

The Montague Reporter

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Thunder Heads to Finals After an Epic Comeback



Addison Talbot, Marilyn Abarua, and Mia Marigliano celebrate the Thunder's stunning come-from-behind 8-7 win in the eighth inning of the MLAA Division 5 semifinal Wednesday.

By MATT ROBINSON

LOWELL – This week the Turners Falls Softball Thunder, the reigning Division 5 state champions, beat two very good teams to advance into the championship game once again.

It wasn't easy – at this level, every opponent is formidable, and Powertown needed every break they could get just to keep their season going. In both games, Blue had to dig their way out of holes as Narragansett and Georgetown took early leads.

TFHS 6 – Narragansett 3

Last Sunday the Thunder overcame a 3-1 deficit to defeat the Narragansett Warriors 6-3. The game was slated for Saturday, but a day-long spring thunderstorm postponed the battle until Sunday.

At the game, fans were communicating with people who were at the Greenfield-West Boylston game. Green was down 4-0 in the fifth, but scored three runs to make it a 4-3 game heading into the bottom of the seventh. Then, one by one, fans announced that Greenfield had scored two runs in the final inning to top the Westies 5-4.

But most weren't interested in the Greenfield game. They came to watch the Thunder.

Turners drew first blood, with leadoff batter Mia Marigliano cracking a triple in the bottom of the first. Two quick outs dampened the Thunder's hopes, but Janelle Massey hit the ball into the outfield to send Marigliano home.

In the third, the Warriors struck back. A hit batsman and two singles loaded the bases with one out.

see **SPORTS** page A6

Pomp, Robes, and Roses: Forty Graduate from TFHS

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – The lights in the high school gymnasium were bright, the air conditioning was brisk, the bleachers were nearly full and the energy was proud and excited as the band launched into the familiar, irreversible opening strains of *Pomp and Circumstance*.

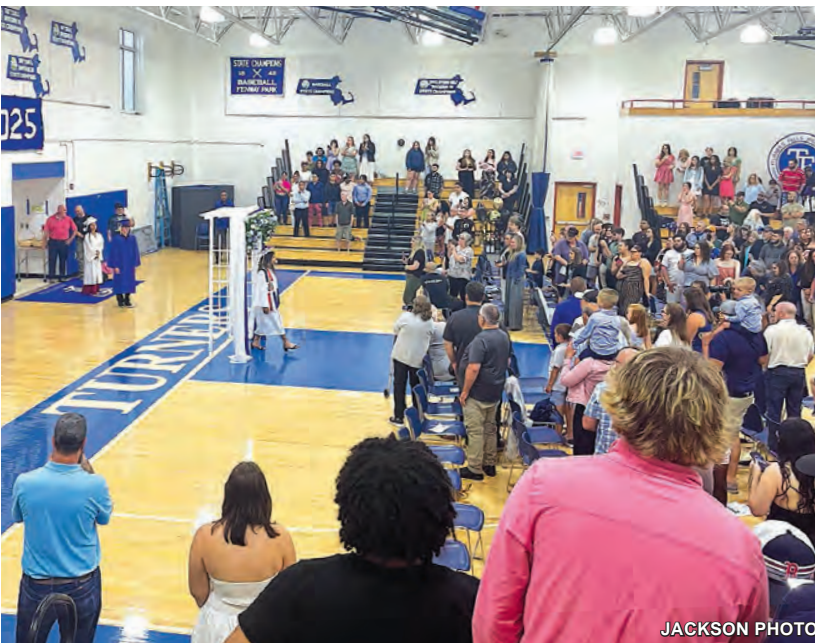
Forty graduating Turners Falls

High School seniors processed, one by one, through a freestanding arch as they entered the gym.

Three faced a final high-stakes test before their diploma: delivering a public speech.

"After today, we will officially be let out into the real world," class co-president Sofia Moreno Sibrian mused. "The Class of 2025 is full of

see **GRADUATE** page A8



Marilyn Abarua Corona, the first of the Turners Falls High School Class of 2025 alphabetically, was the first to pass through this flower-bedecked archway into the graduation ceremony last Friday.

G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Reduction, Turnover of Admin Staff Cause Worry

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Three candidates for interim superintendent of Gill-Montague schools will be interviewed in a public session this Thursday evening, as the district prepares to make a hire before the departure of superintendent Brian Beck at the end of the month.

At the school committee's regular meeting on Tuesday, members raised anxiety about the district's administrative capacity in the coming year. One high-level position, the director of teaching and learning, is being eliminated due to a budget shortfall, and the committee reluctantly approved two restructuring proposals while expressing concern about the schools' ability to keep up on grant funding.

As the meeting began, Gill first-grade teacher Jenay Hall used the public comment period to speak, "representing staff members across the district," about turnover in another top position, the director of pupil services.

see **GMRSD** page A5

Gill Voters OK Budget, Nix Bump For Assessor

By KATE SAVAGE

Around 60 people gathered at Gill's town hall Monday for the second part of the annual town meeting. The meeting handout warned that the town faced a "Perfect Storm" of increased costs, raising its proposed FY'26 operating budget 9.3% from the current year. But the main debate of the evening focused on whether the town should budget even more for its assessor role.

The greatest budget growth comes from a \$224,165 higher assessment for the Gill-Montague regional school district, a growth of 12.7% from the current year. Gill's student enrollment increased 18%, while Montague's fell 4.5%. "This was a double whammy," the meeting handout explained. "Not only do we have more students to pay for, but our share of the overall District budget increased as well."

The town is also paying \$19,221 more to Franklin County Technical School, as its share of attendance rose by 23%.

Ambulance service is increasing \$30,745 for the next fiscal year, as Northfield EMS expands its staffing

see **GILL** page A4

Depot Street Self-Storage Draws Storm of Opposition

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague's zoning board of appeals found themselves barraged Wednesday night with negative "public comments" about a proposal to construct a self-storage facility in a former trolley barn at Montague City Road and Depot Street.

The proposal, presented at the meeting by the building's new owner Michael Skalski, was criticized by residents of the neighborhood and others who use the bike path which passes the property. Complaints were voiced by attendees at the packed upstairs meeting room at town hall, as well as some who attended the hearing via Zoom and others who submitted comments by email, which ZBA members read aloud from a large pile of printed documents.

The core criticism of the plan was that the proposal violates the

see **STORAGE** page A7



The onetime street trolley barn has long been used for storage, leading the zoning board to conclude, over the objections of abutters, that self-storage is not a new use.

Farren Project Still In Rezoning Doldrums

By SARAH ROBERTSON

MONTAGUE CITY – Redeveloping the empty lot where the Farren Care Center once stood may require a developer willing to strike a balance between profitability, housing affordability, density, and open space. On Tuesday night town officials held the latest in a series of public sessions gathering input on what the community wants to see

happen there in order to determine what zoning changes, if any, may be necessary to achieve those goals.

"When we look at our needs, the higher the density the more attractive it's going to be for a developer," said Montague Center resident Rob Steinberg, chair of the town's Economic Development and Industrial Corporation. "The town has an unfortunate history of making so

see **FARREN** page A5

Aging Mural Will Retire

By LILIAN AUTLER

TURNERS FALLS – This village will soon have a new mural in the alley off Third Street next to the Brick House Community Resource Center, thanks to the work of local artists, Brick House staff, and teen center youth.

For almost 20 years, the wall of the adjacent building has been home to a mural created by an earlier generation of Brick House staff and youth in 2006. The background of the mural features song lyrics and poetry that run the length of the wall, highlighting the silhouettes of 16 people. These are tracings of the artists, and each is filled in with images and symbols that were meaningful to them: a tiger, a dragon, and other animals; Beavis and Butt-Head, Freddie Krueger,

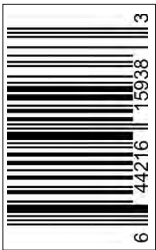
see **MURAL** page A4



Brick House youth programs director Hannah Bertrand points out damage and vandalism on the 2006 mural across the alley from the community center.

Mmmmm... Turnovers

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The Montague Reporter

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Letters to the Editors

Vitality Vs. Decline

Norman Mailer said it best: “There was that law of life, so cruel and so just, that one must grow or else pay more for remaining the same.” For Montague, this is not just a quote – it’s a warning. Our town, like many in Franklin County, faces serious economic and demographic challenges: an aging population, aging infrastructure, and not enough housing – especially for young families and seniors who want to stay in town.

Commercial rents remain low, about \$15 per square foot, which is not enough to support new construction. If we want a thriving downtown with businesses, services, and housing that meets the needs of all ages and incomes, we need to re-think how – and where – we grow.

Fortunately, Montague has a real opportunity. Several sites are becoming available that could be ideal for walkable, higher-density development: a mix of market-rate and affordable apartments with retail or service businesses on the ground floor. These types of developments can be compact, attractive, and designed to fit the character of our town. More importantly, they pay for themselves – and help pay for everything else.

Some residents are advocating for large-lot zoning or new parkland. Their concerns are valid: change can feel risky, and no one wants to lose what makes Montague special.

But one-acre zoning doesn’t solve our problems. It adds to them. According to the American Farmland

Trust, towns like ours often lose money on low-density development – spending more on services than we collect in property taxes. Meanwhile, the demand for affordable housing, especially among seniors and working families, continues to grow.

Mixed-use development helps us grow the tax base without sprawling into open space. It supports local business, reduces traffic by putting people closer to what they need, and brings younger residents who will help keep our schools, our Town departments, and our economy strong.

Montague already has what people want: riverfront beauty, a vibrant arts scene, restaurants, trails, and community. What we lack is housing that allows more people to enjoy those things.

To attract responsible developers, we can rezone key areas, offer tax incentives, and tap into state and federal grants that support affordable housing. We can design this future ourselves – or wait until economic pressures force change without planning.

The choice isn’t density versus character. It’s vitality versus decline. We can grow in a way that respects our history, preserves our beauty, and secures our future. Let’s make a choice for the future – before the cost of staying the same becomes too much for Montague to bear.

Rob Steinberg
Chair of the Montague Economic Development & Industrial Corporation (EDIC)

Love Vs. Vs.

I just wanted to say that I am very impressed with whoever came up with the idea of placing that large stone with the beautiful painting welcoming me into Montague. At the beginning of Greenfield Road and Montague City Road it greets me and makes me happy every time I drive by it. So, thanks for someone’s creativity. One of the reasons I love Montague.

And on another note... I see these “Stop Hate” signs on people’s lawns around town and I must admit that

it makes me feel uncomfortable, because you don’t stop hate. It’s the language that’s negative. I think perhaps a more positive approach would be something like “Promote Peace” or “encourage harmony, or perhaps “love created us like itself.” Words are powerful... and to quote Mother Teresa, “I will never attend an anti-war rally. If you have a peace rally, invite me.” Affirm the positive.

Brian McWizard
Montague Center



Visitors to the Leverett Village Co-op’s Spring Fling on Sunday were delighted to discover Sapsucker Gourmet Popcorn, the brainchild of Jared Pearson and Sarah Robertson, who writes for this paper. The pair served up eight flavors of popcorn, tossed with either olive oil or butter, in paper tubs with chopsticks – to keep fingers clean! Thai peanut was the most popular flavor of the day. Sapsucker will be at Wendell Old Home Days, the Leverett Co-op’s Fall Fest, and the Big River Chestnut Festival. Contact them for more events at sapsuckerpopcorn@gmail.com.

OP ED

Greenfield Education Association ‘Dismayed’ Over Resignation Of Superintendent Patenaude

By ANN VALENTINE, TARA CLOUTIER, JUDY BENNETT, KIM HERLIHY, LUKE MARTIN, and ANNA McBEAN

GREENFIELD – The Greenfield Education Association is dismayed with the resignation of Superintendent Patenaude during this challenging time.

In service to this district over the last 16 years, Ms. Patenaude led with the utmost integrity and always put the best interests of Greenfield’s students, staff, and families at the forefront of every decision. The recent attacks and accusations regarding school budget management do not reflect the dedication, superb management, attention to detail, and transparency she has consistently demonstrated.

Karin Patenaude’s approach, which consistently fosters open dialogue with stakeholders, built trust within GPS schools, staff, students, families, and the broader community. During this budget season she demonstrated a willingness to answer budget-related questions from the School Committee, the City Council, the mayor, and the community, working closely with the school business manager from TMS to provide regular budget planning information and explanations of best and historical fiscal practice. Her commitment to open communication and transparency in financial matters is beyond reproach.

