

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 27, 2024

Mobile Home Park Owner Petitions For Big Rent Hike

By SARAH ROBERTSON

ORANGE – The owners of Leisure Woods Estates are petitioning the town for permission to significantly increase their monthly lot fees for the second year in a row, while many residents of the mobile home park worry that they could be priced out of the community.

On June 11 the Orange Mobile Home Park Rent Control Board held a public hearing to listen to the owners' justifications for a proposed 43% rent hike, and to hear residents' perspectives. About 50 people attended the hearing in the Orange town hall auditorium, with many sharing concerns about the park's affordability and its overall condition.

"I used to live in Wendell, and I was taxed out of my home in Wendell," said Barbara Sylvester, who moved to Leisure Woods in 2022. "Another reason I chose to move into Orange is because you are rent-controlled, and it's getting crazy in Greenfield and Turners, [which] don't have that protection for us."

When Sylvester moved to the park, the rent for each lot was \$359 per month, which she said was affordable as someone living with a disability and working at Stop & Shop part-time. Months later, the rent control board approved an increase to \$410, and Leisure Woods management is now seeking to raise it to \$588.

"I haven't even lived there two years, and if you take \$588 out of my income that leaves me with nothing to survive on," Sylvester said. "I would be forced to sell."

The 146-unit manufactured home community, located between the Orange municipal airport and the Millers River, is home to many elderly, disabled, and low-income people.

"I have worked with many, many, many people in Leisure Woods who

SLOWING DOWN



WILLIAM HAYS PHOTO

Wildflowers beside the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge bloom in chaotic splendor and this summer you can, too.

struggle now," Orange Council on Aging director Tracy Gaudet said at the hearing. "There's going to be a lot of homeless people with no housing to go to.... I just can't imagine where the money is going to come from, or how these people are going to survive."

Gaudet said the average monthly income for her clients is around \$1,500, and that increasing the lot rent by the proposed amount would be untenable for many of them, especially those still paying for their mobile homes.

"Some of them do have mortgages," she said, "and some of them will just walk away from that investment – and that is terrible."

Alfred Henderson testified that the proposed hike far exceeds the latest increase to his Social Security check, and would leave him about \$100 short every month after he pays for food, medications, and doctors' visits. The 91-year-old widower said that if the increase is approved in full, he plans to pay

see **RENT** page A6

Town Hall Seeks to Involve 'Most Vulnerable' in Prepping For Future's Catastrophes



LEVAVI PHOTO

Left to right: Montague town planner Maureen Pollock outlines letters on a poster as Lake Pleasant residents Bob Emond, Linda Emond, Kevin Howard, and Amanda Marek-Miskolczi help her identify the town's biggest climate change concerns.

By BELLA LEVAVI

LAKE PLEASANT – Under the pavilion at Rutter's Park, town planner Maureen Pollock, holding her dog's leash in one hand and creating a poster with the other, explained the town's use of "unique initiatives" for its Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) action plan.

On Saturday, Lake Pleasant resident and MVP core team member Amanda Marek-Miskolczi, accompanied by Pollock, hosted an informational table at the park. Their aim was to encourage residents who typically do not attend town forums to complete a survey on how climate change affects their lives.

"The town can enhance its efforts

see **PREPPING** page A9

Angry Neighbors Decry Ganja Stench

By JEFF SINGLETON

"In March we had an instance that was so bad we had 180 preschool students that were unable to go out on the playground," Kim Williams, co-owner of the Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts, said of fumes emanating from the nearby cannabis farm in the airport industrial park. "That's when we reached a real level of 'we need to do something different'."

"We had to actually close up all the windows and doors in our place," said Walter Patenaude, who stays

at a camp on FirstLight Power land down a steep slope from the grow op. "It's beyond where we're able to sleep, because it's nauseous."

These complaints about odors at the facility operated by Flower Power Growers – one of two cannabis operations in the industrial park – were brought to the Montague selectboard on Monday during a discussion about a state requirement to revise the town's "host community agreements" with both companies.

Flower Power began cultivating cannabis in the

see **STENCH** page A12



ROBERTSON PHOTO

The rental price of lots at mobile home parks is regulated in Orange under a special town bylaw dating to the mid-1980s. The bylaw directs a rent control board to ensure landowners can capture a "fair" amount of rental income, as long as they are judged to be providing "normal and adequate repairs and maintenance." At Leisure Woods, opinions are polarized as to what price is fair – or affordable.

SUMMER SCHEDULE:
VOL. 22 #32: JULY 11
VOL. 22 #33: JULY 25
VOL. 22 #34: AUGUST 8
VOL. 22 #35: AUGUST 22

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

Surf's Up?

We're four years into this stupid pandemic now, and well past the point at which anyone wants to talk about it. The disease, and society and government's response to it, have reshaped our world and our politics. Debates on the topic are stale, with orientation toward the virus – where it came from; how dangerous it is; how and whether to avoid contracting and spreading it – now just as cemented, and as individually varied, as religious belief.

"The COVID summer wave is here," *NBC News* announced on Tuesday.

"As new variants of the coronavirus continue to gain traction, doctors and researchers are bracing for a potential rise in cases this summer," the *New York Times* explained.

"Just as summer gatherings begin, Americans are also catching COVID-19 again," *USA Today* warned Wednesday. "[W]astewater samples... across the US appear to show increases in the virus' spread."

Those of our readers who modify their social exposure based on perceived prevalence of the virus in the local population – everyone else on either side of that, either steadfastly cautious or incautious, is invited to move on to more interesting content in this edition – may be wondering: If or when it *really* "comes back," how will we know?

The main answer for about the last year has been wastewater. The Montague, Greenfield, Sunderland, South Deerfield, South Hadley, Athol, Amherst, and Northampton plants are all still sampling their influent periodically and sending it out for testing, and the data ends up on the same old state website.

But as of press time the morn-

ing of June 27, the freshest data from Montague's Clean Water Facility was from a sample grabbed June 12; from Greenfield, June 14. (The latest sample from Hadley, for some reason, was taken March 12.) So while these and some other local plants saw slight climbs in early June, none yet exceed March's levels – if a national "wave" or "upswing" driven by a strong variant is reaching us, it is not yet reflected in this data set.

On June 7, the city of Greenfield posted data to its Facebook page indicating that 16 of its residents, and one resident of Montague, had contracted the virus during the entire month of May.

"Three people in my household in Montague had COVID in May," one commenter asked. "How is this data gathered?"

"I double-checked the data and it is correct from what has been reported to the state," regional epidemiologist Jack Sullivan replied. "State data only includes lab-confirmed PCR results for cases."

When was the last time someone you know received a PCR test? Most civilians keep a few rapid tests in a kitchen drawer to see if that sore throat is the coronavirus, and post a snapshot of the dreaded double line to their social media accounts to announce their exile from public life.

No one wants to think about this anymore, and for good reason. It's a depressing drag. Our institutions have given up, and our immune-compromised friends are rightly seething at their social excommunication.

In any case, we hope COVID *isn't* big news this summer, but please dp be careful out there.



Co-owner Tamara McKerchie (left) and market manager Rebekah Dutkiewicz pose inside the newly opened Avenue A Market in Turners Falls. The grocery and convenience store offers everyday items as well as unique, organic, and locally sourced foodstuffs. Customers can pay with cash, card, or Common Good credits – and in the near future, SNAP and EBT as well. Find them next to the Upper Bend restaurant at 106 Avenue A.

Letters to the Editors

Toxic Sludge Is *Not* Good for You

The proposed sewage sludge composting facility is a plan that would spread toxic chemicals throughout our farmlands, gardens, parks, and other open lands.

As noted in last week's *MR* article, the states of Maine and Connecticut, for good reason, have banned all land application of sewage sludge – "biosolids" is the euphemism given to toxic sludge. Farmers in Maine have lost their entire family farms and livelihoods to toxic waste sold as "compost."

Why do officials claim, because there is organic matter in sludge from sewage – which is combined with industrial and hospital waste – that sludge can be turned into healthy compost for us to eat through plants

and animals and their feed? They are fooling themselves and hiding the truth from the rest of us.

PFAS is just one of countless toxic chemicals in industrial sewage. Dioxins, chemicals in road runoff, radioactive and prescription hospital waste – the list is long. These things are intermittent: testing on one day will bring different results from the next day, week, or month. Heating the stuff won't make it go away either – if that were true, why aren't we heating and treating it and sending it back into the waste stream?

Our river valley must not become polluted – we have some of the healthiest and deepest soil in the world. We must not be shortsighted and hold our heads in the proverbial

sand/soil "to save money in 20 to 30 years" – our children in 20 to 30 years will be suffering the health consequences of what we do now.

Time to join the other New England states in protecting our farms, food, and health. Regenerative, organic agriculture *does not include toxic sludge!* Contact your state representatives.

Boards of Health can also write sludge control regulations, as Wendell did in 1999. I have a hard copy which I'd be happy to send for your town's use. Request it from Wendell's Board of Health, or myself at PO Box 254, Wendell, MA 01379.

Gloria Kegeles
Wendell

COMPLETION OF A THOUGHT

Scientists who name plants and animals are regular people influenced by their society's racism, sexism, and gender biases, so it's not surprising that some names are now recognized as derogatory: *Japanese beetle*. *Asian murder hornet*. *German cockroach*...

In March 2023 the Entomological Society of America (ESA) officially replaced "Gypsy moth," a name for *Lymantria dispar* many Romani people find offensive, with "spongy moth," referring to the way the insect's light brown, fuzzy egg masses look like sponges.

The destructive caterpillar, introduced to Massachusetts in 1869, is called *spongieuse* in France and French-speaking Canada.

"Throughout their history, Romani people have been the targets of enslavement, genocide, forced sterilization and migration, economic and social exclusion, and other manifestations of anti-Romani racism," the ESA wrote in a statement explaining the decision. "Anti-Romani racism, including institutional racism and discrimination [against] Romani people, continues today, primarily in Europe where a majority of Romani people live."

"Forbush and Fernald (1896)," the ESA noted pointedly, "stated that it is believed that the moth was given its former common name due to the 'brown, tanned kind of color of the male' resembling the skin color of Romani people."

In our June 13 edition, our *West Along the River* columnist caught himself referring to the caterpillar by its older name, acknowledged it was insulting, and announced an intention to "work on changing our habits" – without sharing the new name with our readers! Several of you noticed. This was an oversight on the part of our editorial staff, who should have asked.

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Help! Or Be Helped!

Montague Villages, a neighbor-to-neighbor organization, helps adults over 60 residing in the town of Montague to age in place with dignity and more independence by offering volunteer services, access to information, and community connections.

Application forms are now available for membership – those who receive services and/or support the organization – and volunteers, people over 18 years of age providing services to members and/or other tasks to the organization.

Consider visiting our website, www.montaguevillages.org, for a

wealth of further information. Other contact information includes our email, info@montaguevillages.org, and phone number, (413) 367-6592.

Tax-deductible donations through our fiscal sponsor, Common Good, are always welcomed. You can donate directly on our website.

Services to our members are scheduled to begin in mid- to late fall. We are excited and enthusiastic about bringing much-needed services to meet the needs of our aging community.

Mary Kay Mattiace
Montague City

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The *Montague Reporter* will publish every other week during July and August. Our next issue will come out July 11. This allows our staff and volunteers to take a break — we have published every week since the beginning of the year. Yay!

While you're out and about this summer, don't forget to take us with you, and send a photo for our *Montague Reporter on the Road* feature (see below for examples!).

The First Congregational Church in Montague Center will hold a **pancake breakfast** this Saturday, June 29, from 8:15 to 10:15 a.m. Enjoy pancakes, maple syrup, fruit, sausage, coffee, tea, and juice for \$10. No reservations are necessary. The proceeds benefit the church's Deacon's Fund, which provides assistance for those in need.

Did you know that the Mohawk Trail State Forest has the **tallest trees in the entire Northeast**? Take a walk among these giant white pines this Saturday or Sunday, June 29 and 30, and learn

about why they are endangered and what makes them "hidden heroes of American history."

This free program is geared for ages six to adult and includes a gradual uphill hike, about 1.6 miles round-trip. The walk starts from the interpretive center, just past the park entrance off Route 2 in Charlemont, at 10:30 a.m. each day.

The National Spiritual Alliance will host a **Psychic Fair** from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. this Saturday, June 29, at Thompson Temple, 2 Montague Avenue in Lake Pleasant. Visit spiritualallianceusa.org/calendar to register or for more information.

Music and Movement with Tom & Laurie, a bilingual weekly event designed for preschoolers but fun for all ages, will move for the summer from the Montague Center library to the tent at the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls. The program starts at 10 a.m. each Thursday and is about 45 minutes long.

Tech Drop-In for Seniors is back for the summer months at the Gill-Montague senior center on Fifth Street in Turners Falls.

Anyone 60 years of age or older is invited to bring their questions and their smartphones, laptops, or tablets to a free, weekly Senior Tech Time any Tuesday from 12:30 to 2 p.m. No appointment is needed, just stop by with your device and they'll be glad to help.

Leverett singer-songwriters Walt Burnham and Mitch Mulholland will play folk-style original songs, along with some blues and rock, at the Leverett Library's **Concert on the Patio** next Tuesday, July 2 at 6:30 p.m. Accompanied by acoustic guitars, the two call themselves the Boxshop Duo, after the Leverett Crafts & Arts building they are both associated with.

The following Tuesday, enjoy traditional Québécois music by French Press, featuring Cynthia Thomas on fiddle, Doug Feeney on banjo, and Gus Hollingsworth on accordion. These concerts are free, and will move indoors if the weather is bad.

The **courtyard of Unnameable Books** at 66 Avenue A in Turners Falls will be filled with the sound of music from Wylder Ayers and Indē from 5 to 7 p.m. next Friday, July 5. This free event is part of First Friday, when downtown stores stay open late, as well as Antenna Cloud Farms' Songweaver Sessions.

Wylder Ayres calls their work "folk journalism," creating "a cinematic reel of Americana-inspired sounds." Indē is a multi-disciplinary artist and educator noted for their bass baritone and unique harmonies. After the concert, an afterparty will be held at Brick and Feather Brewery at 78 Eleventh Street.

The LAVA Center in Greenfield will present a free public reading and discussion of Frederick Douglass's speech, **"What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"** on Friday, July 5 at 5 p.m. The date marks the 172nd anniversary of the speech, which Douglass delivered in 1852 in Rochester, New York, 14 years before he visited Greenfield.

After a short concert by students from Twice as Smart, the speech will be read aloud in both English and Haitian Kreyòl. Matthew Barlow will then lead a discussion on Douglass and his legacy.

The **Unfortunate Ooze Fest** is coming to Peskeompskut Park on Saturday, July 6 from noon until 7 p.m. This independent music festival will feature performances by Cycles Inside, Scald Hymn, Arkm Foam, Dan Gay, Marie Carroll, Noise Nomads, Belltone Suicide, Slippery Dixon, Jen Gelineau, Moons of Goom, Mibble, Federico Balducci, Josiah Noomrude, Hardcar, and Trance Macabre.

Bring a lawn chair and picnic to this afternoon of free entertainment, encompassing a wide array of musical genres and experimental instrumentation. In case of rain this festival will be postponed to Sunday, July 7.

Montague Public Libraries invites the public to two community conversations on **accessibility, and accessible collections**, at the libraries. The first will be held Tuesday, July 9 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Gill-Montague senior center. The second community conversation will be held Wednesday, July 10, from 6 to 7 p.m. via Zoom; contact the libraries for more information.

Curious about **hives and honeybees**? The Carnegie Library will have an observation hive on hand, with live bees, for a Bee Talk on Tuesday, July 9 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

The first free **Music on the Common** concert this summer in Montague Center will kick off Wednesday, July 10, at 6 p.m. with "foot-stompin', toe tappin'" music by Becky and John.

Organized by the First Congregational Church, the series runs through July. Other performers will be the Farley Nine, Dusty Dufresne, and Just Fine, Thank You. Bring chairs or blankets to sit on. The concerts will be held rain or shine.

Smokey Bear will stop by the Discovery Center in Turners Falls for his 80th birthday party on Thursday, July 11. Join firefighters from the DCR Bureau of Fire Control and Forestry at 3:30 and 4:30 p.m. for a reading of the Smokey Bear Story and to learn campfire safety, then meet Smokey himself at 4 and 5 p.m. For all ages, rain or shine, and free.

As part of their efforts to preserve the cultural legacy of the Native tribes of our region, the Nolumbeka Project stewards the **Heritage Three Sisters Garden**, where they continue to cultivate ceremonial tobacco and other traditional native crops on the Wissatinnewag site in current-day Greenfield. Their goal is to educate others on the importance and vibrancy of Indigenous agriculture and to network with those interested in it, in particular the preservation of heritage seeds.

The group is looking for volunteers to help at Wissatinnewag, as well as for the annual **Pocumtuck Homelands Festival**, held at Unity Park in Montague the first weekend of August. If you are interested in assisting in any way, contact nolumbekaproject@gmail.com.

Fiddleheads Gallery in Northfield has put out a **call for art inspired by and/or including words** for a show called "Literally Inspired," which will open on August 2.

To find out how to apply, contact margedvaa@gmail.com. You must credit the author of whatever song, book, poem, proverb, or quote inspires you, and you may either incorporate the words into the art or display them next to the piece.

A free store called the **ReCenter** has opened at the 170 Glendale Road transfer station in Northampton. This "swap shop" is run by volunteers, and allows people and organizations to donate and take durable, useful home goods and furnishings for reuse.

The center will be open on the first and third Saturday of each month, from April to October, from 8 to 11 a.m. Some more "risky" items may not be accepted unless the donor pays a disposal fee, but most exchanges are free. Anyone with a Northampton dump sticker is automatically admitted; non-residents may purchase a ReCenter sticker at the gate for \$10 which is good for one year.

The group sometimes holds RePair Cafés as well. Follow "Northampton RePair & ReUse" on Facebook for updates.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
June 28 & 29 at 7:30 p.m.
PLANES, TRAINS, & AUTOMOBILES
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6/28 Gallery Walk: Opening of "On our way" by Chelsea Granger 5-8pm
6/29 Rouge Readings 7pm \$10
6/29 Collage club 1-3 \$10
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SUBMITTED PHOTOS

REPORTER...



Top: Leverett reader Annaliese Bischoff clutches our May 30 edition at the São Leonardo de Galafura viewpoint overlooking Portugal's Douro River valley.

Above: Janet Mascucci of Gill took a moment in Rome with the same edition. "I know," she writes, "but I only get a digital subscription." We think it counts!

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BOTTLES & CANS
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OP ED Farmworkers Bear the Brunt of the Sun

By **CLAUDIA QUINTERO** and **MAYA McCANN**

SPRINGFIELD – This week Massachusetts experienced a heat dome, bringing extreme temperatures across the state. Parts of western Massachusetts were under an excessive heat watch, and Boston declared a heat emergency. The advice of experts and local leaders? Stay indoors, hydrated, and out of the sun.

