

The Montague Reporter

THE WAY TO WORK



ED GREGORY PHOTO

“We’re at the east portal of the soon-to-be-removed Keith Paper mill employee footbridge,” photographer Ed Gregory writes of the above perspective. “It awaits removal by the Sessler Wrecking company out of Waterloo, New York. Preparations are underway for the bridge’s removal during the annual canal drawdown the week of September 21.”

Architects Unveil Sketches Of Proposed New Library

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – “We have looked at three related options that kind of build on each other,” architect Angela Ward Hyatt told the small crowd gathered at the Great Falls Discovery Center last Thursday to look at potential designs for a new downtown library. “In each successive option,” she continued, “we’re learning what was wrong with the first one and trying to solve it.... We’re going to play architect for a few minutes here,

and get you used to looking at floor plans.” Ward Hyatt is president of Schwartz/Silver Architects, the firm hired to design either a renovation of the Carnegie Library or a new building. In mid-August the project’s building committee decided on a new library, and the meeting last Thursday, attended by about 20 locals, was to show some of the options and receive “public input.” The first slides in the presentation showed the components that would meet the basic

see **LIBRARY** page A7



IMAGE BY SCHWARTZ / SILVER

Early sketches of a new library at Avenue A and Second Street feature granite, brick, and tall windows.

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Uncertainty Persists Over Location, Stewardship of Some Local Roads

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard’s September 10 meeting opened with discussion about the 0.6-mile portion of Wendell Road that county maps show as part of Wendell. Both homeowners and officials in Wendell and New Salem have believed that this stretch of road is in New Salem, with the town line to its west, but earlier this year New Salem repaved the road north of that stretch, stopping

where the line is shown on county maps. Highway commissioner Phil Delorey said the situation is multi-layered, involving property owners, taxes, and officials from both towns. He said just the past five years of property tax paid to New Salem by homeowners on that stretch would have covered the cost of repaving it, but that those residents might not be happy suddenly being told they live in Wendell, and should be

see **WENDELL** page A8

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Vote on New School District Will Require Special Election, Not Town Meeting, in Montague

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague officials learned this week that a town meeting will not need to be held in November, as planned, to vote on the proposed consolidation of the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley school districts, because state law requires towns with representative town meetings to vote on regional agreements by townwide ballot. Meeting on Monday, the selectboard also discussed placing a proposal to increase tax benefits for local veterans and a tax agreement with a solar developer on the agenda for the October 22 town meeting, extended an agreement with Eversource Energy to facilitate public access to Dry Hill Cemetery, and decided not to install a hydroelectric turbine

at the Clean Water Facility. The regional committee that has been in charge of organizing a new school district combining Montague, Gill, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick – the Six Town Regional Planning Board (STRPB) – had originally proposed that the towns all hold town meetings on the same day in November. This had proven difficult to schedule, and Montague town administrator Walter Ramsey had recently agreed to coordinate the effort. Concern over Montague’s elected town meeting, however, was raised by Gill representative Deb Loomer at an STRPB meeting last Tuesday, and the next day Montague finance committee member Fred Bowman

see **MONTAGUE** page A5

Wendell’s State Rep Condemns Grant for Bowens Dam Removal

By SARAH ROBERTSON and MIKE JACKSON

WENDELL – Following the announcement earlier this month that the Massachusetts Audubon Society has been awarded a \$462,552 state grant to assist with draining a pond and removing a 270-year-old dam, Wendell’s state representative Aaron Saunders is criticizing the nonprofit’s involvement in the controversial project. “My concern lies primarily with the use of taxpayer money for private property improvements that do not enjoy any demonstrable community support,” Saunders told the *Reporter*. “I remain hopeful that the Healey administration will pause this funding and Mass

Audubon will meet the extremely low bar of disclosing its financial interests in the project.” Since 2017, the state Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) has overseen the proposal to remove the Bowens Pond dam, which sits on private property and is identified by the Office of Dam Safety as being in “poor” condition. The owner of the roughly 220-acre parcel, Tom Robinson, formed a limited liability company, Bowen’s Pond LLC, applied for permits, and hired engineers. The plan involves draining Bowen’s Pond and restoring the upper reaches of Osgood Brook, which proponents argue will improve wildlife habitat and eliminate the risk of a dam failure impacting Wendell Depot Road.

see **DAM** page A6

The Week in High School Sports: Cheers, Chants, and Early Streaks

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – After two full weeks of the fall high school sports season, two local teams are still unbeaten, the Franklin Tech golf and the Turners Falls boys’ soccer teams. The Turners golfers won their first match this week, while their volleyball team made some changes in their lineup. Meanwhile, the Franklin Tech Football Eagles opened their season by swatting the McCann Green Hornets out in the Berkshires.

Boys’ Soccer
TFHS 6 – Pioneer 0
FCTS 2 – Hopkins 1
TFHS 5 – Ware 0

Last Thursday I split my time between the Turners Falls-Pioneer boys’ soccer game and various volleyball games underway in the Turners gym. It was nice meeting the families of the next generation of Turners Falls student athletes. I stayed for the middle school and JV volleyball games, then headed to the soccer field for a hamburger. When I reached the field, the game had just started. By the time I finished my burger, Turners had scored four goals.

see **SPORTS** page A4

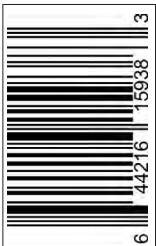


DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Olivia Wolbach of Turners Falls High School sets a pace as the Thunder hosted Hopkins Academy and McCann Tech last Wednesday for the inaugural cross-country meet on the 2.8-mile Bob Avery Course. Wolbach placed sixth in the event.

Blissfully Immune to Media Purges

Preparations Are Underway.....	A1	Sharp, Energizing Chill.....	B1
Melon-Related News.....	A2	Unshakeably Catchy Earworm.....	B2
Life-Sized Candy Land.....	A3	Billowing Out of a Dumpster.....	B3
A Week of Good Bridges.....	A4	Mature Product Category.....	B4
Kind of a Freaky Thing.....	A5	Swimming in the Moon’s Reflection.....	B5
Legitimate Property Assessment.....	A6	Soft Vein, Nape Neck, Jewel Eye.....	B6
Fell Off the Screws.....	A7	Garlic Fest, Pickle Fest, Chestnut Fest.....	B7
Insulation Around a Plenum.....	A8	Stuffing a Flower.....	B8



The Montague Reporter

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Designation

One week and six hours transpired between the assassination on a Utah college campus of Charlie Kirk, the young conservative movement leader, and President Trump announcing he was designating *antifa*, a vague identifying principle of militant opposition to fascism, as a “major terrorist organization.”

It’s unclear what this means; in the US there is no statute outlawing support for domestic groups designated as terrorist, as there is for foreign groups. But it came a day after the FCC threatened ABC and

Disney with regulatory action if they did not punish talk show host Jimmy Kimmel for saying he believed Kirk’s accused assassin held far-right politics. They complied.

The assassin’s inner motivations are completely irrelevant. After all, millions of conservatives today believe Vance Boelter, the apparent assassin of Minnesota state representative Melissa Hortman in June, was a liberal. People are in separate realities. The way out of this conundrum is not through violence, but it is also not through debate.

Letters to the Editors



Much Ado About Melons

(Ed. note: This letter replies to an inquiry in our September 11 edition, “Olden Days: Why So Melony?”)

The rise in melon-related news throughout the 19th century is not due to a lack of more pressing matters, or to a bout of contagious psychosis on the part of editors across the country. It was a craze developed by the melon industry as a way to bolster American pride, introduce a new health fad to the post-Civil War country... and, of course, to make money.

Shortly after the war watermelons made their way North, and the demand was so instantaneous that the watermelon crop of 1867 was the driving force behind truck farming – a practice that encouraged farmers to grow crops for distant markets, the same practice that renders so many of our off-season tomatoes, fresh off of the grocery store shelf, flavorless.

Watermelons became an icon of American freedom. They became the literal centerpiece of barbecues and dinner parties both North and South of the Mason-Dixon. There were even etiquette manuals dedicated to the proper way to eat melons. Specific utensils were invented

to eat the messy watermelon, so watermelon spoons, and watermelon knives were introduced to the Victorian silverware market.

These watermelons were so coveted, in fact, that they have been named one of the most dangerous fruits in history. Farmers had to protect their crops from tenacious thieves. They employed some creative and incredibly shortsighted methods.

A notable deterrent deployed by one watermelon farmer was to inject the fruit with arsenic, so that either a thief would eat the sweet treat and die an agonizing death, or a customer would eat the sweet treat and the seller’s reputation would die an agonizing death. This may have been an effective method, but the farmer failed to remember where he left this melon and incidentally poisoned himself and his whole family instead.

So you can understand how these juicy stories made headlines in newspapers across the country. They were indeed the edible Stanley cups and Labubus of their time. I hope this helps make sense of the watermelon craze.

Silas Clish

Millers Falls

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NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



Waterway Arts in Turners Falls is hosting a “Gumball Machine Takeover” this month featuring art by Brattleboro-area artists Allie Dercoli (Fin.Allie Ferments) and Marika Vandervalk (The Wonky Press). Dercoli, pictured above, paired with Vandervalk to make the handmade glass hermit crab shells and other cool prizes in their Palestine Sovereignty Wishing Well gumball machine. A second machine, curated by Nik Perry of Sadie’s Bikes, offers random band names for those of you racking your brains for a moniker to hang on your latest project. Grab some quarters and visit the Avenue A store, open Thursdays through Sundays.

Buff Duly Summoned

(Ed. note: In the ‘Turners Falls and Vicinity’ column in our September 4 edition, we replied to reader Joe R. Parzych, who’d spotted this artifact at the Connecticut Trolley Museum in Windsor, Connecticut. We asked if any of our readers could identify its origin and function...)

“[...] Joe asks: ‘Could any readers tell us what year that sign was from, and what rail station it was located at?’ Any trolley buffs want to weigh in? Looking at it makes me wonder whether it might have been affixed to a streetcar and rotated to show its destination, but what line went to both Turners and Conway Station?”

I remember once playing an improv game creating lame superheroes and their powers, where someone came up with Pardon Me Boy, whose only special power was being able to identify the Chattanooga Choo Choo when summoned.

I ... feel summoned.

Your instinct is right: that’s a destination sign from the end of a Connecticut Valley Street Railway streetcar, which would be manually

rotated by the conductor at the end of the line (when he also switched which end’s trolley pole was up).

But the “St” isn’t “station” – it’s “street.”

Our streetcar system began in 1895, connecting Turners Falls with Greenfield (via Montague City), and also connecting Turners Falls with Millers Falls (via Lake Pleasant). Early on, every car entering Greenfield went up Bank Row and up Federal Street to Silver Street.

In 1903, the Nash’s Mill division was built, with tracks from Greenfield Common down Main Street to Conway Street and then up to Silver Street. Some Greenfield-bound cars would go that way, signed “Conway St”; others took the original route up Federal Street; and still others

terminated at Main & Federal, simply signed “Greenfield.”

In 1924 the CVSR – which by then extended to Deerfield, Northampton, and Amherst – went bankrupt, and the towns of Greenfield and Montague jointly bought the Turners-Falls-to-Greenfield section. They operated streetcars as the municipally-owned Greenfield Montague Transportation Area until 1934, when GMTA switched to buses.

There were still rails in Avenue A until 1952; the large trolley car barn at Cheapside served as the GMTA and later FRTA bus barn until 2023; and the very first trolley car barn, built in 1895 in Montague City, has been in the news recently as the subject of ZBA meetings.

Here’s a streetcar around 1912 bearing one of those destination signs, rotated to show Turners Falls. (And a longer sign on the side.) It’s just crossed the Connecticut River and is now vying with traffic on Montague City Road on its way to Turners Falls. Back then, not all American cars had steering wheels on the left!

I’m not sure how many different signboard options there were in all; I’ve seen Turners Falls, Millers Falls, Montague (Center), Federal St, Conway St, So Deerfield, Northampton, Amherst, and Greenfield.

Will Quale

Montague Center

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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

Festival season is upon us. Besides all the usual jazz, film, pride, worm, and puppet fests that clog our local calendars year-round, the bounty of natural and agricultural harvests peaks in autumn and with it a traditional bounty of gathering and piling things up. And candy.

Dive right in: The Spiritualists at Lake Pleasant have organized a “Camp Weekend” this week, there’s the Fall Arts & Crafts Festival at Old Deerfield, and here in Turners the **Northeast Unity car show** returns to Unity Park on Sunday, which promises music and food trucks too in case you’re not a big car guy.

Next Saturday there’s a modest Harvest Festival in Leverett, a Pickle Festival across our northern border in Winchester, and from 2 to 5 p.m. a **Montague Community Fair** at Unity Park, sponsored by the Libraries, with live music and family activities. There’s also a biggie out in Orange, **North Quabbin Garlic & Arts** (www.garlicandarts.org), which lasts through Sunday the 28th.

That Sunday there’s a **Harvest Festival** from noon to 3 p.m. on the Gill town common, with hayrides and a petting zoo. (I’ve heard it’s nearly impossible to get hayrides insured these days – those and bouncy castles – so take every opportunity.)

On October 4 and 5 there are family-friendly fall-type events at Apex Orchards and Kringle Candle, plus the **Conway Festival of the Hills**.

Things really get going October 11 and 12 with fall festivals in Granby and Westhampton, a puppet festival in Brattleboro, the fifth annual **Chestnut Festival** at Big River Chestnuts in Sunderland, and of course the season-defining, see-and-be seen **Ashfield Fall Festival**.

Some people miss not having Turners Falls Pumpkinfest in the mix, but while I always enjoyed it, it was also pretty stressful for the neighborhood to host an event of that size. I still hold out hope that someone will bring back something on the scale of the Block Party.

Skunk season is also here.

Ed Hines of the **Wendell Historical Society** let us know that a five-minute film produced by the Society, “The Night Jack Ellis Died,” is competing this Saturday in the Ashfield Film Festival’s “short documentary (history)” category.

The film “tells the story of the respected and loved Wendell citizen whose death occurred during a town meeting in 1987.” Screenings will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. this Saturday at the Ashfield town hall, but if you can’t make it there, the film can also be viewed on YouTube via www.tinyurl.com/TNJED.

Well worth a watch...

The Communities That Care Coalition is accepting nominations for their annual **Mike Fritz Community Builder Award**, which recognizes local residents “for

their efforts in improving health, well-being, and equity in the region, especially among youth.”

The award is given at the Coalition’s annual meeting, scheduled for October 15 at the bus station in Greenfield. Make your suggestions at www.tinyurl.com/fritznoms.



JACKSON PHOTO

And if we’re nominating heroes... This edition is dedicated to the \$20 pair of New Balances I bought last weekend **on the side of the road** in Greenfield (*above*). Big thanks to *that* lady; the shoes are perfect. We live amid such sweet abundance.

A couple weeks back I mentioned on this page that the Montague Cultural Council is taking proposals for small grants, and made an educated guess that the same was likely true in other area towns.

