

The Montague Reporter

CHAMPS, ONCE AGAIN



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Greenfield’s Anna Bucala covers second base as Turners Falls’s Marihyn Abarua slides in safely during the first inning of the MAAA Division 5 state final at UMass last Saturday.

By **MATT ROBINSON**

AMHERST – Last Saturday, June 14, the Turners Falls Softball Thunder seized the Division 5 state title – again. It was the 12th state championship earned by the Blue Ladies. It wasn’t easy. Turners stranded six runners in scoring position but simply couldn’t score a run, and going into the sixth inning they were trailing the Greenfield Green Wave 1-0. In the tenth inning, though, they

came out on top. Some members of the local press had hyped the game as the battle of the century, emphasizing the historic rivalry between Turners Falls and Greenfield. But to the Turners folks, it didn’t matter who they played – the Green Wave was just one more hurdle to jump over on their way to the title. The opposing teams’ fans were mixed together at UMass’s Sortino Field. I sat with

see **CHAMPS** page A6

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Town Considers Its Approach to ‘Friendly’ Housing Developers

By **GEORGE BRACE**

At Tuesday’s Leverett selectboard meeting, members deliberated on a process to make it easier for developers to approach the town with proposals for affordable housing projects under the Massachusetts Local Initiative Program (LIP). In response to dissatisfaction with a recent informal proposal to develop the Kittredge estate on Juggler Meadow Road into a large

housing complex under the state’s Chapter 40B LIP program, board member Jed Proujansky presented a document he said could serve as a “frequently asked questions” form, listing information required of developers before a discussion could be held. This “pre-application phase,” he said, would be useful in starting more productive talks. Because Leverett falls below a threshold of 10% of its housing stock qualifying as

see **LEVERETT** page A8

Herb Farm Brings Therapy to Life

By **BEN GAGNON**

MONTAGUE CENTER – One milk cow, a dozen grazing sheep, and 120 varieties of herbs are tucked away on 20 acres of pasture at Sawmill Herb Farm on Old Sunderland Road, managed and cared for by professional herbalist Susan Pincus and her partner Ryan Richards.

A farm stand offers plants and flowers by the side of the road, next to a renovated barn that smells of freshly-cut wood from the old sawmill just down the road. Every day Ryan wakes up to milk the cow and move the sheep from one field to another as part of “intensive management grazing” aimed at continually enriching the soil.

see **HERB** page A4



GAGNON PHOTO

Susan Pincus and Ryan Richards pick elderberries at Sawmill Herb Farm.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Waste Plant May Treat Sludge From North Attleboro

By **JEFF SINGLETON**

“About five minutes ago, it looks like we lost the Montague Center pump station,” Clean Water Facility (CWF) superintendent Chelsey Little told the Montague selectboard at Monday’s meeting. “There was an electrical fire in the control panel – it’s kind of ongoing – so I’m going to try to breeze through my agenda items...” Those agenda items, it turned out, were extensive and complex, including a new contract for removing sludge cake from the wastewater plant, another potential contract for processing liquid sludge from North Attleboro, state reimbursement for a newly installed aeration system, upgrades to the alarms that warn of clogged pumps at Lake Pleasant, and a monthly review of the effluent the plant discharges into the Connecticut River. The selectboard’s broader agenda also included two state grants for the Turners Falls airport, implementing the recommendations

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

GMRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Interim Super Job Offered to Former Leader at Mahar

By **MIKE JACKSON**

GILL-MONTAGUE – Meeting for several hours off its regular schedule last Thursday night, the Gill-Montague regional school committee interviewed three candidates for interim superintendent of schools, deliberated, and agreed to offer the position to Tari Thomas, who served as superintendent of the Mahar regional school district from 2012 to 2020. “We’re still in [contract] negotiations with her,” school committee chair Jane Oakes told the *Reporter* this Wednesday afternoon. “It was nice to have such good choices,” she added. Brian Beck, who has served Gill-Montague as superintendent for five years, announced in mid-May that he planned to leave the position, and in late May set a final work date of June 30. Oakes reached out to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC)

see **GMRSD** page A4

Playground Opens At Long Last



QUALE PHOTO

Montague parks director Jon Dobosz (left) gave Grant Shaw the privilege of cutting the ribbon Saturday.

By **WILL QUALE**

MONTAGUE CENTER – Design and construction of the Montague Center Park’s new playground was delayed for several years by the pandemic. In keeping with that theme, its opening was delayed one further week by rain. Saturday afternoon, while parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz thanked a gathering of delighted villagers for their support and involvement through the park’s eight-

year-long improvement process, young Grant Shaw was less interested in the speech than he was in the handsome new black locust castles. Until Dobosz called him over: “Hey Grant, do you want to cut the ribbon?” Grant – son of landscape architect Daniel Shaw, who designed the park’s new playground area, which includes rain and pollinator gardens, a circular pathway, and benches – was by Dobosz’s side in a jiffy.

see **PLAYGROUND** page A5

GILL SELECTBOARD

Worry for Roads, Hopes for River

By **KATE SAVAGE**

“I’m not looking for a response to my comment, but I’d hate myself if I don’t say it,” highway superintendent John Miner said at Monday’s Gill selectboard meeting. “I’m very disappointed that two years in a row now my capital improvement project requests have not made it to the town meeting floor. I understand what’s going on, but I still believe that it should go to the townspeople to say yes or no.”

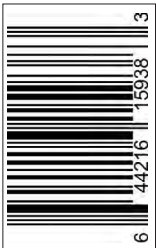
The highway department has twice requested replacements for a tractor and woodchipper. Miner estimated that each would cost around \$60,000. Selectboard chair Charles Garbiel thanked Miner for bringing up the issue. “Maybe we should have left it up to the town voters,” he said. “We were right on the edge of a Proposition 2½ override,” said selectboard member Greg Snedeker. “It was a tough year for us, John.”

see **GILL** page A6

Your Head Is There To Move You Around

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The Montague Reporter

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Something in the Air

As hot war explodes and threats to drag in global alliances, as masked posses descend on schools, courthouses, and hardware store parking lots looking for scapegoats to drag off, as dissenters take to the streets in growing numbers, as a confused military is called up to police the homeland and parade before the leader, as lone wolves embark on campaigns of violent glory and earn nods of approval from the halls of power, readers may feel uneasy and annoyed to see an op-

ed on this page calling attention to a concern that has become *passé*, a front entrenched so deeply we would all prefer to forget it.

War, famine, and pestilence ride together, and many decisions being made this spring and summer will be felt when winter comes. Proponents of mass infection and austerity control our public health policy, and no matter how wholesomely they may coat it, they share the same violent vision as the coalition's armed wing: survival of the fittest.

NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



NINA

Our illustrator brought her MacBook down to the Gill-Montague Senior Center in Turners Falls to get help from Franklin County Tech graduate Matthew Richards. Richards is one of two recent graduates hired to help seniors there with their devices every Tuesday this summer, from 12:30 to 2 p.m. No appointment is needed, just go in with your phone, tablet, or computer if you are a senior who is stumped by something, and they'll help figure it out.

OP ED

Public Health Experts Denounce Vaccine Access Restrictions

By THE PEOPLE'S CDC

WASHINGTON, DC - Public health experts and community members comprising the public health and health justice advocacy group People's CDC condemn the recent restrictions placed on COVID vaccinations by currently appointed US public health officials, whose nominations we previously opposed.

Removal of recommendations for pregnant people and children were announced on May 27 by HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., FDA Commissioner Marty Makary, and NIH Director Jay Bhattacharya, all of whom have extensive track records of opposing vaccinations and advocating for dangerous mass infection policies.¹

We also condemn the new unnecessary requirements that have been imposed by the FDA on the approval of COVID vaccines for people under age 65, which were published on May 20 by FDA Commissioner Marty Makary and FDA CBER Director Vinay Prasad.²

The scientific evidence supporting vaccine efficacy and safety is irrefutable: Receiving a COVID vaccination within the last year reduces the risk of symptoms, severe disease, disability, and death for people of all ages, including previously healthy people.

These restrictions also create immense confusion among the public on the usefulness of COVID vaccines, and undermine confidence in vaccines more broadly. These restrictions are based on misinformation, and they put our communities at risk – and will undoubtedly lead to more restrictions on other life-saving vaccines.

Further, we condemn the closed and undemocratic decision-making process. The development of vaccine policies must be open and transparent, with opportunities for the public to provide written and oral public comments as well as input from the appropriate expert advisory committees, including FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) and CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP).

The new restricted vaccine approval policy has apparently already been implemented in the latest FDA approvals (Novavax's Nuvaxovid and Moderna's mNexspike). Under the new policy, COVID vaccines are not available to people under age 65 unless they have a high-risk medical condition. Fall 2025 flu vaccine strain selection occurred within a closed-door meeting without input from the usual range of expert advisors on VRBPAC's roster.³

The FDA has limited the public's right to provide their input through

public comment. Opportunities for public input as well as open discussions through broadcasted public meetings are essential for public trust in vaccines and for trust in our public health institutions. America's democracy requires true transparency and accountability in our trusted public health institutions.

Current guidelines for COVID vaccinations have already been weakened in the CDC's childhood vaccination schedule,⁴ and recommendations for COVID vaccination during pregnancy have been removed.⁵ Limiting access through these revised recommendations with a focus on "shared clinical decision-making" for healthy children creates harmful and unnecessary barriers to vaccination, potentially impacting both vaccine access at clinics and pharmacies as well as insurance coverage.

Pregnancy is a known high-risk condition for severe COVID, and was still listed as such by the CDC as of May 30, 2025.⁶ Vaccination of pregnant people is also important to protect newborns, who benefit from maternal antibodies. Infants six months of age or younger born to unvaccinated birthing parents represent the majority of infant hospitalizations.⁷ Both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

have released statements criticizing the new policy.

The benefits of COVID vaccination apply to people of all ages, including children and adults, including those without specific high-risk medical conditions. COVID continues to spread within our communities, and vaccination reduces the risk of symptomatic disease, severe disease, disability, and death.⁸ The safety and efficacy of COVID vaccines have been established over many clinical trials and real-world monitoring, including both the original formulations as well as multiple strain updates.⁹

The update process in previous years (2022-2024) allowed the use of both clinical data from existing formulations and nonclinical data from the updated formulation.^{10,11} This COVID vaccine variant update process mirrored the routine process for seasonal influenza vaccine strain updates. This established process has provided the necessary timeframe to minimize delays in order to provide a better match to currently circulating variants.

All COVID vaccine updates must be made available for people of all ages, 6 months and up, at least twice a year. Both children and adults remain at risk of both short- and long-term impacts from COVID infections.^{12,13} Access to vaccination at least once a year

for all ages is needed to provide the greatest benefit, as immunity wanes over time.^{14,15,16}

Restricting vaccine access to certain age groups or people with specific high risk medical conditions creates barriers to vaccination for high-risk groups, leading to additional documentation or extra clinic visits.

Anti-vax, anti-science, and anti-public health influences have no place in our trusted public health institutions. Denying everyday people access to safe and effective vaccines harms all of us. Vaccine uptake is already far too low because of barriers to access. Recent federal cuts have included cuts to research into vaccine hesitancy as well as ending the "Wild to Mild" CDC flu vaccine campaign.¹⁷

US federal health agencies must reverse these decisions and instead strengthen and expand vaccine campaigns as well as ensure free and affordable access to vaccinations.

The People's CDC is a coalition of public health practitioners, scientists, healthcare workers, educators, advocates, and people from all walks of life working to reduce the harmful impacts of COVID-19 (see www.peoplescdc.org). The People's CDC is completely volunteer-run, with infrastructure support being provided by the People's Science Network.

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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY. (Going twice...)

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

First **heat wave** is lurking around the corner.

The **mulberry tree** in the parking lot here is already starting to pop off – one side of it, at least. Feel free to come pluck some mulbs. It'll reduce the jam in everyone's boot-treads.

"The Turners Falls Water Department will be **flushing hydrants the week of June 23,**" writes Suzanne Leh, the department's clerk and collector. That's next week!

"Residents may experience low water pressure and/or discolored water," she warns. "Discolored water is caused by the disturbance of natural sediment and minerals in the water mains. Fire hydrant flushing is done annually and is imperative for water quality and to be sure all hydrants in town are working properly."

Putting together a town paper with a country readership, I often feel a little worried we're running too many Turners-centric announcements, but I just did the math and you know what? The combined population of our **official towns of coverage** – Gill, Erving, Wendell, Leverett, and Montague – is 14,429, according to the last US Census, and the Turners Falls water department serves an estimated 7,057 of them.

That's fully 49%! Telling 49% of our target audience their spigots might sputter and cough and run an orange murk but not to stress out is a totally solid use of the paper. Run your tub for a minute and you should be back to normal.

