

# The Montague Reporter

Year 23 – No. 2

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editor@montaguereporter.org

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

montaguereporter.org

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

## Town Officials: 'No Proposal' For Housing Yet On Table

By GEORGE BRACE

Leverett's selectboard met jointly with the planning board on Tuesday to discuss several topics related to the proposal to build a major housing development on the Kittredge estate on Juggler Meadow Road. Members responded to ideas presented at the previous selectboard meeting, commented on residents' feedback, and sought to clarify the planning board's role in addressing the project.

Approximately 150 residents had attended the November 19 meeting to hear and respond to an outline of a proposal from developer Joshua Wallack to build either 48 or 150 housing units, restricted to owners 55 and older, on the Leverett portion of the former estate of Yankee Candle founder Michael Kittredge, with an additional 250 units to be built on the Amherst side of the land.

A quarter of the units would be sold as "affordable" housing, which would allow the developer to bypass Leverett zoning approval on the 48-unit proposal, as the town falls below the state's minimum affordable housing quota.

Along with residents' sentiments – largely negative – towards the proposal, a variety of avenues to give the town more influence over a potential project were brought up at that meeting, including creating a zoning district overlay, working  
see LEVERETT page A7

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

## Selectboard Will Bring Up Hum Problem With Erving

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard spent the longest part of their November 20 open meeting talking with citizens Sam Birch and Nina Keller about the hum that some residents have been hearing. At the end of the meeting they went into an executive session with members of the citizens' group No Assault and Batteries.

Late this summer some Wendell residents started writing on the townwide email listserv about an ambient hum that they said had begun intruding on their lives. Birch dated September 19 as the first time he heard it. It is said to come and go, and to range in pitch from about 480 to 520 hertz – a high C, as described by Birch.

A number of people attributed the hum to the Erving paper mill, but a paper mill spokesperson told the Montague Reporter in October that the sudden onset of the hum and its variation both indicate its source is not the mill, as the mill's operations have not recently changed.

At the November 20 meeting Birch said he believes what residents have heard is consistent with  
see WENDELL page A5

## MOST WONDERFUL TIME



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

Feathery flakes descended on Turners Falls overnight as we assembled this edition, and by morning the village streets, alleys, and sidewalks were coated in scenic heavy slush. Above: the 3 a.m. scene at the old Starbuck block on Avenue A, currently under renovation, with lampposts decorated in advance of next Friday's "It's A Wonderful Night" holiday event.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## More Staffing Sought to Deal With Markets, Aging, Burial

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard made significant progress at its November 25 and December 2 meetings preparing for next year's budget, which will be voted at the annual town meeting in May. The process began with departments requesting additional staffing

Cemetery commission chair Judith Lorei came before the board on December 2 with a proposal to change the sexton position, which is currently paid on a per-burial basis, to one funded by an annual stipend. The board agreed to send the idea on to the finance committee for consideration, but the discussion raised the question of whether private cemeteries in town – particularly those not affiliated with religious institutions – are sustainable.

Lorei, who attended the meeting with cemetery sexton Amber Korby, said that the plan approved last spring by town meeting to pay a per-burial fee was not adequate, "because of the remarkable work that [Korby] is doing, and the time she puts into everything she does." She added that there was a big increase in burials this year, particularly at Highland Cemetery, which became public in 2021 and where a "green burial" area has since been established in the woods behind the main cemetery.

Lorei said the stipend would increase the cost of the position from \$2,000 to \$4,032 per year, and could be funded within the cemetery commission's budget by increasing the price of burials. Written material in the agenda packet explained that this would cover 144 hours at \$28 per hour.

In response to a question from selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, Lorei said the commission's entire annual budget was approximately \$32,000, and that this year it "brought in \$44,000 just through plot sales," primarily in the new green burial ground. Korby said that about a third of the green burial area has already "sold out."

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell asked if the fees for Montague residents were the same as those for non-residents. Korby said access to the green burial area is \$700 for residents and \$1,000 for non-residents, while plots in the cemetery's main section cost \$550 across the board. The burial fee, she said, could be increased from \$100 to \$150.

Kuklewicz said he believed the proposal was "sustainable." Member Matt Lord asked for more specifics about what the additional hours would be for.

"It's paperwork, it's deeds, it's back and forth with the funeral directors," Lorei said. "Sometimes it's very light, and sometimes it can take hours."

see MONTAGUE page A6

## New Health Center Opens to Patients

By BEN GAGNON

MONTAGUE CITY – Opening a new medical center in Montague will mean a 50% increase in exam rooms and a 50% increase in patients over the next two years, according to Allison Van der Velden, chief executive officer of the Community Health Center of Franklin County (CHCFC).

Local and state politicians were on hand last week for the grand opening of the new 10,000-square-foot medical center at 8 Burnham Street, returning health care to the neighborhood just a year after the nearby Farren Care Center was demolished.

The renovation required to open the new medical center was accomplished with approximately \$300,000 from the state Executive



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

Staff member Carole works the check-in desk at the newly renovated location.

Office of Health and Human Services and \$400,000 from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, which also funds

about 15% of the CHCFC's annual operating budget.

"We were busting at the seams in  
see HEALTH page A5

## High School Sports: Gridiron Goodbyes

By MATT ROBINSON



TRACEY SABOLEVSKI PHOTO

Franklin County Tech's Tyler Yetter hands the ball off to Josiah Little during last Thursday's holiday matchup against Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School.

TURNERS FALLS – Two final football games were played last week involving Turners Falls teams: a Turners Falls High School alumni flag football game, and the annual Turkey Day rivalry matchup between Franklin County Tech and Smith Vocational.

White 41 – Blue 31

On Monday, November 25 the second annual Blue and White alumni flag football game was held at Turners Falls High School. The atmosphere at the game mirrored the old Turners/Greenfield Thanksgiving games; folks who hadn't seen each other for years were hugging and catching up.

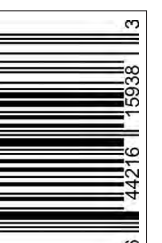
And the game itself was fun. Fun, but competitive.

All joking aside, both teams tried their utmost to win the game, and it came down to the final minutes. With Blue leading 31-29, Cameron Johnson picked off a pass and ran it all the way to the end zone, giving White a 35-31 lead. On Blue's last possession, Noah Kolodziej nabbed another interception and scooted all

see SPORTS page A4

### They've All Come to Look For America

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# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

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In the form of a fundraiser for  
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**SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2025 - 1 TO 4 P.M.**

At the Great Hall of the  
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2 Avenue A, Turners Falls MA 01376

Family, Friends, Fellow Poets, Artists, Collaborators,  
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and dreams at this event!

### TO JOIN THE PROGRAM OF SPEAKERS

Please contact: Sarah Pruitt at sarahpruitt58@gmail.com  
or Jessica Pruitt at jesprui@gmail.com.

## Morbid Symptoms, Not Recommended

As of press time Thursday morning a manhunt is reportedly still underway to find the gunman who carried out a brazen assassination of a top health insurance CEO, Brian Thompson, in midtown Manhattan.

The shooter's motive is officially unknown, but authorities have disclosed to the public that the casings from the three shells the man fired had words written on them: "Deny," "Defend," and "Depose." This appears to be a reference to the insurance industry motto, "Delay, Deny, Defend," which gets to the root of a very large problem: These companies profit by obstructing the funding of necessary patient care.

On Wednesday graphs were flying around the internet of claim denial rates by company. The industry average is 16% denial. Atop the chart at a whopping 32% is United Healthcare, the particular company of which the victim was CEO.

There is not much overt political violence in the United States these days – this summer's assassination attempts on Donald Trump were a shocking outlier, but then

again, the president-elect is seen as breaking the mold so much that his supporters often troll his opponents by accusing them of "Trump derangement syndrome."

An assassination of a CEO, a captain of industry who is not otherwise a major public figure, crosses a different threshold.

Nearly as remarkable as the murder (and, thus far, the assailant's escape) has been the popular response online – particularly, but not entirely, from younger Americans. Social media was awash this week with crass remarks, jokes, and memes suggesting support for the act – or at least a denial of sympathy for the victim – and the ratios indicated this was a surprisingly popular stance that cut across divisions of party affiliation.

In the wake of their loss this November, many Democratic strategists and pundits have been calling for the party to turn its focus toward economic issues, shore up its eroded working-class base. This week's events suggest that not everyone is going to wait for them to follow through on that.



Singer-songwriter Jenny Burtis performs with Klondike Koehler on bass at a recent Monday evening open mic at the Rendezvous in Turners Falls.

## Letters to the Editors

### Grandson Welcomed

We have all seen images of the impact of Hurricane Helene. Our daughter, Jenna, and 9-year-old grandson, Jack, live in Asheville. They were spared flooding but lost power and water.

Jenna decided to come to Montague, arriving tired, in shock, but in good spirits. Jenna registered Jack for school – third grade at Sheffield Elementary.

We had mixed feelings about a brand-new school. Jack was nervous and excited. From the first call to Deb Morse, Registrar, we experienced kindness and compassion. Vice Principal Kristen Dietz took us on a tour beginning in the foyer where Jack's eyes immediately lit up as he saw the "book vending machine" with his favorite titles. This is given as an incentive and encourages positive social engagement. We went to Jack's classroom and were warmly welcomed by his teacher, Shelly Thurston, and some of the students.

This is how it was his entire experience at Sheffield. He woke up excited about each day. We attended evening activities, too. You would

### Big Fan

The November 21 article about Carolyn Clark and her cartoon strip was a delight. I look for Thelma, Harry, and Tank every week, and always appreciate the gentle humor and the psychological wisdom, each a rarity these days.

Anne Bent  
Montague Center

think it was enough for the teachers and staff to have an 8-hour day (at least), but they were also energetic and engaged at night, too!

Jack is back home, but his teacher suggested they become pen pals. Hopefully, Jack and his classmates will stay connected through time-honored letter writing.

This experience will shine in Jack's memory as a time of bravery and compassion during a difficult time. Thank you, Sheffield Elementary, for your kindness and support. We are so grateful!

With Gratitude,

Jackie Humphreys  
Montague

### Appreciates Theater

A huge shout out to Greenfield Garden Cinemas, namely Isaac Mass – apologies to his wife, unaware of her involvement – for all they have brought to the historic venue as well as what is being brought to us day to day, week to week, month to month. Outstanding!

The lobby is festively decorated for the holiday season.

Speaking of "the reason for the season," all Christians have a spiritual mandate to see *Bonhoeffer*. Faithfully consider...

Mary Kay Mattiace  
Montague City

### Loved Cartoonist Profile

Thank you ever so much for the November 21 cover story about Carolyn Clark and her "Over the Hill" cartoon. While I appreciate the news stories and opinion pieces in the *Montague Reporter*, the "Over the Hill" cartoon is my absolute favorite item in the paper!

Over the years I have wondered who the creator Carolyn Clark is and how she gets her ideas for the weekly snippet of dialogue between Thelma and Harry. This imaginary couple has clearly been together for some time as they are so comfortable sharing what they're thinking with each other and are familiar and okay with each other's personalities and pet peeves.

Yes, the dialogue carries the strip – and – the simple but slight changes in Thelma's expressions convey a

real-time conversation so well. I don't remember ever seeing Harry in the strip, just his voice, so he maintains the status of mystery man.

Bella Levavi, thank you for interviewing Ms. Clark. I enjoyed learning about her life and inspirations.

Is there any chance of gathering each and every "Over the Hill" strip from over the years to put into a book? I think this would make a great fundraiser – and I would love revisiting Thelma and Harry's take on the world and our part in it.

And thank you Carolyn for all that you have done and still do to support the *Montague Reporter*!

All the best,

Maryanne Gallagher  
Gill

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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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Montague Center.

The program includes a “History of the Grange” talk by Will Quale at 5 p.m., a community potluck at 6 p.m., and a contra dance at 7 p.m. Music will be by All Over the Map with calling by Steve Howland. The event is free.

Safe Passage’s 21st Annual **Hot Chocolate Run** is scheduled for this Sunday, December 8 in Northampton. The organization addresses domestic violence in Hampshire County with counseling, advocacy, legal services, children’s counseling, and community engagement. The Run provides important fundraising for these initiatives, and last year nearly 5,500 participants raised over \$750,000. The run starts at 8 a.m. and runners can register at [hotchocolaterun.com](http://hotchocolaterun.com). Contact [hotchocolaterun@safepass.org](mailto:hotchocolaterun@safepass.org) with any questions.

This Sunday, December 8 at 1 p.m., **Father Stanley Aksamit** will give a book signing and author talk at Our Lady of Peace Church on Seventh Street in Turners Falls.

His book, *Dying Wishes: Fullness of Life*, uses scripture, homily, and the power of story to explore current world events and issues that divide both the church and the larger society. The book, now available on Amazon, will be offered at 25% off at the event.

Get in the holiday mood with the **Franklin County Community Chorus** winter concert at 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 8 at Greenfield High School. More than 60 voices will sing holiday classics, pop and show tunes, and even an ancient Gregorian chant. Tickets at the door are \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors and children under 12.

Greenfield Community College is holding a **Senior Resource Fair** next Tuesday, December 10, from 12 to 2 p.m. Vendors will be there from organizations offering resources for older adults to enhance the quality of their lives. If you are looking to volunteer, get fit, meet new people, or learn about opportunities for life-long learning, there will be something there for you. Registration at [engage.gcc.mass.edu](http://engage.gcc.mass.edu) is not required, but encouraged. Refreshments will be provided.

**Montague Villages** will hold a Meet and Greet next Tuesday, December 10 from 3 to 4 p.m. at the Millers Falls branch library. If you are curious about giving or receiving services, get your questions answered by representatives from the group.

The Brick House is hosting a **Community Pot Luck** from 5 to 7 p.m. next Wednesday, December 11. Bring a favorite winter holiday dish to share if you can. The Brick House is located at 24 Third Street in Turners Falls. To register or for any questions contact [slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org](mailto:slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org) or (413) 800-2496.

Need a refresher on the current **best COVID mitigation practices** – it’s not just masks – or want a place to talk about the ongoing pandemic? A COVID Safety Workshop will take place Wednesday, December 11 at 6 p.m. at 104

Fourth Street in Turners Falls.

There will be a presentation on methods of mitigating transmission and up-to-date knowledge on current strains, followed by discussion. KN95 masks or better are required, and will be provided if you can’t bring your own.

Wendell author **Kai Carol Jud** will read from and discuss her memoir *Life of Kai, a memoir of awakening* next Thursday, December 12, at 7 p.m. at the New Salem Public Library and via Zoom.

An old-fashioned love story and a practical map for spiritual growth, *Life of Kai* takes the reader on a spirited journey through shamanic ceremonies, meetings with remarkable people, and adventures in nature, love, death, grief, and renewal. The event is free and Jud will have copies for purchase. Find a Zoom link at [ns-friendslibrary.weebly.com](http://ns-friendslibrary.weebly.com).

**It’s A Wonderful Night** returns to downtown Turners Falls next Friday, December 13 from 4 to 8 p.m. Shops will stay open downtown until 8 p.m., and Welcome Yule plays at the Shea Theater with songs, stories, dances, and music.

At 6:30 p.m., Santa will arrive at Spinner Park on the corner of Avenue A and Fourth Street to collect the letters from the magic mailbox and negotiate with potential recipients of presents.

You can drop in at the Discovery Center that evening to craft a bird feeder, as well Saturday morning from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All ages are welcome.

The classic movie *It’s A Wonderful Life* will be screened on a loop from 5 to 9 p.m. at Great Falls Harvest, with free roasted chestnuts. The Brick House and Hired Hand Signs will be holding open houses on Third Street, and across the street, Dream House will be open with small plates and drinks plus live music.

Village of Light Ashram in Leverett sent us an announcement about their **New Earth Briefings**, held the second Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at the ashram and online, each featuring a talk by their spiritual leader GurujiMa followed by a discussion. Find out more at [lightomega.org](http://lightomega.org).

The **Pioneer Valley Symphony** Orchestra, Chorus, and Youth Orchestra unite on one stage for the Home Alone! Annual Holiday Pops Concert on December 14 at 4 p.m. Held at the Greenfield High School, the 150 musicians will present new arrangements of holiday favorites and music from the classic *Home Alone* movie. Pre-show festivities start at 3 p.m. Tickets are sliding scale, and students and youth are only \$5; reserve yours at [pvsoc.org/tickets](http://pvsoc.org/tickets).

