

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 29, 2023

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

As the Farren Buildings Come Down, Town's Funds for Reuse Study Pile Up



"The demolition project is about one-fifth of the way complete," photo correspondent Ed Gregory reports. "It's expected to go well into July, and possibly to August. The property reclamation will follow into September." This photograph, taken on Monday, shows the complex's west side, not visible from Montague City Road. Gregory describes it, left to right: "A section of the 1958 wing up to the brick elbow projection on the roof. The mid-area is a section of the 1960 wing, and the right side – the multi-colored wall to the end – is the 1928 wing. In the rear, the 65-foot high Farren Care Center building rises above the rubble."

By JEFF SINGLETON

The town of Montague has received a \$35,000 state grant to conduct a "market assessment" of the former Farren Care Center property in Montague City. The grant will be combined with a technical assistance grant from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) and \$100,000 from the owner of the Far-

ren, which is currently being demolished, to plan future construction on the Montague City property.

Town planner Maureen Pollock announced that the town had been awarded the grant at the selectboard's Monday meeting. The market assessment, she said, would be designed to "figure out what the target real estate markets are, whether the market can handle condos or

rentals... recommend unit sizes... Is there a need for four-bedroom units, or two-bedroom units?"

Pollock said the study would involve public input, as well as conversations with the local housing authorities. She later confirmed to the Reporter that it would also look into creating some amount of housing deemed "affordable," likely to see MONTAGUE page A7

Developers Sue Shutesbury Over Restrictive Solar Zoning

By SARAH ROBERTSON

SHUTESBURY – A solar energy company, PureSky Energy, is suing the town of Shutesbury over zoning bylaws it claims are unreasonably restrictive and undermine the state's renewable energy goals. W. D. Cows, the local forestry business that plans to lease five parcels of forested land to the company for solar arrays, has been named as a plaintiff in the lawsuit, which claims the bylaws render the plan commercially unviable.

Shutesbury's 2021 bylaws prohibit solar arrays larger than 15 acres, and place a number of restrictions on arrays larger than 1.5 acres. The company argues that these restrictions effectively block solar devel-

opment on 99% of the town's land.

"Ground-mounted solar systems are under extreme cost pressures and must reach a certain economy of scale in order to be profitable," the complaint argues. "Primarily this is due to very high interconnection costs for these projects, which typically remain constant regardless of system size. A proposed solar project needs to be large enough to spread these costs out or the project will be uneconomic."

Massachusetts's official "road map" to decarbonize the electrical grid by 2050 calls for the development of 20 gigawatts (GW) of solar energy-generating capacity. *PV Magazine* reported last year that solar panels covered 7,900 acres of see SOLAR page A5

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Road Commission Determines Redemption Not Worth Effort

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Road commission chair Phil Delorey Zoomed to the Wendell selectboard's June 21 meeting to reaffirm his commission's vote to stop separating returnable bottles and cans from recyclables and taking them in for redemption.

Delorey said the process takes half of one attendant's time and more than half of the shed space, and earns the town nothing. Good Neighbors gets half the redemption money – about \$20 a month, less than the cost of paying someone to separate them. Volunteers used to sort out the returnables and collect the money, but the town accepted the job when

volunteers ran out, and since then the job has grown from a quarter to over half of an attendant's time.

Annual expenses at the Wendell Recycling and Transfer Station (WRATS) are \$40,000 more than its income, and sorting returnables is an inefficient use of an attendant's time, Delorey said. As of July 1, all bottles and cans will be recycled.

"It's hard when the listserv gets ramped up," said selectboard member Gillian Budine, referring to opposition to the decision on the Wendell Townsfolk list.

Delorey said people should contact the road commission, and compared the situation to the free store. see WENDELL page A6

Summer Reading Kicks Off At the Montague Libraries



Undaunted by rain, the reading-kickoff crowd set up in the Carnegie for crafts.

By HANNAH SKORUPA

TURNERS FALLS – The Montague Public Libraries' summer reading program officially kicked off on Tuesday at the Carnegie Library on Avenue A. Although the weather outside was wet and rainy, more than 20 people came to enjoy the activities, which were moved inside.

This year's summer reading theme is "Find Your Voice." "We all have voices, and they can be power-

ful," said Angela Rovatti-Leonard, the youth services librarian. "We can use our voices to speak up for ourselves, and speak up for friends."

The program had originally included a performance by Carrie Ferguson, a musician, but due to the weather it was postponed. Ferguson's performance will be rescheduled in early September 2023 as a "Back to School Bash." More information will be coming soon.

see READING page A3

G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Board's First Resignation of The New Year

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – School's out for summer, and on Tuesday the regional school committee knocked out their whole agenda in under one human hour. Meeting on Zoom, they transferred funds around at the direction of business manager Joanne Blier, were introduced to newly-hired TFHS/GFMS assistant principal Luis Martinez, and approved their own calendar for the coming year.

Middle school guidance counselor Lindsey Wallace shared a comment, amid union negotiations, that good candidates for an admin job in her department are bouncing when they learn the wage. "For students in this district to receive the public education they deserve, there is a link to staff compensation," she warned.

Chair Jane Oakes announced that a three-year Montague seat had opened up following the resignation of John Reynolds, who won the position last month with two write-in votes in his home precinct. Volunteers are encouraged to contact the superintendent's office. The committee meets next on July 11, and hopes to appoint the fill-in July 25.

Up and Down the Avenue, Properties Change Pockets

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – The business economy of downtown Turners Falls sometimes seems to change at such a rapid pace that it is hard for a local newspaper to keep up. In recent weeks the new business openings, real estate purchases, and even impending demolitions have reached such a critical mass that a quick inventory is perhaps in order.

Let's begin at the southwestern

end of Avenue A and move northeast.

Doyle's Car Wash is technically at 1 Montague City Road, just before it merges with the Avenue. It is an interesting car wash because it abuts a ditch that looks like some sort of former canal, which it probably is – the former transportation canal around Turners Falls, built in the 1790s.

Bill Doyle, a former Montague police officer and now a local developer, was not available for comment see AVENUE page A6



This commercial-residential building on the corner of Fourth Street and Avenue A was purchased last Thursday by local developer Bob Obear, Jr.

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SUMMER SCHEDULE
VOL. 21 #33: JULY 13
VOL. 21 #34: JULY 27
VOL. 21 #35: AUGUST 10
VOL. 21 #36: AUGUST 24
SAVOR EACH PAGE



The Montague Reporter

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Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August 2002

Halfway....

Every year the confusion sets in around the beginning of June. "You guys are biweekly now, right?" *Not yet, we sigh. July and August...*

Of course, the readers (and writers... and carriers!...) surprised that we are still putting one out every Thursday in June are easier to deal with than the July callers. When we return to the office next week after our first break, there'll be a number of them on the voicemail, alerting us to the failure of their weekly edition to manifest.

And every summer it occurs to us that we *could* helpfully re-record our outgoing voice message to remind people of our scheduled

absences, but we never do this. Because at the end of the day, those little recordings, whether polite or rude, understanding or scolding, are little love letters. The *Montague Reporter* is missed! Tiny vindications, luring us back to the work at hand.

Summer's a strange time to try to hop on the train here, but we're looking for volunteers: writers, carriers, etc. Some stipends are available. If you're a longtime reader of these pages, you've heard this call before. There's something here for everyone, though, so if you have a little time, please consider it!

And for everyone else, we hope this summer is full of joy and rest.

Letter to the Editors

Turtle Dialogue

Joe R. Parzych's letter in the June 22 *Reporter* was a delight for me: an accomplished photographer whose work I admire said my photo of a snapping turtle the previous week had made his day. Thanks, Joe – you made mine!

As for your questions about the reptile – I have no answers. Maybe they had just laid eggs in the woods. They seemed injured, collapsing onto their left side with every step before splashing into the canal. I waited in vain to see it resurface, then read that turtles can stay under up to three hours. Wow.

Sure, I'll submit more photos for possible publication. Three others of mine have appeared at the top of Page B1: Milkweed and Moon (November 10); Rocco Cat Sprawled on the *MR* (March 2); Discovery Center/Green Bridge (June 1). Readers can see them by searching for those issues or my name in the archives at montaguereporter.org.

Being introduced to each other as neighbors this way turned my thoughts to how lucky we are to have a local paper when print journalism is disappearing at an alarming rate, and journalists are being harassed and killed. Hundreds of US counties have no newspaper, or just one covering a huge area. One study estimated that from 2004 to

2018, the US lost about 1,700 weeklies. Countless others were gobbled up by chains with no interest other than making a profit.

The *Reporter* keeps us informed about our elected officials' decisions, the shenanigans of FirstLight in Gill and New Leaf Energy in Wendell, and of course how our kids' teams are doing and what's in the police log. It connects us to neighbors with similar interests (packing books for inmates, Death Cafes, Community TV), tells us what to recycle this week and what events we can attend.

It also treats us to a podcast, a full page in Spanish once a month, and snippets from 10, 20, and now 150 years ago. When we read the ads, we can choose to frequent businesses that support this not-for-profit newspaper that keeps afloat on a tiny budget, wee-hour toil, and lots of volunteers. (*Disclosure: I'm also a proofreader for this newspaper.*)

So thanks, Joe, for the kudos and for turning my thoughts to the importance of local print. There's a reason why Freedom of the Press, bedrock of democracy, is guaranteed in the very first amendment to our Constitution.

Maggie Sadoway
Turners Falls



Anna Hendricks uses her skeleton model, "Mr. Thrifty," to teach embodied anatomy in some of the creative movement classes she leads at the Brick House in downtown Turners Falls. Hendricks, who designs classes for children ages 1 to 14, has taught at the Brick House since 2009.

OP/ED

The Impact of Alternative Learning

By CASEY AUBREY

MONTAGUE – We need to take the time to consider what we want the future of learning to look like. Since the COVID-19 pandemic many new education options have been brought to light. While the standard public school route may seem beneficial to a young person's development, I believe that isn't always the case.

There are many ways to get an education, such as getting a GED or HiSET. There are online learning programs, homeschooling, vocational training programs, and more. All of these options are viable depending on the individual, their skills, and their needs. We need to consider that public schools are not always the best fit for some, and that there are numerous other ways to get a high school credential and beyond.

Public school can be a great place for a child's development. Having an opportunity to learn amongst other children can be extremely beneficial. The structure of a school day, with scheduled meals, also helps kids develop a routine.

On the other hand, some children really struggle to connect or work with other students. Long classes can be hard for students with issues concentrating or staying still. Public schools typically aim to hold all students to the same expectations, which for some is an extreme disadvantage. Students who take longer to meet their goals, and even students who prefer different learning styles, aren't often considered in a standard public school approach. Each individual student being assigned the same workload, deadlines, and expectations isn't always fair. Fairness, in this case, would be treating education as what it is: an individualized experience, unique to each person and how their brain works.

A GED is a general education degree, an alternative to a high school diploma. If you're someone who is unable to complete high school, or

never finished high school, this may be best for you. Not having this credential can be a challenge in a job search, and makes furthering your education more difficult.

To take the GED test you have to be at least 16 years old and not currently enrolled in school. The test is broken down into different parts: Mathematical Reasoning, Reasoning Through Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. This provides a lot of test takers relief because you can take the tests at different times and at your own pace.

The Literacy Project is a non-profit in western Massachusetts that offers GED and HiSET courses. Executive director Judith Roberts knows the impact of this opportunity herself. "Education has the power to transform lives," Roberts says. "Here at the Literacy Project, we see that every day. We see it in the mother who learns how to advocate for her child, in the laid-off factory worker who retools for a new career, in the high school drop-out who completes her high school education and enrolls in college."

"I know it firsthand, too: I graduated from college when I was 50 years old, after pursuing my education part-time for 15 years. Education definitely changed *my* life."

The Literacy Project has locations in Greenfield, Orange, Amherst, Northampton, and Ware, and now offers online, in-person, and hybrid classes. The organization tries to help people from all walks of life and backgrounds get the education they deserve.

At the Literacy Project you can truly see the difference in environment from a public school classroom. There isn't as much pressure as there is in typical schooling: instead of grades, you receive feedback. You can take breaks as needed, and move through the work at a pace comfortable to you. Classes also have fewer students than your average classroom. It's an all around

less stress-inducing environment, and is often a good fit for those who struggled in public school.

I myself always had a hard time with school. I was bullied a lot in elementary school, and I suffered from pretty severe depression throughout middle school, so much so that I was at risk of failing. I also experienced a lot of anxiety. I would have a hard time getting up to go to school, and staying present in class. I also had a hard time connecting with my peers.

It was an all-around challenge, every day. In the beginning of my junior year I was struggling with health issues as well – the cause was undetermined, but it may have been stress-related. I was sick almost every day, and even getting to school in the morning felt impossible. By that October I had missed more than half of my classes.

I was running out of options. I decided to drop out and was looking at other ways to approach my education. That is when I came across the Literacy Project. It was easy for me to get set up and get started in class, and it made me feel motivated and ready to succeed. Within about two months, they had me feeling confident and ready to take my GED test, and they helped me with the process from start to finish.

I'm currently enrolled at Greenfield Community College. I'm extremely thankful to Beth and all those at the Literacy Project who helped me make it to where I am today.

There are many ways to learn and grow. It's important to consider who the student is, and how *they* learn. Public schools suit many, but not all. Having access to alternative learning is essential to ensuring everyone is granted their education. Programs like the Literacy Project allow people to be themselves, and to make mistakes they can learn from. Being a part of the Literacy Project has made a huge impact on my life.

Casey Aubrey lives in Montague.

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

We will be publishing every other week in July and August, as we do every summer, so this issue will be the last one until Thursday, July 13. It has been a long six months, from January through June, for everyone involved in this project. You can see some of us now and then at the Great Falls Farmers Market this summer, and if you go on vacation, don't forget to take us with you!

This Thursday evening, June 29, from 6 to 10 p.m., the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT) presents "Storytelling for Queer and Trans Survival" at Ten Forward in Greenfield.

The event includes a screening of *All the Beauty and Bloodshed*, a documentary about artist and activist Nan Goldin and her fight to hold the Sackler family accountable for the opioid crisis. According to the description, the documentary "captures moments of grief, power, resistance, loss & joy in LGBTQ community through her childhood, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and into her adult life organizing for accountability, harm reduction, and safe drug use through Prescription Addiction Intervention Now (P.A.I.N.)."

There will be comprehensive overdose response training, and Tapestry Harm Reduction will make Narcan and test strips available for free. Masks are required. This event is free, with donations of \$5 to \$20 encouraged; a bake sale and raffle will also support NELCWIT's assistance fund for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Greenfield's Independence Day festivities are scheduled for this Saturday, July 1, from 4 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at Beacon Field. There will be music and vendors, with fireworks starting at 9:35 p.m.

Next Friday, July 7 from 5 to 8 p.m., Sadie's Bikes is hosting another Gumball Machine Takeover. Jenine Bressner is stocking 200 laser-cut, handmade pieces of art available for 50 cents each as prizes in the gumball machine. Food and refreshments will be available.

This is the third Gumball Takeover, and Sadie's owner Nik Perry says he plans to have one the third Friday of every month - he has booked guest artists all the way to 2025. Sadie's Bikes is located at 83 Canal Street in Turners Falls.

