

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 21 – NO. 8

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 12, 2023

MassDOT Seeks Feedback On Price, Impact, Route of Passenger Train to Boston

By SARAH ROBERTSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – More than 150 people attended a virtual presentation Wednesday night about the future of a proposed passenger rail service connecting North Adams to Boston.

“There’s so much potential for and excitement for western Mass rail,” state representative Natalie Blais told attendees. “You can see by the numbers here tonight for sure that we are very interested in seeing this project move forward, and we are grateful for the opportunity for public participation.”

The state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) hosted the

“workshop” as part of an ongoing feasibility study, expected to be completed this spring, for the so-called Northern Tier Passenger Rail.

Transportation planning consultants from the HNTB Corporation presented the public with two potential service options, explained their methodology, and solicited feedback from attendees.

The first option represents a minimum cost of \$1.04 billion, while the second explored a “higher-end” scenario costing \$2.19 billion. Both would rely heavily on existing freight rail lines.

“In order to run passenger trains on this current freight railroad

see **TRAIN** page A2

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Bleachery’s Closure Leads To ‘Bizarre’ Sewage Pickle

By JEFF SINGLETON

“It’s a little strange to have a private business that has municipal homes connected to it,” Clean Water Facility superintendent Chelsey Little told the Montague selectboard at its meeting Monday night. “What happens if the business leaves?”

“Well,” said Montague selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, “that’s what’s happening.”

Little was recently approached by a septage hauler, Greg’s Wastewater Removal, to determine whether Montague’s treatment plant could accept raw, untreated sewage from 19 homes in the Griswoldville section of Colrain. Sewage from these homes now flows into a plant operated by the cotton bleaching company Barnhardt Manufacturing.

Barnhardt, whose parent company is based in North Carolina, announced last month that it would close its Colrain facility on February 1, and would no longer process the neighborhood’s waste. The plant, which treats both industrial and residential wastewater, is part of a small sewer district formed by Griswoldville residents in 1997.

As of press time, the *Reporter* has been unable to determine whether the hauler that contacted Little is working for the sewer district, the manufacturing company, or both. Little said a call to the district had not been returned.

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

MOVEMENT

Residency Brings Dance To First Grade Classrooms



Guillette Photo

Hillcrest Elementary first graders Caiden Whitman and Venceslau Bagirov show their classmates some high-energy moves during their morning dance program Tuesday.

By KAREN GUILLETTE

TURNERS FALLS – For the past week and a half, first graders at Hillcrest Elementary School in Turners Falls have been learning different forms of social dances: from circle dances, to hip hop and breaking, to country line dance and partner dancing.

A grant from the Mass Cultural Council’s STARS Residency program in the Arts and Humanities has brought local dance educator Anna Hendricks into the school for two weeks to work with Hillcrest’s three first-grade classes.

The theme of the program is “dancing together,” and its goals are to strengthen community in the classroom, expand students’ ideas about dance, and increase their confidence and skills in working together, as well as their appreciation of each other’s diversity and creativity.

Through the STARS Residency grant, all three first-grade classrooms at Hillcrest have had a 45-minute dance session each morning between 9 a.m. and noon, beginning January 3.

Every day the students learn about a different social dance. The day begins with an opening circle, and Hendricks checks in

with each student, asking them to show how they feel with an expressive gesture. Next they discuss the type of dance they will be doing, including its historical or cultural origins.

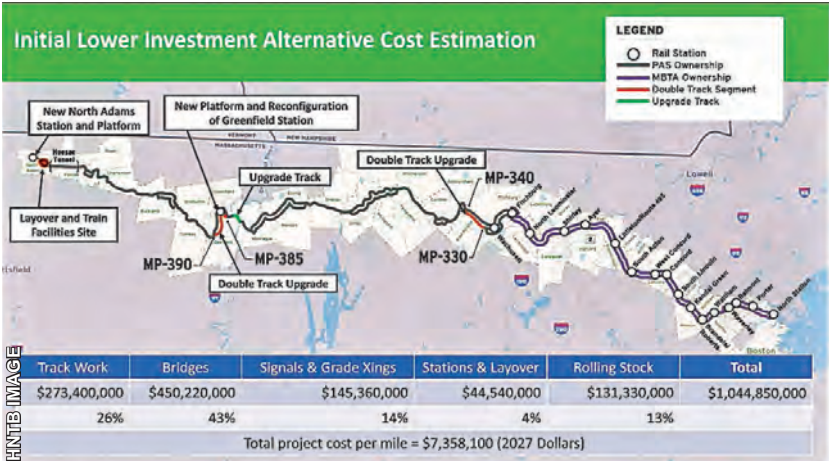
A set of movements follows which are designed, according to Hendricks, to “wake up the brain, increase range of motion in the body, and practice matching movement to rhythm.” Students are then led through a “mindful movement” exercise to help them pay attention to the feeling of their body in space.

Next the students practice and explore a particular dance, learning the skills involved. The children then relish the opportunity to either all dance together, or take turns sharing dance moves in a sharing circle.

At the end of each session there is a period of relaxation and closing.

This Tuesday the students were learning a dance that involved partnering. Prior to the session the classroom teacher had read the children *How Do You Dance?*, a book about a young boy watching his parents dance the tango. Hendricks decided the tango would be a bit of a reach for first-graders, so she taught them

see **DANCE** page A5



A slide from Wednesday’s workshop mapped the cheaper route under consideration.

High School Sports: B’Ball!

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Several late-game surges this week led to basketball losses for Turners Falls High School and Franklin Tech. The Turners boys and both squads from Tech fell victim to these second-half rallies. The Turners girls, however, managed to mount a late-game surge of their own, upending Athol in the fourth quarter.

In other sports, the Georgia Bulldogs won the College Football National Championship by the largest

margin in Bowl history, and the New England Patriots were knocked out of playoff contention due, in part, to two kickoff returns for touchdowns.

Boys’ Basketball

Lee 59 – TFHS 49

Smith Academy 74 – FCTS 68

Smith Academy 49 – TFHS 48

Greenfield 69 – FCTS 62

The Turners Falls Blue Thunder have been unable to register their second win of the season, losing two close matches this week in the fourth

see **SPORTS** page A6

Northfield Board Drafts Discouraging Fest Response

By MIKE JACKSON

NORTHFIELD – By a 4-0 vote, the Northfield selectboard agreed Tuesday evening to endorse and sign a letter drafted by chair Barbara “Bee” Jacque to James Spencer, president of the Moody Center, a nonprofit with a presence on the former Northfield Mount Hermon campus that has invited a three-day Christian music festival to take place in town this August.

Many residents and town officials learned about SoulFest, an annual event newly uninvited from its Gunstock, New Hampshire venue, when ticket pre-sales went live last August. The Moody Center must apply to the town for a permit, but so far has only submitted a “pre-application” informational document about the festival and its plans.

Jacque’s letter was intended to “express deep concerns in response to the Preliminary Review,” and these were highlighted by section headers: public safety; traffic and

see **FEST** page A3

Rising Property Values Leave Montague Without A Map for School Funding

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague, which has just been awarded a \$975,000 federal earmark to accelerate its “streetscape” renovation in Turners Falls, appears to have been blessed with another recent windfall. In November the state Department of Revenue certified that the town’s tax base has experienced so much “new growth” that the town can legally raise nearly \$750,000 more in additional taxes each year than it had previously estimated.

According to town accountant Carolyn Olsen, the gap between the tax revenue Montague does assess and the revenue it legally can assess has widened rapidly in the last two years, from about \$509,000 to \$1.6 million.

This year’s unexpected growth comes primarily from the electric company Eversource upgrading its

transmission lines and poles.

This cause for celebration, however, led to a sometimes anguished discussion at the January 4 joint meeting of the finance committee and selectboard over how much of this potential revenue should be collected in order to fund the town and school district budgets, and how much should be left as so-called “excess capacity” by limiting property tax increases.

At stake was how this decision affects the “affordable assessment,” a method of calculating the towns’ contributions to the Gill-Montague regional school district which ended years of conflict over the district budget when it was adopted in 2010.

In the end, the fin com endorsed a motion by John Hanold to target Montague’s excess capacity at approximately \$1.1 million. According

see **TAX BASE** page A8



David Holtz Photo

Turners Falls’s JJ Charles went up for a shot against Lee defender Ben Cooper as the Thunder hosted the Wildcats last Thursday. Final score: Lee 59, Turners Falls 49.

Someone Oughta Tell You What It’s Really All About

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TRAIN from page A1

there are different needs, and this is reflected in project cost,” said HNTB project manager Anna Barry. “Passenger service needs more reliable track and signal infrastructure in order to have good, predictable, on-time performance. That results in significant investments, even for modest improvements in speed and service.”

The cheaper scenario, which would require signal upgrades and minor alterations to the rails, would enable a four-hour ride from North Adams to Boston. With the larger investment most of the existing track beyond the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter line to Fitchburg would be upgraded to improve safety and speed, allowing riders from North Adams to reach Boston in two hours and 48 minutes.

It would take three years to construct the first plan, and four years to complete the second. The proposals promise a “one-seat ride” from North Adams to Boston without any transfers and without modifying the existing MBTA line.

Makaela Niles, a project manager for MassDOT, said that an alternative route could include a transfer at Fitchburg.

“Direct service might be more desirable, but it also might require more equipment,” Niles said. “Higher frequency can provide more options for travel, but also may have impacts on cost, and have potential conflicts with freight or passenger service along the corridor.”

Both plans include just four stops – North Adams, Greenfield, Fitchburg, and Boston’s North Station – and would use freight rail lines now owned by CSX Transportation, which purchased them from Pan Am Railways last April. Three trains would run the route, departing five times a day from North Adams and five from Boston.

A new platform would be constructed at the John W. Olver Transit Center in Greenfield, Barry said, and a new station at North Adams.

Chugging Along

The next step of the MassDOT study is to develop four more alternative plans based on public feedback. Several people in attendance said that the route would benefit from more stops. Suggestions included Shelburne Falls, Millers Falls, Orange, Gardner, and Cambridge, as well as Vermont and New York.

“The potential to connect to Albany is an exciting possibility,” said Nicholas Horton.

HNTB associate project manager Paul Nelson explained that the planners have not settled on the exact lo-

cations of any future stations.

“The station locations are important for measuring how well the service is used,” Nelson said. “The tradeoff is the more stations you have, the more access to destinations you have, but you also end up with longer travel times – which we saw from the modeling has an impact on overall ridership, too.”

Some attendees warned not to lose sight of the project’s immediate goals.

“[M]aybe later more local trains could be added,” Mary Westervelt wrote in the public chat. “I don’t see a train that stops at every town on the corridor being useful or viable.”

State representative John Barrett of northern Berkshire County cautioned against letting big ambitions keep the project from getting off the ground.

“If we can get this done for \$2.1 billion, this is a cheap price to pay, because the benefits that can be reaped from this are really unknown,” Barrett said. “To me this is a very small price, looking at the investments the federal government has made in the last couple years through ARPA funding and other things.”

It would cost approximately \$12 million annually to maintain the new rail lines, according to HNTB.

“A lot depends on what you generate, and what benefit you get out of it,” Barry said. “These [proposals] are somewhat expensive, because the improvements that need to be made and the ridership numbers that are generated are not often as many as other projects in other, more densely-populated, areas.”

The consultants said they had assessed current regional travel trends using data from traffic lights, MBTA ridership, and anonymized cell phone tracking. They estimated that 83% of travel along the Route 2 corridor occurs in the eastern third of the state, 12% in the central portion, and 5% in western Massachusetts.

“The travel market, as you can see, decreases with the distance from Boston,” Barry said. “Trip time has a large impact on ridership, and we do understand that changes in population and employment could impact these estimates in the future.”

Based on live polling conducted throughout the two-hour workshop, more attendees indicated that they would use a northern tier rail service for day trips than for commuting to work. In a poll that asked who would benefit the most, “individuals from western Massachusetts” was given as the top choice. “Individuals from eastern Massachusetts” were expected to benefit the least.

Representative Aaron Saunders said he agreed with Barrett that the



Vic Scutari pulls a draft last Saturday night at the Deja Brew Pub in Wendell. Due to a lack of bartenders, Vic is only open Friday and Saturday evenings. There is usually a band playing, and you can get pizza, sandwiches, and salads, too.

larger investment would be worthwhile. He pointed to a recent \$2 billion project to extend the MBTA Green Line 4.3 miles.

“This is a modest investment into the western two-thirds of the Commonwealth,” Saunders said. “We should do what we can for the communities across the northern tier of the Commonwealth that have largely been left out of the type of robust transportation infrastructure investment other parts of the Commonwealth have received over the last 50 years.”

Planning for Growth

The presentation predicted some environmental and economic impacts of a new rail service, including jobs generated during construction and a potential decrease in private vehicle use. The higher-end investment might reduce the distance driven annually by all cars along the Route 2 corridor by up to 10 million miles, representing a 0.46% drop.

“I understand the economic impact of the direct construction, but would love to see something broader over time,” state senator Jo Comerford wrote. “I would love to see the study consider longer-term possible economic/population growth along the northern tier spurred by passenger rail as a stimulus.”

“The major benefits will be seen in future generations, as the infrastructure and the users find the actual potential – something that is only a guess in 2023,” argued attendee Greg Roach. “The only thing we know for sure is that it will redefine what being a resident of the western parts of the Commonwealth actually means.”

Saunders discussed the region’s ongoing housing crisis, and the role transportation might play in addressing it.

“We know that transit connectivity is a magnet for housing,” he said. “We should look at this not only through the lens of transit, but through the lens of housing, housing availability, and all the economic development that comes

with those two very important aspects of our public policy.”

Erving town planner Mariah Kurtz told the *Reporter* that a stop in Erving would not only bolster business in the center of town, but make it easier for some people to live there, including those who might wish to “age in place” while receiving medical care in the eastern part of the state.

“Accessibility when living in a rural area is always a concern, since it is hard for folks to get from place to place without robust public transportation and sidewalk infrastructure,” Kurtz said. “Purchasing or renting a home in our smaller towns could become feasible for those with mobility issues, vision impairment, driving anxiety, or are on medications which affect their ability to operate machinery.”

The study is examining the accessibility of the proposed line to low-income, disabled, and minority populations.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) is part of a working group focused on the Northern Tier project. Executive director Linda Dunlavy told the *Reporter* that the possibility of the passenger rail allows the region to “plan for growth.”

