

The Montague Reporter

GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Approves ‘Distasteful’ Agreement With FirstLight

By KATE SAVAGE

In Gill’s special town meeting on Monday, residents approved a new agreement with FirstLight Power for payments *in lieu* of taxes (PILOT) for the decade ahead. The unanimous vote came after an hour of discussion in which many expressed frustration with FirstLight – and with the town’s inability to match the hydroelectric company’s legal and financial might.

In 2021, Gill and Montague appraised FirstLight’s assets for both towns as worth \$146.5 million, with 89% of that value in Montague and 11% in Gill. The company countered that the property was actually only worth \$45 million, less than a third of the towns’ appraisal.

Montague spent \$150,000 arguing the case before the state’s Appellate Tax Board, but dropped its efforts earlier this year after a similar case against the company went badly for Erving. When Northfield Mountain LLC won its appeal against Erving’s appraisal of the Northfield Mountain pumped-storage project, Montague negotiated a settlement with FirstLight, which included a 10-year PILOT agreement.

Gill’s agreement is in line with
see **GILL** page A8

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Working Group Scrutinizing Dysfunctional School District

By GEORGE BRACE

At Tuesday’s meeting, the Leverett selectboard heard detailed updates from officials working to address ongoing financial and governance challenges in the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District (ARPS), which includes the towns of Amherst, Pelham, Shutesbury, and Leverett.

Finance committee member Steve Weiss, who represents Leverett in a working group composed of fin com and selectboard or town council members from the four towns, said the group is examining the “changing fiscal environments” of the towns and factors driving expenses in order to develop a long-term approach to balancing school spending and resources.

The group has seen “voluminous data” showing fixed costs rising in the three smaller towns, and about to rise in Amherst, Weiss reported. Some of the costs the towns are facing didn’t exist 10 or 20 years ago,
see **LEVERETT** page A4

SPOOKY SEASON UNDERWAY



Move over, Christmas: Skeletons at this house on Turners Falls’s G Street could be seen this week swinging on monkey bars and a trapeze, driving a tiny car, riding a bicycle, and being led on a leash. Several readers submitted photos of the scene.

Amid Criticism From Super, Planners Push School Region Vote to Spring

By MIKE JACKSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Following a week of intense public criticism of the proposal by Patricia Kinsella, superintendent of the Pioneer Valley regional school district, the chair of the Six-Town Regionalization Planning Board (STRPB) says he will recommend postponing the vote on forming a larger regional district until next spring.

In an email late Wednesday night to the selectboards of Gill, Montague, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick, Alan Genovese said that when it meets next Tuesday he plans to recommend that the STRPB “delays its request for Town Meeting and special election votes until the Spring.”

The votes in the six towns had been expected in mid-November.

Genovese said the postponement was suggested by officials at the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) “so we can continue our thoughtful crafting” of the new regional
see **REGION** page A2

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Board Learns Of Probable Six-Town Vote Postponement

By JEFF SINGLETON

The evolving plan for the town of Montague to vote on a new six-town regional school district, combining the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley districts along with the town of Warwick, has evolved once again, as town administrator Walter Ramsey told the selectboard at its Monday night meeting.

The board planning the consolidation, he said, has notified him that changes in the proposed regional agreement required by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) may not be ready in time for the originally planned mid-November vote in the six towns.

Monday’s meeting also saw the board appoint former town clerk Deb Bourbeau to the Montague Housing Authority, authorize a conservation restriction to preserve 31 acres of land on Old Sunderland Road, and approve the final warrant for the October 22 special town meeting.

On the school consolidation front, Ramsey said that Alan Genovese, the chair of the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board (STRPB), said that the group was still in negotiations with DESE over a final draft of the regional agreement to send to the towns.

According to state law, the referendum required for towns with
see **MONTAGUE** page A7

Beekeepers at Montague Apiary Producing Queens for a New Era

By BEN GAGNON

MONTAGUE CENTER – It’s impossible to overrate the importance of bees: They pollinate about one-third of the fruits, nuts, and vegetables produced by farmers around the world.

Located on Old Greenfield Road in Montague, They Keep Bees is a small business on the front lines of producing new queen bees and improving the genetic health and diversity of bees in the United States. Co-owners Ang Roell and Bi – coincidentally pronounced “bee” – Kline are experts at removing germplasm (bee sperm) from male drones and inseminating queens in their home laboratory. Before putting the drones and queens under a microscope to perform the delicate surgery, they sedate them with a dose of carbon dioxide.

Once a new queen is born, they create a mini-hive complete



They Keep Bees owners Ang Roell (left) and Bi Kline in their bee yard.

with drones, water, and food, then carefully package it up and ship the queen bees to buyers through the mail. Roell and Kline share their specialized skills by teach-

ing courses at their Montague farm on how to inseminate queen bees as part of what they call “Queen School.” They also collaborate
see **APIARY** page A5

High School Sports: A Fall Potpourri

By MATT ROBINSON



Ware’s Troy Jurczyk (right) breaks up the play with Franklin Tech’s intended receiver Nofyn Stafford (center) as the Eagles hosted the Indians last Friday.

TURNERS FALLS – This week the golf teams from Franklin Tech and Turners Falls High School played their final matches of the season, the Tech footballers lost a home game against Ware, the hybrid girls’ soccer team came from behind to win a home match against Athol, and the Turners volleyball team beat Mahar at home.

Also this week, a birthday party was held in the Turners Falls gym for one local man’s 99th birthday.

Football

Ware 27 – FCTS 14

Last Friday night, under the lights at Franklin Tech, the Football Eagles saw a seven-point lead dissolve into a 13-point loss.

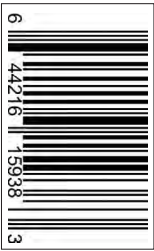
Tech’s first two drives ended with a punt and an interception, but their D refused to bend until 4:31 of the first
see **SPORTS** page A6

Unleashing Journalistic Chaos Since 2002

Drones, Water, and Food.....A1
Chaos That Will Most Certainly Unfold.....A2
Colossal Resounding Cascade.....A2
Wielding a Horseshoe Crab.....A3
As If From a Lighthouse.....A4
With No Escape or Solution.....A4
When the Cards Start Collapsing.....A5

Best Poltergeist Impression.....A6
Severely Corroded Rebar.....A7
Strangers to Drive Into the Canal.....A7
Covered in Potato Chips.....A8
Revealed By the Teeth of the Saw.....B1
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Zooming Around During Playtime.....B2

What Seemed to Be a Light Shining.....B3
Hailed as a Giant Slayer.....B3
Too Old For Some Youngster.....B4
Velvet Lined Box Under Glass.....B5
Snood, Mibble, Reptile Show, Roast Beef.....B6
Rushadicus, Rattlesnake Hill, Velvet Frogs.....B7
A Nutty Aroma Rises to Greet You.....B8



The Montague Reporter

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August 2002

REGION from page A1

district agreement.

“We want to be sure that people have accurate information before they vote,” Genovese wrote, adding that the longer timeline would allow the STRPB to host an “all town meeting” for officials to discuss and clarify the proposal together.

Genovese’s letter came a day after the STRPB’s deadline to formally send the regional agreement to Montague, which had tentatively scheduled a November 18 special election for the vote, as state law requires at least 35 days’ notice. Less advance notice is required in the other five towns, which would vote at open town meetings.

It also came amid a flurry of fierce criticism by Kinsella of the STRPB’s budget analysis, oversight of technical consultants, plans for school bus routes and the transition to the would-be six-town district, and public communications.

In 2019 the towns of Gill, Montague, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick all agreed to enter a feasibility and planning process for a district that would replace both the Gill-Montague district and Pioneer Valley, which at the time included the latter four towns.

The planning board was endorsed by the Gill-Montague school committee, but not by Pioneer’s, and over the next six years STRPB members would repeatedly complain about the lack of engagement or cooperation from the Pioneer school district.

Complicating matters, in 2020 the Pioneer committee voted to close Warwick Elementary School; Warwick instead withdrew from the district in 2023, but remains part of the “six-town” process.

In January 2024, following several years of technical analysis by consultants funded by DESE, the STRPB voted 13-3 to recommend that a six-town district be formed. All three opposing votes came from representatives who also served on the Pioneer committee at the time.

Imagining the Chaos

Since the winter, STRPB has been finalizing the text of the proposed agreement with oversight from DESE, and turning gradually to a public informational campaign.

On Tuesday, September 30, following a forum in Northfield, Kinsella emailed town officials in Leyden, Bernardston, and Northfield highlighting what she said were significant concerns with the staffing cost assessment commissioned by the STRPB.

It was based on a 2023 decision

to use salary grids from Gill-Montague union contracts, she said, because they were higher than Pioneer’s at that time, and it did not take into account that a new contract reached with Pioneer staff in 2024 put that district’s salaries generally on top.

Adjusting Gill-Montague staff to a corresponding higher scale, she argued, would have a “multiplier effect” as it was a larger district. Using rough assumptions she estimated that the merger would result in nearly \$350,000 in raises by moving the highest-paid cohort of Gill-Montague teachers to the highest tier on Pioneer’s salary grid.

Kinsella followed this last Thursday with emails criticizing the longer bus routes entailed by transporting all middle school students in the six towns to Northfield and all high schoolers to Turners Falls, as well as the STRPB’s proposal for central office staff salaries, which she said was “untethered to reality.”

On Friday Kinsella announced that she was “stepping forward to share [her] professional judgment” that the proposal was “not in the best interests of our Pioneer community,” and on Sunday she issued an even more strongly-worded communicate about the transition plan envisioned by STRPB, which she said was “setting our towns up for disaster” by endorsing a new district without a guarantee of transition funding from DESE.

“The Board has no plan and no funding for the work of building a new district,” she wrote. “There are only six weeks left before residents vote, so time has officially run out. It doesn’t take a crystal ball to imagine the chaos that will most certainly unfold if this ill-advised proposal moves forward.”

Kinsella criticized a plan for the transitional school committee to be appointed by the Gill-Montague, Pioneer Valley, and Warwick school committees, stating that the Pioneer committee had not been asked its opinion of this “extraordinary degree of responsibility,” and condemned the STRPB’s “high hopes” that the state would earmark funding for the regional transition.

“The Board believes that it would be logical for the state to give them [sic] money,” she wrote, “... even if the state is cash-strapped.... But there is no cash, there is no plan, and there is no identified ‘someone’ to sign any checks.”

Contingency Plans

In his letter to the towns on Wednesday, Genovese addressed

see REGION page A5

NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

The LOOT warehouse at 31 Turnpike Road in Turners Falls will be open for browsers and shoppers next Saturday and Sunday, October 18 and 19, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Warehouse manager Jon Bander is seen here amidst an organizational challenge of sorting piles of odd vintage items including Pachinko machines, typewriters, tintypes, lab equipment, museum cases, artwork, and mounds of industrial and household curiosities.

Letters to

the Editors

Who Silenced ‘Thunder Falls’?

I now live in a village of Montague, notoriously named “Turners Falls” after the leader of the 1676 predawn massacre of hundreds of elders, mothers, and children in a refugee encampment on the west bank of the Connecticut (from the Algonquian *Kwinitekw*, meaning “long-tidal-river”).

On a bike ride to greet the day with my partner, we realized that operators had flushed the Power Canal, as it is called, for annual maintenance. It was stunning that such a massive volume of water could be released with the push of a button, and we wondered about the fish and all the other life forms that had taken hold there.

When we continued on our ride and went below the dam, we realized that the flow of water was going around the bend – the river’s natural course, which engineers call the “Bypass Reach.” Usually, the dam

impounds the river and redirects its flow into the engineered canal to generate electricity.

Standing below the dam on this day, even in a relatively dry fall season, we could hear the rumbling, tumbling sound of torrents of water spilling over the dam. That’s when the question popped into my head, and touched my heart: *Who silenced Thunder Falls?*

I have learned that the traditional name for this spot is *Peskeompskut* (thunder-rock-place), a destination for the peoples who lived in this region for countless generations. Ever since the glaciers melted away, the long river has made a sharp right turn, run west along what is now Unity Park, and squeezed through a tight place in the rocks, forming a colossal, resounding cascade.