The LAVA Center, located at 324 Main Street in Greenfield, presents a new exhibit, *Black Families of Greenfield: A Brief Historical Snapshot*. The exhibit has been researched and designed by Carol Aleman, president of the board of the Historical Society of Greenfield, as an introduction to some of the history of African-American families in Greenfield; it points to contributions in such areas as music, sports, business, and military service.

The show opens next Friday, July 7, from 6 to 8 p.m. and will be on display until September.

The Movies in the Park event at Peskeomskut Park canceled by last Friday's rain, *Field of Dreams* (1989), has been rescheduled for next Friday, July 7 at 7:30 p.m. It's about a farmer who builds a baseball field in his cornfield that attracts the ghosts of legendary baseball players.

A community barbeque before the movie will start at 6:30 p.m., with donations going to support the TFHS Thunder Music Boosters. At 7 p.m., Drew Paton will perform his "Hit Parade" of tunes from the '40s to the '60s.

Enjoy pizza on the patio at the Leverett Village Coop while you soak up some tunes. The Coop's Friday Pizza and Music series will feature Orlen, Gabriel, and Avery on July 7, and Same Old Blues on July 14.

On Saturday, July 8 the Discovery Center is hosting Tom Ricardi and his live birds of prey from 2 to 3 p.m. Ricardi is a licensed rehabilitator and wildlife biologist who provides an educational presentation on the lives of raptors. You may see vultures, falcons, owls, and hawks! This popular program is free for all ages.

The next Common Hall Open Mic in Montague Center will take place Saturday evening, July 8, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Featured performers On the Lam (Mark Gamble, vocals, mandolin and guitar; Lisa Joy Kirschenbaum, vocals and lead guitar; Asaph Murfin, pedal steel, dobro, and harmonica) will bring harmony-heavy Americana covers to the stage.

All types of performers - musicians, poets, singers, dancers, storytellers - are then encouraged to participate in the open mic. Time slots may be determined at random, depending on how many performers sign up. Be prepared to perform for 10 to 20 minutes, depending on turnout. Donations are encouraged; masks are optional; bring your own food and drink.

"Summer Sundays" begin on July 9 at 1:30 p.m. at the Millers River Environmental Center in Athol. The first of these free, family-friendly events features Jillian Whitney, a naturalist with DCR, who will talk about the very special loons in the North Quabbin area. There will be children's activities and crafts during the presentations, which are open to all, free of charge. Other topics in July and August will include nature journaling, pond life, birds, ferns, moose, geology, and reptiles. Check out atholbirdclub.org for details.

The Brick House Community Resource Center in Turners Falls has lots of summer youth programming planned for July and August. Offerings include Improv Theater with Kaia Jackson, six Monday afternoons starting July 10; Sound Scholars, a music recording program with Joel Eisenkramer, six Tuesday afternoons starting July 18; Dungeons & Dragons on the first and third Wednesday of each month; Teen Zine club every

Thursday, and more. Free lunches will be provided for youth at 12:30 p.m. every weekday.

Contact Megan Richardson at (413) 800-5705 for more information, or to sign up for programs or lunches.

The Connecticut River Conservancy has several opportunities this summer for volunteers to be involved in stewardship of local rivers and waterways.

On July 10 they are looking for people to walk rivers and streams to document sea lamprey nests and help fishery biologists capture lamprey at dam sites and truck them to otherwise off-limits habitats above impassable dams.

Monitors throughout the watershed are surveying streams and rivers in June and July looking for the presence of lamprey. You will learn how to identify nests, attachment rocks, and the tailspill of these fascinating creatures in the Sawmill River. This survey is done by walking about a mile in the river bed of the river, so volunteers should prepare to get wet.

The CRC is also looking for people with kayaks and canoes to help hand-pull water chestnut, a harmful species, from waterways on some Saturday mornings. The key to keeping water chestnut from invading new areas is to remove plants before they have a chance to set seeds. Each paddler will be required to register and consent to CRC's liability waiver, and should bring their own canoe or kayak, paddle, and personal flotation device; if you need to borrow equipment, indicate that on the registration form.

Register and find out more at ctriver.org.

Have you hiked around the Quabbin Reservoir before? One Thursday each month, the DCR Quabbin Visitor Center organizes a hike to spotlight the beautiful landscapes there.

Hikes vary in location and intensity. The next is on Saturday, July 15, from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Barrens Habitat Restoration on

Barre Heathland. Register at www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events. To find out more about these Habitat Hikes, email QuabbinVisitor.Center@mass.gov.

On Sunday, July 16, the Clark Art Institute opens its doors for "Community Day."

Visitors can enjoy free admission all day with art-making activities, live entertainment, and more from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. "Dance to live music inspired by the sounds of nature, learn how natural pulp becomes paper, and participate in creating a collective forest full of color and magic," reads the description. The entire 140-acre campus will be open to visitors, as well as the permanent collection galleries and special exhibitions, including *Edward Munch: Trembling Earth, Humane Ecology: Eight Positions*, and *Elizabeth Atterbury: Oracle Bones*. Refreshments will be available for purchase. For more information, visit clarkart.edu/events.

Thanks to the Friends of Montague Public Libraries, there are two new benches at the Carnegie Library. Sit and enjoy the shade and library gardens, as well as free WiFi.

The Erving library also reports that they have two new benches outside for patrons to enjoy, as well as a pick-your-own garden filled with lettuce and chard.

Artist Aurora Robson's installation **Human Nature Walk** at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center was created from repurposed plastic waste. Robson used bending, welding, sewing, injection-molding, and other methods to create art from debris. The public is invited to bring plastic bottle caps, which will be used within the sculpture. There are guidelines for contributing these on the museum's website, brattleboromuseum.org, where you can also learn more about Robson's site-specific work. It is on view through next February.

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Beading, as any kid or associate of kids can tell you, is in these days. Tuesday's reading-program celebrants at the Carnegie made bracelets.

READING from page A1

But the rain didn't stop any of the fun! A vast selection of beads and string was set out for kids to enjoy making bracelets. They could also make bookmarks at another table. The blank, animal-shaped papers waited to be colored in and covered with fuzzy pom-poms and googly eyes.

When asked if she thought that the event would introduce more kids to reading, Rovatti-Leonard replied, "We hope so! All the programs we plan support early literacy. We hope to get kids in to check out books."

When you sign up for the summer reading program, you receive a packet full of information. Every time you read a book, you log it in the chart included. Once a week you can turn it in to one of the Montague libraries in exchange for a prize.

In addition, library patrons can participate in a fun hide-and-seek game, finding Andy the Moose, a stuffed toy moose hidden in a shop somewhere along Avenue A. If you spot him, tell a librarian at any Montague branch to earn a prize!

For information on any library programs, you can check out the Montague Libraries' website, montaguepubliclibraries.org, or their Facebook page. More details about summer reading and other upcoming events - including the puppet show and the whale mobile - are on the website.



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Fresh 'Special' Taxes Voters' Patience

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – There are voters in Northfield who would rather ride in a submersible than deal with town administrator Andrea Llamas. Unable to handle the rejection of a proposed \$13 million emergency services facility at a special town meeting two months ago, Llamas brought everyone back on Wednesday for another go round. This time the bill of goods was for a new police station and EMT hub on the north end of Main Street.

The property at 168 Main Street is owned by Michael DiBari and Mark Snow, and in order to get the wheels in motion before the end of the fiscal year, Llamas needed cash faster than a railbird with a hot tip at Saratoga.

The six-article warrant was presented to the voters in the Pioneer Valley Regional School auditorium. Article 1 sought to raise the money by moving \$312,011 from the sale of a cell tower easement and \$450,000 from the town's capital stabilization account – which required a two-thirds vote – and Article 2 sought to tax property owners \$500,000, which required a majority vote.

The auditorium was almost as full, the meeting lasted nearly as long and the debate was even more contentious than the first special town meeting – and yielded the same result when the vote on Article 1 fell short of the necessary two-thirds majority, 199 to 86 (58.0%).

Article 2's motion to tax property owners \$500,000 passed by a simple majority, but Article 3's motion to buy the property at 168 Main Street fell short of the two-thirds majority, 114-102 (52.7%). On stage, Llamas and three of the five selectboard members looked like their favorite slugger had fanned with the bases loaded.

The defeat clearly fell on Llamas, who hadn't put her side in a position to win over enough voters.

The other three articles didn't involve the property purchase. Article 4, which proposed moving \$81,000 from the town's share of the opioid settlement fund to buy a new or used debris truck for the highway department, passed easily.

Article 5 proposed changing a town bylaw to let any resident – not

just those who are registered voters – be appointed to a town committee. It also passed, and lastly, Article 6 proposed selling ten parcels of town-owned land.

Be it by guile or deception, a lack of transparency is how rumors start or the truth leaks out. In this case, word was that the town was in cahoots with a solar developer to buy at least one parcel.

"There's nothing that's earmarked for any of those properties," said town clerk and finance committee member Dan Campbell. "Nothing can happen until we designate them to be sold, so as far as any kind of solar array is concerned, that's just somebody speculating."

After some debate, Article 6 was tabled, by a show of hands and a simple majority.

Meanwhile, who needs a fire station? Wasn't that the top priority? Sewer commissioner Karen Boudreau thought so. "We've got two number one priorities," she told the assembled, "a fire department, and a sewer plant. And we've got to come together to solve it."

May Meeting Uneventful

There were no controversies at the annual town meeting on May 1.

Early on, moderator Nathan L'Etoile told the assembled that the annual Town Report was dedicated to Lois Stearns, "for serving the Town of Northfield as a member of the selectboard from 1990 to '96 and the finance committee from 1997 to 2022."

John "Jack" Stanbauer acknowledged the honor on her behalf, and left shortly afterward with his wife Nancy.

Spanbauer served from 2006 to 2019, handily winning four elections including once unopposed, and said he worked closely with Stearns.

"When I first came onto the board, I thought, 'She thinks she knows everything.' At the end I thought, 'Thank God she knows everything.'"

Spanbauer said his proudest accomplishment on the selectboard

was to have the sidewalk resurfaced from blacktop to concrete. "I was obsessed with it," he said.

Board Appoints Lynch

On June 27, the selectboard appointed current assistant town clerk Amanda Lynch to be the new town clerk. She will work 35 hours a week with a starting pay of \$25.74 an hour plus benefits.

Dan Campbell's last day will be Thursday, July 6 at 4 p.m.

"Almost ten years," said Campbell, "and I've been on the finance committee for 17 years."

Lynch's appointment created a vacancy for the assistant's position. "I've applied for it," said Campbell. "Working 10 to 12 hours a week is doable, but there are other applicants, so I'll be in competition."

Distant Fires

Administrators and others at Thomas Aquinas College weren't as taken aback by the smoke from Canada's forest fires as others in Northfield.

"Everyone from out west knew what it was as soon as they saw the strange orange light," said Patrick Ford, director of East Coast development.

"Wildfires rage out there every year. Did you know that the 2017 'Thomas Fire' in California was named after Thomas Aquinas College? It started about a half mile from campus after a transformer blew up. You can still see trees around campus that were blackened but survived. It's miraculous that the campus itself didn't burn down."

Lower Sewer Bills?

The sewer commission is considering a more equitable two-tier payment system. Every household, including senior citizens and one-member households, currently pays a flat \$710 annual rate. In August, that rate will go up to \$785 a year.

A recent letter to the board of commissioners explained the inequity:

"I'm looking across the yard at eight children jumping up and down on a trampoline. Several others are across the street playing in a tree fort. The family's oldest son is mowing the lawn and his mother is planting flowers. The father is chopping and stacking wood. They are getting dirty, and before dinner they will shower, take baths and flush toilets. Their water/sewer usage is voluminous, and yet the head of the household will pay no more than I pay to use one toilet, one sink, and one bath."

Karen Boudreau said the new system will be based on household occupancy, and will likely go into effect next year.

Moody Septic Permit

One of the first items of business for the proposed Moody Center campground off Pierson Road would be to install septic systems, prompting one opponent to quip, "If the perc test fails, maybe we can all say, 'Holy shit!'"

The board of health gave Moody the go-ahead on a limited-occupancy permit, but the Kansas nonprofit is still a long way from breaking ground.

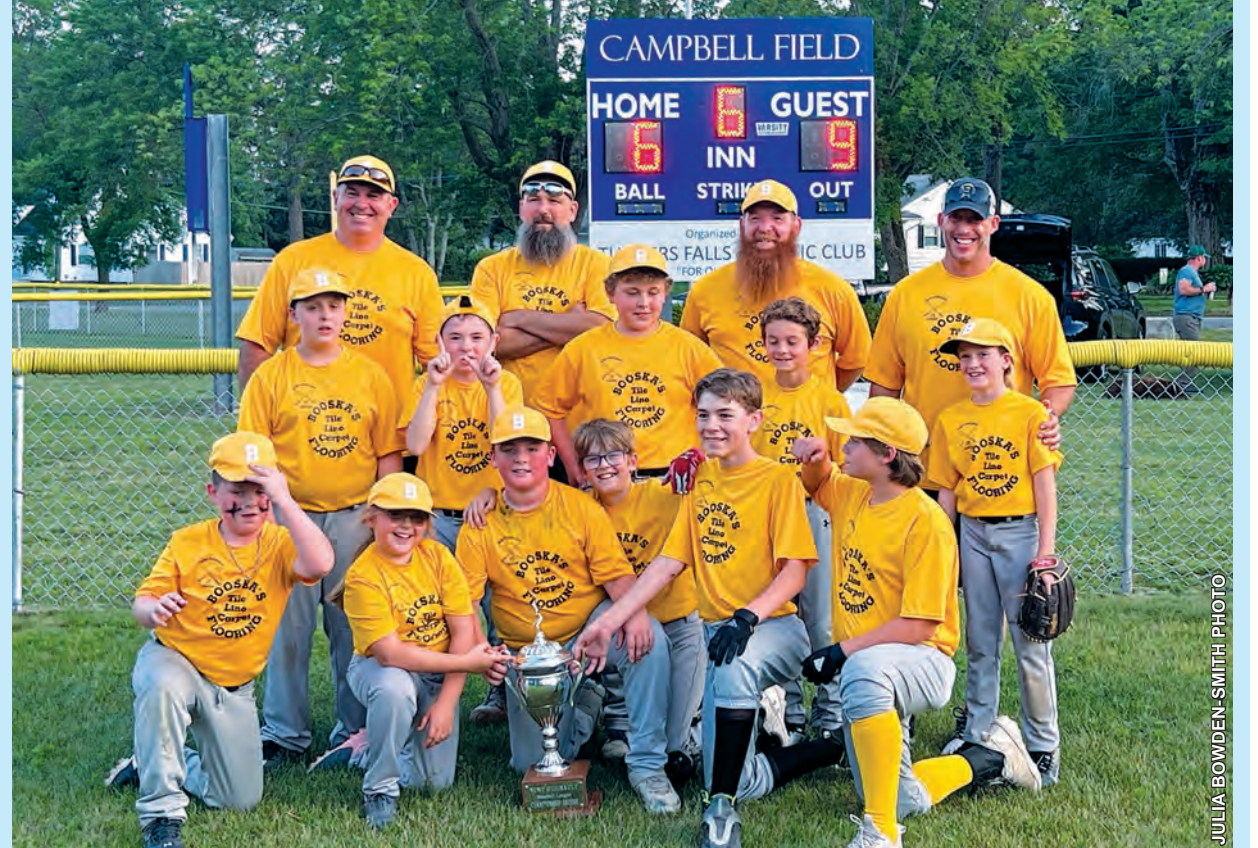
Neighborhood activists like Joe Graveline are ready to demand that the Moody Center pay for archaeological work to prove they wouldn't be disrupting Native American burial sites, which would require a redesign and add significant time and expense.

