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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

ANALYSIS

What's a CSO, And Why Is It So Expensive?

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – It has been a local news story on and off for almost two decades, but Montague's combined sewer overflow (CSO) system is once again in our pages. The selectboard has recently endorsed creating a new full-time position within the public works department to monitor the town's "collection system," which includes the regular sanitary sewers that flow into the Clean Water Facility on Greenfield Road, the catch basins that add street runoff into those sewers, and the CSO, which diverts overflow during storms.

In addition, last Monday the board approved a contract with the company ADS Environmental Services for expanded monitoring and reporting of the CSO in response to a new state mandate. The company will set up a system to automatically email "stakeholders," such as this newspaper, every time there is a significant CSO event.

A CSO event, for the uninitiated, is when heavy rainfall washes a combination of stormwater and sewage into a body of water, such as the Connecticut River or the Boston Harbor. The events occur in municipalities that have inherited old systems that combine sewage disposal with stormwater runoff.

According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, CSOs "contain untreated or partially treated human and industrial waste, toxic materials, and debris, as well as storm water. They are a

see **OVERFLOW** page A8

Law Enshrines 'No Net Loss' Of Mass. Conservation Land

By SARAH ROBERTSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – A law more than two decades in the making, *An Act preserving open space in the Commonwealth* (H.5381), was finally signed into law by Charlie Baker last November 17. Also known as the Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA), the law requires that any public land developed or converted to another use be replaced with protected land of equal value nearby.

"This is a much better situation now, with this act being codified in law rather than a policy that can be ignored, worked around, or ul-

timately rescinded by another administration," Dan Leahy, chair of the Wendell open space committee, told the *Reporter*. "As a town that has as much conserved land as we do, it's always a good thing when the protection of public conservation lands gets stronger rather than weaker, that's for sure."

Conservation commissions in Wendell, Leverett, Conway, and Hadley passed resolutions in support of the PLPA. The law applies to "the commonwealth, any agency, authority, board, bureau, commission, committee, council, county, department, division, institution,

see **LAND** page A5

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Feds Set March Deadline For Hydro Company Filing



The hydroelectric relicensing process has dragged on for over a decade now.

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague town administrator Steve Ellis told the selectboard at its Monday night meeting that light may be at the end of the tunnel in the federal relicensing of the FirstLight Power company. Ellis announced that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) was "requiring" the company to end its settlement discussions with stakeholders and file a final license proposal with the agency by March 31, in preparation for final federal review and approval.

The license will cover two FirstLight projects: the Northfield

Mountain Pumped Storage project, a facility that pumps Connecticut River water up a mountain in Erving and then runs it back down to produce energy, and the Turners Falls Hydroelectric project, which focuses on the dam between Turners and Gill, the Turners Falls power canal, and two power stations on the river below it.

The projects include riverbanks and recreational facilities in Montague, Erving, Gill, and Northfield, all of which were the object of extended negotiations.

Ellis told the *Reporter* that the March 31 deadline, if met, would

see **MONTAGUE** page A6



JERRI HIGGINS PHOTO

Great Falls Discovery Center visitor services supervisor Janel Nockleby (center, with large scissors) had the honor Sunday morning of cutting the ribbon on the Smithsonian Institution's Crossroads: Change in Rural America exhibit at the center's Great Hall. Montague library director Caitlin Kelley (left) and RiverCulture director Suzanne LaManto (right) encouraged Nockleby as she took her third snip, which proved to be the charm, at the exhibit ribbon.

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Several Town Generators Failed During Emergency

By JOSH HEINEMANN

At its February 1 meeting the Wendell selectboard decided to arrange a meeting with emergency manager Lonny Ricketts and fire chief Joe Cuneo to establish a plan so that the town is ready the next time electric service is interrupted. The town had been hit with multiple outages after winter weather events the previous week.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said funds are available for technical and emergency preparedness, and that he would check in with the Franklin Regional

Council of Governments (FRCOG).

Selectboard member Gillian Budine said Swift River Elementary School had closed for five days, and suggested that the situation be declared an emergency so the school is not required to make up that time. She said she would check with the New Salem selectboard about the idea.

Town facilities engineer Jim Slavas and his assistant Alistair MacMartin joined the meeting to discuss the generators that were installed after the 2008 ice storm. They were connected to provide

see **WENDELL** page A7

Public Weighs In On Town's 15-Year Plan



LEVINE PHOTO

Childcare, food, and transportation were offered to residents who volunteered four hours of their Saturday to give their input.

By ANNABEL LEVINE

TURNERS FALLS – Despite the arctic winds blowing through town on Saturday morning, close to 70 Montague residents braved the cold, filtering into the Turners Falls High School cafeteria to participate in the "Montague Comprehensive Plan Workshop – Five Villages: One Future." Saturday's event was the most recent step in collaboration between the town of Montague

and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to craft a new vision plan for the town for the next 15 years.

The last comprehensive plan that the town developed was in 1999, and it helped bring several municipal projects into fruition including the Great Falls Discovery Center (2004), the Canalside Rail Trail (2007), park upgrades across town including the bandshell at Peskeomskut Park, and the preservation

of over 1,000 acres of farmland.

Once finished, this new plan is intended to act as a guiding document for town decision-makers for the coming years, and functionally will allow for a greater chance of attracting grant money to projects and ideas included within it.

A steering committee of Montague residents has been working with FRCOG over the past months to create this new vision plan. The

see **WORKSHOP** page A5

High School Sports Week

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – This week a generational cold front covered the northeast. At 8 a.m. on Friday, February 3, it was 10 degrees. It went down from there. By the time the Turners girls tipped off that night, it

was 8 degrees below zero with 18 mph winds. Then it got colder and the winds picked up.

On Saturday, the Pioneer Valley experienced wind chills of 50 degrees below zero. That's a "real feel" of 82 degrees below. It could

see **SPORTS** page A6



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Turners Falls senior Nik Martin took first in the 100-yard freestyle on Monday as the Thunder competed against Springfield Sci-Tech in their final home meet of the season, and the last of Martin's high school career. He also placed first in the 50-yard freestyle and swam on the winning 200-yard medley relay team.

A Combined Overflow System For Our Towns' Excess Words

Editorial and Letters.....	A2	The Vanilla Question: An Extract Exposé.....	B1
Local Briefs.....	A3	GFMS/TFHS Honor Roll.....	B2
Local Bobcat.....	A3	Montague Police Log Highlights.....	B3
At Large: Fest Fleeing?.....	A4	Device/Advice: The Royal Scam.....	B3
Leverett Selectboard Notes.....	A4	Our Monthly Children's Page.....	B6
Ten, Twenty, 150 Years Ago.....	A7	Arts & Entertainment Calendar.....	B7
Valley View: Software Updates.....	B1	Three Comics & a Montague Cryptojam.....	B7
Heartfelt Cafe: Beyond or Despite Meat.....	B1	Exhibit: By Hook, Endlessly.....	B8



The Montague Reporter

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A Structure of Vastly Greater Soundness

"Today a hope of many years' standing is in large part fulfilled. The civilization of the past hundred years, with its startling industrial changes, has tended more and more to make life insecure. Young people have come to wonder what would be their lot when they came to old age. The man with a job has wondered how long the job would last.

"This social security measure gives at least some protection to thirty millions of our citizens who will reap direct benefits through unemployment compensation, through old-age pensions and through increased services for the protection of children and the prevention of ill health.

"We can never insure one hundred percent of the population against one hundred percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age.

"This law, too, represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built but is by no means complete. It is a structure intended to lessen the force of possible future depressions. It will act as a protection to future Administrations against the necessity of going deeply into debt to furnish relief to the needy. The law will flatten out the peaks and valleys of deflation and of inflation.

"It is, in short, a law that will take care of human needs and at the same time provide the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness.

"I congratulate all of you ladies and gentlemen, all of you in the Congress, in the executive departments and all of you who come from private life, and I thank you for your splendid efforts in behalf of this sound, needed, and patriotic legislation.

"If the Senate and the House of Representatives in this long and arduous session had done nothing more than pass this Bill, the session would be regarded as historic for all time."

— Franklin Delano Roosevelt,
upon the signing of the
Social Security Act,
August 14, 1935

Politics in the US, we frequently complain, is frantically led by the steady beat of elections — *midyear, Presidential, midyear, Presidential* — and each time we round the track we find the next has started earlier, like a neighborhood locked in a grim campaign of one-upsmanship that puts up its Christmas decorations in November, then in October, then in September...

The Presidentials are a spasm of manipulative spending, with legal expenditures on federal races rising over the last four cycles from \$5.3 billion to \$6.3 billion to \$6.5 billion to \$14.4 billion. All that competing investment also contributes to an earlier and earlier start.

Many other countries deliberately limit this abject misery by setting a cap on the length of time politicians may campaign. France? Two weeks. Japan? Twelve days.

Apparently, we're up to at least 21 months here. Democratic president Joe Biden delivered his annual State of the Union address on Tuesday, and while there was a lot going on both in the speech and in the discourse surrounding it, most pundits seem to have read it primarily as an incumbent's triangulation of the 2024 race.

It's a tricky course. A new Associated Press poll shows that only 37% of Democratic voters want Biden to seek a second term. Gambling oddsmakers, however, still have him as the hands-down favorite for the nomination, followed distantly by a raft of undeclareds.

It's tighter on the other side of the aisle. Florida governor Ron DeSantis is breathing down former president Donald Trump's neck, grabbing at the national spotlight by using his state as a laboratory for legislative attacks on queer and trans people, migrants, teachers and historians, and abortion rights.

The play of the game Tuesday was Biden's "rope-a-dope" (in the words of Senate majority leader Chuck Schumer) on Social Security and Medicare, calling the GOP out for "some" of its members hoping to sunset the entitlements and goading his Republican hecklers into vocally disavowing the idea.

Pandering to far-right sex panics and Christian nationalism, the GOP has left itself exposed to attacks on bread-and-butter economic issues.

It's going to be a long 21 months, but it will certainly get interesting.



Sean Keller pauses behind the bar at the North Village Smokehouse in Millers Falls on a recent Saturday night. The joint is hoppin', and owner-operator Keller is smiling. "When I have it in cruise control, it's an enjoyable gig!" he explains. The Smokehouse serves Texas pit-style BBQ meat and Southern sides. When BBQ is done right, Keller says, "it's a destination food that people will drive for."

Letters to the Editors

Cemetery Commission Seeks More Volunteers

The Montague Cemetery Commission is growing in number, interest, excitement, and engagement.

Two years ago, the Town of Montague voted to assume responsibility for the Highland Cemetery on Millers Falls Road, the one active cemetery of the town's eight cemeteries. It has over 200 available spaces for burial in the lawn section. The 2.5 acres of forested land, Highland Woods, is in the early stages of development for a green burial section of the cemetery.

The five members of the cemetery commission are motivated, dedicated, and enthusiastic. We invite you to join us as a volunteer in this dignified endeavor of attending to our town's "sacred parks." Tasks include restoration and cleaning of head stones, clean-up and grooming of spaces, organizing and digitizing old records, historical research, etc.

For those interested in being a part of this meaningful work, honoring our past, present and future community, there will be two informational sessions in late February: Saturday the 25th at 11 a.m. and Tuesday the 28th at 5 p.m., both at the Gill-Montague Senior Center in Turners Falls.

Please join us!

Mary Kay Mattiace
Montague City
Montague Cemetery Commission

Free Leonard Peltier

Monday, February 6 marks the anniversary of the imprisonment of American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier in 1976.

He has served 47 years in the federal penitentiary. He is America's longest-serving political prisoner.

How can we in America call on Russia to release Alexei Navalny when we continue to keep Leonard Peltier in jail?

Peltier is 78 years old, in failing health, blind in one eye, suffering from severe diabetes, and denied needed medical treatment.

Over all these years, he has maintained his innocence. Therefore he has been denied parole on grounds that he is unrepentant of the murders of two FBI agents killed on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota during a general firefight that involved dozens of people.

This same incident resulted in the death of American Indian Movement (AIM) activist Joe Stuntz, whose killing was never even investigated.

In 1975, during a time of widespread violence and the unsolved murders of more than 40 AIM activists and supporters on Pine Ridge Reservation, the two FBI agents, Jack Coler and Ron Williams, had driven onto a private ranch where AIM members had been invited to guard traditional elders of the Jumping Bull family from the ongoing violence.

Driving unmarked cars, the agents were supposedly pursuing a federal warrant — for a pair of stolen cowboy boots.

Two other AIM members who were tried for the killings of the FBI agents in that deadly shootout were

acquitted on grounds of self-defense.

Tried separately, on admittedly perjured testimony, while the government withheld exculpatory evidence that would have shown his gun did not fire the fatal bullets, Peltier was convicted of "aiding and abetting" in the agents' murder and sentenced to two life terms in prison.

Aiding and abetting whom? His co-defendants were exonerated. Peltier was denied the ability to even present evidence of self-defense. He alone has suffered punishment — for 47 years.

James Reynolds, the retired federal prosecutor whose office handled Peltier's trial and appeals, wrote to President Biden last year, asking that he release Peltier.

"With time, and the benefit of hindsight, I have realized that the prosecution and continued incarceration of Mr. Peltier was and is unjust," Reynolds wrote. "We were not able to prove that Mr. Peltier personally committed any offense on the Pine Ridge Reservation."

Amnesty International, the National Congress of American Indians, foreign parliaments, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama, Pope Francis, and members of the US Congress have all called for Peltier's release.

I add my voice to theirs.

I urge everyone who reads this to write to President Biden and ask him to grant clemency and release Leonard Peltier from his long years of suffering. Let him go home to his people, today.

David Detmold
Montague

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Get ready to do that **hearts-and-flowers thing again** on Valentine's Day, February 14. Drop in to the Carnegie Library this Saturday, February 11, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. to make cards for your special people. Craft supplies and refreshments are provided.

Great Falls Books Through Bars hosts a volunteer day this Saturday, February 11 from 1 to 5 p.m. at their 104 Fourth Street location. The work involves responding to letters from incarcerated folks and packaging books to send to them in the community space shared with the Pioneer Valley Workers Center and Finders Collective. Masks are required inside the building.

There's also a session on Monday, February 13 from 5 to 8 p.m. which is aimed at orientation for new volunteers. If you want to attend the Monday session, they ask that you message them at gfb-booksthroughbars@riseup.net.

Artspace in Greenfield is known for their stringed instrument instruction for youth. Students will be showing off their accomplishments at a **String Spectacular Annual Concert** this Saturday, February 11 at 5 p.m. at the Greenfield High School. The students are all in elementary and middle school, and students from Música Franklin, a program teaching after school music lessons in area schools, will be playing in the concert as well. Admission is free.

The **Crossroads: Rural Life in America** kickoff event will be held this Saturday, February 11 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Shea Theater. The *Crossroads* exhibit is currently on view at the Great Falls Discovery Center, and a variety of presentations and programs are scheduled between now and when it leaves on March 18.

This Saturday's event starts with a reception at 6 p.m. and an introductory address by Dr. Leo Hwang at 7 p.m., followed by a short documentary on sugaring by filmmaker Steve Alves. NEPM's Valley Voices team shares local stories interspersed with live music to round off the evening. Free.

Seeking an audience for your story or song? The Common Hall Open Mic in Montague Center awaits your silver tongue this Saturday, February 11 at 6:30 p.m. Sign up at 6:15 for randomly determined time slots. The featured performer is singer-songwriter Leslie King. It's a comfortable setting, and you are welcome to bring your own food and refreshments. Be prepared for 10 to 20 minutes of stage time, depending on the turnout.

Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls is hosting a display of **Turners Falls artist Belinda Lyons Zucker's dolls** during **Black History Month** in February. The

three figures represent three Black women educators, Susie King Taylor (1842-1912), Elizabeth Carter Brook (1867-1951), and Maria "Molly" Baldwin (1856-1922). Come admire the detailed craftsmanship, and learn about the work of these outstanding women. The display will be up through February.

