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



YEAR 21 - NO. 10

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

\$1.50 **JANUARY 26, 2023**

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD Swamped By New Election Laws, Town Clerk Asks to Expand Staff

By JEFF SINGLETON

"With the new Votes Act, our office has hit the wall. We don't have enough time in our day to accomplish all the work we need to do."

The comment from Montague town clerk Deb Bourbeau, at Monday's selectboard meeting, commenced a discussion of her request to add a staff member to her department in the upcoming fiscal year. The staff increase, Bourbeau said, is a response to the increased workload caused by the expansion of mail-in and early in-person voting required under state legislation passed last June, codifying reforms initiated

during the COVID pandemic.

Bourbeau told the board that her budget was "cyclical" - meaning that the higher staffing level is ostensibly needed only during state and federal election years - but that recent state requirements, particularly related to mail-in voting, have been a "nightmare that just knocks other work off the table... We just caught up at the end of December with work from 2020. That's two years ago!"

Bourbeau also noted the barrage of public records requests she and other clerks have recently received, which she said she believed were

see MONTAGUE page A7

PUBLIC DISPLAYS

National Exhibition Challenges Towns to Probe Rural Identity



Interactive panels in the traveling Smithsonian exhibit Crossroads: Change in Rural America, shown here in a previous stop on the tour, explore themes of rural identity, land, community, persistence, and change.

One In Three Fuel Assistance Requests OK'd As Emergencies

By SARAH ROBERTSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY - With one week until Groundhog Day, thousands of local fuel assistance applicants still do not know whether they will receive aid this winter, as a short-staffed department at Community Action Pioneer Valley (CAPV) continues to work through a record number of applications. Requests for emergency assistance, which move applicants to the front of the line, have increased dramatically this year, and some customers have not received emergency delivery as promptly as promised.

Applications from Franklin and Hampshire counties for the federally-funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are processed by CAPV under a contract with the state. Benefits granted to help pay for fuel and electricity range from \$840 to \$2,200 annually, depending on household size, income, and heating costs.

As the Montague Reporter detailed in a December 15 article, the program has been delayed this year by complications of a new online application system, staffing shortages, and increased demand.

CAPV reported at that time that it had processed 2,875 of the 6,684 total applications it had received. In the six weeks since then, according see FUEL page A5

Wet Snowfall **Kills Electricity** In Eastern Hill

A WONDERLAND



Reader Linda Hickman took this photo last Saturday on her farm in Wendell. Monday morning our Wendell correspondent Josh Heinemann lost power, along with hundreds of others in the town. We asked for a report, and Josh obliged.

By JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - Electricity is out, the soft dirt road is not plowed. Branches, limbs and treetops are breaking from the snow load, and crashing to the ground. We go out on our road and cut limbs until they're small enough to throw them to the side. Before darkness I need to collect candles and flashlights. We have two solar powered lights, but I don't know where one is.

Drop a bucket into the well and fill three lidded buckets with water while the sky is still light. We have a gas cook stove and the burners light well with a match. The oven has an electric igniter so we cannot bake. The cellar wood stove keeps the house almost

comfortably warm.

After the things that electric motors usually do are completed, we can sit.

The house is peaceful and quiet. I never thought the house was noisy, but this is really quiet, calming. I can hear the quartz clock counting the seconds. After the branches have stopped breaking, I can hear snow falling.

I did not think to charge my phone, so I can't waste time looking at it. After sundown, the candles do not give enough light to read. I lived two good years in a cabin without electricity. We had kerosene lamps that gave enough light to read.

By NINA ROSSI

TURNERS FALLS - A traveling exhibit on rural American life, Crossroads: Change in Rural America, will be stopping at the Great Falls Discovery Center for six weeks, starting with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. next Sunday, February 5. Crossroads was created by the Smithsonian Institution as part of its Museum on Main Street series of touring exhibitions, and its schedule includes stops in Delaware, Maryland, South Dakota, North Carolina, and Massachusetts.

The Smithsonian worked with the nonprofit group Mass Humanities to bring the exhibit to six small towns in Massachusetts. Applications to become a host town were taken during 2021, with winning locations announced that August. Only towns with fewer than 12,000 residents were eligible, and applicants were required to show partnerships with other community groups to produce and host related events during the exhibition.

Turners Falls was chosen thanks to the work of the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center (GFDC), who put in a local application in partnership with the Montague Public Libraries, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, the Museum of Our Industrial Heritage, RiverCulture, New England Public Media, and others. Friends secretary Sarah Doyle said the \$10,000 grant is probably the largest the group has ever gotten.

The overarching theme of the detailed, interactive kiosk displays that will fill the center's Great Hall is change. These text and pictures invite the viewer to consider questions on themes of "identity," "land," "community," "persistence," and "managing change." The displays have interactive components, with opportunities for visitors to reflect about prompts and contribute their own thoughts.

The exhibit narrative points out, for instance, that change "has always shaped rural life, including migration, business growth and decline, school consolidation, and conflicts of class, gender, race, and ethnicity."

Most of the changes elaborated on in the Crossroads exhibit have taken place during the last 100 years. In 1900, 40% of the people in the US lived in rural communities, and today that figure is 18%. According to the United Nations, the year 2007 marked the first time that the global population lived mostly in urban areas.

Can rural identity, then, also be see **EXHIBIT** page A4

Towns for Days By REPORTER STAFF

FRANKLIN COUNTY - Freez-

ing rain turned to snow Monday as a winter storm moved through, with heavier accumulation in the eastern hill towns. New Salem topped local snowfall totals released Monday night by the National Weather Service at 7.7", while Amherst, two towns away, received only 2.3".

Despite these modest totals, the snow was wet and fast, and trees were laden from the previous Friday. In Wendell this proved a recipe for chaos as trees and limbs fell onto roads and power lines. Residents reported outages as early as Monday morning. On Tuesday morning the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency reported that over 16,000 households in the state were still without power, three-quarters in National Grid's distribution territory. The company's outage map showed a swath through the north-central part of the state, with hundreds affected in each of Wendell, Winchendon, Westminster, and Pepperell.

Many Wendell residents' power was restored Wednesday morning, though that night, National Grid warned it had "secured 300 fieldbased crews" ahead of another storm.

We were amused when we went out into the world, and electricity was out there also.

Montague, Cannabis Company Settle on New Host Agreement

By JEFF SINGLETON

The town of Montague has radically altered its "host community agreement" with the cannabis company 253 Organic, LLC, which opened its doors on Millers Falls Road to the public in 2019. The amendments to the agreement endorsed by the town selectboard on Monday virtually eliminate all socalled "community impact fees," which totaled over \$391,000 in the last fiscal year (FY'22), according to town accountant Carolyn Olsen.

The selectboard's vote is a re-

sponse to new state legislation passed last August which sought to address complaints that the previous rules on impact fees created barriers to minority-owned businesses and failed to help communities negatively impacted by the War on Drugs.

253 Organic, now doing business as 253 Farmacy, operates a combined grow, production, and retail facility in the former Hallmark Imaging building at the entrance to the airport industrial park. The original 2018 host community agreement, required before the state Cannabis

see HOST page A5

GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE Plain Talk On Six-Town Proposal

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Meeting with a scant quorum of three members from Gill and two from Montague, the regional school committee approved a preliminary FY'24 budget Tuesday evening of \$23,744,591, a 5.1% increase over the current year.

A number of revenue factors are still unknown, chiefly the district's Chapter 70 aid from the state, which

is calculated based on a formula that incorporates district enrollment. "It's a real difficult year when there's a new governor, because of the timing that they release their budget," business manager Joanne Blier warned.

Blier reviewed a current operating statement and predicted a year-end surplus of "about \$200,000," which the district would roll into its excess and deficiency (E&D) account.

see GMRSD page A6

Slushy Clumps; Avid Forecasts; Slippery Travel In Spots

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The Montague Reporter

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The Conditions

It is impossible to say who the first person was who died defending land and from destructive development – the ruining of land, after all, went hand in hand with the taking of land to ruin. In the face of colonialism, in particular, untold numbers fought and fell in struggle that can only be said to be environmentalist in that they fought to preserve the environment that provided the conditions for their freedom.

The modern emergence of environmentalism as a cause seen as separate from freedom had to do with the way the two split on the notion of property. Men with property, after all, were free to ruin it, and the environment, that noble cause, had become whatever places remained outside of men's property but were nevertheless affected by it: the air far above our heads, for example, which mixes and moves continuously with the wind, or the water far beneath the earth.

The river that washes our waste out to the endless sea, the shale reserves that extend far beyond anyone's land claim, the millionfold flocks of birds or buffalo and schools of whales or fish: as these things came into focus as objects to the protection of common reason, conservation was born as a force that limits freedom.

The first "environmentalist" killed in these United States, therefore, may be Guy Bradley. Bradley lived in the lawless swampy boom town at the southern tip of Florida - Tequesta land, originally, though the Tequesta were forcibly resettled in Cuba by the Spanish or fell sick and died or fought and died. In

Most environmentalists killed in the modern era have not been police. Ken Saro-Wiwa was an actor and teacher before becoming a leader in the struggle of the Ogoni people against the Nigerian military government and Royal Dutch Shell. When four rival Ogoni leaders were murdered, the government apprehended Saro-Wiwa, tried him, and executed him. The court of international opinion, on the other hand, has held him to be a martyr.

Berta Cáceres was a teacher, too, when she became an activist. She became a key ally of the Lenca people in their resistance to a World Bank-backed project to build four hydroelectric dams on the river that provided the condition for their freedom. The movement trespassed and blockaded construction, and the government charged Cáceres and other leaders with coercion and damaging a company's interests. The court of international opinion disagreed, and Cáceres was already globally revered in 2016 when four men hired by the company broke into her home and shot and killed her. Three of the men were trained by the US military in Georgia.

Human rights watchdog group Global Witness has counted over 1,700 people murdered in the last decade while trying to stop extractive projects on their lands. Three-quarters were in Latin America, and 40% were indigenous.

Last Wednesday morning Georgia state troopers shot and killed an activist they were trying to evict from a land occupation on the outskirts of Atlanta. Manuel Esteban



Morgan, from Shutesbury, has worked at the Wendell Country Store for the past two or three years. In his other life, he says, he makes camera-less animations on old film strips.



Downhill Skateboarder Objects to Epithet

Regarding R.I.P. Knox's January 12 letter, "Idiots!":

There does not have to be blaming or name-calling to call attention to a serious systemic problem. I question whether you were trying to rally support to protect the lives of those who have to commute up Turners Falls Road on foot, or to use insults to gain support for your personal fears. That is bullying.

Some people do not have the means to drive, or to buy the appropriate hi-vis clothing you want. Some likely do not feel safe walking toward 40 mph oncoming traffic next to a guard rail, as you assert is the "right" thing to do.

I hope you will consider more

than someone's (my) pronouns the matter next time before calling others "idiots." There is a need for some sort of action - whether a sidewalk (full or interspersed), some more lights, or a pedestrian way up Canada Hill.

The most obvious, a sidewalk, would entail a major excavation, millions of dollars, weeks of time, and a huge disruption to the commute for hundreds of people. I agree, it would be great – it is also not so easily done.

Please, continue to drive carefully and watch out for our neighbors as you are – that is a role we can all play when transiting that road, until concrete calls to action are made to get our tax money used for this project. Call town offices, as a start.

For the record: I did not ride my board in "between" cars. I rode on the right side of my lane, never breaking lanes or riding on the yellow as your comment suggests. I wore a neon vest and a neon reflector on my white helmet. I used eye contact and hand signals to rear-ward vehicles to communicate if it was safe to pass, or if they should give me room. Your recount was incorrect.

See you soon, maybe. Yours truly,

> **D. Dedischew** (the "Idiot") **Turners Falls**

Bradley's time a craze for hats with ornamental plumes inspired hunters to slaughter Florida's flamingos and egrets by the millions.

Noticing things went extinct, America passed laws drawing lines between hunting and poaching, and banning trade in poached goods. Bradley was a plume hunter who stopped when others insisted on continuing, and in 1902 the American Ornithologists' Union hired him as a warden to police the vast area now known as Everglades National Park.

Bradley was shot dead in 1905 by a plume hunter named Smith and his corpse floated off on a skiff through the swamp. Apprehended, Smith claimed Bradley had shot first and that he had shot back in self-defense. A local jury found him not guilty of murder, but in the court of national opinion, Bradley was an innocent, and a martyr.

Paez Terán, who went by "Tortuguita" at the encampment, was a 26-year-old forest defender of Afro-Venezuelan heritage, and a participant in a movement to prevent two parcels of urban forest - a former prison farm that has reverted to wildness – from being destroyed into a film soundstage and a police urban combat training facility, respectively. The struggle over the socalled Welaunee Forest had drawn national attention, and the police were coming down hard.

Terán is accused of shooting first, and many of the campaign's supporters do not believe this to be true. Public opinion is sharply divided. Whatever happened, though, their death marks a transition: Even here in the US, people fighting for the environment are increasingly starting to act as if they are fighting, not for a noble cause, but for the conditions of their own freedom.

EXAMINING OUR TRUE ESSENCES

The old metric for how much COVID-19 virus is circulating in local communities is no longer useful, as the withdrawal of PCR testing from wide public availability and its replacement with home rapid-test kits has substantially severed that public health signal. This year there has been a shift toward developing a better metric: the number of copies of the virus are swimming around in a given town's sewage on a given day. The state Department of Public Health portal now offers data from wastewater plants in Montague, Greenfield, Athol, Sunderland, South Deerfield, Hadley, Amherst, and beyond.

> This chart shows all the data in the portal from the Montague Clean Water Facility, which has submitted 23 test results from samples taken of its influent since last August 15.



The Montague Reporter

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Published weekly on Thursdays.

Every other week in July and August. No paper the fourth week of November, or the final week of December.

PHONE: (413) 863-8666

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Montague Reporter 177 Avenue A Turners Falls, MA 01376





Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The **Gill-Montague Educational Fund** has provided support for student enrichment projects, scholarships, grants, roses for graduates, and more since 2005. Last year they changed their email software and lost a bunch of contacts in the process.

They ask that folks help spread the word about resubscribing to their newsletter by visiting *www.thegmef.org*.

January's Franklin County Chamber of Commerce breakfast will focus on the *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* traveling exhibit, coming to the Discovery Center from February 5 to March 18 (see article, Page A1).

