

The Montague Reporter

CRAFT

‘What Better Way Than Working With Animals?’



Chelsey Little, proprietor of Montague Taxidermy, works carefully on a pheasant at her Turners Falls studio.

By EVELYN AUGUSTO

TURNERS FALLS – As I prepared to interview local biologist and environmentalist-turned-taxidermist Chelsey Little, I wondered how the old idiom “curiosity killed the cat, but satisfaction brought it back,” might apply to her inquisitive journey through life. After meeting Little at her taxidermy studio in Turners Falls, it was apparent to me that her commitment to her family, her quest for knowledge, and her drive to work hard all aid her in navigating each day.

As a scientist, curiosity no doubt fuels her tank. A working mom, Little divides her time between her family, her art form, and her current position as the superintendent of Montague’s Clean Water Facility. Her background in biological sciences was the mortar that helped her build her part-time Turners Falls taxidermy business one referral at a time.

Little dabbled in taxidermy as a hobby for a year or so, and last

October word of mouth had spread about her projects and she started to receive a lot of attention and requests for her services. It was then that she decided to obtain her state licenses, and officially launched Montague Taxidermy.

Read on to satisfy your own curiosity about taxidermy, a subject that may make some people uncomfortable, but energizes Little’s quest for knowledge and balance.

MR: *What is your relationship to nature? Would you consider yourself a naturalist, or an artist, or both?*

CL: I definitely consider myself both. Ever since I was a young child, I loved animals and the concept of conservation efforts. When most children were watching Saturday morning cartoons, I was watching the Discovery Channel!

As a scientist in my day job, where I deal heavily with science and math, I have found that sometimes not “sciencing” and focusing

see **CRAFT** page A4

GILL SELECTBOARD

Towns Hash Out Contract For Northfield Ambulance

By LUKE DERROY

A brief meeting of the Gill selectboard Monday night saw the approval of an intermunicipal agreement for emergency medical services, allowing Bernardston, Erving, and Gill to continue to use the Northfield EMS service. The contract has been in the works for some time, formalizing an arrangement that has by all accounts already been working well.

By keeping services under the Northfield umbrella, board members said, towns can maintain lower costs while continuing to rely on Northfield’s strong reputation.

“There’s a good group of people involved, and I think it’s good for

the town of Gill,” said selectboard member Randy Crochier, who added that the cost comes out to “about 10 cents per person per day.”

“As I told my wife,” Crochier said, “if I get up in the morning and I take a quarter out of my pocket, I’ve just covered an ambulance for the two of us – and some to spare, in case somebody pops over.”

The vote to approve the contract was unanimous.

FRCOG Charter Review

For the first time since its adoption in 1998, the charter outlining the purpose and structure of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments is up for review. Most of

see **GILL** page A4

Montague Selectboard Race Boils Down to Two

By MIKE JACKSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Incumbent selectboard members in Gill, Erving, and Wendell are stepping down this spring, but the only race on the ballot in our coverage towns is in Montague on May 20, when five-term member Chris Boutwell faces a challenge from Ed Voudren, who held the seat from 1997 to 2004.

Another former member is back for more in Gill, where John Ward, who served from 2009 to 2021, is the sole candidate for a seat being vacated by five-term Randy Crochier.

Town clerk Doreen Stevens told the *Reporter* Leslie Ann Wheeler has filed papers for a vacant board of health seat, and that “[w]ith the passing of Fred O. Chase II on March 12, we have a vacant Constable position.” Ethan X. Chase, she said, has taken out papers to serve the final year of “Fred’s term.” Gill heads to the polls May 19.

Erving town coordinator Bryan Smith said no one turned in papers to run for the selectboard seat Scott

see **RACE** page A5

DISPATCH

‘Hands Off’ March Draws Throngs to State Capitol

By DAVID DETMOLD

BOSTON – “Hello, movement family!” cried Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley. A vast throng of protestors jamming the perimeter of City Hall Plaza in Boston on Saturday, April 5 joined her in chanting, “Hands Off!”

“Hands off our bodies! Hands off our Medicaid! Our Social Security, our Constitution, our cancer research, our democracy, our Black history books, libraries and museums. Hands off our immigrant neighbors!”

People stood on tiptoe, on picnic tables and parapets, and pressed forward, trying to get within hearing range. But thousands more stood packed in a human traffic jam all the way up Tremont Street to the Boston Common like sardines in a can.

Organizers of the Boston Hands Off rally said they hoped 25,000 people might show up to protest federal funding cuts, deportation policies, the firing of federal workers who assist in the deliverance of government services, and the dismantlement of federal agencies.

At least four times that number

see **DISPATCH** page A6

Lieutenant to Retire Early; Report Flags Bias Concerns

By MIKE JACKSON

MONTAGUE – Documents released by the town of Montague on Wednesday shed light on the sudden resignation of a police officer last August, as well as the announcement in January that police lieutenant Christopher Bonnett, the department’s second-in-command, had been placed on leave amid an internal investigation.

According to a disciplinary agreement signed last week by Bonnett and selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, the lieutenant is serving a 30-day suspension that ends April 23 and will then use accrued vacation time until May 2, at which point he “has decided he wishes to retire.”

The document states that it is not

see **REPORT** page A3



The released documents shed light on staffing difficulties at the police department.

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Opinion of Town Meeting Sought on Gravel Road

By GEORGE BRACE

At Tuesday’s selectboard meeting, Leverett’s board continued working on the warrant for the annual town meeting on May 3. Much of the discussion concerned wording, but a resident asked that one article seeking the town’s opinion of a road-paving project be removed entirely. The board also heard a presentation on the problem of roadside trash.

Dudleyville Road resident Ray Bradley urged the board to remove an article seeking voters’ opinion as to whether to resurface that road with pavement or chipseal, or leave

it as gravel. The road is in the first year of a multi-year drainage and resurfacing project, and any pavement would still be years away, but engineers have asked what surface the town wants to use, saying it affects initial drainage work.

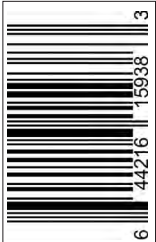
The draft article noted that according to town regulations, a planning board hearing and approval are required before paving a gravel road, but Bradley said he felt the decision should be made by residents of the road, not the greater population. He said “90%” of Leverett residents never use the road, and those who live there have

see **LEVERETT** page A8



Turners Falls High School’s Olivia Wolbach returns a volley during her No. 1 singles win as the Thunder hosted the Green Wave last Friday. Greenfield tallied a 4-1 victory over Turners. For more high school sports coverage, see Page A6.

Open Up, Eternal Lips, And Swallow Me	
A Letter and an Op/Ed.....	A2
Local Briefs.....	A3
Montague Selectboard Notes.....	A5
High School Sports: A Thousand K’s!.....	A6
Wendell Selectboard Notes.....	A7
10, 20, and 150 Years Ago.....	A7
Erving Selectboard Notes.....	A8
West Along: A Safe Cave in a Wreath.....	B1
Police Log Retrospective: Early Pando.....	B1
A Heartfelt Farewell.....	B1
Chip’s Pricy Return Trip.....	B2
Montague Police Log Highlights.....	B3
Three Comics & the Cryptojam.....	B4
April’s Featured Poet.....	B5
Exhibits.....	B6
Events Calendar.....	B6-B7



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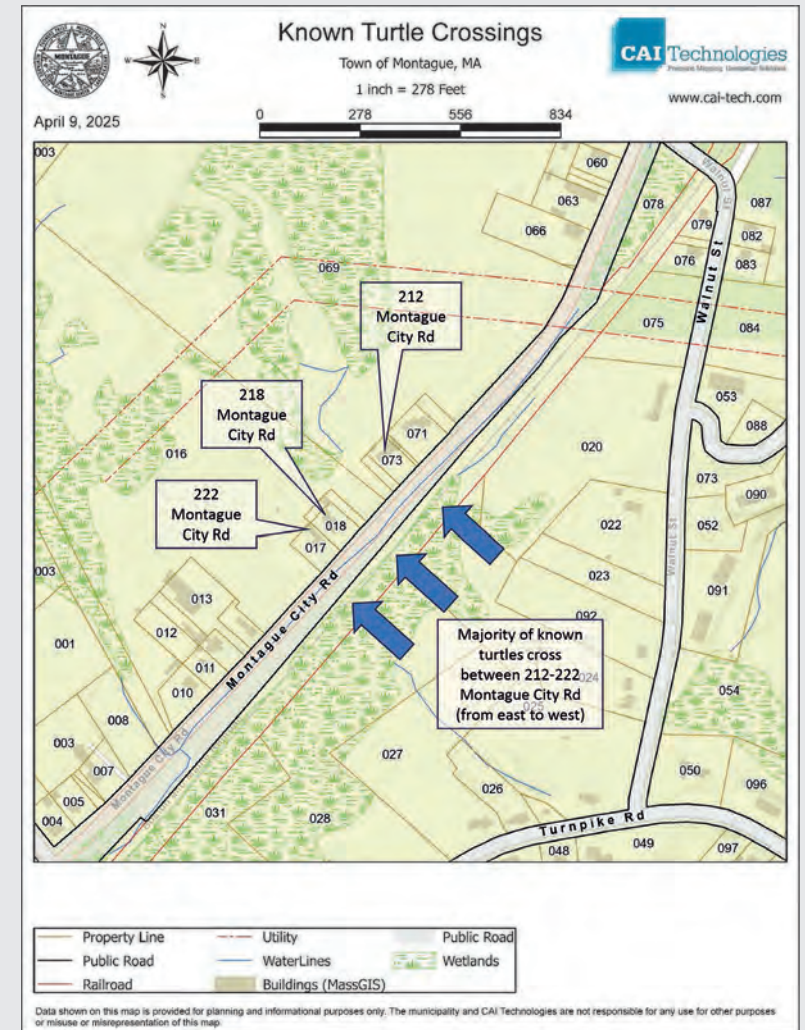
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August 2002

Slow Down

We were about to solve all the world's problems with an editorial expressing political opinion, but just before press time Montague town planner Maureen Pollock sent us this map. Pollock said resident Melissa Winters, the con com, the

Great Falls Discovery Center, and Sheffield Elementary students are conspiring to make lawn signs for this stretch before turtle crossing season hits, mid-May to early July.

Pretty cool. Keep an eye out for turtles, here and everywhere.



Chet Hall and Ryan Cleveland move trout from one pond to another at the Bitzer state hatchery in Montague. Stocking began last week with a tank full of trout going to the Cape. Five state hatcheries provide half a million trout to Massachusetts waterways each spring. Take a self-guided tour of the ponds anytime between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays.

Letter to the Editors

Exchanges of Goodwill

David Brule, longtime columnist for the *Montague Reporter*, has once again proved himself to be a man of many hats. His March 27 column, “USAID Comes to My Village,” is an excellent example of that. David uses his experience from a few years (okay... many) back in the Peace Corps in Northern Africa to underline the importance of many essentials that we are, sadly, losing track of.

Certainly the crucial significance to the community there of USAID is a highlight. Not only the support itself, but also the goodwill towards our country that was engendered by its donations, are vital elements

not to be taken lightly.

In addition, the empathy that flows through that aid, and the empathy shown by David himself in enmeshing himself in the language and the culture of the region, are vital in creating understanding between peoples. Not only were his students adept in the use of many languages, but so was David.

There is so much to be learned from these examples. Thank you, David. May goodwill live on.

Jude and Martin Wobst
Leverett

Correction & Clarification

If you found yourself scratching your head at the opening sentence of last week's lead editorial (April 3, 2025, “All Against All,” Page A2), you weren't alone.

We wrote: “Canadian newsprint is, miraculously, exempt from Trump's new round of tariffs, so his is not a farewell note.”

Some readers who struggled to make sense of this decided it must mean that these tariffs would not be the president's undoing. But no, a small “t” had run off – when “his” is corrected to read “this,” that sentence should make more sense. Though tariffs on newsprint could well bankrupt this newspaper, for now “this” was not a farewell note to our community.

Garden-variety typos often slip past us, but this one distorted our meaning, and for that we apologize.

OP ED Open Letter to the Montague Finance Committee

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – As a reporter for this local newspaper it is my job to cover all sides of controversial local issues in a fair and balanced manner. The airport budget, which has been hotly debated for at least a decade and probably longer, is such an issue.

There has been a good deal of support for the airport, particularly in recent years when it has been far more professionally run than in the past. But there are vocal and well-respected citizens, including influential town meeting members, who do not think the town should be running an airport – or at least think it should be financed by its own revenues.

I attended a Montague finance committee meeting on April 2, not wearing my “reporter's hat” but rather the hat of a town meeting member, a former finance committee member, and a resident who does not have any problem with the town running an airport. The fin com in the end voted to support the proposed airport budget, which will go before the annual town meeting in May.

I happened to agree with this decision but,

not to be harsh, it seemed to me that the discussion mostly ignored some key fiscal and “political” issues which have been the context for the debates at town meeting – and the fin com is, after all, the financial arm of town meeting:

1. There is no other town-related budget like the airport, which is expected to mostly pay for itself by the revenue it generates. That has been the discussion for as long as I have been in town, and it was magnified about five years ago when everyone, including the airport manager and airport commission, seemed to make a clear commitment to eliminate the tax side of the revenue. As a fan of the airport, I was not a big fan of that commitment, but it is huge part of the current context.
2. The commitment to eliminating tax funding was partly a response to its vocal and articulate critics on town meeting. Over the years they have argued that the evidence supporting the notion that the airport is a financial benefit to the town has been weak. I think the fin com may need to come up with some stronger evidence than town meeting has seen in the past.
3. Another key context of the current debate is the town's purchase of Pioneer Aviation – which,

again, I happen to believe was necessary – combined with the failure to install a large solar array to help finance that purchase. The obstacle, related to the lack of capacity in the electrical grid, is hopefully temporary, but the result has been an increase in tax dependency, which contradicts the commitment to eliminating it.

4. A picky point: It was suggested that the airport could use a “discretionary fund,” like the public works department has. But that account is funded by taxation, and setting up a similar one for the airport would only increase the degree of support the airport receives from taxation.
5. The town has made a commitment to paying the airport manager a salary consistent with that of other department heads. I believe this is necessary for the stability of the airport, but it has made eliminating tax support far more difficult.

I feel that the town should consider dropping the goal of eliminating tax support for the airport, and setting a more realistic goal that a certain percentage of the facility's budget be supported by the revenues it generates.

Jeff Singleton is a Montague town meeting member for Precinct 5. He lives in Turners Falls.

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PHONE: (413) 863-8666
EMAIL:
editor@montaguereporter.org
ads@montaguereporter.org
bills@montaguereporter.org
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org
events@montaguereporter.org
poetry@montaguereporter.org
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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Drawdown Montague, a group of neighbors collaborating on community projects related to climate change, is **looking for home gardeners** who would like to share their seasonal bounty with less fortunate community members.

Drawdown volunteers will collect, wash, and distribute donations of produce and flowers to the Franklin Area Survival Center in Turners Falls and the Millers Falls Food Pantry. If you'd like to participate, contact Susan Campbell at campbellsm3rd@gmail.com.

The rustic tent **camping sites at Barton's Cove in Gill** fill up quickly each year, and online reservations opened up this week for the season that starts on Memorial Day weekend. Each campsite has a picnic table, grills, and campfire ring, but no utility hookups. There are two group sites for larger parties, and showers near the ranger's station.