Louisiana Brook, which comes down from the mountain and runs along much of the site's perimeter, was a Native American resource. The process could require federal oversight by the Army Corps of Engineers.

In the 1970s, one of my first stories for the *Valley Advocate* involved a Northfield couple who wanted to live off the grid, but their cabin in the woods was condemned after the town got a whiff of the outhouse.

Afterward they protested, "This is a case that will go down in the annals of history."

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SOLAR from page A1

land in the state, half of which was clear-cut forest, amounting to 3 GW. “Cows is fighting climate change. Not the town of Shutesbury,” W. D. Cows president Cinda Jones wrote in an email to the *Reporter*. “Before climate-changemakers can justify investing more resources in Shutesbury solar project-planning, it must first be determined if the restrictive bylaw is legal.”

The complaint, filed in land court in April, argues that Shutesbury’s bylaws “unreasonably regulate commercial solar projects and do so without any reasonable basis grounded in public health, safety or welfare.”

“Cows is not suing Shutesbury,” Jones wrote, explaining that W. D. Cows Land Company was named in the developer’s Request for Determination “because Cows is the property owner, and we understand this is how requests for determination work.”

Making Sacrifices?

On Monday night, the activist group Smart Solar Shutesbury hosted an online meeting to discuss the lawsuit and the proposed projects. Speakers shared their opposition to clear-cutting forests for solar arrays, concern that the projects could impact water quality and runoff, and frustration with the legal process.

“This lawsuit undercuts and undermines our democratic processes, and threatens our health and safety,” said Sharon Weizenbaum. “We do need solar, but we need it sited in appropriate places. Sacrificing forestlands for solar is absolutely inappropriate.”

Weizenbaum said she joined the group, a chapter of Smart Solar Western Massachusetts, in response to the rapid development of solar facilities on forested land over the past decade. After the developer, then known as Amp Energy, began filing initial plans with Shutesbury’s conservation commission in 2019, Smart Solar members helped the town craft its bylaws regulating large-scale projects.

The company’s proposed arrays near Carver Road, Leverett Road, and Pratt Corner would affect approximately 360 acres of forested land, according to documents filed with the con com.

The new bylaw allows “large-scale” projects, defined as any project between 1.5 and 15 acres, with restrictions. As the arrays would be on land zoned for “forest conservation” – as is most of Shutesbury – and not in one of nine districts designated for solar development, they would also require a special permit from the planning board.

The bylaw also disallows ground-mounted solar arrays on slopes steeper than a 15% grade, on unpaved roads, or on land designated by the state as “core habitat,” and bans the use of pesticides or herbicides. Companies must also permanently preserve four times as much land in town as they use for solar.

The lawsuit Amp Energy filed in April claims these restrictions have “no reasonable basis grounded in public health, safety or welfare.” (The company has since been acquired by two international asset management firms and rebranded as PureSky Energy.)

By the company’s assessment, the bylaws restrict solar development to 1.1% of the town’s land area, potentially in violation of MGL Ch. 40A §3, a state law known as the Dover Amendment.

Reason and Goals

The Dover Amendment, first enacted in 1950, prohibits local authorities from “unreasonably” regulating agricultural, religious, and educational developments using zoning laws. In 1985 it was expanded to cover “the installation of solar energy systems.”

“The Dover Amendment protects solar installation from NIM-BY reactivity,” Jones said. “Because non-experts cannot comprehend that some solar in the woods is more beneficial than keeping every single tree, and nobody seemingly wants to share their view with solar panels.”

“This law was written in 1985 before the concept of large-scale solar existed,” Weizenbaum said. “Industrial solar companies and large landowners now abuse it to apply legal force to push their agenda on small communities.”

The amendment was central to the state Supreme Judicial Court’s ruling last year in the case *Tracer Lane II Realty, LLC v. City of Waltham*. The court ruled in favor of a solar developer that wanted to build an access road through a residential neighborhood, stating that denying the project would impede the state’s legislative goal of promoting solar energy.

This goal – zero carbon emissions by 2050 – is driving electrification and solar development, according to Shutesbury’s state representative, Aaron Saunders. New England generated 11% of its energy from renewable sources in 2022, he said, after arduous years legislators spent fighting for solar and offshore wind.

The representative attended Monday’s meeting and thanked attendees who testified last week in favor of H.3230, a bill he has introduced that would change the Dover Amendment to allow towns to regulate solar facilities for the purpose of preserving “forested lands, agricultural lands, or wetlands.”

“We need to do this in a way that is responsible,” Saunders said. “Clear-cutting our forests is maybe the least responsible way to add to our renewable energy portfolio.”

“There’s a reason that these issues are happening in communities like Shutesbury, and communities like Wendell,” he added, “and it is not because our municipal governments have millions upon millions of dollars in our legal defense funds.... The bylaw that Shutesbury adopted was, by a lot of standards, a light touch.”

Reworking Incentives

Western Massachusetts legislators are behind five of at least 12 bills about solar energy development currently moving through the State House. Another bill Saunders has filed with state senator Jake Oliveira addresses the issue of state solar incentives resulting in the clear-cutting of forest by making ground-mounted arrays on Chapter 61 land and other important habitat ineligible for the subsidies.

Senator Jo Comerford and representative Natalie Blais have filed a bill to incentivize solar development on parking lots, and senator Paul Mark and representative Lindsay Sabadosa filed another to

encourage solar siting on disturbed lands *in lieu* of forests.

“There are very generous subsidies for these types of developments, and there don’t have to be,” Saunders said. “We need to take those public funds and invest it in places where solar works... in rooftops, in parking lots, in our built environment. And there are plenty of these spaces right now.”

Local Antagonists

Jones said she disagrees with the assessment that the state’s solar energy goals can be met without clearing some forestland.

“It doesn’t all fit on rooftops, median strips, and parking lots,” she told the *Reporter*. “Some solar has to go in forests. That’s the reality.”

“At the urging of Shutesbury town leaders, Cows has conserved 84% of its timberland in Shutesbury and hopes to build green energy on less than 2%,” Jones said. “We are dedicated to making this world, this town, a better place and are confident that our green energy partnerships will combat climate change.”

“Cows, Amp, and PureSky’s lawsuit is not only challenging our right to protect these woods, it’s attacking the democratic process on the local level,” Smart Solar Shutesbury member Jill Buchanan said on Monday.

“These incredibly powerful and massive companies want to make as much money as they can, and the result will wreak havoc on our communities.”

The activists ended Monday’s event by requesting donations for a legal fund, either to be given to the town or to hire an independent attorney. The result of the lawsuit, they said, could set a precedent for how solar energy is governed statewide.

“With Shutesbury having this lawsuit, we’re looking at it in Amherst, talking about this bylaw,” said Amherst resident Renee Moss. “They’re saying ‘we don’t want to set a maximum [array size], because we’re afraid of being sued!’”

“To have the largest private landowner in Massachusetts ally with a very large multinational corporation, and force a town into this kind of legal battle with the asymmetry of resources, is wrong,” said Shutesbury resident Carlos Fontes. “And it’s also wrong because the town made its opinion well known by voting for the solar bylaw.”

Some attendees at Monday’s meeting suggested residents boycott Cows Building Supply, the retail store owned by Jones’s family.

“Amp Energy’s court action has nothing to do with the retail store, Cows Building Supply, nor the livelihoods of the dozens of local residents employed there,” Jones wrote in response.

The Shutesbury con com has approved the solar company’s plans delineating wetlands and other natural resources on the five proposed sites. Chair Miriam DeFant told the *Reporter* that as of this week, no applications from PureSky or Cows are pending before the committee. She declined to comment further on the proposed projects.

Representatives from PureSky Energy and Amp Energy did not respond to repeated requests for comment by press time.

“Clear-cutting our forests is maybe the least responsible way to add to our renewable energy portfolio.”
State representative Aaron Saunders

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD (& STM)

Staff Given 4% COLA; Twelve Cops Invited In; Poultry Not Excluded

By KEITH WATERS

The selectboard of Erving kept up their busy schedule with another meeting Monday, June 26. Erving had a special town meeting planned for Wednesday night, and were planning on fitting in another short selectboard meeting right before it.

Covered on Monday was finalizing wage adjustments for town employees in FY’24, a joint meeting with the finance and capital planning committees. While there were rumors that some staff would see 20% raises, selectboard chair Jacob Smith assured the meeting that was not the case.

New compensation tables for FY’24 were prepared that reduced the wage scale from 15 to 10 steps, incrementally increased each step to 3% annually, and showed either a 2% or a 4% base wage adjustment. The idea was that reframing the data this way would allow the town to better understand its needs.

After some discussion, selectboard member Scott Bastarache moved to go with the 4% base adjustment, which was approved unanimously. A new wage schedule called “Highway, Building, and Grounds” was also made.

A number of job descriptions needed to be formalized or better defined, including for the Equipment Operator / Building Maintenance Laborer. Wording was added to allow a potential hire to not have a commercial driver’s license, as long as they are able to obtain one within six months, and the description was approved. Cody Pease, who already works for the town, was then promoted to the position.

An Assistant Treasurer position was also approved.

FY’24 agreements for sludge hauling, solid waste hauling, and trash disposal were also approved. Allied Waste Services, doing business as Republic Services of Springfield, got the contract.

The town must decide how much to charge for gassing up at the electric vehicle charging stations, and how often to change the prices. The current price is 65 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Erving does not have many electric vehicles, so it is not much of an issue, but the board and town administrator Bryan Smith reviewed various scenarios in which having more electric vehicles in the town fleet would get the town a better rate from the power companies.

One result of the “co-responder” program, in which a number of towns have collaborated to bring mental health clinicians on police calls, has been closer relationships among the participating departments.

Erving chief Robert Holst said that as a result, he was seeking to approve more police from neighboring towns than usual this year as “mutual aid” officers. Twelve officers from Bernardston, Gill, Northfield, and Leverett were approved. Erving can call on them for help, and they will be legally permitted to police in Erving.

The demolition of the International Paper mill was brought up. A timeline has not been settled on, but should be soon. Some concern was raised over the possibility of losing a \$600,000 site readiness grant from MassDevelopment, but Bastarache said that as long as the work is intended, the money will not disappear.

The agenda for Wednesday night included accepting a grant to extend the co-responder program through FY’24, extending the agreement with Clinical & Support Options related to that program, a school board resignation, and a review of personnel policy.

After that meeting ended, a special town meeting was convened to vote on five articles.

The first three passed quickly, with little discussion. Article 1 earmarked \$18,000 from the recreation budget for park improvement in order to prevent unspent funds from lapsing. Article 2 spent \$51,000 on a mixing tank for the water department.

Article 3 canceled an appropriation of \$125,000 for an inventory of lead in Erving’s drinking water pipes; the project will be funded instead by a “forgivable loan” from the state. At Jacob Smith’s urging Article 4, which would have taken temporary easements during the Church Street bridge replacement, was passed over; he said the project wasn’t ready yet.

The final 22 of the meeting’s 32 minutes were spent discussing Article 5, a revision of the zoning bylaws. An amendment to “exclude poultry” from the proposed language on agricultural zoning was struck down by a 12-15 vote, and the article was passed by a majority as written.

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting.

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WENDELL from page A1

Years ago, the free store took up too much space in the shed, and the commission discussed stopping it, but people got upset, so Delorey and volunteers built a separate free store, which is open when volunteers open it.

For the road commission, which supervises the WRATS, the town's money might be better spent on a crusher. The town is charged to ship waste by the load, not by weight. If glass can be shipped separately, the town can earn more money.

Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato said she heard the attendant is happy to do the work off hours. She suggested a middle ground, such as separating out deposit bottles and cans in a different space – possibly the Wendell Country Store – during a time outside WRATS hours.

Trigger Points

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said state senator Jo Comerford had secured a meeting the following day, July 22, with the director of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) office about New Leaf's proposed 11-acre energy storage battery project.

Despite its size, the project is too small to require state action. Johnson-Mussad said he thought the idea of the meeting is to change the threshold at which state involvement would be triggered. Wendell committee chairs are invited to present on how the project would affect the town.

Johnson-Mussad likened the situation to David and Goliath, and observed that a big corporation with big money can come in and overwhelm a small town with limited money.

Sharing Formalized

DiDonato said she and New Salem selectboard chair Sue Cloutier were ready to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for sharing a fire chief between the two towns. Joe Cuneo has held two part-time jobs as chief of each department, and will now have one job as chief of both. Wendell, the host town, will bill New Salem every three months for half the expense.

The MOU should be in place July 1 for the July 5 pay. The person who replaces Cuneo after he retires is expected to continue in the same fashion.

Aging in Place

Carol Foote, who manages Life-Path's Age- and Dementia-Friendly Communities program, and Council on Aging chair Nancy Spittle gave a presentation about continuing Wendell's involvement in the regional program. Age- and Dementia-Friendly Communities was started by the World Health Organization and is administered in the United States by AARP.

Foote shared slides showing the needs of an aging population, whether people feel their needs are being met, and how Wendell people's per-

ceptions compare with the region. 90% of Wendell survey respondents said they hoped to stay in their homes as they age, but cited concerns that make living here more challenging.

Wendell does well in providing social interaction, but transportation and access to information are important issues to work on. The next step is creating a regional action plan.

Gnawing Problem

Though not on the agenda, librarian Miriam Warner came in and reported termites in the library, brought to her attention by the custodian. The information came in since the latest library trustees meeting. All agreed that she should call in Zero Tolerance to look at the situation.

The town building maintenance fund for this fiscal year is empty, however, and the expense is in a grey area: the responsibility might be the town's, and it might belong to the library.

Johnson-Mussad suggested using ARPA money if necessary, and agreed to put the library maintenance on the agenda for the money managers' meeting scheduled for July 26.

Managing Money

Other issues wanting discussion by the money managers include a new generator for the town garage, and the financing for a new police cruiser.

Delorey said that the capacity of the solar array planned for the garage's roof, the battery storage, and the building's use of electricity will all affect the appropriate size of a new generator. A benefactor has offered to donate \$35,000 toward putting more solar panels on the roof.

Town hall also needs backup electricity, in case it is needed for a long-term warm place when commercial electricity is not available, and in order to keep Good Neighbors' freezers operating.

A new, equipped police cruiser will cost \$70,000, and the source of that money is uncertain. The town can borrow money, but treasurer Carolyn Manley said a town meeting vote would be needed. DiDonato said chief Scott Minckler is considering a hybrid, which might make a grant available.

Wendell still has ARPA money.

Other Business

The board approved a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for its recording secretary. She is paid a salary, and the COLA given to hourly workers did not apply to her.

The board appointed Trevor Kearns to the conservation commission, and Asa DeRoode as representative to the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD), with DiDonato as alternate. They approved a MOU with FCSWMD.

To accommodate members' schedules, the board agreed to change the time of the next meeting, which is only a pole hearing, to 1 p.m. on Thursday, July 6.

AVENUE from page A1

as of press time, but we were able to talk briefly with the individual who purchased the business from him, John Doleva. Doleva, it turns out, owns a family business on High Street in Greenfield called Doleva Car Washes.

Doleva, who said Doyle had approached him to suggest a sale, did not signal any major changes. He said his Greenfield business uses "biodegradable products" and seeks to be clean, well-maintained, and "aesthetically pleasing," and that he hopes to bring these values to Turners.