There's an **in-person job fair at Greenfield Community College (GCC)** next Wednesday, February 15 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. It's open to everyone, with no pre-registration required. And you can go face-to-face with dozens of area employers as well as learn about training opportunities from the Franklin-Hampshire Career Center and GCC. Learn more at masshirefcareers.org.

The **Local Author Reading series** at the Montague Center Libraries continues on Wednesday, February 15 at 6 p.m. Jennifer Acker reads from her debut novel *The Limits of the World*, which is a fiction honoree for the Massachusetts Book Award. Acker teaches writing and editing at Amherst College. Refreshments will be served.



"A nature photo for you," reader Joe M. Parzych wrote this week. "This picture of a bobcat was taken in my yard in Gill." W'ho!

The **future of the Montague Center Library branch** will be discussed at a public forum on Thursday, February 16 at the Montague Center Library, from 6 to 7 p.m. This moderated public forum will focus on the future of the branch and the second floor of the "old Town Hall." If you can't attend in person, you may visit montague-publiclibraries.org for the link.

The **Town of Northfield's 350th Anniversary celebration** officially kicks off next weekend, February 18 and 19.

Saturday, February 18 is designated "Family Fun Day" at the

Northfield Elementary School, which hosts a morning full of songs and stories by Roger Tinknell, a Birds of Prey demonstration by Tom Ricardi, and other activities. The fun continues in the afternoon with outdoor winter activities at the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center, including a horse-drawn wagon ride, campfire, s'more-making, and cocoa.

On Sunday, February 19, archeologist and historian Peter Thomas, Ph.D., gives a presentation on "The Sokoki: Their Response to Colonization and Their Role in Northfield's Beginning." The program takes place at 2 p.m. at the Trinitarian Church at 147 Main Street.

Dr. Thomas' talk is one of several programs that focus on the indigenous people who occupied the land for 16,000 years prior to colonization. A reception will follow featuring memorabilia from Northfield's 300th Anniversary in 1973.

All events are free and open to the public. For a complete listing of 350th Anniversary events, visit www.northfield350.org.

Just Another Mile, a documentary by local activist Gloria Matlock about racism, resilience, and perseverance in a small Ohio community, will be shown in person and online at the All Souls UU Church in Greenfield next Saturday, February 18 at 2 p.m. This film is about two historically Black neighborhoods in Ravena, Ohio, and racism witnessed by residents there in the 20th and 21st centuries.

formation, contact Ella Ingraham at ejmai127@gmail.com.

Have you heard about **Jurasic armored mud balls**? Franklin County is one of the few places where you can easily see, touch, and study these geologic features. Dr. Richard Little is credited with discovering these oddities, and he will explain all about them in a webinar next Sunday, February 19 at 1 p.m. Register at www.tinyurl.com/mud-ball for the link.

Rebecca Tippens, storyteller at large and movie reviewer in this paper, sent notice that the **Solstice Benefit Concert**, held on the longest night of the year in Ashfield, is now available as a video on YouTube. Apparently, bad weather on the solstice prevented many from attending its 38th annual rendition in December, so if you missed it, or want to remember some favorite stories and songs of that night, visit www.tinyurl.com/38thAWSC.

The concert was a benefit for the Food Bank of Western Mass and the Ohketeau Cultural Center, and there is a link in the video description where you may make a donation to the two organizations.

The Deerfield Valley Art Association is soliciting **art inspired by and incorporating the sciences** for their "STEAM-y Art & Science" exhibit. STEAM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. To enter, send a photo and the title of your piece by March 1 to margedvaa@gmail.com.

The exhibit will run March 24 through May 14 at Fiddleheads Gallery in Northfield. There will be special events, demos, and fun activities scheduled during the show. Check for updates at deerfieldvalleyart.org.

Like the outdoors? Concerned about the environment on our waterways? **The Connecticut River Conservancy is hiring** for a part-time seasonal position facilitating the removal and monitoring of invasive species like water chestnut and hydrilla in the Connecticut River watershed.

It's 25 hours a week, around Northampton and Holyoke. Assistant field crews and a boat are provided. The application deadline is March 19; find out the details at www.criver.org.

Massachusetts is now offering the **Personal and Home Care Aide State Training (PHCAST)** online! This free virtual self-paced training is for anyone interested in becoming a community-based home care worker.

The Mead Art Museum at Amherst College is reopening on February 24 with a **James Baldwin exhibition, God Made My Face: A Collective Portrait of James Baldwin**. This is the first exhibit planned since the COVID hiatus. The show is curated by art critic Hilton Als and features work by Marlene Dumas, Richard Avedon, and Kara Walker, among others.

Baldwin lived in Amherst from 1983 to 1986 and taught classes at the Five Colleges. The exhibit incorporates Baldwin's own writings, recordings, and art made over his lifetime.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

VALENTINE'S Cookie Walk

Make your heart go boom-boom-boom for the Valentine's Day Cookie Walk! Fresh baked cookies, crafts, and flowers. Fun for the whole family!

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AT LARGE

Breaking News on SoulFest Un-Breaks?

By **CHIP AINSWORTH**

NORTHFIELD – The chances of SoulFest happening at the D.L. Moody Center this summer dropped faster than a Chinese weather balloon on Monday after promoter Dan Russell inadvertently showed his hand.

For a few hours that day, SoulFest's website declared that its 2023 venue would be at the Topsfield Fairgrounds north of Boston. The posting disappeared shortly thereafter, but not before *Montague Reporter* editor Mike Jackson captured the screenshot and put it on the newspaper's Facebook page as breaking news.

Russell is becoming desperate to find another venue. One possible reason Topsfield went from a go-to a no-go was because the two sides couldn't agree on a site fee. SoulFest never paid a site fee at Gunstock, and hadn't expected to pay one in Northfield.

Compounding the problem now is that brokers have already sold tens of thousands of dollars' worth of tickets. It's a welcome-to-the-real-world moment for Dan Russell, who can't find the road to Damascus.

Northfield residents learned about SoulFest in August, and were shocked to learn of the advance ticket sales. The Northfield selectboard girded itself for a November tête-à-tête with Moody Center boss James

Spencer, but his presentation was pathetically weak. He didn't have a traffic plan, other than "one big flow in and one big flow out," and said 60 porta-potties would be enough for 6,000 daily concertgoers.

Selectboard chair Bee Jacque subsequently released a response that was signed off on by all five members. In it she said Spencer's presentation had not allayed the board's fears that the three-day extravaganza would choke traffic, paralyze emergency services, and lay waste to Northfield.

A reliable source said Spencer's "heart wasn't in it" after his presentation was panned. For some, it was *déjà vu* from two years ago when his proposal to build a \$14 million apartment complex was similarly rebuffed and he withdrew it. "Save your breath, there's not much question it's going away altogether," said the source.

Town administrator Andrea Llamas confirmed at Tuesday's selectboard meeting that SoulFest isn't Northfield-bound.

Repeated attempts were made to contact Spencer, Russell, and SoulFest GM Vanessa Ayersman by phone, text, email, and snail mail, but transparency never was their strong suit.

Out the Window

My house is close to the former NMH campus, and for exercise I'll

often walk up and down the Moody Street sidewalk. On Wednesday afternoon, February 1, I decided to cross Route 63 and stepped into the crosswalk.

Cars coming from both directions appeared to be far enough away for me to cross safely. I should've hit the yellow crossing lights and waited, but I lowered my head and jogged across the highway.

Wham! The northbound car's fender slammed into my boot as it was raised in the air. The force knocked me down and the first thing I did was scramble to my feet and try to walk. The boot's cushioning saved my ankle, but the impact twisted my knee.

The driver turned around and I pointed for him to park on Moody Street. He was an old-timer and was driving a late model Nissan. "Didn't you see me? It's a crosswalk!"

His passenger leaned across and said, "I saw you."

"Well that's just great!" I said.

He was from Holyoke, and probably on his way to Cha's to buy smokes. Yes, the police were called, but by the time the officer arrived I was back at my house looking for an Ace bandage. During my adrenaline-fueled talk with him I said drivers sped past the campus.

Police chief Jon Hall disputed this when I stopped on Monday for a copy of the report. "Every town has its speeders, but you won't be

catching any big fish in Northfield."

"I think he didn't see you," Hall added. "He was probably looking out the window or something."

All right, but if it's not the speed, it's the volume. Northfield is a busy go-between town. During an afternoon walk on Main Street last summer I counted 661 vehicles in one hour, motorcycles, trucks, and pickups hauling dirt bikes, boats, and ATVs.

Imagine what the main drag will be like if SoulFest ever gets its permit.

Every Cog in the Wheel

Northfield EMS deputy chief Camron Kennedy commended police officer Oleg Cobileanschi for helping to save the life of a stricken Northfield resident on November 22. The call for help came at 11 p.m., and Cobileanschi assisted EMS personnel by "running to the ambulance and down a flight of stairs and back multiple times to retrieve equipment that's not used on every call."

Cobileanschi also relayed information to the dispatch center and helped keep the family calm while three medics focused on stabilizing and prepping the patient for an air ambulance to Baystate.

"This was a highly acute call that without every cog in the wheel turning the way it did could've resulted in a different outcome," wrote Kennedy.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Chief Makes Case for Fourth Full-Time Cop

By **GEORGE BRACE**

Departmental budget hearings continued at Leverett's selectboard meeting on Tuesday, with the board reviewing police, highway, and town facilities budgets for the coming FY'24 fiscal year. Police chief Scott Minckler presented two budgets, one with and one without the hiring of a fourth full-time officer. The board also continued to discuss traffic safety concerns on Two Mile Road.

Minckler cited the state's move away from supporting part-time policing as one of his primary reasons for asking for a fourth full-time officer. Leverett providing police coverage to the town of Wendell through a joint-policing contract also played a role, he said, and the decision would depend on Wendell's selectboard approving half the total expense of approximately \$46,000. The Leverett-Wendell Advisory Police Services Oversight Committee was in favor of the staff increase.

Selectboard chair Tom Hankinson added that Leverett's personnel board also recommended the hiring.

Minckler said that there has also been a rise in call volume. Calls dropped from 3,900 per year pre-pandemic to 2,475 in 2021, but rose to roughly 3,600 in 2022. The call volume from Wendell also rose, from 770 in 2021 to 870 in 2022.

Minckler also cited a need for two or more officers to respond to gun and domestic disturbances, and that the lack of staff puts pressure on back-up responders such as neighboring towns and the state police, who he said were also understaffed.

A resident asked about the number of such calls in Leverett, and Minckler said in 2022 his department had responded to three domestic disputes, 13 disturbances, eight harassment complaints, and recently, one report of a gun being pointed at someone. He said the gun turned out to be a realistic-looking pellet gun, but that the subject was arrested.

Minckler said Leverett's traditional use of

part-time officers to cover sick days, vacations, and extra shifts has been strained by both the job market and the state's move away from part-time policing. Massachusetts has closed its part-time police academy, and after a "bridge academy" to provide full-time certification to part-time police ends in the next two years, only full-time training and certification will be available. The chief said he expects his current part-time staff, now numbering six, to dwindle over time, and that their availability is already limited as they all have other full-time jobs.

Minckler also complained of a "poaching problem," and referred to an email sent by the Boston police department to Massachusetts police chiefs saying, in his words, "we are understaffed, we want your people, we're sorry."

Leverett has a contractual obligation to provide a certain amount of coverage in Wendell, and Minckler said that it has now slipped below targeted levels.

Hankinson asked how small towns are going to solve the problem.

"It's something we're all trying to figure out," Minckler responded.

Fin com member Ann Delano asked how other towns are handling the situation and how many officers they employ, saying that "benchmarks" would be helpful.

Minckler said many towns are looking into combining departments as Leverett and Wendell have done, and are hiring additional full-time officers; Bernardston has added a fourth, and Erving is now at six. He added that other towns in the region have already merged departments, and that Erving and Gill have started a conversation about doing so.

Roads & Buildings

Highway superintendent Matt Boucher proposed a budget within the selectboard's guidance of a maximum 5% increase, and said most of the increase was due to rising costs of supplies and equipment.

Boucher said that his department was back

up to a full complement of three full-time workers, and that the crew was now "great," but also said he was facing similar staffing issues as Minckler, having lost two workers to MassDOT within the last year.

Fin com member Bethany Seeger commented that the difficulty in hiring and maintaining staff was a "common thread," and that the library and other departments face the same issue of bringing people on and training them only to have them move on to higher-paid positions elsewhere. Seeger wondered if the problem could be "elevated" to the town's state representatives.

Facilities and grounds maintenance manager Will Stratford presented a budget with large increases for oil and electricity leading to a 34% overall increase. Stratford said electricity costs were a "question mark," leading him to ask for roughly double the FY'23 amount.

Two Mile Road

The selectboard continued an ongoing discussion of requested safety improvements on Two Mile Road. Board member Patricia Duffy introduced the topic by saying that "the goal is safety," and argued that it was easier to get there through understanding and cooperation than through "ad hominem attacks."

Early last year, a request to install speedbumps at what was generally agreed to be a dangerous intersection with Route 63 touched off an ongoing debate on the best way to solve the problem. The discussion expanded to include other areas of the road, with a plethora of questions and suggestions for solutions from residents.

Boucher said there was not a lot the town can do until spring, but he offered a list of measures that included painting lines, increasing signage, reducing lane size, and adding reflectors and markings to the road that could address the problem without resorting to speed bumps.

Duffy suggested that efforts that created a sense that "this is a neighborhood" were desirable, and that any steps taken in the spring would be a "start," and "not the complete project."

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LAND from page A1

municipality, officer, quasi-public agency, public instrumentality or any political subdivision” overseeing lands protected by Article 97 of the state constitution.

Massachusetts voters approved Article 97 in 1972, amending the constitution to provide greater protection for parks, conservation land, forests, and watershed areas. Under the article, selling these protected lands or changing their use requires two-thirds majority votes in both the state House and Senate.

“The people shall have the right to clean air and water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise, and the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic qualities of their environment,” Article 97 states.

Since 1998, the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) has loosely followed a “no net loss” principle to make sure any land removed from Article 97 protections is replaced, but there has never been any formal policy requiring it. Dorothy McGlinicy, executive director of the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, said the PLPA will add more transparency to this process.

“What I think is awesome about the program is there is transparency. In the past [it] used to be handled by dedicated employees at EEA, but we’d never hear about how they’d try to protect open space,” McGlinicy said. “We couldn’t access much of anything, because it was handled in a spreadsheet on their own computer.”

Under the new law, the state attorney general’s office will be able to penalize any public body that does not follow the “no net loss” policy. The exact penalties and procedures are still being decided on by the EEA, a process that will continue over the next year. The agency updated its website this month to include a portal to submit documentation related to Article 97 dispossession, a PLPA “tracking tool,” and information about the new law.

The replacement land must have equal or greater acreage, fair market value, natural resource value, and “real property interest,” meaning similar land and water rights and restrictions. While the land need not be located within the same municipality, it is preferred, according to guidance published by the EEA this month.

The office deals with roughly 40 change-of-use petitions for public conservation land every two-year legislative session, and while cases of noncompliance are uncommon, they have occurred, according to officials who spoke on background. In the past the office has withheld grant eligibility for municipalities that allowed land under Article 97

protection to be removed without being replaced.

Under the PLPA, any change of use of protected land will now also require a vote by a local conservation commission.

“How it will impact conservation commissions is yet to be determined,” McGlinicy said. “MACC is dedicated to making sure the process is streamlined, but protective of open space.”

Protection or Payment

Local land trusts have also been advocating for the passage of the PLPA for many years.

“Article 97 covers land owned by the state, and easements owned by the state, so some of our conservation areas that have easements held by the state are now better protected,” said Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust spokesperson Jessica Bryant. “This makes Article 97 stronger, and helps make conservationists’ commitment to protect land in perpetuity more real.”

Article 97 was drafted by the late state senator Robert Wetmore, a former Mount Grace board member, according to Bryant. Wetmore was inspired to become a conservationist after the loss of his favorite stream for fishing in the 1950s. After his death in 2016, a fishing hole was dedicated to him in Orange at the Gifford Family Memorial Forest.

“Land conservation has such a powerful impact, from the tangible health benefits for people accessing those spaces, to habitat supporting biodiversity and helping fight climate change,” Bryant said.