“Franklin County’s population is declining and aging, so making our region a place where people want to live and work and raise their kids is critical to our future,” Dunlavy said. “For Franklin County residents, it could provide access to greater job opportunities as well as easier access to metro areas for important services, education, or entertainment.”

On the other hand, Dunlavy said, the train would also bring more people from the eastern part of the state to visit – and potentially to live.

“It will be the work of the FRCOG and the region’s municipalities to plan for potential growth in a careful and thoughtful way,” she said. “We’d rather plan for growth than plan for the grim alternative.”



Letter to the Editors



Idiots!

In response to Bryan Dolan’s “Plea for a Safe Pedestrian Route...”: pedestrians are *supposed* to walk against or facing oncoming traffic not with the flow. Wearing *dark* clothing at night also is rather irresponsible.

That being said, that curve at the crest of the road is a cause of concern. The town needs to address the section of one of the main connectors between the two towns.

Anybody else seen that *idiot* speed-skating on his or her board, coming down same hill *between* cars? They do have a spotlight on their helmet.

R.I.P. Knox
The Patch, Montague

CORRECTION

In last week’s edition we referred, on Page A7, to the “replacement of the Franklin County government with a nonprofit Regional Council of Governments.”

This is totally wrong. “The FRCOG was created under a home rule charter process enabled by 151 Acts 1996, Sec. 567 as amended, adopted by majority vote by all of the town meetings of Franklin County in 1997 (and Council, in Greenfield) and is typically considered a quasi-governmental sub-division,” writes Jay DiPucchio, who would know. Whoops! Thanks, Jay.

Published weekly on Thursdays.
*Every other week in July and August.
No paper the fourth week of November,
or the final week of December.*

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Learn about the old-fashioned methods involved in ice harvesting at a presentation at the Great Falls Discovery Center this Saturday, January 14 at 1 p.m. **“Keeping It Cool: Ice Harvesting”** will show you how people kept their food in ice boxes and harvested ice off the Connecticut River. All are welcome, and the program is free.

Looky Here, a community arts space on Chapman Street in Greenfield, is holding a **clothing swap** this Saturday, January 14 from 1 to 3 p.m. There’s a suggested donation of \$5 to \$10 to participate.

Also at Looky Here on Fridays, Hannah and Sarah host a “Lil Ones at Looky” **art group for ages 1 through 5** between 10 and 11 a.m. A small donation is requested for that event as well.

The **Common Hall in Montague Center** starts the year with an Open Mic event this Saturday, January 14 from 6:45 to 9 p.m. All types of performers are welcome: musicians, poets, singers, dancers, and storytellers. The stage is set at 34 Main Street, and sign ups start at 6:30 p.m. Time slots are drawn at random, with a ten- to twenty-minute performance window, depending on the size of the turnout.

Great Falls Books Through Bars holds another volunteer day at 104 Fourth Street, Turners Falls from 1 to 5 p.m. this Saturday, January 14. Help out by packing books and responding to letters from incarcerated persons. Drop in for some or all of the time, and wear a mask while inside.

New Salem Public Library is hosting a **Bark Basket Class** taught by Jennifer Lee this Saturday, January 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The fee to attend is \$50, and pre-registration is required.

Lee has been making bark baskets for 40 years, and the bark, roots, and branches for these proj-

ects are wild harvested by her family in the Northern Berkshire Mountains. Class size is limited; register in-person and the course fee is due with registration (cash only). The library is at 23 South Main Street in New Salem, and online at www.newsalempubliclibrary.org.

Amherst College offers an in-person and virtual guided tour of **their collection of “Old Bones and Stones”** from around our geologically rich Connecticut River valley next Tuesday, January 17 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

“The many fossils from this valley offer a window to an ecosystem of dinosaurs and primitive plants,” reads the description. “For more than a century, insights and discoveries by local scientists have helped the field of natural history to evolve.” Email amherstneighbors01002@gmail.com to register.

If you aren’t comfortable with performing on an in-person stage right now, you can join the Libraries in the Woods’ **Virtual Open Mic** via Zoom at 7 p.m. next Wednesday, January 18. Sign up for a five-minute slot to share your music or poetry and prose at www.tinyurl.com/LIWopenmic, or two adjacent slots if you would like to perform for ten minutes. If you would like to be part of the audience, email cushmanlibrary@gmail.com to request the link.

Learn about **Risograph printing** in a three-hour workshop at Looky Here next Thursday, January 19 starting at 5 p.m. All materials will be provided. Purchase tickets at www.lookyheregreenfield.com.

Join an **informal discussion about death and dying**, led by longtime hospice volunteer and Heartfelt Cafe columnist Trouble Mandeson, next Thursday, January 19 at 6:30 p.m. It takes place at the Green Fields Market community room at 170 Main Street in Greenfield, and all are welcome.

Share your ideas and stories, or

just come and listen to others. Free.

Creative Legacy Projects is the title of a workshop with Dina Stander on Monday January 23 at 6 p.m. on Zoom, where participants explore and reflect on what they want to give as they go.

Stander is an End-of-Life Navigator, funeral celebrant, burial shroud maker, and the founder of the Northeast Death Care Collaborative. You can learn more about her work at www.dinastander.com. If you are interested in the workshop, email dinastander15@gmail.com.

Learn about **discrimination laws regarding housing**: the Brick House in Turners Falls is hosting a Fair Housing Workshop on Tuesday, January 24 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The presentation, by the MA Fair Housing Center, will be in both English and Spanish. The Brick House is located at 24 Third Street in Turners Falls.

The artist Grainne Buchanan will present **“Regenerations: Reckoning with Radioactivity,”** by an interdisciplinary performance project focusing on the spent radioactive fuel, radioactive water, and soil left behind by Vermont Yankee, at the Brattleboro Museum on Friday, January 27, and Saturday, January 28, at 6 p.m.

“Regenerations” includes poetry, dance, projection, installation, and live music. Admission is \$10, \$5 for BMAC members, and free for students. Tickets may be booked at brattleboromuseum.org or by calling (802) 257-0124 x 101.

CISA’s **Field Notes storytelling event** is coming back to the Academy of Music this spring, with more live storytelling about food and farms and personal transformation. If you have a true story to share, you can pitch it to them and see if you can get up on stage that evening. Find out more at buylocalfood.org. The deadline for submissions is February 3. Ten storytellers will be selected.

The second Thursday of every month there is a **hot chocolate social and craft hour** at the Millers Falls branch library. Come between 3 and 4 p.m. to join librarian Abbey and meet new people, make a craft, and chat with neighbors.

There are **two calls for art from the Deerfield Valley Art Associa-**

tion, which has a gallery and retail shop at 105 Main Street in Northfield called Fiddleheads Gallery.

Franklin County students grades 1 through 12 are invited to create art related to their favorite book for the “Student Art Brings Literature to Life” exhibit on weekends from January 27 to February 19. Parents or teachers can contact marged-vaa@gmail.com for details.

They are also looking for local artists to enter work based on the human figure for an exhibit titled “Figuratively Speaking.” Send a photo and title of your piece to the above email address by February 10. The exhibit will run February 24 through March 19.

The Clark Art Museum in Williamstown is offering **free museum admission** until March 30!

Enjoy unlimited access to their permanent collection galleries and special exhibitions, as well as the 140-acre campus they call “a winter wonderland at this time of year.” Check out what’s going on at www.clarkart.edu and make some plans.

If you are looking to **enjoy nature by attending group activities**, check out the offerings by Adventure East. The Sunderland-based company offers some good reasons to leave the winter couch scene behind and get outdoors, including forest bathing, winter tracking, full moon hikes, and snowshoe walks: www.adventureeast.com.

There’s a new Telehealth **COVID-19 treatment hotline** at (833) 273-6330 and www.mass.gov/CovidTelehealth. Telehealth is a quick and free way to see if you’re eligible for COVID-19 treatment. Clinicians are available every day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. This service is not for medical emergencies, or those who have severe chest pain or shortness of breath.

Interested in receiving specific **training in forest ecology**? Applicants with experience in forestry and community leadership are invited to apply for training to become Keystone Cooperators, who will use their knowledge to serve as spokespersons and advocates for forest conservation in their communities. Find out more at www.MassKeystone.net. The deadline to apply is February 28.

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FEST from page A1

parking; “event scale vs. venue expertise,” noise, infrastructure and impact, and “citizen concerns.”

“We note our strong concern with the Moody Center location having no experience as a venue at this scale,” the letter reads, the last eight words emphasized in boldface type. “While it may have been useful to have proposed a smaller trial event, the Moody Center and its partner opted to announce SoulFest and sell tickets as if the event was a ‘done deal,’ surprising Town officials and alarming the community.”

While selectboard member Alex Meisner called Jacque’s letter “brilliant,” it was not initially universally well-received by the board.

“I strongly feel that the draft response to the pre-application was just far too detailed,” said member Mary Bowen-Smith. “I felt like it needed to be scaled down.”

Bowen-Smith clarified her concerns: “It’s a road map for them to succeed,” she said. “It’s helping them recognize what they need to do to make us happy.”

“In an organization that has not done their homework at all, and is quite a house of cards, if you will, we need to play Captain Obvious with these people,” Meisner argued. “Identifying the problems is not doing the homework – identifying the problems is telling them what they need to do for the homework. That’s what we are doing.”

The board debated its best strategic approach, but the consensus appeared to congeal after when town administrator Andrea Llamas pointed out that by not responding to the preliminary information, the town might be communicating that it did *not* have any concerns about the proposed event, in effect encouraging the Center to proceed with a full application.

“If what we heard at the preliminary meeting was the actual application, I do not see how it could pass,” Jacque said.

Member Bernie Boudreau said he thought the draft letter was “excellent.” Highlighting a section that pointed out that the adjacent Connecticut River was likely to serve as a “sound alley,” Boudreau said he was concerned that the

noise alone from the proposed Christian hard rock festival would have an impact on neighboring communities.

“You know, if you’ve listened to the music from these these bands, they’re very heavy on the metal drums,” he said. “They’re going to hear that in Vernon, and in Winchester, so we are going to be affecting other states.”

Jacque said the town’s mutual aid arrangements with neighboring communities also meant that a large event in Northfield would have an impact beyond its borders. “Our public safety doesn’t just take care of Northfield,” she said.

With vice chair Heath Cummings absent and Bowen-Smith indicating that her strategic concerns had been allayed, the selectboard voted 4-0 to endorse and sign the letter, send it to the Moody Center, and post it to the town website.

Several members of the public, observing from the chamber, indicated their support for the decision. Jacque said the board had received a number of letters on the matter and encouraged further public input.



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AT LARGE

Aquinas Acquires Moore Property

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD — Thomas Aquinas College of East Northfield has purchased land and buildings that abut its campus for \$1,102,000, according to the online news magazine *News-Break*. The seller is a Kansas-based nonprofit doing business as The Moody Center.

The properties, which were originally owned by the Northfield Mount Hermon School (NMH), include a former girls' dormitory on the corner of Moody Street and Highland Avenue called Moore Cottage.

The white four-story domicile, its handsome Queen Anne architecture featuring a wraparound porch, round towers, and overhanging eaves, was built in 1890 by a Northfield music teacher.

In 1895 a New Yorker named D.L. Griggs purchased the property and converted it into a boarding house he named NINA. An alumni publication subsequently characterized Griggs as "less than tolerant," and said NINA stood for "No Irish Need Apply."

Griggs wanted to cash in on the summer conferences that NMH founder Dwight Moody was holding in the auditorium he built in 1894. "Virtually everybody came by train, and got off at the station across the river," said NMH archivist Peter Weis. "I can imagine this guy thinking he was sitting on a gold mine, and I'm sure he was full all summer, but along the middle of September there'd be nobody there."

Moody died in 1899, and a wealthy friend of the school named Julia Parmly Billings purchased the boarding house from Griggs for \$16,840. It was turned into a dormitory and renamed Henry Martin Moore Cottage after the seminary's president and trustee.

According to an article that Weis emailed me, "Moore was a diminutive red-headed chap from



The transfer of lots and buildings in late December represents an expansion of the California-based Catholic college's footprint on the Northfield campus — and an infusion of cash for the evangelical non-profit Moody Center.

Somerville, a businessman and president of the Somerville YMCA [who] converted to Christianity and could never give his men a raise because he gave all he had to D.L. Moody."

Moore Cottage isn't close to other dormitories and classrooms on the campus. "When I was there at NMH, Class of '64, we had about 30 girls, one housemother, and one young faculty member living at Moore," wrote Lucy Hahn. "We may have been placed there because of our common lack of sophistication, but whatever the reason, we bonded and had such spirit."

"There was a large kitchen where we prepared all meals under the watchful eye of Mrs. Severance and we dined with our cloth napkins in our laps and one female faculty member

at each table."

Moore Cottage has been unoccupied the last two decades except for an occasional tenant in the basement or an upstairs guest who was willing to use the common bathroom. It's been neglected. The latticework is broken, the porch floorboards are starting to rot, and the paint around the house is peeling. It could also probably use a new roof.

With the new owner, however, Lucy Hahn believes the cottage will be restored to its former elegance. "I think the 'grand lady' will be well taken care of if it is to change hands," she wrote.

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

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Fingers Pointed After Hollow Job Washes Out; Fire Chief and Various Trees Face Retirement

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The selectboard's new hybrid meeting format allowed selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato to attend the January 4 meeting while she was recovering from being sick without exposing others. Member Dan Keller acted as chair to allow her to rest her voice.

Keller used the "selectboard update" agenda item to report that the inlet side of the Mormon Hollow Road culvert replacement had washed out, and water was flowing under the culvert. "A friend who knows something about construction estimated the repair would cost \$100,000," he warned.

He said Davenport Construction and the engineer, SVE Associates of Brattleboro, are blaming each other, but that project manager Phil Delorey is "on it."

Treasurer Carolyn Manley asked whether there is a surety bond. Keller thought there must be one for a project of that size and expense, but it should be investigated.

Retirement Looms

Laurie DiDonato said the public safety planning committee, on which she represents the selectboard, has been meeting with representatives of New Salem in anticipation of shared fire chief Joe Cuneo's retirement, scheduled for October.

So far, the committee's preference is to hire a single full-time chief, compensated equally by the two towns, to oversee the separate Wendell and New Salem fire depart-

ments. The departments train together and often respond to calls together, but merging them would require creating a new fire district, which has not happened in a century.

