MILLERS FALLS **MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS** LAKE PLEASANT



YEAR 20 - NO. 34

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

Workers Canoe Canal **To Stem Pest Chestnuts**



Seasonal staff pulled weeds from the local hydro plant's reservoir last week.

By NATHAN FRONTIERO

TURNERS FALLS – Seasonal workers joined FirstLight Power staff this summer in an effort to free the Turners Falls power canal of an infestation of water chestnuts, an annual plant and invasive species whose growth can impede boat passage and canal operation. The cleanup project is managed by the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), which is working to address a 23-acre development of water chestnuts in partnership with FirstLight, the canal's owner.

"We have managed the plants around our facilities for more than a dozen years, and we are working hard this year to reign in this large patch," Elizabeth Bazler, senior land and compliance specialist at FirstLight, wrote in an email.

In an interview with the Reporter, Bazler added that the cleanup group has "about a month before these turn into seeds that would be viable for next year. We're trying

to prevent that from happening because you have an annual plant. So if we can interrupt the life cycle, then we can really drop numbers."

Water chestnut pullers launch canoes into the power canal and paddle between the boat barrier and the dam, hack through surface growth and pull floating plants up by their roots, and unload bags of pulled plants from the canoes.

While short-term involvement is possible on a volunteer basis, seasonal pullers who commit to at least three work dates are paid between \$23 and \$25 per hour, with a two-hour compensation provided for any canceled cleanup days. The hydropower company provides all of the equipment, including safety tethers securing the canoes to the canal's banks.

Water chestnuts are a floating plant with sharp, spiny seeds, which produce shoots, which in turn form dense rosettes of vegetation. According to Jeff Boettner, see **PEST** page A5

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD **Cleaner** Name, Smoke Testing, Long-Lost Map

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard has moved from weekly to biweekly meetings, as is the norm in the summer months of July and August, but this means a full plate of complex and often time-consuming issues crowd the agenda. At its July 11 meeting these included lengthy discussions of ongoing problems with the town's trash collectors, a new name for the wastewater treatment facility, a suddenly-discovered map of the sewer system, and the cost of exploring the virtues of a metal town hall roof.

Melanie Zamojski, the chair of the board of health, presented the latest COVID-19, metrics prepared by an epidemiologist hired as part of a regional collaboration with Greenfield, Deerfield, and Sunderland.

Zamojski described a "slight uptick" in the number of cases over the past few weeks. She said wastewater testing by the city of Greenfield suggested this is primarily the result of a new sub-variant which evades some vaccines, but does not generally lead to "serious illness."

Selectboard member Matt Lord applauded the chart, which showed weekly positive tests since the beginning of the year. "I was going to make a cranky comment, because I think the one we have been getting is a terrible presentation," he said. "I am pleased to see there is more depth to what is going on."

Zamojski noted, as she has in the past, that the numbers on the graphic only represented positive PCR tests recorded in the state MAVEN see MONTAGUE page A7

Full Mill Teardown In, Then Out, of State Bill



The deteriorating Strathmore complex is owned by the inhabitants of Montague.

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS - A proposal by the town of Montague for "partial demolition" of the Strathmore building complex between the Turners Falls power canal and the Connecticut River, on land recently rebranded the "Canal District," was unexpectedly included in a bond bill proposed by Governor Charlie Baker this spring but was then taken out by a committee of the legislature, along with all projects funded by federal COVID-19 relief funds.

Town administrator Steve Ellis told the selectboard this week that he will continue to lobby the town's legislative representatives to reintroduce the demolition project if individual "earmarks" are allowed on the floor of the state House and Senate.

But a review of the proposal by the Reporter suggests that it was never endorsed at a recent selectboard meeting, and did not include a design based on evaluations, which have been funded by the state, of the viability of elements in the multi-unit structure.

"The Strathmore," as it is commonly called, was originally constructed in 1873 and was once a central component of the paper industry of Turners Falls. Owned at that time by the Keith Paper Company - an affordable-housing building across the canal now owned by the Montague Housing Authority is still called the "Keith Block" - the

see TEARDOWN page A8

Houseless Numbers Rise In Rural Western MA

Committee Unsure How To Increase Participation

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE - "If it doesn't pass, then we need to go back in person," school committee chair Jane Oakes said Tuesday night about a pending state bill to extend the emergency provision allowing public bodies to meet via videoconference. "That's an easy decision, in some ways."

By the next day, it seemed extremely likely that the extension would pass; the state House passed a version of the bill that would extend it through next March, and the Senate one extending it through the end of 2023. The two are expected to be reconciled this week.

Nevertheless, the occasion prompted school committee members from Gill and Montague to wonder when a return to in-person meeting may be appropriate.

Gill member Bill Tomb clarified that comments quoted in the June 30 edition of the Reporter on the subject were intended to sympathize with, not represent, members hesitant to return. "I've been a proponent, since the beginning, of being willing to go back... I would do it, and I would wear a mask," he explained.

Montague member Jennifer Waryas said that she had heard complaints that both remote and in-person meetings were inaccessible in different ways. "It would be super cool to try to strategize an inclusive solution," she said.

Nick Licata said he liked that the remote meetings cut out travel time.

After two years meeting remotely, the regional school committee is struggling to attract and retain members. At Tuesday's meeting, members voted 6-0 to appoint Brooke see GMRSD page A6

SUMMER SCHEDULE VOL. 20 #35: JULY 28 VOL. 20 #36: AUGUST 11 VOL. 20 #37: AUGUST 25 **READ THEM SLOWER**

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD Safer Roadways Sought Using Signs, Lights – And Limits?

By GEORGE BRACE

Leverett's July 5 selectboard meeting was brief, and highlighted by updates to road safety issues and previews of items to be discussed in future meetings.

Selectboard member Melissa Colbert reported that she'd received positive feedback on the electronic sign recently placed on Two Mile road which flashes "We love our children and pets. Please drive slowly."

Colbert said she had not yet heard back from UMass Civil and Environmental Engineering professor Dr. Michael Knodler, Jr. regarding a case study on increasing safety in the area, but expected to have something to report by the next meeting.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis kept the ball rolling, providing a series of updates on other

see LEVERETT page A4

By SARAH ROBERTSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY - An annual survey of people experiencing homelessness in Franklin, Hampshire, and Berkshire counties revealed an increase in displaced individuals and families living in western Massachusetts this year.

As part of an initiative led by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a collection of regional social service organizations conducted the "point in time" survey in February. They estimated that 572 people across the

three counties were without permanent housing, and about one-quarter of those counted were experiencing homelessness as a family unit.

"It's an amazing figure," said Jerry Lund, an advocate working on housing and addiction issues in the greater Franklin County area. "There seems to be a dramatic increase in chronic homelessness in 2022. And additionally, for the first time since an influx of families arrived in our area following Hurricane Maria in 2018, we have seen an increase - not decrease, but an

see HOUSING page A6



Housing advocate Jerry Lund speaks at a rally last Christmas Eve in Montague City.

A Long Summer Of Slight Upticks Stretches Out Ahead

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Being Bad

"Caller from Fifth Street reporting two boys on skateboards on her porch.... ongoing issue." "[T]wo bicycles stolen from Fifth Street." "Caller from Avenue A states that someone just broke her screen door again and that there is a group of teens outside...."

It doesn't take very many pissedoff kids to really set the tone in a neighborhood. Those of us living in downtown Turners have been watching and worrying for several months now, and were only beginning to compare notes when the lid really blew off. Summertime.

"Caller states that some kids were running around chasing another kid and then stole the child's dog... probable cause for arrest for larceny and assault with a deadly weapon.... Caller reports involved male posted on Snapchat that he would give the dog back if both juveniles fight ... '

Anyone working with young teenagers in the schools over the last year has also seen this coming, even if the rest of us glazed over or wrote off the talk of social-emotional setbacks during the pandem*ic as political talking points.*

"Walk-in party from Fourth Street reports that there are four or five juveniles in front of his building who continuously harass other individuals; party doesn't feel safe at his residence ... " "Caller from Basically Bicycles reporting what looks like a BB hole in one of his shop's windows..."

Whenever our society has experienced waves of juvenile de*linquency – or just panics about* as individuals and fundamentally dangerous in packs, has offered a Rorschach for social blame.

"Caller from Fifth Street reporting that his vehicle was broken into overnight ... " "[F]ight in the alley by the Pizza House; it sounds like a lot of people and like someone is being injured. Another caller stated her brother and a friend just showed up at her house and they had been beaten up by another kid...."

Adults who decide this is the fault of the opposing team of adults (for a culture of domination on the one hand, a culture of permissiveness on the other) will never take responsibility for the experiences of the youth in our midst.

"[M]ountain bike was stolen from outside of the Rendezvous this afternoon..." "Officer flagged down at the skatepark by a citizen who pointed out some vandalism done to recently planted trees."

But if this actually has to do with something all of us are feeling, we should let them know that.

"First of multiple reports of tires being slashed overnight. Affected vehicles were located on K Street, Seventh Street, J Street, Canal Street, Avenue A, and Fourth Street."

What kind of future, exactly, can we tell these kids to patiently wait for? What is the reward of their good behavior going to be?

"Caller from Third Street requesting extra patrols due to the increase in young teens disturbing the area a group of kids at Fourth Street and Avenue A are yelling, screaming, and setting off fireworks, and she is scared to walk to her car."

Everyone is in protective retreat it – the out-of-control behavior from public commitment right of youth, fundamentally innocent now, because the social contract has been broken. But the problem cannot be avoided ... What makes a young person want to be good?



Karen Traub and Sarah Robertson affix grommets to an empty feed bag, making a reusable shopping bag, at the craft fair event at the Leverett Village Co-Op last Saturday. (Anyone interested in helping make bags or coordinating supplies, or just seeking more information, can contact thebagshareproject.org.)

Letters to the Editors

Herbicide Use on Montague Road Edges

It has become apparent that the Montague DPW recently this summer has started a campaign to kill roadside vegetation using herbicides. The spray appears to be targeted toward the invasive Japanese knotweed plant, a plant which is abundant and well-established in many forest and field edge areas all around town. This spraying program apparently started with no notification of adjacent landowners or town residents that an herbicide spray program was going to be considered and undertaken.

Most likely the herbicide being used is Roundup, or some other form of glyphosate. This is an herbicide that according to some studies has been linked to cancer, and is also proven to change and damage the microorganisms that live in the soil.

that to me it does not seem like a chemical that town DPWs or other agencies should be applying to the edge areas of roads, at least not without notification of adjacent landowners, notification of the public at large - and notification of adjacent certified organic farm field farmers in particular.

Unfortunately, this application with no discussion or notification is what has happened all around Montague roads, including on Meadow Road where many of my farm fields are located. In one case the herbicide was applied so close to one of my fields that our organic certification for that field may be jeopardized.

If my organic certifier deterines that the field in question must

I ask that town authorities take more care and communication before undertaking the application of pesticides such as this in the future. I also think that use of herbicides for this purpose is not advisable in this circumstance, and that residents of Montague should oppose such applications. Road edges have been successfully maintained with mowing and brush cutting for many years now. Suddenly releasing a toxic herbicide that could potentially harm walkers, bikers, dogs, and wildlife that use the road shoulder area does not to me seem like an advisable practice.

Please urge Montague authorities to discontinue herbicide use along all Montague road areas.

There is enough concern and controversy about this chemical lose certification due to this, then I will be holding the town of Montague liable for financial damages.

Ryan Voiland Co-Owner, Red Fire Farm **Montague Center**

Sensing Some Anger Here...

Happy July 4th!

The article "Trash Talk" [ed. note: from our June 30 *Montague selectboard report*] spiked my crap-o-meter as my forgotten street, Walnut Street, is one of the "hiccups" that Mr. Finnegan alludes to. "It has gotten better," he reassures us, "but you guys tell me!"

Mr. Finnegan, what is your magic formula for cleaning maggots from trash barrels, when we suffer yet another hiccup? If Finnegan was only recently aware of the problems... did he not read the complaints, or were they not given to him?

And the best part of all, we are saddled with this losing company for two more long years – that's 52 weeks of uncollected trash on Walnut Street – at a rate increase, no less!

A PowerPoint presentation and an application to communicate with the company is proof that Mr. Fin-

negan needs to leave his desk and get out in the real world of Turners Falls trash non-collection, dirty as it may be on a Friday. When we do call to complain, we are always greeted by a person who ensures us our driver is coming.

I gave up on the tooth fairy and the Easter Bunny a long time ago, so I am not going to sleep comfortably knowing that somewhere out there in the great unknown is a Republic Trash driver coming to Walnut Street to get our trash! I bring my recycling to Dave at the Montague recycling center to avoid having to pick up the remains of uncollected recycling scattered by animals. This has gone on for too long, boyo, and it's time to

"man up" and collect our trash!

Debbe Dugan Turners Falls

Right, Sorry

Congratulations to Mike Brown on his well-deserved retirement from the Turners Falls Water Department. May he enjoy it for many years to come.

One clarification for your June 23 article: the water rate is not "essentially a form of property tax for homeowners" - it's a user fee, based on the amount of water consumed.

Just like your electric bill - if you use more, you pay more. The rates are listed on the back of the bill. Since sewer flow is not metered, the winter usage is used for town sewer bills, on the assumption that a significant portion of summer

usage may be for watering lawns, filling swimming pools, etc., and doesn't end up at the WPCF.

The Turners Falls Fire District (a separate entity) does assess a property tax, which appears on the same bill as the Town of Montague's property tax. Through an arrangement with the district, the town treasurer's office bills for and collects the taxes, and then passes them along to the district. But that's a whole separate thing.

> **Mike Naughton Millers Falls**

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

This Saturday, July 16, River-Culture and the Shea Theater present "Shea Away," a free night of music by Frank Hurricane and local legends Home Body. The concert will take place at Peskeomskut Park in Turners Falls at 6 p.m.

Cinemastorm returns to the Shea Theater on Saturday, July 16 from 8 to 11 p.m. Go for free movies, beer to buy, and trivia to chew on.

Crazy For You opens at the Ja'Duke Theater this weekend, part of their Broadway Series. The G-rated play is described as a "zany richboy-meets-hometown-girl romantic comedy," and features memorable Gershwin tunes and "razzmatazz."

Shows are on July 16, 22 and 23 at 7 p.m. and July 17 and 24 at 2 p.m. The Ja'Duke Theater is in the industrial park in Turners Falls, and has a new ice cream shop called Ja'Duke Scoops. Find out more at jaduketheater.com.

Poetry, stories, words, and ta-

cos will all occur this Sunday, July 17 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. at the openair food court at 148 Second Street in Turners Falls.

Organizer Paul Richmond says to bring a chair and umbrella, your listening ears, and words.

Or - save your words for the Third Tuesday Word night at the LAVA Center in Greenfield on Tuesday, July 19 at 7 p.m. Both open mics have five-minute time slots.

"What happens when a stranger wants you to drive him on a kill-

ing spree?" asks the Erving Public Library. Find out when the library screens the film The Hitch-Hiker, the second classic suspense film in a series of film- and book-noir programs with Linda Bowden, from 1 to 3 p.m. this Sunday, July 17.

The 1953 film was written and directed by former actress Ida Lupino. Bowden will lead a lively discussion afterwards, and the Friends of the Library will provide popcorn and beverages.

The Crossword Show is coming back to the Shea Theater next Monday, July 18, at 7 p.m. The show features Zach Sherwin of the TV show Crazy Ex-Girlfriend and the viral YouTube series Epic Rap Battles of History, with a panel of guest comedians solving an actual crossword puzzle live onstage.

Everything will be displayed on a big screen so the crowd can follow along. Whenever the comics solve a word, Sherwin erupts with comedy, music, trivia, and wordplay inspired by the answers. Learn more at www.crosswordshow.com.

