

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Sewer Rates Will Increase For Households, Industry

By JEFF SINGLETON

The September 25 meeting of the Montague selectboard was dominated, as has often been the case lately, by sewer news. The board approved a big increase in sewer rates for industrial users, bringing them up to par with residential users, and agreed to hire former superintendent Bob Trombley to help current superintendent Chelsey Little manage the large number of projects that have descended on the Clean Water Facility (CWF).

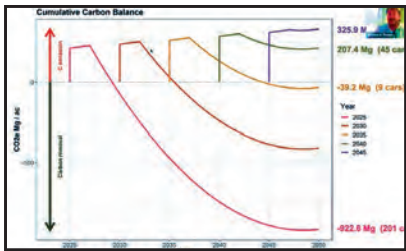
The board also finalized the warrant for the town's October 10 special town meeting and approved numerous permits for this year's Falls Fest, which will take place in downtown Turners Falls on Satur-

day, October 21.

Little began her presentation of sewer rates by showing how much total revenue in total was needed to balance the approved CWF budget. She noted that a number of projects at the plant to be considered at the October town meeting would be funded by "retained earnings," leftover sewer revenue from previous years, reducing the rate increases needed this year.

Total CWF spending approved by town meeting this spring, Little estimated, would require a revenue increase of 8.6% percent, to just over \$3 million. To generate this revenue she proposed raising the residential rate in all of Montague's villages by 8.6%, from \$16.94 per see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Forums Explore Obstacles To a Sun-Powered Future



ZOOM IMAGES

Harvard Forest ecologist Jonathan Thompson (left) shared charts estimating the net impact on atmospheric CO₂ of cutting down trees to build solar arrays.

By SARAH ROBERTSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – The rapid development of solar energy in Massachusetts over the last decade is posing a challenge to communities asked to host large-scale arrays. Small towns are confronting big questions about deforestation, electrical grid upgrades, battery storage, and more as the state and

federal governments race to meet ambitious renewable energy goals.

Public officials, academics, solar developers, and dozens more have been grappling with these issues this month at the Western Massachusetts Solar Forum, a series of online discussions hosted by the UMass Clean Energy Extension. State senator Jo Comerford,

see **EXPLORE** page A2

High School Sports Week

By MATT ROBINSON

The Turners Falls High School volleyball team attempted to topple the sitting state champions this week, but the Frontier Red Hawks had other ideas.

In football, the Franklin Tech Eagles bounced back from last week's late-game loss to Frontier by scoring a game-winning touchdown late in Friday's game against

Pathfinder, and then coming up with a fumble to seal the win.

Tech's volleyballers went 2 and 1 this week, with their only loss against Turners; their field hockey team beat Turners to remain undefeated, but it was the closest contest yet.

And the girls' co-op soccer team at Franklin Tech, which includes athletes from Turners Falls High, is now riding a five-game unbeaten streak, see **SPORTS** page A6



DAVID HOULT PHOTO

Franklin Tech's Mia Marigliano (left) and Pioneer Valley's Fota Ndiaye vie for control of the ball. The Eagles prevailed 5-2 over the Panthers in Monday's game.

Pickup Hits Teen Cyclist At Intersection On Top of Hill

By CHARLOTTE MURTISHAW

TURNERS FALLS – A landscaping truck struck a teenage bicyclist near the convergence of Millers Falls and Turners Falls roads Tuesday afternoon, prompting a heavy emergency services response and renewing local conversation about the safety of the intersection.

At 3:21 p.m., Montague emergency dispatch received a call reporting the collision, and the scene was quickly shut down and traffic re-routed for the ensuing investigation. Montague police, state police, and the Turners Falls fire department were supported by surrounding municipalities' police departments and an auxiliary ambulance from AMR in Greenfield.

Due to the nature of the injuries, the bicyclist was ultimately airlifted from the Turners Falls airport to the Level 1 trauma center at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, according to deputy fire chief Kyle Cogswell.

The truck in question, an older pickup towing an equipment trailer, had apparently climbed the Unity Street hill from downtown Turners Falls; after passing Scotty's

see **HITS** page A7

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Health Officials Wonder How Much They May Intervene

By JOSH HEINEMANN

A three-week gap between meetings made the Wendell selectboard's agenda for September 20 long, but the board was able to stay focused and complete the meeting in under two hours. A number of topics focused on ways to make residents' heating, housing, or energy costs lower.

Board of health chair Barbara Craddock and health agent Wibby Swedberg came with a request to seek advice from town counsel about a tricky situation. A follow-up from a police report made them aware of a local man living alone in unhealthy conditions. Board of health members have cleaned his home three times, only to have it return to its prior unsanitary condition.

Craddock said the resident seems to have little self-awareness and does not always answer his door, and she wondered what course the board of health should take, and whether they should contact protective services.

The selectboard authorized them to consult with the town's lawyers, and member Gillian Budine see **WENDELL** page A6

WATCHFUL EYES



JOE R. PARZYCH PHOTO

A kettle of vultures regularly patrols the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge, scavenging for fish below the dam. Photo correspondent Joe R. Parzych spotted these two last Thursday, resting as workers repaired the dam's bascule gates.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Millionaires' Money Is Here

By JEFF SINGLETON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Money from the "Fair Share" amendment to the state constitution, which imposes a 4% tax on income over \$1 million, will soon be allocated to transportation and education programs at the local level, nearly a year after the measure was approved by the state's voters.

This reality is just starting to dawn on local officials, who have been somewhat short on information on how the money, which will be targeted to education and transportation, will be allocated.

But the impact of the revenue, which is estimated to exceed \$1 billion, could be significant. Montague town administrator Steve Ellis said he plans to go before the selectboard next Monday to tell them that Montague may receive "at least" an extra \$244,000 for roads and bridges.

And at a recent advisory board meeting of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA), executive director Tina Cote announced that the bus system would probably receive approximately \$1.1 million in Fair Share money.

A \$100 million allocation of see **MONEY** page A8

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Board Keeps Its Distance From Gas-Powered Tool Ban

By GEORGE BRACE

At their September 26 meeting, the Leverett selectboard declined a request from resident Zak Katz to support a town meeting article instituting a local phased ban on gas-powered leaf blowers and lawn equipment. The board suggested he pursue an article through a citizen's petition if he wanted to see it included at town meeting. The board also agreed to seek funding for rehabilitation of the Field Family Museum, among other business.

Katz was unable to attend Tuesday's meeting, but emailed a proposal for a phased ban on gas-pow-

ered lawn equipment, beginning in 2025 with leaf blowers used by commercial operators, and taking full effect for all lawn equipment used in town in 2028.

In his email, Katz cited a need to address pollution and climate change as reasons for the proposal. Among other provisions, the measure would establish a fund to help residents with replacement costs. Katz said he would contribute \$5,000.

Selectboard member Patricia Duffy called the turn away from gas-powered equipment "a good thing for us to support" in regards to lowering emissions, but agreed see **LEVERETT** page A2

Your Trusty Local Source For The Meaning Of All Things

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Book Bans: Open Letter to Montague's State Legislators

Dear Senator Comerford and Representative Blais,

Montague's Library Trustees are charged with establishing policies for our town's public library system that reflect community needs and interests, and with supporting our Library Director and staff in their work. We support bill S.2447, "An Act protecting against attempts to ban, remove, or restrict library access to materials," first introduced in July 2023 by Sen. Jake Oliveira (Ludlow) and Rep. Aaron Saunders (Belchertown), and we urge you to co-sponsor it.

Challenges against books are on the rise nationwide, targeting particularly materials relevant to and supportive of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC youth. We have a sound policy for evaluating any patron complaint challenging a book in Montague's collection, but we seek stronger protection for our community's needs and interests that could be enacted at the state level.

This summer, Sen. Oliveira and Rep. Saunders introduced state legislation to "blunt book bans by putting up new requirements for libraries to receive state funds," as reported by public radio station WAMC. Bill S.2447 would require public libraries to adopt the American Library Association (ALA)'s Library Bill of Rights, including its statement that "materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation" to be eligible for state aid from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. State aid augments most public libraries' budgets, supplementing the funding received from their municipalities.

This summer numerous states have experienced calls for book bans or threats against libraries and librarians. Moreover, according to the *Washington Post*, state governments in Montana, Missouri, and Texas announced that they are severing ties with the ALA, imperiling their libraries' access to funding and training.

This *can* happen here: WAMC reported that "what spurred the two western Massachusetts legislators to act was a proposal before the Ludlow School Committee earlier this year that would have removed several titles from the schools' libraries. It ultimately failed without a vote. The sponsor admitted the proposal had been copied directly off the internet."

Other states have recently taken action similar to what Sen. Oliveira and Rep. Saunders have proposed in Massachusetts: Illinois became the first state to outlaw book bans in its public libraries and public schools, and New Jersey is considering similar state-level legislation. Both these bills work the same way: requiring libraries to adopt the ALA Library Bill of Rights in order to receive state funding.

Sen. Oliveira and Rep. Saunders are seeking additional co-sponsors for their proposed legislation regarding public libraries. There are currently seven co-sponsors.

(We note there is a recent related bill regarding school libraries, currently still in committee as SD.2673; we appreciate that our Sen. Joanne Comerford is already a co-sponsor of this bill.)

By co-sponsoring S.2447 you will help protect Massachusetts library patrons' access to the widest range of materials (especially those relevant to and supportive of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities), support our state's librarians and library trustees, and continue our Commonwealth's tradition of acting as a leader in embracing progressive values.

Sincerely,

Montague Public Libraries Trustees

Will Quale, *chair*
Nancy Crowell, *vice chair*
lydia ievis, *secretary*
David Detmold
Gretchen Wetherby
Louisa Khettab
Margot Malachowski
Miryam Vesset
Tricia Perham

CLARIFICATION AND CORRECTION

We've been urged to clarify that a young volunteer "load[ing] a bag of sorted containers into a single-stream recycling dumpster" in a Page A1 photo last week was in fact *emptying* that bag, not tossing the whole thing in. Plastic bags aren't allowed.

For that article, *Helping Sort It All Out*, we misunderstood data about the quantity of recycling at this year's

fair. There were 8.5 cubic yards, plus another 3 cubic yards in a large dumpster, collected, for a total of 11.5 cubic yards. We thought there were 8.5 cubic yards and *dumpsters held* 3 cubic yards, and wrote that "Enough recycling was collected to fill three large dumpsters."

This was way off. Our editor, not our reporter, was to blame. Thanks to Amy Donovan for the keen correction!



Adam Stockwell lifts a 271-pound block of titanium with one of the movable chainfalls inside Montague Machine on Rastallis Street in Turners Falls. The block is going to Wyman-Gordon, a firm that makes parts for the aerospace, energy, and military naval markets. At Adam's left is a hydroelectric turbine the company is rebuilding for a plant in Hillsborough, New Hampshire.

LEVERETT from page A1

with a comment from energy committee member Richard Nathorst that the board should "not be banning things."

Duffy also commented that such a ban would disproportionately affect "lower socio-economic status" people, and said she believed that if one were put in place, the money for replacing equipment should come "from the top down," and the state should provide funding.

Businesses, Duffy said, would also face difficulties replacing equipment, and the ban would make the town "not business-friendly." She added that she was not sure a ban would be enforceable, and suggested that a "resolution" would be a better route.

Board member Melissa Colbert agreed with Duffy about the financial cost to residents, and cited the lack of precedent for such a ban as another reason for the board to decline to support it. "I really love the idea, in theory, of Leverett being pioneers," she said, "and visioning and modeling to reduce our carbon footprint... but this isn't quite it, it's not realistic."

"You're going to need a lot of money to replace all the gas-powered lawn and power equipment in town," Nathorst said. "You're talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars. The town can't afford that."

Nathorst said he thought the goal of carbon reduction was a good one, but believed "market forces" would eventually result in replacement of the equipment "to the extent that it makes sense."

Selectboard chair Tom Hankinson

also voiced his support for the intention of the article, expressing his desire to "decarbonize every house in town," but said he didn't feel the article was within the board's purview. He also said he believed market forces would accomplish the replacement of gas-powered equipment, though perhaps on a longer timeline.

Electric Opposition

The board agreed to sign a letter to the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU) opposing new guidelines the DPU is considering regarding municipal electricity aggregation.

Hankinson said that Colonial Power Group, the town's electricity aggregator, had contacted all of its customers asking for support in opposing the new regulations, saying they would "make energy choices more restrictive." Hankinson said that he, Nathorst, town administrator Marjorie McGinnis, and others had sat in on a presentation by Colonial Power and agreed with their assessment of the regulation.

Nathorst said that he had looked into the matter further, contacting a number of people including at the UMass Clean Energy Extension, and that the consensus was that the new guidelines should be opposed. He reported that the energy committee was "pretty unanimous" in their opposition.

The board decided to modify a template provided by Colonial Power for the task of expressing opposition. Energy committee member Portia Weiskel said she had already drafted a personal letter in opposition, which will also be sent.

Birthday Facelift

The board agreed to a request from Leverett Historical Society member Sarah Robinson that it submit a "short-form" funding request to the town's Community Preservation Commission (CPC), seeking up to \$25,000 for a "face lift" at the town-owned Field Family Museum building.

Robinson said the building was

in "deplorable-looking" condition, and that she was seeking the funding in advance of the town's 250th anniversary in 2024.

Colbert said she appreciated the time and initiative the LHS was taking in the matter, noting that the eventual fate of the Field building has been a "contentious topic" in town, amidst which "the building is falling apart before our eyes." She added that the town will be "on display" during the anniversary celebration, and agreed that the timing for the requested refurbishing feels important.

The board agreed to submit the funding request, and Hankinson volunteered to defend the proposal before the CPC. It will be modeled on a similar proposal also being submitted by the LHS for work on the Moore's Corner Schoolhouse.

Other Business

McGinnis reported that the state ethics commission had told her the selectboard could approve a temporary liquor license to the town's 250th anniversary committee for a planned chicken barbeque at the 250th anniversary celebration, even though the selectboard itself is a co-sponsor of the event.

McGinnis said the board would need to fill out an "appearance of impropriety" form declaring that its members have no financial interest in the event.

The board accepted a \$25,000 state grant to do research into making the Council on Aging's health services navigator position permanent, and to fund one or two large events for seniors.

It also accepted two grants from the state's Community Compact program, one for research into regionalizing fire department services, the other to work on updating the town's personnel policies.

The selectboard and board of health unanimously voted to appoint Alan Goodman to the board of health, restoring that board to full capacity.

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

You may schedule a **COVID vaccine and flu shot at several clinics** being held in October. Find one near you at frcog.org/project/vaccine-information.

Clinics are planned in the towns of Gill, Erving, Northfield, Leverett, Bernardston, and beyond. You may also schedule shots at Walmart, Big Y, Walgreens, CVS, and Rite Aid store pharmacies by visiting their websites. There is no charge.

The Montague Congregational Church in Montague Center is flipping **pancakes this Saturday**, September 30, between 8:30 and 10 a.m. "These are not from a mix!" their announcement proclaims. Get your pancakes with sausage or bacon, maple syrup, fruit, coffee, tea, or juice for \$10. No reservation necessary, just walk into the church at 4 North Street.

Head to the United Way's Franklin County **Community Baby Shower** this Saturday, September 30, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the Greenfield town common.

The Diaper Bank will host a diaper swap, where you can exchange diapers that your family no longer needs and grab some that you can use. There will be other free baby supplies, a "village clothing closet," raffle prizes, and information about resources for new parents. There will be no event if it rains.

The National Spiritual Alliance will host a **Psychic Fair** from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. this Saturday at Thompson Temple, 2 Montague Avenue in Lake Pleasant. To register or for more information visit spiritualallianceusa.org/calendar.

Founded in 1874, Lake Pleasant is the oldest continuously-existing, same-site, year-round Spiritualist center in the United States.

Also this Saturday, September 30, there will be a **benefit concert for Maui** starting at 6 p.m. at the Ashfield Community Hall, 521 Main Street in Ashfield. The performers will be Peter J. Newland and Matt Hebert with their respective bands. Tickets are \$20, or pay what you can.

The **25th Annual Garlic Festival** is this weekend! There'll be three stages with music, performance, and spoken word, plus chef demos, local living and renewable energy workshops, a tent filled with electric vehicles, and a kids' art tent. Check out the work of over 100 artists, farmers, food vendors, healing arts, and community organizations.