The breakfast program, held at Greenfield Community College (GCC) this Friday, January 27 from 7:30 to 9 a.m., will feature a panel consisting of Molly Cantor, Jeremy Goldsher, Erin MacLean, and Janel Nockleby discussing the themes of the exhibit: identity, land, community, persistence, and change.

All are welcome; register at *franklincc.org* or (413) 773-5463.

The Shea Theater in Turners Falls announces a new series of concerts in its lobby, titled **Foyeur Enjoyment at the Shea's Lounge.** Their first takes place this Friday evening, January 27. The notice says no one will be turned away for lack of funds at this pay-what-you-can event featuring Opel, a Springfield-based band described as having "driving bass, complex percussion, dark melodic keyboards, and intense electric guitar leads." Doors open at 7, and the music starts at 7:30 p.m.

The People's Medicine Project is offering a course for anyone who is interested in **learning how to chart their menstrual cycle**. Reasons for learning these skills include managing contraception or preparing to conceive, managing cycle symptoms, and optimizing menstrual health.

The four classes will be taught on Fridays, noon to 2 p.m. over Zoom, beginning January 27 and continuing on Feb 3, 17, and 24. Payment plans and trade are available for those who need assistance with the class fee. Learn more and register at *www.freebodyfertility.com*.

The National Spiritual Alliance offers their **Psychic Fair** again this Saturday, January 28.

Come to the temple at 2 Montague Ave in Lake Pleasant and get a psychic reading or reiki between 11 a.m and 4 p.m. Reserve your spot in advance at *spiritualallianceusa.org*.

The reception for **Joe Parzych's** *Photo Beat* exhibit is going to be a pizza party! Stop by the Great Hall of the Discovery Center in Turners Falls this Saturday, January 28, from 1 to 3 p.m. to meet Joe and admire his excellent photography exhibit.

This weekend the Shea will hold a "Jaunty Monte Arty Party" at the Shea for **Monte Belmonte**, celebrating his retirement as a DJ from WRSI and his new job with NEPM.

The fun starts at 3 p.m. this Saturday – drinks, music, jokes, comedic scampering of some kind – followed by a virtual concert series starting at 8 p.m. called "Get Down With Your Home Town" featuring Indigo Girls, Suitcase Junket, Martin Sexton, Cris Williamson, and many more performers.

The Get Down, which runs on both Saturday and Sunday, January 28 and 29, is a benefit for the North Star Learning Center, the Institute for the Musical Arts, and the Shea Theater that you can watch from your couch at home. Find out more at *www.getdownhometown.com*.

Got an unruly apple tree? Learn how to prune it this Saturday, January 28 at Mineral Hills Winery in Florence. Jon Clements leads this workshop sponsored by the UMass Extension Service. You will learn the basics of pruning, including tools and techniques.

Registration is required at *bit. ly/3kb5s5U*. For more information, email *clements@umext.umass. edu*. The snow date is Saturday, February 4.

Learn about the Extinction Rebellion's acts of civil disobedience, urging governments to act with justice on the climate emergency, at a virtual "open house" this Saturday, January 28 at 2 p.m. The group, with over a thousand groups in 86 countries, plans non-violent direct action. Massachusetts alone

has several chapters. Register at *tinyurl.com/xropen* to get the link.

The Cancer Connection invites those recovering from or in treatment for cancer and their caretakers to attend **virtual Feldenkrais sessions** on Mondays from 1 to 2 p.m. with Joshua Elbaum.

The sessions involve gentle movement in supported positions to "help you breathe easier, sit taller, and have more capacity for doing what you love."

If you are interested, call the Cancer Connection to register at (413) 586-1642. All programs from the Connection are free.

Música Franklin is holding a community concert at Temple Israel, at 27 Pierce Street in Greenfield, next Wednesday, February 1 from 5 to 6 p.m. Performances by staff and students will feature music by Black composers in honor of Black History Month. Composers include Robert Glasper, Florence Price, Cynthia Erivo, and Gloria Matlock, along with traditional spirituals.

There will be some some interactive elements where the audience can participate. The concert is free, and the public is invited.

Concerned about **winter homelessness in our region**? Join the first-ever Winter Walk Western Mass, a two-mile demonstration event on Sunday, February 5 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. starting from Court Square in Springfield.

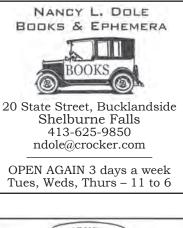
The demonstration takes place during winter's coldest month to raise awareness about conditions affecting the homeless. Hot cocoa and refreshment are offered to walkers. Sign up at *www.winterwalk.org*.

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OPED Ratepayers Bearing Burden of High Energy Costs

By LEIGH RAE

MONTAGUE CENTER - I recently opened my January Eversource bill, and to my surprise it was around 25% more than the same time last year, even though based on actual meter readings our usage was around 3% less for the same timeframe. Our bills have been increasing significantly during the past year, even though our usage has not changed in any material way. Our supply rate now exceeds 21 cents per kilowatt-hour (KWh). According to the US Energy Information Administration, the cost for electricity in Massachusetts is among the highest in the nation. As a result of my surprise at the January bill, I set out to understand better why electricity rates have gone up so much. Every article I read attributes the increase in electricity cost to the war in Ukraine, and the increased price for natural gas, from which much of our electricity in Massachusetts is generated. The articles highlighting the increased cost of electricity often end with a conciliatory note about how ratepayers in Massachusetts can get financial relief from the Commonwealth. A recent segment on New England Public Media highlighted some of the challenges people have been having securing this relief. Thus, it may not be a viable solution for many. To learn a bit more, I went to Eversource's financial statements, which are available through December 2021 on the internet. The financials indicate that revenues, net income, price per share, and dividends have all been increasing steadily – both for the parent

company, Eversource, and for NSTAR Electric, its subsidiary that provides electrical service to 140 Massachusetts towns including Montague.

According to Macrotrends, a research platform for stocks and commodities, the return on equity (ROE) to Eversource shareholders remained at or above 8.49% throughout the first nine months of 2022. (It is only available on the site through September 2022.) In fact, that ROE has not dipped below 8% since mid-2013. By comparison, investors in the S&P 500 during 2022 saw negative returns throughout much of the same period. of the current market volatility. Will we also have to bear the cost of future investment, as energy markets continue to fluctuate due to unprecedented global and local challenges?

A bill that has just been introduced by our state representative Natalie Blais, with co-sponsorship from Mindy Domb, proposing to cap returns to shareholders on utilities gating volatility, and possibly achieving better rates for the entire community. In 2017 a community aggregation program was established among 13 towns in Franklin County, and there are examples of these community aggregation programs across the state.

Recognizing that the world is becoming more and more complex, and that change

All to say that shareholders continue to benefit very nicely from their investment in Eversource.

I was also interested in looking at capital expenditures, to try to glean more about how Eversource is investing in the future. The company made significant capital expenditures in 2021. For NSTAR Electric, capital expenditures in 2021 are listed at \$1.0492 billion in the company's 2022 financial review, a roughly 15% increase over the previous year.

From reviewing the notes in the 2021 annual report pertaining to capital expenditures across the whole company, expenditures among Eversource's electricity subsidiaries – NSTAR, Connecticut Light & Power, and the Public Service Company of New Hampshire – are projected to be at or close to the same level annually for the next five years.

All this leads me to wonder: how much reserve is Eversource carrying to cover both market volatility and future capital expenditures? Ratepayers are bearing the burden in Massachusetts (HD.495). This bill needs to go through the legislative process, which will take time.

That said, it would be worth reaching out to our legislators to let them know that we endorse this idea of capping the profits shareholders can make, as ratepayers bear the burden of market volatility.

In the meantime, as I dug a little deeper, I learned that there is something called energy aggregation, in which a corporation or a municipality can purchase electricity from various sources to lock in a potentially lower rate, and/or include additional renewable energy sources in their electricity mix.

At websites like Power Setter and Choose Energy, ratepayers can purchase their electricity from one of these corporate aggregators. Consumers need to be cautious when signing up for these programs, however. Some of the negative feedback I received indicates that while the ratepayer is required to lock into a contract for two to three years, the company offering the program can sometimes increase rates during the term, and there is no way to get out of the contract without penalties.

Municipal aggregation, on the other hand, seems to offer a safe opportunity for miti-

needs to take place both in how our utilities source energy and how we consume it, I wonder what tools consumers have to make safe and cost-effective choices when sourcing their electricity. And how prepared is the regulatory body in Massachusetts, the Department of Public Utilities, to weigh and balance the activities and financial outcomes of our utility companies, and protect consumers in the future?

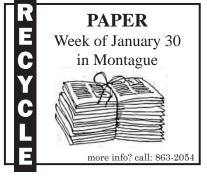
Finally, I wonder how our town can develop community-wide strategies that make us less dependent on price fluctuations that Eversource and NSTAR impose.

Montague elected not to join those other communities in Franklin County back in 2017 when they joined together to aggregate their electricity procurement. Residents in those local communities are currently paying a rate of 9 cents per KWh for supply, compared with the 21 cents we are paying through Eversource.

Perhaps now is the time to reconsider adopting a municipal energy aggregation program so we can mitigate volatility in electricity costs for everyone in Montague in the future.

Leigh Rae lives in Montague Center.





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EXHIBIT from page A1

a "state of mind?" How have artists, writers, musicians, and others defined what it means to be rural? The exhibition asks these questions, presenting visual examples from across the US illustrating challenges that various rural communities have responded to and adapted to over time.

Telling Our Stories

"Stories in Franklin County and Turners Falls *are* the stories of rural America," said Janel Nockleby, visitor services supervisor at the GFDC. "We were a mill town, and we are no longer. We had conflict here, like elsewhere across America. King Philip's War, the massacre – we are still grappling with that here, and having conversations."

Representatives of the various groups involved in the exhibition have been meeting for at least a year to create events scheduled throughout the six weeks – and even a little before and beyond. One of the stated aims of the *Crossroads* program is that these collaborations, exploring place and identity and managing change, will continue after the exhibit leaves town.

The associated programming aims to amplify the exhibit's themes as they apply to local identity, something *Crossroads* emphasizes is constantly evolving and changing.

I spoke with Nockleby and RiverCulture director Suzanne Lo-Manto to find out about the various events. All will be family-friendly and free. (The full schedule is listed at www.greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org and will be included as an insert in next week's Montague Reporter, so I am not going to be comprehensive here.)

The kickoff event, at 6 p.m. on Saturday, February 11 at the Shea Theater, is a good example of the collaborations the *Crossroads* tour has fostered.

Dr. Leo Hwang of Montague Center, a UMass dean who has been working with Mass Humanities as the project scholar, will give an introductory address with images in the background. "He's going to help us make connections to Franklin County," explained Nockleby, "and he's going to do his own reflections as well of his experience in this rural county."

A short documentary film by



RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto (left) and Great Falls Discovery Center visitor services supervisor Janel Nockleby use pattern pieces to work out the footprint of the Crossroads exhibit in the Discovery Center's Great Hall. The traveling displays will arrive next week, and the main exhibition will officially run February 5 through March 18, though associated exhibits and events have already begun and are scheuduled to last into April.

participate by letting RiverCulture mount historic photographs in their windows. The photographs, each of which shows the same storefront at a much earlier time, were printed in a large format on canvas by Nick Waynelovich of the Ja'Duke Center for Performing Arts.

"Hopefully, this will encourage visitors to move around the town a lot," said LoManto, "not just go to the [Discovery] Center and get back on Route 2."

"One of the requirements for this show is that we add a local exhibit to it," noted Nockleby. "Well, we have added more!"

Also related is Joe R. Parzych's photography exhibit *Photo Beat*, now in the Great Hall and with a reception this Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m., and *Montague at Work and Play*, portraits from Page A2 of the *Montague Reporter* (drawn by this reporter) currently on view at the Rendezvous bar.

"And then we have Whose Viewpoint?," Nockleby continued. This exhibit, which will be installed in the canal-viewing hallway behind the Great Hall, was curated by Sheila Damkoehler of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. "She is a genius at making displays for the public," Nockleby said. Damkoehler said her hallway exhibit explores the question, "Whose perspectives are we seeing when we view the images the media creates for us?" using a selection of reproductions of county maps, illustrations, photographs, paintings, and postcards from the 19th and early 20th centuries. There are birds-eye view illustrations by artists who "perched themselves on a nearby hillside," Damkoehler wrote, "and imagined themselves as birds to create images that celebrated growth and industry as progress - towns and cities look neat and tidy, factories look picturesque." Across the river in Greenfield, two presentations will be hosted by the Museum of Our Industrial Heritage. Jim Teraplane will give a

talk on "Franklin County Industrialization" on February 18, and silversmith Steve Smithers will present on "Cutlery and Hand Tools" on February 25.

Another associated event, titled *Crossroads: Food for Thought,* will be held at the Montague Common Hall from 6 to 8 p.m. on February 28. "It's going to be a soup night, a quiz night, and a community conversation about food, food farming, and food insecurity," Nockleby said.

"One of the parameters for *Crossroads* was also to have conversations, and we got training and coaching on facilitating dialogue," she explained. "We are inviting people from different organizations to be there, like the Survival Center, Stone Soup Café, CISA, Just Roots farm, Annie Levine from the farmers market... We will be forming small groups and talking, and we don't have to solve anything, but we will get to know each other better as neighbors."

The Montague Public Libraries have been helping out by hosting some events and exhibits as well, but with the Carnegie basement undergoing renovations, space for gathering is a bit crunched at the moment. Library director Caitlin Kelley has been working with the *Crossroads* committee all along and said that she has provided research on the county's agricultural history and crafted text for program descriptions, among other contributions.

"I'm grateful to have learned so much about the community and its history during this planning process," Kelley wrote to the *Reporter*. "That we are offering this slate of programs about the historic highs and lows of Franklin County as Turners Falls is going through yet another transformative period is not lost on me.

"As Turners plans to take down the buildings that represent its past and looks toward the future, I think it's important for cultural institu-

A4





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25 Millers Falls Road Turners Falls, MA 01376 413-863-4331 www.pzinc.com Steve Alves titled *A Sweet Tradition*, about maple sugaring, will be shown next, and during the final third of the evening, New England Public Media will present four storytellers spinning local tales, with musical interludes.

"Christa Snyder from the Tech School will be making the appetizers!" enthused LoManto, happy to point out another local collaboration. "Everyone that we asked to participate, the answer has been just *Yes!*"

A second event at the Shea, at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 4, will take what Nockleby calls "an unvarnished look" at local history. Dr. Margaret M. Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki), associate professor of anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, will give a talk on the region's Indigenous history titled "Histories Along the Kwinitekw."