Now, for many months in the year, the water goes to its utilitarian purpose in silence.

So, again, who had the ingenuity or the audacity to silence Thunder Falls? What does it mean for a great river to lose her voice? What is gained, and what is lost?

The silencing of Thunder Falls mirrors the attempt to silence Indigenous voices in this place. As FirstLight, the hydroelectric operator, seeks federal relicensing: Will we finally listen? Will we demand that the Pocumtuc, Nipmuc/k, and Abenaki peoples have a voice in decisions about the waterway that has sustained life here for millennia? Or will profit margins continue to dictate when – and if – River is allowed to speak?

Andrew Palmer Grant
‘Thunder’ Falls

Housing Is Health Care

Recent trends in medicine are beginning to integrate social and structural determinants into health care, resulting in an increased emphasis on the impact of housing on our physical and emotional well-being.

While early studies are focusing on those without housing, common sense informs us that security, safety, consistency, and relative comfort are components that each of us seek and relish as we strive to live with maximum health at any age.

Mary Kay Mattiace
Turners Falls

CORRECTION

Last week’s story on a solar project proposed on Lockes Village Road in Wendell (*Fire Chief, Town Boards Probe Solar Battery Safety*, Page A1) misreported the maximum noise levels that battery energy storage system proposed in Wendell would emit.

Beals and Thomas engineer Nick Santangelo said installed sound barriers would keep the ambient noise levels at the property line below 30 decibels (dB) – not below 3 dB, as was apparently misheard and reported by both the *Reporter* and the *Greenfield Recorder*.

Generally, ambient noise in a forest is about 30 to 40 dB, while virtual silence, or “pure tone” noise, is about 3 dB. The Wendell board of health’s regulations for stationary battery systems require sound barriers to ensure that “broadband sound levels... of more than 10 dB above ambient or ‘pure tone’ condition are not produced.”

Apologies for the error! Thanks to our reporter for the correction.

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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

The bulbs are here! MR distribution manager Nina Rossi drove this week to Bantam, Connecticut to pick them all up in person. If they find their way to everyone who ordered them we will count it as a very successful fundraiser.

Once again, pickup is at our Avenue A office this Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and if you ordered for home delivery, you should expect them Saturday or Sunday in a brown grocery bag.

If anyone has brown grocery bags to spare, let us know.

And once you have your bulbs, get them in the ground! It's awesome to think that thousands of new flowers will be a-blooming here come spring.

Not one to be outdone, loyal reader and downtown Turners Falls neighbor Edite Cunha is donating part of the proceeds from her ongoing **Avenue A tag sale**, now extended to the coming long weekend, to the paper.

"People are invited to donate items on the MR's behalf," she writes, "but they will need to come pick up anything left over.... [Sales from] anything donated on the MR's behalf goes 100% to the MR."

The tag sale is at 161 Avenue A and will run Saturday, Sunday, and Monday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, though rain is now in the forecast Sunday and Monday. No matter – check it out, and maybe now's the time to unload that terrarium that's been taking up space on your front porch.

Big thanks to Edite... We need all the help we can get!

In Wendell: "The **Farley Road bridge** will be closed for repairs beginning TODAY," the road commission warned on Tuesday. "Farley Road between Mormon Hollow Road and the bridge will be only



Sadie's Bikes hosts regular community rides! Email info@sadiesbikes for updates.

open to local traffic during the repairs, and the bridge will likely remain closed through October. Please plan ahead and use alternate routes."

And, Leverett: "The staging for the Gutter repair has begun," a trustee of the **Rattlesnake Gutter** Trust announces, "and while the construction has not begun, the trucks need access to get the materials, equipment, etc. in place before they start. They have to back down the road from the gate because there is no way to turn around there. PLEASE do not park along the road."

That's all of us warned.

On a similar topic... A couple weeks ago on my way to the middle gate of the Quabbin Reservoir park from this vicinity I cut through to Route 202 using the entire length of **Dudleyville Road** in Leverett, which becomes Montague Road in Shutesbury.

I'd driven along Dudleyville before some, but not since its dysfunctional drainage situation had become such a large public expense, and not since the question of its eventual surface had become a mat-

ter of public debate. I saw the road's dirt in a new light.

There are pros and cons to almost any form of progress or conservation, but I can't think of a much better example of the thing they call *rural character* than a long slow dirt road like that through the trees, and if the people who live on it want to keep it as dirt, something deep in my bones says they should be helped.

Mary Kay Mattiace (who also has a pointed Letter to the Editors on the facing page) stopped by the office this week to show us the info packet she and a couple other Montague residents are sending out to town meeting members this week, making the case for rezoning the **former Farren Hospital property** to encourage dense housing development.

"Today, many residents – from longtime seniors to young adults starting out – struggle to find homes they can afford," the packet points out. "Some move away because the options simply don't exist here."

This is for real. And whatever you may think about luxury condos or low-income apartments, in our world there are two main factors that determine how affordable it is

on average to find shelter in any given place: supply, and demand.

If you own property here and it helps you when its market value rises – if you rent it to tenants, if you borrow against your equity, or if you have plans to sell it and move – it is in your material interest to advertise this area to make it attractive to those who might want to move here, and also to throw up obstacles to the development of new units.

Please don't do either of those things! But if you must do one, please don't do both.

Our colleague **Richie Davis**, who wrote for several decades for the *Recorder*, will read next Tuesday, October 14 at 5:30 p.m. at the Leverett Library from his three collections of features, *Inner Landscapes* (2020), *Good Will and Ice Cream* (2021), and *Flights of Fancy Souls of Grace* (2022).

Ken Washburn, general manager of the Leverett Village Co-op, writes that they will be hosting their annual **Harvest Festival** on Sunday, October 19 from noon to 4 p.m.

"Come celebrate the season with local live music, a Buckingham Rabbits Vintage pop-up, great food, a community-wide tag sale, vendors, Big River Chestnuts, Duckworld, wine tasting, fairy hair, and more," Ken writes.

Fairy hair? Whatever that is, I'm there. The rain date is Sunday, November 2.

Blind item: While it's incredible that Mr. Bush turned 99 on Wednesday (see Page A6), another lifelong Turners Falls resident is **turning 100 on Thursday!**

She graciously declined the offer of an interview, but please know that she exists, and please think about what she has seen here in her time.

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

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MONTAGUE REPORTER
ON
Okay, this one is good!

At left: Greenfield reader Ellen Villani brought our September 4 edition with her to First Encounter Beach in Eastham, Mass.

But check this out:

At right, that's our own business manager Garth Shaneyfelt, wielding a horseshoe crab and wrapped in the second section of the same edition – on the beach at Yarmouth! So that week's paper made it to beaches on both sides of the Cape.

THE
BEACH!
Submitted Photos
Going somewhere?
Send photos to editor@montaguereporter.org
This is actually extremely cool.

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LEVERETT from page A1

he said, and the situation is further complicated by inflation. He added that property taxes increasing more quickly than inflation threatens the “character” of the towns, making it difficult to attract new residents and retain old ones.

Weiss said he wants the group to analyze the impacts of declining enrollment and to help improve communication between the towns and regional school committee (RSC), though it has yet to meet with the RSC.

Tim Shores, Leverett’s representative to the RSC, laid out a number of problems he said have exacerbated budget difficulties in recent years, including turnover in the school committee and administration. He noted that all RSC seats are coming up for election, and that at least two members do not plan to return.

Lawsuits have contributed to the budget problem, Shores said, with the district being deemed “high risk” and forced to find a more expensive insurance provider.

Shores described structural problems he said hamper the budget process. According to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), the role of a school committee is to set rules, policies, and goals; hire and evaluate a superintendent; and approve an annual budget at the level of “cost centers.”

The district’s more “granular”

budget process is out of compliance, Shores said, and MASC has recommended a “more efficient and properly scoped way of sharing governance” between the RSC and superintendent.

Shores said the RSC’s “first priority” in reforming the process is “the strategic restoration of the superintendent’s office,” giving superintendent E. Xiomara Herman the support and authority she needs to carry out the district’s goals.

As of last year, Shores reported, there were a total of 199 school-age children in Leverett, of whom 98 attend Leverett Elementary School, 77 the regional middle and high school, and 14 charter, vocational, or other schools. The total enrollment at the regional school is 1,182, including 862 students from Amherst.

Selectboard chair Patricia Duffy commented that the working group is making an effort to repair the relationship between the RSC and the towns, which has “seemed not great for a long time,” but acknowledged that the RSC has had a “super-enormous amount of issues on its plate.”

Shores said he perceived a level of mistrust of other groups on the part of some members of the RSC, and that he was advocating for more “open-mindedness,” but “the match hasn’t struck yet.”

Board member Tom Hankinson said a “kernel of progress” was needed. Shores responded that the

kernel was collaboration, but that the parties would be problem-solving for years to come.

Comprehensive Plan

Planning board chair Greg Tuzolo asked the selectboard to endorse a “working group” that would help “facilitate, guide, and catalyze” the implementation of Leverett’s year-old comprehensive plan.

The planning board feels that a group of “champions,” would be more efficient than a new committee, as it would not need to observe open meeting laws but could facilitate dialogue and communication between various boards and committees on aspects of the plan in their areas of responsibility.

Shores, also a planning board member, said that fellow member Gary Gruber, who first suggested the idea, hoped the selectboard would “shine a brighter beacon, as if from a lighthouse, summoning the good people of Leverett with greater influence than the planning board possesses” to put the plan into practice.

The selectboard endorsed the formation of an implementation group, though Hankinson said the group could be named the “comprehensive plan agitators,” a suggestion he credited to town clerk Lisa Stratford.

Other Business

The selectboard tentatively set

a date of Tuesday, November 4 for a special town meeting to vote on \$4.2 million toward a roof project at the ARPS middle school, following the news last month that a grant to cover the remainder of the \$10 million project had been awarded.

A warrant has not yet been drafted for the meeting, and other articles may still be added.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis reported that a contract has been finalized with Ludlow Construction for work on the Dudleyville Road drainage project, and that public notice will go out once a date to begin is set.

Residents can contact her at any time with comments or questions, she added, but will have an opportunity to do so at an upcoming selectboard meeting.

The board awarded a contract to assess the condition of the Field Library building to Eric Gredoi, provided he signs a waiver not to sue the town if he is injured during the work.

The board reported that a third candidate for fire chief will be interviewed in the near future. Interim fire chief Amy Rice plans to retire in March.

The selectboard offered condolences to the family of Sara Robinson. Duffy said Robinson was a prominent member of the community who volunteered for many committees and “did a lot for the town.”



OP ED

Reflection: *What Is a Father?*

By JASON GONZALES

GREENFIELD – *What is a father? Is it someone who shows up part-time? Or only when they believe it matters?*

Some fathers think that only showing up at key moments matters more to a child, rather than being there any and every chance they get. I understand the sacrifice it takes when it comes to supporting your children, and I believe it is worth the effort to ensure your child doesn’t have an absent father.

Easy and fast money has always been my go-to, but now my daughter sits at home wondering where I am and asking me if I can come home. How do I tell her that I put her in the same position my father put me in all these years ago?

Moments like these bring me back to my experience several years ago, when I was sitting in the visiting room at Ludlow, looking through the bulletproof glass at a man. A man who looked baffled to see the son he had tried running away from now sitting across from him.

Thinking of this always brings me back to my first question: *What is a father?*

I can’t let these circumstances now define me as a father; I can still make an impact, I just need to understand I’m not living for myself anymore. Life is about risk-taking, yes, but not every risk is beneficial, especially when the physical time is taken away from your kid.

This is the cycle that at this moment defines my life. Being incarcerated, I had many people tell me not to stress about being a father because my daughter won’t remember all these years. But what about my memories? Why couldn’t I be there for my baby girl growing up? Right now, a lot of these questions have no answers, but to find these answers, I need to start looking at the heart and understanding the type of father I needed growing up.

What is a father? The question runs through my head all day, with no escape or solution. The type of father I had growing up only looked for me if it made him look better or if I looked for him first. There was no consistency or communication even now. Nothing is ever good enough with him, and all I ever get reminded of is what

a failure I am, no matter how hard he sees I’m trying. I’m more or less alone and stuck trying to figure out my life and how to be a better father, so my daughter never feels how I feel ever!