Reservations can now be made at tinyurl.com/b-cove-camp – after May 22, phone reservations are also accepted at (413) 863-9300. Tent sites are \$22 a night.

The public is invited to meet Amherst artist Sophie Foulkes at Loot, 62 Avenue A in Turners Falls,

this Saturday, April 12 from 2 to 4 p.m. Foulkes is one of the three winning artists of the **Wheat Paste Mural Project**.

Foulkes will bring draft designs for the temporary murals to be installed on two buildings along the Canalside Rail Trail bike path, and you can contribute your ideas for the final design and give feedback on the drafts. These murals are temporary, designed to last about three months.

The **Palestine Liberation Film Series** continues this Saturday, April 12 at 5 p.m. at the Great Falls Harvest's Avenue A storefront, next to Pipione's. The documentary *Palestine is Still the Issue* (2002) will be shown at 5:30 p.m., followed by short films and a discussion at 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments are available, and dinner can be ordered from the restaurant.

Greenfield Garden Cinemas is hosting a single screening of *The Encampments (2025)* next Monday, April 14 at 7 p.m. This documentary follows students protesting the war in Gaza at Columbia University and features graduate student Mahmoud Khalil, a spokesperson for the group, who was arrested by ICE agents in March and is being held with no charges at a detention center in Louisiana.

The **Easter Bunny** hops down to Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls on Friday, April 18 between 3:30 and 5 p.m. Everyone is invited to come and take pictures with the bunny on personal cell phones or cameras, and free filled Easter eggs will be given to all children who attend. Call Hidy Osorio with questions at (413) 775-8213.

Peregrine falcons have nested on top of the UMass Amherst library since 2003. They've been under the watchful eye of the **Falcon Cam** every spring when the nesting pairs hatch their eggs. You can watch them at library.umass.edu/falcons/

Educators can also contact Lauren Hubbard at (413) 545-6156 or weiss@umass.edu to arrange a Zoom visit with their class to learn more about falcons.

Beans of all kinds are a popular New England dish, and if you want to grow some this summer, you might be interested in the Provider Bean seeds available through the **Common Seed Project**. It's a bush snap bean and easy to grow, with a compact shape that takes to containers and beds without stakes or strings.

The seeds are available through participating libraries, inspired by the Common Reads program, including the Leverett Public Library. Other libraries interested in joining and receiving a toolkit can email commonseedproject@gmail.com.

An **heirloom bean seed has been rescued** from the dustbin of history by Worcester grower and seed saver Jen Burt. Burt read about the Worcester Mammoth

Horticultural Bean, a popular pole bean in the 1890s that became dis-used, and tracked down some seeds at an Iowa seed-savers' exchange in 2021. You can read about her discovery in a blog post on *Edible Boston* at tinyurl.com/burt-bean.

Saturday, April 26 is **Park Serve Day** in Massachusetts. Join other volunteers to spruce up the grounds at the Discovery Center in Turners Falls and along the Canalside Rail Trail from 10 a.m. till noon. Bring gloves, trash bags, water, and a snack. Register to serve at tinyurl.com/gfdc-serve. This is an annual statewide event sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Would you and your family like to **walk through a whale**? Head to The Workroom at 33 Hawley Street in Northampton on Sunday, April 27 from 1 to 3 p.m. for a journey through a 60-foot-long inflated fin whale, created in the 1970s by Northampton science teacher Fred Morrison to celebrate Earth Day.

Morrison created the model by taping together heavy-duty polyethylene in a school gymnasium, and it has been traveling around Massachusetts and Connecticut ever since. He will be on hand to explain about the nature of whales and the history of his creation. There will be whale storytime for the preschool set, and art supplies on hand to draw whales.

Adult admission is \$5 to \$15, sliding scale; kids can get in free, but must be accompanied by an adult.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.



REPORT from page A1

an “admission of wrongdoing,” and that Bonnett and top town officials “agree not to denigrate, demean or disparage one another in a manner that would create harm or lower a third party’s perception about the integrity, image or competence of the other.”

The second public document released by the town, originally in response to a records request by the *Greenfield Recorder*, is an 84-page report by a private investigator pertaining to an internal affairs investigation Bonnett conducted last summer against a patrol officer, Joshua Dobosz, who resigned August 15.

The analysis, by private investigator Steven Fennessy of the Quincy-based firm Colando Investigative Services, held that Bonnett had violated the department’s internal affairs policy, as well as its policies concerning “truthfulness,” “incompetence,” and “incurring department liability.”

The disciplinary agreement notes that the Montague selectboard concluded Bonnett had violated three of these four policies, but does not specify which three. According to town administrator Walter Ramsey, the board did not feel he had violated the policy on “truthfulness.”

A request for comment from police chief Chris Williams received no reply as of press time.

The Colando report describes events leading up to and following the internal affairs investigation into Dobosz, which was initiated

after a female officer in the department complained to colleagues on August 7 that Dobosz would follow her into the women’s locker room unannounced, made inappropriate comments, and made her feel uncomfortable.

According to the report, Bonnett then verbally interviewed the female officer – whose name and identifying information are redacted – who apparently told him Dobosz had entered her locker room “dozens of times over the years.” That same night, the lieutenant began reviewing security camera footage to document a number of times Dobosz entered and left the women’s locker room in July.

Bonnett interviewed Dobosz on August 9, but did not refer to these videos. Dobosz reportedly told Bonnett he sometimes entered the women’s locker room to hand over a shared Taser to his colleague at shift change.

On August 12, chief Williams and the selectboard reviewed Bonnett’s report, which he submitted with a number of the security camera videos. A disciplinary hearing was then scheduled for August 19, but Dobosz quit on August 15, effective immediately.

“It is with a heavy heart that I submit this letter,” he wrote in his brief resignation notice.

Fennessy reported that he believed there were “deficiencies in the investigation and in the Internal Affairs report,” including that department policy had entitled Dobosz to a “fair and unbiased investigation,” which Bonnett may not have been

able to provide – due to his own relationship with the complainant.

The same day Bonnett submitted his findings, Fennessy wrote, he and the female officer drove together to Logan Airport and flew together to Las Vegas for a shared vacation, kept secret from their colleagues.

The report paints a murky picture of how this relationship came to be known within the department, but pivotal to the revelation was a text the female officer sent after a December 7 holiday party suggesting another colleague ask Bonnett “who’s [sic] house he’s been at every night for the last 9 months”.

According to Fennessy, this information made it all the way to Williams, who spoke with the officer and was informed this was a “mistake, due to the auto-correct function of her cell phone” and that she had meant to type “9 weeks.”

Large sections of the private investigator’s report are transcripts of his interviews with both parties to the apparent dating relationship, who provided him with contradictory information and shifting rationales for their actions.

“It is reasonable to believe that a senior police officer in Lieutenant Bonnett’s position should have been aware of the perceptions and repercussions this ‘extra-professional’ relationship would cause,” Fennessy concluded, “during and after an internal affairs investigation such as the one at hand.”

Bonnett’s decision not to disclose his relationship to his commanding officer, the investigator added, “created a situation in which



“I get to meet interesting people and I learn from them. And I have an opportunity to help out, often in very simple ways.”

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GILL from page A1

the proposed updates are focused on language changes that better represent the organization’s current operations.

“This is to make the charter more reflective of the organization’s needs, now and going forward,” said town administrator Ray Purington. One notable proposed change would reduce the required voting threshold from a two-thirds majority to a simple majority.

The changes would need to be approved at town meeting next month.

Grease for the Wheels

The selectboard members also met as the sewer commission, joined by the two new non-selectboard sewer commissioners, Jeff Suprenant and David Conway.

The commission is still finalizing the sewer budget for FY’26. A new flow meter – set to be funded with \$25,000 in ARPA money – is slated for installation, which could affect recorded sewage volume sent to Montague for processing. Additional unknowns in the budget include aging infrastructure and potential rate increases from Montague, both of which may drive up repair and service costs.

In an effort to keep cooking grease out of the sewer system, the commission has proposed regulations modeled after those used in Northampton. The proposed rules specify the size, location, and maintenance protocols for grease traps and other grease removal systems.

Local businesses, including the Wagon Wheel restaurant and the popular Cielito Lindo food truck, would be required to comply with these regulations. The implementation timeline would have an effective date far enough out so businesses can achieve the code standard.

The sewer commission’s next meeting is Tuesday, May 20, and the issue is expected to be resolved on that date.

CRAFT from page A1

on my more creative side as an artist has been a great way to manage stress. And what better way than working with animals!

MR: What is your earliest recollection about your taxidermy interests?

CL: I remember being around ten years old and watching an oddities show where they had taxidermists featured in one of the episodes, and I found it fascinating that someone can learn how to preserve animals.

Conversely, I also remember seeing taxidermy in movies, where a villain had a den filled with wild African animals taxidermied on the walls... I remember feeling really upset as a child when I saw that, especially being so in love with conservation of animals, and feeling heartbroken that someone would want to kill them and hang them on the wall.

MR: Have you apprenticed under anyone?

CL: Unfortunately, no. It seems taxidermy is a dying art form and it is really difficult trying to find someone to apprentice with, especially in the Western Mass area.

That being said, there is a wealth of knowledge and support amongst the online taxidermy community, and there are many other resources I have used to train in the craft. Nothing quite beats trial and error, though, which I’ve done a lot of!

As a biologist, I have also trained in anatomy and physiology, as well as performed many vertebrate dissections, which aids in my skills as a taxidermist.

MR: Being self-taught, I imagine that you’ve read a lot of books and watched a great many YouTube videos on the subject of taxidermy?

CL: Yes, that and I belong to several Facebook taxidermy groups. Following the threads of conversation and asking my own questions of these experienced and not-so-experienced taxidermists has been very helpful to me.

MR: What, if anything, intimidated you about the tasks involved in taxidermy earlier on as you taught yourself the art of preparing specimens for preserving?

CL: I definitely think I underestimated how much work is actually involved in taxidermy. I remember thinking, “Hey, it’s not so bad; you skin an animal and tan it, and then mount it all pretty

ed for installation, which could affect recorded sewage volume sent to Montague for processing. Additional unknowns in the budget include aging infrastructure and potential rate increases from Montague, both of which may drive up repair and service costs.

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The sewer commission’s next meeting is Tuesday, May 20, and the issue is expected to be resolved on that date.

Other Business

Saturday, April 26 is Prescription Drug Take Back Day. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., residents may bring unused or expired prescription drugs to the police stations in Montague, Bernardston, and Erving for safe disposal in designated boxes.

These biannual events have resulted in the safe disposal of over 70,000 pounds of unneeded medications in Franklin and Hampshire counties since 2011, according to the Northwest District Attorney’s Office, helping prevent misuse or accidental ingestion.

The Gill police department has reported a recent uptick in vehicle break-ins, sergeant John Richardson reported. Residents are strongly encouraged to lock their cars, even during daylight hours.

The next selectboard meeting will be held at the Gill town hall at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, due to the Patriots’ Day holiday that Monday.



Little proudly displays the fruits of her preservation work: a mounted coyote head (left) and a gray squirrel (right).

with glass eyes and fluffy fur.” The fun part being when it all actually comes together and looks so realistic. Little did I know that mounting and the final detail work is about 10% of the actual process.

Skinning the animal and then fleshing the hide are definitely intimidating! Especially with not having someone I apprenticed under. It took quite a while before I was comfortable with the whole process. There are a lot of tricks to it, such as where to be extra cautious on spots like tear ducts that can be easily ripped and can be difficult to repair.

It’s pretty physical, too. There’s a lot of moving around of heavy, deceased animals while skinning. For instance: I can be holding up a section of meat and bone that weighs 20 to 30 pounds with one hand, while trying to delicately continue the skinning of the animal with my scalpel in the other hand.

MR: What did your friends and family think about your interest in taxidermy?

CL: As you can imagine, when I told my friends and family they kind of raised an eyebrow and said: “You’re doing what?! Ewww...”

My kids think it’s pretty cool though! I still don’t think my husband likes having dead animals in the freezer, even though I have a separate one for my projects.

Overall, despite the initial reactions, my family has always been supportive of my endeavors, which I am always very thankful for. I think people often hear “taxider-

my” and have a negative reaction to it, thinking the taxidermist is killing random animals and stuffing them up like a poacher and selling them off.

That’s the furthest from the truth. In fact, as a taxidermist, legally we aren’t allowed to accept an animal to work on without proper paperwork, and cannot pick up or possess roadkill. I can only sell my services in mounting an animal, and cannot sell wild animals even if they were legally harvested.

MR: My research about modern-day taxidermy has highlighted a niche known as Pet Taxidermy, a way of memorializing beloved companions. What are your thoughts about this?

CL: I don’t see myself doing that. Right now, for pets like cats and dogs, it would be about preserving the skull and tanning portion of the hide. Mounted pets are pretty impossible to get right.

MR: What are some sad truths you have been faced with about our environmental problems, and what the natural world is faced with?

CL: In general, outside of taxidermy, there certainly are a multitude of environmental problems in the natural world.

I think sport hunting and poaching of animals, such as the wild African animals on the movie villain’s den walls, is a terrible consequence of a black market for wild animal parts. I also believe strongly that my artwork in taxidermy can be

used to raise awareness of conservation efforts for wild animals, and shine a better light on what taxidermists actually do.

MR: Do you hunt?

CL: Currently, no, I do not hunt, although since getting into taxidermy I have been working on getting my hunting license. I truly believe that there can be a balance of conservation and hunting, where legally-harvested animals can feed people and aid in maintaining a balance in the food chain.

MR: What are the positive experiences you have had as you learn your craft?

CL: I have been able to meet a lot of wonderful people who also believe in the conservation and preservation of animals. I have a deep respect for hunters who abide by the regulations and legally harvest their animals, and who want to remember the animals and honor the life they lived through taxidermy.

I am also currently working on a pet memorial preservation, and that has been extremely meaningful to me and the owner. Some people would rather have something they can touch and hold for a beloved pet that has passed away, instead of just ashes. This one is still a work in progress, but I can preserve the skull and I took imprints of the nose and paw for a memorial.... Being able to respectfully honor and preserve a beloved pet, and help with closure for an owner, has been extremely rewarding.

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RACE from page A1

Bastarache is emptying. “It is my understanding,” Smith said, “that the position will be open to write-ins.” Erving’s election will be held May 5.

So will Wendell’s, though attempts to reach the Wendell town clerk this week received no response. Adam Feltman told us he believes he is the only candidate for the seat Gillian Budine is leaving. He added that he “doesn’t have an agenda, positive or negative other than representing Wendell’s core values,” and will be “learning on the fly.”

In Leverett, Pat Duffy plans to serve a second term. That leaves Montague, where only two people filed papers for three spots on the library trustees, but a big race is brewing between Boutwell and Voudren. (Interim town clerk Tina Sulda said a third hopeful, Josh Bell, failed to submit enough valid signatures on his nomination papers.)

“I’ve got a lot of experience, let’s put it that way,” Voudren told the *Reporter*. The onetime Montague police officer, sheriff’s office employee, and highway department clerk served at town hall during a volatile time. “We didn’t have any money, and had a lot of problems with the police department,” Voudren recalls. “I worked hard to keep everything going then, and I felt like I did the right thing with the police department, even though it’s still not cured.”

Though not a town meeting member, Voudren said he has “kept close to what’s going on,” and has “strong ideas” – including regionalizing Gill, Montague, and Greenfield schools and merging wastewater and water treatment under an “intermunicipal agreement” with Greenfield.

