

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 17, 2024

FirstLight Power Critics Question State Officials At Shea Info Session

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – At a well-attended public information session last Thursday at the Shea Theater, state environmental officials discussed the contents of a “settlement agreement” reached last year between a coalition of state-level organizations and the FirstLight Power Company regarding its future operations on the Connecticut River.

The agreement, as described by Jesse Leddick and Caleb Slater of the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife), would transform the river below

the Turners Falls dam by dramatically increasing the average amount of water flow in the so-called “bypass” stretch between the dam and the company’s Cabot Station hydro-electric plant.

The proposed increases Leddick described varied with season and location, but would be at least ten times current levels in part of the bypass stretch in the spring and in July and August. Increases just below the dam were more modest, but would be at least four times current levels. From November through April, when this part of the river is often virtually dry, the chart showed

see **SESSION** page A6

Land Trusts, Coops Meet To Celebrate New Project On Ridgeline

By CHARLOTTE MURTISHAW

GREENFIELD – Intermittent bouts of cold, driving rain did little to dampen the enthusiasm at the Valley Housing Cooperative’s fall celebration on Sunday. The festivities, held on the 32-acre parcel on the Poet’s Seat ridgeline recently acquired by VHC and several partners, provided general cheer over the land’s new ownership, as well as a stage for the groups to introduce newer initiatives.

Despite the weather, over 100 people gathered under tents and by a campfire for a potluck, presentations, and walking tours of the land at 106 Stone Farm Lane.

The VHC, pulled together by a group of friends who began meeting in 2020 over housing instability concerns, joined forces with the Valley Community Land Trust (VCLT) and Shelburne Falls-based design-build firm Noble Home, LLC to close on the sprawling property in July.

The organizations clinched the property after a major fundraising push, with the VHC crowdfunding \$177,000 in the final month to support the bid. The ultimate sale price dialed in at \$995,000.

Now, the co-op gets to face the joys and challenges of enacting its mission to “create an alternative to renting or owning and take land off of the speculative real estate market,” and ensure that “land is collectively stewarded by and for communities.”

The simplest explanation of the see **LAND** page A5

SCENE REPORT

One Easy Way to Help



Top: Wednesday’s mobile food bank winds down. Above: Postgraduate student Sonam Drema (left) and director of work and service learning Kensey Batchelder came down from the Northfield Mount Hermon School to lend a hand.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – The sun was shining, the folding tables in the parking lot at Fifth and K were piled with potatoes, apples, and little tubs of pesto, and the line stretched down the block. It was 1 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month, which meant the Mobile Food Bank was going live in Turners Falls.

The operation was friendly and brisk. Anyone can get food at the Mobile Food Bank, no questions

asked – or almost no questions. Barbara Watson worked the line with a clipboard, asking each attendee how many household members they were feeding and whether they had come before.

Other volunteers passed out reusable grocery bags, and those in line went from table to table filling the bags up: Asian pears, green peppers, McIntosh apples, bottles of juice, packages of noodles. The pallet of potatoes caused see **HELPING OUT** page A5



Haydenville resident Beth Fairservis brought a shortnose sturgeon puppet to the informational session.

Energy Policy Reforms Packed Into Budget Bill

By SARAH ROBERTSON

BOSTON – After legislators failed this summer to reach a compromise on an omnibus climate bill that would have made major changes to state energy infrastructure policies, the Healey-Driscoll administration is trying to pass some of those changes in a routine budget bill.

The provisions currently in H.5049, the supplemental appropriation bill currently before the House Ways and Means committee, would streamline the siting and permitting of renewable energy facilities, clarify regulations of energy storage systems, and establish benchmarks for the state to procure renewable energy and storage from utility companies. These proposals were mainly

drawn from the House’s version of the climate bill, which was crafted with the help of state representative Jeffrey Roy (D-Franklin), chair of the Joint Committee of Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. Roy says the committee’s goals were shaped by the state’s goal to reach “net zero” carbon emissions by 2050.

“We were prioritizing siting and permitting reform, which was the number-one priority,” Roy told the Reporter. “With the pace of infrastructure construction, we were not going to be able to reach those goals, so we had to do something to increase the pace at which resources could be built.”

In a September 11 press release, the Healey administration said it see **POLICY** page A8

High School Sports: Make-or-Break Time

By MATT ROBINSON



Left to right: Elliot Thibodeau, Rose Fortin, and Charlotte Canterbury set the pace after the start of the 5K cross-country race hosted by Greenfield High School at Highland Park on October 8. Canterbury placed fifth in the event, with runners from Greenfield, Turners Falls, and Hopkins Academy participating.

TURNERS FALLS – The Franklin Tech and Turners Falls volleyball teams seemed to be at their peak this week. Tech’s field hockey team faced two powerhouses, preparing them for a postseason run, and the girls’ soccer team had a win and a tie but need two more wins to make the playoffs.

In football, the Eagles edged out the Palmer Panthers to claim the top spot in the Intercounty North. This Friday they host a Greenfield team fresh off a 48-point scoring frenzy.

An apology to Tech’s golf team: The grandmother of one of the players let me know I’d gotten the coach’s name wrong. When I mentioned this to coach Mike Duclos, he seemed more concerned with his team’s performance in Wednesday’s MIAA tournament at Williamstown.

“As a team, we came in fourth,” he lamented. “[We] did not qualify for the state tournament.” The good news is that Gabe Mota tied for third

see **SPORTS** page A6

AINSWORTH AT LARGE

A Regional Apocalypse

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – Hurricane Helene waited until long after it made landfall in Florida on September 26 to unleash its lethal impact further inland. Indeed, Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan compared it to the Johnstown (Pennsylvania) Flood that killed over 2,000 people on May 31, 1889. That tragedy happened after days of rain caused the South Fork Dam to breach and pour into the valley.

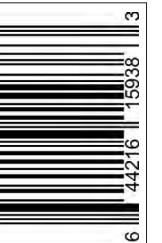
Darren Nicholson would probably agree with Noonan. He lives in

Canton, North Carolina, about 25 miles west of Asheville, near the Tennessee border. “They started talking about the scope two days before,” said Nicholson, a bluegrass musician.

“We’re protected here in the mountains. We live on a hilltop but this entire thing is curves and mountains and valleys. It’s where the Great Smoky Mountains meet the Blue Ridge, and the North Fork Reservoir catches water all year long so when you get this much rain it has nowhere to go but down.” see **AT LARGE** page A4

Are We There Yet?

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The Montague Reporter

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The Blame

"National politics continues to be completely mind-melting as we approach the event horizon," we wrote here on October 15, 2020. "The First Family has purportedly conquered coronavirus; early voters in some swing states are forming blocks-long lines; one of the parties has installed unauthorized ballot boxes throughout California, where a lemur is also missing from the San Francisco zoo, and a person wearing a jetpack has been spotted flying above Los Angeles."

Ah, 2020. Remember 2020? No. You don't. It has been memory-holed. A volatile primary, Democratic Party consolidation around the Biden candidacy on Super Tuesday, the earth-shaking COVID-19 shutdowns one week later, three months of mass street protests sparked by the death of George Floyd...

"Democrats," we continued then, "if the political forecasting website FiveThirtyEight is to be believed, have a 74% chance of gaining a majority in the Senate and an 87% chance at the presidency. The website, which is currently owned by the Walt Disney Company, famously erred in 2016."

Democrats did, in fact, win the Senate and presidency. In case you are not checking FiveThirtyEight this year – who is? – as of press time Thursday morning, it is mod-

eling a 53% chance Harris wins and a 46% chance Trump does.

The site's founder Nate Silver, meanwhile – and again, who is? – is calling it 52% / 48%.

Trump, meanwhile, has been transformed by his four years out of power and is making *much* more extreme campaign promises. This week, it was the threat to use the National Guard – or perhaps US military – against his domestic critics and political enemies.

"It is the enemy from within, and they're very dangerous," he said at a Fox News town hall on Tuesday. "They're Marxists and they're communists, and they're fascists, and they're sick."

In a country drowning in campaign dark money that has developed an Electoral College equilibrium close to the halfway mark, national elections tend to hinge on motivation and malaise. And whatever else you may think of the Biden administration's foreign policy, it is a simple political fact that it has served to depress enthusiasm among constituents that might in other years be out door-knocking and phone-banking right now.

Harris, meanwhile, continues to tack rightward – on immigration, on crime, on war – in pursuit of the spectral swing voters in swing states. If it doesn't work, we know who will take the blame.

For Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno

I'm sitting at my grandfather's dining room table, on top of the hill, Turners Falls. In the house my grandparents bought on a lark, after spending a crisp Fall orange and red warm sun afternoon dropping my aunt off at college. Driving through surrounding small towns, they saw the house, the house saw them. Grandpa had an NEA grant and that was that. So it was here their pilgrimage found center. A throw of dice will never abolish chance (Mallarmé).

Like a roll of the dice, my grandparents did it all, risked it all, together, and figured it out together upon the revelation of the landing. Bodily, they're not here any more. But they did not leave. Like chance, like good luck – *let's just throw it down and put it on the table* – they built up not only a beautiful family but a community outside. I look around Turners Falls and I cannot help but see the ripening fruit of my grandparents' seeds. They didn't have money but they had focus and were real people in



SUBMITTED PHOTO

the sense it didn't matter who you were, are, or were going to be, but you're here now in front of me, and I want to listen.

As a human growing up, I never felt pushed by either of my grandparents into any sort of vocation. A throw of the dice had it that I was an artist – and never once did they urge me to any definitive school. It didn't matter who I was, or who I



NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

A.H. Rist Insurance has been in business in Turners Falls since 1888. Sage Bourbeau, Michelle Bettencourt, and Chelsea Pease (standing, left to right) and Aileen Fitzgerald (seated) make up half of the team at the 159 Avenue A office. Chuck Donovan has been the owner since 1978, and oversaw the company's move from 55 Fourth Street to its current location, the former Rooney's Shoe Store, in 1984.

TWO CORRECTIONS

We would like to correct two big errors in our October 10 edition.

In our Montague selectboard notes (*Library Plan Could Stabilize Staff...*, Page A1), we wrote that public libraries director Caitlin Kelley is proposing to expand a part-time technician position to full-time and add a new full-time adult services coordinator. We wrote that this would increase the budget by \$146,000, plus \$16,000 in benefits.

This was way, way off! (Kelley had described a rate adjustment of "just under \$19,000" and our reporter heard it as "\$119,000," but the confusion compounded from there.)

"The Montague Public Libraries put two proposals before the Select-

board," Kelley clarifies:

"1. To increase the wages of library assistants and the library technician by one grade each, which would cost just under \$19,000;

"2. To upgrade two existing positions, a Library Assistant (currently 8 hours) and a Library Technician (currently 35 hours), to a Library Technician/Assistant (proposed 35 hours) and Adult Services Coordinator (proposed 35 hours). These changes would cost roughly \$47,373 including benefits."

We apologize to our readers and town officials for the mistakes.

And second, the correct spelling of Janel Nockleby's last name is Nockleby. *Nockleby*. Sorry Janel!



Northfield Columnist Should Not Have Platform

I don't understand why the *Montague Reporter*, a paper that covers Montague, Erving, Gill, Leverett, and Wendell, continues to publish opinion pieces by Chip Ainsworth targeted at our Town Administrator.

Mr. Ainsworth is using his platform with your paper to inaccurately portray the performance and work of our Town Administrator and is expressing his opinions, more than he reports facts. He does not write balanced, thoughtful articles and seems to have a personal vendetta against the Town Administrator.

I don't understand why you continue to give him the opportunity over and over again, when your paper isn't advertised as covering Northfield. Please stop giving him this opportunity to continue writing biased and blatantly targeted smear pieces about a hard working town employee. There is a reason the *Greenfield Recorder* does not give him this forum in a paper that does cover Northfield.

Imogene Pruitt-Spence

Susan Wright
Northfield

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Retired longtime *Greenfield Recorder* reporter and editor **Richie Davis** will read from his trilogy of collected feature stories from around Franklin County and beyond at Dickinson Memorial Library in Northfield this Thursday, October 17 at 6 p.m.

Davis covered energy, the environment, regional and state government, and a host of other issues at the *Recorder* from 1976 until 2019. His collections *Inner Landscapes* (2020), *Good Will & Ice Cream* (2021), and *Flights of Fancy, Souls of Grace* (2022), all published by Haley's of Athol, highlight the region's uniqueness. The reading is free, and the books will be for sale.

The **GCC Community Chorus** opens its 2024-25 season with three performances during the fall.

The first two are a program entitled "Four Centuries of American Music." A preview concert will take place this Friday, October 18, from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. in the Sloan Theater at Greenfield Community College. The full performance will be given at Trinity Church in Shelburne Falls at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, November 8.

The program includes shape-note music by William Billings and Jeremiah Ingalls, a folk song and a 19th-century hymn, a mid-20th-century choral piece by Vincent Persichetti, and songs by Leonard Bernstein and by André Thomas.

The group's annual holiday concert will take place at 12:15 p.m. on Friday, December 6 in GCC's Main Lobby. All events are free, with donations welcome at the door.

The LAVA Center in Greenfield is featuring the **creative output of three sisters** this weekend. Liz Kelner, Marian Kelner, and Morgan RaShell Kelner will collectively present their work in photography, collage, music, video, books, and three-dimensional art.

The exhibit will be open on Friday, October 18, from 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, October 19, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The sisters will give readings from their work on Friday at 6:30 p.m. as well as Saturday at 1 and 3 p.m.

"The new lights will be officially turned on at the skate park!" Montague parks and rec director Jon Dobosz reports. "Many thanks to the Montague Selectboard for earmarking the needed ARPA funds to expand the use of this great community resource."

The official "grand illumination" of **Unity Skate Park** with its new lights will take place at 6 p.m. this Friday, October 18.

"At this time, we are planning on keeping the lights on until 10 p.m.," says Dobosz.

The Erving Conservation Commission is sponsoring its annual **Fall Volunteer Trail Workday** this Saturday, October 19 at 9 a.m. on the

Poplar Mountain Conservation Area on Old State Road in Erving.

Trails are deteriorating in several places in easy reach of the parking lot. Tools will be available, or you can bring your own snippers, hoes, loppers, or camp saws. Hike to the top afterwards to enjoy the view at the overlook. For more information, email conservation@erving-ma.gov. The rain date is Sunday.



The Montague Center playground improvement project is well under way. Parks and rec director Jon Dobosz sent in this photo last week of the newly-installed play structures.

The Greenfield Public Library welcomes **state senator Jo Comerford** for a meet-and-greet this Saturday, October 19, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the library's community meeting room.

"Stop by to hear about Jo's legislative work, ask questions, and join in the conversation about pressing issues affecting our community," the announcement reads.

The senator will give a short presentation at 11 a.m., and then take questions and feedback. Light refreshments will be served.

The **Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse** is back! This Saturday, October 19, is the first concert of the season featuring Briezyjane and the Hurricanes. The beneficiary for this one is the Wendell Historical Society. An open mic will start off the night at 7:30 p.m., and a cash donation of \$7 to \$20 is asked at the door.

The final event celebrating Leverett's 250th anniversary is a **Fall Festival at the Leverett Elementary School** this Sunday, October 20 from 1 to 4 p.m. This free event will feature 20 arts and crafts vendors, activities, and games for all ages. Live music will be provided by Masala Jazz, and DJ Overtime will spin records.

There will be an apple pie bake-off – amateur bakers only; local apples and homemade pastry crust required – and a pumpkin decorating contest, with lots of prizes. Ben Goldberg will be there to sharpen your garden and kitchen implements. It's the last chance to buy 250th Anniversary swag, as well! All are welcome, rain or shine.

This weekend is when the Working Weavers organization hosts its annual **Working Weaver Studio**

Trail tour, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, with ten weavers in six studios open to the public for demonstrations and sales from Shelburne Falls to Florence and Conway in between.

A list of the weavers and their locations, including points of interest along the trail such as restaurants, pubs, and other attractions, is available at workingweavers.com.