Unfortunately, just like during the COVID-19 shut-down, this is not a possibility for some of the Commonwealth's most essential workers: farmworkers. Farmworkers continue to work through the heat to put food on our tables. Indeed, most Massachusetts residents benefit from this very work, as the Commonwealth ranks as one of the top states that sells directly to consumers.

"The temperature is over 100 degrees," shares Massachusetts farmworker Patricia Lopez. "It is difficult to do a full day's work. Our body no longer reacts very well. Personally, a colleague fainted yesterday due to the high temperatures. My body gets tired, I feel dizzy, and my vision is cloudy. Yet I must continue as long as my body can withstand, working 11 hours a day from Monday to Sunday, planting tobacco and on certain days picking the vegetables, weeding the field." (*Translated from Spanish by the authors.*)

High heat, humidity, sun exposure, dehydration, and physical exertion can contribute to heat illness. Because farm work requires strenuous labor in hot temperatures, often without sufficient water, rest, or

shade, "farmworkers are at critical risk for heat stroke and illnesses related to excess heat," says Baystate Medical Center attending physician Dr. Norbert Godfield. "Frequent breaks for hydration are necessary in these times."

Practitioners at Baystate Brightwood Health Center, a local health clinic in Springfield, note that farmworker patients regularly come in with symptoms that can be attributed to dehydration.

"They are also coming in with acute food insecurity and related health issues," says family nurse practitioner Ryann McChesney. "As daytime temperatures increase, it is imperative that field workers are given regular breaks during the day to hydrate – key to replenish both water and electrolytes if sweating – as well as access to shade or a cool indoor space in order to bring down body temperatures."

While many farms do try to offer their employees rest and hydration, many workers are not accorded sufficient breaks or access to water. Dr. Audrey Guhn, MD, medical director at Baystate Brightwood, described working with one farmworker who suffered from heat stroke who explained that she typically worked 12-hour days without any scheduled breaks. When she was able to get water, it was in a central location far from where she was working in the field.

A member of the Pioneer Valley Workers Center recently testified before the state Commission on Poverty about a worker who fainted and had a seizure due to heat stroke while working in the field. When

he asked why she returned to work right away, she said that she felt that she had to, because she could not afford to take time off and lose wages.

The Fairness for Farmworkers Act (FFA), a bill filed by state senator Adam Gomez and representative Carlos Gonzalez (H.2812 / S.1837), would address these concerns by mandating two paid breaks on either side of the lunch break for those who work more than eight hours in a day and allowing workers to earn paid time off.

Experts have warned that this heat wave could be the longest one that some have experienced in decades, and it may be the first of many this summer. Global warming is making heat waves hotter, longer lasting, and more frequent.

Farmworkers have been bearing the brunt of climate disasters in the Commonwealth, from losing hours and wages after last summer's flooding devastated western Massachusetts farms to toiling outdoors through heat waves.

Farm work is skilled, difficult, essential labor, performed through difficult conditions. However, Massachusetts farmworkers are not guaranteed any paid breaks, nor a day of rest. The Fairness for Farmworkers Coalition aims to change that unjust reality and improve the health and wellbeing of farmworkers through the FFA.

Additionally, Massachusetts law still allows farmworkers to earn a poverty level minimum wage of \$8 an hour, without the guarantee of overtime pay, despite often working 60 or more hours a week. The FFA will significantly improve farm-

workers' wages, guaranteeing them the state minimum wage and the ability to earn overtime, enabling them to purchase nutritious food, and ensuring they have a safe, stable home in which to recover after a day of difficult labor.

The FFA is currently before the Committee on Revenue, and its lead sponsor, representative Gonzalez, plans to propose including it as an amendment to the House Economic Development Bill. The Coalition hopes that legislators will see that the FFA is critical for the safety and wellbeing of farmworkers and the agricultural sector as a whole and will support this.


The bill does not address everything but is a necessary first step in improving the working conditions and lives of farmworkers in the Commonwealth.

"We are publicly forgotten by society," says Ms. Lopez. "I make a strong call to legislators and other people in authority to please pass this law. We deserve decent wages, and paid rest. With my hand on my heart, I tell you that it will be of great benefit to have better working conditions in our workplaces."

Claudia Quintero, Esq. and Maya McCann, Esq. serve as staff attorney and Equal Justice Works Fellow at the Central West Justice Center, an affiliate of Community Legal Aid. The Fairness for Farmworkers Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals advocating for legislation to improve the lives of farmworkers in the Commonwealth. For more information, visit www.fairnessforfarmworkersma.org.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Eight Dogs Run Off; Riverview Drive Resident(s) Really Annoyed By Parked Cars

Wednesday, 5/1
8:57 a.m. Riverview Drive caller reporting that neighbors are parked on the street.
6:05 p.m. 911 call, Stonecutter Road. No sounds of distress and no response to silent call procedures.
6:08 p.m. Riverview Drive caller concerned about a vehicle parked near a hydrant.
6:27 p.m. Caller advising someone appears to be in the condemned house on Walnut Street.
7:51 p.m. Ben Hale Road caller reporting her Belgian Malinois has been missing for about an hour.
8:24 p.m. Traffic hazard reported, Main Road. Tractor-trailer unit is attempting to turn.
10:24 p.m. Ben Hale Road caller reports four-wheelers and cars with spotlights at a house across the street.
Friday, 5/3
9:24 a.m. Envelope with cash found on the ground outside police station. Investigation revealed it was dropped by a newspaper delivery person the prior evening. Call made to same.
11:07 a.m. Notified that

the state boat ramp on the French King Highway is open. Buoys were installed by FirstLight.
1:45 p.m. Camp Road caller looking for help recovering property.
6:33 p.m. Assisted missing subject back home.
Saturday, 5/4
9:08 a.m. Center Road party reports her dog ran away an hour ago.
9:42 a.m. Mountain Road caller reports skateboarders in the area; concerned for their safety.
Tuesday, 5/7
10:44 a.m. Fire alarm, Elm Street.
11:54 a.m. 911 open line, Pisgah Mountain Road. Nothing that sounded like an emergency.
2:47 p.m. Assisted Erving PD with a motorcycle vs. car accident.
9:26 p.m. Caller reporting people chased him off the road and smashed his car with a bat. No injuries.
Wednesday, 5/8
3:32 a.m. Fire alarm, Memorial Grove Road.
10:48 a.m. Main Road caller reports a German short-haired pointer with a collar ran away.
Friday, 5/10
11:37 a.m. Party at the

station inquired if officers called him last night and advised that he had an arrest warrant. Most likely our number was "spoofed."
11:39 a.m. Walk-in report of trash dumping on Mountain Road.
1:20 p.m. Fire alarm, Boyle Road.
2:04 p.m. Served paperwork, Munn's Ferry.
11:42 p.m. Caller believes she can hear a woman yelling and crying, just north of the high-tension lines.
Saturday, 5/11
5:48 a.m. Main Road caller reports he was flagged down by a female needing help.
1:46 p.m. Complaint to state police about a vehicle traveling northbound on Interstate 91.
Monday, 5/13
11:06 a.m. Fire alarm, Purple Road.
1:44 p.m. Stuck truck, Main and Wyart roads.
Tuesday, 5/14
11:55 a.m. Possible domestic violence on the French King Highway. Unable to locate.
1:58 p.m. Greenfield PD notifying of a 911 call mapping in a one-mile radius of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

3:48 p.m. Missing person reported, French King Highway.
4:40 p.m. Main Road caller reporting an injured animal; referred to ACO.
6:51 p.m. Bicycle recovered, Main Road.
9:15 p.m. Main Road caller out with a loose baby cow.
Wednesday, 5/15
11:05 a.m. Caller reporting a vehicle driving all over the road, French King Highway.
2:20 p.m. Care Drive caller requesting an officer for a vehicle lock-out; child in the vehicle.
Thursday, 5/16
5 p.m. Caller reported their vehicle is out of gas on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.
Friday, 5/17
12:06 a.m. Standing by for a property transfer.
9:17 p.m. Notified that there will be a laser light show for Commencement weekend, Lamplighter Way.
Saturday, 5/18
8:51 p.m. Assisted Northfield PD with disturbance.
Sunday, 5/19
12 noon. Assisted another agency, Barton

Cove. Disabled vehicle.
3:36 p.m. Jeep off into the woods, Main Road. Operator does not appear to be injured.
Monday, 5/20
6:21 a.m. West Gill Road caller states that a vehicle is in her driveway with no one in it.
4:44 p.m. Black-and-gold greyhound found at the intersection of Main Road and Route 2. Taken to shelter.
Wednesday, 5/22
3:52 a.m. Accident with no injuries, French King Highway.
Thursday, 5/23
11:09 a.m. West Gill Road caller requesting information about handling a possum.
12:09 p.m. Animal complaint, Chappell Drive. No services needed.
Friday, 5/24
11:28 a.m. Kayak found in the middle of the river near the beads with no one near it. Secured.
4:57 p.m. Labrador retriever with a collar reported walking down Main Road.
5:17 p.m. Main Road caller advises a tree fell on wires and is arcing, sparking, and smoking.
5:49 p.m. Multiple cars reported as illegal-

ly parked, Riverview Drive. Checked area; no laws violated.
Saturday, 5/25
1:10 p.m. Caller reports a boat in the Cove showing a distress signal. Boat to be towed to the boat ramp.
Tuesday, 5/28
1:52 p.m. Bicycle drove down side of a truck, French King Highway.
4:18 p.m. Dog bite, Walnut Street. ACO previously advised.
6:45 p.m. Main Road and Speer Way caller reporting a raccoon walking kind of slow.
11:14 p.m. French King Highway caller advises her dog has run off.
Thursday, 5/30
7:26 a.m. Main Road caller reporting two Great Pyrenees missing. Both retrieved.
11:04 a.m. Caller states there was a bunch of crows circling around something; is concerned because they are very smart animals. Unable to locate.
11:58 a.m. Caller would like to speak with an officer about previous employer keeping money from his last paycheck.
12:56 p.m. Parking complaint, Riverview Drive.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Store's Water Use Hard to Gauge; Old War Memorial Turns Back Up

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard's regular schedule would have had them meet on the new Juneteenth holiday, so they met instead last Tuesday, June 18. This meeting technically occurred within the boundaries of the annual town meeting, which was continued from June 8 to June 26 for one article that could not be acted on until funds were in hand.

Wendell Country Store proprietor Patty Scutari came to the meeting to continue discussing her request to connect the store with Wendell's town water, after concerns with the well on the property. At a prior meeting, she had agreed to gather data on the store's water use.

The store is regulated as a public water supply, as it serves coffee every day brewed with its own well water, and so it has a water operator who keeps records, but Scutari said they didn't make sense to her. In 2012, when the adjoining Deja Brew Pub was open five nights a week, the store and pub used a combined 10,000 gallons a month; the recent records showed up to 84,000 gallons per month.

The water pipes are in the store's ceiling, Scutari said, so any leak would show. She tested the toilets in the house, which uses the same well, for leaks and found none. She told the selectboard she suspects the meter is off.

Scutari said she sees three options: drilling a new well for the store, installing a new chlorination system for the existing well, which her operator warns are difficult to manage, or her preference, connecting the building to the town water supply.

Jim Slavas, the town facilities engineer, has said he considers connecting the store to municipal water feasible. The storage tank Scutari would need could fit in the store's cellar, and if the property's total water use is higher than the town well can support, she could leave the house connected to the present well, which has not run dry in the 34 years she has been in Wendell.

Slavas has also reportedly said that too little use is not good for a water system. The library is likely the heaviest water user of the town buildings currently connected to the system, and it is only open four partial days a week, with no showers or laundry.

Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato said Wendell should look at other towns, large and small, that supply town water to private businesses to serve as models. Er-

ving supplies some businesses and homes with town water, while the rest use private wells. Selectboard member Gillian Budine said her son serves on the Bernardston water commission, and can tell her what that town does.

The Wendell Meetinghouse has also been promised a connection to the town's water system, as well as to its septic system. Water usage at the Meetinghouse is expected to be sporadic, but likely low overall. The Meetinghouse will also need to store water.

Budine said the town needed to create a policy, and that Slavas should be invited to the board's next meeting to discuss the Country Store's request.

Scutari said that if the store's water is found contaminated one more time, she will have only 180 days to fix the situation.

Savings Passed Along

DiDonato reported that she had met with Wendell's assessing firm, Regional Resource Group (RRG), and representatives of New Leaf Energy and learned that for projects like the battery storage system New Leaf is proposing to build on forested private land between Wendell Depot and New Salem roads, owners typically make payments *in lieu* of taxes (PILOT) based on construction costs.

As New Leaf plans to receive a 30% federal rebate for construction, its PILOT payment would be based on an assessment of only 70% of the project's expected value.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad reported that RRG was the only firm that responded to Wendell's request for assessing proposals. He said the finance committee recommended signing another three-year contract with them in spite of increased costs.

Board members gave DiDonato authority to sign the new contract with RRG, if the board of assessors approves it.

Projects Ongoing

Project coordinator Phil Delorey reported that road line painting is scheduled for July 1 to 5, and that he had applied for a grant to help pay for repairs to the Farley Road bridge. He said he had noticed some irregularities in the new paving on Wendell Depot Road, and asked the selectboard whether they had heard any complaints. They had not.

The WRATS lot was surveyed, and it turned out to be larger than Delorey had expected. A contractor

has agreed to cut trees on the lot at no cost to the town, after which stumping and grading will leave a good area for a new public wood bank, and for the road crew to leave debris they clear from the roads.

Delorey said he hopes a grant can cover some of the cost of stumping and grading the lot.

The next project is cutting down dead trees around the library. The library's abutters have already approved that work.

Delorey discussed the proposal to provide wheelchair access from the main floor of town hall to the stage area, and said that in order to keep to a mandated 12-to-1 slope, a long ramp would be required, which could run along one wall of the main floor area. An access ramp from the stage and kitchen level to the outdoors would have to fit in the narrow alleyway between the building and the police station.

Town hall painting will have to wait for another fiscal year, even with paint peeling on the tin ceiling.

The Remote Vote

National Grid has offered Wendell the use of a consulting firm to assess the condition of town vehicles and determine which ones might be suitable for replacement with electric equivalents. The town can sign on at no cost. DiDonato agreed to be the point person.

A chemically sensitive resident has asked to be accommodated at town meetings. Budine questioned whether a Zoom connection would be acceptable for her, and said she would email her and ask.

To vote remotely, someone must still be checked into a meeting and confirmed as a registered citizen. Only a limited number of remote voters can be accommodated, and that with some adjustment and effort. Anyone requesting remote participation would need to make their needs understood ahead of time.

Other Business

A wooden World War II memorial from Wendell that was found in Arizona, restored by a volunteer in California, and shipped to Wendell at no cost to the town is sitting in a crate in the building inspector's office. Johnson-Mussad said he was not even sure how to open the crate, but a representative from the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Service was planning to come to town for its opening.

Board members have not yet decided where the memorial should go, but agreed that at first it can stay in the office building meeting room.

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

'Troubled Waters: Wendell's Doomed Power Plant, 1909-1938'

WENDELL – The Athol-Orange Power Plant was a major construction project in 1909 and 1910, and supplied electricity to communities along the Millers River for nearly 30 years.

But in 1938 extreme weather, which had a history of reshaping local communities, would prove to be too much for this technological behemoth.

On Tuesday, July 23 at 6:30 p.m., Wendell Historical Society board members Pam Richardson, Edward

Hines, and Joseph Coll will present "Troubled Waters," the history of this facility, whose destruction nearly destroyed the town of Wendell along with it.

This presentation by the Historical Society is co-sponsored by the Wendell Free Library, and will be given in the Library's Herrick Room. Seating for the event is limited; if you would like to reserve a place, please send an email to info@wendellhistoricalsociety.org. The event is free, though donations are encouraged.

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TOWN OF MONTAGUE TOWN ACCOUNTANT

The Town of Montague, MA Selectboard seeks qualified applicants for the position of **Town Accountant**. The position is responsible for the maintenance and monitoring of the Town's financial records and ensuring proper accounting and expenditure procedures are followed in accordance with MA General Laws. The Accountant coordinates with the Town Administrator and Finance Committee in the development and amendment of the Annual Budget and related article requests to be brought to Town Meeting.

The Town seeks a collaborative candidate with a thorough knowledge of municipal accounting process, procedures, and best practices. Minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree in a related field, and 3 to 5 years of related experience with accounting systems in municipal or other government accounting agencies; or any equivalent combination of related education, training, certification, and experience.

Salary starts at \$67,277 and the scale goes to \$82,394. The work week is Monday through Thursday, 35 hours/week, with some evening meetings. The Town of Montague is committed to a collaborative team environment and competitive benefits. A job description is available at www.montague-ma.gov. Target start date is August 26 to September 9, 2024.

For priority review, please submit resume and cover letter by July 8, 2024 to Wendy Bogusz, Selectboard Executive Assistant: WendyB@montague-ma.gov

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WENDELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Wendell Conservation Commission will hold a Public Meeting on a Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by the **Department of Conservation and Recreation** for a project proposing to complete trail maintenance, including a trail closure and reroute on the Ruggles Loop Trail in Wendell State Forest. The trail is located off of Ruggles Pond Road/Laurel Drive in Wendell. The meeting is to determine whether the project meets the criteria of the MA Wetlands Protection Act, CMR 10.05(5), and the Wendell Wetlands Protection Bylaw.

The meeting will be held virtually via ZOOM on **Tuesday, July 16, 2024**, at 6:00 p.m. To join the meeting please use the following link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87329211586?pwd=IFilZlVwziWqbfjYlP5qFmVAQOLi37.1>

Wendell Conservation Commission
Ward Smith, chair; Rowan Gay; Trevor Kearns
Mary Thomas, Conservation Agent

SHEA THEATER MURAL COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

Please take the **survey** to help generate themes for the Shea mural that are relevant to Turners Falls and its residents. These themes will be used by muralist Darion Fleming to create draft designs for consideration and approval by the Shea Mural Steering Group. **Deadline to respond Monday, July 1.**

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RENT from page A1

the amount into an escrow account until the matter is settled in court.

"I'm not against a rent increase as long as it's fair and reasonable, but \$178 is way out of sight," Henderson said. "I realize that you have expenses, and so do we. I realize your expenses are going up, but so are ours."

A Fair Number

It is up to the three-member Orange Mobile Home Rent Control Board, established by a town by-law in 1985, to determine whether Leisure Woods Estates, Inc. may increase its lot rental rate, and by how much.

"We are striving to arrive at a point where Leisure Woods makes a reasonable profit on their operation at 519 East River Street," board chair Jane Peirce said at the hearing, "but we are also needing to be mindful of the population that lives there."

Peirce, a member of the Orange selectboard and board of health, was appointed chair at the beginning of the meeting after a motion was made to organize the board. She thanked her fellow selectboard members Andrew Smith and Julie Davis for agreeing to join her.

