

# The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

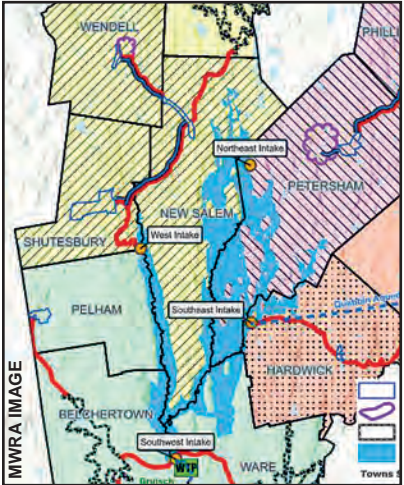
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## MWRA Estimates Using Quabbin Water Locally Could Cost Half a Billion

By SARAH ROBERTSON

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – Communities surrounding the Quabbin reservoir help protect a watershed that has supplied fresh water to the Boston area for nearly 80 years. Today, as more communities in the eastern part of the state are considering tapping into Quabbin water, officials in a dozen towns surrounding the reservoir are asking that the state first support their local water needs.

“My stance on eastern Massachusetts getting any more of western Massachusetts’s water is ‘Hell no – until they pay up.’” state senator see **QUABBIN** page A5



A draft study was released Tuesday on the feasibility of serving Quabbin drinking water to 12 surrounding towns.

GILL SELECTBOARD

## Crochier Not Seeking Selectboard Reelection

By KATE SAVAGE

At Monday’s brief Gill selectboard meeting, the board’s longest-serving member announced he will not run again for his position.

“Six months from now will be the end of my 15th year,” said Randy Crochier, “and I will not be running for reelection to the selectboard.”

“Motion to deny,” selectboard member Charles Garbiel countered. “Seconded,” added chair Greg

Snedeker.

Crochier said the board had accomplished most of the priorities he had when he first joined, including erecting a barrier fence on the French King Bridge and making the roles of treasurer and tax collector appointed rather than elected positions.

Crochier thanked the other members who have served alongside him for their commitment to the town over personal interests.

see **GILL** page A6

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Bill for Chlorination Water Clocks In at Six Figures

By JEFF SINGLETON

“I’m not worrying about paying this bill, because I don’t think it’s accurate,” Montague selectboard member Matt Lord said Monday about a bill the Turners Falls water department recently sent to the Montague Clean Water Facility (CWF). “This is for 20 million [gallons], and we think the next one is going to be for 50 million. Seventy million gallons of water use? That’s what the entire fracking industry used in California in 2014!”

Lord’s analysis came during a presentation by CWF superintendent Chelsey Little which cast doubt on

the accuracy of a water meter recently installed at the facility, which resulted in a bill to the town of nearly \$106,000, about nine times higher than the same period last year.

Other highlights of Monday’s meeting included a hearing on previously approved federal block grants, a host community agreement with a cannabis firm that keeps getting rejected by the state, approval of two events featuring visits by Santa Claus, and a decision to reject a bill for transporting a local student to Northampton.

Little showed the most recent bill, dated October 1, sent to the see **MONTAGUE** page A7



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Franklin Tech’s Maxon Brunette breaks a tackle by Assabet Valley defender Francesco Lopriore III during the third quarter of the state vocational quarterfinal last Saturday. For more coverage of the game, see Page A4.

BEHIND THE SCENES

## Cartoonist Not Taking Life ‘Over the Hill’ Too Seriously

By BELLA LEVAVI

**TURNERS FALLS** – A nagging older couple with a bossy wife, Thelma, and a submissive husband, Harry, has appeared in every edition of the *Montague Reporter* for the past six years.

They star in the weekly cartoon strip “Over the Hill,” created by Carolyn Clark, known to her friends and family as Lyn.

Clark, now 90 years old, draws this comic weekly. It portrays a husband and wife bantering about small daily issues, often ending with humorous punchlines that feel absurd, yet so relatable that they seem to come straight from the characters’ living room.

“Each cartoon is a vignette of

a little scene in the larger story of Thelma and Harry aging,” Clark told the *Montague Reporter* in an interview. “That’s all it is, to me.”

When I arrived at Clark’s home and was greeted by her Shiba Inu, Kobi – eerily similar to the dog in the comic named Tank – I was surprised there was no Harry look-alike being bossed around to walk the dog, make coffee for their guest, or clean the garage.

Clark lives alone with Kobi. “I am delighted to be single. I have no desire to have a partner again,” she said.

This struck me. I also have a fictionalized, exaggerated character in this same paper. But my character Mandy Mudballs, written with my see **CARTOONIST** page A6



Turners Falls cartoonist Carolyn Clark, pictured with her Shiba Inu, Kobi.

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

## Crowds Decry Dense Housing Plan for Candle Baron’s Land

By GEORGE BRACE

Leverett held back-to-back selectboard and special town meetings Tuesday night, with a large number of residents in attendance to comment on the proposed housing development on the 60-acre former estate of Yankee Candle founder Michael Kittredge.

Approximately 150 townspeople were on hand at the Leverett Elementary School gymnasium to respond to an update from a representative of the estate on the potential project on Juggler Meadow Road, which would lie partially in Amherst and partially in Leverett.

Selectboard member Jed Proujansky presented the history of the proposal. The town first learned about the estate’s desire to develop the land a year ago. In a public forum last December, Kittredge development manager Joshua Wallack suggested 400 units could be built on the Leverett portion of the property.

In July, Proujansky said, Wallack gave town officials a tour of the property during which no specific proposals were made, but a general discussion took place about developing the property under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B – either in a traditional 40B process, which would allow the estate to bypass local zoning as Leverett falls short of a state quota on affordable housing, or through an alternative Local Initiative Program (LIP), in which the town and developer collaborate.

Proujansky said creating a zoning district overlay was also mentioned as a possibility.

On August 15 the selectboard see **LEVERETT** page A8

## Ambulance Baby Celebrates 10th Birthday

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – “I’ll come here for every one of my birthdays!” Brooklyn Simon, celebrating with cupcakes and crew in the fire department apparatus bay at the Turners Falls public safety complex, tells the *Reporter* on Wednesday.

“Every ten is a little more appropriate,” Brooklyn’s mother, Michelle Simon, suggests with a laugh.

Ten years ago to the day, Brooklyn was born in Ambulance 1 – “A1, like the sauce,” she remembers – in the parking lot of Jarvis Pools & Spas at the top of Unity Street, with a little help from firefighter Michael Currie and captain Kyle Cogswell.

“Her birth certificate says ‘En route to Greenfield,’” says Michelle. “They could have given Turners a little credit!”

Currie and Cogswell, a decade later captain and deputy chief see **BIRTHDAY** page A2



Left to right: Michelle Simon, TFFD captain Michael Currie, Brooklyn Simon, and TFFD deputy chief Kyle Cogswell gathered at the station Wednesday.

### Thanks (If You Observe)

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Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold  
 August 2002



If you subscribe to the *Montague Reporter* or pick us up on newsstands, you hopefully received one of these handsome envelopes earlier this month with our second annual appeal for donations to our Writers' Fund. These funds are earmarked for reporting, photography, editing, and other "content" expenses our tiny, independent non-profit paper faces.

Trump's 2018 tariffs on Canadian newsprint were widely credited with finishing off many local newspapers. Our bill at the printer rose last month for the third time since 2022, and we don't know what is in store next year. Postage

also continues to inflate apace.

Many of you already donate and support beyond the cover price, but if you are able to give any more, we beg you to bear our Writers' Fund campaign in mind this season.

There are countless worthy causes in need of support, but a strong local press – aware of, but undiminished by, social media – is a fundamental resource that will damage many others if it ever disappears. Help us shoulder the burden!

If you didn't get enveloped, you can give to the fund online at [www.montaguereporter.org/donate](http://www.montaguereporter.org/donate) (specify "Writers' Fund") or contact us for more options. Thank you!

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

### Next Thursday: Stone Soup Offers Community Meal, Honors Indigenous Resistance

**GREENFIELD** – Stone Soup Café invites everyone to come together on Thursday, November 28 at noon for a unique community meal that emphasizes togetherness, respect, and an honest reflection on the history of Thanksgiving. This pay-what-you-can gathering offers an inclusive space for all, with a delicious meal, meaningful conversation, and an opportunity to uplift Indigenous narratives.

On Thursday, November 28 Stone Soup Café will pause all food preparations at noon and sit together to watch a livestream of the National Day of Mourning, an annual demonstration held by United American Indians of New England in Plymouth, Massachusetts to honor Indigenous ancestors and Native resilience.

It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection, as well as a protest against the racism and oppression that Indigenous people continue to experience worldwide.

"We're expecting to serve 500 meals to our community," Stone Soup executive director Kirsten Levitt, says, "with the help of over 50 dedicated volunteers and financial support from generous sponsors like All States Materials Group and Bobby C. Campbell's Thanksgiving Fundraiser. We're also getting fresh ingredients donated from Mycoterra, Upinngil Farm, and Clarkdale Farm, and Di-

emand Farm is donating turkey!"

After the hour-long screening of the Day of Mourning, at 1 p.m. attendees are welcome to enjoy a hearty meal in the All Souls Church sanctuary while the livestream continues.

A suggested donation of \$25 per meal includes a full gluten-free meal with turkey or a vegan lentil loaf, sides, and dessert. A portion of the funds collected will be shared with the Ohketeau Cultural Center and the Nolumbeka Project.

Curbside pickup or delivery options are also available, with delivery registration required at [bit.ly/StoneSoupThanksGiving2024](http://bit.ly/StoneSoupThanksGiving2024).

Opportunities to volunteer include meal preparation on Wednesday, November 27, and setup, meal packing, cleanup, and delivery on the day of the event.

On this Thanksgiving, Stone Soup Café invites the community to celebrate with open hearts, acknowledge the holiday's roots, and build a more inclusive future together. "Stone Soup Café is about creating community space where all can come together for nourishment, connection, and learning for body, mind, and spirit," says Levitt. "The Day of Mourning livestream offers a perfect opportunity to practice our mission."

For more information or to sign up to volunteer next week, visit [thestonesoupcafe.org](http://thestonesoupcafe.org).



Melody Tilton and John Guenther have a regular routine in which they ride their e-bikes from Greenfield to Turners Falls and stop at the Upper Bend, where they can poke at their devices for a while over brunch.

## BIRTHDAY from page A1

respectively, were not about to miss today's party.

"I still tell people that was one of the best days of my career," Cogswell reflects. "You see some of the other stuff, and when you see a life we brought into the world, it's a very special thing."

Currie tells the story from the station's end. It was a late Thursday afternoon when the call came over the dispatch radio. Robert Escott, then the fire chief, asked the two where they were heading.

"I walked by his desk and I went, 'I think we're going to deliver a baby!'" Currie says. They were joined at the scene by a Montague police officer, who offered to drive A1 to the hospital so both could accompany Michelle.

"When a fourth-time mom says 'I'm ready to go,' I know that it's coming soon," Cogswell recalls with a grin. "We only went a quarter of a mile."

"It was exciting," says Michelle. "I felt like we had made it to the hospital, and all of a sudden they tell me I'm at Jarvis Pools.... It was quick!"

"Mom was an absolute trooper," Currie says. "I had delivered a baby before, so this was my second one – it's a pretty awesome experience. When you learn all this stuff in class, you prepare for those calls that are 'low frequency/high risk.' It can be daunting. But like everything, having a good teammate made everything go smooth. Everybody knew what needed to be done."

Brooklyn was born, "en route," at 5:08 p.m.

Baystate Health paramedics soon joined them at the scene, boarding the ambulance to assist with taking care of Brooklyn and Michelle.

Ten years later, the main players reunite over cupcakes, seltzer, and a cheerful rendition of "Happy Birthday" from the rest of the department's day shift. The old white A1 has since been switched out with a new red one, but it turns out the birth truck itself is still roving Montague's roads as part of the highway department's fleet of vehicles. Brooklyn says being 10 feels *amazing*.

Deputy Chief Cogswell has the honor of bestowing presents: pens, glow sticks, stickers, a coloring book – and potholders, so the birthday girl can help out with cooking, which she does say she likes to do.

"This is what's great about being in a tight-knit community like this," Cogswell tells the *Reporter*. "You get to keep that connection with people you're helping directly in the community. It's pretty cool!"

"It's amazing how fast a decade goes by," adds Captain Currie, who brought his own younger daughter along to meet the now-famous Brooklyn. "I drive by their house every day. We were super happy to have a really, really positive outcome."

Brooklyn, now a fourth-grader, confirms to the press that she does tell everyone she was born in an ambulance.

Asked how she feels about that fact, she answers immediately, with just one word: "Confident."



Brooklyn Simon (center), who reports that being 10 feels "amazing," checks in with the fire professionals who helped her get here.

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 or the final week of December.

**PHONE: (413) 863-8666**

**EMAIL:**

[editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org)  
[features@montaguereporter.org](mailto:features@montaguereporter.org)  
[ads@montaguereporter.org](mailto:ads@montaguereporter.org)  
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## LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by NINA ROSSI

There will be **no newspaper next Thursday**, November 28; our next edition will come out on December 5. Have a happy holiday!

We will be printing the **2024 Special Wrapping Paper Edition** next week instead, and getting them out to stores. You can find them for sale in Turners Falls at Food City, Unnameable Books, the Stash House, and the Avenue A Market.

In Greenfield, look for copies at Federal Street Books, the LAVA Center, and Green Fields Market. Other locations are the Wendell Country Store, Leverett Village Coop, the Montague Village Store, and Uppingil Farm Store in Gill.

The Wrapping Paper edition will also be for sale on our website, along with new **Montague Reporter t-shirts** with Emma Kohlmann's now-classic design printed in white ink on black cotton.

Volunteers will be selling wrapping paper and shirts at the Millworks Makers & Art Market in Shelburne Falls on November 29 and 30; the Greenfield Winter Farmers Market at the Greenfield Library on Saturday, December 7; the Wendell Craft Fair on December 13 and 14; and It's a Wonderful Night in Turners Falls on December 13.

Each edition, featuring the work of seven artists, sells for \$5, or five for \$20. Shirts are sliding-scale donation of \$20 to \$40.

The **Healthy Incentives Program (HIP)**, which provides nutritious food for low-income households, is slated to be slashed from about \$80 a month to \$20 a month on December 1. The impact will also be felt by local farms and markets.

The Campaign for HIP Funding is asking the Governor and legisla-

ture to dedicate an additional \$10 million to HIP (line item 4400-1004) in a future fiscal year 2025 supplemental budget to avoid this change. Find out how to show your support and take action at [tinyurl.com/HIPmassaction](http://tinyurl.com/HIPmassaction).

**Música Franklin** holds its fourth free Community Concert of the year this Thursday, November 21, from 5 to 6 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Greenfield. This is a student performance and family-friendly concert with Adam Matlock, an accordionist, composer, and vocalist from Connecticut, followed by a shared community meal.

The **Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts** returns to Montague this Sunday, November 24. Fiddles, cellos, mandolins, guitars, and more will play tunes from multiple traditions under directors Annika Amstutz and Ann Percival, at the Congregational Church at 4 North Street, by the common in Montague Center.

The orchestra's first director was David Kaynor of Montague Center, so this concert is something of a homecoming. Doors open at 1 p.m. and the concert begins at 1:30. Donations are welcome, but truly optional.