Last year Evelyn Wulfkuhle, who owns Maggie Woodfired Pizzeria on Bank Row in Greenfield, purchased the building at **166 Avenue A** along with its alcohol license from Riff's North. At Monday's selectboard meeting, Wulfkuhle received permission to change the venture's "doing business as" moniker, a kind of alias used legally to promote a business, from "Pie Hole" to "Harvey's."

Magpie is well known for its pizza, cooked in a brick oven, but Wulfkuhle told us today that the brick will need to wait while she finances unforeseen renovations to the building and parking lot, which is next to a very appealing outdoor patio for dining.

Wulfkuhle did not set a specific date for the restaurant's opening, but at the selectboard meeting said it would be "really soon." "It just depends on our interactions with the health department," she explained, "but we're getting very, very, close."

During our visit kitchen employees were preparing dishes for sampling, and the inside space appeared in good condition. Wulfkuhle said her current lease at the Greenfield building Magpie occupies expires in 2024, so she will be the owner of two restaurants at least for a time, but she expressed uncertainty about Magpie's future. "I haven't made a decision about that yet," she said.

Asked at Monday's meeting why the name Harvey's was chosen, she said that her grandfather had a brother and a father named Harvey. "I never met those men, but my grandfather called all of us grandchildren 'Harvey' whenever we did something good," she explained.

A DBA is often different from the public name of the business. As of the liquor license transfer hearing in May 2022, the DBA was "Pie Hole," and the business was going to be named "Whole Pie." But on Wednesday, Wulfkuhle told the *Reporter* today that the restaurant at 166 Avenue A will be called... Harvey's.

Across the Avenue and a block to the north you will notice a brick building that houses a restaurant with the catchy name Black Cow Burger Bar, and a hair and nail sa-

lon called Kharma Salon. **127-131 Avenue A**, which has been on the market for nearly a year, sold last Thursday to one of the most successful and connected developers in Montague, Robert Obear, Jr.

Besides the burger restaurant and salon, the building contains residential apartments on the second and third floor and a tiny storefront last occupied by the art gallery Nina's Nook. From 1897 to 2012, it was the home of Equi's Candy.

Obear owns buildings in both Turners and Millers Falls, where his offices are located, and is currently renovating a former schoolhouse in the Erving side of Millers into market-rate apartments. He serves on the Montague planning board.

Obear is a busy man, which is probably why he did not respond to our requests for comment before our deadline. But Jacquelyn Snow, one of the owners of Kharma, told us that "we're happily anticipating good things. Change can be good."

Perhaps the biggest transformation on our list is taking place at the strangely shaped one-story building at **64-66 Avenue A**, sandwiched between the Loot boutique and Ed's Barber Shop. Most recently owned by Shawn Hubert and called Hubie's Tavern, it featured sports, music and some good seafood. The property also includes a large outdoor dining patio.

But a bit over a year ago, Hubert sold the property to a bookstore owner who named the new business Unnameable Books, after a weighty novel by an Irish existentialist who tended to write in French.

The novelist is Samuel Beckett, best known for the play *Waiting for Godot*, and the new owner is Adam Tobin of Shelburne Falls. Tobin owns one bookstore with the same name in Brooklyn, New York, and recently closed a second in Amherst. As a result, he told the *Reporter* this week, "we have a great inventory, but no place to fit then all."

Tobin plans to sell a combination of new and used books, but no seafood or Bloody Marys. He said he is thinking of hosting poetry readings on the patio. When we peeked through the open door a few days ago, workers were taking up the floor. Tobin said it was in danger of collapsing into a "basement of sorts."

"We have a lot of work to do," he said. "We hope to open in September, maybe in October."

Back across the street to the northeast, on the corner of Avenue A and Second Street, sits the iconic sports bar and sometime entertainment venue Between the Uprights on 2nd Street. A magnet for locals who wish to watch, and wager on, the Patriots and Red Sox, the bar at **23-29 Avenue A** has often featured live music on its front patio.

On May 24, longtime owner Lew Collins announced on the bar's Facebook page that he was calling it quits. (To our knowledge, the build-

ing itself is not for sale.)

"After putting everything I've had emotionally and physically into managing 2nd Street Sports Bar from 2003-2008 and then owning Between The Uprights from 2008-2023 I have made the most difficult decision this week to put my bar business up for sale," Collins wrote. "It hasn't been an easy decision, to say the least, but at this time in my life, at almost 61, I feel it is time."

The post was met with statements of support, thanks, and some anguish. Collins did not elaborate on the reasons for his decision, and efforts to contact him for this article were unsuccessful.

Real estate agent Ted Hanna, who is handling the sale, seemed optimistic that a qualified buyer could be found. He called it a "turn-key operation" with a large, two-room space, a kitchen, and "all you need to start running the bar."

And finally, the so-called "Cumberland Farms building" right across the street at **38 Avenue A**, which has been collecting mildew for over a decade but also sports two rather upbeat murals, is coming down.

The onetime convenience store and gas station was taken by eminent domain in the 1980s as part of the Great Falls Discovery Center project, but the taking was tied up in court, and the museum was developed without it. The Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation has tried unsuccessfully to market the property for reuse.

At Monday's meeting, the selectboard issued a "notice of award" of the demolition, for the low bid of \$24,970, to Associated Building Wreckers of Springfield, the company currently bringing down the former Farren Care Center in Montague City.


The project will be funded from a recent town meeting appropriation of \$50,000, so surplus funds may be available for other wrecking. (The town, for example, plans to begin demolishing the historic Strathmore Mill complex on the far side of the power canal.)

Assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey said the town has prepped the Cumby's structure by removing electrical wiring and the coolant from its HVAC unit. The demo will include excavating the concrete slab the building sits on and the sidewalk around its edge, and the site will be loamed and seeded.

"This is definitely an interim use," said Ramsey. "It might be this way for a few years. It is considered a prime development lot, we just don't have an active plan for it."

The library trustees have applied for a state grant to consider either expanding the Carnegie Library, on the corner of Seventh Street and Avenue A, or constructing a new library downtown. If a new library is to be built, 38 Avenue A has been suggested as a prime location.

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SATURDAY, JULY 1: THE ANTENNA CLOUD FARM MUSIC WALK, TURNERS FALLS

- 2 p.m. **Unity Park Waterfront Area:** Live music, family-friendly art-making, children's sidewalk costume parade. Hosted by Marcy Gregoire of *Under the Tree Arts* and Nice! Snack Parlor.
- 3 p.m. **Great Falls Discovery Center:** *Travis LaPlante*. (MR EDITORS' PICK!) Hypnotic, innovative, and virtuosic solo saxophone. Enjoy the outdoor StoryWalk, Mole Music by David McPhail, for more musical fun for kids.
- 4 p.m. **Spinner Park:** *The Music Walk String Quartet*. Artists from the New England Repertory Orchestra bring new and thrilling chamber music to the street corner.
- 5 p.m. **Peskeompskut Park:** *Lily-Rakia Chandler*. Love and liberation in musical practice, from Hebrew melodies to traditional Mohawk chant.
- 6 p.m. **Peskeompskut Park:** *Aisha Burns*. Violinist and singer-songwriter creating original music both intimate and powerful.
- 7 p.m. **Peskeompskut Park:** *blood drum spirit*. Deeply impressive ensemble of heavy hitters, bringing a new global vision to their craft.

MONTAGUE from page A1
renters making 80% of the area median income.

The market study, Pollock noted, would supplement the MHP's technical assistance award. The Complete Neighborhoods grant, \$250,000 shared by six area towns, evaluates land use, zoning, and availability of public transportation, and the Farren study is listed as one of nine projects in its "workplan."

The Complete Neighborhoods work at the Farren will be administered with the assistance of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), a land development company with offices up and down the East Coast. Pollock indicated that VHB may also work on the market study.

Selectboard member Matt Lord asked if the assessment would only look into housing, as opposed to a "mixed use," which could include commercial or public uses. Pollock said the town was exploring a variety of options. "It could be mixed-use, or offices, or other ideas," she said. "We're actually going to be holding a couple of public forums."

Town administrator Steve Ellis said that Montague had not yet had "fine granular conversations" with Trinity Health of New England Senior Communities, which closed the long-term care center in early 2021, about what would be funded with the \$100,000 "pre-development" money it has offered the town. These specifics, Ellis said, will be "points of negotiation as we move forward."

The board voted unanimously to accept the marketing study grant.

Habitat Agreement

In related news, assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey presented an update on the project to build six units of affordable owner-occupied housing on First Street, which has been awarded to Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity. He told the board that the purchase and sale agreement, which had been waiting for funding commitments and an environmental study of the site, was now ready to sign.

Also attached was a land development agreement (LDA) between Habitat for Humanity and the town setting out conditions for the administration of the property after the sale. Ramsey called the LDA an "appendix" to the purchase and sale, and said it may be modified before the property across from town hall is actually sold and the deed transferred.

He added that the town had agreed to "carve out a section of the First Street alley," between First and Second streets, for parking for the housing units.

The board approved the purchase and sale.

Treatment Plant

Ramsey announced that the town had received initial approval from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a

loan and grant to replace the screw pumps at the Clean Water Facility (CWF). The aging screws lift sludge into the facility's secondary treatment tanks.

The USDA's proposed funding for the \$2.5 million project consists of a "low interest" (2.2%) loan of \$1.616 million and a grant of \$860,000, supplemented by \$24,000 from the town. The agency's letter said that it "does not constitute loan and/or grant approval," and that the town needed to respond within a "letter of intent" 10 days officially requesting the funds.

"They sent over a bunch of documents you need to sign," said Ramsey. The board accepted the loan agreement, and voted to allow the chair to sign the various documents.

Ramsey said the preliminary design for the project would be developed this summer, and the construction put out to bid in February.

When selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz asked if town meeting would need to make any more appropriations for the project, Ellis said the town would be required to deposit \$68,000 each year into a "short-lived asset reserve fund," but has received only "limited guidance" about it from the USDA.

The board executed a contract with ADS Environmental Services for monitoring and reporting on combined sewer overflows into the Connecticut River during major rain events.

Public Property

Shane O'Halloran, working for the Dairy Farmers of America, requested the use of public property between 1 and 5 p.m. on Wednesday to film "B-roll" for a commercial for a farm in Deerfield.

Most of the filming, he said, will be done on the corner of Third Street and Avenue A, and would include customers coming in and out of the Upper Bend café. He requested a number of parking spaces for work trucks and "overflow," as well as a police detail.

Public works superintendent Tom Bergeron suggested that O'Halloran "get there early" and block the spaces off with cones. Police chief Chris Williams asked for more detail about the potential blockage of pedestrian and auto traffic.

The board approved the request, and Kuklewicz asked that O'Halloran come to a "future meeting" and show the commercial.

Lawrence George of the Brick and Feather Brewery on Eleventh Street requested the use of public property for two signs, one on the corner of Eleventh and Avenue A and another beside the canal, where the Canalside Rail Trail intersects with Eleventh Street.

George said the signs, framed chalkboards promoting lunch specials, entertainment, and special events at the brewery, would be taken down at the end of each day.

The board unanimously approved the request.

Other Business

Acting as the personnel board, the selectboard appointed individuals to one-, three-, and five-year positions on the town staff and various boards and commissions.

The one-year appointments were a large and diverse group, including ten individuals to the battlefield grant advisory committee, five to the cemetery commission, and eight to the tree advisory committee, but also Bergeron as public works superintendent, Bryan Camden as airport manager, Karen Tonelli as director of assessing, and the firm KP Law as town counsel.

Three-year appointments were made to the conservation commission, the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC), the planning board, and the airport commission. Carolyn Olsen was reappointed to a three-year term as town accountant, and Bill Doyle was appointed to the zoning board of appeals for five years.

The board appointed Kathern "Beanie" Pierce as town clerk, Tina Sulda as assistant town clerk, and retiring town clerk Deb Bourbeau as "clerk's consultant" beginning July 1. These motions did not indicate the terms of the appointments.

The board executed an agreement with the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District for continued hauling and disposal of solid waste, scrap metal, and appliances from the town transfer station.

At Ellis's request, the board transferred \$3,000 originally meant to fund a regional digital economy plan, plus an unused \$16.01 from an outdoor library account, into the town's "community development discretionary unallocated account."

The board then appropriated \$2,500 from this discretionary fund to hire an erosion control consultant for the Water Quality Certification phase - i.e., state approval - of First-Light Power's federal hydroelectric relicensing process. Other funding for the shared consultant will come from the towns of Erving, Gill, and Northfield and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

The board approved a "doing business as" name change for a new restaurant at 166 Avenue A, from "Pie Hole" to "Harvey's," and awarded a contract to Associated Building Wreckers, Inc. for the demolition of the onetime Cumberland Farms building at 38 Avenue A. (See article, Page A1.)

At the end of the meeting, the board retired into four executive sessions to discuss collective bargaining and real estate and "to conduct negotiations with Town Administrator, Steven Ellis". ("Votes may be taken," the agenda read.) The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be held July 10.



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on June 27, 2013: *News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

EV for Leverett Fire Chief?

Although the Leverett selectboard has doubts as to whether an all-electric Toyota RAV4 would make a suitable vehicle to replace fire chief John Moruzzi's ancient Durango, they authorized applying for a state grant to purchase one anyway.

The vehicle has no gas back-up engine, a fact that gave board member Peter d'Errico pause. It has an approximately 100-mile capacity on a single charge, but the selectboard noted that Moruzzi may like to keep the lights on when he arrives at a fire. Would this cut into its range?

Selectboard chair Rich Brazeau suggested he could pack a mountain bike in the back, just in case.

Mutton & Mead Festival: History, Song, and Dance

The members of the Shire put on another weekend of shows, music, and merriment for the citizens of the 21st century this year. This was the third year of the annual Mutton and Mead Medieval Festival, and it was larger than ever.

Attendees began by walking the driveway to the fairground, with signs on the trees describing historical events - Kitty Hawk, the Black Plague - as we moved back in time to the day of Robin Hood, 1210 AD. Scripted shows throughout the day told the story of Maid Marion being forced into marriage with Sir Guy Gisbourne.

The shows created a sense of immersion and made an old story feel new. The actors went so far as to learn the dialect of the time, and spoke in it while in character, and out in some cases.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 26, 2003: *News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

Millers Post Office Closes

The village post office in Millers Falls will close its doors for good this Saturday. The Springfield Post Office's decision to close the Millers station was apparently based on safety concerns over pickup and delivery, as there is no parking lot, though longtime postal clerk Thomas Gessing, who grew up in town, said, "I have never seen an accident on this corner."

Flag Burning

With the 4th of July hard upon us, and sales of the American flag outpacing everything but the new

Harry Potter book, Americans may need a little brushing up on flag etiquette. There is a proper way to display the flag; when bringing it down off a flagpole there is a proper way to fold it; and when it is too tattered to be respectfully flown, there is a proper way to dispose of it. And that, believe it or not, is by burning.

Village Harmony in Ashfield

Rural Renaissance will present Vermont's perennially popular world music teenage singing ensemble on June 30 in Ashfield. The concert marks the beginning of Village Harmony's 14th summer of tours. 23 singers will perform high-energy gospel and vocal jazz, traditional songs from South Africa, Bulgaria, and Caucasus Georgia, and West African songs and dances.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on July 2, 1873: *News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.*

Local Matters

The days are now "going short" on time.

