

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 22 – NO. 45

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1.50

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 7, 2024

GILL SELECTBOARD

State Finally Says Okay To New Gill School Roof

By MIKE JACKSON

Gill town administrator Ray Purington shared the news Monday night that after years of trying, Gill Elementary School has finally been accepted into the Massachusetts School Building Association (MSBA)'

secured, including money to cover a schematic design, which must be appropriated within three months for the project to move forward.

"That design phase is essentially when the full scope of work – or the options for the full scope of work – get flushed out," Purington explained at the meeting, which was held at the Riverside municipal building as the town hall was set up for the following day's election.

see GILL page A5



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

The school district has applied for funding for the Gill roof every year since 2017.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Montague Weighing Making Tree Warden Role Appointed

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard indicated at its meeting Monday that it may propose to make the town tree warden, currently an elected position, an appointed one. The issue came up during a discussion of temporarily replacing former tree warden Mark Stevens, an employee of the public works department who passed away in October, until the town election in May.

ing the town hall annex, and the third discussion in as many weeks on how to fund the state-mandated renovation of the Eleventh Street bridge.

The tree warden vacancy was brought up by town administrator Walter Ramsey. He noted that the warden, an elected official with a stipend budgeted at \$1,764 a year, must be a town resident, but that appointing an interim warden would be an "opportunity to try someone out" and perhaps rethink the position.

Ramsey explained that one employee in the public works department had expressed interest in the job, but was not a resident, and so would not be eligible to run in the

see MONTAGUE page A6

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Officials Will Hear Feedback On Kittredge Estate Project At Upcoming Town Meeting

By GEORGE BRACE

At its meeting on Monday, Leverett's selectboard approved four articles for a special town meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 19. The board announced that it will provide an update that night on the proposed housing development on Juggler Meadow Road, as the town has received a response from the Kittredge estate to a request for information.

formation on a proposal to build a housing development on the Juggler Meadow Road estate of Yankee Candle founder Michael Kittredge, a portion of which lies in Leverett and a portion in Amherst.

Wallack's email included two maps, showing alternative plans for "400 owner owned units 55-plus age restricted, 300 market, 100 affordable." One plan would site 48 of the units in Leverett, the other 150 units. In both plans a percentage of the units would be designated as "affordable housing."

Wallack also included his resumé, the names and titles of six members of the estate's development committee, and a paragraph discussing the company and project's financial status.

Hankinson said the email fell see LEVERETT page A4

President-Elect Has Vowed to Undo Existing Environmental, Climate Policy

By SARAH ROBERTSON

WASHINGTON, DC – The first time Donald Trump was elected president of the United States he chose ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson to be his first Secretary of State, former energy industry developer Rep. Ryan Zinke to serve as Secretary of the Interior, and coal industry attorney and lobbyist Andrew Wheeler as the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

After Zinke worked to open more federal lands to oil and gas drilling, domestic petroleum production increased to historic levels under the Biden administration. For the past six years the United States has produced more crude oil than any other country, reaching an all-time high of 13 million barrels per day in 2023, according to data from the US Energy Information Administration.

On the campaign trail this year, Trump continued his promises to "drill, baby, drill," and during his victory speech he referred to the United States' reserves of oil and gas as "liquid gold."

Trump's next batch of political appointees will define the next four years of energy and environmental policy in the United States, likely impacting carbon emissions and the global climate.

UMass Amherst environmental history professor David Glassberg told the Reporter he expects progress on climate policy made under Biden could be stalled or reversed. A large number of Biden's climate policies were passed in the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), including billions of dollars in subsidies and tax credits for renewable energy and grants to reduce carbon emissions in the transportation sector.

"It wouldn't surprise me if the first thing Trump does is pull out of the Paris climate agreement that Biden rejoined," Glassberg added.

see POLICY page A5

National Trump Wave Included A 3.3% Bump In Local Towns



SUZETTE SNOW-COBB PHOTO

A double rainbow appeared over the Precinct 5 polling station Tuesday morning.

By MIKE JACKSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Voters in the five towns covered by this newspaper found themselves once again out of line with national trends, and more or less in step with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as the results came in from Tuesday's election.

Nationally, Donald Trump became the first Republican presidential candidate to win the popular vote in 20 years, and will be the only president since Grover Cleveland to hold the office in non-consecutive terms.

Though some final tallies were still being taken as of press time, he also appears to have increased his absolute vote count in 43 states. The Democratic candidate, Vice President Kamala Harris, earned fewer votes than Joe Biden's 2020 campaign in about 40.

Harris won Massachusetts with 61.4% of the vote, less than Biden's 65.6% but above Hillary Clinton's 2016 showing of 60.0%.

Our coverage towns – Mon-

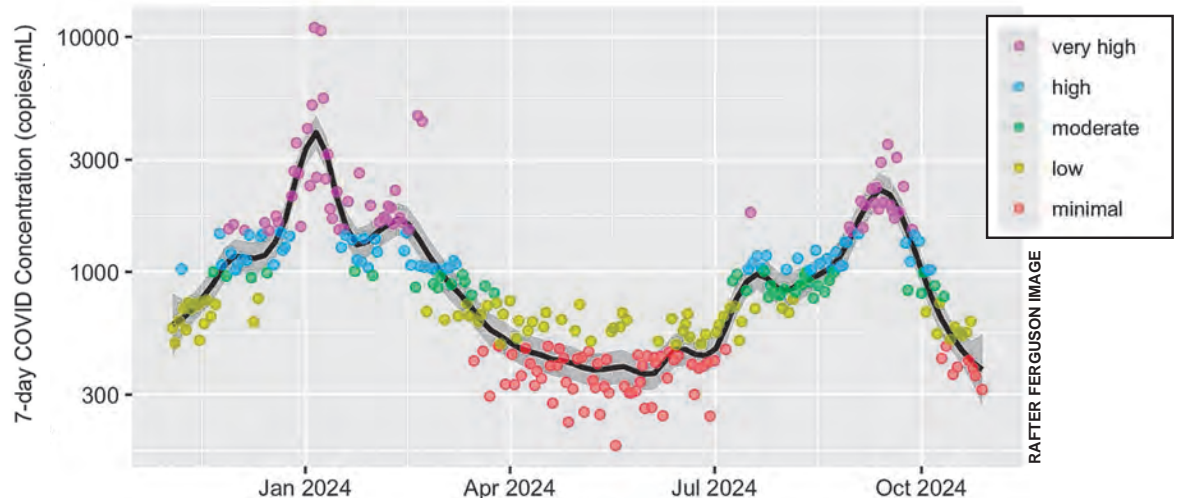
tague, Gill, Erving, Wendell, and Leverett – collectively reflected these shifts. Overall, according to the preliminary or "unofficial" results released by town clerks Tuesday night, Harris garnered 67.9% of all 8,679 ballots cast, outperforming Clinton's 64.6% but falling short of Biden's 72.1%.

Trump, who had earned exactly 23.9% of the five towns' votes in both 2016 and 2020, gained ground slightly, arriving at 27.2%. The remaining 4.9% of ballots were split among write-ins, blanks, and the four other candidates on the ballot.

Erving, where Trump's showing was highest among the five towns in 2016 (with 300 votes, or 36.3%) and in 2020 (with 355 votes, or 37.9%), tilted further in his favor, with 434 votes and 44.5% of the total. For the third election in a row, Erving was followed by Gill, Montague, Wendell, and then Leverett, in that order, in support for his candidacy. Only 12.3% of Leverett voters shaded the bubble for Trump.

see VOTE page A5

ONE THING CURRENTLY GOING WELL...



In September we published a chart by Greenfield reader Rafter Ferguson (western.ma.covid.data@gmail.com) showing mean COVID concentration across 11 sewer systems in Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties, weighted for population, approaching a winter-like peak. Here's a follow-up, reflecting data from November 2023 through October 28, 2024.

May The Land Grow Green, May It Swallow Our Mistakes

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

Wiping the Balance

Global warming is just a theory, but for those who partake it's worth dusting off Bill McKibben's famous 2012 essay *Global Warming's Terrifying New Math*.

In it, McKibben makes a strong case for limiting atmospheric warming to 2°C, relates that this corresponds to the release of 565 more gigatons of CO₂ into the air, and then points out that enough fuel to release 2,795 gigatons is "already economically aboveground – it's figured into share prices, companies are borrowing money against it, nations are basing their budgets on the presumed returns from their patrimony."

Saving the planet, it turns out, would likely require cratering the global economy – or in a best-case scenario, sticking some very powerful companies with some very agonizing losses. Threading the needle of a bloodless transition would take an incredible act of altruistic cooperation among the world's technocratic elite, which means that whichever corporations and mega-billionaires whose balance sheet could be wiped out by successful international coordination have a direct stake in preventing it.

Fortunately for those guys, whipping up paranoia about a global technocratic elite is easier than selling nitrous to a wookiee. The flimsiest efforts to meet up to sketch out first principles summon up every secret-society scapegoat in our dark collective memories. And it's not just the oil companies that stand to gain from the demonization of the wonks – purveyors of military hardware, for example, also stand to lose a lot of dough if folks learn to work things out without deploying armed drones. And any number of regional economic middlemen have a stake in keeping the regions at odds.

If the credo of the wonks is "If we try, can make it through without mass extermination," the watchword of all who came together to stop them eventually converged on "No, we can't." Writing in 2012, McKibben could hardly have imagined the rise to power we are witnessing of a high-tech faction of Dark Enlightenment exterminist billionaires. There are now men astride the world who assessed the future, found it conceivable that Earth's resources would one day be hoarded by a fortified garrison state while billions die of white phosphorus and floods and polio, and decided to be the ones on the inside.

The response to the COVID-19

pandemic provided them the perfect opening. At the outset, humanity had the technical means to stop all unnecessary work, briefly spread apart, test relentlessly, and isolate and extinguish the virus. It would have required a tremendous coordinated redirection of existing resources, and it would have had the secondary benefit of establishing the sort of vast emergency-response communications systems that will help us collectively survive worse natural disasters.

They moved against it so effectively that it is a taboo in many places to be perceived as trying to avoid contracting the virus. By the spring of 2022 the Biden administration had been so successfully cornered it gave up on most of the transformative mass policies the president had promised on his path to election. Historians will study the tortuous path from the Build Back Better Plan to the Inflation Reduction Act.

According to the Census Bureau, the number of Americans below the poverty line rose from 25.6 million in 2021 to 42.8 million in 2023. According to the Department of Agriculture, the number of living in food-insecure households rose from 33.8 million in 2021 to 47.4 million in 2023. And an *Economist/YouGov* poll last month found that for 52% of Americans, the "best measure of how the national economy is doing" is "the prices of goods and services." Right or wrong, there has been a mass experience of worsening and inflation is taken as an index.

Inflation is global, and it has led to a global wave of incumbents losing elections in 2023 and 2024. Kamala Harris, hardly a seasoned political campaigner, was served a shit sandwich in a headwind. She was shopping a number of policies that, if enacted, would probably have helped many Americans materially – but the party of exterminism had a different wind under its wings.

Exterminism is a coherent worldview: the idea that it is desirable to allow the liquidation, in great numbers, of foreign or stateless humans in pursuit of one's security objectives. It is the premise of deporting 20 million immigrants, – and of depopulating the entire north of Gaza. It is already here.

You can't triangulate against exterminism, and it doesn't cut it to say "We are not going back." You need to offer a different vision of the world's future: We can survive what is coming, if we coordinate. And we can't be scared to say it.



Caitlin and Brandon Thomas have just opened Chaos Corner, an indoor toddler playground in Millers Falls. The space is set out like a miniature village where children can go to a doctor's office, store, veterinarian, diner, café, nursery, and laundry. All of the play spaces were built by Brandon and outfitted with toy tools, food, dolls, and appropriate faux equipment. Chaos Corner is open Wednesdays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Letters to the Editors

Common Hall Accessibility Fundraiser a Success

To all who came to the benefit barn/contra dance at the Common Hall the last Sunday of October, that wonderfully beautiful New England autumn day, a heartfelt thanks. Not only did we meet the \$2,500 match and collectively raise a whole lot of money – \$5,464, to be exact – we had a smashing (not literally) good time.

The under-10s and the over-70s and all the decades between danced with each other, appearing to enjoy the experience immensely; people that have been contra dancing for eons danced with people who had never done such a thing before, and not a frown to be seen. Did someone say "community"? It's not just a geographic entity, is it?

Much more remains to be done, of course, to make the Montague Common Hall an accessible space.

But the evidence of community support will help with securing grant money, and of even greater importance, it shows that the project is worth doing, because people care.

Special thanks to callers Imogen Mills and Mo Brachfeld for making the dancing work, to everyone who played in The Pick-Up Band with us, to everyone who danced, to everyone who drank cider and ate chocolate, to Laura who made such cool cookies, to Hannah who was a hostess *par excellence*, to Chris who kept track of the funds, to Clay who drew the plan – who did we miss?