The merger with Pioneer Valley is a non-starter, Voudren said: “I have been a taxpaying member in this town for 50 years, and we cannot afford to accept the deficit Pioneer would bring in.” Combining with Greenfield, he said, would create a “campus” model

with a 10-mile radius, lower transportation costs, and room for students to choose in.

“We don’t have a large amount of time to get it started,” he said. “With what’s going on in the federal government, it’s going to be a lot worse in 12 months.”

Voudren’s vision for wastewater is also grow-or-die: “We used to pump 2 million gallons a day out of Lake Pleasant – where’s it going now? We’ve got water coming out of sandy banks all over the Plains,” he said. “That’s 2 million gallons a day that could be used to negotiate an intermunicipal relationship,” in which Greenfield would keep both treatment plants running.

Additionally, Voudren would demand town meeting members hold forums in their precincts twice a year, which he said is required by the town charter.

Voudren said he didn’t want to discuss Boutwell: “I’m ready now, and if there’s an incumbent, so be it.”

Boutwell was also uninterested in commenting directly on the race. “It’ll be up to the voters to decide,” he said. “I don’t have any hidden agendas or axes to grind.”

The five-term incumbent said his priorities are to “listen to the general public, and try to keep an affordable tax base for residents and businesses in the town of Montague, which is not exactly becoming easy.”

Boutwell said he is holding off judgment on a merger with Pioneer – “we haven’t got all the official information yet, and things keep changing” – and that, after 15 years helping manage an aging treatment plant, “the bottom line is we have to make all sorts of gradual improvements, because if we don’t do it DEP will order it.”

He emphasized the amount of work involved with the role, including developing the town budget with the fin com and negotiating with staff unions, and said he is worried about promised grants disappearing. “There’s always something that pops up that we have to deal with,” he reflected.

Jeff Singleton provided additional reporting.



NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Board Gives Nod to New COG Laws

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard endorsed a proposal on Monday to significantly change the charter of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), the successor to the former county government, which provides important services to its member towns. In doing so, the board revised the position it took two weeks earlier, when it placed the charter changes on the town meeting warrant without an endorsement, amid uncertainty about the proposed process for making such changes in the future.

The board also approved the warrant for the annual town meeting, which will be held on the evening of Wednesday, May 7; reviewed the town’s grant strategy for the coming year; and was informed about the potential replacement of 14 trees on Avenue A reportedly afflicted with the deadly emerald ash borer.

The discussion of the FRCOG charter was led by a presentation by the council’s executive director, Linda Dunlavy, supplemented by 24 pages in the meeting materials. Dunlavy began with a “little bit of history,” noting that the organization originated in the 1990s when governor Bill Weld sought to eliminate county governments in the state. The charter was adopted by all 26 towns in the county in 1997, and FRCOG was created by state enabling legislation the following year.

The charter, which Dunlavy called FRCOG’s “governing document,” establishes the roles, composition, and town voting power on the organization’s committees; the formula for assessing costs to member towns; how towns may join or leave; and how the charter itself may be changed.

“But we’ve never changed this document,” she said, “because it’s

a pretty strong and timeless document – but also because it takes a two-thirds vote in two-thirds of the towns to change, which is a pretty heavy lift.” Charter changes currently require votes of this margin by either a town meeting, or a city council where it exists.

Dunlavy said that she and several staff members will soon retire, and that “before I leave, we hope to have an updated charter that can evolve and hopefully stay fresh for the next 30 years.”

The changes would eliminate language that refers to the now-defunct county government, loosen the qualifications for executive council membership, and remove “some things that would be better placed in bylaws or operating procedures,” Dunlavy explained. The most significant change would be to the method of modifying the document, which will still require approval from two-thirds of member towns, but only by majority votes of the city council or town meetings.

Dunlavy said Montague resident Jay DiPucchio, who played a key role in creating FRCOG and served as its first executive director, would be at the Montague town meeting to answer questions about the proposal. DiPucchio, who attended Monday’s meeting, said he would like some input on his presentation before town meeting. “I only took five minutes the last time, 30 years ago, so I don’t expect to take any more than that this time,” he said.

There was relatively little discussion of the proposal. Selectboard member Matt Lord said he was originally “trepidatious,” primarily because of the provision that amending the document would require only majority votes by town meetings or councilors, which he worried might lead to frequent charter changes and end “the same level of consistency

that we have had in the past.”

Dunlavy said the provision “kind of matches most town meeting votes.”

Lord responded that he could be “enthusiastic” about seven of the eight changes, and “lukewarm about one.”

The board initially approved a motion to place the changes on the town meeting agenda, but after it was pointed out that they had taken this step two weeks earlier, they voted to actually endorse the changes.

Keeping On Task

The board gave final approval to the town meeting warrant, after a dramatic reading by Lord. The 31 articles include the town operating budget, the budgets of the Clean Water Facility (CWF) and Turners Falls municipal airport, and assessments from the Gill-Montague and Franklin County Technical regional school districts. There are also a large number of special articles, mostly involving money.

Town administrator Walter Ramsey told the board that some articles had been “bundled” to save time. He said this has been the practice at previous town meetings, but told the *Reporter* that he is working on a process to allow members to pull out segments of these combined articles for separate votes.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said he thought there were quite a few articles for one evening meeting. “We’re really going to have to keep on task,” he said.

“And hold that date for the following Wednesday,” said Ramsey, referring to a possible follow-up session on May 14 to complete the agenda.

A virtual “pre-town meeting” has also been scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, April 29 for members to discuss the warrant articles.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

From the Montague DPW: How to Use Trash Stickers

MONTAGUE – A **single-use sticker** must be placed on each trash bag placed at the curbside. Only bags with stickers will be collected.

If you are using a barrel, one single-use sticker can be used for whatever is in the barrel. The weight cannot exceed 40 pounds, and no yard waste or hazardous materials can be disposed of in the barrel. Place the single-use sticker on the very top bag inside the barrel.

Single-use stickers cost \$3 each, and can be purchased at the following locations:

Town Hall, at 1 Avenue A; the Montague Village Store, 60 Main Street in Montague Center; **Carroll’s Super Market**, 32 East Main

Street in Millers Falls; **Scotty’s**, 106 High Street in Turners Falls; **Nouria** on Third Street; **Cumberland Farms** on Montague City Road; and **Food City** on Avenue A.

Trash must be out on curb no later than 5:30 a.m. on the day of your street’s scheduled pickup.

Six-month barrel stickers are also available, and cover the time periods of January 1 to June 30 and July 1 to December 31. Each six-month sticker costs \$78, the equivalent of buying one sticker a week.

The barrel sticker must be placed on the side of the barrel. These stickers can only be purchased at the tax collector’s office at Town Hall, Scotty’s, and the Montague Village Store.

Tip of the week ...

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Running List

Assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller reviewed a potential “grant strategy” for the coming fiscal year. He said that keeping a “running list” of grants was important for “keeping our various projects and funding sources organized,” and so that departments don’t “inadvertently compete with one another.”

Nolan-Zeller’s list included grants already in the pipeline, such as for traffic-calming improvements in Montague Center and handicapped access ramp construction on Avenue A; grants planned for the coming year, such as for a culvert replacement on Meadow Road and hazardous materials mitigation at the planned Habitat For Humanity site on First Street; and grants “still in development,” such as for research on “paper streets,” particularly in Lake Pleasant, a review of the sewer system and CWF’s assets; and planning for community broadband.

The board did not take any votes on the list. Later, Ramsey announced the town had received a \$30,000 state grant to install new financial management software.

Other Business

Nolan-Zeller reviewed the status of the process of choosing an “owner’s project manager” to oversee either building a new library in Turners Falls or renovating the current Carnegie Library. The town’s steering committee for the project, he said,

last week chose a “preferred” candidate from among four that applied, and is now in the process of negotiating a contract, which will need to be approved by the selectboard.

The board agreed to schedule a brief meeting on Tuesday, April 22 to vote on a contract if it is time-sensitive.

Nolan-Zeller also updated the board on streetscape improvements on Avenue A. Fourteen trees, he said, have been found to be afflicted with the emerald ash borer beetle, which has killed hundreds of millions of ash trees around the country. He said it was not clear how effective efforts have been to eliminate the borer’s larvae, which cause the trees to die, but the project’s general contractor has offered to replace the at-risk trees with new trees that are not ashes at no cost.

A discussion with the town tree committee and interim tree warden is planned for this week. “Let’s see what the tree committee has to say,” said Kuklewicz. “There are some knowledgeable folks there.”

The board approved the use of Peskeompskut Park for community band concerts every Monday evening from May 5 to July 28, and for the farmers market every Saturday from May 3 to October 25.

Ellen Lamoureux was appointed as the new building department administrative assistant.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 14.

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PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

DISPATCH from page A1

showed up, according to national news sources.

With dreams of a future Northern Tier passenger rail service receding in the light of Department of Government Efficiency belt-tightening in Washington, western Massachusetts residents streamed into Boston on Saturday morning in busloads and carpools. Three full buses organized by Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution left Greenfield and Orange at 8 a.m.

Montague resident Emily Monosson, who climbed aboard a bus from Northampton, said, “We went to Boston, and with so many people I kept finding the ones I wanted to find and a few unexpected ones. It was crazy!”

At 9 a.m. at Alewife station, Connecticut Valley residents like Gabe Slavin, formerly of Montague Center, led a small rally of rustics unfamiliar with the PayByPhone app for the parking garage, searching the depths of their cell phones as Red Line trains rolled down to Boston.

At 10:30, drums rolled in Washington Street in front of Caffè Nero. Swarms of people headed toward the Boston Common. Aerial video shows tens of thousands gravitating toward the Parkman Bandstand from all quarters of the compass like metal fragments to a magnetic lodestone.

Lieutenant governor Kim Driscoll, who took the podium at 11:30 a.m., identified herself as “the proud daughter of a union bricklayer and the mother of two daughters educated in



Left to right: Montague residents Julie Kumble, Duston Spear, Kenneth Danford, and Tamara Kaplan.

Massachusetts public schools.” She steeled the demonstrators to endure the bracing cold and rain, reminding them, “Massachusetts is the birthplace of democracy.”

When she cried out, “You know who’s going to make this country better? You are!” a roar went up to fill the agora.

Standing in the crowd, Barbara Johnson of Belmont said, “I felt a need to stand up to what’s happening in our country today. I feel a lack of control. We are sliding into au-

toocratic rule.”

Stuck in the bottleneck on Tremont Street, the planned parade transformed into an immovable mass of protestors.

Jim McRae of Warwick commented, “This is about outrage. A lot of people counting on their retirement income aren’t going to be happy to see their 401(k)s disappear.”

Half past noon at City Hall Plaza, Congresswoman Pressley summoned the legacy of Martin Luther King, who led 20,000 peo-

ple from Roxbury to the Boston Common on April 13, 1965, the first Civil Rights march in the Northeast. She also summoned the legacy of the Maverick Street Mothers, who blocked the expansion of Logan Airport with their baby strollers in 1968, and Mel King, who led the Tent City protest against housing demolition in the South End in 1969.

“I need you to summon the stamina and the courage to organize,” she said. “Because freedom is never really won – we must earn it, and win it, in every generation. And this is our time.”

A young woman from Somerville named Amy held a sign that read, “Authoritarianism is now being Beta Tested. Say No!”

“My neighbor, Rumeysa Öztürk, was snatched off the street,” on March 25, she explained, by federal agents wearing masks. Though Öztürk, a 30-year-old Turkish doctoral student at Tufts University, held a valid student visa, it had been revoked – reportedly without warning – after she co-authored a pro-Palestine op-ed in her student newspaper, the *Tufts Daily*.

“We don’t have thought crimes in this country,” Amy said. “We should be able to hold whatever beliefs we hold, and express them openly.”

Amy declined to give her last name for the record, after searching for the *Montague Reporter* on her phone to see if the correspondent jotting down her comments was a member of the fake news media.

He wasn’t.

The Week in High School Sports: Tough Starts, Rain-Outs, and Mercy

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Consistent April rains caused multiple postponements this week, but the Franklin Tech Baseball Eagles played on under threatening skies and maintained their perfect record.

The Tech softball team finally faced a less challenging opponent, handing them their first win, while the Turners Falls High School team’s unbeaten streak ended when Frontier scored in the seventh inning.

Baseball
FCTS 4 – St. Mary 1
FCTS 8 – Smith Academy 1

Last Friday the Franklin Tech Baseball Eagles hosted St. Mary’s of Westfield. Thursday’s storm had cleared by then, allowing tarp to be removed from the baseball diamond.

Neither team could put any runs into the till until the bottom of the third, when Tech scored all the runs they would need. Tyler Yetter reached on a fielders’ choice, Zaydrien Alamed was walked, and Hunter Donahue made it to first on an error, plating both runners. A wild pitch then advanced Donahue, and then Brody Hicks drove him home with a long double; Nicholas Prasol batted Hicks in on an RBI sacrifice, giving the Eagles a four-run cushion.

That’s when I headed over to Turners for the next two contests. The Saints scored a run in the fourth, but Franklin held on to the win.

On the mound, Hicks allowed one run on four hits, struck out five batters, walked two, and beamed two. Gavin Crossman, who relieved him for the final two innings, allowed two hits, no walks, and one strikeout and didn’t hit any batters.

Wayde Bardwell shot a single and a double, Hicks clocked a double, and Donahue, George Gutierrez and Mason Lehtomaki placed singles.

Then the rains returned. On Saturday the Turners baseball game was

rained out, and on Monday every single middle school, JV, and varsity sporting event was postponed – except Tech baseball. The Birds again unfurled their tarp to defeat the Smith Academy Purple Falcons, 8-1.

Tech scored in five of six innings, and used three pitchers: Lehtomaki, Crossman, and Prasol. Combined, they allowed just three hits, one walk, and one run while striking out five. On offense, Donahue smashed a triple, Alamed, Crossman, Gutierrez, and Hicks hit singles, and Levi Clark stole two bases.

The Eagles host the Lenox Millionaires this Thursday in their bid to keep their young season perfect.

Girls’ Tennis
Greenfield 4 – TFHS 1

As I arrived at Turners High School on Friday, things looked promising for the home team. First and second singles and first doubles were all tied up at one set apiece, and all seven Turners girls were playing aggressively.

I asked coach Victor Gonzalez how the team was doing. “Better than last year,” he replied. We laughed: Turners didn’t win a single match last year, and so far this year have won one. Unfortunately for Blue, Greenfield began to edge ahead and eventually took four of five matches, though three went to three sets.

Olivia Wolbach took first singles (2-1), while Avery Heathwaite (second singles), Gianna Marigliano (third singles), Khiarieliex Huertas Hernandez and Shayly Martin (first doubles), and Makalya Craig and Trinity Davis (second doubles) dropped their contests.

Softball
TFHS 10 – FCTS 3
FCTS 21 – Athol 2
Frontier 2 – TFHS 1

Last Friday the Softball Thunder hosted Franklin Tech, the second straight game the Eagles played

against one of the best teams in the state. Turners broke the ice in the bottom of the second, as Madisyn Dietz scored on a wild pitch.

Tech took back the lead in the third when Kylee Gamache cracked a triple to the right field fence, knocking two runs in, but in the bottom of the inning the Thunder sent five more across the plate.

Tech got one back in the fourth, but Turners answered with three more, increasing their lead to 9-3, then added a final run in the fifth off an RBI double from Madison Liimatainen to seal the victory.

