

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 20 – NO. 35

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JULY 28, 2022

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Study: Plenty of Parking, But Relax Winter Ban

By JEFF SINGLETON

Is there really a “parking problem” in downtown Turners Falls, an area of Montague with a growing population and an increasing-



The newest municipal lot on Canal Street, completely empty on a Wednesday in July.

ly popular destination for visitors from outside town? A recent study by the international consulting firm Stantec suggests that the notion of a neighborhood parking crisis may be a myth, generated in part by widespread dissatisfaction with the town’s winter parking ban.

A good portion of the July 18 Montague selectboard meeting was taken up by discussion of the parking study, funded by the state Department of Housing and Community Development. Michael Clark of Stantec presented the results in a 20-minute PowerPoint, followed by questions and “public input.”

The study mapped available parking in downtown Turners, described current policies and enforcement practices, evaluated parking usage statistics, and interviewed various “stakeholders,” including business see MONTAGUE page A9

Wendell Finds Itself In 7th Hampden District

By SARAH ROBERTSON

Wendell will have a new state representative after the November election, with Ludlow natives Aaron Saunders and James “Chip” Harrington competing for votes in the newly redrawn 7th Hampden district. Wendell, along with the towns of New Salem, Shutesbury, Petersham, and Pelham, were moved during last year’s state legislative redistricting.

“It’s a very unique district, and I’ll be perfectly honest: it’s the definition of gerrymandering, how they did it,” Harrington told the Reporter. “I really think when the legislature put this district together they were

doing it with the intention of making it so only one party could win.”

A program manager for the Massachusetts Department of Correction, part-time police officer, professional realtor, and Ludlow school committee chair, Harrington has run for office as a Republican in his district multiple times. This will be the first time that his Democratic challenger Aaron Saunders – a brewery co-founder, former chief of staff to state senator Gale Candaras, and now a senior vice president at the Boston lobbying firm Benchmark Strategies – has run for state-level office.

“The 7th Hampden district is a microcosm of the state, in that it has see WENDELL page A8

‘Stars’ Gain Skills While Pitching In

By ISABELLA VACHULA-CURTIS

TURNERS FALLS – Early this summer, the Gill-Montague Regional School District introduced its second year of the Rising Star

Youth Leader Program. This is a summer school opportunity where Sheffield Elementary School students are assisted by older students from Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School (TFHS).



This year’s batch of Rising Stars, middle and high school students who help out at the Sheffield Elementary summer school program – and pick up skills of their own.

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

High School District Asking Quarter Million For New Track

By GEORGE BRACE

At their July 19 meeting, Leverett’s selectboard heard an overview of plans to replace the track and associated athletic field at Amherst Regional High School. Doug Slaughter, finance director for the Amherst regional school district, outlined the options being considered and the funding being sought from district members, which include Amherst, Pelham, Shutesbury, and Leverett. The board also met with the finance committee to review year-end funding transfers to cover budget overages in FY’22, among other business.

Slaughter referenced a study which described the track at Amherst Regional High School as dilapidated and in need of replacement, and which provided four scenarios for construction of a new track and associated improvements ranging in cost from \$1.2 million to \$4.74 million. The district’s school committee favors the high-range options, which involve reorienting the field, improving ADA accessibility, adding lanes and lighting, and optimization of the space, among other improvements.

Slaughter said a working group has agreed that if a more expensive option is desired but funding goals cannot be reached, the project will revert to a lower level option. The Amherst town council authorized \$1.5 million in borrowing in May, and then authorized a further \$800,000 on July 18 in what Slaughter described as a “strong statement they’re committed to an expanded project.”

He then presented a proposed see LEVERETT page A10

TRAVELOGUE

Nothing Stays In Place



From left to right: Wendy Eisenberg, Neil Young, Andy Allen, and Donny Shan, four-fifths of Gloyd, at the Avalon Lounge in Catskill, New York on July 14.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – *Migratory Way: This is the name of a dead end road next to a canal. There is a gate on the other end, it gets locked at sundown. Migrations are always underway, completely oblivious to any rules and restrictions. Seeds, pollens, microbes, radiation, data, animals, people, culture – nothing stays in place.*

The first time I read this passage in the liner notes to the Brompton record *Bald Eagle Over Food City*, it didn’t really stick. I was reading the liner notes long before the record came out, because the supply lines involved with record-pressing are horribly bottlenecked and delayed these days, and the artist had sent them to me to read.

When I moved to this town from the eastern part of the state, during the last recession, to work on a fish farm, it did not take long to discover

er that Neil “cloaca” Young had gotten here first. The week I moved I found myself at one of his Montague Phantom Brain Exchanges, each of which combined a short film, a DJ, a lecture, and musical acts. Watching Paul Flaherty shred a absolute hole through the center of the Rendezvous with a saxophone it dawned on me that if I had come out here to escape art, I had screwed up. Big time.

For such a little town, it turned out, Turners has had more than its fair share of art people, visionaries, and freaks. Most are either from here or from not too far away. Neil hailed from Pittsfield, came up in bozo ‘90s highschool punk bands, went to college at Hampshire and not long after got a steady job there, plugging cables together correctly.

Neil played drums in the noise-rock (?) band Fat Worm of Error, a “stumbling, mush-mouthed, see TRAVELOGUE page A6

Three Groups Split Rent At Fourth Street Space

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Fresh life, beginning with fresh paint, is pouring into a Fourth Street storefront with a long history most recently occupied by the 2nd Street Baking Co. The building sold in February, and the front space has been rented by a coalition of groups – the Pioneer Valley Workers Center, Great Falls Books Through Bars, and a mutual aid group named Finders

Collective – that say they hope to make it a place for a wide range of free public resources and social connection.

“It’s yet unnamed,” Grae McLaughlin, a member of both the prison book group and Finders, told the Reporter. “Neighbors have come by, and have sounded really excited and expressed support, which has been very motivating.”

Books Through Bars collects see GROUPS page A8



The Pioneer Valley Workers Center, Great Falls Books Through Bars, and the Finders Collective will share the former 2nd Street Baking storefront on Fourth Street.

Remember To Breathe, Relax Your Face Muscles

Letters & A Price Announcement.....	A2	West Along: Home Body.....	B1
Local Briefs.....	A3	Theater Review: Modernization.....	B2
Ainsworth Takes Northfield’s Pulse.....	A4	Montague Police Log.....	B3
Wendell Selectboard Notes.....	A5	Our Monthly Children’s Page.....	B5
Erving Selectboard Notes.....	A5	Two Movie Reviews.....	B6
Gill-Montague School Committee Notes.....	A7	Gill Police Log.....	B6
Adult Vocational Programs.....	A8	A&E Calendar.....	B7
Why Your Urine Is Red.....	B1	Five Comics and a Puzzle.....	B7

SUMMER SCHEDULE
VOL. 20 #36: AUGUST 11
VOL. 20 #37: AUGUST 25
VOL. 20 #38: SEPTEMBER 8
MAKE THEM LAST



The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002



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.

Prices Going UP!

At a meeting this week of the *Montague Reporter* board of directors and key staff, the writing was on the wall for all of us to see. The expenses side of the ledger continues to balloon, while the revenues side... well, that's going to be up to you, dear readers.

We aren't at risk of going under, but let's just say that instead of impelling growth, improvement, long-term equipment upgrades and nicer coffee, your donations have been bridging the gap between our existence and non-existence as a newspaper. Not a perfect business model, by any means.

If you've been watching this space, you've already been warned – our "editorial" of March 3 titled *Inflation* covered most of the basics. Our printing costs have risen sharply (from \$474 to \$518 to \$618 for the run, in two years' time; more for an extra-long paper like the one you're holding).

And now postage has risen, *again*. We realized just this spring that the mailed subscriptions were on the brink of losing us money outright, so we bumped those from \$60 to \$70.... well, the price of our stamps just went from 98 cents to \$1.08, so we need to pass

that along. As of August 11 (and printed below on this page) the mailed rate will climb to \$75.

And it's time, finally, to undo the peg holding down our delivery rates... we need to go to \$50 per year for driven and \$40 for discounted walking deliveries. If this is a hardship for you and the difference between reading and not reading the paper, reach out and we'll make you an adjustment. (Many of you are already paying more voluntarily, and we thank you heartily.)

The peg has been our cover price; we've been at \$1 since 2013. Our understanding is that subscription should cost less than at newsstand.... we don't want people unsubscribing to try to save \$4 per year, which is exactly the kind of irrational thrift New Englanders go for. How much should we raise it by? The price is completely arbitrary. We feel each edition delivers over \$5 in value.

\$2 is easiest, and some people argued for this – but doubling the price in one go seems rude.

As of next edition, *Montague Reporters* will cost \$1.50 at newsstands. We apologize, and we hope you will continue reading!

CORRECTION

A loyal reader wrote all this in regarding "Game Review: Survival of the Fittest in *Vampire Survivors*" (July 14, 2022, Page B1):

"A game can be 'rogueLITE,' not a 'rogue-LIGHT.' It's almost always one word; the only cases where I see 'rogue-lite' hyphenated are on Wikipedia.

"The word 'roguelite' was coined in the early 2010s by nerds who love the relatively ancient 'rogue-LIKE' genre, and were annoyed by their discussion spaces and marketing tags on platforms like Steam being inundated with games

that follow many of the roguelike conventions – particularly: one life per attempt and randomized maps, loot, and encounters – but....

"a) Are not top-down, turn-based RPGs;

"b) Contain elements of player progression that persist between attempts; or often

"c) Both of the above.

"Source: A nerd who loves both roguelikes and roguelites. P.S. Nice review of a fun little game."

We appreciate the helpful correction and explanation, and we're glad someone is reading!



Jay DiPucchio, one of two elected members of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments executive committee, discusses the state of democracy with David Carr outside Food City in Turners Falls last week. DiPucchio was gathering ballot signatures for Jane Pierce, an Orange selectperson running for the second seat on the executive committee.

Letters to the Editors

Trash Woes

I want to say to the folks on Walnut Street that I sympathize whole-heartedly.

Now, I live on the corner of Center Street and North Street. A month ago we all experienced a "No pick-up" for two weeks.

Now that we have a Monday pick-up (formerly Tuesday), all of North Street is serviced except my trash. I guess, because the trash is in a wagon (making it easier for this 91-year-old gal to get it to the curb) and not a big trash bucket, it is easier to ignore.

I sincerely hope your trash woes have ended. I feel I have a way to go to get my trash picked up.

Peg Bridges
Montague Center

Wants Better Warning

Note to Montague town officials: As a resident of the town of Montague, I appreciate the reverse-911 system to keep us well informed on road closures, trash pickup delays, and other events that impact residents. I was disappointed and frustrated that this was not used to alert residents of the road work on the canal and White Bridge.

On Friday, July 22 the canal bridge was down to one lane for deck work. Police details had their hands full with steady traffic backing up in all three directions. Had you utilized the existing notification system, many Montague residents would have totally avoided the route.

It was certainly a known repair since two police officers had been

hired. In the future, please use the reverse-911 notification system to alert the residents when bridge work will be performed on either the canal or White Bridge.

And, would someone please think about banning tractor trailers from using the route completely? I was sitting on the White Bridge headed east into Turners when a semi came down Third Street and had to swing the corner which was marked off to one lane. The police officer had to quickly move cones, as he needed more than the single lane. When the truck passed my vehicle, I could have reached out and been in a "Touch a Truck" event.

Ann Fisk
Montague Center

Nearby Summer Playhouse Tip

For some years I have gone to a theater in Southwest New Hampshire called the "Actors Theatre Playhouse." It is mostly volunteer-run, I think, but they are dedicated, well-organized and present great theater, close by, at a very reasonable price of \$15 per ticket.

They have been reopening after the pandemic, so folks aren't accustomed to going.

A group of us went last Friday to see their "10 Minute Play Festival." It was excellent with new timely plays – so well-acted, poignant, and thoroughly enjoyed.

Each play runs Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays for about three weekends – the 10 Minute Play Festival ends this weekend, followed by *Stones In His Pockets* in August, *Constellations* in September, and *Shakespeare's Will* in October. See www.atplayhouse.org for ticketing, photos, reviews, directions, and more.

From the south, take Route 91 north to Exit 3 in Vermont, go east and halfway around the traffic circle to cross the Connecticut River, continue about two miles on Route 9, and then look carefully for a sign

on the right saying "W. Chesterfield" with an arrow pointing left. Turn left there!

After a little over a mile, you will see an old high house in the distance. That's it – an old town hall, converted into a two-level theater. (There are stairs with railings, and the theater is up those stairs, so it's not handicap-accessible, sorry.)

I hope you'll look into it! They're great and fun.

Thank you,

Dotty Janke
Greenfield

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or the Thursday closest to 12/25.

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The Village Neighbors Association is hosting another **free summer concert** this Saturday, July 30, on the Wendell Town Common between 3 and 5 p.m. Doug Tanner's group, The Catalytics, are performing. Rain date of July 31.

The Skating Party at Nova Motorcycles on July 23 was **canceled for the heat wave** last weekend, and the Nice. Snack Parlor was closed as well. Check back for DJ parties on weekends in August – a rescheduled event has yet to be announced.

If you are **looking for a COVID booster**, there will be several local clinics in August. The two closest are at Sheffield Elementary School in Turners Falls, 3 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, August 23, and at Gill Elementary School, 3 to 6 p.m. on Thursday, August 25. Register at home.color.com.

Greenfield plans a **July Arts Walk** this Friday, July 29 from 5 to 8 p.m. Visit Madhouse Multi-Arts, Finch Gallery, Hawks & Reed, LAVA Center, Looky Here, and more.

Local musicians and arts organizations will be promoting outside Hawks & Reed, and proceeds from a raffle of merchandise by Hawks & Reed will be donated to Abortion Rights fund of Western MA.

Find the full map and other information on Facebook at "Greenfield Arts Walk: July."

This Friday, July 29, local presenter and educator Lillian Moss holds a drop-in **Story Workshop** outside the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls under the tent from 10 to 11 a.m. This session will cover writing from prompts and images. On Friday, August 5 there will be a session on sharing favorite personal stories.

A new **theater production at Ja'Duke** in Turners Falls debuts this weekend: *Moana Jr.* is described as a "thrilling and heartwarming coming-of-age story," in which "Moana and the legendary demigod Maui embark on an epic journey of self-discovery and camaraderie as both learn to harness the power that lies within."

The actors are "Broadway Jr.'s" between the ages of seven and 18. See the show on Saturday, July 30, at 4 and 7 p.m. and Sunday, July 31 at 2 p.m.

A **medium and psychic fair** will be held at the Thompson Temple in Lake Pleasant by The National Spiritualist Alliance this Saturday, July 30, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Choose an appointment with a variety of modalities for a 25-minute reading by making an appointment online at spiritualallianceusa.org.

According to the TNSA website, "psychic readings are for entertainment only." Crafters are welcome to book a spot to sell their wares at these events on the last Saturday of each month; call (413) 367-0138 to inquire.

One last reminder that on Monday, August 1 the **Montague Community Band** performs at the bandshell in Peskeomskut Park at 7 p.m. It's free! Bring a lawn chair and enjoy.

There is a new art exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls called "**Let Food be Your Medicine.**" Leonore Alaniz portrays the life force of plants that heal and sustain us by showing the anatomical detail of foliage, seeds, and roots imprinted onto paper and fabric, with complementary literature, trays with live superfoods, a recording of *Music for Plants*, and hands-on activities to introduce children and adults to the edible plant kingdom, from exotic fruit and tree foliage to leafy greens and potent weeds.

The Friends of Montague Public Libraries' next **monthly book sale** is Saturday, August 6 in the basement of the Carnegie Library from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. They'll have hundreds of recent adult fiction, non-fiction, young adult, and children's books as well as DVDs, audio books, and jigsaw puzzles. Proceeds benefit the Montague Public Libraries programs. Stock up now, as there will not be a sale in September due to the Labor Day holiday.

This year marks the **9th Annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival** at Unity Park in Turners Falls on August 6 and 7. The celebration of Native American art and culture is sponsored by the Nolumbeka Project and RiverCulture.

The festival features Indigenous music, drums, dancing, crafts, children's activities, history talks, storytelling, Eastern Woodland skills demonstrations, and more. This year's keynote speaker is Tom Porter, a member of the Bear Clan of the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne. Musicians include Nipmuck flute player Hawk Henries, Ojibwe-American rock musician Keith Secola, the Kingfisher Singers with traditional Northeastern Native American songs, the Wicozani Singers, and the Black Hawk Singers.

Listen to storytelling with Joseph, Jesse, and Marge Bruchac, and try social dancing led by Andre Strongbearheart Gaines, Jr. and Robert Peters. There will also be children's activities with Nulhegan-Abenaki artist Dan Shears, history talks with David Brule and Evan Pritchard, and a discussion by the river of Ceremonial Stone Landscapes and the May 19, 2004 Reconciliation Ceremony with Doug Harris.

For more information on this free, fun, family-friendly event, visit nolumbekaproject.org.

A vigil will be held from 11 a.m. to noon on the Greenfield town common on Saturday, August 6 commemorating the 1945 bombing of the Japanese cities of **Hiroshima and Nagasaki**. Vigilers will remember the atomic devastation and call for a ceasefire in Ukraine, where nuclear confrontation looms.

At 7 p.m. on August 7, *A Call for Peace: Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki* will take place at the Emily Williston Library in Easthampton. Both events were brought to our attention by the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice.

The Greenfield Public Library plans a "**Freeze Pops and Fiction**" event next Monday, August 8 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. You can listen to stories from Circle Round under the tent on the front lawn, and enjoy a freeze pop. Feel free to bring a beach towel or blanket. For information, visit www.greenfieldpubliclibrary.org or call (413) 772-1544.

A Death Café, a **casual group discussion of death** with no agenda or themes, will be held at the Gill-Montague Senior Center on Fifth Street in Turners Falls on Monday, August 8, 5 to 7 p.m. Organizers write that the objective is to "increase awareness of death with a view to helping ourselves to make the most of our (finite) lives. Get together, have tea and cake, and talk."