Matthew Thornton will be the featured performer at the next **Montague Common Hall Open Mic** next Saturday, December 14, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Thornton, a British/American multi-instrumentalist, writes songs that are described as “groovy, unique and compelling.” He uses a cello which he plays with looping and effects pedals, and also guitar and piano. The open mic follows.

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

Memorial Hall Theater  
**POTHOLE PICTURES**  
Dec 6 & 7 at 7:30 p.m. \$6  
**A FACE IN THE CROWD**  
Andy Griffith stars as a charming and manipulative con artist/political influencer.  
Music 7 p.m. Friday, Rich Remsburg & Mark Mulherrin; Saturday, Aaron Bilodeau  
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**MARKETS**  
★ Jinglefest Holiday Market at The Pushkin Building 12/6-12/8  
★ "That's a Wrap!" Last Chance Makers market at Looky Here 12/18-20 12-5pm, 12/21 12-3pm  
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**Compiled by NINA ROSSI**

The Leverett Library wants folks to know that after almost 19 years at the library, **Sue LaClaire has retired** to spend more time with her family. “We are so grateful for her many years as the heart of our library and community,” they write, “and wish her all the best!” Stop by the library to leave Sue a little wish of your own, and they will pass your messages along to her.

The **Wendell Historical Society Museum Store** is offering new items for sale for the holidays.

Fresh fruit pies by Diemand Farm are available for pickup on December 23 for \$23 each. Choose from apple, blueberry, and strawberry rhubarb.

They also offer t-shirts, with a drawing of the old store and post office by Susan Von Ranson that originally ran in the *Wendell Post* back in the 1980s, as well as hats, aprons, books, visual art, and music. Find the Museum Store online at [wendellhistoricalsociety.org](http://wendellhistoricalsociety.org).

Beautiful Disasters is a **storytelling open mic and potluck** the first Thursday of every month at the LAVA Center in Greenfield, hosted by Trouble Mandeson and Nisse Greenberg. Doors open at 6 p.m. tonight, December 5, with food followed by storytelling at 7 p.m.

The hosts will share stories about “fashion disasters,” and attendees are invited to share their own. This is a pay-what-you-want event.

It’s another **First Friday** tomorrow, December 6, in downtown Turners Falls. Shops will stay open late, and from 5 to 8 p.m. there will be a Gumball Machine Takeover at Sadie’s Bikes, featuring artwork by Amy Chilton and Sam Scram.

Holyoke Hummus Company offers a tasting at the Avenue A Market, and DJ Overtime will be spinning at the Music Connection.

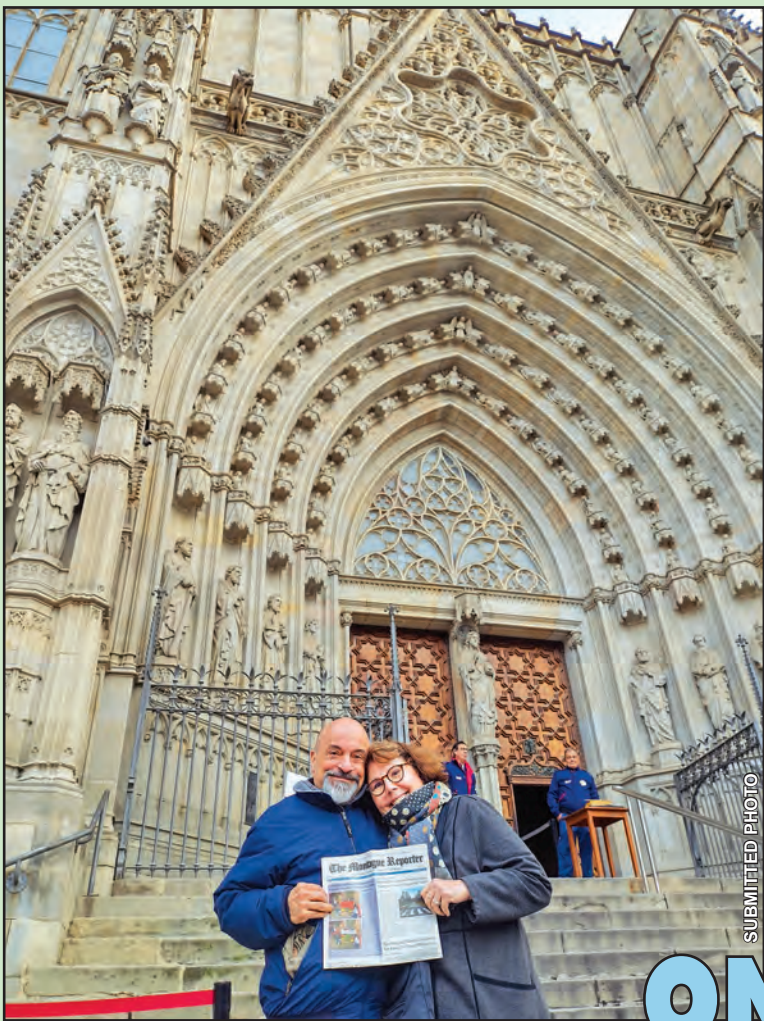
Head to the **St. Nicholas Bazaar** at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church on K Street in Turners Falls this Saturday, December 7 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. for tasty Polish specialties, raffles, and arts and crafts.

There will be several kinds of fruit *babkas*, rye breads, kielbasa, poppy seed bread, Polish Angel Wings, fruit-filled donuts called *paczki*, and the national dish of Poland, *bigos*, a hunter’s stew. The St. Hyacinth Pierogi makers will offer cheese, sauerkraut, and potato and cheese *pierogi*, and a luncheon will be available for purchase.

**Court Dorsey** will read this Saturday, December 7 at 3:30 p.m. at the Wendell Meetinghouse from his new collection of mystical poems, *Tiger Stripes: Poems of Shadow and Light*, published locally by Human Error Publishing. Reception and book signing afterwards.

The year-long “Food, Farms, and Factories” series concludes this Saturday, December 7 with a **Grange Celebration** at the former Grange, now Common Hall, in

**MONTAGUE REPORTER**



Michael Marcotrigiano (left) and Susan Dorais of Montague Center brought our October 31 edition to the Barcelona Cathedral on their recent trip to Spain.

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

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**BOOK LAUNCH**  
IMPOSSIBLE THINGS by Miller Oberman w/ Cam Awkward-Rich SUN. DEC 1 • 3PM  
**CONVERSATION & BOOK SIGNING**  
MARGOT DOUAIHY & MAGGIE THRASH  
READING BETWEEN THE LINES: QUEER PERSPECTIVES IN MYSTERY SUN. DEC 8 • 3 PM  
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## AT LARGE

## Notorious Statue Got Kicked... To Route 66

By CHIP AINSWORTH

**NORTHFIELD** – When I was about eight years old, my mother packed me and my friends in the car for a ride up the Mohawk Trail. The 63-mile stretch of road from Millers Falls to the New York border near Williamstown had opened in 1914, and had been widened in 1951.

Named for the trade route – and occasional warpath – used by the Pocumtuck and Mohawk tribes in the 17th century, it became New England's first scenic tourist route. Its ubiquitous gift shops are stocked with souvenirs that reflect its Native American legacy.

We stopped at a place that sold moccasins, beaded purses, and toy tomahawks, but what caught my attention was a large white crate outside the store with a sign that said *Baby Rattlers*.

I ran over and looked inside, and was shocked by what I saw. Rather than peering at dozens of tiny, slithering serpents crawling over each other, the bottom of the box was covered with... baby rattles.

A while ago I drove past where I'd been pranked and realized that the 20-foot tall "Indian" statue that had greeted travelers for decades was gone. It was a shock, considering that as *Yankee Magazine* once reported, Big Indian "would become a prime photo-op for thousands of camera-toting tourists."

The statue was commissioned by Greenfield's Kim Estes, who owned The Big Indian Shop. "He always wore a cowboy hat," Buckland's Paul Amstein said of Estes. "He looked like a cowboy, and he married a girl from Charlemont and they lived in the Greenfield Meadows. He drove a pickup truck and had a horseshoe business out of the back."

Estes, who died five years ago, graduated from Greenfield High School in 1959, studied farrier training at Oregon State University, and served in the US Army's 104th Infantry Division.

According to his obituary, Estes was the Draft Horse Superintendent at the Franklin County Fair for 25 years, and a member of the Mohawk Trail Business Association. His obit mentioned that he and his wife Joan made frequent trips to horse auctions in Pennsylvania's Amish country.

It was probably during one of these trips that he saw the 15-foot statue of a bearded Amish man outside Dinn's Diner in Denver, Pennsylvania, or the power-lifter holding a barbell aloft at York Barbell, and decided to have his own larger than life roadside attraction.

Rodman Shutt had created at least two other Indian statues, one in Freeport, Maine, and the other in Massapequa, New York. According to the *TripAdvisor* website, Big Chief Lewis is a "tribute to American Indian history on Long Island."



The 20-foot-tall statue was moved from Route 2 in Massachusetts to Route 66 in Oklahoma.

The Lancaster (Pennsylvania) *Sunday News* charted Shutt's progress creating Big Chief Lewis, reporting that "both the face and hands... were handcarved from plastic foam and the chief's 'finery' painstakingly trimmed in crushed glass and Venetian tile to simulate a beaded effect."

Big Chief Lewis holds a peace pipe. Big Indian holds a spear in his left hand, but smiles and waves with his other hand.

"Not Mohawk or Northeastern," said Joe Graveline of Northfield, who's well versed on the region's indigenous cultures. "It is a 1950s concept of all Indians, a generic one-size-fits-all image."

Big Indian debuted at Estes's Big Indian Shop in 1974 and became an instant hit for tourists and locals alike. "My oldest son loved bows and arrows and all that stuff," said Amstein. "We'd go over there probably once a week."

In 2009 Estes sold his business to Sonam Lama, who renamed it Native and Himalayan Views. When I stopped to inquire about Big Indian's whereabouts, a woman gave me Lama's business card and told me to call him.

After I left two messages, he returned my call and told me the brouhaha began two years ago when an Ashfield woman posted an online petition to take it down. "She got 1,300 signatures," said Lama. "A woman from the federal government showed up, and so did others. Some students came and threatened to burn it down."

Given the social and cultural environment, Lama had no choice. The day Big Indian left town the media treated it like it was the Berlin Wall coming down, or Lenin's statue being toppled in Red Square.

"Damn woke idiots," said Shelburne native Skip Smith, who now lives in Florida. "It pisses me off when they come knocking on the doors in Shelburne Falls. The high school had to remove an Indian Chief's mural from the gymnasium wall. It was a senior class gift to the school."

Today, Big Indian welcomes patrons to the Hi-Way Cafe on Route 66, in Vinita, Oklahoma, on the outskirts of the Osage Nation Reservation. There's a jukebox inside, and menu offerings include Homer Dee's enchiladas, guacamole burgers, and Indian tacos.

"I drive by it every day," said Norma Payne Cagle of the Vinita Area Chamber of Commerce. "I've never paid it a lot of attention, and I haven't heard any complaints about it."

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

## SPORTS from page A1

the way downfield to increase that lead to 41-31.

Madi Liimatainen and Mia Mari-gliano also scored touchdowns for White while Kainen Stevens, Brody Girard, and Jake Lavin scored touches for Blue, with two each for Stevens and Girard.

## Smith Vocational 16 – FCTS 8

On Turkey Day, the Smith Vocational Vikings outlasted the Franklin Tech Eagles 16 to 8 in a rain-splashed defensive war down in Easthampton.

The freezing rain began early in the morning, and did not let up. By halftime most of the spectators needed to go to their cars to dry out. One Tech mother reported that her son was blue after the contest.

With the rain sleeting down, the passing game was nullified, and both teams slogged down the field using running plays almost exclusively.

Smith threatened on their first possession, getting inside the five yard-line, but Franklin's goal-line defense held up and retook possession. Tech didn't try any punts – instead, they always went for it on fourth down, relying on their defense to keep the Vikes out of the end zone.

The two teams slugged it out, with neither scoring until late into the first half. With 1:39 left on the clock Smith finally hit paydirt, scoring a touchdown and then a 2-PAT.

The Vikings held that 8-0 lead until the end of the third quarter, when



Wyatt Whitman (#33) holds a lane open for Josiah Little (#20) during Tech's Turkey Day loss to Smith Vocational.

Wyatt Whitman broke loose to put the Eagles on the board and Maxon Brunette added the 2-PAT to tie it up.

The fourth quarter was a repeat of the first three, with neither team able to break the tie. Throughout the fourth, the soaking-wet flagmen stated vocally that they hoped the game wouldn't go into overtime. The Eagles had one last chance to win the game, but were stopped on fourth down with 17 seconds left in regulation.

On their first possession of over-

time, the Vikings threw a rare pass which earned them the lead. Franklin tried to tie it up when they got the ball but were stopped on fourth down, giving victory to the Vikes.

Under center for Tech, Tyler Yetter completed one pass for one yard, and ran for 11. On defense, he recovered a fumble. Hunter Donahue caught that pass and made 10 tackles on defense.

Josiah Little rushed for 90 yards, Whitman had 57, and Nathan Sabolevski ran 9. Whitman

scored Franklin's touchdown and caused a fumble; Brunette scored the extra point.

Joseph Disciullo and Justin Lent returned punts 50 yards and 14 yards, Travis Eastman led the team with 13 tackles, and Zaydrien Alamed recovered a fumble.

The holiday game loss concludes a very successful season for the Football Eagles. It also marks the end of the fall high school sports season.

See you in the winter...



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**HEALTH** from page A1

Greenfield,” said Van der Velden, referring to the main office of CHCFC at 102 Main Street in Greenfield. “This is a beautiful facility in Montague, and will give us the room we need to provide primary care and behavioral health services.” Dental services will remain only in Greenfield.

Van der Velden said CHCFC treated more than 8,000 patients in 2023, but she expects the new facility will allow that number to reach 10,000 in 2025 and 12,000 in 2026, a 50% increase, while full-time staff will expand from about 135 to 150.

She also said she looks forward to opening a pharmacy at the CHCFC medical center in Orange, which will provide home delivery service to patients in Greenfield and Montague starting in January.

Van der Velden noted that CHCFC began operations at the site of Farren Memorial Hospital in 1997, adding that the new medical center on Burnham Street “is kind of

a coming home, just up the street from the original office.” CHCFC relocated to Cherry Rum Plaza on Bernardston Road in Greenfield in 2018 before moving to the current location on Main Street.

“With the cramped conditions we’ve been working in, it’s been a real challenge to maintain our mission of being very patient-centered while also fostering a friendly workplace culture,” said Van der Velden. “We’re smaller than a hospital, and we want to be more responsive to our patients and the needs of our employees.”

The standard patient visit in a big hospital environment is 15 to 30 minutes, said Van der Velden, but CHCFC schedules appointments for 20 to 40 minutes.

“More interpersonal time means we can discover more in-depth issues that affect health, such as housing problems, fuel assistance, transportation needs, legal services or food insecurity,” she said, noting that CHCFC prides itself on referring patients to other social service agencies

for help that can result in a more holistic approach to health care.

“We understand there are a lot of factors that contribute to overall health, so we do extra work to connect people to resources,” she said. “We have a robust relationship with other local providers.”

At the same time, Van der Velden said CHCFC wants its employees to enjoy “a more humane workplace,” including parental leave and space set aside for new mothers to “pump at work,” a service that can be better provided with the new space.

In order to qualify for federal operating funding, CHCFC is a non-profit that accepts Medicaid and Medicare as well as private insurance. The first federally-supported health centers were established at Columbia Point in Boston and in Mississippi in 1964 as part of the federal War on Poverty.

“We don’t have investors or fat cats on our board of directors,” said Van der Velden. “100% of the board is local people interested in the health of their community.” More than half is made up of patients.

“It’s a proud legacy, and the mission is still there,” said Van der Velden. “Today the demand for health care has been increasing, and by 2030 more than 30% of the population in the area will be over 65.” While the demographics of aging Baby Boomers helped drive the need for a new facility, Van der Velden said she hopes the new medical center will make an overall contribution to the town of Montague.

“We hope having more health resources will make it more attractive to live here for a younger population as well,” she said. “I always try to dispel a common misunderstanding about CHCFC: We do focus on the underrepresented, but we are everybody’s health care center. With the opening of this facility, we’re accepting new appointments, and everybody is welcome.”



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**COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY: MONTAGUE WHEAT PASTE MURALS**

RiverCulture is seeking community input for six large-scale, site-specific Wheat Paste (paper) murals to be installed in May of 2025. This project is part of a six-week New England Foundation for the Arts training called Making it Public, aimed at increasing knowledge about best practices (transparent, fair, inclusive) around the selection and installation of public art. Completion of the training came with \$15,000 for the installation of temporary public art.