Felting fans take note: Stephanie Metz, one of the artists featured in the *Felt Experience* exhibit at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, is giving a free talk about her sculpture on Tuesday, July 19 at 7 p.m.

Metz will provide a behind-thescenes look at InTouch, her series of large-scale, touchable felt sculptures, several of which are included in the exhibit, and describe her innovative approach to creating felted wool and stitched industrial sculptures - and the human connections forged by engaging community volunteers to Congregational Church Organ Cel-

needle felt in her studio and inviting audiences to touch the sculptures. The exhibit is up until October.

Hone your Scrabble skills on Tuesdays at the Leverett Library with Gene Stamell. Boards and instructions will be available in the Community Room from 3:15 to 5 p.m. every Tuesday through August 16. Drop-ins are welcome; email leverettlibrary@gmail.com with questions.

Mystra Records' annual Freestone or Ooze Festival, usually held on the Amherst Common, is coming to the Shea Theater this year on Friday, July 22, at 6 p.m. This is a showcase for unusual and DIY music including acoustic and electric, solo, and rock bands; the lineup includes Gary Higgins, Gracious Calamity, Wednesday Knudsen, Anthony Pasquarosa, and the Foam/Burkett/Mowatt trio.

Get ready for a Western Mass Roller Skate Festival on Saturday, July 23 at Nova Motorcycle, in Turners Falls, from 2 to 9 p.m. "Put on your eight wheels and join us," the event description reads. "Costume Contest. Games. Tacos and Shaved Ice."

Laura Roberts Landino invites folks to a Celebration of Life for John Landino on July 24. Her late husband was a local artist, musician, and colorful character who died earlier this year. "Bring your stories, your laughs, and your happiness over a life that was lived to the fullest," she writes.

There are two events: a scattering of ashes at 11 a.m. at the Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club, and a potluck music jam from noon to 4 p.m. at the Montague Common Hall.

If you would like to purchase any of Landino's artwork in his memory, it is on display at the Anchor House of Artists in Northampton.

The final event of the Ashfield

ebration Series is a performance at 2 p.m. on Sunday, July 24 by the Bob Sparkman Trio (Jerry Noble, organ and piano; Bob Sparkman, clarinet; Kara Noble, bass) with guest soprano Tinky Weisblat.

The program includes a variety of music including jazz favorites from the Great American Songbook. Admission is free, with donations suggested. The events celebrate the restoration of the church's 1903 George Reed pipe organ. Find out more at www.ashfielducc.org.

July 23 and 24 is the weekend of the Hilltown Potters' Open Studies. Nine potters open their studies to the public, and host guest artists as well. Some proceeds will go to providing art supplies to hilltown elementary schools. Find out more at *hilltown6.com*.

The Ninth Annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival is coming up on August 6 and 7 at Unity Park in Turners Falls.

If you are a former volunteer or interested in becoming one for the first time, the Nolumbeka Project needs about 40 to 50 volunteers for a variety of tasks, from sitting at a table to helping transport heavy items, and a couple end-of-day volunteers with pickup trucks. Email nolumbekaproject@gmail.com to inquire, and visit nolumbekaproject. org/events/ to see what they have planned for the weekend!

Old Home Day in Wendell is planned for Saturday, August 13. Organizers say they are looking for several things, including artists to do demos, face-painting people, hula hoops, giant bubble equipment, and other fun what-have-yous. Vendors are also welcome to inquire about space. Contact Christine Texiera at ctexiera@gmail.com.

Greenfield Public Library announces that they are now an affiliate FamilySearch library. The popular web service has searchable names and images of historical genealogical and court records from more than 130 countries to help you discover and make family connections. Searching through the library's FamilySearch account will give users access to many more images than those available through individual accounts.

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OBITUARY Ellen Spring 1/12/1959 - 7/3/2022

Ellen Marie Spring, age 63, of Turners Falls, MA passed away on July 3rd, 2022 after a year-long battle with cancer.

Ellen was born in Dorchester, MA on January 12, 1959 to Raymond and Florence (Crowley) Spring.

After graduating from Matignon High School, she went on to receive a BA and a MA in Public Administration from Framingham State College.

Ellen's love for others, persistent until the end, drove her to help foster community wherever she went. She worked for a number of

years as a state social worker, then took on more managerial roles while continuing to see clients.

In later years, Ellen became a founding member of the Unity Skatepark Committee, took on a variety of responsibilities at Franklin County Technical School, and aided at the senior center in Bernardston, MA.

Ellen's desire for adventure and irreverent sense of humor were well-known to everyone she met. The



outdoors was her happy place, from nights of camping to days out on the beach. She allowed her creativity to flourish in craft-making, event coordination, and a love of games.

Ellen will be remembered as a bright light in the darkness for her positive outlook and generosity, giving more than receiving in all aspects of her life.

Ellen is predeceased by her parents and by her brother, Raymond Spring, Jr. She is survived by her son, Matthew Raymond Spring, of Turners Falls. She also leaves behind sis-

ters Eileen McCormick and Madeline Metrick as well as many extended family members.

A celebration of life will be held privately at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, buy yourself a copy of her favorite game, Cosmic Wimpout. Play it with your loved ones while you enjoy some Grateful Dead music. She'd want that.

The Valley Arts Mentors program is currently accepting applications for its Mentorship Cohort. They match ten artists with ten mentees for a six-month period every other week, either online or in person. Apply to be a mentee – or, if you have 15 or more years of experience in your field, a mentor - at artsmentors.org.

Franklin County Technical School announces that students in the Landscaping and Horticultural program completed a community project on part of the Millers Falls trail network this school year.

Shop instructor Kurt Richardson helped them through the project, which laid out a section of trail, cleared out the underbrush, and stabilized the soil with a stone base and trap rock surface. It took about six months including planning time, and the students worked on site for five days.

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road issues. McGinnis said she had received permission from the state for the placement of signage on Route 63, Long Plain Road, reminding motorists of the need to use caution and obey traffic laws pertaining to school buses.

The request was made in response to residents of Long Plain Road expressing concern about child safety on the busy, high-speed roadway. McGinnis said she expected the signs to be up in the last two weeks of August.

McGinnis also informed the selectboard that she was researching the possibility of creating "20 mph Safety Zones" in areas of town through a warrant article at a special town meeting in the fall. Board members had noticed the town of Gill had recently passed such an article, and will discussing the merits of Leverett doing the same at their next meeting.

McGinnis reported that her fingers were crossed that the town's 32 or 33 streetlights would all be replaced with efficient LED lighting in a two-day project beginning on July 14, a project she said has been

10 years in the making.

McGinnis also said she had submitted a request to move forward with a culvert replacement project on Shutesbury Road, and that while she does not have a firm start date, she is hopeful that work can begin in the first or second week of August. She said once a date is fixed, the town will be able to give two to three weeks' notice to motorists, and will directly communicate on the project with residents in the area.

Cars and Trucks

The board reported that the highway department's new dump truck is ready, and will be put into service as soon as license plates arrive from the registry.

McGinnis commented that it is likely police chief Scott Minckler will be driving the new police cruiser when it arrives, due to him putting less miles on it. She said the town runs four cruisers, one of which is required by law to be unmarked – a requirement she said she believed has to do with transporting juveniles, for similar reasons to those prohibiting the publication of their names.

Global Pandemic

The board voted to make masks optional at selectboard meetings for individuals who aren't known to have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus, and aren't showing symptoms.

Colbert said the board of health had recommended the move to align the town with current Center for Disease Control guidelines for areas such as Leverett, which have been designated with "low-community transmission" status.

Other Business

The board appointed 11 volunteers to the recently-created *ad hoc* committee to study the Field building and make recommendations as to its future.

Town clerk Lisa Stratford reported that transfer station rates have increased as of July 1. The new rate schedule is available on the town website.

The board reported they would have an update on a possible pilot program related to mosquito control at the next meeting,

which is scheduled for Tuesday, July 19 at 7 p.m.



ARTHUR-BROWNELL

June 29, 2022



Watch Out... for Touring Morris Dancers

By GRANGER SMITH-MASSA

MILLERS FALLS – During the last week of July, Morris dancers from the American Travelling Morrice will bring song and dance to Western Massachusetts. The team is having their 45th annual tour following a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and will be visiting towns in and around Franklin County. Anyone of any age is welcome to watch the dancers.

What is Morris dancing, and what can people expect from the event? Mitch Diamond, a member of the American Travelling Morrice, was able to shed some light on this.

Morris dancing is a folk dance tradition that has been performed since at least the 16th century, and may be even earlier. The exact origin is unknown, though it is widely believed to have come from England as a ritual to herald the season of spring and encourage the growth of crops.

During the tradition's early years, it was a spectacle for royalty, though eventually it fell out of favor. Instead, it was danced by farmers for fun, money, and to continue the tradition. With its popularity, it expanded from just a spring ritual to being part of events year-round.

Today, Morris dancers gather for a fun and theatrical exhibit that is enjoyed by many. Performers enjoy being part of Morris dancing teams because of the close community and unique artistic connection to the world they offer. The American Travelling Morrice itself intends to bring joy to the communities they dance in. So how did they start? ling Morrice, created in the style of the English Travelling Morrice, another team that comes together to travel the UK and other countries. The American Travelling Morrice has since traveled throughout the US, into Canada, and back to the UK itself, a testament to the breadth of its community and local engagement.

The team collectively plans each tour a year before, starting with choosing a location. Every member has a voice and a role in the planning. Some communicate with venues and places to stay, ensuring that the team follows local laws. Other members organize how the team and their equipment will journey from place to place. Still more will relay information, answer questions, and ensure everyone is heard.

That's all on top of practicing and refining their dancing! When the planning is over and the Travelling Morrice comes by, what can people expect to see?

What you see first is their unique clothing. Morris dancers wear primarily white clothes



and arm bands with colored ribbons that fly as they dance. With pads covered in small bells around their shins, it's likely you'll hear them before you see them, too.

The musicians play traditional folk music on fiddles, accordions, whistles, and drums, providing the accompaniment for the dancers. Handkerchiefs or large, carved sticks, unique traditional dance props, are waved or clashed by the dancers in time with the music. There may also be a dancer in the character of a fool, dancing around the others and interacting with them in ridiculous ways.

Some dances without handkerchiefs or sticks are open for viewers, children and adults alike, to participate in. Folk songs are also sung between dances, and those who wish to are welcomed to join in.

As the American Travelling Morrice comes through our area, many can enjoy the remarkable and playful tradition of Morris dancing. With the ancient ritual of growth and prosperity and the sounds of instruments, singing, and bells, they may even bring luck to the area!

On Sunday, July 24 they will be in Turners Falls: at the Great Falls Discovery Center at 10 a.m., Spinner Park at 11:30 a.m., and then the Rendezvous at 6 p.m. – after a 1:45 p.m. stop at the Wagon Wheel in Gill and a trip out to Shelburne Falls.



Awesome Beer Amazing Food



Awesome, Amazing Employees!

440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA 7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least) (413)367-9666 The American Travelling Morrice is, just as its name suggests, a team of dancers who travel and dance around the US and beyond. Founded in 1976, its members come from all over, including from other local teams that are otherwise rooted in one area. Visitors to the United Kingdom in 1973 were inspired by the Morris dancing they saw, and in the years after they returned they started several teams around the US.

One of those teams was the American Travel-

AFTER A TWO YEAR ABSENCE THE 45[™] ANNUAL TOUR of THE AMERICAN TRAVELLING MORRICE RETURNS JULY 24-30

On Monday, July 25 they'll be at the Montague Center Library at 3:15 p.m. and the Montague Bookmill at 4:30 p.m.

That Thursday, July 28 you can see them at 10:30 a.m. at the Diemand Farm Store in Wendell, at 2:15 p.m. at Element Brewery in Millers Falls, and at 3:30 p.m. at the Erving Library, after which they'll continue up into Northfield. If you miss them, they may be back in downtown Turners Falls once more that Saturday.

The schedule includes many, many other stops in various local towns during the week from July 24 through July 30, so check out the schedule at *www.americantravellingmorrice.org*.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Dan Keller Joins Board of Assessors

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard met on both June 29 and July 6 and addressed trees, solar, staffing issues, and more.

At their June 29 meeting, the board approved a procedure for public comment at the beginning of their regular meetings. It allows 15 minutes at the beginning of each meeting for public comment, limited to three minutes per person speaking. Talk should be appropriate and directed toward matters within the selectboard's authority; longer dissertations may be submitted in writing.

Dying Trees

Tree warden Cliff Dornbush met the board to talk about trees National Grid is tagging as threats to their wires. He said that more trees in town are dying or getting sick this year as compared with prior years, and National Grid has tagged the trees and sent a map showing their locations.

Dornbush encouraged the tree crews to leave tall stumps standing, where they will not threaten a road, to provide habitat. Selectboard member Dan Keller told him that he, Dornbush, has the authority to cut any tree he understands to be a threat to public safety or infrastructure.

Member Gillian Budine added that he should err on the side of caution.

Short Staff; Best Practices

Wendell's property assessments, already an ongoing source of stress, took a step backwards with the de-

PEST from page B1

a retired wildlife biologist and former lab manager at UMass Amherst who is helping with the project, each water chestnut seed can produce ten rosettes and each rosette can produce at least ten more seeds - exponential growth that can quickly clog waterways.

"This is what you're trying to avoid, because it'll sock this entire [canal], could actually clog the dams, and do all sorts of damage down the road," Boettner said.

the water chestnut poses a threat "because it hogs space and nutrients. It can crowd out native plants that are food sources for native animals. Not only do they take over our waterways by out-competing other emergent and floating vegetation, their colonization negatively impacts the function of the entire

parture of Wendell's Regional Resource Group (RRG) associate Kelly Szocik, and a step forward when Keller agreed to a temporary appointment on the board of assessors.

After Keller completes the online course, he can be an active member of the board of assessors with Martha Senn. Together they will make a quorum of the three-member board, and so will be allowed to vote and develop a tax rate. Keller's term, approved by the other two selectboard members, will end with the May 2023 election.

Senn said the town's contract with RRG has worked well so far, and that RRG has assured her that, although good help is hard to find, they will continue to meet Wendell's assessing needs.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said that the town audit showed that he should take a rather expensive online course, costing \$595, on contracting for supplies and services. Keller said that former coordinator Nancy Aldrich kept the town legal in that regard, and noted that expenses over \$10,000 require a request for bids, while lower expenses do not, relying instead on "best practices."

Keller also asked if there may be another way for Johnson-Mussad to learn what is necessary. Johnson-Mussad said the matter can wait, at least until the audit report is final.

Other Business

The library has a list of surplus items they hope to auction off. Senn asked if she could add items from the assessors' office to that list. The lists will to in the town newsletter, along with a plea for citizens to step up and run to fill empty slots in town government.

The selectboard received only one essay in the contest for a campership for a week at Audubon's Wildwood Camp, so that entrant, Seneca Smith, won.

Seal LaMadeleine was approved to use the town hall Friday mornings for a dance session. Town residents are invited, so the selectboard waived the normal fee.

Required Quorum

Following the schedule adopted because of Johnson-Mussad's Greenfield school committee schedule, the board held their next meeting on July 6, though with only half its normal complement of officials - Johnson-Mussad and Budine took some vacation time, leaving Keller and chair Laurie DiDonato as the required quorum. With no one taking notes, DiDonato said she would replay the Zoom recording afterwards and write minutes from that.

Staff Roles; Retirement

Treasurer Carolyn Manley asked for titles and definitions of the different selectboard clerk positions so she could write appropriate checks.