The Café is cosponsored the Council on Aging. Registration is

required; contact Suzette Snow-Cobb via email: suzettesnowcobb@gmail.com or call (413) 824-0232.

The Great Falls Coffeehouse is back for the summer season, with music in the Great Hall featuring local talent. Trio Mambo plays high-energy Latin Jazz and Mambo magic with piano, bass, and congas on August 12, 5 to 7 p.m. The next concerts after that are September 9 and October 14. Refreshments will be available, and your sliding-scale donations will support educational programming at the Center.

Once again, the 40th annual **Montague Mug Race** is scheduled for August 20. This will be the 41st race. The route starts on the village common and is 5.5 miles in length, with plenty of water stops in between. Proceeds benefit the Montague Old Home Days and Fire Department. Find out more at montaguemugrace.com.

"**Writing to Remember**," a new series of memoir workshops with Ruth Flohr, begins on Tuesday, August 23 for six sessions scheduled for 10 a.m. to noon. Share inspiration and tools to tell your life story with other writers of all ages and abilities on Zoom sessions. Tuition is free, thanks to generous Leverett Cultural Council grants. Call Flohr to register at (978) 544-6534.

Franklin Technical High School is starting an **Evening Welding Program** that will provide students with entry level industry training and hands-on experience. Students will learn the basics of MIG/TIG welding, identification of alloys, welding arcs and safe practices. Certifications upon completion. Career counseling included.

The 12-week course encompasses 230 hours, Monday through Thursday evenings starting September 19. For more information contact upskilling navigator Ann Tweedy at (800) 457-2603, ext. 354. The program is aimed at the unemployed and underemployed.

Have you ever **experienced homelessness?** The Three County Continuum of Care Equity and Inclusion Committee is looking for new members with lived experience who want to be part of decision-making for change. There is a stipend included. For more information, contact Shaundell Diaz at sdiaz@communityaction.us or (413) 512-8197.

If you want to know what kind of **food assistance** you might qualify for, call Project Bread's hotline at (800) 645-8333. They offer assistance in 180 languages.

Cultural sector recovery grants for individuals and organizations are taking applications starting August 15, with a deadline of November 1. These are a slew of new, one-time grants to assist Massachusetts artists and cultural organizations with pandemic recovery, funded with \$60.1 million. The \$5,000 grants for individuals are unrestricted, aimed at support recovery for creatives and gig workers. Information sessions are scheduled for August 23 and October 6. Find out more at massculturalcouncil.org.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Seven Tips to Stay Safe And Avoid The Bite

- Eliminate standing water in rain gutters, old tires, buckets, plastic covers, toys, or any other container where mosquitoes can breed.
- Empty and change the water in bird baths, fountains, wading pools, rain barrels, and potted plant trays at least once a week to destroy potential mosquito habitats.
- Drain temporary pools of water or fill them with dirt.
- Keep swimming pool water treated and circulating.
- Keep mosquitos away from exposed skin by wearing long sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks.
- Tuck shirts into pants and pants into socks to cover gaps in your clothing where mosquitoes can get to your skin.

- Stay indoors when possible, especially if there is a mosquito-borne disease warning in effect.



Montague Health Department Staff and Arbor Virus Coordinators

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AT LARGE

Northfield: The State of the Town

By CHIPAINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – People who live in small towns like Northfield pay their taxes and enjoy the quiet life until survey crews appear, a sight that portends the inevitability of heavy equipment and back-up beepers.

Earlier this month I met with town administrator Andrea Llamas as part of this article about the state of the town. I live in Northfield, and less than two years ago a Midwest developer sought to build a three-story condo complex in my backyard. That's when I learned from a longtime resident, "Town Hall is not your friend."

Llamas's office is on the second floor of Town Hall and overlooks Main Street. Her desk is covered with letters, documents, and pink Post-it notes. Calendars and maps hang from the wall, and a metal stand next to the window holds four rows of potted plants. Two stained-glass birds hang from wires tacked to the sill and are being chased by a cat with wings.

Llamas's father taught for AmeriCorps, and during her childhood the family moved from Buffalo to Springfield to Amherst. She has a BS in social thought and political theory from UMass and a law degree from Roger Williams University in Rhode Island.

Her salary was bumped this year from \$100,000 up to \$107,500 plus four weeks vacation, sick days and holidays.

It's a good gig considering the average salary for a town administrator in Massachusetts is \$89,978, according to ZipRecruiter. In 2021, Llamas made more than Greenfield mayor Roxann Wedegartner, who pulled down \$88,680 per that city's salary database.

Llamas lives in Greenfield with her husband, who owns a part of 15 Domino's Pizza franchises, and much of the couple's off time is spent on his boat in the Florida Keys or the Bahamas.

In 2001, Llamas was hired to be Conway's assistant town administrator. She remembers the day, because it was 9/11. She then served as Buckland's town administrator for eleven years, and was making \$61,777 when she left for the Northfield job in November 2018.

Llamas is the CEO, the person responsible for keeping Northfield in the black. She knows her acronyms and is adept at getting grant money. She has a reputation for being imperious, and several of the town's employees were disappointed that the selectboard didn't hold her feet to the fire during her performance review on June 28.

"Can't we just say 'hurray!' this looks good?" chirped Mary Sullivan-Bowen, and Alex Meisner echoed that sentiment: "Morale has been at a level it hasn't been in years. When I don't have to worry about what's going on at 69 Main Street, that makes me feel happy."

Others who watched the meeting on Bernardston-Northfield Community Television begged to differ. "I turned it off after fifteen minutes," said a source who for obvious reasons didn't want her name used here. "I couldn't stand watching it any more."

Who's On First, Explicitly

Meisner is the longest tenured selectboard member. He was elected in May 2018, beating Robbie Leighton 542 to 165. Leighton was the police chief, and apparently all those speeding tickets on Gulf Road hadn't helped his cause.

The following year Heath Cummings (a.k.a. the Dark Knight) beat former selectboard member John Spanbauer 352 to 195, and in 2020 Barbara "Bee" Jacque beat Joseph Stacy, 285 to 97. That was the year voters decided to expand the selectboard from three to five members, and eight months later Bernie Boudreau and Sullivan-Bowen ran unopposed to fill those seats.

During a typical meeting the board will discuss everything from town payroll to clearing snow off the sidewalks. The meetings are every other week and attended by Llamas and town secretary Sandra Wood, who records the minutes. Wood works for both Llamas and the selectboard, and makes \$56,890.

The selectboard, meanwhile, is paid a collective \$11,909 to oversee a town with a \$9 million operating budget. Its members' inexperience was on display during the May 5 meeting when they needed Llamas to help get them through the process of naming a new chairperson.

The dialogue, condensed here, was ripe for a sitcom.

"Let's start off with the chair discussion. Who wants it?" asked Cummings. The outgoing chair quickly added, "I wouldn't be opposed to staying on. Things are going smooth."

"I can't see anyone but you doing it," said Sullivan-Bowen.

"Is it rotating?" asked Jacque, who wanted the job but wasn't ready to admit it, and had probably expected it to be offered to her.

"It used to be," said Meisner. "The way I look at it now is, if somebody has a good rhythm going or if things are going well, they can stay on."

"I think if we're going to change it, we should explicitly change it," said Jacque.

"As like, to follow suit every year?" asked Sullivan-Bowen.

"No," said Jacque. "If we're not going to change it because that has been the convention, then I think we should explicitly change it. I'm all for change, but..."

"Let's say I go off my rocker," said Cummings.

"He's lost his mind!" laughed Sullivan-Bowen.

Meisner took a sip off his Smartwater. "What do you think, Bee? You haven't had your chance at being chair yet."

"No, I haven't," she said, "and I feel ready to step in. I'm not wedded to the idea, but I'm the one who's supposed to rotate in, and everybody's like let's, let's..."

"Change it!" interjected Sullivan-Bowen. "We'll rotate in then, Bee."

"To be honest and direct, I do want the chair. I feel like I'm good at agendas, and I have some ideas about crafting them so we can get out of here at a reasonable hour. Whether it's this year or next year, I'm going to put my cards on the table."

Now Llamas stepped up: "Someone has to make a motion. Someone has to nominate whoever wants to be chair."

Baffled, they looked at each other. Finally Llamas blurted, "Just nominate them! And then you can nominate the other one. 'I make a motion to nominate 'blank' for chair, seconded.'"

Prompted by her instruction, Bernie Boudreau said, "I make a motion to nominate Bee for chair."

"Second," said Meisner.

"Third," said Sullivan-Bowen.

"No. You just have to..."

"I know! I'm just kidding," said Sullivan-Bowen.

After Cummings was nominated, Llamas said, "Okay, now you can have a vote."

Trying to make everyone happy, Meisner turned to Cummings and asked, "If you do become chair again, if it goes that way, [would you] consider having Bee become the chair six months down the road?"

Clearly peeved, Jacque sniped, "I appreciate that Alex, but I don't feel like I have to have a bone thrown my way."

Choices were scribbled on torn pieces of paper and handed to Llamas. "Do you want the count, or just know who won?"

"Just who won," chimed Meisner and Sullivan-Bowen.

"Bee," said Llamas.

"Oh!" said Jacque.

"It wasn't a landslide. I'll just say that," added Llamas.

"Congratulations Bee," said Sullivan-Bowen. "We expect great things from you, and we expect to get out of here at eight o'clock every night."

That's right, at 8 p.m. explicitly.

Sidewalk to Nowhere

One issue that has Llamas caught in the crosshairs is East Northfield's sidewalk to nowhere. The new slab of poured concrete bordering Thomas Aquinas College was part of a \$360,000 grant from the state to the town. It goes up Moody Street and down Winchester Street, and is seldom used by locals, because the college is closed to the public.

"The larger expense was the intersection," said Llamas, referring to the new four-way stop at the convergence of Highland Avenue with Moody, Winchester, and North streets. "That's what the Complete Streets grant was all about, making it safe for everyone."

Actually, the site was chosen for another reason. A committee had been formed that included one resident with ties to the Kansas developer. They chose the East Northfield intersection to complement the opening of the aforementioned \$14 million condo complex.

"There were accidents at that intersection?" I asked.

"I can't tell you the numbers, but yeah, there've been accidents," said Llamas.

To the contrary, people were always able to navigate the intersection without incident. According to two East Northfield residents who researched the police reports, there wasn't an accident reported there in more than a decade.

The money would have been better spent fixing the Highland Avenue sidewalk, which is cracked and damaged by frost heaves. This spring two people tripped on ruts in the concrete and fell on their faces. One of them was me, the other was a neighbor who badly injured her wrist.

"We're not ignoring the side-

walk," said Llamas, "but before we do that we need to fix the culvert, that's the first big issue."

She was referring to a dilapidated drainage ditch near the Northfield Golf Course. "When that's done, my hope is we'll do that sidewalk."

Issues With Steel

There was a time when Northfield had its own car dealership, three gas stations, and a grand hotel. These were the days before I-91. The Schell Bridge connected East and West Northfield for 82 years, from 1903 to 1985.

It was left to rust like a mothballed battleship until the Friends of Schell Bridge went on a crusade to restore the old structure. They envisioned a walkway over the Connecticut River, with parking and picnic areas on both sides. At the 2021 town meeting, voters approved funding that would pay for right-of-way access. As for the rest, 80% of the projected \$25 to \$28 million cost would come from a federal highway program, and 20% from the state.

Alas, those plans are now on hold. "It ended up costing way more than they thought," said Llamas. "Issues with steel."

Barbara Richardson said the Friends of Schell Bridge are disappointed, but added, "We're waiting to hear from MassDOT about an engineering review to see if the cost can be reduced. We stand ready to mobilize our contacts and help any way we can."

Llamas said the lowest bid to replace the 550-foot structure came back at \$48 million, but Richardson says the figure she saw was \$42.7 million.

The town has applied for more funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 but, said Llamas, "If the feds don't come through, we'll go back to the state."

Asked to give a timetable for eventual completion, Llamas said, "I can't even say. Multiple years."

Red-Lighting a Blue Wave

The *Wall Street Journal* recently reported that within two decades, the solar industry will be responsible for "millions of tons of junk panels." If Northfield's zoning laws don't change, the town will have its share of this hazardous waste.

The biggest threat is the industrial solar complex precariously close to being green-lighted on farmland next to Pine Meadow Road. A year ago the five-member planning board voted 4-1 to approve BlueWave Solar's application for a special permit to pile drive 26,000 solar panels into the ground near the Connecticut River.

Planning board member Joe Graveline was the lone vote against, and he's not giving up the fight. "I am going to need to have help on the board, as I am a solo act right now. We need more critical thinking and not just march to the beat of the chair and vice chair's drums," said Graveline, referring to Steve Seredynski and Meg Riordan respectively.

The project has been slowed by Chris Kalinowski's lawsuit to stop it from going next to his Pine Meadow Road home, and Graveline submitted a complaint to the state alleging that planning board member Tammy Pelletier wasn't present for the

see **AT LARGE** next page

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Mormon Hollow Road Closed for Like Four Months

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard recently initiated a public comment time at the beginning of their regular meetings. At their July 20 meeting, treasurer Carolyn Manley raised a concern that other citizens had brought to her attention: Mormon Hollow Road would be cut off as a through road beginning July 25. It will remain closed to through traffic through November.

The citizens Manley referred to felt that information, and other road work, should be made general knowledge through the town. The Mormon Hollow Road work is the replacement of a long- and deeply-buried culvert just west of the Diemand Farm, and the Farm sent an email to their regular customers informing them of the closure and offering alternative routes from the west.

The citizens who spoke to Manley felt the whole town needed that information.

Wendell's CodeRED reverse-911 system has been used for other road closures, and selectboard member Gillian Budine suggested that as a way to reach those residents who have signed up.

Conflict of Interest?

As building inspector and chair of the highway commission, Phil Delorey has been overseeing and steering many projects, including the Mormon Hollow Road culvert, the Kentfield Road bridge, overhaul of the police station, reinforcing the highway garage roof in preparation for solar panels, capping the old landfill which is under the present WRATS, among several others.

Funding for these projects comes from ARPA, from the state small bridge repair fund, and from grants. At this meeting Delorey was happy to report that the projects are all coming in within the budgeted amounts.

Delorey, however, said he has been told

by the state ethics commission that he may be committing an ethics breach in his multiple roles as project coordinator, building inspector, and highway commission chair. He can write an explanation that can be reviewed by the state, but he prefers not to. Acting as project coordinator, he said he is considering leaving his position as highway commission chair.

Delorey said that while the highway commission's focus should be on Wendell's roads, a project manager has wider concerns. With current funding options and requirements, he said, the chair needs computer and internet expertise.

Structures of Support

Tree warden Cliff Dornbush met the board with two separate concerns about trees on the library property.

The first and simplest is that trees around the basketball court can and have fallen on the fence. Taking them down before they drop branches or fall, Dornbush argued, is cheaper than letting them fall and damage the fence, and then removing them.

Dornbush said Matt Edwards' tree service can do that in a day, for a cost of less than \$2,000.

His second concern is the tree supporting the play structure, which he said is weakening and should be dealt with.

Edwards has said the most reasonable solution would be to take the play structure down first and have his crew cut the tree from the top. If enough of the remaining stump is sound, which will be evident when the top is removed, the structure can be rebuilt on what is left of the tree. Edwards estimated this job would take a day's work with crew and bucket, also under \$2,000.

Another option, though, is to leave the structure in place, and lower cut branches with a crane. Dornbush guessed a crane

would cost \$2,000 or \$3,000, more than his budget can support. The tree itself might live two more years or five more, he said, and he worried that the total cost of tree work on the library grounds will decimate his budget.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said other sources might be able to pay for the work, and recommended Dornbush talk with the library trustees to find out what they prefer doing.

Consultants

Tom LaRochelle, Pat Bierly, and Dylan Blanchard, all from Entre Technologies, came to the meeting to introduce themselves. The firm is directing and advising Wendell in its work to make town computer systems more modern and effective.

Bierly said they have helped towns for 10 to 15 years, and that what they want is for the systems to work. Installation was due to start the following week. And after that, he said, "you probably won't see us much," only for routine maintenance. Bierly said LaRochelle would "help steer" and "guide" town staff: "You shouldn't be learning the new processes on your own."

"We have a live front desk," LaRochelle said, telling the town a human being will answer the phone. They also assured assessor Martha Senn that data will definitely be backed up and secure.

Wendell's paid assessors, Regional Resource Group (RRG), did not send a representative to this meeting as expected. In their communication with Wendell, they said that one interviewee for replacing Kelly Szocik, Wendell's contact person who left July 1, was "snapped up" before he could be hired.

Senn said the town's revaluation was done, but that there are still unanswered questions.

Keller, who has volunteered to join the board of assessors, said he had passed the first lesson in the series he needs to complete before he may become a participating member.

He said the material was not as hard as the "camouflage" of online classes.

Senn said Keller needs to complete the fourth lesson before the assessors can set a tax rate, but that the lessons do not have to be taken in order.

Other Business

Board of health chair Barbara Craddock Zoomed in to ask the selectboard to appoint Jim Frank, a new town resident, to the board of health. Frank is semi-retired surgeon, and has attended board of health meetings and "was not scared away." He is reportedly interested in public health and pain remediation without opioids.

The board approved Craddock's request.

Some time ago the town granted National Grid a lease on three acres of the property at 97 Wendell Depot Road, which the town owned at the time. The lease would have allowed National Grid to build a temporary substation, which in turn would have allowed them to upgrade the Wendell Depot substation without interrupting delivery or transport of electricity.

The lease, however, has expired without National Grid building that substation, and now the company is applying for another lease. In the interim, though, Wendell sold the property to a private person, so they will have to contact the new owner.

Budine mentioned that before the sale, the town committed to removing some large logs stored on the property.

In the absence of longtime organizer Karen Copeland, and with more public gatherings being allowed, especially outdoors, a new Old Home Day committee picked August 13 for an in-person gathering on the town common.