I try my hardest to let my daughter know I’m still around; communication and consistency are key. It makes me feel at least I’m trying. My daughter is no burden or setback; she is an extension of me, and I want her to be better than I ever will be. Having a kid is almost like planting a seed. You can’t just plant a seed and expect it to blossom into a beautiful flower with no help. You need to give it all your care and guidance, nurturing it to the best version of itself it can ever be.

But life is strange. If you don’t have anything, how can you ever expect to support your child? I used to think the world revolves around money, but I now see that happiness is a virtue that many people fail to experience. It’s something my kid would want rather than me risking my freedom just to make sure she is dressed better or has more toys than the next kid.

Me being there is worth more than anything money can buy. I need to understand I don’t live for myself anymore, and that started the day her mother and I found out about her. I have to learn to stop hating myself for not being there and just work on being better than I ever was. Because even if I don’t have anyone, that’s not the case with her, because she will always have me, she won’t ever feel how I felt growing up. I can’t let that be.

Mothers got so accustomed to saying a father can be anyone, and I don’t agree, but that’s not their fault; it’s ours. We’re the ones who walk out, or take unnecessary risks, when being present or just supporting their needs more than their wants matters most.

All I wanted growing up was that fatherly love or that support, someone who didn’t give up and who always looked for me when it felt like no one was. I spent a lot of my life alone, trying to fill a void my parents left: drugs, alcohol, and money were the only things that numbed the loneliness and emptiness. I never understood at first, but after having my beautiful baby girl I understand everything I ever felt. I understand now how I grew up wasn’t normal, nor was it my fault.

So, *what is a father?* A father is a child’s superhero, so whether your cape is ripped or not, your child only sees the “S” across your chest. Start being more attentive and interested in your child, and realize your presence is what matters most to them. It’s okay to be your kid’s best friend; listen and pay attention to every little detail, even if the conversation is just straight up gibberish. But also remember, you have to be that authoritative parent to set your child right in life, ensuring their success in life.

Without any type of role model in my life, it’s hard to explain how to be a better father, but when I think about it and really listen to my heart, I just know I’ve got to be everything he wasn’t. And seeing the way my mom was talked down to, knowing she tried her best without any man helping to raise me, until it eventually made her self-destruct and lose herself in the process, I now see we have got to start respecting the mothers and give them their flowers for stepping up and picking up the slack we leave behind.

The way the world is now, it’s like we’re trying to grow roses out of concrete. But with us as fathers, anything is possible, giving our children hope so they can prove the world wrong against all odds, keeping their dreams alive.

I’ll always push my daughter to be great; she’s a shooting star that blessed me the moment her tiny eyes stared back at me. I need to be better, we all do. Children need fathers, and it’s on us to raise the next generation with love so they don’t live through the pain we experienced.

As a father, I can’t give up on myself, because who has my daughter got then? We got this. Just open your eyes and realize.

This article was written for The Light, a newsletter by Franklin County Jail and House of Correction (FCSO) residents.

Some of the writers join The Light already devoted to writing, while others discover love for writing through their participation. The students engage in process-oriented work to create stories and art, including personal essays, op-eds, recipes, poems, research articles, and other explorations of interest to them and their peers, coalescing into a new issue every eight to 10 weeks.

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REGION from page A1

Kinsella’s critiques without naming her. An updated calculation this week by the board’s consultants, the Abrahams Group, had found the payroll costs “actually reduced slightly,” he informed officials.

“Unfortunately, claiming the assessment calculation should include a \$350,000 increase was not helpful and not accurate,” he wrote. “It is also not helpful for someone to state that ‘the Planning Board is setting our towns up for disaster.’ Such hyperbole doesn’t create an atmosphere of meaningful and constructive dialogue.”

Genovese added that the STRPB planned to respond to feedback by making the town selectboards, not the existing school committees, responsible for appointing the transitional school committee.

Reached for comment on Thursday, STRPB secretary Greg Snedeker, a member of the Gill selectboard, said Kinsella had made “pretty bad mistakes” in her public argument, and expressed frustration at the timing of her intervention.

“I sent out two years of invitations to her to join us in our meetings and participate in conversations, and

she chose not to,” he told the *Reporter*. “Now she’s making hasty accusations which aren’t true.”

Snedeker said Kinsella’s understanding of how the two districts’ salary scales would be merged was incorrect, and that the Abrahams Group’s new estimate projected a roughly \$120,000 increase – but that the 2023 analysis had in fact built in a projection of a \$200,000 increase, so the update had actually resulted in assessments “approximately \$79,000” lower than before.

“The only thing required by Mass. law is that a teacher doesn’t make less than what they’re making,” he said. “She kind of moved all those teachers up and gave them these raises, which is not how the statute works.”

As for the transition funding, Snedeker said consultants from the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools had calculated a \$1.9 million cost for the switch to the new district, and that the towns’ representatives on Beacon Hill have been in discussion with STRPB members about an earmark, but have pointed out that they “can’t know where the towns stand until they vote.”

Because of this chicken-and-egg

problem, Snedeker said, the warrant articles drafted by the STRPB for voters in the six towns to weigh in would explicitly make the formation of the new district contingent on the state funding.

“If the state does not fund this, then the districts revert back to their original composition,” he said. “It puts it squarely on the state.... It’s like she doesn’t understand the politics of this.”

In his letter to the towns, Genovese said the STRPB “will continue our current outreach efforts to inform the public, answer questions and respond to concerns.”

The official outreach schedule includes public forums at the Gill-Montague senior center tonight, Thursday, October 9 at 6 p.m.; in Northfield next Saturday morning, October 18, at 10 a.m.; and in the Turners Falls High School auditorium the following Tuesday, October 21 at 6 p.m.

The STRPB is meeting remotely next Tuesday, October 14 at 6:30 p.m., and Snedeker said planning board members have been invited to join the following Gill-Montague school committee meeting on October 28.



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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
MONTAGUE PLANNING BOARD

The Montague Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 28, 2025 in the Town Hall Annex, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and via Zoom to review a Special Permit request filed by **Veaceslav Falceanu** to allow the construction of two 4-unit multi-family buildings, on an approximate 0.918-acre lot, to be split into two separate lots, under Sections 5.2.9(b)iii, 5.3, and 9.2 of the Zoning Bylaw, located at **11 Tenth Street (Assessor’s Map/Parcel 03-0-048)** Historic Industrial (HI) Zoning District. Remote meeting login information and the filing is available for review at www.montague-ma.gov/calendar.

APIARY from page A1

with the University of Vermont and Cornell University to make bees genetically resistant to diseases and more adaptable to climate change.

Roell and Kline had been operating a second beekeeping site in Fairview, North Carolina, allowing them to extend the bee-producing season from five to eight months. Unfortunately, Hurricane Helene destroyed the 25-acre vegetable farm where they kept bees in September 2024.

“After the hurricane you couldn’t even tell there was a farm there,” said Roell.

They applied for funds from the federal Emergency Livestock Relief Program under the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and were able to get a reimbursement check in April for equipment and a percentage of the bees that were lost. They’ve also received part of a \$30,000 USDA grant to write and publish free educational materials on how to maintain bees over the winter in New England.

But the uncertainty surrounding other USDA grants has left other plans up in the air. The pair has been planning to travel around the United States over the next three years to collect germplasm from different subspecies of bees and send the specimens off for cryopreservation at the USDA’s National Laboratory for Genetic Resources Preservation in Fort Collins, Colorado. But due to the recent government shutdown, the \$100,000 grant to support the work is in limbo.

Producing about 1,200 pounds of honey a year had been a secondary business for They Keep Bees, but Roell and Kline are now in the process of ramping up honey and wax production to produce more income now that they only have five months a year to breed queen bees. They produce a light summer wildflower honey and a fall wildflower honey that’s darker in color.

In 2023 they planted rows of chestnut trees on their modest Montague farm, and last year they added rows of pawpaw and Asian pear trees, elderberries, and aronia to diversity their operation. The chestnut trees bloom in late July, a time when their bees need a healthy supply of nectar.

The uncertainty of the federal grant for cryopreservation is just the most recent roadblock, as the Trump administration froze many USDA grants to farmers across the country in the spring while subjecting them to further review. Roell and Kline are understandably worried about the impacts of severe weather events as well as the loss of productive farmland to urban sprawl, concerns that have turned the pair into political advocates in their spare time.

On Monday, they invited state senator Jo Comerford to their apiary along with Sunderland-based Benneth Phelps of the non-profit group The Carrot Project, which helps farmers gain access to capital and financial planning to help make them more resilient to natural disasters. The group gathered under a tent

to shade them from the unseasonably hot sun.

“We have to decide what grants we should apply for – and is it worth our time?” observed Roell.

“And will it ever show up?” chimed in Kline.

“There’s just the two of us, and we wear all the hats,” Roell explained. “We were always told to go for USDA grants, but when the cards start collapsing, what do you spend your time on?”

The conversation touched on methods for helping family farms build resiliency into their financial plans, how to help farmers with risk assessment and succession planning, and how to encourage infill in villages rather than watch sprawl consume productive agricultural land.

Phelps noted that family farms without clear succession plans are most likely to become developed with residential housing, and that fruit farmers are particularly vulnerable to severe climate events. She explained that the Biden administration had shifted federal agriculture policy to include a focus on smaller farms and regional food systems – a policy largely abandoned by the current administration.

While Comerford came to listen to her constituents – and sample some fresh chestnuts – she urged Roell, Kline, and Phelps to submit their ideas in virtual testimony to the Joint Committee on Agriculture, which is currently reviewing a new farm bill at the statehouse.



A queen bee takes off from Bi Kline’s hand.

“We need to do more when it comes to building resiliency into family farms,” said Comerford. “That’s really important.”

Phelps said that farmers are busy with all the various jobs that face them on a daily and seasonal basis, but that long-term financial planning can help weather the setbacks brought on by severe climate events.

“We try to help them leverage the peak years to survive the bad ones,” she said. “You want to be in a proactive position rather than on your back foot.”

Roell agreed.

“We were on our back foot when the hurricane hit North Carolina,” she said. “Getting disaster relief takes time, and you need to be well-positioned to spend it wisely when it finally comes.”

Roell and Kline met when both were teaching English in South Korea and continued their relationship while teaching grade school in the Boston area. Roell became interested in farming during a school project reclaiming urban lands for community gardens. Both agreed that their personalities are a good fit for the constant attention and the wide variety of tasks associated with beekeeping, teaching, and farming.

“It’s a lifestyle choice – looking for and engaging with complex systems – and what is nature but a complex system?” Roell observed.

“There are constantly new problems every day,” Kline added, “and different things to hyper-focus on.”

More information on queen bees, classes, mentorship, and buying honey can be found at theykeepbees.com.



GAGNON PHOTO

Roell and Kline are ramping up honey production at their Montague farm this year in an effort to offset income lost to government and climate disasters.

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SPORTS from page A1

quarter when Ware crossed the goal line to go ahead 7-0. Then the Eagles fumbled the ball away on their very next play, gifting the Indians a golden opportunity, but again their defense shut down the visitors.

The game remained a 7-0 affair until the second quarter, when Nolan Stafford picked off a pass, setting up Tech's first score. It wasn't easy. The Eagles marched down the field but faced a fourth-and-5 from the Indian 40. They gained just about the five yards they needed.

"They must have made it," someone from the crowd yelled as the sticks were brought in.

"They need it," someone else added.

Fortunately for the Eagles and their fan base, the tip of the ball had just cleared the first-down standard, and the drive continued. Seven plays later, Mason Bassett completed a pass to Cole Bassett in the end zone to narrow the margin to a point.

This brought up a side-line debate: Coach Joe Gamache could either kick the extra point to tie it up, or go for the two-point conversion to take the lead. He decided to go for the 2-PAT, and the crowd supported his decision even though it failed.

In the third quarter, Maxon Brunette scored to make it 12-7, and this time the two-point attempt succeeded, giving Tech a 14-7 lead.

In the fourth, Ware completed a 55-yard pass to make it 14-13. The kick failed, and the Eagles found themselves clinging to a single-point lead. On Franklin's next possession, though, a fake punt failed, giving the ball back to Ware on their own 41; six plays later, the Indians scored on a screen pass.