Keller said the "selectboard clerk" has historically been a board member who took responsibility for documents. Like the chair, or newly created vice-chair, the honor brings no extra pay. He said Budine has been able to bring up necessary documents as needed at meetings, and nominated her as selectboard

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

The Town of Wendell is accepting applications for the position of Library Director, to provide and promote library services to this small rural community. Working with the the Board of Trustees, the Director is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of staff and volunteers and oversight of the library's budget.

This is a benefited position up to 32 hrs/wk with an hourly rate of \$23 to \$25. A job description is available at

www.wendellmass.us/index.php/about/librarian-director-job-opening.html Deadline for submission is July 22, 2022. Send cover letter and resumes to *librarianjob@wendellmass.us* or Maggie Houghton, PO Box 912, Wendell, MA 01379.

clerk. Her candidacy won a unanimous vote of approval.

The person who will take notes and write minutes, still to be found, is now titled the "selectboard recording secretary, while a third position currently filled by Joy Gorzocoski is the "administrative assistant to the town coordinator."

DiDonato, as the board's representative to the public safety planning committee, said she had learned from Municipal Resources Incorporated that grant funding for the process of securing a fire chief after Joe Cuneo retires is not likely.

Keller suggested contacting the Collins Center, which was helpful in getting the prior grant. Finance committee chair Doug Tanner agreed to contact the Collins Center, and said ARPA money may be allowed, or failing that, stabilization.

Solar Outlook

The board discussed solar panels on the highway garage roof. The south-facing roof is considered the most appropriate roof for solar on a town-owned building, but the present roof is inadequate to support the panels. A standing-seam replacement is best, but most expensive.

Keller suggested installing a standing-seam roof on the south side of the building, and a normal sheet-metal roof on the north side. Ground-mounted panels are not a good idea in the lot south of the building because large vehicles, fire and highway, frequent the area.

More Other Business

The board plans to host a second community forum about policing this Thursday, July 14, from 7 to 8 p.m., and will meet with members of Entre Technologies at their next regular meeting on July 20.

Unless Massachusetts allows remote meetings to continue after the deadline of June 15, this meeting may have been Wendell's last Zoom before in-person meetings. A bill passed the Senate to extend the deadline to December, but the House had not yet passed a similar bill. Keller said permission to continue Zoom meetings would not prohibit in-person meetings; DiDonato said the July 20 meeting will be remote if it is allowed.

aquatic ecosystem."

"I'm out here volunteering because I just want to beat this beast," Boettner said. "We've worked so hard in other ponds, and I don't want to see it escape in any location, because otherwise it's just gonna spread to all these other places."

For Al MacIntyre, who has been on the cleanup crew for several weeks, joining the effort is a natural extension of his use of the area waterways.

"I'm a consummate waterman," According to the CRC's website, MacIntyre said. "I've been on this river for 40 years, in all kinds of human- and natural-powered craft. For me, it's a way to give back to the river, because it's given so much to me. Not just the river, but even its tributaries on the Deerfield, going whitewater kayaking, whatever it is. I just feel it's important to be able to lend a hand to

the river and the things that live on it, depend on it, as well."

"The process is very contemplative," said Cindy Fisher, another water chestnut puller. "You have a lot of time to just soak in the whole environment. There's constantly people taking advantage of this area, which is really cool to see. We've seen bald eagles and osprey, green heron. Great blues. But it gives you lots of time to think. It's not a bad way to spend your time. And it's especially rewarding when you get lots of those seeds."





Water chestnut, seen here with its distinctive pointed leaves, clogging the canal.

Last week, FirstLight initiated a pilot program to mechanically shred a portion of the canal's water chestnut growth, in cooperation with the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. The division of the US Fish & Wildlife Service, which focuses on the Connecticut River watershed, is headquartered in Hadley and has been involved in research at the federal Anadromous Fish Lab located at the end of the canal.

"Like other pilot projects, it's a bit of a science experiment, so we may find that the equipment works well in the power canal for this application, or we may find that the water is a bit too shallow in some areas for equipment use," Bazler wrote. "Regardless, our canoe team has had tremendous success harvesting to date and we will keep hand picking after the mechanical cutting occurs to ensure the whole patch is cut or harvested."

The effort will continue at least until September 1, according to Bazler, and the team is still welcoming additional help.

Boettner, whose past work has

Faith Diemand's technique for pulling the vegetation involves hanging her legs over the canoe's gunwales as she fills her buckets.

included gypsy moth and winter moth research and managing invasive species with biological agents, also identified the goal of finding such a solution for water chestnuts. In the interim, however, carefully managed manual removal of the plants can mitigate growth and

spread, he noted - but the removal must be as complete as possible.

"If you can suppress it, no seeds are gonna go out from here," Boettner said. "That's golden, and we're not going to have

other places to hunt for it. That's the goal."



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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Pole Position; Earth Machines

By JERRI HIGGINS

A6

The Gill selectboard met Tuesday evening on July 5 due to Monday's holiday. A light agenda included a utility pole installation hearing and the approval of several fire department purchase orders.

Selectboard members met with Eversource Energy representative Austin Harpin. Harpin sought, and received, their unanimous approval for the installation of a 45-foot utility pole at 12 West Gill Road, intended to provide service to a resident's garage.

Town administrator Ray Purington told the selectboard that the property owners and abutters were also notified of the meeting.

Crochier asked Harpin about a list Purington had sent Eversource of a dozen or so double poles in town that had not been removed.

"We have the list now," Harpin responded, "and I will send an email tomorrow for scheduling to get a timeline."

Crochier explained to the meeting audience that when Eversource installs poles, a temporary pole is cut to indicate Eversource's use, and the other pole is installed for permanent placement of all utilities. He also said there is an order in which the wires must get moved. Other utility companies, such as telephone and cable providers, come to place their wires on the new pole, and Eversource then returns to remove the temporary pole. "But some of these second poles hang around for a year, year and a half," he said.

"Whenever there is a pole hearing," Crochier continued, "whoever the poor person is that gets stuck coming to the meeting gets to hear from me about the whole list of double poles in town, because there is a process when it is not an emergency... The whole thing sucks because I cannot say 'no' to the pole, because it hurts a citizen."

Asked by Harpin if any of the dozen or so poles on the list were a priority for removal, Crochier responded "just the first 15."

As Crochier finished speaking, a chime sounded on his phone. "My wife just texted me and said we just lost power. That is just ironic - did I upset you?" he joked to Harpin.

Purchase Orders

The fire department was unanimously approved by consensus for several purchase order requests over the \$500 threshold requiring selectboard approval. Among them were approximately \$24,415 for several annual maintenance contracts including the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, vehicle maintenance, and other annual services, plus \$5,133 for emergency notifications, checklist and inventory, and analytics software services. Up to \$700 was approved for a detachable swivel shoot for the department's tanker truck.

The department was also approved for up to \$17,000 for chimney scrubber kits from chimneyscrubber.com. Fire chief Gene Beaubien said each kit, which normally costs \$1,575, will be discounted \$150 each through a multiple-town purchase order.

He also noted that the kits, made in Vermont, are left in chimnevs all year. "It cleans better than a wire brush," he said. "The way the springs are made, they offset each other." Beaubien said that the device will greatly help to "knock chimney fires down. We are not going to do chimney cleaning."

Beaubien also thanked the selectboard for their support around the town's recent purchase of a Responder fire truck. "We really appreciate it," he said. "It has been a long time coming."

Other Business

Purington told the selectboard that there are still about "90 COVID-19 self-test kits for free at the town hall."

Crochier, who also works as the regional health director at the Cooperative Public Health Service, added that these kits, which each contain two tests, "last at least 90 days beyond the expiration date listed on the kits."

Several Earth Machine compost bins are still available at the town hall for \$25 each. Purington said they regularly cost \$55.

Due to scheduling conflicts, the next selectboard meeting will not be held until Monday, August 1.

GILL MEMBER WANTED for SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Gill-Montague Regional School Committee currently has one vacancy for a Gill resident. Any Gill resident interested in

being appointed to this seat should send a letter of interest to the Superintendent's office - 35 Crocker Ave., Turners Falls - by July 25, 2022. Appointments to these vacancies will be made at the July 26, 2022 School Committee meeting.

GMRSD from page A1

Martineau to fill a vacant Montague seat until next spring election, based on a letter of interest. Martineau did not attend the meeting herself. She has been both a student and a teacher at Turners Falls High School, according to documents on the district website.

Cassie Damkoehler, the former member whose seat she filled, was also the former vice-chair; on Tuesday, members voted to appoint Tomb to the position, at least temporarily. A seat from Gill remains open

(see ad on this page).

A federal law that had changed to require that school summer meals must be eaten on site was changed back, and business manager Joanne Blier encouraged all present to spread the word that "grab and go" will again be allowed. Blier said "a few" families had dropped out of the feeding program because of the requirement.

"You don't even have to live in our town," she added.

Members read a list of science books found at the high school that superintendent Brian Beck said

"went as far back as the 1970s" - a single copy of Berman's How To Dissect – and did not object to their being discarded. Beck warned there would soon be a similar list of social studies texts.

Beck reported that summer flooring projects at Gill and Hillcrest elementary schools had finished a month and a week ahead of schedule.

The committee discussed the effort to study forming a new region with the Pioneer Valley district towns. "This whole process has really been promoted by Gill-Montague," Tomb said. "It hasn't necessarily been brought forward by the school committees.... I question whether you can bring this to fruition, no matter what you plan, without the consent of both school districts." (The Gill-Montague committee endorsed the study process by a 7-2 vote on April 9, 2019.)

Teachers from the two districts were invited to meetings in late June to brainstorm the merger, but despite a \$100 stipend for attendance, only three from Pioneer Valley attended, as opposed to



HOUSING from page A1

increase - in family homelessness. It's going in the wrong direction."

Lund sits on the Franklin County sheriff's Opioid Task Force, and also serves as chair of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) planning board and as a board member of the Community Health Center of Franklin County.

"One of the key things that keeps coming up in all the task force meetings... is the local housing shortage," Lund said. "The principal factor is we haven't built enough dwellings for folks."

A number of member organizations of the Opioid Task Force network, including Community Action, ServiceNet, and Eliot Community Human Services, helped administer the HUD point-in-time count. The census distinguished among people living in shelters, those couch surfing, and those literally sleeping outside. In February 67 people were counted living without any formal shelter, often sleeping in tents in the woods or on the street, in the three counties.

returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Inextricable Links

"It's a very valuable index for what's going on in the homeless population," Lund, interviewed this week for local radio station WHMP, said of the annual survey.

Lund said he became an advocate for housing after becoming involved as an early member of the Opioid Task Force in 2013 and began seeing the issues as inextricably linked.

"There are issues with housing that play a key, almost pivotal role in the ability for folks to find a recovery - a meaningful recovery - with their opioid addiction," Lund said. "We've gotten involved in a number of working groups in our county, and in the regional area, to work on the housing issue. In Franklin County, we focused on the high-risk homeless folks, particularly in cold weather." A recent study by the FRCOG's Small Town Housing Work Group identified a "housing gap" in Franklin County - the difference between the housing desired and the shelter available - of about 1,232 units, or about 4% of all total housing.

pancy of a mobile home only up to 30 days, or up to 90 days with a permit from the board of health, or two years if they are rebuilding a home destroyed by fire.

"The fact is that we're moving in the right direction and accessory dwelling units are becoming realized," Lund said. "People are realizing that it's very important to incentivize these."

Another factor limiting housing availability in Franklin County may be a dramatic rise in short-term rentals. The FRCOG study found that short-term rentals such as Airbnb have increased by 47% in the last three years, concentrated in the towns of Montague, Greenfield, Charlemont, Shelburne, and Deerfield.

make it more likely that landlords push substance users out of their rentals, Lund discussed various ways the housing shortage also makes recovery more difficult.

17 from Gill-Montague.

People receiving treatment for substance abuse can have difficulty finding a room in sober homes locally, Lund said, and with an eviction or any kind of criminal record, renting an apartment afterwards is even more difficult.

"It just keeps coming into the discussion no matter what," he said, outlining the standard course many users in recovery follow: from acute treatment to a two-week clinical stabilization program, and from there on to transitional support.

"If you make it through that pipeline, then the next issue, which is probably the biggest obstacle, is the availability of residential treatment services or so-called halfway houses," Lund explained. "If you are lucky enough to be able to score a position in a residential facility, after four to six months you would hopefully be able to find a sober home.... Most people never make it that far." According to Lund, the tent encampment on the Greenfield common in the summer of 2018 helped bring "the political folks" to focus on the issue of housing. "[T]here are a number of groups, probably four or five groups, who are now working on homelessness – or on the housing issue, not just homelessness," he said. The Opioid Task Force, he said, responded by collecting and distributing tents and sleeping bags and bolstering free food distribution networks like the Stone Soup Café. Working groups within the Task Force focus on various aspects of housing and healthcare, such as addiction recovery, mental health, and post-carceral support.

When HUD first started counting the region's more rural counties separately from Hampden County, in 2012, the census result was 717 people living without permanent housing. This increased to a peak of 781 in 2015, and dropped to 557 by 2017.

The total count jumped to 651 in 2018, the year Hurricane Maria forced many families from Puerto Rico into the mainland; 235 people, or 36% of the total count, were experiencing homelessness as part of a family unit.

"There are considerable racial disparities between the general population and those who are experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, especially amongst families," Lund said.

From February 2020 to February 2021, the number of individuals surveyors counted as experiencing homelessness of all kinds in the three counties dropped from 591 to 425; with this year's count, the figure has nearly

Zoning laws have prevented any significant building of accessory dwelling units and tiny homes, which Lund argued would be a crucial step to closing the housing gap.

"It really is important to increase multiple-unit dwellings," he said. "There have been serious zoning issues that a lot of towns have argued against accessory dwelling units.... A conversion of a garage, even, is something that was discriminated against big time, for a long time. It still is."

The Greenfield city council passed an ordinance in 2016 to allow tiny homes within city limits, and passed a bylaw in 2020 to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs), also known as in-law apartments, by right.

Montague allows accessory dwelling units, or ADUs, with a special building permit, but not tiny homes, which are considered mobile homes under state law. The town allows occu-

"[These] towns are abutting the Connecticut River," Lund said. "In other words, there's a tourist aspect to it."

Squeezed Out

Since the statewide eviction moratorium ended in October 2020, at least 47 people in Franklin County have been served with eviction notices, according to data compiled by the Reporter. Among those nearly evicted was Lund's daughter, whose struggles with opioid addiction he says motivated him to advocate for solutions.

"Stigma, it's the bad thing that's always out there. It's kind of this back hand that raises itself and swats at us when we're not paying attention," Lund said.

After taking the landlord to court and arguing the order was unlawful due to the federal eviction moratorium, she was allowed to keep her apartment until the end of the lease.

"When the lease was up," Lund said, "he absolutely drew a line in the sand, and said that 'you have to move, I'm not going to reup. I'm not going to allow you to stay in my apartment.' Not because she wasn't doing her part of the bargain - it was because she was a drug user."

While the high demand for housing may

"That was a very big effort," he said. "It's caused us to step back and realize that we really need to push the state in that direction to do a better job statewide, in making

funding available for folks who are totally unsheltered."



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MONTAGUE from page A1

recording system, which does not generally include the home "rapid tests" which have become increasingly popular.

She also said representatives in the legislature are exploring funding wastewater testing in Montague, and that the regional collaboration will probably receive additional state funds totaling \$300,000 to hire a "per diem health agent."

Accentuate the Positive

Water pollution control facility superintendent Chelsey Little came before the board to request a final decision on changing the name of her department. Little said that a variety of names had been suggested during the recent "public input process," but that she continued to support the name "Montague Clean Water Facility" as consistent with branding on other towns, as well as with state and federal policy goals.

"Anything that makes it easier to refer to the water pollution control facility when speaking is a real positive step forward," said town administrator Steve Ellis. "That's partly in jest, and partly really true."

