

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 22 – NO. 29

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1.50

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 13, 2024

Gill's Voters Finish Annual Town Meeting, Praise Schools

By KATE SAVAGE

Gill residents gathered on Tuesday for Part Two of their annual town meeting, unanimously approving a town budget of \$4.4 million for FY'25. The budget has grown \$160,000 since last year, an increase of 3.8%. To cover costs, the average annual taxes of a single family residence are estimated to increase by about \$200, to \$4,612.

In rough numbers, 40% of the budget will go to the Gill-Montague Regional School District (GMRSD); 19% to public works, which includes roads, bridges, and sewers; and 9% toward public safety, which includes police, fire, and emergency management costs.

Selectboard chair Greg Snedeker thanked the finance committee and town administrator Ray Purington for finding ways to reduce the budget to "manageable" numbers. "We had quite a few budget meetings this spring, and to get our increase in tax down to 4.5% was a

see GILL page A8

New Hauler Preparing to Learn 'Nooks And Crannies' Of Montague

By JEFF SINGLETON

Three weeks from now a new company, Casella Waste Management, will be in charge of curbside trash and recycling pickup in Montague. Casella is replacing Republic Services, which has struggled to keep up with its pickup schedule, and frequently missed routes since the pandemic began. On Monday night Casella representatives presented the Montague selectboard with its transition plan and responded to questions from the board and public.

Market area manager Kyle Orr, who oversees operations in central and western Massachusetts, began by saying that the company was founded in 1975 by John and Doug Casella in Rutland, Vermont and has since "expanded all across New England, and recently into the mid-Atlantic markets."

Brandon White, strategic account manager for Montague, said the company would soon be sending out a "mailer" to all town residents, and would provide a "promotional video" for the town "to send out to all their social media platforms."

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz noted that the materials mentioned a "Casella app," and wondered whether this would provide a way for residents to contact the

see HAULER page A8

Glen Goes Up For Sale



Charles Garbiel still enjoys running the Avenue A diner, but wants his time back.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – "You've just gotta find that right person," Charles Garbiel says, taking a break for the press as a deep pile of tomorrow's bacon smolders on the grill at the Shady Glen. "The only way I'll know if they're out there is if I list it!"

After 12 years at the helm of the iconic Avenue A diner, Garbiel has decided to put the busi-

ness on the market – turnkey. His best guess is that it could take six months to a year to sell.

"I would like to see it stay the same, but I'm not going to force anybody's hand," he says. "That wouldn't be fair to the people buying it. If they just come in and want to make a hot dog stand – hey, it's your money!"

The Shady Glen has been the Shady Glen since before Garbiel see GLEN page A6

High School Sports Week Thunder Heads to Finals

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – The Franklin Tech Eagles and the Turners Falls Thunder both competed in the MIAA Division 5 softball playoffs this week.

The Eagles, who had only lost to Turners and Greenfield by one run each in the regular season and made it into the semifinals in the Western Mass tournament, lost a heartbreaker to Georgetown in the Round of Eight after surrendering four unearned runs in the first inning.

The Thunder also let up an unearned run in the first inning of their own Elite Eight contest against Narragansett, but rebounded to defeat the Warriors 11-4 and advanced to the Final Four round. On Wednesday night the Thunder defeated the Hopedale Blue Raiders at Worcester State University 4-1, earning their way back to the state championship game this Saturday.

Georgetown 4 – FCTS 2

The fifth-seeded Softball Eagles see SPORTS page A6



Turners Falls' Janelle Massey blasts a triple in the bottom of the sixth inning, a key play in the Thunder's 4-1 win over the Hopedale Raiders in Wednesday night's MIAA Division 5 semifinal at Worcester State University.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Pot to Demo Mills Doubles; MassDOT Intends to Build New Bridges Beside the Old

By JEFF SINGLETON

Monday's Montague selectboard meeting was dominated by two long presentations on important issues facing the town – a plan by the Department of Transportation to build three new bridges over the Turners Falls power canal and Connecticut River, and the transition to a new trash and recycling hauler. The board also voted to appoint Christopher Nolan-Zeller as the new assistant town administrator.

But buried near the end of the agenda was a brief item about an agreement with the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for \$5,000,000 for the "abatement, demolition, and restoration" of the town-owned Strathmore Mill. This, it turned out, was something of a bombshell.



State transportation officials said they favor a plan to build new bridges about 70 feet southwest of the White Bridge and the canal bridge connecting to it.

"This is what we have been working for on so many levels," town administrator Steve Ellis told the board.

In 2018, he explained, then-state see MONTAGUE page A7

GCC Leadership Accused Of Squelching DEI Report

This article was first published earlier this week at The Shoestring (www.theshoestring.org).

By DUSTY CHRISTENSEN

GREENFIELD – Greenfield Community College has been thrown into turmoil in recent weeks over the revelation of a previously unreleased report from a consulting firm that questioned the commitment of campus leaders to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

On Monday, the college's faculty-and-staff union said they voted nearly unanimously to hold a vote of

no confidence in Provost Chet Jordan and President Michelle Schutt over the matter. The union will also present Schutt a list of demands for re-establishing trust. Leadership of the Greenfield Community College Professional Association, or GC-CPA, accused Schutt of burying the report, denying its existence, and then fighting to keep the full document from the union.

The report, an unredacted copy of which The Shoestring has obtained, detailed several alleged instances of racist behavior from unnamed administrators and accused Jordan and see GCC page A5

TFHS Principal Becomes Fourth Top Administrator Departing This Semester

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – The end of classes this week brought with it the announcement that Christopher Barnes, principal at Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School, is leaving the district.

Barnes, who served in the position for three years, has been hired as principal at Monument Mountain Regional School in Great Bar-

ington, according to the Berkshire Eagle and Gill-Montague superintendent Brian Beck. The district posted the opening to its Human Resources website on Tuesday.

Also advertised is the position of director of teaching and learning. Beck told the Reporter that Jeanne Powers, who has been with the district for three years as well, was "recruited for a position in higher see GMRSD page A7

Auditor: UMass Broke Law Privatizing Fundraising Jobs

By SARAH ROBERTSON

AMHERST – The state auditor's office recently determined that the University of Massachusetts Amherst violated state law last year when it eliminated over 100 unionized positions from the university's fundraising office and offered the workers jobs at the private UMass Amherst Foundation.

University officials first announced the proposal to outsource most fundraising work from the

Office of Advancement in December 2022 as way to comply with state pension laws, and the transition was finalized in May 2023. The two unions that had represented the employees, the Professional Staff Union (PSU) and University Staff Association (USA), opposed the change and continue to argue it wasn't necessary.

"The fight to save public work and bring these positions back to UMass Amherst isn't over," USA see UMASS page A3

Moving Into the Universe; Drifting This Way and That

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

Esteem!

The *Montague Reporter* would like to wish a very special and very Happy Birthday to Carolyn Clark, a longtime member and frequent officer of our Board of Directors, distribution supervolunteer, occasional genealogy columnist, and from late 2018 until just this winter this newspaper's interim distribution manager.

We won't specify which day this week is Lyn's birthday or what age she has reached, but we will note that the number is round and auspicious, and that her lifespan overlaps

with those of Bonnie and Clyde.

The *Reporter* is set to reach a milestone of its own soon, with our 1,000th edition – as the Romans would say, our Mth edition – due August 8. Though we share a bit of subscription money with writers and photographers, a large amount goes to printing and other forms of overhead, and not a single edition would ever have come out without the significant and regular efforts of patient volunteers like Lyn.

Happy Birthday, and thank you for all your hard work!

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

"I know it's a lot of stuff going on," Valley Housing Cooperative founding member Saul Shanabrook sighed as he helped us better understand the proposals VHC has assembled for new housing on Greenfield's Stone Farm Lane (June 6, *Poet's Seat Ridge Eyed for Possible Coop Development*, Page A1).

First and foremost, we misidentified Noble Home architect/owner Noah Grunberg in a caption on Page A1 as "Valley Housing Co-op member Saul Shanabrook." This was a human error at the *MR* office; our reporter and photographer correctly identified Grunberg in the photo. We apologize to Shanabrook and Grunberg, our readers, and anyone else who cherishes apology.

Getting into the nitty-gritty, though, VHC members flagged inaccuracies in the article stemming from a misunderstanding of their presentation at a fundraising event last week.

The idea is not, as we wrote, to create a "24-unit housing coop." A leasehold for a portion of the 32-acre parcel, which Valley Community Land Trust would purchase, would go to Noble Home to build a 24-unit condominium cluster. (We also wrote that this was "about an acre," but the actual leasehold would be 7.5 acres.)

"These condo units are not part of the co-op although the co-op may opt to purchase some of the units," VHC member Sara Brown clarified. On the other 24.5 acres, Brown said, VHC envisioned trails, gardens, and low-impact projects as we wrote, but also "plans for future development."

According to Shanabrook, VHC imagines this as 10 to 20 "little houses," and plans to dis-

cuss the idea of building 10 of the units with the city this week. "We're not going to move as quickly as Noah is," he said.

Understanding now that there would be two separate developers on the land, we see our final error: reporting that "[a]ll of the projected 24 units are currently spoken for."

"Noah's 24 units are not spoken for yet," Brown wrote. "Interested folks can reach out to info@noblehome.design."

"[We were] saying that Valley Housing Coop currently doesn't have any openings for residents," Shanabrook explained in a follow-up conversation. "It was meant to kind of head off everyone being like, 'I want to live there'.... We don't have a real development plan yet."

The scheme is complicated by the group's determination not to displace the residents of two duplexes already on the parcel – it would become a third leasehold of the land trust, owned separately by VHC – and by the possibility that the coop would purchase condos from Noble Home for its members to live in.

"That would let folks who couldn't get a mortgage, or couldn't pay for the downpayment of those units, to still be member-owners and live there," said Shanabrook.

Phew! We hope we got it all right this time. If not, we'll take a third swing at it.

Oh, and the \$177,200 VHC would need to raise by the end of this month? Brown said the group is still seeking "at least" \$22,000 in donations, and looking for additional loans before closing. According to Shanabrook the closing date is still set for June 27.



NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION / CAPTION AND ORIGINAL PHOTO BY SARAH ROBERTSON

Myra Glabach waits for her turn down the Unity Park hill at the Montague Soapbox Derby last week. Glabach's cart raises awareness of chronic recurrent multifocal osteomyelitis (CRMO), a rare inflammatory bone condition she was diagnosed with when she was 10.

Letters to the Editors

Extreme Engine Noise a Form of Aggression; Police Should Figure Out How to Enforce Law

Turners Falls has a noise problem and it's time we addressed it.

There are motorcycles so loud you can hear them from one end of town to the other, trucks and cars with exhaust systems altered to produce a deafening roar. There's one motorbike that purposely backfires, making a sound like gunshots. This kind of noise has no purpose but to intimidate and disturb. It is a form of aggression.

The noise wakes sleeping children, drowns out backyard conversation, and triggers symptoms in people with nervous system disorders like PTSD and fibromyalgia.

There are also legal issues. The vehicle noise disturbs the peace. It is easily louder than the legal decibel limit, and it breaks Massachusetts law against purposeful alteration of a vehicle "so as to make a harsh, objectionable or unreasonable noise."

How can we address this issue? By the time a police car could respond to a particular complaint, the offending vehicle has already gone. Could the police issue tickets when they come across these common nuisances? Could we institute harsher penalties for aggressive noise? Or are we helpless and forced to accept it?

Lillian Moss
Turners Falls

War on Women, War on Democracy Bigger Than Just the *Dobbs* Decision

A demonstration will be held on the Greenfield town common on Sunday, June 23 at 12 noon to observe the second anniversary of the Supreme Court *Dobbs* decision, which took away women's constitutional right to abortion.

Following this decision, many states have outlawed vital aspects of women's health care, including abortion, and now threaten access to contraception and LGBT rights. But *Dobbs* is not an isolated event – it is part of a reactionary plan to more broadly undermine women's rights, bodily sovereignty, and democratic governance.

The demonstration is organized by the Reproductive Justice Task Force of Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution (FCCPR), together with the Feminist Action Team of Indivisible MA, the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice, Western MA Code-Pink, Western MA Jewish Voice for Peace, the Amherst Young Feminist Party, the Democratic Socialists of America River Valley Branch, and the Western MA Area Labor Federation.

All are invited to this important event. Similar "Bigger than Dobbs" events are taking place all across the state.

We will also take note of how this attack on women's rights connects to a War on Humanity that leaves most US citizens unable to influence the decisions of their own government – in the ongoing genocide in our name in Gaza, as well as in policies that affect our lives at home. We are holding this rally to highlight how wars, the present Supreme Court, and reactionary anti-democratic politics are all part of the war on all of us, and on women in particular, in a multitude of ways.

A number of powerful and informative speakers will discuss the issues, their interconnections, and actions we can do in response. Please join us and spread the word! For more information, contact Ann Ferguson at ferguson3638@gmail.com.

Ferd Wuklan, FCCPR
Montague Center

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

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The Connecticut River Conservancy reports that as of May 30, close to 50,000 sea lampreys made it over the Holyoke dam, compared to 22,000 total in 2023. Lamprey will be more noticeable below barriers, such as dams and culverts, and around rocky river beds.

The CRC asks folks to not disturb the lampreys, who are returning to freshwater to build nests for their eggs and spawn. They do not feed during their migration, and pose no risk to the environment or people.

Volunteers are sought to walk rivers and streams in the watershed area to document sea lamprey nests in June and July. Find out where and when, and sign up, at ctriver.org.

This Saturday morning, June 15 at 11 a.m., the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls hosts "Eco-Magic with Mike Bent," a free, one-hour program featuring magic, storytelling, music, and kid-friendly comedy touching on topics of water pollution and conservation, recycling, and responsible forestry. The program is designed for children and their caregivers, though all are welcome.

The Wendell Misfit Prom is this Saturday, June 15. The parade, with the theme of "Wendell Goes Medieval," begins at 6 p.m. from the common and progresses to the Deja Brew parking lot.

Ticketed festivities begin at 6:30 at Deja Brew, with live music by The Salty Heifers and Carol Devine & The Mighty Fine as well as a big tent, a dance floor, a photographer, a barbecue, raffles, and bonfire.

Tickets will be sold at the door for \$20, but are \$15 ahead of time at the Wendell Country Store. Children under 10 are free. The beneficiary this year is Village Neighbors, an organization that helps local seniors live comfortably at home by matching them with volunteers who

offer services such as rides to appointments and home repairs.

The Shea Theater will hold a Surreal Soiree, a night of phantasmagorical fun as a benefit for the community theater in Turners Falls on Saturday, June 15 at 7:30 p.m. The B-52.0's will play, and there will be a Dada dance party curated by DJ Just Joan, with drag moments by Tytannia Lockhart and Sir Real.

Tarot readings, a 50/50 raffle, a photo booth, and "so many more weird and wacky curiosities" will reportedly keep you busy between turns around the dance floor. Tickets are \$25 at the door, or \$20 in advance at sheatheater.org.

On Father's Day, this Sunday, June 16, the Franklin County Radio Control Club will have its annual "Fun Fly Airshow Spectacular" at the Turners Falls Airport.

Come by between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to try out an RC airplane or simulator, watch those who fly them well do their thing, and enjoy food, games, and raffles.

The club's spot is at Gate 4, between Pioneer Aviation and the tech school in the Turners Falls Industrial Park. There is no charge for spectators, but donations are gladly accepted. Find out more at franklinrc.com.

The Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center will host a presentation on armored mud balls following their annual meeting next Thursday, June 20. "Revealed: The Amazing Story of Armored Mud Balls" will include a short walk to Unity Park to see examples of armored mud balls with Professor Richard Little, who discovered these unique geologic formations.

All are welcome to attend the brief meeting and the ensuing presentation in the Great Hall at the Center in Turners Falls. Light refreshments will be provided.

Jubilee!, a Juneteenth concert of early New England music, is scheduled for the Deerfield Community Center on June 20 at 7 p.m. An all-star ensemble of early American music performers will play Abolitionist psalmody, spirituals, dance tunes, and chamber music from the repertoire of regional African-American composers and band leaders.

This includes the music of Greenfield's own John Putnam (c. 1817-1895), the "father of contraband music," and selections from a newly-discovered manuscript of music by early Connecticut composer and fiddler Sawney Freeman. The ensemble will perform on period New England instruments and will be joined by local shape-note singers, led by Historic Deerfield musician-in-residence Tim Eriksen.

Find tickets and more information at historicdeerfield.org.

Go on an Irish Fiddle Odyssey with Kenny Butler at Peskeompskut Park in Turners Falls next Friday, June 21 at 7:15 p.m. Butler will play a blend of traditional and improvised jigs, reels, and airs.

Following the live music at 7:45 p.m. will be the award-winning animated film *Song of the Sea*. The hand-drawn movie is described as an "enchanted tale that blends the timeless magic of Irish mythology with a poignant story of family and self-discovery."

LifePath's "Wellness Unplugged" topic for June is "Life After Losing Your Driver's License."

The meeting will be held Monday, June 24 from 10 a.m. to noon over Zoom with a panel of professionals who will tackle the legal and emotional sides of surrendering one's license, as well as Franklin County Regional Transit Authority and LifePath advocates to teach about local resources for rides.

After the presentation, attendees will support each other in finding ways to apply the information to their lives. Find a link under "Events & Workshops" at lifepathma.org to register for the online meeting.

LifePath also has a program to help older people get to medical appointments by matching local volunteers with individuals in need of transportation. There's a waiting list of people with no other way to

get to their appointments, and they need more volunteers.

All LifePath volunteers receive training, supervision, and mileage reimbursement. Learn more at lifepathma.org/volunteer.

Try your hand at making wild fermented flower sodas on Saturday, June 29 at 12:30 p.m. at the Leverett Library. The drinks are made with nothing but water, raw honey, and edible flowers, herbs, and fruit.

This program is for both teens and adults, but space is limited; sign up by emailing leverettlibrary@gmail.com.

If you're still lining up activities for the kids to do this summer, you might be interested in the two-week summer theater sessions for youth at the Shea Theater in July led by Atticus and Enzo Belmonte. Geared for ages 8 to 12, each session will feature a workshop with Double Edge Theatre. The program will run 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, over the weeks of July 8 to 19 and July 22 to August 2.

Each day of the program will be dedicated to creating and rehearsing an immersive theater performance and learning and participating in various acting games and workshops. The cost is a sliding scale of \$400 to \$650 per session. This fee includes snacks, but not lunch.

Each session concludes with a performance at 10 a.m. on the last Friday of the session. Spaces are limited to 20 per session. Register at sheatheater.org.

If you're interested in learning more about managing diabetes and prediabetes, the Brick House Community Resource Center in Turners Falls is hosting a Diabetes Self-Management workshop on Saturdays from July 13 to August 17.

The workshop is for adults with prediabetes or diabetes or their caregivers, and teaches the basics of balancing medication, diet, exercise, techniques to deal with hyper- and hypo-glycemia, meal planning, stress reduction, and more.

Each workshop starts at 10:30 a.m. in English, and is offered again in Spanish at 1 p.m. To sign up or learn more, go to lifepathma.org.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
June 14 & 15 at 7:30 p.m.
LOVING VINCENT
This innovative animated bio of Vincent Van Gogh was created from tens of thousands of paintings. With a Q&A with local producer Nikki Justice.
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SHORTS BY
YOKO ONO & TEJAL SHAH
FRI. JUNE 28 • 7PM

MUSIC
Hedgewitch
Hollow Deck
Kevin Murray
Nick Neuburg
WED. JUNE 26 • 7PM

POETRY
Emily Hunt
STRANGER
w/ Seth Landman
SUN. JUNE 30 • 3PM
66 AVENUE A • TURNERS FALLS

UMASS from page A1

president Mary Malinowski said in a statement this week. "In the end, even UMass must be accountable to the law - and we won't stop until this theft of public work is put right."

The 1993 Taxpayer Protection Act (TPA) requires state agencies to receive approval from the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) before outsourcing services. UMass officials failed to submit required information prior to the transition, OSA general counsel Michael Leung-Tat wrote in a May 31 letter, or to explain how the move was "in the best interest of Massachusetts taxpayers."

"After reviewing this matter and the provided documentation in detail, we are unable to determine that this outsourcing produced financial savings at a higher quality of public service," Leung-Tat wrote. "We are informed that a time tracking system was not and is not currently in place to track employee time allocation.... This has prevented our office from completing the analysis that would help us make a determination regarding the cost savings."

OSA urged UMass to begin tracking how the fundraising employees spend time at work.

"[T]he unions are currently bargaining with

UMass administration over this time-tracking code," PSU organizer Jonah Vorspan-Stein told the Reporter, adding that despite the privatization the Foundation "continues to rely on state workers to perform a number of tasks."

The Foundation, founded in 2003 as a fundraising arm of the university's flagship campus, is a private nonprofit, and its employees do not receive state pensions. Under Massachusetts law, public employees may spend no more than 25% of their working hours performing tasks on behalf of affiliated institutions of this kind.

In 2022 university administrators told PSU and USA that many of their members were in danger of losing their pensions because their jobs exceeded this 25% threshold. After months of unsuccessful negotiation, UMass vice chancellor for advancement Arwen Duffy, who also serves as the Foundation's executive director, announced the decision to outsource the jobs.

"[T]hese positions are not being lost; they are being moved for compliance reasons and in the interest of protecting your past and future retirement contributions," Duffy wrote in February 2023.

At a March 2023 meeting of the state retirement board, Massachusetts treasurer Deborah

Goldberg said the non-compliance issue was "clearly and absolutely, 100%, UMass Amherst's responsibility," and indicated that the threat to the employees' pensions did not originate from her office.

"We've been arguing all along that UMass Amherst was recklessly rushing their privatization scheme - and now, the State Auditor agrees that UMass violated the law," PSU union steward Jason Johnson, a former Advancement employee, wrote on Wednesday.

UMass Amherst spokesperson Ed Blaguzewski did not respond to a request for comment Wednesday afternoon.

"Although the TPA does not provide the OSA with enforcement powers, we caution in the strongest terms that UMass Amherst and all campuses within the University of Massachusetts system comply with the TPA in the future and in all respects," Leung-Tat wrote.

"Now that the Auditor has determined that the privatization was illegal, we are hopeful that authorities with enforcement powers might intervene to set things right," Vorspan-Stein wrote this week. "One obvious next question is - who will enforce the Auditor's findings?"



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PAPER
Week of June 17
in Montague



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OP ED

Unraveling My White Supremacist History

By JANINE ROBERTS

LEVERETT – There are rumors that my Roberts great-grandparents were enslavers in Culpeper County, Virginia. I begin researching them before a 2023 southern road trip with a friend of 50 years, Delores Brown. Exploring Georgia, where Delores lived as a child with her sharecropper grandparents, visiting the National Lynching Memorial and the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, walking the Pettus Bridge in Selma – all catapult me further into family history.

I think, *if they enslaved people, it was just a few.*

Around 24% of heads of households in the South “owned” slaves in 1860, and 15% to 17% enslaved between one and nine people. Only in around 7% or 8% of households were 10 to 99 children, women, and men forced into grueling labor, according to statistics kept by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

After seven hours online, I discover a 1783 “property” tax list in Culpeper County for Joseph Roberts (1760-1834), my fourth great-grandfather. His so-called “property” is listed as: “Sawney, Will, Jacob, Adam, James, Joe, Voll, Kesar, Lett, Jenny, Easter, Lucy, Sarah,” and “7 small negroes.”

I curl into myself, gut-punched; these were people, not his “property.” Thirteen names, most likely imposed by so-called “masters.” Seven people with names unwritten; probably children eight and under. Eight, the age of my granddaughter. Images

in my mind of her picking tobacco leaf by leaf, absorbing nicotine through her skin, vomiting, weak with green tobacco sickness.

I’m ashamed of my earlier minimizing thoughts.

I dig deeper. Within two months I hold in my hands a copy of the February 14, 1782 will of Benjamin Roberts (1706-1782), my sixth great-grandfather. With a magnifying glass I read tight-cribbed handwriting, an eighth of an inch high.

In it, Benjamin bequeathed to my fourth great-grandfather Joseph: “One Clock, one Feather bed, two Stills...” and what he had no right to “give”: “Sixteen negroes viz Sawney, Seth, Rose, Nell, Nan, Winny, Alice, Jacob, Ginney, Sarah, Bett, Jack, Eve, Will, Georgia, & Easter, to him and his Heirs forever.”

I’m aghast. Forever? And no distinctions made between “two Stills” and human beings?

There’s more. Sam, Tim, Sue, Molly, Dolley and Adam were left to Benjamin Roberts, Jr., while Lewis & Leanor, Richard & Lett went to two other grandsons. Phyllis, Harvey, Simon, Dennis, and Reuben, along with three other unnamed “negroes,” were “left in the care” of my sixth great-grandfather’s executors.

Thirty-four people in all.

I say their names softly, then louder. Repeat them; a litany, a prayer. But how can I say a prayer for them when it was my kin who bought and sold them, worked them from dawn to dark? Three without even their imposed names recorded. What were their given names, called out with a lilt, with love, in

the enslaved quarters?

Near the end of the will: “Benjamin Roberts, a grantor, voluntarily conveys title of property to grantees.” Fissures in my heart. Nothing is voluntary for the 34 people in bondage, and their lives and livelihood. Or, for that matter, the actual property of the bondspeople, which is illegal to pass down. Embedded as well in the will were the forced labor camps my great-grandparents ran on some 2,000 acres stolen from the Manahoac.

But what happened to the people my relatives enslaved? I can’t find wills, deeds, or tax property lists for my relatives in the 1830s and ’40s. By the 1850s my second great-grandfather William Roberts was in Kansas with no bondspeople.

I think, *maybe some of my relatives had a reckoning and freed their “slaves.”* I scour Free Negro Registers. Nothing. I trek to Culpeper with my friend Delores.

There, in the County Courthouse with Virginia activist Zann Nelson, we unearth two key documents. The first shows “a contract this 24th day of August 1838” made by my third great-grandfather George Melton Roberts (1787-1860). He received from James Shotwell \$263.52 and ½ cents in exchange for his inheritance from my fourth great-grandfather, which included “six slaves, to wit Kale, Sam, Priscilla, Maria, Wyatt, and Ellen.”

In the second document, from September 17, 1851, widowed Elizabeth Roberts, my fourth great-grandmother, “grants unto the said Carter B. Cropp, the fol-

lowing named property to wit: certain slaves namely Sam, Maria, John, Ellen, Susan, Martha, Sarah, Hand, Wyatt, Louisa, Andrew, and Spencer with the increase of the females thereof.” Deep jolts: *increase of the females – the babies do not belong to their mothers and fathers!* My goddaughter has a three-month old. Lele is not hers?

No one was freed. My relatives paid off debt with human lives, including the unborn.

Delores and I roam land along Crooked Creek that my ancestors stole. Find a summer kitchen where enslaved people worked and slept in sweltering lofts.

We study new markers about Black heritage put up by the town and local groups, Right the Record and the African-American Heritage Alliance. Welter of sadness, recognitions of deep resiliences, fury that fuels accountability. Ideas percolate: support *righttherecords.com*’s community-based reconciliation projects; add the names I’ve found to *10millionnames.org*; create and fund a marker, with oversight from local Culpeperites, about what I’ve uncovered.

More sleuthing about the people my ancestors enslaved.

Janine Roberts, Professor Emerita at UMass-Amherst, lives in Leverett, and can be reached at janine@umass.edu. She hopes this op-ed, excerpted from her essay Accosting My Own White Supremacy, will instigate some readers to do some sleuthing into their own family histories this Juneteenth.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Anger at Outgoing Union 28 Superintendent

By KATIE NOLAN

At the Erving selectboard meeting held just before the annual town meeting on May 8, police chief Robert Holst read a statement regarding an April incident at Erving Elementary School in which “a student had been threatened with harm by another student. The threat involved the use of a firearm.”

Investigation, Holst said, determined that “there was no access to a firearm, and in addition, there was no evidence of a firearm at the Elementary School.” He mentioned that some school staff and staff of the Union 28 superintendency district had known about the threat during the week, but had not immediately reported it to his department.

The selectboard criticized the lack of communication with police by the administration, and decided to write the school committee and Union 28 supervisory committee requesting an investigation.

At their meeting this Monday, the board discussed a response from Union 28 joint school committee chair Steven Blinder, who wrote that the Erving Elementary staff were employees of the town of Erving, not Union 28, and that therefore the Union 28 committee had no authority over them – and that no action would be taken regarding superintendent Jennifer Culkeen, as she is currently on leave and will not return to the position when her leave ends.

“The idea that somebody is not held responsible for their actions because they are on leave and leaving the job is ludicrous,” said selectboard member Scott Bastarache. He said the administration’s actions had “caused chaos and disturbance... paramount to negligence” at the elementary school, and described Blinder’s response as “grossly inadequate.”

Member James Loynd said he agreed, adding

that there was “no excuse for the inaction and, quite frankly, the cavalier attitude about it. If we let it go as is, we are equally complicit in jeopardizing [staff and students’] lives and safety.” He recommended sending a letter to the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) asking what the town can do to hold Culkeen accountable.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said the committee’s response “makes us complicit if we just sit back and accept that answer.”

All three agreed that the former superintendent should be accountable for the handling of the threat incident. The board asked town administrator Bryan Smith to work with Jacob Smith to draft a letter asking DESE for guidance.

Former IP Mill

The \$3.7 million debt exclusion for demolishing the town-owned former International Paper Mill failed at May’s town election. In their notes for the annual town meeting the selectboard had warned that if the measure failed, the town would auction the mill. However, at Monday’s meeting there was some hesitation about going to auction, as a low bidder might be unable to develop the property and might neglect it.

Bryan Smith said that grants for demolition are very rare, but that Montague had recently obtained one, and it would be worthwhile to find out how that was accomplished. He said he would also check with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the town’s contact for US EPA grants.

He also reminded the board that the town still has a \$600,000 grant which it can use for a partial demolition of the property.

Bryan Smith observed that towns have two choices for developing town-owned properties: requests for proposals and auction. Several RFPs have been issued for the IP Mill without attract-

ing an appropriate developer. He recommended the town look into creating an economic development industrial corporation (EDIC).

According to the Department of Economic Development, EDICs are separate from town government, and must be authorized by state statute. They are used to develop industrial or manufacturing capacity, in order to reduce the unemployment rate and eliminate substandard or open areas.

