

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 9, 2024

Erving Will Send IP Mill To Its Fate at Public Auction

By KATIE NOLAN

The ballot question authorizing a \$3.7 million debt exclusion for demolishing the buildings at the former International Paper Mill failed at Monday's Erving town election, by a vote of 146 to 91. At Wednesday's annual town meeting, the companion article authorizing the debt exclusion was passed over.

According to the summary printed on the town meeting warrant, because the debt exclusion was defeated, the selectboard, finance committee, and capital planning committee will request the treasurer to auction the property to the highest bidder.

The meeting approved the \$6.6 million general operating budget, \$3.8 million Erving Elementary School budget, \$1.4 million secondary education budget, and Franklin County Technical School budget with few questions.

Besides the IP Mill debt exclusion, controversial articles included the normally routine authorization for the selectboard to dispose of surplus town property, an authorization for the board to negotiate a 99-year lease with Rural Development, Inc. for land for senior housing, and FY'24 raises for elected officials.

Under the surplus property authorization, the selectboard normally see **ERVING** page A6

Gill Treasurer, Tax Collector Statuses Head To Town Vote

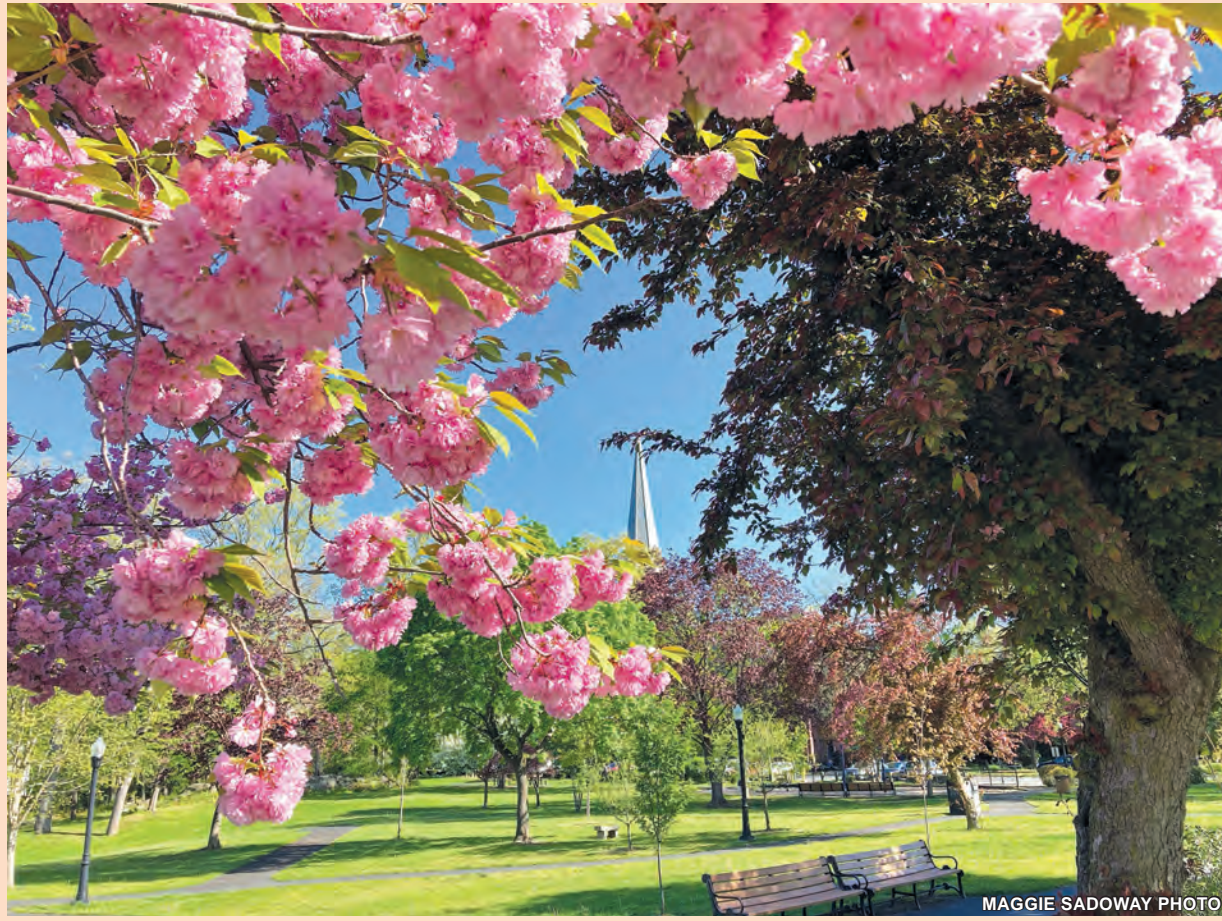
By KATE SAVAGE

During Monday's town meeting in Gill, several dozen attendees convened to pass all warrant articles – but not without some debate. The most controversial articles concerned changing the roles of treasurer and tax collector from elected to appointed positions. Residents also discussed discontinuing a road, and allowing a wider range of investments for the town's trust funds.

As the roles of treasurer and tax collector become more financially and legally complex, many towns are making them appointed positions rather than filling them by elections. Proponents say this allows a town to establish a formal job description and qualifications, and pull from a wider candidate pool which includes non-residents. Further, while there is no clear recall process for incompetent or misbehaving officials elected to these roles, appointed ones can be removed as needed.

"It's really a little scary to have see **GILL** page A8

BLOSSOMS BLOOMING



Peskeompskut Park, in picture-postcard form. See the insert in this edition for happenings in the park this spring and summer.

MAGGIE SADOWAY PHOTO

Legal Aid Agency Expands Local Presence

By MIKE JACKSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Soon, for the first time in years, low-income people in Franklin County needing legal support in civil matters will be able to walk directly into an office in downtown Greenfield to find help. Community Legal Aid (CLA), which covers the state's five western counties, has maintained an unmarked "satellite" office at 55 Federal Street, but clients have had to connect with the agency by phone or online.

Though a planned return to a full office is still in "early stages," staff tell the *Reporter*, a recent expansion in local services makes the move possible.

"We're all very excited about putting together a little team, based out of the Greenfield office, of people who live [in Franklin County] and are really committed to serving its communities," said Katie Madison, an attorney with CLA's disability benefits program



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

While Community Legal Aid staff currently meet clients in this Federal Street building, plans are underway for a full office.

and a local resident herself.

While state funding for civil legal aid goes through CLA in most areas of law, until recently disability benefits in Hampshire and Franklin counties have been the see **LEGAL AID** page A5

High School Sports: Wounds and Recoveries

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Games were stacked upon games this week as schools tried to make up for weather-related postponements. The Tech track team lost by just two points against Mohawk, a

perennial favorite, and the Turners Falls boys won their first tennis match of the season.

In baseball, the Franklin Tech Eagles haven't been able to buy a win since their loss last week to the Turners Falls Thunder, and Turners saw their own seven-game win

streak grind to a halt this Wednesday with a loss to Ware. In softball the Eagles are soaring, while the Thunder are licking their wounds.

Baseball

Mt. Everett 11 – FCTS 5
TFHS 3 – McCann 2
Athol 8 – FCTS 4
TFHS 5 – Mahar 4
Ware 6 – TFHS 1

Tech's baseballers headed to Sheffield last Friday to face the Mount Everett Eagles. As in previous contests, their hitting was on target but they couldn't get the runners home. Tech took an early lead, but the Mountain Men had a massive fifth inning and they were unable to make up the deficit.

Hunter Donahue, Jacob Martin, Zaydrien Alamed, Gavin Crossman, Benjamin Dodge, Mason Lehtomaki, and Dylan Young all hit for Tech, with Donahue and Young cracking doubles. Kyle Begos and Levi Clark pitched three innings each.

On Monday, Turners Falls defeated the McCann Green Hornets in the Hornet's Nest up in North

see **SPORTS** page A6



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Franklin Tech's Hunter Donahue safely dives to the plate with Turners Falls' Kainen Stevens ready to tag, scoring the Eagles' sole run during last week's cross-town matchup at the tech school. The Thunder went on to win, 9-1.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD Businesses Ask For Help With Access Ramp As Streetscape Work Continues

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard voted Monday night to allocate \$232,778 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to finance the ongoing Avenue A streetscape project after a Congressional earmark, the original funding source, fell short of the project's cost.

At the same meeting – the shortest in recent memory – the board discussed using more ARPA funds to construct handicapped access ramps for businesses on the west side of Avenue A, reviewed the results of the annual town meeting the previous Saturday, and received an update from member Matt Lord, who serves on the committee developing an agreement to consolidate the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley school districts.

The funding gap in the streetscape project – intended to cover the northwest side of Avenue A from Third Street to the Discovery Center, the plaza in front of town hall, and the small parking lot to the southwest of that building – had come up the previous week. The Congressional earmark of \$975,000 had fallen short of the amount needed to fund the lowest bid while providing for a 10% contingency.

Last week, assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey had suggested either covering the gap with ARPA funds, including \$206,000 already committed to projects but not spent, or removing street lights

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Town Meeting Members Ask Why GMRSD Assessment Wasn't Higher

By BELLA LEVAVI

MONTAGUE – Town meeting representatives voted to allocate \$30.9 million in appropriations to fund municipal services for FY'25 at their annual town meeting at Turners Falls High School last Saturday, May 4. While there were many discussions – including about school funding and capital projects, upcoming court cases with FirstLight Power, and finding future revenue sources for the Turners Falls airport – all 25 articles on the warrant passed.

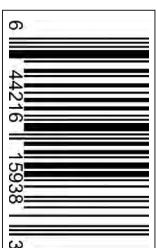
Discussion of the Gill-Montague regional school district's \$12.1 million assessment to the town, which passed unanimously, revolved around members of town meeting wanting the district to request more money to properly provide resources to its students.

Finance committee vice chair Dorinda Bell-Upp spoke about why she had voted against recommending the regional school budget. "My 'No' vote on this article is a vote against our current system," she said, "which prevents the town and

see **ASK WHY** page A4

Drench Yourself In Newspaper Vibes

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The Montague Reporter

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August 2002

PUBLIC STATEMENT

UMass Amherst Unions Condemn Crackdown

(On Tuesday state and local police arrested over 130 students, faculty, and community supporters at a protest on the UMass Amherst campus. In sympathy, we are reprinting in full this statement by the school's unions. — Eds.)

Yesterday evening, May 7, 2024, the University of Massachusetts Amherst Chancellor Javier Reyes invited more than a hundred armed riot police onto campus to violently break up a peaceful encampment of students, staff, and faculty protesting the war in Gaza. Reports and video have emerged of police pushing protestors and kicking them while on the ground, and other forms of unnecessary force. The five largest unions at UMass Amherst, representing thousands of staff, faculty, and graduate workers, condemn the ongoing criminalization of free speech, the over-policing of campus, the infliction of violence upon our students, and the administration's decision to endanger the health and safety of the entire campus rather than negotiate solutions.

Though Chancellor Reyes has claimed, in an email to the UMass campus, that the administration began bargaining in good faith with student leaders of the encampment at 4 p.m. and continued negotiating for more than an hour and a half, eye-witnesses report that a cavalcade of police cars began arriving soon after 5 p.m. — in the middle of what Reyes characterized as "civil discourse to help bridge our differences."

It did not have to go like this. We are appalled by police crackdowns in response to campus protests — at Columbia, the University of California Los Angeles, the University of Texas Austin, the University of Wisconsin Madison. In this national atmosphere, Reyes's decision to ask the police to break up the protest was tantamount to inviting police violence.

By contrast, UMass could have sided with campuses that chose peaceful resolutions. University administrations at Wesleyan,

Northwestern, Brown, Rutgers, the University of Minnesota, and the University of California, Riverside, among others, have negotiated with students and avoided violence.

Chancellor Reyes has claimed that his action was justified by the fact that the protesting students did not obtain a land-use permit — a violation that carries the weight of a civil penalty. But there is no valid justification for using force against students simply because they pitched a few tents on the campus lawn, a crime that carries the same weight as jaywalking.

Unfortunately, the UMass administration's resort to the violent suppression of student protest is part of a larger pattern of disregard for its community that includes understaffing, overwork, low pay, bias in discipline, and the forced privatization of more than 100 state workers — an action decried by everyone from state legislators Jo Comerford and Mindy Domb to Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey.

We believe that the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the state's flagship university, should be a place of free inquiry, intellectual challenge, and camaraderie, a place that supports free expression, the right to assembly, and the welfare of students and staff alike. UMass works because we do, and we work because we care for our students — for their intellects as well as their physical safety. Such beliefs cannot flower when the Administration's response to peaceful protest is to call in the riot police.

In Solidarity,

AFSCME Local 1776
Graduate Employee Organization
MA Society of Professors
Professional Staff Union (UMass Amherst and Boston Chapter Boards)
University Staff Association

CORRECTION

In our article last week on the opening of Highland Woods (*Montague Officially Opens Its Ground to Green Burial*, Page A1), we wrote that "... one of Mary Fraser's woven willow baskets was on display, along with a carrying cart made by Walker Korby."

"[T]he coffin cart was actually built by Mark Fraser, Mary Fraser's

dad," cemetery commissioner Judith Lorei told us. "Walker Korby did the design of Highland Woods and the creation of the Path of Reflection, in addition to removing dead and downed trees and general clean up of the area."

Our apologies to all involved, and our thanks for the opportunity to set the record straight!



Lynn Wiles shows two sophomore students how to do a perm on a cosmetology customer in the Franklin County Technical School's "Cosmo" shop. Generally, seniors handle appointments for the general public, but this was a special request. Readers may call the front desk at the school to schedule appointments for hair, nails, waxing, makeup, and facials at very affordable prices.

Letters to the Editors

Open Letter to Presidents of Colleges, And the University of Massachusetts, In Western Massachusetts

We write to express our support for your students' peaceful and moral expressions of support for Palestinian civilians in Gaza currently under merciless assault by the Israeli military. Your students are calling for an end to the war and US support for it, including disclosure of and divestment of your school's investments in weapons and other industries enabling the war.

Your students' idealism and action are in the tradition of earlier student and youth movements that challenged their country's and their schools' policies for the better. Among these are the anti-Vietnam war and civil rights movements,

the protests for divestment in apartheid South Africa, and the anti-nuclear and divestment in fossil fuels movements.

By their public actions in protesting a genocidal war, students are speaking truth to power and we must listen to them. Brown University's President and a handful of other universities and colleges have led the way. We urge you to do so also.

From the board of the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice:

Pat Hynes, Suzanne Carlson,
Emily Greene, Anna Gyorgy,
Sarah Pirtle, Marty Schotz

Emergency Fuel Aid

It has come to my attention that roughly 4,000 eligible households — elders, families, low-income residents — have applied for fuel assistance in the fall of 2023 through Community Action Pioneer Valley (CAPV).

They understood from CAPV that their applications would be processed in six to eight weeks.

But now, as of May 5, 2024, applicants who applied in fall of 2023 are receiving heating shutoff notices from their heating companies. Applications are still pending, and vendors are not being paid.

So, if you have applied for fuel assistance, met the guidelines, and

have received a heating company shutoff notice, immediately bring the notice to the PVAC office on Main Street in Greenfield to process emergency payments.

As noted, many, many vendors (i.e. heating companies) are waiting for six months of payments for overdue bills from thousands of applicants. It is a known fact that applicants have had difficulty since 2022 with delayed processing of fuel assistance by CAPV. This is a huge burden for the applicants, CAPV staff, and the vendors.

Sincerely,

Betty Tegel
Montague

Walk for Peace

On Saturday, May 18, the Village of Light Ashram in Leverett is sponsoring a Walk for Peace in Gaza. This Walk, beginning at the Leverett Town Hall and ending at the Peace Pagoda, is meant to include everyone. It is a testimony of the heart that seeks an end to violence in Gaza and wishes to stand with those who are suffering in both Israel and Palestine, the many who have experienced severe loss and much grief.

