she sat down to write them,” says Eric. “They are easily broken down into vignettes, many of which revolve around personalities that pass through her or [her mother’s] life.”

The project aims to use the in-

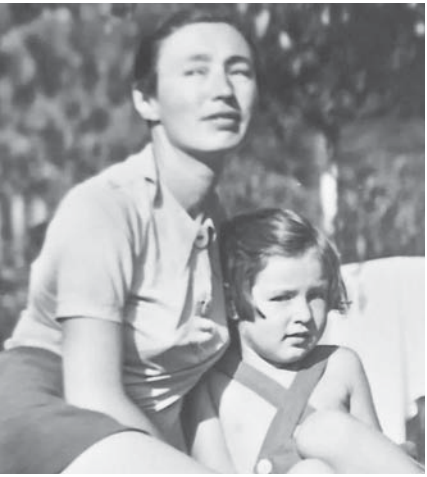
ternet’s far-reaching network to gather crowd-sourced intergenerational German speakers willing to translate Berta’s recordings into English. Potential translators can be students, professors, or anyone with a background in German.

My own grandmother, who fled Nazi Germany during World War II, has translated one file, and feels the importance of helping dissect Berta’s stories into English. The few completed translations are uploaded to the public and are accompanied by a typed transcript on the project’s website: <https://bal.5colldh.org>.

A Worm’s-Eye Perspective

While there is no complete or accurate list of survivors from the Holocaust that live today, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum maintains a registry of the

see **UNEARTHING** page B5



PHOTOS COURTESY E. GOLDSCHIEDER

Top left: Berta Allerhand Landré, three years after the second World War.
Left: Berta and her daughter, Marianne Landré Goldscheider, in 1937.
Right: Berta’s mother, Anna Hahn Allerhand.

MONTAGUE REPORTER ON THE ROAD



Montague Reporter managing editor Mike Jackson reviews the previous week’s edition on Thanksgiving outside the People’s Palace and Winter Gardens in Glasgow, Scotland. The building houses a museum of Glaswegian social history, and its domed ceiling is adorned with an eight-panel mural portraying episodes of class struggle in the city beginning with the 1787 strike and massacre of the Caltion weavers. (As it turned out, the Winter Gardens were under renovation.)

Going somewhere? Take us with you! Send photos to editor@montaguereporter.org

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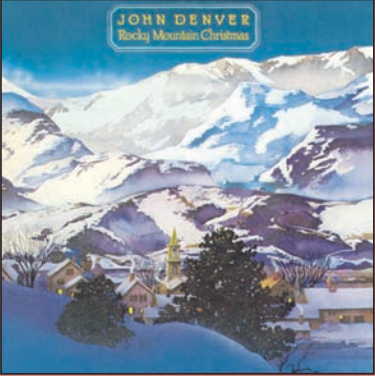
#14: Our Favorite Christmas Records

Compiled by J. BURKETT

TURNERS FALLS – This week, for our final column of the year, we decided to interview some folks from the local (or so) music scene about their favorite Christmas records of all time.

We hope everyone has a great holiday! And keep the records playing out there...

Adam Kohl, Wendell, a.k.a. Arkm Foam: the Mystra Records XMas LP, *YZ (XMissing): Christmas And Seasonal Sounds* (2010). “Of course!”



Allysen Callery, Bristol, RI: Vince Guaraldi, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965) and John Denver, *Rocky Mountain Christmas* (1976).

Andrea Sroka, Turners Falls, member of Flaming Dragons of Middle Earth and Hung Trucker: Norman Luboff Choir, *Calypso Holiday* (1957). “It’s not really a Christmas album at all, but on the occasion it makes me feel like I want to. I especially like the trumpet parts.”

Andy Crespo, Electric Eye Records, Northampton: “Vince Guaraldi... James Brown, etc. Nothing obscure.”

Ariel Kotker, Easthampton: Frank Sinatra, *Christmas Songs* (1950). “We played it non-stop in 1989.”

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Christmas With the Chipmunks* (1961). “Wes’s dad used to

play it – also ‘Greensleeves’ and Fahey, x-mas recs year round.”

Bev Ketch, Turners Falls, member of Viewer: *Unknown German music box record*. “It was the most beautiful Christmas album I ever heard, but I lost it and don’t even know the name of it.”

Bob Fay, Easthampton, member of Sebadoh and Night School: Phil Spector, *A Christmas Gift for You from Phil Spector* (1963), and also Lou Rawls, *Merry Christmas. Ho! Ho! Ho!* (1967). “The Spector title for the fantastic amount of jingle bells on the recordings, and the Lou Rawls just has great Xmas soul.”

Breakdown Records, Turners Falls: Easy E, “Merry Muthaf---in’ Christmas.” (And their homie Anthony says: the 1989 *Bummed Out Christmas* compilation.)

Chris Carlton, Frozen Corn: Bill Crofut & Benjamin Luxon, *On Christmas Eve* (1985). “It’s UK and New England traditionals, pretty straight but good quality. The wassail song is my favorite.”



Chris Dooley, Holyoke, a.k.a. DJ12XU: Peanut Butter Wolf, *Badd Santa: A Stones Throw Records Xmas* (2007). “This is a fun compilation of holiday songs mixed by Peanut Butter Wolf. Some of my favorite tracks are Bruce Haack ‘I Like Christmas,’ Super Jay ‘Santa’s Party Rap,’ and Baron Zen ‘My Lovely Christmas’.”

see **MUSIK** page B4

Pet of the Week

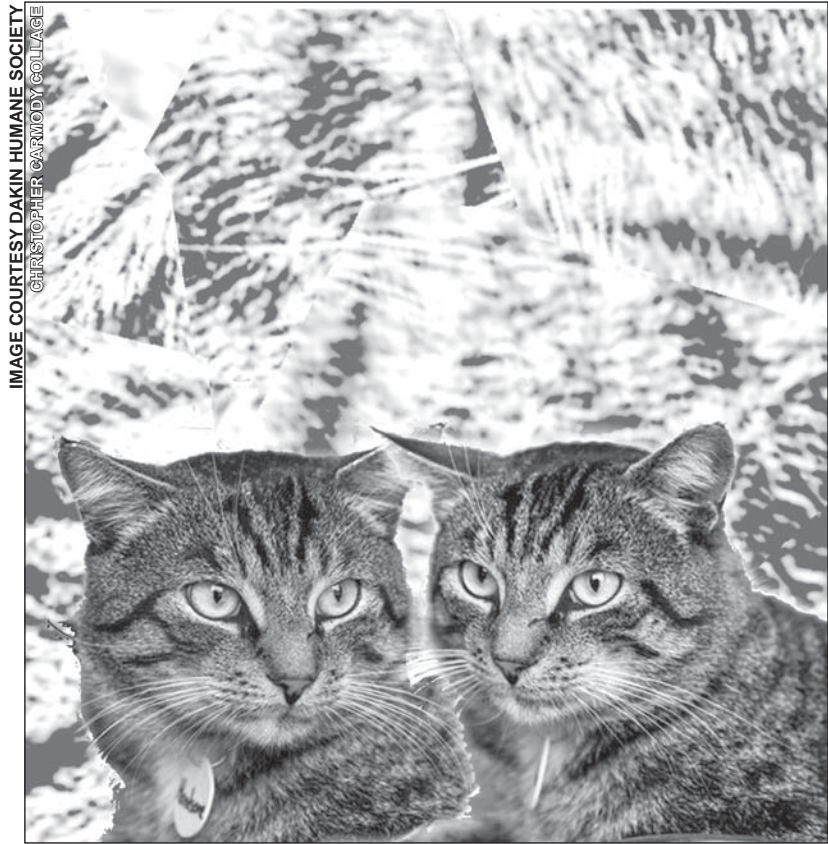


IMAGE COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY
CHRISTOPHER CATRUDY COLLAGE

“HANDSOME”

Hi. My name is Handsome, and you can certainly see why. I’m a beautiful boy looking for a quiet, mellow home where I can stretch out and relax.

I’ve lived with other kitties, but I’d like a home without any dogs

cramping my style. If you’ve got a big plush bed for me to sleep in, give Dakin a call, or come down to the Leverett shelter to meet me.

Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at info@dpvhs.org.

THEATER REVIEW

Mr. Drag and How the Grinch Stole Karl

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

TURNERS FALLS – I have seen Mr. Drag and Karl perform several times. A couple of the performances were Christmas holiday shows. The one that I went to last year at the Shea Theater involved the duo doing a version of *A Christmas Carol*. This year’s had something to do with *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*.

A guitarist and songwriter named Izzy Heltai opened for the show. An elf character came up on stage to help him open. Heltai sang a song explaining how Karl and Mr. Drag save Christmas from the Grinch who stole Christmas – or in this case, who stole Karl, like the title of the show says. It was a cool opening to the show.