If the city wishes to conduct an independent audit of the years that TMS has managed the school department’s finances, we fully support that process. We are confident that such a review will confirm Superintendent Patenaude’s commitment to responsible stewardship of public funds and ensure she receives the respect she deserves as the highly qualified professional that she is.

The hostile and accusatory tone from some members of the School Committee and City Council meetings – including the mayor – this year toward Superintendent Patenaude alarms the GEA membership. Because of the severe shortage of competent superintendents in Mas-

sachusetts, we felt lucky that Superintendent Patenaude chose to put her expertise, efforts, and talents to work for our district and the children in our city.

As educators, we know the importance of stable leadership for our schools and the negative impacts which will result from losing such an effective leader. Before beginning the search for a new Superintendent, it is in the best interest of Greenfield Public Schools and its constituents for the School Committee and City Council to reflect on their conduct and their ability to make decisions in the best interest of the city.

The future of this district is now more challenging and more precarious than under Superintendent Patenaude’s leadership. While we recognize the constraints now imposed by the mayor’s budget, the GEA expects bargaining to continue in good faith and hopes the hiring of a new Superintendent will not be used as an excuse to delay the current contract negotiations. The GEA is pleased that contract agreements have been reached for Unit A and Unit C.

Research and case studies show that trust in our educational leaders is critical, and that benevolent, competent, and reliable leadership – like that demonstrated by Patenaude – builds stability and consistency for staff and students, especially during challenging times.

To put it simply, the GEA is disheartened with the conduct and tone of the mayor, the School Committee, and the City Council over these last several months. Karin Patenaude’s leadership of Greenfield Public Schools kept our members hopeful about the future of the schools despite this challenging time. Her resignation extinguished our optimism, as the remaining elected officials have proven themselves to be beneath the moment.

Ann Valentine, Tara Cloutier, Judy Bennett, Kim Herlihy, Luke Martin, and Anna McBean make up the executive board of the Greenfield Education Association. They can be reached at greenfieldeducationassociation@gmail.com.

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PHONE: (413) 863-8666
EMAIL:
editor@montaguereporter.org
ads@montaguereporter.org
bills@montaguereporter.org
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org
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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY. (Going once...)

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

People keep sending photos of the **collapsed barn!** It does look cool. It also holds still for a portrait, doesn't it. Beware the pull of scenic ruins.

The **air quality in these parts** has been poor this week, due largely to wildfires in Canada. If you have a smartphone and like to worry effectively, there are a number of good, free apps providing live maps of air particulate levels.

We are looking for one or two **drivers for very small delivery routes in Greenfield.** Inquire within. The reward will mainly not be received in this lifetime, but we guarantee it nevertheless. And we will give you gas money. And free papers. Join the family!

Hot tip: "If people want to have a spectacular viewing of mountain laurel, they should drive up to Chestnut Hill and around the Loop," our faithful correspondent Donna Petersen writes. "The power lines especially are a rolling cascade of mountain laurels in shades from **lightest pink to deep rose.** The colors go on and on into the distance. Beautiful!"

Greenfield environmental journalist and gadfly Karl Meyer shared with us that the state Department of Environmental Protection has **dismissed his appeal of their approval** of FirstLight's water quality certificate.

Karl's appeal was a Hail Mary – he told us when he filed it that it was "kind of a prayer" – turning a laser focus on the phenomenon of water flowing south to north in the Connecticut at times the company is filling up Northfield Mountain at full speed. He attached vector maps produced by the company itself indicating the truthfulness of this often-banded-about phenomenon, and argued this violated the stated aim of the Clean Water Act "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity" of rivers, namely the physical part.

"Mr. Meyer claims to be 'an aggrieved person,' the Commonwealth's determination reads. "However, the information contained in his Notice of Claim and subsequent submissions does not adduce sufficient facts to suggest that he will suffer any injury in fact different in kind from that suffered by the general public..."

Our high school sports correspondent Matt Robinson stopped by the **Turners Falls Class of**

1975 reunion this weekend at the French King Restaurant, and sent in this photo. Holy cow, that's 50 years, isn't it?

The nearly simultaneous departures from our mortal coil of **Sly Stone on Monday and Brian Wilson on Wednesday** are sad and not shocking but odd in combination. Those two 82-year-old men both did so much to change American music, and they both faced so many personal demons along the way.

Our state Congressional delegation has been making a fuss this week about termination of federal grants established under the **Digital Equity Act**, including a number which were supporting the extension of internet access, connectivity, and education in rural areas.

It's a good reminder... besides everything else questionable about it, hacking in a frenzy at anything in the government labeled "equity" is going to be bad for us rural dwellers.



The **Pride parade in Greenfield** last Saturday was very largely attended despite the rain, though most people headed home right after the march's end to dry out instead of sticking around to party at Energy Park. Above is my favorite sign of the day. 10/10 political messaging, no notes.

Any sunwatchers out there? We're told the **sunsets are now getting earlier** – it happens ahead of the solstice, apparently, though the days are still getting slightly longer this week in total. Funny.

This notice came in this week and we didn't get a chance to put it elsewhere:

"The public is invited to join University of Massachusetts Amherst



astronomers to observe sunrise and sunset on the longest day of the year among UMass Amherst Sunwheel's standing stones on Friday, June 20 at 5 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. UMass Amherst astronomer Stephen Schneider, who will lead this event for the final time after doing so for the past 14 years, will explain the astronomical cause of the solstice and how the Sunwheel works."

And this:
"At the evening session, if the sky is clear, a solar telescope will be set up to safely view the surface of the sun. During this period of strong solar activity, sunspots and solar prominences are often visible."
Type UMass Sunwheel into the thing to find out how to get there. Rain will cancel.

Last week we ran a photo on this page of a bear rampaging in the Patch, and Monday morning we came in to an email from Craig and Susan Cornett, with the above picture attached.

"Thursday morning we were surprised to find **a bear feasting on the bird feeders in our backyard**, just north of the Bookmill," they write. "Sorry birds, no feed for you for a while!"
Bears everywhere!

Now through June 30, United way of the Franklin & Hampshire Region is holding its annual **diaper drive**. We can think of few people more deserving of help than babies subject to diaper shortage, few ways to improve life outcomes more dollar-to-dollar effective than just buying diapers for people who need them.

Here's their pitch:
"Not everyone knows about diaper need in Western Massachusetts, but it remains a critical issue for many low-income families. In

March 2022, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Vermont and the Greater Boston Food Bank found that 36% of Massachusetts families with young children could not afford enough diapers for their children. Even more striking, the National Diaper Bank Network reported in 2024 that nationally, one out of every two families with young children struggle to buy diapers.

"Though high rates of diaper need are reported among those receiving food assistance, SNAP and WIC cannot be used to buy diapers, even though they are crucial to the healthy development of infants and toddlers. Diapers can cost as much as \$100 per month, per child, and prices continue to rise. According to NielsenIQ, the average cost of diapers increased by 32% from 2019 to 2024.

"Most daycare and early education programs require families to provide disposable diapers in order for children to attend. Without enough clean diapers, children lose out on valuable developmental programming and guardians miss work. Many families are forced to decide between changing a diaper and paying for utilities, rent, clothing, and other important needs....

"For information about how to donate or host a donation drop-off box at your organization or business, visit uw-fh.org/diaper-drive, call (413) 584-3962 x102, or email info@uw-fh.org.

"Contributions will help UWFH collect the nearly 20,000 diapers it distributes each month via its diaper bank to 14 local agencies supporting our community. Greenfield Savings Bank is matching all monetary donations up to \$10,000."

We weren't invited to, but the *Montague Reporter* officially endorses this business with the getting diapers to babies.

Anyone following the **New York mayoral primary?** Pretty interesting stuff going on down there.

Seems like pretty weird times for the country as a whole right now, in fact. Curious what you think.... We're always in need of more Letters to the Editors.

Two more editions until we take our first **summer week off**.

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

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MURAL from page A1

and Kermit the Frog; camouflage paired with an American flag; a free speech slogan; musical instruments; symbols of lost friends.

The discussion about creating a new mural began when the building's owner, Spencer Peterman, approached the Brick House to express his interest in a change. Brick House community arts engagement coordinator Kaia Jackson said the non-profit has also "been thinking about how to revitalize the alley, plant herbs, and create a space where youth are excited to engage in activities that can also bring the community in."

Creating a new mural on Peterman's building, Jackson said, was seen as an opportunity to "center youth voices in many different ways, from the conceptual to the visual, that valued their different gifts and passions."

The 2006 mural represents a snapshot in time from the era when it was created, and current participants at the teen center are not necessarily familiar with the artists, musicians, movies, lyrics, and other references it depicts. In addition, some areas have been damaged by paint splat-



Onetime Brick House employee Athecia Yager stopped by Wednesday and spent a moment with the 2006 tracing of herself before the mural is painted over.

GILL from page A1

and services. "It is a critical service we cannot be without, and there are no other realistic options for coverage," the handout explained. The costs are expected to continue rising for several years.

Health insurance costs for the town rose by \$35,526. The handout attributed this increase to the widespread use of GLP-1 drugs such as Ozempic and Wegovy for diabetes and weight loss. The handout suggested this cost would stabilize or "who knows, even decrease" as insurers are cutting their coverage of these drugs for off-label use.

Town meeting unanimously approved a budget of just over \$5 million, with nearly \$2 million of that going toward the school district. It also unanimously approved a 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for appointed town employees, in line with this year's Social Security COLA, which the town uses as a benchmark.

Dashed Assessor Aspirations

Members of the board of assessors paused the budget discussion to ask for the creation of a new position: principal assessor, which would begin at a higher step in the wage scale than the current position, assistant to the assessors. The current assistant to the assessors is Diane Sumrall, who has undergone training and certifications to increase her scope of work.

The budget as written would already have increased Sumrall's pay by \$6,849, nearly 17%. The proposal would have raised Sumrall's annual pay by \$3,325. After lengthy discussion, this was rejected by majority vote.

Some board members expressed support for the proposal and admiration for Sumrall's work, but said they were frustrated that the issue was

being raised at town meeting rather than going through the personnel, finance, and selectboard committees.

"We have other people in the town hall that I feel are grossly underpaid, and they're not necessarily taking a raise this year," said selectboard member Greg Snedeker. "I don't appreciate being caught off guard with this."

"This is not a surprise to anybody who's been a part of this process," countered board of assessors member Pamela Lester. "We worked on this for a year and a half."

Some attendees voiced support for providing better jobs to local officials rather than see those positions become regionalized, fearing regionalization would lead to less responsive service and even higher costs. "Today, if you have a question or issue regarding your property assessment, you can call or walk into town hall and have a conversation with a real live person," said board of assessors member Tim Storrow.

"I just want to make sure we're very careful with precedents that we're setting," said resident Jenn Waldron, noting that other departments could easily use the forum to ask for raises. "We're very lucky to have people that adore each other so much, and are working hard together. I just want us to be careful how we do these things."

Finance committee member Tupper Brown expressed appreciation to the board of assessors for continuing to push the issue. "[Sumrall is] absolutely wonderful," he said. "She couldn't be better, both in terms of her professionalism and in terms of her openness and willingness to talk to anybody. She's exactly the kind of person we want.... I would be glad to have whatever level of compensation is necessary for Diane

to be really happy in this town, and to stay here, but I don't want to fool with the office tonight."

Following the motion's rejection, Lester moved to accept a Massachusetts general law which would provide up to \$1,000 in additional pay for qualified assessors. The motion was declared out of order, as its scope was beyond the topics listed on the warrant.

Free Cash Floweth

Gill received a bumper crop of "free cash" over the last year, and officials are still trying to figure out where it came from. Free cash includes unspent department budgets and higher-than-expected tax revenues. The town's free cash grew by \$667,000 in FY'24, far in excess of the usual amount of around \$200,000.

Town meeting voted to put \$80,000 of it toward the town budget in order to reduce the tax rate and avoid a Proposition 2½ override, \$109,816 toward the final payment on a highway truck and the first payment on the fire truck, \$10,000 toward retiree benefits, and the rest in stabilization accounts, which can be used for surprise costs in the future.