Through this Walk we stand with them, holding them in our love. For those who do not know what effect a Walk such as this might have, its effect is both upon oneself, opening the heart to its own greater love, and also on the network of life of which we are a part. In this sense it is a prayer-in-motion. It goes out to the universe and to the hearts of others, whether knowingly or not.

Those who feel they cannot walk for the entire time can ride in one of the cars that will be accompanying the walkers. You can also join us for only part of the Walk.

Advance sign-up by May 11 is requested but not required.

For more information about the Walk for Peace in Gaza, or to sign up, go to www.lightomega.org/event/gaza-peace-walk.

For questions, contact Karun Das at karun.das108@gmail.com or (413) 270-4274.

We hope you will join us.

GurujiMa, Teacher
Village of Light Ashram
Leverett

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YOUR LETTERS!**

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

If you enjoyed the silent movie series at the Greenfield Garden Cinema this winter and became a fan of Jeff Rapsis, who provided commentary and improvised musical accompaniment at those shows, you might enjoy a Brattleboro event this Friday, May 10 at 8 p.m. at Epsilon Spires. Rapsis will be playing the pipe organ during **F.W. Murnau's 1924 film *The Last Laugh***.

The film is considered the height of the German Expressionist movement and is a story about a working class man whose fantasies of power and prestige become destroyed. There are no on-screen captions explaining the action in this film, so the narrative is carried by the actors. Get tickets at epsilonspires.org.

Despite the closure of the Bridge of Flowers last fall, the annual **Bridge of Flowers Plant Sale** will take place this Saturday, May 11 at the corner of Main and Water streets in Shelburne Falls from 9 a.m. to noon, rain or shine. You'll find perennials dug from Bridge gardens and annuals donated by local nurseries and private gardens. Featured again this year will be a garden-themed tag sale, a bake sale, and soil testing, plus pollinator plant information.

Proceeds from the tag and bake sales will go to the Bridge of Flowers Committee's umbrella organization, the Shelburne Falls Area Women's Club, and its scholarship fund. Proceeds from plant sales will benefit the Bridge for maintenance, upkeep, and more.

Explore **block printing on textiles** with artist Kady Woods this Saturday, May 11 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Greenfield Community College campus. Bring your own cloth or clothing to print on or select from items provided – cotton and

cotton blends are best, or linen or other natural fibers. You will learn how to design and carve a rubber stamp, which you may bring home to decorate more items with.

There's a \$25 fee; register at engage.gcc.mass.edu.

The Leverett Co-op is hosting its annual outdoor **Spring Fling Festival** this Saturday, May 11 with live music by Myrtle Street Klezmer and Silverback Swing, lawn games, children's activities, wine tasting, samples, auction items, tool sharpening and care with Ben Goldberg, pizza slices, and scooped ice cream cones.

"Check out our great selection of one-of-a-kind handmade gifts and cards," they write, "just in time for Mother's Day!" The fun starts at 1 p.m. and winds down around 4 p.m.

The Leverett Village Co-op is located at 180 Rattlesnake Gutter Road. If the weather looks rainy, call the store at (413) 367-9794 to see if the festival has been rescheduled.

Sylvia Wetherby is showing her watercolor illustrations from the *Adventurers of Percival Porcupine* series at the Wendell Free Library during the months of May and June.

This Saturday, May 11 at 2 p.m. a reception will be held with Wetherby celebrating the publication of the third book in the series, *Oak Seed*. Signed books and original illustrations will be available, as well as refreshments and a chance to win a door prize.

Aging with Humor and Grace, a conversation group for elders in a spiritual frame of mind, will have its next monthly meeting next Tuesday, May 14 at 10:30 a.m. at Faith Church, 331 Silver Street in Greenfield. All spiritual beliefs are respected, and the group is free. For more information, email undomesticatedmind@gmail.com.

A **Health Careers Job Fair** will be held next Wednesday, May 15, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Greenfield Community College dining commons. The MassHire Hampshire-Franklin Career Center has arranged for many local hospitals and care centers to be there.

Artist Conor Cash will be featured at a one-day trunk show at Sawmill River Arts next Saturday, May 18 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cash repurposes animal skulls into sculptural pieces by sprinkling mushroom spores in them after cleaning them.

"I attempt to communicate my awe at the beauty and tragedy of matter as it changes states," he writes, "by using scavenged bone as a guide for the growth of reishi mushrooms to create statuettes and light boxes that speak to the exceptional state of death in the midst of life."

Sawmill River Arts is located at the Book Mill in Montague Center.

The **Northampton Repair Fair** welcomes folks to participate from all over Western Mass next Saturday, May 18, from noon to 4 p.m. at the Smith Vocational School.

The fair features tool sharpening and tool care, electronics and minor computer and device repair, bike repair and tune-up, fabric and clothing mending, lamp and small appliance repair, and more. There will be snacks and music.

This year's **Day of Remembrance** commemoration of the 348th anniversary of the massacre at Peskeompskut (the Great Falls) will be held Saturday, May 18 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls.

Honored guests are Liz Coldwind Santana-Kiser, elder, council woman and tribal historical preservation officer for the Chaubunagungamaug band of Nipmuck Indians, and Roger Longtoe Sheehan, chief, Elnu band of Abenaki.

A 20th anniversary commemoration will also be held on the lawn behind the building, weather permitting, of the May 19, 2004 reconciliation ceremony. The event is free, with light refreshments provided; more information is available at nolumbekaproject.org.

The Turners Falls branch of **Greenfield Savings Bank** is hosting a family-friendly event with Montague police K-9s Artie and Mack from 1 to 2 p.m. next Saturday, May 18. Artie and Mack are different breeds, and their roles within the department are markedly different. Their handlers, Officers Ruddock and Miner, will be at the bank to share and explain.

Reservations are required – reserve a spot by 5 p.m. Friday, May 17 by calling (888) 324-3191 or stopping by the branch office!

Pamela Means will perform "The Power of the Protest Song" at Peskeompskut Park in Turners Falls on Saturday, May 18 from 4 to 6 p.m. With her guitar and voice, Means explores the lineage of protest songs, how their meanings were transformed over time, and how they inspired cultural shifts in the realms of racial and social justice. She also shares her personal experience of becoming an artist and using her voice. Learn more at pamelameans.com.

The Erving Library invites everyone to a **Sculpture Fest** on Sunday, May 19. This will be the unveiling of a new natural materials sculpture at the Library by Laker's Acres, funded by the New England Foundation for the Arts. The sculpture is based on the Summer Reading Program theme, "Read, Renew, Repeat," which focuses on native species and conservation.

John Lake of Laker's Acres will be using his chainsaw, chisels, and wood grinder to sculpt locally-sourced wood in a live demonstration of his technique.

The event, which runs from noon to 3 p.m., will also feature a food truck, local vendors, and free popcicles, while supplies last.

Acclaimed wild foods maven and author and illustrator Blanche Derby will present **Wild and Cultivated Edible Plants: A Show'n'Tell** on Sunday, May 19, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Discovery Center.

Many invasive plants, like garlic mustard and goutweed, are tasty and nutritious additions to our diet. Derby brings samples of her wild and cultivated plant friends for this free indoor presentation in the Great Hall. The event is for ages 12 and up; visit greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org to learn more.

A "**Cry Out for Peace**" concert will take place on Sunday, May 19 at 3 p.m. at Our Lady of Peace Church in Turners Falls. There will be music with Our Lady of Peace Singers and Eventide Singers, as well as motivational readings from champions of peace and justice, and admission is free. Call (413) 863-5397 for more information.

The Greenfield Garden Cinemas have announced they are making first-run **movies available in Spanish** through the TheaterEars software, which is available for free for all smartphones.

Audience members can select the movie on their phones to access real-time translation. No internet is required, but it's recommended to have at least a 40% battery charge, especially for three-hour movies.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.



"I'm sure this is a local," Turners Falls reader Rob Machado writes of this cat he encountered in Lake Pleasant, crossing the fabled Bridge of Names over the ravine separating the village's sections. "It was quite confident of its balance!"

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RECYCLE

BOTTLES & CANS
Week of May 13
in Montague



more info? call: 863-2054

GREAT FALLS FARMERS MARKET

Every Saturday
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
May to October

Peskeompskut Park
Turners Falls

WE DIG FRANKLIN COUNTY

- Loam
- Gravel
- Sand
- Natural Stone



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UNNAM EABLE BOOKS EVENTS

FICTION READING
CLAIRE DONATO /
KIND MIRRORS, UGLY GHOSTS
FIONA WARNICK / THE SKUNKS
SAT. MAY 18 • 7PM

MOVIE NIGHT
A HUNDRED FACES FOR A
SINGLE DAY
CHRISTIAN GHAZI
SHORTS BY
MARGUERITE DURAS
MEREDITH MONK
FRI. MAY 24 • 7PM

MUSIC
GRACIOUS CALAMITY &
NOAH BRITTON
SAT. MAY 25 • 7PM

POETRY BOOK LAUNCH
PLAT
by LINDSAY WEBB
w/ CAROLINE RAYNER,
NORA CLAIRE MILLER
ELLE LONGPRE
FRI. MAY 31 • 7PM

66 AVENUE A • TURNERS FALLS

ASK WHY from page A1

school committee from having meaningful discussions about the budget."

Bell-Upp said that since the COVID-19 pandemic began, classrooms have become more chaotic, and schools cannot provide the additional resources needed without larger budgets.

"A budget that is both tight and largely predestined leaves little room for public discussion," she continued. "As a parent and a community member, I couldn't vote 'Yes' on the school assessment because I know that is not enough." This sentiment was echoed by other representatives at the meeting.

Members also appropriated \$837,356 to pay Montague's assessment from the Franklin County Technical School. This represents a 20% decrease in enrollment from Montague, and an assessment 20% lower than last year.

They also voted to appropriate \$36,000 for one student to attend Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School.

Library Options

Meeting members voted to appropriate \$150,000 from stabilization to fund the planning and design phase of the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. The current main branch of the Montague libraries, the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls, is said to be inadequate for the needs of the town. Only about half of one floor is fully accessible, and there is such a lack of space that an item must be removed from the collection each time a new one is added.

The town hopes to use the funding to explore three options for the library: additions, complete reconstruction, or moving the building to 38 Avenue A.

"We will have plenty of time to

identify what our real options are for the three different scenarios," library director Caitlin Kelley said of the planning and design phase, adding that there will be plenty of opportunity for public input in this process. "This is our main library. It is really important we give the community what they want."

While several members spoke in favor of the article and it passed unanimously, David Detmold, a resident who resigned from the library trustees in March, urged people to think about the repercussions for the town going into this process.

"The vote you are about to take today I think is going to have a serious impact," Detmold said, "not only on this one building I value... but I think it might also have a future impact on the two branch libraries." He explained he feared that the increased cost of maintenance of a new library may lead to the closure of another library branch.

"Regardless of Mr. Detmold's fearmongering, I will not ever support closing branch libraries due to the costs of building a new library," selectboard member Matthew Lord responded.

Cheaper Sidewalks

Town meeting members voted to appropriate \$175,500 from stabilization to repave Hillcrest Elementary sidewalks, and in a separate vote, to use \$24,000 from free cash to reconfigure Sheffield Elementary School's main office.

The request in the warrant initially asked voters to approve the appropriation for repaving by borrowing the money, but Lord, supported by town meeting, amended the article to pay for the project from the town's stabilization fund.

This project will mill and resurface the existing paved area, as opposed to a "full-depth reconstruction" option costing \$65,000 more.

The school district intends to close Hillcrest Elementary in the near future, so the administration chose the less expensive option, which is expected to last about five years, instead of the full-depth option which could last about 20.

"The pavement is something we need now," said facilities director Heath Cummings. "It would be a minimum of five years we would have to wait until that building is no longer in use."

Precinct 2 representative Josh Lively requested adding the additional \$65,000 to the appropriation to pay for the more expensive option to repave the premises of the school. This was deemed out of scope by the moderator, and the construction project passed in a vote with 46 Yeses to 24 Nos.

"It's hard to predict the future... This is the best compromise we can reach," said capital improvements committee member Ariel Elan. "The future of that site, with or without a new building, is uncertain. We thought this would be better for the general public than laying down pavement that could last for 20 years. We are trying to do the best we can to keep up with safety needs."

Airports and Alleyways

The meeting voted to appropriate \$419,677 to support the operating budget of the Turners Falls municipal airport. The airport had expected increased revenues due to leasing land for a large-scale solar array, which ended up not coming to fruition due to the lack of grid infrastructure. The airport is now operating at a deficit, which the town will cover.

"There is no easy fix in terms of airport negotiations, and folks involved in the town coming up with creative solutions. We will have multiple proposals for the future," airport manager Bryan Camden

said, addressing the meeting.

Additionally voters appropriated \$365,000 to purchase a ten-wheel dump truck, \$296,000 to rehabilitate the public parking lot next to town hall, \$78,500 to reline sewer manholes and pipes, \$64,218 to fund a vehicle repair account for the public works department, \$40,402 to purchase a 20-ton trailer, and \$30,000 to repave First Street alley.

Upcoming Litigation

Voters chose to use \$260,000 in free cash to cover legal fees for future litigation between the town and FirstLight before the state Appellate Tax Board.

"There is a significant difference between the values as determined by the board of assessors and what we understand FirstLight is presenting as their values," the finance committee's explanation on the annual town meeting warrant read.

FirstLight currently pays about \$3.3 million in taxes to the town annually, according to Montague town administrator Steve Ellis. Ellis explained the town hopes to dispute FirstLight's values for FY'22, FY'23, and FY'24, equating to about \$10 million in taxation.

"They, as a taxpayer, feel they have no reason to make compromises," Ellis said, explaining why he believed the town must initiate processes to go into litigation if it hopes to have FirstLight entertain the idea of negotiations. "They feel they are coming from a place of strength."

In 2017, the town won a case against FirstLight after the company disputed the taxes it owed for appraisals in 2013. The new case would be similar, but would span over three fiscal years rather than one.

"We need to give this community the opportunity to represent ourselves in court," Ellis said.

"Otherwise, it can lead to a catastrophic loss."



AT LARGE

Eighteen Months of Grace from 'Monster'

By CHIPAINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – The annual Town Meeting was gaveled into session before 169 voters by moderator Nathan L'Etoile at 7:09 p.m. on Monday in the Pioneer Valley Regional School auditorium.

Residents were motivated by two articles on the warrant, of which the first would ban electrical storage facilities and the other would keep BlueWave and other large scale solar outfits from using the town for financial gain.

Both articles were 18-month moratoria, and both were overwhelmingly approved, by votes of 116-7 and 81-17 respectively.

There's a growing realization among residents that Boston is usurping Western Mass. resources for its own use. The Quabbin Reservoir is the sum of four towns flooded in the 1930s; 60,000 acres of land were purchased, and the rest seized by eminent domain. References were made to destruction wrought by the Northfield Mountain Project, and suspicions that Boston is using Northfield and other towns to feed the energy monster.

L'Etoile is the man who helped set the wheels in motion for farmland to be covered with thousands of solar panels along the Connecticut River. Indeed, he deferred to Alex Meisner when the articles were read.

It's his family's farmland, but it's his neighbors who will suffer diminished tranquility and reduced property values, and be the most vulnerable to whatever harm these so-called "clean energy" systems might cause.

Town meeting members waited 90 minutes until Articles 26 and 27 were read.

Early on East Northfield resident Brian Bordner took the floor and asked his fellow townfolk to vote down the entire town budget. "Sometimes we feel helpless, living in a culture of taxation," he said. "Here at town meeting we have a say. This is the one time we can influence how much we're taxed."

Referencing last year's emergency services facility proposal that cost \$1 million and never got off the ground, Bordner said, "They've been foolish with our money. Make this town affordable for young people, for retired people. I ask you to join me in voting down the omnibus."