This committee asked for, and received, use of the town hall for its bathrooms with the rental fee waived. Plans to show a movie indoors have been dropped.

AT LARGE from prev page

public hearing on February 18, 2021.

State law says that all planning board members must be present for public hearings. At a special town meeting in January, the town tried to push through an article that would have circumvented that law, but it was soundly defeated by the three dozen or so Northfield residents who attended. In the words of Joan Stoia: "It's important for board members to show up and listen."

"We need to get a moratorium on large scale industrial solar in Northfield," said Graveline, "until we can get a handle on the impact it will have for our community."

More Moody Blues

"What's up with the Moody Center?" I asked.

"Building permits pulled," she shrugged. She looked toward the next room and yelled, "Building permits pulled, Sandy?"

"Permits pulled," answered Wood.

The Moody Center has been a buzzard drone hovering over the town ever since a religious non-profit based in Overland Park, Kansas co-opted the name of the famed theologian Dwight L. Moody and used it to follow the gold-brick road to Damascus.

First it announced plans to build a café or bed-and-breakfast at a former NMH dorm called Revell Hall. Then came plans for a majestic "glampground" off Pierson Road. The renderings showed beautiful sunsets and brilliantly designed A-frames casting shadows amongst towering pines that don't exist.

Pierson Road residents spent

\$17,000 on attorney fees to stop it. Llamas said at the time she thought they'd lose the case, and they did. The court ruling came down last May and the building permits were pulled in October, but thus far nary a shovel-full of dirt has been moved.

The former NMH property once boasted three freshly mowed soccer fields. Now it's a hayfield fronted by two dead arborvitae shrubs. Not so great to look at, but the Pierson Road community prefers it to the alternative.

Northfield Notes

Northfield's property tax rate is \$13.85 per \$1,000, fifth-lowest in the county behind Whately, Erving, Rowe, and Monroe. "The latest property tax rate will be set in November," said Beth Walker, one of three assessors together with Alice Lord and Bob MacEwen. "It will be based on the budget passed at town meeting. We don't just pick a number out of a hat." ...

The Northfield Kiwanis Club is offering to sell its 6.25-acre park to the town. The good news it has plumbing. The bad news it has mosquitoes....

A while back walkers and cyclists began seeing LOST BIRD posters tacked to telephone poles around town. The absent avian was a white cockatiel named Sage, and a call to its owner regarding its lost-or-found status wasn't returned. Maybe it caught a southerly breeze and rejoined its mates in Australia.

Chip Ainsworth writes sports for the Recorder, and news and opinion for the Reporter. He lives in Northfield.



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

State Bans Putting Clothes in Trash

By KEITH WATERS

Monday, July 18 brought a longer meeting for the Erving selectboard – 2 hours and 35 minutes – and few witnesses. It seemed like there was one person in the live audience online, though the meeting had been viewed 11 times on YouTube a couple days later.

The COVID situation appears to remain the same, with a low number of local cases reported.

A bigger piece of news discussed was the upcoming statewide prohibition on including textiles with other solid waste. This will come into effect November 1 of this year, and what it will mean is that a long list of things including clothing, shoes, bedding, and curtains will not be allowed to be disposed of in the "regular" trash.

The state has also clarified that it is not the responsibility of towns to provide people with a way to dispose of these things. Town administrator Bryan Smith asked the board whether he should be looking into solutions for Erving residents.

Selectboard member William Bembury responded that no, he does not think the town should provide an additional service for this. Bembury went on to say he throws clothing and shoes into his trash bags when he wants to get rid of them.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache asked if the town could be held responsible if prohibited items are found in trash bags coming from the town. Bryan Smith explained that yes, it is likely prohibited items, even those in opaque trash bags, will be found at some point between their curbside pickup and the place where the town pays to haul them, and that Erving would then be fined or otherwise punished for this breaking of the rules.

He also pointed out that the companies that deal with this type of refuse do it for profit, and most would serve the town in some way for no cost to the town.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said he felt one suggestion – an unmanned dropbox for textiles – does not seem like a good solution, as it would likely be inundated with non-conforming items at a cost to the town.

Bastarache suggested that the town should figure out

how to notify residents about the new law soon, as it will be a big change in practice. Bryan Smith said he would continue looking into solutions.

Gettin' Codified

The project to codify the town bylaws and regulations was also discussed. The purpose is to consolidate and normalize all the bylaws and regulations and make them be available and searchable online.

A report has come back from the vendor, a company called General Code with an address in New York state, that included a draft of the corrected and updated bylaws and regulation, as well as a section of legal analysis. This report is now in the hands of the selectboard, who agreed to review the first half of it before their next meeting, and the second half before the one after that.

After the selectboard's review, they will return their critiques to General Code, who will then generate a final draft. Town meeting will then vote on whether to accept the final draft.

A Daunting Project

The selectboard, Bryan Smith, and assistant planner Mariah Kurtz see a town Master Project List as a way to keep track of the many projects Erving is involved with. Many projects were mentioned during the discussion of this list, including the pressing need for a new cemetery.

What took the most time was what to do with the town-owned former International Paper Mill property. This is a pressing matter, as the town may not be able to insure it past this summer. A plan was made to have at least two meetings, one with a walk-through of the property, and invite some experts and legal advisors to them so town people will be able to get information on what can possibly be done with the property.

Bryan Smith and Kurtz will develop a draft for who the experts will be and how the meetings could be conducted, and have it ready for the selectboard to review at their next meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, August 1.

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TRAVELOGUE from page A1

amoeboid creature out of a childhood nightmare” according to at least one music critic, and plugged cables together incorrectly under the Bromp Treb moniker, and makes films, including *Full Mantis*, the 2018 feature-length portrait of the percussionist Milford Graves, which he co-directed.

He and his partner, the fiber artist Fafnir Adamites, bought a house on the Hill when those were still reasonably priced and have acted ever since as natural magnets, drawing likeminded people slowly nearer. Pillars of the community. Features of the landscape.

I ended up being friends with Neil and Fafnir, so none of what you are about to read is journalism.

As this article goes to press, they are driving across the country to live in Los Angeles, where Faf has gotten a proper job teaching in their field. It’s a sound life decision and – for a good number of people in experimental and DIY cultural circles here, not to mention people who just plain know them as neighbors – a mega bummer for us.

Nothing stays in place, and the deeply hyperlocal *Bald Eagle* record (“Mineral Hill Runway,” “Running of the Lampreys,” “First Light”...) turns out to have been an end-of-an-era reflection, when you flip it over.

Catskill, New York

I have the week off the paper, so I decide to process this stupid news by going to see the band Gloyd play in four states. Neil is in this band, but so are four *other* well-regarded local musicians; it’s a bit of a supergroup. They play free improvisational music (there are saxophones).

The Hudson Valley strikes me on this trip as a more exaggerated copy of ours: the river is wider; the industrial heyday hit higher heights, and its long crash more dreadful. Back on the upswing, these little outposts of Brooklyn are good warnings of what an east-west rail connection could mean for us.

The streets are otherwise quiet, but the Avalon Lounge has neon lights and wristbands for paying customers. The violist-composer Joanna Mattrey plays first and is captivating. I wonder a little how many of these people sitting around us on the floor listening intently were in big indie-rock bands 15 years ago. Their clothes are all subtly nicer than the ones we wear in Western Mass.

Only four-fifths of Gloyd is here tonight –

the vocalist, Ruth Garbus, joins the tour tomorrow – but the band locks in immediately and doesn’t stop.

At one point everyone folds in around Neil, who takes a long solo in part by fumbling around, dropping three frame drums over and over onto each other and the rest of his kit. It looks comical, effortless, accidental – and it sounds great. The music never stops moving through it, and the audience is beaming.

Wendy Eisenberg also shreds, more than usual. (They admit to me later that the band’s score going into this set was “mystery solos.”) Wendy left Turners in 2019 to do the thing for real in New York, and it’s paying off; the week of this show, they hit number nine on *DownBeat* magazine’s “Rising Star Guitar” list. “It’s great! I love jazz,” they deadpan when I bring it up. “I play jazz.”

Gloyd began in December 2017 when Andy Allen, who plays sax and flute, asked Wendy and Neil to join him for an improv set at Cold Spring Hollow, a house venue in Belchertown. “It was fucking ridiculous,” Wendy tells me. “He’s like the best drummer in the world.”

The very next day, Wendy hitched a ride with Neil to a festival in Cambridge both had been booked to play, Neil in a duo with Donny Shaw, the former bassist from Fat Worm of Error. Wendy had been a fan of Fat Worm – “I had heard of them by legend when I first moved to Boston, but I think they had broken up by then,” they explain.

Looking back, Wendy calls being invited into Gloyd a “massive stroke of luck.” “It’s really one of the top experiences of my life as a musician,” they add. Wendy also tells me exactly why playing with Gloyd is better than the improvisers they collaborate with in New York, then asks me not to print it.

They try again, on the record: “Gloyd is... funny people. It’s very sublime, to play with Gloyd, and it makes all the other improvisational experiences I have that aren’t engaged with humor just seem so much less vibrant.”

“He’s extremely present when he’s playing drums,” Wendy says of Neil, when I ask them to describe his playing. “A lot of drummers love Milford Graves, but instead of being aware of the kind of rolling, non-metronomic pulse that Milford was so good at, they just treat it as an aggressive thing: ‘Let’s

hit a lot of drums really fast and all over the place, and it’s gonna be based like on how much I can hold,’ or whatever. But Neil’s totally free, and really funny, and extremely physical in a way that isn’t about like, ‘How can I overcome the conventional physicality of my body so that I can be like a drum machine, or like the heaviest metal drummer’ – it’s like, ‘How do I just like do what my body wants me to do?’”

Between each show, the band returns to Andy Allen’s family tree farm in Wyben to regroup and record. My traveling companion and I camp the next town over from Catskill and then drive back to Turners Falls. We go for the scenic route instead of the Pike, and Google Maps directs us through Pittsfield, and then up through Plainfield, onto Gloyd Street.

Providence, Rhode Island

Donny Shaw laughs. “You know I live pretty much right there off Gloyd Street, right?”

This venue is a totally different vibe than last night; it’s a legal venue, but it’s hiding from the busy neighborhood it’s in. You arrive by walking down an unmarked alley. We’re hanging out in the back parking lot. Gloyd is playing third tonight, and the second band – in a dissimilar genre – is playing an extremely long set for a second band.

Donny goes back the furthest with Neil, to 2002, and says that before that they both had “similar kinds of childhood: goofy punk bands, suburban youth.” In typical self-defeating journalism mode, I’ve asked him how Fat Worm started.

“This could be misinformation, but I think [Chris] Cooper, Neil, and [Tim] Sheldon did gamelan at Smith,” he says. “That was how they met, and it was always a recurring theme, talking about gamelan composition, consonance and interplay.... Neil had never really played drums in a band before, and I had never played bass, so we both developed somewhat unique styles alongside each other.... Playing bass with Neil’s drums is still so natural.”

The parking lot scene drags on. One guy is actually sitting on the ground watching a prestige TV show streaming on his laptop. I

ask Donny about Neil’s playing.

“I’m not aware of a tempo or something – that’s not the baseline from which he’s going off,” he says. “Most free drummers have that: there’s an underlying tempo to the thing, but they’re playing with it. With Neil, that wasn’t there, it’s just... free rhythm, or something? It’s not pinned to a thing, it’s just a compulsive falling apart.”

“His personality just attracts so many amazing people,” he adds. “There’s a film crowd he knows, and a music crowd... It’s going to be a huge loss to not have his curatorial perspective.”

When the set finally starts – well, first of all, this is Ruth’s first night, and she is wearing some kind of 1920s gown-and-hat set, a real statement piece. The bar is loud and dark, and this time Gloyd has to earn the attention. Even after most people wise up, the people from the second band are so charged with adrenaline they continue to chat rather loudly at a table rather near the stage.

Neil is the one who finally takes action, dragging his drums out into the middle of the floor, flopping and clowning and continuing to play directly next to the chatty Kathies. They cheer him on.

The set as a whole is deranged – Ruth keeps turning the only lamp on and off until the set ends in darkness. Andy will later remember this set as “pretty,” but recordings cast some doubt on that. Providence was won over, but at what cost?

Wallingford, Connecticut

Gloyd’s third show is at a record store outside New Haven, Redscroll Records. I have an amazing day taking back roads through northeast Connecticut, have an early supper at a gigantic Latino festival I stumble upon in Willimantic.

When I get to Wallingford Gloyd isn’t there yet, but people are there to see them – not exactly a crowd, but people of discerning taste. Most are content to pick through the massive warehouse of ultra-high-end fancy music people records while we wait. Finally the band

see **TRAVELOGUE** next page



A full Gloyd, on the Channel Princess.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

New Principals, Tough Floor, Open Seat

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – No one from Gill has stepped forward yet to offer to fill an empty seat on the regional school committee. The committee held a short summer meeting Tuesday night via Zoom, and agreed to keep publicizing the opening. They were joined by Brooke Martineau, who will begin in August as a member filling a Montague vacancy.

Brian Beck introduced the committee to two newly hired administrators: Sheffield Elementary principal Kerry Heathwaite, and Gill Elementary principal Walter Huston. Both grew up in Massachusetts and spent “some portions of their careers” in other states, Beck said, and both were the top choice of their search committees.

Heathwaite, as it turned out, was from Montague. She said she was “thrilled” to meet students and families at one “Popsicles with the Principal” event; a second will be held on Thursday, August 4 from 1 to 2 p.m.

Huston, from the eastern part of the state by way of New Hampshire, said he was moving to Deerfield and that he was enjoying meeting his school staff.

Business director Joanne Blier reported that the flooring project at Gill was completed, but the project at Hillcrest had encountered a setback. While the asbestos flooring has successfully been removed, a surface under it turned out to be made of a different material than anticipated, so more work and more money will be required.

Blier said the project is still expected to be finished a week before teachers return, and that she would have a better idea in the “next couple weeks” if the project is over budget. An additional appropriation at a Montague special town meeting in the fall may be necessary, she said, adding: “I can’t imagine there’ll be any money left for the rugs.”

The committee voted unanimously to renew the district’s contract with physician Dean Singer. Beck praised Singer’s work, “under very challenging circumstances.”

As is its custom, the committee discussed the idea of returning to in-person meetings. Though it nearly expired, the Massachusetts legislature extended the pandemic-era allowance for remote meetings through May 2023.

Chair Jane Oakes said that remote meetings allow for larger audiences, and Montague member Heather Katsoulis pointed out that being “down a member,” it is more difficult to achieve quorum. (A nine-member committee can meet with four absences, but an eight-member committee can only allow three.)

“I’m wondering if community attitude toward the school district would be better if we met in person,” Montague member John Irminger said. “Personally, I like meeting at home. It’s comfortable.”

After a check-in about how it will make quorum at its next meetings, on August 9 and 23, despite various members’ planned vacations, the committee adjourned.



Ruth Garbus in maximum effect at Wallingford.

TRAVELOGUE from prev pg rolls in, apologizing and explaining they’d had a hectic day of napping and snacking at Andy’s house, got a late start on their recording session, and didn’t want to stop it.

Like Wendy, Andy trained at conservatory; unlike Wendy, he actually saw Fat Worm of Error play when he lived in Boston:

“I was playing with Guerilla Toss, it was at the YWCA in Cambridge back in 2011. They were last, and they just blew my mind... I saw them one other time in Providence. But I’ve watched YouTube videos of them, and you know that album *Pregnant Babies Pregnant With Pregnant Babies?* I’ve listened to that like a million times.”

Andy was responsible for booking the proto-Gloyd show, and was more than happy to bring Donny in as a fourth member at Neil’s suggestion.

“The big thing for me about Fat Worm is that their timing is really neat.... That’s something I was really excited about, as far as playing with Neil. I was ready for that.... Donny has it, too, just a cool sense of rhythm, timing, and pacing to the set.

“And then, obviously, Neil has that kind of goofball thing, and it actually works really well in a performance... sometimes it’s not even

at the point of what’s happening in the music, but he’ll just be making the craziest faces, and it makes it fun.”

The set at Redscroll has a lot of the fun stuff; it is the funnest one of the run. Neil throws drums onto drums and makes faces, and Donny stomps around and detunes his bass strings. The lights are bright, and the mood is bright and interactive. Ruth Garbus paces around kicking a bucket with an empty in it, vocalizing about the beer can.

Though Ruth played in the psychedelic collective Feathers long ago, and then the power-pop Happy Birthday, she is best known for her trademark solo work: hushed, painstakingly constructed bedroom pop songs. With Gloyd, she has come a long way from that.

“Neil has a very different way of approaching music than I do, which is really interesting,” she tells me. “He seems to be more conscious, literally – whereas a lot of the time I’m aiming for some kind of semi... Not unconscious, but letting whatever comes up, first though-best thought. He has more of an outside vision of what he’s doing.”

Ruth describes Fat Worm of Error as “one of the best bands I’ve ever seen,” and has special praise for Neil’s Brompton Treb solo work: “It was the first time I heard purely experimental music, but it had a

beat sometimes and is funny and you can dance to it, and it’s just – fully engaged, instead of being more intellectual.”

Ruth was the fifth and final member to join with Gloyd, and has been using the context of the group to explore very different directions in sound.

The music settles into a reverent hush. “Very simple gifts,” Ruth announces sweetly. “VERY SIMPLE GIFTS!” she sings, over and over, higher and higher, arms stretched heavenward.

“It felt like we kind of all like lost our minds a little bit,” Andy says later about this set. “In a healthy way. And I enjoy that, you wouldn’t go to New York City and hear some big names on the improv scene do a set that’s that funny.”

Everyone is excited for the boat.

Turners Falls

Neil advertised this show as his last one as a local, and friends from all walks of life turn out, in the area of grass near Unity Park set aside for geese to defecate. The location is apt. This year Neil has been teaching himself to play the trumpet, and organized a weekly free-form session for horn and wind players he called Tooty, right in this spot.

Below the dam, when the river was frozen, he also used to or-

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 **August 8, 2022**. Appointments to these vacancies will be made at the August 9, 2022 School Committee meeting.