Points of View

LoManto said she is particularly excited that over a dozen downtown businesses have agreed to

New Partners

Nockleby noted that while the GFDC has historically had a hard time bringing in the local teen population, *Crossroads* has created an opportunity for a new partnership.

"That's an audience we have wanted to have at the Center," she said. "Working with the Brick House youth director for a teen art show here, it really just clicked. They get to have their own show from March through April in the Great Hall!"

That group show, which has been titled *Life is ____: An Exploration of Being Through the Eyes of Local Young People*, is currently in process, with youth creating art at the Brick House teen center or bringing their work there to be added to the show. Interested artists can contact Hannah at (413) 432-9522 to participate.

The Brick House show will be on view in the Great Hall from March 25 to April 26, after the main exhibit is gone. tions to take notice, take stock, and bring the community into the conversation."

So, will these collaborations continue after *Crossroads* leaves?

"Yes – and this is why the Smithsonian does it," answered LoManto. "They are hoping that something gets started, that this brings new partners on board, that we take a new idea together and run with it..."

The Great Falls Discovery Center is open Wednesdays through Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Crossroads will be on view from February 5 to March 18. Check next week's edition for an insert with a full calendar of events.

A volunteer guide will be present with the exhibit at all times to answer questions and tell visitors about events. Volunteers are still needed to serve as guides, and training will be provided. Interested readers can contact

Janel Nockleby at (413) 863-3221.





FUEL from page A1

to data shared by the agency, 805 applications have been processed while 764 new ones have been received, meaning that the backlog has been reduced by 1%.

"It's just tiresome, and you just wonder how many people are struggling," said Montague resident Donna Petersen. "At this point I'm sure a lot of people are."

Petersen, who told the *Reporter* in December that her propane tank was about 30% full, said this week that it is almost empty, and her fuel assistance application has still not been processed. She called CAPV for emergency assistance on Monday, and was told a delivery would be made "within 18 hours."

When a customer has less than one-eighth of a tank of heating oil left, or less than a three-day supply, it is considered an emergency to be dealt with immediately. CAPV's contract with the state requires it to "resolve the energy crisis for eligible households in life-threatening situations" by putting their applications on a fast track.

CAPV energy director Peter Wingate told the *Reporter* that in such emergencies, fuel must be delivered to eligible households "within 17 business hours."

"The 18 hours is our internal time frame leading up to notifying the vendor of eligibility," he explained. "Unfortunately, we do not have a way to control their delivery schedules, and it does vary from dealer to dealer." Petersen said that on Tuesday she called back to check the status of her emergency application, and found the voicemail box was full. As of Wednesday afternoon she had not received a propane delivery. "I at least have a wood stove and a credit card, but not everybody has that option," she said.

Emergency Overload

Emergency fuel deliveries may be bottlenecked not only by the phone lines at CAPV, but also by delivery companies. On Monday, state representative Natalie Blais took to Twitter to heckle Amerigas on behalf of an "elderly constituent" who she said had been waiting two weeks for a propane delivery.

The customer had been told on January 9 that a delivery would arrive within 24 hours, according to Blais, and had begun rationing her limited fuel ahead of this week's snowstorm. Blais posted a screenshot of a twohour customer service call she had made on the constituent's behalf, and described a conversation she had had with a company representative.

"George says that @*AmeriGas* does not do emergency propane delivered [sic] and they are very VERY sorry for the inconvenience," she tweeted. "Incidentally, George has a grandmother and feels very bad about this."

The constituent apparently received her propane delivery on Tuesday, with an apology and a credit to her account.

"Grateful to @*CAPioneerValley*

for piling on here and their incredible service to *#1stFranklin* constituents," Blais tweeted.

In a January 12 email to members of the Franklin County Resource Network, CAPV Hampshire County coordinator Dane Kuttler said the fuel assistance department is in "a heck of a jam this year." At that time, she said, the office was processing applications submitted in October.

The program's longtime manager left in November for a state job administering LIHEAP, Wingate previously confirmed to the *Reporter*. According to Kuttler's message, five people have been doing the work of a department typically staffed by eight.

"We have one additional staff person hired to do income certification, and continue to recruit more," Wingate said this week. "The rate of folks applying for LIHEAP has slowed down – this allows more time dedicated toward the income certification process."

As of Monday afternoon, CAPV had received 7,448 applications for fuel assistance, according to Wingate, and more than half are still being processed. The total number of applications is 34% higher than last year at the same time.

Last year at this time, Wingate wrote, CAPV had processed 180 emergency assistance applications. So far this season, the agency has processed 1,078 applications – nearly one-third of the applications it has completed – as emergencies.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Montague has prepared and submitted a **Final Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Public Notification Plan** to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Any interested party can view the plan at the following website: *www.montague-ma.gov/p/1494/Public-Advisory-Notices-DPW-and-CWF*.

Written comments can be submitted until March 30, 2023. This is a period of 30 days after the date of publication in the MEPA Environmental Monitor. Submit written comments to MassDEP by email (preferred) to *massdep.sewagenotification@mass.gov* or by mail to 100 Cambridge St, Suite 900 Boston, MA 02114. Submit written comments to Steven Ellis by email to *townadmin@montaue-ma.gov*.

This Public Notice is published in the *Environmental Monitor*, *The Montague Reporter*, *The Recorder*, and the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*.

Planning Ahead

"Fuel assistance has worked more or less like clockwork for a long time. You didn't hear about it for all those years because it just worked," Kuttler told the *Reporter*. "And it still works – it's just going slow enough to scare people this time."

In addition to rising energy costs, demand may be higher this year thanks to a new statewide portal which allows residents to submit applications online without needing to meet with an intake worker. According to the data shared by Wingate, the agency saw 627 first-time applicants last year, and so far this year has seen 1,635.

Petersen, who has received LIHEAP before, said this year's surge in demand should have been anticipated.

"That's what you pay your executives for, to think ahead and plan," Petersen said. "I know they're swamped and everything, but all these issues should have been anticipated.... Everybody knew the price of fuel, and these issues, and they knew they had this new application portal."

Last Friday, a CAPV staff member told the Franklin County Resource Network her agency was "in desperate need of intake/certifiers," and shared a job posting headlined "We're Hiring Heroes."

"We have so many more applicants in need of help that we can't keep up," she added. "If you know of anyone who might be interested, please send our way." The advertised rate was \$17.63 to \$18.70 an hour, as it was on October 12.

Wingate encouraged anyone interested in taking on one of the seasonal positions to apply via CAPV's website. Applications for fuel assis-

tance, meanwhile, may also be submitted through the end of April.



HOST from page A1

Control Commission (CCC) could approve 253 Organic's license, required that the company pay the town of Montague 3% of its retail sales revenue, and a sliding scale of 1% to 3% of wholesale sales to mitigate local costs or "impact" of its operation.

Montague has previously used this revenue to fund counseling staff at the Gill-Montague and Franklin County Technical School districts, a parenting education program at the Brick House Community Resource Center, an after-school math program, and intersection improvements at the industrial park.

Assessing Impacts

Last year's legislation prohibits agreements that set "impact fees" as a fraction of revenue, instead establishing that towns and cities can seek reimbursement for specific, provable public impacts.

The amendments approved on Monday eliminate the previous method for calculating impact fees, but do not provide any new formula for calculating them. Montague agrees "not to seek reimbursement for future costs," with the exception of those associated with a potential closure of the facility, or those that can be covered by "unexpended prior payments that exist at the time of the signing of this amendment." as opposed to being calculated as a percent of revenue, which is now illegal – and effectively agrees to a "waiver to any and all claims to the Prior Payments."

The new host community agreement, and the state legislation that it responds to, do not eliminate a separate excise tax on cannabis sales, which brought in just over \$300,000 to Montague in FY'22, according to Olsen. That money is deposited in a town capital stabilization fund.

Pursuing Equity

These rather radical, and seemingly costly, changes in local policy were responses to changes in the state law regulating cannabis enacted after a 2016 referendum legalizing the plant. The process had included a provision for local "host community agreements" that included impact fees to mitigate potential negative impacts of the newly legal industry. But local communities, according to *Commonwealth Magazine*, imposed "excessive fees" which were shown over time to tend to favor "big companies and White business owners." This raised serious concerns about the failure of the law to mitigate racial inequity. The final law, signed on August 12, addressed some concerns with the original bill but, according to an analysis by the MMA, could still "retroactively subject existing host community agreements to review by the Cannabis Control Commission."

In December the municipal association called on the CCC, which is not required to issue regulations until August 2023, to provide "interim guidance" to cities and towns about the status of these agreements.

As the city of Boston abruptly returned millions of dollars collected under its original host agreements with pot companies, the *Boston Globe* ran a series with the theme that "confusion reigns over local fees." The *Globe* quoted Leslie Hawkins, a lawyer who had formerly managed the city's cannabis board:

"The law has had an ironic chilling effect, because no one knows what to do and no one wants to be the municipality that takes less

Greenfield has also modified its host community agreements to comply with the new law, according to Eric Twarog, the city's director of planning and development. "We're just not seeing any direct impacts from cannabis that can easily be measured," he told the *Reporter*.

At the Montague selectboard meeting on Monday, Ellis, who had introduced the amendments to the town's agreement with 253 Organic, said these precedents had influenced his thinking.

"There is a lot that is not yet settled," Ellis said. "When a law is passed it gets translated into regulations, and we don't know precisely how those regulations will come out. But this conversation is happening in a number of communities, and there have been some high-profile changes in direction by cities such as Boston that inform our thinking..."

"253 Organic was interested in revisiting

Those "prior payments" sit in a special cannabis stabilization fund that, according to town administrator Steve Ellis, includes approximately \$228,000 in funding that has not yet been appropriated.

The amendments also explicitly eliminate the requirement that the company annually donate up \$15,000 to "local community initiatives," and 150 hours of participation by employees and management to "community meetings and community service activities." Rather, 253 is simply encouraged to donate money and time to the town "as a good corporate citizen at any time it wishes."

To compensate for the loss of revenue and to address uncertainties about future litigation, 253 Organic agrees that "all prior payments made by the operator are reasonably related to past, present and future costs" – "There's just a huge gap between the express intent of the law and what we're seeing in real life," said Sonia Chang-Diaz, chair of the state senate's Cannabis Policy Committee.

The initial reform legislation, which passed the senate by a 39-0 vote last spring, contained a Cannabis Social Equity Trust Fund which would provide grants and loans to minority-owned businesses. This, and several other provisions of the law, received almost universal support at the time.

But many local officials and the leadership of the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), which represents cities and towns at the state level, believed that changing host community agreements and their impact fees would retroactively nullify agreements already entered into. The proposed legislation was also criticized for inviting lawsuits targeting the impact fees, while providing little guidance as to how those fees should legitimately be calculated. money than everyone else. Every lawyer in marijuana got calls the day that legislation was signed from clients wanting to go back and renegotiate their [local fees] right away... but I don't think we're going to see much change in the near future."

Not Yet Settled

Local officials we spoke to in Franklin County expressed uncertainty and concern over the status of state policy, but several other towns, like Montague, have moved to retroactively amend host community agreements and the calculation of impact fees.

Northampton nearly eliminated impact fees last January, more than six months before the state reforms. That decision, according to the city's economic development coordinator Annie Lesko in an email to the *Reporter*, "was made solely by former Mayor David Narkewicz."

In a letter to local cannabis companies provided by Lesko, the mayor proposed that "the impact fees will be conditionally waived until and unless the city is required to expend funds to mitigate specific impacts from your particular marijuana establishment. In such an event, the city will assess an impact fee to be paid within 30 days." the issue," said selectboard member Matt Lord, an attorney who helped negotiate the amendments to the Montague agreement. "There was a mutual interest in amending the host community agreement. The negotiations were very collegial, and the outcome we have reflects a mutual interest."

Lord went on to characterize the compromise: "The wash is done. You paid these fees, they're good. You're not going to have more fees: you're good."

"We really don't know what constitutes 'impact," Seth Rutherford, co-CEO of 253 Organic, told the *Reporter*. "We really don't know what the Cannabis Control Commission considers an impact. We do know that we've had a very good relationship with the town of Montague, and we want to keep that going."

When asked whether the company and its employees would continue to contribute to town events and programs, Rutherford replied in the affirmative.

"It really comes down to the culture here at 253," he said. "I really don't think we need to be told to be good people." Rutherford added that he would continue to serve on the town airport commission,

which he called "a great learning experience."







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GMRSD from page A1

"The \$23 million budget is running on about a \$200,000 wiggle room?" asked John Irminger of Montague. "That's a pretty tight ship!"

"We try to keep it tight," Blier replied, explaining that if E&D exceeds 5% of the budget, the district must return money to the towns.

Frank Talk

The committee reflected on a presentation two weeks earlier by representatives of the Six Town Regional Planning Board (STRPB), which is conducting a study of combining the towns in the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley districts into a larger

to "present more of a positive, rather than a negative, approach," but thanked her for the feedback.

"Lots of negatives have been brought forward," he said. "Most of them [are] not institutional in the sense of education - they're more institutional in the sense of ownership.... Just as we as a district ran into with the renaming of of our school mascot, the whole notion of losing identity is a major issue. Whether or not that's pertinent or germane to thinking about educational excellence, or otherwise, I'm not sure, but it's certainly in the mix."

sion between identity and better pro- cuss new challenges posed by "argrams - that Northfield wants to hold onto its identity, and try and run a varied program with 600 students?" Irminger asked. "That might be too simple a way of looking at it?"

part?" Irminger asked.

"Yeah," Beck told him. "We have to continue this study."

Other Business

The committee discussed capping at 1% the number of district children who may enroll in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School. Members discussed the possibility that not being able to enroll in the Virtual School might cause a student to instead choice out or attend a charter school, at greater cost to the district. No vote was taken.

Tomb requested that at an up-"Would you say that there's a ten- coming meeting, the committee distificial intelligence" programs such as ChatGPT. "I think we should address it before we have it addressed to us by outside parties," he said. The topic prompted excited sharing by several attendees. "We should definitely discuss it," Oakes agreed. A call for a volunteer to fill a vacant Montague seat on the school committee by appointment has not yet been successful. "We have not received any letters of interest," Oakes reported sadly. The deadline for letters of interest has been extended until February 27.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Town Officials Waiting On Legal Advice Over Washout, Solar Battery

By JOSH HEINEMANN

At their January 18 meeting the Wendell selectboard continued their discussion, with town project manager Phil Delorey, about the Mormon Hollow Road culvert, its washout, its patch, and its eventual repair. At the time of the meeting the patch, black plastic sheeting, was working, directing runoff into the culvert and not beneath it, and not undermining the culvert, the whole repair, and the road itself.