The Seeds of Solidarity stand at the Orange festival will be well-stocked with multiple varieties of seed garlic for planting this fall, and bags and braids of bulbs for cooking. Learn more about this North Quabbin event at garlicandarts.org.

Looking for a **great view of the Quabbin Reservoir**? If you are up to a challenge, there's a scenic hike scheduled this Sunday, October 1 from Gate 37 on a short - but steep - trail up the Soapstone Mountain.

All ages are invited to come, but leave dogs at home. Meet at 11 a.m. at the gate off of Monson Turnpike Road in New Salem. Dress for the weather and insects, wear safe, suitable footwear, and bring water. Register at tinyurl.com/soapstone-hike.

Got a story to share that deals with mourning, loss, solace, and hope? Submissions are open for

a **Healing Waters, a storytelling show** at the Shea Theater on the afternoon of November 5. It is a benefit for the Hospice of the Fisher Home, an independent non-profit hospice residence and in-home program serving Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties.

The submission deadline is **this Sunday, October 1**. To enter, send an audio or video file of yourself reading your story, up to 10 minutes in length, plus a short (150-word) statement about yourself and your contact information, to healingwatersinfo@gmail.com.

Notice to all Eagle Scouts! Montague Scout Troop 6 will hold a Court of Honor ceremony in recognition of recent Eagle Scouts Zachary Emond and Silas Koyama next Monday, October 2 at 6 p.m. at the Montague Elks Lodge in Turners Falls.

If you are a local Eagle Scout, please attend the ceremony and share the honor of the evening.

On Monday, October 2 you can learn about **"Turf Wars: The Great American Lawn"** at the Montague Center Library from 6 to 7 p.m.

Michael Marcotrigiano will present information on "how we got from a country of forests and prairies to a country dotted by countless green acres of high maintenance turfgrass. The history and politics of the lawn are simply fascinating as are the ecological implications and challenges of balancing the fondness for a neat lawn with today's environmental concerns."

Get free clothes at the **YMCA free clothing store** on Tuesday, October 3, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Greenfield Y's gymnasium. Donations of bags of clothing in very good condition will be accepted at the front desk at the Y until October 1. Last year over 8,000 pieces of clothing went out to hundreds of individuals and families.

The latest edition of LifePath's *The Good Life* newsletter has an interesting article about **Mycoterra Farm in South Deerfield**, written by Bi-sek Hsiao.

Julia Coffey is the founder and owner of Mycoterra Farm and sister business Mass Food Delivery. Mycoterra is the largest mushroom farm in Massachusetts - they grow over 3,000 pounds a week in their greenhouses. Coffey started her food delivery business during the pandemic and it is still going strong, providing door delivery of farm products throughout the valley. Read more about it at lifepathma.org.

On Friday, October 6, the Discovery Center will open a new Great Hall **exhibit of paintings called Migrations**, curated by GuateMaya Art and Culture Connection. *Migrations* celebrates the human and natural diversity of the upper Connecticut River valley and the Americas. Colorful works depict scenes integral to village life, Mayan culture, and the history of Lake Atitlan in Guatemala.

There will also be a Day of the Dead Altar, built by local families with support from Montague Catholic Social Ministries. Through November 30.

The **Great River Challenge Triathlon** returns to the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environ-

mental Center for its eighth year on Saturday, October 7. The event combines paddling, running, and mountain biking, and can be done solo or with a team.

Several world-class athletes will be competing: world champion triathlete Janda Ricci-Munn, who is returning for the second time, and Olympic skier Kris Freeman, who will also compete.

Lunches will be catered by Tito's of Greenfield, the Brewery at Four Star Farms will supply a complimentary brew for racers, and Fogbuster of Greenfield will provide hot coffee. The Can Collectors will provide music for those waiting for their athletes to complete the course, and prizes will be distributed around 2 p.m. Advance registration is online at runsignup.com, and complete information on the race is at greatriverchallenge.com.

Volunteers are welcome to help **clean lichen off gravestones** with water, dish soap, and a very soft brush, at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 7, at the Gill Center Cemetery. Heavy rain cancels. Call Joan Pillsbury at (413) 531-2637 for more information.

Annaliese Bischoff will lead a workshop on **"Making Paper from Fungi"** on Saturday, October 7 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. at the Leverett Library. She'll show participants how to make paper from reishi and turkey tail fungi. Sign up for a spot by emailing Bischoff at sagegreen33@gmail.com.

The **Domino Toppling Extraganza** returns Sunday, October 8, at 5:30 p.m. to the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. This spectacle is the longest-running domino event in the world. Professional topplers will spend 48 hours setting up tens of thousands of dominoes, only to have a single tap fell 900 square feet of precisely placed blocks.

This year it will take place at 28 Vernon Street, next door to the museum, and will be livestreamed on BMAC's Facebook page. Admission is free for children 8 and under, \$3 for BMAC members, and \$5 for all others. Because space is limited, advance purchase of tickets is advised at brattleboromuseum.org or call (802) 257-0124 x. 101.

There will be a **Fantasy and Science Fiction Festival** in Deerfield on October 8 featuring local authors Holly Black, Andrea Hairston, Allen Steele, and James Camias. The authors will give readings, sign books, and hold a roundtable discussion about the genre.

The event will be held at the Deerfield Community Center in Old Deerfield between 3 and 5 p.m., and is a benefit for the Tilton Library renovation fund. Tickets at the door are \$20 for adults and \$10 for ages 12 and under.

Artspace in Greenfield is seeking a **tech volunteer**. "We are in need of a kind and talented individual to help us out with a variety of technical difficulties. We are having some internet woes, struggles with various Google Apps, and are seeking insight on email glitches," they write. If you or someone you know is interested in helping us out, email info@artspacegreenfield.com.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

POSTPONED!
Just before press time, Tom Goldscheider let us know his September 30 presentation at the Great Falls Discovery Center on the local machine tool industry and the United Electrical Workers union has been postponed due to COVID-19. We wish him a speedy recovery. Watch our *Local Briefs* column for a new date.

TURNERS FALLS WATER DEPARTMENT METER READING BEGINS MONDAY OCTOBER 2

VILLAGE-WIDE TAG SALE + Pie Auction!
★ ★ New date! ★ ★
Saturday, 9/30
9 am - 1 pm*
Rutters Park
Lake Pleasant
*Pie Auction @ 1 pm
Fundraiser for
The Bridge of Names

Montague Center Congregational Church
4 North Street
PANCAKE BREAKFAST
Deacon's Fund Breakfast
Saturday, September 30
8:30 to 10:30 a.m.
MENU:
Pancakes (plain or fruit)
Maple Syrup
Sausage or Bacon
Coffee, Tea, Juices
Walk-In Service
Cost: \$10

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

National Pierogi Day To Be Observed Locally

TURNERS FALLS - Our Lady of Czestochowa Church at 84 K Street is celebrating National Pierogi Day next Saturday, October 7, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The public is cordially invited to attend the event.

OLC's St. Hyacinth Pierogi Makers have been very busy making new and creative pierogi for this special occasion. Uniquely flavored creations for the event include the Crab Rangoon Pierogi with Duck Sauce, the Mango Habanero Pierogi with Mango Butter, and the Golabki Pierogi topped with a Creamy Garlic and Dill Tomato Sauce - all available hot off the grill.

"We wanted to offer non-traditional pierogi for this event that you would not find elsewhere," said Parish Council president Walter Hoszkiewicz. "All three varieties provide an incredible delicacy that will awaken your palate."

In addition, OLC's traditional Sauerkraut Pierogi and Potato & Cheese Pierogi will be available in frozen to-go packages of



St. Hyacinth Pierogi Maker Mark Garmalo can't help smiling after making Crab Rangoon Pierogi for next Saturday's National Pierogi Day Celebration.

a half-dozen each. A bake sale is planned featuring homemade Polish baked goods, "like Babcia used to make."

Don't miss your opportunity to savor the flavor of innovative Polish cuisine!

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RECYCLE

BOTTLES & CANS
Week of October 2
in Montague



more info? call: 863-2054

FACES & PLACES



Members of the St. Mary's of Worcester and Turners Falls high school basketball teams gathered at the Montague Elks on Saturday to reminisce about the 1973 Division 3 state basketball tournament, which St. Mary's won, 73-45, at Assumption College in Worcester. From left to right: Paul Cournoyer and Fran Togneri of TFHS and Steve Sargent, Ed Bauer and Bob Kusz of St. Mary's.



The trophy St. Mary's was awarded by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Pols Howl at DPU in Anguish

By KATE SAVAGE

Monday's selectboard meeting in Gill showcased concerns that a state agency may throttle local efforts to cut greenhouse emissions and reduce energy costs for residents. The selectboard approved a flurry of letters to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) and elected officials, seeking to protect the town's energy aggregation program in the face of new proposed guidelines.

"It's a sad statement that we have to keep coming back to this," said chair Randy Crochier. "We went through a lot of - I almost said a bad word. We went through a lot of stuff to get this done in the first place."

Aggregation programs allow municipalities to negotiate alternative electricity providers for residents. Negotiators choose from among a number of competitive bids and try to lock in a low price for a specific timeframe. Residents can stick with the basic service provided by the local utility if they wish. About 150 cities and towns in Massachusetts rely on aggregation programs, and in the next two years that number is expected to grow to 225, or nearly two-thirds of the state.

Gill's aggregation program has been celebrated for cutting costs dramatically and avoiding recent energy price spikes. "The comparative results for the last couple of years for our townspeople have been great," said energy commission member Tupper Brown. "Much lower bills." Gill's program also relies on a higher proportion of renewable energy than that included in basic service.

The DPU claims the new guidelines will help reduce its work backlog, which has stranded some aggregation plans in bureaucratic limbo for over four years. But those

in attendance on Monday expressed worry that the guidelines would only make the process slower, less effective, and more costly for both towns and residents.

According to the letter Gill is submitting to the DPU, drafted by Colonial Power Group, the town's aggregation consultants, the new guidelines would require municipalities to seek regulatory approval for more operational details. Towns with existing plans would also have to file amendments to comply with new requirements. This would immediately add a significant burden to DPU's backlog, the letter argues.

Energy commission member Claire Chang pointed to a program in Boston to offer low-income residents solar energy credits, which she said has been stuck in DPU's approval process for more than three years. "It's been stymied," said Chang.

"It should not be getting harder," said selectboard member Greg Snedeker. "With the experience of 150 towns, it should be getting easier."

The letter accuses the proposal of "excessive and costly micro-management," with the state agency "unnecessarily intruding into the minutiae of operational matters rather than deferring to the expertise of local leaders." Under the new guidelines, aggregation plans could only include two options, and one would have to be equivalent to "basic service." That means towns couldn't increase the proportion of renewable energy in their default offering, as Gill currently does.

The proposed guidelines would also "create missed market opportunities and hinder innovation," the letter went on to argue. Aggregators often try to move quickly to make new agreements when prices fall, but the guidelines would require towns to announce their launch date at least six months

ahead of time. Towns would also have to announce beforehand what energy plans they plan to offer, rather than seeing what the bidding process reveals and choosing the best options.

Also of concern is a requirement that all filings be signed by a lawyer "directly representing" the municipality, which imposes a new cost that would hit small communities most heavily.

Gill's letter will include a section that wasn't in the draft provided by Colonial Power, arguing that "municipalities must do their part to meet climate goals." According to the letter, "flexible" aggregation plans could allow towns to encourage the adoption of heat pumps or alter time-of-use rates to encourage electric vehicles.

The letter also sets out an alternative solution to lighten the bureaucratic workload and allow the DPU to approve plans much faster: return to its past process. "The Department should return to its former approach to aggregation plan review from the early 2010s, prior to its escalation in micromanagement," it states. "This approach can be implemented today and does not require any added rulemaking procedures, forms, or guidelines."

Snedeker asked the energy commission members why the state is considering the new guidelines now.

Brown responded: "I imagine that they had a sense that the aggregation program was getting away from them, and that they wanted to stay on top of it."

"And at the urging of the utilities," added Chang. "Let's just make it as simple as possible for everybody," she suggested, "because it benefits everybody. Well, that's the problem," she mused, laughing. "It benefits the ratepayers."

"So making it complicated helps somebody else," said Snedeker.

"Just by mistake," joked Crochier.

er. "Not intentional."

The board also signed a letter to the local legislative delegation in support of H.3852, a bill designed to protect local control of aggregation programs and reduce DPU oversight.

The selectboard thanked the energy commission for their quick work on the issue. "The endurance and continuing effort of Claire [Chang] is quite phenomenal on this issue," added Brown. "She's been carrying it."

Other Business

The board expressed muted interest in an upcoming "listening tour" with the Healey-Driscoll administration for Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampshire counties.

"It feels like another attempt at municipal moderation," said town administrator Ray Purington. "They're trying to find ways that state laws are interfering with smoother or efficient operation of cities and towns." Purington noted that in a meeting of this size, most of the time would be spent in introductions and thank-yous.

Asked what would make such events better for small towns like Gill, Crochier suggested that a meeting just for Franklin County would make participants feel like they had more of a voice.

Brown called the town's attention to the growth of invasive vines threatening trees along town roadways, and said he was starting to look into forming a group or subcommittee to deal with it.

The board declared stacks of old books long kept in the town hall basement to be "surplus equipment." Most are compilations of various state acts and codes. Purington said he would try to find someone interested in taking them rather than throwing them away.

Erick Padillo was appointed as firefighter through June 2024.


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EXPLORE from page A1

representative Mindy Domb, and other legislators organized the series with the goal of educating the public on policy priorities concerning the industry.

State climate chief Melissa Hoffer was the opening speaker at the first forum on September 5. “We’ve lost our stable climate. That is gone,” she said. “Our task now is to learn to be with these accelerating and intensifying impacts... and doing everything in our power to get off fossil fuels as quickly as possible. This is really important. And we’ve got to do that in a way that respects the integrity of our ecological systems, that is equitable, and that reflects the clear teaching of the Anthropocene.”

Massachusetts must develop solar energy at four times the current rate, state officials said, in order to meet its goal of “net zero” carbon emissions by 2050. About 3 gigawatts (GW) of solar capacity have been built, and an estimated 24 to 27 GW more are needed.

Solar energy in the United States is now a \$35 billion industry, said Juan Botero, a technology manager with the US Department of Energy, and regulating it is no simple task.

“The capacity, or technical expertise – it’s not always there, at the state and local level, for this proactive planning to take place,” Botero said. “A lot of what’s happening is reactionary to a site that gets proposed.”

Some towns, including Wendell and Shutesbury, have passed bylaws significantly restricting the location, size, and other aspects of solar arrays, though in some cases the legality of these bylaws is still being determined. Shutesbury is being sued by the energy developer PureSky Energy and local forestry company W.D. Cows on the grounds that the town’s 2021 solar bylaw is unreasonably restrictive, a violation of the so-called Dover Amendment of the state Zoning Act. The outcome may further define what restrictions are considered legal across the state.

State representative Aaron Saunders has introduced a bill that would update the Dover Amendment to allow towns to regulate solar facilities for the purpose of preserving forests, farms, or wetlands, instead of just public health.

Incentivized by the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program, developers are

competing for sites that promise the fastest, easiest, and most profitable installations. Undeveloped land in less affluent communities presents the fewest barriers, but may not be the most ecologically sound place to site arrays.

“The new SMART regulations inadvertently incentivized large solar development, but left municipalities without enough guidance,” said Kenneth Comia, deputy director of land use for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. “Planning boards may be caught flat-footed when trying to address some of the nuance of the SMART regulation. What we’re trying to understand are some of the hardships of regulating solar in towns.”

Surveys have shown that the public prefers solar arrays installed on rooftops and parking lots, but those are the most complicated and costly. Rooftop solar is especially difficult to permit and install, deterring some smaller businesses.

Josh Hilsdon, a co-owner at Greenfield-based residential solar company PV Squared, spoke at the September 12 forum. “There are some towns in which PV Squared has found it so onerous and difficult to work with inspectors that we have seriously considered simply not providing solar in those communities anymore,” he said.

