

# The Montague Reporter

## Leverett Moves Toward Decision on Forest Gift

By JAMIE SIMPSON

The town of Leverett has moved closer to a decision on whether to accept a donation of a 147-acre managed forest. After forester Bruce Spencer offered the land in 2023, the town formed an *ad hoc* committee to study the issue; they shared their findings and recommendations at a meeting last Thursday.

“The Town Forest Exploratory Committee recommends that the Town of Leverett accept the donation by Bruce Spencer and Judy Northup-Bennett of the Two Brothers Woodlot,” they wrote. “The donation delivers public, environmental, and conservation benefits that outweigh the potential costs of Town ownership.”

Spencer is widely recognized as one of the best foresters in New En-

gland, and served as chief forester at the Quabbin Reservoir from 1965 to 2007. The land in question is located at 353 North Leverett Road in North Leverett, near the Shutesbury town line and Lake Wyola.

Committee members Eric Donnelly, Juniper Katz, Jimmy Grogan, Stewart Olson, and Eva Gibavic presented the report and answered questions at last week’s meeting, which was open to the public. The event gave residents time to weigh the information in advance of a property hike planned for April 27, and the annual town meeting on May 3, when voters will be asked whether to accept the land.

The 28-page report is available on the town website.

The hike, at 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 27, is open to all, and an exploratory committee member will

see **FOREST** page A5



Voters will weigh whether the forested land, which has been under careful management for a half century, would make a wise public acquisition.

## High School Sports Week: A Walk-Off Sacrifice Fly!

By MATT ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – This week the Turners Falls High School baseball team lost an error-ridden heartbreaker against McCann, but bounced back against Greenfield for their second win of the season. Then they split their next games against Athol and Lee.

The Franklin Tech boys, meanwhile, outlasted Lenox to keep their record perfect.

In softball, the Eagles poured on the runs against Mohawk while Turners beat Greenfield on a seventh-inning sacrifice.

### Baseball

*FCTS 5 – Lenox 3  
McCann 3 – TFHS 2  
TFHS 8 – Greenfield 5  
Athol 19 – TFHS 5  
TFHS 10 – Lee 2*

Last Thursday afternoon, the Franklin Tech Baseball Eagles topped the Millionaires of Lenox in a seesaw battle to keep their record at a perfect 4–0.

I met with the team briefly before the game. As they were warming up, Coach Dan Prasol reminded his troops that the season is still early, and that they need to produce

see **SPORTS** page A4



Great Falls Middle School athlete Autumn Thornton blasts the ball into the right outfield in the bottom of the seventh inning last Friday night, driving baserunner Marilyn Abarua home for the tiebreaking run: Turners Falls 3, Greenfield 2.

## Groups Will Host Forum For Montague Candidates

By REPORTER STAFF

**MONTAGUE** – As the annual town election on May 20 approaches, the *Montague Reporter* has partnered with the Montague Public Libraries and Montague Community Television (MCTV) to organize a candidates’ forum on Sunday, April 27 at 4:30 p.m.

The forum will feature an in-depth discussion with selectboard candidates Christopher Boutwell, who has served on the board since 2010, and Edward Voudren, who served from 1997 to 2004. Readers interested in suggesting discussion topics or questions may submit them to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).

Though there are no other competitive races on the townwide ballot, all candidates will be invited to introduce themselves to voters.

These include Rachel Stoler, Ann Fisk, and Paula Girard, incumbents, running for the board of health, board of assessors, and Montague Housing Authority, respectively; Tamara Kaplan and incumbent Will Quale for the library trustees; and incumbents Heather Katsoulis, Wendy Thompson, and Jane Oakes for the Gill-Montague school committee.

Anyone interested in announcing a write-in candidacy at the forum should email the above address. Vacant seats on the library trustees, school committee, parks and recreation commission, and Veterans’ Memorial trustees will be filled by write-in votes. The Veterans’ Memorial seat is reserved for a veteran.

The April 27 forum will be broadcast live on Channel 9 and available to watch afterward on MCTV’s Vimeo page as well as in re-runs.

A limited number of live audience seats are also available. Anyone interested in attending in person, in the upstairs meeting room at town hall, may call any of the Montague Public Libraries to register.

### MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Turtles, Sludge, and Cultural Impact

By JEFF SINGLETON

The agenda for Monday’s Montague selectboard meeting was packed, and the event drew a crowd, both at the town hall and online. Topics ranged from removing a dozen trees along Avenue A (*see article, Page A1*) to complaints about a truck parked dangerously on L Street to allocating money to the Cultural Council amid uncertainty about federal funding.

The board also dealt with the resignation of the newly-elected town meeting moderator, a resident who was prohibited from owning a dog but may have the right to a service dog, and extensive proposed changes to the sewer regulations. Not to mention closing a block of Third Street for a music event, announcing that the soapbox derby has been canceled, and approving turtle crossing warning signs made by schoolchildren.

One of the issues that drew the most input, including emails and letters, was the situation on L Street, where vehicles turning from Seventh Street merge

## Montague Declines Offer To Remove Block of Trees



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

After hearing from the public, officials agreed that while a contractor’s offer to replace this row of aging shade trees was generous, replacing a few at a time would be better.

By JEFF SINGLETON

**TURNERS FALLS** – “The two thorniest meetings I’ve had involved trees,” Rich Kuklewicz said at the Montague selectboard meeting Monday night. “When I first got on the board, there were trees on Montague Street, [and] that was a debacle.”

The selectboard chair, who first joined the board in 2015, was referring to a line of historic trees believed to have been planted by the town tree warden in the late 1940s that were ultimately cut down by the electric company Eversource, which felt its lines were at risk.

“Trees,” he continued. “There’s something about them. I get it.”

The comment came during a discussion of a proposal by Mountain View Landscapes and Lawn Care, the company making “streetscape” improvements on Avenue A in Turners Falls, to remove all the ash trees on the northern side of the avenue between Third and Second Street, which have been undergoing treatment since 2022 for infestation by a beetle called the emerald ash borer.

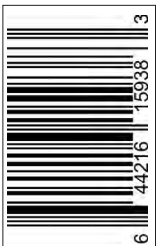
The company, which is tasked with rebuilding the planters that contain the trees, has offered to remove and replace them, at no extra cost to the town, with trees of different species. This course of action was also recommended by Berkshire Design Group, the landscape

see **TREES** page A5

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# The Montague Reporter

*"The Voice of the Villages"*

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August 2002

## Excerpt: The ‘Boomerang’

“First we must study how colonization works to decivilize the colonizer, to brutalize him in the true sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, to covetousness, violence, race hatred, and moral relativism; and we must show that each time a head is cut off or an eye put out in Vietnam and in France they accept the fact, each time a little girl is r—d and in France they accept the fact, each time a Madagascan is tortured and in France they accept the fact, civilization acquires another dead weight, a universal regression takes place, a gangrene sets in, a center of infection begins to spread; and that at the end of all these treaties that have been violated, all these lies that have been propagated, all these punitive expeditions that have been tolerated, all these prisoners who have been tied up and “interrogated,” all these patriots who have been tortured, at the end of all the racial pride that has been encour-

aged, all the boastfulness that has been displayed, a poison has been distilled into the veins of Europe and, slowly but surely, the continent proceeds toward savagery.

“And then one fine day the bourgeoisie is awakened by a terrific boomerang effect: the gestapos are busy, the prisons fill up, the torturers standing around the racks invent, refine, discuss.

“People are surprised, they become indignant. They say: ‘How strange! But never mind – it’s Nazism, it will pass!’ And they wait, and they hope; and they hide the truth from themselves, that it is barbarism, the supreme barbarism, the crowning barbarism that sums up all the daily barbarisms; that it is Nazism, yes, but that before they were its victims, they were its accomplices; that they tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them, that they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because, until then, it had been

NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



Hillary Hoffman holds the Prize Wheel at Federal Street Books in Greenfield. Hoffman and co-owner Neil Serven are gearing up to celebrate Indie Bookstore Day next Saturday, April 26. Spin the wheel to get exclusive prizes, including a flash tattoo at Thorntail Tattoo, Joe Kopera’s Connecticut River prints, patches from Babe Gang Patches, special store t-shirts, stickers, and more. (Masks are required, but are given out at the door for free.) Stop by for free stickers and pins.

applied only to non-European peoples; that they have cultivated that Nazism, that they are responsible for it, and that before engulfing the whole edifice of Western, Christian civilization in its reddened waters, it oozes, seeps, and trickles from every crack.”

Aimé Césaire, 1950  
from *A Discourse On Colonialism*

## CORRECTION

A sharp-eyed reader noticed that the Events Calendar in our April 10 edition listed the start time for Peter Cottontail’s EGGstravaganza, which takes place this Saturday, April 19 at Unity Park in Turners Falls, as “11 a.m.”

The EGGstravaganza will occur at 1 p.m., rain or shine.

People between the ages of 4 and 12, inclusive, are encouraged to attend, with containers suitable for shoveling candy-filled plastic eggs into.

The event is sponsored by Montague’s parks and recreation department.

A horn will signal the start of the hunt. Violence is prohibited.

It is not always possible to collect as many candy-filled eggs as one desires.

GUEST EDITORIAL

# On Compost... and Personality Cults

By THE COMPOST CO-OPERATIVE

**GREENFIELD** – There are times when historical perspectives can provide both comfort and ways forward.

A friend once described being a school-child in 1950s Czechoslovakia. One day the teacher told the class to open their textbooks to a certain page, take out their black markers, and cross out a paragraph. Then on the next page, and the next chapter.

It was an exciting activity the child only later found ways to understand. Paper supplies were limited, and textbooks could not be revised and printed quickly enough to reflect the new political reality. It was 1956 and Soviet leader Nikita Krushchev had just denounced his predecessor Joseph Stalin, who had died in 1953, in the famous speech “The Personality Cult and Its Consequences.”

Following Krushchev’s denunciation, Stalin, whose unchecked power had claimed the lives of millions of his fellow citizens, was scrubbed from official histories.

The current US government is more efficient at revising official history, and deploys algorithms and AI rather than child labor – though that, too, is returning. Federal agencies are busy compiling lists of forbidden words.

The US Department of Agriculture, until recently the largest organization in the country subsidizing important climate-resilient projects on the farmlands that keep us fed, will no longer process applications for funding that contain reference to 110 words and phrases, including *women, black, indigenous, climate, water quality, emissions, pollution, gender, microplastics, under-resourced, solar energy, environmental jus-*

*tice, accessibility, and affordable home.*

In this context it was not surprising to notice that a USDA-sponsored webinar that Compost Co-op participated in last year – on “Cooperatives After Incarceration” – had been replaced by a creepy exclamation point and message, *This video is private.* The webinar featured a fascinating presentation by the prominent scholar of African American cooperatives, Jessica Gordon Nembhard. By now, a whole publicly accessible archive of USDA webinars documenting complex knowledge and histories has been eliminated.

Working with food scraps keeps us grounded in cycles of rot, nourishment, growth, death, and rebirth. Lots of people working together to turn a valuable resource away from the landfill and into compost builds community and helps address the climate crisis. It also reminds us that we are capable of composting oppressive systems – by educating ourselves, working together, and taking action.