It's all special, it all helps, and it all counts.

Becky Hollingsworth
Rebecca Weiss
Montague Center

Dept. Grateful

The Turners Falls Water Department extends its gratitude to residents who responded to our request for pictures of their service lines.

As part of the EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, all water suppliers in Massachusetts are required to maintain a complete inventory of the drinking water service lines in their systems. This has been a significant undertaking, and we appreciate everyone who took the time to respond to our letters.

This is an ongoing project, and if you still have the letters but have not yet responded, we would greatly appreciate your assistance. As required by the state, we will be sending out another round of letters to properties we have not heard from. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Suzanne Leh, Clerk/Collector
Turners Falls Water Department

Montague Center Article Overlooked Key Point About Political Signage

Thanks for the article in last week's *Montague Reporter*, "Blue State Enthusiasm Hard to Gauge..." (Page A1). It highlighted the possibility of respect, civility, and neighborliness that can happen when residents of a community talk about their differing views and learn how to peacefully co-exist.

However, the article missed an important point. The issue is not that Mr. Turn is flying banners in front of his house advocating for his candidate. That's politics. Several of us do the same.

Other banners that weren't mentioned in the article were antagonistic. They include an organization targeting LGBTQ rights and an image of a dog urinating on a sign made by Franklin County CPR, an organization that Mr. Turn's neighbor co-founded.

Mr. Turn's first amendment right? Sure. Respect, civility and neighborliness? Not so much.

Judith Lorei
Montague Center

Published weekly on Thursdays.

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

PHONE: (413) 863-8666

EMAIL:

editor@montaguereporter.org
features@montaguereporter.org
ads@montaguereporter.org
bills@montaguereporter.org
circulation@montaguereporter.org
events@montaguereporter.org
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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The **Turners Falls Water Department's** semi-annual water bills were mailed November 1, and payment is due by December 1 to avoid a \$20 late charge. Payments can be made at the office, 226 Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls, by mail, or online at turnersfallswater.com.

The **Montague Libraries** are taking applications for a very part-time library assistant position at the Carnegie Library, as well as two substitutes to cover shifts as they come up at the branches and Carnegie. This is a six-hour-a-week position on Saturdays, with the opportunity to pick up additional hours as needed.

Interested candidates may send a resumé, cover letter, and three references to library director Caitlin Kelley at librarydirector@montague-ma.gov by Monday, November 18 at 4:30 p.m. Indicate which position you are applying for, or both. Inquiries may be made to the same email address.

The **Greenfield Community College Community Chorus** presents a free fall concert this Friday, November 8 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the college. The program, directed by Margery Heins with John Yannis as accompanist, highlights four centuries of American music.

The **Montague Common Hall Open Mic** this Saturday, November

9, features singer-songwriter Craig Cornett, playing Americana favorites accompanied by special guests. Cornett is relatively new to the area and lives in Montague Center.

The event runs from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Sign up at 6:15 p.m. for a spot to perform your own schtick – spoken word, song, dance, or what-have-you. Donations are appreciated, but not required.

A **Veterans Day Ceremony** is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Monday, November 11, 2024 at the Soldiers Memorial on Avenue A in Turners Falls. Prayers and speeches honoring Montague veterans will be conducted by representatives from the Montague selectboard, Montague Elks, and the soldiers' memorial committee. This event is open to the public.

Montague Villages will hold a meet-and-greet at the Millers Falls branch library next Tuesday, November 12, from 3 to 4 p.m. The new group matches elders with volunteers who supply services of various kinds, such as rides, repairs, yard work, companionship, and other assistance, aimed at helping them stay independent in their home.

LifePath is holding a caregiver open house at the Community Engagement Center at 101 Munson Street in Greenfield next Wednesday, November 13, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event is a respite day for caregivers, who can socialize, enjoy

live music by the Eventide Singers, receive chair massages, and attend workshops on advanced planning, communication with people with dementia, adaptive outdoor programming, and more. (The 15-minute chair massage is free, but you need to sign up at tinyurl.com/chairrelief.) Find out more at lifepathma.org.

The **Franklin County Community Development Corporation** invites the public to their 45th annual meeting at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center in Greenfield on November 13 from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Speakers will reflect on 45 years of small business development in the county and share a framework to guide future projects. Refreshments will be offered by local companies. RSVP at tinyurl.com/fccdcevent.

The **Montague Center Oral History Project** kicks off with an event at the Common Hall next Thursday, November 14. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and villagers are welcome to enjoy refreshments and music. At 7 p.m. three interviewees and a moderator will share stories. Attendees will learn about collecting oral history and the goals of the project, and can sign up for training sessions.

The first step will be to record interviews with villagers who grew up in Montague Center, or are over 80 years of age and have lived there a long time. The project will place edited recordings on the library website for everyone to enjoy, a podcast series will be developed, and photographer John Rae will contribute portraits of each interviewee. For more information, contact Kate Martineau at kmartineau@cwmar.org.

An **Intergenerational Film Fest** is planned for November 14 at Greenfield Community College. The festival is part of the "Cyber Senior"

program, and features YouTube videos pairing youth with older adults in Franklin County. Watch a trailer at tinyurl.com/intergenfilm. A dinner and talkback completes the event, which runs from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Register at gcc.mass.edu/events.

The **Northfield Mount Hermon Dance Program** invites the public to its free fall concert, "Power & Powerlessness." Students will explore these themes with original pieces in styles including ballet, hip-hop, jazz, K-pop, and Navajo/hip-hop fusion. Faculty, students, and guest artist Caroline Burden have provided choreography. The performances will run November 14 and 16 at 7:30 p.m. and November 15 at 8 p.m. in the Rhodes Arts Center on the Gill campus. Seats must be reserved in advance at tinyurl.com/power-plays.


A **Fête Noël** is planned at the **Montague Congo Church** on Saturday, November 16, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Enjoy free coffee until 9:30 a.m. and peruse crafts, baked goods, lunch, and more (see ad on this page) at the Montague Center church. Santa arrives for a visit between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. All proceeds will go towards local and global mission programs.

The Nolumbeka Project presents the annual **Full Beaver Moon Gathering** at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls next Saturday, November 16 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Angela Marcellino, author of *The True Natives of Cape Cod Massachusetts and their Food Ways*, will present, and there will be a raffle drawing. The event is free and all ages are welcome. For more information, visit nolumbekaproject.org.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

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OP/ED

Banner Issue About More Than Free Speech

By ALI and JEANNETTE WICKS-LIM

MONTAGUE CENTER – It would be hard to miss the banner display that recently went up in front of a private residence in Montague Center. There are several Trump flags, a flag that reads "I'd rather be an American than a Democrat," a giant Glenn Beck "Propaganda Wars" flag, flags with the dates 1863 and 2024, and the biggest flag of all, which reads "Please, Please, Please Support Gays Against Groomers." There are also a couple of other signs that make little sense in the context of this giant colorful display.

We drive past the banners every day. They've changed how we feel about where we live.

A person has the right to post signs expressing opinions on their property, but a display as aggressive as this should create concern. We believe that most people in town do not support these messages, but based on some of what we've seen and heard, we're not sure many really understand what they are and how they impact some of us.

Gays Against Groomers is listed as a hate group by both the Anti-Defamation League, which describes GAG as "an anti-LGBTQ+ extremist coalition," and the Southern Poverty Law Center, which explains:

"GAG has used its national and chapter-led social media accounts to attack trans people, and to engage in harassment and intimidation campaigns against individual teachers, doctors, politicians, businesses and institutions of American civil society including schools and hospitals.... The group regularly spreads vicious anti-trans disinformation, pseudoscience and conspiracy theories, and has attacked anti-racist and LGBTQ+ inclusive education practices. The group also supports censoring LGBTQ+ people,

topics and images such as Pride flags in schools."

Other groups listed as hate groups by these organizations include the Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Patriot Front, and Westboro Baptist Church. We wonder how residents of Montague might have responded if that display had included a swastika or a KKK flag? We want to believe there would have been little tolerance for that.

Glenn Beck is a conspiracy theorist and conservative talk show host who has repeatedly made anti-Black, anti-immigrant, and anti-Asian statements and is celebrated by white supremacist groups like Council of Conservative Citizens.

Most of the other signs are either dog whistles or Trump signs. Trump's agenda is full of racist, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric, so many experience the giant banners as unwelcoming if not threatening. Perhaps a simple yard sign expressing the homeowner's political preference would have sufficed. Instead he chose to send a giant message of hate.

When the display first showed up we wondered what the response might be. After a period of silence we posted on local lists, expressing concern. While many online expressed dismay about the signs others seemed emboldened by them. Hateful, mocking messages showed up in comments sections until they were closed.

Since the banners appeared we've heard or seen local people comment repeatedly that we must be tolerant of different opinions. That sentiment should not extend to visible glaring support for hate groups.

We've heard people express compassion and concern for the person displaying the hate. Some suggested neighbors appease the person hanging these signs by offering to take down their own Harris signs. Others have discussed their loyalty to him while acknowledging the hate. One per-

son described the flags as "festive and colorful."

We'd like to provide our perspective. As an LGBTQIA+ and multiracial family, our family is directly targeted by those hate groups and the agenda of that candidate. To us the banners and these kinds of responses to them feel like a direct message that it's time to move.

Well-intentioned people negotiated that the signs would come down for one day; some declared this a victory. Part of us felt relieved for the reprieve from such visible hate. Part of us felt that since the signs would be going up again it might be better to continue to expose the hate; people walking up to that house should know what they were approaching.

A one-day removal doesn't feel like a victory to us. We feel targeted, and have to live here in the days to follow. It's as if it mattered more how visitors see us than how those of us who live here feel.

The signs went back up after Halloween. They may or may not stay up after the election, but the impact will remain for some of us long after others have moved on. Clearly we have work to do.

It would feel good to us for more members of the community to recognize and name the hate for what it is, and respond accordingly. We'd love to see lawn signs that declare "Hate Free Zone" all over town. Maybe an open community meeting would be helpful so more voices could be heard. Maybe we can learn from this and do better next time.


Families like ours know that hate can appear anywhere. What makes a town feel safe or not has little to do with whether hate is expressed, and everything to do with how a community responds to it.

Ali and Jeannette Wicks-Lim live in Montague Center.

LOOKY HERE EVENTS

- 11/9 QUEER EROTICA OPEN MIC for Writers 7pm
- 11/12 Entropy: writing workshop w/ L. Scully \$40 6-8pm
- 11/17 Expressive Arts Shindig materials provided 1-4pm \$15
- 11/21 Figure Drawing 6-8pm \$70 Materials \$15
- 11/30 collage club 1-3pm materials provided! \$10

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Week of November 11
in Montague



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UNNAM EABLE BOOKS EVENTS

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KEVIN MCLELLAN
& LIZ YOUNG
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THE KARMAN LINE
by Daisy Atterbury
w/ Andrea Lawlor
SUNDAY, NOV. 10 • 7pm

POETRY
DARA BARROIS-DIXON
MATTHEW ROHRER
DOBBY GIBSON
ALAN FELSETHAL
SATURDAY, NOV. 16 • 6pm

NORTH CAROLINA HURRICANE RELIEF FUNDRAISER
hosted by Caroline Rayner
SATURDAY, NOV. 23

66 AVENUE A • TURNERS FALLS

LEVERETT from page A1

short of the amount and type of information he was hoping for, and fellow board member Patricia Duffy commented that she found the maps hard to read, but discussion focused largely on how to share the information with Leverett residents.

Duffy commented that the board was “aiming to be transparent” and backed a consensus among members that the response should be made available on the town website and at town hall, with a link provided on the LeverettConnects email listserv.

Board member Jed Proujansky agreed that the board should “share what [Wallack] sent” and put it out for people to respond to. He said that it made sense to provide the information before the special town meeting, and commented that it would be the board’s first chance to hear a response on the subject from a broad range of residents.

Four Articles

The special town meeting will take place at 7 p.m. Tuesday, November 19, at the Leverett Elementary School.

The first article to be voted on would approve the use of up to \$90,000 from the town’s stabilization fund to buy a replacement for a highway department truck which recently sustained severe engine damage, and which according to highway superintendent Matt

Boucher is not worth repairing.

The purchase would come ahead of the truck’s scheduled replacement according to the capital plan, but Boucher said it is needed for winter. Capital planning expenditures, he suggested, could be shifted to maintain the department’s budget.

Article Two seeks approval for \$8,508 to go from the Community Preservation Fund to the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill for research, trail work, and bridge work on the Graves Ironworks site.

Article Three seeks approval for the transfer of \$114,000 from the same fund to the Leverett Affordable Housing Trust.