Village Neighbors, which connects older residents in Leverett, Wendell, New Salem, and Shutesbury with volunteers, is holding a volunteer orientation next Tuesday, October 22 at 6:30 p.m. at the Leverett town hall. If you hope to attend, call (413) 345-6894 or email volunteers@villageneighbors.org with your contact info.

this month concern the late Louise Shattuck's friend, mentor and no-fee psychometric medium Dorothy Evelyn Conant Begg, the first baby born in Lake Pleasant in 1898.

Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls is offering some stress relief with a **free bodywork demonstration** by Jamie Simpson of Birch Tree Bodywork on Saturday, October 26 from 1 to 2 p.m. Body work basics will be demonstrated and you may learn simple techniques to help you and your loved ones feel less stress. Wear comfortable clothing to join in.

Reservations are necessary by 5 p.m. on October 25 and can be made by calling (888) 324-3191 or stopping by the branch and speaking to the staff. All are welcome.

The Parlor Room in Northampton will host a **screening and discussion of *Stumlord*** with local filmmaker Dylan Landry. The documentary covers the efforts of tenants in Section 8 housing in Hartford, Connecticut to rectify issues with their landlord, a fight they took from local and state government all the way to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The screening is Sunday, October 27 from 1 to 3 p.m. and includes a discussion facilitated by Felicia Lundquist about people power and racial inequity in housing. RSVP to attend at tinyurl.com/habfun.

Seeds of Solidarity Farm and Education Center in Orange is offering a **no-till gardening workshop** on Sunday, October 27 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Farmer Ricky Baruc will pass along techniques and Caro Roszell will inform about visual soil assessment and testing. The description says that switching to no-till methods can build healthy soil, reduce labor and cost inputs, promote climate resilience, and increase your connection to the land.

Registration is required for this workshop, and the sliding-scale fee of \$65 to \$95 includes a soup and salad lunch. Email deb@seedsofsolidarity.org to register. Scholarship opportunities are available for farmers of color, or for new farmers going no-till.

If you have ever wondered what they mean when they say "it's on the cloud," you can find out when the **Senior Tech Time Series** continues on Monday, October 28 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Gill-Montague senior center. Franklin County Technical School techies will explain the mysteries of "the cloud," and you may learn how to use cloud-based apps such as Google Docs. All are welcome, no appointment needed.

The Tech School will also offer a **free alternative to door-to-door trick-or-treating** for pre-kindergarten through sixth graders. The school's doors will open on Tuesday, October 29 between 4:30 and 6 p.m. for little goblins and ghouls to enjoy a safe and festive trick-or-treating in costume on the campus in Turners Falls' industrial park.

The Friends of Leverett Library are accepting donations for their **popular holiday basket fundraiser**. If you or your business or organization have items to donate, contact Leverettlibraryauction@gmail.com.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
October 18 & 19 at 7:30 p.m.
BUBBA HO-TEP
In this under-appreciated 2002 horror comedy Elvis and JFK are alive and living in a nursing home – and must battle a mummy.
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w/ Scout Turkel
Hannah Brooks-Mott
SUN. OCT 20 • 3PM

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AT LARGE from page A1

The North Fork, said Nicholson, is 4,200 feet above sea level. "You've got gravity and tributaries and streams, and there's nothing that can stop the water. Cell towers went down, entire networks were destroyed, gasoline pumps were shut down. We didn't know what was going on. It was really strange.

"I've never experienced anything like it, never seen devastation like this – massive buildings, homes floating down the river, bridges out. The I-40 Gorge between Tennessee and North Carolina is gone, and it's going to be years before that thing's open."

Nicholson's son Taylor characterized that stretch of interstate "like they turned a goat loose and followed it with a bulldozer. The pavement and everything that supported it is washed away."

Taylor was working as a part-timer for the Clyde Fire Department (pop. 1,376) when the waters came. "We had gotten a briefing from the National Weather Service that this was going to be an historic rainfall," he said in a soft Carolina accent. "We activated the first siren at about 3 a.m. and that means, 'Get out now.'"

"Dams had begun releasing pre-emptively, but nothing could support 30 inches in 72 hours. We were just a giant funnel. I'm a swiftwater technician, so I got to be in the water and make

some rescues."

As of Monday, according to the *Associated Press*, there had been 98 storm-related deaths in North Carolina and 11 in Tennessee.

"We definitely need help," said Darren. "I discourage people from using the funding organizations. Get in touch with our local leaders. People are well-intentioned, but all you're doing is making yourself feel better because it sure isn't getting to us."

He provided me with the number for Canton's mayor Zeb Smathers, an attorney and Duke graduate. Smathers returned my call the next day sounding like someone who hadn't had any sleep since the storm hit his small town of under 5,000.

"If you want to help our town directly, there are two options," he said. "If you want to help the town rebuild a playground, make the check out to us." Those checks should be mailed to Canton Town Hall, PO Box 987, Canton, NC 28716.

"If you want to help our residents," he continued, "send a check to the United Way and earmark it for hurricane relief. We've had good relations with United Way." Those should be mailed to United Way of Haywood County, 81 Elmwood Way, Suite 140, Waynesville, NC 28786.

Who's To Bless?

One of the great songwriters of our time, Kris

Kristofferson, died last month at age 88.

PBS's eight-part documentary *Country Music: A Film by Ken Burns*, which debuted in 2019, included an entire segment about Kristofferson. Born into a military family, he attended Pomona College and Oxford University and became an Army Ranger and helicopter pilot. He was *en route* to West Point to be a teacher when he stopped in Nashville to get a glimpse of Music City.

Kristofferson never left town, never taught at West Point and never saw his parents again. They disowned him. He worked as a janitor in Nashville and wrote music, including "Sunday Morning Coming Down," which was recorded by Johnny Cash and is considered by some to be AA's national anthem.

His mother subsequently sent him a letter that damned Johnny Cash and confirmed he'd been "excommunicated" from the family. He showed it to songwriter Cowboy Jack Clement, who showed it to Cash.

The next time they saw each other in the studio, Cash looked at Kristofferson, chuckled, and said, "Always nice to get a letter from home, isn't it, Kris?"

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



OP ED

FCSO's 'Nurturing Fathers' Program

By JAMEL NICHOLSON

GREENFIELD – Being a father is not easy! Having the pressure and responsibility of keeping alive and nurturing another human being is enough to really second-guess your parenting. Unfortunately, I let down my six-year-old daughter. My heart breaks for her while I'm away correcting myself, and I finally understand what it means when people say "it takes a village to raise a child."

The Nurturing Fathers program at the Franklin County Sheriff's Office helped me save my relationship with my daughter because it showed me that there is no 100% right way to be a father. It takes time, hard work, and patience to help navigate your parenting and being aware of the skills that you lack. There is a key, and it is this program.

I have been incarcerated and away from my daughter for 2½ years now, but I do get court-ordered visits twice a week for 20 minutes through Securus video connect and the Children's Day visit every other month for two hours. For a while, I was dealing with a lot of frustration trying to figure out what the issues in my parenting were and how I could do better as a father under my circumstances of being in jail. I have had help from other incarcerated fathers, and even case workers that have children, to help me navigate the tough times when I felt that I lacked certain parenting skills.

I now understand that even parents that are able to tuck their children in bed every night still go through the same frustrations. I feel guilt every day I'm away, because I told myself I would do better than my father did. My father spent all of my childhood incarcerated, and even though I'm in jail right now, that will not be the case for my daughter. Programs like the Nurturing Father's Program here at FCSO have been very helpful for me.

Nurturing Fathers is a 13-week class about finding better ways to parent. This program is run by Franklin County's two most laid-

back staff: C.C.W. Chandler and Clinician Lydia.

The class is for an hour and 30 minutes, one day a week, and takes place outside of the unit in a classroom. I loved the program because instead of just reading out of a book, not only the students but the instructors, too, shared personal experiences as parents and personal experiences from their own childhoods! This was perfect because our childhood memories – good, bad, or both – will also help us find better ways to parent.

In this class, we took quizzes and also had homework some days that we always discussed as a class. Everyone showed respect to others in the class and the instructors always found ways to honor the students who attended.

Also, after the 13-week course, there is a celebration where you're awarded a surprise and a certificate. The certificate means a lot because this program is a recognized program in the state of Massachusetts, not just in this jail.

Some of the topics in the class were Discipline, Fun & Games, Teamwork Between Father and Spouse/Co-parent, Fathering with Violence or Fear, and Overcoming Barriers. In a few different class sessions, we listened to and watched parenting videos, and also listened to music that had to do with parenting. This program honestly opened my eyes and my mind to do better.

So that my readers could get more insight into the program, I asked another student and also a staff member how they felt about the Nurturing Fathers program.

Interview with Jonathan Sutliff:

"A couple things I got from Nurturing Fathers were learning about different ways to raise our children and a better understanding of what toddlers and children are looking for from their parents. I also learned just because you're incarcerated that does not mean you stop being a parent.

"I learned great things in the Nurturing Fathers Program; it was

a great class and I recommend it for any father, incarcerated or not. Clinician Lydia and C.C.W. Chandler are great teachers and treated the students with a lot of respect. The group actually felt like human beings and not inmates, which made it easier for us to open up about our families."

Interview with Lydia (Clinician):

"There are very few things that could make me look forward to a Tuesday afternoon, but I can honestly say I look forward to 1:00 every Tuesday as it is the time for Nurturing Fathers. In this class I am honored to get a glimpse into our clients' personal intimate lives. I am humbled by their level of vulnerability they display. The sparkle in their eyes when they talk about a proud parenting moment always warms my heart.

"It's a break from the daily structure of the jail as my co-facilitator and I are encouraged to, and openly talk about, our own parenting (and parented) experience. Our mistakes, triumphs, and everything in between. My co-facilitator and I never claim to be experts of parenting or preach that our way of parenting is the only right way; we all are learning from each other.

"Being a woman teaching a nurturing fathers' group may sound a little invasive to some; however, I am also a parent of a young daughter. I can share the differences from the mother's point of view. I am also given the opportunity to talk about my own relationship with my father and how that has influenced my own parenting, and am validated by the nods of understanding from the fathers in class.

"This class is filled with laughter and tears. Sometimes we get into lively discussions with different views. Those who have taken the class know that my co-facilitator and I are polar opposites in our beliefs on certain matters, but I feel that makes the class even better as you can hear both sides when we disagree. This class carries no judgment and begins each session

with the beliefs that you are already nurturing fathers. The proof is being in this class.

"This class is so different from other groups I've taught as it doesn't affect only your behaviors and thought patterns, but ripples out touching the lives of your children. The children go forward with skills taught to them by your modeling of what being a nurturing father looks like. The chain of past parents' mistakes is broken and the new chain is forged, only strengthened by your experience in this class.

"Also, ice cream."

It's clear the Nurturing Fathers program was really transformative, not just for the students but the instructors also. Before I came to jail I was very involved in my daughter's life. I was there when she was born, and managed a good schedule where custody time was basically split.

I suggest this program for help in any parenting situation. Just because we are incarcerated that does not mean we stop being fathers. With how cold, cruel, and unsafe this world is now... Our children need both parents to help guide them in the right direction. This program taught me that there is no perfect way to parent but helps navigate different ways to understand your child/children. I hope this writing helps encourage more men in this jail to want to take this course to help become a better dad.

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.

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collaborative arrangement takes some time to convey. In accordance with a model VCLT has used for decades, the land trust will hold the land permanently, and has granted leaseholds to the other two partners. On one 7.5-acre leasehold, Noble Home plans to build a 24-unit “small-living” condo facility; groundbreaking is anticipated next spring.

VHC, meanwhile, holds two leases. One comprises a single-acre lot with two pre-existing rental duplexes. The co-op also purchased a deed to these buildings, covered by a pair of mortgages from the Cooperative Fund of the Northeast (CFNE) and Equity Trust.

The final lease is for the remaining 23.5 acres, on which the co-op intends to carry out other projects, including maintaining an existing network of trails for public use, and adding more dwellings as well as community spaces for its members and the public. Ideas floated include a sauna, gardens, and a workshop space.

The groups say that the acquisition creates a rare opportunity for collective stewardship of sustainable and affordable housing, in perpetuity.

On Sunday, VHC member Saul Shanabrook closed out proceedings by acknowledging the contrast between the complexity of the arrangement and the plainness of the mission.

“I know it’s a lot of structure and legal stuff and seems maybe boring or complicated at times,” Shanabrook said. “But it’s exciting to be able to work with these folks. It just brings it down to the very material level of people living in their homes: they want a safe place to live, they want to be able to keep living there... It’s not complicated. We just need all of these complicated things to keep the market out of the question, because the standard way of doing things is not aligned with those goals.”

Early Days

Since closing on the Stone Farm Lane property in July, VHC has been getting established on the site, and encountering the challenges of converting its vision to reality. The only existing housing on the land is the pair of rental duplexes, which the co-op now administers.

According to VHC member Sara Brown, two of the four units have already opened up during the transition: a one-bedroom apartment, formerly occupied by a couple who had a baby and bought a house; and another unit whose long-term tenant, she told the *Reporter*, has decided to leave rather than confront a rent increase and the disruption of the impending condo construction.

Efforts to contact tenants were unsuccessful as of press time, but housing court filings indicate that as of September 2023, a one-bedroom unit in the duplexes was being rented at \$875 per month.

While Brown declined to disclose the pre-purchase rent, she confirmed that VHC set the new rates – staggered to increase over six months – at \$1,300 for a one-bedroom and \$1,500 for a two-bedroom unit.

“Unfortunately, we’re beholden to our mortgage, insurance, taxes, and maintenance,” Brown said. “So even without any overhead, just by purchasing the property at market rate to then decommo-

ify – sometimes still, unfortunately, you may have to increase rent. But it will be more affordable in the long term, because it won’t keep pace with the market.” Brown emphasized that the co-op tried to negotiate with its insurance company and lenders, but failed to find effective alternatives in its business plan which might have avoided a rent hike, even with a plan for co-op members to provide much of the maintenance work on a volunteer basis. Still, she said, VHC would have been willing to negotiate.

“If we had been approached like, ‘Oh, I really want to stay, but this won’t work for me – can I figure out a way to stay?’, that would be different,” she said. “It was more like, ‘Okay, I’m going to be leaving.’ I think we would try to work with different situations, even though we don’t have much leeway.”

Old Friends, New Faces

The power of cooperative ownership was on hand at Sunday’s event, where the potluck supplemented a spread by the worker co-op Tortillería Semilla. Semilla Collective worker-owners Elizabeth Gonzalez, Anabel Hernandez, and Javier Gonzalez-Villatoro led the day’s roster of speakers.

Based in Connecticut, the group works with the farm Riquezas del Campo in Hatfield, and hopes to do pop-ups food events in Massachusetts in the future. The speakers said that starting their food-based collective created a pathway for them out of exploitative employment, and highlighted the strong links between food sovereignty, land, indigenous autonomy, and resistance against the violence of agribusiness.

They were followed by representatives of VHC and VCLT, as well as Rebecca Fletcher and Trena Loftin of the freshly-minted Valley Alliance for Land Equity (VALE), whose affiliated groups include the VCLT and VHC as well as another new local organization, the Franklin County Community Land Trust (FCCLT).

In addition to serving as hub for land trusts, co-ops, and similar organizations in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties, VALE aims to “scale up the availability of permanently affordable, democratically-governed, shared equity opportunities for land & housing,” according to its mission statement, and “meaningfully reduce the racialized wealth divide in Western Massachusetts.”

