

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 14, 2024

RESTORATION

Library's Return of Artifacts To Oglala Lakota Continues

By DAVID DETMOLD

BARRE, MA – The Barre Museum Association at the Woods Memorial Library celebrated Veterans Day this year by returning a war



JOHN WILLIS PHOTO

After spending over 130 years in a central Massachusetts library museum this war bonnet, over four feet long, is returning to the Oglala Lakota people.

bonnet and a chief's eagle feather headdress to the Oglala Lakota nation. These culturally significant items had been kept in the library's third-floor museum for more than 130 years. On Monday, they began their long journey home.

Justin Pourier, tribal historic preservation officer for the Oglala Lakota, had to put the back seats down in his white Suburban in order to make enough room to fit the headdresses, carefully packed in a large white box with cedar branches and offerings of sage and tobacco, in his vehicle.

Before driving back to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, Pourier will stop at the Peabody Museum at Harvard University, where a medicine man from the tribe will join him to pick up a human skull and a hammer that Harvard has agreed to return to the Lakota. Harvard is struggling to make progress in de-accessioning a collection of approximately 7,000 Indigenous human remains, and Pourier's visit with the medicine man this week will be a small but significant step in the university's belated effort to comply with the mandates of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

As the town common in Barre filled with Veterans Day observers at the 11th hour of the 11th day of November, Pourier stood across the street on the third-floor landing to the library's private museum and remarked, "We are getting

see RETURN page A4

Montague Board of Health Chewing On Proposal to Ban Nicotine Pouches

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague board of health held a hearing late last month on a proposal to revise the town's regulations on sales of tobacco products, focusing on nicotine pouches, a smokeless product currently sold at four local convenience stores. The new regulations would effectively ban the pouches, which are placed between the gum and lip to absorb nicotine, by allowing their sales only at "adult-only" tobacco outlets.

"Montague does not currently have any of these establishments, and will not allow for additional tobacco permits under current conditions," board of health chair Melanie Zamojski noted.

The hearing began with a presentation by Cheryl Sbarra, executive director of the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards (MAHB), who assisted Paxton in revising the town's current regulations, which date from 2015, based on a template developed by her organization.

Many of the proposed changes focused on technical issues, for example by making the regulations consis-



TOWN OF MONTAGUE / ZOOM IMAGE

Public health director Ryan Paxton (left) met October 30 with board of health member Rachel Stoler and chair Melanie Zamojski (right). Member Mike Nelson attended via Zoom.

tent with current state law and with inflation in the price of tobacco products. The overall rationale for the regulations, a lengthy series of "whereas" statements warning of the dangers of smoking and nicotine use, would remain virtually identical.

see NICOTINE page A5

INTERVIEW

Fire Chief: Dangerous Dry Conditions Could 'Potentially' Last Into New Year

By MIKE JACKSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Three pieces of news Tuesday drove home the severity of the region's dry and fire-prone condition. First, Rebecca Tepper, the state Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary, officially declared the Connecticut River Valley to be suffering a Level 2, or "Significant," drought.

Second, UMass Amherst researchers announced the launch of a three-year, federally funded project to build "advanced integrated hy-

drologic models" in order to predict how the changing global climate will impact water patterns in the Northeast.

"We're 30 to 40 years into significant changes to New England's climate," professor David Boutt explained, "and we're seeing marked shifts in everything from the water table, which is rising throughout the region, to the intensity of rainstorms, which are getting fiercer, to the length and timing of droughts."

And third, a half-dozen departments and agencies responded to a brush fire in Leverett, according to that town's fire chief Brian Cook, and were able to prevent it from engulfing a home. "This incident is a stark reminder of the extreme fire risk we are facing due to ongoing drought conditions," he warned residents on a townwide email listserv.

To get a better understanding of how the dry season is affecting local fire services, the Montague Reporter spoke Wednesday with Turners Falls fire chief Todd Brunelle, who announced a local ban on outdoor fires at the beginning of the month in conjunction



JACKSON PHOTO

Turners Falls fire chief Todd Brunelle, with the department's brush truck.

with Montague Center chief David Hansen. The interview has been abridged and edited for clarity.

MR: As I think a lot of people are aware at this point, it's just really dry out there, and a fire risk, huh?

TB: It's very dry, and an extremely high fire risk. We've gone through a very dry period since the spring – since May – so conditions

see FIRE page A6

High School Sports: Monument Falls



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Franklin Tech's Josiah Little draws an army of Spartan defenders as Tech topped Monument Mountain 50-16 in Turners Falls last Friday. Little, with 271 yards rushing and five game touchdowns, broke the school's single-season rushing yardage record, as well as the school record for touchdown scores in a single season.

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – As we get deeper into November, the local fall sports season has been whittled down to two sports, football and cheer. The Franklin Tech Football Eagles will battle until Thanksgiving, while the Turners Falls Cheerleaders will rowdy up the crowds through basketball season, and are scheduled to compete in several regional cheer-offs in the winter.

The cheer squad has been an

influential cog in the Tech football machine, rallying the crowd at every home game while the Eagles soared to a perfect 5-0 record. Next Saturday, Franklin hope to make it a perfect 6-0 when they take on the Assabet Valley Aztecs in the first round of the statewide small vocational tournament.

Last Friday, they took on the Monument Mountain Spartans in a game that many thought would be a battle of giants. Both teams shared championships in their respective

conferences, and the Spartans came in with a high-powered offense.

But Franklin Tech seems to be reaching a crescendo. After scoring

see SPORTS page A4

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Dates for Surplus Auction, Special Town Meeting Set

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard's November 6 meeting was short, just over an hour.

The board set a tentative date for a special town meeting on Thursday, February 6 at 7 p.m., pending the availability of the town clerk, and moderator. The agenda will include three bills of prior years, and possibly a request from the highway commission for money to hire a smaller truck for plowing roads that are tight for the regular trucks.

The police budget may be an is-

sue. Treasurer Carolyn Manley said the town's free cash should be certified by the state by then, making it available to use. As of last week's meeting, highway commission chair Phil Delorey was not yet ready with other possible needs. The position may also include clearing walks with the town snowblower.

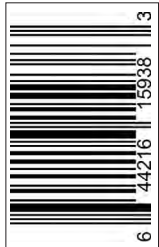
The selectboard also set a tentative date for an auction of surplus town equipment: Saturday, January 11 at 10 a.m. at the highway garage, with viewing starting at 9 a.m. The back-up date would be January 18 if

see WENDELL page A3

And Whosoever Diggeth A Pit Shall Fall In It

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The Montague Reporter

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August 2002

Field of Dreams

The 76 days between the re-election and re-inauguration of President Donald Trump must be a time of great impatience and anticipation for his supporters.

For those who felt one Trump term was plenty, this period offers an experience of plodding dread. In case finger-pointing over the Democratic loss fails to keep everyone busy and engaged all the way into January, the admin-in-waiting has now begun announcing a string of juicy outrages in the form of Trump's intended appointments.

Many square with expectations: New York conservatives Lee Zeldin for EPA head (he "will ensure fair and swift deregulatory decisions," the prez-elect boasted) and Elise Stefanik for UN ambassador; John Ratcliffe picking up where he left off as CIA director; Stephen Miller, Dan Scavino, and other insiders for various chief/aide gigs.

Others are raising eyebrows: Kristi Noem in charge of homeland security; Tulsi Gabbard as director of national intelligence; and *Fox News* morning host (and self-styled Crusader) Pete Hegseth as secretary of defense.

Whether Trump's own party will go along with the appointment of neophytes to helm some of the planet's most complex bureaucracies will soon be seen.

Trump's onetime rival Marco Rubio is his pick for secretary of state, a hint that he has an eye on retaining the party's neocon faction, and a sign (alongside Hegseth) that the antiwar posturing of the campaign is out the window. And sending Mike Huckabee as ambassador to Israel is a bouquet of flowers for Netanyahu, who has appointed a Kahanist settler in exchange.

The eyebrow-y-est pick as of press time is Matt Gaetz as US attorney general. Pundits seem to be missing one upside of this pick for Trump: Gaetz's brother-in-law is Palmer Luckey, the right-wing billionaire founder of military contractor Anduril, which hopes to be making the AI extermination drones for Hegseth's crusader campaigns. It's a similar move to appointing Erik Prince's sister as education secretary during his first term. A square jaw and a dynastic odor are key qualifications for this dream team.



Jake Goldman is the assistant librarian at the Millers Falls branch library, which recently reopened with new carpeting and freshly painted walls. The children's section has been moved from the back area to the front, where two-year-old Sage Bander rifles through a basket of toys. To finish off the renovation, a new, ADA-compliant service desk will be installed before the end of the year.

Letters to

the Editors

Fall Clean-Up Time

The Montague Cemetery Commission will be conducting our annual fall clean-up of the town cemeteries, in particular Highland

Cemetery, next Tuesday, November 19. Removing seasonal decorations from your loved ones' graves before the above date will be much appreciated.

The commission clean-up will include the removal of dead flowers and wreaths, broken items, and debris such as plastic flowers that have blown onto nearby headstones. According to the cemetery rules and regulations, all summer decorations must be removed by November 15 and all winter decorations by April 15. "If these items become unsightly, dangerous, detrimental or diseased, or when they

do not conform to the standard maintained by the commission, they will be disposed of."

It is our purpose, as a Commission, to take reasonable precautions to keep the cemeteries clean, free of clutter, and safe for visitors and all who have loved ones buried on the property. Please do your part by being mindful of items that make it difficult to maintain the area around the headstone.

Jo-Ann Prescott
Montague City
Member, Montague
Cemetery Commission

Averse to Surprises

Last March, New England Power purchased nearly 53 acres of land in Wendell along Wendell Depot Road for \$145,000. Because of our recent history of unwelcome large-scale energy projects, citizens of Wendell are wary of corporations that have their own agenda to meet their investment goals.

For several months, No Assault & Batteries in Wendell has been attempting to contact New England Power and National Grid. A spokesperson from National Grid told us recently that her company has "no intention yet to use the land, and may never use it at all." She said National Grid is in the habit of buying available parcels next to the power lines, or in other strategic places, but they may use it sometime for

"transmission lines, a substation or a lay down area."

None of our local communities like surprises from corporations who make decisions in distant headquarters that impact the environment where we live. Transparency should be an important corporate goal to ensure good planning and cooperation.

We hope that National Grid will continue to tell us what they plan to do with this important land along Wendell Depot Road, and that they will work with citizens of Wendell to address our issues and our goals.

Court Dorsey
Wendell
for the No Assault & Batteries
Coordinating Committee

DEPT. OF CONFLICTING EVENTS

Interfaith Service for Leverett's 250th; Post-Election Political Strategy Session

LEVERETT – Twelve interfaith communities will bring their music and wisdom together in celebration of Leverett's 250th anniversary.

The interfaith service, "Sharing Divine Love for Peace," will be held at the Leverett Congregational Church, 4 Montague Road, this Sunday, November 17, from 2 to 4 p.m., and is free and open to the public.

Each interfaith community will share singing, prayers, or another way they seek to foster peace and love. Most will invite the audience to join in. Participants will also share a little of their history and practices.

Along with the Leverett Congregational Church, the service is sponsored by the Mount Toby Friends Meeting, the New England Peace Pagoda, and the Interfaith Opportunity Network.

Other participants include the Bahá'í Community of Western Massachusetts, Hampshire Mosque / Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts, Hope Community Church, Hopping Tree Sangha, Jewish Community of Amherst, North Leverett Baptist Church, New England Peace Pagoda, and the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst.

"We hope an interfaith service can remind us that we are so much more alike than we are different," said Lee Barstow, pastor of the host church. "Every human being wants to be happy, and our happiness depends on our conscious connection to each other, to the earth, and to all life...."

"We hope this service will help grow our awareness that no matter the differences in each of our traditions, we are all after the same function, which is to grow the love and peace that is at the heart of our human potential."

A reception will follow in Leverett Town Hall.

GREENFIELD – Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution (FCCPR) will hold its quarterly meeting this Sunday, November 17 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Guiding Star Grange, 401 Chapman Street in Greenfield.

The meeting's theme is "After the 2024 Election: What comes next? Where do we go from here?"

"We invite people to come together to discuss what our community will do in the face of the looming Trump presidency, and to discuss the failure of the Democratic Party to address concerns of working people in this country," said Ferd Wulkan.

