

# The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 2, 2023

## MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

### Grants May Help Keep Sewage, Mill Buildings Out of the River

By JEFF SINGLETON

Grants continue to pour into the town of Montague, primarily to deal with aging infrastructure in the post-industrial community of Turners Falls, where officials fear a former factory complex could fall into the Connecticut River even as they respond to state and federal mandates to stop sending combined waste and stormwater into that same river.

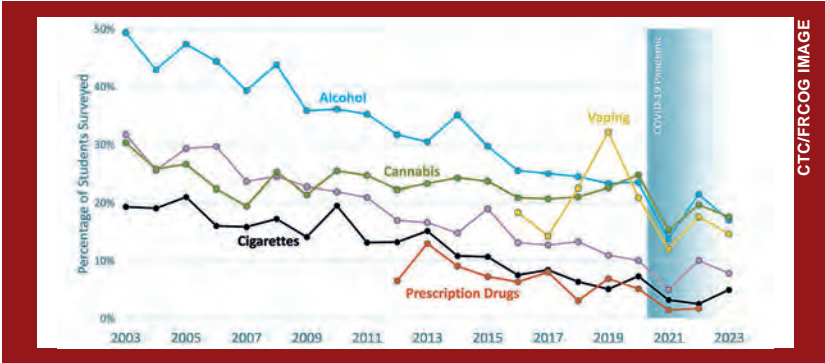
Near the start of a short selectboard meeting Monday, assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey

announced that Montague had received two hefty grants to deal with these problems.

The first grant was a \$132,700 allocation for “site readiness” for demolition of the Strathmore mill complex and a reuse plan for the site. Ramsey said the grant was issued by the agency MassDevelopment and the design plan will probably be implemented by the firm Tighe & Bond, which has previously produced a demolition design for the complex.

see MONTAGUE page A8

### Survey Data Show Local Youth More Sober, But More Anxious



Self-reported use of alcohol, cannabis, cigarettes, and prescription drugs has declined.

By JULIA WALKOWICZ

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Last Friday, October 27, the Communities That Care Coalition of Franklin County and the North Quabbin (CTC) released the results of its 21st annual survey of middle and high school students. Since 2003 the CTC has connected with a number of local school districts to conduct its annual Student Health Survey of students in grades 8, 10, and 12.

The survey examines the behaviors of students by assessing both “risk factors,” which increase the likelihood of problem behaviors, and in alternating years “protective

factors,” which improve the safety of the youth population.

Nine public school districts – Athol/Royalston, Four Rivers Public Charter School, Franklin County Technical School, Frontier, Gill-Montague, Greenfield, Mohawk Trail, Pioneer Valley, and Ralph C. Mahar – took part in the survey. This year, 1,439 students were surveyed, or three-quarters of the classes’ enrollment, offering insight into their experiences with a focus on risks. The survey provides information about substance use, mental health, and the changing factors that impact youth within the community.

see DATA page A5

### Massachusetts Right-to-Shelter Law Reaches a Tipping Point

By SARAH ROBERTSON

BOSTON – So many families are in need of emergency shelter in Massachusetts today that the cost of helping them is expected to greatly exceed the \$325 million currently allocated to the state’s primary emergency housing assistance program for families with children. Citing these constraints, state officials have set limits on the number of families it will serve, and will start a waitlist for those with nowhere else to live.

On Wednesday a Suffolk County Superior Court judge ruled against a civil rights group that filed an injunction attempting to prevent the changes.

“We do not have enough space, service providers, or funds to safely expand beyond 7,500 families,” Governor Maura Healey said at a recent press conference. “From that point on we will no longer be able to guarantee shelter placement for new families entering the system.”

As of Wednesday, 7,388 families were living in state-provided emergency housing; officials say they expect to reach the cap by the end of this week.

Under a 1983 “right-to-shelter” law, families and pregnant women had been guaranteed placement in the state’s Emergency Assistance (EA) shelters, unlike unaccompanied adults experiencing homelessness. In August the Healey administration declared a state of emergency due to the high demand for the program. Massachusetts is spending about \$45 million every month on emergency housing, according to the governor; in September her office requested an additional \$250 million, which the legislature

see SHELTER page A6

## SPOOKY SEASON

Spotted at Tuesday’s Rag Shag Parade in downtown Turners Falls: Ayleanna (center), turning into a werewolf, accompanied by Damien and Emily.



At the end of the parade, Ayleanna was awarded one of two prizes for Most Original Costume.



Wesley (right) disguised himself as Steve, a default character skin from the Minecraft video games, and walked away with Most Original Costume in the boys’ division.

Oceanna came as the rebooted version of Wednesday Addams. (“They didn’t have the old-school one anymore,” she lamented.)



Liam (left) explained that he was Aiden Pearce from the video game Watch Dogs.

Oliver and John, meanwhile, paired up as twin plumbers Mario and Luigi from the Mario Bros. franchise. Mario won for Best Costume.

Alex (at rear), in a handmade suit festooned with mother-of-pearl buttons, was the Pearly Queen of Turners Falls.

PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS BY MIKE JACKSON

.... See Pages A5 and A6 for more Rag Shag pics!

### High School Sports: A Banner Season



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Thunder captains Madi Liimatainen (left) and Taylor Greene display the Western Mass Class D Volleyball championship trophy last Saturday at West Springfield High School following Turners’ 3-0 sweep of the top-ranked Lee Wildcats.

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – The unsung heroes of Franklin County Tech and Turners Falls High School beat higher-seeded teams this week, culminating in three championship games.

The Tech field hockey team was forced to travel to Belchertown where they beat the higher-ranked Orioles, earning them a chance for the Western Mass Class B championship title. The Turners field hockey team saw a 1-0 first-half margin turn into a 7-0 rout in the Class C playoffs.

The Turners volleyballers, who were ranked below Lee by the PVIAC, made quick work of the Wildcats to win the Western Mass Class C Championship. Tech’s volleyball team was eliminated in the PVIAC semifinals, but got a shot at the Small Vocational state title.

Franklin Tech’s football team needed to win big to qualify for the MIAA football playoffs. They did

see SPORTS page A4

### Modest Hikes Recommended For Stipended Town Positions

By JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – “Without these incentives, some individuals might not be able to participate in town government,” finance committee chair Francia Wisniewski announced last month during a discussion of revised stipends for elected and appointed positions.

Stipends are small, generally annual payments for serving on local boards or for performing specialized tasks for the town, such as moderating town meeting, coordinating emergency management, inspecting electrical wiring, and running the farmers market. Speaking

at the town selectboard’s October 16 meeting, Wisniewski presented a summary of the fin com’s recommendations for stipends over the next three fiscal years.

Although they occupy a very small portion of the town’s operating budget – \$62,835 this year, or 0.53% of the town’s operating budget – stipends have been a rather controversial topic over the years, periodically consuming a good deal of time at fin com meetings.

There is no recorded rationale for the varied amounts allocated to different positions, or why members of certain boards receive these

see STIPENDS page A7

#### Everything Reaches a Tipping Point

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# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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 August 2002

## From On Violence

"The colonist's sector is a sector built to last, all stone and steel. It's a sector of lights and paved roads, where the trash cans constantly overflow with strange and wonderful garbage, undreamed-of leftovers. The colonist's feet can never be glimpsed, except perhaps in the sea, but then you can never get close enough...."

"The colonized's sector, or at least the 'native' quarters, the shanty town, the Medina, the reservation, is a disreputable place inhabited by disreputable people. You are born anywhere, anyhow. You die anywhere, from anything. It's a world with no space, people are piled on top of the other, the shacks squeezed tightly together. The colonized's sector is a famished sector, hungry for bread, meat, shoes, coal, and light. The colonized's sector is a sector that crouches and cowers, a sector on its knees, a sector that is prostrate...."

"The gaze that the colonized subject casts at the colonist's sector is a look of lust, a look of envy. Dreams of possession. Every type of possession: of sitting at the colonist's table and sleeping in his bed, preferably with his wife. The

colonized man is an envious man. The colonist is aware of this as he catches the furtive glance, and constantly on his guard, realizes bitterly that: 'They want to take our place.'...."

"The violence which governed the ordering of the colonial world, which tirelessly punctuated the destruction of the indigenous social fabric, and demolished unchecked the systems of reference of the country's economy, lifestyles, and modes of dress, this same violence will be vindicated and appropriated when, taking history into their own hands, the colonized swarm into the forbidden cities. To blow the colonial world to smithereens is henceforth a clear image within the grasp and imagination of every colonized subject. To dislocate the colonial world does not mean that once the borders have been eliminated there will be a right of way between the two sectors. To destroy the colonial world means nothing less than demolishing the colonist's sector, burying it deep within the earth or banishing it from the territory."

Frantz Fanon, 1963

## And Now

As of press time the estimated death toll in the Gaza Strip has surpassed 9,000, and one corpse at a time US public support for the Israeli state's ongoing bombardment campaign is deteriorating.

If Americans are feeling queasy at the idea of an open-ended revenge war, we had better look back once again at what a majority here decided the 9/11 terrorist attacks justified. But that's for another day.

We are seeing stark generational divides, both among Americans in general and Jewish Americans in particular, over the morality of Netanyahu's current campaign in Gaza. This does not mean younger people condone or desire the sort

of atrocities against civilians the world witnessed on October 7. But it probably does mean they feel such horrors are inevitable as we chart a collective path into a century of scarcity and competition.

No one believes anymore that a two-state solution is really offered to Israelis and Palestinians, and in hindsight it is easy to imagine that it was never proposed in good faith. The same is felt to be true of trickle-down economics, a market globalization that will lift all boats, digital technology that will bestow freedom and privacy.

By accepting global inequality as permanent, we have set ourselves on the path of perpetual violence.

## CORRECTION

In the article on Diana Beresford-Kroeger by Donna Petersen, *Seeing the Forest... For the Trees* (October 19, Page B1) Petersen says she incorrectly typed a quote from Beresford-Kroeger: "The copper birch in Ireland sings."

"There is no copper birch anywhere," Petersen tells us, "but there is the copper beech, which sings, while the non-existent copper birch would probably just hum."

Our apologies to our readers, and to the copper beeches, for our error.



Tim Jefferson inserts a steel bar that will become a bearing race punch into a stamping machine at Mayhew Steel Products in Turners Falls. After this the punch will be heat-treated to make it harder, and the striking end will then be heat-treated again to soften it so it will mushroom instead of shatter when struck. Jefferson has worked at the company for 29 years.

## Letter to the Editors

### Village Co-op Situation 'Delicate'

Hope you have been enjoying the fall foliage. We are writing on behalf of the Leverett Co-op, to share updates regarding our wonderful little Co-op and its always lively finances.

As you may have heard from recent correspondence, the Co-op has been grappling with structural financial challenges for years. Operating a little store in a sparse-populated rural area has built-in challenges.

As we continue to hope and strive for that wonderful time when the store will perpetually operate in the black, many of us have come to understand that operating in the black requires our ongoing support in three major ways: shopping there; volunteering (which helps to reduce costs); and donating.

The good news is that the Co-op is a wonderful community center, a lovely place to see and connect with neighbors, suffused with the gifts of our local community, beautiful gardens, delicious food, and the creative output of our neighbors which constantly graces our walls and shelves. Not to mention, it's incredibly well stocked with all of our favorite things, and the prices are lower than they've ever been. Keeping this gem alive is a labor of love.

We wanted to make you aware of the fact that we are once again in a delicate financial situation, and we need to both be transparent to our members about our status and reach out for your assistance. So, we have news and a request:

• We will be holding an Emergency Meeting this Thursday, November 2, at 7 p.m. at the Leverett Town

Hall, to discuss the financial status of the Co-op. We will share details regarding our financial status.

• In an effort to bring our expenses and revenue back into balance, we are planning on reducing our winter hours of operation. We find that the amount of traffic during early morning and evening hours is pretty lean, and reducing costs is one way of helping to right-size our budget. We are sorry to reduce access to our store, but hope that folks understand. This may only need to be temporary, but we will not know until we see how we are doing.

• We are building a fundraising and development arm of our operations. A wise friend shared that in their view, the Co-op must have a robust and ongoing program of fundraising. Because of the fragility of our business model, supplemental funding is essential. Do you have skills in this area? If you would like to get involved in supporting the development of a robust and ongoing fundraising operation, please let us know. And of course, you can always donate to our Go-Fund-Me at [www.gofund.me/5562afab](http://www.gofund.me/5562afab).

Besides all of that, make sure to put our Autumn Harvest Festival on your calendar. It has been postponed to November 5, with music, horse-drawn wagon rides, crafts, samples, tool-sharpening – and much more!

Thanks for all your support. Together, we can keep our beautiful little Co-op alive!

Ellen Ellsberg Edge, Leverett Member, Leverett Village Co-Op Board of Directors

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The Turners Falls Water Department's semi-annual water bills were mailed out yesterday, Wednesday, November 1. Payment is due by December 1 to avoid a \$20 late charge. It can be made at 226 Millers Falls Road, by mail, or online at [turnersfallswater.com](http://turnersfallswater.com).

The ballfield between the Leverett library and elementary school now boasts a 2,000-pound wooden birthday cake in celebration of Leverett's 250th Anniversary in 2024.

This large wooden cake has electric candles marching around five tiers, with sheets of PVC sheathing for "frosting" over the wooden armature. The giant cake, 25 feet across and 16 feet tall, was originally made for Westfield's 350th anniversary in 2019 in imitation of a similar one people remembered from the 300th anniversary. Two Westfield businesses stepped up to make the thing: Bruce Scheible, owner of Westek Architectural Woodworking, had his crews build it with help from Elm Electric Company.

Since many towns in the area were founded around the same time, the plan was always to circulate the cake from town to town over the ensuing years. It was most recently parked in South Deerfield for their 350th anniversary, preceded by town anniversaries in Whately and Hatfield.

For more information about Leverett's 250th Anniversary plans, or to help out, contact Maureen Ippolito at [celebrateleverett250@gmail.com](mailto:celebrateleverett250@gmail.com).

The Millers Falls Community Improvement Association is hosting a craft night at Element Brewery tonight, Thursday, November 2

from 5 to 6 p.m. Come make *origami* and *kurigami* with your neighbors. All ages are welcome and materials will be provided.

Have you found that something great occasionally comes out of something really bad? That's the theme of tonight's **Beautiful Disasters: A Storytelling Open Mic** at the LAVA Center in Greenfield.

Trouble Mandeson, who writes the *Heartfelt Café* column in this paper, and Nisse Greenberg will host the event, which starts at 7 p.m. The specific theme is "Family Disasters," but no disaster will be disqualified – just share a five- to seven-minute true story, and pay what you want to attend.

Tomorrow night is a **"First Fridays" happening in downtown Turners Falls** between 5 and 8 p.m. Sadie's Bikes is hosting another Gumball Machine Takeover, this time featuring artist Dalia Shevin, who has created 200 encapsulated prizes to put in the machine for her show called "200 Ways to Say Thank You."

Amy Chilton is holding a reception for her art show at LOOT of pixelated color field paintings and fine art prints. And the Upper Bend will hold Vegan Pizza Land, a pop-up pizza pie sale that typically sells out very quickly – they urge people to come in as early as possible.