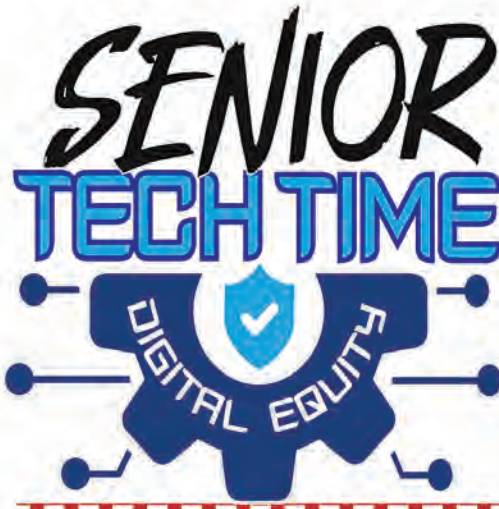
Fletcher and Loftin, who work for the CFNE and Willow Permanent Real Estate Cooperative, respectively, introduced themselves as steering committee members of VALE, and explained that while the network has been germinating for two years, it has only recently arrived at a name.

“In this area, there is a long history of people trying different structures for collective land and housing efforts,” Loftin said, noting that VALE hopes to make these efforts more resilient by providing ways for them to support each other.

The presentations closed out with a group of hopefuls currently prospecting another potential land trust and co-op project elsewhere in Greenfield. Though still in its early stages, the group has worked closely with both VHC and the FCCLT in planning, and hopes to announce more about its project soon.



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Get the most out of your Iphone or Android phone. Teachers from Franklin County Technical School compare and contrast the benefits of each, with one on one help!

The Cloud and Google Docs Monday, Oct. 28th • 4-6pm

Ever wondered what they mean when they say “it’s on the Cloud”? Join Techies from Franklin County Technical School to learn the mysteries of “the Cloud” and how to use cloud apps like Google Docs!

What is AI (Artificial Intelligence)? Monday, Nov. 18th • 4-6pm

Techies from Franklin County Technical School outline the basics of artificial intelligence, and what it can do for you, and how it can make your life easier.

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a bottleneck until volunteers decided to scoop the spuds into smaller boxes and walk them up the sidewalk, supplying each bag preemptively. Apples followed suit.

By 2 p.m. the line had cleared and the biggest remaining task was breaking down cardboard boxes.

The Mobile Food Bank, which rotates among 24 sites every month, is a program of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. The site at the Gill-Montague senior center is co-sponsored by the Franklin County Community Meals Program, with the Northfield Mount Hermon School (NMH) providing many of the volunteers. Today, two others wore the insignia of rival local banks.

Others are free agents. “I have friends who help with community meals, but I don’t want to fix meals, and I don’t want to stand inside,” said Jeri Moran, who had manned the pepper station. “This is outside, every month – if it’s January and it’s snowing, it’s still here.”



Allen Chen, a day student at Northfield Mount Hermon, said it was his first time helping at the Mobile Food Bank.

“This is my first time helping out here specifically – I’ve done some work sort of similar to this at the Amherst Survival Center,” said Allen Chen, a day student at NMH. “I’m mostly opening boxes, helping put out the food, and helping anyone who needs help carrying things to their cars.” The bags, he explained, can get heavy.

Sonam Drema, a student from India taking a post-graduate year at NMH, said it was her second month at the distribution. “I grew up on a farm, in a similar community,” Drema told the *Reporter*. “I grew up receiving help, so whenever I get the chance to offer my help I’m like, ‘Why not?’”

The Mobile Food Bank first launched in 2013, and the Turners Falls site was added in 2018. NMH director of work and service learning Kensey Batchelder said she and her students have been coming since then.

When asked how many recipients she had tallied on her clipboard, Watson, herself a former NMH teacher who has stuck with the project after retiring, admitted she had lost exact count. “I got interrupted, and we added a few more,” she said. “It was over 120.”

“For the first several years I don’t think we ever broke 100, and now we break it every month,” she added. “I would say it averages between 110 and 130.”

According to Food Bank direct programs manager Kristina Mullin, the recipients standing in line are delivering food to more people. At the 11 distributions from October 2023 through September 2024, she said, the Turners site served a total of “822 unduplicated individuals” – up 20% over the previous year.

“They saw an average of 260 individuals each month,” Mullin reported. “The volunteers distributed a total of 32,700 pounds of fresh produce and non-perishable items. Overall, we have seen an increase in participation and food going out through the Montague Mobile Food Bank.”

A heavy bagful of free food, no questions asked, is apparently a winning proposition – and the bar is set mercifully low for volunteering, too.

“You just give people food, and they say ‘Thanks,’ and you say ‘Great!’” said Moran. “I can’t think of one thing bad about this.”

“I forgot I could be quoted,” she added, casting a suspicious glance at the *Reporter*’s recording device before declaring solemnly: “It gives me meaningful life in my old age.”



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a minimum of 400 cubic feet per second would be allowed over the dam.

Leddick shared estimates that this would increase the habitat for shad by 70% to 80%, and for young shortnose sturgeon, a protected species, by approximately 73%. He also said the agreement would reduce “peaking,” or the wide variations in water depth and movement caused by the operations of the Cabot station, and restore more “naturalized flows” in the 35 miles downstream of the plant, increasing “habitat persistence.”

“This is what we accomplished in the settlement agreement with FirstLight,” Leddick said. “It kind of flies under the radar screen, in part because it’s not well understood, and not talked about enough.”

The presentation was met with skepticism from the audience which filled a large portion of the theater and expressed its most vehement opposition to the Northfield Mountain pumped-storage station, also owned by FirstLight, upstream from the Turners Falls dam. This facility pumps water from the river up a

steep hill and releases it to produce electricity when demand is higher. While this storage capacity is justified as providing stability for the regional electric grid, FirstLight’s critics argue that its use of the river as a lower reservoir kills fish, causes erosion, and at times makes the river “flow backward.”

The meeting, attended by at least 140 residents in person and others via Zoom, was organized by the state Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), which must certify that FirstLight is following state water quality laws in its operations, and mitigating its impacts on the river, before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) may issue it new licenses.

Information Only

FERC’s relicensing process began more than a decade ago, as was frequently noted at the meeting, and will continue after the state files its water quality judgment next April.

The October 10 event was billed as an “information session” at which the public could learn about the criteria for issuing a

state certification and “ask questions,” but not express opinions as in a “public comment” venue. The point was made repeatedly by Tim Jones of MassDEP, who opened the meeting, and Stacie Smith of the Consensus Institute, a Cambridge-based non-profit, who chaired the session.

Smith said that comments “will not be entered into the record, because it’s not a public comment time.”

The meeting was broken into four segments with presentations by Jones on the water quality evaluation process, MassDEP’s David Hilgeman on erosion and impairments, Leddick and Slater from MassWildlife on water flows and habitat, and Paul Jahnige, speaking about recreation and water quality on behalf of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Each was followed by at least a half hour of questions and responses.

Jones began with a discussion of the role and legal status of the certification process, including what MassDEP can and cannot consider under state and federal law. He said the agency could review the materials in First-

Light’s application, official public comments, the settlement agreements, and comments by other state and federal agencies.

He stressed, and repeated several times in response to questions, that FERC looked “very favorably” on settlement agreements, and that ignoring or contradicting them could lead to legal action against his agency.

Issues “outside the jurisdiction” of MassDEP, Jones said, include decommissioning the facilities, altering their operations for “energy-related reasons,” the length of the new licenses, tribal interests not related to water quality, and “economic, social, and societal impacts.”

Stipulations MassDEP may place on the certification, he said, could include repairing erosion caused by FirstLight operations, installing a barrier net in front of the Northfield Mountain intake, upgrading fish ladders at the Turners Falls dam, and increasing the flow of water below the dam.

Jones noted that two virtual public hearings had been held during a public comment

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place with a 78, which qualifies him for the individual tournament.

Second apology: I go to a lot of events, but don’t always report on every game. Unfortunately, some of the middle-school kids were expecting a write-up on a game I went to. In the future I’ll try to give the younger athletes shout-outs.

Volleyball

TFHS 3 – Greenfield 0

FCTS 3 – Pioneer 0

TFHS 3 – Easthampton 0

FCTS 3 – Ware 0

TFHS 3 – Pioneer 0

Last Thursday, Turners celebrated Senior Night by walloping Greenfield in a three-set sweep. It was potentially the best performance by the Thunder all year, and a fun game to watch, even though it was one-sided.

In the first set, the Greenfield JV girls sat in the middle section with the Turners families. They were like banshees, screeching every time Greenfield hit the ball. The Turners students in the far left bleachers yelled “Boom” whenever senior Madi Liimatainen served, while the Greenfield crowd cheered every time a Green player touched the ball.

Among the Turners folks was a little newborn baby, serenely absorbing the sights and sounds of the contest. Perhaps when he’s 17 he’ll ask his mother why he loves sports so much – she may remind him of this game.

After Blue took the first set 25-10, the banshees relocated to the far right bleachers, though the entire section continued cheering whenever Greenfield didn’t make a mistake. Powertown dominated the second set 25-6. The Wave scored four of those points on faults, most of which went long or were caught in the net. Green held fast in the third, but the result was never in doubt as Turners cruised to a 25-10 third.

Liimatainen led the team in aces while fellow seniors Tatiana Carr Williams and Marilyn Abarua helped out with digs and kills.

While Turners was crushing Greenfield, the Tech Eagles were dismantling the Pioneer Panthers up in Northfield, 25-10, 25-6, 25-7. Breanna Kempf, Jenna Petrowicz, Lilyann Baldwin, and Emma Peterson had outstanding performances.

On Friday Turners swept Easthampton, and on Monday they beat Pioneer. In the Pioneer match Liimatainen had the most kills followed by Carr Williams and Janelle



Turners Falls High School senior Tatianna Carr-Williams (at right) tips the ball over the net on a set by Maddie Dietz (center), as Greenfield’s Alice Wondolowski (left) defends. Carr-Williams made four kills, three aces, and a dig as the Thunder roared to a three-set Senior Night win over the visiting Green Wave last Thursday.

Massey, while Maddie Dietz made 14 assists.

Also on Monday, Franklin swept the Ware Indians 25-10, 25-14, 25-20. Petrowicz, Shelby O’Leary, and Taylor Underwood came up big. Franklin concludes their regular season this Thursday, hosting Athol.

Field Hockey

Amherst 2 – FCTS 1

Southwick 6 – TFHS 1

FCTS 2 – Smith Academy 0

Belchertown 3 – FCTS 1

Tech played the top two field hockey teams in their conference, Amherst and Belchertown, this week. On Friday they traveled to Amherst and came out on the losing end of a defensive battle. Abi Dobias scored Tech’s goal while goalkeeper Maddie Markwell only had to make two saves.

The same day, Turners dropped a home match against the Southwick Rams. Ledwin Villafana scored in the first, but Turners couldn’t keep up with the constant attacks. Conner Herzig limited the damage with 10 saves.

On Monday Tech blanked Smith Academy – Avery Heathwaite and Kenzie Sourdiffé-Phelps scored the

goals, while Hannah Gilbert and Dobias gave assists. On Tuesday, they faced the Belchertown Orioles, another Division 2 powerhouse.

A brisk wind made the real-fee feel temp 40 degrees, but it didn’t stop the encouragement from both fan bases. The game remained a scoreless tie until 33.6 seconds left in the half, when Amherst scored a go-ahead goal.

Less than four minutes into the third Gilbert tied it up, and it remained tied until the Orioles were awarded a penalty shot because the ball hit an Eagle foot. (According to the officials, it would have scored.) The penalty shot was good, and Belchertown retook the lead. The visitors slipped in another shot at the end of the third to give them a 3-1 cushion.

At this point the game became pretty physical, as Tech tried desperately to mount a comeback.

On one fast break an Oriole player used her stick to trip up the attack, resulting in a two-minute Tech power play. They put the pressure on, but Belchertown kept clearing the ball and preserved the win. In goal, Markwell kicked away six shots.

Tech celebrates Senior Night this Thursday against Holyoke.

Boys’ Soccer

FCTS 5 – St. Mary’s 2

FCTS 2 – Duggan 2

Athol 4 – FCTS 1

The Eagle boys defeated St. Mary’s last Thursday in a home shootout. Jaxon Kottwright-Clark (2), John Georgitsa, Cody Yettez, and Mason Thurston scored Tech’s goals while Kottwright-Clark, Georgitsa, and Colby Leete gave assists.

On Monday Tech tied Duggan 1-1 in Springfield, and on Wednesday they lost to Athol on the road with Nate Trude scoring their only goal. The regular season wraps up this Friday with an away game against Putnam.

Girls’ Soccer

FCTS 2 – Smith Academy 1

FCTS 1 – Gateway 1

The Tech girls, meanwhile, are on the cusp of a playoff spot. After this week’s battles they need five points to make the playoffs.

Last Thursday they traveled to Hatfield and defeated Smith Academy. Mia Marigliano scored the first goal on an assist from Alyssa Peters, and the second assisted by Mady Lynde. Thirty seconds before the horn, Smith snuck one in to prevent the shutout. Kylee Gamache made eight saves.

On Wednesday the Gateway Gators, who had previously lost to the Eagles, pulled off a tie. Kaley James scored on an assist from Kaelyn Mclean to give the Eagles a lead, but with 17 minutes left in the game the Gators tied it up. Gamache made four saves.

Tech has three home games left, and needs two wins and a tie to qualify for the playoffs. They play Pathfinder on Thursday, Smith Voc on Friday, and on Monday host the Green Wave as they say goodbye to their seniors.

Football

FCTS 24 – Palmer 22

The Tackling Eagles upped their record to 5-0 last Friday by defeating the Palmer Blue Panthers.

This one had everything. Long gains erased by penalties, a blocked field goal, an apparent safety and an actual one, a half extended on a penalty, an interception in the red zone, three Tech fumbles, and 14 points scored in 18 seconds. In the end, the Eagles squeaked out a win.

Tech took a quick lead, but a late hit and a holding penalty stifled

their next two drives. They finally finished one in the second quarter to increase the lead to 14-0. On the ensuing possession, Palmer ran a direct hike to the running back, deep into Eagles territory, but a pick from Tyler Yetter stopped the threat.

On their next drive Palmer fooled everyone with a screen. They drove down the field and, with 16 seconds left in the half, attempted a field goal. Not only did Nathan Sabolevski block the kick, but the Eagles ran the ball all the way back to the 10 as the half ended. A penalty gave Tech one more play, but the pass was incomplete, so they had to settle for a 22-point margin at the half.

In the second half Palmer keyed on Josiah Little, and their largest lineman was warned not to keep jumping on him after the whistle blew. With Little getting stuffed at the line, the Eagles mixed it up, throwing the ball to him for a TD.

Fans began looking at the schedule, daring to wonder if Tech might go undefeated in the regular season. Just 18 seconds later, Palmer had scored 14 points. Their first touchdown came as time ran out in the third, and they scored again immediately after Tech fumbled the ball on the kickoff.

Tech drove the ball down to the 1-yard line but couldn’t put it in the end zone, setting up a first-and-10 for Palmer at their own 1. Tucker Hicks caught the carrier behind the line for a safety, increasing the lead to 24-14. Palmer scored with only two seconds left on the clock, but since there is no 4-PAT, they had to settle for the 24-22 loss.

Yetter completed four passes for 44 yards, threw a touchdown and a two-point conversion, and gained 13 yards on the ground. Nolyn Stafford, Ethan Smarr, and Sabolevski caught passes, with Smarr scoring a touchdown and a two-pointer. Little led the team in rushing (150) followed by Sabolevski, Yetter, Maxon Brunette, and Stafford. Hicks scored a safety, and Hunter Donahue, Zaydrien Alamed, and Sabolevski led in tackles, with Sabolevski making a sack, recovering a fumble, and blocking a field goal. Wyatt Whitman recovered a fumble too.

On the way home I listened to the end of the Greenfield game on Bear Country. The reception was spotty, but it was clear that Greenfield is for real as they scored 48 points against Mahar. If Franklin wants to stay atop the conference, they will need to get past the Green Wave this Friday.