A dance number led by Mr. Drag was next. I thought it was all right, and again like last year’s show, it seemed like they were doing a holiday TV special. It was made more like that when Karl went into the audience to ask people questions. Mr. Drag was the individual who asked the actual questions. At one point when Karl was helping out with it, he was actually pretty close to where I was sitting. So that was cool, too.

Other performers showed up, pretending to be guests and family. It was an amusing part of the show to see. Karl did a nice dance number with one of the guest performers, and the audience really enjoyed that act. Last year’s show featured a mailman character, who showed up again here – in fact, they made that a character into the Grinch, which was a very cool way to do it. (I should have realized that’s who he was when I saw him, because like the Grinch, he was with a dog character named Max.)

There was a scene where we actually see the Grinch and Max kidnap Karl. It was a funny scene, with no



WLOSTOSKI PHOTO

The holiday show ran at the Shea on December 6 and 7.

words in it. I once heard a funny rendition of “All I Want for Christmas” by Mr. Drag – this time, he sang “My Favorite Things” with others. Mr. Drag is still very good with that type of thing.

The second act had Heltai opening again, with the same type of song, only this time a director gave him funny instructions and interrupted him during the song. I enjoyed that, and the audience loved it as much as Karl’s dance number. Their version of the Grinch Who Stole Karl was great. It worked wonderfully well as part of the show. I just loved the look of their Grinch.

The show also featured a version of two weather-controlling characters I once saw in a cartoon, *The Year Without Santa Claus*, with Santa singing songs. It was their version of the cartoon.

I am amazed at how popular Mr. Drag and Karl have become in Turners Falls since I first saw them at the Shea two years ago. I found myself so immersed in the show that time flew by until the intermission. That continued for the rest of the show.

cedar and rose: insights from naturopathic practice

Healing With Water and Light

By DR. NITYA EISENHEIM

GREENFIELD – Continuing in the vein of naturopathic treatment of colds and the flu, I want to introduce you to hydrotherapy and sauna techniques.

Hydrotherapy is the application of different temperatures and types of water for healing. For example, most of us are familiar with using Epsom salt baths in hot water for muscle aches and flu-like symptoms, or placing a cool rag on our forehead for a headache. Many different cultures in Europe and Asia – and there are probably more I do not know about – use hydrotherapy and sauna for healing from arthritis, chronic fatigue, chronic illness, to beat the flu, or to just stay healthy.

Here in our neck of the woods, David Ruggles, an African-American abolitionist and hydropathic practitioner, founded the first hydrotherapy center in the United States in Florence, MA in 1847. He treated many famous people, such as Sojourner Truth.

Hydrotherapy is one of the foundational modalities of Naturopathic medicine because it is easy, it is accessible, and it works. It can help improve circulation, stimulate and improve lymph flow, stimulate the immune system, balance the nervous system by helping one to relax, and improve digestion. It stimulates the vis, the inherent healing nature in all sentient beings. It can be as simple as ending your shower with cold water, or doing an alternating hot and cold foot bath.

Far infrared sauna is a therapy using light filtered through charcoal as an overheating or hyperthermia treatment. Far infrared light is man-

ufactured by the sun; it is a portion of the sun’s invisible band. It is what you feel when you stand in the sun on a winter day and feel warm. If a cloud comes along, you might get a chill because the far infrared rays have been blocked. Far infrared light penetrates the skin layers more deeply than any regular steam or dry sauna you might find in your gym; you can sweat more and therefore receive its benefits with a lower temperature.

Overheating treatments have been recognized throughout history. Quite simply, it is hyperthermia utilized as a healing technique. Ancient

ture produces a natural biological defense and stimulates the healing force of the immune system to rid itself of destructive pathogens.

I use far infrared sauna in my own practice for detoxification and for getting ready for the cold and flu season. I believe far infrared sauna can boost your immune system, balance your brain and nervous system, and help to detoxify mold, heavy metals, and other environmental pollutants, which we all are exposed to on a regular basis.

The sauna also helps you relax and get into a parasympathetic state, which is the rest-and-digest state of the nervous system where healing happens. Many of my clients have reported better sleep, digestion, and more energy as a result of regular sauna use.

I’m Dr. Nitya Jessica Eisenheim, a Naturopathic physician practicing in Greenfield at Cedar Rose Naturopathic. I’m passionate about herbal medicine, cooking, healthy food, and community building. I love foraging for wild edibles and medicinal plants and igniting that passion in others. Through herbal medicine, integrative nutrition, naturopathic medicine, craniosacral therapy, and visceral manipulation I was able to heal from chronic back pain, irregular menstruation, and digestive issues.

Remember to always consult with your physician regarding appropriate treatment for you. This is not a replacement for medical or health care.

Dr. Nitya Jessica Eisenheim, ND is a Naturopathic doctor and herbalist, specializing in Lyme Disease, chronic digestive concerns, and chronic pain. She lives in Wendell, practices in Greenfield, and is founder of cedarroseheals.com.



Dr. Eisenheim’s sauna, used in treating patients at Cedar Rose Heals.

healers were aware that a slight fever was a potent healing tool against various illnesses. Greek physicians elevated body temperatures in therapeutic gathering places as an immune defense against infection, and that concept still holds true even today. Slightly raising body tempera-

Senior Center Activities

DECEMBER 16 TO 21

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.

Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs, call 863-9357. Messages can be left on machine when the center is not open.

M, W, F: 10 a.m. Aerobics; 10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

T, W, Th: 12 p.m. Lunch

Monday 12/16

8 to 9:15 a.m. Foot Clinic (by appt.)

12 p.m. Holiday Dinner w/TRIAD

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday 12/17

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

Wednesday 12/18

9 to 11 a.m. Veterans’ Outranch

12:30 p.m. Bingo

1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Mobile Food Pantry

Thursday 12/19

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards, Games, & Pitch

4 p.m. Gentle Yoga

Friday 12/20

12 p.m. Breakfast for Lunch

1 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Lunch is at 12 p.m., with reservations required two days in advance. Call (413) 423-3649 for

meal information and reservations.

For information, call Paula Better, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

Monday 12/16

8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

Tuesday 12/17

8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise

10 a.m. Stretching & Balance

12 p.m. Home Made Lunch

12:30 p.m. Friends meeting

Wednesday 12/18

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

11 a.m. M3 Class

12 p.m. Homemade Lunch

12:45 p.m. Bingo & Snacks

Thursday 12/19

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

12:30 p.m. Holiday Movie

Friday 12/20

9 a.m. Quilters Workshop

TBA: Walking or Snowshoeing

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

LEVERETT

For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

Wednesday 10 a.m. Flexibility & Balance Chair Yoga at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free).

Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

WENDELL

Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and programs, or for a ride.

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Bud's War, Part 6

By JERRY “JINX” COLLINS

TURNERS FALLS – Jerry “Jinx” Collins wrote about his youth growing up in Turners Falls in his memoir “Jinx: A New England Mill Town Urchin’s Life, the Depression through 1952,” which we have excerpted from previously. Now, Collins is sharing with us the experiences he and his brothers had during active duty in the armed services in excerpts from his latest memoir, still in progress, “Transition: A Journey From Youth to Manhood.”

In this installment, Jerry begins to learn, many years later, about what Bud experienced during the war.

It was June 11, 2013, and I had just come back from spending the morning with Bud. We had gone to Poet’s Seat Nursing Home, in Greenfield, to see my old boyhood friend “Lits.” Now 77, Lits had been there for the past two years and was receiving end-of-life care.

Having not seen him in over 50 years, I still would have known Lits anywhere, as he now was a spitting image of his father. The visit allowed us to recall our youthful adventures and catch up on all of our mutual boyhood friends, both living and deceased.

After leaving, Bud and I stopped at a café on Avenue A in Turners for coffee and donuts. We stayed there for a long time, talking about all of our old relatives and about some of his experiences in the Pacific war during World War II.

Iwo Jima

More open to talking about it now, Bud told me about the battle of Iwo Jima. With the Marines almost surrounded at Mount Suribachi, the destroyer he was serving on as radioman, the USS *Henry A. Wiley*, had been ordered to provide cover fire and to stand by in case an evacuation of the ground troops should become necessary.

The ship’s searchlights, concentrated on one sector, were instrumental in suppressing a Japanese night surprise banzai attack. The captain backed the ship to within approximately 200 yards of the shore – that’s the length of two football fields – which was so damn close that the Japanese snipers were bouncing bullets off the ship’s deck.

The ship’s crew was afraid that the captain was going to run it aground. “Maybe the captain might have been planning to give all of the crew rifles,” I quipped, “and send you ashore to help the Marines.”