Cuneo has not committed to staying on beyond his scheduled retirement, but if he chooses to do that, both towns would need to have a home-rule petition approved by the legislature. As it would also require a town meeting vote, board members hope to schedule a special town meeting in February.

Tree By Tree

Tree warden Cliff Dornbusch said 19 or 20 trees along Wendell Depot and Locke Hill roads were still in "undecided" status for the National Grid trimming and cutting. He asked for a continuation of the ongoing tree hearing to discuss those trees with interested citizens, and arranged to meet town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad to set a date.

Dornbusch said citizen Michael Idoine wants a tree removed from the corner of John Quist and Wendell Depot roads as it is an obstruction for drivers trying to turn off John Quist. National Grid arborist Ryan Kress said the tree is reasonably healthy, but will start to drop branches and limbs within the next five years. Taking it down will require removing three smaller trees.

Dornbusch said that at first he resisted taking that old historic tree down, but that cars speeding on the Wendell Depot Road "race-track" make the visibility issue more severe.

Keller said Idoine has long had an interest in the town's overall welfare, and that he put "a lot of weight" into his concern. With member Gillian Budine, a resident of John Quist Road, abstaining, the selectboard voted 2-0 to have the tree removed.

Dornbusch said all the trees taken down on town-owned land have been moved to the wood bank site, and recommended setting a time limit for homeowners to remove felled trees from the roadside on their own land, as they may create a hazard for snow plows or mowing. Budine said she had not noticed any roadside trunks that appeared to be a problem.

Splash Zone

The board voted to accept Tom Chaisson's \$1,200 bid to clean, prime, and put two coats of paint on the office building cupolas. The money can come from the town building maintenance fund, which has not yet been tapped in FY'23.

Chaisson is also looking at repainting the wall next to that building's entryway — where water falling from the roof splashes up onto the siding, causing the paint to peel — and at boarding shut the house on the town-owned property at 40 Gate Lane.

Instead of gutters, the office building is surrounded by a curtain drain that allows runoff to collect on the ground and drain under the parking lot into the community garden. This avoids annual gutter cleaning and appears to work, except where the runoff hits the impervious surface.

Chaisson suggested adding a gutter along that part of the roof.

Johnson-Mussad said open space committee chair Dan Leahy had contacted Mass Audubon to offer them the Gate Lane property in exchange for dismantling the house. Part of the property could be made into a parking place for people who want to walk on other Audubon-owned land nearby.

Other Business

At the request of town clerk Anna Wetherby, the board agreed to opt out of townwide voting by mail. Mail-in ballots will still be available to citizens who ask for them. Also at Wetherby's request, the board approved early voting, 17 days in advance of election day.

Budine said the Leverett-Wendell hiring committee promoted police officer Meghan Gallo to full-time and hired Allison Dalpe as a part time-officer. Gallo will also continue as Wendell's animal control officer.

Johnson-Mussad relayed that planning board member Seal La-Madeleine plans to step down before the May election.

At the request of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, the board voted to designate DiDonato as a special municipal employee and absolve her from any conflicts of interest between her position as selectboard chair and Wendell's representative to the District.

Board members approved a library-sponsored ski and skate sale this Saturday, January 14 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the town hall.

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Beginning with hand exercises, Great Falls Creative Movement instructor Anna Hendricks demonstrates the skill of “mirroring” a partner to Hillcrest Elementary School first graders (clockwise from top) Violet Fisk, Lilly Hartnett, Aubriella Franklin, Julian Golden, and Roman Pennant.

DANCE from page A1

the merengue, a dance originating in the Dominican Republic. In preparation for the partner dancing, she had each student sit facing a friend and practice “mirroring” their hand movements. They then practiced some footwork... and followed this by adding some

hip movements...

Once the music began, the room was filled with an irresistible beat, and the “couples” bravely tried out their new skills. Roman Pennant shared that he was happy dancing with his classmate Violet Fisk. It really showed, as the two seemed like they had been dancing together

er for some time.

The students had many positive things to say about the program. According to Reese Drumgool, “It’s really fun because I get to move around a lot!”

Zeagan Stafford liked “doing the mirror thing,” while Weston Hobbs said he liked “getting his energy out.”

Ella Kimball, meanwhile, said she really enjoyed dancing with a partner because “it’s really fun!”

“Different parts of my classes resonate with different kids,” Hendricks told the Reporter. “Some kids join in when we’re all bopping our heads to a beat, or just subtly keeping rhythm with our feet, or when everyone is dancing in their own way and they feel like no one is watching them. And others just love to dance in their own way, with their whole body, while everyone is watching and cheering for them.... Dancing together is such a wonderful and unique way to get to know each other!”

Hendricks has been teaching dance for 13 years. In 2009 she founded the Great Falls Creative Movement program, which offers “unique, holistic, and community-based dance programming” at the studio on the second floor of the Brick House, as well as in area schools and other sites in the broader community.

Hendricks said her main hope for this month’s residency at Hillcrest is that “each child has a moment of really feeling joyful, or even just at home moving their bodies – whether by dancing alone with their eyes shut, dancing with a partner, or showing off their best dance moves in the cipher circle.”

The Hillcrest program will cul-



Jayne Sanders and Ayleanna Vien see what it’s like to dance with someone else.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 609427

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed South St over Sawmill River bridge replacement project in Montague, MA.

WHEN: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed bridge replacement project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of a full replacement of the bridge carrying South Street over the Sawmill River in Montague, MA. South Street is a rural two-lane local road. Based on the rural nature of the roadway and the surrounding area, as well as the low traffic volume and travel speeds, the project is exempt from bicycle and pedestrian requirements in MassDOT’s Health Transportation Policy. No separate bicycle or pedestrian facilities exist on the roadway currently and none are being proposed in this project. There are no known plans to add separate bicycle or pedestrian facilities on this roadway.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The town is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT’s policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7210, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Major Projects**, Project File No. **609427**. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing is posted to the MassDOT website listed below.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER

minate this Friday in a dance combining all three classes together.

Teachers have been enthusiastic about the program. “Through the dance class, I have seen our classroom community grow closer together,” Sara Johnson reported. “Students are more willing to open up to each other during the dance class, as well as during other academic times. It has been a joy to see my students celebrate their differences and support each other more.”

Kristy Smith said she felt the residency has been a wonderful opportunity for students to try dancing. “I really appreciate how Anna kept the focus on positivity, and dancing for your own self,” she said. “It was lovely to see kids take risks and try something new!”

Principal Sarah Burstein told the Reporter that she really appreciates the school’s partnerships with community programs. The collaboration

with Great Falls Creative Movement provides physical exercise for the children, but also opportunities for learning on a variety of levels.

One mom interviewed on the phone about the program asked her son how he liked it. “I really like to dance, because I like to be very active,” he responded. “The only thing is that it’s too short. We need more time to dance and exercise!”

One student noted that although they felt nervous at first, eventually it felt okay when you made a mistake or fell down, because everyone laughed at themselves. Another said that dancing in the “circle” to share their creativity felt much easier with a partner than going solo.

When a teacher mentioned she had been a bit nervous about trying out a new dance, one young student told her: “If you are nervous, I will dance with you!”



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SPORTS from page A1

quarter. Meanwhile, across Millers Falls Road, the Franklin Tech Eagles have been waging their own battle in pursuit of their first victory.

Last Thursday the Lee Wildcats came down from the mountains, and needed a stellar final period to best Powertown. The game went the way it was supposed to – at least in the beginning. The bad boys from Lee trampled the one-win Thunder in the first quarter. In that period, the Cats won the rebound battle, more than doubling Powertown’s output as a result: every time Blue scored a basket, Lee would hit two.

The Wildings were up 20-10 after a quarter, but midway through the second, with the pep band and the cheer squad urging them on, Blue Thunder pulled to within a point, 27-26. Turners kept pace until Lee hit a field goal to close out the first half leading by three, 34-31.

At the end of the third quarter, with the score 43-42, Lee scored another late-period basket, and after three complete, the Cats were up 46-42. In the fourth, though, Blue couldn’t buy a basket, and the Wildcats doubled them down 13-7 to win it 59-49.

The contest was a total team effort for Turners, with seven players scoring. Branden Truesdell played in the paint for most of the game, leading the team with 15 points; Levin Prondecki (9), JJ Charles (8), Deven Sloan (7), Alex Quezada (5), Jakub Lavin (3), and Cameron Burnett (2) also contributed.

The same night, Tech lost to Smith Academy.

The Eagles took a first quarter 27-14 lead and were ahead at the half, but Purple steadily made up ground, and by the time the third quarter ended Tech was down 57-53. Further outscored in the fourth, the Eagles lost the game 74-68.

Ty Sadoski had a career night in Hatfield, scoring an amazing 32 points. He didn’t do it alone, of course: Robert Belval put up 17, Robert Murphy scored 10, Noah Ausikaitis had 5, and Ben Dodge netted 4.

Then on Tuesday, January 10, the Boys in Blue headed down to Hatfield themselves, and lost to the same Smith Academy that had beaten Tech five days earlier.

Like their neighbors, Turners was beating Purple going into the third period, but finished down by one point after surrendering a five-point lead heading into the fourth quarter.

Seven Powertown players again scored in the contest. Quezada led the Thunder with 15 points, Prondecki and Charles netted 10 each, Dysten Shinall sank a foul shot, a three-pointer and an inside field goal for 6 points, Lavin and Burnett each made three-pointers, and Jackson Cogswell hit a free throw for 1.

A whole bunch of people came to Franklin Tech on Tuesday to watch the Eagles-Green Wave JV and varsity games. There was no parking in the first two lots, but luckily someone was leaving after the JV game so I was able to park relatively close. I was told that Tech’s JV team had been leading, but Greenfield won it in the fourth quarter. It seemed to be a pattern this week.

The crowd in Tech’s gym was loud. Students and adults alike enthusiastically voiced their support for the kids on the court. And on the court, the kids battled for a full four quarters.



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Turners’ Caden Williams-Senethavisonk takes a shot in the paint as Lee’s Tyler Bartini defends.

Tech had a great first half, and at the break were up by 7 points. Green narrowed the margin to a single point going into the final stanza, then outscored Franklin by eight points to win the contest 69-62.

Sadoski (22) was again Tech’s high scorer, followed by Ausikaitis (15), Belval (9), Murphy (6), and Dysten Cullen and Cayden Lehtomaki (5 each).

This Friday the 13th, the Turners Falls Thunder welcomes a familiar foe – the Franklin Tech Basketball Eagles. Rumor has it that the recommended dress code for the occasion is semi-formal: if you go to the game, wear your suits and ties.

Girls’ Basketball
FCTS 33 – Putnam 28
TFHS 55 – Mohawk 17
Mt. Everett 45 – FCTS 38
TFHS 42 – Athol 38

While the Tech Boys were striving to notch their first win, the school’s girls were trying to stay unbeaten. The Lady Birds traveled to Springfield last Friday, defeating the Putnam Vo-Tech Beavers in a low-scoring affair.

Lea Chapman scored 10 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and Kaitlin Trudeau made 9 steals, pulled down 6 rebounds and scored 9. Kendra Campbell netted 9 points, while Kyra Goodell had 5 points and 7 rebounds.

The Turners Falls Thunder Ladies, meanwhile, went up the trail and defeated the Mohawk Warriors, 55-17.

Mohawk is another basketball team with only six or seven players on their roster. Against the visiting Thunder, they could only muster a single point in the first period. They were held to four in the second, and shut out completely in the third.

In the fourth, with the game no longer in doubt, the Warriors put up 12 to make the final 55-17.

Nine players scored points for Turners: Lily Spera (20), Taylor Greene (10), Madi Liimatainen and Keira Richardson-Meatty (6), Tatiana Williams and Steph Peterson (4),

Marilyn Abaeua and Raygan Rendriss (2), and Morgan Dobias (1).

On Monday, the Mount Everett Eagles came to Franklin Tech and spoiled the white-shirted Eagles’ perfect record.

Everett does not have a lot of players on their squad, so the Tech JV had to host Minnechaug. The Everett Eagles varsity roster only consists of 7 players.

Tech fans know, from the Mohawk win, that teams with only one or two reserve players can become exhausted in the later periods. “Plus, they could get into foul trouble,” a granddad reminded me during the game. “They can’t afford to foul out!”

But the game was pretty clean, so the foul advantage was off the table.

Tech blasted out to a 14-2 lead in the first quarter, and hit a three-pointer 29 seconds into the second to go up 17-2. It seemed that Tech’s perfect record would hold for another night. I actually left the game at halftime, and drove to Turners High to catch the end of the Turners-Athol girls’ game.

As it turned out, the visiting Eagles got their second wind. They tied it up at the halftime buzzer and outscored Tech 12-5 in the third and 10-9 in the final, handing Franklin their first loss since the 2022 playoffs.

Goodell led Franklin in scoring with 14 points. Hannah Gilbert put up 9, and Chapman registered 5 and led the team with 9 rebounds. Campbell was held to four free throws, but she pulled down 7 rebounds. Cordelia Guerin hit a three-pointer, Lilianna Inman banked one basket for 2 points and grabbed 8 rebounds, and Trudeau hit a freebee.

Turners Falls was down 26-21 to the Athol Red Bears, with 2:36 left in the third quarter, by the time I got to the gym. The Thunder made some headway in the last two and a half minutes, and were down 30-26 with a quarter left to play.

Red went up to 32-26 seven seconds into the final quarter, but White was not intimidated. The Thunder

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Energy, Wages Driving FY’24 Budget Growth

By KEITH WATERS

The Erving selectboard kept it going with the long meetings Monday night – though not as long as the previous one, Monday’s lasted for 3 hours and 20 minutes. The board could not get to everything on the meeting agenda, putting off discussions of a new town hall and ongoing work on the personnel bylaws. The information packet for the January 9 meeting weighed in at 536 pages.

The bulk of the night’s meeting was a joint session with the finance committee to review FY’24 budget requests. The largest portion of that time was spent discussing the wastewater budget, up nearly \$88,000 from last year, or 9%.

There is daily testing that has to happen at the wastewater treatment facilities, and two tests that are performed on the weekend are being billed as overtime, every week, with the expense paid from the line “unforeseen overtime.”

The selectboard and the fin com asked water and wastewater superintendent Peter Sanders if that could be changed. Sanders had a little laugh after his response that he would “try to come up with something.”

The state is offering towns a forgivable loan to test for lead in drinking water pipes, and the final applications must be in by March. The loan is only forgiven if all the work is finished in the time allotted, forgiveness is on a first-come, first-served basis, and it is unknown whether there is still money in the program, which started last summer.