Indeed, **Gill’s Local Cultural Council** now “encourages area cit-

izens to submit proposals for community-oriented arts, humanities, and science programs by October 16. Ideal projects will take place in the Town of Gill or at least be connected with a Gill organization or resident.”

Applications for all of the local cultural councils can be found at www.massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/. Many applicants apply in several towns. Gill’s allocation this year totals \$5,700.

The Salvadoran restaurant **Cocina Lupita**, which is expanding from Greenfield to a second location on Avenue A in Turners Falls, placed an ad in this edition for a liquor license hearing, and in the course of doing so mentioned to me that they expect to be open very soon.

So, you heard it here first!

Back in March we covered their plans for the space, which was most recently occupied by the Black Cow Burger Bar and for generations before that by Equi’s Candy. I’m looking forward immensely to being able to grab pupusas and *aguas frescas* right here on the Ave.

Jack Nelson, the sculptor and lunatic well known in these parts, enjoyed his 90th birthday this week. Congratulations and very best wishes to him. He makes it look easy – and fun. A true inspiration.

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

DISPATCHES FROM THE CARNEGIE BASEMENT

The Case For a Large Community Room

By CAITLIN KELLEY

TURNERS FALLS – At the Discovery Center last Thursday, Angela Ward Hyatt of Schwartz/Silver Architects debuted the firm’s preliminary design concepts for Montague’s main library building project. Event attendees were treated to a review of the architect’s design process and learned how feedback from the community, the library building steering committee, the library trustees, and state library consultants led to design changes and evolutions.

Angela’s most recent design features reading nooks on the first floor, inspired by the reverse bay windows found on several Avenue A buildings. There’s a separate quiet reading room; a community room with three sets of French doors that open onto a roof garden, overlooking the canal; and a programming room where children – and occasionally adults – can get messy as they make art. When you drive by at night, you’ll see the adult fiction and non-fiction stacks illuminated through generous windows.

This design is not the final one, but it is getting there.

Next, Angela revealed preliminary ideas for the exterior of the building. She highlighted the façade of 113 Avenue A, which features granite trim, tall, well-spaced windows, and a decorative brick cornice, and presented a first design that incorporated all three of those things. This demonstrated a deep understanding that any building we develop must complement Turners Falls’ historic architecture.

Audience members had a variety of feedback on the designs, from “You should incorporate a tower!” to a suggestion that the roof garden be partially covered, so that it can be used during inclement weather and laptop users won’t have

to worry about screen glare.

Library trustee Pam Allan noted that she has received a couple questions about why the new building needs a large community room, which I’d like to answer here, for all those who were unable to attend the event:

1. There are countless programs that library staff and I would love to be able to facilitate that we cannot host in the Carnegie Library. I listed a couple dozen at the August 14 community event, and will replicate a few here: book clubs, art classes, local history lectures, film screenings, technology talks, technology instruction, bilingual Music and Movement, Life-Sized Candy Land, educational animal programs, and many more.

2. There is no large meeting room in downtown Turners Falls that is free to use by the public. Both the Shea Theater and the Discovery Center charge a rental fee to use their spaces, and reservations must be placed well in advance – 45 days, in the case of the Great Hall. The library’s new community space would be open and free to anyone who wishes to host a community meeting or event, and easily bookable online.

3. While there are larger community spaces in other parts of town, the majority of Montague’s population is located in Turners Falls, as are the majority of the town’s restaurants and retail establishments. A large community room on Avenue A would mean that folks without cars wouldn’t be excluded from events, programs, or meetings. It also means those participating in library programs and events would be more likely to grab a coffee, lunch, groceries, or ice cream from local establishments after they leave, further supporting the local economy.

4. Finally, when library staff have to host many of their programs offsite, it means that patrons can’t simply browse the collection after the pro-

gram ends. If their parents have to transport them to another location after a family program ends, kids are simply less likely to go home with a stack of books, which means they’re reading less.

Indeed, circulation of children’s materials has decreased since we’ve been disallowed from facilitating programs on the second floor of the Carnegie. If there is a large community room in the new library, children will be able to go straight from singing about elephants with Tom and Laurie to checking out all the animal books in the children’s room across the hall.

Finally, I’d like to offer a *mea culpa*. I noted at our last community event that a community conversation about the potential costs of this project would happen in November or early December.

Unfortunately, I’ve been informed by our consultants at the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners that our final design submission needs to be reviewed by the state’s independent reviewers, and that a final state grant amount must be approved before we may provide cost estimates to the public.

Their reasoning is that if the reviewer determines that there needs to be changes to the design, we won’t have promised the project will cost *X* number of dollars only to learn that it’s going to cost *Y* number of dollars instead.

That review process will take time, so we may not know how much money the town will be responsible for until January. Rest assured that I and the other members of the library building steering committee are as eager to learn about the cost implications of this project as you are, and are committed to providing as much information to the public as we can, as soon as we can.

Caitlin Kelley is the director of the Montague Public Libraries.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Sewer Regs Finally Agreed Upon

By KEITH WATERS

At its meeting on Monday, September 15, the Erving selectboard read a set of proposed amendments to sewer use regulations for the seventh time, and discussed them once again with water and wastewater superintendent Pete Sanders.

The first thing Sanders presented to the board was the sewer connection fees he found for Greenfield and Montague: while both charge the same for residential and commercial/industrial, Greenfield's rate is \$1,000, and Montague's rate is \$125. Erving's rates are currently \$150 for residential, and nothing for commercial/industrial.

Asked by the board for a recommendation of future rates, Sanders suggested something between \$250 and \$500, and to have them the same for all categories. The board and Sanders agreed to set the application rate at \$500 for all categories and further to stipulate that residential connections must have a six-inch PVC connecting pipe.

The board, Sanders, and town administrator Bryan Smith agreed that nothing else needed to be reviewed on the new sewer regulations, so they can now be presented to the town as they must be. A presentation date of sometime in the middle of October was agreed on.

In preparation for the upcoming interviews of final candidates for the position of activities coordinator for senior services, scheduled for next Tuesday, September 23, selectboard member Jim Loynd reworked a number of questions provided by Bryan Smith. The board spent some time going over these questions. The selectboard is going to hold another meeting next Monday, September 22 and they decided to finalize the questions then.

The September 22 meeting is to interview community service cadet candidates. The board spent some time at the meeting this Monday finalizing their questions for these candidates. The interviews are for a position which will lead to a position as a police officer.

The board discussed how the community aspect of this position, and of the town's police force, are important.

Bryan Smith presented the board with a new state grant he suggested the town could apply for. The state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has just begun a program called Local Early Actionable Planning (LEAP), which he said he believed the town's River Road water main project would be eligible for.

He and town planner Glenn Johnson-Mussad had prepared the application. The town is requesting \$64,000, which would pay for the preparation of engineering documents; the project could then be put out to bid. The board approved his idea, and the application will be submitted.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith related that he had heard from the state that the Church Street bridge project had gone out to bid, so action will begin soon.

Bryan Smith replied that a bid has been selected for the Farley Road Bridge project, and work will happen there in October.

"A week of good bridges," said Jacob Smith.

After the interview sessions, the selectboard's next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, October 14.

SPORTS from page A1

I watched a few more minutes while I conversed with some of the regulars, but it became obvious that Turners was liberally substituting their reserves while playing keep-away. The Thunder scored two more goals after I left, keeping the visiting Panthers at bay.

Yolvin Ovalle-Mejia and Rojello Galves-Mendez each scored two goals for Blue, while John Ramirez-Martin Freilyn and Jose Abarua Corona had one each.

While Turners was out kicking the Panthers at home, the Eagles won a close one down in Hadley against Hopkins. Nathan Gheorghita scored both goals for Tech while John Georgitsa gave two assists. In goal, Jakob George made five saves.

On Monday, the Thunder traveled to Ware, where they shut out the Indians to extend their unbeaten streak. In this one, Ovalle-Mejia and Noah Kolodziej kicked in two goals each, while Moises Borrayes finished with a goal and two assists.

Volleyball
TFHS 3 – Mohawk 1
TFHS 3 – Hampden Charter 0
TFHS 3 – Pioneer 0

When I returned to the gym last Thursday to catch the varsity volleyball game, I saw the Thunder defeat the Mohawk Trail Warriors 3-1. Much of the talk in the stands was about the loss of spiker Madison Liimatainen and the fact that the team's libero, Maddie Deitz, was out on IR.

Turners bounced out to a 22-12 lead in the first match, weathering a Warrior comeback to take it 25-18. The Warriors came out smoking in the second, putting up five quick points, and coasted to a 25-19 win to tie it up. Blue rebounded and won the next two matches handily to take the game 3-1.

Janelle Massey finished with six kill shots, four digs, and 11 aces, and Maddie Haight had two kills and gave nine assists. The newest libero Abigail Moffatt, saved eight digs and served six aces.

On Tuesday, the Hamden Charter School of Science Wolfies came to town. Very few Hamden fans made the trip from Chicopee, but Wolfie JVs in the far section made up for it with loud cheering and chants.

In the middle section, proud parents and grandparents chanted "Here we go, Turners, here we go!," while the Turners students in the near section did their own cheering and chanting.

In the opening match, Turners led until the Scientists tied it at 15, but Powertown finished strong to take it 25-17.

The second match was a battle of streaks: Turners took a 5-1 lead, but the Wolfies went on a tear to wrest it back 10-5. During this streak the Hamden bench chanted the soccer anthem – "Olé Olé Olé Olé..." – but Turners regrouped, and went on their own tear to take the match 25-18.

The last match was all Blue, and Turners took it 25-11. As the teams shook hands, the parents and grandparents began chanting, "Way to go, Turners, way to go..."

Deitz, back in the game, finished with a kill, five digs, four assists, and two aces. Haight made a kill, two digs, and six aces; Moffatt six digs and three aces; Massey five kills, two digs, and four aces; Shelby Beck three digs and five aces; and Autumn Thornton a kill, three digs, and four aces.

On Wednesday, the Thunder played arguably their best game thus far, besting the Pioneer Black Panthers in three grueling matches to take the game 3-0.

Golf
TFHS 179 – Mohawk 195
Frontier 156 – TFHS 197
FCTS 155 – Westfield Tech 187
FCTS 156 – Athol 158
Hopkins 160 – TFHS 179

The Turners Falls golf team won their first match in over a year last Thursday, at home against Mohawk. It was also the lowest stroke count of the season. Ethan Eichorn and Cam Cogswell tied for second place with 43s, Liam Kerivan placed fourth with a 46, and William Tyler shot a 47 for fifth place.

On Friday the squad traveled to the Cherry Hill golf course in Amherst, where they dropped a match against Frontier. Cogswell, who finished in 45 strokes, was the lone Thunder player on the leader board.

The Westfield Technical Academy Starfires came to town the same night and were soundly defeated by Franklin Tech, who took the top



Franklin Tech's Faythe Sobieski (center) splits St. Mary's Charlotte Glynn (left) and Kelley Gervais (right) as the Eagles hosted the Saints on Tuesday. The Saints prevailed in the competitive match, 2-1.

four spots on the board. Jack Day led the field with a 35 while Grady Deery, Braeden Talbot, and Mason Vassar tied for second with 40s.

On Monday the Tech golfers traveled to Ellinwood Country Club in Athol, keeping their streak alive with a two-stroke victory over the Red Bears. Day tied for the top spot with a 33, Deery finished third with a 36, and Talbot finished fourth in 40, while Vassar made eighth with a 47.

On Tuesday, Hopkins defeated the Turners Falls team at Thomas Memorial by a score of 160 to 179, though the Turners team's score of 179 matched their lowest of the season. Eichorn led the side with a 40.

Field Hockey
TFHS 3 – Mahar 2

The Turners field hockey team headed to Orange on Monday, where they defeated the Mahar Senators 3-2. Khalifa Seck scored a goal and gave an assist, while Eva Lareau and Jazzlyn Gonzalez both scored goals. In goal, Connor Glenon made seven saves.

Cross Country
Smith Voc 15 – TFHS 50 – Pioneer 50

On Wednesday the cross-country teams from Pioneer and Turners traveled to Northampton to race against the Smith Vocational Vikings. In the girls' meet, Olivia

Wolbach placed third with a time of 20:56 and Amber Marcy finished fourth with a time of 22:31.

Football
FCTS 48 – McCann 0

Last Friday, the Franklin Tech Football Eagles traveled to North Adams and blanked McCann 48-0.

Quarterback Mason Bassett completed five passes for 131 yards and two TDs, threw an interception, and rushed for a 2-PAT. Max Brunette rushed for 145 yards, caught a 13-yard pass, scored three touchdowns, and made a sack and two interceptions – one of which he ran back for 87 yards.

Nathan Sabolevski rushed for 76, scored two TDs, and made a sack; Nolyn Stafford made three catches for 97 yards and scored a touchdown; and Hunter Donahue ran 25 yards on the ground, made a reception for 21 yards, scored a touchdown and a 2-PAT, and he made a sack.

Wyatt Whitman, who rushed for 20 yards, led the team with 16 tackles. Brady Gancarz returned three punts for 68 yards and scored a 2-PAT and Joseph DiSciullo kicked off eight times for 248 yards and punted once for 38.

The Eagles will play their home opener this Friday against the Frontier Red Hawks.



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MONTAGUE from page A1 said he believed state law required that towns with representative meetings hold full elections to approve new districts. He recommended that Ramsey consult legal counsel.

The law which deals with regional consolidation is MGL Chapter 71 Section 15, titled “Acceptance of organization provisions by electorate.” The section states that votes on agreements for new school districts shall be held by secret ballot in towns with open town meetings – all the towns in the proposed district, except Montague – but that those with representative meetings need to vote at an annual or special town election.

The law goes on to say that while any town meetings must be held “within thirty days” of receiving a proposed district agreement, any election must take place “not less than thirty-five nor more than fifty days after the receipt of such recommendation.”

“It turns out we had misidentified the process for adopting the district being a representative town meeting,” Ramsey told the selectboard on Monday. “A special town meeting does not need to convene.”

Due to the differing timelines required of towns with different forms of town meeting, he said, Montague will need to vote after Gill, Northfield, Bernardston, Warwick, and Leyden.

Ramsey said he was working with town clerk Wendy Bogusz to “strategize” on when the referendum should be held, and that the STRPB was in the process of organizing “information sessions” about the proposed regional agreement.

The six-town board has tentatively scheduled its next meeting for Wednesday, September 24, and is waiting to receive approval from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) of the final draft of the agreement.

“We’re trying to work out the official timing of when we submit the final regional agreement that DESE approves,” STRPB secretary Greg Snedeker, a representative of Gill, told the *Reporter*. “We’ll try to keep the special town election close to the other towns’ town meetings, to reduce the amount of politicizing of the votes.”

If the proposal fails in any of the six towns, the district will not be formed.

