

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 21 – NO. 38

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1.50

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

**MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD**

## Ellis: Town ‘Hamstrung’ During Patch Emergency

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard responded Monday to public concern about two controversies that arose in August. They removed an article from the fall town meeting warrant to rezone a parcel of land near Turners Falls’ Hill neighborhood for industrial use, and questioned the level of public communication from the regional district attorney’s office following a non-fatal shooting incident in the Patch.

An agenda item titled “Discussion of Public Communication During Emergency Incidents” addressed the August 29 shooting and its aftermath. The police response, with helicopters, armored vehicles,

and officers in SWAT uniforms with assault rifles searching for a suspect, may have created the impression there was a dangerous “active shooter” in the neighborhood.

The police quickly became aware that the incident stemmed from a dispute between two people, and that the alleged perpetrator had escaped into the woods and probably across the Connecticut River, but this information was not relayed to the general public. The suspect was apprehended in Holyoke later that evening.

“We felt more hamstrung than we would have preferred,” said town administrator Steve Ellis. “The message that was communicated see **MONTAGUE** page A7

**LEVERETT SELECTBOARD**

## Health Officials Considering Requiring Wells Tested for PFAS

By GEORGE BRACE

Leverett’s board of health joined the town’s selectboard meeting Tuesday to discuss a proposal to mandate that any wells on properties being transferred or slated for new construction be tested for PFAS chemicals. Among other business, the selectboard also discussed the need to find a new animal control officer.

Board of health (BOH) member Peter Sylvan said that the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) was advising local health boards to recommend testing wells for PFAS – per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – and other toxic compounds. He said Leverett’s BOH was considering requiring such tests on all new construction and property transfers.

According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, while more research is needed, “[s]cientific studies have shown that exposure to some PFAS in the environment may be linked to harmful health effects in humans and animals.”

BOH member Lizzie Alwan said that while MassDEP has not yet finished its study of PFAS contamination in Leverett, the testing thus far “appears” to show a “relatively thin vein” in the groundwater near North Leverett Road. Sylvan added there have also been spotty positive tests elsewhere. “This is a problem that is cropping up in many municipalities across Massachusetts,” Alwan said, “and frankly across the United States.” She added that one contractor recently told her PFAS “is going to be the new asbestos.”

Sylvan said the BOH was thinking of introducing testing and mitigation regulations on new construction and property sales as a “baby step” towards “getting a handle” on the problem. Testing for PFAS, he see **LEVERETT** page A5

**GILL SELECTBOARD**

## State Changes May Undermine Gill’s Electricity Purchase Plans

By KATE SAVAGE

The dominant topic of discussion at Monday’s Gill selectboard meeting was concern over a set of new guidelines proposed by the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU) for town electricity aggregation plans, which could limit the energy options towns could offer their residents.

Purinton said the new guidelines were “ostensibly to help speed up the approval process” for municipal aggregation plans, some of which have been stuck in the process for years. But some of these guidelines seem to conflict with the aggregated rates currently available to Gill residents, which are broadly touted as a success in decreasing energy costs and increasing renewable energy use.

see **GILL** page A4

## KEEPING IT RURAL



“During a heavy rain, the former Cumberland Farms building on the northwest corner of Second and Avenue A went under the demolition ‘axe’ Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m. sharp,” Ed Gregory reports. “Associated Building Wreckers of Springfield are the ‘axe’ men. By noon, the building was a scrap heap. ABW will clear, clean, and leave the property as if the structure was never there.”



Joe R. Parzych braved the rains last week at the Franklin County Fair and shared photos: above, Adam and Florian Jaracz of Sugar Valley Farm in Cummington and Robert Kaczynski, showing sheep; below, the festival’s famous roundhouse, packed to the rafters with prize quilts and vegetables. “I had an awesome time,” Parzych reports. “I had apple pie, a root beer float, and other food, I got to listen to music while I was there, and I saw my friends.” (See more on Page A6!)

## Sewage Data Shows Virus’s Steady Return; Spike in Athol

By SARAH ROBERTSON

**ATHOL** – Sewage samples taken at Athol’s wastewater treatment plant late last month showed the highest average concentration of COVID-19 viruses, by far, of any facility in the state. The spike coincided with a steady rise in levels of the virus detected in wastewater across the country over the last three months.

“Athol waste water data for COVID surveillance shows an increasing trend in town,” the Athol board of health posted on Facebook on August 29. “Many people are picking up COVID tests stating they have had an exposure to someone COVID positive. School is back in session and Labor Day weekend is upon us!”

In the week preceding the board of health’s warning, an average of 7,636 “copies” of the virus were detected per milliliter (ml) of sewage entering the Athol treatment plant, according to data published by the state Department of Public Health (DPH). At that time, the average estimated concentration in the northeastern United States was 689 copies/ml of sewage.

“[W]astewater data can provide an early warning about increasing cases since virus will show up in wastewater several days, maybe even a week, before positive see **RETURN** page A5

## Three Years Into Joint-Policing Arrangement, Leverett, Wendell Hash Out Terms

By JEFF SINGLETON

“The Leverett police have worked hard to get to know Wendell and its residents,” Wendell town clerk Anna Wetherby, who also serves as a “community representative” on a joint police services advisory committee, told the Reporter. “They have been in town, not just for policing situations, but to attend Old Home Day and other events.”

An amended intermunicipal agreement (IMA) between the towns of Leverett and Wendell, under which the former provides policing services to the latter, was approved by the Leverett selectboard on Tuesday, and will likely go before Wendell’s board at its scheduled September 20 meeting.

The collaboration itself has been underway for nearly three years, and originated in the impending retirement of longtime Wendell police chief Ed Chase. According to Leverett police chief Scott Minckler, in 2018 Wendell began investigating potential arrangements with adjoining towns – particularly New Salem, with which it already shared a fire chief.

But the New Salem police chief was also close to retirement, so Wendell looked for a more stable option. A “police succession committee” was formed, on which Wetherby and former Wendell selectboard member Dan Keller served.

see **POLICE** page A6

## High School Sports Week: Rained Out

By MATT ROBINSON



The Thunder’s Taylor Greene sends the ball over the net against Eagle defenders Haleigh Benoit and Lea Chapman as Turners swept Franklin Tech 3–0 last week.

**TURNERS FALLS** – This week the scorching heat gave way to massive flooding across the region, canceling or postponing outdoor games and matches.

Franklin Tech managed to get in one field hockey game, beating the Hampshire Regional Red Raiders by seven goals. Turners also snuck one in, but lost to the Bombers from Westfield.

Although Turners boys have yet to have a soccer match, the Franklin Tech soccer team has played twice, winning their latest game by a single goal. The Turners Falls volleyball team did not need to postpone any matches, as they play inside. The Blue Thunder routed Athol and Easthampton this week before see **SPORTS** page A8

### How Much Independent Community Journalism Can You Take?

Regrouping at the Stash House.....A2	Flotsam Query Answered.....B1	Montague Police Log Highlights.....B3
Letter: The Case for the Lot, at Last.....A2	Valley View: Seasonal Visitations.....B1	Keepers of the Flame Offer Reading.....B3
Local Briefs.....A3	Garden Landscapes Teem With Tension.....B1	The Motion of Light in Vodka.....B4
Op/Ed: Blackpilled on Pond Plants.....A3	Context Key to Apple Selection.....B1	September’s Poet: Michael Lally.....B6
Patrons Grilled on Vinyl Hauls.....A4	Our Sick Canary Surfs the Waves.....B2	Arts & Entertainment Listing.....B7
10, 20, and 150 Years Ago.....A6	Movie Review: One Lucky Break.....B2	Three Comics and a Puzzle.....B7
Faces: Cattle Call After the Washout.....A6	Gallery Listings.....B3	Ephemeral Review: Garbus In, Garbus Out?.....B8



# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

## Editorial Staff

Mike Jackson, *Managing Editor*  
Nina Rossi, *Features Editor*  
Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, *Poetry Page*  
Victoria Maillo, *Spanish Page*  
Beverly Ketch, *Children's Page*  
Spencer Shorkey, *Science Page*  
Maggie Sadoway, *Editorial Assistant*

## Production Staff

Garth Shaneyfelt, *Business Manager*  
Lyn Clark, *Distribution Manager*  
Jae Southerland, *Layout & Subscriptions*  
Charlotte Kohlmann, *Layout*  
Christopher Carmody, *Layout & Images*  
Sarah Brown-Anson, *Podcast Producer*  
Brian Faldasz, *Technical Administration*

**Founded by**  
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold  
August 2002

## Not Even Looking

We were certainly warned, for whatever it's worth, as we fly on together into a future clouded by breakdown and disaster.

*Massachusetts City Declares Emergency After Flash Flooding*, the *New York Times* headline blared – that's Leominster, just up the road from us, after seeing 9.5 inches of rain in a single day on Monday – the street were rivers, there was fear a dam would give way, the state was sending three thousand sandbags....

And then the online headline changed: *Massachusetts Cities Declare Emergency*.... North Attleborough, it turned out, was also having a bad day.

Nothing compared to Derna, a city on the coast of Libya, larger than Leominster and smaller than Worcester, and downstream the same day from a dam that did burst. Click the little link to learn more *The Unimaginable Has Happened in Libya*, a *Times* guest columnist explains under an eye-grabbing banner ad for *Beetlejuice: The Musical* (GET THE BEST SEATS TO BEETLEJUICE).

"By dawn, a third of the city was gone..." As of our own press time, the best guesses are 8,000 dead and another 10,000 missing. You have to inspect the culverts, you have to repair the dams, every once in a while you have to drain the canals and poke around and properly inspect their eroding walls.

In Libya, of course, this perpetual work of maintenance and infrastructure was scooted over onto the back burner by the US- and NATO-backed ouster of developmentalist strongman Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. Rebels removed him from a drainage pipe and did terrible things to him before killing him with their guns in the street, and for nearly a decade after the country was riven by rival warlords.

Failed states add energy to the impact of storms, but they have nothing on warming seas. The first hurricane in a long lifetime to hit the West Coast was a bust in California, though not in Baja California, and the moisture it brought inland contributed to last week's can't-look-away spectacle of the desert playa itself malfunctioning under this year's Burning Man festival. A little rain at the wrong time of year can go a long way, it turns out, and none of the creativity and DIY tech featured at the post-apocalypse-themed party stood up to a two- or three-day taste of actual apocalypse.

When It Happens Here, whatever It is and whenever it Happens, we're heartened by the fact that most of our neighbors are kind-hearted and cooperative – at least on principle. But more and more clues indicate that even here, the vibe is slowly rotting.

Exhibit A: Late at night, last week, standing outside the laundromat in Turners Falls waiting for clothes to dry. The street is empty, hushed enough to hear the skeletons of bugs as they bounce off the streetlights. Enter a gleaming black pickup truck – its clean black tires have articulated muscles and its extra-wide tailpipe roars – the truck slows as the driver, spotting the village's single visible resident, bellows "F— YOU!" out his open window before ripping ahead up Unity Street to the Hill.

Exhibit B: This weekend, crossing the Avenue from Peskeompskut Park during the farmers market, talking with a neighbor who is walking a bike: A car approaches and is not slowing. The pedestrians take a determined step, not into the vehicle's line of travel, but enough to assert the legal right-of-way. Finally the car stops, then pulls up alongside the pedestrians still in the crosswalk to scream, "YOU WEREN'T EVEN LOOKING! I REALLY SHOULD HAVE HIT YOU!"

Those of us who live downtown can feel this ambient hostility, and it's not coming from inside the neighborhood. Living in one of America's most miniature cities we get to bear the brunt of a certain number of nearby bozos' anti-urban worldviews. It's subtle, but it's there – and it suddenly seems to be oozing out of the ground.

Culture war, COVID, and climate change. The rising din of next year's federal election. Spending down the last bits of a wave of federal investment unprecedented in most of our living memories. Inflation, and all the tall tales and fables people tell about inflation. Not enough people willing to work the jobs, not enough jobs that can cover the spiralling cost of housing. And, yes, a large number of our neighbors and relatives completely trapped in social-media halls of mirrors.

The floodwaters will wash through, and when they do, we will find out who is capable and interested in cooperation. And we will find out that some people aren't. In the meantime, what is there to do about it?

NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



David Lewis and Marlene Lavelle – holding shop cat Pockets – flank owner Kathryn Swanson at a recent Tuesday morning staff breakfast at the Stash House. Visitor Judith Maloney, seated, contemplates learning the ins and outs of a Bernina sewing machine.

Swanson recently closed her 106 Avenue A shop and has combined inventory and staff at the larger 320 Avenue A location. She describes the Stash House as a "YMCA of sewing machines" and says the business is encouraging "sewing fellowship," as well as offering affordable fabrics, notions, yarns, patterns, and classes and workshops to the public.

## Letter to the Editors

### Lot Takes Advantage of Suitable Land

Mr. Naughton seems way too cavalier in dismissing the rezoning of the Turnpike lot, for several reasons.

We're over a million dollars under our statutory maximum tax rate? That respects what our taxpayers can afford. Taxing towards our maximum would be bad policy.

Many of our smaller businesses are already under strain from the dual tax structure, which takes advantage of our largest taxpayer's very profitable enterprise. I'm sure they would resent it if Mr. Naughton walked in with his larger bill, especially when there's an alternative at hand.

It's not a permanent solution, but one of many we need to take, year over year, to be the better town we want to be. There is a shortage of suitable land, and we have to take advantage of what little we do have.

Secondly, you don't get to solvency in one giant leap; it's the result of slow and steady progress. That  $\pm 1.1\%$  he's so eager to forgo, as trivial, is almost exactly the amount of this year's tax increase. Rezoning the parcel results in that kind of annual recurring revenue. Saying it's not needed is rather a *la de dah* attitude towards spending our citizens' money.

Thirdly, this parcel is at the junction of two of our busier roads, and adjacent to two cemeteries, our public safety center, and our public works garage. Any structure would be well off the street. I'm not seeing the harm. The rezoning fits the current uses pretty well.

So what is he really saying? This is just NIMBY, with a superficially plausible, but factually wrong wrapper to gussy it all up. (While a member of MEDIC, I'm writing this in a personal, not official, capacity.)

Robert J. Steinberg  
Montague

## CORRECTIONS

Last week's article on the Expandable Brass Band (Page B1, *An Ever-Expanding HONK!*) contained two factual errors: the year the band started was 2010, not 2009, and Sandy Ward's trumpet-playing husband's name is Ken Harstine, not Ken Karsten. We apologize for the errors!

We also need to set the record straight about one thing from our August 24 coverage of Wendell's recently terminated container redemption program (Page A1, *Wendell Debates Fate of Redeemables*). Summarizing a resident's comments at a highway commission meeting, we wrote that the Good Neighbors food pan-

try "is funded by grants to buy food from the Western Mass Food Bank."

Nancy Graton, longtime director of Good Neighbors, called to let us know this wasn't correct. "The food that we get from them is all free," she clarified. "For foods that are refrigerated or frozen, we pay a 'maintenance fee' of 19 cents a pound, to help them keep the food fresh."

We appreciate the clarification – with the loss of donation revenue from the redeemables, Good Neighbors may be able to acquire less food from the food bank, but it isn't technically a purchase.

### Published weekly on Thursdays.

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

PHONE: (413) 863-8666

#### EMAIL:

editor@montaguereporter.org  
features@montaguereporter.org  
ads@montaguereporter.org  
bills@montaguereporter.org  
circulation@montaguereporter.org  
events@montaguereporter.org  
poetry@montaguereporter.org  
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org

Send address changes to:

The Montague Reporter  
177 Avenue A  
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Advertising and copy deadline is  
**MONDAY at NOON.**

This newspaper shall not be liable for errors in advertisements, but will print without charge that part of the advertisement in which an error occurred. The publishers reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason and to alter copy or graphics to conform to standards of the newspaper, such as they are.

#### Annual Subscription Rate:

\$40 for walking subscriptions;  
\$50 for driving route subscriptions;  
\$75 for mailed subscriptions;  
\$40 to \$75 for digital subscriptions.

Call us or contact  
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org  
with any questions.

**WE WELCOME  
YOUR LETTERS!**

ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE  
LIMIT 4 PER YEAR

Montague Reporter  
177 Avenue A  
Turners Falls, MA 01376

editor@  
montaguereporter.org

### Sign Me Up!

\$20 { 6 months (23 issues) for our walking routes  
4½ months (18 issues) for our driving routes  
3 months (12 issues) for mailed subscriptions

**The Montague Reporter**

177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email (optional): \_\_\_\_\_



Compiled by NINA ROSSI

This year's *Montague Reporter* wrapping paper design contest netted 55 submissions from 34 artists! We appreciate the enthusiasm for this project, and we'll be highlighting the chosen artists over the coming weeks.

If you are a business owner who is interested in selling copies of our 2023 Wrapping Paper edition between Thanksgiving and New Year's, please contact [garth@montaguereporter.org](mailto:garth@montaguereporter.org).

Tonight, Thursday, September 14, there's a meeting of the **Lake Pleasant Tea and Crumpet Society** from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Thompson Temple in Lake Pleasant.

This event is an open mic, "primarily for artists and craftists and photographers and writers and readers of prose and poetry," according to David James, the contact person for the group. For more information, contact [djames3@valinet.com](mailto:djames3@valinet.com). The public is welcome.

Inspired by the Greenfield Public Library's announcement that they are giving away copies of the Constitution this Saturday, September 16, the LAVA Center will do a **participatory reading of the Constitution**. All are welcome to bring their own copies and help read the document aloud or listen as others read, and there will be extra copies on hand to share. Following the reading there will be a discussion, so bring your questions, comments, and concerns. There will also be an opportunity to record your thoughts about our country's foundational document in a story booth.

LAVA opens at noon; the reading will begin at 12:30 p.m. and is expected to take up to an hour, followed by the discussion and story booth recording. This event is free.

Craving an **adventure in the microcosmos**? Fold your way into

it – make your own Foldscope at a workshop this Sunday, September 17 at 10:30 a.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center! Learn how to make and use this origami microscope with ornithologist Ezekiel "Zeke" Jakob, co-founder of the non-profit Conservacion Panama.

Observe tiny parts of our world up close, and get an introduction to scientific methods and conservation. The workshop, for children and families ages nine and up, is free, but registration is required. Call (413) 863-3221 to sign up.