Although unemployment is not high in Erving, Bryan Smith said he felt the town might be able to get an exemption. “The real benefit of an EDIC,” he explained, “is the flexibility in the way they can handle real estate transactions that towns can’t.” The board asked him to investigate the idea, and to get an estimate from engineering consultants Tighe & Bond about how much of the mill could be demolished for \$600,000.

Other Business

The selectboard held a public hearing for the relocation of a portion of Care Drive, a necessary step for a senior housing project proposed by Rural Development, Inc.

With the fin com, the board approved a \$62,000 change order for additional reconstruction of Maple Avenue, where new boundaries were established that extended the roadway. Funds will come from the town’s Chapter 90 funding. The board decided not to approve a \$42,000 change order for road work near the POTW #3 treatment plant, and agreed to wait on deciding about a change order for redoing paving near the town salt shed.

A \$66,655 contract for landscaping maintenance was awarded to Beulah Land Maintainers of Orange.

The selectboard requested, and the fin com approved, a transfer of \$8,000 to cover engineering and professional services for PFAS testing by the water department.

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GCC from page A1

Schutt of “incapacity and performativity” when it came to racial-equity work.

“The report is extremely upsetting for its portrayals of senior members of the Administration who seem ignorant of or only superficially committed to the work of anti-racism,” Trevor Kearns, the GCCPA president, said in a statement on behalf of the union’s executive committee. “An astonishing number of Cabinet members seem confused about basic concepts such as ‘equity’ and ‘race.’ Several administrators are accused of committing racialized harm.”

Jordan did not respond to an email requesting comment. A third-party PR firm working for the college informed *The Shoestring* that Schutt declined an interview, though she did answer written questions.

In a hastily called special meeting of the college’s Board of Trustees to discuss the matter early Monday – several days after the GCCPA released the full report to its membership – Schutt said that diversity, equity, and inclusion, which is often referred to collectively as DEI, continue to be a priority for her administration. She told trustees that the school initially hired RE-Center Race & Equity in Education, a Hartford-based consulting firm, in March 2023 after two failed hiring searches for an administrator to lead DEI work on campus. RE-Center had begun interviewing college staff and administrators, but Schutt terminated the firm’s contract in November before the consultants had spoken to students. The college had pre-paid the firm \$60,000 of an anticipated total contract cost of \$112,900, college records show.

“Unfortunately, in practice, their consulting model, process, and philosophy did not create a learning model [or] coaching opportunities for growth as we expected,” Schutt told trustees.

In particular, Schutt said that during a listening session, when one campus participant asked if DEI should consider economic status or class, a consultant said that was a “racist question” rather than neutrally working through the differing perspectives on that issue. Schutt also pointed to an incident when a white college administrator, during a discussion of an art exhibition on campus that included the N-word in its title, used the full title, including the slur, in discussion with the consultants.

“In no instance in this conversation was the word used as a slur or directed at an individual,” Schutt said. “The consulting team focused on the traumatizing nature of the use of that word with their staff instead of coaching the team member on how to potentially manage or address the N-word issue, including the use of the N-word in art and literature, and how campus leaders can address questions and concerns that will arise and may impact academic freedom.”

Schutt said that she found it concerning that the consultants wanted to treat some questions from the campus as personnel issues rather than educational opportunities, and that the firm was unwilling to make changes GCC had asked for in their approach and staffing. Schutt referred to the report RE-Center ultimately sent the college as “opinion, incomplete, and in some cases inaccurate” – a document she said was

created months after the college had terminated its contract.

“I believe this document to have been created out of frustration of a canceled contract and to insulate themselves from a potential request from GCC for a refund on work that had been paid for but had not occurred,” she said.

RE-Center did not respond to an email Monday morning requesting comment. Schutt did not answer a question from *The Shoestring* as to why that firm was hired over others.

In RE-Center’s report, the firm came to three conclusions: that at GCC there is “a pervasive ideology that increased diversity is the end point of and primary path to equity,” that the college lacks “a shared power analysis,” and that “there is campus wide dissatisfaction around leadership’s practices of transparency and methods of communication.” They accused the college of “a culture of distrust, individualism, and siloing of DEI work.”

“RE-Center must not be used to justify excuse-making, fragility, discomfort, and abandoning what was expressed as a commitment to BIPOC campus community members and community members from historically excluded identities,” the firm wrote about GCC ending its contract with them, using the acronym for “black, indigenous, and people of color.”

At Monday’s board meeting, Schutt faced criticism from trustees and Kearns – who was allowed five minutes to speak at the end of the meeting – about why they had only seen the report in recent days. RE-Center had sent the document to GCC in March.

“I’m deeply troubled that this is the first I’m hearing about any of this as a trustee,” board Vice Chair Anthony Worden told Schutt. “It just seems like as a body, we should have heard about this months ago.”

Initially, Schutt had declined the faculty union’s public records request for RE-Center’s report. The college’s response to that public records request in early May referred to the document as “unsolicited self-serving material from ReCenter that while using the word ‘report’ was not a report within the terms of the previously-terminated contract and was rejected by the College as *ultra vires* and unauthorized.” The college went on to say that RE-Center had not shared any of the underlying data from their work.

“Accordingly, no documents sent by ReCenter following termination of its contract are factual work product and any release would inhibit the ongoing DEI work by the College,” the response read.

Eventually, after another request from the union, Schutt allowed them to see the report in person, but in a heavily redacted format, Kearns said. At the board meeting, student trustee Michael Hannigan said that he had also received a copy with many details blacked out, though he also received an unredacted version from elsewhere.

“There’s a lot of troubling things within the report,” Hannigan said. “I definitely share the frustration of not being informed about this until now.”

The document details what consultants said were several incidents of racism while canvassing on campus: a white member of Schutt’s cabinet interrupting and dismissing the consultants during a retreat, for

example, and the one administrator’s use of the N-word four times.

“RE-Center shared the exchange with senior leadership,” the report said of the use of the slur. “A Cabinet member in a supervisory position shared that nothing would be done because of the friendship the President has with this individual who used the n-word.”

Schutt, for her part, told trustees she couldn’t talk about individuals quoted in the report because it is a human-resources issue. She also questioned the accuracy of some of the quotes included throughout the document. But she said she did speak with the administrator who used the N-word and that “the error was acknowledged, reflection was made, actions were taken that I can’t go into specifics on.”

RE-Center also criticized the college’s DEI plan, which the firm said envisioned a DEI office with a staff of one person with a job description that is “unrealistic particularly with limited agency.” The consultants said the DEI director role should be at the vice president level instead of being unpaid, stipended, or rolled into the existing duties of another senior administrator. The college’s DEI plan also called for an insufficient budget and no staff for the DEI office, the consultants said.

Speaking to the Board of Trustees, Schutt said that the college has already posted a vice president of DEI position and that a national search is underway. That person will report directly to the president, she said.

RE-Center’s recommendations to the college included ensuring that equity work is role-specific and not “person-dependent,” restructuring the president’s cabinet to make DEI work part of all of those administrators’ expectations, and creating equity goals that “shift power, not celebrate diversity.”

“The President and Provost must invest in their own learning via Executive Coaching from a trained racial equity facilitator,” the report concluded. “The demonstrative evidence of their incapacity and performativity is masking behind their perceived view that leadership at the college has always been critiqued. An ownership of the direct harm they cause and are causing must be acknowledged and addressed or it will continue to occur.”

In written remarks to *The Shoestring*, Schutt said she does expect to identify “personal coaching resources and participate in any team trainings with an open mind and open heart.” She said that DEI work requires trust and that timeliness, transparency, and accountability are part of establishing that trust.

“At the same time, as a College we have a responsibility to protect the privacy of individuals who participated in a confidential learning session and to assure that information that is shared is complete and accurate,” she said. “In this instance, I want to acknowledge that I could have done a better job of communicating with our community earlier and with more details about the discontinuation of the relationship with the DEI consultant and next steps.”

Schutt said that other DEI work is also underway at the school. She told trustees that this includes everything from eliminating traditional remediation courses to lobbying state lawmakers on issues like housing, additional student

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MONTAGUE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

In accordance with the Mass. Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, the Montague Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, 2024 to review the Notice of Intent filed by NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy for the 21C6 Distribution Line Reconductor Project. Jurisdictional activities include installation of 2 new distribution poles, grading for installation of a temporary matted work pad and removal of 13 trees in the 200-foot Riverfront Area, and/or 100-foot Buffer Zone along Migratory Way and within the 21C6 ROW between Migratory Way and the Connecticut River.

The public hearing will be held on June 20, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in-person and remotely. In-person meeting details, remote meeting login information, and the filing are available for review at www.montague-ma.gov/calendar.

funding, and free community college for all. She said the school is exploring academic and workforce opportunities in Hampshire County and just graduated the first cohort of certified nursing assistant students who speak English as a second language. She said that the college will not hire another consulting firm for DEI work.

It remains to be seen whether those steps will repair tensions on campus. In an interview with *The Shoestring*, Kearns, the union president, said that it took three months before Schutt even acknowledged that she had terminated the contract with RE-Center in February. And even then, he alleged that she misrepresented the reason the college fired the firm. Then, he said Schutt made efforts to suppress the report, which was paid for with taxpayer dollars.

“There’s really a culture of secrecy, of deception, and of protecting administrators to the detriment of my members,” he said.

It appears that some of the fissures on campus run deeper than just the latest debacle related to the DEI consultants. Kearns told *The Shoestring* that there has been significant turnover in recent years in the administrative ranks, including three presidents in the past four years. And he had sharp words for the current leadership on campus.

Speaking to the college’s trustees, Kearns said that withholding the report was just the latest example of this administration’s opacity. “During their time here, the

president and provost have managed to systematically dismantle the caring, inclusive, and collaborative culture that made GCC unique,” said Kearns, who has taught at the school for 15 years. “In its place, they have installed a culture of secrecy, dissembling, evasion, stonewalling, disrespect, and sometimes outright abuse.”

Kearns said that he and his members understand that consultants don’t always work out.

“But instead of communicating that bare minimum to the campus, and instead of advancing DEI work at the college, the president spent her time trying to hide the report from the community, and, apparently, from you,” he told trustees. “At best, her actions are evidence of poor leadership; at worst, they are evidence of institutional racism and favoritism that might protect misconduct.”

Schutt said in a message to campus Monday afternoon that the college is identifying a partner to help host campus-wide dialogues this fall to “address issues of equity, communications, and process that have come to the surface as we resolve this issue.” She said that she will “identify opportunities” to gather feedback from students, too.

Dusty Christensen is an independent investigative reporter based in western Massachusetts. He can be reached at dusty.christensen@protonmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @dustyc123 or on Instagram @dustycreports.

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COURTESY OF CHARLES GARBIEL

Above: The original Tastee-Freez ice cream joint in the 1950s, with the original First Street tenement block visible behind it.

Right: The Shady Glen today.



CHRISTOPHER CARMODY PHOTO

GLEN from page A1

was born, though it was first built in the '50s as a Tastee-Freez – a black-and-white photo of the half-sized soft-serve joint still hangs above the counter. It was Richard's Drive-In from 1956 until 1963, when Frances Humphrey bought it, renamed it, and six months later turned it over to her brother, John Carey, who ran it for just over 40 years with his wife Linda.

"I used to come down here with my mom and get chicken fingers and fries when I was a kid," Garbiel tells the *Reporter*. "When I was going to GCC as a young adult, I'd come in and get breakfast and read the *Boston Globe* and then go to school."

In late 2004 the business and

building were purchased by the Zantouliadis family, who owned the Miss Florence Diner in Northampton; after a tumultuous year they kept the building but optioned the business to Athanasios "Tommy" and Ilias "Louie" Matheos. Garbiel bought everyone out in 2012.

At that point the Turners Falls native already had 15 years' experience under his belt working at the Turners Falls Pizza House, but the sellers still showed him the ropes.

"I shadowed Louie and he showed me the way they do things, and then over time I just started adding my own style," he recalls. "We brought in the breakfast burrito, we started doing eggs Benedict – sausage with gravy, things like that. Slowly, over time, you add

your own flavor to it."

Garbiel says COVID was "a ride," and describes the restaurant business as "a roller coaster – up and down, up and down," but he insists he still enjoys the work. The Glen's hours have been pared back to 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., but the diner remains open seven days a week.

"I like this setup because I can cook and talk," he says of his battle station between the counter and the grill – a gas grill, by the way,

which Garbiel had the good fortune to install just before Berkshire Gas declared a moratorium on new hookups in Montague.

"I get to harass the regulars, watch the new people from out of town laugh at the way we talk to each other," he continues. "It's like a fun little family... Mondays we have a captive audience, and Monday holidays are a madhouse – they're busier than the weekends!"

Garbiel imagines an ambitious

younger couple could restore the Glen's dinner hours, but says he's glad he no longer works the extended hours he did when he was "12 years younger." Now a Gill resident, he moonlights as a member of his town's selectboard – and as a dad.

"My daughter's six – I work here seven days a week," he laments. "I miss out on a lot of stuff she does... I don't look at it like I'm selling the business. I look at it like I'm buying time."



SPORTS from page A1

traveled to Penn Brook Field in Georgetown Saturday morning to challenge the fourth-ranked Georgetown Royals. By 11:15, Tech was down by four runs and was forced to play catch-up. To make matters worse, none of the runs were earned.

"We committed three costly errors in the first inning," head coach Joe Gamache said after the game. "We were able to settle in and battle back after that, but could not complete the comeback."

And battle they did. The 20-4 Franklin East Conference Champions never gave in. The Eagles' defense stabilized to keep the Georges off the boards for the rest of the contest, and in the third Tech even gained some ground as Gianna DiSciullo scored off a Jenna Petrowicz RBI and senior Kaitlin Trudeau batted Lilianna Inman in.

In the ensuing innings, with the gap narrowed to 4-2, Tech got runners on base while their defense kept Georgetown in check. But Franklin was unable to score again, and the Georges held on to win the game and advance to the Division 5 semifinals.

Trudeau, in her last game wearing an Eagles jersey, made a hit and drove in a run. Petrowicz had a hit and an RBI, DiSciullo drew a walk and scored a run, Inman scored, Cordelia Guerin and Kylee Gamache were walked, and Hannah Gilbert was hit by a pitch. In the circle, Gilbert scattered two hits, walked one batter, struck out six, and did not allow any earned runs.

The loss eliminates Franklin Tech from the MIAA tournament, ending a very successful 2024 softball season. It's easy for the girls to play "woulda, coulda, shoulda" in their minds, but in the end softball is just a game, and they gave their school and their supporters a wonder-filled, memorable season which

they will treasure for years to come.

Not to mention that the team will be immortalized on the championship banner in the gym.

TFHS 11 – Narragansett 4

On Saturday afternoon the Turners Falls Softball Thunder vanquished the visiting Narragansett Warriors 11-4 in the Division 5 quarterfinals. I found out about Franklin Tech's loss when I arrived at the Narragansett game, and I felt was a little conflicted cheering on Turners while mourning Tech.

Narragansett took advantage of some Thunder miscues in the first inning. A walk gave 'Gansett a base-runner, she advanced on an error,

and a wild pitch handed the Warriors a 1-0 lead.

Turners couldn't score in the first, but Madison Liimatainen struck out the side in the top of the second, and that's when the Thunder clapped back.

Addison Talbot led off the home second, with a base hit, Anne Kolodziej hit a fielders' choice bunt to advance the runner, and Madisyn Dietz skied a triple and scored on an error.