Large-scale solar development can be profitable, “if you do it right,” said Kathy Doyle, founder of Fireflower Alternative Energy. SMART incentives, the Mass Solar Loan program, federal money from the Inflation Reduction Act, and the EPA’s \$7 billion Solar For All fund are among the programs subsidizing development. However, Doyle said that economic uncertainty due to electrical grid interconnection issues, federal tariffs, supply chain interruptions, and local zoning laws are hurting the industry.

This week governor Maura Healey appointed members to a new commission tasked with finding ways to accelerate the state’s energy permitting and siting laws. Representatives of Mass Audubon, the Conservation Law Foundation, and companies including National Grid, Eversource, and Bluewave Solar will sit on the commission.

An ‘Unnecessary Question’

About 60% of the ground-mounted solar arrays built since 2013 have been on previously forested

land, and about a quarter impacted cropland. According to state Energy and Environmental Affairs undersecretary Katherine Antos, about 10% of all deforestation in Massachusetts since 1990 has been due to solar development.

“We have the capacity to push solar to more rooftops, parking lots, and previously disturbed areas while protecting our natural working lands,” Antos said. The state, she said, has enough developed and disturbed land to meet its renewable energy goals.

“While I say it’s a false choice – we can have forests, and we can have solar – in the past we haven’t done a lot to prevent siting within forests,” said Jonathan Thompson, a senior ecologist at the research forest in Petersham owned by Harvard University. “If you picked [sites] at random, you would end up with something like this distribution. I would argue, again, that we could do better.”

Thompson, presenting at the second session, discussed what he called the “unnecessary question”: weighing the environmental value of preserving forested land against that of building solar arrays. There are too many variables to answer succinctly, he said, but he and his colleague Lucy Lee developed a model that attempted to calculate the tradeoff.

“Forests directly remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Solar does not,” Thompson said. “What it does help us do is reduce emissions by supplanting fossil fuels or other carbon-intensive energy production.”

According to the model, projects built on forested land before 2035 could reduce total carbon, but as more of our electrical needs are met by the sun and wind, the relative value of forested land increases.

“Time is a super-important variable,” Thompson said. “If you’re going to build solar, the most important impact we will ever have is when the grid is as dirty as it can be.”

Big Batteries

Attendees also expressed concerns about battery storage, now a requirement under the SMART program for all arrays over 500 kW.

“Batteries are complex. Batteries have a lot more health and environmental risks than solar panels,” said Andrew Toomajian, a development

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manager for SunBug Solar. “We’re going to see people looking at batteries with an increased level of scrutiny, and figuring out how to permit them, how to implement them safely, where they make sense.”

Earlier this year the state attorney general’s office struck down Wendell’s proposed ban on stand-alone battery storage systems on the grounds that such a ban would inhibit solar energy production. Developers who have proposed a large-scale storage project on Wendell Depot Road are now petitioning the state for exemptions to other town bylaws.

The final session of the series, titled “Perspectives on Solar,” was scheduled for this week but was postponed due to “technical difficulties” until later this fall. Among the expected speakers were W.D. Cows president Cinda Jones, Shutesbury planning board member Michael DeChiara, and Sharon Weizenbaum of the citizens’ group Smart Solar Shutesbury.

Recordings, slideshows, and transcripts of the solar forums are available on the UMass Clean Energy Extension website.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Walk, Bike, Or Roll To School!

TURNERS FALLS – The Sheffield and Hillcrest elementary schools are teaming up to hold a “Walk, Bike & Roll” event beginning at 8 a.m. on the morning of Wednesday, October 4.

The two schools share a field between them where the students and some of their families will meet up after arriving. There are plans for families who normally walk or drive their children to school to meet at specific places in the community to walk and/or bike to school together. The families of bus students are welcome to meet at these locations as well, to take part in the fun!

This event is supported by the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School program under the MA Department of Transportation. Contact Stacey Langknecht at stacey.langknecht@gmrtd.org or 863-7473 if you would like to volunteer for this event or other initiatives in the district.

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WENDELL from page A1

suggested contacting the Franklin County Sheriff's Office TRIAD division as well.

Wood Bank

Tree warden Cliff Dornbusch announced that Wendell has been awarded a \$10,000 grant for equipment needed for its wood bank. The grant reimburses the town after the money is spent, and Dornbusch said he needs to make the purchases within one or two months, and asked if the town has a credit card he could use.

Treasurer Carolyn Manley said that she is hesitant to hand out the town credit card without serious control, and added that town accountant Erin Degnan needed to read the grant to learn what is allowable.

Dornbusch suggested that the Good Neighbors food pantry, with its awareness of household incomes, could allocate the wood, in half-cord lots. Budine said that Good Neighbors may offer advice, like any person, but she felt it would be problematic to have a private entity overseeing a municipal asset.

Housing Rehab

Brian McHugh, director of community development at the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA), told the selectboard about the current round of community development block grant (CDBG) funding, which makes loans available in Wendell and Charlemont for low-income housing rehabilitation.

McHugh asked the board to sign off on three special conditions: that all money repaid, which is only required when a house is sold, must go back into the loan fund; that the FCRHRA may count information technology under its own administrative costs; and that the housing authority can work with the state's low-income weatherization program to extend the money's reach.

Board members agreed to accept the current CDBG program, with those conditions. The grant makes \$1.1 million available to the two towns, with the goal of bringing 16 homes in Wendell and 10 in Charlemont up to code.

Electric Bills

New regulations – or new inter-

pretations of existing regulations – are creating a backlog at the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU) in processing applications for community aggregation of electric bills.

Several years ago Wendell aggregated its municipal electricity bills, and later residents' electricity bills, with support from the consultants Colonial Power. The program has saved money overall for the town and for residents.

Colonial Power has recently drafted a letter asking municipal support for state bill H.3852, which would redefine the regulations and give the DPU guidance interpreting them, allowing for more local control and hopefully clearing the backlog.

"Giving municipalities more options is not a bad thing," said Budine.

The board agreed to forward Colonial's letter, with Paul Doud abstaining from the vote. As a new selectboard member, he explained, he is not yet familiar with electrical aggregation.

A citizen sent the selectboard a message asking if he could apply his excess solar credits to the town as part of his tax payment, or if that is unworkable, just donate them toward the town's electric bill.

The board decided to wait for input from the town treasurer. DiDonato said she thought the situation, someone having extra solar credits to donate, would be rare.

Budine said it might be cleaner to donate the credits to another entity. Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato suggested the town's broadband hut expense, and Budine suggested Swift River School. "Their bill is atrocious," she said.

Two Quick Ones

No one came for a posted discussion of the WRATS's policy on redeemable bottles and cans. DiDonato said she thought the people who opposed the end of WRATS processing returnables probably wanted a public forum, and that she would ask Shawn Jarrett and Tom Mangan if they would like to come to the next meeting.

No abutters came, or contacted the selectboard, for a hearing to install a pole on Jennison Road, near the intersection with Cooleyville Road, that would split a span be-

tween two existing poles and allow for new construction. Board members approved the National Grid request.

Other Business

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said he had convinced Housatonic Basin Sampling and Testing to temporarily continue monthly testing of Wendell's municipal water supply until a permanent arrangement is established.

The selectboard approved creditable service for two road crew members, supervisor Allen Frost and Scott Jarvenpaa, allowing them to use five years of similar work in Orange and New Salem respectively towards their Wendell vacation and retirement allowances.

They tabled a decision about a third member, as the letter from Orange about his service mentioned six years of "temporary" work, which left them wondering how much time he could actually be credited for. State law allows up to five years of work in a similar capacity for another community to be credited towards vacation and retirement benefits.

Johnson-Mussad reported back from his first municipal contracting course, and thanked the selectboard for agreeing the town would cover the expense. He is starting the second of the three-course series, which the state wants someone from every municipality to complete.

Seneca Smith told board members of the Wendell Youth Group's plan for a benefit 5K walk and run to be held November 4. The route would go from the gazebo to a point on Farley Road and then return. Participants should bring a can of food to be donated to the Orange Food pantry.

Budine said Smith should contact the police and fire departments so they know about the event and can help if needed.

The new town website, Johnson-Mussad reported, is close to launch time. He shared on the Zoom screen a sample web page for a board meeting. Budine said she was disappointed that the process of uploading meeting agendas and documents would not be easier than it is with the present site.

**SPORTS** from page A1

forcing a tie this week against the only team that has beaten them.

The Tech squad's loss came in the second game of the season, against Athol. Since then they have been on fire, outscoring five opponents 22 goals to 5. The Kicking Eagles defeated Greenfield 6-1 last Thursday, beat Pioneer 5-2 on Monday, and on Wednesday managed to tie Athol, leaving them with a 5-1-1 record so far.

Volleyball

TFHS 3 – Pioneer 0

FCTS 3 – Ware 0

Frontier 3 – TFHS 0

FCTS 3 – Athol 1

TFHS 3 – FCTS 0

The Turners Volleyball Thunder and Franklin Tech Volleyball Eagles both won two games this week before facing off against each other.

Last Thursday Turners defeated the visiting Pioneer Black Panthers 3-0, beating the Cats by an average of 13 points per game. Taylor Greene led in assists with 22, Madi Liimatainen scored 18 kills and a block, and Tatiana Carr Williams made two kills and served two aces.

On Friday, the Tech team was part of a multi-sport matchup at home: the field hockey team faced off against Turners at 3:30 p.m., the boys' soccer game against Smith Aggie commenced at 4, the JV and varsity girls' volleyball teams played Ware in the gym, and the Football Eagles' game kicked off at 7. I attended all except the soccer game.

The Tech volleyballers won the Ware match handily, with Ware only managing 20 points in the second game. (It was a little cringeworthy to hear Ware open every game with the yell "Lady Indians!")

Shelby O'Leary dominated from the line, serving five aces. She also gave 11 assists and had two digs. Skylei LaPan had four aces, Haleigh Benoit scored seven kills, two aces and two digs, and Brooke Smith blocked a shot, gave an assist, and made two kills.

The Thunder rolled down to South Deerfield on Monday in a bid to challenge the Frontier Red Hawks, the reigning state champs. Turners kept pace in all three games, losing the opener 25-21 and the final 25-23. Greene had 14 assists and four kills in this one, Liimatainen shot 12 kills and scored an ace, Kiera Richardson-Meattey made two kills, and Madison Dietz served an ace and saved nine digs.

The Eagles, meanwhile, traveled to Athol that day and outlasted the Red Bears 3-1. Tech dominated the first two games, but the Bears won the third 25-21. With momentum on the home side, Athol stuck with the Eagles, forcing an extended game 26-24.

In this one Tech served an extraordinary amount of aces. Emma Petersen served nine, while making two kills, eight digs and one block; O'Leary shot eight, while making two kills, three digs and 12 assists; Jenna Petrowicz had seven, with four kills and two blocks; and Lea Chapman served four aces, while getting nine kills, two digs, and a block.

For her part, Smith made three kills, three assists and a block.

On Wednesday, the Thunder crossed Millers Falls Road and swept the Eagles. After losing big in the first game, 25-15, Tech tightened up, holding their own in the next two, 25-22, 25-23.

On the Turners side of the net, Liimatainen made 19 kills, scored

two aces, and dove for five digs; Carr Williams had eight kills and a blocked shot; Dietz served two aces and had 12 digs; and Greene gave 23 assists, made seven kill shots, and she had four digs.

Tech's stats were more defensive. Kristine Given, Amelia Rider, and Hannah Hackett all registered multiple digs while Haleigh Benoit served two aces, made three kills, and had a dig.

Field Hockey

TFHS 1 – Southwick 0

FCTS 2 – TFHS 0

Last Thursday, the Field Hockey Thunder defeated the Southwick Rams 1-0. The game was scoreless until the end of the third quarter. With 50 seconds left in the period, Avery Tela put the ball past the goalkeeper to give Powertown the lead. She was assisted by Ledwin Villafana.

The game was a clean defensive game. Only five total corner shots were called. Plus, Southwick didn't manage any shots on goal while their goalie only had to make one save.

On Friday the undefeated Tech Eagles defeated Turners 2-0. It was Tech's closest win of the season.

Hannah Gilbert scored the first goal, assisted by Kate Trudeau. It remained 1-0 until the fourth quarter when Lilly Ross fed the ball to Gilbert who shot it in. Turners mounted an attack into Tech's end in the final two minutes, but the Eagles' D held on to ice the shutout.

Football

FCTS 14 – Pathfinder 7

As I mentioned, the final contest on Friday's agenda at Tech was the football game played against the Pathfinder Pioneers. The Football Eagles, who had lost against Frontier in the final minutes last week, found themselves in another tight battle.

In the opening minutes, the Eagles' D forced a punt on the Finders' first series. The offense then ran a 14-play, 69-yard drive, culminating in a Gabriel Tomasi TD and a Josiah Little 2-pointer to give the Birds an 8-0 edge. There was a problem with the clock on the scoreboard, so I had to ask an official for the time – it was 3:34 of the first quarter.

The Pioneers answered immediately, though, and with a minute 28 left in the first, it was an 8-7 game. Pathfinder attempted a field goal in the second quarter, but it failed, and Tech clung to the single-point lead going into halftime. Neither team could score in the third period.

With 13 minutes left in the game, Tech gained control deep in their own territory. They drove down the field and chewed up the clock, finally scoring on another Tomasi keeper. The extra point attempt failed and the Pioneers took over with four and a half minutes on the clock. With the game on the line, a costly fumble gave Tech back possession and iced the game for the Eagles.

Tomasi went six for eight under center, passing for 106 yards, and carried the ball six times for 36 yards. Ethan Smarr caught five of those passes for 78 yards and Tucker Hicks the other reception for 28. Little gained 142 yards and had 57 in kick returns. Maxon Brunette had four carries for 39 yards, Jet Bastarache rushed for 24, and Smarr ran twice for two yards. On defense, Izaia Romer made a sack, Wyatt Whitman caused a fumble, and Camryn Laster pounced on it.

The Eagles go east next Friday to challenge the Athol Football Bears.

**EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Caregiver Gathering; Sound Bath

WENDELL – This Saturday, September 30 at 10 a.m. at the Wendell Meetinghouse, Debbie Lynangale welcomes all past, current, and future caregivers to gather, enjoy breakfast goodies and morning coffee, tea, or juice, and share stories and questions about their caregiving experiences.

"So many of us have been on this journey with partners, loved ones and friends," says Lynangale. "Almost everyone I talk with has a story or knows someone who has experienced some aspect of the caregiver role."

The number of informal caregivers is growing, and, as noted by groups like the Family Caregiver Alliance, many are juggling different roles and responsibilities. Many end up doing tasks for which they have no training, and consequently deal with unrealistic expectations of themselves, those they care for, and health-related institutions.

Yet there's also a much more positive side to caregiving – the privilege of walking with those dealing with significant life challenges, of feeling like you make a difference, of honoring important relationships and people.

Saturday's gathering is meant to create a space where fellow caregivers can support each other and enjoy the company of others who know what it's like. Contact dlynangale@gmail.com for more information.

And this Sunday, October 1 at 4 p.m., Matt Samolis will present a Cymal Sound Bath at the Meetinghouse. Samolis has been working in sonic and visual mediums since 1987. He performs his Cymal Sound Bath on a "steel cello," a bowed instrument he has assembled out of mounted cymbals and tuned steel rods. The sound that issues from this assemblage is at turns contemplative, awe inspiring, and other-worldly.


"My method of practice effectively blends the harmonic and drone traditions, and is entirely acoustic," he writes. "The result is a sound environment that is meditative and timeless, inviting the listener toward a stillness that is calming and rejuvenating."

For more information and examples of Samolis's work, visit his website at mattsamolis.wordpress.com. He began studying flute, and later composition and tenor banjo; he has worked with ensembles at the New England Conservatory, Brandeis University, Berklee, and Tufts, as well as Open Hand Theatre, Pilgrim Research Collaborative, Mobius, Roy Hart Theatre, and numerous other projects. He has also donated many hours of his time and expertise to the renovation of the Meetinghouse.

Both events are free, but donations are gratefully accepted to support renovations and programming at the Meetinghouse.

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MONTAGUE from page A1
 thousand gallons to \$18.39. The rate the town of Gill would be charged for sewage pumped from Riverside would also increase by 8.6%, from \$15.68 to \$17.03.

Little's proposal made only a small increase in the "flat rate," from \$937.44 to \$967.44, for Montague sewer users not receiving metered drinking water, the basis for most sewer bills.