“We are grateful to the hard work and relentless community advocacy that finally codified this policy into law,” Franklin Land Trust executive director Mary Lynn Sabourin told the Reporter. “Putting into law a policy of ‘no net loss’ of public and protected land honors the work done by so many before us [and] strengthens our ability to continue to conserve land in Massachusetts for the benefit of all future generations.”

“The land trust community is engaged in the use of a lot of public funding,” said Leahy, the Wendell open space committee chair. “They have decades of doing this work, raising private funds to help advance and facilitate public conversation, and it’s something they really wanted to see.”

Leahy, who also sits on the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition, said that decades of advocacy and debate over the PLPA led to Baker signing the bill during his final weeks as governor. Afraid that waiting for a new administration would mean further delays, conservationists made concessions on its final text.

“I know the Massachusetts Land

Trust Coalition was pushing for a tougher bill, but supported some form of compromise,” Leahy said. “Everybody has had a lot of skin in the game, for many years. They were concerned if it didn’t get codified into law now it would be a long time until this was before the legislature again.”

One compromise that Leahy said he and some of his colleagues did not want to see allows developers to continue to make cash payments *in lieu* of immediately protecting other land, which a public entity would then use to purchase more protected land within three years. These payments are still allowed under the PLPA, though according to the nonprofit environmental advocacy group Clean Water Action, the law requires more transparency and public notification in such cases.

Remaining Vigilant

Last month, legislators and advocates gathered at the State Library in Boston to celebrate the passage of the PLPA. State senator Jamie Eldridge, who represents parts of Middlesex and Worcester counties, was a lead sponsor of the bill and hosted the event.

“This law will make the land transfer process clear and efficient to enable community growth without compromising the essential preservation of public lands,” Eldridge said. “I’m grateful for the hard work and persistence of land preservation advocates in reaching this milestone – including the godfather of the PLPA, Phil Saunders, who spent over two decades fighting for this legislation.”

Saunders, an early advocate for the PLPA from Weston who worked as an economist and consultant, died last May just after the bill passed both the House and the Senate. His daughter Elizabeth Saunders serves as the Massachusetts state director for Clean Water Action, and spoke at the celebration.

Saunders said that her father continued to help shape the bill in his dying days from his hospital bed.

“There was a small bag of things that moved around with him as he moved to different rooms and facilities, and one of the things that was in it was copies of each of the House and Senate versions of the PLPA,” she said. “The Senate bill had just passed with the cash *in lieu* provision – which he was not very happy with, shall we say – and he was trying to figure out what the appropriate guardrails might look like.”

According to Saunders, the “guardrail” provisions her father recommended ended up in the bill as passed.

“We’re going to have to remain vigilant,” Robb Johnson, executive director of the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition, said at the event.

WORKSHOP from page A1

committee’s work has included administering a community survey, with the results helping to guide the organization of last weekend’s workshop.

In a bid to make the event more accessible to local residents, organizers provided free breakfast and lunch, childcare, transportation, and translation services.

Following an opening presentation from FRCOG representatives and new town planner Maureen Pollock, attendees split into discussion groups based around recurring themes from the survey responses. The topics included “housing,” “transportation,” “open space and environment,” “economic development and culture,” “land use and zoning,” and “community facilities and resources.”

At the conclusion of the morning’s discussions, the facilitator of each group, also a member of the steering committee, presented their group’s findings.

Groups reported on town strengths such as outdoor recreation in parks and on the Montague Plains, multiple walkable downtowns, the bike path, and a strong artistic community. Some of the weaknesses discussed included a shortage of affordable housing units, a lack of safe outdoor swimming options, and aging infrastructure.

After a lunch break catered by El Nopalito restaurant, new groups were formed based on geography, with participants joining tables with other residents of their villages. The afternoon’s groups made plain the distribution of participants, with Turners Falls and Montague Center having enough people to fill multiple tables.

A need for affordable housing continued to be a theme during the afternoon debrief. Municipal investment in keeping young folks in town was brought up by several groups, with ideas ranging from help with home repairs



Maureen Pollock, Montague’s new town planner, helped facilitate the event.

to opening up a gym. Multiple groups also mentioned the idea of a car-free connecting path between the villages.

An interesting bit of local news dropped when assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey, presenting for the Millers Falls group, mentioned that if the northern corridor of the East-West passenger rail becomes a reality, Millers Falls may be a stop on the line.

During the day’s workshops, scribes took discussion notes while participants marked up town maps. The next step is for planning staff at FRCOG to take all of that information and summarize it for a presentation on March 9. The steering committee and residents will then vote on priorities, which will in turn result in a set of focus groups.

After the focus groups are held, all that will be left in the process will be to write the comprehensive plan itself.

If you are interested in learning more or keeping updated about this process, FRCOG has set up a website you can visit at www.montagueplans.org. (Yes, that is spelled correctly.)



“It’s also critical we engage in the next step, which is the development of regulations to implement the law – and that we continue to serve as watchdogs each time a community, or the state, proposes to divert protected land to another use.”

The law requires an analysis of alternatives before any project can proceed on public conservation land. The EEA still needs to determine the specifics of how these assessments must be conducted, how the value of replacement land will be measured, and other policy details.

“The Healey-Driscoll Administration is dedicated to protecting, preserving, and enhancing the Commonwealth’s open and green spaces, which are vital to our state’s

infrastructure,” EEA spokesperson Maria Hardiman wrote to the Reporter. “We look forward to the implementation of the Public Land Preservation Act.”

Johnson said that state incentives to build new school buildings put increased pressure on municipalities to find and build them on open space quickly, especially in urban areas.

“It’s easier to build on open land than to try to tinker with previously disturbed land,” he said. “Next time you need a police station, a transmission line, a water pumping station, a new dump, a dump expansion, a new parking lot... it’s easier to do it on open land. But they’re not making more of it.”





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MONTAGUE from page A1

trigger a lengthy state and federal water quality assessment phase, which could take over a year, so FirstLight's licenses may well not be issued until at least summer 2024.

In announcing the target on Monday, Ellis did not seem overly optimistic about the end game. "It is our expectation that we either will or won't see a settlement agreement for consideration," he announced.

This skepticism may reflect the long and uncertain process up to this point. FirstLight technically filed its "final application" for the new licenses in 2016, but its "notice of intent" to do so was originally issued in 2012, followed by technical studies and dozens of meetings and "stakeholder" comments on these studies.

FirstLight has been operating on annual license renewals for over four years, because the original federal license expired in 2018. Projected deadlines for a final settlement have been missed several times.

During the decade since the process started, FirstLight was sold by the French international conglomerate Engie, which traces its origins from a company that built the Suez Canal, to a Canadian public investment firm called the "Public Sector Pension Investment Board," a so-called "crown corporation" established by an act of the Canadian Parliament.

Much of the research and debate that has stalled the relicensing process has involved the amount of river "flow" left below the Turners Falls dam, and controversies over the Northfield Mountain pump station. Montague officials have tended to avoid speaking publicly on those issues, focusing instead on requesting various recreational improvements along the river.

In an "agreement in principle" issued by FirstLight in February 2022, the company appeared to have agreed to install a new boat access point near Unity Park and two new river access points for rafting just below the Turners Falls dam, replace the stairs to the Cabot Woods river access point southwest of the Patch neighborhood, and make significant improvements to the put-in and take-out ramp at Poplar Street in Montague City.

The company also committed to a process for evaluating and restoring the historic Cabot Camp at the end of East Mineral Road, near the confluence of the Millers and Connecticut rivers.

"FirstLight, in consultation with the Town of Montague, will attempt to find a qualified organization within the first 3 years of license issuance to take responsibility for preserving the Cabot Camp historic buildings," the agreement read. "Absent finding a qualified organization and in consultation with the Town of Montague, FirstLight would... plan and conduct market/re-development study of Cabot Camp in collaboration with the Town of Montague..."

At a previous meeting Ellis portrayed this language as reflecting lessons learned from the controversy over the demolition of the Faren Care Center. But on Monday he seemed hesitant to confirm these commitments were reached.

"There are pieces here that are outlined that I have never seen agreements for," he said. "We don't have a comprehensive settlement agreement that I can present

to you at this time."

"At this point in time," Ellis said, "it feels like things are about to come together because they have to... I'm waiting for publicly accessible documents to present to everybody."

Dangerous Dog

A sad and emotional hearing on the fate of a "dangerous dog" on N Street ended on a surprise note when the dog owner announced that he planned to euthanize the dog.

The hearing was called because the selectboard believed that Nicholas Pratt, the owner of a pit bull, had failed to implement an order imposed the previous May. The process is heavily regulated by state law, and the hearing was held in the presence of Montague town counsel Greg Corbo.

The regional dog officer, chief of police Chris Williams, and a neighbor armed with pictures presented evidence that the dog had not been properly restrained or muzzled as required, and that fencing to contain the animal either had not been completed or had broken down.

Then, his voice breaking, Pratt said he planned to euthanize the dog. "My dog has gotten more aggressive, even toward myself," he said. "I plan on putting him down. He's not getting any better... I believe there is something wrong with his head."

Pratt said he had taken the dog to a training school, but that had not improved the situation. He said that he was currently out of town for work, and that he needed to wait two weeks for a paycheck.

Selectboard members said the town would pay for euthanization, as it has occasionally done in the past, but expressed concern about the animal being left alone in the home with Pratt's elderly mother. Although Pratt said he believed that the dog would not attack his mother, the board voted to seize the dog the next day. Pratt agreed to inform his mother by email.

Better News

The board approved a request by Silas Koyama to construct an informational kiosk at the corner of Montague City Road and Masonic Street in Montague City. The wooden kiosk, which was part of a project to become an Eagle Scout, would contain a "replaceable map" and a bulletin board.

Koyama said he had worked with assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey on the proposal. Koyama also offered to repair and restore a memorial near the same intersection.

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell expressed support for the project and added that, as a member of the war memorial committee, he might recommend that "the board remove those bushes [covering the memorial stone], that's how bad it is."

At the request of the Montague tree committee, which administers the town wood bank, the board endorsed a grant application for tree-cutting equipment, safety apparel, and storage shed valued at \$15,000. The application is to an organization called the Alliance for Green Heat, though Ramsey, who presented it for the committee, said it was a federal grant.

Trash Updates

The board authorized Ellis to initiate a bidding process for trash and recycling services beginning in

the 2025 fiscal year, and approved a contract with ADS Environmental Services to monitor and report on the town's combined sewer overflows for the remainder of this fiscal year.

Ellis made an announcement he said he "hope[d] our local news media will pick up on." He said he had heard reports "from a number of sources" that residents may be confused as to whether they can still get their trash picked up if a \$3 blue sticker, as opposed to a barrel sticker, is placed on top of a pile of trash bags inside a barrel.

"You absolutely can," he clarified publicly. "You don't have to buy a barrel sticker."

Ellis also said that if residents had purchased barrel stickers because they had gotten mixed messages from the trash hauler Republic Services, they should call the selectboard office, and that "we could work out some accommodation."

He went on to add that there was no need to put blue stickers on each trash bag in the barrel, and that this policy offers "an additional value to the homeowner." The purpose of the more costly barrel stickers was not disclosed.

Other Business

In response to a large rate increase by the state for administration of the "sealer of weights and measures" service, which tests bar codes and other mechanisms for measuring products, the board increased a variety of fees for those services by 80%.

The fee increase, proposed by administrative assistant Wendy Bogusz, will be retroactive to January 1 to cover bills reflecting the previous fiscal year (FY'22).

The board placed 21 articles on the March 2 special town meeting warrant, and voted to recommend 19 of them.

Some of the more notable articles include a \$32,250 "programming needs assessment" for the Carnegie Library, which would be funded from the remaining balance of a 2017 appropriation for a library study; a \$2.5 million bond issue for new screw pumps at the Clean Water Facility, a large portion of which may be reimbursed by a grant the US Department of Agriculture; and a "rugged" hybrid "municipal inspection vehicle" requested by the health, building, and assessing departments, who currently use their own cars.

A discussion of articles to change the town clerk and treasurer/collector position from elected to appointed status was delayed for a week so town clerk Deb Bourbeau could participate.

As the meeting neared closure, Ellis said he had heard from US representative Jim McGovern's office that federal COVID American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds that are not spent might be "clawed back" by the government during the national debate over extending the debt ceiling.

Ellis could not say how the money would be "clawed back," but warned the board that "it was the general sentiment from McGovern's office that we might not want to delay the commitment of those funds."

The board retired into an executive session to discuss strategy in property negotiations with FirstLight. The next selectboard meeting will be held February 13.



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Turners Falls' Adelaide Ehle took first in the 100-yard butterfly as the Thunder hosted Springfield High School of Science and Technology for their final home swim meet of the season Monday afternoon.

SPORTS from page A1

have been worse: in New Hampshire, Mount Washington recorded wind chills of -108 F.

But in spite of a few power outages in town and a frozen pipe at the high school, the kids played on.

The regular season is wrapping up, and the student athletes are looking forward to the postseason. The Franklin Tech girls are riding high, just jockeying for position in the three tournaments they will compete in. As the sitting state champion for Massachusetts small vocational school, they'll have a well-deserved target on their backs.

The Turners girls also made the playoffs. In the PVIAC Western Mass tourney they'll play locally, but in the MIAA brackets they may find themselves on a ferry to one of the islands. The Franklin Tech Eagles and the Turners Falls Thunder battle one more time before heading into the postseason.

For the boys, both Franklin Tech and Turners Falls have been in rebuilding years. They'll play in the also-ran brackets, but before they wrap up their regular seasons, they'll also play each other.

And in other sports, the Turners Falls hybrid swim teams had their last team competitions.

Girls' Basketball

TFHS 56 - Mohawk 27

TFHS 46 - Athol 36

FCTS 46 - Athol 14

Last Friday, braving frigid temps, the Turners Falls Thunder celebrated Senior Night, welcoming the rebuilding Mohawk Warriors. I didn't venture out to the game, but heard Blue won it 56-27.

On Monday, the Thunder traveled to Athol and outpaced the Red Bears by 10. It was anybody's game until the third quarter. Turners only led by 3 points in the first quarter and they couldn't pull away in the second. At the half, it was still a 3-point game, 20-17.

Blue got some breathing room in the third, expanding the lead to 7 points, and finished strong in the fourth, defeating Athol by 10 points and sweetening their own playoff prospects.

Taylor Greene had the hot hand and was money at the line. She netted 25 points including two 3-pointers and seven foul shots. Morgan Dobias and Madi Liimatainen scored 6 points each, Abbi Holloway 4, Steph Peterson 3, and Tatiana Williams 2.

After losing to the Thunder on Monday, Athol had to host the soaring Franklin Tech Eagles on Tuesday. It was a tough home stand for Da Bears against teams from Turners. The Bears were tamed again, this time by the Franklin Tech Lady

Birds' withering defense.

Tech's much-vaunted D shut Red down in the opening period of Tuesday's game, holding Athol to just one foul shot. Tech transitioned well offensively and had outscored the Bears 18-1 after one quarter. The next three periods were no better for Red as Tech held them to 4, 6, and 3 points respectively.

Hannah Gilbert led Tech with 19 points. While her teammates went cold at the line, Gilbert made four out of five free throws, the only foul shots Tech made all night.

Kendra Campbell also hit double figures with 12, with Kyra Goodell (6), Lilianna Inman (4), Kaitlin Trudeau (3), and Cordelia Guerin (2) also putting up points for the Birds. And although Lea Chapman was blanked at the hoop, she led Tech with 10 rebounds.

The win gives Franklin Tech Eagles a 14-1 record with three games left to play.

This Thursday, February 9 they host the Thunder, who will cross Millers Falls road with a 9-7 record. On Monday they'll travel to Northfield to take on the Pioneer Black Panthers, and they'll finish up at home against Putnam Vo-Tech on Thursday the 16th.

Boys' Basketball

Smith Academy 72 - FCTS 37

Smith Academy 50 - TFHS 47

The boys' teams are just playing for fun now, and they'll play each other this Friday night.