The **Wendell Energy Committee** is hosting a community gathering in the Wendell Free Library's Herrick Room next Tuesday, September 19 at 7 p.m. Get information on fuel assistance, solar energy, heat pumps, and the Wendell wood bank, and join a discussion on Wendell's energy future including New Leaf's proposed multi-lithium ion battery storage project. All are welcome; snacks will be provided, and conversation encouraged.

The **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** of Western Massachusetts offers a free, nine-session program for family, significant others, and friends of people with mental health conditions. The programs include discussions, presentations, and interactive exercises. The first one is next Tuesday, September 19, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in Greenfield.

Pre-registration is required; contact [suesharbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:suesharbaugh@gmail.com) or visit [namiwm.org/support](http://namiwm.org/support).

The ArtsHub of Western Mass presents a **workshop for the creative community** on Saturday, September 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Bombyx Center for Arts and Equity in Florence. There will be speakers, workshops, and listening sessions designed to connect the creative community.

Register by September 18; the cost is \$30 plus a fee, and includes coffee, snacks, and lunch from Masa Mexicano. Artist Nayana Lafond, known for her portrait series of *Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls*, will lead the afternoon session on the topic of "How we can work together so our work and time is valued and recognized as the core of the creative economy."

Information and registration are available at [artshubwma.org](http://artshubwma.org).

The third annual **LAVA Film Festival** takes place next Friday and Saturday, September 22 and 23. This showcase of Massachusetts filmmaking talent, from students to professionals, kicks off at 5 p.m. Friday with a reception with the filmmakers, followed by screenings that evening and all day Saturday.

For more details, go to [thelavacenter.org](http://thelavacenter.org). Sliding scale tickets will be available at the door; a limited number of weekend passes will be available for pre-order.

There'll be plenty of Volkswagens and Audis in Turners Falls during the **Northeast Unity Auto Show** next Sunday, September 24. First Street will be closed for the day to accommodate the event which is centered around Nova Motorcycles.

"We're VW kids at heart," they write, "so this is a car show for all VAG (Volkswagen/Audi) cars of any vintage. We also just love to see rad stuff, so if you've got some cool vintage JDM or other Euro hiding in a barn, send us a message! Non-VAG cars will be accepted on a case by case basis. More of a 2-wheel person? Bring your Euro or vintage bikes out and park up at Nova Motorcycles!"

The cost is \$25 for a car and driver, and spectators are free. The event starts at 10 a.m. with a 40-minute scenic cruise, starting at the Food City parking lot and ending at Sadie's Bikes on Canal Street. ("Don't drive like a dick!," warn the organizers.) There's an informal "hang" at Sadie's at 5 p.m. with treats from Nice.Ice Snack Parlor, and then a concert with Jimmy Just Quit behind the Pioneer Valley Brewery.

To register or for more information, visit [northeastunity.com](http://northeastunity.com).

**Looking for a pet?** The Dakin Humane Society is reducing

adoption fees for all animals by 50% all September as part of its "Summer of Love" adoption event. Cats, dogs, and a variety of other animals including guinea pigs, rabbits, ferrets, hamsters, birds, mice, gerbils, rats, and more are up for adoption. Dakin states they placed 592 kittens this summer – up 60% from last year – and lots of pets are still looking for placement.

Dakin is in Springfield, and is open to visitors Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m. Folks are advised to visit [dakinhumane.org](http://dakinhumane.org) before visiting to see which animals they are most interested in. You may also apply to adopt pets online.

We have received several notifications about the next round of **local cultural council grants**. The Wendell, Gill, and Montague cultural councils are spreading the news that the 2024 cycle has begun for local art, cultural, science, and humanities projects. These grants can be applied to for exhibits, festivals, field trips, performances, short-term artist residencies, workshops, lectures, and more.

**October 17 is the deadline.** You can find out more from Montague's council at [culturalcouncil@montague-ma.gov](mailto:culturalcouncil@montague-ma.gov). Wendell's cultural council invites applicants to contact Phyllis Lawrence at [phyl.lawrence1@gmail.com](mailto:phyl.lawrence1@gmail.com), and Gill's gives [lcc@gillmass.org](mailto:lcc@gillmass.org) as a contact for questions.

The North Quabbin **Garlic and Arts Festival** celebrates Year 25 of its family-friendly "festival that stinks" on September 30 and October 1 in Orange. Garlic and Arts is renowned for its art vendors, local farm products, fabulous food, endless entertainment, and inspiration for a hopeful future.

Schedules of entertainment, activities, and exhibitors are online at [garlicandarts.org](http://garlicandarts.org), as is travel, parking, and shuttle information. There's a half-price anniversary special \$5 admission charge; kids 12 and under and EBT, WIC, and ConnectCare households have free admission. Note that there is no ATM on site; bring a water bottle for free water refills and a bag to carry your shopping in.

Send your local briefs to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).

**Montague Center Congregational Church**

4 North Street, Montague  
(413) 367-9467

**Sunday School**

Pre-K through 5th Grade

Worship & Sunday School 10 a.m.  
followed by Coffee Hour 11 a.m.

Best Practices for child security will be followed.

Also see our website:  
[www.montaguechurch.org](http://www.montaguechurch.org)

Newcomers Welcome!

**WENDELL COUNTRY STORE**

"It's just a stone's throw from reality."  
Groceries - Videos - Home Baked Goods  
Beer - Wine - Liquor  
**MON - SAT 7-9, SUNDAY 8-8**  
978-544-8646  
Lockes Village Rd.  
1/2 mile south of Wendell Center

**VILLAGE-WIDE TAG SALE**  
**+ Pie Auction!**

**Saturday, 9/23**  
**9 am - 1 pm\***

**Rutters Park**  
**Lake Pleasant**

\*Pie Auction @ 1 pm  
**Fundraiser for**  
**The Bridge of Names**  
Rain Date 9/30

OP ED

**Giving Up the Fight for Leverett Pond Wildlife**

By MACAYLLA SILVER

**LEVERETT** – A few years ago I made a small pond. No more than three feet deep, no wider in radius than twelve feet across. I did it for joy, for its beauty. Yet it would also be a laboratory. Like a garden, I would try to control what would take place in this little world that sits in the sun in my small backyard.

I put in Water Lilies. I put in oxygenating aquatic plants, some native, some that I had found attached to my canoe one summer. No matter, as all of them thrived. Frogs came, and Toads came, and they laid hundreds of eggs that turned into tadpoles.

Insects came. Dragonflies, Damselflies, and unfortunate Mosquitoes, whose efforts to breed were met with hungry tadpoles and flying birds. Birds came even to this small pond, not Herons, but Phoebe, Swallows and high in the air, Swifts.

This year I looked out in high summer and felt that the Water Lilies had taken up too much space on the water's surface. That the submergent plants had also grown too fully

and that anywhere in the pond I could pull up buckets of them. I thought: Maybe next year I will remove some of the Water Lilies. Yet I knew the submergent plants would be harder to remove. Most grow from vegetative fragmentation. Any bits of the plant will and do break off to form other plants. Always.

It hit me that I would, if I wished to remove them, drain the entire pond, clean it, remove any silt from the bottom, and be very careful about any Water Lilies that I wished to put back in. I could do that. It would take a lot of effort and time.

I could do that... because it is my pond, and it is only twelve feet around, and only three feet deep. It could be done, even if it kills all the living things in the pond. Kill the things you can see, the many forms of life you cannot. Nature would return again. Even in this little pond in my own backyard.

I have spent four years fighting a small group of landowners in the Cider Mill Road area of our "Great Pond," a 90-acre pond connected to known tracts of wetland. A pond that was increased, nearly a century ago, by a

dam flooding shallow areas of deep soil from forests and marshes. An area that today still has large tracts of surrounding woodlands, so water trickles in full of nutrients to continue the growth and life of the pond.

Those who loved the pond as a pond are in the envious position of living in the areas where the pond is always clear and lake-like. Areas untouched by anything other than nature's balance.

I thought of my own pond. Then I thought of the waterfronts in front of the Cider Mill Road. People there are so willing year after year to "manage" nature. To remove, with poisons or machines, a few acres – often cut like checker boards – of what they describe as "too many plants in the water." Year after year they campaign, but year after year...

Nothing changes. And it never will. I have given up the fight. Because Nature will win without my efforts. The sun, the shallow area less than five feet deep, the flowing nutrients... will always keep the battleground on which they wish to fight filled with plants, filled with life. Even when they

try to kill it. They may spend their whole remaining lives doing so.

Even if they ignored all the laws, spent many millions of dollars, drained the pond as much as they could for years, dredged the soil and muck from the areas they wished, Nature would still return. Nothing would change.

It is a terrible thing when you invest in an idea because you think it will correct a mistake. You campaign for an idea that you hope will correct it, asking for support and money as a charity... to correct your mistake.

The mistake? Buying land in front of a stagnant, shallow, plant-filled section of pond and wishing it was going to be a crystal clear waterfront is a mistake. An expensive mistake, yes. But as the years go by, and all efforts continue to fail... they could have learned to love the natural landscape that bloomed every year in front of them. They could have let Nature be Nature.

They could have let a pond be a pond.

Macaylla Silver lives in Leverett.

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

**ED L.** Dealer in used Home Furnishings

SMALL FURNITURE • COLLECTIBLES • DECORATIVES

**374 Deerfield Street • Greenfield**  
Featuring: Lamps Mirrors Chairs Baskets

Call (413) 834 - 3128 TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

MASK REQUIRED • EXCLUSIVE SHOPPING!

**BOOK MILL**  
440 Greenfield Rd.  
Montague, MA 01351

413-367-9206 [www.montaguebookmill.com](http://www.montaguebookmill.com)

Books you don't need in a place you can't find.

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

413.863.5394 - Office  
413.775.3327 - Cell  
[frankd\\_74@yahoo.com](mailto:frankd_74@yahoo.com)

**RECYCLE**

**BOTTLES & CANS**  
Week of September 18  
in Montague



more info? call: 863-2054

**WE DIG FRANKLIN COUNTY**

- Loam
- Gravel
- Sand
- Natural Stone



**(413) 774-1285**

**GREENFIELD FARMERS COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE**  
Locally Owned Since 1918

269 High Street - Greenfield  
(413) 773-9639


**Local Farmer-Owned**

Products for the home,  
farm, pets, yard & garden

If you  
Feed it - Seed it - Weed it  
We GOT it!


www.greenfieldfarmerscoop.com

**NANCY L. DOLE BOOKS & EPHEMERA**




20 State Street, Bucklandside  
Shelburne Falls  
413-625-9850  
ndole@crocker.com

OPEN three days a week  
Tues, Weds, Thurs - 11 to 6  
(also by chance or appt.)



**THE LADY KILLIGREW:**

Awesome Beer  
Amazing Food



Awesome, Amazing  
Employees!

440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA  
7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least)  
(413)367-9666

## DISPATCH FROM THE CULTURE MINES

photos and interviews by MIKE JACKSON



Larry, New Hampshire

Thin Lizzy,  
*Chinatown* (1980)

Pearls Before Swine,  
*The Use of Ashes* (1970)

Donald Fagen,  
*The Nightfly* (1982)

Fairport Convention,  
*Unhalfbricking* (1969)

Mahavishnu Orchestra,  
*Birds of Fire* (1973)

Cro-Mags,  
*Best Wishes* (1989)

"I got the Cro-Mags because that's one of the best covers of all time. I've been looking for this Fairport Convention for forever - same with the Pearls Before Swine - and I found them both immediately."

Beverly,  
Turners Falls

Sade,  
*Diamond Life*  
(1984)

"Because I love Sade, and I don't have this one!"



Turners Falls' second record store, the Music Connection, opened this week just a couple doors down from our office. We asked a few customers what they made off with...



Julia, Turners Falls

Ahmad Jamal Trio,  
*At the Pershing:  
But Not For Me* (1958)

Beach Boys,  
*Endless Summer* (1974)

Van Morrison,  
*Moondance* (1970)

Talking Heads,  
*Sand in the Vaseline: Popular  
Favorites 1976-1992* (1992)

"I got this Ahmad Jamal - he died last year. And then tapes for my car... This Talking Heads compilation has 'Sugar On My Tongue' on it, it's a really good song. And that's it - I was very conservative."

Brendan (DJ Andujar),  
Greenfield

Skah Shah #1,  
*This Is It* (1981)

Skah Shah #1,  
*Ensem'm Ensem'm* (1992)  
& approx. 15 more

"International stuff is the big thing for me. This is a Haitian band right here. You just want one picture? I've got some Ramsey Lewis here, some Grace Jones.... some Gil Scott-Heron.... I don't buy records too much anymore, so I figured I'd support the new spot."



### GILL from page A1

DPU's new guidelines would limit aggregation plans to two options, with the default being the equivalent of "basic service." Gill's current plan has three options, all offering a higher proportion of renewable energy than basic service.

Gill's default plan includes 25% more renewable energy than basic service, and residents can choose to upgrade to a 100% renewable energy plan or choose a cheaper plan that only adds 5% more renewable energy. They can also opt out of the aggregation plan completely and continue as individual electricity customers.

"I don't know that DPU should be dictating it," said town administrator Ray Purington. "It's our program. Let us run it."

"Especially if it goes through town meeting," added selectboard chair Randy Crochier. "Wouldn't town meeting be the one to make that decision?"

"To be on the DPU's side, it is just a guideline right now," explained energy commission member Claire Chang. "It's not a regulation set in stone. But guidelines tend to move in that direction, and so I'd rather have it written well as opposed to loopy."

Chang noted that residents would likely use less renewable energy under the new guidelines. "In order to get more renewable energy, you have to physically opt in," she said, "so it dissuades a large portion of the population from acting." Additionally, if Gill were required to remove one of its options, it would likely drop the 100% renewable energy plan, since

it has the fewest users.

"I'd prefer to leave it alone and just do what we're doing, because it seems to be working," summarized Crochier. "We spent a lot of time discussing what we should use and why."

"I don't really like the idea of DPU telling us what has to be our default option," added Purington.

Asked why she thought DPU was creating these specific guidelines, Chang paused and asked with a chuckle: "You want me to say it publicly?"

"Because the utility's telling them to," chimed in Crochier.

"[The utilities] offer basic service," said Chang. "And what's happening is that many municipalities are realizing that this is an opportunity for them to aggregate the community together and lower everybody's electricity rates, across the board, and the utilities don't like that."

Purington said that Colonial Power Group, the consultant that helps local towns secure their aggregation plans, will provide an analysis of the new guidelines before an October 6 deadline for comment, along with suggested wording that towns can use in submitting letters to DPU.

### Bittersweet Cemetery

Cemetery commission chair Joan Pillsbury informed the selectboard that work was beginning soon to remove invasive Asiatic bittersweet from the grounds at the Center Cemetery.

"It's very invasive, and it's taking over," Pillsbury said of bittersweet.

"It's coming over, and it's hard to control. With the weed-whackers that they go around the gravestones with, it gets tangled up, and it's just a terrible mess."

Following a plan set out by certified ecological restoration practitioner (and Gill resident) Christopher Polatin, the commission will pay \$2,200 to Matthew Verson Vegetation Management to cut back the vines and apply a triclopyr-based herbicide to the stumps. Polatin's plan recommends herbicides "labeled for use in wetland buffer areas such as the cemetery project area."

Over the next two years, the cemetery commission plans to spend an additional \$2,150 to spray bitter-sweet with herbicide. The commission will pay for the first year of work, Pillsbury said, with the hope that town meeting will later vote to backfill what is spent this fall, as cemetery commission funding is non-recurring.

### Other Business

Gill was awarded an Assistance to Firefighters Grant of \$26,095.23. The selectboard approved a required 5% town match of \$1,304.77. The amount will be used for special nozzles, thermal imaging cameras, gas detectors, and battery-powered vent fans.

Chris Polatin resigned from the conservation commission, after roughly ten years of service. "He's always been very helpful to me when I've reached out to him," said Crochier. "He is a wealth of knowledge."

The board expressed hope that

Polatin would continue to be involved as a non-voting associate member in the future, once the conservation commission figures out the details of that role.

To fill the vacancy, Brian Donahue was appointed as a member through June 2025. "He brings 15 years of con com experience from a previous town," said Purington.

"Somebody else with a wealth of information and knowledge, that's great!" said Crochier. "Say yes quick before he changes his mind!"

Purington announced a number of upcoming events, including a hazardous waste collection day on Saturday, September 23, a square dance hosted by the recreation committee from 7 to 10 p.m. that same night at the town hall, and the Gill Fall Harvest Festival from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, September 24 on the town common.

As the meeting concluded, Crochier took a moment to remember Robert Hunter, who passed away on August 30.

"Bob was a long-time Gill resident and a 30-year member of our police department on a part-time basis," Crochier said. "He did a lot for the town in many ways, not just the police department. One service that he provided that most people don't even think about was the fact that he was available at 2:30 in the morning when somebody hit a telephone pole, or a tree, and you needed a detail real quick. He would get out of bed in the middle of the night and go help."

"I think the town lost a lot, and I just wanted to make mention of it."


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

**French King**  
Restaurant & Motel

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH  
FRIDAY - 8 A.M. TO 2 P.M.  
SATURDAY & SUNDAY - 7 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

DINNER  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY - 4:30 TO 9:30 P.M.

CALL TO CONFIRM: (413) 423-3328



**Fred Holmgren**  
Piano Tuning & Repair

Stay  
tuned!

(978)544-5494  
fredholmgren@gmail.com



**Pipione's**  
SPORT SHOP

- Fishing supplies; Live bait
- Fishing & Hunting Licenses
- Paintball & CO<sub>2</sub> Refills
- Guns & Ammo

Open 7 am 7 days a week  
101 Ave A, Turners 414.863.4246



**RETURN** from page A1

test numbers start to increase,” the DPH states on its “COVID-19 Wastewater Report” website.

The Athol board of health agent was on vacation this week and was unable to provide comment to the *Reporter* as of press time. Athol’s town manager did not return a request for comment on Wednesday afternoon.

Last week the city of Greenfield increased the COVID-19 risk level from “low” to “moderate,” and then to “high,” which means the city is now officially recommending masking in public spaces. This status is recommended by the Valley Health Regional Collaborative, an initiative that includes Greenfield, Montague, Deerfield, Sunderland, Shutesbury, and Leverett.