This edition comes out **on Juneteenth**, so mailed subscriptions will be posted on a Friday. (Sorry, mailed readers, if you got this late. That might be why.)

This doesn't come up much – it's only the third federal holiday we've published on in the 12½ years I've been involved with the paper: The last time Juneteenth fell on a Thursday was 2014, and the nationwide holiday was declared in 2021. We don't publish on Thanksgiving, and we take the last week of December off, so Thursday Christmases don't affect us. When we go biweekly in July and August, we pick our dates to avoid July Fourth.

The only other federal holidays that could land on a Thursday are New Year's Day and Veterans Day. We published January 1, 2015 – a special historical edition! – and November 11, 2021. New Year's will strike again this winter; maybe we'll cook up something special. (Walked and driven subscribers: tip your carrier!)

"Despite Juneteenth's status as a federal holiday, celebrations across the country are being **scaled back or canceled,**" CNN reports. "Organizers say safety issues along with mounting resistance to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives are making it harder to hold events..."

Monday evening the last two blocks of Turners Falls Road were **closed for a standoff** at Hillcrest Homes. A locals-only message went out via Montague's CodeRED system: "Please be advised that

we have a police situation.... Please seek alternate routes *drones [sic]* may be in the air."

A *Reporter* correspondent dropped by and gave us updates. It was the second time recently the county's freshly-kitted-out Special Response Team came to town (see *State Police Seeking Tips After Gunfire In Turners*, May 29), and they do look remarkable in their olive-drab duds. It's mentioned elsewhere in this section that some bystanders were worried it was an ICE raid.

Not so, though – an alleged domestic violence-related incident escalated, we were told, with a legal gun owner in an apartment, and was then safely deescalated. Roads reopened and people put their normal clothes back on. Our colleagues at the *Recorder* got the story Tuesday, and as far as we know there's not much more to add.



"Not all ADUs require ZBA approval," our Montague Center correspondent Will Quale writes, of these teensy dinosaurs growing on a beam **on his back porch**. Here they are at ages zero days (at top) and nine days (above).

Birds everywhere!

When Will filed his article on a playground opening (*Playground Opens At Long Last*, Page A1), it was my turn to be the baby bird – **landscape architect Dan Shaw**, who designed the project and supplied a kid to cut its ribbon, is *the* Dan Shaw, songwriter and frontman of esteemed Holyoke postpunk unit Landowner.

Suddenly it all made sense.

"The greatest human monument / Greater than the pyramids / Covering the Earth / Places to put cars," Shaw sang on the B-side to 2016's jittery solo outing *Impressive Almanac*. Two tracks later: "As they built the levees higher, rivers always seemed to rise..." And then: "On bubbles 1 to 5 / Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / I pick 3..."

Next album, having added a full band, relentlessly focused, no effects pedals: "I got poured over drain rock / Like water wasted through careless hands / Building prisons and dams..."

"Public meeting at the planning board about changes in the neighborhood / He's there to assure you that changes can be good..." This biting

critical track is even titled "Male Architect."

And on 2020's *Consultant*, firing on all cylinders, jamming clockwork econo: "Now that it's on your radar you recognize it everywhere.... / It's a pipeline / Laid out / The path of least resistance / Laid out in front of you by a lawmaker in the Fifties / Who knew what he was doing..."

This looks to be a fantastic case of write-what-you-know, and in my opinion, if Shaw's playground design is half as good as his musical efforts the children of Montague Center have really lucked out. Find it on Bandcamp, etc.

We heard **three thousand turned out in Greenfield** last Saturday for the "No Kings" protest, and we also heard one thousand (*see below*). Main Street was shut down for a bit.

It has been a heavy week, with troops in LA, Democratic elected officials assassinated in Minnesota and detained by Homeland Security in California and New York, protest security misreading a fellow armed protestor in Utah and shooting him and killing a bystander, and intense mutual bombardment of Tehran and Tel Aviv.

As of press time Thursday the Trump administration seemed to be wavering as to whether to join in the bombardment of Iran. A couple months ago the US director of national intelligence said the intelligence apparatus "continues to assess that Iran is not building a nuclear weapon" and "is closely monitoring if Tehran decides to reauthorize its nuclear weapons program." The Israeli government disagrees.

Over the final year of the Biden presidency, the main activist movement on American streets was the one in solidarity with the Palestinian cause. It was overall younger and more international in composition than the US left has been in decades, and its partisans built direct connections with civilians in Gaza and elsewhere. Whatever else can be said about it, believing you are trying to stop a genocide and *failing* is a very particular experience, and millions here are having it.

A broad-based domestic coalition that combines this younger, heartbroken, politically hardened activist left with people who opposed or otherwise abstained from their movement is a tall order. However, given the escalation of international war and the likelihood that the US military will join it more openly, it also seems unlikely that sidelining their concerns – the strategy mainline Democrats adopted during the presidential election – will be a successful approach.

It's a critical issue. Faced with a client state that insists on leading, Trump's own political coalition is in this same moment frozen in fierce debate as to whether "America First" should mean the US regaining its dominant position in the imperial hierarchy, or taking a step away from it and focusing on deportations and tariffs. After all, while rallying support for war abroad is a time-tested way to defuse domestic opposition, Americans have fresh memories of the tide that eventually turned against the Iraq invasion sweeping a generation of Republican leaders off the historical stage.

Whatever happens next,

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"The 'No Kings' protest held in Greenfield Saturday had up to 1,000 protestors," photo correspondent Ed Gregory writes, "toting various messages directed toward the 'King' Trump administration. The march formed at Fiske Avenue and Energy Park, headed to Main Street, turned west to Wells Street, turned east, and proceeded along the sidewalk to the common for a continued rally."

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GMRSD from page A1

for support in recruiting an interim superintendent for the year. As she explained to the committee at its May 27 meeting, schools are not supposed to go for any length of time without superintendency.

MASC posted the position, screened applicants, and recommended three finalists for the June 12 interview session: Thomas, who has been working as a leadership coach for superintendents; Roland Joyal, currently finishing a term as interim superintendent in Monson; and Mark McLaughlin, serving in the same role in South Hadley.

The three were given back-to-back public interviews, with committee members asking each the same prepared list of questions.

Thomas said that her biggest strength was connecting with people, that her biggest weakness was “tortur[ing]” herself, and that her leadership style was to be a “servant” to her various constituencies. She said she structures her workday in order to be available in the school buildings “as much as humanly possible.”

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, she explained, she was hired as interim superintendent in an administratively heterogenous five-school district in northern New Hampshire. “It was fascinating,” she said. “Their superintendent just went, ‘I’m gone!’ It really taught me the importance of a thoughtful entry process, even with an interim position.”

Thomas discussed her approaches to delegation, collaboration, public communication, and supporting staff in professional development. At the end of her interview, she asked the committee members to each share a word that typified their own connection to the district.

Next up was Joyal, who served as principal at Chicopee High School from 1999 to 2017 before becoming assistant superintendent in Chicopee for three years, director of the Lower Pioneer



Six of the eight school committee members ranked Thomas their top choice of the three candidates.

Valley Educational Collaborative for three years, and then an interim superintendent.

Joyal emphasized his accessibility and good working relationships with staff and school committee members in the various districts he had served in.

Introducing himself, McLaughlin told the committee he had taken a “weird path” to interim superintendency, having been hired as an assistant superintendent at South Hadley shortly before the superintendent left. He emphasized repeatedly in his interview that a superintendent “works for the school committee,” though he also described taking a listening, collaborative approach with all stakeholders before making a plan.

After the candidates left, the eight committee members present on Thursday took turns shar-

ing their initial impressions. Thomas quickly emerged as a consistent frontrunner.

“Everyone gave similar answers to questions about collaboration and listening,” Gill member Bill Tomb observed.

Montague member Steve Ellis said he saw a “stark contrast in styles, although all seemed very amiable.” He praised Thomas’s effective communication style. “The mission was right there,” he said. “It was very clear and powerful.”

“I like that she’s had experience in both municipal and regional schools,” said Montague member Carol Jacobs.

“I also got from her that she would be able to make hard decisions if she needed to,” Montague member Wendy Thompson added, “and have the hard conversations, and hold people accountable.”

The committee ultimately voted 7-1 to offer the position to Thomas. The dissenting vote came from Montague member Cliff Spatcher, who said he was most interested in special education, and favored Joyal followed by McLaughlin.

Thomas’s answer when asked what model of special education delivery she felt was most effective was that “the goal is always to be in general education,” though students with “significant” disabilities may need substantially separate placement. Joyal’s answer stressed providing the “least restrictive environment,” and the importance of providing supports early in children’s development to encourage their developing independence.

At Ellis’s suggestion, McLaughlin was designated as an alternate top candidate if a contract with Thomas was not successfully negotiated. This passed by a 8-0 vote.

On Saturday, according to the *Greenfield Recorder*, Joyal went on to interview for an interim superintendent position at the Greenfield public schools, and was offered the position.

HERB from page A1

“I love the relationship between the sun, the soil, the grass, and the animals,” said Ryan. “Rotational grazing means about one-third of the grass is eaten, one-third is trampled and becomes compost, and one-third is left to produce more green growth and extend its roots rather than going to seed.”

Continually keeping grass in its vegetative growth stage also means the plants are taking more carbon from the air, thereby offsetting the methane produced by livestock.

“This is a carbon-neutral approach,” he said. “Except for minerals and salt, I can feed the animals right here, and without adding anything to it the land becomes more productive. This is the way it was done for thousands of years by indigenous cultures who bred sheep to graze.”

Ryan learned how to manage sheep as an apprentice shepherd in Italy, but rather than stay with the animals all day he now uses electrified fences, which give him the freedom to work part-time as a social worker in Northampton. Sometimes the neighbors and their kids will pitch in, including recently when a newborn calf went temporarily missing.

“It was an awesome experience of some-

thing like eight people showing up to look for the calf, including the local kids,” said Ryan. “I love the neighborhood aspect of this place.”

It turned out the calf was only 30 feet away from its mom, hiding in tall grass.

Although the milk cow provides some milk, cheese, and even yogurt, the main business for Ryan and Susan is operating a certified organic herb farm and CSA specializing in medicinal and culinary herbs. They grow 120 different plants and flowers sold at the farm stand and through *sawmillherbfarm.com*. They also rent the newly-renovated barn out for ceremonies, yoga classes, meetings, overnight stays, workshops, and training.

Susan learned her trade as an apprentice with local herbalists Brittany Wood Nickerson and Chris Marano, and now leads a “somatic herbalism apprenticeship” every Saturday for up to a dozen people from as far away as New York City and Burlington, Vermont.

“It’s a process of learning by doing,” said Susan. “A lot of what we do is develop a personal relationship with the plants and learn about yourself in the process, deepening your intuition. It’s about trusting in the wisdom of your body and ultimately learning how to make medicine.”



The entrance of the farm’s newly renovated barn and event space.



The farm stand at Sawmill Herb Farm on Old Sunderland Road.

Last week a row of tulsi was blooming at the farm, a plant with purple flowers that’s also known as holy basil, an herb sacred in India. Another row of lemon balm produced a strong scent along with the perennial yarrow, which produces white flowers.

“Tulsi is a delicious plant for tea, and helps the nervous system and digestion,” said Susan. “It’s calming and focusing – perfect if you need to get to work on a project. Lemon balm is easy to grow, another great plant for tea. Yarrow has been used by indigenous cultures to stop bleeding, and to help with fever.” Autumn is the time of year to harvest gooey marshmallow roots that can be used to make tea or just to suck for a sore throat.

In her practice as an herbalist, Susan said she has found that global news and domestic politics are causing widespread stress and anxiety.

“People’s nervous systems are completely blowing up,” she said. “There’s deep grief, pain, and fear. People don’t feel safe. We can’t ignore what’s happening, but we have to be in a community with people and learn about our neighbors.”

One approach to the stressful times is

growing a modest garden.

“If you have the capacity, grow a garden, develop a relationship with one plant at a time, try things out and don’t aim for perfection,” she said. “We’re always going through life quickly, and we don’t stop and slow down enough.”

She also emphasized doing research and understanding that everybody’s mind and body react differently to medicine.

“You might ask yourself,” she said, “what do you notice when you have a cup of tea? How does it taste, how does it feel in your body? The somatic approach is about noticing sensations because there might be wisdom there. Ultimately you have to be the expert of your own body.”

Meanwhile, it’s Ryan’s job to keep fresh milk on the kitchen table.

“The farm creates a lifestyle balance that works for me, and it does something for my mental health,” he said. “I don’t always want to get up first thing in the morning, especially in the winter, but once I get out there I don’t think I’ve ever wished I didn’t get up to milk the cow and see the sunrise.”