The Smith Academy Purple Falcons had a very good week against the teams from Turners. Last Thursday they beat the Eagles by 35, and on Tuesday, they mounted a massive comeback to defeat Turners by 3.

When the Falcons came to Franklin Tech they downed the Eagles 72-37. Ty Sadoski continues to score for Tech, putting up 17 in the loss; Noah Ausikaitis also hit double figures with 11, while Gabe Mota (5), Robert Belval (2), and Tyler LaFountain (2) also helped out.

On Tuesday, the Boys' Thunder ran out of steam against the Purple Falcons, eventually losing by just 3 points. Blue stormed out of the gates, amassing a 13-4 lead after one complete, and in the second, they stretched the lead to 30-10. But it wasn't their night. Purple outscored them 40-17 in the second half to eke out the victory.

Turners ran a balanced attack with Logan Addison (14), JJ Charles (12), Jakub Lavin (11), Levin Prondecki (5), and Alex Quezada (5) all contributing.

This Friday, the Thunder visit the Franklin Tech Eagles.

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WENDELL from page A1

enough electricity to keep some essential town buildings operational.

During last month's outage, the highway garage generator apparently had a malfunctioning "low oil" switch that turned it off. Wires in the office building generator pulled themselves apart, and the generator destroyed itself. Slavas said he thought the rotor had overheated, expanded, and intersected with the stator.

Slavas said that these generators were not designed for extended use, and that he did not think it was a failure of preventive maintenance. He routinely checks the motors' oil and spark plugs.

The generator at the internet hut, meanwhile, was turned off by its low oil switch.

MacMartin said that this generator has the capacity to supply the nearby office building, and could be wired to do so. The expense of maintaining it would have to be divided between the internet enterprise fund and the town, and an electrician would have to install a transfer switch.

In the summer, the hut uses electricity for air conditioning and operation, and in the winter the equipment may create enough heat for itself. Slavas and MacMartin said they were not sure. During the recent event, they reported, the town's broadband internet went out independently from electricity.

Slavas said insurance is available to the town at \$600 for six months, or \$6,000 a year, for each generator. He said he thought replacing the generators on a regular schedule is a better use for that kind of expense. The generators in place now are 12 years old and due for replacement. Slavas took on the task of pricing new generators and seeing if purchasing several at one time would drop the price.

Funneling Well

Project manager Phil Delorey reported that the sudden freeze had dashed any hope for a quick and final repair of the botched Mormon Hollow Road culvert, but that the sandbags and black plastic put in as an emergency patch are working as hoped, funneling surface water into the culvert rather than below it.

A full repair will have to wait until warm weather allows the ground to thaw, Delorey said, but he and road crew supervisor Allen Frost looked at it and thought the patch looks like it will work until then. Contractor Davenport Construction also said the price may go down by then.

Delorey said he would talk with town counsel about determining responsibility for the original failure, and payment for the repair, estimated at \$84,241. Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato suggested asking for \$90,000 at the upcoming special town meeting.

Delorey said the town's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) account looked like it was overspent, but only because several projects with

other funding were initially charged to that account, the Kentfield Road bridge and the Mormon Hollow Road culvert among them.

Bids for repair of the highway garage roof, Delorey reported, would be opened this week.

Rehab Program

The meeting began an hour early with a public hearing about the next round of community development block grants (CDBG), which Wendell uses to provide housing rehabilitation loans to residents.

Brian McHugh, director of community development at Franklin County regional housing and redevelopment authority (FCRHRA), said Wendell and Charlemont are partners in the current set of rehabilitation grants, with Wendell as the lead town.

The program, which has developed over 2,800 properties since it began in the early 1980s, currently offers no-interest loans of up to \$50,000 aimed at bringing houses up to code "from roof to septic system," including energy upgrades, to eliminate slums and blighted areas and address the results of natural disasters, as happened after Hurricane Irene.

Loan repayment is due if a property is sold, but the amount due drops by 1/15 each year, so that after 15 years the borrower owes nothing. Loans will not be extended in flood zones, for toxic leaks, or for underground storage tanks, and they are subject to historic review and statutory limitations.

The goal for the upcoming round of grants is 11 properties in Wendell and five in Charlemont, and if money is left because a loan is repaid or any repairs cost less than \$50,000, more properties can be added from the waiting list.

The selectboard voted to authorize the chair to sign documents necessary for Wendell to participate in the new CDBG round. The hearing ended, leaving a half-hour break before the regularly scheduled selectboard meeting, allowing a correspondent time to eat dinner but not to wash any dishes.

Positive Assessments

Adam Hemingway of Regional Resource Group (RRG), the town's professional assessing firm, held a tax classification hearing.

Hemingway began by describing developments in Wendell's financial position. The nationwide increase in real estate prices, he said, has brought Wendell prices with it. Adding new growth brings the overall valuation of the town up further, which will allow the tax rate to drop - from \$23.24 per \$1,000 in FY'22 to \$21.41 in FY'23. Due to rising assessments, the average property owner's actual bill is expected to go up around 5%.

Wendell's levy limit is up from \$2.6 million to \$2.8 million, giving the town an excess levy capacity of \$176,000. All of this is subject to approval by the department of revenue.

The bulk of Wendell's taxes are from residential properties. Utilities pay personal property tax on their poles, wires, and rights of way. The selectboard voted again to use a single tax rate.

Negative Assessment

Open space committee chair Dan Leahy told board members that neither Mass Audubon nor the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is especially interested in acquiring the 5.9-acre property at 40 Gate Lane from the town, although neither is totally disinterested.

DCR has some concern about water quality in the Swift River watershed. Gate Lane was discontinued as a town-maintained road at the 1986 town meeting, but after recent logging nearly destroyed that road, the town put in some fill and made it passable.

Leahy suggested a no-cost transfer, and suggested that cost of demolishing the structure on the property would be mitigated by reducing the town's liability insurance on it.

Other Business

Accommodating outside demands on the schedules of clerk Anna Wetherby and moderator Katie Nolan, the board scheduled a special town meeting for 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 4 at the town hall. They had hoped the meeting could be earlier, to approve a home rule petition that would allow Cuneo to continue as fire chief past his scheduled retirement in October. A home-rule petition needs a town meeting vote and then approval by the legislature, which takes time.

Johnson-Mussad said no town department had returned with a special request for naming Wendell's priorities for direct local technical assistance (DLTA) offered by FRCOG. Board members chose Wendell's top three choices as fostering municipal engagement; a roadway speed study; and rural policy plan implementation. Wendell and Gill are on a waiting list for culvert assessments.

The board accepted a \$4,000 donation from the Friends of the Library. That money comes with the stipulation that it will be used for library expenses.

Nina Keller was appointed to the planning board. The planning board asked selectboard members to attend its February 6 meeting to join in a discussion of a 12-acre battery storage facility proposed for forested land off Wendell Depot Road.

Board members voted to accept a combined bid by Tom Chaisson of \$1,800 to repair and repaint siding next to the walkway to the office building entryway, for \$1,200, and install gutters above the walkway, for \$600.

The meeting ended late, with an executive session "to discuss strategy with respect to litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares."



SEEKING LIBRARY TRUSTEE

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

Want to get involved in your community's libraries? Please send an email of interest to librarydirector@montague-ma.gov by Wednesday, March 1. Please feel free to send any questions to that address as well, or call library director Caitlin Kelley at (413) 863-3214 ext. 6.

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

Here's the way it was on February 7, 2013: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Input Duly Harvested

About 45 people attended the February 5 Downtown Turners Falls Public Planning Workshop on Livability. The workshop was the culmination of months of discussion and planning by Montague town planner Walter Ramsay and a consulting team led by Peter Flinker of Ashfield. Flinker explained his role - to assess the needs and create a comprehensive plan for moving Turners Falls forward - and divided the attendees into groups of seven or eight. For the next two and a half hours the groups rotated to tables corresponding to six focus areas. At each table a consultant took notes.

Of major concern was maintaining the population diversity, and that housing affordability not be compromised by "development." There was general agreement that there were too many vacant downtown storefronts, and that businesses of all types should be encouraged to start up or relocate to Turners Falls.

What Could Go Wrong?

Montague police chief Chip Dodge was pleased to announce to the selectboard a new in-house service at the public safety complex: a drop-off box for old or no-longer-needed medications.

Do not throw old prescriptions in the toilet or trash - put them in a plastic baggie and drop them in the Med box at the police station. For needle disposal, go to the nurse or board of health at town hall.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on February 6, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

A Tightening of Belts

At the Selectmen's February 3rd meeting, Chairman Sam Lovejoy and board member Ed Voudren seemed determined to ride out the town's projected loss of

\$115,500 in state aid without further cuts to staff or services, using the Board's budget emergency hiring freeze and limiting overtime, among other measures.

Executive Secretary Frank Abbondanzio said he planned to meet with town staff and department heads to convey the seriousness of the situation and obtain cooperation on very strong spending controls.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on February 5, 1873: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

On Wednesday morning, the thermometer mustered courage enough to crouch down to thirty degrees below the cipher. Ugh!

Workmen are engaged blasting out rocks at the head of First Street.

Mr. George E. Hartley is engaged, under the direction of Mr. Wm P. Crocker, in building a coffer

dam at the end of Dam Island.

The County Commissioners meet at the Farnen House on Tuesday next, Feb. 11, to hear the petitioners for the bridge across the river at this portion of our town.

Rector L. Goss is laying in an immense stock of wood for his brick yard purposes next season. He intends to double his facilities.

The Schuler Hall assemblies are well patronized. If the band would play waltzes and schottisches in slower time, it would be appreciated by the dancers.



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OVERFLOW from page A1
priority water pollution concern for the approximately 700 municipalities across the US that have combined sewer systems."

Regulators and environmental and public health advocates worked for decades to reduce both the number of CSOs and the amount of liquid that passes through them.

The "CSO" acronym is also sometimes used to refer to the costly efforts undertaken, primarily since the 1972 Clean Water Act, to mitigate these overflows. So, for example the projects funded by Montague to reduce the amount of sewage spilled into the Connecticut River have sometimes been called "combined sewer overflows," but they are really CSO *abatement* projects.

CSO events, lastly, are distinguished from sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), which are emissions from regular sewer systems carrying human and industrial waste but limited rainwater. According to the EPA these may be caused by blockages, vandalism, line breaks, power failures, and "defects that allow storm water and ground water to overload the system."

Overwhelmed by Rain

The origins of the modern sewer systems that combined sewage and stormwater can be traced to the mid-19th century, with industrialization and the dramatic growth of the urban populations, according to Burian et. al.'s 1999 paper "The Historical Development of Wet-Weather Flow Management." The combination of population growth and piped water supplies, they write, led to a "growing public demand to replace privy-vault-cesspool systems with centralized wastewater systems."

The authors also portray debate over the design of these centralized systems, but say that ultimately, "the combined-sewerage scheme became widely implemented in spite of opponents who thought it sensible to keep sanitary wastes and stormwater separate."

Ed Gregory of the Montague Historical Society and the town's official historical commission has documented the construction of Montague's sewer system, primarily using articles in the old *Turners Falls Reporter* (1872-1922). Our system was clearly a combined one, with water from storm drains and catch basins in Turners Falls exiting into a main drain that spilled into the Connecticut River at what was then

called the "South End," the neighborhood now known as the Patch.

Gregory's archive also shows combined systems at Millers Falls, flowing into the Millers River, and even in Montague Center, where a combined sewer and water system drained into the stream that powered the former Dyke Mill on Center Street, and which flows into the Sawmill River.

Apparently, not everyone was comfortable with the practice of dumping untreated waste into the rivers. On May 21, 1902 the *Turners Falls Reporter* reported that "[t]he committee on the water supply for the city of Springfield from the State House, Boston, have been here looking over the river and noticing where the town sewer entered the Connecticut river near the South End."

The newspaper warned then that "to be compelled to get rid of our sewage in any other way would stagger the tax payers of this town."

A Big-Ticket Item

A significant number of Montague homeowners were certainly staggered by the funding of a major CSO abatement project in 2005, a response to a federal requirement that the town bring sewage discharge into the Connecticut River in line with the Clean Water Act. The project was also no doubt also influenced by improvements in the engineering of combined waste systems that envisioned large underground tunnels that could hold potential overflows and then more slowly direct them for treatment to sewer plants, rather than being dumped into the river.

Montague's current wastewater treatment plant, now known as the Clean Water Facility, was built on Greenfield Road in Montague City in 1963, but the CSO system continued to spill into the Connecticut at two "outfall" locations.

A 2004 study estimated that 3.56 million gallons of combined overflow entered the Connecticut each year at a CSO outfall near the Railroad Salvage building, and another 3.48 million gallons per year at a second outfall near the town's treatment plant. Plans were drawn up to reduce this spillage by 92% and 60%, respectively, at a cost to the town of \$5.7 million.

This infrastructure expense was approved at an annual town meeting in the spring of 2005, with \$3.42 million to be covered by sewer department revenue and the remaining



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\$2.28 million borrowed and repaid from taxation. The latter sum was sent to voters that August for a vote to exclude the debt from Montague's Proposition 2½ tax levy limit.

Between the town meeting and the summer vote there was a good deal of debate, some of it in the pages of this newspaper, over the funding of the project, particularly because a significant portion of the cost of the project – 40% – would be paid using tax revenue rather than sewer fees. Some residents, particularly those who relied on private septic systems, argued that it was unfair to tax households that did not use the sewers.

The 2005 debt exclusion was approved at a lightly-attended poll by a vote of 277 to 233 – and it would take nearly four years for contractors to complete the project.

The 2004 study had identified that the cause of much of the town's CSO usage was water overloading a sewer main at Seventh and L streets. According to a September 2005 *Montague Reporter* article by Joe A. Parzych, two of the first tasks were to replace a 15" concrete sewer main running down Seventh Street to Avenue A, installed in 1948, with a new 21" PVC one – and then to test residences stretching up onto the Hill to find out where ground and roof water was being diverted into the sanitary sewer rather than the storm drains.

By May 2006 the contractor reported that costs were ballooning and the project would come in closer to \$10.3 million. At that point, the town ordered them to slim the proj-

ect down to fit within the approved budget, even though it meant reducing the goals of overflow abatement.

The project was finally declared completed in October 2009. Then-wastewater superintendent Bob Trombley reported that weirs had been raised at the town's three "CSO regulators," dozens of tons of grit had been removed from the collection system, and record flows of influent were already arriving at the treatment plant after rainstorms.

Monitoring Spillage

That same fall, ADS Environmental Services installed monitoring equipment on Montague's CSO system so the town is able to measure its overflows in real time.

During a routine inspection in February 2016, ADS discovered that a blockage near the wastewater plant had caused sewage to flow through the CSO into the river for weeks. The extent of the violation was later estimated at 9.5 million gallons by the state Department of Environmental Protection, which levied a \$17,089 fine – reduced to \$5,000 when the town complied with a consent order.

Later in 2016, town meeting approved a second CSO project – this one a \$1,000,000 maintenance project on the so-called "main drain," which carries stormwater under the power canal and out to the river at the Patch outfall, and associated siphons, built in 1914 and reportedly clogged with sand. This time taxpayers were asked to pay 54% and sewer ratepayers 6%, while the remaining 40% was reimbursed by FirstLight

Power, which owns the canal.

The debt exclusion for that project was met with less opposition. The vote, taken in June 2016, was 402 to 200 with two blanks.

It appears that the work on the CSO system over the years has paid off. A report on the Clean Water Facility website estimates that 107,400 gallons of overflow entered the river at the Patch outfall, and 373,745 gallons at the outfall near the treatment plant, during the entirety of the year 2020. If these numbers are accurate, they represent 97% and 89% reductions in overflow at the two sites, respectively, since the 2004 study.

The new position at the public works department to oversee the town's "collection system," which includes the CSO, along with the new public notification technology with its \$6,250 price tag, will not require debt exclusion votes and may not be as controversial as the 2005 and 2016 proposals. Whether these measures will further reduce the amount of combined sewage flowing into the river, and by how much, has not been projected.

Town administrator Steve Ellis said that the wording of the CSO notifications, which could in theory be sent out to several hundred people each time a spillage occurs, should reflect a middle ground.