The “high” risk status indicates that more than five “cluster events” have been reported of people in the area contracting the virus, and that more than 10% of test results reported are positive, according to Megan Tudryn, a public health nurse for the Greenfield health department and a member of the Regional Collaborative.

It also reflects an upward trend in the number of reported cases – and of measured wastewater concentrations, aggregated from testing in Greenfield, Montague, South Deerfield, and Sunderland.

Though the earlier four-town Contact Tracing Collaborative is no longer in operation, some public health nurses from the Regional Collaborative are still reaching out to COVID-positive patients in the area.

“We don’t follow up with at-home tests unless a patient calls us for guidance, because there’s no way of knowing who tests positive on at-home tests,” Tudryn said in an email. “We answer any questions they may have, let them know about Paxlovid and how to get it, offer free tests for their families, etc.”

**Numbers Crunch**

Last Friday, data provided by the Regional Collaborative and posted on the Greenfield city website indicated that the local wastewater concentration of the virus had risen from 464.9 copies/ml to 920.1 copies/ml during the previous week.

This calculation does not appear to be based on publicly available data. The Regional Collaborative

does not have a website of its own, and the Greenfield, Montague, and Deerfield sites refer users to the DPH wastewater dashboard. As of press time the most recent figures there are 441 copies/ml in Greenfield (September 1), 123 copies/ml in Sunderland (August 30), and undetectable amounts in South Deerfield (August 28) and Montague (August 21).

Lab manager Noah Diamond, who collects the untreated sewage samples at the Montague Clean Water Facility (CWF), confirmed that virus concentrations there have been rising. “I’m unsure as to why August 21 is the most recent sample listed,” Diamond wrote in an email. “There’s most likely a lag in samples being delivered and samples being reported, but we don’t have anything to do with posting results.”

“Occasionally Montague has staffing issues and they miss a collection day,” said Tudryn. “We’re working with the state to get autosamplers installed to help with this.”

A Montague sample also measured an anomalously high of 3,788 copies/ml in mid-July. At the time, this was the highest concentration reported in the state – but it was 26 times higher than a sample taken two weeks earlier, and fell by more than 99% a week later.

“We believe some of our data is skewed because we take in regional septage, where Greenfield only takes in-town septage,” CWF superintendent Chelsey Little told the *Reporter*. “We could have someone’s septic tank that has been sitting around and collecting RNA COVID all year get pumped and unloaded at our plant, and now there’s a concentrated sample instead of a normal daily sewage sample.”

Unlike Montague’s single-day spike, Athol’s sewage in the last week of August produced five points in a row on the DPH dashboard that exceeded any other concentration in the state during the last three months.

**Lines Go Up**

Data is collected at nearly 40 wastewater plants to get a sense of the community spread of the virus. The samples are tested by Biobot Analytics, Inc., a wastewater epidemiology company based in Cambridge, and DPH updates its dashboard using data from Biobot.

Founded by a doctoral student at MIT, Biobot currently contracted by

the federal government’s National Wastewater Surveillance System to analyze COVID-19 data nationwide.

Tudryn forwarded the *Reporter* a file from the company, which shares its data “non-commercially,” showing DPH’s current figure for Greenfield is the average of two samples from August 30 and September 1. Two newer samples, from September 6 and 8, averaged 763 copies/ml.

The company publishes charts at [biobot.io/data/covid-19](http://biobot.io/data/covid-19), but they are aggregated by county and then by region. “[T]he population represented by wastewater data may not reflect the entire county and depends on where the sampling locations and their associated catchments are located,” the site explains. Municipal results are weighted by population and combined, and the charts then use a three-week rolling average.

By these calculations, COVID-19 levels in wastewater are rising nationwide – from 219 copies/ml on July 5 up to 640 copies/ml as of September 6. In the same time period, the overall “Northeastern” region saw an increase from 233 to 717 copies/ml, and Franklin County rose from 145 to 700 copies/ml.

Worcester County, where Athol is located, had an average of 1,240 copies of the virus per ml last week.

The Biobot site also charts the shifting prevalence of different variants of coronavirus over time in different US regions. Genomic sequencing shows that more variants were present in wastewater samples this summer than at any point since the pandemic began. Since the Delta variant emerged in December 2021, variants have typically come in waves, with the vast majority of cases coming from the same strain. However, Biobot’s data show seven different variants present in recent samples, with none accounting for more than a third of the sequenced viruses.

The Northeast, which as of late August has developed the highest concentration of wastewater virus in the country, is also seeing the most rapid emergence of EG.5, the “Eris” strain named as a variant of interest by the World Health Organization last month. EG.5 accounted for 25.4% of the copies of the virus in the region as of August 23.

Mike Jackson contributed additional writing.



Join friends and neighbors at the  
**Gill Harvest Festival**

on the Gill Town Common  
Sunday, September 24th  
Noon – 3:00 P.M.

Gill firefighters will provide food and drinks, including their famous hand-cut French fries!

**Farmers Market**

Local farmers will sell their wares.  
Plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables!

**Local Crafters with their Wares**

Farm activities for all ages –  
Tractors for kids to climb and hay rides!

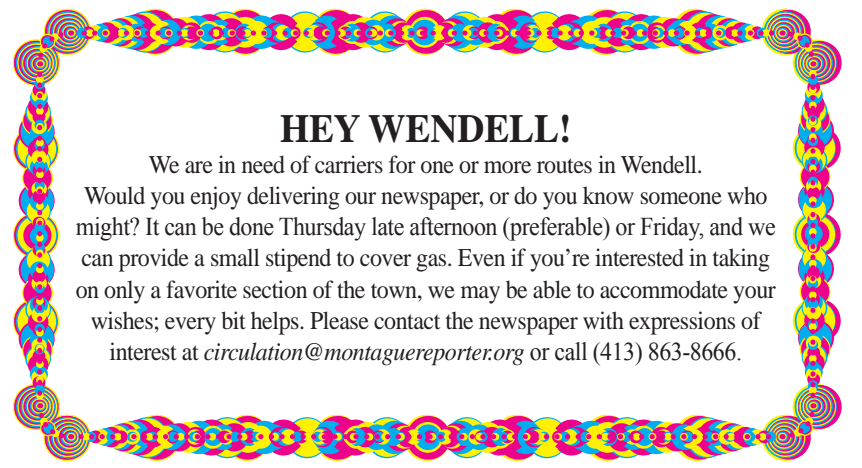
**Live Music by SpaceBar**

(sponsored by a grant from the Gill Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.)

Visit the Slate Memorial Library.

Gill Historic Commission books for sale!

Enter the door prize raffle to win an Earth Machine backyard compost bin.



**HEY WENDELL!**

We are in need of carriers for one or more routes in Wendell.

Would you enjoy delivering our newspaper, or do you know someone who might? It can be done Thursday late afternoon (preferable) or Friday, and we can provide a small stipend to cover gas. Even if you’re interested in taking on only a favorite section of the town, we may be able to accommodate your wishes; every bit helps. Please contact the newspaper with expressions of interest at [circulation@montaguereporter.org](mailto:circulation@montaguereporter.org) or call (413) 863-8666.

**MONTAGUE CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS FOR LOCAL ARTS, CULTURAL, SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES PROJECTS**

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY VISIT THE CULTURAL COUNCIL PAGE ON THE TOWN OF MONTAGUE WEBSITE



WWW.MONTAGUE-MA.GOV AND SEARCH: MCC GUIDELINES AND PRIORITIES 2024  
EMAIL: CULTURALCOUNCIL@MONTAGUE-MA.GOV

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED UNTIL OCT 17  
**MONTAGUE CULTURAL COUNCIL**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



**LEVERETT** from page A1

said, costs approximately \$700, and mitigation appears to run between \$350 and \$5,000.

While such a decision was in the BOH’s purview, Sylvan said, it would be a “some-what significant change in the status quo,” so the BOH wished to include the selectboard in the deliberations.

Resident Isaiah Robison suggested recommending, rather than mandating, the testing so as to avoid “drawing a circle around people’s houses” or “isolating” them.

Sylvan replied that there was a negative incentive to volunteer for a recommended test, as positive results become public knowledge and may make it more difficult to sell a house. He reiterated MassDEP’s recommendation that every well be tested, and said that though testing programs have been available, participation has been low.

Allowing wells to be drilled without PFAS testing, Alwan added, presents a risk to other residents as it can potentially spread contaminated water to leach fields and to other properties. Selectboard member Patricia Duffy noted that PFAS are highly water-soluble and can travel long distances.

Alwan said one option the BOH was considering was to require tests only in areas known to have a high PFAS presence, an

approach taken by other municipalities. The issue, she said, came to the fore in Leverett due to a recent land purchase which “might be in a PFAS-contaminated area.” One major concern, she explained, is that this case may create a precedent.

The health board decided to allow the owners to drill a well, but to require PFAS testing before signing off on a building permit. In the event of a positive test, the owners can receive a building permit if mitigation is implemented, but the BOH is still deliberating on whether to require this work to be fulfilled by an outside contractor to ensure compliance.

If testing requirements become more broad, Alwan said, the town will also need to establish enforcement provisions. She noted that some municipalities are requiring positive PFAS tests to be recorded on property deeds.

This sparked further discussion about the potential consequences of the BOH’s actions. Robison said recording information about contamination on deeds would be like placing a “salvage title” on a car.

“The unspoken thing here is that it will lower the property values of homes if it’s found,” said Duffy.

Tim Shores, a resident and a member of the planning board, raised questions about

changes over time in PFAS levels in groundwater, and how that would be dealt with if test results were included on deeds.

Sylvan and Alwan said that one reason for consulting with the selectboard is that they were unsure what enforcement mechanisms were available to the BOH if testing and mitigation were broadly mandated.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis responded that the BOH has the authority to choose its methods of enforcement. “You guys have autonomous power,” she said. “I think it’s what you put in your regulation.”

Selectboard chair Tom Hankinson said that the technology for PFAS mitigation was simple and widely available, and that he was in favor of testing at all new construction and transferred properties. “I’d just require it across the board,” he said.

**Other Business**

The selectboard decided to double the salary of the long-vacant animal control officer position from \$1,500 to \$3,000 per year. Members agreed to reach out to neighboring towns’ animal officers to see if they want additional work, and to “talk up” the position’s importance at the special town meeting later this fall in hopes of finding a candidate.

Duffy reported that she had visited the

abode of a resident and dog to verify that the dog was being restrained as ordered at a recent dog hearing. Duffy said that while the dog’s “fangs were ominous,” it was on a steel tether, and appeared to be restrained as per the order.

The board approved a \$5,950 contract for a routine audit of the account set aside to fund “other post-employment benefits” to retired town employees.

The board agreed to submit a letter of comment on proposed changes to how the state regulates and approves municipal electricity aggregation plans, as requested by the town’s aggregator, Colonial Power. (See *Gill selectboard notes, Page A1.*)

The board also approved revisions to the intermunicipal agreement with Wendell for shared police services (see *article, Page A1*).

Brennan Mailloux was appointed to the position of town custodian.

Selectboard members voted, 3 to 0, to authorize McGinnis to inquire with the state ethics commission whether it would be okay for them to grant a one-day beer-and-wine license to the town’s 250th anniversary committee for the committee’s 250th anniversary chicken barbecue, given that the selectboard itself is co-sponsoring the festivities.



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

**OrigamiUSA**  
Origami is for anyone, anywhere, anytime!  
Join us at: [OrigamiUSA.org](http://OrigamiUSA.org)  
Email: [admin@origamiusa.org](mailto:admin@origamiusa.org)  
Tel: 212.769.5635

- Find a local community origami group
- Fold from diagrams in our publications
- Shop for origami paper and books
- And much more!

413-256-6217  
fine instruments bought and sold repaired and restored  
**Fretted Instrument Workshop**  
49 So. Pleasant St., Amherst, Mass. 01002

**REAL PICKLES**  
Locally grown vegetables  
Fermented & raw  
100% organic  
A worker co-op in Greenfield, MA  
[www.realpickles.com](http://www.realpickles.com) | (413) 774-2600

## LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on September 12, 2013: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

### Erving Firefighters Resign En Masse

Former fire chief Almon "Bud" Meatey and five Erving fire department members resigned at the September 9 selectboard meeting. Meatey, Mark Kosloski, Raymond Mailloux, Herman Meatey, William Pease, and Kelly Potts entered the meeting, piled their turnout gear on the floor, and waited patiently. When recognized by chair Andrew Goodwin, the six turned in keys, pagers, and badges without comment, letting their actions speak.

Chief Philip Wonkka, appointed on September 3, shook hands with the firefighters and thanked them for their service. The board,

clearly sobered by the mass resignation, asked town administrator Tom Sharp to draft letters thanking them for their service to Erving.

Management consultant Sophie Parker has interviewed firefighters and town officials to plan mediated discussions of issues and conflicts.

### Sidewalk Design Chosen

The *ad hoc* RiverCulture steering committee has chosen a design by Anja Schutz for the First Street crosswalk from Unity Park to the riverside recreation area. Schutz said her design, a strong black-and-white statement, celebrates fish that are part of the abundance of local nature, the iconic and ubiquitous stray shopping carts, the bike path, and the cutlery, giving a nod to Turners Falls' industrial past as well as its growing culinary scene.

## 20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on September 11, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

### Discovery Center Opens Soon

There is a flurry of activity at the new Discovery Center site on Avenue A. A dream for so many years is finally becoming a reality. Construction is ahead of schedule, though excavation is difficult due to the extremely hard ledge of bedrock. Visitors will see how the falls were before they were dammed; a natural depression will become a gathering space known as the Amphitheater; the walkway will be covered with traditional red bricks.

The front of the property will be bermed up with trees, hydro-seeded, and beautified with plants.

### No Hedging on Bushes

At their September 8 meeting the Gill selectboard discussed the bushes at the corner of Route 2 and Myrtle Avenue, a safety hazard as they block the view. "This goes on every year," said member Leland Stevens. The property owner prefers to trim them himself but "we need to decide how high they should be," said board chair Ann Banash. The selectboard set September 22 for the bushes to be trimmed to a height of not more than three feet.

## 150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on September 10, 1873: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

### Local Matters

The weather is now cool and bracing.

They are putting flash boards on the dam.

Fourth Street is to be graded through to Ave. A.

Gov. Warmouth of Louisiana is stopping at the Farren House, a guest of Major Keith.

The loser of a flat-bottomed boat can hear of her whereabouts by inquiring of A. Jacobs, 15 Pulp Block.

Freeman Woodard on the plains has the largest field of large watermelons in this vicinity.

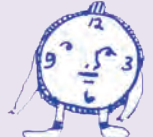
The artesian well at the Montague Mill is over 806 feet deep, and the flow of water is 103 gallons per minute. Mr. Farwell is still boring.

Commodore Smith ferried sixty people over to, and back from, the concert at Riverside, last Sunday. If he has a brown, sunburnt face, and brawny arms, he has a heart big enough to work all day Sunday that all who will may attend worship free.

W. Stevens is quite an amateur jig-sawer. He has just finished a handsome work-box, the workmanship on which would do credit to an expert.

The Sunday School Concert was far more meritorious, in its way, than three-fourths of the concerts given by traveling professional performers, which was due not only to the great care and exertion of the several ladies and children taking part; but to the forethought and tact displayed by Mrs. Nathaniel Holmes in the direction of the exercise, the selection of pieces and the allotment of parts, and in the thorough manner in which she had all the parts working harmoniously together by means of frequent rehearsals. The programme consisted in part of singing by the choir, songs and recitations by the two little waifs from the Little Wanderer's Home that have been adopted by Dr. Sornborger, and recitations by a number of bright little boys and girls.

What is Turners Falls going to send to the Annual Exhibition of the Franklin Co. Agricultural Society? Clark & Chapman, the paper mills, cutlery, and all our Ladies ought to do something for the Fair.



## Not Enough Soapboxes; Plug Pulled On Derby

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – Organizers announced late Wednesday afternoon that the Montague soapbox derby, scheduled for noon on Sunday, was cancelled, after not enough racers registered to roll cars.

"The committee is meeting this morning, so we're immediately on the clock to see what we can do to bring it back next year even more successfully than in the past," parks and rec director Jon Dobosz told the *Reporter* at press time Thursday.

Dobosz said that the group had agreed that if fewer than 20 racers registered by Thursday, it would not justify "the amount of time and effort that's needed that day for setup and breakdown." As of that deadline, only 13 had registered, including two out-of-state participants.

"We're hoping that more people locally, past participants, decide to race next year," said Dobosz, who added that while his department's youth programs are "busting at the seams," adults "are really slow coming back," with low participation in the annual Sawmill road race and the adult softball league. "Adults just reprioritize things," he reflected.

Soapbox races have been held at Unity Park in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and after a seven-year hiatus in 2021 and 2022, with 31 and 20 racers respectively in the last two races.

was passed by the Leverett selectboard this week and will likely be discussed in Wendell next week, though an agenda was not available as of press time.

The updated IMA would apparently eliminate the advisory role previously held by the joint committee in hiring full-time police officers. All the sources we spoke with in the two towns agreed that this committee's role will primarily be in budgetary oversight, though vague language remains authorizing it to "[w]ork to resolve issues of mutual concern to the Towns..."

"The committee's role is oversight of the agreement, not [of] the police department," said Wendell selectboard member Gillian Budine, who also sits on the joint committee.

As far as the method for assessing costs to Wendell, the original IMA states that a formula would be developed by the advisory committee, presumably with the Collins Center's assistance, "subject to data collection, analysis, and negotiation and revision over an initial period of time which will be at least three years."

The new IMA includes a formula the committee developed, with Wendell's share based primarily on a three-year "rolling average" of the percentage of service calls coming from each town.

At Wendell's town meeting in June, voters were told the police had responded to 870 calls from their town over the previous year, and agreed to increase their town's police budget from \$49,970 to \$74,841 in anticipation of the revised formula taking effect this year.

"During the Wendell town meeting, Scott Minckler received a warm welcome and much praise and appreciation, even though Chief Minckler was asking them for more money towards the budget," Duffy wrote. "The Wendell members of the police advisory committee also expressed the same sentiments."