Snedeker, who also serves on the Gill selectboard said the STRPB is consulting with attorneys “to find out if we can release the regional agreement at different times” to the six towns. “Both [Gill town administrator] Ray Purington and Walter [Ramsey] brought this up,” he said. “We haven’t heard back yet about what kind of flexibility we have with that.”

The Gill-Montague district was formed by ballot elections held in both towns on May 23, 1967. In Gill, which was also being courted at the time by the Pioneer Valley district, the ratio in favor was about 4-to-3, according to the *Greenfield Recorder-Gazette*. In Montague, the vote came in 563 to 33.

Chief Finalists Named

At Monday’s selectboard meeting, board member Rich Kuklewicz said the police chief hiring committee had narrowed a list of “quite a few very qualified applicants” to two finalists – Jason Haskins, a lieutenant in the Greenfield police

department, and David Kachajian, chief of police in the town of Brandon, Vermont.

Ramsey said both finalists had experience in towns smaller than Montague, but also in larger towns. He said Kachajian would have to receive certifications in Massachusetts, but that the town “would have every reason to believe that he would get those.”

Ramsey proposed the selectboard members interview the finalists on Monday, October 6 in private, but deliberate in open session as required by the state open meeting law. The board members nodded in agreement, but did not take a formal vote.

COLA for HEROes?

The new director of assessing, Adam Tocci, made two proposals that would increase the local property tax levy. The first would broaden tax exemptions for qualified veterans and their families, as made possible by a state law known as the HERO Act. The other, a 16-year agreement, would lock in lower payments from the solar company Kearsarge Energy in exchange for the company withdrawing its challenges before the state appellate tax board of assessments on two solar facilities it owns in Montague.

Tocci, who was presenting at his first selectboard meeting, reviewed different options for veteran tax relief made possible by the HERO Act and how each would impact the town. He noted that any exemptions approved by the board of assessors should be included in the planning process for the FY’27 budget, which would be approved at next spring’s annual town meeting, and implemented next year.

In January, Tocci explained, the assessors must project the cost of property and personal tax exemptions and request funds to set aside in the “overlay” account they use for abatements and exemptions. Applications for the exemptions would be due in April, though, so the assessors must estimate their impact based on past years.

Tocci said that in the current fiscal year, 72 Montague taxpayers have been awarded reduced taxes based on veteran status. He compared the costs to the town of applying two potential increases to this benefit – a cost-of-living increase (COLA), and an increase in total benefits by between 20% and 100% – to four different categories of beneficiaries.

He estimated, for example, that approving a 3% COLA and a 50% increase in total benefits for most beneficiaries would require a \$21,836 increase in the overlay account, which last year stood at \$917,183.

Kuklewicz said he was in favor of broadening the benefits, but unsure of which options to bring to town meeting, and when.

Selectboard chair Matt Lord said he would favor bringing it to the October town meeting and packaging it alongside a proposed tax on short-term rentals, such as Airbnb, which would generate revenue to offset the exemptions.

Ramsey said articles for that meeting are due by September 23, but that the board could “dig into this question” on September 29.

PILOT for Arrays?

Tocci then presented a 16-year payment *in lieu* of taxes (PILOT) agreement with Kearsarge for two of the three arrays they own in town

– one on Millers Falls Road across from the entrance to the airport industrial park, and one on Turnpike Road behind the Park Villa Apartments. Combined, the two facilities generate 2.6 megawatts of power.

Kearsarge, which has challenged its tax assessments before the state appellate tax board (ATB), has proposed an agreement, similar to the PILOT with FirstLight Power approved at May’s annual town meeting, which would lower the company’s payments for the two arrays but allow the town to avoid the cost of losing the ATB case.

Tocci said that calculating valuations for solar companies is very difficult due to the lack of comparable data, potential cuts in federal solar incentives, and high rates of depreciation in the arrays’ value. He estimated that Montague would have lost approximately \$4,500 in revenue had the PILOT been in effect in 2025.

During Monday’s discussion it was revealed that the assessors had already negotiated and approved the agreement with Kearsarge, which must be approved by the October town meeting to give them the power to negotiate it. The Turners Falls fire district, which also taxes the solar company, is party to the PILOT agreement and must go through a similar process.

Micro Hydro Nixed

Clean Water Facility superintendent Chelsey Little reviewed a lengthy engineering study of the feasibility of installing a turbine to generate electricity from the plant’s effluent as it is discharged into the Connecticut River.

The research showed that the installation cost would likely be high, grants likely hard to find, and the “payback period” after which the town’s energy savings would exceed its costs would likely be long.

The board agreed not to move forward on installing a turbine at the plant.

Little reported on the project to replace the screw pumps at the facility. She shared pictures of the process, and said that when the old screw pumps were removed, it was “kind of a freaky thing to drive in and see, because the first thing we always check as operators [is], are those things operating and moving?” She also showed pictures of old concrete components in the process of being upgraded.

Little said “substantial completion” of the project is targeted for February, and final completion in April.

Other Business

The meeting began with the board reading, and approving, a proclamation declaring October 5 “Farren Memorial Appreciation Day.” Pastor Stanley Aksamit of Our Lady of Peace Church submitted the proclamation, which recounted the history of the Catholic hospital in Montague City which opened in 1900, became a “rehabilitation care facility” in 1990, and closed in 2021.

The board authorized Council on Aging director Roberta Potter to sign a \$5,000 “Creative Experiences” grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to fund Spanish lessons for seniors.

The board also approved an extension of a license with Ever-source Energy to allow town vehicles access to Dry Hill Cemetery

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MONTAGUE PLANNING BOARD
PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS & CHANGE TO OFFICIAL ZONING MAP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A and the Montague Zoning Bylaw, the **Montague Planning Board** will hold a public hearing at **6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 23, 2025 via Zoom**, to consider and hear public comment on the following proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaw and proposed changes to the Official Zoning Map:

(1) To consider amending Section 2 “Definitions” by adding the following new definitions: Craft Workshop, Boutique Hotel, Light Assembly Workshop, Mixed-Use Development, Mixed-Unit Dwelling, Open Space, Landscape Open Space, Private Open Space, Public Open Space, Permeable Surface, Rowhouse, Townhouse, and Three-Family Dwelling. (2) To consider amending Section 4.1 “Types of Districts” by adding the following new districts: Village Center Mixed-Use District (MU-VC) and Design Overlay District (DOD). (3) To consider amending Section 5.2 “Use Regulations” by adding use regulations for the new MU-VC District. (4) To consider amending Section 5.3 “Multiple Principal Uses” to specify that provisions of this section shall not apply to the new MU-VC District, but instead will be governed by the new use regulations in MU-VC District under Section 5.2, and by the new DOD regulations under Section 6.4. (5) To consider amending Section 5.5 “Dimensional Requirements” to add new dimensional requirements for MU-VC District; and to consider amending Section 5.5.3 “Dimensional Relief” to designate the Planning Board as the Special Permit Granting Authority for dimensional relief in the MU-VC District. (6) To consider amending Section 6 “Overlay Districts” by adding a new overlay district – Design Overlay District (DOD), which specifies purpose, applicability, additional dimensional requirements, parking requirements, design principles, development standards, and provisions relative to possible conflict with other bylaws. (7) To consider amending Section 7.2.3 “District Parking Requirements” by adding new parking requirements in the MU-VC District. (8) To consider amending Section 7.4 “Lot Access” by adding new lot access requirements in the MU-VC District. (9) To consider amending Section 9.1 “Site Plan Review” by adding new language that specifies applicability of uses and activities in the MU-VC District; and appoints the Planning Board as the Site Plan Review Authority in the MU-VC District. (10) To consider amending the Official Zoning Map by adding the MU-VC District and DOD District. The two new zoning districts will encompass the following parcels in their entirety: 330-340 Montague City Road, Parcel #12-0-044; 0 Montague City Rd, Parcel #12-0-051, 356 Montague City Road, Parcel #12-0-044A; and 0 Montague City Road, Parcel #12-0-050.

Meeting login instruction, as well as the complete petition and map, are available for review at www.montague-ma.gov/calendar or via email from Maureen Pollock, Director of Planning & Conservation: mpollock@montague-ma.gov.

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, Mass. General Laws, as amended, the Inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that Cocina Lupita LLC, d/b/a **Cocina Lupita**, Joshua Bretnier as manager, has applied for an Annual On Premise, \$12 Restaurant, All Alcohol Liquor License. The premise is located at 125 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA consisting of front entrance/exit door leading into dining area and back entrance/exit door off kitchen. Dining area will seat up to 46 persons to include booths, tables and bar seating. Total area consists of 1,400 sf.

Date and place of hearing: **Monday, September 29, 2025, at 6:32 p.m.**

Meeting link at www.montague-ma.gov/d/13705/Selectboard-Meeting

Montague License Commissioners

across the company’s property on Wendell Road.

The board hired Abigail Moore as administrative assistant in the town clerk’s office and awarded assistant clerk Tina Sulda an “out-of-grade” pay increase, as required under her union contract, while she fills in for Bogusz.

Ramsey was authorized to enter a natural gas purchasing contract when the price drops below the current rate of 73 cents per therm. The Franklin County Technical School and Gill-Montague regional school districts are participating with Montague in the contract.

Assistant town administrator Christopher Nolan-Zeller reported that Governor Maura Healey had just announced state Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grants, and Montague was awarded \$458,750 to create a “master plan” to address

stormwater runoff in the Hill neighborhood of Turners Falls.

Nolan-Zeller also shared a map of various bridge and road closures in downtown Turners Falls. These included a portion of Canal Street in front of the Keith Apartments though September 27, while the Strathmore footbridge is demolished (*see photo, Page A1*); and the “Fifth Street bridge” from September 21 through 27, during the power canal drawdown.

As reported last week, First Street will be closed for several months between Avenue A and L Street for repairs of damage to the road caused by a water main leak.

The next selectboard meeting will be held next Monday, September 22.

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

News Thief; Moaning Sound; Assessor; Backfire Panic; Past Pig Bite; Pot Smell

Thursday, 7/3
10:33 a.m. Eden Trail caller reports a pick-up at the end of their driveway with two people passed out inside. Asked them to leave but they didn't. No impairment detected.
3:49 p.m. Motorcycle accident, Main Road. Male is alert with leg and arm injuries.

Sunday, 7/6
9:15 p.m. French King Highway caller threatened at work.

Monday, 7/7
10:59 a.m. Health inspector conducting a 911 test at school pool.

Thursday, 7/10
6:33 a.m. Center Road caller believes possum in their yard is rabid.
2:41 p.m. Subject arrested on warrants and violation, FK Highway.

Tuesday, 7/15
7:07 p.m. 911 call to report vague threats.

Wednesday, 7/16
5:54 p.m. Caller on the river advises friend cut on thigh by boat propeller. Tourniquet applied by PD; transported to the hospital.

Friday, 7/18
7:56 a.m. Boyle Road caller reports newspapers missing for two years. Caught a neighbor taking one.
5:37 p.m. Three-car accident, French King Highway. Patients all refused transport.
5:53 p.m. French King Highway caller found backpack under porch with concerning items.
9:26 p.m. Caller reporting loud explosions near West Gill Road.

Saturday, 7/19
9:26 a.m. Mailboxes on Center Road destroyed.
4:09 p.m. Main Road subject arrested for second OUI offense.
4:44 p.m. FK Highway caller reports despondent subject. Transported for evaluation.
6:12 p.m. Caller from campground requests help with camper not allowed on premises.

Monday, 7/21
4:06 p.m. Mountain Road resident lost keys, maybe in storm drain.
10:19 p.m. River Road caller reports hearing a moaning sound outside their residence.

Tuesday, 7/22
12:04 p.m. Caller reports a suspicious subject measuring their garage. Legitimate property assessment.

Wednesday, 7/23
7:50 a.m. Caller reports being assaulted after a road rage incident.

Thursday, 7/24
9:14 a.m. Truck lost tires, FK Highway. Removed from road.
10:34 a.m. Kayak rental office reports camper concerned about a mental health crisis.
6:09 p.m. Leak at pump, FK Highway. Shut off.

Friday, 7/25
2:44 p.m. Accident, FK Highway. Cans fell off a truck, hitting a car. Minor damage.
10:57 p.m. Oak Street caller reports assault.

Saturday, 7/26
11:15 a.m. Mountain Road caller advised a neighbor notified PD of shooting today.
10:09 p.m. Oak Street caller reports wife missing after leaving to watch fireworks. Returned home safely.

Sunday, 7/27
3:18 p.m. Tree down, River Road impassable. DPW advised.
4:11 p.m. Vehicle left unattended, FK Highway. Owner looking for mushrooms.
4:49 p.m. Car vs. house accident, Main Road.

Tuesday 7/29
10:28 a.m. Franklin Road resident reports dog bite. ACO advised.

Wednesday, 7/30
12:44 p.m. Motorcycle vs. deer, Mount Hermon Station Road. Deer deceased.

Thursday, 7/31
2:21 p.m. Tree blocking road, West Gill and Center roads. Assisted with traffic control.

Saturday, 8/2
7:05 a.m. Riverview Drive caller reporting a fire on the porch. Neighbors put it out.
2:29 p.m. FK Highway caller advised his wife called him, hysterical. She ran a red light because she heard shots fired in the area. Hot dog vendor reports a car was backfiring.
8:39 p.m. Caller at boat ramp advises his vehicle, reported stolen, is at the boat ramp.

Tuesday, 8/5
10:15 a.m. Assisting probation, Main Road. One under arrest.
1:28 p.m. Missing person, Oak Street.

Wednesday, 8/6
2:25 p.m. Main Road caller reports wallet missing since Monday.

Thursday, 8/7
8:40 p.m. Purple Road caller reported a missing person. Called back; camper located.

Friday, 8/8
11:30 a.m. Assisted funeral procession.
1:44 p.m. Walk-in with a found wallet.

Sunday, 8/10
1:22 a.m. 911 call for a brown and white cow loose, West Gill Road.
2:19 p.m. Caller at Barton Cove reports a person saw a male yelling and holding a knife. Caller did not see male but reports past issues. Will await PD.

Tuesday, 8/12
3:52 p.m. Reports of power and phone lines down, FK Highway and Taylor Place.
11:40 p.m. Main Road caller reports a cow in the road just north of the elementary school.

Wednesday, 8/13
9:11 p.m. Caller reports a male crying hysterically on the Gill side of the TF bridge.

Thursday, 8/14
6:22 a.m. Caller reports a party sitting on the side of the Highway, staring at the ground. Unsure if in distress.
9:57 a.m. River Road caller reports a past pig bite.
7:07 p.m. South Cross Road caller advises people may be smoking pot in a parked vehicle.
7:40 p.m. Party reports male with long hair and no shirt on side of Highway. Has food; officer gave him water. On his way eastbound.

Thursday, 8/21
11:46 a.m. Caller in Highway area advising vehicle all over the road. Officer made contact with operator. May be fatigued.

Friday, 8/22
8:18 a.m. Walnut Street caller reports a sick-looking raccoon.
6:53 p.m. Main Road caller reports pole on fire, lines down.
7:28 p.m. Multiple calls for disabled lights.