"[I] apologize for how long it has taken us to assemble this meeting," Peirce said. "It seems like nobody wants to be on the rent control board."

The regulations empower the control board to set a maximum lot rent that takes into account the tenants' interests while allowing the owner to earn a "fair net operating income" after deducting mortgage payments and "reasonable" operating expenses. The board also reserves the right to deny a requested increase if it sees evidence that the owner has failed to provide "normal and adequate repairs and maintenance."

"It's not like we can just decide what sounds reasonable and what doesn't – it's an exact formula," Peirce told the *Reporter*. "There's a very, very closely prescribed process that we will follow to try to arrive at a fair number for everybody."

Leisure Woods president and director Glenn Gidley testified that the park has been running a deficit for the last decade, during which time there were no increases in lot rent.

"We went 10 years trying to be sensitive to the fact that we were in some down economic times," Gidley said. "We were planning some rent increases, then the pandemic hit – and I even talked to the chair of this board and it was told



ROBERTSON PHOTOS

Alfred Henderson (left) says that if the rent at Leisure Woods increases by as much as the park's owners have requested, he will pay into an escrow account until the matter is settled in court. Henderson, a recent widower, lives across the street from his daughter and her husband, Arthur Hicks (right). Hicks, who has taken part in two successful lawsuits to force the landlord to make maintenance investments, says he believes the mobile home park model is "collapsing" in the face of a broader housing crisis.

to me that maybe we should wait. We waited, and here we are. We are operating at a deficit."

A current-year budget submitted by Leisure Woods as a requirement of its petition estimates annual rental revenue from the park at \$697,997, leaving the business with a net loss of \$29,153 after anticipated expenses, which include \$170,000 in payroll for four employees, \$130,000 for water and sewer bills, and \$105,650 for maintenance, as well as \$50,000 for a line labeled simply "Miscellaneous."

Factoring in \$45,000 in interest payments and \$500 in state income tax, the company said it faced a net loss of \$74,653.

John Kuzinevich, a lawyer representing the company in the proceedings, told the *Reporter* that a portion of a \$30,000 "professional fee" line item covers his services. He noted that the company's financial statements had not been independently audited. "We don't need

to go through the expense," he said.

Kuzinevich also told the *Reporter* that over the last decade, Leisure Woods has actually netted an average gain of about \$16,000 per year. "The Gidleys view it as a loss," he said, "but from an accounting perspective it's not a real loss, it's a break-even."

The town's rent control bylaw indicates that an owner's "fair" income can be calculated using the property's market value and prevailing commercial interest rates. Considering Leisure Woods' \$3.4 million tax assessment and assuming an 8.25% interest rate, the company asserts that its fair income should be \$281,861.

"That's basically what they should be earning, considering the value of the land and their own services," Kuzinevich told the *Reporter*. "No prudent investor would invest \$3 million and be satisfied earning \$16,000."

"We're just looking for a fair rate of return," he said. "While we really do sympathize – it's tight times for the residents – it's the same for my clients."

Constant Sniping

During the hearing, residents complained that Leisure Woods lacks amenities offered at other mobile home parks, including those used in financial comparisons to justify its requested increase. Several shared concerns about inadequate stormwater drainage, icy roads in the winter, and long delays before maintenance requests are acted on.

Other residents told the board that the community recreational room is in severe disrepair and remains shuttered, having never opened.

"The constant sniping and abuse that we put up with, and our staff puts up with, is ridiculous," Gidley said, responding to the complaints. "'And then we want clubhouses! And then we want cookouts! And

then we want parties!' The acrimony has to stop. There is a certain faction of residents at Leisure Woods that will come up here and tell you anything, whether it's fiction or not, to make us look bad so that these fees don't go up."

Gidley is also the owner of Salem Manufactured Homes, a New Hampshire-based company that describes itself on its website as a "thriving, vertically integrated family business with over 15 employees." Salem both sells manufactured homes and manages seven mobile home parks, according to a list on the website, including Leisure Woods.

When fuel expenses at the Orange park ran high in recent years, Kuzinevich told the *Reporter*, Leisure Woods took a loan from Salem Manufactured Homes.

"Salem Manufactured Homes and Leisure Woods Estates are totally separate and distinct corporations," he clarified. "They do not share a common set of books. If there are transactions between them that are reflected on the books, just like any transaction with any third party, there is no commingling of assets and nothing is done off the books."

Coming to a Head

Gidley's company has owned Leisure Woods since 1997, and in that time residents have brought two lawsuits forcing the company to fix drainage and road issues, winning both.

Arthur Hicks, a retired firefighter and 28-year resident of Leisure Woods who was involved in the lawsuits, says he believes the pressure of a nationwide housing crisis is reaching mobile home communities like his.

"It's going to come to a head, and everything is going to collapse," he told the *Reporter*.

One home at Leisure Woods, built in 2003 with two bedrooms

and 1,300 square feet of living space, is currently listed for sale at \$192,800. Alfred Henderson said another house near his sold the same day it was listed.

At the June 11 hearing, Hicks brought attention to the park's recreational hall, which he said was never completed, is used for storage, and is at risk of collapsing.

"They call it the rec hall – we call it the wrecked hall," he said to applause from the audience. "At this point it's structurally unsound, it's on the verge of collapsing."

Gidley said Leisure Woods would not make capital investments at the park until its rental revenue increases.

"We have struggled with it for a long time," he told the board. "And it's time that we get the type of fee that we can – perhaps at some point, when we get to a median level – provide some of the things these folks are asking [for]. But right now we're down to the basic necessities, which is providing a safe, clean, park."

"Back in the day, mobile homes were an affordable place to live – it was cheap," said resident Sue Boyer. "It's not cheap anymore. The new trailers – single-wides are \$100,000, double-wides are \$250,000. Who can afford that? And then to have lot rent on top of that, I just don't get it."

At the end of the meeting Kuzinevich requested the public hearing be formally closed, eliciting boos from the crowd. The board voted instead to continue the hearing, but adjourn the meeting.

"I would like to make sure that our entire process is open and transparent," Peirce said, "so we can explain our findings and our decision in a public meeting format."

The board has scheduled the continuation of the hearing for Tuesday, July 16 at 6 p.m. in the Orange town hall auditorium.



Leisure Woods Estates' petition to the Orange rent control board included a list of higher rents charged at other mobile home parks in the region. At this month's hearing, some residents argued that the company provides fewer amenities. One thing the company does offer is the sale of mobile homes themselves, under a "vertically integrated" arrangement with a second company owned by the president.

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Senior Anne Kolodziej slams a triple during the Western Mass semifinal game against Hopkins Academy.



Senior and co-captain Holly Myers sprints down the baseline on her hit in the fourth inning of the Western Mass championship game at Westfield State.



Senior Ella Kolodziej (left) gets a high five at the plate from her sister Anne Kolodziej.

Madi Liimatainen is congratulated by head coach Gary Mullins after achieving her 900th career strikeout during the state tournament's Round of 16 game against Norfolk County Agricultural High School.



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2023 Water Quality Report

Turners Falls Water Department

226 Millers Falls Road
 Turners Falls, Massachusetts 01376-1605
 PWS ID# I192000

We are once again proud to present our annual water quality report, covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2023. Over the years, we have dedicated ourselves to producing drinking water that meets all state and federal standards. We continually strive to adopt new methods for delivering the best quality drinking water to you. As new challenges to drinking water safety emerge, we remain vigilant in meeting the goals of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users.

Please share with us your thoughts or concerns about the information in this report. After all, well-informed customers are our best allies. For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Jeffrey Hildreth, Water Department Superintendent, or Suzanne Leh, Clerk/Collector, at (413) 863-4542.

Community Participation

You are invited to participate in our public forum and voice your concerns about your drinking water. We meet the first Wednesday of each month, beginning at 5 p.m., at the Water Department Office, 226 Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls. Our Annual Meeting of the Turners Falls Fire District is held in the spring.

2023 Board of Water Commissioners: Bruce Merriam, Kenneth Morin, Edward Pelis. Certified Water Operators: Stephen Fitzpatrick, Jason Watroba. Water Operators: Riley Watroba, Austin Felix.

Where Does My Water Come From?

The Turners Falls Water Department's main source of water consists of one ground water artesian well located off Center Street in Montague Center. Gravel-packed Well #1192000 2G pumps 1.2 to 2 million gallons of water per day to the filter plant. At the plant, the water is sand filtered for the removal of iron and manganese; the treated, filtered water is then discharged into the gravity-fed distribution system. The Hannegan Brook Well located near Lake Pleasant can yield 1.44 MGD to meet future water demands.

The water quality is good and only requires the addition of water treatment chemicals for pH adjustment. The storage facilities in Turners Falls have a total storage

capacity of 6.3 million gallons. Lake Pleasant and Green Pond are emergency backup surface water supplies. Please call Jeff or Suzanne to answer any questions at (413) 863-4542, clerk@turnersfallswater.com, superintendent@turnersfallswater.com, or www.turnersfallswater.com.

Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or <http://www.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.

Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the MA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) prescribe regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Substances that may be present in

source water include: Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife; Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; Pesticides and Herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources, such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses; Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and which may also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems; and Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Lead in Drinking Water

How does lead get in my drinking water?

In Massachusetts, most drinking water sources like reservoirs and groundwater are lead free. When lead is present in water, it is typically due to the water flowing through lead pipes or plumbing in homes with lead parts or solder. Service lines, which are the pipes that connect your home to the water main, could have lead in them. Inside your home, you may have lead pipes, copper pipes connected with lead solder, or brass faucets or fittings containing lead. Lead levels are highest when the water has been sitting in lead pipes for several hours. Hot water causes lead to enter water faster.

How does lead get into my body?

In many cases, most exposure to lead is from paint dust, paint chips and soil contaminated with lead. Lead can also get into your body by drinking or cooking with water containing lead. Young children absorb lead more easily than adults, and lead can be passed from a mother to her unborn child. For these reasons, lead in drinking water can be an important source of exposure for pregnant women, young children, and infants that are fed powdered formula.

Lead is not absorbed through the skin. Bathing or showering in water containing lead should be safe.

What can I do right now to protect my family?

Run your water before using and use COLD water. Always use cold water for drinking and cooking. Do not use hot water for cooking or baby formula. Hot water usually has higher lead levels than cold water. Running the water before using will usually reduce any lead levels by

flushing out the water that has been sitting in lead pipes for several hours.

Boiling water does not eliminate lead. If there is lead in your water, boiling it will increase lead levels.

Statement from the Environmental Protection Agency:

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Turners Falls Water Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water; but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Water Conservation

You can play a role in conserving water and save yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water.

Here are a few tips: Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.

Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.

Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.

Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.

Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Write down the meter reading before going to bed at night or leaving for a day. Include all numbers, write down the new reading in the morning and subtract the prior reading. If there has been a change it is probably due to a leak.

What Is a Cross-connection?

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning

systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand), causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cess-pools, or garden chemicals.

Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. For more information, review the Cross-connection Control Manual from the U.S. EPA's Web site at <http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/drinkingwater/pws/crossconnectioncontrol/index.cfm>. You can also call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Source Water Assessment, Protecting Turners Falls Water Supply:

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) for the water supply source serving this water system. This report is a planning tool to support local and state efforts to improve water supply protection. Although the TFWD has many safeguards in place, the overall susceptibility ranking to contamination of the groundwater supplies is high, based on the presence of numerous high-ranking threat land-uses within the Zone II water supply protection areas. The report commends our water system on its proactive approach to source protection. A complete SWAP report is available at the TFWD, the Board of Health office, and online at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/swapreprs.htm>. For more information, call the TFWD at 863-4542.

Things You Can Do to Protect Our Water Supply

Take used motor oil and other such fluids to the town's hazardous waste collection sites, use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly, and do not use the river beds to dispose of any waste.

Turners Falls Water Quality Data

During the past year, we have taken hundreds of water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic, or synthetic organic contaminants. The table below shows only those contaminants that were detected in the water. The state allows us to monitor for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken. **Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community. Our next round of lead and copper sampling will be in 2024.**

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Date Collected	90th percentile	Action Level	#MCLG	# of sites sampled	# of sites above Action Level	Possible source of Contamination
Lead (ppb)	7/25/23	1.3	1.3	.042	20	0	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	7/23/23	0.0276	1.3	1.3	20	0	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservation

Secondary Contaminant	Date Collected	Result or Range Detected	Average Detected	SMCL	ORSG or Health Advisory	Possible Sources
Manganese	8/16/23	0 to .005 ug/L	.0025 ug/L	50 ug/L	300*	Natural sources as well as discharges from industrial uses.
Sodium	8/16/23	10.3 to 11.1 mg/L	10.7 mg/L	20 mg/L	-	Discharge from the use and improper storage of sodium-containing de-icing compounds or in water softening agents

* US EPA and Mass DEP have established public health advisory levels for manganese to protect against concerns of potential neurological effect and a one-day and 10-day HA of 1000 ppb for acute exposure.

Inorganic Contaminants	Date(s) Collected	Highest Result or Highest Running Average Detected	Range Detected	MCL or MRDL	MCLG or MRDLG	Violation (Y/N)	Possible Source(s) of Contamination
Arsenic (ppb)	8/11/23	1		10	N/A	N	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Nitrate (ppm)	8/17/23	0.105	0 - 0.105	10	10	N	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Nitrite (ppm)	8/16/23	0.105	0 - 0.105	1	1	N	

PFAS

On October 2, 2020, MassDEP published its PFAS public drinking water standard or Massachusetts Maximum Contaminant Level (MMCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L), or parts per trillion (ppt) applicable to community (COM) and non-transient non-community (NTNC) systems for the sum of the concentrations of six specific PFAS. This drinking water standard is set to be protective against adverse health effects for all people consuming the water. **The Turners Falls Water Department did take samples in 2021, 2022, and 2023 and had no detects.**

Definitions:

90th Percentile: Out of every 10 homes sampled, 9 were at or below this level.
AL (Action Level): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
mg/L: Milligrams per liter.
MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level): The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Lev-

el Goal): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
NA: Not applicable.
ND (Not detected): Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.
ppb (parts per billion): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).
ppm (parts per million): One part substance per

million parts water (or milligrams per liter).
SMCL (Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level): They are established as guidelines to assist public water systems in managing their drinking water for aesthetic considerations, such as taste, color, and odor. These contaminants are not considered to present a risk to human health at the SMCL.
TT (Treatment Technique): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
ug/L: Micrograms per liter.

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in building a resilient community that offers resources and opportunities for everyone," Pollock said.

The initiative is part of Montague's broader strategy to gather feedback from its less outspoken residents.

Pollock detailed the town's efforts to explore its "climate resilience vulnerability," and how shifting and extreme weather conditions impact aspects like transportation, food access, and the availability of shade and cooling centers.

After carrying out "a variety" of MVP-funded projects, including recent drainage improvement work on Montague City Road, she said, the town is now "revisiting its climate resilience priorities with a focus on equity."

This means specifically targeting the "environmental justice population" for outreach, including isolated older adults in rural areas, individuals with low incomes, those with disabilities, and non-English speakers such as immigrants.

As part of this effort, the town has assembled a team of 12 individuals from across its villages, representing a range of backgrounds, who meet monthly and receive a stipend. The team, brought together with the help of Montague Catholic Social Ministries and the Brick

House, includes Spanish speakers, youth, people with disabilities, residents with low or fluctuating incomes, and newcomers.

Guided by their fellow residents' feedback, this core team will select one project for the town to take on that would make use of a future \$50,000 MVP grant.

"The MVP 2.0 process is designed to be completed over two years," Pollock told the *Reporter*. "It takes time to build new relationships, expand the involvement of the broader community, and work together to develop and implement a project."

Marek-Miskolczi, a drug and alcohol counselor, joined the core team due to her involvement with the Lake Pleasant Village Association.

"This is something that a lot of people aren't sure about - climate change, and how to address it," Marek-Miskolczi said. "It's totally outside my usual realm. But I wanted to engage in something new that people don't typically get involved in."

When asked about her expectations of the survey results, Marek-Miskolczi highlighted concerns about worsening storms in Lake Pleasant.

"We need a lot of maintenance on our houses," she said. "There's a lot of low-income [residents], but

also strong community support."

Linda Emond and her husband Bob visited the park to take the survey on Saturday morning after receiving an email from Marek-Miskolczi. Linda Emond expressed concerns about increasingly severe rainstorms in the neighborhood, citing the 2020 destruction of the Bridge of Names in a flash flood. She also noted the absence of FRTA bus stops in her village.

In addition to tabling and distributing the survey, the team plans to conduct focus groups to better understand Montague residents' needs and concerns.

"This event is open to everyone here at the park today," said Pollock, explaining the choice of venue as a community focal point. "We want to connect with our Lake Pleasant community - we want to hear from everyone."

Pollock recounted past successes in connecting with residents typically disengaged from municipal outreach by tabling at events, such as free concerts at Peskeompskut Park.

"I had a diverse group of people approach my table - young families who said they never attend town forums, but happened to walk by and chat," Pollock said. "It felt special. I'd like to continue these unconventional efforts."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Grant for Trail Through Wendell Won; Town Boards Fester With Vacancies

By KEITH WATERS

The Erving selectboard met on Monday, and reappointed board and committee members for FY'25.

These included Phillip Wonkka as the town's ambulance advisory representative, David Brule as archaeological preservation officer, Teresa Dodge and Richard Newton to the board of registers, Elizabeth Fliss and Jonathan Fliss to the cultural council, Wonkka and Richard Newton to the E911 planning committee, Rebecca Miller as election inspector, Brule and Kelly Loynd to the golden cane committee, and Joseph Bucci to the open space committee.

There remain a number of vacancies: the cable advisory committee is short three members, the historical commission one, open space one, the conservation committee one, the public works feasibility committee three, and the zoning board of appeals one.

Someone also has to represent the town on the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) council, and that has recently been selectboard member Scott Bastarache. His fellow selectboard member Jim Loynd, the alternate, has filled in for him a few times recently when Bastarache had a conflict, and Bastarache said he appreciates that.

About \$84,000 still remains in the FY'21 community development block grant Erving shares with the towns of Northfield and Warwick. By contract, those funds were to be used by the end of this month, but the group is requesting an extension until the end of the year. The selectboard approved it.

The board also voted to renew the town's agreement with Clinical and Support Options for police co-response services. The town has had this agreement with CSO for several years, and the board and town staff are happy with it.

The selectboard also approved retaining the services of FRCOG to create an Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), a document that Erving must submit to the state in order to gain access to certain grant funding. The town is hiring FRCOG's professional planners to prepare the document, and the work should begin this summer. A scope-of-work document was prepared for FRCOG and the town to ensure all the boxes that can be checked are checked.

Wonkka, the town's fire chief, reported that last Friday he was offered a "bombshell" of a deal on a set of extrication equipment - a cutter, a spreader, and ram - for \$30,525, compared with \$40,595 the town was planning to spend procuring very similar equipment.

The selectboard agreed that Wonkka should go with the lower offer.