The Carnegie Library is holding another **used book sale** this Saturday, November 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fiction, paperbacks, kids' books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks from hundreds of recent donations will be for sale.

Wet weather has canceled quite a few good times lately: *booooo!* The

**Leverett Coop Harvest Festival** rained out last Sunday will be held on this Sunday, November 5 instead. (Unfortunately, there will be no *Montague Reporter* tent, as staff members can't make this date, but we urge our readers to attend.)

Join Dina Stander for an unusual matinee this Sunday at the Shea Theater, **Healing Waters**, a benefit for the Hospice of the Fisher Home.

*Healing Waters* is a curated selection of original stories told live from the stage by people from the community. Stander writes that the show is "a journey through a landscape of loss, mourning, solace, and hope." The event runs from 2 to 4 p.m., with admission by sliding scale, \$15 to \$35.

**Shameless self-promotion:** I've had several dogs and cats move in and out of my life over the past few years, and as things have settled down it seems my household now includes two cats of quite distinct personality. Per usual, I discharge my personal history into artwork, so it's not surprising I am opening a show called MEOW at the Shelburne Arts Coop this month.

There are cat stuffies, illuminated "MEOW" signs, and a variety of ceramic and found object cat sculptures. I've created a three-part comic book series about some of these transient creatures that will be for sale as well – parental discretion advised.

The opening reception is this Sunday, November 5 from 1 to 3 p.m. *Meow!*

**Writers Read** is a monthly series at the LAVA Center, and Christian McEwen, whose book, *In Praise of Listening*, was the subject of an article in our October 5 edition, will be one of the readers next Wednesday, November 8 at 7 p.m.

In addition to McEwen, Janet E. Aalfs will perform spoken word with martial arts dance, and Susie Patlove will share some of her poetry. There is a \$5 suggested donation.

Amherst artist Kathleen Anderson will give a free presentation on **identifying historical Black American jewelry** at the Mill Dis-

trict Local Art Gallery in North Amherst next Wednesday, November 8 at 7 p.m.

Anderson will refer to several of her own jewelry collections to illustrate how cultural groups have used jewelry and other forms of adornment to express what they think is beautiful, to convey beliefs about the natural world, and to show their status in society. For everyone ages 16 and up. For more information, see [gallery@cowls.com](mailto:gallery@cowls.com).

Next Friday, November 10 is the last **Great Falls Coffeehouse** performance of 2023. Ragged Blue will provide the music, playing bluegrass with a touch of Celtic, swing, country, and raucous blues.

Doors open at the Discovery Center's Great Hall at 6:30 p.m. Coffee and homemade baked goods will be available, and the museum is open during intermission. Suggested sliding scale donation \$6 to \$15, free for children. Donations help the Friends of the Discovery Center provide free nature programming for the public.

The United Church of Bernardston's **Second Saturday Roast Beef Supper** is up and running again, with the next one taking place on Saturday, November 11 with seatings at 5 and 6:15 p.m.

"A delicious roast beef meal, complete with freshly mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable and rolls, and freshly baked pie for dessert, is for sale for only \$15," according to their notice. Call (413) 648-9306 to reserve a preferred seating time, or to order takeout. Suppers will continue on the second Saturday of each month through April.

Montague Center librarian Kate Martineau has put out a **call for Stories of Light** for a reading at the library on December 20 at 6 p.m. Submit your work – poems, stories, or portions of a larger work that can be read aloud in five to seven minutes – for review by November 20. Contact [kmartineau@cwmars.org](mailto:kmartineau@cwmars.org) for more information or to submit.

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OP ED

## Following the Money in Greenfield's Mayoral Race

By DOUG STOTZ

**GREENFIELD** – With only a few days remaining until Greenfield's mayoral election, there is little factual information available on each candidate's prospects.

One place to look is the Commonwealth's Campaign Contribution database, [www.ocpf.us/Home/Index](http://www.ocpf.us/Home/Index). This database holds information on every contribution made to each candidate as reported by their campaigns.

Total contributions reported for each candidate between December 1 and October 23 were \$17,608 for Mayor Roxann Wedegartner and \$17,543 for Councilor Ginny DeSorgher – a \$65 advantage for the mayor.

Adding Mayor Wedegartner's benefits of incumbency and name recognition would seem to favor her. But a closer look suggests Councilor DeSorgher may instead be leading.

What really matters towards projecting a winner is each candidate's financial support from private citizens of Greenfield – the voters on November 7.

To measure this requires screening out four other types of contributors: business owners

and executives, excluding small businesses; unions; past and present elected officials, excluding school committee members; and out-of-town donors – frequently "friends and family" of either candidate.

This segmented analysis reveals some interesting trends that clearly favor the challenger:

- Mayor Wedegartner is much more dependent on business owners and executives for contributions than Councilor DeSorgher. 42% (\$7,350) of Wedegartner's total contributions are from these, compared to none for DeSorgher. Tim and Wendy Van Epps of Northampton, owners of Sandri, donated \$4,000 – 23% of the mayor's total – through individual \$1,000 contributions made on December 28 and January 30.

- Unions are a minor portion of each candidate's support. Mayor Wedegartner raised \$500 from the Laborers District PAC, while Councilor DeSorgher raised \$700 from two unions.

- Mayor Wedegartner has a clear advantage in support from past and current elected officials. She has raised \$1,400 from these, versus \$770 for Councilor DeSorgher. (DeSorgher's

contributors in this group are herself and three other current or former city councilors.)

- Mayor Wedegartner strongly leads in contributions from private citizens outside Greenfield. She has raised \$2,090 from these – 12% of her total – compared to \$502 for DeSorgher, 3% of her total.

- Among private Greenfield citizens, Councilor DeSorgher has 2.5 times both the funds raised and individual contributors than Mayor Wedegartner. Wedegartner raised \$6,268 in campaign funds from 47 separate Greenfield residents – multiple contributions by a single person were combined – compared with \$15,571 from 123 individual Greenfield residents for DeSorgher. Therefore, DeSorgher raised 2.5 times the money, from 2.6 times the Greenfield residents, as the incumbent. (The average donations per donor were \$133 for the mayor and \$127 for Councilor DeSorgher).

- Mayor Wedegartner is raising less money this year than during her 2019 campaign. In 2019 Wedegartner was one of three challengers to replace retiring Mayor Martin. While she's now the incumbent, her total

fundraising runs behind that year – \$17,608 reported from December 1 until October 23, as compared with \$22,253 between those dates in 2018-19. This is a 21% drop in her funds raised, before inflation.

More importantly, the number of her individual "private citizen" contributors from Greenfield has declined more than twice as sharply. During these months 116 private Greenfield citizens donated to her in 2019, versus only 47 in 2023 – a 59% decline. Funds raised from these residents in 2018-19 totaled \$13,189, so 2022-23's contributions of \$6,268 represent a similar 52% drop.

It's obviously risky to extrapolate campaign contributions data to forecast actual voter turnout and behavior. Having said that, it's very clear Councilor DeSorgher is substantially more successfully raising funds from those who will actually be voting for Greenfield's mayor on November 7.

Doug Stotz, now a Wayland resident, is a Greenfield native and Greenfield High School graduate as well as a former Chief Analytics Officer of a Fortune 500 company.

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## SPORTS from page A1

just that, and will play down in Carver in the first round.

### Volleyball

Mount Greylock 3 - FCTS 0  
FCTS 3 - Smith Voc 1  
TFHS 3 - Lee 0  
Norfolk 3 - FCTS 1

Last Thursday, Franklin Tech traveled over the mountain to play the top-ranked Mount Greylock Mountaineers in the Western Mass Class C volleyball semifinal round. The Eagles had some bright spots, but Grey swept them in three games.

Lea Chapman ended with four kills, three digs, and a couple of blocks; Jenna Petrowicz served an ace, made two kill shots, got three digs, and made two blocks; Kristine Given had three digs; and Lily Josephs spiked three kills.

The loss eliminated Tech from the PVIAC, but the Eagles have two more tournaments to contend with. The Mass Vocational Athletic Directors Association (MVADA) tourney kicked off first.

On Saturday the Spiking Eagles hosted the Smith Vocational Vikings in the Small Voc. The Vikings are known to Franklin Tech - they play each other in multiple sports, and have built up quite a rivalry in their Turkey Day mash-up. So on Saturday the athletes, coaches, and fans were familiar with one another.

The Vikes held tight, but in the end, the Eagles used their height advantage to dominate at the net. Shelby O'Leary finished with two kills, three digs, 10 assists, and one ace; Chapman registered 12 kills, eight digs, and a block; Emma Petersen made five kills, eight digs, and eight aces; and Abby Carlo had a kill and two digs.

The win propelled Tech into the state championship game.

Also last Saturday, down in the West Springfield gym, the Turners Falls Blue Thunder "upset" the top-ranked Lee Wildcats 3-0 for the Western Mass Class D championship. This was another case of the underdog outperforming the favorite, as each game was lopsided and never in doubt.

Taylor Green (25 assists, one kill, two aces, two digs), Madi Liimatainen (17 kills, three aces, four digs), Janelle Massey (five kills, four aces, three digs), Tatiana Carr Williams (three kills, two aces), Maddie Dietz (two aces, 12 digs), and Jill Reynolds (four aces) all contributed in the shellacking.

The Thunder are seeded third in the Division 5 state tournament, and will face the winner of Pioneer and Madison Park Voc.

On Monday the Eagles were swept by the Norfolk Aggies in the MVADA finals, 3-0. The Lady Birds had some difficulty returning serves. The first hit frequently went astray, forcing Tech's players to chase the ball to keep it in play. Using every part of their arms and fists in their desperate attempts to return shots, they kept the first contest close - until mid-game. With the score 15-11, the Aggies went on a tear and defeated Franklin 25-15.

The Eagles led throughout the second game, building a 20-15 lead, but Norfolk went on another run and outlasted them 25-22.

In the final game, with Tech trailing by 10 points, the mood on the court changed. The Eagles, on the verge of elimination, began to loosen up. Smiles came out, and the girls joked with each other and with



Crowd pleasers: the Thunder rolled to a three-set sweep against Mohawk Trail during the Class D semifinal at home last week.

the other team. After all, it is only a game, and it is meant to be enjoyed.

Chapman finished with four kills, three digs, and two blocks; O'Leary two aces, one kill, six digs, and six assists; and Petrowicz five aces, four kills, five digs, and an assist.

Franklin Tech is seeded 14th in the MIAA D-5 bracket. They have a bye in Round One, and will host the winner of the Springfield International Charter and Roxbury Prep matchup.

### Field Hockey

Greenfield 7 - TFHS 0  
FCTS 2 - Belchertown 1  
East Longmeadow 5 - FCTS 0

Last Friday the fourth-seeded Turners Falls Field Hockey Thunder lost against the Green Wave of Greenfield in the Western Mass Class C semifinals.

It was anybody's game into the third period, when Greenfield, sporting a slim 1-0 lead, suddenly caught fire. They began intercepting passes and scored three goals in quick succession to go up 4-0. Blue did their

best to break the press, but managed only one shot on goal while the Wave slowly built their lead to 7-0. Goalie Conner Herzig made 14 saves

That same night, the Franklin Tech Eagles "upset" the Belchertown Orioles 2-1 in the Class B semis. (I'm a little skeptical about the PVIAC rankings - Tech had a better record than the Orioles, but because of the formula they were forced to travel to Belchertown.)

Both of Franklin's goals were scored by Kenzie Sourdiffé, with assists from Kailey Steiner and Kate Trudeau. In goal, Maddison Markwell made six saves.

That victory sent Tech to the Western Mass championship game. On Monday they traveled to Agawam, where they lost to the Spartans of East Longmeadow in the finals.

The loss does not end their season. This Saturday they travel to Stoneham to wage another Spartan battle in the MIAA Division 4 state tournament. Again, I'm not a big fan of the seeding formula; the Eagles are ranked 17th in the state, but as

a result of the formula, they have to travel 100 miles to play a team ranked one spot above them.

### Football

FCTS 46 - Mahar 0

The Franklin Tech Football Eagles avenged their loss in the conference title game last Friday, demolishing the Mahar Senators out in Orange and earning a spot in the MIAA Division 8 tourney.

Tech's defense, which had held the undefeated Ware Indians to just six points in the final three-plus quarters, set the pace early. Camryn Laster picked off a pass, and they were off to the races. Gabriel Tomasi scored on a one-yard keeper, then he threw it to Ethan Smarr for a 2-pointer to give Tech the 8-0 lead.

In the second quarter Laster made another pick. This time Josiah Little scored the TD and Tomasi ran for the two points, and Tech was now up 16-0. And on it went. By halftime, it was 32-0.

In the second half the mercy rule kicked in, but even with the clock running continuously the Blue Birds managed to score 14 more points.

Tomasi made five completions for 36 yards and rushed for 65, scored three touchdowns, ran in one 2-pointer, and scored three others on passes. After gaining just nine yards against Ware, Little got back to his usual output, with 127 rushing yards and two TDs.

Smarr carried the ball once, made a catch, and scored a 2-pointer; Nathan Sabolevski ran for 14 yards and scored two 2-pointers; Maxon Brunette had four carries for 21 yards; Landon Purington rushed once; and William Ainsworth scored a 2-pointer. Hunter Donahue, Cameren Candelaria, and Tucker Hicks caught passes from Tomasi.

Defensively, Laster grabbed two interceptions and knocked away two pass attempts. Landen Hardy made 11 total tackles, and also caused a fumble and recovered it himself. Donahue made a sack and an interception for a pick-six and deflected a pass, while Tyler Yetter crushed a sack.

The Eagles are seeded 15th in the Division 8 bracket. This Friday they head to Carver to face the undefeated Carver Crusaders.



Greenfield's Gloria McDonald (left) and Turners Falls' Avery Tela vie for the ball during the Western Mass Class C semifinal game in Greenfield. Greenfield punched their ticket to the tourney final with a 7-0 win.


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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# With Override Roundly Refused, Glum Talk of Cuts at Town Hall

By KEITH WATERS

The Erving selectboard was joined by the capital planning and finance committees for part of its meeting Monday night – the first since October 18, when town meeting voted down a number of proposed articles that would have augmented the current year budget, and October 19, when the people of Erving voted 138 to 35 not to allow a proposed Proposition 2½ tax override.

Since the override was voted down, budgets for FY’25 will not be able to grow as town officials had suggested they should. Given that some expenses go up every year unavoidably, including raises for town staff that are written into contracts, this will leave all departments facing what will essentially be budget cuts.

“We have to fund these within our current budget,” selectboard member Scott Bastarache said of expenses expected to grow, “and then – what does it look like, to balance the budget from there?”

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith recommended asking department heads to submit “level-funded” budgets, and then “identify what services may need to change, and how.”

“They need to come with cuts they think they can make,” said finance committee member Deborah Smith. “And, for services – if they have ideas for how those services could become income-generating.”

“I’m open to any sort of suggestion for how we balance this budget appropriately,” said Bastarache. “Whether that’s through fee-for-service, [or] whether that’s through cuts for services we’re no longer going to offer.”

The board members suggested asking all department heads to consider two questions: What could

you cut from your expenses? And what services could you possibly charge or charge more for?