The walls of R.M. Starbuck's brick block are being carried up rapidly, by Henry Holland.

The foundation of the new engine house is laid on Third Street. The Farren House Stable approaches completion.

The German Sunday-schools of Turners Falls, Shelburne Falls and Greenfield picnic at Long's Grove on the Fourth.

Phillip Jacobus secured about 23 pounds of black bass below the dam the other day, the largest fish in the catch weighing three pounds.

The Schools have all closed, and the examinations have been most satisfactory. The measles interfered somewhat with the class-

es, one-half the pupils being sick at one time, but still the average has been unusually high. Those of our citizens who missed the examination of this school missed a rare treat. 127 little pets, all under the most perfect discipline, and each as intent to please as it could possibly be.

It might be as well for us to here thank Mr. Fred Hubbard of the School Committee for courtesies extended, and suggest that the next time he desires our assistance when he attempts the "Excelsior" business that he give us time to double up on life insurance. We expected a good time, but never dreamed of getting quite so high; however, Fred, we didn't break our pledge, it was too "Dry" on that hill.

The generous showers of Saturday night were Godsend to the parched earth in this locality. But, then, rain was hourly expected from the moment Ed Goddard began to cut that field of hay near the ferry.



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www.altiumpkg.com
Congratulations!

Congratulations to the TFHS softball team on another successful season! From all of us at the **Brick House Community Resource Center.**

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863-2785 • Free loaner cars!
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Kostanski Funeral Home
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Greenfield: 773-9515
Congratulations to the Champs!

Mackin Construction
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Congratulations, Team and Coaches!

Montague Community Television
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Congratulations, Team, from everyone at MCTV!

Montague Web Works
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Congratulations, TFHS Softball Team!

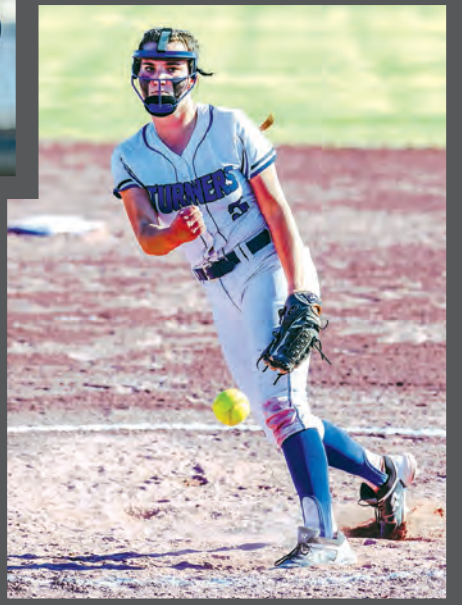
Turns Lawn Care
TLC, in their 30th year, hopes you'll be curious about a man named Jay Shetty...



Above: : A coaching moment during the MIAA Division 5 quarterfinal game against Franklin Tech.
Left: : Senior Morgan Dobias smashes a double in the MIAA Round of 16 against Lenox.



Above: : Senior Cadi Wozniak sends a walk-off single to the outfield fence, driving home Madi Liimatainen for an 8th-inning 9-8 win against the Wabconah Warriors.
Right: Liimatainen excelled in the circle this season, as well as at the plate.



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Wagon Wheel Restaurant
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JUNE 29, 2023

Above: Some of the last strawberries and asparagus of the season, spotted last week at Kolakoski Farm Stand in Deerfield.

WEIRD OLD LETTERS DEPT.

“My Crazy Pen Must Forbear...”

We were browsing the July 2, 1873 edition of the Turners Falls Reporter, our namesake, for our “150 Years Ago” column when we got word that the feature intended to run in this space would be postponed. It was a fortuitous opportunity to instead share this terrific letter, which appeared in that edition. (Its author was anonymous, signing it simply “F.”)

EDITORS REPORTER: –

“I went down home one day, came back the next,” is an expression I have often used to my friends in this place. To them of how little consequence – to me of

how much importance. How often will the incidents of a single day fill a volume.

On Friday last I took one of my “runs” home. On board the cars was Col. Crocker, whose name is so inseparably connected with our

new city.

To an interested company he told in his own graphic manner something of the earlier history of the Falls, – how as far back as 1832, or thereabouts, he saw the possibilities of the Tunnel route opening a highway to the far west; visited the falls, foresaw that this must be the site of a large inland city, investigated, wrote, talked, published, but did not successfully interest the public.

He told us how in 1844-45, he tried again to get the capitalists of Boston to develop the natural resources of the place, but in vain.

He told us how the river still rolled on uselessly, wasting its power, until sometime in 1865, his friend O.T. Ruggles, Esq., becoming interested through the influence of an old pamphlet* which he published many years before, saw, was

see **LETTER** page B8



An 1833 lithograph illustration of “Turner’s Falls” by Orra White Hitchcock.



Travel with Max

By Max Hartshorne

Travel tips for a modern European adventure.

SOUTH DEERFIELD – We are just back from a two-week trip to Europe, including a Mediterranean cruise on a full blown clipper ship and some quality time in one of France’s most scenic old time harbor towns, Cassis. And then a bit of Paris to wrap it up.

It left us both exhilarated and enlightened, because – well, here I need to share a secret. Most of the trips I take are hosted by tourism boards, so the travel planning is carefully done by more skilled planners than us. They tell me where to go, they take me around, and they negotiate every detail, smoothing my way and giving me time to focus on covering the destination on my website, *GoNOMAD.com*, and sharing photos on social media and creating podcast episodes.

But this time, we were on our own: no freebies, no efficient airport pickup, no hotels that we could leave without glancing at the bill. Nope, this time it was all on us.

I know some of my readers are

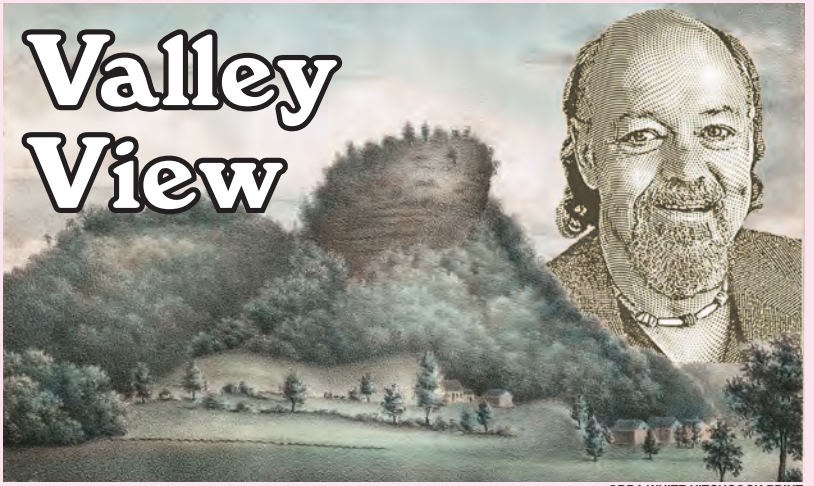
continental travelers too, so forgive anything that seems obvious, but I want to share some of the observations, tips, and lessons we learned on our trip, including renting a car, negotiating trains and buses after the cruise, and some of the ways you can save time and money if you’re taking a trip to Europe in 2023.

These newer ways of travel, like taking an Uber instead of a cab, were key to making our trip more comfortable and cheaper. Have you ever been in a cab during a traffic jam, sadly watching the meter tick and tick, up up up? With Uber, this doesn’t happen. The cost to get

see **TRAVEL** page B4



Boats in the harbor at Cassis.



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – A 60-year-old photo posted recently on Facebook by a former classmate really got my wheels spinning.

Shot on the final day of school in June 1963, the black-and-white image appeared on *Deerfield Now*. It showed my fourth-grade class standing on the front granite stairs leading into the two-story, brick South Deerfield Elementary School that stood on Conway Street, which in those days was Route 116. The building long ago met the wrecking ball, clearing the way for the Deerfield police station.

Our teacher was Nancy Judd, from the family that owned Turners Falls’ Judd Wire. To us she was Miss Judd. In fact, I wouldn’t have known her first name had it not been provided by the Facebook submitter.

Miss Judd was young and innovative – a breath of invigorating air on a staff dominated by old bats. She was by far the best grammar-school teacher I had. Easy for me to say now. The rest of my grammar-school teachers are dead. Which doesn’t mean I’d hesitate to criticize most if they were still among the living. Uh-uh. In this case, it’s not necessary.

My path to Miss Judd’s classroom was a stroke of dumb luck. Strictly a right-place, right-time dynamic. It happens. I was the beneficiary. If I’m not mistaken, she was a one-year wonder. She popped briefly into my young life, like a hummingbird feeding through a flowerbed, and was gone soon after school ended. She got married, became Mrs. Coughlin, and soon transitioned into an office job at her family business.

At least that’s my recollection. Don’t hold me to it. It was long ago. I wonder if she’s alive? It’s possible. She’d likely be in her mid-80s.

Although I can’t say how many of my pictured classmates survive, I know the two friends I’m standing between are gone. One received a tough cancer-recurrence diagnosis after recuperating from unrelated open-heart surgery, and chose a bullet over more surgical intervention. The other drank himself into the grave, 50 years after murdering his younger brother with a serrated steak knife during a drunken scrap over the last piece of cheese avail-

able for wee-hour ham sandwiches at their parents’ home. The suicide victim and both brothers were my friends. Life takes strange turns.

That said, I can’t say my first thoughts went there upon viewing the photo.

What immediately came to mind was the summer that followed – when I accompanied my maternal grandparents on a retirement tour of the Midwest. We started by driving the New York State Thruway to Niagara Falls, then stayed with family in Illinois and Minnesota.

The trip gave me my first peek into Black urban poverty, driving through the Gary, Indiana ghetto. Then I was introduced to desolate, rural, Native American poverty on the high plains of South Dakota. There I still vividly recall tattered sheets of flimsy plastic window coverings flapping in sultry prairie breezes. Both glimpses shocked an impressionable, small-town boy from South Deerfield.

My grandfather’s sister, Delia (Keane) Berg, owned a bar and restaurant in Stockton, Illinois, joined to her son John’s downtown gun and tackle shop. Both establishments attracted a steady stream of chatty Midwestern characters. Stockton, a farm town, was an interesting place, a tasty slice of latter-day Mark Twain’s riverboat America.

John Berg, my mother’s first cousin, was then about 30. He took me fishing on the Mississippi River, brought me along to a friend’s dairy farm to reduce a nuisance pigeon population, and taught me how to catch pond snapping turtles on baited overnight droplines attached to floating plastic jugs.

The highlight of my extended Illinois stay was a Sunday dinner of baked snapping turtle prepared by Great-Aunt Delia. It was delicious and unforgettable, to this day my only snapping-turtle feast. Delia told me in her Irish brogue that snappers offered an assortment of seven different types of meat from under one shell. Though I sampled them all, don’t ask me to name them. I know three were beef, pork, and chicken. Maybe lamb, too. That’s the best I can do.

Our next stop was Minnesota, the so-called “Land of 10,000 Lakes.” My mother’s older brother Bob lived in a northern Twin see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3

Pet of the Week



PHOTO COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY

“YUSEF”

Meet Yusef – a super-adorable potato on legs. He’s an outgoing and curious pig that will chat up a storm with you. He’s been in foster for a bit, waiting for a new family to take him home.

Yusef will jump out of his cage onto his patio to greet you with enthusiasm. He is not thrilled about being picked up or held, but he does like to be pet on his head. He loves food and will gently eat veggies, pellets, or alfalfa out of your hand.

Guinea pigs need lots of space to run around in, and toys to keep them active and enriched! They should get daily “floor time” outside of their cage.

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

Senior Center Activities JULY 3 THROUGH 7

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.

ERVING

Open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Open for cards, coffee, and snacks daily. Fitness room open daily.

Ask the Nurse and Blood Pressure Clinic is the first Tuesday of each month. Brown Bag 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 7/3

9 a.m. Interval
10:15 a.m. Stretch & Infusion
Tuesday 7/4
9 a.m. Good For U
10 a.m. Line Dancing
Wednesday 7/5

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

Thursday 7/6
9 a.m. Core & Balance
10 a.m. Barre Fusion
Friday 7/7

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

Monday 7/3

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Oak Tree Chair Yoga
11 a.m. Chair Exercise

Tuesday 7/4

No Activities
Wednesday 7/5
9 a.m. Veterans’ Hours
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
4:15 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 7/6

9 a.m. Chair Yoga
10:30 a.m. Brown Bag
1 p.m. Cards & Games
Friday 7/7
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
2 p.m. By the Seat of Your Dance

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.

JULY LIBRARY LISTING

Montague Public Libraries

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

Erving Public Library (413) 423-3348

Gill: Slate Library (413) 863-2591

Leverett Public Library (413) 548-9220

Northfield: Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455

Wendell Free Library (978) 544-3559

MONTAGUE

Every weekday: *Free Summer Meals*, for ages 18 and under. Breakfast 8:15 to 9:15 a.m., lunch 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays at the Carnegie.

Multiple days: *Art Exhibit*. Photographs by Barry DeJasu, starting July 17. Montague Center.

Multiple days: *Grab & Go Bags*. Science: LEGO pyramid. Craft: Rainbow spinner toy. Free kits at all branch locations while supplies last.

Every Saturday: *Saturday Story Time*. Jump-start early literacy skills for preschoolers. Carnegie tent, 10 a.m.

Saturday, July 1: *Used Book Sale*. Fiction, paperbacks, kids’ books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks. Hundreds of donations. Carnegie, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Every Tuesday: *Game Day*. Board, card, and lawn games. Carnegie tent, 1 to 3 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Story Time*, stories and songs, Montague Center, 10 a.m.; *LEGOs on the Lawn*, Carnegie, 1 to 3 p.m.

Every Thursday: *Playgroup*, guided and free play for preschoolers, older sibs welcome, Carnegie tent, 10 a.m.; *Tine Zine Club*, snacks provided, at the Brick House, 2:30 p.m.

Every Friday: *Mindful Moments*. Yoga poses for children and parents. Carnegie, 11 a.m.

Friday, July 7: *Teen CarnegieCon*. Dress up as your favorite comic book character. Food and activities designed for tweens and teens; everyone welcome. Carnegie, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 10: *Lemonade Social*, Millers Falls, 3 to 4 p.m.

Monday, July 14: *Friends of MPL Meeting*. All welcome. Email vgatvalley@gmail.com for info. Carnegie, 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 15: *Community Work Day*, Montague Center, 10 a.m. to noon.; *Find Your Voice*, all-ages participatory music with Julie Stepanek, Carnegie tent, 11 a.m.

Wednesday, July 19: *Author Series*. Karen Latuchie. Refreshments provided. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

Friday, July 25: *Youth Advisory Committee*. Bring your ideas for library programming. Snacks provided. Carnegie, 4 p.m.

ERVING

Sundays, July 2 and 23: *Paws to Read*. Kids read to a dog. Sign up for a spot. 2 p.m.

Thursday, July 6: *Friends of the Library Meeting*. All welcome. 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 9: *Puzzle Swap*. 1 to 3 p.m.

Tuesdays, July 11, 18, 25: *Writing Workshops* with local author Mara Bright, for teens and adults. 5 p.m.

Thursday, July 13: *Tattoo and Piercing 101*. Info session for teens and adults. 5 p.m.