He got eight votes, but despite being steamrolled, he had said his piece. Bordner is recovering from severe allergies and a bout of pneumonia and consequently, he said, "It took every ounce of energy for me to get up and speak."

Joe Graveline chuckled when he heard Bordner's remarks about the ESF: "That million bucks sits in a roll-up in the map room right now."

Token Farming Sustains Ruse

Jesse Robertson plans to graze his goats between the solar stanchions to show how well "dual use" solar arrays can skirt agriculture by-laws. He insinuated that people living on Pine Meadow Road were hypocrites because they had built their homes on farmland. You can hate me, he said in so many words, but I'm staying.

Robertson is a paid employee of BlueWave Solar, and his comments didn't sit well with Pine Meadow Road resident Chris Kalinowski. "Solar companies are moving in and they don't care about us," Kalinowski said. "We don't have a gas station, but we'll have thousands and thousands of solar panels."

"Think about this situation if it was your own neighborhood," echoed police chief Jon Hall. "Pine Meadow Road is one of the most beautiful roads in the county."

Both articles passed overwhelmingly, but the one year of grace won't help in the long run, given the governor's commitment to "clean energy" at any cost.

Chair Ousted From Planning Board

The following day 446 ballots were cast in the annual town election at town hall. The only contested race was for the planning board seat held by chair Steve Seredynski. He was opposed by Joseph Stacy and Victoria Luksha.

The winner, as of an official tally Wednesday morning, was Luksha, who garnered 207 votes to Seredynski's 187. There were 27 blanks, and mail-in ballots might still be arriving.

Joe Stacy, whom Luksha's backers feared might play the spoiler, received 25 votes. Stacy is the Harold Stassen of Northfield, having run in and lost at least three different town elections.

The new planning board is composed, by order of seniority, of Margaret Riordan, Tammy Pelletier, Joe Graveline, Michele Wood and Luksha. "They will be without Seredynski's bullying presence," said a town hall insider.

Two candidates ran for two openings on the selectboard. As of Wednesday, caucus nominee David McCarthy tallied 367 votes and incumbent Bernie Boudreau received 351.

Chip Ainsworth writes sports for the Recorder and opinion and news for the Reporter. He lives in Northfield.

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LEGAL AID from page A1

jurisdiction of the Center for Public Representation, according to CLA managing attorney Jennifer Dieringer.

"Just recently we absorbed that work," Dieringer explained. "We're well-versed in this, we've been doing it for decades in the other counties, and it now allows us to do it across our entire catchment area."

In addition to disability rights, the agency handles family law, immigration law, various legal services for elders, education law – for example, supporting parents in accessing schools' special-needs supports – and a CORI/re-entry program, which focuses on "helping people with criminal records overcome barriers to housing, employment, and other opportunities."

It also handles housing law.

"Housing is our biggest area of practice," Dieringer said. "By far the most applications we get are for housing assistance – we primarily prioritize eviction defense work – but we also help folks at risk of losing their housing subsidies, and we do fair housing work [around] housing discrimination."

Every Friday, CLA staffs what it calls a "lawyer for the day" program at the Franklin County housing court, helping tenants with anything from advice to mediation to representation in the court itself.

"[Eviction] numbers haven't peaked the way we all thought they might after the moratorium, but they are as high as they've ever been," Dieringer told the *Reporter* in a late April interview.

"What we're seeing – not just in Franklin County, but all over our area – is many more evictions for no cause, which just means that the landlord wants the unit back," she added. "Recently that's often because a speculator comes in to buy an apartment complex, renovate it, and flip the apartments at a higher rent."

While CLA has not had a shingle hanging in the shire town, the agency has deep local roots and active connections. Originally known as Western Mass Legal Services, it merged in 2011 with the Legal Assistance Corporation of Central Massachusetts (LACCM), and has maintained full offices under its new name in Worces-

ter, Fitchburg, Springfield, Pittsfield, and Northampton.

Some of the agency's Franklin County clients call in "cold," Dieringer said, but many come as references from either the Greenfield Court Service Center or local social-service providers such as NELCWIT, Community Action Pioneer Valley, and LifePath.

Madison, who is fluent in Spanish and has a background as an attorney representing immigrants and asylum-seekers in New York City, says she already has a caseload of disability-benefits clients in Franklin County.

"We do two categories of cases," Madison said of her program. "One is people who are still trying to get benefits in the first place – by the time they get to us they usually have done their initial application, been denied, and want to appeal."

In such cases, Madison says, CLA sees a roughly 50% win on appeals.

"That's pretty good odds, in the grand scheme of things," she adds. "That's a pretty significant number of cases that were wrongfully denied at the earlier stage."

The second category is recipients whose benefits have been reduced, some of whom the Social Security Administration may be trying to claw back benefits already paid.

"Some of the biggest needs that we are trying to meet in the community are that type of cases – the overpayments, the continuing reviews," Madison said. "People who have been depending on these benefits to meet their basic needs, and now are at risk of losing them."

In these cases in particular, Madison told the *Reporter*, "free civil legal aid is especially important, because there's really no back pay or money at stake that private attorneys would be able to withhold fees from."

For now, clients seeking CLA's services can call (855) 252-5342 to speak with a screener, or see www.communitylegal.org for more information.

"Even though we don't have a full-time office there with a receptionist yet," Madison said of the agency's Greenfield operations, "for purposes of people who are needing our services, we are very, very open to intakes."

**NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD**

Board Allows Public Comment Time; Low Pavement Bidder Sniffed At; Some Committees Funner Than Others

By JEFF SINGLETON

With a minimum of ceremony – a handshake from chair Tom Hankinson, and a "welcome" from the new vice chair Patricia Duffy – Jed Proujansky joined the Leverett selectboard on Tuesday.

Proujansky, who has selectboard experience in Northfield and has served on Leverett's finance committee, was elected to replace retiring Melissa Colbert at the April 27 annual town meeting. He immediately made his mark on the local political scene by proposing that the board set aside time at its meetings to hear "citizen concerns."

"People often say they are not heard at meetings," said Proujansky in explaining the proposal, suggesting that public comments should be the first item on the meeting agenda each week.

Both Hankinson and Duffy expressed concern that discussions might ensue on topics not on the agenda, violating the state open meeting law. Proujansky said that the board should not take votes, but only put the issues on a future agenda, but Duffy said any form of "deliberation" might violate the state law.

The board already has defined "protocols for public address to the board" on its published agenda. These state, in part, that "during meetings the Selectboard will attempt to find a balance between hearing from members of the community and conducting required business. All public address is at

the discretion of the chair." The protocols also say that board "will generally listen to comments rather than respond immediately. If a topic comes up that is not on the agenda yet further action is required by the Board, the Chair will add the matter, as appropriate, to a forthcoming agenda."

After more conversation about navigating the line between public input and discussion that it feared might violate state law, the board voted to set aside 15 minutes at the beginning of each meeting for "citizen concerns," with a time limit on statements from members of the public. The time of this agenda item can be extended at the discretion of the chair, and may begin at 6:45 p.m. during the winter months.

Pavement Politics

The selectboard voted to award a contract for paving the parking lots at the public safety complex and library on Montague Road to Northeast Asphalt, a company based in Wisconsin. Town coordinator Marjorie McGinnis said the company had come in with a low bid of \$142,000, compared to a \$152,000 bid from Warner Brothers LLC, based in Sunderland.

Isaiah Robison of the firm questioned the award to Northeast, saying that "nobody likes the quality of their work." He cited as an example the project connecting homes on Cushman and Teawddle roads affected by the closed town landfill to the Amherst drinking water line.

McGinnis said that in a

state-regulated bidding process, the town would need to prove that a low bidder failed to meet specific criteria for a project in order to reject them, and there was no such documentation for the case cited by Robison.

Later in the meeting Robison floated the idea, not on the agenda, of his being appointed as the town's animal control officer, which Leverett lacks, in exchange for a reduction in taxes on the property where his father lives.

"Just food for thought," he told a skeptical selectboard, which agreed to put the idea on a future agenda.

The next day Duffy told the *Reporter* that there is in fact a program in Leverett under which elderly homeowners can have their property taxes reduced in exchange for work, but that it probably would not apply to Robison's situation. "Isaiah is always trying to think outside the box," she said.

Forests & Fields

Two members of the committee charged with evaluating a proposed donation of a large stand of forested land to the town, chair Eric Donnelly and Eva Gibavic, came before the board to request that the life of their committee, which expired at the recent town meeting, be extended through the summer so that it can complete its final report. The board endorsed the request.

"I have never been on a better committee in my life," said Gibavic. By contrast Richard Nathorst,

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MONTAGUE PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT Montague Center Park Improvement Project

Design Phase Public Meeting #2
Thursday, May 16 at 6:30 p.m.

Montague Public Safety Complex Community Room
180 Turnpike Rd., Turners Falls, MA 01376

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that the Montague Parks & Recreation Department will be sponsoring a meeting regarding the design of Montague Center Park on Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Community Room at the Montague Public Safety Complex, located at 180 Turnpike Rd., Turners Falls, MA 01376. Public participation is welcomed. For additional information, please call Montague Parks & Recreation at (413) 863-3216.

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the Inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that Sow Loud LLC dba Avenue A Market, William McKerchie as manager, has applied for an Annual \$ 15 Off-Premises Wine and Malt Beverage License. The premise is located at 106 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA consisting of a 1,276 sq. ft. single floor storefront, single room customer-facing with two storage areas in back. There are two entrances and two exits.

Date and place of hearing: Monday, May 20, 2024 at 6:34 p.m. via ZOOM link on agenda at www.montague-ma.gov/d/12374/Selectboard-Meeting

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who chairs the *ad hoc* committee to evaluate the future of the Field Building, the former town library on Shutesbury Road, told the board that "this has been the most contentious committee I have ever been on."

The comment followed a report from Hankinson that the property on which the building sits had passed a perc test, and therefore a bathroom could potentially be installed. Hankinson also said that any renovation of the building would need to remediate lead paint.

Nathorst seemed to feel this information was good news since, as he said, members of his committee had "rebelled" against moving forward without more information. The board agreed to invite the *ad hoc* committee to a meeting in the near future.

Other Business

The selectboard reorganized itself, with Hankinson being re-elected as chair and Duffy replacing Colbert as vice chair.

The board reassigned members to serve as liaisons with other committees, with Proujansky agreeing to be the contact with the school committee. A proposal to invite committees for periodic updates to the board outside the annual budget process was also approved.

A lengthy application to the state for grants to upgrade town buildings under the Green Communities program was approved.

The board also approved, by a two to one margin, a request from the Village of Light Ashram on Sunderland Road to use the town hall parking lot as a base for a "peace walk" on Saturday, May 18.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Equity Grant Could Help With Internet Hookups

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Right after Wendell's May 1 special town meeting – at which voters overwhelmingly approved a health and safety bylaw, made urgent by a proposal to clearcut 11 acres and install 780 large lithium batteries – the selectboard held a short meeting on the town hall stage.

They approved a digital equity implementation funding agreement with Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. By signing and submitting this agreement by June 21, Wendell is reserving \$56,603.77 to “perform approved digital equity implementation activities.” To get that money, the town must submit a digital equity plan or charette by June 30, 2025, and a complete application by July 31, 2025.

Board member Gillian Bu-

dine said she thought this money might be used to connect unserved households to the town's fiber-optic internet system.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said the assessing contract with Regional Resource Group (RRG) expires June 30. With the board of assessors, the selectboard plans to write a request for proposals (RFP) for assessing services in time to either renew RRG's contract or find another firm.

Gerry's Landscaping is still waiting for a response to their bid for mowing town properties this year. Lawns around town buildings were already tall, but the common has bare spots.

Board members decided to schedule mowing as rain and sunshine call for it, and consult with Gerry's about re-establishing a ground cover on the common.

ERVING from page A1

disposes of used furniture or old computers. However, at the annual town meeting, several residents questioned why the town had sold the former library building for \$5,000 and the former Pleasant Street School building for \$10,000 to a developer under a request for proposal (RFP) process. According to one resident, the renovated former library is now on the market for \$400,000.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache responded that an RFP allows the town to control the type of development that occurs on former town properties. One commenter felt the town should list its unused real estate with a realtor to realize the greatest return. Town counsel Donna MacNichol clarified that the town can only sell valuable real estate at auction, or with an RFP.

A majority of voters approved authorizing the selectboard to dispose of surplus property.

A selectboard-submitted article asked for authorization to negotiate a 99-year lease for land on Care Drive with Rural Development, Inc. (RDI), the development arm of the county housing authority. One commenter felt the article was too vague, and proposed an amendment to require the board to negotiate about only enough land to build the 18 age-restricted units and eight multi-generational units described in RDI's proposal. In addition, the amendment would require any modifications to the units to allow aging in place be at RDI's expense. The amendment was defeated.

Other concerns expressed were whether the multi-generational units would mean more children at Erving Elementary School, whether there would be a preference for Erving residents in the senior housing units, and

whether the town would make money on the lease.

Town clerk Richard Newton asked whether the negotiations would be transparent, and was assured that they would be held in public session. The meeting ultimately voted to authorize the selectboard to negotiate the lease.

Funding FY'24 raises for the treasurer, tax collector, and town clerk was approved at the 2023 annual town meeting, but the necessary second step of voting to set the level of compensation was not approved at that meeting. The article at Wednesday's ATM was intended to complete the process and authorize paying the raises.

Although 77 out of 136 people voting approved the compensation levels, the motion failed, because a two-thirds majority is required for setting compensation in a current fiscal year.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith moved to pass over the article authorizing a \$3.7 million debt exclusion for demolition of the former IP Mill buildings. He said that if town meeting approved the exclusion, the town would need to hold another vote on it within 60 days.

When asked about the cost of the three-year debt exclusion, principal assessor Jacquelyn Boyden estimated the residential tax burden at \$92 per \$100,000 in assessed valuation.

Smith told the voters that Lloyd's of London has been insuring the property, but recently requested expensive repairs to the vacant and deteriorating buildings if the town wants to continue the insurance.

Speaking against passing over the article, one resident felt it made sense to demolish the buildings in order to reduce the town's risk. The meeting voted to pass over the article.

SPORTS from page A1

Adams. The Hive took an early 1-0 lead, but in the fourth inning Blue responded with three runs. The Hornets made some noise in the next four innings, but Turners held on to win it 3-2.

Powertown scored their two earned runs off two hits – one double by Jackson Cogswell – and seven walks; both were batted in by Dylon Richardson. Alex Quezada struck out seven, walked six, and allowed four hits and an earned run, and in relief Joey Mosca struck two out and gave up one hit.

On Tuesday the Eagles went to Athol and dropped their third straight game. They tied it up in the third, but the Bears went on a tear and doubled them up 8-4. A couple of things were out of character for the Eagles in this game. They were held to just four hits – from Donahue, Brody Hicks, and Dodge with two doubles – and committed six errors.

The Eagles hope to reverse their fortunes when they host Mahar on Thursday.

Turners played Mahar on Tuesday. It was billed as the first game of a double-header, with varsity softball starting an hour later, but by the time the first pitch was thrown the girls' tennis match was over, and the JV softball bats were in full swing.

Reviewing the weather forecast on Tuesday, one fan said, “It looks like tomorrow's games are going to get postponed!” Someone else chimed in, “Yes, the games'll be stacked up just like today.” Many of us walked the campus to catch more than one event.

Turners jumped on Mahar early, taking a 3-0 lead in the first inning, and when the Senators scored in the second Blue responded with a run of their own to keep the margin at three. In the fifth Mahar tied it up, and it would remain knotted into the seventh, when Turners scored the winning run off a bases-loaded walk.

Turners won the game with four hits, from Kainen Stevens, Derek Wissman, Deven Sloan, and Cogswell, who hit a double. Pitcher Richardson let up eight hits and one walk, and K'd seven.