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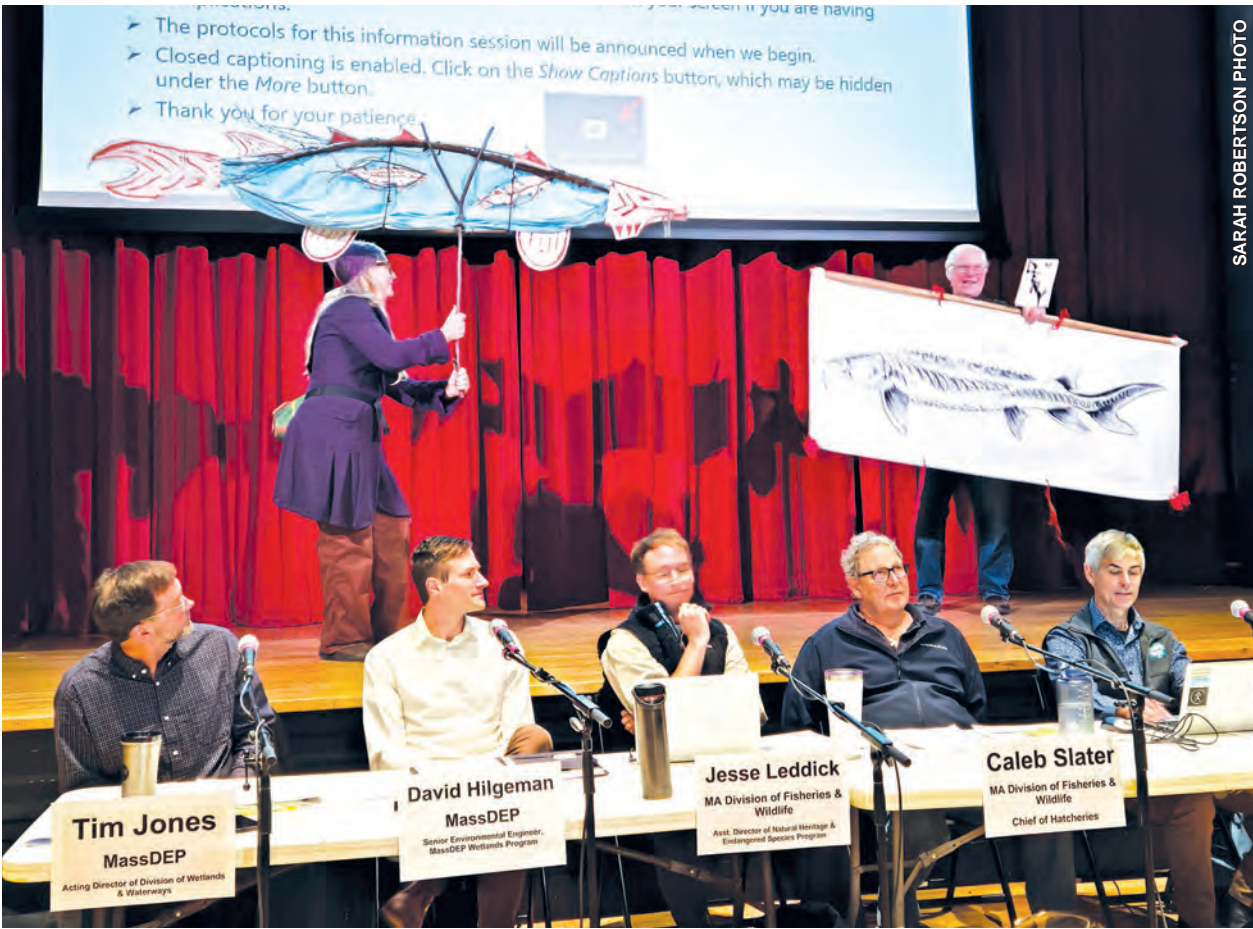
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SARAH ROBERTSON PHOTO

Beth Fairservis and Chris Queen took to the Shea stage to demonstrate their awareness of the endangered shortnose sturgeon.

SESSION from previous page

period earlier this year, and that there would be more opportunity for public comment if a draft certification is issued this winter. All of the presenters referenced prior public comments.

The presentation by Hilgeman focused on technical studies of the causes of riverbank erosion, which he said had stretched back for decades. The law requires that MassDEP attempt to disentangle erosion caused by factors such as weather and boating from those caused by FirstLight operations.

Hilgeman described in some detail a study commissioned by FirstLight that used computer modeling to conclude that most of the erosion was caused by external factors including “boat waves,” eliciting laughter from the audience. He then described review studies that questioned those conclusions.

FirstLight’s application contains a “streambank erosion plan,” according to Hilgeman. To certify it, MassDEP would need to be assured that erosion attributable to the company’s operations would be remediated, and any future erosion monitored and addressed.

Leddick and Slater discussed fish habitat and river flows, including the company’s agreements to increase flows below the Turners Falls dam and measures to improve fish passage over it. They revisited the proposal to install a barrier net at Northfield Mountain, and advocated creating more sophisticated “performance goals” for monitoring fish populations than currently exist.

The final presentation by DCR described the large number of recreational and accessibility improvements along the river promised in a separate settlement agreement signed by state agencies, non-profits, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), and a number of towns including Montague, Gill, and Erving.

Sovereign Rites

After each presentation the officials at the front table were barraged with questions and comments, many of which were highly critical of FirstLight and of the relicensing process overall.

Montague resident Ariel Elan said a friend of hers who kayaked on the river and could smell pollution at the Northfield Mountain station, and asked whether MassDEP monitors the air and water quality there.

“I don’t believe so,” said Jones, noting that the data “was not available.” Elan said she was under the impression MassDEP had enough staff to gather this data.

Joe Graveline of Northfield, who identified himself as a senior adviser of the Nolembeka Project, noted that while Jones had said MassDEP could not consider tribal concerns, under federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation guidelines, “you have to take into consideration tribal knowledge, tribal experiences, and tribal history.”

“That hasn’t happened,” Graveline said, adding that he said he had sent Leddick “a very detailed piece of documentation about our challenges,” including evidence that people were stealing artifacts from the dry bed of the river below the dam.

“Under our state water quality standard, we cannot consider those interests,” Jones replied. “Under the federal standards, yes – and, in fact, I think there’s an

obligation to do that.”

Sarah Matthews, who identified herself as an attorney and member of Western Mass Rights of Nature, asked what she called a “procedural question.” Since the public comment period, she said, scientists analyzing eDNA in the river water discovered “strong evidence” of shortnose sturgeon above the Turners Falls dam. (The area was not previously considered a habitat of the protected species.)

“Can you ask for a biological opinion?” she asked. “The ongoing study is going to be presented at a cooperative migratory fish meeting later this month.... Do you have the power to shut down the facility until it’s studied properly, or order more studies?”

“We can’t answer [that] right now because it’s all under consideration,” Jones answered. “We’re aware of the DNA testing above the dam... but in terms of what we can do as DEP, I can’t comment on that right now because we are in the middle of the certification process.”

One attendee, Michael Kline, read aloud the mission statement of the MassDEP and then asked: “Don’t you think it’s the sovereign right and responsibility of residents of this valley to manage this river, and to relieve this foreign entity – it’s a function of the Canadian government – to relieve them of this responsibility?” (The company is owned by Canada’s Public Sector Pension Investment Board.)

Jones said this was a “difficult, layered question to answer.” “Our obligation is to follow the mission statement,” he told Kline, “but also follow the water quality standards law. I appreciate the question, but we have to follow our state laws.”

A common theme raised by audience members was the complaint that the river at times flows in reverse due to the Northfield Mountain facility, and that the state process was ignoring the problems this causes.

“If that happens every day, for the length of the river,” Greenfield resident Lynn Waldron told the officials, “my heart breaks for you guys, because you have worked so hard to figure out a way for these fish to survive and live up and down, yet it’s like Sisyphus and the mountain – no matter what you do, there’s still going to be this river flowing backward.”

Waldron called for the closing of the pumped-storage station, to a round of applause.

“I’d like to believe you, each of you, that you love the environment, you’ve devoted your lives to it,” said Gary Seldon, also of Greenfield. “I’m going to try to contain my anger. I don’t want to be angry at you. I want to encourage you to deny the certificate to the Northfield project, because it’s a desecration to the river.”

Seldon went on to say that the river running backward is an “emperor-has-no-clothes situation.” “I do not have a question – I’m done,” he concluded.

“I’m sorry we weren’t able to answer everybody’s questions tonight, but thank you for being here, and we really appreciate your participation,” said Stacie Smith at the end of the meeting.

MassDEP will issue its draft water quality certification decision this winter, according to Jones, followed by a public comment period and hearing. The deadline for the final decision is April 22, 2025, and the federal process to confirm or deny FirstLight’s application could take another year or more, according to a source at FRCOG.

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

Here’s the way it was on October 16, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Pumpkinfest Nostalgia

The fifth annual Franklin County Pumpkinfest will be held from 2 to 9 p.m. this Saturday in Turners Falls. The event will feature 80 vendors and booths for non-profit organizations, live entertainment on three stages, a beer tent in the park, and a place to carve pumpkins. Last year over 8,000 attended the event, and organizer and selectboard member Michael Nelson expects as many or more this year.

An Age-Old Question

The Leverett selectboard will not reappoint fire chief John Moruzzi, who resigned during a protracted dispute about firefighters serving past age 65. When the selectboard

changed the conditions for senior firefighters to continue serving, Moruzzi offered to rescind his resignation, but town counsel said such an offer has no legal standing.

Why So Many Bricks?

This week John Furbish recommends a downtown Turners Falls walking tour beginning on Avenue A, with its preponderance of handsome brick buildings.

“What some may not know,” he explains, “is that almost all the bricks used to construct these fire-resistant buildings originated from the 100 feet of clay at the bottom of glacial Lake Hitchcock. The bricks were manufactured in Turners Falls and Greenfield.”

Furbish further explains that 200 million years ago, the entire region was a tropical paradise with trees the size of redwoods in a food-rich mecca for roaming dinosaurs.

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on October 14, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Making Suffragettes Proud

Like town clerks across the country, Montague town clerk John Zywna’s office was kept busy Wednesday signing up a horde of last-minute registrants for the upcoming presidential election. “We’ve had over 100 today,” said assistant clerk Deb Bourbeau.

One of the last to make it just before the 8 p.m. deadline was Rachel Kriete, who had a harrowing drive from New London to register here in her home town. “I missed

the exit in Hartford and got lost,” Kriete said. “Then a refrigerator flew off the truck in front of me and almost hit my car.” But she wasn’t about to let a few minor obstacles get in her way of exercising her rights under the 19th Amendment.

It’s Not Deja Brew Yet

The Wendell selectboard tried to balance the request by Wendell Country Store owners Vic and Pat Scutari – who are seeking approval to open a pub adjacent to their store – with concerns of citizens and neighbors of the store.

The proposed business is to be dubbed Deja Brew.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on October 14, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

Local Matters

Rents are coming down – they say. Who is doing anything to secure the Dog Fund for our library?

Petty pilfering is something that has been almost unknown in our town. Sometimes it crops out, however. The last case was that of a couple of whips from Mr J.P. Morgan, but as the party who took them is known, it will save exposure and disgrace to have them returned at once.

Holyoke enjoys the honor of a new French paper, the *Courrier d’Holyoke*. It is a handsome little sheet. Our French residents should give it a hearty support.

The foot race on Saturday afternoon between Andrew Rock of our town and a Mr. Shay of Holyoke was a very tame affair. As far as the interest touching the event was concerned, we have never seen so

many persons together at the Falls, and that during a heavy shower, but it was soon discovered that Mr. Rock had no chance whatever of winning. Aside from the fact that his competitor was a powerful, athletic “professional,” he was suffering from a sprained foot. He should not have entered the race. He was in no condition for it. At about 2 o’clock at least a thousand persons were on the course of the race, and the judges measured off the course. The men were quickly ready and the thing was quickly done. Mr. Shay won in handsome style, actually playing with his opponent, by turning every few yards to see where he was. This was a dangerous game, for, had he stumbled, he would have lost, as the men struck the line almost abreast. The stakes were for \$100 each, and Shay carried them off to the evident delight of his friends. Time not taken.

James O’Brien, who lost an eye at the Russell Cutlery Co’s works a short time since, is doing finely and will soon resume labor.



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POLICY from page A1

had filed the energy policy changes in the budget bill as they were “critical and time sensitive.” The bill was sent to the Ways and Means Committee on September 12, and no action has been taken on it yet.

Experts say Massachusetts has been missing the mark on its energy transition goals, which were set in the 2021 *Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy*, for many reasons related to the financial, regulatory, and operational complexity of adding new technologies to the grid.

A December 2023 report by the state Department of Energy Resources (DOER), *Charging Forward: Energy Storage in a Net Zero Commonwealth*, asserted that state and local permitting processes are too slow to meet the urgent need to get off fossil fuels. The report recommended greater state guidance on the siting and permitting of storage infrastructure in particular, as local officials often struggle to address the nuances of emerging technologies such as battery energy storage systems (BESS).

“For developers, they must comply with state and local regulations and bylaws; this becomes particularly challenging on the local side, where processes and requirements can vary considerably from municipality to municipality,” the DOER report read.

“For municipalities and local officials, because battery energy storage deployment is still in its infancy, many do not account for these systems in their bylaws and do not know how to evaluate projects or respond to constituent questions and concerns. In particular, these stakeholders cite safety, environmental, equity, end-of-life, and aesthetic concerns.”

Streamlining Siting

Some of the regulatory changes proposed in the budget bill would have a major impact on how new energy infrastructure projects are reviewed and permitted.

Municipalities would be expected to review “small” facilities – any wind or solar plant under 25 megawatts (MW), or battery system under 100 megawatt-hours (MWh), and issue or deny one consolidated permit within one year of a project application, rather than separate permits from individual boards.

The legislation would also require the state to issue guidelines by 2026 for local fire departments on how to mitigate potential dangers of transmission and storage projects, and would establish a new state fund to help municipalities pay for experts to help review project applications.

“We’ve asked the communities to consolidate all of their permitting,” Roy said. “To do it on a parallel basis, as opposed to doing one permit at a time, sequentially.”

State senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton) has taken issue with the proposed one-year time-

line, which she expressed in a letter sent to Roy’s Joint Committee co-chair, senator Michael J. Barrett (D-Lexington).

“Requiring municipalities to issue a consolidated local permit for small clean energy infrastructure facilities within 12 months, or else have the application deemed to be constructively approved, is too rigid to be appropriate in all cases,” Comerford wrote. “Consider if the developer modifies their application or provides requested information in the 11th month.”

This local deadline was a matter of contention during last summer’s debate on the climate bill, and the current proposals include circumstances under which it may be extended. The Senate version had included a provision for state review when multiple projects are *de facto* approved by municipal inaction, but the Healey administration did not include this in the budget bill.

At the state level, the Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB), which is made up of various state agency heads and members of the public appointed by the governor, would manage permitting of all new energy infrastructure. BESS, which previously fell into a disputed regulatory gray area, would be placed under its permitting authority.

“Large” projects – over 25 MW in generation or 100 MWh in storage – would also go directly to the EFSB, though towns would be able to weigh in as “intervenor.” The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) would still “have their own permitting pieces” under the new legislation, Roy said, but would no longer serve as the central permitting authority.

In her letter to Barrett, Comerford raised concerns about the range of storage technologies that would qualify as “clean energy storage” under the changes, including hydroelectric pumped-storage facilities that use rivers as lower reservoirs.

The update could make these facilities eligible for credits under the DOER’s Clean Peak Energy Standards, she pointed out, which would likely incentivize them to pump water into and from the rivers more frequently, “leading to major negative impacts on water level, flows, erosion, and aquatic life.”

“To mitigate and manage these impacts takes enormous effort, funds, and person-hours,” she added, “as demonstrated in the ongoing and controversial federal relicensing and state water quality review of the Northfield Mountain project.” (See article, Page A1.)

Pumping and Dumping

Energy procurement targets in the budget bill have also been a topic of concern raised by Comerford and other energy advocates. Power distribution companies would be required to enter contracts for energy storage, with the state bidding out or “procuring” contracts amounting to 1,500 MW of capacity by next summer, and up to 5,000 MW by 2028.