Article Four would adopt the provisions of MGL Chapter 39, Section 23D – known as the “Mullins Rule” – in Leverett. This would allow members of the zoning board of appeals (ZBA) and certain other town bodies to vote in hearings even if they missed one meeting on a particular matter.

Hankinson said adoption of the rule is primarily intended to give the ZBA more flexibility in the event of Chapter 40B negotiations over the Juggler Meadow Road project, but the selectboard was advised that other town bodies might benefit in the future as well, and included them in the measure.

Under the Pavement...

The selectboard approved an

\$11,000 payment to Northeast Paving to settle a dispute over a \$40,000 charge the company made after completing paving work at the safety complex and elementary school. The town maintained that the charge exceeded the terms of the \$142,000 bid on the contract. Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis, Boucher, and town counsel Donna MacNicol negotiated the settlement. Boucher added that he was also “not really” happy with some of the work, and said this had factored into the negotiations. A discussion took place on state low-bid contracting rules and the town’s options to avoid similar disputes in the future.

Isaiah Robison suggested there were avenues to file paperwork expressing dissatisfaction with the company.

Other Business

Fin com chair Phil Carter said the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) showed inflation of 3.4% over the last year, and Duffy noted that the projected CPI for 2025 was 1.8%.

After a brief discussion, the selectboard accepted the fin com’s recommendation to provide town department heads budget “guidance” that they should seek increases of no more than 2.5% for their FY’26 budgets.

The board signed a five-year contract with the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility and renewed the Leverett Village Co-

op’s liquor license.

Fin com member Nancy Grossman suggested the selectboard look into creating a short-term rental policy at a future meeting so as to be proactive in addressing the trend.

Robison requested the selectboard communicate with transfer station coordinator Annette Herda about the dress code for her department, citing an unresolved concern with the dress of a station employee. Robison said it was not a question of style, but safety and appropriate dress.

The board set the date of the annual town meeting as May 3, 2025, and scheduled a special selectboard meeting for Friday, November 22 at 2 p.m. for a tax classification hearing, which would enable the town to send property tax bills out the first week of December.

Resident Silas Ball said that if no takers are found before Thanksgiving for the town’s 250th anniversary celebration cake, it will be “stuffed in the dumpster.” Ball said he would “love to pass it on,” but there has been no interest.

McGinnis said she had been looking for takers as well.

Ball said he would discuss a suggestion to use it as bonfire fuel with fire chief Brian Cook. Other suggestions included destruction by potato cannon and setting the cake out on the ice of Leverett Pond this winter and waiting for it to melt.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Fall: A Great Time to Start – Or Improve – Compost Bins

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Autumn, with its abundance of fallen leaves and decaying pumpkins, is a great time to start a new home compost bin, or to improve home compost systems. Fall leaves add carbon to compost bins or piles, which is necessary for effective food waste composting.

Since leaves and yard waste are banned from the trash in Massachusetts, composting autumn leaves is a useful disposal method that can also benefit lawns and gardens.

Residents can save money by composting food waste rather than putting it in the trash. 22% of residential trash in Massachusetts is comprised of food waste, according to the Department of Environmental Protection studies. Households that compost can potentially reduce the number of “pay as you throw” town trash bags or stickered bags that they use.

Another way households can save money is by using homemade compost on gardens and lawns instead of buying bagged garden soils and topsoil. Finished compost helps lawns and gardens retain water, adds nutrients and minerals to soil, and improves soil structure for healthier plants.

Composting organic materials at home, or in a municipal or commercial compost program, reduces climate-changing gases that are emitted from landfills and long-distance trash transport. Trash from western Mass is now being sent by rail to landfills in faraway states like South Carolina and Pennsylvania.

Low-Cost Containers

Composting is easy, and it can be even easier with effective, low-cost bins. The Franklin County Solid Waste District sells “Earth Machine” home compost bins, which feature a door in the bottom that can be opened to shovel out finished compost.

Residents of 16 towns in the District (including Montague, Gill, Erving, Wendell, and Leverett) may purchase a bin for \$25 through a subsidized pricing incentive provided by these towns. Call the District at (413) 772-2438.

Earth Machine bins are \$65 for residents of other District member towns. Residents may also purchase the bins at the transfer stations in Colrain, Orange, and Wendell (pricing varies); call that number or see franklincountywastedistrict.org/p/27/Compost-Supplies.

The District also sells “Sure-Close” kitchen compost collection pails for \$5 each. This two-gallon pail sits on the countertop or under the sink to collect food waste before taking it out to the home compost bin or municipal compost collection.



Greenfield residents may purchase Earth Machine bins (seen above) and Sure Close pails at the Greenfield transfer station. For more information they can call Greenfield DPW at (413) 772-1528.

Municipal Compost

In addition to home composting, households that participate in municipal composting can greatly reduce their trash volumes. The food waste collected in municipal programs is processed at a commercial compost facility such as Martin’s Farm in Greenfield or Clear View Composting in Orange. These large-scale facilities do accept items not recommended for home composting, such as meat, bones, cheese, and BPI-certified compostable tableware (see bpiworld.org).

Municipal compost programs at 15 Franklin County transfer stations (including Montague, Wendell, Leverett, and Greenfield) accept separated food waste from residents or paid permit-holders. An annual permit or access fee may be required but there is no charge to deposit food waste. Gill residents have access to a special food waste drop-off program; contact town hall to learn more.

In addition, any Franklin County resident can bring organic waste to the Greenfield transfer station’s compost dumpster after paying a \$5 per visit host fee.

How to Make Compost

In the kitchen, use a compost pail or similar covered container to collect fruit and vegetable scraps and peels, eggshells, coffee grounds and paper filters, tea bags, bread crusts, and more.

Meat, bones, poultry, fish, cheese, pet wastes, and oily foods such as peanut butter and salad dressing are *not* recommended in home compost piles. “Compostable plastics” will not break down in home piles, but are designed to break down in the higher-heat environments found at commercial facilities.

When adding kitchen scraps to home bins, cover them with fall leaves or other carbon-rich materials such as finished compost from inside the bin. Covering the scraps reduces insects and odor and speeds up the composting process.

When setting up a compost bin or adding materials, the bin should contain three parts “brown” carbon-rich materials – fall leaves, brown yard waste, straw, used paper towels, ripped-up egg cartons and paper bags – to one part “green” nitrogen-rich materials such as food waste, coffee grounds, and grass clippings.

Maple leaves and other autumn leaves are ideal for composting. If possible, avoid oak leaves and pine needles; they break down slowly and can be acidic. Saving fall leaves in a covered trash can or under a tarp makes it easy to add them to compost bins all year long. The finished compost inside a compost bin is another source of brown material.

The composting process needs oxygen; mixing or “turning” the pile with a shovel or pitchfork will speed it up. Introduce helpful microorganisms to compost bins by adding a few shovelfuls of garden soil or finished compost, and add water as needed to keep the contents as damp as a wrung-out sponge.

Compost is ready to spread on gardens and lawns when it resembles crumbly, dark brown or black, sweet-smelling soil.

In addition to the above methods, larger amounts of leaves can be “cold composted” by dumping them only in a simple chicken wire circle, about four feet in diameter and three feet high. Add some water occasionally, and after a year or more the wire can be opened to shovel out “leaf mold,” an effective mulch or soil amendment.

For more information, visit franklincountywastedistrict.org or contact the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District at (413) 772-2438 or info@franklincountywastedistrict.org.

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VOTE from page A1

Among the town of Montague's six voting precincts, familiar patterns of political preference mostly held steady. Trump support was highest (36.6%) in Precinct 2, the section of town abutting Erving, and lowest (18.8%) in Precinct 1, which borders Leverett.

Democratic incumbents in Congress were supported over Republican challengers in total vote share – Senator Elizabeth Warren at 68.2% and Representative Jim McGovern at 71.6% – and in each of five towns and all six of Montague's precincts, with partisan preferences once again strongest in Leverett and Precinct 1 and weakest in Erving and Precinct 2. Both retained their seats.

A Direct Say

The local towns also followed statewide trends on the five ballot questions, with certain exceptions.

The first three questions, which passed statewide, enjoyed majority support in all five towns and across Montague's precincts.

Question 2, which will allow high school students to graduate without passing the MCAS standardized test, was the most popular, with support ranging from a low of 67.1% in Erving to a high of 78.5% in Precinct 5, downtown Turners Falls.

Question 1, authorizing the state auditor to oversee legislators on Beacon Hill, was most popular in Erving and least popular in Leverett. The reverse was true of Question 3, granting Uber and Lyft drivers the right to unionize. Within Montague, though, both enjoyed strongest support in Precinct 5.



Montague election worker Suzette Snow-Cobb (left) and clerk Janel Nockleby count the ballots after polls closed in Precinct 5.

Question 5 would have phased in a minimum wage for tipped workers, but was defeated by a 64.3% No vote statewide, and a 57.4% No vote locally. It would have won, however, in Leverett, Wendell, and downtown Turners Falls.

It was only on Question 4 that the majority of local voters split from the statewide decision. Overall, 57% of Massachusetts voters indicated that they were not ready to see the decriminalization of psilocybin mushrooms, mescaline, ibogaine, and DMT. Local voters, however, came out 53.3% in favor of the measure, buoyed by leads in Montague (53.2%), Leverett (58.1%), and Wendell (67.5%).

Wendell's support for Question 4, in fact, was the highest of any of the Commonwealth's 351 towns and cities. The showing echoes the sleepy hill town's 2016 support for the cannabis legalization referendum, which popped out on statewide results maps at 79.2%.

Within Montague, the psychedelics question failed in Precincts 3 and 6 – the eastern section of the Hill neighborhood, and the Patch and Montague City – but saw 51.0% support in Precinct 4, the west of the Hill; 51.8% in Precinct 2, Millers Falls and Lake Pleasant; 56.7% in Precinct 1, Montague Center; and a whopping 70.2% in Precinct 5.

Slouching Down the Hill?

Tuesday's data once again hint at a gradual but noticeable political realignment of Precinct 4. Historically, the ward voted similarly to Precinct 3, its neighbor on the Hill, but over the last decade it appears to have diverged.

Of our five coverage towns and the six precincts of Montague, Precinct 4 was the only place Kamala Harris did not underperform Biden's 2020 percentage, as well as the only place the number of votes cast for Donald Trump declined – from 231 in 2020 to 212 in 2024.

The shift may be geographic as well as demographic: following the 2020 US Census the town was redistricted, reassigning several blocks from Precinct 5 to Precinct 4 as a result of downtown population growth. These transferred voters no longer vote in their own neighborhood on Election Day, but must drive or hitchhike up the hill to Franklin County Technical School.

According to Precinct 5 warden Annabel Levine, on Tuesday 34 different residents who attempted mistakenly to vote at the Gill-Montague senior center were sent elsewhere; most, she said, lived in Precinct 4.



GILL from page A1

The Gill-Montague regional school district has been applying to replace the elementary school roof every year since 2017.

While \$48,439 has already been set aside, Purington said he anticipated this would not be enough to cover the design, though he added that he did not know how much it would cost, as not many other asphalt-shingle roof replacement projects had been funded recently. He suggested another \$100,000 could be borrowed from the town stabilization fund, which "ought to be plenty."

"We need to come up with all of it [up front]," selectboard member Randy Crochier explained.

"We can't get reimbursed until we spend \$50,000 at least," chair Greg Snedeker added.

"We are happy to finally have the roof replacement approved by MSBA!" Gill-Montague business manager Joanne Blier told the Reporter. "I believe this was our sixth application for the roof."

Blier said the capital project will be discussed at the November 12 regional school committee meeting.

Drug Money

The selectboard reviewed a report from the Cooperative Public Health Service (CPHS) about the effort to pool opioid settlement money received by member towns to jointly fund projects.

The 15 member towns are taking in \$34,600 per year from the national settlement, and CPHS is proposing to spend \$33,159 on three initiatives: weekly meetings held by the Recover Project; intensive support

for pregnant users and new mothers through Moms Do Care, and supplemental funding for a recovery coaching program through the Center for Human Development.

The service providers would invoice each town separately for the work rather than establish a central account. Funding for these initial projects would be committed for two years.

Crochier, who also works at CPHS, said he was "95% sure" a matching grant would be awarded from the Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership, which could help support participants' transportation, add mothers to the Moms Do Care program, and better advertise the public "cabinets" containing naloxone, which reverses opioid overdose.

Over the next 18 years, he said, the revenues would "go up, they'll go down – other manufacturers will come on board after settling."

Crochier recused himself from the vote as Snedeker and member Charles Garbiel authorized the spending.

Other Business

Purington summarized comments submitted by the public at a recent open house on "digital equity." Comcast broadband is not yet available on Vassar Way or Bascom Road, and residents complained of low broadband speeds, as well as cellphone "dead zones."