A **flag football game** will take place Monday, November 25 at 6 p.m. at **Turners Falls High School**. Flag football is a no-tackle game in which players remove a flag from the belt of a ball carrier to end a down. The game is open to all alumni and current students. Entry is granted for \$5 plus a canned good per player and fan.

If you aren't interested in the Black Friday shopping frenzy, one alternative is a nice and easy walk

along the canal in Turners Falls. The annual **Go Green on Black Friday Walk** takes place next Friday, November 29, from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

The walk along the Canalside Rail Trail is about three miles, on a level, paved surface, which makes for an easy stroll for adults and children ages eight and up. Dress for cold weather, wear sturdy shoes, and bring water. The walk begins at the Great Falls Discovery Center. Inclement weather or icy trail conditions cancels.

A **Pancake Breakfast** will be held Saturday, November 30 from 8:15 to 10:15 a.m. at the Montague Congregational Church, 4 North Street, with a \$10 donation to benefit the church's Deacon Fund.

Homemade pancakes, maple syrup, fruit sauce, assorted meats, coffee, tea, and juices are on the menu. Walk-ins are welcome!

The Leverett Village Coop is hosting its first ever **Bowl Library Dinner** on Sunday, December 1 from 6 to 8 p.m. Those who attend will receive a library card, pick a bowl of their choosing to "borrow" for the evening, and fill it with free warm food if they so wish.

Everyone is welcome – the meal is entirely free! If you would like to donate a special bowl or volunteer to help in the kitchen, contact Page at [page.page.413@gmail.com](mailto:page.page.413@gmail.com) for more details.

Eggtooth Productions presents the **annual Mr. Drag holiday show, It's Home for the Hologays!**, on December 6 and 7 at 7:30 p.m. at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls. Filled with song, dance and story, the Drag Family offers their unique and hilarious take on *A Christmas Carol*.

This is the eighth year that Eggtooth has offered this family-friendly alternative to the usual holiday entertainment. Tickets are \$20, though EBT, WIC, and Connector-Care cardholders are offered free or steeply discounted admission. For more information, contact Linda at [Lmciner@gmail.com](mailto:Lmciner@gmail.com).

The **Shutesbury Holiday Shop** is open for one weekend each year

with a beautiful and affordable array of handcrafted work from over 40 local craftspeople. (It's also another location to pick up our Special Wrapping Paper Edition.)

The event takes place Friday, December 6 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, December 7 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday night will also feature a "Soups & Stews" dinner, benefitting the Friends of the M.N. Spear Library. Look for more information at [shutesburyholidays.wixsite.com/holidayshop](http://shutesburyholidays.wixsite.com/holidayshop).

Leverett Crafts & Arts announces its annual **Holiday Sale and Open Studios** on the first two Saturdays in December from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Browse through local art and craft by resident artists and others, plus work by Mudpie Pottery, at 13 Montague Road in Leverett.

Make a **tiny, leather-bound book necklace** at a workshop at the Wendell Free Library on Saturday, December 7, from 1 to 3 p.m. Make one of these "booklaces" as a gift or for yourself, and if time permits, Jeannette Stockton will also guide you to make a tiny hard-bound book as well.

The workshop is for tweens and up, and registration is required. Email [wendell@cwmar.org](mailto:wendell@cwmar.org).

The community is invited to join Northfield Mount Hermon at its **annual Vespers performances** on Sunday, December 8, at 3:30 and 6:30 p.m. Featuring NMH student performers, Vespers includes choral and orchestral music, carols, and readings in the candle-lit Memorial Chapel. NMH choral music teacher Alexandra Ludwig writes that "[i]n addition to readings and carol singing, the audience will hear contemporary pieces that have ancient melodies as their inspiration, bridging winter celebrations across centuries." The performances are open to the community, and while there is no admission fee, registration is encouraged at [together.nmhschool.org/register/vespers2024](http://together.nmhschool.org/register/vespers2024).

Send your local briefs to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).

### NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Ambulance Costs Expected to Rise

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the Erving selectboard voted to send a letter to state senator Jo Comerford and state representative Susannah Whipps supporting the purchase of a property at 546 Northfield Road in Bernardston by Northfield Emergency Medical Services.

Towns cannot buy property in other towns without approval by the state legislature. According to the draft support letter, "This would enable the Northfield Emergency Services Department (Northfield EMS) to locate their base of operations in an adequate and central location to be able to provide critical ambulance services to the towns of Bernardston, Gill, Erving and Northfield."

Selectboard member James Loynd commented, "We rely heavily on this service."

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith warned that costs for Northfield EMS will increase in the next annual budget.

### Sharing Leave

The board voted to allow a town employee to voluntarily transfer some accrued sick leave to another employee. Selectboard member Scott Bastarache said he appreciated that "one employee is

looking out for their fellow co-worker," but noted that he was "concerned about the process."

Board members agreed that a policy was needed for future requests for transfer of sick time. For the current request, the board stipulated that the donor must retain 80 hours of leave, the donation could not bring the receiver's sick leave total to more than 1,000 hours, and that town administrator Bryan Smith would administer the transfer.

Board members agreed to develop a policy on sick leave transfer by the end of FY'25.

### Many Screeners

The board decided to create a five-member screening committee to review and interview candidates for the police department cadet. The cadet is expected to learn department procedures and, after successful completion of state police academy training, be appointed as an Erving officer.

The board will decide on the screening committee members at its next meeting, currently scheduled for December 2, after discussing the committee with police chief Robert Holst.

The screening committee for financial services clerk forwarded a list of three finalists for the position. Bastarache asked for more time to review the information about the candidates, and

the board put off a decision until December 2.

The board appointed Jacob Smith, Peter Sanders and Darby Gagnon to the screening committee for the wastewater treatment plant maintenance position.

The board decided to publicize five to seven openings on the town planner screening committee, with a deadline of December 2 for interested citizens to submit letters of interest. Board members said they wanted to include community voices, as well as a member of the finance or capital planning committee, in the process.


### Other Business

The board voted to extend the town's contract with the Materials Recycling Facility in Springfield for five years. Board members noted that costs for sending the town's recycling to the MRF will increase by 2.5% each year of the contract.

Bryan Smith told the board that one reason for an increase in fees is that fewer communities are contracting with the MRF. However, he said the MRF might pick up some additional communities in Berkshire County.

The selectboard and library trustees, meeting jointly, voted to appoint Devon Gaudet to the vacant library trustee position.

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**SUN. NOV. 24 • 6PM**

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Week of November 25

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Week of December 2  
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## OP/ED

## Where Were You on November 22, 1963?

By JANINE ROBERTS

**LEVERETT** – There are seven girls ages 9 to 16 left in the dorm at the American Community School in Beirut, Lebanon, over the Thanksgiving break. It is past nine, our curfew. I peek down the hall: anyone sneaking out of their rooms? What are those sounds coming from Miss Moore's faculty apartment?

I creep over, put my ear to her door. Sobbing? What should I do? If a teacher's door is closed, you knock only if you have an emergency. I'm not having one.

I sidle down the hallway, knock on Gaby and Vicki's door. "Can I come in?"

Gaby, round-faced with corkscrewed dirty blonde hair, looks up from her bed.

"Something's wrong with Miss Moore. Come on!" We hunch at her door. Vicki's lips tremble, she whimpers. I pull her and Gaby into my room. We make a plan. They'll hide in my closet. As the oldest, I rap softly on the door. When Miss Moore opens it, her eyes radiate red like she was in a photo taken with a flash.

"Are you OK?" I blurt out.  
"It's nothing... about me," ... a gasp... deep breath... "Something terrible happened in the States."

"Oh no!" *Had we been nuked by the Russians?* Air shudders in and out of her chest.

"What?" I implore.

"I can't... I can't tell you," she says beseechingly. Gaby and Vicki peer around the doorway of my room. Miss Moore doesn't seem to care that they're in my room, usually an immediate ten demerits. "Knox will meet with us after breakfast... We'll know more then."

Meeting with the Headmaster, know more then? Clearly she knows something now.

"Girls, go to bed," Miss Moore orders. "You'll need a good night's sleep." She closes her door. A good night's sleep for what?

I say to Gaby and Vicki, "Get the other girls. Bring blankets, flashlights. Sneak back here with your shortwave radio."

I strip bedspreads from the bunks, pile stacks of books on one end of them on top of my desk, unfurl them over chairs. The six other girls arrive. We stretch thicker blankets on top of our "tent" so no light shows. We crawl underneath, turn on the radio. Newscasts on every station. We twirl the dial – announcers speaking rapidly in Arabic and French – no English. For hours we translate, puzzle-piece together: *Texas, in a car, shot, trying to save him, blood, Jackie.* Kennedy died at 1:00 p.m. CST.

We sob like Miss Moore; keep listening. Was Jackie OK? Caroline, John Jr.?

I slip out from under the blankets, retrieve my stash of Jordan almonds, but no one eats. Around four in the morning, the last of the girls falls asleep, feet sticking out of our tent. I crawl over them, slide open the door to the balcony, sit huddled in a blanket as the Mediterranean swooshes over and over. The sun rises and spreads its light across the sea.

*Kennedy. Young, idealistic, bold, so different from grandfatherly Eisenhower. How could he be dead?*

After breakfast, a somber Dr. Knox comes into the dining hall and tells us the news. We try to act surprised, but are too upset and exhausted to fake it. I get a message that my older brother, a student at the American University of Beirut,

and his Saudi roommate are waiting for me in the lobby. I run to them; we cling to each other. The receptionist on duty, Miss Asfour, motions me over. Breaking all the rules, she says, "Go out with your brother. Just be back in two hours."

Men and women in tears mob us: "We're so sorry!" "Such a good man!" Passersby walk with arms around one another, holding each other up. Most shops are closed. There's little traffic. We head back. Brian's roommate buys a newspaper in Arabic and French, presses it into my hands.

In my room that night, afraid for my country, its future. No way to reach my friends, my parents. I open my wooden scrapbook from home, stare at photos where we're in Civil Rights demonstrations in Seattle. *Impossible.* What can demonstrations do when Kennedy can be murdered in broad daylight?

I slam the scrapbook down on the floor. *You Can Survive Atomic Attack* flies out of the *Mad* magazine I had stashed it in. Mom and her government pamphlets. Always prepared. Nothing prepared me for this.

Or for the killings now in the Middle East. Kennedy's words on June 10, 1963:

"And is not peace, in the last analysis, basically a matter of human rights – the right to live out our lives without fear of devastation... the right of future generations to a healthy existence?... Confident and unafraid, we must labor on – not towards a strategy of annihilation, but towards a strategy of peace."

How might the world be different if he had lived? What will we and our leaders do now?

*Janine Roberts is professor emerita at UMass Amherst. She lives in Leverett.*

## High School Sports Week: Down to Turkey Day

By MATT ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – On Saturday afternoon, the Aztecs of Assabet Valley came to town to challenge the Franklin Tech Football Eagles in the first round of the Vocational playoffs. Unfortunately, someone had to lose, and the Aztecs came out on top – 20 to 14.

But that does not end football for teams from Turners Falls. Franklin Tech will play the Smith Vocational Vikings on Turkey Day. The venue has changed – the game kicks off at 10 a.m. on Thanksgiving morning at Easthampton High School.

And although Turners Falls High School does not have a football team, they have plenty of alumni who bleed Blue. At 6 p.m. next Wednesday, the football field will again be utilized as they play a flag football game against fellow alums, followed by a bonfire.

When Saturday's game kicked off, not a lot of people were in the stands, but as the game went on more and more trickled in. The temperature was below freezing at the start of the game but gradually warmed into the 40s. The biggest weather factor was the wind, which gusted throughout the entire game, sending papers and other debris flying.

The game itself was an exiting roller coaster, with several players needing help to get back to the sidelines. In the end, with 13 seconds left on the clock, the game came down to a fake punt.

On the first possession Tech marched down to the Aztecs' 42 but came up short on a fourth-and-4. When Assabet took over, they faced a fourth-and-14, but managed to get the first down and keep the drive going. One play lat-

er, they scored. Tech stuffed the extra point attempt, and at 2:07 of the first, the visitors were up 6-0.

Less than two minutes later, Tyler Yetter connected with Hunter Donahue to tie it up.

Three minutes before halftime, Tech was forced to punt, and bystanders were asking why no one was back to receive the kick. The answer became evident as the Aztecs instituted a maximum blitz, blocking the punt and setting up an Assabet touchdown. The 2-PAT was good, too, and Tech was now down 14-6.

Coach Joe Gamache ran his two-minute offense and Tech scored with less than a second left in the half, but a penalty was called and the score was negated. The refs put time on the clock, giving the Eagles 1.2 seconds and the ball. Unfortunately, they were unable to get the touchdown back, and headed into the second half still down 8 points.

In the fourth quarter Assabet, still leading by the same margin, attempted a pass which was picked off by Camryn Laster. He hugged the nearside chalk line, sprinted 45 yards, and scored to make it 14-12. Maxon Brunette then crashed into the end zone for the extra point, and with 2:49 left in regulation, it was all tied up.

The Aztecs ran their own two-minute offense, though, and nosed ahead to 20-14 with 1:37 to go. After Tech was unable to convert on a fourth down, the visitors got the ball again, and thought they could just take a knee to drain the clock. But Coach Gamache called timeouts, forcing them into a fourth-and-8 dilemma with 13 seconds left to play.

If they went to a knee, time would



*Franklin Tech's Nolan Stafford (left) and Camryn Laster (right) were all smiles after an interception and 39-yard touchdown by Laster gave the Eagles hope with under three minutes remaining in the game.*

stop at change of possession, giving the Eagles one more play. So they lined up for the punt, but faked the kick – and instead ran a QB keeper to seal the win.

Yetter completed six passes for 92 yards and finished with 16 rushing yards. Other ball-carriers included Josiah Little (83 yards) Brunette (45), Wyatt Whitman, Nathan Sabolevski, and Nodyn Stafford. Receivers included Donahue (67 yards), Ethan Smarr (15), Little (7), and Stafford (3).

Donahue had 12 yards in kick returns and scored a touchdown, and Brunette punched in the 2-pointer.

Defensively, Madix Whitman got in on 10 tackles, Wyatt Whitman had nine, and Zaydrien Alamed made seven. Laster had a 45-yard pick-six, Alamed and Sabolevski shared a sack, and Laster, Yetter, and Madix Whitman blocked pass attempts.

The Football Eagles get back on the gridiron Thanksgiving day in Easthampton.

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**QUABBIN** from page A1

Jo Comerford told the *Reporter* on Wednesday. “We for too long have not had fair recompense for this water, that we sacrifice for and we steward. I think we’re proud of stewarding it, but our communities are stressed, and stretched thin.”

Since 2022, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) has conducted three feasibility studies exploring the expansion of its Quabbin water service to dozens of communities in the eastern part of the state. The MWRA currently pumps about 200 million gallons per day from the reservoir, and tries to stay under a “safe yield” of 300 million gallons per day, fed mostly by the Swift River.

In 2023 Comerford and state representative Aaron Saunders filed a bill, *An Act relative to the Quabbin watershed and regional equity*, to assert the needs of Quabbin communities. The bill proposes taxing existing users of Quabbin water – over three million people and 5,500 businesses – to help western and central Massachusetts towns maintain local water systems. It would also change the formula by which payments *in lieu* of taxes (PILOT) are made to watershed communities.