In the circle, Liimatainen gave up three runs on six hits and four walks while striking out 17. At the plate she hit a single, a double, and an RBI. Dietz, Janelle Massey, Marilyn Abarua, and Addison Talbot also had hits for the home team.

Hannah Gilbert pitched a complete game for Tech, and although 10 runs crossed the plate, only three were earned; she struck out seven batters and walked four. Gamache also cracked a double and a triple while Gilbert, Cordelia Guerin, Shelby O’Leary, and Sandra Johnson all lodged singles.

The Eagles hosted the Athol Red Bears Wednesday, after the unenviable task of opening a season against two of the top teams in the state.

“That was last year,” coach Gamache reminded his troops before the game. “Last year we were one game from the state championship, but this is a new year – we don’t want to live in the past.”

His pep talk seemed to motivate the players, as Tech completely decimated the Bears in a mercy-shortened 21-2 trouncing.

I asked the coach why he wasn’t using his ace, Gilbert, against Athol. “We have another game tomorrow,” he replied. “It’s early, and I want to watch out for my players.” In the end, it didn’t matter – it was Athol’s first game, and they only fielded



Franklin Tech senior Kylee Gamache, shown leaving the field at the end of the first inning, recorded her 100th career hit during the crosstown contest at Turners Falls High School last Friday. The Thunder bested the Eagles 10-3 at Gary Mullins Field.

nine healthy athletes.

Tech took an early 2-0 lead when Gilbert skied a home run over the right-field fence. When she came up in the second inning she hit another homer over the fence, and Tech’s lead was 6-0. The floodgates opened in the third inning as 11 more runs crossed the plate, and Gamache emptied his bench.

Red scored once in the fourth, and the Tech reserves scored four in the bottom of the inning. One more Athol run crossed the plate in the fifth, but after the third out, the game was mercifully called.

Gilbert, Brayleigh Burgh, Samantha Duncan, and Taylor Underwood finished with two hits each, including Gilbert’s home runs, while Guerin, Lindsey Taylor, O’Leary, Kylee Gamache, and Alison George hit one apiece. Burgh let up one hit, one run, and

one walk in the first five innings while K’ing six batters, and Lyla Mickiewicz came in for the last inning, allowing one hit, one run, and one walk and whiffing one.

While Tech was registering their first win of the season, the Thunder were down in South Deerfield, clinging on to a single-run lead against Frontier. Liimatainen had scorched a solo home run in the first, and Powertown held on to that lead into the seventh, when Frontier tied it and then won it 2-1.

Liimatainen pitched 6.2 innings, allowed two runs on four hits and no walks, and struck out 13 – including her 1,000th career strikeout, a first for Turners athletes. She, Talbot, Dietz, and Ameliya Galbraith all had hits.

Tech heads up the Trail this Thursday to face Mohawk, and on Friday the Turners girls host Greenfield.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Wendell and New Salem Gain As the United States Loses

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Fire chief Joe Cuneo, Wendell captains Asa de Roode and Matt O'Donnell, and New Salem captain Cam Dunbar were in the room when the Wendell selectboard opened its April 2 meeting. Before it opened, they chatted among themselves about Wendell's fire vehicles. As the meeting began, Cuneo introduced O'Donnell to the full selectboard as the shared chief of Wendell's and New Salem's fire departments.

O'Donnell had been hired at the March 25 public safety planning committee meeting by selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato, member Paul Doud, and the entire New Salem selectboard. That committee had been meeting since Cuneo announced his intended retirement in 2022.

After 23 years working for the federal government, O'Donnell was given a choice: retire by May 31, or face possible firing. His early retirement allows him to accept the shared fire chief position.

O'Donnell has served on the Wendell fire department 11 years, moving up through merit, interest, and training from firefighter to captain. He will become chief on May 31 and Cuneo plans to retire June 30, allowing a month of overlap.

New Coordination

When Glenn Johnson-Mussad was hired as town coordinator in 2023, the selectboard agreed to change its schedule from alternate Wednesdays to the first and third Wednesday of every month, plus the fifth as needed. Given his departure, treasurer Carolyn Manley asked the board to return to alternate Wednesdays, to coordinate with the schedule for signing payment warrants.

The board agreed, and will return to alternate Wednesdays starting May 7.

They appointed new town coordinator Kelly Tyler as the town's records access officer and alternate representative to FRCOG, as well as to the personnel policy study committee. Manley asked the board to give Tyler a priority list of the many small and large tasks in front of her.

Tyler said she had gotten no response yet from Justin Gale, the building inspector hired in January 2024 when Phil Delorey retired. Delorey said he still gets calls as inspector and that he, too, had been unable to reach Gale by phone.

Manley added that Gale agreed to have his required certification by June 30 of this year, and she had no knowledge of whether he had it yet. He has acted as building inspector under the authority of the building commissioner. She suggested contacting the commissioner, who was in Hawaii, or looking at options offered by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

Delorey said FRCOG was always there. Budine said there is a one-time \$3,000 fee to connect with FRCOG software, but that this might be better than having residents start building without any permitting or oversight.

Tyler said she would continue try-

ing to contact Gale. Doud suggested advertising the position again.

Roads and Sand

As project coordinator, Delorey reported that bids were being solicited for repairs to the Erving Wendell bridge in Farley. He said he expects responses this month, and work to follow – perhaps one week for repairs.

Delorey said unauthorized people have been taking unauthorized amounts of material from the area of the salt shed. Residents are allowed one bucket of sand per snowstorm from the small shelter near the shed, but pickup trucks have been seen taking repeated loads; Delorey said highway supervisor Al Frost followed one into New Salem. Leverett police chief Scott Minckler said Leverett is having the same problem. They installed a camera and a sign threatening fines, and the problem went away.

Delorey said he asked the paving contractor to pave West Street and the worst part of Farley Road in May. He said Wendell is getting less state money for road repair this year.

Delorey said unauthorized people have been taking unauthorized amounts of material from the area of the salt shed.

Doud said the state Fair Share tax is giving Wendell \$42,000 this year, down from \$125,000 a year ago. Budine commented that the Fair Share formula is not working as expected, with more money going to larger towns.

Rural road repair aid is also down, and Budine, who works with local schools, said she sees that school expenses are not showing up in the formula. She said she might bring the matter up with Elena Cohen, state senator Jo Comerford's district director.

An Oldie But Goodie

Manley reported that the owners of the D&B landfill had not paid taxes for 30 years. The landfill was originally allowed by the board of health to allow Mormon Hollow Automobile salvage some fill to get more level land. The state took that permission and expanded it to a demolition landfill that accepted debris from Boston's Big Dig.

When the landfill started to slide towards the Millers River, the state halted that, and installed monitoring wells.

Wendell will have 45 days to get the landfill appraised and sold, if the town gets the landfill through land court. Manley wanted to know the town's interest, "before I pull the trigger."

The Downtown Scene

Speaking as a member of the Council on Aging (COA), Katie Nolan said the senior center needs painting. She said the COA is contacting the sheriff's office for

work-release painters, and asked the town to provide brushes and paint.

As garden committee chair, Nolan said the garden plans its annual plant swap on the north common Saturday, May 17.

Assistant facilities engineer Alistair MacMartin proposed a simultaneous townwide tag sale on the same common. He also suggested moving the free box from its location by the Meetinghouse to the town office property, and agreed to meet with Nolan to find a place not in the way but not so hidden it invites dumping.

Trash, including food scraps, was allowed to build up at the town hall. Custodian Amanda Detlof hoped the buildup came from the gap in maintenance before she started work there.

DiDonato said she would start a conversation with Good Neighbors coordinators about guidelines for use of the building. Doud said he would contact the library and confirm their guidelines for trash.

Frost said he was willing to take the containers of trash from the town hall to WRATS.

Other Business

The selectboard authorized spending the town's remaining ARPA money, plus \$665.61 from the assessors' budget, for Catalyst software so the board of assessors and Rural Resource Group can finally set the tax rate.

They appointed Ashley Penna as assistant tax collector, Emily Maiella to the garden committee, and Doud to the police oversight committee and as Wendell's representative to FRCOG.

Library trustees Karen Idoine and Ruth Mazurka asked that the town run criminal offense records investigations (CORI) of potential library volunteers, and workers who might work alone with children or other vulnerable people. They said COA head Nancy Spittle did CORI checks for Village Neighbors and senior center workers.

The board authorized Tyler to run CORI checks for the library.

No Assault and Battery (NAB) representative Nina Keller handed a \$6,000 check to the nearest selectboard member, Gillian Budine, to be used for legal expenses in Wendell's appeal of the state attorney general (AG)'s decision to the battery bylaw passed last year by town meeting.

The AG ruled that the bylaw is effectively a zoning bylaw, and the town's appeal aims to show it is actually about health and safety. The donation joins \$5,000 in public funds committed by the selectboard in December; any funds not spent will be returned to NAB.

The board approved a list of items to be offered at the town auction, Saturday, April 26 at the highway garage. The list will be posted on the town website. On it is a tractor Leverett has offered to buy for \$1,500; the minimum bid is \$1,500. Folding chairs start at \$10 for a lot of five.

Former selectboard chair Dan Keller will be the auctioneer. Viewing begins at 9 a.m., and the auction at 10 a.m. Purchases are cash only.

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on April 9, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Fourth Fire in Two Months

In the early hours of last Friday morning, an ember from Linda Ackerman's woodstove apparently ignited the roof of her Taylor Hill Road home of forty years. She fled the house barefoot with her indoor cat Smudge in her arms. She and her traumatized cat then spent four hours sitting on a

wall watching the firefighters put out the blaze.

Ackerman, well known in town as the branch manager at the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls, was back in the office this week, overwhelmed both at the challenges ahead and at an outpouring of support she has received from the community.

The fire was at least the fourth in two months, following blazes at an empty Wendell residence, a Leverett horse farm, and a multi-family Montague City house.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on April 7, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Save the Boxcar

The highlight of this week's Erving selectboard meeting was a visit and urgent appeal for help by a small group of townspeople supporting Toni Wilson's effort to purchase the Boxcar Restaurant on Main Street. The Boxcar might be sold to Dunkin' Donuts, with the likelihood that the historic building would be demolished and replaced by the standard franchise design.

The former train depot station is 150 years old and has not been altered much. Planning board member Jeff Dubay said, "The Depot was the internet of the 1850s. It put us on the map and brought people together."

Caution Urged at Vermont Yankee

On April 4, River Road resident Bart Bales asked the Gill selectboard to call for increased safety measures at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. Entergy is engaged in a formal permitting process seeking approval to boost power production at the plant to 120% of its original design capacity.

The 25,000,000 Curies of radioactive Cesium stored at the plant are "not storable," said selectboard member Phil Maddern.

"It's a dangerous pool of stuff," said Bales.

150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on April 7, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

The measles are raging at Riverside. One man has got 'em.

Mink and muskrats are plenty, and the boys are after them.

The stage broke down in coming from Greenfield last evening.

There is over twenty feet of frost in the ground – measuring the surface.

Two young fellows broke through the ice in crossing the river this afternoon.

Samuel R. Pierce yesterday bought at sheriff's sale, the house of Charles C. Moulton, on the plain, for \$726.

The place had some life, yesterday. It puts us in mind of the days that are to come – when the bridge is built.

No one can doubt the efficiency of our constables, after witnessing the capture made on Saturday by Constable Jones and Special Taylor.

Henry Loveland, while crossing the river last evening, broke through the ice and went down to

his neck. There were several comrades with him, who quickly rescued him from imminent danger.

The speech of Austin DeWolf before the legislative committee, warning them of building bridges over the Connecticut to impede navigation, was good – very good – of its kind. But it was of a very poor kind. Imagine a full rigged ship sailing up under the new bridge and over the falls.

Many persons collected at the bulkhead, Sunday, while the water was rising rapidly, in the hope of seeing the ice go out, but were disappointed. The water rose six feet, but the ice was too firm to move an inch, and now with five feet of water running over the dam it seems as far from going out as ever. The ice may remain at this point for many days yet. It is all clear below the falls for two or three miles, and the river is open for over a half a mile at South Vernon.

The heavy rains of Saturday and Sunday caused a great and sudden rise in the river, and on Monday afternoon the Millers Falls dam gave way on the Montague side. About one third of the structure was demolished, which cannot be replaced for some time.



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LEVERETT from page A1
safety concerns involving access for emergency vehicles.

If the town wants more “serene” roads, Bradley said, it could tear up the pavement elsewhere.

Other Dudleyville Road residents weighed in, including Rich Karsten, who said he did want the question to go before the town, and Gregory Salzman, who noted that there had not yet been any formal discussion among residents on a paving choice.

Selectboard chair Tom Hankinson said town counsel Donna MacNicol had told the board her understanding was that state law puts the decision under the purview of the selectboard before it goes to the planning board. He said that the opinion of the road’s residents was important, but that the board wanted to get a “sense of the town” as well.

Board member Jed Proujansky pointed out that the road is town-owned, and that while the current project is grant-funded, the town will pay for its maintenance going forward.

Resident Carol Heim asked the board to post information about those projected costs on the town website, and encouraged people to discuss the project on the LeverettConnects list-serv, as town meeting is “not a great place for extensive discussion.”

The board decided to leave the article on the warrant, but reword it to clarify that it is seeking opinion, rather than a decision, on the matter.

The board removed a different article requested by a citizen calling for a town-wide speed limit in business and thickly-settled districts, as allowed by a state law, but agreed to keep paying attention to speeding in those areas.

Proujansky said he “appreciated the spirit of the article,” but suggested that reducing speed limits by five miles per hour in certain areas would not be effective, and that

other methods such as crosswalks may have better success.

Resident Maureen Ippolito said electronic signs displaying either smiles or frowns are more effective than text-only signs.

Nip Patrol

Resident Zack Katz gave a presentation encouraging the board to initiate a program to address roadside trash, particularly empty beer cans and nip bottles, on the grounds that such refuse was bad for the environment, a public safety issue, and ugly.

Katz said that resident Isaac Dickinson has been documenting alcohol-related container trash this spring, and picked up 431 containers along a single one-mile section of road.

Katz said he has been picking up garbage along Shutesbury Road himself, and could identify individual offenders by type of nip bottle, saying, for example, that there is a “cinnamon schnapps guy.”

The problem exists across the country, Katz said, and he shared methods other communities are using to deal with it. Some towns, he said, have banned the sale of nip bottles, and have seen results extending beyond cleaner streets to fewer ambulance calls and arrests. While there are no stores selling nips in Leverett, he suggested the town might work with its neighbors on the problem.

Katz also commented that while he “doesn’t want to institute surveillance in Leverett,” other towns have shown good results using trail cams to monitor littering “hot spots.” Other suggestions included signs with positive messaging appealing to local pride and personal accountability, such as “Leverett Doesn’t Litter.”

While he understood Leverett’s budget limitations, Katz said, the town could “start small – every

step reduces impact.”

Board member Patricia Duffy said she liked these ideas, and recalled that “Give a hoot, don’t pollute” signs as a child had an influence on her.

Hankinson also said he liked the ideas and that the board should consider a town program to pursue them.

Public Personnel

The selectboard approved hiring Justis Connor as a full-time police officer as of July 1, following the departure of one of the department’s four full-timers.

Chief Scott Minckler said Connor needs to attend the police training academy, and can start as a part-time officer in July, then be promoted to full-time upon graduation in December. Minckler said Connor has served in the Army National Guard for nine years and still has commitments to fulfill, but that the department could work around them.