"We will also discuss what we need to do in Massachusetts to ensure the rights and safety of people under this new regime."

Two statewide referendum issues that FCCPR focused on in the election succeeded: Question 1, which authorizes the state auditor to resume audits of the state legislature, as was the case in the 1990s, and Question 2, which eliminates MCAS as a high school graduation requirement.

"We may have to take action to consolidate these wins, and to ensure the will of the people is not thwarted by the leadership of the Massachusetts House and Senate," said David Cohen.

The public is welcome to join FCCPR for the discussion as to what direction the group's organizing will take in 2025 and beyond. "We need to hear all voices, and combine our ideas moving forward in this new political environment," the group writes.

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

November is a **special month for writers**, some of whom have taken on the challenge of writing every day for 30 days: 30 poems, plays, or just one piece – a novel, perhaps? Who knows what might result from a disciplined daily writing habit!

The LAVA Center in Greenfield is hosting daily open writing times all month, with someone in attendance to supply prompts for those in need of a boost. For hours and more information visit thelavacenter.org/write-nov.

Habitat for Humanity invites people to **build gingerbread houses** this year for their fundraiser to build affordable homes. Construct them at home with your team using base materials supplied by the organization.

There are eight creative categories to shoot for, and prizes involved. Learn more at pvhabitat.org/events/gingerbread-build. The final day to register is December 4, and supplies will be given out on December 7.

Jeanne Weintraub will hold a **Holiday Pop-up** at her house on 2 North Street in Montague Center, next to the red brick church, this Saturday, November 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. On offer will be 2025 bird ecology wall calendars, five different jigsaw puzzles, tea towels, coasters, tote bags, stickers, notebooks, and ornaments, all with ecology and pollinator themes designed by “MsGreenJeanne.”

Artspace Community Arts Center in Greenfield has been planning to add a **ceramics studio** to their building, and are holding a “Fired Up!” fundraiser open house this Saturday and Sunday, November 16 and 17, where you can check out their plan. There will be a clay exhibit, and professional ceramicists demonstrating their craft.

Artspace hopes to raise \$100,000 to equip the studio, and an anonymous donor has offered to match all donations up to \$30,000. Readers may donate to the cause at tinyurl.com/clay-funds.

Artspace has also put out a call for submissions for a **community art show** titled “Forward.” They are looking for artwork that captures the essence of “forward” as an exploration of evolution, change, and movement. The show will run from January 17 to February 28.

Painters, musicians, and sculptors from Franklin County are invited to submit by December 2. Find out more at artspacegreenfield.org. There is no submission fee.

A screening will be held this Sunday, November 17 at 6 p.m. at the Great Falls Market space, 109 Avenue A in Turners Falls, of the 2016 documentary *Off Frame: Revolution Until Victory*, “a meditation on the Palestinian people’s struggle to produce an **image and self-representation on their own terms** in the 1960s and 1970s, with the establishment of the Palestine Film Unit as part of the PLO.”

Director Mohanad Yaqubi’s critical look at these archives, which runs 65 minutes, is part of the local Palestinian Liberation Film Series, open to the public by donation. A potluck will precede the screening at 5 p.m.

Grayson Funk, manager of strength and conditioning at the Greenfield Y, will join the Kitchen Club at the Gill-Montague senior center in Turners Falls next Monday, November 18 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. to present “Understanding the **Why Behind Fitness and Nutrition for Seniors**, Part Two.”

Topics include the role of nutrition in fitness, how to optimize food intake for sustained energy, and pre- and post-workout snacks. Kathie Curnick, a nurse and Healthy Heart Ambassador, will be there to take blood pressures for those interested. All are welcome, no appointment needed.

The final **Senior Tech Time** session for 2024 will take place on Monday from 4 to 6 p.m., also at the Gill-Montague senior center. Techies from Franklin County Technical School will outline the basics of artificial intelligence, as well as what

it can do for you. All are welcome, and no appointment is needed.

Finding the money to get off of fossil fuels by upgrading your home or car is important, but very complex. Greening Greenfield invites the public to an **Energy Fair** where attendees of all income levels can learn about new programs and incentives, meet people who can give them the details they need, and sign up to get started.

The Energy Fair will be held Monday, November 18, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the John Zon Community Center in Greenfield. Pre-register at bit.ly/energyfair24 or call (413) 774-5667. Free pizza will be provided.

The New Salem Library will host a free musical evening with the **River Valley Quartet** – Russ Scott, Kathryn Scott, and Joe McCaffrey on clarinet and Sue Dunbar on bass clarinet – next Tuesday, November 19 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. They will play a mix of classical and military favorites with lots of toe-tappers and something for everyone. For more information, call the library at (978) 544-6334 or email n_salem@cwmars.org.

Retired longtime *Greenfield Recorder* reporter and editor **Richie Davis** will read at the Leverett Public Library next Tuesday, November 19 at 6:30 p.m. from his trilogy of collected feature articles: *Inner Landscapes* (2020), *Good Will & Ice Cream* (2021), and *Flights of Fancy, Souls of Grace* (2022). Signed copies of the books will be for sale at special prices.

The Greenfield Community College (GCC) Senior Symposia present a discussion about “What Just Happened, and Why: **The 2024 Presidential Election**” on Thursday, November 21 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the college. Mark Lendler, professor emeritus of government at Smith College, will lead the discussion. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at engage.gcc.mass.edu/workshops.

Temple Israel in Greenfield hosts a live concert by nationally-acclaimed artist and Jewish educator Alicia Jo Rabins next Thursday, November 21 at 7 p.m. “**Girls in Trouble: Bringing Biblical Women to Life through Song and Storytelling**” presents a series of indie-folk, bluegrass-inflected songs that interpret the lives of Biblical women

in all their complexity. Rabins uses her voice accompanied by plucked violin, a loop pedal, and guitar to weave poetry and music together into what are described as “beautiful and haunting songs.”

There is a suggested sliding-scale donation of \$15 to \$20, or \$5 to \$10 for Temple Israel members and those under 18.

The **Little Drummer Craft Fair** will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. next Saturday, November 23 at Franklin County Technical School in Turners Falls. The juried craft fair features unique hand-crafted products from more than 55 artists and craftspeople from New England and beyond.

The fair is held indoors at the school, with plenty of free parking, and culinary arts students and staff will provide refreshments. Check out the “Little Drummer Craft Fair” Facebook page for updates and more information, or call (413) 863-9561.

Riverboat captain and Ryan Lelerc shares his adventure stories and a slide show collected while working as a guide for two sporting lodges in Alaska next Saturday, November 23 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Northfield Mountain Visitors’ Center.

“Destination Alaska!” will be an **insider’s look at America’s last frontier**, highlighting its world-class fishing and showing close encounters with dangerous wildlife, float planes, jet boats, and helicopters. Locations include a very remote lodge on the Aleutian Peninsula and a renowned fishing spot in Bristol Bay. No registration is necessary.

Field Notes, a **live storytelling event celebrating local food and farming**, is coming for a sixth time to the Academy of Music in Northampton, and CISA, the sponsoring organization, is looking for people to pitch story ideas.

Your story needs to relate to local food and farming and be a true, personal tale taking about seven minutes to read aloud. If you haven’t stood up in front of an audience to speak before, they offer coaching. Spanish interpretation and stipends are available.

Pitch your story buylocalfood.org/get-involved by Wednesday, November 27 to be part of the show.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

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POTHOLE PICTURES

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drawings, Christmas items.

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WENDELL from page A1

weather demands a change.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad got the job of soliciting surplus equipment from town departments and creating a list ahead of time for potential buyers. He said he has had no experience organizing a town auction. Manley said former selectboard chair Dan Keller used to do most of the organizing.

Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato said she hoped that Keller might be willing to help organize the auction this year, and even be willing to run it.

Charity Liquor

Manley suggested that someone should check whether state law against “happy hour” applies to non-profit organizations. The rule seems to aim to lower any incentive for someone to drink quickly in a limited time frame.

The Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse has offered beer and wine at several Meetinghouse functions, and in fine weather people

have taken their drinks outside. Some are even alleged to have walked across Center Street onto the north common, which is town property, not Meetinghouse property. Alcoholic beverages need to remain at the licensed facility.

Selectboard member Paul Doud agreed to talk with members of the Friends and let them know the town needs to tighten its rules for one-day liquor licenses. No one mentioned any issues with over-consumption, or serving minors.

Johnson-Mussad said he will check with town counsel, or with the state Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC), for clarification of the law.

Other Business

Sara Jenney resigned from her position as animal inspector. Budine asked whether she had sent a written notice to town clerk Anna Wetherby, which is necessary to make the resignation official.

The board appointed Carolina Mendez to the open space committee and Lonny Ricketts to be

Wendell’s contact for the state Department of Public Health and Homeland Alert Network.

Johnson-Mussad said his call to a pest control company had not yet been answered. Both the office building and the town hall have mice.

In his coordinator report, Johnson-Mussad said the 2023 town annual report is ready for proofreading and being sent out for printing.

He reported that Erving’s grant application for a feasibility study for a walking and bicycle trail from Farley to Wendell Depot, which would run through Wendell, was approved.

DiDonato said she would write the annual report for Wendell’s Green Communities status. She said it is a necessary part of any Green Communities grant application, but that Wendell town buildings are not occupied full-time, so their energy use is low already. She and New Salem energy committee chair Zara Dowling have been working on possibilities for lowering energy use at Swift River School.

Johnson-Mussad said the town needs to hire a long-term library cleaner.



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PAPER

Week of November 18 in Montague



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BOOK LAUNCH

THE KARMAN LINE by Daisy Atterbury w/ Andrea Lawlor

SUNDAY, NOV. 10 • 7pm

POETRY

DARA BARROIS-DIXON MATTHEW ROHRER DOBBY GIBSON ALAN FELSENTAL

SATURDAY, NOV. 16 • 6pm

NORTH CAROLINA HURRICANE RELIEF FUNDRAISER

hosted by Caroline Rayner

SATURDAY, NOV. 23

66 AVENUE A • TURNERS FALLS

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RETURN from page A1

more respect. All these years later, if you look at it, the whole world is going back to the Native way of life: respect for the Earth.”

Not every election postmortem has arrived at that same conclusion, but Pourier takes a long view. “It took seven generations for us to get here,” he said. “The return of these items will bring healing to the next seven generations.”

In 2022, the Barre Museum Association voluntarily returned approximately 150 items from its private collection that had been stripped from the bodies of hundreds of unarmed Lakota who fell at the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. Those items had been donated to the museum by a local resident named Frank Root, who had acquired them from a contractor hired by the US Army to clear the killing field of the victims’ bodies.

“How many people can say they live down the road from a massacre of their disarmed relatives? Seeing the grandmas and the kids that were crying,” when the Wounded Knee items came home, Pourier said, “I’m positive it is helping them to start to process that historical trauma. I can’t put words to how big this is.”

Those relics are now kept at the Oglala Lakota College in Pourier’s hometown of Kyle, South Dakota. He said, “For me, personally, I would never want to display those items from massacre victims.”

The two headdresses returned on Monday were not associated with Wounded Knee. They remained unclaimed in the museum’s collection until Elizabeth Armen Martin, clerk of the Museum Association, brought them to the attention of Jeffrey Not Help Him, an Oglala man who had assisted with the 2022 repatriation.

Not Help Him determined that the 50-inch war bonnet, made of



Above: Tribal historic preservation officer Justin Pourier inspects the war bonnet on Monday. At right: The chief’s headdress.



braided horsehair, prominent eagle talons, the fur of a white-tailed deer, and intricate porcupine quillwork dyed orange and red; and the chief’s headdress, made of red wool, bison hide, metal bells, and tin ornaments with more than 30 attached golden eagle feathers – a few feathers had gone missing from the trailing end of the 60-inch headdress – were also of Lakota origin.

On Monday, Pourier carefully examined the war bonnet without removing it from the box. At the top, a single eagle feather had been dyed red.

“I’m fairly certain...” he said. “A

red painted feather signifies a member of a warrior society – warriors who have been wounded in battle.”

Regarding the eagle feather headdress, Pourier said it would have been worn by a chief, not necessarily in battle, but as a sign that the chief protected his people. He knows what he is talking about. He is descended on a grandfather’s side from Chief Four Bears (circa 1784-1837) and on a grandmother’s side from Chief John Grass (1836-1918).