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PLAYGROUND from page A1

Handing Grant the scissors, Dobosz barely had time for a health-and-safety warning – “When you’re done with these, you’ve got to give ‘em back. You can’t run with them...” – before the ribbon was cut. “Ah, he did it! It’s official, the park’s officially open!”

Just prior to the ribbon-cutting, Dobosz delivered a speech that began with appreciation for the project committee, who provided guidance throughout the project: John Bray, Albert Cummings, Eileen Mariani,

Alice Armen, and Jeri Moran. Their names were chosen by lottery from the many interested Montague Center residents who attended an open meeting in 2017.

In May 2018, Montague’s town meeting appropriated \$7,000 to fund a master plan for the park’s improvements. This allowed Dobosz to approach the Conway School of Landscape Design, who assigned the project to three students. Lili Elena, Amanda Hawes, and Mallory Rasky analyzed the site and the community’s needs,

and then developed a detailed plan which was submitted to the town in July 2019. While not a final construction-ready plan, the students translated the committee’s ideas and high-level concepts into well-researched technical drawings and descriptions.

“The master plan helped establish a solid foundation for this project to move forward and get grant funding,” said Dobosz. But momentum suddenly ground to a halt. “As with many things, it really got held up by the pandemic.”

Small related improvements were made even during the height of COVID isolation. Montague’s tree advisory committee planted a row of bald cypresses along the park’s frontage on School Street. Perhaps unintentionally, this file of widely-spaced trees resembles a socially-distanced queue which may stand for centuries as a reminder of the era in which the park was improved.

A special town meeting in October 2023 kicked the project into high gear by voting to appropriate \$500,000 to support a state Parkland Acquisition & Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant, which would fund professional landscape design and construction of a playground, including a parking lot, gardens, and tree plantings. The grant, if awarded, would allow the project to proceed by pledging to reimburse the town \$340,000 of that appropriation.

“At first I was not very confident that we were going to be able to receive grant funding from that source,” said Dobosz. As recently as 2016, the town had received a PARC grant of \$263,000 to build Unity Skate Park in Turners Falls. “But we received [the grant]!” The state Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (DEEA) announced its decision in December 2023.

Dan Shaw – father of the ribbon-cutter – of GZA Geoenvironmental was hired after that to design the park, and Mountain View Landscapes of Chicopee as the general contractor last July.

Work proceeded quickly, documented by photographs on a Facebook page maintained by the Parks & Rec department, from “[h]oles and piles of dirt” in September to equipment installation – climbing towers and swings, slides, bugs on springs – in October to benches and walkway in December.

While much of the play area is covered in wood chips, pour-in-place rubber surfacing was installed in April around some equipment to make the area more safe and accessible for kids using mobility aids.

“I want to thank *you*,” committee member Eileen Mariani added following Dobosz’s thank-yous. “You’ve been shepherding this since 2017. The town voted unanimously for that grant. They have great confidence in your work and what you do, Jon. And this is just gorgeous.”

That opinion was shared by state officials. “We had the state inspection this past Monday from the grant administrators,” Dobosz concluded. “Melissa Cryan from the [DEEA] arrived, and she gets out of her car and she’s like ‘This is amazing, it’s an amazing park!’”

“We used the perfect structures for this village, for this setting, and we couldn’t be any happier.”

The children playing during the speech, oblivious to Dobosz’s words, agreed.



Top to bottom: GZA Geoenvironmental landscape architect Dan Shaw surveys the outcome of his work; a bug perches on a big spring as swings hang calmly in the background; project committee members Jeri Moran (left) and Eileen Mariani (right) flank parks and rec director John Dobosz.

Tip of the week ...

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Free Summer History Lecture Series Starts Next Thursday

DEERFIELD – Historic Deerfield’s 2025 Summer Lecture Series will take place both in person at the Deerfield Community Center and via Zoom from 7 to 8 p.m. on the following Thursdays: June 26, July 10, and July 17.

These lectures are free, but pre-registration is required; see www.tinyurl.com/freedeerf for links.

On June 26, Dr. Drew Lopenzina will present on “The Return of William Apess: Resurrecting the Life and Legacy of a Nineteenth-Century Pequot Author and Activist.”

Dr. Lopenzina, whose work interrogates the intersections between settler-colonial and Indigenous cultures in the Northeast, is the author of several books including a biography of Apess, and is currently working on a critical edition of Apess’s 1829 memoir.

On July 10 Dr. Patricia Dawson (Cherokee Nation) will present “Carrying the Fire: Cherokee Women’s Textile Diplomacy,” and on July 17 Dr. Margaret Ellen Newell presents on “Native New England and the Impact of Slavery.”

League of Women Voters Hosts Legislative Coffee Next Saturday

GREENFIELD – The League of Women Voters of Franklin County (LWVFC) will host a “Legislative Coffee” with state legislators representative Natalie Blais, representative Susannah Whipps, and senator Jo Comerford next Saturday, June 28, at 3 p.m. at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center.

“It is as vital to engage at the community level as it is to call our national leaders to account,” remarked LWVFC president Marie Gauthier. “Our state legislators understand the local impacts we’re facing – they need our passion and advocacy to bring attention to our needs at Beacon Hill. We encourage everyone to take advantage of this

opportunity to raise their collective voices and be heard.”

This event is free and open to all, and refreshments will be provided.

The LWVFC is a nonpartisan grassroots political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League works to provide objective information on critical public policy issues and conduct debates and forums to increase awareness of candidates seeking office.

For more information, visit online at lwvma-franklincounty.org.

Montague Community Television News Finals & Folders

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Cheer on our high school softball team in the Turners vs. Greenfield Division 5 Softball State Tournament by tuning in to Channel 9 on local cable! You can also find it online by going to our website, Montaguetv.org, and following the “Videos” tab.

There you will now find folders that will direct you to all of the Montague and Gill selectboard meetings, in which you will find

both the most recent meetings and all of our previous recordings.

If you would like to make a video, or if you know of an event that should be filmed, let us know! You can come by the station at 34 Second Street in Turners Falls to talk with Dean or Deirdre, Mondays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can email us at infomontaguetv@gmail.com or even call us up at (413) 863-9200.

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“Every great cause begins as a movement, becomes a business, and eventually degenerates into a racket.”

Eric Hoffer, ‘The Temper of Our Time’



Left: With two outs and two strikes in the bottom of the 10th inning, Marilyn Abarua blasts a tie-breaking RBI hit last Saturday at Sortino Field.
Right: Madi Liimatainen, evading a tag at the plate following Abarua's hit, scores the winning run to secure the Thunder's state championship win.

CHAMPS from page A1

a gentleman who was on Greenfield's undefeated cross-country team in the 1960s, a 98-year-old from Turners Falls, and the Murphy family of Murphy Park fame. The mood was cordial, with fans calling out supportive encouragement to the girls on the field, and when it was all over everyone shook hands.

On the diamond, the mood was a little less relaxed. Most of the players wore hopeful grimaces on their faces as the first Greenfield batter stepped into the box. Their nerves were exposed when a throwing error gifted the Wave a runner on second base with no outs. With their first mistake behind them, the Thunder D buckled down; catches by Ameliya Galbraith and McKenzie Stafford and a ground out kept Green off the board.

Powertown also got a runner to second base in their first at-bats when Marilyn Abarua hit a ground single. She then stole second, but a strikeout retired the side.

The top of the second saw a diving catch by Madisyn Dietz sandwiched between two Madison Liimatainen strikeouts, and Turners came back to the plate. Leadoff batter Autumn Thornton made it to third off a chopping single, a steal, and a fielders' choice, but again Blue came up empty.

In the third, Mia Marigliano placed a one-out double, but two consecutive outs erased the threat. The game dragged on with both teams striving to get that first run.

It came in the Greenfield fourth. A single just over the shortstop's glove put the leadoff batter on base,

though when she attempted to steal second, Marigliano picked her off. The next batter was walked, and two hits later she scored, breaking the double goose egg and giving Green a much-needed boost. Toward the end of the inning Marigliano — who took over catching duties this season, one of the most grueling positions — suffered a hand injury. She shook off the pain, and play resumed.

Turners went one-two-three in the bottom of the fourth, with Thornton robbed by a spectacular running catch.

Green couldn't score in the top of the fifth, and in the bottom of the inning Galbraith cracked a one-out double. Courtesy runner Ivy Lopez advanced to third base on a Maddie Haight fielders' choice, but a deep fly by Marigliano was tracked down for the third out. And so, going into the sixth inning, Powertown was still trailing by a run. Fans from both sides agreed that no matter who won, they were certainly getting their money's worth.

In the sixth, with "Sweet Caroline" booming over the speakers and their backs against the wall, Powertown finally answered. Abarua hit a one-out single and stole second. Janelle Massey then smashed a double, and Abarua rounded third and raced home to tie it up. Courtesy runner Autumn Dimari stole third, but two straight outs meant Powertown was unable to score the go-ahead run and the game stayed knotted at one each.

In the seventh, the True Blue Faithful began to chant: "Here we go, Turners, here we go!" Then

the scoreboard malfunctioned, breaking the tension for the stalwart spectators. As Greenfield batted, the fans laughed as the balls, strikes, outs, and innings on the board all changed at will.

By the time Turners came to bat, it seemed to have been righted. Galbraith singled and made it to second base before the side was retired, and the championship game stretched into extra innings.

Green got two runners on base in the eighth, but a Liimatainen strikeout shut the door. In the bottom of the inning Liimatainen herself walked, then stole second, and then Massey was intentionally walked, putting two runners on with one out.

Thornton cracked the ball into the outfield. Liimatainen patiently kept her foot on the base until the ball was caught, then advanced to third, but much to the chagrin of the home crowd it was ruled that she had left early. The ball was lobbed to second, and the inning ended on a controversial double play.

In the ninth, two strikeouts and another circus catch by Dietz retired Greenfield in order, and the chants grew louder still. Addison Talbot slapped a one-out base hit in the home ninth, but a double play sent the game to 10.

This led to more speculation from the spectators — the scoreboard only had room for 10 innings. "What they going to do?" one woman quipped. "Start the whole game over?"

But then it got tense, as Greenfield waged a major threat. The Green Wave put two runners on base with one out.

This was nothing new for Coach

Gary Mullins and his squad. "After the easy victory over Rising Tide, the difficulty of attaining victory seemed to be an uphill climb," Mullins shared after the game. "We needed to come back from a three-run deficit against Monson, to then crawl by Drury, with Madi getting the only two hits of the game for Turners." And in their last two playoff games, to mount comebacks against Narragansett and Georgetown just to keep their season going.

No, this was nothing new for Mullins — or his team of players and coaches. After a quick huddle in the circle and a few deep breaths by the players and the fans, play resumed. A pop-out to first gave the Thunder their second out, and a Liimatainen strikeout sent Powertown back to the plate with the contest still cemented at 1-1.

The first two Blue batters in the bottom of the tenth hit the ball hard, but Green Wave infielders threw both out. With two down, Madison Liimatainen came to the plate. Folks in the stands were heard debating whether she would hit a walk-off home run.

"Remember when she was in eighth grade?" one man asked. "All those RBIs in that title game!"

"And she's been fouling over the fence today," someone behind us added.

But Liimatainen wouldn't get the chance — she was forced to settle for a five-pitch walk. Marilyn Abarua came up to bat next. Abarua, who Bear Country earlier this year said was the smallest girl on either team, has been on a hitting streak of late. Sometimes big

things come in small packages.

Abarua got behind in the count early. With one strike on her, she fouled into the catcher's mitt to make it 0-2. Liimatainen stole second on the foul tip, which left the Greenfield coaches scratching their heads, but the umpire explained that the runner can advance on a foul if the catcher catches the ball.

Facing two outs and an 0-2 count, and with Liimatainen languishing on second base, Abarua was forced to swing at every pitch. She fouled the next five in a row. On the sixth, she placed the ball over the shortstop's head. Liimatainen never stopped. She rounded third and raced home, just beating the throw and scoring the winning run, and earning Turners Falls High School yet another state championship banner.

Abarua finished the game with three hits, two stolen bases, and a walk-off RBI. Galbraith had two hits and a steal, Massey and Thornton hit doubles, and Talbot hit a single. In the circle, Liimatainen pitched ten innings, giving up one run while striking out 11 batters and walking four. She was also walked twice, stole two bases, and scored the game-winning run.

So where does this leave the Turners Falls Softball Thunder, with Abarua, Liimatainen, and Marigliano all having graduated?

"Next year, we will face the difficult task of trying to win with a very young, inexperienced pitcher," coach Mullins forecast. But, always the sportsman, he added: "I look forward to the challenge, while also feeling the pressure to have a winning season."