Town administrator Brian Smith announced that Erving had won a grant for \$30,000 to study the feasibility of connecting Farley Village with Erving Center by way of paths on the Wendell side of the Millers River. The town is seeking help from FRCOG's planners for this project. The grant is from the MassTrails program, through the state Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Board of health member Jay Niedbala has resigned. The selectboard thanked him, and wished him well with his endeavors.

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Documentarian to Give Charlemont Talk

CHARLEMONT - Award-winning director, producer, and journalist Jackie Jesko will examine the forces shaping our fractured and partisan new media landscape, drawing back the curtain on American broadcast news as the third speaker in the Charlemont Forum's summer series.

"We have more information at our fingertips than any other generation in the history of the world," the veteran journalist and documentary filmmaker says - and yet, she adds, "it seems harder than ever to deci-

pher what information is trustworthy, and what is based on an agenda."

Jesko's presentation, "The Weird Economic of Truth: Understanding Today's News and Documentary Landscape," will be held at the Charlemont Federated Church on Thursday, July 18 at 7 p.m. The event is free, and will also be available on Zoom through the Forum's website.

Critics have praised Jesko's nuanced filmmaking approach, citing her acclaimed 2023 HBO documentary series *Savior Complex*. In 2021

she won an Emmy for *Disgrace*, an episode of *Vice Investigates* examining the aftermath of the *#MeToo* movement. She has also won a DuPont-Columbia Award for her investigation into India's Hindu nationalist movement and a James Foley Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism for her reporting from the front lines of conflict in Syria.

More information about Charlemont Forum events is available on the "Charlemont Forum" Facebook page or at CharlemontForum.org.

Montague Community Television News

The Public Archive

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS - MCTV is building an archive of our culture. We are there to make sure that you can show this year's Soapbox Races to your grandchildren.

They also might like to see what the Montague selectboard was talking about on June 24 of 2024, or what the Montague conservation commission was working on, or the Gill selectboard. We're sure there will be a lot to glean by looking into the past local government meetings!

The grandchildren of the future will also love to learn about the amazing people in our communities. This week we have a video honoring Wendell citizen Christine Heard, and we have a Spotlight on the local business Sage Green Botanicals.

It is our duty and our pleasure to

capture all of the important stories in Montague and beyond, and we hope you can help us by letting us know if there is something you would like to get filmed. Or try getting behind the camera yourself! 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 infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com for a link to the Zoom.

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

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

Aquí se habla español

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



Gente de Franklin County: Vanessa Brewster

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

GREENFIELD – Conozco a Vanessa Brewster desde 2017, cuando empezamos a trabajar juntas en Greenfield Community College. Ella había vuelto después de tener a su bebé y las dos compartimos oficina, materiales y charlas entre clase y clase. Tenemos amigos comunes, nos une el amor al español, y la vida ha hecho que seamos casi vecinas. Hace unas semanas nos encontramos en una fiesta de celebración de jubilación de alguien a quien las dos admiramos y me prometió que me daría esta entrevista.

Nos encontramos en Looky Here, en el número 28 de Chapman St. en Greenfield. Es un local con las paredes en amarillo y muchas muestras de arte en las paredes. En el escaparate hay una casita de muñecas hecha a mano, con sus muebles diminutos y con multitud de detalles.

Nos sentamos en la zona de atrás, donde guardan los materiales para crear arte. Muchos de ellos provienen de donaciones de artistas de la zona que deciden donarlos, o simplemente gente que pensaba hacer proyectos y no ha utilizado todos. Vanessa me dice que todas las donaciones de materiales artísticos son bienvenidas.

Lo primero que le digo es que me cuente acerca de ella. Ella me dice que se considera una artista polifacética: escribe, compone, canta e interpreta música, hace arte en muchas y diferentes formas.

Su biografía

Vanessa nació en el sur de Connecticut, en Stratford. Estudió allí la secundaria, pero en el mismo momento que se graduó, con solamente 17 años, se mudó a Boston con su novio y unos amigos con el objetivo de hacer música y arte.

En 2002, tras un período de tiempo en Boston, decidió cambiar de aires y se fue a San Francisco. Allí vivió en una antigua fábrica con otras 20 personas en habitaciones separadas por telas o sábanas. En California continuó haciendo música y arte compaginándolo con pequeños trabajos en cafés o como chef personal.

En esos momentos el techno era el tipo de música dominante y a Vanessa no le acababa de gustar, aunque le encantaba California. Un día decidió que estaba harta del techno y el rock era lo que quería hacer. Así pues, cambió de estado y se fue a Providence en Rhode Island, lugar que ella consideraba que era la meca del rock en ese momento. Allí conoció a muchas personas con las que todavía hace música en



Vanessa Brewster delante de Looky Here.

este momento.

Decidió volver a estudiar español, la lengua, la literatura y la cultura y empezó sus estudios en Greenfield Community College, más tarde en Smith College y por último su Maestría en español en Middlebury College.

Vanessa ha estado también en otros países para practicar español y conocer más la cultura hispana como Ecuador, Bolivia, México, España y Puerto Rico. Tras graduarse enseñó español en GCC, y después de la pandemia empezó a hacerlo en un instituto de secundaria de la zona.

Hace un año empezó a pensar que no se encontraba en su ambiente y que quería hacer volver a trabajar con arte y por eso volvió a trabajar en Looky Here donde se siente como pez en el agua y donde puede perseguir sus sueños. Me dice que se siente que en un momento de su vida que está donde quiere estar. Quiere trabajar con arte, con la comunidad, y en Greenfield. El problema es el dinero ya que es difícil conseguir pagar los salarios y hacer sostenible el lugar. La experiencia de enseñar le ha servido para ponerse delante de la audiencia y ofrecer contenido con mayor significado.

Franklin County

Llegó a Massachusetts y empezó a trabajar y a estudiar sobre plantas medicinales en Just Roots Farms en Hadley. Ella pensaba que era solamente para un verano ya que no le parecía un buen lugar para vivir en ese momento. Vanessa me explica que tenía unos 20 años en aquella época y que esta parte de

Massachusetts para ella estaba llena de hippies, así que soñaba con volver a Providence, Rhode Island para hacer rock.

Y así, por cosas del destino, empezó a trabajar en People's Pint y se mudó a Franklin County, más concretamente a Greenfield. Vanessa pensaba que era un lugar muy pequeño, pero enseguida se dio cuenta de que este era su lugar, su casa. Han pasado ya veinte años desde entonces.

A Vanessa le encanta Franklin County, sus personas, la música, y por supuesto la tierra, el río, y las pequeñas montañas. Cree que Franklin County es un lugar donde se siente cómoda. Es una burbuja, con mucha gente interesante y siempre es posible conocer gente nueva. Vanessa piensa que es su lugar, y quizás en un futuro lejano tenga tiempo para volver a recorrer el mundo.

Looky Here

Looky Here tiene una impresora especial que permite imprimir en forma de obras de arte, se llama la Risógrafo. Allí enseñan a utilizarla y al mismo tiempo realizan objetos con ella que ponen en venta para poder sostenerse. Fui testigo de la impresión de una página de calendario realizada por un artista local y la calidad es verdaderamente profesional. El aparato tiene tintas en diferentes colores y el papel de arroz que es la huella de impresión.

Este nombre tan curioso, "Looky Here," proviene de la tienda que ya estaba allí antes, era una tienda de venta de objetos de segunda mano. Decidieron quedarse con el rótulo porque era bonito. Todavía algunos despistados entran en la tienda

queriendo vender joyas o ropa.

Beverly Ketch estaba caminando con Vanessa vio el local y a través de la ventana imaginaron el local, con sus paredes amarillas. Ella y otras personas pusieron en marcha todas las cuestiones administrativas. En 2017 nació Looky Here, una organización sin ánimo de lucro que ha tenido diferentes versiones. Primero fue una galería de arte.

Vanessa estuvo en el proyecto durante unos meses, pero también el año en que nació su hija y se dio cuenta de que era imposible para ella trabajar al mismo tiempo que estaba con su bebé.

Más tarde, la presidenta del Consejo de dirección de Looky Here, Hannah Brookman, compró la Riso y entonces se convirtió en lugar diferente ya que el local empezó a ser un lugar de comunidad y no solamente un club de artistas.

Sarah Lanzillotta, otra de las personas que forman parte del Consejo de dirección – según Vanessa todo lo que toca se convierte en oro – hizo que todo floreciera durante su tiempo en Looky Here. Las otras dos personas que son miembros de la dirección son Ketch y Abby Rush.

Looky Here acepta donaciones de arte, y que están dispuestos a aceptar todo tipo de materiales artísticos. La galería de arte toma solamente el 30% de las obras que se venden, y Looky Here organiza toda la publicidad.

Cada año organizan una Gala donde ellos quieren recaudar una cantidad de 50.000 dólares y esto les va permitir acceder a una beca que les permita ser sostenible. Durante dos meses expone obras en

People's Pint que la gente podrá comprar y también están preparando una cerveza que se va a llamar Looky Beer cuyos beneficios se destinarán a la organización, y por último una gran fiesta final.

En Looky Here, Vanessa también organiza clases de arte en español y planea para el próximo otoño unas sobremesas de té, en las que las personas puedan practicar su español hablando de arte, compartiendo unas tazas de té.

A ella le gustaría ser más accesible para la comunidad latina, atraer más artistas que representen diferentes estamentos de la comunidad. Le gustaría abrir las puertas a más gente, pero a veces, es difícil llegar a toda la comunidad y que se sepa que están abiertos a nuevas ideas. La idea es invitar a la gente que le interesa el arte que se acerquen a Looky Here, tienen recursos baratos que provienen de donaciones, hacer pasantías para estudiantes de GCC o de Greenfield High School.

Looky Here quiere obtener más becas que ayuden a que el centro artístico sea sostenible y apoyen a personas que tienen el sueño de hacer arte. Otra de las ideas para el futuro de Vanessa respecto a Looky Here es continuar editando libros. He tenido en mis manos el libro de Chris Weisman titulado *The timeless point of expression of bohemian life* y es francamente una obra de arte en estilo y maquetación. La idea es hacer que Looky Here sea también una pequeña editorial que consiga libros bonitos. Otra de sus ideas es invitar a más personas que quieran hacer diferentes tipos de arte. Vanessa está abierta a nuevas ideas.

Looky Here está abierto de miércoles a sábado desde las 12 hasta las 5 de la tarde. No duden en visitarlo porque encontrarán muchas sorpresas.

El miércoles 10 de julio habrá un concierto en el local de Looky Here en el que actuarán AT and the Fantasy Sites, Bryan Gillig, y la propia Vanessa. Ella me cuenta que es la primera vez que va a cantar canciones compuestas por ella misma. AT es un compositor y creador de letras al que Vanessa admira mucho. Las puertas se abren a las 6 y el espectáculo empieza a las 7 de la tarde. Las entradas para dicho concierto se pueden comprar allí mismo con un precio de entre 1 a 20 dólares, dependiendo de lo que puedas pagar.

Si ustedes quieren obtener más información acerca de las actividades que ofrece Looky Here, ser voluntario o proponer algunas ideas, pueden ponerse en contacto a través de este email: LookyHere-Greenfield@gmail.com.

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The Eleventh Street Bridge into the Patch frames a recent sunset sternly.

MONTAGUE from page A1

Communities had previously agreed to donate to the town were now available. In order for the selectboard to be empowered to spend this money without a town meeting appropriation, he noted, the town would need to set up a “fairly meticulous” application process. “We’re treating this like a grant,” he explained.

Kuklewicz said that the public works department was going to trim some of the shrubs on the property, and clean up the gazebos. “It might be a good spot for neighbors to go and have a picnic,” he said.

The Beautiful Thing

A nearly half-hour discussion of a proposed sludge composting facility generally followed the format of a presentation earlier this month, covered in last week’s edition of the *Reporter*. Clean Water Facility superintendent Chelsey Little began explaining the virtues of the term “biosolids” as opposed to the traditional “sludge,” and the rising cost and negative environmental impacts of transporting sludge to distant venues to be disposed of.

Consultants from the firm Weston & Samson gave a presentation on two possible composting configurations – one of which would involve drying the sludge before composting – and their estimated costs. Scenarios involving composting only Montague’s biosolids or accepting material from other towns in the region were also compared, with the latter generally receiving higher marks.

The firm estimates that it would take between 20 and 30 years for Montague to realize savings from building a composting facility, but both the consultants and Little also stressed the immediate environmental benefits of no longer shipping the sludge away to a landfill or incinerator.

Selectboard members expressed a strong preference for drying the sludge before composting it, and for accepting material from other towns. Ellis expressed concerns that increased regulation of PFAS chemicals could create “risk” for the project, but Little said recent testing of biosolids in Montague and neighboring towns did not in-

dicating dangerous levels of PFAS.

Little objected to a proposal by Weston & Sampson to site the drying equipment near the CWF operations building. “The problem is that things have been added [to the facility] piecemeal,” she said, “and then they’ve deteriorated.”

There appeared to be a consensus that any composting operation should be located behind the transfer station at the end of Sandy Lane, though this raised another topic.

“As we’ve heard earlier in this meeting, we know odors are a big concern,” said consultant Jarod Stuyvesant, referring to earlier discussion of cannabis farms, “and this is another industry that does have its odors, and there will be periods of time where they might smell. But the beautiful thing is that the end product does not smell.”

The board did not take a vote on any of the proposals. “We’re all nodding,” Kuklewicz said, “so let’s keep on moving.”

Parks, Poles, and Holes

The selectboard approved two payments to Berkshire Design, using funds from the town’s Community Development Block Grants (CDBG): \$2,300 to oversee the Hillcrest Elementary School playground project, and \$1,833.80 to oversee a new round of streetscape improvements on Avenue A.

At the recommendation of the parks and rec department, the board awarded a \$265,150 contract for the construction of a playground at the Montague Center Park to the low bidder, Mountainview Landscapes and Lawncare of Chicopee. The project is partially funded by a state PARC grant.

Three agreements with the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District were authorized: one for hauling and disposing of bulky waste, scrap metal, and appliances from the town transfer station; one for inspecting the transfer station; and one for regional hazardous waste collection events on September 21 at Greenfield Community College and the Orange transfer station.

The board granted a license to FirstLight Power to place radio equipment on a disused telephone pole near Unity Park, at the old

bridge abutment at the end of the bike path.

Ramsey said the town had not been aware that it owned the pole in question until the request was made.

The board authorized a \$39,100 agreement with the engineering firm Wright-Pierce to oversee the design of a project to line manholes in Turners Falls and Millers Falls, and a \$23,690 contract with Gleason Johndrow Landscaping to mow and landscape the town cemeteries.

In response to a question from selectboard member Chris Boutwell, Ellis said the latter contract did not include landscaping at the historic Dry Hill Cemetery.

Other Business

Acting as the personnel board, the selectboard members voted to increase the salary of police staff sergeant James Deery by 25% for completing his master’s degree, and made a conditional offer of employment at the department to Alexander Griffin, pending physical and psychological examination.

Credit cards for town-related purchases were issued to Ramsey and building inspector Bill Ketchen, and Franklin County Technical School student Jackson Erali was appointed as summer help at the municipal airport.

Selectboard member Matt Lord read aloud a long list of board members and town officials for appointment and re-appointment, and all were unanimously approved by the board.

Turners Falls High School dean of students Jen Luciano received approval to use the corners of Avenue A with Third and Seventh streets on Wednesday, July 3 for a “helmet drive” fundraiser to benefit the school’s softball program.

The board retired to an executive session to discuss the “purchase, exchange, lease or value” of 42 and 44 Canal Road, a section of which is expected to be eventually used by the state Department of Transportation for new bridges across the power canal and Connecticut River.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, July 1 for the sole purpose of approving a new host community agreement with cannabis firm Flower Power Growers.

JAMIE SIMPSON PHOTO

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

Here’s the way it was on June 26, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

engineering superintendent for Greenfield’s DPW.

Sawmill Salmon Finale?

Horse-and-Buggy Road

Turners Falls Road is a steep, windy, narrow and often dark road that connects Route 2A in Greenfield with the White Bridge to Turners Falls. There is no sidewalk and only a two-foot wide shoulder in places; a sharp turn at the bottom leads to many car-on-car accidents. School buses will not come; police have nowhere to park to monitor the busy traffic – as many as one vehicle every 5.5 seconds.

Historically, neither Greenfield nor Montague seems to have prioritized the connector. But in an era in which transportation planners are taking pedestrian and cyclist safety seriously, Turners Falls Road seems finally to be garnering attention, with a safety audit scheduled for July.

Widening the road for a sidewalk or bicycle lane would require blasting into rock or building into air. “It could be a half-million-dollar project,” said Sara Campbell,

As the United States was playing Portugal to a draw in its World Cup soccer match on June 22, an adult salmon was discovered in the Sawmill River near Montague Center. David Lovelace, who discovered the salmon, said he could not recall seeing a returning fish of this size in the river. That view was repeated by a number of residents in Montague Center.

The fish was over three feet long, and appeared to be seriously injured, with wounds on its belly. It was lying on its side at the edge of a deep pool just below the Montague Bookmill. Ken Sprinkle of the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Sunderland speculated that the animal might have been injured trying to get over the Holyoke dam, or swimming upstream over rocks.

This could be the last salmon to return to the river, since the federal Connecticut River Watershed Salmon Restoration program was phased out several years ago.

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 24, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

It was a close game, and much credit for the win was due to a strong showing by pitcher Julie Girard. She went six and two thirds innings, struck out six, walked one, and gave up five hits.

TFHS Softball Girls Win State

On June 19, the Turners Falls High School Girls Softball team beat defending champions Cardinal Spellman High of Brockton to bring home the first state trophy for a Franklin County softball team, ever.

“I was trying to keep my composure,” said Girard after the game. “I was trying not to vomit.” She succeeded on both counts, striking out the final two batters as Turners Girls Softball finally tasted state championship victory.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 24, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

was attached, letting the derrick fall with a crash. In its descent it struck the horse of Larkin Fisher and broke its back, injuring it so severely that its owner had to kill it. Fisher himself, who was handling the stone swung by the derrick was pretty badly bruised on the head, shoulder and back. He will be well in a few days, however. Later in the day, just after noon, it fell the second time, but this time with more serious results, as it struck Aloh Parsnow, who stood by it, with such force as to throw and then crush him in a most terrible manner. It struck him across the hips and crushed them out of form. He was taken home but died soon after reaching there.

Local Matters

Go strawberrying.

Four more men got in the way of peregrinating rocks at the Tunnel on Thursday.

The building committee are daring to finish the Oakman schoolhouse. Just think of it, after that.

Bartlett Bros. are making the Suspension Bridge look as good as new.

Croquet is all the go in town – and at Merriam’s store in Greenfield.

The County Commissioners give notice that they are willing to be bored by a hearing on the Peabody *et als* petition on the 26th of August at the Farren House.

A singular train of misfortunes seems to have attended the raising of the derrick on Second St., near the Keith block. On Monday morning, about 9 o’clock, the fastening slipped from the stump to which it

Young Parsnow was a native of our town, and was a bright, intelligent, industrious young fellow. He was 20 years and 5 months old.