In our region, farmers and scientists have had contractually-promised funds stolen; fish and wildlife protectors have lost their jobs. Head Start families, teachers, veterans, healthcare workers, transgender people, artists, cooperators fighting for living wages and a future for the planet: what actions can we take together?

Any step counts, whether we are calling our representatives or putting money into local businesses rather than huge corporations, or asking for help and supporting people who are being disappeared.

Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution lists local resources for immigrants at [fccpr.us/immigrant-support-resources/](http://fccpr.us/immigrant-support-resources/). Reach out to your federal and

state representatives and let them know how you are feeling.

For the longer-term health of our failing experiment in democracy, we can:

- *Shake up that Constitution.* Educate ourselves and work to replace the Electoral College, shaped by the institution of slavery, with proportional representation; elect the president by popular vote; and make room for other political parties. The Electoral College favors a two-party system. Like political systems with proportional representation, let’s get some groupings in power who will support humanity’s common interests, including clean air and water, sustainable farms, self-sufficiency, freedom of expression, community resilience, and prosperity for all.
- *Revive that revolutionary demand, “No taxation without representation.”* Address the undemocratic and constitutionally-enshrined policy of residents of Washington, DC and Puerto Rico not having representation at the federal level.

More immediately, let’s face reality: the market is not going to handle this. Philanthropies funded by billionaires will not come to the rescue. The plundering will not wait a year and a half.

- Our tax dollars are currently funding an unprecedented transfer of wealth from the bottom 99% to the top 1% – otherwise known as tax cuts for billionaires – including from the Social Security Administration. *Using our Social Security tax payments for anything other than social security amounts to wage theft, is an unfair labor practice, and requires a response.*

- Unions are some of the best tools workers have to protect our interests. If your workplace has a union, join and become active. If you’re not in a union, talk with your fellow workers about joining one.
- Read about successful general strikes, in the US and around the world. *Find out why the tipping point for a general strike is approximately 3.5% of the workforce, or 11 million workers in the US.* Consider using the powerful tool of withholding your labor and joining a general strike. If you can’t afford to do that, give encouragement to someone who can.
- Talk with strangers and friends, tend gardens, show up when neighbors or loved ones are harassed, cry out when young scholars are hauled away in broad daylight by masked men.

The history of cooperatives is filled with examples of people learning and working together in challenging conditions to address their collective needs – listening to one another, sharing knowledge, and taking action. There are plenty of models of cooperation out there.

And by the way, that friend who spent time in school blocking out references to Joseph Stalin participated in a general strike in 1989 that brought down the government in Czechoslovakia.

History – especially in its contradictory, real-life forms – offers some inspiring guides to the future.

*This op-ed was written by Ryan Reeves, Revan Schendler, and Eli Smith, the work-ers-owners of the Compost Co-operative.*

*The co-op offers residential and commercial curbside collection in Greenfield, Montague, and Shelburne Falls, and municipal pickups in Conway, Charlemont, Shelburne, and Gill.*

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

The 2025 **Great Falls Farmers Market** welcomes vendors of all kinds to apply for Saturday morning spots at Peskeompskut Park in Turners Falls. There’s no need to commit to the whole season, which runs May to October, and the fee is low at \$10 a day. Market organizers can run SNAP and HIP payments for any vendor with eligible items.

Applications can be submitted at [tinyurl.com/gffm2025](http://tinyurl.com/gffm2025). Email questions to [greatfallsfarmersmarkettur-ners@gmail.com](mailto:greatfallsfarmersmarkettur-ners@gmail.com).

The Massachusetts Fair Housing organization is seeking **fair housing testers** to assist them with investigating illegal housing discrimination practices. Testers pose as potential renters and home buyers, and report on their experiences. They are trained, per-diem employees who work remotely, on an as-needed basis, and are paid per completed assignment, usually a few hours a month.

Applicants must be detail-oriented, well-organized, and have good writing and listening skills. IPOC, multilingual, LGBTQIA+, and disabled applicants are encouraged to apply. For questions or to apply, contact coordinator Krystal Kilhart at [kkilhart@massfairhousing.org](mailto:kkilhart@massfairhousing.org). The next online training session is next Wednesday, April 23, at 6:30 p.m.

The Leverett Community Builders are sponsoring the fifth annual **community-wide Earth Day clean up** next Saturday, April 26 from 9

a.m. to 1 p.m. Families and individuals can choose an area to clean and sign up at [bit.ly/LeverettCleanup](http://bit.ly/LeverettCleanup).

Participants can bring trash and recyclables to the transfer station at no charge, and a Leverett Village Co-op gift certificate will be awarded for the most trash collected. Light snacks will be available at the transfer station for volunteers.

The cleanup coincides with the **styrofoam collection** event at the transfer station each Saturday morning in April. The highway department will pick up large items left on the side of the road the following Monday if par-

ticipants arrange it by emailing [highway@leverett.ma.us](mailto:highway@leverett.ma.us).

“The event offers a great opportunity to not only clean up Leverett, but to also be part of a fun community-wide effort,” the organizers write. “People are encouraged to show up with your family, invite your friends and neighbors to participate. Be safe. Have fun.”

Celebrate **Polish culture and heritage** next Saturday, April 26, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the LAVA Center in Greenfield. This free, family-friendly event is part of the exhibit “New Roots in River Banks: Polish and Other Eastern European Immigrants to the Connecticut River Valley,” on display at the Center through April.

The event features Polish and Eastern European folk dancing with Rachele Ackerman; Pysanki egg displays and demonstrations by Carol Kostecki; *wycinanki* paper-cutting with Susan Urban, accompa-

nied by her displays; coloring and creating paper egg designs, along with cutting traditional clothing and costumes that can be fitted and colored for paper dolls, with Helena Alves and Patty Solomon. There will even be Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish cookie treats.

Award-winning **singer-song-writer Erica Wheeler** will perform a concert of place-based songs at the Discovery Center in Turners Falls on Sunday, April 27 from 3 to 5 p.m., along with a Big Read-inspired writers’ showcase.

The event is free and open to all, with refreshments provided. It explores themes in Ross Gay’s book of poetry *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*, this year’s Big Read. It’s the first time a book of poetry was selected for the annual Big Read, which seeks to inspire local conversations and connections by reading a book in common.

The 34th **Poet’s Seat Poetry Contest** celebration will be held Tuesday, April 29 at 6 p.m. in the community meeting room of the Greenfield Public Library. The winners of this year’s contest will be announced, and finalists and winners will read their work.

The famous Poet’s Seat chair will go home with the adult first-prize winner at the end of the evening.

Greenfield’s **Stone Soup Café** provides over a hundred households with weekly access to groceries, produce, and personal care items. Donations of new, unopened pantry items and products such as toothpaste, soap, deodorant, and socks are being accepted at a Food and Hygiene Drive by the Greenfield Cooperative Bank, at both of its locations on Federal Street in Greenfield, until April 30.

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



Montague foam recycling volunteers (left to right) Marina Goldman, Leigh Rae, and Julie Kumble pose in front of a wall of packing foam and coolers last Saturday. Styrofoam collection continues at the Leverett, Montague, Northfield, and Warrwick transfer stations from 9 a.m. to noon these next two Saturdays, April 19 and 26. (Only clean, dry, white blocky packing material and coolers made of expanded polystyrene foam (EPS or PS #6) can be accepted – no food containers, #4 LDPE packing material, or peanuts – and the collections are for residents of those towns only.)

## OP ED

# Now’s the Time: Protect Our Digital Privacy Rights!

By RYNE HAGER

**TURNERS FALLS** – Although I don’t have my regular tech column this week, I felt the need to highlight some news. This Wednesday, committees in the Massachusetts legislature held a hearing for two big privacy bills that could have far-reaching benefits for all of us: the Location Shield Act and the Massachusetts Data Privacy Act.

Both are critical for our collective digital privacy, and while certain details are likely subject to change, I’d like to explain *why* we need them in the hopes that you might call your representatives in support of these two much-needed bills.

First, the **Location Shield Act** (S.197, H.86) will ban anyone from selling the location data gathered by your cell phone. Many of the apps and services you use on your smartphone are able to access your location. In some cases, like for weather apps, this makes sense; in other cases the uses are a little more nebulous, such as the Google Play Store’s ability to highlight locally popular apps. But in plenty of cases this data is only gathered for marketing purposes – to increase the effectiveness of ad targeting, or for resale together with other information to build more effective profiles of all of us.

By itself, this data may not be particularly important to you – though anyone visiting a protest, abortion clinic, or other sensitive location could easily see the intrinsic value of that information. But it can be combined with

other “metadata” attached to our digital lives, like the things we search for and the sites we visit, to make it easier to individually fingerprint us and track our actions across the internet without our consent.

This data is sold and resold through networks of data brokers and technology firms for countless uses. Both Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection have admitted to purchasing cell phone location data to assist in their work. The government is using the legal resale of our location data against us, with no oversight or protections for those who might be innocently caught by flawed analysis – practices which have already resulted in the deportation of innocents.

And as abortion rights and access become more restricted in the future, freedom of travel between our states is going to become more critical, and should not be subject to the passive, continuous scrutiny of advertisers, marketers, or law enforcement.

If any of this has you convinced of the benefits this law might offer, I urge you to call your state legislators and explain to them clearly that the Location Shield Act is something you’d like to see passed. Here in Montague, our representatives are already co-sponsors, but we should encourage them to speak out in support of the bill in public.

The Location Shield Act has been endorsed by organizations including the ACLU of Massachusetts, Progressive Mass, and Fight For The Future.

You might think that Massachusetts, given its contemporary political reputation, would already have a general data privacy protection law on the books, but about 20 other states have beaten us to it.

The **Massachusetts Data Privacy Act** would establish a series of basic rights that each of us will henceforth have over our data, including the rights to access that data, correct inaccuracies in it, delete it, and carry it between services, as well as the right to opt out of the use or sale of our personal data. Companies would also have to “clearly and conspicuously disclose” how customers can exercise these rights, so they can’t be hidden away.

These rights aren’t particularly onerous to engineer around – any company that does its homework and implements privacy-by-design concepts will have a trivial time integrating them into its services. And small businesses and startups have a carve-out: anyone who processes data for less than 100,000 people per year – or for less than 25,000 people, and makes at least 25% of their revenue from the sale of personal data – is explicitly exempt. In short, it wouldn’t place an unnecessary burden on anyone who can’t afford it. (There are a handful of other exemptions, such as airlines.)

At a fundamental level this would codify a basic concept: you have a right to decide how your data is used. It’s not up to Facebook or Google, or advertising networks, and definitely not the third-party brokers assembling every detail of our lives into databases.

I have always been stunned that there isn’t a federal law encompassing these rights, but we have the opportunity now to push forward with a law tailored just for us, and we might even deliver something better than other states have – a private right of action to ensure we all have legal recourse against violators, for example, would be a nice stick for companies that don’t take the carrot.

A lot of different versions of this bill have bounced around Beacon Hill in recent years, but given the documented ways our data is now being used against us, we can’t wait forever. Even if the version that passes doesn’t enable the perfect data privacy protections I dream of, it’s a starting point considering that today we have nothing.

I urge you to call your legislators in support of the bill – here in Montague, Jo Comerford has already signed as a co-sponsor, but I believe Natalie Blais has not – and to speak out in support of the bill across social media.