Saturday, 8/23
6:53 a.m. Female reported sleeping on TF-Gill Bridge. Called officer a "jerk" for interrupting her sleep. Has moved to side of bridge. Is yelling and flipping off cars.
9:28 a.m. Caller from Bridge reports a human stumbling around flipping people off.

Tuesday, 8/26
8:31 a.m. Caller reports a disabled boat. Three parties on board; no medical aid needed.
7:06 p.m. South Cross Road caller reports a delivery truck sped up her road and delivered her packages. Concern is a smell of marijuana on the female driver and all her packages too. Gone on arrival.

Wednesday, 8/27
7:43 a.m. Notified of picketing, Main Road.
8:52 p.m. Main Road caller advises she saw an unidentified anomalous phenomenon.

Thursday, 8/28
12:30 p.m. Main Road caller reporting a hawk sitting on a guardrail. ACO transported injured bird to rehab.

Friday, 8/29
7:13 p.m. Caller reports the dirt section of Ben Hale Road has divots taken out of it, turning it into a "giant rumble strip."

DAM from page A1

"Every aspect of this project improves community and climate resiliency," Robinson wrote in an email to the *Reporter*. "Restoration has been our family's goal for over 15 years, as we, with the able assistance of [DER] along with Mass Audubon and many other environmental organizations, advanced this project from concept to fully designed and permitted."

In 2022, DER granted \$125,000 to Bowen's Pond LLC to support the engineering work and permitting necessary to remove the dam. Robinson's business received another \$20,000 grant earlier this year to cover further permitting and construction bidding.

With those funds, the LLC hired the engineering firm GZA Geo-Environmental to develop technical plans for the dam removal and subsequent habitat restoration. The engineers presented those plans in January to the con com, which approved a variance in March to proceed with the project.

Mass Audubon, which owns the adjacent 2,500-acre Whetstone Wood Wildlife Sanctuary, was among several environmental organizations voicing support for the dam's removal throughout the years-long permitting process. Thomas Lautzenheiser, a senior conservation ecologist with the organization, attended the con com meetings in January and March.

"The Robinson family should be credited for advancing this environmentally conscientious project that will allow the brook to return to its natural condition, create valuable riparian habitat, and enhance climate resilience," Lautzenheiser told the *Reporter*.

Mass Audubon's \$462,552 grant came from the state's Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Program, which according to the state website is "open to municipalities and non-profit organizations."

The organization is "acting as a fiscal agent," according to Lautzenheiser, and was awarded the grant "following a competitive and transparent bid process."

However, the proposed removal of the dam has drawn longstanding opposition, and Saunders argues that the grant relieves Robinson of the financial burden of its maintenance while allowing him to retain ownership of his 220-acre property.

"If the LLC that owns the land wants to remove the dam on its own dime, then there's a process for that, which I believe they have been engaged in for some time," he said.

Dissenting Views
Throughout the process, other local residents have said they would prefer to see Bowens Pond preserved for its historical, ecological, public safety, and aesthetic value.

Adam Porter and Elizabeth Jakob, who directly abut the pond and are both professors of biology at UMass Amherst who have published on invasive species, have repeatedly expressed concern that after the pond is drained, the land will be taken over by a shrub known as glossy buckthorn.

In 2019, after the dam's removal was identified as a priority by DER, then-fire chief Joe Cuneo pointed out that Bowens Pond is a key water source for fire trucks, as it is equipped with a "dry hydrant" that allows trucks to pump water out of the pond.



A sign near the pond criticizes the decision to remove the dam.

A special town meeting in 2020 authorized the taking of easements for a new dry hydrant, and the current plan is to build one at McAvoy's Pond, where the dam is now co-owned by the town. The selectboard discussed the possibility of co-owning the Bowens Pond dam, but decided against taking on the liability.

In comments sent to the conservation commission in January, neighbor Michael Idoine argued that the "ecological and aesthetic value of the pond cannot be replaced by regaining 1 mile of stream bed," and criticized the LLC for overstating its consultation with Wendell officials, in its application to the state.

Idoine, who himself partnered with Mass Audubon in 2022 to conserve about 110 acres of nearby land, circulated a petition opposing the dam's removal that received hundreds of signatures.

Former Wendell resident Kristina Hartjens is a descendant of the Osgood and the Bowen families, among the town's first settlers, who built the original dam in roughly 1754.

"I feel sad about it because I know the pond, and I have so many memories there," Hartjens told the *Reporter*. "But I also feel sad because I think it's being overlooked what an ecological disaster that will be, not only for that area but downstream."

Hartjens, who recently sold the home she grew up in across the road from Bowens Pond, said that Mass Audubon had offered to purchase her property, but offered less than the buyer she chose. She added that the pond might contain a number of old telephone poles, which her grandfather believed were dumped there when Wendell Depot Road was rebuilt.

"We need to have transparency and real community engagement in the process," Saunders said this week after the grant announcement. "That includes any corporation and non-profit with a financial interest in the property making the case for why the purported ecological benefits outweigh the historic, community, and public safety concerns."

Habitat Priorities
The Whetstone Wood Wildlife Sanctuary is the largest of at least 60 sanctuaries Mass Audubon manages statewide. Unlike most of them, Whetstone Wood is not publicly accessible, in accordance with the wishes of founding donors Ina and Mason Phelps.

It has continued to grow in recent years, including purchases of about 20 acres of land from the Wetherby family in 2021, the 110 acres from Idoine in 2022, and 14 acres from the Szostek family in 2024.

The nonprofit received a \$25 million grant last year from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to continue to purchase and conserve forests and wetlands in the Con-

necticut River watershed, though the Trump administration rescinded those funds this summer. That grant would have been implemented by a coalition of nonprofits, some of which are involved in the Bowens Pond dam removal, including the Connecticut River Conservancy, American Rivers, Trout Unlimited, and area land trusts.

The plans drafted by GZA mentioned Robinson's intention to conserve most of the parcel after the dam is removed, but did not specify how.

"In the immediate future we plan to permanently preserve about 200 acres of the project site with Mass Audubon," Robinson told the *Reporter*. "This is a great project and we are proud to be part of it."

Osgood Brook, a coldwater fishery and tributary of the Millers River, is considered to be a "priority habitat" under the state's BioMap program. Proponents of the project have asserted that removing the dam could help to reduce downstream water temperatures, improve biodiversity, and allow native species such as trout, sea lamprey and beavers to reinhabit the wetland.

"The project site serves as a vital wildlife corridor that connects Whetstone Wood Wildlife Sanctuary and Wendell State Forest and is certainly the type of habitat we seek when evaluating potential land conservation projects," Lautzenheiser, the Mass Audubon senior ecologist, told the *Reporter*.

The nonprofit stepped in as a "fiscal agent" for the Bowens Pond grant, he explained, to "facilitat[e] the completion of a project poised to cross the finish line after more than a decade of rigorous design, permitting, and preparation by the land-owners and their project partners."

"Mass Audubon has extensive dam removal and ecological restoration experience and regularly counsels private landowners regarding best land management practices," he said.

Saunders argued that sizable state grants, such as the one awarded to Mass Audubon for the dam removal, would better be used to support projects in town with broader local support.

"The grant funding problem is larger than just the dam," he told the *Reporter*. "We are in the midst of significant changes to how the Commonwealth permits energy projects, many of which are sought to be cited in rural communities. We need to do everything we can to engender a sense of trust between our small communities and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs..... I am concerned that this use of taxpayer money, and the process by which Mass Audubon received it, will only serve to erode the trust we are trying to build."



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LIBRARY from page A1

requirements for a two-story building, based on state regulations and local needs as determined by the building committee. The 10,000-square-foot first floor was dominated by the book collection, a computer room, a large audio-visual space, and a local history room, while the 9,000-square-foot second floor featured three rooms for children, youth programs, and “teens” as well as a large community meeting room.

“We have a little extra space on the second floor to do something wonderful with,” Ward Hyatt said, announcing that the trustees and building committee had endorsed adding a roof terrace on the north side, facing the Turners Falls power canal and Connecticut River.

She then showed three variants on the plan. In “Option A,” the main entrance would be at the corner of Avenue A and Second Street, with a second entry point from the Second Street parking lot. On the second floor the children’s and community rooms would be located to the north and south respectively, with the roof garden to the west.

In “Option B,” the main book collection was shifted east so it

would be seen through the windows along Avenue A, the main entrance was now from the parking lot, and the second floor was completely reorganized, with the community room opening on to the roof terrace that now faced both north and west.

“Option C” then, in Ward Hyatt’s words, “builds on what we learned from Option B,” with numerous small design changes including “seating nooks” along the Avenue A and Second Street windows.

All the proposals had an option for a basement, though this would add cost to the project.

Ward Hyatt moved on to show an initial illustration of the library’s exterior, which she stressed needed to be consistent with the late-19th-century buildings on Avenue A.

“We are incredibly inspired by your community, and doing a deep dive into what we’re seeing around us,” she said, presenting some “initial thoughts, because we’re just scratching the surface.” Avenue A is heavily dominated by brick, but also by granite, which has been mirrored in recent streetscape improvement projects.

“The artistry in the brickwork is insane,” Ward Hyatt declared,

showing some close-up photographs of local rooftop cornices. “I think we can learn a lot from this, and design a building that plays on some of these details.” She added that her firm was particularly impressed by the two-story building at 113-115 Avenue A, with its high windows and ceilings.

The audience then viewed renderings of the outside of the new building, starting as a cube-like box and increasing in complexity, with a granite first floor, a brick second floor, and tall windows. Ward Hyatt stressed that these were not final proposals, but a “very first start.” “We were very happy with how it was connected to the streetscape here,” she added.

Lynn Stowe Tomb of Gill, who said she was a “longtime user of the Montague library,” and asked if there was “any way you could put a tower on this building.” She urged the architects to look at the library on the former Northfield campus of Northfield Mount Hermon School, which has towers and is “absolutely gorgeous.”

Stowe Tomb asked about exits for children in the designs, and was assured that these were a priority. She also expressed a desire to see the local history room be “as big as possible,” and doubt that the parking lot would be large enough.

Jeri Moran of Montague Center noted that in Option C, the quiet study and reading rooms were located right below the children’s room. “I hope you insulate that,” she said.

“We’re really good at that,” Ward Hyatt replied, adding that in another community her firm had designed “a public library with a high school library above it, with a gymnasium above that... and a weight room.”

Library building committee co-chair David Dempsey noted that in Options B and C the roof terrace would only be seen from the community room, and asked whether there was a way to make it visible upon entering the building.

“That’s a good idea,” said Ward Hyatt. “We’ll study that.”

Montague Center resident Nell Wright said she had spent the morning at the Greenfield library, and found that “the elevators are really noisy.” Ward Hyatt replied that they had moved the original location of the elevator, which had been next to libraries director Caitlin Kelley’s office. ““She was like, ‘Do you really hate me that much?’” she joked.

As the meeting broke up, Kelley told the crowd that if any of them thought of comments or questions they had not articulated, they should send her an email.

“We want to get as much feedback as we possibly can,” she said.



IMAGES BY SCHWARTZ / SILVER



“Option C” in the architects’ early plans includes a roof garden facing north and east on the second floor (top), and on the first floor (above), a main entrance from the parking lot and “seating nooks” along the large Avenue A-facing windows in the main book collection.

Montague Community Television News

Our ‘Magic Looking Glass’

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – The future of the Carnegie Library can be found on your TV set! Tune in to Channel 9 to gaze into the magic looking glass of Montague’s past, present, and future.

You can hear what was said at the last Gill selectboard meeting, see the ease with which the Julian Gerstin Sextet performs complex jazz from around the world, peer into the home offices of Montague selectboard members as they discuss solids overflowing from tanks, and more.

All of our videos from the present and past are on our Vimeo page, which can be found by clicking the “Videos” tab on our website, *Montaguetelevision.org*. There you will also find folders directing you to all of our Montague and Gill selectboard recordings, both recent and previous.

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

And if you see us out there filming, say hi!

LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on September 17, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Where’s the Beef?

On Monday morning, as Country Creemee owner Robyn Mason opened the doors to begin her day, she noticed certain things were out of place. “A trash can was turned over, a box had been moved, and the safe door was open,” she said. “We don’t leave cash in the safe since we were robbed in June.”

At first Mason thought the intruders hadn’t stolen anything much of value – until she opened the walk-in cooler. “I saw they had taken roast beef, turkey, ham, baked beans, and two pans of brownies,” she said.

Mason said she was upset about losing the pans, favorites for baking. The break-ins disturb her, she

explained, because she feels the Country Creemee is part of the community – “people come and stay, sit out on the lawn and watch the planes take off at the airport.”

Northeast Energy
Direct Pipeline

This week the Wendell selectboard considered a draft scope of work from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for a regional pipeline advisory committee. The June 29 special town meeting approved a resolution instructing the selectboard to obtain voter approval before making future decisions concerning the proposed gas pipeline or compressor station.

Board member Arthur Johnson said that he was in favor of building the pipeline, and was against “[his] tax money fighting it.”

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on September 15, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Bike Path Clears
Another Hurdle

John Carlisle, the Boston spokesperson for Mass Highway, had good news on progress for the Turners Falls canalside bike path: “We heard from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments they have approved a plan to remove coal ash and dispose of

it in the proper manner. They will replace it with gravel fill.”

Speaking for bike path construction contractor Warner Brothers, Paul Gibavic said construction had halted between the Eleventh Street bridge and the Turners Falls-Gill bridge abutments due to the presence of coal and coal ash, used as fill a century ago in the bed of the old railway that ran along the canal to the mills.

“We anticipate the contractor will be back out there sometime next week,” Carlisle predicted.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on September 15, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

Isn’t it about time to organize a dramatic company for the winter’s amusement.

The blowing of the Keith steam gong again is like hearing the voice of an old friend.

W.J. Malley has entered for the single scull race at Lake Pleasant this afternoon.

The Bridge Commission meet to-day, and will open the bids for the construction of the new bridge.

Some two hundred strangers are in town attending the meetings of the Millers River Baptist Association.

Cashier Sewall’s horse became unmanageable on the avenue the other day, and ran over the brick pavement in front of the Farren House before he could be stopped.

While workmen were moving Mrs. Temple’s house, on Third street, the other day, it fell off the screws and was considerably damaged. It was occupied at the

time by two families, but no one was hurt by the accident.

The Athol Transcript is informed that there was no tipsy individual from Turners Falls at Athol on the day the base ball match was played there. The Athol Transcript man couldn’t see straight that day.


The Clark & Chapman Machine Co. have replaced the old iron gearing on their driving shaft with wood and iron gears, doing away with the annoying clatter which was so plainly heard while the wheel was running nights and Sundays.

On the lower island below the falls there is a greater variety of trees and shrubs than can be found on any spot of its size hereabouts. There are gum trees, spruce, several varieties of pine, buttonwood, poplar, beech, birch, willow, alder, maple, oak, and other trees, all in the space of a good sized back yard.