On that note, the board approved the proposed new name, which now appears on the town website along with a new logo, based on the winning design by local artist Lahri Bond for a mural on the side of the facility headquarters.



Ellis updated the board on the progress of "smoke testing" the town sewer system to identify sources of external inflow and infiltration, primarily during significant rain events. Although the emphasis in previous discussions has been the system in Millers Falls, which flows into a treatment plant in the town of Erving, Ellis showed a map of a large number of testing sites in Turners Falls.

tive of the town's hauling contractor, Republic Services. The system has been experiencing missed collections and uncertain collection dates since it moved from a four- to five-day schedule at the beginning of June.

Finnegan was assisted by new operations manager Amias Callender, who said that the company had created a new "customer service center" to identify problem collection locations, and that a new driver from East Longmeadow is "getting more comfortable with the route" in Montague.

Callender warned that there were "some pockets in town that are still off schedule," and said they would be a focus during the coming weeks. Callender also said that "on-time service has been vastly increased" due to better trucks, including one called "Old Faithful," and the expansion of the schedule to five days.

A man named Mr. Little who lives on Federal Street complained that he had been notified in early June that his pickup had been moved to Mondays, but that the Republic truck "has never come on Monday," and wildlife were getting into his trash. Lord said that there have been similar problems on Center Street in Montague Center.

Ellis said he had met the new driver. "He's a great guy," he said, but added that there are "persistent problem areas," and told the Republic employees "we've got to get this right."

"This information is very helpful," said Callender.

The board approved the use of \$800 in "Community Donation Funds" from Republic to cover trash collection at the Great Falls Festival in downtown Turners Falls this October.

Building Projects

The board voted to execute an \$83,309 contract with the engineering firm Stantec for the design of a culvert replacement of Ferry Road. The project is being funded primarily by money diverted from the Fifth Street footbridge replacement project, which is no longer needed.

Ellis said the culvert project was not yet on the regional "Transportation Improvement Plan" but that he is confident the TIP, as it is called, will be amended in the fall.

Ellis reported on several other local capital projects, noting progress on the sidewalk and rear entrance to the Carnegie Library and continuing to advocate for hiring an architect to oversee renovations on the town hall roof.

and the execution of an agreement with FirstLight MA Hydro LLC for use of the company's land.

Ellis shared several legislative updates, which included a possible extension of the right of local communities to hold virtual and hybrid meetings beyond the current deadline of July 15; the progress of legislation to remove the Montague police department from civil service, as approved by a recent town meeting; legislation that could change the calculation of "impact fees" towns can negotiate with cannabis firms; and a new transportation bond bill that may include several new Montague bridge projects.

For the second meeting in a row, Ellis reported that the state legislature had "stripped out" all projects funded by federal ARPA money from a bond bill proposed by governor Charlie Baker. These included a \$5.5 million proposal for a partial demolition of the former Strathmore mill complex (see article, Page A1).

Ellis said he had "engaged" representative Natalie Blais and senator Joanne Comerford, the town's delegates on Beacon Hill, "about how we can keep this project moving forward."



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD Bylaw Cleanup; Busted Air Conditioner

By KEITH WATERS

The Erving selectboard held a relatively short meeting this July 6, clocking in at one hour and ten minutes. There were a number of people in attendance who did not have to be, for which Scott Bastarache gave thanks, which Jacob Smith seconded.

The state's reporting to the towns regarding COVID-19 has changed, but the assessment of Franklin County as being "low risk" has not.

The town's police department is moving ahead with new hires. William Kimball has accepted an offer for a part-time position, and Laura Gordon has started already in a full-time position.

Gordon was a police officer in Greenfield and is the wife of William Gordon, a lieutenant in the Greenfield police department and the current acting chief. Laura Gordon had taken unpaid leave in Greenfield after that city reduced the budget for the department subsequent to a jury trial finding of racially-motivated discrimination against the department.

The selectboard is working on new guidelines for meeting participation, which are about ready to be published. When they are ready they will be published on the town website, in the Around Town community newsletter, and on the backs of the agendas handed out at each meeting.

the town's bylaws, make sure there are no conflicts and some sort of regular formatting, and make the bylaws available and searchable online. Included in this project is a small recurring budget item to make sure the bylaws are updated annually.

The planning committee, town clerk, and town administrator reportedly had to do a bunch of work to get to a draft, which is now ready to be reviewed by the selectboard. The selectboard agreed to review it.

The state Department of Environmental Protection had required the town to do inflow-and-infiltration testing of its sewer systems to try to reduce excess water going to its wastewater treatment facilities. This testing has now mostly been done, and some small sources of I-and-I were found. Water and wastewater superintendent Pete Sanders helped go through the results, and contributed to selectboard deciding to approve finalizing the results and sending them to the state.

Sanders also had to present an emergent need to the board: the failure of an air conditioning unit at one of the town's wastewater treatment facilities. The unit's control boards, he said, were eaten by mice sometime since last summer.

The repair of the 14-year-old unit, said to be nearing the end of its useful life, would cost \$8,000, while its replacement would be about \$25,000. The selectboard approved repairs.

The testing, which is taking place this week, is being implemented by the department of public works in conjunction with the engineering firm Wright-Pierce.

Ellis then reviewed the progress of a project to update the town's map of its sewer system, which is being paid for in part by a \$150,000 state grant. He then revealed that an older map, created by a different engineering firm and presumed lost, had recently been discovered.

"They found them! They found them in June," said Ellis. "It is an added component to our study."

Ellis said that adding this component could also add \$10,000 to the cost of the study which could be funded by already-appropriated federal COVID-19 relief money from the American Rescue Plan Act. The board did not take a vote on the issue.

Garbage Progress

The board heard another update on trash and recycling collection from Tyler Finnegan, a representa-

Both Lord and selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz advocated that the architect investigate the design and cost of a metal roof, and after a lengthy discussion, Ellis reluctantly agreed. Ellis said he feared that a metal roof design would add to the cost above the approved appropriation.

Other Business

Suzanne LoManto, assistant town planner and director of the RiverCulture program, requested a variety of approvals from the board for the upcoming Pocumtuck Homelands Festival, an event on August 6 through 7 that celebrates indigenous culture and history.

The board approved these requests, which included an entertainment license, the use of public property, the use of the town hall annex meeting room for a film screening,

The town is also working on a project called Town Bylaw Codification. The aims of this are to cleanup

The selectboard voted to reinstate Jacob Smith as its chair for the next year.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Two Elected Official Vacancies in Erving

ERVING – The Town of Erving would like to announce one vacancy on the Recreation Commission, and one vacancy on the Planning Board. These vacancies are both for elected positions.

In accordance with MGL Chapter 41, Section 11, the Select Board is seeking interested residents to serve in these positions until the Annual Town Election in 2023. To be considered, an interested resident must be a registered voter of the Town of Erving.

The Planning Board is a five-member elected Board that guides the development of Erving by serving as the Special Permit and site plan review authority under the Zoning Bylaw. The Board also administers the provisions of the Subdivision Control regulations. The Planning Board plays an important role in reviewing the Zoning Bylaw, proposing edits, and holding public hearings for voters before any revisions are presented at Town Meeting.

The Recreation Commission is a five-member elected Board that provides youth sports, recreational programs, and special events for Erving residents. The Commission does so while overseeing the use and development of the Town's five parks and playgrounds.

If you are interested, please send a written letter of interest that identifies the position that you are interested in serving in and that includes your name, address, and contact information.

Letters of interest should also include an explanation of your education, training, experience and other interests that would lend itself to the position sought.

Letters of interest are due by Wednesday, August 17, 2022.

Letters can be sent by mail to: Select Board, Attn: Volunteer Services, 12 East Main Street, Erving, Massachusetts 01344 or by email to volunteer@erving-ma.gov.



TEARDOWN from page A1

factory complex is considered an important structure within the Turners Falls Historic District.

According to a 2013 reuse study, after the complex was abandoned by the International Paper Company, its owner from 1953 to 1994, it came under the control of several owners who could not maintain it. One filled it with paper destined for recycling in China, and reportedly stripped the complex of its copper. The complex fell into the town's lap for back taxes in 2010, and has been something of an albatross ever since.

Numerous reuse studies over the past 30 years have documented the complex's potential, and but also its progressive decline. An initial proposal in 2019 for a nearly complete demolition was nixed after the engineering firm Tighe & Bond gave a huge cost estimate because the one building in the complex the town does not own, a small hydro facility, would be at risk if the adjoining buildings were demolished. (It is not clear how the most recent plan in the Governor's bond bill would address that problem.)

That same year the state agency MassDevelopment allocated \$250,000 "for the abatement of hazardous materials in four buildings of the former Strathmore Mill that have a future as an adaptively re-used mixed-use property."

Last December 8 the state agency, which has looked favorably on Montague's vision for a revitalized "Canal District," allocated another \$35,000 for a "property reuse assessment of the mill complex." This announcement also referenced the 2019 grant "to support development of the Strathmore Complex."

But recent discussions at Montague selectboard meetings suggest that the reuse assessment, which has not been completed, was folded into a Canal District master planning process under the guidance of the Springfield-based architectural firm Dietz & Company.

While Dietz's proposal to the town in early February envisioned both structural and marketing assessments of the building, the Reporter could find no evidence that either has been completed.

In April, meanwhile, the town issued a proposal calling for the partial demolition of the Strathmore, and on the 26th of that month sent a \$5.5 million demolition proposal to the Governor, which came to be included in his bond bill. The Reporter could find no evidence that these proposals were the product of any formal redevelopment assessment, or indeed even a discussion and vote by the selectboard.

Last month a joint committee of the legislature stripped the Governor's bond bill of all projects, including the Strathmore demolition, which would have been funded by federal ARPA money. A source close to Beacon Hill, who declined to speak on the record, explained this week that legislators may still be able to insert "earmarks" as the remaining bond bill works its way through the House and Senate.

If that it still a possibility, it is unclear what the town of Montague's official preference for the project is at this time. The first April proposal, which may have been the basis for the request to the Governor, stated that 100,000 square feet of the mill complex would be demolished and 150,000 square feet "stabilized... for adaptive-reuse as mixed-use with a housing component."

But during the past month, town officials appear to have returned to the nearly total demolition scenario proposed in 2019 to Tighe & Bond, with only freestanding Building 11 considered potentially viable.

The owner of the adjacent Southworth buildings, Tom Cusano, has expressed an interesting in acquiring Building 11, but he told this newspaper that he had received no news about its fate.

"It appears that the Strathmore buildings are doomed for destruction," Cusano said. "That's too bad. They can never be replaced... We may still have an interest in Building 11 if we can put it to good use."

Ellis, the town administrator, gave his perspective on the Strathmore to this newspaper in a series of recent emails. As far as the process is concerned, he stated that the master planning process, which apparently now includes the MassDevelopment reuse study, was funded "with an awareness that the town has submitted grant requests to raze the northern portion of the Strathmore and stabilize the southern portions..."

Ellis suggested that the town was moving simultaneously on "parallel tracks" with the Strathmore, and that this strategy had been developed by the selectboard in 2019, in the context of the hazardous material abatement project and the Tighe & Bond total-demolition design proposal.

According to Ellis, "We are very open to housing or mixed-industrial - any beneficial re-use throughout the district, including in the Strathmore, and hope the master plan will facilitate that."

But Ellis also warned that the complex is "deteriorating rapidly," and at Monday's selectboard meeting pointed to a recent fire at an old factory building in Orange as a reason to continue to lobby the state for a demolition earmark.

Town planner Walter Ramsey told us there will be a second "public session" on the Canal District Master Plan on July 26 at 6:30 p.m. As of press time this event does not appear on the town website; a planning board meeting is scheduled for that time. "It would be great to have that covered, as it relates to the topic at hand," he said.

Ramsey also said he hopes to release an "Investigation Phase memo" on the condition of the Strathmore prior to the meeting, noting that "the architect's prognosis is not good, with a recommendation that

Building 11 alone may have rehabilitation potential."

WORLD OF RHYTHM



Top to bottom: Kaoru Watanabe at Peskeomskut Park; Iréne I-Shea Shaikly at Unity Park; sisters Xingyao Xue and Xingyue Xue of the XY Percussion Duo play marimba. Sunday, July 3 saw a village-wide, multi-faceted showcase of virtuoso percussion in Turners Falls: the Music Walk, curated by Antenna Cloud Farm with support from RiverCulture, the MA Cultural Council, and Greenfield Cooperative Bank.





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FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

JULY 14, 2022

Above: Junk in a junk barn on Route 63 in Northfield.



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – The Buck Moon lights the southern midnight sky, casting a somber, summer glow across the blotchy-brown front lawn, cut high and thirsting for a soaker, and greeting the month when antlers grow.

Rhubarb, asparagus, and strawberries have passed, a disappointing shad run of less than 200,000 is over, and the backyard blueberries are ripe. Soon fresh magenta raspberries that ripen to a pastel purple will sweeten my morning cereal. Those that don't make it fresh into my bowl will be stored frozen in zip-lock bags for use extending well into winter, when dry, toasty heat will radiate from the soapnot a fenced Black Angus awaiting slaughter, a Smithfield hog mired in its own filth, or a caged and cramped Tyson chicken. Humans sure are capable of sadistic cruelties to which cat-and-mouse games pale in comparison.

But enough of that. Let's move on to a recent spontaneous visit from an old friend and former teammate passing through my neighborhood to look at a job. On a midday weekend whim, he just pulled into my horseshow driveway, parked his truck, and walked to the inset porch off my dining room. I was sitting at my desk in the study when I heard him announce his presence through the screen door. The television, a room and small front hallway away, was on loud so that I could keep up

GREAT FALLS APPLE COLUMN

By ANNABEL LEVINE

TURNERS FALLS - When I first moved to the valley a decade ago, I worked at a charter school in Haydenville. After the school day ended, I would make my way to the all-school space to work another two hours at the after-school program.

I remember one day going outside to supervise on the playground and seeing the new student teacher walk over to the picnic table and take an assortment of items out of a cloth bag. I watched as she took out a bundle of sticks, a clump of fluffy material, and a long coil of rope. Intrigued, I went over to see what she was doing.

She told me, as she snapped the dry twigs and pulled off their bark, that she was making twine out of a plant called dogbane. This was years before the Great Falls Apple Corps, and at the beginning of my plant journey, so it wasn't a surprise to me that I had never heard of it. However, I cannot pass up a fun project, so I asked if she would teach me.

As I set to processing some of her bundle, she told me that she had learned this skill in a survivalist course she was taking up in Montague. The course would end with a weekend in the woods, trying to make it through two days surviving only using food and resources she found herself. I remember thinking to myself that Montague must be a wild place!

I slowly got the hang of the process of stripping the bark and then twisting the fibers into twine, and asked where I could find more dogbane to make some of my own. She had harvested hers elsewhere, but she told me it was pretty common and should be easy to find. I looked it up on my phone, to see what it looked like, and banked the image in my brain to have on hand whenever I went looking for wild plants. I thought I would find it soon... but I didn't. I progressed further into my journey of wild plant knowledge, and after years of learning about and finding dozens of new plant allies in the wild, I still hadn't found dogbane - until this week!



Dogbane in flower, with its characteristic red stems, growing along the edge of an empty lot in Montague City.

I found myself a few nights ago with my phone in hand for a little too long, glued to the avalanche of bad

stone woodstove.

I use a sharp paring knife to quarter fresh-picked berries for my cereal. Later, when frozen, I crunch them between my thumb and forefinger into little, round, tasty bits for consumption. That way, they quickly melt and bring a soft lilac hue to the tan cashew milk I've added. Honestly, I have no preference. They're totally satisfying fresh or frozen.