Fin com member Daniel Hammock said he worried that if the town takes part and lead is found, a homeowner may be forced to sell their house to pay for its removal.

Whether Erving should apply for the loan was not decided at Monday’s meeting. If it is decided that the town should apply, the borrowing would have to go to a special town meeting for approval.

Swelling Figures

The long and short of it is that prices are going up everywhere, and electricity is a big one.

The board of health was an exception to the pattern of costs rising because of electricity. Its requested budget is up \$25,000 to \$92,000, due to both increased pay for the health agent and an increased mileage allowance for that agent to drive to Shutesbury and Northfield, who now share the position.

Highway department costs for FY’24 are up over \$163,000 over this year, a 36% hike, largely driven by a new truck and a new \$100,000 line item for road improvement.

The senior and community center has a promise of some big bucks coming in, through its Friends of the Senior and Community Center program. People are enjoying the new multi-million dollar facility, and programs are expanding. Director Paula Betters said people have been coming from near Boston for some of its programs.

Outside of the budget meeting, the selectboard reminded Betters that the center is intended for seniors and the community at large, and not solely as a senior center, and approved two people for the committee to hire the center a new “activities coordinator.”

The library is back in business after having its normal operation greatly disrupted by the pandemic. Its FY’24 budget request is up 21%, or nearly \$43,000, led by increased pay and hours for librarians and the increased cost of electricity.

The cost of flags has also apparently increased. The town spent \$12,500 on flags in FY’23 and is requesting \$17,000 for FY’24, making “Town Events & Ceremonial Flags” one of the fastest-growing departments in Erving.

Other Business

Erving has been working to find bids for a project to replace two culverts on Wheelock Street. Bid prices have been volatile, and the town is trying to get one locked in. Language has been added to the bid request saying that if the bidder can not finish both culverts with the funds available, it is acceptable to only replace one.

The town has to upgrade its recycling center for it to be legal. The costs for this have been estimated as \$88,600, though its services will remain about the same.

Someone who used to live in town, but doesn’t anymore, was approved to purchase plots in the town cemetery. Selectboard member William Bembury asked that the board reconsider this practice in the future, given the shortage of cemetery space.

A special town meeting will have to be held soon, for a number of reasons. The board is currently trying to schedule one for the end of February, but it may end up being in March.

The selectboard’s next meetings are scheduled for January 23 and January 30.

pulled within one point, 34-33, and then surged ahead to a six-point lead. With 22 ticks on the clock, Athol hit a three to make it 40-37.

Greene was intentionally fouled. She sank both free throws, and Thunder was once again up by five. Athol could only add a point after that, and Turners held on to win it 42-38.

Greene had the hot hand for Turners on Monday. She hit seven 2-pointers, sank seven free throws, and banked two 3-pointers for a to-

tal 27 points. Other scorers for Powertown were Dobias (5), Peterson and Rendriss (3), and Liimatainen and Williams (2).

The Eagles traveled to Palmer on Wednesday, to take on the Pathfinder Gold Pioneers, but we did not have the score as of press time. This Thursday, the Thunder Ladies travel down to Springfield to play the Putnam Beavers, and next Tuesday, Tech welcomes the Black Panthers of Pioneer.



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MONTAGUE from page A1

Barnhardt was in the news in 2019 after a sulphuric acid spill at the Colrain plant made its way into the North River, a tributary of the Green River. The spill came from an outdoor tank which served both the manufacturing and treatment plants. Residents of the region were highly critical of the slow public notification of the accident, which may have killed 270,000 fish, according to one estimate.

In December 2021, the office of the Massachusetts attorney general announced that the company would be required to pay about \$1.5 million in settlements. One year later, Barnhardt announced the plant’s 31 workers would be laid off permanently, according to the *Greenfield Recorder*, citing “business loss and other costs beyond our control.”

Little told the selectboard that the Montague facility could handle the relatively small amount of sewage from the 19 homes. She suggested the town consider the rate structure currently in use to process sewage from Gill’s Riverside neighborhood, and estimated the Colrain waste would bring in \$25,000 in annual revenue.

She expressed concern about “operations logistics,” however, particularly on weekends, as the sewage would be arriving at the Montague plant seven days a week. “It just depends if the board feels strongly we want to help and make it happen,” she said.

“I like to think we could help out,” said selectboard member Matt Lord, “but I do not think this is something we would want to do five years from now.” The discussion turned to a short contract for the services while the residents work to find a permanent solution.

“We’re not opposed, but there are some questions that you could vet,” Kuklewicz told Little. “We could even do it on a trial basis.”

“It’s just really bizarre,” Little said.

“This is a fun one, and I’m super curious,” said Lord.

Little shared the latest data on the effluent discharged from the wastewater plant into the Connecti-

cut River, which were all favorable. Under the town’s permit with state and federal agencies, the data are reported monthly.

Little presented a list of a dozen requested sewer bill abatements. The board only approved two, but made motions in most of the other cases to reduce the usage level used to calculate the customers’ next bills.

The selectboard appointed Anthony Montivirdi to the position of operator/laborer at the plant.

The board also gave Ellis the power to sign and submit an updated “notification plan” for problems that may arise with the town’s combined sewer overflow system, designed to reduce flow to the sewer plant during periods of heavy rain by redirecting excess waste into the river.

Bypassed; Crushed and Filled

Ellis reported briefly on the federal relicensing process for First-Light Power’s local hydroelectric operations, which may be in its final stages. He said the company has signed a “fish and flow agreement” with state agencies, which might not preclude consideration of Montague’s proposals for enhanced recreational access to the Connecticut River, but might also mean “we will never get to them.”

“I think that is all I can say without opening up cans of worms,” he concluded.

Assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey reported that officials from Trinity Health Senior Communities of New England, which owns the former and soon-to-be-demolished Farren Care Center in Montague City, have requested to be allowed to fill the “deep basements” of the complex’s newer sections with crushed material from the demolition.

The board approved this request, with a number of criteria for the modified permit. It also voted for the town to accept 356 Montague City Road, a building on the Farren property which Trinity is donating instead of demolishing.

Asking Boston

Monday’s meeting began with a lengthy conversation between the

selectboard, state representative Natalie Blais, and Blais’s assistant Corinne Coryat. Topics ranged from grants supporting the planned demolition of the Strathmore mill complex to securing more funding for town clerks, who face challenges keeping up with laws expanding voter access.

The board expressed particular concern about the failure of the legislature to approve Montague’s request, based on a town meeting vote last May, that the town’s police department leave the state civil service system. “This really affects our ability to recruit from a diverse candidate pool,” said Ellis.

Blais said a decision on Montague may have been delayed pending a legislative report from a commission evaluating the civil service.

The board also lobbied Blais to advocate to extend the pandemic-era relaxation of public meeting laws, set to expire in the spring. Kuklewicz said that many committees overseeing larger regional districts, such as the Franklin County Technical School and Franklin County Solid Waste Management districts, have seen increased participation due to the option to hold meetings online.

Winter Schedule

The selectboard spent much of the evening planning its review of the town operating budget prior to sending recommendations to the finance committee. The board decided to focus on departments requesting significant personnel increases, to begin reviewing budgets with department heads next Tuesday, January 17, and to make recommendations to the finance committee on Monday, January 30.

There was a lengthy discussion of the “logistics” of a special town meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 2. The board voted to open the meeting’s warrant this Tuesday, and close it at 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 26.

Lord and town meeting member Ariel Elan expressed concern that holding the meeting in person at the high school might make a quorum difficult to achieve. The board agreed to poll town meeting members on the issue.

Other Business

An application from the Gill-Montague Regional School District for a state grant to address school violence was endorsed by the board. According to Ellis, the grant will assist district staff and the Montague police department to establish “threat assessment teams.”

Ellis announced and reviewed the \$975,000 federal earmark awarded to the town for Avenue A “street-scapes” improvements, as reported in last week’s *Montague Reporter*.

The selectboard approved a cell phone stipend for new town planner Maureen Pollock, and executed

a \$15,000 state grant for “programming and projects” at the request of RiverCulture director and assistant planner Suzanne LoManto.

Ellis concluded the meeting by reporting on the search for a new health director. Noting that the hiring committee had received “a few resumes” and that Monday was the “soft deadline” for applying, he said that the town is “still open to other qualified applicants.”

The next selectboard meeting will be held next Tuesday, January 17 rather than next Monday, due to the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday.



LOOKING BACK:
150 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on January 8, 1873: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

First Things First...

We paid a visit this morning to the work going on in sinking the artesian well at the Montague Paper Mill. A depth of 145 feet has been attained and the work progresses favorably.

At the depth of 128 feet water was found, which filled the hole bored to within eight feet of the top, and on Saturday last another vein was struck which has raised it four feet more, or considerably above the level of the river.

Whether this water is to be had in any large quantity, is a point to be tested, and Mr. Marshall is having a pump made to try it; at all events, it is a pretty fair evidence

that water can and will be had in abundant quantity before long.

Ag School Scorned

The annual meeting of the Agricultural Society was held on Saturday, at Greenfield, with a large attendance. It was called to order in Franklin Hall, and adjourned to Washington Hall above. After reading the report of the last meeting the Secretary and Treasurer’s report was read, which was accepted.

The matter of a scholarship in the Agricultural College was brought up. A.K. Warner spoke in favor of the measure. D.O. Fisk, of Shelburne, opposed it with a great deal of warmth, bitterly denouncing the insitution, declaring that an education there was worthless, and the whole thing a humbug.

20 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on January 9, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Erving Administrative Coordinator Resigns

Citing escalating tensions within the town’s government, Erving administrative coordinator Debra Roussel officially resigned her position effective January 31.

In a resignation letter read aloud by Roussel to selectboard chairman Dan Hammock and selectman Andy Tessier on January 6, Roussel expressed her sadness over the town’s inability to “find solutions to the issues that seem to be present among boards, committees, and/or individuals to yield positive results with the resources that are available to us.”

Hammock and Tessier voted to accept the resignation, “with regret.” Selectman Bert Dubay was not present. Roussel has accepted a similar post in Gill.

Their Doors Are Open

Maria Rodman, the new director of the Montague Catholic Social Ministries, is at the center of a whirlwind, and yet she is

strangely calm.

Her four-room multi-service agency on the first floor of the Moltenbrey Building on the corner of Avenue A and Third Sreet in Turners Falls is a nexus of learning and support for women and children, from preschoolers to seniors, who come to take the free programs in computer literacy, creative writing, self-help, art, and a wealth of after-school tutoring and preschool play groups.

Rodman took over for MCSM’s retiring director, Pat Fettingier, in September. She came to the Northeast when her husband was hired as a Professor of International Education at the Brattleboro School for International Training.

Before coming to New England, Rodman served as the Southeast Program Director of the US Save the Children Foundation, and says the skills she acquired on that job translate well to Turners Falls.

MCSM was founded seven years ago by the parishioners of St. Anne’s and St. Mary’s in Turners, along with the parishioners of the Sacred Heart Church in Greenfield. Father Stanley Aksamit played a major role in its creation, as did the agency’s founding director, Kit Hinga.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Six-Town Study In the Doldrums?

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – The Gill-Montague regional school committee started 2023 off strong Tuesday night, with 80 minutes of their Zoom meeting dedicated to a presentation by the Six Town Regional Planning Board (STRPB) and the next 53 to a presentation on the preliminary FY’24 budget.

Roughly another 27 were left for all other business, including acknowledging a \$2,500 donation from the Montague Elks to the athletic department’s Helping Hands service program, approving various spending warrants and a budget transfer, and at the very end, reminding the press and public that an open seat on the committee awaits a willing Montague volunteer, who would be appointed to help until the spring election. (Letters of interest may be directed to the superintendent’s office.)

The STRPB, which toils away in obscurity studying the feasibility of joining Gill, Montague, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick into one district with one middle school and one high school, was represented by its chair and vice-chair, Al Genovese and Greg Snedeker, members of the Warwick and Gill selectboards.

The STRPB has a public presentation online, both as a slideshow and a video of that slideshow with a narrative voiceover; Genovese and Snedeker opted to run the slideshow-voiceover video via Zoom’s screen-sharing function, pausing text-heavy slides pointedly while weaving in a third layer of their own meta-commentary.

The effect was disorienting, and some school commit-

tee members complained that the presentation seemed skewed toward boosting a merger. “It made me wonder, has due diligence been done to investigate all the risks, all the cons, all the the potential problems that this could bring?” Gill member Cristina Marcalow asked.

Slides at the heart of the show featured historical enrollment data at Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley. The bottom line has been starkly negative – Turners Falls High School graduated 36 seniors last year, Pioneer only 23 – but the data dipped sharply and rose again during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“By the end of the process of working with DESE and working with the consultants, we didn’t have any confidence in any of the projections, really,” Montague STRPB member Michael Naughton explained.

One significant prediction the study is able to make more clearly is that a six-town district would be in “hold harmless” status, eligible only for a token per-pupil increase in state funding each year due to its combined enrollment loss. Gill-Montague recently escaped this status and has been enjoying larger Chapter 70 aid infusions.

Genovese said he was losing optimism in the project. Gill-Montague superintendent Brian Beck and business manager Joanne Blier ran through a slide deck of their own explaining all the factors going into the preliminary FY’24 budget of \$27,589,056, a 4.4% increase over the current year. This assumed Montague’s contribution will rise by 3.4%, a figure likely to grow (*see article, Page A1*). The committee will drill in further at its meeting next Tuesday, January 17 at 6:30 p.m.

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TAX BASE from page A1

to a quick calculation by Olsen this would mean the town’s assessment to the school district, which had been on track to increase by 3.4% next year, would increase by 4.2% instead.

Hanold’s proposal barely passed the fin com, with two of the five members present abstaining, and it may still be modified by the selectboard. There appeared to be a consensus that the committee needed to develop a policy if it wanted to make annual decisions on excess capacity that impacted the assessment.

“I don’t think we should take the approach of winging it each year,” said Hanold.

Left on the Table

What is a *levy limit*, what is *excess capacity*, and how might these impact the “affordable assessment”?

A local *levy* – according to a primer published in 2013 by the state Department of Revenue’s Division of Local Services (DLS) called “Everything You Wanted to Know About Levy Limits But Were Afraid To Ask,” is simply “the revenue a community [raises] through real and personal property taxes.” It is “the largest source of revenue for most cities and towns.”