Once again the extra point failed, and with 5:16 left to play, the Eagles were behind 19-14. After they were unable to convert on a fourth down, Ware got the ball back and scored once more to make it 27-14 at game's end.

Mason Bassett completed 11 passes for 111 yards, an interception, and a touchdown, and rushed for a two-point conversion. Cole Bassett, Levi Dunn, Jaxon Silva, and Brunette were his targets.

Brunette and Nathan Sabolevski were Tech's top ball-carriers with 76 and 44 yards respectively, followed by Stafford, Jared Currier, Mason Bassett, Justin Lent, and Brady Gancarz.

On defense, Lent led the team with six solo tackles, Stafford made two interceptions and patted away two passes, Landon Smead picked off one pass and knocked another away, Samuel Bodenstein deflected a pass, and Sabolevski chased the Ware quarterback 17 yards before sacking him. On special teams, Joseph DiSciullo kicked off three times for 112 yards and punted three times for 95.

The Eagles will attempt to right their ship this Thursday against the Green Wave in Greenfield.

Cross Country

On Wednesday, the Turners cross-country team competed against Mahar on the Bob Avery course in the woods behind the JV baseball diamond. No team scores were awarded, but individual athletes competed in four heats on two courses.

In the varsity boys' heat, Lucian Carlo placed second with a time of 19.29 and Lucas Edmonds finished ninth in 30.06.

Olivia Wolbach was the only runner in the girls' varsity heat,



Top left: Turners Falls's Autumn Thornton goes up to spike the ball against the visiting Mahar Senators during Tuesday night's home game, which Turners won in four sets.

Lower left: Franklin Tech quarterback Mason Bassett looks for his receiver during last Thursday's game as Ware's Enrique Burton closes in.

Top right: George F. Bush, a former student, athlete, teacher, and coach at Turners Falls High School, is congratulated by volleyball player Kaiya Adams on the eve of his 99th birthday. Mr. Bush was celebrated during Tuesday night's home game against Mahar game with cake and a rendition of "Happy Birthday" by the crowd.

Lower right: TFHS science teacher Brian Lamore presents Mr. Bush with a "99" trophy, signed by well-wishers.

breaking the tape in 23.22, while Nova Gallup was the only girl who competed in the JV race, completing the shortened course in 22.25.

Soccer

FCTS 2 – Athol 1

Tech's hybrid girls' soccer team came from behind on Monday night to edge out the Athol Red Bears.

Red scored first, but Tech tied it when Carly Walsh fed the ball to Faythe Sobieski who kicked it into the net. Sobieski and Layla Hammond then led an Eagle attack, and Mady Lynde finished it up to score the winning point.

Shayly Martin made seven saves in goal.

Golf

FCTS 154 – Pioneer 184
McCann 152 – TFHS 194
TFHS 177 – Mohawk 179
FCTS 157 – Smith Voc 176
Westfield Tech 150 – TFHS 185
FCTS 159 – Mohawk 190

Last Thursday the Franklin Tech boys defeated Pioneer at the Northfield Golf Course. Grady Deery (35), Jack Day (39), Braeden Talbot (40), and Mason Vassar (40) swept the top four places for Tech.

That same afternoon, the Turners Falls linksmen traveled to For-

rest Park Country Club in North Adams, where they were bested by the McCann Green Hornets. Cam Cogswell led Blue with a 42, followed by Liam Kerivan, Ethan Eichorn, and William Tyler.

On Monday the Blue Thunder traveled to Greenfield Country Club and defeated the Mohawk Trail Warriors for their third win of the season. This time Ethan Eichorn led the squad with a 41, followed by Cogswell (42), Andrew Eichorn (42), and Kerivan (47).

Tech, meanwhile, were hosting the Smith Vocational Vikings at Thomas Memorial. In this one Deery (35), Day (36), and Talbot (37) again swept the top three spots, with Vassar (43) coming in fifth.

On Tuesday both teams wrapped up their regular season. The Thunder golfers lost to Westfield Tech at home, with Kerivan and Ethan Eichorn each shooting 45, and Franklin also earned a win against Mohawk at Greenfield Country Club to cruise to a 13–3 record.

Field Hockey

FCTS 4 – Palmer 0
FCTS 1 – Hampshire 0

In field hockey last Friday, the Sticking Eagles of Franklin Tech traveled to Palmer and shut out the

Panthers 4-nil. Cammy Jacques, Talia Pederzini, Amelia Rider, and Kailley Steiner scored Tech's goals, and Teagan Donahue added an assist.

On Monday, the Eagles beat Hampshire in a home game. Donahue hit the ball to Abi Dobias, who slapped it into the net for the only score of the game.

Goalie Redyn Gutierrez made two saves to preserve the shutout.

Volleyball

TFHS 3 – Mohawk 1

On Tuesday night the Turners Falls volleyballers defeated the visiting Mahar Senators 3-1, improving their season record to 8–5.

It was the Open House Extravaganza at the high school and middle school, so teachers and students who don't usually attend games were in attendance. One special man who would soon enter his 100th year on the planet was sitting in his regular seat, cheering on his team.

The four matches were all hard-fought, and as the players jostled for every point the crowd chanted and cheered them on. When Power-town won the first match 25-17, the parents and grandparents did their usual "Here we go, Turners, here we go" chant, and when they won the second 25-20, one of the moth-

ers called out "We're back!" in her best Poltergeist impression.

But the Senators did not go away. The Mahar students in the far bleachers came up with dueling chants as the visitors took the third match 25-22 to make it 2 to 1. The fourth match was all Blue, though, and Turners took it 25-19. And as the teams shook hands, the older folks in the center section clapped and chanted, "Way to go, Turners, way to go."

Maddie Dietz ended up with one kill, one block, three digs, 11 assists, and five aces; Janelle Massey made nine kills, two digs, and four aces; and Jakhia Williams five kills and four blocks. Shelby Beck made one kill, three digs, and four aces; Abigail Moffatt 16 digs and four aces; and Maddie Haight two kills, one dig, three assists, and an ace.

But the night was not over.

After things settled down, athletic director Jen Luciano announced that Mr. George F. Bush would be turning 99 on Wednesday. The whole gym erupted in cheers and applause, and Mr. Bush humbly accepted the accolades as everyone sang Happy Birthday to him.

Happy birthday, Mr. Bush. May you have many more.



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MONTAGUE from page A1

representative town meetings, such as Montague, to join a new region must be held at least 35 days and at most 50 days after formal “receipt” of the regional agreement. The Montague selectboard had originally scheduled an election on Tuesday, November 18, but the STRPB will not meet until next Tuesday evening, October 14, and Ramsey said he doubted the text would be finalized on that date.

“I know last week I was telling people to hold [November 18] for a special election,” Ramsey said. “For now, I don’t think we’re going to meet that deadline.” He recommended that the board “put this on pause.”

Selectboard member Marina Goldman asked whether the other five towns in the proposed district – Gill, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick – which would vote on the regional agreement at their open town meetings, would be affected by the delay.

“It will affect everyone,” said Ramsey. “My apologies, I wish I had more information for you.”

“It’s okay, you didn’t write it,” responded selectboard chair Matt Lord.

Multiple attempts to reach Genovese this week were unsuccessful.

Apartheid Question

In a related development, the board approved the warrant for the special town meeting on Wednesday, October 22, whose 16 articles were read aloud in their entirety by Lord. Several of the articles had been rearranged since the draft the board had discussed the previous week.

A citizen-petitioned article that would declare Montague an “apartheid-free community” in response to Israel’s treatment of the Palestinian people remained at the end of the agenda, despite the request of one supporter last week to move it up.

Ramsey said he had discussed the issue with town meeting moderator Elizabeth Irving, who “felt very strongly” about maintaining the tradition of placing petitioned articles at the warrant’s end.

Ramsey said town meeting moderator Elizabeth Irving, “felt very strongly” about maintaining the tradition of placing petitioned articles at the warrant’s end.

There was a brief discussion of the apartheid article, with Ramsey saying the resolution would not bind the town to any specific policies and Lord responding that he thought it was “a shame that you would say that, Walter, because the goal of this is certainly to change some policies and practices.”

Land Conserved

Town planner Maureen Pollock requested that the board endorse a conservation restriction on two pieces of property owned by Elinor Wright on either side of Old Sunderland Road, at the intersection of Fosters Road and across from Falls Farm. The restriction limits the amount of development that may occur on the 31 acres “in perpetuity,” according to Pollock, and grants oversight powers to the Franklin Land Trust of Shelburne Falls.

The 24-page conservation restriction document includes lists of prohibited and allowed uses, enforced by periodic inspections by the land trust. For example, animal husbandry and horticulture are allowed, but must be accompanied by a “farm conservation plan” approved by the trust. Income-generating solar arrays are prohibited, but solar power to support other permitted uses is allowed with the trust’s prior approval.

Pollock was accompanied by Liam Cregen, a land conservation specialist from the land trust, and by Wright. Cregen said that a five-acre field on the property is being farmed by Mount Toby Farms in support of its dairy operation. He said the land trust was interested in supporting this use, as well as preserving Cranberry Pond Brook, which flows through the property before joining the Connecticut River.

Joining the conversation very briefly, Wright stated cryptically that given “what’s going on across the street, I treasure having a quiet, conserved area on the other side.”

The property’s neighbor, Falls Farm, is under a consent order from the state Department of Environmental Protection after extensive land-clearing was determined last year to be the cause of runoff and erosion.

Draining & Pumping

Assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller discussed the town’s strategy for applying for grants from a new state grant program called Environment and Climate One Stop. He said this was a “bundle of programs” which municipalities could apply for with a single application.

Noting that the state had rejected Montague’s application for the repair of a culvert under Meadow Road last year, but had provided positive feedback, Nolan-Zeller suggested filing an “expression of interest” for the same project by the October 28 deadline.

“Great, let’s do it,” said Lord, after a long silence emanated from the board.

Nolan-Zeller also discussed a potential change order for the project to replace the screw pumps at the Clean Water Facility following the discovery of “severely corroded rebar” inside the pump station building. He suggested the town could issue a “work change directive” until the additional cost is known. He estimated it would be about \$15,000, which would fall well within the project’s contingency fund.

Theater Operation

The board approved a 10-year lease agreement with the Shea Theater Arts Center, Inc. (STAC), which will begin on January 1, for the operation of the town-owned Shea Theater. Ramsey introduced the discussion by saying that the Shea had an option in its existing 10-year lease, approved by town meeting, to enter into a new agreement. The existing lease, he pointed out, is actually between STAC and a town entity known as the Civic Center Commission, which no longer exists.

Selectboard member Rich Kulewicz asked if there could be “any capital items that might be anticipated” during the new lease.

Ramsey said the theater’s roof has been repaired and a new HVAC installed. “We still have not figured out how to make the stage accessi-

ble,” he said. “That might involve some municipal funds.”

Personnel Dept.

Wearing their personnel board caps, the selectboard members appointed former town clerk Deb Bourbeau to the Montague Housing Authority for a term of four years and eight months. Housing authority director Bellamine Dickerman, who had made the request, could not explain the complex issue due to technical problems with Zoom, so that task fell to Lord.

Lord said that as he understood it, this was actually a state-appointed seat which had not been filled since 1999, so the selectboard could now legally appoint Bourbeau.

Lord said this was actually a state-appointed seat which had not been filled since 1999, so the selectboard could now legally appoint Bourbeau.

Ramsey said the process as described by Lord “had been confirmed with the state,” and the board unanimously appointed Bourbeau.

At the request of Turners Falls municipal airport manager Bryan Camden, the board hired a Franklin County Technical School student, Ray Dyer, to work at grounds maintenance for 40 hours “biweekly,” at a rate of \$16.50 per hour.

The board approved three-year contracts with the police patrol officers’ and detectives’ union, Local 183, and the sergeants’ union, Local 184, both sections of the New England Police Benevolent Association.

Other Business

Orice Jenkins of Música Franklin, a free after-school music program for Franklin County students, requested an entertainment license for a “Fun Fest” in Unity Park next May. The board approved this request, along with a request for a one-day beer and wine license for a “dumb supper ritual,” in the words of Jason Cohen, on November 1 at the Montague Retreat Center.