"Someone said, 'Without quality internet service, the kids won't come home after college,'" Purington said, "as well as you can't sell your house."

"Home to the town, not neces-

sarily home to the homestead," Crochier clarified.

The selectboard appointed two Riverside residents to newly created seats on the sewer commission: David Conway to a two-year term and Jeff Suprenant to a three-year term. "I said to Ray that I'd take the three-year," Suprenant explained.

The commission has traditionally been comprised of selectboard members, but was expanded this year with the goal of including Riverside sewer customers.

The board unanimously approved a Green Communities report, which showed that the town's energy usage rose in FY'24, but was still 20.1% less than the "baseline" established 14 years earlier. Purington said some variation year to year is due to the timing of deliveries of heating oil at the elementary school.

The board also held a brainstorming session about the future use of the Riverside building in which the meeting was being held, which is no longer being used by the Four Winds School.

"I don't feel like we're in the business to be landlords to for-profit companies," Crochier said.

"It's a perfect environment for having a workshop or a class," said Janet Masucci.

"Does the senior center need some classroom space like this?" Claire Chang asked.

"We're not getting less seniors in our area," Snedeker mused.

"I personally wouldn't care if the building was declared surplus," Crochier said, "but I'd hate to lose this whole piece of land." No votes were taken.



Tip of the week ...

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POLICY from page A1

"We will just be left behind while Europe moves forward with electrification... We'll be like a rusty locomotive, and that's sad."

Politico reported this week that Trump recently vowed at a donor event to rescind unspent money from the IRA, "terminate" the Green New Deal – an ambitious 2019 legislative package that was never enacted – and appoint technology CEO Elon Musk to head a new Federal Efficiency Commission aimed at overhauling other departments.

"We know there are a lot of dedicated people who work in the government, but unfortunately many of them will be driven out of the government or resign, because it's so frustrating," Glassberg said. "I'm cautiously optimistic that people will be able to organize and accomplish what they can in the ways they can accomplish it, but there's no question it will be challenging."

The Biden administration told Axios last week that "about 80%" of the IRA grant money appropriated in the most recent fiscal year, or \$92.5 billion, has already been awarded, and the outlet reported that it was "not clear" whether clean energy tax credits established by the bill could be rescinded.

To what degree the administration will be able to stall or reverse recent climate policy may be determined by control of the House of Representatives. As of press time Wednesday night, Republicans have won majority control of the Senate, and were leading with 209 seats won to Democrats' 191 in the House according to races called by CNN.

The market is moving the energy industry towards solar, wind and electrification regardless of who is in office, Glassberg said, but the uncertainty and inconsistency around government initiatives could cause disruptions that could set the country back on its climate goals.

"Pulling the rug out... is not just going to be bad for the environment, but also bad for a lot of these new industries that are starting up," Glassberg said. "It's hard for businesses, to say nothing of local [and state] governments who are trying to get grants."

The administration could also roll back important public health regulations, according to Chitra Kumar, climate and energy managing director at the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS).

"Critical climate and public health standards that hold polluters to account – such as standards

limiting climate and health-harming pollution from coal- and gas-fired power plants and fossil fuel extraction and transport – are at extreme risk of attempted weakening or outright abandonment," Kumar said in a public statement on Wednesday.

Kumar pointed to environmental policy proposals in the Project 2025 manifesto as indications of what might lie ahead.

"Trust they will do what they said in the campaign," she wrote. "While the previous Trump administration ultimately saw many of its efforts fail in the courts due to neglect of statutory obligation and basic facts, even failed attempts still result in lengthy delays, which translate into significant, widespread, life-shortening, and climate-exacerbating impacts."

Glassberg said he hopes that interstate agreements such as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a cap-and-trade carbon credit system among 11 northeastern states including Massachusetts, can help take the place of climate goals likely to be nixed by the next administration.

"The states that have a lot of momentum going – and Massachusetts falls into that category – will just have to step up what they are doing at the state level, and make up for what's not happening at the federal level when it comes to climate adaptation, planning, and infrastructure," he continued. "But, of course, you need federal money for that."

Glassberg, who worked for the National Parks Service before he became a professor of environmental history in the 1980s, said former colleagues told him they were not allowed to use the term "climate change" in official communications or reports during the first Trump administration. In response, some staff members contributed to an anonymously-run website, *OurParks.org*, and social media accounts for the "Alt U.S. National Park Service."

Over 100 environmental protections were rolled back between 2017 and 2021, according to a list maintained on the website, in ways that impacted pollution, carbon emission, wildlife conservation, resource extraction, and the regulation of toxic substances.

"Their jobs get redefined as, essentially, clear-cutting, mining, and development," Glassberg told the Reporter. "There was a sense they had to do what they had to do – covertly, and sometimes overtly, as fast as they could."



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MONTAGUE from page A1

spring election. He also said he had informed the tree advisory committee of the opening, but had heard of no other takers as of Monday's meeting.

The duties of the tree warden are governed by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87, the state's shade tree law. The law establishes "procedures for removing shade trees, procedures for planting public trees, and penalties for violating provisions of the law" according to the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The warden is responsible for the care and control of public shade trees, defined as any tree within a public way.

No one, including the warden, "may cut, trim, or remove any tree, greater than one and one-half inches in diameter" without a public hearing, which must be advertised at least seven days in advance, except in emergency situations. The warden is empowered to require a "vegetation management plan" from utilities such as Eversource.

Most of these provisions are echoed in a tree bylaw passed by town meeting in the spring of 2021.

In Montague, the warden also collaborates with the tree committee to plant new trees – 600 were planted under a 2018 grant from the

US Forest Service – and to maintain a "wood bank" for low-income residents in collaboration with the Council on Aging.

At Monday's meeting Ramsey suggested appointing the DPW employee who has shown interest in the position, after opening the process up to other potential applicants over the next few weeks. Notice has been posted on the town website, and the topic may return to the selectboard later this month.

Big Ticket Items

For the third week in a row, the selectboard discussed closing a \$64,354 gap in funding a state-mandated project to renovate the Eleventh Street bridge, which connects the Patch neighborhood with downtown Turners Falls.

A week earlier, the board had voted to close the gap primarily with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, but decided to leave \$1,588 in the ARPA account after using a portion of the balance to fund a change order in the Carnegie Library basement renovation. The board had also indicated it would probably send an article to the next special town meeting this winter to fund the entire bridge deficit with a new appropriation, potentially freeing up over \$55,000 in ARPA

money for other projects.

However, on Monday assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller reported that the town's capital improvements committee (CIC), an arm of town meeting, had recommended against that course of action, as ARPA funds may not be eligible for use after a December 31 deadline set by the US Treasury Department.

The board agreed with that assessment without taking any formal vote on the matter.

Nolan-Zeller then presented an "overview" of potential capital requests for both the winter special town meeting and the annual meeting in May. He said he had received proposals from nearly all departments, though the two school districts, the Gill-Montague regional and the Franklin County Technical schools, have until November 27 to submit theirs.

Two potential capital projects directly under the selectboard's jurisdiction would be contributing \$57,000 toward improvements to the FRTA bus stop at the intersection of Millers Falls Road and Industrial Boulevard (see sidebar), and renovations to the town hall annex, which Nolan-Zeller estimated as costing up to \$880,000. The latter project was slated for FY'26 under the long-term capital plan developed by the CIC in 2023.

The estimated cost of the annex project appeared to produce sticker shock on the selectboard. Chair Rich Kuklewicz said that while he supported a project that would create more space for meetings, he thought the price tag was "a lot to cover in a year," and that he would like to see a "better design" before approving funds.

"I don't think that \$880,000 number is anywhere near accurate," said member Matt Lord. Lord also warned that if the town moves forward with the project, it may be required to "retrofit all of town hall with sprinklers" to bring it up to code. He then suggested making a "needs assessment for all of town hall" before committing to a project.

Without taking a vote, the board directed Nolan-Zeller to look into funding for such a study.

Tax Targets Reviewed

Ramsey presented preliminary estimates of revenues for the FY'26 town budget, which would need to be approved at the May an-

nual town meeting. The figures included total property tax revenues, state aid, and "local receipts" such as motor vehicle excise taxes, trash sticker revenue, and building permits, for a total of \$26,944,612, an increase of just under 3% over the current fiscal year.

Ramsey then showed three potential scenarios for leaving some "excess capacity," the amount the town chooses to tax residents below the annual "levy limit" it is allowed under the state law Proposition 2½. Taxing below the levy limit, often justified in terms of keeping property taxes low and maintaining flexibility to meet unanticipated costs, has been town policy for the past four years. Ramsey showed the impact of three excess capacity targets on the town budget and school assessments.

The first would leave the same level of excess capacity as the current fiscal year, \$1,149,954, and would produce a positive budget balance of \$373,742 and a 3.26% increase in the so-called "affordable" assessment to the Gill-Montague district.

The second assumed a higher level of taxable "new growth," and thus a higher levy limit, but would leave more excess capacity (\$1,314,312), lowering the budget balance to \$288,886 and the school assessment increase to 2.60%.

The third scenario aimed to produce a school assessment increase of 3.91%, the average increase over the last 10 years. It would lower the excess capacity to \$986,000 but raise the budget balance to \$457,967.

Board members seemed to feel the district might not be able to sustain the lower assessment increase in the second scenario, especially given that in the current year the district received a much lower level of state aid than it had projected. "I just can't

see the school district asking for much less than the average increases have been," said Kuklewicz.

Lord agreed. "They got slammed so hard by the Chapter 70 [state aid] formula this past year," he said.

"The board does not have to decide the direction today," Ramsey said. "This is just food for thought."

Other Business

Nolan-Zeller said the project to rehabilitate and line 53 sewer manholes, mostly in Turners Falls, is going out to bid this week. The work is funded by a grant from the state Rural and Small Town Development Fund.

The project to install new screw pumps at the Clean Water Facility, awarded to Associated Construction Company, is expected to start next August and finish in January 2026.

At the request of police chief Chris Williams, the board voted to make a conditional offer of employment to Carter Woodward of Hatfield for a patrol officer position, officially beginning this week. Williams said Woodward would need to pass a variety of tests and attend the police academy, possibly in Holyoke, in the coming months.

The board approved a \$27,250 agreement with the engineering firm Tighe & Bond for landfill monitoring and a \$15,000 grant from the state Cultural Council to the River-Culture program to help fund "all sorts of different cultural events," as Ramsey put it.

Ramsey noted that the Turners Falls power canal was "slowly filling up," but reported that work will continue at the end of the canal near Cabot Station.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 18 due to the Veterans Day holiday on November 11.



FRTA Asks Town to Chip In

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) assistant administrator Michael Perreault met with the Montague selectboard Monday night to share a design for new bus stops and crosswalks at Millers Falls Road and Industrial Boulevard, the entrance to the Turners Falls airport industrial park.

The stops serve the industrial park and Franklin County Technical School, as well as the nearby regional housing authority headquarters and the cannabis dispensary 253 Pharmacy.

Montague town administrator Walter Ramsey said one design under consideration would feature a pedestrian-activated red light on Millers Falls Road, but that flashing beacons would probably be used instead, "given the context of a kind of high-speed road."

The project would be funded by a \$178,376 grant from the state Department of Transportation, but a construction estimate given by a design firm is for a \$235,663 total cost, and FRTA is seeking funding to close the gap.

Perreault and Ramsey said the housing authority may be able to contribute, and floated the idea of asking for an appropriation at Montague's winter town meeting in February.

Selectboard member Matt Lord said that some money remains in the cannabis stabilization fund that could be used.

After a prolonged discussion, the selectboard was "generally supportive," in the words of chair Rich Kuklewicz, but wanted more information from FRTA on bus ridership and other potential funding sources before making a decision to send an appropriation request to town meeting.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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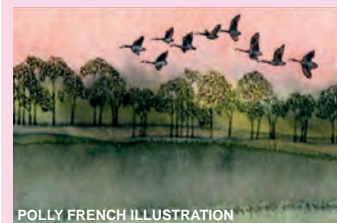
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FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER NOVEMBER 7, 2024



WEST ALONG THE RIVER NOVEMBER WOOD

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – I went out into the yellow wood a week ago. Or was it two? The woodland path and the trees beyond were bathed in a golden glow. Maple and birch trees in their final ephemeral glory were bright before the coming dark month of November, the coming three months of sleep.

The maple viburnum grove I've been favoring all these years adds a reddish-purple tinge to the bright wood, an impressionist's subtle dash of counterpoint to the fleeting effect of light on leaf.

But that was a short time ago, and now the leaves are all down, save for the grandfather oaks that will keep their bronze shining foliage for a little while longer, even into and through the winter.