The public is asked to participate in a short survey about themes for the Rail Trail and Downtown Turners Falls pairs of murals. These themes will be listed in the Call for Art and used by the applicants in their draft designs. For more information about the project and to participate in the survey, visit <https://bit.ly/491hjJe>

Questions? Contact [riverculture@montague-ma.gov](mailto:riverculture@montague-ma.gov)



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

The community health center's third location is now open in the Burnham Street building built by Connecticut River Internists and occupied from 2020 to 2022 by Baystate Health.

**WENDELL** from page A1

the sound of a compressor or an exhaust at the paper mill. He said the frequency at the mill was 430 hertz, and that he had spoken with a person familiar with outdoor sound propagation who asked not to be named, but said the variations heard by residents fit with how sound travels: it travels farther and can vary in pitch when temperatures drop, when humidity rises, or with a temperature inversion, which would keep the sound waves close to the ground.

Birch said a fix should be simple and relatively inexpensive, \$10,000 for a muffler or some baffles.

Selectboard member Gillian Budine said she has heard the hum outside her home, and thought it might be an idling train.

Finance committee member Meagan Sylvia said she has heard it as well, and it makes her want to close her window at night. She said Massachusetts has a policy about noise that rises above background noise.

Birch said the hum does not bother him, but that it drives his spouse crazy.

“I think we should reach out,” selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato said, to either the Erving selectboard or the town administrator.

Budine said she thought the conversation should start as neighbor-to-neighbor.

**Priming the Pump**

The idea of hiring a town grantwriter has come into selectboard discussions on and off, and may be moving towards action. Finance committee member Al MacIntyre said Wendell has lost out on a lot of money in grants, and

that pay for a grantwriter is often included in the grant as part of the cost of administration.

Budine said Northfield hired a grantwriter with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money, but she was not sure how that relationship is continuing.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has offered help, but selectboard members were not sure if that help was for writing grants, or the process of retaining a grantwriter.

Town coordinator Glenn Johnson-Mussad agreed to arrange a meeting with the Northfield grantwriter, FRCOG, a fin com member, and a selectboard member outside the regular meeting schedule. DiDonato agreed to represent the selectboard.

Project manager Phil Delorey offered his services if Wendell does decide to hire a grant writer, citing his experience getting grants for bridge repair and replacement and road repair and restoration.

**WRATS and Mice**

Delorey reported that Wendell received a \$150,000 grant for repair of the Farley Road bridge, with work expected to start in spring.

So far the town has received only one bid, \$25,000, for stumping the one-acre area behind WRATS already cleared for the wood bank. Delorey said he was hoping for other bids, and looking for money to fund the stumping and the capping of the former landfill.

He said a “highway” to the new locations for construction debris and metal open-top containers at the WRATS has been completed, and the containers only need to be re-

located. The change should make disposing of those materials easier and safer.

Answering a question from Budine, Delorey said he had not put a mesh over the outside vent of the meeting room heater, which mice have been using to access the building. He said he intended to do that soon, with help from citizen Stephen Broll.

**Technologies**

After discussing the town’s options of either buying a new photocopier or a five-year lease, board members agreed to purchase one with color capacity for \$4,495 from Baker Office Supplies. The service agreement adds \$0.0008 per black-and-white copy and \$0.006 per color copy, with toner and maintenance included.

Treasurer Carolyn Manley said she remembered that the present copier “came from the old building” the selectboard used to meet in, making it at least 20 years old.

Citizens have reported some trouble searching the new website, and DiDonato suggested rearranging it to make things so easy to find that no search is necessary. She suggested that the website committee create a “mock page” as a trial.

Budine said that now, a year into the new website’s operation, is a good time to assess it and make small changes as needed. She suggested asking for feedback in the upcoming newsletter and over the listserv.

Website committee member Robert Heller suggested installing a feedback button at the bottom of the website, asking users “What do you like?” and what does not work.

**Other Business**

Not sure whether they even needed to do it, the selectboard created an adjunct fin com position for member Garret Sawyer’s daughter Samara, who wants experience with finance. They then voted to appoint her.

Manley asked the selectboard to endorse a guideline from the federal Centers for Disease Control that would have town employees out with a respiratory disease return to work a day after they have no symptoms and no fever, and then stay masked for five days of work.

The board agreed to endorse that approach as “best practices,” though not a town policy, if the board of health agrees.

They board went into an executive session including members of No Assault and Batteries, with the option of returning to an open meeting after the executive session. The reasons given were “to comply with or act under the authority of any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements (approval of meeting minutes); and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.”

They returned to open session only to close the meeting.

The first Wednesday in 2025 is a holiday, New Year’s Day, and postponing that meeting one day would put it on a day Johnson-Mussad is out. Board members agreed to schedule a Zoom-only meeting for 4 p.m. on Wednesday, January 8, for timely business only.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

Korby said the green burials are “more hands-on.” “I physically go there and move the dirt out of the way,” she explained. “I hand-lower a number of people.”

Lord asked whether the sexton should be a stipended position or a town staff member, meaning paid a wage subject to longevity increases.

Lorei said this was an “interesting question.” She noted that the boards of some privately-run cemeteries in Montague had approached the commission – though “not in an official capacity” – and are “maybe needing some help from the town.”

“The people who run these cemeteries, they’re getting older, and it’s hard for them to attract new people,” she said.

Korby described a recent meeting with private cemetery board members as “a brunch, kind of a check-in.”

Kuklewicz said this was how the town took responsibility for Highland Cemetery. “Some of those cemeteries have a long history with our forefathers that founded this town,” he added.

Montague now has eight public cemeteries, including Highland, and seven private ones, according to a list Lorei sent the *Reporter*. Three of the private cemeteries, she said, are connected with active churches.

Boutwell proposed that the board “take this under advisement, and send it along to the finance committee.”

Heads nodded, and the board did not take a formal vote, but Lord said that “it will be an interesting conversation with the finance committee.”

The fin com has declared a moratorium on discussion of stipends for the next few years, but Kuklewicz said that would probably not extend to proposals for new positions.

**Helping Hands**

On November 25 the board reviewed requests from Great Falls Farmers Market manager Annie Levine and Council on Aging (COA) director Roberta Potter to add staff to their departments.

Levine’s proposal called for adding a part-time assistant manager while somewhat reducing the hours and pay of the manager. The result would be a increase in the market’s annual budget from \$5,200 to \$5,700.

“It’s too big a responsibility for one person,” Levine said. “It’s 26 weeks in a row, and there’s no one to cover if someone is sick, if there’s any life events, or anything like that.” The market currently runs every Saturday from May to October, and the assistant manager would take over one Saturday a month.

The board voted to recommend to the fin com that the manager’s stipend be reduced and a new assistant position be created.

Potter presented a request for the COA, which operates the senior center on Fifth Street in Turners Falls, not far from the farmers market. She proposed hiring an administrative assistant, who would work between 12 and 15 hours per week at the center, adding “anywhere between \$12,000 and \$19,000” to the budget, depending on how the town implements recommendations of a recent wage and classification study.

Potter said the job would be “predominantly administrative”: preparing invoices, answering the phone, working on the COA website, and possibly producing a newsletter. This would free her to help the cen-

ter’s growing constituency on their individual challenges.

“I’m finding,” Potter said, “that the need in the community for individual help for older adults is either growing, or people in the community are becoming more aware that this is the place to come when you need help.”

She mentioned her inability to use her accrued vacation time. “It’s not because I’m so wonderful,” she said. “It’s because if I’m not here, the bills don’t get done.”

Lord said he supported Potter taking her vacation time, but was concerned to hear she was “getting sucked in to” helping individuals solve their problems. He suggested delegating direct services to volunteers – finding high school students, for example, to help with seniors’ computer-related problems.

Kuklewicz said the board would move Potter’s request on to the finance committee. Heads nodded, but no formal vote was taken.

**Local Rookie**

At the request of police chief Chris Williams, the board approved a conditional offer of employment as a patrol officer to Tim Momaney, pending completion of a physical and other prerequisites for attending the policy academy, probably in Holyoke. Williams said Momaney, who is 26 years old, grew up in Turners and attended Franklin County Technical School and Norwich University.

Later in the meeting, town administrator Walter Ramsey told the board that Williams has indicated he would like to renew his three-year contract, which was due to expire on December 2. Ramsey said he wanted to “put the board on notice” that discussions with Williams had commenced, and that the process coincides with contract negotiations with the town’s police unions.

Ramsey said he hoped to bring a draft contract to an executive session the following week. “Well, the contract is expiring, so we’d better get something,” said Kuklewicz.

At the end of their December 2 meeting, the board went into an executive session to discuss a new contract with Williams.

**Federal Aid**

Assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller reviewed a draft community involvement plan (CIP) on November 25 for the planned demolition of the Strathmore mill complex, as required under the federal grant which will partially fund the project.

Nolan-Zeller’s presentation, and the draft in the agenda packet, consisted almost entirely of a lengthy history of the complex and the eventual decision to tear it down and replace it with a riverfront park. Sections concerning community input were all marked “To be completed”.

“It’s not a finalized document at all,” Nolan-Zeller said when asked about the absence of a plan. “Once it’s ready in a more substantive form – it will still be a draft, initially, but it will contain specific provisions regarding how community involvement is going to take place.”

Nolan-Zeller also reviewed a number of contracts funded by federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money, which must be signed and endorsed by the selectboard before the end of the calendar year, as required by the federal Treasury Department.

On December 2 the board approved two agreements to fund proj-

**STILL MORE NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD****Tax Classification a ‘Rite of Passage’ in Montague**

By JEFF SINGLETON

**TURNERS FALLS** – “It’s going to be hard to explain to people that we’re trying, but that is what we can do,” Montague selectboard member Matt Lord said at the conclusion of the board’s annual tax classification hearing on Monday, November 25.

In the classification, a complex and at times confusing process, the town determines the relative contribution of residential, as opposed to commercial, industrial, and personal (CIP), taxes that will be used to finance the current year’s budget.

The town’s director of assessing Karen Tonelli, who led the discussion, called the process a “rite of passage.” The hearing was also attended by the board of assessors.

Tonelli began the hearing by noting that the total amount of property taxation, or “levy,” required to meet the budget approved at last spring’s town meeting was \$22,476,888, an increase of 2.6% over the previous year. That must be raised from the total property valuation in town, which she said now exceeds a billion dollars.

“As everyone is aware,” she said, “that follows the real estate trends.” Tonelli later told the *Reporter* the total assessed valuation stands at \$1,250,841,802, an increase of 5.4% over the previous year.

Tonelli then presented a chart showing potential “splits” between residential and CIP taxation. The top line showed the results for a “flat rate,” a single rate for all property. Under this scenario homeowners would fund 69.53% of the levy and the three categories of CIP a total of 30.47%. This flat rate would be estimated at \$17.97 per thousand dollars in valuation.

She clarified that the board was not locking in the

tax rate itself, because the state Department of Revenue “may do some rounding and change the rate a little bit.”

From there, the chart showed the impact on the two tax rates of incrementally shifting a higher proportion of the levy onto CIP. Tonelli highlighted a split similar to that adopted last year, with 59.17% falling on residential property, and proposed keeping it there. This would result in estimated rates of \$15.29 for residential property and \$24.08 for CIP.

Town administrator Walter Ramsey, however, noting this would mean an average residential tax bill increase of just over 7%, suggested the board consider a larger shift to CIP.

Lord, on the other hand, said that many of the town’s commercial taxpayers were small businesses. “I think it is very important that we maintain a mix of commercial, and even the light industrial, that we have here in Montague,” he said. “I want us to be a business-friendly community.”

In the end the board voted for a small additional share of the levy to be paid by CIP, lowering the estimated residential rate to \$15.21 and raising the CIP to \$24.26. By Tonelli’s calculations, this would mean the average single-family homeowner’s bill will increase by \$279, rather than the \$303 in her original proposal.

After setting the tax split, the board voted against adopting three exemptions, as it does each year. An open space discount was ruled out because the town has no qualifying properties. A discount for homeowner-occupied residences was skipped, as it is designed to benefit municipalities with a large number of vacation homes. And a discount for properties housing small commercial businesses, Tonelli said, would primarily benefit their landlords.

ects at the Clean Water Facility – upgrades to the septage receiving station, and a contingency for the new screw pumps – with ARPA funds.

**Accountant’s Tools**

At the request of town accountant Angelica Desroches, the board voted to split the town’s payroll and financial services software between two new companies. Both functions are currently provided by software costing \$5,800 per year from Business Management Services, which was recently acquired by a company called gWorks.

Desroches proposed using Harpers Payroll Services, Inc. as the vendor for payroll and Vadar Systems for financial services.

Harpers, she said, specializes in handling payroll and performs some functions of a human resources office, which the town does not have, and Vadar is already being used by the treasurer’s office, as well as by the assessors though not for assessing. She said she would seek a state Community Compact grant, similar to one the treasurer’s office received, to help fund the purchase.

The board voted to “move forward” with the Vadar software, and authorized Desroches to apply for a Community Compact grant which would allow the town to pay nearly half the cost of a \$61,293 six-year contract in the first year. The purchase would still need to be approved by the finance committee and town meeting.

The board also voted to pay Harpers \$500 to begin installing new payroll software, as it would need to be up and running by the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1. Desroches said that if town meeting does not approve the contract, “they just disappear – hey get the 500 bucks, and they’re done.”

**The Select Domain**

Ramsey said all FY’26 department budget requests are due next Monday. He reviewed the select-

board office’s budget, as well as what he called “ancillary budgets that kind of fall under the umbrella of the selectboard’s office.”

The selectboard budget, which increased significantly in recent years through adding staff such as the assistant town administrator, has stabilized at \$324,312 for FY’26, a decrease of 0.56% from the current year. The decrease is primarily caused by the retirement of former town administrator Steve Ellis.

Among the “ancillary” budgets, the town meeting budget is proposed to be level-funded, as is the budget for the town-owned Colle building. The legal services budget would see a reduction of 5.7%, due to the “winding down” of union contract negotiations, in Ramsey’s words.

The veterans services budget carries a small cushion of 2.7% as expenses are still being projected, and the working budget for general insurance from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency (MIIA) has a placeholder increase of 4.9%. The farmers market budget would increase by 9.6% to \$5,700 if the assistant manager is approved.

“Intergovernmental agreements,” which include assessments Montague pays to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, are predicted to increase by a total of 2.9%.

The largest proposed increase is in the “shared services” budget, which includes a diverse array of items ranging from supplies for the town hall employee lounge to photocopying supplies, the annual town audit, and printing the annual report. It is proposed to rise by nearly 15% to \$107,232, though nearly all of the increase would result from shifting the payroll software to this section of the town budget.

The board did not take a vote on these budgets, but Kuklewicz proposed sending them all on to the fin com, and Lord and Boutwell nodded.

Nolan-Zeller said that the dead-

line for FY’26 capital requests from departments had passed, and that the capital improvements committee will meet this month to review them. These requests total \$4.68 million, he said, “so there’s a lot of work that lies ahead in prioritizing and planning those projects.”

**Other Business**

Ramsey informed the board at the November 25 meeting that the search for an interim tree warden, following the death of former warden Mark Stevens, has been delayed pending a meeting of the tree advisory committee to consider potential candidates. The warden is currently an elected position, determined at the annual spring election, so the appointment will be temporary. Ramsey noted that the board may be considering making the position appointed.

Ramsey also reported that the town had received a letter from its insurance agency, the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency, showing no increase this coming year and a 2.5% increase in FY’27.

At the end of the December 2 meeting Ramsey announced the town’s winter overnight parking ban, which runs from 1 to 5 a.m. December through March on all streets except those in downtown Turners Falls, where parking is allowed except during declared snow emergencies.

Details, including communication about snow emergencies and where and when parking is allowed downtown, can be found on the town website under “Notices.” Ramsey said the emergencies will also be signaled by flashing blue lights on Avenue A.

Ramsey was asked if recent confusion had been resolved as to when cars parked in downtown lots during emergencies must be removed. “Tell people to go by what the sign says,” he said.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, December 9.



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**LEVERETT** from page A1

with the developer through the state's Chapter 40B "Local Initiative Program," and coordinating with the town of Amherst.

Tuesday's discussion began with the planning board rejecting the idea of pursuing an "off-cycle" \$10,000 state grant to study zoning overlay districts. Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis said she had been made aware of the possible grant by a representative of state senator Jo Comerford.

Planning board member Tim Shores said he was in favor of zoning overlays in the long term, "especially if they involved affordable housing," but said \$10,000 was "not going to do anything meaningful" with respect to zoning changes.