“The idea with these long-term procurements, or power purchase agreements, is it allows a company contemplating a massive infrastructure investment to be guaranteed money for a period of time so it can get the investments it needs to,” Eve Vogel, an associate professor at UMass Amherst’s Department of Earth, Geographic, and Climate Sciences, explained to the *Reporter*.

“Our [state] tax dollars don’t pay for it, but it’s pretty much the same people paying for it, because eventually the ratepayers pay for it.”

The *Charging Forward* study does not appear to set similarly ambitious goals for storage development, though it does recommend that 250 MWh of storage be added for every gigawatt (GW) of renewable energy generation added to the grid. The study highlights the uncertainty of whether the expansion of capacity will meet targets, given a roughly 80% “attrition” rate for proposed battery projects.

“As we move toward a grid that’s more made up of wind, and less natural gas, then storage will be crucial,” Vogel said. “I don’t think storage is ‘clean’ or ‘renewable,’ but at the same time it’s incredibly important to the future energy transition, because it has the ability to shift in time the way that variable renewables do not.”

Still, Vogel said she believes storage buildout should be linked to generation. “Until you have enough variable energy that you need storage to balance it, it’s a waste of money to build excess storage,” she argued.

The *Reporter* asked Roy whether the large existing pumped-storage facilities – Northfield Mountain on the Connecticut River, and Bear Swamp on the Deerfield River – would qualify for the procurement contracts if the current proposals are enacted.

“That is an open issue at this time,” he replied. “We believe it should be covered and that the administration can seek to fulfill its obligation using existing facilities like Northfield.”

The proposal as written would apply to existing storage projects, but Comerford, Vogel, and some other advocates are urging legislators to change the wording to include only “newly constructed” storage facilities. Allowing the existing plants to qualify, Comerford argued in her letter, “would mean spending 35 per cent of the ratepayer funds on two projects that are already running and profitable...”

Comerford also warned that the supplemental budget process, “which is not likely to have a public hearing,” should not “interfere with or subvert” the ongoing relicensing process for the Northfield facility, which has been underway for over a decade.

“There are too many things in flux and too much potential for unintended consequences,” she wrote, “to allow these provisions to proceed.”

1794 MEETINGHOUSE SEEKS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 1794 Meetinghouse Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit performing arts center located in New Salem, seeks an Executive Director. The Executive Director acts on behalf of and reports to the Board of Directors through the whole year. Duties include:

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- Suggest fundraising ideas at committee meetings
- Seek grants to support organization
- Coordinate the renovation and maintenance of the 1794 Meetinghouse building

This is a part-time position that seeks candidates that have experience with the performing arts and non-profit management. Please send resumes and cover letters to director-search@1794meetinghouse.org.

Tip of the week ...

Be cautious of wet leaves on the road during the fall, they can be as slippery as driving on snow or ice, leading to skids and spin-outs which could cause serious accidents.



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ON THE ROAD

Anita Dancs and Bill Sweeney brought the August 22 edition of the Reporter with them last month to the royal palace in Madrid.

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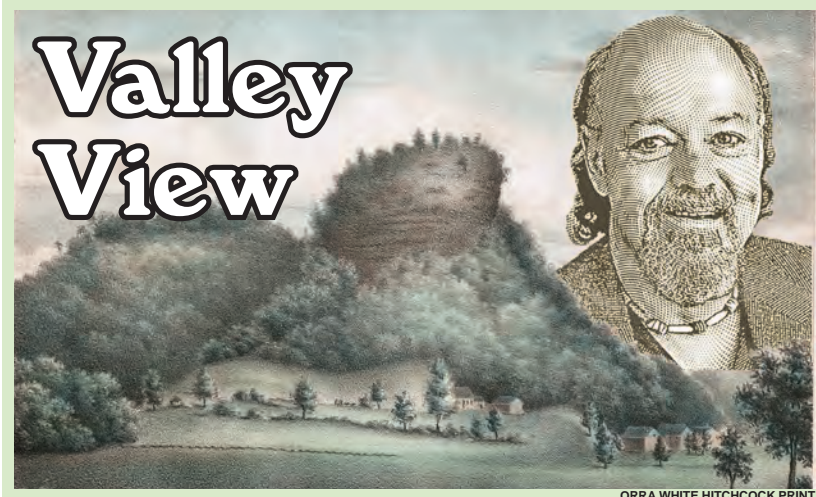


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OCTOBER 17, 2024



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

A 'Patten' Language?

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – As English speakers, we all know that “best laid plans” saying aimed at “mice and men.” Lifted from 18th-century Scotsman Robert Burns’s poem *To a Mouse*, it reminds us that intentions can and “often” do “go awry.”

Chalk this up as one of those. Not unusual among history sleuths who, in the process of researching one topic, always keep their antennae sharp for “peripherals.” It’s akin to starting down one forest trail and swerving on a whim down another.

During a recent read of Charles E. Clark’s *The Eastern Frontier: Settlement of Northern New England 1610-1763*, published in 1970, I investigated an interesting footnote introducing a primary source previously unknown to me. It was *The Diary of Matthew Patten of Bedford, N.H., 1754-1788*, opening a rare window into the daily meanders of a colonial Scots-Irish pioneer of New Hampshire’s Merrimack River valley around today’s Granite State city of Manchester.

Miraculously, this journal detailing 34 years of an important man about town’s life survived to the modern day. Protected for more than a century in the Patten family and the hands of a doctor, it finally came to light at the turn of the 20th century. The Bedford, New Hampshire Historical Society received it as an assemblage of fastened loose pages and published it in 1903. Still in print, it is today valued by scholars and local historians alike exploring New Hampshire’s earliest inland settlements.

Patten wore many hats in the community, including but not limited to justice of the peace, carpenter, and surveyor. What interested me most were his descriptions of the many shad- and Atlantic salmon-fishing activities at Manchester’s famed Amoskeag Falls on the Merrimack River and smaller neighborhood tributaries.

Clark’s *Eastern Frontier* book gave me snippets. I wanted more.

So, I bought a recently printed copy to see what else it had to offer about fishing – and found my mission confronted by the absence

of an index. Undeterred, I laboriously skimmed through 545 pages in search of anything related to fishing. Three days later, I had assembled my very own eight-page index for future reference.

The information Patten provides about fishing practices of his times would have mirrored 18th-century Connecticut River activity at the Great Falls between Turners Falls and Gill. The spring weeks during which it occurred would also have been in the same ballpark. The problem is that I know of no 18th-century diary detailing fishing activity at Turners’ or South Hadley’s falls. All we get is second- and third-hand reports published by local historians who never took part in the annual fish-harvesting routines.

My plan was thus to condense here what I had learned about Amoskeag Falls fishing, and what it meant to Turners Falls. Then a bump in the road threw me off course. I fell victim to a peripheral dangling thread of curiosity relating to our town of Shelburne. I tugged at it, and a whole new story line unraveled. I should have known better, but couldn’t resist. So, here we sit, my intended topic tucked away for a future column.

At least our new subject is local. Far closer to home than Bedford, New Hampshire. We’re going to focus on the so-called Patten District resting in the northwest corner of Shelburne, some six miles west of my upper Greenfield Meadows homestead.

The voluminous Patten diary set me wondering if maybe there was a genealogical link between the Scots-Irish diarist of Londonderry, then Bedford, N.H., and our own Patten District on Patten Hill in Shelburne.

The likelihood seemed strong. Our Patten District borders north with Colrain, which was settled by hardy Scots-Irish emigrants from the Londonderry area before 1740 – remarkably early for upland settlement here. Perhaps, I pondered, there were Pattens in the Chandler Hill Cemetery, the town’s oldest burial ground. A

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B6

Above: The draining of the power canal, which was previously extended until this coming Sunday, allows us to see the tailraces under the Strathmore paper mill complex. On Wednesday the drainage was extended again, through next Friday, October 25.

BOOK REVIEW

Black Hole Sun, Won’t You Come?

Chuck Collins, *Altar to an Erupting Sun* (Green Writers Press, 2023)

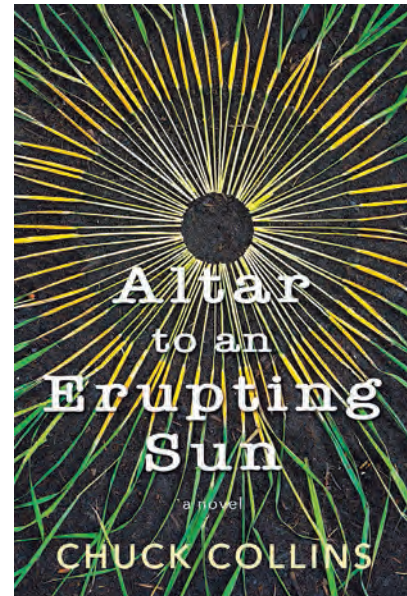
By GEORGE SHAPIRO

LAKE PLEASANT – Oscar Meyer wiener heir and former Greenfield resident Chuck Collins has written a novel entitled *Altar to an Erupting Sun*, published in 2023. His book belongs to a growing list of novels that respond to the fear of climate change by imagining people were actually responding to climate change. Recent examples of this emerging genre include Kim Stanley Robinson’s *Ministry for the Future* and *The Deluge* by Stephen Markley.

However, in Collins’s book, the climate change novel bookends what is a brief social history of people and events in Franklin County, Massachusetts from the 1970s until today, centered on the ’70s radical milieu coming out of the “Montague Farm.”

The novel begins by introducing the “erupting sun,” Rae Kelliher, an elderly woman with a long history of non-violent social activism, as she travels from Guilford, Vermont to Westchester, New York to engage in an act of domestic environmental terrorism. The rest of the novel is effectively a eulogy, delivered by Reggie, her Boston Irish working-class husband, for America’s first white female hippie suicide bomber.

We first learn that Reggie – along with most of the other residents of Rae’s intentional retirement com-



munity in Vermont – has escaped prosecution after Rae’s death, despite having prior knowledge of her plan to cross state lines to engage in an act of politically-motivated terrorism, pre-meditated murder, and despite participating in a secret meeting to discuss the plan to commit these crimes.

For anyone familiar with previous acts of environmental terrorism and their legal consequences, the behavior of the FBI, etc., this suggests that what follows will be a fantasy. But this has already been telegraphed by the lovely hand-drawn map, in the style of J.R.R. Tolkien, of Franklin County and

southern Vermont, presented before the story begins.

(The more conspiratorial-minded may suspect that the failure to charge Reggie is, in fact, because he is a deep-cover agent sent to keep tabs on Rae after her 1980s trip to Sandinista-controlled Nicaragua. While the book does consider that Rae may be “on a list,” this idea is not specifically addressed.)

What follows is a loosely told history of the radical milieu in western Massachusetts and a *bildungsroman* of a social activist that combines real and imagined people and events. Rae first appears in western Mass as a young woman, the first in her Ohio family to go to college, as she drops out of Amherst College to live at the Montague Farm commune and work at local pickle factory Oxford Pickles.

The Montague Farm and Oxford Pickles were real places, as has been discussed recently in this paper, and the specificity of Rae’s experiences combined with the looseness of the story suggest that she is based on one or several real people of Franklin County the author is familiar with.

At the Montague Farm we meet Sam Lovejoy, who enlists Rae as a (secret) co-conspirator in his plot to demolish the weather tower erected as part of the plan to build a nuclear

see **BOOK REVIEW** page B8

RECIPES

Autumn’s Other Pomaceous Fruit

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – In fall apples are everywhere: in tumbled piles at farmstands and supermarkets; in orchards where you can pick your own, in newspapers and magazines where they flaunt themselves in vivid photos.

Pears ripen in fall, too, but the big to-do about apples shuffles them off center stage. And that’s a pity, because pears are just as delicious as apples – juicier, too. You can choose from many varieties especially in local orchards, and they are versatile all-rounders in the kitchen.

One surprising old way of using them was as a meat substitute. In Europe, the medieval church designated almost half the days of the year as meatless “fast days,” so cookbooks gave fast-day versions of meat dishes. A variety of pear called *warden* often substituted for

meat in pies and stews because it was always very firm. It’s what Perdita had in mind in Shakespeare’s *Winter’s Tale* when her shopping list included “saffron to color the warden pies... mace, dates... ginger.”

The warden’s failure to soften marks it as different from the pears we get today. They start out hard, stay so for a while, then ripen suddenly and pretty soon go too far, settling into a brown mush. You have to watch them to get them at their tenderest, but the advantage of the speed-ripening process is that you can easily choose more or less ripe pears for different purposes.

Firm pears are best when you need shapely slices for tarts or cakes, and also for poaching in syrup or wine to make a pear compote. Riper, but not soft, pears are good sliced with lunch meats and appear in some Mediterranean chicken and lamb dishes.

see **PEARS** page B4



HOPLEY PHOTO

Apples’ juicier, fast-ripening cousins are also in season.

Pet of the Week



'FIDO'

Meet Fido, the cat with the name of a dog but all the charm of a feline! This stunning senior girl has beautiful long hair and eyes that will mesmerize. She adores lounging in a cat tree by the window, where she can bask in the sun and keep an eye on the world outside. Her gentle temperament makes her a joy.

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How to spot AI-generated content – or try to.

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – If we are to believe all the marketing out there today, AI is poised to change the world by reducing the amount of work each of us will have to do – that is, if we can trust those investing billions of dollars in the concept to have spontaneously become altruists. Whatever future AI brings, it's going to be a part of the systems we use to do work in the future, as its utility in certain scopes is already changing how business works.

But there are other use cases where AI is a net harm to society, as in the proliferation of misinformation-spreading bot spam on social media. Detecting AI-generated content is likely to be a long-term losing battle, and the advice I share with you today is probably going to be out of date within months, but there are a few different ways that you can spot AI-generated content in certain contexts.

When it comes to images and video, you'll have an easier time picking out the kinds of oddities that generative models accidentally create due to their lack of contextual understanding.

Early generative models had issues with things like eyes pointing the same direction or too many fingers or arms, creating those subtly terrifying clay people. This sort of mistake typifies the problems with generative models: statistically-based systems can collate the proper elements of an image or photo in an *abstract* sense, as they have parsed enough images to know what should appear in one, but they can't necessarily assemble those pieces together in a natural way.

And while they have mostly figured out fingers and eyes these days, this fundamental misunderstanding is an intrinsic part of their operation, and it still often causes small, detectable errors and incongruities.

Uncanny Textures

The sort of artifacts you'll see from AI image generation will vary based on the context of the image, but some of the more easily spotted issues include aspects of a background that don't quite fit a setting – a slightly out-of-focus door or a window twisted into an odd shape – or in the wrong place for the framing that would otherwise be required.

Some models still have issues with generating text within images, which makes AI easier to spot, but that's also a trivial detail to edit later. What you're more likely to spot are out-of-focus bits of text in the background that can't be easily changed, and which contain either rampant misspellings or strange, not-quite-English characters.

Patterns, such as the texture or color of clothing and carpet, the grain of wooden objects, or the dis-

tribution of bricks and windows on a wall, can also be good places to spot the kinds of inconsistencies that AI creates, as they often blend or warp details in ways that would be physically impossible.

Before you start claiming that every image you disagree with is AI-generated, I should warn you: Many of these giveaway artifacts can be effectively fixed by someone with photo editing experience. Replacing a set of eyes, changing the shapes of limbs, and isolating a subject from its background to throw it into a different setting are all pretty basic parts of image manipulation today, and can be effective in removing or reducing errors, if someone is willing to put in the work – though, luckily for us, outside of highly-targeted attacks online scammers tend to be low-effort.

AI-generated videos are also coming for a TV near you, or so Hollywood seems to be betting. Right now the systems that produce these videos are very, very computationally expensive to run, so you're not likely to run into many, but they tend to produce even more nonsensical results than "traditional" AI image generation, with objects changing form or flying around the screen.