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The Montague
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GILL from page A1

Miner also expressed worry about operating costs as the fiscal year ends. "To be quite honest with you, I'm a little nervous about how much money I've got left in my budget at this moment," he said.

The board approved a payment of \$10,546 for the diagnostics, parts, and installation of two multi-function controllers for the department's John Deere backhoe — but the department might have to wait until July, when the new fiscal year starts, to make those repairs.

Miner explained that the parts were expensive because they are electronic and the dealer has to program them once they are on the machine for the warranty to remain in effect.

John Deere has come under fire by the "right-to-repair" movement in recent years for its repair restrictions. The Federal Trade Commission filed a lawsuit against the company earlier this year, claiming the company is driving up

costs and violating antitrust law by creating a repair monopoly. The company contends these restrictions make its equipment safer and protect its intellectual property.

Slope Protection

Princy Stotz came to the selectboard to announce her interest in putting land she owns along the Fall River under conservation restriction. "My family's been lucky enough to live there," she said. "It's been perfect. We'd like it to remain that way."

The plot, which includes around 60 acres in Gill and 29 in Greenfield, borders the Fall River on both sides. Liam Cregan, the land conservation specialist at the Franklin Land Trust, explained that the riverbanks are steep and forested, and protecting them would be important for both the Fall and Connecticut rivers.

"Princy and her family are wanting to do a really generous thing and preserve it in per-

petuity," Cregan said. He explained that next steps include finalizing the plan and getting state approval before seeking signatures from the selectboard. Once the town approves, the conservation restriction will be "statutory and permanent," he said.

Brian Donahue was also there to voice support for the project. Donahue co-owns Bascom Hollow Farm just upstream from the property, serves on Gill's conservation commission, and also sits on the board of the Franklin Land Trust. "If this were protected," Donahue said, "it would give us just about everything from Route 2 to the Bernardston line, with some very small gaps."

Other Business

Cathryn Thomas was appointed as town accountant for the year ahead. Regional animal control officer Kyle Dragon was appointed as a part-time police officer for the town.



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MONTAGUE from page A1

of a wage and classification study, various personnel appointments, and dates for special town meetings this fall.

The contract for hauling sludge cake, the dried solids removed during sewage treatment, was awarded in April to Agresource, Inc., a company based in Rowley, Massachusetts. Their bid increases each of three years, averaging about \$194,000 a year, for a contract beginning July 1.

Asked where the sludge will be taken, Little said the company has a number of composting facilities “around the Northeast,” noting that the town’s current hauling company has been bringing the product to an incinerator in Rhode Island. “We’re also very happy that, at a lower cost, we are able to have it composted,” she said.

Agresource has also initiated an agreement with the city of North Attleboro to bring liquid sludge to Montague for processing, for a “projected revenue” of \$200,000 annually. The board was not presented with a final contract, so it took no vote.

Little reported that a new alarm system connected the wastewater plant directly with the four pump stations at Lake Pleasant. The old alarms alerted village residents with a “loud screeching noise,” and they then had to call the plant or police to alert them that the grinder pumps were broken or clogged.

As for the damaged Montague Center control panel, Little said that a South Deerfield-based company, Greg’s Wastewater Removal Service, was transporting sewage from the village to the treatment plant, and that her staff was temporarily repairing the burned-out electronics until a more complete upgrade can be completed.

The CWF also recently replaced aeration blowers and fine bubble diffusers, which supply oxygen to microbes at the plant. The board approved reimbursement requests for two previously approved state grants for these projects.

Showing pictures of the old and new blowers, Little explained that the former used much more energy to generate air. The new diffusers, she said – which were also funded by the electric company Eversource – will generate finer bubbles, more suitable for treating sewage that no longer contains paper mill pulp.

Little briefly reviewed the monthly report on discharge from the plant, required under its state and federal permits. The numbers all fell well within the permit criteria, except for one one-day measurement of *E. coli* bacteria which was very high. She explained that this was the result of the aeration blowers being replaced.

Personnel Board

Little did not stick around as the selectboard members, acting as the personnel board, voted to approve a staffing change at the CWF. Timothy Little, the facility’s foreman, will change places with lead operator Samuel Stevens. Town administrator Walter Ramsey noted that Timothy Little will join the United Electrical Workers union, and Stevens will switch to the National Association of Government Employees.

Other personnel decisions by the board included the appointment of Adam Tocci as director of assessing to replace Karen Tonelli, who retired in February. Tocci has served as an assistant assessor in the cities of Boston and Greenfield. “We

feel he is ready to make his move,” said Ramsey, who served on the in-house hiring committee.

Annie Levine was appointed assistant manager of the Great Falls Farmers Market, Ethan Thrower and Jenna Petrowicz as summer help at the public works department, Abigail Moore as clerical help in the town clerk’s office, and former town clerk Deb Bourbeau as a part-time consultant.

Police chief Chris Williams requested that the town give a “conditional offer of employment” to Brian Pfister to serve as a patrol officer. Pfister, who has worked as an officer in Chicopee, Holyoke, and Warren, will receive a \$10,000 bonus, phased in over his first year. The bonus policy was adopted last fall to attract certified applicants who do not need to attend a police academy, which places a financial burden on the town.

While at the online meeting Williams officially announced his retirement, which was reported in this newspaper two weeks ago. He will serve on the hiring committee for a new chief until he leaves his position at the end of the year.

Williams also announced that the closing of a section of Turners Falls Road earlier in the day by the Franklin County Special Response Team (SRT) had “nothing to do with ICE,” as some residents apparently feared. “We had to use the SRT team to get a barricaded subject out of a house,” he said.

Condemned House

Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Re-development Authority, which administers the town’s federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and Alyssa Larose of the associated agency Rural Development Incorporated (RDI) came before the board to request that Montague “forgive” a 1992 CDBG loan for the rehabilitation of a house at 17 Hillside Avenue in Turners Falls.

The housing authority and RDI wish to turn the house, which has since been abandoned and condemned, into affordable housing. McHugh traced its history, and said the state attorney general’s office has identified it as a candidate for its receivership program. This would involve the state working with local municipalities or agencies to petition a housing court to appoint a “receiver” to rehabilitate the property. The state may also provide financial assistance.

The housing authority and RDI wish to turn the house, which has since been abandoned and condemned, into affordable housing.

McHugh said the attorney general is requesting that the old loan, which was for \$13,290, be “discharged” before a receiver, which is expected to be RDI, is appointed. “There’s a long process for that, but this is a first step in making that happen,” he said.

The board unanimously voted to forgive the loan, with recently elected member Marina Goldman voting at the virtual meeting as she boarded a bus in Alaska.

Awry Road

The board considered a request from the Leh family, who live on Taylor Hill, to change the mapped

location of Burek Drive to conform to its actual location. The request was submitted by attorney George Goodridge, and supported at the meeting by attorney John J. Green, who represents the neighboring Burek family. The current road runs through both families’ properties.

Goodridge said a recent survey showed that the route laid out and approved by a town meeting in 1969 does not coincide with the road actually constructed, meaning that the town had taken portions of two properties for public use that do not actually have a road, and must instead take different portions of those properties.

Selectboard chair Matt Lord explained that a selectboard vote defining the road’s actual location was the first stage of the process, which will also require a hearing and vote of the planning board and approval by town meeting. The board endorsed the “revised street acceptance plan.”

Other Business

The board voted to adopt the final draft of the town’s new wage and classification plan, which updates compensation for both union and non-union employees. The new rates have been integrated into next year’s budget with the exception of the police department, whose union contracts had not been finalized in time for the annual town meeting in May.

Ramsey proposed a potential date of October 22 for a special town meeting, for which he said articles are “piling up.” Board members endorsed this without taking a formal vote.

The board was asked if the timing might require two fall “specials,” since the committee developing a regional agreement consolidating the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley school districts has proposed votes by all six involved towns in November. Lord said his preference would be for separate meetings, as “the regionalization vote is going to have a significant amount of controversy.”

The board approved two “assurances” needed to receive state grants for a backup generator (\$27,500) and parking lot improvements (\$129,411.50) at the Turners Falls airport. Airport manager Bryan Camden noted that the assurances require that the town continue to own the airport for another decade, and not “take the money and then immediately sell off the airport, or sell off equipment.”

At the request of assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller, the board authorized a \$12,255 change order from the National Water Main Cleaning Company for its ongoing manhole rehabilitation project.

The board also approved an extension of a state “site readiness” grant for the demolition of the Strathmore mill complex to June 30, 2026, due to “some of the site logistics and complications that you all know very much about,” in Nolan-Zeller’s words.

Asked if these logistics and complications involved the presence of a small hydro company owned by a Canadian firm Eagle Creek Renewable Energy, whose plant is being held together by other buildings in the complex, he replied in the affirmative.

The board then retired into an executive session to discuss the town’s negotiating strategy with FirstLight Power. Their next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 30.



LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on June 18, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

apartment building did not fit the neighborhood’s character or the original criteria.

Sell the Center School? Yes

The town of Montague has finally signed a purchase and sale agreement for the former Montague Center School building. The sale price, which has fluctuated over the several years of negotiations between the town and the Greenfield-based developer Mark Zaccheo, is now set at \$1,000.

The closing set for July 31 will end a process which has become something of an extended ordeal for town officials.

Chosen in 2012 to develop the property, Zaccheo submitted a proposal strongly opposed by some Montague Center residents, who felt the proposed 22-unit

More Efficient Lights? Yes

On Monday, the Gill selectboard learned that a new supplier and brand for LED streetlights are slated to consume 6,785 kilowatt-hours, versus the 10,050 of the previous brand and 23,000 of the current lights.

Fractured Gas?

The Erving selectboard approved an 18-article warrant for a special town meeting June 29. Article 18, placed on the warrant by citizens’ petition, asks the town to vote to oppose any pipeline in Erving carrying natural gas obtained through hydraulic fracturing.

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 16, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Buy the Strathmore? No

On Monday the Montague selectboard voted unanimously not to exercise the town’s option to purchase the 250,000 square-foot Strathmore Mill from Western Properties, LLC.

Although the town will not own the building, it will continue to have an active interest in its structural integrity and development potential. Chair Allen Ross made it clear he was not in favor of purchasing the property, but admitted its future was part of the town’s interest.

Although the extensive feasibility study was encouraging in regard to the potential for development, the current market for such structures does not appear to support the costs.

Come for the Books, Stay for the CDs

Karen Chapman, owner of Room with a Loom, has added used CDs to her merchandise and renamed her store “Mill Music.” Chapman explained that she figures used CDs fit neatly with the used books at the adjacent Montague Bookmill – in a location known for beautiful scenery, unique shops, and friendly, casual atmosphere.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 16, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

Wild strawberries are ripe. Nude shivering boys line the banks of the Prospect street bridge. A bridge has just been built over the ravine on Canal street, below the Griswold mill.

The walls of the Griswold mill are up one story and the carpenters are beginning to put in the timbers.

Landlord Holden has lost over \$100 worth of pigs during a month, from some distemper.

The County Commissioners will proceed to-morrow to lay out the bridge across the river via the Great Island.

Mrs. Colle will give a grand ball in her hall on the evening of the 20th – the first anniversary of the dedication. The tickets will be fifty cents.

A.H. Baker’s heavy truck horse recently drew from Greenfield to Turners Falls a load of iron which weighed 4130 pounds, or with the

wagon, over 5000 pounds. Mr Mayo advertised a counter for sale, and upon reading the advertisement concluded it was about the thing he wanted himself, and so appropriated it.

If the railroad passes through her place in Greenfield, as expected, Mrs. Colle will probably move to Turners Falls and build another block or a dwelling house.

A son of Oliver Green of Gill was thrown from a horse in McCoy’s blacksmith shop, Riverside, yesterday, and had a finger smashed by being tramped upon by the animal.

A band of Gypsies were camped in the outskirts for a few days last week. They had some fifteen or twenty horses, some of which they sold or exchanged to different parties in town.

The Cutlery men unreeled their hose and tried the fire pump, Saturday afternoon. Through seven hundred feet of hose, laid up the hill to the rear of the Farren hotel, an altitude of over a hundred feet from the pump, a three-quarter inch stream was thrown about 150 feet.



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ROB MACHADO PHOTO

Above: A hazy June sunrise over the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

ART PATROL

WHEELS RIDE HALL’S WALLS

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – The walls of the Discovery Center’s Great Hall are covered right now with little pictures: video stills, mostly, about 250 of them, amounting to a retrospective of the town’s skateboarding and BMX scene.

This is *Dam Culture 1995-2025: Wheeled Play in Montague, MA*, an exhibit curated by local culture maven Jeremy Latch, though you wouldn’t know any of that walking into the hall: there’s no signage, actually, or labels of any sort. The effect is akin to happening across skateboarders in the wild, hundreds of small bodies against the brick captured in instants of flight and catastrophe, scraping determinedly along the town’s concrete and metal edges as its hulking old manufacturing factories are one by one dismantled.