Bud laughed and said that his captain would have done that if

needed, as he had “the guts of a truly great leader.”

Bud had been at his radio operator station for so long that when relieved, he went below deck and slept so soundly that he never heard the ship’s guns firing at the enemy’s positions all night long. When he finally awoke and went on deck, he saw the American flag flying over Mount Suribachi.

The Parade

In February of 2016, when Bud was spending the winter with me here in Arizona, I noticed that in Sacaton, a small community on the Gila Indian reservation located just twelve miles from my home, there was going to be an Ira Hayes Iwo Jima parade and celebration. (Ira was from there.) When I told Bud about it he asked, “Is it too far to go to see it?”

“Hell no,” I said. “It’s tomorrow at 9 o’clock. But we need to get there about eight so we can get a good seat for the parade.”

“Remember, I told you I was there and saw the flag in the morning after it had been raised,” he reminded me. “I’m really looking forward to going.”

When we arrived there about an hour before the start of the parade, I was blown away by the number of motorcycles from all over the country and as far away as Hawaii, and with the huge crowd that lined the parade route. Most of the people attending were Vietnam War vets, and when they saw the little 91-year-old guy wearing the World War II *Henry A. Wiley* baseball cap, many of them came over to talk to him and show their appreciation for his service.

Then, as the parade started passing by, the Grand marshal’s car which carried Ira Hayes’ brother slowed down, and with a thumbs-up acknowledged Bud. It wasn’t too long after that that the Indian princess, in all her beautiful garb, scurried over to give him a big hug and pose for Bud to take a photo with her.

From another one of the lead cars, a man who appeared to be one of the officials jumped out to also acknowledge him. When he learned that Bud had stood on the deck of the *Wiley*, which had been so close to the beach below Mount Suribachi, and had watched the flag flying that first morning, he said to Bud, “If we had known you were here, we would have had you ride in the Grand Marshal’s car!”

I’ll never forget the proud look that shined on my brother’s face that day as he got such a well-earned acknowledgment of his service.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Icy Conditions; Unshoveled Sidewalks; Excess Snow; Abandoned Chickens; School Assault; Pub Fight

Sunday, 12/1

2:33 a.m. Officer checking on vehicle parked at Railroad Salvage. Spoke to registered owner; he will be moving vehicle.

9:37 a.m. Walk-in party from Federal Street reporting that his snowmobile trailer was stolen over the weekend. It was parked on his son’s lawn, locked to a tree with a “For Sale” sign on it. The chain is still there; the trailer is gone. Report taken.

3:59 p.m. Report from Turners Falls Pizza House that a party is outside the door causing a disturbance again in his wheelchair, begging patrons for money. Officer advises party will be moving along.

Monday, 12/2

12:08 a.m. Report of vehicle that went sideways on Rabbit Hill; did not think it hit anything. Officer assisted motorist. DPW is in area plowing and sanding now.

3:17 a.m. DPW requesting two vehicles be moved: one near Hubie’s; one near Ce Ce’s. Officer requesting Rau’s. One vehicle on Fifth Street.

6:11 a.m. Burglar alarm motion at Franklin County Technical School. Maintenance on scene; had forgotten to disarm system before plowing.

1:24 p.m. Property manager on Fairway Avenue states that there is a Honda Civic parked in their lot that does not belong to a resident there. Owner not found. Manager advised that they can tow vehicle at their own expense.

1:44 p.m. 911 caller from Family Dollar reporting that a black sports car with PA plates keeps driving into the parking lot and doing donuts. Unable to locate; officers will continue to be on lookout.

4:37 p.m. Caller from Federal Street reporting that her neighbor is plowing snow from the driveway into the road, making the road impassable; requesting someone check area for safety. Unfounded.

Tuesday, 12/3

8:23 a.m. Caller from Fifteenth Street states her neighbor is plowing his

driveway into her yard; states that this has been an issue in the past and she would like to speak to an officer. Officer unable to make contact with neighbor at this time. Advised of options.

10:15 a.m. Caller states that it looks like there are two cars off the road into a snowbank near the Rod and Gun on Turners Falls Road. Officer reports that vehicles have AAA and family coming to assist them; requests DPW for scrape and sand in area.

10:53 a.m. Motor vehicle stop; verbal warning for excess snow on car.

1:09 p.m. Report of intoxicated male in parking lot on Bridge Street; unsteady on his feet. Officer advises party’s brother came to walk him home.

2:24 p.m. Officer reporting large tree branch down on Turners Falls Road. Called DPW, who advised that sidewalk is not town owned. Called Montague Housing, who advises the tree is across from their address, and it isn’t their tree or their responsibility. Called DPW back; they stated they will get someone out to take care of it.

3:38 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road requesting that officer retrieve illegal substances found following an eviction. Services rendered.

3:45 p.m. Report of icy conditions in Turners Falls and on Greenfield side of General Pierce Bridge. DPW advised for Turners; referred caller to Greenfield PD.

4:47 p.m. Report of someone throwing a snowball at the caller’s vehicle while she was driving on Third Street just around the corner from Canal Street. Area search negative.

Wednesday, 12/4

8:26 a.m. Caller complaining of snow banks on Green Pond Road at Route 63; believes them to be a hazard; advises he has complained to the DPW in years past but they have not cut back the snowbanks. Officer checked area and advises that the snow

banks are not a hazard.

8:47 a.m. Complaint re: unshoveled sidewalk on Union Street. Advised caller of 24-hour provision in town bylaws; advised to call back later today if sidewalks are still not cleared.

2:12 p.m. Report of unshoveled sidewalks across from Scotty’s; three houses in a row. Services rendered.

3:15 p.m. Report of unshoveled sidewalk on Masonic Avenue; caller advises her child’s school bus stop is on that corner, but the sidewalk has not been cleared from the storm. Ongoing issue. Officer advised owner of violation and penalties of noncompliance. Owner advises town plows hard snow on the sidewalk; does not believe he should have to clear it. Owner advised of several options for removing snow. Owner lives out of town. Officer will attempt to delivery town bylaw notice to owner.

5:21 p.m. Report of unshoveled sidewalk at foreclosed home on G Street. Officer drove by and obtained a phone number from the door; will place a call.

Thursday, 12/5

1:44 a.m. Caller from Avenue A reports very loud noises coming from upstairs; someone running on the stairs; things banging or being banged on. Officers advise quiet on arrival.

1:54 a.m. Clerk reporting unwanted male at F.L. Roberts. Courtesy transport provided.

9:32 a.m. Caller from Farren Care Center requesting assistance getting a resident to return; same left on foot after getting upset at the smoking policy. Services rendered.

3:46 p.m. Caller states that his truck was struck by another vehicle while it was parked on Bridge Street. Report taken.

Friday, 12/6

12:53 a.m. Neighbor advising that the sidewalk in front of an empty, foreclosed property on G Street has still not been cleared.

11:02 a.m. Party into station stating he found an abandoned vehicle in the Plains; would like to speak to an officer. Officer advises he spoke with vehicle owner’s brother, who advises the vehicle got stuck there and when the snow melts enough to get it out, they will.

11:07 a.m. Caller from Federal Street states that he had some tenants move out a few weeks ago and they left their chickens. States that he has been feeding them, but he ran out of feed and is not taking care of them anymore. Caller states he was in court today and was told by his lawyer that he needs to contact the animal control officer to report abandoned animals. ACO advised.

2:01 p.m. Caller states she was involved in a car accident and has some pain. AMR and Shelburne Control advised. Tow requested for both vehicles; DPW requested for icy secondary roads. Both parties refused transport. Rau’s has both vehicles.

8:59 p.m. A 54-year-old Florence man was arrested on a straight warrant.

9:59 p.m. Caller states that her son was assaulted a few weeks ago at the high school and he has serious injuries. She is going to come in to fill out a statement.

Saturday, 12/7

12:12 a.m. Caller reports a fight broke out in front of the Millers Pub and seven or eight people were fighting; group has since dispersed and moved along down the road towards the library. Unfounded.

11:23 a.m. 911 caller from Third Street states that while she was in the shower, a man entered her home and was standing in her kitchen when she came out of the bathroom. She yelled at him and he left. She was able to get a photo of the man using her phone. Units checking area for possible involved vehicle.

6:44 p.m. Report of one resident assaulting another at Farren Care Center.

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

Two New Musical Offerings; Fundraiser

By MICHAEL SMITH

It’s that time of year again! The snow has fallen, and the decorations are going up. The only thing left to help get you in the holiday season is music!

And MCTV has you covered. Available right now on our website, montaguetv.org, you can watch the Montague Community Band perform their Holiday Concert at the Shea Theater. Musicians and music

lovers braved a storm to participate, but for you it’ll be much easier!