On Wednesday, the rainstorms held off long enough so that the baseball game against Ware could

be played. The Indians defeated Blue 6-1, bringing them back down to Earth. Stats were not available at press time.

Tennis

TFHS 4 – West Springfield 1
West Springfield 3 – TFHS 2
HCSSE 5 – TFHS 0

The Turners Falls boys' tennis gang won their first match of the season last Thursday at Clark Field against the West Springfield Terriers.

Mike Boyle (6-1, 6-1), Noah Kolodziej (6-0, 6-0), and John Carmichael (6-4, 4-6, 10-8) swept singles for Turners, Patrick Andrews and Max Briere lost first doubles 6-1, 6-0, and Lucas Black and Khalifa Seck won second doubles by forfeit.

On Super Tuesday, the Terriers came to Turners to avenge the defeat. It was a little difficult telling the players apart, because everyone was wearing blue jerseys except two players: one of the Terriers was wearing a white tee, and Boyle had on a muscle shirt. It was his last regular-season match, so both coaches permitted his unofficial uniform.

The other interesting fact was that West had changed their lineup, seemingly to put their strongest players in the most contested matches. They won 3-2 with this strategy. Boyle (6-2, 6-0) and Kolodziej (6-3, 6-0) won first and second singles, but Carmichael lost third (6-1, 6-1), while Mario Pareja and Vaughn LaValley (6-1, 6-1) and Andrews and Black (6-3, 6-4) lost both doubles.

Though this was their last regular season match, the team will play on: they have a consolation match on May 20, against a foe to be determined.

One of the earliest events on Tuesday was the girls' tennis match against the Hampden Charter School of Science East. The Scientists shot out to a quick lead and never looked back as they blanked Thunder 5-love. Individual stats were not available at press time.

Track

Mohawk 67 – FCTS 65
Mohawk 103 – TFHS 40

Mohawk has always been known as a strong track and cross-country school, reportedly because they live in the hills and are used to running, but on Monday the Tech boys lost to

them by just two points.

Tech took first in seven events: Izaya Romer in discus; Josiah Little, long jump; Cameren Candelaria, the 100m; Anthony Gallo, the mile; William Thomas, the 800m; Madix Whitman, Jared Currier, Justin Len, and Wyatt Whitman the 4x400m relay; and Preston Duval, Candelaria, Sam Bodenstein, and Dylon Cullen the 4x400m relay.

In the girls' meet, Jakhia Williams took first place in the long jump and 100m, Jaade Duncan won the 200m, and the relay team of Williams, Duncan, Izzabella Otto, and Jazzlyn Gonzalez won the 4x100m.

Softball

Mt. Greylock 5 – TFHS 4
TFHS 8 – Mohawk 7
FCTS 8 – Hopkins Academy 3
FCTS 8 – Pathfinder 0
TFHS 3 – Wahconah 1
FCTS 12 – Mahar 0

Turners Falls' game against the Red Mounties of Mount Greylock last Thursday was pretty hard to watch. The Softball Thunder were in the midst of their hardest stretch of the season, including an eighth-inning loss to Greenfield the night before. They were pretty exhausted, and only had one reserve player.

The game started ominously – the leadoff batter cracked a double and the next walked, and both advanced into scoring position – but Blue's defense shut Greylock out.

In the bottom of the first, Holly Myers walked and courtesy runner Marilyn Abarua scored to give Blue Thunder an early lead, and Anne Kolodziej stole home in the second to make it 2-0. It could have been more, but a tag at third base ended the threat. In the third, a two-run Red homer tied it up, and in the fourth Turners countered with two runs off an error and a sacrifice.

The game plodded on until the last inning, which is when exhaustion seemed to hit, and mental mistakes and a bases-loaded walk gave Greylock the lead. Powertown never gives up – two batters reached base in the seventh – but they were unable to score, and Turners' losing streak went to three.

Mia Marigliano, Madisyn Dietz, Addison Talbot, Ella Kolodziej, and Madison Liimatainen had hits for Blue. In the circle, Liimatainen gave



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Turners Falls High School alumna Liv Whittier smashes an RBI single as the Keene State Owls defeated the Plymouth State Panthers 4-3 at Keene State College last Saturday. The weekend marked the end of the Owls' 40-game season.

up five hits, struck out six and gave up six walks, three of which were in the seventh inning.

The Thunder Ladies went up the Trail the next night, snapping their streak by defeating the Mohawk Warriors. This game was tied until the seventh, when Blue scored the winning run; Myers, Marigliano, Talbot, Abarua, Dietz, Anne Kolodziej, Janelle Massey, and Autumn Thornton all had hits for Turners, and Marigliano was hit by a pitch.

Also on Friday, the Eagles went to Hadley and defeated Hopkins, 8-3. The game was tight until the fourth, when Tech let loose and scored four unanswered runs. Kaitlin Trudeau led Tech with three hits, while Jenna Petrowicz, Lillian Ross, and Liliana Inman had two each, including a double from Petrowicz and an Inman triple. Kylee Gamache and Hannah Gilbert also hit safely for Tech with Gilbert smacking a double, and in the circle Gilbert allowed three hits and one earned run, striking out 14.

On Monday, the Pathfinder Pioneers came to Tech, because their own field was unplayable due to storm damage. The Eagles were off balance for the first three innings, but put up two runs in the fourth and six more in the fifth to coast to an 8-0 shutout.

Cordelia Guerin, Gamache, and Petrowicz all hit doubles with

Trudeau, Skylei LaPan, Gilbert, and Kyra Goodell also hitting safely. Gilbert threw a no-hit shutout, walking four and striking out 18.

On Tuesday the Thunder extended their streak to two by defeating the Wahconah Warriors. It was the last event of the long night at the high school. In the top of the first, a walk and an error got runners on second and third, but two strikeouts and a 6-3 grounder ended the threat.

Turners has been in a hitting slump – with the exception of Mohawk, they hadn't scored more than four runs in any game since April 26, and this one was not the exception. Blue was held hitless until the fifth when, down 1-0, they began putting the bat on the ball, leading to three runs over the next two innings. In the seventh the Thunder shut the visitors down in order to preserve the 3-1 victory.

Blue finished with five hits: two from Massey, one each from Marigliano and Dietz, and a triple by Ella Kolodziej. Liimatainen scattered three hits, walked two batters, struck out 11, and didn't allow an earned run.

And on Wednesday evening, the Tech Lady Birds beat the rain – and their slump – and the Mahar Senators, 12-zip, though the stats were not available as of press time.

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MONTAGUE from page A1 and the town hall renovation from the project and rebidding it. Lord had expressed some support for the latter option, while chair Rich Kuklewicz and member Chris Boutwell supported using ARPA and completing the entire project. They agreed to give the decision another week, and asked for more information on the town's unspent ARPA funds.

At Monday's meeting Kuklewicz continued to support using ARPA funds and completing the project as designed, saying it would create "continuity" with previous streetscape work. He also said that completing the project as designed might help the town get more grants.

"I'm not a political person, as people might know or not know," he said, "but I'm also looking at the public side... making that a project that stands out, to hopefully get us aligned and recognized for other things that could really help us..."

In the end the board voted unanimously to appropriate \$232,788 in ARPA funds to complete the project, then awarded the "base bid" contract of \$1,097,980 to Mountain View Landscapes, Inc. of Chicopee, the low bidder for the project, to be funded by the congressional earmark, called Community Project Funding, and ARPA.

This will leave just over \$143,000 in unobligated ARPA money, which must be allocated to projects "under contract," Ramsey told us, by the end of the calendar year.

Ramp Ask

Erin MacLean, co-owner of the downtown shop Loot and another building at 102 Avenue A, came before the board to request that the town allocate ARPA funds to make the businesses from 102 to 112 Avenue A "accessible." MacLean was accompanied by Loot and 102 Avenue A co-owner John McNamara, Tamara McKerchie, co-owner of the Upper Bend Café at 112 Avenue A, and a petition signed by 15 business owners and residents on the Avenue.

The petition calls for the town to consider building a ramp to provide access to four businesses along the Avenue – currently Waterway Arts, Textir Beauty Bar, the Avenue A Market, and the Upper Bend. The petition notes several other access ramps that have been or will be installed on the Avenue, and calls the proposal "an opportunity for the

town to correct a missed opportunity from when this section of the streetscape was rehabilitated in 2013."

Kuklewicz asked Ramsey if he had done any research on the proposal. Ramsey said the town had hoped to include a similar project in the Community Development Block Grant budget in 2013, but the funding then was "very tight," so the storefronts remained inaccessible. "They all have a step," he explained.

Ramsey said he had asked "our designer to cost out what this would look like," and the firm said a design could be produced for between \$3,000 and \$5,000. He then made a "generous estimate" that the entire project might cost \$100,000.

McNamara said a "pre-pandemic" quote for a similar project, a ramp which would have wrapped around the Third Street side of 102 Avenue A, "came to fifty grand." "That was a long time ago," he said.

The board seemed favorable to funding the design work using ARPA money, and investigating other grants for the broader project. Ramsey mentioned a Cultural Destinations Grant, and Kuklewicz asked about the town's "community development unallocated fund." Ramsey said he would bring back a proposal from the design firm.

Beyond Thunderdome

Lord reported back on the progress of the committee drawing up a regional agreement for a new six-town school district. The special committee was appointed by the Six Town Regional Planning Board, which has been investigating the potential consolidation of the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley regional districts.

The committee, Lord said, had considered two issues "of substance": whether to include pre-kindergarten grades in the new district, and how towns would be represented on the new school committee. On the former issue, he said, the committee had reached a "tentative yes" conclusion because both current districts include pre-K.

As for school committee representation, Lord pointed out that the population of Montague would be just over half the population of the combined six-town district, presenting significant problems addressing proportionality.

Kuklewicz pointed out that the representation on the school com-

mittee of the 19-town Franklin County Technical School, on which he serves, is not strictly proportional. Greenfield has four representatives, Montague and Orange each have two, and the remaining 16 towns have one each.

"In my mind this is going to be the single largest issue that this subcommittee is going to be deciding on," Lord said, "the other one being how finances and assessments are going to be made." He said he was open to negotiating on these issues, but wanted to avoid putting Montague in a "lose-lose" situation, with limited representation and disproportionately high assessments.

Other Business

At the request of public works superintendent Tom Bergeron, the board authorized a \$51,544 contract with Concrete Systems, Inc. for the purchase of a box culvert to be installed on South Ferry Road, and then a \$35,477 contract with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. for overseeing its installation. Funds for the project, which will be carried out using DPW labor, were approved at the March 14 special town meeting.

Bergeron also requested, and the board approved, the hiring of Arianna Terounzo as the full-time custodian for town buildings.

Still wearing their personnel board hats, board members also approved the reappointment of soon-to-be retiring town administrator Steve Ellis to a different seat on the retirement board. "Now that I'm actually going to be retiring, I'll be better qualified," said Ellis.

The board authorized payment of \$2,127.50 to the Berkshire Design Group for oversight services on the Hillcrest Elementary School playground project, and \$7,470 to the same company for similar services on the Avenue A Streetscape Project, Phase IV.

At the request of Ann Fisk of the First Congregational Church in Montague Center, the board approved the use of public property – the town common and nearby streets – for the annual mug race, from 6:30 a.m. to noon on August 17.

The board briefly discussed the results of the recent annual town meeting (*see article, Page A1*), and then adjourned before eight o'clock.

The next selectboard meeting will be held May 13 at 6 p.m. via Zoom.



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on May 8, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Drones Over Leverett

At Leverett's annual town meeting on Saturday, an article restricting the use of drones passed by a hand vote of 40 to 29.

The article forbids the town from operating drones in a manner violating the constitutional rights of residents and affirms that landowners and tenants have control over their airspace.

Proponent Beth Adams provided a history of drone attacks on civilians in Afghanistan. She said that the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act will revise the rules

regarding air space, defining a "public right of transit" at ground level, rather than at the current 500 feet above ground.

Thank You, Montague!

Eleven-year-old Cecilio Sanchez, speaking to Montague town meeting members on Saturday, May 3, quite succinctly summed up the need for Turners Falls to have a skate park: "I think we need this park so kids can be more active."

Town meeting agreed. When the vote came a few minutes later, not a single dissenting voice was heard.

And so, after 16 years of hoping, planning and organizing, Montague can at long last hope to see a permanent skate park built as early as next spring at Unity Park.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on May 6, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Sandwiches To the Rescue

A fire sparked by a locked wheel on a passing freight train lit a mile-long brush fire stretching along the tracks from the Farley Crossing of the Millers River on the Wendell side.

It took 12 departments, 50 firefighters, and seven hours to finally douse the flames. Still, it might

have been a lot harder had the firefighters not received some 100 turkey and egg salad sandwiches, handmade by local residents and the Wendell Country Store.

Decrease the Grease, Please

After an April 22 sewage backup in downtown Turners Falls, DPW superintendent Bob Tromley admonished restaurants to clean their grease traps regularly and advised homeowners to pour hot grease into a can, freeze it, wrap it in plastic, and dispose of it.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on May 6, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

The dentists are rejoicing. The maple sugar crop is twice as large as usual.

Putting on airs – A white summer vest and a heavy winter overcoat.

The Legislative Committee on the petition for a bridge at this point held their meeting here to-day.

The Celtic Literary Association's annual party takes place on the 15th.

These are the days in which the wife of the dweller in the suburbs follows him to the door and says: "And if you *don't* bring home those seeds!"

The best exhibition of taste yet given in Turners Falls is that expressed in the selection of the chandelier for the M.E. chapel. It is a beauty.

They commenced laying brick on the school house walls last Saturday, but still they're not happy.

Our truant officers suggest that some folks will find out that there is a law compelling attendance at school. We hope they will

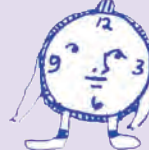
enforce it.

Clapp & Co.'s horse took it into his head to deliver goods without a driver. There was a fall in crockery, amounting almost to a crash.

Our beloved townsman, B.N. Farren, Esq., with his son, Master Frank, is announced to sail for Europe on Monday next. May God bless and keep him while absent from us.

Orders have been issued by the Fitchburg R.R. for the removal from their depots of all showcards, handbills, and notices of every description, excepting those referring to the road and its connections. The depots are to be kept exclusively for the road and its passengers. We can see no objection to all this; but heaven knows they are uninviting enough now, will it add to them to rob them of what little attraction they do possess in neatly framed cards?

We regret to learn from reliable sources that it is a fact that there are persons who claim to live here who go out of town and order whole suits of clothes made for them and never call for the same. It is a mean trick, and hurts every honest man in town who may desire to order goods, besides entailing a heavy loss to the merchants imposed upon.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Montague Solar Forum: Planning for the Future

MONTAGUE – The Montague energy committee and solar planning committee invite all town residents, including members of committees, boards, and commissions who may be involved in future planning for solar, and owners of businesses in town, to a Solar Forum via Zoom on Wednesday, May 22, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

The meeting will offer an opportunity for residents and business owners in all five of Montague's villages – Turners Falls, Millers Falls, Lake Pleasant, Montague City, and Montague Center – to provide input on and explore ways that the draft *Community Solar Action Plan for the Town of Montague* could be used as a starting point for solar planning.

This comprehensive draft plan was developed by two UMass students, in close collaboration with the UMass Clean Energy Extension (CEE) faculty experts in clean energy, and it presents a wide range of ideas and potential opportunities for the planning of future solar installations in our town. The plan includes suggested locations that might be best for solar installations, based on what residents prefer and on potential sites for larger solar arrays.

New solar development will be driven in large part by dropping solar prices, federal incentives, state initiatives to facilitate meeting our greenhouse gas man-

dates, and potential expansion of the town's electric grid capacity for solar.

The energy committee encourages attendees to review the current draft *Community Solar Action Plan for the Town of Montague*, or at least the draft plan's executive summary and its three-page summary. These documents will prepare you to share corrections and thoughts on the draft, and ideas as to how the town may move forward with more solar planning in alignment with residents' preferences, as identified by the CEE's *Community Solar Survey Summary*.