Even if the town created an overlay, he pointed out, state approval of a traditional Chapter 40B affordable housing application would override it.

Shores also said he was "uncomfortable" with the "off-cycle" offer of the potential grant, suggesting it had the appearance of the state exerting influence. He said that if the Kittredge estate wanted zoning changes that could be accomplished through an overlay, they should do the work of recommending the changes and the research to back up their request.

A better next step for Leverett, Shores argued, would be to coordinate a response with Amherst to promote the interests of both towns.

Planning board member Richard Nathhorst agreed, saying it was also premature to talk about an overlay affecting the Juggler Meadow Road estate. "There is no proposal for a development before us," he said, and "no identified developer, or funding."

Nathhorst cited the lack of a plan for water and sewer utilities as important missing information, and said the planning board had a lot of other work to do affecting development in Leverett before taking on the creation of an overlay district, which was described as a lengthy and complex process.

Planning board member Swan Keyes also pointed to the lack of information requested from Wallack as "not giving us enough to work with."

Any available grant money, she said, might be better used for "visioning" meetings with residents.

Keyes commented that the town didn't own the property, "so it's not our say what happens with it," but pointed out that after the initial presentation by Wallack a year ago, at which residents expressed a desire for senior housing, he came back with a senior housing proposal.

"Don't assume they're not open to our ideas," she said. "What we've seen so far is that someone wants to build a housing development."

Planning board chair Greg Tuzzolo addressed the role of his board if the town pursues a Local Initiative Program (LIP), known as a "friendly 40B" process, in which it would collaborate with developers on an affordable housing application. While planning boards have no statutory role in 40B proposals, Tuzzolo said, the Leverett board has been working under the auspices of an agreement with the selectboard with the intention of providing review, commenting, communicating with the public, and overseeing an LIP application.

He added, however, that in the opinion of the planning board Wallack's communication about the project thus far didn't qualify as an application, and there was "no specific way to engage" in the process as requested by the selectboard given the lack of information.

Tuzzolo gave traffic considerations as an example of one "potential dealbreaker" that was "completely not addressed" by the developer at the informational meeting. He said that meeting was valuable in certain ways, but not an adequate first step in an LIP process.

Members of both boards said it would be a good idea for the town to adopt a formal procedure, not specifically tailored to the Juggler Meadow Road site, for handling LIP applications.

Selectboard member Jed Proujansky said town officials were trying to meet with their counterparts in Amherst to "get alignment," and had garnered some sense of what the latter town thinks at the informational session. He estimated that three-quarters of those who spoke were "not in favor of the Kittredge

plan," but that the other quarter was in favor of "more affordable housing than was proposed, or thought about."

"A bunch of people didn't want anything," Proujansky added, which "may be a little bit unrealistic." But until the town sees more of Wallack's and Amherst's thoughts and things develop further, he said, it was "all speculation."

Member Patricia Duffy commented that the listening session was intended to build public trust that the selectboard is remaining open about the proposed development. She also commented that she didn't want Wallack to use the media to push the town into action.

Proujansky seconded Duffy's comments, saying he was a strong proponent of transparency. He added that the two boards were "a whole lot less confused than they were five months ago."

**Other Business**

The selectboard voted to purchase a replacement truck for the highway department for \$71,000, pending an opinion from the state attorney general's office that the town may reject a lower-priced bid that does not meet the advertised specifications.

The board approved hiring Thomas Aaron Hulsey to replace Sue LaClaire in a part-time position at the library. Library director Hannah Paessel said LaClaire has retired after 19 years "supporting the community" at the library, and it was a "big change."

The board decided that the police advisory committee has the appropriate members to "open" the police contract and make recommendations to the selectboard about a requested change to pay rates for police details.

The selectboard agreed to continue its recruitment drive seeking volunteers for vacant positions on town boards and committees. "The capital planning committee doesn't exist right now," said McGinnis, highlighting the issue.

Plans were made to ask committee chairs for information about the available positions, and to list the vacancies on the town website and in the newsletter.

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

Here's the way it was on December 4, 2014: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

**Progress Made on Shea Plan**

At its meeting on Monday, the Montague selectboard and the newly created Civic Center Commission held a sparsely-attended "envisioning" session to discuss the future of the Shea Theater. A similar public forum in early November drew a large and engaged crowd.

The discussion focused on a report by a consultant, Debra J'Anthony, the former director of the Shea and current director of the Academy of Music in Northampton, based on the previous forum as well as conversations with mem-

bers of the Shea board, the Turners Falls arts community, and potential renters.

**Erving Votes to Secure Mill**

Erving's November 24 special town meeting approved \$150,000 to secure entry, improve site safety, and provide maintenance at the former International Paper mill.

Selectboard chair William Bembury said the town's insurer, MIIA, required the town to board up windows and doors at the property. Bembury explained that over 200 windows were broken and that the building had been vandalized. During his site visit, he saw evidence of a fire in one room and mold growing on the walls.

**20 YEARS AGO**

Here's the way it was on December 2, 2004: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

**Wendell Considers New Library**

The Wendell library building committee is holding a forum on December 4 to try to build consensus about the best site for a new library. Librarian Rosie Heidkamp said the library trustees were keeping an open mind on the possibility of renovating the town office building to make room for the library.

**Gill Considers Nuclear Uprate**

An upcoming Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearing on a pro-

posed uprate in power production at the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant to 120% of the plant's original design capacity was the central topic of discussion at a forum at the Gill town hall on Wednesday. Vermont Yankee is also seeking permission for onsite storage of spent fuel in an above-ground storage facility, and to extend the plant's life expectancy beyond 2012 through relicensing.

**No Injuries Sustained**

Gill police chief David Hastings filled the Gill selectboard in on details of a collision involving one of the town's cruisers on November 28 which resulted in \$2,300 worth of damage to the cruiser.

**150 YEARS AGO**

The *Turners Falls Reporter* took a four-week hiatus between November 18 and December 16, 1874, returning with a new editor, Cecil T. Bagnall, who would edit the weekly paper until its closure in 1922. Instead, dear readers, we offer this recap of common themes found in the *Reporter* in 1874.

Native-born workers were joined first by Irish and French-Canadian immigrants, then by families from Germany and Poland. Each group formed its own church. Hundreds lived in small, company-owned apartments, such as the Cutlery block still on Third Street, and worked at the bustling paper, cutlery, and cotton mills which relied on the Connecticut River and the canal for power.

People died young due to diphtheria, pneumonia, typhoid, and measles, rare today due to vaccines. Women died from childbirth; men in workplace accidents, described in gory detail. Nearly every issue speaks of new buildings, bridges, houses, and sidewalks.

The fire department was expanding, practicing, and busy, as there were frequent fires, including when the Oakman schoolhouse burned to the ground. Accidents with horses

and carriages were common. People fell through ice and barely survived boat accidents and near-drownings. Children broke bones falling out of trees and sledding down steep streets, sometimes made icy by the town for the kids on purpose.

Rain, frost, snow, mud, flies. Watermelons, strawberries, pickrel, shad, and oysters. Hirings and layoffs. Teenage scalawags. Hitching posts and sleighs. Ferry boats and logs on the river. Billiard tables at the Farren House. Colle. Schuler.

Local people were curious, hostile, disparaging, and welcoming to "outsiders," especially those they called "Negroes" and "Gypsies." Men's names dominated in the paper; women were lauded for their prowess as hostesses and advised when new bonnets arrived at stores.

Elegant balls, summer clam bakes, and concerts gave relief, and base ball teams were organized. The paper proudly reported when the children did well in school, performed in plays, or signed up for German classes. Wealthier townsfolk sailed to Europe and returned months later. Updates to train schedules to and from Greenfield were published regularly. It was noted that petty pilfering was rare.

**NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE****Slow Descent Into the Budget Dimension**

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – The regional school committee met Tuesday night and began budget season with a "preliminary discussion" of next year's projected revenues, and fretful news about this year's operations.

"I've been doing this for a very long time, and I have never finished the year in deficit," business manager Joanne Blier told the committee. "Fingers crossed that we keep up that streak." One problem, she said, is that Gill-Montague was accepted into the federal program to reimburse upgrades to broadband internet equipment, but only after the district fronts the cash.

Other unanticipated expenses include out-of-district special ed costs and transportation for special ed and students in the homeless and foster systems. Committee members asked Blier and superintendent Brian Beck if they are looking into providing more special ed in-house rather than contracting out. "Sometimes if we create one for three students, it's cheaper than sending one student out," Montague member Wendy Thompson pointed out.

Beck called this a "strategy to think about for the future," and said administrators were exploring the idea.

Another problem this year, Blier complained, is staff submitting invoices for unanticipated expenses. "It's new staff," she explained. "We thought we had them fully trained, but it's appearing that we didn't."

Beck reported on visits by the state Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to Great Falls Middle School, mandated after poor MCAS test results. The state is still analyzing the school, but Beck warned that a "more thorough dig" into the science and English language arts curricula might be ahead.

Blier ran through what is known and unknown about FY'26 revenues. Last year she projected growth in state Chapter 70 aid that did not end up coming through. This year, she said she hopes the growth will come through – to the tune of \$700,000 – "but we're going to have plans for if we don't get that," she said. Rural school aid is showing some promise, but Blier pointed out that districts with between 11 and 21 students per square mile earn a step up, and Gill-Montague's density is 21.36.

The committee is expected to approve a preliminary budget January 28.

The committee heard a reportback from members who attended the annual Massachusetts Association of School Committees conference and spent some time discussing an intention to show up at the schools more often, and in particular how to do that without scaring staff.

The committee voted to accept \$40,000 from William Carlisle, who graduated in the Class of 1951, to establish a scholarship fund named after his late daughter, Roxanne Carlisle. Roxanne died of cancer, and the scholarships will benefit students pursuing careers in healthcare.

One Montague seat on the school committee remains vacant.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# Kids' Theater Resumes in Gill

By KATE SAVAGE

At Monday's meeting, the Gill selectboard celebrated the return of the ACT Program to town hall. Members of the selectboard weren't entirely certain what the acronym stood for – perhaps Afterschool Community Theater, suggested town administrator Ray Purington – but everyone present agreed the homegrown theater program for young people is “a big hit.”

The ACT Program was started over a decade ago by local drama educator Amy Gordon, but was cancelled mid-season by the COVID pandemic in the spring of 2020. “The Rec Committee has talked Amy Gordon out of retirement, and the ACT Program is coming back this year,” said Purington.

Gordon will begin working with interested students in January, he said, and the performance will take place in April.

The selectboard agreed to allow the program to paint the walls of town hall's stage black for the performance. “It needs to be painted,” said member Randy Crochier, “and clean paint of any color beats dirty paneling.”

However, they were reluctant to agree to moving the town's Bicentennial Quilt away from the stage. “We have to figure out how it's hung and how we're protecting it from the light,” said Crochier.

**Other Business**

A special town meeting will take place Monday, December 16 at 7 p.m. Participants will help decide whether the elementary school will get a new roof. After years of rejected applications, the project was finally approved by the Massachusetts School Building Authority's “accelerated repair” reimbursement program.

Purington explained that the town needs to set money aside for the project's schematic design “to make the state happy, so they'll agree to kick in their share.”

The selectboard voted unanimously to allocate all unused ARPA funds – just shy of \$950 – to replace the old meter at the Riverside sewer pump station. These funds come from the American Rescue Plan Act, an economic stimulus bill passed in 2021, and must be fully allocated by the end of 2024.

Gill received a total of nearly \$440,000 in ARPA funds, which went toward replacing the Gill Elementary School floor, buying new trucks for the fire and highway departments, and several smaller projects.

The effort to replace the fluorescent lights in town hall with LEDs has been put on hold. Eversource informed Purington that its \$500 incentive for municipalities to make the switch will not expire at the end of the year, as previously believed, giving the town more time to request additional quotes from installers.

“Come to Gill, the meetings are short!” touted Crochier, as the meeting wrapped up in under 15 minutes. The next selectboard meeting will take place at 5 p.m. on Monday, December 16 before the special town meeting.



**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**  
**MONTAGUE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

In accordance with the Mass. Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, the Montague Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2024 to review the Request for Determination of Applicability RDA #2024-07, filed by FirstLight Power to determine whether the proposed landscape garden beds at the Turners Falls Fishway, 2 Gatehouse Drive (Parcel #04-0-0005) and 0 First Street (Parcel #04-0-0007) is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act. A hybrid meeting will be held at the Montague Town Hall Annex, 1 Avenue A in Turners Falls, MA. Remote meeting login information and the filing are available for review at [www.montague-ma.gov/calendar](http://www.montague-ma.gov/calendar).

## A GILLBILLY ON THE MEND



*This may be slightly old news, but Gill reader Pamela Lester shared this awesome story before our break: “Yesterday as I was near home I passed an animal down on the road,” she wrote. “I recall seeing its head up. It was near the center line. I turned around and sure enough there was a bobcat baby. It looked about the size of my tabby cat except for the longer legs and small tail. What a beautiful face.*

*“S/he dragged itself away from me using front paws, still on the road. Moved away as much as it could. I started directing traffic around us, me and my new friend, and I asked another driver who was going by to call for help so I could keep traffic safely distancing. Gill PD showed up, and they were in contact with animal control.”*

*This photo was shared on social media the next day by the Leyden Center for Wildlife Rehabilitation, which had transported the juvenile bobcat to a veterinary clinic operated by Tufts University for surgery on an injured leg.*

*“I didn't realize the rest of the story so far until today,” Lester told us. “I am so grateful for all who are helping this little one. Hopefully s/he will recover quickly from surgery and be released back near where s/he was found to return to its family.” (Thanks to the Leyden Center for Wildlife Rehabilitation for the photo permission!)*

**Tip of the week ...**

**If a grease fire occurs, put a lid on it and turn off the heat. Never throw water on it as it will spread the fire. Do not move a burning pan, as it can ignite clothing or burn others.**

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**LATE-BREAKING ANNOUNCEMENT**

## Wendell Library Craft Fair!

**WENDELL** – The Friends of the Wendell Free Library will host the Annual Craft Fair at the Wendell Meetinghouse, 6 Center Street in Wendell, next Friday, December 13, from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, December 14, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The first hour of each day is for masked shoppers only. Masks will be available at the door.

The Fair will feature live music, raffles, refreshments, and locally crafted wooden bowls and utensils, jewelry, pottery, soaps, woolen knits, syrup, paintings, cards, photography, candles, clothing, Wendell flag aprons and totes, and much more. Baked goods and cider will be available in the library on Friday night, also to benefit the Friends.

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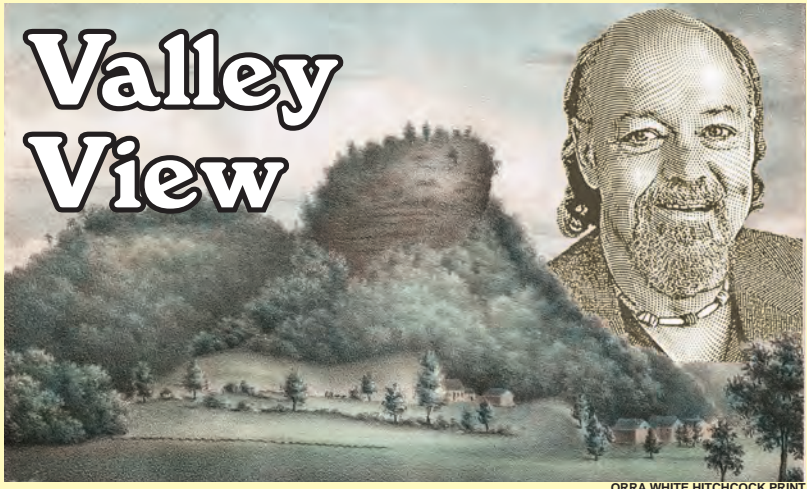
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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

DECEMBER 5, 2024

Above: The turn of the season brings the return of the Cutlery Block's famous frost zigzags.

## Valley View



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

### Fishing for a Motif's Maker

By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – Antique collecting can trigger the wildest, most unpredictable and fulfilling adventures – some hot and fruitful, others cold and barren. When an enticing, dangling thread of inquiry gets tugged and just keeps on giving, the eager anticipation of important discovery can be truly exhilarating.

Case in point: a pair of 18th-century banister-back chairs I recently purchased in their original red paint. I found them in the local marketplace for a reasonable cost. I have subsequently learned that these chairs, typically associated with the first half of the 18th century, came to market from a Northampton collector with a snooty preference for original finish; likely, however, he did not know they were made in Conway.