On the other hand, if you need a *break* from holiday music, you can listen to John Hughes perform music played on the Kora, a West African instrument. It provides the perfect escape from the winter blues.

Root Studio, a local non-profit organization, held a successful fundraising campaign during the online Giving Tuesday donation event. Go to montaguetv.org to

watch their latest video, and see how you can help out people making a real difference for our community.

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, infomontaguetv@gmail.com, or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We’d love to work with you!

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MUSIK from page B1

Christopher Carmody, Ashfield: Gayla Peavey, “I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas.” “Also some of Bob Rivers’ *Twisted Christmas* [1989].”

Clark Griffin of Pigeons: *Elvis’ Christmas Album* (1957). “It reminds me of being a kid at Christmas. It’s heartbreaking to hear now, because Elvis got to record gospel songs that he so cherished on Side 2.”

Cynthia Meadows, Mystery Train Records, Amherst: Vince Guaraldi, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965). “Also Carpenters, Band Aid, Sun Ra’s doo-wop X-mas songs, and The Ravens with Jimmy Ricks.”

Erica Pinto, Holyoke: *Lou Monte Christmas* (1960-61). “Or Lou Prima. I do love “Dominick the Italian Christmas Donkey”... and Burl Ives... and the Gremlins soundtrack... and...”



Greg Dalton, a.k.a. Gary War: Rod Rogers, Teri Summers And The Librettos, “Santa Claus Goes Modern” (1969). “A 1960s Christmas song-poem.”

Hannah Brookman, Turners Falls, of Looky Here: John Denver and the Muppets, *A Christmas Together* (1979).

Jamie Mohr, Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Bruce Haack, *Ebenezer Electric* (1976).

J. Burkett, Mystery Train Records, Amherst: Bruce Haack, *Ebenezer Electric* (1976) and Phil Spector, *A Christmas Gift for You from Phil Spector* (1963). “First time I heard the Haack LP it was the most insane thing... Still great, but now more trad/beautiful/unique. Too bad Phil went totally nutso...”

Jeffrey Gallagher of Bridge of Flowers: The Roches, *We Three Kings* (1990). “It’s just their renditions are so creative.”

Jen Gelineau, Holyoke: Mariah Carey, *Merry Christmas* (1994). “I used to listen to this on repeat before the baby came. Also the Ronettes, and the *Soul X-Mas* comp.”



Jim Neill, Northampton, WR-SI-The River: Johnny Mathis, *Merry Christmas* (1958). “My parents played it every year since before I can remember, and this album IS Christmas for me. Still triggers that innocent, uncomplicated, un-cynical joy we felt as kids. Aside

from the nostalgic power, I think Johnny’s voice and the orchestral arrangements are beautiful.”

Joe Malinowski, Willimantic Records, CT: *Santa Claus Hides In Your Phonograph* (1922). “I don’t know that I have a favorite album. This kind of creepy one is the first record that comes to mind.”

Joel Paxton, Turners Falls: Frankie Valli & The 4 Seasons, *Christmas Album* (1966). “I used to think that one was really great. Also the Booker T & the MGs one.”

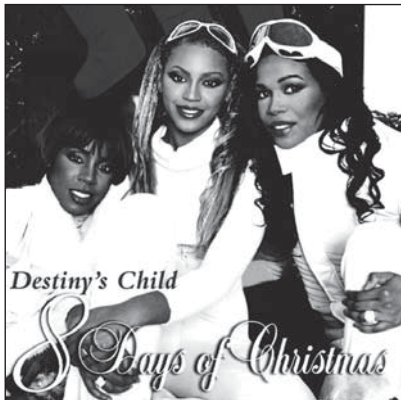
John McGuigan of Huevos II: John Denver and the Muppets, *A Christmas Together* (1979). “I listened to it all the time as a kid, and it still stands up. Hits that spot between funny and heartfelt that the Muppets are so good at. “Christmas is Coming,” with Miss Piggy going off the rails at the end – haha!”

John Moloney of Sunburned Hand of the Man: Vince Guaraldi, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965).

John Townsend, Easthampton: “Jackson 5, *Christmas Album* (1970), The Carpenters, *Christmas Portrait* (1978), and Ella Fitzgerald, *Ella Wishes You a Swinging Christmas* (1960). “A 3-way tie for best!”

Ken Maiuri of Ribbon Candy and the B-52s: Vince Guaraldi, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965). “Deeply nostalgic for me, plus it includes the timelessly gorgeous and groovy ‘Skating’.”

Kryssi Battalene of Headroom and the Mountain Movers: *Glen Campbell Christmas* (1968-69). “I found an unmarked tape with this album on it years ago, and would listen to it all the time not knowing what it was.”



Mal Devisa, Amherst: Destiny’s Child, *8 Days of Christmas* (2001). “Don’t know if I have a favorite, but from what I remember, this is amazing.”

Michael/Ma Turner of Huevos II: Amy Grant, *A Christmas Album* (1983). “This was my favorite growing up.”

Neale Gay, Greenfield: Bob Dylan, *Christmas in the Heart* (2009).

Omeed Goodarzi, Turners Falls: The Beatles’ 1968 Christmas 45’. “Yes totally!”

Owen Manure of the Owen Manure Band: *Elvis’ Christmas Album* (1957). “Because my grandmother had it.”

Pablo Yglesias, Peace & Rhythm Records: The Residents “Santa Dog” 45’ (1972). “No favorite LP. Just this song.”

Paul LaBrecque, Head of Wanstastique/10 Forward: David Bowie & Bing Crosby, “Little Drummer

COMICS

by denis f. bordeaux

T-RUMP

THREE DEGREES OF WARMING

by JANICE ROWAN

OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark

Submit your comics to editor@montaguereporter.org. Original, locally produced content only, please!

Boy” (1982). “It has been a long time since I celebrated X-Mas, but I have always been fascinated by this song since my childhood.”

Peter Nolan, Pelham, of Magik Markers and Spectre Folk: The Royal Guardsmen, “Snoopy’s Christmas” (1967). “It’s got a cool jazzy mellow vibe that is pretty timeless. Also the kid singing is great and good vibes. Also Willie Nelson’s “Pretty Paper” [1979], and the Christmas With the Chipmunks [1962] is all killer, no filler.”

Rob Thomas, Easthampton, of Sunburned Hand of the Man: Vince Guaraldi, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965), and Peggy, Penny, & Barbara Seeger, *American Folk Songs for Christmas* (1953). “There is a very special quality to this 10”... it has a small chorus of children... it’s from Boston in 1953 and has old X-Mas tunes.”

Sam Gas Can, Northampton: Jingle Cats, *Meowy Christmas* cassette (1993).

Ron Schneiderman, Easthampton, of Spirit of Orr and Sunburned Hand of the Man: Lou Rawls, *Merry Christmas. Ho! Ho! Ho!* (1967).



Ted Lee, Feeding Tube Records: *A John Waters Christmas* (2004). “Charlie Brown Christmas is always good too.”

Tony Pasquarosa, Gluebag, SQRM, Crystalline Roses Band: Dean Martin, *A Winter Romance* (1959). “His voice is flawless on this... and depending on which version you have, it may not even have trad. Christmas tunes, which provides comfort as long as snow stays around.”

Wednesday Knudsen of Pigeons: Bing Crosby, *Merry Christmas* (1945). “It was always the first record on the turntable as my mom and I started decorating the tree.”

Wendy Eisenberg, Turners Falls: John Zorn, *A Dreamers Christmas* (2011). “Ideal Christmas music with schmaltz up the wazoo.”

Wes Buckley, Pittsfield: The Ventures, *The Ventures’ Christmas Album* (1965). “I’m learning it for a gig in a couple weeks, and it is a stellar record!”



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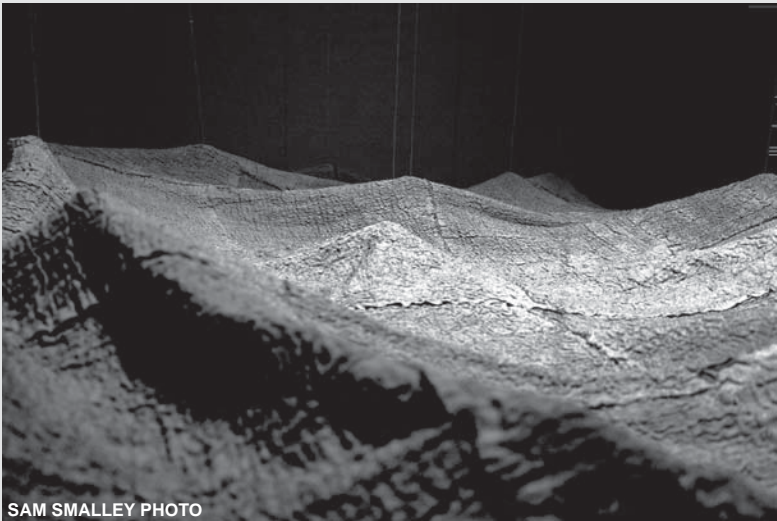
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Textile Artist Speaks



SAM SMALLEY PHOTO

Fafnir Adamites, “Interfere (with)” (2019), felted burlap installation.