Tickets to the dinner and dance event are available online for \$120 each, not including fees.

A three-year agreement with the energy company Constellation to supply electricity to the town at a much reduced rate was approved. Ramsey said the company was a “vetted partner” of the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

Ramsey reminded the board that a pre-town meeting event will be held next Wednesday, October 15 at 6 p.m. The first half hour, he said, would be an orientation for new town meeting members, and at 6:30 “we will walk through the warrant.”

The board retired into an executive session in order, according to the agenda, to “conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel: next Police Chief.” At the previous week’s meeting the board had voted to offer the position to Greenfield police lieutenant Jason Haskins. Reached for comment, Lord told the *Reporter* that the negotiations were “not a big deal.”

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, October 20.



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was on October 8, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Pipeline Legal Challenges Ahead

With 16 new members and 21 articles to cover, the Montague special town meeting of October 1 lasted over three hours. The most controversial items involved two appropriations to fund legal work involving the proposed natural gas pipeline.

Article 13 proposed spending \$20,000 on “technical assistance and legal representation” before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. It passed on a strong vote, with even some pipeline supporters voting yes, after the amount was reduced to \$13,750.

Article 14 would spend \$10,000

on legal challenges to the project. Resident Ariel Elan explained that challenging a contract between the pipeline company and Berkshire Gas at the state level could be a strategy to stop the project. This was sharply criticized by pipeline supporters, and even questioned by some opponents.

They Said It Would Never Happen...

On Tuesday, having installed a drainage system, workers graded the site of Turners Falls’ Unity Skate Park, the culmination of 18 years of tireless advocacy by area youth and adults. The park’s construction is backed by a combination of state, town, and privately raised funds, and it should be ready to ride later this fall.

20 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on October 6, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Gill Fire to Get Radios, Camera, Intercoms

Fire chief Gene Beaubien informed the Gill selectboard the town has received a \$52,918 grant from FEMA and will split another \$12,000 grant from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments with the police department.

Beaubien’s department will receive a combined total of \$58,113, of which \$45,703 will be spent on radios and the balance for a thermal imaging camera. Now everyone in the department will be able to monitor communications with the dispatch center, and the fire trucks

will be equipped with intercoms.

Bumpy Streetscape Project

On Monday the Montague selectboard heard from Millers Falls residents with plenty to say about the village’s streetscape project.

James Senn of Dry Hill Road came with a petition outlining his objections, shared, he said, by nearly everyone he had spoken to. The bump-outs from the sidewalks are traffic hazards, snow plowing will be more difficult, and the loss of parking makes the project seem anti-business, he said: “It looks nice on paper, but it’s not practical.”

Following Senn, another petition was presented, but in support of the ongoing efforts to beautify that community.

150 YEARS AGO

Here’s the way it was on October 6, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

The river has risen a foot or so. The turkeys are doing their best to get fat.

The Montague paper company have started up ten of their pulp machines.

Peter Farwell has sold his pet horse to D.C.G. Fields of Montague City.

The wife of Ferryman Jones died very suddenly, while visiting Deerfield last week.

One of Dibble & Potter’s teams drew a load of coal weighing 3100 pounds from their coal sheds, up the hill yesterday. A good load for one horse.

No one appearing against Eli Carpenter for attempting to shoot his wife, he was fined only for drunkenness, in the sum of \$10.

The tower at the north end of

the Griswold mill has been carried up a story higher than the main structure. The timbers for the roof are being placed in position.

The epizootic is prevalent among the horses in town now, although it has not affected them as severely as in former years. People have now learned how to treat the distemper.

The old road leading to the suspension bridge from Canal street is not closed by a fence or anything, and is a trap for strangers to drive into the canal on dark nights.

The dance at Colle Hall Saturday evening was attended by over fifty couples, and was in every way a success.

The Athol Transcript doesn’t know exactly the difference between amateur and professional in base ball matters. No matter how much Mr. Merrill declares that he is only an amateur, it is a fact that he received a stated salary for play with a club, and at one time made base ball his sole business.



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GILL from page A1

Montague's. Gill will pay FirstLight back nearly \$69,000 as "overpayment" for the previous four years' taxes. Moving forward, FirstLight will pay the town \$173,000 in place of property tax. That number will grow by 0.75% each year for the next nine years, an amount that the finance committee warrant note warned "may be less than the rate of inflation and/or the increase to the average residential tax bill."

"I feel that we were forced between a rock and a hard place," said finance committee chair Claire Chang. "There are several parts of the agreement that are distasteful at best."

"I felt like the town was negotiating with the gun to our heads, and didn't really get a say," agreed selectboard member John Ward.

In its notes on the meeting warrant, the finance committee wrote that the agreement will avoid the costs of revaluation appraisals and ensuing litigation for the next decade. However, the town "will be faced with making difficult choices between cuts to town services and asking residential property owners to shoulder more of the tax burden."

The fin com's notes concluded: "With Erving's loss already on record, it is highly unlikely Gill would prevail. While we appreciate the value of good attorneys, the Town can find better ways to spend taxpayers' money than fighting an unwinnable case."

Temporary Assessor

Before the town meeting, the selectboard met to discuss interim assessor plans and deal with some troublesome roofs.

The board approved an offer to

Diane Sumrall, the town's former primary assessor, to work up to 16 hours a week at \$35 an hour until a new employee is hired and trained.

"This is Week Two without anybody in the assessing office, which is quite alarming to me," said board of assessors member Pamela Lester.

Selectboard chair Charles Garbiel said he wasn't comfortable with the proposed pay rate. "We just gave her a 19% raise. Now we're asking for another 13% in the same year." He expressed concern that this could be a back-door effort for Sumrall to return, with the full pay raise that town meeting voted down earlier this year.

Ward added: "There have been asks, and those asks have been granted. And there have been more asks, and they have been granted. And now she's left, and she's asking for more, and they're being granted."

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker joined Ward in approving the offer, while Garbiel voted against it. "You guys are too nice," Garbiel muttered to his colleagues after the meeting's close.

Roof & Ceiling Risks

The Riverside municipal building has a leaky roof. A rainstorm in late September left a damp patch in the ceiling. "Lord knows we needed the rain, but didn't need it right over that building," said town administrator Ray Purington.

Ray Steele and Robert Perry, founding members of the volunteer fix-it crew "The Grayhaired Club," investigated further. They suggested tarping the leak to buy some time and putting in a second attic access point closer to the problem area.

Perry said the building "kind

of looks like it's covered in potato chips," as the asphalt shingles flake and fall off. All present agreed the building needed to be fully re-roofed, but no concrete plans were discussed.

An LED light fixture started a fire in the ceiling of a classroom at Gill Elementary last Thursday, October 2. Custodian Wayne Eckert quickly put the fire out. "Without his response, it would have been a lot worse," said Purington. The classroom was expected to be usable by the following day.

Purington said the big question on everyone's mind was "What about the other light fixtures?" He said the town's insurance company was helping to address that concern.

Other Business

To continue paying for a new fire responder, the selectboard approved awarding a one-year bond anticipation note for \$94,000 to BankESB, at an interest rate of 3.9%.

This is the second of three years of borrowing for the vehicle. Treasurer Peter Turban said the town is paying off \$47,000 of the loan each year. For the final year of payment, Turban said he hoped there would either be lower interest rates, or an abundance of free cash allowing the town to pay off the debt early.

One item on the agenda, schedule a special town meeting in November to vote on a proposed six-town regional school district, was tabled (see article, Page A1).

Snedeker, who also serves as secretary of the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board, said he would know more after Tuesday about when the new district agreement might be recommended to the towns.



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Montague Community Television News

When Searching For Videos

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – If you've been curious what the Montague planning board has been up to, now is the time to check our Vimeo page! All the monthly meetings since April have now been added to our digital archive. You will see them immediately when you click on the "Videos" tab on our website, Montaguetelevision.org.

If you don't see what you are looking for, you can always click the tiny magnifying glass that appears under the MCTV header on Vimeo. Beware of using the "search" box at the top – if you type your search

there, you will be searching *all* of Vimeo, and not just the MCTV collection.

If you are specifically looking for meetings, you can find folders directing you to all of our archived Montague and Gill selectboard meetings, past and present.

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!

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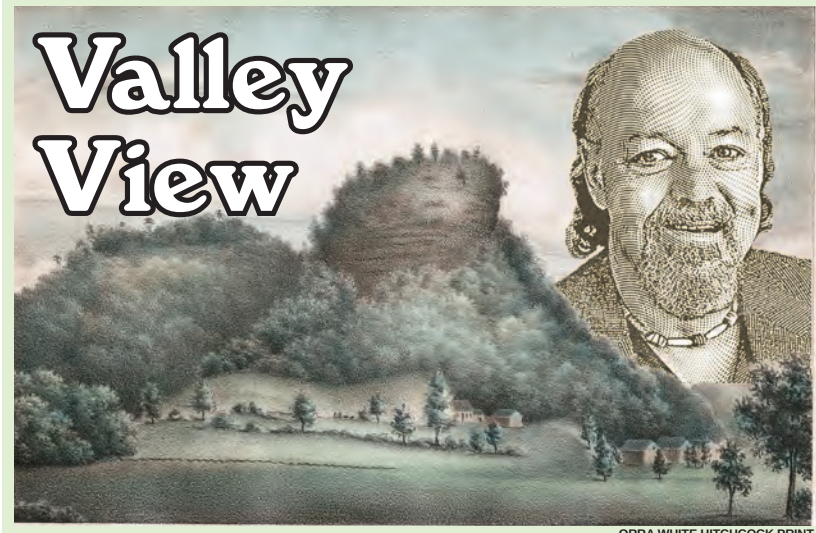
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ED GREGORY/PHOTO



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

Valley View

Close Encounters II

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – A neighbor passing by on the morning of September 27 innocently contributed a timely follow-up to my last column about a young antlered deer in our upper Greenfield Meadows neighborhood.

Our roadside chat was spontaneous. I was on a circuitous route to my roadside mailbox before 9 a.m. and just happened to catch him walking up Brook Road to lend a hand in the 29th annual Green River Cleanup.

Wearing the kind of fluorescent vest worn by crossing guards, big bag in hand, he intended to clean up litter and trash along Hinsdale Brook, a Green River tributary that rises in the Shelburne hills and flows through my backyard. The trash discarded there by people sidestepping landfill fees is disgusting.

I first noticed the man as I walked across the mouth of my carriage shed to adjust a blanket covering a mid-19th-century walnut “farm table” I recently replaced. I didn’t immediately recognize him in his cleanup attire, but could sense from his body language that he wanted to talk. Sure enough, as I walked down my driveway to the mailbox, he stopped and waited near an ornamental cherry tree. That’s when I recognized him, and greeted him.

“Oh. Good morning, Richard,” I said. “Sorry. I didn’t recognize you from afar.”

“No problem,” Richard responded. “I wanted to talk about deer.”

“Sounds good.”

Actually, he was focused on one particular deer, coincidentally the same young buck I last wrote about in this space. He offered no hint that he had read the piece.

Little did he know that I, too, had been watching the buck – first, several times in broad daylight without antlers, and eventually with a smallish teacup rack slightly overextending his alert ears in the gray light of dawn. Though I have recently seen this deer three

or four times in close quarters, I wasn’t wearing glasses and the light has been too dim to count his antler points. The configuration and ordinary spread suggests between four and six.

I began seeing the buck, alone and antlerless, during the fawning season in late May and early June. His behavior, posture, physique, and the time of year hinted he was a young buck soon to sprout headgear. My suspicion was confirmed in early August when I bumped into him a few times on my daily daybreak walks, a good time for deer sightings.

Neighbor Richard, who moved into the neighborhood about 10 years ago, was in a hurry to get started on his altruistic weekend venture. So, pressed for time, he launched right into our conversation, prefacing it with the fact that over the years, he has often seen antlerless deer around his home and hayfield, but never bucks.

He was curious why: Are buck sightings rare?

I told him that I, too, have seen far fewer bucks than does in 29 years of neighborhood observation. One factor, I assume, is the fact that bucks only sport antlers six months a year, evolving from velvet summer sprouts to hardened winter sheds that fall to the forest floor. Even large bucks don’t stick out in a crowd without antlers from January to June.