Their distinctive crest rail immediately signaled Conway to me, giving me an edge that's important as a collector. I quickly recognized it because I had previously examined and photographed

an identical chair on display at the Conway Historical Society. My interest in that chair was a decorative design element into which I had personal insight.

Most folks have probably passed the historical-society chair over the years without recognizing the two unusual, decorative fishtails ascending from the crest rail, protruding on each side of a dome centered between the finials. This maritime motif is generally associated with 18th-century furniture, looking-glass frames, and clocks made in New London County, Connecticut and Philadelphia. Because it's rare, it often goes unrecognized by even sophisticated observers.

The reason I know the fish-tail motif is that I own a family, six-drawer, Chippendale tall chest wearing six examples from the same template, descending from an otherwise unremarkable straight bracket base. It gets better. My chest and the historical-society chair came from the same Conway homestead of Isaiah Wing (1761-1834), who moved there from Harwich, Cape Cod in 1774.

Both pieces were almost certainly crafted by the same hand, or at the very least are from the same workshop. I bought the chest some 25 years ago from Sunderland auctioneer-dealer William Lloyd Hubbard, who had inherited it from a spinster Amherst aunt. Hubbard, the dean of local antique dealers at the time, thought I should have it because it had descended through several brides in my Whately Sanderson family. I didn't argue.

My immediate question was: who built it? A first obvious candidate came to mind: master craftsman William Mather (1766-1835), who arrived in Whately with his sea-captain father and Lyme, Connecticut family in 1787. Trained in Connecticut at the mouth of New England's largest river, Mather was a joiner who built houses – and some truly remarkable furniture – before leaving the area for Canandaigua, New York around 1825.

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B8



SANDERSON PHOTO

The author first became interested in the fishtails cresting from this chair kept at the Conway Historical Society. Someone local, he suspected, was behind this maritime motif.

## RECIPES

### THE SPICES OF WINTER HOLIDAYS

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

**LEVERETT** – “Smells like Thanksgiving,” said the clerk checking out the little bags I’d just filled from the bulk spice bins at Cornucopia in Northampton. I had whole and powdered allspice, whole nutmegs, cinnamon sticks, and powdered coriander.

For most of the year, these and other spices sit quietly on their rack, until Halloween brings mulled cider and other spiced treats. After that spices are hard at work, flavoring pumpkin, apple, and mincemeat pies at Thanksgiving, perfuming myriad holiday cookies and cakes, and even jazzing up some traditional holiday meat dishes.

Why use spices? Why not herbs or flavorful fruits such as lemons, oranges, or berries?

The short answer is that most spices are native of hot regions in Asia. In the days of sail, getting them to the Western hemisphere used to take months, and sometimes as much as a year – an expensive journey, made dearer by port taxes along the way. At journey's end the accumulated costs made spices too dear for everyday fare. But spending on luxury foods celebrates holidays, so spices became a hallmark of festive food.



HOPLEY PHOTO

Amelia Simmons's 1796 “Christmas Cookey” recipe calls for powdered coriander.

Our daily bread is unspiced, but holiday breads such as German *stollen* and Italian *panettone* are romanced with the aromas of nutmeg and vanilla respectively. Vanilla flavors numerous cakes, including the New Orleans King Cakes made for Three Kings Day on January 6.

Swedes use the world's most expensive spice in their saffron-flavored Christmas bread. Cardamom, also costly, flavors many Scandinavian Christmas buns and cookies.

Dried fruit often partners the spices in holiday baking because it, too, was once a pricey import reserved

for special times. Fruit cakes from Britain and the Caribbean are dark and dense with dried fruit and spices. Mincemeat pie – a Thanksgiving tradition in New England, and essential for Christmas in Britain – is another fruit-and-spice treasury.

As for America's Christmas cookies, the spices vary tremendously, because immigrants keen to taste the flavors of their homelands brought many recipes. It was, however, a home-grown cookie recipe that prompted me to buy coriander in Cornucopia. Titled see **RECIPES** page B4

## PREVIEW

### Eggtooth Holiday Pageant Becoming a Shea Tradition

By BELLA LEVAVI

**TURNERS FALLS** – The eighth annual family-friendly drag Christmas tradition returns to the Shea Theater this weekend.

“We are proud and delighted to offer this wonderful alternative to your typical holiday fare,” said Eggtooth artistic director Linda McInerney in an interview with the *Montague Reporter*.

Eggtooth's annual Christmas pageant, *Home for the Hologays*, will take place this Friday, December 6, and Saturday, December 7, at 7:30 p.m. The show invites people to bring their families and enjoy drag performances, musical numbers, and theatrical scenes featuring the cast. As in previous years, the adult members of the audience will also be invited to drink Mr. Drag's favorite olive-brine drink: the martini.

Each year, the show features a variety of Eggtooth Productions performers portraying a dysfunctional

family at a lively Christmas party. The cast includes siblings, a maid, an Alexa robot, and a nosy neighbor.

“It's a chance for really creative work to shine that's not inspired by traditional holiday motifs. Instead, it's about coming together, not fo-

cused on the commercial aspects of the season,” said K. Adler, playing Karl in the show.

This year, the Christmas party is canceled after one of the sisters is unable to attend. Mr. Drag, played see **PAGEANT** page B3



MATTHEW CAVANAUGH PHOTO

Myka Plunkett, Joe Dulude II, and K. Adler ham it up in last year's performance.



# Pet of the Week



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Meet Lola, a gorgeous five-year-old female Lionhead looking for a special home to call her own. This fluffy lady may be shy at first, but once she gets to know you, she's all about lounging and relaxing alongside her people.

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Most housing sold at pet stores is

too small for small pets. Expect to spend at least \$100 on housing. Minimum requirements for enclosed spaces is 10 square feet for one to two rabbits. Rabbits should also have at least 24 square feet of exercise space outside of their enclosure where they can run and play each day. For answers to frequently-asked rabbit questions, visit [rabbit.org/frequently-asked-questions/](http://rabbit.org/frequently-asked-questions/)

If it's your dream to have a fluffy little buddy to eat salads with and snuggle – on her level – then Lola may be a great pet for you.

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

# DECEMBER LIBRARY LISTING

### Montague Public Libraries

Turners Falls: Carnegie (413) 863-3214  
 Montague Center (413) 367-2852  
 Millers Falls (413) 659-3801

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

### MONTAGUE

**All month:** *Grab & Go Craft.* Paper roll snowperson. At all branches while supplies last.

**Thursday, December 5:** *Book Club.* George Saunders, *Lincoln in the Bardo.* Montague Center, 7 p.m.

**Every Saturday:** *Drop-in Community Puzzle.* All ages. Carnegie 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Saturday, December 7:** *History of the Grange.* Presentation by Will Quale, 5 p.m.; potluck dinner, 6 p.m.; contradance, 7 p.m. Free fun for all. Montague Common Hall.

**Monday, December 9:** *Friends of MPL Meeting.* Email [kristopherlangston@gmail.com](mailto:kristopherlangston@gmail.com). Carnegie, 5:30 p.m.

**Every Tuesday:** *Imagination Station.* Drop-in craft for ages 6 to 12. Carnegie, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, December 10:** *Meet & Greet with Montague Villages.* Millers Falls, 3 to 4 p.m.

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

**Thursday, December 12:** *Book Club:* Ross Gay, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude.* Millers Falls, 5:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 18:** *Folded Paper Luminaries.* Ages 8 to adult. Montague Center, drop in 5 to 7 p.m.

**Saturday, December 21:** *Gingerbread Houses.* For children and caregivers. Discovery Center, 1 to 3 p.m.

**Monday, December 23:** *Craft Club.* All ages. Montague Center, 4 p.m.

**Friday, December 27:** *Meet & Greet with Montague Villages.* Montague Center, 10 to 11 a.m.

### WENDELL

**All month:** *Art Exhibit,* hooked rugs by Phyllis Lawrence.

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

**Saturday, December 7:** *Booklace Necklace Workshop.* Reg req'd. 1 p.m.

**Every Sunday:** *Yoga.* 10 a.m.

**Sunday, December 8:** *Rug Hooking Exhibit Opening and Demo.* 1 to 3:30 p.m.

**Every Tuesday:** *Art Group.* 5 p.m.

**Every Wednesday:** *Movie.* 4 p.m.; *Yoga.* 6:20 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 11:** *CNC Playgroup* with Sylvia. 10 a.m.

**Friday, December 13:** *Holiday Craft Fair.* 4 to 8 p.m. Wendell Meetinghouse.

**Friday, December 13:** *Friday Night at the Library,* Friends

bake sale. 5 to 8 p.m.

**Saturday, December 14:** *Holiday Craft Fair.* Wendell Meetinghouse. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Saturday, December 14:** *Local Children's Author Reading:* Jamie Lefebvre, *Simon, King of the Triangle.* 11 a.m.

**Monday, December 16:** *Fiber Group / Mending Circle.* 6:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, December 17:** *Cyber Seniors Tech Help.* 2 to 5 p.m.

**Tuesday, December 17:** *Sew a Reusable Gift Bag.* Reg req'd. 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

**Saturday, December 28:** *Group Puzzle Time.* 1 to 3 p.m.

### LEVERETT

**Through December 26:** *Art Exhibit* by Jeanne Weintraub-Mason.

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

**Thursday, December 5:** *Author Talk.* Richie Davis. 4:30 p.m.

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

**Every Monday and Wednesday:** *Online Qigong.* See [leverettlibrary.org](http://leverettlibrary.org) or email [communityqigong@gmail.com](mailto:communityqigong@gmail.com) for info. 10:30 a.m.

**Every Wednesday:** *CNC Playgroup.* Ages 0 to 5 with caregiver. 10:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, December 11 and Tuesday, December 17:** *Drop-in Library Tech Help.* Wednesday 10 a.m. to noon, Tuesday 4 to 6 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 18:** *After School Art Space.* Ages 6 to 12. 1 to 2:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 19:** *LEGO Builders.* Ages 5 to 12. 4 p.m.

### NORTHFIELD

**All month:** *In-Library Kids' Scavenger Hunt.*

**Thursday, December 5:** *Spice Club pickup starts.* Sample and recipes while supplies last. *This month:* ras el hanout.

**Friday, December 6:** *Coffee/*

*Tea Social and Art Reception:* Leni Gaudet, "Mostly New England." 10 to 11 a.m.

**Wednesday, December 11:** *Readings Group:* Franz Kafka, selections. Pick up at the library. 3 p.m.

**Thursday, December 12:** *Take-and-Make Craft.* Tree night lights. While supplies last.

**Thursday, December 12:** *House Plant Swap.* 5:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 12:** *Environmental Book Group.* Clayton Page Aldern, *The Weight of Nature.* Pick up at the library. 6:30 p.m.

**Friday, December 13:** *Campfire and S'mores.* 4 to 5 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 18:** *Poetry Discussion* with Nick Fleck. 3 p.m.

**Thursday, December 19:** *LEGO.* 3:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 19:** *MCB Book Group:* "a well-reviewed book in your least favorite genre." 5:30 p.m.

**Friday, December 27:** *Teen Night.* Ages 13 to 19. Crafts, games, pizza. 6 to 8 p.m.

### ERVING

**All month until Sunday, December 15:** *Friends of the Library Winter Raffle.*

**Sunday, December 8:** *Puzzle Swap.* All ages, no puzzle required. 1 to 3 p.m.

**Sunday, December 8:** *Genealogy Drop-In Help.* 1 to 3 p.m.

**Monday, December 9:** *Playgroup.* Ages 0 to 5. 10 to 11:30 a.m.

**Wednesdays, December 11 and 18:** *After School Activities.* Snacks. 1:30 to 3 p.m.

**Sunday, December 15:** *Craft Day.* Sign-up req'd. 1 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 18:** *Board of Library Trustees.* Monthly meeting, open to all. 4:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 26:** *All-Abilities Social.* All are welcome; sign-up required. Two sessions, noon to 1:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, January 1:** *Friends of the Library.* Monthly meeting, open to all. 1 p.m.

## Senior Center Activities DECEMBER 9 THROUGH 13

### 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 12/9

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

#### Tuesday 12/10

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

#### Wednesday 12/11

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
 11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
 12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo

#### Thursday 12/12

1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday 12/13**  
 10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
 11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
 2 p.m. Chair Dance

### LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinic is held monthly. Contact (413) 548-1022 x2 or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

### 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 12/9

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

#### Tuesday 12/10

*No Nail Clip.*  
 9 a.m. Stretch & Balance  
 10 a.m. Line Dancing  
 11 a.m. Social Stringer

#### Wednesday 12/11

9 a.m. Interval Training  
 10:15 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
 11:30 a.m. Bingo

#### Thursday 12/12

9 a.m. Barre Fusion  
 10 a.m. Pilates Flow  
 12 p.m. Senior Tech Help

#### Friday 12/13

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting Open Sew

### WENDELL

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

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

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- Safe Combinations Changed



**PAGEANT** from page B1

by Joe Dulude II, is visited by the three ghosts of Christmas – past, present, and future – all portrayed by Montague Center actor Marina Goldman.

“This year, Mr. Drag takes a walk down memory lane in a *A Christmas Carol*-style narrative,” Adler said. “We’ll see some new faces, some familiar ones, and a lot of really weird stuff.”

The cast emphasized that this year’s performance feels especially significant following the re-election of former President Donald Trump, as a way to create joyful queer art in uncertain times.

“After this past election, it’s important to see people out there making art that’s full of joy, laughter, and positivity,” said Dulude. “We’re not putting anyone down – no matter your beliefs, you can come and have a good time.”

Dulude is known for his Broadway, television, and movie makeup design work, including stints on Broadway musicals such as *Wicked*, *MJ*, and *Death Becomes Her*.

“Dulude is known worldwide as a makeup artist, but in the Valley, he’s known as the bearded drag queen,” McInerney said.

The drag of Mr. Drag and Karl features playful costumes and make-

up. The rest of the cast, in less traditional drag attire, dons outrageous costumes, wigs, and makeup as well. Dulude said he is especially excited about the audience participation invited in this year’s performance.

The annual tradition began when Dulude performed as Mr. Drag in a previous Eggtooth Productions Christmas pageant, singing “Rainbow Connection.” The performance was so well-received that the company invited Mr. Drag and Karl to host the following year’s show.

The production is inspired by *The Carol Burnett Show*. Initially, it was more of a variety show, but it has evolved to feature more plotlines, with a script written and directed by Dulude. Each new production includes references to past years, offering “Easter eggs” for returning attendees.

“Newcomers won’t miss a thing,” said McInerney.

The show runs for 90 minutes with no intermission. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the door or online.

“If there was ever a time to support a local drag queen, it’s now,” McInerney said. “I worry about our marginalized friends, and this is a great way to support the communities we’re concerned about for the future.”



**MOVIE REVIEW**

**For Holiday Fun, See *Red One***

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI



**GREENFIELD** – *Red One*, which is playing at Greenfield Garden Cinemas, is a movie about Santa Claus being kidnapped. “The Red One” is a codename for him in the movie.

Some cool characters and things are featured in this movie. The cast includes J.K. Simmons, playing a muscular Santa Claus behind a souped-up high-tech sled with some very good-sized reindeer that are computer generated and cool looking. Dwayne Johnson plays his head of security, and Lucy Liu is the head of an agency called MORIA that provides military protection for all mystical individuals.

A hacker who gets involved in the plot is played by Chris Evans. His name is Jack O’Malley, a.k.a. “The Wolf,” and he’s on something called a Level Four Naughty List. That is one of the cool things in this movie, along with a talking polar bear played by Reinaldo Faberle, who is part of the security team.

Some of the normal things that you expect with Santa are still here. He has a place at the North Pole but it’s a high-tech village. He still checks that list twice. He has a wife, played by Bonnie Hunt. He sees kids at the mall too.

Chris Evans’s character has a young son who comes into play with all of this. Other things that come into play are Krampus, Santa’s adopted brother, showing up; Gylia, a monstrous entity from Iceland similar to Krampus; and magical snow globes used to imprison bad individuals, which are part of the plan to kidnap Santa.

Another advanced technology that comes into play is the ability to

change toys into different sizes and make them come to life. Another cool thing is that they have to defend themselves against snowmen. This story takes some nice turns. Two that I particularly like are who ends up giving a hand to the hacker and Santa’s head of security, and reindeer coming in handy.

I adored the fantasy elements of this movie, and the way it includes people from legends. Some of this works wonderfully with being a Christmas movie. After, all who wouldn’t expect Krampus to be a part of the story?