Resident Dorothy Storrow asked why more couldn't be used toward the town budget to lower the tax rate. Town administrator Ray Purington answered that Gill is still seeking clarification about the source of the money, "to make sure that what seems too good to be true really is true." He also cautioned against using one-time funds to cover ongoing operating costs.

Storrow asked that the finance committee and selectboard keep residents informed about the status and source of this windfall by publishing updates in the town newsletter.



Participants in the 2006 mural project made paper tracings of each other, traced those silhouettes onto the building's wall, then each filled their own outlines with symbols of personal significance.

ters, graffiti, and weathering.

This spring, the Brick House brought on local artists Nellie Marshall-Torres and Clark Jackson (no relation to Kaia) to lead a creative process in collaboration with the teen center youth. They walked around the downtown area with the program participants to look at oth-

er murals and gather ideas.

The young people shared words, stories, and visual ideas that the artists have incorporated into a new mural design. They expressed strong interest in nature themes and images of animals doing things that kids do.

"There are many personalities among the kids, but they all seemed to agree on the theme of woodland creatures doing Brick House stuff," said Marshall-Torres. "They are excited about contributing to a new mural even if they don't necessarily think of themselves as artists.... There is a sense of connection and mutual aid among the creatures, who are sharing food and doing activities together."

The mural may include images of frogs playing basketball, a rabbit eating ramen noodles, a turtle on a skateboard, a salamander eating ice cream, a racoon on a scooter, a singing snake, and a skunk playing the drums.

Clark Jackson is a farmer, illustrator, and painter who was brought into the project by Torres-Marshall. "It's been fun to get to know the teens and see the Brick House in action," he said. "I love art, and doing art with kids is very inspiring. They're much less inhibited than adults."

In preparation for a large Community Paint Day this Saturday, June 14, the artists will complete the mural design, clean up the old mural wall, apply a base coat of primer, and then project the new design onto the wall and trace outlines of the shapes. On Saturday participants will use a printout of the design and a color chart to paint the figures.

One goal of the project for the Brick House, which moved its teen center into the Third Street building next door in 2004, is to memorialize the original mural and bring it into conversation with the new one. Staff members have been in touch with the artists and former youth and



Former Brick House outreach coordinator Karen Stinchfield reminisced about the original mural project and the early years of the Brick House's presence on Third Street.

adults who were involved in creating the 2006 mural. On Wednesday, a small "goodbye gathering" was held in the alley.

Karen Stinchfield, the former Brick House outreach coordinator who led the creation of the mural, was present, as was Athecia Yager, who had started with the organization as a teen and was a young adult staff member at the time of the mural project. Stinchfield and Yager reflected on the project's significance, both for themselves and for the former youth represented in each of the silhouettes.

Some, they said, are still living in the area, with jobs and in some cases children of their own. Others they have lost touch with. In 2006, many were facing difficult circumstances at home.

"We just need to say goodbye to it," said Stinchfield. "We can be happy that they're creating something new, even if it's sad for us. The mural process changed us forever — we were here on the weekends, one participant's father died during the process. The conversations that we

had really bonded us."

"It's in our hearts to be in community with folks who were involved in the previous mural, knowing that it was meaningful to them," said Kaia Jackson. "We want to make space for processing change." The hired artists have been considering ways of preserving certain elements of the original mural, including the figure of a pink rat, the pet of a former youth, that is considered iconic.

"We are looking at how to honor different eras, and not erase history," said Kaia Jackson. "The mural doesn't have to represent one unified story; it can be multi-layered and textured... My interest is to use this as an opportunity to tell the story of the previous mural."

The Community Paint Day will be held in the alley at 22 Third Street this Saturday, June 14 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Community members of all ages are welcome to participate in the collaborative process. The rain date is Sunday, June 15 from 2 to 5 p.m.



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FARREN from page A1

many requirements, and being so specific in its desires, that it doesn’t attract any developers.”

Town planner Maureen Pollock facilitated the virtual meeting along with consultants from Innes Associates hired to help Montague rezone the neighborhood. The project is receiving funding from the state Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

Having analyzed responses from the most recent input session in April, Pollock and Innes ranked participants’ top priorities: “affordable housing,” followed by “public benefits,” and then “economic value.”

“Montague City’s new village center will be a dense, mixed-use hub that unites the surrounding community and unlocks new housing and economic opportunities in Montague,” Emily Innes, president of the consulting firm, read from a slide. “The village center will be focused on inclusivity, meeting the needs of all residents and visitors, regardless of age or income. New development within the village center will enhance the quality of life and showcase Montague City’s commitment to public health, arts and culture, and natural resources.”

Innes and her colleague Paula Ramos Martinez presented three model scenarios – designed for the town last year by another consulting firm, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) – that blend commercial and residential spaces at different degrees of density, and asked the forum’s approximately 30 attendees to answer polls giving feedback about each.

Innes said her firm will use the data to draft a zoning amendment for the neighborhood that best accommodates these wishes, and present the proposed change to the selectboard and planning board in September.

The lot is currently zoned as “Central Business,” which does not permit single- or two-family homes, but allows mixed-use developments with commercial space at street level and apartments above. Other parts of town zoned as “General Business” allow single- and multi-family housing with a special permit.

Zoning board of appeals (ZBA) member David Jensen, who served for decades as Montague’s building inspector, asked whether the land would be sold or leased to developers under the model scenarios, and if there was a way to retain local ownership of homes and businesses.

“Presumably, we can’t control whether something like this gets condo-ed out,” Jensen said. “Is there any attempt to restrict that, control it, or encourage it?”

Innes answered that the town could implement overlay districts to incentivize specific types of development.

“Any municipality that disposes of municipal land can dispose of that land subject to certain criteria,” she said. “One of the things that the town of Montague could do is define that criteria in the [request for proposals], which could include specifications about ownership types, or development standards.”

“The two overlays can be so ponderous as to become

unusable,” Jensen replied. “It’s not easy to develop anymore – housing is off the scale. If this is a desire of the town, we have to make it easy enough for somebody. If they’re going to apply their money, we’re going to have to accommodate their creativity.”

At least two attendees expressed interest in seeing a “co-housing” community built on the lot, while others said they wanted to see a form of phased development or subdivision of the site to allow for more flexibility over its future use.

Betty Tegel, a Turners Falls resident and disability rights advocate, expressed the need for accessible housing and parking options, as well as homeownership opportunities for seniors who want to age in place.

Montague Center resident Will Quale asked how many housing units were included under each potential scenario. Innes answered that the possibilities ranged from as few as 19 units in one scenario to as many as 199 in another.

Martinez emphasized the “strategic” location of the Farren site, being connected to downtown Turners Falls by both bus and bike routes.

“We have the bus stop because of the hospital,” she said. “Right now we do not have the hospital, so this bus stop could be eliminated if there is not a lot of use. Adding something to make this place a destination can incentivize the use of that bus stop, and prevent that stop [from being] eliminated.”

Montague City resident Peter Hudyma argued that allowing the nearby Canalside Rail Trail bike path to run through the lot and building a public park around it would have a significant benefit to the community.

“Montague City is the only village in the town of Montague that doesn’t have a public park,” Hudyma said. “It seems to me this would be the ideal location for it, because of the existing infrastructure. With the addition of a few picnic tables under the picnic shelters and the extension of the bike path, you would have a wonderful asset for the people of the community, and also whichever future residents would choose to live here.”

“Also,” Hudyma continued, “saving some property – not developing every square inch to allow for future town use – I think might be appropriate.”

Pollock said the development could include both parkland and housing.

“Once we get to writing a request for proposal for a possible development, we might not parcel out the whole property for development,” she said. “We might subdivide it into smaller parcels that would allow us the flexibility and control of choosing which parcels we want to develop.”

After Innes Associates presents the town with the proposed zoning amendments in September, the selectboard and planning board would vote on whether to send them to a special town meeting for final approval.



GRMSD from page A1

Hall said that there had been “no communication to staff asking for volunteers” to serve on a search committee for the job, as is often the practice, and that hiring has been most successful when it is “founded on collaborative processes.”

Hall added that teachers were also concerned that some of the tasks of the director of teaching and learning position would fall on them.

Business manager Joanne Blier reported that the current fiscal year appears to be finishing with a “small surplus,” and that Gill town meeting had approved the town’s assessment to the district, “so we do have a budget” for FY’26.

For the fiscal year now ending, Blier asked the committee to transfer \$100,000 in surplus instructional funds, largely left by “unfilled positions,” to cover deficits in employee separation and health insurance budgets, and another \$80,500 to cover deficits in special ed and foster child transportation lines.

“I understand transportation costs are going through the roof right now,” said newly elected Montague member Steve Ellis, recently the town administrator. “Have we built increased cost assumptions into next year’s budget?”

Blier made a face. “This wasn’t blowing up at the time when we were building the budget,” she replied.

When it came time to sign warrants to pay current invoices, normally a routine task, Montague member Cliff Spatcher raised red flags for the second consecutive meeting about vaguely labeled maintenance costs. This time he pointed to lines totalling \$10,155 for repairs to the Gill Elementary heating control system.

Blier said these bills represented a year’s worth of troubleshooting and repairs. The warrant was approved 6-1, with Spatcher opposed, and Ellis and Blier again urging him to meet with facilities manager Heath Cummings.

“While Heath has broad expertise,” Beck said, “he doesn’t have your level of expertise in this area, and it would be good for him to be able to hear your concerns.”

Spatcher said he wouldn’t mind doing this.

Two staffing reorganizations were approved, reluctantly. The first would return to an earlier system of having separate assistant principals at the middle and high school, and one dean, rather than one and two; this would add \$20,156 to the FY’26 budget.

The other would give the director of pupil services a part-time assistant by replacing the secondary school nurse with a part-time “float-er” nurse and eliminating the family engagement coordinator position. This would save \$15,792.

Ellis recused himself from the entire staffing discussion, as his wife Dianne Ellis is currently back covering the pupil services position on an interim basis, and he said she may be interested in working in the department in the future.

The new assistant would also handle “special projects,” including administering the district’s federal “title” grants.

Montague member Carol Jacobs, herself a former school superintendent, reiterated her concern that the related elimination of the teaching and learning director was “not a good situation.” “There’s just so much work,” she warned. “I still say we should have looked harder for a way to fund that position.”

Gill member Bill Tomb wondered whether federal education grants will be available in future years.

“I think that’s distressing for everybody, and I don’t have an answer to that,” Beck told him.

The elimination of the family engagement position would mean

Selectboard Executive Assistant

The Town of Montague is seeking applications for the position of **Selectboard Executive Assistant**. The position is a key member of the Selectboard Office, working alongside the Town Administrator to provide excellent technical and clerical assistance to the Montague Selectboard. The position is a primary point of contact to the Selectboard Office for citizens and employees of Montague. The position manages employee onboarding, enrollments, and personnel records, provides citizen customer service, manages licensure, prepares for weekly Selectboard meetings and semi-annual Town Meetings, and related tasks. The position supervises a part-time administrative assistant.

Candidates for this position should have at minimum an associate’s degree and/or 3 to 5 years of experience in a similar role or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Experience with municipal government is a plus but not required.

This is a 35 hour/week position with excellent benefits including an 80% health insurance match. The pay scale starts at \$28.28 per hour (\$51,469 annually). Monday-Thursday work schedule with some evening meetings.

Applicants interested in this position should send a cover letter and resume via email to: WalterR@montague-ma.gov. Position open until filled.

Full job description available at www.montague-ma.gov/p/308/Employment-Opportunities

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TOWN OF LEVERETT
Fire Chief

The Town of Leverett, population 2,000, seeks an energetic, citizen-oriented, full time **Fire Chief** who can balance small town culture with the technical needs of a modern fire department. Chief completes oversight and management duties for the department, manages fire, training, and medical response, actively fights fires and provides medical treatment. Qualifications include strong communication and management skills, five years’ fire and one year supervisory experience, residence within proximity of town as required by law. Knowledge of Leverett community a plus. Full time benefitted position. Annual salary ranges from \$75,000 to \$81,000 based on experience.

Job description with requirements available on the town website.

Applications and resumes due by June 30, 2025 to Selectboard Office, PO Box 300, Leverett, MA 01054.

Leverett is an AA/EOE.