The bill would add three Quabbin representatives to the MWRA board of directors, and would direct the agency to assess all viable drinking water sources in the four western Massachusetts counties. Comerford says she wants to see a “generational” study that would chart a course for the next 50 years.

“We clearly have potable water challenges right now, but we know those challenges are going to increase,” Comerford told the *Reporter*. “The state can’t fix what it can’t see, and we can’t see it until we measure and analyze it.”

The bill did not pass in the most recent legislative session, but MWRA decided to study the region anyway, albeit with a narrower scope. The engineering firms Tighe & Bond and Hazen and Sawyer were hired to produce a fourth feasibility study, which was presented in draft form on Tuesday to about 50 municipal leaders from the region.

**Pumping Uphill**

According to the study, it would cost a total of \$498 million to build the water pipes, pumps, treatment systems, and storage capacity needed to directly provide Quabbin surface water to Barre, Belchertown, Hardwick, Ludlow, New Salem, Orange, Pelham, Petersham, Phillipston, Shutesbury, Ware, and Wendell.

One section of that plan would serve 7,000 people in Wendell, Shutesbury, New Salem, and Orange, requiring 27 miles of transmission and distribution pipes and seven storage tanks and costing \$215 million.

Two other “intakes” considered were at the eastern edge of the Quabbin in Hardwick and on the southern tip in Ware. A fourth was considered at Petersham, but the study determined it would not be viable under drought conditions.

“There’s a lot of pumping that’s required to service these areas,” MWRA director of environmental and regulatory affairs Colleen Rizzi told the attendees at Tuesday’s meeting. “As you pump, you also need to reduce the pressure as you come to some of these services, so there’s a lot of energy associated with these concepts.”

The western section in particular, Rizzi said, would have “quite a bit of storage and pumping associated with it. This is largely due to the size of the areas that we’re trying to reach from the Quabbin, but also the geography.... In drought conditions, the Quabbin drops in elevation.”

Two alternative aquifers were also investigated. The first, in Wendell, could serve 550 residents of Wendell, Shutesbury, and New Salem at a cost of \$112 million; a second in Petersham could serve 315 residents of that town and Phillipston for \$70 million.

During the meeting, Saunders asked whether any of the \$6 billion in capital infrastructure investment the MWRA is planning over the next 40 years would benefit central or western Massachusetts communities, and whether historical data is available for PILOT payments to the watershed towns. MWRA staff said they would provide answers at a later date.

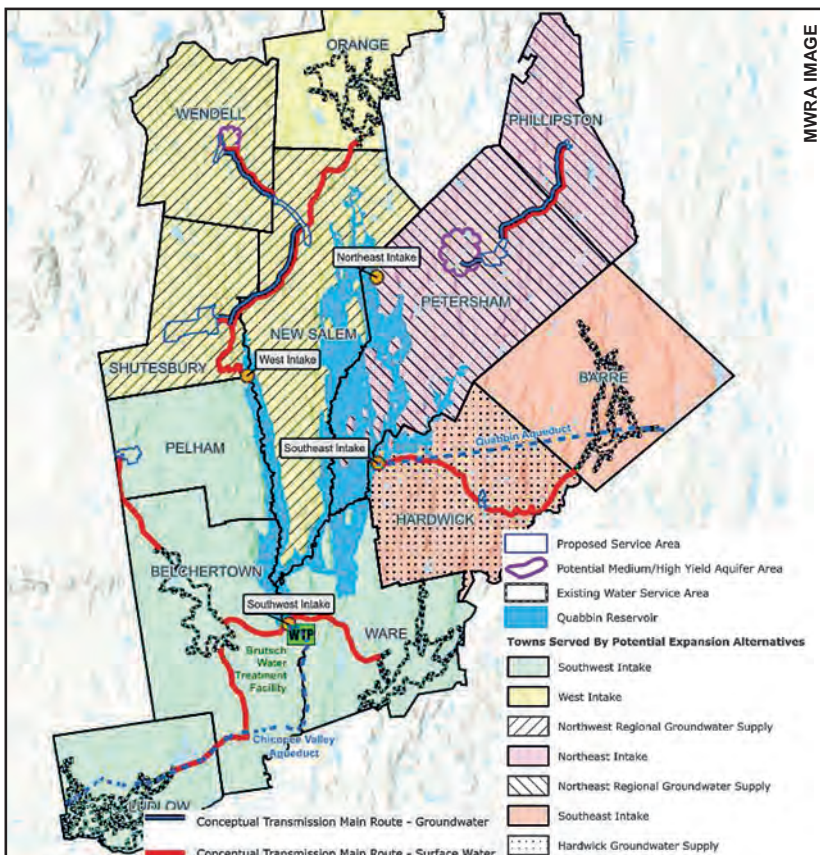
Another attendee asked who would bear the cost of connecting these communities to the Quabbin. The MWRA officials replied that it would ultimately be the municipalities’ responsibility.

“I thought the study was incomplete and insufficient, but it was a first step – it was a marker, and a chance for our communities to be heard from by the MWRA,” Comerford told the *Reporter*. “There isn’t a solution that is going to fit all communities. We know that. But it’s still really important for Boston to listen.”

Comerford said the study failed to assess the whole of western Massachusetts’ water resources, or consider MWRA’s capacity to treat, protect, and draw from existing groundwater sources. The senator said she and Saunders offered to help MWRA gather information from the 12 assessed communities, but the agency did not take them up on the offer.

“There is very little interest in paying for robust pumping infrastructure to the tune of several hundred million dollars, and it certainly did not sound like the MWRA leadership was offering to pay for it,” Saunders told the *Reporter*.

“[Eastern Massachusetts municipalities] don’t have the water resources proximate to their communities to do what they’re doing, and we facilitate that for them,” he said. “We do that through preserving and restricting our land.”



The MWRA-commissioned study looked at four “conceptual” routes for pumping water from the Quabbin to the surrounding towns, as well as two high-yield aquifers.

**Cash, Please**

Jane Peirce, a member of the Orange selectboard and board of health and a former Department of Environmental Protection employee, also attended the virtual meeting.

“I’m struck by the irony of the idea that you would take water from Quabbin, pump it uphill to us, and sell it back to us after it was our water to start with,” Peirce said. “It would be very interesting to me to know what the value of the raw water is.... Our water system works just fine, but could you give us some consideration for every gallon of water that we are donating to you that can be sold to somebody else?”

Several people echoed these sentiments, including Bill Pula, a member of the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee, longtime chair of the Pelham board of health, and former director of the Quabbin and Ware watersheds for the state Department of Conservation and Recreation.

“To me, it was a waste of money to do that study,” Pula told the *Reporter*. “The idea of taking water out and pumping it up to a town like Pelham is ridiculous. We don’t have a distribution system, and there’s no way to get it anywhere.”

Pula said the MWRA could instead use its resources to help towns like his, where some wells are running dry in the current drought, and others are contaminated with PFAS chemicals.

“We have quite a bit of water on our side of the hill here, but there are water quality issues, and there’s probably more coming, too,” he said.

In Shutesbury, at least 60 wells have been found to be contaminated with PFAS from fire-suppressing foam used many years ago at the fire station in the center of town. Selectboard member Eric Stoker told the *Reporter* the town has been paying residents for filtration systems, with some financial aid from the state, but he has concerns for the long-term viability of the groundwater.

“This treatment is expensive and ongoing,” Stoker said. “There may come a time when it’s cheap, or cheaper, for Shutesbury to say, ‘Let’s be a water district.’”

In 2020 the well at Swift River School, on the border of Wendell and New Salem, was found to be contaminated with dangerous levels of PFAS. Treatment systems have been installed at the school, as well as at the Petersham Country Store

and a well serving the offices of the Harvard Forest.

According to the MWRA study, water from the Petersham aquifer could be piped several miles to the center of Phillipston, where unsafe PFAS levels were detected at the now-shuttered elementary school.

“Safeguarding water sources is going to need a really nuanced approach,” Comerford told the *Reporter*. “Some of our community need help testing for PFAS, they need filters, they need support for things that are much more localized.... The study was supposed to contemplate access to potable water, not necessarily only taking it from the Quabbin. That was a decision made that I disagree with.”

**Recompense**

Comerford and Saunders say they plan to re-file their bill when the legislature reconvenes in January.

“The communities that steward this watershed are in Hampshire, Franklin, and Worcester counties, and we need representation from all of those counties so that there’s strength in numbers, and so that a different perspective can be acknowledged,” Comerford said.

When the legislature was debating a major housing bond bill earlier this year, House speaker Ronald Mariano tried to insert a \$1 billion

appropriation to fund MWRA expansion into eastern Massachusetts.

“I found it outrageous and insulting, and we killed it in conference,” Comerford said. “I’m not interested in sending one more drop of water east until we have been fully seen for what we need out in western Massachusetts, and until we get more just financial recompense for this water.”

Eight of the watershed towns already receive PILOT payments for land that cannot be developed or taxed because it serves as a recharge area for the reservoir, but supporters of the bill argue that these payments do not reflect the true value of the resource the communities provide to the state – or their needs.

By Pula’s calculations, the proposed surcharge of 5 cents per thousand gallons would currently generate about \$3.65 million annually to support these towns. If the MWRA sold an additional 20 to 30 million gallons per day to new customers in the east, it would bring in additional revenue of \$29 to \$44 million per year to the agency, and another \$365,000 to \$547,500 in surcharges.

The final version of the MWRA study is expected to be released next month, at which time a public information session will be scheduled.

Mike Jackson contributed additional writing.

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**CARTOONIST** from page A1

best friend, is entirely based on our lives – everything Mudballs does has happened to us. Clark, however, has somehow constructed a whole world in her head.

Clark explained that every other Saturday, she sits in her blue recliner and thinks. She reflects on what's happening in the world, her health, other people's health, her two past marriages, and more. "And things just come to me. It is not that difficult," she said.

On Sundays, she draws two comics and delivers them to the paper, a routine she has maintained every fortnight since November 2018.

She described herself as a recluse, like many writers, with a vivid imagination.

Critiquing the artistic quality of her comic, she noted that Thelma doesn't have hands, or even arms. For Clark, the key element is the dialogue.

After retiring from Merriam-Webster in Springfield at age 70, she wrote two books set in a fictional town near the Mohawk Trail. Clark said she enjoyed writing dialogue the most. Nearly 20 years after publishing those books, she continues honing her skill through Harry and Thelma's conversations about the weather, neighbors, or whatever comes to mind.

Clark explained that she simply needed a counterpart for Thelma, so she created Harry. "I think of the two of them now as my family," she said.

The couple often discusses health problems, politics, and cooking. Harry is a retired astrophysicist who once dreamed of becoming a chef, but decided it would be too hard. Thelma loves tea, and her dog, and has strong political opinions.

The cartoon's main message, Clark said, is to not take life too seriously. "One should be able to laugh about situations and enjoy them," she said.

Clark grew up in southern Connecticut and moved to Massachusetts for college. She lived in various parts of the state before settling in Turners Falls 20 years ago.

These days she stays busy with many volunteer activities, including serving as vice president of the *Montague Reporter's* board of directors. She has been on the board since its inception and has worked nearly every odd job imaginable for an independent small-town weekly paper.

**Death and Politics**

At the time Clark first created "Over the Hill," the *Montague Reporter* had only one regular comic, which was fiercely anti-Trump.



A more recent installment, from May 2024.

She feared this might alienate readers, so in an effort to help balance things, she decided to create a gentler counterpart, even though she had never drawn before and did not consider herself an artist.

She admitted the first few cartoons were rough, but she eventually found Thelma's look, which has remained mostly unchanged. Thelma's hair color changes depending on whatever paint or marker Clark has on hand.

Clark said she believes Thelma's political commentary isn't too heavy-handed. In one comic, Thelma speculates about why Donald Trump might act the way he does, suggesting he may have had a difficult childhood. When Harry asks if she would vote for him, Thelma replies, "I would rather stick a fork in my eye." Clark said she feels this approach to political commentary feels less polarized than much of today's discourse.

A self-described liberal, Clark called herself "rightfully judgmental" of the upcoming presidential administration. Still, she tries not to be overly harsh in her politics, and often avoids discussing them in her personal life to prevent hurting people's feelings.

She hopes Thelma and Harry come across as gentle and nonjudgmental. In a recent strip, Thelma sees a truck adorned with

Trump flags and exclaims her hatred for the then-candidate. Harry responds that such hatred isn't in her nature.


Beyond politics, another recurring theme in the comics is the acceptance of death. "Death is not a real problem for me," Clark said. "Death is natural."

In one comic, Thelma wakes up in the middle of the night and feels disappointed she's still alive.

Clark, who has attended Death Cafés at the Gill-Montague senior center, has an optimistic view of death. She feels ready for it, knowing her children can care for themselves. Her only concern is finding someone to care for Kobi, noting they will both turn 100 in the same year.

"When my son hears I have died, he will not say, 'Oh no,' he will say, 'I'll be right there for Kobi,'" she said.

As for the eventual death of Thelma and Harry, Clark said she can't imagine letting them die – or ending the comic. However, she hopes to find some way they can say goodbye.

"Death is like birth. It's just there. It will happen," she said before getting up for the third time during our interview to attend to Kobi. This time, she fed him some of her tea. 



A strip from "Over The Hill"'s first months, in April 2019.

**GILL** from page A1

"I spent 11 years on the board with John Ward," Crochier said. "I drove a one-ton diesel pickup, John drove an electric car, and that's probably what we had the most in common. But we got along really great, and we worked well together. I respect him greatly."

Crochier also had glowing words for town administrator Ray Purington. "I tell anybody in Franklin County that wants to listen: the only reason I'm still on this board is Ray here," he said. "We're blessed to have him."

When asked his advice to anyone interested in running for the seat, Crochier said, "If you're doing it for an agenda, then don't run. We all have somewhat of an agenda, but if you're doing it for just one item, it's too much of a commitment for that."

Crochier explained he was announcing his plans early so community members have ample time to decide if they're interested in running for the position now that there is no incumbent.

**Recycling Costs Rise**

The board signed a five-year extension of the town's contract with the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). Purington said costs for the service are increasing, but the facility remains the best option for the town.

The new agreement was negotiated by the state Department of Environmental Protection, Waste Management, and the MRF advisory board, which includes community representatives.

Purington explained that the base processing fee will continue to increase 2.5% every year, while the amount paid in exchange for materials is decreasing 1% every year. "It's essentially a 3.5% increase," Purington said. "They're just splitting hairs to get there."

"It is still a good deal, and still the best deal out there," he wrote in an email to the board. He explained that the Springfield MRF is a state-owned facility, and is much more affordable than the private options used in the eastern part of the state.

Purington also said the towns involved in the agreement have been sending less waste to the facility than agreed upon, which reduces the credit they receive for the value of the materials. One reason for the smaller waste stream is that towns like Greenfield have switched to single-stream recycling, which the MRF can't process.

Additionally, "companies are finding more ways to package and ship products with less material," Purington said, pointing to Amazon's growing use of paper envelopes rather than cardboard boxes as an example.

**Other Business**

The board agreed to send a letter to the state legislature supporting an exception to the Home Rule – which forbids municipalities from owning property in other towns – to allow Northfield to own an EMS facility in Bernardston. Northfield EMS provides ambulance service to Gill, Bernardston, and part of Erving.


"This is the perfect location," Crochier said, noting that it was essentially the "geographic center" of the area served by the department.

The board agreed to switch out the old fluorescent lights in town hall to LED lights. Commonwealth Electrical will change 44 fixtures in the building for a little over \$4,000. Of that, \$500 will come from an Eversource initiative.