BRATTLEBORO, VT – Turners Falls artist Fafnir Adamites will discuss the installation “Interfere (with)” in a free talk at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) next Wednesday, December 18, at 7 p.m.

“Interfere (with)” is a sculptural installation of felted wool and burlap suspended above the gallery floor. Adamites will speak about the ways in which their sculptures act as “monuments and reminders of trauma, intuition, and the legacy of emotional turmoil.”

Adamites explained that the way in which the sculpture was created aligns with the concept that the work is designed to express.

“The process of making the work in this exhibit inherently transforms and distorts,” they said. “When a non-wool material, such as burlap, is added to the traditional wet felt-making process, it is forced to shrink, altering its original woven structure. This intentional rupture in the rigidity and order of the burlap fabric is one step in freeing the materials from their presumed inherent qualities. For me, it metaphorically embodies the hopeful impulse of releasing the individual from the psychic burden of familial inheritance.”

“Adamites’s installation feels overwhelming and potentially suffocating,” said Sarah Freeman,

who curated the exhibit. “However, the use of highly tactile materials and repetitive, contemplative techniques allows the work to function as a tool for acknowledging, examining, and making sense of painful memories and experiences, thereby diffusing them.”

Adamites holds an MFA degree from the Fiber and Material Studies Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BA in Photography and Women’s Studies from UMass-Amherst. They took part in a residency at the Studios at MASS MoCA in 2016, and their work has won numerous awards.

Founded in 1972, the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center presents rotating exhibits of contemporary art, complemented by lectures, artist talks, film screenings, and other public programs. The Museum’s galleries and gift shop are open every day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Tuesdays. Regular admission is \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors, and \$4 for students. Members and children 18 and under are admitted free of charge.

Located in historic Union Station in downtown Brattleboro, at the notorious intersection of Main Street and Routes 119 and 142, the Museum is wheelchair accessible.

For more information, call (802) 257-0124 or visit brattleboromuseum.org.

OUT OF THE PARK DECEMBER 2019

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello, and happy holidays everyone! It’s that wonderful time of year to spend with family and friends, and to reflect on what’s most important in our lives.

One thing that should most definitely be at the top of your list is staying healthy and active during the holidays. It’s very easy to eat that extra piece of pie or candy (guilty here) and hibernate in the warm confines of our homes. Meet winter head-on by keeping your mind and body active. You’ll be thankful come spring.

Speaking of staying active, we start off the New Year with our **Annual Sawmill River 10k Run!** The Sawmill Run will be held on Wednesday, January 1 at 10 a.m. in Montague Center. We typically host close to 200 runners in this event, which is one of the more popular races in the county. The sleepy back roads of this beautifully picturesque village are a major draw for many runners. If you are a runner, or know of one, what better way to start off your year? The Sawmill Run is a digitally-timed race, and is sanctioned by the USA Track and



Field Association. Pre-registration is available on-line at RunReg.com/sawmill-river-10k-run, or you can download a registration form on our webpage at montague.net.

If swimming is more your thing, then take note that our **Open Swim Program** at the Turners Falls High School pool will be starting up soon after the New Year. Open Swim will be held on Tuesday and Friday evenings starting January 3, and will go until March 6. Family Swim is held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., with Adult Lap Swim from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. For rates, please visit our website or give us a call.

We’ll also be having our **American Red Cross Babysitting Course** on Tuesday, February 4 and

Wednesday, February 5. Those participating will obtain the knowledge and resources to become a great babysitter!

This is a fun and interactive course that teaches students first aid and safety skills, as well as helpful tips on how to prevent and respond to emergencies. The course is open to youths ages 11 to 15, and fees are \$40 for Montague residents and \$45 for non-residents.

On Saturday, February 15 we will be holding our **Night Sledding** event down here at Unity Park from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. We’re going to illuminate the hill with light towers, get a campfire going, and enjoy some refreshments to keep us warm! We held this event for the first time last winter, and had a great turnout. Here’s hoping we’ll be able to keep this snow for some quality sledding!

That’s about it from here. Enjoy the holidays, and if you wish to get additional information on all of our programs, check out our webpage on montague.net. We’ll talk to you in 2020!

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

UNEARTHING from page B1

names of 195,000 individuals, residing in over 60 countries. These survivors have countless stories yet to be told to younger generations, stories that are in need of being inextricably heard.

“Berta’s worm’s-eye perspective on well-known events from history have renewed relevance today,” says Eric. Right now, more than ever, stories like hers need to be spread.

Over the course of a century, between 1860 and 1960, three generations of Allerhand-Landr ’s female family members left indelible records in the form of personal histories. Berta’s mother, Anna Hahn Allerhand, wrote 60 pages of letters to her daughter containing gleeful but also gut-wrenchingly sad events in their lives. Marianne Landr  Goldscheider, Berta’s daughter, self-published two memoirs, *Janik Remembers* and *Talking to My Mother*, reflecting on her family’s experiences in postwar Europe through the lens of a teenager.

Berta’s own recollections begin with her early childhood memories in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, abruptly interrupted by WWI. An English translation of one file, already completed by volunteer Margaret Shade and available online for listeners, unravels one of Berta’s earliest memories in 1902, when she was two years old growing up in M hrisch Ostrau, an industrial Austro-Hungarian city bordering Germany.

“I cheer now I am a boy,” she wrote, “as my mother dressed me in white long underwear. Already then it seemed better to me to be a boy.” At such a young age, she was already noticing that the world around her was prejudiced against women, and the reality that being a man came with more inherent power and privilege.

The recollections continue through her studies at the University of Vienna in the 1920s, the maniacal rise of Hitler’s fascist power, and life in her family home, which doubled as a safe house for leftists fleeing to Belgium. They include the unbearable suicide pact of her par-

ents, decided upon after reading their fate had been prescribed in being sentenced to a concentration camp. Later on, Berta was not able to claim their bodies in Ostrau as a Jew in occupied Prague because she could legally not traverse those borders, so her husband did so for her.

She went on to chronicle her time in Cologne, Prague, Theresienstadt, and Munich. In 1937 she fled to Czechoslovakia, where she would live until her own death by suicide in 1982.



Berta's passport photo, taken two weeks prior to her parents' death.

To learn more about this project, you can contact Eric Goldscheider at eric.goldscheider@gmail.com or (413) 835-1248. You can listen to Berta's voice and some of the translations at <https://bal.5colldh.org>.

Allerhand Landr ’s death, her audio memoir has lived in the dark, never heard in its entirety by a public audience. With the help of the internet, one woman’s stories can now be given a new light.

Berta did not write every day for a cumulative number of years; her memoir was not an act of resistance in the form of a diary. She wrote toward the end of life, when time to recall everything is never on one’s side. Hardships can be compartmentalized and ultimately forgotten, but when shared, they are worth a fight to be remembered.

The 35 hours’ worth of stories Berta held onto catalogued three generations of lifetimes, even after her experiences of devastating loss and living through fear for her own Jewish identity. In the end, her memory-keeping was a tool that helped get her through it all: it was what she could control.

A Collaborative Remembrance

As I listened to a handful of translations made by volunteers, I realized that this project could also create new chains of nuanced storytelling, based on the kinds of voices, tones, and interpretive choices translators decide to use.

“I hope to see this as a potential curricular tool for digital and blended teaching of German, translation skills, Central European 20th century history, memoir as young-adult literature, spoken word, and memory studies,” says Eric.

Perhaps the result of this project will be played on the radio, or even shared in Germany. During World War II, radio was seen by the underground Jewish resistance as a tool for denazification. Berta also worked in radio, so it may be fitting to hear her recollections over public airwaves.

During the 37 years since Berta

Eric is looking for any German speakers willing to spend just minutes translating vignettes, never before translated into English, from his grandmother’s life. If you do not speak German but would like to help, there is also a donation page at www.gofundme.com/f/bal-crowd-sourced-translation-podcast where individuals can contribute financially to the project.

Berta originally titled her work *Fallen Through the Sieve of Time*, and subtitled it *Every Human Life is a Novel*. She intended on publishing it, and wanted to share her stories with all those who would listen.

If you would like to help as a translator, or just as a listener of this collaborative act of Sholeh remembrance, you can contact Eric Goldscheider directly at eric.goldscheider@gmail.com or (413) 835-1248. This ongoing project can be accessed at <https://bal.5colldh.org>.