Fin com member Benjamin Fellows asked whether a department that identifies cuts, or successfully adds fees for services, would be credited the money. “Let’s say Department A does something that generates \$40,000,” he said. “Does that go to the town’s budget, or is it part of Department A’s budget?”

Selectboard members explained that savings generated by one department would not be rewarded to that department. “In the end it’s one pot of money,” said Jacob Smith, “and it’s got to fund it all.”

Discussion of potential service cuts, or new fees, will likely be near the front of town affairs until the FY’25 budget is set next spring.

### Sewage Warming

In the meantime there are pressing matters that need to be dealt with. The town had a wastewater line freeze two years, which cost the town somewhere around \$40,000 to remediate. The initial solution was to bring a generator to the area where the freeze occurred, in order to run a heater. The next solution involved about 500 feet of extension cords.

Neither of these is a good long-term solution; electricity should be run to the area where the heater is needed. Water and wastewater superintendent Peter Sanders procured a bid from National Grid to extend the required lines for a cost of \$12,500. This proposal was approved by the selectboard.

### Bridge Splitting

The Farley bridge, which spans the Millers River going to Wendell, is in need of repair. Given the scope of the work a design study seems

like the best first step. Wendell has a bid for a repair design study which will cost \$31,000. Erving is under the impression Wendell will pay for half of it.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache asked whether the repairs could be pushed to FY’25. Fin com member Daniel Hammock pointed out that they would not be any less expensive in the future.

Selectboard member James Loynd suggested closing the bridge.

The board asked highway superintendent Glenn McCrory whether there was any excess road repair money in his budget, and McCrory responded that there was not. In a back and forth it was established that \$16,000 – half of \$31,000 – is equivalent to repairs on four or five culverts which the highway department was planning for the spring.

When the board asked McCrory whether he thought those repairs should be put off until the following year so the bridge design study could be prioritized, he responded that he thought the repairs should be delayed and the study done now. All agreed that town administrator Brian Smith should tell Wendell that Erving is willing to pay for its half of the study.

### Snow Backup

The town will finally have something it has not had before now – relief for snow plow drivers, in the case that storms run long. In the past the highway department has had to staff extensive overtime in the case of long storms. This winter the town will have an agreement with an outside company that will allow the department to call for backup in case it is needed.

Erving’s next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 13.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

## Low-Income Energy Assistance: Winter Season Began November 1

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) is pleased to announce November 1 as the start of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) 2023-2024 winter heating season.

LIHEAP is a free, federally funded, statewide service that helps eligible households stay warm during the winter months by paying a portion of winter heating bills. Applications for home energy assistance are currently being accepted online at [toapply.org/massliheap](http://toapply.org/massliheap) or, for Franklin and Hampshire County residents, at [toapply.org/CA](http://toapply.org/CA). Income-eligible households may receive financial help to offset heating bills from November 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024.

Both homeowners and renters can apply online or through local administering agencies for LIHEAP assistance. Households must meet specific eligibility requirements to qualify for aid, which will be paid directly to their heating vendor. Eligibility is based on several factors, including household size and combined gross annual income of residents 18 and older. Qualifying households – including those with the cost of heat included in the rent – can receive assistance for all sources of heat, including oil, electricity, natural gas, propane, kerosene, wood, and coal.

“The Massachusetts home energy assistance program is free, because no resident should have to worry about heating their home during the wintertime,” said Ed Augustus, Jr., Secretary of Housing and Livable Communities. “High fuel costs can have a devastating effect on household budgets and can even endanger Massachusetts’ most vulnerable residents. We encourage anyone who needs heating assistance to explore their eligibility by applying online or visiting the nearest administering agency. And please share the information with loved ones or neighbors who could benefit from this free resource.”

For more information, visit [www.toapply.org/MassLIHEAP](http://www.toapply.org/MassLIHEAP) – or, for our regional LIHEAP agency, Community Action Pioneer Valley, see [www.communityaction.us/program/fuel-assistance](http://www.communityaction.us/program/fuel-assistance).

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### DATA from page A1

The students’ demographics themselves have shifted over time. This year 23% of respondents identified as a race or ethnicity other than White, up from 15% in 2015; over the same eight years the number who identified as LGBTQ+ rose from 11% to 31%, and the number identifying as transgender (T), nonbinary, or unsure increased from 2% to 11%.

The survey indicates that substance use among local youth has declined dramatically over the last two decades, with use of alcohol, binge drinking, cigarettes, cannabis, and prescription drugs remaining low since the relaxing of pandemic restrictions.

Impaired driving is also trending downward, with fewer than 6% of those surveyed who drove reporting drunk driving, as compared with 20% in 2007. However, 18% of student drivers reported “high driving,” and 20% of students reported riding with a high driver, and just under half of the surveyed student drivers – 49% – recorded that they have texted while driving.

Cisgender female students, LGBTQ+ students, and students of a lower socioeconomic status were all relatively more likely to report use of surveyed substances than their counterparts, while students of color reported substance use at the same rate as their peers.

In terms of sexual and relationship health, sexual activity among youth has decreased in recent years – 37% of respondents in 2019 reported that they had ever had intercourse, compared with 28% this year – which the researchers noted may highlight a turn from in-person activities to more online interaction for local youth.

When asked what topics have been taught in their schools, half of all students (51%) reported they have been taught about condoms and other birth control methods, and three out of four (75%) said they have been taught about sexual consent. However, among students who reported intercourse with opposite-sex partners, 35% said they did not use birth control in their last encounter, up sharply from 8% in 2019.

The number of students reporting that they had experienced sexual and dating violence also increased noticeably since 2019. LGBTQ+ students reported sexual and dating violence most often out of the surveyed groups. According to CTC coalition coordinator Kat Allen and evaluation coordinator Nick Hathaway, “These

increases are concerning, but may in part be related to cultural shifts in education and empowerment around sexual consent.” Improved awareness of these behaviors and their warning signs in relationships, in other words, may be leading to greater likelihood that youth are recognizing and reporting harmful behavior when it happens.

The students continued to report symptoms of mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, at alarmingly high rates, with over 40% saying they are too anxious and too depressed for “usual activities.”

The data showed strong correlations between these symptoms and “screen time” spent using devices such as smartphones, computers, televisions, or gaming consoles. According to the survey, too much screen time is associated with excessive social comparison and can replace healthy activities.

However, the relationship between screen time and mental health is complicated. According to Allen and Hathaway, “teens who report a moderate amount of recreational screen time may be better off than teens who report no recreational screen time, at least in today’s world where so many young people are interacting online”; this may be especially true for youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth, who may rely more on such devices to find communities of shared experience.

Nonetheless, higher reported levels of recreational screen time appear to be correlated with increases in mental health problems for all surveyed youth in the area. Around 20% who said they spent less than an hour on screen each day reported feeling anxious or depressed, while of those who spent five or more hours, closer to 50% reported anxiety and depression and 30% reported loneliness or difficulty controlling anger.

The CTC’s slide presentation of its survey offers alternatives and antidotes for screen time, including phones designed with kids in mind, media agreements, and legislation such as the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

Hosted in part by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the CTC offers resources for students and other members of the community on a wide variety of topics, including sex education, mental health, and interacting with the internet, at [communitiesthatcarecoalition.com](http://communitiesthatcarecoalition.com). The section labeled “Data” includes the Student Health Survey questionnaire and results.



REMINDER

## November 8: Public Meeting for Re-envisioning the Farren Property

**MONTAGUE CITY** – The Town of Montague is exploring potential land uses and activities for the former Farren Care Center site at 340 Montague City Road.

Planning department staff and VHB Consultants will hold their second public meeting from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. next Wednesday, November 8 at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls, to review feedback provided by residents and other stakeholders, review market feasibility conditions, and discuss possible project opportunities.

Pizza and childcare will be provided. To request childcare services, email town planner Maureen Pollock at [planner@montague-ma.gov](mailto:planner@montague-ma.gov).

The meeting will be recorded by Montague Community Television and made available for viewing online a few days afterwards.

To learn more about the project, visit [www.montague-ma.gov/p/1531/](http://www.montague-ma.gov/p/1531/). For any questions or comments, please email Pollock at [planner@montague-ma.gov](mailto:planner@montague-ma.gov).

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**SHELTER** from page A1

has yet to act on.

“The trend continues to be driven by the arrival of families who are new to our country,” Healey said. “They are families, some expecting moms, and children – more than half of them are children. They are here lawfully, allowed in with the knowledge and consent of our federal government.”

Healey’s declaration cited obstacles refugees face in accessing permanent housing – a “confusing tangle” of immigration law and the need for federal work permits – as well as an overall lack of affordable housing as reasons families are spending more time in the system. The rate at which families are transitioning into homes, she wrote, has declined by two-thirds since 2019, resulting in fewer shelter openings.

“This level of demand is not sustainable,” Healey said this month. “We need urgent support from the federal government, which bears ultimate responsibility for this situation.”

**Lawyering Up**

In an attempt to prevent the changes to the shelter program, the nonprofit group Lawyers for Civil Rights filed an injunction last week against the state’s Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC). An emergency hearing was held in a Boston courthouse on Tuesday, the day before the proposed changes were set to take effect.

“In the absence of immediate intervention by this court... homeless families with children will be denied immediate shelter placement and left out in the cold,” Lawyers for Civil Rights attorney Jacob Love said at the hearing. “This is a lot like the fire department creating a waitlist for families with ongoing house fires – delay in emergency services amounts to the denial of services.”

Lawyers for Civil Rights filed the complaint on behalf of three families potentially facing homelessness, arguing that the EOHLC did not provide the legislature with the required 90-day notice prior to changing how the shelter program

is administered, and that its clients would be harmed as a result.

On Wednesday Suffolk County Superior Court judge Debra Squires-Lee denied the motion, allowing the state to set limits on the program.

“No one seriously disputes that families living without safe shelter are at risk and, in particular, that children without access to stable housing may be irreparably harmed,” Squires-Lee wrote in her decision. “But the burden the EOHLC faces is simply that it no longer has either the money or the space to provide such housing immediately to every family that is eligible for same.”

Arguing on behalf of the EOHLC, assistant attorney general Kimberly Parr said that the plaintiffs lacked standing to file the suit, and that the agency was operating within the authority granted by emergency regulations.

“The legislature specifies that in the event of a deficiency, individuals have no entitlement to services in excess of the amounts appropriated in this item,” Parr said. “The agency can’t keep spending and driving the line item into further deficiency, and the court doesn’t have the authority to order it to do that.”

The current demand for family shelters, according to court documents, is 77% higher than this fiscal year’s budget anticipated. Parr said the EA program will require an additional \$210 million just to meet the needs of the 7,500 families under the cap.

“This isn’t about maintaining the status quo,” she said. “While the administration and the defendants are very sensitive to the impact that these regulations will have on families in the Commonwealth, they’re also constrained by very real financial constraints – not to speak of the constraints of identifying shelter units amid the housing crisis, a shortage of affordable housing in Massachusetts.”

**Winter Approaching**

Marion Hohn, a staff attorney at the Central West Justice Center, listened to Tuesday’s hearing because



Massachusetts governor Maura Healey (center) held a press conference October 16 to discuss the shelter crisis, alongside lieutenant governor Kim Driscoll (left) and Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice (right), newly appointed as emergency assistance director.

the judge’s decision will impact many of the people her legal aid organization seeks to help.

“Particularly in our service area in western Massachusetts, there are really no alternatives to the state-funded shelter system,” Hohn told the Reporter. “What is going to happen to families who have no other place to stay – families with children – particularly as winter approaches?”

The total number of homeless families in the state is much greater than just those eligible for emergency shelter, Hohn said. She added that the shortage of shelters predates the influx of foreign migrants, but that the migration crisis has exacerbated existing issues.

“It’s complex and challenging, but at the end of the day, it’s a program for homeless children to have a roof over their heads,” Hohn said. “Our hope is the legislature will act and provide sufficient funding to this program.”

Just over half the families in the EA system are currently living in hotels and motels, including 45 families at the Days Inn in Greenfield. The Northampton-based agency ServiceNet is contracted by the state to provide these families with shelter, food, and other services.

“It is our privilege to participate in addressing the humanitarian crisis that has been driving people to flee from countries torn by war and violence,” ServiceNet director of housing and shelter services Erin Forbush told the Reporter.

Without the right-to-shelter law, Forbush said, “we would not have the family shelter programs we do now, which provide a vital safety net for Massachusetts residents as well as for those who are new to our state.”

While most of the families at the Days Inn are originally from Haiti, others are from Central and South America, Africa, and the United States.

“We’ve got families who are coming here from Haiti who are fleeing violence in their country, and then we have families from here in Massachusetts who are fleeing domestic violence,” said ServiceNet director of community relations Amy Timmins.

Typically, ServiceNet houses 16 families at the Greenfield Family Inn on Federal Street, but with the addition of the Days Inn contract its caseload has grown to approximately 200 people. As long as the state provides the financial resources, Timmins said, ServiceNet will be able to hire staff to provide care to the families. The organization partners with local governments, schools, other nonprofits, medical centers, and churches to meet its clients’ needs.

“ServiceNet is not alone in this work,” Timmins said. “It’s important to illustrate how much of a network there is that surrounds these families with care.”

**Responding to Crisis**

Under the new limits, Governor

Healey said that families with “high needs, including health and safety risks” would be prioritized for shelter placement. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Massachusetts filed an amicus brief in the Lawyers for Civil Rights complaint pointing out the troubling vagueness of this mandate.

“The administration’s proposal, if allowed to proceed, would leave it with unfettered discretion to determine which desperate families will or will not obtain shelter, without any input from the legislature or the public,” the brief read, “and leave affected families in the dark about their legal rights and, quite literally, out in the cold.”

Healey said her administration is also responding to the crisis by pushing for work authorization permits and rental vouchers. She appointed Lieutenant General L. Scott Rice of the Massachusetts National Guard last month to serve as her emergency assistance director. On Tuesday Rice announced the state would make 1,200 housing vouchers available to families that have been living in emergency shelters for longer than 18 months.

Under the new rules, officials will be allowed to set limits on the amount of time a family may spend in the emergency shelter system.

“We have families who have been in shelter for well over a year,” Healey said. “The more we can do to help them find their own footing, the more we can reduce the demand on state and local resources.”

In a letter she sent on August 8 announcing her emergency declaration to the Department of Homeland Security, Healey described the pressures migrant families are placing on the shelter system as a “federal crisis of inaction that is many years in the making.”

“This state of emergency arises from numerous factors,” Healey wrote, “among them federal policies on immigration and work authorization, inadequate production of affordable housing over the last decade, and the end of COVID-era food and housing security programs. The need for action is urgent.”



More scenes from Tuesday’s Rag Shag Parade in downtown Turners Falls.

At left: Kaniya, a skeptical young witch, was wheeled down the Avenue by Rohan, costumed in a cardigan.

Above: The revelers take the street, passing by the Music Connection, downtown’s newest trick-or-treating stop. Turners Falls fire trucks brought up the rear, silent but flashing red, while Ayleanna the werewolf held the column’s left flank.

