

The Montague Reporter

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Police Chief Intends to Retire This December

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague police chief Chris Williams plans to retire on December 31, after over 30 years in the department. The announcement came at Monday’s Montague selectboard meeting as the board voted to extend the chief’s current contract, which was due to expire at the end of June, to the end of the year.

Monday’s meeting included a number of other significant decisions by the board, which elected a new chair, decided to retain the Saturday annual town meeting, approved an employment contract with the new town clerk, and extended an agreement with a local developer to renovate a formerly town-owned industrial building, which had expired in 2019, for another decade.

The meeting began with the reorganization of the board and adoption of the summer meeting schedule. Matt Lord was voted the new chair, Rich Kuklewicz the vice chair, and newly-elected member Marina Goldman the clerk. The board then agreed to meet every two weeks during the summer, starting in June, unless additional meetings are necessary.

The contract with Williams, which dates to December 3, 2021 and was originally set to expire at the end of this month, was extended to December 31, at which point it says he will retire. From July through December Williams’ annualized pay will increase by \$2,408 to \$118,172. He will also serve as the department’s IT coordinator, receiving a

see **MONTAGUE** page A6

Big Foot Food Forest Makes a Large Imprint

By BEN GAGNON

MONTAGUE CENTER – After 31 years of traveling the world with the United Nations and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Babette Wils decided to settle down with her husband Mark Somerville on Hatchery Road in Montague, where she’s bringing a global perspective to farming.

The first step in her new career was taking permaculture courses in New Hampshire and Maine, building on her first-hand look at the

farming methods used by indigenous cultures around the world, from Asia to New Zealand, Australia, and Guatemala. She started a quarter-acre garden in Needham.

“So many concepts in permaculture come from indigenous cultures,” said Wils. “From traveling the world I was able to learn how people grow food in so many different ways, and I felt like it was time for me to do something for the environment, so we started looking for land in western Massachusetts in part because Mark’s

see **FOOD** page A7



Babette Wils, in the Big Foot chicken coop.

Sweet Deal Extended Until New Bridges Built



In 2017, a developer purchased the “Railroad Salvage annex” from the town of Montague for \$1,000 with the stipulation that he redevelop it within two years.

By JEFF SINGLETON and MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – On Monday evening the Montague selectboard revealed the contents of a proposal, approved in a non-public executive session at the end of April, to extend the agreement with developer Robert Obear Jr. to renovate 15 Power Street, the old “annex” to the former Railroad Salvage building, between the power canal and the Connecticut River.

Montague acquired the 10,600-

square-foot former warehouse building for back taxes in late 2015, and issued a request for proposals (RFP) for its redevelopment in 2016 under the town’s commercial homesteading program. The RFP required that applicants be prepared to purchase the building for \$10,000 and invest at least \$75,000 in its redevelopment.

Though 14 respondents expressed interest in the RFP, Obear submitted the only “complete proposal,” according to meeting minutes, with a

see **DEAL** page A5

Import Tariffs Worry Local Coffee Roasters

By LUKE DEROY

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Coffee prices reached an all-time high earlier this year, up 84% from January 2020 to March 2025, due in part to poor harvests in Brazil and southeast Asia. Roasters in Franklin County have been feeling the heat and adapting in their own ways to the financial challenges.

“It’s a volatile market,” said Annie Lytle-Rich, who has co-owned

Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters since taking over for her parents in 2013. In the coffee industry, prices fluctuate year to year. But this spring, added unpredictability has recently come in the form of US import tariffs.

Brazil’s crop is looking better this year, but because virtually all coffee is grown outside the United States, tariffs have landed hard in this industry. The Trump administration’s

see **COFFEE** page A6

High School Sports: Mullins Hits 800!



Turners Falls High School coach Gary Mullins and pitcher Madi Lämatainen took a moment to celebrate on Monday after the Thunder’s 12-0 victory over Rising Tide Charter School – Mullins’ 800th career win.

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – Athletes from Franklin Tech and Turners Falls high schools competed this week in the state championship, with the Tech and Turners baseball teams and Tech’s softball team all eliminated from the playoffs.

The lone survivor, the Turners Falls softball team, advanced into the quarterfinals Wednesday night courtesy of a wild pitch. Meanwhile the Thunder’s coach, Gary Mullins, quietly racked up his 800th career win.

Baseball
FCTS 3 – Salem Academy 0

Last Friday the Franklin Tech Baseball Eagles defeated the visiting Salem Academy Navigators in the preliminary round of the MIAA Division 5 state tournament. The game was scheduled to begin at 4:30 p.m., but at 3:30 it began raining. The downpour lasted about 15 minutes, and with no damage done to the field the game went ahead as scheduled.

The contest was a pitchers’ duel until the third inning, when the Eagles took advantage of some Navigator miscues. Zaydrien Alamed reached on an error, stole second base, and went for third. The throw went wild, and Alamed turned the corner and scored.

For the next couple of innings the defenses took over, and circus catches and great throws kept both teams off the board. But in the home fifth Tech scored on another Salem error, as Tyler Yetter took second base on a throw to first, then advanced

see **SPORTS** page A8

North Leverett Sawmill Restoration Half-Funded

By SARAH ROBERTSON

LEVERETT – On a riverbank in North Leverett stands a large, shuttered sawmill straddling a stone dam, a relic of the region’s colonial and industrial past. This 250-year-old building has been closed for a

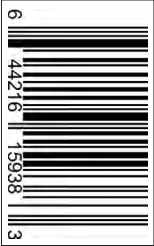
quarter-century, but a local non-profit is working to transform the surrounding grounds into a public park, and the antique building into a museum and community space.

“The goal is to stabilize it and make a building that will be there

see **SAWMILL** page A4



Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill treasurer Susan Lynton points out some of the mill’s original 18th-century wooden beams.



Often The High Point Of Your Week

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The Montague Reporter

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SECOND LOOK

An Essential Social Good Thrown in the Grinder

After interviewing local coffee companies about the potential impact of US tariffs on their industry (Import Tariffs Worry Local Coffee Roasters, Page A1), our reporter Luke DeRoy had more to say about a future in which a “cuppa” becomes a luxury purchase...

By LUKE DEROY

TURNERS FALLS – There’s an irony as deep and rich as Colombian Supremo in taxing coffee, given that America’s obsession with it began as a rebellion against taxation. After the Boston Tea Party, separatist British colonists shunned tea and turned *en masse* to coffee as a political statement. Drinking it became an early act of American identity.

Revolutionary-era coffeehouses were hubs of debate and organizing in both the New World and France, and by the American Civil War, coffee had become so essential that the Union Army considered it nearly as important as ammunition. Its psychological benefits and cultural benefits are tightly woven.

It’s also a social facilitator. Sociologist Ray Oldenburg coined the term “third place” to describe gathering spaces outside of home and work where people can talk, laugh, and decompress. Places like cafés and diners are good just to be around people. We recognize familiar faces, and hear unfamiliar ideas.

These places encourage social movement and are vital to democracy, but these days, less than half of Americans say they have a local coffee shop where they can gather with others in their community – 41%, according to a 2024 report by the Survey Center

on American Life. That number drops sharply among lower-income Americans. And now, with prices rising, even fewer will feel welcome in those spaces.

This is the first time since the colonial era that the government has imposed stiff tariffs on imported coffee. And since virtually 99% of the coffee Americans drink is imported, the price hikes will be significant – even to those who brew their own at home. There is no American coffee-farming industry to protect, making these tariffs, essentially, a tax on consumers.

Poor harvests in Brazil, Vietnam, and elsewhere have already sent prices soaring. Tariffs are now stacking on top of those increases, driving the “C-market” commodity price of coffee beans to levels not seen in decades.

The result? Fewer options for consumers. Roasters may be forced to stop carrying coffees from certain regions. Cafés may disappear entirely from certain neighborhoods, leaving only upscale coffee bars in gentrified areas where a \$6 latte is the new normal. The simple and once so common and accessible act of gathering over a cup of coffee is dangerously close to becoming a symbol of class divide.

Luke DeRoy lives in Turners Falls.



Members of the vintage motorcycle club at Franklin County Technical School stand around their project bike, a 2006 Honda CRX250R. Personnel from Nova Motorcycles in Turners Falls come on Thursdays to offer guidance. Pictured here are Cyrus Cranston, Wyatt Sisun, Maddex Hubert, and Domenic Guinond-Swan.

Letters to the Editors

Retaining Good Leaders Means Fixing the Educational Foundation

In our county, the superintendent of the largest school district has resigned. The superintendent of the second-largest municipality has also stepped down. This isn’t just a local issue; you can look across Massachusetts and see the same pattern. Public education top leaders are walking away from jobs that have become nearly impossible to sustain.

Superintendents today are expected to manage shrinking budgets, raise student outcomes, navigate political and bureaucratic pressures, collaborate with disjointed school boards, and respond to crises

in mental health and staffing, often all at once, and under relentless public scrutiny. In rural areas like ours, these challenges are magnified by low educator pay, limited transportation, and scarce access to essential services.

And behind it all lies one of the biggest, yet most overlooked issues: the state’s deeply flawed education funding system, Chapter 70.

Until we address how our schools are funded at the state level, superintendents will continue to resign and our most vulnerable students will remain at risk of falling through the cracks.

A strategy employed by school districts in rural communities to mitigate budget shortfalls and to pool resources is regionalization. I’ve participated, as a former school board member, in a substantial conversation on a local school district that didn’t move forward with this idea. In my current home school district, our community is navigating a critical vote on whether to regionalize, which has been presented as a proposal framed as a solution to our existing budget challenges.

But regionalization, while sometimes helpful in streamlining operations, is not a cure-all. I am still seeking evidence that this approach leads to better outcomes for children in rural communities. At best, it’s a short-term budget fix dressed

as innovation. At worst it delays the deep, structural reforms our education system so urgently needs.

So, what would it look like to stop patching the cracks and start investing in a system that truly supports all schools, students, and educators, rural and urban, in communities large and small?

Here are three steps we can take:

1. Re-engage county civic leaders in a dedicated task force focused on education, to assess needs and propose real solutions.
2. Hold our state legislators accountable and demand that equitable school funding becomes a top priority in the State House, not just a one-off engagement on their agenda.
3. Elevate community advocacy and participation by organizing to push for increased state funding, particularly for rural and under-resourced districts.

Our children and our schools deserve more than temporary fixes – they deserve bold, informed, and sustained action, especially in rural communities. To achieve this, our leaders require viable solutions, meaningful support, and favorable working conditions in order to deliver the best educational opportunities for our region’s children to achieve academic and life success.

Francia E. Wisniewski, M.Ed.
Montague

CORRECTION

In last week’s Wendell selectboard report (*Deep Mahar Cuts Proposed As Towns Face Tax Override*, Page A1) we mistakenly wrote that the \$640,849 proposed assessment from the school district to Wendell was “an increase of \$50,432 or about 1% over the current year.” This is plainly in error, as reader Michael Naughton pointed out – but it turns out the correct figures were an increase of \$46,431, and about 7.8%. These errors were generated in editing, and not by our reporter. Our gravest apologies!

Asparagus Concern

I recently enjoyed learning about Our Family Legacy Farm through an article in this paper. However, I was concerned about the timing of pesticide applications mentioned in the article. In the article, the reporter explained that the farmers spray pesticides before rain so that the precipitation helps “clean off the asparagus.”

I have been studying for the CORE exam – the certifying test for pesticide applicators – and, generally speaking, one should not spray pesticides before a rainstorm. A rain event after spraying would not only reduce the effectiveness

of the pesticide application, but could also lead to water pollution: damage to aquatic ecosystems, poisoned groundwater, etc.

Pesticides are designed to break down in the field through the pesticide’s interaction with sunlight, microbes, and other natural phenomena. Rather than using the rain to “wash” their asparagus, the best way to protect farmworkers, consumers, and the environment is to follow the instructions on the pesticide’s label.

Peter Wackernagel
Greenfield

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Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

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

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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

(Any better title ideas?)

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

Wendell held its **annual town meeting** Wednesday night at 7 p.m., and our regular Wendell government correspondent Josh Heinemann called us around 10:30 with the news.

Despite rumblings of a tax revolt, Josh said the full version of the FY'26 town budget was passed, which will require a Prop 2½ override vote, and a tanker-truck purchase was approved, triggering a debt exclusion vote on top of that. The town has 90 days to hold a ballot vote.