Marilyn Abarua followed with a base hit, Mia Marigliano walked, and Liimatainen and Holly Myers hit doubles to clear the bases. After two complete, Turners had a 5-1 lead.

The Warriors shot right back in

the third. Three walks loaded the bases with one out, another wild pitch gave 'Gansett another free run, and a base hit narrowed the margin to 5-3. It could have been worse. A throw to home plate caused a collision, but catcher Myers held on to the ball to limit the damage.

In the fifth, yet another wild pitch allowed the Warriors to score, so it was a one-run game going into the bottom of the inning.

In the home fifth, Talbot slapped a leadoff base hit, but two quick outs seemed to doom the rally. That's when Turners went on a tear. Seven more Thunder batters came to the plate in the inning, scoring six more runs and leaving the Warriors in a very desperate situation.

The next six Warriors went down in order, unable to respond, and Turners held on to win 11-4 to advance to the Final Four.

Myers led Powertown with three hits, including two doubles, and batted in four runs; Talbot also had three hits and she scored two runs. Dietz scorched a triple, Liimatainen and Autumn Thorton cracked RBI doubles, Abarua and Janelle Massey hit singles, and Marigliano and Maddie Haight scored two runs each.

In the circle, Liimatainen scattered two hits, walked six, and whiffed 15.

TFHS 4 – Hopedale 1

And then, on Wednesday, the Blue Thunder repelled the pinstriped Raiders of Hopedale at Worcester State University.

The Raiders were not an unknown entity to Turners. Since 2015, Powertown has defeated Hopedale in five straight semifinal playoff games. This week they stretched that streak to six.

Hopedale has some very large athletes on their team, but for Liimatainen this meant elongated

strike zones. She fanned two of the first three Hopedale batters easily, a harbinger of things to come.

Offensively, most of the Turners batters hit the ball hard, but it seemed to fly directly into the Raiders' gloves. The defensive battle raged on until the bottom of the fourth when Myers was walked and Anne Kolodziej batted in courtesy runner McKenzie Stafford.

In the sixth inning Hopedale tied it up on a perfect bunt, a fielders' choice, and an RBI. They managed to load the bases, but Turners' defense held tight, limiting the Raiders to one run and keeping the score tied.

In the bottom of the inning, Turners finally broke loose. Massey led off with a stand-up triple, and Talbot batted her home. The next batter struck out, but at this point the Hopedale pitcher seemed to lose her edge; Talbot stole second and advanced to third.

Then Dietz drew a walk, and didn't stop until she reached second base. With Talbot taking a long lead at third, the fielders didn't dare to throw the ball to second to get Dietz out. A wild pitch then scored Talbot and sent Dietz to third. Then Abarua walked – or actually ran – all the way to second base because Dietz was threatening to steal home if the Hopedales decided to try to throw out Abarua.

This seemed to frustrate the pitcher even more, and she threw another wild pitch, scoring Dietz and giving Turners a 4-1 cushion. In the seventh Turners finished strong, retiring the side in order to earn their way to another state championship match.

The championship game will be held this Saturday at noon at UMass Amherst. Turners will be playing the team that Tech lost to, the fourth-seeded Georgetown Royals.



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Turners Falls ace pitcher Madi Liimatainen led the Thunder from the mound last Saturday with 15 strikeouts against the Narragansett Warriors in the MIAA Division 5 quarterfinal at Gary Mullins Field. The Thunder's 11-4 win over the Warriors advanced them to the semifinals on Wednesday.

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GMRSD from page A1

education that is closer to home” and that she and Barnes would continue to serve the district until the end of this month.

Second-grade and third-grade teacher positions at Sheffield Elementary were also posted to the site on Tuesday.

Barnes and Powers join Hillcrest Elementary principal and early childhood coordinator Sarah Burstein and director of pupil services Dianne Ellis in departing Gill-Montague this semester.

In late May the administration announced the hire of Corrina

Weislo for the pupil services role, and this week Beck reported to families that Williamstown Elementary School principal Cynthia Sheehy had accepted the Hillcrest position.

“It is always challenging to conduct searches for new administrators, but can also provide a district with an opportunity to shape new teams,” Beck told the *Reporter* following the news of Powers’s and Barnes’s departures. “Summer may also provide an opportunity for a quicker release from an administrator’s previous position, so hopefully they can begin sooner.”



MONTAGUE from page A1

representative Steve Kulik had inserted the funding into a bond bill “focused on environmental considerations” including “climate change adaptation, environmental and natural resource protection, and investment in recreational assets and opportunities.” Ellis said that Kulik had understood “the pressing environmental risk that the Strathmore was becoming.”

This bond bill remains on the books six years later, so the current governor, with the support of Montague’s present state senator Jo Comerford and representative Natalie Blais among others, had the authority to allocate the \$5 million. It supplements a \$4.92 million federal Brownfields grant for the same purpose, bringing what Ellis called the total “capital stack” for the demolition of the complex to \$9.92 million.

“What this really means is it’s go time... for addressing this significant environmental and safety risk,” Ellis said.

The board voted to sign the documents required by the state to receive the award. Ellis told the *Reporter* the demolition of the mills could begin as early as summer 2025.

Bridges Likely to Move

Monday’s Zoom meeting began with a 50-minute presentation by the state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and engineering firm Stantec about the state agency’s Project 612799, the replacement of five bridges across the power canal and Connecticut River with new structures. The bridges connect downtown Turners Falls with the Patch neighborhood, with the old industrial district, and beyond it with the city of Greenfield.

The design phase for the project is anticipated to last until 2027.

The board had requested the meeting to review the options the MassDOT was considering before “they go too far in any one direction,” as assistant town administrator Walter Ramsey put it on May 20. On Monday, however, it appeared that MassDOT and Stantec had settled on one option, which would involve constructing three new bridges: one to Greenfield, a connector over the canal to that bridge, and a new bridge into the Patch to replace the existing “Bailey bridge.”

After an introduction by MassDOT major projects manager Rob Antico, who said that Montague had requested the meeting “so that we could show you what we believe is the preferred alternative,” Stantec project manager Dennis Reip reviewed the current status of the bridges in the area, as well as historical and environmental “constraints,” and summarized three options.

Reip quickly dismissed the first option, to rebuild the bridges across the canal and river in their current locations. A wider bridge with more space for pedestrians and bike lanes could not be reconstructed there to connect with existing roadways, he said, and the work would require an extended closure of traffic between the towns.

The second option, MassDOT’s preference, would build new main bridges across the canal and river approximately 70 feet downstream from the current bridges, allowing traffic to Greenfield to continue during construction. A third bridge would replace the Bailey bridge over the canal to Power Street and the Patch, and two disused bridges would be removed.

Reip acknowledged that this would have a significant impact on the privately owned 42 Canal Road property, requiring a new parking plan, right-of-way changes from the town and FirstLight Power Company, and likely the elimination of the front of the building, which was an addition to the historic factory.

He dismissed the third option, a plan to shift the entire alignment of the bridge over the river nearly 450 feet to the south, where the Bailey bridge is today. This alignment, he said, would still require significant right-of-way permissions, and would require a difficult elevation gain for the bridge over the river.

Ellis said the engineers had designed this alternative after town officials pressed them for an option that would have less impact on 42 Canal Road, and asked if it could still be feasible. Reip said that “it could be made to be feasible,” but reiterated that it would be difficult for the bridge to increase in elevation to meet Turners Falls Road in Greenfield further uphill.

Selectboard chair Rich Kulewicz asked if it was the town’s responsibility to secure the rights-of-way for the project. MassDOT compliance administrator Pamela Marquis said it was the responsibility of the town to negotiate rights-of-way and pay for their costs, including the hiring of appraisers, but that the state “will work with you to go through the process, and make sure the timing of it works.”

Historical commission chair Janel Nockleby asked about the potential impact on historic properties. Antico responded that there was “a way forward” to salvage the “historic portion” of the 42 Canal Road building, which was once part of a factory, and that “at that point it would be a town building.”

Ellis asked if there was any viable option “between” the first and second options, rebuilding the main bridges without as much im-

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

MIT Students Will Try to Mediate

By **JOSH HEINEMANN**

Near the end of Wendell’s June 5 selectboard meeting, just three days before the annual town meeting, treasurer Carolyn Manley came into the meeting room to share a snag in the already-posted town meeting warrant. Article 13 would appropriate \$246,122.31 for debt service on Wendell’s broadband project from a special revenue fund designated for Connect America Fund (CAF) disbursements, but Manley said the town is not allowed to appropriate this money until it is in the bank, and the money is not there yet.

At the town meeting on Saturday, Article 13 was therefore moved to the end of the warrant, and the meeting was continued until Wednesday, June 26, at 7 p.m. in the office building meeting room in the hope that by then the money will have arrived.

Citizens approved the rest of the town meeting warrant in just under two hours. The town’s operating budget was set at \$3,908,357, with \$260,000 taken from stabilization to reduce the tax rate. There were few dissenting votes, and discussion was mostly for clarification.

Siting Facilitators

Two MIT professors – Lawrence Suskind, Ford professor of urban environmental planning, and Jungwoo Chun, lecturer in urban studies and planning – sent the town and the citizens’ group No Assault and Batteries (NAB) a letter offering MIT’s renewable energy facility siting clinic to facilitate collaborative problem-solving meetings regarding the battery project proposed for forested land in Wendell.

Selectboard member Gillian Budine said at the June 5 meeting that the class was studying current legislation and mediation. Virtual and in-person meetings would begin September 9 and end December 13, and would cost Wendell and NAB nothing.

The board voted to sign a letter of engagement. Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato agreed to be the town’s point person in dealing with the class, while Bill Stubblefield will represent NAB. The clinic will share a final report with all “participating stakeholders.”

Technology

If a local fire alarm goes off at the town hall when no one is in the building, no one might hear it. Fire captain Asa DeRoode has suggested a monitored alarm system.

Board members hesitated to start the service, given the cost of installation and \$60 monthly charge. Budine suggested using community development block grant money, and town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad said he thought the town’s insurance agency, MIIA, might be willing to offer a grant.

Athol-based Tech 1 Computers gave Wendell a bid for IT services based on blocks of hours worked, as opposed to the monthly charge from Wendell’s present provider, Entre Technology of Springfield. Being more local, Tech 1 said they would not find on-site service calls a problem.

Johnson-Mussad said he has had some frustration with Entre trying to solve problems remotely, but that they help as an intermediary with Microsoft, a service Tech 1 does not offer.

DiDonato asked how easy it might be to break the IT services apart. Selectboard member Paul Doud suggested a conversation with Entre, and Budine said she would be willing to talk with the company, and added that she was concerned about Wendell’s service with Microsoft 365.

Public Hookups

Wendell Country Store proprietor Patty Scutari has discussed with town facilities engineer Jim Slavas her wish to connect her store to Wendell’s municipal water system. Slavas said that while the town well can provide as much water as the store needs, its flow rate would not be adequate for times of high water use, and his advice was that the store would need a water storage tank.

The Wendell Meetinghouse, whose Friends also want connections with both the municipal water and municipal septic systems, would also need to store water for high-use times. Scutari has said she is willing to pay for both the connection to the town system and a storage tank.

Although the Country Store is used by the public, it is privately owned, and the town might need to set a policy before it starts down the possibly slippery slope of allowing private hookups to its water system. Budine said there is a general law about connecting to a public water system.

Other Business

Before creating appointment slips for FY’25, board members culled people who have not sworn themselves in, who have moved from town, or who served in temporary positions.

FRCOG director of community services Phoebe Walker and Carolyn Hochard, Wendell’s regional public health nurse, came to discuss a five-year “age- and dementia-friendly” action plan being developed in Franklin County. The program is looking for input from towns about accessibility, use of open space, access to health services and housing, social and intergenerational inclusion, civic participation, information sharing, transportation, and impediments to participation.

Walker and Hochard mentioned libraries as places where old and young can be together comfortably, a senior tax work-off program that Conway is considering, and printing large-format warrants and passing around microphones at town meetings.

Library trustees Ruth Mazurka and Sylvia Wetherby brought a complaint to the selectboard about a resident who parks his car at the library and lets his pit bull out on a long leash. The dog runs at patrons, workers, and volunteers coming to and leaving the library, and it appears threatening. There have been a number of incidents – one resident was knocked down, and another fell and broke her wrist.

Wendell’s former dog officer had previous contacts with this resident, and did not wish to confront him again. The town’s animal control officer has left the Leverett police department, and the department as a whole now acts as animal control.

DiDonato said it was time to talk with the police, and possibly time for a dog hearing.

pact on 42 Canal Road.

“The simple answer to that question, MassDOT believes, is no,” Antico replied. “There really is no in-between.”

New Walter Secured

A proposal to designate Walter Ramsey to sign grant documents with the state to fund a “vulnerability inventory” for the Clean Water Facility encountered resistance from selectboard member Matt Lord, who noted that the agreements identified Ramsey as the town administrator, a designation that he does not yet hold. “It’s very formal, and it’s not factually accurate,” said Lord.

The board voted to sign the document but designated Ramsey as assistant town administrator, his current position.

Acting as the personnel board,

the selectboard approved a contract with Christopher Nolan-Zeller to be the assistant town administrator, and then formally appointed him to that position as of June 26.

“He has the right experience,” said Ellis, “and really wowed the [hiring] committee with the depth and fluidity of his thinking.”

Other Business

After the MassDOT discussion representatives of Casella Waste Management, who had been waiting patiently on Zoom, began their presentation on their transition on July 1 to the role of Montague’s trash and recycling hauler. (See *article, Page A1.*)

The selectboard, at the request of parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz, approved a \$95,998 contract with Central Mass Signal,

LLC for lighting upgrades at Unity Skate Park, funded by an American Rescue Plan Act allocation.

In a somewhat unusual decision, the board voted to certify that the “useful life” of a 10-wheel dump truck approved for purchase at last month’s annual town meeting would be “up to ten years.” Ellis said that the vote was necessary under state law in order to leave the town’s options open for issuing bonds at some point in the future to fund the purchase.

The board appointed Ellen Williams as substitute library assistant, and Franklin County Technical School student Jackson Pendelton as “summer help” at the Clean Water Facility.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 17.



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GILL from page A1

pretty heavy lift," he said. "We had a lot of rising costs."

The Education Equation

Half of the overall increase is driven by higher school expenses, as Gill has seen an 8% increase in enrollment in the GMRSD. Some attendees expressed concern that the state wasn't providing more funding for the school district.

Finance committee member Tupper Brown announced that he almost chose not to recommend the GMRSD assessment – "not because of any disapproval or question I had about the budget, but as a protest having to do with a rather large inequity built into the Chapter 70 funding program," he said.

Brown claimed that policies such as the local contribution cap place a heavier burden on poorer areas of the state, resulting in poorer towns subsidizing richer towns "to an amazing extent – about a billion and a half dollars across the state," he said.

Brown stated he "backed down from this terrible threat" and decided to recommend the school budget due to state senator Jo Comerford's work pushing the legislature to re-evaluate the Chapter 70 funding formula. "There is some hope that maybe somewhere in the future, maybe even at a time that I might see it, this can be corrected," he said.

GMRSD superintendent Brian Beck attended the meeting to highlight successes in the school district.

"We've managed to turn around our school choice numbers," he

said, citing recent improvements in enrollment trends. "There are an increasing number of students choosing to remain in the district or come to the district, and fewer students leaving to other schools, including charter schools. We hope those trends will continue in that direction. We've improved by 127 students over the last two years."