A reception will be held this Saturday, June 21, from 2 to 4 p.m. for the show, which is only up until June 29. Some of these kids, just like the buildings, are no longer with us, but many are, even if they’ve found new uses, and Saturday they might fill in some of the stories.

I met up with Jeremy this week to preview the show and ask him how it came together. I knew that he didn’t grow up here, but was an Americorps worker at the Brick House during a heyday of skateboarding and music in the town’s youth culture, and had a headstart on both fronts when he



Jeremy Latch demonstrates the act of curation at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

arrived. You can still catch him skating around downtown.

This interview has been abridged, reordered, and edited for clarity.

MR: When did you first get to Turners?

JL: The first time I came to Turners was probably February 2001. It was an exploratory trip, the first time I even knew this place existed. I had to take a pee, so I went down by the river, and there was a wild goat living underneath the bridge at that point. And then I came up, and a woman all in white plastic bags biked by. I said, “Oh, this town is cool.”

MR: Where’d you grow up, and what was skateboarding like there?

JL: Albany, New York. Albany now has a public skate park, only within the last five or so years – it’s a state capital, so it’s kind of unusual that they didn’t address that need.

see **EXHIBIT** page B2

WEST ALONG THE RIVER

TO A NEW REPUBLIC OF TURTLE ISLAND

By DAVID BRULE

THE FLAT, ERVINGSIDE – A bright morning after the rain, I find myself back here in late June with the rest of you, inching towards the Fourth of July.

I’ve reached the high point of my annual migration cycle: I start out sheltering in January in the woodshed, my chair and coffee cup facing east to the rising sun. As the seasons evolve, I migrate out from the sheltering shed to a midpoint on the deck, near the kitchen door. Then, as the temperature rises and the sun shines more and more brightly, I make another move. I take shelter in the shade of the Montmorency cherry tree.

I’ve migrated a distance of 20 feet in six months. Now, knee-deep in June, I move to the final stage in the seasonal cycle: my Adirondack chair is set under the low apple bough, my green Paris café table holding a cup and a stack of books. Dog stretched out near my chair in the luxuriant growth of grass and lingering buttercups of my No-Mow May, which has slipped into my No-Mow-June.

From my grass-level lookout, I’m happy among the roses, irises, and orioles.

You’ll pardon me if you note that I’ve written about all of this before. It needs to be duly noted and remembered every year, for maybe in 50 years there’ll be no one to describe just how the sunlight reaches the cherry tree this morning, or remind you of the long crescendo of the wood thrush calling from the dark woods beyond the reach of the garden.

So I plunge in again to tell you about it all, which is my job. That is the way life is, endlessly repeating, hopefully with the good days outnumbering the bad.

This first morning after days of rain could be one of the first days after Creation. Mist wreathes overhead, swifts streak through the summer-like skies, seemingly always in groups of three. They wheel and chatter in high-pitched voices in the sheer joy of flying, like kids on a roller coaster.

As is always the case when, nearing the end of June, and before the national paroxysm known popularly as the Fourth of July, I open a book and await two gentlemen poets who have traveled through time and space for our annual meeting under the apple tree. It is my seasonal practice to invite them into the yard for some philosophizing, and to enjoy a couple of glassfuls of last year’s cherries that have been

curing in vodka over the winter.

So Gary Snyder, Wendell Berry, and myself get into talking about the current state of affairs in this country. We generally agree that this country can drive you crazy. I wrote last year during our previous meeting we three figured that possibly in one year hence, meaning now today in 2025, we could well be living under a new Third Reich, for starters.

Turns out it was a pretty good prediction.

We gravitate to the Pledge of Allegiance, especially evoked by the line:

“...And to the Republic for which it stands.”

We spend time pondering the question: for which Republic do we stand?

Snyder, a familiar voice from the Jack Kerouac Beat Generation days, reminds us of his “Pledge” poem:

I pledge allegiance to the soil of Turtle Island, and to the beings who thereon dwell one ecosystem in diversity under the sun With joyful interpenetration for all.

This always sets the tone for our conversations. It always puts us in the mood to distance ourselves from the hypocrisy of the flag-waving false patriots that have let this current state of affairs happen to our country.

To be sure and fair however, perhaps some of you have not quite figured out the reference to the turtle.

Some of us see the continent sprawled before us, all carved up along artificial borders, sometimes along parallel lines, sometimes just straight delineations traced across a map. All neat, cut and dry, except it isn’t.

You may be seeing an imaginary, aspirational concept that does not take into account cultural and linguistic territories and homelands, migration routes and corridors, flyways, waterways, watersheds, and spiritual realities more than 30,000 years old.

Some visualize our continent divided up into state-sized fiefdoms. On the other hand, others of us see Turtle Island.

The Indigenous creation story tells us that Skywoman fell through a hole in the sky, falling and falling towards our spinning, aquatic world, surely to end in a

see **WEST ALONG** page B4

RECIPES

CAKES & BERRIES FOR SUMMER



Read on for a recipe for this yogurt cake with blackberries and almonds.

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – Strawberries are the vanguard of the berry season. Writing about them, the 17th-century English clergyman William Butler said, “Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did.”

Many would agree, but many would give other berries the nod, arguing that the raspberries or blueberries that come when strawberries have retired from the scene are better. Yet others vote for August’s blackberries, or for rarer berries such as black raspberries and blackcurrants.

The truth is that as each berry ripens, it seizes the limelight and becomes the star of the moment.

Berries are especially delicious in baked goods because butter, sugar, and other baking ingredients enhance their flavors. Some berries reign over iconic desserts: strawberries in shortcake, for example. You could substitute blueberries, though we rarely do because when raw their flavor is mild.

But blueberries are iconic in pies and muffins. Strawberries rarely make it into pies, except when paired with

see **RECIPES** page B8

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

‘MOUSE’

Mouse is a six-year-old female shorthair tabby with a sassy and independent personality. She is an excellent mouser who wants all of the affection that you can give her. She has been an indoor cat her entire life. Mouse needs a loving home where she can relax and thrive. She gets along with dogs and cats, but is happiest on a lap. Her human parents report that Mouse needs to be in a home without young children,

as she gets stressed and urinates outside her box. She is spayed and has no known health issues, but needs an updated round of shots. There is no adoption fee for Mouse. To apply to adopt, find “Available Community Animals” at www.dakinhumane.org under the “Adopt” menu. A potential adopter must submit an application, interview and meet the pets, and sign an adoption contract.

Senior Center Activities JUNE 23 THROUGH 27

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 6/23
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise

Tuesday 6/24
9 a.m. Chair Yoga
12:30 p.m. Tech Tuesday
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 6/25
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga (weather permitting)
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 6/26
1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. Meditation for Seniors

Friday 6/27
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Pizza Party
2 p.m. Chair Dance

1 p.m. Yoga

Tuesday 6/24
9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
10 a.m. Line Dancing
11 a.m. Social Stringer
1 p.m. Planning for Medicare

Wednesday 6/25
9 a.m. Interval Training
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics
11:30 a.m. Bingo
1 p.m. Game Show

Thursday 6/26
9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow

Friday 6/27
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. The next clinic is July 15. Luncheons are the fourth Friday at town hall. For more information, contact (413) 548-1022 or coa@leverett.ma.us. Check the town newsletter or the LeverettConnects listserv for info.

WENDELL
Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. The next clinic is July 2. 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 6/23
9 a.m. Good for U
10 a.m. Seated Fitness
12 p.m. Pitch Cards

EXHIBIT from page B1

But there’s also an abundance of street skateboarding. The whole downtown would clear out at 5 p.m., and that was like our zone. You knew where security guards were, you knew where the cops were, and you could kind of navigate around that and have a little routine to skate.

Steps, rails, some embankments –

MR: A classic business district after hours.

JL: Exactly.... I started skateboarding in what’s considered the third wave, the *Back to the Future* generation – in 1985 *Back to the Future* came out, and there were several skateboard scenes. You know, I thought it was like an independent choice that I made, but it was actually just marketing.

That was a couple years after the invention of what’s called “street” style skateboarding, which was a concerted effort by some industry heads to pump some juice back into the industry, because skate parks had all closed in 1980.

MR: Why?

JL: Insurance. So they were all private, there were hardly any public parks at that time.

MR: How would you describe the skate culture in Turners when you got here?

JL: Well, there was already a skate park here then. The first time I skateboarded at that park, they were all wooden ramps and they had like, hollows in the back. Within ten minutes, a plume of smoke appeared, and all these [redacted]-year-olds came out.

MR: This was the temporary park behind Chick’s Garage?

JL: I mean, it wasn’t temporary. That was the park.

That would have been during the fourth boom, which was the *Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater*, Bam Margera in *Jackass* era. A lot of kids skateboard-

ed at that point. There were tons of skateboarders at the skate park.

MR: Did the *Jackass* influence mean people were doing more fool-hardy things?

JL: Oh yeah...

So, this here is Dave Longe, from the video *American Hero*. When I first came out here this guy Matt Rogowski told me about something they were working on called “Bush Jump America.” Bush was president, but they were like, “No, no relation – it’s just us jumping into bushes.”

I bet if you collected a cross-section of videos made by skateboarders from 2001 to 2004 there would be a lot of kids in shopping carts going down hills, jumping into bushes, eating gross things, *et cetera*.

MR: Some of these are pretty identifiable spots. The steps, obviously, across from Food City, and the loading docks. This one is next to St. Kaz...

JL: Yeah, that’s gone. There’s a wooden ramp there now, it’s handicapped-accessible... This is behind the Farren, now gone. And that’s Central Street – do you recognize that house?

These ones are the only skate park pictures in here, I tried to have it just be actual street spots. You can see some of the ramps got moved around....

Greenfield built a skate park that opened up in September 2001, and at that point the Turners Falls park was just dead, because there was a much better facility right over there, and a lot of the people coming here were from Greenfield anyways.

MR: The Reporter started in 2002, and reading the early archives it seems like about every two years they were raising money to fix the ramps.

JL: I was at the Brick House from 2001 to 2004. We organized weekly skateboard trips up to the indoor park in Brattleboro, on Flat Street. The video *Que Pasa*, which was made by Kit Henry, has a lot of

footage from trips up there.

One interesting thing is that from 2001 to 2003, there’s probably four full-ish length skateboard and BMX videos made in Turners and Greenfield. That’s something that’s definitely changed, in that no one makes long-form skateboard videos anymore.

MR: How were people making them?

JL: Probably MiniDV camcorders, the latest consumer technology. I don’t think they were being distributed, they would make a couple copies and dub them for friends. They weren’t making it out to California.

MR: And so all of these are stills from videos?

JL: Stills from videos, mostly, and then actually some photographs. I hardly took any of these pictures.

Here’s Nate Jackson, who’s here, directly outside this window, skateboarding. Did you see the Machine Shop show they had in here last winter? They had a picture of, like, “This is what it looks like right outside this window” – I wish I had that, because here there’s people skateboarding on the remaining foundation. I thought it would be nice to kind of contextualize it for people, to see outside the windows, like “Okay, this is our town.”

MR: What are these ones?

[Points to a black-and-white photo of workers on the Connecticut River log drive.]

JL: Just things I was interested in – I don’t know why, but I’ve always loved the idea of these people walking on the logs. Obviously they were doing this for employment, but I feel like there’s a kinship: the balance. I love the river and I love skateboarding, so it kind of ties in.

These are the forms for the draft tubes for Cabot Station...

MR: What garage is that?

JL: Chick’s! This is from *Dirty Chicks* – that’s Greg Ellis. Jim Wickline worked there as a mechanic in the early 2000s and they made a short video of them skateboarding in there after hours.

Oh, and this one is actually David Creque. Dave lives in Turners now, but this is a picture of him from 1978, from a movie called *Skateboard Madness*, featuring Stacy Peralta – in the movie they visit the Virgin Islands, where Dave was a young 13-year-old. He jumps over five kids and does a two-skateboarded handstand! He moved here in ’79 or ’80, and the movie came out in 1980.

MR: I like this combo here.

JL: This is maybe 1998, from *Hazardous Material*, Zack Holmes’s film.

MR: How’d you get a hold of all of these?

JL: I reached out to Zack personally for that one. Nate Jackson lent me his MiniDV, Hi8, VHS tapes and I transferred them. Unfortunately, there actually wasn’t a lot of footage of people skateboarding in the streets, it was mostly Greenfield skate park or UMass.

Otherwise, I just went onto people’s Instagram pages and scrolled, or Googled “skateboarding Turners Falls,” that type of thing.

MR: And how long had you been harboring the idea to do this?