The *levy limit*, meanwhile, is a product of the 1980 Massachusetts law known as Proposition 2½. This law restricted the amount of an annual levy to a 2.5% increase over the previous year, plus any taxes associated with “new growth,” meaning “the growth in the tax base resulting from certain new construction and other growth in the tax base that is not the result of property valuation.”

There are a number of technical restrictions as to what qualifies as “new growth,” but the key takeaway is that unless they are caused by construction, increased property values alone do not increase a town’s levy limit.

The levy limit may also increase by more than 2.5% if there is a

“tax override,” which raises it by a specific percentage, or by a “debt exclusion,” which raises it to pay debt for a particular project and disappears after that debt is paid off. Either of these exceptions must be approved by voters.

On the other hand, there is no requirement that municipalities *must* build annual budgets that use the maximum allowable levy, and this was at the heart of Montague’s fin com discussion last week. A community may choose to set its levy below the limit, and the difference – the amount that it can legally tax, but chooses not to – is known as “excess capacity.”

The DLS document is silent on why a town would want to do this. Two common justifications are that a levy below the legal limit means lower taxes, and that keeping taxes below the limit provides towns with a “cushion” so that they can address unexpected budget increases or fund capital projects without requiring overrides and debt exclusions.

A 2019 article in the *Boston Business Journal* reported that overrides and exclusions had fallen to their lowest level since the early 1990s. One of the factors cited was an increase in local excess capacity, which had “nearly tripled in the last decade.”

For years, Montague taxed to its levy limit, but it began to build excess capacity into revenue estimates in FY’20, a year when “we were lucky enough to have some added new growth,” Olsen told the fin com.

Town administrator Steve Ellis said the decision to set the levy below the limit was made in an effort to help “temper the tax rate,” which had been increased to fund large bonded projects such as the new public works building.

The decision to tax below the levy limit raised questions about the calculation and timing of the town’s proposed assessment to fund the Gill-Montague school district budget, the largest expense voted on at

the annual town meeting each May. When it was first introduced, however, Montague’s excess capacity was modest, and was not seen to significantly impact school funding.

But as growth in the town’s tax base outpaced projections in FY’22 and FY’23, Montague’s tax “cushion” tripled to \$1.6 million, the figure reported to the Department of Revenue for approval.

“They said, ‘did you really mean to do this?’” Olsen told the committee last week. “And I said ‘yes, we actually did.’”

Splitting the Difference

This very high estimate of excess capacity, which the fin com and selectboard can reduce as the FY’24 budget process moves forward, will have a large impact on taxes and on funds available for all town programs. But it was the impact on the regional school district that dominated last Wednesday’s discussion.

The school budget process starts each fall with Montague estimating its tax revenue and announcing a figure known as the “affordable assessment.” This practice is the result of negotiations that ended over a decade of conflict over education spending between the district and the towns of Gill and Montague.

Many Montague officials and town meeting members believed that the money the district requested used up virtually all revenue increases to fund town departments. The school committee and administration believed these increases were needed to address the ever-expanding needs of public education, and mandates they faced from the state.

Beginning in 2007, the GMRSD had an increasingly difficult time getting its assessment approved at town meeting, and in 2009 it was voted down – both by the Montague meeting and a subsequent district-wide meeting, as required by state law, consisting of voters from Gill and Montague. As a re-

Montague Community Television News

Rural Informants

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – MCTV has been helping local residents document their lives, from high school basketball games to street fairs and theater performances.

In February, Mass Humanities and the Smithsonian Institution will welcome the Museum on Main Street *Crossroads: Changes in Rural America* traveling exhibition to the Great Falls Discovery Center. If you are inspired to create a film about your life here in “rural America,” contact us – we would be happy to help!

All community members are welcome to submit their videos to

be aired on Channel 17 and featured on the MCTV Vimeo page, so think of what you would like to make and come see how we can help. MCTV is always available to assist in local video production. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided. And remember, MCTV is still looking for board members!

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

sult, the state Department of Education was mandated to take “fiscal control” of the district.

The impasse was ended in November 2010 by a “compact” between the district and the two towns, at the heart of which was a compromise that came to be known as the affordable assessment. Montague would allocate 48.5% of its available revenue – roughly the level when the agreement was reached – to the school district.

Gill’s assessment is more complex – it is a fraction of Montague’s, based on the two towns’ shares of students in the district – and the assessments approved at town meeting have not always followed the blueprint perfectly, but the compact has guided the process. The assumption in that era was that Montague was raising all the revenue it legally could.

And now, as Olsen told the fin com and selectboard, Montague’s new practice of taxing below the levy limit raises significant questions.

“The affordable assessment was

originally designed so the town would allocate to the schools a certain percentage of our revenues,” she explained. “That was fine, as long as we didn’t have the excess capacity. Now that we have that excess capacity, that changes – the larger it gets, the less we are abiding by the original intent of that agreement.”

Olsen said that she thought the town needs to come up with “some policy [on excess capacity], and preferably one that does not have to be revisited every year.” She also recommended that the town not “penalize” the school district by creating a level of excess capacity above what was predicted under the earlier growth estimate.

The final motion endorsed by the finance committee, which effectively proposes to collect a half-million more in taxes – 48.5% of which would presumably be passed along to the school district – may have been consistent with that advice.

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting.



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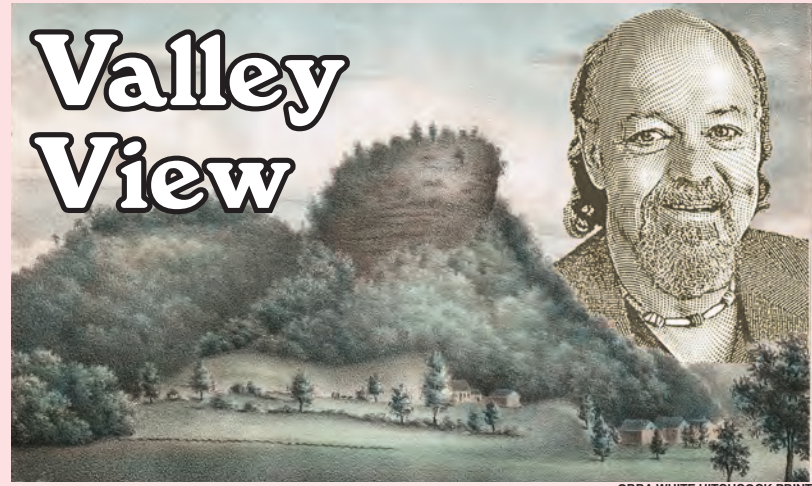
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SARAH ROBERTSON PHOTO



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – I took a recent walk around the Cheapside uplands with old buddy Billy Wardwell, a Bingville native I trusted would know all the little nooks and crannies.

You’d have to know affable “Wardy.” He grew up there. Highland Park was his playground.

We’ve known each other since high school, both from the Class of 1971: he from Greenfield, me South Deerfield. In youth we occasionally crossed paths on our nighttime rambles, and were even Sunday-morning street-hockey teammates, playing on the paved hilltop rink facing the Franklin County Courthouse parking lot and Greenfield YMCA.

Oh, to be young again. Back then I could run. Now battered knees can make walking a challenge.

That day, on a slippery morning track following two days of heavy rains, we parked at 7:30 on a Hope Street pull-over and scaled the power line to the first old road we met. From there, we headed south toward the Cheapside railroad underpass and the old ski jump before circling north, under the power line and toward Bear’s Den, Sachem’s Head, and the old Lupinwood mansion. It took over an hour to circle back to where we had first left the power line, at which point we descended to our vehicles.

Along the circuitous way we met several walkers, many with dogs. Some were leashed, others ran free as they’re meant to. On our brief off-trail diversions, through woody brush and over fallen trees, I knew enough to be cautious with each step. It’s easy to slip and break a leg wedged between slimy, prostrate tree trunks on greasy ground. Foot-free romps with wet leaves underfoot can be perilous even for a young whippersnapper, which I ain’t.

I contacted Wardwell after unexpectedly being nudged into Cheapside research by Jim Terapane, president and co-owner of the Museum of Our Industrial Heritage, housed in the old Greenfield Steel Stamp building on Mead Street. The mixed brick-and-clapboard former industrial structure stands along the Green River at Greenfield’s historic first mill site, snuggled up to the Mill

Street bridge.

It was quite by chance that I had bumped into Terapane. On my way out of a bookbinder friend’s home shop in South Deerfield, I just happened to catch him raking his yard across the street. There we ventured into discussion about a boarded-up Greenfield building owned by someone he knew. The building stands on the west side of the Hope and Cheapside streets intersection along the Deerfield River.

That impromptu chat piqued my interest in the unoccupied building, which memory suggested was once a riverside tavern. Uncertain my kneejerk assessment was accurate, I looked into it at home, and was not surprised my memory had failed me. As far as I could learn, it was never a tavern, but rather an old riverside store.

Jonathan Hoit’s White Horse Tavern was around the corner on Deerfield Street. There in 1799 Hoit hung his sign, a white horse on black background, from his “mansion house,” which now stands in Deerfield on 46 Old Main Street, Lot No. 25. Deerfield Academy recently purchased the center-chimney property from Fenwick, LLP for a tidy \$1.75 million.

The first riverside store was built alongside a toll bridge and shipping dock just before the turn of the 19th century, when Cheapside was growing into an important commercial district. Such surnames as Williams, Wait, Hoit, Houghton, and Abercrombie were merchants there over the early years.

Situated at an advantageous spot that represented the northern Connecticut River shipping terminus before 1798, when the Turners Falls Canal gave boats and barges access to Bellows Falls, Vermont, Cheapside remained profitable into the mid-19th century, when the shipping paradigm went from river to rail. Then it fell by the wayside as a viable mercantile district, forever changing the neighborhood’s character.

In the modern era, the old store building that once wore a long, extended streetside presence has been separated into two buildings. They stand today on opposite sides of the railroad underpass at the intersection of Hope and Cheapside streets.

Upon immersing myself in see **VALLEY VIEW** page B2

Looking at the Everyday with Joe R. Parzych

By NINA ROSSI

TURNERS FALLS – Joe R. Parzych’s photography exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center pulls together images of life in rural Franklin County across several decades. The photographs in “Photo Beat Past and Present: Moving Forward in Time, Capturing the Moment” present animals, wildlife, verdant hills and fields, shops, bridges, people, machinery – all the possibilities that a curious mind pointing a lens down these roads and into small towns might find.

It’s an insider’s viewpoint, for sure. As we go around the room looking at his work, Joe knows all the names and the backstories to the scenes, but our conversation often spirals back to his close relationship with his late grandfather, Joe A. Parzych.

That’s because he apprenticed with him as a freelance photojournalist from an early age. In fact, one can see a picture of little Joe with a 35 mm camera taking a shot of maple sugaring when he was not much higher than the bucket on the tree.

“My grandfather said, ‘I want to teach you something, Joe. Instead of going to Hallmark [Institute of Photography], I want to take you out in the world and give you hands-on experience,’” explains Joe R. “My grandfather was doing freelance photojournalism since 1947. He also ran an excavating business.”

Joe grew up on the family farm right across the river in Gill. His grandfather grew up there as well, one of 13 offspring of Polish immigrants. *Jep’s Place*, Joe A. Parzych’s honest and heartfelt memoir of the Depression years on the farm, appeared in these pages and is available from the library and on Amazon.

Joe’s father, Joe M. Parzych, lives on the farm still, but Joe R. has had his own apartment in Greenfield since last year. (There are a lot of Joes in his family –



Joe R. Parzych with photos of Turners Falls, part of his exhibit this month at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

going back 18 generations, he says.) Joe M. works at the Gill Greenery, a micro-farm operation that grows, packs, and distributes a variety of edible sprouts.

One of the aims of the show, according to Joe R., is to spread awareness of local farming. He approached Discovery Center visitor services supervisor Janel Nockleby about having an exhibit in the Great Hall and found that it would make a perfect lead into the “Crossroads: Change in Rural America” exhibit coming in February.

see **PARZYCH** page B5

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE

BY TROUBLE MANDESON

GREENFIELD – After weeks of holiday gluttony – I don’t know about you, but I’m still munching on candy canes and a tin of three-flavor popcorn – I think I’ll continue the trend of eating sweets by talking about dessert, my favorite part of any meal. I also want to investigate why we have an urge for sweet after savory.

I’m aware that it irks my wife when we’re in a restaurant and I ask for the dessert menu with the dinner menu. I mean, what if someone orders the last *crème brûlée* or *pot du crème* by the time I’m done with my meal!? I have no problem asking the server to hold one for me just in case, and even if wifey thinks it goes beyond the bounds of propriety, so be it. I will have my dessert.

When I was a kid, we always had dessert at the table following dinner, sometimes a handful of homemade chocolate chip cookies or a small dish of ice cream or sherbet. Our frozen desserts were limited to

Neapolitan-flavored ice cream – we would excavate the chocolate or vanilla, leaving the strawberry intact



The author’s famed biscotti, perfect with coffee. Everything gets thrown in, from coconut flakes to baked winter squash, and no two batches are ever alike.

– or rainbow sherbet, which I still love to this day. Once I took over doing the family shopping at around 12 years old, it wasn’t uncommon to find Rocky Road as well.

A quick aside: moving from west to east brought some uncomfortable truths – I cannot find a decent Rocky Road ice cream here. It barely exists; none of the local ice cream makers offer it, and the one commercial brand available is too sweet for my taste. Do you hear me, northeastern dairy dessert makers? Get thee to a marshmallow factory and churn us out some true Rocky Road. I swear I even found it with walnuts once... which is just so *wrong*.

Sometimes my mom made her own homemade ice cream for dessert. It was really ice *milk*, a slushy mix of milk powder, water, and sugar, with chopped-up peppermint pieces which she stuck in the freezer in a metal dish. Ugh. It was chunky and gritty, and not at all like “real” ice cream. It was another one

see **HEARTFELT** page B4

Pet of the Week



“MURPHY”

Meet Murphy, a stray who has been in foster care, learning about the good life. His foster says that he was shy at first, but after he was introduced to the wonderful world of toys, he knew he’d been missing out as a stray.

Murphy is a loving kitty who considers everyone his friend. He gives kisses, likes being held, and enjoys being petted. This boy craves attention to the point of demanding pets and getting himself in a tizzy.

Murphy is FIV+, and his distinctive look is related to a medical condition. Beauty is only fur deep anyway, and his beauty shines from deep within.