The Rag Shag Parade was introduced in this town in 1925, the brainchild of playground director Claude Hubbard, in response to several years of youthful holiday mischief and rioting. Thousands turned out for the parades in those days, which would end with bonfires, movies in Unity Park or at the Shea Theater, acrobat shows, and an awful lot of popcorn. Anyone interested in renewing the event at a large scale – next year, maybe, or for its 100th anniversary in 2025 – should get in touch with this newspaper. Kudos to the organizers who are keeping the flame alive, year after year. – Eds.

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**STIPENDS** from page A1

payments while members of others, including labor-intensive committees like the fin com itself, do not.

"The stipend conversation has been inconsistent," Wisnewski told the board.

The last time the fin com reviewed the payments was for the FY'19 budget. At that time, according to Wisnewski, members agreed not to undertake another review for five years. When the topic was reopened this year, however, it was decided that the payments should be reviewed every three years going forward.

The Gill-Montague school district also recently approached the town to ask about stipends for school committee members, Wisnewski added; while the fin com was open to the idea, members wanted to hear the opinion of Gill, which shares funding for the district.

All this led to a new stipend conversation with the goal of creating a plan for FY'25 through FY'27. In her presentation, Wisnewski described stipends as "token" payments meant to "increase fair democracy and equal opportunities for citizens." She also stressed that they should be adjusted for inflation.

According to a report included in the meeting packet, a total of 27 individuals are receiving stipends this year, FY'24. These include nine elected board members – three each on the selectboard, board of health, and board of assessors – as well as the elected town meeting moderator and tree warden.

The other 16 positions on the list are appointed, and include the board of registrars, the town clerk – for her role supporting that board – the emergency management director, the inspectors of barns and animals, IT coordinators for town hall and the police department, the forest warden, and the most recent officials to

receive a stipend, the hearing officer and the farmers market manager.

The final appointed officials receiving stipends are all in the building department: an assistant building inspector and gas, plumbing, and electrical inspectors. These do not receive annual stipends, but rather "rates per inspection," currently \$35 across the board.

The fin com, member John Hanold told the Reporter, reviewed the relevant job descriptions, primarily through interviews. Neither Hanold nor town administrator Steve Ellis said they were aware of written descriptions for the roles.

The committee's recommendations were generally to maintain the status quo in terms of which positions should receive stipends, and their stipends for the current fiscal year.

Most of the stipends were then recommended to be raised by 12% for FY'25, and then held at that level for FY'26 and FY'27. Some of the targeted amounts were adjusted to be, in Hanold's words, "evenly divisible for 12 monthly payments."

Hanold wrote that the fin com settled on the 12% figure because it "reflects inflation since FY2019, forecasted inflation to FY2029, and any other considerations (travel, child care etc.) that one chooses to add."

"There was no attempt to quantify these," he continued, "or to make stipends sensitive to actual or forecasted inflation. This is in keeping with the concept that stipends are a subjective, qualitative exercise, not a mechanical process."

Thus the appointed forest warden, who monitors fires and "controlled burns" such as those carried out by the state on the Montague Plains, would receive an annual stipend of \$1,882 beginning in FY'25 while the tree warden, an elected official who organizes the removal and pruning of town trees by the

public works department, would receive \$1,764.

The stipend for the town meeting moderator, \$500, was not adjusted in the fin com's recommendations because it was increased for FY'24 by town meeting in May. Nor were the stipends for the two new positions – \$2,500 for the hearing officer, and \$4,000 for the farmers market manager.

In specific instances, the fin com recommended making larger changes. The committee felt that the barn inspector has been underpaid compared with the animal inspector, and recommended the former's salary be increased by 33% in 2025, but the latter by only 12%. (Both positions are appointed by the board of health, and are currently held by the same person.)

The inspectors' rates would all increase by 29%, to \$45 per call.

The Reporter contacted Mike Naughton, who served as finance committee chair in the early years of the current century, about his reactions to the recommended stipend reforms.

"I remember there was a lot of discussion when the Board of Assessors had higher stipends than the Board of Selectmen, as they did for FY'02," Naughton wrote. "The short answer was because they asked for them and they made a reasonable case, but that didn't seem like a great system."

As for this year's stipend discussion, Naughton wrote that "it seems like a lot of time spent over not much money."

"[S]tipends has historically been a very gray area, so maybe it does deserve extra attention until an enduring plan is in place," Naughton added. "I also think it's important that, as much as possible, the town has clear rationales for its spending decisions, big and small."



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

*Here's the way it was on October 31, 2013: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

**Montague-Amherst Bus Of Vital Importance**

On October 28 the Montague selectboard voted unanimously to affirm that the current Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) bus route from Turners Falls and Montague Center to Amherst is of vital importance to the community. This vote came after the board learned the FRTA had decided to propose eliminating the current Route 23.

The new plan calls for 13 buses a day between Turners Falls and Orange and 16 between Turners and Greenfield. The selectboard and other officials failed to see

how this service would be of benefit to those in Montague wanting to get to UMass, the largest employer in the area.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said people will not want to travel to Greenfield and South Deerfield to get to Amherst.

**Night Kitchen Calls It a Day**

The Night Kitchen, the popular restaurant at the Montague Book Mill, is closing after nearly ten years. "It's bittersweet," said owner and chef Max Brody, "but it's been a great run. After ten years you find other things to do in life. Your priorities change. But change is good."

Brody is proud of what he accomplished. He seems even prouder of his staff, who made it work so well.

**20 YEARS AGO**

*Here's the way it was on October 30, 2003: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

**An Unusual Village**

Seances are no longer held in the unusual octagonal room atop the Lake Pleasant post office, but the National Spiritual Alliance does offer Sunday services. They include hands-on healing and messages from various mediums and psychics, as well as psychic development classes and workshops throughout the year.

A new book about Lake Pleasant will be released shortly after Thanksgiving: *Spirit and Spa: A Portrait of the Body, Mind and Soul of a 133-Year-Old Spiritualist Community*. The tome looks to be an exciting adventure for those

who are fascinated by the history of this unusual village.

**Bare Facts, Bear Facts**

Licensed black bear hunters in western and central Massachusetts set a new statewide record of 142 bruins, including 39 in Franklin County. The largest bear was taken by a bow and arrow.

**Second Twin Born First**

Wendell resident Shirley White reports that her twin nieces were born at Baystate Medical within forty minutes of each other in the wee hours of Sunday morning as daylight savings time ended. Taylor was born first at ten minutes to two. Mackenzie was born next at 1:30 am. Both girls are doing fine.

**150 YEARS AGO**

*Here's the way it was on October 29, 1873: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.*

**Local Matters**

Indian summer has summarily burst upon us somewhere in this region.

A.C. Lewis of Riverside has purchased the coal business of Hitchcock & Harrington.

Dr. Field of Riverside is badly afflicted with rheumatism.

W. S. Harris has built a large barn at Riverside, and in the spring will start a livery stable.

The German Evening School has opened very favorably and already numbers 45 pupils, all of whom seem anxious to learn.

Chas. Stoughton & Co. now keep fresh oysters every Saturday. Their customers will be glad to learn this.

The fire engine company are much in need of funds wherewith to purchase hooks and leather straps to raise their hose with.

We suppose there is no rose without its thorn. To our taste, the

chestnut destroys the peculiar, rich flavor of the worm.

M. Sullivan has put in a culvert on L street, near Third, and pedestrians can now get over the mud-puddles without taking a running jump.

Owing to the financial pressure, the John Russell Cutlery Co. have been compelled to close their works two days (Friday and Saturday) of each week, and on the other days, the workmen will be put on three-quarters time.

The types made us convey a wrong idea last week in regard to the flow of water in the artesian well. The last depth at which they found water was over 700 feet instead of 200 feet, as we had it. Four veins were struck, the first being found at 200 feet.

There is no end to sickness here. It seems to pervade the whole place and the saddest death which we have recorded in a long while is that of Mr. Otto Whipple, who was taken ill last Wednesday and on Monday evening was dead. He was a fine boy, but they are generally the first singled out.



The Rag Shag Parade marshals looked on as marchers assembled in the Aubuchon Hardware parking lot. "I'm actually Al Cummings today," Montague selectboard member Chris Boutwell (left) said with a laugh. "He asked me to fill in!" "I've been doing this since 1971!" said John Murphy (right). "So I'm a real veteran – I'm not dressed up as one, I am one."

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

The specific work the grant will cover apparently has yet to be determined. As MassDevelopment's award letter put it, "[t]he next step is to work with our staff to confirm the scope of your project and develop a grant agreement."

The award comes on the heels of selectboard approval of an application to the federal Environmental Protection Agency for a Brownfields Cleanup Grant of up to \$2.6 million that would help fund a "partial demolition" of the Strathmore.

It also comes on the heels of an October 30 walk-through of the complex's Building 11 by town staff and officials. According to Ramsey this freestanding building, not previously targeted for demolition, was found to be leaking heavily in the pouring rain.

"Of course this is just funding for the design work, this is not funding the actual demolition," Ramsey said, noting that "the town is still working on that with our state and federal officials."

The second grant Ramsey announced Monday was a \$500,000 award from the Rural and Small Town Development Fund for "Avenue A combined sewer overflow and buffer line improvements." This project, he said, would improve the functioning of the "buffer line" under Avenue A from Food City to Bob's Auto. This line holds combined stormwater and sewage during periods of heavy rain, with the goal of passing it along to the Clean Water Facility (CWF) rather than overflowing into the Connecticut River.

Both grants, Ramsey said, came from applications Montague submitted through the state's "Community One Stop For Growth" online portal. This portal allows municipalities to apply for more than one grant, sometimes from different state agencies, coordinate separate projects with similar goals, and receive feedback from the state before final applications are submitted.

"This process streamlines the experience for the applicant and better coordinates economic development programs and staff on engagement and grant making," the state website explains. "It also reorients the State from a passive reviewer of funding requests to an active partner in economic development strategy, priorities, and investment."

Ramsey noted that previous grants Montague has received after applying through this portal have funded pump-station upgrades at the industrial park and a feasibility study for a sludge-composting facility.

**Distant Disaster Delays Farren Teardown**

Town administrator Steve Ellis gave an update on the Farren Care Center property on Montague City Road, which is being cleared of its historic hospital and then gifted to the town. He said there had been a "slowdown in the demolition process," in part because the contractor was "distracted when a power plant fell into the river south of us..." (In late August a building owned by Red Bridge Hydro, LLC collapsed into the Chicopee River in Wilbraham.)

Ellis said they would not finish the work and seed the grass until next spring, but have pledged to clear the sidewalks.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz asked about the single building that will be left standing on the property, which Ellis noted would not be heated over the winter. Ramsey said he had recently spoken with town building inspector Bill Ketchen, who thought an unheated building "would be OK for a few seasons."

**Accused Dog Blessed With Many Puppies**

The selectboard discussed a potential violation of an order it had issued at a dog complaint hearing on October 17. On that date the board found that dogs owned by a resident of Turners Falls, several of whom had jumped off a porch roof, knocking down a neighbor and biting her dog, were "nuisance dogs" under state law. The town had received complaints from other neighbors, and the owner's son had been cited at an earlier dog hearing.

As a result of the finding, the owner was required to license the dogs by the close of business on October 26, purchase insurance, secure exits from the residence – including to the porch roof – and walk the dogs individually.

At Monday's meeting Ellis said the dogs had not yet been registered, and that Montague animal control officer (ACO) Calin Giurgiu had visited the home and found the owner "has not been responsive." Ellis said Giurgiu was also told by the owner's son that "there may be 11 puppies in the home."

After testimony by lead regional ACO Kyle Dragon, Ellis announced that the town had scheduled a formal dog hearing for next Monday, November 6 at 6:32 p.m. Dragon said Giurgiu had indicated that the owner might consider surrendering the mother dog and puppies to the dog shelter.

**Other Business**

The board approved a \$273,628 professional services agreement with engineering firm Wright-Pierce for oversight of the project to replace screw pumps at the CWF. The project, estimated to cost up to \$2.5 million, is funded by a large loan and grant from the federal Department of Agriculture. Ramsey said the project will be funded by the loan, which must be used before the grant kicks in.

CWF superintendent Chelsey Little said she was glad to work with Wright-Pierce on project oversight, which does not require a bidding process. "I'm looking forward to a project at the CWF where I am not actually managing," she said.

Ellis reviewed a proposed memo to department heads about crafting their FY'25 budgets. While the "excess capacity" – money the town may legally tax, but chooses not to – the board had agreed the previous week to build into revenue estimates would allow a 3.5% increase in the town's operating budget, Ellis advised that departments be asked to plan for "level-service" budgets, increasing over the current year only for inflation.

Any department considering increasing its services, Ellis said, particularly by making personnel or programmatic changes, should alert him and the selectboard by early December. "The sooner we know, the more we will be able to think about it and make good decisions," said Kuklewicz. The other members nodded, but no formal vote was taken.

At Ellis's request the board executed an agreement with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to revise the scope of the state Mass in Motion program, which promotes "healthy eating and active living," to include a "digital equity" component. It approved a contract with facilitator Colleen Doherty to coordinate the training, which will be targeted to elderly residents.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, November 6.



**lordy lordy look who's 40!**



If you run into Billy Pennington around town this weekend, wish him a happy birthday. A man of few words, you often have to dig for his interesting stories, so here are some prompts to ask him about: "what was your experience like being a mall santa", "why did you wear a beret the first time you met your future wife's family", or "what is the greatest number of trees you've planted in one day". He's also giving tours of his construction handywork at the grand re-opening of Roundabout Books Saturday 11/4 10AM-6PM

with love, the friends and family of Billy Pennington

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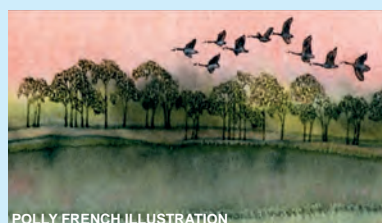


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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

NOVEMBER 2, 2023



WEST ALONG THE RIVER

NOVEMBER MORNING JOURNAL

By DAVID BRULE

**THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE** – On the edge of my backyard wilderness, poised with my pen ready to scribble, I’m waiting to see what’s going to happen.

Poet Billy Collins once described himself as the secretary to the morning. I like that image; it’s sort of what I’ve been doing all along. I feel kind of like an old-time court stenographer, putting down in my shorthand what I hear and see, for the record. Only I don’t have to deal with alleged perpetrators or lawyers banging on, just the innocent wild folk starting their day and going about their November-morning business of surviving.

First light brings the late, autumn-sharp, simple note call of the early rising cardinal, the last to retire from the yard to sleep well after dusk and the first up at daybreak. During the summer it was the catbird, rather, who started his noisy prattlings and quirky imitations of other songbirds around 4 a.m., just like the Deep South mockingbird who sings all night.

Catbird has already slipped away early last month headed south, so the cardinal fills the morning niche.

Not to be left out, the white-throated sparrow now chirps his single note too. Springtime meant he’d be whistling his “*Sam Peabody, Peabody*” call, plaintive and sweet, limpid and liquid-clear. Now he just plain chirps the one note.

A tiny invisible throng maybe numbering three or so, the golden-crowned kinglets begin lispings through the bare maples. Impossible to see through foggy, sleepy eyes, but I know they’re up there by their calling.