Delorey said that he and contractor Clayton Davenport of Davenport Trucking had concluded a full repair should happen as soon as possible, and not wait until spring. Davenport needs four or five dry days with the ground still soft to do a full repair, and Delorey said he planned to meet with him at the site Monday.

The contractor has stamped engineering plans for that full repair, and at a special meeting January 13 the selectboard had authorized paying \$84,281 for that repair "in consultation with town counsel."

Selectboard member Gillian Budine said calls to town counsel David Doneski of KP Law had not, however, been returned.

On January 13 Davenport and selectboard members had agreed the town should not be responsible for payment in the end. With the stabilization account, the highway department's saved paving funds, or possibly American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money, the town can cover the immediate expense, with responsibility for the final payment postponed.

Budine suggested an executive session to discuss responsibility for the repairs and related legal issues.

Developments

Reporting on other projects, Delorey said bids are out for a professional to find appropriate placement for monitoring wells around the town's former landfill, an area now under and behind the WRATS. The town has a \$75,000 grant for capping the landfill, and he said he is hoping for a low bid for that work. Trees are being cut in preparation for a road to surround the landfill, and "hundreds of truckloads" of fill will be needed to build that road.

walled battery storage facility on currently forested land behind 68 Wendell Depot Road.

A town solar bylaw approved at the 2022 annual town meeting specifically forbids battery storage facilities unless it they are built in concert with a solar field. Doody asked for a joint meeting of planning board and selectboard on the topic, with members of the conservation commission, finance committee, and energy committee welcome.

Procedures

The selectboard will hold a required hearing about the next round of community development block grants (CDBG) funding at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, February 1, before their regularly scheduled meeting.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said the board needs to redo the annual tax classification hearing, also on February 1.

Nineteen trees whose removal for power lines have been questioned remain on the list for an ongoing tree hearing with National Grid, and Johnson-Mussad added a continuation of the hearing, scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, February 2, in the town hall. The process for identifying trees as they are discussed is not easy, and handouts with photographs may be available to participants.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) is asking the town for its three priorities for direct local technical assistance (DLTA) in the coming year. Johnson-Mussad said he would send information to department heads and ask for their input.

Other Business

The board granted its approval for a private burial ground at 313 Farley Road, pending approval by the state Department of Environmental Protection. The property owner needs to file a site plan and an amendment to his deed.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said a cemetery, even on private land, is required to have public access. Board of health chair Barbara Craddock said she anticipates more such requests.

district with a single middle school and a single high school.

Bill Tomb, the Gill liaison to the STRPB, acknowledged criticism of the presentation and said he felt it "came across very awkwardly."

Cristina Marcalow of Gill said she had "started softly polling people in [her] orbit" about the proposal, and reported a "hesitation towards regionalization... Without knowing anything, there's a tendency to kind of question consolidation." Marcalow said she felt the STRPB should better address this skepticism.

Tomb said the STRPB had agreed

"It's simple, but it's accurate," Tomb replied.

Irminger asked if there were other towns that Gill and Montague might combine with. Superintendent Brian Beck said other options are not "open for discussion" while Gill-Montague is using a state grant to conduct the feasibility of the six-town proposal.

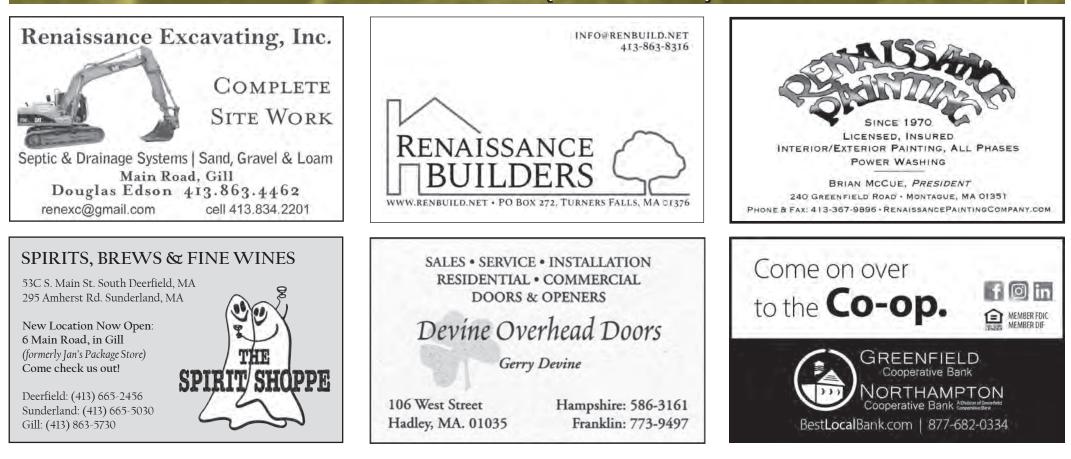
"Oh, so the resources themselves create an obligation on our

The Kentfield Road bridge is in place, still a shock to the neighbors' eyes, and cleanup of the work site is scheduled for spring.

Planning board chair Molly Doody was also waiting for a response from town counsel, to an email she had sent about the plan by Borrego Energy, acting as New Leaf Energy, to build a 12-acre, free-standing,

Craddock changed the subject to report that COVID-19 numbers are increasing again. There is a lot of resistance to masks, she said, but they offer the best protection. The town hall still has air filters, which help, and Craddock recommended mask wearing at indoor events and in town offices.

The board waived the town hall rental fee for a library-sponsored skate and ski sale held January 21.



coming from people looking for election fraud. "You just can't fail in an election now," she said. "People are waiting for us to fail."

Bourbeau had requested that a full-time employee, at 35 hours a week, be hired at the low end of the town's pay scale. Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz asked what the "tipping point" was at which the town would not have to pay benefits. Town administrator Steve Ellis responded that it would be below 19 hours. He said the current labor market was "bifurcated," with some applicants wanting full-time work and others part-time work, but also suggested that not offering benefits would limit the number of qualified applicants.

In the end the board seemed amenable to Bourbeau's proposal, but did not take a final vote. She was asked to submit a final budget request that included technology and furniture for the additional employee.

The board also briefly discussed a request from the public works department for an additional staff member who would on the sewer "collection system," which includes the town's sewers, catch basins, and combined sewer overflow. Clean Water Facility superintendent Chelsey Little reported that Greenfield has eight employees dedicated to their collection system.

The board will take a vote next week on these two proposals and other FY'24 budget items it has reviewed, and send its recommendations to the finance committee.

Waste Welcomed

Little updated the board on the request, received earlier this month, for Montague to treat sewage shipped from a group of 19 homes in Colrain for processing. The homes have been connected to a treatment plant owned and operated by cotton bleaching company Barnhardt Manufacturing, which is closing in February.

Little said she had spoken to members of the small sewer district, which residents of the neighborhood formed in 1977, and that they hoped that trucking their waste to another area facility would only last from "three to six months" while they "look for a long-term solution."

Selectboard members expressed doubts that such a solution would be found within that timeframe, but to an estimate by the engineering firm Wright-Pierce, the town faces a funding gap of \$165,000. The board discussed using federal American Rescue Plan Act funds and reserves to cover the shortfall, but Kuklewicz argued forcefully that the town should also consider purchasing a surplus generator.

After a discussion of including a surplus option in the bidding process, the discussion ended without a vote.

Body Enlarged

The cemetery commission has asked to appoint two additional members, bringing the number on that board to five. The selectboard was about to approve Jamie Fuller and Jo-Ann Prescott to the positions when it was realized that the commission was limited to three members, a cap which would need to be increased by a separate vote, which had not been placed on the agenda.

"I'm fine with this," said member Matt Lord. "I don't expect there to be a ton of controversy... If someone was really concerned about the size of the committee, they would have noticed this and shown up here today."

The board voted to expand the cemetery commission, then voted to appoint Fuller and Prescott to the two added positions.

Exemptions Bestowed

Jan Ameen, director of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD), came before the board to request that it designate Montague's representative and alternate rep to the district's oversight board as "special municipal employees."

The FCSWMD, which serves 21 small towns in the county, monitors the local transfer station on Sandy Lane, assists with grant-writing for waste and recycling equipment, and operates a number of special programs, including two regional hazardous material collections.

The special designation, which must be approved by a local appointing authority, allows certain municipal positions in towns of under 10,000 in population, including unpaid volunteers, to avoid violating parts of the state conflict of interest law. They may, for example, represent a private party before a municipal board they do not serve on, or receive compensation for matters involving the municipality. ed a potential conflict, and pointed out that the board members "may already have conflicts."

The state ethics commission confirmed this finding and ruled that since the district is regional, each member town must designate its representative and alternate positions as "special."

"I don't really understand that," said Ameen, "but we're kind of making the rounds to see if [member towns] are willing to vote this in."

To further complicate matters, Ameen noted that Chris Boutwell, Montague's rep on the solid waste board, was already a special municipal employee in his role as a selectboard member. But, she noted, it is the "position," rather than the individual, that must be designated as a special employee.

The board voted to make the Montague rep and alternate rep to the FCSWMD special municipal employees. It then approved an annual report from Ameen, as well as a permit request regarding the "yard waste area" – also known as the "brush pile" – at the transfer station on Sandy Lane.

Other Business

Assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey presented the board with a long list of proposals for local technical assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. A feasibility study for sharing ambulance services with other towns in the region topped his list, with an updated sidewalk inventory for Montague placing second and diversity, equity and inclusion training for municipal officials coming in third place.

At the request of Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, the board authorized payments of \$287,271 to the construction firm H.M. Nunes and Sons and \$10,164 to the Berkshire Design Group for work on the Avenue A Streetscape project.

Ellis briefly reviewed the warrant for the March 3 special town meeting. He said many of the 19 articles were "timely, and will allow us to execute against projects or meet requirements that we are obligated to meet over the next few months."

The only item Ellis discussed specifically was a \$668,000 appropriation to fund a new hangar on the airport property, to be built by the Franklin County Technical School for a new program. This article might be removed from the warrant depending on new state "grant language" funding the project, according to Ellis.

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on January 24, 2013: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Strathmore Mill: Debris Cleared, New Plans Proposed

On Wednesday the Town of Montague received two proposals for the redevelopment of the Strathmore Mill, both focusing on the freestanding Building 11. Town officials will spend the next few weeks reviewing those proposals before making recommendations to the selectboard, who will have the final say on whether to offer one or more sections of the mill for a nominal fee under the town's Commercial Homesteading program.

The first proposal, submitted by Flight Patterns, LLC of New Jersey, sees the adaptive reuse of Building 11 as the crucial first step in a phased project eventually encompassing the entire complex.

Flight Patterns hopes to transform the Strathmore into a "multipurpose facility," including artist live-work spaces, performance space, musician studios, a homesteading school, and other facilities for adult education. Their website posted a description of "a green community center devoted to arts, education, agriculture, commerce, and sustainability."

The second, submitted by the ThreshHold Cooperative, sets its sights on Building 11 alone. The local group has made public its vision for the building as "a cooperatively owned and managed space," a confederation of smaller organizations of individuals seeking to own or rent sections as studio space, workshops, and residential units.

ThreshHold's proposal was submitted with a stack of letters of interest from local stakeholders, "already more than enough to fill" proposed studio and residential units. Sixteen prospective tenants, and 10 prospective cooperative owners, have identified themselves as interested in studio space.

20 YEARS AGO

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on January 23, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Town in "Crisis Mode"

A day after the news broke that Montague highway boss Edward Parks-Mleczko is on paid administrative leave pending a criminal complaint that he stole money from the town, residents and town officials want to know how he was able to stay on the job in the face of mounting evidence that his department was facing a second major larceny in as many years.

Parks-Mleczko, a 19-year veteran of the department, has been summoned to appear in Greenfield district court on Friday to answer a complaint of larceny of public funds over \$250. The complaint was filed following an investigation spanning several months, according to Sgt. Stephen Gowran of the Northwestern District Attorney's Crime Prevention and Control Unit.

Joe Janikas, now a member of the Montague finance committee, said that "checks and balances to stop anything like this from happening a second time" were supposed to be in place following the conviction of former Gill police chief Ron Kelley, who pled guilty in 2001 to the theft of some \$40,000 in Montague "pay-perthrow" trash sticker receipts. Kelley had been working as a bagman for the Montague highway department, carrying the receipts to town hall.

Selectboard chairman Samuel Lovejoy said that the town is in "crisis mode" after Parks-Mleczko was placed on leave by town administrator Frank Abbondanzio.

A7

seemed amenable to a contract for at least a year, with higher rates for weekend deliveries.

Little also discussed a "procurement strategy" for a new generator at her plant. After counting \$225,000 from a prior town meeting appropriation and a federal grant, according Ameen said the issue arose when a member of her board started a local clean-up event and sought to procure funds from businesses for a dumpster. She stated that FCSWMD board members are "technically county employees," and the district's legal counsel advised this represent-

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be held Monday, January 30.



Here's the way it was on s January 22, 1873: News from the s Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

The number of scholars in the public schools is still on the increase.

The rain on Saturday night made good skating on the river.

Lawrence Powers has commenced excavating a cellar on Third street, near Avenue A, for a three story brick building which he intends to erect as soon as the cellar is finished.

W.W. Hosmer, who is one of the most enterprising of our merchants, is making more improvements in his store. Carpenters are at work putting up a counter, shelves and cupboards on the erst vacant side of the shop, and a large and full stock of books, stationery, etc., will be put in by E.D. Merriam.

Mr. Hosmer has also got in a magnificent new Tuft's soda water fountain, of very superior finish, with compartments for ten syrups, and Congress water, etc., which he will put up as soon as necessary. This fountain is by all odds the best in the county.

Forbes & Foster have opened a branch jewelry store in this town, locating it in part of the shop occupied by Mr. Budlong. N.P. Pratt drove his black horse from Northampton to Greenfield, Wednesday afternoon, in one hour and 23 1/2 minutes, winning \$500.

The weight of snow on the roof of Seth Stone's old carriage shed caused that building to tumble down on Saturday.



Full Snow Moon Gathering and Social Dance

GREENFIELD – The Nolumbeka Project presents the Full Snow Moon Gathering and Eastern Woodlands Social Dance next Saturday, February 4 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Greenfield Community College Dining Commons. All are welcome.