Beck added that one reason more students are choosing GMRSD for their education is that the school is increasing its offerings in athletics and theater.

Beck added that one reason more students are choosing GMRSD for their education is that the school is increasing its offerings in athletics and theater.

"I want to commend you on these extracurricular activities," selectboard member Charles Garbiel told him. "As somebody who graduated from Turners – '95, I'm not that old – I was ready to drop out my sophomore year. What kept me there was the swim team..."

"You may never know if there's a kid who's going to stay in school because there's a theater program, because there's a swim team, because of the things you're offering and adding now. And they may tell you, or they may wait till they're 47," he said with a laugh.

Applause and Cheers

Other budget increases include rising insurance costs for employees, buildings, and vehicles, which adds around \$30,000 to the budget. The highway department reports that road repair and maintenance is growing more expensive, adding over \$16,000 to its budget, and ambulance service costs are up \$10,000.

Asked about the increase in ambulance costs, fire chief and emergency management director Gene Beaubien explained that all the towns that contract with Northfield EMS for service have needed to kick in more money to cover facility and staffing costs.

Beaubien added that Northfield EMS's work is superior to the service previously provided by private company AMR. "Since they've taken over, they have not missed a call in Gill," Beaubien said. "The previous ambulance service was hit-or-miss. Most of the time Northfield would come anyway, because AMR could not maintain the service level to our area."

Other articles that passed approved a 3% cost-of-living-allowance increase for town employees and set aside funds for the expenses associated with appraising the land owned by FirstLight Power, which the town must undertake every five years.

Following applause and cheers at the meeting's conclusion, one resident was heard to explain to another that these things used to be more contentious and exciting.



HAULER from page A1

company "if there is a challenge."

"Especially with new drivers," Kuklewicz said, "it's going to take a bit of time for your drivers to get organized and understand our town – we have a lot of nooks and crannies."

Smith said the app's primary purpose was to notify residents of delays and "special pickup days," but that it is customizable, and could be set up to allow residents to communicate with the company.

Kuklewicz asked whether the company envisioned changing the route schedule, or sticker system, currently in effect in Montague. Orr said Casella planned to keep the same daily schedule, but recommended that trash and recycling be put on the curb by 7 a.m.

"There might be some differences in how we run the daily routes," he explained. "The days won't change, but a lot of residents get in the habit of 'Okay, my garbage man doesn't come until 10 o'clock, so I don't have my stuff out first thing in the morning...'"

Town administrator Steve Ellis said that one goal of the new contract is to "reinvigorate and ensure accountability with regard to the sticker and permit system that we have." The town website states that a one-time \$3 trash sticker – valid for bags or containers weighing up to 50 pounds – must be placed on a standalone trash bag, or on the top bag within a barrel.

Alternately, a "barrel sticker," good for six months, can be purchased for \$78 at town hall and placed on the barrel.

Ellis said the town has recently been lax about enforcing the weight limit, in part because Republic did not have the time or ability to weigh containers. He did not outline a new enforcement mechanism, but said that for "something that's irregular, the resident will be notified that it's an issue."

Selling the stickers only covers about 62% of current hauling costs in Montague, according to data presented by Ellis in December. He predicted then that the percentage would further decline under the new contract with Casella, but the selectboard decided not to raise sticker prices – at least for the coming fiscal year.

In seeking a new hauler, Montague decided to stay with a dual-stream recycling system, which requires residents to separate bottles and cans from paper and cardboard and put them out for collection on alternate weeks. The town has a contract with the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Springfield, the only dual-stream destination in the state.

"We're looking for a long and event-free partnership with Casella," Kuklewicz said at the conclusion of Monday's presentation.

The contract with Casella, consistent with the request for proposals that led to the company being chosen, states that it is only required to pick up trash and recyclables from one- and two-unit family homes.

This would appear to contradict the bylaw unanimously passed by town meeting in 1987, when the MRF opened in Springfield, requiring "the mandatory separation of certain recyclable material from garbage or rubbish by the residents of the town of Montague and the collection of the recyclables at the residents' curbside." The bylaw established a fine "not to exceed" \$50 for placing recyclables in garbage bags. It does not say that this mandate applies only to residents of one- and two-family homes.

The 1987 bylaw also states, however, that the recycling and trash will be picked up by the town public works department, when in fact pickup was privatized more than 15 years ago. Ameen suggested to the Reporter that it should perhaps be updated.



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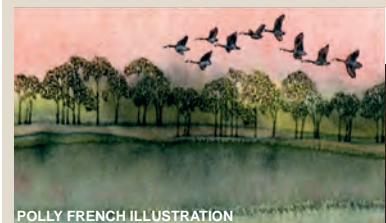
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WEST ALONG THE RIVER
**INTO THE GREEN
 CHAMBERS OF
 ANOTHER SUMMER**

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – Some mornings a light rain falls onto a greening world. Other days dawn after a warm night of fireflies, a morning growing bright with the slanting rays from the east as they first reach the tops of the trees.

Those wet mornings I can stay dry sitting lightly in my outdoor workshop, writing to myself about the ongoing transformation of the early summer world. Like a miracle all is becoming green, paused as we are on the rim of the cup of summer.

Sitting under the wood shed roof in the mist I fall backwards in time to my first outdoor office, back when I was 10, my first double-digit number. My father had built me a small cabin in the backyard made of some of those old-fashioned wooden shutters that had a long dowel down the middle so they could be opened or closed, letting light in or shutting it out. They made up the walls of my summer retreat. I used to sit there in my imagined solitude a few feet from the back door and read. And now, seventy years later, I'm doing the same thing in a nook of my own making.



Flowers leading to the author's gate.

In here the potting workbench I inherited from my sweet cousin Annabelle, who lived just across the way, serves as shelving for the assorted pink clay flower pots and a place to put my books of poetry and a handy cup of coffee.

Beyond the green-leafy wall at the end of the lawn, redstart warblers and wood thrushes sing in the rain.

Grandmother Hannah's peonies are swelling, just waiting to burst

and bloom. She planted them in the yard more than one hundred years ago, and here they are again, reminding me every year of her gentle ways and sad melancholy Irish eyes.

Orioles and catbirds devour oranges set out on the platform feeder, the house wren prattles, and the grass grows green all by itself under the gentle rain of this soft misty day full of summer's promise.

Now how is it that at precisely the same date every year, the rhododendrons push forth their impossibly showy blooms? They're like so many of those 19th-century dames with over-sized bosoms, in their corseted and cinch-waisted dresses, in those photos that I find in a forgotten corner of an upstairs drawer. Addressed to grand-uncle Douglass in 1917, these ladies in flowery hats and roguish smiles signed their pictures on the back with a "Wish you were here," written with a flourish of penmanship of long ago, now vanished.

The roses, too, with names like *Desdemona*, *Teasing Georgia*, *Tottering-By-Gently*, *Reine des Violettes*, and *Tess D'Urbervilles*, await patiently their turn on the calendar of June, this month of the rose, when we will find ourselves knee-deep and lost in their centuries-old beauty. These zephyrs of the evening carry their ancient perfumes throughout the growing dusk.

The perennial wall of green advances every year from the woods onto the lawn, reclaiming inch by inch the civilized space that we have to win back from Mother Nature. This tug-of-war goes back a century and a half to when great-grandfather first pushed out the advancing maple, oak, and birch to make for himself this 1870s lawn.

It befalls to us to secure that border between grass and tree, to maintain the margin. But one day the trees will advance again, when there is no one to follow us to claim an open space. With a bit of imagination never lacking, you will catch the face of a Wild Boy peering out at us through that wall of green. That'll be Pan peeking. With his sharp eyes, pointed ears, and sly smile he is reminding us that when our time is up and we are through here, he'll take all of this back.

There are many moments when I catch myself asking: How it could be that there is such a perfect morning as this? Cool dew drops on the roses, blue sky drifts by overhead. Or is it the clouds

see WEST ALONG page B8

Above: Cows crowd the gate at Hastings Farm in Gill, chewing, assessing their options.

**THE RISE AND FALL
 OF ORANGE'S TAPIOCA EMPIRE**

By CATHY STANTON

WENDELL – I recently wrote a book about Quabbin Harvest Food Co-op in Orange, called *Food Margins: Lessons from an Unlikely Grocer* (University of Massachusetts Press). It started out as a kind of memoir but ended up exploring the history of our whole modern food system and why it has become so hard for smaller food ventures to survive economically. It also tells a story of so many New England mill towns that were hotbeds of innovation and production, only to lose their economic vitality when industrial capital went elsewhere.

Orange was once the home of the Minute Tapioca Company, and investigating how Minute Tapioca became a national brand opened a window for me into the moment around the turn of the 20th century when American food – and many other things – became truly industrialized.

This three-part series in the *Montague Reporter* is excerpted from the book in slightly abridged form.



PART ONE: RUN THROUGH THE GRINDER

Like most industrially processed foods, Minute Tapioca had a carefully crafted origin narrative. Its founding tale goes like this: A Boston landlady named Susan Stavers served some tapioca pudding to a boarder who complained that it wasn't as smooth as he was used to from his years as a sailor in the South Seas. She figured out how to run tapioca flakes through her coffee grinder and *voilà* – a new product was born.

Stavers named it "Tapioca Superlative" and started selling it door to door in little bags. The business was bought out by an enterprising newspaperman in Orange, John Whitman, who started it on its road to becoming a national brand.

Inevitably, there's much more to it, as I found when I started tracking Stavers and Whitman through archival and genealogical data. In Minute Tapioca's story we can trace the whole arc of the industrialized food

system in all its perplexing abundance, its reliance on cheap raw materials and cheap labor, and its efficiencies and concentrations that eventually combined to inoculate the whole system against change.

This story shows just how perilous the economic terrain was at the turn of the 20th century. Everyone was looking for moonshots, but – spoiler alert! – the people who came out ahead tended to be the ones who'd gotten into it with some capital and property and experience to begin with.

And even then, there were no sure things.

Susan Stavers seemed at first to be one of those who might be poised to succeed. Her parents' families were well-to-do. But her father died when she was an infant. At some point she migrated from coastal New

see TAPIOCA page B5

RECIPES

Herbs for Summer... and for Winter!

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – Though herbs look modest sitting on supermarket shelves or hunkered in their garden corner, their magic aromas cast lovely spells on food, brightening flavors, and making happy marriages such as basil and tomatoes, dill and cucumbers, fennel with fish, and mint in tea.

Now, in summer, herbs abound. Clumps of chives and mint have been growing since the ground unfroze. As usual, thyme and sage made it through the winter, and rosemary, cilantro, oregano, and dill are with us too, and sun-loving basil is well on its way to becoming the big leafy plants of late July.

Before winter comes again, it's worth squirreling away some summer herbs. Freezing is one easy method. Pick them when they are

at their best, rinse them clean, then chop. Next, half-fill each cup of an ice cube tray with them, pour on boiling water, let it cool, and then freeze them.

This works well for basil, chives, dill, parsley, and most mints. In winter you can drop the cubes into soups and stews to zing them with summer flavor.

Drying herbs by hanging bunches in an airy spot is an old-timey way to preserve them. You can also dry them in a microwave. Simply place them on a paper towel and zap them in 20- or 30-second bursts. Timing depends on their moisture and the power of the microwave. Woody herbs such as rosemary and thyme take about 30 to 50 seconds, while soft-leaved herbs such as mint may take three minutes.

Sealed in containers and stored see HERBS page B4



Herbs, seen here growing in backyard pots, can be frozen and used year-round.

Pet of the Week



SUBMITTED PHOTO

'MONA'

This week we are excited to feature Mona Messineo, who is celebrating her first birthday on June 18! Mona moved to Greenfield all the way from Texas last year after being adopted by her new family members RJ, Helen, and Jojo.

Mona is an incredibly sweet and classically curious Gemini. She loves playing in mud, creeks, and rivers, and is a pro at scaling the steep hills of Highland Park and the Meadows in Montague. While she may be a couch potato at home, Mona is supercharged in the woods and prances around just like a deer.

Mona's best friend is her cat sister, Jojo. Their love is inspiring – they were spooning on Day One of meeting. It's so cute it hurts.

Happy Birthday, Mona! Want your pet featured in *The Montague Reporter*? We accept reader submissions! Just email a high-resolution photo to jae@montaguereporter.org along with a paragraph or two about why your pet is simply the best.

If you'd like to learn more about, meet, or adopt a new pet, call Dakin Humane Society at (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.



OUT OF THE PARK

JUNE 2024



By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Happy June everyone! Summer is here – pretty much – which means a busy time for Montague Parks & Recreation.

Panicking parents, please note that our Summer Camp is almost full and starts Monday, June 24. We have a lot in store for our campers this summer, including a bunch of great field trips, special events, and fun daily activities. We also take weekly trips to Laurel Lake, so your kids will certainly keep busy.

Our camp operates Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with early and late care available. The program runs through August 16, and what better way for your kids to stay active this summer!

For more information we recommend visiting www.montagueparks-rec.com, and click on the “Summer Camp” page. The camp is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, so we take our jobs quite seriously. Don't let your kids miss out – call us now before all the spots are filled!

We also have our films planned out for the Movies in the Park series. Our first showing will be *Song of the Sea*, scheduled for Friday, June 21, with *Labyrinth* scheduled for July 19, and *Elementals* showing Friday, August 2.



This series is in partnership with RiverCulture, and is held at Peskeomskut Park in downtown Turners. Showtime is 7:30 p.m., and RiverCulture is working on getting musical acts before the movies. Keep an eye out for updated information on our Facebook page.

If your kids want to get prepared for the upcoming soccer season,

we'll also be sponsoring Super Summer Soccer Jamboree Program from July 2 through August 22, Thursday nights after Independence Day week. The clinics will be held at Highland Park in Millers Falls and are open for kids going into grades 3 through 7.

Sessions will be from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and are the ideal opportunity for your player to work on his or her skills. Montague residents are \$15 per player, while non-residents are \$20. Please note that these are not drop-in sessions, so plan on playing throughout the summer.

That is about it for now. Be sure to visit our webpage and Facebook page for updates, and if you have immediate questions feel free to call us at (413) 863-3216. Please also log on to www.riverculture.org for a full calendar of events in Montague this summer. It is going to be a packed summer of wonderful events, so check it out! We will talk to you in July!

Jon Dobosz, CPRP is director of parks and recreation for the town of Montague.

EVENT PREVIEW

Leyden's 'HopeFest 2024'

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – One of my favorite things to write about is music festivals. I heard about one coming up in Leyden called HopeFest. One thing that attracted me to it was that it will feature John Sheldon, a guitar player I have seen perform and liked rather well.

HopeFest will be held this Saturday, June 15 on the lawn of Martha Hopewell, at 174 Kately Hill Road in Leyden.

Hopewell is the organizer of the festival, and she told me this about it being at her place: “I felt offering my property as a safe space for my neighbors to come out and enjoy live music would be wonderful.” She also told me the story behind how she got one performer to play at it. She invited friends to perform at the festival in 2022. She had also heard John Sheldon play, and liked him, too, so she reached out to him through Facebook.

“Imagine how pleased I was when he responded ‘Yes!’” she said. “With that, HopeFest 22 was born.... Our deal was he would play if I donated the equivalent of his fee to a local cause.”

Hopewell chose the Survivors' Recovery Fund at the Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts because, as she told me, she has a

sweet spot for women's issues. “I hosted a nice crowd of nearly 100 neighbors, friends, and fans!”