"I've been looking for LED conversion in this building for a number of years," said Purington. He said he decided to move forward now because Eversource's LED conversion incentives will end with the calendar year. "\$500 isn't a ton of money for an incentive, but it's \$500 more than next year," he added.

Purington said he was reaching out to the company to ask if they could contribute more than that. "I don't know if it will work," he said, "but I'm not too bashful to ask."

The fire department will be spending \$2,845 for a new overhead door opener motor. "Did they already run that new truck into a door?" Crochier joked.

Gill's next selectboard meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, December 2 at town hall. 

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GMRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE****Mean Girls and Shingles**

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – Tuesday's regional school committee meeting began on an atypically energetic note as two members of the Turners Falls High School (TFHS) production of *Mean Girls, Jr.* came to promote this weekend's staging. Cammie Carner and Bella Trinke, who play the villainous Regina George in the show's two casts, regaled the committee with "World Burn," in which George vows revenge against her traitorous so-called friends. Showtimes are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, November 21 through 23, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, November 24 at 2 p.m.

Gill Elementary parent Michi Wiancko followed with a public comment expressing "growing concern" about Gill's food service program. "We don't currently have anybody there cooking food," she said. "There's not even a job description [posted]." The farm-to-table program, she added, has stalled.

Superintendent Brian Beck and business manager Joanne Blier replied directly. "We have interviewed somebody, and are prepared to offer someone a job," Blier said. Beck said the cafeteria was using disposable plates because a dishwasher component is back-ordered.

"Would it be a good idea to make sure something goes out to the Gill families with this update?" Montague member Carol Jacobs asked.

The Massachusetts School Building Administration (MSBA) has finally accepted the replacement of the Gill school's roof. Blier said a schematic design could be completed by spring 2026 and the roof replaced in summer 2027, but the first step is seeking Gill residents to sit on an oversight committee.

Gill has set a special town meeting for December 16 to allocate an initial \$50,000 for the design. The full cost could run to \$1.5 million, Blier said. Gill member Bill Tomb suggested the town might prefer a metal roof to asphalt shingles, and Blier warned him that MSBA's 77.5% reimbursement is often applied only up to the lower cost.

Tomb was appointed as committee secretary and he, Jacobs, and chair Jane Oakes were appointed as representatives to the joint labor-management committees for both Unit A and Unit C employees.

Members spoke highly about recent meetings with TFHS students. Beck clarified that he does not attend the sessions, in case students need to complain about him.

One Montague seat on the school committee remains vacant.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

CWF by the Turners Falls water department, which charged the town \$105,883.09 for the use of 20,861,000 gallons of water. A bill for the same six-month period from the previous year was for \$11,900.35, she said, for “a little over 3 million gallons.”

The higher bill, Little added, reflected only one month on the new meter, which was installed in September. A recent reading showed a further increase in usage of 50 million gallons.

“It is astronomical, and it was a surprise to us,” she said. “It was a surprise to the water department, too.” The Turners Falls water department is part of the Turners Falls Fire District, an entity independent from the town of Montague.

Little expressed some uncertainty about the cause of the problem, acknowledging that the old meter was “extremely inaccurate.” She told the *Reporter* that the recorded water usage could also have been the result of a calculation or typing error.

Lord and selectboard chair Rick Kuklewicz offered a number of possible solutions, including the CWF installing its own meter and the water district testing its meter by running a known quantity of water through it. “We need to find some data points to set this against,” said Lord.

The water measured by the meter is only used for chlorination, which takes place mainly during warmer weather, Little said, so testing may have to wait until the spring. She and town administrator Walter Ramsey said town officials planned to meet with water department superintendent Jeffrey Hildreth about the bill, which Little said cannot be covered by the CWF’s budget.

The board also reviewed 16 requests for abatement or reduction of sewer bills and approved six reductions, as recommended by Little. One was for the cannabis firm Flower Power Growers, who Little explained had been charged based on the use of water which did not all end up in the sewer system.

Resident Julie Morse asked why the “minimum usage rate,” the sewer bill for customers who use less than 8,334 gallons of water over a six-month period, nearly doubled this year. She said no clear explanation for the increase was given at the meeting where the selectboard discussed restructuring the rates, and that the new rate was much higher than in other cities and towns, such as Palmer and Deerfield.

Little responded that it was extremely difficult to compare sewer charges among towns, because “every system is wildly different from the next one,” including in the size of facilities and the type of treatment. Palmer, she said, has 8,000 users, while Montague has only 2,000, and applies a “fixed flat rate” to all customers.

Kuklewicz said that the board would discuss the issue and decide whether to put it on a future agenda.

Little said she planned to submit a capital request to move the staff “break room,” which contains seating and a kitchen, to the area where a generator currently sits. The generator is being moved outside the building, and Little proposed transforming the small current break room into a meeting room.

Little did not give an estimate of the project’s cost, and the board did not take a vote, but encouraged her to move forward with the proposal.

The board approved the eleva-

tion of Anthony Montivirdi from CWF laborer/operator to wastewater technician. Little said Montivirdi, who has been working at the facility for two years, “is great,” and has recently obtained his wastewater license. With his promotion the CWF will now be fully staffed.

In a final bit of sewer news, the board unanimously approved a permit to connect Z and K Estate, a new auto repair and dealership business on Millers Falls Road, to the sewer system.

**Fifth Time’s The Charm**

Seth Rutherford, chief executive officer of 253 Organic, which grows and sells cannabis on Millers Falls Road, attended the meeting to discuss a fresh rejection of the town’s host community agreement with the company by the state Cannabis Control Commission (CCC), the fourth such rejection.

“It seems like we’re at it again,” said Kuklewicz.

“They keep finding something different every time,” said Ramsey. “I guess we have different reviewers every time, and there’s no way to have any interaction with the agency, which is very frustrating.”

The provisions rejected by the CCC, which had previously been approved, involved a requirement that if the company ceases operations it clean up the site and indemnify the town for its work. The CCC said this was a violation of state law as it did not apply to other businesses in the airport industrial park.

Rutherford had initially suggested that the town and company could seek a waiver for the offending sections, or else adopt a “model agreement” issued by the CCC in order to “skirt this regulatory nightmare.” The selectboard somewhat reluctantly voted for a third option: simply striking the provisions and resubmitting the agreement. Rutherford expressed support for this approach.

**Hearings, Hearings, Hearings**

The board held a hearing to review programs funded by the federal FY’22-’23 community development block grant, which have either been completed or are still underway. “We have to hold a second public hearing for these grants,” Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, which administers the town’s block grants, explained. “The first one was in the application stage.”

McHugh quickly reviewed the activities funded by the \$1.13 million package, including a project to upgrade the community playground at Hillcrest Elementary School, upgrades to seven units of housing, programs at five social service agencies, and the design of streetscape improvements along Avenue A.

There were no questions or comments from the public, and the board did not take any votes.

McHugh then reviewed the applications from four social service agencies for the coming year’s block grant (FY’24), which were nearly identical, except that the Brick House did not apply in the new cycle and Montague Catholic Social Ministries has changed its name to the Heartwing Center. The board unanimously approved all four contracts.

**Santa to Strike Twice**

RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto requested the use of public property for two Christmas-related events involving visits by Santa Claus.

One – the traditional event at Spinner Park on Avenue A where Santa, escorted by the Turners Falls Fire Department, retrieves requests from children left in a mailbox – is scheduled for December 13, to coincide with the “It’s A Wonderful Night” downtown promotional event. The other, now in its third year, sees Santa driven by the Montague Center fire department on a lengthy trip to stops in all five villages, which will occur on December 21.

The board approved both seasonal visitations.

**Other Business**

Town treasurer Eileen Seymour presented a state-required disclosure of a potential conflict of interest, because she will also be serving as the treasurer of the Turners Falls Fire District.

Seymour, asked if her new duties would involve billing the town wastewater plant for water usage, responded that the water department sends the bills and that she “would just be the treasurer.”

The board agreed to sign off on the disclosure.

At the request of assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller, the board voted to cover a \$2,884.54 overrun in the Millers Falls library renovation project using the “community development discretionary” account rather than the “bid overrun” account, which has run out of money. Nolan-Zeller apologized for not predicting the shortfall.

The board authorized a \$27,000 contract with PowerOptions, Inc. for a study of the carbon footprint at nine town buildings, and approved the annual Green Communities report, which addresses Montague’s progress toward benchmarks set under the Green Communities Act.

An extension of the town’s contract with the Springfield Municipal Recycling Facility until FY’30 was endorsed by the board. Ramsey said the contract was consistent with the town’s new trash hauling service and the “dual-stream” recycling system in which residents sort recyclables.

An agreement with the state to continue the inspection service known as the Sealer of Weights and Measures was also approved.

Ramsey presented options for addressing a bill recently issued to the town for transporting a student to the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, which plans to offer a program not available at Franklin County Technical School. Ramsey said the bill of \$400 per day had been sent by a vendor chosen by the Gill-Montague regional school district “unbeknownst to us,” and that he had found a vendor willing to charge \$220 per day.

Ramsey said that if Montague paid the previously negotiated rate, the total cost for sending the student to Smith, including tuition, would approach \$100,000 annually. “That’s like going to Harvard,” said Kuklewicz of the higher number.

Ramsey told the *Reporter* that the annual cost under a revised contract could still exceed \$70,000. The lower amount would still surpass the town’s transportation budget in the new year, he said at the meeting, and would require a \$35,000 reserve fund transfer until a special town meeting can appropriate more money.

The board voted to authorize him to negotiate a contract at the lower cost.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, November 25 at 6:30 p.m.

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

*Here’s the way it was on November 20, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.*

**If He Plants It, They Will Come**

On Tuesday the Montague selectboard was once again confronted by a very unhappy crowd reacting to the treatment of Turners Falls store owner Rodney Madison, who has been displaying items on the sidewalk and in the town-owned planter he has adopted.

Not only did the board have to explain why it had allowed Madison, at a previous meeting, to be accused [by police chief Charles “Chip” Dodge] of running “an illegal business” – an area apparently not under the oversight of the town

– but it was revealed that rules for use of the planters on Avenue A, one of the key issues in the controversy, had never been voted on.

Claiming that this false charge was affecting his business and his efforts to lure visitors to downtown, Madison requested that the board “publicly state that it’s a legal business.”

The board did not immediately respond, but eventually, after much prodding from Madison and members of the audience, board chair Chris Boutwell stated, “It appears from the information that you have tonight that you have a legal business.”

In a two-to-one decision the board voted to allow Madison to use the planter and to place objects on the sidewalk.

**20 YEARS AGO**

*Here’s the way it was on November 18, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.*

**Soilless Plants**

Soon the interior of Dennis Walsh’s new hydroponic shop at 112 Avenue A, the only local specialty garden supplier, will delight the senses of visitors. Three watering systems coupled with grow lights can nourish and sustain the plant life: the Ebb and Flo system floods roots three times a day; the drip system drips on the plants all day long; and the aeroponics system, Walsh’s favorite, sprays the roots constantly.

Within the next couple weeks, customers hoping to defy winter’s barrenness, can purchase, or just

sniff, snapdragons, peas, tomatoes, phlox, strawberries, peppers, zinnias, portulaca roses, parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme.

**Plants Grant**

The Great Falls Community Gardens, at the corners of Fourth and L streets and Third and L streets in Turners Falls, were awarded a \$1,000 grant from the New England Grassroots Environment Fund for a tool shed and gardening tools.

The small grants program was designed to foster and give voice to grassroots environmental initiatives throughout the region. It provides grants of up to \$2,500 to fuel civic engagement, local activism, and social change.

**150 YEARS AGO**

*Here’s the way it was on November 18, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.*

**Local Matters**

If signs fail not, we shall have rain sometime.

Although we had a fall of snow on Sunday morning, the sleighing is not first-class yet.

Diphtheria is raging in this vicinity, and too much caution cannot be exercised in avoiding cold at this particular season of the year.

A concert and ball will be given by the Montague Cornet Band, this evening in Colle Hall.

The female element will shortly predominate in our churches. Winter bonnets are in the milliner’s hands.

Mr. Campbell is engaged in laying a brick walk on Fourth street for Mr. Rist.

Coal is rising, and Dibble and Potter are just the boys to raise it. We saw some of it raised into a two-story building, recently.

As we view the fiery, untamed

iron horse rush past our beautiful city it suggests to our mind the idea of progress. No charge made for this effusion.

One would fancy from the numerous holes along K street, that a young graveyard was being started.

Our boy Luke is unreasonable enough to ask for a holiday on Thanksgiving to celebrate the anniversary of his almost being drowned.

We stated in our last that 40 hands had been discharged from the Keith mill rag room. We are glad to learn that our information was incorrect.

A lad of perhaps ten years of age hung himself this morning.

Amherst, intellectual with its two colleges, moral with its forty and odd ministers, is also spiritual with its score of liquor-holes.

There were eight burials in Greenfield last week, a greater number than has occurred in a single week for years. Three bodies were brought from Turners Falls and one from Springfield. Four of these deaths resulted from diphtheria.



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**LEVERETT** from page A1

requested more detailed information, including a business plan and financial information, so that it could “engage the town in a meaningful discussion about the project.”

Wallack responded on November 1 with a single-page document and maps outlining two alternatives, each proposing a total of 400 units restricted to owners 55 and older, a quarter of which would be designated as “affordable housing.”

The plans called for either 48 or 150 of the units to be built in Leverett, with the remainder located on the Amherst portion of the land. The 48-unit proposal would result in 12 new “affordable” units being built in Leverett, and would allow Kittredge to bypass local zoning.

Proujansky clarified that the board had not requested an LIP, sometimes called a “friendly 40B” process, and though Wallack’s response did not identify the 150-unit plan as an LIP proposal, Proujansky said this could be a way for the town to have influence not available under a traditional 40B process.

An LIP proposal, he added, would require the approval of the selectboard and planning board.

Proujansky said other options included Kittredge selling the estate to a single buyer or breaking it into pieces, but the board was not aware of these being pursued. He also noted the possibilities of the town negotiating district zoning overlays to affect what is allowable, or proposing other uses for the property.

“There are many subtleties to each solution,” Proujansky said, which the board was working with an attorney to evaluate.

**Rural Characters**

After this summary, residents lined up to express a wide range of concerns, and strong opposition to the proposals. Tom Wolff estimated that 90% of speakers were opposed to both proposals.

Many also expressed a desire for more affordable housing in Leverett.

Among the reasons for opposition, the negative impact on the town’s rural character was cited again and again. The financial impact was also questioned, with many saying they saw a potential for problems and a lack of information about the future as reasons to hold back.

Commenters brought up a lack of trust in the Kittredge estate, and said they feared legal issues with

any potential agreements the town might enter.

Jenny Daniel commented that the town has voted many times to maintain its rural character, and that the development, “whether in Leverett or across the imaginary line in Amherst,” would bring traffic, noise, and pollution and burden the police and fire departments. Daniel asked the board to “stand up against this,” and not subsidize the property’s amenities.

“The Kittredge family has never been a friend of Leverett,” said Nancy Grossman, pointing out that the estate has “endlessly fought property taxes.” She also expressed concern that the developers might be able to remove the senior age restrictions after the units are built, and said studies have shown new residential development “almost always” ends up costing towns money.