“My heartfelt thanks for inviting us to continue our cooperation with the library,” Pourier offered members of the Museum Associa-

tion on Monday. “When we return these items back home, whoever wore these war bonnets, everyone in their family – everyone on the reservation – feels honored. These are symbols of protecting our people and our way of life. That energy and that spirit returns.

“Reservation life is a hard way of living,” he continued. “This shows the way to a better future for our young boys and girls. For them to be able to come see these items on the reservation is very important. I offer you *Wopila Tanka*. That means, ‘Big thank you.’”

SPORTS from page A1

48 points against Mahar, they buried the Mountain 50-16.

Monument’s high-flying offense consists of passes and misdirection runs. On their first possession they threw eight times, including completing a pass on a fake punt, and finished the drive on a misdirection. The entire offense went one way while the carrier went the other way – straight into the end zone. Another pass gave the visitors an 8-0 cushion.

On the ensuing possession, Tech grounded ahead, culminating in a Josiah Little score. And like a bullet, Little darted into the end zone for the 2-PAT to tie it up.

That’s when the Eagles’ defense took over. An interception by Madix Whitman set them up for their next score, and Ethan Smarr kept the drive alive by making a catch while keeping his toes in bounds.

After Little scored another TD, the extra point failed, making the score 14-8, but a penalty was called, and the yardage was paced off on the kickoff. This did not please the home crowd. “If you call a penalty,” a few of them reasoned, “then the extra point try should be done over. Not on the kickoff!”

“They either count the penalty on the extra point or on the kickoff,” another called out. “Not both.”

In the end, it didn’t matter. When the Spartans attempted another pass, Tyler Yetter ripped the ball out of the receiver’s hands,

setting up a Smarr touchdown and giving Tech a 20-8 lead in the second quarter.

That’s when it began spitting snow, making the passing game a little harder. In the second half, Tech’s secondary stood out, hitting targets just as they received the ball. When Tech got the ball, Little sprinted all the way downfield to put the score at 34-8, and Tech scored once more in the third to make it 42-8.

Both teams went on to score

again before the final whistle. Monument used their misdirection offense to put another 8 on the board, and Maxon Burnette responded to make the final score 50-16.

Under center, Yetter went three-for-six for 27 yards, rushed for 12, and he made two interceptions. Little ran for 271 yards, caught a pass for 8, and scored five touchdowns and four 2-pointers.

Burnette rushed for 61 yards and a touchdown and returned a kick for 23 yards, Wyatt Whitman

rushed for 38 and scored a 2-PAT, and Jaxon Silva rushed for 32. Smarr made two catches for 19 yards and a touchdown, and Zaydrien Alamed scored a two-pointer.

Nolyn Stafford (eight tackles), Madix Whitman (seven tackles and two interceptions), and Hunter Donahue (six tackles) led the defense.

This Saturday afternoon, coach Joe Gamache goes after yet another state vocational title as he and his team take on the Assabet Aztecs.



Above: Franklin Tech QB Tyler Yetter pitches the ball to his running back during Tech’s 50-16 victory over Monument Mountain last Friday. At right: The Turners Falls cheer squad practices the liberty stunt.



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NICOTINE from page A1

Most of Sbarra’s testimony focused on the proposed limitation of sales of nicotine pouches to tobacco-only stores. She said that this section would be added because of concerns from tobacco control inspectors who “have seen, and been told by school officials, [about] the increase in use of these products by youth.”

“We don’t know the amount of nicotine that is actually in these products,” Sbarra said, “except that when it’s been tested, it’s been orders of magnitude greater than those that have been found in cigarettes.”

“The products are usually flavored,” she added, “and if they are flavored, they would violate the state law in Massachusetts. However, frequently, these products, when they are flavored, are not explicitly labeled.”

Sbarra said her organization feels the best solution is to restrict the sale of these products to tobacco-only stores. She recognized that Montague has none, but said that she “can’t imagine that these products cannot be purchased online, or from another municipality, if someone really thinks that taking all of this nicotine is better than smoking.”

Ilana Gerjuoy, a prevention strategies coordinator at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), spoke on behalf of FRCOG’s Communities That Care Coalition. “One thing that we do know from research over the years about tobacco products and alcohol,” she said, “is that when you see products in our community with a higher outlet density, that does increase use among youth. It creates normalization, which increases youth use.”

Gerjuoy added that many of the nicotine pouch brands are manufactured by tobacco companies.

Opponents Weigh In

Retired Harvard University librarian Steven Helfer, who attended via Zoom under the screen name “fatblackcat77,” spoke on behalf of a nonprofit organization he co-founded called Cambridge Citizens for Smokers’ Rights, which he said does not accept money from the tobacco industry.

“[T]his proposal has nothing to do with youth,” Helfer argued. “Youth are forbidden by state law [from purchasing tobacco products] – this proposal only affects adults 21 years old and older. So putting it all as if youth is the reason for this, I think, is disingenuous.”

Helfer went on to say that the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves of the use of nicotine in some forms to help quit smoking, and made the assertion that in the quantities it is present in the nicotine pouches, “it poses no danger of addiction.”

Peter Brennan, director of the New England Convenience Store and Energy Marketers Association, said that his organization opposed the ban, and maintains that cur-

rent regulations limiting sales to adults 21 and older are sufficient. He called convenience stores “safe places to sell what is essentially a low-harm product.”

Like the other critics of the proposed change, Brennan argued that adults use the pouches to help quit smoking. “If the public health goal is to eliminate smoking, then this is a useful tool,” he said.

Josh Pruett, legislative consultant with the National Association of Tobacco Outlets, repeated these points, adding that the way “adult only” stores were defined, “not a lot of stores are going to qualify” around the state.

“It creates normalization, which increases youth use.”
– Ilana Gerjuoy, Franklin Regional Council of Governments

At the end of the hearing, board of health member Rachel Stoler asked whether the board needed to vote at the same meeting. Paxton said that while the agenda he had posted listed a potential vote, “I don’t think you have to.”

Board member Michael Nelson proposed that “we take all the comments from this meeting under advisement, and take some time to consider them and vote at our next meeting.” This motion passed unanimously.

According to the town website, the health board is scheduled to meet next on Wednesday, November 20 at 5 p.m., though an agenda has not been posted as of press time. The following meeting is scheduled for December 11.

Knowledge Gap

Nicotine pouches represent a growing segment of the tobacco industry, following a decline in cigarette sales. *NBC News* reported in August that Philip Morris International, owner of the leading pouch product Zyn, has invested \$232 million in a manufacturing plant in Kentucky and plans to open a new plant in Colorado to handle demand for the product.

The National Association of Tobacco Outlets (NATO) was founded in 2001 with support from tobacco manufacturers, according to the Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing, a project of the American Lung Association. Records available online indicate that several seats on its board of directors have historically been reserved for manufacturers.

The New England Convenience Store and Energy Marketers Association (NECSEMA) is an associate member of NATO, according to the latter organization’s website.

“Little is known about the product,” associate editor Jack-

ie Powder wrote in April in *Hopkins Bloomberg Public Health*, a publication of the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University. In order to fill that “knowledge gap,” several researchers at the University are undertaking a five-year research project on oral nicotine pouches funded by the federal National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Gerjuoy, who testified in favor of the new regulations in Montague, sent the *Reporter* a research summary from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention she said supported her testimony that high tobacco outlet “density” encourages youth use.

The summary cites studies evaluating the impact of outlets within a quarter mile of schools, and quotes a 2012 US Surgeon General finding that “neighborhoods that are more densely populated with stores selling tobacco may promote adolescent smoking, not only by increasing access, but also by increasing environmental cues to smoke.”

Big Sellers

Zyn is currently sold at four outlets in Montague, according to the product website, and a competing product called On! advertises that it is sold at two.

“We are concerned that local Boards of Health are getting so much input from non-local people who represent industry and the money behind these products,” Gerjuoy wrote. “[I]f good research shows in the future that a new nicotine product is actually effective for cessation and does not lead to concurrent use of cigarettes or increased nicotine addiction, that would be great.”

“The hope is that [the research] will be useful to those who regulate the marketing of these products,” Meghan Moran, one of the Johns Hopkins researchers, told *Hopkins Bloomberg Public Health*. “If we discover the companies are doing things that are uniquely appealing to youth, we want that to stop. If, as the science advances, we feel more confident that these could be potential harm reduction tools, then we might learn something that could help us increase the motivation of smokers to switch to these products.”

None of the owners of the four local stores listed on the Zyn website as selling the pouches testified at the October 30 hearing. Three did not respond to requests for comment.

Liana Pleasant, co-owner of Scotty’s Convenience Store on High Street in Turners Falls, said she was unable to attend the hearing, and does “not have an opinion either way.” Pleasant said the pouches are a “big seller” at her store, but that she believes that the health board is doing its “due diligence” and “collecting information” about the issue.

“If they decide to regulate it, I can go along with that,” she said.



TOWN OF LEVERETT • INVITATION TO BID

Double Cab 4WD Work Truck

The Town of Leverett is seeking bids for a Double Cab 4WD Work Truck. A copy of the Invitation to Bid is available from the Administrator at townadministrator@leverett.ma.us or (413) 548-9699. Sealed bids are to be submitted no later than December 2, 2024 at 2:00 pm. The contract resulting from this bid will be awarded by the Selectboard to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder.

The Town of Leverett reserves the right to reject any and all bids in whole or in part, and to waive irregularities and informalities, when at its sole discretion it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Town and to the extent permitted by law.

TOWN OF MONTAGUE • ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Turners Falls Sewer Manhole Rehabilitation

The Town of Montague, Massachusetts (Owner) is requesting Bids for the construction of the following Project: **Turners Falls Sewer Manhole Rehabilitation**

General Bids for the construction of the Project will be received at the Montague Town Hall located at 1 Avenue A, Montague, MA, until Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 10 AM local time. At that time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read.

The Project includes the following Work: Replacement or rehabilitation of manholes identified during inspections. Rehabilitation includes, but is not limited to, frame and cover replacements, miscellaneous point repairs, application of chimney seals, root removal, cleaning, grouting, lining, and pipe seal repairs. The work of this project shall be substantially complete by or before June 15, 2025, and final completion and final pay requisition must be submitted on or before July 15, 2025 to meet eligibility requirements for funding.

Owner anticipates that the Project’s total bid price will be approximately **\$300,000**.

Obtaining the Bidding Documents: Information and Bidding Documents for the Project can be found at the following designated website: www.wright-pierce.com/projects

Bidding Documents may be downloaded from the designated website at no cost.

To be considered a responsive Bidder, the Bidder shall have obtained at least one set of Bidding Documents from the Issuing Office using the name that is to appear on the Bid Form. The designated website will be updated periodically with addenda, lists of plan holders, reports, and other information relevant to submitting a Bid for the Project. All official notifications, addenda, and other Bidding Documents will be offered only through the designated website. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the designated website. It is the Bidder’s responsibility to check the designated website for addenda.

Instructions to Bidders: For all further requirements regarding funding agency notifications, funding agency requirements, bid submittal, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders included in the Bidding Documents.

The bidding and award of this Contract will be under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30, Section 39M. Complete instructions for filing Bids are included in the Instructions to Bidders. Each Bid shall be submitted in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders and shall be accompanied by a Bid Security in the amount of 5% of the Bid.

No Bidder may withdraw their Bid for a period of thirty (30) days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays after the actual date of the opening of the General Bids. This advertisement does not obligate the Owner for any costs associated with preparing or submitting bids.

The successful General Bidder must furnish a 100% Performance Bond and a 100% Payment Bond with a surety company acceptable to the Owner.

Minimum wage rates as determined by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Department of Labor Standards (DLS) under the provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 149, Section 26 to 27D, as amended, apply to this project. It is the responsibility of the contractor, before bid opening, to request if necessary, any additional information on Prevailing Wage Rates for those trades people who may be employed for the proposed work under this contract.

The Owner reserves the right to waive any informality in or to reject any or all Bids if deemed to be in its best interest.

This Advertisement is issued by the Town of Montague, Mr. Walter Ramsey, Town Administrator, November 12, 2024.

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FIRE from page A1

right now, with the leaf litter falling, the late-season warmth we’ve had, coupled with the breezes and the winds we’ve had, make conditions very, very dangerous, and very susceptible to a quick fire spread.