Awkward Repetition

Detecting AI-generated text is much more difficult, and for short blurbs or anything that had a human hand in editing, it's effectively impossible. But there are a few tells that can indicate something may have had AI help in its creation.

AI can be straight-up wrong sometimes, and basic research to check and verify citations, claims, or facts is often enough to detect its involvement.

For one, AI-generated text lacks a semantic understanding of the words it creates: it literally does not have a direct understanding of the meanings behind different words, just a statistical understanding of the relationships *between* them. As a result, AI can be straight-up wrong sometimes, and basic research to check and verify citations, claims, or facts is often enough to detect its involvement.

Large-language models also need a prompt or a set of instructions to produce content, and the phrasing used in the prompt can affect the output drastically. Sometimes you can pick up that a bit of text feels like a response to a ques-

tion presented in another context; other times, the repetition of a specific word or phrase in increasingly less applicable settings might hint that it was used in a prompt.

AI systems are actually great at following most of the basic rules of grammar – large-language models, after all, are the architectural evolution of basic autocorrect! – but that itself can be a way to spot them: they don't make many *simple* mistakes, but when it comes to sentences with particularly complicated construction, they may stumble in weird but obvious ways.

The New Cold War

AI detection will be a losing game for those who play it, as educators dealing with the ingenuity of their students are learning far too well. This is particularly true when it comes to text, but it may not stay this way forever. OpenAI, the company behind the popular ChatGPT, has already revealed to the public that it has a 99.9% accurate method for detecting AI-generated text, but it has no plans to release it to the public. Which makes sense: Why would you sell a way to make work easier, then destroy your own market by selling a way to detect people using the first tool?

I suspect that falling costs and changing market demands will eventually change that math. Engineers are also working on methods to detect AI in photos, from cryptographically signing the contents of an image to metadata in a way that can be later verified, to invisible fingerprinting at the time of image capture or generation, with the cooperation of some social media companies.

Countless pages have been written in recent years prognosticating doom and gloom for a society that can no longer trust the apparent sanctity of the written word or photo, but this conveniently ignores decades of photomanipulation, centuries of ghost writing, and millennia of lies.

I remain confident that humanity can harness the utility of AI and still somehow adapt to the crazy and apparently novel concept of "fiction," with the understanding that this tool doesn't always do a good job, and is bound to increase the signal-to-noise ratio just about everywhere. What's important is good-faith transparency on the part of businesses and individuals when it *is* used, and the knowledge that it has fundamental limits and no actual semantic understanding of its results – at least, not yet.

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

Senior Center Activities

OCTOBER 21 THROUGH 25

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.
Contact (413) 548-1022 x2 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.

Monday 10/21
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Kitchen Club
4 p.m. Tech Special Topics Class: Androids & Apples
6 p.m. Cemetery Commission

Tuesday 10/22
9 a.m. Chair Yoga
10 a.m. Grandparents Raising Teens
12:30 p.m. Tech Tuesday: Drop-In Tech Help
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 10/23
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga (weather permitting)
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 10/24
1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. Montague Villages Volunteer Training

Friday 10/25
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Pizza Party
2 p.m. Chair Dance

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 10/21
9 a.m. Good 4 You
10 a.m. Seated Dance
12 p.m. Pitch
1 p.m. Yoga

Tuesday 10/22
9 a.m. Interval
10 a.m. Line Dancing
11 a.m. Social Stringers

Wednesday 10/23
9 a.m. Strength & Conditioning
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics
11:30 a.m. Bingo

Thursday 10/24
8:15 a.m. Run for Your Wife – Bus Departs
9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow

Friday 10/25
9 a.m. Quilting & Open Sew

WENDELL
Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments.
For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

PVMA and Montague Libraries Announce the New NEA Big Read

DEERFIELD – The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA) and the Montague Public Libraries are launching their three-season National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read program in November, exploring themes in Ross Gay's book of poetry, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*.

With orchards dotting the hillsides in this epicenter of the nation's cider revival, Gay's love of nature, especially orchards, inspired the kickoff during Franklin County Cider Days. While Gay's poetry acknowledges painful aspects of life, his ability to find gratitude and joy – in nature and in ordinary moments of kindness and joy – is inspiring.

"The NEA Big Read program is meant to inspire meaningful conversations, celebrate local creativity, elevate a wide variety of voices and perspectives, and build stronger connections in our communities," says PVMA Big Read coordinator Sheila Damkoehler. "Although this is our eighth Big Read award, we're excited to lead our first Big Read of a book of poetry. And it's a fitting connection to PVMA's ongoing work

presenting the story of Deerfield's Lucy Terry Prince, who composed the earliest documented poem by an African American."

The programming will kick off on Franklin County's Cider Days weekend with a book giveaway at Clarkdale Fruit Farms in Deerfield on Sunday, November 3 from 10 to 11 a.m. On Sunday, November 10, writer and musician Erica Wheeler will lead an Autumn Orchard Saunter at Clarkdale, beginning at 1 p.m.

The Montague Libraries will offer copies of the book to patrons participating in the MA Center for the Book's November 2024 Reading Challenge. PVMA and MPL will reach out to libraries, bookstores, and private reading groups throughout the valley to encourage winter readings and discussions. Spring will bring a variety of art and writing events, culminating with a virtual visit by Ross Gay.

Learn more about the NEA Big Read: Pocumtuck Valley and find the developing schedule at www.deerfield-ma.org. For more info, contact pvmaoffice@deerfieldmuseum.org or call (413) 774-7476.

ARTIST PROFILES

Daryl and Jessica Beck



A piece from Sequence, Jessica and Daryl Beck's August exhibit at the LAVA Center.

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – It seems the LAVA Center in Greenfield has helped me out again with finding artists to profile. This time, it is a duo of artists. I would describe their art at the LAVA Center as being one long photo with a bit of art drawn into it.

Daryl Beck is the father of Jessica Beck, and is the one I heard back from for the profile. "This was our first time collaborating on a joint exhibit," Daryl said. The two both do their work by themselves, he told me, but have always enjoyed looking at art together.

His opinion on their art, and how they are somewhat different, was this: "I think our pieces complement each other, even though they are really different in style and medium." None of these pieces have been shown at other events or galleries. The pieces at the joint exhibit I saw at the LAVA Center, *Sequence*, were made specifically for it. Daryl added that some pieces he has made were years in the making, because he takes a lot of photos while traveling across American landscapes, then reviews and edits them when he gets home. The end result apparently also can take many days.

While you and I might call the end results photos combined with art, Daryl Beck told me he thinks of them as "sculpture and performance art, not just images inside a frame." This is certainly an interesting description of his point of view about the artwork. Several of Daryl's past, large-scale sculptures are now in private collections of friends and family, and some are available for sale. He has also done multi-media installations in the past.

For Jessica, this was her first gallery exhibit. Daryl told me that like him, his daughter digs into the imagery of a capitalist culture. However, her influence is in street art when it comes to how she works, and what she creates is a virtual world. The webpage for the August show at the LAVA Center also told me that Jessica's influences are "Sludge Life, graffiti on YouTube, and Hip Hop."

"She's painted these science-fiction snapshots of digital reality, using a limited palette of colors, and it all kind of tells a story," Daryl explains. Other people, he said, have liked "the juxtaposition of Jessica's paintings with my pieces."

All of the things in Daryl's and Jessica's art seem to have combined to make the show I saw at the LAVA Center.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Packages Stolen; Volatile Ex; Fighting Kids; Large Bear; Pants Worn Below Butt; Bad Dad; Slurs; 'Sweet Caroline'

Monday, 10/7

8:44 a.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting a structure fire on Fifth Street. Smoke and flames visible from outside the house. Everyone evacuated. Officers blockading nearby streets. DPW contacted. Fire marshal on scene talking to involved party. Fire potentially started on stove from cooking. Board of health will be on scene in a couple of days. Officer requesting checks be done at property. Attempting to make contact with building owner.

4:24 p.m. Verbal warning for crosswalk violation at Seventh and K streets.

4:58 p.m. Caller states that there is an adult female yelling and fighting with some juveniles at Unity and Central streets. Female got in the middle of a juvenile dispute. All parties separated and cleared area before officers arrived.

Tuesday, 10/8

8:23 a.m. 911 report of a two-vehicle accident at Hatchery and Greenfield roads; fluids leaking from vehicles; no injuries. Montague Center FD en route. Officer requesting tow for both vehicles.

10:10 a.m. Anonymous caller reporting a possible domestic disturbance on Turners Falls Road. Made contact with homeowner; states she was having a verbal argument over the phone and does not need assistance.

1:05 p.m. Caller reporting that a number of packages have been stolen off of people's porches at the Cutlery Block lately; she just witnessed two males and a female walk up onto people's porches, look around, then walk away. She was able to get a picture of the back of them. They are now at Nouria. Caller called back with additional information. No one matching descriptions located.

4:10 p.m. Party into station to report a hit-and-run on behalf of her mother, who witnessed it. Unsure what time the accident happened, but her mother told her about it at around 3:15. Party's mother told her she observed a silver SUV strike a silver Honda on Crocker Avenue. States her mother can be reached by phone if the registered owner reports the damage. Scanned log from today; owner has not come forward. Officer advised.

6:56 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road states that her ex is throwing rocks at her apartment windows and trying to gain entry. Advises her ex lived there for a year and moved out this past Friday; his belongings are in a shed. Caller's daughter is home; caller is en route. Advises her ex does not own a vehicle and would have arrived on foot. Officer advises

male gone upon arrival; spoke with neighbor who confirmed male was banging, and left a few minutes ago. Checked premises and advised caller's daughter to keep doors locked and call if the male returns.

8:23 p.m. Anonymous caller complaining of dog barking at a neighbor's house on Montague City Road; states it happens for an hour or two in the evenings; believes the owner is at work. Quiet upon arrival. Copy of call left for animal control officer.

8:54 p.m. Fire alarm sounding for 20 to 30 minutes at the same location on Fifth Street as the fire yesterday. Shelburne Control and MPD officer advised.

Wednesday, 10/9

7:50 a.m. Minor two-vehicle accident on Adams Street; no injuries. Advised of options.

10:50 a.m. Sewer backup reported on Montague City Road. DPW advised.

11:24 a.m. Report of vehicle parked in Discovery Center lot for over a week. Referred to an officer.

11:30 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports a young male with a white helmet was riding an electric bike "way too fast" on the sidewalk earlier.

1:58 p.m. Caller from Crescent Street reports there is a diseased tree across the street and she is afraid it is going to fall on her house. Info passed along to DPW.

6:25 p.m. Caller from Central Street states a large group of kids is starting to fight. Peace restored.

7:41 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road states there is a large black bear on her porch looking in the sliding door. Advised caller to stay inside and it will move along. Caller states she had been told that an officer can blow the air horn to move the bear along. While on phone, caller stated bear went over the railing and off the deck; unsure where it is now. Officers advised.

9:27 p.m. Detective requesting transport unit. One detained. Recovered stolen vehicle. Rau's en route. Called Seabrook PD and advised vehicle was recovered in our town. A 27-year-old Shelburne Falls man was arrested and charged with receiving a stolen motor vehicle; possession of a Class A drug; unauthorized use of a motor vehicle; and possession of a Class B drug.

11:09 p.m. Caller advises that he was at Nouria earlier and observed a male party described as "scruffy" near his vehicle and in his path of walking into the store. Advises he told the male to leave him and his car area alone, and the male stated he just wanted to ask him a question. Requests officers check area for male while they are out. Units

advised.

Thursday, 10/10

2:56 p.m. 911 caller reporting two-car accident, with fluids, on Industrial Boulevard. Report taken.

3:47 p.m. Caller states there is a male walking with his pants below his butt near Turnpike and Turners Falls roads. Referred to an officer.

Friday, 10/11

8:36 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street would like it on record that somebody spat on her vehicle while it was parked in her space.

4:50 p.m. Anonymous caller reporting a father at the skate park is yelling, swearing, and being verbally abusive to his two-year-old toddler about not eating their snack; party is also smoking in the skate park. Male party reports he was yelling at his child because he was disrupting other children.

7:37 p.m. 911 caller reporting car into telephone pole on North Leverett Road. No smoke or flames. Vehicle driver out of vehicle. Tow requested. No damage to pole. Courtesy transport provided. Summons issued; report taken.

9:16 p.m. 911 caller from Chester Street reports she heard an explosion and saw a fire erupt. Now she sees the flames getting bigger in the woods, and people with flashlights. Transferred to Shelburne Control. TFFD en route. Not as reported: officer advises someone is using a fire pit in a nearby backyard; advises pit fire does seem a bit big. TFFD investigating.

10:56 p.m. Caller from Millers Pub reports a male party at the bar is making racial slurs at her, and if police don't respond she is going to "knock him out and take care of it" herself. Officer spoke with caller and mediated the issue.

Saturday, 10/12

1:13 p.m. Caller from Bangs Street advising that the same pitbull is loose again and growling at kids. Message left for dog owner.

11:09 p.m. 911 caller reports hearing people outside, possibly intoxicated, singing "Sweet Caroline" somewhere around Dell and Marshall streets. Caller states she does not know where the noise is coming from, but that it is loud. Officer advises no noise heard in area.

Sunday, 10/13

12:50 a.m. Shelburne Control advises they are on the line with someone reporting a vehicle crashed into a garage on South Prospect Street and someone walking down the road towards Wendell. Officer advises homeowner provided description of involved male. Requesting Erving PD assist if anyone is on. Shelburne Control contacted and advised; Erving unit

responding. Officer advises he and Erving unit are headed to Millers Pub to attempt to locate the involved male; second MPD officer remaining on scene of incident, requesting tow for vehicle. Officer states involved male located and advised of Miranda rights. A 35-year-old New Salem man was arrested and charged with OUI – liquor or .08%, second offense; leaving the scene of property damage; marked lanes violation; and possessing an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle.

6:17 a.m. Eversource advising they are on West Chestnut Hill Road due to a tree down with wires. Most of tree cut up at this time; one lane open. Requesting DPW with loader to assist with cleanup. DPW contacted and advised.

11:15 a.m. Walk-in states that last night he was having dinner at his son's on Montague City Road, and his truck was hit by a vehicle that took off. Damage to front driver's side bumper. He will contact building landlord to see if they have cameras; otherwise, wants on record.

3:53 p.m. Owner of Rau's is currently at the garage, and it appears that someone attempted to break in. Report taken.

Monday, 10/14

8:35 a.m. Caller reporting a sick or possibly injured opossum in the Greenfield Savings Bank driveway. Called back stating she attempted to call the ACO and they are off today. Would like an officer to look at the opossum as it's a disturbance to the public having to look at it. Advised of options. Caller called back in stating she found someone to take, and take care of it, the opossum.

5:10 p.m. 911 caller from J Street reporting past breaking and entering; states someone known to him stole his TV and other items. Report taken.

5:51 p.m. Third-party report of vehicle vs. dog on Greenfield Road; dog is injured. Dog is at its residence with its owner. Delay due to call volume. Caller called back advising the owner and driver had talked; stated the driver offered his information but the owner did not take it, stating she felt responsible for the accident. Units advised.

Officer advises no answer at the door at the owner's residence. Spoke with a female at the caller's residence who said the owner left to take the dog to the vet, but she does believe the owner and driver ended up exchanging information.

7:28 p.m. 911 report of two males fighting on Bridge Street. Units checked area at length; unable to locate. Erving PD checked Erving side; negative contact.

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GONE FISHIN'



KEN WASHBURN PHOTO

Reader Ken Washburn spotted this bald eagle on September 28 while walking on Migratory Way, the road along the Turners Falls power canal, which had at that point recently been drained for maintenance, and presented easy snacking. MassWildlife counted nearly 90 territorial pairs of bald eagles in the state last year, and over 60 wild-born chicks. Nearby Barton Cove has been a nesting site since 1989, when the same count was only four pairs and three chicks.