She also expressed reluctance to subsidize the “albatross” of amenities currently on the property, referencing a waterpark, a bowling alley, and other features that have been described as antiquated, and which one commenter said they had heard cost \$1.5 million per year to maintain.

Steve Weiss noted that even 48 units would represent the largest population increase that has ever occurred at one time in Leverett. He warned that the ramifications of doing “that much, that fast” should be better understood.

**The Iron Curtain**

Many commenters discussed the idea of cooperating with Amherst as a means to resist the development, though some questioned the likelihood of this strategy’s success. Jacob Park said the project “can’t happen without Amherst” due in part to the latter town’s ability to say no to a 40B proposal.

Tim Shores noted that the proposal would also rely on water and sewer connections to Amherst. He advocated increased contact between the towns, and along with Phil Carter was one of several residents who suggested that the selectboard discontinue contact with the estate. If the developers come up with research that shows they can make the plan work, Shores said, “let them come to us with it.”

Martin Wobst cautioned against being optimistic about help from Amherst, as he believed real estate developers may have more influence there, and complained that re-

cent projects in Amherst “look like Soviet construction in the 1980s.”

Carol Heim expressed a desire for more affordable housing on the property, but said that “a part of her” feels the town should walk away until “we have a lot more information.” Wallack, she said, did not answer “even a part of what was asked” by the selectboard.

Heim said she was not in favor of an LIP process, preferring a zoning overlay solution if more than 48 units are sought.

Carter also objected to the LIP option, saying that he did not want to see the issue decided by three people. “Nothing against you three,” he told the selectboard members. He also said he favored an overlay, which the entire town would be able to debate at town meeting.

Selectboard chair Tom Hankinson said an overlay would mean work for the planning board and asked that board’s chair, Greg Tuzzolo, to speak on the matter.

Tuzzolo said that his board had loosely discussed an overlay, and that it was worth further consideration, though it would be an “onerous, multi-year” process. Whether or not the current effort moves forward, he said, the estate is not going away, and creating a zoning overlay might have future benefits.

Lisa Brooks said she found the Kittredge proposal “strangely similar” to one made in the 17th century involving 47 lots sold by Native

Americans to settlers. “Those original people who said ‘Yes’ to that agreement are no longer here,” she said. Brooks said she “loved” affordable and low-income housing, but said Nipmuc people should be invited to live on the land.

Hankinson commented on the difficulty of holding talks with stakeholders about the property, describing it as a “chicken-and-egg situation.” The lack of specific information from the estate, he said, was making it hard to discuss the matter with residents or the town of Amherst.

Hankinson said the board has been trying to talk with the other members of this “triad” whenever more information is received, and that Leverett residents shouldn’t feel “left out” of the discussion, as the board is trying to be as transparent as possible.

**A Rapid Special**

A brief special town meeting saw all four articles passed. Residents voted unanimously to spend up to \$90,000 to replace a highway department truck a year or two ahead of schedule.

Voters also unanimously approved \$8,508 in Community Preservation Act funding for work at the Graves Ironworks and the adoption of the state’s “Mullins rule” – M.G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23D – after amending the article to include the finance committee. The rule allows committee members who have missed one public hearing on a topic to vote on the matter in question.

A \$114,900 transfer of funds from the Community Preservation Fund to the Leverett Affordable Housing Trust was overwhelmingly approved. Resident Steve Nagy asked if the money could be used for affordable housing on Juggler Meadow Road, and Faye Zipkowitz suggested that would probably be part of a larger discussion.

**Take the Cake**

At the end of the charged and lengthy selectboard meeting, the potential of a last-minute reprieve for the large, wooden, 250th anniversary celebration cake, which had been slated for destruction, prompted a contentious argument among members of the 250th anniversary committee.

Despite accusations that they were taking the cake by eminent domain in doing so, the selectboard voted to give the town of Pepperell until this Saturday to commit to removing it.

Ann Ferguson and others thanked the 250th committee, and cake steward Silas Ball and his crew, for their work with the cake. Grossman commented that seeing it lit up at night was “magical” and “brings joy.”



A dispute broke out during Tuesday’s selectboard meeting over the fate of the wooden cake acquired for the town’s 250th anniversary celebration this year.

PATRICIA DUFFY PHOTO



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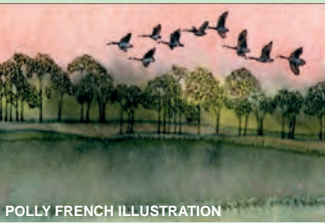
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NOVEMBER 21, 2024



## WEST ALONG THE RIVER

### RUMINATIONS ON A COLD, FROSTY MOON

By DAVID BRULE

**THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE** – How to describe this season? This month, usually so dark, has been bright and cold, unlike most months of November in memory.

Almost too dry to put frost on the withered pumpkins, the skies are too clear for snow.

The full moon shines through the upstairs bedroom window like the old-fashioned headlight beam of the train that rumbles and wails through town, past the old ghost of the train station in the upper village. That moon puts a silvery necklace on the river over yonder through the trees. The rushing water is now down to a trickle, threading among riverstones in this dry season.

In the early dawning, that same moon floats far above and away, visible through the scrawny arms of the bare maples. The pale lone-some Man in the Moon lingers on the western horizon, taking no heed of the political fortunes and disasters down here among the mice and men.

I ply my lonely task of keeping my naturalist's notebook, outdoors and at my post every day at 7 a.m. This has become my day job, for which I am paid absolutely nothing every Friday.

I keep the weather company, reporting on life at the edge of the civilized world – or, at least, at the edge of this old neighborhood where an ancient river flows, a river before time existed.

I file a twice-monthly report on the quality of sunlight on any given day, on the killing frost, on the driving rain or swirling snow, or on the lack of both.

On a day like this, for those of you who are shut off from the outside world or who deliberate-

ly shut yourselves off, I can tell you that just now a quiet group of Tao philosophers, the waxwings, have settled on the climbing bittersweet vines, calmly discussing the affairs of the waxwing world over a breakfast of berries.

You may know that bittersweet is much maligned as an invasive, strangling trees slowly like a ruthless boa constrictor. We pull it down, cutting it from its roots at every opportunity, but it persists. It's a plague for us and the trees it strangles, yet a boon for some creatures, feeding many birds over the winter when food supplies are low.

In the natural scheme of things, there's always some element of usefulness in even the most despised of villains.

High above the quiet conversation of the waxwings, just before the sun has cleared the neighborhood's nearest rooftop, even before it peeks through the sentinel pines on the ridgeline, an eagle glides in the frosty air. Not soaring, just gliding, in slow, wide circles. It communicates a sort of joy and pleasure in being alive, a royal being in majestic flight surveying the landscape and riverscape, doing nothing else in particular.

I can report that the clouds are drifting past, above the eagle, as they usually do, flowing from east to west. Eagle pays no mind.

His kin down below, the wee chickadees, are up and at 'em. They arrive early at the supply of sunflower seeds. They seem to reflect upon their selection, then choose the one they want, and lilt off to a nearby branch to crack it open. The faint *tap-tap* of their work reaches me, attentive in my Adirondack chair.

There have been no night raids see **WEST ALONG** page B6



LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES ILLUSTRATION

Cedar waxwing, *Bombycilla cedrorum*.

Above: The extended closure of the Canalside Rail Trail continued this week, as FirstLight Power finishes installation of underground system to reroute water leaking from the left dyke of the Turners Falls power canal.

## PROFILE PRACTICING ALIVENESS... WITH CLAY

By SIERRA D. DICKEY

**GREENFIELD** – Ode Ortiz-Wren finds that a piece of clay is the perfect sandbox, so to speak, for a person to play with and practice things like confidence, assertion, boundaries, allowance, and risk-taking. “It can really allow people to notice what their limits are and move away from damaging situations or environments,” they tell the *Reporter*.

A somatic expressive arts educator using clay, Ortiz-Wren has recently begun seeing students at a shared studio space on Hope Street in Greenfield. Over the course of a recent two-hour somatic arts class, a student made ceramic stamps from forest detritus, rocked back and forth on their feet to find their center, sipped tea, and spoke about some tough moments from their week.

Ortiz-Wren recommends working with clay for anyone who needs practice with taking risks in a visceral way. Unlike other mediums, clay has some unique corollaries to the human body. “The material itself has its own memory and is really sensitive,” they say.

The material also requires fastidiousness, and a willingness to make mistakes and accept unexpected outcomes in the kiln. Artists often work hard through many steps to create something that they ultimately don't have final control over. Ceramics, says Ortiz-Wren, can provide a “wonderful practice of detachment.”

Somatics is an interdisciplinary field including educators, bodyworkers, therapists, and artists. Somatic practitioners believe that the body is more than a vessel for our experiences, and actively shapes our mental, social, and emotional selves. Somatic arts educa-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Ode Ortiz-Wren, a somatic expressive arts educator, at their clay studio in Greenfield.

tors work in theater, writing, singing, painting, dance, and other mediums; in a somatic art class, students are often encouraged to process emotions through creative expression and body-based exercises.

see **CLAY** page B2



## Oral History Project Kicks Off

By LEE WICKS

**MONTAGUE** – Before everyone had a car, you could do all your shopping right in Montague Center. The two-story home with the second-floor porch, the one with the books for sale, was a general store, luncheonette and soda fountain. There was a meat market, a penny candy store, a store that sold and repaired Zenith televisions, and more.

When Eileen and Paul Mariani moved here with their three little boys in 1969, there was a donkey that roamed around town, occasionally chasing people and sometimes biting. This was a shock to two people raised in New York City.

“We expected roosters,” Eileen said. “Not a donkey!”

Back when Mark Fisk and Mark Girard were kids, nobody swam in the swimming hole at the end of

North Street – because the town's sewage pipe emptied just above it. They found other spots upstream in areas where the Sawmill River had been dammed up.

Halloween was always popular, but not nearly as big as it's become. One family opened their front doors to reveal tables laden with

see **CONNECT** page B8



WILL QUALE PHOTO

Left to right: Montague Center natives Mark Girard, Ann Fisk, and Mark Fisk, and moderator Julie Kumble, who reportedly moved to the village from the faraway land of Leverett.



# Pet of the Week



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CLAY from page B1

In the studio, the student sits across from Ortiz-Wren at a workbench and explores the clay in a variety of ways. Classes are always one-on-one and oriented toward the student's process. The goal is to use clay to find a way into what's happening in one's body, and not to make functional ceramic pieces to take home.

"We create a parallel experience with what's happening with you and your body, and the piece that you're working on," says Ortiz-Wren. The clay is often reused, and not fired, after the session.

About halfway through a session, Ortiz-Wren will make a suggestion for an experiment that they and their student might try together. These experiments allow students to test out moving, touching, or changing the clay in certain ways that support their own embodiment. The student might step on clay and observe the sensations coming in through their feet and legs, or practice cutting it with a ceramics tool to sense into how much force or gentleness is actually required.

While sensitive and personal topics arise during sessions, Ortiz-Wren is not a therapist. They are being mentored by Kai Cheng Thom, a Toronto-based former social worker and embodied justice facilitator, and are currently seeking certification in non-clinical somatic therapies.

Ortiz-Wren has a bachelor's degree in ceramics and illustration from Marlboro College. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, they were pursuing a music career

in Austin, Texas. Lockdowns brought them home to the Boston area, where they deepened their own relationship with somatic therapies.

They produced their own ceramic pieces and worked as a tech in a pottery studio before beginning to offer somatic arts classes themselves.

This summer, Ortiz-Wren moved to Turners Falls to live with old friends, and set up shop in the Hope Street studio space. They describe their relationship to clay – and their own time as a patient with somatic therapists – as "life-changing."

"Working with clay for most people is very young," they say. "Most people have experiences with clay or mud or Play-Doh and so whether or not we're conscious of it, we're really working with memory when we're working with clay."

As Ortiz-Wren continues their mentorship under Thom, they are building skills to facilitate conversations about trauma using a different approach than psychoanalysis. "There are things that are allowed to come up with me, as a practitioner, that maybe aren't talked about in a ceramics class," says Ortiz-Wren.

"In a culture that's so intensely pushing people into numbing and plowing through inhumane work routines and inhumane structures of power, practicing aliveness can be a huge game-changer, and can inform decisions that we make, and the commitments that we're available for."



## THEATER REVIEW

### O'Neill's Emotional *Moon for the Misbegotten* Strikes Chords at the Majestic Theater

By MAX HARTSHORNE

**WEST SPRINGFIELD** – Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, now playing at the Majestic Theater in West Springfield, takes us back to 1923, when a family drama ensues in a Connecticut farmhouse.

We meet the residents of this rural run-down house, another stellar build by scene designer Greg Trochlil and his team: first the father Phil Hogan (John Thomas Waite), with his full-on Irish brogue, and Josie, his voluptuous daughter (Sue Dziura), who live together and face an upcoming challenge. The misbegotten are the unfortunate, the poor whose situation has caused family upheaval.

The son, Mike Hogan (Caleb Chew), is leaving because their part of rural America offers nothing to the young. The house is for sale and might be sold right out from under them. Josie encourages her brother to seek greener pastures. For now, she is staying right here to fight for the house and for her landlord, James Tyrone, Jr., the man she loves... despite the many headwinds between them.

When O'Neill wrote this in 1941, as the sequel to *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, it was an era where people treated alcohol much differently than they do today. It's noticeable because Phil appears pretty drunk throughout much of the play, as does James (Jay Sefton). As the play goes on you hear Josie constantly suggest that "having another drink" is the solution to getting closer, not feeling bad, or any other issue. Just pop the cork, man, have a swig. Again and again, one character accuses another of trying to get them drunk.

The play ran 2 hours and 20 minutes, and sometimes in the first act it lagged. A few members of the audience next to us left at intermission. You had to listen carefully to understand Phil's well-honed brogue and the intensity of the frustrating relationship between Josie and James.

But Sefton, who was so memorable on this stage in his solo performance of *Unreconciled* last year, makes an interesting change



KAIT RANKINS PHOTO

Actors Jay Sefton and Sue Dziura share a moment as James and Josie in Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten* at the Majestic Theater.

throughout this long show, wrestling so much emotion out of the character, as he did in his solo outing. You can almost experience his self-loathing yourself each time James takes another drink, or sees his hand shaking with tremors.

James shares horrible tales of neglect and pain from his alcoholism: his mother died and he was too drunk to attend the funeral, she never saw his sobriety that lasted a few years, he's a degenerate through and through. Josie tries to do what Mom never did, console and forgive him.

I think Josie is the most impressive character. She keeps our attention on her throughout with her passion for James, despite his many challenges. She may be poor, and who knows who she's slept with – a frequent topic – but she's a good person.

As the moonlight bathes the couple in the second act, and Phil's homemade booze comes out, Josie wrestles with saying whatever she has to say to win James's heart. But he can't even get to their date on time, arriving hours late. Josie shrugs – she's not giving up on this guy.

"You look like you've seen a ghost," she says sympathetically.

"My own," answers James. "But you are healthy and beautiful and clean, and I like your breasts," is

how the seduction goes. But instead of seduction, we see empathy, as he lays his head on her chest and she stops begging him for a kiss.

Director James Warwick's decision to change O'Neill's original production from a four-act play to two acts with an intermission was wise. The tone of the play changes remarkably with the moonlight scenes between Josie and James both showing an impressive range of sharp emotions. The script is dense, and at times hard to follow.

Critic J. Peter Bergman wrote in his review of this staging, "If you are intelligent and patient and can appreciate the sensibility of O'Neill's special, verbose language, it is a beautiful play well worth your time and attention."