"We do not want to minimize these events, but we do not want to exaggerate their impact either," he told the *Reporter*.

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting.



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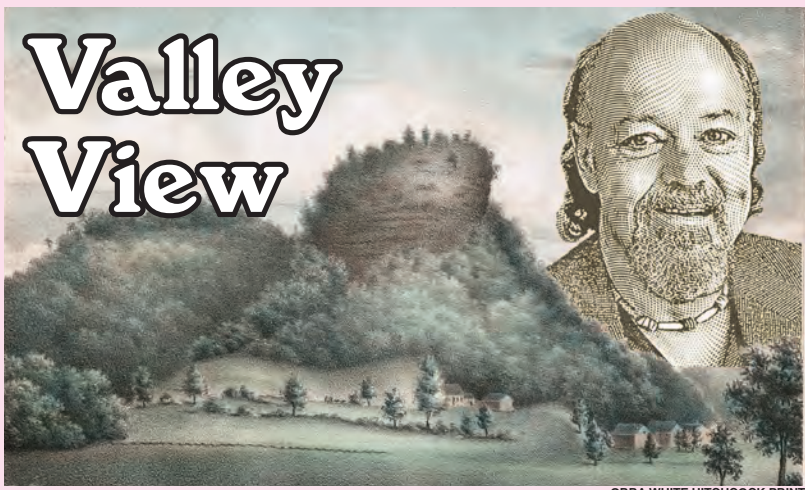
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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

Above: Canada geese, their breasts bathed in the setting sun, practice formations over the Turners Falls dam.



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – The first time I sat down to a computer was the day I started working as a part-time *Greenfield Recorder* sports-writer in the spring of 1979. I was 25, soon to be married, still sowing my wild oats.

I think it was a Hendrix machine; or maybe that was the name of the publishing software installed in the Recorder’s first computerized newsroom. Does the name really matter? The point is, if I wanted to work there or for any newspaper, I had to learn computers. End of story. Me – a friggin’ two-finger typist who’d never taken a typing class or used a typewriter, never mind a computer. I had submitted college essays longhand.

Those were the days before 24/7 cable TV. Hard to imagine. That means no CNN, no MSNBC, ESPN in the incubator.

Cell phones? Are you kidding me? When old friend Chip Ainsworth and I did a local sports talk show between 1980 and ’85 on Greenfield’s 15,000-watt radio station WPOE AM-1520, irked Yankee fans used to pull off the interstate to challenge our Pin-stripe barbs from rainy, wind-blown, roadside phone booths. So, yeah, I guess I’m a technological dinosaur.

Which is not to say I can’t get by on computers, and in cyberspace. Though by no means a computer whiz, I have indeed mastered enough computer skills to be functional in the modern world, and did indeed tackle the world of pagination. In fact, as a deadline editor with the last pages sent down to the press room each night, my supervisors ranked me second to none, whether rewriting last-minute game stories or building pages for production, the clock always ticking like a time bomb.

With the final half-hour or so all mine and the news pages already down in the pressroom, I’d battle to the final millisecond to get the last west coast score and updated standings on the Scoreboard page before the press started with a grumble and rolled to a vibrating scream. Still, I can’t say I ever developed intuitive computer skills, like those from the two generations below me.

Today retired, I watch in admira-

tion when my grandchildren pick up any device on God’s green earth and effortlessly navigate their way to intuitive solutions by simple trial and error. Not a whiff of fear or hesitation, totally aware there’s always a way out of any misstep.

I don’t have that confidence, didn’t grow up with computers and smart phones. But that’s OK. They’ll never understand the woods, the streams, the swamps and their critters like I do. Not only that but, despite being wired for words, I can do math in my head. It never ceased to amaze me when scribes a generation younger than me were as lost without a calculator as a woodsman in a deep, foggy swamp without a compass.

What brings me to this discussion is a couple of projects steaming to a rapid boil on my front burner. First, I must build my first PowerPoint presentation, to be delivered for Deerfield’s 350th birthday celebration. Then it’s about time I made an honest effort to learn the Samsung Galaxy Tab my wife brought home for me with her new phone from Verizon. I’d like to figure it out as a handy, useful secondary computer. I have been told not to worry, it’s easy. To which I say, easier said than done.

Remember, I’m a self-admitted dinosaur. When I was young and in school, computers were sci-fi tools of the future, housed in their own rooms at high-security sites like the Pentagon, NASA, and MIT. Not for students like me, more interested in integrating happy hours and frat parties with driving overhand curveballs and three-quarters sliders over the right-center-field fence.

I sat down recently with a friend, an accomplished scholar and PhD, who made a house call to teach me PowerPoint. He and I have worked together on many projects focused on history and prehistory of Deerfield and its neighboring towns. We work well together, have complementary skills and knowledge, and share many interests. Unlike me, he carries a smart phone, and clearly has a better handle on modern technology. I attribute this to his ability to carefully read instruction manuals and tinker around until he has this function and that mastered.

I admire such folks, but learn see **VALLEY VIEW** page B2

The Vanilla Question

The Search for B.F. Miner’s Secret Formula

By JERRI HIGGINS

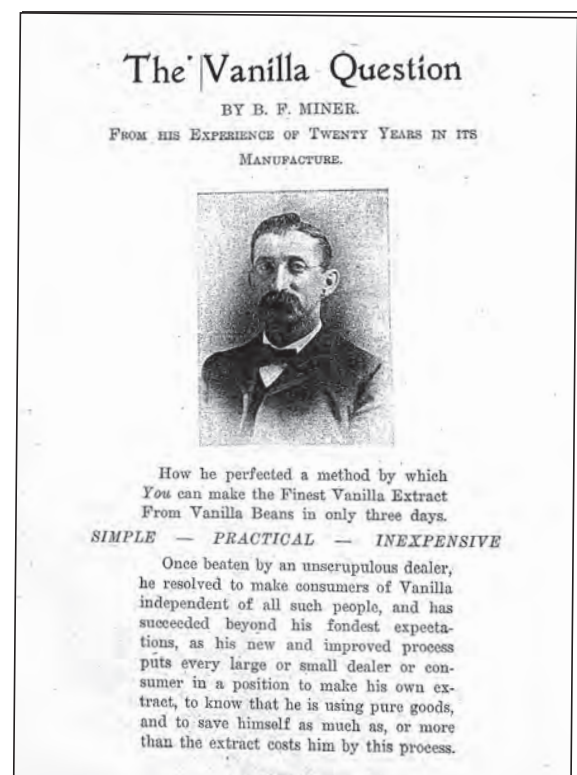
MONTAGUE CENTER – The year is 1908. Montague’s roads are dirt, and the traffic is almost certainly more horses and carts than cars. In Montague Center, the Montague Tavern, also known as the Montague Inn, has been standing for close to a decade where the Post Office sits today, and the Alvah Stone grist mill will not house an art gallery, a book or music store, or any restaurants for nearly a hundred years.

This spring or early summer, with years of experience and hard-earned success in making flavoring extracts already behind him, Montague Center resident Benjamin Franklin Miner writes “The Vanilla Question,” a 16-page treatise and business prospectus. The pamphlet is mainly structured to sell his proprietary vanilla-making process, but Miner is also apparently rankled by the questionable business practices of his rivals in the flavoring extract business, as well as those who might be seeking to slander him and his products.

Miner has been selling his “Vanillo” brand vanilla extract since 1902, and has gained a favorable personal and business reputation, not only for his flavoring extracts, but through his Toiletine brand tonics, lotions, and medicinal remedies.

He knows his method of extracting vanilla is simple, time-saving, and outstanding – and not only does he have endorsements from some of the influencers of his day, but he also has chemical proof of the purity of his best-selling extract. That was not the case when he started out buying vanilla and other extracts from a wholesaler years earlier.

Miner’s promise is that his book will give you, dear reader, the exact formula and method to make your own vanilla – and not just any vanilla, but the *best, purest* vanilla. He is offering it to you in a subscription-only book



COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

This pamphlet by B. F. Miner, found tucked above the furnace in Miner’s former house on Turners Falls Road, inspired our research into the extract-making salesman.

he is writing, for \$25, to be paid up front. (Adjusted for inflation, that’s approximately \$831 in 2023 dollars.)

This princely sum, he assures his prospective franchisers, is but “a trifle” compared to what can be reaped by making and selling their own vanilla, thus avoiding all “unscrupulous dealers” in the future.

Miner developed a lotion for aches and pains he named “Toiletine” and began selling it in 1885, while see **VANILLA** page B5

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE

BY TROUBLE MANDESON

GREENFIELD – I love meat. I probably eat too much of it, if you check my cholesterol levels, but I love the savory taste meat offers and the fullness in my belly after consuming a burger or a juicy steak. But I also love to learn to cook food in new ways, and I’ve spent some time substituting ingredients in recipes to make them vegetarian or vegan.

Since I bake lasagnas to give away for an online grassroots project called *LasagnaLove.org* – Google it and check them out – I always ask if recipients have any allergies or food issues. I’m happy to make any version that works for them.

Pastas made from rice or chickpea flour are gluten-free, and roasted, sliced root veggies make good replacements for noodles as well. Plenty of plant-based meat and cheese substitutes are now available.



MANDESON PHOTO

Buying into a farm share can really boost your consumption of fresh vegetables and fruits. Some farms exchange weekly shares for volunteer work, or have sliding-scale models so fresh local food can become accessible.

This week I saw a recipe for Daikon Radish Bacon, and wow, was it delicious. I mean, it’s no sliver of greasy pork, but it has its own attraction and a very satisfying crunch. I had to buy Liquid Smoke for the recipe, an intensely smokey and salty liquid that, like soy sauce, should be used in very see **HEARTFELT** page B4

Pet of the Week



CARMODY/COLLAGES

“LANA”

Here at Dakin, Lana is a very affectionate, loving, and high-energy girl. Even though she is big, in her mind she would love to be a lap dog! She would benefit from a space to be able to run around in. Lana also has a calmer side when she is ready to settle down and get plenty of pets.

Loud noises tend to make Lana nervous, so just be aware of this

when taking her on walks. She isn't the biggest fan of dogs, and prefers to be the only one in the home.

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

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

much better with someone looking over my shoulder, which became an obstacle at the *Recorder* whenever the parent company decided to upgrade its publishing software.

When it came to the software, I was resistant to change because I was always on a deadline auto-pilot routine with the old system, hitting all the repetitious commands in a furious rhythm down the stretch. A new system forced me to learn new commands and disrupted my rhythm, slowing me down in a game where speed was essential. Plus, new systems always presented slightly different language and new drop-menu symbols I had to learn.

Complicating matters, the paper didn't want to pay for the weeklong, on-site classes offered by the publishing-software company, opting instead for an hourlong classroom led by software-company reps in the upstairs “Pine Room,” and additional training for a select few editors to serve in a newsroom-tutor role. It was a recipe for disaster, placing incredible pressure on the staff teachers, who were themselves

learning the new system and thus defensive and frazzled by questions they could not answer under severe deadline pressure.

I acquired special insight into the dynamics of one such transition because, as it turned out, the three reps who came to town to install and teach the software stayed two nights at my Bed & Breakfast. There, in the wee hours after deadline, we'd wind down with Wild Turkey on the rocks and conversation by the dining-room woodstove. In those comfortable pre-bedtime discussions, I learned the *Recorder* was rolling the dice by deciding to trim proposed training sessions way back to save money.

As they departed on the last morning, they wished me luck. Never, they said, had they left a newspaper staff less prepared to put out a paper.

“Good luck,” the leader chuckled, rolling his eyes on the way out the door. “It's gonna be a shit-show. You get what you pay.”

Well, though difficult, we got through it. A month or so later, through trials and tribulations, I had mastered the new software and

developed a new deadline rhythm. But that experience and others with bare-bones, inadequate training like it left me with “attitude” about learning new computers and gadgets. I resent new terminology and symbols for familiar old functions, and always wonder: Why isn't there just one transferable language, and one set of drop-menu symbols, for all Windows programs?

So here I sit, procrastinating, fuming, venting, revisiting all the craziness that contributed to my stubborn, self-styled compuphobia. Akin to being launched into a ragging river with no paddles or helmet, I have always come out alive and well on the other side, though not unscathed.

That said, mark these words: I will soon have a PowerPoint presentation or two, maybe even three, copied onto a portable thumb drive that can be plugged into any auditorium projector, and that Samsung Galaxy Tab will soon be satisfying my secondary-computer needs.

It's the learning process I object to. Too much like work. I'm retired.



Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School 2nd Quarter Honor Roll

– Grade 6 –

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>FIRST HONORS
Kaylee Adamski, Max Briere, Chloe Bucinskas, Camden Cogswell, Matthew Guilbault, Ellis Holmes, Lilyana Jette, Tyler Newton, Asiah Parker, Axel Richardson, Viviana Rosa, Taylor-Marie Scanlon, Nikolay Shlegel, McKenzie Stafford, Bethany Whitney</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Ryder Berg, Noah Blanchard, Jenna-Lee Brown, Savannah Brown, Nicholas Damkoehler, Kori Eklund, Emely Sanchez Abarua, Stacy Hunter, Maximus Tucker, Caiden Vecchio</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
Melody O'Donnell, Raelynn Riveccio, Bristol Stevens, Autumn Thornton</p> |
|---|---|---|

– Grade 7 –

- | | | |
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| <p>FIRST HONORS
Kenzie Alicea, Valerie Bazemore, Shelby Beck, Jameson Better, David Chagnon, Kairi Chubb, Joseph Discuillo, Kayahna Eaton Soto, Everett Eichorn, Reese Ewell, Ameliya Galbraith, Madison Haight, Alaina Halla, William Hutchison, Carter Leete, Trevor Lyons, Ashton Marshall, Lynx Petraccia, Nicole Porter, Scarlett Pouliot, Emmett Spriggs, Olivia Wolbach, Chloe Wonsey, Kamden Zagame</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Sawyer Cadran, Cameryn Carner, Samuel Eichorn, Weston Jones, Bennett Lanoue, Addison Lively, Jocelyn Ovalle Roblero, Kendra Steiner, Ava Taylor, Keith Warger, Landon Wager</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
Tori Chagnon, Jackson Day, Morgan Deluca, James Edson, Jazzlyn Gonzalez, Jonathan Holmes, Hannah Holst, Braeden Moore, Connor Pacheco, Vinicio Palazzo, Evalynn Parra, Genesis Pereira, Dakotah Simon</p> |
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– Grade 8 –

- | | | |
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| <p>FIRST HONORS
Owen Blanchard, Jacob Broga, Ethan Damkoehler, Rachel Juarbe, Gianna Marigliano, Kaya Shipley-Aja, Brayden Slauenwhite, Addison Talbot, Braeden Talbot</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Patrick Andrews, John Burt, Ophelia Gallup, Piper McMahon, Kimberly Ramirez Martin, Marketa Vachula-Curtis</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
Keira Feeley</p> |
|---|--|---|

– Grade 9 –

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>FIRST HONORS
Jackson Cogswell, Ethan Eichorn, Clara Guidaboni, Cameron Johnson, Michaela Klempner-Siano, Noah Kolodziej, Curtis Kretchmar, Vaughn LaValley, Estes Lemerise-Reinking, Shayly Martin Ovalle, Mario Pareja, Khalifa Seck, Kainen Stevens, Michael Waite, Naomi Wilson-Hill</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Dylan Bruanult, Madisyn Dietz, Eisee Galvez Martin, Kai Giard, Brody Girard, Christopher Halla, Nathaniel Kolokoski, Caleb Lincoln, Cole Marshall, Janelle Masse, David Ortiz, Yolvin Ovalle Mejia, Kevin Perez Cueto, John Ramirez Martin, Miles Riley, Nathaniel Trinquet, Alexis Truesdell</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
London Ferrer, Alhanna Nadeau, Angelina Tidlund</p> |
|---|---|--|

– Grade 10 –

- | | | |
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| <p>FIRST HONORS
Marilyn Abarua Corona, Tatiana Carr-Williams, Lainey Chagnon, Elliot Cook, Madison Liimatainen, Mia Marigliano, Sofia Moreno, Anthony Prizio, Alexander Quezada Abarua, Gary Smith, Ledwin Villafana Abarua</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Kessik Beck, Starrli Bell, Samantha Carr, Aaliyah Gover, Ella Guidaboni, Khariel Huertas Hernandez, David Klempner-Siano, Teagan Lavalley-Finch, Briceidy Ovalle Perez, Sheni Ovalle Roblero, Gabriel Page, Brian Penagos, Elizabeth Reipold</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
Maya Deramo, Raymond Hillock, Keira Richardson-Meattey, Caden Williams-Senethavisok</p> |
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– Grade 11 –

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>FIRST HONORS
Kamryn Berry, Grayson Bowse, Michael Boyle, Kyleigh Dobosz, Fiona Hutchison, Syna Katsoulis, Aiden Kelly, Anne Kolodziej, Ella Kolodziej, Audrey Lapinski, Cody McDonough, Ricky Pareja, Jillian Reynolds, Avery Tala</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Otilia Bartolon, Ian Bastarache, Cameron Burnett, Kiri Corbin, Trent Dobias, Jaade Duncan, Taylor Greene, Logan Johnson, Owen LaValley, Megan Leveille, Joseph Mosca, Ayleen Ovalle Perez, Raygan Pendriss, Jacob Reich, Dylen Shinall, Kaleb Torres, Jack Trombi</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
Noah DeLorenzo, Sydney Rivera, Geovannie Shand</p> |
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– Grade 12 –

- | | | |
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| <p>FIRST HONORS
Xavier Chagnon, Cloe Fulk, Makayla Gray, Nikolas Martin, Abigail Moore, Jacob Norwood, Dalver Perez, Madison Sanders, Tyler Tetreault, Kamara Woodard</p> | <p>SECOND HONORS
Jelani Jean Charles, Alexander Johnson, Jakob Murray-Lavin, Antonia Prizio, Matyah Sutton</p> | <p>THIRD HONORS
Wesley Berdugo, Andrew Janerico-Fisher, Zachary Malcolm</p> |
|--|---|--|

Senior Center Activities FEBRUARY 13 THROUGH 17

LEVERETT

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

WENDELL

Foot care clinic is 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.