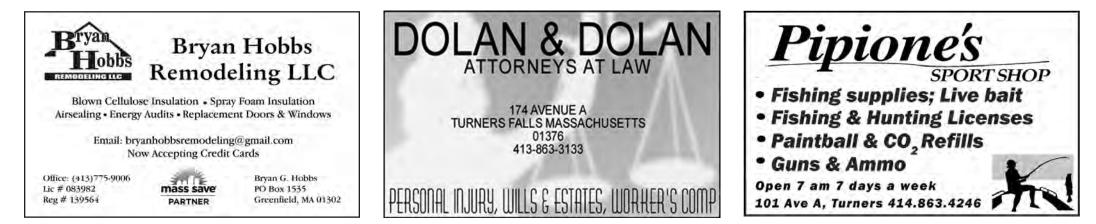
The gathering is a rare opportunity to learn and participate in traditional Eastern Woodlands Native social dances, led by Nipmuc Tribe members Andre Strong-BearHeart Gaines, Jr., and his nephews Daishuan Reddeer Garate and Miguel Wandering Turtle Garate. Honored guests include Liz Coldwind Santana Kiser, Elder, Council Woman, and Tribal Historical Preservation Officer for the Chaubunagungamaug Band of Nipmuck Indians, and Roger Longtoe Sheehan, Sagamo (Chief) of the Elnu Abenaki Tribe.

Bring rattles and shake out the cabin fever! Social

dances are done for fun, for socializing, and to express the joy of having been given the gift of life. They are done by people of all genders and ages to create a sense of friendship and community. The single-file, call-andresponse dances are fun and easy to learn.

The event is free, and the snow date is Sunday, February 5. This program is supported in part by grants from the Gill, Greenfield, Leyden, and Montague local cultural councils – agencies supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency – as well as the Nolumbeka Project, Greenfield Community College, and Whole Foods Market. Donations are appreciated and can be made at *www.nolumbekaproject.org*.

Refreshments will be available. Organizers are asking for contributions of wrapped single-portion snacks. If you can help, contact *nolumbekaproject@gmail.com*.



High School Sports: Snow Days!

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Last week we wrote that the Franklin Tech girls' basketball team would play the Turners Falls High School team on Friday, January 20, "weather permitting."

Mother Nature did not permit the match-up. A two-day snowstorm blanketed the Pioneer Valley, canceling games for most high school sports. The one exception was the Franklin Tech Wrestling Eagles. They put on their snow boots on Saturday and traveled out to Wilmington to grapple with the Wilmington Wildcats.

Other than that, the basketball teams didn't get back onto the court until Tuesday. And on Wednesday, Old Man Winter again came down like a wet blanket, causing still more cancellations and postponements.

On Tuesday, though, Franklin Tech's girls' and boys' basketball teams resumed their seasons, as did the Turners Falls girls.

The Tech girls went up to Buckland, and handed the Mohawk Warriors a 46-19 loss. This was not unexpected – basketball is not Mohawk's strongest winter sport. The varsity girls only have seven players on their roster, and have had more than their share of lopsided losses. The Mohawk boys also had seven players on their roster, but due to injuries they have disbanded entirely, forfeiting the remainder of their games.

The Lady Birds have a home game against Smith Academy this Thursday, and on Friday they finally go to Turners High School to



Franklin Tech's Kendra Campbell (left) drives the ball as Pioneer Valley's Laura Kahler defends, during a January 17 game covered in last week's edition. (Our photographer was unable to make this week's games due to the weather!) Tech squeaked out a 51-49 win in the Franklin North Conference matchup.

play the Thunder. Weather permitting, of course.

The Turners girls, meanwhile, lost a close one against the Southwick Rams on Tuesday. The teams were dead even at the half, but the Ewes nosed ahead by four points in the third quarter, and they held on to defeat the Thunder 44-39.

Powertown must now host Pioneer on Thursday before welcoming the 11-1 Franklin Tech Eagles in Friday's game.

The Franklin Tech boys also

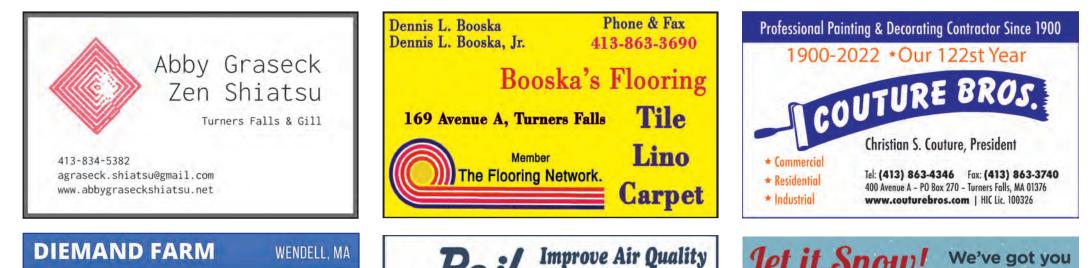


Turners Falls's Lily Spera shoots from the edge of the wing as the Thunder hosted Smith Academy last week. Turners won the January 17 game, 43-32.

played on Tuesday. After benefiting from a 10-0 forfeit against Mohawk, the Eagles lost an away game against the Athol Red Bears. The Blue Birds were leading by six points after a quarter of play, but Da Bears outscored Tech by 24 in the second period to take a 38-20 halftime lead. Tech was unable to make up any ground in the second half, and lost to Red 61-37.

On Friday, the Eagles travel up to Mount Greylock to challenge the Red Mounties.

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









Take Control of Your Future!

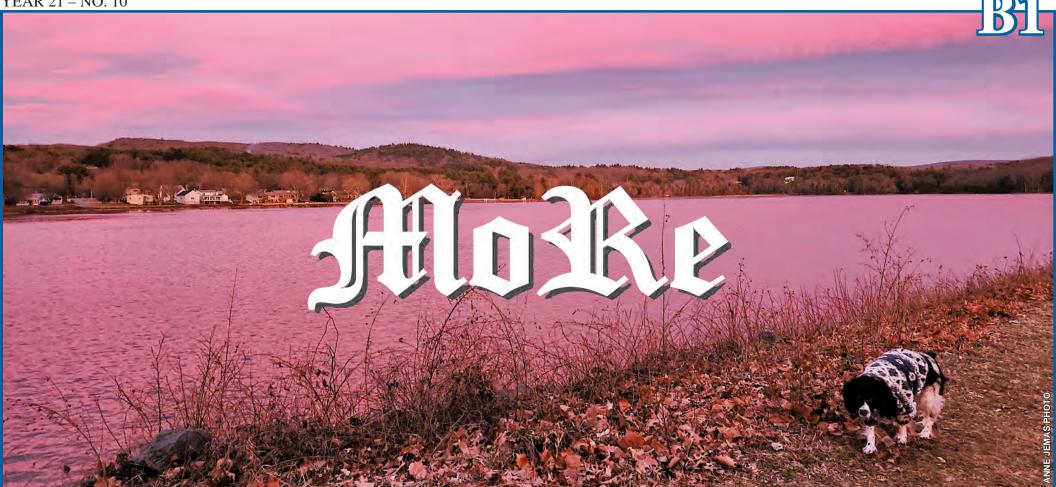
Avoid costly commutes and work close to home with up to \$3,000 sign-up bonus opportunities.

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 Dental · Vision · 401K · FSA/HSA · Vacation
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Join Our Team!

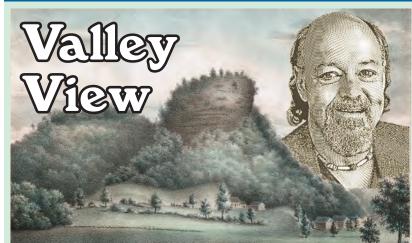
262 Millers Falls Rd. • Turners Falls, MA 01376



FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

JANUARY 26, 2023



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – Just curious. In these days of rampant, chatty social-media inquiries about virtually anything, is it cool to similarly reach out in print media? Or is that below the dignity of newspaper poohbahs and style police insistent on clinging to old standards of news-gathering and newswriting?

Who knows? Better still, who cares? Can't say I've ever been reluctant to buck authority. You must remember that I grew up at a time when people with reputations for challenging norms could display their radical tendencies as bright, defiant feathers in their felt caps. Oh yes, the Glory days, ended by the assassinations and followed by Richard M. Nixon, Ronnie Ray Gun and, well, I trust you know the rest. In recent weeks I've struggled with a sharp, vexing thorn in my paw that was difficult to extract. It involved a forgotten Greenfield brook named on old public records and maps as "Grave," "Gray," and eventually "Graves," which now seems to be accepted. For the sake of consistency and compliance, I will from this point forward refer to it in this narrative as "Graves Brook," because that's what it's labeled on contemporary topo maps. The earliest maps prefer "Gray," while all three names appear in deeds.

it were buried three victims of a 1724 Native American ambush that unfolded along its northern branch, about a mile north of East Main Street. That branch rose somewhere behind today's Agway store off High Street, which it crossed at Lincoln Street, where likely evidence of the burial was discovered by construction workers at the dawning of the 20th century.

The brook's main, southern stem flows from a prolific Highland Park spring that was dug out many years ago to form what is today Highland Pond. The spring brook flowed north about three-quarters of a mile before taking a sharp turn toward downtown near Maple Street and meeting the north branch around the intersection of Pleasant, Chapman, and Arch streets.

Above: Sunset at Unity Park, last week, before the snow.

The Wizard of Looky: Revealed! העם העם העם העם העם העם העם העם העם

By JAN ATAMIAN

GREENFIELD – Once upon a time, Looky Here on Chapman Street in Greenfield was a cozy pawn shop filled with junk. The original sign remains, but its evolution into a gallery and community art space is a magical tale. It is also a reflection of how creative individuals endure hard times, working to make the world a better place to live.

In 2017, the ten original founders of Looky Here purchased a risograph machine to operate as the "cash cow," helping them raise money for the gallery space, recycled art materials thrift shop, and workshop venue. Looky Here evolved to become a non-profit in 2018 with Hannah Brookman and Beverly Ketch as president and vice-president, and Abby Rusk and Sarah Lanzillotta as treasurer and secretary.

But the COVID-19 pandemic had a drastic effect on the local economy, including Looky Here. Brookman is the only member of the original group still at Looky Here. She said she truly loves the space and the community involvement it gives her. In the future, she hopes to welcome many newcomers and workshop facilitators to the space. When you enter Looky Here, the yellow walls are aglow with vibrant acrylic and watercolor paintings and pastel drawings. Admin Reveal is a collection of Brookman's work



Hannah Brookman and some of the many works she has created during her past five years managing Looky Here, a community arts space in Greenfield.

from 2017 to 2022. It is a comingout-of-hiding show, in that she is revealing herself. Previously, she said, she felt shy or modest about showing her work. The show allows the viewer to step into the heart and soul of a very talented artist. The 90 works include paintings, drawings, and sculpture, hung in a salon style. It is candy for the eyes; a treat to behold. Like a scene from the interior of a Bonnard painting, your eyes gaze out on lush green landscapes

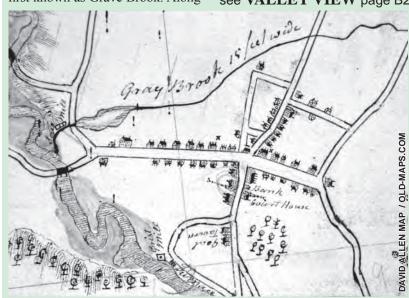
radiating warmth, a welcome sight on a cold January night. Brookman said she admires Da-

According to local tradition credited by Greenfield historian and author Francis M. Thompson to Deacon John J. Graves, for good reason the downtown stream was first known as Grave Brook. Along

Both legs of the brook drained wetlands along the western base of Rocky Mountain. From their midtown convergence, one significant stream paralleled West Main Street to the Green River. The confluence is located on the extreme south end of the Colrain Street dog park, between Solon Street and bridge at Davenport Trucking.

Fear not, confused readers who are unable to place this stream running through the heart of Greenfield: You're not alone. I too was perplexed. Thus my recent round of research, and use of the past tense to describe it.

My search began by asking around and, frankly, I found not a soul who knew of the brook's existence. That included Greenfield natives I respected as "informed sources" - observant types who live within walking distance see VALLEY VIEW page B2



This 1830 map shows the brook passing straight through town.

vid Hockney's paintings. This is evident when viewing large wooden panels and canvases of rich color, exhibiting a modern charm. Taking details from her personal life, Brookman has collaged images of her partner, Omeed Goodarzi, and her cat on a large wooden panel. and several works show places they have lived in Leverett, Turners

see WIZARD page B5

Orange You Glad... ... That They're In Season? HOPLEY PHOTO

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT - Outside trees stand stark, the fields lie bare, rivers and ponds are freezing. Local harvests are a distant memory. Yet supermarkets still have in-season fruit. In warmer climates orange trees are blooming and fruiting. Winter is their season, so all the orange varieties in the supermarket are at their best.

Oranges originated in India, where Arab traders fell in love with the beauty of the bright fruits with their fragrant star-shaped flowers glowing against the dark shiny leaves. They took orange trees back to Arabia, where they used them as shade trees in the courtyards of their mosques and gardens.

In this role they introduced the trees to medieval Spain, which they ruled, and from there oranges eventually spread to other Mediterranean countries. They arrived in the Americas in 1493, when Columbus brought the seeds to Haiti. Today, the United States and Brazil are the world's biggest producers.

All these early oranges were bitter, and were used much as we use lemons: to squeeze on fish, or to make tangy sauces or cooling drinks. Their skins lent their fragrance to perfumes as well as drinks, as did the flowers. In the form of orange-flower water, the flowers still give a hauntingly lovely accent to many Mediterranean and Middle Eastern dishes and pastries. It's available

see ORANGE page B4



An orange tree growing in Cordoba, Spain.





DUGGY"

Do you love old man dogs? Are you looking for a constant, loving companion? Do you sleep so soundly that a dog snoring as loudly as a very loud snoring person won't keep you awake? If you answered "yes!" to all these, Duggy may be the dog for you!

Duggy is a charming guy who loves his people. He wants to be in your lap or on the sofa next to you. He will follow you around the house to make sure you are not lonely, and is always watching you, hoping some pets or snacks may come his way. He loves to eat!