Regardless of one’s individual political beliefs, privacy is a fundamental human right, and we’ve ignored the impact technology has had on it for too long. It’s in our power now to protect and enshrine that right before others erode it away, so I ask you to do what you can to help: call your representatives, call your legislators, and ask your friends and neighbors to do the same.

Ryne Hager writes the Device/Advice column for the Montague Reporter. He lives in Turners Falls.

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Congregational Church  
4 North Street

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BREAKFAST

Saturday, April 26  
8:30 to 10:15 a.m.

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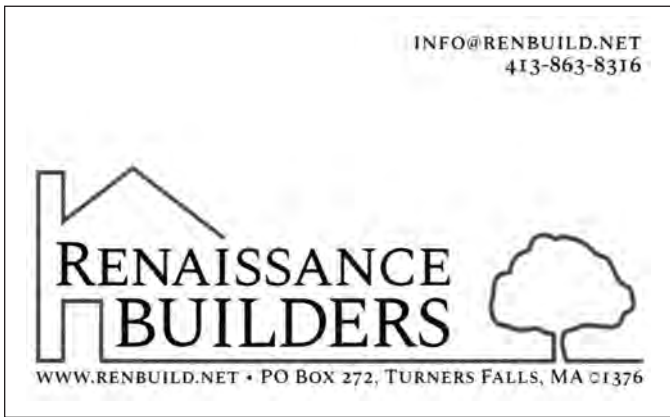


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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

YMCA Offers Free Youth Program  
Teaching ‘Safety Around Water’

**GREENFIELD**—Franklin County’s YMCA is proud to announce the return of its Safety Around Water program, a free initiative designed to teach essential water safety skills to children in the community. This life-saving program is available to youth ages 6 to 10 years old and aims to prevent drowning deaths by providing critical knowledge and skills for safe water practices.

Drowning remains one of the leading causes of accidental death in children, and the YMCA is committed to reducing this risk through education and training. Safety Around Water teaches children

how to be safe in and around water, with lessons that include floating, treading water, and safely exiting a pool or body of water.

No prior swimming experience is necessary, making this an accessible opportunity for all families in the community.

Classes are open to all non-members on a “first come, first served” basis and will be held on four Mondays, April 28 through May 19. Registration opened on April 14. Families can secure a spot for their child by calling the YMCA at (413) 773-3646 ext. 0.

The program is made possible

through the generous sponsorship of Gagne Wealth Management Group.

“We believe that every child should have the opportunity to learn water safety, regardless of their background or experience,” said FCY aquatics director Lisa Woodall. “Through the support of Gagne Wealth Management Group, we are able to offer this vital program for free and help keep our community’s children safe.”

For more information about Safety Around Water or to learn more about YMCA programs and initiatives, contact the Y at the above number or visit [www.your-y.org](http://www.your-y.org).

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Electric Bike  
Discounts!

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – Low- to moderate-income Massachusetts residents are eligible to apply for a sizable discount on electric bicycles under a new program by the Massachusetts Clean Energy (MassCEC).

The program will issue vouchers of up to \$800, or up to \$1,200 for qualifying lower-income applicants or any with a doctor’s note specifying a need for an adaptive e-bike.

Initial applications may be submitted at [ma-ebikes.masscec.com](http://ma-ebikes.masscec.com) starting Monday, April 28. Winners chosen at random will be asked for proof of residency and income eligibility, then issued voucher codes.

A total of 3,000 will be granted.

SPORTS from page A1

in every game.

Lenox broke the ice in the third inning, taking a brief 2-0 lead, but in the bottom of the inning Tech roared back to take a 3-2 edge. The visitors briefly tied it up in the fifth before Franklin put another two across the plate in the bottom of the inning to ice the win.

Brody Hicks pitched six innings and finished with five walks, five strikeouts, three hits, and one earned run. Gavin Crossman pitched one inning and allowed a walk. Jack Hicks and David Kirchner hit doubles, Tyler Giardina hit a single, and Brendan Albert sacrificed in a run.

Across Millers Falls Road, the Turners Falls Thunder were battling the McCann Green Hornets and shooting themselves in the foot in the process. Although Green ended up scoring three runs, they did so courtesy of five Thunder errors – the Turners pitchers only gave up two hits, and did not allow a single earned run.

It was a scoreless tie until the bottom of the fourth when Turners took a 1-0 lead. Green tied it in the fifth, then put two more across in the sixth. Blue chipped a run in their sixth to make it a one-run game, but were unable to score in the seventh, handing Green the win.

Kainen Stevens finished with two hits, including a double, while Brody Girard, Jackson Cogswell, Trevor Lyons, had one each with Lyons clocking a double. On the mound, Julian Kaiser pitched five innings, finishing with two walks, seven strikeouts, two hits, no earned runs, and he hit three batters. Ethan Eichorn, who came in for the last two, walked a batter, struck two out, and didn’t hit any.

On Friday the Greenfield Green Wave came to Turners. It was the first game in a baseball-softball doubleheader between the two schools.

Before the game, coach Scott Minckler lectured his team. “Let’s not have a repeat of yesterday’s game,” he advised. “We cannot commit so many errors and expect to win.”

His speech seemed to put a flame under the players’ caps, as Blue put six runs across in the first inning. Greenfield did rally enough to make it a game, but Turners held on to win despite two errors.

Lyons, Eichorn, and Nathaniel Trinqué hit singles for Powertown, Cogswell and Freilyn Jose Abarua Corona hit doubles, and Kaiser finished with two hits and three RBIs.



Turners Falls High School first-baseman Julian Kaiser (right) makes the tag on Greenfield’s Arthur Fitzpatrick as the Thunder hosted the Green Wave last Friday. The home team clinched an 8-5 win.

Then on Tuesday – Tax Day – the Athol Red Bears brought the Thunder back to earth with a 15-4 drubbing. Athol scored six runs before Turners managed one, and six more to go up 12-1 after three and a half innings.

Kaiser, Eichorn, and Trinqué had hits for Blue, while Ledwin Villafana cracked a home run. Cogswell, Girard, Lyons, and Kaiser all took turns pitching.

On Wednesday the Thunder bounced back, defeating the Lee Wildcats out in the Berkshires. Turners took a 1-0 lead in the first inning, but the Wildlings went ahead 2-1 after two complete. It was all Blue from there on, as Turners scored nine unanswered runs to take the game 10-2.

Stevens pitched a complete game, finishing with three walks, three hits, seven strikeouts, and an earned run. At the plate, Lyons hit a double while Stevens (four), Cogswell, Kaiser (two each), and Girard also had hits for Turners.

**Softball**  
FCTS 14 – Mohawk 3  
TFHS 3 – Greenfield 2

Last Thursday, the Softball Eagles defeated Mohawk 14-3 up in Buckland. The Birds shot out to a 10-0 lead before the Mohawks scored their first run.

Hannah Gilbert pitched the entire game for Tech, allowing one earned run on three hits and three

walks and striking out 13. At the plate she had three hits, including a home run, and stole three bases.

Brayleigh Burgh and Breanna Kempf also clocked doubles and Abigail Dobias, Shelby O’Leary, and Taylor Underwood hit singles.

And in the second game of Friday’s doubleheader against Greenfield, the Ladies in Blue nosed out the Green Wave 3-2.

This was a pitchers’ duel, but in the third inning Green plated two runs off a base hit. In the bottom of

that inning, Madison Liimatainen cracked a home run over the fence to halve the gap to 2-1.

When she came back up in the sixth Liimatainen was walked, stole two bases, and scored on a wild pitch, tying it at two apiece going into the seventh.

And in the seventh, Marilyn Abarua reached base on a bunt, advanced to second, stole third – and scored on an Autumn Thornton sacrifice, giving Blue the walk-off 3-2 victory.



The Thunder celebrate at the plate Friday following the stunning seventh-inning sacrifice fly by Autumn Thornton, #16, which drove home teammate Marilyn Abarua for the winning run against longtime rival Greenfield.

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**FOREST** from page A1

take a short video for anyone unable to attend, Gibavic said. Participants are encouraged to carpool from the Leverett Co-op parking lot, but if needed may cross the access bridge to the property and be directed where to park.

The final vote comes at the annual town meeting, which takes place Saturday, May 3, from 9 a.m to 2 p.m. at the Leverett Elementary School gym. It is the last article on a 40-item agenda.

If the town says yes, the selectboard will appoint a three-member committee, which would be tasked with managing the forest, hiring a licensed forester to implement a management plan, and reporting back annually to the board.

Spencer offered the Two Brothers Woodlot for Leverett to use as a “town forest,” and has said he hopes the town will continue his sustainable forest-management practices. Leverett would be responsible for its care and maintenance, and any related costs.

After buying the land with a forester friend in the early 1970s, Spencer stewarded it for decades “with great care and intention,” in the words of the report, along with his late brother Hartley, maintaining species diversity, offering all-season recreation, removing invasive plants, and allowing seasonal deer

hunting to safeguard forest health.

According to a December 2023 interview with George Brace in the *Montague Reporter*, Spencer also worked to protect Native stone-work identified by a knowledgeable local woman.

“Low-impact logging” roughly every 10 years has covered stewardship costs, the committee found, and helped healthy native stands to thrive by clearing unhealthy trees and competitor species.

Sunday’s hike will show participants the results of Spencer’s work.

“Dense, towering stands of hemlock and white pine predominate on the lower slopes where water emerges in vernal pools,” the report describes. “Moving up the slope, impressively large red oak trees dominate the forest canopy along with scattered birches and maples.”

The exploratory committee thoroughly examined the land over the past year and discussed six main criteria: *conservation values; compatibility with town goals; management and maintenance; financial implications and opportunities; legal and administrative requirements; and community benefit*. Each was scored on a scale of 0 to 4 points.

The resulting total, 20 points out of a possible 24, led the committee to strongly endorse accepting Spencer’s offer.

The report highlights key potential benefits and challenges. The former include biodiversity, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, all-season recreation, and educational opportunities for all ages. At last week’s meeting, planning board member Tim Shores noted that aspiring foresters could study best forest management practices on the property they might not find anywhere else.

The most significant potential challenges flagged by the committee are upkeep costs and right-of-way concerns. The costs are expected to be relatively low: the land is already under a conservation restriction held by Franklin Land Trust, which prevents development in perpetuity, so the town would lose less than \$300 a year in tax revenue.

The second item is trickier. A sturdy access bridge, built across the Sawmill River in 2007 and reportedly in excellent condition, connects to an access road running along the western edge of abutter Colin York’s property. Woodlot visitors and York both have right-of-way access to the bridge and the road.

York has contributed to bridge maintenance and access road improvements, and the committee found that to date there have been no issues with the arrangement, but some attendees at last Thursday’s meeting expressed concern about

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Excerpts from the 2019 Montague Public Tree Protection Bylaw

**5. Cutting of Public Trees:**

Consistent with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87, no person except the Tree Warden, may cut, trim, prune, damage, or remove any part of a public tree, including the roots within the drip line of the tree, without written permission as described in Section 7.

The Tree Warden may not remove, permit the removal of, or cause to be destroyed any tree greater than 1.5 inches in caliper without a duly advertised public hearing as specified in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87, or if objection is given at or prior to the hearing in writing, without the additional approval of the Selectboard, unless that tree is determined to be an imminent hazard tree, as described in Section 8.

Utilities may, or at the request of the Tree Warden must, file an annual vegetation management plan and/or a hazard tree removal plan.