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

Senior Center Activities

JANUARY 16 THROUGH 20

WENDELL

A foot care clinic is held the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. Senior Health Rides are available. Contact Jonathan von Ranson (978) 544-3758.

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 1/16

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Kitchen Club

Tuesday 1/17

9:30 a.m. Tuesday Knitters
10 a.m. Fruit & Financials
1 p.m. Chair Yoga
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 1/18

9 a.m. Veterans’ Agent Hours
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise

11:45 a.m. Friends’ Meeting
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
1:30 p.m. Mobile Food Pantry
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 1/19

1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 1/20

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

ERVING

Erving Senior Center is open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and snacks daily.

Brown Bag lunch is the first Thursday of each month. Veterans’ Services are the first Wednesday of each month. For more information, please call (413) 423-3649.

Monday 1/16

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

Tuesday 1/17

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

Wednesday 1/18

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

Thursday 1/19

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

Friday 1/20

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

Cheapside deeds and families, my focus swiftly changed, moving from the store to the Hoit house, which I did not know was being sold, and the 210 acres on which it stood. Most of the land was originally owned by Hoit’s father-in-law, Samuel Childs.

My stumbling block was unfamiliarity with that upland terrain. It is far too busy these days to attract me as a walker, and plus, I don’t believe any of the acreage is or ever has in my time been open to hunting, so that eliminates another potential activity that could have drawn me in.

That’s why I chased down Wardy. I knew he could in quick order introduce me to the prominent reference points mentioned in deeds – features like the Point of Rocks, Bear’s Den, and Sachem’s Head. I also was confident he’d have something to add about Greenfield’s first golf course, which once stood on the southern end of the parcel, surrounding the stately hilltop multi-apartment house standing there today. In my earlier days, that building on the hill facing Cheapside Bridge was known as Hopecrest Manor.

Hoit was from Deerfield, the younger brother of wig-maker and tavernkeeper David Hoyt and the uncle of author Epaphras Hoyt, both of whom used what has become the accepted spelling of the surname. For some reason, Jonathan pre-

ferred the earlier spelling. So that’s what we’ll go with here: Hoit.

The Hoit “mansion house” on Deerfield Street came with a big barn and other outbuildings and stood elevated on a low terrace supported by a roadside concrete retaining wall across the street from Dave Samal’s old Mohawk Meadows Golf Course. The floodplain meadow, bordered south by the Deerfield River and west by the Green, was once a Native American artifact-collectors’ paradise, not to mention fertile tillage that produced for mid-19th-century owner David Reed Wait some of the finest tobacco money could buy.

By 1964, the dwelling had fallen into disrepair. So, Johnny-on-the-spot South Deerfield building contractor William Gass disassembled and rebuilt it in Old Deerfield. By November 1966 he had completed his very own interpretation, then known as the First Church of Deerfield’s parsonage.

Today the building, situated between Memorial and Wells streets, stands as a shining example of colonial architecture. It’s painted yellow with white trim that highlights fancy architectural embellishments. Old Deerfield is better for it, Cheapside worse for the loss of an important, historic building. Though, remember, Cheapside was part of Deerfield until 1896.

Had not Jim Terapane innocently nudged me into Cheapside research, I may have never discovered the

story of the Hoit house. Moving it was a much-publicized project at the time, but the event seems to have faded from collective memory. I’m thankful for being led to it, and for other discoveries made along the way, starting with locating the exact location of the old 8,000-acre line that separated Greenfield and Deerfield until the 1896 annexation. Formerly led to believe the town line was much closer to the Meridian Street Bridge, I found that it was almost 700 feet north of that point.

Yet there’s still much to learn about Cheapside. You’ve got Col. William Moore’s seven-story, late-18th-century commercial building along the Green River, the neighboring Franklin Furnace, and William Wait and Benjamin Swan’s cooper shop down the road. Also worthy of additional study are the likes of Isaac Abercrombie, Moses Bascom, William Wilson, Samuel Pierce, Hezekiah Goff, David Wells, John Russell, and many others – all historical figures who contributed to Greenfield’s identity as an important commercial and industrial center.

So stay tuned, and be patient. Expanding the historical record can and *must* be a slow, tedious process governed by the solemn commitment to avoid irresponsible, inaccurate information that’ll be repeated for decades.

Such information is inevitable and unfortunate, and only obscures the path to truth.



Surviving Breast Cancer

By Julie Cunningham

Part 31: Getting ‘Better’

AMHERST – The transition from “sick” to “better” is not as easy as you might think. I built a life around being sick. My job, my home, my partner all reflected my illness and how much energy I didn’t have, and the anxiety that ate at me. I honestly didn’t see a future at some moments. I didn’t know if I would live a year or two, or more, so I didn’t plan for it. I didn’t consider what a future might look like.

Then, suddenly, it *was* the future. Suddenly I was changing. Suddenly I was working more, working better, working smarter. Suddenly I was looking for a partner who I could live with long term, and a home that reflected my values and needs and wants. Suddenly I was thinking about who I wanted to be, not just surviving. Suddenly I wasn’t a patient.

It was more simple when I was a patient. I would come home and sleep. I would talk to my friends and family, sometimes, but mostly I would sleep. I would clean a little, be with my son, and sleep. Everything was about how much rest I could get because *boy*, was I tired.

As I become more of who I used to be, it’s like an unthawing. The parts of me I forgot about, the parts that want to experience life, are back. That’s amazing. And scary.

We want to control everything. We want to plan for every possible outcome: if we do *this* and *this*

happens, then I will do *this*. If my house catches on fire we will get the kids out, then call the fire department, then go stay with Grandma. If my spouse gets sick we have savings we can draw on. If our kids get sick, we have the best doctors we can call. We like backup plans, and backup plans for our backup plans.

But nothing is harder than planning a future and realizing *anything can happen*.

Nothing is harder than planning a future after having an aggressive cancer. Planning a future means thinking about what happens to my kid and my pets if I get sick again. It also means giving them everything I can while I am healthy. Spending time with my kid while I am healthy and taking care of my family while I am healthy is planning for the future.

One thing I realize is that I cannot control the people around me. They have their own way of doing things, and their own lives. Sometimes, it spills into mine. Especially immediately following an illness when I was so reliant on them. I can’t control the people around me or make them want what I want.

After an illness, I think that there is a tendency for friends and family to think that it is okay to control the patient. There’s a tendency to try to make the patient less independent, for fear of the illness returning. That way if the illness comes back, it’s

not so catastrophic – systems are already in place. But that’s not living.

After cancer, life seems so precious. Life after cancer is a gift. Every day is amazing. It’s a whirlwind of possibilities that I didn’t know I would have.

I took my son back to Boston last week. The last time we were in Boston overnight was 2019, a year and a half before I found my lump. I told him we’d be back in the summer of 2020. Then COVID hit, and I moved in, then out, of my boyfriend’s house, and right when I was finding a place for us to live, I found my lump. Everything came to a stop.

While I was in treatment I didn’t know if I would ever take him back to Boston. When we stepped out of the car back into the hotel, just after Christmas, it was a triumphant feeling.

In the spring, I am hoping to take him back to Lake George to do another trail ride and a lunch cruise. Lake George is one of my favorite places to stay, and we had so much fun there in October. This spring it will be almost exactly two years since I found my lump. Two years since I put my entire life into the hands of the doctors and surgeons who literally saved my life.

Before I found my lump, I was picturing a future I probably didn’t have. Now I’m moving towards a new reality: *something better*.

MOVIE REVIEW

Lamborghini: The Man Behind The Legend (2022)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – Lamborghini is a very well-known Italian luxury car brand, which apparently started out building tractors, just like Henry Ford did. The founder’s full name was Ferruccio Lamborghini. The movie *Lamborghini: The Man Behind The Legend* gives us a portrait of who this man was, and how he got started becoming who he was with cars.

Lamborghini is played in the movie by Frank Grillo, who I know is a reasonably well-known action film actor. We see him returning home after fighting in World War II and starting to get into building tractors with a friend. Lamborghini is shown to be a confident man who tries to get people to invest in his tractors – which they do, though it is also pointed out that they might be doing this because they pity him.

The undertaking takes a toll on his personal life with his wife, though he does end up having a son to his name. He is shown to be a man who is maybe better with machines than he is with people.

Lamborghini has a falling-out with his friend when he dates a girl his friend is interested in. We see him start to compete with Enzo Ferrari, the man behind Ferrari – played by Gabriel Byrne – and build his first Lamborghini. That man points out that people view Lamborghini as uneducated. This may be accurate, but I think this man was still



very good with machines.

At one point, we see a race between a Ferrari car and a Lamborghini car. It makes sense to see, since the car makers are competing against each other. I consider both of these cars to be very cool, but Lamborghini to be the more exotic of the two. If that race I mentioned happened in real life, I wonder which car won it.

Ferruccio Lamborghini is portrayed in the film as someone who is very focused on his legacy in connection to his car. If that is how he wanted to be remembered, through his car, then I think he got his wish. His car is very well-known.

Frank Grillo does a decent job in the film of portraying all the things I have mentioned about this man. I think people would agree with me when they see it. I think that is what a biographical movie about someone is supposed to do.

MOVIE REVIEW

Guillermo del Toro’s Pinocchio (2022)

By REBECCA TIPPENS

COLRAIN – I had a hard time writing this review because basically, all I want to say is: Do Not Pass Go, Do Not Collect \$200, just go see it! *Guillermo del Toro’s Pinocchio*, a full-length stop-motion animation film (with song), now in theaters and on Netflix, is a wonder.

I am happy to see that it has won and been nominated for multiple awards – some still pending. [Editor’s note: *Pinocchio* won “Best Animated Feature” at the Golden Globes on Tuesday.]

For those not savvy with the term “stop-motion,” Wikipedia explains that it is “an animated filmmaking technique in which objects are physically manipulated in small increments between individually photographed frames so that they will appear to exhibit independent motion or change when the series of frames is played back.”

Created with help from the Jim Henson Studio, all of the puppets, but especially the apparently wooden Pinocchio, are charmers. Equally beguiling and realistic, their personalities show a broad range of emotion, and they largely evolve as they make their way through life’s challenges. You will come to love (or appropriately, hate) them, while still being astonished by their characterizations.

I am still filled with the poignant images of Geppetto’s tears, and the cricket, voiced by Ewan McGregor, is beyond lovable. I laugh aloud, however, thinking back to how many times he should have been squashed to death yet miraculously resurrects, eventually returning to his home in Pinocchio’s heart. There is a great bit about that home-stead, beautifully beginning and closing the film with an image of a birth-giving pine cone.

I also laugh when I recall so many different incidents that Geppetto and Pinocchio face. For example, how they figured out how to exit the dog-



fish/sea monster’s belly. Humorously exciting!

Yet the lessons of the film are deep – the earnest but bumbling ways Pinocchio learns his own lessons, and the consciousness that evolves in Geppetto as he comes to love the puppet, created in part to compensate for the loss of his beloved son to fighter bombers, for the being he truly is, separate from his lost son.

Though the original novel *Pinocchio* was written in 1883, Del Toro has set the story in Mussolini’s Italy. This is a rather brilliant decision, as the forces of the Right – shown with their vision proscribed under the dictate of one almighty ruler, and El Duce’s demands for obedience – are operative in the world today, giving that much more weight to the film’s counterbalancing message: Determination and commitment are necessary to find your own path, your own truth, as you learn to see and deal with the machinations and duplicities of others, ultimately bringing you more in tune with your heart and deepening your care for those you love.

This film is inspiring, but with enough humor and adventure to not feel preachy. It is joyful, sad, surprising, clever, and thrilling, not to mention visually beautiful and *uber*-creative. Made without taking short cuts, it treats the viewer to lovely embellishments for their own sake.

You just have to see this version of *Pinocchio*. It is good medicine for your soul.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Paintball Losers Still At Large; Trash Smell; Hurt Owl; Unwelcome Invitation; Magic Boulder; Claim of Slander

Monday, 1/2

6:01 a.m. Caller states that on his way to work, he struck a deer on Lake Pleasant Road; states he has some damage to vehicle; requesting officer for report. Officer advises deer located on side of roadway and dispatched. Message left for DPW.

8:27 a.m. Caller from Avenue A would like it on record that a male has been hitting a small dog when he takes it outside to walk it. Caller left message for animal control as well.

8:47 a.m. Caller from Faren Avenue states that the upstairs neighbor is being loud and sounds like he is throwing things around the apartment. Male party agreed to turn down his music and keep himself quiet.

9:43 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street states that a new bottle of medication of hers has gone missing from the address she is staying at. Referred to an officer.

11:51 a.m. Caller states her 19-year-old daughter has not been heard from since Friday. Officer having Greenfield PD check on address where she was last seen. Involved female entered as missing into NCIC.

2:45 p.m. Walk-in would like it on record that his

home on Turners Falls Road was hit with multiple paintballs overnight. He has cleaned it up.

2:50 p.m. Caller from N Street states that one of the neighbors’ dogs is loose and walking around the neighborhood again. Referred to an officer.

4:38 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road states house and cars were hit by paintballs overnight. Report taken.

Tuesday, 1/3

4:47 a.m. Caller states he was at Greenfield Savings Bank withdrawing money and clipped a light pole behind the bank with his vehicle. Caller advised to return and await an officer. Officer advises no damage to vehicle; slight damage to light post.

4:20 p.m. Paperwork received from RMV to be served for immediate suspension due to a fatal accident preliminary. Officer attempting to serve paperwork on K Street. Served in hand.

4:22 p.m. Caller from Park Villa Drive states there is a bomb threat carved into his window sill that was not there this morning. Referred to an officer.

4:43 p.m. Caller complaining of burning trash smell near Grand Avenue and Crescent Street. Referred to an officer.

7:25 p.m. Call transferred from Shelburne Control; car vs. deer on Millers Falls Road. Referred to an officer.

9:44 p.m. 911 caller requesting boyfriend be removed from house. Officer advises verbal argument over rent money. Verbal warning. Male party leaving for night.

Wednesday, 1/4

9:35 a.m. Caller from G Street reports hearing a loud noise similar to gunshots in the area but is unsure where noise is coming from or what it is. Caller states noise has been constant since 9 a.m. Officer checked area; no issues.

1:58 p.m. Caller from L Street states her new car was keyed last night by her upstairs neighbors; states ongoing issues with them. Did not notice until she was leaving work to go home but insists her neighbors did it. Parks in the driveway overnight and states they did it on the side of the car not visible on her security cameras. Report taken.