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 2/13

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Pot Luck

Tuesday 2/14

9:30 a.m. Tuesday Knitters
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 2/15

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

11:45 a.m. Friends' Meeting

12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
1:30 p.m. Western Mass Food Bank

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 2/16

9 a.m. Chair Yoga
1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 2/17

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

ERVING

Open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and snacks daily. Brown Bag lunch is the first Thursday of each month. Veterans' Services are the first Wednesday of each month. For more information, please call (413) 423-3649.

Monday 2/13

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

Tuesday 2/14

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

Wednesday 2/15

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


Thursday 2/16

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

Friday 2/17

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

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Montague Community Television News

Hoopla About Heat Pumps

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – What’s all the hoopla about heat pumps? On January 29, Mike Simmons of Abode Energy Management led a presentation on heat pumps: the “What,” the “Where,” and the “How Much.” If you would like to learn about mini-splits, rebates, heat efficiency, and more, find MCTV’s recording of the presentation on our Vimeo page.

There you will also find a talk with the Great Falls Discovery Center exhibiting artist Joe R. Parzych as he discusses his photography. As always, we have the most current Montague selectboard and finance committee meetings avail-

able online and on Channel 17. 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.

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*, Smithsonian on Main Street exhibit. Through March 18.

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

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: *Small Works Show*, invitational exhibit of small wall art. Through February.

Montague Center Library: *Photographs by Joey Parzych*. Local scenes taken by the Gill photojournalist. Through March 18.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Teen Art Show*. Franklin County high-schoolers show their best work. Through February 23.

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

Geissler Gallery, Stoneleigh-Burnham School, Greenfield: *Another Way to Experience Winter*, mixed-media work by Malaika Ross. Through March 17.

Wendell Free Library: *Loop by Loop*, traditional and contemporary rug hooking by members of the Quabbin Rug Hookers Guild and the Rug Social of Brattleboro. (See article in this section.) Through February.

Von Auersberg Gallery, Deerfield Academy: *Looking Glass*, Rachel Portesi’s hair portraits. Collodion tintypes, Polaroids, ViewMaster 3D, and video exploring female identity in portraits that display hair in sculptural forms. Through March 1.

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. Through May 12.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Showing the Unseen*, members’ group show.

Hope and Feathers Gallery, Amherst: *Jules Jones*, collage paintings. Through February 25.

Anchor House of Artists, Northampton: *Luke Jaeger*, kinetic sculpture and animation; *Matty Hollander*, chaos and pattern; *Vincent Frano*, plaques and banners. Through February. Reception this Friday, February 10, at 6 p.m.

Oxbow Gallery, Easthampton: *Roads.Rivers.Clouds.Structures*, new paintings by Turners Falls artist Karen Evans; *The Maelstrom*, ceramic figures by Harriet Diamond. Through February. Reception this Sunday, February 12 from 2 to 5 p.m.

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.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Bicycle Emissions; Wandering Around Food City ‘High’; Power Outage & Obstacles; Receipt Said Zero Percent Water

Tuesday, 1/31

6:17 a.m. 911 caller from N Street reports a dog outside currently whining. Caller concerned for the dog due to the cold temperature. Officer advises homeowner was spoken to; female reports her son took the dog out before he left this morning; dog brought back inside.

Wednesday, 2/1

6:09 a.m. Vehicle repossession on Fourth Street. 9:43 a.m. Food City employee reporting vehicle leaking gasoline. FD responding as well. Officer going to vehicle owner’s home to try and get the keys. Rau’s requested to tow vehicle to Bob’s Auto. Vehicle towed. 11:38 a.m. Caller states that her boyfriend went outside to sit on the back porch last night around 10:30 p.m., and when she went out to check on him a few minutes later, he was gone. His cell phone appears to be dead. He has no vehicle. Nobody has seen him. Caller called back to say he is home now and seems OK.

12:30 p.m. 911 call; employee from Montague Housing Authority requesting PD respond to Davis Street to help deal with removing people who are not on a lease with them. Situation mediated. Parties have left. 1:29 p.m. Caller states that his stepson and his stepson’s girlfriend stole a large amount of cash from him over the weekend. Report taken. 5:24 p.m. Caller from Park Street states a male has been riding a motorized bicycle up and down the road during the day; it is loud and causes her a disturbance. Reports he goes upwards of 40 mph and does not wear a helmet or any reflective clothing. Does not believe he should be allowed to do this. Last saw him a couple of minutes ago. Officer reports male party not in area. 5:36 p.m. Caller from Park Street states the male party just drove by on his motorized bike again; needs to speak to an officer as this is completely unacceptable. Caller states she took a video of him riding by her. Officer advised. Officer reports caller is worried about bicycle emissions. Advised of her options.

Thursday, 2/2

3:51 a.m. Calling party reports she saw two individuals dressed in dark clothing near vehicles on Avenue A and believes they are up to no good. Caller reports that once they saw her vehicle, they took off running. Officer advises he spoke to a female party, who advised there was an altercation at the Moltenbrey a bit earlier. Units attempted to make contact with individual who resides there; no answer. 11:04 a.m. Food City employee reporting a male customer is “high” and wandering around the store. They would like him to leave. Male party moved along without incident. 2:05 p.m. Caller states that her car was hit in the parking lot next to the Rendezvous this morning. Services rendered. 5:13 p.m. Caller from L Street states there is a heavy chemical smell in the building. She is there with a newborn baby. Asked her and baby to go outside. Shelburne Control contacted.

Friday, 2/3

5:55 a.m. Caller from Federal Street states there is a fire in the backyard; states it is not a structure; doesn’t see anyone around it. Info given to Shelburne Control. 10:33 a.m. Caller reports a large dog is often off leash on Avenue A and charges at people. Info forwarded to animal control. 11:03 a.m. 911 caller from Davis Street reports two people known to her are attempting to get into her house and she does not want them on the property. Services rendered. 2:29 p.m. Walk-in reports larceny of money, jewelry, medication, and a camera from Federal Street. Advised of options. Requested to have on record only. 3:57 p.m. Officer reporting a red Toyota Corolla in the middle of Greenfield Road not moving. Officer pulled over and asked if they needed help; parties in the car were alert but seemed under the influence. Second officer advised. Car was overheating. Waiting to cool down before moving along. Second officer advises both parties fully alert; no indication of impairment.

5:02 p.m. Caller states someone’s trash can is blowing around in the road near Scotty’s. Item removed from road. 5:27 p.m. Multiple reports of tree blocking one lane of traffic on Mormon Hollow Road. Officer requesting DPW and Ever-source be made aware, as there are wires involved. Blocking both lanes of traffic. Power outages in area. Shelburne Control notified. Road closed down. Asplundh arriving on scene. 9:35 p.m. 911 caller reporting two-car accident on Turners Falls Road. Officer requesting Rau’s for tow and ambulance to evaluate female party for dizziness. Officer advises operator will be transported via ambulance. 11:13 p.m. Caller from Hillside Road thinks someone just broke into her house but they are gone now. Caller unsure if anything was stolen because it’s dark in the house. Not as reported. 11:22 p.m. Caller states a crew is trying to work on the power outage in the area and can’t get in the gate at Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center. Officer advises a 24” pine tree is down completely blocking Migratory Way, about halfway between the gate and the fish lab. Ever-source will access line the other way. DPW notified to clear tree. Northfield Mountain project contacted. They will send someone out to clear the tree from the road.

Saturday, 2/4

6:44 a.m. Caller from I Street can smell gas in his apartment and is afraid to light anything after losing power last night. Call given to Control. 12:41 p.m. Caller from K Street reports a female pulled up in a dark gray minivan and put a package in her driveway. Package addressed to someone in South Deerfield. Teacher dropping off a package for a student. 3:11 p.m. 911 caller states he is at FL Roberts and was sold gas with water in it. Attendant took off with her boyfriend after refusing to get manager. Now arguing with manager. Declines to give name at this time. Hung up.

Another 911 call received from woman stating that a male stole a purse, two cartons of cigarettes, and everything she has while she was at FL Roberts during this disturbance. Officer spoke to female party and will look for male party in area. Second officer advises she spoke to male party and he is returning belongings. First officer spoke to employee from business; he was shown the receipt of the gas that was delivered yesterday that showed 0% water.

6:43 p.m. 911 caller from Park Street states water is leaking into his apartment from the floor above. He went upstairs and knocked on the door, as both their cars are home, but no one answered the door. Officer advises contact made with someone on the second floor. Aware of pipe burst. FD on scene trying to shut off water. Homeowner on scene as well. 8:34 p.m. Caller states his grandson just drove off Wendell Road. Car in ditch. Denies injuries. Up and walking around. Rau’s on scene trying to remove car from ditch. Car out of ditch. Operator able to drive home. 10:05 p.m. Walk-in reporting a heavy smell of gasoline while driving over the General Pierce Bridge. States he does not have a phone. Shelburne Control advised.

Sunday, 2/5

10:02 a.m. Caller advising of people who have gone onto the Water Department property and are ice skating on Lake Pleasant. Parties located and moved along. 3:04 p.m. Caller states there is a car stopped in front of her house on Millers Falls Road; the hood is up, but it appears that the driver is “stumbling” around, and there are small kids in the vehicle. Vehicle was not broken down; they were delivering DoorDash. 4:17 p.m. Caller states he just saw a kid in a hoodie with a hat on tag a sign on Third Street. Officer did find one sign that had been tagged and believes he saw a person matching the description walking up Unity Street while on his way to another call. Investigated.

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Stuffing vegetables with other vegetables can be a fun and unique way to use up a big winter squash or a giant zucchini. De-seed the squash, add in uncooked rice or other grain, chopped vegetables, and seasonings, and bake it on a pan in the oven until the rice is cooked and the flesh is tender.

HEARTFELT from page B1

small amounts. My first batch was inedible, so I reduced the portions for the next batch.

I used to wonder why vegetarians or vegans would want to eat something that tastes like meat, but I understand it a bit better after trying this recipe. There is a certain satisfaction in crunching into a strip of something salty and seasoned even if it's not really meat.

I can't wait to have a vegan over for breakfast. That reminds me of a favorite bumper sticker I once had on my vehicle that read, "My parents were vegan... until I ate them." Ba-dum! I thought it was hilarious.

When cutting meat out of a diet, one has to make sure to get enough protein. Although I am a meat eater, I happen to also love tofu, which can be eaten raw, baked with spices,

or sauteed in a veggie stir-fry. It is filling and full of protein and generally takes on the flavors of whatever it's cooked with. Protein is also found in seeds, nuts, grains, and legumes.

Tempeh, though like tofu made from soy, is a different story. I've never found my way to liking its weird spongy texture, but I've discovered that it's a healthier choice than tofu because it's less processed. Perhaps you'll find a future column here dedicated to tempeh. I might have to take up the challenge of cooking with it.

While some vegans choose not to eat meat based on the killing of animals, the exploitation of nature is also anathema to a vegan lifestyle. The use of child labor and slavery-like conditions for workers, as well as the destruction of ecosystems and animal habitats, can inspire one to give up meat. And I won't even go into the gory details of animal treatment during the commercial production of meat.

Conversely, living as we do in such a rich agricultural part of the country, the meat produced locally isn't pumped full of antibiotics and growth hormones. In fact, the meat you buy from farms around here has likely been raised from animals who contentedly munched grass next to the Connecticut River.

If I stopped eating meat, I would surely miss the scent of a fragrant rosemary-and-garlic-rubbed side of beef roasting in the oven, or a pan of crunchy fried chicken bubbling on the stove. I don't know about you, but the smell of frying tofu just isn't the same, even if it

EGGPLANT-LENTIL VEGAN CHILI

1 large eggplant (or 2 to 3 small)
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 yellow onion, diced
2 jalapenos, seeded and chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
3 Tbsp. chili powder
2 tsp. cumin
2 tsp. oregano
1/8 tsp. ground cloves
3/4 tsp. salt
1 cup dried green lentils, washed
4 cups vegetable broth
1 can diced tomatoes, 15 oz.
1 can kidney beans, 15 oz.
2 tsp. maple syrup
chopped scallion or cilantro

Cut the eggplant into one-inch cubes. Put the cubes in a bowl and heavily salt them and set aside.

Preheat one tablespoon of oil in a pan over medium heat. Sauté the onions and jalapeno with a pinch of salt until translucent, for 5 to 7 minutes.

Add garlic and continue to sauté. Rinse the eggplant and add it to the pan with the rest of the oil. Cook for 5 minutes at medium, covered, but stirring occasionally, until it's soft. Be sure not to let it scorch.

Mix in spices, and cook for two minutes. Add in cleaned lentils, broth, and diced tomatoes. Cover, bring to boil, then simmer for 40 minutes until lentils are tender.

Add beans and maple syrup. Taste and add salt as needed. Garnish with scallions or cilantro.



Pasta with steamed or roasted vegetables and beans, tossed with a dressing, is a hearty way to get plenty of protein, vitamins, and minerals with great flavor.

can be seasoned to taste good.

It does seem to me, though, that symbiotic relationships do occur between humans and animals. Not only do we domesticate and live with those whose flesh, skin, and byproducts we use and consume, but we are giving them food and shelter and caring for them. So, are we hurting or helping them? It's a heavy question to explore.

I suppose we're all entitled to our viewpoint. It's not my intent to shame anyone for eating or not eating meat, but I encourage you to try new things and maybe you'll come up with some non-meat substitutes

that are healthier and less expensive, too. Good luck.

This is one of my favorite recipes, I make it often and I don't even miss the meat. It's a good one for those who claim not to like eggplant – they won't even know it's there, because it cooks down and thickens the chili.

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



Owned? The Curious Case of the Kindle

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – We don't buy media like we used to, and I mean that literally: we rent, we don't buy. This is most easily felt when it comes to on-demand streaming services like Netflix and Spotify, where many of us have swapped out the ritual of buying media on a physical disc at a range of prices for access to an on-demand library for a flat fee.