In all cases, pruning and removal of public trees shall be done in accordance with the current ANSI pruning standards.

**8. Removal of Hazard Trees:**

The Tree Warden may remove, without a public hearing, a tree that is determined by the Tree Warden, to be an imminent hazard to persons or property.

The hazard determination shall be made based on an objective risk tree rating system such as the USDA Forest Service 12-point Risk Tree Rating system or the International Society of Arboriculture Hazard Tree Evaluation system. Hazard trees shall be prioritized for pruning, removal, or otherwise minimizing the risk based on hazard trees objectively presenting the most risk.

**TREES** from page A1

architects the town is working on the project.

Assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller had announced the proposal a week earlier, but the board decided to consult with the tree committee and tree warden before making a decision.

The tree committee then voted unanimously last Wednesday to keep as many ash trees in place as possible. Member David Detmold gave a presentation of the committee’s position, affirming that the committee had voted to save as many trees as possible, but also hoped to negotiate a “compromise” with the contractor by replacing some, but not all, of the ashes this year.

“It was never a good idea to plant all of one species,” he said, noting that the targeted ash were only 12 of the 19 on that side of the Avenue, and that it “might be good to take out a couple of them” in a gradual replacement process.

The other seven ash trees, south of Third Street, are not under discussion as the present streetscape project only reaches to Third.

Detmold estimated it would take 10 to 20 years for the new trees, planted at 3½ inches in diameter, to provide the level of shade pedestrians and those sitting on benches are accustomed to. He also argued that the ongoing effort to treat the trees by Andy Vega, an expert on the ash borer from the J.J. Mauget Company, has been “very successful.”

Two trees on the opposite side of the Avenue, a crab apple and a pear, were also included in the offer, and the tree committee consented to their removal.

However, after a meeting Thursday between town officials and representatives of Mountain View – which is also rebuilding the Montague Center playground for the town under a separate contract – it was revealed that the company’s free replacement offer for the 14

trees was a take-it-or-leave-it deal.

“Choosing certain trees for removal and others for keeping would not be feasible,” Nolan-Zeller explained, paraphrasing the company’s project manager, “as the no-cost offer for tree replacement would be covered by reduced labor costs from not requiring Mountain View to carefully work around each tree’s root system while excavating.”

Three residents who spoke at the meeting, which was well-attended in the upstairs meeting room at town hall and online via Zoom, all seemed to support the tree committee’s position.



According to the tree advisory committee, measures to combat the emerald ash borer have seen some success among the ash trees on the block. In 2022, damage caused by the beetle infestation led to the removal of seven ashes at Peskeompskut Park.

the potential for future problems.

Other items discussed at the meeting included a possible donation of \$10,000 from an anonymous resident for forest management costs, should the town accept the land; potential grants and other state and local funding sources; and the idea of creating an enclosed dog run on the property.

When all is said and done, Lever-

ett may be poised to have one of the best-managed town forests around. The land is sometimes referred to as a “working forest,” but as Spencer himself said in his December 2023 interview in the *Reporter*: “Some people want to call it the ‘working’ forest, and I don’t want to have that adjective in front of it. The forest takes care of itself... It has a lot to offer.”

with two of the trees in front of it. “This should have been discussed and figured out by this company before now.”

The board was asked what the town’s contract with Mountain View said about trees in planters. “It’s to protect and retain them,” said Ramsey. “I think they’re worried about some ongoing liability.” “If the trees don’t survive, they don’t want to have the liability that they’re supposed to protect them, and have us come back after them and say ‘You didn’t protect them!’” said Kuklewicz.

Kuklewicz suggested saving two planters, consisting of four trees, and letting the contractor remove the other eight ashes, an idea which was not embraced by the audience.

“We can take that to the contractor and try to negotiate,” said Ramsey. “Maybe come back to you with a price proposal to save some of these.”

Detmold said he would prefer to see four of the ash trees removed, and eight saved.

The discussion ended without the board taking a vote. “We will surely be hearing about this again,” said Kuklewicz.

Nolan-Zeller noted that if any proposal to remove the trees moves forward, a public hearing with the tree warden will still be required. After some discussion of the logistics of a hearing and the pace of the construction project, Lord recommended scheduling a tree hearing in advance of the board’s next meeting on April 28, and canceling it if it is not needed.

On Wednesday, Nolan-Zeller told the *Reporter* town officials had told the company the town could not accept its offer, and requested an estimate of the cost of removing only the two ashes in front of Gary’s Coins and Antiques.

Reached for comments, Ramsey confirmed negotiations were continuing.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

the corner of L and Fifth streets, in an attempt to improve motorists' sight lines. He added that he had heard residents of other neighborhoods make similar complaints, but said the selectboard would need to amend the town's traffic regulations to address the issue more broadly.

Culture & Recreation

RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto obtained approval to close a section of Third Street in Turners Falls on the afternoon and evening of Friday, June 6, and a license for live music. The "First Friday" event will take place between Avenue A and the Brick House, and only resident parking will be allowed from the Brick House to Canal Street.

LoManto said she had scheduled three bands and a sound engineer, and would stay within the sound limits the town sets for entertainment licenses.

The board also voted to approve contracts with three artists, Ponnappa Prakkamakul, Sophia Foulkes, and Aaron Meshon, to install temporary murals around town using wheat paste. LoManto said "fantastic community engagement" events had been held with two of the artists, so community members can provide input on drafts of the murals, with the third scheduled for this Saturday. Each artist will be paid \$4,000.

The board approved a request by Montague Cultural Council chair Kathy Lynch to allocate \$9,000 from the town's "community development discretionary fund" to make local matches for grants for cultural events. Lynch marshaled an impressive number of speakers to testify to the grant program's benefits to social life and the local economy.

Selectboard members expressed some concern about the status of the federal and state grants the matching funds would supplement, but Lynch pointed out that if they are cut, the local funding would be even more vital. The board's vote was unanimous.

Lynch also requested that Jon-Marc Seimon, a resident who grew up in South Africa and has regularly attended recent Cultural Council events, be appointed to the council. The board made the appointment.

A \$2,750 contract with Scott Dixon of Tailblock Concrete for repairs at Unity Skatepark was approved. Parks and recreation director John Dobosz said that the work was "pretty much routine maintenance," and that the skate park "gets a lot of usage, as we all know."



ED GREGORY PHOTO

Ed Gregory, a longtime documentarian of local construction and demolition, took this photo Saturday morning in downtown Turners. Ed reports: "This segment of the Turners Falls Streetscape project is at the entrance to the Town Hall. A worker wields a powerful cut-off saw utilizing an abrasive disc to cut slits into the sidewalk to enable easier break-up and removal of the concrete and brick rubble that will ensue. The entire front approach area will be reconfigured, as well as the bump-out facing Avenue A."

On the downside, Dobosz also announced that the Soapbox Race scheduled for June 2 has been canceled. Dobosz said the planning committee had met earlier that evening and decided not enough members could put aside the time to organize the event.

"Hopefully we can circle back around this fall," he said, "and see if we can put on an even better event for June 2026." The Soapbox Race scheduled for September 2023 was postponed, and ultimately held the following June.

Turtles

The board authorized the placement of warning signs along a stretch of Montague City Road where turtles attempt to cross each May and June. Town planner Maureen Pollock said she had received a complaint from a resident that turtles have been getting killed at this time of year, visited the area, and mapped the crossing zone with the help of the conservation commission.

"Each year," Pollock explained, "thousands of turtles throughout Massachusetts and beyond travel to new areas to find food and nest."

This proposal, too, was of a cultural nature, as the signs will be adorned by pictures of turtles painted by second-grade students at Sheffield Elementary School. Pollock said Janel Nockleby of the Great Falls Discovery Center, a state Department of Conservation & Recreation facility that focuses

on Connecticut River wildlife habitat, has been working on a program with the students about turtles.

At this point LoManto rushed to the selectboard table with a large pile of very cute turtle illustrations, and the board quickly authorized Pollock to place lawn signs, with support from the public works department.

Reached by the Reporter, Pollock said the project is still a work in progress, but that the plan at this point is to combine the pictures with turtle-crossing warnings at strategic points along the road.

Sewage & Sludge

Chelsey Little, superintendent of the Clean Water Facility (CWF), updated the board on various projects at the plant, and discussed a 68-page draft of revised sewer use regulations. According to assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller, the regulations have not changed since 2013, and are being updated as required by the plant's federal permit with the support of the engineering firm Wright-Pierce.

Nolan-Zeller summarized the changes, including new sections on "inflow and infiltration" and "illicit connection." The revisions expand and clarify the authority of the superintendent, establish procedures for industrial and commercial users to appeal permits and report "changed conditions," and clarify criteria for fines.

Selectboard member Matt Lord asked whether a subsection dealing with appeals of a decision on a "discharge permit" applied to in-

dustrial users. Nolan-Zeller pointed out that it was in fact under the "industrial users section."

"We wanted to clean up some of that industrial stuff," said Little, "which was all throughout the original document. It was a little bit confusing for folks."

Nolan-Zeller said Monday's discussion constituted a "first read" of the revisions, which would require an official public hearing before being enacted. He agreed to post the draft on the town website, along with the current regulations and an edited "mark-up."

Little updated the board on bids the town received for hauling away "sludge cake," the solid waste removed during the sewage treatment process. The lowest bid, she said, came from Agresource, Inc. in Rowley, and she was working on a contract to present at the board's next meeting.

Little said the company would also be interested in building the regional sludge-composting facility the town is considering.

The board was shown photos of a number of upgrades underway at the plant, including a very modern-looking piece of equipment Little said had been installed by CWF staff and would go into service this week: a new aeration system, which mixes oxygen into the sludge to feed the bacteria that "break down waste." This equipment was funded by a state grant, and Little said it could reduce electricity use by 70%.

Other upgrades include a new generator and a receiving station for septage, which includes a rock trap, a grinder, a content sampler, and an automatic billing meter. Little said this would be installed in the coming week.

Dogs

Ramsey reviewed the case of a resident who was prohibited last year under state law from owning a dog, after violating a dog order from the selectboard, but was recently seen by neighbors walking a puppy. She presented a note from a medical official who said it was a service dog, and the board, to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, agreed on March 31 to allow her to keep the canine but require that it be vaccinated, licensed, and secured on her property.

The owner had not yet complied with all of these requirements, Ramsey reported, but had registered and vaccinated the dog. He said town

counsel recommended that because she had complied with "the heart of the criteria," the town should allow her to keep the dog, "up to and until there is a nuisance violation."

The town administrator proposed that the board send a letter to the household documenting the "accommodation," but keep them "on a tight leash." The board did not take a vote, but seemed to agree.

Other Business

Ramsey announced that town meeting moderator John Dempsey, elected last May, has resigned and will not be able to attend the annual town meeting on May 7. Former moderator Ray Godin cannot work the annual either, he said, but was "willing to coach" Elizabeth Irving, who came in second last spring as a write-in candidate, and serves on the planning board and board of registrars.

Irving cannot simply be appointed by the selectboard, Ramsey explained, but would need to be elected to the position by a motion from the floor of the May meeting. "We're working with her to get her up to speed," he said.

Ramsey told the Reporter that in theory, a new moderator will need to be elected by a town election, but as there is not enough time to add the position to the May 20 ballot, it is possible that every town meeting this year will need to elect a moderator from the floor.