10:36 p.m. Caller from G Street requesting officer to drive through neighborhood, as she was just getting home and was almost hit by a car speeding down the road without its headlights on, revving its engine and burning out tires. Officers advised. No car found in area. Will monitor area.

Thursday, 1/5

1:39 a.m. Officer out with car in Sheffield Elementary School parking lot; windows fogged up. Nobody with vehicle.

10:53 a.m. One party arrested following a motor vehicle stop at Food City.

2:10 p.m. Caller from Faren Avenue reports his neighbor is breaking glass in the upstairs apartment. All quiet on arrival. No answer at door.

3:17 p.m. Walk-in wants on record that his mother and child live on Montague City Road and there was a man outside harassing him, yelling that the reporting party was following him. Description provided.

3:27 p.m. Caller requesting officer to Fourth Street alleyway as adults and children seem to be swearing at each other and making threatening comments. Not physical at this time. Officer unable to locate parties.

Friday, 1/6

4:54 a.m. Caller states he hit an owl on Montague Street and it looks severely injured. Owl was walking around and has tucked himself under a bush in the yard. Officers leaving it alone for now; will check on it later. Attempted to call bird specialist twice; no answers. Spoke with environmental police, who advise they should have someone who can come out around 6 a.m.

9:30 a.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road would like it on record that a few days ago, the front of his house was hit by paintballs.

3:10 p.m. Caller states that a male in a tan sweatshirt with a beard just asked her 13-year-old son if he was high; and if not, if he would like to be; and if so, to meet him in the alleyway between Second and Third Streets. Caller would like officer to speak with male and have him move along. No person found matching description.

4:45 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road would like to report that her house was hit with paintballs; unknown when this occurred.

Saturday, 1/7

8:50 a.m. 911 caller from Central Street reports that her neighbor’s German shepherd just broke its leash and attacked her dog. Caller not sure if her dog is injured or not; needs to check. Investigated.

3:56 p.m. Caller from Connecticut River Liquor and Wine states that a male is asking everyone for money again. Caller would like him trespassed or cited for loitering because this is an ongoing issue. Advised of options.

9:47 p.m. Caller from Central Street states that a female is yelling and screaming at her boyfriend; states it has been going on for

approximately 20 minutes. Party was asleep on the mattress. No issues.

9:58 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street states there is a lot of yelling and it sounds like a male is throwing himself against the wall; requesting a well-being check on male and his mother who lives there as well. Parties were having an argument over a personal matter; advised to quiet down.

Sunday, 1/8

1:18 a.m. Caller reports a “boulder” in the roadway on Turners Falls Road; unsure if it is on Greenfield or Montague side. Greenfield PD and MPD officer advised. Officer advises cardboard box moved from roadway; no rock.

11:30 a.m. Caller from Cumberland Farms states a male party just came in and was yelling and stole a lighter. This is the second time this week he has done this in the store. Caller requesting trespass options. Advised of same.

1:53 p.m. Caller states that her daughter was bitten by two dogs today while running on Fosters Road. Looking for vaccine information on dogs. Offered numbers for ACO and kennel; declined at this time. States her husband is going to the address where it happened and ask if the dogs are vaccinated. Asked caller if she would like officer to come take report for ACO; declined at this time. Caller called back stating there is no rabies certificate at the location, but they had a rabies tag from a vet in Greenfield. Advised she would have to call them to see about the vaccine. Caller upset we cannot get this information for her now. Advised she should bring her daughter to get looked at and let medical professionals decide the next steps. Caller states she does not want her daughter to get a rabies vaccine. Again offered for a report to be made with an officer that we could give to the ACO. Caller hung up.

2:31 p.m. Caller looking to make a report with an officer as he is being slandered on Facebook by someone with a profile in Turners Falls. States they are posting about him molesting women via his business. Advised of options.

4:43 p.m. Party from Davis Street into station to speak to officer about attached parties and their six children unwanted at her house. Officer advises attached parties have been staying at location for months; they receive mail there. Attached parties are in the process of having reporting party evicted for not paying rent. All parties advised of options.

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HEARTFELT from page B1
of her cost-cutting measures when things were tight. These days I luxuriate in a pint of locally-produced dark chocolate, or make my own interesting flavors.

Growing up in the Depression era, my mom and her divorced Jewish mother were very poor as they moved from place to place around Los Angeles. I remember my mom telling me she might go out with friends to eat and only order a cup of hot water, to which she would add ketchup to make a thin tomato soup. This poverty mentality stuck with her, and she cooked everything from scratch, even if her version was far from the original.

Even today, I feel like a cheater in the kitchen if I don't prep all of my ingredients from scratch. If my mom did open a can, it was cream of chicken soup for one of her generic casseroles, but most of our meals started with chopping, dicing, and prepping the ingredients.

In today's economy we can appreciate our parents' ability to stretch a meal to feed everyone, especially as the cost of groceries climbs. As someone who loves to cook and experiment and has a fridge full of homemade condiments and sides, I appreciate the things my mother taught me from growing up in a life of "less than."

But I digress.
Although dessert didn't really appear in French cookbooks from the Middle Ages, there were recipes for



Sugar cookies rolled out thin, cut into hearts, and baked to a crispy crunch dotted with grains of turbinado sugar.

entremets, or interval dishes, both savory and sweet. The word "dessert" evolved from the 17th-century French verb *desservir*, meaning "to clear the table." As the linens were changed before the final course of a meal, generally a delicate fruit course or *le fruit*, the bourgeoisie took to calling this last course "dessert."

Over time, the visual presentation of the dessert became more important than its flavor. Elegant glass-and-metal structures would be served stuffed with whole plums or apples. Meticulously crafted sugar figures, oftentimes not even consumed, became the center of dessert displays; by the next century, dessert "specialists" would study architectural design in order to replicate it in sugar.

After the French Revolution, people began to riot over sugar as a decadent spoil of the rich. Indi-

vidual desserts began to be served rather than one spectacular visual effect. As sugar became more widely available, and with the advent of refrigeration to keep butter from spoiling, baking became simpler. By the late 19th century, dessert was available even to the lower classes.

So, why do we crave sweet after savory? It seems that our bodies crave a quick spike of energy to support our digestion, which is hard work for the body, and eating sweets helps this process along. We use energy to make more energy, which is called the thermal effect of food. This is the amount of energy it takes to digest, absorb, and metabolize the food we eat.

Craving sweets is also a psychological habit. We program our bodies to expect sweet after savory. For some, this satisfies and energizes them, while others may feel sluggish and bloated after eating sweets. It is worth being aware of when and how much sugar we consume. It's important to learn to control the insidious craving for sweets, especially with diabetes now so commonplace.

We may also crave sugar for the jolt of serotonin it produces. This makes us feel happier, calmer, and satisfied, and it's why it is so hard to give up sugar. I've started trying to eat less sugar by baking with date sugar, but I still find myself reaching for an offered chocolate, and I am eating way more of the caramel-covered popcorn than the cheese popcorn. It's a process, I think, to wean oneself down or off of sugar. My dad did it in his 40s after both of his parents died from complications related to diabetes, and I always admired his willpower.

But I'm not there yet. I love sweets too much to give them up completely, but I'm learning to appreciate more natural and less sweet ways of getting that same rush.

I'll leave you with a recipe for a simple yet rich cookie, made with honey rather than sugar. Try keeping these in the cookie jar – it's impossible!

Trouble lives in Greenfield with her wifey and energetically wrangles a farm office, loves to copyedit, write, and read, volunteers everywhere food is served, and has recently taken up painting.



TAHINI OATMEAL WALNUT COOKIES



MANDESON PHOTOS

Tabini Walnut Cookies are incredibly sweet and chewy, flavored with honey and cinnamon. The batch pictured here has dried cranberries and raisins.

6 Tbsp. of tahini
1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup walnut pieces
1 cup rolled oats
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
chocolate chips (optional)
raisins (optional)

Preheat the oven to 325°. Mix the tahini with the honey. Add in the walnut pieces, oats, and cinnamon, and chocolate chips or raisins if desired. Drop spoonfuls of batter onto a parchment-

covered baking tray. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes until just lightly browned. The cookies will harden as they cool. Make them small, as they pack a powerful punch.

Tahini is a source of essential fatty acids and aids in blocking deposits of cholesterol. Eat healthy while enjoying this very habit-forming recipe.

(From *Smart Cookies: High Fiber, Low Fat, No Sugar* by Jane Kinderlehrer, 1985: Newmarket Press.)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Sunset; Pile of Snow; Stun Gun; Morse Code; Hawk, Deer Unstuck

Friday, 12/2

4:53 p.m. Suspicious vehicle on French King Bridge. Party came from the woods advising she was taking pictures of the sunset.

Saturday, 12/3

4:50 p.m. Subject on the French King Bridge taken for evaluation.

Monday, 12/5

11:20 a.m. Received report that vehicles parked on the French King Highway were struck with paintballs. 6:30 p.m. Two-car accident reported on the French King Highway.

Tuesday, 12/6

5:59 p.m. Carbon monoxide hazard reported on Riverview Drive.

Wednesday, 12/7

6:57 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with a disturbance.

Thursday, 12/8

8:23 a.m. Responded to a vehicle accident, with injury, on Millers Falls Road in Montague. 9:31 a.m. Tree pieces reported on Hoe Shop Road. Passable, but will need to be raked out.

10:59 a.m. German shepherd loose on West Gill Road.

Friday, 12/9

3:20 p.m. 911 misdial from Conference Road. Voices in the background. No emergency. 5:02 p.m. Assisted Erving PD. Caller reported a Silverado all over Route 2 westbound; has almost had several head-on collisions.

Saturday, 12/10

1:35 p.m. Caller from Pisgah Mountain Road found a white lab with a pink collar they have never seen before. Returned to owner. 3:19 p.m. Responded to a suicide threat on the French King Bridge.

Sunday, 12/11

3:53 p.m. Assisted Northfield PD with accident on South Mountain and Fisher roads.

Monday, 12/12

9:52 a.m. Assisted Northfield PD with accident on Mount Hermon Station Road. 12:43 p.m. Served a warrant on Main Road. 6:56 p.m. Large pile of snow reported in the roadway on West Gill Road.

Tuesday, 12/13

5:10 p.m. Assisted Ber-

nardston PD with a medical emergency on Huckle Hill Road.

Thursday, 12/15

4:38 p.m. Suicide threat on the French King Bridge. Subject taken for evaluation. 6:22 p.m. Call from West Gill and Main roads reporting a white dog loose in the area.

Saturday, 12/17

3:16 a.m. Main Road-caller advises he struck a pole. No injuries. 10:12 a.m. Caller from the French King Highway states an individual in a blue car stunned her with a stun gun. 11:09 a.m. Caller from North Cross Road reports that hunters are on the property.

1:15 p.m. Caller reports being passed at East Main Street by Subaru going over 100 mph. 3:05 p.m. Served paperwork, Atherton Road.

5:52 p.m. Assisted Erving PD on East Main Street on a report that a white pickup struck snow and a sidewalk.

Sunday, 12/18

7:33 p.m. Party at the French King Highway and Barton Cove Road reports her "check engine" light came on. She is in a bad spot, worries she might get hit. 12:53 p.m. Helped a party on the French King Highway gain access to a locked vehicle.

Monday, 12/19

9:28 a.m. Assisted with a trespass order. 12:53 p.m. Helped a party on the French King Highway gain access to a locked vehicle. 5:29 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with a structure fire on Turners Falls Road.

Thursday, 12/22

8:35 a.m. Suspicious vehicle on dirt road near French King Bridge. 12 p.m. Assisted Northfield PD with an accident, Maple Street and Old Wendell Road. Parties transported.

3:21 p.m. Motorist from Main Road reports a dog loose in the area. Called the homeowner, confirmed the dog is back inside. 4:11 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with a vehicle that rolled over the guardrail.

Friday, 12/23

7:30 a.m. Tree on lines, French King Highway. 8:09 a.m. Tree and lines down on Ather-

ton Road. 8:27 a.m. Tree reported on secondary line on Center Road.

1:31 p.m. Caller from Main Road advises there is a blinking light coming from inside the building. She is concerned it may be someone signaling "SOS."

5:14 p.m. Limb blocking part of Main Road.

Saturday, 12/24

1:38 p.m. Caller from South Cross Road advises a dog wandered into their yard and they have it leashed.

5:27 p.m. Caller from the French King Highway requested an officer as she is having an argument.

Sunday, 12/25

2:33 p.m. Caller from Mountain Road advises that a big hawk is hanging upside-down in their chicken coop. Netting cut and hawk removed.

Tuesday, 12/27

5:43 a.m. Caller reports the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge is in glare ice. 10:07 a.m. Walnut Street caller reports road is covered in ice. 3:24 p.m. Loose dog reported in area of South Cross and Main Road.

Thursday, 12/29

12:30 p.m. Caller from Trenholm Way reported a deer stuck in the ice. Deer was then able to get out of the ice. 2:38 p.m. Parking issues reported on Riverview Drive. No problem observed.

Friday, 12/30

12:07 p.m. Two car-accident on the French King Highway. 5:01 p.m. Disabled vehicle on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

8:55 p.m. 911 call from the French King Highway. No voice contact; phone appears to be moving along Route 2.

Saturday, 12/31

11:19 a.m. Suspicious vehicle reported on the French King Bridge. Located out walking dog; no services required. Same advised no unattended parking over 30 minutes.

8:59 p.m. Caller from Walnut Street reports an ongoing issue with neighbors letting dogs out without a leash; afraid for his safety.

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Buying a Portable Generator or Solar Panel? Get a Power Meter.

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – Most of us have seen those big battery-powered “portable generators” and considered picking one up. Many models come with optional or bundled solar panels that promise to refill its chemically-powered electrical storage without paying the man and/or Eversource. It all sounds like some kind of scam, but it isn’t, as anyone with solar panels on their home can tell you.

But before you rush out to pick one up in anticipation of some spring or summer fun camping or on the road, you have a bit of research ahead of you.

To start, you need to understand how much power you’ll be using, and how or when it will be used. These portable generators are ultimately stuck with whatever capacity they have, and that can even be reduced over time as the structures and chemicals inside the battery are damaged from things like heat, charging speed, and holding their charge for very long.

If you plan to use a solar panel to charge things up – like on a boat, a van, or from a camping tent – the rate at which you can top up the generator is also a significant detail. It doesn’t matter how much those batteries can store if, at the end of the day, your use of electricity exceeds your ability to replenish it.