Squirrels and chipmunks are the next to show up, scrounging away under the feeders. With my clever combination of funnel-shaped squirrel baffles and the tubular cone aptly called a torpedo that I picked up years ago over at Ag-way’s, those pesky buggers can’t climb up to raid the seed shelf. Once in a while one of them shimmies up the pole to disappear into the dead-end tube. It feels really satisfying to see them have to slide back down like an old-time fireman coming down the pole at the station.

Behind me the kitchen door is pushed open and out strides the Dog of the House. Nicky the Siberian, in his prime, comes out onto the early morning deck to survey his domain. With a sometimes swagger, sometimes careful stalk, other times lively liltling

walk he checks all the corners of the yard and squirts his favorite marking posts: the forlorn sunflower stems, the garden gate, and the dogwood of course.

His extraordinary senses tell him who was here last night. We don’t know, but he does. Was it possum? Skunk? Raccoon?

No bears, luckily. He chased away the last bear we had here last summer. The 300-pound bruin ran ahead of the pursuing dog from one end of the enclosed garden to the other, until he found a stout maple growing right near the fence. One leap and in one fell swoop the big black bear cleared the fence, grabbed the tree, and bounced off heading for the river.

He hasn’t been around since, but that doesn’t mean he won’t be back. We are in the ancient pathway of *Awasoos* and his kin.

*Awasoos* is the Abenaki and Nipmuck name for the black bear. Our Indigenous friends tell us the name comes from two roots: *awa*, which denotes “over and beyond,” with *soos*, which means “to go or to walk.” *Awasoos* describes “one who travels far, over and beyond,” referring to the bear’s wide range of territory.

In his wide range of travels, bear has gained vast knowledge, and hence is considered a being of great wisdom. I have no doubt he’ll be back when he reaches this part of his territory again.

On other mornings like this, on my river walks in the past, I’d often meet a different presence. My neighbor and cousin Annabelle from across the Flat would be out walking our paths through the old pasture gone to woodlands. I used to see her coming through the trees with her walking stick, followed by her little dog by the name of Daisy. Daisy has passed on and now she’s accompanied by Bonnie, another pert and lively little companion.

I would always call out to Annabelle in French: “*Bonjour Cousine!*” She’s the last one of my father’s family to speak French, and I like to keep that heritage going as long as I can.

Annabelle, *née* Paradis, is the niece of my late grandmother Mimi Matteau Brûlé. I consider her a cousin and a kindred spirit. She’s now in her 90s, and up until last year, we would regularly cross paths in the woods.

With a fine warm smile, she would always respond in French, and we did understand each other, in spite of my Parisian dialect and her ancient French-Canadian *patois*.

see WEST ALONG page B3

Above: Avenue A, really having a season.

ART

Bill Brayton Explores a Universal Force in *Torrent*

By NINA ROSSI

**GILL** – Extreme flooding last summer in Conway, where he lives, propelled artist Bill Brayton to revisit themes of water, waves, and gravity in his work. The results are now on view at the Rhodes Art Center Gallery at Northfield Mount Hermon, in a solo exhibit Brayton has named *Torrent*.

There are seven wall pieces in the show, made primarily of wood, and ten mixed-media drawings. All were completed this year. Many of the works are named after different water terms; Brayton enjoys sailing, and reads a lot of nautical adventure stories.

Brayton says the water theme came partly from experiencing the record-breaking deluge that hit Conway, and partly from an earlier sculpture he made in 2005 called *Rogue Wave*. A rogue wave is a mysterious large wave that advances rapidly out of nowhere in an opposite direction from where other waves are coming from – they are the cause of many nautical disasters!

Brayton’s wife Erica Wurtz, also an artist, had encouraged him to reinvestigate some of the ideas in *Rogue Wave* for a while, but, he admits, “I am very hesitant to take advice in this area, as many artists are. But it also seemed to make sense. There was something in that piece that I kind of have been missing.”

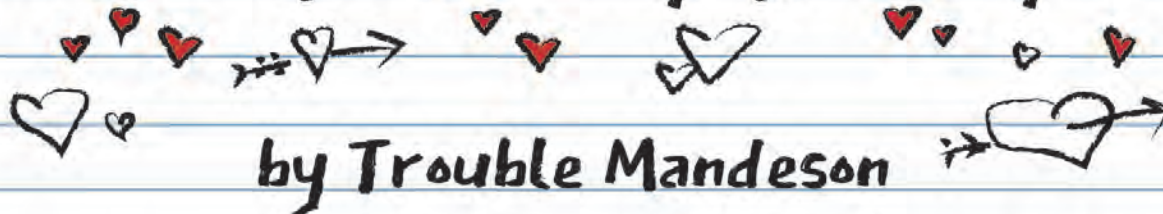
The way Brayton constructed *Rogue Wave* out of wooden curves cut on a bandsaw was a departure from see **TORRENT** page B5



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Cliff Sun by Bill Brayton, graphite, charcoal, ink, water-based spray paint.

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE



by Trouble Mandeson

**GREENFIELD** – As you might imagine, it can be a challenge to choose a particular topic or food item to focus on for this column. I first go down the list of past columns to ensure that I don’t repeat

a topic. Then I open the fridge and look in the pantry to see what leaps out at me.

*Hmmm*, a box of prunes. Maybe a history of dried fruit? I did make fruit leather this summer...

Oh, hey, there’s that gumbo mix our New Orleans pals sent us. I could make that and write about food from the South... *Aha*, peach chutney, I could talk about sauces, dips, and foods that pair well with each other!

This is the conversation in my head until one idea rises to the top, like fat on a pot of cooling chicken soup, and off I go to ruminate and research cauliflower, the country’s candy bar consumption, or holiday meal planning for vegans.

Lately I’ve been listening to an audiobook and watching the Netflix show of the same name, *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat*, a food primer by chef Samin Nosrat who learned her craft at Alice Waters’ *Chez Panisse* restaurant in Berkeley, California. With a mix of personal anecdotes, recipes, tips, and even some food science, Nosrat teaches us how salt enhances food’s flavor, fat gives us appealing textures, acid brings brightness and balance, and heat determines the texture of our food.

It’s a lot of information and I’m not trying to memorize it; rather, I listen and focus on things that catch

see **HEARTFELT** page B8



MANDESON PHOTO

Try making a Niçoise salad, a classic French recipe that pairs vegetables with protein in the form of green beans, potatoes, boiled eggs, and a tuna filet.

# Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

## “BEANS”

Beans may be a bit like a can of baked beans at first – sealed tight, and a tad shy – but give him a little time and you’ll be cracking open the heart of this charming companion! Once he warms up to you, he becomes a watchful observer, always curious about your every move.

Also, this boy loves leafy greens and will snatch them right out of your hands. A main course of beans always goes well with a salad.

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

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

## NOVEMBER 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

**Multiple days: Art Exhibit.** Until November 17: mixed media by Jamie Fuller. Starting November 20: photos by Jeanne Weintraub-Mason. Montague Center.

**Multiple days: Grab & Go Bags.** Crafts: Egg carton owls, fairy houses. Free kits at all branch locations while supplies last.

**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. (No groups November 9 or 23.) Carnegie, 10 a.m.

**Thursdays, November 2 and 16: 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.

**Friday, November 3: Tea Rex Party.** Kid-friendly snacks, huge inflatable dinosaurs, special guest Dinoman. Discovery Center, 3:30 to 5 p.m.

**Saturday, November 4: Used Book Sale.** Fiction, paperbacks, kids' books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks. Hundreds of recent donations. Carnegie, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Saturday, November 4: Chinese Papercutting** with Zonghe (Elena) Li. Discovery Center. Session for families with children ages 5 to 12, 10:30 a.m.; session for teens and adults, 1 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 8: Drop In & Draw** with local artist Caroline Wampole. For ages 13 and up. Materials provided, all levels welcome. Montague Center, 4 to 5 p.m.

**Thursday, November 9: Hot Chocolate Social.** Millers Falls, 3 to 4 p.m.

**Monday, November 13: Friends of MPL Meeting.** All welcome. Email [vgatvalley@gmail.com](mailto:vgatvalley@gmail.com) for more info. Carnegie, 5:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 15: Author Series.** Gray Davidson-Carroll, *Waterfall of Thanks*. Refreshments provided. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

**Thursday, November 16: Keeping Your Family Healthy,** a Good Food workshop about safe food preparation and storage. Millers Falls, 2 p.m.

**Monday, November 20: Art Exhibit Opening.** Photos of nocturnal animals by Jeanne Weintraub-Mason. Montague Center, 6 p.m.

**Thursday, November 30: Book Club.** Amanda Skenandore, *Between Earth and Sky*. Montague Center, 7 p.m.

### ERVING

**All Month: Art Exhibit,** photography by Phyllis Stone.

**Sunday, November 12: Friends' Puzzle Swap.** All ages, no puzzle required. 1 to 3 p.m.

**Sunday, November 12: Genealogy Drop-in Help.** 1 to 3 p.m.

**Monday, November 13: Teen Advisory Night.** Enjoy ice cream and tell us what you want at the library. Ages 11 to 19. 3:30 to 5 p.m.

**Thursday, November 16: Forest Health Lecture Series.** Audrey Barker Plotkin on invasive forest insects and climate change. 5:30 p.m.

**Thursday, November 16: PJ Storytime.** RSVP suggested, 6 p.m.

**Sunday, November 19: Friends' Craft Day.** Materials provided, RSVP required, 1 p.m.

**Thursday, November 30: Book Club.** Light refreshments. 5:30 p.m.

### LEVERETT

**All Month: Art Exhibit,** amuse-bouche photographs by Annie Tiberio; *Story Walks*, new story on the trail behind the library every Thursday.

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

**Every Wednesday: Playgroup,** for children ages 0 to 5 and their caregivers. See [leverettlibrary.org](http://leverettlibrary.org) or email [budine@erving.org](mailto: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, November 11: Art Reception.** Amuse-bouche photographs by Annie Tiberio. 12:30 p.m.

**Saturday, November 18: Workshop: Vegetable Fermentation.** Registration required: [leverettlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:leverettlibrary@gmail.com). 12:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, November 28: Author Reading.** Richie Davis, *Flights of Fancy, Souls of Grace*. 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.

**Every Wednesday: Musical Storytime.** Lively, enriching, and multicultural. For children 1 to 5 and caregivers. 10 a.m.

**Wednesday, November 1: Readers' Choice.** Bonnie Garmus, *Lessons in Chemistry*. Pick up a copy. 10 a.m.

**Thursday, November 2: Spice Club pickup starts.** Stop in for a sample and suggested recipes while supplies last; look for a new spice every month.

**Saturday, November 4: Puzzle Swap.** Dozens of new-to-you puzzles for kids and adults. For more info, email [friendsofml101360@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofml101360@gmail.com). 10 to 11:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, November 8: Readings Group.** Jane Austen, *Emma*. Pick up a copy. 3 p.m.

**Thursday, November 9: Environmental Awareness Group.** Lily Brooks-Dalton, *The Light Pirate*. Pick up a copy at the library. 6:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 15: Campfire and S'mores,** for all ages, behind the library. 5 p.m.

**Thursday, November 16: Library Trivia Night.** Four Star Farms Brewery, 6 p.m.

**Thursday, November 30: Author Reading.** Richie Davis, *Flights of Fancy, Souls of Grace*. 6 p.m.

### WENDELL

**Every Wednesday: Matinee Movie.** 4 p.m.

**Every Friday: LEGO club.** 4 to 5 p.m.

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

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

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

**Friday, November 10: Home-school Hangout.** 10:30 a.m.

**Friday, November 10: Office Hours** with State Rep. Aaron Saunders. 2 p.m.

**Tuesday, November 14: Tech time.** Free one-on-one sessions with techie pros. By appointment, 4 and 4:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 15: CPR and Fire Safety.** Geared toward adults. 6:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 29: STEM.** Build a homopolar battery sculpture. 2 p.m.

## Senior Center Activities NOVEMBER 6 THROUGH 10

### 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 at (978) 544-3758.

### 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 11/6

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

### Tuesday 11/7

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

### Wednesday 11/8

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

### Thursday 11/9

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

### Friday 11/10

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

### GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays

from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 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 11/6

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

### Tuesday 11/7

9 a.m. Chair Yoga  
10 a.m. Zumba Lite  
3 p.m. Tai Chi

### Wednesday 11/8

9 a.m. Foot Clinic  
by Appointment

### Thursday 11/9

4:15 p.m. Mat Yoga  
1 p.m. Pitch

### Friday 11/10

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

### LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinic is held monthly.

For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022 x 2, or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

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**WEST ALONG** from page B1

Constantly keeping herself busy, Annabelle used to drive out to visit her daughter down on the North Shore with her little dog beside her on the passenger's seat. Other times she was a constant volunteer up at the Erving Library, sorting out books and discreetly offering her opinion and wisdom on all manner of topics.

Then all that changed.

She started feeling weak, worried about falling and began cutting back on her excursions.

We, her family, worried about her. Back and forth on stays in the local hospital, we found her frail and resigned, listless and annoyed

at her predicament.

"Getting old sucks" is the phrase she shared with me the last time I visited her in the hospital. She was never one to mince words. I began wondering if I should start looking for my suit coat and necktie, to be ready for the funeral.

Then, fooling all the predictions of the doctors and the fearful expectations of her family, Annabelle announced she was fed up, left the hospital and stalked out of the first rest home she visited. She went home to her snug red house and little dog on the Flat.

And now I hear she's back up at the library again!



MONIQUE BRULE PHOTO

Back on the Flat: The author's cousin Annabelle, with her companion Bonnie.



**Montague Community Television News**

**New Leaf Turned Down**

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** – Concerned citizens of Wendell, including David Stubblefield of the Wendell State Forest Alliance and members of the "No Assaultin' Battery Storage" group including Anna Gyorgy and Court Dorsey, are calling on their community to join in their effort to stop the New Leaf Wendell Energy Storage Project, which would install 780 new lithium batteries on 11 clear-cut acres on what is now forested land in the town.

The group's talk at the Wendell Meetinghouse on October 24 was recorded and is available on MCTV's Vimeo page, along with both the Montague and Gill select-board meetings from that week.

All community members are wel-

come to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 9, and featured on the MCTV Vimeo page. If you have any ideas for films, MCTV is always available to assist in local video production as well. Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided.

And if you're looking for more ways to get involved, consider joining the MCTV Board. If you would like to stop in for a meeting, even just to check the vibe, email [infomontaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetv@gmail.com) for a link to the Zoom.

Contact us at (413) 863-9200 or [infomontaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetv@gmail.com), follow us on Facebook, or find us on Instagram @[montaguecommunitytv](https://www.instagram.com/montaguecommunitytv). Find videos and more on our website, [montaguetv.org](http://montaguetv.org).

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Smoky Haze; Smoky Haze (Reprise); Cookin' and Stompin'; Crusty Gleaners; Zero Mention of Friday Canal Incident**

**Monday, 10/23**

10:32 a.m. Caller from Sunderland Road states that they caught a skunk and need help to remove it. Animal control officer notified. 8:11 p.m. 911 caller states there is a go-kart with juveniles in it, with no headlights on, driving at a high rate of speed in the area of Griswold and Davis Streets. Juveniles located. Pushing back to their house.

**Tuesday, 10/24**

9:20 a.m. Caller states that there is a large black dog loose in the area of Taylor Heights and Taylor Hill Road; the dog is being aggressive towards people. ACO notified and responding. ACO checked area; unable to locate.