Though I’m no wildlife behavioral scientist, I have carefully observed deer for many decades and know that bucks are more elusive than does. At certain times of the year, however, you’ll catch them traveling in groups of three to five. Other times they become loners, especially during the territorial fall rut or mating season, when dominant “rackers” range widely in search of receptive does.

Never are bucks more visible than when they’re on the prowl during the rut. They’re also visible but antlerless, sometimes in small, segregated groups, during fawning season, feeding in green hayfields

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3

Above: “About 80 guests were present at Our Lady of Peace Church on Sunday,” photographer Ed Gregory reports, “as Bishop William J. Byrne of Springfield bestowed the blessing on the Farren Memorial Hospital statue on the front lawn of the church. Bishop Byrne was assisted by Rev. Father Stanley Aksamit, ‘Father Stan,’ of Our Lady of Peace.... Farren descendants and guests offered memories and historical accounts of the hospital, which was located at Montague City from 1900 to 2021. Selectboard member Rich Kuklewicz proclaimed that Sunday, October 5, 2025, be observed as Farren Memorial Appreciation Day in the Town of Montague.” Thanks, Ed!

BOOK REVIEWS

Woodman, Spare That Tree?

Callum Robinson, *Ingrained: The Making of a Craftsman* (HarperCollins, 2024)
Brian Donahue, *Slow Wood: Greener Building From Local Forests* (Yale, 2024)
Don Ogden, *It’s The Trees!* (Levellers, 2025)

By DONNA PETERSEN

MONTAGUE – Here we have three books about trees: one about a craftsman making beautiful wooden objects, the next about making homes and other buildings from locally-sourced wood, and the third a collection of poetry focused on trees. Three very different books, the first set across the pond in Scotland, the second very local, the poems by a local writer and activist.

Callum Robinson’s book *Ingrained: The Making of a Craftsman* begins with a kind of ode to a very large tree laid on its side and newly sawn into boards. The author muses about the life this tree has had, expressed by its annual rings: “Centuries of character as individual as fingerprints, written in the figure of the grain and revealed by the teeth of the saw.”

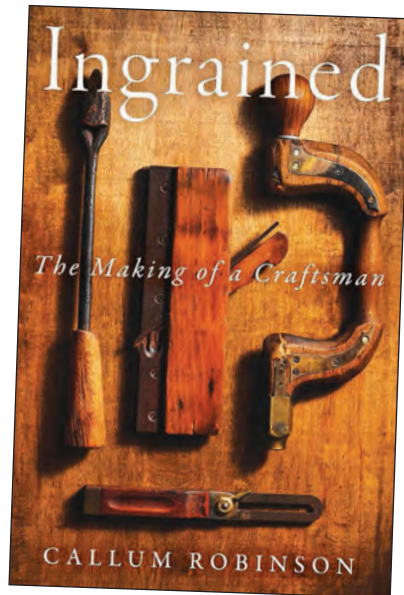
I had read a couple of rave reviews about this book by a Scottish woodworker. “Eloquent... charming,” the

New Yorker magazine wrote. “[A] call for all of us, whatever we do, to do it with passion” And it won the Indie Book Award for non-fiction.

Intrigued, I ordered it through our regional library system. It did not disappoint.

Growing up the son of a do-everything father who turns to woodcraft after being made “redundant” (laid off) from his job, Robinson, still a teenager, steps in and helps his dad. He learns how to design a project, how to find the right wood for it, the use and care of tools, how to make something useful and beautiful from the wood, and that a piece of lumber may hide troublesome secrets.

Fast forwarding, the adult Robinson and his wife Marisa have a woodworking shop of their own, with a crew of three employees making custom bespoke pieces. They are modestly successful, but when a major project falls through the financial consequences appear to be devastating.



At this point, Robinson takes the reader on a trip along the winding path that led him here: more learning and finding his way to becoming a craftsman.

He lavishly describes the process of creating pieces. I could almost smell the different woods as they are worked, and the finishing oils,

see **BOOKS** page B4

RECIPES

OUR FRAGRANT, FINE-GRAINED QUEEN

By CLAIRE HOPLEY



Basmati rice – shown here in a recipe for yellow basmati with cashews and raisins – has a name meaning the “queen of fragrance.”

LEVERETT – Until the 1980s most supermarket rice was simply classified as “long grain” or “short grain.” Today, every supermarket sells sushi rice, jasmine rice, Thai perfumed rice, Spanish *bomba*, Italian *carnoroli* and *arborio*, Indian *basmati*, and sometimes varieties such as the forbidden rice of China, which is black.

The distinction between long-grain and short-grain rice is still useful, because they are suited for different purposes. Short-grain rice releases starch into the water during cooking so the grains cling together. This is perfect for sushi, where the rice must securely nestle around the filling. It’s also good if you eat it with chopsticks. Similarly in risotto, starch from *carnoroli* or *arborio* makes the finished dish slightly saucy and succulent rather than dry.

Basmati is different. It is the most prestigious of the long-grain rices because it has elegantly thin, aromatic, grains. These characteristics are shown off by the traditional cooking techniques in dishes such as *pilafs* and *pilafs* in which the grains stay separate, not clumped.

This is the rice of northern India and Pakistan, who together export all the basmati on world markets. These countries grow other types of rice too, but basmati is revered. Indian food writer Madhur Jaffrey describes it as “delicate” and “fine-grained,” while Julie Sahni, author of *Classic*

see **RECIPES** page B8

Pets of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

‘Boo’ & ‘CRAYON’

Meet Crayon and Boo, an adorable bonded pair of guinea pigs looking for their new home together. These two are very social, and love spending time with people as well as each other. Boo and Crayon have even lived in a home with other animals and did well. They enjoy being picked up, zooming around during playtime, and sharing veggies.

Guinea pigs need lots of space to run around, and toys to keep them active and enriched. They should get daily “floor time” outside of their cage, which is great for bonding and growing closer with them. Many pet store cages are too small for guinea pigs. We can suggest better options.

With their sweet personalities and lively energy, Boo and Crayon are sure to bring joy, laughter, and plenty of squeaks into your life.

The adoption fee for the pair is \$35. Come to the Dakin Humane Society in Springfield during our open adoption hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m., call us at (413) 781-4000, or visit www.dakinhumane.org.



Five Ways to Help Weather the Storm

By LEE WICKS

MONTAGUE CENTER – Federal budget cuts that impact seniors are real and troubling, so this month I’m writing about kind initiatives that are helping people live their best lives and weather bad times.

First of all, Montague Villages: Neighbors Helping Neighbors is growing and making life easier for people who need a little help with household tasks, transportation and more. President Helen Gibson Uguccioni reports that membership is currently at 124, and they have completed 213 service requests since November 1, 2024.

If you are new in town or haven’t heard of **Montague Villages**, it’s a group of volunteers offering services, information, and gatherings for people over 60 who live in the town of Montague. It’s part of a national organization, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, dedicated to helping people age in place with dignity.

Some Montague Neighbors members volunteer and receive services, but volunteering is not required, and some people have joined who do not need services right now but want to show their support and make sure the organization will be here for them when they do. All volunteers must complete a criminal offender record information (CORI) background check and attend a training session before they start helping members.

New members are always welcome. Gibson-Uguccioni adds, “We need organization volunteers – we need people who are willing to work on committees, as well as working on specific projects.” She also mentions that the organization is grateful to its current business sponsors: Greenfield Cooperative Bank, Greenfield Savings Bank, Foot Care by Nurses, and Windy Hollow Veterinary Clinic.

If you want to know more about Montague Villages, visit www.montaguevillages.org or call (413) 672-3095 and leave a message, and one

of the organization’s call managers will get back to you.

Monte’s March, an annual event that raises money for the Western Massachusetts Food Bank, has increased its goal this year to \$650,000 to offset federal cuts to the Food Bank’s budget. The Food Bank helps stock our local food pantries, and with the cost of groceries rising more people than ever are seeking help.

Some marchers complete the entire two-day pilgrimage from Springfield to Greenfield, others join in for just a part of it, and some make a donation to the Food Bank. You can do so online at www.foodbankwma.org.

If you are thinking of lacing your sneakers for Monte’s March, or a march to raise money for medical research – or a march to express your love of democracy on No Kings Day on October 18, or the LifePath Walkathon to support Meals on Wheels and other community programs – prepare your feet and listen to a recent **Backyard Oasis** podcast with Dr. Kate Clayton-Jones, the founder of Footcare by Nurses.

In this program, Dr. Clayton-Jones offers advice for caring for your feet and insights into the role that healthy feet play in maintaining balance and general health. The podcast reaches out to older adults who seek to live more thoughtfully, healthily and happily; who hope to inspire others with their ideas; and who serve their communities in the interest of greater good. These free episodes are great to keep in mind as the weather cools and we spend more time indoors.

Backyard Oasis is designed by and for older adults, and produced in the multimedia studios at Greenfield Community College (GCC). Its website invites listeners to “join us frequently in the Backyard Oasis for wide-ranging conversations with a diversity of people who are growing older... and want to talk about it!”

You can listen however you listen to podcasts, or by going to the GCC website and searching under

“Community Engagement.”

For those who are struggling with dementia or caring for someone with memory loss, **LifePath offers an age- and dementia-friendly newsletter** with resources and advice such as how to reorganize your home for successful living.

“We want to promote content that celebrates the accomplishments of people of all ages, and celebrates what they are doing,” says Jason Money, the age- and dementia-friendly program director. The newsletter is free and published monthly, but readers need to sign up online at the LifePath website under the “age- and dementia-friendly” program.

Still, there’s more help. Since most of this column contains links to online resources, it is vital for elders to feel comfortable with this technology. These days you may need to go online to schedule doctor’s appointments and flu shots, check on Social Security benefits, and more.

It’s convenient – once you know how. My grouchy brother is having a hard time because he doesn’t want a smart phone or a computer. If he lived here, he could attend the upcoming **forums for Senior Digital Equity** at the Montague Public Libraries on Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m.

The first is this Thursday, October 9 at the Montague Center branch, and it will focus on artificial intelligence. The next is on cybersecurity and will be held October 16 at the Millers Falls branch, and the third, on the “free and easy tools” of the Google Suite, will be held at the Gill-Montague senior center on October 23.

Whew. That’s a lot of links at one time, and probably too much information, but it shows that compassionate people are taking action to preserve our caring community and necessary services. Help, in many cases, is only a phone call or a website search away, and elders who want to walk, march, volunteer, or donate have plenty of opportunities.

Senior Center Activities

OCTOBER 13 THROUGH 17

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 10/13
Closed

Tuesday 10/14
9 a.m. Stretch & Balance
10 a.m. Line Dancing
11 a.m. Social Stringer

Wednesday 10/15
9 a.m. Interval Training
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics
11:30 a.m. Bingo

Thursday 10/16
9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow
12 p.m. AI Talk

Friday 10/17
9 a.m. Quilting Open Sew

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 10/13
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Pot Luck

Tuesday 10/14
9 a.m. Chair Yoga
12:30 p.m. Tech Tuesday
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 10/15
9 a.m. Veterans’ Agent

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

Thursday 10/16
1 p.m. Pitch
5 p.m. Fall Forum / Cyber Security

Friday 10/17
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
2 p.m. Chair Dance

LEVERETT

Chair Yoga classes are held Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinics are the third Tuesday of each month. The next clinic is 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 November 5. 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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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

while does briefly isolate for birthing. Other than that, it's hit or miss, with frequent doe sightings and an occasional buck.

As my chat with Richard quickly progressed, I discovered his true impetus for stopping. He didn't want to talk about deer in general. He had a story to share about the bold young buck he and I had both seen in recent weeks.

It made perfect sense to me that my neighbor would have seen this animal. On all three of my close encounters, it was headed straight for his hayfield – twice leading a doe and her twin fawns, once alone. Obviously, the hayfield was a regular feeding, and potentially bedding, stop in the buck's weekly travels.

I knew from my own observations that the animal was comfortable slithering through the neighborhood. He doesn't hesitate to travel across lawns, often clinging close to occupied dwellings. I have witnessed this up close and personal, in my front yard and on brisk daybreak walks.