TOWN OF LEVERETT
Community & Events Coordinator

The Town of Leverett is hiring a part-time **Council on Aging Community & Events Coordinator** to support older adults in Leverett by leading community outreach efforts, planning and managing events, building relationships with residents and service providers, and helping strengthen Leverett as an age-friendly and inclusive community.

Applicants must be able to work Fridays with other hours flexible. Pay is \$20 per hour for 15 hours per week. A job description and application are available in the Leverett Town Hall, by emailing townadministrator@leverett.ma.us, or by calling (413) 548-9699. Questions should be directed to the same number.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

Leverett is an AA/EOE.

Tip of the
week ...

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provide any assistance.
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putting that part-time employee, Stacey Langknecht, out of the job.

“I understand we’re in a crunch for money, but I really want her to know how much we appreciated everything she did,” said chair Jane Oakes.

A long section of the meeting went to editing the list of interview questions for the Thursday evening interviews of the interim superintendent candidates. Oakes said she had been “working night and day” on the

hiring process. After the meeting, the *Reporter* was informed that the candidates are Tari Thomas, Roland Joyal, and Mark McLaughlin.

The committee plans to go into an executive session and attempt to make a hire Thursday night.

One piece of positive news Tuesday was that a new district website is about to go live. Technology director Tina Mahaney said it will be “easier to work on,” “cleaner,” and “softer.”



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

Eric Hoffer, ‘The Temper of Our Time’



With two outs in the top of the seventh inning of Sunday's quarterfinal game against the Narragansett Warriors, Madi Liimatainen delivers a pitch.

SPORTS from page A1

An RBI then plated two runs, and a two-out error gave the visitors a 3-1 edge. Two more runs crossed the plate, but an interference call erased those runs, and the inning ended with the Warriors holding that 3-1 lead and the home crowd on the edge of their seats.

In the bottom of the third, Madison Liimatainen drew a walk and Marilyn Abarua followed up with a base hit, sending Liimatainen to third. Then Abarua stole second base, putting two runners in scoring position.

Massey then dodged a bullet as a foul was misplayed. On the next pitch, she hit an RBI sac to give Turners their second run of the game. Autumn Thornton then hit safely, sending Abarua home to tie the game going into the fourth inning.

In the fifth, Abarua hit a two-out line drive, and Massey followed up with a base hit. Next, an error put Thornton on first base, and a double by Madisyn Dietz gave the home team a 6-3 edge.

The Warriors couldn't answer in their last two at-bats and Pow-

ertown held on to win it, sending them into the semifinals against the Georgetown Royals.

TFHS 8 – Georgetown 7

The Blue Ladies traveled on Wednesday to the River Hawk softball field at Lowell State University to play against the fourth-seeded Royals. Even though Lowell is a hike from Turners Falls, the True Blue faithful showed up in droves.

There was controversy from the very start. The leadoff batter for the Royals hit a grounder. The throw to first seemed to be in time, but the ump ruled her safe. The call was disputed by the coaches but the play stood. A one-out walk then put two runners on base, and two more base hits gave George a three-run lead.

Turners got runners on base in their first two innings, but were unable to turn them into runs. A booming home run in the third and a walk and three singles in the fifth increased the Royals' cushion to 6-0.

Blue was up against the ropes, but nobody in the dugout panicked. The coaches calmly gave instruc-

tions and encouragement to the girls, and in the bottom of the fifth Turners finally scored. Marigliano hit a single, Liimatainen was walked, and Abarua batted Marigliano in to make it the difference 6-1. Liimatainen then scored on a Thornton sacrifice and Abarua on a Dietz bunt to pull the Thunder within three runs. Suddenly, it was a game.

With only two innings left in regulation, Turners' backs were against the wall. A leadoff hit by the Royals in the sixth came to naught as the Powertown D shut down the next three batters in order. In the bottom of the sixth, Ameliya Galbraith and Maddie Haight hit singles, and Marigliano was walked to load the bases.

Then Liimatainen came up to bat, and the chants began: "Here we go Turners, here we go..."

The ball was hit right at the third basewoman, which should have been an easy double play, but it was hit so hard that it was bob-

bled. Two runs scored, and everyone was safe. Massey then hit a sac, plating Marigliano, and then Thornton chopped a single to score Liimatainen. Turners was now on top, 7-6, with one inning left.

Georgetown is a great team. Their players made amazing throws and catches throughout the game, and their batters had accumulated eight hits in six innings. In the seventh, their leadoff batter skyed the ball way over the fence for a solo homer, tying it at seven with no outs. The next batter walked putting the go-ahead run on first base.

Turners is also a great team, and a strikeout and two fly balls ended the threat. They came up to bat in the bottom of the seventh with the game still knotted. The Turners crowd chanted throughout the inning, but a grounder and two popups sent the game into extra innings.

A strikeout, a diving catch by Thornton, and a third-strike bunt foul quickly put Turners back in the

driver's seat. In the bottom of the eighth, Marigliano and Liimatainen drew walks to put two runners on with no outs.

As Abarua came to the plate, the Turners crowd grew louder. A passed ball sent the runners to second and third, but Abarua quickly amassed two strikes. She fouled the next pitch, and then hit the ball over the second basewoman's head to score Marigliano. The crowd erupted: Turners was heading, once again, to the championship game.

Seven Thunder Ladies had hits for Blue: Abarua with three; Thornton and Dietz with two apiece; and Haight, Marigliano, Liimatainen, and Galbraith. In the circle, Liimatainen gave up seven runs on three walks and nine hits while striking out 14.

Turners returns to the championship game this Saturday at UMass Amherst, facing either Greenfield or Hopedale – weather permitting, of course.



Ivy Lopez makes a heart sign and Janelle Massey (12) and Autumn Thornton (16) look on as Marilyn Abarua steps up to the plate in the bottom of the sixth on Wednesday.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Fire Calls More Than Double in Seven Years

By KEITH WATERS

The selectboard of the town of Erving held a meeting on Monday. First up was a quick review of the warrant for the upcoming special town meeting (STM) on Wednesday, June 25. They were clearly familiar with the articles, and the warrant was approved after a typo correction.

Erving Paper Mills, responding to the town's request for a nomination for the new local hazard mitigation planning committee, nominated its manager Eric Whitman. The board approved his appointment to the committee.

Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority was present to explain the results of a federal community development block grant originating in FY'21, which he said had resulted in five houses belonging to low-income residents of Erving being brought up to code. Changes made included lead paint remediation, wheelchair ramps, and replacement windows and appliances.

McHugh also told the board about a practice the housing authority has started with a few other towns to establish a separate fund for smaller rehabilitation projects which are hard to fund through the current revolving loan structure.

McHugh had previously given selectboard member Scott Bastarache and town administrator Bryan Smith the outline of this proposal, and both said they liked it. The other

selectboard members, chair Jacob Smith and James Loynd, will review the proposal and McHugh will return for further discussion on June 23. Bryan Smith said he hopes they can resolve the issue at that meeting.

The board set a new water use rate. The current rate had been \$5.40 per 1,000 gallons, and Bryan Smith proposed that be raised to \$5.45. The board approved this.

Water superintendent Peter Sanders was present to explain damage sustained to his equipment last Friday due to a loss of electricity service. The cost of damage from that event is estimated at \$8,500. The town will see if insurance will cover it, but there is money in the water department budget remaining for repairs like this.

Fire Department Staffing

Fire chief Phillip Wonkka reported that in 2017 the fire department had 186 service calls, and last year it had 381. The bulk of the calls are during daytime hours, he said, and 69% are medical-related.

The department is in the process of hiring a new full-time staff member, and Wonkka said he believes the new staff will be in service sometime in July. Wonkka and the board also discussed the idea of moving to bigger trucks as they are replaced, ultimately reducing the number of trucks.

The board also talked with Wonkka about the town's intention to have a social media presence for all the services it provides, and

suggested that the fire department should post regularly to reach out to the community.

Elaborating further, Jacob Smith pointed out that it would be good for the public to know that the town's firefighters don't just sit around all day, not that he thinks they do.

Road Openings

The board and highway superintendent Glenn McCrory went over new edits to the proposed road-opening regulations, a new set of rules dictating how utilities and other people who have to dig into town roads are allowed to do so.

Though this was the fourth official read and many edits had been made already, both McCrory and the board found some legalese that did not seem right, including an issue about how many extensions a contractor may apply for. They agreed that a contract should not allow for extensions to push work from one year to the next, but the current draft allowed for three extensions.

Other unclear language referred to the superintendent in some places, and the department in others. McCrory and the board went through all 77 sections of the guidelines and found a number of other things in need of clarification.

Bryan Smith took notes and said he would adjust the wording, and the regulations will be addressed again at a fifth reading.

The selectboard's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 23.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Turners Falls Athletic Club Announces Scholarship Winners

TURNERS FALLS -- The Turners Falls Athletic Club Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the following three students, who have been selected to receive our scholarships for their academics and their contributions to sports at Turners Falls High School.

The awards are in the amount of \$2,000 each, payable to the individual student for their second semester at the college of their choice, for a total of \$6,000.

The recipients are Madison Liimatainen, Mia Marigliano, and Marilyn Abarua Corona, all of Turners Falls.

We would like to congratulate the scholarship winners and thank all the student athletes who applied; we wish you all the best of luck in the future.

We especially want to thank all of the active TFAC members whose donations make these scholarships possible. With this group we have awarded over \$138,290 to more than 206 students since 1954.

The Turners Falls Athletic Club: Supporting Sports & Academics for the Youth of Turners Falls Since 1934.

For Our Youth,

TFAC Scholarship Committee

Christian S. Couture,
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STORAGE from page A1

town’s zoning bylaws, which do not allow self-storage facilities in the “neighborhood business” district where the barn is located. “The board lacks the authority to permit a prohibited use,” argued Lilith Wolinsky, who owns a house next to the building.

Wolinsky also argued that a parking lot Skalski proposed on the building’s Depot Street frontage would increase noise and traffic significantly, and its lighting would create glare.

A number of comments were received by email from cyclists who said they pass the old trolley barn when riding on the Canalside Rail Trail bike path, which connects to Montague City Road via Depot Street.

One rider complained about cars coming out of the proposed parking area, and warned that the “signs, lights, and traffic” would lower property values. Another said that affordable housing should be considered for the property, consistent with calls for the redevelopment of the former Farren Hospital property a block away.

The public input did not seem to move the members of the zoning board, who appeared to believe these critics were exaggerating the negative consequences of the project.

“I appreciate the passion, but some of this is overreach,” member Bill Doyle said after the public comment period ended.

“I did the math for self-storage and it averages five visits a day,” said David Jensen.

At the same time the board seemed to feel that the project was consistent with the goals of a neighborhood business district, which was zoned for “high-volume traffic,” in the words of chair Josh Lively. Member Robert Obear, Jr. argued that self-storage would have a lower impact than housing, which might attract drug dealing.

The board seemed prepared to approve the special permit, but began to add stipulations as they reviewed the specifics of the proposal. None of the members said they felt Skalski’s proposal would deviate from the building’s prior usage.

Local historical researcher Will Quale shared a chronology of the car barn’s history with the building and planning departments. The long, two-story brick building was constructed in 1895 by the Greenfield and Turners Falls Street Railway Company, and used with “constant activity” until 1903. After that point it was used “sparingly” and for seasonal storage until 1924, when it was purchased by Julius Blassberg, a junk dealer, for storage.

In 1949 Blassberg’s wife Gussie sold the facility to the iconic Montague Rod and Reel Company, which used it primarily to store bamboo for their factory on nearby Rod Shop Road. In 1956 it was ac-

quired by the Montague Machine Company, who used it “exclusively as a storage warehouse,” and in 1998 was sold to Charles Rucci, who has used it for his masonry business.

This spring, Skalski was in discussions with Rucci about purchasing the barn. Skalski owns Catamount Storage, which operates a self-storage facility on Main Street in Shelburne Falls, about a mile from the village center, as well as Catamount Trading, the former Mohawk Trading Post on Route 2.

Besides his own businesses, Skalski is employed by JRB Disposal and Excavation, a South Deerfield-based company owned by Jeffrey Burniske, who also purchased properties on either side of Rod Shop Road last year under a separate company, Skyjac Realty, LLC.

Skalski told the *Reporter* that Burniske is not involved in the purchase or renovation of the car barn. He expressed interest in the building’s history, and noted that his father had been friends with its owner.