All other articles passed, except for one declaring Wendell a sanctuary zone for trans and non-binary people, which was tabled after concerns were raised about the accuracy of some of the wording, and that it could bring the wrong kind of attention to town; Josh said at least one trans-identified resident spoke against the article.

We'll have a fuller recap next week!

More late-breaking news: on Wednesday afternoon FirstLight Power, owners of the dam, canal, and riverbanks in these parts, announced that a "sudden failure in the hydraulic system" on the second dam gate the prior evening had resulted in perhaps **300 gallons of hydraulic fluid** splooging into the bypass stretch of the mighty Kwenitekw.

This was different, the press release said, from the "seepage" from the pistons in 2022 and 2023, and the company has planned since then to "overhaul" the faulty mechanisms this summer. In the immediate term, we will again see the sheen sopped up with oil-absorbing booms.

"FirstLight reiterates that any release of oil to the river is unacceptable," it says, "and we take full responsibility for the swift and thorough resolution of this issue."



Our neighbor Anne Jemas, by all indications a huge fan of the recent town election, submitted this photo of selectboard-member-electee

Marina Goldman (left) **with Pat Allen**, who served on the board from 1999 to 2013.

"Pat was the last woman to serve on the selectboard," Anne explains. "She came to town to help Marina celebrate her victory."

Many will remember the period from 2004 to 2010 in which the board was majority Patricias. According to the street listing, there are at least two other Marinas in town – one on Central Street, and one on Eleventh.

A couple weeks back, during our reporting on what sounded like a **major wave of SNAP/EBT theft** locally (May 15, *After Food Stamp Thefts, Victims Left High and Dry*, Page A1), we submitted a public records request trying to gauge the extent of it.

Just after last week's pages went off to the printer, the Department of Transitional Assistance emailed us the data. Our inquiry had only scratched the surface, but holy cow: in all of March and April, a total of 17 claims of stolen benefits were filed in all of Franklin County. In just the first two weeks of May, that figure spiked to 174, including 85 in Greenfield and 66 in Montague.

Stay tuned for more on this topic.

There's a ton of stuff going on simultaneously this Saturday – Pride in Greenfield; the asparagus festival in Hadley; Family Fish Day in Turners; the playground ribbon-cutting in Montague Center; the 250th wrap-up and time-cap-sule-sealing in Leverett.

One thing we didn't think to put on our Events Calendar is the retirement party at the Schuetzen Verein, from noon to 5 p.m., for **Montague Center fire chief David Hansen**. The party appears to be publicly advertised, though an RSVP "by May 17th, 2025" was also requested, so who knows if they're at capacity. Congrats, Chief.

On Sunday **the Leverett Village Co-Op** is having its Spring Fling, with live pizza, wine painting, lawn darts, *et cetera* from noon til 4 p.m., and ducks from Duckworld from noon til 2 p.m.

"Note," general manager Ken Washburn writes: "the ducks will only be around until 2 p.m. because they get tired."

Is this clever and endearing copy an attempt to go viral in Montague (make it onto Page A3 of the *Montague Reporter*)? Will printing it here only contribute to the coming problem of publicists getting weird to catch our attention? Has our algorithm been hacked?

A 30-minute "director's cut" of the ultra-low-budget-but-real **short film shot in Wendell and Shutesbury** in March, *Thickly Settled*, will screen next Friday the 13th at the Drake in Amherst. "The story questions the paths we are on versus the paths not taken, and to what lengths we would go to change things."

And speaking of thickly settled.... Rhylissa Doxzen sent photos of this small-but-real **bear in the Patch** on Monday afternoon.

Bear in the Patch!



We missed it until this week, but in late May the *Boston Globe* ran an in-depth profile of Turners Falls **casket-weaver Mary Fraser** – 1,360 words, six photos. We're not sure if we'd call Montague a "tight-knit town of 8,400," but there are a hell of a lot of talented and hard-working people running around in these parts, and it's always great to see one gain some recognition abroad.

Also, props to Fraser for identifying to the *Globe* as anti-capitalist. Death should never be an opportunity for profit maximization.

UMass Amherst sends us a lot of press releases, but one caught our eye this week: researchers at the university's New England Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases have determined that a "naturally occurring compound **secreted by the skin of donkeys**" repels deer ticks.

"It's one of the different smells that you find on a donkey that you don't find on a horse," the study's lead author explains helpfully.

We'll take ten!

Right now **the odds on Polymarket** – the biggest cryptocurrency-based political gambling platform, though it's always pretty skewed by who wants to do cryptocurrency-based political gambling – are: "Negative GDP growth in 2025?," 27%; "Nuclear weapon detonation in 2025?," 15%; "Megaquake in 2025?," 33%; "Will Donald Trump win Nobel Peace Prize in 2025?," 8%; "Who will win Dem nomination for NYC Mayor?," Cuomo 80%, Mamdani 19%; and "Israel intercepts Greta Thunberg's ship before reaching Gaza," 85%. Just thought you should know.

We are sitting on a small stash of "**Montague Reporter On The Road**" photos sent by fans out on travels. When will we ever have the page space to unleash them?

Send your little bits of news to editor@montaguereporter.org.

Another Letter to the Editors And Another Thing

In my last week's *Montague Reporter* letter to the editor, I thanked all the people who ran for office in the past election, but I failed to acknowledge and thank all of the town employees and volunteers who spent long hours staffing the polling stations and staying up late to tabulate all of the write-in ballots!

A special shout-out to Deb Bourbeau for coming out of retirement to help with the Town Clerk's office and oversee this last election. Great to see her smiling face at the Tech School polling station!

Anne Jemas
Great Falls

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Farren Rezoning Zoom Next Tuesday Entices You

MONTAGUE CITY – The Town of Montague, in partnership with the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) and Innes Associates, Ltd., is exploring zoning amendments necessary for potential redevelopment of the former Farren Care Center sites.

The Town is also considering zoning changes for the surrounding neighborhoods along Rod Shop Road, Masonic Avenue, and Depot Street to promote the adaptive reuse of historic buildings that serve as gateway transitions from the existing residential areas to the potential redevelopment site.

All Montague residents are in-

vited to an online workshop next Tuesday, June 10, from 6 to 8 p.m. to review the work completed so far and provide valuable feedback to help shape the project.

The link to join via Zoom is: us02web.zoom.us/j/86151084116

The agenda includes reviewing the April 17 community workshop, revisiting the public's development goals, and reviewing potential scenarios. The project webpage at montague-ma.gov/p/1568/ includes recordings and slides from April 17.

For questions or comments, contact planning director Maureen Pollock at mpollock@montague-ma.gov or (413) 863-3200 x112.

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AT LARGE

By CHIP AINSWORTH

NORTHFIELD – A Gill resident and Vermont social worker has been named this year’s recipient of the Lara Sobel Justice Award. The honor is bestowed each year by the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) to an individual who is “committed to empowering individuals and families, and ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities.”

That woman, April Greene, is my daughter, and the award is named in honor of Lara Sobel. I’m proud of her, of course, and also of my son-in-law Corey for taking in foster kids and helping the helpless.

“Do you know who she is?” April asked of the award’s namesake. “Look her up.”

And so I did.

Sobel was a DCF case worker who was killed by Jody Herring after parental rights to Herring’s 9-year-old daughter were terminated. It’s unclear if Sobel knew that Herring was given an early release from Rutland Regional Medical Center where she was sent for an involuntary 90-day psychiatric hospitalization.

According to accounts in the *Bennington Banner*, *Burlington Free Press*, and *VT Digger*, on August 7, 2015, Herring was lying in wait for the 48-year-old married mother of two to leave her office in Barre. When she saw Sobel she stepped out of her car at Barre City Plaza and shot her twice in the head with a .270 caliber Remington rifle.

After she was arrested, police found dozens of rounds of ammunition in her car. Earlier in the day Herring had gone to a farmhouse off of I-89 in Berlin, Vermont and killed her 48-year-old cousin Rhonda Herring, 43-year-old sister Regina Her-

Pride and Tragedy; Accessibility; Malfeasance

ring, and their 73-year-old mother Ann Falzarano because they had tried to help their young niece.

An IV heroin user, Herring had 11 misdemeanor convictions and two DUI arrests, including one for domestic assault. In 2017 she pleaded guilty to the first-degree murder of Sobel and the second-degree murders of her relatives. She was sentenced to life in prison without parole on the former conviction, and 20 years to life on the latter three.

Herring subsequently appealed the sentences on grounds the court did not take into account her anxiety-related mistrust of others. “Her anxiety did not itself cause the defendant to commit the murders: rage did,” the state supreme court ruled.

Gold Standards

In keeping with having one of the highest annual sewer rates in the state – \$1,276 per ratepayer – Northfield residents last month approved spending \$233,000 for two new bathrooms in town hall.

Several residents put up a stink, including Brian Bordner, who argued, “Even Saddam Hussein didn’t have \$233,000 toilets.”

Selectboard member Sarah Kerns proposed reducing the amount to \$80,000, but the majority agreed with the finance committee that provisions in the Americans with Disabilities Act would nearly triple that amount.

Local elections were the following day, and a hotly-contested selectboard race saw town hall insider Dan Campbell defeat challenger Barbara Brassor by 60 votes, 304 to 244. The 548-vote total was the most for a selectboard seat since 2018, when Alex Meisner defeated Robbie Leighton 542 to 165.

Outtakes

Billy Joel has said he originally wrote his 1983 hit “Uptown Girl” for Elle Macpherson, whom he dated in 1982, but that it really became about his next wife Christie Brinkley. They were married for almost ten years until 1994.

In her new book *Uptown Girl* Brinkley writes of the divorce, and claims, “Booze was the other woman”....

Jack Anderson was one of the finest investigative journalists of his era. Anderson won the Pulitzer for breaking stories about the CIA’s plot to kill Fidel Castro and the Reagan administration’s involvement in the Iran-Contra affair.

Senior *Fox News* commentator Brit Hume learned the trade from Anderson, including how to get a reluctant source to talk. When asked what the call was in reference to, Anderson told Hume to respond with one word: “Malfeasance.”

True or not, the panic-stricken source would call back every time....

Quick, what movie won the Oscar for Best Picture? Time’s up. *Emilia Pérez* is a musical about a cartel boss who fakes his death and has sex-change surgery to avoid being caught. Audience reviews on Google average 2.1 stars from 3,776 ratings.

A review in *The Economist*, a liberal, Trump-bashing British periodical, summarized: “Hollywood is besotted, but audiences are not. *Emilia Pérez* is, objectively, poor. The dialogue has been hastily transitioned and the lyrics lost in translation. Emilia’s wife sounds robotic in Spanish and slips into English halfway through a line.”

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

SAWMILL from page A1

for generations,” said Susan Lynton, treasurer for the Friends of the North Leverett Sawmill. “We will have to figure out uses of the building that will be sustainable, and the townspeople have said they want an event space in a four-season building.”

Last year the Friends received a \$683,500 grant from the National Park Service’s Semiquincentennial Grant Program, an initiative to commemorate the country’s 250th anniversary in 2026, to restore the sawmill building. The Slarrow mill was one of 19 projects to receive \$10 million in grants in the program’s first round of funding.

With those funds, other grants, and private donations, the group has so far raised about \$900,000 of the anticipated \$1.8 million cost of turning the mill into a historical museum with room for art exhibits and educational programs.

There is no electricity or plumbing inside the building today, but enough light streams through the windows to illuminate cobwebs on the large rusty circular saw blades. The machinery would be removed

during the renovation, Lynton said, though an outline would remain on the floor where the large saws once were.

Originally built in 1774 by Joseph Slarrow, who would soon become a captain in the Revolutionary War, this mill is one of the oldest and largest in the country still standing. South Hadley historian Will Melton, who conducted much of the research for the Friends’ successful grant application, told the *Reporter* he got involved with the restoration effort after tracing family roots to a member of Slarrow’s Continental Army militia.

“There were only about 200 sawmills like this operating at the time, so this is a very rare artifact,” Melton said. “There are reproductions and replicas, but Slarrow’s Mill is the real thing. I’ve hunted for others in New England for a couple of years, and I haven’t found one yet with the pedigree to match Leverett’s.”