JL: Maybe a year and a half? see **EXHIBIT** next page



JACKSON PHOTO

“There’s less discretion than there would have been in the era when I started skateboarding,” exhibit curator Jeremy Latch reflects.

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PROFILES

Boys of the Landfill

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – One of my favorite topics to write articles on is a review of a concert. The Energy Park in Greenfield has them during the summer. I went on June 6 to see one. These concerts consist of three different groups of performers. This time, we had one group called Orlen, Gabriel and Avery. They weren’t bad, but I had seen them here before. Another was 133 Skeele. I have seen concerts at this park a couple of times, and I came to see someone new perform. It was a group called Boys of the Landfill. It was a four-man band. The group had a fiddle, accordion, bass banjo, and guitar. They were the third to play out of three groups of performers that were there. Boys of the Landfill played folk

music, and the accordion made the whole thing sound unique. The guitarist was good. I am a fan of guitar playing, and this gave me no complaint. The guitarist also sang, and that was good, too. I found the fiddler to be good too. This group didn’t sound off-key when it came to their performance. They were in sync with each other. I was not disappointed with this group when it came to someone new I wanted to see. Like it always does at these concerts, a nice crowd showed up, and they enjoyed this group as well. Probably enough so that seeing them made it a nice evening. I found this concert to be good, and I will probably at least go to one more concert during the summer, at the park or another location in downtown Greenfield.

EXHIBIT from page B1

I was in here with my daughter Olivia – we came in a lot, it was part of our routine – and I don’t know what show was in here, but I just asked [visitor services supervisor] Janel [Nockleby], “How do you have a show here?” She was like, “Oh, you just ask me!” And then it was kind of a slow process.... I was thinking about the way the town’s changing. For me, that means there’s places that no longer exist that I used to think about riding skateboards on, or actually rode skateboards on. One key memory I have is someone telling me about skating in the Arts & Industries building, and I said, “Oh my gosh, that’d be amazing, to see that footage.” And I remember skateboarding inside of Railroad Salvage in 2003 – I would love to just see that again. The building’s not even there now. Then I just realized it was simpler to do screenshots, rather than assemble a bunch of videos.

MR: *One of the ways the town has changed is just the actual physical surface of things – there’s more designed environments, and things are designed to stymie, uh, wheeled play.*
JL: For sure! When they redid Spinner Park, leading up to it I’d walk by and say, “Oh, my, this is going to be fun!” It’s in a residential area, so it’s not like you could skateboard on it all the time, or hardly ever. But then, at the last

moment, they installed these beautiful bronze leaves everywhere. I wonder what *they’re* for.... These are all the concrete embankments on the canal. This is the stairwell that led to the pedestrian bridge, which is now gone – this is where the “Town of Montague” sign lives now. This is at the current park. This is Dallas Willor, he just passed away so I wanted to have him in this. These are some of the pictures I got most excited to find. Above is Kody Clark, from *Que Pasa*, in 2002 maybe, skateboarding in front of Railroad Salvage. And then below, scrolling through Instagram I found this picture of a guy named Taylor Wiles skateboarding inside of Railroad Salvage in probably 2013, when it was partially already fallen down.

MR: *How are you handling credits?*
JL: Nothing is credited. I mean, people will show up here on Saturday, I hope, and anybody who is associated with skateboarding is going to know who everybody is.
MR: *How has Turners changed, in terms of wheeled play, in the time period that this show covers?*
JL: Well, not not as many people do it at the skate park, I think, as they did in 2001. Certainly no one does it in the streets anymore, or it’s very rare. A lot of the things you learn when you’re out and about, skating in public places – like negotiating space – you forget [at a skatepark], so there’s a degree of entitlement, I



Subjects ride BMX bikes down outdoor steps, grind and pop tricks along the power canal, and pay visits to mills and their ruined foundations.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Roof Dog; Ditch Commuter; Intoxicated Wanderer; ‘On And Off Again’; Alley Altercation; Popped Fuse

Monday, 6/9
12:50 p.m. Caller states that a deer was struck by a FedEx truck on Federal Street and is on the side of the road injured. Officer advises deer is deceased. MassDOT notified; they will send someone to retrieve it.
1:17 p.m. 911 caller from Highland School Apartments reports that a Montague Housing Authority employee was mowing the lawn and a rock shot out from underneath the mower and shattered the rear windshield of her vehicle, which was parked in the parking lot. Report taken; advised of options.
3:09 p.m. Caller from Hillside Avenue reports she is visiting her mother and there is a rabid fox in the backyard. Animal control notified.
6:53 p.m. Report of white husky running around on Turners Fall Road. Officer spoke with resident in area; dog lives on Vladish Avenue and usually makes its way home. Caller called back in stating she trapped the dog on her garage roof and is waiting for an officer. Services rendered.
11:03 p.m. Caller from East Main Street states that a male stole her medication (Klonopin and Fioricet) about 20 minutes ago. Caller states male who took her medication is homeless and she is unsure where he went with it. Officer advised caller of options.
Tuesday, 6/10
4:49 a.m. Commercial burglar alarm at Silvio O. Con-

te Anadromous Fish Research Center. Alarm company advises they reached a keyholder, who advises to disregard/cancel.
11:20 a.m. Caller from Ja’Duke Center for the Performing Arts reports that a Dodge van was loitering in the area around 10:55 a.m., taking pictures of children. Referred to an officer.
1:57 p.m. Party into station to report that a female has her car facing the wrong way on Turners Falls Road; she is parked there and staring blankly ahead. Cars are swerving around her. Vehicle gone upon officer’s arrival.
10:23 p.m. Caller reports that her boyfriend received a threat that people were going to go to his home and beat him up; would like to speak to an officer. Officer made contact with caller, who stated the problem has been fixed.
Wednesday, 6/11
12:18 a.m. Caller states there is a bonfire behind a Fourth Street property that is smoking a lot. Control contacted to dispatch fire. Officer on scene in alley reports small cooking fire.
11:27 a.m. Two-car accident at Burnham Street and Montague City Road; head-on collision; airbag deployment. Control advised. Medical *en route*. Officer advises units clear; both vehicles being towed.
11:49 a.m. Caller reporting two loose dogs on Falls Road in Sunderland; states both are tiny and puffy. Caller called back and advised that they found the owners.

8:51 p.m. 911 caller witnessed a white Bronco drive up the ditch at Hillside Plastics, then pull into the parking lot and shut the vehicle off; requesting wellbeing check on driver. Officer states this was an employee who drives through the ditch to work on a daily basis. No issues.
9:56 p.m. Caller states a vehicle with its hazards on is broken down in the travel lane on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge; states nobody is in vehicle. Officer states they are assisting the party with putting gas in the vehicle now. Clear.
Thursday, 6/12
10:30 a.m. Caller from Second Street states that a woman keeps throwing bags of dog poop into her driveway and front window sills. Caller has some video footage that they would like an officer to review. Caller is currently at work but will call back later today.
11:46 a.m. Walk-in reporting that her car was hit in the Food City parking lot on June 8 around 2 p.m. The person that hit her vehicle was reportedly confronted by a witness, then drove away. Officer went to residence of the vehicle that was witnessed hitting the caller’s car. Contact made with male party who admitted to hitting the car. Report taken.
8:47 p.m. Caller from Prospect Street states the neighbor’s dog has been barking for a half hour. Referred to an officer.
9:36 p.m. 911 caller from Seventh Street states she just got home and it looks like someone has been in her apartment; requesting officer check apartment before she goes in. Officers checked apartment; nothing unusual found. Units clear.
Friday, 6/13
1:51 a.m. 911 caller reports her friend is currently intoxicated and is walking around Randall Road; caller is concerned for her safety. Officer requesting ambulance. One party transported to hospital; summons issued.
9:56 a.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant road has called multiple times stating that his on-and-off-again girlfriend threatened to punch him in the head and throw his stuff out a window. Area checked; unable to locate.
2:41 p.m. Caller from Autumn Lane states that a brown bear cub is hanging out in the yard; she will call back for assistance if the bear doesn’t leave soon.
3:10 p.m. 911 caller states that a grey Toyota Corolla is all over the road and almost struck the caller while they were walking on Lake Pleasant Road.

think, that skateboarders have, like, “Oh, we can do this wherever we want.” There’s less discretion than there would have been in the era when I started skateboarding. People knew, “Oh, this could get busted, so we should be chill about it.” People don’t really skateboard anymore. Kids are interested in scootering, but there’s not many young skateboarders anymore. Not like in 2001, when *Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater* just came out, and Bam Margera was on the TV...

MR: *What’s your advice to the youth?*
JL: They don’t listen.



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WEST ALONG from page B1 watery grave. But a flock of geese and swans flew up to catch her and set her down safely on the back of a huge sea turtle.

All the furred and feathered beings met in council around her, trying to figure out what to do next. Some had heard of there being earth and dirt beneath the water, so they decided to dive down to bring some back to the surface for Skywoman to stand on.

Many dove down and failed to reach the bottom, but muskrat, *musquash*, one of the smallest beings, succeeded and brought back up some mud. The mud was placed on the bare hard shell of the sea turtle. Skywoman began to dance, and the mud spread out further and further under her dancing feet. The mud became earth, spreading until it was large enough to plant the saplings and grasses she had clutched at the beginning of her fall through a hole in the sky. She and our fellow creatures together helped build this earth we now inhabit, and which we are now sadly desecrating.

Thus came about a balanced world created for human beings and all the other beings who are our relatives and our teachers.

But our world is clearly out of balance. Many feel that Indigenous values and teachings of harmony and reciprocity with our natural world could help us restore that balance. We need to listen to those Indigenous voices before it is too late.

Wendell Berry, the original Mad Farmer from Kentucky, clears his throat from over there where he's sitting in the shade, and shares

some of the declarations in his *The Mad Farmer Liberation Front Manifesto* that could provide guidance in our efforts to survive:

- 1. Do every day something that won't compute.
- 2. Love someone who does not deserve it.
- 3. Ask the questions that have no answers.
- 4. Plant sequoias and oaks.
- 5. Say your main crop is the forest that you did not plant, that you will not harvest.
- 6. Laugh. Be joyful though you have considered all the facts.
- 7. As soon as the generals and politicians can predict the motions of your mind, lose it.
- 8. Leave it as a sign to mark the false trail, the way you didn't go.
- 9. Be like the fox who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction."

That sounds like the kind of advice and new pledge that should have meaning for us on the Fourth.

The three of us feel pretty good this fine morning under the apple tree, after renewing our faith in a new Republic for which we could stand. We savor the coffee, and the cup of birdsong. The chilled cherries wait for us, drops of condensation making rivulets down the sides of the icy glass.

The dog is contented too. He likes the quiet talk, and the thought of a new government in which he plays a central role. On his back he paws the air, stretching in pleasure, not caring to be anyone else or anywhere else but on the back of the New Republic of Turtle Island.



A Journey Down Memory Lane

The Pine Field



BY JOAN MOREL

SUNDERLAND - Down the backyard slope, over the fence, through the neighbor's yard below and across their dead-end street we ran to play in "our" pine field. Acre upon acre, row upon row of evergreen trees were planted there by someone. Maybe they were small eastern white pines, about kid height at the time; perfect to run through, and brush by and duck under because they didn't stick you with needles or grab at your clothes.

Remember playing your childhood games outside all day? Jump rope, marbles, hopscotch, riding bikes and hula hoops on the sidewalks. Under the pines we played hide-and-seek, cops-and-robbers, tag, and cowboys-and-Indians, built forts, and had wicked snowball fights. Such endless fun in the '50s and '60s for us post-World War II neighborhood kids in Winchester, all 54 of us strong!

Though situated on flat land down behind our homes, off to the right the pine field ran on up a small hill, past houses, then down around a pond to a cemetery. Fittingly, while exploring behind one of the houses I discovered a headstone for a beloved dog, interred at the edge of the pines.

This wonderful pine field right in our backyards was bounded on the far side by a brush-filled ditch with running water, home to tadpoles, frogs, salamanders, newts, and other critters fascinating to watch.