The selectboard's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 28, as next Monday is a state holiday.



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The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District and Franklin County Tech School are coordinating a fix-it/repair event on Saturday, May 31 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you are skilled at repairing household objects or have another skill to share, let us know! We need volunteer fixers for this event, and hope you'll join us for an hour or more.

Contact Jan at fcswwmd@crocker.com or (413) 772-2438

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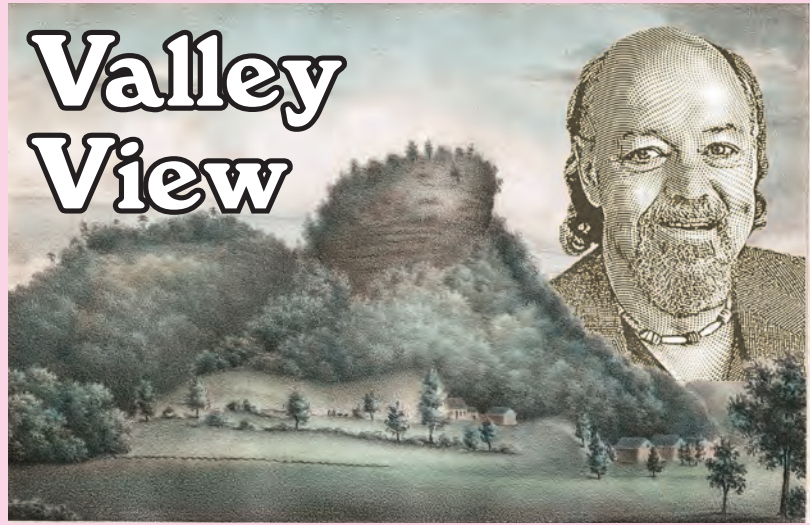
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## Big Cat in a Small Town

By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – April 7. Raw and rainy. Eleven-ish.

Out in the woodshed on a morning whim, I’m rearranging what’s left of my winter cordwood supply, heaped against the north and east walls. I can see there’ll be a little left for fall.

I chuck a big, heavy, all-nighter wedge of hard seasoned red oak closer to the entryway when I hear the phone ring in the kitchen. No rush. I’ll check the caller-ID when finished with my chores. The woodburning routine is less demanding come springtime.

Before going inside, I load up an armful of smaller, irregular, knotty pieces – tangled, twisted, and messy with debris. They burn hot and revive a fire when needed. During my daily woodshed chores, I routinely build a little side pile of these oddball pieces to make them easily available from time to time as needed. Kinda like medicine for the daily fire, especially morning’s first on embers from the night before.

Anyway, with my wood-gathering duties completed, I go to the phone expecting to find a familiar name on the caller-ID screen. Nope. Someone new. Last name Richardson, first initial D. Phone number beginning with South Deerfield’s familiar 665 exchange.

Hmmmm? Facebook friend Peter Richardson, perhaps?

I promptly return the call, and a man answers the third ring.

“Peter?”

“Nope, Doug.”

“Oh, sorry. Didn’t get the first name, and figured it must be Peter.”

“I’m his big brother,” he said – and his River Road neighbor as well, the two residing in adjacent dwellings within sight of Sunderland Bridge.

He went on.

“You’re the guy who wrote an outdoor column in the *Recorder*, right, and used to report cat sightings?”

“Yep, that’s me. I’ve been retired seven years. What’s on your mind?”

He had a tale to tell. One he believed, correctly, would interest see **VALLEY VIEW** page B8

*Above: Daffodils, again? That’s right. Deal with it. Springtime. Oh, and by the way we learned the daffodils featured here last week were on L Street, not on I Street... confusion caused by a lowercase letter! The ones above are on Migratory Way.*

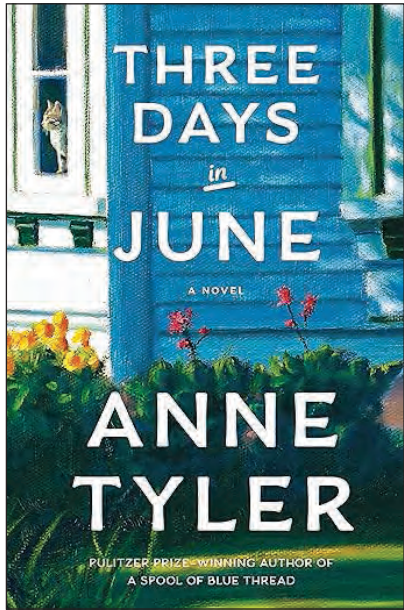
### BOOK REVIEWS

## Three Spring Reads: Character Studies

Anne Tyler, *Three Days in June* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2025)

Joanna Miller, *The Eights* (G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 2025)

Eric Puchner, *Dream State* (Doubleday, 2025)



By CLAIRE HOPLEY

**LEVERETT** – “People don’t tap their watches anymore, have you noticed?” asks Gail Barnes at the beginning of Anne Tyler’s latest novel *Three Days in June*. Gail remembers her father tapping his Timex while waiting for his wife. As a child she thought he was trying to spirit her “mother before us instantly, already wearing her

coat.” Retrospectively she realizes he was acting out his impatience: “Can she really be this late?”

This is a mini-lesson in interpretation: how actions and words can be variously construed. Gail, now an assistant school principal, has remained a misinterpreter throughout her 61 years. She segues from childhood watch-tapping memories to the day the school headmistress tells her she is retiring. “Does this mean I’ll take over as headmistress?” she asks, in what she calls “a perfectly logical question.”

She is startled to find that an outsider has the job and is bringing her own assistant with her. In other words, Gail is fired, and she hasn’t seen it coming. Nor has she foreseen the headmistress’s explanation: “This job is a matter of people skills... you’ll be the first to admit that social interactions have never been your strong point.”

How right she is! The rest of this short novel covers the three-day weekend in which Gail’s daughter Debbie marries. It’s not uneventful.

Gail is not happy when her ex-husband arrives needing accommodation for himself and a homeless cat. Then she has to figure what to wear and decides on gray – a miserable color for the mother of the bride. She worries that the groom is a philanderer. She’s awkward with his parents, who have planned and financed the reception. The arrival of her amiable ex-husband revives memories of her marriage. Clearly that was another period of misjudgment.

Only Anne Tyler could spirit such an unappealing character to a hopeful ending. She does it through her characteristic mixture of wit, good humor, sharp observation, and a charming character – in this case the ex-husband. Tyler has now published over 20 novels, of which the 11th, *Breathing Lessons*, won the 1988 Pulitzer Prize. *Three Days in June* is unlikely to repeat this feat, but it will amuse, charm, and counsel the author’s myriad admirers, just as her earlier books have done.

In contrast to Tyler with her see **REVIEWS** page B2

## A Journey Down Memory Lane Our Kerria Bushes



By JOAN MOREL

**SUNDERLAND** – Japanese kerria (*Kerria japonica*), the only species in the genus *Kerria*, is a deciduous bush covered with golden yellow blooms in spring. It is native to China and Japan where in the wild it grows on mountainsides. Although named after a Scottish gardener, William Kerr, to me this beautiful bush is my Great Uncle George.

I’m not sure why – perhaps because he was the one who planted it in front of his house which he shared with my grandmother. My mother, who loved her Uncle George like a father, as did I, dug up a cutting from his kerria bush for her own home.

Uncle George worked for years as chief boiler-maker in the Boston naval shipyard; when he retired he was followed in that position by his nephew, my Uncle Don. Both of them were really talented in crafting things out of wood and metal and whatever else they found redeemable in the town dump. As a kid, at Christmas I always gave him a screwdriver to work with – to his delight.

In retirement Uncle George and Grandma had a camp and a boathouse on the northwestern Hebron Bay section of Newfound Lake in Hebron, New Hampshire, where family members spent time in

summers. He built a motorboat for us all to go blackberry picking on Indian Point, a peninsula a bit down the lake; a kayak to glide around in; a canoe that spiders dropped down into – and a small rowboat with oars for me.

I bravely ventured across the bay to the sandbar with a beach on one side and yucky marsh mud on the other, where bloodsuckers clung to my legs; up the Cockerhollow River; and through the marsh at the north end of the bay.

But back to that kerria bush cutting. My parents planted it in a spot dappled with sunlight, amidst other bushes, in their backyard overlooking the Mystic Lakes. It grew as big as the mountainside kerrias in Japan and China must grow.

As a young adult I continued the tradition, taking cuttings from my mother’s kerria bush to plant wherever I moved to next... and next... and next. You get the picture.

Maybe you have a planting like that, too.

Offspring of Uncle George’s kerria bush live in several places in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, including in both of my sons’ backyards and now, again, in mine.

Full of memories of happy times, they are covered each spring with beautiful, marigold-like blossoms.

## PHOTO BLEAT



*“The goats are alive with the sound of music,” photo journalist Joe R. Parzych reports, “on the beautiful green farming hills of Gill, at Sunrise Valley Farm.” Visitors to the farm, home to Peila’s Creamery, he notes, may feed and pet the goats.*



# Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

## ‘LOKI’

Loki is a two-and-a-half-year-old neutered American Pitbull Terrier. Loki’s owners want him to go to an experienced adoptive home, with a family or individual that has time to provide the training, structure, and exercise he needs. A home with older children or teenagers would be best.

Loki’s humans describe him as curious, enthusiastic, food-motivated, goofy, playful, quirky, and shy. He is energetic and rambunctious, and can be stubborn, and at times mouthy. He has been through obedience training, but appeared distracted by other dogs, and is reactive to dogs while on leash. He has been to doggie daycamp and boarded, where he got along well with other dogs and played

with them. Loki gets anxious when there are storms, wind, or loud noises, and does not like to be restrained for care at home or at the vet. He is not good with cats.

Despite these challenges, Loki is a love bug, and enjoys cuddles on the bed or couch. He will be a great companion for the right individual or family. Loki is house-trained and microchipped, and the person adopting him can keep his crate, dog food, and toys.

Loki is available for adoption from a private owner in Westfield. To apply, visit [www.dakinhumane.org](http://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.

### REVIEWS from page B1

long-established place in contemporary fiction, Joanna Miller is a newcomer. Her first novel *The Eights* is set in Oxford in 1920. British women had just won the right to vote – but had to wait until they were 30 to exercise it, unlike men, who voted at 21. They had also just won the right to get an Oxford degree. Women had been studying there since the 1870s. They had even completed degree courses, and passed their final exams. Nonetheless degrees weren’t granted.

Even with the 1920 rule change, women undergraduates were subject to harassment of all kinds. College rules for women were much stricter than for men – and would remain so at British universities until the 1970s. While sisterly feeling and university propaganda about their good fortune to be studying at Oxford helped accommodate them to the Oxford regime, it was hard to ignore the jibes and insults from some male students and professors who voiced and acted on their misogyny.

Miller successfully dramatizes this situation, having researched the university and other records of the early 20th century. She shows four fictional women making their way towards a degree in their freshman year. All have eight-letter names: Ottoline (Otto), Theodora (Dora), Beatrice, and Marianne. They bond as the “Eights.”

They are also bonded by their memories of the First World War, which ended in 1918. Otto had served in France as a nurse; Dora had suffered the deaths of her brother and her fiancé; Beatrice, daughter of a well-heeled and famous suffragette, had worked as a clerk and a driver; Marianne had nurtured the bereaved of her father’s parish.