When the *Reporter* asked the police chief and members of the oversight group this week what they thought will be the biggest challenges for the collaboration in the future, virtually all mentioned the impact recent statewide police reforms will have on rural police departments, which rely heavily on part-time officers.

These reforms, created by the independent Peace Officers' Standards and Training (POST) Commission and signed into law at the end of 2020 by former governor Charlie Baker, require that part-time officers receive training almost to the level of full-time officers.

"[I]f they get that training," explained Duffy, "and they can get it at the Bridge Academy, which is less rigorous than the Police Academy, they can then just become full time officers. So there are less and less part-time officers available. That creates gaps in coverage for both our towns." Leverett, she added, has recently lost two of its part-time officers.

"We feel it," said Budine. "We do the initial hiring and training, and then they leave for other places."

"For me, this collaboration has not been challenging," said Wetherby. "I'm happy with the collaboration, and I feel safe."



## FACES



JOE R. PARZYCH PHOTO


Our roving agriculture reporter Joe R. Parzych reported from the scene of the 174th annual Franklin County Fair. The fair was shut down due to bad weather last Friday night, but Samantha Piela of Sunrise Valley Farm in Gill, the Piela family farm, took part in the dairy youth cattle show on a beautiful weekend day. "Others had damage, due to the aftermath of the bad weather at the fair," Piela's mother Jenn told Joe. "We continued on doing what we've done for many years, working very hard at the fair."

There were no reports of any cows or sheep getting hurt. "After everyone recovered," Joe writes, "there was a great turnout on Saturday and Sunday, full of enjoyable times, with food and entertainment as far as the eye can see."

## & PLACES

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

BKONFONQEQWIYSS.IPY  
HMZGESCQVQFHJW.MMO  
FONTLVPEAXQAHO.SHC  
LJKEVOBFBFNAPGR.RED  
SECRETBROADCAST.NET  
a weekly secret message podcast

 **FEDERAL STREET BOOKS**  
8 Federal Street, Greenfield  
federalstreetbooks.com

relieving chronic pain  
Gretchen Wetherby, LMT  
413-824-7063  
bringing peace to tired muscles  
gretchenwmt@gmail.com • gretchenwetherby.massagetherapy.com

**MONTAGUE** from page A1

to me was that, as part of an ongoing investigation – the responsibility for which was assumed by the Northwestern District Attorney’s Office and the Massachusetts state police – that our ability to communicate was subordinate to the investigation.”

Ellis said he was told “it was an active shooting event,” but “it doesn’t meet the definition, as it was not an attack on an unspecified group of public citizens – it appeared to be the result of a quarrel between two people.” He added that police chief Chris Williams “would have presented this with me today,” but was on a pre-planned vacation.

“I do think it bears a discussion with the chief at a meeting,” said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz. “And I think we should understand what the standard operating procedure is.”

“I don’t think they did a good job communicating,” said member Matt Lord, “and I hope they do a better job next time. They created unnecessary fear among the population.”

Patch resident Briggs Doxzen, who went home from work for lunch that day, said their children said the suspect had run past them on his way into the woods. “It became quickly apparent to me it was an isolated incident,” Doxzen said. Doxzen went back to Greenfield Savings Bank, leaving the children with a sitter, but “the bank later went into a lockdown because they had heard rumors of some sort of active shooter.”

“Montague... has an alert system that tells me when there’s a parade, when there’s a snowstorm,” said Andy Toomajian. “And to have a *Star Wars*-level military police presence in my neighborhood – like, there were not just multiple helicopters, but people with assault gear and tactical weapons on the streets – that’s scary! And to not have any communication, and just be texting with neighbors.... I want something proactive from a town that has an alert system.”

Toomajian said he was “appreciative of a strong and fast police response” overall, and understood the relationship between the town police, DA’s office, and state police to be “very complicated.” Still, he said, police were still telling cars leaving the Patch that they would be unable to reenter “long after the majority of police had left the neighborhood,” which he felt was “really poor management of the situation” given the lack of communication.

Additionally, Toomajian said he had long been concerned about “ongoing drug issues in the neighborhood,” and had found local police response “underwhelming.” “To have something like this come to a head was a little frustrating,” he said.

Kuklewicz said he appreciated Toomajian’s comments. “Hopefully we can get it on a future agenda,” he said.

**Jets Indeed Cooled – For Now**

An article was removed from the October 10 special town meeting (STM) warrant that would rezone a parcel of town-owned land on Turnpike Road to allow for manufacturing or housing. The proposal appeared on a draft warrant the board discussed August 21 and was recommended by the planning board the next day by a 3-2 vote, despite strong opposition from a packed hearing of local residents.

Town officials have been discussing the parcel with NE-XT Technologies, a Greenfield-based manu-

facturer of precision steel products, since April. After the planning board hearing, selectboard members suggested there might not be time for a lengthy zoning debate on the crowded STM warrant.

On Monday, Evelyn Walsh of the citizens’ group “Rest in Peace” – a reference to two cemeteries that abut the parcel, along with the public safety complex – delivered a statement with 25 signatures reiterating the reasons the group opposed manufacturing on the lot. She called the proposal an “internal game plan” and a “fragmented approach,” and called on the town to instead “create a coordinated plan to build a second industrial park to accommodate the needs of potential tenants.”

Kuklewicz asked whether anyone at the meeting “would like us to advance it to the next level.” Hearing no response, he said that this had been “almost a rhetorical question,” and that he did not support including the rezoning on the fall warrant as “there’s too many questions still.”

“I agree with you, Rich,” said member Chris Boutwell. “It’s too much too soon, and needs a lot more investigation.”

“I don’t believe it belongs on this warrant,” said Lord. “I do hope we can move it forward on a different warrant. The parcel is a space that represents a great development opportunity for the town.” Lord said he “appreciated” the educational work done by opponents of the change, but that “the small-d democratic process” called for a town meeting discussion at some point.

According to Ellis, if the change does not receive the required 2/3 vote at town meeting, a “substantially similar” article may not be considered for another two years. He also warned that if the selectboard does not act on the planning board’s recommendation within six months, the town would need to “rebegin the petition process” with the planning board and public hearings.

The board did not take a vote, but it was clear there was no support for putting the article on the warrant. Discussion of 16 other articles took up much of Monday’s meeting, and the board will make final decisions on these on September 18.

**Pollution Control**

Chelsea Little, superintendent of the Clean Water Facility (CWF), presented the monthly report on effluent the plant sends into the Connecticut River. Measures of organic material and solids removed by the treatment process were well above minimum levels set by state and federal regulation. “I’ve never seen treatment go that well in my seven years of wastewater treatment,” she said. “We’re super proud of that, even with all the rain we’ve had this summer.”

Little was asked why, if these results were favorable, the town is spending so much money to meet federal water pollution mandates.

“Most of the issues that we’re experiencing right now,” Ellis replied, “relate to the collection system, as opposed to the treatment facility.” The town has inherited a sewer system combining rain runoff and sewage that periodically overflows into the river before it can reach the plant, he said, and though the town “reduced the problem by more than 90%” with costly mitigation efforts over a decade ago, “the last miles are generally the expensive miles.”

Ellis estimated that a “full separation” of stormwater and sewage “might be in the vicinity of \$25 to

\$27 million, which is why we are taking mitigation approaches.”

Little reported on bids to install a reconditioned generator at the plant. The board voted to award a contract to low bidder Collins Electric Co. of Chicopee, and to cover the cost using \$209,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds pending a vote at the STM to repay it from CWF retained earnings.

The board approved \$7,500 for engineering firm Wright-Pierce to evaluate the HVAC in the plant’s operations building, and amended a contract with the state for a grant to upgrade the plant’s “fine bubble diffusers” to be consistent with an earlier grant to upgrade “aeration blowers.”

Public works superintendent Tom Bergeron reported on progress on the “collection system” – the sewer system, catch basins, and combined sewer overflow infrastructure. Bergeron said Kyle Bessette, newly promoted as the collection system’s chief operator, “found a lot of things we didn’t know anything about,” including weirs in front of several pump stations.

Bessette, he said, will also focus on the longstanding issue of water infiltration into the Millers Falls sewers.

**Roofs and Roads**

Ellis updated the board on roof repairs on the town-owned Colle Opera House and Shea Theater. He said there had been a \$4,700 change order because “the elements of the [Shea] roof were not as expected.”

He said he had been on that roof checking the drainage system, and contractors hope to complete it by the middle of next week as events are planned at the theater, whose HVAC system has been removed during the work.

The board executed a \$45,000 contract with Larochelle Construction of South Hadley for repairs on the slate roof of the old town hall in Montague Center, and an \$85,000 contract for masonry repairs on the same building. Assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey said repairs on the building’s windows, funded by an ARPA appropriation, are waiting for the final bills from these projects.

Bergeron said the recent paving of Wendell Road, from Mormon Hollow Road to the Wendell town line, had used up most of his department’s state aid for paving, with this year’s allocation still in the pipeline.

**Other Business**

Turners Falls airport manager Bryan Camden reported on a \$75,000 Federal Aviation Administration grant to design an apron and taxiway to the property formerly owned by Pioneer Aviation, now used for maintenance, flight training, and fueling. “Next year we will receive the big grant,” he said.

As personnel board, the selectboard accepted Max Pellerin’s resignation from the airport commission, and appointed Josh Lively to the opening. Jasper Adams was appointed to the Cultural Council on the recommendation of its chair, Kathy Lynch.

Angela Amidon was appointed as administrative assistant to Wendy Bogusz, the executive assistant in the selectboard office. Ellis said Amidon had worked “for many many years in a medical office environment.”

Ellis also reported back from the state Economic Development Planning Council, on which he sits. He

**TOWN OF MONTAGUE – JOB OPENING ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

The **Montague Town Clerk** seeks a qualified candidate for the position of **Administrative Assistant**. The position provides administrative support duties to the Town Clerk’s Office. Assists in preparing for elections as well as maintaining official municipal records, issuing permits, certifications and licenses.

**Educational Requirements:** A candidate for this position should have a High School diploma or equivalent with strong computer and writing skills, and one (1) to three (3) years’ experience in an administrative or similar environment.

**Ability:** Must be able to communicate effectively verbally and in writing with excellent customer service and interpersonal skills. Must have computer skills for word processing, spreadsheets and databases and be able to learn department specific software programs and website updating.

**Physical Requirements:** Candidates must be able to lift at least 30 lbs. and occasionally more when moving election equipment. It is sometimes necessary to stand or sit at a keyboard for extended periods of time. Some long day/late evenings are required for election related events.

**Wages:** This is a full-time union position with benefits. Grade B wage scale is \$19.28 in accordance with the Town of Montague Employees’ Association.

Please send cover letters and resumes to: Town Clerk, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376 or [townclerk@montague-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@montague-ma.gov). Applications will be accepted until Tuesday, September 19, 2023. Montague is an EEO/AA. Full job description available at [montague.net/p/308/Employment-Opportunities](http://montague.net/p/308/Employment-Opportunities)

**Tip of the week ...**

Boating season may be coming to an end, but your boat is still at risk of a total loss while in storage due to fire, theft, and other hazards. Contact us today to get a policy that provides coverage for your boat all year round.



We have more than insurance. We have experience...

25 Millers Falls Road  
(413) 863-4331  
[www.pzinc.com](http://www.pzinc.com)

auto | home | business



**NOW HIRING**  
Scan the code or visit [www.careers.altiumpkg.com](http://www.careers.altiumpkg.com).

**\$1K-3K SIGN-ON BONUS**  
**Altium Packaging**

**\$18.00 to start**

**NO experience required.**

**On-the-job training provided!**

**Take Control of Your Future!**

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

**It's Not Just a Job...**

- Medical • Dental • Vision
- 401K • FSA/HSA • Vacation
- Short/Long-Term Disability
- Life Insurance and more.

**Join Our Team!**

262 Millers Falls Rd.  
Turners Falls, MA 01376  
**413-475-1140**



Formerly **HILLSIDE PLASTICS**  
Across from the Airport

said that he had been named “captain” of the council’s “rural sector” subgroup, and that there is a “strong voice” to articulate rural concerns such as aging populations, decaying factory buildings, a lack of affordable housing, and limited capacity to plan “shovel-ready” projects.

Parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz announced that the annual soapbox derby was planned for this Sunday, September 17, and that organizers were “still welcoming racers.” “We have a minimum of 20, which we are slowly approaching right now,” he said, set-

ting a deadline for Wednesday. On Wednesday the race was canceled due to low participation.

The board authorized library director Caitlin Kelley to accept a \$2,500 grant to help fund the “Falls Fest,” which is replacing the event once known as Pumpkinfest. Ellis said this year’s festival, scheduled for October 21, will include concerts at Peskeompskut Park and the town parking lot between the Harvest and Rendezvous restaurants.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for September 18.



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

**HUGE WASHERS!**  
**HOT DRYERS!**  
Open 365 Days  
6 A.M. - 10 P.M.

**SUZEE'S THIRD STREET LAUNDRY**  
TURNERS FALLS  
SUZEE'S THIRD ST. LAUNDRY  
413-863-1376

**Bryan Hobbs Remodeling LLC**  
Blown Cellulose Insulation • Spray Foam Insulation  
Airsealing • Energy Audits • Replacement Doors & Windows  
Email: [bryanhobbsremodeling@gmail.com](mailto:bryanhobbsremodeling@gmail.com)  
Now Accepting Credit Cards  
Office: (413)775-9006  
Lic # 083982  
Reg # 139564  
Bryan G. Hobbs  
PO Box 1535  
Greenfield, MA 01302  
mass save PARTNER

**Brian R. San Soucie Locksmith - CRL**  
certified - bonded - insured  
863-2471  
28 Montague St  
Turners Falls, MA  
Trusted for over 25 years, installing all types of locks & entry devices for business & homes  
- Dead BOLTS  
- Household Lock Sets  
- Master Keys & Re-keys  
- Safe Combinations Changed

**SPORTS** from page A1

eking out a win against Mohawk. Also this week, the Franklin Tech Football Eagles opened their season a day late, but certainly not a dollar short.

**Volleyball**

TFHS 3 – Athol 0

TFHS 3 – Easthampton 0

TFHS 3 – Mohawk Trail 1

The Turners Falls Volleyball Thunder traveled to Athol last Friday and swept the Red Bears, 3-0. The middle game was the closest, as Da Bears managed to score 16 points, but in the other two contests Turners more than doubled them up.

Taylor Greene scored six aces, made two kills, and gave 16 assists. Madi Liimatainen shot eight kills, dug for four digs, and served an ace, and Janelle Massey had four aces, two digs, and a kill.

On Monday the Thunder Ladies defeated the visiting Easthampton Eagles, 3 games to nil. In this win Liimatainen made nine kills, three digs, and six aces; Massey had six kills, two digs, and an ace;

and Greene gave 18 assists, made three kill shots, saved two digs and scored three aces.

Thunder traveled up the trail on Tuesday and outlasted the Mohawk Warriors 3-1. All four games were hard-fought, and each was decided by three points or less. But Turners prevailed, winning the last game 28-26 in overtime.

Greene again led the team with 16 assists while scoring four kills and six aces. Liimatainen made eight kills, served an ace and had four digs, while Massey had four aces, two digs and a kill.

**Field Hockey**

Westfield 4 – TFHS 0

FCTS 8 – Hampshire 1

Last Thursday, September 7, the Turners Falls Field Hockey Thunder were shut out by the visiting Westfield Bombers 4-0. The Bombers scored two quick goals in the first quarter. Neither team could put the ball into the net for the next two periods, but in the fourth, West tacked on two additional goals.

In net, goalkeeper Conner Herzig

made an incredible 10 saves.

On Tuesday, the Franklin Tech team traveled down to Westhampton and decimated Hampshire Regional 8-1. Hannah Gilbert scored three goals in the win while Kate Trudeau scored twice and made one assist.

Single goals were also scored by Lilli Inman, Kenzie Sourdiffe-Massee, and Meredith Bistrek, while Lilly Ross and Katy Lengiza each gave assists.

**Boys' Soccer**

FCTS 3 – Hampden East 2

On Monday, the Franklin Tech Kicking Eagles edged out Hampden Charter School of Science East 3-2. Mason Thurston, Loki Rhodes, and Preston Duvall scored Tech's three goals and Jack Gancarz gave an assist. The win evens their record at 1 and 1.

**Football**

FCTS 20 – McCann Tech 0

Due to inclement weather, the Tech/McCann football game was postponed to Saturday. It didn't matter to Franklin Tech, who proceeded to shut out the Green Hornets by three touchdowns.

Under center, Gabriel Tomasi went 3 for 8 for 40 yards and a touchdown. Tomasi also carried the ball once for a 16-yard gain. Ethan Smarr caught all three passes, rushed once for five yards, and ran back McCann's only kickoff 22 yards.

Jet Bastarache carried the ball five times for 56 yards, Josiah Little had 54 rushing yards and ran back two punts for 63, and Maxon Brunette helped out with a four-yard carry.

On defense, Landon Hardy led the team with 12 total tackles and made a sack. Shaun Turner made eight solo tackles, caused a fumble, and got in on a sack. Bastarache and Zaydrien Alamed each recovered fumbles, while Tucker Hicks and Collin Eddy made sacks.

Tech will take on the Frontier Red Hawks at home this Friday.



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Franklin Tech's Kate Trudeau (left) dribbles downfield with Turners Falls' Ella Guidaboni defending. The Eagles soared 6-1 over the Thunder in the crosstown contest at TFHS last Wednesday.

**JOIN FRANKLIN CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOR A FALL MEADOW STROLL**

**SEPTEMBER 17, 12:00-2:00**

**CHECKERSPOT FARM  
30 JACKSONVILLE RD.  
COLRAIN**

**FRANKLINCONSERVATIONDISTRICT.ORG**

**Precious Cargo? We've got you covered!**

**Competitive rates and discounts for all of your insurance needs!**  
159 Avenue A | Turners Falls | 413.863.4373 | ahrist.com

**Friends of the New Salem Public Library LOCAL AUTHOR SERIES**

New Salem Public Library, 23 S. Main Street  
7 to 8 p.m. at the library and on Zoom  
Join us for readings with area authors.  
Refreshments.  
Books for sale. FREE to attend.