About 160 years before this redheaded tomboy with braided pigtails played in that ditch, from 1793 to 1803, the 27-mile-long Middlesex Canal was built, stretching

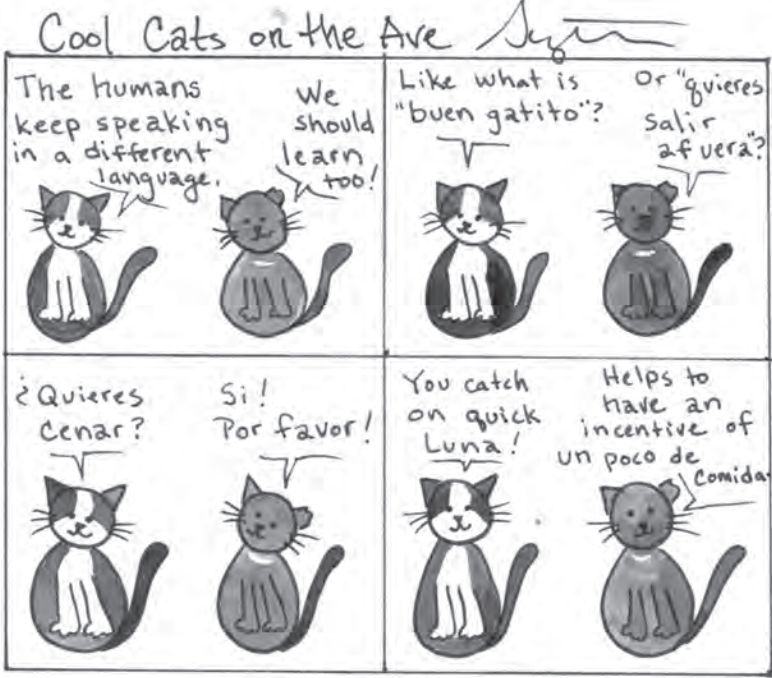
from the mills in Lowell to Charlestown with an extension along what is now Canal Street in Boston to the harbor. It flowed through ponds and rivers and lakes, connected here and there by 30-foot-wide, three-foot-deep man-made ditches.

Development of railroad tracks parallel to the barge canal 50 years later ended its commercial use, but during those years the canal brought growth to towns along its route at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. On July 3, 1999, the *Boston Globe* printed "When the Road was a River" by Michael Kenney, now accessible online. This was a great read for me as an adult, who knew nothing about the ditch when I played in it as a child.

Towering over the pines on the near side of our pine field at the end of the dead-end street was an oak tree that became a focus of us kids one day. What a great place for a treehouse! Gathering boards, nails, and hammers, then building steps and platforms, took a while. We didn't even notice the cruiser coming up the street until we heard the door open and close. Then we were told to take down everything, which we did... until the cruiser left.

But time inevitably passes, and with that comes change. The entire flat area of our pine field was cleared and an elementary school built on those acres, with its own modern playground of towers and slides. The few pines that remain stretch to the sky now, accompanied by deciduous trees and other landscaping.

It's a very strange feeling, walking through that area nowadays. Two years ago my sister, my lifelong girlfriend, and I met where we grew up. I am glad we have our memories of times gone by, and the wonderful childhood we were lucky to experience there.



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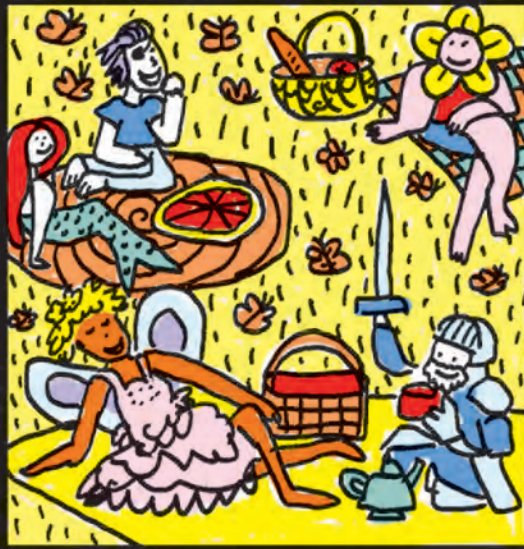
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EVENTS

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THURSDAY, JUNE 19

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Slow Burning Daydream, K.O. Queen, Target Scammers, Film & Gender*, more. 2:30 p.m. \$.

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Oen Kennedy, Zydeco Connection*. 6 p.m. Free.

Brewster Court, Northampton: *Wallace Field, Brittany Brideau*. 6 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Open Stage*, with five-minute slots for a variety of performing artists. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

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

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Wildcat O'Halloran Band*, blues. 7 p.m. Free.

The Drake, Amherst: *Mikaela Davis, Lily Seabird*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Wild Pink, Greg Mendez, Wojcicki*. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JUNE 20

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Nice & Easy Walk*. 1 p.m. Free.

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Green River Festival* feat. *Mt. Joy, Torres, Ocie Elliott, Kabaka Pyramid, Mo Lowda & the Humble, Mark Mulcahy, Dogpark*, more. See greenriverfestival.com. 3 p.m. \$\$.

Artspace, Greenfield: Opening reception, *River Valley Radical Futures*. Group show "travels to a future in the Connecticut River Valley 100 years beyond the fall of capitalism, imagined by local groups who work towards that future today." 5 to 8 p.m. Free.

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Records, Burgers, and Booze*, with Patch Burger and DJs Rob Forman and Liz Tonne. 6 to 11 p.m. No cover.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Conversation Party*. 6 p.m. \$.

Element Brewing, Millers Falls: *David Brule & His Irish Band*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: Author *Serena Burdick*, in conversation with *Alexis Schaitkin*. Book launch for Burdick's novel *Promise to Arlette*. 7 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, Rex McGregor's *Happy Husband Hunting* and Jeremy Geragotelis's *Tennis Play*. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

First Congregational Church, Amherst: *A Walk in the Woods* by the Valley Players. Benefit for the Peace Development Fund. 7 p.m. \$.

Treasure Shop, Hadley: *Yawni, Mibble, Saeddyr, Bucket*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

Mist Chalet, Holyoke: *Sam Wenc, Jake Meginsky, Ben Hersey, RTSM*. 7 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Sun Cousto, Nag, Fragile Rabbit*. 7 p.m. \$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Two-Step Night* with *Les Taiauts, The Honky-Tonk Angels*, country karaoke. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Next Stage Arts, Putney, Vermont: *Vermont Comedy All-Stars*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Not Just Rita Band*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Suzanne Vega*. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Deep Seize, Rival Galaxies, St. Intel*. 8 p.m. \$.

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Great Barrington: *Los Lobos*. 8 p.m. \$\$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Vices, Inc., Plague Dad, Luminous Crush*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Green River Festival* feat. *Courtney Barnett, Kevin Morby, LA LOM, Thus Love, Olive Klug, Illuminati Hotties*, more. See greenriverfestival.com. 11 a.m. \$.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Opening reception, *Dam Culture 1995-2025*. 2 to 4 p.m. Free.



Kalyee Pernice's "Eye of the Storm," on view through July 13 as part of Fiddleheads Gallery's group show A Touch of Whimsy.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Tony Vacca*. 2 p.m. \$.

National Spiritual Alliance, Lake Pleasant: Sunday evening service feat. *Wednesday & Kryssi, Jenny Moon Tucker, Liz Durette, Josh Burkett*. 5 p.m. By donation.

Unity Park Food Truck Lot, Turners Falls: *A Solstice Night Market*, with vintage treasures, food trucks. Hosted by Nova Motorcycles and Buckingham Rabbits. 6 to 10 p.m. Free.

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Small Town Radio*. 6 p.m. Free.

Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club, Montague: *Mad 'Atter, Audio Bomb*, barbeque. 7 p.m. \$

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, Rex McGregor's *Happy Husband Hunting* and Jeremy Geragotelis's *Tennis Play*. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Dam Culture 1995-2025*, photos and video stills of people skateboarding and engaging in other "wheeled play" in Montague's public spaces. Curated by Jeremy Latch. Through June 29, with a reception this Saturday, June 21, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Montague Center Library: *Art/Poetry, Poetry/Art*, group exhibition, through July 2.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: Guest artist *Amanda Petrovato* shows paper works inspired by sky, landscape, and natural history. Through July.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *T.I.A. Architects Fundraising Exhibit*, to support building a meetinghouse at the Leverett Peace Pagoda; *Allow the Mystery*, paintings by Jerzy Kokurewicz. Both through June 29.

Artspace, Greenfield: *River Valley Radical Futures*, work by artists Sunny Allis, Mary Katherine Cleary, David von Dufving, Bo Kim, Sharon Leshner, Michael Medeiros, Laura Torracco, and Alix Gerber envisioning a world after the end of capitalism. Opens this Friday, June 20 with a reception from 5 to 8 p.m.; runs through July 11.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Artists in Residence*, work by Levi Diamond and Arantza Peña, through July 25.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Portraits in RED: Missing and Murdered Indigenous People*, paintings by Nayanna LaFond, through July; *Marlboro Reminders*, works by Marlboro College alumni, through June.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *A Touch of Whimsy: artwork that makes you smile*, group show through July 13.

Mill District Local Art Gallery, Amherst: *Seen / Scene / Cene*, group juried exhibition of artwork by local trans women, cis women, intersex, genderqueer, genderfluid, and non-binary individuals, through June 26.

Memorial Hall Museum, Deerfield: *Courage and Peace*, 21 paintings by Robert Strong Woodward, through this Sunday, June 22.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Domestic Radius*, photographs and artist books by Laura Holland, through June.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Blossoms Galore*, member art show on a botanical theme, through June.

The Art Garden, Shelburne Falls: *Zoomed In Zoomed Out*, teen art exhibit featuring 40 works by 17 teen artists, through June.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Copper Etchings in Bloom*, by Bobbi Angell, and *Dreams From My World*, oil paintings by Trina Sears Sternstein, both through June 29.

Barn Door Gallery, Northampton: *there's nothing wrong with love*, Sunny Allis and Jae Southerland explore queer identities through abstraction. Through June 27.

PULP Gallery, Holyoke: *Tim de Christopher*, limestone carvings and drawings by the Turners Falls artist, with artwork by Stacy Cadwell, Paul Bowen, and Stephen Evans. Through this Sunday, June 22.

CALL FOR ART

Seventh Annual Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition: Entries sought by July 15 for realism in painting, sculpture, drawing/graphics, pastel, and mixed media; submit to workshop13.org/exhibitions. Show runs August 23 to September 7 at Workshop13 in Ware. Cash prizes include \$1,000 for best in show.

CALL FOR FILMS

Ashfield Film Festival: Call for short films of five minutes or less. Grand prize \$500; one-time "history prize" of \$1,000 offered this year for the best film on historical themes, inspired by a quote by philosopher George Santayana: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Deadline August 31; festival September 20 and 21. Find out more at ashfieldfilmfest.org.

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Quarters, Hadley:
Western Mass Electronics, with featured artist *Thomas Bergeron*. Bring your own synth, drum machine, sampler, etc. 7 p.m. No cover.

First Congregational Church, Amherst: *A Walk in the Woods* by the Valley Players. Benefit for the Peace Development Fund. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Eloise & Co*, *Rachel Aucoin*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Midnight's, Brattleboro: *Sludge Inc.*, *Deerest*, *Stagnox*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Ulculvert, Conway: *5.99*, *Dialog Talk*, *Mudal*, *Rick Gnarly*, *Noah Grossman Trial*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 22

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Green River Festival* feat. *Waxahatchee*, *MJ Lenderman & The Wind*, *Chicha Libre*, *All Feels*, more. See greenriverfestival.com. 11 a.m. \$\$.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Singing Club*, song circle led by Emma Pauline. All ages welcome. Refreshments. 2:30 to 5 p.m. By donation.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Tone Forest*. 4 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Reverend Horton Heat*, *Nathan & The Zydeco Cha Chas*. 6 p.m. \$.

First Congregational Church, Amherst: *A Walk in the Woods* by the Valley Players. Benefit for the Peace Development Fund. 7 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sister Xmas*, *Yawni*, *Mibble*, *Daniel Gay*. 8 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JUNE 23

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Montague Community Band*. 7 p.m. Free.

TUESDAY, JUNE 24

Tori Town, Holyoke: *Map of the Stars*, *Radical Joy*, *Enjyah*, *Key to the After-Life*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

New Salem Library, New Salem: *Optimizing Brain Health As We Age*, presented by Linda Puzan, MSW, and Nancy Spittle, RN, followed by Q & A and refreshments. 7 p.m.

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Home Blitz*, *Creative Writing*, *Hopeless Lovers*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

United Arc, Turners Falls: Visit from *Wellness on Wheels Bus*. Free screenings for blood pressure and diabetes, COVID-19 tests, health living resources, more. Sponsored by Baystate Health. 1 to 4 p.m. Free.

Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum, Hadley: *Evelyn Harris and Yasmeen Williams*. 6:30 p.m. \$

FRIDAY, JUNE 27

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Flying High Dogs!* Show with frisbee dogs. 2 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Simon White & Rhythm Inc.* 6 p.m. No cover.

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Oakland Stroke*. 6 p.m. Free.

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: *Little Mazarn*. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

Four Star Farms, Northfield: Start of *Pedal 2 Pints*, 35- and 50-mile bike tours that include a sampling of Valley breweries. Register at www.bikereg.com/pedal-2-pints. 9:30 a.m. \$\$.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Pride Hike and Canalside Stonewall Stroll*. Celebrate Pride while walking the 2.6-mile round trip along the canalside rail trail. Ages 10 and older. 10 a.m.