As You Write It

This short memoir was among those written by local authors who take part in a monthly writing group led by Laura Rodley at the Gill-Montague senior center. They publish their reflections periodically in the anthology series As You Write It, which is available at local libraries. As You Write It VI was released last spring.

“The Sky Is the Limit”

By SALLY FAIRFIELD

The sky is the limit and if that is so, there is no limit on the Northern Plains of North Dakota. Children grow up on farms in that country where the tallest plants are wheat, corn and barley. In the coulees trees grow, the tops peaking over the banks of the deep cuts the streams have made in the flat land. From one town to the next the silhouettes of grain elevators and church spires rise on the horizon.

In the town of Richardton, known for Assumption Abbey, there are two identical towers on the church. The land around Richardton was settled by Germans from Russia and Germans from Hungary and the church was built in the style they remembered.

The Abbey had a school for the

children from the farms. Imagine the young boys, their brothers and friends all going to school and to the church on Sunday all of them taking care of animals and household chores before school and after, always under the sky where they could see the stars and the sun and the storms coming from the northwest.

And one day a brother from the abbey asks a certain boy if he would like to help him. Or, maybe the boys had chores during the school day. Some stood out as having a special way with the horses or a talent in plowing a straight row, or one was a particularly good student. Or, there was a tragedy at home. The boy, crossed the dirt road that separated the abbey from the town and he found a new life, never having left where he began.

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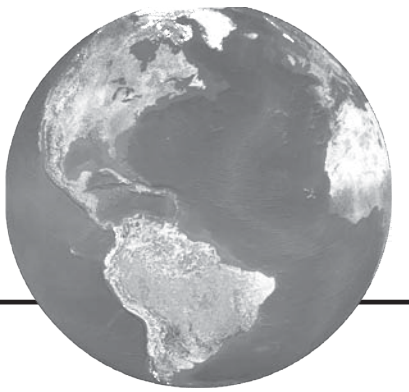
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Aquí se habla español

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



Machuca, una película chilena para reflexionar.

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

Las protestas en Chile continúan cada día dos meses después de haber empezado por la subida del billete de transporte público. El presidente Piñera tuvo que dar su brazo a torcer y realizar reformas para tratar de paliar diferencias sociales como subida de las pensiones o la cancelación de deudas estudiantiles.

Mientras estaba ocurriendo ahora mismo en Chile, decidí utilizar la película *Machuca* en una de mis clases en GCC. La había visto ya hace años, ya que se trata de una película de 2004, pero me hizo reflexionar sobre la realidad actual en Chile. La película está dirigida por el chileno Andrés Wood.

Machuca nos cuenta la relación entre dos niños, casi adolescentes, Pedro Machuca y Gonzalo, que provienen de clases socioeconómicas muy diferentes y se encuentran por primera vez en el aula de clase. La película transcurre en 1973, unos meses antes del golpe de estado que sufrió Salvador Allende a manos del general Augusto Pinochet que convirtió el gobierno en una dictadura militar. Las protestas que ocurrieron realmente en el '73 se incluyen a través de imágenes computarizadas de la época.

El director fue entrevistado por la revista española dedicada al cine *Todocine* con motivo del Festival de Cannes donde se presentó la película y estas fueron sus palabras:

El 11 de septiembre de 1973 yo tenía 8 años y, de cuarenta compañeros de curso, al menos quince vivían en los poblados chabolistas de la ribera del río Mapocho, a la salida de mi colegio. Estos niños habían entrado en el establecimiento educacional por la iniciativa del director, un sacerdote estado-

nidense de ideas progresistas. Fue una experiencia enriquecedora, a veces tormentosa y cruel pero también maravillosa; llena de contradicciones, como las que se vivían en el país. Fue un corto período de tiempo que nos marcó profundamente a todos (alumnos integrados y no integrados), ya que reunió a dos mundos que estuvieron y han estado completamente separados en la historia de Chile.

Me parecía que hacer esta película era algo absolutamente necesario, por un lado, porque nadie ha tocado la pérdida de la democracia en Chile bajo esta perspectiva. Aquí son los niños quienes miran, no juzgan ni emiten juicios. Son testigos de los hechos que sucedieron. Eso le da mucha libertad y verdad al relato. Y en ese sentido, la narración no está centrada en la filiación política y ni siquiera social. Son todos seres humanos, con sus grandezas y sus miserias. En Machuca he retomado ese período desde la melancolía, pero no lánguida sino llena de entusiasmo, como el de dos niños de once años que descubren mundos externos e internos en los que por fin pueden sentirse a sus anchas.

Todo se vive literalmente desde sus ojos. A través de ellos recibimos la información fragmentada del experimento educacional, de sus familias y del país.

Indudablemente, era un proyecto ambicioso, pero no por todo lo que quería abordar sino porque tenía que tener muy claros los límites de esta historia: el peor pecado hubiera sido intentar decirlo todo. Por eso, en Machuca, nos hemos limitado a lo que los niños han querido mostrarnos.

Como nos dice el director en estas declaraciones, parte de la película es autobiográfica. Wood

fue estudiante es un colegio privado con las mismas características que el de la película, en el que se creía en la integración de estudiantes que provenían de clases sociales desfavorecidas. El director identifica al director de la escuela con Salvador Allende que intentó llevar a cabo una reforma educativa en la que todas las clases sociales tuvieran acceso al mismo tipo de educación. Los militares que aparecen al final para interrumpir el proceso de integración representan a Pinochet y sus generales.

El senador Allende llegó al poder en 1970 al frente de una coalición llamada Unidad Popular formada por socialistas y comunistas. Esta fue la primera vez que un candidato socialista llegó al poder en unas elecciones democráticas en un país latinoamericano. El triunfo de Allende fue visto con desconfianza por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Una de las primeras medidas de Allende fue la reforma agraria. El gran porcentaje de la tierra en Chile estaba en manos de unos pocos latifundistas. La tierra fue expropiada a los dueños que no la estaban trabajando y fue repartida a agricultores que formaban cooperativas dirigidas por el gobierno. Así mismo nacionalizó la industria minera que hasta ese momento era propiedad de empresas de los Estados Unidos.

La clase media sufrió las medidas económicas al ser víctima tanto de la inflación como del aumento del mercado negro y empezaron las protestas contra Allende que se narran en la película y las contra-protestas de sus partidarios. Su gobierno tuvo que soportar una ola de huelgas, presiones políticas, disturbios sociales, intentos revolucionarios y una profunda división entre los grupos integrantes de la Unidad Popular. Allende se vio bloqueado entre los grupos extremistas de izquierda y



Salvador Allende, presidente de Chile 1970-1973.

Tablón de anuncios

• **Food Bank de Massachusetts** sigue ofreciendo alimentos gratis cada tercer miércoles de mes en el parking del Senior Center en Turners Falls cuya dirección es 62 5th Street. La próxima distribución de comida será el miércoles 18 de diciembre de 1:30 a 2:30 p.m.

Por favor, asegúrense de traer sus propias bolsas. Este programa se realiza en alianza con FCCMP y Montague COA. Si tienen preguntas, contacten con **The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts** en el teléfono: (413) 247-9738.

• **It's a Wonderful Night in Turners Falls.** El viernes 13 de diciembre se celebrarán diferentes actividades en el centro de Turners Falls para celebrar la llegada de

las festividades de invierno. Habrá música en vivo, promociones en restaurantes y tiendas, sin olvidarnos de la llegada de alguien muy especial a las 6.30 pm a Skinner Park. No olviden llevar sus cartas y deseos al Buzón Mágico que está en la avenida.

The Montague Reporter tendrá una jornada de puertas abiertas con la posibilidad de conocer más sobre nuestro periódico local. *Discovery Center* de 2 a 5 p.m. tendrá actividades para niños en las que podrán crear comederos para pájaros. Todas las actividades son presentadas por *RiverCulture*. Si desean más información, pueden acudir a www.turnersfallsriverculture.org.

derecha sin poder dar satisfacción a ninguno de los dos bandos.

El 11 de septiembre de 1973 Allende se encontraba en el Palacio de la Moneda que fue bombardeado por los generales golpistas. Las circunstancias no estuvieron claras hasta hace poco al ser desclasificados documentos que demuestran que los generales intentaron forzar al presidente a renunciar al cargo, pero Allende se negó. Pinochet y sus generales, ayudados por la Agencia de Inteligencia estadounidense hicieron creer a la opinión pública que Allende se había suicidado. Se sabe ahora que el gobierno de Nixon durante el período de Allende entorpeció la concesión de préstamos a Chile por las agencias internacionales y realizó contribuciones secretas de dinero a los partidos políticos contrarios y a medios de prensa que se oponían al presidente.