MR: How many brush fires has your department had to respond to?

TB: We’ve responded to about a half a dozen, mostly outside of the community. We’ve had a few smaller fires within the community, mostly contained, where people somehow weren’t aware of the conditions and the [fire] ban that’s in effect.

We’ve gone south, east, we’ve been everywhere. We’ve been down to Monson to assist our neighbors there, and we’ve been out to Worcester County through the mutual aid system. Most recently we assisted with a fairly large fire in Northfield. Our folks have been very busy.

MR: What do these mutual aid calls typically look like?

TB: It might be sending a brush truck, but right now when these fires get larger it’s a very labor-intensive process – “hand crews” is the fire service term, but basically it’s firefighters working with hand tools, doing a lot of digging around the outside of the fire, trying to remove any combustible material on the ground to hopefully stop it at that point.

There’s also a lot of that work that comes into play when fires encroach from a wooded area to a residential area. Then we start bringing fire engines in closer to the homes to help protect them.

Each scenario has a little bit of a change. It’s a very unique fire problem, wildfire and its urban interface. It takes a lot of players to make the situation work, doing a lot of separate jobs with a common goal.

MR: Who makes the official determination that there’s (A) a drought, and (B) a ban on fires?

TB: Drought conditions are monitored by the state, and typically those official markers would come from them...

As far as the bans go, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Code grants the fire chief in each community the authority to put up that ban in place.

One of the things that has been extremely helpful for all the fire chiefs in Massachusetts during this is that we are getting daily briefings and updates through the fire mar-

shal’s office and the Massachusetts chief fire warden, who works under the Department of Conservation and Recreation. They send out a bulletin every day – sometimes twice a day – to give the current fire conditions and the state of where we’re at with any large fires burning within the Commonwealth. Numbers of fires, resources being used, current and forecasted weather conditions.

MR: Are we due any rain?

TB: There is no rain in our near future. I would expect this ban to potentially last into the new year, unless it should change and we do get some snow cover or substantial rain. But the amount of rain we’re going to need to really change the conditions on the ground would be considerable.

MR: We had a light rain the other day, and people were really remarking, “Oh, good!” Did it make any appreciable difference?

TB: Absolutely not. It’s negligible at best.

MR: Have you seen a season like this before?

TB: No, not in recent years. This time of year, this is very atypical. Very atypical.

MR: Does mutual aid also run across state lines? Has the Turners department gone to Vermont or New Hampshire with any of this?

TB: Yes, it does, [but] we have not yet had to go up there.

MR: Last week a number of departments were responding to a brush fire in Northfield – what did that look like?

TB: It was on Crag Mountain. What made this one difficult was what we call a wildland-urban interface – it was a combination of protecting homes and then dealing with the fire problem as well.... During the initial fire attack portion, two structures were very close to being endangered, and were protected. And then two additional structures were threatened later, and protected.

MR: Are there additional hands coming from the state?

TB: Absolutely. The Department of Conservation and Recreation, DCR, has trained wildland firefighters that are always coming out to assist. They’re our experts, really – this type of firefighting is their specialty, so they bring resources and they

bring experience, help in tactics and strategies in fighting these fires.

Throughout this period, the Department of Fire Services are frequently at many of these calls. They provide mobile rehab facilities for the firefighters, incident support equipment, drones, ATVs, UTVs.

MEMA’s involved in some of this coordination. The Massachusetts Air National Guard, out of Barnes and out of Joint Base Cape Cod, are involved – they’ve been doing a lot of the water drops.

The Massachusetts State Police Air Wing is involved, often helping to do aerial reconnaissance, giving firefighters on the ground a picture of what the fire looks like from above, weather conditions and structures that might be threatened that we can’t readily see from the ground.

The fire towers operated by DCR, which are usually shut down this time of year because they’re not needed, are being manned during the peak hours. They’re able to see signs of fire quickly and start deploying resources – they do a fabulous job of helping keep these things small....

It’s really nice to see that all the [stewards] of the taxpayers’ funds can coordinate, when called upon, and work together to make something good happen.

MR: Have there been a number of significant fires?

TB: As of five o’clock yesterday, the seven-day total for Massachusetts from the 5th through the 12th was 199 fires, with 516 acres burned. In the last 24 hours there were 21 fires, and an estimated seven acres burned.

Towards the eastern part of the state, at Mount Gilead in Lynn, they’re currently at 427 acres [total]. A fire on Old Forest Road in North Andover is estimated at 128 acres.

MR: These are ongoing fires?

TB: They have some level of control on them, but they’re still being monitored. Active fire may be knocked out, but it goes into what they call a “patrol mode” where they have to maintain a watch on it – fire is burning deep underground that can sometimes pop up, and as new leaf litter drops down from the trees there may be hot spots that reignite it.

MR: We’ve also had some very windy days!

TB: The wind has been quite a challenge, coupled with the dryness. Any spark or form of ignition

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can lead to a chain of events that could be potentially catastrophic.

MR: How has all this been from a staffing perspective?

TB: Nobody has enough staffing. It taxes all resources, for all communities, because it’s so labor-intensive – the durations are hours and hours into days, and some of these larger ones out east are weeks. It wears the personnel down, and it pulls them away from other duties. It is definitely challenging.

MR: Is the state trying to track potential causes in its database?

TB: As best as possible. Almost all of the fire activity, and I’m not saying that it’s intentional or negligent, can be traced back to a human cause. So it’s very important for residents to heed the ban.

Be very careful with smoking materials, especially if you’re smoking outside – ensure that you put it “all the way out,” as the slogan goes. Use a sturdy ashtray, with sand or water, to make sure any smoking material is out.

We ask that people be very careful when they’re using outdoor equipment, lawn mowers or leaf blowers or ATVs. The engines on them can get hot and create a fire,

and they can also create sparks...

No outdoor burning of any kind, including cooking, charcoal chimneys – now is not the time to do that.

MR: Are you seeing a good level of awareness from the public?

TB: I think it’s been very good. Based on what we’ve had to take care of within the Turners Falls fire district, at least, we’re getting good compliance.

But as this weather condition continues for a longer period of time, it’s very important that we don’t become complacent....

[And] if you see smoke or flames, please – the faster that we hear about it, the better chance we have of putting it out and creating a safer condition sooner. Please call 911 right away. We want to be able to protect you, and protect your neighbors.

The manpower required to take care of these situations is so great. It utilizes our dispatchers, our police officers sometimes get involved in road closures, the firefighters, the state police, the Air National Guard... We want to prevent as many of these incidents as possible, to protect homes, to protect lives, and to preserve resources for any other emergency that may happen.



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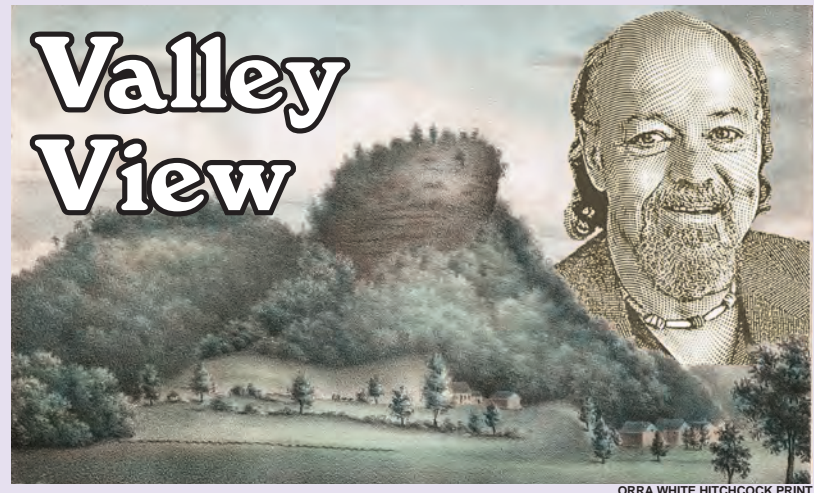
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 PREMIER DEALER



Exchanging Pheasantry

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – I remember my introduction to wing-shooting like it happened yesterday – occurring in my South Deerfield hometown, mostly along the base of North Sugarloaf between Graves Street and Hillside Road.

My late father was a sportsman of sorts, but not a hunter or fisherman. He loved team sports and was quite accomplished in football, basketball, and baseball – especially football, which carried him to the *Boston American* newspaper’s New England Unsung College Football Player of the Year award a year or two before my 1953 birth. He was a fleet, elusive halfback and a teammate of future NFL Hall of Famer Andy Robustelli at Arnold College in Milford, Connecticut.

Older local folks will remember the restaurant Robustelli owned on Barton’s Cove, a popular ’50s-’60s hangout. I remember meeting him and other New York Giants players at their preseason summer camp in Bridgeport. It was a big deal. I recognized their names from Sunday afternoon telecasts in the days of rooftop antennas and grainy black-and-white TV.

Never in my lifetime did my dad own a fishing rod or gun, but my mother’s brother Bob did, and he had introduced me as a young boy to fishing during summer Cape Cod and Nova Scotian vacations, and to skeet and trap shooting at a Minnesota sportsmen’s club. Prior to that I had honed my shooting skills with friends’ BB and pellet guns, then relied as a teen on some of their fathers’ beat-up shotguns and .22 caliber field guns, the use of which was accompanied by stern gun-safety rules. That laid-back scenario wouldn’t fly in today’s world. Then it was tradition.

My wing-shooting adventures began most often in the company of my boyhood friends “Fast Eddie” Urkiel, who took his own life in recent years, and “The Count,” who’s alive and well as a 40-year veteran high-wire lineman at Utah’s Snowbird Ski Resort. We all had nicknames back then, and still use them today when we get together.

The Count lived on Eastern Avenue, a stone’s throw from a narrow secondary powerline we favored over all other partridge-hunting sites. At the time, old Yankee pasture along the forest’s edge was being overtaken by young growth with many seeds and berries. Perfect habitat for partridge, official name ruffed grouse.

The Count called grouse “gray ghosts” because of his dad’s admiration for their speed and escapability. If you walked our old hunting paths today, you wouldn’t get a single flush from mature forest.



Ruffed grouse (Bonasa umbellus).

The same holds true for woodcock. Back in the day, we’d flush occasional resident woodcock on summer days, then small flocks of flight birds in the fall. The Count called them “timberdoodles.” Their numbers, too, have dwindled greatly. Without a dog as kids, we flushed far fewer woodcock than partridge. Timberdoodles are small and tend to hold tighter when danger looms.

In that ideal ’60s habitat, partridge would regularly burst out of the undergrowth, providing quick, challenging shots before disappearing behind branchy obstructions. When they eluded us on the way in, we’d remember the location, and move in slowly on the way back. The strategy worked now and again, but less frequently than a similar back-and-forth trout-fishing routine on upland brooks and streams.

In later years, with better shotguns and more experience, I learned

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B2

DEVICE ADVICE

Getting Your Phone Ready for 2025 – Even If You’ll Never Be

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – Your data is likely everywhere online, and the worst part of that is that much of it is data you weren’t aware of. Your photos, your videos, your emails, and most of your communications are stored or routed through various different companies’ services, together with oodles of so-called “metadata” that further define times, locations, and other bits of identifiable information associated with that data.

And while we hope it isn’t used for anything outright nefarious, it’s definitely already being used for things most of us aren’t aware of.

Short of living entirely off-grid in the woods – admittedly, an actual possibility here in Franklin County – there isn’t too much the end user can really do until our country passes a data privacy law, and you can expect it to be fought tooth and nail, or rendered toothless itself, if the idea comes up in the near future.

The FCC recently fined all of the major cellular service providers for selling your location data to pretty much anyone who wanted it, including analytics systems and “data brokers” that can easily combine data from multiple sources to track individuals. Recent reporting from *404Media* shows how this “advertising” location data could be used, for example, to follow abortion



seekers between states.

Unfortunately for all of us, it’s all but guaranteed that a probable Trump FCC under Brendan Carr will drop both fines and any possible regulatory objections to these kinds of practices, given his history.

That lack of control in your own data and life may make you feel a little helpless. And, I’m sorry to say, you are. We all are. That’s why we often rely on regulators to make companies stop doing things that are bad for people. After all, trusting elected and appointed experts to act in the public interest is part of the social contract behind our system of government – or it was, once upon a time.