Connor is a resident of Holyoke, but told the board he is looking forward to moving his family to Leverett, and the more personal connection to his work that a small town will provide. He also noted that his father is a sergeant in the Pelham department.

The board approved two candidates to fill recently-vacated part-time positions at the library. Library director Hannah Paessel recommended Sarah Prager as a programming librarian, saying she is a children’s book author with extensive programming experience.

Paessel said Jill Palmer, hired as a catalog librarian, has three years of official experience at the library, but worked as a substitute before that and has extensive prior experience at libraries.

The board also approved hiring Christopher Phillips as town custodian, and appointed Sarah Manteiga to the conservation commission.

Other Business

Proujansky moved that the selectboard draft a statement supporting state legislation calling for single-payer healthcare. Hankinson and Duffy agreed to read the legislation and take up the motion at a future meeting.

The board gave the go-ahead for the annual town Earth Day clean-up on Saturday, April 26, rain or shine.

Members of the 250th anniversary committee received approval to install two stone monuments – one on the north side of town, and one on the south side – with bronze plaques and steel letters on them saying “Leverett,” the committee’s tree symbol, and “1774–2024.”

Committee member Matt Boucher said the installations would wrap up the celebration activities and expend the remaining money in the committee’s account. Member Silas Ball said they also hoped to plant a few trees around town.

“Sounds great,” said Hankinson. “All ahead full.”



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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Town on Hook for Filter, On Track for ‘Annual’

By MIKE JACKSON

“Must be riveting TV,” Erving selectboard member Scott Bastarache joked Monday night as the three board members sat quietly reviewing the draft annual town meeting warrant on their laptops.

The board officially approved a \$15,290,897 town operating budget for FY’26, formalizing decisions made a week earlier with the finance committee (*Montague Reporter*, April 3, 2025: “FY’26 Budget Balanced, Amid Grumbling at Departments”), and moved on to the resulting May 14 town meeting warrant.

With a number of mostly minor changes, the board voted unanimously to approve the 26-article warrant. Besides the town budget, the articles include \$1,089,000 for capital expenses, the establishment of water and wastewater stabilization accounts, and an article mandating that any building with five or more apartments install a key box for the fire department to gain rapid entry.

The final article would amend the Franklin Regional Council of Governments charter, a request being considered this spring in all 26 member towns.

The selectboard continued its ongoing reviews of updates to the town’s sewer use, road-opening, and water department regulations, without giving final approval to any updates. Before the next meeting, wastewater operator Pete

Sanders and town administrator Bryan Smith agreed to come up with a draft of sewer use fees by usage rate, which are not currently included in the town’s policies.

The board unanimously approved a new intermunicipal agreement with Northfield, Gill, and Bernardston for Northfield emergency medical services (NEMS) in the four towns. Erving will be assessed fees based on half its population being served by NEMS.

An unanticipated piece of urgent business was discussed: the state Department of Environmental Protection is requiring the town to provide clean drinking water to a household affected by PFAS chemicals believed to have leached from the now-capped Maple Avenue landfill.

After some discussion with Sanders and Smith, the board approved a plan to offer the homeowner the installation of a point-of-entry treatment (POET) system, estimated at roughly \$27,000, of which about \$18,000 would be pulled from the current year’s budget.

If the homeowner turns down the filter, the town could provide bottled water indefinitely, though selectboard chair Jacob Smith commented that “that’s a lot more plastics, and that’s what started this all.”

Additional reporting was provided by Keith Waters. Thanks to Bernardston-Northfield Community Television for providing video.

Montague Community Television News

Exclusive Hauls

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Go shopping with Jay at Great Hauls Vintage and learn about the tiny clothing store on Avenue A. You won’t find Jay’s clothing online, but you will find this “Local Business Spotlight” while you’re on our Vimeo page catching up on all of our recent public meetings. We have new ones up from the Montague planning board and finance committee, the Gill and Montague selectboards, and the Gill-Montague regional school committee.

In case you missed it live or want to see it again, you can also find a two-part taping of Macbeth at the Shea Theater, presented by the Montague Shakespeare Festival.

Tune in to Channel 9 on your local cable to view these recent videos and fun reruns, or come by and make your own video! The Montague Community Television station is equipped with a studio, cameras, lights, and microphones, as well as friendly staff members available to help. Stop by 34 Second Street in Turners Falls, Mondays through Fridays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., or contact us at infomontaguetv@gmail.com or (413) 863-9200 with your project proposals or questions.

You can find all of our videos on Channel 9 and our Vimeo page. Follow us on Facebook or find us on Instagram [@montaguecommunitytv](https://www.instagram.com/montaguecommunitytv). Find videos and more on our website, montaguetv.org.

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WEST ALONG THE RIVER
THE TROG
IN SPRINGTIME

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE—The local representative of the *Troglodytidae* family, the Carolina wren, is singing on the front porch balustrade in the spring rain.

I’m sitting dutifully at my writing desk high up in the north bedroom, watching that rain falling outside the window.

Beyond the Old Pasture woods, the mist-covered Mineral Mountain looms over this little hamlet some of us still call the Flat. My family has dwelt here in this house for five generations, and we have always used that designation for this floodplain on the river where the homestead sits. I may be the only one left around to still call this neighborhood the Flat.

It’s been raining for a week, so I give myself the permission to get whimsical, just to defy the damp mood about and around the place.

You may know that we have several avian species in our midst representing what I call “the Trog family.” A certain population of early humanoids are called Troglodytes, based on their penchant for dwelling in caves. The bird species we’re writing about here has the same tendency to prefer cave-like nest sites. They like to tuck away their homes in barns, baskets, or even birdhouses. They are wee, sassy birds for the most part.

The one I’m writing about today, the Carolina wren, has been livening up the local songscape all winter with his *teakettle*, *teakettle* call, a fine counterpoint to the screech of the jay or the mindless chatter of the English sparrows.

This particular species of wren,

Thryothorus ludovicianus, has moved into our neck of the woods over the past several decades. This bird is a true Southerner, expanding its range along with the mockingbird, cardinal and titmouse. I never saw it as I was growing up in this neighborhood, when I was first turning my attention to ornithology. But these days the Carolina wren has become a permanent resident, even toughing out the winters up here among us Northerners.

This wren has two local cousins, who have been with us since the end of the Ice Age.

The house wren, *Troglodytes aedon*, which some of us still call the Jenny wren, shows up in May. This bird is totally a busybody of a gossip; either gender is often singing or chattering, scolding, or sassing everyone all over the yard.

Jenny or Johnny wren are the small ones who love birdhouses with a one-inch doorway. This wren can fit through the 25-cent-piece-sized opening and set up housekeeping inside this little cave. They load up the nestbox with all manner of twigs, cleverly maneuvering three-inch long sticks through that one-inch hole.

By the way, the dratted English sparrows can’t fit through the quarter-sized hole. Good riddance, for they are terribly destructive to many bird box nesters. They raid bluebird and tree swallow nests, destroying eggs and killing young nestlings. It gives great pleasure to see them try to push their large bodies through the small opening without success.

Mind you, Jenny wren also has the reputation of punching holes in the eggs of other birds, or filling up nesting boxes with so much junk that other birds are discouraged from moving in.

The third Troglodyte representative is the winter wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes*, who is rare enough, seen maybe once or twice each winter, as is appropriate, given its name.

This wren is literally a little bigger than your thumb – four inches beak to tail – and haunts deep tangles of brush piles. This bird also loves the roots of blow-down trees, scooting in and out of the tree’s twisted root system that is now exposed to everyone’s view, much to the embarrassment of the unfortunate maple or poplar.

But the Carolina wren, the subject of this morning’s writing, is a bit larger than both of its cousins at 5.5 inches, and loves to find the perfect nesting spot near human beings.

see WEST ALONG page B3



A cave of a nest, deep in the author’s Christmas wreath.

Above: Daffodils, flanked by crocuses, were in bloom last week on I Street in the Patch.

Five Long Years Ago:
A Montague Police Log Retrospective

Compiled by EMILY ALLING Illustrations by NINA ROSSI

Local schools close March 15, 2020, and a stay-at-home advisory is issued March 23; nonessential businesses are ordered to close physical workplaces. In the following weeks, there is a sharp uptick in the number of neighbor complaints and dog-walking incidents called in to the Montague police...

Wednesday, 4/1/20
11:40 a.m. Caller reporting that the street cleaner truck from Wendell is causing huge clouds of dust when driving by houses. Caller states he just spent the week cleaning the outside of his house and now wants to file a criminal complaint against Wendell and its employees for causing the dust storm. Caller also concerned for spreading of COVID-19 through the street cleaning process.

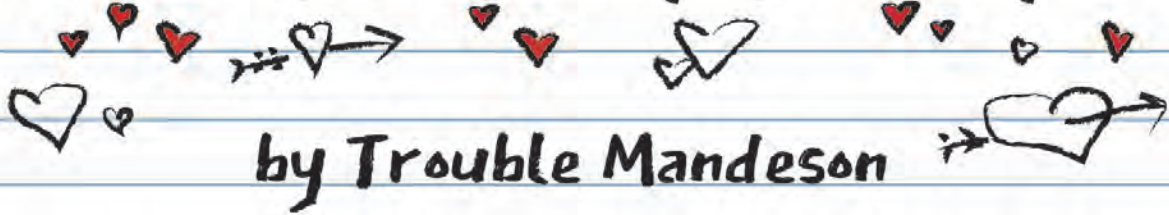
Thursday, 4/2/20
3:30 p.m. Caller reporting that a man just came into Family Dollar and made verbal threats to her in relation to an incident that happened at the store yesterday with his girlfriend. Officer spoke with attached party near park; party stated it was just a verbal altercation because the clerk said something to him about the mask he was wearing.
Saturday, 4/4/20
3:18 p.m. Caller states that people are using the skatepark and the basketball courts at Unity Park. The entire park has been closed down by the town due to the coronavirus pandemic. Playground and skatepark are roped off. A few people were moved along from the skatepark. Does not look like basketball court has been closed down yet.



Sunday, 4/5/20
11:47 a.m. Caller states that the upstairs neighbors are being too loud, too often. Advised of options.
Wednesday, 4/15/20
1:19 p.m. Caller from Family Dollar requesting assistance with unwanted male who was just in the store and is now outside the store screaming and causing a disturbance. Last seen with white face mask, black hood-

ed sweatshirt, and black sweatpants with a white stripe down the side. Officer spoke with male party; verbal disagreement between male and caller over proper personal protective equipment.
Thursday, 4/16/20
10:14 a.m. Report of disturbance that just occurred at Family Dollar; caller states a woman got upset at store limits on cleaning see LOG page B8

NOTES FROM THE HEARTFELT CAFE



GREENFIELD – This month’s column topic was suggested by Maggie Sadoway, intrepid proofreader for the *Montague Reporter*, who spent some years living in Greece in the 1970s. She and her husband spent ten weeks in what she said would “rank high among the best things we would experience in 45 years together.”

The information in this article is provided in quotes directly from an article Maggie wrote called “Memories: Summer in a Greek Farming Community,” (*Montague Reporter*, January 25, 2024), which she generously shared with me. She and her husband stayed in a 60-year-old farmhouse in Trahi on the island of Skyros where residents grew their own food and earned their income by growing and processing cheese, honey, wool, beef, lamb, tomatoes, watermelons, grapes, olives, barley, and wheat.

On Skyros, bread was made from leftover starter dough mixed in a large wooden trough, a prized possession that mothers passed on to their daughters, and multiple loaves were left to rise and then get baked in stone ovens. Long wooden paddles moved the loaves in and out of the hot oven.

Equipment was made by hand with brooms fashioned from dried thyme and sacks woven on a loom. Everyone worked, whether man, woman, or child. Donkeys, mules, and horses, and sometimes Skyrian ponies, a breed of miniature horses bred on the island, were used to thresh the wheat and barley which was

then winnowed, sieved, and bagged into woolen sacks.

Other food related tasks included making *trahana*, a cracked wheat porridge used as a thickener to stuff tomatoes and eggplants. The mill stones, weighing about 30 pounds each and measuring 20 inches in diameter, would be used to grind the wheat while positioned

see HEARTFELT page B4



Greek memories: a luscious cocktail plate featuring hummus and feta cheese with pita chips, olives, roasted chickpeas, and olive oil – still the author’s favorite snack.

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

‘RUSSELL & COUSY’

Russell and Cousy are former barn cats who have adjusted well to their lives as pets. Russell is a female and has been spayed and got her shots. She is extremely personable and affectionate. She loves finding a lap to sit on and being petted for hours. She’s talkative and vocal, and she loves cuddling and sleeping in bed. Cousy is an unfixed male, and still needs his shots. He is more shy and skittish.

The two of them are bonded and cannot be separated. Cousy is skeptical of humans and will only cuddle if Russell is next to him. They

are trained to eat two meals per day from an automatic feeder with a shared bowl. They’re absolute sweethearts, and very easy! They do very well on their own. They can be trained to be outdoor or indoor-outdoor cats, and are expert mousers.

Russell and Cousy are available for adoption from a private owner in Leyden, with no fee. To apply, visit www.dakinhumane.org and find “Available Community Animals” under the “Adopt” menu. A potential adopter must submit an application, interview and meet the pets, and sign an adoption contract.

Ainsworth On The Road: Part II

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – Listening and waiting for the coffee to brew. Sinatra was on his game: “Put your dreams away for another day...”

Was it worth it, I wondered, spending thousands of dollars and driving thousands of miles for three weeks of shorts, t-shirts, and sandals, for friendships renewed, for spring training baseball and long hikes in Jonathan Dickinson State Park?

The weather was sunny and 80 degrees and Juno has one of the nicest stretches of sand and shore on the coast, but I’m not a beach person and went just once to get sand in my shoes.

Admittedly, there’s a lot to dislike about Florida – the sales tax on newspapers, busy railroad crossings, bland food and crowded restaurants, to name a few.

“I had a corned beef sandwich at a diner in Stuart last night,” texted my Providence friend Paul White. “It was the absolute worst corned beef I have ever had.”

“Two accidents a mile apart on US1 south of Hobe Sound,” he added. “Had to backtrack and take 95 South.”

One of those accidents involved a cyclist who was killed by a car. Two years ago Dartmouth football coach Buddy Teevens died from injuries he sustained after he was struck by a pickup truck while bicycling in St. Augustine; ten years ago, former UMass coach Bob Pickett was killed by a car while he was standing on a sidewalk in Daytona.

Florida highways are war zones. The natives drive fast and mean and they don’t use their blinkers.

Fade to Grey

The trip north from Jupiter began on I-95 past car dealerships and housing developments – \$199K *Everything Included* – past wilted flowers on small white crosses and airboats parked on gravel driveways, over the muddy St. John’s River and into Palatka toward Gainesville.

After an overnight stay with friends I drove north to Callahan and east to Yulee and stopped for oranges and grapefruit at a citrus center near the Georgia state line.

The store was stocked with bags of saltwater taffy, pecan logs, sea shells, alligator heads, and orange blossom honey. In the back a foot-long gator swam back and forth eyeing me from inside a 100-gallon tank.

“These baby alligators are only kept here for a short time, and then



AINSWORTH PHOTOS

Gator jaws on display at a citrus stand in Yulee, Florida.

moved to a larger facility,” said a sign next to the tank. “They are cared for and handled by trained professionals.”