Con la muerte de Allende se inició una dictadura de 17 años en Chile, una de las etapas más negras de su historia. La represión iniciada por Pinochet contra socialistas, comunistas, sindicalistas y todos los que estaban bajo sospecha de ser contrarios en sus opiniones tuvo el resultado de miles de muertos, desaparecidos, personas torturadas y niños robados.

Pinochet desmanteló cada una de las medidas sociales económicas que habían sido llevadas a cabo por el gobierno de Salvador Allende. Los partidos políticos y sindicatos fueron suspendidos y cerró el congreso del país. Pinochet se auto-proclamó presidente y jefe de las fuerzas armadas formando una junta militar. Entre sus primeras medidas económicas fue la privatización de la industria minera y revertir las expropiaciones realizadas por el gobierno de Allende. Los consejeros económicos de Pinochet siguieron la doctrina de Milton Friedman de la llamada *Escuela de Chicago* (*Chicago Boys*), que estaban en contra del intervencionismo estatal. Se recortó el gasto público y se ofrecieron unas condiciones muy ventajosas a inversionistas extranjeros.

La principal consecuencia de estas medidas de la junta militar presidida por Pinochet fue el aumento del desempleo que llegó a ser de un 19%. El terror ejercido por el gobierno hizo que la población no se atreviera a protestar como habían hecho por las medidas de Allende.

En 1989 y confiando en la recuperación de la economía, Pinochet celebró un referéndum que proponía extender su presidencia por un periodo adicional de ocho años. La mayoría del electorado chileno votó en contra y Pinochet no tuvo otro remedio que permitir la convocatoria de elecciones presidenciales que ganó Patricio Alwyn, aunque Pinochet siguió ocupando su cargo de jefe de las fuerzas armadas. En 1998 Pinochet renunció a este cargo, pero se aseguró el de senador vitalicio para conseguir la inmunidad contra los delitos criminales de los que fue acusado. Pinochet fue acusado de crímenes contra los derechos humanos, tráfico de armas, evasión de capitales y de corrupción. El presidente Alwyn encargó el informe Rettig que permitió condenar a algunos de los generales de la dictadura.

En 1998 Pinochet viajó a Londres para ser sometido a una operación hernia. El juez español Baltasar Garzón emitió una orden de busca y captura contra él por torturas, crímenes contra la humanidad, y genocidio y Pinochet fue detenido por la policía británica. Nunca llegó a ingresar en prisión y volvió a Chile donde fue condenado a arresto domiciliario ya que sus abogados alegaron una enfermedad mental. Murió en 2006 a causa de un infarto.

No quiero en estas líneas desvelarles el resto la película ya que creo que realmente merece la pena verla. Pueden ustedes hacerlo a través del sistema online *Kanopy* que es utilizado por la mayoría de centros escolares y bibliotecas públicas. El conocimiento de la historia reciente de Chile junto con esta película provocará en ustedes reflexiones que tienen un valor actual.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pile, Rick Rude, Landowner*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Marlene Lavelle, The Old Fashioneds, DJ Subdweller, and Funeral Cone*. Fundraiser for Sadie's Bikes. \$. 8 p.m.

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Karaoke Night*. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

Turners Falls Downtown: *It's A Wonderful Night In Turners Falls*. Holiday activities for the whole family are planned throughout downtown: art exhibitions, live music, pop-up shops, restaurant specials, holiday promotions, and unique gift buying opportunities, until 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Awesome Art In Motion*. Join this Turners Falls based dance company for elementary children for an informal showing of their newest dance piece which explores what it means to be an individual and a member of a group. 5:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dean Ford and the Beautiful Ones*. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Mark Schwaber, Revenant Sea, Certain Death*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Gypsy Pigeons*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

Northfield, Various Locations: *Northfield Special Day*. Old-fashioned holiday fun for all ages. Free horse-drawn hayrides, musical performances, crafts, and local shopping. A commu-

nity bonfire, caroling, delicious snacks, history, art and more, all day long starting at 10 a.m.

Greenfield High School, Greenfield: *Holiday Pops Family Concert*. Join the *Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra, Chorus, and Youth Orchestra* for a musical celebration of the holidays. Features "Frostiana" and many holiday favorites. Kid-friendly activities at intermission. \$. 3 p.m.

St. James Church, Greenfield: *Greenfield Drum & Dance*. African dance, followed by a Drum and Dance instead of the usual Dance Spree. \$. 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Masala Jazz*. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule*. The story this

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule*. See Friday's listing. \$. 2 p.m.

Polish American Club, South Deerfield: *Festibal Danse NOËL, Danse Cafe*. Live French and Breton music. Dances are easy, friendly, forgiving, fun: circles, lines, and couple dances. Hors d'oeuvres potluck. \$7-\$12 donation. 4 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Early Bird Music Series #7: Bird Organ, Less Clay Pool, Blood Mobile*. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Traditional Irish Music in the Wheelhouse*. 7 p.m.

JULIAN PARKER-BURNS PHOTO



The Pamela Means Band plays Hawks & Reed on Friday, December 20 at 7 p.m. Pamela Means Band is an all female, women of color trio, featuring Cinnamon Blair (bass, vocal), I-Shea (percussion, vocal) and founder and leader Pamela Means. They perform Means' original music and select soulful, groovy covers by artists of color. The horn-beary Soul Magnets will also play a mix of old-school, funk and neo-soul originals, deep covers, and dancefloor favorites that night.

year focuses on the wisdom of trees, animals, and the magic of music. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Wendell Town Hall: *Simon White & Rhythm Inc.* Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse presents a great night of reggae, dub, hip hop, funk, dancehall, and soul from Wendell's own Simon White and The Rhythm Inc. Band. Desert-O-Rama with your favorite treats, all to benefit the Coffeehouse expenses. Open mic before the show. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Ugly Sweater Party*. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Nemesisister, Home Office, DJ Lucie Rosenfeld*. \$. 8 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *JJQ*. \$. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *John Sullivan Band*. 9:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Nova One, Mal Devisa, Old Pam*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*. 8 p.m.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quiz Night*. Benefits the Montague Reporter! 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Music in the Morning*. Children's music series. Live, interactive music by educator Marcy Gregoire, with movement specialist Hilary Lake. Puppets, costumes, musical instruments. 10 a.m.

Baystate Franklin Medical Center, Greenfield: *Clinical Notes*. This BFMC women's *a cappella* chorus, comprised of nine employees and staff members, will perform its annual holiday concert, *Tidings of Joy*, in the hos-

pital's main conference rooms. 5:30 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contact Improv*. Class at 6:30; dance jam with live music from *Konvergenz & Steven Katz* from 8 to 10 p.m. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Open Mic Night*. New open mic night for local musicians. 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Sadie's Bike FUNdraiser*. Owner *Nik Perry* will provide soup and bread, talk about his passion for cycling and his vision for the store, and answer questions from attendees. He might even teach you how to fix a flat! *Nik* is also going to demonstrate his favorite dice game, *10,000*, so come on down and play a round. \$. 5 p.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: Artist Talk, *Fafnir Adamites*. Adamites talks about her installation at BMAC. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Creacion Latin Big Band Jam*. On the fourth floor. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Salsa Wednesday*. With *McCoy and DJ Roger Jr.* \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Grateful Dead Night* with *Owsley's Owls*. 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

The Hive, Greenfield: *James Hefflin Gypsy Quartet, John Lentz Trio*. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Lisa/Liza, Joe Mygan, and Taxidermists*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half Shaved Jazz*. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Element Brewing Co., Millers Falls: *Brule's Irish Band*. 6 p.m.

Millers Pub, Millers Falls: *Little House Blues Band*. Harmonica-driven, Chicago-style blues quartet. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Barbie May Dieward, Jazer Giles, Lailye Weidman, Tatyana Tenenbaum*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pamela Means and Soul Magnets*. \$. 8 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. Contra dance with *Andy Davis, David Kaynor, Laurie Indenbaum* and the *Back Row Band*. All welcome; no experience necessary. \$. 8 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *TNT Karaoke*. 9:30 p.m.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery will host another community Small Works Show of original 2- or 3-dimensional art in February, 2020. Non-juried show open to all ages, all mediums. Limited to two pieces per artist, 10" in any direction, including frame (if framed); at least one will be exhibited. Details, application form available at the gallery and online at sawmillriverarts.com. Bring form, \$5 fee per piece, and art work to the gallery between January 12 and 26. Art work must be for sale. Contact Louise Minks, (413) 367-2800, or Louise@LouiseMinks.com.

EXHIBITS

Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *Resident Artist Group Show*, an eclectic holiday sale by studio artists at LCA. Through December.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: Exhibits include *Fafnir Adamites: Interfere (with); Doug Trump: By Rail; Maria Elena Gonzalez: Tree Talk; Gordon Meinhard: The Lives of Tables; and Thelma Appel: Observed/Abstract*. Through February.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: *Season of Light*. Member holiday show. Through December.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls:

Junior Duck Stamps: Come see the top entries for the statewide 2019 Junior Duck Stamp competition. Through December 22.