Richard wanted to share his entertaining tale – one he found humorous, not to mention indicative of a spirited young buck that appears to be a bit of a character. I didn't ask, but do suspect he had seen the animal a time or two before the incident unfolded in the bright of day. It occurred in an unlikely place: in and around the small shed, tucked against a slim treeline, where he shelters his tractor from weather.

One day, looking out at the shed through a back window, Richard

was surprised to see his tractor's emergency lights flashing. *Hmmm?* Clueless as to why, he went out to investigate, cutting across the hayfield's northwest corner. As he approached the shed – you guessed it – the young buck fled from within, bounding to the back treeline.

The curious animal must have entered the shed to explore the contents, including the tractor, which he had likely watched in action from hidden locations. Richard figures the young buck must have sniffed the light switch and pressed too hard with his nose, turning on the flashing lights. This should come as no surprise to hunters who install trail cameras to photograph deer passing through woods they hunt. It's not unusual to catch one sniffing the camera and making contact with its nose. I have seen many examples.

So, I can't say I'm surprised the buck entered the shed. He once stood face-to-face with me until I got within 10 yards. Even then he only trotted about 25 additional feet away before stopping, turning broadside, and watching me pass.

I assume other neighbors are aware of this young buck's presence, and some have very likely seen him up close as I have. His comfort around humans could work against him in the coming days, with hunters in the woods.

When the shooting starts, all he must do to survive is bed down within 500 feet of an occupied dwelling, where he seems cozy, and where discharge of firearms is forbidden.



TV REVIEW

Amazon Prime's *David* Continues on Its Path

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

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

That's what I wrote back in April when I reviewed the first season of this TV show. It seems they have managed to do that well, as I discovered online at Amazon Prime Video: *House of David* has now entered a second season, as of October 4.

The second season premiere consists of two episodes. The first begins just after David has defeated Goliath and enters the battle Israel is fighting at the moment, about 1,000 BC. Considering it is the first time he has ever fought in a battle, he manages to hold his own. That what the first episode mostly consists of.



At some point King Saul will realize that David is the anointed one, but for now he hails him as a Giant Slayer, and people greet him warmly. Saul is so pleased by what David has done that he offers up one of his daughters' hands in marriage. It is the daughter who already likes David, so it's not exactly a bad match-up to have happen.

I have seen a preview that backs up my view that this is the season where we see David become a warrior that people will follow into countless battles. They look like they will be devoted to him. It should be interesting to see him follow the path that will make him king of Israel, and to get to the point where he and Saul will clash.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Drunk Pulls Fake Gun; Cops Called on Loud Children; Coyote Acts Normal; Vehicle Break-In Escalates to Assault

Monday, 9/29

11:21 a.m. DPW reporting a possibly sick fox wandering around on the sidewalk on Montague Street. Animal control officer notified; MPD responding. Area checked; unable to locate.

12:34 p.m. Food City store manager requesting officers due to an intoxicated male yelling and threatening employees and refusing to leave. Another caller from Family Dollar stated that the male party pulled out a “fake” gun and pretended to shoot her. Last seen headed towards the park. Described as older male with gray hair. Food City advising they want him trespassed from the store. Area search negative; callers advised to call again if he comes back.

3:08 p.m. Caller states she went to the liquor store across the street and gave them \$5 for a lottery ticket. They were nasty, so she took her money back and they took the ticket back, but she would like an officer to speak with them about how they treat customers who are deaf. Referred to an officer.

3:25 p.m. Caller from Fifth Street states that two men are going around the neighborhood trying to get people to switch electric companies. She also stated that they took a picture of her energy bill and signed her up, and she had to jump through hoops to cancel. She would like to speak to an officer. Officer checked area, didn't see anyone matching the description.

8:23 p.m. Noise complaint from Oakman Street; neighbor is leaf-blowing. Referred to an officer.

Tuesday, 9/30

7:30 a.m. Caller states that a bunch of kids are being loud at the bus stop at Fourth and L streets. Unable to locate.

2 p.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road states that someone shot a couple of BBs into a window on his RV. Report taken.

3:26 p.m. Caller reports there is a railroad truck parked in the Fourth Street lot that she feels is too big and doesn't fit properly; could cause an accident. Officers advised.

4:15 p.m. Officer flagged down near Laurel Lane and Turnpike Road for report of possible rabid fox. Second caller states he is on the field at Turners Falls High School and the fox is there. ACO contacted and on scene. Unable to locate fox; will continue to check area.

9:37 p.m. 911 caller reports he was driving over the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge and saw a fire on one of the islands along with what seemed to be a light shining. Wondering if someone is trapped, as the dam was recently

opened. Officer advised.

Wednesday, 10/1

8:36 a.m. Caller from East Taylor Hill Road would like on record that her Halloween decorations were vandalized yesterday. She states this has happened multiple times.

11:48 a.m. Detail officer advising of vehicles parked in the no parking zone on the Canal Street side of Second Street, creating hazards. Citation issued.

2:37 p.m. 911 caller reports her vehicle was struck by another vehicle that left the scene. Suspect vehicle located at the residence that the registration comes back to. No one is answering the door. Report taken.

3:13 p.m. Caller from Park Villa Drive thinks that last Thursday or Friday, someone stole Oxycodone off her kitchen table. Officer advised caller of options and informed her MPD would have this on record.

4:25 p.m. Greenfield PD requesting assistance in trying to locate a female who is reported to have threatened self-harm. Mother of female called in with additional information. Contact made with female; no sort of danger; all services declined. Greenfield PD updated.

5:45 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant Road thinks that someone hacked her phone; states she changed her password on Monday and now she's locked out. Referred to an officer.

8:47 p.m. Caller reports two males having a verbal altercation in front of the Pizza House. They have since left.

Thursday, 10/2

1:54 a.m. Caller from Third Street states neighbor who lives upstairs is walking around loudly, making it impossible for caller and his family to sleep. Caller advises he talked to the neighbor recently about the noise issue, but the noise level has not changed. Officer advised resident of complaint.

8:22 a.m. Caller from Oakman Street reporting possibly injured or sick coyote in her backyard. Children being picked up for school in front yard. ACO advised and *en route*. ACO advises coyote is acting normal and is not sick or injured. Caller advised to call again if that changes.

9:30 a.m. Car vs. deer on Turners Falls Road. No injuries; deer still on scene. Referred to an officer.

10:16 a.m. Walk-in reporting fox in the area of Turnpike and Millers Falls Roads. ACO advised fox gone on arrival.

12:23 p.m. 911 transfer from Control. Female was driving and saw four cows cross the road behind her. They successfully crossed, no issues.

2:26 p.m. Caller states he works with MassDOT and a Federal Street property has a table and two sofas outside that he is not responsible for picking up. Wants to discuss with an officer. Officer advised caller that he will follow up with the residents at that address.

3:34 p.m. Caller would like officers to check the Plains area as he thinks people are living in their cars off of Beach Road.

5:10 p.m. Caller from Morris Avenue concerned about a fox that looks rabid and has a broken leg. Located animal; looked mangy, but ran away from them.

Friday, 10/3

5:25 a.m. Passerby reports a deer struck by a vehicle on Sunderland Road. Vehicle is no longer on scene. Deer is deceased on side of road. Environmental police officer contacted; they will have someone pick the deer up. Homeowner called in reporting same; advised them that EPO had been contacted.

5:30 p.m. 911 caller states two dogs are fighting on Main Street and four people are trying to separate them but not having any luck. Officer states female has laceration to her fingers and is going to the hospital. Would like ACO to meet officers at station.

9 p.m. 911 call reporting a Klonopin overdose on East Main Street; possible SWATting. Unable to locate.

Saturday, 10/4

1:12 a.m. Officer reporting bears in area of Morris Avenue and Coolidge Avenue.

1 p.m. Multiple simultaneous 911 calls reporting a car vs. motorcycle accident at Montague City and Turnpike Roads. Conferred with Shelburne Control; MPD, FD, and EMS responding. One caller observed a male in a green shirt flailing his arms yelling that he wanted to kill himself. Confirmed with officers on scene that this subject is involved in the accident. While units were on scene, Chief Redmond advised that the vehicle

called in was involved in an incident in Wendell earlier today where the subject pulled a knife on a store clerk. Info subsequently faxed over by Shelburne Control. Officer advises subject detained. Tow requested for one vehicle. Officer following ambulance to BFMC. Courtesy transport provided for involved passenger.

5:03 p.m. Report of two subjects who appear to be under the influence of drugs going in and out of a black SUV on East Main Street. Male and female both believed to be wearing lime green. Vehicle is missing its front bumper. Upon arrival, officer advised vehicle located parked just past Carroll's Market. Officer advised operator is sober.

6:31 p.m. Officer spoke with a solicitor from Sunrun who did not have a permit on file; moved along.

10:44 p.m. 911 call from third party, with victim also providing information in background. Pedestrian struck by vehicle at Third and L streets, complaining of arm and knee injuries after confronting someone who was breaking into his vehicle. Suspect vehicle last seen on Third Street heading toward Avenue A. Conferred with Shelburne Control. Upon arrival, officer advises an involved party left on foot toward First Street. Area checked; negative contact. Partial plate search in RMV yielded two local potential matches. Units advised. Greenfield PD checked address for potential match; no vehicle matching description.

Sunday, 10/5

12:02 a.m. 911 call reporting disturbance on L Street. Officer advises both parties separated for remainder of night.

1:31 a.m. Caller who resides above Millers Pub advises a motorcycle revving its engine has been by the area a handful of times tonight. Caller concerned the operator of the motorcycle could get hurt doing that. Officer advised of call nature.

3:11 p.m. Caller from Lyman Street reporting small crash involving a car and a motorcycle. Both vehicles able to drive away.

7:14 p.m. 911 caller states she was driving on Sunderland Road and two kids wearing masks jumped out; she had to swerve to avoid hitting them, and is concerned they are going to get hit. Unable to locate.

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BOOKS from page B1

and then feel the sanded, finished surfaces. Even the leather upholstery scent was there. It all made me want to dive in and make something out of some lovely wood – although not elm, which is apparently a bitch to work with despite its beauty!

Back to the current woodworking shop, looking desperately for work. All it takes is a slight twist on the shop’s path: a vacant storefront on the nearby town’s main street. Why not? With help from the crew and Robinson’s dad, Method Studios opens a retail shop. Besides cutting boards, bowls, and sculptures, large pieces including desks, tables, chairs, and even a challenging rocking chair are created, admired, lusted over, and sold, pieces that are meant to last and be handed down to future generations. Custom work picks up again. *Success!*

I think any woodworker, carpenter or maker who takes pride in their work would enjoy this well-written, engaging book. Or you could just buy a ticket to Scotland and see the work in person...

Long-listed for the Non-Fiction Mass Book Award, *Slow Wood: Greener Building From Local Forests* is described on the inside cover as a “radical proposal for healing the relationship between humans and forests through responsible, sustainable use of local and regional wood in home building.”

Brian Donahue, the author of this very local book, has a background on the history of forests and farms, has written numerous other books, and is a

professor emeritus at Brandeis University.

Donahue calls upon his past professional experience, his time creating and working in a forest land non-profit in Weston, Massachusetts, and his family’s purchase of 170 acres of land in Gill and the subsequent building of a home and farm there to introduce the reader to his ideas.

Applying Donahue’s vision, his house was built entirely using wood harvested from the land it sits on.

This is a dense book, revealing the history of New England forests from indigenous times to the great land clearing by early European settlers (invaders?), to the second- and third-growth forests we see today. The forests’ composition has changed through that clearing, as well as by invasive diseases and pests including chestnut blight, elm disease, the wooly adelgid, emerald ash borer, and so on. Donahue provides maps that illustrate these changes in composition, and importance of tree species, over time into the present.

Donahue describes the selective logging done to build his family home and clear land for his farm, and promotes the ecological value of local logging for forest health and as a better alternative than concrete, metal, or plastics. Hundreds of trees were cut and then milled by local workers, and the house was built by local builders.

He argues that carefully-done logging – a lot more logging, in fact – can and should be done for the health of these forests and the future availability of local timber.

Donahue’s book is well-written, and there is a great deal of information

here including some good, strong proposals about changing the way we build. However, I found some of his recommendations to be a little unrealistic, especially in the hyper-capitalistic and chaotic times we live in.