MR Wrapping Paper Edition • Artist Profile #2

By REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – This summer we invited people to submit design proposals for our fourth Special Wrapping Paper Edition, to be printed in late November. This fundraiser for the *Montague Reporter* will feature full color designs printed on double pages of newsprint, meant to wrap presents in. Seven of these pages will feature the work of local artists chosen from the proposals we have received, with an in-house cover design as the outer page.

We are introducing our winning artists and their design proposals every week leading up to Thanksgiving, when the Edition is printed and put out for sale online and in stores. We have asked each artist the same three questions, and solicited a selfie from them.

Daphne Board is featured this week. Her design, titled *Smorgasbord*, is of a bunch of colorful knitted socks!

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

DB: *Smorgasbord* celebrates the playful and creative legacy of longtime Valley resident Hanne Burns and her handknit *hygge-sokker* as she utilized leftover yarn skein ends while keeping feet cozy in the winter months. This newsprint wrapping paper is a way of extending that resourcefulness and joy of making while heading into the season of slowing down, staying warm, and celebrating family and friends.

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

DB: Anything handmade in any way!

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

DB: I have enjoyed finding out about local events and community issues in newspaper reporting over the years; this includes the gift of better knowing a place while traveling. Picking up a copy of the local news wherever I have traveled to – when it's possible to read the language – has often been a concise distillation of what is important and compelling to people who live full-time in a place I happen to be experiencing only temporarily.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

PEARS from page B1

They're good with cheese, too. With blue cheese they make a specialty dynamic team. Gorgonzola is the preference in Italy; Roquefort in France, and blue Stilton in England. One riff on this pairing, sometimes called Locketts Savory, is watercress (or spinach) and ripe pear slices on toast with Stilton piled on top. Packed side by side in a baking dish,

they go into a 350-degree oven to be retrieved 4 or 5 minutes later just as the cheese softens into a warm blanket, tucking the pear in place.

Good as pears are with meats and cheese, they shine in desserts. Slicing and poaching them in a light syrup seems to heighten the flavor, while cooking them in red wine transforms their color as well.

Poire Belle Hélène is a classic

French dessert of poached pear on vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce. Given the recent hurricane, the name has threatening vibes, but Auguste Escoffier, the restaurateur who created it in 1864, named it in honor of the Offenbach operetta *La Belle Hélène* – The Beautiful Helene – then playing to enthusiastic Parisian audiences.

Pears also star in many pies and cakes. Indeed, you can substitute them in most apple recipes because botanically they are cousins and they behave similarly.

Note, though, that while cinnamon is often the spice of choice with apples, it can overwhelm the fragrant flavors of pears. Almond and vanilla are happier companions, and ginger adds a tingle in many pear cake recipes.

Small amounts of allspice are good, too, and the pepper in the recipe for Peppered Pears, which follows, is surprisingly good for pears served with meat or cheese.



POACHED PEAR SLICES WITH ALLSPICE

Just a few whole allspice berries touch these pears with a delicate flavor. This simple dish makes a light ending to a meal. Nice with ice cream.

1/4 cup sugar, or more to taste
4 large firm pears (about 1 1/2 lb.)
8 whole allspice berries



Add more sugar for extra sweetness; more water if needed.

Serves 3 or 4.

CHICKEN WITH GRAPES & PEPPERED PEARS

You can make the Peppered Pears several hours ahead of time or while the chicken cooks. Black peppercorns add aroma; white peppercorns add heat. If you don't have both, just use one or the other.

1/2 tsp. black peppercorns
1/2 tsp. white peppercorns
1 1/4 lb. (three or four) ripe but not soft pears
4 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
2 Tbsp. honey
4 large chicken thighs, bone in, skin on
1 Tbsp. olive oil
salt and pepper
2-inch sprig of rosemary
4 whole garlic cloves, peeled
about 30 red grapes, washed



Coarsely crush the peppercorns by putting them in a plastic bag and bashing them with a can of food. Set aside.

Peel the pears; quarter them, and discard the cores. Cut them into small chunks, not quite bite-sized but not tiny.

Put the pear chunks in a saucepan and add the wine vinegar and honey. Cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally to mix, for 2 to 3 minutes, then sprinkle in the pepper. Cook gently until the pears are tender, adding a tablespoon of water if the liquid evaporates. Set aside.

Trim excess fat from the thighs and put them in a casserole or pan big enough to take them in a single layer. Heat gently to melt the chicken fat, which adds flavor to the dish. Remove the skin when the fat has rendered.

Add the olive oil, and season the thighs with salt and pepper. Put them skin side down in the pan. Snip the rosemary leaves over them, and add the garlic cloves. Fry over moderate heat for 7 or 8 minutes, or until the skins are golden brown.

Turn them and stick the grapes around the chicken. Cook for 5 minutes, then add the peppered pears. (You can add half and serve the rest at the table, or add them all.) Cover the pan tightly, reduce the heat to low, and cook for 20 minutes or until the chicken is tender and the grapes have mostly collapsed.

Serves 4 with potatoes, rice, or polenta, plus vegetables and any reserved pears.

PEAR & ALMOND UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

For the topping:
6 Tbsp. butter
3 Tbsp. light brown sugar
2 Tbsp. white sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 large ripe pears

For the cake:
6 Tbsp. butter
1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. almond extract
1 to 2 Tbsp. milk
2 to 3 Tbsp. toasted almonds

For the topping, put the butter in a 9-inch layer-cake pan over low heat. As it melts, brush a little on the side of the pan to grease it, then stir in both sugars. Stir frequently until the mixture is a pale fawn color. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla.

Peel the pears, quarter them, remove the cores, then cut each



until pale and smooth.

Mix the flour with the baking powder. Beat a tablespoonful of this flour into the mixture, along with one beaten egg and the almond extract. Beat in the remaining egg and a little more flour. When smooth, beat in a tablespoon of milk plus the remaining flour.

Spread this on top of the pears. Bake in the center of the oven for about 30 minutes, or until a skewer stuck into the cake comes out clean and the cake has slightly shrunk from the edge. Run a knife blade between the cake and pan to loosen it. Cool on a rack for about 20 minutes.

While still warm, place a serving plate on top of the pan and quickly invert it so the cake falls onto the plate. Any pears left behind can be repositioned. Decorate with toasted sliced almonds, or position a cherry in the middle.

Serves 6 to 8.

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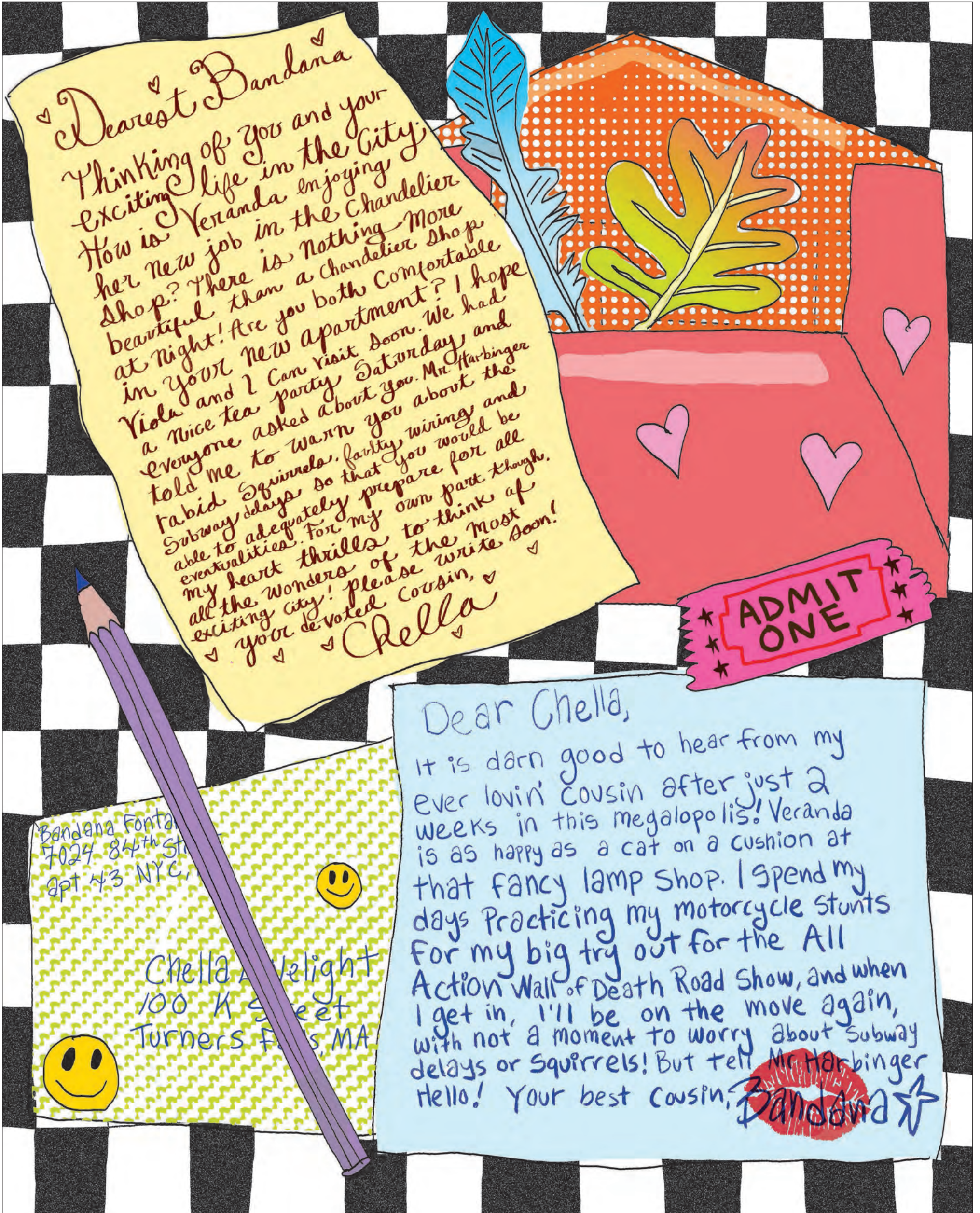
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The Children's Page

Words by BEVERLY KETCH - Illustration by HANNAH BROOKMAN



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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

quick peek at Lois McClellan Patrie's *History of Colrain*, however, proved fruitless. Nope. Not a whisper about any Colrain Pattens.

Undaunted, I went to Leila Stone Bardwell's *Vanished Pioneer Homes and Families of Shelburne, Massachusetts* and found no mention of a Patten family, and nothing else explaining how the name "Patten" came to the town's district or hill.

Hmmm? No easy answers! I had to dig deeper.

Enter my energetic, worker-bee friend, the always-accommodating Greenfield Historical Society president Carol Aleman, who grew up on her Wheeler parents' East Shelburne farm along the Patten rim. If anyone would know how the name came to the isolated northeast corner of Shelburne, I was confident she would. So, I dropped her an email.

Although Aleman had no immediate answer, she was certain her sister Joanne and husband John Herron would know. She'd query them and get back to me. The Herrons own an expansive dairy farm on Hawks Road in the southeast corner of town, and share a lively interest in Shelburne history.

Yes, indeed, they had the answer. The name "Patten" had no connection to any family of

that name. It was instead initially known as the "Pattern District," which over time became Patten in the old, obsolete, hilltown Yankee dialect. Fancy that. A simple case of colloquial mispronunciation.

But why "Pattern District?" Well, there appears to be no precise answer, just varying interpretations of the same theme: that is, a description of a neighborhood built on a social, moral, or physical pattern worth emulating; one, in fact, superior to the rest of town.

Little did I know that I could have found my answer at home. With the new information in hand, I took a deeper dive into my own sources tucked into bookcases and cupboards and, sure enough, found confirmation.

The first supportive source was Ellsworth Barnard's *A Hill Farm Boyhood*, Volume 1 of his four-volume memoir *Sunshine and Shadows: A Teacher's Odyssey*, published between 1983 and 1991.

Barnard (1907-2003) was a Patten Hill native and college English professor. I met him and his wife Mary many years ago at their rustic High Ledges cabin, situated on family property left by the Barnards to the Audubon Society. He was then over 90. I wanted to see and discuss the small grove of immature, 10-foot American chestnut trees featured in his 1998 collection of

essays *In a Wild Place: A Natural History of High Ledges*.

Intrigued by this gentle naturalist and gentleman of letters, I promptly bought his memoirs, but didn't place him and the Patten District in the same mental bundle when first pondering sources that might explain how it was named.

When I finally pulled *A Hill Farm Boyhood* out of my bookcase, there on the first page of Chapter 1 was his suggestion that Patten District was so named "perhaps because, as legend has it (supported by local pronunciation habits), the dwellers in that area provided an exemplary pattern for their less righteous fellow townsmen."

Barnard would have known. He was born and raised in the Patten Hill farmhouse built by his ancestors in 1790.

Soon I discovered yet another local source written by a deep-rooted Shelburne author who confirmed the Barnard-Herron-Aleman explanation. Buried beneath rubble in a bottom bookcase cupboard was Elmer F. Davenport's 1968 booklet *As You Were Shelburne*. There, in the last three lines of "Chapter 7 - The Patten District," he informs us that its residents "were so strict in their conduct that others called it the Pattern, later shortened to Patten, in a spirit of jealousy."

Not surprisingly, a slightly different spin from the same perspective.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Mysterious Massachusetts

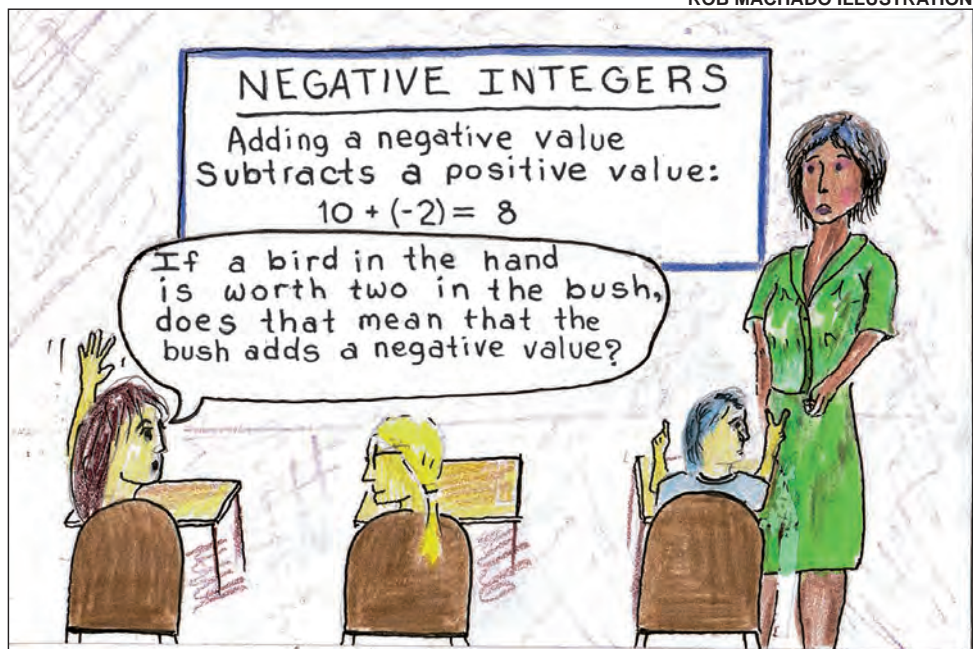
NEW SALEM - Every state has its ghost stories, but no other state has the Dover Demon or the Salem Witch Trials. From seaside ghosts to UFOs over the Berkshires, Massachusetts has a rich history of paranormal legends, odd events, and strange denizens.

On Tuesday, October 29 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the New Salem Public Library, join Springfield librarian Sarah Hodge-Wetherbe on a fascinating journey of discovery as she shares her intriguing tales of strange and unusual happenings across the state.