For now, I have a few useful tips that I hope can make a difference in exercising control over your own data if and when things get bad (again)...

Toggle to “No”

First, the low-hanging fruit: Control where and how your data is shared. On your phone, this

means you need to sit down and review what’s going on. Much as you might check a credit card statement each month to see where money is going, you should go through your list of installed applications to be aware of what’s there, and prune that list if any names stand out to you as untrustworthy.

Remember, some apps may have been acquired by new companies or owners since you started using them. Do you trust the new owners not to abuse your data?

Apps also don’t need as much of your data as they may ask for. Just like you can hit “no” on those cookie pop-ups on websites and still enjoy the content on them, you can often restrict the permissions your device grants to applications and still get the functionality you expect out of them – though this isn’t always true. Review the privacy options in your phone’s Settings menu to see what apps are using what data, whether any have requested your location, photos, or files recently, and so forth.

see **DEVICE** page B6

BOOK REVIEW

Jackie Wullschläger, *Monet: The Restless Vision* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2024)

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – In October we could double-dip on gold and amber, ruby and topaz by gorging on the dazzling trees mirrored in the still water of a pond. It was a sight to hoard in the memory, not one we could reproduce for ourselves. But towards the end of his career the Impressionist painter Claude Monet did create an enthralling sight he wanted forever in his view, and because he painted it over and over again, we can see it too.

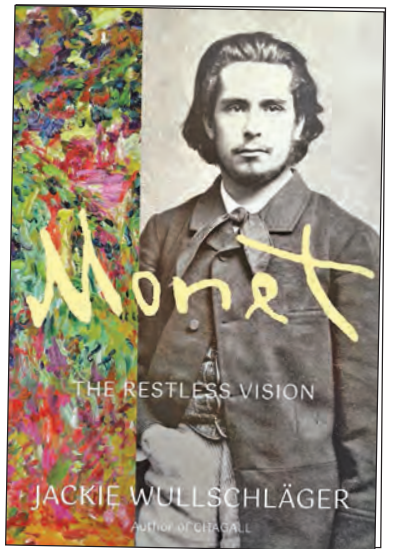
As Jackie Wullschläger explains in her brilliant new biography, Monet devoted his final years to painting the water lily ponds and the Japanese bridge in the garden of his house at Giverny. He had diverted a small river to create those ponds, then filled them with water lilies, ordering many of them from Japan

just so he could paint them.

Monet went out there punctually every day, smoking a Caporal cigarette while waiting for the moment of perfect light, his canvas and palette at the ready. This project was expensive, but he persisted even as his sight failed, knowing he might be blind by the time the lilies reached their blue and mauve maturity.

He wanted to capture those evanescent colors, the blues and greens, the greys and violets, the red of the curving bridge. He wanted to possess them. And he wanted to pass them on, negotiating fiercely with the French government about where and how to display his lily pond pictures so future generations – ours among them – can also fall in love with them.

By the time the reader of the biography reaches Wullschläger’s fine descriptions of Monet’s work on the



ponds and his devotion to painting the lilies, his immovable persistence in any task he set himself is no longer surprising. Indeed, the photograph on the jacket is not the usual image of Monet as an aged Santa in a Sun Hat. Rather, a formidable young man looks into the camera.

see **BOOK REVIEW** page B8

Pet of the Week



‘MOON’

Say hello to Moon! This sweet guy made his way to Dakin with help from a friend after being left behind by his previous people. He spent some time outside, and is often looking to get back out, even for just few minutes. He’s a bit sassy and only wants to be petted for a little while.

Change is hard for him after so much, and time to relax is paramount to him feeling comfy in his new home. The \$50 adoption fee includes spaying/neutering, rabies vaccination, current on distemper vaccines (you will need to provide boosters), a FeLV blood test, a microchip implanted and registered to you, treatment of fleas, ticks, and ear mites, a vet exam at Dakin, a health certificate, and a free vet exam within 30 days at participating vets.

Come in during open adoption hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m., or call the Dakin Humane Society at (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

to bring partridge down with surprising success through naked apples, alder, poplars and tall, tangled wild roses. It’s a skill that takes a lot of convincing and time to master, aided by light, fast-pointing, side-by-side double-barrels with open chokes.

For my taste, the wide sight plane of my pre-World War II French 16-gauge double-barrel that shot 2½-inch shells produced far better results than my 12-gauge Browning Citori over-and-under with its 2¾-inch loads and modern removable choke tubes. The wider sight plane is faster and deadlier. Similar to other difficult challenges, efficiency is directly related to confidence. I always believed wing-shooting and hitting a baseball shared many transferable skills.

These days, with the local partridge and woodcock population in noticeable decline, I choose not to kill them. Too much respect. Don’t need the meat.

That old childhood powerline along the base of North Sugarloaf isn’t the only covert where the decline is obvious. All my favorite grouse coverts are today barren. On the rare occasions when I flush one, my trusty shotgun still reflexively flinches upward, but I just don’t follow through. Instead, I tip my cap and let the bird escape, hoping it’ll establish a spring nest and brood.

In the old days, hunting without a dog, we’d hunt in small groups of two or three, and alternate walking five or 10 slow, alert steps before stopping to spook partridge into flight. In many cases I think that approach could be more productive than hunting with a dog, which produces more wild flushes.

A pointing dog can remedy that problem, but I never chose to own one. Personal preference, I guess.

The big difference is that in the flush-and-retrieve game the hunter must read the dog and anticipate sudden flushes, while those hunting over pointers move in to flush birds themselves after their dog has locked on point.

Give me the frenzied flush-and-retrieve game any day of the week. Gentlemanly shooting over pointers is, to me, too much like killing.

After I graduated high school, another friend who’s no longer with us introduced me to his personal style of pheasant hunting. The method was similar to my aforementioned partridge-hunting routine, except the pace was faster and busier. We’d get into heavy cover and walk three abreast, stopping often in unison to listen for fleeing footsteps in the undergrowth and watch for wiggling goldenrod and other brush.

I must hand it to my late buddy. His was a highly productive game. We shot many pheasants, preferably flying, but often on the run like rabbit hunting. Myself, I always preferred a flush, but can’t say the same for my partners. I was a developing wing-shooter, and they were filling freezers.

Which brings us to another late friend, whose family owned a Whately produce farm liberally stocked with pheasants each year during the six-week season. The family owned a tagalong black Lab farm dog named Smokey, who loved the excitement of cackling ringneck-rooster flushes. Father and son encouraged me to “Take him anytime you want. Smokey loves to flush pheasants, and won’t run off.”

That was a year or two before I got married in 1979, and I took them up on the offer, hunting not only their vast acreage but many other bottomland coverts not far off. Those were the days when most

pheasants were stocked on private land, spreading birds and hunting pressure thin. Today, most birds are stocked on state Wildlife Management Areas, which can be chaotic and potentially dangerous, with a lot of hunters and gun dogs working the same space.

When my South Deerfield grandfather died less than a year into my marriage, I bought his home, and within weeks purchased my first gun dog – a versatile black Lab named Sugarloaf Saro Jane, call name Sara. She had national-champion River Oaks Corky in her background and was a dynamo in the field.

As Sara aged out, a softball teammate and field-trialer introduced me to well-bred English springer spaniels, which I switched to in the early ’90s. Springers are smaller and an overall better dog for the type of bird-hunting I love. Sara was a better family pet.

Inevitably, it’s now me that’s aging out, and for the first time since I was a kid I’m without a dog. Meanwhile, the put-and-take pheasant-hunting game has changed dramatically – along with fall weather. I must say I find bird-hunting far less inviting when it involves sweating through tick-infested 60- and 70-degree November marshland.

Then again, if the day is right and the urge is there, I still have access to my friend’s experienced springers. But even that convenient arrangement won’t last forever. He recently put the demanding field-trial circuit in the rearview and will soon, more than likely, bury his last gun dog.

I have no concerns or regrets. Had my day. Many of them. And have now discovered new pursuits that fulfill my hunting instincts and keep me engaged.

I chase information.



Senior Center Activities NOVEMBER 18 THROUGH 22

GILL and MONTAGUE	ERVING
The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Open Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Daily snacks and coffee. Fitness room and pool table open.
For more information, please call 863-9357.	
Monday 11/18	Monday 11/18
10:15 a.m. Aerobics	9 a.m. Good For U
11 a.m. Chair Exercise	10 a.m. Seated Fitness
1 p.m. Kitchen Club	1 p.m. Yoga
4 p.m. Tech Topics: AI	Tuesday 11/19
6 p.m. Cemetery Commission	9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
Tuesday 11/19	10 a.m. Line Dancing
9 a.m. Chair Yoga	11 a.m. Social Stringer
11 a.m. Money Matters	1 p.m. Cannabis Informational Presentation
12:30 p.m. Drop-In Tech Help	Wednesday 11/20
3 p.m. Tai Chi	9 a.m. Interval Training
Wednesday 11/20	10 a.m. Chair Aerobics
9 a.m. Veterans’ Agent	12 p.m. Bingo
10:15 a.m. Aerobics	Thursday 11/21
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga (weather permitting)	9 a.m. Barre Fusion
11 a.m. Chair Exercise	10 a.m. Pilates Flow
11:45 a.m. Friends of the Senior Center Meeting	12 p.m. Thanksgiving Lunch
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo	Friday 11/22
1 p.m. Mobile Food Bank	9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting, open sew
4 p.m. Mat Yoga	
Thursday 11/21	LEVERETT
10 a.m. Montague Villages Board of Directors Meeting	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.
1 p.m. Pitch	Contact (413) 548-1022 x2 or coa@leverett.ma.us .
3:30 p.m. Montague Villages Volunteer Training	
Friday 11/22	WENDELL
10:15 a.m. Aerobics	Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments.
11 a.m. Chair Exercise	For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.
12 p.m. Pizza Party	
12 p.m. SHINE (by appointment)	
2 p.m. Chair Dance	

MR Wrapping Paper Edition • Artist Profile #6

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 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.

Soren Mason Temple is featured this week. Her design shows owl creatures within a colorful abstract background.

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

SMT: You are about to open something mysterious and wonderful.

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

SMT: An owl feather headdress, a stained glass rhino, a cape made of spiderwebs, a personal chef.

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

SMT: Knowing what’s happening around me without leaving the house. Crossword puzzles for entertainment/distraction from the real world and knowing what ASTA, OGEE and ALOU are the answers to. A place for my cats to sit.

Have a question for the editor?

Email it to us at podcast@montaguereporter.org and listen for our “Ask the Editor” segment to hear the answer!

The Montague Reporter Podcast



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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on November 13, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Wendell Weed Hunt

At its November 5 meeting, Wendell selectboard members were read a letter from state police concerning the board's demands for an end to low-flying helicopter surveillance. The demand was in response to the disturbance of a funeral ceremony by an unidentified helicopter flying at low altitude over the participants.

State police superintendent Colonel Timothy P. Alben wrote "...no professional pilot would ever intentionally disrupt a funeral or show such outward disrespect.... Generally speaking, our aircrafts are not utilized for broad marijuana detection or eradication missions, though we have utilized them (and will continue to do so) in specifical-

ly directed criminal investigations that may involve the illegal cultivation of such substances. ...With all due respect...marijuana cultivation remains an illegal activity at both the federal and state level."

Building Inclusivity

Montague's newly reinstated Civic Commission, tasked with determining a vision and strategy for the use of the town-owned Shea Theater, held the first of two public meetings on November 4. The goal is to help explore whether the Shea has potential to become something beyond the scope of its mission and vision of the past 24 years.

Robin Paris of the Shea's board of directors said she was hopeful about the health of the community and the recent reworking of the organization's mission statement to draw more diverse offerings. "We all have to get along," she pointed out.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on November 11, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Unacceptable Obstacles

On the drizzly Saturday of October 30, a group of stalwart individuals gathered for a wheelchair parade in Turners Falls. The brainchild of Sandy Facto, the event was designed as a challenge to the selectboard to spend an hour navigating Avenue A in wheelchairs to understand the obstacles she and others faced daily.

All three selectboard members,

Pat Allen, Patricia Pruitt, and Allen Ross, accepted the challenge. Two wheelchairs were battery-powered; Pruitt's was manual, which can make the slightest incline a major physical challenge. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio photographed problem areas as the group navigated their way over bumps, cracks, and steep grades, with extra difficulties at curb cuts – and when Pruitt got stuck in the mud.