Constable Allen gives notice to all owners of unlicensed dogs that if they do not take out licenses at once, he will proceed to destroy all dogs which have no right to live.



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MONTAGUE REPORTER...

Danielle Seltzer and Chris Hill of Turners Falls write:

"We absolutely love the Montague Reporter and read it together every Saturday. So although our routine on Saturday, July 12, happened to be a little different, we managed to bring the paper to Arlington, Vermont and managed to sneak in a quick read before our wedding ceremony. The photos are taken outside the West Mountain Inn, which we highly recommend to your readers who are looking for a wedding venue or a cozy weekend away from home. Thank you for your truly excellent newspaper!"

(We're honored! Thanks & congrats! – Eds.)



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

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ON THE ROAD OF LIFE

WENDELL from page A1

included in the conversation.

Adam Hemingway serves as the assessor for both towns, and might serve as a liaison between the two. He should at least be able to calculate the financial impact of reassigning the houses to Wendell.

Selectboard chair Laurie DiDonato suggested that Wendell should accept state Chapter 90 money for the stretch of road, but give it to New Salem for repaving it. Town coordinator Kelly Tyler agreed to arrange a meeting with New Salem.

At some point, a landowner with property on either side of Old Farley Road replaced the original road with what is there now, and Delorey said it cannot be maintained with town equipment, as its slope is now twice what regulations allow. For most of its length it is only one vehicle wide.

Jenny Gross, a realtor and Wendell resident, came before the board to dispute a statement made at their August 27 meeting that residents who purchased homes on Old Farley Road had been told it was not a town road, and that maintenance was their responsibility. She said no agreement that road was a private way had ever been accepted.

Delorey said Old Farley Road was one of 17 roads discontinued in 1987, and that the highway department considers it a "no-brainer"

that the town has no responsibility for it. Pointing out that special equipment is needed to clear snow on its grade, he questioned the wisdom of maintaining what is essentially a driveway for a few houses. He said he was unsure whether the town had discontinued the road or merely its maintenance.

One option would be to reopen the old layout as a town road. Delorey said another would be to place a sign stating "Private Way" at its entrance.

Gross showed 70 pages of documents and letters concerning the road, with important parts highlighted, and said she would send them to selectboard members. She said she wanted to be helpful in this process. The discussion will continue.

Sound Bath

Resident Sam Birch was delayed on his way to town, leaving Jenny Gross to bring up the humming noise heard in northwest Wendell. It started "almost to the day" this year as it did last year, she said, so it seems to be weather-related; it is not constant, but it is a nuisance when it is there.

In 2024 Birch recorded and measured the sound, both at his home and near the Erving Paper mill, and met with a paper mill supervisor who told him that nothing had

changed in the mill's processes.

This year, residents affected by the noise have set up an email group. Gross asked the selectboard's advice on how to address the noise issue, and asked whether they or the concerned residents should contact Erving Paper. She said that in another small town, a similar noise had been corrected by installing insulation around a plenum.

Selectboard member Paul Doud looked up the record from 2024 and suggested the citizens go as a concerned group. The mill supervisor had said to contact him if the hum continues.

Emergency Planning

Matt O'Donnell, the fire chief shared by Wendell and New Salem, and Wendell emergency management director Lonny Ricketts reported on how the town and its residents can respond to emergencies.

A long-term lack of electricity is the most common emergency issue. Ricketts said most older residents stay in their homes and make do, and that no one came when a cooling center was offered in the last heat wave. However, electricity is essential for people with medications that need refrigeration.

Water and charging are available at the fire station, and the office building considered is a

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good location to post information. O'Donnell said New Salem owns a digital signboard, which "has been out more than it has been in the station." A grant may be available to get one for Wendell, which still has the analog version, a sandwich board with slots for letters.

O'Donnell said the fire department is focused on fallen trees that block roads or lean on wires. He said it is important to get emergency warnings out to residents early and then, when a situation is imminent, to use the CodeRED system to alert them.

Other Business

Board members signed a contract for the repair of the Farley Road Bridge, which connects Wendell and Erving.

DiDonato said the town needs an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator, and with little discussion, the board appointed Tyler to the position. As a first step towards making town meetings ADA accessible they declared them to be fragrance-free, while acknowledging that such declaration is unenforceable.

The board agreed that the town should stop the process of acquiring, for unpaid taxes, the property at 202 Mormon Hollow Road, the demolition debris dump. Members are waiting for town treasurer Carolyn Manley's return to take the proper legal steps.

The special town meeting was rescheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 15 at the town hall, depending on availability of the moderator and clerk.

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SUZETTE SNOW-COBB PHOTO



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

WEST ALONG THE RIVER

THE URGE
FOR GOING

By DAVID BRULE

*I get the urge for going
when the meadow grass is
turning brown
and summertime is falling down
and winter is closing in*

Tom Rush, “Urge for Going,” 1968
Lyrics by Joni Mitchell

ERVINGSIDE – Come Sep-tember, that old song makes its way back into my morning note-book. It may come back every seven years or so, or once in a while it turns up on a day like today.

And even though I vowed to spend the summer on my home grounds, sometimes September makes me want to get up and leave.

Maybe it was the flight of the dozens of nighthawks on an early September evening last week, winging away from our northern skies, headed for warmer climes further south, ahead of the first frost.

Maybe it was the redstart warbler who lingered here in the jewelweed at the edge of the porch long enough to tip his hat and say *so long, it’s been good to know you.*

This little summer resident breezed through the yard just the other morning. He had spent the summer singing along the west-flowing river, likely actually enjoying the baking heat and dry weather.

This wee redstart, with his red and black plumage, is a warbler we can count on year after year. He and his mate have raised generations here in our woods and called cheerily throughout the summer.

This sprightly gent, still decked out in his seasonal clothes, paused once more long enough to say fare-

well. A flick of the tail, a knowing look – I can imagine even a wink – and he was gone.

Sometime soon, in a month or so, he’ll be far to the south with his warbler cousins, singing in Spanish in Costa Rica. He leaves us behind to deal with the coming cold.

At least he took the time to say goodbye, which is more than our catbird will do. That one will just be gone in the night, once all the chokeberries around here are consumed. Gone without so much as a goodbye.

The autumn leaves falling, much too early for some of us, tend to bring forth other years of departures in the past. This likely accounts for the nostalgia, even melancholy, that some of us feel at this time of year.

For sure, birds do go off on their way, but in our human world, too, September has often been about leaving. When we were young, September meant going out the door to school, even if that was just getting over to the high school on Crocker Avenue.

Then came a real leaving: off to college, some of us off to war.

Fall meant the beginning of the year starting to shut down. For sure, it goes out in a blaze of glory up here in the northeastern corner of the continent, but the flash flares up suddenly and is gone too soon – and then what do you have?

Some of us remember the sharp, energizing chill that wakes you up in the mornings of the fall. *Whack!* It can hit you like a smack in the face.

Back then, that chill used to mean football games at the high school field, marching bands, the snakedance through the town just before the Thanksgiving game.

see **WEST ALONG** page B3



LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES ILLUSTRATION

American redstart (Setophaga ruticilla).

Above: Sunflowers growing at Flagg Farm, on Gill’s Main Road.

RECIPES

IT’S TIME TO START...
STUFFING VEGETABLES

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

LEVERETT – Stuffed vegetables catch the eye by making us wonder what’s inside. We’re hoping for something lovely, which means the filling must be tasty and pretty plentiful. Remember those disappointing peppers filled mostly with rice, the tomatoes or mushrooms with boring bread mixtures? Good stuffed vegetables need lots of flavor pops from yummy things like herbs, nuts, and tasty morsels of this and that.

Colors are exciting, too. While lots of delicious foods are not very vivid, fillings spangled with bright herbs and vegetables promise extra pleasure.

Having met the goals of tastiness and eye appeal, stuffings can be almost endlessly varied. But the choice of vegetable container is more limited: eggplant, peppers, zucchini, tomatoes, mushrooms, and winter squash are typical because it’s easy to scoop out the seedy centers to house the stuffing, but there are some surprising alternatives.

Stuffed squash blossoms, for example. In Mediterranean countries market stalls have baskets of these yellow blooms. Locally, gardeners can pick their own, choosing only the male flowers, which will never become squashes and are identifiable by the lack of a swelling under the bloom.

Squash flowers collapse quickly, so they have to be stuffed within an hour or two. Fillings include a mashed-potato-and-cheese mixture or rice pilaf, often with walnuts or raisins. The gently twisted ends of the petals hold the petals closed as they’re dipped in egg and bread-crumbs and fried, or brushed with olive oil and baked. The

see **RECIPES** page B8



HOPLEY PHOTO

Acorn squash, stuffed with sausage and apples.



In Pursuit of Digital Discipline...

By RYNE HAGER

TURNERS FALLS – The internet has changed the world more than any other technology in recent human history. Once disregarded as nothing more than a source of scams and disinformation, it’s now a fundamental requirement for modern social life and any successful business – though it’s *still* a source of scams and misinformation.

The internet has made it easier than ever to access all the things we want, and that’s also one of its biggest problems: Like little kids that only want to eat candy, we frequently want the wrong things for ourselves. And so we waste hours each day scrolling feeds, addicted

to an easily accessed stream of dopamine through endless content and constant notifications.

The internet has its good points, but we’ve also gotten so great at designing systems to take advantage of how our brains work that having constant access to it is terrible for our mental health. Keeping control of how we use it, therefore, is critical.

In light of both recent events and a question to the editor from inside the paper about parental screen control, I’d like to offer a few tips for how to rein in our worst internet habits and establish a little more discipline.

To start, I like to tell people that *friction is important*. When you’re

designing any system that people use, there’s a kind of hierarchy in terms of operations or actions: Put the things you’ll need to use the most in a place where it’s easy to find them – where there’s little “friction” in getting to them. When you’re preparing a workspace for a project, it means laying out tools in order or frequency of use. And when you’re on your phone or tablet, it means making the apps you need to use easier to access.

So, if you’re trying to limit how you use specific apps – those pernicious content feeds, or social media – you can make it *harder* for yourself to access them, increasing the friction for that particular

see **DEVICE** page B4



‘CALI’ & ‘LOKI’

Meet Cali and Loki, two young Shih Tzus looking for their forever home. Cali is 4, a spayed female; Loki is 5, a neutered male. Their human describes this dynamic duo as adventurous, gentle, curious, quiet, shy, and snuggly.

They are good with other dogs, good with kids, up to date on shots, and microchipped. Due to landlord permission issues, the pups need

a new home. Their current owner would like to rehome Cali and Loki as a pair.

To apply to adopt these four-legged friends, now located in Westfield, find “Available Community Animals” under the “Adopt” menu at www.dakinhumane.org. A potential adopter must submit an application, interview and meet the pets, and sign an adoption contract.

Art Begets Art: ZBS.fm Begets Tell Me Who You Think I Am

By MANDII MUDBALLS

GREENFIELD – As I sat on the couch with the Artist in Residence of my living room – my friend Zadio Belfer-Shevett, a.k.a. electronic musician ZBS.fm – helping them craft an email asking *The Shoestring*, *The Valley Advocate*, Wendy Carlos, and Anthony Fantano to review their latest work, I realized that I, too, have a newspaper column, and that I’m much more reputable than a guy who matches his t-shirt color to the amount that he likes an album.

We sat down to chat, and Belfer-Shevett opened the conversation by asking me a question for once: “Tell me who you think I am?”

“Well,” I started to say, “you are my dear friend who is twice my height and has more hard skills in my pinky nail than I have in my entire brain, including how to use QuickBooks, how to rename a PDF, and how to wrap an XLR cord...”

They interrupted me. “That’s the name of the album.”

Tell Me Who You Think I Am is Belfer-Shevett’s most recent release, and the “apotheosis of their artistic vision.” Just like them, the tracks are “moody, all of the beats are small but groovy, low-volume, warm, and friendly,” they said, indulging me when I ask “How could the album be ‘low-volume’ if I like the way it sounds when I turn it up really loud in my car and show off my ethical consumption by having the Bandcamp logo showing up rather than Spotify’s on my CarPlay for the first time in my life?”

I firmly believe that art begets art, that art can’t get created in a vacuum, and that being immersed in an artistic community shapes the work people are able to put out.

Belfer-Shevett started making electronic music alone in their bedroom, but this album could only have come to be through collaboration – and through performance in front of more than three people on a Twitch livestream, which they historically did before becoming the most-booked musician in western Massachusetts.

“I’ve tried a lot of songs live, and the ones on this album are those that people seem to like the most,” they said, telling me about the process of producing the version of “Mayday!” that made it onto the album, full of Billie Eilish samples and a melody that was created by the Turing Machine, a program that randomly generates melodies. The melody was written in 2022, and played for the first time at the last show at the beloved bar Mayday in Providence, whose claim to fame was being Darkest Bar in New England.

Belfer-Shevett said “Mayday!” is a crowd favorite, and it’s easy to hear why. The piece combines an unshakably catchy earworm of a melody with a haunting delay, reverb, and 12 different drums (“That’s how many pads are on my machine!”) to create the perfect amount of tension and release – a classic recipe for life as well as electronic music. The beats seem to trip over each other, echoing the other pieces of the song, each taking a breath before catching its footing and allowing for moments of quiet to accentuate the rhythmic build.

“Before putting ‘Mayday!’ on the album,” they told



me, “I performed it live a dozen times, and tweaked it as I went along. The song got better and better as I performed it and felt how the audience reacted to it.”

While “Mayday!” and many of the other songs on the album are catchy and sonically appropriate for both a dance floor and headphones while you study for your master’s degree in data science, Belfer-Shevett said that the tracks are “incredibly esoterically produced.”

They explained that they joined a Discord server in 2019 made up of almost 200 trans electronic musicians (only two of whom were transmasculine – “I’m a walking transfemme stereotype,” Belfer-Shevett said), which fell apart because of too much interpersonal drama, and was reborn with just 12 core members who still talk to this day.

“My online friends are really into hardware, which informs a lot of what I make. The music that I make is done in a much less complicated way than all of theirs, though. The fact that I make it, compose it, and produce it on hardware not made for that purpose is funny and probably says something about me,” they said of their multi-thousand-dollar instruments, the same ones that make cricket sound effects for my puppet shows made out of moldy mattresses and newspaper.

On the other hand, the western Massachusetts music scene has influenced them to make work that “isn’t very abrasive, because nobody wants to listen to that. I get put on bills with regular bands playing acoustic and indie stuff. It says a lot about the taste around here – like one of my favorite local DJs said, everybody wants to listen to Adrienne Lenker, mostly.”

Another gift that western Massachusetts has given them is the opportunity for collaboration. Two of the songs on the album came about from performance projects they were invited to accompany: “3:47,” which was written alongside their cousin to accompany a dance piece about a microwave, and features a persistent house groove and synth flourishes clearly inspired by the sound of popping popcorn, and “Of Whales,” which combines chopping vocals originally composed for *A Happening: Leviathan* with music that Belfer-Shevett improvised during the show.