**September 14:** Celia Jeffries, *Blue Desert*  
*A novel of a young British woman living in the Sahara during WWI.*

**October 26:** Faith Shearin, *Lost River, 1918*  
*A magical YA novel where the dead return from the afterlife.*

**November 16:** Michael Miller, *High Bridge*  
*Imagine a young Grover Cleveland and women's rights activist Matilda Joslyn Gage team up to solve a mystery.*

[nsfriendsoflibrary.weebly.com](http://nsfriendsoflibrary.weebly.com)

**Have a question for the editor?**

Email it to [podcast@montaguereporter.org](mailto:podcast@montaguereporter.org) and listen for the "Ask the Editor" segment to hear the answer!



**The Montague Reporter Podcast**

... 74 episodes now available!

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

FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CO-OP

**WE'RE FALLING IN LOVE WITH LOCAL FLAVORS**

- Local fresh produce
- Local & humanely raised meats
- From scratch bakery
- Made to order catering

**Green Fields Market**  
144 Main Street  
Greenfield, MA  
(413) 773-9567

**McCusker's Market**  
3 State Street  
Shelburne Falls, MA  
(413) 625-2548

**Erik Doolittle**  
owner

**Erik Doolittle**  
landscape maintenance

Cell (413) 834-1531  
462 Fox Hill Rd.  
Bernardston, MA 01337

Professional Painting & Decorating Contractor Since 1900

1900-2023 • Our 123rd Year

**COUTURE BROS.**

Christian S. Couture, President

★ Commercial  
★ Residential  
★ Industrial

Tel: (413) 863-4346 Fax: (413) 863-3740  
400 Avenue A - PO Box 270 - Turners Falls, MA 01376  
[www.couturebros.com](http://www.couturebros.com) | HIC Lic. 100326

**Reid's Window Washing**

Brayden Reid (603) 254-1037  
[braydenreid05@gmail.com](mailto:braydenreid05@gmail.com)

**uChoose Rewards**  
Debit Card Rewards Program

**Earn Rewards**  
Every Time You Use Your Debit Card!

**Redeem Rewards**  
You Choose How To Redeem Your Points!

Sign Up is **FREE & Easy!**  
Scan the QR code or go to [greenfieldsavings.com/uChoose](http://greenfieldsavings.com/uChoose)

888-324-3191  
[greenfieldsavings.com](http://greenfieldsavings.com)

**Greenfield Savings Bank**  
Member FDIC/Member DIF

**MYSTERY TRAIN AMHERST**

BUY / SELL / TRADE  
MUSIC / MOVIES / BOOKS  
WE BUY RECORDS

178A N Pleasant  
413-253-4776

**Serving Home Grown Farm-inspired Food & Drink**

**H & O**

44 Hope Street, Greenfield, MA 01301  
Ph 413 774 3150 | [hopeandolive.com](http://hopeandolive.com)



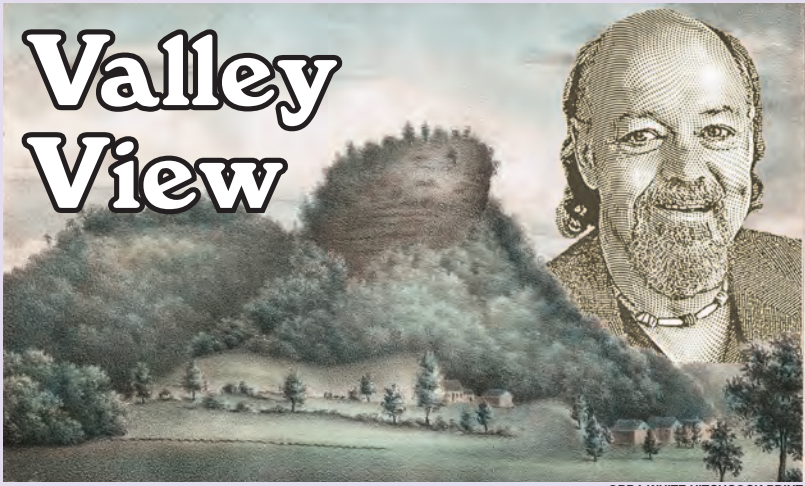


FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORER.ORG

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

*Above: In response to reader inquiries about buildup at the buoys, a FirstLight spokesperson explained that the company “does not have immediate plans to remove the debris field collecting at the Turners Falls Boat Barrier as we continue to make interim repairs to our bascule gate hydraulic cylinders.... We typically pass the debris over the dam through the bascule gates when we remove the barrier in early November. This constitutes the safest approach to moving the debris.”*



By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – Wednesday, September 6 wakes to damp, gray light, with lacy ground fog blanketing spongy meadows. Evocative indeed. Almost spooky.

Striding at my normal brisk pace up the first half-mile of my daily morning walk around the neighborhood, I find Green River Road still streetlamp-lit as the gap between dawn and dusk continues to narrow, daybreak delivered a wee bit later each day. My feet moving, pulse rising, I deeply inhale to open my jets.

My cranial wheels will soon be whirling to a high hum, thoughts dipping and darting like a feeding hummingbird from one topic to another as I walk familiar ground. Most often, they flow down historic streams bubbling with local perspective. I guess some would call it *sense of place*, which I hesitate to use these days. I’d hate for someone to label me “woke,” whatever that means. If defined as introspective, analytical, and seeking a better way, count me in.

Often, walking alone as light filters in, I imagine what this neighborhood looked like when the paved road was no more than a footpath, a cart-path, a shortcut traversing wetland meadow leading to the old Jonathan Smead saltbox. Considered the oldest house in Greenfield, the Smead homestead stood sentry on the raised eastern overlook. It was built as early as 1739, ancient for colonial settlement in the upper Meadows.

On this day, however, my holiday thoughts take an abrupt turn down Memory Lane, which I enjoy traveling. Perhaps I have been nudged there by cool hints of autumn in the air, by dabs of faint color in some trees, by emerging roadside yellows and purples, and by loose, dry maple leaves crunching underfoot in places. The message is clear. Soon my woodstove will be radiating soothing dry heat for another season ending in May.

The place where my thoughts meandered on this holiday morning was spontaneous, yet totally predictable. I leaped back 41 years to the early-morning hours of September 6, 1982. Labor Day that year fell on that day, when my first-born child and namesake

son was born in Northampton. Though he left this world 13 years ago following aortal dissection and botched surgery, I think of him often, especially alone and snuggled into an inner chamber I love to occupy.

Whether quietly walking a hardwood spine where shagbark hickories and black bears roam or slogging through a thorny marsh where cock pheasants crow and partridge drum, thoughts of Gary and his late younger brother Ryan waft through my consciousness like whistling winter breezes. I always welcome such thoughts, be they in the warmth of peaceful dreams or the chill of a frosty winter hunting stand with my back to a stonewall or twin red pine.

My wife, Joey, calls such occurrences “visitations,” which I don’t challenge or try to explain. When the time is right, they just happen.

But why digress? Back to Joey’s Labor Day labor pains and Gary’s holiday birth, which couldn’t have come at a worse time for me. You see, he chose to arrive on decision day of Athol’s annual holiday softball tournament, for which I had found a sponsor and assembled a team of former hardball players who could handle about anything thrown their way.

The annual Pequoig League Labor Day Tournament was a double-elimination affair that attracted at least 24 modified-pitch teams accustomed to playing a faster brand of semi-fast softball than Franklin County offered. The leagues from Athol, Gardner, the North Shore, and Keene, New Hampshire allowed bunting and stealing, not to mention hard-throwing pitchers known in softball lingo as “slingers.” Though these pitchers couldn’t use the 360-degree, fast-pitch windmill windup, they were allowed to stretch modified rules by pivoting their hand and wrist out at the apex of their backswing to above their head and snapping it at release to increase velocity and ball movement.

It was a great way to end the season for a pickup team of old Franklin County hardball players who loved the challenge of knucklers, risers, and sizzling heat that could be heard up and in.

At 29 I was the oldest positional player on our team, but not by see **VALLEY VIEW** page B5

**ARTS**

**Life Blooms in Chris Hill’s New Nocturnal Landscapes**

By NATHAN FRONTIERO

**SHELBURNE FALLS** – Amid the established and extant risks of climate change, the biodiverse reveries of Chris Hill’s paintings feel both celebratory and urgent.

Building on a show Hill debuted in 2019 at Salmon Falls Gallery, *Nocturnal Landscapes: World of Soil* offers a vision of botanical bliss in acrylic. These works feature resplendent fields of lush green leaves, glittering purple lupines, and hearty heads of cabbage. Insects flutter and occasionally gaze out toward the beholder. As Hill writes on the show’s website, these are images of “cultivation in harmony with nature.”

The inspiration for these renderings of farmland bursting with color derived from experiences with starkly different environments. Hill, 35, has a background selling soil and fertilizer, which exposed him to “a lot of really nice-looking farms” and “a lot of farms that were sort of toxic-looking,” he says.

“I was in a rental house in North Hadley, living in the middle of a giant toxic potato field,” Hill explains. “We would have to close our windows when they would spray the



FRONTIERO PHOTO

Before the Spotted Lanternfly, acrylic on canvas, 2021. The five-by-six-foot centerpiece of Chris Hill’s new exhibition took the artist two years to paint.

field, and they’d be spraying the fields at night under cover of darkness. So I saw both sides of this spectrum when it came to healthy ecosystem farms and unhealthy ecosystem farms. And that was the major thing that spawned this painting series.”

In *Cottage Garden*, a sumptuous concentration of the leaves and insects in the foreground, by per-

spective and proportion, at once overpowers and seems to guard the eponymous dwelling nestled in the background. *Magical Beings* finds butterflies, moths, caterpillars, and other critters in a joyfully bustling verdant closeup.

“I’m humbled when I look closely at a square yard of field or see **LANDSCAPES** page B5

**RECIPES**

**The Apple: A Culinary Workhorse**

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

**LEVERETT** – All apples may be created equal, but they are not all created the same. Their colors range from the startling green of Granny Smiths through yellow Golden Delicious to crimson-flushed Cortlands and crimson Red Delicious. Their tastes vary, too, from the briskly tart to the sweetly aromatic.

Most importantly from the cook’s point of view, all apples do not behave the same way in the kitchen.

Take McIntoshes, for example. When just picked they are crisp, but when cooked they quickly become a purée. Empire apples are similar. Apples like these are just what you need for making applesauce and apple butter, but they are not useful in an apple-topped cake or tart where you need the slices to hold their shape. For this role Golden Delicious, Jonagold, Gala, or Pink Lady would be better choices.

For baking, early-season Gravensteins or Cortlands are good choices. Cortlands are also ideal if you want to garnish a dessert or cheese plate with raw slices because, unlike other apples, they don’t brown when cut. They’re good in salads, too.

Every apple has two parent trees and so, like humans, apples are not exactly like either one. An apple



HOPLEY PHOTO

Bags of Sansa and Ginger Gold apples at Clarkdale Farm.

see **APPLES** page B4

# Pet of the Week



RJ MESSINEO PHOTO

## “Jojo”

Join us in a collective “Aww!” for Jojo – short for Jojo Bunny Biscuit – our adorable Pet of the Week! She just moved to Greenfield from Dakin in August and is loving her new home with her favorite person, RJ.

Jojo is full of kitten energy and enjoys cat parkour, birdwatching, napping on a chair under the dinner table, hunting mice, making biscuits, looking down on humans from the highest shelf in the kitchen cabinets, and carrying her kill – her favorite feather toy – up and down the stairs. Occasionally, she’ll also get sleepy enough to settle down for a short cuddle.

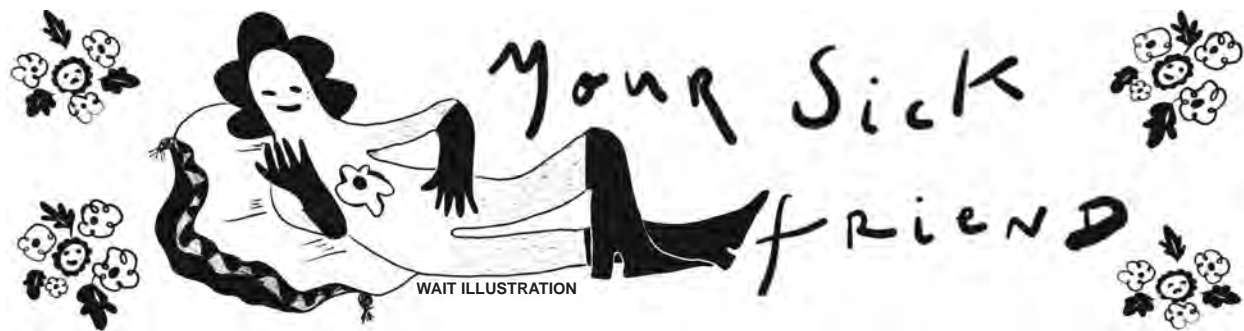
She’s a very social cat that loves people and comes right to the door

when you arrive at her home.

Welcome to the *Montague Reporter* community, Jojo. We’re glad to hear you’re settling in nicely here and keeping the mouse population in check. And we see from your photo submission that you’re a big fan of our newspaper.

Want your pet featured? Email a photo and information about your pet to [jae@montaguereporter.org](mailto:jae@montaguereporter.org).

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



By CASEY WAIT

**TURNERS FALLS** – Hello dear readers. When I last wrote in July, I mentioned I was recovering from my fourth COVID infection. It seems that I was, not for the first time this pandemic, a canary in a coalmine.

Each of my four infections have preceded a surge in cases both regionally and nationally. In the weeks since my last column, America has seen yet another rise in COVID cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. Given that the school year has only just begun, colder weather is on the way, and the holiday season is rapidly approaching, this trend is likely to continue its upward trajectory.

As if this wasn’t worrying enough, I’m also hours away from taking my first dose of chemotherapy medication, prescribed to try and manage my increasingly severe autoimmune diseases – which have gotten steadily worse with each COVID infection. This means that my already-weak immune system will be further suppressed at a time when not only are COVID, influenza, and RSV cases projected to increase, but fewer community-wide mitigation efforts are in place to protect people like me.

I won’t mince words: I’m terrified. I’ve agonized for months over whether the risks of starting chemo during an ongoing and uncontrolled pandemic outweigh the daily costs of my worsening uncontrolled auto-immune symptoms, especially when my diseases have so clearly worsened due to the virus at the center of the pandemic.

I’m still not entirely sure I’ve made the right choice, but it’s the only real chance I have to get some

relief from the sores in my mouth, throat, and skin, from the horrible pain in my joints, and from the heavy weight of fatigue that currently crushes me.

It’s not fun to share this shit with you all. Sometimes it’s cathartic, but it’s also vulnerable and personal, and I worry I’m exploiting my own pain somehow. But I share these experiences of illness and anxiety because I know I’m only one of many people worldwide going through something similar.

A defining experience of the pandemic for me and my sick friends has been the nightmare feeling of screaming with no sound coming out – trying to raise an alarm that no one can hear. As the world determinedly marches at maximum speed towards “business as usual,” we keep getting sicker. It’s incredibly hard not to feel like no one cares.

But I am not a nihilist or a misanthrope. So much of my frustration with “the world” writ large is knowing that we *can* do better! We *can* treat each other better. So many people, my beloved radical lefty friends included, have been so thoroughly individualism-pilled that I think they don’t even realize it. You cannot fight a pandemic as an individual. It is literally impossible. We keep each other safe – all of us!

It should not be the sole responsibility of the immunocompromised to protect ourselves. I am one of the most COVID-cautious people I know, and I have still gotten the fucking virus four fucking times. I refuse to be exiled to my home. I refuse to miss seeing my friends’ kids grow up. I refuse to miss birthday parties, lectures, art, protests, being part of the body politic.

I need you to care. And I need that care to manifest as action.

Please – I’m not too proud to beg – wear masks in public. This means at grocery stores, work, school, the library, museums, cafés. N95s and KN95s offer the best protection, but a surgical mask is better than nothing. Bulk buy with friends to save money. Your right not to be inconvenienced by a mask isn’t as important as my right, and everyone else’s, to not get sick – I’m sorry, it’s just not. If you have access to insurance and/or can afford it, please get vaccinated with the updated booster when it is available. This is what solidarity looks like!

It seems unlikely that help will be provided by the government, but this is no excuse for us to give up on protecting each other. We have agency. We don’t need mask mandates to decide, as a community, that keeping each other safe is the right thing to do.

Are you a business owner? Require masks on premises! Buy a HEPA filter to protect your employees and customers. Give your employees sick pay. Planning an event? Require masks upon entry! Take responsibility.

We create the culture in our friend groups and families. Come up with plans for how to care for one another. Have difficult conversations. Refuse to leave anyone behind. As the pandemic continues alongside climate crises and economic deprivation, we are going to need these resiliency skills more and more. The time to care is now. The time to care is always.

With love and rage,

*Your Sick Friend*

## Senior Center Activities SEPTEMBER 18 THROUGH 22

### WENDELL

Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. For Senior Health Rides contact Jonathan von Ranson (978) 544-3758.

### GILL and MONTAGUE

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

### Monday 9/18

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
10:30 a.m. Oak Tree Chair Yoga  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1 p.m. Kitchen Club  
**Tuesday 9/19**  
10 a.m. Money Matters  
1 p.m. COA Meeting  
3 p.m. Tai Chi  
**Wednesday 9/20**  
9 a.m. VA Agent  
9:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
11:45 a.m. Friends’ Meeting  
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo  
1:30 p.m. Food Pantry  
4:15 p.m. Mat Yoga  
**Thursday 9/21**  
9 a.m. Chair Yoga  
9 a.m. Senior Help  
by appointment  
10:30 a.m. Senior Farm Share  
by subscription

1 p.m. Cards & Games

### Friday 9/22

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
12 p.m. Pizza Party  
2 p.m. Chair Dance

### ERVING

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

For more information, please call (413) 423-3649.