A uniquely long log carriage and turbine, allowing the sawmill to process boards up to 45 feet long, were installed in the 1870s. During World War II, the US Navy commissioned

the mill to make the keels of “mine-sweeper” ships, which were constructed entirely of wood in order to evade and remove the magnetically-triggered explosives hidden underwater by the German military.

The sawmill had changed ownership eight times in 200 years before brothers Hugh and Lloyd Kirley of Leverett assumed control in 1972. They used the mill to produce the long beams necessary for classic post-and-beam construction.

“The mill was then the only commercial water-powered sawmill in Massachusetts,” Melton said. “It was a charming but limited operation, able to turn out only half the board-feet of electricity-powered modern mills. Managing the dam’s water flow was always difficult.”

Though the work wound down in the 1990s, the sawmill remained operational until 2003 when a storm caused the roof to collapse. A fundraising effort led by the Kirley brothers and the Leverett Historical Society helped to restore the building in 2007.

In 2022, the Kirleys donated the building and adjacent land to the Friends, which had incorporated as a nonprofit that year. The group used Community Preservation Act funds to construct a new pavilion and a network of trails along the Sawmill River. The town also donated two more acres, making what is now the Heritage Park and Nature Trail 4.6 acres in all.

These trails connect the site with another historical relic: the Graves Ironworks, the remains of a water-powered “triphammer,” a mechanical drop forge used by blacksmiths to flatten iron. They also provide some public access to the river itself, where patrons can lounge or wade at their own risk.

Last Saturday, Lynton hosted a gathering at her home where she had on display a scale model of



The sawmill’s main room still houses machinery used by previous owners, which would be removed during the renovation.

the proposed project. This was the second house party board members have hosted to present their plans, collect feedback, and solicit donations from supporters.

The group has been working to remediate mold and structural issues, complicated by a severe rainstorm last summer that flooded the first floor. Engineers, hydrologists, and soon archeologists are being hired to study the land and secure the necessary permits to complete the extensive renovations. The new bathrooms will utilize composting toilets, and a “tight tank” rather than a traditional septic system will be used to capture graywater.

Completely transforming the sawmill will also require stabilizing the aging dam, which according to Lynton could cost about \$250,000.

“And everybody in Leverett – well, most people in Leverett – support it,” she said. “While not everybody approves of dams, they approve of that one, because it looks so ugly when it’s drained.”

The National Park Service grant cannot fund work on the dam, how-

ever, and so, with another \$900,000 to go on the overall project, the Friends group hopes to make progress now that the grounds are open to the public.

A formal opening ceremony for the North Leverett Sawmill Heritage Park and Trail will be held Saturday, June 21 from 1 to 4 p.m. Board members will recognize Greenfield Cooperative Bank as the project’s largest private donor so far, and share information about the proposed restoration and fundraising plans.

“Imagine how wild Leverett was in 1774,” Melton said in a presentation to the group’s supporters at Lynton’s gathering. “Sunderland’s eastern district had just broken away to form a new town, and Massachusetts was emerging as the tinder box of rebellion – the American Revolution.... It’s a miracle that so much of this mill’s structure, and its story, are still with us. Harsh winters, fires, floods, rot, neglect, and demolition to make way for other projects doomed most of the country’s early sawmills.”



A model of the proposed mill museum shows the walkways, driveway, parking lot, and septic system the group envisions.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Tiny Moments of Municipal Renewal

By KATE SAVAGE

It was out with the old and in with the new at Monday’s Gill selectboard meeting.

Out with the failed opener for the bay door of the fire department’s brush truck. The board approved a payment of \$1,600 to Devine Overhead Doors to replace it. “Don’t want to have to get out and open the door and get back in,” said selectboard chair Charles Garbiel. “Lose a couple acres at that point.”

Out with the crumbling fence around the public safety complex. The board approved a payment of \$4,755 to L&L Fence Company to build a cedar fence 104 feet long and 6 feet high to replace it.

Out with 27 failing heat detectors at the public safety complex. The board approved \$2,440 for Fire Equipment, Inc. to replace them with new ones.

Out with the old energy rates, and in with the new. Gill is part of a municipal electricity aggregation program, which allows it to band together with 15 other towns in the area to sign a several-year contract to receive energy at a fixed price. Residents can opt out of the program at any time. The current contract expires in January.

The new rates are expected to be in the range of 13 to 16 cents per kilowatt-hour. The default offering will include 25% more renewable energy than the state requires, but residents can also choose 5% more renewable energy or 100% renewable. The board authorized town administrator Ray Purington to award the three-year contract when the bid

pricing is received on June 11.

In with a new firefighter, who is also an old junior firefighter. Miles Chattman began working as a junior firefighter at age 17, after the department responded to a fire alarm at his house. Chattman turned 18 last month and graduated from school. The board appointed him to the full adult position and thanked him for continuing with the role.

Fire chief William Kimball spoke appreciatively of the junior firefighting program. “Every student that started with the Gill fire department has either stayed with the Gill fire department or got hired on a career department,” he said.

Kimball spoke of plans to run a student “Wonder Week” this summer, where young people can do a week-long training program in the basics of firefighting.

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker announced that he would be giving testimony in support of state bill H.517, “An Act to Provide a Sustainable Future for Rural Schools,” in Tuesday’s joint committee on education hearing. Snedeker, who sits on the six-town regionalization planning board, spoke approvingly of state representative Natalie Blais and senator Jo Comerford for sponsoring the bill.

“The sections on special ed and regionalization are really good,” he said. “They’ve been listening very well to what our needs are.”

Spring is the time of rebirth and renewal. Even town meeting is returning: Part Two will convene next Monday, June 9 at 7 p.m., at the town hall, and will focus on the town’s budget for the year ahead.

COFFEE from page A1

current tariffs add a minimum 10% “baseline” tax on all imports to the US, with the exception of goods from Mexico.

Vietnam and Indonesia, two of the nation’s largest coffee suppliers, are being hit even harder, with tariffs of 46% and 32% respectively.

Uncertainty marked all of the conversations the *Montague Reporter* had with local roasters. The National Coffee Association has submitted an application to have coffee removed from the list of imports subject to tariff, and last Wednesday the United States Court of International Trade ruled that the administration does not have the authority to declare the tariffs, but as of now there is no way to know what will happen.

In the meantime, local businesses said they are doing their best not to pass the cost onto customers.

Lytle-Rich told the *Reporter* she is trying to remain grateful, both to the company’s employees and its customers. So far, Shelburne Falls Coffee hasn’t made any changes to their sourcing or raised prices due to the tariffs.

Fogbuster Coffee, known until 2021 as Pierce Bros., hasn’t been so lucky. After already raising prices due to increased sourcing costs, the Greenfield-based company announced publicly last week that a

10% “tariff increase” will be added at the point of sale as of June 1.

“We’ve been holding off as long as we could,” said CEO Paco Agrafojo. Agrafojo said he is hopeful, but not necessarily optimistic, about the ruling by the Court of International Trade. In the meantime, the company is preparing for what business will look like if it is forced to pay more not just for beans but also cups, bags, and other imported materials.

“Most things we buy either can’t be sourced in the US, or it’s way more expensive,” Agrafojo said. And while Fogbuster has done everything it can to avoid passing along these new costs, he said that if the tariffs remain in effect, many small roasters won’t have a choice.

At Dean’s Beans, a worker-owned cooperative in Orange, a commitment to ethics is front and center in the company’s brand. The *Reporter* spoke with CEO Beth Spong and roastmaster Brendan Walsh, both of whom emphasized that despite the uncertainty, they are not changing their sources.

While Dean’s Beans also recently raised prices for the first time in nearly three years, Spong and Walsh said the people getting squeezed the hardest so far have been at Royal Coffee, the importer that works with the company to handle the logistics of sourcing beans directly from co-ops abroad.

MONTAGUE from page A1

\$3,000 stipend for the six months.

“It is understood that the Chief intends at the end of the Tenure and he further agrees to publicly announce his retirement upon approval of this agreement,” the amended contract reads. “Chief agrees to cooperate with the Town in a search for a new police Chief.”

Reached by the *Reporter*, Williams said he was currently on a vacation and did not wish to comment.

Williams, a native of Montague, attended Turners Falls High School and Greenfield Community College and served as a reserve officer before joining the department on a full-time basis in 1995. He was passed over in 2004 as a candidate for chief, although he obtained a higher score on the state civil service exam than the other internal candidates, and became acting chief in July 2018 when then-acting chief Christopher Bonnett was arrested for assault after an alleged drunken argument with his girlfriend.

Bonnett himself had been serving as temporary chief since that March, after an investigation of the disappearance of pills from the police station’s prescription drug dropbox and the resignation of chief Chip Dodge. The charges against Bonnett were later dropped, and he rejoined the force as second-in-command until last December, when he was suspended amid complaints of impropriety in his investigation of a fellow police officer; he left the now-understaffed department this spring.

After town meeting level-funded the police budget in 2020 amid local Black Lives Matter demonstrations, the department collaborated with two public committees who investigated its use-of-force policies. The result was a detailed report filled with statistics on arrests and recommendations for reform.

According to Ariel Elan, who facilitated one of the advisory committees, “Chief Williams and our then-Lieutenant Chris Bonnett were incredibly cooperative. They sat with our committee for four hours of intensive, challenging interviews; then responded to follow-up questions by email for countless more hours.”

Town Hall Shuffle

In other personnel news, the board approved a contract with Wendy Bogusz to serve as town clerk from July 1 of this year to June 30, 2028. Bogusz currently serves as executive secretary to the selectboard, and has worked for the town since 1997.

As far as Bogusz’s replacement is concerned, town administrator Walter Ramsey said he had the advertisement “ready to go, and it’s going to hit the paper this week.”

Because the position is not a department head, he recommended against setting up a special hiring committee but rather implementing an “internal review” with staff.

Ramsey seemed confident that a new Wendy could be hired by July 1, and also that a major reorganization of the town hall office space, proposed by the old Wendy, could be accomplished by that date. The proposal is to move the town clerk’s office into the meeting room across the hall, plus an adjacent office currently used by the executive secretary. The new executive secretary would then occupy what is currently the current clerk’s office.

The board supported the idea without taking a formal vote, but seemed to be skeptical that the reorganization could be completed by the end of June.

Old Buildings

The selectboard announced that, following a series of executive sessions on the topic, they had extended the timeline of a land development agreement to redevelop the Railroad Salvage Annex property on Power Street by up to 15 years. (See article, Page A1).

The Montague Center Playground project has been completed, and a ribbon-cutting is scheduled for this Saturday, June 7 at 1 p.m., with a rain date next Saturday.

The board also heard a report from Emily Innes, a consultant with Innes Associates, on the process to redevelop the former Farren Hospital property and nearby former Rod Shop in Montague City. She reviewed the results of an April public input session at the Great Falls Discovery Center, as well as a meeting last week with the planning board.

A virtual “community workshop” planned for next Tuesday, June 10 will focus on the Farren site alone, Innes said.

The board approved four letters to different funding sources under the state’s “Community One Stop For Growth” grant portal. The projects the town is seeking to fund include traffic signal replacement at Avenue A and Third Street, hazardous material cleanup at the town parking lot on First Street, technical assistance for implementing a “wayfinding system” in downtown Turners Falls, and an update of the town’s housing production plan.

They also approved a letter in support of an application by Jess

Marsh, the co-owner of the Third Street garage building that has most recently housed the Pioneer Valley Brewery, to the state’s Underutilized Property Fund, which assists the rehabilitation of privately-owned buildings. The brewery closed last week.

Other Business

Assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller announced that the South Street Bridge in Montague Center is now open for traffic but that Swamp Road, which had “taken a beating” during the South Street project, was temporarily closed for “patch repairs.”

Ramsey discussed with the board the complex topic of how non-union employees will fit into the town’s newly negotiated wage schedules. He suggested two options. The first would put non-union staff on “the closest step to what they are [at] now,” though he said this would lead to some staff – mostly department heads – not immediately getting 3% cost-of-living increases they are currently expecting. The second, which he recommended, was a “hold-harmless” approach in which these staff would not move to a lower step, even if it is the nearest, and would receive the 3% increase.

The board seemed favorable to the second option, but did not vote on the issue. Ramsey said the proposal was not fully funded under the coming year’s budget, and that supplemental funding would need to be approved at a special town meeting.

Parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz announced that the Montague Center Playground project has been completed, and that a ribbon-cutting at the playground is scheduled for this Saturday, June 7 at 1 p.m., with a rain date the following Saturday.

Dobosz added that rain is predicted for this Saturday, so he will make the decision on Thursday whether to postpone. “We are owed a nice, beautiful Saturday,” he said.

The board discussed the results of a survey of town meeting members to determine the level of support for ending the traditional date of the annual town meeting as the first Saturday in May. The annual was held this year on two Wednesday evenings, and though the board members felt this experiment had been successful, they did not think the survey showed sufficient support for making the change permanent, which would have had to be brought to a town meeting as a bylaw change.

As of now, the annual meeting will remain on the first Saturday in May.

The selectboard’s next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 16.



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White tubes help young trees at the food forest grow.

FOOD from page A1
family is here.”

In 2019 they found the 36-acre property on Hatchery Road, which had been in the Bitzer family since the early 1800s. Although John Bitzer had the right to build up to 18 homes on the site, he chose to preserve it for farming in 2001 with a conservation restriction through the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust and the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources.

Now it’s officially the Big Foot Food Forest.
“We chose the word Big Foot as a play on the idea of having a small carbon footprint,” said Wils. “If you flip that around, we would like to have a big, positive kind of footprint on the land in a way that enriches the world. My aspiration is to make this a better piece of land for nature and humans than we found it.”

A food forest, sometimes called a forest garden, is a way of growing food that mimics a forest, with trees that produce berries and nuts mixed with “nitrogen-fixing” plants such as Siberian pea-shrubs, clover, comfrey, and vetch. Black locust trees also produce nitrogen to naturally fertilize the soil.

“The idea is to create a forest that’s balanced and diverse, where all the vegetation relies on each other over time,” Wils said, adding that other plants and flowers are included to attract pollinators as well as wasps that prey on pests.

Today a large portion of the land is covered with vertical white tubes that protect the young trees that will eventually yield aronia, goji, and sea berries, all of which contain high levels of antioxidants. One of Wils’s long-term plans is to produce a new product she calls the “Bigfoot Super-Berry Mix” that would be used to make healthy smoothies.

“It’s all well and good to be eco-freako, but the bottom line is this needs to work,” said Wils, adding that recently planted chestnut, almond, and northern pecan trees are expected to be a key part of the product line. These nut-producing trees would thrive in the longer, hotter summers that Wils expects will become the norm over the next 20 years.

“Nature needs to adjust for shifting climate zones, and we have to be ready for that,” said Wils.

One tried and true permaculture model originated with Native Americans, who traditionally grew corn, beans, and squash together. The pole beans use the corn plants as a natural trellis to climb on, while squash keeps weeds under control.

Wils hopes that grazing sheep on the land will also keep the grass down while their droppings further fertilize the soil. Wils sees farming as an ongoing process of trial and error.

“I think I found my tribe with farmers, because they’re all perennial experimenters and project inventors, and I feel so comfortable in that group,” she said.

One of those experiments is collecting food scraps from 60 households around Montague for compost and chicken feed, and she’s looking for more to take part. The idea is based on the much larger Vermont Compost Company.

“People are happy to do it, and it’s gotten me out there in the community,” said Wils. “There are so many amazing people on the route and we get very chatty. I calculate an extra hour for chats.”

Many of the projects at the Big Foot Food Forest are helped along by volunteers recruited through the Workaway program. Wils said some volunteers come to the food forest because they view New England as a place of “climate safety” compared to their homes in places like Texas and the Southwest, which have recently suffered extremely hot summers.

Babette, Mark, and their Workaway helpers are kept busy feeding and collecting eggs from about 100 chickens and shearing wool from 10 sheep. They’ve also built various outbuildings, including a straw bale studio with a grass roof in 2022. Their projects and experiments are detailed at bigfootforest.com.

“It’s not like we have the best ideas out there,” said Wils, “but there are millions of small farms in the world trying to find better ways to grow food, and by communicating our successes and failures, together we have a chance to figure it out.”



GAGNON PHOTOS

Big Foot’s strawbale studio, with its grass roof.

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on June 4, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Power Town Sold

On Friday, the Portland, Maine-based Silver Street Development Corporation closed on its \$3.5 million purchase of the ten Power Town Apartments buildings, housing over 80 affordable housing units in downtown Turners Falls.

By all indications the buildings will see some repair and rehabilitations, allowing residents to remain. But town planner Walter Ramsey said the town’s attempts to convince Silver Street to free up

some of the buildings’ ground-level units to commercial storefront use had been unsuccessful.

“Everything Comes” to Erving

At the Erving selectboard meeting, resident Paul Neville asked the town to remove trash, including computer monitors and tires, from his property on Old State Road which he said was left by non-residents taking advantage of Erving’s “Everything Goes” trash collection. Neville agreed to call the police promptly the next time he observes dumping, and will allow the town to install a security camera where items are dumped.

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 2, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Daily Riverside Sewer Check

A fraction of the Gill finance committee met with the selectboard on Wednesday, seeking to close a \$14,000 gap in the town’s FY’06 budget prior to the Monday town meeting. Lacking a quorum, the committee could take no vote.

Board member Ann Banash said highway department workers routinely spend half an hour each working day checking over the Riverside sewers, a task which seemed to be budgeted in line items at both the highway department

and the sewer district. Reducing the highway department’s budget by \$7,000 and allowing the sewer users to pay for this daily maintenance task would close half the budget gap, Banash said.

Perfect Softball Season

The Turners Falls girls’ softball team defeated Greenfield 9-1 last Friday to finish the season a perfect 20-0. Ace Julie Girard picked up her 500th career strike-out in the final inning, a perfect way to finish out a super season.

Turners Falls, expected to be the top seed in post-season play, will find out this week who they face in the first round.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 2, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

About time to go in swimming. A drive of logs is on its way down the river.

N.D. Allen has his ice cart on its rounds now. He has many customers, but could serve more.

The band serenaded the Riverside folks last evening. They are practicing march music quite often.

There are two or three ladies in this vicinity who can row a boat more gracefully than the majority of men.

A. Robinson and E. Knights, while fishing down the river, the other day, caught two shad weighing five pounds apiece.

Quite a number of Turners Falls people have hired land on the Plain, this spring, and are gardening quite extensively.

Ye hurdy-gurdy man has been around. He departed with a few coppers, and many thanks for his timely leave-taking.

It would be well for fishermen to remember that for every black bass they catch before the fifteenth of the month they are liable

to a fine of \$50.

The library was opened to the public Saturday evening, and a great many books were taken out. Catalogues will be furnished next Saturday.

Mr Goss expects an unusual number of visitors to Mount Toby this summer. He contemplates building a large and elegant hotel there, in a year or two.

Half a dozen people in this place are at work on articles of a useful nature for which patents are pending. It would be hard to find a town of this size where more inventions are being made.


You can always feel safe when we have such an efficient fire department as we have now. The steamer was at the scene of the fire, Monday, with team up, and all, ready to throw water, in three minutes.

Our artist has gone to the country to rusticate. He wore out three pencils in sketching the most startling scenes at the fire, Monday.

W.W. Hosmer went fishing the other day, and a frog took his hook and climbed up on the raft alongside of him. When Billy discovered the position of the audacious frog he rolled up his line and went home in disgust.



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SPORTS from page A1

to third and scored on two wild pitches. George Gutierrez hit a ground-er, and Hunter Donahue, who had made it to third on the second wild pitch, beat the throw home.

Neither team would score again. With the victory, the Eagles advanced into the Round of 32.

Pathfinder 6 – TFHS 5

Later that day, the Turners Falls Baseball Thunder were eliminated from the Division 5 bracket by the Pathfinder Pioneers.

As I traveled to the game I listened to it on Bear Country, and when I arrived Turners was batting in the second inning in a 0-0 game. In the third, the skies opened up again and the rain poured down. Fans huddled under umbrellas and the ump stood in ankle-deep water, but the players carried bravely on. When the scoreboard began blinking I returned to my car to listen on the radio.

It was a slogfest. Turners only managed one hit, a two-run double by Kainen Stevens, but picked up three more runs off RBI walks. On the other side of the plate, the Pioneers only scored three earned runs, but took advantage of four Thunder errors to edge Turners out of the playoffs.

Brody Girard, Jackson Cogswell, Julian Kaiser, Ledwin Villafana, and Freilyn Jose Abarua Corona scored runs for the Thunder, while Kaiser, Stevens, and Ethan Eichorn shared pitching duties.

Bromfield 13 – FCTS 2

On Monday the 2025 season came to an end for the Franklin Tech Eagles, too, as they lost to the Bromfield Trojans in the Round of 32.

Track and Field

Athletes from the Franklin Tech and Turners Falls High School track teams competed in the Western Mass championship meet last week: Sam Bodenstein and Dylan Cullen in the 100m and 200m; Carsten Couture in the 100m; William Thomas in the 800m; John Duncan and Atlithonatiu Gonzalez in the javelin; Madix Whitman and Josiah Little in the triple jump; and Wyatt Sisum in the shot put.

Bodenstein then advanced to the state finals at Tufts University last Friday, where he finished 29th in the 200m with a time of 25.01.

Two girls also qualified for the state finals, Jakhia Williams in the 100m and Tristan Bliss in the discus. Bliss threw 97'6" on her first attempt, securing a fifth-place medal.

Softball

FCTS 17 – Whitinsville Christian 0

On Monday the Franklin Tech Softball Eagles outclassed the Crusaders of Whitinsville Christian School. I stayed for the first three innings before traveling to the Turners Falls-Rising Tide contest.

Wild pitches, a ground-rule double, and dropped third strikes

gave the Eagles a 6-0 cushion after one inning. In the second, more dropped balls, errant pitches and two RBI sacrifices increased the lead to 10-0 and the Crusader pitcher retired with an elbow injury.

In the home third, Hannah Gilbert scored on a Kylee Gamache triple, and courtesy runner Samantha Duncan scored on a catcher error to increase the margin to 12-0.

By the time I left, Gilbert had struck out nine of the ten batters she faced. As the fourth inning rolled around coach Joe Gamache began liberally substituting his players. Gamache, Gilbert, Duncan, Abigail Dobias, and Gianna DiSciullo registered hits for Tech, with Gamache cracking a triple and Gilbert a double. In the circle, Gilbert allowed one hit and three walks while striking out 14.

The victory propelled the Eagles into the Sweet Sixteen round against the West Boylston Lions.

TFHS 12 – Rising Tide 0

The Turners game did not start on time because the Rising Tide bus from Plymouth was delayed. The delay did not help the Herons, who went 1-2-3 in the first inning. Mia Marigliano led off the bottom of the first with a standup double, and Marilyn Abarua batted her in on a sacrifice.

In the second inning Turners exploded. Autumn Thorton hit an inside-the-park home run, Addison Talbot followed it with a double, and the next two batters walked to load the bases. Another walk sent a run home, a failed double play scored two more, and a base hit by Madison Liimatainen gave Turners a 6-0 lead.



DAVID HOITT PHOTO



LESUE CHARLES PHOTO



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Top: Franklin Tech senior Gianna DiSciullo makes solid contact during the MIAA Division 5 Round of 32 game against Whitinsville Christian School on Monday in Turners Falls. The Eagles soared over the visiting Crusaders 17-0.

Bottom left: After winning fifth place statewide with a 97' 6" throw, Turners Falls junior Tristan Bliss bites her fifth-place medal at the Division 6 outdoor track & field state championship meet at Tufts University last Friday.

Bottom right: Turners Falls High School's Julian Kaiser battles in the Division 5 preliminary round last Friday as Turners hosted Pathfinder Regional. The players endured rainfall that impacted pitching, batting, and fielding.

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Blue plated six more runs in the fourth, then put the Herons down in order to ice the 12-0 mercy-shortened victory.

Although the game was won, there was one more celebration to be had. The victory was the 800th for

Gary Mullins, Turners Falls's intrepid head coach. Humble as ever, Mullins accepted the accolades while downplaying any overdone praise.

Marigliano and Talbot each finished with three hits including a double, Liimatainen and Thorton had two each including Thorton's home run, Janelle Massey hit a double, and Kaiya Adam hit a single. Liimatainen gave up one walk and no hits, and struck out 12.

West Boylston 6 – FCTS 3

Franklin Tech's very successful 2025 season derailed on Wednesday as West Boylston knocked them out of the playoffs.