“It’s kind of like that thing where ice has to have something in water to grab on to in order to become a crystal,” they said. “There aren’t a lot of things that I write that come purely from my own head.”

While *Tell Me Who You Think I Am* was honed through performance, hopefully the release of this three-years-in-the-making project will be able to hit the ears of people outside of the *Montague Reporter’s* coverage area. As much as I stand by this album, God knows I can’t help with that.

Maybe you can? Find ZBS.fm’s *Tell Me Who You Think I Am* on Bandcamp, and all unethical streaming services, now!

True Love Will Find You
In the End (TLWFYITE),

Mandii Mudballs

Senior Center Activities SEPTEMBER 22 THROUGH 26

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 9/22

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
4 p.m. Tech Class
6 p.m. Library Trustees

Tuesday 9/23

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

Wednesday 9/24

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga
(weather permitting)

11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 9/25

1 p.m. Pitch
Friday 9/26

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:30 a.m. Seniority Dance Recital and Members’ Lunch
1:15 p.m. Chair Dance

ERVING

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

Monday 9/22

9 a.m. Good for U

10 a.m. Seated Fitness

12 p.m. Pitch Cards

1 p.m. Yoga

Tuesday 9/23

9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
Closing at 10 a.m.

Wednesday 9/24

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

Thursday 9/25

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

Friday 9/26

9 a.m. Quilting Open Sew

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinics are the third Tuesday of each month. The next clinic is October 21. Luncheons are the fourth Friday at town hall.

For more information, contact (413) 548-1022 or coa@leverett.ma.us. Check the town newsletter or the LeverettConnects listserv for info.

WENDELL

Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. The next clinic is October 1. 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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WEST ALONG from page B1
Not anymore.

Where is the scent of the burning leaves of yesteryear? Gone with the wind. And besides, burning leaves is now against the law. Instead, what's left behind in September is the unnamable sense that you should be going somewhere, joining the wild geese and flying away.

There was the car going down the road, family waving goodbye and getting smaller in the rearview mirror, the plane leaving the earth's runway, the ship sailing. But that was back then.

These days, I do recognize the

old feeling that I should be going somewhere, but in the end I don't mind staying put, after all. Been there, done that.

Some of us will stay wistful for a while, maybe briefly melancholic, or maybe not even give a second thought to that September urge for going.

As for me, I don't mind sitting here and thinking about it, letting my mind get its fill of that autumn yearning.

I'll just pull up a chair, have a seat, and wait to see what's going to happen next around here.



AT THE FAIR

Rhonda's Reptiles



IMAGE COURTESY OF RHONDA'S REPTILES

A bearded dragon at the reptile rescue.

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – Rhonda Leavitt has been running a reptile rescue for 15 to 20 years in New Lebanon, New York. I found her at the Franklin County Fairgrounds during this year's fair.

She told me this was the first time she had done the Greenfield fair. Other fairs she has gone to have included the Three County Fair, Marshfield, and Topsfield.

Leavitt couldn't tell me how many reptiles she has at any given time. She brought quite a diverse number of reptiles with her to the Franklin County Fair.

She held an Albino Motley boa in her arms a lot. People could take pictures of themselves holding the creature for five dollars. You could also do the same with a ball python. In fact, you could take pictures with all the creatures she had with her at that moment. Other exotic creatures present included the Bearded Drag-

on, a lizard of some kind. An associate also held that creature briefly. Another lizard was called a Tegu, and a third was a Leopard Gecko. A baby alligator was also there to see.

The reptiles drew a nice crowd. A fair number of people seemed to want to take photos of themselves with the creatures.

Leverett said she was at the fair "strictly to raise money" for the rescue. She also does educational programs and birthday parties.

Besides reptiles, she mentioned, "we do other animals – birds and other exotic animals." In the past, for birds, she has had macaws, cockatoos, cockatiels, parakeets, and African Greys.

I am not a reptile person, but seeing all of this was cool. I really liked seeing a couple of tortoises. They are specifically called a Sulcata and a Red-Footed Tortoise. One was much bigger than the other. You can learn more about Leavitt's rescue at www.RhondasReptiles.com.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Cows Escape Again; Cannabis Smelled; Tent Found Cut; Music Annoys; Torches Burn; Coyotes Bark Near Tracks

Monday, 9/8

1:54 p.m. Caller from L Street advises a neighbor backed into her fence. Car rolled backwards. Officer waiting on callback from party who hit fence. Note and phone number left with caller.

6:17 p.m. Caller states he received a call from a Montague resident's worker reporting that she thinks someone broke in and was staying at the resident's house. Caller states resident is in rehab in Greenfield, and nobody is wanted at her house except her worker, who stops to do her laundry and get her mail. Caller wondering if officers could check the area and call if lights are on or a car is in the driveway, as he lives at some distance. Referred to an officer.

7:40 p.m. Caller from East Main Street states a male party has been smashing things, slamming things, and threatening their lives since 8 p.m. yesterday. Officer requesting EMS for male party, who feels he is going to pass out or seize. TFFD transporting party.

7:46 p.m. Caller from East Main Street states neighbor stole money from her and she is sick of it. Officer advised caller of options.

Tuesday, 9/9

7:30 p.m. Walk-in states he was assaulted by another male party at Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club. Referred to an officer.

9:24 p.m. 911 caller states that he observed smoke, but no flames, while walking home on Avenue A. Officer located a small campfire on Fifth Street; possibly what the caller was seeing or smelling.

Wednesday, 9/10

9:34 a.m. Caller states that people in a silver car parked in the alley on

Fourth Street are smoking marijuana. Investigated. Nothing observed by officers.

2:24 p.m. Caller from Main Street reporting a vehicle parked in front of her house for four days. Vehicle is legally parked and belongs to a neighbor.

2:50 p.m. Walk-in reports someone stole a blank check and cashed it for \$3,000. Report taken.

4:27 p.m. 911 caller states his car was struck in the Food City parking lot. Officers advised.

11:14 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street states an individual who resides in the building has dogs that bark continuously throughout the week. Caller states she has spoken to her landlord about the issue. Advised caller that call would be logged.

Thursday, 9/11

5:44 a.m. Caller reports a tree limb in the roadway at L and Montague streets that appears to have been struck by passing cars. Officer requesting DPW be contacted as there is a large branch and debris in the roadway. DPW advised.

11:01 a.m. 911 caller from Seventh Street states his CO alarm keeps going off and he would like the building checked. Call transferred to Shelburne Control.

11:13 a.m. Caller would like to speak with an officer about a female who has his vehicle; he would like it back. Advised of options.

1:16 p.m. Caller states he got a call from a driver reporting that there are horses in the road on Federal Street. Officer checked area; nothing located. Second caller provided a more specific location and states the horses belong at a Lake Pleasant Road address; second caller tried to get a hold of the owners, but there was no answer. Spoke with owner; she is in the area trying to locate the horses and get them back home.

1:51 p.m. 911 caller from West Mineral Road states her oven was burning and

there was smoke when she opened it. It seems better now, but she would like the fire department to check on it. Call given to Control.

3:34 p.m. Northfield PD states they have probable cause for an arrest for a male who also has an attached warrant; they are looking to see if Montague PD officers will attempt to locate him at his workplace in Turners Falls. Northfield PD en route; officers will bring male out when he arrives.

3:51 p.m. Caller from Third Street states there is a wire down lying on a car and under another vehicle. Control contacted.

5:57 p.m. Party into lobby looking to report a missing person; states it has been a week. Subject entered into NCIC system. Quincy PD called stating they had an interaction with the subject on Sunday around 3:45 a.m. Arlington PD reported the subject was in a business in their town on Tuesday. State police ran plate on Wednesday; states party, who had a passenger, was stopped for a violation. Framingham state police dispatcher confirmed state police had dealt with subject as a passenger on a traffic stop in Boston that day, and that he was receiving a summons. Subject will remain in NCIC until notification is received that contact was made with him after he was entered into the system.

7:28 p.m. Caller from East Taylor Hill Road states a tent was cut, pieces of her laundry were taken down, and a chair was flipped over, though it's not windy. She will look through her cameras and see if she has more information. Report taken.

9:40 p.m. Local police sergeant called and asked if we have a school resource officer for Franklin County Technical School; a party is in a group text with two seniors, and they are threatening to jump him and shoot him, sending pictures with guns. Officer advises to give him the principal's number and for him to fax his report to us; we can have officers check it out tomorrow. Officer spoke with administration and advised them of options.

10:42 p.m. Caller from L Street states he was leaving for work and backed into a car. He left his info on the car, and also provided his contact info to police.

Friday, 9/12

12:52 a.m. Caller reports that roughly five people in the area around Nouria are talking loudly and playing loud music. Officer advises five or six people in front of location upon arrival. Officer spoke to ca-

shier and to individuals in front of store. Group was advised of complaint and will quiet down.

9:20 a.m. Walk-in from L Street reporting a hit and run of their vehicle this morning. Report taken.

3:07 p.m. Caller from Federal Street reports horses are loose in the yard; caller hasn't seen them, but was told by a neighbor. Officer advises no loose horses in area.

Saturday, 9/13

11:27 a.m. Walk-in requesting to speak with an officer regarding ongoing issues with her neighbor's dog coming onto her property and acting aggressively toward her. Caller states she has spoken with the neighbors, but they have not rectified the issue. Officer advised caller of options.

4:27 p.m. Caller from Federal Street states the neighbors across the street play music loudly every day into the night, and it is very disruptive. States she asked them a couple of months ago to turn it down and they haven't complied. Referred to an officer.

9:22 p.m. 911 caller reports she is at work and can see big flames, possibly a house fire, across the street and up the hill on Federal Street. Transferred to Control; officers advised. Officer advises no flames or smoke observed on South Lyman Street; going to Smokehouse to get more details from caller. Second officer advises fire pit with tiki torches on New Street. Confirmed no structure fire. All units clear.

Sunday, 9/14

12:44 a.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant states a dog has been barking in the area for roughly 45 minutes; states it is unusual to hear a dog barking that much. Officer advises he is out in the area, and the noise is not a dog barking. Officer observed three or four coyotes near the railroad tracks and believes the noise was coming from them.

5:41 p.m. 911 caller from Federal Street states lots of smoke is billowing out of a dumpster. Officer states that a few extinguishers were used; the fire was contained to the dumpster, and the fire department is on scene.

8:03 p.m. Caller from East Mineral Road states two people were smoking and playing the guitar in the middle of the road; they would like to have them removed, as it is private property. Officer advised parties of property line; they are heading back to their vehicle to leave.

8:58 p.m. Crisis text line reporting risk of death by taking pills. Officer advised. IP address provided.

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DEVICE from page B1

action by removing them from your home screen or hiding them in a more difficult-to-reach folder.

If you're trying to spend less time doomscrolling or hoping to cut back from watching mindless content on Instagram or TikTok, you can just make it harder to access those apps to begin with, granting you more time to say "no" to yourself.

Sometimes that isn't enough, and you can't trust yourself to resist the compulsion – these systems are designed to be addictive, and there's no shame in struggling to exercise a degree of control that these companies simply don't want you to have. Thankfully, there are other tools you can take advantage of.

On iPhones and iPads, for example, you can use a tool called "Screen Time" to analyze the severity of your device use and establish limits, either in the use of individual apps or at certain times of day. Similar tools live on Android devices in a section called "Digital Wellbeing."

These tools are useful for enhancing your self-control and ensuring that those you're responsible for don't grow up with bad digital habits. After all, these systems can hurt them as much as they do us, and they have not yet acquired the context to recognize the danger.

Setting time-based limits for certain apps can be another way to increase friction, if simply making more steps to access them doesn't work. If you know you spend too

much time on Instagram or Facebook, for example, you can limit yourself to what you consider an appropriate amount of time per day, though you'll have to trust yourself not to simply bypass the "block" when you hit that limit. Scheduled limits for nighttime access can also help if you're having trouble with phone use before bed.

Of course, this assumes that you actually *need* to use a given app at all, and that's an assessment I'd also urge you to consider. Sometimes the best way to exert control is to simply not give yourself a contrary option in the first place.

Many of the services we use on our phones are easily accessed, when we need them, through a computer. Friction can be increased in lots of different ways, and having to re-install an app before you use it might be a barrier that works better for you than a bypassable timer.

Sometimes it's not the method of access that's an issue, but the content itself. This comes up most frequently with children, who we'd like to protect from seeing certain types of content until they understand its context and meaning more appropriately, but it can apply to adults, too. There are places that are simply designed to be bad for us because addictive consumption makes them money. (See: Every Meta/Facebook property.)

Outright blocking access to specific apps, sites, or services can also be a last-ditch effort to increase friction, if all else fails. In the case

of kids, many platforms also offer pre-configured lists for blocking access to euphemistic "adult" content – though then you're trusting someone else to define that for them.

I've worked on both sides of the phone business in the past, from inside a smartphone startup and as a journalist covering gadgets. The entire software and hardware economy has become what those in the business call a "mature product category," with defined winners – AI hasn't disrupted that, though many people wish that it would.

Making money now isn't about doing something novel or new – it's about maximizing the extraction of value in a way that matches our expectations for mutual fund-guaranteed growth, and *you* are what it's extracted from. You're under constant, increasingly granular targeting for this extraction, from each new and annoying notification you can't seem to control to ever-more-engagement-promoting videos being recommended by opaque, omnipresent content-recommendation algorithms.

The only way to win this game is not to play. So, as the kids say, go touch grass – stop scrolling on your phone, and Do Actual Stuff.

For more questions about consumer technology, how gadgets work, or which doodad to buy if you need X, Y, and Z, shoot Ryne an email at deviceadvice@montaguereporter.org.



EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Montague: What Would It Mean to Become an 'Apartheid-Free' Community?

TURNERS FALLS – An information session on Montague's upcoming Apartheid-Free Community resolution is scheduled for next Saturday, September 27 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the tent outside the Carnegie Library, 201 Avenue A in Turners Falls.

This information session offers a dynamic and personal opportunity to meet town meeting members and local business owners who support passing the Apartheid-Free Community municipal resolution at the special town meeting on October 22.

Light snacks will be offered.

This resolution would affirm a town-wide commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people, and for all people; oppose all forms of bigotry; and pledge to work to end support for Israel's regime of apartheid, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

The community is encouraged to engage with their fellow residents to discuss what it would mean for Montague to become Apartheid-Free.