3:55 p.m. Employee at Walgreens called 911 to report that there is a smoky haze in the store that's getting worse. Transferred to Shelburne Control. TFFD on scene.

6:18 p.m. 911 caller from Walgreens states that the store is filling back up again with a smoky haze. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

6:37 p.m. 911 caller states that there is a strong odor in the East Main Street area. Cannot describe what odor smells like. Officer advises negative findings; area smells normal.

**Wednesday, 10/25**

4:02 a.m. Caller from Dell Street states she was awakened to knocking at a door located at the back of her house. Caller states she saw an elderly male party with a walker leaving on foot towards Turners Falls Road. Caller described male as wearing pants and a sweater; believes male may be confused. Officer transporting male. Units spoke to male's wife, who states that this has never happened before and that she is surprised he made it out of the house. No further issues.

7:53 a.m. Caller states the chickens are in Turnpike Road again and they are going to cause an accident. Officer advises no hazards in area and no animals seen at this time. Call printed for ACO.

9:59 a.m. A 42-year-old male, address unknown, was arrested on a straight warrant.

10:17 a.m. 911 caller reporting minor car accident on K Street. No injuries; no fluids. Officer advising

single vehicle. DPW advised of tree hit. Operator requesting AAA for a tow.

11:02 a.m. FRTA driver called 911 to report a possible fight on the bus. Driver has pulled over at Scotty's on Unity Street. Peace restored; officer provided courtesy transport to one party.

12:34 p.m. Two-car accident on H Street. No injuries, smoke, or fluids. Both cars and occupants on scene. Officer advised.

1:29 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street states that a black car drives around this time and almost hits her every day; she yells at them to stop, and they flip her off and yell back. She believes this is intentional and believes they reside in an upstairs apartment. Officer advises he spoke to the people in the car, who deny the allegations at this time. Caller called back in again stating the car almost hit her legs. Advised caller that officers have talked to car occupants.

6:15 p.m. 911 caller from Bridge Street reports his neighbor is banging and stomping on the floor. Male was cooking dinner and playing his guitar. He was advised of the complaint.

9:03 p.m. 911 caller reporting male in J Street building; reports he was told in court that he is not supposed to be there. Investigated.

**Thursday, 10/26**

11:13 a.m. Notified officer that overnight, vandalism took place inside the bathroom facilities at Unity Park; urination and spray paint of fake blood on the walls. Investigated.

11:28 a.m. Food City manager states that male parties are in the parking lot walking around begging people for money. He has asked them to leave multiple times, and they walk away for a couple minutes then come right back. Male parties advised of complaint and will move along. 1:01 p.m. Caller came to department stating she has been seeing cars roll through the stop sign at First and L Streets without fully stopping. Referred to an officer.

1:19 p.m. Attempting to make contact to take dogs on N Street. Unable to locate.

1:30 p.m. Employee from Greenfield Savings Bank states there is a male party outside asking people for

money as they leave the ATM. Male party states he's waiting for someone who's using the ATM. He will wait by the sidewalk.

4:19 p.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting a woman on the side of Turners Falls Road in Greenfield crying. Calls transferred to GPD.

4:43 p.m. Caller from Greenfield Road advises that an old "crusty" hatchback-style vehicle with three occupants came to her residence and stated that they are going around to all the area farms to see if they can walk around the property and find items in the ground. Caller asked them to leave, and they did without incident. Caller would like this on record.

5:41 p.m. Caller states that he hit a deer on Swamp Road. It is alive, but not well. Deer gone upon officer's arrival.

**Friday, 10/27**

6:03 a.m. Caller from Keith Apartments requesting well being check on neighbor downstairs. Caller states that it is common for her to bang and yell, but today seems to be worse than previous times. All quiet upon arrival; no answer at door.

10:22 a.m. Officers looking for female with active warrant who was just spotted by an off-duty officer on Power Street. A 31-year-old Millers Falls woman was arrested on a default warrant.

1:54 p.m. Male party with a cane harassing people for money at Food City. Store manager wants him removed. Party moved along.

6:27 p.m. Caller from West Main Street states that the people downstairs are hacking into her phone and her WiFi. She was also supposed to have food delivered and it hasn't arrived yet; she suspects that they stole it. Officer called caller back, and she yelled at him on the phone. Caller would like it on record.

6:37 p.m. 911 caller from East Main Street states that he pushed over a bucket that was being used for a fire and a male party assaulted him. While on the phone, could hear two male parties yelling at each other. Officer providing courtesy transport for caller. Officer spoke to witness who had a completely different story.

**Saturday, 10/28**

4:10 a.m. 911 caller reports he can hear a female party yelling loudly, slamming walls, and possibly damaging items in an apartment on Avenue A. Officer located involved female party, who had ten active warrants. A 32-year-old Turners Falls woman was arrested.

8:52 a.m. Caller from G Street states that the crew working on building a new garage is playing music

from a radio too loudly. Investigated. Music was not excessively loud.

9:20 a.m. Checking Power Street area for female with active warrant. A 22-year-old Greenfield woman was arrested on a straight warrant.

1:26 p.m. Walk-in reporting a disturbance that occurred in the business that he owns (Third Street Laundry). Advised of options.

2:01 p.m. Walk-in concerned because no one has heard from her adult son since yesterday. Last seen walking to work at a friend's house on Mountain Road in Greenfield. Party entered into missing persons system. Greenfield PD called stating they located the male party at an address on Mountain Road, deceased.

5:44 p.m. Caller states that a black motorcycle has been going past his house multiple times, possibly into triple digits. Caller believes that he is going around a loop, Millers Falls Road to Lake Pleasant Road to Route 63. Rider has a red jacket. Caller called back stating that the bike is still driving around at high rates of speed. Received call from second caller stating that the bike has been driving in the area for approximately an hour and she is concerned that he is going to get hurt or harm someone else. Unable to locate.

7:51 p.m. Caller from Central Street reports that her neighbors are outside trying to shoot a raccoon with a BB gun and looking in windows. Officer advises male party spoken to; he was trying to get the raccoon out of the trash.

**Sunday, 10/29**  
9:02 a.m. Caller from Norman Circle states that the neighbor is blowing leaves into the road again. Officers advised.  
9:21 a.m. Officer saw female with active warrant riding a bike on the bike path towards Eleventh Street. Officer has one party in custody. Officers in foot pursuit of a second party, who has two active warrants. GPD assisting with search for second party, which was later called off. A 45-year-old Turners Falls woman was arrested on a default warrant.

7:25 p.m. Employee from Nouria called 911 stating that two male parties are trespassing and have been asked to leave multiple times, and they won't. Parties are disturbing the peace. Both male parties moved along.

9:33 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road reporting car over embankment. Operator uninjured. Tow requested. Rau's was able to pull vehicle out; operator was able to drive away.

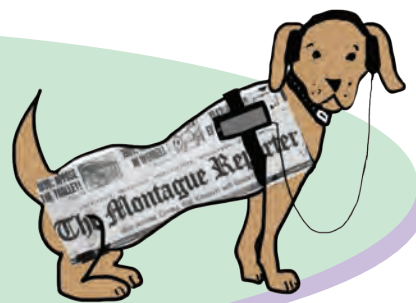
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## ARTIST PROFILE

## Michelle's Creations

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – I saw specially design tumblers by Michelle's Creations at a booth at the Franklin County Fair, and I decided to add this artist to my list of profiles I have written, as it seemed like a cool idea. Her full name is Michelle Williams.

I would call these pieces of artwork rather unique – in fact, I have never done a profile on an artist who makes work like this before, which is what drew me to want to write about them.

Some of the designs themselves are rather unique-looking too. "It could be anything," Williams said when I asked about them. "It could be an animal." I asked for an example of something that could be on a tumbler. Dragonflies are one of them.

I also found out that one of Williams's tumblers has an image from the movie *Hocus Pocus* on it when I looked on her Facebook page. Another had images of dinosaurs.

As for how long she has been making these, "about four years" is what she told me. Their popularity seems to be pretty good, from what she told me about that as well. She said she sold between 50 and 60 of them at the Fair this year.

"Everyone loves reusable tumblers," she added, "and I have a lot of repeat customers."

Williams said she gets blank tumblers from different retailers, and started making them for gifts for family and friends. She now sells them at many craft fairs – including at Hitchcock Brewery, Kringle Candle, Camp Apex,



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Hand-decorated tumblers with Hocus Pocus and dinosaurs.

the Duck Pond, and Christmas in July – and at a couple of craft stores, the Vermont Emporium (at Exit 1 outside Brattleboro) and at Bates Crafts in Orange.

"It takes me about 45 minutes on each," Williams said, when it comes to making the tumblers. The price ranges from \$15 to \$45 depending on sizes and designs. You can find quite a few images of tumblers she has made on the "Michelle's Creations" Facebook page.

MR Wrapping Paper Edition  
Artist Profile #5

By REPORTER STAFF

This summer we invited people to submit design proposals for a special Wrapping Paper Edition, to be printed in November. This fundraiser for the *Montague Reporter* will feature full-color designs printed on double pages of newsprint, meant to wrap presents in. Seven of these pages will feature the work of local artists chosen from dozens of entries we received.

We are so excited to bring these wonderful designs to life in this special edition, which will go to press in the third week of November!

**Heather Katsoulis's** winning design is inspired by the Turners Falls fishway. We asked each artist to answer the same three questions:

**MR:** What would you want your wrapping paper to say, and feel like, for the person it is being gifted to?

**HK:** I'd like the paper to be

a reminder of the gift of the Connecticut River and our connection to it, particularly right here in town. In addition to its natural beauty setting the stage for this village, we have the pleasure and opportunity to see its changes, observe the wildlife through bird watching, fishing, the fish ladder – the design is inspired by the sign at the entrance – or enjoy a stroll or ride on the bike path as it follows each gentle meander.

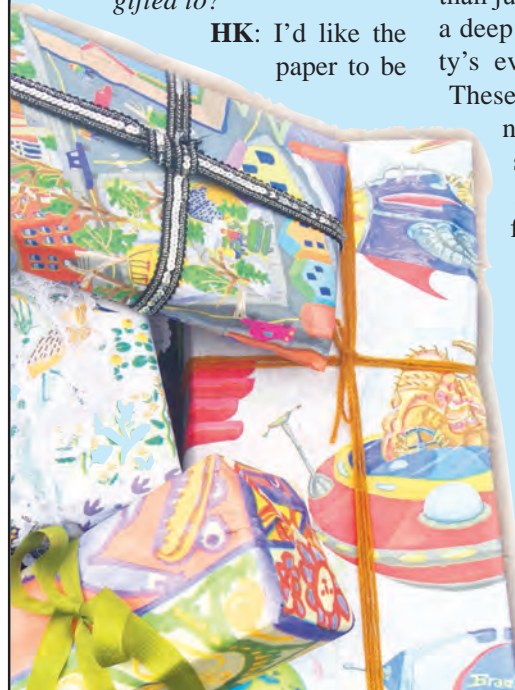
**MR:** What gifts would you want to receive wrapped in your paper?

**HK:** My most cherished gifts are those that are handmade by the giver – food, yarn crafts, words, art. Or socks. :D

**MR:** What other gifts have newspapers given you over the years?

**HK:** I've discovered that reading the *Reporter* provides more than just current updates. It grants a deep insight into our community's events and inner workings. These articles aren't merely news; they capture the essence of our town. The *Reporter* serves as a platform for residents to share experiences, ensure our officials remain transparent, and discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Furthermore, delivering the paper has instilled in both my daughter and son a strong sense of community, service, and responsibility, broadening their horizons beyond our immediate neighborhood.



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## MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN



SCOTT MUNROE PHOTO

## 64. Peter Prescott

Interview by J. BURKETT

**TURNERS FALLS** – This week we get to talk to the talented Pete Prescott! Pete is based in Providence these days, but has been in a lot of Boston-based bands over the years, including Volcano Suns, Peer Group, Kustomized, and the great Dredd Foole & the Din, who have had some mind-blowing CD reissues out lately.

But Pete is most well-known for being part of Mission Of Burma, with Clint Connolly and Roger Miller. MOB's impact and influence can't be overstated. They snuck up on the

world in 1979 with a great mixture of new sounds, memorable songs, dissonant harmonies, and great live shows, all with a distinct punk/post-punk edge. Despite their impact they disbanded in 1983, having only released one LP and some EPs, due to Miller getting tinnitus from their loud live shows.

Since then their reputation has just grown. Just a few of the bands who have mentioned their influence are Pearl Jam, the Foo Fighters, REM, Superchunk, the Replacements, Thurston Moore, Drive Like Jehu, Throwing Muses, Yo La Tengo, Pixies, Hüsker Dü, Guided by

Voices, Big Black, Fugazi, Catherine Wheel, Moby, and Down by Law.

In 2002 they started doing reunions shows for big audiences around the world -- a reunion that lasted almost 20 years (!), and is now officially over. In 2009 the Boston city council declared October 4 to be "Mission of Burma Day" in honor of the band's music. Check them out ASAP if you haven't already...

Pete's new band is Minibeast, who play out here from time to time. He writes all the songs now, and it's very different from his other bands. Keep your eyes peeled for their next show!

**MMM:** Hi Pete! Can we start with any early music memories?

**PP:** Mundane, but important – the Beatles on Ed Sullivan. This cemented the idea that, far more than songs, I'm interested in the interplay between musicians.

**MMM:** How about favorite albums growing up?

**PP:** Again, I got Beatles records at Christmas time, so when they grew up, I grew up with them. Outside of those, the Who and the Kinks came next, so it was British stuff that was influential first.

**MMM:** Were there albums that changed your life?

**PP:** Brian Eno - Here Come the Warm Jets, the Ramones' first al-

bum, the first Neu! record.

**MMM:** We both worked together in Boston. Are there any memories of those early *Mystery Train* days that particularly stand out?

**PP:** The best "job" I ever had. Everyone that worked there was a revelation for me because they all had their own tastes and we all mixed our own tastes together.

**MMM:** It really was the best! *Mission of Burma* have had such a comeback over the years. Was that really surprising?

**PP:** It was surprising that it went on forever. And we were all glad that people got a chance to actually see it, and appreciate it.

**MMM:** How about the origins of Minibeast?

**PP:** Toward the end of Burma's endless reunion, I finally started doing what most musicians do when they're children, which is making bedroom tapes, which I eventually turned into the first Minibeast record.

Formed a live band with some great players from Providence, but it wasn't quite "it" yet. Broke that up, made a second bedroom record that was a sonic step forward.

Then I got a more steady band, with Keith Seidel on drums and Eric Baylies on bass. Finally Eric left and Niels LaWhite joined. Then it turned into the rhythm-based psych experi-

ence that it is now.

**MMM:** You have been in a lot of bands now... How are they different, or similar?

**PP:** The present one is the most different because it's based on non-Western arranging ideas. The other ones were all some mixture of noise, pop, and improv.

**MMM:** Are you into any recent films? How about fave soundtracks?

**PP:** Yes. Horror movies like *Hereditary*, *Titane*, *Men* – horror movies still seem to be the most adventurous style. Recent soundtracks: *Twisted Nerve* [1968], and *The Sentinel* [1977] by Gil Mellé.