During this splendid young summer, I have thus far run into three neighborhood bucks "in velvet," their fuzzy, developing antlers difficult to decipher when hidden behind alert ears curled forward. As a young man able to read the rotation of an oncoming pitch from the batter's box, I could see them with less effort. But why complain? A May eye exam rated my vision 20/20, which I find impossible to accept. My vision used to be much better, with no need for reading glasses or magnifiers to tie blood-knots at daybreak, joining the thinnest tippets to monofilament leaders in challenging gray light.

I guess if that's all a 69-yearold man has to gripe about, after decades of ignoring injury, playing hard and defying most medical advice, he has it better than most old war horses on the stretch run. I guess my motto has always been that you only go around once. So, why not make the most of it?

Who knows? Maybe that fatalistic perspective, framed in Christian doctrine that I rejected before puberty, is bogus. Maybe we do, in fact, come back in another earthly form. If so, I hope I'm

on breaking CNN news.

He didn't knock, just hollered in a playful greeting that went something like, "Is that what retired old codgers do with their free time watch the boob-tube all day?"

Unable to identify the voice, I rose from my seat, walked to the porch door, and was pleased with the identity. An expert mason who could have comfortably retired long ago, he's a couple of years older than me, and still working a strenuous trade for any man north of 70. Why quit if still able and willing? He's good at what he does, still loves doing it, and is very likely the valley's finest bricklayer. He's seen it all, has worked on many historic buildings - including many in Historic Deerfield - and remains in great demand.

I hired him in the late Eighties to rebuild an old kitchen fireplace that had been boarded up for at least two generations at the family home I owned in South Deerfield. Then, when I moved to Greenfield 25 years ago, I again needed his services. He capped a couple of chimneys, laid a Goshenstone walk, helped secure a lamppost and flagpole, set me up for a woodstove, and got all five of my home's Rumford fireplaces into good working order.

If I can see my way clear before he retires, I'd like to bring him back for a last hurrah to rebuild the brick base of the main center-chimney housing the five fireplaces. Centered in a spacious, high-ceilinged tavern cellar built for storage, the base is split into see VALLEY VIEW page B4

news coming across my feeds. I needed a movement break, so I got my shoes on, grabbed a book, and decided to at least go check out the new little free library a few blocks over.

Once I reached the little library and dropped off my book, I decided to see what was growing around the neighborhood, hoping to find a patch of wild raspberries to snack on. When I was ready to head home I took

see APPLE CORPS page B8

GAME REVIEW Survival of the Fittest in Vampire Survivors

By W. KAIZEN

AMHERST – A friend of mine describes the satisfaction that he takes from playing videogames as akin to wiping splattered bugs off a car's windshield. He means that both the ease with which enemies are felled and the sense of restoring order only to have it besmirched again are the primary reasons he plays games like Left 4 Dead and Destiny. For me, no recent videogame has triggered this pleasure like Vampire Survivors.

Vampire Survivors is a solo pixel-art "autoshooter," a new genre of videogame that turns shooting games on their head. The goal is simple: Survive for 30 minutes. Gameplay is simple, too: Kill or be killed, as increasingly difficult waves of enemies spawn at fixed time intervals.

The twist to the autoshooter genre is that all you actively do is move. The game automatically attacks for you, in a manner determined by which weapons you choose. There are different start-



The player of this game is, pleasurably, mobbed with hordes of foes.

ing characters to choose from, each with its own starting weapon. Choices of additional weapons and buffs become available over the course of each run.

Vampire Survivor features more simultaneous enemies than I've ever seen in a videogame before. The player controls a sprite that moves across a large map filled with primitively animated mobs, including bats, skeletons, and zombies. And

oh, how many enemies there are! I've never been confronted with so many on screen at once, with more coming all the time from off screen, all of them homing in on me with such relentless abandon.

Being mobbed is the game's entire point, which is an oddly gratifying experience to have when, for the past two COVID-disrupted years, people have been doing

see VAMPIRE page B5





"LARRY"

Larry is a cute ferret whose favorite game to play is hide and seek. He is spunky, and you'll have fun chasing him around. Larry likes pets, but when it comes to being picked up, he plays bait and switch. He uses being picked up as a quick way to scramble off to freedom.

He has not interacted with children yet. Also, you know all those single socks you have because their mates disappeared in the laundry? Hold onto them. Larry loves to grab 'em!

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

Senior Center Activities JULY 18 THROUGH 29

WENDELL

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

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on 10:15 a.m. Aerobics Zoom on Wednesdays. Foot care 11 a.m. Chair Exercise clinic is held monthly. For more 12 p.m. BYO Lunch to Bingo

11 a.m. Chair Exercise 12 p.m. Pizza Party Monday 7/25 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise 1 p.m. Knitting & Handcrafts **Tuesday 7/26** 1 p.m. Chair Yoga 3 p.m. Tai Chi Wednesday 7/27

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT **Charlemont Forum's 2022 Series Opens With Gender Identity Talk**

CHARLEMONT – The Charlemont Forum's 2022 lecture series aims to explore, at each session, causes of and possible solutions for one aspect of the current divisions in American political culture. The Forum engages humanities scholars from various fields, including religious studies, American history, literature, and media studies. These discussions on important topics are free of charge to those who attend, thanks to grants from local cultural councils.

The Forum's opening session, next Thursday, July 21 at 7 p.m., will address the complexities of gender identity issues in the 21st century. Dr. Genny Beemyn, a transgender educator, author, and consultant and the director of the Stonewall Center at UMass, will lay out the touchstones of the topic, as they identify them: increasing a clearer public understanding of gender; fighting discrimination; and creating opportunities for public awareness.

"The last decade has seen a generational shift in how gender is lived and viewed," says Beemyn, who recently joined other experts to talk about trans rights priorities for the Biden administration. "Refuting the common assumption that gender can be reduced to female and male, many members of Gen Z identify as nonbinary and are challenging society to recognize more than two genders. This presentation will discuss the development of these changes, why they are important, and how people can be supportive of this movement."

When asked if they think the general public is on its way to supporting more equal rights and social acceptance for gender-nonconforming members of our society, Beemyn responded:

"More and more young people are identifying as trans and nonbinary, and they are changing how society in general thinks about gender and creating a more gender-inclusive climate.... Despite the leaders of conservative states doing everything they can to force trans youth to disappear, they are not going away."

The Charlemont Forum's format of audience-speaker exchange will provide an opportunity for respectful dialogue on the issue. The presentation will be held live at the Federated Church in Charlemont, and will also be on the Forum's Zoom platform. For audience members attending the live presentation, current COVID policies of the church building must be followed. For more information, see the Charlemont Forum's Facebook page.

Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column by STEPHANIE BAIRD

TURNERS FALLS - For the July and August Sex Matters columns I have a treat in store for you, dear readers. Our very own local sexpert Yana Tallon-Hicks - couples sex therapist, educator, and longtime "The V-Spot" sex columnist for the Valley Advocate - is publishing her first book, Hot and Unbothered: How to Think About, Talk About, and Have the Sex You Really Want due out on August 16 from Harper Collins.

Delightedly, Yana agreed to an interview, which will be split over two columns. The first part of the interview focuses on Yana's background as a sex educator and writer. Consider this interview an amusebouche to whet your appetite for the main course.

First, a short quote from the back cover: "Yana helps you decide who you really are as a sexual being and how to set sexual goals. What do you want? How do you want to explore? In answering these questions you can the "this is the difference between set your limits, clarify your needs, and communicate your desires to your current partner. Yana reminds you that whether your partner is a lifelong companion or a casual hookup, your pleasure, comfort, and identity should always be supported."

YTH: Would it be glib if my answer to this was just "life"? As a teenaged girl raised in the early aughts, my earliest sexual forays and sex education experiences were really confusing and lacking. I could say I've been inspired to write this book since then.

My interest in the divide between how we talk and learn about sex and how we actually have and experience sex has always been there. Once it started forming into a career, the research part took hold, and has been ongoing for the last decade in my work as a columnist, educator, therapist, and now book author.

I actually did very little extra research for this book beyond the work I've done in the last ten years which to me really tells me that I've picked the right career path.

SB: What is your sexual health background?

YTH: My background is less in

perspectives in my work.

As I share in those pages, "I am white, cisgender, thin, and able-bodied. I am also a presently well-resourced queer/bisexual woman in a straight-passing relationship. My success in my field and my access to various platforms to safely speak and write about sex are undoubtedly influenced by my racial, body, and class privilege, just to name a few. As a white sex educator and writer, I have benefited by way of white privilege from both past and current racist reproductive health research practices, laws, and acts in this country and beyond. To not acknowledge this harm here would be to perpetuate it."

Given our particular moment in history and the struggles our country is stumbling through, it felt crucial to share about my identities and how it impacts the information and perspectives I share in the book and that my perspectives are limited by my identity lenses. I also find it

information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 2, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information please call 863-9357. Monday 7/18 10:15 a.m. Aerobics

11 a.m. Chair Exercise 1 p.m. Knitting & Handcrafts Tuesday 7/19 1 p.m. Chair Yoga 3 p.m. Tai Chi Wednesday 7/20 9 a.m. Veterans' Agent Hours 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise 12 p.m. BYO Lunch to Bingo 1:30 p.m. Parking Lot Pantry 4 p.m. Mat Yoga Thursday 7/21 10 a.m. Fruit & Finances 1 p.m. Cards & Games Friday 7/22 10:15 a.m. Aerobics

4 p.m. Mat Yoga Thursday 7/28 1 p.m. Cards & Games Friday 7/29 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and snacks daily. Fit- 10 a.m. Barre Fusion ness room open daily. Erving Friday 7/22 van services available (must call 24hrs in advance for a ride). For more information, please call 9 a.m. Interval (413) 423-3649.

Monday 7/18

9 a.m. Interval 10:15 a.m. Seated Workout Tuesday 7/19 9 a.m. Good for U 10 a.m. Line Dancing Wednesday 7/20 9 a.m. Cardio Low Impact 10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics 11:30 a.m. Bingo Thursday 7/21 9 a.m. Core & Balance

SB: What inspired you to research and write this book?

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew Monday 7/25 10:15 a.m. Seated Workout Tuesday 7/26 9 a.m. Good for U 10 a.m. Line Dancing Wednesday 7/27 9 a.m. Cardio Low Impact 10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics 11:30 a.m. Bingo Thursday 7/28 9 a.m. Core & Balance 10 a.m. Barre Fusion Friday 7/29 9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

chlamydia and gonorrhea" avenue of sex ed, and more in the realm of relational sex education. My work has always engaged questions like, how do we talk about sex - and why? How do our cultural and social contexts influence the way we relate to ourselves and our partner as sexual people? What relational and personal skills can we develop to make sex a healthier, easier, safer, and more pleasurable part of every day life?

If you want to get technical, however, I have a self-designed undergraduate degree in LGBTQQ+ community and sex education. I have a masters degree in couples therapy. And I've been formally and informally trained in specialized topics regarding sex and sexuality from experts across the country.

SB: What else would you like to share about your own background and/or identities?

YTH: I found it important in the first pages of my book to acknowledge some identity information about myself and how that information influences my privileges and

important to urge readers to diversify who they learn about sex and sexuality from, which is why in the book's resource guide you'll find a variety of other sex educators and writers to learn from.

I'm also out and proudly queer and non-monogamous, something I find important to be vocal about both as a person and also as a professional in the sex and couples therapy field. I find that sex advice books are often heavily skewed either toward straightness or queerness, monogamy or non-monogamy; it was very important to me that the book not just mention, but fully represent, the entire run of both of these spectrums rather than either/or.

The conversation will continue in our August 11 issue. Stephanie Baird, LMHC is an OWL Facilitator, EMDR Consultant and Psychotherapist, certified in Advancing Clinical Excellence in Sexuality (ACES,) and encourages her clients towards thriving sexual health. She welcomes feedback and suggestions at sexmatters @montaguereporter.org.

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FROM A TEEN'S POINT OF VIEW

The Real TOPGUN School

By FINTAN ANDREW JONES

MONTAGUE – It is Fintan, and today I will be talking about a school called TOPGUN. You may be thinking that I will be talking about the movie from 1986 or the recent sequel, but no. I will be writing about the actual TOPGUN school in Fallon, Nevada. I was very inspired by this movie, so I have been researching the school.

I will start off from the beginning. The TOPGUN school was founded in 1969. It was originally located in Naval Air Station (NAS) Miramar in San Diego, California. The school was founded by the Navy to help experienced pilots to teach future Naval aviators.

The first head instructor at the TOPGUN school was a man named Dan Pedersen. He flew in the Vietnam War, and was accustomed to flying countless different military aircraft. He recruited eight other pilots to help him train the next generation of Naval pilots.

The headquarters of NAS Miramar was a 50-foot-long stolen Airstream trailer, where they taught tactics. Despite these challenging circumstances, the students persevered and came out of the fourweek-long course with a "Master's Level Education" on everything about themselves and their aircraft. This makes some sense because the students woke up at 4:30 a.m. every day, seven days a week. I can only imagine how much work and dedication that must take.

Before the TOPGUN school existed, in the Vietnam War the United States's "kill-to-loss" ratio was 2:1. After the TOPGUN graduates went back to Vietnam, that figure went to six times higher than before, at 12:1. After this incredible success, the Navy started giving more money and resources to the TOPGUN school so they could continue their amazing work.

It was in 1986 that the public got a look into the work that the TOPGUN school was doing. This was when the first Top Gun movie came out. I watched this movie, and I thought it

TO G TO G

was pretty cool; it made me want to learn how to fly an airplane.

A man named Pete Pettigrew was someone who worked a lot on the 1986 Top Gun movie, to make it as real as possible. He was an instructor at the TOPGUN school, which made him a very credible advisor. A fun fact about Pete Pettigrew is that his call sign is "Viper." A call sign is the name used to communicate with specific people through radio.



Way back in 1942 there was an air base about 60 miles to the east of Reno, Nevada - sound familiar? Yes, NAS Fallon, the same one I was talking about in the beginning of this column. NAS Fallon was actually built as part of a defense network to help fend off a possible Japanese attack and/or capture of the West Coast. This air station was also helping a lot in the Vietnam War. During this time, NAS Fallon was helping load aircraft carriers in preparation for the future or possibly being used in the war itself.

Of course after the war the Navy took notice of the TOPGUN school, and in 1996 the school was relocated just over 460 miles to NAS Fallon. It was then that the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Centers were merged into the Aviation Warfighting Development Center.

Anyways, now in 2022, the sequel to Top Gun came out, and it is a really good movie. It is one of my top 10 favorite movies ever.

Just looking at the legacy of the TOPGUN school, I think it is amazing. They started in an Airstream trailer and now they have graduated over 205 classes. They are still in operation today.

It was very fun researching about this history, and I learned a lot of very interesting information. Next time, I will be writing about an instrument called the cello. I happen to play this instrument, and enjoy it very much.

ALVIN G

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG Downtown Youths Engaged In Full-Blown Crime Wave; Canal Street Intersection Harms Vehicles; Two Loose Snakes; Terrorism Task Force; Pictures of Lady Gaga Fully Clothed

a look themselves.

6:21 p.m. 911 caller advises

Caller advises she broke

up the altercation, advised

staff, and called 911. Caller

states aggressor has since

left the location; other in-

volved male still on scene.

Officer advises involved

male is refusing medical

8:32 p.m. Caller reports

seeing two juvenile males

"tagging" stop signs; last

seen heading under the

bridge at the Discovery

Center. Officer in foot

pursuit. One in custody.

Involved juvenile turned

over to parent and will be

cleaning up the graffiti to-

12:30 a.m. Walk-in party

from Fourth Street reports

that there are four or five

juveniles in front of his

building who continuously

harass other individuals;

party doesn't feel safe at

with one male and two fe-

they were yelled at by the

reporting party. Involved

4:08 p.m. Caller reports a

man in Unity Park with

two loose snakes. Referred

from Unity Street report-

in the face by a friend's

dog. Child transported to

cooperative.

to an officer.