One more comment about the set: the small touches, like the real granite steps that actors sit on and the rocks set in front, add so much realism to the house, giving the play the right feel of the home of some misbegotten souls.

*A Moon for the Misbegotten runs at the Majestic Theater, Elm Street in West Springfield, through Sunday, December 1. Tickets are \$35 to \$38 and can be purchased at the box office or by calling (413) 747-7797.*

## Senior Center Activities NOVEMBER 25 THROUGH 29

### ERVING

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

#### Monday 11/25

9 a.m. Good For U  
10 a.m. Seated Fitness  
1 p.m. Yoga

#### Tuesday 11/26

9 a.m. Stretch & Balance  
10 a.m. Line Dancing  
11 a.m. Social Stringer

#### Wednesday 11/27

9 a.m. Interval Training  
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
12 p.m. Bingo

#### Thursday 11/28

Senior Center Closed

#### Friday 11/29

Senior Center Closed

### GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information, please call 863-9357.

#### Monday 11/25

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

1 p.m. Pie and Ice Cream Party

#### Tuesday 11/26

9 a.m. Chair Yoga  
12:30 p.m. Drop-In Tech Help  
3 p.m. Tai Chi

#### Wednesday 11/27

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga  
(weather permitting)

#### Thursday 11/28

11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo  
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

#### Friday 11/29

Senior Center Closed

### LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinic is held monthly.

Contact (413) 548-1022 x2 or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

### WENDELL

Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments.

For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

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PREVIEW

# The 98th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – There are many well-known and famous things coming up for the holidays. One of these is the 98th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. It's set to be held on November 28 in New York City, and will be shown on NBC from 8:30 a.m. to noon that same day.

This parade features many different floats, several marching bands, and other things. A Minnie Mouse float will debut in this year's parade. Other floats of Disney characters have been used in this event, such as Mickey and Pluto in 1934. In 1935 it was Donald, according to *USA Today*, and Goofy came along in 1992.

The event got started in 1924, though instead of focusing on Thanksgiving, it was called the Macy's Christmas Parade. It was just held by store employees, who hoped it would make customers shop there for Christmas. It began at 9 a.m., according to the *History Channel*, and followed a six-mile route from Harlem to Herald Square.

The floats that first year featured characters from nursery rhymes, which matched the Christmas display at Macy's flagship store. The rhymes were the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, Little Miss Muffet, and Little Red Riding Hood.

Live animals from the Central Park Zoo were used on floats in the early parades. The first balloon wasn't used until 1927, when Felix the Cat made his debut. Interestingly, the parade, while well

known as being something to see on TV around Thanksgiving, wasn't shown on national TV until 1947.

Other groups that have been in the parade include the NYPD Mounted Unit, the NYPD Motorcycles Unit, and the Harlem Globetrotters.

Marching bands that have been in the parade include the NYC Marching Band, the University of Massachusetts Minuteman Marching Band, the West Virginia University Mountaineer Marching Band, and the Macy's Great American Marching Band.

Dennis Rhoads is the president of the Music Festivals & Tours, the company involved with the Macy's marching band. "I owned the company," Rhoads told the *Reporter*. "It's been 35 years."

The band has been part of the parade for 18 years. He told me "2006, I guess" when I asked what the first year was that they started doing the parade. They have only been in the parade, which is why they are named Macy's Great American Marching Band.

I learned from Rhoads that 250 members are part of the Macy's band, and that their uniforms are red and white. "They have always been that," Rhoads said. "Students from all over the United States are part of the band. It's an all-star band."

"It's an honor and a tremendous experience for the students," he added. "It takes a whole year to prepare for the parade."

You can check out the official website for Music Festivals & Tours for info on the Macy's marching band at [www.musfestivals.com](http://www.musfestivals.com).



The Santa Claus float in the 1924 parade.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## 'Eviction Clarification'; Foreclosure; Chimney Fire; BB; No Power; Four Pills; Brush Fire; Injured Goose; Mad Child

**Tuesday, 11/12**

9:04 a.m. Assistance requested with eviction clarification on J Street. A 64-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on a default warrant.

4:10 p.m. Caller states that there appears to be some damage behind a building on Canal Street; someone may have gained access to the building through a broken window using a ladder. No ladder seen in area. Unable to tell what may be new damage vs. previous damage. Caller left before officers' arrival.

**Wednesday, 11/13**

11:50 a.m. Caller from Norman Circle reports that her poodle ran away. No tags; black and white; seven pounds.

12:17 p.m. Party into station reporting that he received a phone call from a number claiming to be Baystate Springfield asking for his Medicare number. He gave it to them, then when he tried calling them back, the line was busy. He believes he was scammed and is nervous that his money will be stolen. Advised of options.

4:36 p.m. Walk-in from Turners Falls Road believes that someone is prowling around their property at night. Advised of options.

5:48 p.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road advises that his 20-pound Dachshund that is reddish-brown and has no collar ran away. Caller called back advising that he found his dog.

9:23 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road advises her neighbor is operating heavy machinery and it is very loud. Caller advises that the noise diminished while she was on the phone. Officer advises the neighbor was loading a tractor onto a vehicle; they are done for the night.

**Thursday, 11/14**

9:17 a.m. Employee from a Millers Falls Road business would like it on record that a van pulled in and the passenger, an older woman, came in and was talking nonsensically to them. The woman got back in the van and left. A male party was driving. Caller thought it seemed strange and wanted to

document it.

11:40 a.m. Caller states that there are two cars parked on the sidewalk on Unity Street, making pedestrians walk in the road. Area checked; no cars on the sidewalk.

4:29 p.m. Caller reports that approximately a half hour ago, she observed all of the doors to the house and garage at a Dell Street address open; items were visible in the garage and curbside; no vehicles or subjects observed on the property. Caller states she heard that the house was foreclosed on. Upon arrival, officer advised doors were open, oven was on, and there was a cat inside. Officer clear for now; will check back, but it appears someone has been there performing a clean-out. Officer back at property; advising multiple vehicles there now. Officer spoke with parties on scene and closed their doors. Parties are in the process of moving out.

4:38 p.m. 911 caller reporting what appears to be a brush fire behind Senn's on Federal Street. Conferenced with Shelburne Control. Upon arrival, officer advises smoke and flames showing. Officer advises railroad crew on scene performing maintenance; they advise this is a standard practice and they have sufficient water on site. Shelburne Control advised.

5:01 p.m. First 911 caller reporting what appears to be either a physical altercation or a close proximity heated verbal altercation in front of Food City. Two parties left on foot; one walked off toward a vehicle and is believed to still be in the parking lot. Simultaneously, a second 911 caller reported that he was with his brother and an unknown male approached them threatening to punch them and accusing them of robbing someone. Second caller denies the accusation; states nothing physical transpired; is leaving area on foot; does not want to speak with an officer in person but is requesting a phone call. Second caller also concerned that the other involved

party may be intending to drive while intoxicated due to detecting an odor of alcohol during the altercation. Units advise involved vehicle gone on arrival.

7:17 p.m. Caller complaining of loud equipment being operated near Montague City Road and Depot Street; it is disturbing her peace. Caller states it has been going on for approximately 45 minutes. Referred to an officer.

9:49 p.m. 911 report of chimney fire on Wendell Road; flames showing from top of chimney. Caller has evacuated with her dog. Conferenced with Shelburne Control. Officer advises no flames showing at this time, but chimney is glowing red. Wood stove; external metal chimney. Relayed to Shelburne Control.

**Friday, 11/15**

8:51 a.m. Caller reports that he was at Cumberland Farms with his sister when two parties pulled in, started harassing him, and took pictures of his sister, who doesn't want her picture taken. Advised caller that an officer will call him back.

9:09 a.m. Caller from I Street reports that her back glass door is shattered; it looks like it was shot by a BB gun. Report taken.

9:07 p.m. 911 abandoned call; upon callback, caller stated he called to report a cat being neglected in Montague Center. Caller unable to provide details of the exact location or how the cat is being neglected. Officer advised caller of options. Caller did not provide officer with additional information beyond what was provided in the initial call.

**Saturday, 11/16**

8:30 a.m. 911 caller from J Street states that there is no electricity in the building and she is concerned about running out of oxygen. No reported power outages in area. Message left for property manager. Power was restored to the building approximately 10 minutes later.

10:33 a.m. Anonymous caller concerned about a neighbor conducting an illegal burn in a yard on Lake Pleasant Street. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

10:55 a.m. 911 report of unwanted person on L Street. Investigated.

1:56 p.m. Employee from an East Main Street business would like it on record that they had an adult female customer come in today claiming to have found a pill inside their business; she returned it to the caller. When the caller went to the area to double-check, she found three more pills. Entire area had been cleaned pri-

or to arrival of suspicious female. Caller concerned that the woman may have purposely left pills there to be found by a child.

4:50 p.m. MPD officer was flagged down and told that two kids were trying to climb the fence around the old paper mill in Erving. Officer responding; Erving PD notified. They are going to make entry into the building. Parties located. Erving PD getting one of the parties medical attention.

6:43 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road heard a male voice yell at a dog and then heard the dog whimpering, like it may have been hit by the male party. Unable to locate.

**Sunday, 11/17**

3:16 a.m. 911 caller from Avenue A states she can overhear individuals in a neighboring apartment stating that they are going to damage her vehicle or break into it. Officer spoke with the caller and advised her of her options. Upon arrival, all was quiet.

12:21 p.m. Report of an injured goose on the bridge at the bike path near the Water Pollution Control Facility. Message left for animal control office. MPD officer is transporting the goose to the vet in Deerfield.

4:23 p.m. Caller reports that his neighbor on Court Square is having a brush fire; lots of leaves around it, and it's near the tree line. Shelburne Control advised. MCFD on scene requesting PD assistance. Officer responding.

5:09 p.m. Report of a child walking on Hillside Road with parents screaming for the child from the car. Male party walking asked for a hug. When asked by bystanders if any assistance was needed, the adults said no, and the child said nothing. Officer advised. Everything is fine; child was mad that parents would not bring her to the mall. Child is back in the car.

6:02 p.m. Caller reports that the neighbor behind her on West Street is having a fire. Does not think it's out of control. Control advised. MCFD confirming address.

10:25 p.m. Caller from Whately reports she just woke up and her truck is gone and her debit card is gone and she believes she knows who took them; she wants the party arrested. Advised caller that she needs to call her local PD. Caller was not happy with being told this. Shelburne Control calling in; Whately PD will talk to caller. Caller states she thinks her truck is on Second Street. MPD officer advises vehicle located on Avenue A; unknown what apartment involved party may be in. Shelburne Control advised.

## Have a question for the editor?

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### EXHIBIT ANNOUNCEMENT

## Process and Patience On a Homespun Path



Tide Pool, Wonderland, Acadia National Park, Mt. Desert, Maine, one of 20 rugs by Phyllis Lawrence on display at the Wendell Free Library.

**WENDELL** – Phyllis Lawrence’s most recent rug exhibit, *Finding A Path*, is an impressive new textile art exhibit that provides a transformative experience at the Wendell Free Library. Each of the 20 pieces is inspired by nature and some include collected materials such as beach stones or feathers.

Lawrence’s work is purely adorned with natural materials, and shows a masterful dedication to her craft. Each of the 13 pieces in the Herrick Room Gallery is a unique landscape in rug form, made using traditional hooking techniques and felting.

Lawrence uses both photographs and original drawings as a foundation for each image and then selects from homespun wool, silk yarn, and patterned fabrics to begin hooking together light and dark, thick and thin. She describes a simplicity in the technique, and shares that she looks forward to the escape and meditation involved once she arrives at nesting loop beside loop.

The resulting work is both awe-inspiring and inviting; compositions whisper to a curious mind and warrant a closer eye. One is suddenly aware of one’s fingertips stretching out towards each rug in an attempt to understand the complexity of the picture before them.

In “Tide Pool, Wonderland, Acadia National Park, Mt. Desert, Maine” (above), Lawrence explores the play of light, water, and reflection as she captures a moment in time with family. The rug looms large despite its medium scale. It is a brilliant composition of which the details are artfully puzzling, almost akin to seeing collage, when pausing up close.

Lawrence uses a dark border to showcase the variety of blues juxtaposed with earthen yellows, a spectrum of whites, and the occasional raspberry mauve. She says she sees the repetition of the loops in her work as “companions linked

by simple closeness, in color and texture, to create a whole...” that echoes the broader network of interrelationships and communication in the natural world.

The collection gives the impression of realism abstracted by mindful process. It recalls painters such as John Singer Sargent and Mary Cassatt.

Lawrence has been hooking rugs for many years. *Finding A Path* includes about 20 medium-scale pieces, with the exhibit extending into the glass case that graces the library entrance. It is her intention to provide viewers with a sense of nourishment that fuels their own creativity.

Lawrence’s artistry is an antithesis to our frenzied “grind culture.” While she desires to emphasize the beauty in creation and humanity, she also finds a part in the human collective as she acknowledges the cultural need for expression, connection, and understanding. Lawrence has arranged these into her rugs. With this new collection, she also provides an antidote to the difficult moments inherent in living, a pause amidst overwhelm.

Drawing near to Lawrence’s work, a sense of magic abounds in the viewer’s attunement to the fine tangle of process and patience, practice and presence, woven into each piece.

*Finding A Path* is on display through December at the Wendell Free Library. A reception will take place Sunday, December 8 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. in the form of a demonstration. Lawrence belongs to a rug-hooking guild that meets once a month, and they have offered to hold their December meeting at the library.

This reception is a wonderful opportunity to get an inside look at the rug-hooking process, meet Lawrence and other artists, and ask questions.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

## Drone; Showered With Rocks; Northern Lights; Death; Prius Face-First In Ditch; Yelling Profanities At Nobody; Lawnmower Fire; Laundry Detergent Theft; Creeper Back

#### Thursday, 10/3

5:35 a.m. Caller reported they struck a deer in the area of the French King Bridge.

7:18 a.m. Fire alarm on Cutler Road.

7:57 a.m. Medical emergency on North Cross Road.

11:45 a.m. Report of a loose calf in the North Cross Road area.

4:31 p.m. Oak Street caller wanted to have it logged that she received a bitcoin ransom email.

#### Friday, 10/4

10:11 a.m. French King Highway caller reporting a break-in.

4:55 p.m. Assisted Main Road caller looking for an accident report.

6:47 p.m. Paperwork service on Main Road.

7:49 p.m. Caller reporting a car parked on the shoulder on Route 10 between Pioneer and Route 142 with no lights on. Someone may be attempting to work on it.

7:59 p.m. Mohawk Trail 911 call reporting erratic operation on Route 2 east. The dark SUV possibly with a Pennsylvania license is now in Gill. Greenfield dispatch notified both Gill and Erving.

#### Saturday, 10/5

10:20 a.m. Boyle Road caller states a party drove into the front of his vehicle and then left. A good Samaritan took a photo. Did not engage with the party.

6:42 p.m. Riverview Drive caller advises that two adults and four children are fishing on the pier and also cooking something.

7:20 p.m. Medical emergency on Boyle Road.

#### Sunday, 10/6

3:32 p.m. Center Road caller requesting a call from a Gill officer with questions about a drone flying around the area.

9:15 p.m. Caller states they witnessed a gray Mercedes sedan weaving between lines on the French King Bridge.

9:22 p.m. Fire alarm on Elm Street.