I'm concerned for these 200-year-old ancestors who line the edge of my small terraced republic, overlooking the edge of the flood plain that extends to the rushing river a hundred yards yonder. Sometimes that river takes it into her head to leave her bed and reclaim her traditional run in silvery braids through the woods, making small islands of hillocks, those places where beaver and wood duck visit.

The oaks, already in their prime when first depicted in Beers's 1880s birds-eye view of Millers Falls, are under no small amount

of stress after being partially defoliated this summer by the second wave of voracious insects we now call spongy moths. (Growing up decades ago we called them "gypsy moths," but well-meaning folks now want us to drop that term, considered disparaging of the Traveling People.)

So on an early November morning like this, the now-bare maples lift their scrawny arms to the graying sky, shorn of summer's vigor and autumn's glory.

Robins move overhead, slight plaintive, almost melancholy calls drift down as they fly over, but it's probably just robin talk as they drift away from tree to tree, not going too far.

Down here on the ground, November is the time I set aside to move the wood.

This year's woodpile destined for the 1912 Glenwood C cookstove was constructed back in 2022, and here it is 2024.

When I prep wood for the future seasons there are steps I've followed for more than 30 years, once I've accumulated just the right amount.

The iron Glenwood, cast in a foundry in Taunton a century or more ago, wants pieces that fit the firebox and can slide through the circular lid into the flames. So one of the steps is to split wood so it fits.

That's actually one of the more pleasant tasks. There's something

see **WEST ALONG** page B8



The author's beehive woodpiles.

High School Sports: One Last Comeback

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Teams from Turners Falls High and Franklin County Tech competed this week in the MIAA state tournament. The Turners volleyball team toppled Mohawk and made it as far as the Sweet 16 against Whitinsville Christian, while the Tech field hockey team lost against Frontier in the Round of 32.

In soccer, the Tech girls lost a 1-0 battle to Smith Vocational, while the Turners boys won their first game on the Cape but dropped their next match against Maynard.

The Franklin Tech Football Eagles decimated the Mahar Senators, meanwhile, and will compete in the small vocational playoffs.

Volleyball
TFHS 3 – Mohawk 2
Whitinsville 3 – TFHS 0

On Saturday afternoon the Volleyball Thunder outlasted the Mohawk Warriors in the MIAA Division V girls' volleyball tournament, Round of 32. It was the fourth time the two teams met this season, and Mohawk was coming in with a 3-0 edge. The game featured dueling



The Thunder gather following a stunning win over Mohawk Trail in the MIAA Division V Round of 32 competition in Turners Falls. After dropping the first two sets the Thunder roared back, winning the next three for a victory over the Warriors. Turners advanced to the Round of 16 against Whitinsville Christian on Wednesday.

chanting, desperation digs, impossible shots, and key blocks, as well as some pretty intense play from both teams.

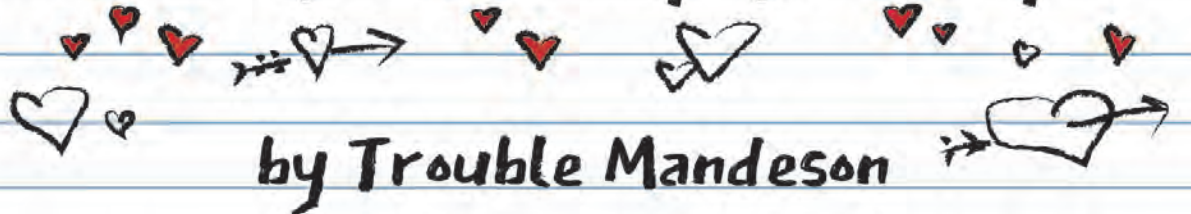
After Mohawk took the first set, the pressure was painted on the players' faces. It was relieved temporarily in the second set when the

ball hit the ceiling and ping-ponged against the rafters. The Mohawk players braced for the drop, but on its last bounce, the ball rested against two beams.

Mohawk took the second set, though, and the grimaces on the

see **SPORTS** page B4

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE



GREENFIELD – This month I'm writing about various species of relatively small, short-necked, large-billed waterfowl. You probably know them as ducks. I was going to focus on all poultry, but in December 2022 I covered chickens, so we'll see how many interesting facts and historical happenings I can dig up on our duck friends.

China has been and remains the center of duck consumption since they domesticated ducks 4,000 years ago, around 1983 BCE. Today, about 70% of the world's duck supply comes from Asia, with the US as the sixth-largest exporter of duck, after the EU, Myanmar, Vietnam, South Korea, and Taiwan.

"Peking duck" originated in Beijing, China. It's traditionally roasted and served with pancakes or buns, spring onions, and sweet bean sauce. During my work life at UMass a lifetime ago, a Chinese graduate student once brought me



"Crispy duck," shown here at a local Chinese restaurant, is roasted and served in large pieces topped with a crispy skin. There are lots of thin bone slivers as the bird is chopped whole so one must pick or suck the meat off of the bones.

homemade Peking duck for lunch, and that really was a special treat.

Most ducks are descended from a single species of wild Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*); the Muscovy duck (*Cairina moschata*), originating in South and Central America, is the only duck that doesn't share

lineage with the Mallard. There are dozens of wild and domesticated breeds, and you can find ducks on every continent of the world except Antarctica. Duck meat is hardy and versatile, and you can eat every part but the feathers, including the beak.

see **HEARTFELT** page B4

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

'SWILLEY'

Meet Swilley, a 7-month-old hound mix who came up from Alabama looking for his new family! This sweet, easy-going pup has done great with dogs and kids in his previous shelter, and he has that gentle, lovable nature that makes him a joy to be around. True to his hound roots, Swilley's got a curious nose and loves to explore, but he's also just as happy snuggling up when the day is done.

Swilley is still young, so he'll do best with a family that's excited to help him learn the ropes. Whether it's training sessions or casual walks around the neighborhood, he's ea-

ger to follow your lead and soak up all the new experiences. And with his friendly, adaptable personality, he's a good fit for almost any active household. We don't know how he'll do with cats.

Swilley could be your perfect match! The \$550 adoption fee includes neutering, rabies and kennel cough vaccinations, a heartworm test, current parvo and distemper vaccines, a microchip, and adoption registry. Come in during open adoption hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m., or call the Dakin Humane Society at (413) 781-4000 or visit www.dakinhumane.org.

MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN



SUBMITTED PHOTO

#74: Sam Gas Can

Interview by J. BURKETT and TROY CURRY

TURNERS FALLS – Hopefully a lot of you have heard of Sam Gas Can by now! He's another cool artist and musician living here in the valley. "Okay, what kind of musician is he?" you might ask. It would be a hard question to answer.

In the case of the above photo, he was a synth/organ drone exotic-type player. But in the last live set we saw, at the Ooze fest in September, he was more of a performance artist, doing a strange vocal interpretation of the great Arkm Foam. At other times he's more an electronic musician, or someone who will do visual art in the middle of a loud experimental music night – or maybe even crack a joke or two.

Suffice it to say, SCG is anything but straightforward musically. His visual art might be a little more continuously connected, with more of a "comic book/zine" vibe; some of his art is on the cover of his music releases as well.

If any of this sounds up your alley you should check him out, online or at house shows and festivals in the area, or even back in Worcester where his roots are, maybe at the Firehouse, Hotel Vernon, or the infamous New Year's Noise Brunch. There is recent footage of him on YouTube, the most recent video being the Ooze festival in Turners Falls...

MMM: Hi Sam! So, what are the origins of "Sam Gas Can"?

SG: This is a nickname that was impressed upon me in my youth because my real last name is "Gas-kin." People seemed to prefer it, and I just stuck with it, I guess! It's helpful to think about it as being a stage persona, someone that isn't me, but is very much like me – and has more hair.

MMM: So what were some of your influences?

SG: My earliest inspiration was "Weird Al" Yankovic, which I think really influenced my jukebox genre style and inability to take things

100% seriously. I also watched Nilsson's *The Point* every day as a child; I think the art, music, and message all spoke to me.

In high school, I loved GVAR for their crazy stage presence, and Atom & His Package for his DIY spirit. I was also laser-focused on the Dischord and K Records labels. I probably put too much importance on them as organizations, but when none of my friends matched my enthusiasm about making music ourselves, I became desperate to be part of something bigger than myself.

MMM: Did you record before you played live? How do the live and recorded stuff differ?

SG: I don't think they differ all that much, but others might disagree. I definitely played live first; I don't think I got a 4-track cassette recorder until after high school. It's all been so different from the start.

I'm sure I've pulled a curveball on folks' expectations in both regards – and not always in a good way. I definitely don't consider how to reproduce things live while recording, though, so that's always been a bit tricky!

MMM: Did I meet you when you lived at the Media Mansion? Do you want to talk about those days? How did living there with George and Dan affect your stuff?

SG: We actually met before I moved to town, when George Myers helped me set up a gig at the old [Mystery Train] space, back when bands played in front of the big Michael Hurley mural! I remember Ben Hersey trying his hardest to kiss a lightbulb and not get burned.

Media Mansion was the only house I ever lived in that hosted shows. It was a true delight! Most of the folks who lived there had some sort of art or recording project going, and although we didn't collaborate regularly, we definitely shared a lot of equipment and tried to support one another in whatever ways possible.

MMM: How about tours... You said Japan was cool? And you played overseas another time? Did you ever

play in Belgium with Dennis Tyfus?

SG: Japan was a blast, Osaka in particular is a colorful and vibrant city. I loved the Katsu Curry and Okonomiyaki, a savory pancake dish. I bought way too many retro video games and had a great time at the Sanrio Puroland theme park. Anyone who collects physical media of experimental music must visit Tobira Records in Kasai, you will not be disappointed!

I've only played in Rotterdam otherwise, but I'd love to do a proper European tour soon – lots of friends to whom I owe a visit.

MMM: What other musicians or labels are you into right now?

SG: I've really enjoyed the Swedish underground sound from Discreet Music and Förlag För Fri Musik for noisier things, but the new self-titled album from Workers Comp has some of the best songwriting I've heard in a long time.

I really like the editing style of those older Super Roots EPs by Boredoms, as well as related projects like UFO or Die, OOIOO, and Hanatarash.

MMM: Any thoughts about the BenGeorge7 show here at MT this summer? What about the last Ooze fest?

SG: Great gig! I loved the 40-plus-minute sets by reunited improv/performance duos Ben-george7 and Shea & Skot of Maine, but was really blown away by the synchronic mindscapes carved out by Moons of Goom – it reminded me a lot of Ose's *Adonia*.

I also loved your set with Wednesday Knudsen at the Ooze Fest in Peskeompskut Park the other day. It was lovely to hear two improvising saxophones weave together so gently! Staubitz & Waterhouse never fail to delight me, and the outdoor environment lended itself further toward the perfect "deep listen."

MMM: Any plans for new releases?

SG: I just got the masters back for my sound-poetry/stand-up comedy album, *Live in Japan*, as well as a new album from NxCx, my noise duo with Abdul H Sherzai, titled *A Line in the Sand*.

I'm hoping to get some more work done on the third and final issue of my comic book series *Pizza Wizard* as well.

MMM: What's your fave Neil Young or Dylan album? Remember we did that Neil/Bob art piece? Do you still listen to them?

SG: I don't think I could ever get sick of *Nashville Skyline*, it's a perfect album, definitely in my top 10. Tracey Trance put that one on repeat for me while we were tripping on acid outside the Firehouse in 2013 and it's stuck with me ever since.

And I think we both know that *Trans* is still Neil Young's best album.

Senior Center Activities

NOVEMBER 11 THROUGH 16

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 11/11

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Pot Luck Lunch

Tuesday 11/12

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

Wednesday 11/13

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

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

Thursday 11/14

Foot Clinic – By Appointment

Friday 11/15

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
2 p.m. Chair Dance

Saturday 11/16

12 p.m. Cemetery Commission meeting

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 11/11

Closed for Veterans Day.

Tuesday 11/12

8:30 a.m. Toenail Clipping
9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
10 a.m. Line Dancing
11 a.m. Social Stringer

Wednesday 11/13

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

Thursday 11/14

9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow
1 p.m. Blue Cross Information
Session

Friday 11/15

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting, open sew
9 a.m. Friends Baklava Making

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.

WENDELL

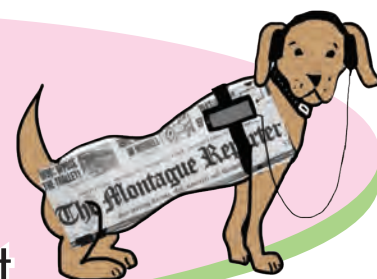
Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments.

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

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on November 6, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Word of the Day: 'Leveret'

On October 28, the Leverett selectboard learned that Betsy Douglas, former chair of the Leverett historical commission, is absconding with Sir John Leverett. The large oil painting of the town's namesake, governor of Massachusetts during King Philip's War, is so tarnished that it is hard to make out the subject's features.