Before the sale had been completed, he applied to the ZBA for a special permit to convert the building into a “2-story climate controlled self storage facility with a bedroom apartment at the rear of the building.”

The application said plans included a freight elevator to allow customers to access the second floor, a parking lot with ten spaces and additional lighting, and three signs on the parcel’s Depot Street and Montague City Road frontage, two of which would be illuminated.

Skalski told the *Reporter* he applied for the permit before closing on the building purchase – which was finalized on May 30 at a price of \$250,000 – because he wanted to see what town officials would allow on the site. “We don’t really know what we want to do,” he said, suggesting that if the permit is not approved he will find other uses consistent with town zoning.

314 Montague Road is considered a “non-conforming structure,” meaning that it could not be built for storage under current zoning regulations in the “neighborhood business” district. Because it has been used for storage since before the zoning restrictions became town policy, though, “storage” is allowed as long as the ZBA grants a special permit.

Approval, however, is not automatic. According to Section 5.1.3 of Montague’s zoning bylaws, which is cited in Skalski’s application, the special permit would be “subject to a finding that the alteration shall not be substantially more detrimental than the existing nonconforming use and/or structure to the neighborhood, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 40A, §6.”

The town bylaw mirrors the language of that state law, which reads, in part: “Nonconforming structures

or uses may be extended or altered, provided, that no such extension or alteration shall be permitted unless there is a finding by the permit granting authority or by the special permit granting authority designated by ordinance or by-law that such change, extension or alteration shall not be substantially more detrimental than the existing nonconforming use to the neighborhood.”

But how can local officials judge whether a self-storage complex is “substantially more detrimental” to a neighborhood than the storage of masonry supplies?

According to an article by Kimberly Bielan of the law firm Moriarty Bielan & Malloy, they are expected to use a “Powers test,” based on a 1970s decision by the state Supreme Judicial Court.

That decision, in a case involving the reconstruction of a property used for a restaurant in Barnstable, ruled that a permit for a proposed renovation of a non-conforming structure should be denied if: “a) The resulting use does not reflect the nature and purpose of the use existing when the zoning law took effect which made it nonconforming; *or* (b) There is a difference in the quality or character, as well as the degree, between the resulting use and the originally protected use; *or* (c) The resulting use is different in kind in its effect on the neighborhood from the originally protected use.”

The applicant, Bielan added, “bears the burden” of showing that the use and its effects are essentially unchanged.

In the end, the ZBA barely discussed why Skalski’s proposal required a special permit, and what the legal criteria would be for issuing one to a “non-conforming structure.”

When the time came for a vote on the permit, however, members hesitated, because they realized Skalski had made significant changes in the proposal since his original application, including enlarging the apartment and changing the parking configuration, with more spaces accessed from Montague City Road. The “climate controlled self storage facility” in the original plan was now termed “cold storage.”

These changes encouraged more questions from the board. Jensen asked Skalski what he planned to do about the building’s boarded-up windows, and Lively said he wanted a rough estimate of how many storage units were planned.

The board considered approving the special permit with conditions, but decided to delay consideration to a future meeting, voting to keep the hearing open until Wednesday, July 23.

“We don’t know whether we’re seeing 18 or 25 storage units,” Lively told Skalski. “Your neighbors want to see a final plan.”



LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on June 11, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Gratefully Passing the Torch

What’s life like now for Polly Kiely, the hard-working lady who served as director of the Erving senior and community center for two decades? “I certainly have more time,” said Kiely, “to do my painting and to travel.” Kiely, who’s taught a painting class at ESCC for 20 years, continues to do so and also instructs a quilting group.

Kiely says she is glad she has concluded her full-time position at the senior center, noting that it’s an all-consuming job, and is delighted that Paula Betters is her replacement. She also pointed out that current demographics at ESCC are different than when she became director in 1994. “The center still serves 80- and 90-year-

olds,” she said, “but just-retired 60-year-olds are in the mix now.”

General Pierce Emergency

The General Pierce Bridge, connecting Montague City with Cheapside, was closed to traffic on Wednesday, indefinitely, for emergency repair. A 4-foot-by-six-foot plate now covers a major section of concrete that had collapsed into the Connecticut River, leaving nothing but rebar visible. SPS New England was called to patch the hole, toward the end of the Greenfield-bound lane, with more fast-setting – and fast-deteriorating – concrete.

Rubber tires have clearly worn down the bridge’s concrete, resulting in a series of temporary cold asphalt patches in the Montague-bound lane. Traffic was snarled by drivers making U-turns at police barricades on both sides of the river.

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 9, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Voters Nix Clerical Support

Volunteer boards in Gill will go another year without clerical support after town meeting members voted down a \$5,632 request for a part-time position.

Suzanne Smiley, planning board chair, said her board was overwhelmed with paperwork. “I

have concerns regarding the possibility of not being able to meet a legal deadline,” she argued.

Ernie Hastings countered, “We got along without one for many years.”

Allen Adie felt the work should be done by administrative assistant Debra Roussel “like Bev Demars used to.” In spite of the board of health stating the town was losing revenue due to paperwork it could not process, the measure was defeated 29 to 22.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on June 9, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

The first pic-nic of the season is being held at Lake Pleasant today.

The bridge over the canal at the Suspension bridge, approaches completion.

Mr. B.N. Farren has a half-dozen of the best Jersey cows in this part of the country.

George F. Adams, Monday, made a contract to supply Mr. Farren with 2,000,000 brick during the summer.

A Riverside girl caught twenty horn-pouts while fishing the other evening. Better to be caught smiling than pouting.

There were 120 messages sent from the telegraph office here, in May, with receipts of \$60, against 87 messages and \$56 of receipts in April.

The firemen had the engine out on Thursday evening for practice. From the L street hydrant, with eight hundred feet of hose, they threw a stream one hundred and thirty-six feet.

The law prohibiting the taking of black bass remains in force until

the first of July, instead of the 10th of the present month, as erroneously stated by us last week. The Franklin Fish and Game club are ever on the alert for violations of the law, so if you get caught don’t come in and stop your paper and say we did not tell all about it.

The geology class of Mount Holyoke female seminary, to the number of thirty-three, came on the ten o’clock train and were taken in boats up to Mr Stoughton’s bird-track quarry at the Horse Race, to learn about the geological formation of these ledges and the tracks in their natural position. They spread a tempting lunch on the grass at the mouth of Millers River. The girls seemed to enjoy themselves fully as well as if the stern countenances of a dozen teachers were not forever frowning on them. They were taken to Greenfield by N.D. Allen’s teams for the last afternoon train down.

The public should bear in mind that the library is controlled by an association and that a fee of \$1 a year is charged to non-members for the privilege of taking books therefrom. Many go there believing it to be a free public institution, and are embarrassed with the information that it isn’t.




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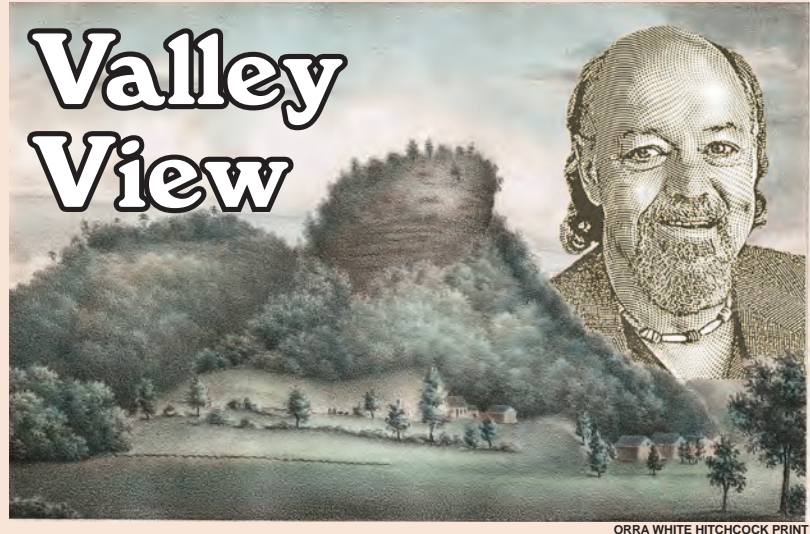




features@montaguereporter.org

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

JUNE 12, 2025



A Field of Memories

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – Our white mock orange blossoms have popped, signaling to me that the shad run is over, fawns have dropped, and summer is riding stormy winds to our doorstep.

Also, it announces my return down a well-worn path to my ancestors’ Whately and Hatfield river meadows along River Road. To these croplands I annually travel as a creature of habit and heredity, first for asparagus, then for strawberries, and after that for whatever other farm produce show up at their roadside stands.

Sure, there are other great places to buy fresh native asparagus and strawberries, but I have no reason to chase them down. I’m locked into the fertile floodplains, saturated with my DNA, between Bradstreet and Mount Sugarloaf. Those silt-rich plots have always served me well, along with occasional diversions across Sunderland Bridge when convenient. There, too, my gene pool runs deep.

I suppose I acquired my taste for fresh asparagus and strawberries from my father, who seldom missed the first pick of spring. He made it a point to stay on top of it, most likely a family tradition. His grandfather was born on the Sanderson Farm a short distance south of Sugarloaf, where he and his siblings probably learned young to cut asparagus and pick strawberries from precious patches they maintained.

For that matter, it wouldn’t surprise me a wee bit if they knew a few secret spots on their farm’s perimeters where those sweet little wild strawberries savored by Native Americans grew.

To get to my River Road stands, I typically drive through my old hometown of South Deerfield to see, in Marvin Gaye’s words, what’s going on. Passing through downtown, I take Sugarloaf Street to the Route 116 intersection and drop down Sugarloaf Street Extension toward Hatfield.

My first strawberry run of

the season last week pushed my thoughts down a familiar memory vein. Just another example of visual stimuli unleashing a reminiscent torrent – this time triggered by the site of my old youth-baseball diamond on an acre or two lot hugging the southwest tip of Mount Sugarloaf. Unkempt, going to seed, and obviously no longer a ballyard, it was a poignant sight for a man like me, to whom baseball was so important during spring and summer.

That fenced diamond, with cinderblock dugouts and a metal-faced scoreboard behind the left-field fence, was our summer hangout. Outfield fence and parking lot bordered by tall pines that provided a great background for hitters, the little ballpark was laid out on Sugarloaf-reservation property around 1950, and became a community asset for more than a half-century.

Now, judging from what I encountered last week, it’s obviously destined for oblivion, with newer, better ballparks available. Which doesn’t mean the sight of that little diamond won’t be missed by those of us who once regularly used it.

We often played ball there most of the day before scooting home for supper, throwing on our uniforms and returning for a real Frontier Youth League game: the real deal, with umpires and coaches and spectators lining the outfield fence and seated on small, shaded, wooden bleachers under the tall pines, not far from the home dugout along the first-base line.

Though I can’t remember any direct association of that ballpark with strawberries, the same cannot be said of asparagus. My mother would often ask me to pick up a couple bunches for supper from the card-table stand at the intersection of Sugarloaf Street and Mountain Road. It was offered by the Dzenis family that resided there: self-service, honor system, a quarter a bunch.

I’d pick a couple of bunches out

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B8

SCENE REPORT

Fun for a Cause at the Flutie 5K

By JOE R. PARZYCH

BERNARDSTON – Yours truly, the photo beat guy, reported from the scene of the Flutie 5K for Autism, held at Pratt Field in Bernardston on Saturday by the United Arc of Franklin County. Many participated in running and walking for autism, and everyone had a great time and raised a lot of money for a good cause.

There was food, music, and fun for everyone to enjoy.

Last year I donated my photography – a photo of the Franklin County Fair – to the United Arc raffle in honor of my late aunt Christine Parzych, a native of Gill who passed away in 2022.

Christine was born with Down syndrome and was an artist and a fan of Sesame Street and the Muppets. She loved all kinds of music from the ’70s, ’80s, and ’90s – she was a fan of Guns N’ Roses – and traveling. She was loved by her family and many friends, and participated in the Special Olympics.



Ninety-three participants ran or walked in the 2025 Flutie 5K last Saturday. Gabriel Ramirez of Greenfield, at right, won first place with a time of 8:15.8. Full results are available at www.runsignup.com.