It reminded me of a time growing up in Deerfield when Dick Wilby’s family went to Florida and Mark Enoch asked him to send him a baby alligator. A few days later a package arrived at Mark’s doorstep and his mother put the box in the bathtub and carefully opened it. The alligator lay deathly still until I poked it in the back and it whipped around and nearly bit off my finger.

When the alligator disappeared we figured Harriette had flushed it down the toilet, and wondered if it would crawl out of the sewer and into a Stephen King novel.

Tempted By History

During road trips south I’ll pass signs for the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, the National Museum of the Marine Corps, the Warriors Air Museum, the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, the Tuskegee Airmen Shrine, and dozens more.

Temptation got the best of me near Savannah, where I exited for “coffee and tea in patriotic surroundings” at the Black Rifle Coffee Company. Inside were hundreds of police patches from across the country including the French-and-electric blue of the Mass. State Police, plus everything from hand-grenade candles to a Duke Cannon Big Ass Brick of Soap – “Smells Like Productivity.”

Instead of coffee I walked out with \$176 worth of military-themed t-shirts for the family. Later I’d stop at the Good Earth Peanut Company off Exit 4 in Virginia for fresh

peanuts and salted pecans. Always remember to put money in the travel budget for gifts and souvenirs to bring back home.

In Santee, South Carolina, I booked a room at Clark’s Inn which caters to travelers who go to bed early. At Craig’s Deli I ordered a rare roast beef sandwich and asked the owner about his billboards.

“I’ve got four, two in each direction,” he said. “They’ve got to know I’m here.”

“How much do they cost?” I asked.

“Ten thousand each,” he said. “That’s \$110 a day. If I can’t do \$110 a day... I’ve already had ten customers.”

Down the street I asked the clerk inside an Amoco station to price a pack of Camel unfiltered cigarettes. She reached up for a pack, scanned it, and said, “Nine-seventy-five.”

In Massachusetts, Camel unfiltered cost \$19.35.

The Long Last Leg

I left Clark’s Inn before sunrise to avoid the backups that would begin along miles of road construction and thousands of jersey barriers.

In Virginia I passed rolling hills and pastures where Confederate and Union soldiers had encamped that today are warehouses and Walmarts.

In Richmond I decided to avoid city traffic and took the long way home on I-64 over to I-81 up through central Virginia and Pennsylvania to Scranton. It’s a trucker’s route, and I was stuck behind Mack trucks going 66 passing other trucks going 65, but the GPS assured me I wasn’t losing time and would be home before midnight.

Dusk settled into darkness on I-84, and I took the New York State Thruway to the Mass Pike to Springfield. It was 10:15 p.m. when the journey ended, 1,070 miles from Santee.

Thanks to the grace of God and rumble strips, my car was still in one piece. George Carlin said there are two types of drivers, morons and maniacs, and I’d been a bit of both.

“Five more weeks of winter,” I said to my kids, and they scoffed.

That was three weeks ago, and the nasty, cloudy, dreary, cold, wet weather persists. Was it worth the getaway? You bet it was.

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



Sunset at Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Hobe Sound, Florida, on March 12.

Senior Center Activities APRIL 14 THROUGH 18

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 4/14

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Pot Luck
3:30 p.m. Senior Tech Class

Tuesday 4/15

9 a.m. Chair Yoga
11:00 a.m. Money Matters
12:30 p.m. Tech Tuesday
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 4/16

9 a.m. Veterans’ Agent
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:45 a.m. Friends’ Meeting
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
1 p.m. Mobile Food Bank
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 4/17

1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. Montague Villages
Volunteer Training

Friday 4/18

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

548-1022 or coa@leverett.ma.us.

Please check the town newsletter or the LeverettConnects list-serv for more info.

ERVING

Open Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1 Care Drive. Daily snacks and coffee. Fitness room and pool table open.

Monday 4/14

9 a.m. Good for U
10 a.m. Seated Fitness
12 p.m. Pitch Cards
1 p.m. Yoga

Tuesday 4/15

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

Wednesday 4/16

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

Thursday 4/17

9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow
12 p.m. Martin Gitlin
Greatest Sitcoms
Easter Bonnet

Friday 4/18

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting,
Open Sew

WENDELL

Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. The next clinic is May 7. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinics are the third Tuesday of each month. Luncheons are the fourth Friday at town hall. For more information, contact (413)

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WEST ALONG from page B1

Two years ago, this trog took over our back kitchen door by building her nest on top of an upturned long-handled scrub brush left by the door. We use this brush to wash the kitchen floor. Her nest on the spiky brush was a tunnel-like construction with a small woven hole, hence the troglodyte reference.

Several inches into the oven-like masterpiece of woven grasses were deposited four eggs, plus a snake-skin – for good luck, I guess.

Who knows why this species likes to add a snakeskin to her nest? Some other species do that too, even substituting shreds of plastic if no snakeskin is available.

We were not able to go out the back door for about four weeks while the wren incubated and raised four youngsters. One day they finally bailed out and headed for the wide world of the back yard. At that point we could reclaim the back door, and finally wash the kitchen floor!

This year the wren decided that the inner circle created by the pine boughs of our Christmas wreath was just the spot for a new nest. And wouldn't you know, that center hole, familiar to everyone who puts a wreath up near the front door, became the perfect dwelling place for this year's wren family.

Their nest is carefully crafted to perfection with fine grasses and soft mosses to match the green but fading pine needles. It is snug up against the porch clapboards next to the mailbox, ready for a clutch of wren eggs to be deposited at the end of its bird-cave tunnel.

Unlike our willingness to abandon the use of the back kitchen door and floor brush last time, we'll have to work out an arrangement with this year's trog family. We won't give up going in and out the front door, and in spite of the wreath and nest next to the mailbox, we won't stop deliveries of the US mail!



Artist Profile: Edith Bingham

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I liked going to this craft fair called the Pop-Up Market in Greenfield in December. One of the artists I saw there was Edith Bingham of Shelburne Falls, who I later interviewed for an article.

“I am a fine artist,” Bingham told me. “I have painted since I was a child. I do illustrations as well.” These have mostly been textbook illustrations, she said during the interview, “but lately I have been doing fine art.” She has worked for textbook companies and sign-painting companies.

Bingham told me she has created “portraits of children and famous people,” landscapes of the surrounding New England countryside, and still lifes of seashells, flowers, and fruit.

Bingham attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and has lived in Shelburne Falls for 20 years. She has shown one painting at the Springfield Museum, a portrait titled *The Pandemic*. “I have sold them at Shelburne Falls Art co-op for over 20 years,” she said, and it was her first time at the Greenfield market.

“For me, art is how I engage with the physical world as well as the world of ideas, stories, and folklore,” she wrote in the artist’s statement on her website. “I want to interpret visually the stories that have been told and retold throughout history and to indulge in the beauty of my surroundings. Using color, movement, and form, I hope to capture human



Monster, a pen illustration by Shelburne Falls artist Edith Bingham.

faces and figures in ways that express not only joy and triumph but also the darker side of the human condition. I notice shapes and colors, from the smallest details to the larger picture, and how they connect and flow.”

Bingham sells prints that are reproductions of art she has made. The portraits on her website, www.edithbingham.com, are very realistic-looking, and are probably extremely accurate in connection with the real-life look of the people she has portrayed. The same goes for some of the still lifes that are there as well.

“I get inspired by nature and community,” Bingham said when I asked what she paints. I find I mostly enjoy the portraits and still lifes when it comes to her art. Her website is where you can find out for yourself if my opinion of her art is right, or have your own thoughts about it.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Lost Quarters; Bone Pile; Back Scratcher; Jumping After Seven; Nude Sauna-Goers; Car in Ravine; USDA Warrant; A Civil Matter

Monday, 3/24

8:41 a.m. Caller reporting heavy gas smell in the area of Industrial Boulevard and Australia Way. Shelburne Control advised.

3:56 p.m. Caller from Station Street states that a dual-wheeled truck keeps running over the corner of his property, damaging the lawn. Advised of options.

Tuesday, 3/25

12:46 p.m. Walk-in looking to make a police report of over \$1,000 worth of coins stolen from her house. Officer advises quarters are possibly missing; she will look around her house.

2:25 p.m. Party into station requesting a soliciting permit. Permit denied by chief. Requesting party made aware of reasons for denial and that he is not allowed to solicit in our jurisdiction.

5:18 p.m. Caller from Federal Street concerned that a juvenile is shooting a BB gun toward Route 63 at a bag hanging from a tree; would like an officer to check it out. Officer spoke with the party who was shooting the BB gun; reports no hazards; party shooting into the woods.

Wednesday, 3/26

10:39 a.m. Caller has video footage of the theft of a package with a valuable item inside on East Main Street. Prior larceny occurring on March 13. Investigated. Caller advised of options. Will be on lookout for suspect.

11:01 a.m. Caller states that there is a large pile of bones in the area of the overlook on Cemetery Road. Investigated. Old bones from a deer.

2 p.m. Officers advising of a large sinkhole forming in the Canal Road area. DPW and FD notified. Message left for last known property owner. DPW and utility companies remaining on scene to come up with a solution. TFFD deputy chief relaying request from First Light Power that officers periodically check the sinkhole overnight to make sure it isn't getting larger.

3:50 p.m. Caller reporting someone trying to break into a washing machine at Third Street Laundry; has a video; would like to speak with an officer.

Caller advises incident occurred at around 3:45 p.m.; suspect is female, dirty blond hair, holding a back scratcher which she had also used while trying to gain access; last seen leaving on foot toward Avenue A. Officer advises there is no video of the act, only of the suspect leaving. Officer advised caller to have the owner call when he returns on Sunday if he would like to speak to an officer.

4:02 p.m. Caller concerned about two dogs taking themselves for a walk on Montague Street heading toward the police station. Unable to locate.

7:04 p.m. Caller from Grove Street would like to speak to an officer about vandalism and harassment. Officers advised party of options.

Thursday, 3/27

8:47 a.m. USDA agent into station requesting PD assistance with a possible arrest on Main Street. Unable to locate.

Friday, 3/28

2:20 p.m. Multiple callers reporting a two-car accident on Millers Falls Road. Ambulance requested for evaluation of juvenile in one vehicle. Tow requested for both vehicles. Report taken.

3:57 p.m. Walk-in requesting to speak to an officer; states she and her father have closed their business since October. They placed “No Trespassing” signs on the property, changed the locks, and sent an email and letter in the mail notifying her sister. Today, they went to the business to clean, and the locks had been cut off and replaced with locks installed by her sister and her husband. They went to the Sheriff’s Office, but a trespass order will not be served until Monday. Advised of options.

6:45 p.m. 911 open line from Norman Circle; can hear breathing in the background, then “I’ll be right back.” No answer on callback. Caller called in on business line at 6:50 p.m. with a complaint about neighbors. He was advised officers are outside looking to speak to him. Officer advising complaint about kids riding motorcycles on the property. Officer spoke with property owner; advised of complaint and options; hoping to work together to figure it out.

7:31 p.m. Caller from Oakman Street reports there was a painting ad hung on his door; inquiring whether any solicitation permits are granted at this time. States he will bring flyer to PD next week. No approved permits currently on file.

Saturday, 3/29

1:57 p.m. Walk-in reporting threats/harassment

while driving in the parking lot of Food City. Advised of options.

3:48 p.m. 911 call from individual calling from his father’s apartment at Keith Apartments reports that a black van was there with two people who were knocking on doors trying to see if people were home. Caller has a video of them going in and leaving an apartment. Officer advised. Upon callback, caller told officer that he was stabbed. Officer advising he spoke to the caller and his father and watched a 43-minute video. No injury.

Sunday, 3/30

7:48 a.m. Caller from Cumberland Farms states that a male party who has been stalking an employee just showed up. Ongoing issue. Advised of options.

5:59 p.m. Caller from Greenfield Road reports that his landlord has parked her truck in front of his car and he can’t leave; he would like to go to the store to get medicine. States the driveway is big enough, but she is doing this out of spite as he is being evicted in June. Officer states car moved and situation mediated.

8:17 p.m. Caller from G Street would like an officer to go and talk to the neighbor about jumping around because it is after 7 p.m. Officer advised.

Monday, 3/31

8:32 a.m. 911 call from bus company stating that they received a call from one of their drivers who says that a woman was forcibly put into a vehicle; possible abduction. Driving on Crocker Avenue toward Montague City Road. Officer advises contact made with both parties. Both admitted to having an argument; female is not being held against her will. Advised of options.

10:09 a.m. Multiple reports of manhole cover missing at Third Street and Avenue A. Officer and DPW advised. Officer advises cover is on, but DPW still needs to respond. Fixed by DPW.

11:41 a.m. Trespass order served to female party for Jarvis Pools.

5:06 p.m. Caller reports her neighbors walk from the outdoor shower to the sauna naked. She can see them clearly from her house. Residents advised of complaint.

Wednesday, 4/2

12:35 p.m. 911 caller reporting a vehicle has gone into a ditch on Fairway Avenue. Officer advises vehicle is approximately 25 feet down an embankment and the driver is trapped inside. Shelburne Control notified; FD and ambulance responding. Driver removed from vehicle and transported to BFMC. Officer requesting

DPW respond with barricades due to road damage.

Thursday, 4/3

11:41 a.m. Caller from East Mineral Road concerned about a white van that parks in the parking lot and burns metal. The male party has propane tanks set up, and the smell is very pungent. Vehicle not there upon officer’s arrival; however, there is some evidence of material being burned. Investigated.

11:47 p.m. Passerby states there is a house near Scotty’s that has a light flickering on the porch. Caller thought it to be strange and wanted to report it.

Friday, 4/4

1:35 a.m. Caller complaining of loud music/noise which is disturbing her sleep. Officer advises Central Street area checked; noise is coming from Unity Street area. Officer located noise on Unity Street. Party advised of complaint. Volume will be lowered.

10:27 a.m. Caller states that a male party is hitting rocks into the road with an orange stick. Area near Millers Falls Road and Industrial Boulevard checked; unable to locate.

10:43 a.m. USDA agent here to attempt to make an arrest of a female party on Main Street with an active warrant. Unable to locate.

3:17 p.m. Caller reporting sinkhole on Paradise Way; no cones. Looked about three or four feet deep, and an orange pipe is showing. Officer advises sinkhole on side of road. DPW advised.

Saturday, 4/5

11:43 p.m. Caller from L Street states she has had a male party, possibly her juvenile neighbor, hanging around her back door the last few nights, and tonight he ripped off her wired camera and took off. Female has footage and a screenshot of what he looks like. Officers looked in area for male party; no contact. Report taken.

Sunday, 4/6

3:31 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant states he lent his cousin in Montague Center an electric bike and it was stolen from his cousin’s basement by an individual currently in Erving. Officer advises Erving PD spoke with involved party and located the bike; advised party was cooperative. Party stated he bought the bike from someone named Steve and will not be turning it over because he did not steal it. Officer called reporting party back to advise of findings and that it is a civil matter.

Monday, 4/7

2:23 a.m. Caller reports he sneezed and drove into a parked vehicle on the side of Third Street. Damage to other vehicle’s mirror. Referred to an officer.

Have a question for the editor?

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



The Montague Reporter Podcast



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MAGGIE SADOWAY PHOTO

“Baking Bread, Karpathos, Greece.”



MANDESON PHOTO

Spanakopita, made from layered filo dough, spinach, feta cheese, eggs, dill, and black pepper. This version has an additional layer of steamed beets topped with cheddar cheese.