Douglas will drive Sir John to Williamsburg for restoration estimates, as she would like viewers to have a better look at Sir John and three leverets, or young hares, included in the coat of arms.

Trouble at River Station

The project to turn the former Chick's Garage at 151 Third Street into an arts incubator has apparently stalled, after a behind-the-scenes conflict over code compliance issues prompted the building's owner to announce on Monday that he would seek to sell it.

The structure, dubbed River Station, is currently home to Evoke, a working glass studio, with a painter and skateboard shop also renting space. Owner Rich Becker said his fourth tenant Nifty-Bits, which makes ornamental flowers and other sculptures from recycled glass, gave him notice last week that they are leaving, and that the slow pace of renovations has prevented him from attracting others.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on November 4, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

New Owners at Shady Glen

Last Sunday in Turners Falls, family photos came down off the wall as John and Linda Carey prepared to turn the keys to the Shady Glen diner over to new owners Elizabeth and George Zantouliadis.

With her five-year-old son Dimitri in her lap, Elizabeth listened as Carey explained his menu planning system. "He's got 40 years of advice and experience to share," said Elizabeth. "We are just learning. He's got a winning formula here."

Carey has been at the helm since 1963 when he took over from his sister, Frances Humphrey.

"I'm really not happy about letting it go," said Carey. But while he may have sold the business, he isn't through working there: "I'll be here as long as they're comfortable having me around."

Lifeline From NMH?

Fire chief Gene Beaubien told the Gill selectboard to "get out your checkbook" on November 1, as he presented an estimate for repair to the "Jaws of Life."

"There's a big crack in one of the steel blades," he said of the hydraulic emergency equipment. A replacement for a refurbished pair with a lifetime warranty is \$3,250. The original cutters were condemned during a recent inspection, along with two sets of 16-foot hose so old the safety inspector won't even test them now. Replacement cost is \$969.

Administrative assistant Deb Roussel was asked to determine the balance of funds left in what is known as the "Mount Hermon account," a \$10,000 annual contribution from the tax-exempt school towards the town's public safety departments.

"This is something that should come out of NMH," said selectboard member Ann Banash.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on November 4, 1874: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Local Matters

The autumn foliage is being tipped with frost and winter clothing is coming into requisition.

Mr. G.L. Rist can boot any man in Turners Falls.

Our new barbers have taken their departure, disgusted with the slow growth of hair in Turners Falls.

The cresting has been added to the dome of the new school house, and gives it a very neat appearance.

The fire engine company now practice on a wharf built for their accommodation at the foot of L street.

Telegraphic connection has been consummated between this town and Greenfield, the first message went tripping over the wires on Monday.

Jas. S. Richardson is manufac-

turing a new pattern of rustic flower-stand, nice, tasty and inexpensive. Also a blacking stand; and every gentleman who can afford to black his own boots should have one.

The Montague paper company have completed the three-story addition to their mill, and are now putting in a turbine water wheel from the Turners Falls manufactory of Clark & Chapman, and a pen stock four and a half feet in diameter. A portion of the front of the new building, which, by the way, is intended for the finishing department, is being fitted up for a general office, 20x20 feet, handsomely furnished, while adjoining is a private office, 18x18 feet. A true draw-bridge 120 feet long, is to span the canal in front of the new building, while a suspension foot bridge will connect the new office with the east side of the canal.

Mr. Henery Lebourveau while working in a ledge at the Horse Race to-day, had his foot badly crushed.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Suspicious & Out of Sorts; Thin Walls & Ceilings; Disheveled Man; Dead Swan; Realistic Knife; 'Caller States His Wife Has Never Murdered Anyone'; Final Days of Interregnum Unknowingly Enjoyed

Monday, 10/28

8:19 a.m. Caller would like to speak to an officer about ongoing harassment from somebody sending text messages to various crisis hotlines asking for the police to be sent to the caller's home because she is "suicidal." Advised of options.

12:20 p.m. Employee reporting multiple break-ins at Eagle Creek Renewable Energy over the weekend. Officer requesting DPW respond to assist with securing gates. DPW foreman notified. Report taken.

1:29 p.m. Caller states that someone pulled a gun on his daughter inside an Avenue A building. Unfounded.

10:31 p.m. 911 caller states the downstairs neighbor is being evicted and needs to be out by November 4; it sounds like he is throwing things and slamming doors. Landlord advised caller to contact police. Officer advises involved party was gone on arrival. Neighbor advises he has not heard anything all day.

Tuesday, 10/29
12:21 a.m. 911 caller reports two individuals in a white Charger flashing weapons at people; advises vehicle is currently between the old Between the Uprights building and Shady Glen. Officers advised. Area checked; negative findings.

6:34 a.m. Officer advises there is a deceased deer in the roadway on Federal Street near the old Mark's Auto. MassDOT contacted and advised.

6:26 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reporting a suspicious vehicle in her neighbor's yard. She asked him if he knew who it was, but he didn't really answer. Officer advised. Operator had pulled off to make a phone call; was not aware he was on someone's property.

8:45 p.m. 911 caller reports that a male party at Millers Pub is kicking his car; he seems suspicious and out of sorts. Caller states she asked if he needed help and he freaked out. Officer out with vehicle, which is reportedly having car troubles. Officer advises car is in a parking space and involved party is upset about his girlfriend. Not under the influence at this time. Clear.

10:17 p.m. 911 caller from Millers Falls Road reporting someone is snooping around her yard and they shouldn't be there. Reports they have a flashlight and that when her daughter yelled for them to leave,

the flashlight turned off; caller is unsure if they are still around. Officer spoke to involved party, who was walking their dog and flashed a flashlight when they saw an opossum. Will update caller.

10:22 p.m. Caller from East Main Street reporting her upstairs neighbor is playing loud music and it is too late; caller has school in the morning. She hit her ceiling with a broom but the music didn't stop. Officer advises some audible noise; resident was watching a movie. Advised of complaint. Caller called back in, stating that the officers had just left and the neighbor turned up the music again. Officers advised. Noise was also coming from Apartment 1; however, neither was excessive. Building has thin walls and ceilings.

Wednesday, 10/30
1:41 a.m. AAA states they had a call for service in Millers Falls. After AAA jump-started the vehicle, the male party left in the vehicle without any lights on and with the vehicle's trunk open. Shelburne Control advised.

8:10 a.m. Turners Falls High School staff requesting an irate parent leave the property. Male party gone on officer's arrival. Officer responding to party's home to speak with him; no answer at door. Principal will follow up with school resource officer.

11:05 a.m. Caller from Union Street states that a disheveled man came up on their porch with a pad of paper and a pen but did not say anything to them. He left the porch and walked around the house, then headed towards his car. Advised of options.

11:38 a.m. Caller would like it on record that she received a call last night telling her that she needed to take money out of the bank. The man she spoke with said that they would send someone to her house today to fill out a form so that they could have access to her money. Advised caller to call if anyone shows up that she doesn't know.

4:41 p.m. Caller from G Street advises her brother notified her that she has a dead swan in her backyard; requesting it be removed. Provided with number for animal control officer.

5:20 p.m. Car vs. motorcycle on Unity Street. No injuries reported at this time. Officer requesting medical for evaluation and tow for motorcycle.

Thursday, 10/31

9:28 a.m. Caller advises her vehicle parked on

Central Street was struck overnight and sustained damage to the front bumper. The vehicle now smells like rubber and wobbles when it is operated. Caller advises she will come to MPD to file an accident report.

1:08 p.m. Caller advises his unoccupied vehicle was struck in the Food City parking lot about five minutes ago. Officer advises there is a smudge on the driver's side rear quarter panel of the bumper. Caller was able to wipe off the smudge.

3:11 p.m. Caller states that a male party dropped off a dog they found on Norman Circle; believes it was dumped by the owner. Male dog, gray/black pug-dog, about 30 pounds, no tag or chip. Message left for ACO.

5:15 p.m. Report of subject in a Jason costume carrying what appears to be a real, large knife.

The presence of the knife was alarming several patrons of the Rendezvous. Subject was not observed waving or threatening with the knife. Last seen walking toward Seventh Street. Area checked; unable to locate.

10:26 p.m. 911 caller reporting that a vehicle with four occupants was just outside her residence on Fourth Street; occupants appeared to be watching her and her son on their porch, and one of the occupants had a gun. Caller states that her son recognized the operator but could not identify the three occupants as they were wearing black masks and dressed all in black. Caller advises subjects left when she took down their license plate. Last seen on Fourth Street heading toward J Street. Referred to an officer.

Friday, 11/1
8:34 a.m. Caller from East Main Street reports a female took a picture of her while taking out the trash; she doesn't want to be bothered and would like police to come talk to the involved female. While on the phone, the caller went back to the involved female and started swearing and escalating the situation. Situation mediated; parties staying away from each other.

12:03 p.m. Caller reports there is a man fishing with a young girl at Cabot Camp; she finds this suspicious, as the girl should be in school. Referred to an officer.

12:07 p.m. Caller reports his wife is on the phone with the Springfield police

department and was told she has a warrant for missing a court date for a murder she committed, and if she doesn't send them \$3,500, they will come arrest her right now. Caller states his wife has never murdered anyone. Advised caller this is a scam and the number should be blocked. Caller was reluctant to do so, feeling as though police are lying to set up his wife. Reassured caller that his wife does not have a warrant, and that police are not looking for money from them.

2:04 p.m. Off-duty firefighter reporting his wife states there is a homeless man hanging out in a yard near Dell Street and Turnpike Road making other mothers and children uncomfortable. Officer advised. Believes it's the resident who lives on the corner. He has since gone into his home.

Saturday, 11/2

4:15 p.m. 911 caller reporting a male in a silver vehicle putting bottles and cans in the bushes off the public parking lot near Main Street and Dewolf Road. Caller called back stating the vehicle left the area; he will go check the bushes tomorrow and see what was left there.

7:30 p.m. Caller advises her 14-year-old daughter was smacked in the face by a male at the skate park around 6:50 p.m.; requesting officer respond to report the incident. Caller advises daughter does not need medical attention at this time. Officer advised parties of their options and will notify the school resource officer about the incident.

9:18 p.m. 911 caller states a neighbor is having a fire outside on Turners Falls Road and it's starting to threaten her house. Referred to other agency.

Sunday, 11/3


1 a.m. Caller from Burnett Street requests to speak to an officer as someone in a black Ford truck with an American flag knocked on their front and side doors tonight around midnight. Caller advises this has happened before and is unsure why it is happening. Officer advised of call's nature.

1:20 a.m. Off-duty firefighter reports a large bonfire on Turners Falls Road; requests someone check on it due to its size and it being a "red flag" day. Shelburne Control advised.

6:04 p.m. Caller from Court Square advises her neighbor has an illegal fire in their backyard. Shelburne Control notified.



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HEARTFELT from page B1

Ancient Egyptians were among the first recorded humans to fatten up the wild ducks living in the marshes along the Nile for consumption. They were also used in sacrifices, and temple reliefs show Akhenaten, the reigning pharaoh from 1351 to 1334 B.C., holding a duck up to the gods as he wrings its neck. They sought gifts of abundance from the gods with these offerings, and the duck was viewed as a symbol of fertility and renewal.

The Egyptians were also known to use techniques to enlarge the livers of ducks and geese by forcing them to overfeed, which eventually became the foundation for *foie gras*, a delicacy in French cuisine with a rich, buttery, delicate flavor. It's prepared and served as a *mousse* or *paté*, and it's stated in French law (French rural code Article L654-27-1) that "*Foie gras* belongs to the protected cultural and gastronomic heritage of France."



MANDESON PHOTOS

Crispy duck is served with plum sauce, which has many variations in its ingredients. It will definitely have plums, or perhaps plum wine, along with soy sauce, olive oil, maybe star anise and a shallot, some sugar, rice vinegar, or beef stock. It's thick, sweet, and salty.

Meanwhile, in ancient Rome, they too were fattening ducks by feeding them figs and teaching themselves methods for preserving the duck meat through techniques such as *confit*, in which duck legs are cooked in their own fat.

The French, with their high-end food traditions, developed several other duck recipes including seared duck breast or *magret de canard*; a stew with poultry, sausage, pork, and beans baked under a dark brown crust called *casoulet*; and the meltingly tender *confit de canard*, a classic recipe of duck legs slow-cooked and then pan-fried until golden.

During the Middle Ages in Europe there was a shortage of wild birds due to overhunting, which led to the captive breeding of birds for food. Through selective breeding over several generations, farmers have increased the size of domestic ducks, limited their flying ability, and forced them to grow faster and produce more eggs. There are now over a dozen "heritage" breeds which the Livestock Conservancy has on their priority list to protect.