She attended Deerfield Academy and many other schools, and was part of United Arc and Pathlight. My late grandmother and grandfather, Edna Carleton Parzych and Joseph A. Parzych of

Gill, both volunteered as founding members of the United Arc of Franklin County board of directors. My grandfather, who owned and operated an excavating company, dug the foundation of United see **FLUTIE** page B4



Scallops & sand sculpture: A weekend in South County, Rhode Island.



Steve and Beth Iovino of Island Buys and Driftwood make interesting birdhouses and lamps from old lobster buoys in Charlestown, Rhode Island.

SOUTH DEERFIELD – Last weekend was an enjoyable getaway, even though the weather felt more like December than June. Our eastward seaside destination was Charlestown, in Rhode Island’s South County.

We were headed to the annual Atlantis Rising International Sand Sculpture Competition in Ninigret State Park, in its third year already one of Charlestown’s biggest events.

We drove down unsure if the weather would deliver a torrent of rain, or just blow westerlies. Our first stop was to our accommodations in Westerly at the Shelter Harbor Inn, once an elegant horse farm. This was a fine choice, easily located on a turn-off from Route 1A.

Our spacious accommodations in this popular wedding venue were just right. The 22-room inn was originally built in 1900, then renovated in 2019 to offer carriage house rooms adjacent to its main building.

The restaurant at the Inn was one see **TRAVEL** page B2

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

‘FRANKLIN’

Meet Franklin, a 5-year-old Australian Shepherd/Australian Cattle Dog who weighs in at 38 pounds. According to his humans, this adorable low rider is 100% mutt with strong herding characteristics.

Franklin has a big personality and adores adults, but does not do well with children, cats, or other dogs. He lives for attention, scratches, and cuddles. He has excellent manners in the house, is crate-trained and house-trained, and only chews on his toys. He is neutered and micro-chipped, knows basic commands, and plays fetch like a champ.

Franklin struggles with reactivity on walks, and needs an experienced adopter. He can be anxious and reactive in new and overstimulating situations, but routine and lots of exercise will help him thrive. He does well off-leash in safe, quiet areas. He would do better as a country dog.

There is no adoption fee for Franklin. To apply to adopt, find “Available Community Animals” at www.dakinhumane.org under the “Adopt” menu. A potential adopter must submit an application, interview and meet the pets, and sign an adoption contract.

TRAVEL from page B1

of the weekend’s highlights. How could we have gone wrong with local lobsters and clam and scallop fettuccine? They mixed some delectable bourbon cocktails, and the bartender put the little cocktails into big glasses just for us.

I always enjoy spending time in Rhode Island, a state my parents used to take us to when we were very young. For us, it was Weekapaug in the 1960s. The ocean was all around us, and we loved jumping on the rocks that line the busy boat channel on the narrow peninsula that leads to Galilee and Point Judith.

This is still the spot where the ferry boats take people to Block Island. They come back and forth six times a day, and there are two choices: “The Islander,” a high-speed, passenger-only ferry, or the slow and steady “Block Island” ferry for a longer ride with cars.

We stopped at a store selling fish and lobsters at Point Judith and chatted with the owners who were fixing the menu sign outside. They said someone could make a fortune since so many people board the Block Island ferry carrying hot pizzas made on the mainland. There is only one small pizza shop, so it could be a pepperoni goldmine!

Art, Crafts, & Crustaceans

This was the first year they changed the sand sculpture competition venue, moving it to a former air reserve base, on what appeared to once have been a runway. The special sand used to make these impressive works of art comes from New Hampshire. It’s a very small grain that sticks together much better than regular beach sand.

Atlantis Rising brings in the biggest names in sculpting from around the world. One sculptor’s bio said she had entered 160 sculpting contests in her career, and it had become a full-time job. The towering sculptures were built and viewed inside a tent due to the intermittent rain and strong winds outside. Despite the weather, the hundreds of vendors outside seemed happy with the significant crowd.

This year’s winner was a three-column monster sculpture by Abe Waterman called “Digi/Fata-lization.” (See photo.)

At a nearby craft fair we met Steve and Beth Iovino of Island Buoys and Driftwood, who live in Charlestown and were manning a windy stand. They make all sorts of fun things out of repurposed lobster buoys. There was a birdhouse, lamps, and other useful gadgets, each with a unique, distinctive pattern denoting specific lobstermen’s families.

The Iovinos said plenty of lobsters are caught daily down here in Rhode Island and Connecticut, which is good to hear. The prices are around \$16 a pound.

Back North to Westerly

Sunday was a great day to hop on those rocks that line the channel. We watched a fishing boat struggle to motor against the strong incoming tide. It was rare that the place, usually filled with ferrygoers and day trippers, was so empty, but the rain and winds had kept most away.

The clam shacks and fish markets remained open and waiting, with few customers wandering in. There were a lot more waiting for us up north, so we swung back onto Route 1A, heading for Westerly’s town center.



The winning sculpture at this year’s Atlantis Rising Sand Sculpture competition was Abe Waterman’s Digi/Fata-lization, with its three impressive columns of sand art.



Outside The Café: Westerly is a lively little Rhode Island town.



HARTSHORNE PHOTOS

The Shelter Harbor Inn in Charlestown.

Our timing was perfect as Sunday turned out to be a big street fair, with lots of booths lining the classic main street, and cars blocked off.

Right near the Westerly Railroad Station, which offers Amtrak service five times a day, is the classic 1888 railroad hotel building, now called the Martin House, where instead of rooms for the night, you can buy a book and have a coffee.

There are plans to extend the Hartford Line trains that run to New London an additional 16 miles to Westerly. The only rub is that the platform would have to be raised 48 inches, which would cost \$16 million. Still, planners hope to someday connect these two thriving cities.

I like towns like Westerly, a real “there-there” with a train depot, a

main street, and lots of thriving businesses and restaurants. We enjoyed lunch at The Café, a large restaurant with stars on the walls and oysters on the halfshell. A starter of yellowtail tuna, followed by a Monte Cristo sandwich, was just perfect. The sandwich was old-school, dipped in batter and fried.

Rhody is always a good choice for a weekend getaway. Where are you beaching this year?

Max Hartshorne, from South Deerfield, is the editor of the GoNOMAD.com travel website and the host of the GoNOMAD Travel Podcast, with weekly short form episodes, every week: feeds.captivate.fm/gono-mad-travel-podcast.



Senior Center Activities

JUNE 16 THROUGH 20

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 6/16

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
6 p.m. Cemetery Commission

Tuesday 6/17

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

Wednesday 6/18

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

Thursday 6/19

1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. MV Volunteer Training
3:30 p.m. Meditation for Seniors

Friday 6/20

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

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.

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 6/16

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

Tuesday 6/17

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

Wednesday 6/18

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

Thursday 6/19 – Closed

Friday 6/20

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.

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Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

SOUTH HADLEY – For this month's column I was inspired to interview Amherst artist and educator Jana Silver after seeing a recent social media post of her gorgeous “yoniware” ceramics.

Readers can see her art online at janals.wixsite.com/janasilverart.

SM: What is your artist statement and biography?

JS: In my work with clay, I am driven by a deep and ongoing desire to explore it. Clay, for me, is a material of endless possibility, inviting experimentation, imperfection, and discovery.

My practice is grounded in curiosity. I am always investigating something: the nature of the clay itself, the story a piece might be telling, or my own voice emerging through the material. Often, it's a combination of all three. Each piece is a kind of conversation, a negotiation between my vision, my hand, and the will of the material.

While I don't set out to tell my story through my art, I am always telling a story. As both an artist and a teacher, I bring a spirit of inquiry to the studio. I challenge myself constantly, asking questions, setting goals, and chasing the moment of recognition when the feeling in my heart says *yes, this is it*. That moment is rare. I can probably count on one hand the times I've felt it from start to finish, where that sense remained consistent throughout the process.

In many ways, that's the nature of working in clay. Every step offers change, sometimes predictable and sometimes not. For me, this is both the challenge and the reward of a life in clay: the continual search for something I can never fully control, yet always strive to explore further.

SM: What would you like to share about your own art background and/or identities?

JS: I was born into a family of strong women artists. I became a feminist the moment I discovered the word. I have an MFA in ceramics and a Doctorate in Teacher Education.

Although there have been stretches when I wasn't working full-time in the studio, I've always maintained a studio practice, creating from the heart has been my constant, and my teaching has always had a focus on art and activism.

I try to stay informed, I do what I can, the way that I can, and I encourage my students to do the same.

SM: What inspired Yoniware?

JS: Yoniware was born out of a moment of connection and inspiration. I was away on a moms' weekend, fittingly enough, sharing some of my clay sgraffito work, when a friend asked if I'd make her a platter representing a vagina.

That simple, bold request lit a spark. At first I made the pieces for fun and just for her, but over time they evolved into something more intricate and meaningful.

SM: What is its purpose?

JS: When the current political administration took office, the work took on a new meaning, a more ur-

gent message. Yoniware became a form of resistance, a visual message I could send into the world. It offered a way for me, as an artist, to respond.

Donating a portion of each sale to Planned Parenthood gives me a sense of power in a time when I'm feeling powerless. I feel that I'm doing something in my own way, and by purchasing a piece of Yoniware I'm giving others the opportunity to do something in their own way.

SM: What are some of the ideas, history and concepts related to yoni?

JS: The collection was named *Yoniware* after a brainstorming session with my daughter, who has studied yoga and yogic philosophy for years. She suggested the term *yonis*, a Sanskrit word that honors the sacred and generative aspects of the feminine. After visiting India I became drawn to the classical language of Sanskrit, so this title felt right. The name added layers of meaning to the work while remaining true to its playful, provocative roots.

SM: Were there any particular artists, art movements, or social movements that inspired you towards this yoniware?

JS: I think the connection to Judy Chicago was pretty evident from the beginning. The social movement that inspired me, also obvious.

A slightly abridged version of the certificate of purchase attached to each sale says it all. It states: “Each unique handmade piece in the Yoniware series honors the ancient symbol of the *yonis*, the Sanskrit word for “womb,” “source,” and the sacred embodiment of Shakti, the yogic representation of feminine energy. The yoni is not just a body part, but the living gateway of creation. The artist believes it is time for women to once again reclaim this power and protect the rights and health of all who carry it within them.”

SM: Do you have any yoni, or sexual health, heroes or mentors?

JS: Not specifically. Yoni/vagina art is not new. People say, “Your work reminds me of Georgia O'Keeffe.” So maybe she was my hero. Not a bad one to have, on a million different levels.



A plate in Amherst ceramicist Jana Silver's “yoniware” series.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Good Hedges; Bad Dog; Active Warrants; ID Suspicion; Environmental Police Give Zero Help With Injured Moose

Monday, 6/2

12:38 p.m. Caller concerned about hedges on School Street that have grown so large they are blocking drivers' view, putting pedestrians in danger. Officer advises that the hedges look good and are not overgrown.

5:30 p.m. 911 caller from Stevens Street reports that while he was gone this afternoon, a neighbor got agitated driving down the alley between properties and hit the caller's wife with his car. They are now arguing. Officers advised. Situation mediated.

6:50 p.m. Caller reporting male party passed out in his vehicle at the entrance to the Plains. Officer advised. Male party was sleeping. No signs of impairment.

10:32 p.m. Shelburne Control, on behalf of Erving PD, requesting officers check bridges in town for a female who texted the behavioral health link stating she was going to jump off a bridge. Officer advises Turners Falls-Gill Bridge clear; General Pierce and bridges by canal also clear. Officer advises vehicle parked by Strathmore comes back to a female party out of Erving. Upon seeing cruiser, vehicle took off toward Seventh Street. Officer advises General Pierce Bridge checked again; negative contact.

Tuesday, 6/3

5:45 p.m. Massachusetts state police requesting K9 unit; exterior sniff for vehicle on I-91 northbound. K9 officer out of town. MSP updated.

6:06 p.m. Caller from Avenue A reports that a child is riding his bike around the block and her dog does not like things that are smaller than itself. States that when the child rides the bike, her dog pulls on the leash, and it's not okay as she just had surgery. Referred to an officer.