Friday, 7/1

pending.

Thursday, 6/30

attention. Report taken.

Monday, 6/27

6:26 a.m. Caller from Park requested for both vehicles. Street calling about animal abuse by neighbors; lookcopy of call for ACO.

2:12 p.m. Party into station ferred to an officer. to speak with an officer 8:50 p.m. Caller from the building.

2:34 p.m. Received a call from someone stating they are from Palmer police and 9:23 p.m. Caller from Fifth Street reporting two boys on skateboards on her porch; she would like an officer to tell them to get off of private property. male from Greenfield; only Officer spoke to caller; on- knows his first name. Caller

Randall Road reporting harassment from a neighbor. Caller hung up; around the caller's are in Tuesday, 6/28

10:03 a.m. Officer was approached downtown by a male posted on Snapchat party who reported two that he would give the dog bicycles stolen from Fifth 6/24. Report taken.

2:10 p.m. Caller from Randall Road reporting that a maroon Jeep pulled out of the driveway of a neighbor and ran all over the mailboxes. Officer stated that the landlord contacted him directly and advised that a gold-colored vehicle hit the mailboxes. Investigated.

2:38 p.m. Caller reporting two-vehicle accident; states that he was behind a friend on Route 63 and another 1:47 p.m. Officer witnessed

7:54 p.m. Caller states that she came over the Canal ing for what to do about Bridge and took a left; it. Provided number for there was a large bump, she witnessed a male punch animal control officer; left and after she went over it, another male at Food City. her car started rattling. Re-

about a tenant at Went- Avenue A states that worth Congregate Hous- someone just broke her ing making verbal threats screen door again and to harm another tenant in that there is a group of teens outside. Referred to an officer.

10:01 p.m. Caller states that some kids were running around chasing another kid and then stole the child's dog. Second caller states he was walking his dog and got run down and they stole his dog. Caller states it is a states they came after him 11:17 p.m. Caller from with a police-type baton. Officer advises dog is older black Chihuahua; probable cause for arrest for larceny and assault with a deadly weapon; requesting area agencies be on lookout for suspect and if located, stop, hold, and contact MPD. Caller reports involved back if both juveniles fight, then posted the dog was returned to where it was taken from, but caller advises that it was not. Greenfield PD spoke with mother of involved juvenile in their town; she advised he was not at that location. Summons issued.

> 10:05 p.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street states a male is outside her apartment who appears to be drunk or on something. Party gone upon arrival. Wednesday, 6/29

BFMC in a personal vehicar pulled out from Gunn a vehicle bottom out real cle. ACO on scene. Road and slammed right bad on Canal Street, where 10:23 a.m. Report from K Tuesday, 7/5 into his friend's car. Offi- all the potholes from the Street of a skunk caught 10:03 a.m. Employee from

head and neck pain. Tow they have already contact- Ongoing issue.

ed the company about the 12:26 p.m. 911 caller from road situation but will take Avenue A reports a female came to his apartment two weeks ago and refuses to leave. He states he does not know who she is. Officer reports caller was loud and confrontational and told the officers to leave.

8:55 p.m. Caller from Wendell Road states that a large bear went into her garage and got into the birdseed. They have been trying to scare him off, but he does not seem to be afraid of people; it has been approaching people and pets rather than running. Provided number for environmental police. Sunday, 7/3

7:25 a.m. Caller from Fifth Street reporting that his vehicle was broken into morrow; charges may be overnight; he is missing \$100 and his Suboxone as well as other items. Investigated.

Monday, 7/4

9:04 a.m. Walk-in advising that he unknowingly had three counterfeit \$20 bills. He went to pay for something at Cumberland his residence. Officer out Farms; the clerk tested the bill and determined it was males at location; spoke to fake. Caller then realized juveniles, who deny caus- that he had two more and ing any issue and state that turned them over to the Greenfield PD.

9:13 a.m. Officer flagged male advised of issue; oth- down by male who stater two juveniles were un- ed he was just chased by a bulldog that is running loose on Fifth Street. Unable to locate.

9:01 p.m. Caller states there is a fight in the alley by the Pizza House; it sounds like 10:01 a.m. 911 caller a lot of people and like someone is being injured. ing two-year-old bitten Another caller stated her brother and a friend just showed up at her house and they had been beaten up by another kid. Report taken.

cer requesting AMR for a construction are getting in a trap. ACO released Silvio O. Conte Anadro-

asking for money. going issue.

unable to get additional information. Houses all darkness. Unfounded.

Street: one on Thursday 6/23 and one on Friday



MOVIE REVIEW The Black Phone (Scott Derrickson, 2022)

By SEAMUS TURNER-GLENNON

CHARLEMONT - The same day I saw *The Black Phone*, the newest release from horror filmmaker Scott Derrickson, I watched Mario Bava's 1965 sci fi-horror film Planet of the Vampires. Planet of the Vampires is one of the most creatively lush and beautiful-looking movies I've seen in some time. With its retrofuturist production design and swirling, colorful outer space skies, it's akin almost to something like John Ford's She Wore a Yellow Ribbon for its bold, impressionistic visuals.

Needless to say, seeing something which serves as a good reminder of how truly creative and vast the horror genre is capable of being just before viewing The Black Phone did Derrickson's film no favors.

The Black Phone is Scott Derrickson's



UNIVERSAL PICTURES

second film produced by modern-day horror titan Jason Blum and his studio Blumhouse. The first was 2012's Sinister, a sturdy entry in the early-2010s haunted house film boom. It was made out to be damn near the scariest film ever achieved

by overeager hack horror publications like Bloody Disgusting, but even divorced from its overblown reputation at the time of its release, Sinister didn't have all that much going for it beyond an admittedly successful semi-found footage gimmick and a pleasantly cruel streak running

through its center.

Whatever mysterious juice helped propel Derrickson into the realm of the serviceable in 2012, however, is evidently gone ten years later. The Black Phone is the kind of film where interesting and creative thoughts go to die.

Adapting a mediocre short story by writer Joe Hill, Derrickson shoots what could have been turned into something weird and unnatural as a barely-functioning procedural, not only committing the cardinal sin of horror film – placing plot ahead of fantasy and form - but also fumbling the misguidedly-centered plotline.

Lucio Fulci, the great Italian horror filmmaker, once stated that the difference between horror and thriller was that horror is fantasy, while thriller is plot. The Black Phone, with its ugly beige visuals and loosely strewn-about plot threads, functions well as neither.

12:36 p.m. Caller from Ba- ter reporting damage done sically Bicycles reporting to parking gate over the what looks like a BB hole in one of his shop's win- 2:55 p.m. Caller states dows. Officers spoke with that his mountain bike caller, who wants the information on record.

over the sculptures at Avenue A and Third Street and going in and out of group of five who were skateboarding in the area. No damage to property. Individuals moved along.

Saturday, 7/2

1:14 a.m. 911 caller reporting vehicle into tree checking area on foot. Unat Federal Street and Dry Hill Road. Driver does not appear to be injured and states she swerved to avoid a deer. Operator picked up; vehicle towed.

7:31 a.m. Neighbor disturbance on Eleventh Street.

mous Fish Research Cenweekend. Report taken.

was stolen from outside of the Rendezvous this af-9:04 p.m. Anonymous call- ternoon. The front wheel er reports a few males in was taken off so someone their 20s skateboarding wouldn't steal it, but they did anyway.

Wednesday, 7/6

12:44 p.m. Caller states traffic. Officer spoke to that his wife and son just saw three people fighting on the corner of Fifth and J Streets. One of them reportedly had a knife. Now reported to be behind 18 Fourth Street. Officers founded.

> 1:49 p.m. Motorist reporting a mangy, skin-andbones fox crossed Turnpike Road in front of them and is walking around in the area. ACO notified and

> > see **MPD** next page



BKONFONQEQWIYSS.IPY HMZGESCGQVQFHJW.MMO FONTLVPEAXQAHDO.SHC LJKEVOBFBFNAPGR.RED SECRETBROADCAST.NET a weekly secret message podcast



MPD from page B3

responding. Checked area; unable to locate. 11:07 p.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Area search negative.

Thursday, 7/7

a.m. Officer 8:37 flagged down at the skatepark by a citizen who pointed out some vandalism done to recently planted trees. Caller will notify DPW. 8:45 a.m. First of multiple reports of tires being slashed overnight. Affected vehicles were located on K Street, Seventh Street, J Street, Canal Street, Avenue A, and Fourth Street.

3:28 p.m. Caller from Davis Street reporting that a male party across the street from her put a couple of pictures of women in his garage windows. Officer advises they are pictures of models. 4:39 p.m. Party from Davis Street into station to request that an officer come to his residence and speak to him regarding his neighbor harassing him about pictures hanging on his garage. Officer advises that the pictures are not inappropriate in any way; they are pictures of Lady Gaga, fully clothed. Officer spoke with neighbor; appears to be ongoing dispute.

7:57 p.m. Officer advises that he got a in report of kids on top ca of the concrete pillars ha on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge; the kids fr climbed down when he pulled up, and he advised them to stay off.

Friday, 7/8 6:03 a.m. Caller from J Street advises a raccoon is tangled up on her front porch; unsure what to do. Referred to ACO.

6:53 p.m. Caller from Third Street requesting extra patrols due to the increase in young teens disturbing the area. Saturday, 7/9

12:41 p.m. Trooper in the are from Terrorism Task to obser Force requesting inseen; not house information on out of involved individuals ordinary.

regarding threats made to Supreme Court. Services rendered.

Sunday, 7/10

12:49 a.m. Caller states that a group of kids at Fourth Street and Avenue A are yelling, screaming, and setting off fireworks, and she is scared to walk to her car. Officer who was in the area when call came in didn't see or

hear anything. 7:49 p.m. 911 caller from Bridge Street reporting that her vehicle was taken sometime today, probably by two people staying with her. Advised of options; she will come

to the station to fill out paperwork. 11:45 p.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Nobody seen in area. **Monday, 7/11**

1:07 a.. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Officer checked and remained in the area for a while to observe; nobody seen; nothing out of the

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

two doored chambers – one a smoker, the other a wine and preserve closet. There is no one on Earth who could rebuild it better.

Then again, maybe that's a job for the next owner of my property. Stewardship of old buildings can wear a homeowner down. Historic buildings require expensive upkeep. They're not playthings for the elderly, especially when you throw in a big barn with a stately cupola that painters and roofers these days try to avoid. I suppose that's why you see so many proud old cupolas falling into sad disrepair. Working on them is dangerous. I have once been on the roof of mine for weather-vane work. When my feet returned to solid ground that day, I knew I would never return. Too dangerous for an elderly man with impaired, unstable knees.

Which brings us to the reason for my buddy's impromptu visit. As proof that retirement is indeed on his agenda, the man went out and bought himself a 24-foot fishing boat for seafaring recreation. He says with a wry grin that he may as well spend some of his hard-earned money before his kids do. Sounds good. And why not? The man likes the ocean, and loves to fish it. Plus, he figures his new toy will give him private access to his daughters, both of whom call Nantucket home. The first marina he chose was located in Groton, Connecticut, where he found the fishing unsatisfactory. Now he's moved on to Fairhaven, a southeastern Massachusetts seacoast

town on Narragansett Bay, which he's found more to his liking and, better still, is closer to Nantucket.

He says that although the fishing from his new port is far better, he's still learning the nuances of striped-bass fishing, which he wants to master. He's confident that will eventually happen and he'll soon be regularly landing nice stripers.

Then came the kicker. Always looking for fishing companions, he extended to me an open invitation to accompany him. Such expeditions entail a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -hour round trip for six hours of deep-sea fishing on a private boat fully stocked with navigational gadgets, fish finders, fishing tackle, and sleeping quarters, to boot.

Since the day that generous offer was made in the comforts of home, I have considered it many times. I enjoy the man's company, and suspect I could easily rekindle my love of fishing. The problem is that a seafarer I am not. I'm a mainlander with a Surviving Breast Cancer By Julie Cunningham

Part 26: Hope Builds the Future

AMHERST – This column is dedicated to Alex and Amy Fiorey, the owners of Falltown Grill in Bernardston. After renovating the former Four Leaf Clover restaurant and opening it as the Falltown Grill, within just three weeks there was a fire and the building is now a total loss.

I started this column a year ago to talk about what surviving breast cancer meant to me as a mom with a young son. I've learned so much since then about enjoying and appreciating life and appreciating the things I take for granted every single day: breathing, being with my son, going to work, sleeping, running.

All of those things, at one point or another, were made difficult by my diagnosis. For example, the chemo drugs they gave me are so extremely harsh on the body it was difficult to breathe for an entire two months in the beginning. I was too shy to run without hair, so I took an entire year off until my real hair grew back. I was so extremely tired that although I attended my job every single day, some days it was just difficult to stay awake. It was so hard I began to feel subhuman.

Unless you've been living under a rock, you've probably heard that Alex and Amy suffered a loss at their new restaurant location in Bernardston. But what impressed me as a survivor was how they immediately seemed to turn around and take action. This wasn't going to beat them. This wasn't going to be the end of anything. It was, in fact, only the beginning.

Every fairytale starts with "once upon a time," and every fairytale ends with "and they lived happily ever after," but in between there is a struggle, a villain, and a harsh reality the heroine and hero must overcome. No one wakes up and has everything they ever wanted. I was looking forward to going to the Falltown Grill, like many locals were, to try the new menu and support the new owners. Now I'm offering a different kind of support: Hope.

Hope is a four-letter word that can mean so many things. I clung to it when I had a tumor living inside me for months that I knew was cancer, but I had to wait to get it out while I did chemo first. Every morning I woke up I knew there was something still inside me trying to kill me. But I had hope.

And through that hope, I came out on the other side better than I was before. I have more life in me than I did before, and now I've had the experience of going through something difficult that I thought would break me.

Hope never dies. It lives in everything we do. Every time I go to work and feel energetic and light and not tired and heavy, I feel a sense of hope. Every day I run, knowing that running symbolizes a year of triumph over my diagnosis, I have hope. Hope gets me through my day, and hope is the reason I wake up in the morning and the reason I keep writing. I have hope the next book, column, or article will be better than the last. I have hope that loss will bring us closer, and conflict will make us wiser.

And I have hope that when my son returns from visiting his dad we will go to Falltown, a better version of itself, and it will be amazing and well worth the effort. I imagine us sitting together, my son at one end of the table and me at the other, talking about his time away and what he did. He will be complaining, as he always does, about what he doesn't like about his meal, and asking for ice cream; I will be cramming down food so I can finish before he gets too antsy. But all along I will be thankful that he has returned and that we are finally in that place.

I'm really grateful for people like Alex and Amy who push forward, because it shows the rest of us that we can also push forward when we face an obstacle or a tragedy. It's really amazing to see two people so dedicated to what they want to accomplish. We look to each other for strength, and their strength shows me that I can move forward, too.

SCENE REPORT At the 'Greenmind Fair & Share'

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – On July 2 and 3 there was a music festival at the Franklin County Fairground called the Greenmind Fair & Share. It had several music acts, among other things. Also, because Independence Day was shortly after the festival, they had fireworks on one of the days.

The Red Jasper was the first band I heard there.



healthy fear and respect of the ocean, which I know little about. Truthfully I'm about as eager to learn the ocean side of Cape Cod with a novice captain as I am to paddle a boogieboard with Truro Beach seals.

So, let's just say, the jury's still out. I'm in the pondering mode. Would hate to get in over my head, if you get the gist.

Have you ever seen *The Perfect Storm? Jaws*? I have. Not a comforting thought. I'd rather be lost in the woods any day than floating,

ship-wrecked shark-bait bobbing like a dry-fly in stormy seas.