Greenfield Gallery: *Paul Hoffman, Paintings and Illustrations*. Poetic dreamscapes informed by a lifetime of world travel. Through January 18.

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Free Library: *[not necessarily] By the Book*: Altered books by *Trish Crapo*. Through December 21.

Hosmer Gallery, Forbes Library, Northampton: *Coalesce (Premier) & Precarious*. Paintings by Alice Thomas. Through December.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *The Art of the Mon-*

tague Reporter. Exhibit of cartoons and illustrations from our pages. Through December.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Michael Tillyer and the Anchor House Artists*. A curated show of work by artists who have been members of the Anchor House, a studio and workspace for artists who live with mental illness. Also on display, works by the Vermont Glass Guild artisans. Through December 31.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Tiny Treasures* group show. Paintings, ceramics, leather, paper cuts, jewelry, wood, and ornaments by member artists. Through January 27.

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CALLS FOR ART

Nina's Nook in Turners Falls invites artists to submit erotic art for Triple SSS 2020: Sensual, Sexual, Smut. Submit up to three jpegs to eroticart2020@gmail.com by January 15 for the February show. A \$10 participation fee is asked at drop off to help with expenses relating to the reception.

Where do you live? Where are you from? Who gets to make the map, and what gets left out? Exploded View announces a call for art on the theme of "You Are Here." Open to all media; send three jpegs along with descriptions and dimensions of the work and name, address, phone number to explodedviewma@gmail.com by December 15 to be juried into the show, scheduled at the Great Falls Discovery Center during January and February 2020.

Artspace in Greenfield welcomes artists and art instructors with ideas for exhibits and programming at the center. If you have an idea for a class, a musical project, a gallery exhibit, or what have you, please contact the office at (413) 772-6811 or email info@artspace-greenfield.com.

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WEST ALONG THE RIVER DOWN THROUGH DECEMBER DAYS

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, MILLERS FALLS – It’s hard to remember the last days of November, now that we’re plunging so deep into December. It seems that the seasons out here on the back porch flipped faster than in past years, literally overnight.

Back on November 30, knowing the snow was on the way, I made my last trek out to our little island on the southwest corner of my personal kingdom on the west-flowing river.

I needed to get over there to saw up the maple trunk that had been lying in the grass and brush for the past two seasons. I wanted to get that maple, cut down and trimmed up by the beaver team, off the ground and propped out of the snow’s reach so I could sled it home once the earth was covered.

I had been meaning to get that trunk and a few others during the summer months but the weather had been too hot and steamy to do log-cutting work, and besides, the ticks had infested every inch of the island. One got me this June and I was sick as a dog for a week. Anaplasmosis, apparently. It could have been worse – at least I dodged Lyme. The cure-all antibiotic doxycycline pulled me out of the fever induced by the tick bite, but I was a stranger on my own land until November. I couldn’t take any more risks: once was enough.

But now those murderous bug-gers are seeking shelter beneath the leaf litter and will leave me alone. It’s mostly quiet out here, doing this last November chore. The rushing rapids fill the air with the sound of water flowing over rounded stone and boulder. In this bright morning, the frost created by the steaming river on overhanging branches is a fragile inch thick. The only other sound is the *scree-scray* of my bow saw; no internal combustion engine powers my cutting. I get in a few vigorous strokes and then a pause to watch the wood duck wing by, in his prim elegance.

Another pause has me thinking about last night in the cold air near the campfire. We chanced to look up in time to see the shooting stars

of the Northern Taurids cross the Pleiade in the dark velvet sky. Now, in the bright sunshine of 9 a.m., if the weather man is right, we’ll have our last look at the landscape before the snow covers all for the next five months. The witch hazel near where I’m sawing is discreet yet defiant, still holding forth with its pale yellow November flowers against the promise of coming snow.

We humans scrambled to get the last chores done that last November day.

Next morning we’re up and about at the first bird shadows in the early light. The blue jays are arriving from the white pine island along the river. The snow has already started falling overnight. The landscape is transformed into a Christmas card scene, the pines are under a coating of the first snow as we remember from so long ago.

The wind is rising, stirring the last dry leaves, the tufts of last summer’s flower stems are already outlined in ermine, the one-note furtive calls of birds sound muffled under the heavy wet flakes. This is the promised all-day snow that will draw us to the Glenwood cook stove and keep us indoors, near the hearth of the fireplace or at the kitchen table to get started on writing Christmas cards. We need to send them on time out over the Atlantic to make sure friends in Ireland, France, and Brittany get them before December 25. Others will be destined to Greenfield, New York, Texas, Arkansas, Leverett.

Sigh. I kind of catch myself thinking I’ll just do the black bear thing, and sleep through it all.

By December 3, it has been snowing for two days and two nights, all day and all night. For December snow people like me and the Siberian pup, nothing could be better.

Those November chores are a distant, pleasant memory. The heavy white blanket has been drawn over every other thing that was left undone, we’ll find the overlooked task in five months – it’ll keep ‘til then. I like to think that beneath the snow the distant heat from the earth’s core will slowly rise, protecting slumbering animals and snakes, as well as the roots of our new plantings.

Still I can’t help venturing out to my chair near the woodpile, to sit under the sheltering woodshed to watch the storm, noting a flash of blue through the swirling flakes: that’d be one of the jays. Elsewhere the holly red of the cardinal adds a scarlet *accent aigu* to the snowscape.

In spite of my wanting to stay out here, the heavy flakes are blurring my page, the ink coagulating between index finger, thumb, and notebook. I will have to abandon my winter chair, which is quickly turning into a December throne of snow. This early morn is a blessing, cold at 20 degrees, but it’s hard to hold out in these conditions. The family indoors does think I’m a little eccentric to insist on sitting outside in a snowstorm.

After a few minutes under the roof of the woodshed, with the snow drifting in on blowing wind, I retreat high upstairs to the north bedroom and clear off my desk, which has become buried under typical winter spare-room clutter. Up here it’s quiet, far from the downstairs bustle around the kitchen table, while carols on the radio rise up distant and muffled. My writing table, left to sit unused during the

summer months, has accumulated a surprising amount of objects: pens, pencils, notebooks, photos, feathers, stones, old postcards, paper clips, folders, a jar of cat’s eye marbles, and more.

I remember Billy Collins admonishing the writer to clean up the writing space before getting down to work: “*Clean the place as if the Pope were on his way...*”

Now of course there’s no way the Pope is going to show up down here on the Flat or introduce himself into my writing quarters, besides we’ve probably been excommunicated *de facto* long ago! But I know what Collins means.

So here I am, perched up in north chamber near the slanted roof’s rafters, a small writer’s frown on my face as I concentrate on scratching out these images. As long as the winter muse perches patiently on my shoulder I should be fine.

Sitting in front of the north-facing windows looking out over a snow-covered landscape, I can see yesterday’s snowshoe trail stretching out into a vanishing point in the woods, where it leads through the trees and to the fast west-flowing river.

Up here among family mementos, photos, letters, and artifacts of those passed on long ago and generations before, I can’t help but to get drawn into thinking of the lives lived out down here in this old house on the Flat.

Somehow, in the winter season and so close to the end of the year, especially as Christmas draws near, memories become sharper of those who have gone before.

For me, added to the chance to write about village characters and woodland creatures has also come the responsibility of preserving memory, family lore. I feel that I

owe the preceding generations the respect of remembering their decades of worry, poverty, joy or anguish, brief periods of success, and longer periods of just staying alive, surviving.

All that comes with living in an old house full of Christmas memories.

*In my dream I was the first to arrive
at the old house after a winternight’s walk.
Wind and night had forced through the cracks.
I pushed inside, turned on lamps,
Lit a fire in the stove. Frozen oak
Logs stung my fingers; it was good
Pain, my hands reddening on the icy
Broom handle as I swept away snow.
On Christmas Eve I prepared a warm
Place for my mother and father,
Cousins, aunts and uncles,
grandparents, great-grandparents
All my relatives, none missing,
none dead
All happy with one another,
all coming through the woods*

– Adapted from *Housewarming*,
by Thomas R. Smith

So it will be on Christmas Eve, amidst the celebrations for a year well spent and for the promise of times yet to come, there will always be that feeling of nostalgia for Christmases gone by. The trick is to remember to be thankful for those who have gotten us here, set a place for them, but also to bask in the warmth of family and friends still here with us, then fill our glass and enjoy the brief respite and peace that comes with keeping a very Merry Christmas.



A Christmas postcard sent in 1909 to the author’s great-grandmother, Lizzie Smith.

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