Interested in adopting Duggy? 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 30 TO FEBRUARY 3

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Zoom on Wednesdays. Foot care days through Fridays. Open for clinic is held monthly. For more cards, coffee, and snacks daily. information, contact the Leverett Brown Bag lunch is the first Thurs-

ERVING

Open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mon-

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

and often pass it on their daily rounds. Even anglers, trappers, and local historians seemed clueless.

"Where is it, again?" was their consistent response. My description focused on the site where it met the Green River. My guess is that by now they've all checked out the spot, just out of curiosity.

There's good reason for this collective community ignorance. Unless I'm missing something - and, having grown up in South Deerfield, that's possible - the only section of the stream exposed today is that final 50-yard run to the Green River. I do believe the rest of the stream is out of sight, out of mind, long ago buried and piped underground through town. If anyone knows better, please advise. I'd love to see bits and pieces to get a handle on the layout.

In its crowning glory on late-18th and early-19th-century maps from Dave Allen's Maps of Greenfield CD, "Gray Brook" is prominently displayed, and labeled as 15 feet wide. I would estimate today's final 50-yard ravine to the Green to be even wider.

Maps from 1794, 1801, 1830, and 1832 show a sawmill situated near what is today's intersection of Elm, Solon, and Colrain streets, with a large millpond extending east all the way back to Conway Street. The road configuration then was different than today's, with a bridge crossing Elm Street and leading west to another bridge at the site of today's Davenport crossing. The current Colrain Street running past the dog park did not then exist, just the mill and floodplain.

My initial fascination with this brook was sparked by research into Deerfield's first Green River allotments of 1686-90, which would become Greenfield's Main Street settlement about 30 years later. Lot No. 2 on the west side, near today's Fort Square, was designated as the "mill lot" - most likely a speculative name relating to a brook running through it that took a steep drop, suitable for a millsite.

Because I was focused then on the other end of the street, I paid little attention at the time, but I did remember this reference when scouring deeds surrounding Greenfield's first corn mill, built by Joseph Parsons in 1699. That grist mill stood on the Green River below West Main Street at the Mead Street site of today's Museum of Our Industrial Heritage.

Thus, my first impulse was that the so-called Main Street "mill lot" I recalled was on the east side of the street, extending south down the steep escarpment to Parsons' mill. But upon closer inspection, I discovered that not to be so – it was on the west side.

Hmmmm? Why there?

That's when I remembered that small section of brook on the south end of the dog park, which sent my inquisitive wheels spinning. Maybe there had been a mill in that neighborhood! When maps and records confirmed that thought, my problem was solved.

But what about the brook? I knew nothing about

its source, its history or its current status. Where did it go? Had it been tunneled through town to make room for commercial and residential development? If so, why? Was it not irresponsible, at best, for a town to bury a brook that furnished good, clean spring water through neighborhoods?

Though it was almost certainly drinkable in colonial Greenfield days, and the source spring would have been a place of high spirit to previous Indigenous residents, the stream's purity would have diminished as the town's population density grew.

I went back to Thompson's History of Greenfield searching for answers and, knowing what to look for, found them with little effort. I discovered that during a busy round of post-Civil War development through what would become Greenfield's densest neighborhoods, sewage disposal had become a vexing concern.

We're talking about the heavily populated part of town bordered north by Silver Street, east by High Street, south by Main Street, and west by Elm Street. There, new streets and neighborhoods were being built and construction crews were laying sewage pipes connecting into both legs of Graves Brook, which was eventually also piped through town to mask odor and prevent epidemics in the process of moving raw sewage to the Green River and out of town.

Although Thompson doesn't elaborate on the details of Greenfield's first sewage systems, built between 1880 and 1890, he does supply a chronological list of related improvements made during that 10-year period. He also informs us that the workforce laying the pipe was dominated by fresh Italian immigrants, who (though this was unstated) would have been familiar with more advanced yet still primitive European sewage disposal infrastructure.

All of this offers little insight into how such a system would have worked during a day of outhouses and bedroom chamber pots. Flush toilets are said to have been invented in 1596 England by Sir John Harington, then greatly improved around 1860 by fellow Brit Thomas Crapper. But, really, how many Greenfield residents had flush toilets in, say, 1885? Not many, is my guess.

Flush toilets seem to have taken hold here closer to 1920, from what I have gathered over the years. Many are the tales of people alive today who witnessed raw sewage being discharged into fishing streams by pipes of various sizes. Given that, can you imagine how disgusting the mouth of Graves Brook would have been in the early 20th century?

It would have been disgusting indeed – perhaps a topic for another day. Maybe town records and newspaper archives lay out a detailed account. Then again, maybe not.

The human and industrial filth that fouled our rivers and streams back then is nothing to be proud of.



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. Through January 29. Reception and pizza party this Saturday, January 28 from 1 to 3 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.

day, February 2, from 5 to 7 p.m. Through February 25.

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

COA at (413) 548-1022 x 2, or day of each month. Veterans' Sercoa@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 1/30

10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise Tuesday 1/31 9:30 a.m. Tuesday Knitters 1 p.m. Chair Yoga 3 p.m. Tai Chi Wednesday 2/1 9 a.m. Veterans' Agent 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise 12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo 4 p.m. Mat Yoga Thursday 2/2 10:30 a.m. Brown Bag 1 p.m. Cards & Games Friday 2/3 10:15 a.m. Aerobics 11 a.m. Chair Exercise

vices are the first Wednesday of each month. For more information, please call (413) 423-3649.

Monday 1/30

9 a.m. Interval 10:15 a.m. Seated Workout Tuesday 1/31 9 a.m. Good For U 10 a.m. Line Dancing Wednesday 2/1 9 a.m. Cardio Low Impact 10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics 11:30 a.m. Bingo Thursday 2/2 9 a.m. Core & Balance 10 a.m. Barre Fusion Friday 2/3 9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

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.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Montague at Work and Play: IIlustrations from the Montague Reporter, 2019-2023, fifty-two full-color illustrations by Nina Rossi of people at work and play in the villages of Montague. Reception on Sunday, February 19 at 4 p.m. Through March 18.

Artspace, Greenfield: Teen Art Show, Franklin County highschoolers show their best work. Through February 23.

Madhouse Multi Arts, Greenfield: Bring Your Own Art Show. Bring work for this DIY exhibit during the Friday, January 27 Arts Walk from 5 to 8 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: Admin Reveal, collection of works by Looky Here manager Hannah Brookman. (See article, Page B1.) Receptions on two Fridays, January 27 and February 24, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Through March 1.

Shelburne Arts Coop Gallery, Shelburne Falls: All You Need is Love, members' show. Through February.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: Student Art Brings Literature to Life, Franklin County students' show. Weekends through February 19.

Sunderland Library: Spring Eternal, mixed-media abstract landscape paintings by Sara Gately. Through February 28.

Augusta Savage Gallery, UMass Amherst: Portraits in Red: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls, paintings by Nayana LaFond. January 30 through May 12. Reception next Monday, January 30, at 5 p.m. Artist talk February 8 at 6 p.m.

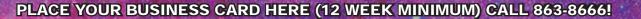
Gallery A3, Amherst: Birds, paintings by Keith Hollingworth. Through January.

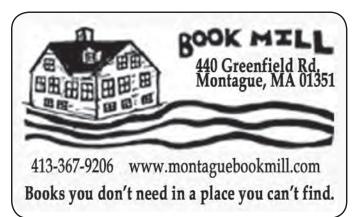
Hope and Feathers Gallery, Amherst: Jules Jones, Collage paintings. Reception next Thurs-

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. 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.





Dudek Tax Service 10 Masonic Ave **Turners** Falls MA 01376 Frank J. Dudek

413.863.5394 - Office 413.775.3327 - Cell frankd_74@yahoo.com



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT Sand for Seniors

MONTAGUE – Are you a Montague resident who might be confined indoors and in need of sand for icy steps or sidewalks? We have just the solution for you!

An exciting new partnership has been formed in the town of Montague to provide residents in need of sand. The Montague highway department and Greenfield Savings Bank have joined together to deliver sand to home-bound seniors in need.

Please note: this program does not involve sanding your property.

Feel free to contact either of the folks listed below for arrangements:

Montague DPW: Brandy Patch, Office Manager, (413) 863-2054, extension 321.

Greenfield Savings Bank: Linda Ackerman, (413) 775-8261.

During the phone call, name and address verification will be docu-

mented for program records, etc. This is the second year that we are offering this program. We hope to expand the numbers this year and provide a degree of safety to prevent falls in the inclement weather that will be coming our way!

We are all happy to continue delivery of "Sand for Seniors!"



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG Truck Makes Broadway Debut; The Bathroom Outside; Vehicle Believed Stolen Was Right There At Laundromat; Car Vs. Hedge; Couple Of Buddies Just Out Riding Around

Monday, 1/16

Involved male bypassed her. All is fine. Cumberland Farms, and 11:04 a.m. Party states did not enter property.

forwarded to DPW. Tuesday, 1/17

10:29 a.m. Caller states two pitbulls are running that a brown-and-white around near Spring and spotted pitbull is running L streets; one is grey and in and out of traffic at white, the other is tan and Lyman Street and Millers white. Male called ask-Falls Road. Animal con- ing if anyone has called trol officer notified and about two dogs; states his responding. ACO searched daughter opened the door area but did not find dog. 12:41 p.m. Sergeant from he was walking around the FDA in the lobby re- looking for them. questing to speak with a 3:19 p.m. Caller from L ongoing court case but she detective.

from Family Dollar. Of- knows who did it. It's an be in contact with female's ficer spoke to clerks, who ongoing issue; not the first were calling 911 due to an unwanted female in the store. She has since left. Female spotted in front of Food City, and advised of complaint made by store. Wednesday, 1/18

that there is a large brush 1:17 p.m. Chief Williams fire across the street from spoke with a male who was her on Millers Falls Road knocking on the door at and that the male there the DPW. He was report- has some gas cans with ing a sewer back-up. Info him. Info given to Shelburne Control.

1:05 p.m. Caller states that and the dogs got out, so

time her property has been apartment, and closed the Report taken. door on him.

10:38 a.m. Caller from 4:36 p.m. 911 caller advis- tractor-trailer unit lost a ter being asked to without Fourth Street states that it ing they just struck a deer rear axle and a tire that hit looks like someone is try- on Federal Street. Deer his vehicle. Caller states damage to the vehicle. Re- continued over the Turnport taken.

solicitor.

7:58 p.m. Passerby report- Friday, 1/20 ing a strong odor of gas/

notified. Thursday, 1/19

seeing smoke from FL Rob- officer.

ing to kick in the door of party to move her vehi- Spirit Shoppe in Gill 9 a.m. Officer checking sta- his neighbor's apartment. cle so the truck has more for parties fighting and tus of a trespass order for a Party was trying to get room to back up. Party threatening a female in the male currently walking to- into her mom's apartment, contacted and advised. ward Cumberland Farms. and mom wasn't hearing Officer escorting truck to to Shelburne Control. Hillside Plastics.

about homeless people possibly living in the woods above the public parking lot Referred to an officer. 9:06 a.m. Caller from L

back car tires were slashed overnight. Report taken. 2:37 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road requesting assistance catching a small dog running around the neighborhood. Dog located and brought inside.

3:20 p.m. Caller from J Street states that a female Street states that her car is back in the building. Of-8:45 p.m. 911 hangup call tires were slashed and she ficer advised; states he will probation officer.

4:33 p.m. Report from the 1:13 p.m. Male party who vandalized. Officer be- Patch of vandalism to gan speaking with caller, caller's car. Caller's son into Cumberland Farms but she got very angry at showed up with the vehi- has just come into the him, stormed off into her cle for an officer to look at. store. Officer spoke to

6:33 p.m. Caller states a is injured; there is some the tractor-trailer unit ers Falls-Gill Bridge into 6:14 p.m. Caller states that Turners; he was pulled there is a vehicle parked over in the turnoff area in the shadows on Dell on the Route 2 side of the Street between Montague bridge. Control contacted and Bulkley streets, and a to dispatch Gill. Officers man walking around with advised to be on lookout a flashlight. Permitted for a tractor-trailer unit advised of complaint. missing a tire.

12:32 a.m. Caller reports propane on Turners Falls she saw a male party Road. Shelburne Control wearing a thin blue jacket with blue jeans using He asked her to watch his the bathroom outside on dog and handed her an 1:22 a.m. Caller involves Avenue A. Referred to an envelope with \$500 in it.

parking lot. Transferred

9:51 p.m. 911 caller from 8:43 a.m. Caller concerned Keith Apartments states her neighbor is screaming and banging on the walls. Quiet upon arrival. Adat Third and Canal Streets. vised caller to call back if noise starts again.

10:22 p.m. Assisting Gill Street states that her two PD with previous call from Spirit Shoppe. Saturday, 1/21

12:51 a.m. Multiple callers reporting a vehicle into hedges on Millers Falls Road. Driver seems to be OK and is currently out of the vehicle. Officer advises airbag deployment; vehicle has a wheel off party is not supposed to be it. Tow requested. Officer on the property due to an requesting Eversource be contacted as a pole was struck. Pole still intact but requires inspection. Northfield FD transporting patient. Investigated. was asked not to come employee, who stated that the involved male left afincident. No trespass orders against him.

Sunday, 1/22

2:01 a.m. Caller reporting people roughly three houses down on G Street having an outside party with loud music. Officer advises upon arrival, no noise or music was heard. Three females located around fire;

10:34 p.m. 911 caller worried as her neighbor was banging on her door; when she opened it, he seemed to be under the influence. Caller states the male parerts; unsure what is causing 1:44 p.m. Party into sta- ty has an ankle injury and

Five Villages: One Future **Montague Comprehensive Plan WORKSHOPS**





montague is planning for its future.

Community Visioning Workshop Saturday, February 4th

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. In person: Turners Falls High School, 222 Turnpike Road

- Lunch provided
- Childcare provided
- Translation available upon request

 Transportation available upon request Weather date: February 11th (check montague-ma.gov or montagueplans.org in case of weather)



Register here or just show up:

tinyurl.com/montaguecommunityworkshop

Goals & Priorities Workshop

Thursday, March 9 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Virtual on Zoom

Translation available upon request

Register here for access:

tinyurl.com/montaguegoalsworkshop

Review the results of the SURVEY in English or Spanish and learn more about the development of a comprehensive plan for Montague at WWW.montagueplans.org

Questions? Contact Megan Rhodes at (413) 774-3167 ext. 132 or mrhodes@frcog.org

YOU took a survey to share your thoughts and goals for Montague.