RISING from page A1

Stars make labels in Spanish.

She explained that this benefits both the families that speak different languages, and also students that primarily speak English: “Not only is it teaching students who may not know the English word,” she said, “it teaches students who only know English, because every day they’re seeing the Spanish word for the class.” The Rising Stars also included classroom labels in Ukrainian to benefit Ukrainian-speaking students.

Last year, the Rising Star Youth Leaders primarily focused on the youngest summer school students, helping them with their studies, and helping the summer school teachers as needed. Ellis said that this year, the program includes more focus on the older students, and preparing them for other jobs or volunteer opportunities.

Similar to last year, in the beginning of each day the older students assist students and teachers in classrooms. What is different, Ellis said, is that while last year at the end of the day the Rising Stars assisted students and teachers in elective activities such as art and music, this year the second section of the day is focused on team-building activities for the Rising Stars, and the end of the day is dedicated to practice writing resumes, participating in escape rooms, and even learning about how to repurpose things around the school that aren’t helpful to the environment.

“We talked a lot about waste,” Ellis told me. “Like, there are thousands of these Plexiglass dividers,” and the group talked about how to repurpose them: “like as drawing surfaces and that type of thing.”

Ellis also mentioned the Rising Stars are participating in a social/emotional learning workshop next week, which is similar to the resume-writing workshop they had finished previously, at The Brick House teen center in downtown Turners Falls. “It’s really more fo-

cused on [the Rising Stars] in the afternoons, just with a little more choice on what they are helping out with,” she said.

Antonia Prizio, a senior at TFHS, explained that the Rising Stars even help to maintain the raised beds in Sheffield Elementary’s garden, with plants donated by Laurentis Farm.

Ellis said she emphasizes the importance of qualities like respect in a workspace – not leaving a mess behind after lunch, for example, and not using your phone when you are helping students.

All of the Rising Stars I interviewed, though, said their favorite part of the day is working with the little kids in classrooms.

“I think my favorite part of the program has to be working with elementary schoolers, because they are all so adorable,” said Ayleen Ovalle-Perez, who is going into her junior year at TFHS. She expressed, “This is my first time working with kids. I’ve been enjoying it a lot; I was nervous when I first got here, but it isn’t as difficult as I thought it was going to be.... I’ve always been nervous around kids, but I think this program has helped me, because I’m much more comfortable now.”

Ovalle-Perez also said she thinks this program has prepared her for future occupations, because it has given her more responsibility than usual, though not so much that it’s overwhelming.

I loved talking with Chloe Ellis, and with all this year’s amazing Rising Stars! I think this program has truly helped all of the older students prepare for their futures by providing them with new responsibilities and experiences. This is a perfect opportunity for an amazing, educational, and exciting summer job!

Isabella Vachula-Curtis is entering her junior year at Turners Falls High School this fall.



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WENDELL from page A1

a population center in Ludlow and Belchertown, and the communities north of Belchertown are geographically distant from the population center," Saunders said. "Living in Belchertown, which is a geographical center of the district, is helpful."

New Openings

Democrat Thomas Petrolati had represented the 7th Hampden district for several decades; since 2001, it was comprised of Ludlow and parts of Belchertown, Chicopee, and Springfield. Petrolati, who often ran unopposed despite a long series of controversies, retired in 2020.

Harrington ran for the seat that year, but lost to Democrat Jake Oliveira in a close race that ended in a recount, held at his request, in Belchertown. This year Oliveira is running for state senate instead, and Harrington is making another run – but in a significantly altered district.

New state legislative boundaries were drawn last year based on the 2020 US Census, amid significant debate, and signed into law almost unanimously last November. Ludlow and Belchertown remain in



Republican James "Chip" Harrington (left) and Democrat Aaron Saunders (right), both Ludlow natives, find they must campaign in New Salem, Wendell, and beyond.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

the 7th Hampden district, which has five new towns in Hampshire, Franklin, and Worcester counties.

Wendell will be losing state representative Susannah Whipps, the only independent in the Massachusetts House.

"I do think people in the upper parts of this district really vote for the person, and not the party," Harrington said of the new towns he hopes to represent. "They're all wonderful communities. I just don't know how they're affiliated

with Ludlow."

"I was really blown away by the sense of community that permeated every conversation," Saunders said of a recent campaign stop at the Wendell transfer station. "Whether it was talking about the Meeting-house renovation project or making sure we protect open spaces from industrial scale solar, across the board it was a real pleasure."

Our Corner of the World

Speaking with the Reporter,

both candidates expressed a desire for regional equity, and said they would work with colleagues to give western Massachusetts more political weight in Boston. Both said they felt the state's 2020 police reform bill places a disproportionate burden on small towns to train part-time officers, both said they want education reform, and both described recovery from the opioid addiction epidemic as a top priority.

"I think there is very well-intentioned policy that's developed in Boston, but it's seen through the lens of how Boston and larger communities operate," Saunders said. "And our smaller, more rural communities aren't always the loudest voice at the table about how these well-intentioned policies are going to impact our corner of the world."

Harrington shared similar sentiments, saying that economic development incentives often don't translate well to rural areas. He also described the pressures that student debt and the housing shortage are putting on young adults.

"We're looking at a very significant bubble that's going to burst in the near future," he said. "The

American Dream is challenging."

On the topic of primary school education, the candidates differed in their priorities.

"Special education comes to mind," Saunders said. "If a community has a couple of out-of-district placements to meet a student's needs best, that can really turn a school's budget upside down. We need to think about how we equitably fund education, and bring into light rural poverty, which is too often hidden."

"We're not putting enough emphasis on people considering the trades," said Harrington, a school committee member of 18 years. "In Massachusetts we seem to be really lacking when it comes to education."

Asked about their plans to campaign in Wendell, Saunders said he plans to play guitar with the band at Old Home Days on August 13. Harrington said he has enjoyed recreating in the town, and looks forward to meeting more of its voters at future events.

As neither candidate faces any challengers in the primary ballots in September, voters will make their decision on November 8.



Adult Training at Tech

By CHRISTINA TRINCHEIRO

TURNERS FALLS – Unemployed or underemployed residents who are over 18 and who have completed a high school equivalency exam (formerly known as the GRE), are invited to an open house this Thursday, July 28, at 6 p.m. to learn about career partnerships in welding and automotive technology.

The Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) Career Technical Institute and MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center are hosting the event, which will be held on the FCTS campus at 82 Industrial Boulevard.

"The [welding and automotive technology] programs being offered at FCTS will be a great opportunity for the Franklin County region," said Matt West, the school's director of career and technical education. "In collaboration with MassHire and Commonwealth Corporation, FCTS will be able to provide high-quality trade education and experience for its participants. Eligible participants will greatly benefit both personally and professionally through these programs."

The partnership features two grant-funded programs that begin Monday, September 19. The courses will be taught by professional educators from FCTS, and students will receive job or apprenticeship placements upon completion.

While participants are not required to pay tuition, fees, or for materials, they will need to fall within what West describes as "designated criteria" set by the Commonwealth Corporation and the state.

"The MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center is excited for this grant-funded partnership with Franklin County Tech," said Ann Tweedy, career services counselor at the Career Center. "MassHire's role is to help candidates interested in free training that may be seeking jobs and careers in growing and/or stable professions and vocations to connect with us. We look forward to assisting in offering outstanding training in sustainable vocations and industries to job seekers."

Program Highlights

The welding program is a 230-hour industry training session, with credentials and career placement assistance. Students will be certified as American Welding Society SENSE Level 1 entry-level welder, and the program also includes an OSHA 10-hour construction certification.

Classroom exams include GMAW, FCAW,

GTAW, SMAW, thermal cutting, print reading, and testing and inspection. In the shop, students will learn how to work with GTAW steel, stainless steel, and aluminum.

The automotive technology program will provide students with entry-level industry training and hands-on experience. Students will work with automobiles with complex systems, combining computer technology and conventional mechanical systems.

OBDII, electronic braking systems, electric vehicle and automated support systems for drivers will be studied. Certifications in this program include OSHA-10, Hotworks, and Basic SP2, as well as an option to acquire entry-level Subaru certifications. Students will also receive 10 to 15 hours of career readiness training.

If someone is interested in the programs but unable to attend this week's open house, they should reach out to FCTS and MassHire for more information.

For those who do not meet eligibility requirements, Tweedy said, other trainings and programs are available to assist potential applicants. "MassHire Career Services can help check eligibility for those who may be unemployed/underemployed, and to enroll candidates in free classes for jobseekers," she said. These classes are listed on the MassHire website at www.masshirefhcareers.org.

Tech School for Adults

The Career Technical Initiative is a federally-funded program to retrain the workforce to meet existing labor needs. The grant, administered through the Commonwealth Corporation and MassHire, funds training opportunities for unemployed and underemployed adult workers in construction trades and manufacturing at high schools with aligned Chapter 74 programs.

Next spring, FCTS also plans to offer trainings in culinary arts and carpentry. The culinary arts program will consist of 230 hours over 12 weeks; participants will receive certifications either as ServSafe managers or food handlers.

The carpentry program, also a 230-hour, 12-week program, is an industry-standard curriculum that will present real-world knowledge and skills useful for multiple career pathways.

For more information about MassHire, visit www.masshirefhcareers.org. More information about the local Career Technical Institute is available at tinyurl.com/FCTS-CTI.

GROUPS from page A1

donated books and mails them to incarcerated people, and the Workers Center, headquartered in Northampton, has been distributing free food and other resources regularly on Avenue A throughout the pandemic. Both groups have been using 111-115 Avenue A as a base of operations, but have been told the building will be unavailable after October.

Several Books Through Bars members, meanwhile, have also been involved in Finders, a project that grew out of an initial idea for a public tool library.

"Tools are kind of expensive, and not everyone has them," McLaughlin explained. "It would be great for people to be able to use them and bring them back when they're done."

The Finders group's quest for a storefront led them to the corner of Fourth and L at an opportune time for their friends up the Ave. A large stockpile of books must be schlepped around the corner, from one basement to another, and there is reportedly still a lot of setting up to do before the coalition opens the doors to the public.

The commercial kitchen is rented to another tenant, but the main space, basement, and outside patio can all be used by the groups.

"We're excited about offering a community resource library – tools, seeds, books, clothes," said Elin Dahal, describing plans for a "free store space that folks in the community can pop into and hang out in."

Dahal, who first became involved in Finders and then joined Books Through Bars, said the hope is for the store to be "popular and accessible." "There aren't very many spaces these days where you can simply exist, without buying something or maybe being part of a religious group," he said. "That's at the core of it."

Pioneer Valley Workers Center organizer Andrea Schmidt said her organization, which focuses on low-income and immigrant workers has been seeking a second brick-and-mortar location for some time.

"During the pandemic our base, of mainly immigrant workers and farmworkers, really grew by meeting folks through the food distribution," Schmidt said. "Our interest is primarily to have a space to store our food, and continue to meet with folks and have programming – but a huge priority is also to collaborate with other groups that have liberatory projects."

According to McLaughlin, the pandemic meant an "influx" of requests to Great Falls Books Through Bars. "Lockdown in prison facilities is different across the board, but also was a lot more strict during the pandemic, in a lot of cases," they said. "People are looking for more to do in their cells, or when social distancing is in effect." The or-

ganization holds monthly volunteer days to fill orders and write return notes and letters to include in the packages.

Though the three groups are still formalizing their collaboration, Schmidt, McLaughlin, and Dahal all said the plan is to hold regular open hours, with volunteers trained to help neighbors access any of the groups' resources – or to bring in more.

"None of us do housing or tenants' rights organizing – the Workers Center doesn't have a ton of connections with shelters in the area," Schmidt said. "Those are things that we will want to be able to direct folks to."

The yet-unnamed project follows a long legacy of community spaces, commercial and non-commercial, in the corner storefront. It was Schuhle's Market from at least 1918 through the 1940s, and then Freddie Macker's package store. The Macker family sold the building in 1969 to the Polish Cooperative Stores, Inc., then headquartered next door.

The space served as the Village Florist in the late '70s, and the Turners Falls Youth Center in 1981 – the Montague Tenants Association held a public meeting there that April to discuss proposed downtown housing projects, which would eventually become Power Town Apartments. In the late 1980s, the Cooperative lost the building to foreclosure. By the early 1990s, the space was home to the Pathway Program, which advertised beginner karate classes for both children and adults, as well as other applications of the power of Chi Energy. Shortly after that, it was J.R.'s Sports Cards.

The run of businesses in more recent memory include eateries, bakeries, and markets: Blue Skies; Bellybowl; Patty Cake Patty Cake; La Bodega/The Latino Connection; and finally the 2nd Street Baking Co., which had changed hands not long before the pandemic hit and did not survive its first months.

Now colorful signs in the window, in English and Spanish, explain the three groups' goals. (Email addresses are included – pvwworkerscenter@gmail.com, finders@riseup.net, gfbooksthroughbars@riseup.net.)

"I've been in spaces that seemed cool, because they were doing things that I felt aligned to, but it felt very hard to penetrate a kind of in-group/out-group dynamic, and that can feel really bad," said Dahal. "We're definitely trying to avoid that, and have it be accessible to people from a variety of backgrounds and inclinations."

"I'm excited to have a space where people can come in and have access to a lot of basic needs that everyone deserves to have: dried goods, food staples, things like clothing," Schmidt told the Reporter. "We painted it with warm and inviting colors – I think it came out great."



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MONTAGUE from page A1
owners and residents.

The firm found that areas designated “customer parking” were 75% utilized, while those reserved for employees and residents were used at a 40% rate. Utilization was 75% along Avenue A and lower on other streets, including “side streets.”

Clark called these percentages, based on a number of single-day counts, “pretty healthy” given that research identifies “ideal” utilization as between 80% and 90%. “The perception of a parking crunch was not exactly borne out by the data,” he said.

The one negative highlighted in Stantec’s analysis of town parking policy was the winter parking ban, in effect in all villages from 1 to 5 a.m. from December 1 to April 1. A survey showed that approximately one-third of downtown residents felt “negatively impacted” by the ban. The PowerPoint called this “a matter of frustration for residents,” even though parking is allowed during these periods in municipal lots and by special permit on several streets.

The study concluded by recommending better signage for “customer wayfinding,” as well as better enforcement of employee and customer parking zones, through “flyers and notifications” rather than ticketing.

Stantec also recommended that town officials “work with the DPW and Police Department to modify winter parking policy and provide more flexibility for residents.” This could include allowing “same side parking” on an alternating basis, allowing on-street parking except during predicted snow events – which would require enhancing the town’s emergency alert system – or keeping a ban in force only in “priority corridors.”

Town planner Walter Ramsey said the study’s “big takeaway” was the need to address the problems caused by the winter parking ban.

Finance committee member John Hanold said that in Minneapolis, where he had lived “for many years,” the city enforced a system where, during declared snow emergencies, parking was banned on major “arterial” streets and allowed on alternate sides of others. He called this “easily communicated, and easily understood.”

“I’d like to see us talk about this again,” said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz. “Maybe sometime in August or early September.”

New Curbing

Ramsey reviewed the remnants of the project, which has been discontinued, to build a new pedestrian bridge over the Turners Falls power canal. He said the town Department of Public Works (DPW) is set to receive the pieces of the metal bridge, which has already been constructed, and store it for future use, potentially for student welding practice at the Franklin County Technical School.

The grant that would have funded the project, he said, can pay for milling and resurfacing streets along a crescent from Avenue A, up Third Street, down Canal Street to Seventh, and then back down to Avenue A. The work will be done by the town DPW. He said granite curbing may not be available for timely completion of the project, so the town is considering asphalt curbing.

He finished this evaluation by saying that roughly \$1.3 million in grant funding remained “on the table.” The board informally agreed

to repave a parking lot damaged during the project, allow non-granite curbing on Canal and Third streets, and accept the metal bridge pieces for future use.

Tree Injections

David Detmold of the Montague tree committee presented a proposal to address an infestation of the emerald ash borer, a beetle that has attacked ash trees in Peskeomskut Park and may threaten others in downtown Turners Falls. He said Montague was “one of the last communities in Massachusetts to report emerald ash borer presence, but when it came to town, it came to town in a big way.”

[M]embers of the tree committee were initially skeptical of the use of pesticides, but... the effectiveness and safety of the treatment as described led to a unanimous vote in favor of the procedure.

Detmold introduced Andy Vega, who he called the “resident expert” on the insect. Vega, until recently a member of the tree committee, said he has worked for JJ Mauget, a company which specializes in tree injections to ward off dangerous invasive species. He said that while the infected trees in Peskeomskut Park would need to be removed, other endangered trees on Avenue A and elsewhere could be injected with the mild pesticide and monitored for the impact on the borer.

“It would be a great learning experience,” he told the board. According to the company’s website, the injection involves placing pellets under the tree’s bark and allowing its “natural circulatory system [to] transmit chemicals.”

Detmold said he and other members of the committee were initially skeptical of the use of pesticides, but that the effectiveness and safety of the treatment as described led to a unanimous vote in favor of the procedure.

Detmold also said the committee was requesting a “special appropriation” to supplement the tree warden’s budget. While the tree warden budget had already been increased substantially this year, he said, a current “backlog of work” could eat up those funds. He estimated that for an additional \$5,000 the committee could remove the infected trees in the park and inject at-risk trees along Avenue A.

The board voted to “endorse and authorize” Detmold’s proposal, although the motion did not immediately transfer additional funds to the tree warden. “Do the work first,” said Kuklewicz. “We would supplement the budget if this causes a deficit.”

Waste Streams

At the request of DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron, the board approved a contract amendment with the engineering firm Wright Pierce, which is mapping the town’s sewer system, to include mapping catch basins in villages beyond Turners Falls.

Board members asked Bergeron about the progress of smoke testing the sewer system to locate inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the system. Bergeron said that “fortunately,” he had been on va-

cation the previous week when the testing took place, but “as far as I know... they completed it as of last Thursday.”

“The smoke does go everywhere,” he added.