The story behind this year's lineup is that Sheldon agreed to play again, which made her decide to go ahead with having the festival again. “Then I went to the Black Sheep in Amherst one winter Sunday, heard the Catalytic Swing Band playing there, and knew I had my lineup!”

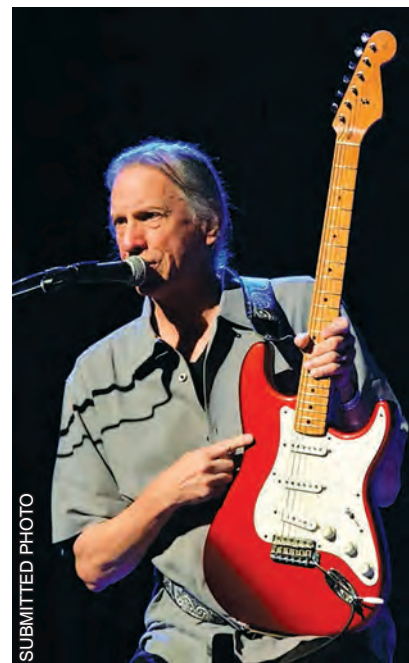
John Sprague of Shutesbury, a friend of Hopewell's and local musician and songwriter himself, agreed to come with an ensemble he has formed with Claire Dacey. Hopewell happily said yes to that.

I also talked with John Sheldon about the festival.

“This year, Martha contacted me,” he told me. “I have done benefits before. I like doing them because the spirit of helping others makes for good music and a great vibe.”

Sheldon had this to say about John Sprague: “John is a master musician, who is performing with Claire Dacey, a truly wonderful singer.” This year is Sheldon's choice of favorite missions, according to Hopewell: the Food Pantry of Western Massachusetts and Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) will be the beneficiaries of HopeFest 2024.

Hopewell has experience with working for several nonprofit places



SUBMITTED PHOTO

John Sheldon

as an executive director, and HopeFest is the first public event she has hosted. It is a low-budget event, so she has used a lot of free advertising from the local town and food co-op newsletters, flyers, being on Facebook, networks of friends and performers, and word of mouth. She also paid to have the event placed on the calendars of some local newspapers. She gives a “special shout out to the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce for helping to spread the word as well.”

HopeFest will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. at 175 Kately Hill Road in Leyden this Saturday, June 15. There is a \$10 to \$25 suggested donation. The rain date is Sunday, June 16.

Senior Center Activities

JUNE 17 THROUGH 21

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

Monday 6/17

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
6 p.m. Cemetery Commission

Tuesday 6/18

10:45 a.m. Chair Yoga
11 a.m. Money Matters
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 6/19

9 a.m. Veterans' Agent
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
4:15 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 6/20

10 a.m. Montague Villages Board Meeting
1 p.m. Pitch

Friday 6/21

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
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.

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 6/17

9 a.m. Interval
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics
12 p.m. Pitch

Tuesday 6/18

8:30 a.m. Nail Clipping
9 a.m. Good for U
10 a.m. Line Dancing

Wednesday 6/19

11 a.m. Social String

Thursday 6/20

Closed for Juneteenth
9 a.m. Core & Balance
10 a.m. Barre Fusion

Friday 6/21

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

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.

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on June 12, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Absolutely Free

The cable advisory committee seeks public input on the performance of Montague Community Television in order to help assess its service to the community and to decide if its contract should be renewed.

All cable TV companies are required to set aside funds that support free local public access television. The capital funding enables MCTV (Channel 17) to buy cameras and computer servers; its oper-

ational money pays for personnel, rent, utilities, etc.

New Library for Erving

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners awarded Erving Public Library a \$50,000 Planning and Design grant. At the June 9 selectboard meeting, town clerk Richard Newton asked if the board had considered looking at overall town building requirements, rather than looking at each facility individually. Each time a building need is identified, he said, only one option is presented, resulting in "so many buildings instead of one nice multi-use facility."

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 10, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Denial Is Not an Option

"We'd be placing the town in serious financial jeopardy by denying this," said Wendell zoning board of appeals chair Myron Becket on Thursday.

Becket was explaining the board's unanimous approval for AT&T Wireless to install cell phone antennas on a Locks Hill Road tower, only 250 feet from the nearest home. Although dozens of Wendell residents voiced opposi-

tion to the proposal, the board had determined they could not find grounds to support a denial in the town's zoning bylaw.

New Library for Wendell

For the last four years, librarian Rosie Heidkamp has been building support for expanding the Wendell Free Library. Preparing for the next round of library construction grants from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Heidkamp said Wendell really needs a new library on a new lot, given that the current lot is too small for an addition.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 10, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

Mr. Griswold will accomplish his one millionth brick this season.

The Town is building new roads and streets, and a costly bridge on Prospect Street.

Andrew McCarthy offers a snug tenement to let in his new house on the hill.

Let any should be led into error, let us say that it will be two years before it will be legal to fish in Lake Pleasant.

Geo. C. Adams has added a handsome new milk cart. Milkmen are looking up since the Williamsburg disaster.

The fall of that chandelier at the M. E. Chapel Sunday afternoon was not such a serious affair after all. But slight damage was done.

The wife of Engineer Goddard died at Millers Falls this morning.

The front of our new school house bears in large raised Gothic letters, on a finely finished Portland free stone, the words "Oakman School." *Veritas invincit invidiam.*

Will our Field Drivers please do their duty? Loose horses running the streets, and through the yards of the place, where children are at

play, may look very well, but some people object to have their children incur the risk of being killed in that way. If we have a law, enforce it.

An attempt was made to burn the house owned by R.L. Goss, at the foot of L street, on Sunday night, but it was unsuccessful. A fire was kindled in the cellar and a straw bed pulled so that the contents hung over the fire, but failed to light.

W.G. Stewart, agent of the Singer Sewing Machine, was riding last Tuesday with his mother, wife and child on the road that leads from here to Millers Falls. In driving down a hill, his horse stepped into a hole in the road where there had been a small bridge, and stumbled, throwing out Mr. S. and his mother, the wheels of the wagon running over both. The animal then ran with Mrs. Stewart and the child in the bottom of the vehicle, but fortunately kept in the road, and finally, after running considerable distance, allowed itself to be stopped upon coming to a hill. Mr. Stewart was not much hurt by the fall, but his mother was badly injured, and has since been under medical treatment.

Some very funny fellows amused themselves changing signs on Friday night last. They had better emigrate to a larger field of usefulness. This town is entirely too small for such magnificent genius.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Cooler Check; Use Without Authority; Opossum in Barrel; Machete Announcement; Fight; Graduation Fireworks

Monday, 6/3

12:25 a.m. 911 caller from Laurel Lane reports he was just robbed. Report taken. Relative with individual for the night.

11:36 a.m. Caller states there is a blue cooler propped against the stop sign at Seventh and J Streets. Cooler was left there last night. Caller does not feel comfortable opening it; would like an officer to look inside of it. Services rendered; cooler empty.

12:18 p.m. Caller from Turnpike Road reporting that the trash trucks just picked up trash about 20 minutes ago and while she was outside doing yard work, a random vehicle pulled up, dropped two bags of trash in front of her home, then took off. Contacted DPW; they will pick it up.

1:31 p.m. Dog in intersection in front of TFFD.

Taken into FD bay. No collar or tags. Owners identified by firefighter. No answer on phone for either owner. Negative contact at address; however, multiple vehicles in driveway. Call put into aunt by firefighter. Contact made with owners; they were shopping. They will come pick up the dog from TFFD.

3:51 p.m. Caller from Edgewater Way reports a coyote in the field next to her house; she wanted the animal control officer to be aware. Forwarded to ACO.

4:03 p.m. Caller reports a male in a small black sedan approached her while she was walking to work on Unity Street at 10 a.m. and asked her if she wanted a ride. No police service necessary.

4:34 p.m. Walk-in reports finding a note asking for help along with a phone number written on his steps. Report taken.

7:16 p.m. Caller from G Street reports a male has been trespassing on his property and has also been riding his bike around the neighborhood staring at people. Advised of options; he will call when the male is on his property.

7:22 p.m. Report of two loose horses and a donkey in the road on Federal Street. Neighbors were able to secure the horses.

Tuesday, 6/4

7:18 a.m. 911 caller reporting that a female in her apartment has an active warrant. Caller wishes to remain anonymous. Confirmed female has two active warrants. Officers meeting with Gill PD to discuss first. Caller called back stating the female left the apartment and is hiding in the hallway. Officers advise Gill PD is waiting in front of the building. Officer knocked on several doors. No answer. Clear for now.

11:42 a.m. Caller requesting officers to her house; states her sister stole her car and does not have a license. Wants sister arrested. Plate and vehicle info received from IMC records. Caller now advising car is in driveway; she sees her sister walking and is yelling at her while driving behind her. Wants officers to come arrest sister. Caller states she just watched her sister walk into a building on Third Street. Would like an officer to meet her there. Officer spoke with caller and advised her of options. She is not happy with those options. Per officer, caller was advised PD will not be going forward with charges as no observation was made of female driving the vehicle. If she wishes to press charges, she can pursue charges of use without authority.

Wednesday, 6/5

11:08 a.m. Caller states there are a lot of overgrown trees and bushes blocking drivers' view of pedestrians/bicycles as they enter the bike path crossing area on Greenfield Road. DPW notified.

12:38 p.m. Caller would like on record that someone sent her a fraudulent check through a dog-walking app. Caller has already been in contact with her bank.

4:51 p.m. Caller reports two loose pit bulls in the concession stand area of Turners Falls High School. Did not see collars. Officer has dogs; will take them home to Emond Avenue.

4:58 p.m. Caller states she was just hit in the parking lot by the fish ladder and the person tried to take off. Report taken.

9:16 p.m. Caller states that four cars just went flying down Poplar Street and are all in the dirt parking lot near the water. Advised of complaint.

Thursday, 6/6

3:36 a.m. Greenfield PD requesting to meet officer at town line to provide a courtesy transport of a female to her house. Officer transported female to location in Millers Falls.

3:02 p.m. Report of overgrown vegetation blocking the sidewalk in front of a Grout Circle residence. Caller observed a child get off the bus and walk in the road due to the sidewalk not being accessible; child was almost hit by a passing vehicle. Officer advises closest residence is on South Prospect Street; spoke with resident there who advised she does not own the property and that to her knowledge the town has always maintained anything that grew over the guardrail there. Message will be left for DPW.

7:10 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports that her electric bike was sto-

len off her porch approximately one week ago. 8 p.m. Walk-in reporting ongoing harassment by neighboring tenants on G Street. Advised of options.

Friday, 6/7

8:02 a.m. Caller requesting assistance getting an opossum out of one of her trash barrels. Services rendered.

11:36 a.m. Caller states that there is a live electrical wire down on the ground at Center and North Streets. Shelburne Control notified; sending MCFD. Eversource notified and on scene.

12:26 p.m. 911 caller from Second Street states that a female came outside where he is painting and threatened to kill his dog. Involved male and landlord both advised of their options. Involved female left prior to officers' arrival.

3:07 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states that a male with a machete just threatened to kill everyone, then ran back into his apartment. A 48-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with assault with a dangerous weapon.

4:03 p.m. Caller from Turnpike Road reports he had a snow blower and an air conditioner with price tags for sale on his front lawn, and someone stole them. Neighbor has it on video. Officer at suspect's house; no answer; left message on his cell phone. Officer waiting to see if male party will come home. Believes property is right inside the garage. Owner of property showed up and identified it as his. Male suspect called back into PD; he thought it was scraps on the side of the road. He still has the remote to the air conditioner, and will drop it off at the caller's house tomorrow.

4:21 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states a male party just shoved a woman out of the car and she hit her head. Male suspect called 911 stating he did not do anything; states he lightly pushed her out of the car and she stumbled and hurt herself. Gill PD assisting. Female declined medical attention. 65-year-old South Hadley man arrested, charged with domestic assault and battery.

Saturday, 6/8

7:34 a.m. Employee requesting PD move along a male party who is acting strange outside of Cumberland Farms. Male party moved along.

6:31 p.m. Report of loose pitbull at caller's residence on Turnpike Road. Owner unknown; no tags on dog. Caller states this dog is loose frequently and has been seen as far away as Millers Fall Road near Hillside Road. Officer transporting dog to regional shelter; dog secured at shelter. Male claiming

ownership of dog came to station inquiring about how to pick up his dog; was referred to the shelter. Male left before his information could be obtained. Unknown female party called inquiring whether charges would be pressed against her if she broke her dog out of the shelter; states she is there now, looking at her dog. Advised female against doing so and advised of procedure. Female acknowledged she was aware of the phone number to call and the hours of operation, then terminated the call. Dog's owner called requesting to speak with a supervisor. Copy of call left for ACO. Officer spoke with owner; advised of options.

8:52 p.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting fight in front of Pizza House; two males; one armed with a knife. Subject described as a male with a backwards hat and bandana wearing a leather motorcycle-style vest; large knife observed in back pocket. Disturbance may have been captured on surveillance at the package store. Responding officer advises units spoke with second caller; parties had begun to disperse prior to arrival. Units clear.

9:04 p.m. Report of fireworks being shot off from a house party on Dell Street. Officer advises source was a graduation party; most guests have left the party; fireworks have stopped.

Sunday, 6/9

2:38 p.m. 911 caller reporting a group of teenagers on bicycles playing chicken in the roadway on Aviation Way. Involved youths were advised.

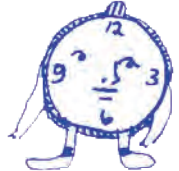
3:13 p.m. 911 caller reporting stove fire on Highland Avenue. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

5:34 p.m. Caller reports giving a \$225 gift card to a female in exchange for two kittens. She was to meet the female at Bradley Airport with another \$225 gift card. The female never showed up with the kittens. Female is reportedly from somewhere in New York. Advised of options. 8:04 p.m. Report of baby deer in backyard on N Street.

Monday, 6/10

12:52 a.m. Caller from Keith Street states that a car has been circling around in the area for about 30 minutes and they are now parked near the stop sign with their lights off. Officer advises no vehicle matching description in area.

1:48 a.m. 911 caller from Keith Street states that a dark-colored vehicle has been in the area for a while and a male party wearing camo shorts, a hat, and a mask keeps parking the car and getting out. Male is on sidewalk taking pictures, refusing to identify himself.



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HERBS from page A1

in a darkened place, microwave-dried herbs hold their color and fragrances. Use them in sauces, marinades, and herbal teas.

Mint, rosemary, thyme, sage, tarragon, dill, and some other herbs dry well. Parsley and chives lose flavor and are not worth drying. The flavor of basil changes, but it's still good in tomato sauces.

Oil and vinegar can also preserve herb flavors. You can use herbal oils for frying, and like herbal vinegar makes excellent salad dressings. Simply pack jars tightly with an herb, add warmed vinegar or a bland oil such as canola, cover, and set in a sunny window. Shake every day for a week. For a stronger flavor, replace the herbs with fresh ones and repeat the process. Bottle – using non-corrosive caps for vinegars – and add an herb stem for eye appeal.

Tarragon, dill, and chives are especially good in vinegar, while rosemary, garlic, and basil are good in oil. Garlic and basil are at the heart of pesto. Made into a paste with Parmesan and pine nuts or walnuts, then kept tightly closed, it keeps for months in the fridge.