### Monday 9/18

9 a.m. Interval  
10:15 a.m. Stretch & Infusion  
**Tuesday 9/19**  
9 a.m. Good For U  
10 a.m. Line Dancing  
**Wednesday 9/20**  
9 a.m. Cardio Low Impact  
10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
11:30 a.m. Bingo  
**Thursday 9/21**  
9 a.m. Core & Balance  
10 a.m. Barre Fusion  
**Friday 9/22**  
9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

### 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](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

## MOVIE REVIEW

### Gran Turismo (2023)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – In August I saw the movie *Gran Turismo* at the Garden Cinema theater in Greenfield. It’s a true story about a young British kid who’s a big-time player of this racecar video game, *Gran Turismo*, winning the “ultimate wish fulfillment” – to be a real-life racecar driver – through a competition involving the game.

Like the theater has been known to do, it did a promotional event to go with the movie premiere, which was a chance to play *Gran Turismo* for a while at the theater.

The opening scene points out how the game’s Japanese creator worked on making it as realistic as possible, a fact this businessman played by Orlando Bloom mentions while trying successfully to get Nissan’s help with the competition in Tokyo.

The winner, Jann Mardenborough (Archie Madekwe), wants nothing more than to drive racecars for a living. However, his parents tell him to be realistic. His father, played by Djimon Hounsou, gives him an ul-

timatum about this at one point. He does have real skill in this area; one person even calls him a natural.

Jann’s skill is showcased when he tries to avoid the cops after sneaking out with his brother. He starts to become a racer after he wins a spot at the racing academy being set up for the competition. His real skill is shown again when he’s right about a problem with the brakes on his car.

A couple of fellow winners at the place include one from Tokyo, one from the USA, and one from France.

After beating them for the top spot in this whole deal, Jann ends up in some real-life races, in places like Italy, the city of Istanbul in Turkey, and Germany. He officially becomes a racecar driver when he wins fourth place in a race. He gets a racing license, and a contract to drive racecars for Nissan of Tokyo.

He perseveres, and gets an insanely cool amount of luck because of that. He almost loses his nerve to race when he has a bad stroke of luck, but he keeps going on.

The closest I have ever come to having the kind of luck Jann had was



getting the opportunity to run a video camera several times at lacrosse events, and becoming a writer at a local newspaper. If you think about it, when it comes to being able to do these things like I want to, this has been pretty good luck.

This movie ended up being quite enjoyable for me. I was very satisfied with everything I saw on screen. This kid is an example of what happens when you go for a dream and don’t give up on it. It became an incredible journey – he went on to win at Le Mans, a famous French race I am familiar with, and he is still a racecar driver today.

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

**MASSIVE BOOKSHOP**  
EST. 2020  
YOUR LOCAL RNTI-PRIME BOOK SERVICE  
VISIT US AT: [MASSIVEBOOKSHOP.COM](http://MASSIVEBOOKSHOP.COM)

**Rau's Auto**  
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIR  
(413) 367-2475  
531 Turners Falls Rd. Montague  
24 hour emergency towing  
Best service licensed Mechanics

**sunbug solar**  
An energy partner that will make you feel right at home  
413 884 1000  
[sunbugsolar.com](http://sunbugsolar.com)  
Certified Corporation

# EXHIBITS

**Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls:** *Intervals*, mixed-media prints about time on handmade paper, by Karen Axtell. Reception this Sunday, September 17, from 2 to 4 p.m.

**Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center:** *Megan Sward*, guest artist, showing ceramics in September and October.

**Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts and Arts:** *A. D. Tinkham Retrospective*, paintings. Through September 30. Reception Saturday, September 23 at 3 p.m.

**Artspace, Greenfield:** *Shifting*, oil paintings reflecting on the pandemic with themes of isolation, rest, healing, and community, by Annaleah Moon Gregoire. Closing reception Friday, September 29, at 5 p.m.

**Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield:** *We'll Show U*, group exhibit showing works by Rachel Cyrene Blackman, Bill Gardner, Youme Nguyen Ly, M. Rudder, Emikan Sudan, and John Vo. Through October 6.

**South Gallery, Greenfield Community College:** *Faculty Art Exhibit*, works by Chenda Cope, Nick Meyer, Noah Paessel, Kelly Popoff, Joan O'Beirne, and Jen Simms. Through September 29. Gallery talk next Wednesday, September 20 at noon.

**Looky Here, Greenfield:** *The Tuesday-verse: Sorcerer Central*, paintings by Olivia Hamilton. Through September 29.

**LAVA Center, Greenfield:** *The Poetry of Puddles*, photography by Dave Madeloni. Through September.

**The Gallery, Northfield Mount Hermon School, Gill:** *Paintings by Mwanga William*, Ugandan-born painter and sculptor from Brattleboro. Through Octo-

ber 6. Reception this Friday, September 15, from 6 to 8 p.m.

**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.

**Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield:** *Jean Kozlowski Retrospective Exhibit*, a look back through the local artist's painting career. Through September 17.

**Art in the Hall, Shelburne Falls:** *Totz*, Christin Couture's portraits of children play on Victorian conventions. By appointment at [redtidebluefire@gmail.com](mailto:redtidebluefire@gmail.com).

**Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls:** *Silver Anniversary Show*. Members' exhibit celebrating the Coop's 25th anniversary. Through September.

**Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls:** *New Nocturnal Paintings*, by Chris Hill (see Page B1), and *Artful Harvest*, photography by Laurie Miles. Through October.

**Gallery A3, Amherst:** *Piecing, Connecting, Re-calling*, work by Rochelle Schicoff and Marianne Connolly. Through September 30.

**Anchor House of Artists, Northampton:** *E. Joseph McCarthy*, retrospective of paintings from 50 years in the studio. Additional exhibits by Jonathan Stark, Kevin Bouricius, Steven Robaire, and Sunita Mudgett. Through September.

**Club George, Northampton:** *Resurfacing: A Graphic Designer Explores Textiles*, work by Linda Florio. Through September 30.

**Northampton Senior Center:** *Jeanne Weintraub*, Montague artist showing her wildlife and plant prints. Through September.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

### Puppy Scam; Elevator Entrapment; Hand-Rolled Cig; Kid With a Whip; Blown Cover; Three Hit-And-Runs

#### Monday, 9/4

11:18 am: 911 caller on Avenue A states a friend's mother stole her wallet overnight, took all her cash, and won't return it. Investigated.

1:37 p.m. Caller concerned about a suspicious box she found in the porta-potty at Unity Park. Services rendered.

2:21 p.m. Suspicious auto reported on H Street parked in front of a vacant home. Unable to locate.

5:40 p.m. Report of a red Camaro doing donuts at Sheffield Elementary School. Called back to say the car went into her neighbor's garage with flat tires. Officer found tire debris in the lot, verified a verbal dispute had sparked a male party to go over to the parking lot. Advised it had been cleaned up. Citation issued.

6:08 p.m. Report of a loud noise, like an explosion, behind a Turnpike Road home. No police services necessary.

6:39 p.m. Puppy scam reported by a Montague City Road caller. Caller prepaid for a puppy, then was blocked by the seller. Coming to the station to fill out a statement.

7:39 p.m. Caller stated that there has been a lot of drug dealing happening in the area of L and Fifth streets. Unable to provide further descriptions of people or vehicles involved.

8:19 p.m. Large amount of smoke reported in the Emond Avenue area, with people feeling lightheaded and coughing. TFFD on scene.

8:40 a.m. Officer conducting a motor vehicle stop, Montague City Road. Verbal warning issued for an unsecured load.

3:55 p.m. Dead cat reported in Partridge-Zschau Insurance company parking lot. DPW advised.

4:48 p.m. Couch illegally dumped on the side of Lake Pleasant Road. DPW advised.

7:58 p.m. Report of a fight in progress on Avenue A, with ten people kicking and punching a male party. Multiple 911 calls reporting that the suspects drove away, and the victim walked away toward Fourth Street. Officers unable to locate the involved parties.

8:38 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street states there is loud music playing, keeping her from sleeping. Sergeant advises he spoke with them earlier and told them to keep it down after 9 p.m.

10:19 p.m. Caller from L Street states the neighbors are being too loud, it's been going on all day, and his grandmother cannot sleep. Quiet upon arrival; spoke with caller who states it was normal residential noises like TV and footsteps.

**Wednesday, 9/6**  
10:09 a.m. Party arrived at Turners Falls High School looking to dismiss a student, but the name is not enrolled at any district school. All OK; party was supposed to go to Greenfield, not Great Falls, Middle School.

4:51 p.m. Elevator entrapment on Avenue A. Elevator stuck at basement level. Now fixed, and person out. Elevator company to come for service.

5:34 p.m. Caller says a panting dog has been in a truck in front of the Mill-

ers Falls laundromat for three hours. Officer found no dog in the vehicle at the time, but owner and dog were located and they are heading home.

**Thursday, 9/7**  
7:32 a.m. Disabled paving truck reported in the middle of Montague City Road. Truck has cones around it and is waiting for a tow; clear visual to get around it at this time.

3:29 p.m. Two-vehicle accident, Avenue A and Fifth Street. No injuries or fluids leaking. Citation issued.

5:17 p.m. Report of a male outside of Walgreens using drugs. Officer found a male party rolling himself a cigarette.

5:47 p.m. Park Street caller says she smells gas in the area. Referred to another agency.

9:02 p.m. Accident reported on North Leverett Road. Vehicle hit a barn; airbags deployed. Rau's called for tow. Left message to have propane tank inspected.

9:52 p.m. Tree down on South Ferry Road. Officer able to move the tree, road is clear.

**Friday, 9/8**  
5:19 a.m. Reporting party states he was in a hit-and-run accident; his car is badly damaged and he hit his head. Refusing any medical service. Rau's called for tow, MassDOT notified of guardrail damage.

7:47 a.m. Loose pitbull reported by Millers Pub. Message left for ACO; owner notified at work, will have someone pick up the dog.

4:27 p.m. Party from Fifth Street states that there is a kid with a whip, and he wants whip taken away from him. No further information given, and reporting party declined officer assistance.

6:10 p.m. Cones put in roadway for flooding on Montague City Road.

6:27 p.m. Report of limbs hanging over roadway on Turners Falls Road. Confirmed by officer; DPW notified.

6:56 p.m. Manhole cover reported off on Avenue A near the United ARC. Sergeant advises cover is completely off and he will be unable to move it himself. DPW put it back.

7:03 p.m. Montague City Road is completely flooded, and a small tree is down. DPW advised.

7:12 p.m. Caller on J Street said a tenant went to housing court and was told her boyfriend couldn't be there after 4 p.m., but she just saw him climb through her window. Officer advised.

7:37 p.m. Tree struck by lightning on Denton Street, down with wires. Officer advised, referred to other agency.

8:59 p.m. Tree limb on wires on Turners Falls Road, truck hazard. Ever-source notified.

**Saturday, 9/9**  
7:42 a.m. Caller states that a gray pickup truck with a cap on it pulled out of the public safety complex onto Turnpike Road, sideswiped her vehicle, and did not stop. Reports a large scrape on her driver's side wheel well. Officer checked area, nothing found. Unable to locate.

3:47 p.m. Walk-in party to speak with an officer about a break-in with a computer stolen seven days ago. Officer spoke with his wife, who said she is aware of the situation and is keeping a close eye on him.

11:39 p.m. Caller states his eight-week-old puppy got out of the house. Services rendered; the dog was located inside the house.

**Sunday, 9/10**  
9:38 a.m. Party states someone kicked their door at 1:30 a.m., and they have a video of it. Report taken.

11:19 a.m. Third Street caller says the driver of a taxi backed up into a neighbor's car, but was told by her boss to just leave, and dropped off caller at her destination. Investigated. Owner has been notified.

12:29 p.m. Public drinking reported at Spinner Park. Parties dispersed.

5:22 p.m. Male states he was watching eagles and got stuck behind the gate at Migratory Way. Services rendered. FirstLight said they were not sure if code had changed, but would send someone from Cabot Station to let the caller out.

8:06 p.m. Multiple callers stating there is a male in the roadway at the paper mill and Canal Road, screaming at cars and recording them on his phone. Unable to locate.

# Library Author Series Presents *Spirit and Spa*

By DAVID JAMES

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – A Spiritualist “tag team,” whose members share a core belief that human beings can – and do – communicate with Spirit World souls of the living dead, will read excerpts from *Spirit and Spa* at the Montague Center library branch next Wednesday, September 20 from 6 to 7 p.m., and answer questions that will most likely follow.

A memoiristic and old photographic portrait of Lake Pleasant, *Spirit and Spa* traces three generations of the Bickford-Shattuck family's intimate involvement in the founding and phenomenality of the smallest and youngest of Montague's five villages, which is now three months short of its 150th anniversary.

*Spirit and Spa* was a joint effort by the late Louise Shattuck and this writer, and excerpts will be read by this writer and Sheryl Sadler-Twyon, both of this village and both members of the board of directors of The National Spiritual Alliance (TNSA). The program is part of the library's Authors' Series.

Sadler-Twyon's connection to Lake Pleasant is through her paternal great-grandparents, Frank and Myra Wilbur, an herbalist and a medium. The Wilburs were contemporaries of the Bickford-Shattucks in the pioneering days of the Spiritualist summer campground from the 1880s through the early de-

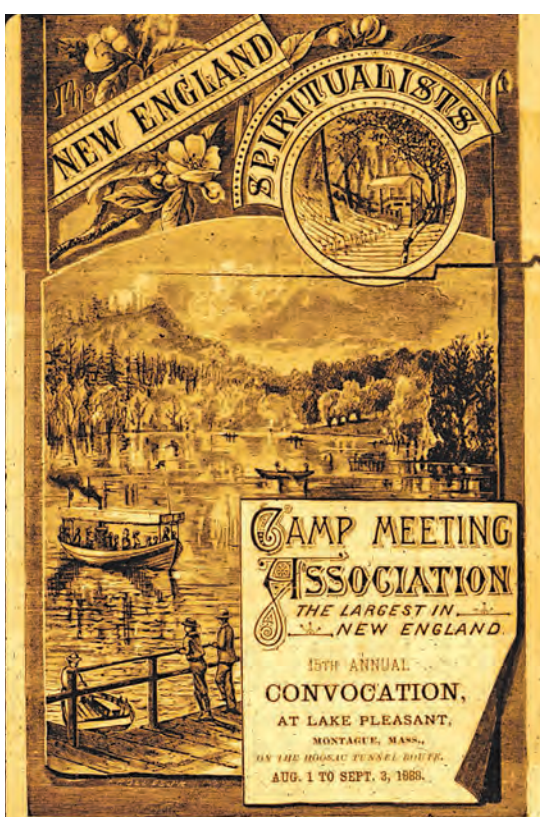
acades of the 20th century, as it morphed from tent sites to Victorian cottages to a deluxe hotel and a handful of mansions of millionaires.

For half a century, Lake Pleasant was the largest Spiritualist gathering place in the United States. TNSA's ongoing presence makes it the nation's oldest continuously-existing year-round same-site Spiritualist center.

In 1968 Shattuck wrote a historical overview for *Yankee Magazine*, “Oh, to be Young and Happy Again on Beautiful Lake Pleasant,” and began daydreameries of publishing a substantial accounting of the village she had loved so long and so well.

When this writer meandered into her life in Y2K, Shattuck, widely known as the “Oracle of Lake Pleasant,” said she felt she had found someone to help hold aloft the torch she had carried alone... and her slumbering dream of a full-fledged portrait of Lake Pleasant awakened once more.

With Shattuck as architect and master contributor of magical lore, and this writer as interviewer of her mind and memories and researcher of dusty and musty old records, mixer of word-mortar and layer of paragraph bricks, *Spirit and Spa* came into being on the eve of the 250th anniversary of the Town of Montague's founding. And the rest, as they say – whoever they may be – is history.



The front cover of an 1888 New England Spiritualist Campmeeting Association program.

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

**ROOT YOGA STUDIO**  
51 11TH ST., TURNERS FALLS

**413.676.9076**  
ROOT-YOGA-STUDIO.COM

**NEW STUDENT SPECIAL**  
**THREE CLASSES FOR \$30**

**Doug's Auto Body**  
Doug Smith - Owner

MA Reg. #RS2190

Ph. (413) 863-2785      39 Center Road  
Fax: (413) 863-0120      Gill, MA 01354

**FREE ESTIMATES**      **FREE LOANER CARS**  
**REPAIRS ON FOREIGN & DOMESTIC CARS AND TRUCKS**

Lic #36550-EL      1-413-345-1687

**ELECTRICIAN**  
**CHRIS M. STRAKOSE**

RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL  
ALL ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS AND REPAIRS  
EMERGENCY SERVICE

9 SWAMP ROAD  
MONTAGUE, MA 01351  
EMAIL: CSTRAKOSE.ELEC@GMAIL.COM

**FULLY INSURED**      **FREE CONSULTATION**

**APPLES** from page B1

seed will not grow into a tree bearing the same fruit as the one it came from. Of course, growers don't want to take chances that seedlings will become commercial successes, so they propagate apple trees of desirable varieties by taking a bud with a small piece of wood called scion wood and grafting it onto rootstock.

In this way new varieties are developed. For example, one parent of the Ginger Gold apples, developed in the 1980s, is Golden Delicious, while Sansa, another 1980s apple, has a Gala parent.

Apple trees are often described as being "discovered," because by lucky chance a self-seeded tree may produce a lovely apple, just waiting

to be found. Granny Smith appeared in the garden of an Australian woman of that name in the 1740s. John Ball is reputed to have found Baldwin apples as a chance seedling in his Wilmington orchard, first calling the apples "Woodpecker" because woodpeckers loved them. They were then called "Butter," after the name of the man who bought the orchard, and finally "Baldwin" when they were marketed by a Colonel Baldwin.

There are now an estimated 7,000 apple varieties but supermarkets rarely have more than about ten favorites in stock. Old, established orchards may grow many more. Clarkdale Fruit Farms in Deerfield – founded in 1915 – has over 50 varieties, including many older heritage varieties now hard to find elsewhere.

Just as new apples are developed, some once-popular apples become rare. Northern Spy, for example, discovered in New York in the early 1800s, is often cited as the best all-around apple, especially for pies. But the trees grow slowly, and crop well one year then poorly the next. This doesn't endear them to growers who have to make a living.

Another rare apple is Roxbury Russet, valued by earlier generations because it kept well for winter. But nowadays we don't need to stash apples away for winter use, and its rough brownish skin is off-putting to the many Americans who like shiny colorful skins, so russet apples are hard to find.