7:24 p.m. Caller from a Third Street apartment building reports that other tenants broke into her apartment again and looked through her belongings. Nothing taken. Would like something done as she believes they are doing this as retaliation. Officer advised. Male who lives in building states he is at work and that the caller left around 5:24 p.m., returned at 7:15, went up the stairs with groceries, and is now accusing others of breaking into her apartment, then audibly said “You're dead.” Officer advised. Original caller called back in stating she is missing one-third of her acetaminophen tablets and alcohol prep pads, and believes both are being used for crack. Caller further reporting neighbors turned the heat on and it's too hot for her. Referred to an officer.

7:46 p.m. Caller from Franklin Street reports she just got back from vacation to find the front door wide open and the entire apartment gone through. Officer advised. At this time, seems like it was kids going through the house. Checked and spoke with neighbors with possible time frame.

Wednesday, 6/4

10:45 a.m. Walk-in looking to speak to an officer about questionable transactions within a condo association on Walnut Street. Additional caller from bank looking to speak to officer regarding fraud paperwork that was handed in. Officer spoke with female.

3:19 p.m. 911 caller from Montague City Road states that a neighbor was accusing him of letting people into her home. Officer advised caller to reach out to the landlord; he will do the same.

Thursday, 6/5

9:31 a.m. Abandoned 911 call hung up prior to mapping. Caller called back in stating there was a man at Greenfield Savings Bank looking in cars. He is now walking down Avenue A. Earlier, he was watching people use the ATM. Caller called back in stating the male is in the Walgreens parking lot looking in car windows again and is headed back towards the bank. Officer checked area; no one matching description located.

12:42 p.m. 911 caller reports she is with her ex who has active warrants. Party determined to have six active warrants. Officer transporting party directly to court.

4:30 p.m. Two calls reporting dogs running loose on Route 63. Referred to other agency.

9:51 p.m. 911 caller states something is beeping in a neighbor's apartment on Central Street; caller would

like someone to check it out. Called Control; Turners Falls fire department notified. Police units clear; FD remaining on scene.

Friday, 6/6

10:43 a.m. Hillcrest Elementary School principal would like an officer to come and speak with a parent who was driving erratically on school property yesterday and was rude to staff who tried to speak with her about it. Advised of options.

1 p.m. Several motorists reporting a severely injured deer on the side of Turners Falls Road near the Field of Dreams. Deer appeared to be OK, was moved along into the woods.

2:39 p.m. 911 caller from Walnut Street states that his Lyft driver dropped him off and took off with two phones and a laptop of his. The driver was supposed to wait for him. Lyft driver came into lobby and said he found the items in the back of his car when he got home.

3:33 p.m. Caller states she was just threatened by a male party at the Turners Falls Post Office. Caller states male left in a vehicle; she didn't get a plate or description; would just like it reported at this time.

5:36 p.m. Caller from Greenfield Savings Bank states a male is trying to open an account, and something doesn't seem right with the IDs he provided. No sign of fraudulent activity.

5:42 p.m. Caller from Old Sunderland Road reports there is a tree hanging on the wires and some wires are on the ground. Call given to Control; Ever-source notified.

8:56 p.m. Caller from Walnut Street states a small beige vehicle just went up the street with its back window down and it sounded like gunfire came from the car. Caller states car turned around and went by again doing the same thing, then went up the hill on Fairway Avenue. No signs of damage or shell casings in area. Officer spoke with multiple other people who thought it sounded like an altered exhaust.

Saturday, 6/7

12:24 p.m. Greenfield PD requesting assistance for a two-car accident on the White Bridge. Services rendered.

4:18 p.m. Caller reporting tree down at High Street and Avenue B. Officer states tree is 25 feet long and 15 inches in diameter; request DPW be contacted. DPW is sending a crew to clean it up.

7:17 p.m. Caller requesting police to help turtle cross Avenue A. Officer removed animal from road.

8:34 p.m. Caller states she used her EBT card in Greenfield for \$8 and then went to use it at Cumberland Farms in Turners Falls, and there wasn't any money left on it. Caller claims there was a charge for \$605 and believes there is a skimmer at the store; would like to speak to an officer.

9:38 p.m. Multiple 911 callers reporting an injured moose on Wendell Road. Officer request environmental police be contacted. EPO states they can't get anyone up to his area and it's too dark to do anything tonight; advises to turn lights and sirens on to scare the moose into the woods for the night, and they will send someone out in the morning. MPD officer advises that the moose should be put down, and to call the EPO back. Called EPO back; states they have no officer available for our area and to put the moose down. Officer advises animal has been put down, and to call DPW to pick up the animal. Spoke with DPW; they will remove the moose tonight. DPW on scene; leaving to get equipment; will return.

10:23 p.m. Multiple calls complaining of loud music thumping on Taylor Hill Road; not sure of address. Referred to an officer.

11:29 p.m. Report of intoxicated female destroying items inside a house on East Main Street. A 43-year-old woman from Stafford Springs, Connecticut was arrested and charged with disturbing the peace and resisting arrest.

Sunday, 6/8

2:27 a.m. Caller requesting to meet an officer near Waterway Arts on Avenue A as she is hearing loud bass noise from music going through her walls. Officer advises noise can be heard from the building above the salon or market. Involved part of building that noise is coming from cannot be accessed at this time. Caller states she has already contacted the landlord of the other building and will attempt to figure out a solution in the morning.

1:09 p.m. MPD officers assisting Deerfield PD checking the bike path area off Greenfield Road for two males on bicycles who fled from an accident on River Road a few minutes earlier. Shelburne Control advises the males are believed to be on 10-speed style bicycles, and rode towards the train yard. Montague officers located one party and have him in custody. Other party fled into the woods. Officer with detained male; K9 track started in area. Officer advises male has been Mirandized by card.

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PROFILES

The Expandable Brass Band

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I talked to Sally Ward, a member of the Expandable Brass Band, before a parade they were part of this spring at the Earth Day celebration in Greenfield. It was called the Joyful Noise Parade. The band was made up of quite a large group of people with instruments. They were also wearing interesting yellow-and-black uniforms.

Ward said she has been a member since 2010, and that the band has been around “since the same time – I joined it six months later.” She plays “the percussion, the trombone, shakers, etc.” She said the yellow-and-black outfits were “standard for the group, and we’re here for the Bee Fest every year.”

Ward describes the band as an “activist street band.” “People can come and join it,” she said. As another way to describe the band, she showed me a card explaining that an activist street band “has cause, will travel.”

Besides observing them march

well in the parade, I felt they played music well and were not at all out of sync. A juggler who was part of it was also in sync with his juggling. I observed him doing that as the band played, and it looked that way.

Ward said 25 members play in the band on average, and that other events they were a part of recently were the opening of the St. Patrick Run in Holyoke in March, the Back Porch Festival in Northampton, in March as well, and Big Brother Big Sisters’ 15th Annual Daffodil Run on April 27.

They hold rehearsals that are open to the public. A recent one was at Maines Field in Florence from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. on a Sunday.

The official website for the band, www.expandablebrassband.com, lists other events they have played at, and where some of their rehearsals have been held in the past. Their next concerts are this Thursday, June 12 at Millside Park in Easthampton, and this Saturday at noon for the Bikes Fight Cancer event in South Deerfield.

FLUTIE from page B1

Arc’s offices on Summer Street.

The United Arc advocates and provides supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including apartments in Greenfield. The Arc is nationwide, and has many agencies at the local, state, and federal level. The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism empowers families and individuals affected by autism.

To learn more about the United Arc and the Flutie Foundation, check out www.flutiefoundation.org and www.theunitedarc.org. Please support them – they are awesome organizations. The United Arc is always looking for people to volunteer.

Joe R. Parzych has 27-plus years of experience as a freelance photojournalist and writer. His unique photographic storytelling provides an autistic perspective to everyday objects that people overlook in our community.



PARZYCH PHOTOS

Above: Volunteers look on as runners round the cones.

At right: United Arc CEO Fred Warren gives a heartwarming hug to event and communication generalist Sandra Vecchio.



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Cool Cats on the Ave

I heard that humans celebrate "graduating."

Like when dogs graduate from obedience school?

No, more like they learn all kinds of stuff about the world.

Like how to take care of cats?

They learn our favorite foods, the best toys and softest beds.

And how to care for us when we're sick.

Yeah, all the ways to make us happy cats!

I'll celebrate that! Meow Graduation!

SUZETTE SNOW-COBB ILLUSTRATION

... but there's No screen, No computer, not even any batteries?!

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ROB MACHADO ILLUSTRATION

OVER THE HILL

Harry, what happens if the POTUS continues to ignore the SCOTUS rulings?

Well, SCOTUS doesn't have a police force, so nothing unless the DOJ acts

But the DOJ is in his pocket. And the POTUS has the military!

Well, the Pentagon doesn't usually like to get involved in domestic politics, Cupcake.

So our government just becomes increasingly broken and chaotic?

Yes. Also the blue states will enforce the court rulings; the red states will ignore them. Things fall apart; the center cannot hold.

I think the regional centers of power will strengthen and depend more on themselves.

Oh, Harry. Poor old un-united states. It can only get worse, can't it?

Carolyn Clark

* from The Second Coming, by W.B. Yeats.

You've taken up weight lifting?

The President believes in "Peace Through Strength."

I'm increasing my strength for the fight to come...

JAN ATAMIAN ILLUSTRATION

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

- William Carlos Williams

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

June’s Featured Poet: Janet MacFadyen

August

By mid-morning the air stumbles.
The sun’s a hazy incandescence,

crows saw away at the silence,
the garden burgeons up in sweaty umbels.

Summer squash invades the lettuce,
tomatoes are too fat to stand, the beans

strangle while gold-green beetles
wrest leaves into lattices.

Everyone grabs while the heat lasts;
the sun oozes with juice,

the whole structure sags.
By afternoon, thunderheads bruise

the horizon — violence heightens;
summer swells, and overripens.

Just underfoot

A tapping in our bodies tells us
an owl is watching, or who is coming before they arrive.

We feel the bleached moon’s half-open eye, hear
the man in his grief-dream call to the lion to eat him

and the lion invites him home.
In the house, a tub with a clawed foot,

clamshell with soap, wallpaper snarled
with vines and heather. A woman sleeps

on a pillow of whitened antler, her baby buried
on a swan’s wing. We walk the halls

to where the lion pads, and a vine
winds twelve yards underground like a railing

to reach the Iron Age. Naked foot
impressed in siltstone. Even deeper,

the two front hooves of an aurochs stride
side by side like brothers. A man’s

freed thighbone —
it could be ours.

Everyone here is a guest

Another life
takes form from the dead tree’s body,
its limbs a scaffold

for fungus curlicued
as petticoats, orange
as apricots.

*Look at our moist, our
suck. We kiss
to take possession, embrace*

*to gather world into ourselves, each of us
frilled, rilled
all fingers and mouth —*

The hoards spill in
for a rollicking fiesta,
feeding, fruiting, decomposing

festering.
The table is spread, the body
throws open its doors —

Propulsion

The wind is its own voice —
hushes, then rouses shrilly, speaks
in the tongues of birds, they are heard

through wind. So the swifts swirl
undecided, not quite ready
to migrate, not quite sure which way

is south. The compass
grass bends and branches sway, there is
no other way but forward. Still

the wind blows smoke rings
to the clouds. Forward yes, but take your time,
the kingdom out of breath.

Contributor Notes

Janet MacFadyen is the author of three full-length collections, most recently *State of Grass* (Salmon Poetry 2024), with a new collection, *Love Letters to the Wild*, forthcoming from Dos Madres Press. Honors include a Massachusetts Cultural Council grant, a residency in Cill Rialaig, Ireland, and a seven-month Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center fellowship. Her poetry appears widely. She is the managing editor of Slate Roof Press, and lives in Shutesbury.

IMAGE: CAMILLE PISSARRO, POPLARS, ERAGNY, 1895



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Jenny Abeles, Sarah Wisby
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Prose Poem Variations
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coming UP...

• 6/12 "The Drawing Room"
Bi-weekly Thursdays 6-8pm \$10

• 6/20 Conversation Party!
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EVENTS

submissions:
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THURSDAY, JUNE 12

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

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro:
Emerald Ground Water,
Elijah Berlow, Norma Dream,
beetsblog. 7 p.m. \$.

Marigold, Brattleboro:
Illusionary Dreams. 7:30 p.m. \$.

New England Public Media,
Springfield: Hamid Drake/
William Parker Duo.
7:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:
Twang Club, classic country
vinyl. 8 p.m. No cover.