HEARTFELT from page B1

between a woman’s outstretched legs.

With the addition of milk, a soft porridge was made from the milled wheat “in a blackened pot over an outdoor wood fire, stirred constantly with a long bamboo pole until thickened.” It was next spread out on the roof to dry in the sun, while being turned over several days then hung outside in woolen sacks to continue drying.

Most ingredients used in the home were homegrown and homemade. Oregano, mint, fennel, basil, sage, and peppermint were grown for tea and seasoning, egg noodles were carefully mixed, rolled out, and cut, and salt was collected from the sea. Rabbits, goats, and sheep provided skins and wool, and all the men wore the “ubiquitous Skyrian footwear” made from tires and a leather thong.

My wife and I visited Greece about 15 years ago, staying for a week on the small island of Sifnos, part of the Cyclades, a group of islands with white sands, blue seas, and architecture in blue and white. There were a multitude of churches, in fact, a total of 360 on this tiny island, just about one for every day of the year. They were closed, but we could peer past dusty panes to see ancient Byzantine art on the walls, a stylized form of religious painting.

If you’ve never been to Greece, you’ll soon learn about the cats – hundreds of cats, lounging around streets and alleys scrounging for handouts. No one seems to own them, but everyone seems to care for them with handfuls of chicken or feta cheese left out. They’re rough-looking, some with missing eyes and scraggly fur, and yet they’re so famous, they’re represented in every gift shop with “Cats of

Greece” calendars and postcards for sale.

Besides the sun, the sand, and the beautiful blue sea undulating below the cliffs of our guesthouse, the food was fantastic. Mornings found us at a local cafe enjoying thick Greek yogurt topped with nuts and honey. Lunch or dinner was freshly caught seafood or lemon-roasted chicken, or a platter of hummus, tabbouleh, feta, and pita bread. Occasionally we enjoyed a chilled glass of ouzo, an anise-flavored aperitif toasted with a hearty Yiamas! Cheers!

I’ve loved Mediterranean food since I first made spanakopita, a spinach pie with egg, feta, dill, and spinach layered in buttery filo dough when I was 9. I still make this traditional dish, sometimes adding in layers of steamed beets or mixing in different greens with the spinach. Having the opportunity to eat a style of cuisine I’d loved for years was quite the treat.

Another Greek favorite is a lamb sandwich, called souvlaki, featuring marinated and grilled meat stuffed into a warm pita and served with tzatziki sauce made from yogurt, cucumber, lemon, olive oil, and herbs. It dates back some 4,000 years; according to an article at Food & Wine, the Greeks were known as one of the first people to slice and roast several types of meat which replaced the Neolithic Age method of boiling meat.

According to the same article, the Greek culture’s love of sugary treats is part of the collective consciousness. “That’s how we achieve happiness,” states Aby Saltiel, co-owner of Kalesma, Mykonos, a chic hotel on the island.

Sweet treats like baklava with ground nuts and honey layered into crispy, buttery filo,

MAGGIE’S GREEK FAVA (Yellow Split Peas)

one cup fava beans
onion, sliced
salt and pepper, to taste
one lemon

Boil one cup fava in three to four cups of water. When thoroughly cooked, mash them to a thick puree. Spread onto individual plates.

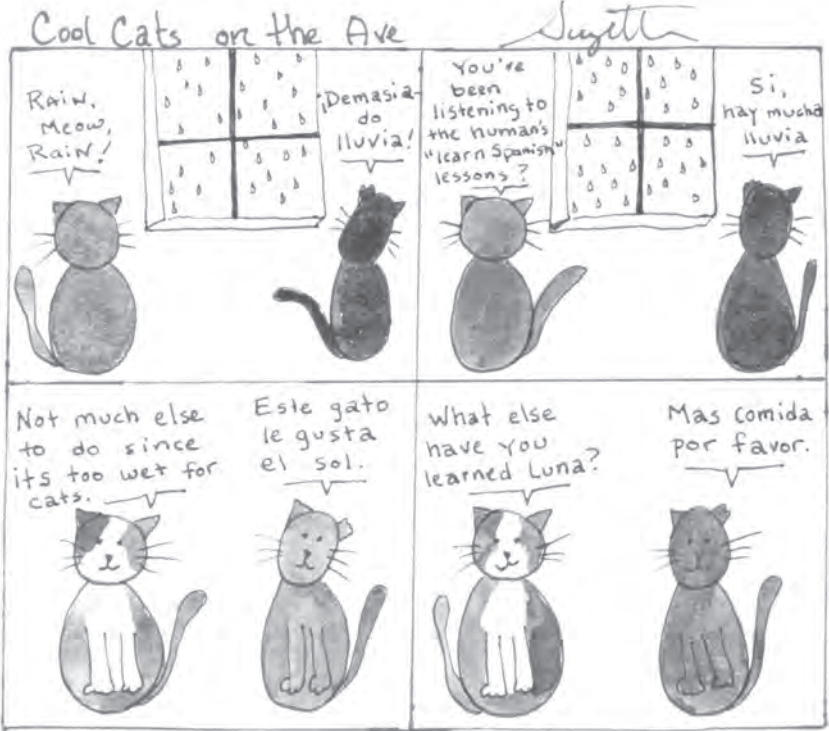
Garnish with very thin slices of onion, salt, pepper, and fresh lemon to taste. Top with a good amount of olive oil – the more robust the better! Serve with thick sourdough bread and a simple salad on the side.

Many accompany the meal with a glass of country retsina, the traditional Greek wine flavored with pine resin. Yiamas!

spiced walnut cake, and loukoumades, or Greek doughnuts, can be found everywhere.

I leave you with a recipe Maggie included in one of her cards for Greek Fava. Kali Orexi, or Bon Appetit!

This will be the last column of Notes From the Heartfelt Café. It’s been a good run of four years, and the author would like to acknowledge and thank those readers who have reached out to her and spoken with her in person about their interest and enjoyment of the column. Thanks to the Montague Reporter.



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

- William Carlos Williams

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

April's Featured Poet: Rachel Sterling

Confession fourteen

I ran far too many times
into that unforgiving
brick wall which
insensitively withheld
its gauze pads and
mercurochrome to
adequately dress my
ghastly head wounds
which desperately
circled the neighborhood
over and over again
like a lost pack of
stray dogs searching
for food.

A Magical pudding

This magical
pudding of
the Gods
came speeding
on a truck
from the Hasidic
folks of Brooklyn.
A Grandmother
from Hungary
gave them the
recipe for this
chocolate Babka
gold left on the
front porch
in a white
cardboard box.
The Grandmother's
songs were sung to
the children and
baked into this pudding
riding a top a thousand
generations of moving
fingers shaping dough
always humming Hungarian
lullabies in dark hallways
before daybreak.

Something to Remember

Even Adolf Hitler had
a warm cuddly side
that would only come
out for twenty two seconds
at 3am on Christmas eve
when he was sipping
eggnog lovingly made
by his sweetie Eva Braun
at his Eagles nest hide away
in the Bavarian alps.
Hiding forest elves
would sneak glances
at Adolf from behind
the handmade, gold
embossed furniture
in the living room
as he whispered sweet
love bombs with beguiling
twinkling eyes to Eva
as she helplessly swooned
over his perfect hairdo.
“Don't worry my darling.
Soon this horrible war will
be over and I'll buy us a
wonderful ocean get away
in Bermuda where we can live
out the rest of our days” he'd
say sitting next to a crackling
fireplace, swallowing his last
drop of eggnog sprinkled with
fresh nutmeg grown in his
private herb garden.

While playing scrabble

A mad generation flies
Past the window and
Keeps going regardless
Of what the observers
Are doing in the house.
These unruddered
Projectiles of flying
Acrobats do backflips
Continually without
Blinking while tying
Their shoelaces.
They lift passing trucks
With bare hands, saving
The lives of trapped children
Pinned under the wheels
Of eighteen wheelers
Downtown, and think
Nothing of it.
They cook thousands
Of servings of baked
Alaska for the inhabitants of
North America in lieu of
Burping for days on end.
And even though it looks
Like it's every man for himself,
Something entirely different
Is taking place.
It's the human race
Rising like condensation on
Car windows after a rain storm.

News flash

Today a tidal wave
of the wrong chemicals
rages through hijacked
brain tissue.
This wave wipes
away hordes of cells
and flows around
and around in whirlpools
inside the hoofs of
stampeding horses,
behind the eyes
of wayward falcons
flying through
a wilderness maintained
by a careful God.



WRITING THE LAND
The Poetry Page is supported by
NatureCulture
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Contributor Notes:

Rachel Sterling's work has previously appeared in *The Montague Reporter*,
The Windless Orchard, *The Tipton Poetry Review*, and elsewhere. She lives in Leverett.

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EVENTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 10

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center, Northfield: *Monthly Hike*. Pre-register at www.bookeo.com/northfield. 1 to 3 p.m. Free.

First United Methodist Church, Greenfield: *Música Franklin Talent Show* with student performances, grades 1 through 12. Dinner after the show. 5 to 6 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Circles of Safety Workshop*. For parents and caregivers, especially those raising teens, to learn about preventing child sexual abuse. 5:30 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Documentary film screening, *Deep Rising* (2023), presented by Greening Greenfield. 6:30 p.m. Free.

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *Learn to Play the Ukulele* with Julie Stepanek. Instruments provided, "but bring your own if you have one." For ages 12 and older. 6:30 p.m. Free.

The Drake, Amherst: *Lydia Lunch*, spoken word, with musicians *Tim Dahl and Matt Nelson*. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Montague Square Dance*, with *Pretty Cranks* and caller *William Wellington*. Jammers welcome. Circle dances and beginner

squares, 6:30 p.m.; regular squares, 8 p.m. By donation.

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Goodness Shakes*, freestyle community dance. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Raven Used Books, Shelburne Falls: *Candace R. Curran* chapbook launch, with guest poet *Janet MacFadyen*. Refreshments. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Shenanigans with Friends*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Buckley Hall, Amherst College: *Voicebox*, performances by Amherst College artists showcasing works by faculty, staff, and students that deploy the human voice across a range of styles and traditions. 7 p.m. Free.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Kalliope Jones, Hazel Foucault*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Hiroya Tsukamoto, James Parison*. 7 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Stephan Crump Sextet*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *Emily Rach Beisel, Marie Carroll, Cryptwarbler, Rebecca Schrader + Barbie.ai, Sam Hodge, Impure Luck*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Gay Mayor, APIE, Gastric Lavage*. 8 p.m. \$.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *Rock201*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Willie Lane, Matt Valentine, Spectre Folk*. 8 p.m. No cover.

The Drake, Amherst: *Tank & The Bangas, Elliott Skinner, DJ Zeus*. 8 p.m. \$.

33 Hawley, Northampton: *Vic Rawlings & Arkm Foam, Jake Meginsky & Lemuel Marc, Milk of Mustard Seed*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Band of Brothers*, Allman Brothers tribute. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Lost Film, Nanny, Slant of Light*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Behold! True Believers, Fool & the World*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, Turners Falls: *Easter Bazaar*, with a variety of Polish food including babkas, kielbasas, pierogis, and the national dish of Poland, bigos or hunter's stew. Luncheon, raffle, bake sale, arts and crafts. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$

Main Street, Athol: *Big Cheese 5K Race*, 9:30 a.m., \$; *River Rat Promenade*, 9:35 a.m., free.

Greenfield High School, Greenfield: *Artspace Market*, with vendors selling handmade goods. Fundraiser for Artspace Community Arts Center. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. No cover.



St. Hyacinth Pierogi Maker
Claire Hughes displays a tray of
sauerkraut pierogi, which will be for
sale at the Polish Easter Bazaar at
Our Lady of Czestochowa church in
Turners Falls this Saturday, April 12.

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Home and Craft Show*, with over 60 home improvement and craft vendors, guest speakers, food booths, games, and a raffle. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free.

Northfield Mountain Rec and Environmental Center, Northfield: *Kids' Nature Art with Deborah Bazer*, making May baskets, for ages 4 to 10. Register at www.bookeo.com/northfield. 10 a.m. Free.

Greenfield Savings Bank, Turners Falls: Shoemaking with Sharon Raymond. Upcycling workshop using scrap leather to create toddler shoes. 1 p.m. Free.

EXHIBITS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Atomic Dog: What I did to beat the blues*, paintings by Ryan McGinn, through April.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Where We Are, Together*, paintings by Cameron Schmitz, through May 26.

Montague Center Library: Ann Feitelson: *Quilts*, through May 2.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: Vanessa Kerby, guest artist showing ceramics through April. Reception this Saturday, April 12 from 1 to 4 p.m.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Feathers and Fur*, works by Mary Schreiber, through April.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Playmakers: Making Sense of the World Through Art*, artwork by Whitney Robbins, Bobby Brown, and Joan Green, through April.

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Teen Art Show*, work by youngsters across Franklin County. Through April 25, with a closing reception Friday, April 25 from 5 to 8 p.m.

TEOLOS Gallery, Greenfield: Peter Ruhf: *Magical Surrealism*, sixty years of paintings, drawings, and prints, through April 26.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *New England Dreamscapes*, new paintings on slate by Sarah Adams, through April; *New Roots in Riverbanks*,

history exhibit about Polish and other Eastern European immigrants to the Connecticut River valley, through May.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *STEAM Art and Science*, group show of art that incorporates elements of science, through May 18.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Closed and Wide Open Spaces*, paintings by Nancy Meagher, through April 26.

Science & Engineering Library, UMass Amherst: *The Soil Beneath Us*, mixed media works by Malaika Ross about the rhizosphere. *Harvesting Color: A Seasonal Journal*, art about ecology and herbalism using a variety of green alchemic processes by Tonya Lemos. Both through May 30.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Hurry Up Spring*, member show heralding the season, through April 28.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Student Art Exhibit*, work by fifth- and sixth-graders at the Mohawk school district, through April 27.

Hosmer Gallery, Forbes Library, Northampton: *Zine Libraries of Western Mass and Beyond*, collection of zines from regional libraries. Through April, with a reception this Saturday, April 12, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Borgia Gallery, Elms College, Chicopee: *For a Pair of Wings*, works by Hannah Hurricane, through April 18.

CALL FOR ART

The Greenfield Redevelopment Authority is looking for digital submissions for art to be displayed in the two 40-by-60-inch windows of the former **First National Bank building** on Bank Row. Details at greenfield-ma.gov/gra. Deadline to submit is April 17.

CALL FOR PERFORMERS

The Brick House is seeking teen performing artists from Franklin County for the second annual **Franklin County Teen Performing Arts Showcase** on May 23 at the Shea Theater. Musicians, actors, dancers, or any other type of artist who would like to perform are welcome to apply. Performers receive a small stipend. Apply at tinyurl.com/Teen-Showcase-Sign-up by April 27. Contact olliepawell@gmail.com with questions.

CALL FOR EVENTS

RiverCulture is seeking **cultural events for their 2025 summer calendar**, including performances, exhibits, history talks, music festivals, craft fairs, theater, farmers markets, outdoor movies, and workshops. Events must take place in Montague between May 24 and September 22. Send details to riverculture@montague-ma.gov before April 28. Include the name, date and time, cost, and location, plus a one- or two-line description. Call Suzanne with any questions at (413) 863-3200 ext. 115.

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CALENDAR

Leverett Public Library,
Leverett: *Juggler Meadow String Band*. 1 p.m. Free.

Millers River, Athol: *River Rat Race*. 1 p.m. Free.