The board voted to execute a certification by the state Department of Environmental Protection (Mass-DEP) for the transfer station on Sandy Lane. Bergeron said the certification requires that mattresses be disposed “in their own dumpster,” and that the DPW now provides a large box for “textiles,” including clothes, that will be transferred to the Salvation Army and another dumpster for “organics” that will go to Martin’s Farm for composting.

The board then approved several memoranda of understanding with the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD) for transfer station inspection and hauling, emergency sludge collection at the clean water facility, and hazardous waste collection. The latter will take place on September 24 at Greenfield Community College and the Orange transfer station.

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell, who is on the FCSWMD board of representatives, noted that residents must register to dispose of their hazardous waste with a form on the district and town websites.

Ramsey gave an update on the project to cap the town-owned burn dump on Sandy Lane. The project will be funded by a company which plans to put a solar array on the site, but the design and engineering are being funded by the town.

Ramsey said the state Department of Environmental Protection is requiring additional design work to seal the cap, due to leakage in its perimeter. He said the additional costs could be funded from a variety of town meeting appropriations, but estimated a shortfall of \$11,975, which he stated could be met by an appropriation at a fall town meeting or from the “unexpected engineering fund.”

Also On Sandy Lane...

At the request of police chief Chris Williams, the board approved a contract with the Franklin County sheriff’s office, which operates a regional dog shelter on Sandy Lane in Turners Falls, for use of the shelter from fiscal years 2023 until 2026. Services provided include housing dogs for a short time period, collecting fees from dog owners, transferring “dangerous dogs” to a more appropriate facility, and providing annual reports to the town.

Williams noted that the fee for a dangerous dog has increased, to up to \$50 per day. A memo from dog officer Kyle Dragon of the sheriff’s office states that this language is designed to allow the shelter to charge on a “sliding scale and not be locked into \$50 by the contract.”

Montague, Greenfield, and Deerfield are the member towns in the shelter program.

Other Business

At Ramsey’s request, the board voted to accept a painting, labeled “Peskeomskut,” of the area around the Falls “during the time when Native Americans lived here, before there was a dam.” The painting shows indigenous people with spears amongst great numbers of migrating salmon, and several villages in the hills rising above the falls.

The work, painted by Mashpee Wampanoag tribal member Robert Peters, was paid for through a do-

SEEKING LIBRARY TRUSTEE

Would you like to help support the Montague Public Libraries? Are you available for one or two evening meetings per month? Trustee meetings are generally held on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. in-person. One interim trustee is needed until the next town election in May 2023.

Want to get involved in your community’s libraries? Please send an email of interest to librarydirector@montague-ma.gov by Monday, August 22. Feel free to send any questions to that address as well, or call library director Caitlin Kelley at (413) 863-3214 ext. 6.

nation from the FirstLight power company.

The board also approved a request from Marcy Gregoire, who operates the Nice. Snack Parlor on Second Street near Unity Park, for a roller skating “festival” on July 23, and weekly roller skating on Fridays in August near her business. It also approved a request by parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz for an entertainment license for “night skates” at the skate park on July 30 and August 27.

The board appointed Noah Diamond as a laboratory manager at the clean water facility, starting August 1, and approved a new schedule, prepared by town accountant Carolyn Olsen, for reimbursing

employees’ “business meals.”

The board voted to approve an agreement with Helene Karl Architects for procurement and project oversight to install an asphalt roof on town hall. The board had previously asked the town administrator to cost out a metal roof option but in the end decided to go with the recommendation of the Capital Improvements Committee which endorsed asphalt as less expensive.

The board’s next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday, August 3, but if it appears that accumulated business cannot be disposed of in a “timely manner” on that date, an additional meeting will be scheduled for Monday, August 1.



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

Here’s the way it was on July 26, 2012: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Radio Tags Shed Light on Shad Migration

This year, in a surprising turn of events, American shad returning to spawn in the Connecticut River surged in numbers, approaching levels not seen since the early ’90s. Scientists studying annual fish migration in the Connecticut don’t really know why more than 500,000 shad were counted in the mainstem and tributaries of the river this year – more than doubling last year’s count. But they aim to find out.

Ken Sprinkle, Connecticut River coordinator for the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission, said at the recent meeting of the CRASC on Tuesday, July 10, as the 40-year emphasis on restoring Atlantic Salmon to the river was officially abandoned by the US Department of Fish and Wildlife due to budget constraints and poor numbers of returning salmon (just 50 this year), that the commission has now established separate committees to study each species of anadromous fish in the Connecticut.

Our Lady of Peace Gets Repointed

Charlie Rucci of Rucci Masonry is repointing about 1,000 square feet of the brick façade of Our Lady of Peace church on Seventh Street in Turners Falls, seventy feet above the ground.

Rucci estimates the church measures about 180 to 190 feet from the

sidewalk to the cross at the top of the steeple. The bricks were last repointed about 20 years ago.

Repointing is a process where surface mortar, deteriorated by freeze-thaw cycles, is removed and replaced. Twenty years is about the length of time that usually elapses between repointings.

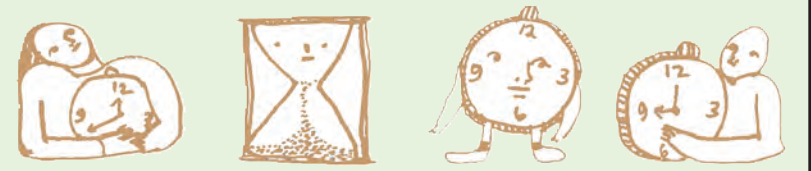
Unity Park Play Area Complete!

If your kids are looking for a fun way to beat the heat, the good news is, the Unity Park water feature is now ON!

“We got the water quality test back this morning at 11:57,” said Montague parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz on Wednesday afternoon. “The water feature is on right now. It went on at noon, and it’s been a big hit. There has been a constant stream of kids going in and out ever since.”

The water feature, a sort of fountain with graceful fish-like shapes of metal leaping up around the jets of water, forms the centerpiece of the new play area at Unity Park, the eagerly awaited renovation of the town’s largest and most heavily used recreation area. This spring, the first phase of construction began, utilizing a \$652,000 Community Development Block Grant.

In June, the town of Montague got the good news it had been approved for the second phase of construction at Unity Park, for about \$460,000, to renovate the playing fields, basketball court, establish community gardens and install a new parking lot at the south end of the park, along with an accessible walking path around the entire perimeter of the park.



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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Voluntary Water Restriction

MONTAGUE – The Turners Falls Water Department is requesting their customers take part in voluntary water restrictions due to the dry conditions in the area. Outdoor water use should be limited, and should take place before 9 a.m.

and after 5 p.m.

At the present time our water supply shows no imminent sign of being at risk. We will continue to monitor water levels, and will advise if further conservation measures are needed.

LEVERETT from page A1 breakdown of funding sought from other towns in the district. The list, he said, had been weighted to reflect the track's location in Amherst, and the greater use it would see by Amherst residents.

The "ask" from Leverett was \$269,129. Of that, \$126,750 would come from local taxes, \$101,400 from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, and \$40,979 from "other sources" such as donations. Slaughter said there was potential for flexibility, but these were the targets a working group came up with to fund the school committee's favored \$4.74 million option.

Questions were raised by selectboard members and others on the relative benefits to residents of Leverett, the favoring of artificial turf over natural grass, and the use of CPA funds for the project.

Board member Patricia Duffy questioned the benefits both to children in Leverett and to those at the high school not using the fields, saying she favored the least expensive option. She also noted that a CPA funds application to build a pavilion on Leverett's recreational field had recently been rejected.

Board chair Tom Hankinson said that though he was "fiercely protective" of CPA funds, he felt the project was a good use of them. He volunteered to be one of Leverett's three representatives on a four-town committee to further study the matter.

Money Moves

The selectboard and fin com approved 16 year-end transfers to cover \$38,723 in overexpenditures by town departments as of the end of FY'22 on June 30. \$16,048 of the transfers came from the town's reserve fund, reducing it from \$31,167 to \$15,118. The balance of \$22,324 was transferred from other accounts.

While many of the overages were small, or attributed to "hard

to predict" fluctuations in cost, several were questioned by fin com and board members. An overage of approximately \$3,000 in general expenses from the treasurer and tax collector prompted fin com member Jed Proujansky to say they should know their expenses.

"Why are they spending money not in their budget?" he asked. "Why are they giving us after-the-fact news?"

Hankinson responded that the person in the positions was new. "We're in the position of watching sausage being made," he said, though he agreed it was an appropriate time to remind all departments to "pay attention" to their budgets.

An overage of approximately \$15,000 for health insurance benefits at the elementary school was not included in the group of approved transfers, as the amount was "not concrete yet," according to town administrator Marjorie McGinnis.

She attributed the overspending to "insufficient communication" regarding employee turnover at the school, and the fact that school employees are entitled to different levels of insurance benefits depending on factors including having a family, but said the total cost "should have been known earlier."

Mosquito Project

The selectboard is exploring options that would help Leverett opt out of the state's aerial mosquito spraying program, which requires the approval of a municipal mosquito control plan to safeguard public health.

Board member Melissa Colbert gave a report on her tour of Medzu Labs, a private company based in Amherst, and an initial consultation on the cost of implementing a pilot program to test for mosquito-borne viruses in Leverett.

Colbert described the facility as "utterly impressive," and said the estimated cost ranged from \$10,000 to \$48,000, depending on

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such variables as how many collection sites would be involved, who would do the collecting, and the level of testing done on the collected mosquitos.

Colbert, a medical doctor, said the town should consider such a program because early detection of mosquito-borne viruses is potentially life-saving, and the cost of healthcare for infected people can be astronomical. She said she did not think an alternative program run by the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District would be an effective use of town funds.

McGinnis suggested that since

the mosquito season was half over, the town could ask Medzu if a smaller, less expensive collection program might be possible this year, adding that it might be funded by money already in the budget for such a purpose.

Public Speaking

The board discussed ways to further improve the sound quality of meetings for remote attendees. Hankinson said that he participated remotely at a recent meeting and had trouble hearing some of the speakers.

Colbert offered that adding mi-

crophones would help, but would create a different level of complexity due to the system in use, and more equipment would be needed. She and McGinnis both suggested that reminding people to speak right into the microphones would be helpful.

Resident Richard Nathorst said the weak point was the equipment in town hall. "It's junk," he said.

Nathorst added that if Leverett was going to spend a quarter million dollars on a track, it could afford to spend thousands on "the town's democracy."



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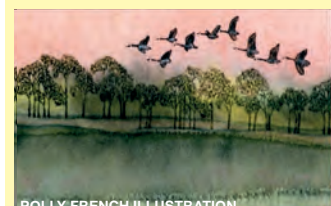
"When day comes, we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid. The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light. If only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it."
Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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WEST ALONG THE RIVER
DON'T GET AROUND
MUCH ANYMORE

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – Don't look for me this summer of 2022 in the hills of Donegal. I won't be there this time. I won't be tuning up my fiddle in Biddy's Crossroads pub in Glencolumkill, either. That pub may well stay open after the legal drinking hours at 11 p.m. without me.

Indeed I know for a fact that Jamie the barman will lock the door, draw the shades, and keep pulling pints of Guinness well into the early morning. The music and the drink will flow into the dawn that comes very early in the far west of Ireland, in County Donegal.

If you're lucky enough to be snug inside the pub when the door gets locked, you'll be making a true night of it until the dawning of the day.

But I won't be there.

I'm pretty sure I won't be sitting in my favorite café in Paris on the corner of la Rue des Saints-Pères and the Boulevard Saint-Germain, either. Old Baptiste the waiter will have to do without me. He probably won't even notice that I am not there. I may well want my customary lunch of omelette, frites, and a quarter carafe of house rouge, but I won't be getting it this year.

I can imagine the tourists cruising past my café table, squinting at menus, calculating changing euros into dollars and debating whether to enter here or continue on down the boulevard to the Deux Magots where Hemingway, Picasso, Gertrude Stein, and even Lenin spent their Paris days of exile writing and holding court. Well, those tourists will have to do without me watching them and writing down their peculiar way of dressing, their gestures, and their apparent disorientation.

I can tell you I won't be waking up on a sun-shot Sunday morning in our little house on a quiet street in the Paris suburbs. Normally on a summer morning there'd be coffee

on the living room table with the French windows open to the quiet of the day, Django and Grappelli setting the morning mood with their bluesy gypsy jazz track on the disk. I'm thinking something like *Sweet Chorus* or *Gallerie St. Hubert*.

No, not this summer.

Poet Billy Collins knows the mood I'm in:

How agreeable it is not to be touring abroad this summer, wandering cities and ascending torrid hill towns.

How much better to cruise these local, familiar streets, Fully grasping the meaning of every road sign and billboard And all the sudden hand gestures of my compatriots...

For sure and instead, I'll be waking up in the early morning at home, in my house along the west-flowing river.

Distant summer sounds of the river barely reach our bedroom window. The river is low, but still moving. The songs of wood thrush and jenny wren come in from the yard and woods through the open window beside my bed on the second floor of this old house, up near the roof where it can be stifling hot at times. There's just a generally mosquito-proof screen between us and the world outside. Sometimes it keeps them out; sometimes they slip in with their cousins the no see-ums.

So instead of Jamie pulling pints at the Crossroads Pub in Donegal, I will be spending the evening at the Element Brewery and Distillery conveniently established just a few minutes away up the street from me in the village of Millers Falls. I can walk there and back if I need to. Now that's the kind of neighborhood pub everyone should have. Jamie can well serve up the Guinness in the Glen, but here, Louis our barman will be in charge of the taps. He'll see **WEST ALONG** page B3

Above: Northern Construction pave the western span of the General Pierce Bridge. "It's an impressive operation to watch," writes photographer Ed Gregory. "The machine is a specially designed concrete-paver that levels and finishes the deck surface. Concrete is pumped to the heavily reinforced rebar deck via a 5-inch diameter pipe, fed by a huge mobile concrete pumper that is in turn fed by two concrete mixer trucks... The bridge crew is efficient, and moves as a well-tuned engine to be sure the finished operation is of high quality."

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE
BY TROUBLE MANDESON

GREENFIELD – The word is out: beets are totally on-trend – or didn't you know? Whether whizzed into a smoothie, wrapped up in a spring roll, or blended into a creamy hummus, their gorgeous crimson color and earthy profile make them one of my favorite vegetables to add color and flavor to dishes.

Loaded with vitamins and minerals, yet low in calories and fat, beets contain folate, manganese, and copper, which support and boost healthy liver function and the immune system. They have been used as a remedy to activate liver enzymes and increase bile.

Conversely, too much beetroot can cause low calcium levels and kidney damage, as they are high in the compound oxalate which can form kidney stones. Of course, anyone who has eaten beets can attest to the scary side effect of pink urine and red poop, a phenomenon called *beeturia*, which isn't dangerous, just a bit off-putting.

The amino acid tryptophan is found in beets and has been shown to



This grilled hamburger is just waiting for the addition of sliced beetroot to make it juicy.

improve mood, so maybe it's no surprise they've been used as an aphrodisiac for centuries. Perhaps at your next dinner date the menu should include ginger-beet martinis, roasted beet and kale frittata, and dark choc-

olate beet brownies for dessert to get you and your lover in the mood ...

The oldest evidence of beets in the human diet is found in ancient Europe. Four charred beet roots see **HEARTFELT** page B8

THEATER REVIEW

Grail Knight Takes Camelot to Three Sisters Sanctuary

By NATHAN FRONTIERO

GOSHEN – Tucked in the hill-towns amid fields of sculptures wrought from stone, ceramic, glass, and reclaimed metal and wood, a new twist on an Arthurian legend unfolds for audiences open to a more active theater experience. Written by Sean French-Byrne and directed by Ezekiel Baskin, *Grail Knight* reimagines the knights of the round table and their quest for the holy grail in a collapsing world.

References in dialogue to dying birds, harsher seasons, and failing crops suggest a Camelot stumbling through climate destruction, an element to the show that landed pointedly on its opening night performance in the middle of the latest severe heat wave. Paradoxically enough, as the sun lowered and the bleakness of the day hung as thick in my brain as the humidity on my skin, the anachronistic quality of Three Sisters Sanctuary at twilight during the show felt close to a reprieve.

The play's immersive format begins with a theater-in-the-round introduction in the Sanctuary's



Cast members in a scene from Grail Knight. From left: Syl Simmons, Abigail Weaver, Esmeralda Blackheart, Myles Olmsted, and K. Dymek.

grassy amphitheater. There are additional points of convergence for major events in its plot, but it otherwise requires the audience to choose their own adventure as the cast splits up and moves throughout the grounds in simultaneous scenes. There are between two and five paths through the 90-minute show depending on which characters you follow.

It's impossible to experience every moment as written in a sin-

gle viewing, and this heightening of live theater's natural transience gives the audience a greater level of agency. What version of this play you see in a given evening is up to you. There's also an added layer of intimacy to the production, as the audience is allowed to stand relatively close to the actors while following them through the Sanctuary.

In addition to its innovative format, *Grail Knight* also adds nuance see **GRAIL** page B4



Green crab spider, misumessus oblongus.

Pet of the Week



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“STARSCREAM”

Starscream is incredibly shy and it takes quite a bit of time to coax him out, but with the help of his sibling Stardust, he can play and get into mischief with the best of them. Once he gains a little confidence and trust, he will come around and be a bit social. He often wants to be around and at the party but not quite joining fully in. With a home that has a little patience and likes to play with

a chaser-prey-on-a-stick-toy-thingy (scientific term), he will flourish into a wonderful addition to the family. 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.

AUGUST LIBRARY LISTING

Montague Public Libraries

Turners Falls: Carnegie (413) 863-3214
 Montague Center (413) 367-2852
 Millers Falls (413) 659-3801

Erving Public Library (413) 423-3348
 Gill: Slate Library (413) 863-2591
 Leverett Public Library (413) 548-9220
 Northfield: Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455
 Wendell Free Library (978) 544-3559

MONTAGUE

Every Wednesday: *Story Time Outside.* Meet Meghan Doyle for stories, songs, and a Take-and-Make craft. Carnegie tent, 10 a.m.