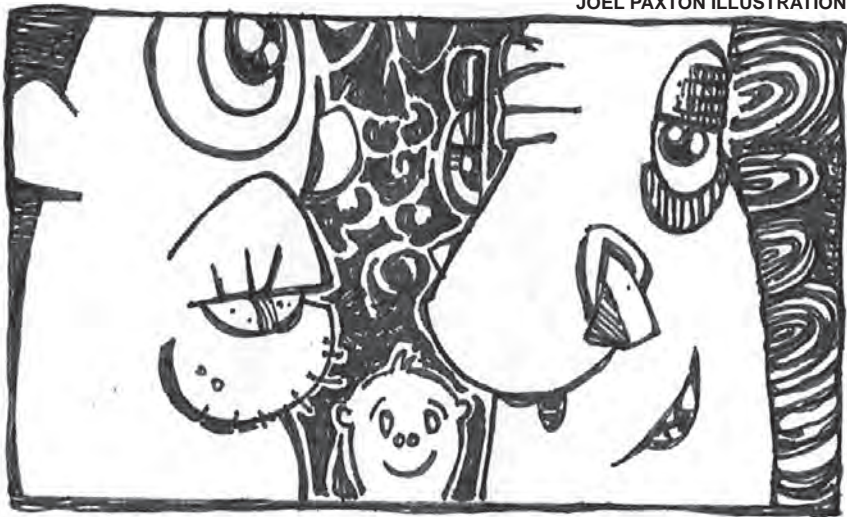
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



looking forward...

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Em-press Of, Casey MQ*. \$ 7 p.m.

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro: *Slow Pony, Doctor Gasp, Norma Dream*. \$ 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Burnt Pink, Miriam Elhajji, Blackpool*. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Band of Brothers*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Cinemastorm* double feature: *The Fly* (1986), *The Blob* (1988). Free. 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *2 Car Garage*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Feldons, Les Derailleurs, Basement Cats*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Next Stage Arts, Putney: *Arun Ramamurthy Trio*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

Academy of Music Theater, Northampton: *Nick Lowe & Los*

Straitjackets. \$ 8 p.m.

Rat Trap, Holyoke: *A.P.I.E., Gay Mayor, Leaking Head, Target Scammers*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Eric Gaffney, StepBirds, Owen Manure*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ian Campbell*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

Next Stage Arts, Putney: *Family Matters: A Tour of Vermont Short Films*. \$ 6 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Session Americana, Winterpills, Suitcase Junket, Caitlin Canty, Zak Trojano*, more. Kate Lorenz memorial. \$ 6 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Juliet Salameh Olivier, beetsblog, Gelineau/Baldwin/Meginsky trio*. Gaza benefit. \$ 7 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Chick-N-Wire*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Wizard's Castle, Montague: *Wizard's Costume Ball* feat. *The Gaslight Tinkers*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Nova Arts, Keene: *Myrtle Street Klezmer*. \$ 7 p.m.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Briezy Jane, Little Wild Bouquet, Edward Hines*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Philip Glass Ensemble* performs *Koyaanisqatsi* live. \$\$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Emily Margaret Band*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20

Leverett Elementary School, Leverett: *Leverett Fall Festival* feat. *Masala Jazz*. Free. 1 p.m.

Lupinewood, Greenfield: *Pigeon Pit, Leaf Glitter, Harm, Kivimae*. \$ 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *King Tuff with Chris Weisman, Ruth Garbus Trio*. \$ 7 p.m.

Space Ballroom, Hamden, CT: *Boris, Starcrawler*. \$ 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton: *Yo La Tengo, Friendship Band*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Greet Death*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kimaya Diggs, Wallace Field, Rachel Sumner, Emily Haviland*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Saving Vice, Fight from Within, In Shallows, Kennedy Park, Your Arms Are My Legs*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *David Cross Band Plays King Crimson*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Amelia Cry Til I Die, bobbie, Silvie's Okay*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *A Happening IV: Leviathan*. \$ 7 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Omar Sosa & Tim Eriksen* present *Atlantica*. \$ 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Happy Valley Gas Juggers*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Bowker Auditorium, UMass Amherst: *Max Roach Centennial Celebration* feat. *Makaya McCraven*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Deluxe, Andy Goulet*. \$ 4 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *A Happening IV: Leviathan*. \$ 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The EDD, The Trichomes, Jime Time*. \$ 7 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Sunset Rubdown, Sister Ray*. \$ 7 p.m.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Mind Left Body, Dead tribute*. \$ 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Shokazoba Funkestra, I-Ganic Sound System*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Creative Writing, Sky Furrows, Marasca*. \$ 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

Greenfield Records, Greenfield: *Christa Renee*. Free. 12 p.m.

Mullins Center, UMass Amherst: *Dropkick Murphys, Pennywise, Scratch*. \$\$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sexwave*. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31

Pierce's Hall, Putney: *Buoyant Cover Band Show*. \$ 6 p.m.

Brewery at Four Star, Northfield: *Head of Wantastiquet, Sagan & Sigourney, Dave Thomas & the Frosty Five*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The B-52.0s, DJ Cashman*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Guerilla Toss, Rough Francis, Aspero Siacos*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1

No Fun, Troy, NY: *Guerilla Toss, Abyssmals, 100 Psychic Dreams*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Jimmy Just Quit*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Thus Love, Robber Robber, Brunch*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2

Palladium, Worcester: *The Black Dahlia Murder, Dying Fetus, Spite, Angelmaker, Vomit Forth*. \$ 5:30 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Cloudbelly, Rocking Puppies*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *KISSStory, KISS* tribute. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Colonial Theater, Keene: *Bruce Cockburn*. \$ 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *The Juliana Hatfield Three, Hilken Mancini Band*. \$ 8 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Anohni*. \$\$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ben Cote Band*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

DCU Center, Worcester: *Iron Maiden*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

The Clark, Williamstown: *Circuit Des Yeux, Bill Nace, kite/wing*. \$ 6 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Kawabata Makoto (Acid Mothers Temple) & Tim Dahl, John Moloney*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The Big Takeover, The Brighton Beat*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Judge John Hodgman: Road Court*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Nova Arts, Keene: *Haley Fohr & Bill Nace*. \$ 7 p.m.

BUI Skatepark, Brattleboro: *Torture, Splitknuckle, Blood Tithe, Fatal Realm, Split In Half, Void Bringer*. \$ 7 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Mal Blum, John-Allison Weiss*. \$ 8 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Flore Laurentienne, William Basinski*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *A.P.I.E., Fast Cheetah, TBA*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Daily Operation, Easthampton: *Love Child, Lupo Citta, Phroegs*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Dead Man's Waltz*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Adrienne Lenker, Suzanne Vallie*. \$ 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Odie Leigh, Charlotte Rose Benjamin*. \$ 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Fine Arts Center, UMass Amherst: *Angélique Kidjo*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Marshall Crenshaw, James Mastro*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Palladium, Worcester: *Disco Biscuits*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Rani Arbo*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Kasambwe Brothers*. \$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *413Ska Sunday Matinee* feat. *Mephiskapheles, Sgt. Scagnetti, Mega Infinity, Pink Slip*. \$ 3 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Cityspace, Easthampton: *COD, Corrode, Gay Mayor, YaTeVe, Taxidermists, Mark Cone*. \$ 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

Buckley Recital Hall, Amherst College: *Juilliard String Quartet* plays *Schubert, Mozart*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

Creation Station, Easthampton: *La Banda Chuska, Tipa Tipo*. \$ 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Son Little, Tonina*. \$ 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Laraaji, sound bath*. \$ 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Quiet Riot*. \$ 8 p.m.

EXHIBITS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wax, Water and String*, paintings in encaustic, watercolor, and embroidery by Pam Allan. Through January. Reception this Sunday, October 20, from 4 to 6 p.m.

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls: *Echoes*, artwork by Maya Malachowski Bajak.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *A First-Class Machine Shop*, local history exhibit with images, text, maps, and artifacts in collaboration with the Museum of Our Industrial Heritage. Through December 1.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: *Jasper Alexander* presents block prints from his Salted Snail Studio, through October.

Montague Center Library: *Meghan Schwelm*, paintings exploring the everyday and the familiar. Through October 30, with a reception next Wednesday, October 23, at 6 p.m.

Rhodes Gallery, Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill: *Western Mass Illustrators Guild*, group show of artwork by local illustrators. Visits by appointment: *jrourke@nmhschool.org*. Through November 22, with a reception next Friday, October 25, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Making Pictures*, oil paintings by Sally Dillon and pastel paintings by Ruth Rinard. Through October, with a reception this Sunday, October 20, from 1 to 5 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Trees and Mills*, drawings and etchings by Frank Waugh. Through October 29.

Von Auersperg Gallery, Deerfield Academy: *limninal*, paintings and kinetic sculpture by Donabelle Casis, through November 2.

Geissler Gallery, Stoneleigh Burnham School, Greenfield: *Tourist*, photographs by Anja Schütz. Opening reception on October 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. Through December 15.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *World on Fire*, art and installation by Greenfield self-taught artist JJ White. *The Art of Recovery*, artwork from participants at the Recover Project; through October.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *When You Are Here*, paintings by Clare Churchill Seder. Though December 6, with a reception next Friday, October 25 at 5 p.m.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *Food for Thought*, group exhibit by member artists. Visitors are invited to bring nonperishable food for the Northfield food pantry. Though November 3.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *To everything there is a season...*, black and white photographs by Larry Rankin. Through November 2.

Science & Engineering Library, UMass Amherst: *Our Common Ground*, UMass worker artist exhibition about caring for the Earth and each other. Through December 19.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Autumn Glory*, group show by member artists working in paint, photography, sculpture, fabric, wood, and more. Through October.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Wings of the Wind*, paintings by Margaret Lloyd, and *The New Herbarium*, cyanotypes by Madge Evers, through October 28.

D'Amour Museum, Springfield: *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 February.

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BOOK REVIEW from page B1 reactor in the Montague Plains. This real event is Rae's initiation into social activism as she navigates the social and romantic environment of life on a "hippie" commune in the '70s while dealing with her increasingly estranged family back in Ohio.

From the Montague Plains she joins the movement fighting the Seabrook Station nuclear reactor that culminates in acts of mass civil disobedience. This ignites a lifetime of activism for Rae, with cameos by real personalities such as Bill Moyers, Howard Zinn, and a young (future) Congressman Jim McGovern.

In the novel, Rae's activism on display is depoliticized, as she switches from issue to issue, affinity group to affinity group, and activist boyfriend to activist boyfriend. After her anti-nuclear activism, the book shifts a decade and she discovers the Reagan administration's war against Nicaragua. Yet she advances no opinions about power, American society, or the historic conflict between the US and the USSR.

Described as a "good reader" and a thinker, Rae recommends Howard Zinn's history of America, but has gained no overall insight from it. The books she reads, helpfully collected in a list by the author, are all of that peculiarly American mass-market amalgam of business advice and self-help, transposed for people who can only see themselves mirrored in some greater cause: *Ecology of Care: Medicine, Agriculture, Money and the Quiet Power of Human and Microbial Communities* (2015); *Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth* (2010). The character in the novel isn't allowed to be motivated by ideas, but only what personally interests her – with moral outrage as a lodestar.

You could chalk up this lack of politics to the limitations of the novel, but as Harvey Wasserman and Anna Gyorgy write: "The real power of the role of Montague Farm in the No Nukes movement came from its instant consensus. When the nukes were proposed for a site four miles away, there was no deep, heartfelt debate about what we were going to do. We were, simply enough, going to stop it."

One feels the light and heat of a social scene coalescing around a cause like a newly-formed star. Yet, the character Rae feels that she is in the "back of the room" at the Montague Farm and keenly perceives that even a consensus-based affinity group, such as those that made up

the Clamshell Alliance, has a front and a back. Rae wants to be in the front, becoming a "facilitator."

For a story about a woman coming of age in the '70s, there are only passing and smirking references to feminism as a political force. But for Rae the personal is the political, and the power of the Montague Farm was in how it translated the personal relationships of a social group into "political" acts. For people on the periphery – as with Rae's feeling of being in the back – the Farm appears as a performance, a world where things are really happening. For those like the author who were witnesses to it, it is clearly an indelible memory. Nowadays we can all have the same experience following activist influencers on social media.

Looking from outside the bubble of nostalgia, Rae goes from failure to failure. The nuclear reactor in the Montague Plains is canceled, but Seabrook Station goes on-line and the anti-nuclear affinity network, the Clamshell Alliance, falls apart when consensus is no longer possible.

Rae's relationships with men follow a similar cycle: an initial draw over shared interests leads to an inevitable breakup over irresolvable differences. Driven by outrage, Rae has little sense that the hippies moving to rural New England were part of the great sweep of deindustrialization beginning in the '70s, which drew white people out of the cities and doomed the government-led expansion of nuclear power in the US.

She shares the same myopia as current nuclear proponents – albeit with the opposite goal in mind – in imagining that it is government, not economics, that stands in the way of nuclear power. And then, with Reagan, the sun sets on the whole era. The solar panels are taken down at the White House.

Climate change appears as an issue for Rae's penultimate affinity group, arising out of her activism against the gas pipeline through western Mass. (The book acknowledges that, while the pipeline was canceled like the nuclear plant before, the real question was whether the US would export the products of fracking as liquefied natural gas to a world market. If opposition to the pipeline did anything, it was to push that gas to a different terminus – and the war in Ukraine has now made the global LNG market central to the world economy.)

Rae's bubble has now both contracted and expanded. Having

declared cities to be environmentally unsustainable, she lives in a cohousing community in Guilford with other semi-retired people approaching old age. Climate change is now in her backyard – it disrupts her Caribbean activist teach-in trip – and yet this time the source of the outrage is global, never directly within reach. Catalyzed by a terminal cancer diagnosis, Rae forms a final affinity group of one and plans a last activist campaign: a personal act of violence against a "carbon baron" she deems responsible.

The collapse of a lifetime of non-violent activism to a one final violent act might be viewed as a critical rejection of non-violence as a mode of action in the face of climate change. That Rae's cohousing community moonlights as a "natural" funeral home for people who want to be buried in coffins woven from willow branches could serve as a potent metaphor for the death of a generation of activism.

For those of us wondering "What Is to Be Done?," it is an intriguing "modest proposal" to suggest that an affinity group of grandmothers performing acts of suicidal violence could be the answer. But this is the violence of the mass shooter, without strategy or real cognizance of what might be achieved, never mind the cost – politics collapsing to a singular personal will. Not so much an "erupting sun" as a black hole, from which nothing can escape.

The author Kim Stanley Robinson, who contributes a blurb on the back of the novel, shares many of the cultural touchstones and affectations of the "hippie" era as Collins. As a student of recently deceased post-Marxist academic Frederic Jameson, he is generally considered a writer of the Left. Yet in his *Ministry for the Future* he imagines a cabal, consisting of the world's wealthiest central banks and a UN agency with a secret paramilitary arm, fixing the climate crisis.

While no less a modest proposal than leveraging suicidal grandmothers, the suggestion that financial incentives guided by the central banks could be the way forward was enough to get KSR's novel into the pages of international publications such as London's *Financial Times*. Collins's book, in contrast, seems to speak mainly as a memoir to the generation of activists he chronicles, and as a curiosity to those for whom these events are becoming another chapter of our quaint local history.

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Montague Community Television News

Shea Sessions

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Many community members attended MassDEP's public information session on FirstLight Power's 401 Water Quality Certification application at the Shea Theater on October 10. MCTV has the full meeting, documented in two parts. We also have uploaded the Climate Resilience Survey meeting that took place at the Shea on October 8.

It is never too late to participate in these local issues, and we hope that these recordings can be of service to you as we look towards the future. The GMRSD school committee meeting from October 8 is also on our Vimeo page, as are last week's Gill and Montague select-board meetings.

And finally, please enjoy a special performance by Rocking Puppies from their show at the Montague Community Fair on September 28.

All MCTV videos are aired on Channel 9 as well as being featured on the MCTV Vimeo page. If there is a meeting, event, performance or happening in the Montague area that you think MCTV should capture, let us know! And if you also have an idea for a show, MCTV is always available to assist in local productions as well. Just reach out!

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

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