But when it came to industrial users, Little proposed raising the rate by 17.3%, from \$15.68 to \$18.39, placing these customers on an equal footing with Montague residents. She explained that there are about 11 industrial users, and that the town was working on a "rate revision" which would be ready in 2025. "Until then," she said, "just to clean it up a little bit, I think it makes sense to move the industrial rate [up] and at least get them to what [Montague] residents are paying now, and not get the lower rate that Gill pays."

No sewer users spoke about the proposed rates at Monday's hearing. Asked whether industrial sewer customers had been warned of the rate increase, Little said she had notified them in the spring that a rate increase would be proposed at a fall hearing, and repeated the notification earlier this month. She had also given the selectboard a preview of the increase at its September 11 meeting.

The selectboard, acting as sewer commissioners, unanimously approved the new rates for 2024.

Little then asked the board to consider hiring a temporary manager to help her oversee the numerous projects taking place at the CWF. She said the department is "somehow intertwined with" 11 repair or improvement projects. "I'm only one person," she added, "and it's a lot to keep up with and manage [the plant] day to day."

Little said that as she was considering outside assistance, and former

Montague wastewater superintendent Bob Trombley's name "came up." "I reached out to Bob, and he would be happy to help," she said. She suggested he could focus on grant-funded projects, including new aeration blowers and a roughly \$2.5 million screw pump replacement.

Chelsey Little said her department is "somehow intertwined with" 11 repair or improvement projects. "I'm only one person," she added.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz suggested that Little get help from assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey, but Ramsey said that while he did a great deal of grant management, project management was generally outside his scope of work. Town administrator Steve Ellis referred to the proposed role as an "organizational project manager" (OPM), and said Trombley could do the work for a reasonable rate. "I really support Chelsey's outreach on this," he added.

Trombley managed the treatment plant from 1993 to 2016, and then worked as an interim "consulting superintendent" when his successor, Bob McDonald, abruptly retired in August 2019. He also served on the hiring committee in 2020 which recommended Little, who had previously worked as Northfield's superintendent.

Little said she could fund the temporary position out of project budgets and a line for "professional services" in the CWF budget. The board approved of her proposal without taking a formal vote.

The board also executed a \$282,130 contract with Collins Electric Company to install a new generator at the plant. Little said the installation might be delayed by the need to purchase transfer switches which are being "held up," potentially for a year. Kuklewicz suggested that she or the contractor search for a reconditioned switch.

New Hookups

In related sewer news, the board approved a permit to construct a new connection to the town sewer at 6 Randall Wood Drive. There followed a discussion of the board's role in approving such sewer connection permits.

Department of Public Works (DPW) superintendent Tom Bergeron said he had rarely come before the board with a permit request, and that sometimes a time-sensitive sewer connection had been made and then approved after the fact.

"I'm fine with it," said board member Chris Boutwell. "I could go either way." Member Matt Lord agreed, but said the issue should be revisited during a broader discussion of sewer regulations.

Ellis said the sewer regulations state that requests for new connections should come before the board, acting as the sewer commission, for approval. He then said that the board could delegate that authority to the DPW superintendent. "Well, I guess we have a plan," said Kuklewicz. The board did not take a vote on the matter.

At the end of the discussion, Bergeron noted that if a homeowner on a sewer trunk line had a septic system and that system failed, the homeowner is required to connect to the sewer system.

Montague at Play

In news not as directly related to the sewer system, for its second meeting in a row the board approved the warrant and motions for the October 10 special town meeting. Both documents contained slightly updated wording for Article 8, which would appropriate \$500,000 for the renovation of Montague Center Park, pending the approval of a state parkland acquisitions grant.

Board members had expressed concern that promising in advance to keep the playground area for parkland use "in perpetuity," in the language of the article, would undermine the state grant application. Ellis said state officials had assured him that this language, which is required under state law and remains in the document, would not undermine the town's application.

The board approved permits associated with the Falls Fest – the successor to Pumpkinfest and the Great Falls Festival – which will take place Saturday, October 21. Permits included the use of public property for music at Peskeompskut and Spinner parks, for "family activities" at 38 Avenue A next to the Discovery Center, and for crafts vendors in front of the Shea Theater.

The board also approved a one-day beer and wine license for a "beer garden" at Peskeompskut Park.

The Rendezvous restaurant will need to come before the board separately to receive permission to use a portion of the adjacent Third Street parking lot for music, while the rest of the lot will be used for parking for the event, according to event organizer Klon Koehler.

Koehler thanked the board for its support, praised former Great Falls Festival organizers Scott Kuzmeskus and Mike Nelson for "keeping it going for 12 years," and stressed that the new scaled-down version of the fall event would keep Avenue A open and "showcase Montague businesses, [and] Montague art."

Other Business

The board approved a \$326,495 contract with Davenport Trucking for the Montague City Road flooding mitigation project. The project has been delayed due to wet weather but, Ramsey said, "they're going to do as much work as they can this fall," and perhaps even work during the winter on "vegetation removal."

The board authorized Ellis to apply for a state grant to fund safety training for staff working in enclosed spaces, such as the sewer system. He said the grant would pay for onsite training rather than requiring employees to travel to distant locations. Ellis also reviewed a document drafted by the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts calling for the state to reduce the impact of its mandates, regulations, and formulas on smaller municipalities. He said that a proposal to eliminate the need for advertising public hearings in the local press may have been a mistake, and this proposal should have been more clearly limited to procurement notices, for which state-sanctioned websites have become the common venue.

"The person who edited this may not have done a great job," Ellis said.

The board did not take a vote on the letter. Its release coincides with a coming "listening tour" of Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties by the Healey-Driscoll administration.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 2.

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

Here's the way it was on September 26, 2013: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Historic Gill

The Gill selectboard unanimously supported police chief David Hastings' request to sign on to a proposed countywide mutual aid law enforcement agreement, deplored the one-vote defeat of the recent debt exclusion vote to purchase a new highway truck, and delayed action on a proposed National Register of Historic Places designation for the Riverside Mohawk Trail section of town.

Playful Wendell

The official opening of the refurbished library playground is set for October 5. Come enjoy the

custom-built tree house, the puppet playhouse, the musical pipes, a chalk board, the elegant glider big enough for the whole family, the re-energized basketball court and play space, and the wonderful 30-foot long mural whose mountain scene includes Mount Monadnock and the Millers River.

Ousted Montague?

The September 19 meeting of the advisory board of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority began with a plea by Montague resident Jeff Singleton to maintain the current Route 23 from Greenfield to Amherst, or implement a proposed alternative to Sunderland Center. Singleton argued that eliminating direct service from Montague to the largest employer in the region was "bad public transportation policy."

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on September 25, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Erving Home Storage

The Erving selectboard discussed how to use space soon to open up in town hall as the result of the departure of police department personnel to their new building. An urgent need is for part-time boards and commissions to have a place to store town maps, since many of these materials are now kept in the homes of board members.

Montague Center Fish

The Montague conservation commission granted a permit for a 200-foot fish byway on the Sawmill River. The Connecticut River Wa-

tershed Council's proposal would allow fish to bypass the Spaulding Brook dam in the peak spring and fall migrating seasons to a disused historic channel of the river. The project is intended to facilitate restoration of Atlantic salmon to the watershed and improve fish passage and genetic mixing.

Millers Falls Mail

Three months after the Millers Falls post office shut down, residents will again be able to send and receive letters and faxes, rent mailboxes, and use copying services.

Vladimir Vdovichenko's Mail Master branch, with fresh tangerine paint and 205 post boxes, opens this Saturday. Vdovichenko immigrated to the US from Uzbekistan 13 years ago, when he was 18.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on September 24, 1873: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

The rains of last Friday and last night brought the river up a couple of feet.

They are running the logs over the dam as fast as they will go.

The "melancholy days" have not yet come, but these have a melancholy look.

The boys had a dancing party at Wood's Hall, Riverside, Monday night.

R. S. Locke put under our inspection, a week ago, two tomatoes, weighing one pound six ounces a piece.

Several boys were put under the charge of the State Charities for stealing fruit from D.A. Wood's garden at Riverside, and one fellow had to shell out a \$2 bill for taking a water-mellon from Henry Barton's field, in the absence of the proprietor.

The huge foundation for the

Keith Paper Co.'s Stock Rooms is completed, and Geo. O. Peabody and Adams & Son have the contract for the erection of the building.

John O'Neill, aged about 12 years, was very seriously injured at the Cutlery on Monday. His hand was so badly smashed that two fingers had to be amputated, and it is probable that more will be forced to undergo the same operation.

If the person who found a Malacca wood handle whip on the hill beyond the toll bridge at Montague City will return it to this office, he will receive a good substantial reward for his trouble and honesty, as the whip was a much valued gift from a friend.

The large building now going up here belongs to Mr. F. Colle, not D.F. Collier as some of the papers have it. D.F. Collier is not putting up any house here. We cheerfully correct the error.

Since our first edition went out, our beautiful new school house has been burned to the ground. Loss \$15,000. Cause at present unknown.



HITS from page A1

Convenience Store and Jarvis Pools and Spas, the driver kept left at the fork onto Millers Falls Road.

The driver struck the bicyclist at a crosswalk to the median between Millers Falls Road and Turners Falls Road. Skid marks on the road indicate the driver began braking prior to the crosswalk, and are being assessed alongside other factors to determine the truck's speed at the time of impact. The speed limit, 25 mph up the hill, shifts to 40 mph immediately after the crosswalk where the collision occurred.

Online chatter around the incident revolved around concern for the teenager and opinions about the intersection's safety. Commenters on a post on the "Franklin County MA Police Scanner" Facebook page expressed discontent over a range of issues, from rancor over the speed of drivers and the visibility of signage to complaints about pedestrian use of the area.

While police have yet to provide any official updates on the bicyclist's condition or give any statements about the incident, citing the pending investigation, multiple sources who spoke with the *Montague Reporter* on background Tuesday and Wednesday indicated the patient is believed to have escaped life-threatening injury.



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MONEY from page A1

millionaires' tax money to the state school building authority, meanwhile, may increase the chances of the Gill-Montague district's current application for state building aid to consolidate its two elementary schools in Turners Falls.

Changing the tax code to address what many perceived as growing inequality gained considerable traction in the second decade of the 21st century, as a number of well-publicized studies showed that the rich are paying a much lower share of their income in taxation than had been the norm in the decade after the Second World War.

This sentiment was, in theory, strong in Massachusetts. And yet, referendums to amend the state constitution to allow a more "progressive" graduated income tax were rejected by the voters five times since the 1960s, according to the *Boston Globe*. Eventually, those who favored more progressive taxation landed on the specific concept of a "millionaires' tax" as perhaps a more palatable sell to the state's generally liberal voters.

In 2018 an initiative petition proposing a constitutional amendment to impose a 4% tax on income over \$1 million passed the legislature, but was declared unconstitutional by the state Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) because it combined two separate policies: implementing the tax measure, and specifying how the funds would be spent.

The 2022 ballot question was very similar to the 2018 measure and again combined these elements, but this time was a "referral" from the legislature and not a citizens' petition, and was therefore subject to less rigid constitutional requirements. It passed muster with the state court – and then, by a narrow 52% to 48% margin, with the voters.

The result was the addition of a paragraph to the constitution authorizing the tax, to "provide the resources for quality public education and affordable public colleges and universities, and for the repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and public transportation," and specifying that the revenue raised "shall be expended... only for these purposes."

But passing a ballot question to make the rich pay more is not the same as deciding how to spend the revenue. Would the money simply supplement existing line items in the state budget, or would it focus on innovation and one-time capital

projects? And would this revenue stream be stable in future years, particularly since a portion is generated by volatile capital gains taxes?

In February, the legislature and incoming governor Maura Healey agreed to base this year's allocations on a somewhat conservative revenue estimate of \$1 billion. An initial proposal by Healey traveled through the usual budget process in the House and Senate, followed by a conference session between the two, and a negotiation with the governor.

Allocations to specific programs were finally approved in mid-August, along with a procedure intended to stabilize the revenue stream in future years.

The result was an elaborate process for spending the revenue, according to an analysis by Jason Wright of the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. Revenue from the tax is initially deposited in an Education and Transportation Fund, which is capped – this year at \$1 billion – and then allocated out to five programmatic categories: public transit; roads and bridges; higher education; K-12 education; and early education and care.

Money within these five categories are then allocated to 24 line items. For example, this year under the public transit category \$90 million is allocated to "regional transit"; \$100 million under roads and bridges to "roads and bridges supplemental aid"; \$12 million under higher education to "free community college supports"; and \$69 million under the K-12 education to free school meals.

Any revenue above the current \$1 billion cap is sent to two other pots: 85% to an innovation and capital fund, and 15% to a reserve fund to address future potential revenue shortfalls.

The impact of all this on local programs will be significant, but will also vary a good deal from program to program. The policy has all the trappings of a work in progress.

Coming at the end of a packed regional transit board agenda, executive director Tina Cote's announcement last Thursday that FRTA expects to receive over \$1.1 million in new state aid due to Fair Share barely caused a ripple.

But when this reporter – who, in full disclosure, serves on the transit agency's advisory board as an alternate rep for the town of Montague – later looked at that figure in the context of the FY'24 regional transit budget approved at FRTA's

annual meeting in May, it appeared that the impact will be significant. This year's budget totals \$4.8 million, and includes approximately \$1.2 million in state aid without the wealth tax revenue.

In other words, the millionaires' money may nearly double our local bus system's state aid this year.

On the other hand, it is not entirely clear what the impact will be on the Gill-Montague Regional School District. The \$100 million of Fair Share money going to the Massachusetts School Building Authority might increase the district's chances of receiving funding to consolidate its elementary schools into one building. (According to the *Boston Globe*, the school building authority "can spend \$850 million a year on school construction" in a typical year.)

The district, according to business director Joanne Blier, already provides free meals to students under the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), whose formula is heavily influenced by the incomes of students in the district, so it may not be helped by the \$69 million Fair Share allocation for that purpose.

The new state aid math in Montague, however, is impressive. This year the town was allocated approximately \$489,000 under the state's existing Chapter 90 highway formula. The Fair Share money may increase that by nearly 50%.

Part of the reason, according to Steve Ellis, is that half of the \$100 million the state is allocating to this line item will be distributed according to a separate formula which places a much greater emphasis on road mileage, which benefits small rural communities.

As Ellis wrote in a memo to the selectboard: "Area legislators, Senator Jo Comerford and Representative Natalie Blais, advocated strongly for this element of the spending plan and with a particular emphasis on the inclusion of the component that will use road-miles as a basis for distribution of the money, as this approach will be more generous to rural communities than the standard Ch. 90 formula."

The influence of "area legislators" may also be seen in the Fair Share allocation to regional transit authorities, many of which serve the state's more rural areas. That piece of the pie rose from \$25 million in the Healey administration's original proposal to \$90 million in the bill that passed last month.



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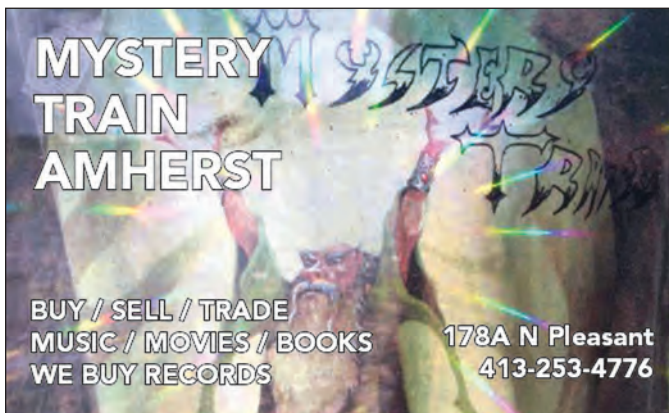
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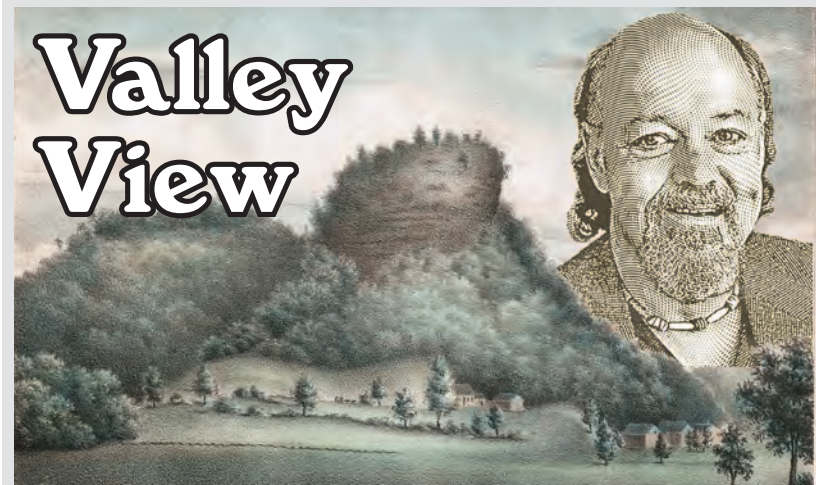
NINA ROSSI PHOTO

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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

Above: Things down at Deerfield's Kolakoski Farm Stand are starting to look anfully... seasonal.