The Clean Energy Extension faculty member(s) leading the meeting will summarize the draft plan, and leave plenty of time for questions and explorations of next steps.

The Montague energy committee looks forward to exploring solar planning opportunities with town residents and business owners, and identifying next steps for expanding solar in keeping with the town's preferences.

For the Solar Forum meeting agenda, Zoom login info, and draft *Community Solar Action Plan*, see www.montague-ma.gov/d/12414/Montague-Solar-Forum. Other solar planning documents are at the bottom of this page: www.montague-ma.gov/g/58/Energy-Committee.

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GILL from page A1

all of these be elected,” said selectboard chair Randy Crochier, pointing to the sums of money handled by both positions. “There’s nothing stopping someone from being elected and doing absolutely nothing but put this town in financial ruin.”

But opponents worry the change would represent a loss of democratic control, and bring with it a greater risk of cronyism.

“I trust the selectboard implicitly. I know they’re going to do the right thing,” said Tom Hodak, the town’s elected tax collector. “What I’m looking at is down the road, when these three folks are no longer here and we have a three-member selectboard that is possibly aligned to do some type of nepotism.”

Hodak said that many towns who appoint these roles have five selectboard members, which offers some protection against bad behavior. But in Gill, “all you would need is two people,” he continued. “There have been problems in this state in other towns where that has happened, and it’s a big job to fix it.”

The town’s elected treasurer, Peter Turban, came out in support of the articles. “The laws and regulations for both positions are getting more and more detailed,” he said. “I have to know all the banking laws, I have to know investment laws, and laws for borrowing loans. It’s not just for somebody off the street – it would take them years to start learning all that stuff.”

With one dissenting vote, the articles were approved. To become enacted the measures must now also win the majority of votes in the May 20 town election.

Road Privatization

In a non-binding vote, all but one participant recommended the discontinuance of Mount Hermon Road, a county road shorter than a mile that runs through the Northfield Mount Hermon School campus.

Highway superintendent John Miner announced that giving up the road would cut \$2,700 from Chapter 90 funding for the town, but estimated that fixing and repaving it would cost around \$500,000.

“My honest opinion,” he said, “is let the road go.”

“Just because you’re discontinuing the road doesn’t mean you can’t use it,” said Mary McEneaney, assistant head for finance and operations and chief operating officer for the school. It just means the town is no longer responsible for it.”

“While I fully support this, I’m going to take this time to make the one pitch to Mount Hermon,” said Crochier. “I encourage you to never fully close that road.” Crochier expressed concern that closing the road would lead some drivers away from the businesses along the town’s Main Road.

“It is not our plan to close that road permanently in either direction,” said McEneaney, adding that if it were to be gated, “it would be only for the dark evening hours.”

Following the article’s approval and after McEneaney’s departure, several attendees expressed a tardy concern for the vote, noting there was no legally-binding way to ensure that the school keep the road open. Ultimately the issue of who controls the road will be decided by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

Other Articles

The town unanimously voted to adopt state provisions in accordance with the “Prudent Investor Rule,” which allows the town to invest trust funds in a slightly expanded portfolio.

Town attorney Donna MacNicol summarized the change. “The state has a list of investments,” she explained. “It is very, very short, and very, very, very conservative. The state now has a list of investments that is very, very conservative and a little bit longer. It’s still controlled by the state, they still only let you invest in those, so it’s really a very small expansion of the very conservative funds that towns can invest in.”

The town also unanimously approved a small increase in the annual real estate tax exemption provided to legally blind persons. Currently, legally blind residents may receive an exemption of \$437 from their property tax. The town voted to increase this to \$500.

In addition to voting on articles, participants took time to honor several residents who have served the

town for decades. Kit Carpenter honored Pam Shoemaker, who passed away in February, for her work on the town’s historical commission.

“She was compassionate, both with her fellow Gill residents and with the subjects of long ago,” said Carpenter. “It was astonishing how many lives she reached, and how many of these became her friends.... Pam, you will be missed.”

Town administrator Ray Purington thanked Susan LaScala, Harry van Baaren, and Barbara Watson, “three key leaders” who are retiring from their work on the town newsletter, the town’s oldest publication.

“Even in this ever-expanding digital age we’re in, your hard work each quarter produces a robust and hardy document that informs and brings people together,” said Purington. “It is the stuff of community. You have made a lasting mark in the fabric of Gill.”

Gill’s town meeting will convene again on June 11 to vote on a number of other warrant articles, including the town budget for FY’25.

Selectboard Meeting

Prior to the town meeting, the selectboard held a meeting that lasted 4.5 minutes, a new brevity record for this reporter. In that time, they awarded the lease of the Boyle lot for this growing season to Dan Flagg, for a cost of \$200, and allowed Brian Peila to lease the Mariamante field for the growing season for \$175.

They also appointed Aaron Budine to fill a vacancy on the board of fire engineers for the next year and accepted, “with regrets,” the resignation of Jenna Marotte from the conservation commission.

The board approved a request from the board of assessors to move forward on a measure to create the position of “principal assessor,” who would be paid at a higher scale than the current position, “assistant to the assessors.” Only one role would be funded at any given time, and while a new candidate would usually start as an assistant to the assessors, they could be promoted to principal assessor if their qualifications expand.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Tuesday, May 21 at 5:30 p.m. at the town hall.



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—Alan Coutinho, Volunteer Meals on Wheels Driver

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Tip of the week ...

Prevent fires by cleaning the lint filter in your laundry dryer after use and regularly inspecting the vent pipe for blockages. Flexible, ribbed vents should be phased out in favor of rigid metal ducts.



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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*



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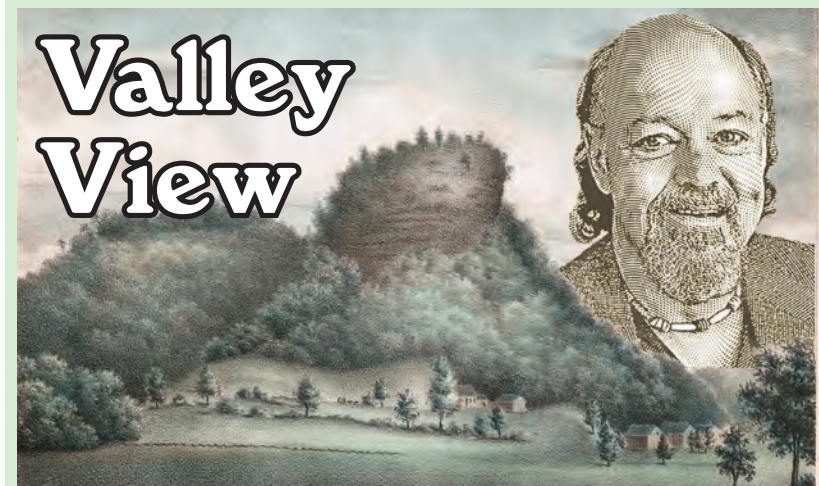


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Above: Montague's current town hall on Avenue A watches quietly as azalea flowers bloom once again.



Valley View

The New Kids on the Block

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – All I can say about last week's start of the four-week 2024 Massachusetts spring turkey-hunting season is, what a difference a year makes.

It matters not that I no longer view wild turkeys through a hunter's lens. My interest in the state gamebird will never fade. I will forever continue to observe and learn about these large roadside birds, which did not exist during my South Deerfield boyhood.

Last year, beginning about a month before opening day, I was greeted daily over the first half-mile of my daybreak walks by aggressive gobbling along the northern perimeter – rain or shine, far and near – interrupting the calming still of dawn. Later, on the Meadow Lane home stretch, occasional gobbles could be heard from the wooded western hillside across the road from my upper Greenfield Meadows home.

This year, not a peep – not even one of those distant, barely discernable rattles I long ago learned to identify. Hmmm?

Why? I suppose, with deep analysis, I probably could have arrived at a hypothesis sooner than I did. But I can't say I ever really dwelled on it. I just kept my daily antennae alert, heard nothing and figured the gobbling would soon begin.

One obvious factor that didn't line up and only confused matters was our mild winter and early

spring. Why, of all years, would spring gobblers choose silence this year? It made no sense. Just another peculiar stoke of nature, I surmised.

Then, on the evening of the April 8 eclipse, my phone rang. A neighbor and friend called to chat about a new discovery in his yard. A woman who lives across the street from him had alerted him to a Great Horned Owl (GHO) nest, wedged into the crotch of a dead white pine about 40 feet above his driveway.

Interested, I walked to his yard to take a look – my first observation of a GHO nest in more than 70 years on this planet. What a treat. A mating pair had taken over and reinforced a former crow, raven, red-tailed hawk or maybe even gray squirrel nest, and it contained two large, light-colored fledglings being fed by the adults. According to many sources, GHO nests typically produce two nestlings.

By the time I saw the fledglings, I would estimate they were about six weeks old. They stood stoic and motionless on the nest's edge, calmly peering down at me on that first encounter. Numerous online sources report that GHO nestlings begin practicing hunting skills at three weeks by pouncing on sticks comprising the nest. By six weeks they become "branchers," hopping from limb to limb and eventually stretching their wings in preparation for flight.

Awkward flight tests then begin at seven weeks, and they maneuver their way to the ground after about

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B8



Two nested great horned owl fledglings in the author's neighborhood.

EXHIBIT Time to See the Unnamed Figures

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

DEERFIELD – History often proceeds by exploding its received truths. One example is that America's indigenous peoples, once presented as primitive hunters in need of "civilization," are now understood as having also been agriculturists, and to have had complex cultures of their own, thank you very much. Another example, still current, is that slavery was an abuse of the Southern states, only relieved after Northern abolitionists exposed its horrors and the Union Army defeated its Southern supporters.

This idea is challenged in a new exhibition at the Flynt Center of Early American Life at Historic Deerfield. Called *Unnamed Figures: Black Presence and Absence in the Early American North*, it displays paintings, artifacts, and photographs showing that slavery was both legal and common in the Northeastern states, and moreover,



John Potter and Family, artist unidentified, oil on canvas frame, from *Matunuck, Rhode Island, circa 1740*. From the collection of the Newport Historical Society, on loan to the Flynt Center of Early American Life. (Image courtesy of Old Deerfield.)

that it was one of the powerhouses of the region's prosperity.

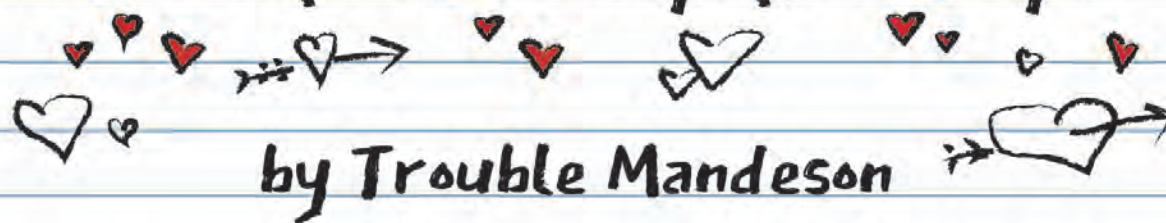
Slavery's most fundamental contribution to the wealth of the original colonies was the trading system in which ships from North America took their products, including salt cod, to West Africa, where they picked up enslaved people, which they sold in the

Southern states and the Caribbean along with the salt cod to feed them, and buying sugar, rum, and molasses, which they sold, along with slaves, in their home ports.

We still see the wealth these merchants accrued in the handsome mansions they built, the lovely furniture, ceramics and artifacts they

see **UNNAMED** page B5

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE



by Trouble Mandeson

GREENFIELD – Every night of my childhood my mom would make a salad to accompany dinner. Her idea of a salad would be sitting in the middle of the table, set for our family of six at exactly six o'clock. Dad would be reading his *TIME* magazine, older brother slurping his food and disappearing moments later, sister talking while no one listened, twin brother almost certainly spilling his milk, and there I was, nose buried in a book, fork slowly and mechanically advancing from plate to mouth. I was the last to leave the table – that is, unless it was my turn to do dishes.

I shudder at the memory of those awful fiberglass tulip chairs with burnt-orange cushions that looked like something from the *Star Trek* television set. I always thought they were so ugly, but imagine my surprise after Googling their description to find them for sale today from various outlets. They came out as reproductions of a chair designed by a 1950s Finnish industrial designer named Eero Saarinen, and were described as "sleek and space-saving."



The author's version of the French salade niçoise, traditionally made of tomatoes, hard-boiled eggs, Niçoise olives, and anchovies or tuna, dressed with olive oil or a vinaigrette.

There on the table like a centerpiece would be Mom's salad, made from hand-torn pieces of iceberg lettuce, two quartered tomatoes, and some large carrot chunks, floating in a puddle of Bernstein's Italian dressing. There was no variation and that was how I understood

salads to be. Back then, in spite of living in California, one of the most fertile states in the country, iceberg lettuce was it for my family.

Today it's a whole different game as I consume salads full of color, texture, and taste. I love baby

see **HEARTFELT** page B4

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

'EVEREST'

Do you dream of having a gremlin of your own? Here's your chance!

Everest has a big name for such a cute little pup. She is playful, friendly, and very affectionate. She loves to go for walks and is trained to potty outside as well as on pee pads. She hasn't lived with kids, but is used to visiting children and loves them.

Everest hasn't lived with other dogs or cats, so we don't know how she will do with them.

If you're ready to adopt and want to learn more about, meet, or adopt this pet, you can start the process in one of two ways:

Come in during open adoption hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m. For in-shelter pets (not in foster care) coming in ASAP is the fastest way to adopt! For more information, call (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

Senior Center Activities MAY 13 THROUGH 17

ERVING

Open Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Daily snacks and coffee. Fitness room and pool table open.

Monday 5/13

9 a.m. Interval Workout
10 a.m. Seated Dance
12 p.m. Pitch Cards

Tuesday 5/14

8:30 a.m. Nail Clip
10 a.m. Wellness Fair

Wednesday 5/15

9 a.m. Strength & Conditioning
10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics
11:30 a.m. Bingo

Thursday 5/16

9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow

Friday 5/17

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

12:30 p.m. Tech Help Drop In

3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 5/15

9 a.m. Veterans' Help Hours
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:45 a.m. Friends Meeting
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
1 p.m. Food Pantry
4:15 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 5/16

9 a.m. Senior Help Hours (by appointment)
10 a.m. Montague Villages
1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. Tech 4 Seniors Class (pre-registration req'd)

Friday 5/17

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

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, please contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

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.

Monday 5/13

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

Tuesday 5/14

9:30 a.m. Tuesday Knitters
10 a.m. Zumba Lite
10:45 a.m. Chair Yoga

Monday 5/13

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

Tuesday 5/14

9:30 a.m. Tuesday Knitters
10 a.m. Zumba Lite
10:45 a.m. Chair Yoga

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TV REVIEW

How Disney Built America (History)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – It appears that the “Built America” documentary format is an insanely winning formula for a TV show. They made another series for the History Channel in 2023 called “The Mega-Brands That Built America,” and it was renewed for a second season. Now they have decided to continue doing things this way with a new series, *How Disney Built America*. The series focuses on how Disney came to be, and how it shaped America. The first episode, titled “The Birth of Mickey,” aired April 28.

People obviously know Mickey Mouse as Walt Disney's most famous creation, when it comes to him being an animator. The story of how Walt created his company has probably been done quite a bit, but with this series people will learn something more about his story.

When Walt first started with

his studio in the 1920s, animation wasn't very popular, or what people back then would call very respectable. That is something new I learned, as was the fact that Mickey wasn't Disney's first success with animation. It was actually a rabbit named Oswald. They did a series of these cartoons for Universal Pictures.