The game was a pitchers' duel until the fourth inning when the Lions scored three runs. The first came when a runner at third base raced to the plate, surprising the Eagle D. The second came when a pitch went under the backstop cage for a dead ball. The third scored on a bases-loaded hit-by-pitch.

In the fifth, the visitors' lead increased to 5-0 off a wild pitch and a collision at home plate.

The Eagles broke the drought in the sixth, narrowing the gap to 5-3 as Lindsey Taylor scored on an error, Gilbert on a Sandra Johnson sacrifice, and courtesy runner Duncan on a DiSciullo RBI. The Lions scored one more run in the seventh off a home run, and Tech couldn't answer.

The Eagles have nothing to hang their head over. They won the Franklin East League, made it to the Western Mass championship game, and finished the season 18-5.

TFHS 1 – Drury 0

Across Millers Falls Road, the Turners Falls Thunder were facing troubles of their own. They scored a single run in the first inning, then held on to beat the Drury Blue Devils by that margin.

In the first, Liimatainen smashed a standup double. She was replaced by Autumn DiMare, who stole third and then scored on a wild pitch. And that was it.

Neither team would score again, though in the top of the seventh, the Devils put two runners in scoring position. A monster stop by Talbot kept them from advancing and a strikeout ended the game, sending Turners into the quarterfinals. They will host the Narragansett Regional Warriors at 5 p.m. this Saturday.



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MIKE JACKSON PHOTO
features@montaguereporter.org OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER JUNE 5, 2025

WEST ALONG THE RIVER A NEW CHAPTER FOR WHITE ASH SWAMP

By DAVID BRULE

WISSATTINNEWAG – White Ash Swamp has a long and ancient history. How far into the past should we go? I think going back 15,000 years would suffice.

Back then, after the last glacier receded, the mighty Connecticut River was seeking its original bed and wound its way west and around the basalt ridge we now call Wissatinnewag or Canada Hill, flowing in the direction of modern-day Greenfield.

But as the primeval river bore down through the glacial debris and sediment, bit by bit it reached the resistant bedrock that was to become the Thundering Falls, known by Natives as Peskeompskut.

The river no longer needed to wrap around the ridge on the west. In fact, the basalt ridge became an obstacle and shunted the flow sharply to the south, leaving its old western bed and flowing as we see it today.

That abandoned arm of the river eventually became swampy zones whose vestiges can still be seen in the wetlands along Route 2, Cherry Rum Brook, Colrain Road, and at the entrance to the Greenfield Community College campus.

More than likely you yourself have driven through White Ash Swamp on your way to Greenfield or Route 91 without realizing it. The so-called French King Highway was built right through that swamp in the 1960s, which by the way has bearing on this story.

That swamp claimed many lives during King Philip’s War in 1676. Even now you may hear the echoes of cries of the doomed men who raced through the swamp on

May 19, 1676, desperately trying to get home to Hatfield after murdering close to 300 women and children at the falls.

Thirty-eight of those colonials never made it out alive from the swamp, pursued and overtaken by the Native coalition forces in their counter-attack against the 150 English raiders.

But that was 350 years ago.

It turned out that in the not-too-distant past, the remarkably pure sands on the Wissatinnewag site nearby attracted the attention of a local sand and gravel company. Those sands had been left behind by the glacier’s retreat and had formed the beaches of the glacial lake.

Those well-drained, sandy plains were also the final resting place of the Indigenous inhabitants of the 12,000 year-old continuously inhabited village located on the basalt ridge above the falls.

Regardless of the constant unearthing of human remains, the sand and gravel operations continued for decades, removing sand and coincidentally the remains of human beings that were exposed by the bulldozers and steam shovels.

Fortunately for the local historical record, a local amateur archaeologist and collector wrote down what he saw happening in the ’60s.

George Nelson of Northfield regularly visited the work site and described the process followed by the workers: they removed the larger bones, skulls, and long bones from the piles of sand and put them aside until the end of the work day. Then the remains were piled into a dump truck and unloaded in White Ash Swamp, across the road.

see **WEST ALONG** page B8



This satellite image shows the Wissatinnewag site at upper right; the White Ash Swamp is in the triangle west of that site and north of the second sandpit.

Above: Six wheatpaste murals went up around Montague this week, including this one on the side of St. Kazimierz’s club by Great Barrington-based artist Aaron Meson.

SCENE REPORT Waste Not, Want Not!

By JAMIE SIMPSON

TURNERS FALLS – Handbells rang every few minutes in the Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) gymnasium, accompanied by numerous cheers of “Woohoo!,” each time an item brought to the first-ever Franklin County Repair Event was successfully restored to working order.

Area residents brought lamps, wooden chairs, bikes, clothes in need of mending, dull knives and scissors, and even a hairdryer last Saturday to the school, where volunteers who love to fix things cheerfully took on the challenge of bringing these items back to life – all free of charge.

This inaugural event was organized by the Franklin County

Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD), led by executive director Jan Ameen, who has been with the district for 30 years. “We started talking about this in October [2024],” Ameen told me. The town administrator of Conway asked about putting on an event similar to ones held in Northampton, Colrain, and Northfield. From there, Ameen said, “the event morphed into” a county-wide effort.

The “first goal,” Ameen said, was to “integrate the tech school and showcase student talent,” bringing in electrical and wood furniture repair by current students, recent grads of FCTS’s adult education courses – many of which are also offered free of charge – and FCTS instructors. Adult education coordinator Justin Lawrence oversaw the school’s participation in the event.

The menu grew to include mending, darning, gluing, basic bike maintenance, blade sharpening – for knives, scissors, and even lawn mowers and chainsaws – blood pressure screenings by FCTS health tech students, and treating boots with permethrin, a tick repellent.

The organizers put out a call for “fixers.” “People who tinker were really jazzed about it,” Ameen said. The team secured state grants to pay

see **WASTE NOT** page B2



Left to right: Milan and Boyana Dragicevich of Greenfield smile as Jon Lagreze of Colrain gets Milan’s old guitar ready for restringing.

RECIPES THREE TAKES ON FISHCAKES

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – Thrift was the mother of fishcakes. Lots of countries have them, and everywhere it’s clear that the cooks who invented them simply mixed fish, often leftover, with whatever basic foods were already in their kitchens.

Old-time New England codfish cakes are a good example. The main ingredients are salt cod and cracker crumbs – two kitchen basics easily combined into a patty for frying. When potatoes became popular in the late 18th century, they edged out cracker crumbs. What could be easier than mashing leftover potatoes and fish together?

And what tastier? As Lydia Maria Child wrote in her 1831 cookbook *The American Frugal Housewife*, “There is no way of preparing salt fish for breakfast, so nice as to roll it in balls after it is mixed with mashed potatoes; dip it into an egg, and fry it brown.”

Everywhere fishcake recipes show economy by partnering fish with inexpensive local staples. There’s one from Yorkshire, England that suggests leftover oatmeal, and another from Russia that calls for the

see **RECIPES** page B5



Read on for a recipe for these basic salmon-and-herb fishcakes.

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

‘NUGGET JAMES’

Meet Nugget James, a snazzy, neutered, three-year-old purebred Chihuahua with a big voice and a lot of energy. He is a loving and affectionate 12-pound boy who enjoys snuggle time under blankets and loves to give kisses.

His human parents describe Nugget James as curious, food-motivated, playful, and quirky. He loves his toys and hops like a bunny when he plays. He is a bit nervous around new people, especially men, and though he lives with kitties he terrorizes them. He doesn't have expe-

rience living with children, but loves smaller dog friends.

He's doing his best with house-training but will need patience while he improves. Nugget is fully vaccinated, up to date on shots, and microchipped. He is located in Amherst. There is no adoption fee. To apply to adopt Nugget James, 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 9 THROUGH 13

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, please call 863-9357.

Monday 6/9

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

Tuesday 6/10

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

Wednesday 6/11

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 6/12

1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. Meditation for Seniors

Friday 6/13

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

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 6/9

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

1 p.m. Yoga

Tuesday 6/10

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

1 p.m. Garden Club

Wednesday 6/11

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

Thursday 6/12

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

Friday 6/13

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

WENDELL

Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. The next clinic is July 2. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinics are the third Tuesday of each month. The next clinic is June 17. 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.

WASTE NOT from page B1

for "consumables," things like new sockets for lamp repair, along with some tools volunteers needed and personal protective equipment.

Though Ameen said she was tired, having been awake since 5 a.m., she noted happily: "I can say with good confidence that almost everything people brought in has been repaired, except for a couple of items that were too far gone."

As we spoke, a satisfied customer with a snazzy, freshly-darned wool coat passed by and praised Ameen and the team for the event, calling it "way-outside-the-box thinking."

Nolan Beauregard of Greenfield, Amir McKamey of Northampton, and Jon Ryan of Conway all recently completed a 12-week carpentry program through FCTS's adult education program. As they put the finishing touches on a newly reglued and safer wooden chair for this reporter, they talked about the experience.

"I've been interested in carpentry for a while," Beauregard said, adding that "this program gives people of all ages a chance to learn" valuable skills.

"At first it looks like it's going to be a lot," said McKamey, "but then before you know it, you're halfway through" the 12 weeks. "Most people [in the program] want to practice professionally," he said, doing something they love while earning a good living.

Duncan Bullen of Sadie's Bikes was there, prepping bicycles for this season. "I worked on my own bike for years, and really got into it," he said. Last year Bullen began working part-time at Sadie's; this year he's on full time, learning a lot on the job. "There's definitely a need for this [event], to keep stuff out of the trash," he observed.

Just outside the gym near where Bullen was adjusting brakes and lubricating chains, Rachel Stoler, community health program manager for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, sprayed boots with permethrin, a powerful tick repellent.

A few feet away, Jon Lagreze of Colrain was re-gluing the bridge to Milan Dragicevich's guitar. Dragicevich expressed amazement that the bridge was attached only with glue. "It held for 15 or 20 years before it came off," he said. He and his wife Boyana, of Greenfield, also brought in lamps, knives, and a bicycle.

At another station, Fred Beckta of South Deerfield sharpened dull scissors and knives. Beckta said he signed on after fellow "swap shed" volunteer Amy Donovan – also a program director at FCSWMD – told him of the event. As he honed the shears of Moira Megargee, also of South Deerfield, Beckta joked about how happy his wife of 40 years was to have him out of the house.

Megargee said she had heard about the event online, and told others about it. "I think the whole concept is fabulous," she said. "It's a Yankee tradition not to throw anything away."

Northampton resident Stef Marotte, who works for the FCSWMD, volunteered to help at the event to see how it works. Marotte said she wants to see more people organizing repair events: "I want [us] to do a better job getting the word out there, especially to younger people. I want them to think it's super cool," she said animatedly. At the FCSWMD, she said, "I've learned so much in



Swanson's Fabrics education director Elsa Cousins and volunteer Mo Hart of Greenfield mended many clothing items Saturday.



Lamps were one of the most popular items people brought to the repair event.



Fred Beckta of South Deerfield made pointed remarks while sharpening a knife as Stef Marotte, FCSWMD employee and event volunteer, gets ready to ring the bell in celebration of yet another restored item.

the past year" about how to safely collect, transport, store, and recycle batteries from area transfer stations, and she is excited to get involved in other initiatives as well.

On the mending side, beloved local fabric arts hub Swanson's Fabrics – which identifies its Stash House in Turners Falls as a "no-kill shelter for your fabric stash" – was represented by education director Elsa Cousins and volunteer Mo Hart. The two made many articles of clothing wearable again, including two of this reporter's favorite sweats with strategically precarious wear holes.

Cousins mentioned the weekly "mends with friends" group, one of the many classes and "fellowship sessions" Swanson's holds at the Stash House.

Centered in the room were several FCTS health tech students, who Ameen said were excited at having over 20 people stop by their table to get their blood pressure checked.

By 1 p.m., the four-hour event was closing up shop. FCSWMD's Donovan shared the final figures: 50 to 60 attendees, and a total of 85 items saved from the landfill.

"The reason we exist," Ameen said, "is to reduce waste. This event is a perfect way to keep things out of the trash."

Besides breathing life into the "waste not, want not" ideal, Saturday's repair event helped build community among attendees from around the county. Ameen and others said they hope to make it a regular event.