Admittedly, this is a tradeoff not everyone wants to make, but the benefits are clear: a larger library, lower up-front costs, and new releases and additions at no extra fee, outside occasional price increases. It's a *subscription*, and subscriptions make their own sort of logical sense. But there's one place where modern media consumption still follows old pricing models while adhering to these new rules: eBooks. Consider the Kindle.

Setting aside things like Kindle Unlimited – subscription-based access to a very limited library – the pricing model for eBooks still follows the old models for physical

media. We buy books *à la carte* at individual prices under the assumption that they are ours. The format may have changed, swapping paper for pixels and bits, but the implication in purchasing a thing individually and outright is that you'll retain access to it in perpetuity, unlike a subscription.

But that actually isn't the case. In fact, you own a lot less than you probably think.

The obvious and more well-known drawback is that once you have purchased these eBooks, you can't sell or exchange them. The content is tied to your account, and short of selling your account to someone else, which almost certainly violates any given eBook-selling company's terms of service, you can't recoup your costs by reselling the title when you're done with it. You also can't pass them on to others – short of a change in law, no eBook libraries are going to be included in future estates. Your purchases grant you access, but it's a non-transferrable arrangement.

Still, you'd think the book is at least yours for life, right?

Unfortunately, there are a number of ways that even you can lose access to the titles you've purchased for yourself. For one, a company like Amazon or Google (which also sells eBooks) can always just decide to delete your account as a result of a terms-of-service violation. Remember, your purchases are non-transferrable and tied to that account, so when it disappears, you lose access, regardless of what you've paid. These companies aren't on the hook to reimburse you for the costs, either, and I have personally followed stories where Google has revoked a customer's access to their account without recourse or remuneration.

Even without such drastic measures being taken, there are other impediments. A report by UK-based UX designer Rick Monro that went somewhat viral on the budding social media service Mastodon documented a recent experience where his Amazon account simply lost access to a handful of older purchases, some of which were no longer available. Amazon hasn't commented publicly regarding the incident,

but similar stories have cropped up in the past.

Sometimes licensing arrangements with a publisher prevent future distribution, and other legal issues can arise around specific titles or authors, preventing companies from continuing to provide access. In some cases Amazon's support has offered refunds as a goodwill gesture, but there's no requirement that they do so.

Other forms of digital media that follow similar rules have had similar problems. Some older computer and console game titles distributed on digital storefronts have disappeared. In some cases this is because the stores themselves are no longer accessible as servers and the infrastructure is retired, but in other cases, rights and distribution agreements become impediments.

This is not illegal, even if maybe it should be. Hidden in the licensing agreements for every one of these services is some variation of the following:

Kindle Content is licensed, not sold, to you by the Content Provider... you may not sell, rent, lease, distribute, broadcast, sublicense, or otherwise assign any rights to the Kindle Content or any portion of it to any third party... you may not attempt to bypass, modify, defeat, or otherwise circumvent any digital rights management system or other content protection or features used as part of the Service.

That's copied from Amazon's terms and services, but the short version is that you don't own your digital purchases; they're licenses that can be revoked. You can't try to sell

those licenses, and you can't try to circumvent the tools companies create to ensure the rules are followed. Certain very specific exemptions to these rules have been carved out by the Librarian of Congress in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), with regular review and adjustment, but these don't typically expand customer rights much.

Compared to a subscription service, this is really the worst of both worlds: You pay per item, at publisher-set prices, without "owning" anything.

And even that is ignoring the fact that hardware is regularly depreciated. Amazon retired the original 2007 Kindle fully in 2021. It's no longer able to connect to the internet, and you can't download eBooks onto it anymore via the traditional means, meaning that model can no longer access a customer's library or any new purchases. Buying eBooks, or other media such as games that follow the same model, means making a commitment to owning a device that retains access, and that means regularly replacing things as standards change – and it's not always planned obsolescence, either.

Ultimately, if you want to make sure you can still read that new release in another decade or two, you may be better off with a paper book than ephemeral bits and bytes.

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

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VANILLA from page B1

he was eking out a living as a grocer in Hoosick Falls, New York, married with three children at the age of 44. The grocery store proved unprofitable, and Miner's health was poor.

He started selling vanilla and other extracts door-to-door around 1889, but unbeknownst to him, the Troy, New York manufacturer he had been purchasing from began adulterating its extracts, and Miner soon lost his customers. Not knowing how to recover his business, he would later explain that he sought advice from Corydon E. Tyler of the Tyler & Finch Company, a vanilla and specialty importer from New York City.

In 1891, with Tyler's encouragement – and using the first vanilla beans he had ever bought – Miner set out to make his own high-quality vanilla and other extracts. By the following year, he and his family had moved. Though the *Springfield Daily Union* reported that he was moving his business to Greenfield, it appears that Miner set up his new home and began to build laboratory buildings on what is now Swamp Road.

For Almost Nothing

In 1906, the Pure Food and Drug Act tightened rules and added new provisions from earlier federal legislation, and Massachusetts Board of Health agents increased their efforts to prosecute sellers of adulterated and dangerous products. While Miner's business was not immune – his lemon extract, which claimed 4% lemon oil the previous year, was found to contain only 2.4% – his extracts were purer than most surveyed at that time, according to the 1905 Massachusetts Annual State Board of Health Report.

Only one company sold a lemon flavoring extract containing the required 4% lemon oil, but it also con-

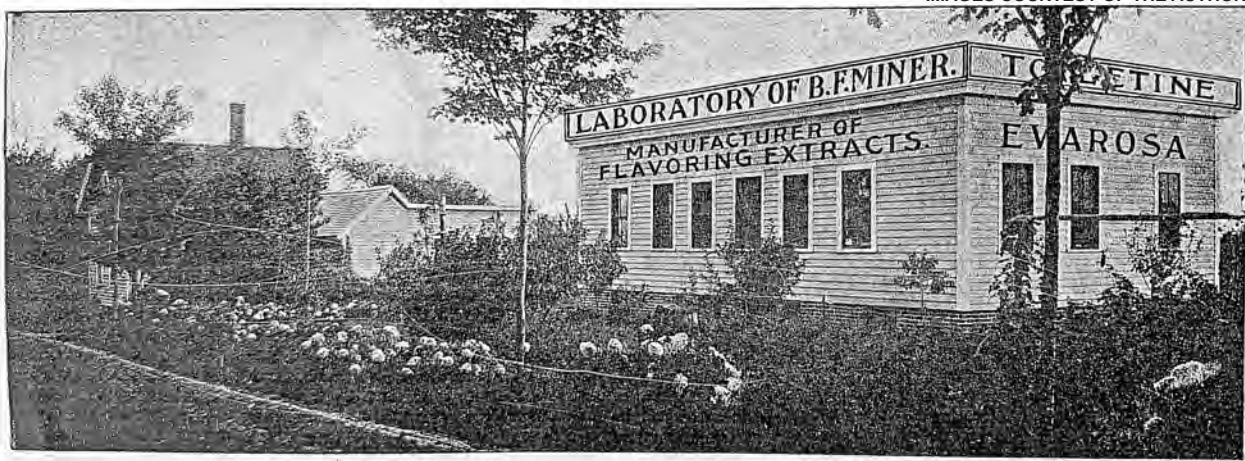
tained 45% methanol, which Miner's Lemon Extract did not. Methanol, or wood alcohol, was not taxed at that time and was cheaper than grain alcohol, but can also be fatal even when ingested in lower amounts.

It was in this era of negative reputation for the flavoring extract business, and increased public scrutiny, that Miner apparently decided to franchise out his special process.

Miner's pamphlet opens with a letter of endorsement of his "business ability and integrity" from the cashier of the Franklin County National Bank in Greenfield, followed by a portrait of the mustachioed Miner himself, bearing the caption "How he perfected a method by which *You* can make the Finest Vanilla Extract From Vanilla Beans in only three days."

"A hustling grocer in every town can, with my book, in which the formulas for making not only Vanilla but also the other extracts, give him the benefit of my twenty years' experimenting, obtain the very best results at the lowest cost, and practically monopolize the extract business in his town," Miner promised. "Young men with good business ability but a small capital can have the benefit of twenty years' experience for almost nothing, and soon establish a lucrative business."

"As it is a fact that I have never used one particle of chemical substitutes," he asserted, "and have made better goods than my competitors, several of the largest extract manufacturers have considered it necessary to adopt the unscrupulous tactics of sending emissaries (called demonstrators) to every house in this part of the country, these men and women stating plainly in so many words to every housewife that my Vanilla was 'absolutely unfit to use.'" "It is safe to say," he continued, "that such methods defeated their



Home and Laboratory of B. F. Miner, 1900

Above: The pamphlet included this 1900 photograph of Miner's first residence in Montague, on what is now Swamp Road, and the laboratories he built there for making his extracts. These buildings have since been torn down.

own object, and that the action of these unscrupulous manufacturers but added in the end to the reputation I have established for the purity and quality of all my products."

The pamphlet is rounded out by photographs of Miner's Montague house and laboratories, a "Scientific Endorsement" of his "superior extract" from a Prof. H. Morse, M.D. (the author, the reader is told, of the textbook *New Therapeutic Agents*), and finally an order sheet for Miner's book *The Vanilla Question*, "to be delivered as soon as published."

An Elusive Trail

The idea to research Miner's promised book, *The Vanilla Question*, began around 2005 when Jaenne Kendrick, a former Montague Center resident and friend of this writer, passed on a copy of Miner's pamphlet with a request to find the book and write about it.

Until her passing in 2008, Kendrick and her family lived for many years in the 1907 home Miner had built on Turners Falls Road. Kendrick related that her interest in his book had been piqued when she found his 16-page prospectus "tucked above the oil tank" in the

house's basement.

Finding information on Miner and his life seemed like it would be a straightforward process. Just go to the library for local history, scour the internet, maybe make a few phone calls, and *voila* – all done! (Cue the laughter of every historian ever.)

As it turns out, there is a fair bit of documentation of Miner's successful Toiletine business – but not of his promised *Vanilla* book, nor indeed of his life.

It took many hours of poring over Montague, Greenfield, and Hoosick Falls, New York historical records; searching the US Census and other vital records online; and receiving the assistance of librarians near and far as well as Ed Gregory, a local historian and digital preservationist with the Montague Historical Society, to find the scant information available.

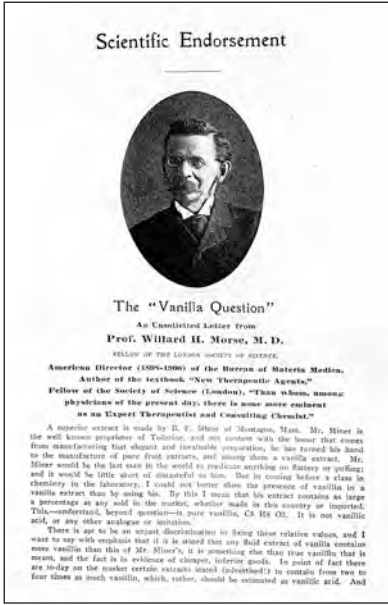
Gregory sent along a copy of the endorsement letter that chemist Willard H. Morse, M.D. had sent to Miner, attesting to the chemical purity of Miner's vanilla extract. The Historical Society's website also provides a treasure trove of pictures and other information that was invaluable in visioning Montague Center in Miner's era.

Most important, though, was finding the *correct* Benjamin Franklin Miner to document. It turned out there was a Benjamin Franklin Miner in Charlemont, who was listed as a tin peddler. After hours of research on him and accounts of his Company B unit of the 52nd Massachusetts Regiment fighting in the Civil War, he turned out to be the wrong man.

Two other contemporaries of our Benjamin Miner who both lived in Boston at the time, one a sea captain and merchant and the other a shoe-seller, also caused detours in finding the correct Benjamin Miner.

The research was so absorbing that one afternoon, after several hours of reading first-person accounts in books and on various websites, as well as watching late-19th

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR



An endorsement of Miner's vanilla extraction process.

and early-20th century historical videos of Greenfield and Montague Center life on the Montague Historical Society website, it felt odd to see the village's asphalt roads and modern vehicles.

Nothing remains of Miner's first home and laboratory on Swamp Road, but both the house he built on Turners Falls Road and a Toiletine building in Greenfield still stand. His "Vanilla" pamphlet may not have attracted the investors he sought. Miner sold the Toiletine business in 1910 to William Ulrich, who ran the business until his death in 1932; his son, Charles Ulrich, ran the business until its closure in 1972.

Miner apparently remained in Montague Center until his death in 1922. He is buried in the Elm Grove cemetery next to his house, alongside his wife Kate, who died a few years earlier, and two adult sons. Another son, Birchard Miner, seems to have ended up in Detroit.

Perhaps there is a reader whose family archives hold Miner's book of flavoring extract formulas and his vanilla extraction method, or perhaps someone with better sleuthing skills will find it. If so, please contact the *Montague Reporter!*



Miner built his house on Turners Falls Road in 1907.

SCENE REPORT

The Eastern Woodland Social Dance at GCC

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I once went to a Native American dance event held by the Nolumbeka Project at Greenfield Community College. I enjoyed the event, and wrote about it for an article. I decided to go and write about another dancing event by them last week called the Eastern Woodland Social Dance.

I decided to go early to check things out before the event started. On the day of the event, Saturday, February 4, I found that GCTV, the local community TV station, was there again to film this one. Also, I forgot how big the circle of chairs was arranged for people to sit in

for this. It really was quite a large circle!

Like the last dance, this dance had leaders and honored guests. One of the dance leaders from the Nipmuc tribe was Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines, Jr. The name of one honored guest was Roger Longtoe Sheehan, chief of the Elnu Abenaki tribe.

I should mention that, on top of refreshments being provided, there was a Native American art vendor there, and I learned he was Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines, Jr. A table had books by Native American authors on it. One title was *Drumming & Dreaming* by Larry Spotted Crow Man.

One family appeared to really get involved

in doing this event, having Native American rattles in their hands to use when the dancing started. David Brule, the president of the Nolumbeka Project, opened the event with acknowledgment about Native American lands.

Liz Coldwind Santana-Kiser, another honored guest, spoke shortly after David. She spoke about the Native American spirit in her speech I believe. Roger Longtoe Sheehan sang a couple of Native American songs while banging a drum when he spoke. Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines was apparently dancing with a couple of his nephews.

One dance featured him and his nephews along with a fourth person shaking a rattle. He

also shouted out and chanted while he led what he called a follow-the-leader thing while dancing. People also followed him in chanting.

Quite a few people turned out to have brought rattles, which they did a good job of using while dancing. The same went for the chanting. As I observed, it looked like everyone was moving in the form of a spiral. Their movement looked well-organized, and kept with the beat of the chanting and the rattles. People looked like they enjoyed doing this dance! I believe it also must have been fun for the individual from GCTV who was there to film it.

A couple more dances were done by Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines. It was an enjoyable experience, like the last event I went to like this. That big circle of chairs was completely filled up!