Like basil and garlic in pesto, many herbs work in tandem or even in groups. Some mixes have become classics of regional cuisines. For example, French *fines herbes* is a mix of parsley, chervil, chives, and fennel for use with chicken and in egg dishes. For flavoring soups, French cooks pioneered the *bouquet garni* – bay leaf, thyme, parsley, and rosemary, tied in a little bundle so it can be retrieved from the pot before serving.

Herbes de Provence – a fragrant mix of thyme, oregano, rosemary, sage, and often lavender – is also from France. Packed in pretty pots it's expensive, but it's easy to dry and combine the herbs in your own kitchen.

Italian seasoning, a mix of oregano, thyme, rosemary, and garlic, is also easy to make. *Gremolata*

CHORIPAN CON CHIMICHURRI

A little hot pepper is often added to chimichurri, but it's not hot-hot like Mexican salsas. Use chorizo, Italian sausage, or another kind of thick flavorful sausage.

For the chimichurri:

1 clove garlic
 ½ cup parsley, finely chopped
 2 tsp. dried thyme
 1 tsp. oregano
 ½ tsp. powdered cumin
 1 scallion (or more), finely chopped
 1 small tomato, skinned, seeded, and diced
 2 Tbsp. diced sweet red pepper
 ½ cup (or more) olive oil
 2 to 3 Tbsp. (or more) wine vinegar
 salt to taste
 pinch of hot pepper

Skin, seed, and dice the tomato. Everything should be finely chopped into teeny-tiny bits, yet each ingredient should be identifiable. Put the olive oil and vinegar in a jar and add all the chopped ingredients, plus the salt.

Add a quarter cup of warm water; put the lid on and shake. Leave for at least an hour – or longer, if more convenient – for the flavor to de-

velop, shaking from time to time.

Keep leftovers in the fridge. It keeps well, so double the quantities if you like.



For the choripan:

4 bread rolls (or 1 small baguette)
 1 medium onion
 4 Tbsp. oil, plus extra for frying
 1 tsp. dried oregano
 4 Italian sausages (or bratwurst or kielbasa), about 1 lb.

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Peel and quarter the onion, slice it very thinly, and fry it gently in 2 tablespoons of oil until the slices become golden and tender. Set aside.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of the olive oil and the oregano to any oil left in the pan and set aside.

Choose rolls or bread that have a firm, but not hard, crust. Hot dog rolls are too soft; crusty sourdough or French bread is too hard. If using a baguette, cut it in four sections and slice it so you can later sandwich a sausage in it.

Brush the cut side of the bread or rolls with the reserved oil and oregano. Wrap them loosely in foil and put them in the oven to warm.

Now fry the sausages in a little oil until they are golden-brown and



HOPLEY PHOTOS

cooked through. You could also grill them, if you prefer.

For serving, top the bottom half of each roll or baguette section with a little onion, and add a sausage and a little chimichurri. Serve the remainder at the table for anyone who wants more.

is a classic Italian sprinkle used on *osso buco*, a veal and tomato casserole; it's perfect on any meat that needs a little jazz. Make it with lots of chopped parsley, grated lemon zest, and finely chopped garlic.

Like tango, *chimichurri* comes from Argentina and is popular all over South America. This mix of herbs with oil and vinegar has lots of variations, including some heavy in garlic and some thick with chopped tomatoes. Use it as a marinade or relish with all meats, or in the popular Argentinian street food *choripan con chimichurri* – sausages on a roll or in a chunk of bread.

This recipe is above, with an equally tasty recipe for herb toasts below it.



HERB TOASTS WITH NUTS

1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
 5 Tbsp. room-temperature butter
 1 small egg
 1 Tbsp. Parmesan
 1 Tbsp. snipped basil
 1 Tbsp. snipped chives
 2 tsp. chopped parsley
 1 tsp. dried oregano
 about ¼ tsp. salt
 pepper to taste
 about 6 medium slices tasty bread, or 4 English muffins, halved
 2 Tbsp. pine nuts, sliced almonds, or coarsely chopped walnuts

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees

and lightly grease a baking sheet or line it with parchment. Beat the egg.

In a bowl, mix the flour into the butter, then stir in the egg and Parmesan. When blended add the basil, chives, parsley, and oregano, plus salt and pepper to taste, and the nuts.

Spread this mixture on the slices of bread or muffin halves. Bake them on the prepared pan for 12 to 14 minutes, or until the topping is golden. (Check that the nuts don't burn.)

Serve warm, sprinkled with a little Parmesan or a few nuts, with salads or soup. Also good for breakfast.



FACES & PLACES

Reader Jeri Moran reported back from last weekend's Good Neighbors Make Good Music festival in Montague Center. "The festival was laid back and wonderfully organized," she writes. "Over 15 acts throughout the afternoon, food, lots of dancing.... The day ended with the Butterfly Swing Band, who had people up and dancing in the Common Hall."



JERI MORAN PHOTOS

Above: The Montague Marching Band played on the common between acts. "They're described as 'loud, raucous, and full of fun,' and they were," Jeri writes. "And good."

At left: "Zay-Tunes were terrific," she reports. "Described as a 'group of local musicians who get together to perform traditional and popular songs of the Arabic people.' Singer Nazira Basbour was outstanding."



MGTV News

Judgment Day

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – The Montague Comcast Relicensing Meeting is taking place this Monday, June 17 at 6 p.m. at the Montague town hall, and we'd love to see you there. Your public input is the best way to ensure that the station receives the funding it needs to remain free and active. Letters of support are also greatly appreciated, and can be emailed to MCTV.

We have new uploads this week and every week. The most recent Montague selectboard and finance committee meetings are both available to view online, as is the June 5 information session on the town's sludge composting study. We have also documented and compiled footage from the Nolumbeka Project's Day of Remembrance event on May 19.

If there's something you would like to film, don't hesitate to stop by! Cameras, tripods, and lighting equipment are available for checkout, and filming and editing assistance can be provided at no cost to you. It's an incredible resource!

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

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TAPIOCA from page B1
Hampshire to Boston.

In 1865 she was living in a boarding-house, but in the 1870 US Census she and her sister, still in their early twenties, jointly owned a townhouse in downtown Boston. Susan was listed as a music teacher and her sister as a store clerk, but somehow – an inheritance, perhaps – they’d managed to buy in to Boston’s booming real-estate market at an auspicious moment.

Their 1870 boarders were a motley bunch, with hard-to-trace names and no listed occupations. It’s hard to know if this was where the encounter with the sailor happened, if it ever did. It’s possible it was in the following decade, an eventful one in Susan Stavers’s young life.

First came the Great Fire. In 1872 a huge swath of downtown Boston burned in half a day. The Staverses’ boardinghouse was reduced to rubble, probably along with their wealth. There’s no evidence they ever owned property again. In the 1880 US Census they show up a few blocks away as lodgers in another downtown boardinghouse inhabited by another highly miscellaneous group of clerks, factory workers, students, and businesspeople.

Interestingly, they were living directly across from the makeshift laboratory where Alexander Graham Bell invented the first telephone in 1876. And they seemed to have caught the inventing bug that was going around. That same year, several patents were filed in their names for improved methods of sifting ash from coal stoves and fireplaces, using mechanisms not unlike a coffee grinder.

There’s no sign that any of their inventions ever made it onto the market. And just a couple of years later their whole side of the street was demolished as developers continued to remake the downtown as a center for finance and commerce. Even if they’d still had money, Susan and Clara Stavers probably would have been priced well out of the Boston real-estate market by that point. There’s a sense of the family gradually sliding down the socioeconomic ladder.

But Susan seemed to keep on searching for ways to recoup her lost capital, hoping to

find investors, dreaming about success in the manufacturing economy that was surging all around her.

Seventy-five miles to the west in Orange, John Whitman was entertaining similar dreams. Whitman had learned the newspaper trade in Orange and then moved to Boston, working his way up in city newspapers. But his time in the city was as unlucky for him as it had been for Susan Stavers. In 1892 he fell down an elevator shaft and injured his spine so badly that he was immobilized for a year. He returned home to recuperate, married his sweetheart, and became the manager of a local paper.

Perhaps while lying flat on his back, he came up with the idea of starting a specialty grocery company to make and sell tapioca products. Tapioca was a trendy new food, the açaí berry of its day, with similar overtones of healthfulness and naturalness. Its popularity dovetailed neatly with both refinements in industrial processing and the changing shopping habits of US housewives, who were starting to look for convenience, novelty, and value.

Sometime in early 1894 John Whitman set up the Whitman Grocery Company as a side hustle.

It’s not clear how he knew about Susan Stavers – perhaps from his days as a reporter in Boston. He reached out to her in 1894 with a proposal that she merge her one-woman business with the company he was envisioning. As Stavers later described it, he offered her a chunk of company stock and said she would continue to represent the venture in the Boston area.

It must have seemed like the big break she was looking for. She signed a document relinquishing her rights to the product and promising to keep the processing method a secret. The written contract mentioned the stock but not the other parts of the deal, which, according to Stavers, Whitman promptly reneged on.

To be fair, he may simply have been unable to honor his promise. It turned out that running a food business was very different from running a newspaper, and Whitman struggled right from the beginning. It wasn’t all bad news – within a year he had a dozen employees and a small cadre of traveling salesmen in central and western Massachusetts. The Orange Historical Society still has the big hand-turned coffee-grinder that the company’s first workers used, following Stavers’s method.

But getting raw materials was a problem. Whitman started out importing flake tapioca from small producers in Malaysia, but both quality and quantity were inconsistent. And there weren’t a lot of other sources for bulk tapioca flakes at that point. It was hard to find the right kind of production space and even harder to recruit a board of directors to guide things toward profitability.

Not all of this was because of the food business. Some of it was timing. The country was still reeling from the Panic of 1893 and a lot of local businessmen were feeling the pinch. Barely a year after its founding, the Whitman Grocery Company, like many of the town’s smaller businesses, was in a very shaky state.

But convenience foods were getting more popular all the time, and that got the attention of executives at Orange’s better-capitalized businesses like the New Home Sewing Machine Company and the Grout Brothers Automobile Company. The Grouts even got as far as launching their own competing food brand, Lightning Tapioca.

Frank Ewing, a bookkeeper at New Home,



The sailor’s kick that started a business

IT WAS BOSTON—1894. Susan Stavers, a landlady, served a sailor guest some tapioca. The sailor complained that it was coarse and lumpy. He’d had far better in the South Seas!

The landlady’s pudding wasn’t bad for those days. All American tapioca was coarse and lumpy. But she didn’t hit the oating. The sailor’s grumbling simply whipped up her Yankee gumption. What could be done about tapioca?

She hit on grinding the dry tapioca . . . and made the best pudding the sailor had ever tasted.

Mrs. Stavers started a neighborhood business in this “ground” tapioca. People liked the smooth, creamy pudding it made. The business grew from a door-to-door stage to a nationwide enterprise—the famous “Minute Tapioca.” It created a factory. It created jobs . . . jobs that didn’t exist before.

So—though the story had an unusual beginning—it fits into the usual American pattern—the pattern of American growth, employment, prosperity.

Will this pattern still be our way of making jobs?

Employment—steady, continuous employment for those who want to work—must be achieved somehow after the war is over.

Many Americans—like the Boston landlady—have ideas for new businesses and for expansion of businesses. Ideas that range all the way from putting up a new neighborhood garage to building great new industries. Ideas for making more of present products and for making them better.

These ideas, these intentions, can make jobs. Jobs by the millions. Jobs that, in turn, make more and more jobs.

But this American way of making jobs can flourish or fade according to the conditions under which business works. Laws and regulations are necessary. But if they become such that they discourage enterprise and penalize its rewards . . . initiative can be checked. Expansion hindered. New ventures throttled. The very spirit of American enterprise can give way to an attitude of “let someone else take the responsibility.”

And if this happens, the alternative would probably be government relief projects to make up the jobs—perhaps including even yours.

In a very real way, the choice is yours. For, through your opinions and your representatives, you make the rules under which business operates.

So remember this . . . whenever you’re making up your mind about the questions of the hour, ask yourself: “Will this measure help American enterprise make jobs?”

On your decisions will depend the kind of nation your children will live in. The kind of jobs you and they will have.

One big drop in the bucket
General Foods has 13,000 people on its payroll . . . 8500 in the armed forces.

We will have jobs for our service people when they return. And in our company they will get a warm welcome and a generous restoration of all employee benefits as well.

Furthermore, through growth and development of our present products, and by launching new products immediately after the war, we expect to make many new jobs . . . jobs that don’t exist today.

And remember, these are the plans of just our American business.

Minute Tapioca is a product of General Foods—and American enterprise

This 1944 Life Magazine ad for General Foods mythologized Susan Stavers’s invention of Minute Tapioca, turning it into a fable of American enterprise.

saw a shorter route. Over lunch one day at a downtown diner, he found himself sitting next to a despondent 20-year-old who was one of Whitman’s remaining directors. Despite an impressive-sounding title – vice president and assistant general manager – the young man had nothing good to say about the company’s prospects, and he jumped at Ewing’s offer to buy out his 250 shares of stock.

Ewing finished his lunch and went to talk with the Grouts about consolidating their efforts into one company that could actually capitalize on the growing demand for tapioca products.

Then as now, success in the processed-food industry rested not only on cheap raw materials and up-to-date technologies but also on the knowledge of how to combine them in a way that could result in profit. Even John Whitman knew that, and he’d taken steps to secure his intellectual property through his written contract with Stavers.

The new management went further. They didn’t want Stavers operating as a semi-free agent in Boston, going door to door and telling people how she’d invented the product. They didn’t want anybody going door to door, period. They could see that the future of processed food was in mass markets, spurred by advertising in national media.

There was poor Susan Stavers thinking she was catching the wave in the food industry when in fact she represented something that probably seemed painfully backward to the ambitious men now in charge. She was small-scale craft; they were industrial production,

and industrial production was the future.

So they hired an elite Boston law firm to file a complaint against her with the state’s Supreme Judicial Court in April 1895. By June they’d secured a ruling in their favor, enjoining her from ever selling her tapioca again or breathing a word about how it was made. Susan Stavers was effectively out of the picture and out of the food business.

And out of options, apparently. She and her sister Clara, then in their mid-forties, both died in December of that year in facilities for women without means of their own, Clara in what was then called the Taunton State Lunatic Hospital and Susan in a hospital for indigent women on Long Island in Boston Harbor. Clara was buried in a pauper’s grave with a little generic metal marker, now badly rusted. I wasn’t able to discover Susan’s burial place, and her death certificate lists her cause of death as unknown. But it does mention her occupation: “Domestic” – that is, a domestic servant.

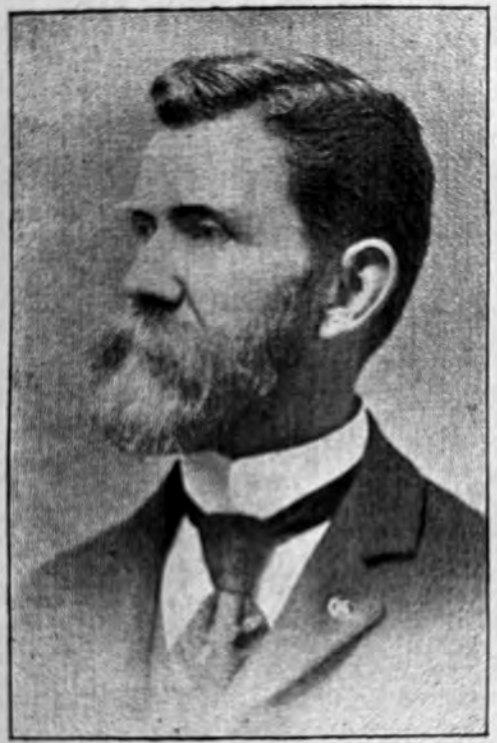
In the sad ending of this story you get a sense of two enterprising single women from a once-prosperous white Yankee family trying and failing to hang on to some kind of financial security in the tumultuous turn-of-century industrial economy.