They sounded like a folk, jazz, and pop band. They had a singer who sounded like she could really do a ballad, and along with her, they had a drummer and two guitarists. The people listening to them seemed to really enjoy them. The guitarists sounded really good.

The next band I saw was called The DeadHeads MA, and they were a little more to my liking. They are a rock'n'roll band that is a Grateful Dead cover band. They consisted of a keyboard player, two guitarists, and a drummer. One of them could sing decently, and while that was going on, the other band members kept in sync with each other nicely.

The StyleFX Dancers were a little interesting to watch. They were a group of dancers from a studio in Greenfield that seem a little like an exercise class, but they are apparently a group of very good hip-hop dancers. Some of their moves were very impressive. People watching had a lot of enthusiasm for them, and this enthusiasm continued throughout the performance. One or two individuals from the group took turns doing break dancing routines, which the crowd really loved. Those individuals were really good at it.

I want to mention that some of the StyleFX dancers also joined a woman named Aimee Salmon who was doing African dance. That was done well, too. It turns out that besides an African dance and fitness studio in Amherst, she also runs what she calls an Africana Store.

One more band I saw was Shantyman, which I liked the sound of really well. They sounded a little like

Local band Shantyman was a festival highlight.

blues music. They also sounded unique to me, probably because they had congo drums as part of the band along with a drum set, two guitars, and a keyboard.

The festival had carnival games to play, where you could win a ticket for ice cream. The games were all right. I found the food to be decent, too. They had a photo booth where you could get your picture taken in front of an ocean background, which is what I did, and it is actually a very cool-looking photo. Sometimes at festivals like this they have artists with their arts on display. I like to look for artists that I like, so I can write profiles on them. I met a nice handful of ones to pick from for that idea.

My two favorite parts of the day were the dancers when they did break dancing, and Shantyman. It was a nice music festival to attend!



VAMPIRE from page B1

whatever they can to avoid crowds in the real world. In an interview with NME, Vampire Survivors designer Luca Galante accurately describes it as "like a fever dream." By the end of a run, it's comical how many mobs jostle across the entirety of the screen, each obeying simple lines of code, whose sole goal is to eliminate my character.

While the game is indeed cartoonishly nightmarish, against all odds, the player has a surprisingly good chance of turning the tide. I still lose, but more often than not, I can now get to 30 minutes and complete a run even on the hardest levels. This is due to the permanent upgrades you can buy between runs, in rogue-light fashion, with money that you accumulate during them.

Several commentators have noted the meteoric ascension of *Vampire Survivors*, from almost no players when Galante released it as an early-access game on Steam in December 2021 through today, when tens of thousands of people are routinely playing. Galante, who designed the game as a lark in his spare time, has quit his job and now works on it full-time with a small team of assistants.

Galante has been justifiably accused of ripping off the mobile game Magic Survival, but as the old saw attributed to Picasso goes, "good artists copy; great artists steal." Vampire Survivors is the king of the increasing number of autoshooter clones.

Vampire Survivors excels in its stickiness. The game's difficulty



To win, the player must simply last one half hour moving around and accumulating enough power to keep the monsters at bay.

ramp is finely graded. Like a slot machine, it has a steady thrum of finely tuned rewards. To acquire new weapons and buffs, you pick up XP gems dropped by enemies. Hordes of enemies equals hordes of XP gems, which make a wonderfully musical sound upon pickup. Picking up upgrade coins is almost as fun, and sounds just as good.

If you're a fetishist for watching numbers go up, you can turn on a setting that unleashes a cascade of them on the screen, showing how much damage each of your attacks is doing. The only problem with this is that, given how many enemies are typically onscreen at any

given time, the profusion of numbers makes it difficult to see what's happening – an effect as amusing as it is annoving. I turned it off after a while, preferring situational awareness over meta-comedy.

By the end of a good run, you will have accumulated six or more very powerful weapons, whose attacks also fill the screen, creating enough chaos. Becoming over-powered in a videogame has rarely felt better, and never felt sillier.

Despite the sheer profusion of onscreen stuff, Vampire Survivors doesn't stutter or lag, at least not on my PC. It almost seems like a stress test for one's computer, though most are now powerful enough that they should be able to handle it without a hiccup. Galante is also planning a version of the game for the Nintendo Switch.

The best thing about Vampire Survivors besides its gameplay is its cost. Because it's still in early access, it's only \$2.99 right now on Steam. My son and I have already put over 30 hours in the game, chasing achievements, and we plan to keep playing until we get them all. When it gets too hot outside or as an alternative to evening TV time, there's no better deal than

Vampire Survivors this summer for virtual fun.

Montague Community Television News

Have a TV **Party Tonight!**

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS - The Nolumbeka Project held a Day of Remembrance on May 19, 2022 for the 346th anniversary of the Great Falls Massacre. MCTV documented the speeches, and the video is now available on our Vimeo page, where you will also find coverage of the Rev. Carlos W Anderson's Father's Day/ Juneteenth celebration from June 19.

Our Vimeo page also has footage of the Unity Makers Market - including vendors and the musical performance of Molly Es - Montague and Gill selectboard meetings, as well as the last two GMRSD school committee meetings.

All community members are welcome to submit their videos to be aired on TV and featured on Vimeo, which is linked to *montaguety.org* under the tab "Videos." MCTV is available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided.

And remember, MCTV is still looking for board members!

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

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Summer Fun. Montague Parks and Recreation summer camp presents young artists' interpretations of frogs and other amphibians. Through July 27.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Everything Can Be Fixed, abstract multimedia works by Turners Falls resident Susan Blauner. Paintings, sculpture, fabric, colored pencil compositions. A portion of sales will benefit Ukrainian relief organizations, with 100% of sales of Blauner's greeting cards going to benefit animals of Ukraine.

Dream, photographs of the New England landscape by Theirry Borcy. Through July.

Local Art Gallery, Mill District, Amherst: Valley Artist Portraits. Isabella Dellolio photographed 20 local artists for a project putting their portraits on Valley Bike kiosks. Through August.

Gallery A3, Amherst: Painting. Evelyn Pye surrounds the viewer with landscape paintings, ranging from 6 inches to 6 feet, in oil on linen, canvas, and wood. Through July.

Anchor House of Artists, Northampton: Looking after

Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School 4th Quarter Honor Roll

FIRST HONORS

- Grade 6 -

- Grade 8 -

Freilyn Abarua Corona, Kenzie Alicea, Valerie Bazemore, Sawyer Cadran, Cameryn Carner, Kairi Chubb, Jackson Day, Samuel Eichorn, Reese Ewell, Ameliya Galbraith, Jazzlyn Gonzalez, Madison Haight, William Hutchison, Addison Lively, Braeden Moore, Jocelvn Ovalle Roblero, Vinicio Palazzo, Nicole Porter, Scarlett Pouliot, Olivia Wolbach, Chloe Wonsey

SECOND HONORS Shelby Beck. Lvnx Petraccia. Kendra Steiner

THIRD HONORS Allan Cordero Lopez, Isabel Cottrell-Bouchard, Morgan Deluca, Trevor Lyons, Jordyn Martin

– Grade 7 –

FIRST HONORS Augustus Beauchaine. Owen Blanchard, Ethan Damkoehler, Ophelia Gallup, Michaela Klempner-Siano, Gianna Marigliano, Kimberly Ramirez Martin. Kaya Shipley-Aja, Brayden Slauenwhite, Addison Talbot, Braeden Talbot, Marketa Vachula-Curtis

THIRD HONORS Jacob Broga, Charles Ladner,

Kaleb Shaw. Stella Shipley-Aja, Brayden Sloan, Aleksandr Stytsenko, Elijah Torres

– Grade 9 –

Greenfield. LAVA Center, Blake Soule, landscape, street and documentary photography. Through July.

Here, Greenfield: Looky Smoky Puddle, works by Cathy Wusocki and Wayne Hopkins. Through August 27.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Unseen Rhythms. Jude Danielson presents quilted textiles that navigate the realm between pure color perception and recognizable form. Through August 31.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: Staying Connected, a multimedia exhibit of art as an expression of cultural heritage. Through July.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: Lisa Beskin, underwater photography; Julie Crabtree, embroidered scenes inspired by the Bridge of Flowers. Through August.

Shelburne Arts Coop Gallery, Shelburne Falls: Dare to

66 years, retrospective of paintings from David Rohn's career in Putney, Vermont, and NYC. Through July.

A.P.E. Gallery, Northampton: July 11 to 17, Impossible Citrus. Kelly Clare and Lorelei d'Andriole Jones ask: when will we stop being given lemons with which to make lemonade? The public is invited for participatory lemon-smashing, citrus instruments, lemon etching, and invisible ink, to push back against the numbed state. July 21 thru 23, Thresh/ Hold. Collaborative installation by Exploded View members Edite Cunha, Trish Crapo, Nina Rossi, and Sam Wood explores what happens when ideas literally take shape inside a gallery. Hours for both shows at www.apearts.org.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: Felt Experience, group show of felt artists. Also exhibiting: Beth Galston, Frank Jackson, Mie Yim, Nebizun, Roberley Bell, and Oasa Duverney. Through October 10. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

FIRST HONORS

Erin Banister Potter, Miguel Bartolon, Camden Bonnett, Maxon Brunette, Laken Chessie, Jackson Cogswell, Lincoln Coleman, Madisyn Dietz, Ethan Eichorn, Elsee Galvez Martin, Jaylice Gary, Brody

Girard, Clara Guidaboni Jack Jette, Cameron Johnson, Nathaniel Kolakoski, Noah Kolodziej, Vaughn LaValley, Estes Lemerise-Reinking,

Emma Little, Cole Marshall, Shayly Martin Ovalle, Janelle Massey, John O'Malley, Yolvin Ovalle Mejia, Mario Pareja, Talia Pederzini-Curtis, Alyssa Peters, Ariel Peters, Jenna Petrowicz, Miles Riley, Khalifa Seck, Alexis Smith, Kailey Steiner, Kainen Stevens, Brooke Tirrell, Nathaniel Trinque, Michael Waite, Naomi Wilson-Hill

– Grade 10 –

FIRST HONORS

Grayson Bowse, Michael Boyle, Cameron Burnett, Kiri Corbin, Fiona Hutchison, Logan Johnson, Syna Katsoulis, Aiden Kelly, Anne Kolodziej, Ella Kolodziej, Audrey Lapinski, Joseph Mosca, Holly Myers, Ricky Pareja, Jillian Reynolds, Avery Tela, Jack Trombi, Derek Wissmann

SECOND HONORS

Ian Bastarache, Jaade Duncan, Taylor Greene, Owen LaValley, Ayleen Ovalle Perez, Raygan Pendriss, Jacob Reich, Sydney Rivera, Isabella Vachula-Curtis

THIRD HONORS

Sheala Arce, Trent Dobias, Kyleigh Dobosz, Reyli Galvez-Martin, Megan Leveille, Geovannie Shand

SECOND HONORS

Michael Berdugo, Dylan Brunault, Zoey Kus, John Ramirez Martin, Dominick Stafford

THIRD HONORS Sophia McComb,

Mila Skiff

FIRST HONORS Marilyn Abarua

HONORS Corona, Starrli Bell, Cameron Anderson, Kamrvn Berrv, Ravne Maren Batchelder, Kessik Bonfiglio, Tatiana Beck, Darian Burnett, Carr-Williams, Elliot Cook, Ella Guidaboni,

Juel Caraballo, Samantha Carr. Khiarieliex Huertas Hernandez, Kailev James-Putnam, Logan Leblanc, Keira Richardson-Meattey

SECOND

THIRD HONORS

Lainey Chagnon, Teagan Lavallee-Finch

- Grade 11 -

Madison Liimatainen,

Mia Marigliano, Anthony

Prizio, Alexander

Quezada Abarua.

Alexander Sabin.

Gary Smith, Ledwin

Villafana Abarua

SECOND HONORS

Makayla Gray, Nikolas Martin, Stephanie Peterson, Adeline Riley, Tyler Tetreault

THIRD HONORS

Logan Addison, Alexander Johnson, Dany Mazariegos-Morales, Corin Wisnewski

– Grade 12 –

FIRST HONORS

Xavier Changnon, Dylan Burnett, Bryce Finn, Jayden Hosmer, Jacob Lyons, Jacob Norwood, Kiley Palmquist, Dalver Perez, Blake Pollard, Brandon Pollard, Dylyn Russell, Madison Sanders, Olivia Stafford, Paige Sulda, Leidy Villafana Abarua, Kamara Woodard, Emily Young

SECOND HONORS

Britney Lambert, Maximas Morgan, Jordin Muniz, Haley Randall, Enmanuel Villafana Abarua

THIRD HONORS

Oliver Farrington, Odalis Ramirez-Martin, Melany Sanchez Abarua

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



FIRST HONORS

Cloe Fulk, Abbigail Holloway, Jelani Jean Charles, Abigail Moore, Antonia Prizio, Brooke Thayer



EDITORIAL Racial Inequalities in Health and Research

By SPENCER SHORKEY

MILLERS FALLS – The 1776 Declaration of Independence of what would become the United States of America included the phrase "all men are created equal" - however, the white male that wrote it owned hundreds of enslaved Black people. The US Constitution, ratified in 1788, codified the young slave-nation's racism by stating that enslaved people were "counted as three-fifths of a free individual." And in the USA's early days, only land-owning white males could vote. It wasn't until the 15th and 19th Amendments in 1870 and 1919 that voting rights were protected for all races and women respectively. Even with this constitutional protection, voter suppression tactics continue to this day.

That the American ideal of the equality of all people has yet to be realized is evidenced by our economic and political systems, which have continuously been dominated by wealthy capitalists; their exploitation of the working class has yielded a country where the top tenth of households own 70% of all wealth while the bottom half own 2%. Four million enslaved people were emancipated into this system by 1865, a system which unsurprisingly perpetuates oppression and inequality over a century later. Those with money get richer, while those without get stepped on.

One aspect of the inequality and racism that persist to this day is disparity related to public health. The significant disparities Black and Indigenous Americans face compared to White Americans and Asian Americans include higher rates of hypertension, diabetes, obesity, HIV/ AIDS, and coronavirus.

For example, a study of COVID-19 deaths in the USA in the *Journal of the American Medi*-

cal Association found that in 2020, pre-vaccine, Black Americans had a twofold higher mortality rate than White Americans. Scientific studies aimed at fixing these and many more health disparities are funded through the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD).

The NIMHD is one of 27 research institutes and centers funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). It funds studies such as how pharmaceuticals may affect racial groups differently, approaches to bringing farmers markets to food deserts, and the relationships between the number of alcohol outlets and neighborhood violence.

In 2021 the NIMHD received \$392 million, or less than one percent of the NIH's \$43 billion budget. By comparison, the NIH's highest-funded institute, the National Cancer Institute (NCI), received \$6.6 billion. While the disease of cancer results in \$200 billion in healthcare costs and \$150 billion in lost productivity annually, health disparities cost our country approximately \$93 billion in excess medical care and \$42 billion in lost productivity annually.

In comparing societal economic burdens to research spending, we find the NIMHD spends \$1 per \$344 of the estimated annual burden of health disparities, while the NCI spends \$1 per \$53 of annual cancer costs. This goes to show that compared to cancer research, health disparity research is relatively underfunded by a factor of about seven.

Barriers to Involvement

Not only are there racial health disparities, and underfunded research efforts to address them, but in 2021 only 2.6% of all NIH-funded research proposals went to Black scientists – a five-fold underrepresentation, considering that 13% of the US population is Black. Although Black researchers have historically faced lower funding application acceptance rates, as seen in the upper figure, the largest factor in this funding inequity is the overall low number of Black researchers putting in requests, as seen in the lower figure.