Dwayne Johnson’s most recent movies include a couple of *Jumanji* sequels, which I believe he did well in when it came to his acting. His character in *Red One* is similar enough to his usual action roles for it to be a good movie for him.

One line of his describes the tone of it nicely: “There are worse ways for a guy like me to go than saving Santa Claus.”

This is a cool fantasy action flick to see for the holidays.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Dam Failure Drill; Loud Party Unwanted; Red Beanie; Icy Roads; Big Shipment Of Crack; Problematic Raccoon**

**Monday, 11/18**

6:20 a.m. 911 caller states fire alarms have been sounding in a Third Street building for 40 minutes. No smoke or fire. Shelburne Control advised.

12:21 p.m. Caller reporting a vehicle parked at Dell Street and Turnpike Road for three hours; wondering if it was abandoned. Vehicle parked legally; nothing suspicious at this time.

2:02 p.m. Manager of a J Street property reports that an eviction was served and completed last week, and everything was removed from the involved apartment. When he returned today for an inspection, he found credit cards and pills; he is wondering if the party has broken back in. Officer advised caller of his options.

6:56 p.m. Caller advises there has been a vehicle parked on Gunn Road for about two hours with a single occupant. Vehicle legally parked; operator was in area for cell service. 7:07 p.m. Caller from East Main Street advises she observed two juveniles throwing rocks at vehicles and business signs, and advised them to stop but they did not listen. Unable to locate. No damage found.

**Tuesday, 11/19**

8:14 a.m. Walk-in has been working with LifePath to manage aspects of a business, and they have noticed larceny; they contacted the DA, who told them to make a police report. Statement filled out. Contacting Greenfield for trespass order; will change locks.

11:37 a.m. Caller from Bridge Street reports his nine-pound Chihuahua was attacked or stepped on twice by a pitbull that is never on a leash. States the owner never has it on a leash and it is frequently in his yard. Advised caller to call while this is happening. 12:13 p.m. Environmental incident drill for hypothetical imminent failure of Northfield Mountain main dam. Drill only.

6:34 p.m. Caller advises his truck was struck by another vehicle at Carroll’s Supermarket; believes there are security cameras. Officer made contact with business owner. Cameras not operable at this time.

7 p.m. 911 caller from Unity Street advises her intoxicated boyfriend took her phone and will not give it back. Employee from nearby business reports screaming for the past hour. Situation mediated; parties agreed to be separated. Neighbors advise the female party appears to be the primary aggressor.

7:20 p.m. 911 caller advises that she smells burning trash in the Old Greenfield Road area. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

**Wednesday, 11/20**

5:28 p.m. Officer out on Avenue A with a pulled-over tractor-trailer unit. Driver was checking out smoke from vehicle. On his way.

6:36 p.m. 911 caller states a male and female are fighting at Unity Park and a child is crying. Left prior to PD arrival.

7:15 p.m. Caller from West Street states a male party no longer on the lease keeps showing up and threatening the caller’s sister; male has established residency. Advised of court options. Parties separated for the night.

7:47 p.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting a crash on Montague City Road. Vehicle towed; road reopened.

**Thursday, 11/21**

9:20 a.m. Caller from Griswold Street reports two windows in her car were smashed out overnight.

12:36 p.m. Officer responding to a Music Connection due to a party in the store who wanted to speak to him. After meeting and advising him of his options, the party got loud and was unhappy. Owner reported that he did not want that party back in the store.

5:04 p.m. Caller advises there are three vehicles in the Hillcrest Elementary School parking lot not associated with the school. Two are occupied. An employee is not comfortable walking to her vehicle. Officer advises parties were talking to each other; nothing suspicious in nature.

8:38 p.m. 911 caller reporting accident at Lake Pleasant Road and Federal Street; unknown injuries. Second call from other vehicle; she doesn’t think she is injured. Citation issued.

**Friday, 11/22**

12:25 a.m. Walk-in requesting to speak with an officer regarding strangers knocking on his door at random between 10:30 p.m. and midnight. Provided party with options.

3:48 p.m. Caller from L Street reporting a party wearing a yellow hoodie with a rifle and scope. Officer advises pellet gun.

8:35 p.m. Caller reporting a fire in the area of Fifth Street and Avenue A. Officer advises unpermitted outdoor fire. TFFD dealing with it now.

**Saturday, 11/23**

12:38 a.m. 911 report of party slumped over in driver’s seat at Gunn and Sunderland roads; unknown whether she is breathing. Caller will see if he can wake her. Responding officer advises no need for medical; requesting PBT. Party passed PBT. Some alcohol on board. Will have sober driver pick her up.

9:14 a.m. Caller states that while he was sitting in traffic at Third and L streets the car in front of him

backed up and crashed into him. Minor damage. Caller does not want to pursue claims. Damage to rear bumper of other vehicle.

11:23 a.m. Caller from Textur Beauty Bar states that a male in a red beanie is hanging around her business asking people for money. Unable to locate.

**Sunday, 11/24**

1:41 a.m. Caller reports loose horse in Hatchery Road area, last seen heading toward Route 47. Officer located horse; advises one horse and one goat secured and back at home.

10:23 a.m. 911 caller from J Street reports an evicted tenant is breaking and entering into a shed; requesting party be removed. No one found at scene.

2:22 p.m. Multiple calls reporting tree across North Leverett Road, blocking both lanes. Tree moved to side; DPW advised.

5:32 p.m. Caller from Old Sunderland Road advises a 50- to 60-pound black German Shepherd/Border Collie mix was almost struck by a vehicle. Dog is on caller’s porch; no tags. Officer returned dog to residence.

**Monday, 11/25**

7:27 p.m. 911 caller advising of illegal burn in alley between Fourth and Fifth streets. Officer advised there is a fire in a fire pit off of Fourth Street. TFFD extinguished.

**Tuesday, 11/26**

5:32 p.m. 911 call reporting male assaulting female near Fourth Street and Avenue A, chasing her toward Food City. Officer checked Avenue A, did not see anyone and was not flagged down. Unable to locate.

6:55 p.m. 911 caller reporting a deer hit on Millers Falls Road near Lake Pleasant Road. Deer is alive but on the side of the road. There are car parts in the road, but caller reports the car that hit the deer is not on scene. Drivers pulling over to slow traffic. Deer dispatched; DPW advised.

7:09 p.m. Caller reports he was driving on South Lyman Street and a kid threw a rock at his car, damaging it. The parents are now arguing with him, telling him to get off their property. Officer responding. Situation mediated; they will figure out the rest themselves.

7:18 p.m. 911 caller reporting loud arguing from downstairs neighbors; situation is escalating, and he and his family are getting nervous. Officers advised. Situation mediated.

11:34 p.m. DPW requested to sand roads for icy conditions in Turners Falls.

**Wednesday, 11/27**

9:46 a.m. Caller from Highland Street states that a tree company is blocking one side of the road on a blind corner. Company hired by DPW; DPW will close the

road until the work is done. 3:58 p.m. East Taylor Hill Road caller states people have been taking her candy cane decorations, moving them, and breaking them. Investigated.

11:28 p.m. A 40-year-old Greenfield woman was arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery, intimate partner.

**Friday, 11/29**

5:26 a.m. 911 caller from Randall Road states that a truck struck their parked vehicle in the driveway, no injuries. Caller states owner of truck is on scene, and was not in the truck at the time of the accident; it popped out of park into drive, rolled, and struck vehicles. Officer advises minimal damage; no further action at this time.

5:36 a.m. Caller from Avenue A states there is loud music in the room below her; requesting it be turned down. Officer advises slight sound of music near back of building; not deemed to be a nuisance.

8:57 a.m. Employee at A.H. Rist Insurance reports a male party outside of the business keeps bothering the female employees as they get out of their vehicles. Unable to locate.

5:43 p.m. 911 caller from Hillside Avenue reports smelling smoke; her pellet stove is smoking. Transferred to Shelburne Control. Caller exited residence and put her dogs in vehicle.

**Saturday, 11/30**

1:56 a.m. Officer located evidence of someone sleeping in the vestibule of Greenfield Savings Bank.

2:14 a.m. Officers checking the woodline across from Greenfield Savings Bank, as a tent has been discovered. Nobody in area.

10:43 a.m. Caller from L Street reports someone smashed the window of her vehicle overnight and stole her wallet.

2:32 p.m. Party into station regarding someone trying to kill her with Chinese food they left at her door last night. States her neighbor ended up eating it and got severely ill. Also states that they have her phone bugged and that a big shipment of crack got delivered last night. Advised of options.

3:56 p.m. Walgreens employee reporting a male asking people if they want to buy marijuana. A 45-year-old Millers Falls man was arrested on a straight warrant.

**Sunday, 12/1**

8:08 a.m. Caller from Central Street reporting a sick raccoon on her porch. She slammed the door and told it to go away, but it didn’t listen. She called her nephew, who is a state trooper, and he told her to call MPD. Officers advised. Raccoon moved along.

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# Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School 1st Quarter Honor Roll

## – Grade 6 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Ryker Bray, Rowan Deery, Brenna Guilbault, Konrad Henry, Aaron Neupane, Ryan Newton, Madilynn Pacheco, Madison Phillips, Sincere Sumlin, Lilith Sumner, Jacob Torres, Malcolm Tyler, William Tyler, Anthony Warren

**SECOND HONORS**  
Louis Burek, Kenzie Flaxington, Lukas Gexler, Carter Greene, Hanna Kyselyova, Blake Minckler, Ivy O'Donnell, Alannah Renaud

**THIRD HONORS**  
Madden Coates, Dayzar Crapps, Makhi Doyle, Evelyn Galvez Mendez, Amelia Nelson, Yoreli Ovalle Mejia, Elliot Thibodeau

## – Grade 7 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Jonathan Bones, Kaleb Briggs, Lydia Cadran, Nevaeh Call, Mikayla Cormie, Kaelynn Dudek, Andrew Eichorn, Braedyn Firth, Jazelle Gonzalez, Josephine Hayman, Jo Licata, Silas Lively, Amber Marcy, Nathaniel Martin, Anna McCarthy, Nicholas Nelson, Daisha Ovalle Perez, Gabriel Palazzo, Alexis Parker, Gracie Jo Philip, Zoe Powling, Eleni Reipold, Janessa Sadler, Ella Shaw-Jarvis, Johnathan Sicard

**SECOND HONORS**  
Tyler Girard, Page Katsoulis, Eva Lareau, Mariah Larson, Leana Lopez, Axel Martin Ovalle, Liam Pielock, Kyle Porter, Fiona Ribeiro, James Sanchez, Rhiannon Smith, Maria Solano, Azariah Stebbins, Taelynn Supernault, Parker Walters

**THIRD HONORS**  
Lylah Brocklesby, Eliza Carew, Samuel Choleva, Isabella Griffith, Emma Jardine, Ava Laffey, Cooper Malone, Jasmari Marquez, Genevieve Otero, Malakai Patnode, Tyreek Rivera, Westin Tela, Gabriel Tidlund

## – Grade 8 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Kaylee Adamski, Lucas Black, Max Briere, Santiago Buri Rosales, Bryan Cordero Lopez, Nicholas Damkoehler, Ellis Holmes, Lilyana Jette, Adelaide Kolakoski, Ella Larouche, Tyler Newton, Austin Platek, Allison Raymond, Myaa Reed, Axel Richardson, Viviana Rosa, Taylor-Marie Scanlon, Bristol Stevens, Bethany Whitney

**SECOND HONORS**  
Noah Blanchard, Chloey Bucinkas, Camden Cogswell, Connor Glennon, Matthew Guilbault, Colby Hebert, Kamden Keene, Teagan Mercier, Melody O'Donnell, Asiah Parker, Emely Sanchez Abarua, Nikolay Shlegel, Hunter Stacy, Mckenzie Stafford, Maximus Tucker, Jayden Weber, Owen Zilinski

**THIRD HONORS**  
Adrianna Lemerise-Reinking, Gracie O'Neil, Austin Smarr, Autumn Thornton, Kevin Tomas Mejia, Sylar Torunski

## – Grade 9 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Sato Bazemore, Madison Haight, Bennett Lanoue, Addison Lively, Trevor Lyons, Ashton Marshall, Braeden Moore, Jocelyn Ovalle Roblero, Lynx Petraccia, Nicole Porter, Rain Sanborn, Emmett Spriggs, Olivia Wolbach, Chloe Wonsey

**SECOND HONORS**  
Freilyn Abarua Corona, Sergey Alexeyenko, Lachlan Banister Potter, Jameson Better, Cameryn Carner, Courtney Cummings, Morgan Deluca, Ameliya Galbraith, Jaclyn Galvez Martin, William Hutchison, Michael Johnson, Jakira Leno, Chase Maynard, Vinicio Palazzo, Genesis Pereira, Scarlett Pouliot, Emma Ramos, Jakhia Williams, Athena Willor, Kamden Zagame

**THIRD HONORS**  
Kylee Jenks, Daniel Morales Gonzalez, Marshall Pike, Gabriella Trinqu

## – Grade 10 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Jacob Broga, Jaydon Gary, Rachel Juarbe, Julian Kaiser, Gianna Marigliano, Layla Mathieu, Kimberly Ramirez Martin, Kaya Shipley-Aja, Stella Shipley-Aja, Brayden Slauenwhite, Addison Talbot, Marketa Vachula-Curtis

**SECOND HONORS**  
Yashiro Bagen, John Burt, Caeden Cottrell-Bouchard, Ethan Damkoehler, Keira Feeley, Robert Goff, Heather Goodsell, Shelburne Paris, Paige Simmons, Andrew Sinpunpakt, Brayden Sloan, Derek Wilson

**THIRD HONORS**  
Johnny Bartolon, Davian Bala, Ophelia Little, Brianna Preston, Angel Ruiz Scott, Llewyn Toomajian

## – Grade 11 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Moises Borraves Velasquez, Jackson Cogswell, Trinity Davis, Ella DeLorenzo, Lily DeLorenzo, Ethan Eichorn, Cameron Johnson, Noah Kolodziej, Cole Marshall, Shayly Martin Ovalle, Yolvin Ovalle Mejia, Michael Waite, Tobias Wilson-Hill

**SECOND HONORS**  
Madysyn Dietz, Elsee Galvez Martin, Rojelio Galvez Mendez, Brody Girard, Clara Guidaboni, Michaela Klemprer-Siano, Allister Kolakoski, Curtis Kretchmar, Caleb Lincoln, Janelle Massey, David Ortiz, John Ramirez Martin, Miles Riley, Jenna Sanford, Kainen Stevens, Philipp Tischleder, Nathaniel Trinque

**THIRD HONORS**  
Michael Berdugo, Mashaud Carter, Kai Dennett, London Ferrer, Kevin Perez Cueto

## – Grade 12 –

**FIRST HONORS**  
Starri Bell, Samantha Carr, Tatiana Carr-Williams, Elliot Cook, Aaliyah Costantino, Ripley Dresser, Ella Guidaboni, Khiaarieli Huertas Hernandez, Madison Liimatainen, Zane Niedzielski, Jacob Norwood, Dalver Perez, Sasha Scott, Ledwin Villafana Abarua

**SECOND HONORS**  
Kamryn Berry, Avery Cook, Pamela Gomez, Kailey James-Putnam, David Klemprer-Siano, Teagan Lavalley-Finch, Sofia Moreno, Sheni Ovalle Roblero, Gabriel Page, Yeliselabel Perez de Leon, Alexander Quezada Abarua, Elizabeth Reipold

**THIRD HONORS**  
Maya Deramo, Raymond Hillock, Logan Leblanc, Avery Miner, Gary Smith, Caden Williams-Senethavisouk

## RECIPES from page B1

“Christmas Cookey,” it appeared in Amelia Simmons’s 1796 book *American Cookery*, the first cookbook and the first Christmas cookie published in America. Powdered coriander gives it style.

Simmons has another recipe called simply “Cookies,” which also has coriander – two spoonfuls, mixed into two and a half pounds of flour and a thrifty quarter-pound of butter. In contrast, her Christmas Cookey calls for a whole teacupful of coriander, a whole pound of butter, and extra sugar – perfectly illustrating using spices to smarten everyday fare for the holidays.

Coriander is rare in cookies compared to cinnamon, vanilla, nutmeg, and ginger, but its magical flavor makes America’s first Christmas cookie special. But then, too, the

zingy ginger in gingerbread, fragrant nutmeg in egg nog, the cozy warmth of cinnamon in Austrian cinnamon stars, and Greek *melomakaronas* are special, too.

For those who don’t have a sweet tooth, spices also jazz some holiday meat dishes. French Canadians wouldn’t be without their Christmas meat pie *tourtière*. Recipes are handed down in families so they vary, but they all have spices: black pepper, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves are popular choices.