Now WE need to determine Montague's priorities for the next 15 years.

Collaborate with your neighbors on the future of HOUSING TRANSPORTATION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LAND USE AND ZONING HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES CLIMATE CHANGE

have been some issues time of day.

what occurred.

the issue. Caller transferred tion to report that two she offered to take him to to Shelburne Control. Offi- cars have been racing be- the hospital. He declined cer advises upon arrival, tween 2:30 and 3 p.m. on and said that wasn't necthe emergency fire extin- a daily basis; very danger- essary then sped off in his guishers had appeared to ous. Officer advised party truck. Officers were able be set off; no visible smoke to call when she sees the to speak with male party. or fire at this time. Spoke cars and that he will try to Report taken. to clerk, who advises there be in the area around that Monday, 1/23

came out to see the fire won't leave. Officer advis- gone on arrival. suppression system going es situation mediated for 1:23 a.m. Contacted by off by itself. Clerk called now; eviction issue.

his company; he is cur- on foot today. Officer ad- tow others. rently stuck on Broadway vises car is not stolen; it 2:08 a.m. Officer out with around and re-routed. Of- of options. ficer requesting involved 9:30 p.m. E-911 call from They are moving along.

12:02 a.m. Caller states with the electrical panels 4 p.m. Caller from Third a group of kids is being inside the building today. Street states her landlord loud and doing donuts in While the clerk was in the came into her apartment the parking lot at Monback, he heard a noise and and is yelling at her and tague Machine. Vehicle

DPW for assistance with district manager to report 4:41 p.m. Caller states he vehicles that need to be is at the laundromat and moved for snow remov-6:41 a.m. Truck driver went to the store to get al on Avenue A, Second advises he was supposed things for dinner; his girl- Street, Seventh Street, and to make a delivery to an friend took off with his G Street. Able to reach address but was provided money and left him. Last some parties to move vethe wrong information by week she stole his car. Left hicles; Rau's requested to

in Lake Pleasant and needs is at the laundromat with vehicle pulled off to side assistance getting turned the caller. Caller advised of road. Couple of buddies just out riding around.

- 10 P

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ORANGES from page B1

locally in specialty food stores, especially those selling Middle Eastern groceries.

In the 19th century bitter oranges were superseded by today's sweet oranges, which arrived from China, where they had been hybridized. At first they were called "China oranges," or simply "chinas," as they still are called in Puerto Rico.

Mandarin oranges also recall their Chinese origin. They got their name because the skin is the color of a mandarin's robes. Clementines come from North Africa, where they were hybridized by, and named after, a French priest named

Père Clément.

Oranges' easy hybridization has given us numerous varieties, including the red-juiced blood oranges, first grown in Italy. Perhaps surprisingly, grapefruits are another hybrid, but not kumquats, which look like an olive-sized orange. They belong to a different botanical family,

but are generally treated as oranges, and in China they are valued precisely because they will grow farther north than oranges. Their flesh is tart but the skin is sweet, so you can munch them as a snack or slice them into circles to add to a salad.

Vivid orange salads teaming sliced oranges with olives, red onions, or salt cod are popular in Mediterranean countries. Orange juice is vital in classic sauces such as *bigarade* for duck and Maltaise sauce, which gets its luxurious color from blood oranges.

And, of course, orange desserts are popular everywhere. This recipe for caramelized oranges comes from Italy, where restaurant waiters often show off their knife skills by peeling the oranges so the peel falls away in one long strip.

Many cakes pairing oranges with almonds or hazelnuts are loved in Spain, Italy, and the Middle East. The recipe I am sharing uses almond flour instead of wheat flour, so it's gluten-free.

It's deliciously moist and tangy.



CARAMELIZED ORANGES

5 large navel oranges

1 or 2 blood oranges (or another navel)

1¹/₂ cups sugar

 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water

1 cinnamon stick

²/₃ cup very hot water

1 to 2 Tbsp. orange-flower water (optional)

This recipe makes 4 to 6 servings. Navel oranges are best for this, as they have no seeds.

Peel the oranges, cutting them over a serving bowl to catch any juice, and going right through the skin to take off not only the orange-colored surface but also all the white pith.

Slice the oranges, discarding the seeds of the blood orange. Try to keep the slices intact, but remove the white central core.

Arrange them in the serving bowl, placing small or broken slices at the bottom and arranging the best slices in a circular pattern on top. If you are including blood oranges, intersperse them among the regular slices. Sprinkle with orange-flower water, a teaspoon at a time, until you think you have enough. Don't overdo it.

Put the sugar into a pan with one and a half cups of water. Put it on the medium-high burner and stir to dissolve the sugar before it reaches boiling point.

As soon as it boils, add the cinnamon stick, then boil rapidly without stirring until it turns first yellowish and then darkens to a rich brown. The change happens slowly at first, but then speeds up, so keep an eye on it all the time. As soon as it is medium brown, remove the pan to an empty sink or a counter. Then, keeping your hand covered with a cloth or mitt and standing back to avoid spatters, pour in the very hot water.



Caramelized oranges make a sweet and tangy treat.

As soon as the bubbling has died down, return it to the stove and stir to make sure you have no lumps. If you do, stirring over the heat will dissolve them.

Pour this caramel syrup over the oranges, and put the bowl in the fridge for a couple of hours before serving. They can be kept covered in the fridge for up to two days, though you should turn over the slices from time to time to stop the top ones drying out.

ORANGE AND ALMOND CAKE

3 large navel oranges, washed 8 eggs 1¹/₂ cups sugar 2¹/₄ cups ground almonds, or almond flour 1¹/₂ tsp. baking powder 2 tsp. orange-flower water (optional)

2 to 3 Tbsp. sliced almonds, toasted

This unusual cake uses the complete orange, peel and all. It's super easy to make, and serves 10 because it's quite filling.

Wash the oranges and place them, whole, into a large pan with about two cups of water. Cover and bring to the boil. Simmer for one and a half or two hours, adding more water if the first lot evaporates, until the oranges are easily pierced with a skewer.

Remove them from the pan, let cool, then cut into quarters. Turn them - skins and all - into a pulp by rubbing them through a strainer or a food mill, or whizzing them in a food processor.

Grease a 9-inch spring-form or loose-bottomed cake pan and line its base with parchment paper. Turn the oven to 375 degrees.

Beat the eggs in a large bowl until mixed, then add the sugar and beat again until blended. Stir in the almond flour, baking powder, orange pulp, and the orange-flower water, if using. Mix well and turn into the prepared pan.

Bake for 45 minutes then check to see if it's browning. If so, lay a sheet of foil over the top. Continue baking for another 15 to 30 minutes or until a knife inserted in the middle comes out clean. Cool thoroughly in the pan before unlocking it and turning out the cake.

Decorate the edge with toasted sliced almonds. To toast the almonds, stir them over moderate heat until they turn a medium brown about three to four minutes – or put them in a small bowl and microwave for 30 seconds at a time until they are done. Beware: they burn easily.

EVENT PREVIEW The 11th Annual K-9 Keg Pull

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – In Greenfield there is a winter carnival from February 3 through 5 that includes several events. At one of them, called the K-9 Keg Pull, owners call to their dogs as they pull a keg toward them.

The Greenfield Recreation Department is involved with the carnival. The Keg Pull will

has started, and that it's one of many people's favorite events at the carnival.

As for how many dogs are involved, "It varies year to year," she said. "Up to 50 at most." I learned about the categories of dogs that are featured through an event webpage. Each dog will be placed in a category of racers similar in strength, and pull either a 4-pack of cans, a quarter keg, a half keg, or a full keg. Christy gave me a little more information on that. "For divisions of the contest," she explained, "it depends on the weight of the dogs. One example being what dog used the small beer can. Then there is a full keg." I learned that GCTV films the event every year, and I found a video of last year's K-9 Keg Pull on their website. It doesn't really look like much of a big deal! Various breeds of dogs were involved. One of the small dogs was a Corgi, and another was a pug. A big dog that was there was a Dalmatian. An article at the Recorder told me the times and names of some of the dogs who won last year's Keg Pull. A dog named Halo got a time of 4.33 for top dog. Other winners were Orion, for 4.40 seconds, and Yoshi, for 6.2 seconds. That seems to indicate that some of these dogs did a nice job of earning their owners some bragging rights! If you are interested in doing this yourself, you can pre-register at the Greenfield Recreation Department Annual Winter Carnival website. The entry fee is \$5 per dog with pre-registration, \$10 on the day of the event, cash or check only. Checks should be made out to "Friends of Greenfield," with "Paws Park" in the comment line.

Dear Creators, Makers of Art, Craft, Assemblage, Garden, and Cuisine,

In the spring of 2022, I introduced you to "Bestie Gnome" made from Sculpey polymer clay, eighteen inches high, a traveler to many outdoor spaces we all know and love.

Unfortunately, clay can be fragile. Last summer, Bestie accidentally fell off a shelf, shattering into many tiny pieces. Much like a puppet, only her smiling head remains. She someday imagines a new body fashioned out of bits of treasured cloth. With a fond farewell, she was placed in a shoe box for rest and recuperation.



take place on Sunday, February 5 at Beacon Field over a snow-covered course. Check-in is around 12:30 p.m., and the competition starts at 1 p.m.

I got a nice bit of info on the pull itself from Christy Moore, who has been Greenfield's recreation director for 16 years. She said "10 or 11 years, roughly" is how long the event has been going on, since the carnival



A promotional photo from last year's Keg Pull.

Last week, the Bestie puppet head emerged from the confines of her box. She had a strong desire to be photographed amongst January forest mushrooms, and an ancient tree trunk leading to an underground

LOOKING

MARIE BROWN

home... perhaps a hobbit home. There is a con-

nection to Bestie's spiritual draw to the natural world. It is vividly described in the book Looking for the Hidden Folk: How Iceland's Elves

Can Save the Earth, by Nan- eration to generation. In a cy Marie Brown (Pegasus



Books, 2022). Brown is a cultural historian of Icelandic sagas, visiting Iceland over 30 times since 1986. She creates a strong sense of wonder and appreciation of hidden, magical places amidst a landscape of fire and ice, bubbling with volcanic

> eruptions. under-Her standing of Old Norse led to reading the ancient elf-filled sagas, survival stories embedded in the memories of the Icelandic people, passed down orally from gen-

country with a population of

400,000 people, it is said that 50% of Icelandic people believe in the concept of "the hidden folk" or "hudulfolk."

It is miraculous to imagine a belief in "hidden folk" in "modern times." These beliefs can even influence a public works project, sometimes rerouting the direction of a road, or moving an enormous slab rock (home to an elf community) to a more scenic view of the sea.

Imagine delaying development in this culture over the feelings of the spirits past? Now that is truly something to ponder on a cold winter night.

> Jan Atamian Lake Pleasant



Falls, and Putney, Vermont.

Brookman talked about her new home in Putney that she shares with Goodarzi, which is illustrated in several paintings. She spoke about loving the design of the house, which the previous owner built and crafted himself. This fact resonates with her. Her new home studio is pictured in the landscape painting behind Brookman in the photograph for this article.

As an emerging multidisciplinary artist, Brookman's talent is plentiful. She puts her love and enthusiasm for the creative process into everything she makes. I feel fortunate she has chosen western Mass and southern Vermont to plant her roots.

Gala Beginnings

Brookman was born in Denver, Colorado in 1993. In conversation, she recalls that her parents encouraged her to attend art classes at an early age. She said her mom taught her to believe "you can make anything." She grew up repurposing and recycling. Making clothing and bags has always been a part of her life.

She attended Denver School of the Arts, a comprehensive secondary arts magnet middle and high school in the Denver public school system. In addition to academics, students explored creative writing, dance, band, orchestra, vocal music, stagecraft and theater design, video, cinema and visual arts. At this time, Brookman remembers staying up until midnight on many nights, designing costumes, sets, and lighting, and learning stage management.

This brings to mind her recent fundraising event for Looky Here in December 2022. Held in the Pushkin building on Main Street in Greenfield, it was a well-organized Gala Art Auction. Eighty-nine artists donated works of art, to be auctioned off under the high-ceilinged former bank lobby. Music flowed from performances by Goodarzi, Katarina Mazur, Blue Dish, and Stella Kola.



This painting of The Lovelights is acrylic on canvas framed with gold foam.



Beverly Ketch's multi-colored Christmas cape dazzled the audience.

THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

Brookman tells me that she hung all 90 pieces of art by herself, not knowing if her creative idea would bear fruit. It turned out to be a huge success, with the proceeds enabling her to give back to the community with continued workshops and exhibits at Looky Here.

Now I understood how her connection to hard work and theater design made it possible to pull off such a huge undertaking. As an attendee that night, I thought I was transported to a New York City gala event.

From the magnet arts high school, Brookman attended Bennington College in Vermont. At this point, she said, she had her fill of technical theater and being directed by others. Bennington offered independent curriculum studies, and it is here that she combined academics with studies in social thought and sculpture.

For a senior project, she once again incorporated reuse, finding a junky, discarded aluminum roof to create a karaoke bar within the gallery. Within the installation, friends performed in her hand-made costumes. She felt the need to document her art piece, and this led to her learning to use video equipment. She is currently using her technical expertise at her job with Montague Community Television (MCTV).

After graduation from Bennington, Brookman headed to the Franconia Sculpture Park in Shafer, Minnesota for an internship in the art of welding. Here she created a 20-foot steel sculpture entitled "Self-Portrait with Cucumbers." At the time, she said, "The sheet metal was my paint, full of patterns and textures."

Projects Galore

When her four-month residency ended, Brookman moved to western Massachusetts in a van. Here, she was introduced to a vibrant music community that Goodarzi was a part of.

She met Beverly Ketch, an inspiring poet and musician, and they spoke of a magical TV show that they wanted to produce about fairies that live in the downtown planters in Turners Falls, resulting in "The Lovelights." Brookman made all of the costumes and props for the show, filmed and edited it, and acted as one of the main characters. The show, which was aired on MCTV, transformed Avenue A into an enchanting fairy land.

Brookman said the Lovelights are currently working on a sequel, and meanwhile, she and Ketch continue the adventures of the Lovelights in the monthly Children's Page in the *Montague Reporter*. They are a dynamic duo – Brookman's delightfully expressive illustrations bring Ketch's words to life. At the exhibit, you may browse through a portfolio of past Children's Page comics.



The exhibit also includes two wooden wall pieces, carved with a jigsaw and painted.