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An Understanding Of Our Great Fortune

By LEE WICKS

MONTAGUE CENTER – When I am exhausted and sad from reading the day’s news, I look through other parts of the paper, either online or in print. I’ve been surprised to find that online reading is easier for me these days.

However, once someone enters the sea of information online, there’s a good chance of drowning – especially on the subject of health.

One article about the best possible healthy heart diet leads to another high-magnesium diet plan to avoid cognitive loss, and then another for weight loss or weight gain. One article says fat is good; another says plants are better and beans are essential, unless you suffer from certain digestive issues, in which case fermented foods are great, unless they’re not.

Regular exercise is important for both physical and psychological well-being. Push, but don’t do anything that hurts. Count your steps but try to relax and breathe. Maintain good posture. A person can start feeling slightly light-headed and ill while absorbing so much advice. Certainly, it’s easy to feel overwhelmed.

To consume enough vitamins, minerals, and fiber, I could spend all of my supposedly free time shopping, cooking, and eating. Frequent small portions throughout the day are recommended. Following all the guidelines, including the need to stay hydrated, means traveling with water and small snacks and worrying that I have no way to brush my teeth or floss after the healthy handful of nuts and dates I just ate.

And yes, drinking all that water leads to many bathroom breaks, and it’s not convenient to always be on the lookout.

That’s just the food and exercise part of wellness; the other parts include social interaction, intellectual stimulation, and, according to the sex-positive column that sometimes appears in this paper, intimacy should be nurtured. When, I ask, would there be time?

I admire local farmers who toil in mud and heat, working the fields, fixing machines, feeding animals, repairing whatever needs repair, who end each day with well-used muscles and the satisfaction of knowing they are feeding people. I’ll bet they never go to the gym and face exercise machines that look like medieval torture devices, and I wonder if they have time to worry about what they eat.

Maybe so much worry is a threat to mental health. It could be construed as self-indulgent. But, with looming cuts to Medicaid and Medicare, taking care of yourself might be more important than ever.

And some good choices might prevent more complicated and costly problems later. Improved balance

could prevent a fall, a broken hip, and weeks of rehab. Weight-bearing exercises promote strong bones. For some, meditation can lower blood pressure. Changes in diet can help prevent diabetes and heart disease.

Maintaining independence is vital. Meals on Wheels has, until now, been a dependable source for at least one meal a day for people over 60 who are disabled and cannot get out. Sadly, I have heard that some communities are cutting back on Meals on Wheels deliveries due to federal budget cuts.

Those of us who can still manage on our own need to preserve our mental and physical well-being and step up to help people when needed. Montague Villages volunteers are already helping people with all sorts of needs. I am thrilled that there are now about 100 members, and hope the organization will continue to grow.

But I also feel my blood pressure rise when I think of the ever-increasing needs caused by an administration willing to cut off children and elderly people to give tax breaks to billionaires. The world feels heartless right now, and antidotes are hard to find.

Happily, I do have one. If you like to read, pick up a copy of *How to Age Disgracefully* by Clare Pool-ey. It’s set in London at a community center that houses a senior citizens’ social club, a daycare center, AA meetings, and other non-profit groups that form the glue that holds the community together.

A fallen ceiling, budget shortfalls that prevent repairs, a developer eyeing the site, and an unsympathetic city council set up the conflict. An eccentric cast of characters old and young conspire to save the building that has brought them together. They face seemingly impossible obstacles, and I’m not going to say how it ends, but it’s charming with just the right amount of humor and outrage.

It reminds me that there will always be books, and they will dependably provide an escape when people need respite. My oldest friends in Montague are reading it.

After we meet to talk about the book, we’ll celebrate Marina Goldman’s victory in the town election, and our precinct voter numbers. We had a 12.5% turnout, more than the other villages but still not enough. We will not dwell on that – or Gaza, Ukraine, starving children in Sudan, and children who might soon lose access to healthcare and early childhood education because of cuts to Medicaid and Head Start.

For just an afternoon, we will try to avoid discussing threats to institutions we hold dear. We will eat a little too much, promise to work it off, schedule our next meeting, and part with an understanding of our great fortune to be here and healthy for now.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Cyclist Spouts Jibberish; EBT Theft; Old Friend Posts Bird; First Ticket Issued Under Overnight Commercial Parking Ban

Monday, 5/26

2:48 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states that the woman across the hall from her has a small dog that is routinely kicked, yanked, and yelled at by a male party who takes care of the dog’s elderly owner. Information being forwarded to Animal Control.

6:42 p.m. Caller states that two kids keep throwing their dog into Cranberry Pond and it’s whining. Caller states they are also striking the dog across the face with fish that they catch. Location is in Sunderland; call given to Control.

11:52 p.m. 911 caller reporting loud noise disturbance on East Main Street. Unfounded.

Tuesday, 5/27

2:26 p.m. Tech school principal reporting that a male party on a bicycle has shown up on campus twice today; he is talking “jibberish” and raising the concerns of staff. Officer out with party on Industrial Boulevard. Party is out for a ride on his new bike. He was advised to stay away from the school.

5:25 p.m. Caller from Edward Avenue reporting unknown male party lying on her front lawn. Officer advises party spoke to caller; was waiting for a ride as his motorcycle broke down. Gone on arrival.

7:57 p.m. Walk-in from Highland Circle looking to speak to an officer regarding a potential dog bite that occurred earlier this evening. States he went to the ER, and they are unsure whether it was

a bite or a scratch. Copy of call sent to animal control officer.

8:27 p.m. Car vs. light pole accident at Food City. Tow on scene.

Wednesday, 5/28

6:40 a.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop on James Avenue. Tow requested for involved vehicle. Summons issued for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration; uninsured motor vehicle; and unregistered motor vehicle.

3:23 p.m. Caller from Judd Wire states that a 10-pound hook fell off of a vehicle and hit his car. He is not sure if the car is drivable, and would like an officer to come and take a report.

3:29 p.m. Report of harassment on Millers Falls Road. Advised of options.

4:58 p.m. Caller states that between 4:30 and

5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, motorcycles are traveling on Turners Falls Road over 100 m.p.h., passing in no-passing zones and doing tricks. Caller is concerned people are going to get hurt, and would like something done about this. Report taken.

Thursday, 5/29

6:05 a.m. Concerned caller states someone is currently asleep in a running vehicle located in the Fourth Street parking lot. Officer spoke to male party, who had fallen asleep; no issues.

8:11 a.m. Caller reports that on Thursday 5/15, a male in the back seat of a black Nissan Rogue yelled “I’m gonna drop the ham-

mer” at two males on the sidewalk on Avenue A. Referred to an officer.

11:08 a.m. 911 report of a telephone pole arcing at Thomas Memorial Country Club. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

1:06 p.m. Caller from Sandy Lane reports that a white tractor-trailer unit with “EXTRA” written on the side struck a wire and pulled it from the pole. Comcast wire; Comcast notified.

2:53 p.m. Straight warrant received from juvenile court for a male on Third Street.

7:56 p.m. Caller from Central Street states that a vehicle is taking up two spots and more parked in the road. Caller is not happy about it and would like an officer to check it out. Parking ticket issued.

Friday, 5/30

11:12 a.m. Caller states that a male is bugging people for money in the Food City parking lot and the business doesn’t want him there. Referred to an officer.

12:52 p.m. Trespass notice served to male party on Industrial Boulevard.

5:56 p.m. Officer at dance at Turners Falls High School.

7:08 p.m. 911 caller states a white Honda CRV hit a telephone pole on West Main Street and the lady driving seems intoxicated. Officer cancelling medical as operator seems fine and is declining medical attention. Tow requested. Officer advises to call Eversource as the back side of the pole is split. Eversource on scene.

Saturday, 5/31

11:27 a.m. Caller from Third Street reporting that her SNAP benefits have been stolen; advises someone used \$268 yesterday. Officer advised caller of options.

7:28 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street states an old friend posted a picture of her house with a middle finger up on social media and she doesn’t like it because she has kids. Advised of options.

9:51 p.m. 911 caller states her neighbor above her on East Main Street is making loud noises. Officer states contact made; door shut in officer’s face; advises caller was also playing loud music. Units clear.

11 p.m. Caller reports that the bar on Third Street has a band playing and the music is too loud. Referred to an officer.

11:29 p.m. Caller requests officers to L Street as she can hear people outside yelling and screaming. Caller unsure what is going on; she has heard this for roughly 20 or 30 minutes. Officer advises event at Pioneer Brewery wrapping up; no further noise. Caller requests units back to location as she can still hear people arguing. Officer spoke to involved party, who was having a verbal argument. Parties have settled down for the evening.

Sunday, 6/1

11:12 a.m. Caller reports she was out on her daily walk and saw there was a vehicle parked where it shouldn’t be at Prospect and L streets. Officers advised.

SCENE REPORT

The Librarians: The Next Chapter (TNT)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I once watched two seasons of a sequel TV series for *Quantum Leap*, and enjoyed it very much, so I decided to try my hand at seeing how much I would enjoy a sequel to *The Librarians*.

It is called *The Librarians: The Next Chapter*, and they have managed to get it back on the TNT network, which is a good fit since that is where *The Librarians* first premiered as a series of movies featuring Noah Wyle. He was also part of the TV series, which I saw all four seasons of and enjoyed.

The Next Chapter premiered on May 25, and features Christian Kane as Jacob Stone, reprising his role from the first series as a Librarian, a protector of a special collection of magical items. They use him to pass the torch, so to speak. The new story involves a Librarian from the past named Vikram, who gets stuck in the present and has to clean up a mess he makes. Vikram is given a team, more or

less, to take care of this. Two of these characters are introduced early in the first episode: Lysa, a woman with a math background who inherited Vikram’s former castle, and Connor, a history teacher-turned-blogger who happened to be looking around the place when Vikram unleashed the magic he has to clean up.

There is also a Guardian, named Charlie, played by Jessica Green, who serves as a bodyguard of sorts to the Librarian. The Librarian has never had a Guardian before. I have seen Green in another TV series called *The Outpost*, and she should make this a very good series to watch.

The show involves a magical connection to the Library itself, where this new adventure begins, so at least something good comes out of the magic being unleashed by this Librarian. Lysa and Connor’s skills end up coming in handy with what they have to deal with.

We also get a look at this history teacher and the mathematician’s



personal history. During the episode they say why they believe what they believe. It is also shown how Lysa’s history connects with Vikram’s, and why she inherited his castle.

There is probably enough in *The Librarians: The Next Chapter* for me to enjoy it for two seasons, which it has already been renewed for.

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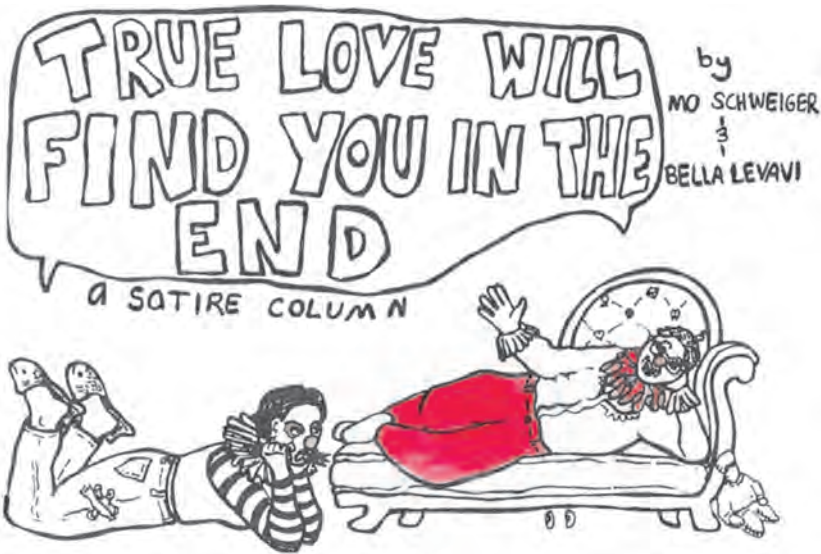
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SATURDAY & SUNDAY – 7 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

DINNER
FRIDAY & SATURDAY – 4:30 TO 9:30 P.M.

CALL TO CONFIRM: (413) 423-3328



By MANDY MUD-BALLS

TURNERS FALLS – Fish taco. Fish ladder. What do the two have in common? Neither should exist in Franklin County, but oh man do I love them both!