Valley View

ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – It's no secret that Mother Nature can be a cruel, unmerciful witch, capable of administering unimaginable pain and suffering while snickering at weepy, bleeding-heart sentimentality.

Nature lovers moored in reality accept the good with the bad, of which there is plenty to go around. The following tale about an unfortunate encounter between a maturing fawn and a big tom bobcat fits the bad like a home-spun Merino sock.

The story unfolds in bucolic Waldo County, Maine, where my brother-in-law, Buzz, manages a 125-acre gentleman's farm about a half-hour inland from Belfast. There, over the past 50 years, he has creatively manicured the old Howard dairy farm into an idyllic, off-the-grid nature preserve tailored to his self-sufficient ways. He harvests cordwood and mushrooms from his woodland, apples from his orchard, lowbush blueberries from his hillside, eggs and meat from his henhouse, and trout from his ponds.

If he still hunted, he could add salubrious wild meats to his diet, but he can do without venison, wild turkey, woodcock, partridge, and waterfowl.

A retired professor and doctor of foreign culture and language, he and his female partner, Leigh, study birds, trees, plants, wildlife and the environment with Thoreauvian passion. A legacy is in place to protect the place when he is gone.

Like the rest of New England, his Montville farm has endured an unusually wet summer that interfered with his orchard, garden, and tractor chores, not to mention the natural seasoning process of open-air cordwood piles. Though Buzz and Leigh made necessary core adjustments as best they could, their normal routine was disrupted, and the necessary modifications weren't always ideal.

Committed to optimizing their acreage as a sustainable farm and nature refuge, they are fully aware and accepting of nature's cruelties for wildlife that shares their land. Their isolated location only enhances one of their favorite and constant activities: bird and wildlife observation, be it through the bay window, off the seat of a tractor, or doing chores in the barn, fields, orchard and woods.

They know one deer from another, how many tagalong fawns each doe has in tow, the number of antler points displayed by resident bucks, how the nesting season went for turkeys and grouse, and when the occasional moose, bear, or bobcat passes through.

With four eyes constantly scanning the terrain, assessing and sharing what they have seen, the couple doesn't miss much. It's a labor of love. Their life mission.

Which brings us to the big bobcat that showed up earlier this summer, a "bruiser" Buzz estimates to weigh in the neighborhood of 50 pounds. If so, it's a whopper in bobcat world. The graceful, cautious cat showed itself "from time to time" this summer, see **VALLEY VIEW** page B5



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A trail cam photo of the bobcat, courtesy of the author's brother.

Revisiting Old Furry, Fuzzy, & Feathered Friends

By DONNA PETERSEN

LEVERETT – Back in the spring of 2022, I visited the new critter sanctuary in Leverett, Jefferson's Safe Haven, and wrote an article for the *Montague Reporter* about the place and its creatures. I drive by it pretty regularly and usually see cars parked by the gated drive-



KATHY LEWIS PHOTO

Over 20 years old, Franklin came to Jefferson's Safe Haven after his donkey life mate passed away. He's become fast bonded friends with the two other donkeys, Nestor and Wilbur.

way, and I have noticed some new structures in place.

I wanted to see what was new in the field and barn, so I visited with Tricia Hamilton, one of the two sisters who own and manage the Haven, and we had a nice talk.

The entire field and yard property is now fenced in, giving all the animals plenty of space to roam, and fencing has been extended a bit into the woods so the animals can get out of the sun and munch on some ground cover and shrubs. Besides the large barn with its big goat mural (this is visible from the road), there are sheds called "Goat1 One" and "Goat1 Two," although Trish told me most of the goats and sheep seem to prefer the big barn. There is also a big yellow scratching brush where the critters can rub themselves.

Trish and I spoke on the deck attached to the side of the house, and we had plenty of company. Goat Naomi and her daughter Mugwort joined us, as did a bad boy goat. (He got into everything!) They climbed on the deck furniture and checked me out. Mugwort and bad boy goat did a bit of horn butting and generally made themselves quite at home.

Some of the animals I met in early 2022 are gone; many animals come here at an advanced age and, well, things happen. The alpacas Livingstone, Blaze, and Monkey are gone. But there are some new residents. Along with Naomi and Mugwort, new goats include Zuri, Tilly, Peggy, and Anise. And new sheep include Moo, Bean, and May; they are Jacobs' Four-Horned sheep, although they are very goat-looking. And I think Lou and Mario are sheep – sometimes it is hard to tell!

A new addition to the mini-donkey group is Franklin, who has a sweet story. He is 20 years old and lost his life mate a while back. He was apparently quite bereft, but since coming to the Haven, he has found new friends and is doing well. He and with Mugwort greeted me through my open window before I even got out of my car.

see **FRIENDS** page B4

RECIPES

All Together Now!

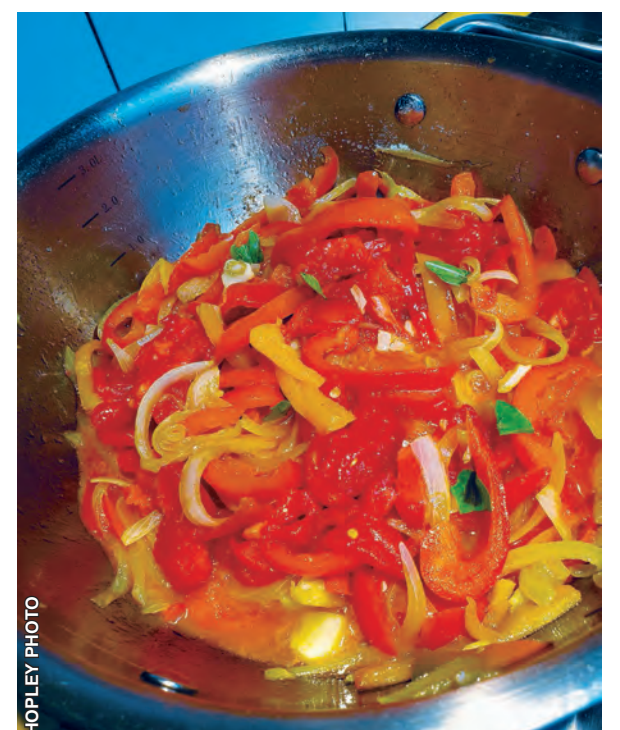
By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – It's harvest time. Scarlet tomatoes hang on their vines. Eggplants gleam purple under umbrellas of leaves. Winter squash loll on the ground, bulking up seemingly by the minute. You can buy burly cabbages that tip the scales at 12 and 13 pounds, ears of corn picked that morning, peppers, cucumbers, carrots, beets, and more.

And if you have a garden, every day brings a new supply of your very own beloved crops. They're a delight, but they can be a problem too. It's easy to get too much. Then you make your favorite dishes until they begin to bore, or you find soggy cucumbers, wrinkly zucchini, squishy tomatoes expiring in the fridge.

What can I do with all this, you ask yourself.

The Mediterranean answer is to cook vegetables all together. French *ratatouille*, Spanish *pisto*, and Greek *briami* team eggplant, peppers, zucchini, and tomatoes with favorite flavorings to make dazzling vegetable stews that can be served cold as well as warm. Italians make *peperonata*, a vivid mixture of tomatoes and red peppers; Sicilians make *caponata*, a sweet-sour blend



HOPLEY PHOTO

Peperonata is a versatile and vibrant way to use an overabundance of vegetables.

see **RECIPES** page B8

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

“AVA”

Ava is a gentle soul looking for a loving home! Her previous owners had to surrender her because their baby is severely allergic, but it was clear that this sweet girl was very well loved. They said she is fully house trained, playful, happy, and loves to snuggle.

Ava has been shy at the shelter, but she warms up very fast and is proving to be very brave in new situations – when she is scared of something, a little coaxing and sweet talk from whoever is with her can help her overcome just

about anything. (Even the scary industrial dryer!) She is still young and, like, any young dog will benefit from training.

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

(Want your pet featured? Email a photo and information about them to jae@montaguereporter.org.)

Senior Center Activities

OCTOBER 2 THROUGH 6

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. Covid test kits are available. You can pick a kit up any time during open hours. Lunch available Tuesday through Thursday. Coffee and tea available all the time. For more information please call 863-9357.

Monday 10/2

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

Tuesday 10/3

9 a.m. Zumba Lite
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 10/4

9 a.m. VA Agent
9:15 a.m. Aerobics

11 a.m. Chair Exercise

12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo

4:15 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 10/5

9 a.m. Chair Yoga
9 a.m. Senior Help

by appointment

10:30 a.m. Brown Bag

1 p.m. Cards & Games

Friday 10/6

10:15 a.m. Aerobics

11 a.m. Chair Exercise

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 10/2

9 a.m. Interval
10:15 a.m. Stretch & Infusion

Tuesday 10/3

9 a.m. Good For U

10 a.m. Line Dancing

Wednesday 10/4

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

11:30 a.m. Bingo

Thursday 10/5

9 a.m. Core & Balance

10 a.m. Barre Fusion

Friday 10/6

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.

OCTOBER LIBRARY LISTING

Montague Public Libraries

Turners Falls: Carnegie (413) 863-3214

Montague Center (413) 367-2852

Millers Falls (413) 659-3801

Erving Public Library (413) 423-3348

Gill: Slate Library (413) 863-2591

Leverett Public Library (413) 548-9220

Northfield: Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455

Wendell Free Library (978) 544-3559

MONTAGUE

All month: *Library Building Survey.* Tell us about your local library experiences: tinyurl.com/MPLfallsurvey

Multiple days: *Art Exhibit.* Mixed media by Jamie Fuller. Montague Center.

Multiple days: *Grab & Go Bags.* Science: Glow ghosts. Craft: Clothespin bats. Free kits at all branch locations while supplies last.

Monday, October 2: *Turf Wars: the Great American Lawn.* Led by Michael Marcotrigiano. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

Every Wednesday: *LEGO at the Library.* Carnegie, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Every Thursday: *Playgroup,* guided and free play for preschoolers, older siblings welcome. Carnegie, 10 a.m.

Thursdays, October 5 and 19: *Great Stories Club* for teens. Brick House, 3 p.m.

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

Saturday, October 7: *Used Book Sale.* Fiction, paperbacks, kids' books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks. Hundreds of recent donations. Carnegie, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Wednesday, October 11: *Concert: Jenny Burtis,* local singer/songwriter. Outdoors if nice, indoors if rainy or very cold. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

Thursday, October 12: *Hot Chocolate Social.* Millers Falls, 3 to 4 p.m.

Monday, October 16: *Friends of MPL Meeting.* Annual discussion of Bylaws. All welcome. Email vgatvalley@gmail.com for more info. Carnegie, 5:30 p.m.

Monday, October 16: *How Not to Kill a Tree.* Led by Michael Marcotrigiano. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 18: *Author Series.* Richie Davis, *Flights of Fancy, Souls of Grace.* Refreshments provided. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

Thursday, October 19: *Kitchen Wizardry,* a Good Food Workshop with Nalini. MCSM Family Center, 41 3rd St., 2 p.m.

Thursday, October 19: *Book Club.* Erica Bauermeister, *No Two Persons.* Montague Center, 7 p.m.

Saturday, October 21: *Falls Fest.* Family activities, good food, great music. Avenue A, 1 to 6 p.m.

Friday, October 27: *Youth Advisory Committee.* Bring your ideas and suggestions for teen library programming. Snacks provided. Carnegie, 4 p.m.

Saturday, October 28: *Haloween Party.* Scavenger hunt, wearable crafts, photo booth. Costumes encouraged. For children of all ages and their caregivers. Carnegie, 11 a.m. to noon.

ERVING

All Month: *Art Exhibit,* landscape photography by Joelle Fabrizio.

Sunday, October 8: *Friends' Puzzle Swap.* All ages, no puzzle required. 1 to 3 p.m.

Sunday, October 8: *Genealogy Drop-in Help.* 1 to 3 p.m.

Thursday, October 12: *PJ Storytime.* RSVP suggested, 6 p.m.

Sunday, October 15: *Friends' Craft Day.* Materials provided, RSVP required, 1 p.m.

Thursday, October 19: *Forest Health Lecture Series.* Joan Deely on invasive plants. 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 26: *Book Club:* "A bestseller from the year you turned 18." Light refreshments. 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 29: *Erving Town Halloween.* Library open for photo booth and treats. 4 to 6 p.m.

LEVERETT

All Month: *Art Exhibit,* watercolor paintings by Nancy Emond; *Story Walks,* new story on the trail behind the library every Thursday.

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

Every Wednesday: *Playgroup,* for children ages 0 to 5 and their caregivers. See leverettlibrary.org or email budine@erving.org for info. 10:30 a.m.

Every Thursday: *Play Mahjongg.* Beginners welcome. 1:15 to 3:30 p.m.

Every Saturday: *Tai Chi.* Free classes, all welcome. Intermediate to advanced 10 a.m., beginners 11 a.m.

Saturday, October 7: *Workshop: Making Paper from Fungi.* Annaliese Bischoff. RSVP required: email sagegreen33@gmail.com. 1 p.m.

Saturday, October 14: *Fungi Walk* behind the library. Email sagegreen33@gmail.com to

register. 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 17: *Author Talk.* Dean Cyon, *Finding Home (Hungary, 1945).* 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 19: *Lecture: Making Paper from Fungi.* Annaliese Bischoff. 4 p.m.

Saturday, October 21: *Living History Presentation: Frances Perkins.* Presented by Jarice Hanson as part of the Friends of Leverett Library annual meeting. 1 p.m.

Tuesday, October 24: *Geno: A Night of Originals.* Gene Starnell plays his old and new original songs. 6:30 p.m.

NORTHFIELD

Every Tuesday: *Drop-in Knitting.* Join fellow knitters and crocheters to chat and share projects. 6 to 8 p.m.

Wednesday, October 4: *Readers' Choice.* Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion.* Pick up a copy at the library. 10 a.m.

Thursday, October 5: *Spice Club pickup starts.* Stop in for a sample and suggested recipes while supplies last; look for a new spice every month.

Thursday, October 5: *Library Trivia Night.* Four Star Farms Brewery, 6 p.m.

Saturday, October 7: *Puzzle Swap.* Dozens of new-to-you puzzles for kids and adults. For more info, email friendsofdml01360@gmail.com. 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, October 11: *Readings Group.* William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Lear.* Pick up a copy at the library. 3 p.m.

Thursday, October 12: *Environmental Awareness Group.* George Monbiot, *Regenesis: Feeding the World Without Devouring the Planet.* Pick up a copy at the library. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 14: *Dog Show.* Free to watch. To register a dog: \$10 for adult handler, \$5 for child handler. Dogs compete in fun categories and for a chance to be in annual calendar. 2 to 4 p.m.

WENDELL

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

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

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

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

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EXHIBITS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Lisa Beskin*, underwater photography. Through December. Reception tonight, Thursday, September 28, at 5 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Intervals*, mixed-media prints about time on handmade paper, by Karen Axtell. Through September.

Montague Center Library: *Jamie Fuller*, mixed media. Through October.