All subscribers who commenced with the paper commence a new year next week. Just peep into your wallet and see if you have a receipt there that belongs to you or a few dollars that belong to us.



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STENCH from page A1

industrial park last year and has a license to manufacture products with it. 253 Farmacy, located at the park's Millers Falls Road entrance, began growing several years earlier; the company opened its retail store in 2019 and is currently seeking an additional medical marijuana license.

Two years ago, Massachusetts legislators passed a law requiring major revisions of the agreements between municipalities and cannabis companies, tasking the state Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) with implementing the changes.

Montague has been negotiating a new agreement with 253 Farmacy, and several months ago both parties agreed to draw up a draft that diverged from a template recommended by the CCC. One issue it addressed that was not included in the state template was odor control.

The town is required to submit new versions of its agreements with both companies in early July, and the selectboard was already scheduled to discuss the topic on Monday when complaints about "ongoing odor control measures" at Flower Power were added to the mix.

Occurrences of Smells

"I really want to highlight how seriously we take this issue," Flower Power Growers CEO Ezra Hagarty told the board. "We're really open to workshopping this, and getting feedback."

Hagarty launched into a presentation of the company's existing efforts to contain the smell of its plants, which he called "the best odor control measures proved to be scientifically effective." These, he said, include "carbon filtration" to remove odors inside the buildings and a plant-based product sold under the brand name Ecosorb that it mixes with the exhaust leaving the facility.

He added that the remaining odor varies with the weather and wind direction, and is in any case "very subjective."

Hagarty said the company had met with town officials about its neighbors' complaints. He suggested that better communication about when the odor is particularly strong would help the company address the problem by allowing it to correlate complaints with the facility's operations and the local weather conditions.

Montague public health director Ryan Paxton said his department had received complaints from three or four residents in addition to Ja'Duke, and that he had been to the industrial park "numerous times" himself to check on the odor, making "observational measurements to see if I can smell it."

"The smell is observable at different times," Paxton reported. "Sometimes I can't detect it at all, sometimes it's stronger, sometimes

it's less strong." But, he said, he had no way to make "objective measurements" of the cannabis odor level. "It's not something we have tools for," he said.

Williams said that Ja'Duke, a youth performing arts center that operates a preschool, driving school, snack bar, and theater approximately 830 feet from Flower Power's grow operation, first began alerting the company about the odors last September, and had "emailed back and forth with them" between then and March concerning "50 occurrences of smells." She then noted the incident in which she said children were unable to go to the playground during recess due to the fumes.

Williams then compared Flower Power's testimony about the quality of their odor control technology with having a state-of-the-art, but broken, sound system at the theater. "It doesn't matter how great your systems are," she argued. "If they don't prevent odor, it's not good for our children in the school."

She added that at a planning board hearing on the company's special permit to build the facility, the public had been assured that there would be "no odor."

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said that he, too, recalled a promise of no odor at a hearing, and said he was very concerned about the complaints being voiced.

According to *Montague Reporter* coverage of the November 24, 2020 special permit hearing, Flower Power co-owner Josh Goldman said the "specialized botanical neutralizing agent" that would be added to the building exhaust had been "independently tested" to be 98.7% effective.

At Monday's meeting, selectboard member Matt Lord said that while the testimony suggested the company might be emitting "nuisance odors," a requirement that it emit no odor at all might violate local agreements, as well as state law. He recommended that Flower Power produce a document explaining its odor control process, and any changes it has made in response to recent complaints.

Paxton said the health department had no way to make "objective measurements" of the cannabis odor level. "It's not something we have tools for," he said.

Kuklewicz asked Hagarty to work with Paxton on such a report and send it to the board for discussion at an upcoming meeting. "I want to keep this on the agenda until we figure it out," he said.

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Exhausting Issue

The question of jurisdiction over odor hung in the air as the board discussed Montague's host community agreements with 253 Farmacy and then Flower Power.

Town administrator Steve Ellis reported that a section in the proposed new agreement with 253 Farmacy on odor control was apparently accepted by the CCC, even though the issue was not mentioned in the commission's preferred template.

The CCC rejected a section, however, in which the company would pledge that it would not seek the repayment of impact fees it paid to the town prior to the changes in state law which prohibited collecting such fees as a percentage of sales. The commission also objected to language holding the cannabis firm responsible for all "costs and expenses, including attorneys' fees" caused by a violation of the agreement.

The board voted to accept the changes requested by the CCC and approve the host community agreement with 253 Farmacy as amended.

The board then turned its attention to Flower Power, and the

discussion of its odors. The town's existing agreement with the company still contains extensive provisions for fees and other voluntary contributions which are no longer allowed, as well as a far more detailed section about odor control than the one approved by the CCC for the 253 Farmacy agreement.

While both agreements give the selectboard the power to enforce odor control measures, the special permit issued by the planning board to Flower Power in 2020 granted that authority to the board of health and the CCC. Paxton said he had contacted the CCC seeking "technical resources" or guidance on odor control enforcement, but the agency was unable to provide any.

"They very much indicated that they would be looking to see how we interact with Flower Power," he added. "If we have an issue with odor, they would expect a response in line with our host community agreement."

Ellis said that the revised agreement with the company was due to be mailed to the state before the next selectboard meeting, which was scheduled for July 8. He said

that the existing agreement was "wholly out of touch" with state policy, but that the CCC's response to the revised agreement with 253 Farmacy had proven that the revision does not need to perfectly follow the state template.

Lord suggested using the new agreement with 253 Farmacy agreement as a "model."

Kuklewicz said he agreed, with the exception of odor control, on which he wanted to preserve the "more descriptive and extensive" language from the existing agreement with Flower Power.

"There's a risk there," said Lord, "but I'm fine with it either way."

Lord suggested that the board authorize him and town staff to revise and submit the revised agreement, but Kuklewicz said he would be more comfortable with the whole board voting on it. "I've signed enough documents," he said. "I want to try to know what I am signing."

The board agreed to hold a single-topic meeting next Monday, July 1 to review Flower Power's host community agreement.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

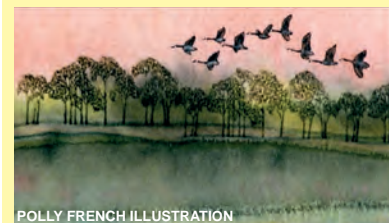
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POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

WEST ALONG THE RIVER

ALLEGIANCES IN JULY

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – Along about this time of year, before the national paroxysm known popularly as the Fourth of July, I pull up my Adirondack chair under the old apple tree, and await two gentlemen poets who have traveled through time and space for our annual meeting.

All I have to do is open a book, and there they are.

It is my seasonal practice to call them into the yard for some philosophizing and a couple of glassfuls of last year's Montmorency cherries that have been curing in vodka over the winter.

They are always eager to hold forth with some well-grounded opinion that could pass for wisdom about the state of this Republic. This year we gravitate to the Pledge of Allegiance, especially evoked by the line: ... *And to the Republic for which it stands.*

We spend time pondering the question: for *which* Republic do we stand?

Gary Snyder settles in, Wendell Berry does the same, and we start ruminating over the state of affairs and the direction our country is going in. We figure we could be meeting next year at this time under a new Third Reich, for starters. All three of us agree that sometimes this country can drive you crazy.

Snyder starts it all, rattling off the lines of a poem he wrote:

I pledge allegiance to the soil of Turtle Island and to the beings who thereon dwell one ecosystem in diversity under the sun With joyful interpenetration for all.

I always like to hear those lines, kind of helps restore some balance

and humor in my sometimes jumbled, despairing mind.

Turtle Island, indeed.

To his point, some of us see a continent sprawled before us, all carved up along artificial borders, sometimes parallel lines, sometimes with weird little unexplainable jogs in the otherwise straight delineations. All neat, cut and dry, except it isn't. It's an imaginary, aspirational concept that does not take into account cultural and linguistic territories and homelands, migration routes and corridors, flyways, waterways, watersheds, and spiritual realities that are 30,000 years old.

Some visualize a continent divided up into state-sized fiefdoms. On the other hand, some of us see Turtle Island. You may have heard reference to this place where we live, using the name Turtle Island for the planet. Not everyone knows what that is all about.

Let's start by saying that our Indigenous cousins tell us there was a time long ago when there was nothing on this blue planet but water. Nothing, that is, until Skywoman fell through a hole in the sky and began her fall towards our spinning, aquatic world. She was falling, falling into what was sure to be a watery grave, when the wild geese and swans flew up to catch her and bring her down safely to land on the back of a huge sea turtle.

And there she was, standing on the back of that hard, bare shell, wondering how it had all happened, pinching herself to be sure she was still alive.

All the furred and feathered beings met in council around her, trying to decide what to do next. They determined that someone had to dive down deep to find the earth at the bottom of this great expanse of water. They knew it was down there somewhere, but no one had ventured down to find it before this.

So several of the strongest tried see **WEST ALONG** page B3



LOUIS AGASSIZ COLLECTION ILLUSTRATION

Scarlet tanager, *Piranga olivacea*.

Above: The safety buoys at the Turners Falls dam.

THE RISE AND FALL OF ORANGE'S TAPIOCA EMPIRE

By CATHY STANTON

WENDELL – This is the final excerpt from my book *Food Margins: Lessons from an Unlikely Grocer*, newly released by the University of Massachusetts Press. *Food Margins* tells the story of Quabbin Harvest Food Co-op in Orange, interwoven with the history of the town and its industries – in particular, the Minute Tapioca Company.



PART THREE: UP, UP.. AND AWAY.

You can still find Minute Tapioca on the shelves of many supermarkets, in little red boxes that have stayed remarkably similar over many decades. But the company left Orange in the 1960s, part of a familiar story of corporate acquisition, consolidation, and abandonment.

Minute Tapioca's history after its shaky beginnings in the 1890s and meteoric expansion in the 1910s

opens a window into how we arrived at today's food system, dominated by a few giants and offering limited options for those trying to survive on a smaller scale.

Many companies followed the playbook that Minute Tapioca used as it grew into a national success in the first years of the 20th century: cheap raw materials, efficient mechanized production, and mass adver-

tising. But a few far-sighted entrepreneurs recognized that in a competitive and increasingly saturated food sector, that wasn't enough to ensure continued growth. They began to pursue another strategy for scaling up: buying other companies and heading us toward the current highly concentrated state of the food system.

One of the first companies to make this move was Postum, the cornerstone of what quickly became the Post Cereal empire and later General Foods. Minute Tapioca was one of Postum's first acquisitions, bought for cash in 1926. Over the course of the 1920s dozens of other well-known brands, like Baker's chocolate and Hellmann's mayonnaise and Log Cabin maple syrup, became part of the "Postum family."

In a big step beyond Postum's origins as a healthful grain-based alternative to coffee, the company also acquired both Maxwell House and Sanka, which quickly became the leading national coffee brands in a sector formerly filled by smaller, more regional importers.

see **TAPIOCA** page B5



COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

By the 1930s, as part of the General Foods food empire, Minute Tapioca had added a huge new concrete wing to its Orange facility and was exporting its product around the world. (Postcard date unknown, post-1930.)

RECIPE

Once-In-a-Blue-Moon Roast Beef Dinner

By EDGAR SOARES

GREENFIELD – Dinner is one of the best highlights for us at FCSO at nighttime. The concoction that we make down at the block is amazing. There are so many recipes and things we can come up with that I'm even thinking of opening a diner on the outside and call it "Jailhouse Flavor."

However, no matter how creative we are, there is one item that has been a problem even though it is of high value and taste: the roast beef. Do you know that item on canteen? Have you heard of it? No! Well, I'll tell you why. It is because no one knows how to prepare it properly to actually enjoy its true flavor.

With roast beef, most people resort to making it with brown rice where you have to pour out all the sauce from the roast beef just to be able to get a decent taste. Usually it still comes out bland, so other ingredients are



SOARES PHOTO

With a little patience and ingenuity, the roast beef can be good.

then added like seasoning, cheese, chili, salami meat, etc. At the end you end up with a chili bowl mix that has

see **RECIPE** page B6

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

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Meet Honey, a charming one-year-old pit bull who's ready to fill your life with joy! This sweet and social boy has a heart of gold and a playful spirit. Honey has lived with kids as young as 5, and has done wonderfully with them. He's the perfect playmate, loving games of fetch, tug, and chewing on sticks.

Honey is house-trained, as long as he's kept on a regular schedule, and he's also crate-trained, making him a well-mannered companion.

While he hasn't met many dogs before and was a bit unsure about them at the shelter, we believe he has the potential to make doggy friends with slow and careful intro-

ductions to easy-going and friendly pups. For now, Honey would thrive as the only dog in the household.

If you're looking for a loyal, playful, sweet companion who will bring endless laughter and love into your home, Honey is the perfect fit. If you'd like to learn more about, meet, or adopt Honey, call Dakin Humane Society at (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

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.

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Millers Falls (413) 659-3801

Erving Public Library (413) 423-3348
Gill: Slate Library (413) 863-2591
Leverett Public Library (413) 548-9220
Northfield: Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455
Wendell Free Library (978) 544-3559

MONTAGUE

Multiple days: Grab & Go Bags. Craft: nature fish. At all branches, while supplies last.

Every Weekday, except July 4 and 5: **GMRSD Free Meals.** Onsite meals for ages 0 to 18. Carnegie, under the tent. Breakfast, 8:15 to 9:15 a.m.; lunch, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Every Monday: Makerspace Mondays. Explore STEAM concepts. Ages 8+ with caregiver. Carnegie, drop-in 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 2: Rot to Riches. Explore the wonders of compost. Children and teens. Carnegie, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Every Wednesday: LEGO. Carnegie, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 3: Knitting Club. All ages. Montague Center, 4:30 p.m.

Every Saturday: Chess. All ages. Carnegie, 10 a.m. to noon.

Saturday, July 6: Used Book Sale. Paperbacks, kids' books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks. Carnegie, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Monday, July 8: Friends of MPL Meeting. Email vgatvalley@gmail.com. Carnegie, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 9: Community conversation, Improving Library Accessibility. Gill-Montague senior center, 10 a.m.

Bee Talk. Learn about colony structure, handle beekeeping gear, safely observe a honey bee hive. Carnegie, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 10: Improving Library Accessibility. Community conversation. Online via Zoom, 6 to 7 p.m.

Thursdays, July 11, 18 and 25: Bilingual Music & Movement. Sing and move with Tom & Laurie. Carnegie, 10 a.m.

Thursday, July 11: Smokey Bear's 80th Birthday. Readings with wildland firefighters, appearance by Smokey. Co-sponsored by DCR. Discovery Center, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 11: Book Club. Designed for adults. Millers Falls, 5 p.m.

Friday, July 12: Intro to Spanish... with Ducks! Jon Lambert with guests from Duck World. For children and caregivers. Carnegie, 3 to 4 p.m.

Tuesday, July 16: Animal Talk with The Reptile Nook. Meet and interact with animals. For children and teens. Carnegie, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 23: Tom Ricard's Birds of Prey. Presentation, conversation, and live demonstration. All ages. Carnegie, 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 24: Meg

Ricks, Landscapes: Endangered and Preserved. Exhibition of paintings. Montague Center, reception 6 to 7 p.m. On display through August.

Thursday, July 25: Graphic Novel Club. Mannaert Wauter, *Chef Yasmina and the Potato Panic.* Ages 7 to 11. Email gracenm@montague-ma.gov to register. Carnegie, 3:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 25: Book Club. Charlotte McConaghy, *Migrations*, and Elizabeth Rush, *The Quickening*. Montague Center, 7 p.m.

Friday, July 26: Homeschool Hangout. Carnegie, 1 p.m.

ERVING

Sunday, July 14: Puzzle Swap. All ages, no puzzle required. 1 to 3 p.m.

LEVERETT

All month: Art Exhibit. Quilts of Leverett History. LES student quilts and a historic quilt.

Every Monday and Wednesday: Online Qigong. See leverettlibrary.org or email communityqigong@gmail.com for info. 10:30 a.m.

Every Tuesday: Music on the Patio. July 2, *Boxshop Duo*; July 9, *French Press*; July 16, *Masala Jazz*; July 23, *Orlen, Gabriel & Avery*; July 30, *Stamell Brothers*. 6:30 p.m.

Every Thursday: Mah-jongg. Beginners welcome. 1:15 to 3:30 p.m.

Every Saturday: Tai Chi. Intermediate to advanced, 10 a.m.; beginners, 11 a.m.

Wednesdays, July 10, 17, 24, and 31: Playgroup. Ages 0 to 5 with caregiver. 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, July 25: Community Read Discussion Group. Gretchen Gerzina, Mr. & Mrs. Prince. 5 p.m.

NORTHFIELD

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

Tuesday, July 2: Spice Club pickup starts. Sample and recipes while supplies last. This month: white pepper.

Wednesday, July 3: Readers' Choice Book Group. William Kent Krueger, *Ordinary Grace*. Pick up at the library. 10 a.m.

Wednesday, July 3: Tech Help. Bring your device and ask your questions. 1 to 3 p.m.

Friday, July 5: Coffee and Tea Social. 10 to 11 a.m.

Friday, July 5: New In-Library Kids' Scavenger Hunt.

Saturday, July 6: Puzzle Swap. For info, email [\[sofdm101360@gmail.com\]\(mailto:sofdm101360@gmail.com\). 10 to 11:30 a.m.](mailto:friend-</p></div>
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Wednesday, July 10: Take-and-Make. While supplies last.

Wednesday, July 10: Readings Group. Henrik Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*. Pick up at the library. 3 p.m.

Thursday, July 11: Trivia Night, Four Star Farms Brewery, 6 p.m.

Thursday, July 11: Environmental Book Group. Elizabeth Rush, *Rising*. Pick up at the library. 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 18: Spirit and Spa, presentation and reading about Lake Pleasant's Spiritualist history, by David James and Sheryl Sadler-Twyon. 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 20: Northfield History Coffee Talk. River crossings in Northfield, with Joel Fowler. 10 to 11 a.m.

Thursday, July 25: Northfield Fix-It Fair. Bring broken-but-loved stuff. Also knife-sharpening and permethrin shoe-spraying. Music by Ed Hogan. Tent at Northfield Golf Club, 1 to 3 p.m.

Thursday, July 25: Book Group. Books by authors born outside the US. *This month in Erving*, 5:30 p.m.

WENDELL

All month: Art Exhibit. Nature studies by Timothy Sheehan.

Every Tuesday: Art Group. 5 p.m.

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

Every Sunday: Yoga. All levels, pay what you can. 10 a.m.

Tuesdays July 9, 16, 23, and 30: Fairy Tale STEM Activities.

Tuesday, July 9: Community Conversation: Improving Library Accessibility. Via Zoom; email wendell@cwmares.org to register. 1:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays, July 10, 17, 24, 31: CNC Playgroup. 10 a.m.