#### Monday, 10/7

12:27 a.m. French King Highway caller reports his vehicle broke down and may be out of gas. Vehicle is about 200 yards west of the French King Bridge.

9:48 a.m. Medical emergency on Main Road.

12:07 p.m. Party stuck in an elevator on Main Road.

5:11 p.m. Caller was behind a dump truck on Route 10 with an uncovered load heading toward Bernardston, and advises her car was “showered with rocks” from the truck. She does not have a color or company name for the vehicle.

11:36 p.m. Report of a missing person, Lamplighter Way.

#### Tuesday, 10/8

12:20 p.m. French King

Highway resident reporting a stolen trailer.

2:55 p.m. Small hole reported in surface on Franklin Road. Given to highway supervisor.

4:31 p.m. Officer requested, French King Highway.

#### Wednesday, 10/9

8:24 a.m. Complaint of a youth driving westbound on Route 2 passing cars on solid double lines.

12:46 p.m. Two- or three-car accident, French King Highway. No injuries.

#### Thursday, 10/10

10:27 a.m. Assisted citizen on Munn’s Ferry Road.

11:52 a.m. Loose dog located in the middle of Center Road. Reunited with owner.

12:28 p.m. Caller reporting an older station wagon with Vermont plates hitting the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. No airbag deployment or entrapment. The hood is up and the vehicle may be smoking.

8:36 p.m. Main Road caller reporting parties parked in her field waiting for the Northern Lights. She asked them to leave and they started screaming at her.

#### Friday, 10/11

11:08 a.m. Log reported on Main Road in the southbound lane. May have fallen off a truck.

2:39 p.m. Death reported on Barney Hale Road.

3:29 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with accident with injuries, Gill Road.

#### Saturday, 10/12

8:36 a.m. Medical emergency on Main Road.

9:14 a.m. Assisted Green Hill Road citizen with VIN verification.

#### Sunday, 10/13

11:15 a.m. Assisted another agency on Elm Street.

#### Tuesday, 10/15

8:22 a.m. Caller advises her vehicle is disabled at the Gill lights near the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

#### Wednesday, 10/16

3:51 p.m. Caller reporting a vehicle driving in the breakdown lane on the French King Highway almost rear-ended her, and almost struck another vehicle.

#### Thursday, 10/17

10:57 a.m. French King Highway caller states an elderly male appears to have gone off the road. His Prius is face-first in a ditch in the area of the kayak rental building.

5:24 p.m. Main Road caller reporting a vehicle fire.

#### Friday, 10/18

12:49 a.m. Fire alarm on Cottage Row.

8:23 a.m. Received notification that the French King Highway boat ramp has reopened with new pavement.

10:25 a.m. Assisted citizen looking to set up an escort.

11:37 a.m. Assisted another agency on Main Road.

1:36 p.m. Lamplight-

er Way caller states his phone appears to have been hacked and he is receiving threats on it.

2:36 p.m. Main Road caller advises he heard shots fired in the area.

5:30 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle reported on West Gill Road. Vehicle is off the road and not a hazard.

#### Saturday, 10/19

11:27 a.m. Main Road caller states she can hear gunshots coming from behind her residence.

12:32 p.m. Large black cow reported in the road, North Cross Road.

12:38 p.m. Memorial Grove Road 911 call. On call back, party stated she is on a bus and accidentally called.

12:53 p.m. Stop sign and a road sign knocked down, North Cross and Back roads.

7:05 p.m. Officer wanted on Camp Road.

#### Sunday, 10/20

11:46 a.m. Set up Setback Lane citizen with escort this evening.

4:51 p.m. Medical emergency on Boyle Road.

#### Monday, 10/21

9:06 a.m. Grove Street caller states his vehicle was gone through sometime overnight.

10:01 a.m. Grove Street caller reports unlocked vehicles were entered and spare change taken.

11:26 a.m. Oak Street caller requesting a welfare check for a male party with a white hat who is up by the former Four Winds School building yelling profanities at nobody.

12:57 p.m. Riverview Drive caller reported a past motor vehicle breaking and entering.

#### Tuesday, 10/22

1:13 p.m. Oak Street caller reports he received a few calls from people who have had their boats rifled through.

6:53 p.m. Officer out with a suspicious person on a bicycle, West Gill Road.

#### Wednesday, 10/23

1:37 p.m. Main Road caller advising his riding lawnmower caught fire. No structures threatened.

3:09 p.m. Caller advises two people are climbing the fence and taking pictures, French King Bridge.

5:49 p.m. Report of a possible propane tank explosion near the water tower on Bolger Road.

#### Thursday, 10/24

4:26 a.m. Medical emergency on Mountain Road.

7:10 a.m. Main Road caller reported lost or stolen license-to-carry card.

11:54 a.m. West Gill Road caller states her neighbors are out burning.

6:05 p.m. French King Highway caller reporting a deer on the side of the road that was struck but is still alive. The animal

is somewhere between the Wagon Wheel and the French King Bridge.

6:20 p.m. Medical emergency on West Gill Road.

9:20 p.m. Purple Road 911 call with a young child and a mother telling the child to go to bed.

#### Friday, 10/25

8:28 a.m. French King Highway caller reporting glass in the breakdown lane across from the Factory Hollow rest area. Vehicles are getting flat tires.

10:58 a.m. Barney Hale Road caller states that it’s not an emergency, but she needs the number for the Gill PD. Her roommate took the laundry detergent and she can’t do laundry.

8:24 p.m. South Cross Road caller reporting that the creeper is back with a flashlight in the woods. The caller thinks they come from the drug house.

#### Saturday, 10/26

7:09 p.m. French King Highway caller reported someone breaking into his trailer at the listed location.

8:39 p.m. Harassment reported on Main Road.

#### Sunday, 10/27

12:45 p.m. Lost Great Dane puppy found on West Gill Road.

6:38 p.m. Main Road caller reports her upstairs neighbor is deliberately banging around and being loud.

#### Monday, 10/28

10:26 a.m. French King Highway caller reports that a westbound pickup blew through the lights and is passing vehicles at high speeds. Now out of sight. Greenfield PD advised.

1:20 p.m. Fire alarm on Boyle Road.

4:17 p.m. Red van with no plates parked at the end of a driveway, Main Road.

5:01 p.m. Main Road caller advises his neighbor is blowing leaves across the road onto his property.

7:50 p.m. Rear-end collision of vehicles traveling eastbound on French King Highway. Both single occupants were transported by NEMS. Byrnes removed both vehicles.

#### Tuesday, 10/29

12:26 p.m. Dogs reunited with owners and contact information added, West Gill and Dole roads.

#### Wednesday, 10/30

8:32 a.m. Noise complaint received on Main Road.

9:01 a.m. Boyle Road caller looking to report an online scam.

1:02 p.m. Medical emergency on French King Highway.

1:50 p.m. Report into the station of an overturned canoe with two parties in the water, French King Highway. Not requesting further services.

#### Thursday, 10/31

1:20 p.m. Medical emergency on Walnut Street.

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# Aquí se habla español

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



## Encontrar paz en la naturaleza

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA

**GREENFIELD** – Estudios realizados por diferentes organizaciones médicas, entre ellas la Universidad de Vermont demuestran que la naturaleza puede tener un impacto positivo en la salud mental, ayudar a reducir el estrés, y a mejorar nuestro estado de ánimo. Y no podemos olvidarnos tampoco que caminar ayuda a combatir la obesidad y los problemas físicos y mentales que trae consigo.

Eso sí, el mismo estudio recalca que la naturaleza, los parques, y bosques no son accesibles para todos por igual. El estudio señala que los afroamericanos y latinos no disponen del tiempo libre o de medios de transporte adecuados para llegar a estos y por ello están en desigualdad de condiciones.

Me he decidido a escribir sobre algunos de estos lugares cercanos porque creo que en estos tiempos de incertidumbre, de estrés y aflicción, una forma de desconexión y de encontrar consuelo y paz es caminar en la naturaleza. Como dice la famosa frase de John Muir: “En todo paseo por la naturaleza, encontrarás más de lo que buscas.”

Hoy quiero compartir con ustedes tres lugares cercanos, con fácil acceso para que puedan pasear y reconectar con la naturaleza. Les recomiendo que si tienen unos minutos libres cada semana, dejen de lado sus teléfonos y redes sociales e intenten caminar al menos 30 minutos, verán como en poco tiempo será el mejor momento de la semana para ustedes.

### Ruta del Canal en Turners Falls

Si usted vive en Turners Falls, el lugar más cercano y sin necesidad de conducir es pasear por el carril de bici que empieza en Unity Park y llega hasta Deerfield muy cerca de McClelland Farm Road en donde existe un aparcamiento para carros.

Esta ruta era una antigua vía del tren reciclada para pasear. La distancia total es de 3.7 millas en un sentido, y el desnivel de altura es muy escaso, es un terreno en su mayor parte llano por lo que no requiere de un gran esfuerzo físico.

Actualmente no se puede llegar hasta el fin ya que está cortado por una construcción, que terminará en unas semanas, así que será mejor cruzar en el puente de la calle 11 y seguir el camino al lado del canal hasta llegar al final del Patch donde se encuentra el laboratorio de investigación de peces anádrolos SO Conte.

Otra opción es cruzar el mismo puente de la calle 11 y llegar hasta la calle I donde empiezan los caminos que llegan hasta el río paralelos a Migratory Way. Estos caminos son fáciles de caminar, con alguna raíz o piedra, pero en general llanos y fáciles de encontrar, con muchos



Vista en Northfield Mountain.

árboles que crecen cerca del río. Hay algunas mesas y bancos al final en el lugar llamado la Roca donde se forma una pequeña presa.

La distancia hasta aquí es de unas dos millas dependiendo de la ruta que elija. Puede usted llevar su animal de compañía, siempre en correa.

### Highland Park en Greenfield

Al otro lado del río Connecticut podemos recorrer el parque de Highland en Greenfield. Puede usted llegar andando o si utiliza su carro puede aparcarlo bien en el aparcamiento de Poet's Seat Tower en Mountain Road o en el mismo parque después de las pistas de tenis.

Este parque que está dividido por Mountain Road cruza toda la cresta montañosa de Greenfield paralela al río. El nombre que aparece en los mapas es Rocky Mountain que lleva a la famosa torre de Poet's Seat desde la que se puede observar Greenfield o al otro lado, al sur, llamado Temple Woods que termina en la plataforma de Sachem Head.

Las vistas son muy buenas en ambos lados, con diferentes caminos bien marcados donde encontrar la paz. Hay que ser muy cauteloso al recorrerlos porque tienen muchas raíces y piedras puntiagudas que pueden hacerle tropezar.

En verano, el parque es fresco especialmente en las primeras horas de la mañana. En otoño y en invierno, cuando los árboles han perdido sus hojas los rayos de sol, hacen que el camino sea menos frío.

La subida a la plataforma tiene una distancia de unas dos millas y la última parte puede ser un poco difícil debido a lo empinado del terreno y a las rocas. Hay una cuerda que facilita el ascenso para ir agarrándose a ella.

Otra posibilidad es desdeñar la

subida a la plataforma y seguir por el camino mucho más ancho y blando que se llama Bears Den Road que es fácil de seguir y termina en una de las barreras para carros en Mountain Road. Se pueden elegir caminos alternativos para volver, algunos pasando por la plataforma que siempre son más complicados o manteniéndose paralelos a Bears Den Road.

No recomiendo subir a la plataforma si no se encuentra ágil o no tiene experiencia con terrenos llenos de raíces y rocas. Si ese es su caso le recomiendo aparcar el carro en la entrada a Poet's Seat Tower y hacer el camino por la carretera pavimentada hasta la torre.

El camino tiene una distancia de menos de una milla y una vez arriba puede usted subir a la torre y disfrutar de unas vistas a mayor altura o simplemente contemplar Greenfield desde los pies de esta. En días claros puede usted ver hasta Leyden o las cimas que rodean Shelburne.

Camine unos pasos más hacia en dirección norte, y encontrará una meseta con unos bancos que dan hacia Greenfield. Es un lugar elegido por muchos para meditar, o incluso leer un libro. Recomiendo especialmente esta pequeña y fácil caminata después de un día duro de trabajo para desconectar y tomar aire fresco. Se pueden llevar perros, siempre en correa.

### Northfield Mountain en Northfield

Este lugar es uno de mis favoritos para pasear en cualquier época del año. Se encuentra en Route 63 entre Erving y Northfield.

El bosque forma parte de las instalaciones de FirstLight, pero está abierto al público excepto las zonas acotadas para dicha empresa. Hay

un aparcamiento para unos 50 vehículos y casi nunca está lleno, ni siquiera los fines de semana. El edificio que contiene un museo suele estar cerrado, pero se puede acceder a los baños que están en la primera planta. Los senderos están bien marcados con mapas y colores y puede usted obtener un mapa de papel al principio del recorrido.

En este lugar usted tiene muchas opciones, la más fácil es caminar por la carretera asfaltada que sube hasta el embalse que está en la cima de la montaña y que se alimenta del agua que se extrae por succión del río Connecticut. La distancia es de unas 1.8 millas y aunque hay una elevación de 1.100 pies la subida es muy gradual si usted toma este camino.

Existen otras muchas opciones en un lugar en el que puedes hacer 26 millas recorriendo diferentes senderos. Algunos piensan que la carretera está abierta para vehículos de motor, pero no es así. Está cerrada por razones de seguridad después del 11-S y permite el paso solamente a vehículos de la empresa de energía. Puede usted pasar por la barrera a pie o incluso en bicicleta o rodarla por detrás de los edificios.

Mi ruta favorita es aparcar y seguir la ruta que sale del aparcamiento, pasa delante del edificio y rodea un pequeño estanque con ranas y plantas. Continúe por un pequeño sendero que aparece a su izquierda justo después de la carretera para vehículos de gravilla. Atraviese el gran camino llamado 10th Mountain y continúe hasta una bifurcación donde aparece el nombre del camino elegido: Rose Ledge.

Continúe por este camino hasta llegar a Summit Trail y a continuación un poquito de Reservoir Road

y está usted a 1.100 pies contemplando el embalse artificial. El embalse está acotado por una valla, así que no puede usted acercarse al agua. Hay una pequeña plataforma con bancos y papelería, así como con una leyenda que le indica que montañas está usted viendo desde ahí. En días claros se pueden ver algunos picos de las Berkshires.

La distancia que usted ha recorrido es de una milla y media con un ascenso fuerte y con dos lugares con vistas señalados en el camino desde los que se puede ver el valle del Connecticut. Este sendero tiene algunas dificultades ya que tiene raíces y rocas, y en ocasiones está mojado. Tiene usted que pasar dos veces un pequeño riachuelo, en una ocasión con un puente resbaladizo y en la segunda pisando en rocas. Si usted no tiene mucha experiencia caminando por el bosque, le aconsejo que use otra ruta o que camine con mucha precaución y lleve bastones.

En algunas épocas del año la ruta está abierta a caballos y bicicletas. No son muy frecuentes pero comparten algunas rutas.

En invierno si hay nieve los caminos están abiertos para raquetas de nieve y esquí de fondo. En las últimas temporadas como no ha nevado mucho las rutas eran gratis y no alquilaban equipos, aunque si nevaba mucho las rutas son de pago. Hay también una pequeña cabaña donde en algunas ocasiones sirven chocolate caliente. Es un excelente lugar para ir con tu perro (siempre en correa) y con niños.