Every Thursday: *Playgroup Plus.* Guided and free play with music and activities. Designed for preschoolers; older children welcome. Carnegie tent, 10 a.m.

Thursday, August 4: *Sculpt Imaginary Creatures out of Clay.* Workshop for pre-teens and teens with Annaleah Gregoire. Space limited, call (413) 863-3214 to register. Carnegie tent, 2 to 4 p.m.

Friday, August 5: *Let's Tell Stories.* Lillian Moss facilitates workshops in becoming a more comfortable storyteller, sharing the stories we live and the stories we tell each other every day. Carnegie tent, 10 a.m.

Friday, August 5: *No Strings Marionettes.* Puppet show, entertaining for all ages. Bring a blanket or something to sit on. Peskeomskut Park, 10:30 a.m.

1st Saturday: *Used book sale.* Fiction, paperbacks, kids' books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks. Hundreds of recent donations. Sponsored by the Friends. Carnegie Library, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Thursday, August 11: *Paint with Bubbles.* Workshop for pre-teens and teens with Annaleah Gregoire. No need to register. Carnegie tent, 2 to 4 p.m.

Thursday, August 11: *Using Periodicals in Your Genealogical Research.* Workshop with Al Fiacre, Godfrey Memorial board chair and senior researcher. Email librarydirector@montague-ma.gov or call (413) 863-3214 for the link. Zoom, 6 p.m.

2nd and 4th Friday: *Summer STEAM.* Hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math activities for grades K to 4. Kids should dress for possibly messy activities. Carnegie tent, 1 p.m.

Multiple days: *Paws to Read.* Read to trained therapy dogs Emmy or J-Lo to improve literacy skills. 3rd Monday, 3rd Thursday. Call (413) 863-3214 to reserve a 15-minute spot for your child or teen. Carnegie tent, 4 to 5 p.m.

3rd Tuesday: *Camp iREAD Crafts.* Children and teens are

10 a.m. Line Dancing
Wednesday 8/10
 9 a.m. Cardio Low Impact
 10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics
 11:30 a.m. Bingo
Thursday 8/11
 9 a.m. Core & Balance
 10 a.m. Barre Fusion
Friday 8/12
 9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

Weather, etc. sometimes causes changes in library events; you may want to call ahead to confirm events.

invited to stop by to make a summer-camp-themed craft. Carnegie tent, 3 p.m.

Wednesday, August 17: *Author Series.* Lee Wicks reads from her latest novel, *Muriel and the Grocer's Daughter: a Memoir.* Refreshments. Montague Center Library, 6 to 7 p.m.

Thursday, August 25: *Intro to Genealogy.* Carol Ansel, director of the Godfrey Memorial Library, demonstrates the basics of searching Ancestry Library Edition and FamilySearch.org. Email librarydirector@montague-ma.gov or call (413) 863-3214 for the link. Zoom, 6 p.m.

ERVING

All August: *Holly's Art Factory.* Local artist Holly Smith's artwork will be on display in the Community Room all month.

Monday, August 1: *Paws to Read.* A great opportunity for reluctant readers to read with a therapy dog. Call (413) 423-3348 to reserve a spot. 4 to 5 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Bilingual Storytime and Playgroup.* Hora Del Cuento y Grupo De Juego Bilingue. 10 to 10:45 a.m.

Thursdays, August 11 and 25: *Green River Players Ukulele Group.* All are welcome to play or sing along, or request a song. 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Sunday, August 14: *Summer Reading Program Final Party.* Open to all ages. 1 to 3 p.m., raffle prizes announced at 2 p.m.

Thursday, August 18: *Flower Bar.* Choose and design a fresh, locally grown flower arrangement. Materials provided. RSVP required. 5:30 to 7 p.m.

LEVERETT

All August: *Story Walks.* Find a new Story on the trail behind the library every Thursday.

Every Monday and Wednesday: *Online Qigong.* Free class, everyone welcome. More info on leverettlibrary.org, or email CommunityQigong@gmail.com. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tuesdays, August 2 and 9: *Scrabble Tuesdays.* Free. Anyone ages 7 to 107 is welcome. 3:15 p.m.

Tuesdays, August 2 and 9: *Music on the Patio.* August 2: Box Shop Trio. August 9: Duo Thomas-Fownes. Bring a chair and join us on the patio for local music and good

friends. 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 3: *Wild Kat Hoops.* Hoop to see you in the field behind the library for this fun program for all ages. 10:30 a.m.

Every Thursday: *Play Mah-jongg.* Free, everyone welcome. Bring your own tiles or try with ours. Email leverettlibrary@gmail.com for more info.

Every Saturday: *Tai Chi.* Free classes, everyone welcome. Space limited, masks required. Call Dennis for info: (413) 367-9760. Intermediate to advanced 10 to 11 a.m., beginners 11 a.m. to noon.

NORTHFIELD

Every Tuesday: *Drop-in Knitting.* Join fellow knitters and crocheters to chat and share projects. 6 to 8 p.m.

1st Wednesday: *Readers' Choice.* August 3: *Rules of Civility* by Amor Towles. Pick up a copy at the library. 10 a.m.

Friday, August 5: *Sarah Clay and the StarCats.* Live jazz music under the tent at the Northfield Golf Club. Drinks available for purchase. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

1st Saturday: *Puzzle Swap.* Dozens of new-to-you puzzles for kids and adults. For more info, friendsofdml01360@gmail.com. 10 to 11:30 a.m.

2nd Wednesday: *Readings: Nonfiction, Fiction, and Poetry.* August 10: *Kayak Morning: Reflections on Love, Grief, and Small Boats*, by Roger Rosenblatt. Pick up a copy at the library. 3 p.m.

2nd Thursday: *Environmental Awareness Group.* August 11: *The Nutmeg's Curse* by Amitav Ghosh. Pick up a copy at the library. 6:30 p.m.

3rd Tuesday: *Friends of the Library.* For more info, friendsofdml01360@gmail.com. 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Friday, August 19: *Campfire and S'mores.* Chillin' at a campfire behind the library with fancy s'mores fixins. 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, August 25: *Roadside Revelations in Western Mass.* Rob Weir (author, teacher, explorer) shares curiosities found in nearby towns, especially Northfield and Conway. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

WENDELL

Every Tuesday: *Watercolor Art Group.* 5 to 6 p.m.

Wednesdays and Fridays: *Healthy Bones and Balance* with Marianne Vinal. To join contact mariannevinal@gmail.com or (978) 544-6122. Zoom, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Senior Center Activities AUGUST 1 THROUGH 12

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 Zoom on Wednesdays. Foot care clinic is held monthly. For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 2, or coa@leverett.ma.us.

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

Monday 8/1

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

Tuesday 8/2

No Classes

Wednesday 8/3

11 a.m. Chair Exercise
 4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 8/4

10:30 a.m. Brown Bag
 1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 8/5

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
 11 a.m. Chair Exercise

Monday 8/8

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
 11 a.m. Chair Exercise
 12 p.m. Pot Luck Lunch
 1 p.m. Knitting & Handcrafts

Tuesday 8/9

No Classes

Wednesday 8/10

9 a.m. Foot Clinic by Appointment
 11 a.m. Chair Exercise
 4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 8/11

1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 8/12

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
 11 a.m. Chair Exercise

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Monday 8/1

9 a.m. Interval
 10:15 a.m. Seated Workout

Tuesday 8/2

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

Wednesday 8/3

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

Thursday 8/4

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

Friday 8/5

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

Monday 8/8

9 a.m. Interval
 10:15 a.m. Seated Workout

Tuesday 8/9

9 a.m. Good for U

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WEST ALONG from page B1

keep our Irish roots jam session well fueled and lubricated, playing until all hours – or 9 p.m., whichever comes first!

How much better to jump into the air-conditioned Toyota and head downtown. Instead of my Paris café, instead of heading for the *Champs-Élysées*, I'll find myself on Avenue A, to get my caffeine jolt at a sidewalk table at the Upper Bend Café. Maybe I'll have lunch at the Rendezvous, the old headquarters of my *québécois* ancestors, the old home of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste.

Or maybe I'll head over to the Shady Glen for my favorite BLT.

Instead of visiting the Paris churches of Saint-Sulpice or Saint-Germain-des-Prés, parishes from which my 1600s French ancestors left for the New World, for New France, I'll be more than content with the cathedrals of the tall trees here in the Valley.

If I were over there I would spend time in the Parc de Bagatelle, full of the rose gardens inspired by Madame Bonaparte, Joséphine de Beauharnais. I'd be strolling the alleyways between beds of roses, listening to well-dressed French children racing and calling along the paths.

Instead, I'm lingering in the rose gardens of our own backyard,

planned and cared for by Madame Monique. Son Kevin, home from his native Brittany for the summer, patrols the flowerbeds photographing the near invisible little insect creatures that inhabit the yard, mostly unseen. (One of those tiny, finger-nail sized inhabitants, a green crab spider, *misumessus oblongus*, is pictured above.)

No, instead of hoping to catch a flight that may or may not be leaving on time, or even actually going to the place I might wish to visit, I'll stay put at home this summer.

How much better to slide into the local, familiar flow: the morning paper, the local birds singing just for us, all language barriers down, the rivers of our American idiom running freely: gimme an iced mocha, an everything bagel, eggs over easy, you got it, that for here or to go? Have a good one.

It's enough to climb into the car as if it were the great car of English itself and sounding my loud vernacular horn, speed off down a road that will never lead to Rome, not even Paris.

(Adapted from "Consolation," a poem by Billy Collins.)



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Someone Hit The Wrong Deer; 86'd From The Voo; Driver Hits Two Bicyclists; Heat Wave Brings Disputes; Spree Of Graffiti, Slashed Tires, And Vehicle Break-Ins

Monday, 7/11

1:30 p.m. Water department supervisor into station to report harassment toward his employees.

2:29 p.m. First of several calls reporting smoke that was a result of sewer smoke testing.

5:27 p.m. Caller states multiple bikes are drag racing up and down Turners Falls Road at speed of nearly 75 mph. Unable to locate.

6:07 p.m. 911 caller from Turners Falls Road states that she just got a call from her son that while he was walking on the street, a group of males assaulted him and poured lighter fluid on him. Second caller states some kids were going around saying that some boys had a fight and they were putting liquid fire on the building. Caller concerned these kids might set the building on fire. Officer advises that an adult now has the lighter fluid, and there is no current concern of fire. All information given to fire department. Received call from state fire marshal's office requesting officer go to *no-fires.net* and fill out a referral to get the kids into that program. Summons issued.

8:57 p.m. 911 caller states that a male was asking for a ride to the hospital and then opened a child's car door. Left on foot towards the Farren. Officer requesting an ambulance.

10:27 p.m. Caller states that a basketball game just got started at Unity Park; would like an officer to move them along. Parties gone on arrival.

Tuesday, 7/12

12:09 a.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Area checked; negative findings. Caller requests check of area again. Officer will be checking area periodically.

3:13 a.m. Caller from Davis Street reports a few kids on the swings at the park near his house causing a loud noise disturbance. Officer located a few individuals in their twenties and moved them along.

5:04 a.m. Caller reports that his wife hit a deer near the Federal Street overpass. No ambulance needed. Caller called back and reports involved vehicle is on fire at this time. Vehicle fully engulfed. Shelburne Control advised. MassDOT contacted to pick up deer. Tow requested.

5:30 a.m. Clerk at Cumberland Farms reports a female party is causing a commotion inside the store and requests that she be moved along. All units tied up. MSP will respond to call.

10:07 a.m. Walk-in from Second Street reporting that his vehicle was broken

into last night. His dashcam caught the suspects on video. Report taken.

2:01 p.m. Officers saw a male party who has two active warrants while they were patrolling downtown. He ran; they are attempting to locate him in this area. Unable to locate.

9:35 p.m. 911 caller reporting that he saw two people walking on First Street, and then he heard a tire get slashed. Caller could hear the air coming out of the tire. Area searched; unable to locate. Officer couldn't see slash marks on the tire.

10:50 p.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Referred to an officer.

11:17 p.m. Caller from Rendezvous reports that three parties are refusing to leave the location upon requests from the worker there. Officer spoke to clerk, who advises patrons were able to help escort the involved males outside and lock the door as they were banging on it trying to get back in. Area search negative.

11:46 p.m. 911 caller from Griswold Street reports male party is currently across the street in a tree line/bushes, walking around and refusing to return home. Caller advises party is intoxicated and came from the Rendezvous, where he was hit by someone during a dispute there. Caller also indicated party has a kitchen knife with him. Party taken into protective custody and removed to hospital for hand injury. Area checked for knife; unable to locate.

Wednesday, 7/13

3:07 a.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Area search negative.

5:20 p.m. Warrant arrest following a traffic stop on Turners Falls Road. (Details redacted.)

7:15 p.m. 911 caller reporting that a female party stole \$100 from him. Party coming to station to fill out statement. Summons issued.

Thursday, 7/14

10:50 a.m. Caller from Third Street reports finding her door latch taped with black Gorilla tape this morning; she believes someone is doing this to gain entry to her apartment. Officer attempted to call female back; no answer, unable to leave a message.

11:01 a.m. Accidental dial from female jogging in Newton Street area. Unable to call back; phone number is from France.

12:12 p.m. First of two reports of campsites or homeless encampment above parking lot at Canal and Third streets. DPW contacted; they will clean the site.

8:01 p.m. Caller from Carroll's Market reporting

that two kids stole two two-liter bottles of soda. Officer spoke with juveniles and their mother. They agreed to go back to the store tomorrow and pay for the soda. Store owner advised; officer will follow up tomorrow.

Friday, 7/15

1:38 a.m. 911 caller reporting attempted break-in at an Avenue A apartment building. Nobody willing to speak to an officer; request that incident be logged. Officer checked area. Building secure; all quiet.

1:51 p.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street reports that neighbors are harassing her. Parties advised of options.

2:04 p.m. Shady Glen owner reports graffiti on his dumpster and building. No response requested; just wants info logged.

3:54 p.m. Caller reporting a group of people that have been consistently outside of her business at Avenue A and Fourth Street for a week now; suspects drug activity. Referred to an officer.

7:48 p.m. Caller reporting hearing screaming coming from the Eleventh Street hill near the horseshoe pits; unsure if it is an animal or a person. All quiet upon officer's arrival; nothing unusual noted.

8:36 p.m. Caller from Turnpike Road reporting a fox in the area that might have rabies; fox has no hair on it. Caller given number for animal control.

11:49 p.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Area search negative.

Saturday, 7/16

11:12 a.m. Several complaints regarding very loud music and vulgar music coming from a Federal Street location. Homeowner advised of complaint. He states that he went to Town Hall to get permission to play music this weekend. Officer advises noise does not exceed noise meter; will check again if any further calls come in.

Sunday, 7/17

12:05 a.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Referred to an officer.

2:55 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road states that an elderly neighbor just assaulted her in the parking lot of their apartment building. Officer left detailed message outlining her options. Report taken.

Monday, 7/18

3:26 p.m. 911 caller stated she would like a male party with whom she was having a verbal dispute removed from her vehicle. No information on location or party name. Line disconnected. Dispatch called the number back and a male party answered the phone, refused to give information, and

stated they were "all set," then disconnected. Officer searched area; nothing suspicious.

6:46 p.m. 911 caller from Northeast Foundation for Children wanted to know what would happen if she pressed the emergency button in the elevator, so that she can inform her employees.

10 p.m. Caller reporting an 18- to 25-year-old male giving a 12- to 14-year-old male alcohol in the parking lot of F.L. Roberts. Officer advised.

Tuesday, 7/19

12:48 a.m. Suspicious person report on Randall Road. Area search negative.

6:52 p.m. 911 caller from Hatchery Road reporting that his electric stove is on fire. Call transferred to Shelburne Control.

Wednesday, 7/20

1:17 p.m. Caller reports that a dark green Toyota SUV has been running for some time on Fourth Street, and she believes they may be selling drugs. Information forwarded to detective.

11:27 p.m. Caller reports finding a box with two kittens in it near the dumpster at Keith Apartments. Officer located spot at kennel for the cats.

Thursday, 7/21

8:43 a.m. Two bicyclists hit by a vehicle at Turners Falls and Hatchery Roads. Both patients transported to Baystate Springfield. Summons issued. Report taken.

11:07 a.m. Caller reporting male in a white shirt, jeans, and inline skates damaging the sculpture at Avenue A and Third Street and tapping himself. No damage observed by officer. Party moved along.

4:19 p.m. Vehicle into deer on Federal Street. Operator reports damage to vehicle. Deer dispatched. MassDOT advised that deer will need to be picked up.

Friday, 7/22

5:18 a.m. Caller from Third Street states there has been loud banging from upstairs; ongoing issue. Caller called back requesting that the officer advise the female that if they have to come back, someone is leaving with them to scare her into stopping all the noise.

5:08 p.m. 911 caller from Federal Street reporting that this evening a male with a firearm came to his house and threatened to harm him; has had an issue with the neighbor in the past. Male party Mirandized. Situation not as reported.

Saturday, 7/23

9:28 a.m. Caller from East Mineral Road reports an old ferry boat in the river. A life boat with life vests is

see MPD next page

CALL FOR ARTISTS!

for our second wrapping paper edition

By REPORTER STAFF

People have probably been wrapping up presents in the very attractive pages of our eye-catching little newspaper for many years. In 2020, we decided to make those packages look even cooler by inviting seven local artists to design pages to be used exclusively as recyclable and unique wrapping paper. The project also became a fundraiser for our little independent, non-profit newspaper.

During Thanksgiving week, when we normally skip publication, that year we printed the Wrapping Paper Edition. Thanks to sales of this special issue, we were able to raise nearly \$4,000 toward the newspaper's operation.

We are happy to announce a call for artists for another Wrapping Paper Edition for 2022. We are seeking seven artists from the Western Mass region to design wrapping paper pages this summer.