Duck eggs have thicker shells and are larger than chicken eggs. The colors range from white to light grey and blue. Duck fat is a valuable commodity, used in *confit*, sauces, and gravies, and to fry crispy potatoes. I've learned it can also be used to make stovetop popcorn. To me that seems like a nice bowl of crispy-crunchy, salty goodness that I'd enjoy.

One holiday season I was gifted a jar of duck gravy cooked with maple syrup. I made myself a bowl of *poutine*, a popular Canadian dish where hot, crispy French fries are topped with cheese curds and brown gravy. It's rich, salty, and chewy.

Cabot makes cheese curds which you can buy locally in most co-ops if you don't favor a drive up to Canada. I do believe the dish to be an acquired taste. French fries, yes please, any time, but the curds have an interesting rubbery texture and I've never been a big fan of brown gravy. Yet the version I made with duck gravy was divine.

When shopping for duck to cook,



Locally, only Big Y in Greenfield sells duck, although they only had one when the author looked. It was \$60 for a six-pound D'Artagnan Roban duck, a propriety heritage cross breed raised in New Jersey.

you're most likely going to find Muscovy, which is leaner and good for roasting and stewing. Moulard ducks are a cross between Pekin and Muscovy and usually raised for *foie gras* as their breasts are extra fatty. These are best seared and served rare. Wild duck meat is very lean and has a strong taste, so it's generally marinated or soaked in milk.

Duck can be roasted, grilled, braised, used in a casserole, or cooked *sous vide*, a process in which food is vacuum sealed into a plastic bag and then cooked in a temperature-controlled water bath. This immersion type of cooking offers precise cooking control and cooks the food consistently throughout.

Internationally there are many ways to cook a duck. The aforementioned *duck à l'orange* in France and Peking duck in China, but also red curry duck in Thailand, duck *pho* (pronounced "fuh"), a savory soup with meat and noodles in Vietnam, and *bebek betutu* in Indonesia, a whole duck seasoned with spices, wrapped in banana leaves, and slow-roasted in a terra cotta pot.

I'll end this column here with an apology: I meant to buy and roast my first duck before submitting this article, but life got in the way, and if I get to it I'll report the results in a future column. Since I've never cooked it myself, I leave you with a recipe for a Honey Roast Duck, perhaps you'll try it this holiday season.

Trouble Mandeson lives in Greenfield with her wifey and their cat Peeps. She volunteers for local nonprofits, cooking for and feeding those in the community, and loves to write, copy-edit, and create art.

**SPORTS** from page B1

Turners players' faces grew. It was gut-check time. In the third set, Turners led throughout the battle and built a 24-18 lead. Fans and reserves held up one finger, indicating "game point," but Mohawk is a great team and scored twice more before the Thunder finally hit 25.

The next set was a nail-biter, and knotted up at 22. With their backs to the wall, Powertown finished strong and held on to win it 25-23.

In the deciding match the tension notched up – one player even became physically sick. After the court was cleaned and a replacement jersey swapped in, play resumed. This cathartic event seemed to ground the players, and as the True Blue faithful chanted *Olé, Olé, Olé*, Turners built an 11-4 lead.

But Mohawk is a great team, and did not go away, even when the Thunder led 14-9 and Turners fans were again holding a finger in the air. They went on a run to make it 14-13, but unfortunately for the visitors, their next serve went low and Turners won on a fault.

Madi Liimatainen finished with 15 kills, four aces, and three digs; Maddie Dietz made three kills, five aces, and 16 assists; Tatiana Carr Williams had a kill and four aces; and Maddie Haight made some key serves.

The win propelled Turners to the Sweet 16 round against the Whitinsville Christian Crusaders. As of press time Wednesday night, we learned they had lost to the Crusaders 3-0 down in Whitinsville, but stats were not yet available.

Field Hockey*Frontier 6 – FCTS 1*

The Franklin Tech field hockey season came to an end last Friday afternoon at the sticks of the Frontier Red Hawks.

Red kept the play in the Eagles' backyard for most of the first half, and it was difficult for the Tech fans to yell encouragement to their team, leading to a 6-0 Frontier lead at halftime. But when the sides switched the Franklin defense tightened up, shutting Frontier out in the second half.

In the fourth quarter Kathryn Lengieza fed the ball to Hannah Gilbert who shot it in, preventing a shutout.

Girls' Soccer*Smith Voc 1 – FCTS 0*

The Tech girls lost a heartbreaker on Monday to the Smith Vocational Vikings down in Northampton in the Division V preliminary round.

It was a scoreless tie for 75 minutes, but the Vikings finally slipped one by with five minutes left in regulation. Kylee Gamache made an incredible 20 saves in goal.

Boys' Soccer*TFHS 1 – Cape Cod 0**Maynard 3 – TFHS 0*

On Sunday afternoon the Turn-

ers boys traveled to the Cape, and defeated Cape Cod Regional Technical School 1-0 in the Division V preliminaries. John Ramirez Martin scored the winning goal on a free kick.

On Election Tuesday, the Maynard Tigers shut the Blue Thunder out 3-0 in the Round of 32, eliminating them from the playoffs.

Football*FCTS 48 – Mahar 14*

The Franklin Tech Football Eagles bounced back from their first loss of the season last Friday, thrashing the visiting Mahar Senators. Fans were lined up three deep on the sidelines.

It didn't take long for the Birds to establish dominance. Less than three minutes in, Josiah Little sprinted into the end zone to give Franklin a 6-0 lead. After the score, the Eagles lined up for a kick attempt. It failed but the crowd, most of whom had never witnessed a one-point try, were amazed.

When Mahar got the ball they made some mental mistakes. They were flagged on their first possession because two men went into motion at the same time, and on their next possession five players lined up in the backfield.

The Eagles scored again, and this time went for the 2-PAT. The ball was tossed to the very back corner of the end zone, but Ethan Smarr made the grab, keeping his toes inside the chalk to give Franklin 14 points.

In the second quarter, with Tech up 21-0, a Senator ran back the kick-off all the way to the 11, and three plays later it was 21-8. When Tech got the ball back Wyatt Whitman ran everybody over, crashing into the end zone to increase the lead to 28-8. Tech scored 20 more points before the mercy rule kicked in and both teams emptied their benches.

Under center Tyler Yetter completed three passes for 71 yards, threw a 2-PAT, he rushed for 20; Smarr and Hunter Donahue were his targets. Little rushed for 187 yards, and Whitman for 82. Other carriers include Justin Lent, Tucker Hicks, and Oliver Schwenger-Sartz. Yetter, Little, and Whitman scored two TDs each, Donahue scored one, Smarr got a 2-pointer, and Joseph Disciullo kicked four extra points.

Donahue and Maxon Brunette led the team in tackles.

After the game spectators debated whether the win was good enough to qualify for the MIAA tournament. "Only 16 teams make the playoffs," one pundit remarked. "We were 17." Another theorized that Coach Gamache would rather concentrate on the vocational tournament.

It turns out that the Eagles did not make the MIAA playoffs, but are seeded second in the vocational tournament. This Friday they play their last game before the tournament kicks off. Their opponent is Monument Mountain, a team that has scored 48 points or more five times this year.

**HONEY ROAST DUCK**

one whole duck (3 lb.)

1 orange

2 Tbsp. honey

2 whole sprigs of thyme

(or rosemary)

the stripped leaves of 2 more

sprigs of thyme (or rosemary)

sea salt

fresh ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 430°. Squeeze a little of the juice from the orange inside the duck. Place the orange halves and two thyme (or rosemary) sprigs into the bird's cavity. Season all over with salt and pepper. Place the duck in a

roasting pan and cook for 20 minutes, or until the skin begins to crisp, then reduce the heat to 370° and cook another 40 minutes.

Remove from oven. Drizzle with honey and the stripped thyme (or rosemary) leaves, and put it back into the oven. Roast another 20 minutes or so, testing the duck's internal temperature until it reaches 165°.

Let it rest uncovered for 10 minutes before serving. Use the pan drippings to make gravy and the carcass to make stock.

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THE SPIRIT SHOPPE



It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

– William Carlos Williams

edited by Janel Nockelby
Readers are invited to send poems to
the *Montague Reporter* by email at:
poetry@montaguereporter.org
(Please note we are no longer
accepting mailed submissions.)

This month's page:

a tribute to Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno
and Patricia Pruitt

Random Thoughts of a Late Summer's Afternoon

Strange how life plays out. Like looking down below
at the river, rippling, churning, sliding, as on it flows.
Strange, when you think about it, how your life unfolds
there before you, day by day: the trees, the fields, the glow
of those late summer leaves... the things the eye beholds.

Yes, there's the thing itself. There, and then, just like
that, it's just the memory of the thing, as that too glides by
as now something else asserts itself to occupy
the mind's attention. Like these late-blooming roses – white,
carmine red, yellow, pink, here, now, by this fly-

blown birdbath, with the pocked Saint Francis statue
gripping his broken bowl. And there, to your left, those
loping branches on the dawn redwood now shadow-
ing those once-giant hostas. And then those five fading lilacs,
their time long past. And (look!) two yellow grosbeaks

and a single sparrow perched there on the feeders, the late
summer light shimmering in and on and through it all.
Strange, isn't it, old man? (And did you ever think you'd say
those words?) But then, there it is, as on time's river flows.
And what is there to do about it, but buck up and greet

the now, the day, this lucent moment, even as it too
quickly slides away? Yes, what is there to do, except to
celebrate what's – when you think about it – the ever new,
because it's here, now, something to gaze upon again. Can you
understand the gift this is, this newness shining through?

– Paul Mariani
Montague

Of Song Such

i.m. Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno

There is no such thing as song
says song as it breaks

apart into pieces
as the sky falls apart

with the music of its debris.
The wreckage of leaves

scatters across the lawn
green songs lost in green shade

everything you ever owned
floating away into nothing

the first song of an animal
who is not quite yet song itself.

There is no such thing
as song only when you sing

you shape the abyss,
speaking form out of void.

A small voice
translating starlight

from sorrow, clairvoyance
from a glissando of angels.

– Patrick Pritchett
Simsbury, Connecticut



The Poetry Page is supported by
NatureCulture
WritingTheLand.org

Rain

I want it to rain.

I want it to rain
like the sky has died
and the clouds can't hold back their tears.

I want it to rain
like time is on fire
and history has begun to smolder.

I want it to rain
until the air tumbles down
like a waterfall.

I want it to rain
until the blind can see
and the sighted go blind,

until I'm drowning in my bed,
carried away by torrents of you.

– G. Greene
Greenfield

Flying on Together

for Christopher & Patricia

The wind flying into the forgiveness of trees
we, who are everything
we breathe –
Going down to the earth
in a bow
of hallelujahs
thank you
for the words & worlds spoken
& unspoken
thank you for the wind
on our back
(I turned around
and there you are)
thank you
for the praise
of the Song

– Ninsó John High
New York and Lisbon, Portugal

Contributors' Notes:

Gary Greene is a Greenfield native and the author of *Poems In A Time of Grief*. His work has appeared in the *Montague Reporter*, where he was the featured poet in January 2021; Oprelle Publications' poetry anthology *Matter*; online at wittypartition.org; and in *Nine Mile Books & Literary Magazine*. He lost his wife Jean after nearly 40 years together and began writing poetry to express his grief. Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno mentored him, and they became good friends. These are the last poems that he sent to Chris – written prior to Chris' passing, but they capture the way he felt when he heard the news.

Paul Mariani taught literature and poetry at UMass Amherst and Boston College before retiring. His books include poetry, biographies of poets, various critical studies, and memoirs. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the NEH, NEA, the American Philosophical Society, the Guggenheim, the John Ciardi Award, and the Flannery O'Connor Award. His latest volume of poetry is *All That Will Be New: Poems* (Slant Books).

Ninsó John High's newest book is *Scrolls of a Temple Sweeper* (Wet Cement Press, Berkeley). Poet, novelist, translator, and Zen monk, he is the author of more than a dozen books.

Patrick Pritchett is a poet and scholar. He lives in Simsbury and teaches at Rutgers University. He worked with Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, Ed Foster, and Lisa Bourbeau on the Pioneer Valley Poetry Festival from 2017 to 2022.

Musician and filmmaker **Neil Young**, sometimes known as Neil "Cloaca" Young, spent most of his life living in the valleys of western Massachusetts until suddenly moving to the southernmost gerrymandered dingle of the City of Los Angeles, called San Pedro, about two years ago. For 16 years before that he and his partner, the artist Fafnir Adamites, lived in the little village currently known as Turners Falls. He does a lot of stuff, which you can read about at yeay.suchfun.net.