**MMM:** What is the newest with Minibeast?

**PP:** Recording a new record in the fall. Probably some national touring in the spring.

**MMM:** Any fave bands right now?

**PP:** We always run into bands that we play with that are amazing, that nobody really knows about – that's the state of things right now.

**MMM:** Thanks for talking with us! Do you want to end this with good music stories or a joke?

**PP:** I couldn't tell a good joke if my life depended on it.

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**TORRENT** from page B1

the thin, steam-bent wood he was typically working with. The thicker lines of the piece's curves were "a radical direction shift for me," Brayton says. "The title piece, *Torrent*, is the wall piece I made first. It led the way and I am still trying to recapture, in new work, what happened in that one."

In *Torrent*, two longer pieces of wood cut in a series of undulations sustain shorter, more playful curves fastened around and above them. Seamlessly joined from behind, the curves are of varying thicknesses, hues, and textures of wood. The grain visible from different varieties of wood provides additional movement. Water stains are visible in one piece.

An aluminum circle rides on the nearest undulation seemingly affecting the shorter curves around it, through the echoing of its perimeter in nearby wooden arcs. As the only shape that implies any type of closure, its self-containment provides the waves with an emotional center and point of reference. *Torrent* references water, but the circle could also be seen as a star whose gravity is bending light and curving spacetime around itself.

Sometimes the reference point in a wall sculpture is a sphere of wood, and sometimes it is an aluminum disc. In *Pitchpole*, a small

boat-shape of cast and carved concrete rides high to the upper right. Brayton explains that "pitchpoling" is when a boat flips forward upside down: "That's when really bad stuff happens, like your mast breaks off!"

The concrete Brayton likes to work with is a special mixture of cement, vermiculite, sawdust, and other things, a formula he has been tinkering with for 30 years. "It's lightweight, easy to sculpt and build hollow forms with, and it floats," he says. "It's just been a fun exploration."

The wood is from his own collection of boards, some of which came from a local sawmill, but others may have come from friends, or were reclaimed from bits of boats or houses. "The wood has some preloaded history in many cases," he says. He made a tool for scribing curves with two lines running in parallel, then cut them on a small bandsaw and sands them very carefully.

Generally he works directly with his materials without first creating a plan. "I always make a lot of parts, without thinking about how they are going to go together, and then just start improvising and seeing where the work goes," he says. "They stack up and add up to something that I can't predict. That's the most fun way to work for me."

Brayton established the sculpture program at Hampshire College and retired from there in 2020. He is also an NMH alumnus, class of 1976. "I always used to tell my students at Hampshire that one of the few guarantees in art is to put together a lot of the same thing, and it always looks interesting," he concludes.

The 10 drawings in the exhibit use black lines and bold circular elements that seem to make orbits and spin into looping lunar trajectories. Smaller circle shapes appear in both light and dark, with larger portions of circles that imply celestial bodies or as negative spaces, suggest light. Brayton says there are many connections between the sculpture and drawings in how the creative process is about adding and taking away and improvising.

"They often have this big black line. I've been using spray paint and big markers and things that you associate more with graffiti, and I just love the way the color black can



ROSSI PHOTO

Brayton's wood sculpture *Pitchpole* is approximately 56 inches wide and 31 inches high.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sculptor Bill Brayton of Conway.

energize everything around itself and create something that has more... *courage*, maybe. It provokes an emotional response. It's my favorite color!"

Brayton explains that gravity is "something sculptors especially are fixated on. It is the thing that bends, the force that works on everything, and it pulls on our bodies over time." His drawing *Underbelly* shows a light area sagging into the darkness below it with a soft, yielding curve that expresses this accumulative effect.

Brayton believes he has just touched the surface of what could happen in this series with the work he completed this year for *Torrent*. "I want to try a vertical one; I want to try an outdoor-oriented piece using this language; maybe I'll have the sculpture come more directly into the drawing to see where that goes," he muses. "But really, I have no idea where it's headed, and that's what is fun about art making, right?"

**The Gallery**

Rhodes Art Center Gallery director and NMH art teacher Jamie Rourke says the gal-

lery is making more of an effort this year to invite the public in to see the exhibits. The main focus is to be a teaching gallery for the private boarding school's 600-plus students. Rourke explains that "the primary driver is to bring in quality work in a wide range of mediums and approaches, so that the kids can see what art making is all about in 2023 – not 1950, or 1900."

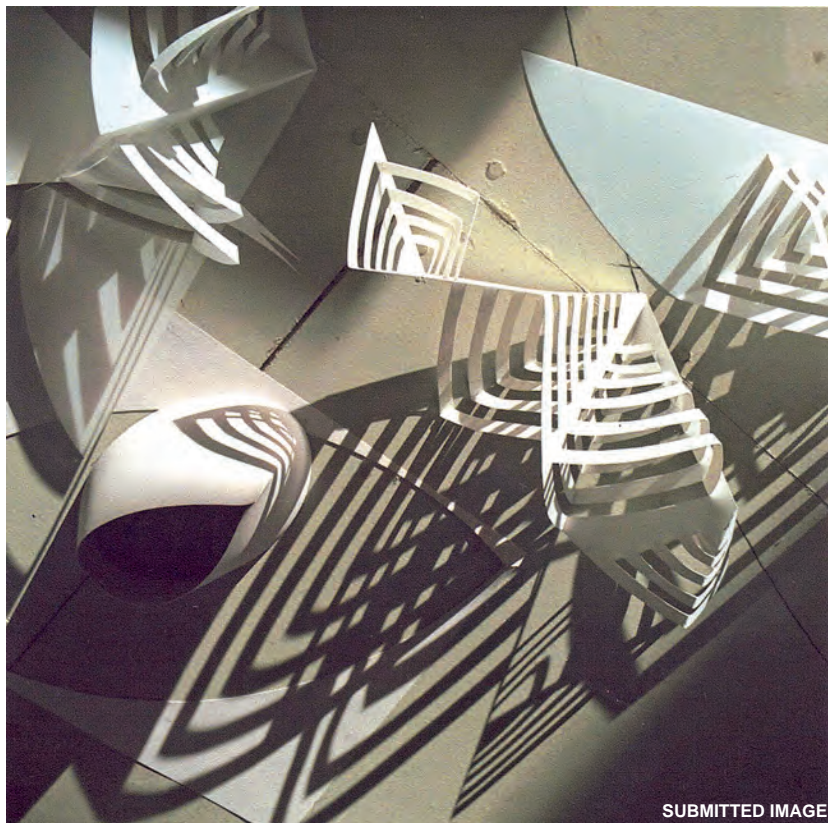
Rourke says he tries to find ways to connect exhibiting artists with students either through their art practice or by making connections into other academic areas and, as he puts it, "just other ways of being a human on the planet that are meaningful."

The next exhibit after *Torrent* is work by Anna Hepler, November 27 through January 19, followed by annual faculty and student art exhibits. Hepler is a Greenfield-based sculptor and printmaker.

The Gallery is open to the public Mondays to Fridays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m.; it is closed to the public on Saturdays. For more information, contact Rourke at (413) 325-4048 or [jrouke@nmhschool.org](mailto:jrouke@nmhschool.org).

**EXHIBIT ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Paper Sculptures by Jamie Fuller**



SUBMITTED IMAGE

A photograph, taken by Jamie Fuller, of one of her paper sculptures. The following is a curatorial statement by Montague Center Library staff...

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – Jamie Fuller makes us look closely at the space around us. Her art, on view this month at the Montague Center Library, plays with illusion so that shapes appear where they really aren't. It makes one attentive to

how one sees and how much one assumes rather than visually verifies.

Playing with light, Fuller at times presents us with shadows that are more substantial than the objects which cast them. She creates forms that suggest three di-

mensions but are, in fact, flat. Fuller describes her art as "an ongoing inquiry about how we perceive space and essential spatial cues." She asks, "How can a room or area be altered to allow one to pause and look in a new way?"

Born in New York City, Fuller earned a bachelors at Queens College and a masters at Yale University. She has exhibited extensively in New Jersey, New York, and internationally. Montague Center is now her home. Neighbors know her as a warm and friendly addition to the village where she walks regularly. Most often dressed all in New York black, Fuller exudes warmth despite the traces of the big city she still carries. She seems to take it all in – the sights and sounds of the country, along with the perceptions of those she meets. If you stop to talk with her you might learn to see the familiar in new ways.

Fuller's play with perception feels appropriate for a library, where we come to see the world from different perspectives and to imagine other worlds. She makes us look again. And again.

Fuller's work is on view until November 15. Montague Center Library hours are Mondays and Wednesdays from 2 to 7 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**EXHIBITS**

**Rendezvous, Turners Falls:** *Lisa Beskin*, underwater photography. Through December.

**Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls:** *Migrations Exhibit and Day of the Dead Altar*. Colorful depictions of village life, Mayan culture, and the history of Lake Atitlan in Guatemala. Through November 30.

**Montague Center Library:** *Jamie Fuller*, mixed media, through November 15.

**Rhodes Art Center, Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill:** *Torrents*, sculpture and drawings by NMH alum and Hampshire professor emeritus Bill Brayton of Conway. (See article, Page B1.) Through November 17.

**LOOT, Turners Falls:** *Paintings and Prints* by Amy Chilton. Colorful geometric paintings and fine art prints. Reception this Friday, November 3, from 5 to 8 p.m.

**Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield:** *Fall Into Fiber*, presenting the work of 16 regional fiber artists. Through November 5.

**South Gallery, GCC:** *Less Like a March, More Like a Polka*, abstract paintings, totemic sculpture, and installation by Emily Noelle Lambert. Through November 3.

**Looky Here, Greenfield:** *Breakfast Kingdom*, new multimedia

work by Wishbone Zoë (a.k.a. Zosia Kochanski). Through November 24.

**LAVA Center, Greenfield:** *Fourth Annual Community Art Show*, through December. Reception this Saturday, November 4, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**MD Local Gallery, North Amherst:** *Amherst Plein Air Society*, paintings of the Sweet Alice Conservation Area. A portion of sales benefits the Kestrel Land Trust. Through November 12.

**Gallery A3, Amherst:** *Expressions from Nature: Past and Present*, landscape paintings by Janet Winston. Through December 2. Opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. tonight, Thursday, November 2.

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

**Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls:** *MEOW*, a humorous collection of sculpture, stuffies, comics, and wall art with a feline theme by Nina Rossi. Through November 20; reception this Sunday, November 5 from 1 to 3 p.m.

**Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls:** *On the Land*, paintings by Charles Malzenski, and *Bright Suspensions*, window hangings and mobiles by George Reynolds. November 3 through December 31.

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## FRONTIERS

# The Long Road from DNA Structure to Genetic Medicine

By SPENCER SHORKEY

**MILLERS FALLS** – The earliest concrete understanding of how deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) works as the chemical basis of genetic inheritance came in 1950s Britain, where crystal-making and X-ray slinging scientists managed to tease out the geometry of the DNA double helix. This group included James Watson, Francis Crick, Maurice Wilkins, Rosalind Franklin, and Raymond Gosling, who built on decades of previous advances in biochemistry and physics in their discovery.

In the following decades, the discovery of biological nanomachines for copying DNA led to the revolutionary development of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). PCR enabled scientists to create, manipulate, and analyze DNA sequences at a vastly greater rate.

The Human Genome Project was first sanctioned in 1990, and by 2003 the pronouncement was made that over 90% of DNA sequences in the human genome had successfully been read. The project's cost was in the billions, an investment rationalized by the promise to identify the DNA-encoded causes of many hereditary diseases at the DNA level. As DNA pioneer James Watson put it, "When we know the face of the enemy... we will try to cure the disease or lessen its effects."

In our modern era, the sequencing of a full human genome can be done for around \$100. The relatively low costs of DNA sequencing in recent years has enabled countless studies aimed at tying down the DNA-encoded correlates of hereditary traits and diseases.

There is a large diversity of hereditary human traits, such as height, body hair, blood type, cancer risk, and even neurological tendencies. On average, humans have DNA which is 99.6% identical to other humans, with the differences in around 12 million DNA letters out of 3 billion. Each cycle of reproduction from parents to offspring also results in around 10 to 100 unintended changes, termed *mutations*, in the DNA code.

In some cases, a single "monogenetic" difference, known as a mutation, is linked to specific disease traits, including sickle cell anemia, cystic fibrosis, some forms of breast cancer, and many forms of muscular dystrophy. Sequencing of a patient's genome can reveal these clear-cut monogenetic mutation pathologies, opening up opportunities to correct the identified mutation.

Although a number of clear-cut monogenic diseases have been discovered, it is much more common to find that human traits and diseases are correlated to dozens, hundreds, or even more variants. These are termed "polygenic" traits. In the case of height, a study of over 5 million people by the GIANT consortium and the company 23andMe found thousands of DNA variations were involved. Even with

all the loosely correlated variants discovered, their polygenetic models could only account for less than half of the variability in human height – in other words, at least half of the variation we see in height does not seem to correlate with DNA.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts routinely tests newborns for 66 monogenic disorders which are considered clinically actionable. This includes 17 amino acid disorders, two endocrine disorders, 13 fatty acid disorders, four hemoglobin disorders, two lysosomal storage disorders, 15 organic acid disorders, and 13 others. Among those tested for are cystic fibrosis, which impacts one in 40,000 people in the US, spinal muscular dystrophy, which impacts one in 10,000, and sickle-cell disease, which impacts one in 400 African Americans.

Early detection of genetic disorders has allowed nutritional and pharmaceutical interventions to have a big impact in improving the quality of life. And for some monogenic disorders, gene therapies have been invented, and have been already shown to work in humans!

## Gene-Editing Methods

Gene therapies have the potential to permanently change the DNA "instruction manual" that directs cellular behavior, creating the option to correct, replace, or otherwise mitigate the negative effects of faulty genes. Since many genetic disorders do not have very effective treatments, gene therapies can offer hope to patients with conditions previously considered untreatable or incurable.

A variety of gene editing applications have been or are currently being tested. Since scientists have an easier time controlling the behaviors of cells in a lab setting, there has been a focus on "ex vivo" applications, where cells are taken out of the body, edited, and then reintroduced. Several "ex vivo" applications have worked really well, and are already on the market. In fact, the majority of the 26 gene therapies approved so far have been for blood-based disorders, which can be performed *ex vivo* and benefit from a higher degree of accuracy and efficiency.

More challenging are the fully "in vivo" applications, in which therapy is somehow applied to cells while they are in the body. Introducing new or modified genes into patient cells is complex, to put it mildly.

Researchers have had to find ways to safely and efficiently deliver these genes, often using modified viruses as vectors, which comes with its own sets of challenges. The body's immune system can sometimes recognize and attack the introduced genes or the vectors used, diminishing the effectiveness of the therapy or causing adverse reactions.

And while the aim is to target specific genes or cells, there's a risk that other genes or parts

of the DNA can be unintentionally modified, leading to unforeseen consequences.

The first step in a gene edit is to get the gene-editing package inside the targeted cell. This can be done by using a virus or virus-like particle to covertly sneak the package in, or by using a nanoparticle carrier engineered to pass through membranes. Since viruses already evolved pretty effective methods for gene editing long ago, taming and engineering them to safely edit genes was the therapeutic approach to pass through trials and win approval.