Friday, July 12: Office Hours with Rep. Saunders. 1 to 2 p.m.

Friday, July 12: Free concert, Zydeco Connection. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 13: Boxville. A cardboard community on the common. 10 a.m. to noon. (Rain date July 20.)

Saturday, July 20: Rainbow Players, stories from 25 years of social justice theater and travels. 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 23: Troubled Waters: Wendell's Doomed Power Plant, 1909-1938. Presentation by the Wendell Historical Society. 6:30 p.m.

Friday, July 26: Wendell Warriors workshop. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 27: Origami workshop, ages 5+. 1 to 3 p.m.

Sunday, July 28: Cookbook Book Club. 4:30 p.m.

Senior Center Activities JULY 1 THROUGH 5

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 7/1

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

Tuesday 7/2

9 a.m. Good for U
10 a.m. Line Dancing
11 a.m. Social Stringer

Wednesday 7/3

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

Thursday 7/4

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

Friday 7/5

9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

Monday 7/1

11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Kitchen Club

Tuesday 7/2

9 a.m. Chair Yoga

Wednesday 7/3

11 a.m. Chair Exercise

Thursday 7/4

9 a.m. Senior Help Hours
(by appointment)

Friday 7/5

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.

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.

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.

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WEST ALONG from page B1

to reach the bottom, but no one succeeded. Many actually died trying.

Then muskrat said he would try, but the others were skeptical. How could such a small being like muskrat succeed where others had failed? Yet down he went, and after a long deep dive he rose to the surface with a ball of mud clutched in his paws. The other creatures took the mud from his lifeless body afloat on the water and placed it on the back of the turtle, at the feet of Skywoman.

By the way, we need to remember to be kind to small brother muskrat, *musquash*, for the gift he provided Skywoman, and all of us.

She began to dance, and that ball of mud grew larger and larger the more she danced, and all the wild creatures danced with her. The mud became earth that spread under their feet until it was large enough to plant the saplings and grasses she had clutched at the beginning of her fall through the hole in the sky.

That is why we dance: to remember the gift of Skywoman, of *musquash*, and of our fellow creatures who helped her build this earth we inhabit, and which sadly we are now desecrating. Things are out of balance.

Indigenous teachings of harmony and reciprocity with our natural world could help teach us how to restore that balance, if we would only listen to those voices before it's too late.

Take a minute to compare the origin story of Skywoman on the turtle's back and of Eve in the Garden of Eden.

We are told that Eve came from a man, Adam's rib, and that an evil creature, the snake, was responsible for her downfall. Eve was the source of temptation, guilt, shame, Original Sin, add an apple for more sin, and because of her, the first couple was cast out of the Garden. They were banished from the Garden for what Snyder would call joyful interpenetration!

No wonder our culture is so screwed up. No wonder that up until very recently woman has been kept in inferior status. We have a lot to learn yet.

The full version of Skywoman's arrival can be found in Robin Wall Kimmerer's book *Braiding Sweetgrass*.

Back to my own garden. With the mid-morning rays of the sun now reaching into the shady corners of the yard, I sit with my invisible poet friends, daydreaming and philosophizing.

Just then an improbable scarlet tanager selects a cherry or two from the fruit that's left in the cherry tree.

This treetop dweller has come down from the green canyons of the towering maples to find his morning breakfast, gracing us with his brilliant rainforest presence.

Wendell Berry, taking his turn at this impromptu poetry reading where Snyder left off, cites his proposals from his *Mad Farmer Liberation Front Manifesto*. He rattles off some of the amendments that could be part of a new imagining of our founding document:

1. *Do every day something that won't compute.*
2. *Love the world. Love the Lord.*
3. *Love someone who does not deserve it.*
4. *Ask the questions that have no answers.*
5. *Invest in the millennium. Plant oaks and sequoias.*
6. *Say that your main crop is the forest that you did not plant, that you will not harvest.*
7. *Say that the leaves are harvested when they have rotted into mold. Call that profit.*
8. *Expect the end of the world.*
9. *Laugh. Be joyful though you have considered all the facts.*
10. *As soon as the generals and politicians can predict the motions of your mind, lose it.*
11. *Leave it as a sign to mark the false trail, the way you didn't go.*
12. *Be like the fox who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction.*

Both poets offer some sound perspectives on another way of thinking as this upcoming national holiday explodes on the scene with its poor substitute for patriotism amid hot-dogs, hamburgers, and fireworks.

Think about the national disaster hurtling toward us. Think about what the Pledge of Allegiance really means, or could mean.

On the other hand, how about just giving it a rest, kicking back on a fine morning such as this, savoring some coffee or even some more vodka-preserved cherries with real or imagined friends. How about finding some balance in this new day and imagining a new world, a new Pledge, a new Republic.

The dog lolling in the grass likes this concept, too. He likes the company and the thought of a new republic inclusive of human and non-human beings.

In fact, this could be a new republic in which he plays a central role!

On his back he paws the air, stretching in pleasure, joining us in our thoughts, none of us caring just now to be anywhere else but on this Turtle Island of the mind.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Lot of Comments All Over the Place; Deflation By Slash; Chair Installer; Ongoing For Four Years; Man With Gun

Monday, 6/17

9:42 a.m. Caller would like assistance from an officer making contact with Duravent about a spill of metal back in April. Advised of options.

5:03 p.m. Caller states that a car just ripped into a driveway at Aviation Way and Millers Falls Road and hit a pole. No injury; small amount of fluids. TFFD on scene. Damage to two guidewires on electrical pole and the fuse is blown. Eversource on scene; Rau's is towing vehicle.

8:16 p.m. Caller states she just watched a hand-to-hand transaction between a female and a male in a white Subaru in the parking lot of the Survival Center. Officers advised.

Tuesday, 6/18

6:32 a.m. Caller from Central Street would like it on record that when he came outside this morning, he found his truck covered with little specks of paint. He will come to the station after work so an officer can view the damage. Report taken.

7:39 a.m. Report of possibly rabid skunk walking around in circles near the preschool area at Hillcrest Elementary School. Animal control officer notified and will be responding.

9:51 a.m. Caller from Eleventh Street states that a male party who rents a garage behind her house has been aggressive towards people and was swinging a sickle around this morning. He also left fake blood spots on the ground near their storage unit. Officer spoke with caller and is heading to involved male's residence to speak with him. Officer spoke with involved male's wife and advised her of the recent behavior.

10:50 a.m. Property manager from Fourth Street would like an officer to view damage done by a non-resident, who tore down a video camera in a hallway. Property manager spoke to tenant and involved party; they are going to work it out on their own.

4:16 p.m. Erving PD called stating that the librarian in their town received an email from a Montague resident with a lot of comments all over the place; officer requesting wellbeing check. Nobody home at this time.

6:24 p.m. Checking area off Power Street with FirstLight. Male party located behind Discovery Center. One tent located; letter left. Will check back in a few days.

8:08 p.m. Caller states that a small puppy appears to be stuck inside the fenced area around the football field at Turners Falls High

School. Officer bringing dog to station; it is a 10-15 year old Chihuahua. No calls about the dog. Taken to shelter.

Wednesday, 6/19

4:59 a.m. E-911 caller reports he was driving and saw two individuals on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge, closer to the Gill side, and observed one of the individuals climb onto the railing and then get back down onto the sidewalk. Caller concerned for individual's welfare. Officer advises he located two individuals matching the description. Neither had an ID, and they refused to provide much info. Both declined assistance.

7:58 a.m. 911 caller from Griswold Street reporting three tires slashed overnight. Officer observed three flat tires with one-inch marks consistent with deflation by slash of a sharp object. Caller does not know of any suspects. No cameras in area. Investigated.

3:05 p.m. Caller from Highland Avenue reporting someone broke into his house and stole a kayak paddle and an air-conditioner remote. Does not want officers to respond to scene; just wants people not to break in anymore. Report taken.

3:38 p.m. Caller reporting that a male party lent his bank and food stamp cards to his daughter, who refuses to give them back. Officer advises that since it has been over a month since the cards were taken, they need to be canceled and new ones issued.

9:06 p.m. Caller reporting that there is someone inside Hair by Phase One on J Street who is not the owner; they showed up in a white vehicle that is parked outside, entered the business, and are rummaging through everything in a quick manner. It looks suspicious. Officers clear; someone is setting up a new chair in the salon.

Thursday, 6/20

6:17 a.m. 911 caller reporting that a tree caused power lines to come down across Old Sunderland Road; wires are low-hanging and smoking. Caller transferred to Shelburne Control for FD; officer advised. Eversource contacted and advised of situation. Officer requesting road closed signs on Old Sunderland Road at Main and School Streets. Officer advises Eversource staying on scene. Roads closed; signs placed.

2:25 p.m. Greenfield Savings Bank employee reports a customer brought in a dollar bill and narcotics that were found. Services rendered.

6:40 p.m. Caller reporting

that a truck with a tree growing out of the back of it has been parked in the same spot near Fifth and L streets for over two years; is suspicious that something within it might be unstable at this point, and possibly explosive. Officers advised.

6:59 p.m. Caller from Third Street reports that her downstairs neighbors are harassing her and keep turning on the heat to purposefully trigger her asthma. Advised caller of options.

8:25 p.m. Juvenile caller reporting a spam call she received from an "officer" stating she has a package that was shipped from China to Texas and is being held in Texas; package supposedly contains drugs and money. She was told not to give out any information regarding this, especially to her parents; caller told her father right away. Report taken.

Friday, 6/21

6:31 a.m. Caller reporting a vehicle has been parked along Greenfield Road since Monday; not sure if it's disabled. Officer advises keys are with vehicle and it is open; second officer took keys and secured vehicle. Officer advises that the caller came out while they were on scene and advised that the owner has been back and forth to the vehicle and that its water pump is broken. Officer requesting Leverett PD be asked to make contact with the registered owner.

9:40 a.m. Caller from Deep Hole Drive states there is a tree down blocking part of the road; unsure if wires are involved. Officer advises no power lines are involved. Tree is completely blocking the road at the entrance to the Rod & Gun Club. DPW contacted.

10:40 a.m. Report of some of Dry Hill Road being washed away by heavy rain. Caller also contacted DPW.

10:43 a.m. 911 caller from Center Street reporting that a big tree limb fell on wires outside her house. Transferred to Shelburne Control. Comcast wire. Homeowner can call at their convenience. Tree is in yard, not blocking any traffic or roadways. Caller called back in stating Comcast gave her a date of Tuesday for fixing the line. She has a medical line box, and this is unacceptable. Call placed to Comcast. Ticket placed with updated information about lifeline activation button. Attempted to update caller; no voicemail is set up.

11:26 a.m. Walk-in reporting that the intersection of Court Square,

Station Street, and Main Street is a safety hazard due to overgrown hedges. Caller states she was previously told by two former police chiefs that nothing can be done until someone is hurt. Caller states she has called numerous times and nothing is ever done; requesting to speak with the current chief. Call forwarded to Chief Williams.

2:03 p.m. Caller from Federal Street reports an older Ford Taurus with two men who are stopping at every house they can and soliciting. They would not say what business they are with, and when asked to leave became argumentative. No solicitation permits on file at this time. Officer located car; occupants wearing gear for Trinity Solar were made aware they are not allowed to solicit until a valid permit is on file. Males came to department and declined to fill out permits; stated they just won't come to this town again.

4:05 p.m. Caller reporting on ongoing suspected drug activity on Fourth Street; states it has been ongoing for four years. Connected caller to detective's voicemail.

4:50 p.m. Caller from Seventh Street reporting that the plates were stolen off of a vehicle in his yard. Vehicle has been sitting for three or four months and he is not sure when the plates were stolen. Will come in tomorrow to fill out paperwork.

7:31 p.m. Report of engine revving on and off for the past ten minutes on Federal Street; caller can hear the noise but does not have a visual. Officer checked area. Someone was working on the exhaust on a vehicle.

Saturday, 6/22

1:31 a.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop on Third Street; two parties believed to have active warrants. A 45-year-old Turners Falls man and a 38-year-old Turners Falls woman were arrested on default warrants.

6:16 a.m. Caller states he had to stop for a fox limping in the roadway on Federal Street. Unfounded.

7:16 a.m. 911 caller reports a transformer blew outside her house at Eleventh and G streets. Forwarded to Shelburne Control.

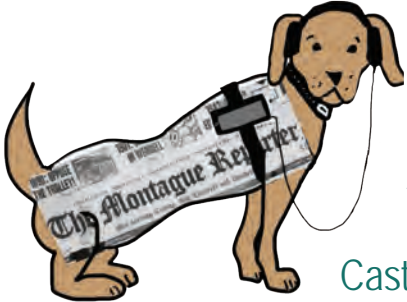
9:35 a.m. 911 report of a man standing in the area of the Gun Rack with a rifle. Unable to locate.

1:19 p.m. 911 report of an open manhole on Seventh Street. Officers replaced cover.

1:23 p.m. 911 caller reports hitting a deer on

see MPD next page

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MPD from page B3

Main Street. No damage to vehicle. Deer is lying on a lawn in the area and has a broken back leg. Environmental Police contacted.

1:28 p.m. 911 report of an open manhole cover near Food City. Manhole cover replaced.

1:55 p.m. Officer reports flooding in area of Griswold and Davis streets.

3:07 p.m. Caller from Crescent Street reports that the water in the catch basin in front of her house is completely full up to her stairs. She is worried she will not be able to get out of the house. Officer advises water has receded.

3:45 p.m. Walk-in reporting furniture, mattresses, couches, and a snowmobile frame dumped on the Montague Plains, 25 to 30 feet from the end of Plains Road. Caller asked if he could remove the items himself if the DPW can't do it. Advised caller

DPW would be notified Monday morning and we'd let him know. 3:56 p.m. 911 caller reporting a deer just ran out in front of him on Federal Street. Front-end damage to vehicle. Deer jumped into a thick brush area; it has an injured leg, but took off across a field. 8:57 p.m. Caller reporting that he hit a deer and there is damage to his vehicle. Deer moved to the side of the road.

9:01 p.m. 911 report of a possibly intoxicated female operator who was all over the road and almost hit a street sign. Second caller reporting that the vehicle almost hit them head-on. Officer behind vehicle now; will attempt to stop her near Scotty's. Officer advises vehicle is not stopping, but continuing on Turners Falls Road at a low speed. Second officer *en route*; vehicle pulled over at Dell and Davis streets. A 67-year-old Turners Falls wom-

an was arrested and charged with failing to stop at a stop sign; marked lanes violation; operating under the influence of liquor; and operating to endanger.

Sunday, 6/23

9:15 a.m. Cumberland Farms employee reporting a party hanging around behind the dumpster, "acting sketchy." Male party moved along. 2:23 p.m. Caller reports that the drainage culvert on Meadow Road is full and the water is almost up to the road. Water is at road level right now but not a hazard; needs to be watched. DPW notified; they will check it before the storm comes in.

5:47 p.m. Male 911 caller stated "Just come here," then hung up. Officers responding to Unity Street. Verbal altercation between two males. One left; the other is intoxicated and uncooperative.



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?*, community arts exhibit about the entanglement of food, time, commitment, and ecology. Closing reception this Saturday, June 29 from 2 to 4 p.m. *Remnants*, photographs by Jim Wallace from 2010 showing Turners Falls' abandoned Strathmore and Griswold mills. Reception and talk Sunday, July 14 at 1 p.m.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: *Caroline Wampole*, guest artist showing abstract paintings, through June. *Studio Feeler*, ceramics by guest artist Akilah Scharff-Teoh in July and August, with a reception on Saturday, July 13 from 1 to 4 p.m.

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 this Friday, June 28 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *Summer Members' Exhibit*, through July 28.

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

Leverett Crafts & Arts: *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 Krifta, chronicling his move towards abstraction. Through June 29.

MD Local Gallery, Amherst: *Femme Locale*, group show by trans women, cis women, inter-

sex, 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. *Watercolor Whimsey*, paintings by illustrator Astrid Sheckels, on view in July and August with a reception Saturday, July 13 at 2 p.m.

Club George, Northampton: *A First*, prints and photographs by Linda Bills and Stephen Dallmus, through June 29. *Whimsical Narratives*, reflective works in pottery and printmaking by Rosie Dinsmore and Sophie Foulkes, July 13 to August 3.

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.



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

By STEPHANIE BAIRD

SOUTH HADLEY – I first wrote about gender here in 2020 and am called, due to the continued escalating anti-trans climate, to write about it again. In 2024 thus far, 43 states have introduced 602 anti-trans bills, with 42 bills having passed, 221 having failed, and the rest still active in the state legislatures.

In 2020, I felt unabashedly hopeful and joyful about so much gender expansiveness. Today I remain very excited about it, and grateful to all gender explorers, but this excitement is disturbed by how anything non-cisgender is constantly targeted and condemned by conservatives, and by the uninformed, in the courts and the media.

This condemnation is so pervasive that most of my open-minded, compassionate cisgender clients have found themselves defending trans rights and inclusion in arguments instigated by their cisgender relatives. If I had a nickel for every client that has brought this up in their session just in this past month, I'd be able to retire to a small island.

Luckily my clients have been practicing assertiveness and communication skills, capably navigating these instigations – often by urging their relatives to educate themselves regarding transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) information, via fact-based sources such as those mentioned below.

This article is dedicated to these amazing allies, as well as my TGNC siblings who have found themselves the target of hostility and unwanted inquisition. I hope this information can serve as a helpful reference.

Here are the major points that I keep in mind when considering gender:

1. Biology is simply *not* binary. Yes, we

often observe people having a system that includes vulvas and related organs, or a system that includes testes and related organs.

2. *And*, intersex individuals have always existed. These individuals have less typically combined organs – i.e., having both ovaries and a penis – or a variety of chromosomal combinations beyond XX and XY – i.e. XO, XXX, XXY, or XYY, or some cells that are XY and some that are XX, etc. Or they may have hormonal or chemical variations that influence the expression of their reproductive organs or other related features (chest, hips, etc).

3. *At least 2%* of individuals are estimated to be intersex in some way, whether visible or invisible.

4. That means there are a minimum of *three* possible categories of reproductive/biological combinations: folks with a vulva and related organs, folks with a penis and related organs, and folks that have a different combination of organs, chromosomes, and/or hormones. That number increases exponentially if we try to identify *every* potential combination of chromosomes, hormones, and organs. Some research and government questionnaires are now, at the very least, giving three options – female, male, and intersex – for sex assigned/assumed at birth.

5. All societies everywhere, always, have had individuals who neither conform to nor embrace the general stereotypes and behaviors of the sex they were assigned/assumed at birth.

5a. Many cultures celebrate this diversity, such as the concept of "Two-Spirit" in many Indigenous communities on this continent – these folks often fulfill an esteemed ceremonial role beyond male and female roles.

5b. Most cultures beyond this continent also include concepts of gender variety. Indigenous Hawaiians use the term *mahu* to refer to a revered and respected individual that

embodies both female and male spirit.