Dear readers and writers, we will continue to print poems in honor of Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno as you send them in, so keep writing!

going under

that night
the one you died
I went under
never to resurface

I live still
I don't know how
with no air
little light
no laughter

there are others
down here
I sense them
more than see them

but no matter
there is no company
in this misery

– G. Greene
Greenfield

'notes to self about a couple of neighbors that i miss'

hey Chris,
i found a perfect low current pool
for my unhatched eggs
a hidden cul de sac
with a pointless eddy or two
on the surface
to hypnotize a passing tourist
and below the silt
ill keep pressing
maybe take ahold of an unhooked cart
or finally rust those bearings still,
for good

hey Patricia,
i thought i stopped writing poetry years ago
when i moved here
and found so many
other tools more interesting
and readily-accessible to me,
really dumb, long way around tools.
definitely not the stuff
of compactness and economy
but with so much distance,
time and now the fact
that you both are
on the other side,
i think that i just had
my antenna detached

i could go on, but
you know, economy.

– Neil Young
Los Angeles, California

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Montague Community Television News

Now & Always

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – MCTV has a tugboat-load of new local shows! All of these quality programs were produced by members of our community, and we are proud to have them available for you to watch now and always.

Please enjoy the Stash House's Trash Rich Fashion Show; Matt Haenlin, Bill Blatner, Ben Sears, and Nina Rossi of Little House Blues performing at Peskeompskut Park; the River Signal Radio Hour transmission from their live broadcast on October 19, featuring performances by Les Taiauts, Melissa Dickey, Kath Andrews, Sister XMas, Sam Gerdes, and Russell McCumber; Vapors of Morphine at the Shea Theater; and the next in-

stallment of Wendell's "Honoring Local Elders" series, the Alys and Chris Queen edition.

As always, we have the most current selectboard meetings from both Gill and Montague available as well.

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

Contact us at (413) 863-9200 or infomontaguetv@gmail.com, follow us on Facebook, or find us on Instagram @montaguecommunitytv. Find videos and more on our website, montaguetv.org.

MR Wrapping Paper Edition • Artist Profile #5

By REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – This summer we invited people to submit design proposals for our fourth Special Wrapping Paper Edition, to be printed later this month. 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.

Our youth winner, Sophia Elizabeth McKusick, is featured this week. She lives in Charlemont and is nine years old. Her painted design honors the Connecticut River.

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

SM: I want the paper to say, "Merry Christmas." I want the person opening the gift to feel happy.

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

SM: I would like to receive an electronic fish toy that I used to have. It could swim around in its own little container.

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

SM: Gifts from my Nannie wrapped in newspapers. And newspapers give good information.



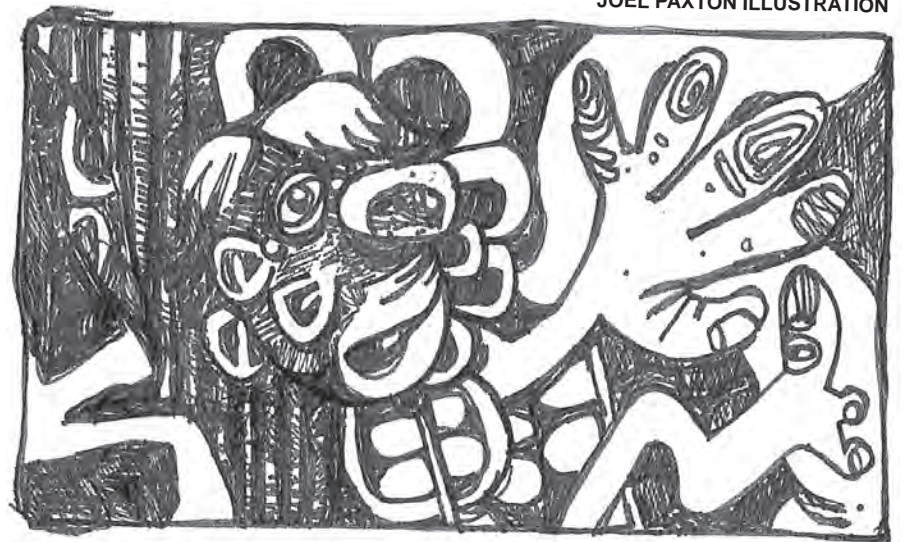
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ROB MACHADO ILLUSTRATION



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Advertisement for ED L., a dealer in used home furnishings. Text includes 'SMALL FURNITURE • COLLECTIBLES • DECORATIVES', address '374 Deerfield Street • Greenfield', and phone number 'Call (413) 834 - 3128 TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT'. Also mentions 'MASK REQUIRED • EXCLUSIVE SHOPPING!'.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



looking forward...

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Clark Art Institute, Williams-town: *Circuit Des Yeux, Bill Nace, kite/wing*. \$ 6 p.m.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belcher-town: *Morgan Garret, Primal Rat Screw, Lucy, Swamp God* more. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

The Hoff, Holyoke: *Tributary, The P.A.s, Modern Ego, Sowing, Parachute Club*. \$ 6 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Zydeco Connection*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Shenanigans With Friends*. Free. 7 p.m.

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

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Whiskey Treaty Roadshow*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Happy Valley Gas Juggers*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Guided Brick, Holyoke: *Haley Fohr, Bill Nace, Sarah Araujo, Matt Krefting*. \$ 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners

Falls: *BluGroove*. Free. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Sarah Shook & The Disarmers, Chloe Kimes*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Hampshire College, Amherst: *Gem Alchemy, Jetties, DJ Madel, fertilitoad*. Free. 7 p.m.

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

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Arun Ramamurthy Trio*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

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

33 Hawley, Northampton: HUT XLIII feat. *Karen Nelson, Regan Bowering, Deja Carr*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Gaslight Tinkers, Moon Shells*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *A.P.I.E., Fast Cheetah, Whistlin' Moon Travelers*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Carnivorous Bells, Editrix, Landowner, Target Scammers*. \$ 4 p.m.

First Churches, Northampton: *Valley Arabic Music Ensemble, Sarah Nabulsi, Burikes, Ismail Asaad, Rachel Teferet, Mare Berger, Michel Moushabeck, Kaia Jackson*, more. Gaza Benefit. \$ 6 p.m.

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

Roos-Rhode House, Hampshire College: *Knitting, Blandest, Rednave, Pearl Sugar*. \$ 7 p.m.

Space Ballroom, Hamden, CT: *Six Organs of Admittance, Tashi Dorji*. \$ 8 p.m.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11

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

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12

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

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Falltown String Band*. No cover. 8 p.m.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Saliba, Two Wrong Turns, Clancy*

Conlin & Wallball. \$ 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Bread & Puppet: The Possibilitarian Imperative Everything Show & Gray Lady Cantata #9*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

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

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

People's Pint, Greenfield: *Looky Here's 3rd Annual Gala*. \$ 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Apes of State, Rent Strike*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

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

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

EXHIBITS

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

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

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *A First-Class Machine Shop*, local history exhibit with images, text, maps, and artifacts in collaboration with the Museum of Our Industrial Heritage, through December 1. Opening reception for a new hallway exhibit, *Deep Roots: A History of Agriculture in the Connecticut River*, this Saturday, November 9 at 1:30 p.m.

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

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Oh Beautiful Glass*, annual glass exhibit curated by Sally Prasch, showing a variety of styles from a diverse group of local artists.

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

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

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *World on Fire*, art and installation by Greenfield self-taught artist JJ

White, and *Community Art Exhibit*, both through December.

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

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

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Keith Hollingworth & Ron Maggio*, new works on view through November 30. Reception tonight, Thursday, November 7, from 5 to 8 p.m.

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. Reception this Sunday, November 10 at 2 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Lisa Beskin: Photography*, photos of ice, and *Anita Hunt, (Re) Imaginings*, collages made from hand-printed papers, through December 31 with a reception this Saturday, November 9, from 2 to 4 p.m.

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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satisfactory about the swing of the maul overhead, aiming it just right, and having the maple or oak split evenly into twin pieces that fall to the sides of the chopping block. Plus there's the exhilaration of physical labor and heat generated by the effort.

Old-timers say wood heats you twice, splitting it and then burning it. As for me, it heats me more like multiple times over, given the limbing, bucking, sawing, and moving that goes into the whole process.

While building my annual pile for use two years hence, I get fancy. I build myself a beehive-hut looking pile, round and about five feet tall with a 10-foot diameter. It becomes a two-year home for chipmunks, garter snakes, woolly bears, and all manner of other creatures.

On the warm days of autumn, the snakes are coiled on the warming wood. They watch me unconcerned through seemingly contented cat's eyes while I contemplate my work of art, knowing that soon I will have to take it apart.

Ah, the image of a man and his woodpile is a beautiful thing. "Every man looks at his woodpile with a kind of affection..." (Henry David Thoreau).

For sure, the woodpile is a reassuring presence. It's one of those signposts or benchmarks of the cycle of the years. A woodpile symbolizes a job that is never done, because we build it up in order to tear it down.

We have to build a new one once we pull down the old one, which will in turn be torn down like the one before. Over the years the

woodpile connects us with the season's cycles, each one lasting a year or two before it joins its kin, much like the numbered years that flow on into the future, leaving others behind, consigned to memory.

So I'm taking 2022 apart, saving shed snakeskins, rescuing woolly bears as I trundle off endless wheelbarrowsful of wood to the shed on the back porch, a few feet from the kitchen door and the ultimate destination, the old Glenwood C.

That wood will generate heat for the coming winter that will cook savory stews, maybe a *boeuf bourguignon*, a roast, a *pot-au-feu*, or *galettes* for Candlemas Day and Mardi Gras. It'll warm my feet pressed against the oven door, and dry mittens and hats on a snowy day. Time was when the cat of the house would lounge under the stove, limp with heat and pleasure.

But before it makes it into the stove, that woodpile reconstitutes itself in the shed near the door and becomes my winter writer's workshop. I make sure I leave room for a nook to fit my writer's Adirondack chair, where I will soon begin my winter's work of keeping the weather company and charting the sun's progression along the eastern rim of my valley, snug against the sun-warmed stacks of wood.

And this week, back on the low hill where my great-grandfather's long-gone 1880s barn stood, a new pile will rise, earmarked for the winter of 2026 and '27, renewing the circle game of the seasons.

For sure, a man and his woodpile is a beautiful thing!

TV REVIEW

Last Days of the Space Age (Disney/Hulu)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I saw the trailer for a new TV series that Jesse Spencer is going to be in and decided I was interested in looking into it. It showed up on the Hulu streaming service on October 2.

Last Days of the Space Age involves three families in Australia during the '70s, around the time the Skylab space station crashed. I understand that this was a real-life event that happened in Australia. Other events were going on at the time, like a power outage problem, so if that was also part of the history, they did a good job of getting all of it right.

In this show Jesse Spencer uses his real Australian accent and plays Tony Bissett, the husband in one of the families in the area, who along with others is on strike from the power company he works for. His family is feeling the financial pressure of this strike. His wife Judy, played by Radha Mitchell, has to deal with their TV being repossessed during a party, and their mortgage coming into play. The family also has two very different daughters. One is quite interested in going into space, and the other would rather surf in the ocean.

One of the other families featured in the show connects to them through their son being a good friend to one of the daughters. Besides the financial pressure they are under, Judy is almost seriously hurt by a brick from one of Tony's fellow strikers. Tony points out



to his friends that "we are all in this together," but that kind of change is because there is a good deal of financial pressure going on here. Judy is, at the very least, worried.

This was all going on before the crash of Skylab. I don't really know much else about what will unfold here, but needless to say, this guy's marriage is getting strained. (I will give you a little hint as to what changes in connection with his wife and being "in this together": she gets in the middle of this strike, and not on the side her husband is on.) A third family gets involved when a woman's grandson stays with her for a while.

I also believe that maybe by the end of this season we will witness the crash of the space station. It just makes sense with this series to show it on screen. It doesn't look like this is going to be a bad TV series to watch!

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sawmill River 10K Run

MONTAGUE CENTER – Registration for the annual Sawmill River 10K has begun! The Sawmill Run is scheduled for Wednesday, January 1, 2025 in Montague Center.

The road race begins promptly at 10 a.m. near the Village Common on Main Street. Race day registration will begin at 9 a.m. at the Montague Common Hall at 34 Main Street.

Divisions include *Youth*, 17 years and under; *Open*, 18 to 39 years, *Master*, 40 to 49 years, *Senior*, 50 to 59 years, and *Senior+*,

60 years and up. The entry fee is \$30 if paid by noon on December 31, or \$40 thereafter. Hot and cold refreshments will be provided.

This event benefits the Montague parks and recreation department (MPRD)'s Sponsor-A-Child scholarship program.

Online registration is available at www.runreg.com/sawmill-river-10k-run, or by logging on to www.montagueparksrec.com or calling MPRD at (413) 863-3216 to receive a registration form and additional information.

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