Here, which Brookman has been holding in the space for the past five years. She said the process of drawing from life is both exciting and relaxing. Viewers may turn the wooden dowel to see many of these drawings, which have an expressive line quality.

Morris Fan

A part of Brookman's connection to the natural world is her connection to the philosophy of William Morris (1834-1896). Morris was a British textile designer, poet, artist, novelist, architectural conservationist, and printer, and a believer in greater equality between the rich and the poor.

If you would like to learn more about Morris, Brookman has created an episode about him on the podcast Art and Labor (*artand-laborpodcast.com/tag/hannah-brookman/*). The series focuses on cultural and art workers' ongoing struggle to survive, and chronicles stories of organizing and social justice within the arts.

On the risograph press, Brookman has also reprinted a small edition of one of William Morris's essays. Some of the quotes are memorable. In his discussion of Victorian industrialization, he wrote: "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

And lastly, in this busy world, it is truly magical when creative individuals support one another, as so beautifully written

Brookman put some of her figure drawings on a scroll which visitors can view by turning the dowel rods.

Brookman also plans to transform the series into a children's book using her risograph printer. A risograph is a screen-printing photocopier that prints in color layers, one color at a time.

In addition to the Children's Page, Brookman draws a daily comic of her life using an Apple pen on an iPad. This she calls her "magic journal." She has posted some of the funnier comics from the journal online. Brookman said she loves looking back and reflecting on her older comics.

Also on view at the show is a hand-made "crankie" holding a scroll of brown paper filled with pastel and charcoal drawings from her figure drawing sessions at Looky by Goodarzi in a tribute to Brookman for the *Admin Reveal* exhibit. He writes, "... if there's one thing you must know about Hannah's creative life, it's that she really likes to draw and she does it... a lot. Hannah burns through a sketchbook like the hourglass pours through time, I kid you not."

A reception for Admin Reveal will be held this Friday, January 27, from 5 to 8 p.m. in conjunction with the Greenfield Art Walk. Looky Here is located at 28 Chapman Street, Greenfield. There will also be a closing re-

ception on February 24 from 5 to 9 p.m., which will include a screening of The Lovelights show.



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It is difficult to get the news from poems yet men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there. - William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno Readers are invited to send poems to the *Montague Reporter* at: 177 Avenue A Turners Falls, MA 01376 or to: *poetry@montaguereporter.org*

Possible Etiologies of the Recent Grand Prize-Winning Poem

Foreword to *My Life As An Aphasic*, dictated by a stroke victim [redrum] Satan's Netflix password [REDRUM] Assembly instructions for an Ikea bookcase on planet Obtuse-7 [deadlock] Aftermath of a bombing in a typesetting factory [deadlock] [dreadlock] What an aneurysm looks like committed to print [headlock] Baby's first psilocybin [lamebrain] The inaugural batch of alphabet soup [dreadname] The only information ever to escape a black hole [scornbrain] Stephen Hawking's bicycle-lock combination [breadtrain] The very last of the nine billion names of God [Coltrane] The complete genetic sequence of Beelzebub's DNA [fright-train] A turtle with a stutter ordering duck soup [braindrain] Basement archive of the Organization For Words Never Used That Way Before [ohthepain] The original recipe for word salad [deframe] Jeffrey Epstein's porn name [reversefame] What rock bottom sounds like [allgain] The Inscrutable Eulogy for All of Poetry [sadday].

- G. Greene Greenfield

ANGELS

- Do you believe in angels? she asks By way of explaining her extended absence;
- Oh, I believe in anything I have to under the circumstances, I tell her; What are yours?

Mine? she asks, By way of extending the absence.

Circumstances, I say.

Oh, she says, It's just that I went to New York with my friend

And all her money somehow wound up in my pocket; She thinks I stole it, But I don't think it was me. My life's a mess.

And the angels? I ask.

The what?

Angels, I say.

Right, says she, the angels...

SHARDS

My brothers debate with some collegial authority the meaning of dwarf and midget after the little man down the street has shattered our plate glass window with his forehead: three blows he says, to stop the buzzing in his ears; the buzz, I think, of my brothers' collegial authority.

> - Wesley Blixt Greenfield

The Reference Desk

Dear Sir There is strong evidence That a snake Has spat a red color stone and There is glow from it Which lights A Dark Room. Let me know If such things exist and if so What is the name Of such a stone.

Our January Poetry Page

What About the Bird

In spite of Sunday I proclaim Thursday because Thursday is Splendid Fairywren Day.

Your birthday bird-of-the-day in the page-a-day is the Andean Cock-of-the Rock.

I ordered next year early in hopes of a better birthday bird. If the year will have me back ordered. Here's to hoping for the Hazelfronted Pygmy-tyrant.

Fast forward I find the Ocellated Turkey oscillating. Stuck on the page the Green-breasted Mango is not fruit. Turn the page turn the bird.

Vermilion-crowned Social Flycatcher Red-legged Honeycreeper Blue-Throated Bee-eater Masked flowerpiercer Long-wattled Umbrellabird Flame-rumped Tanager Bufflehead, Bufflehead Ross's Goose. It's been a year.

Being brilliant, the Green Crowned Brilliant gets more than one day. Turn the bird. Black-capped chickadee are you a poem? Or do you defer to the blue-faced honeyeater?

The Lappet-faced vultures wear pantaloons. This is about birds

That's what I thought, too.

– Wesley Blixt Greenfield

> - Wesley Blixt Greenfield

wearing clothes. Turn the bird. Forget the day. The robin dies its feathers pink.

Cue the local bird before me as he takes all of December to whisper rehearse the muted river. Name the Northern Mockingbird, Splendid.

> - <mark>Janel Nockleby</mark> Turners Falls

RITING THEE LAND The Poetry Page is supported by NatureCulture

NatureCulture WritingTheLand.org

Contributors' Notes

Wesley Blixt holds an MFA from UMass Amherst and is the author of *Skaters*, a novel set in Greenfield, where he lives.

Janel Nockleby lives in Turners Falls, works at the Great Falls Discovery Center, and earned an MFA in poetry from UMass-Amherst. She was the poetry editor for the *Montague Reporter* from 2009 to 2012.

Gary Greene is a Greenfield native and author of *Poems In A Time of Grief.* His work has appeared in the *Montague Reporter*, where he was the featured poet in January 2021; Oprelle Publications' poetry anthology *Matter*; online at *wittypartition.org*; and in Nine Mile Books & Literary Magazine. His poem "A Poem About Not Getting a Dog" will appear in the June 2023 edition of *Rattle.* He has competed in and placed in the top three in the Poet's Seat and Robert P. Collén poetry competitions. His latest book, *The Lonely Years*, is currently seeking a publisher.

EMMA KOHLMANN IMAGE

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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, Bochek, *PWRUP.* \$. 8:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: The Dustbowl Revival, The Mary Jane Jones. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

10 Forward, Greenfield: Two-Step Night, with Les Taiauts and The Honky Tonk Angels. Cajun and honky-tonk two-stepping dance lesson provided. Benefit for local organizations Liyang Network and the Anti-Imperialist Action Committee, for disaster relief and mutual aid in the Philippines and Venezuela. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Shea's Lounge presents Opel. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Michael Nix, Chris Devine. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

Shutesbury Athletic Club: Wildcat O'Halloran. Free. 8 p.m. The Drake, Amherst: Lou Bar-

low. \$. 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.

Hitchcock Brewing Company, Bernardston: Sandy Bailey & Band. Free. 6 p.m.

Online: Get Down With Your Hometown festival, feat. The Indigo Girls, Chris Smither, Tony Trischka, Martin Sexton, The Nields, Parsonsfield, The Suitcase Junket, Naia Kete, Prune, many more. Benefit for the Shea Theater, North Star, and Institute for the Musical Arts. See getdownhometown.com. 6 p.m.

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

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: East Coast Cowboys with Jen Tobey. Free. 7 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: Appalachian Still, Kat & Brad. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: The Equalites. Free. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: The Eighty Six Seas. Free. 9:30 p.m. **SUNDAY, JANUARY 29**

Temple Israel, Greenfield: Stephen Katz, Klez Cabal. \$. 4 p.m. Online: Get Down With Your

Hometown festival, second night (see Saturday listing). 6 p.m.

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

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Woody and the Ganja Chicken Collective feat. Big Dread Smith. \$. 9:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Joe K. Walsh, Grant Gordy, Briezy Jane and the Hurricanes. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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, Kieran Lally, Hollow Deck, DJ Krefting. \$. 8 p.m.

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

The Drake, Amherst: Les Derailleurs, Landowner, Perenni*al.* \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Underground System. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Adam Reid & the In-Betweens, Sailor *Down, Julie Cira.* \$. 8:30 p.m. **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

Four Star Farms, Northfield: Rosie Porter Trio. Free. 5 p.m. Marigold Theater, Easthampton: Doomsmas featuring Slow Wake, Shadow Witch, Geezer, Fox 45, Astral Bitch, and more. \$. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: Lakeside Drive. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Behold! True Believers, Lives of Crime, AP Wray. \$. 7:30 p.m.

SCDT, Northampton: HUT 39 feat. Amelia Heintzelman & Leah Fournier, Peter Gizzi, Bill *Nace.* \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown: Bill Nace/Matt Krefting duo. \$. 3 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Ben Carroll, The Give, Matt Emmer & Friends. \$. 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: Chuck and Biscuits. 8 p.m. The Drake, Amherst: Outro,

Spanish for Hitchhiking, Eat Fire Spring. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Crossroads exhibit kickoff event. Free. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Glen David Andrews. \$. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

The Wheelhouse at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Queer dance night feat. DJs JessXO, Bux Wild, Heartballoon. \$. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Belltower Records, North Adams: Center, Matt Weston, Liz Durette. \$. 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: Pamela Means, \$, 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Whiskey City. \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: 2 Car Garage. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: The Bourbon Street Blasters, Zydeco Connection. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

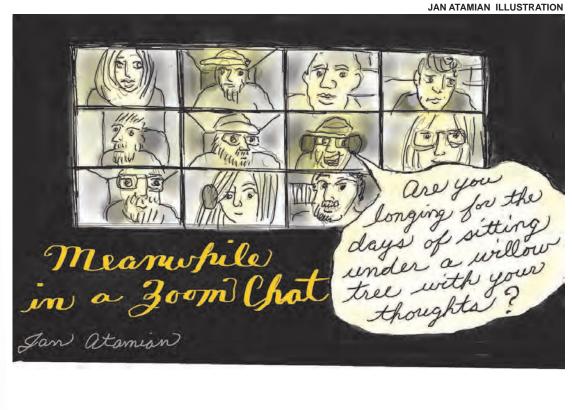
Bombyx Center, Florence: Club *D'Elf.* \$. 7 p.m.

Nova Arts, Keene NH: Florist, Footings. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Quiet Houses record release, with Mark Schwaber. \$. 8 p.m.







JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

GET YOUR AUDIT ON By DAISY REED FOR REAL IT'S NICE TO BE ABLE WHAT A CRYBABY, HE TO CALL SOMEONE IF YOU'RE IN SHOULD DEFINITELY QUIT SOMEBODY ASKED THE POLICE A BAD SITUATION, BUT THESE AND JUST BE A CONSULTANT CHIEF, HOW WILL PPL FEEL SAFE JOKERS? CHIEF DUDE SAYS HA, YEAH, THEN HE'S TO COPS WHO WANT TO BE AFTER YOUR DECISION? AND HE SAFETY IS MINE TO GIVE LIKE "I LOVE THIS TOWN." MORE DICKISH SAID "THEY WON'T BE SAFE!" OR TAKE, SO GO SUCK IT IF THIS IS LOVE ... GREENFIELD. DOESN'T SEEM THERE'S GOOD LIKE THE KIND OF PERSON YOU MONEY IN THAT WANT COMING IN AN EMERGENCY.



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



THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

JANUARY 26, 2023

MOVIE REVIEW **Broker** (2022)

(This review contains spoilers.)

By REBECCA TIPPENS

COLRAIN – I loved the film *Broker*, now playing at Amherst Cinema. It has limited release across the country, though it has been widely seen across the globe. It is a film written and directed by

Hirokazu Koreeda from Japan, who also made the great film *Shoplifters* (2018).

The director introduces the audience to the film, a conceit that I do not remember having seen before, but I loved it – as it felt as though he were welcoming us to his family and their story. The story is a

heartwarming ensemble piece set in South Korea. Whereas the story takes place outside of the law, all of its characters – those on the side of the law and those skirting its boundaries – are presented multi-dimensionally. For some reason, that feels like a deeply needed and welcome relief for our times, bringing us out of head trips and into our hearts.

Broker focuses on three people, all about 30 years old, who have been raised together in an orphanage. We are given insights into their past experiences – their perpetually unfulfilled longing to have been chosen for adoption by a family led to their determination to help a single mother find a family for her little boy, whom she feels unable to raise on her own.

They are doing this outside of the laborious adoption system while also making money in the selling of this (adorable) little one, who is maybe eight months old at the beginning of the story. They are granting themselves economic liberation by this sale. One of them now runs a laundry service whose income does not allow for more than life's basics.

As the story progresses, the relationships among the three deepen, their back stories are revealed, and their love for the little one grows. Though it began in empathy, their

> desire to assure him a really good home deepens.

Each of the band in turn takes care of the baby. We see them feeding him, carrying him around, and they schedule night shifts so that each gets at least six hours of straight sleep. They do all this with warmth and affection and not

an ounce of false sentimentality.

The team evolves to consider whether they might find some way to not have to sell this little one. What makes a family a family? they ask, as do we. Is it made by blood relation, marriage, or coupling? Is it just everybody involved having the same intention?

An adorable element is that, unbeknownst to the "Brokers," a fiveor six-year-old from the orphanage has secretly stowed away in their van. When they discover him, they end up embracing him as one of their team.

Ends come together as the film closes; we see the baby as a threeor four-year-old, adored by the multiple people who have loved and cared for him.

It is important to see a film that brings out the kindness of people, and that it is a wee babe who brings out the best in people is a lovely way to feel and experience that.



(Going somewhere this winter? Bring us with you! Send photos to editor@montaguereporter.org.)

Montague Community Television News Authors at the Library

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – David Detmold was the featured Local Author at the Montague Center Library on the 18th, and MCTV is airing the recording of this event. The Local Authors series will take place monthly at the library at 6 p.m. on every third Wednesday.

The Gill selectboard and Montague selectboard each held their meetings this past week, and the recordings of these are available on the MCTV Vimeo page.

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*.





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



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