Miller notes the effects of these wartime experiences, dramatizing them in the plots she develops for each of the four women. Their emotional impact, however, is described rather than fully explored. This perhaps reflects the difficulties of working with four central characters rather than one or two.

Yet while the lack of emotional depth is a shortcoming, *The Eights* is nonetheless readable and interesting, not least in exploring women’s history and reminding us that the fight for admission to universities was hard-fought.

In Eric Puchner’s *Dream State*, Cece abandons her medical studies at Johns Hopkins when she realizes that her teenage ambition to be a doctor has disappeared. She will find something else, something she can really commit to. Meanwhile, she prepares for her wedding to Charlie at his family’s summer place beside a lake in Montana.

It’s idyllic, and at first Cece has the luxury of worry-

ing about things like which square dance caller to hire. Then she faces the problem of gift bags for the guests, and what to put in them. Then she worries about Garrett. He’s Charlie’s best friend and is going to be the celebrant, but she’s never met him, and cannot understand Charlie’s faith in him when he doesn’t turn up.

Then as the wedding approaches Charlie’s father gets sick with a norovirus. Other people succumb, too...

*Dream State* follows the lives of Cece, Charlie, and Garrett, flash-backing to Charlie and Garrett’s earlier days at Middlebury, bonding over ski trips with friends, then moving through parenthood and work, finally reuniting as retirees. One even has a grandchild. By this time the lake house, once pristine and bathed in bright sunshine, is swathed in smoke from forest fires. Ends are clearly coming.

This plot trajectory – from youth to age – is absolutely familiar as the most human plot of all, and it’s one that storytellers

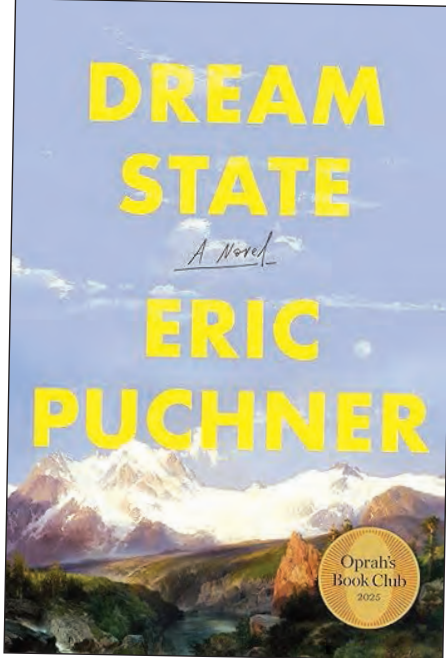
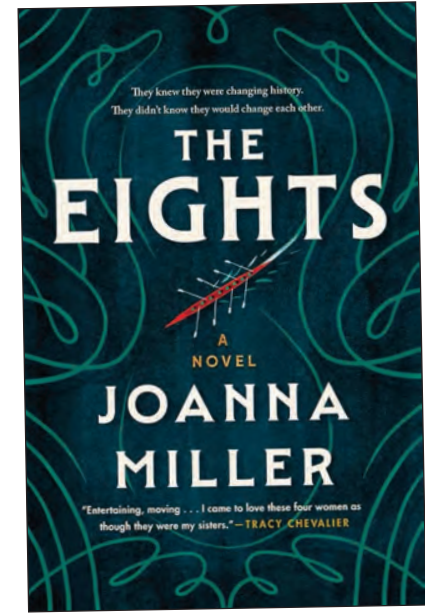
have often used. Puchner handles it deftly, seemingly turning it to look at the things it might turn up. They include evils such as the death of the young, joys such as the pleasures of skiing in Glacier National Park, sorrows such as careers that didn’t work out, surprises like failures that turn to success.

What does it mean? Thinking back on life Cece compares it to a hike on which one is “Forever peering through the trees, waiting for a glimpse of flowers. Where was it? Where? She was beginning to suspect it didn’t exist.” She is grappling with that amorphousness which Bottom experiences in *Midsummer Night’s Dream*: “I have had a dream – past the wit of man to say what dream it was.”

Puchner takes this as epigraph for his novel – an evocation of Montana as a dream state, and also of the dream – or phantasmagoric – nature of life itself.

The beauty of this novel comes from Puchner’s delicate descriptions: of “the sun dim as a thought” seemingly “left in the sky by mistake”; of an osprey: “A band of brown striped the bird’s eyes, like a tiny blindfold. Its beak, bent straight down at the tip, seemed to be melting.” Then there’s his intense recapture of activities: the humiliation of a dismal author reading in a bookshop; the exhilaration of skiing in Glacier National Park; the focus of Garrett tramping through the snow looking for wolverines; the sheer joy as Cece and others hurl themselves into the cold lake on hot, hot days.

The intellectual and emotional pleasures of this book are so many that it is sure to be reread, remembered, pressed onto friends. It is a distinguished achievement from an author hitherto best known as a short story writer.



## Senior Center Activities APRIL 21 THROUGH 25

### 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 4/21

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
3:30 p.m. Senior Tech Class  
6 p.m. Cemetery Commission

#### Tuesday 4/22

No Tech Tuesday  
9 a.m. Chair Yoga  
3 p.m. Tai Chi

#### Wednesday 4/23

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

#### Thursday 4/24

10 a.m. Montague Villages Board Meeting  
1 p.m. Pitch

#### Friday 4/25

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

### 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.

### 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 4/21

Closed for Patriots’ Day

#### Tuesday 4/22

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

#### Wednesday 4/23

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

#### Thursday 4/24

9 a.m. Barre Fusion  
10 a.m. Pilates Flow

#### Friday 4/25

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

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

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

### TV REVIEW

## Amazon’s *House of David* Gets It Right

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – The story of David has been done so many times in film and TV. Amazon Prime has decided to try its hand at making it a TV series. They mentioned at the start of the first episode that they try to be accurate with the history involved in the story.

The episode is a pretty good showcasing of what I know to be part of the story of David. It chronicles the falling-out between King Saul and the prophet Samuel after the king stops obeying God when it comes to certain things.

We get a glimpse of Goliath during a battle, and we are also introduced to David, a simple shepherd

playing the harp. That is a signature item he is known for in the Bible, and he is shown learning to play from his mother. There is also another part of his story in there, where he protects his sheep from a lion.

It was a nice start to the season. So far they have done a good job with staying on point with the whole story. Amazon Prime seems to have a hit on their hands with this show. I didn’t really know any of the actors from anything else, except for Stephen Lang, who plays Samuel. I am quite familiar with him from the *Avatar* movies by James Cameron. Despite that, the acting in this is good too.

As the story is traditionally told, David will eventually meet up with

King Saul – and Goliath. I looked at subsequent episode titles, and it looks like they are going to stretch out the story, introducing other key characters before David’s famous battle with Goliath.

The image of Goliath on the screen is still of a giant of a man, but I wonder if he is indeed going to look like that when the time comes for them to meet up. People have not seen a full picture of him just yet. I think they will try to build up the suspense with a showdown that is such a huge part of the story.

How well they do this, when it comes to both the storytelling and to showing Goliath on screen, could result in *The House of David* getting a couple more seasons to its name.

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# LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on April 16, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

## Bridge Safety A Priority

On April 14, Erving selectboard chair William Bembury told visiting state representative Susannah Whipps Lee that one of the town's most pressing issues was public

safety on the French King Bridge. He said the urgency of the issue was highlighted by a confirmed suicide at the bridge earlier in the day. Bembury said that officials from Erving, Gill, Northfield, the state police, and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation had started meeting in September 2014 to consider safety measures for the bridge.

# 20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on April 14, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

## Where Have All the Children Gone?

"The baby boomers' children are gone," superintendent Sue Gee of the Gill-Montague regional school district noted as she explained dropping enrollment figures to the school committee at the April 12 meeting. Enrollment projections from the New England School Development Council show a continuing decrease in the Gill-Montague schools since 1997-98, when total enrollment was 1,652. Enrollment in 2004-05 was 1,231, a loss of 421. It is projected to drop by at least 30 students a year through 2008-09.

Martin Espinola, director of grants and technology, reported that based on survey results, the good news is that a large number of teachers know how to use com-

puters for a variety of tasks. The bad news is that "only 13% of our teachers regularly use technology in their classrooms," he said.

## Bike Path, Here We Come!

Warner Brothers of Sunderland have begun the long-awaited construction of the bike path, stretching from the former Red Bridge by Unity Park to Depot Street in Montague City. The path, mostly 12 feet wide, will follow the Connecticut River from the park, then follow the canal along an abandoned railroad bed by Montague Machine Company.

Eventually, the path will continue across Montague City Road, follow the abandoned railroad past the wastewater treatment plant, and cross the Connecticut River over an abandoned railroad bridge. If gasoline prices continue their upward spiral, we may all be using bikes for more than recreation.

# 150 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on April 14, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

## Turners Falls and Vicinity

People can now cross the river by boat, and are happy.

They are having a bad spell of orthogramania here now.

Thirty-six cars comprised a train that left this station one day last week.

About the best thing Mr. Goss can do is to put Commodore Smith in charge of the ferry this summer.

Geo. H. McCoy, Albert Jones and John Perry, while fishing Friday in Barton's Cove, secured a string of 112 hornpouts.

Now that the proposition to open up Canal and Seventh streets has been defeated, they are talking of cutting through Fifth street to the bridge.

The Emmett Cornet Band concert and ball, on Friday evening, will no doubt be well patronized. No one who has a desire to have a good band in Turners Falls should be absent.

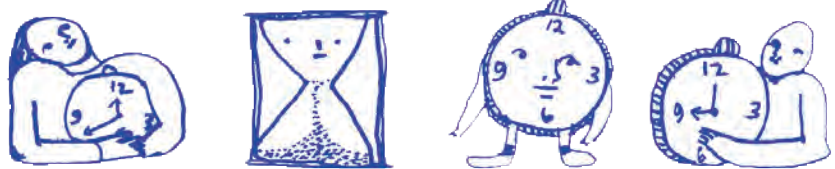
The long-looked for event has passed. The ice which everybody believed to be so thick that it could not move a hundred yards without curtailing disaster, has broken up

and fizzled out. On Sunday morning at 3 o'clock it broke away from the ferry point, and gave every appearance of an extraordinary crash to follow, but after forming a gorge at the narrows, the ice remained firm till Monday morning.

During the entire day Sunday, which was balmy and delightful, thousands of people gathered on both the river banks waiting for the expected grand moving panoramas. The movement here and there of a cake of ice would set the crowd in a flutter of expectancy. But with all the patient watching and prophesying, the ice budged not at all and a disappointed crowd reluctantly meandered its way home.

On Monday morning about 3 another batch went out, and people felt miserable at losing the sight, but at 8 o'clock there was an intimation that the ice was coming in a body, and people hurried to obtain commanding positions. This time the ice-cakes were so small that it was another disappointment to those accustomed to witness the grandeur of former breaking ups, and the run was of short duration.

At noon the body of the remaining ice went out, and was remarkable only for the unusual quantity of drift wood which was carried down with it.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

### Town Asked To Work For Church; Animal Control Escort; Dog On Fire Escape; Slim Jim Among Auto Break-In Thefts

#### Monday, 4/7

8:03 p.m. Caller from Third Street requesting to speak with an officer regarding his neighbor, who has a camera pointed at his apartment door. Advised of options by officer.