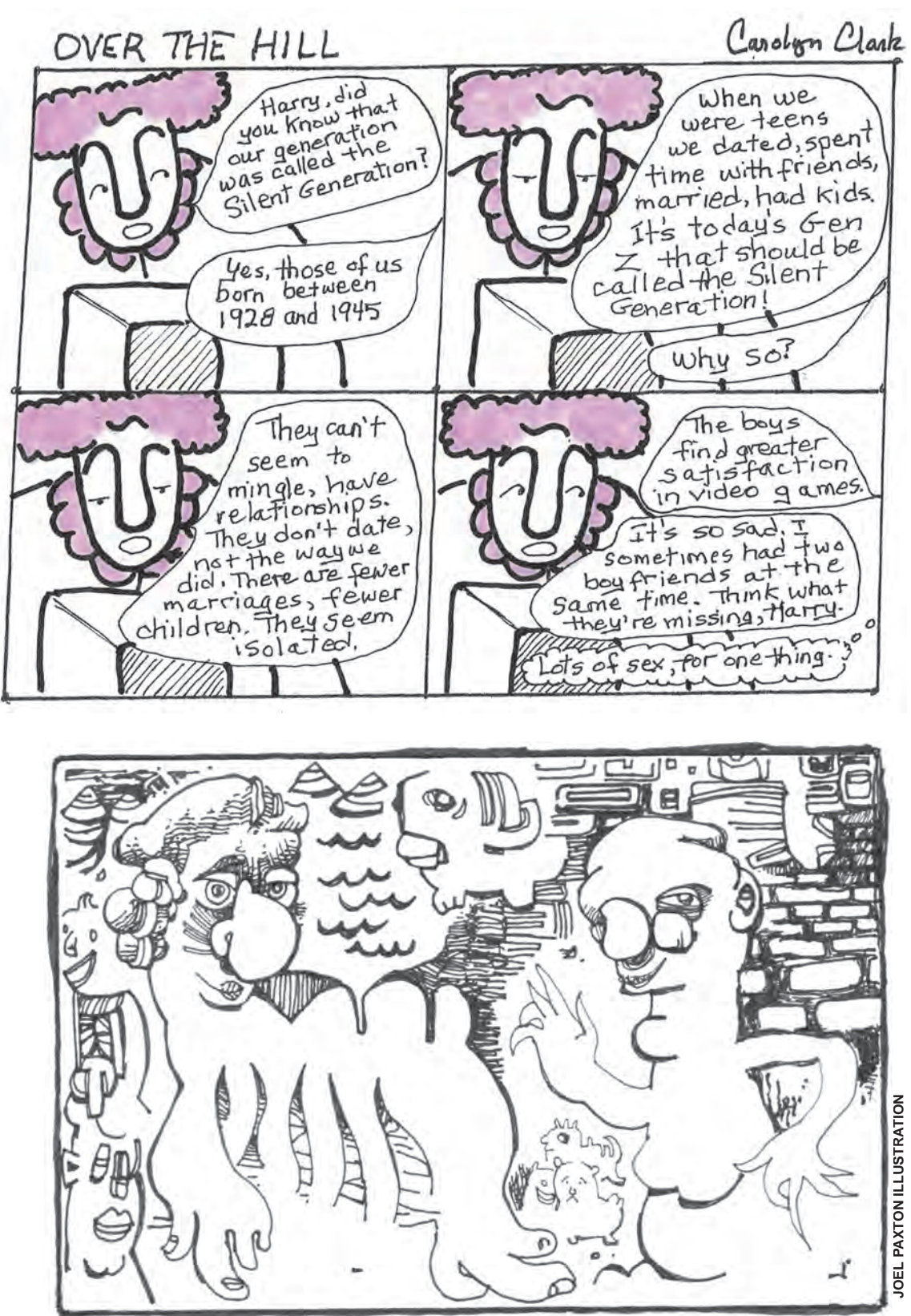
Now is the time to raise our

collective voice for democracy and freedom of speech, and against the rise of fascism and systems of discrimination. As citizens we have the power to stand together with each other to call for, and *create*, municipal action to support the needs of the town's residents.

Just as the world took a stand against South African apartheid to force the end of its oppressive and racist system, we must mobilize in our own communities to build equitable futures for us all. We know it must start at home.

According to town meeting member Maddox Sprengel, "In order to feel a sense of belonging, safety, and shared humanity in my local community and beyond, I support taking a public pledge as a first step to commit to ending all forms of US complicity that support and sustain the system of Apartheid by the state of Israel."

To learn more about the efforts of Apartheid-Free Western MA and ways to get involved, contact infoapartheidfreewesternma@gmail.com.



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The Children's Page

The Lovelight Sisters

IN CHELLA AND VIOLA'S BACKYARD THERE LIVED A LOVELY COMMUNITY OF GNOMES. THEY WERE NOT GARDEN GNOMES, AS REALLY THE LOVELIGHT'S BACKYARD WAS MORE LIKE A JUNGLE WHEN SEEN FROM THE SCALE OF A GNOME. THEY WERE BIGGER THAN FAIRIES, THAT'S TRUE, BUT NOT VERY MUCH BIGGER.



"MY NAME IS HELVAH," SHE SAID MATTER OF FACTLY, LOOKING OVER HER SHOULDER MOMENTARILY. "AND I KNOW YOU ARE CHELLA BECAUSE I LIVE UNDER YOUR DOORSTEP." HER VOICE, THOUGH TINY, WAS CLEAR AND FIRM. CHELLA'S EYES WIDENED. SHE WOULD NEVER FEEL THE SAME AGAIN WHILE CROSSING HER THRESHOLD! SOMEONE FOUR INCHES HIGH WITH FAR SUPERIOR CARPENTRY SKILLS TO HER OWN WAS LIVING RIGHT UNDER HER DOOR!



CHELLA WAS RESTLESS WITH EXCITEMENT UNTIL THE MIDNIGHT HOUR FINALLY CAME. SHE PEEPED OUT AND SOON SAW A FLOCK OF SWANS AND GEESE FLYING TOGETHER IN A V! A RARE SIGHT INDEED.



ONE AFTERNOON CHELLA WAS WANDERING THROUGH THE YARD WHEN SHE CAME ACROSS A SIGHT THAT MADE HER STOP IN HER TRACKS. A PLUMP LITTLE GNOME WITH THICK BRAIDS AND A GREEN POINTED CAP WAS WORKING WITH BEAUTIFUL TINY TOOLS ON THE DOLLHOUSE DOOR OWNED BY CHELLA'S COUSIN, CORDELIA. THOUGH PERHAPS NOT AS SURPRISED AS THE AVERAGE PERSON MIGHT BE TO SEE A MAGICAL CREATURE—AFTER ALL, SHE HAD TWO FAIRY FRIENDS, CHELLA CERTAINLY STARED IN WONDERMENT AT THIS SKILLFUL LITTLE PERSON, STANDING AND HAMMERING BUSILY.



SUDDENLY, OUT FROM BEHIND THE DOOR BURST A BIGGER GNOME, LOOMING OVER HELVAH. HE HAD BEEN HOLDING THE DOOR. "THIS IS GLUMP, MY HELPER," SHE SAID AS HE LOOKED UP SHYLY AT CHELLA. "WE HAVE TO GO NOW, BECAUSE TONIGHT IS THE NIGHT OF THE GNOME MOON, AND WE WILL FLY ON SWANS AND GEESE TO THE ISLAND POND TO EAT MOON-BERRIES AND SWIM IN THE MOON'S REFLECTION. WATCH FROM YOUR WINDOW AT MIDNIGHT!" SHE CALLED AS SHE LEFT.



THEY PASSED RIGHT BY THE CHURCH STEEPLE, CLOSE ENOUGH FOR HER TO SEE THE TINY HATS OF THE GNOMES AND THE SPECIAL SADDLES ON WHICH THEY SAT! ABOVE THEM SHONE THE FULL MOON. CHELLA GASPED. WHAT A STORY SHE HAD TO TELL VIOLA!

WORDS BY BEVERLY KETCH, PICTURES BY HANNAH BROOKMAN

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* Carousel with L. Scully 10/13-11/3
4 Mondays 6:00-8:00

* Unproductive Behaviors
with 6:30-8:00 Sundays
Sierra Dickey 10/26-11/30
masks required

* TEEN RISO
6 weeks 10/8-11/12 3:45-4:45
Wednesdays

* KIDS ART with
Anna Leah ages 5-9
Tuesdays 10/7-11/11 3:45-4:45

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events@montaguereporter.org

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

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

Dickinson Library, Northfield:
LEGO Drop-In and Play.
3 to 4 p.m. Free.

Bellows Falls Opera House,
Bellows Falls: Documentaries,
The Last Resort (1978) and
Early Warnings. Discussion
afterward with filmmakers
Charles Light and Daniel Keller
and anti-nuclear activist
Sam Lovejoy. 6:30 p.m. \$.

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

Belltower Records, North
Adams: Kilynn Lunsford, Sky
Furrows, Barbie.AI. 7 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro:
Actors, Soft Vein,
Leathers. 8 p.m. \$.

Parlor Room, Northampton:
Phillip Greenlief/Trevor Dunn/
Scott Amendola trio. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Great Falls Discovery Center,
Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope*
Story Hour: Snakes.
Ages 3 to 6. Story, activities,
and crafts. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Greenfield Community
College, Greenfield:
Community Chorus. New
members welcome; register
at www.gccfor.me/chorus.
Rehearses Fridays at
12:30 p.m. \$\$.

The National Spiritual Alliance,
Lake Pleasant: *Discovering*
Spiritualism: History &
Practice, presentation
by David James. Part of
a weekend-long *Camp*
Weekend; more at tinyurl.com/alliancecampwknd.
5 p.m. By donation.

MASS MoCA, North Adams:
Greensky Bluegrass,
Kitchen Dwellers, Jaime
Wyatt, more. 5 p.m. \$\$.

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

Dickinson Library, Northfield:
How Maps Lie, with
cartographer and map
store owner Andrew
Middleton. 6 p.m. Free.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Botfly,*
Ursa, Spinal Teeth. 7 p.m. \$.

Town Hall, Ashfield:
Documentary, *Fanny:*
The Right to Rock (2021),
followed by a discussion with
director Mary Patierno and
Fanny guitarist and vocalist
June Millington. More at
ashfieldfilmfest.org. 7 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton:
Rose City Band, Wet
Tuna. 7 p.m. \$.

Buckley Recital Hall,
Amherst College: *Women*
of Chicago's Black
Renaissance. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Big E Arena, West Springfield:
TLC, Big Boi. 7:30 p.m. \$\$.

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

The Drake, Amherst: *Dogpark,*
Kids That Fly. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro:
Tropical Fuck Storm,
Perennial. 8 p.m. \$.

Divine Theater, Holyoke:
Night Moves dance class;
DJs *Matt Krefting,*
Jake Meginsky. 8 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Nape*
Neck, Phrøeggs, Man
Jumping to Heaven. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Colrain Central Elementary
School, Colrain: *Colrain Fix-It*
Day. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

Interlink Publishing,
Northampton: *Read &*
Resist Fest, with workshops,
speakers, kids' activities,
vendors. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free.

MASS MoCA, North Adams:
Old Crow Medicine Show,
Swamp Dogg, CimaFunk, Lee
Fields, more. 10 a.m. \$\$.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell:
Info session, *Successful*
Grant Writing. 11 a.m. Free.

Palladium, Worcester: *Lorna*
Shore, All Out War, Cannibal
Corpse, Full Of Hell, Madball,
Kublai Khan, Municipal Waste,
The Black Dahlia Murder,
many more. 12:30 p.m. \$\$.

Guiding Star Grange,
Greenfield: *Swedish Dance*.
Intro workshop, snacks, open
dancing; live music on five-
string fiddle and nyckelharpa.
All welcome. 1:30 p.m. \$.

The National Spiritual Alliance,
Lake Pleasant: *Historical*
Walking Tour of Lake Pleasant,
with David James. Part of
a weekend-long *Camp*
Weekend; more at tinyurl.com/alliancecampwknd.
2:30 p.m. Free.

Big Brown, Millers Falls:
Tracey Trance, Phrøeggs,
Jewel Eye. 4:20 p.m. \$.

Brick House, Turners Falls:
Deathless Forever (formerly
Space Camp), Jayson Keery,
beetsblog, Casper Lucia, Rivka
Nisinzweig, Kristine Leschper.
Music, puppets, poetry,
potluck, vegan sorbetto.
Benefit for Finders Collective,
Books Through Bars, and the
Carrier Bag Kitchen Collective.
5 p.m. By donation.

Town Hall, Ashfield: *Ashfield*
FilmFest, short films with
connection to the western
Mass hilltowns. Community
band, 5:30 p.m.; films, 7 p.m.
More at ashfieldfilmfest.org. \$.



Popular singer-songwriter
Lucy Kaplansky plays a split
bill with Patty Larkin at the
Shea Theater this Saturday night.

PULP Gallery, Holyoke:
Sideways Door 4, feat.
Sunburned Hand of the Man,
LOCULUS, Katherine Kain,
Niki Farahani, Ben Hersey,
Tori Lawrence & Co. 6 p.m. \$.

Unnameable Books,
Turners Falls: Reading,
Cristina Pérez Díaz, Mónica
de la Torre, Isabel Sobral
Campos, Elizabeth Mikesch.
6:30 p.m. No cover.

Turners Falls Rod & Gun
Club, Turners Falls: *Groove*
Prophet, barbeque. 7 p.m. \$.

The National Spiritual Alliance,
Lake Pleasant: *Songwriters*
in the Round. Part of *Camp*
Weekend; more at tinyurl.com/alliancecampwknd. 7 p.m. \$.

Mount Toby Friends
Meetinghouse, Leverett:
Pete & Woody: An Unlikely
Friendship, presented by
Steve Suffett and Pat
Lamanna. 7 p.m. \$.

Just Roots, Greenfield:
Hootenanny Fundraiser.
Barn dance, silent auction,
local beer, and food.
Proceeds support affordable
farmshares. 7 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton:
Dougie Poole,
Margaux. 7 p.m. \$.

EXHIBITS

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls:

Portals, Doorways, & Leaks, works
by Mathew Hollander and Trevor
Powers, through September.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners

Falls: The Springfield Photographic
Society presents *The Towns of Franklin*
County, through September 30.

Montague Center Library, Montague

Center: Paintings by Millers Falls artist
Ashley Liu, through September.

Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill:

Bicycles, Beaches, and Bovines,
multimedia work by Gill artist
Doug Dale, at the Rhodes Art
Center through October 10.

Leverett Library, Leverett:

Art & Crafts Inspired by the 1774
North Leverett Sawmill, with work
by dozens of artists, through October.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett:

Susan
Valentine, *Paintings*, and Sue Kassirer,
Works in Clay. Through September.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Silent Auction

Art Exhibit, works donated by local
artists and assemblages by Andy
Rothschild for sale to benefit LAVA,
on view through December 20. Anna
Bayles Arthur, *Selected Paintings*,
through October with a reception next
Friday, September 26 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Artspace, Greenfield: Japanese Pop

Art and Moment in Light, landscape
paintings and pop art by Kimiko
Donohoe, through October 3.

Looky Here, Greenfield: Belt Course,

paintings and prints by Amy Borezo and
John Armstrong, through September 28.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield:

Fall Into Fiber, group show. Through
November 2, with a reception this
Sunday, September 21 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Sunderland Library, Sunderland:

Woodland Soundscape, interactive
exhibit by Ms. Green Jeanne with prints
of wildlife and accompanying sound
clips via QR codes, through September.