More needs to be done to promote underrepresented groups in scientific research. But first we need to ask, what factors are perpetuating inequality in this particular system?

Becoming a researcher usually means getting undergraduate and graduate degrees, which entails significant time commitment, undergrad tuition expenses, and often-low graduate researcher stipends. Financial support from family and community members can make the difference in getting through the long and uncertain process of becoming a researcher. However, Black families are majorly disadvantaged in terms of wealth.

According to the 2019 *Federal Survey of Consumer Finances*, the median family wealth of Black families is \$24,100, less than one-fifth of the \$188,200 the median White family has. It's therefore easier for White families than for Black families to contribute to the pursuit of higher education.

Another barrier is representation and mentorship. Mentors from similar backgrounds are important in helping aspiring scientists navigate the educational system while getting trained as a scientist. Teachers in grade schools and universities are critical assets for mentorship. However, according to the 2018 Census, while 15% of schoolchildren are Black, only 7% of public-school teachers are, a twofold underrepresentation. At the university level, 12% of undergraduate students and 7% of graduate students are Black compared with 3% of full-time faculty, a 4-fold and 2-fold underrepresentation.

Representation Matters: What is the 'Leaky Pipeline'?

By HEATHER HAMILTON

TURNERS FALLS - The "leaky pipeline" is a metaphor often used to describe the underrepresentation of different minoritized groups, such as Black Americans or women, in science, technology, engineering, and math-related (STEM) educational programs and professions. This metaphor asserts that entry into the pipeline, which leads to terminal degrees and careers in STEM, is accessible to all people, but that progressively larger numbers of people from minoritized groups are lost at each stage of the progression towards a career in STEM.

However, as Dr. Ebony Omotola McGee addresses in her book Black, Brown, Bruised: How Racialized STEM Education Stifles Innovation, this metaphor relies on outdated assumptions, and promotes victim-blaming. Rather than addressing the structural biases and racism that make STEM education anti-inclusive, the leaky pipeline metaphor and the solutions offered by the academy and industries to "plug" the "leaks" focus on fixing the minoritized student, teaching them to assimilate into the existing STEM culture.

Should we be asking our most vulnerable populations to become pluckier and more resilient? Or should we be working to dismantle the structures and cultures within STEM that actively discourage inclusivity?

Representation of America's diversity in STEM fields - not just in race, but other in demographics like gender, class, and home community type (i.e. rural, suburban, or urban) - is important to promote innovation and collaboration. Groups composed of people with diverse identities and abilities have the potential to be better problem-solvers than homogenous groups. This idea is supported by the work of Scott E. Page, a professor of political science, complex systems, and economics at the University of Michigan, and his collaborators. A notable conclusion of their research is that, in some cases and under certain conditions, when solving complex problems in groups "diversity trumps ability." And what is a scientist or an engineer but a professional problem-solver? Thus, there is some incentive to promote diversity of thought and identity in STEM. But how can this be done equitably and respectfully while acknowledging the current culture in STEM? Addressing underrepresentation is itself a complex problem requiring a diverse

group of problem-solvers to find solutions.

Let's begin at the beginning: entry into the STEM pipeline. Though the entry point is generally considered to be at the undergraduate level, recent studies have shown that early exposure is essential to building interest in STEM topics and self-efficacy in the abilities of young children. Shifting the focus of inclusivity efforts to younger groups, particularly elementary age, is therefore imperative to understanding and dismantling the barriers minoritized students face in pursuing advanced STEM education or careers.

Additionally, exposing young children to STEM professionals from underrepresented groups is arguably as important as exposure to concepts. It is easier for students to believe that they can pursue STEM careers when they see people who look like them working as STEM professionals.

Disparities in public education across race and class lines present significant barriers to this type of exposure. According to a September 2020 article in Forbes magazine by Talia Milgrom-Elcott, more than half of American school districts - and more than 90% of districts with majority Black or Latinx students - have issues recruiting and retaining STEM teachers, let alone STEM teachers with diverse identities. Many public schools have been forced to cut curricula for budget and assessment reasons, and this has not only meant a decline in art and music education, but also in science-related instruction. The lack of exposure continues into secondary school, and is more pronounced in high schools serving minoritized populations.

The assumption that key entry stages into the STEM pipeline are initially accessible to all communities is, therefore, false. The seeds that grow into underrepresentation in STEM professions are sown as early as elementary school, which highlights the importance of equitable education policy and funding at the primary and secondary school levels, as well as of alternative routes for exposure to science, and of the role that parents, families, and communities can play in encouraging children to pursue their STEM-related interests. Keep reading this page over the next several months, as we address the lack of representation of minoritized groups in STEM and what scientists, policymakers, and the public can do to increase the diversity of students pursuing STEM education and careers.





Top: NIH funding rates, by race. Bottom: Total NIH-funded applicants, by race.

System Change

When it comes to racial inequality in research spending, funding rates, and science and academia in general, the barriers to equality are multifaceted and run many levels deep. Inequities in research funding are ultimately tied to the poorer socio-economic status of Black people in the US. If we are ever truly going to be a country of equal opportunity, efforts need to be directed at repairing the racial socio-economic disparities rooted in our history. Estimates of the wages lost due to slavery come to about \$10 trillion dollars - which is also the estimate

of the current wealth disparity. This is the sum the American people owe to the 40 million descendants of the enslaved people that helped build our country.

The state of California's groundbreaking reparations task force recently outlined proposals to fund the housing, tuition, and businesses of descendants of enslaved people, and in Massachusetts, the town of Amherst has allocated several hundred thousand dollars to their African Heritage Reparation Assembly, which is also at the stage of developing proposals.

Beyond the importance of addressing socioeconomic barriers, targeted engagement efforts can impact the representation of minority scientists. Getting more information into minority communities about scientific training options and career trajectories can be a challenge, since these communities are already underrepresented among educators and the scientific workforce.

Science educators and working professionals should consider putting more work into building these outreach efforts. This is not only the right thing to do, but will also help to democratize and broaden the reach of scientific institutions and principles, increasing their stability in an era of increasing misinformation and anti-science views.

A discussion of various science outreach activities, and their rationale, is covered in the accompanying piece.





DO YOU READ THIS?

The Montague Reporter is looking for volunteers to help us curate this ongoing listing. Interested parties may contact editor@ montaguereporter.org.

THURSDAY, JULY 14

Avalon Lounge, Catskill NY: Joanna Mattrey, Gloyd. \$. 7 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: Track Meat, Chimneys, Trash Rabbit. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Michael Cormier, Aisha Burns, Nat Bald*win.* \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Addie, High Tea, Adelaide Fay. \$. 8 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Micah P. Hinson, Wes Buckley. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 15

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Station to Station, with DJs Dutch, MentalDrift, Big Destiny, Mc-Guix, more. Free. 6 p.m.

256 Pleasant, Northampton: Brit Brideau, The Leafies You Gave Me, Almost Almost. \$. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: Tommy Fuentes Band. Free. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Aubrey Haddard, Ciarra Fragale, Kalliope Jones. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: The Slambovian Circus of Dreams. \$. 8 p.m.

Mayday, Providence RI: Droplets, Mesmers, Chrome Jackson, Gloyd. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 16

Deja Brew, Wendell: Wendell Reggae Fest. feat. Rhythm Inc., Wheel Out, Equalites, many more. 1 p.m.

Peskeomskut Park, Turners Falls: Home Body, Frank Hurricane. Free. 6 p.m.

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: Matt Evans' Aquatic House. \$. 6 p.m. Belltower Records, North Adams: Shirese, Slyne and the Family Stoned, Post Moves. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Cinemastorm, free movie double feature. 8 p.m.

Redscroll Records, Wallingford, CT: Max Hamel, Gloyd. \$. 8 p.m.

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

SUNDAY, JULY 17

Four Star Farms, Northfield: Little House Blues. Free. 3 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Thus Love, Scout Gillett. \$. 7 p.m.

Nova Arts, Keene: Mary Lattimore, Michael Roberts. \$. 8 p.m. Beside Unity Park, Turners Falls: Glovd, Free, Neil's last show as a local. End of an era. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

Montague Center Common: Music By Mr. C. Free. 6 p.m.

Rendezvous. Turners Falls: TUESDAY. JULY 26 Wes Brown w/Matan Rubinstein. Free. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 21

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Driv*in' N Cryin'.* \$. 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: Underground System. \$. 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: Ruby Lou, Thus Love, Guy Ferrari, Mibble. \$. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 22

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Freestone or Ooze, feat. Gary Higgins, Gracious Calamity, Anthony Pasquarosa, Federico Balducci, Wednesday Knudsen, and many more. \$. 6 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Ragged Blue. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 23

Shea Theater. Turners Falls: Dear Mr. Ward, staged reading of new book by Evan H. Gregg.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: claire rousay, Matchess. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Oompa, Chris Focus, Aiigav, Allie from the Valley. Hip-hop.

SUNDAY, JULY 24

Parlor Room, Northampton: Lau*ra Veirs.* \$. 7 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: Deep River Ramblers. \$. 8 p.m.

Look Park, Northampton: Regina Spektor. \$. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27

Montague Center Common: Farley Five. Free. 6 p.m.

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

THURSDAY, JULY 28

Look Park, Northampton: Ani DiFranco. \$. 7 p.m.

JULY 28-30

MASS MoCA, North Adams: Bang on a Can feat. Tyondai Braxton, Yuka Honda, L'Rain, more; works by Steve Reich, George Crumb, more. Info at massmoca.org.

FRIDAY, JULY 29

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Youth fest with Big Destiny, Jessica Beck, Mangrove forrest, Mag3nta, more. \$. 6 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Adams: Simon Joyner, A.P.I.E., Jeanines, Joshua Burkett, Luxor Rentals. \$. 6 p.m.

Race Street Live, Holyoke: Deer *Tick.* \$. 8 p.m.

Margiold Theater, Easthampton: Tender Spot, New Erotics, Feminine Aggression. \$. 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 30

JAN ATAMIAN ILLUSTRATION

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: Teresa Healy & Tom Juravich. \$. 4 p.m. Energy Park, Greenfield: The

Most Wuthering Heights Day Ever 2022. 5:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Jess Martin. Free, outdoors. 6 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Most Wuthering Heights Night Ever feat. Loculus Collective, Bed Bits, Petite Garcon, short film screening, \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Misty Blues Celebrate Queens of the Blues. \$. 8 p.m.

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

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 1

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: Graham Nash. \$. 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 2

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: Graham Nash. \$. 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4

Montague Village Store, Montague Center: ReBelle. Free. 5:30 p.m.

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: Drive-By Truckers. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Shamarr Allen. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6

Bombyx Center, Florence: The Bad Plus. Outdoors. \$. 7 p.m.

MONDAY, AUGUST 15

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Bonnie Prince Billy, Footings, *A.P.I.E.* \$. 8 p.m.











\$. 7:30 p.m.

\$. 10 p.m.









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







The Montague Reporter is seeking a new business manager. 12 to 15 hours per week, starting pay \$18 per hour, with potential to increase both pay and hours.

The work includes taking care of modest newspaper finances (accounts payable and receivable, invoicing, etc.); overseeing our subscription base, distributors, and advertising; some office management, volunteer wrangling and recruitment; thoughtful communication; and big-picture thinking. Some Quickbooks experience is helpful, but we can train the right candidate. Comfort with telephones, computers, math, and writing is a must, as is believing you can figure it out.

Interested parties should email annie@montaguereporter.org.



Tom Sullivan, a volunteer for the Montague Tree Advisory Committee, waters a young tree on the corner of Avenue A and Fifth Street. During the current heat wave, members of the public are encouraged to help water any newly planted trees on their tree belts, or in their neighborhoods. The Town of Montague was fortunate to receive a competitive grant from the US Forestry Service to plant 600 new trees, to replace the many missing trees on our public tree belts and to provide shade and beauty for our neighborhoods. But the DPW cannot water all of them.

"With the present heat and lack of rain," Sullivan says, "any help from the public in watering the young trees this summer would be greatly appreciated!"

APPLE CORPS from page B1

a shortcut across an empty lot and noticed a stand of plants in flower along the edge. I had walked right by this patch on my way to the library, but now I got a little closer, and once I saw the patch clearly I gasped. Dogbane! After years of searching, I had finally

found it! When you search online for dogbane, the results are often comparisons with a common look-alike: milkweed. I've had enough false identification alarms over the years that I've practically stamped the online photos in my brain. So I took a second, more calculating look, and the synapses started firing: Red stems! Skinnier leaves, without the fuzz of the common milkweed, delicate white flowers... I checked my phone to be sure, but - as I knew it would be - my gut was correct. At long last I found myself standing in front of a patch of dogbane.

It took so long for me to find dogbane that in the years since I have learned how to make twine out of other plant materials as a substitute. Daylily twine has been my favorite discovery, easy to make and resulting in a shiny, multi-toned string (though be careful if you have cats, as daylilies are toxic). There's a stand of wild raspberry canes in the backyard that were going to be my next twine-making experiment before I went for my walk and the plans got changed.

While I may have been the most excited by the dogbane, it was by no means the only plant of note that I found growing on my route. While the goldenrod plants in my front and back garden are still budding, I found goldenrod in all stages of flowering in people's yards, edges of wooded lots, or even growing out of a crack in the concrete, like the clump in full bloom next to the old DPW building. Goldenrod flowers are edible, and they make a gorgeous golden-yellow dye.

Wild carrot, also known as Queen Anne's Lace, was in full bloom pretty much everywhere, their cheery round heads blowing in the breeze. It reminded me it's time to make my favorite wild carrot recipe, which is to dip the full, flowering heads in batter and fry them. (Pro tip: Leave a few inches of stem on the flower. They're much easier to handle.)

As with any plant we talk about in this column, only take a bite if you're 100% sure you have identified your plant correctly. For example, wild carrot has a poisonous look-alike called water hemlock that can kill you.

On the street parallel to mine, I found a bank of young trees that the town planted in the past year, including two edible landscaping favorites: hawthorn and linden. The linden flowers were past – when fresh, they make one of my favorite herbal teas - but the hawthorns were covered in small fruits.

Also covered in small fruit was the Kousa Dogwood in a tree belt up the street, which, if you've read any of our previous columns, you may know as a GFAC favorite!

In a few spots I found some late-season garlic mustard, with each plant having a few dozen seed pods full of mustard seeds. While the edible and delicious parts of the young garlic mustard are its leaves and roots, the mature or dying plant has seeds which you can make into your own homemade mustard. Most foraging guidelines advise only harvesting a small percentage of your find, but harvesting garlic mustard seeds keeps this non-native plant from spreading, so you can har-



Top: This hawthorn tree, newly planted in a sidewalk tree belt, is already covered in fruit. Bottom: A clump of goldenrod in full flower grows out of a crack next to the old DPW garage.

edges and in empty lots. However, I was also happy to see a lot of beautiful and useful plants my neighbors had planted on purpose, including vegetable gardens, fruit trees, and native perennial beds. The more my neighbors plant or leave to grow wild, the healthier our neighborhood ecosystem, and the better equipped my garden is to thrive.

Try taking a walk in your neighborhood, and pay attention to the corners and wild spaces. What plants grow where you live?

The Great Falls Apple Corps is a volunteer-run group that advocates for edible landscaping and community gardening in all its forms. We run the Unity Park Community Garden and a sidewalk food forest on the corner of Seventh and Prospect. If you are interested in getting your hands dirty with us, reach out to us on Facebook, Instagram, or email us at greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com.

If you would like a free tree planted on your front yard, contact DPW clerk Brandy Patch at hwycompliance@montague-ma.gov.

vest as much as you need.

Most of the plants I spoke of above, with the exception of the sidewalk trees, were growing wild along



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