9:49 p.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street reporting she was assaulted following an altercation; initially declined an ambulance, but later stated she would like an ambulance to respond. Conference caller with Shelburne Control for EMS. Officer advises caller was given statement forms to fill out and is being evaluated by AMR.

#### Tuesday, 4/8

11:34 a.m. Representative from Our Lady of Czestochowa Church requesting PD respond to clean up a mess left behind from someone living in the woods on their property during last summer or fall. Advised caller that this is private property, and it would be their responsibility to clean up. Officers checked items for anything dangerous; nothing found.

5:33 p.m. 911 caller reports she accidentally hit a dog on Millers Falls Road; dog no longer on scene. Officer states no damage to vehicle; dog was bumped and ran off. Checking area for dog.

7:11 p.m. Caller reports someone is outside his house on Highland Avenue; he is not home but is watching surveillance; states his home has been broken into in the past. House secure; no signs of any break-in; officer checking area. All clear. Caller will stop by tomorrow to show video of the guy who tried to get in his house. States the guy didn't knock, but went straight for the handle.

#### Wednesday, 4/9

10:16 a.m. Animal control officer requesting PD to escort him while he delivers a letter from the town to residents at an N Street address. Services rendered.

11:52 a.m. Caller from Oakman Street states that a lot of her jewelry has gone missing overnight. Officers checked around house and did not find anything suspicious. Officer spoke with caller's daughter over the phone and advised her of the situation. 7:55 p.m. Caller reporting three or four people having a bonfire in the woods near the old Railroad Salvage. Seems big at this time. Officer advises single-log fire; being put out now. TFFD on scene.

#### Thursday, 4/10

6:21 a.m. 911 caller reports that roughly 15 minutes ago a male party took his blue backpack, which has medications and other items inside. Officer spoke with caller, who reports he set his backpack down in front of an Avenue A building and it was taken shortly after. Advised of options.

6:55 a.m. Caller from L Street reports someone scratched the driver's side of her vehicle overnight. Report taken.

7:07 a.m. Caller from K Street reports an older male attempting to break into a maroon Ford Explorer. Male left area on foot. Officer reports having one detained. Report taken.

10:24 a.m. Fax received from Baystate Franklin Medical Center regarding a dog bite that occurred in Turners Falls. ACO notified. Copy faxed to board of health.

11:38 a.m. 911 caller from Montague Avenue reports his cousin punched him in the face, bashed his head on the ground, let two pit-bulls loose, and then left on a blue mountain bike. Message left with ACO. Officer unable to locate male at his residence. No sign of bike.

1:01 p.m. Report of ongoing issue with a loose 60- to 70-pound black dog coming into the caller's yard on Taylor Heights. Today the dog growled at the caller. Info forwarded to ACO. 4:12 p.m. USPS advising

green Camry parked in same spot on Sixth Street since November; hasn't moved. Vehicle towed.

4:33 p.m. Caller from Greenfield Road had a chair and a deck storage container taken and knows who took it; would like to speak to an officer. Officer advises that caller is going to send a certified letter to the party and to herself stating she wants her stuff back.

6:34 p.m. Caller reports someone hit a pedestrian-crossing sign near the Bookmill and it's lying on the ground. Officer was able to put sign back up.

7:54 p.m. Caller from unknown location reporting neglect of two dogs, saying they spend 30 hours a day in a cage with no food or water, peeing and pooping all over themselves, and when they finally get food or water they eat or drink it so fast they get sick. Referred caller to ACO.

#### Friday, 4/11

1:42 a.m. Concerned caller reports a dog barking in the area of the Fourth Street alleyway for a long time. Officer advises dog located barking on the third floor at the rear of a building. Unable to make contact with dog owner. Dog is on third floor fire escape, out of the elements.

8:07 a.m. Caller from Hillside Road reports there is a fox in her driveway and she thinks it is injured. Number given for ACO.

8:43 a.m. Caller from Turners Falls High School requesting officer assistance in understanding a restraining order that was received regarding a student.

#### Saturday, 4/12

8:49 a.m. 911 call from Wendell Road; a tree is down across the road, and the caller is attempting to remove it. Officer requesting DPW. Tree removed.

#### Sunday, 4/13

3:35 a.m. Caller from Turnpike Road reports someone went through

his vehicles at 12:30 this morning. A Slim Jim and a flashlight were stolen. He has the incident on camera. Report taken.

3:51 a.m. Caller was parked in the parking lot at the Carnegie Library when he heard a male's voice up on the hill saying "You're gonna die...You're gonna die." He then saw a male walk down the hill and head toward Food City. Unable to locate.

7:34 a.m. Caller from O Street reports that someone broke into two vehicles in their driveway overnight. They have video footage. A debit card belonging to a family member was taken from a Jeep. Investigated.

10:40 a.m. 911 caller reports that someone just backed into her on Third Street near the lights. No injuries. Minor damage. Parties exchanged information.

11:17 a.m. Walk-in from Montague City Road reporting that her vehicle was broken into overnight. An oversized Disney bag with a bunch of personal information inside was stolen. Caller came back in and stated that a neighbor found the bag and returned it; nothing missing.

11:27 a.m. 911 caller from Bridge Street states that he had left his car jacked up yesterday and someone came by and lowered the car and stole his tools. Advised of options.

11:53 a.m. Walk-in from Turnpike Road reporting that someone went through his truck last night and took his wife's little black bag with her wallet in it. Wallet was found, but credit cards were missing. Investigated.

12:11 p.m. 911 caller from South High Street reporting that their vehicles were broken into overnight. Report taken.

12:22 p.m. While off at a nearby address, officer was flagged down about two more vehicles that were broken into. Report taken.

# MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

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# Locally Filmed Drama Hits Streaming

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – When we spoke with *Money Game* writer-director Julian Lowenthal last spring, he was gearing up for his movie’s local red-carpet premiere, shopping it around to film festivals, and seeking a distributor that could ultimately get it onto streaming services.

*Money Game* – shot on 10 locations in Turners Falls and Greenfield, with some cameos from Millers Falls, Amherst, and South Deerfield – made it into about a dozen festivals, and now has a distribution deal with the Santa Monica-based media company Buffalo 8 allowing it to be streamed at home via Amazon Prime Video (\$4.99 to rent, \$6.99 to “buy”), Fandango (\$3.99 to rent, \$5.99 to buy) and

Tubi (free, and login-free, but with commercials).

“The big one I’m trying to get everyone to go see is Tubi,” Lowenthal tells us, “since, again, it’s free, it’s just ads – and for anyone that doesn’t want ads, Amazon people can buy or rent it.”

Though he couldn’t control the placement of the ad breaks on Tubi, the director says he feels “it works.” (“I’m happy,” he reflects. “I got luck of the draw.”)

Lowenthal, who grew up in the area and cut his teeth making shorts for YouTube and MCTV, filmed his feature debut in 2022 on an initial budget of \$950,000, then went back out during post-production in 2023 to get more shots of the area.

*Money Game* is a drama, and though it does not carry an official MPA audience rating, it features

adult themes and language. The plot, according to the platforms, is that “James, a young widowed father of two girls, struggles to navigate a broken system, until he discovers the ‘Money Game’ from an unorthodox professor.”

What this synopsis doesn’t mention is that these characters live in *Turners Falls* – viewers will find themselves transported here, in 2021. (Get your N95s out!) Local bars, markets, schools, theaters, bridges, bridge abutments, and sidewalks appear mostly undisguised.

Though the plot may wander into the weeds at times in service of its mission to illustrate one perspective on how the US economy has been rigged, the charisma of lead actor Daniel Washington and the sheer familiarity of the locations will make it an entertaining



Daniel Washington, Katie Lynn Johnson, and the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge star in *Money Game* (2024), newly streaming on several platforms.

watch for local viewers.

Lowenthal says he has new projects and collaborations in the pipeline, but is continuing to promote *Money Game* however he can.

This includes a series of “cash trivia raffles,” from now through December: if you watch the movie, you can head to the *Money Game* Facebook page for a chance to win \$100 or \$200 in exchange for a correct trivia answer. (“People do have

to be 18 or older, because there’s money involved, but it’s completely free to enter,” he says.)

“I’m very happy with the general response,” Lowenthal says. “It’s hard to put into words, but I am always amazed at how much it’s spoken to people, and connected with different people in different ways. The movie was able to spark so many different kinds of people coming to me empowered in different ways.”



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EVENTS

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THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center, Northfield: *The Lives and Behavior of River Otter*, presented by local tracker, naturalist, and wildlife videographer David Brown. 6 p.m. Free.

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

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

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

Bookends, Florence: *Alexia Avina, Sam Cope, Hoonah, bobbie*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Sylvie's Okay, Brennan Wedl*. 8 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.

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.

Element Brewing Company, Millers Falls: *David Brule & His Irish Band*. 6:30 p.m. No cover.

Unnamed Books, Turners Falls: Poetry reading, *Sara Mae, Zenaida Peterson*. 7 p.m. By donation.

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

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

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. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Leftovers*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Folkfaces, Moon Hollow, DiTrani Brothers*. 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. \$.

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.

**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.

**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.

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

**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.



John Sheldon, onetime sideman to Van Morrison, James Taylor, Buddy Miles, and Linda Ronstadt, entertains this Saturday at the Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse.

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. \$.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 19**  
Greenfield Public Library, Greenfield: *Soil pH Testing*, and information about Master Gardener training from the Western Mass Master Gardener Association. Bring soil to test (see "How to Test..." at [www.wmmga.org](http://www.wmmga.org)). 10 a.m. to noon. Free.

Montague Center Common, Montague: *Raise a Ruckus for Democracy*. Bring signs, noisemakers, food for students' vacation lunches; wear red. 11 a.m.

Unity Park, Turners Falls: *Peter Cottontail's Eggstravaganza* presented by Montague Parks and Recreation. 1 p.m. Free.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Police Kittens, Hoonah*. 4 p.m. No cover.

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. \$.

**Hosmer Gallery, Forbes Library, Northampton:** *Zine Libraries of Western Mass and Beyond*, collection of zines from regional libraries. Through April.

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

CALL FOR READERS

The LAVA Center in downtown Greenfield is holding auditions for the third annual **On the Boards festival**, new play readings mostly by local playwrights. Auditions will be held Saturday, May 3 and Monday, May 5, and performances the weekends of June 7, 14, 21, and 28. Experience is welcome, but not necessary. No preparation required for the auditions, no memorization required for the performances. Honoraria are offered. For more information or to sign up, see [thelavacenter.org/on-the-boards](http://thelavacenter.org/on-the-boards).

CALL FOR MUSICIANS

The **Montague Community Band** welcomes new members. Open rehearsals held Mondays at 7 p.m. at the Peskeompskut Park bandstand on May 5, 12, and 19 and June 2. Message their Facebook page for details.

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CALENDAR

Guided Brick, Holyoke: *The Basement Cats, Llama Tsunami, Catrick*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

Leverett Town Hall, Leverett: *Community Pancake Breakfast*, open to the public, between two Easter services at the Congregational Church. 7 to 8 a.m. Free.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Jenifer Gelineau, Giant Enemy Cancer Cult*. 4 p.m. No cover.