5c. In India, *hijras* (transwomen) have existed as a third gender for over 4,000 years. *Hijras* held important positions in religion, court, and administration from the 16th to 19th century and were sought out for religious blessings. In Hinduism, one form of Shiva merges with his wife, Parvati, becoming the androgynous Ardhanari. British colonial law beginning in the 19th century criminalized and attempted to eradicate hijras; these laws were repealed when India attained independence.

5d. Judaism, via the two-millennia-old Talmud, identifies eight genders: *Zachar*, male; *Nekevah*, female; *Androgynos*, both male and female characteristics; *Tumtum*, lacking sexual characteristics; *Aylonit hamah*, identified as female at birth but later naturally developing male characteristics; *Aylonit adam*, identified as female at birth but later developing male characteristics through human intervention; *Saris hamah*, identified male at birth but later naturally developing female characteristics; and *Saris adam*, identified male at birth and later developing female characteristics through human intervention.

5e. There is an excellent interactive map at pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits_map.html. You can tour the world via this map, appreciating how many other cultures express gender diversity.

6. Capitalism and patriarchy have benefited from pushing a binary gender system. There is ubiquitous historical evidence of Westernizing colonial efforts to eradicate any kind of non-binary gender system.

Gender concepts continuously evolve, so when in doubt, consult reputable sources such as the National Center for Transgender Equality (transequality.org), the Trans Legislation Tracker (translegislation.com), the Human Rights Campaign (hrc.org), or PFLAG (pflag.org).

Regarding local action to support transgender people in this increasingly hostile anti-trans climate, I am pleased to announce that under my own tenure as President, the

Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence authorized the establishment of a fund to support trans individuals and families who are leaving other states and seeking shelter in western Massachusetts.

This project, the Trans Relocation Support Fund, is a collaboration with the UU Service Committee, other congregations, and the local organization Translate Gender. You can donate directly at www.tinyurl.com/TRSFCampaign.

The local health organization Transhealth offers medical health, mental health, gender-affirming care, and community educational services to TGNC individuals and their families. Their website, transhealth.org, also invites supporters to donate to their mission and related funds.

In my middle age, I identify as a femme-appearing nonbinary and gender fluid person, partly due to my strong feminist sense of equality, as well as my own life-long characteristics. I have always hated feeling boxed in, and enjoy many stereotypical "masculine" pursuits: lifting weights, martial arts, driving fast, making household repairs, road cycling, boat-building.

I wrote back in 2020 that "in my youth, I so intensely eschewed stereotypical notions of feminine behaviors that I refused to take home economics or typing in school – two skills I sorely wish I had learned, thirty years later. If I were 16 now, I would decidedly be nonbinary, and would take typing as well as woodshop!" This statement still stands!

I look forward to the day when anyone can embrace any activity, interest, hobby, skillset, profession, clothing style, physical attribute, or any other characteristic courageously and beautifully, and be celebrated by all.

Stephanie Baird is a certified OWL facilitator and an EMDR psychotherapist and consultant who encourages her clients towards thriving sexual health. She is the author of the book EMDR Therapy and Sexual Health: A Clinician's Guide (2023). She welcomes feedback and suggestions at sexmatters@montaguereporter.org.

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TAPIOCA from page B1

An even bigger step came in 1929 when Postum bought the General Seafoods Company, based on the Massachusetts coast. Its founder, Clarence Birdseye, had patented a quick-freezing method that opened a whole new horizon of convenience and transportability. By the end of the 1920s Postum had gone public and was listed on the Dow Jones under its new name, General Foods.

In Orange, the acquisition was hailed as good news. Although Minute Tapioca was now a national brand, its executives recognized that on its own it was vulnerable to both competitive pressures and the kinds of macroeconomic shake-ups that made the company's early days so unstable. The town had lost its major employer, the New Home Sewing Machine Company, in the 1930s, and it was looking for a firm commitment that that wouldn't happen again.

Postum assured them it had no plans to move the manufacturing of Minute Tapioca anywhere else. Frank Ewing and his team had created a cutting-edge facility, a production method hedged around with detailed patents, and a smooth supply chain. Why mess with success?

Alignment with a growing corporate giant offered more security for those in Orange who owned Minute Tapioca stock as well as opportunities for ambitious local men to climb the company hierarchy. For a long time – long when reckoned against the tight boom-and-bust cycles of industrial markets – this felt like a good thing for Orange.

In the middle decades of the century, Minute Tapioca was a model corporate citizen. It provided a well-appointed riverside recreation area known as “the Ranch,” open to local children as well as its own employees' families. It adopted the orphaned New Home Band, which became the Minute Tapioca Band – and which still exists today as the Orange Community Band.

New machinery expanded the plant's capacity. In October of 1929 more than a million pounds of tapioca embarked from Orange, much of it sold internationally.

The Great Depression shook many Americans' faith in the industrial capitalist order, but by then the affordable processed foods of the industrialized food system had become familiar and even essential for feeding hungry families. And the leaders of the major food corporations made sure everyone was aware of that fact.

General Foods was among the most energetic promoters of the vi-



AMY BOREZO PHOTO

Today, the former Minute Tapioca factory is the Orange Innovation Center. Quabbin Harvest Food Co-op was incubated there from 2009 to 2014.

sion of American industrial food production as the best (perhaps the only) way to feed the US and the world. Its CEO, Clarence Francis, was active in government food policy circles during the Depression and into the Cold War era, and like Nelson Rockefeller and other titans of industry, he used his company's clout in support of continued expansion of large-scale production at home and vigorous exporting abroad.

Francis' faith in the system comes through in a speech he made in Orange in September of 1947. He was the guest of honor at the delayed celebration of Minute Tapioca's 50th anniversary, which had occurred during the war when the Japanese takeover of Indonesia halted shipments of tapioca from Java and the Orange factory turned to making dehydrated potatoes for K-rations.

By 1947 the war was won, the soldiers back home, and the plant gearing up to make its signature product again, using a new source of supply from cassava plantations then being carved out of the rainforests in Brazil. Everyone was ready for a party.

Under a big tent at “the Ranch,” Clarence Francis shared his thoughts on the future direction of the American food system with several hundred current and former Minute Tapioca employees. He was on the speech circuit that year, spreading the message that people needed to calm down about inflation and post-war shortages. Everything would even out in time, he promised. Food prices might be rising, but he assured the National Restaurant Association in a speech earlier that year

that “the law of supply and demand is waiting at the head of the stairs to push them back.”

His speech in Orange ran along similar lines, but in a more personal vein. Francis had joined the Postum Company just before its acquisition spree in the 1920s, a moment when there was plenty of room for an ambitious young executive who understood that his job was to keep the cycle of corporate growth churning. He was there when Postum bought Minute Tapioca in 1926, and I get the sense, reading his 1947 speech, that he had a particular fondness for the company, and for the town of Orange.

“You cannot come to a group such as this without being refreshed,” he told the crowd. “I believe that people in communities such as this think a lot more sensibly and a lot straighter than the people in the big metropolitan areas where they are subject to high pressure and different pulls.”

Some of those pulls were toward the socialistic idea that government ought to play a very active role in refereeing and rectifying the imbalances within the nation's economy, including its ever more industrialized and corporatized food sector. Francis had no time for that. He believed firmly that government's true role was to do what it could to support the business leaders who really knew how to manage an industrial economy.

It was a message that resonated in Orange, whose industrial leaders had long been hostile to labor organizing and government regulation. After the grinding Depression

and war years, it must have felt immensely reassuring to have one of the high priests of American capitalism offer his personal blessing.

“You cannot be wondering about this country,” Clarence Francis told the audience at the anniversary party. “Have faith in the future, faith in the country, and I think it is going to come out all right.”

Just 15 years after this comforting message, General Foods made the decision to consolidate the production of Minute Tapioca and other foods at a new plant in Delaware. The Orange factory was shuttered quite quickly; local residents remember students suddenly being taken out of school and houses going on the market overnight.

General Foods was following the economically rational policy of “eat or be eaten,” which worked until the 1980s when it was bought by tobacco giant Philip Morris as part of its own image makeover. Three years later Philip Morris acquired Kraft and put the two together as Kraft General Foods. In 2000 Nabisco was added to the mix and everything was consolidated under the Kraft name. But then Philip Morris spun off many of its food holdings, at which point Kraft merged with Heinz, itself owned by a couple of gigantic holding corporations.

There wasn't – and still isn't – any end point to all this consolidation, unless you count the unfolding ecological catastrophes set in motion by the past two centuries of industrialization and continual scaling up. Keeping the cycle going

within the food system has reached a nonsensical point where we're pouring about 13 calories of energy, most of it from fossil fuels, into each and every calorie of food energy, including the ones that die in landfills or get turned into industrial ingredients that don't provide much in the way of actual nourishment.

Over the past century, through incremental steps that have each been rational and often well-meaning, we've created a food system that essentially serves as a sink for our own uncontrolled growth while pumping out greenhouse gases that are destabilizing the ecosystems that food production depends on.

The cycle of consolidation and abandonment continues to play out in towns like Orange. In 2015, it lost the last of its industrial plants, which had been doing skilled metal fabrication since 1840. A newspaper editorial said bitterly, “Promised a deepening of [a] relationship... that stretched back 175 years, Orange today finds such pledges hold no water.” The owners, based in Wisconsin but controlled by a global private equity firm, had said all the right things when they came to town. But it took only five years for those promises to prove hollow.

The paper hoped that Orange could find its way forward, “hopefully with help from business owners who keep their commitments.”

By 2017, the year I joined the board of directors at Quabbin Harvest, the metal-fabrication plant property was sold to a company based in India. The new owners soon resumed operations on a much smaller scale, paying quite well but not creating any permanent jobs. This was just-in-time supply-chain capitalism, a world where commitments to place and communities were continually tested by the overwhelming imperative of growth.

It was preposterous to imagine that a small-scale grocery store could succeed in such a time and place. But to those of us involved with the co-op it seemed equally unimaginable not to have some kind of alternative to the relentless cycle of booms and busts, courtship and breakup, extraction and abandonment.

As I became more involved in the effort to save this small food co-op, I was beginning to have a sense that keeping the venture alive was going to require walking some kind of fine line between denial and determination.

Cathy Stanton lives in Wendell and teaches anthropology and environmental studies, with a focus on food studies, at Tufts University in Boston.



Local Book Profile: *Fur & Feathers Together*

By MELISSA WLOTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I met the children's book author Patricia Williams last winter at a Holiday Pop-Up Market hosted by the Pushkin Gallery in Greenfield. The whole idea of a book interested me for an article – I have also never profiled an author before.

The name of the children's book Williams wrote is *Fur & Feathers Together: A Tale of Highland Woods*. The summary on Amazon is “Courageous Woodland Creatures Unite and Fight to Stop the Pollution of Their Water Supply. They are aided

by uppity pet dogs, a loud-mouthed macaw, and a very flirty red hen.”

Williams retired after working for 14 years as a union representative for the Massachusetts Nurses' Association.

“The book took me two to three years to write,” Williams told me. She also said, in connection with what the book is about, that “the animals in Highland Woods realize their water has been polluted.”

Tom Swetland is the illustrator. Williams called the illustrations “brightly colored,” and told me they are “mostly of the animals that the book is about.”

She mentioned the way the illustrations came to be. “After I wrote, I showed him the book,” she said. “We discussed what made sense. He showed me 10 different illustrations.”

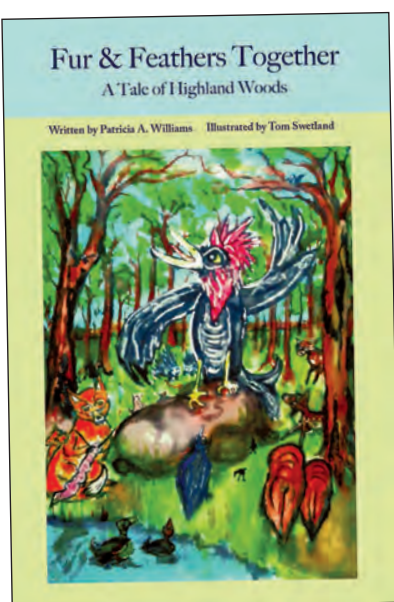
I learned that the book was self-published, which was done last August at Onion River Press in Brattleboro, Vermont. Besides Amazon, Williams told me it's also on a lot of other websites, including Barnes & Noble, and is being sold locally at places like Federal Street Books and World Eye Books.

I asked Williams if she would write another book. “It's being con-

sidered,” is what she said to that.

It seems like a very unique concept to write about, and the illustrations by Tom Swetland are cool. If I had to describe them to a stranger, I would say the Rooster is a black-and-red creature that looks very interesting. That is what I got from the image on the cover – this creature in a forest, surrounded by a pretty good-looking image of a fox, and two ducks in the pond next to him.

The cover image, in my mind, draws people in nicely. With another cover like that I think Williams could have nice success with any next book of hers.



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SOARES PHOTOS

RECIPE from page B1

lost the flavor and taste of the roast beef completely.

What's the point of spending your money on something you can't even taste? Eventually, people stopped buying roast beef because they believed it just doesn't mix well with anything, so a good product was completely discarded.

Well, after lots of hard work and experimentation, I'm here to restore hope back into your canteen roast beef. What I'm about to share with you is the only way – in my opinion – to make a roast beef dinner that you can enjoy the full flavor and texture the way it was meant to be. It's so simple it will make you fall over laughing, saying "Why didn't I think of that before?"

First, get the roast beef from the canteen (a five-dollar item) and wait for the food cart – yes, the jail food cart, a.k.a. FCSO Silver Dinner.

Next, gather up all the patience you have and wait for egg noodles to be served in one of the jail meals. Egg noodles are not available on canteen, and because we get the egg noodles only about

every three to four weeks, that in itself makes this meal special. It's not an everyday thing but a once in a blue moon type of thing. It's a special meal that comes around once a month like a celebration, a ritual, or a tradition. It's something that once you start you won't want to miss a single month of it.

Welcome to the reality of things in jail, where noodles are the hope for each month.

When I see the egg noodles being served on the trays, my eyes light up and I clap and rub my hands together, saying to myself "Today I'm going to have the special roast beef dinner. That time of the month has arrived."

This is how I go about preparing it:

Save up two to three servings of egg noodles, depending on the portion provided, and put that to the side. Use a small bowl and pour all the content of the roast beef within it. Heat it up in the microwave by itself until the thick sauce becomes watery.

Use a spork to break up the chunky pieces of the roast beef as much as you can. Reheat it in the microwave for two minutes. Then, pour over the egg noodles and mix thoroughly. Heat the whole mix again if the contents are not hot enough for you, and lastly, enjoy.

There is no need to add any other flavor to it, because you have the sauce that provides the true taste and flavor of the roast beef so that you will be truly content with your roast beef dinner. That's exactly how I enjoy it. However, different people have different taste buds and preferences, so you can add a seasoning pack to it and some squeeze cheese, but I wouldn't go beyond

This article first appeared in The Light, a newsletter by Franklin County Jail and House of Correction (FCSO) residents. Some of the writers join The Light already devoted to writing, while others discover love for writing through their participation. The students engage in process-oriented work to create stories and art, including personal essays, op-eds, recipes, poems, research articles, and other explorations of interest to them and their peers, coalescing into a new issue every eight to 10 weeks.

that. It will take too much from the roast beef flavor.

Simple, easy, and in less than 10 minutes your dinner is ready. If you start, please continue this tradition and we will all be united as one in this monthly remembrance of where we are, the hardship we've been through, and the tough time our loved ones are dealing with on the outside.

My brothers, there is still hope for us. So let us use this as our communion, our right to a better life, and continue doing it on the outs to support those of us that are still incarcerated – and to remind you not to repeat your mistakes and become limited to jailhouse food only.

Do you have a food hack, a simple meal that you enjoy, or a guilty pleasure with food that no one else knows yet? Are you willing to share it with others like I'm sharing this one with you? Please write to or talk to Madi. The next issue of *The Light* may contain your wonderful, simple recipe.

Top left: A package of roast beef, available for \$5 from the canteen, and egg noodles from the food cart.

Middle left: First heat the beef up in the microwave, pausing once the sauce is watery to break the chunks of beef up with a spork.

Bottom left: After further microwaving, the beef is ready to be added to the egg noodles and mixed.

Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School

4th Quarter Honor Roll

– Grade 6 –

FIRST HONORS
Abigail Billings, Lucas Billings, Jonathan Bones, Lylah Brocklesby, Lydia Cadran, Andrew Eichorn, Audrina Gexler, Jazelle Gonzalez, Lailah Jenks, Benjamin Johnson, Page Katsoulis, Eva Lareau, Silas Lively, Nathaniel Martin, Daisha Ovalle Perez, Alexis Parker, Gracie Jo Philip, Fiona Ribeiro, Leith Sadoway, Johnathan Sicard, Cameron Smarr

SECOND HONORS
Julian Bowden-Smith, Tyler Girard, Ava Laffey, Axel Martin Ovalle, Genevieve Otero, Izzabella Otto, Liam Pielock, Kyle Porter, Rhiannon Smith, Taelynn Supernault, Leon Tomas Mejia

THIRD HONORS
Samuel Choleva, Kylie Collazo, Anthony D'Amici, Ashlyn Perez Chun, James Sanchez

– Grade 7 –

FIRST HONORS
Kaylee Adamski, Lucas Black, Santiago Buri Rosales, Matthew Guilbault, Ellis Holmes, Adelaide Kolakoski, Asiah Parker, Myaa Reed, Taylor-Marie Scanlon

SECOND HONORS
Noah Blanchard, Davis Burnett, Bryan Cordero Lopez, Connor Glennon, Liliyana Jette, Kamden Keene, Ella Larouche, Tyler Newton, Austin Platek, Viviana Rosa, Jayden Weber, Owen Ziilinski

THIRD HONORS
Max Briere, Camden Cogswell, Nicholas Damkoehler, Colby Hebert, Melyn J Ramirez Martin, Emely Sanchez Abarua, Nikolay Shlegel, Kevin Tomas Mejia

– Grade 8 –

FIRST HONORS
Kenzie Alicea, Sato Bazemore, Jameson Betters, David Chagnon, Kairi Chubb, Allan Cordero Lopez, Grady Deery, Joseph Disciullo, Everett Eichorn, Samuel Eichorn, Reese Ewell, Amelia Galbraith, Madison Haight, Jonathan Holmes, William Hutchison, Bennett Lanoue, Carter Leete, Addison Lively, Trevor Lyons, Ashton Marshall, Chase Maynard, Braeden Moore, Lynx Petracchia, Nicole Porter, Emmett Spriggs, Kendra Steiner, Ava Taylor, Keith Warger, Landon Warger, Olivia Wolbach, Chloe Wonsley, Kamden Zagame

SECOND HONORS
Shelby Beck, Cameryn Carner, Kayahna Eaton Soto, Kylee Jenks, Weston Jones, Danie Morales Gonzalez, Jocelyn Ovalle Roblero, Connor Pacheco, Vinicio Palazzo, Evalynn Parra, Scarlett Pouliot, Dakotah Simon, Edward Walsh

THIRD HONORS
Freilyn Abarua Corona, Isabel Cottrell-Bouchard, James Edson, Jaclyn Galvez Martin

– Grade 9 –

FIRST HONORS
Ethan Damkoehler, Rachel Juarbe, Gianna Marigliano, Kimberly Ramirez Martin, Leo Reiber, Kaya Shipley-Aja, Brayden Slauenwhite, Addison Talbot, Marketa Vachula-Curtis

SECOND HONORS
Jonathan Ainsworth, Keira Feeley, Jaydon Gary, Julian Kaiser, Ophelia Little, Ivy Lopez, Layla Mathieu, Brianna Preston, Rain Sanborn, Stella Shipley-Aja, Paige Simmons, Brayden Sloan, Derek Wilson

THIRD HONORS
Yashiro Bagen, Triniti Barre, Johnny Bartolon, John Burt, Caeden Cottrell-Bouchard, Robert Goff, Josue Goncalves, Lilee Lizotte, Evelina Parpalov, Llewyn Toomajian

– Grade 10 –

FIRST HONORS
Jackson Cogswell, Ella DeLorenzo, Lily DeLorenzo, Ethan Eichorn, Elsee Galvez Martin, Cameron Johnson, Allister Kolakoski, Vaughn LaValley, Este Lemerise-Reinking, Shayly Martin Ovalle, Oliver Norwood, Yolvin Ovalle Mejia, Mario Pareja, Catherine Salls, Khalifa Seck, Nathaniel Trinqué, Michael Waite, Naomi Wilson-Hill

THIRD HONORS
Kai Dennett, London Ferrer, Alexander Golembeski, Christopher Halla, Ciana James, Cole Marshall, Kevin Perez Cueto, John Ramirez Martin, Jenna Sanford, Alexis Truesdell, Christopher Ulloa Abarua

SECOND HONORS
Michael Berdugo, Moises Borrayer Velasquez, Trinity Davis, Madisyn Dietz, Rojelio Galvez Mendez, Brody Girard, Clara Guidaboni, Michaela Klempner-Siano, Noah Kolodziej, Curtis Kretchmar, Caleb Lincoln, Janelle Massey, John O'Malley, David Ortiz, Yelisabel Perez de Leon, Kainen Stevens

– Grade 11 –

FIRST HONORS
Marilyn Abarua Corona, Samantha Carr, Tatiana Carr-Williams, Ripley Dresser, Ella Guidaboni, Kharieliex Huertas Hernandez, Madison Liimatainen, Mia Marigliano, Sofia Moreno, Briceidy Ovalle Perez, Gary Smith, Ledwin Villafana Abarua

SECOND HONORS
Darian Burnett, Elliot Cook, Pamela Gomez, Kailey James-Putnam, Zane Niedzielski, Gabriel Page, Brian Penagos, Elizabeth Reipold

THIRD HONORS
Cameron Anderson, Teagan Lavallee-Finch, Linnea Macek, Avery Miner, Sheni Ovalle Roblero, Anthony Prizio, Caden Williams-Senethavisouk

– Grade 12 –

FIRST HONORS
Kamryn Berry, Grayson Bowse, Michael Boyle, Trent Dobias, Kyleigh Dobosz, Fiona Hutchison, Syna Katsoulis, Anne Kolodziej, Ella Kolodziej, Audrey Lapinski, Owen LaValley, Cody McDonough, Jacon Norwood, Ayleen Ovalle Perez, Ricky Pareja, Raygan Pendriss, Dalver Perez, Avery Tela

SECOND HONORS
Ian Bastarache, Cameron Burnett, Taylor Greene, Katelyn Grise, Aiden Kelly, Megan Leveille, Joseph Mosca, Jacob Reich, Jack Trombi, Isabella Vachula-Curtis

THIRD HONORS
Otilia Bartolon, Noah DeLorenzo, Jaade Duncan, Khrystinalyn Gomez Thorne, Regan Marshall, Jasmine McNamara, Ella O'Keefe, Dylen Richardson, Geovannie Shand

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looking forward...

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, Eric Hnatow, The Frost Heaves & Hales, Big Destiny*. Free. 5 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Wilco, Horsegirl, Horse Lords*, more. \$ 5 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Tracy Grammer and Jim Henry*. Free. 12 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Wilco, Nick Lowe & Los Straitjackets, Joanna Sternberg, Soul Glo, Etran De L'Air*, more. \$ 12 p.m.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Red-nave, Trash Sun, Dalton Moon, Film and Gender, Blandest, Cadmium, Pondview*. \$ 3 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Jimmy Just Quit*. Free. 6:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Allegra Krieger, Hour, Lily Seabird*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Rick Maguire (of Pile), All Feels*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Four Sticks, Led Zeppelin tribute*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Wake In Fright, Red Herrings, Phroeggs*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Burning Roses Burlesque*. \$ 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Jeff Tweedy & Friends, Wednesday, Iris Dement, Halvorson/Fujiwara*, more. \$ 12 p.m.

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Anju*. \$ 3 p.m.

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Sue Kranz, The Klines, Austin & El-*

liott. Free. 6 p.m.

Temple Israel, Greenfield: *Songs of the Steppes and the Shtetl with Polina Shepherd*. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Florry, Dead Gowns, Slow Pony*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Lia Kohl & Whitney Johnson*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 1

Rat Trap, Holyoke: *Mordecai & Spatulas, Gluebag*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 4

Bookends, Florence: *Emily Bloom, Juicebox Bandit, Silvie's Okay*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Frozen Corn, Bridge of Flowers, Beverly Ketch, X-Mas Sisters*. No cover. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 5

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: *Wylder Ayres, Indë*. No cover. 5 p.m.

Mystery Train, Amherst: *Paperjays, Tarp, Jeff Unfortunately, Spectre Folk, Karen Zanes, Mal Devisa*. Free. 5 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 6

Peskeompskut Park, Turners

Falls: *Belltone Suicide, Cycles Inside, Daniel Gay, Federico Balducci, Hardcar, Jen Gelineau, Josiah Noomrude, Marie Carroll, Mibble, Moons of Goom Band, Noise Nomads, Noise Prince, Scald Hymn, Slippery Dixon, Trance Macabre*. Free. Noon.

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Kimaya Diggs*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

SAT-SUN, JULY 6-7

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Montaguestämman, Swedish Fiddle Music*. \$.

SUNDAY, JULY 7

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Friction Quartet*. \$ 3 p.m.

Greenfield Records, Greenfield: *Playbackers, Windsour, Robert Fuchs, Kate Mohanty*. Free. 4 p.m.

Bookends, Florence: *All Feels, Bobbie, Paperdisk, Cowperson*. \$ 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10

Montague Common, Montague Center: *Becky and John*. Free. 6 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *AT and the Fantasy Suites, Bryan Gillig, Vanessa Brewster*. \$ 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 14

Nova Arts, Keene: *Cecilia Zabalá, Wendy Eisenberg trio*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 19

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: Flywheel Arts presents *Feminine Aggression, Tempestade & Clockserum, Juana B Ontop*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 20

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

FRIDAY, JULY 26

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Madison McFerrin, Daisy Skelton, Kimaya Diggs, Kendra McKinley, DJ Badcatch*. Free. 5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 27

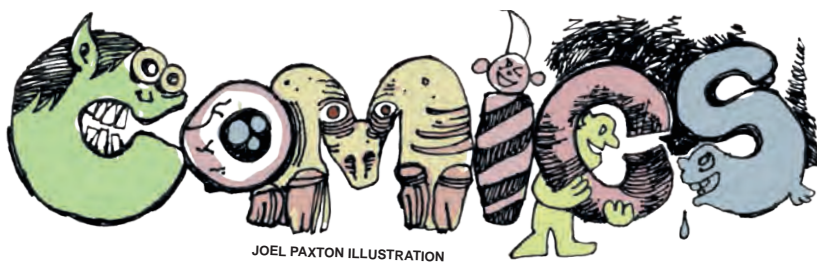
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ben Hersey, Noah Britton, Trance Macabre, Jeff Unfortunately*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 26 & TUESDAY, AUGUST 27

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Dark Star Orchestra*. \$ 7 p.m.



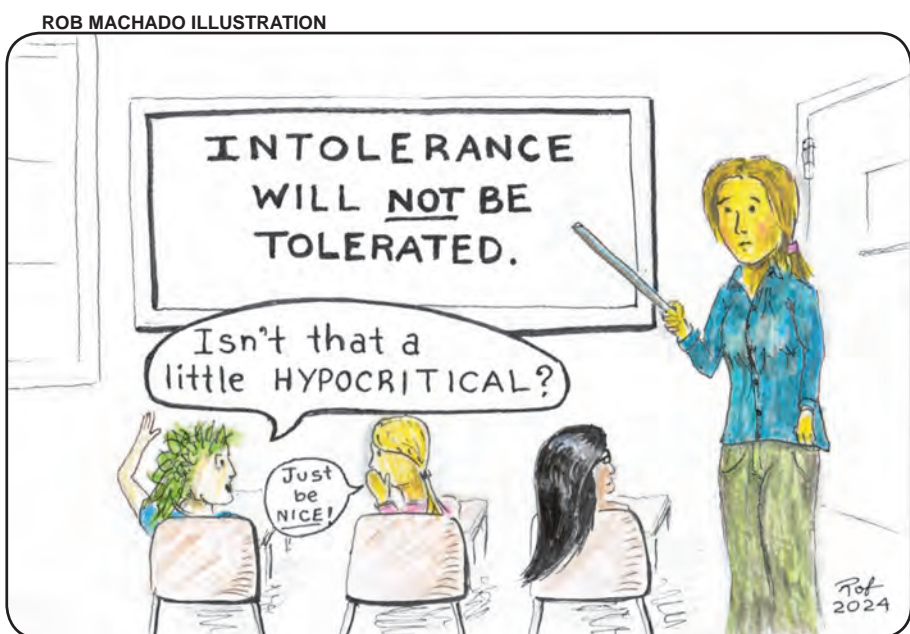
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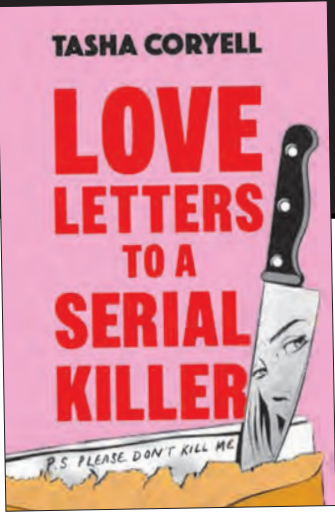
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RECOMMENDATIONS

CLAIRE'S SUMMER READS



By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – The phrase “summer reading” suggests lazy days with docile novels – a romance perhaps, or the latest mystery. In practice, though, whatever their genre the best novels for summer are those that noodle away at their characters’ dilemmas, prompting new thoughts about life.

The new thoughts can be kick-started by a title. Take, for example, Tasha Coryell’s *Love Letters to a Serial Killer* (Berkley, 2024). The immediate thought is “I wouldn’t do that!” followed quickly by “Who would?” and “Why?”

The blurbs call this book “witty,” “darkly funny,” and a “romp.” Like the raspberry-pink cover, these descriptions suggest this book is funny or amusing. It is not. It really tries to answer those questions about writing love letters to killers.

The reasons Hannah does are because she’s in her thirties, depressed by failing to find a partner, and in a dead-end job. When she learns of a serial killer who has dumped four female bodies in a ravine near Atlanta, she leaves Minneapolis and heads down there for the trial of the accused, a wealthy good-looking young lawyer. One of Coryell’s achievements is to make writing to him a credible move for Hannah, and to show that falling in love would inevitably follow. Another is to write a book that is a page-turner, especially after Hannah leaves Minneapolis.

For a summer-read romance with a difference, this is a good choice. It’s also a good choice if you love

mysteries with a psychological theme and a hard-to-predict ending.

The title of Fiona Barton’s new book *Talking to Strangers* (Berkley, 2024) also sounds a dangerous note. Which child has not been warned about talking to strangers, particularly strange men? Yet today people do this all the time on dating sites. In Barton’s novel Karen Simmons is all over them. Like Coryell’s Hannah, she longs for a permanent partner, but unlike Hannah, she’s optimistic about finding one.

When she is discovered murdered, the people of her small English town speculate that one of her online hookups is the culprit.

Or perhaps it’s one of the many locals that Karen has dated. Perhaps, too, Karen is partly culpable because she ignored those warnings about speaking to strangers.

Two women pursue the killer. Detective Elise King, who is recovering from treatment for breast cancer, and Kiki Nunn, a single mother struggling to make a living as a journalist. A scoop would help her career. Elise is not sympathetic. She thinks Kiki will interfere with her investigation.

Fiona Barton, herself formerly a journalist, handles the dynamics of their relationship well. Equally her description of the town and its people is compellingly spot-on. Lovers of detection fiction will enjoy figuring out who killed Karen, while lovers of the social novel will recognize the author’s serious exploration of the problems faced by middle-aged single women.

Nell Freudenberger’s *The Limits* (Knopf, 2024) also hovers around problems of middle age, particu-

larly those involving kids – in this case Pia, who has been living with her mother, a divorced research biologist in Tahiti. Pia’s dad is a New York cardiologist working long hours in the early days of COVID, and is thrilled that Kate, his new wife, is pregnant. He’s thrilled too that Pia is coming to New York to finish high school.

No reader will be surprised that this doesn’t work out: Pia resents Kate, doesn’t like most of her schoolmates, wishes she were back in Tahiti. What is she to do? What are her parents to do? These conundrums power a plot full of tensions, and Freudenberger’s sympathetic and even-handed treatment of all her characters and her compelling descriptions of both New York and Tahiti make this novel a particularly absorbing summer read.

Jane Smiley is equally adept at describing a locale. Her new novel *Lucky* (Knopf, 2024) is mostly based in St. Louis, where her protagonist Jody lives for much of her life. It’s Smiley’s hometown, and its avenues and houses are so lovingly described that the city is more sharply drawn than any of the characters. Most of them are good people, pretty unconflicted, so therefore not especially interesting.

Jody is more captivating. The novel charts her early life, then her success as a musician, and her experiences with her family, which includes a financial whiz of an uncle who ensures she has plenty of money. Such fictional biographies tap into their readers’ biological

and social sense of their own lives. This can make for compulsive reading, so while Jody is not destined to become as memorable as Jane Eyre or Emma Bovary – classic

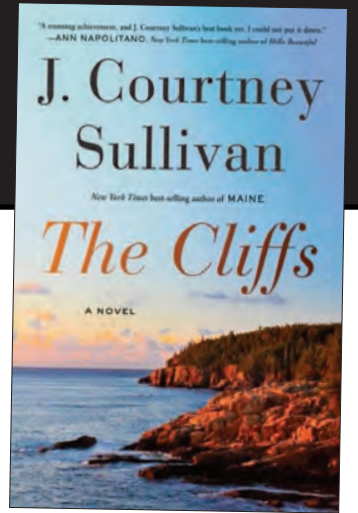
heroines of this genre – her life can while away the reader’s hours on the beach or in an airplane.

Like Smiley, J. Courtney Sullivan, though much younger, is a well-established novelist. Her territory has always been Massachusetts and Maine, and her focus is on families, usually described over two or three generations. Her new book *The Cliffs* (Knopf, 2024) is set in a small coastal Maine town, where Jane Flanagan has been brought up by an impoverished and stressed single mother. She’s good at school, so she gets away and becomes an archivist at the Schlesinger Library in Cambridge.

The library is devoted to collections of materials illuminating the lives of American women. Sullivan explores this topic throughout *The Cliffs*, analyzing the life of Jane as a woman with a difficult childhood, a challenging career she enjoys, but reservations about her relationships with men.

Thus far, this is territory the author has explored in her four earlier novels. In *The Cliffs* she goes further, investigating the women who have lived in the old house standing on the cliffs of Jane’s hometown. She loved exploring it as a child. Now she investigates its past when she is hired to research its history by a new owner.

Indigenous people, of course, lived on the cliffs; so did the Victorian builder of the house, and his wife. As Jane investigates their lives, Sullivan moves into a new area for her: Maine before the colonists, then as it was a century and more ago. This makes for a dense novel, awkwardly structured in places but perfect for anyone want-



ing a long, exploratory read.

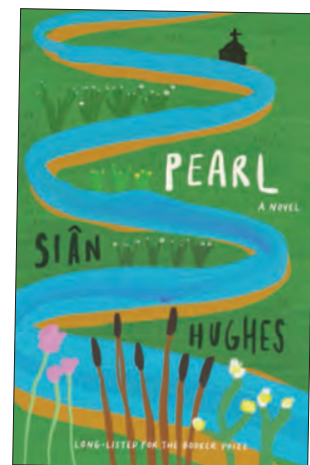
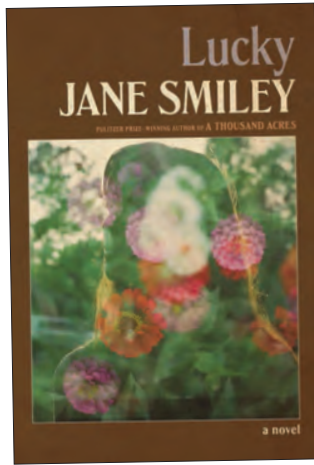
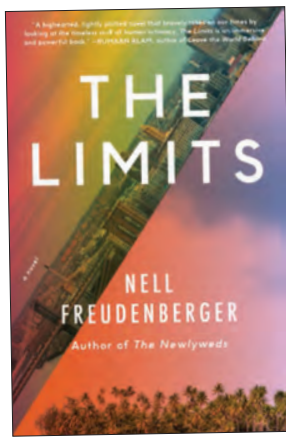
One of the year’s most rewarding novels, *Pearl* (Knopf, 2024), goes on sale in late July, and it’s worth waiting for. Like *The Cliffs*, it traces the living past in the present – a task first-time novelist Siân Hughes handles with extraordinary deftness.

Pearl is set in the tiny village in Cheshire, England where Hughes grew up fascinated by an old, deserted house. In the novel it is home to eight-year-old Marianne, who spends her days gardening and cooking with her mother, listening to old tales and singing old rhymes.

Old regional rhymes head each chapter, but the poem that powers the novel is the 14th-century “Pearl,” written by an anonymous local author who also penned “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.” In it a father falls asleep on the riverbank and dreams of his dead daughter on the other bank. In Hughes’s *Pearl*, Marianne becomes the mourner after her mother throws herself into the river that flows by the house.

Marianne becomes the most difficult child and teen imaginable, absorbed by her mother and the world of old tales she evoked. As she explains in a wonderful metaphor, “The past is folded over and over like puff pastry and my mother, of all people, would understand how I am wrapped up in its layers and cannot find my way out.”

As this makes clear, *Pearl* is a serious analysis of grief, and also a rich exploration of the survival of the past and the power of its words. A truly remarkable novel.



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