En la parte inferior del bosque hay rocas impresionantes que son visitadas por escaladores cada fin de semana. Hay también una cabaña que permite acampar siempre con reserva.

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**WEST ALONG** from page B1 by the mother bear who makes her monthly rounds through our woods and neighborhood. She has not pushed down the rickety fence looking for a midnight snack for weeks now. Just as well for our fence. Yet I can't help but being concerned: men are out with powerful guns looking for bear, maybe pushing her from her usual haunts. I like to think that she can find plenty to eat given the bumper crop of berries, acorns, and pignuts out there in the wilds.

In the high woodstack just behind my chair, the wren busily inspects every nook and cranny of the

firewood that fills the shed serving as my writer's workshop. The wood is stacked five feet high and four feet deep. Like money in the bank, we've got enough for the next three months, ready for any snow emergency that may come our way.

This may be the sum of rural felicity, my privilege and maybe reward, for the time I've put in in various offices and far-flung lands before settling back here where the family began.

Ah well. That full moon encourages such thoughts, and I will savor what the outdoor world provides, and let the cards fall as they may.



**Montague Community Television News**

**Safe In Our Vault**

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** – The stories of Montague residents will be kept safe in our vault of preserved local history with the addition of the Oral Histories Project. The kickoff event took place in Montague Center last week (see article, Page B1), and featured stories from Ann Fisk, Mark Fisk and Mark Girard. More events and a podcast are planned for the future.

You can find the video recording of the kickoff event on the MCTV Vimeo Page or catch the video on Channel 9, along with the Montague selectboard meeting from November

18 and the November 19 Gill-Montague school committee meeting.

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

**MR Wrapping Paper Edition • Artist Profile #7**

By REPORTER STAFF

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

We are introducing our winning artists and their design proposals every week leading up to Thanksgiving, when the Edition is printed and put out for sale online and in stores.

We have asked each artist the same three questions and solicited a selfie from them.

This final spotlight shines on **Jeanne Weintraub**, a two-time winner who was previously selected for our inaugural 2020 Special Wrapping Paper Edition. Her *Living River* design illustrates the concept of a river as a living being, with lots of interdependent life forms.

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



SUBMITTED PHOTO

**JW:** "I am the river, the river is me." I want to inspire people to see the Connecticut River as a living being, and to consider the indigenous viewpoint that we are in a sacred relationship with the river where we live.

If you look closely, you can see microorganisms inside of other organisms, along with the creatures who feed on them, and a fishing hook, to remind us that we literally are what we eat. Because micro-organisms play a critical role in the health of waterways, this design gives them equal visibility with larger, more recognizable animal life associated with the river.

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

**JW:** A microscope, so I can marvel at all the crazy-looking tiny organisms living in water.

With magnification, you can see up close the insect larvae, phytoplankton (tiny plants), zooplankton (tiny animals), and water fleas shown in the design. The microscope opens a window into the community of interdependent living beings that inhabit a vast universe that is vitally important to us.

Consider that a diverse community of over 100 trillion microscopic bacteria live inside our own bodies, helping us digest our food!

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

**JW:** The *Montague Reporter* connects me with the lifeblood of this community. I loved the "Does a River Have Rights" article (February 2, 2024, by Sarah Robertson) that explained how activists are turning to the Rights of Nature movement to protect the life of the Connecticut River.

We are incredibly lucky to have a local paper that reports on news in our villages, like the erosion and wetland issues caused by development at Falls Farm.

And where else would I find out about all the music, festivals, plays, art exhibits, presentations, local history, restaurants and businesses to visit, and organizations to support here in Montague and surrounding towns?

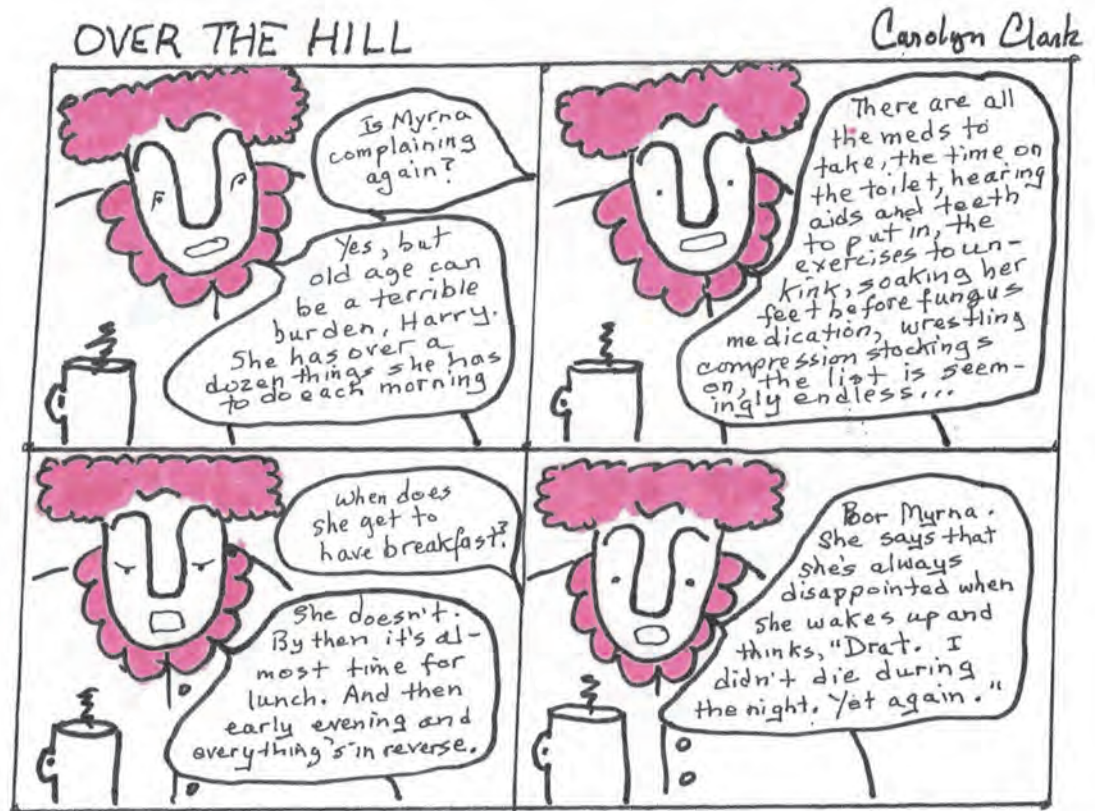


JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

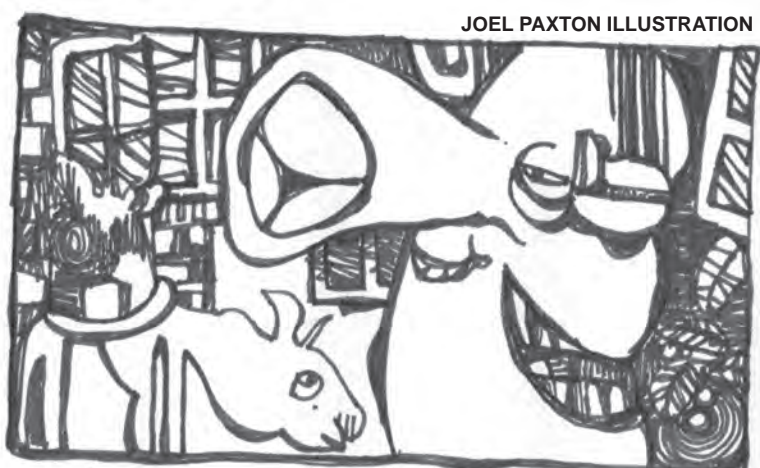
and **PUZZLE**



JAN ATAMIAN ILLUSTRATION



Carolyn Clark



JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



looking forward...

## 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 Shan-non*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Left-overs*. 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.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Ladies Dance Night*. No cover. 7:30 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: *TE-KE::TEKE*. \$. 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Graedient, Sillysounds, Okyn, Gutslug, MF Oblivion*. \$. 8 p.m.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Lost Film, Ciarra Fragale*. \$. 8 p.m.

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: *Chanelle Allesandre, Julie Bodian*, and poets *Catherine Bresner, Deja Carr, Pheobe Glick, and Rachele Toarmino*. Hurricane relief benefit. \$. 6 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Turn It Loose*. Free. 7 p.m.

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

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

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Andro Queen, Glass Carnage, Glasss, Sleep Destroyer, Feeble Hands, Gagu, An Hero, Wax Input, Sue*. \$. 5 p.m.

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

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Small Town Radio, Gravestone*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Jose Gonzalez & La Banda Criolla, DJ Tradicion*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Bandit Queen of Sorrows*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Jalbatross*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass & Beyond*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

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

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro: *Mutual Obsession Circus presents The Apocalypse Show*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Jane Siberry*. \$. 7 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Bandit Queen of Sorrows*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Jalbatross*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

Pulaski Club, Easthampton: *Compress, Satanic Magick, Haunting Figure, Death Vanish*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rat Trap, Holyoke: *Shirese, Red Herrings, Spatulas, Fugue State*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

Congregational Church, Montague Center: *Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts*. Free. 1 p.m.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Andro Queen, Glass Carnage, Glasss, Sleep Destroyer, Feeble Hands, Gagu, An Hero, Wax Input, Sue*. \$. 5 p.m.

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

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Small Town Radio, Gravestone*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Jose Gonzalez & La Banda Criolla, DJ Tradicion*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Bandit Queen of Sorrows*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Jalbatross*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass & Beyond*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

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

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro: *Mutual Obsession Circus presents The Apocalypse Show*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Jane Siberry*. \$. 7 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Bandit Queen of Sorrows*. No cover. 8 p.m.

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## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half Shaved Jazz*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Mr. Sun Plays Ellington's Nutcracker*. \$. 7 p.m.

Nova Arts, Keene: *The Ladybug Transistor, Lightheaded, Kendra*. \$. 7 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Christa Joy and the Honeybees*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Drew Paton*. No cover. 6:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Ryan Montbleau*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *She Said*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Rock 201*. Free. 7 p.m.

Mount Toby Friends Meeting-house, Leverett: *Betty & The Baby Boomers*. \$. 7 p.m.

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.

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

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

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

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Garnet Rogers*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Loculus Studio, Holyoke: *Ben Hersey, Hayley Blackstone, Christ St. George & Matt Krefting*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dylan Reese, Dylan Owen*. \$. 8 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *The Slavobovian Circus of Dreams*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sam Mulligan, Whyte Lipstick*. No cover. 9:30 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Bella's Bartok, Candy Ambulance*. \$. 10:30 p.m.

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

**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.

**Wendell Free Library, Wendell:** *Finding a Path*, hooked rugs by Phyllis Lawrence. Through December, with a reception Sunday, December 8 at 1 p.m.

**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 this Friday, November 22. Visits by appointment at [jrouke@nmhschool.org](http://jrouke@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.

**D'Amour Museum, Springfield:** *Look Again: Portraits of Daring Women*, woodcut and collage prints by Leverett artist Julie Lapping Rivera celebrating the achievements of women who defied the status quo, through February.

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**CONNECT** from page B1

candy bars – big ones, according to Mark Fisk – but you couldn’t take one without singing “God Bless America.”

And the bonfire. It was *huge* back then. They used railroad ties, Ann Fisk said apologetically. That was before anyone knew they were not great to burn. The ties were stacked 60 feet tall, said Mark Girard, and the bonfire burned for two days while Boy Scouts stood vigil around the clock, alert for stray sparks.

These are just a few of the memories shared at last Thursday’s kick-off event for the Montague Center Oral History Project, an idea launched by library branch manager Kate Martineau. Julie Kumble, who is helping to coordinate the project, acted as moderator for the event that filled the Common Hall. The panel consisted of Mark Girard, Ann Fisk, and Mark Fisk.

Kumble skillfully asked questions to prompt memories and stories and passed the mic around when audience members chimed in, which they did. When Eileen Mariani told her story about the donkey, someone knew the donkey’s name. Someone else knew who it belonged to. Others had stories to tell about being chased. Laughter filled the hall.

Together, the panel and the audience created a picture of another time, when people went to school together, lived and worked in town, served on the volunteer fire department together, and joined the Grange, which is now the Common Hall.

Ann Fisk thanked the people who have worked so hard to maintain and improve the structure that has now become a gathering place for the community, and will be even more welcoming after funds are raised to build a handicapped access ramp.

This event demonstrated both the abundance of stories and the appetite for them. Martineau said she suspected this when she began organizing the project, in part because she hears so many stories at the library. She also knew of a similar project in Colrain, organized by Jesse Olsen Bay of Weathervane Community Arts, and it inspired her to do the same in Montague Center.

Martineau hopes to preserve these stories by recording them for posterity. The library has purchased the necessary equipment, and Kumble and Olsen Bay will be leading trainings of interviewers. Weather-

vane will help edit the recordings.

John Rae, an internationally renowned photographer who lives in Montague, will also take portraits of those being interviewed so that years from now there will be both a verbal and a visual record of who they were. The recordings and photographs will be posted on the library website for everyone to enjoy.

Capturing and saving these stories, especially from elders, is the first priority of the project, which Martineau hopes to expand to Montague’s other villages as time goes on.

Ann Fisk said she wished someone had done this 20 years ago, since some of the village’s most colorful old-timers are gone now. Thankfully, there are people in town with memories of those old-timers and stories to tell about them.

All that is needed to maintain the momentum created last Thursday night is volunteers. If you have a story or stories to tell, if you’re interested in being an interviewer, or if you know someone who ought to be interviewed, Martineau wants to hear from you. You can contact her at [kmartineau@cwmars.org](mailto:kmartineau@cwmars.org) or (413) 367-2852, or stop by the branch library.

The first training will be held in person at the library on Monday, December 2 from 10 to 11 a.m. A virtual training will be held Wednesday, January 15 from 6 to 7 p.m. These trainings will familiarize folks with the equipment and teach best practices for interviewing, such as what questions to ask and how to respond so that your voice isn’t recorded as well.

Once trained, volunteers will be able to sign out the equipment and interview their neighbors. Martineau will then help them upload the audio when they return the equipment.

“Our priority for interviews for this first round,” she said, “is people over 80 who have lived a significant time in Montague Center, but there’s certainly some wiggle room.”

“Right now, there aren’t plans for a repeat of Thursday’s event,” Martineau said. “But if there’s interest, perhaps after the first round of interviews has been edited, we’ll celebrate with another event. It was great to come together as a community!”

She’s right. It was the kind of evening that felt like we were all in a Jimmy Stewart movie about small-town life in America, a joyful interlude in tumultuous times.

# MONTAGUE REPORTER

*Catching up on some M.R.O.T.R.’s that came in this fall!*

*Right: Cary Hardwick of Montague City enjoyed Vol.22#33 of the Reporter on the Isle of Skye in Scotland this summer.*

**ON**



*Left: On the same trip – Mark Koyama, also of Montague City, catches up on the same edition a few days later in the Orkney Islands.*

**THE**

*Right: Is she reading or sleeping? Sarah Voiland of Montague behind Vol.22#39 in Marshfield, Massachusetts late September.*



**ROAD**

*Left: Our Wendell and Erring town hall correspondents, Josh Heinemann and Katie Nolan, escaped to the Azores this fall. This picture, with Vol.22#38, was taken at a mineral water spring in Vale das Lombadas, San Miguel.*

*Going somewhere? Take us with you! Send photos to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).*

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