English spiced beef has allspice, peppercorns, and juniper, and Swedish meatballs – a specialty for Christmas dinner and holiday parties – are rich with allspice, ginger, and nutmeg.

Whatever your holiday favorites, it’s the season for raiding your spice rack!



## AMELIA SIMMONS’S CHRISTMAS COOKEY

Adapted from the first recipe for a Christmas cookie printed in America in 1796.

2 cups all-purpose flour  
¾ tsp. baking powder  
1 cup granulated sugar  
4 tsp. powdered coriander  
1½ sticks (6 oz.) cold butter  
about ½ cup milk  
sparkling colored sugar,  
pearl sugar, silver dragees,  
frosting, or other Christmassy  
decorations

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Thoroughly mix the flour, baking powder, granulated sugar, and powdered coriander in a large bowl. Cut the butter into bits and rub them in. (Or process these ingredients in a food processor.)

When the mixture looks like breadcrumbs, make a hollow in the center and pour in about half the milk. Stir to bring the mixture together, adding more milk a little at a time until it has the texture of shortcrust pastry dough. Turn onto a floured surface, knead briefly, and roll out to quarter-inch thickness.

Now, in Amelia Simmons’s words, “Cut or stamp into shape or size you please.” For a sugar top, press the cookies into plain or colored sugar and place on the baking sheets. Bake for 14 to 18 minutes, or until the edges of the cookies are golden brown. Small cookies bake faster than big ones, and some decorations need pressing into the



HOPLEY PHOTOS

cookies while they are hot; frosting should wait until they are cold.

Makes 3 or 4 dozen.

## SWEDISH MEATBALLS

Breadcrumbs and cream make these meatballs tender; spices add luxurious flavor. For parties, omit the gravy and serve the meatballs on cocktail sticks with a dipping sauce.

1 large slice bread  
1 cup cream  
½ lb. ground beef  
½ lb. ground pork  
1 medium onion, grated  
1 clove garlic, minced  
salt and black pepper to taste  
1 tsp. powdered allspice  
1 tsp. powdered ginger  
¼ tsp. powdered nutmeg  
2 Tbsp. chopped parsley  
1 egg, beaten  
oil for frying  
2 Tbsp. brown sugar  
1¼ cups (or 10.5 oz. can)  
beef broth

Tear the bread into bits, place in a large bowl, and add half a cup of cream. Leave for about 10 minutes until the bread absorbs the cream.

Crumble the ground beef and pork into the bowl, stir in the onion and garlic, then the salt, black pepper, allspice, ginger, nutmeg, and finally the parsley. When

they are thoroughly mixed, stir in the egg. Turn the oven to 350 degrees.

Wet your hands and form the mixture into walnut-sized balls. You should have 30 to 36. Heat the butter and oil in a pan that can go on the stovetop and also in the oven. Fry the meatballs in batches a few at a time so they aren’t crowded. Turn them over after two minutes to brown both sides, then remove and add another batch. Finally, return them all to the pan and put it in the oven to cook for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, stir the brown sugar with the beef broth in a small pan, and bring to simmering point.

To make the gravy, remove the meatballs from the oven and put them on a plate. Pour the beef broth mixture into the meatball pan and stir to combine with the juices. Simmer over medium heat, then slowly stir in the remaining half cup of cream. Return the



meatballs to the pan. Cook for another four to five minutes, stirring to coat them with the gravy.

Serve on mashed potatoes or buttered noodles with cranberry sauce on the side.

Serves 4 or 5.

## SPICED MULLED WINE WITH ORANGES

3 large navel oranges  
1 lemon  
1 bottle fruity red wine (e.g. Merlot)  
3 Tbsp. brown sugar  
3 cinnamon sticks, plus extra for serving  
12 whole allspice berries  
4 cloves  
2 cardamom pods, cracked to open slightly (optional)  
½ cup medium sherry or dark rum

Slice one orange into 6 to 8 slices. Peel a thin, two-inch strip of peel from another orange and the lemon. Squeeze and reserve the juice from the unsliced oranges and lemon.

Pour the wine into a large saucepan. Add a cup of water, the strips of peel, sugar, three cinnamon sticks, allspice berries, and cloves – and the cracked cardamoms, if you are using them.

Simmer for five minutes, then add the juices and about half the orange slices. Continue simmering for three minutes. Turn off the heat. Cover the pan and leave on the



turned-off burner to keep warm for 15 minutes to develop the flavoring of spices and oranges.

For serving, reheat to drinking temperature, and stir in the sherry or rum. Ladle into glasses and garnish each with a halved orange slice and a cinnamon stick.

About 7 or 8 servings.

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ANALYSIS

The House Oversight Testimony on UAPs

[oversight.house.gov/hearing/unidentified-anomalous-phenomena-exposing-the-truth/](https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/unidentified-anomalous-phenomena-exposing-the-truth/)

By SPENCER SHORKEY

**MILLERS FALLS** – I gave these prompts, in italics (SAS), to OpenAI’s ChatGPT-4o, and it gave responses (GPT) based on an analysis of written and oral testimony at the November 13 House Oversight Committee hearing on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAPs).

The first and the last paragraph of each response were removed, as they tended to contain redundant information, and two misquotes of the hearing transcript were corrected. The responses are otherwise unedited, except for formatting and to fit *Montague Reporter* style standards.

*SAS: Analyze the four witness testimony documents at this website, keeping a Kuhnian viewpoint in mind. No response is required to this prompt, just analysis...*

*Describe Dr. Tim Gallaudet’s testimony in at least 400 words, using at least four direct quotes.*

**GPT:** In his testimony, Dr. Gallaudet recounted a significant incident from January 2015, when he was serving as the Commander of the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command. During a naval exercise off the US East Coast, he received an alarming email from the operations officer of Fleet Forces Command, marked “URGENT SAFETY OF FLIGHT ISSUE.”

The email stated: “If any of you know what these are, tell me ASAP. We are having multiple near-midair collisions, and if we do not resolve it soon, we will have to shut down the exercise.”

Attached to the email was the now-declassified “Go Fast” video, captured by a Navy F/A-18 aircraft’s forward-looking infrared sensor. The video depicted an unidentified object exhibiting flight characteristics unlike any known US arsenal.

Dr. Gallaudet noted, “The implication of the email was clear: the author was asking whether any of the recipients were aware of classified technology demonstrations that could explain these objects.” He emphasized that, due to Department of Defense policy, such demonstrations are rigorously deconflicted with live exercises, leading him to conclude that the observed phenomena were not related to any known classified technology.

The following day, the email and its attachments mysteriously disappeared from all recipients’ inboxes.

Moreover, the incident was never discussed again by senior officials. Dr. Gallaudet expressed concern over this lack of follow-up,

stating, “As the Navy’s Chief Meteorologist at the time, my primary duty was to reduce safety-of-flight risks. Yet, it was evident that no one at the Flag Officer level was addressing the safety risks posed by UAPs. Instead, pilots were left to mitigate these threats on their own, without guidance or support.” He inferred that the information must have been classified within a compartmented program that even he himself [was] not privy to.

Dr. Gallaudet highlighted the broader implications of such secrecy, emphasizing the moral imperative for transparency. He stated, “Unelected officials in the US government do not have an exclusive right to this knowledge about the nature of reality. The American people have a right to that knowledge.” He also underscored the national security concerns, noting that despite the US spending over \$900 billion on national defense in 2025, there remains an incomplete understanding of what is in the nation’s airspace and waters.

He added, “American taxpayers have a right to know why our military’s massive budget is inadequately addressing this national defense deficiency.”

*SAS: Describe Dr. Michael Gold’s testimony in at least 400 words, using at least four direct quotes.*

**GPT:** In his opening remarks, Dr. Gold commended the committee for addressing the UAP topic, stating, “I want to begin by complimenting everyone involved in this hearing for having the courage to publicly and robustly address the Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP) issue.”

He emphasized that the long-standing stigma surrounding UAPs has hindered scientific inquiry and public discourse, noting, “Unfortunately, for decades this topic has been suffering from a stigma that has prevented much-needed study and public discourse.”

Dr. Gold highlighted the critical role of data in scientific exploration, particularly at NASA, where “data is the lifeblood of NASA and science in general.” He argued that the stigmatization of UAPs obstructs the collection of valuable data, thereby impeding the scientific community’s ability to understand these phenomena.

To illustrate this point, he referenced the experience of Lt. Commander Alex Dietrich, a decorated fighter pilot who encountered UAPs during training exercises. Commander Dietrich faced ridicule from colleagues and a lack of fol-

low-up from superiors, leading Dr. Gold to conclude, “This is a prime example of how the stigmatization of UAP prevents the gathering of invaluable data that represents our best and only chance to understand the phenomena.”

Addressing the potential contributions of NASA in UAP research, Dr. Gold suggested that the agency could play a pivotal role in combating the stigma. He proposed that NASA sponsor symposia on UAPs or participate in panels at existing conferences, stating, “Participation by NASA officials in such discussions would carry great weight and send a message to the academic community that the UAP topic is no longer taboo.” He emphasized that such initiatives could be undertaken with minimal cost but would significantly enhance the quality of research conducted on UAPs.

Furthermore, Dr. Gold advocated for NASA to review its extensive archival data, much of which could be pertinent to understanding UAPs. He recommended that NASA “create an Artificial Intelligence or Machine Learning algorithm that would review all agency archives to search for anomalous phenomena in the air, space, and sea,” thereby leveraging advanced technologies to identify patterns that may have been previously overlooked.

*SAS: Describe Luis Elizondo’s testimony in at least 400 words, using at least four direct quotes.*

**GPT:** In his opening remarks, Elizondo asserted the reality of UAP, stating, “Let me be clear: UAP are real. Advanced technologies not made by our Government – or any other government – are monitoring sensitive military installations around the globe.” He emphasized that these phenomena are not isolated incidents but represent a global pattern of activity.

Elizondo highlighted the advanced capabilities of UAPs, noting that they “are performing in excess of 1000, 2000, to 3000 G-forces.” For context, he explained that “the human body can withstand about 9 G-forces for a short period of time before you suffer negative biological consequences.”

This stark contrast underscores the extraordinary nature of these phenomena.

Addressing the issue of government secrecy, Elizondo stated, “A small cadre within our own Government involved in the UAP topic has created a culture of suppression and intimidation that I have personally been victim to, along with



Left to right: Luis Elizondo, Michael Shellenberger, and Michael Gold testify.

many of my former colleagues.” He recounted experiences of unwarranted investigations and harassment, emphasizing the need for transparency and accountability.

Elizondo also confirmed the existence of secret UAP crash retrieval and reverse engineering programs. When asked if the US government had conducted such programs, he responded affirmatively, stating, “Yes.” This revelation suggests that the government possesses advanced technologies that have not been disclosed to the public.

*SAS: Describe Michael Shellenberger’s testimony in at least 400 words, using at least four direct quotes.*

**GPT:** In his opening remarks, Shellenberger emphasized the constitutional duty of Congress to oversee the executive branch, particularly concerning classified programs. He stated, “One of Congress’s most important responsibilities is oversight of the executive branch in general, and the military and Intelligence Community (IC) in particular.” This oversight ensures that powerful governmental entities operate within the bounds of the law and remain accountable to the American people.

Shellenberger presented evidence suggesting that the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Intelligence Community are withholding information about UAP from Congress. He noted, “There is, however, a growing body of evidence that the government is not being transparent about what it knows about unidentified anomalous phenomena, formerly called UFOs, and that elements within the military and IC are in violation of their Constitutional duty to notify Congress of their operations.”

Highlighting the lack of transparency, Shellenberger referenced statements from high-ranking officials. He mentioned that “President-Elect Donald Trump and former President Barack Obama have said that the government has information about UAPs that it has not released.”

Additionally, he cited former CIA director John Brennan, who stated, “I think some of the phenomena we may be seeing continue to be unexplained and might be some type of phenomenon that results from something that we don’t yet

understand and could involve some type of activity that some might say constitutes a different form of life.”

Shellenberger also discussed the Pentagon’s release of declassified documents in April 2024, which showed that a proposed Department of Homeland Security program was intended to take possession of and reverse-engineer retrieved UAPs.

He stated, “In April of this year, the Pentagon released declassified documents showing that a proposed Department of Homeland Security program was intended to take possession of and reverse-engineer retrieved UAPs.”

*SAS: Turn your temperature up and speculate about why elements of the US government have historically worked to hide this reality about UAPs and non-human intelligence (NHI).*

**GPT:** The historical secrecy surrounding UAPs and NHIs likely stems from a confluence of pragmatic and speculative factors:

- **National Security Concerns:** Early UAP encounters coincided with the Cold War, a time when any unexplained aerial phenomenon could be interpreted as advanced foreign technology. Acknowledging the presence of NHIs might have risked exposing vulnerabilities or emboldening adversaries.

- **Technological Advantage:** If UAP technology has been recovered, governments might suppress knowledge to maintain a strategic edge. The ability to reverse-engineer such technology could yield breakthroughs in propulsion, energy, or materials science, conferring immense military and economic power.

- **Cultural and Religious Implications:** Acknowledging NHIs could destabilize societal norms and religious frameworks. The potential challenge to human-centric worldviews might provoke fear, denial, or unrest, undermining societal stability.

- **Control of the Narrative:** Maintaining secrecy allows governments to manage public perception and avoid relinquishing control over an issue they do not fully understand. By controlling the flow of information, authorities can prevent mass hysteria and preserve institutional trust.

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# MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

## Tucker Zimmerman, Dance of Love (4AD, 2024)



### MYSTRA REVIEWS #12

Review by JOSH B. & TROY C.

**TURNERS FALLS** – This week we are excited to review the new album by the great Tucker Zimmerman. Not sure how many of you have heard of this amazing artist, but he is a master musician! Some have even said he is the best songwriter of all time, and we wouldn't argue, as he is one of our all-time faves.

You should especially check him out if you are into all the other '60s/'70s heroes like the Holy Modal Rounders, Yes, David Bowie, Michael Chapman, prime-era Cat Stevens, and the Incredible String Band. He even influenced, played shows with, and recorded with some of those folks. His music is unique, yet universal, and it might change your life forever. Yes!

Against all odds he has finally come back to the States, in his 80s, and recorded recently with Big Thief in Vermont and made the amazing, singular album we are discussing this week.

**JB:** Hi Troy. So, have you heard the new Tucker LP? When I got my copy, I was having a really hard week, and I never do this, but I was playing it multiple times a day, and it really cheered me up. Music can be so healing like that. There's nothing like it, really!

**TC:** The new Tucker is gorgeous. I'm ordering it Friday! I can't wait to hear it on LP.

The album is seamless. It feels like I don't have enough time to

absorb it, even if I lived decades. I don't know if that makes sense...

**JB:** I think I understand – all of his albums are amazing, for this to come out now seems really miraculous. Starting with the first track, which is from his demos, or one of his poems: Tucker's music, and our duo project, have really helped me over the years. I love his amazing emails, he has been so giving. But, like this first song suggests, he probably has forgotten about all of it already. I will remember it until my dying day, for sure.

**TC:** You experienced this. It's rare and amazing. Like draws similar though, Josh – you two were drawn together.

**JB:** I love the second song too, "The Idiot's Maze," which might be my fave on the album. I've been there, for sure, stuck in the idiot's maze. Then comes the great "Lorelei"! What an amazing 1-2-3 punch.

When I met Tucker I couldn't believe how sharp and creative and beyond he was. It was like finding an extinct species. So, as much as this new album is amazing... I'm not surprised, because he definitely had it in him.

**TC:** He is unstoppable. So many light years beyond even my comprehension. It scared me with his poetry, because some things are scary – in that it's like a channel to universe.

Did you notice, or is it me, that he uses a very out-front rhythmic quality in his playing and delivery on some tracks? Remarkable.

**JB:** I have noticed that. He has a great and unique rhythm, kind of like how Bo Diddley created his own... maybe "Tucker's rhythm" will be similarly famous.

I picture the inside of his mind as being similar to the inside of his place when I visited him. His house was like a library, most of the walls were floor-to-ceiling shelves of books... Maybe his mind has shelves of his poems and writing. There was a lot of Stephen King and Bukowski in his library, by the way, and mostly American writers though he lives in Belgium, I thought that was cool.

**TC:** Stephen King has some mind-blowing complex ideas, and can dry the mind like a recursive error. I was just thinking of him yesterday. I like that Tucker will delve into Bukowski.

"Leave It On The Porch Outside" is really special. What a glorious track: "He's already got a name, it's Jack or Jane / Leave it on the porch outside."