As the transplant that I am, I decided to pay homage to my wandering ancestors and experience the two in one afternoon. On my self-declared two-hour lunch break, I marched across the aptly titled Turners Falls-Gill Bridge to Cielo-Lindo, a place that reaffirms my Californian belief that the best food is always served from a parking lot.

Crispy fish taco in hand, I marched back across that same bridge to my favorite seasonal delight: the fishway viewing window. After descending three flights of stairs, visitors are treated to a view of three murky windows that peek

into the depths of the Connecticut River. While at first I balked at the fact that the accessible viewing option is a television screen above ground, my ire cooled after my descent when I realized that windows are the same thing as TV screens.

I looked around the small underground viewing room for a clue to what was going on, but all I saw were several couples getting handsy while staring into the water. I guess the drive to procreate is contagious through the fishway’s glass. Hopefully this does not rub off on the only other population who comes to visit the ladder: hundreds of screaming children.

I do delight in seeing these fish, scaly friends, alive and well, wriggling upstream rather than in a pan, but I had to admit I had no clue what I was looking at here. It felt like a low-budget aquarium that could

only afford kind of ugly fish, some of whom were missing half their scales.

“What am I looking at?” I wondered aloud, my mouth full of tilapia and cabbage slaw.

“What do you think you’re looking at? Ten thousand years of aquatic evolution leading to the most absurd afternoon possible!” yelped a voice.

I looked around the room for a human source of the voice, but everyone else seemed preoccupied, the couples with their smooching and the children with their screaming.

“Down here, bozo!” a watery voice screeched. I looked down at my taco, knowing the voice came from it, as this wasn’t the first time my ancestors had spoken to me through my lunch.

“I’m not your ancestor, dummy. I’m here to teach you about the fish ladder,” the filet in the tortilla said, its voice muffled under a layer of salsa verde.

“I can tell you don’t care what I have to say. Maybe a 200-mile journey will convince you. *Oh, Big Al!*,” it called.

At that moment, the largest, most bedraggled shad at the whole fish ladder swam up to the viewing window.

“Sixty-six pools I had to jump through. I feel like John Cheever in ‘The Swimmer,’” Big Al the shad rasped at me, as I looked on in silent amazement.

“What, you don’t get that reference? Fish love that book, we’ve

all read it. That and *Moby Dick*. Representation is *so* important.

“Anyway, this thing was *not* built for us! It was built for the flipping *salmon* and their weird jaws! In the 1970s, for the first time ever, the white guys in charge thought to consult Indigenous histories in the area when making decisions. They took one look at the name Salmon Falls, the original name of Shelburne Falls, and decided that they should build this fish ladder to encourage salmon to spawn in the tributaries of the Connecticut River in Vermont and New Hampshire, just like all of these millennials with their remote tech jobs.

“Little did they know that the only thing worse than no knowledge is an iota of knowledge, and the idea that there was ever abundant salmon in these waters was a misconception, leading to the creation of a ladder that doesn’t fit the actual population of the river: SHAD!

“Us trying to get up this thing is like if you tried to sit in a car seat made for a giraffe. It’s possible, but really hard. Like trying to get you to actually work 40 hours a week at your desk job.”

“Hey!” I shouted, breaking up his monologue. “If that’s all baloney, then what’s the real story? Why are you here?”

“Well,” began Big Al, “according to Micmac legend, I was once the mighty porcupine! I found myself discontent with life on land, and climbed a nearby tree to beg

the Great Spirit to shake things up. Shake things up she did, when she sent a huge gust of wind to knock me off of my perch and into the river.

“Upon hitting the water, my skin split down the middle and flipped inside out, turning my quills to bones and my lungs to gills. I became the squirming shad, my abundant quills becoming the 769 tiny bones inside of the shad, turning eating me from a delicious snack to an esophagus-bursting disaster. From me came millions of little fish, who are now blessed to travel 200 miles upstream from spawning ground to ocean and back.”

“Oh, that’s just like the song,” I said, and began to hum:

*“When the Lord made shad,
The devil was mad
For it seemed such a feast of
delight;*

*So to poison the scheme
He jumped in the stream,
And stuck in the bones out of spite!*

“I know that one from my grandfather the fishmonger. Wait, is that you, Abe?”

At this, Big Al stormed the glass, shouting, “Just because you have a God complex does not mean that every anthropomorphized interaction you have is with your *ancestors*! You live in a magical place. This just *happens*. I am a *shad*!”

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Mandy Mud-balls



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Behind the scenes: Common Wealth Murals executive director Britt Ruhe and RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto pasted up panels of the Seventh Street temporary mural Tuesday.

RECIPES from page B1

country’s popular curd cheese. Similarly, fishcakes in Syria use bulgur, one of their most popular carbs.

Moroccans make fishcakes from sardines and the salt-preserved lemons that feature in many of their dishes, while Turkish cooks add their country’s plentiful currants and pine nuts. Further east, Thai cooks dial up fishcakes with curry paste and chili.

The earliest fishcake recipe in English shows no such concern for using what’s to hand. It comes from the late 14th century and includes sugar and spices – both imported from Asia, and ultra-pricey in those days. Such antique extravagance notwithstanding, we have inherited the thrifty fish cakes of our region, and so potatoes and fish – now typically fresh rather than salted – are the dominant fishcake partners in both North America and northern Europe.

But while thrift inspired the invention of fishcakes and they remain a great money-saving supper choice in these inflationary times,

excessive thrift is too much of a good thing. Fishcakes need to taste fishy to be good, so eking out a little fish by dumping in a load of potatoes or crumbs is not the flavorful way to go. Flavorful fishcakes need at least two-thirds fish to one-third potatoes or crackers.

Herbs such as parsley, cilantro, and chives boost the flavor. Grated lemon or lime zest or a little nutmeg is good, too. A few coarsely-chopped shrimp or smoked fish, or some defrosted frozen peas or cooked chopped mushrooms, add texture as well as flavor.

And while fishcakes made from leftovers are good, those made from freshly cooked warm ingredients often taste better, because the flavors of warm food mingle more easily.

As for which fish to choose, the rich flavor of salmon, as in the first recipe below, make it a fishcake star. In the Thai recipe, the red curry paste is so bold that any white fish works well, while the final recipe calls for a slightly fibrous fish such as cod or skate.



SALMON-AND-HERB FISHCAKES

- 2 cups mashed potato
- 1 Tbsp. chopped parsley
- 1 Tbsp. chopped chives or scallion
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¾ lb. salmon, either poached or baked
- 2 or 3 slices smoked salmon (optional)
- about ½ cup flour
- about ½ cup panko, or other dry breadcrumbs
- oil for frying



Put the potatoes into a mixing bowl and mix in the parsley, chives, thyme, and Worcestershire sauce. Flake the salmon with a fork and chop the smoked salmon (if using) into small bits and stir both into the mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste. If using warm ingredients, let cool to room temperature in the fridge for 20 minutes.

To make the fishcakes, divide the salmon mixture into six to eight equal portions. Flatten slightly into half-inch rounds,

about 2 to 3 inches wide.

Dust a chopping board with flour and turn the fishcakes in it to lightly flour each side. Put the panko or other crumbs on a plate and press both sides of each fishcake into it.

Heat 2 or 3 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan, and cook the fishcakes for 3 minutes a side.

Serves 4.

THAI-STYLE FISHCAKES

Red curry paste spices these cakes; adjust the amount to get the firepower you enjoy. It is sold in the Asian aisles of supermarkets, as is *nam pla*.

- 1 lb. hake or other white fish
- 2 limes
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ tsp. white or black pepper
- 1 Tbsp. Thai red curry paste, or yellow curry for a milder flavor
- ½ cup cooked green beans, or red pepper, in ¼-inch bits
- 2 Tbsp. nam pla or Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 1½ Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. chopped cilantro
- 3 Thai (or ordinary) basil leaves
- 2 to 3 Tbsp. flour
- canola or peanut oil for frying

Thoroughly dry the fish. Cut it into small pieces, then process it in a food processor or mash it with a potato masher to make a rough paste.

Cut one of the limes into wedges and set aside for the garnish. Scrape the zest and squeeze the juice from the other lime and add it to the fish, along with the beaten



egg, pepper, curry paste, bean or pepper bits, *nam pla* or Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, cornstarch, sugar, cilantro, and roughly-chopped basil. Mix thoroughly.

Dust a chopping board thickly with the flour. Divide the mixture into eight portions and form each into a 2-inch-diameter cake, turning them over to flour both sides. The mixture is sticky, so it’s helpful to use a spatula for turning.

To cook, pour oil to the depth of a quarter inch into a frying pan large enough to take the fish cakes in a single layer. Fry them for 3 minutes, or until the bottom surface is golden. Flip and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes. Serve garnished with lime wedges and accompanied by fried rice or stir-fried vegetables.

Serves 4.

FISHCAKES WITH CRACKER CRUMBS and MANGO-LIME SALSA

Made with cracker crumbs rather than potatoes, these fishcakes hark back to New England’s earliest. To highlight their similarity to crabcakes, choose a fish that shares the slight fibrousness of crab: for example, cod scraped into bits with a fork rather than mashed, or better yet, skate. The salsa is also good with the Thai fishcakes.

- 1 ripe mango
- ⅓ cup chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp. chopped mint or chives
- grated zest and juice of 1 small lime
- 2 to 3 drops of hot sauce (optional)
- 1 Tbsp. coarsely torn cilantro
- 1 lb. skate or cod
- 2 tsp. finely chopped parsley
- about 25 saltine squares
- 2 scallions, finely chopped
- salt and pepper
- 2 Tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. dry mustard powder (Colman’s or Chinese)
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 egg, beaten
- about 1 cup panko or dry breadcrumbs

Mangoes have a long pit in the center. Cut down each side of this, then cut the flesh into cubes. Cut any remaining flesh from the pit. Put all the pieces in a serving bowl.

Put the chopped onion in a small bowl, cover with boiling water for a minute to soften the taste, then drain and add to the mango. Stir in the mint or chives and lime zest and

juice. Add hot sauce if you like. Finally add the torn cilantro. Set the salsa aside.

Grease a large dinner plate, and put the fish on it. Scatter on a little chopped parsley. Sit this plate on top of the pan of water and cover the fish with a lid or another plate. Bring to the boil and simmer for about 12 minutes, or until the fish is opaque. Remove the plate from the pan, and when cool enough to handle scrape the fish with a fork to break it into shreds.

While the fish is cooking, turn the saltines into coarse crumbs by putting them in bag and bashing them with an unopened can of food. You need about 1 cup. Mix these, the scallions, and the remaining parsley with the fish, and season with salt and pepper.

Put the mayonnaise in a small bowl and stir in the dry mustard, Worcestershire sauce, and beaten egg. Add this mixture to the fish mixture and combine. It should be rough, not smoothly blended.

Scatter half the panko on a plate. Wet your hands and form the mix-

ture into six or eight balls, flatten them slightly, and drop them onto the panko. Scatter the remaining panko on top, using enough to coat the fishcakes.

Chill for an hour, or longer if more convenient. To cook, heat a quarter-inch depth of oil in a frying pan and fry the fishcakes for 5 minutes, turning them carefully half way through. Serve with the salsa.

Serves 4.



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EVENTS

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THURSDAY, JUNE 5

Energy Park, Greenfield: 133 Skeelee, Jim Eagan, Boys of the Landfill. 6 p.m. Free.

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: Gin Blossoms, Copilot. 7 p.m. \$\$.

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

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Rubblebucket, Lollise. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

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

Third Street, Turners Falls: Cloudbelly, Michi Wiancko, The Rockin’ Puppies, ribbon cutting for wheatpaste mural project. Outdoors. 5 p.m. Free.

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls: Sadie’s Bikes Gumball Machine Takeover, with featured artists Scout Cuomo & Gray Maynard, Anna Knecht Schwarzer, Kathy Guo. 5 to 8 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: Crankie Show. Three crankies in 30 minutes. 5 p.m. Free.

Ja’Duke Theater, Turners Falls: Ja’Duke Showcase, with performances from over 55 classes. 6 p.m. \$.

Hungry Ghost, Northampton: Georgia Beattey, A Gezele Tey, potluck with giant sandwich. 6 p.m. No cover.