The apples good for making hard cider – Massachusetts' basic drink until Prohibition – are also now rarities because they don't usually taste good eaten out of hand or in pies.

Nonetheless, the boxes and bags of apples at Clarkdale and other local orchards and farmers markets cheer the heart because apples are such culinary workhorses. The number of recipes for apple pies, cakes, and other desserts seems countless. Then there's apple sauce and chutneys to add zing to meat dishes, and apple butter for a breakfast treat.

Here are some recipes, with notes about which apple to use in each one.

**APPLE BUTTER**

Apple butter is easy to make because there's no peeling or coring. It has less sugar than jam, so there's fewer calories. On the other hand, it doesn't keep as long. Be sure to stash it in the fridge and eat it within a month. It's great with toast, muffins, popovers, and pancakes. Most apples are good for apple butter; a mixture is great. Avoid Golden and Red Delicious, as their slices stay too firm.

about 3 lb. mixed apples, washed  
1¾ to 2 cups sugar  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
½ tsp. allspice  
¼ tsp. nutmeg

Cut each washed apple into 4 or 5 pieces, discarding any stalks as you go. Leave the cores in. Put the pieces in a large pan with half a cup of water.

Cover and place on a low heat for about 20 minutes, until the apples have become very soft. Let them cool for a few minutes, then push them through a food mill or whizz them in a food processor. (If choosing the latter method, discard the peels and other debris before processing.)

Return the softened apples to

the rinsed-out pan and stir in 1¾ cups of the sugar. Cook over medium heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar, for about three minutes. Then stir in the cinnamon, allspice, and nutmeg.

Increase the heat and boil rapidly until thick and glossy. Test for flavor by tasting a cooled spoonful. Stir in the remaining sugar if you would like it.

Test for doneness by dropping a spoonful on a cold plate. It should be glossy and hold its mounded shape, not flatten out. Spoon into sterilized jars. Cover the jars with a clean cloth until cold, then cap with lids. Store in the fridge for up to 4 or 5 weeks.

Yields three half-pint jars.



Apple butter on a muffin.

HOPLEY PHOTOS

**MARLBOROUGH PIE**

This pie was a Massachusetts specialty, often mentioned in memoirs of 18th- and 19th-century Thanksgivings. Cortland apples are a good choice because the flesh doesn't brown when exposed to the air. Golden Delicious are good too, and Northern Spies are perfect. You can use a mixture of apples, but avoid McIntosh as they fall apart.

3 or 4 apples, peeled and cored  
grated zest of 1 lemon  
½ tsp. lemon juice  
½ cup granulated sugar  
3 eggs, beaten  
1 Tbsp. rum (or 1 tsp. vanilla extract)  
¼ tsp. nutmeg  
3 Tbsps. butter, melted and cooled, not re-solidified  
½ cup half-and-half or cream  
9-inch deep-dish pie shell, baked without filling

Preheat the oven to 375° F. Grate the apples. (You should have about 2 cups of grated apple.)

Quickly mix the grated apple with the lemon zest and juice, then stir in the sugar, then the beaten eggs, the rum or vanilla, the nutmeg, the melted butter, and finally the half-and-half or cream.

Pour the mixture into a pie shell that has been previously baked to a light gold. Place in the center of the oven and bake for 10 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 350° F, and bake for another 20 minutes, or until a toothpick poked into the middle comes out clean.

Cool on a wire rack and serve slightly warm or at room temperature.



Marlborough pie.

**TABLE BOOKS****Raising the Martini to New Heights**

JOHN CONFORTI PHOTO

This image of a martini shows photographer John Conforti's fascination with liquid reflections.

By **RICHARD ANDERSEN**

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – Charge your glasses! Photographer John Conforti has elevated this splendid liquid and its dazzling glass to eye-appealing art in his superb collection *Martini: A "Cocktail" Table Book*.

The martini soon got over its humble 1922 beginning in San Francisco – two shots of gin, one of vermouth, stirred not shaken in a chilled glass, topped with a lemon peel or green olive – to spread across the country and then across the pond to France, where the martini glass was introduced at the Paris Exhibition of 1925. A Modernist alternative to the champagne coupe, no glass ever looked as sexy (think stiletto heels), hot (think Jazz Age fashions) or cool (think Cole Porter tunes). Alcohol never looked better.

The glass was also practical. The slim stem was easy to hold and prevented the hand from warming the cold liquid faster than room temperature could. Because the wide mouth exposed more gin to open air, the experience of drinking a martini became pleasingly aromatic before a first sip was even taken.

The martini's popularity in the States increased during Prohibition (ever hear of "bathtub gin"?), and so did the measuring ratio. Because of a shortage of vermouth, it went from 2:1 in 1920 to 3:1 and then 4:1 by 1933. The more gin and less vermouth, the "drier" the martini became. Winston Churchill's had no vermouth whatsoever.

Other well-known names soon became associated with the drink. Sean Connery as James Bond ordered one "shaken not stirred" (heresy!) in the 1964 movie *Goldfinger*, and Alan Alda as Hawkeye served martinis from a distillery hidden in his tent during the entire run of the television series *M\*A\*S\*H* from 1972 to 1983.

Foreign substances also got in on the act. Vodka became a popular substitute for gin, and both have been enriched or diluted – take your choice – by everything from chocolate to peaches to coffee beans.

Today there is a breakfast martini, a Vesper martini, and even a "pornstar martini" (vanilla flavor, passionfruit juice, and prosecco).

John Conforti will have none of this. For him there is only one, pure, genuine, authentic martini. In the three-sentence introduction to his new collection of photographs, in which crystal-clear martinis interact with dramatically placed icons in a range of beautiful settings to produce some of the most vibrant images in the history of color photography, he throws down the gauntlet: "I'm not talking a cup of cheap gin poured over an ice cube. I'm talking satin, fire, and ice; Fred Astaire in a glass; surgical cleanliness, insight, comfort; redemption and absolution. I'm talking MARTINI."

Conforti's most engaging photographic technique is to juxtapose a traditional martini within a familiar setting in such a way that light reflecting off the setting refracts through the martini, creating images that are both real and surreal at the same time.

The most stunning of Conforti's 30 vibrant images takes place in Brooklyn's River Café. In this photo, shot from a table inside the café, light reflecting off a bright red-and-yellow striped awning refracts through a foregrounded martini to create the illusion that the liquid in the glass matches the stripes on the awning. Resting atop one side of the glass's rim are three buoyed olives, held together by a wooden stirrer. The overall effect is not much different than viewing a gently shimmering lake during a brightly lit sunset, the red and yellow rays of which dive deep beneath the surface of the water. Nothing less than sublime.

It all looks too good to drink. And it is, for the simple reason that this martini is no longer a cocktail. It's a work of art.

Should you wish to talk martini with John Conforti, or if you're interested in purchasing a copy of *Martini: A "Cocktail" Table Book*, you can write directly to him at [jmjm1948@aol.com](mailto:jmjm1948@aol.com).

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

**Renaissance Excavating, Inc.**

**COMPLETE SITE WORK**

Septic & Drainage Systems | Sand, Gravel & Loam

Main Road, Gill  
Douglas Edson 413.863.4462  
renexc@gmail.com cell 413.834.2201

INFO@RENBUILD.NET  
413-863-8316

**RENAISSANCE BUILDERS**

WWW.RENBUILD.NET • PO BOX 272, TURNERS FALLS, MA 01376

**WOODCAT**  
CONSTRUCTION LLC

SERVING FRANKLIN & MIDDLESEX COUNTIES

**SLOW RENOVATIONS OF ODD STRUCTURES**

info@woodcat.co / ig: woodcat\_builds / 508 306 1822

BONDED/INSURED/MA CSL & HIC

**LANDSCAPES** from page B1 forest growth,” Hill writes in an artist statement. “There could be small animals, hundreds or thousands of small insects; millions of nematodes, protozoa, archaea, and algae; billions of fungi and bacteria. Interactions between each organism are specific and contribute to the continuation of the whole.”

On his website, Hill describes that while *Nocturnal Landscapes* “[began] as a reaction against chemical-industrial agriculture, the series has evolved into a celebration of soil regeneration and ecosystem building.”

In an interview with the *Montague Reporter*, Hill elaborates on his style.

“I call my work ‘surreal’ because it represents a vision of agriculture that isn’t reality,” Hill says. “Because the majority of the farms in the country are sort of these toxic wastelands, and if you walk through them, they don’t look anything like the paintings.”

Hill expresses a desire to “focus on the positives,” using his work to explore examples of a healthy relationship between agriculture and the environment.

“The paintings are depictions of a lot of small farms and natural gardens, where you do see a diversity of plants and a diversity of insects and animals and a productive growing space,” he says.

*World of Soil’s* grand centerpiece, the five-by-six-foot *Before the Spotted Lanternfly*, renders a moment of sheer beauty before the destruction of overcorrection. In a fictional narrative that Hill wrote after completing the painting, he describes a thriving wild lettuce crop contaminated by pesticides used to combat a spotted lanternfly invasion.

“Now many of the insects and toads are gone,” Hill writes. “The wild lettuce remains but it pulls up pesticides from the soil and it shouldn’t be harvested here anymore. The lanternflies are the first ones to return the following spring.”

The specific organisms Hill highlights stem in part from their relationship to ecological decline.

“I certainly want to draw awareness to the decreasing biodiversity



FRONTIERO PHOTOS  
*Cottage Garden, acrylic on canvas. Flora and fauna at once overpower and seem to guard the dwelling nestled in the background.*

in our insect life,” he says. “That’s a core part of my series, just drawing attention to the insects. They are indicator species, so are toads and frogs, so I have those portrayed in my painting. They’re some of the first things to go when the land is treated with pesticides, or when an environment shifts because of natural causes.

“When local ecosystems start to collapse, the amphibians and some of the more sensitive insects are gonna be the ones that go first, such as fireflies, they’re another one that I like to paint a lot.”

Hill lives in Turners Falls. He says he takes about a year for each painting, working at a gradual pace. *Before the Spotted Lanternfly* took two years.

“I might spend an hour on a single insect, and then do the same the next day,” Hill says.

He doesn’t use an easel, opting instead to balance the stretched canvas on his lap while sitting on his living room couch.

Hill and Salmon Falls Gallery intentionally timed the show for the September 10 iteration of the Shelburne Falls Art Walk. They did not predict the episodes of severe flooding that damaged western Massachusetts farms earlier this summer – or the resonance those losses would have with this collec-

tion of paintings.

“I booked the show six months ago,” Hill says. “I’ve been working on these paintings for a long time. I was going to hang the show last month when all the flooding was happening, and I decided that since a lot of these local farms around here are the inspiration behind some of my paintings, I’m gonna donate 15% of my proceeds to the Mass Farm Resiliency Fund.”

If his finished works illustrate the endurance and sanctity of the natural world when given the conditions to flourish, Hill’s artistic process also evinces the value of thoughtful cultivation.

“I started painting when I was about 13 years old,” Hill says. “Prior to that I was doing wood sculpture, since a very young age – I’ve always been interested in arts. Then in my 20s, I started to get very interested in painting and I pretty much paint every day. My secret to success, if I had one, about getting the art done is that I just do it a little bit each day. I chip away at it.”

Nocturnal Landscapes: *World of Soil* is on view at *Salmon Falls Gallery, 1 Ashfield Street, Shelburne Falls, until October 29. The gallery is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. Admission is free.*



**VALLEY VIEW** from page B1 a wide margin over some. Readers will recognize the Powertown players, such as Bobby Bourbeau, Mike Parenteau, Fran Togneri, and Ray Zukowski. The rest of the roster included my South Deerfield chums, people like Matty Murphy, Eddie Skribiski, Glenn Deskavich, and Big Richie Kellogg. Top to bottom, that lineup came to play and could handle anything thrown its way.

On that final day of the steamy three- or four-day tourney, our hand-picked skeleton crew was marching into Silver Lake Park for the winners-bracket finals against the tourney favorite, a veteran Keene team with fireballer Tim “Whitey” Lepisto on the mound. Gametime was 11:15, and a large, boisterous crowd was expected.

Because our barebones roster had no depth, there was no room for injury or emergency. How do you find a capable ballplayer willing to sacrifice his Labor Day Weekend by sitting the bench as a backup? It’s not fair.

Winners-bracket finals are always huge. The unbeaten winner moves into the driver’s seat, needing one more win for the championship. The loser falls into the losers’-bracket final, needing to win that game and then beat the winners’-bracket foe back-to-back in the championship finals.

I can’t pretend to have been unaware that my wife’s pregnancy could interfere with my availability before I submitted the tourney entry fee. But her late-August due date convinced me to roll the dice, confident everything would work out. It was wishful thinking. You’d have to have known Gary – or both of us, for that matter – to truly understand the long odds against smooth sailing.

Sure enough, the pressure-cooker started to whistle as the tourney approached with Joey more than a week overdue – not uncommon for first pregnancies, we were told. By the time the tourney opened and the pregnancy endured, all I could do was hope and pray to the hunter-gatherer gods that the birth could wait until after Labor Day.

Not to be. Go figure. When Joey awoke with labor pains at around 4 a.m., I called a teammate to apprise him of the unfortunate situation. Hopefully, I told him, the birth would happen fast. I’d get there as soon as possible. If I didn’t make it for the first pitch, they’d have to play a man short, without a fourth outfielder,

like the real game. By 4:30, less than seven hours before the scheduled first pitch, we were off to the Northampton hospital.

We went straight to the emergency room, where Joey was assessed. With fetal distress detected, an emergency C-section was ordered and the holiday scramble was on. A surgeon was found, and I attended the birth, hung around awhile, and was informed that my wife needed rest. It would be best to give her space and let her rest for several hours of post-op recovery. Music to my ears.

Before 11 a.m., I was on my way to Athol with no hope of playing.

I arrived at Silver Lake Park with Keene at bat and up by two runs, I think either 3-1 or 5-3, in the top of the seventh inning. After witnessing the final two outs from the bench with scorekeeper Brudger Bialecki, I went to the third-base coaching box for our last at-bat. I want to say the storied Lepisto was pitching. He was a hurler with many state titles and Nationals victories under his belt. (But, remember, it was four decades ago. I could be conflating one tourney with another. Does it really matter?)

Down to our final three outs, we rallied to load the bases with two outs, sending always-dangerous slugger Murphy to the plate. It was high drama before a festive holiday crowd ringing the fence-enclosed diamond. Murphy was always a tough out and, as usual, he worked the count to 3 and 2. Then, with one mighty swing of the bat, he ended the game in dramatic fashion – sending a towering, game-winning grand-slam home run over the left-center-field fence.

I can’t say for sure, but do believe we went on to win that tournament. If not, we were runner-up. Honestly, I can’t remember. Don’t forget, I was at the time hopelessly ensnared in more pressing family distractions – ones that raced down Memory Lane like a bolt of flashback lightning on that recent, crack-of-dawn, Labor Day ramble around my neighborhood.

It now seems like ancient history to me as I grow old. I have outlived my sons, and competitive local men’s softball leagues have followed the passenger pigeon’s poignant path. What remains are happy memories and fleeting, ghostly “visitations” that come and go like blustery winds. Never ignore their gentle knocks on the back door. Invite them in to savor joyous reminiscence.



Montague Community Television News

**Bike Spotlight**

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** – Sadie’s Bikes is in the “Local Business Spotlight” this time around. Nik Perry shows us one of the bikes he built himself, and gives a little backstory on his interest in bikes. If you are interested in having your business featured in this local programming, please reach out to [info-montaguestv@gmail.com](mailto:info-montaguestv@gmail.com).

Other recent video updates include both the Gill and Montague selectboard meetings from September 11, the Montague finance committee meeting from September 6, and the GMRSD school committee meeting from September 5.

All of these local meetings are

recorded and archived by MCTV, and a full collection of recent meetings can be found on our Vimeo page alongside many other community-sourced 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.



*Chris Hill’s Cabbage Fields, acrylic on canvas, 2021.*

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

**STONEDWORK**  
— BUILD. REBUILD. MEND. —  
R. SKELTON, WALLER  
(413) 367-2435 • skelton.rob@gmail.com

**DOLAN & DOLAN**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
174 AVENUE A  
TURNERS FALLS MASSACHUSETTS  
01376  
413-863-3133  
PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

**B. RUBIN & SONS INC.**  
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIRS  
Shocks • Tires • Batteries • Starters  
Struts • Tune-ups • Brakes • Oil Change  
194 MILLERS FALLS RD. • 413-863-2236  
10% SENIOR DISCOUNT FREE ESTIMATES  
MASS INSPECTION STATION: NO. 13051

the  
poetry  
page

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

- William Carlos Williams

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

# September's Featured Poet: Michael Lally

## From New York Notes (2004)

In the hospital —  
More cleaning of the  
Arteries, of the stent  
That shouldn't need it —  
How did Cheney and I  
End up in the same boat —  
The most beautiful  
Day of the year!  
And tomorrow  
The third anniversary  
Of another beautiful day  
When everyone realized how  
Vulnerable we all are —  
Though as always, some  
More than others —  
Last week the third  
Anniversary of my cancer  
Being removed, and of  
My finally accepting the  
Inevitable or not so much  
Acceptance as surrender — [...]   
My heart problems — though still  
So difficult for me to  
Comprehend — the cancer  
Was so much more  
Straightforward and clear —  
And still that young light  
Haired longhaired woman  
In the beige jeans gives  
Me a look of interest —  
I wonder — but no  
She's doing it again —  
Maybe it's the distance —  
She can't see the fear  
And disappointment in  
My eyes the age in  
My neck and hands —  
The shortness in my  
Breath and discomfort  
In my chest I'm not  
Ready for this — too bad —

## My Life 2

When I was 10,  
I thought I was "Irish,"  
even though I was  
born in the USA.

When I was 20,  
I thought I was "Black,"  
even though my skin  
is pink & freckled,  
my hair is straight,  
and I have no  
African ancestry.

When I was 30,  
I thought I was "queer,"  
though I was  
married and had  
two children, and all my fantasies  
& obsessions & com-  
pulsions & attractions  
were and had always  
been about women.

When I was 40,  
I thought I was a  
"movie star," even  
though the movies  
were terrible, and  
I was terrible in  
them, and almost  
no one knew them,  
or who I might  
have been in them.