Sunday, July 16: *Family Storytelling* with Rona Leventhal, 11 a.m.; *Craft Day*, Materials provided, RSVP req’d, 1 p.m.; *Art Show Open House* with local artisan Sally Delaney, 2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 18: *Pineapple Project*. Theater for families with kids ages 3 to 8. 1 p.m.

Thursday, July 27: *Book Club & Make Your Own Sundae Party*. RSVP requested, more info online. 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 30: *Music & Movement* with Tom and Laurie. 11 a.m.

LEVERETT

All Month: *Art Exhibit*, poured paint artwork by Mary Glavin; *Story Walks*, behind the library, new story every Thursday.

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

Every Monday and Wednesday: *Online Qigong*. Free, all welcome. See leverettlibrary.org or CommunityQigong@gmail.com for info. 10:30 a.m.

Tuesdays: *Music on the Patio*. July 11, Same Old Blues; July 18, Juggler Meadow String Band; July 25, Box Shop Trio. 6:30 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Playgroup*, for children ages 0 to 5 and their caregivers. Email budine@erving.org to RSVP. 10:30 a.m.

Every Thursday: *Play Mahjongg*. Beginners welcome. 1:45 to 4 p.m.

Wednesday, July 12: *Playgroup*, ages 0 to 5. 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, July 13: *Family Talent Show*. 4 p.m.

Saturday, July 15: *Flying High Dogs*. 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 19: *Playgroup*, joined by the fire department. 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, July 26: *Music & Movement* with Tom and Laurie. 10:30 a.m.

NORTHFIELD

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

Every Tuesday: *Drop-in Knit-*

ting. Join fellow knitters and crocheters. 6 to 8 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Open Tech Hours*. Pop in with your device for help on anything library-related. 1 to 3 p.m.

Wednesday, July 5: *Readers’ Choice*. Clint Smith, *How the Word Is Passed*. Pick up a copy at the library. 10 a.m.

Thursday, July 6: *Spice Club pickup*. Stop in for a sample and recipes while supplies last; look for a new spice every month; *Library Trivia Night*, Four Star Farms Brewery, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, July 11: *Ceramic Château*. Art viewing and conversation with Jack Nelson. Fiddleheads Gallery, 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 12: *Readings Group*. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*. Pick up a copy at the library. 3 p.m.

Thursday, July 13: *Environmental Awareness Group*. Dina Gilio-Whitaker, *As Long As Grass Grows*. Pick up a copy at the library. 6:30 p.m.

Friday, July 21: *Movie and Chat*, *Out of the Storm*. Community Bible Church, 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 22: *Coffee Hour*. Rustic Ridge, with Margie Fowler. 10 a.m.

WENDELL

Every Saturday: *StoryCraft*. Picture book read-aloud and connected craft. 10:30 a.m.

Every Sunday: *Yoga*. All levels, by donation. 10 a.m.

Every Tuesday: *Art Group*. 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *Playgroup*, 10 a.m.; *STEM activity* for elementary age, registration requested, 3 p.m.

Every Friday: *LEGO club*. 4 p.m.

Saturdays, July 8 and 22: *Wendell Youth Group*. 1 p.m.

Tuesday, July 11: *Music & Movement* with Tom and Laurie. 10 a.m.

Tuesdays, July 11 and 25: *Tech Help* by appt. Register at wendell@cwmar.org.

Thursdays, July 13 and 27: *Fiber Arts / Mending Circle*. 6:30 p.m.

Friday, July 14: *Homeschool Hangout*, 10:30 a.m.; *Rep. Aaron Saunders office hours*, 2 p.m.

Saturday, July 15: *Zen Rock Wrapping*. 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, July 16: *Book Launch Party*. Sylvia Wetherby, *Madame Monarch*. 2 p.m.

Saturday, July 29: *Collage Your Own Magnetic Poetry Set*. Email wendell@cwmar.org to register. 3 p.m.

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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

Cities suburb of St. Paul named New Brighton. My late uncle, a World War II vet and Georgia Tech graduate, was a well-paid electrical engineer at Honeywell. He had four children close in age to me, including a namesake son who would be killed as a teen 10 years later when his car was struck by a train near his rural Saugerties, New York, home.

Salient memories from my extended Minnesota visit included discovering tiny snapping turtles hatching from the sandy, undercut bank of a backyard "crick," learning about developing film and making black-and-white prints in my uncle's well-equipped cellar darkroom, and shooting trap and skeet at the local sportsmen's club.

From there we embarked on a camping adventure through South Dakota and eastern Wyoming – what I would then have called "cowboys and Indians" territory. We visited the Black Hills, Mount Rushmore, the gold rush town of Deadwood, the Badlands, and Devils Tower, all of which left deep impressions.

I saw my first buffalos, visited the saloon where Wild Bill Hickok was killed by Jack McCall, fed wild Badlands burros, and even found an Indian artifact I still own in the small creek flowing through our campsite on the prairie-dog infested Devils Tower plain.

At Mount Rushmore, I met Benjamin Black Elk (BBE), a Sioux Native of the high plains, who joined us for a lunch of buffalo burgers and fries. His calm dignity impressed me greatly.

My grandfather, a Galway Bay native and kisser of the Blarney Stone, had the so-called Irish gift of gab. He struck up a conversation with the Oglala Lakota elder dressed in full Native regalia, head-dress and all, as he shook hands and promoted the now-classic Western movie *How the West Was Won*, in which he had a bit part. When an invitation to join us for lunch was accepted, I got the opportunity to meet him up close and personal.

BBE was the son of iconic holy man Black Elk, a Custer's Last Stand witness who knew Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and many other warriors associated with the famous 1876 Battle of the Little Big Horn.

In 1932, Black Elk collaborated with poet John G. Neihardt to write *Black Elk Speaks*, a classic anthropological work that's still in print and widely read. We knew nothing of it at the time.

I realize now that that glorious summer, combined with Miss Judd's enlightening fourth-grade class that preceded it, were the high points of my uninspiring 13-year journey through Deerfield's public schools.

It was all downhill after 1963, beginning with the hiring of a new, sadistic elementary principal named Dan McAllister, who greeted me to fifth grade with an evil snarl. McAllister was an angry handicapped man who acted upon his frustrations by intimidating boys to tears in his office – a small, stuffy room situated off a landing halfway up the staircase. He would invite you in for disciplinary matters and close the door behind you. His next move was a firm grip with thumb and forefinger on the back of your neck, followed by the vicious threat to smash your head through the east wall.

In today's world the man wouldn't last six months in a Massachusetts school. He'd be disgraced by news accounts, never again to torment helpless young schoolboys.

Two years of dealing with that man's cruelty under puberty's spell didn't teach me to curl into a fetal ball of submission. No, it taught me to hate, to fight back, and to question authority. Before the calendar moved into 1964, toward the final bell of a November fifth-grade afternoon, President Kennedy was shot in Dallas, igniting the tempestuous Sixties. When I got home, Kennedy was dead, and my mother was bawling. I will never forget it.

Soon the sound of protest and the smell of tear gas were in the air as Vietnam lingered on, political assassinations continued, cities burned, Nixon was reborn, and challenging authority became cool.

Even the likes of sinister Dan McAllister, with the fearful "clump, clump, clump" of his elevated shoe hitting the wooden floor, could not stem the idealistic tide. I followed autodidactic paths to knowledge, and found a few college mentors to nudge me in the right direction.

I found a way.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Trucks, Towel, Adult Son, Traveling Doctor, Known Male, Big Bear, Meadow Road Location All Out Of Control

Monday, 6/19

8:29 a.m. Caller from L Street would like it on record that her car was gone through last night. An umbrella was taken out and left in her garden, but nothing else was touched.

3:21 p.m. East Mineral Road caller states that three black pickups, a gray sedan, and a black sedan are always speeding on her road and have killed two of her dogs doing this. She would like the area monitored.

4:12 p.m. Caller states that a white Honda pulled erratically out of a driveway on Route 63 heading south, shot some sort of gun out the passenger window, and sped towards town. Area checked; nothing found.

6:07 p.m. 911 caller from Franklin Street states a towel was on fire in her bathroom. She has since put it out, but the fire alarm won't shut off. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

8:35 p.m. Two 911 calls from Central Street reporting that a male party is harassing neighbors.

Tuesday, 6/20

3:47 a.m. Burglar alarm at Franklin County Technical School. Officer spoke with a group of kids who advised they were getting ready for a fishing trip. Confirmed with teacher.

6:46 a.m. Motorist reporting vehicle off roadway near the Newton Street railroad underpass; states it has a tire in the air and appears to be sideways. Second caller reports vehicle is in a ditch with damage to windshield and elsewhere. Rau's to tow. Officer requesting Athol PD check residence of owner; Athol advises party no longer lives there but provided her new address. Summons issued for operating with a suspended license.

7:12 a.m. 911 caller reports that her adult son is out of control and throwing food everywhere. Advised of various court options. Male party has left to cool down.

12:43 p.m. Report that two dogs from an N Street address are running loose. Animal control responding.

1:20 p.m. Caller states that some tools were taken from his vehicle while it was parked overnight in the St. Stanislaus parking lot.

2:07 p.m. Caller from J Street reports that a female stole a package from outside her apartment door; will email video footage.

4:27 p.m. 911 caller from Lake Pleasant Road states there is a heavy smoke smell and visible smoke coming from the Plains. Transferred to Shelburne Control. No scheduled burns per TFFD. Officer advises smoke is coming from Broadway; unsure what is being burned, but it seems to be contained.

6:23 p.m. Report of a sil-

ver sedan sitting outside Hillcrest Elementary two or three days per week. Caller states she has asked the driver if he needed assistance and he said no. The car was parked in the handicap spaces this evening; when caller walked by, the male sped off. Driver described as an 18- to 25-year-old male with shaggy brown hair. Officers advised; copy printed for school resource officer.

6:33 p.m. 911 call from male stating he lives on the second floor of a Third Street building. Male reports his neighbor overdosed 1.5 months ago, and a dog, a large pitbull named Bruno, has been alone in the apartment; he can hear the dog moaning and wants something done. Officer confirms dog inside; neighbors state it is being taken care of by a female squatting at the residence. Female has an active warrant.

7:22 p.m. Officer advises that a Ja'Duke employee saw a brown Crown Victoria drive into the parking lot at 7:15 a.m. and ask a parent if Ja'Duke was hiring. Wants on record.

Wednesday, 6/21

9:12 a.m. Fourth Street caller wants it on record that a package was stolen.

10:28 a.m. Food City manager told officer a female party came in and took food. Summons issued.

11:17 a.m. Caller reports someone's belongings are on town hall property. Officer advises it looks like someone slept in the bushes last night and left some trash. Trash removed.

11:22 a.m. Verbal warning for stop sign violation at South High Street and Turnpike Road. Driver is a traveling doctor and was trying to use GPS.

3:47 p.m. 911 caller reporting two-vehicle accident at Park and Unity Streets. Officer requesting EMS; tow requested for both vehicles.

5:06 p.m. Caller states that one of his cards was declined while trying to get gas at Nouria. He was able to use another, but upon getting home found a \$150 charge on the one that had been declined. He has contacted the card company.

7:15 p.m. 911 caller from N Street states that two dogs are out on a roof and the owners are allowing it to happen; caller concerned for dogs' safety. Owner stated they were putting an air conditioner in the window and a dog got out, but came back in on its own.

9:21 p.m. 911 caller states that a male party was attempting to pry open the door to Walgreens. Caller closed the store and is sitting in her car. States that party is a known male in the area. Shelburne Control advises there is no officer on duty for Gill tonight.

Officer advises no damage to door or building. Male party verbally trespassed.

Thursday, 6/22

1:16 a.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street states that someone who appears drunk has been knocking on doors, causing a disturbance for a half hour. Attempted to call involved male; his girlfriend is locked out and is knocking. Able to get male to wake up; female is inside; all set.

10:49 a.m. Officer from another town has been hearing gunshots, and a round came through a window on River Road. He has driven up McClelland Farm Road and believes the shot came from Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club, over the river and down the road into the resident's window. Would like Rod & Gun checked for incidents, and to see if MPD officers can hear shots as well. MPD spoke with reporting party. Incident happened yesterday.

11:04 a.m. Caller states that the third floor of a Second Street building has locked doors, but townspeople ripped the doors down and are doing drugs up there. Officer reports locks changed, building now secure.

1:43 p.m. Caller on Country Club Lane states she saw a big black bear in her yard, is concerned for children's safety. Looks like it is headed towards Dell Street. Second caller states bear is headed down Oakman toward Dell.

3:47 p.m. Caller reporting bear in area of Bulkley and Griswold streets.

4:49 p.m. Caller reports a child with no helmet driving a go-cart around Fifth and L streets. Second caller states he was in the middle of the road by the gas station. Unable to locate.

9:37 p.m. Caller states a gray pitbull tried biting her son on Fifth Street when he was walking home from school. Dog was chained up, but chain is long enough to reach into the sidewalk. Caller would like ACO to look into having the owner shorten the chain. Call left in ACO's box.

10:08 p.m. 911 caller from Keith Apartments states her neighbor is slamming a door and it sounds like she is throwing things against a wall. Quiet upon arrival; no answer at door.

Friday, 6/23

8:41 a.m. Fourth Street caller reports theft of property from his apartment yesterday.

11:06 a.m. Landlord of a Third Street property states she was informed that the police and ACO were trying to rescue a dog in the apartment the other day but didn't get in. Caller states there should be nobody in the apartment and gives permission for

PD/ACO to gain entry by breaking the lock if needed. ACO *en route*. Female possibly squatting in apartment has active warrant. No person in apartment; no damage done when gaining entry; ACO has the dog.

2:35 p.m. Caller states the language and yelling at a Meadow Road location has gotten to be too much. Caller states that there are a lot of people living in the building, and every day they yell and throw things at each other in the road. Not currently happening, but caller is going to start reporting it.

5:53 p.m. Caller requesting assistance with lockout at Cumberland Farms; three-year-old son is in vehicle. Officer advises vehicle is unlocked and the kid is out.

6:10 p.m. Caller from Sunrise Terrace reports a loud noise sounding like a gunshot. Officer advises he could hear fireworks.

6:20 p.m. Caller states that someone is setting off fireworks in the Randall Wood area. Unable to locate.

Saturday, 6/24

9:34 a.m. Caller from Sunset Drive reports a family of skunks under her deck. Info forwarded to ACO.

2:32 p.m. Veterans flag holder reported stolen from St. Anne's Cemetery.

2:48 p.m. Report of suspected drug activity at the Cutlery Block.

Sunday, 6/25

6:58 a.m. Caller from J Street reports seeing a female enter two vehicles and take items. Officer reports one under arrest. Four unlocked vehicles entered; glove boxes opened; items thrown about the vehicles. Female in custody splashed all the water from the toilet in the cell onto the floor. Officer transporting female to HOC. Custodian notified about spit and toilet contamination. Call received regarding her property that was found on J Street; caller reports her vehicle was entered in a back lot on Fifth Street. A 32-year-old Turners Falls resident was charged with four counts of breaking and entering into a boat/vehicle for misdemeanor.

9:56 a.m. Caller from Taylor Hill Road reports a groundhog living under the extension to his house. Info forwarded to ACO.

10:40 a.m. Report of two loose pitbull mixes on Grand Avenue. Owner contacted and *en route*.

1:48 p.m. Report of vehicle entered overnight on H Street. Sunglasses and phone charger were stolen.