Northfield Mountain Recreation Center, Northfield: *Wild Edibles and Medicinals Plant Walk* with Jade Alicandro. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT: *Khruangbin*, *Thundercat*, *Thee Sacred Souls*, *Steel Pulse*, more. 12 p.m. \$\$.

Greenfield Savings Bank, Turners Falls: Presentation, *Spirit and Spa*, with David James and Sheryl Sadler-Twon on Lake Pleasant Mystery. 1 p.m. Free.

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *Carrie Ferguson*. Interactive, for all ages. 1 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Jurassic Armored Mud Ball Unveiling and Celebration*, with a presentation by geologist Richard Little. 2 p.m. Free.

Sunderland Center Bus Stop, Sunderland: *The Leafies You Gave Me*, *Emerald Ground Water*, *Saliba*, *Orange & Amber*, *Teen Driver*, *Kim Chin-Gibbons*, *Hogsmas*, *The Pinings*. 3 p.m. Free.

Montague Common Hall, Montague: *Sarang*. 6 p.m.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Lavender Flu*, *APIE*, *Mountain Movers*, *Joshua Burkett*. 7 p.m. By donation.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, James Anthony Merolla's *Jane Austen Ruptured My Spleen* and Sam Rahman's *Glaucman's Syndrome*. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Murphy's Law*, *The Take*, *Pink Slip*, *Green Street Fiends*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Delicate Steve*, *Modern Fools*. 7 p.m. \$.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Nas with the Boston Pops*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Karla Bonoff*. 8 p.m. \$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Padded Waltz*, *Fool and the World*. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Deerhoof*, *Asher White*. 8 p.m. \$.

Sulis Studio, Florence: *Vildalva*, *Peretsky*, *bobbie*, *Enchanted Mirror*, *Impure Luck*. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Real World*, *Space Camp*, *Hexrot*, *Frogs*. 8 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Hardcar*, *American Amnesia*, *Murder (Sword)*, *Low*. 8 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, JUNE 29

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Folkfaces*, *Ditrani Bros.*, *Moon Hollow*. 8 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, JULY 1

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Buck Gooter*, *Bunnies*, *Jumpy*, *Wishbone Zoë*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JULY 4

Charlemont Federated Church, Charlemont: *John Clark*, horn, *Avery Sharpe*, bass, *Jerry Noble*, piano. Presented by Mohawk Trail Concerts. 5 p.m. Free.

Firehouse, Worcester: *Necralant*, *Warcastle*, *Baazlvaat*, *Mordhau*, *Skum*, *Glorious Descent*. No flags permitted. 6 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, JULY 8

Daily Op, Easthampton: *Akai Solo*, *Fatboi Sharif*. 7 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16

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

SATURDAY, JULY 19

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Ladysmith Black Mambazo*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, JULY 22

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro: *Lina Tullgren*, *Mia Friedman Band*, *beetsblog*. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Moron*, *Wishful Thinking*, *Gluebag*, *Gay Mayor*, *Red Herrings*. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Home Body*. 4 p.m. Free.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Glenn Miller Orchestra*. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Mirah*, *Footings*, *Mimi Fang*. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Star Family Singers*, *Lucky Star USA*, *Mary Elisabeth Remington*. 9:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Big E Arena, West Springfield: *Busta Rhymes*, *Rick Ross*. 7:30 p.m. \$\$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Devendra Banhart*, *Kath Bloom*. 8 p.m. \$.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Karla Bonoff, who wrote hits and sang backup for Linda Ronstadt and others before setting out as a solo artist, comes to the Shea Theater next Friday, June 27.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Murphy's Law*, *The Take*, *Slob Drop*. 7 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Recreational Vehicle*, *Poison Joys*, *AT & The Fantasy Suites*. 9 p.m. No cover.

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Nice & Easy Walk*. 10 a.m. Free.

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Dan Dewalt Sextet*. 4 p.m. Free.

Elks Lodge, Greenfield: *July 4 Fireworks Fundraiser*, team trivia competition, cash prize. Register at tinyurl.com/fireworksfundraiser. 5:30 p.m. \$.

Millers Falls Library, Millers Falls: *History Story with Will Quale*. "Rebuilding Millers Falls after the 1895 fire which leveled 17 buildings on Main and Bridge streets; and the five buildings that have housed the village's library from 1897 to the present." 6 p.m. Free.

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Russ Thomas*, *Austin and Elliot*, *The Frost Heaves* and *Hales*. 6 p.m. Free.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Rival Galaxies*, *This Could Be It*, *Biddy Boy*. 7 p.m. \$.

Charlemont Federated Church, Charlemont: *A Memoir of Blindness and Justice*, presented by retired judge David Tatle. 7 p.m. Free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Glenn Echo*, *Neil Sather*, *Kim Chin-Gibbons*. 9 p.m. No cover.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Dayna Kurtz & Robert Maché*, *Willa Mamet*. 7 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, James Anthony Merolla's *Jane Austen Ruptured My Spleen* and Sam Rahman's *Glaucman's Syndrome*. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

First Congregational Church, Amherst: *A Walk in the Woods*, by the Valley Players. Benefit for the Peace Development Fund. 7 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Rickie Lee Jones*. 7 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Murphy's Law*, *The Take*, *Pink Slip*, *Green Street Fiends*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Delicate Steve*, *Modern Fools*. 7 p.m. \$.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Nas with the Boston Pops*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Karla Bonoff*. 8 p.m. \$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Padded Waltz*, *Fool and the World*. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Deerhoof*, *Asher White*. 8 p.m. \$.

Sulis Studio, Florence: *Vildalva*, *Peretsky*, *bobbie*, *Enchanted Mirror*, *Impure Luck*. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Real World*, *Space Camp*, *Hexrot*, *Frogs*. 8 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Hardcar*, *American Amnesia*, *Murder (Sword)*, *Low*. 8 p.m. \$.

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RECIPES from page B1

rhubarb, probably because they’re too chunky to fall into the tender mass good for pie fillings. Nor are strawberry muffins common, because strawberries don’t make delicious splotches like blueberries do. Raspberries also make good muffin splotches. They’re excellent in shortcake and cake fillings, too.

The commercial growing of most berries did not start until the 1920s. Previously berries were foraged. Blackberries can still be gathered, and nothing so quickly prompts the delight in reaping where you have not sown as grasping a shining blackberry cluster that has been nodding almost out of reach. Their aroma in pies is magical, especially when partnered by apples.

STRAWBERRY-RHUBARB COBBLER

It’s easy to cobble together this homey dessert, a delicious American classic.

- 6 stalks rhubarb (8 to 10 oz.), washed
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 quart fresh strawberries, washed and halved
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1½ cups flour
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 stick butter, cut in bits
- ½ cup, plus one Tbsp., sugar
- 1 egg
- ¾ to 1 cup sour cream or milk

To make the base, cut the rhubarb in one-inch pieces, discarding any stringy bits. Put the rhubarb in a saucepan with 2 Tbsp. water; cover, and cook over low heat for 3 minutes.

Now gently stir in the sugar and add the butter. Cook covered for another 2 to 3 minutes. Add the halved strawberries, and cook for 3 minutes longer. Thicken by making a thin paste with a tablespoon of cornstarch mixed with a tablespoon of water. Add a little of the hot juice then stir it into the pan of fruit until it thickens.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a large oven-proof dish or deep pie pan.

In a large bowl mix the flour, baking powder, and nutmeg. Drop

The black raspberries of early July are also worth foraging. They are sometimes mistaken for small blackberries because they are the same color, but like other raspberries they have hollow centers, whereas blackberries have a firm core. They’re sweeter than blackberries or red raspberries, and have rich aromatic flavors. If you know of a patch be sure to pick them because supermarkets don’t have them. Use them in muffins, cobblers, or jam.

Each of the following recipes has variations using different berries – including the cranberries, which bring up the rear-guard of the berry season in September and stay with us until Christmas.



in the bits of butter and rub them in until the mixture looks like very coarse crumbs. Stir in the sugar.

In a small bowl, lightly beat the egg, then stir in the sour cream or sour milk. Mix three-quarters of this into the flour mixture. You need a batter with a firm, but not sloppy, dropping consistency. Add the remaining egg mixture a little at a time to achieve this if necessary.

With a large spoon, drop dollops of the batter on top of the strawberry-rhubarb mixture. Do not spread; they join a bit while baking and the charm of a cobbler is the bright pools and rivulets of juice traced on the golden topping. Sprinkle the surface with the remaining tablespoon of sugar before baking for about 20 to 25 minutes.

Test for doneness by sticking a cocktail stick or skewer into the topping; it should come out clean.

Serves 6.

Variations: Substitute 2 to 3 pints of blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries for the strawberries and rhubarb. For a cranberry-raisin cobbler, substitute a 12-oz. bag of cranberries plus ¾ cup golden raisins, previously soaked for 15 minutes in warm water.



HOPLEY PHOTOS

RASPBERRY-CREAM SPONGE CAKE

- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 half-pint packs of raspberries
- 2 tsp. sugar, or to taste
- ½ pint heavy cream, whipped
- 2 tsp. confectioners’ sugar

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Grease the sides of a 9-inch removable-base layer cake pan, and line the bottom with parchment paper. Melt the butter, stir in 2 Tbsp. of cold water, and set aside to cool, but don’t let it resolidify.

Mix the flour and baking powder together.

Put the eggs and sugar into a large mixing bowl, and using an electric whisk beat rapidly for 4 to 5 minutes, or until the mixture has tripled in bulk and is pale. The whisk should leave a trail when drawn through it.

Gently stir in the butter-and-water mixture, then sift in about a third of the flour. Fold it in. Repeat this step twice with the remaining flour.

Put the mixture gently into the prepared pan and bake for 20 minutes. It is done when it is golden, slightly shrunken from the edge of the pan, and the center springs back when gently pressed.

Cool for 10 minutes on a wire rack, then run a knife between the cake and side of the pan and invert. Strip off the parchment and continue cooling until room temperature.

When cool, halve horizontally. To make the filling, sprinkle 2 tsp. of sugar on one pint of raspberries and crush them with a fork. Put the

bottom cake half on the serving plate and spread the crushed berries on it. Spread on the whipped cream. Now distribute the remaining whole berries on top of and around the edge of the cream. Gently place the other half of the cake on top. Sift on confectioners’ sugar.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Variations: Strawberries are terrific in this cake, and so are black raspberries. Instead of crushed berries on the base, spread it with jam made of the same sort of berries.



YOGURT CAKE WITH BLACKBERRIES AND ALMONDS

This recipe is adapted from a similar one in Claudia Roden’s *Med* (Ebury Press, 2021).

- 4 eggs, separated
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 Tbsp. almond flour
- 1½ tsp. almond extract
- 1 pint plain 2% Greek yogurt
- 2 cups wild or store-bought blackberries
- 1½ Tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp. toasted sliced almonds
- confectioners’ sugar

For the cake, grease a 9-inch loose-bottomed pan. Line the base with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Put the egg whites into a large bowl and whisk with an electric beater until they form peaks. In another bowl, combine the egg yolks and ½ cup of sugar and beat into a smooth, thick, pale-yellow mass. Mix in the almond flour, almond extract, and Greek yogurt. Gently fold in the beaten egg whites.

Turn the mixture into the prepared pan. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, turning it if one side darkens before the other. Slide in the blade of a small knife to see if it’s done. If so, the blade will come out clean.

Cool on a wire rack. The center will sink and the edges will shrink slightly, leaving a ridge. Run a knife around the edges to loosen any bits that are sticking. When the cake is cool, remove it from the pan.

An easy way to do this is to stand the base on



a wide can, such as a big can of tomatoes or coffee, and press the edge of the pan down so the cake is left sitting on the can. Remove, then slip a knife blade between the base and the cake to free it. Strip off the parchment paper.

Make the topping while the cake bakes. Set aside 8 berries for garnish. Put the remainder in a saucepan with half a cup of sugar and a quarter-cup of water. Cook gently until the juice runs, then simmer until the berries are soft.

Mix the cornstarch to a thin paste with a tablespoon

of cold water. Stir 2 tablespoons of the hot juice into the cornstarch mixture, then combine with the berries. Continue stirring until the mixture has thickened. Cool to room temperature before using.

To serve, spread the topping over the center of the cake. Dust the edge with confectioners’ sugar. Garnish with the reserved berries and almond flakes.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Variations: Substitute raspberries or blueberries for the blackberries. Or, use sliced strawberries, sprinkled with a tablespoon of sugar, and left for 20 to 30 minutes until juicy.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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