Also, did he just say "Does anybody have a kazoo?" on the track "The Rama-lama-ding-dong Song"? It's one of my faves right now. I'm thinking about this new album with Big Thief, and his delivery and the type of poetry, and what is on *Tunnel Visions*. I wonder what parts Tucker wrote with guitar, or a small piano?

**JB:** I think Tucker usually writes with his guitar. He has a very particular, certain way he records, which connects all his stuff – back to the '60s, even – with its production, mixing, etc. I think he still uses the same guitar as back then, too, or the same model anyway, it's a European 12-string.

I love entering his dimension on all of his albums... similar, yet always exploring things in new ways; creating new and exciting stuff within that context.

**TC:** This makes sense on the phrasing of the new album. So the band follows his complex thoughts. Zoned out so simple, and still can twist one's mind around.

With reading, too, Tucker has like a super-upgraded operating system. It would be crazy to see what he would say about the Ma-

habharata and Bukowski. Maybe a continuation? Reminds me of a reflection of Bob Dylan's quote on nature – he said he doesn't dig nature. I don't know the whole quote. But basically nature decays and dreams don't. But who knows?

Did Tucker ever mention Bob Dylan?

**JB:** Not to me. I did bring up different bands with him, and he commented on a few of them. He said the Rounders were OK, for instance... But after a bit he would change the subject. I never brought up Bowie, even though Bowie was a fan of his, and his music is in that Bowie movie on Netflix.

Do you have a favorite of his LPs? I think I like Foot Tap [1977] best. You got me into Word Games [1983]... it's really cool that he could even be good in the '80s. Not everyone could do that. And on into the '90s and '00s!

**TC:** I like *Foot Tap*. I got the first LP [1969] first. But I have listened to *Square Dance* [1980] more, to be really honest, second after *Tunnel Visions*. I don't know the first album as well.

"The Idiot's Maze" is gorgeous – the slide, or pedal steel, is lovely. Sounds like a banjo, too? The timing of the song is so gorgeous. There is like really lovely experiential yet dreamlike aspect toward the end of the track into "Lorelei."

"Lorelei" – a really dreamboat float... This whole album is one of the best recordings in a while. He really knocked it out of the ballpark. Did he play for you at all when you were at his home?

**JB:** No... I tried to book a show with him, but I don't think he was playing around that time. It was so nice he invited me and Tony to his house, though, really magic. I love his voice and his storytelling. His records are like that, too – I love sinking into that voice.

**TC:** Tuck says he's so lucky to be alive on "The Season." Magic.

"Burial At Sea" is like another page of the poem. The record is bookended, or open-ended like a poem? I like how they don't say it,

but it's true, another page that ties in lovingly with "The Season" and "Threads Of Life"...

The lyrics are magic. This song "Lorelei" is gorgeous. It took me a bit for it to kick into my brain waves. And the way it goes into the next song, "The Season," is really crazy. This is like a companion to *Tunnel Visions*. I guess that's Tucker's flow? It's like The Renderers, in the vibe of "Million Lights."

Listening to it from the first track again, "Old Folks Of Farmersville": It's really glorious in the most otherworldly way. The arrangements are intricate but not too overdone, yet it's layered. The whole album is like one big story. Like the song says, "Patchwork quilts are filled with dreams."

I like "Don't Go Crazy (Go In Peace)." You said he had a cool grandmother?

**JB:** Yes, we bonded over cool grandparents. He lived with his grandparents for a bit, and they helped him.

**TC:** Ah, so he did have a magical grandmother.

**JB:** He talked about the San Francisco scene a while, which blew my mind. He was at every one of the first 10 to 20 Jefferson Airplane shows! And he said he was in the room when the Dead was formed. Such a legendary story... It seems like a very tight scene in SF back then. But then I guess he came back a few years after those early years, and said it was like hell on earth. Maybe that's when he moved in with his grandparents.

**TC:** We missed him live that time he played out west, during the "official designated pandemic." It's amazing he came over during that time and traveled and played to bring joy and hope. He's such an incredible soul.

I keep going back and forth between *Tunnel Visions* and this LP. I have to say there is a stark, vast contrast.

**JB:** Yes – he has really pushed beyond all worlds with this new album. It's so awesome! I am psyched for him. Bests to Tucker, times infinity!



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looking forward...

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5**

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

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

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

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

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6**

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

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

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Saraha, Hardcar, Immune Friction*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Eggtooth Productions presents *Home for the Hologays*. (See page B1.) \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

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

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *True Stew*. No cover. 8 p.m.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7**

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

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

UU Society, Amherst: *Jacqueline Schwab, Tim Van Egmond*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

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

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

Loculous Studios, Holyoke: *Ben Hersey, Hayley Blackstone, Chris St. George, Matt Krefling*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Eggtooth Productions presents *Home for the Hologays*. (See

page B1.) \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

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

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Outer Stylic, Beast Mode*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

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

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**

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

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: Reading, *Margot Douaihy, Maggie Thrash*. \$ 3 p.m.

Memorial Chapel, Northfield Mount Hermon: *Vespers*. Free. 3:30 and 6:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10**

Palladium, Worcester: *I Am Morbid, Suffocation, UADA, Mortiferum, Fulci, Knoll*. \$ 6 p.m.

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

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11**

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Tev Stevig, Myrtle Street Klezmer*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Kim Chin-Gibbons, Toska, Harm*. \$ 8 p.m.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12**

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

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

Bombyx Center, Florence: *About This, It Was Not Yet Written* with *Myk Freedman*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Micah Thomas Trio*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13**

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Carol Devine & The Mighty Fine*. \$ 7 p.m.

The Drake, Amherst: *Anxious, Restraining Order, Burning Lord, Dimension*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *TapRoots, Mal Maiz*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ashley Rhodes*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14**

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Agonizers, Marianne Toilet & The Runs, Typhoid Rosie, The New Limits, The Prozacs, The Downstrokes, Futon Lasagna, Sapien Joyride*. \$ 6 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Mon-

tague Center: Open Mic feat. *Matthew Thornton*. No cover. 6:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Jeopardy, Slobdrop, Maidenhead, Woundlicker*. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Stompbox Trio*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

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

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15**

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

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

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 16**

Marigold, Easthampton: *Howling Giant, Black Pyramid, Modern Ego*. \$ 7 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18**

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown & Friends*. No cover. 8 p.m.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19**

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Voo Holiday Spectacular* feat. *Corki & Ken, Falltown String Band, Drew Paton, Fern Bork & Bruce Kahn, Marvin Shedd, Jerri Higgins*, many more. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Kirk Knuffke, Joe McPhee, Michael Bisio trio*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Stephen Kellogg, Moonrise Cartel*. \$ 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *E, Roger C. Miller*. \$ 8 p.m.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20**

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Sue, A Home Beneath, Glasss, unbrokenapologies, An Hero*. \$ 6 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Peter 'B-Side' Beebe*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hutghi's at the Nook, Westfield: *PWRUP, Bent, Jeopardy, Slobdrop*. \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Screening, *Far Out: Life On & After the Commune*, with Q&A. \$ 7:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21**

Palladium, Worcester: *Shadows Fall, Uneath, E-Town Concrete, Jasta*, more. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Ugly Sweater Party*. Free. 7 p.m.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *The Niels*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Thalia Zedek, Sky Furrows, J. Burkett*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22**

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Public Serpents, RBNX, Threat Level Burgundy, Ragz to Stitchez*. \$ 1 p.m.

Abandon Dream, Turners Falls: *Peter Stampfel, Stella Kola, Cycles Inside, Tony Pasquarosa, Joshua Burkett*. \$ 3 p.m.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22**

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Screening, *Soundtrack to a Coup D'Etat* (2024). \$ 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Jeff Belanger's The Fright Before Christmas*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27**

Mystery Train Records, Amherst: *Junk Orbit, Joshua Burkett, Water Shrek, Cosmic Ray*. \$ 5 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Low, Bag Lady, Mothra, Unagi*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 4**

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Big Top Drag Show*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 10**

CitySpace, Easthampton: *One Ton Tommy Gun, Dead By Wednesday, Skinlab, Infinite Cruelty, Skud*. \$ 8 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 11**

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Mono Means One*. \$ 8 p.m.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 12**

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

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 17**

The Drake, Amherst: *Perennial, Radical Joy, Truther*. \$ 8 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 18**

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Dear Ella*. \$ 7 p.m.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Stompbox Trio*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Aradia, Scott Hsu, The Third Entity*. \$ 9:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 31**

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

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1**

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: First Generation Ensemble presents *Mother Tongue*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Bill Frisell*. \$ 7 p.m.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6**

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

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11**

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

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15**

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Pamela Means*. \$ 7 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *The Bad Plus*. \$ 7 p.m.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Do It Now!* \$ 7:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 7**

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Suzanne Vega*. \$ 8 p.m.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 25**

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

## EXHIBITS

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

**Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls:** *A First-Class Machine Shop*, local history exhibit with images, text, maps, and artifacts, and *Junior Duck Stamps*, top youth entries for the state-wide 2024 Junior Duck Stamp competition, through January 16. *Deep Roots: A History of Agriculture in the Connecticut River* is on display in the hallway.

**Montague Center Library:** *Susan Dorais*, collages combining natural and architectural elements to create fantastical sights, through January 3.

**Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center:** Guest exhibit featuring Andrew Vlock and Chinatsu Nagamune, ceramic and textile artists from Leverett, through January.

**Rhodes Art Center, Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill:** *Countervail: The Words and Work of Anne Thiam*, sculpture, poetry, and music. Through January 24, with a reception this Friday, December 6 at 6:30 p.m. To visit at other times, email [jroureke@nmh-school.org](mailto:jroureke@nmh-school.org).

**Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett:** *Annual Crafts & Arts Holiday Sale*, artists and craftspeople from the LCA and surrounding community, and open studios. Saturdays, December 7 and 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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

Through December 17.

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

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

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

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

**Gallery A3, Amherst:** *Small Wonders*, works smaller than 10" by 10" by member artists. Through December, with a reception this Thursday, December 5, from 5 to 7 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:** *Peace and Joy*, holiday arts and craft exhibit by member artists, through January.

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

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

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**VALLEY VIEW** from page B1

Mather's signature piece, known by collectors throughout the land, is a Chippendale high case of drawers with vine-carved pilasters, said to have last sold for more than \$300,000. He built it for Deacon Thomas Sanderson (1746-1824), my fifth-great-grandfather, around the time of his 1803 move from Canterbury, today upper River Road in Whately, to Indian Hill, now the start of Whately Glen.

According to Mather's account books, owned by Historic Deerfield and Delaware's Winterthur Museum, the carpenter and Deacon Sanderson did a lot of business. Around the time of his move to and upgrade of Adonijah Taylor's home and millsite, Sanderson paid Mather \$28 for the highboy and a dollar more for a companion "desk and bookcase," the whereabouts of which is today unknown.

The combined \$57 expense was no small fee at the time – Mather charged a daily fee of \$1.25 for his services, and 75 cents a day for the "unskilled" laborers assisting him.

As the son of sea captain Benjamin Mather and apprentice to a coastal Connecticut joiner, young William had maritime motifs in his soul. Thus, the expertly carved seashell centered on the skirt of the Sanderson highboy. Maritime embellishments such as fishtails, lobster tails, whales' tails, and seashells occasionally showed up on the priciest New London County furniture crafted during the last half of the 18th century.

So – coupled with the fact that he had a long, documented business relationship with Deacon Sanderson – Mather was in my mind the most likely maker of my fishtail chest.

**An Earlier Style**

There was, however, a doubt-stirring caveat.

On the back of the chest is a handwritten list of the Sanderson brides who received it as a wedding gift. It begins with the 1816 marriage of Mehitable Wing to Si-

las Sanderson, a younger son who accompanied Deacon Thomas to Indian Hill. The problem was that the chest's construction screamed 18th century.

An example of "survival furniture," perhaps? Well, maybe, but I had trouble accepting that. My suspicion was that Mehitable was probably not the wedding-chest's first recipient. Yes, it accompanied her to her new Whately home as part of her dowry, but the Chippendale style and Queen Anne girth suggested it had been made a generation earlier.

*Hmmm?* Could it have been built instead for the wedding of Mehitable's mother, Zelinda Allis, who married Isaiah Wing in 1786 and died from childbirth complications in 1797? Mehitable, born 1790, was Zelinda's third child and first daughter, as well as her first-married daughter. Thus, she was a likely recipient of such a traditional wedding gift.

Proving a line of descent back to the Wing homestead was another matter, though, and I eventually relegated the search to the back burner until the banister-back chairs came to light. So, this recent purchase unleashed a new round of research, this time reaching into old Conway deeds for potential furniture-makers.

I had previously done some Conway deed research along the Deerfield line and, combined with various genealogical explorations, had noticed a surge of Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard families into Conway in the 1770s and 1780s. If one or more of these folks named Dunham, Mayhew, Look, and Manter brought woodworking skills to the nascent "frontier" community, perhaps the fishtails came with them.

I emailed Conway Historical Commission chairwoman Sarah Williams, whose research often overlaps mine. We had previously discussed early Conway/Ashfield settlers from Cape Cod and the Islands, but I had never taken a deep dive into how they made ends meet.

The Cape Cod Wing family was, of course, the first one to activate my inquisitive juices, but I could find no evidence that Isaiah, his father, or any of his brothers were carpenters. Though a distant cousin Elisha Wing (1782-1869) was a prolific 19th-century Ashfield housewright/joiner, I judged him too young to have made my chest or chairs.

**The Shop Joiner**

My next target was the Dunham family, early settlers in Conway's "South Part" community resting in the southeast corner of town. Colonel Daniel Dunham, Jr. (1711-1797) came to town from Martha's Vineyard in 1774 with a family that included sons Daniel, Cornelius, and Jonathan, all of whom show up in Conway deeds. Though the Dunhams didn't stay long, they left many gravestones in the old South Part Cemetery.

"So," I emailed Williams, "were any of the Dunhams woodworkers?"

"Yes," she responded. "Good thinking. There's a deed identifying Daniel Dunham, Jr. as a housewright. You may also want to explore Wadsworth Mayhew, a Martha's Vineyard joiner who followed the Dunhams to Conway."

Bingo! Deed and online research down many rabbit holes immediately convinced me Mayhew was my man.

He not only knew the Dunhams: in 1778, his sister Lucinda (1738-1815) married Cornelius (1748-1816) in Conway, where they are buried. Also, a couple of years after settling in Cambridge, New York, in about 1790, Mayhew sold to Cornelius and Lucinda the last of his Conway landholdings within spitting distance of his Roaring Brook sawmill.

Born to a prosperous Martha's Vineyard family in 1741, Wadsworth Mayhew came to Conway with younger brother Zephaniah and Lucinda around 1775, when he paid James Gilmore more than 193 pounds for a 70-acre parcel with dwelling and outbuildings. Four



*The fishtails repeat at the top of this chair (above) and base of this chest (below), both believed to have come from the Conway homestead of Isaiah Wing.*

years later he paid Captain Lucius Allis 20 pounds for a small adjoining parcel on which he may have built the sawmill.


Captain Allis could be an important twist to our discussion of the fishtail chest. He was Mehitable Wing Sanderson's maternal grandfather, and an important Conway character. Could this neighbor of Mayhew have commissioned the wedding chest for daughter Zelinda?

I believe so. In fact, I think you can take it to the bank. And it would have been the perfect occasion for Mayhew to decorate a chest of drawers with six of his signature fishtail drops in an uncustomary place.

Martha's Vineyard deeds identify Mayhew as a joiner before his move to Conway, where he is also sometimes thus identified. By the time he left Conway before 1790 for Cambridge, New York, an outgoing deed identifies him as a "shop join-

er," the first such reference I have seen on a deed. It clearly refers to a furniture-maker. His shop was likely one of the outbuildings he purchased from Gilmore, conveniently close to the sawmill he soon built.

Further research shows that Wadsworth's nephew – Abiah Wadsworth Mayhew (1774-1850), son of Zephaniah – was also a skilled cabinetmaker with an early Spencertown, New York shop. That village is 10 miles west of West Stockbridge, Massachusetts and 60 miles south of Uncle Wadsworth's Cambridge, New York home.

So, finally my long search struck gold. Though there remain a few loose ends to connect, I believe Wadsworth Mayhew was the maker of my Conway chest and chairs. The Conway Historical Society chair, too. A Conway resident for a mere 15 years or less, his cryptic signature was  Vineyard fishtails.

**MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!**

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**Montague Community Television News****Covering the Basics**

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

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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!

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