The first episode does show how the cartoon of Mickey came to be, but you have to watch it to learn why this happened, and why Oswald isn't well known as one of Walt's creations. The name “Mickey” was semi-inspired by the pilot Charles Lindbergh, who was around back then. You will learn by watching the first cartoon with Mickey how much Walt liked this man.

There was another sort of interesting timing to this cartoon being made, which had to do with the first film featuring people talking coming onto the screen. That is

what made Walt decide to do the same with the Mickey character.

Walt Disney is said in this series to be some kind of visionary when it comes to cartoons, and his making Mickey into a character that talks was definitely an example of that. Some of the information about Disney and Walt in this episode I already knew, and some I didn't. The first talking cartoon with Mickey was named “Steamboat Willie,” and that is one thing I already knew. After “Steamboat Willie,” other people tried to do what Walt did with sound in the cartoons, but Disney did a much better job than they did.

Another one of his early works was *Snow White* (1937). I believe upcoming episodes will cover how groundbreaking or visionary this was. The next character created after Mickey will also be revealed. I believe some interesting stories will be told in this show!



Hello dear readers,

You might have noticed I was absent last month. I hate missing a column, but unfortunately I was sick with my eighth COVID infection – my third this year – and needed to focus all my energy on fighting and recovering from the virus.

While I am finally beginning to feel more like myself, I'm still terrified I'll get sick again any moment. As I've said before, I already do everything I can as an individual to mitigate my risk, and yet I keep getting ill. I need others to take the pandemic seriously if I am to have any hope of maintaining my current level of health.

As your friendly neighborhood sicko, let me implore you yet again to continue taking COVID precautions! While our official public health bodies have largely given up on their responsibility to educate and protect the public, we are lucky to have a number of regular Joes who have taken up the community-care torch.

The Finders Collective, at Fourth and L streets, in Great Falls often have free rapid tests and KN95 or N95 masks. The Western Mass Mask Bloc, located at the Comics N'More bookstore in Easthampton, has a variety of masks available for free. Bookends bookstore in Florence has air purifiers available to rent for concerts, parties, movie screenings, etc.

Support each of these efforts by spreading the word, donating to them, and making good use of them! We keep each other safe.

On that note, I am so moved by the way so many pro-Palestine student encampments all over the world have been incorporating COVID protections into their organizing structures. While many of the adults in their lives fail to recognize the continuing pandemic – or to decry the violence being meted out on the people of Gaza – these young people know that a fight against genocide must also be a fight against ableism in all its many forms.

While Israel was celebrated for its role in global vaccine development, little attention was paid to the fact that the people of Gaza were denied any access to the COVID-19 vaccine at all or that Israeli bombs targeted Palestinian hospitals at the height of the pandemic in 2022.

Since October 2023, tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians have been murdered by the Israeli military, and hundreds of thousands more are at risk of dying in refugee camps and ruined cities due to starvation and illness. The few hospitals left standing are overrun with patients.

It is impossible to know how many of the ill in Gaza

are sick with COVID-19 specifically – we don't even have adequate COVID testing here in the US – but it is certain the virus is present, and in a starved, largely houseless, unvaccinated population living amongst rubble and corpses, without access to clean water, it is likely to be lethal.

“Health” is not possible in the context of occupation and unrelenting violent assault, and I would argue that disability justice must be pro-Palestinian just as the pro-Palestine movement must be informed by disability justice. For more on this relationship, I recommend the 2017 book *The Right to Maim: Disability, Capacity, Disability* by Jasbir Puar, as well as the recent Death Panel podcast episode “A Killing Peace w/ Rasha Abdulhadi (Part Two).”

I have been in touch with a young man from the Gazan city of Khan Yunis named Jihad Abu Rouk. On October 18 his family home was destroyed in an Israeli attack, and his uncle and several of his young cousins were killed. Since then Jihad and his family of six have been living in a tent with little protection from the elements, let alone bombs. They have made the heartbreaking decision to attempt to leave Gaza in the hope of finding more safety, but Egypt is charging \$5,000 per person to cross the only border still open.

Just a few days ago Jihad's younger brother, Muhammad, was gravely injured in another attack. Muhammad was in a coma for three days, and lost his leg. Their family cannot afford a prosthetic. To add to the family's woes, last weekend Jihad's mother found out she has thyroid cancer, and they cannot afford chemotherapy treatment. Whether the injury comes in the form of a bomb or an illness, both are forms of violence that Israel is weaponizing against the people of Palestine.

If you are able to, please contribute any amount of money possible to the Abu Rouk family's survival fund: www.givebutter.com/AbuRouk. Every day they are in grave danger. We can help this family flee to safety. For a spreadsheet including hundreds of other verified medical and perinatal fundraisers for families in Gaza, see Operation Olive Branch: www.linktr.ee/opolivebranch. It is truly dystopian that we are living at a time when people need to crowdfund in order to escape genocide, and yet here we are.

If you don't have money to spare, please call our senators, Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren, and representative Jim McGovern to demand an immediate and lasting ceasefire, and an end to US military support of Israel.

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EXHIBITS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rivers of Franklin County*, geology-inspired, map-based art by Joe Kopera, through May.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *What's On Your Plate?*, a community arts exhibit about the entanglement of food, time, commitment, and ecology. Through June 29; closing reception Saturday, June 29, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: *Caroline Wampole*, guest artist showing abstract paintings, through June. *Mushrooms and Skulls*, by Conor Cash, Saturday, May 18 only.

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Distractions*, showcasing work by Greenfield Community College students Sam Kuusinen, Ava Machowski, Suzy Q Groden, Isabella Lonardo, Madeline Keating, Mars, and Erin Shabunin, participants in Joan O'Beirne's art seminar. Through May 31. Reception tonight, Thursday May 9, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Greenfield Library, Greenfield: *ServiceNet Community Art Exhibit*. Paintings, photography, and other art works by more than 20 artists from the ServiceNet community. Through May.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Indi-Visible*, photos by Alfonso Herrera-Neal and Lindy Whiton documenting migrant and immigrant farm workers in Western Mass, including field interviews, through July. *Tom Swetland*, collage art, assemblage, mixed media, *papier-mâché* and junk sculpture

around the themes of surrealism, psychedelia, dreamscapes, and conspiracy, through June 29.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Inside, Outside*, paintings by Emily Giarmari, through May.

Leverett Library: *Pastels from Ruggles Pond* by Rema Boscov, through June.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Susan Mulholland*, paintings, and *Michael Kudrikow*, metal sculpture. Through May, with a reception next Saturday, May 18, from 2 to 5 p.m.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Stories I Tell Myself*, mixed media by Diane Steingart, through May.

MD Local Gallery, Amherst: *Femme Locale*, group show by trans women, cis women, intersex, genderqueer, genderfluid, and non-binary artists curated by Christine Texiera and Alexia Cota. Through June.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Splash of Color*, group show by member artists, through May.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Jeremy Sinkus*, glass sculpture, and *Unpleasantly Beautiful*, sculptural pieces with etched glass panels by Annaleah Moon Gregoire. Through June.

Watermark Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Grand Opening*, innovative work by Andrew Sovjani, Jan Morier, Christine Kaiser, Cynthia Consentino, and Laurie Goddard.

APE Gallery, Northampton: *Platitude*, a look at contemporary queer life in America through the form of ceramic serveware created by nine artists. Through May 26, with a reception Friday, May 24 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Mistaken Identity; Door Slam; Adult Films; Floppy Hat; Power Company Clears Camp; Shooting Off Guns

Monday, 4/29

6:26 a.m. Caller states he got a text from a neighbor who stated that people slept in her garage last night at Wills Ferry and Meadow roads. Male party is pulling a red wagon and a female is following behind him. Officers advised. Parties advised to stay off people's property and out of garages.

9 a.m. Caller from Main Street reports that her car was keyed; not sure when. She noticed it Saturday while she was in Gardner and believes it happened sometime over the past couple of weeks. She is filing an insurance claim and needs to have this on record.

1:35 p.m. Caller reporting two dogs locked in a minivan with its windows closed at Unity Park. Dogs seem to be in distress. No owners seem to be around. Officer advised. Windows are open and there is a person with the dogs.

7:09 p.m. Officer conducting a motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road; advises he thought there was an occupant in the vehicle with an active warrant. Unfounded.

7:21 p.m. Caller from East Taylor Hill Road reporting that her eight-year-

old daughter told her that between 6 and 7 p.m. yesterday she was playing outside and a man in an older light blue pickup truck drove by and stopped and waved at her for a while. The man drove away, looped back around, and started waving at her again. The daughter then ran inside and told the caller. Caller wanted incident on record.

Tuesday, 4/30

9:56 a.m. Caller from Bridge Street would like it on record that the downstairs neighbor was banging on his walls again very loudly.

11:10 a.m. Caller concerned that an unregistered truck is parked on the corner of Twelfth and G streets with two people and two dogs living in it. Officer spoke with vehicle occupants and advised them that the vehicle would be towed Friday at noon.

6:44 p.m. Caller states that his elderly mother is being scammed on Facebook. She sent someone \$600 for a cat. Party advised of options; she will call if anything else happens.

6:47 p.m. Caller from Third Street states the neighbor downstairs slammed his door too hard and she is requesting an officer because she doesn't know what to do about it.

6:53 p.m. Caller reporting that there is a fire near or in a greenhouse on Center Street; there is someone with it. Shelburne Control advised.

Wednesday, 5/1

9:31 a.m. 911 caller from Bridge Street reporting that the downstairs neighbor is pounding on the walls very hard and shaking the walls of his apartment. The involved male has a long history of this type of behavior. Report taken.

10:25 a.m. 911 caller from Bridge Street reporting that now the downstairs neighbor is banging on the walls and yelling threats of violence towards him. Officer requesting second PD unit and EMS. Officer advises male party is now detained for posturing to punch him. Summons issued.

11 a.m. Caller from East Main Street states that her car was vandalized overnight. One entire side of the car was keyed. Requesting officer stop by her house when one is available.

11:20 a.m. Caller from East Main Street states that her neighbor just backed into her car and damaged it, then took off. Report taken.

1:13 p.m. Manager of a Federal Street property reporting that someone

broke into a locked garage and stole a lawnmower and a snowblower. Report taken.

1:56 p.m. Caller states that a group of people is yelling, blowing car horns, and swearing in the Eleventh Street alley. Officer spoke with a male party who advised there was yelling because their dog got loose, but it has now returned.

1:59 p.m. FirstLight Power supervisor would like to speak with an officer about assisting them with clearing out an encampment off of Power Street. Advised of options.

4:14 p.m. Following a traffic stop at Montague City Road and Paradise Parkway, a 41-year old Greenfield woman was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

5:36 p.m. Party into station to get information on his legal options regarding an ex who is threatening to break into his house.

6:52 p.m. Caller states that there is damage to her vehicle from a truck that was parked too close to it on Avenue A. Referred to an officer.

9:18 p.m. Officer conducting a motor vehicle stop at Millers Falls Road and Chester Street. Registered owner showing as suspended. Summons issued.

Thursday, 5/2

4:59 a.m. Walk-in reports that he woke up in the morning and believes someone was in his apartment. He did not notice anything out of place, but \$70 was missing from his wallet when he checked. Advised of options.

6:04 a.m. 911 caller from Third Street reports that a male party who lives in the building is currently yelling and making inappropriate comments and threats toward the caller and her daughter. Caller has to leave soon and is uncomfortable leaving the location with the male downstairs. Officer spoke with male party, who advises he watches adult films with the volume up high and that the caller and her daughter are listening to his videos intentionally. Caller stated that they do not listen to his videos; however, they have concerns about the male party and the comments he makes. Caller concerned for the safety of her daughter. Both parties advised of options. Report taken.

11:47 p.m. Caller states a large branch came down and is blocking Turners Falls Road at Morris Avenue. Officer states DPW will need to cut up the branch as there is no place to push it with the loader. Officers left barricade on

one side and cones on the other side.

Friday, 5/3

4:30 p.m. Caller reporting a dog left outside without water near Ninth and X streets. Caller gave the dog two bowls of water and the dog drank them both. Wants on record; will monitor & call back if it happens again.

Saturday, 5/4

10:36 a.m. 911 caller reporting an older green Volvo parked in the road on Rastallis Street with all its doors open; a woman is sitting in the driver's seat not moving the vehicle. Officer told vehicle owner to pick up her license from the PD, where it was dropped off earlier in the week. Party is currently living in her car. Advised she needs to move vehicle and advised of options.

12:44 p.m. Caller reporting a woman in the Food City parking lot walking around yelling "Mom!" with her dress pulled up in the back, wearing a floppy hat. Seems to be out of sorts. Gone upon officer's arrival.

2:36 p.m. Caller states that there are four or five kids playing in the gravel area before the railroad tracks on East Main Street and it's annoying him and his dog. Officer advises not as reported. Teenagers recording a video, far enough away from tracks that it is not a hazard. Their father is with them. They are not causing a disturbance of any kind and are fine to remain in the area per officer.

4:01 p.m. Caller stated that he witnessed someone getting rear-ended on Montague City Road near Cumberland Farms and there was significant damage. Vehicles are in the roadway. Officer spoke to involved parties, who said they were handling it themselves. Minor damage.

4:06 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reports that her neighbor is shooting off guns and it is disturbing her. Advised of options.

8:06 p.m. Caller from Sunrise Terrace left message in general mailbox stating that her neighbor is playing music loudly and she would like someone to speak with him. Officer advises that it was not excessively loud. Advised of complaint.

Sunday, 5/5

2:55 p.m. Report from Walgreens of a male sitting against the building with a propane heater and a gas tank. Shelburne Control notified.

8:51 p.m. 911 call from East Main Street reporting verbal argument between roommates over burnt taco shells. Both parties advised of options.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

This Saturday is Bulky Waste Day!

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Franklin County Solid Waste Management District is holding its Spring 2024 "Clean Sweep" Bulky Waste Recycling Day this Saturday, May 11 from 9 a.m. to noon. The three collection locations are the Erving Senior Center, at 1 Care Drive in Erving (off Route 63); Mohawk Trail Regional School at 26 Ashfield Road (Route 112 South) in Buckland; and the Whately Transfer Station at 73 Christian Lane, Whately.

Please note that the Erving Senior Center is a new collection site, replacing the Northfield Highway Garage.

Residents and businesses from any of the District's 21 member towns may bring bulky items to one of the three collection sites. Acceptable items include **tires, appliances, scrap metal, furniture, carpeting, construction debris, computers, televisions, propane gas tanks**, and other **large items**. Materials will be recycled whenever possible.

Pre-registration is not required.

There are charges for most items. Disposal fees – cash only – will be collected during check-in at each site. A complete list of prices for the most common items can be found at franklincountywastedistrict.org. The list has been provided to participating town halls and transfer stations.

Mattresses and box springs will *not* be accepted at this event. There are six regional mattress recycling locations across Franklin County, which are open year-round. For locations, pricing, and hours, see franklincountywastedistrict.org/mattress-recycling. If you are unsure if your mattress and box spring can be recycled, call the District office at (413) 772-2438.

Electronics are accepted, but residents are also encouraged to recycle computer equipment and televisions at their town's transfer station, or at the Greenfield Transfer Station. Staples stores accept computer equipment free of charge, but not TVs; call the store for details.

Clean, dry **textiles and books** will be accept-

ed for free reuse or recycling. Textiles – which are now banned from the trash in Massachusetts – must be contained inside a sturdy plastic bag. Textile recycling accepts 95% of all textiles and shoes, including clothing or linens that are torn or stained, or have missing buttons or broken zippers. Damaged textiles can be sold to manufacturers to make insulation or shop rags.

Acceptable items include clean and dry **clothing, shoes, and accessories, plus curtains, sheets, towels, and stuffed animals** in any condition, except moldy or wet. Encyclopedias are not accepted, but all other books are, hardcover or paperback, and can be in any condition except, again, moldy or wet.

Bulky rigid plastics will be collected separately for a special recycling program at \$5 per load. This special program only accepts these bulky rigid plastic items: **empty 5-gallon pails, lawn furniture, laundry baskets, storage totes, trash barrels, recycling bins, and milk crates**.