Since the event, the town has patched some of the worst problems. "They did a good patch job," said Facto. "But I'm hoping it's just a stopgap for the winter."

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on November 11, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

Forty hands have been discharged from the rag-room of the Keith mill. The Clark & Chapman Machine Company have reduced their pay roll 10 per cent.

The John Russell Cutlery Company are running on full time.

The new dry-bridge on Prospect street is finished. It is 143 feet in length, 18½ wide, and cost \$1,600.

There is a probability that a Congregational church will be established here.

Fossil tracks pay. So says friend Stoughton, of Gill. He has just discovered a new pattern of these tracks, and has several men to work getting them out. He supplies cabinets at high prices.

Notwithstanding the counter-attraction at the German M.E. Church on Sunday evening, the Baptist Sabbath School concert was well attended and was a very successful affair.

Mr. Dickinson Holton has laid a very neat brick walk in front of his block, and we understand Messrs. Rist and Tupper propose following suit. It will give quite a city aspect

to Fourth Street.

Giant powder is to be brought to bare upon the ledge of rock for boring the new canal, and possibly steam will be employed to hoist the stone, of which \$200 worth has already been sold. Much of it will be needed to wall the west side of the canal.

Mr. Fish, of Riverside, was seriously injured on Friday, last, while hauling wood from Haywood's mountain. The stone, with which he blocks the wheel of his wagon, when coming down the mountain road gave away and overturned the wagon. Mr. Fish's leg was badly mangled.

The wife of John Zimmermann, living in the Russell Block, died suddenly Monday morning. Suspicions of foul play existing, Coroner Lyons of Greenfield and Selectman Oakman were called and after a careful examination of the circumstances attending and preceding her death, determined in a post-mortem examination which was attended by Drs. Walker and Fisk of Greenfield, and happily resulted in them stating without question that Mrs. Zimmermann came to her death by unusual but perfectly natural causes.

Alpheus Rugg has engaged in the meat business.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Shoplifting; Out-Of-State Vehicle; Male Taking a Nap; Guns Confiscated; Device Thrown In River; Fire; Smoke

Monday, 11/4

3:43 p.m. Caller reports that since she used the ATM at Carroll's Market, there have been two pending withdrawals for \$200 each that she did not make. She has contacted the business and made them aware as well. Would like on record. Report taken.

9:27 p.m. 911 open call from Clean Water Facility. No voice contact; buzzing in the background. Officer advised. Line disconnected. Area checked; both gates locked; no one around.

Tuesday, 11/5

3:11 p.m. 911 hangup call. Caller called back; juvenile stating that someone stole his belongings but gave them back; no need for PD assistance. Mapping in back field of Turners Falls High School. Officer made contact with the caller. The other party had moved along prior to officer arrival. Caller unable to provide more information on the other involved party.

4:43 p.m. Greenfield PD requesting officer check a Davis Street address for a vehicle involved in alleged shoplifting at Big Y. Officer advises vehicle is at address; attempting to make contact. Officer advises there was no answer at the front or back door; vehicle is still hot as if it was recently driven; and multiple lights are on inside of the residence. Greenfield PD advised.

5:43 p.m. 911 caller advising there is a fire in the woods on the left side of Cranberry Pond in Sunderland. Call transferred to Shelburne Control.

8:54 p.m. Greenfield PD advising that they have positively identified the female from the previously reported shoplifting incident as the party they had inquired about earlier. Probable cause for arrest for shoplifting per GPD. Female also has an active warrant in the system. Officers checking residence and area; unable to locate female. They will continue to be on lookout.

Wednesday, 11/6

8:02 a.m. 911 call reporting car vs. tree accident on Turnpike Road. Transferred to control; MPD officer advised and responding. Operator complaining of chest pain from airbag deployment; still in vehicle. Medical *en route*. Vehicle smoking. TFFD on scene. Tow requested. Family member *en route* to pick up operator.

10:23 a.m. Walk-in reports that his daughter has been running his business and has been stealing his mail and not paying the bills. Party is working with a lawyer. Officer advised party of options.

4:56 p.m. Caller concerned about an out-of-state vehicle that has been sitting on Edward Avenue for 3 or 4 days. Vehicle is legally parked; nothing suspicious noted.

5:40 p.m. 911 caller reporting smoke in Old Sunderland Road area. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

6:35 p.m. 911 caller from L Street reporting that she can't turn off the gas to her stove. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

8:18 p.m. Caller found a loose black dog with no tags on Old Sunderland Road. Dog picked up and taken to shelter for the night.

Thursday, 11/7

6:40 a.m. 911 caller states that a black Saab is driving at high rates of speed on Federal Street, passing three cars and a bus at one time. Caller states this is the second day in a row the vehicle has done this. Officers advised.

7:53 a.m. Off-duty officer reporting a Mercedes with damage parked near a fire hydrant at Sherman Drive and Masonic Avenue; possibly hit then backed up. Vehicle gone on officer's arrival. No damage to hydrant.

10:40 a.m. Caller reports someone is stealing his mail and throwing it away; reports he is no longer getting his food stamps or his Social Security payments. Reports only two people are allowed to get his mail, and he would like them both arrested. Officer advises no answer on callback.

1:11 p.m. Caller reporting that two male parties just knocked on her door near Fifth and K street asking questions about who and how many people live in the house, and if anyone speaks Spanish. When she started questioning them, they said they were Jehovah's Witnesses and left in a vehicle. Contact made with male parties; they are Jehovah's Witnesses.

6:39 p.m. Caller advised that he struck a deer around 7:50 last night on Turners Falls Road. Caller did not report the incident at the time and is now requesting an accident report. Officer advised caller of options.

7:07 p.m. Caller advises there is a male inside a vehicle in the Family Dollar parking lot who appears to be unconscious. Male has been there for around three and a half hours. Male has been observed smoking and then going unconscious repeatedly. Officer made contact with male, who advised he was taking a nap in his vehicle.

Friday, 11/8

11:36 a.m. 911 caller reporting minor accident in

Greenfield Savings Bank parking lot. Report taken.

2:25 p.m. School resource officer was contacted directly about a vehicle with Connecticut plates that has been parked in the same spot on Edward Avenue since Saturday night. Vehicle was reported once already and was determined not to be stolen or suspicious. Vehicle is parked legally.

2:58 p.m. Caller states there is a male party who appears to be passed out in a vehicle in the alley at Eleventh and Twelfth streets. Caller states he has been there for approximately 45 minutes; states she is not comfortable knocking on the window in case he wakes up "crazy." Officer advised. Male and female were sleeping in the vehicle; no sign of impairment; parties are inside now.

3:35 p.m. Walk-in advises that her sister-in-law's grave was tampered with. Officer advised party of options.

10:16 p.m. Greenfield PD requesting assistance confiscating the firearms of a party on Fairway Avenue. Services rendered.

Saturday, 11/9

1:12 a.m. Caller from Third Street states that her Maine Coon cat got out of her house yesterday around 6 a.m. Caller states the cat is a gray tiger in color, blind in its right eye, with a fluffy tail. Call logged.

3:32 a.m. 911 caller from Griswold Street states someone was attempting to break into their basement for roughly 20 minutes and is currently out in front of her door. Caller advises she has found knives on the back porch before and believes they belong to the male who tried to enter her location. Officer advises units will be on lookout in area.

12:28 p.m. Two-car accident in Salvation Army parking lot. No injuries; both parties still on scene. Insurance information exchanged.

2:16 p.m. Caller states a girl just threw a computer or tablet into the river across the road from the skatepark. Officers advised.

3:34 p.m. Report of assault and battery on Fourth Street. Report taken.

4:01 p.m. Caller from Montague Village Store reports that two teenagers were just in the store and would like them advised not to return. Caller advises her employee called stating that one of the teens tries to distract the clerk while the other tries to steal alcohol from a restricted area. Officer off with involved party on Main Street; spoke to her regarding the incident; verbally trespassed her from Montague Village Store; advises she is on her way home.

11:32 p.m. Reports of suspicious activity on/around Burnett Street. Officer advises she drove through the area a few minutes ago and did not observe anyone in the area.

Sunday, 11/10

4:07 a.m. Caller states he has been doing his laundry in the laundry room of an Avenue A building, and there is a strong odor of rotten eggs. Shelburne Control contacted and advised. Officer and FD checked building/location; unfounded.

6:11 a.m. 911 caller from Meadow Road advises a stranger walked up to his house, knocked on his door, and requested aid. Caller advises male's phone had allegedly died. Caller advises male is currently walking northbound, possibly asking other neighbors for help. Officer located and spoke with male party, who wanted to charge his phone via the cruiser aux. Caller advised of options; left area on foot.

12:16 p.m. Caller reporting that residents on Turners Falls Road are having an outdoor fire at this time. Control advised.

12:55 p.m. Walk-in from Fourth Street reports that his vehicle was entered and gone through overnight. Nothing missing; just wanted on record.

7:48 p.m. Caller from Federal Street reporting heavy smoke smell in the area. She can't see flames anywhere, but the smell is very pungent. Shelburne Control advised.

8:40 p.m. 911 caller advises she does not have an emergency; requesting to speak with fire services regarding smelling smoke while walking her dog in the area of Turners Falls Road. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

8:57 p.m. Caller from Mormon Hollow Road reporting smell of smoke in area. Shelburne Control advised.


9:29 p.m. Walk-in reporting smell of burning plastic near his residence on Turnpike Road; could smell it outside of the PD. Shelburne Control notified.

Monday, 11/11

9:51 a.m. Caller from Morris Avenue reports that someone broke into her house during the night and went through items in her basement. Report taken.

5:44 p.m. Party into station advising her vehicle was struck between 12:15 and 1:15 p.m. in the Food City parking lot. Did not notice the damage to her vehicle until recently. Report taken.

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The incredible Guggenheim in a Spanish city worth seeing.

SOUTH DEERFIELD – The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain – you can’t prepare for how it hits you – this swirl of titanium shimmering in the sunlight, a building that seems to defy gravity, curves spinning in all directions. Frank Gehry did something here. You get the sense that Bilbao had been waiting for this moment, for someone to come along and shake it up, say, *Let’s do something wild*. He designed it on a napkin, and it looks like it... but that’s the fun of seeing it up close. It’s like the Cybertruck:

you can’t stop looking at it. Before the Guggenheim in 1997, Bilbao was a river city on the north coast of Spain that felt worn-out: heavy on industry, light on flash. Shipyards, factories, smoke – those were the images that used to define this place. But then the European Union and a rich foundation teamed up to fund the Guggenheim Museum, and suddenly Bilbao was on the map, a must-see for anyone with an eye for design, or at least an interest in seeing how art can reshape a whole city.

Gehry didn’t just design a museum; he gave Bilbao its new identity. The local guide told me that the difference between before and after the “Big G” is remarkable, and that it put both Bilbao and its very stylish neighbor, San Sebastian, on the tourist map big-time.

Inside, the museum is just as jaw-dropping. You feel dwarfed by the space – those sweeping forms are even more intense up close. It’s almost like the building is alive, and you’re moving through it like a visitor in a massive, moving sculpture.

The exhibits are heavy hitters: Richard Serra’s massive steel sculptures in what seems like a football field-sized gallery curve and twist in ways that mess with your sense of balance. Jeff Koons’s giant flower-covered *Puppy* greets you outside like an oversized, blooming canine guardian. The art feels bold and experimental, like the building itself. Still, I was more impressed with the building.

Bilbao has another museum that opened recently in a beautifully restored building, the Museum of Fine Arts. This collection combines the old with the new in a historic building inside a city park. A lot more low-key than the busy, bustling Guggenheim if you want to see more art while you’re visiting.

There’s a soul to this city that goes deeper than the Guggenheim, a mix of old-school Basque pride and new-school energy. After a few hours of wandering the galleries, I hit the streets to soak in the rest of what Bilbao has to offer.

New and Old Together

A long walk to the Old Town, Casco Viejo, is worth it. The Old Town is the heart of Bilbao. This is where you find those cobbled streets and tiny *pintxos* bars. *Pintxos*, the Basque version of tapas, is a whole experience involving centuries of tradition and Spanish tastes.