When I was 50,  
I thought I was  
"enlightened," even  
though I wasn't.

But of course I was  
and am—enlightened,  
as I was and still am  
—an Irish-Black-  
Queer-Movie-Star.

## Too Many Creeps

Back when that Bush Tetras song  
became the anthem of the down  
town scene, in the 1970s I knew,  
we'd add our own list of what  
there were too many of, like  
yuppies, lawyers and real  
speculators buying up  
the lofts we lived in illegally,  
foreseeing the powers that be  
changing the laws in time  
for the yuppies and lawyers  
and real estate speculators to  
buy up our neighborhoods  
we never called "Soho" or  
"Tribeca" but instead "So What"  
and "Washington Market"  
as it had always been known...

Now the list would go on  
forever, like too many lies,  
and too many people believing  
them, and too many filthy  
rich greedheads rigging the  
game and then blaming  
the rest of us for problems  
they cause, and too many  
people in poverty and  
deprivation, too many of  
them homeless, and too many  
evictions of poor people, and  
too many bullies, and too  
many cars, and too many  
TVs, and too many eyes on  
too many screens, and too  
many scams, and too many  
overworked underpaid  
people, and too many tax  
exempt churches  
and football stadiums, and too  
many fundamentalist Christians  
and Jews and Muslims and  
Ayn Randians, and too many  
hypocritical politicians and  
pundits, and, What about too  
many poems, you might ask,  
and I'd respond There can  
never be too many poems...

## Contributor Notes:

Special thanks to Richard Andersen for acquiring the Lally poems, from which I made a selection.  
In July, Richard participated in *Lallypalooza: A Celebration of the Life and Poetry of Michael Lally*. Here is  
Richard's appreciation of his friend:

Michael Lally is a highly acclaimed, widely celebrated, heavily anthologized author of more than  
twenty published books. A graduate of the University of Iowa's Writers Workshop and recipient  
of numerous honors and awards, including two poetry fellowships from the National Endowment  
for the Arts, he's also a playwright, screenwriter, editor, newspaper columnist, book reviewer,  
movie and television actor and director, teacher, lecturer, readers' guide author, recording artist,  
publisher, printer, and catalyst for the current national renaissance in live poetry readings.

Lines from Michael's works have been written into the dialogues of several major motion pictures  
and, to the envy of many, read aloud on the floor of Congress by Republican lawmakers as examples  
as to why the National Endowment for the Arts should be abolished.



WRITING THE LAND

The Poetry Page is supported by  
NatureCulture  
[WritingTheLand.org](http://WritingTheLand.org)

AQUATINT PRINT: RAPIDS ABOVE HADLEY'S FALLS BY WILLIAM GUY WALL 1822

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

Gerri Johnson Realty

Gill, MA • 413-863-9736  
[GerriJohnson@GJAR.com](mailto:GerriJohnson@GJAR.com)



WWW.GJAR.COM  
GERI JOHNSON, 45 Years of Experience



TURN  
IT UP!

MUSIC  
&  
MOVIES

BOOKMILL | MONTAGUE CENTER | 367.0309

SHANAHAN CONSTRUCTION  
SUPPLY CO. INC.  
SCSC "Rock solid service with level advice"

Complete Masonry Supply  
Offering a complete line of pavers,  
wall stone, retaining wall block and more.

298 Avenue A., Turners Falls 413-863-4322  
and at our new location or 802-579-1800  
529 S. Main St, Brattleboro [www.shanahansupply.com](http://www.shanahansupply.com)

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



The Reporter is looking for volunteers to help us curate this listing. Interested? Contact us at [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org)

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Mystery Train, Amherst: *Noise Nomads, Angela Sawyer & Arkm Foam, Shea Mowatt, Jonathan Hanson*. Free. 5 p.m.

Forbes Library lawn, Northampton: Flywheel presents *Treefort, Daeves*. Free. 6 p.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: *Ayano Kataoka*, percussion. \$ 7 p.m.

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Camp Keewanee, Greenfield: *Bella's Bartok, Leon Trout, Neal Francis, Bearly Dead*, many more. See [wormtownmusic-festival.com](http://wormtownmusic-festival.com). \$ 1 p.m.

Millside Park, Easthampton: *Ethiocolor, San Salvador, Orchestre Tout Puissant Marcel Duchamp*. Free. 6 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Dippers, Sky Furrows, Luxor Rentals*. \$ 7 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *David Wilcox*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Of Montreal, Locate S,1*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Patrick Mawn*. No cover. 8 p.m.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Camp Keewanee, Greenfield:

*Creamery Station, Outer Style, Hayley Jane, The Motet*, many more. See [wormtownmusic-festival.com](http://wormtownmusic-festival.com). \$ 10 a.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Emma's Revolution*. \$ 4 p.m.

Millside Park, Easthampton: *Louis Cato, Jon Cleary, Young @ Heart Chorus*. Free. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Brewery, Turners Falls: *Ask Wanda*. No cover. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Dialog Talk, Hazu, Birthright*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Senegal-America Project* feat. *Tony Vacca, Tantra Zawadi, Abdou Sarr, Mamadou Ndiaye, and Derrik Jordan*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Richard Lloyd Group* (ex-Television). \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Modern English, Augustine's Velo Club*. \$ 8 p.m.

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Arcadia, Easthampton: *Valerie June, James McMurtry, The Suitcase Junket*, more. See [arcadiafolkfest.com](http://arcadiafolkfest.com). \$ 10 a.m.

Camp Keewanee, Greenfield: *Max Creek, The Alchemystics, Rev Tor Band, The Edd*, many more. See [wormtownmusic-festival.com](http://wormtownmusic-festival.com). \$ 10 a.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Elan Sicroff*. \$ 4 p.m.

Lunder Center, Williamstown: *Senseless Optimism, Wendy Eisenberg*. Free. 5 p.m.

Millside Park, Easthampton: *John Doyle, Mick McCauley, Lily Henley & Duncan Wickel, Liz Knowles & Kieran O'Hare*. Free. 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Craetor, Limited Hangout, The Mighty Suicide Squirrels*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *GracieHorse, Stella Kola, bobie!*. \$ 8 p.m.

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Queer Poetry Night* with *CA Conrad*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Tree House Brewing Company, South Deerfield: *Dinosaur Jr., Luluc*. \$ 8 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Landowner, Bunnies, Phroeggs*. \$ 7 p.m.

Tree House Brewing, South Deerfield: *Kurt Vile & the Violators, Joanna Sternberg*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown & Friends*. No cover. 8 p.m.

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Montague Village Store, Montague Center: *Vimana*. Free. 6 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Murphy's Law, Grade 2, Tired of Trying*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Winter-pills, Original Cowards, Fancy Trash*. \$ 8 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Clannad*. \$ 8 p.m.

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Sierra Ferrell, The Devil Makes Three, Allison Russell*, more. \$ See [www.massmoca.org](http://www.massmoca.org) for info.

Montague Mill Haus: *Rong, Sink, Halo Bite, Corrode*. \$ 6 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *The Green Sisters*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *She Said*. \$ 8 p.m.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Dropkick Murphys (Acoustic), Bombino, Aoife O'Donovan, Alison Brown*, many more. \$ See [www.massmoca.org](http://www.massmoca.org) for info.

The Perch at Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pamela Means* performs *Abbey Road*. \$ 7 p.m.

Bellows Falls Opera House, Bellows Falls, Vermont: *Chris Smither, The Suitcase Junket*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Daniel Higgs, Chris Weisman*. \$ 8 p.m.

### looking forward...

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

10 Forward, Greenfield: *The Leafies You Gave Me, Hedge-witch, Justice Cow*. \$ 8 p.m.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Sandy Bailey, Cloudbelly, Luna Dawn*. \$ 7 p.m.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Major Stars, Jeffrey Alexander & the Heavy Lidders, Bhanjan Bhoy*. \$ 8 p.m.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Diane Cluck*. No cover. 8 p.m.

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

Palladium, Worcester: *Suicidal Tendencies, Judge, H2O, End It*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Ruth Garbus, Locate S,1*. \$ 8 p.m.

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15

The Drake, Amherst: *Bob Mould*. \$ 8 p.m.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Beverly Glenn-Copeland*. \$ 8 p.m.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26

Nova Arts, Keene: *Xiu Xiu, Thus Love*. \$ 7 p.m.

## COMICS and PUZZLE

JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

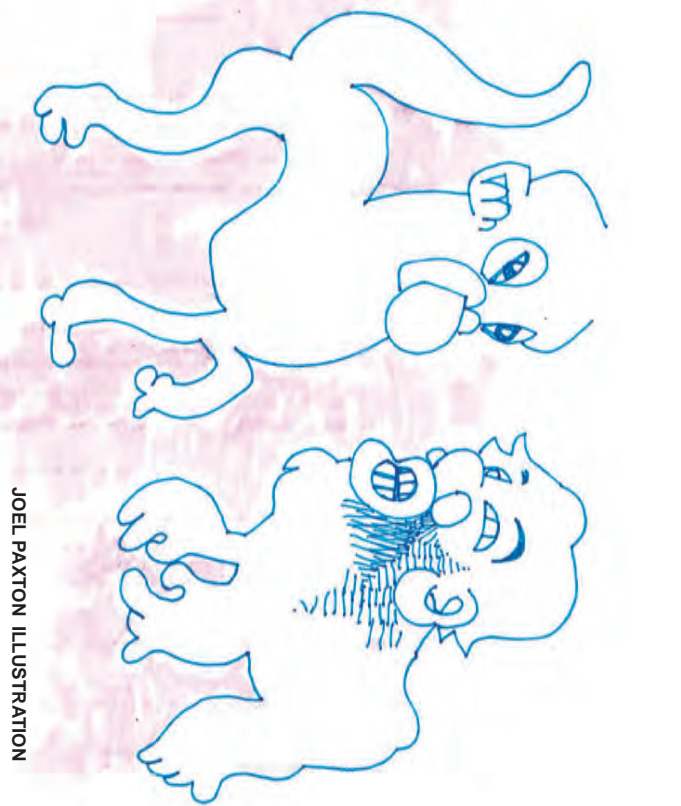


Submit your comics (and puzzles) to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org). Original & local creations only, please!

# MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

YBIYMB ONB ANOYYBP  
EX RETAINS OXP RETAINS  
ET ANOYYBP EX ARBU.  
- DOUBT COMPLEX

CRACK THE CODE? SEND YOUR ANSWER TO: [INFO@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG](mailto:INFO@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG)



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

### SPIRITS, BREWS & FINE WINES

53C S. Main St. South Deerfield, MA  
295 Amherst Rd. Sunderland, MA

New Location Now Open:  
6 Main Road, in Gill  
(formerly Jan's Package Store)  
Come check us out!

Deerfield: (413) 665-2456  
Sunderland: (413) 665-5030  
Gill: (413) 863-5730

SALES • SERVICE • INSTALLATION  
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL  
DOORS & OPENERS

## Devine Overhead Doors

Gerry Devine

106 West Street  
Hadley, MA. 01035

Hampshire: 586-3161  
Franklin: 773-9497

Come on over  
to the **Co-op.**

BestLocalBank.com | 877-682-0334

## ALBUM REVIEW

# Ruth Garbus, *Alive People* (Orindal Records, 2023)

By BRIAN ZAYATZ

**WENDELL** – I have long contended that Ruth Garbus is the best songwriter active in – or near – western Massachusetts. And yet, for the last five years or so I have been unable to send friends my favorite songs of hers when they ask about them, because they had never been recorded for public enjoyment. So last year when she announced that she would be recording a live album at 10 Forward in Greenfield, I was naturally over the moon.

But in the months after that show, at ensuing performances, I started to realize what a gift to the community it had been that these songs had been kept unrecorded for so long. Never in my life had I had such a relationship with songs. I would be lucky to hear them a handful of times per year, but I would sing them to myself for weeks after each show, humming through the parts I didn't remember and chewing on the meaning of the ones I did until I had metabolized them a hundred different ways.

The songs demanded a togetherness to be appreciated: if I was hearing them, it meant I was sitting in dead silence, possibly in tears, amongst close friends, strangers, but most of all people I see only at shows.

I didn't realize that this very ephemerality was also a thematic throughline of Garbus's songs until her set was assembled in the decidedly less ephemeral format of *Alive People*, a CD and LP released by Orindal Records on August 25.

Save for a few opening words – accompanying vocalist Julia Tadlock translating the song's title – the album begins with "Mono No Aware," a Japanese phrase referring to an awareness of the impermanence of things. Garbus and Tadlock sing in down-tempo, monotone phrases an octave apart, delivering four verses on topics ranging from the mortality and wisdom of squirrels to the perils of ignoring one's own genius.

The song introduces the album's central conceit and tension: that although everything around us is fleeting, ourselves most of all, the only way to truly see and appreciate the

world is to slow way, way down. I'm reminded of Thoreau's advice to take one's walks alongside a turtle on a leash.

When the vocal line finally jumps to a second note, the tension released makes the listener realize just how much control Garbus has over her voice, and her performance on the rest of the record confirms this.

Seen live, it doesn't seem effortless; it is the product of a long process of learning that began with breath. It is like watching a crafts-person spinning or juggling hot glass or sharp tools to produce a flower out of some improbable material: at no point does Garbus look afraid, only focused.

In the next song, another slow burn, the singer builds an unlikely relationship with a gamer in a virtual world that comes to feel as though it may be as real as the one in which we live and breathe. Another song shrugs off a lack of athleticism; still another is an ode to a houseplant. Each is delivered with musical precision, inventiveness, and feeling, elevating the mundane to the level of the sublime.

It's worth noting that, though recorded live at a performance venue, this is not quite a live album. The liner notes put it: "*Alive People* is a studio album... that happened to be recorded in a club with an audience of a hundred." I was expecting to hear some of the sounds that make Garbus's performances so special: cheers, of course, but maybe some snapping along with a beat playing while the musicians tune, audience members whispering "wow" to each other amid the applause, or someone shifting in their seat, drawing attention to the depth of enraptured silence that has taken hold.

But even as the album was being recorded, I realized this would not be the case. The audience's silence at the show felt unnatural, lingering until the final note of each song had rung out into nothingness, then breaking down into applause and a chorus of held-in chair squeaks and coughs. At one point while Garbus was retuning, I asked her if we could say "woo" while she was playing. Yes, she said, we should all act naturally, but this



ORINDAL RECORDS IMAGE

was impossible: we all wanted everything to be perfect, too.

The audience has a ghostly presence on the album, our cheers faint and mixed with other sounds at the ends of some tracks. After a few listens, I finally understand it: it's not a live album, but we needed to be present in the room for the songs to be what they are. These fragments of strangely-mixed audio are a nod to the audiences that co-created these songs, watching them evolve over several years through different instrumentations, tempos, and deliveries.

As contradictory as it may seem to record an album about ephemerality, the form allows the audience to engage with the songs in a new way, and recent performances have shown they continue to evolve. (Keen fans may notice some excellent Garbus songs did not make the cut, and we will hopefully continue to enjoy these in "live-only" form for some time.)

The last composed song on the album, before an improvised final track, is

"Reenchantment of the World," a title I choose to believe is a reference to Jackie Wang's poetic finale to *Carceral Capitalism*.

"When you go to town meeting you will see people's minds," Garbus sings, describing in detail the Brattleboro city hall and returning to the refrain, "And it was government music." From a live "studio" recording to a meeting of municipal government, Garbus seems to point to the musicality inherent to any space in which people create something together imperfectly.

"Alive people," after all, is an odd phrase. We hear its opposite, "dead people," more commonly, as we otherwise take for granted that the word "people" in common usage implies "alive" ones. In making the adjective explicit, Garbus politely nudges us to notice the fact of living a little bit more.

*An album release show for Alive People, with Ruth Garbus and Locate S.I, will be held Saturday, October 14 at the Stone Church in Brattleboro.*

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

**Abby Graseck**  
Zen Shiatsu  
Turners Falls & Gill

413-834-5382  
agraseck.shiatsu@gmail.com  
www.abbygraseckshiatsu.net

**DIEMAND FARM** WENDELL, MA

**WE CATER**  
your special events

GRADUATIONS  
BIRTHDAYS  
MEETINGS  
WEDDINGS  
ANNIVERSARIES  
FUNERALS

THEDIEMANDFARM.COM (978) 544-3806

**Peter Waters Painting Services**

Interior/Exterior  
Custom Residential  
Fully Insured

Office: 978-544-6534  
Cell: 413-461-5172  
Wendell, MA  
peterjwaters88@gmail.com

**Harriet Paine**  
REALTOR®

C (413) 475-4203  
O (413) 223-1367

harriet@cohnandcompany.com  
cohnandcompany.com

117 Main Street  
Greenfield, MA 01301

**Turners Falls Pizza House**

Family Owned & Operated  
Serving Turners Falls area for 40 Years  
Dave Argy, Family & Staff

PIZZA, GRINDERS,  
DINNERS, SALADS, BURGERS

www.turnersfallspizza.com  
119 Avenue A, Turners Falls (413) 863-8000

Local Solar PV Installers  
for over 16 years  
in western Massachusetts

**GREENFIELD SOLAR**

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

SolarGreenfield.com  
2 Fiske Ave., Greenfield  
(413) 772.3122  
Call for free site assessment!

1. come in  
2. put feet up  
3. have drink  
4. eat grub

**THE VOO**

NEW FOOD!

78 3rd St TFMA

HOURS/SPECIALS

ORDER ONLINE:  
thevoo.net

**Start the Future Today!**

- Wealth Management
- Trust Services
- Estate Settlement

**GSB**  
Wealth Management  
& Trust Services

(413) 775-8335 • greenfieldsavings.com

Dennis L. Booska  
Dennis L. Booska, Jr.

Phone & Fax  
413-863-3690

**Booska's Flooring**

169 Avenue A, Turners Falls

Member  
The Flooring Network.

**Tile  
Lino  
Carpet**

**Reil** Improve Air Quality  
& Heating/Cooling  
Efficiency

CLEANING SERVICES LLC

**DUCT CLEANING**

Free Video Inspections  
Air Duct • Baseboard • Dryer Vent Cleaning  
Log on to see our Rotobrush video

Call 413.223.5494 or visit www.REILCLEAN.com