Chesterfield Town Hall, Chesterfield: Two-Step Night with Les Taiauts, The Honky-Tonk Angels, country karaoke. 6 p.m. Free.

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

Looky Here, Greenfield: Readings by Carolyn Zaikowski, L. Skully, Sarah Wisby, Jenny Abeles. 7 p.m. No cover.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: Slob Drop, Burly Girlies, Film & Gender. 7 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, PH Crosby’s The Plan and Konrad Rogowski’s Narrow House: Dreams to Let. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

Sena Farm Brewery, Worthington: Seven Mile Line. 7 p.m. No cover.

Workshop13, Ware: Silvie’s Okay, Olivia Nied, Roath, Bitter Grasses. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: TapRoots, Mal Maiz. 7 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Johnny Folsom 4, Johnny Cash tribute. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: Shenanigans with Friends. 8 p.m. No cover.

Iron Horse, Northampton: Dean Wareham, Escape-Ism. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: The Gaslight Tinkers. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Bella’s Bartok, JJ Slater. 8:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Family Fishing Day, with activities at the Center and shuttle to Barton Cove. Equipment



Tracy Grammer will direct readings of P.H. Crosby’s new play The Plan this Friday and Saturday at the LAVA Center in Greenfield.

provided. Children must be accompanied by an adult. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

Hadley Town Common, Hadley: NEPM Asparagus Festival, with Paul Beaubrun, The Greys, Splendid Torch, Le Fever, family activities, more. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. \$. By donation.

Downtown Greenfield: Franklin County Pride Parade. 12 p.m. Free.

Leverett Library, Leverett: 250th Anniversary Celebration Finale. Story scroll, time capsule, community quilt viewing, refreshments, more. 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.. Free.

Montague Center, Montague: Montague Center Playground Ribbon Cutting. Rain date June 14. 1 p.m. Free.

Energy Park, Greenfield: Pamela Means, Indë, Mz.October, B-52.0s, Queer Joy Chorus, Wylder Ayres, more. Pride Festival. 1 p.m. Free.

Ja’Duke Theater, Turners Falls: Ja’Duke Showcase with performances from over 55 classes. 2 and 6 p.m. \$.

Greenfield Records, Greenfield: Franklin’s Mint, Anthony Pasquarosa. 2 p.m. Free.

Nova Motorcycle, Turners Falls: Unsprung Moto Rally. Vintage bikes, friendly competition. Open house, 3 to 7 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: Torie Jock & Damage Control, Bass Sabbath, Ronald Pagan, The Other Broken Ones, more. 4 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: CitySpace Bluegrass, open jam. 4 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, PH Crosby’s The Plan and Konrad Rogowski’s Narrow House: Dreams to Let. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: Christine Ohlman, Rebel Montez. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton: Burnt Sugar: The Arkestra Chamber. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Belltower Records, North Adams: Julie Beth Napolin, Ezra Feinberg, Willie Lane. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Greenfield Garden Cinemas, Greenfield: Rocky Horror Picture Show, presented by the Come Again Players. 8 p.m. \$.

Midnight’s, Brattleboro: Pastel Panties, Henbane. 8 p.m. \$.

Cold Spring Hollow, Brattleboro: Olympic Deth, Microgoblet, Fred Cracklin, Rhubarb Duo. 8 p.m. \$.

EXHIBITS

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls: Art=Work, group show exploring how we value handmade work, through this Friday, June 6, with a closing reception from 5 to 8 p.m.

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

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

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: Guest artist Amanda Petrovato shows paper works inspired by sky, landscape, and natural history. June through July, with a reception this Saturday, June 7, from 1 to 4 p.m.

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, with a reception this Saturday, June 7, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: Lydia M. Kinney, solo exhibition; The Overlap, GCC student group exhibition. Both through June 13.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Portraits in RED: Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, paintings by Nayanna LaFond, through July. Opening this Saturday, June 7: Marlboro Reminders, works by Marlboro College alumni.

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.

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.

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

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.

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

CALLS FOR ART

Fiddleheads Art Gallery, Northfield: New England fiber artists are invited to submit work for consideration for the “Fall into Fiber Arts 2025” exhibit, to be held from September 12 to November 2. Deadline August 15. Details at deerfieldvalleyart.org.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Call for writers and artists to respond to each other’s works in a community exhibit on display in July and August. Rolling deadline, no fees. Details at thelavacenter.org.

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CALENDAR

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Olivia Nied, DJ Lupron, DJ £\$¢**. Franklin County Pride benefit and afterparty. 9 p.m. \$.

Se7ens, Easthampton: *Outer Styleie, Crowrider*. 9 p.m. Free.

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

Leverett Village Co-op, Leverett: *Spring Fling*. Live music, refreshments, vendors, craft projects for kids, lawn games. Ducks from Duckworld until 2 p.m. 12 to 4 p.m. Free.

Black Birch Vineyard, North Hatfield: *Zac Trojano*. 1:30 p.m. Free.

Ja'Duke Theater, Turners Falls: *Ja'Duke Showcase* with performances from over 55 classes. 2 p.m. \$.

Element Brewing Company, Millers Falls: *The Leftovers*. 2 p.m. No cover.

Mount Mineral Road, Wendell: *Mount Mineral Music Festival*. 2 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Great Falls Creative Movement Presents: Falling Into Magic*. 2:30 p.m. \$.

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: Poetry, *Candace R. Curran, Amy Gordon, Sara Letourneau*. 3 p.m. By donation.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Recent Diving Discoveries in the Connecticut River*, presented by scuba diver Annette Spaulding. 3:30 p.m. Free.

The Drake, Amherst: *The Soul Rebels*. 8 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JUNE 9

The Tank, Agawam: *Beaver Fever, Corbata, Brujo, Visceral Filth*. 6 p.m. \$.

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Open mic*. 7 p.m. Free.

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Houndmouth*. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Aimee Mann, Jonathan Coulton*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

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

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Candy Apple, Corrode, Rejekts, Cigs*. 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum, Hadley: *Tim Eriksen*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Writers Read* with Morning

Star Chenven, Joan Livingston, and Rebecca Daniels. 7 p.m. Free.

West Whately Chapel, Whately: *Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem, Darlin' Corey*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Jennie McAvoy; Orlen, Gabriel and Avery; The Klines*. 6 p.m. Free.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Perennial, Paper Lady, Gollylagging, Helen's Hands*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Justin Merle, DAYES*. 9:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open Mic*, with featured performer Pete Nelson. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, Sasha Aronson's *Aananda* and Stephen Fruchtman's *The Greatest Nation of All Time*. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *The Klines*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Great Barrington: *Steve Earle*. 8 p.m. \$\$.

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 15

Outlook Farm, Westhampton: *Strawberry Festival*. Pig roast, live music, taproom tasting. 12 to 4 p.m. \$.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Fields & Forests: What Do Bees Need?* Make your own native bee habitat by "painting" with yarn, fleece, pre-felt shapes, and water. 2 p.m. Free.

Jewish Community Center, Amherst: *Leverett Community Chorus, Caravan Chorus*. Benefit for Doctors without Borders. 4 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play readings, Sasha Aronson's *Aananda* and Stephen Fruchtman's *The Greatest Nation of All Time*. Talkbacks with playwrights. 7 p.m. \$.

Workshop13, Ware: *The Big League Collective, Norma Dream*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Moon Hollow, Amy McIntire*. 7 p.m. \$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Phrøeggs, Technicolor Ltd., Magic User*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Customers from Hell*, local community TV premiere and Q & A. 4:30 p.m. By donation.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Warm, Black Pyramid, A Constant Knowledge of Death, Loudsounds*. 8 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JUNE 16

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

Mt. Toby Meeting House, Leverett: *Supporting Our Immigrant Neighbors in a Time of Crisis*, with speakers from advocacy organizations. Sponsored by Leverett Together. 7 p.m. Free.

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 17

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Honoring Elders: Don and Janee Stone*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum, Hadley: *Thea Hopkins*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown, Alexis Marcelo* duo. 8 p.m. No cover.

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.

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

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Wildcat O'Halloran Band*. 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, Julien Baker & Torres, Ocie Elliott, TEKE::TEKE*, more. See greenriverfestival.com. 3 p.m. \$\$.

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.

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

Next Friday the 13th at 5 p.m., Springfield artist LESN101 and sample-based musician NAGO collaborate on Eternal: Elements, an improvisational mural-making performance in the walkway behind Northampton's A.P.E. Gallery. Free.

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

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

FRIDAY, JUNE 27

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

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Vya, Slowburning Daydream, Sleep Destroyer, Glass*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Don Gadi*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

TUESDAY, JULY 1

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Ocean Vuong*. 7 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, JULY 10

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

SATURDAY, JULY 12

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *John Gorka*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JULY 21

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

SATURDAY, JULY 26

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

FRIDAY, AUGUST 1

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Peace Talks, De Rodillas, Demented FX, Visceral Filth, The Eye*. 8 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

Black Birch Vineyard, North Hatfield: *Darlingside*. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 12

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

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Kinan Azmeh & CityBand*. 6 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

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

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Big E Court of Honor Stage, West Springfield: *Queensrÿche*. 8 p.m. \$.

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WEST ALONG from page B1

The smaller bone fragments remained in the sand-and-gravel mix and were part of the fill used in building the Route 2 extension through the swamp. Think about that the next time you drive that highway on the way to Route 91.

The remains dumped and bulldozed into White Ash Swamp were reburied without proper ceremony, without any dignity or respect. Those acts of desecration have been at the heart of controversy, negotiations, and broken promises – until now.

This newest chapter involves Cerruzzi, LLC, the swamp’s current owner; the City of Greenfield; local tribal officials; and the Nolumbeka Project, an organization whose board I serve on.

Nolumbeka’s precursor organization, the Friends of Wissatin-

newag, purchased the Wissatinnewag site in 1999. The sand there containing burial grounds could no longer be desecrated, thanks to the 1990 federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

There was an effort to rezone the desecrated site from light industrial to commercial use, but the citizens of Greenfield voted down the zoning change proposal, which would have given the green light to building a big box store on the desecrated 40-acre Wissatinnewag site. After long negotiations, that site was sold to the Friends. A conservation restriction was promptly placed on the property, which for the last 25 years has been progressively healing itself. Natural vegetation succession growth is reclaiming the disfigured and scarified site.

The new chapter is being written as you read this.

Cerruzzi, LLC has found a buyer for the excavated basin abutting the White Ash Swamp across from Wissatinnewag where the remains were dumped. If all goes according to plan, the White Ash Swamp reburial grounds, protected by a city burial ordinance, will be ceded and deeded by the LLC to the Nolumbeka Project, which will hold the property until regional Native groups form a coalition to hold the lands collectively.

The Pocumtuck tradition of honoring inter-tribal stewardship in the zone at the falls will be renewed, respected, and restored. The remains of those ancestors who lived and journeyed here to this deeply spiritual place will now rest in peace.

David Brule is president of the board of directors of the Nolumbeka Project.



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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

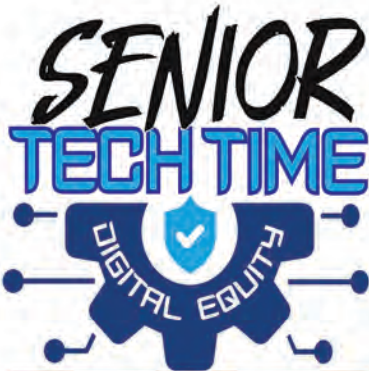
Saturday: One Last Leverett 250th Event

The Leverett 250th team is wrapping up its celebrations of the town’s 250th anniversary with a final reception this Saturday, June 7 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Leverett Library, 75 Montague Road.

The event will include a final opportunity to write or draw on the Story Scroll, which will be archived for future residents to see in 50 years! You can also view the Time Capsule and learn about the contents before it is capped and archived for 50 years – and this time we will leave detailed

notes so everyone knows where to find it in 2074!

The event will be held in the library’s Community Room where guests can see the beautiful community quilt that was created for the 250th anniversary and learn about the town quilters who pieced together the squares. There will be refreshments and the finale is open to all. Let’s share a moment together as we put a year of community celebrations behind us and look forward to new challenges and collaboration!



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In partnership with the Gill Montague Council on Aging, Franklin County Technical School Web and Programming Courses, and Franklin Regional Council of Governments. This project is funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the Mass Tech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Implementation Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds.

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