I ducked into a local spot, El Globo, the kind of place where you stand at the counter, sip a glass of *txakoli* (the local white wine), and



Bilbao’s Guggenheim Museum was built in an area that used to be shipyards and oil tanks.

help yourself to a selection of small bites. The *pintxos* are piled high on the bar: anchovies, *jamón*, peppers, all arranged like little works of art. It’s casual, but it feels special – a way to get a taste of everything, all while chatting with locals who are more than happy to point you toward their favorite bites.

Although you can’t really go wrong with any of these, my choice was in Plaza Nueva, for the usual assortment of flavors that blast off the counters! There are so many places to discover in the narrow pedestrian-only streets of the Old Town.

Bilbao is full of these contrasts – cutting-edge modernism sitting right next to centuries-old traditions. A perfect example is the Azkuna Zentroa. It used to be a wine warehouse, but now it’s a massive cultural center with a cinema, a gym, and art exhibitions. The architecture is a little wild – brick columns that look ancient, but they’re all different styles. It’s playful and surprising, a place where Bilbao’s new creativity shines.

You can go swimming here, too, and the visitors look up at the bottom of the swimming pools on the second floor!

At La Ribera Market, another great stop, vendors still sell the freshest seafood and vegetables, keeping Bilbao’s food culture alive and thriving. It’s old-school Bilbao, a reminder that even as the city moves forward it hasn’t forgotten its roots.

This is a city that’s reinvented itself without losing its soul. The Guggenheim may be the spark that lit the fire, but it’s the way Bilbao blends the old and the new, the industrial with the artistic, that makes it such a compelling place to visit. You come for the museum, but you stay for everything else – because Bilbao isn’t just a city you see, it’s a city you *feel*.

Outside of Bilbao

We took a 30-minute ride through the mountains outside the city one morning to Galdames, where we discovered the stunning Museo De Coches Antiguos Y Clásicos Torre Loizaga. This nondescript series of garage halls holds an impressive collection of antique and modern cars, including one huge building with only Rolls Royce cars. Wandering around the grounds you find a magnificent tower, hence the name, and a small, romantic inn where honeymooners can stay.

The car museum was a bit different and unexpected. The next stop was even more so, in the small town of Balmaseda, where we visited a former textile factory where they once made berets. The hats. A trail through this part of Spain features industrial locations you can visit and learn how things used to be made.

At La Encartada, you can see the whole process of how they began in 1892 making *boinas* and Basque berets. It is a fascinating tour in English and it’s fun to watch the spinning looms and carding machines in the big factory.

When I came to the end of my visit and needed to get to the airport, I walked 200 feet to a bus stop and the fare to the airport was 1 euro! Bilbao is encouraging its citizens to use the convenient fare cards, so they provide a massive discount, which comes out to be about 3 euros for a whole day of rides.

Max Hartshorne, local travel editor, writes about traveling around our region and beyond. Max is the editor of GoNOMAD Travel and hosts the short-form GoNOMAD Travel Podcast, which you can hear at anchor.fm/max-hartshorne.



Pintxos in Bilbao are like tapas, but more complex.



Balmaseda, a small town outside of Bilbao.

Montague Community Television News
The Tip of the Whale

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Could *Leviathan* be captured in a three-hour video? Let us know what you think! MCTV just uploaded this recording from the two-day-long immersive arts festival in which the Shea Theater was swallowed by a whale.

You may not get to unlock the bartender’s secret menu, walk through the belly of the beast, or sing with the sirens of the underworld, but you will get to see some of the performances that took place in this documentation of the event.

Find it, as well as all recent selectboard

and finance committee meetings, on the MCTV Vimeo page or catch it on air.

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

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- LORNA JEFFERSON

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The Children's Page

FAIRY FAMILIARS

BY BEVERLY KETCH & HANNAH BROOKMAN



FLORA THE FAIRY HAS A LITTLE HOUSE IN THE PLANTER DOWNTOWN. THEY HAVE THEIR WHOLE FLOOR COVERED IN FOUR LEAF CLOVERS THAT THEY COLLECTED, WHICH ISN'T EASY WHEN YOU ARE ONLY FOUR INCHES TALL, AND CONSIDERING THEIR RARITY.

FAUNA'S BEST FRIEND FLORA LIVES IN HER OWN LITTLE HOUSE NEXT STORE, BUT A LITTLE DEEPER UNDER THE BUSHES. HER HOUSE IS SOFT AND COZY WITH MILKWEED FLUFF AND FEATHERS, WITH A LIGHTNING BUG FRIEND EVER NEAR.



FAUNA STOPPED BY FOR A VISIT ONE EVENING, BRINGING A LOVELY BLUISH PEBBLE AS A GIFT. THEN THEY SANG AND TOLD EACH OTHER STORIES 'TIL THE SKY WAS AT ITS DEEPEST DARK, AND THE STARS AT THEIR BRIGHTEST.



AFTER FAUNA LEFT TO EXPLORE THE NIGHT SKY AND SEEK ADVENTURE, FLORA HAPPILY LOOKED AT THE BLUE PEBBLE. "I WOULD LIKE TO FIND A PRESENT FOR FAUNA," SHE THOUGHT. "I WONDER, I WONDER WHAT IT SHOULD BE." SHE SNUGGLED INTO HER FLUFF AND FEATHERS AND DREAMED OF CANDY AND CAPES, FINE BOOTS AND PAINTS, BUT NONE OF THOSE THINGS WERE RIGHT FOR FAUNA.

THE NEXT DAY, FLORA WAS TENDING THE FLOWERS IN THE PLANTER WHEN A BEAUTIFUL MOTH LANDED NEAR HER. IT WAS ALMOST AS BIG AS SHE WAS, AND HAD THE LOOK OF THICK BROWN VELVET.



JUST AS SHE THOUGHT SHE WAS AT HER MOST AMAZED, PEARLS EMERGED FROM THE LOVELY CREATURE AND HER AWE KNEW NO BOUNDS!



SHE CAREFULLY TOOK ONE MAGICAL PEARL TO FAUNA, WHO PLACED IT REVERENTLY ON A FOUR-LEAF CLOVER IN THE CORNER. FAUNA WAS SHINING WITH GRATITUDE.

THEY PLAYED BELLS AND DRUMS AND ENJOYED ANOTHER FINE EVENING.



FAUNA'S WEEK WENT BY MERRILY AND THEN, MUCH TO THEIR SURPRISE, THE PEARL BEGAN TO MOVE! THE NEXT THING THEY KNEW, A FURRY LITTLE BROWN AND BLACK CATERPILLAR EMERGED. IT WAS A NEW FRIEND! THEY DELIGHTED IN ALL ITS WAYS, MOVING TO AND FRO AROUND THE LITTLE FAIRY HOUSE. THAT NIGHT THEY BOTH CURLED UP TOGETHER HAPPILY AND FELL FAST ASLEEP.

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DEVICE from page B1

Remember that you can easily flip that “Yes” to a “No,” and it doesn’t keep you from consenting later. And if you have an iPhone, remember to “ask” every app “not to track,” when prompted.

You should also audit the privacy policies for all those apps you’ve got, and recent changes have made that a little easier. Both Google and Apple require that publishers include details on app listings regarding when and how your data is used, sent to partners, or sold. It’s a tedious process, but you can go through the store listings for every app you have installed and make sure that these policies match your expectations. When they don’t, consider installing a more privacy-respecting alternative.

Do note, though: many of the “free” apps and services you use make their money by selling your data, and privacy-respecting services they compete with often cost money or require that you host the bits they need to work yourself, which can be a technical operation.

Your phone’s system settings and browser may also have additional privacy features nested in a privacy or security menu which you can review and enable. Some of these might not be on by default because they offer an explicitly compromised experience; you’ll need to consciously weigh the advantages and disadvantages when you consider flipping the switch.

Virtual Privacy

Using a virtual private network (VPN) is another common piece of privacy advice, but they aren’t a magic way to access the internet privately.

We are tracked in so many ways, even just for marketing purposes, that hiding the “to” and “from” lines on the metaphorical data envelope can’t always prevent our digital fingerprints from being reassembled at each end trivially through other means. These include the cookies that follow you from ad-serving social media platforms across the entire internet, distributing demographically discrete data to target you ever more precisely with ever more engaging ads.

So while they aren’t magic, VPNs can still help – particularly, and more effectively, when combined with making other changes in your internet use and settings, which will depend on how much you’re willing to inconvenience yourself.

Odds are that the social media platforms you post to, the search engine you find all the answers in, and every “free” app you use are all measuring what they can about you and distributing that to advertisers.

(One unfortunate truth I should also point out is that while blocking ads hurts digital publishers, it does appreciably increase reader privacy, and can help less internet-experienced family members steer clear of increasingly sophisticated ad-based scams.)

Given how deeply all these apps and services are now intertwined with our lives, it’s up to you, unfortunately, where to draw the line between privacy and convenience. For some inspiration, I recommend the website *switching.software*, which shows alternatives to popular options.

If you do decide to get a VPN, make sure it isn’t domestic and that it has been audited for privacy. Mullvad is one name I can recommend, but there are others. Stay away from the YouTube sponsorship names like NordVPN, Private Internet Access, and Surfshark.

And if you really care about the kind of privacy promised by a VPN, consider using a VPN chain, which nests multiple connections inside one another, mitigating the need to trust any single VPN provider.

Your data is out there, it’s personally identifiable, and it can and will be used against you. Even if you’ve done nothing wrong, it can be trivially changed and combined in ways that make it look otherwise. We already know this data can be used to follow and track you, to keep a record of your actions, and to try to manipulate your future actions – this is what we call “marketing” in the age of online advertising. Even within the world of not-out-right-criminal activities, and stripped of any tinfoil hat, your data provides a mechanism for others to exert increasingly unjust control over you.

As we consider the broader impact of concepts like justice, control, and other abstractions in the coming years, I hope some of this advice can help you make positive changes to keep your data – and you, dear reader – a little safer.

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

ARTIST PROFILE

Nick Maynard’s Magnified Sunlight

By MELISSA WLSOTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I first saw Nickolas Maynard at the Mutton & Mead festival this summer, and found him to be a very cool artist in the way he makes wooden carvings. He literally uses sunlight and a magnifying glass to do it.

Maynard was also at the Franklin County Fair this year. His pieces consist of wood with sayings on them, and very nice pictures. One of them is a tiger, which he gave me a picture of to use with this article. Another piece of his is a Japanese mosaic that is very cool.

Maynard has an interesting reason for doing his art this way. “I make art by burning wood with magnified sunlight,” he told me in an email, “because it is a cathartic mix of art and physics, in addition to being an excellent practice of fine motor skills.”

He began making wood carvings with sunlight when he was a kid. He was in college at UMass Amherst, making a sign that said “Nick’s Room,” when someone saw him and showed interest in one: “I explained that I was making it for myself, and he said ‘Yeah, but you sell these, right? How much? \$10? \$20?’ So I agreed to make him one and he gave me \$15.”

Maynard soon became a regular landmark in the center of campus on any sunny day, selling small blocks of wood burned by hand with magnified sunlight. He typi-



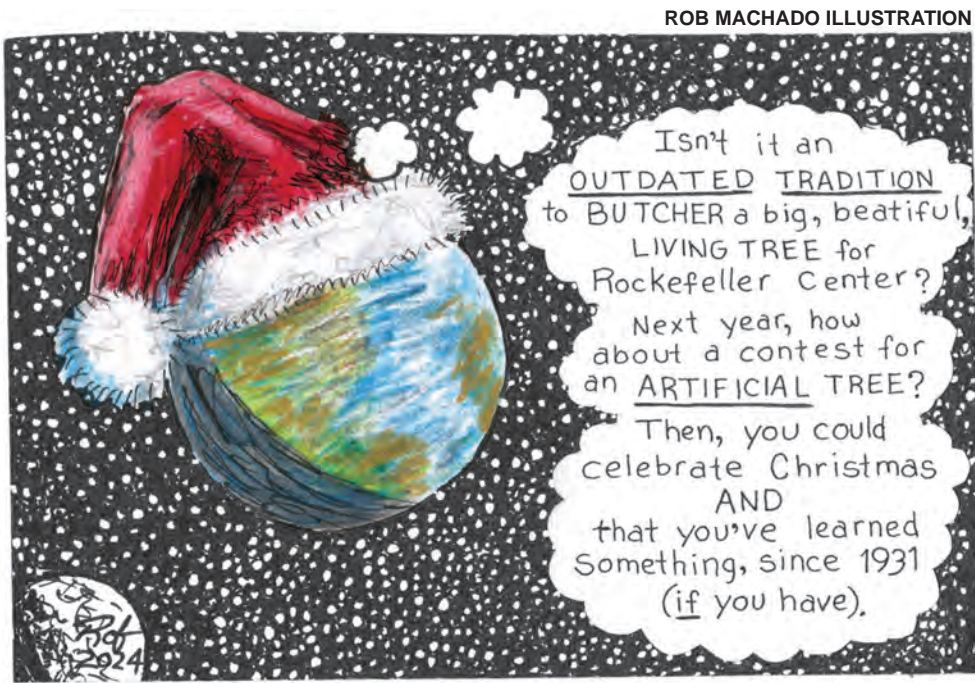
Nickolas Maynard etched this tiger image onto wood with a magnifying glass.

cally sells them in person, including custom pieces for people who have special requests.