3:02 p.m. Caller states that parties are at Railroad Salvage cleaning out their car and throwing trash on the ground. Search negative.

4:18 p.m. Park Villa Drive caller states a car in the parking lot is leaking gas.

Montague Community Television News

Here For the Main Event

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Learn about the "Amazing Geology in Gill" from geology professor Richard D. Little in our recording of his talk on May 29. Find yourself in the Family Fishing Day footage from June 4, and get to know local author Marina Goldman in her talk at the Montague Center Library. Or, celebrate the Turners Falls High School softball team's winning season in our coverage of the semifinal and final playoff games.

But we know you're all here for the main event, the meetings! What would MCTV be without our weekly coverage of all local government meetings? This week we have the Montague board of assessors meeting from June 26, the Montague selectboard meeting from June 26, and the Montague finance committee meeting from back on June 14.

There's always something new

to watch on MCTV, and we are always up to something. We're currently looking for businesses to participate in our *Local Business Spotlight*. If you are interested in having your business featured, please reach out to infomontaguetv@gmail.com, and be sure to check our website and Vimeo page for all our newest videos.

MCTV is always available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided. Stop by the station, 34 Second Street in Turners Falls, sometime between Monday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., email us, or give us a call at (413) 863-9200.

If there is something going on you think others would like to see, get in touch – we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment.

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TRAVEL from page B1

from Gare de Lyon to the Airbnb apartment in Paris' 13th *arrondissement* was a flat \$16.50. Throw in a few euros' tip and even though it was a 45-minute slog, the price didn't change.

At one point my partner Mary asked me, "Why aren't we staying in a hotel?" That would be logical, since most hotels in France now feature air conditioning ("climatisation") and we were sweating a bit in the bedroom chamber with just an open window to cool us down.

I answered her quickly: "The last hotel room I stayed in in Paris was so small I could barely fit my luggage inside." There was also no plug next to my bed, a perennial complaint by Americans in Europe.

Looking around at the homey, one-bedroom apartment, I felt sure I'd made the right decision. Besides having a bigger bedroom, we had an outdoor terrace and a nice big tiled bathroom. We enjoyed relaxing with our iPads after our 19,000-step day in Paris, and we would have faced a Marx Brothers *Duck Soup* situation in a little hotel room. The cost for the Airbnb for two nights was just under \$400.

One very modern aspect of our 2023 travel planning was that we used ChatGPT AI to write our trip itinerary. It was a great way to lay out the whole trip, and the AI found attractions and places in the Provence region that we might have missed.

Of course, anything AI is better when supervised by a human. I adjusted the itinerary to delete its suggestion to add Marseilles – too far, too complicated – and added screenshots of Google Maps for every drive we needed to take in our rental car. I put all the reserva-



HARTSHORNE PHOTOS

Left: Poppies grow in a wheat field in Le Luberon, Provence. Right: Max and Mary at Notre Dame in Paris, showing the progress of the massive cathedral's restoration.

tion numbers and door codes right into the document so we would both have all of the info.

We got a chance to ride one of the world's best and fastest trains, the TGV, which whisked us 360 miles from Avignon to Paris. You have to book tickets in advance, just like for an airplane flight, and pay for luggage too. I forked over the extra money just in case, and the price for two was just under \$100 one-way.

These fast trains are very long, and we had seats in Coach 13, seats 564 and 565. The train sped into Avignon right on time, and we had mere minutes to gather our heavy luggage and extra bags and try to find the right traincar. I did not realize that this long train was actually *two* trains, and none of the first eight cars said Number 13, so we fitfully rolled our big suitcases down the platform.

The next set of numbers after locomotive number two began with 17, and we saw all of the passengers finishing boarding and panicked.

"Let's get on now!" I said in desperation. Bad call. Every seat was sold out, and we were in car 9 without any seats, while our luxurious spots back in car 13 were empty.

It was a three-hour trip, and for consolation, we grabbed a cushioned bench near the end of the car. Next time, figure out where on the platform your car will land before you board!

Paris is still as splendid as you think it is. It's even better, now that there are so many electric scooters, e-bikes, Ubers, and electric cars providing many more ways to get around. It's full of orange-clad workers sweeping and washing the streets, and the buildings you remember are still sparkling and beautiful, as are the modern buildings along the glittering Seine.

At our Airbnb, we found a business card for a *crêpe* joint about eight minutes from the flat in the 13th *arrondissement*. On our last night, we set out and found Rue de la Butte aux Cailles, a lively side street with dozens of tables filled with revelers, enjoying the warm night and dining on *crêpes* and other delicious foods that France is famous for.

On the walk home, a rowdy jazz band in a café blasted out familiar standards with a saxophone and trombone that you could hear for blocks. It was a delightful Friday night in Paris, and we felt like we were in the perfect place at the perfect time.

Max Hartshorne, a local travel editor, writes about traveling around our region and a little beyond. Max is the editor of GoNOMAD Travel and host of the short-form GoNOMAD Travel Podcast, which you can hear at anchor.fm/max-hartshorne.



OTHER TECHIE TRAVEL TIPS

- Set up Apple Pay on your phone, and every time you need to buy something, just tap the merchant's credit card reader with your phone. In Europe they will never take your card into the back room; it is all done right in front of you, and paying that way is quick and safe.
- Remember to set up or turn on "Find my Phone" on your laptop or iPad, so that in case you lose your phone you have a way to find it on a map (or from the beeping phone).
- Use Google Docs and Chat GPT AI to create an itinerary that you can read offline and share with your travel companion(s).
- Find Airbnbs, but check the details. We found a flat with a sweeping view of the harbor, and great reviews. But no one mentioned that the apartment was 66 steps up four floors, and there was no elevator.

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Visions of the Connecticut River Valley*, work by regional artists featuring the nature of the river, through June 30. *Montague Parks and Recreation Young Artist Week*, works created by children ages 5 to 12 that focus on local wildlife, July 12 to 26.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Crapo Tarot*, tarot cards by Trish Crapo. Through July 15.

Goose Divine Energy, Greenfield: *Joseph McCarthy*, paintings. Through July. Reception this Friday, June 30, from 5 to 8 p.m. during Art Walk.

TELOS Gallery, Greenfield: *Anja Schütz and Paul Teeling*, fine art photography. Through August.

170 Main Street, Greenfield: *Peter Monroe*, fine art photography. Through July. Appointments at *estherwasmydog@yahoo.com*. Also open this Friday, June 30 from 5 to 8 p.m. during Art Walk.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Black*

Families of Greenfield: "The faces, energy and achievements that helped to shape the town's identity and creative pulse." Through August 31; reception Friday, July 7, 6 to 8 p.m. *Thomas Ratté*, painting, pencil, watercolor, and photography. Through July 31; reception Saturday, July 8, 12 to 3 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Live Portraiture* by *Julia Shirar*, Thursdays in June and July. Sign up to be painted by emailing *julia@juliashirar.com*. Subjects will be given a reproduction of their portrait. Closing reception Friday, July 28.

Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts & Arts: *Jesse Connor and Lori Lynn Hoffer*, landscape and botanical paintings. Through July. Reception Sunday, July 9, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Anne White*, paintings and more. Through June.

Northfield Public Library: *Botanical Dreams*, whimsical acrylics by Kaylee Pernice. Through July 1.

Montague Center Library: *Mt. Toby Paintings*, by Kate Spencer.

Through July 14.

Memorial Hall, Deerfield: *The Allen Sisters*. Two deaf sisters developed the image that has defined Deerfield for the past century through photography. The exhibit focuses on their view of the innocence of childhood. Through October 13.

Art in the Hall, Art Bank Building, Shelburne: *A Pastorale*, Christin Couture's surreal pastoral scenes. Through July 30. Reception on Sunday, July 9, from 1 to 4 p.m.

The Art Garden, Shelburne Falls: *Annual Teen Art Exhibit*, through July 8.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Wonders of Nature*, group exhibit by member artists. Through July.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Two Conversations: Erika Radich and Sharon Myers*. Myers is a fabric, clay, and mixed-media artist, and Radich focuses primarily on printmaking. The show is a collaboration between the

artists who are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through August 27. Reception Saturday, July 8 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *Regional Photography Show* by New England photographers, through July 2. *Northfield Then & Now Exhibit*, a contemporary response by area artists to historic photographs of Northfield, July 7 through August 19; reception Thursday, July 20 from 4:30 to 7 p.m.

Jewish Community of Amherst: *The Art of Collage*, mixed-media collage by Micha Archer. Through July 28.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Inner Circles, Immersions*: abstract collages composed of painted papers by Paula Hite, on display with immersive landscape paintings in oil on wood by Evelyn Pye. Through July.

Club George, Northampton: *Daily Drawings: An Everyday Chronicle*. Lynn Peterfreund. Through July 22. Reception July 1, 4 to 7 p.m.

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THEATER REVIEW

Great Moments, Way Out in Chester

By MAX HARTSHORNE

SOUTH DEERFIELD – Chester Theatre is back with a new four-show summer run, with a crazy, funny show that to some might feel a bit too crazy.

I laughed often and out loud at *The Making of a Great Moment*, performed in the tiny Hampden County town of Chester, Massachusetts. The location of this theater, 45 winding road minutes from Northampton, is part of the appeal. What could be more fun on a sunny Thursday afternoon than a scenic drive over mountains, by the river, to this comfortable little theater? And dinner after the show on the porch of the wonderful Chester Common Table restaurant was first-rate.

The play is a two-person comedy that reminded me of listening to a Robin Williams riff. Non-sequiturs, historic references, preposterous theories about the questions that man asks other men about the human condition. And two appealing characters who have fun with their roles while spinning out funny lines and humorous pratfalls.

The premise was a fun idea – a pair of Canadian actors, trekking across the state of New Hampshire, putting on a show at various unglamorous locations. The show is called “Great Moments in Human Achievement,” and is composed of vignettes of the world’s great discoveries, from the first campfire to the wheel to a wonderfully complex bit about how humans first discovered how to kiss.

It was a rollicking ride, with funny physical humor done with dexterity, as we watch Terry Dean (Bill Bowers) and Mona Barnes (Esther Williamson) ride their bikes, change a flat tire, and, finally, make love under the stars as the rollicking show came to a lurching conclusion.

This isn’t a show for everyone. Two seniors right next to us made a quick exit within the first ten minutes, and my companions felt

that it was too long, and dragged a bit. Overall, I laughed so hard and had fun with the crazy non-sequiturs that I was content with the 95-minute length.

The pair of actors had a good blend of oddity – they both loved to riff on their own hang-ups. She with some ad libbing to the script of their show, and he with a dreamy recollection of his 407 acting roles and searing envy of his actor pals, back in Toronto, who just opened in a new play in a prestigious theater. His and Mona’s next show would be where? In the boondocks and dimly-lit stages of New Hampshire. Ugh.

The Making of a Great Moment was written by Peter Sinn Nachtrieb and directed by James Barry, and had its world premiere in nearby Lowell in 2017. The play-within-a-play format provides dozens of hilarious (to me!) 10-second impersonations, from the man who invented the bicycle to made-up characters like “Cremini,” the man who ate the first mushroom, and “Apendictus,” the Greek doctor, or the world’s first surgeon.

A bit of a Monty Python feel, and the frantic pace of the aforementioned comedy was great, but this wasn’t freefall improv. It was just a very clever script and actors who can wring accents, odd tones,

and props to morph into characters that pop up and fade away.

The idea of Mona and Terry’s play is that each of these people provided humanity with something important, hence the title. These are the great moments of human achievement, each told with the actor using a new prop, from the draped sleeping bags making royal robes, to the saucerpan helmet Terry dons in another quick scene about a general or someone else in history.

The actors also throw in different themes. Mona is very attached to her cheery slogans, which turn even the darkest story into a charm, and Terry, the veteran semi-successful actor, wrestles with the indignity of their current assignment and wistfully pines for getting back for another long run in a show. Anything. Just get him back in front of the lights.

The Making of a Great Moment plays at the Town Hall Theatre this Thursday, June 29 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Friday, June 30 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, July 1 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, July 2 at 2 p.m.

Talkbacks follow the Thursday and Saturday matinees, and a “cast conversation” follows Friday’s show. For tickets and more information, call (413) 354-7770 or see www.chesthertheatre.org.



Bill Bowers and Esther Williamson play *Making’s* only two characters.



Enable Two-Factor Security Today!

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – It’s a pretty nasty feeling when you think someone might be crawling through your data, or get a warning from Google or your bank of an unauthorized login attempt. Adaptive systems on the company’s end are often able to detect unusual behavior, thanks to details like IP locations, to determine that no, it’s probably not you trying to log in from some random location in Asia.

But “they” otherwise frequently have what they would need to get into your account: your username and password. If you re-use these credentials on multiple sites, all it takes is a single security incident at one company to unravel your entire digital life. There often isn’t even any directed intent behind it – automated tools can take that data and just try to use it in as many places as they can to get into your accounts.

Wouldn’t it be handy if there were some *third* detail you could require for your login that couldn’t be duplicated or shared? Even better, what if this third, seemingly magical system could actually entirely replace the obnoxious password process, so you’d never again have to remember which string of timeless security incantations invoke which account?

These are real things. They exist, right now. And you can take advantage of them today.

The easiest (read: cheapest) solution won’t give you that passwordless future I described, but many accounts support what is called “verification code two-factor authentication.” I’ve touched on the subject a few times in the past here at the *Reporter*, but two-factor authentication is as simple as its name: You have a second detail that needs to be entered, alongside your password, when you enter your account credentials.

In the case of verification codes, this is a rotating, seemingly random set of numbers – usually six digits, sometimes more – that a service can send you, or which an app can generate for you. In most cases, getting set up with this system requires signing into your account, navigating to whatever security options are available, looking in the list for “Two-Factor Authentication,” and following the instructions to enable it.

Less secure systems will send you this key over a text message on your phone. I know that sounds like it’s a better solution, but it’s actually pretty dang easy for someone to impersonate you on your cellular provider’s support line to try to redirect your service and intercept these messages. It’s called a “SIM-swap attack,” and it happens frustratingly often. It’s ultimately one of the least secure two-factor options out there, and I recommend avoiding it unless that’s the only option that is offered – in which case, it’s better than nothing!

Email-based codes are slightly better, but the best solution is

to use either a hardware key, a “Passkey,” or an app like Google Authenticator, Microsoft Authenticator, Authy, or other related solutions to store and generate these verification codes for you.

A hardware key is one of the more secure options. If you take your online privacy seriously – or, at least, if you’d like to make bigger steps to do so – consider picking a few up. They come in a wide variety of supported connectors, including Apple’s lightning, USB Type-C and the standard rectangular USB Type-A, and they sometimes offer support for NFC or Bluetooth for wireless use.

Brands like Yubico, Belkin, and Google sell hardware keys, and some offer security-audited designs. Toss at least one in a safe and secure place in case you lose your primary, and stick the other one on your keychain for easy security on the go, and just pop it into a device as needed.

Because of how they work, hardware keys are also strongly resistant against phishing attacks, so if you accidentally fall victim to a scam email and enter your credentials somewhere you shouldn’t, the key can still help keep you safe. (But if that happens, change your passwords! In fact, change them regularly every few years anyway! Please!)

If you buy a hardware key that supports the modern FIDO2 standard, with certain companies you can also take advantage of passwordless authentication. This means you won’t need to use a password to log in – just the key will do. Arguably, this is *slightly* less secure than using multiple login factors, but the convenience makes it much simpler to use. And with convenience so often being the reason we ignore security, every little bit there can help.