Clarkdale Fruit Farms, Deerfield:

Doorways, self-guided audio-visual tour

with sculptural doorways and sound pools
by multiple artists, through November.

Gallery A3, Amherst: Counterspells

& Concatenations, works by Marianne
Connolly and Rebecca Muller,
through September 27.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne

Falls: *Harvest Colors*, group show
by members, through September.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls:

Old and New, paintings by father-
and-son duo Robert and Matthew
Steinem, through November 2.

Carberry Fine Arts Gallery at STCC,

Springfield: *We're Riding the Same*
Wave, interactive environments
and playful sculptural forms by
Sunny Allis, through October 3.

CALL FOR ART

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Community
art exhibit on the theme of *Heart &*
Soul. Submit up to three pieces to
bit.ly/comartshow by October 11.
No freestanding works allowed,
pieces must be able to hang on the wall.

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CALENDAR

Hampshire College Solar Canopy, Amherst: *Trepidation, Freonhuffer, Glasss, Death In Venice, Giant Enemy Cancer Cult, Robots Keep Secrets*, more. 7 p.m. \$.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *GCB, DJ413mafia, Fear Dot Com, Dialog Talk*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Phillip Greenlief/Trevor Dunn/Scott Amendola trio*. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Myrtle Street Klezmer*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Vermont Jazz Center, Brattleboro: *Jason Moran*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Big E Arena, West Springfield: *The Avett Brothers*. 7:30 p.m. \$\$.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Stella Kola, Henbane, Paper Jays, Vanessa Brewster*. 8 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Lucy Kaplansky, Patty Larkin*. 8 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Simon White & Rhythm Inc.* 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Laura Stevenson, Oceanator*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Bob Mould, J. Robbins*. 8 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *shakusky, Saliba, Smut Club*. 8 p.m. \$.

Art!, Northampton: *Sleep Destroyer, Cliffrose, Owen Manure, Feldspar 00000*. 9 p.m. \$.

Unicorn, Holyoke: *DJ Lucas, Pasto Chris, Caplito*, more. 9 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Kris Day*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Unity Park, Turners Falls: *Northeast Unity Car Show*. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Sierra Hull, Peter Rowan & The Sam Grisman Project*, more. 10 a.m. \$\$.

Downtown Keene: *Keene Pride* feat. *Sunset Electric, Antara Gatch, Sister Funk, Nova One*, more. 12 to 7 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Craft Day with the Friends*. Older teens and adults welcome. Instruction and materials provided. Register at (413) 423-3348. 1 p.m. Free.

Polish American Club, South Deerfield: *Pioneer Valley Balfolk Dance*: Live French-Breton music, *hors d'oeuvres* potluck. Instruction provided; no partner necessary. Jam session at 2:45 p.m., dance at 4 p.m. By donation.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Stella Silbert & Nat Baldwin*. 4 p.m. No cover.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Mikaela Davis, Lily Seabird*. 7 p.m. \$.

Daily Op, Easthampton: *Dummy, Mahogany*. 7 p.m. \$.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Valise, 1-800-HOT-DUCK, Katy Mongeau*. Poetry and films. 8 p.m. \$.

Esteemed Czech violinist, vocalist, and composer Iva Bittová will perform next Saturday, September 27 at the Montague Common Hall – that’s quite a booking coup on the part of Good Music Makes Good Neighbors! Bittová is also offering a workshop, “open to singers and instrumentalists of all levels,” earlier that day, though it’s \$50 to \$70 whereas the concert is \$20.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Hutghi’s, Westfield: *Bent Light, Tara Clerkin Trio, Stefan Christensen*. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

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

Space Ballroom, Hamden CT: *Shonen Knife, The Pack A.D.* 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Brick House Community Resource Center, Turners Falls: *Positive Solutions Parenting*. Five-week program for caregivers of children preschool through age 8. Childcare by arrangement. Register at slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org. 10 to 11:30 a.m.

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

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Afterschool Activities*. Games, makerspace, snacks. 1:30 to 3 p.m. Free.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *The ABCs of Dementia*, presented by Linda Puzan, MSW, followed by discussion and refreshments. 1 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Poetry Group*. 3 p.m. Free.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *The Bug Museum*, bug-inspired puppet workshop. Materials provided; no skill necessary; all ages. 6:30 p.m. Free.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

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

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Laugh Don’t Cry*, political comedy show. 6 and 8 p.m. \$.

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *Living with Black Bears in MA*, presented by wildlife technician Shasta Slade. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Friday Night at the Library*. Extended hours (until 7 p.m.) and a picnic potluck. 5 p.m. Free.

Downtown Greenfield: *Prose Parade*, feat. *Sierra Dickey, Vanessa Brewster, Sarah Wisby, Mo Schweiger, Rebecca Rideout, Matthew Latkiewicz*, more. Meet at Looky Here; bring trumpets, drums, pots and pans, bubbles, etc. End up back at Looky Here for refreshments, etc. 5 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Teen Night*. Low-key hangout after hours; food, crafts, and games available. 6 to 8 p.m. Free.

Palladium, Worcester: *Dark Angel, Sacred Reich, Hirax, Void*. 6 p.m. \$\$.

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: Reading, *Miranda Mellis, Andrea Lawlor*. 6:30 p.m. No cover.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Iva Bittová*. 7 p.m. \$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Low Volume Electronics* with *Snowglobe Almanac, ZBS.fm, Sunset Mission, Hissquiet*. 7 p.m. \$.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Wishbone Zoë, Saliba, Goldsetter*. 7 p.m. \$.

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown: *James K, Maria Somerville*. 7 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Deep C Divers, Couchboy*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Zepptunes*. 8 p.m. No cover.

The Drake, Amherst: *Yaima, Camp Saint Helene*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Zoë Keating*. 8 p.m. \$.

Deep Thoughts, Northampton: *Andy Boay, Bong Wish, Mike Etten*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Hutghi’s, Westfield: *Animal, Surrender; Ryan Sawyer/Wendy Eisenberg duo; Matt Krefting*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wide Open Jam*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope Story Hour: River Otters*. Ages 3 to 6. Story, activities, and crafts. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Jacobs Road Municipal Center, Heath: Short documentary, *Views from a Woodlot*, profiling retired Quabbin forester Bruce Spencer. Panel discussion on forestry afterward. 4:30 p.m. Free.

Multiple venues, Northampton: *Northampton Jazz Festival*, feat. *The Amherst Jazz Orchestra, Jimmy Gavagan Trio*, more. Full schedule at northamptonjazzfest.org. 4:30 p.m. Free.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

Retreat Farm Brattleboro: *Tholpavakoothu*, puppet troupe from Kerala, India. 6:15 p.m. \$.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *The Leafies You Gave Me, Hot Dirt, beetsblog*. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Forster Farm, Orange: *North Quabbin Garlic & Arts Festival*. Music, food, vendors, farm products, kids’ activities and games, demonstrations, more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. \$.

Winchester, New Hampshire: *Winchester Pickle Festival*. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *The Mammals*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Apex Orchards, Shelburne: *Apples & Artisans*. Vendors, rides, apple picking; music by *Ragged Blue*. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Gill Town Common, Gill: *Harvest Festival*. Food, hayrides, petting zoo, vendors, coin toss, raffle, more. 12 to 3 p.m. Free.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Michael Beach, Spectre Folk, Creative Writing*. 8:30 p.m. \$

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4

Institute for the Musical Arts, Goshen: *Ches Smith Clone Row*, feat. *Mary Halvorson*, guitar. 7:30 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11

Big River Chestnuts, Sunderland: *Chestnut Festival*. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free.

Ashfield Center, Ashfield: *Ashfield Fall Festival*. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *Rubber-O Cement, Diagram:A, Mike Young, Dimension Viewer*, more. 7 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

First Churches, Northampton: Ambient Church presents *Laraaji*, with live light projections. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Crop Dusters*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Richard Thompson*. 8 p.m. \$.

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TUE-SAT

4-9

RECIPES from page B1

dottiness of stuffing a flower is part of their charm.

Stuffed beets are another oddity. They once lured us inside a Spanish restaurant when we spotted them on the window menu. Each large beet arrived sitting in splendid isolation on a white plate. It was raw, but hollowed to house a mixture of diced cooked beet and raw apple in a light mayonnaise dressing.

The hard work here is excavating a hole in the hard beet. If you're not up for that, the filling is easy to make and good on its own.

Hollowing out purple-top turnips for stuffing is easier, because you don't do it until they are half-cooked. The excavated turnip is mashed with potatoes and returned to the turnip shell for reheating and basting with butter. Their inventor, the 19th-century French restaurateur Auguste Escoffier, called stuffed turnips a "slightly and excellent garnish," and suggested creamed spinach as an alternative filling.

And then there are stuffed olives. Far from unusual, they're certainly odd because the cavity left by the pit is tiny, and filling it with red pepper

slivers, almond shards, or whatnot is fiddly. No doubt it's done by machines today, but it must originally have been the work of farm families who spent winter evenings inserting tiny tidbits. Take it as proof that, like Nature, humans abhor a vacuum and will find something to fill it.

For us, that's the local vegetable harvests. Bell peppers have virtually empty centers that just beg to be filled, while the seeds of tomatoes, zucchini, and winter squash can be quickly discarded. The velvety flesh of eggplant is more solid, but when cooked it makes such delicious fillings that every eggplant-growing country has recipes.

In Greece *papoutsakias* – "meaning little slippers" – are favorites. The slipper-shaped eggplants are packed with ground meat with tomatoes and herbs, then topped with a thick and lush cheese-flavored *bechamel* that looks a bit like a furry slipper trim. Try the *papoutsakias* for a chill evening.

The stuffed winter squash in the following recipe are also good for cooler weather. Stuffed mushrooms are great party fare – and pretty good for supper, too.



GREEK PAPOUTSAKIAS

- 2 eggplants, each about 8 oz.
- 1 to 2 Tbsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 oz. ground lamb or beef
- 1 tsp. powdered cumin
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 cups peeled, chopped tomatoes, fresh or canned
- 2 tsp. dried oregano, or to taste
- 1 tsp. dried mint
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- ¼ cup flour
- about 2 cups milk
- 4 oz. crumbled feta
- ½ cup grated Parmesan
- 2 egg yolks, lightly beaten
- freshly grated nutmeg



kle with salt. Leave the eggplant to drain for 45 minutes, then pat dry.

To make the filling, heat a tablespoon of the oil in a large pan. Crumble in the ground meat and cook until it has browned. Push it to one side of the pan, and add the onions and garlic to the other side.

Cook for 4 or 5 minutes or until the onions have softened, then combine with the meat and stir in the cumin, tomatoes, oregano, mint, bay leaves, and half a teaspoon of cinnamon. Season with salt.

Cover and simmer for about 25

minutes, until thickened. If necessary, evaporate excess liquid by rapid boiling. Taste and add more herbs or salt if necessary.

Grease a baking pan into which the eggplants will fit in a single layer, and fill them with the stuffing. Remove and reserve the bay leaves. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

For the sauce, melt the butter in a saucepan. Remove it from the heat and stir in the flour to make a thick paste. Stir in the milk over moderate heat, a quarter cup at a time, until you have a very thick pudding-like sauce. Stir in the feta and Parmesan. Cook gently until the cheeses have melted. Taste; add more salt if needed. Stir in the beaten egg yolks and a little nutmeg.

Spread this sauce on the filled eggplant. Cover with foil and bake for 30 to 35 minutes. Check after 20 minutes and reduce the temperature to 325 if the cheese topping has brown patches. Serve, garnished with the bay leaves, when the "slippers" are tender.

Serves 2 to 4.

ACORN SQUASH STUFFED WITH SAUSAGE AND APPLES

- 2 acorn squash, about 2 lb. each
- 1 to 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 apples
- ¾ lb. loose Italian sausage, hot or sweet
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 3 sage leaves, torn, or 1 tsp. dried sage
- salt and pepper to taste
- ½ of a red bell pepper
- ¾ cup apple cider or apple juice
- 2 Tbsp. butter

Cut across the middle of the squash to make scalloped-edged halves. (Cutting from the stem end down won't give this effect.) Trim the bases so they sit level. Scrape out and discard the seeds.

Using a melon-baller or teaspoon, scrape some of the flesh from the central hole to enlarge it slightly. Chop and reserve the scraped-out flesh. Turn the oven to 400 degrees and grease a lasagna pan or other large dish.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Over moderate heat, add the onion. Now peel and grate just one apple and stir it into the onion along with the scraped-out squash. Let soften, stirring occasionally, while you form the sausage into balls the size of small cherry tomatoes.

Push the onion-apple mixture to one side of the pan and fry the sausage balls on the empty side, adding a few at a time, and waiting until the first lot have lightly browned before adding the others. When all are browned, stir them into the onion mixture along with the oregano, sage, and salt and pepper to taste.

Let simmer while you cut the red pepper into thin strips. Cut across half of these so you have small dice and stir them into the mixture along with half the cider or juice. Add the remaining liquid as needed to create a loose, saucy mixture. Pile this into the cavities in the squash. Put them in a greased pan, open side up, and cover with foil.

Bake for 60 to 90 minutes, checking once or twice that the surface is not browning too quickly. If it is, reduce the heat to 375. The squash is done when a skewer poked into the side passes through easily.

During the final minutes of cooking, make the garnish. Fry the pepper strips in a small frying pan for 2 minutes, then remove. Halve, core, and slice the unpeeled apple. Heat the butter in the small pan. Add the apple slices and cook for 2 to 3 minutes per side.

Before serving, garnish with the pepper strips and apple slices.

Serves 4.

STUFFED MUSHROOMS WITH PECANS AND HERBED CHEESE

- 1 lb. large white mushrooms (about 12)
- 1 shallot, finely chopped, or 2 Tbsp. chopped onion
- 2 to 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup crumbs from day-old wheat bread
- 5 oz. (1 package) Boursin or other herbed cream cheese
- ½ cup pecan pieces
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted

You need the larger white mushrooms – about 2 inches in diameter – sometimes sold as stuffing mushrooms. Portobellos of a similar size are good, too. Wipe them clean with wet paper towels and let them dry. Break off the stems and chop finely.

Heat a tablespoon of oil in a small frying pan and gently fry the chopped stems with the shallot or onion for 4 or 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Let cool, then mix with ½ cup breadcrumbs. Mash in the cheese to make a stiff mixture. Stir in the pecan pieces.

Fill each mushroom, mounding the filling up slightly, then scatter the rest of the breadcrumbs on top. (At this point you can cover the mushrooms and store them in the fridge for up to 24 hours if necessary.)

Heat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease an oven-proof dish and arrange the filled mushrooms in a single layer. Melt the butter. Pour a little on the top of each mushroom. Bake 12 to 15 minutes, or until the crumb topping is golden. Serve warm or at room temperature, garnished with fresh herbs such as parsley, thyme, or rosemary leaves.



These are perfect for parties, but also good served with vegetables as a supper dish.

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