This measurement usually comes in watts or watt-hours. The former measures instantaneous power use, and the latter is a measurement of use over time, and can describe capacity.

These consumer units come in a lot of different names – battery-powered portable generators, power stations, batteries – and their capacities range from a couple hundred watt-hours to thousands, with output covering a similar range. The power generated by the solar panels for these generators varies a lot based on how big they are, but most will be somewhere around 80W to 200W per panel.

These are a lot of numbers to juggle if you don’t know how much power, or capacity, you need. If you aren’t familiar with the sort of calculations involved in determining these kinds of numbers – and even if you are – I have a bit of advice: buy a Kill-a-watt power meter, or one of its cheaper clones.

Rather than looking at the specifications of all the various gadgets you want to plug into the generator, you can use this meter to measure power use of the devices themselves. That way, if you have a particular setup you want to use while camping or on the road, you can just plug things together at home, route all the power through the meter – either at the same time or in batches – and use it the way you plan to on the road or in an emergency. This will give you real-world measurements of how much power you’ll use, without making you guess at things like the peaks, idle use, or

maximums under load.

That meter will be able to feed you not just the maximum output you’ll need, but the capacity you’ll require to use that equipment. In short, rather than being forced to guess or round numbers to worst-case estimates based on hard-to-read (and sometimes not fully accurate) ratings on power adapters, you can get precise true-to-life numbers for that portable fridge, CPAP machine, computer, radio, or projector.

I haven’t used every one of the different portable generator models out there, but I’ve reviewed a few in my time for other outlets, and they do actually work. When the power went out as part of Eversource’s repairs two years ago, I had a kit together that was enough to keep my computer powered to get work done, along with a solar panel matched to just barely meet my use, so the generator never ran out of juice.

I even have a more powerful set of panels and a beefier battery for emergencies, enough to keep the fridge and a few necessary appliances going, though I haven’t had to use them yet. They work great for camping, too. And if you’re on the road, companies make specialized panels for things like camper vans, with corresponding batteries better suited for cars, and the same goes for boats.

Even if you don’t plan on getting a portable generator or solar panels, these Kill-a-watt-style meters can be handy in a lot of other situations. As electricity costs continue to rise – and I personally winced to see the numbers – these meters can help you figure out what stuff at home might be consuming more power than you expect. A lot of things like TVs and stereos draw a surprising amount of power just sitting idle, and the meter can measure it. If you have a backup fridge or freezer in the garage, you can see if it’s consuming more power than you expected.

There are even 240V versions of these meters you can use to see if replacing that hot water heater, washer, or dryer is worth it. If you’ve gone full smart home, there are even certain devices, from companies like Sense and Emporia, that you can have installed at your breaker box to measure your whole home’s energy use at any given time.

Energy prices are likely to rise both short term and in the near future, according to both analysts and investors, as we make the switch to more renewable sources. Cutting our own usage is one way to keep those costs down. Whether you’re considering supplementing by installing solar panels at home or just making sure you’ve got enough juice to keep your phone charged on a camping trip, a cheap power meter is a good investment.

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.

PARZYCH from page B1

“He came in one day and said, ‘Hey, what do you think about me having a show here?’” says Nockleby, who came into the Hall while Joe was showing me around the exhibit. “We happened to have an opening for a January show, and I wanted something that was relevant to the Smithsonian’s ‘Crossroads’ theme. Joe’s was perfect.”

The Discovery Center is hosting this traveling Crossroads exhibit about change in rural America during February and March. It was created by the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, DC, which describes itself as “the world’s largest museum, education, and research complex.” The Friends of the Discovery Center applied for the opportunity through Mass Humanities, and Montague became one of the five Massachusetts towns chosen for the exhibit.

According to the Smithsonian, the month-long Crossroads exhibit “offers small towns a chance to look at their own paths to highlight the changes that affected their fortunes over the past century. The exhibition will prompt discussions about what happened when America’s rural population became a minority of the country’s population and the ripple effects that occurred.” (We will preview the exhibit, and more related events, in coming editions.)

Joe has a great appreciation for the Connecticut River, as well as the towns of Turners Falls and Gill. “You never know what you will see on the river. It makes you feel calm, and it is a great place to watch wildlife,” he says. A photo of the former walking bridge that crosses the power canal and goes into the old paper mill prompts Joe to tell me about his grandfather’s mother, who walked to that bridge from Gill barefoot.

One of Joe R.’s ambitions is to come out with a photography book. “Just pictures, no words,” he says. “You can make your own story, using your imagination and creativity.” He is looking for a local publisher to work with. He is also looking forward to getting a cat, and enjoys collecting vinyl records and art, playing guitar, and a little of everything else, too.

Included with the photos in the exhibit, however, is a bit of narrative in the form of several newspaper articles by and about Joe including some family history about his



A fisheye view of cows at the Zak Farm in Gill is paired with a family of geese Parzych spotted by the canal in Turners Falls.

great-great-grandfather George Carleton, who was a farmer and a Vermont state representative with only a high school diploma. “I would like to see us get back to grassroots, where regular people just run for office,” Joe says. “And when my grandfather saw our former president make fun of a reporter with autism, he was so shocked he almost cried.” Joe says he has a form of autism himself, and has been a client at the United Arc since age six. One of the things he enjoys most at the Arc are Coffee and Conversation advocacy sessions with local legislators.

I asked Joe what he thought makes his work unique.

“One thing is that I see everyday subjects, especially during the pandemic,” he answered. “Nature and stuff. People should take their time. It was hard during the pandemic, we

haven’t had something like this since 1919. It is different. It is good that people are coming out and enjoying life now, and you only live once. It’s like an adventure!”

Come to a reception on Saturday, January 28 from 1 to 3 p.m. with Joe, and see some of his “everyday” scenes to remind yourself of the rural bounty that slumbers under gray skies and sheets of ice and snow until the spring thaws work their magic.

Keep an eye out on local TV stations for interviews with Joe, and you can find out more about the coming Smithsonian Crossroads traveling exhibit at www.greatfallsdiscovery-center.org and in this paper!

The Great Falls Discovery Center is open Tuesdays from 10 to 4 p.m., and Wednesdays to Sundays from 10 to 5 p.m.



Parzych talks about finding the beauty in everyday scenes, like these photographs he took in Shelburne Falls.

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The Children's Page

YONERDOD ILLUSTRATION

THE LOVELIGHTS HIT HARD TIMES
PART 5
WORDS BY BEVERLY KETCH
PICTURES BY HANNAH BROOKMAN



ON THROUGH BRUSHES AND BRIARS THEY STRUGGLED UNTIL FINALLY THEY FOUND FIGARO UP IN A TREE, LOLLING COMFORTABLY ACROSS A WIDE BRANCH AS IF NOTHING HAD EVER HAPPENED, AND SPOT CURLED UP BELOW ON A VERY SOFT-LOOKING TUFT OF MOSS.

THE WOODS WERE BEGINNING TO DARKEN, AS CLOUDS ROLLED IN ABOVE THE FOREST CANOPY, AND THEY ALL NOTICED AT ONCE THAT MUSIC WAS FLOATING THROUGH THE AIR. VIOLA LIFTED FIGARO OUT OF THE TREE AND CHELLA SCOOPED UP LITTLE SPOT, HUGGING HIM CLOSE TO HER HEART, STILL BEATING HARD AFTER THEIR RACE THROUGH THE WOODS.



ELDA WAS DRIFTING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE MUSIC, AND QUIETLY THEY ALL FOLLOWED.



THEY HADN'T WALKED FAR BEFORE THEY CAME UPON THREE HOBOS FROM WHOM MARVELOUS MUSIC EMERGED. SITTING AROUND A CAMPFIRE AND PLAYING OLD INSTRUMENTS THAT LOOKED AS PATCHED-TOGETHER AS THEIR RAGGED OLD CLOTHES, THEY SANG...



THE WONDERFUL VOICES AND THE FINGERS DANCING ON THE INSTRUMENTS MESMERIZED THE SISTERS. BUT WHEN THE HOBOS FINALLY LOOKED UP AS THEY FINISHED THE SONG, THEY FELL BACK OFF THEIR STUMP SEATS RIGHT ONTO THE GROUND, SO SURPRISED WERE THEY TO SEE THE THREE SISTERS, AS IF THEY HAD APPEARED OUT OF THIN AIR!



THEY LEAPT TO THEIR FEET, SCRAMBLING TO PUT THEIR HATS ON THEIR HEADS, NO SOONER THAN TO TIP THEM TO THE LADIES.

THEY SOON MADE FRIENDS, AND CHELLA SANG "ALBERTA, LET YOUR HAIR HANG LOW," A SONG THEY ALL KNEW. THEN ONE OF THE MEN LET VIOLA HAVE A TURN PLAYING THE BANJO AS THEY ALL DANCED AND CLAPPED ALONG.



JUST AS ELDA BEGAN TO TELL A TALL TALE FROM THE OLD DAYS, THE SKY OPENED UP ON THEM WITH A DOWNPOUR OF RAIN AND PUT OUT THE FIRE, DROWNING THE CAN OF BEANS THAT HAD JUST STARTED TO BUBBLE AND STEAM AND THAT THEY HAD ALL PLANNED TO SHARE! WOULD THEIR TROUBLES NEVER END? TO BE CONTINUED...

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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THURSDAY, JANUARY 12

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Dari Bay, Ruby Lou, The Musical Chairs*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Young Shakespeare Players present *Twelfth Night*. Free. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Space Camp, Bricklayer, Rong*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Cass McCombs, Kolumbo*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Young Shakespeare Players present *Twelfth Night*. Free. 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Mystery Train Records, Amherst: *Rootless, The Eye, Sagan and Sigourney, Cycles Inside*. Free. 5 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open Mic*. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Rave In Capricorn* with DJs Aoife,

Nitu, and Bux Wild. \$ 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Rosie Porter & the Neon Moons*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Wondertwins, Vandal Flag, Misery Quilts*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

The O's Music Bar, Sunderland: *RJ McCarty*. \$ 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Back O'Town Cajun Band, Planet Zydeco*. \$ 1 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Skytigers, Plunge Pool, Perennial Quest, Mark of Wrath*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *Webb Crawford, Technical Reserve, Liz Tonne, Krammer-White/O'Hara*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown*. Free. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dead Collective*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20

The Perch at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Burning Sun, Ex-Temper*, more. \$ 7:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Sunburned Hand of the Man, Franklin Mint, Mountain Movers, Bulle*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Gaslight Tinkers*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

Mount Toby Friends Meeting-house, Leverett: *Jim Sharkey*. \$ 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Surrealist Games and Prepared Piano* with Roger Clark Miller. \$ 7 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Cloudbelly, Wallace Field*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Old 78 Fall Festival Reunion*, with *Woody & the Rebel Alliance, rice: an American Band, Whalom Park, MC Force*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Thus Love, Lahnah, Prune*. \$ 8 p.m.

Calvin Theater, Northampton: *Last show ever?* \$\$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

Next Stage Arts, Putney: *Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem*. \$ 4 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Thus Love, Carinae, Tilden*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Masala Jazz*. Free. 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Zay, King Vick, Melodias, Muda, Kony, Fatty Thicc, Zasder, Recklezz*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Cheap City, The Leafies You Gave Me, Bocek, PWRUP*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *The Dust-bowl Revival, The Mary Jane Jones*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Two-Step Night* with *Les Taiauts, The Honky Tonk Angels*. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Goblet, Jeopardy, Slob Drop, Oziem, Jonee Earthquake Band*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Lou Barlow*. \$ 8 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Big Head Todd and the Monsters*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass & Beyond*. Free. 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Jaunty Monte Arty Party*. \$ 3 to 5 p.m.

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown: *Sam Prekop, Greg Davis, Kryssi Battalene/Wednesday Knudsen duo*. \$ 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

Temple Israel, Greenfield: *Stephen Katz, Klez Cabal*. \$ 4 p.m.

DCU Center, Worcester: *The Judds: The Final Tour*, with *Ashley McBryde, Martina McBride*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2

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

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Four Rivers Charter School Annual Variety Show*. Free. 7 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Bill Nace* record release, *Stella Kola* record release, *Matt Krefting, Hollow Deck*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *GZA*. \$ 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Adam Reid & the In-Betweens, Sailor Down, Julie Cira*. \$ 8:30 p.m.



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EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Photo Beat, Past and Present: Moving Forward in Time, Capturing of the Moment.* Photographs by Joe R. Parzych. See article on Page B1. Through January 29. Reception Saturday, January 28 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Goose Divine Energy, Greenfield: *Donna Estabrooks*, paintings. Through January 15.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Admin Reveal*, a collection of works by Looky Here manager Hannah Brookman. Receptions on Friday, January 27 and Friday, February 24 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Von Auersberg Gallery, Deerfield Academy: *Looking Glass.* Rachel Portesi's hair portraits. Collodion tintypes, Polaroids, Viewmaster 3D, and video exploring female identity in portraits that display hair in sculptural forms. Through March 1. Reception this Sunday, January 15, from 5 to 7 p.m.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *Season of Light*, member artists' holiday shop. Through January 15.

Shelburne Arts Coop Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Season of Wonder*, members' show. Through January.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Birds*,

paintings by Keith Hollingworth. Through January.

Burnett Gallery, Amherst: *Spare*, photographs by Sarah Reid. *New Work*, metal sculpture by Jon Bander. Through January 29.

Hosmer Gallery, Forbes Library, Northampton: *A Mosaic Journey, Peregrinations on Being Human.* Cynthia Fisher reflects in mosaic on the human need for creativity, and pursuit of knowledge, and understanding. Through January 30.

Anchor House, Northampton: *Fran's Emails*, collaborative works by Fran Henry, Walter Korzek, and Ken Gagne including emails, woodcuts, assemblage, and more. *Somber vs. Psychedelic*, oil paintings by Ben Hotchkiss. *Invoke*, abstract imagery by Sara Gately. Reception this Friday, January 13 from 5 to 7 p.m. Through January 28.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: *The New Herbarium*, fungus and plant images by Madge Evers; *We Feel Our Way Through When We Don't Know*, group show; *The Space Between Memory and Expectation*, large-format photographic installations by Renate Aller; *Moons and Internment Stones*, rock and moon paintings by Alison Moritsugu; and *(de) composed*, sculpture by Judith Klausner. All through February 12. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

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