Each artist will be given the space of two full adjacent pages for their design, making a double page measuring approximately 20 by 22 inches. You may design in full color, black and white, or fifty shades of (G-rated) gray. Tattoo artists, comic illustrators, graffiti specialists, painters, street sketchers, kids, photographers, geometry nerds, type designers – all are encouraged to send us ideas for a wrapping paper!

We are lucky to be able to offer a stipend to each artist thanks to the generosity of an anonymous

donor, plus contributions from the Montague, Wendell, and Gill Cultural Councils. In addition to the fame and good karma of being featured in this project, each selected artist will receive \$200. Plus, we'll award five artists ten copies of the Wrapping Paper Edition for their personal use!

Sales of this limited-run Wrapping Paper Edition will be available between Thanksgiving and the end of December, in local stores and online, at the special price of \$5 each or five for \$20. Totally recyclable, original, locally designed and printed... what could be better than a gift wrapped in our paper?

Artists and designers, please send your contact information and a proposal for a unique wrapping paper design, along with up to three samples of finished work that represents your style (.jpegs please), to features@montaguereporter.org with "Wrap" in the subject line. You'll have the whole summer to cogitate on this, because proposals are due September 1.

Selected artists will be contacted on Monday, September 12. You will then have the rest of September and October to get your design finished for us.

For more information about the project, please contact features editor Nina Rossi at (413) 834-8800 or the above email address. And if you are a shop or business owner who would like to sell copies of the Wrapping Paper Edition, please get in touch!

56 episodes are now available!

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MPD from page B3

MPD from page B3 tied to it. She yelled and didn't get a response. Requesting welfare check. No issues found. 6:11 p.m. Another call regarding a cat in Lake Pleasant. Advised that animal control officer has been looking into the situation. Caller did not like that answer; hung up and proceeded to call 911 and speak with Shelburne Control. When transferred to Montague dispatch, caller refused to speak. 8:31 p.m. Caller states that she was walking a friend's dog near Seventh and L Streets and someone was in the backyard and stole some Ryobi tools with spare batteries and took off running. Caller states that she heard what sounded like gunshots in the backyard area as well. Received other calls reporting similar sounds of gunfire in the area of Fourth and L Streets. Officer out with two parties. Reports of loud noises may be coming from

closer to Unity Park. Officers believe it is two separate incidents. Area checked, all appears well downtown. Officer will continue to canvass area. **Sunday, 7/24**
7:39 a.m. Caller from I Street reporting that their patio and chairs were spray-painted overnight. Officer advises they are clear; will be walking the area as there are multiple cars with slashed tires.
8:10 a.m. Officer noticed tire slashed on vehicle on H Street; spoke with vehicle owner and made them aware.
8:18 a.m. Officer advising H Street location reported the vandalism already; pre-existing.
8:59 a.m. Officer out with a vehicle with slashed tires on Eleventh Street. Spoke with vehicle owner.
9:07 a.m. Officer reports several additional instances of vandalism on Eleventh Street.
10:08 a.m. Caller from First Congregational Church reported

that their red school bus in the parking lot was vandalized and glass was broken. Investigated.
10:48 a.m. Caller from Avenue A reports that her car was broken into last night; so far, a charger is missing.
11:29 a.m. Caller reporting vandalism to United Arc building; graffiti on windows. Investigated.
11:54 a.m. Caller from I Street reporting vandalism to house (graffiti). Investigated.
1:47 p.m. Officer reporting vandalism to Second Pentecostal Church on Eleventh Street.
1:51 p.m. Officer reporting vandalism to Shanahan's Construction on Avenue A.
5:04 p.m. Caller from I Street reports that his car was broken into overnight; parents noticed door wide open at 7 this morning.
6:25 p.m. Caller from J Street reporting graffiti sprayed on his two sixteen-foot box trucks.



What Can You Do With an Old Phone?

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – I know that a lot of us are hesitant to get rid of an old phone, but that doesn't necessarily mean that we do anything useful with it. We've all got that drawer in a sideboard or kitchen somewhere where these old gadgets end up in retirement. But there are a few other things that you can do if you'd rather repurpose them for something useful.

To start, old smartphones can often be used as security cameras. They won't be quite as good at that role as purpose-built hardware, since they lack features like the infrared capture and lights necessary for use at night, but if you just want something to toss in a corner to check in on the cats while you're gone during the day, they'll work perfectly.

There are a few different apps you can use to do this, but one of the more popular ones is called Alfred-Camera. It's available for both iPhones and Android devices, allowing you to pair two phones together so the camera on one can be seen from the other. The setup process isn't too complicated, but you will need access to both phones. If you want to use it for more than a few hours or as a permanent camera, a charging cable that reaches the position you plan to have it is also a good idea.

If you want a more advanced camera system, there are other apps and options. For example, if you're a particularly technical person and you've got a Synology NAS on your home network, Synology makes an app that can turn a phone into a security camera and plugs it into its security suite, and there are other, more involved methods as well.

Cameras aren't the only thing you can do with old phones; they also make pretty good remotes. If you have an Android TV, you can pretty easily use an old Android phone as a remote for it, courtesy of the Google Home app.

If you've been dipping your toes into the world of smart home gadgets, an old phone can also be a decent kitchen or coffee table remote for adjusting lighting or setting the thermostat. Using an app like Unified Remote, you can use it as a remote control for your computer, too.

You should keep in mind that when you use an old phone for things like this, if it's no longer getting updates, it can be a small security vulnerability for your home network. You really shouldn't use an older phone that's no longer getting updates on any accounts you

care about – if your email account is critical, or you do things like online banking, make sure you're using a phone that's still getting security updates.

If none of that sounds appealing, but you've resolved to do something with that old phone, you can also consider donating it. Shelters (particularly those for victims of domestic violence and abuse), senior programs, and other nonprofit agencies can often find a good way to use them. That phone might be too old for you and not secure for things like banking, but as a simple means of battery-powered communication, it can do others a lot of good. Unfortunately, the recent shutdown of 2G and 3G networks across the US means that a lot of older phones can't actually connect to carrier networks anymore, but some may support more modern technologies and still have a little life left in them.

Lastly, if you can't reuse your old phone, you can always dispose of it responsibly. Many carriers have recycling programs, as do big-box electronics retailers like Best Buy. However you might feel about Amazon, it offers free recycling for small electronics with free shipping. But if the battery in your old phone is swelling, you may have to either remove it or dispose of it together with the phone at a hazardous waste collection site – not all electronics recyclers will accept bloated batteries, as they can combust during transit.

For more questions about consumer technology, how gadgets work, or which doodad to buy if you need X, Y, and Z, shoot me an email at deviceadvice@montaguereporter.org.

GRAIL from page B1

to its approach to these legendary characters. Galahad (played by Esmeralda Blackheart), the last knight of the round table, is reinvisioned as a young trans girl. The complicated story of her lineage – the result of a sexual assault – is one of several areas where history becomes a weighty presence, a subject of thorny scrutiny as those bequeathed it face the challenge of how to move forward from or even redeem themselves in its wake.

In a parallel arc, Sir Mordred (Abigail Weaver) grapples with being Arthur's illegitimate son and nephew as the darkness of his own destiny looms. My particular journey through the show focused primarily on their respective scenes.

Blackheart delivers a searing performance, gliding between Galahad's yearning for a better future and frustration with its uncertainties. Braided together are her present challenges of being recognized for the fullness of her capability as a knight, confronting the indignities of misgendering, and navigating trust and love amid the fraught structures and frightening chaos of the world on a precipice of apocalypse – and Blackheart illuminates these layers with aplomb and affecting depth.

Weaver gooses Mordred with a mischief that electrifies their scenes, whether regaling a tale into the crook of a tree or toying with Galahad, and her switch into a pathos-laden register intensifies the play's emotional heft. Elsewhere, Kai-Kahlila gives Lancelot a compellingly wounded nature as the knight also grapples with a painful past.

In addition to their role in the cast, Kai-Kahlila also provided the show's haunting makeup design, which is perhaps most enthralling as applied to the three Divine Messengers, shifting ensemble roles who appear somewhere between dark spirits and the undead. When one of the Messengers (played by Myles Olmsted) appears as a ghostly vision of King Arthur himself, blood seeming to run



SUBMITTED PHOTO

K. Dymek and Katie Faust-Little look on as the Three Sisters Sanctuary dragon erupts with flame in a scene from Grail Knight.

down his cheeks, the show reaches its eeriest point.

Grail Knight is the latest work from Theater Between Addresses, a production company of theater artists and writers formed during the early days of the pandemic in spring 2020. Though primarily connected to and founded in western Massachusetts, the group uses a variety of host spaces for its performances, and recently premiered another new play at New York Theater Festival: *These and Those*, which Weaver directed.

The at-once elegant and un-kempt quality of Three Sisters Sanctuary proves an ideal setting for a play as ponderous and committed to unresolved tension as this. The Sanctuary's imposing and genuine fire-breathing dragon

sculpture makes a notable entry into the proceedings, and the climactic reunion of the cast over a multi-level clearing as dusk looms was elevated by skies calming from a roiling thunderstorm.

Whether you lose yourself in the lilting and ominous songs from the Divine Messengers – courtesy of music director Wynn MacKenzie – or the fluidity of the roving actors, the singular and elemental thrills of *Grail Knight* will linger with you like the summer heat.

Grail Knight can be seen at Three Sisters Sanctuary at 188 Cape Street in Goshen this Friday, July 29, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, July 30, at 3 and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, July 31, at 4 p.m. Rain dates are August 5 and 6.



Montague Community Television News

Family Fishing Day, Immigrant Voices, & More

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Have you been keeping up with town committee meetings? MCTV has! We have uploaded videos from the Montague and Gill selectboard meetings, Montague finance committee meetings, Gill-Montague regional school committee meetings, and as a treat, the Board of Assessors meeting from July 18.

You can find them all on the MCTV Vimeo page, which is linked on our website, MontagueTV.org, or you can tune in to Channel 17 on your television.

We also have great videos from the 15th Annual Family Fishing Day at the Discovery Center, and

of Immigrant Voices: A Celebration of the Arts, which took place at the Shea Theater on May 22.

All community members are welcome to submit their videos, and MCTV is always available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for check-out, and filming and editing assistance can be provided.

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.

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MOVIE REVIEW

Another Mindless Summer Blockbuster? Nope.

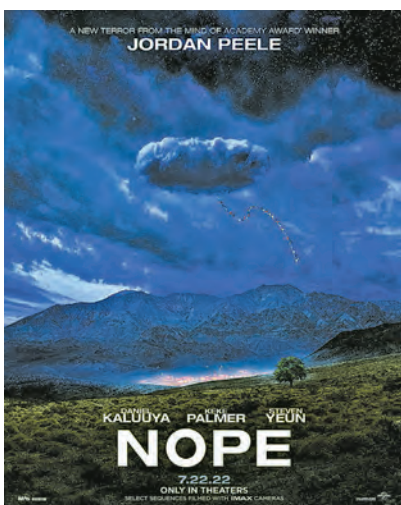
By BRIAN ZAYATZ

WENDELL – Jordan Peele's long-awaited third feature film is here. His debut, 2017's *Get Out*, made some fairly thunderous waves in the film world, proving that a smart, socially-conscious horror film could still be a box office smash. (Without *Get Out*, would *Sorry to Bother You* have seen the same kind of release and reception? Or Ari Aster's films?)

Five years on, it's increasingly easy to frame this wave of cinema as big studios selling social critiques back to us, or claim those critiques were compromised by major studio support from the start, that low-budget horror has been playing with these themes for decades, or that Peele used radical aesthetics to kick-start a career that had up to that point been spent writing and starring in goofy sketches for Comedy Central.

Nope tells the story of O.J. and Emerald Haywood (Daniel Kaluuya and Keke Palmer), the inheritors, after their father's mysterious and untimely death, of a multi-generational black-owned ranch that trains horses for Hollywood films. We see early in the film that business is not what it once was, as studios opt for CGI over the unpredictability of animal talent, and that O.J. and Em seem each to have inherited only half of their father's talents: Em with people, and O.J. with horses.

Before long, horses start disappearing, and strange sounds and weather patterns haunt the ranch: you know where this is going. (Especially if you watched the trailers.) While *Nope* is a little on the slow-and-steady side, it's a bona fide summer blockbuster; complete with action, suspense, a bit of humor, and, ironically, plenty of CGI.



Critiques of Peele aside, he makes a thoughtful film. His characters are not just black stand-ins for the usual bumbling white ones whose hubris in the face of the unknown typically drives a thriller plot. O.J. and Em, like Chris in *Get Out*, have hard-won smarts that give their characters some depth.

Most alien or monster movies imagine humans reacting to these forces in predictable ways, anticipating a superintelligent aggressor. *Nope*'s characters break the mold here: one character, complete with an overwrought traumatic backstory, can be seen as analogous to TikTok star "Brother Nature," presenting a clean, social media-ready version of the non-human world in which it's OK to walk up and try to fist bump potentially dangerous creatures.

As a professional animal trainer, O.J. knows such an approach still assumes essentially human terms to an interaction. At this point it might be clichéd to call Peele's films "refreshing," but it truly is refreshing to see a character like O.J., with his informed approach to an unknown entity, at the center of the narrative, rather than relegated to delivering some kind of foreshadowing and

then dying while meatheads doom the rest of the cast.

Nope also shows us a "Wild West" in which, after the enclosure of the frontier at the end of the 19th century, the film industry was not far behind in selling images of that enclosure back to general audiences. Steven Yeun plays a character who was a child star in a 1990s TV Western, and now runs an amusement park selling that nostalgia back to thinning crowds of families. As the strange occurrences grow more frequent at the ranch, O.J., Em, and others race to capture them on video. Who will be the first to enclose the new frontier?

What works well about *Nope* is that you can come for the spectacle, or for the inventive film-nerd genre bend. The humor, unlike in Peele's old sketches, is sparing, situational, and believable, relieving the tensions of the long buildup. It should go without saying, but this is not *Get Out*, and if you go in looking for it, you will be disappointed. (I almost didn't believe it when a white auteur filmmaker character was revealed *not* to have ulterior motives.) If you go in looking for horror, even, you will be disappointed.

Going in without much in the way of expectations, I was pleasantly surprised. Whatever you think of Peele's career arc, it's hard to argue that he's not raising the bar for what a blockbuster can be. Whether it's an ocean of annoying MCU movies or a heat wave you need a break from, Peele offers a welcome respite.

Brian Zayatz is an editor at The Shoestring and a contributing writer at the Montague Reporter, and works at Amherst Cinema, where he is a founding member of Amherst Cinema Workers United.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Fireworks, Loose Dogs, Stolen Soil, Lost Cockatiel

Wednesday, 6/1

12:33 p.m. Caller from Riverview Drive states there is an ill or injured possum in the driveway.

5:41 p.m. Caller reporting an overabundance of buzzards on the Gill side of the bridge. Kettle of buzzards observed. No issues.

6:43 p.m. Suicide threat on the French King Highway.

Friday, 6/3

2:34 p.m. Vehicle blocking unmaintained access road in Old South Cross and Factory Hollow road area.

5:06 p.m. Assisted Orange PD, French King Highway.

9:01 p.m. Car vs. deer, French King Highway.

Saturday, 6/4

2:19 a.m. Caller from West Gill Road reports some type of explosion.

9:04 p.m. Fireworks on Camp Road.

Sunday, 6/5

11:59 a.m. Caller from the French King Highway reporting someone stole a bale of soil.

Monday, 6/6

4:40 p.m. Caller from Barton Cove Road asked for an officer; they had a camper leave a lot of gear behind.

Thursday, 6/9

4:10 p.m. Caller from Cove

View Lane reports one loud shot fired in the area. Can't see anyone or anything.

Friday, 6/10

8:30 p.m. Fireworks on Walnut Street.

Saturday, 6/11

1:15 p.m. Received a stolen cell phone report.

2:18 p.m. Caller from the French King Highway stated the male party he was staying with came at him with kitchen knives. Advises he is currently outside.

4:09 p.m. Citizen from Main Road reported losing a kayak paddle last weekend at the state boat ramp.

9:40 p.m. Caller from West Gill Road reporting a white pickup blaring music behind her parents' garage.

Monday, 6/13

7:20 a.m. Three loose cows on West Gill Road.

11:29 a.m. Assisted Bernardston PD on Bald Mountain Road.

2:29 p.m. Citizen reporting a lost passport.

Wednesday, 6/15

7:23 p.m. Caller from Oak Street states she came home at lunch and noticed a vehicle on her lawn.

8:43 p.m. South Cross Road caller reports the neighbor's dogs are always barking.

8:45 p.m. Caller found a loose dog wearing an electric collar. He is *en route* to the regional kennel.

9:12 p.m. Two dogs missing, West Gill Road.

Thursday, 6/16

3:47 p.m. Report received of a 9-year-old walking on the French King Highway.

Friday, 6/17

11:36 a.m. Attempted to serve four warrants on Main Road. No contact.

5:25 p.m. West Gill Road caller reporting a sinkhole.

Saturday, 6/18

10:54 p.m. Walnut Street caller reports her neighbor shooting off fireworks.

Sunday, 6/19

7:42 p.m. Three calves on North Cross Road.

Monday, 6/20

10 a.m. Caller from Mount Hermon Road reports her cockatiel flew away. The bird has a white body, yellow head, and red cheeks.

12:54 p.m. Caller advises he is missing some cows, if the PD comes across them.

Tuesday, 6/21

11:15 a.m. Truck creating hazard on the French King Highway at Setback Lane.

Thursday, 6/23

6:33 p.m. Assisted Ever-

source in changing a street

light bulb.

8:32 p.m. Kids on gas-powered bikes causing disturbance, Barton Cove Road.

Friday, 6/24

3:04 p.m. Caller reports she struck a deer. No injury.

4:50 p.m. Report of kids sitting on the railing of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

Saturday, 6/25

11:47 a.m. Caller reporting out-of-control subject on the French King Highway.

8:45 p.m. Complaint of dirt bikes riding back and forth down Franklin Road.