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The Children's Page

YONDERNOD ILLUSTRATION

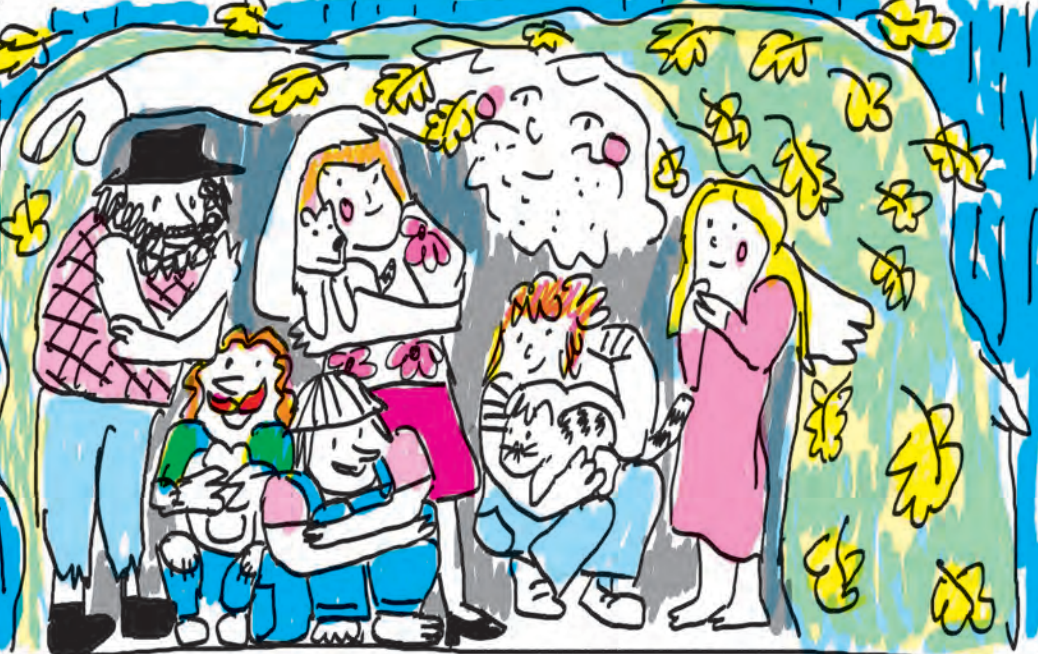
THE LOVELIGHTS HIT HARD TIMES PART 6

WORDS BY BEVERLY KETCH AND
PICTURES BY HANNAH BROOKMAN



THE DOWNPOUR SOAKED THE LOVELIGHT SISTERS, THEIR MUSICIAN FRIENDS, AND THEIR PETS RIGHT DOWN TO THE SKIN. JUST AS THEY WERE ABOUT TO GIVE UP HOPE, A STRANGE SIGHT MET THEIR EYES. A HUGE PILE OF LEAVES NEARBY STARTED TO MOVE AS IF A WHALE WERE UNDERNEATH IT, AND UP ROSE A ROSY-CHEEKED MAN, WITH LONG TANGLED HAIR AND A BUSHY BEARD!

HE HAD BEEN ASLEEP UNDER A TARP THAT THE LEAVES HAD COVERED, AND AS HE STOOD UP IT FORMED A SORT OF SHELTER. HE BECKONED THEM ALL TO COME IN TO GET OUT OF THE RAIN.



HE WAS PERFECTLY DRY AND CHEERFUL, BUT SEEMED NONETHELESS TO BE COVERED IN LEAVES HIMSELF. THE DOWNPOUR SLOWLY BEGAN TO LET UP, AND IN A LITTLE WHILE, THE SUNBEAMS BEGAN TO COME THROUGH INTO THE FOREST.

AS THE ODD LITTLE GROUP WAITED UNDER THE TARP, A RAINBOW, STRANGELY BRIGHT AND SOLID, STRUCK THEM ALL WITH AWE.



THEY COULD SEE THE RAINBOW'S END AS IT TOUCHED THE GROUND VERY NEAR TO WHERE THEY WERE. AS THEY WATCHED, OPEN MOUTHED IN SILENT AMAZEMENT, A LEPRECHAUN SLID DOWN THE RAINBOW WITH A POT OF GOLD IN HIS HAND.

THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER WIDE-EYED, WITH FULL RECOGNITION OF THE RARE OPPORTUNITY THAT PRESENTED ITSELF. AS IF PERFECTLY PLANNED, EVERY ONE OF THEM-- DOG, CAT, LEAF MAN, HOBOS AND SISTERS-- TORE OUT FROM UNDER THE TARP AND DESCENDED ON THE MERRY LITTLE LEPRECHAUN, CATCHING HIM COMPLETELY UNAWARES.



TO BE CONTINUED...

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Screensavor, Loops For Pearl*. Free. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Parlor Room, Northampton: *High Tea, Freemann*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Chuck and Biscuits*. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Hedge- witch, Luci Dead Limb, Hollow Deck*. \$ 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *Linsey & the Llamas*. Free. 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Outro, Spanish for Hitchhiking, Eat Fire Spring*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Greys, Brittany Bride- au*. \$ 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ad- elaide Fay*. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Greenfield High School, Green- field: *Música Franklin String Spectacular*. Free. 5 p.m.

Hitchcock Brewing Co., Ber- nardston: *Butterfly Swing Band*. Free. 6 p.m.

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

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Lady Pop*. Free. 8 p.m.

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

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Dark Temptations* feat. DJs *Aoife, Mike, Madel, Hedon*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Big Destiny, Fever Dolls, Erin Cas- sels-Brown*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Valentine's Dance Party*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Divine Theater, Holyoke: *Peter Blanchette*. \$ 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Nova Arts, Keene: *Cecilia Za- bala, Alton Lathrop, Zara Bode*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Zach Nugent, Dead Set*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *King Buffalo, Swell Fellas*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jenny Burtis*. Free. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Hitchcock Brewing Co., Ber- nardston: *The Bromantics*. Free. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners

Falls: *Ben Ware*. Free. 8 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Ad- ams: *Center, Matt Weston, Liz Durette*. \$ 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Rave in Aquarius* feat. DJs *vlnrble, witch.wav, j-ski*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Upstairs District, Daniel Blair, My Friend Tony, DJ Number 7*. \$ 8 p.m.

The O's Music Bar, Sunderland: *Wildcat O'Halloran*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Chris Goudreau, Hedgewitch, Hollow Deck*. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Hitchcock Brewing Co., Ber- nardston: *Rosie Porter and the Neon Moons*. Free. 6 p.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meet- inghouse, Leverett: *Pamela Means*. \$ 7 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *No Joke*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Elias & Dan*. \$ 7 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Crash Test Dummies, Carleton Stone*. \$ 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Matt Emmer & Friends, Helen Hummel, Kitchen Scissors*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

JJ's Tavern, Florence: *The Prozac, The Manipulators, Slob Drop, Fear the Masses, Green Street Fiends*. \$ 7:30 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.

The O's Music Bar, Sunderland: *Ruby Lou*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Of Earth and Soul* presents *Life/ Death/Life*. \$ At 3 and 7 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *John Gorka, Patty Larkin, Cliff Eber- hardt, Lucy Kaplansky*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Tysk Tysk Task, Barbarian Thieves, Once Were Kings, Ne- cralant*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Singer-songwriter night*. 8:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Barry Jive* EP release; karaoke. \$ 6 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Two- Step Night* with *Les Taiouts, The Honky Tonk Angels*. Dance lesson, country karaoke. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *HyFy*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *She Said, Katie Clarke & Larry LeB- lanc*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Horse Jumper of Love, They Are Gutting A Body Of Water, Computerwife, Robber Robber, Pet Fox*. \$ 6 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Ad- ams: *Bad Trips, Nazi Coffins, belltonesuicide, Hissquiet*. \$ 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Goth Girl Field Trip IV* feat. *imissy- mydeadfriends, DJs Cullen, Madel, Fetus Slayer, moms- deadmac*. \$ 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *John- ny Cash Birthday* feat. *Josh Levangie, Wild Bill & the Flying Sparks*. Free. 8 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Kas- sa Overall*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Suitcase Junket*. \$ 8 p.m.

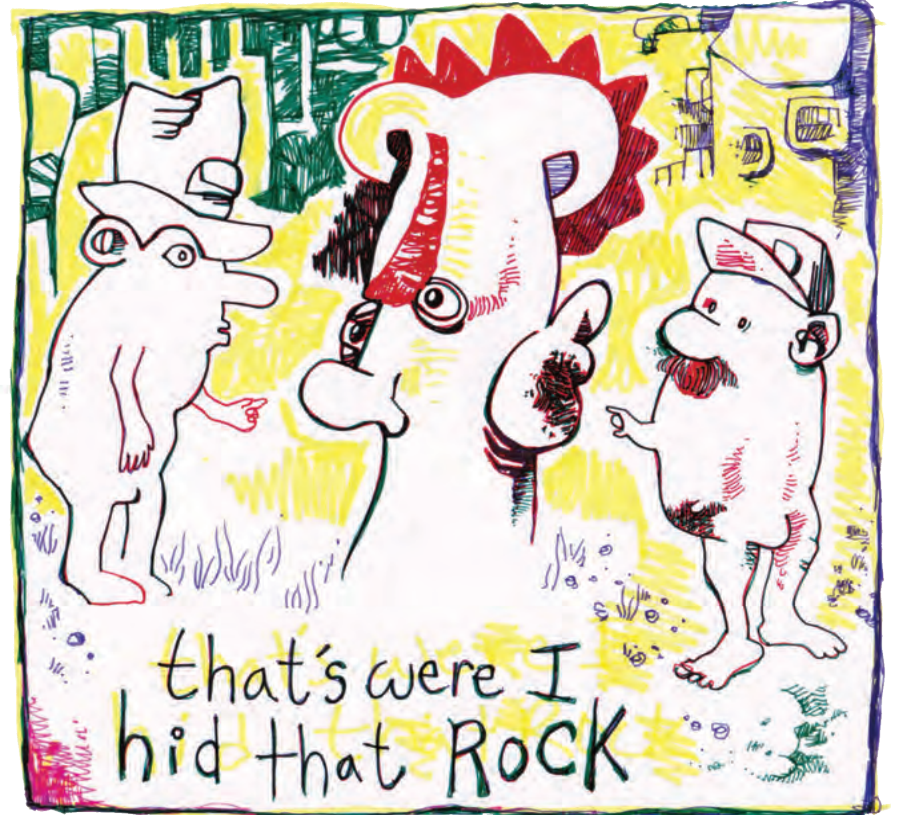
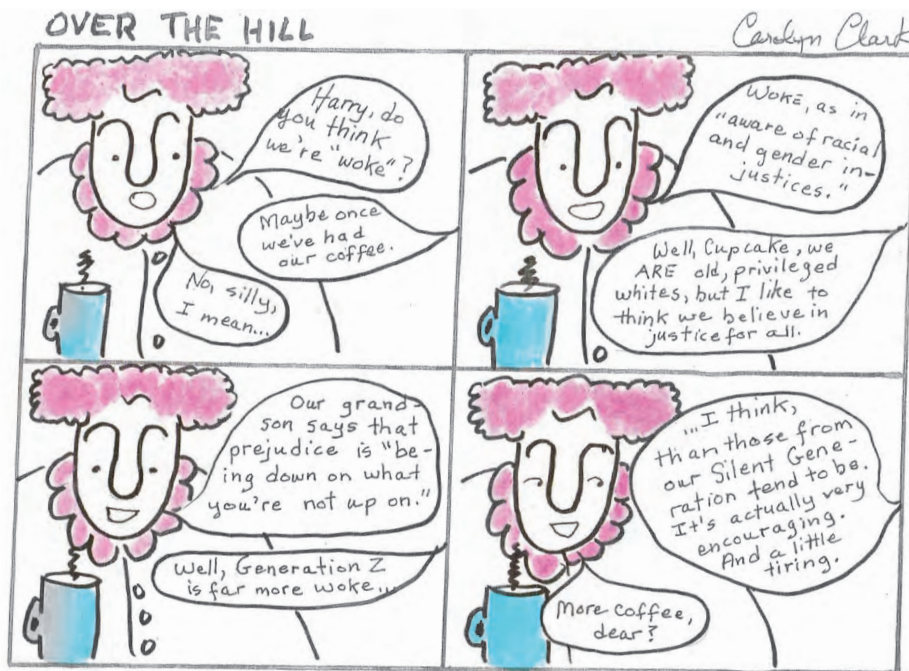
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Screening, The Conformist (1970)*. \$ 8 p.m.

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EXHIBIT

Rug Fiends: *Loop By Loop* is Amazing in Every Inch

By NINA ROSSI

WENDELL – Hooking rugs is a quiet activity, something done while sitting down with the work in your lap. Quiet methods do, however, sometimes yield the kind of riotous, eye-popping work now on display in the *Loop by Loop* exhibit at the Wendell Free Library.

I just heard of the show, which has been up for a month and will come down at the end of February, and, eager to absorb the warm color and texture of this textile art, I quickly arranged to see it with the show's organizer, rug hooker Phyllis Lawrence.

What a treat for the eyes in the middle of winter! This is the perfect time to both make and enjoy a wooly craft! I immediately fantasized about being the patient sort of person who might love poking a hook through canvas to create a lush, warm, beautiful, one-of-a-kind rug for however long – days, months, years even, if I were ambitious – it might take to make such a thing.

Phyllis was loath to talk about the time investment, and I totally understand. I don't really want to know the grisly details behind such beautiful creations, and I am happy to leave my fantasy about making one myself as just that.

Sometimes a painstaking craft can be paralyzed by its own preciousness, but these pieces are not that! What makes them special is the artfulness of their design, the joyfulness of color choices. Despite the time it must have taken to make them, they have a

fresh, lively, fun look.

The pieces in *Loop by Loop* were made by members of two groups that Lawrence belongs to, the Quabbin Rug Hookers Guild and the Brattleboro Rug Social. Rug hooking is something she got into after retiring from her teaching job at Swift River Elementary School around 12 years ago, and she said she enjoys the social aspect of the groups as well as the opportunity to learn from others and share ideas and materials.

Lawrence assured me that rug hooking is quite easy to learn, involving no fancy stitches or equipment, just a hook to draw loops of fabric – usually wool, yarn, or scrap material – through a stiff backing material like canvas, linen, or burlap. Many people start with an embroidery hoop to hold the work taut while their hands work on either side, but other frames are available or can be made to hold work of larger scale.

A display cabinet near the library entrance holds some small hooked projects as well as a few tools of the craft. Especially useful is the hand-cranked strip cutter! Since the width of these fabric “worms,” as hookers call them, can be less than one-eighth of an inch, cutting them with scissors just is not practical. Even a straight edge and rotary cutter could be nuts. The little machine in the cabinet can crank out five or six thin strips at a go – terrific!

On another shelf a thin, non-woven fabric bearing a grid of red dots had a scene inked on it. It was shown next to a hooked piece

of the same design. Lawrence explained that the design was transferred through the thin material onto the backing by tracing it with a marker pen. A stretcher frame was also visible in the cabinet, plus books about the craft and some smaller finished pieces, two of them done by Phyllis Lawrence.

Lawrence pointed out some details in her Great Blue Heron pillow top, designed from a photo by Judy Jennett. Using rows of loops to follow the motion of the surf in which the heron stands, Lawrence also incorporated spun silk and other textured yarn into the froth of the waves to give it dimensionality.

Although she did not put any examples in this show, she says she has incorporated natural and found objects like jewelry, buckles, and other things into her hooked pieces and sometimes felts onto them. Instead, the work by Lawrence and some of the others, such as Cindy Baer and Linda Faye, uses painterly lines of colored wool loops to depict light and form.

If you have ever examined the fine mosaic work done in ancient Greek and Roman times, and seen how rows of little colored tiles can shade a cheek or outline an eye, it is similar to the shading used in these hooked pictures. Lawrence pointed out that unlike many other mediums used to make a picture, the loops of wool each cast little shadows in their wake, giving them a unique texture.

The walls of the library's meeting room are where these wonderful hooked pieces are hung. Painterly scenes include some of birds, a Chihuly glass globe, the Peace Pagoda, Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*, and an ode to horse riding. Equally appealing are the more graphic designs that feature bold colorful shapes on contrasting backgrounds.

One of the largest pieces in the show is the very dramatic “Bedrug Fantasy,” designed by Marie Azzarro and hooked by Ann M. Cairns. The stylized fruit and leaf forms in bold colors really pop out against a dark purple background. Even when an artist chooses a design by someone else, they can make it their own by their choice of color and material, as Cairns has done.

Come see the *Loop by Loop* show before these pieces disappear back into private domestic homes again.



Top: This cabinet displays tools and materials that illustrate the rug hookers' craft, as well as samples of some of the artful styles that can be accomplished.

Above: Detail of an image of a Dale Chihuly glass globe hooked by Phyllis Lawrence, showing how she builds a picture from looped lines of color.

The Wendell Free Library, at 7 Wendell Depot Road, is closed Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays, and open Tuesdays 2 to 7 p.m., Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Fridays 1 to 5 p.m., and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Loop by Loop is up through February.



ROSSI PHOTOS

Hooked rugs on the wall of the Wendell Free Library meeting room.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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