Stone Church, Brattleboro:
Dragged Into Sunlight,
Mizmor, Rabbit. 8 p.m. \$.

300 Pleasant, Northampton:
Libby Quinn, Hot Dirt,
Mellykiss, Death Spiral.
8 p.m. No cover.

Northampton Center for
the Arts, Northampton:
Documentary, Brownie Speaks
(2014), and Q&A with director
Don Glanden. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13

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

A.P.E. Gallery, Northampton:
Arts Night Out, featuring live
painting and beat-making
with graffiti artist LESN101
and sample-based musician
NAGO. 5 p.m. Free.

National Spiritual Alliance,
Lake Pleasant: Kirtan
Concert with Shubalanda.
6 p.m. By donation.

Incandescent Brewing,
Bernardston: Stealing
Frequencies. 6 p.m. Free.

Black Birch Vineyard, North
Hatfield: Pioneer Valley
Symphony and Chamber
Choir. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Great Falls Discovery Center,
Turners Falls: Off-the-Cuff
Trio. 7 p.m. By donation.

Deerfield Community
Center, Deerfield:
Jake Blount. 7 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. \$.

The Hoff, Holyoke: Sapient
Joyride, Imp Say Glyph,
Golem, Rhubarb Duo. 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. \$.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell:
The Mo Joes. 8 p.m. No cover.

Asbestos Farm, Hadley:
Emerald Ground Water,
Two Wrong Turns,
Blind Spot. \$. 8 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

Our Lady of Czestochowa
Church: Turners Falls: Pierogi
Sale, Yard Sale, and Bake
Sale, including several Polish
desserts. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Charlemont Federated Church,
Charlemont: Amy Burton,
soprano, John Musto, piano.
Presented by Mohawk Trail
Concerts. 5 p.m. By donation.

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

Tori Town, Holyoke: Party
Nerves, The Hell Yeahs!,
Hardcar, A.P.E. 6:30 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. \$.

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

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

Hutghi's, Westfield: Radio,
Cars Go West. 9 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.



The Leverett Community Chorus will perform this Sunday afternoon at a Doctors Without Borders benefit in Amherst.

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center,
Turners Falls: Dam Culture 1995-
2025, photos and video stills of people
skateboarding and engaging in other
"wheeled play" in Montague's public
spaces. Curated by Jeremy Latch.
Through June 29, with a reception next
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.

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.

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

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

Both through this Friday, June 13. River
Valley Radical Futures, group show,
opening reception next Friday, June 20
from 5 to 8 p.m., through July 11.

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

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

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.

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

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne:
Copper Etchings in Bloom, by
Bobbi Angell, and Dreams From
My World, oil paintings by Trina Sears

Sternstein, both through June 29.

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 by August 15 for
consideration for the "Fall into
Fiber Arts 2025" exhibit, to be held
September 12 to November 2.
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.

CALL FOR FILMS

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

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TUE-SAT 4-9

CALENDAR

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Don LaCoy*. 2 p.m. Free.

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

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *The Jeanines, Carmen Perry*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

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

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

Gill-Montague Senior Center, Turners Falls: *Mobile Food Bank*. All welcome to receive food. 1 to 2 p.m. Free.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

FRIDAY, JUNE 20

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 22

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

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

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

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

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

MONDAY, JUNE 23

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 24

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

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Vices, Inc.* 9:30 p.m. No cover.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Aussie indie luminary Courtney Barnett headlines the Green River Festival next Saturday at the Franklin County Fairgrounds.

POONEH GHANA PHOTO

looking forward...

FRIDAY, JUNE 27

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 29

Lunder Center, Williamstown: *William Parker, Patricia Nicholson*. 5 p.m. Free.

THURSDAY, JULY 3

Montague Center, Montague: *Bonfire*, hosted by the Montague Center Fire Association. 6 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, JULY 5

Mystery Train Records, Amherst: *Joseph Allred, Liam Grant, Matt Robidoux, Domestic Drafts*. 6 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JULY 11

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Big Freedria*. 7 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, JULY 17

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Wet Tuna, Vimana*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, JULY 26

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Daedelus, Dan Friel, Head of Wantastiquet, Barbie.AI, Impure Luck, Astral Chill*. 8 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *Dark Star Orchestra*. 6 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

Robertson Paper Company Field, Bellows Falls, Vermont: *Tony Trischka, The Stockwell Brothers*. 6 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Thor & Friends, More Eaze*, more TBA. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton: *Josh Ritter & The Royal City Band, Amy Helm, Steve Poltz, Cloudbelly*, more. 10:30 a.m. \$.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Iron Horse, Northampton: *New Jazz Underground*. 7 p.m. \$.

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VALLEY VIEW from page B1
of the water in the bottom of a pan, and drop a couple of quarters into the coin slot on the cover secured to a can. Maybe a Maxwell House coffee can, if my long-term memory can be trusted. I can still hear

the “clunk, clunk” of those quarters hitting the can bottom.
Today, an identical bunch of roadside-stand asparagus will run you anywhere from five to seven bucks. I paid both this year. That said, when buying directly from the

source, you get a full bunch – not one chopped thinner for profit by retailers, who buy wholesale and make four bunches into five.
Back to the days of buying asparagus at Dzenis’ stand, my mother would reward me by throwing in

some spare change for an ice cream cone and a pack or two of Topps baseball cards at mischievous Billy Rotkiewicz’s downtown Frontier Pharmacy across from the town common. Baseball cards, bubble gum included, were a nickel a pack;

ice cream cones a nickel a scoop.
Once in a great while, my mother on overload with four kids to feed and my father on the road in some faraway place, she’d even give me enough for a hamburger, French fries, and a coffee frappe. I don’t recall the cost, but can’t imagine it was more than a couple of bucks. Gas was then probably around 15 cents a gallon, and a big, comfortable house 10 to 15 thousand bucks.

In my adult years I came to associate asparagus with an autumn game I passionately played. That would be pheasant hunting on both sides of the Connecticut River, most often in Whately and Hatfield on the west side, sometimes Sunderland and Hadley on the east side. There we included commercial asparagus patches among our haunts, the plants standing in rows like corn but not nearly as tall.

That was back when the state stocked the majority of its pheasants on private land, not the Wildlife Management Areas preferred today. Pheasants seemed to find their way to asparagus fields, where they eagerly foraged the red berries dropped to the ground by wind and rain.

Big fields like the one we often hunted along the river at Hatfield’s Bashin provided quite a challenge. When a gundog caught scent of a pheasant and pursued it through asparagus, the birds had clear lanes to flee down, and no cumbersome leafage to interfere with their flush. A wing-shooter had to be quick to drop a cackling rooster before it flew out of range.

Gamebirds have no interest that I’m aware of in strawberry fields. So, we can’t go there.

Whew! Finally, time to come up for air. Thanks for listening. There’s nothing I’d rather reminisce about than baseball, pheasants, and travels through my ancestral homeland.

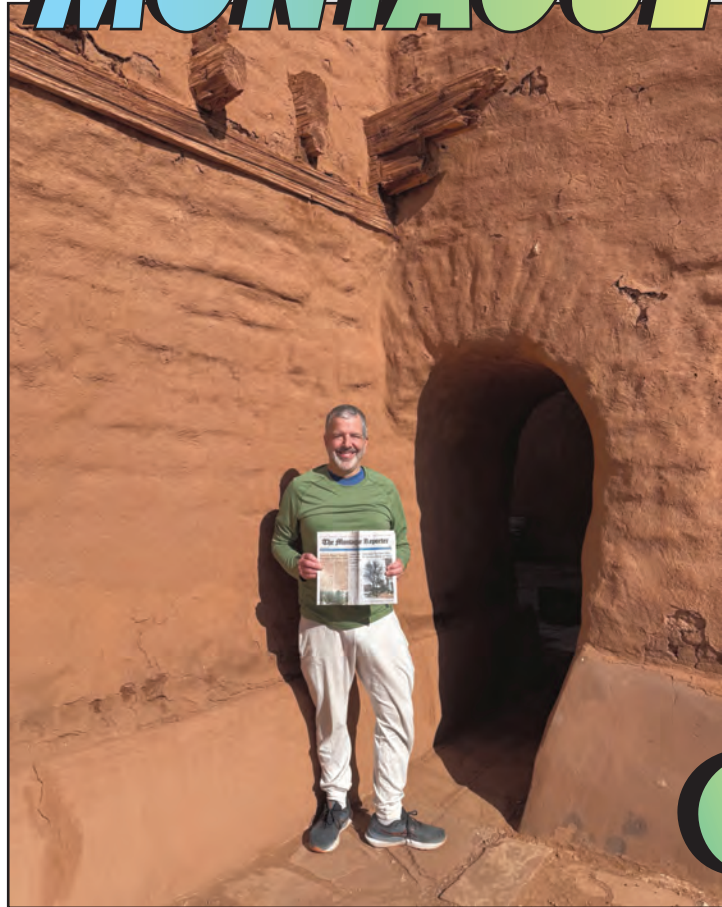
All it took to bring me there was a quick glance at a poignant overgrown boyhood ballpark. By the next time I passed it, over the weekend, it been scalped and tidied up a bit, but not for the grand old game.

Its use as a baseball diamond now a memory, it’ll likely become an extension of the clogged adjacent parking lot for Sugarloaf hikers.

Gary Sanderson lives in Greenfield. Questions and comments welcome at gary@oldtavernfarm.com.



MONTAGUE REPORTER



Reporter proofreader and contributor Jamie Simpson brought our April 17 edition to Pecos National Historical Park in Pecos, New Mexico.



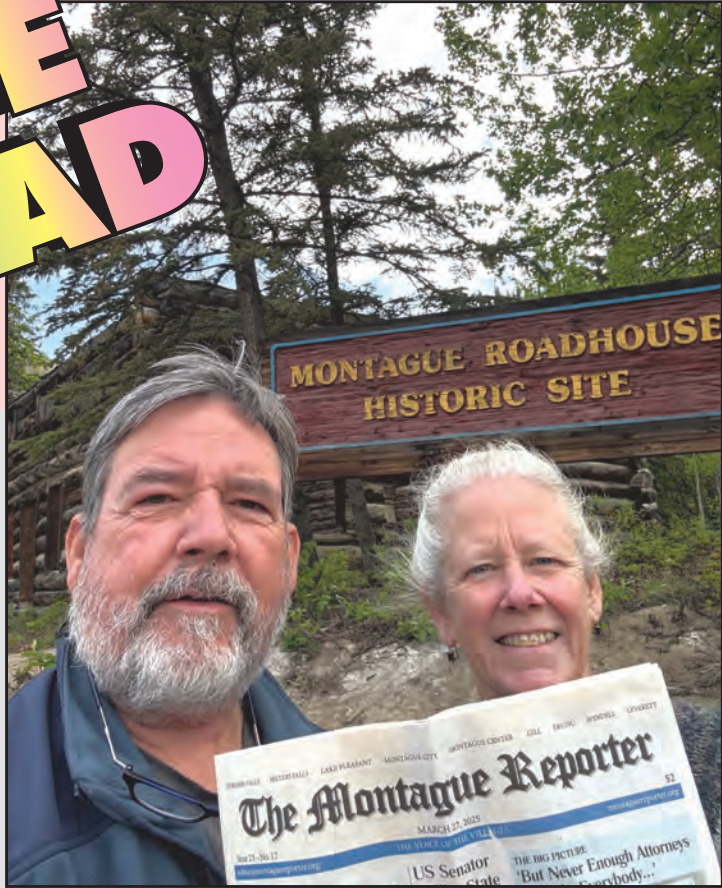
Vanessa Brewster and Hannah Brookman, vice president and president of the Greenfield art organization Looky Here, went to the Fanzineist Art Book & Zine Fair in Vienna, Austria bearing not one but two sections of our April 24 edition.

ON THE ROAD



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Leverett reader Annaliese Bischoff hauled our June 5 edition to Tuscany, Italy. Here she is at Lucignano d'Asso – the building behind her features a sign with a Mussolini quote.



On the Klondike Highway in the Yukon Territory, Leverett's Catharine and Stephen Ball brought out our March 27 edition at the Montague Roadhouse.

Going somewhere this summer? Take us with you! Send your photos to editor@montaguereporter.org.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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