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.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *Tiny Art Fundraiser*, 5" x 5" art for sale donated by members of the Deerfield Valley Art Association. Through October 29.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Shifting*, oil paintings reflecting on the pandemic with themes of isolation, rest, healing, and community, by Annaleah Moon Gregoire. Closing reception this 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.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *The Tuesday-verse: Sorcerer Central*, paintings by Olivia Hamilton, through September 29. *Breakfast Kingdom*, new multimedia work by Wishbone Zoë (Zosia Kochanski), October 1 through November 24; reception Friday, October 27.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *The Poetry of Puddles*, photography by Dave Madeloni, through Sep-

tember; followed by *Portraits: a Lyrical Eye*, photographs by Gerard McGovern.

The Gallery, Northfield Mount Hermon School, Gill: *Paintings by Mwanga William*, a Ugandan-born painter and sculptor from Brattleboro. Through October 6.

MD Local Gallery, North Amherst: *Amherst Plein Air Society*, paintings of the Sweet Alice Conservation Area. A portion of the sales will benefit the Kestrel Land Trust. Through November 12. Reception this Friday, September 29, from 5 to 7 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.

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

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Local Color*. Members' exhibit celebrating colors of the autumn season. Through October.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *New Nocturnal Paintings*, by Chris Hill, 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

Cops Called on Folks Just Talking to Each Other; Loud Bangs; Wrong Birthday; Prone Dog; Barely Audible Bliss; Plant Rage

Monday, 9/18

1:20 p.m. Caller concerned about a possible scam involving redeemable coupons in her Eversource bill. Advised of options.

2:53 p.m. Employee of Montague Housing Authority would like it on record that they discovered some graffiti in one of the stairwells at Keith Apartments.

3:13 p.m. Caller states that her car was backed into sometime this morning in the alley between K and L streets. A note was left with a phone number. Report taken.

9:52 p.m. Caller states he is following a vehicle from Deerfield that left the scene of an accident in front of his house. Did not call Deerfield PD. Reports the car stopped at Cumberland Farms. Deerfield PD notified and on scene taking information for accident report.

Tuesday, 9/19

3:22 a.m. Caller reporting tree down blocking roadway on Walnut Street. Officer advises tree blocking both lanes of travel; requesting DPW be notified. No wires involved.

7:22 a.m. Caller from Montague City Road states that her daughter waits for the bus near the General Pierce Bridge and cars go by too fast; would like area monitored better.

9:34 a.m. Caller reporting a white van at Unity Park that she finds suspicious. Male parties sitting in van; people driving up and then leaving after talking to them for five minutes. Officer in area. Vehicle operator reports she was doing yoga and is now just sitting in her car; nothing

suspicious.

5:21 p.m. Caller states that a male party with a white van has been staying at Railroad Salvage for the past week or so; he has a generator, and there are cords everywhere. Party moved along.

7:31 p.m. Caller reports that a deer jumped out in front of his vehicle on Meadow Street and damaged his car; it is now lying in the road and barely breathing. Deer dispatched. Message left for DPW.

8:03 p.m. 911 caller reports that a vehicle hit a pole outside Walgreens; the vehicle is leaking fluid and looks like it is smoking. Officer advises minimal damage; involved party will attempt to drive vehicle home.

8:34 p.m. Caller from Avenue A advises that his neighbor is playing loud music and it is disturbing him. Officer advises that they turned the music down.

9:49 p.m. Caller states that a cluster of loud bangs was audible on Avenue A a few minutes ago. Officer advises quiet in area.

11:58 p.m. Officer witnessed a car run into a pole on Turners Falls Road. Male appears to be getting out of vehicle. State police on scene. Pole broken in half. No wire down. Positive airbag deployment. Eversource contacted and *en route*. Vehicle towed. Report taken.

Wednesday, 9/20

5:57 a.m. Male walked into station stating that his father told him the police were looking for him. Party taken into custody.

8:05 a.m. 911 caller states the birthday on his food

stamp card is wrong; he's tried contacting the state about it, but they told him he's trying to commit fraud, and now he's starving. Would like officer to call him back. Officer attempted callback; no answer.

12:55 p.m. Caller states there is a large dog outside the Windy Hollow Veterinary Clinic that is possibly hurt or deceased. Officer spoke with employees, who deny having such a dog there at this time. Neighbor down the road has a dog that often lies in the front yard. Area checked; unable to locate.

2:27 p.m. A 24-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on three default warrants and also charged with two counts of assault and battery on a police officer; malicious destruction of property over \$1,200; assault and battery with a dangerous weapon; and threatening to commit a crime.

4:01 p.m. Report of argument over music being played at Unity Park. Parties had dispersed prior to officers' arrival; however, officers were able to find and speak to the parties.

4:45 p.m. Caller from Hatchery Road states that she has a sick opossum in her yard. Message left for animal control officer. Caller was able to catch animal and let it out in the woods. No services needed.

Thursday, 9/21

5:20 p.m. Caller from East Main Street reports that he had two Amazon packages stolen yesterday. Referred to an officer.

7:45 p.m. Caller states that there are loud noises, vehicles, and screaming in the area of Millers Pub; requesting officer drive by. Quiet upon arrival.

Friday, 9/22

10:55 a.m. 911 caller reports he was just in a minor two-car accident at Avenue A and Seventh Street. No injuries. Report taken.

4:20 p.m. Caller states he struck a deer on Main Street; it is still alive, but not able to leave. Caller subsequently stated that the deer took off and there is no damage to his vehicle, so he is all set now.

9:26 p.m. Caller from Montague Street states her garage light came on and it won't go off now; requesting officer drive by and check area. Caller was having trouble with garage door opener. All set now.

9:29 p.m. Caller states that there was a series of loud noises that sounded like gunfire and made her house shake; occurred on the alley side of Fourth Street. Area quiet upon arrival.

10:05 p.m. Officer out across from water department with a couple of

guys acting suspicious at this time of night.

10:07 p.m. Caller states the owner of Tangible Bliss has music playing very loud, but he is not there; requesting PD attempt to locate him and have him go turn music off. Speaker is playing very calm and quiet music; barely audible.

11:13 p.m. Caller from Davis Street states he accidentally backed his vehicle up on his neighbor's lawn and his neighbor is currently outside yelling. Officer advises situation mediated; caller was the aggressive party.

Saturday, 9/23

1:17 a.m. Caller from East Chestnut Hill Road reports that a nearby neighbor is having a party of sorts and is currently making a lot of noise. Referred to an officer.

12:33 p.m. Caller states that there is a small plastic cup with some bullets in it near the pedestrian bridge on the corner of the old Railroad Salvage parking lot. Items retrieved.

2:15 p.m. 911 caller from Vladish Avenue reports they have a fire in their oven that won't go out. Transferred to Shelburne Control; PD advised.

6:42 p.m. Caller states her neighbors have been harassing her and now aren't allowing enough water into the washer for her to wash her clothing. Officer spoke with caller, who states she will handle the situation.

6:51 p.m. Caller states there is a female party standing at Newton and Franklin streets screaming that he poisoned her plants during his family event. Second caller states she's also at this event, and that the female party is screaming threats and throwing wooden boards in their direction. Situations mediated. Parties agreed to separate.

Sunday, 9/24
4:03 p.m. Caller from N Streets states that two neighboring dogs are running around loose again. Dogs are currently back inside.

7:55 p.m. Caller states she accidentally backed into a vehicle near Carroll's Market; doesn't see any damage, but wanted to make a report just in case. Report taken.

9:47 p.m. 911 caller reporting motorcycle accident on Millers Falls Road. States operator of bike left scene and was last seen walking up Grand Avenue. Officer requesting tow. Attempted to call number of male party associated with bike; spoke to female party who advised wrong number. Officer advises Koch's has the motorcycle.

ARTIST PROFILE

Chantelle Leswell

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I go around sometimes to certain events to find artists I would like to do profiles on. At the Farmers Market in Greenfield, I met a woman who was showing what I call spring wreaths. I have one at my own home for the springtime, which is why I liked the wreaths made by this artist, whose name is Chantelle Leswell.

"I started about two years ago making what I call 'hand-craft wreaths,'" Leswell told me. One reason she likes doing this kind of work, she said, is that she is from Scotland, and "really enjoys sharing a part of myself from far away."

Leswell launched her business selling her wreaths at this year's Farmers Market. Another thing she has done in the area was a workshop in May at the Imaginary Bookshop,

a relatively new bookstore in downtown Greenfield.

She is also going to work with farms. "There will be local farms that I will be collaborating with in coming months," she told me during our interview. She also added that one is a new business. It is called Moonrise Farm in Greenfield, and it grows flowers. She has other projects in the works with local farms and businesses.

Leswell made what she is going to try and undertake with this business sound sort of cool. I definitely thought it was cool to learn that she is self-taught when it comes to making these wreaths. The story behind it was simple: she wanted one for her own house, and all the ones she liked were out of her price range.

She makes the wreaths out of grapevines and wood, and then adds silk flowers or dried flowers. She uses the dried



A handmade wreath sold by Blooming Thistle Co.

flowers upon request. "The silk flowers are the most popular," when it comes to the wreaths, she told me.

"Sometimes," she added in connection with the wreaths, "I like to forage flowers and dry them myself when I can."

Leswell's business is called Blooming Thistle Co. She has a Facebook page and Instagram page where you can look

at her work. She has decorated friends' kids' bedrooms. She does commissions of the wreaths, and customers can decide how much they want to pay for them. The ones she brings to the events cost between \$35 and \$45 depending on size and materials. She told me it goes over well with people, meaning she has great feedback from them.

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FRIENDS from page B1

There are five hens in residence; Peanut, Coconut, and the three Ladies. Some new hens are expected shortly; all are no longer laying eggs, but were sent to Leverett for retirement rather than the stockpot.

At one point during our conversation, Trish said "Oh! Pony is in your car!" I thought, *What? Even a miniature pony couldn't get in the window!*

I whipped my head around, and Trish laughed and explained: "Pony is the cat's name. Don't worry, he

won't do any damage." Better a ten-pound cat than even a tiny pony!

Trish said they are at full goat capacity and hate to turn any away, but would take new alpacas if any were in need. And she told me all animals who could be gelded have been, so there wouldn't be any unexpected pregnancies.

The cars I see parked at the Cave Hill Road location belong to volunteers, a regular stream of people who help with fence maintenance, poop scooping, feeding, general care, and landscaping. Kathy LeMay, the other sister member of the team, and Trish both have full-time jobs so they have hired help come on Monday through Friday mornings. Fortunately, both their jobs seem to be remote-friendly, but the volunteers and hired help are important.

When I spoke with Kathy last year, she expressed hope for community involvement through schools and organizations. They are still hoping for more! Groups from ServiceNet in Greenfield and Northampton come by to visit and connect with the animals and help out a bit. One ServiceNet staff member enjoyed the visits so much she now volunteers on her own.

Community Options, an organization helping folks with disabilities find employment, also brings people by every Wednesday to help with feeding and the never-ending poop scooping.

Trish told me of a couple who came to visit a while back. The husband had dementia and didn't have much verbal ability at that point, but his wife later told Trish



Patches the alpaca is the most emotionally and socially steady animal, says LeMay.

ish that he really connected with the animals. He had farmed in the past, and she said that the visit was "life-changing."

One of the sanctuary's goals for the near future is to set up a medical veterinary fund. If you have a dog or cat, you probably know how expensive vet bills are these days. Many of the resident animals are elderly, and their care needs can be frequent. The Haven hopes to raise funds through community donations.

There will be an open house at the Haven on Saturday, November

11 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Go say hello to Mugwort, Franklin, and Patches – you don't have to scoop poop to gain some new friends. The alpacas, mini-donkeys, sheep, and goats are always very photogenic, and willing to pose for photos.

Jefferson's Safe Haven can be contacted at info@jeffersonssafehaven.org. The address is 149 Cave Hill Road in Leverett. Visit online jeffersonssafehaven.org, where you may also make a donation.



KATHY LEMAY PHOTOS

The most talkative member of the herd, May May is "a giant soul in a tiny goat body," according to Kathy LeMay of Jefferson's Safe Haven.



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

SOUTH HADLEY – Welcome back to a new school year, for those who live by the school schedule, and welcome officially to Autumn, that time of pumpkin spice lattes, apple picking, and crisp mornings. I've just begun teaching a brand-new course at Bard College at Simon's Rock, "Sexual Health and Wellness," and I am loving this additional opportunity to provide sexual health information, a.k.a. "Sex Ed," to 9th- and 10th-graders this semester.

Speaking of sex ed, we have great news in Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Board of Education approved new guidelines this week for public schools' provision of sex education. The last time new guidelines were discussed and approved was 1999.

The new framework indicates that students can be taught age-appropriate, fact-based, medically accurate information, beginning with hygiene, bullying, and combating gender stereotypes for the youngest students. Middle and high schoolers can receive more detailed information about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), dating, healthy relationships, LGBTQIA+ identities, consent, bodily autonomy, and substance abuse.

I write that students "can," rather than "will," receive this sexual health information because Massachusetts is one of the 12 states that does not mandate sex education in public schools. Still, having the guidelines explicitly state that

LGBTQIA+ identities and information should be included in this aspiring comprehensive sex education is a huge win for our progressive, compassionate, affirming, and caring state. We can only hope that the more restrictive – and consequently, more dangerous for youths' health – states take some inspiration from our current endeavors, which come from an environment that was, once upon a time, very Puritan and erotophobic.

For the rest of this article I'd like to discuss outercourse, intercourse, and STIs. My students have a lot of questions about these three topics, so it's never too repetitive to clarify.

Planned Parenthood (PP) defines *intercourse* as anything that does not involve penis-vagina intercourse, with the goal of preventing egg and sperm from meeting. However, the Our Whole Lives (OWL) sex ed curriculum defines outercourse as activities that do not involve penetration, and goes on to list a number: mutual masturbation, rubbing clothed bodies together, striptease dancing, discussing fantasies, kissing, caressing, and massage.

As our youth hopefully have more opportunities for sex education, I'd also like to mention the term "sexual debut," gleaned from other articles and information about sexual activities. For me "sexual debut" can refer to any new sexual activity someone chooses to do with themselves or another person. People may have a variety of sexual debuts, such as when they first experi-

ence masturbation, kissing, oral sex and intercourse (when of age), and so forth. We can even think about someone having new sexual debuts with every new partner.

This terminology is more helpful to use than "losing one's virginity," as "virginity" stereotypically refers to penis-vagina intercourse, and leaves out entire sectors of people and activities.

In my teaching and writing I generally define *intercourse* as activities that have the highest risk of pregnancy or transmission of STIs, if unprotected, and involve genitals entering body parts. Penis-in-vagina, penis-in-anus, and fellatio (giving a penis oral sex) all fall under my framing of intercourse activities. Cunnilingus – giving a vulva and clitoris oral sex – is a little trickier, as it may involve some penetration by the tongue, and it certainly can involve an exchange of body fluids.

PP and OWL both tend to emphasize outercourse activities as ways to avoid pregnancy, and some STIs, while enjoying activities that can promote sexual intimacy and closeness.

The best way to avoid pregnancy is to ensure that sperm do not enter the vulva or vagina by enjoying outercourse and/or non-penis-vagina activities such as manual stimulation, oral stimulation, and using adult toys.

Transmission Risks

Since there are many STIs, and many ways of transmitting them, the best ways to avoid STIs include all partners having detailed conversations about STI status prior to activity, getting tested prior to sexual activity, using barriers like

condoms or dental dams during each encounter, choosing committed fluid-bonded sexual relationships, and/or picking and choosing the safest sexual activities based on each person's STI status.

While PP and OWL both include deep, or "French," kissing among their outercourse activities, there is a possibility of transmitting herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1) or human papillomavirus (HPV) through this exchange of saliva. When in doubt, get tested, and talk openly and honestly about any potential risk.

HSV-1 is extremely common; according to Johns Hopkins Medicine, about 50 to 80% of Americans have this diagnosis. HSV-1 can be asymptomatic for years, with only occasional cold sores indicating its presence. It is most transmissible when the cold sores are active, or just before and after they erupt. Medications now exist to help control it.

HPV, spread through skin-to-skin contact such as oral, anal, and vaginal intercourse, is also incredibly common, with nearly every adult having this diagnosis at some point in their life, and about 13 million teens infected each year according to the CDC. Luckily, most young people now receive vaccinations against HPV. However, as there are hundreds of strains, many may still contract an HPV infection at some point.