Shea Theater: *Cinemastorm* double feature: *The Hobbit* (1977), *The Flight of the Dragons* (1982). 7:30 p.m. Free.

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

MONDAY, APRIL 21

Greenfield Garden Cinemas, Greenfield: *The Thin Man* (1934), introduced by local film and theater historian *Jonathan A. Boschen*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

Finders Collective, Turners Falls: *Presentation and discussion* on the Atlanta forest, the resistance to Cop City, the history of RICO charges, legal updates, and movement defense. 7 p.m. By donation.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Exposure*, a band performing Robert Fripp's seminal 1979 album *Exposure*. 7 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Open Mic* with *Jim McRae*. 8:30 p.m. No cover.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: Author Duncan Watson discusses his book *Everyone's Trash*. 6:30 p.m.

Greenfield Garden Cinemas, Greenfield: Regional premiere, *Acres of Clams* (2024), documentary on the Clamshell Alliance anti-nuclear network. Special Earth Day event. 6:30 p.m. \$.

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *The Air We Breathe*, with Hitchcock Center for the Environment educator *Chrissy Larson*. "The presentation will focus on air quality, its impacts on health, and the many ways individuals can take action in their homes and communities." For ages 11 and older. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Vieux Farka Touré*. 7 p.m. \$

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Cooking Class and Dinner*, with *Kyle Zegel* of Just Roots. Register at *slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org* or (413) 800-2496. 5 p.m. Free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Jesse Carr Trio*. 8 p.m. No cover.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Play reading, *The Scariest Thing to See in the Woods*, presented by Silverthorne Theater Company. Reservations at *www.tinyurl.com/theaterthursdays*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Hampshire College, Amherst: *Landowner, New Orthodox, Neets*. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Two-Step Night*, with *Les Taiouts, The Honky-Tonk Angels*, country karaoke. 8 p.m. \$.

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

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

Greenfield Garden Cinemas, Greenfield: Film, *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), with trivia, coloring, and cosplay contests. 3 and 6:30 p.m. \$.

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.

Madhouse Multi-Arts, Greenfield: *Open studios*. 5 to 8 p.m. Free.

IRON HORSE, NORTHAMPTON:

*Loudon Wainwright III, Olivia Nied*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

Institute for Musical Arts, Goshen: *Deidre McCalla, Joe Jencks*. 7 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Torie Jock & Damage Control*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club, Montague: *7th Annual Sticky Pig Roast*, with live music. 2 p.m. \$.

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *Superfoods 101*. Educational workshop with *Kim Larkin* celebrating nutrition powerhouses such as cacao, açai, and goji berries. Register at the library or (978) 544-6334. 2 p.m. Free.

Juicebox Winebar, Shelburne Falls: *Keat Sweat, Applzöe, Malik Abdul-Rahman*. Dance party and cookout, fundraiser for Palestinian food sovereignty. 4 p.m. No cover.

The Tank, Agawam: *Vomitdolls, Cat Crash, Film & Gender, DepopulateMontana, Jack Flowers & the Petal Tones, Sailboat, Solace in Bloom, mybodywasfoundinahollowtree, The Xbox Generations*. All ages. 4 p.m. \$.

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

Pioneer Valley Brewery, Turners Falls: *The ZeppTunes*, Led Zeppelin tribute. 7 p.m. No cover.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *David Wilcox*. 7 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Dead Man's Waltz, Grateful Dead / Allmans / Band* tribute. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Moon Hooch, Future Joy*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Nefesh Mountain, Ali McGuirk*. 8 p.m. \$.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Dan Blakeslee, Footings*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *The Last Drag Show on Earth*. 10 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

Montague Elks Lodge, Turners Falls: *Pancake Breakfast*, to benefit the Friends of the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter. 8 to 11 a.m. \$

Bombyx Center, Florence: Author talk, *Jennifer Rycenga*, on her book *Schooling the Nation: The Success of the Canterbury Academy for Black Women*. 2 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Concert and Writers' Showcase*, with featured performer *Erica Wheeler* and participants of the NEA Big Read workshop series. 3 p.m. Free.

Leverett Elementary School, Leverett: *Community Potluck*. Short presentations by five Leverett organizations and discussion on building community. "Bring finger foods and snacks to share if you can." 4 p.m. Free.

SEEDS OF SOLIDARITY, ORANGE:

*Workshop, Grow Great Gardens*. Presentation and discussion, followed by self-guided tour of no-till, climate-resilient gardens, fields, greenhouses, and energy efficient buildings. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Franklin County YMCA, Greenfield: *Healthy Kids Day*. Family activities, performances, resources, games. Register for a kid's bike giveaway at *tinyurl.com/YMCAgiveaway*. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Polish Mini-Festival*. "Celebrate Polish culture and heritage with music, folk dance, traditional crafts and displays." 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Leverett: *Earth Day Community-Wide Cleanup*. (See Page A3 for details.) 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Seeds of Solidarity, Orange: *Workshop, Grow Great Gardens*. Presentation and discussion, followed by self-guided tour of no-till, climate-resilient gardens, fields, greenhouses, and energy efficient buildings. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Franklin County YMCA, Greenfield: *Healthy Kids Day*. Family activities, performances, resources, games. Register for a kid's bike giveaway at *tinyurl.com/YMCAgiveaway*. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Polish Mini-Festival*. "Celebrate Polish culture and heritage with music, folk dance, traditional crafts and displays." 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

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

SATURDAY, MAY 3

French King Bowling, Erving: *Bowl for Kids' Sake*. Teams register at *www.bbbswm.org/events*. fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Western Mass. 10 a.m. \$.

Holyoke Senior Center, Holyoke: *Flywheel Zine Fest*. 11 a.m. Free.

SUNDAY, MAY 4

Palladium, Worcester: *Dying Fetus, Cradle of Filth, Fleshgod Apocalypse, Ne Obliviscalis, Undeath, Vomit Forth, Corpse Pile*. 4 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, MAY 10

The Drake, Amherst: *Spelling, Feminine Aggression, Jessi's World*. 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

Hutghi's, Westfield: *The Toasters, Steppin' Razor Blades, Futon Lasagna*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, MAY 17

Nova Arts, Keene: *Speedy Ortiz, Undertow Brass Band, Rong, Kal Marks, Minibeast, Dakou Dakou*, more. 12 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, MAY 27

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ralph White, Colby Nathan, Recreation Vehicle, Frozen Corn*. 8 p.m. No cover.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Linda Smith, Cindy, Jeanines, Kryssi B*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

FRI-SUN, JUNE 20 to 22

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Green River Festival* feat. *Mt. Joy, Julien Baker & Torres, TEKE::TEKE, Courtney Barnett, Kevin Morby, Thus Love, Waxahatchee, MJ Lenderman & The Wind, All Feels*, more. See *greenriverfestival.com*. \$\$.

THURSDAY, JULY 10

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Disco Biscuits*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JULY 21

Look Park, Northampton: *Iron & Wine, I'm With Her*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Home Body*. 8 p.m. No cover.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Big E Arena, West Springfield: *ZZ Top*. 7:30 p.m. \$\$.

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**VALLEY VIEW** from page B1  
me. It unfolded on the west bank of the Connecticut River, the road from his house, where he and three neighbors had been monitoring a bald eagle nest on an island across the way. Following a familiar path to an unobstructed vantage point, tripod telescope in tow, they were pleased to discover an eaglet, and were sharing the telescope for close-ups.

As they chatted, Richardson noticed something that drew his attention, nestled into the steep upstream riverbank to his left. There, about 40 feet away, motionless and blending into the backdrop, was the face of what looked to him like a wildcat. Or was it an optical illusion?

When he pointed it out to the man next to him for an opinion, he was assured it wasn't a log. Sure looked like a cat to his friend as well. When it finally moved, they knew they were viewing a brownish bobcat that didn't seem unnerved by their presence.

Though I've never associated bobcats with the Connecticut River, it makes perfect sense that they'd be attracted to such riverbank environments, which provide tangled shelter and a tasty smorgasbord of prey.

The cat, wearing a blue tag on each ear, just calmly lay there, cleaning itself as the four eagle-watchers quickly switched their focus. All four studied it with their naked eyes, and discussed it as they alternated closer looks through the scope. One even took cellphone

photographs, which showed up on Facebook soon after my phone conversation with Richardson.

Curious to the four observers was the fact that the animal, though well aware of their presence, seemed relaxed. Why didn't it flee? Injured, perhaps? Then it calmly rose to its feet and sauntered away at an angle from the intruders. No sign of a limp or unsteady gait. It appeared to be perfectly healthy.

Richardson returned home perplexed. He was certain what he had witnessed was not typical bobcat behavior. Given that the animal was tagged and the number was discernable through the scope, he called MassWildlife's Connecticut Valley District office in Belchertown to see what he could learn. Possibly state wildlife biologists were conducting a bobcat study, and would be interested in his observations.

To his good fortune, the call came into the district office at a hectic time and was answered by none other than district manager Joseph E. Rogers. What better source than the boss?

Apprised of what Richardson and friends had seen, Rogers wasn't surprised. Though MassWildlife is not currently tagging bobcats for a study, state wildlife biologists in Connecticut are, and a similar sighting had recently been reported in Hampshire or Hampden County. In Rogers' opinion, it was likely the same cat. He thanked Richardson for reaching out.

Richardson's wife Kathleen emailed Rogers the four-digit num-

ber on the cat's ear tags, in case he wanted to dig deeper and confirm his initial presumption that it was the wayward Connecticut cat on an upstream journey.

A few days after the sighting, late afternoon-early evening, my phone rang and Richardson's name again appeared on the caller-ID. I answered. He wanted to report new information he thought would interest me. Rogers had chased down the cat's identity. The tags were not from Connecticut.

Let Rogers' April 9 email to Kathleen Richardson explain: "It took me a couple of days to track down, but I was able to ID the tag numbers for the bobcat you reported. It appears this was a bobcat treated at Tufts Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic and released in Belchertown this past winter. It's good to know the animal is healthy. Thanks for reporting the sighting."

So, there you have it. Mystery solved.

Apparently, the bobcat remains semi-comfortable around humans after being fed and nursed back to health by Tufts veterinary personnel. That'll likely change if the animal stays out of harm's way and continues reacclimating to the wild.

That said, one can never confidently predict such outcomes. Some rehabilitated wild creatures make it. Some don't.

Questions and comments are welcome at [gary@oldtavernfarm.com](mailto:gary@oldtavernfarm.com).



**RIVER ALERT re: Northfield Mountain**

**Connecticut River Defenders** invites you to a **Gathering at the River's Edge**; Unity Park, Great Falls on **Friday, April 25 at 6:30 pm**

On Monday, April 22, Mass DEP\* is expected to issue a 401 Water Quality Certificate for the Pumped Storage operation at FirstLight's Northfield Mountain. They have the option to deny or waive the Certificate but we anticipate that they will allow the continued desecration of the Connecticut River and its ecosystem by issuing it. We will continue to work towards the shut-down of NMPS as the relicensing process proceeds to FERC\*\*.

Join us and our special guest, **Liz Cold Wind Santana Kiser**, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Chaubunagungamaug Band, Nipmuc Indians on **Friday April 25, 6:30 pm.**

\*Mass Department of Environmental Protection  
\*\*Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

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