Sunday, 6/26

7:57 p.m. Caller from Main Road reported an orange cat with no collar.

Monday, 6/27

5:15 p.m. French King Highway business reported breaking and entering.

Tuesday, 6/28

7:42 a.m. South Cross Road caller reporting neighbor's dogs barking.

4:17 p.m. Two-car accident with injuries, on the French King Highway.

Wednesday, 6/29

3:57 p.m. Assisted Montague PD with disturbance.

Thursday, 6/30

9:07 a.m. Beagle-type dog running in and out of traffic, French King Highway.

MOVIE REVIEW

Back From the Edge Of The World

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I have a bunch of favorite genres that I usually like to watch for movies. Among them is the historical drama. A movie is called a historical drama when it features a person who really existed in history.

I saw the movie *Edge of the World* online. The star of the film was played by Jonathan Rhys Myers, and the movie was about a real-life failed soldier named Sir James Brooke, who went on a scientific expedition in Borneo during the 18th century and became a governor of Sarawak. This happened after he helped put down a rebellion and the Sultan of the

area gave him Sarawak as he promised. He even ends up with a wife more or less.

This movie is basically a story of how all this happened to him, as well as how he defends the place. The man ended up succeeding far better than he apparently did as a soldier. The people of Sarawak are shown in the movie to like him very much. The man himself ended up ruling for 26 years, and his lineage ended up ruling for a long time, until World War II.*

The movie also shows Brooke

as a man who tries to keep his own ideas of what is right and wrong intact, in connection to being in an area where the morals are different than his own. He ends up spending a lifetime on a crusade to end piracy, slavery, and headhunting. I don't know how well he succeeds in these crusades, but Queen Victoria was apparently impressed enough to give him a knighthood at one point for his courage.

Edge of the World was a decent movie to watch. I thought Rhys Myers played the part well. I loved seeing the exotic location of the actual Sarawak where it was filmed in.

The knighting of this man must mean that, at least in many people's

eyes, James Brooke was not viewed as a bad man. I also believe in good karma, somewhat, and it would seem that his lineage ruling in Sarawak for as long as it did backs up Brooke's pretty well.

* *Editors' note: Brooke, his nephew, and his grand-nephew ruled as the so-called "White Rajahs" of Sarawak from 1841 to 1946, when the region became a British crown colony. In 1963, shortly after independence, it became part of the Federation of Malaysia.*



EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Let Food be Your Medicine.* Leonore Alaniz' imprints capture the anatomy and life force of edible plants, which grow wild and are cultivated in local farms. Includes works by other artists and poets. Reception Saturday, August 13, from 12 to 4 p.m.

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.

GCTV Studios, Greenfield: *Alternative Abstracts.* Drew Hutchinson paintings. Through September.

Lava Center, Greenfield. *Why I Stand,* statements, video, and banners about and by participants in weekly vigils on the Greenfield town common. Curated by the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice. August 6 through 27.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *All of the Things,* paintings by Susan Valentine. August 4 through 28. Reception Sunday, August 7, at 2 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *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. **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 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 in the windows of District businesses. Quarterly opening at the Gallery, 5 to 7 p.m. on July 29, to meet artists showing in the general store and gallery.

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

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.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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

THURSDAY, JULY 28

Look Park, Northampton: *Ani DiFranco*. \$ 7 p.m.
MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Jim Jarmusch & Phil Kline, Bang on a Can All Stars*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Doll Spirit Vessel, All Feels, EIEIEIO, Musical Chairs*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 29

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Tyondai Braxton, L'Rain*, more, pieces by *George Crumb, Igor Stravinsky*, etc. \$ 12 p.m.

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.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Miles Hewitt, Locator, Karlo Rueby and the Bezels, Aaron Noble*. \$ 7 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

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Steve Reich, Yuka Honda*, many more. \$ 12 p.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meeting-house, 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.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *The Spicy Condiments*. 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.

SUNDAY, JULY 31

Mesa Verde Patio, Greenfield: Outdoor hip-hop and breaking festival hosted by *Style FX Dance Studio, DJ Reez*. Free. 3 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Sandy Bailey, Marlene Lavelle, Elenor Levine*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, AUGUST 1

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield:

Graham Nash. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The Garcia Project*. \$ 8 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.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Drew Paton*. Free, outdoors. 6 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Chvrches, Cafune*. \$ 8 p.m.

SAT-SUN, AUGUST 6-7

Unity Park, Turners Falls: *Pocumtuck Homelands Festival*. Free, outdoors. All day.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6

Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Ragged Blue*. Free. 6 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Sunburned Hand of the Man, Junk Orbit, DJs Bill Nace & Matt Krefting*. \$ 6 p.m.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Edd, Lush Honey*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Kurtz-Belmont Jazz Quartet*. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7

Bombyx Center, Florence: *John Medeski, Billy Martin & Friends*. Benefit. \$ 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *From the Woods, Jukebox Jake, Neal Sabol, Sweet Euphoria*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10

Look Park, Northampton: *Gov't Mule*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, AUGUST 12

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Bloomsday, Carinae*. \$ 8 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Wet Tuna, Liam Grant*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Courtney Barnett, Lucy Dacus, Men I Trust, Faye Webster, Barpees Strange, The Beths, Hana Vu*. \$ 10 a.m.

Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Rosie Porter & The Neon Moons*. Free. 4 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Moving Day, Yarrow Skoblow, Emilia Benoit*. 7 p.m.

Look Park, Northampton: *Mary Chapin Carpenter, Erin Rae*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls:

The Brothers Project, Allmans tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 14

Nova Arts, Keene, NH: *Bonnie Prince Billy, Myriam Gendron, Footings, Party of the Sun*. \$ 5 p.m.

MONDAY, AUGUST 15

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

TUESDAY, AUGUST 16

Look Park, Northampton: *Elvis Costello & The Imposters, Nick Lowe & Los Straitjackets*. \$ 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17

Look Park, Northampton: *Punch Brothers, Watchhouse* feat. *Sarah Jarosz*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 19

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *TapRoots, The Lost Tribe, Jose Gonzales and Banda Criolla*. \$ 8 p.m.

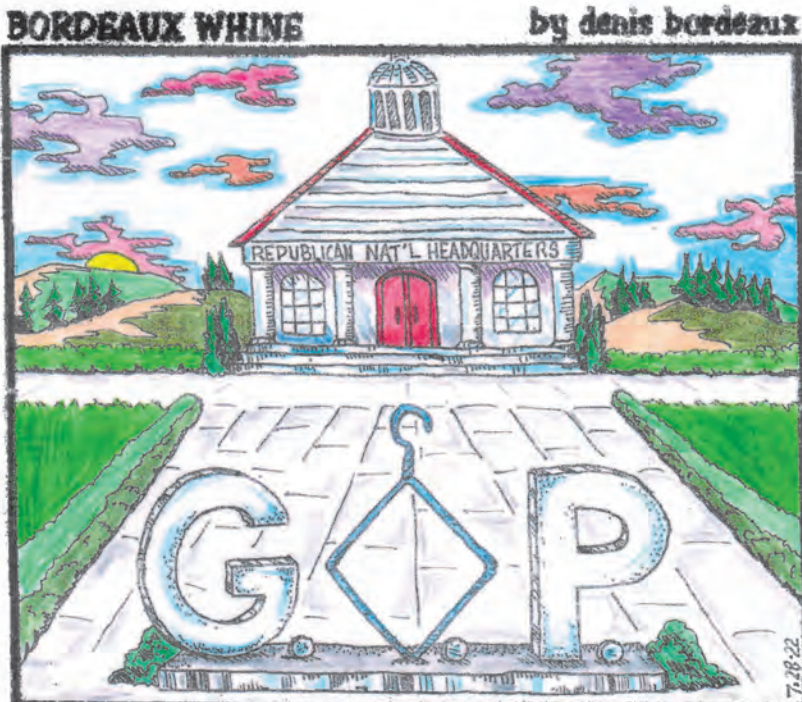
SATURDAY, AUGUST 27

Palladium, Worcester: *Anthrax, Black Label Society, Hatebreed, Municipal Waste*, many more. \$ 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30

Colonial Theater, Keene, NH: *Lucinda Williams and Her Band*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

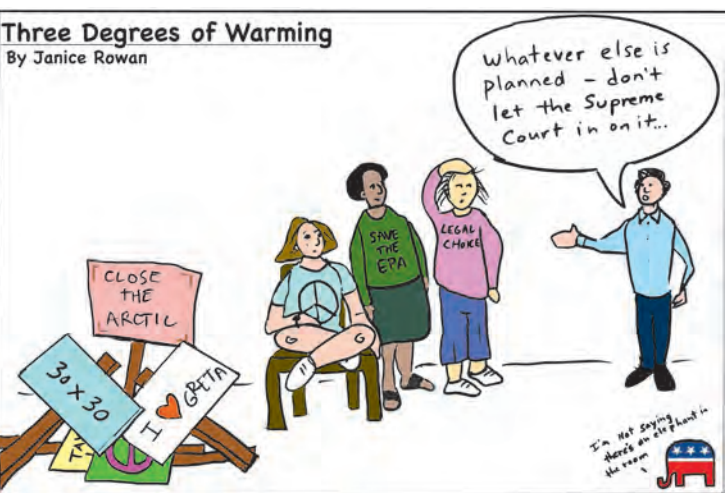
Race Street Live, Holyoke: *Built to Spill*. \$ 8 p.m.



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BEET BROWNIES

8 Tbsp unsalted butter
1 to 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
(or date sugar)
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 tsp Kosher salt
2 eggs
2 tsp vanilla extract
1/4 cup buttermilk
1 to 2 beets
3/4 cup flour
1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips

Roast the beets in the oven at 400° degrees until tender, 45 minutes to an hour, or cook in an Instant Pot with one cup of water for 15 minutes. Peel and purée one large beet or two small beets with 1/4 cup buttermilk. (My mom added lemon juice to milk to make buttermilk when baking!)

Preheat the oven to 325° and grease an 8x8x2 metal pan. Melt butter until it has brown specks and smells like caramel. Add sugar, cocoa powder, and salt and set aside to cool.

In another bowl, beat eggs and add to the butter mix after it's cooled down for 10 minutes or so. Stir constantly as you add the eggs so they won't cook. Add vanilla and 1 cup of the beet purée, and stir. (Add the rest of the beet purée to soup or pancake mix.) Add flour and baking powder and stir, then add chocolate chips. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes until it looks dry on top. The brownies should have a reddish tinge.

This is a great way to sneak beets into a chocolatey treat!

MANDESON PHOTOS



A variety of beets at the Greenfield Farmers' Market.

HEARTFELT from page B1

were found in the Neolithic site of Aartswoud in the Netherlands. Beet remains were also excavated at the Third Dynasty Saqqara pyramid at Thebes, Egypt.

Cultivation began around 2,000 BC along the Mediterranean coast with sea beets, the wild ancestor to the common beet we know today. Beets are still a part of the Mediterranean diet, which is rich in heart-healthy ingredients like whole grains, nuts, seeds, and extra virgin olive oil, with moderate amounts of lean meats, seafood, dairy, and eggs.

In ancient Greece beet leaves were eaten as a culinary herb and used medicinally. Gladiators ate the leaves to cool the blood. They called them *teutlon*, after *teutlis*, the Greek word for squid, because the leaves looked like squid tentacles.

In Rome, they referred to the beet as *beta*, from its Latin name, *Beta vulgaris*. Archaeologists discovered paintings of beetroots on the walls of brothels in ancient towns, preserved in ash from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. Beets have even been described as growing in one of the Wonders of the World, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, so they were obviously admired for their extraordinary beauty and health benefits.

Beets have been used to treat tuberculosis, scurvy, dandruff, and toothaches, and in modern society, beet juice is believed to help prevent erectile dysfunction. It helps the body produce nitric oxide, which opens up blood vessels and, well, enough said about that! It also makes a good hangover helper, as it eliminates toxins from alcohol consumption and hydrates the body with vital trace minerals. So whip up a beet smoothie after a night of overindulgence.



Summer spring rolls made by the author contain noodles and a mix of grated veggies including carrots, sweet bell peppers, and candy-striped beets.

During the reign of Queen Victoria – who disapproved of heavy makeup, ascribing its use to prostitutes and actors – beet juice was massaged into the cheeks to create a blush, to contrast with the very pale skin of the privileged classes. Lips and hair may also be given a red tint and shine from beets.

Hippocrates was fond of chewing beet leaves for fresh breath, and it is said that drinking beet juice will rid one of garlic breath by decreasing the concentration of certain odors with odor-eliminating enzymes.

A fun fact about eating beets Down Under: in Australia, where I've twice visited, they serve their hamburgers with a slice of canned beetroot plopped right on top, along with lettuce, tomato, and onion. It's delicious, adding a tart sweetness that pairs well with the

greasy, salty beef.

To eat a beet, you must first rid it of its skin. The simplest way is to either boil, steam, or roast them until tender either whole or cut into large pieces, then hold them under cold running water right out of the pot to slip the skins off easily.

If using them raw, you can use a vegetable peeler. I love raw beets on a green salad, they are so sweet and juicy. I'm especially partial to the Chioggia or candy-striped beet, as well as the gorgeous golden beet. A sprinkle of chili powder and lemon juice on a raw beet is delicious, and they also pair well with onions and horseradish.

Don't forget about pickling these little beauties, too. If you can find the tiny beets you can pickle them whole. They make a beautiful garnish, or I like to julienne them and add vinegar, black peppercorns, olive oil, and a dash of dry mustard. They'll keep in the refrigerator for a while.

Soup made from beets, also known as borscht, is thought to have originated in Ukraine, making its way into Polish and Russian cuisine. It's made with red beetroots, although there are soups called borscht that don't have beets at all, made with cabbage or sorrel.

Beets have such a wide variety of uses as food, as medicine, and as a cosmetic. Their unique, earthy flavor and brilliant crimson color makes them a splendid addition to many a meal as a beverage, appetizer, entrée, or dessert. Try these beet brownies and see what you think.

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



EXHIBIT

Oh My Gouache!: Mercati Comes to Montague

By RICHARD ANDERSEN

MONTAGUE CENTER – Fabio Mercati, whom I know and whose work I have admired for more than a decade, is a self-taught Italian artist. Born in Umbria and raised in the shadow of Medieval and Renaissance greats, he began drawing and painting in early adolescence. But it wasn't long before he began studying art works in London and Paris, where he was greatly influenced by the Impressionists.

Gouache (pronounced “gwash”) is watercolor that has been thickened with a bonding agent. It helps make the final work appear less transparent, more opaque. The word “gouache” is French, but it comes from the Italian *guazzo*, which means “mud.”

The opaque effect of a gouache painting is readily apparent in the ten works currently on exhibit at the Montague Center Library. They're brighter and more intensely colored than traditional watercolors. They also reveal the level of dedication and commitment to range, vision, and execution that Mercati brings to all the works he creates, the most

famous of which is a meeting-room-sized triptych permanently installed at the University of Siena and a similar-sized mural at the AVIS Institute, a blood donation and research center in Tuscany.

A measurement of Mercati's range and vision can be found in the photo accompanying this review. At first glance, his representation of a woman on a beach waving to someone outside of the gouache's frame seems to be little more than a colorful depiction of an ordinary occurrence. But look at the woman's body language. It looks as if she's just hurled an object into the air. This is no ordinary wave, and the person at whom it is being aimed is no casual acquaintance.

Now look at the arm. It's out of proportion with the rest of the woman's body. Why would an accomplished artist like Mercati choose to extend the woman's arm the way he did? Where have we seen an arm conveyed so out of proportion before?

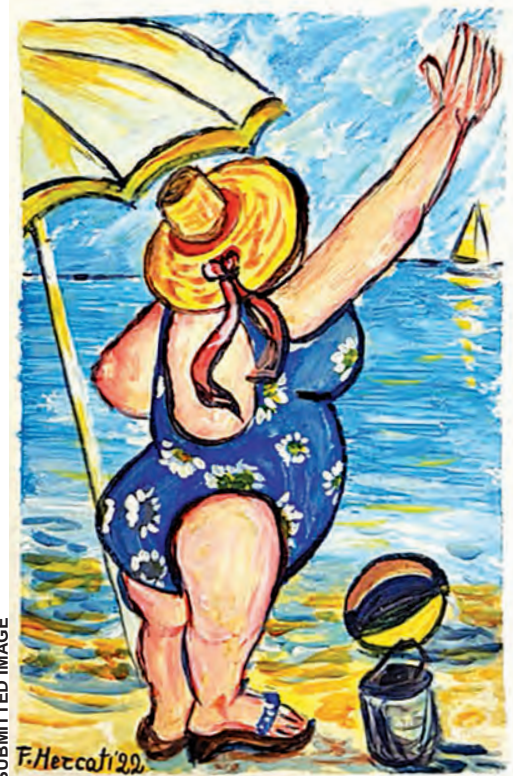
Remember the left arm and hand in Michelangelo's *David*? They, too, are out of proportion with the rest of the sculpture. Why? Because Michelangelo wanted to em-

phasize the force with which the stone in David's hand is going to be hurled at Goliath. And Michelangelo's *David*, unlike previous representations of the biblical hero, is no prepubescent boy who needs God's help to defeat his vaulted enemy. This *David* is the future king of Israel. This *David* has already killed a lion with his bare hands. This *David* is the best fighter in the Israeli army going up against the best in his enemy's army.

Mercati, of course, is no Michelangelo, and his woman on the beach is no biblical icon, but the representation of the energy with which this ordinary woman thrusts her wave into the air is underscored through the same use of body language and disproportion that Michelangelo used when he created his famous sculpture.

What Mercati might be telling us is that, in her own ways and for his own reasons, the woman waving on the beach is also a hero.

An exhibit of ten Fabio Mercati gouaches is on display until August 14 at the Montague Center Library. If you have a work or works that you would like to see exhibited at this library, please contact Kate Martineau at (413) 367-2852 during the library's opening hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 2 to 6 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Above: A gouache painting by Fabio Mercati.

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