HPV is often asymptomatic, and usually goes away on its own within two years. For others, HPV may show up in the form of genital warts. However, 10% of infections can lead to cancerous cells on the vulva, vagina, cervix, penis, anus, or back of the throat area. While condoms can help prevent the spread of HPV, they don't adequately cover the vulva,

where HPV can exist. The internal condom may provide a bit more coverage of the vulva, but is not a guaranteed HPV prevention method.

Other viral STIs include HIV, hepatitis B, and HSV-2. People who are at risk for exposure to HIV can now take pre-exposure prophylaxis, which helps prevent the transmission. And with early detection, antiretroviral therapy medication and injection treatments now exist to keep HIV from developing into AIDS. Proper treatment may even result in undetectable viral loads. Hepatitis B can be treated with an antiviral medication regime; HSV-2 can result in genital sores.

Bacterial STIs, which tend to be curable, include syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia; trichomoniasis is a curable parasitic STI. All four are easily detected with testing and treatable with antibiotics. While some STIs may reveal themselves with itchiness, unusual discharge, pain, irritation, or sores, others may be asymptomatic, and can be transmitted unknowingly.

I hope readers will find this STI refresher helpful, and pass this article and information on to individuals considering various sexual debuts, so that those debuts may be as pleasurable and healthy as possible.

Stephanie Baird, LMHC is an OWL facilitator, EMDR consultant and psychotherapist, certified in Advancing Clinical Excellence in Sexuality (ACES), author of the 2023 book "EMDR and Sexual Health: A Clinician's Guide," and encourages her clients towards thriving sexual health. She welcomes feedback and suggestions at sexmatters@montaguereporter.org.

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VALLEY VIEW from page A1

forcing Buzz to protect his chickens – easy pickings’ for such an efficient, opportunistic predator.

Online research told Buzz that a dominant tom like the one sharing his property covers a range of 36 miles and intentionally works alternate quadrants of that sphere to avoid overhunting an area. Bobcats primarily hunt small game, such as rabbits, woodchucks, squirrels, chipmunks, mice, waterfowl, turkeys and grouse, but are known to take down small deer by ambush and stalking, most often pouncing from trees and other elevated perches.

For several weeks prior to the recent incident, Buzz and Leigh had noticed palpable unease among the deer feeding close to their house. On several occasions under the cover of darkness their curiosity was piqued by the sound of deer delivering sharp, blowing alarms that warned of looming danger.

On September 15, they were awakened at 5 a.m. by a piercing, scream-like fawn distress call accompanied by incessant blowing by its doe mother. The pathetic distress calls continued for five minutes, then stopped as the doe continued blowing and stomping about. Buzz and Leigh knew a kill had occurred. They planned to investigate the scene in the light of day, well aware that

what awaited them would not be pretty.

Walking out into the field later that day to a patch of green grass surrounded by a higher hayfield, they easily found the kill site about 80 yards into the middle of the field. There, Buzz reports, “the fawn was tackled, killed, dragged to the edge of the forest, partly eaten and neatly covered by leaves and sticks – classic evidence of a bobcat caching its kill to conceal it from ravens and other scavengers.” The cat had eaten a leg and part of the back before covering his prize for future feedings.

Buzz says the conditions for a midfield kill were ideal: wet, quiet terrain, light pre-dawn fog and mist, a concealing hill, and a favorable, soft breeze that was barely detectable. Those advantageous factors provided the cat with enough cover to creep within pouncing distance and take down the estimated 40- to 50-pound victim.

Fawns, typically born around Memorial Day, grow quickly and are more than capable of fleeing danger by September. Buzz thinks the odds were squarely against the experienced adult cat, perhaps a one-in-10 shot. Everything had to line up perfectly, and did.

The kill was quick. The cat tackled its unsuspecting prey with a jarring neck shot, using his claws and teeth to puncture the fawn’s throat in several places. The fatal wound was a gaping hole opened along the

carotid artery and jugular vein that bled out the fawn quickly.

With his kill-assessment phase complete, Buzz’s nature classroom was just beginning.

Wearing rubber gloves and boots to minimize human scent when examining the scene and taking photos, he and Leigh carefully re-covered the fawn with leaves and sticks. He returned to the scene later that day and set up a trail camera, seeking confirmation that the big bobcat they’d been seeing was indeed the predator, and to examine the culprit’s feeding patterns.

Well, as that old folk song goes, the cat came back, but it didn’t even wait till the very next day. Instead, it returned a couple of hours after the camera had been deployed. As expected, it was the big tom they’d been watching, and he made quick work of devouring his prize. By Day 3, the carcass was reduced to bones – a fascinating process to watch.

Though I didn’t tell Buzz so until after the perpetrator had been positively identified, I initially held hope that the kill had been the work of a cougar. They, too, bury their kills and return in subsequent days to eat them. Never in the world of modern-day New England cougar sightings has anyone captured such an event on film. Could this be the first? On my own brother-in-law’s farm? Nope. Too good to be true. Just a bobcat. Fascinat-

ing, nonetheless.

Buzz was particularly interested in one aspect of the feeding routine. With his hunger satisfied on the first visit to his cached fawn, the cat dragged what was left to a new location 15 feet deeper into the forest. “There,” wrote Buzz, “he covered the remains with copious amounts of leaves and sticks. Clearly, this was a time-consuming job. The ground all around the fawn was scraped clean, and all of the debris there located was piled on the remains. Indeed, this second covering was even more thorough than the first.”

On a poignant note, the fawn’s mother kept returning to feed at the kill site, perhaps hoping for a miraculous reunion with her fawn. On the day of the kill, she grazed not 50 feet from the covered fawn carcass. A sad sight indeed – one interpreted by my brother-in-law from the proper perspective.

“We love seeing deer, and especially fawns,” he wrote in an email to friends. “That said, we also like having large carnivores around and know they play an important role in keeping the deer herd in check.”

To him, it all came down to a basic balance-of-nature principle that’s as old as life itself – a tenet that some New Age “nature lovers” would rather forget. Such selective denial is not progressive thinking. It’s ignorance.



As Cable Costs Spiral, Consider Cutting the Cord.

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – The prices for basically everything have been going up, and that includes subscription services like cable. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average cost of cable and satellite service nationwide has increased by over 44% in the last 10 years, and nearly 90% in the last 20. A different study by *CordCutting.com* claims an increase of 52% in the last three years alone.

We may complain about spending more than we expected on things like gas, eggs, and bread these days, but the average cost of a cable subscription has reached an astronomical \$1,600 a year, according to an analysis by MNTN Research.

Sit down for a second and consider your own monthly cable bill, and what it works out to over any given year. You might think as you weigh that bigger-than-expected number, “Sure, but I watch TV, and I like it.” But there’s probably a good chance you can cancel your TV service, save a lot of money, and still not lose out on most or all of the shows you enjoy.

To start, you can watch a lot of old TV shows and movies through services like Pluto TV, from *Star Trek* to *Sailor Moon*, *Gunsmoke* to *MacGyver*, *CSI* to *Court TV*, and even the local news – well, local-ish. They’ve got Boston’s CBS station, WBZ. And there are a lot of services like this out there, including TubiTV, the Roku Channel, Freevee, Crackle, and more. And a library card can finagle you access to Hoopla, which includes movies and TV shows, too.

There is one notable drawback to going the free route when it comes to streaming, and that’s sports. You can’t really watch football, baseball, or what-have-you without coughing up some dough. But you can still do it, through services like Fubo, Sling TV, Hulu, Peacock, and ESPN+, and it should still cost you less than your cable subscription. And throwing a few bucks at a streaming subscription for the shows you want can be a worthy alternative to paying Comcast.

One thing to be wary of, if you follow this strategy: Switching cable TV for streaming services can add up if you decide you need all of them. Paying for Netflix in 4K, Hulu, Paramount+, Disney+, Prime Video, Apple TV+, and all the

other popular services can quickly add up to more than your cable sub may have cost you. Consider canceling services when your favorite shows stop for the year – you can always mark your calendar to subscribe again next year when they start back up.

I also urge you to audit your subscriptions – streaming media and otherwise – at least once or twice a year. There are free services like Mint that can help you easily track and visualize your subscription spending, and other paid services such as YNAB that can similarly scrape the data from participating banks and credit card companies. You might find a subscription or two that you forgot about and aren’t using anymore. Even small monthly fees add up over time.

While you can cut out cable, basic internet connectivity is required for any streaming solutions you may replace it with, but there’s one last bit of advice I have: the ACP.

As part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed in 2021, the FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program provides a substantial discount for internet service for many who are eligible for it – up to \$30 per month, or even more. Criteria for the program are broad, and include anyone on Medicaid or SNAP benefits, those getting reduced-price school lunches, those receiving any federal housing assistance, those with veterans’ pensions, and many of those on tribal lands using tribal assistance programs.

With the average cable bill hitting \$1,600 a year, cutting the cord may make a big difference in your budget. If you aren’t that strapped for cash, shuffling that money into just one extra mortgage payment a year could cut several years off the life of a loan, saving you tens of thousands of dollars in interest.

Think about it: you’re probably only really watching 10 or 15 channels out of the 150+ you’re paying for, and I bet you can get access to most of the same sorts of shows much more cheaply through standalone streaming services and the various free options out there. Maybe it’s time to cut the cord.

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

FROM A TEEN’S POINT OF VIEW

The High School Adventure

By FINTAN ANDREW JONES

MONTAGUE – Hello! I just started high school three weeks ago. It was definitely a big adjustment. There are so many differences between middle school and high school.

Now, to the schedule. To start off, the classes are much longer in high school, therefore, there are fewer total classes. In my middle school there were six class “blocks” every day, plus lunch; now there are four class blocks plus lunch.

I enjoy this new system, because with 75-minute classes you get a lot of learning. If you figure five minutes of each class is kids coming in and unpacking, and five minutes at the end is for kids to pack up, you are still left with over an hour of solid learning! Some classes even include breaks, because we don’t have one built into our schedule otherwise.

Longer classes are especially great for subjects like Spanish where you need to completely shift the way your brain thinks. Speaking of Spanish, this semester I have a Spanish class where they only allow you to speak Spanish while in the class. (You can speak English if given permission.) This is a big adjustment, but I think it is great for becoming fluent in another language.

This semester I am taking Science and Technology, Orchestra, Physical Education, Health, Spanish, and AP Human Geography. I will be getting new classes next semester, which so far include World History and English.

So far my favorite class has to be either Science and Technology or AP Human Geography. I really enjoy engineering and robotics, and those are things we do a lot of in Science and Technology. I heard from my teacher that we will be making prosthetic hands and learning about the engineer design process.

In AP Human Geography we learn about geography and how it relates to how humans interact with the world and each other. I wasn’t sure if I would like this class but

I have really started to like it. My next column after this one will be inspired by this class – but more on that later.

Aside from the schedule adjustment, there are many other things that are new. To start, instead of having one grade of students in each class, there are a mixture of students from different grades. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and learn from people who have been in high school longer.

Another thing that is different is the clubs. In middle school, there were a lot of clubs that were only for high schoolers, and now I am able to join them and participate more. I am considering Robotics club and As Schools Match Wits. If you don’t know, in As School Match Wits you get to try out for a team that represents your school in live TV competitions. I am leaning towards Robotics, since it is hard to get on the As Schools Match Wits team until you are a junior or senior.

This season I am not playing any sports, since I want to see how heavy the homework is before I take on an after-school sport, but I might play some sports in other parts of the year. If I had to choose any sport I would probably do shot put, ultimate frisbee, or javelin throwing.

Overall, I am really enjoying high school, and can’t wait for more things to come from it. All of the teachers are very nice and have made the transition from middle school to high school very easy.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about some of the new things that happen in high school.

As I mentioned earlier, my next column will be inspired by my Human Geography class. We had an assignment about how geography is connected to humans, and what we do with that information. We had to watch a video about how bananas have changed the world, from being a luxurious treat, to a government asset, and finally to a topic of war. I was very interested in digging deeper into this, and that is what I will write about next time.

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Aquí se habla español

Esta es la página mensual en español del *Montague Reporter*. Aquí podrá encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana en el área, eventos de interés, curiosidades, y noticias mundiales en español. Si quiere participar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a spanish@montaguereporter.org.



OPINIÓN

La salud es lo que importa.

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

GREENFIELD – El ser humano solamente tiene algo seguro: que algún día vamos a morir. Aun así casi nadie nos va preparando para ese momento, ni en casa, ni en la escuela, ni en la propiedad, sociedad o comunidad.

Les tengo que confesar que no temo la muerte en sí misma. Tengo una edad y ya he vivido muchas experiencias, y aunque me gustaría vivir muchas más, ver crecer a mis sobrinos, viajar y conocer más gente, y quizás escribir un libro, no me puedo quejar. He tenido una vida completa, incluyendo los malos momentos que me han hecho crecer y reinventarme varias veces.

No le tengo miedo a la parca, pero sí a la enfermedad y todo lo que esta conlleva. Odio los hospitales y siento un rechazo que me sale de dentro a todo lo relacionado con los médicos. Además de este dolor físico y mental provocado por la enfermedad está la cuestión económica.

Y esto es sobre lo que quiero hablarles para que ustedes comparen y piensen como podría ser el futuro si algunas cosas cambiarán en este país. Les aseguro que otro sistema es posible.

Este verano he estado en España visitando a una amiga de 57 años que fue diagnosticada en julio de 2022 con un linfoma de Hodgkin que le provocó un tumor inoperable en el riñón. Este tumor le provocaba importantes dolores que solamente las dosis de morfina conseguían doblegar. Recibió nueve ciclos de quimioterapia desde que le fue diagnosticada la enfermedad y que no consiguieron reducir el tumor ni la enfermedad. Ha pasado muchos meses ingresada en el hospital con cuidados mentales y físicos las 24 horas del día en una habitación individual ya que sus defensas estaban mermadas.

Mi amiga es profesora de instituto en un instituto de Salamanca y está de baja médica cobrando su sueldo completo desde el primer día en que le fue diagnosticada de su enfermedad, no hay límite de días por enfermedad. Desde entonces no ha vuelto al trabajo, aunque el instituto le reserva la plaza si pudiera volver a enseñar, o si no, declararla no apta para el trabajo y cobrar su sueldo como jubilada por causa mayor.

Cuando los médicos vieron que el tratamiento de quimioterapia no daba los resultados esperados, decidieron para un tratamiento muy novedoso y caro que se realiza en parte en Suiza. El hospital de Salamanca es un hospital de provincias que no tiene to-

dos los avances al ser pequeño y este tratamiento es casi experimental, aunque ya se lleva haciendo algunos años en Estados Unidos. Se llama tratamiento de células T-Car. Se trata de extraer células de la médula del paciente, se llevaron a Suiza y en el laboratorio se manipularon para convertirlos en sanas y que fueran capaces de reproducirse creando otras células sanas también.

Hubo que repetir el tratamiento dos veces porque en el primer intento las células no funcionaron como se preveía. Una vez modificadas se inyectan de nuevo en la médula del paciente para poder inmunizarse ante los ataques de las células cancerígenas. Solamente este tratamiento cuesta unos 465.000 dólares en los Estados Unidos.

Las células T-Car funcionaron y su tumor ha remitido completamente. Aún así, mientras se estaba recuperando en el hospital se contagió de un hongo que estaba a punto de atacar su cerebro. Los médicos tuvieron que operar en dos ocasiones para poder limpiar las zonas afectadas por el hongo. Ha tenido que ingresar todo el verano para recibir tratamiento, ya que sus defensas estaban muy debilitadas por el linfoma.

Durante todo este tiempo ha recibido transfusiones de sangre cada semana, plaquetas, plasma y otros medicamentos. Ha tenido a su disposición un psiquiatra, un psicólogo, y un fisio cada día. Su habitación tenía las mejores comodidades, incluido un colchón térmico anti-llagas y una enfermera o médico a toque de timbre las 24 horas del día.

Por fin, hace unas semanas ha vuelto a casa, aunque recibe a diario la visita de un fisioterapeuta, y va tres días por semana al hospital en ambulancia medicalizada para recibir tratamiento médico para el hongo. Los fines de semana un médico y una enfermera la visitan en casa para comprobar que la recuperación lleva su curso correcto.

¿Y saben ustedes cuánto ha pagado mi amiga de su bolsillo desde que le diagnosticaron la enfermedad? Exactamente 0 euros.