He has not sold much online. He has made pages at Facebook (see [@TheMagnifiedSunlight](#)) and Instagram (see [@magnifiedsunlight](#)) with photos of some of his art. One piece shown on the Instagram page says “Hannah and Jason Established August 19th 2023” and has a dragon on it. The seal for the University of Massachusetts in Amherst is on another one.

As for how many of these pieces he has made, Maynard’s estimate is somewhere between 25,000 to 30,000 pieces, though mostly very small ones. He estimates he has practiced this skill for about 7,000 to 8,000 hours.

I would personally like to add that the pictures this man has burned on some of these pieces is amazing, and it is incredible work that he has done. I can’t imagine any people who have seen his work wouldn’t say the same thing.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Bombyx Center, Florence: Klezmer workshop with *Lisa Gutkin*, \$, 5 p.m. *Lisa Gutkin*, with *Christina Crowder*, *Pete Rushefsky*, and *Rachel Leader*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

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

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Simon White and the Roots All Stars*, special guests. \$. 6 p.m.

Abandon Dream, Turners Falls: *Beverly Ketch*, *James Wade Scales*, *beetsblog*, *Page Page*, *Nino*, *Jeff Coyne*. \$. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Apes*

of State, *Rent Strike*. \$. 7 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Lady Lamb*, *Humbird*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Elis Paul*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The Matt Swanton Band*, *Barrett Anderson*. \$. 8 p.m.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Marlee Siou*, *Donnie Coco*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Deep Thoughts, Northampton: *Ben Hersey*, *Ric Royer*, *Noah Britton*. \$. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Groove Prophet*. Free. 7 p.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Claudia Schmidt*. \$. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *JP Harris*, *The DiTrani Brothers*. \$. 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Moondog on the Keys*. \$. 7 p.m.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *rani arbo*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Next Stage Arts, Putney: *Hazmat Modine*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Scissorfight*, *theWorst*, *Bent*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Chained to the Bottom of the Ocean*, *Inter-course*, *Crippling Alcoholism*. \$. 8 p.m.

Wes Brown. No cover. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

First United Methodist Church, Greenfield: *Adam Matlock*. Free. 5 p.m.

Palladium, Worcester: *Exodus*, *Havok*, *Candy*, *Dead Heat*. \$. 6 p.m.

Temple Israel, Greenfield: *Alicia Jo Rabins*. \$. 7 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Mikaela Davis*, *John Lee Shannon*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Leftovers*. No cover. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Don LaCoy*, *Rich Stratton*, *Matt Cornell*. Free. 7 p.m.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Wolfman Jack*, Dead tribute. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Dalton and the Sheriffs*, *Zac Brown / Zach Bryan* tribute. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Secret Chord*, Leonard Cohen tribute, with *After The Rain*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Wildcat O'Halloran*. No cover. 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Morrissey Blvd*, *Autumn Drive*, *The Wild Brood*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Abandoned Building Brewery, Easthampton: *All Feels*, *True Jackie*, *Hoonah*. No cover. 7 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Mozzaleum*; screening: *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). \$. 7:30 p.m.

Next Stage Arts, Putney: *Club D'Elf*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Wolfman Jack*, Dead tribute. \$. 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Kath Bloom & David Shapiro*, *Spectre Folk*, *J. Burkett*, *Ana-Claire Simpson*. \$. 8 p.m.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

The Hoff, Holyoke: *Sinister Feeling*, *Dimension Six*, *Machines of Hate*, *Life Sentence*. \$. 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Viqueen*, *Problem With Dragons*, *Astral Bitch*. \$. 8 p.m.

looking forward...

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *AudioBomb*. Free. 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Dear Ella*, *Daybreak Rumba Band*, *Moonshells*, *Ruth & Ben String Band*, *Les Taiauts*. North Carolina hurricane benefit. \$. 12:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Frank Black*. \$. 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

The Drake, Amherst: *Sapien Joyride*, *B'Shara*, *Ravenous Conglomerate*, MCs. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Eggtooth Productions presents *Home for the Holigays*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Erin McKeown's Anti-Holiday Spectacular*. \$. 7 p.m.

Bombyx Arts, Florence: *An Evening With Tom Rush*, accompanied by *Matt Nakoa*. \$. 7 p.m.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Mirah*, *Footings*. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Eggtooth Productions presents *Home for the Holigays*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

Turners Falls High School, Turners Falls: *Montague Community Band Holiday Concert*. Free. 2 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

Iron Horse, Northampton: *The Greys*, *Hot Dirt*. \$. 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Donna the Buffalo*. \$. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule*. \$. 2 p.m.

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

EXHIBITS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wax*, *Water and String*, paintings in encaustic, watercolor, and embroidery by Pam Allan, through January.

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. *Deep Roots: A History of Agriculture in the Connecticut River* is on display in the hallway.

Montague Center Library: *Susan Dorais*, collages combining natural and architectural elements to create fantastical sights, through January 3. Reception next Wednesday, November 20 from 6 to 7 p.m.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Oh Beautiful Glass*, annual glass exhibit curated by Sally Prasch, showing a variety of styles from a diverse group of local artists. *Stacey Temples* exhibits paintings of family and nature in the Hall Gallery. Through November.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Wondrous Wildlife*, illustrations of birds in their habitats shown with their food sources, and prints of nocturnal wildlife in relation to plants, fungi, and food sources, by Jeanne Weintraub. Through December 17.

Geissler Gallery, Stoneleigh Burnham School, Greenfield: *Tourist*, photographs by Anja Schütz, through December 15.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *World on Fire*, art and installation by Greenfield self-taught artist JJ White, and *Community Art Exhibit*, both through December.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *When You Are Here*, paintings by Clare Churchill Seder. Through Friday, December 6, with a closing reception from 5 to 8 p.m. that night.

Rhodes Art Center Gallery, Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill: *Western Mass Illustrators Guild*, group show of artwork by local illustrators. Through November 22. Visits by appointment at jrourke@nmhschool.org.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Keith Hollingworth & Ron Maggio*, new works on view through November 30.

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: *Wool and Glass*, wool tapestries and blown glass work by coop member Peter Bott, through November 25.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Lisa Beskin: Photography*, photos of ice, and *Anita Hunt, (Re) Imaginings*, collages made from hand-printed papers, through December 31.

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.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Minibeast*, *Upper Wilds*, *Teen Driver*. \$. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Kinney Center, UMass Amherst: *Renaissance Jukebox*. \$. 2 p.m.

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

Mystery Train, Amherst: *Enya for Nancy*, *Hieronymus Harry*, *Rare Geese*, *Astronomical Miracle*. \$. 5 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Florist*, *Lily Seabird*. \$. 7 p.m.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Narrow Head*, *Sapien Joyride*, *American Ethos*. \$. 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *River Valley Quartet*. Free. 6:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *GCC Music Department Concert*. Free. 7 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *The Songs of Carole King* with *Sandy Bailey*, *Zara Bode*, *Kimaya Diggs*, *Tracey Grammer*, *Erin McKeown*. \$. 7 p.m.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Jesse Cook*. \$. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Habib Koité*, *Aly Keita*, *Lamine Cissokho*. \$. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *All's Eye Trio*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Brandon Seabrook*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

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BOOK REVIEW from page B1

One hand is in his trouser pocket, but his implacable gaze belies any casualness this pose suggests.

That gaze persisted. It is there in Renoir's portrait of him at 35, in the studio photograph of him at 43, and in another, his hairstyle no longer waving round his neck but cropped, almost military-style, at 59.

Monet was born in 1840, the son of a merchant. The family lived in bourgeois comfort in Le Havre, a major port in northern France. As a teen Monet drew well enough to make money selling caricatures of local personages. Unlike the breezy brushstrokes of his famous paintings, these finely detailed creations show that his paintings were rooted in his keen observations and the drawing skills to record them.

Monet's father did not approve of his son's wish to study art, and was miserly about supporting him in Paris. This affected Monet, of course, but didn't deflect his aim. He borrowed money from all who would lend it. His friend the painter Frederic Bazille was especially generous, but past loans only inspired Monet to send letters demanding more.

Eventually an aunt helped him with regular payments and he began to sell his pictures, but life with his first wife Camille was often straitened. For many years they were itinerants, spending only a few months in an apartment before moving on. Sometimes a cheaper rent prompted them, but often he simply wanted to go to another place so he could paint it.

This habit continued until old age. Monet did not paint what happened to be around him; he actively sought out compelling places. As a

result, he made many paintings of the same things. During his early career this was often a garden with flowers and young women in white dresses. Later he would take off for weeks at the shore, at one point returning to Le Havre to paint scenes of the busy port, at another creating picture after picture of the maritime rock formations at Étretat.

Later in life he stayed for weeks at the Savoy Hotel in London, renting a room overlooking the Thames so that he could paint picture after picture of the fog-bound river and its bridges.

The habit of painting a place over and over, learning how the light fell on it and then waiting until sun and shadow elicited a new appearance he could capture, eventually led Monet to paint series of pictures, such as those of the water lily ponds.

Among the best-known are his 25 paintings *Haystacks Near Giverny*, which he began in 1890, when he was 50 years old. They stand in the shorn field, an ordinary rural sight until Monet shows the light picking out color and changing the emotional effect. (Two of these alluring paintings now live relatively close to us at the lovely drawing room of Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington, Connecticut. The Clark Art Institute in Williamstown also displays several of Monet's paintings.)

Another series for which he rented a room to get the views he wanted is of the façade of Rouen Cathedral. From the bedroom window of a small house opposite, he painted 50 pictures of the varying light picking out the colors in the cathedral's sculpted and weathered masonry.

Wullschläger explains that her

biography is based on a cache of 3,000 of Monet's letters appended to the 1974-1991 French edition of the Wildenstein *Catalogue Raisonné* but not included in the English edition, and not translated into English until she did so as she researched this biography. She notes that while Monet has been "exceptionally well-served by art historians," there has been little attention to the artist's interior life.

Hoping to redress this, she writes, "My approach stems from the belief that painters translate the raw experience of life into art; that as the painter Sean Scully once said to me 'painting will always reflect your nature without mercy.'"

Monet was reserved, even conventional, except in anything that pertained to his art. All that shameless borrowing of money during his early years was so that he could paint.

Yet unlike many men of his time, including some of his painter friends, he acknowledged the son born before he married Camille, and unlike most middle-class men he did not try to avoid conscription by paying for a working-class substitute poor enough to put up with seven years soldiering in Algeria. Monet spent a year there before being invalidated out due to a severe illness.

Back in France he resumed painting, unfettered by the restraint that marked other aspects of his life. He described himself as gorging on working in the wind and weather, once writing "it was a joy to me to see this furious sea, it was like a nervousness."

Wullschläger notes that for the novelist Marcel Proust, "Monet's lilies symbolized the transformation of life into art." In his *À la recherche du temps perdu* Proust based the character of Elstir partly on Monet, describing him as feeling "the enchantment that he had succeeded in transcribing, in fixing for all time on his canvas... the throb of one happy moment."

In turn, Wullschläger has succeeded in describing the life of this taciturn man and transformative painter in orderly but evocative prose, authoritative, assured but unpretentious. Her biography is a sheer pleasure to read.

Enlightening, too: Who knew Monet's name was Oscar? He signed his earliest paintings as "Oscar" before switching to his middle name, "Claude."



This 1885 entry in the Haystacks series is at Japan's Obara Museum of Art.

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