LOOT, Turners Falls: *Meet Artist Sophie Foulkes*, one of three winners of the Wheat Paste Mural Project. "Stop by LOOT to see the draft designs and contribute your thoughts and ideas for the final design." 2 to 4 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Vernal Pool Variety Hour*. Drop-in program on the lives of frogs, toads, and salamanders and their migration journeys. Ages 7 and up. 2 to 4 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Market, Turners Falls: *Palestine Liberation Film Series*, documentary screening, *Palestine Is Still the Issue* (2002), followed by shorts and discussion. 5 p.m. By donation.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open Mic*, with featured performers *Annika Amstutz*, *George Wilson*, and *Becky Hollingsworth*. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Seva, Snowbeasts, Clock Serum, Orange Demon, Starvation Wages*. 7 p.m. \$.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: Contra dance with *Red Case Band*, *Lisa Greenleaf* calling. 7:45 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Joan Osborne*, singing Bob Dylan songs and originals. 8 p.m. \$

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Consider the Source, Unqualified Band, Chiburi*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Teen Driver, Hardcar, Grammerhorn Wren*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Home and Craft Show*, more than 60 home improvement and craft vendors, speakers, food booths, games, raffle. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

Brick House Community Resource Center, Turners Falls: *Community Circle*. 2:30 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *French/Breton Jam Session*. Open to the public. 2:30 p.m. Free.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Samara, Inverter, Sheepdog, Oozie, Mantle*. 3 p.m. \$.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *One Master, Midden, Compress*. 7 p.m. \$.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: *UMass Percussion Ensemble*. 7 p.m. \$

Darlings, Easthampton: *Winterpills*. 7 p.m. Free.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Big D and the Kids Table, PWRUP*. 7 p.m. \$

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Robber Robber, Laveda, Lost Film*. 8 p.m. \$.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Dweezil Zappa*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown, Eric Hangen*. 8 p.m. No cover.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Curmudgeon Bingo*. 7 p.m. \$.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Community Contra with Becky Hollingsworth, George Wilson, Rebecca Weiss*, caller *Hannah Johlas*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Northfield Mountain Rec and Environmental Center,

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Kim Chin-Gibbons*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Jatoba, Splatter*. 7 p.m. \$.

Hampshire College, Amherst: *Imp Say Glyph, Wizard Finger, Sapien Joyride, Giant Enemy Cancer Cult, Dome Lettuce, Death in Venice, 100 Ton Nightmare*. 7:30 p.m. No cover.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Rebels*, Tom Petty tribute. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Ty Segall, Mikal Cronin*. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Wolfman Jack, Grateful Dead* tribute. 8:30 p.m. \$.

25 Main, Northampton: *Barbie ai, Maddog, Roost. World, Tech.Ota + Topher, System_failure*. 10 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Bella's Bartok, Film & Gender*. 10:30 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Unity Park, Turners Falls: *Peter Cottontail's Eggstravaganza* presented by Montague Parks and Recreation. 11 a.m. Free.

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *Ashley Rhodes*. 6 p.m. No cover.

Tori Town, Holyoke: *Jackson Fig, Better Living, Radical Joy, Velveteen*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *AudioBomb*. 7 p.m. No cover.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *John Sheldon*. 7 p.m. \$

Nova Arts, Keene: *Zoh Amba Sun Ensemble, David Ross Quintet*. 7 p.m. \$.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Film, *The Elephant Man* (1980), with opening music by *Ladies in the Radiator, Joshua Burkett*. 7 p.m. \$.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Gaslight Tinkers*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: Contra dance with *The Moving Violations, Bev Bernbaum* calling. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Big Yellow Taxi, Joni Mitchell* tribute. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Kristine Leschper, Anna McClellan, bobbie*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Creative Writing, Missed Cues, Willie & Wednesday*. 9:30 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Dave Seidel, Barrett/Sherzai duo, frogtones, Spectre Folk*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Next Monday, April 14 at 7 p.m., The Encampments screens at Greenfield Garden Cinemas. Directors Michael T. Workman and Kei Pritsker were embedded in the 2024 Palestinian solidarity campus protests, and among the leaders the film features is Mahmoud Khalil (above), now imprisoned with no charge by the US government.

MONDAY, APRIL 14

All Souls Unitarian Church, Greenfield: *Stone Soup Café Community Soup Night* invites "everyone, regardless of their ability to pay." 5 to 7 p.m. Free or by donation.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Combust, Echo Chamber, Just Us, Can't Lose, Ball of Destruction*. 6 p.m. \$.

Greenfield Garden Cinemas, Greenfield: *The Encampments* (2025), documentary on Palestinian solidarity movement at Columbia University. 7 p.m. \$

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Frost Heaves and Hales*, 9 p.m. No cover.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

Millers Falls Library, Millers Falls: *Meet and Greet with Montague Villages*. 3 p.m. Free.

Sulis Studios, Florence: *Financial Collapse, Matt Norman, Otto Benson, beetsblog, Frogtones Frogget, Free Body Estimate*. 6 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

Greenfield Public Library, Greenfield: Author talk, *Tom Weiner* and *Dr. Amilcar Shabazz*, about their book *In Defiance: 20 Abolitionists You Were Never Taught In School*. Light refreshments; books for sale. 6 p.m. Free.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Good News!, Happy Mouse, Two Wrong Turns*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Northfield: *The Lives and Behavior of River Otter*, with local tracker, naturalist, and wildlife videographer David Brown. 6 p.m. Free.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Sylvie's Okay, Brennan Wedl*. 8 p.m. \$.

Drawing Board Brewery, Florence: *Hollow Deck, Pressure Care, Blues Poison Dart Frog*. 7 p.m. \$.

Jupiter Club, Easthampton: *Disintegration*, goth night with DJs *Bex Taylor, Studebaker Hawk*. 7 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

Greenfield Savings Bank, Turners Falls: *Easter Bunny Visit*. Children receive a candy-filled egg. 3:30 to 5 p.m. Free.

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

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Theater of Ideas*, featuring *Ash Goverman* presenting "Life on the Ice." 6 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Indoor Mini-Golf*, with glow-in-the-dark lights. 6 to 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bruce Korona*. 6:30 p.m. No cover.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Kaethe Hostetter's Impressions of Ethiopia, O Ksenos*. Tickets at www.weathervane-arts.org; no one turned away. 7 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Stock Goblin, Skruple, B'Shara, Leadheads, Eliza Howells*. 7 p.m. \$.

looking forward...

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Jazz Jam*, with featured performers *Two For Jazz*. 6 p.m. Free.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

Franklin Patterson Hall, Hampshire College: Public lecture, *Noura Erakat*, "The Boomerang Comes Back: How the US-backed war on Palestine is expanding authoritarianism at home." 4 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Federal Street Books, Greenfield: *Indie Bookstore Day*, with prizes, children's used book sale, and more. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Nova Arts, Keene: *Takaat, Rick Maguire*. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, MAY 3

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Lung, Dollflower, PMS*. 7 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, MAY 4

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Immigrant Voices*, presented by Center for New Americans. 7 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, MAY 12

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Tune-Yards*. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, MAY 16

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Mazozma, Creative Writing, Wednesday Knudsen*. 8 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, MAY 18

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Sun Ra Arkestra*. 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

Firehouse, Worcester: *Apes of the State, Sister Wife Sex Strike, Little Foot, Justin Arena*. 8 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

The Drake, Amherst: *Okkervil River, The Antlers*. 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16

Whately Town Hall, Whately: *Hot Club of Cowtown*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JULY 26

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *The Mountain Goats, Guster*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Bonnie "Prince" Billy, Tashi Dorji*. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

The Drake, Amherst: *Lucero, Jessica Lea Mayfield*. 8 p.m. \$.

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LOG from page B1

supplies and threw the items that she wanted to buy at the caller. Caller advises the Plexiglass blocked some of the items, but some items did hit her. Woman last seen walking on Avenue A turning into Peskeompskut Park wearing a black mask, purple bandana, blue backpack, and blue shoes and is with another woman in a gray shirt.

2:18 p.m. Caller requesting his options re: ongoing noise from another apartment in the building; believes the person may be doing it to harass him. Noise consists of moving furniture and loud walking or stomping.

Wednesday, 4/29/20

11:03 a.m. Caller states the upstairs neighbors are always stomping on the floor and it is causing him mental distress.

10:49 p.m. Caller requesting to speak with an officer re: an incident that happened earlier this morning at Cumberland Farms. Caller states that she works in the medical field; she went to the gas station for a bottle of water and held the door for a woman coming out. The woman made a remark about the caller wearing her scrubs; caller told her that they are clean and she is on her way to work. The woman then stated that it is people like the caller who are causing this pandemic and that she hopes her and her family get the virus. Female took photos of caller's vehicle. Caller is concerned that female party might try and find her.

Friday, 5/1/20

1:39 a.m. 911 open line; caller states she has been in bed for a month because she was told to stay inside during the virus. Caller states she is a little drunk and is really sad about everything that is happening. Officers on scene. Caller states she just wanted someone to talk to because she was lonely. Officers clear; stating roommate has phone.

Saturday, 5/2/20

1:20 p.m. Report of unwanted female sitting on caller's front porch on Fifth Street rocking back and forth, possibly waiting for another tenant upstairs. On arrival, party was crying and eating ice cream but advised she is OK. Party moved along.



Tuesday, 5/19/20

7:52 p.m. Caller reporting suspicious vehicle on Avenue A near Fourth Street; states truck has a blanket covering the windows from the inside; two occupants. Officer made contact with registered owner. He was watching a movie on his cell phone, and stated that he lives in the area but is currently staying away from his apartment because he is in and out of stores and does not want to risk spreading COVID-19 to the children who live in the apartment. No issues at this time.

Tuesday, 5/26/20

8:52 p.m. Approximately 15 callers reporting fireworks in the alleyway across from Turners Falls Pizza House. Officer reports that a trans former just blew in the same area, which could be part of the noise people are calling about. Advised involved party of complaint.

9:42 p.m. Caller reporting that the same group of kids who were just spoken to by an officer are now back in the alley lighting off smaller fireworks. Officer spoke with party and advised him of the second complaint; advised that if this becomes an ongoing issue, he will be charged accordingly.

Wednesday, 5/27/20

10:59 a.m. Report of male party who was stomping around and flailing his arms for approximately 15 minutes outside a gray sedan in front of the Montague Village Store. Male was not wearing a mask and believes the owner asked him to leave.

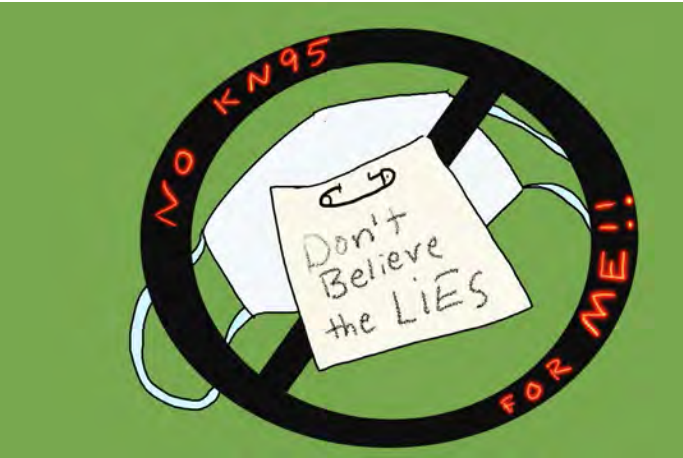
5:25 p.m. Caller from Third Street states that someone is letting off fireworks in the area. No evidence located; no one around to confirm or deny. Will continue to check area.

Wednesday, 6/3/20

9:14 p.m. Reports of fireworks and other loud noises from Spring Street and Davis Street. Area checked; nothing found.

Monday, 6/8/20

9:36 p.m. Report of fireworks near Power Street. Officer located parties with fireworks in the old Railroad Salvage parking lot. Parties moved along.



Friday, 6/12/20

9:12 a.m. Caller from Family Dollar reporting that she asked a customer to leave after he entered the store without a mask and refused to tell her why he was not wearing one. Caller called back on 911; possible verbal argument heard in background. Advised caller not to engage with customer and that officers were almost on scene. Units clear; customer completed what he went there for and has moved along.

Saturday, 6/13/20

9:31 p.m. Reports of fireworks from the Scalpers Lodge and in the area of Swamp Road and Center Street. Unable to locate.

Wednesday, 6/24/20

9:02 p.m. Report of ongoing issue with fireworks being set off every night for the past two weeks or so near Spring and Central Streets.

Officer reports area is all quiet; nothing found.

Thursday, 6/25/20

1:45 p.m. Caller from Montague Catholic Social Ministries would like it on record that yesterday she found a face mask on her vehicle with a note about "not believing the lies," and this morning on the door to the building she found a note referring to "not believing the lies" as well.

Thursday, 7/2/20

4:13 p.m. Subway employee reporting customers fighting about mask wearing. Involved female was arguing with two men because they did not have masks on, but they were covering their faces with their shirts. Female was arguing that it was a law to wear a mask. Officer explained that it is not a law, but a policy that a business can choose to enforce or not. Party contin-

ued to argue with officers but eventually moved along.

Tuesday, 11/3/20

11:36 a.m. Caller from FL Roberts requesting removal of unwanted party. Caller asked customer to wear a mask according to store policy. Customer refused. Caller asked him to leave, and he refused and became belligerent. Male party left store; caller advised of trespass options.

Thursday, 11/19/20

1:01 p.m. Walk-in would like to speak to an officer about the rules re: mask-wearing. Advised of options.

Tuesday, 12/8/20

2:59 p.m. Food City employee requesting officer for male party who is refusing to wear a mask; not causing a disturbance at this time.

Thursday, 1/21/21

12:52 p.m. Caller reporting theft of an air purifier from a common area in the apartment building. Report taken.

Friday, 1/22/21

12:55 p.m. Caller reporting that she received a scam text message telling her that if she watches a video she will receive approximately \$1,400 in COVID relief money.

Saturday, 3/20/21

6:16 a.m. Call from male party talking about everyone getting sick from wearing a mask. Caller called back stating everyone is scared, and the caller is unemployable. Third call received.

Wednesday, 4/14/21

10:56 a.m. Caller from Salvation Army inquiring about mask regulations and his abilities through the store he works for if an employee refuses to wear a mask or show

proof of a medical condition. Caller advises there was an altercation with a customer earlier, but the customer has since left. Referred caller to board of health and advised to call back if the customer returns and assistance is needed. Caller called back advising that the customer returned; they refused her service due to refusing to wear a mask; customer went out to her car to retrieve an affidavit to bring back in demanding the caller's information so she can sue him. Customer has since left store again.

Monday, 5/3/21

9:59 a.m. Report of a patron at the Turners Falls post office who is upset about being told he has to wear a mask due to being in a federal building. Patron is throwing things in the lobby and has reportedly broken a computer monitor. A 35-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with two counts of assault with a dangerous weapon, disorderly conduct, and malicious destruction of property worth less than \$1,200.

Wednesday, 12/1/21

4:09 p.m. Caller states she received a suspicious package today and is concerned because she has heard of people sending stuff like COVID in the air pouches. The package is all that was in her box; no other items. Caller advised to throw away package if she is concerned.

Friday, 12/17/21

4:21 p.m. 911 misdial. Caller trying to make an appointment for his COVID booster shot; he meant to call 211, the state information line. No emergency; not in any distress.



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