Apple and Google have also worked together recently on the Passkey standard, which can offer these same passwordless benefits using just your phone, if you set the system up with the company’s related accounts, and if you have a device that supports the required security. If you’re mostly signing onto your accounts through your phone, this really does make security a snap, and I strongly urge you to set the feature up.

When you start taking ownership of your security and privacy like this, you’ll be a little stunned to realize that some of your most high-value accounts – most banks, for example – don’t support these stronger security systems, despite the fact that many of the standards behind them have existed for over a decade now, and security researchers have frequently proven them to be smart and secure choices for users.

So, if you have an important account that doesn’t support strong two-factor authentication, consider reaching out to the company through social or support channels asking for them to take *your* security, and not just your money, into account.

MOVIE REVIEW

Transformers: Rise of the Beasts (2023)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – On June 11, shortly after it premiered, I saw *Transformers: Rise of the Beasts* at the Garden Cinema in Greenfield. I had seen a prequel that had focused on the Transformers character called Bumblebee and enjoyed it. That movie was named after the Transformer it was centered on.

Rise of the Beasts is a sequel to *Bumblebee*, set seven years later in 1994. It features some cool stuff. One is the Transformers called Maximals, who can turn into animals: a cheetah, rhino, an eagle, and an ape. They have done a good job of creating these on the screen.

The two humans that are centered this time around are a young man named Noah, played by Anthony Ramos, and a character named Elena, played by Dominique Fishback. I guess they decided to keep more or less the same format as the *Bumblebee* movie: the fact that Bumblebee was helped by a human being



the last time around is brought up. The villain this time around is a Galactus-like machine. For you who don’t know that character, it’s a guy that eats planets. So does this machine. A “transwarp key” is also involved in all of this.

Noah gets involved when he tries to steal a certain Porsche, and Elena does because she works at a

museum and tries to investigate an artifact, which turns out to be that key. These two events kind of converge on each other. There is a police chase.

We learned why this Porsche, who’s really a Transformer, is called Mirage. Because of everything going on, the two humans and a group of Transformers must go to Peru. I won’t say how it ends, but I will say that we see some more really cool Transformers in this movie. Some even have human-like faces.

Optimus Prime ends up learning the value of working with humans. Noah, who is good at fixing machines and is an ex-soldier, gets something really cool that works well with those aspects of him. They have never done anything like it in these films. And just like the girl Bumblebee befriended, Noah’s skills in fixing machines come in handy.

Again, I won’t spoil the ending of the film, but after all of this, let’s just say his character and Mirage are definitely going to be friends.

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

- William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
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Montague Reporter at: 177 Avenue A
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or to: poetry@montaguereporter.org

Our June Poetry Page

Trees

What a thing.
The varieties,
the beauty.
Feeding us,
producing oxygen,
providing shelter,
raw materials,
home to so many species.
Essential.
No trees,
no us.

Yet,
all the dendrologists,
all the silvologists,
Theophrastus himself –
none can answer
the most fundamental
question.
Why?

Why?
the question at
the marrow
of everything,
haunts me now.
You were
sustenance,
air,
shelter,
my home.
Gone now.
Why?

I cannot imagine
surviving,
wanting to survive,
a world without trees.

- G. Greene
Greenfield

In my pocket

If I gave you everything
In my pocket, the silver
Watch, the note from
Grandmother, the recipe
For Belgian Bread pudding,
The receipt for the violin
Bow re-hair and the forty-seven
Cents in change would you
Come with me to the
Amusement Park so we could
Watch the children hang
Upside down on the tilt a whirl
Ride and then buy cotton
Candy?
The silver watch is certainly
Worth two orders of cotton
Candy.
The recipe for Belgian bread
Pudding is certainly worth
A roller coaster ride or two.
The violin bow re-hair receipt is
Worth a trip through the
House of mirrors
And the forty-seven cents
Is certainly worth two chili dogs
On a cool Autumn night
Before the end of the world

- W. C. Gosnell
Montague

If I am Still Me

At the end of my time here
And not transformed by tedious comings and goings
Innings and outings
Sundry growth and irritation
I may feel a petty grief at leaving when it is time to go.

I may wince with reluctance to let slip through my dust one trail of love
Which bound me here
To the many I knew
The many I knew I would never
And those I never would

I may pinch together fingers to grip and hurt one last time
for my own living too short for serious undertaking.
When exactly was that potential realized – the one everybody talks about achieving.
(Like I would know if I did)
Too mean to share.

I may stare boldly up above my head in a dare
Who is looking after all?

If I have been transformed, and not still me
I will open my arms and bring those I love along.

- Edna French
Montague

A kite

Points of view had already been chosen.
Temperatures for enthusiasms set.
Spontaneity fissured, experienced, pleated, folded.
Now again there was a rising in her.
This here one was a kite on the beach.
She'd really have to brace herself:
Do a squat almost, push push push herself well into the hell below ground.
Nobody does this anymore.
It's too much work.
(Not a whit of enthusiasm in it let me tell you).
Grip and yank and grab that string and leap and run run run while looking up.
Only in a tease could she rest: loose that grip and let it out:
let it go a bit to surge, and loom and dive.
Maybe it would hit her.
She was up to it but wasn't enough for it.
It was never about the wind stirring up a bit of trouble to be enjoyed.
Maybe this is living. –

- Edna French
Montague

Contributors' Notes

W.C. Gosnell's previous work has appeared in *Soundings East*, *The Portland Review*, *Black River Review*, and others.

G. Greene is the author of *Poems In A Time of Grief*. He lives in Greenfield.

Edna French has lived in New England, and in the town of Montague, for years. Also a photographer, her recent focus has included urban structures imprinted by human nature: "Town Without Pity" and "Town Without Pity (next door)." Professional success includes proposal-writing and research for education, arts, and community health fundraising.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



The Reporter is looking for volunteers to help us curate this listing. Interested? Contact us at editor@montaguereporter.org!

THURSDAY, JUNE 29

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Kathy Sylvester, Austin & Elliott, Small Change*. Free. 6 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Storytelling for Queer & Trans Survival*. NELCWIT benefit. See (Page A3 for more info.) 6 p.m.

Forbes Library, Northampton: Flywheel Arts presents *Christa Joy, OcCult Classic*. Free, outdoors. 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

Nova Arts, Keene: *Faun Fables, Christa Joy & the Honeybees*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Bag Lady, Dance Cancer, Leave It Behind, Unagi*. \$. 8 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Spouse, Bunnies, Deathnave*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, JULY 1

Downtown Turners Falls: Antenna Cloud Farm presents *Music Walk*, feat. *blood drum spirit, Aisha Burns, Lily-Rakia Chandler, Travis LaPlante*, more. Free. 2 p.m.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *Deja Brew Meltdown* feat. *The Humans Being, Rabbit's Foot, Immortal Jellyfish, Whalom Park, The Faith Ann Band, Splash Nebula*. \$. 2 p.m.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Elvis Costello & The Imposters, Nick Lowe & Los Straitjackets*. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Blanket Approval, The Upstairs District, Trouble With Parachutes, The Baxbys*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Judy Collins, Rasa String Quartet*. \$. 8 p.m.

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Sensor Ghost, Perennial, Bubble Scary*. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 2

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Robert Plant, Alison Krauss*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Padded Waltz, Jake Tuvek*, more TBA. \$. 7:30 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 3

Nova Arts, Keene: *Little Wings, Topsy*. \$. 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 6

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Brookside Project, Russ Thomas, Pat and Tex LaMountain with Avery & White*. Free. 6 p.m.

Tree House Brewing Company, South Deerfield: *They Might Be Giants*. \$. 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 7

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Drew Paton*. Free. 6:30 p.m. *Tall Travis*. Free. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 8

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Oozie, Thunderforce, Crowdrider, No Such Thing As Ghosts, DC Wolves, Craetor*. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Rare DM, DJ Gus* (mem. Boy Harsher), *LUCY*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Reverend Horton Heat, The Delta Bombers*. \$. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 9

All Saints Episcopal Church, Hadley: *Yacouba Sissoko*. \$. 3 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Lexi Weege, Nate Martel, Sandy Bailey, Anni Abigail*. \$. 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 13

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Orlen, Gabriel & Avery, Joe Graveline & Nina Gross, The Klines*. Free. 6 p.m.

Steakback Outhouse, Brattleboro: *Lily Konisberg, Greta Keating, Ruth Garbus, beetsblog*. \$. 6 p.m.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *The Lentils, Lina Tullgren*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 14

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Chuck & Biscuits*. Free. 7 p.m.

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Maeve Gilchrist, Kyle Sanna*. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *The Blues Dream Box, Bridge of Flowers, Owen Manure, Push Back*. \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Delicate Steve, Ruth Garbus, Mythless*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hutghi's At The Nook, Westfield: *Lupo Citta, Slant of Light, Bruise Bath, Thee Holy Oaken String Band*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 15

Mt. Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Peaceful Means*. \$. 4 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Lonesome Brothers*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Red Genauer and Assembly of Dust*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pete Bernhard, Eli Elkus, The Green Sisters*. \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Wolfman Jack*. \$. 8 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 17

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Eric Arn, Glenn Jones, Zoots Houston*. \$. 4:30 p.m.

looking forward...

THURSDAY, JULY 20

Montague Village Store, Montague Center: *The Bitter Duo*. Free. 5:30 p.m.

Daily Operation, Easthampton: *Swirlies, Frankie Rose*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 29

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Steph Davis*. \$. 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Sweeping Promises*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25

Nova Arts, Keene: *William Tyler & the Impossible Truth, Garcia Peoples*. \$. 7 p.m.

MONDAY, AUGUST 28

Tree House Brewing, South Deerfield: *Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue*. \$. 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

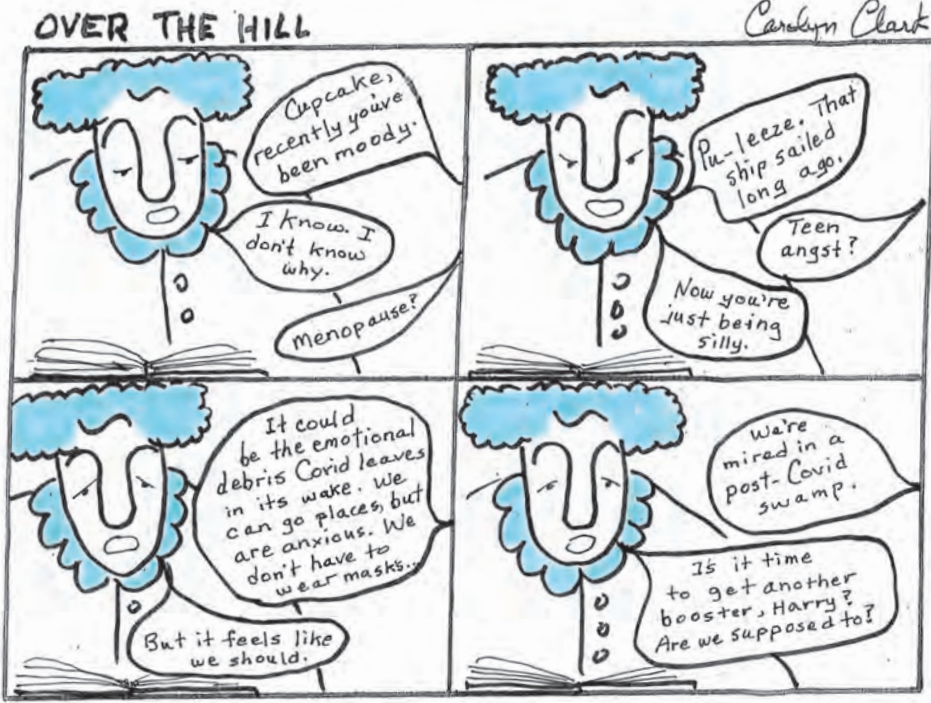
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Cloudbelly & High Tea*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Palladium, Worcester: *Godspeed You! Black Emperor*. \$. 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Henry Rollins, spoken word*. \$. 8 p.m.



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LETTER from page B1
convinced, and purchased one hundred shares of the old Turners Falls Water Power Company's stock.

This was the commencement of the new order of things. He, (Col Crocker,) though then with other large interests demanding all his time, consented to take an interest. The new dam was built, etc., etc.

Why Messrs. Editors, that talk, as a matter of history, was worth a week's time. The Col. throws more information into an hour's talk than any man I ever knew. He saw the Fitchburg and Vermont and Massachusetts Railroads built, the gigantic obstacles to building the Tunnel overcome, the foundation of our embryo city laid, and its future prosperity assured.

The last hour was whiled away in pleasant conversation with "mine hostess" of the Farren House, who knows not only how to control efficiently the interests of the most popular public house in Western Massachusetts, but also to interest in the parlor, or in the travellers home, the cars.

Home at last. What pleasure, what joy in that word. What would this world be worth without a home. It would be like eternity

without a heaven. Loved ones well. Sad news. The youngest son, of our late townsman, S.P. Whitney Esq, just graduated from school, on the morning of Thursday. In the afternoon on the river, the boat overturned and he was drowned. But a step from the height of joy to the depth of sorrow.

Saturday morning came, and, with my companion, I am off to the Golden Wedding of my esteemed friend Henry Robbins, Esq, of Sudbury. What a gathering. New York, Worcester, Providence, Boston, etc., sent representatives. Under those large tents the hundreds gather. What shouts of joy, what merry laughter, what encouraging words, what happy songs.

Fifty years of married life. What changes in those fifty years. Then the old stage coach, and the first mile of railroad was not built. I would like to speak of earth's changes, of golden presents, etc., but my crazy pen must forbear.

Home just in time to say good bye and reach the cars. Riding in the cars to me is never monotonous. The book of human nature is ever open for study. How that fashionable young miss (most all cloth) tries to show the diamonds on her

jewelled fingers. How that pompous young man in serene empty-headedness squirts his tobacco juice on the floor, not forgetting to bespatter the lady's dress, opposite.

How tired and wearied that poor mother looks with her three little children, respectively one, two, and three years old. She was handsome five years ago. But the eye has lost its lustre, the cheeks are hollow, her head aches. The children will not be still. Does she not sigh for her girlhood days again?

O the drouth, the terrible drouth. Corn dead, tobacco wilted, grass dry, woods on fire. Nature with her ten thousand mouths crying, rain, rain. Well it has come. We enter Athol in a splendid shower. How refreshing, how gladsome. The old promise holds true. "Seed time and harvest time shall not fail."

"Greenfield," shouts the conductor, and still it rains, it pours.

"Stage ready for Turners Fall," cries Barnes.

Ten and a half o'clock and my little cozy room is reached. I have not written a title of what I might, and still "I have only run down home and back again."

F. 

* Our correspondent is in error in a matter or two in regard to the historical portion of his letter. At the time of the failure of the Holyoke Water Power Company, Mr. Wendell T. Davis purchased two hundred and four shares of stock held by that Company. Shortly afterwards he interested Mr. Ruggles in the matter, and he in turn interested Colonel Crocker. None can deny that Col. Crocker is the founder of the proposed city, and that his money, energy and brains have been the main spring of its development, and that he has been the unfaltering friend of every enterprise inaugurated here, but Mr. Davis and Mr. Ruggles must still be allowed their share of the credit which is so justly their due, and of which Col. Crocker has no desire to rob them. (Eds., T.F. Reporter.)

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