The member towns of the Franklin County Solid Waste District are Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Hawley, Heath, Leverett, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Rowe, Shelburne, Sunderland, Warwick, Wendell, and Whately.

Before sending unwanted items for disposal or recycling, consider offering them for reuse. Various charities, including local Salvation Army and Goodwill stores and non-profits, accept donations of household items and working electronics. Always call ahead to ask if they can accept your item. Or offer reusable items on a local "Buy Nothing" Facebook group, Freecycle group, or local town groups such as NextDoor.

For more information see franklincountywastedistrict.org, or contact the District office at info@franklincountywastedistrict.org or (413) 772-2438.

MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD). The District is an equal opportunity provider.

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Montague Community Television News

Cultural Uploads

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Montague’s annual town meeting is up on our Vimeo page, and will be airing on our cable station as well. We also have Montague’s select-board meeting from May 6.

This week’s cultural upload comes from the Montague Retreat Center, where Adam Bauer performed *kirtan* with his ensemble on April 14. If you have videos that you want to share with your community, please do!

All community members are welcome and encouraged to submit their videos to be aired on Channel 9, as well as featured on the MCTV Vimeo page. That

means you! 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 for a link to the Zoom.

Contact us at (413) 863-9200 or infomontaguetv@gmail.com, follow us on Facebook, or find us on Instagram @montaguecommunitytv. Find videos and more on our website, montaguetv.org.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Fling Festival is Saturday, May 11

LEVERETT – The Leverett Co-op is hosting our annual outdoor Spring Fling Festival this Saturday, May 11 with live music, lawn games, children’s activities, a wine tasting, samples, auction items, tool sharpening and care with Ben Goldberg, pizza slices, and scooped ice cream cones!

All the fun starts at 1 p.m., and will wind down around 4 p.m. Live music will be provided by Myrtle Street Klezmer and Silverback Swing. There will be something for all ages, so come out and join the fun – and check out our great selection of one-of-a-kind handmade gifts and cards, just in time for

Mother’s Day!

Now in its 50th year, the Leverett Village Co-op is located at 180 Rattlesnake Gutter Road in Leverett. If the weather looks rainy on Saturday morning, please call the store at (413) 367-9794 to see if the festival has been rescheduled.

Fishway Reopens, With Sensory-Friendly Hours!

TURNERS FALLS – The Turners Falls Fishway will be open May 11 through June 9 for fish migration season. Spring on the Connecticut River offers an unrivaled opportunity to witness the migration of shad, sea lamprey, and other anadromous fish. The Fishway will be open Wednesdays through Sundays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Monday, May 27 for the Memorial Day holiday.

FirstLight has also announced a new partnership with the Autism Alliance, a program of advocates, to become

an Autism Welcoming and sensory-responsive business. Visitors attending sensory-friendly hours at the Turners Falls Fishway – two Wednesdays, May 15 and 22, from 4 to 5 p.m. and two Sundays, May 19 and June 2, from 9 to 11 a.m. – can download a social story from the company website, www.firstlight.energy, to prepare for the trip, and can expect a quieter environment at the facility.

Sensory bags will also be available to support a more welcoming and accessible experience.

HEARTFELT from page B1

lettuce and kale and grow them in my garden, where I can harvest handfuls of the immature leaves each week and where, like magic, they grow back again and again so I can enjoy salads throughout the growing season.

Sometimes I’ll use mature kale, which can be made more palatable with a thorough rub of olive oil to soften it. I’ll stack the leaves, roll them up and slice them into ribbons – called a *chiffonade* cut – then massage them with olive oil.

During the farm share season there’s almost always something to throw in salads like pretty purple daikon radishes, alien-looking kohlrabi, and cool, cone-shaped cabbage.

I love crunchy meals, so there’s always a generous pile of chopped, grated, or *julienned* veggies like raw beets, turnips, watermelon radishes, fennel bulb, purple cabbage, or sweet orange or yellow bell pepper. I also like to throw in a handful of almonds, sunflower seeds, or pepitas for a salty crunch, and then top it all off with crumbled feta cheese.

I typically use a very simple vinaigrette.

Salads are not, of course, just made from iceberg lettuce as my mom believed. There are three-bean salads, pasta and potato salads, fruit salads, noodle salads, and salads that have rice and other grains added. Roasted root vegetables like potatoes, beets, radishes, fennel, and carrots are all delicious chopped into chunks, drizzled with olive oil

and salt, roasted, cooled, and added to all types of salads.

Salads can be traced back to ancient Babylonia, Egypt, and Rome, where they included lettuce, celery, radishes, and onions and were believed to be good for digestion and overall health. Sometimes herbs, fruits, and nuts were added to enhance flavors and textures. Seems like they haven’t changed much over the years as we use the very same ingredients.

During the Renaissance period, the upper classes presented salads as intricate and stunning visual displays and, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the French introduced mayonnaise as a dressing, turning salads into a rich creamy dish. Chef Auguste Escoffier, who elevated traditional French cooking, also popularized classic salads like the Caesar, Niçoise, and Waldorf, each with a unique combination of ingredients.

The word *salad* derives from the French *salade*, an abbreviated form of the Latin *herba salata* or salted herb as vegetables at that time were associated with salt, often kept in a salty brine or dressed with a salty oil and vinegar dressing. In 1606 Shakespeare gave us the phrase “salad days,” referring to a time of youthful experience. It’s based on the notion of “green,” which I presume refers to being young or new.

In the 20th century, salads became even more diverse, moving beyond greens to grains and proteins added to make them more of a main meal than a side. The

versions are endless: green salads made from lettuce, spinach, and arugula; composed salads with all ingredients arranged on the plate; tossed salads where ingredients are mixed; and *antipasto* salads from the Italians, generally vegetables, meat, and cheese.

Bound salads are assembled with mayonnaise or other thick sauces – think tuna, egg, or chicken salad – while a dessert salad might include fruit, gelatin, or whipped cream. Wedge salads, popularized by steakhouses in the 1970s, are served as a cut wedge of lettuce drizzled with blue cheese or other ingredients like avocado, bacon, or a sprinkle of nuts.

During the advent of the 21st century, convenient bagged salad kit sales grew as iceberg lettuce sales fell. Already having been cleaned and cut, these bagged greens bring in billions a year in the US with sales increasing by 6.5% every year, even while lettuce sales remain flat. They’re a modern convenience that has helped Americans consume healthier foods with less prep time needed.

Whether eating a Greek salad of tomatoes, cukes, sweet peppers, and feta cheese, the Spanish *pipirrana* with poblano peppers swapped out for the feta, or the Italian *Caprese* with fresh mozzarella, basil, and sweet tomato slices drizzled with olive oil, you’re adding a wealth of vitamins, minerals, flavors, textures, and taste to your diet.

Here’s my wife’s recipe for her three, usually four, bean salad!

Trouble Mandeson 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, copy-edit, and create art.



MANDESON PHOTOS

This chopped salad with a colorful and textured array of vegetables, topped with almonds, is one of the author’s favorite meals.



A colorful octopus salad with tomatoes, onions, and avocado enjoyed by the author during a vacation to the Mexican Riviera.

GOUCH’S THREE (FOUR) BEAN SALAD

One can each, drained: kidney beans; white beans, such as navy or cannellini; green beans; and, if you like, garbanzo beans.

Be sure to rinse the garbanzo beans first. Slice onions in rings, and drown it all in your favorite Italian dressing. Best when allowed to sit in the fridge overnight.

Sooooo good, I drink the dressing when the beans are all gone!

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FACES & PLACES



JOE R. PARZYCH PHOTOS

Photo correspondent Joe R. Parzych writes that he spotted Hawk Williams (left) and a fellow, unnamed member of the First Congregational Church in Montague Center selling raffle tickets at Food City on Saturday. The raffle winner, who will be drawn at the Mug Race on August 17, will win four tickets to see the Red Sox play the Toronto Blue Jays at Fenway Park on Monday, August 26.

Sunday morning, Joe headed down to Yankee Candle headquarters in Deerfield to see the 19th annual Antique Truck Show, hosted by the Antique Truck Club of America's Western Massachusetts chapter. "The truck show was very slow due to the rain," Joe reported back to us. "I could not get names because there were less people, and they were walking around.... People checked out old trucks of all makes, models, and sizes through the ages, and there was plenty of food and prizes." Well, we'll have to wait for next year's report!

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Just Roots Spring Festival, Seedling Sale, and Appeal

GREENFIELD – Just Roots, a local farming and food access nonprofit, will host a Spring Festival and Seedling Sale on Saturday, May 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Greenfield Community Farm, 34 Glenbrook Drive in Greenfield. This celebration will feature a wide variety of activities, as well as plants for purchase from local vendors.

The Spring Festival and Seedling Sale is free and open to the public and will feature live music, cooking demonstrations and samples, farm tours, a free seed swap, a raffle with prizes from local businesses, children's activities, and free ice cream from Ice Cream Emergency.

Seedlings for sale will include vegetables, flowers, culinary and medicinal herbs, native pollinators, and more from Just Roots, MXED GREENS, Turtle Bend Farm, Checkerspot Farm, Sage Green Botanicals, the People's Medicine Project, Sawmill Herb Farm, Fox-trot Farm, and A Wing and a Prayer Nursery. More information can be found at www.justroots.org/event/spring-festival-seedling-sale.

This event is held in the midst of Just Roots' Spring Appeal fundraising campaign. The organization aims to raise \$20,000 by the end of May to support their Community Farm and Franklin County Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program.

This year, Just Roots will serve up to 1,000 families in Franklin County and statewide through its affordable CSA programs, 90% of whom are low-income and/or food insecure, connecting them with local food and cooking resources. Funds generated through Just Roots' Spring Appeal will bridge the gap between what participating families are able to pay for a seasonal farm share and what it costs to grow fresh, local food using sustainable methods and paying employees a living wage. In addition, Just Roots is seeking to make investments in their Community Farm to build resiliency as they continue to recover from the flooding of 2023 and adapt to a changing climate.

To make a donation online or for more information about the Spring Appeal, visit www.justroots.org/donate-to-spring-appeal.

UNNAMED from page B1

bought, and the family portraits they commissioned.

They gaze out from paintings in innumerable historic houses and museums, and now also at the *Unnamed Figures* exhibition: solid red-cheeked men, sometimes bewigged, always handsomely dressed, perhaps with a lace *fichu* at the throat. The wives and daughters are similarly assured and handsomely clothed.

But where are the enslaved people who helped generate their wealth, and still worked in their houses and gardens, their workshops and farms?

By the mid-18th century over a third of historic homes on Historic Deerfield's mile-long street had slaves. An example had been set as early as the late 17th century by the town's first minister, the Reverend John Williams, whose portrait is displayed in the exhibition. He owned slaves both before and after his capture and transportation to Canada in the 1704 attack on Deerfield during the French and Indian Wars. But the names and images of enslaved people of Deerfield, and of the North in general, are notable only for their absence. Black people of the past are rarely present, except in a few paintings.

Unnamed Figures does an excellent job both of redressing this lack, both by highlighting the tiny Black figures present in landscapes and embroidered samplers, and by displaying the paintings in which enslaved people occasionally appear more prominently, if usually still as secondary figures.

In one extreme case, a big plump merchant stares confidently out of a dark background wherein the observant viewer might

spot a tiny, soberly dressed Black man, seated at a desk. Possibly he was a clerk – one of the multitude of tasks enslaved people were sometimes given.

Equally odd is the picture *John Potter and Family*, painted around 1740 and on loan to the Deerfield exhibition from the Newport Historical Society. This painting, by an unidentified artist, shows John Potter, lips pursed – perhaps after sipping hot tea from the china cup in his hand. He's surrounded by three women, their hair in up-dos and pin-curls. His wife has her hand on the teapot, a daughter seemingly having just received a cup of tea. His scarlet jacket and their ruffle-filled *décolletage* tell of leisured lives, as does the young Black boy looking out at the viewer.

The painting lets us know that John Potter has the wealth to clothe himself and his family in fine style, to buy an expensive porcelain tea set imported from China and the costly tea to serve in it, and to own a slave.

Did this young boy bring the tea things in? There's no evidence of this, nor indeed of what his work may have been. His inclusion in the painting simply signals the Potter wealth. Yet his gaze, and the painter's attention to his features and the folds of his shirt, suggests an interest of ambiguous import. Certainly, unlike most Northern slaves, this Black person is very definitely present, making this painting memorable rather than simply conventional.

Several other paintings in the exhibition similarly show slaves with their enslavers. In landscapes it's possible to spot here a Black plowman, there a Black woman with a broom or mop. Perhaps more unexpected than these domestic tasks, the exhibition shows objects

crafted by Black people, among them ceramic oyster jars made by Thomas Commeraw, an emancipated slave who stamped his work with his mark.

Cesar Chelora, a woodworker, was another emancipated slave. His enslaver, Francis Nicholson of Wrentham, had taught him to make planes, and left him his freedom and the tools of his trade when he died. One of Chelora's cornice planes is in the Historic Deerfield collection, and on display in the *Unnamed Figures* exhibition.

Phillis Wheatley is better known than these figures. She was captured as a seven-year-old in Gambia, then taken to Boston in a ship called *The Phillis*. When the Wheatley family bought her they named her after the ship. Their daughter Susanna taught her to read and write.

Phillis Wheatley later learned Greek and Latin, and wrote a book of poetry, published in London when she was 20 as *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, the first published book of poems by an African American. Her picture from the frontispiece is in the *Unnamed Figures* exhibition, though unfortunately little of her short life or recent critiques of her work by Black scholars is mentioned.

The Wheatleys freed Phillis after the 1773 publication of her book. By this era, Northern states were beginning to enact legislation to gradually free slaves. Massachusetts, for example, effectively abolished slavery in 1783. When photography was invented in the mid-19th century, formerly enslaved people and their descendants could have themselves visually represented in ways they chose. A



Phillis Wheatley, engraving on paper frame by an unidentified artist in 1773, detail. From the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. (Image courtesy of Old Deerfield.)

selection of such early photographs is also included in the exhibition.

The 97 pieces on exhibit in *Unnamed Figures: Black Presence and Absence in the Early American North* certainly expand the common view of slavery in the United States. It's an exhibition well worth visiting. It opened on May 1 and continues until August 4.

Equally worth seeing, and on permanent display, are the Witness Stones, now installed outside the houses of Historic Deerfield's former slave owners. These are four-inch-square memorial plaques displaying the names of the enslaved people. They are set into the sidewalk edge of the properties so that anyone strolling the street may see them.

For example, at the Creelman House immediately north of the Flynt Center, the stones record Phillis, aged 9 in 1741, and Humphrey, recorded as a slave there in 1742. At the Dwight house on the other side of the Flynt Center, the stones record Cesar, Pompey, and Rebecca. You can pick up a map of the Witness Stones at the Flynt Center's front desk.

Historic Deerfield, at 80 Old Main Street in Deerfield, is open 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., Wednesdays through Sundays and on Monday holidays. The Flynt Center is at 37 Old Main Street.



HOPEY PHOTOS

The "Witness Stones," seen here at the Creeley House, name the enslaved people who lived and worked in the houses at Old Deerfield.



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the
poetry
page

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

- William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Readers are invited to send poems to
the *Montague Reporter* by email at:
poetry@montaguereporter.org
(Please note we are no longer
accepting mailed submissions.)

Our May Poetry Page

Fear to Share

99 bottles of fear on the wall,
99 bottles of fear.
Take one down and pass it around,
98 bottles of fear on the wall.

98 bottles of fear on the wall,
98 bottles of fear,
Take one down and pass it around, 97 bottles
of fear on the wall.

What would we do,
if we don't have fear on the wall?
No longer bound
by its siren call.

What will we have as a frame to shape our days
and direct our actions?
We might have to think, my G-d,
about what is easy and
what is hard.
What is worth it and,
what is not.