Esto se debe a que en España existe para todos los españoles y residentes en el país un seguro de cobertura sanitaria universal. El acceso a médicos y hospitales no se puede negar a nadie, incluso si no tienes documentación para residir legalmente en el país.

Claro, esto técnicamente es gratis, aunque estos gastos se pagan con el dinero recaudado por los impuestos que deben pagar todos los españoles si no quieren cometer una ilegalidad. Los impuestos se pagan de dos formas: una es por los ingresos obtenidos al año, y otra por los bienes inmuebles y las rentas que se produzcan. Esto quiere

decir que los salarios más altos en España pagan un impuesto anual del 45% de su salario, pero los salarios más bajos no pagan más del 20%.

Pongamos por ejemplo el caso de mi amiga. En España, los profesores de instituto están sujetos a ciertos impuestos y contribuciones para financiar la Seguridad Social al igual que todos los trabajadores. A continuación, y para que se hagan una idea, les proporcionó una descripción general de los impuestos y contribuciones comunes que se deducen del salario de un profesor en España:

- **IRPF, Impuesto sobre la renta de las personas físicas.** Este impuesto es deducido mensualmente del salario y se calcula en función de los ingresos y otras circunstancias personales (estado civil, número de hijos, etc.).

Esta sería una tabla de las contribuciones al IRPF según los sueldos en Castilla y León del año 2022:

Hasta 12,450€	19%
12,451€– 20,200€	24%
20,201€– 35,200€	30%
35,201€– 60,000€	37%
60,001€– 300,000€	45%
Más de 300,000€	47%

- **Cotizaciones a la Seguridad Social.** Los profesores están obligados a realizar contribuciones mensuales a la Seguridad Social. Estas cotizaciones se calculan en función del salario y van destinadas a cubrir prestaciones como asistencia sanitaria, pensiones, desempleo, entre otros.

Los salarios de los profesores de instituto en Castilla y León pueden variar dependiendo de varios factores, como la categoría, la antigüedad, el tipo de contrato, las horas trabajadas, y otros complementos salariales. Además, los salarios pueden cambiar con el tiempo debido a negociaciones sindicales, cambios en las leyes laborales, y reajustes salariales.

Para proporcionar una estimación general, según datos previos (hasta septiembre de 2021), los salarios anuales brutos para un profesor de instituto en España varían en un rango amplio: Un/a profesor/a de Secundaria (con experiencia) ganaría entre 30,000€ y 50,000€ brutos al año aproximadamente.

Por lo tanto, un profesor de secundaria en Castilla y León, comunidad en la que los sueldos son casi los más bajos de España, cobraría unos 2.500 euros al mes que son unos 2.670 dólares al cambio. Además, el profesor tiene dos pagas extras al año, en diciembre y julio que no son constitutivas en retención de impuestos.

En nuestro distrito, Gill-Montague, un profesor de secundaria en su escala de la tabla más alta cobra al mes unos 3.800 dólares, no tiene pagas extras y tiene cada año escolar tres días de asuntos propios y derecho a un día y medio por enfermedad cada mes, lo que hace menos de 15 días al año de baja por enfermedad.

Paga al año unos 700 dólares a Medicare y unos 9.000 dólares al año en tasas federales y estatales de acuerdo a su sueldo y además de una contribución al seguro médico de unos 7.000 dólares al año. Este seguro normalmente obliga a realizar pagos por cada visita al médico de cabecera, especialista, medicinas.

Ni que decir tiene que, en caso de enfermedad grave, el desembolso por parte del paciente sería inmenso. En el caso de la enfermedad de mi amiga, con todo lo que se incluye a lo largo de este año, *la factura no estaría por debajo del millón de dólares.* Añadan ustedes eso al sufrimiento por la enfermedad.

Y los profesores en Massachusetts somos unos privilegiados, porque el sindicato es uno de los más fuertes. Otros trabajos ni siquiera ofrecen días de baja por enfermedad o días libres. Aún así, tengo compañeros que van a recibir su tratamiento de quimioterapia durante la hora de comer o de preparación ya que no tienen días de enfermedad disponibles por haberlos agotado.

España no es un país rico. Hay un porcentaje de desempleo enorme comparado con el de Estados Unidos. Durante la dictadura franquista que duró 40 años ya existía el sistema de seguridad social similar al que existe en Estados Unidos, pero el acceso a los médicos y hospitales buenos solamente era posible para los que podían pagarlo. Incluso los que podían permitirse lo viajaban hasta Houston para realizar sus tratamientos.

Ahora nadie hace esto ya que en España pueden tener el mismo tratamiento sin ningún coste para el paciente.

La diferencia es que en Estados Unidos la salud es considerada como un negocio, no como un derecho del ser humano.

Todos sabemos que una de las frases de la Declaración de Independencia en este país dice: *Todos los hombres son creados iguales y que tenemos derecho a la vida, a la libertad y a perseguir la felicidad.* El derecho a la salud es un derecho inalienable del ser humano y esa es la dirección en que este país debería moverse.

Las elecciones del 2024 están a la vuelta de la esquina, pensemos en ello.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Satisfaction*, Rolling Stones tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Palladium, Worcester: *Cannibal Corpse, Mayhem, Gorguts, Blood Incantation*. \$ 5:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Slobdrop, Voidbearer, Chiburi, Mars Hendrick, Strosselbee, Slow Pony*. \$ 6 p.m.

Pioneer Brewery, Turners Falls: *Stillwater Band*. No cover. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Two Step and Karaoke Night*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Luthier's Co-op, Easthampton: *Lonesome Brothers, Stripmall Ballads, The Blue and Gold*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Red Guitar* film screening with *John Sheldon*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Reed Foehl, Workman Song*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Jonathan Coulton*. \$ 8 p.m.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Thalia Zedek, All Feels*. No cov-

er. 8 p.m.
Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Screensavor, Loops for Pearl, St. Intel, Allen Fingerlake*. \$ 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass and Beyond*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Garlic and Arts Festival, Orange: *Bombazzeando, Rebirth, Love Crumbs, Moon Hollow, Sorry Mister*, more. From 11 a.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Sandy Bailey CD release, Cloud-belly, Luna Dawn*. \$ 7 p.m.

Everything But Comics, Northampton: *Zebu, Blahsum, Chris Wardlaw, Sleep Destroyer*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Tengger, Jesse Beaman*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Abby Volta, Sonum Unum, LOEN*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1

Garlic and Arts Festival, Orange: *Shokazoba, Ray & the Lovers, Gaslight Tinkers, Wild Bill, Home Body*, more. From 11 a.m.

Retreat Farm, Brattleboro: *Orchard Aid* benefit feat. *Zara Bode & Stefan Amidon, Slow Pony, Pete Bernhard, Hazenuts, Vermont Timbre*, more. \$ 1 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Scary movie double feature: *Hereditary* and *It Follows*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Pi-

oneer Valley Jazz Shares presents *Jeff Lederer's Shoenberg on the Beach*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Phil Ragland, Dome Lettuce, more TBA*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Amethyst Kiah, Jon Muq*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2

Abandoned Dream, Turners Falls: *Powers/Rolin Duo, Wednesday Knudsen, APIE, Junk Orbit*. \$ 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Y La Bamba*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kabaka Pyramid, Rebelle, DJ I-Ganic*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4

The Drake, Amherst: *Bitchin Bajas, Wet Tuna*. \$ 8 p.m.

Red Cross, Northampton: *Pere-stroika, Dutch Experts, Ice Ras-ta vs. Dialog Talk*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Asher White, Silvie's Okay, Dollflower*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Major Stars, Jeffrey Alexander & the Heavy Lidders, Bhajan Bhoj*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6

Brattleboro Gallery Walk, Brat-tleboro: *The Gaslight Tinkers*. Free. 6 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

Drew Paton. No cover. 6:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *New England Repertory Or-chestra*. \$ 7 p.m.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *La Perla, Gaia Roots, Peace & Rhythm DJs*. \$ 7 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Stoner Will & the Narks, Shag-ohod, Laini & the Wildfire, The 413s, Penniless Wild*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Two Crows for Comfort*. No cover. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Kid Psi-lo, imissmydeadfriends, Cos-mos Cozzy, indigauxz*. \$ 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *Wild-cat O'Halloran*. No cover. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

Belltower Records, North Ad-ams: *Lupo Citta, Germ House, Jeffrey Alexander, Luxor Ren-tals, Human Pontiac*. \$ 1 p.m.

Abandoned Dream, Turners Falls: *Hal Lambert & Mitch-ell Mobley, Aaron Dooley & Friends, The Monotonous Ring-ing*. \$ 6 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *KISSStory*. Kiss tribute. \$ 7 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *The Mammals*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Danielle Miraglia, Jen Kearney, Lisa Bastoni*. \$ 8 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northamp-ton: *Primaya Darshini's Periph-ery, Kimaya Diggs*. \$ 8 p.m.

looking forward...

MONDAY, OCTOBER 9

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Ava, Hoonah, bobbie*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Juliana Hatfield*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

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

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17

Hutghi's At The Nook, West-field: *Chris Forsyth's Evolu-tion Band, Sunburned Hand of the Man*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Damon & Naomi, Wet Tuna, Dredd Foole*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20

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

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24

Nova Arts, Keene: *Baba Com-mandant & The Mandingo Band, Deep Seize*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28

The Drake, Amherst: *Light-ning Bolt*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Palladium, Worcester: *Fish-bone, GZA*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Pharcyde*. \$ 8:30 p.m.



OVER THE HILL
Carolyn Clark

Panel 1: Harry, do you suppose that grains of sand wish they were boulders? Wish they were rock celebrities? Never crossed my mind.

Panel 2: I can almost hear them crying. "I woulda, shoulda, coulda," and lamenting their anonymity. Sigh.

Panel 3: Just like all the ordinary people living their ordinary lives. Like us. We don't even know any boulders!

Panel 4: Thelma, we are boulders. Just look at us! Oh Harry! Get serious! Well, I don't think you're ordinary. You're my boulder, cupcake!

JAN ATAMIAN ILLUSTRATION

He outbid everyone at the pie auction, again!

Submit your comics (and puzzles) to editor @montaguereporter.org.

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JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

HEY GOVERNOR, LOOKIN' PRETTY GRIM FOR MY GIRL BOSSMANN OUT HERE, THINK YOU COULD DO ME A FAVOR???

GET YOUR AUDIT ON

By DAISY REED

IF YOU ASK ME, I'M PRETTY GOOD AT THIS!

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SKATE PARK WAS ME, ALL ME!	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MADE SOME PROMISES TO THE POLICE CHIEF, GOTTA BE MAYOR TO FOLLOW THRU
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LIBRARY SAME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VOTE 4 ME OR I'LL TAKE YOUR HOUSE FOR BACK TAXES! HAHA JK GONNA DO IT ANYWAY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GIANT IPHONE ON THE TOWN COMMON, YO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EVERYBODY WHO EVER SPOKE AT CITY COUNCIL ABOUT ME IS AN OUTSIDE AGITATOR, FOR REALZ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A FOOD TRUCK OR TWO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOT EVERYBODY DIED IN THE PANDEMIC	

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PEPERONATA

Eat this vibrant mixture on bruschetta or hamburgers, or serve it as a salad or warm side with pasta or grilled meats and fish.

- 2 large red peppers
- 1 large yellow pepper
- 1 large onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 2 or 3 garlic cloves, minced
- salt to taste
- 6 large, ripe but firm tomatoes, peeled and roughly chopped



Cut the peppers in half, discard the seeds and the whitish ribs, and then cut them into 1/4-inch strips.

Heat the oil in a large shallow pan over moderate heat, stir in the onion, and cover and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally until softened. Now stir in the minced garlic and the pepper strips; season with salt and cook over moderate heat for another 5 minutes.

Stir in the tomatoes, cover

and simmer for 7 or 8 minutes, stirring once or twice. Remove the lid and simmer for about 10 minutes until everything has become a tender stew.

Serve with any of these garnishes: basil; capers; olives; pine nuts; Parmesan.

RECIPES from page B1

of celery, eggplant, tomatoes, and raisins; and Moroccans have *tagines* of couscous with seven vegetables – all the more alluring because seven is a lucky number in Morocco.

For another angle on using lots of vegetables, Chinese-style stir fries make use of a bit of this-and-that enhanced with strips of meat or zinged with a hot pepper. Another Asian option is curried vegetables. Like stir-fries, they typically begin with onions, ginger and garlic, but add heady spices plus a mix of vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, and winter squash.

Similarly, Italian *minestrone* begins with onions and garlic softened with some chopped celery in olive oil. Next added are skinned and chopped tomatoes, plus about six cups of chicken or vegetable stock. Once it simmers, you add vegetables, using those that need longer cooking first – carrots, for example – then adding those that cook faster: green beans, zucchini cubes, and leek disks. If you have a piece of Parmesan rind, add that for body, and oregano for quintessential Italian flavor.

To turn it from a lunchtime soup to a filling supper stew, add small pasta shapes such as orzo or macaroni and cook until they are tender.

Predating all these vegetable combinations is the Native American trio of corn, beans, and squash. These vegetables were traditionally planted together and called “three sisters” because they helped each other out: the corn supported the beans, which added nitrogen to fertilize the soil, while the spreading leaves of the wandering squash shaded the roots. They also cooper-

THREE SISTERS PIE

You can substitute a box of cornbread mix for the crust in this celebration of America’s three sisters, or top it with mashed potatoes.

For the filling:

- 3 Tbsp. corn or canola oil
- 1 pepper, any color
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 20 green beans, cut diagonally
- 2 cups butternut or zucchini pieces
- 2 firm tomatoes, peeled, chopped
- 2 ears of corn
- a 15-ounce can of beans
- 1 tsp. cumin
- salt and cayenne pepper

To make the **filling**, put the oil in a shallow pan. Cut two thin slices from the center of the peppers and brush with oil. Heat the remaining oil and gently cook the onions and garlic for 4 or 5 minutes or until softened. Cut the remaining pepper into strips and add it to the mixture, along with the squash and green beans, cut into 3/4-inch pieces. Continue cooking gently for another 5 minutes, then stir in the tomatoes.

Drain the beans – use Great Northern or kidney beans – and reserve the liquid. Add the beans and corn, and season to taste with the cumin, salt, and cayenne. Simmer covered for 5 minutes or until the squash and peppers are tender, stirring occasionally. If they are dry, add some bean liquid to make a moist but not sloppy mixture.

Transfer to a deep-sided 9-inch dish. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

To make the **crust**, mix the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, salt, and allspice in a large bowl. Mix the beaten egg with the oil and milk, then combine the two mixtures and the corn kernels, and stir until blended.

Spread thinly over the vegetables. (It will increase in volume as it cooks.) Put the reserved pepper slices decoratively on top.

Bake for 20 to 30 minutes, or until a tester inserted in the topping comes out clean.



For the crust:

- 1 cup yellow corn meal
- 1 cup flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 tsp. allspice or cinnamon
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup corn or canola oil
- 1 ear of corn kernels
- 1 cup milk

ate nutritionally, because when eaten together they supply complete protein and other nutrients.

They’re great in soups, and extra-special in this Three Sisters Pie.



PISTO

In this Spanish dish the vegetables are cooked until tender but still separate, rather than stewed down. It’s a staple in *tapas* bars. At home it’s often served with fried eggs or cooked with fish.

Pumpkin, butternut, or potato cubes can be added.

- 4 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 medium peeled eggplant
- 1 medium green pepper
- 1 medium red pepper
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 medium ripe tomatoes, peeled
- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 medium summer squash

roughly, and cut the eggplant, both peppers, zucchini, and squash into 3/4-inch pieces.

Heat the oil in a shallow pan over moderate heat. Soften the onion, garlic, and eggplant in it for 4 or 5 minutes, then add the peppers and cook until much of the oil has been absorbed and the peppers have softened. Season with salt and pepper.

Add the tomatoes, zucchini, and squash. Cover the pan and cook gently for about 8 to 10 minutes to soften. Remove the lid and increase the heat to evaporate all but 3 or 4 tablespoons of the juices. Taste and season again if necessary.

Sprinkle on the remaining parsley and serve as a side or top with a fried egg for a light meal.

To serve with fish, add pieces of fish filet or swordfish chunks to the pan and cook until they are just done – about 5 minutes. Pisto keeps covered in the fridge for three or four days.



Dice the onion, finely mince the garlic, chop the tomatoes

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