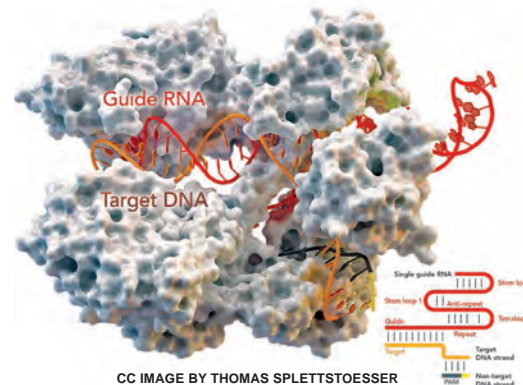
Though nanoparticle carriers haven't been as extensively trialed as viral vectors, they have advantages: lower rates of immune reactivity, and better quality control from a manufacturing standpoint. They also aren't based on manmade or "hacked" viruses, which gives some people pause.

## DNA-Hacking Machines

The first FDA-approved gene therapy in the US was Luxturna, in 2017. Luxturna treats variants of inherited retinal (eye) diseases in which a mutation in the RPE65 gene is implicated. This therapy is *in vivo* – it is injected into the eye – and uses adenoviral vectors to enter retinal cells and deliver the DNA coding for a corrected version of the RPE65 gene into the cell's nucleus.

Once in the nucleus, in the case of Luxturna, the correct RPE65 DNA forms a circular DNA "episome" which persists in the cell, encoding the correct instructions on how to make the RPE65 protein.

Viral vector gene edits sometimes work by integrating directly with a cell's DNA. This can happen if the vector-delivered DNA happens to find a region of nucleus DNA with a similar, or "homologous," sequence, and sticks to that matching sequence. The cell may then mistake the segment of vector DNA for the correct sequence and repair that area of DNA; the vector DNA sequence is thus "recombined" into the cell's DNA, effectively editing the cell's DNA.



The Cas9 protein and its guide RNA target a specific DNA sequence for editing.

The emergence of targeted DNA-modifying machines, such as the famously game-changing Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) and its associated systems (Cas), has opened up the door to even more precise gene-editing applications. An enzyme called Cas9 was originally discovered as a targeted defense system to cut viral DNA-invading bacteria. It was immediately apparent to researchers that Cas could also be set up to target and cut DNA for gene-editing purposes.

Using the CRISPR/Cas9 system to modify specific sequences within the genome, Vertex/

CRISPR effort has shown promising results in *ex vivo* applications treating sickle-cell anemia and a related disease, beta thalassemia. Off-target effects are still a potential concern, however, and long-term safety studies are ongoing.

Though CRISPR-Cas systems can introduce breaks in DNA, it can be a little hard to control how the cell will piece the DNA strands back together, and whether the desired recombination will take place. This is not a big problem for *ex vivo* therapies, where only correctly-edited cells are selected for use, but the uncertainty of the Cas double-strand cutter is a bit too high for use for *in vivo* therapies.

Fortunately, creative minds set to work and engineered the Cas molecular scissors to conduct a more limited, single-strand break, and added a new function to Cas to chemically modify the specifically nicked base. These new "base editors," or "prime editors," have much less uncertainty in their outcome, greatly reducing the chances of unintended mutations.

Cytosine base editors (CBEs) convert cytosine (C) to uracil (U), which is recognized as thymine (T) during DNA replication or repair, while adenine base editors (ABEs) convert adenine (A) to inosine (I), which is then recognized as guanine (G) during replication or repair.

## Editing Human Bodies

Gene-therapy options are now available for a few blood cancers, melanoma and prostate cancer, several blood disorders including sickle-cell disease, several forms of muscular dystrophy, and RPE65-related blindness. Countless more are currently being tested in clinics, using an ever-widening array of viral and nanoparticle vector schemes, and new targeted editing systems including CRISPR/Cas and base editors.

It's important to acknowledge the costs of these sorts of therapies: though gene therapies should be one-time treatments, each procedure costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. To be frank, I am not a big fan of pharma's instinctiveness towards price gouging, but I believe in these cases it is justified. Just think about how debilitating many of these unfortunate genetic diseases are, and how many public and private resources are spent in order to care for those unlucky folks.

And finally, what about the possibility of gene manipulation in embryos using these gene-editing tools? The idea raises significant ethical and regulatory questions, which have led some to progress cautiously in the field.

Others, such as Chinese biophysicist He Jiankui, act first and ask questions later. Just five short years ago, He put out a manuscript that shocked the world by publicly disclosing the successful creation of gene-edited babies. He had edited their embryos to alter the CCR5 protein in order to hopefully make the resulting humans resistant to HIV.

Honestly, I think the idea is fairly legitimate, but executed way too soon – and imperfectly, from the looks of He's data on the resulting edits.

He went to prison for three years, because making designer babies is illegal. My thoughts at the time were, was He Jiankui really the first to gene edit a human embryo and bring it to life, or was He just the first to be dumb enough to tell the world about it?

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JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3**

Hitchcock Brewing, Bernardston: *Rosie Porter & the Neon Moons*. No cover. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Electric Carnival Band*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Darlin'* (Wendy Eisenberg trio), *Hollow Deck*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Gary Higgins, Glenn Jones, Liam Grant*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Legend*, Journey tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Leon Trout, Whalom Park*. \$ 8 p.m.

Roos-Rhode House, Hampshire College: *Kath Bloom, Yoona Kim & Greg Kelley, Marie Carroll*. Free. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Gaslight Tinkers, Jatoba*. \$ 8 p.m.

Race Street Live, Holyoke: *Handsome Dick Manitoba, Claudia Malibu*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Matt Charette & The Truer Sound, Matthew Spence & The Church Key Choir*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4**

Progression Brewing, Northampton: *Mischief Brass Band, Tank Hood, Sasha K.A., Moon Hollow*. Free. 12 p.m.

Institute for the Musical Arts, Goshen: *Sarah Kate Morgan, Mary Fraser, Julia Friend*. \$ 7 p.m.

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown: *Miriam Elhajji, Tendai Muparutsa*. \$ 7 p.m.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Xylouris White, Marisol Zilske*. \$ 7 p.m.

Race Street Live, Holyoke: *B.C.U.C., DeeJay Theory*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Wistariahurst Museum, Holyoke: *Oceans And* (Tim Berne trio). \$ 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Dead Street Dreamers, Red Herrings, WarGraves, The Flems*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Chris Goudreau, Tony Batey, The Maladaptive, Frost Heaves & Hales*. \$ 8 p.m.

Bookends, Florence: *Kath Bloom, Miranda Spatula, Margaret Metelica*. \$ 8 p.m.

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro: *Sarah Morrison, Locate S.1*. \$ 8 p.m.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5**

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Healing Waters*, storytelling benefit for Hospice of the Fisher Home. \$ 2 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Fall Frolic* featuring *Cojiro*. \$ 2 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Screening, *Pink Floyd Live at Pompeii* (1972). \$ 5 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: Drone night: *bobbie, Blood Orphans,*

*Luci Dead Limb, Kathy*. \$ 8 p.m.

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6**

The Drake, Amherst: *Dinosaur Jr., Magik Markers*. \$ 8 p.m.

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7**

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Stella Silbert, Georgia Beatty & Maisie O'Brien, Ananya Ganesh*. \$ 7 p.m.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *CHS, Noise Nomads, Spy Balloon, Father Hotep, Giant Enemy Cancer Cult*. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Sasami, Prewn*. \$ 8 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8**

Bowker Auditorium, UMass Amherst: *Ranky Tanky, Lisa Fischer*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Bookends, Florence: *Ava Mirzadegan, b.o.b.b.i.e., Mibble*. \$ 8 p.m.

Race Street Live, Holyoke: *Jeffery Lewis, The Burning Hell, Greg Hall*. \$ 8 p.m.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9**

Nova Arts, Keene: *Tiffany, The Flems*. \$ 7 p.m.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10**

Nova Arts, Keene: *Ruth Garbus Trio, Joseph Allred*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kendra McKinley, Cloudbelly*. \$ 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *Little House Blues*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Brujo, Void Bringer, OFC, Blossom*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Fancy Trash* album release, *Moon Hollow, Chris Goudreau*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Dylan Patrick Ward and the Lovable Losers, Emma's Secrets, Outside Voice*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

Institute for the Musical Arts, Goshen: *Bridget St. John, Norma Dream*. \$ 7 p.m.

No Fun, Troy, NY: *Screaming Females, Dazy, Sunbloc*. \$ 7 p.m.

Tori Town, Holyoke: *Trash Sun, Red Nave, Sleep Destroyer,*

*Dalton Moon*. \$ 7 p.m.

Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT: *Tool*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Missive, Staubitz/Waterhouse duo, Marasca*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Aaron Noble & the Clones, The Frost Heaves & Hales, The Ambiguities*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13**

Bookends, Florence: *Bird Friend, Myles Burr*. \$ 7 p.m.

Treehouse Brewing, Deerfield: *Neil Hamburger*. \$ 8 p.m.

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21**

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Marc Cohn*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

The Drake, Amherst: *Mike Doughty and Ghost of Vroom*. \$ 8 p.m.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16**

The Drake, Amherst: *Matthew Parrish Trio with Houston Person and Michelle Lordi*. \$ 8 p.m.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17**

Palladium, Worcester: *Fishbone, GZA*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Galvanizer, 2 Car Garage*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Toubab Krewe*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Greys, Vandal Flag*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *North Bay Dead Alliance*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18**

Mount Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Claudia Schmidt & Sally Rogers*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

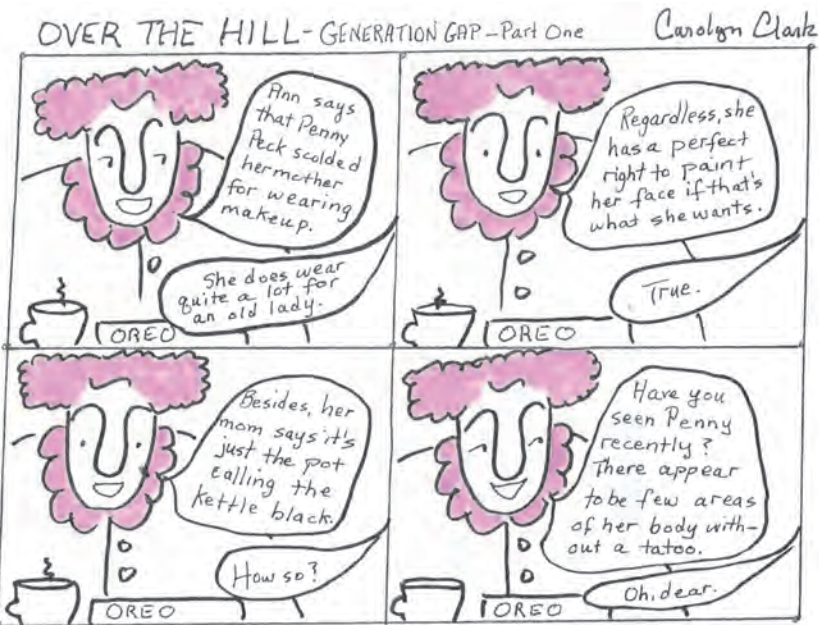
Academy of Music, Northampton: *Rubblebucket, Dante Elephante*. \$ 8 p.m.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19**

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Zoh Amba / Chris Corsano* duo. \$ 7:30 p.m.



JAN ATAMIAN ILLUSTRATION



BY TAY JAMES @WARPSPEEDSKELETON

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**HEARTFELT** from page B1  
 my attention. I have to say it has already changed the way I feel about salt. This week I made short ribs and per her advice, I salted them liberally and let them sit overnight in the fridge inside a plastic bag. I can say that yes, they were very tender and delicious, and not as salty as I feared.

You don't have to be a professional cook to understand the information, which is relayed simply and concisely. I would recommend it to anyone whether you watch the documentary, listen to the audiobook, or, like me, get yourself on a waiting list at the library for the hardcover book.

I've been learning more about

healthy food choices because, *dear readers*, I was recently diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and I am struggling mightily with how that's going to affect my relationship with food. It's been a good one as long as I ate what I wanted, whenever I wanted, but I fear that food might become my enemy as I must now stop to consider every bite I take and how it will affect my body.

Naturally I am overwhelmed with this information, and I know it will be challenging, but I'm trying to move forward and become educated. That's the reason for investigating Nosrat's book. I find it's full of super helpful techniques and tips for flavoring and enhancing food, which I'd like to incorporate into my cooking more as I learn to eat leaner meats and consume fewer carbs and less sugar.

I'll have to increase my gym workout from a laid-back two days a week for 30 minutes to a full-on three-day, 50-minute workout if I am to get serious about controlling the disease.

What makes this all so hard to swallow is that I feel great, I feel healthy, I have energy, and I sleep well and yet, somehow over the past year, my A1C crept up and I've joined the ranks of the six million or so humans on the planet living with this disease in spite of not having any complications. How does one reconcile having a disease with no symptoms?

Thankfully, I was able to get in on the tail end of the YMCA's Diabetes program which was just closing its registration. When I was handed a thick notebook of Things I Will Have To Do That Are Hard I immediately burst into tears. I was consoled by everyone in the class who all felt the same. It's hard to pivot from old habits and form new ones, and food is something we find comforting on so many levels.

So, you ask, where's the food in this column? I'm more than halfway in and haven't really lased in on



Buying fruits and vegetables at farmers markets is a great way to keep on track with healthy eating. Bell peppers are a good low-carb, non-starchy vegetable full of vitamins.

## POWERHOUSE SALAD



MANDISON PHOTOS

One part of healthy eating is to consume lots of colorful vegetables in a chopped salad. Use up whatever vegetables you have on hand, and for some protein and texture, add in nuts and sunflower seeds and a scattering of tart feta cheese.

- 3 cups baby kale and/or other tender greens
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes
- 1/2 cucumber
- 1/4 cup red onion (consider pickled ones)
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 2 tsp. capers
- pinch of salt

pinch of dried oregano and/or other spices

Arugula or baby spinach can also be used. Hard-boil the egg, peel it, and chop it up. Halve the cherry tomatoes and slice the cucumber and the red onion.

Toss all the ingredients in a bowl. Consider adding a lean protein source like chicken, tuna, shrimp, beans, or tofu.

a particular food or topic. Perhaps my aim for this column is to ask you to consider your relationship with food, and ask if you need to reevaluate your food choices. What are you feeding your body, and is it working at its most efficient?

Or maybe I just don't want to do this alone.

I thought I was eating well, bringing home and cooking farm fresh veggies for most of the year along with my own garden produce, avoiding eating out, baking with low sugar and salt, but it seems that a combination of my genetics and my love for liverwurst have won me the Diabetes lottery. How am I

going to find satisfaction and joy in what I imagine to be a diet of carrot sticks and unbuttered popcorn?

Stay tuned, dear readers, and together – for surely some of you are on this train, too – we'll eat our way to health!

Here's a recipe for a delicious salad recommended by the American Diabetes Association.

*Trouble lives in Greenfield with her wifey and their newly adopted cat Peeps. She volunteers for local nonprofits to cook and feed those in the community, and loves to write, copyedit, and create art.*



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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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