And, we might even begin to support
the line-up of longings in
our heart,
no longer bottled by fear.

- Leona Phillips
Santa Cruz, CA

The Language Butchers

With cruelty which masquerades as sanitized morality,
The language butchers seek a world engulfed in bleak banality;
To satisfy their power grab, they'll amputate your heart and soul,
Until the essence of your life has seeped into their man-made hole

As words can be a gateway to a world of possibility,
So also may they be a cage of cancerous servility;
The more it spreads, and creativity exhales its final breath,
The plague is normalized, while experts mollify this grisly death

Omission is an ugly sin; its progeny is ignorance,
Anesthetized complacency, and vacuous indifference;
A philistine amusement park, with clinical bureaucracy
Whose Kafka-esque maze obfuscates the oligarchs' monstrosity

The spread of Critical Theory, a sugar-coated road to Hell,
Has cast a wide, hypnotic cloud on those befuddled by its spell;
But stripped of its accoutrements, and seen as just a game of words,
Its poisoned power disintegrates, and forms a pile of steaming turds.

To those for whom control of life has robbed them of humanity,
Who make the rules and peddle their pathology as sanity,
The bitter paradox is that the more controlled, the more destroyed -
It's time to open all our eyes, and bring to light their verbal void.

- Kevin Smith
Greenfield

Contributors' Notes:

Kevin Smith, an ex-Turners resident, now lives in Greenfield, where he continues to play the tuba, walk his dog, and be inspired by his girlfriend, Stephanie.

Leona Phillips, formerly of Amherst, Massachusetts, currently lives in Santa Cruz, California. She is a retired Professor of Human Services and a retired trauma therapist, currently weaving with yarn and words.

Gary Greene is a Greenfield native and author of *Poems In A Time of Grief*. His work has appeared in the *Montague Reporter*, where he was the featured poet in January 2021; Oprelle Publications' poetry anthology, *Matter*; online at wittypartition.org; and in *Nine Mile Books & Literary Magazine*.

Past Tense

Was, were, used to be
never described us,
had no meaning in our life,
a widescreen, single-take movie,
seamless years of endless now,
now ended,
rendering it unbearable
to think of you - now -
to speak of you - now -
in the past tense,
what we knew as our life
archived in memory,
a bruised portfolio of
pale watercolor facsimiles
bound together by
what was ours,
what we were,
what we used to be.

- G. Greene
Greenfield

Portrait of a Picture

The photo is of a woman,
nestled against a post
on the edge of a log-cabin porch,
smiling up at the man she loves.

Vermont autumn-sun backlight,
all the colors of the world they shared,
breathes golden fire into her auburn bob.

Luminous shadow caresses her face,
too shallow to conceal her beauty,
her joy, the way she loved,
a radiance no shade could eclipse.

The woman had many gifts,
but a special one for painting,
and the man asked her to render
the picture as a self-portrait.

Neither dreamed that this canvas
would be the only one
she would ever paint of herself,
or that it would later grace an easel,

in an old, incense-smoked church,
beside an urn,
the woman become illustrator
for her own funeral Mass.

The shadows are everywhere now,
plentiful and deep,
golden light consumed
by insatiable twilight,

as the man sits quietly, lost,
and gazes up at the portrait
painted from the picture of the woman in love,
smiling down at the man she loved.

- G. Greene
Greenfield



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looking forward...

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Lucy Wainwright Roche & Suzy Roche*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Vinyl Night*, hosted by Breakdown Records. \$ 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Rickie Lee Jones*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Fishbone's Angelo Moore, The Agonizers, Threat Level Burgundy*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Frankie Cosmos, Katie von Schleicher*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Mystic Warrior*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 11

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Hedgewitch* music video release. \$ 6 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague: *Sisters of the Circle*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Cinmastorm* feat. *Predator, Total Recall*. No cover. 7:30 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Lakeside Drive*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Gaslight Tinkers*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Trans Inclusive Crime Syndicate* presents *Hypercore*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 12

Palladium, Worcester: *Cattle Decapitation, Carnifex, Rivers of Nihil, Humanity's Last Breath*, many more. \$ 4 p.m.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Michael Slyne, Spectre Folk, Fugue State*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Karaoke*. \$ 9 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 14

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Bonnie Kane*. \$ 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown and Friends*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 16

Nova Arts, Keene: *Paper Castles, Stoner Will & The Narks, Jake McKelvie, Rick Rude*, more. \$ 4:30 p.m.

Mystery Train Records, Amherst: *Kath Bloom, Kate Lee, Wes Buckley*. \$ 5 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *girlpuppy, Mesa Verde*. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Gift, Carinae*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

City Space, Easthampton: *Nate Wooley's Columbia Icefield* with *Susan Alcorn, Ava Mendoza,*

and *Ryan Sawyer*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 17

Nova Arts, Keene: *The Messethetics, Marc Ribot, Prefuse 73, Wadada Leo Smith, Jim White/Marisa Anderson duo*, more. \$ 2 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Erin McKeown, SPOUSE*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Vimana, The Fawns, DJ Andujar*. \$ 8 p.m.

Ashfield Lake House, Ashfield: *Stoner Will & The Narks, Cowperson*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 18

Nova Arts, Keene: *Earth, J. Pavone String Ensemble, The Huntress and Holder of Hands, Sunburned Hand of the Man, The Leafies You Gave Me*, more. \$ 2:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Jeopardy, SLOBDROP, Epicenter, Wargraves*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meeting-house, Leverett: *Antje Duvokot*. \$ 7 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Stephen Kellogg*. \$ 7 p.m.

Colonial Theater, Keene: *Bella's Bartok*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Institute for Musical Arts, Gosh-

en: *June Millington, Toshi Reagon*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Big Yellow Taxi*, Joni Mitchell tribute. \$ 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Abysal, King Bastard, Necrelant, Warm*. \$ 8 p.m.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *SickFit, Rear Window, Brujo, Taxidermists, Swamp God*. \$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 19

Nova Arts, Keene: *Buck Meek, Nina Nastasia, Mal Devisa, Jolie Holland*, more. \$ 12 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Jessica Pavone String Ensemble, Kurt Weisman, Milk of Mustard Seed, Nat Baldwin*. \$ 2 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Church, Turners Falls: *Cry Out for Peace*, feat. *Our Lady of Peace Singers, Eventide Singers*, readings on peace, justice. Free. 3 p.m.

Bondhu, New Ashford: *Mutual Aid for Gaza Benefit* feat. *Sound For, Jen Gelineau, Creative Writing, MYTH'D*. \$ 5 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Center for New Americans* presents *Immigrant Voices*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 21

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Alexander, Wes Buckley, Parashi*. \$ 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 21

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Coral Grief, The Upstairs District, Big Destiny*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 25

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Juan Carlos Marin Band, Myrtle Street Klezmer*. No cover. 4 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

Three County Fairgrounds, Northampton: *Sheer Mag, Indigo de Souza, Dehd, Butcher Brown, Thus Love, Sun Parade, Lucy*, more. \$ 12 p.m. See field-day.rocks.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Negativland, SUE-C, Valley Solar*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Greenfield Records' Big 15* feat. *Noise Nomads, Old Pam, Stella Kola, The Eye, Willie Lane, Big Destiny, Creative Writing, Moth's Frog*. \$ 1 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Betty LaVette*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRI-SUN, JUNE 21-23

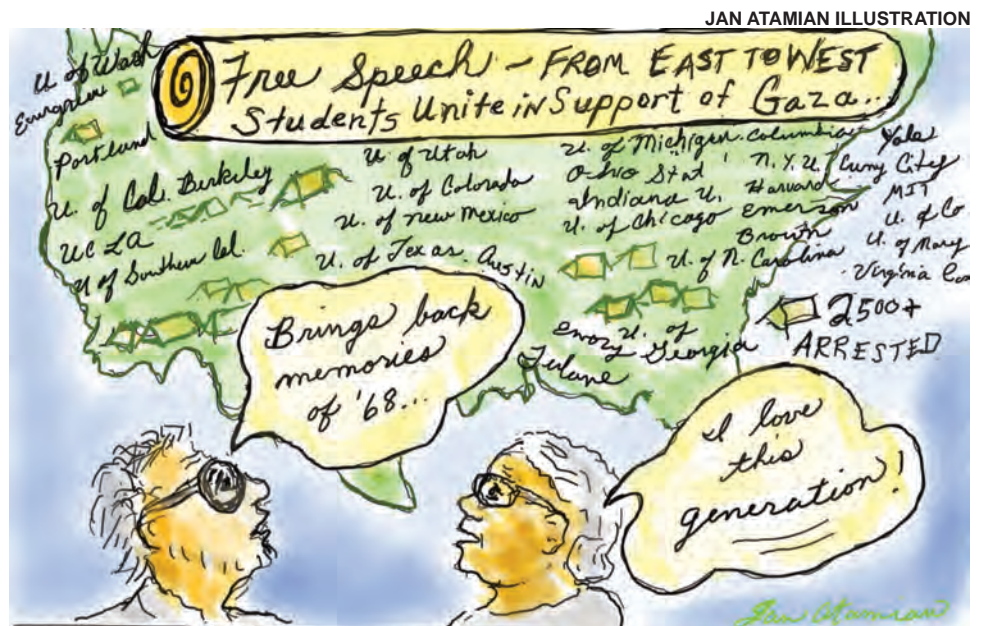
Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Green River Festival* feat. *Cake, Fleet Foxes, Gregory Alan Isakov, Mdou Moctar, Dakshabakra, Speedy Ortiz, Son Rompe Pera*, more. See greenriverfestival.com.



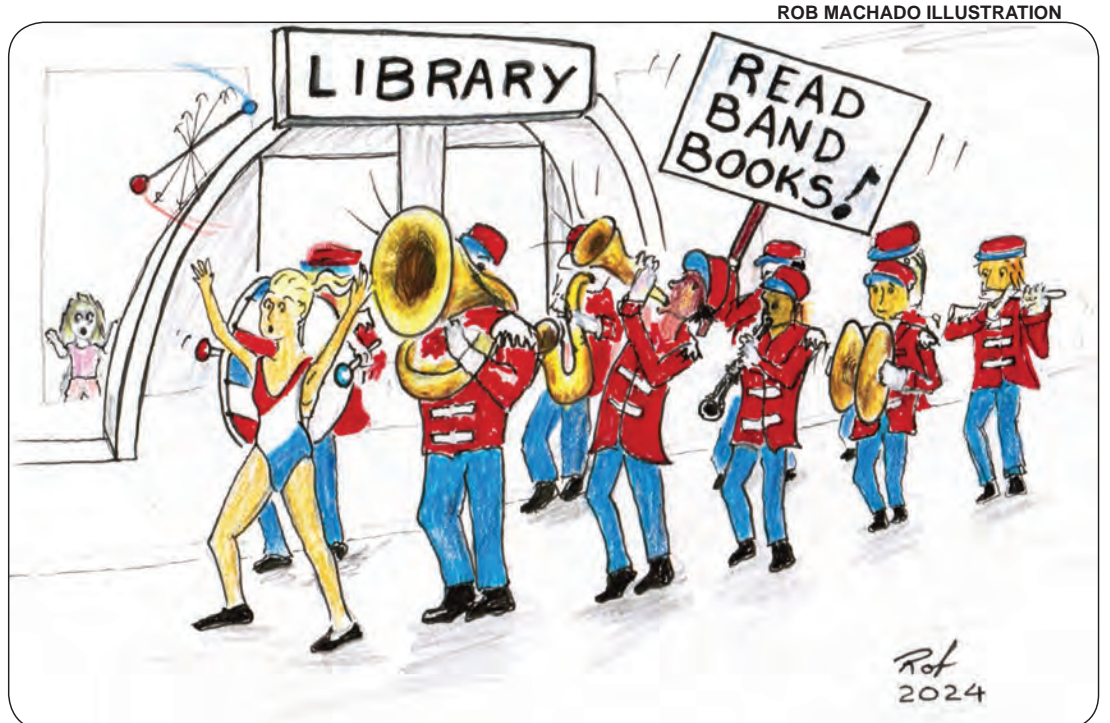
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VALLEY VIEW from page B1 eight weeks. Their parents continue to feed and protect them through the summer, and by autumn the young ones move on to seek new territory of their own.

The fact that the nest was there didn't come as a great surprise. I had been aware of new owls in the neighborhood for at least a few months. I now know the timing made perfect sense. Online information identifies GHO as early nesters in the bird world.

I can't recall when I first started hearing those unfamiliar adult hoots, but it was probably in late December or January. I regularly heard them as I passed marshy meadows skirting the upland base north of my home. I immediately suspected GHO because I knew

there had been a previous nest in the same area many years ago, when I was directly impacted.

Back then my sons were school-boys and my daily *Recorder* shift brought me home at around 2 a.m. My last chore before bed was to run and water my English springer spaniel gundogs out back by the brook. That was the last time I remember hearing the long, haunting GHO hoot, which in no way resembles joyous barred owl hooting with its familiar cadence of *Who cooks the stew? Who cooks for you awwwwllllll!*

When my small, female, calico Manx, Kiki, went missing, I felt certain she had been the victim of those large, wee-hour GHO I kept hearing, and I still believe this to be the case. Known as the "tiger of the north

woods," they hunt small animals like rabbits and squirrels. Kiki was no larger than a rabbit, and her highly visible white base would have made her easy pickings as she hunted the backyard stonewall day and night for mice, chipmunks, and you name it.

I now believe that the loud presence of GHO in the neighborhood is a likely reason why turkeys seem to have vacated territory within earshot of my home and morning ramble. I know turkeys do not view owls as friends. That I discovered as a turkey hunter who employed barred-owl locating calls to stimulate aggressive responses from combative gobblers establishing *their* domain.

On the other hand, hen turkeys likely try to avoid building their ground nests near the nests of large owls capable of devouring their broods. If hens leave a habitat, gobblers follow.

Thus far this year, my lone Meadows turkey sighting occurred at around 7 a.m. in corn stubble slightly more than a mile south of my home. There I caught two lonely hens scratching and feeding their way west toward Colrain Road. That's it. Not another sight or sound of turkeys in a place where they have previously thrived. This at daybreak no less, prime time for gobbling – better still gobbling that carries great distances from high in a tree.

My neighborhood owlets disappeared from view about two weeks ago and are likely by now flying and helping to thin out the upper Meadows squirrel and rabbit population. I hope they eat young woodchucks, too. Woodchucks have menaced me and my neighbors in recent years.

As for the temporary scarcity of turkeys, well, I can't say I'm concerned. They may not be in my backyard these days, but I don't have to travel far to find them.

Gary Sanderson lives in Greenfield. Questions and comments welcome at gary@oldtavernfarm.com.

Town of Erving Office of Community Planning & Erving Public Library present

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Join us to unveil a new natural materials sculpture by Laker's Acres at the Erving Library!

Sculpture Demo by Laker's Acres | **Friends of the Library activity booth**

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Ribbon cutting at 1:00pm | **Holyoke Hummus food truck**

Sunday, May 19, 12:00-3:00 PM
Erving Public Library

This project is funded by the New England Foundation for the Arts in partnership with Forecast Public Art and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

*The festival has room for 6 Erving vendors that are compatible with the festival theme and location availability. Please call the library for info. Sign up will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

2 Care Dr., off rt. 63, Erving, MA 01344 (413) 423-3348 erving-ma.gov/library



ROBBIE BAKER PHOTO

A horned adult (left) is seen with the young.

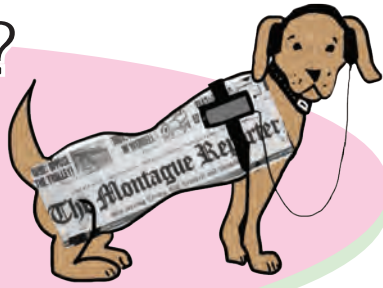
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