In July 1895 the rest of the original tapioca company directors, including John Whitman himself, resigned, probably with huge sighs of relief. The business was now in the hands of those who had both the capital and the skills to scale it up.

Next week:

“A place where labor is cheap.”

LIFE IMAGE



Frank Ewing was a bookkeeper at New Home Sewing Machine in Orange when he recognized the potential for Minute Tapioca to become a successful product in the new processed food sector. Photo source: “Orange Illustrated,” published by the Orange Enterprise and Journal, 1904.

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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

ILLUSTRATION: ANONYMOUS, ALLEGORY OF PEACE, CA. 1520. MET MUSEUM COLLECTION.

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 June Poetry Page

Untitled

December 30, 2023

And a day goes by, and tanks, and the sky a festival of kids flying kites, and blood
flowed behind a panting car.

And a day goes by, and the planes, and the tent of the displaced makes a bet
with time: winter is late.

And a day goes by, and the snipers, and the market itself has no salt: so I said:
No worries, the merchants have plenty of sadness.

And a day goes by, and artillery, but my neighbor's funeral passes
along slowly, why rush at a time like this!

And a day goes by, and the newscasts, and when evening came, it was a bit
joyous to find us all there with none missing, except the house.

— Nasser Rabah, *Gaza*

Translated by Ammiel Alcalay,
Khaled al-Hilli, and Emna Zghal

If I must die

If I must die,
you must live
to tell my story
to sell my things
to buy a piece of cloth
and some strings,
(make it white with a long tail)
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza
while looking heaven in the eye
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze –
and bid no one farewell
not even to his flesh
not even to himself –
sees the kite, my kite you made,
flying up above
and thinks for a moment an angel is there
bringing back love

If I must die
let it bring hope
let it be a tale.

— Refaat Alareer, *Gaza*

What Is Home?

What is home:

It is the shade of trees on my way to school before they were uprooted.

It is my grandparents' black-and-white wedding photo before the walls crumbled.

It is my uncle's prayer rug, where dozens of ants slept on wintry nights, before it
was looted and put in a museum.

It is the oven my mother used to bake bread and roast chicken before a bomb reduced
our house to ashes.

It is the café where I watched football matches and played –

My child stops me: Can a four-letter word hold all of these?

— Mosab Abu Toha, *Gaza*

“Dead Cats Continue to Meow.”

“One morning, we didn't find homes, just heaps of red words piled like dirty clothes on sidewalks...”

December 22, 2023

Behind the walls of the grade school, while the students lined up to salute the flag, the younger kids flay
cats alive, they hang the furs on tall sticks, they circle around the school with a continuous meow. The par-
ents, who concluded that their kids became cats, sprinkled salt on the neighborhood's streets to remove
the stench of absence, and washed again and again the children's clothes for a holiday that won't come.

A blind man listening to a match replay on his radio said to curious runners-by:
don't hurry, the match ends with the defeat of both teams; but they didn't get the joke. They stole his radio
and left him cursing the politicians. In those days, we didn't pay attention to the complaints of walls – so
much blood was on them, who cares about walls that complain? One morning, we didn't find homes, just
heaps of red words piled like dirty clothes on sidewalks, no one cared about them either; couples, though,
continued – and without walls – their usual business, not only that, but they made more kids who flayed
more cats inside the school.

The heart doctor treating me now recommends only one thing:
stop writing the diaries of a dead village.

— Nasser Rabah, *Gaza*

Translated by Ammiel Alcalay, Khaled al-Hilli, and Emna Zghal

Contributors and Translators:

Nasser Rabah was born in Gaza in 1963 and lives there. Like all Palestinians presently in Gaza, he and his family have been forcibly displaced. He got his BA in Agricultural Science in 1985 before going on to work as Director of the Communication Department in the Agriculture Ministry. He is a member of the Palestinian Writers and Authors Union and has published five collections of poetry, *Running After Dead Gazelles* (2003), *One of Nobody* (2010), *Passersby with Light Clothes* (2013), *Water Thirsty for Water* (2016), and *Eulogy for the Robin* (2020), and a novel, *Since approximately an hour* (2018). His poems have been translated into English, French, and Hebrew. The translators, Ammiel Alcalay, Khaled al-Hilli, and Emna Zghal, are working on a collection of Nasser Rabah's poems for *City Lights*, due in Spring 2025.

Mosab Abu Toha posted an Instagram video on October 29 of his family home, now flattened and reduced to rubble, in Beit Lahiya, North Gaza. “That used to be my house,” he wrote, looking over his shoulder. “There is nothing, there is nothing over there. Not my books. Not my heirlooms. Not the kitchen. Nothing.” Later that day, Abu

Toha posted a screenshot of the poem “What Is Home?” from his debut poetry collection *Things You May Find Hidden In My Ear* published last year by *City Lights*. In the caption to the poem, he asks: “Please save this poem, recite to the people around you and tell them what happened to my home, and the homes of so many other people? Tell them some families were buried under the rubble.” Mosab Abu Toha was detained in a mass arrest by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) on the morning of November 20. He was at a checkpoint in Gaza traveling south toward the Rafah border with his wife and children. Toha was beaten and interrogated, along with 200 others, then released. He is now receiving medical treatment and is with his family.

Refaat Alareer was a prominent Palestinian poet and professor living in Gaza. He was killed by an Israeli airstrike on December 6 in northern Gaza. He had refused to leave the north at the start of the 2023 Israel-Hamas war. His brother Salah with his son Mohammed, and his sister Asmaa with three of her children (Alaa, Yahia, and Mohammed) were among those killed in the same airstrike. Five

months after Alareer's death, his eldest daughter Shaimaa, her husband Mohammed Siyam, and their newborn baby were killed by an Israeli airstrike on their home in Gaza City. “If I Must Die” is the last poem Alareer wrote.

Emna Zghal is a Brooklyn-based visual artist. She was trained in both Tunisia and the United States and has shown her work in both countries and beyond. Reviews of her exhibits have appeared in the pages of *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, and *Artforum*, among other publications and are represented in noted public collections.

Poet, novelist, translator, essayist, critic, and scholar Ammiel Alcalay's over 20 books include *After Jews and Arabs* (University of Minnesota Press, 1992), *Memories of Our Future* (*City Lights*, 2001), and the forthcoming *CONTROLLED DEMOLITION*: a work in four books (Litmus Press).


Khaled al-Hilli teaches Arabic at New York University and is completing a doctorate at CUNY on the post-2003 Iraqi novel. His book *Sargon Boulos: “This Great River” – Translating the Beats into Arabic* is due out from *Lost & Found* this year.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



looking forward...

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Jennie McAvoy, Orlen Gabriel & Avery, Pat & Tex LaMountain*. Free. 6 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Marasca, Amber Wolfe Rounds, Ben Richter*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

Leverett Village Co-op, Leverett: *Little House Blues*. Free. 6 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Film, Popul Vuh: The Creation Myth of the Maya*. \$ 6 p.m.

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

Club Castaway, Whately: *Squirt: Pride Party* feat. *DJ Kashmere Champagne*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Franklin County Pride* feat. *The B-52.0s, Thus Love, Pamela Means*, more. Free. 1 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Misfit Prom* feat. *The Salty Heifers, Carol Devine & the Mighty Fine*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Burly Girlies, McAsh, The New Limits, RVR, Melovictoria, Marianne Toilet and the Runs*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The B-52.0s, DJ Just Joan, Tytannia Lockhart, Sir Real*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Dayna Kurtz with Robert Maché*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Richard Chase*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Loculus Studio, Holyoke: *Tyler Rai, Olana Flynn, Kryssi & Wednesday*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Tori Town, Holyoke: *Frogs, Radical Joy, Dalton Moon, Cinema Stare*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

SAT-SUN, JUNE 15-16

Cheshire Fairgrounds, Swanzey NH: *Goose, Greensky Bluegrass, moe., Pigeons Playing Ping Pong, Dopapod, Sierra Hull*, more. See northlandslive.com.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Lez Zeppelin*. \$ 7 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 17

Nova Arts, Keene: *Haley Heynderickx*. \$ 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Undertow Brass Band*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Clay Camero*, short films \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Landowner, Balaclava, Bucket, Feminine Aggression*. \$ 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Film and Gender, Divine*

Filth, Johnny Cashmere, Zoe Tuck, DJ Hedon. \$ 8 p.m.

Rat Trap, Holyoke: *California X, Corrode, The Watcher*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

FRI-SUN, JUNE 21-23

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Blue Skies*. Free. 7 p.m.

Thirsty Mind, South Hadley: *Hedgewitch, Britt Brideau*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Power Trousers, Van Walton, DJ Mentaldrift*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Kool & The Gang, En Vogue*. \$ 2:30 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Jung-Yi Alice Hsieh Daugherty, Ilya Kazantsev*. \$ 4 p.m.

Lunder Center, Williamstown: *Garcia Peoples, Mountain Movers*. Free. 5 p.m.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Gray/Smith and Speer, Turner Williams*

Jr., Matt Krefting, Wednesday Knudsen. \$ 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Silversun Pickups*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: *Nick Neuberger/Kevin Murray, Hollow Deck, Hedgewitch*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Waiters: Legend 40th Anniversary Tour*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Boys of the Landfill, Zydeco Connection*. Free. 6 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Red Herrings*. \$ 6 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Horsegirl, TV Buddha*. \$ 7 p.m.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Boyz II Men*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Greenfield Arts Walk : On Our War by Chelsea Granger*. No cover. 5 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Sen Morimoto, Big Destiny*. Free. 5 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Mad Painter, The Holy Oakes*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Majel Connerly*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30

Daily Op, Easthampton: *Os Mutantes*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 6

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Oozie, Vallery Falls, Fisher Wagg*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 7

Bookends, Florence: *All Feels, Bobbie, Paperdisk, Cowper-son*. \$ 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, JULY 23

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Beck with the Boston Pops*. \$ 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 28

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pile*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 29

Iron Horse, Northampton: *M. Ward*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3

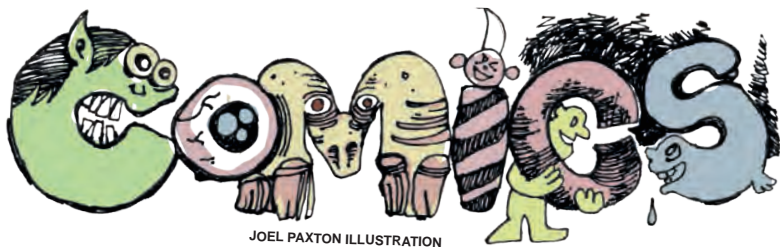
Belltower Records, North Adams: *Bunnybrains, Nod, Michael Slyne*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4

The Drake, Amherst: *Mannequin Pussy, Ovlov*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, AUGUST 5

Nova Arts, Keene: *Sun Ra Ark-estra*. \$ 7 p.m.



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WEST ALONG from page B1

drifting by, and the blue holding in place?

On brighter and sun-shot mornings, my trail to the green café table is marked in the dew through the tall grass, where the fireflies, even more plentiful this year, linger in their day bed. They'll arise at dusk for their nighttime of courtship.

Dog lolls in luxury beneath the green metal Parisian-style café table below the old cherry tree where writer scribbles in notebook, trying to catch the fleeting moments of this instant, on a day unlike any other.

In another lifetime I was actually sitting at a green café table in Paris doing pretty much what I'm doing now. How did I wind up here?

I'm always writing, writing, taking notes on

the vigorous vegetation that threatens to engulf the yard, on the foxglove towers that are a-bumble with the stalwart bee nuzzling his way into the deep pocket of the digitalis. This pollinator is hard at work saving the planet or at least, for starters, saving this garden.

I watch the fiddlehead ferns grow, and the cherries as they redden and ripen. Cedar waxwings have been testing those fruit, visiting the top branches overhead. Their fluttering wings make shadows on my notebook page.

A cuckoo woke me at 5 a.m., calling just outside the upstairs bedroom window. Her call is not like a Bavarian cuckoo clock, more like a distant pumping, a few guttural notes that seem to come from far away even when she is close by.

The cuckoo arrived on time for the pop-

ulation explosion of gypsy moth caterpillars down here on the Flat. This is the third summer of the localized outbreak, and I do hope the 200-year-old oaks can survive the defoliating effect of this scourge. (We're not supposed to call them "gypsy moths" anymore as it is insulting to the Traveling People, so we'll work on changing our habits.)

Other than the cuckoo, so much for the so-called early bird that gets the worm. I'm usually up before most of them. They remain asleep until around 7 a.m., and then the wren begins warbling constantly from the birdbox, perched in her inch-sized doorway, while the red-eyed vireo exhausts the listener with his breathless singing, taking not so much as a two-beat rest. He reaches his coda and returns to the top of his sheet music to

begin again his tune written in the key of A.

Chimney swifts, chipping and gay, whip over the yard, screaming through the morning skies, and I'm worn out just trying get all this racket down in my notes, on just two cups of coffee!

The rest of the day promises to be full, with a list of chores awaiting.

Then let evening come, when the darkening yard will be all a-glimmer, as hundreds upon hundreds of fireflies float over the unmown grass and up into the green canyons of the tall maples where orioles and tanagers nest.

Maybe then we'll raise glasses of chill rosé, clinking the traditional *tchin-tchin* toast to welcome in the summer, as dusk falls on another momentous day.



EXHIBITS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Allen Fowler*, small mixed-media collage work from several recent series. Through mid-September.

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

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: *Caroline Wampole*, guest artist showing abstract paintings. Through June.

Montague Center Library: *Landscapes: Endangered and Preserved*, paintings by Meg Ricks. Through August, with a reception Wednesday, July 24 from 6 to 7 p.m.

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Valley Arts Mentorship Showcase*, mentors and mentees show their work. Through July 1.

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: *On Our Way*, paintings by Chelsea Granger, June 28 through July 31. Opening reception Friday, June 28 from 5 to 8 p.m.

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

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Travel the World*, photographs and paintings by Dave and Jackie Pueschel. Through June.

Sunderland Library: *Frederick Gao Retrospective*, showing Gao's paintings of life in Western Massachusetts. Through June.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Paintings*, by John Krifka, chronicling his move towards abstraction. Through June 29.


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: *Country Life*, group exhibit of pastoral images by member artists. Through June.

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

Club George, Northampton: *A First*, prints and photographs by Linda Bills and Stephen Dallmus. June 15 through 29, with a reception on this Saturday, June 15 from 3 to 6 p.m.

D'Amour Museum, Springfield: *Frida Kahlo, Her Photos*, images from Kahlo's personal collection, which were locked up in a bathroom at the artist's residence for more than 50 years; through September. *Look Again: Portraits of Daring Women*, woodcut and collage prints by Leverett artist Julie Lapping Rivera celebrating the achievements of women who defied the status quo; through next February.




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