Everything has gotten very expensive, from food to services to building supplies, *ad infinitum*. And in an ideal world, timber companies and private forest owners would be better forest stewards. The author had great contacts through his work, including Harvard Forest in Petersham and the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, as well as other resources that most people do not have access to.

Maybe someday the ideas presented here will be put into action. I have met and worked with caring and smart people with strongly differing opinions on how forests should be “managed,” be that through careful sustainable logging, minimal management, or just “leave it alone!”

One thing not addressed in Donahue’s book is climate change. What is going on all over the world is beyond scary, and I think we need as many trees as possible to absorb and sequester carbon dioxide and release oxygen into our atmosphere. Until we get the runaway train that is climate change under control – if we can – we need trees, the planet’s natural climate warriors.

As a child, I would sit on the narrow stairs of my old grandmother’s old house reading Joyce Kilmer’s poem “Trees” over and over:

I think that I shall never see / A poem as lovely as a tree.... / Poems are made



by fools like me / But only God[dess] can make a tree.

Now I’m older than my grandmother was then – oh my! – but I still enjoy poems, and I think Don Ogden is no fool as he writes about trees and more in his slim book, *It’s the Trees!*

Ogden, co-host of the Enviro Show heard on various local radio outlets, has written a great deal of material on varied subjects. Many of us may go to poetry, books, music, or art as a way to cope with the

world around us as it seems to grow more challenging in every way. Ogden has written these poems and prose with a forceful nod to the trees and their value as beautiful, and sustaining beings – and to the threats currently posed by those we dare not name.

Michael Kellet, co-founder of RESTORE: The North Woods, wrote the forward to the book, hoping readers take to heart the book author’s passionate plea.

In his poem “Plantanus occidentalis,” Ogden seems to be referring to the wonderful huge Sycamore tree in Sunderland center:

and we continue on destroying and / enjoying ourselves, but for those who / stop in silence and respect know this...

Other titles include “Roots,” “Carbon,” “To a Certain Cedar,” “Climate Crime Theater,” “Trees Have Decency,” and “Think Like a Tree.”

I especially enjoyed “a snag”: a tree and an owl!

An owl in the night / down the road in dark / moonless night in a / snag...

A book worth checking out and taking to heart. And I love the cover!



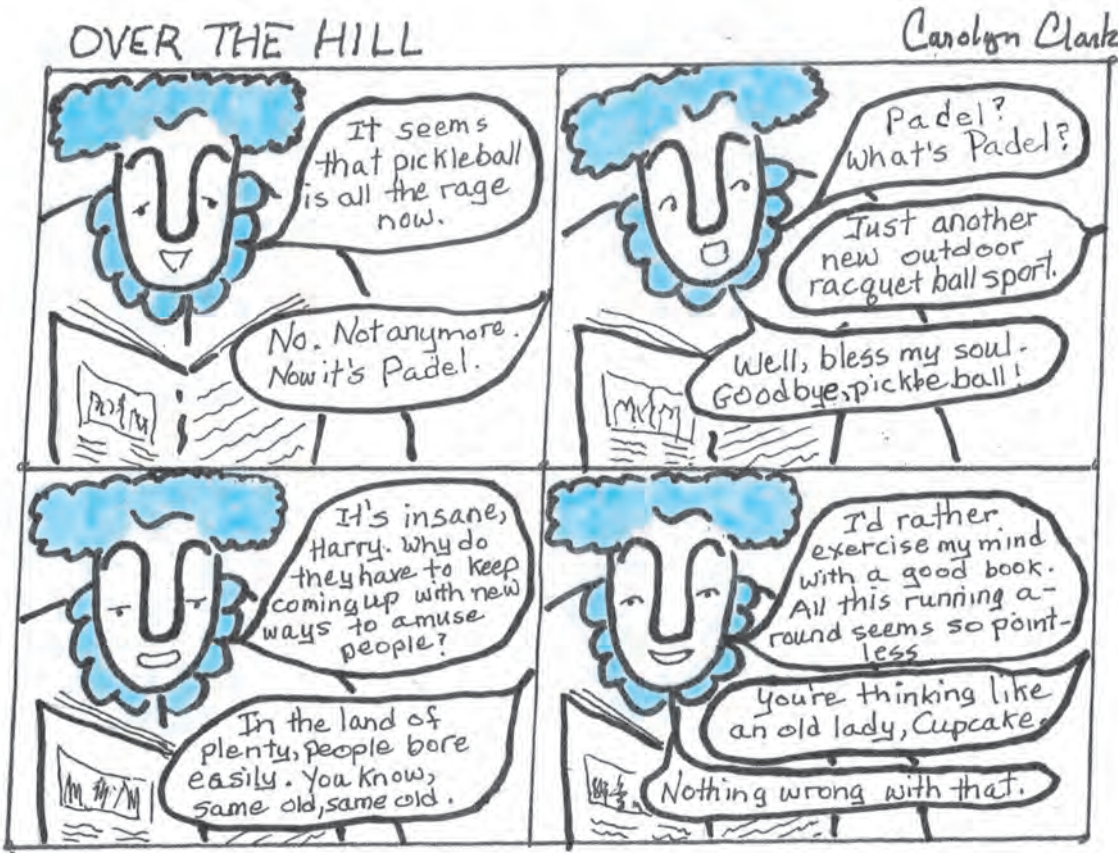
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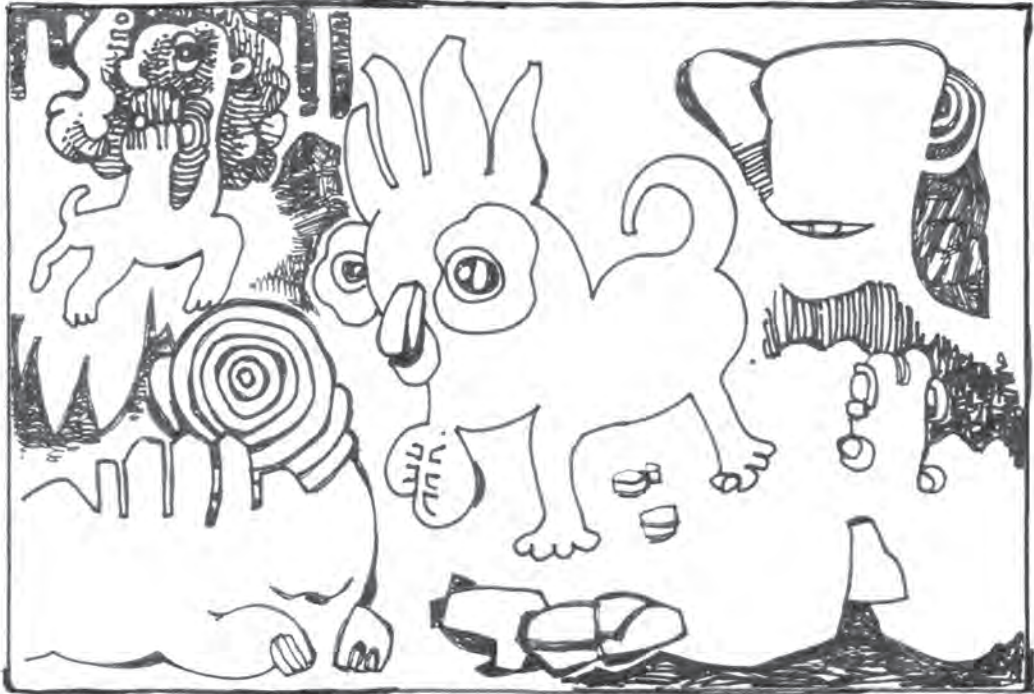
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It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

– William Carlos Williams

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

Our October Poetry Page

Romance

All of us have been there
With smiles and daffodils
So eager to be ready
To love and drink our fill

Not knowing what comes next
We walk the narrow path
Excited to be in it
A dream come true at last

I'll love her now and forever
I'll keep my vows complete
She'll love me too I know it
Our life will be so sweet

With high expectations
We wonder through this maze
Round every crooked corner
And every crooked craze

When finally it has ended
We're shrunken bits of flesh
Relieved that it is over
And glad to get some rest

– Anonymous
Turners Falls

A Lament for the Connecticut River

for Karl Meyer

The art of destroying isn't hard to master:
build brick mills to spew yellow-green poison
to foul major drinking sources faster.

Pollution is only one course to be chosen;
Try trapping beavers and raising dams
for flood control — then defend with cold reason

your actions. There exist, of course, other scams
that will benefit corporate greed:
find a place to adjust the flow; ignore the clams,

fingerlings, larvae, and fry; now they cannot breed.
If you're not satisfied with these methods
and desire other destructive deeds:

perhaps, like many industrious cowards,
pour untreated sewage in it to ruin
the spring waters that descend towards

The Sound, to inspire nitrogen-rich flora to flower
in bays and coves, deadwaters; or like the laggards
upstream who purposely leaked toxins:
yes (say it!) it is easy a river's course to sour.

– Nick Fleck
Northfield

Museum

I collect moments.
I collect voices.
When you talk, I am studying.
Hoarding the faces you make.
Your mischievous smile,
The way your hands dance when you speak,
The glimmering stardust in your eyes.
(Did you know that your eye shines?)
I store your laughter away in a velvet lined box under glass.
For when I need to remember that chosen family is treasure.
Swirling, heavy, lingering incense smoke,
These memories perfume the air and burn my eyes.
I collect moments, because here, time passes differently.
Music wraps me up in a spectral hug,
Lyrics are your whispers.
Clear as all night talks under stars, waiting for the only thing
that brought freedom.
I close my eyes to hear your voice, and replay the things you said.
Play.
Stop.
Rewind.
Play.
Pause.
Pause.
Pause.
I collect moments to keep me company,
Even when it is painful to remember.
Pockets lined with your response when I need advice.
It's love that is only a veil of energy.
You're all here,
Cheering me on,
Warning me,
Telling me to smarten up.
Reassuring me that I worry too much, and everything I do is good.
Trauma creates ghosts,
But not all of them haunt.

That's why I run a second behind.
I am talking to you,
But if I see magic,
If I see that you know what I know,
If there is a little flicker behind your eyes,
Signaling to me that you're not a lump,
I'm filing it away.
Pressed between wax paper,
Logged and cataloged.
You are all preserved,
And I'm the collector.

– Star F.
Turners Falls

I have a terror...

I.

Depression like Grief
strangles time past
and time future ...

the agéd Brain
loses grasp of
his walking stick ...

in the yard an invisible Power
disturbs
squirrels, chickadees, and flowers ...

I rise from the depths
for the third & last surfacing
before drowning

II.

the wake of a birch bark
canoe follows
as the past begets dark

in the final years
when dangers increase
the hazards, fears

childhood ghosts grip
the imagination fog
shrouds head stones...

III.

riding rapids,
eddyding around
boulders, and

I cascade across cataracts
over razor sharp rocks
toward the sea's calm mystery

– Nick Fleck
Northfield

Contributors' Notes:

Anonymous is going to be 70 in November and lives in Turners Falls, a transplant since 2006 from Boston. It was the best move he's ever made. Now he lives a quiet life and for him there is nothing better. It's a good way to go. (Editor's note: We can vouch for this being a real person.)

Star F. has a fondness for crows, moss, and curiosity. She struggles with two- to three-sentence bios.

Nick Fleck writes: "When I walk alone along trails hardly worn / I find a rhythm in my voice full of silence borne."



WRITING THE LAND

The Poetry Page is supported by
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TO WEAR A MASK

EVENTS

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

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

New Salem Preserves, New Salem: *Village Neighbors Meet-Up*. Drink cider, enjoy the vista. 2 to 4 p.m. Free.

Montague Center Library, Montague Center: *Senior Tech Time, Artificial Intelligence: Basics and Beyond*. 5 p.m. Free.

Four Star Farms Brewery, Northfield: *Library Trivia Night*. Teams of one to six players. Bring your own food. 6 p.m. Free.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Arena Civic Theater presents *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. Benefit for TransHealth. 7 p.m. \$

All Souls Church, Greenfield: Documentary, *Rising River's Edge* (2025). Discussion with filmmakers. 7 p.m. Free.

HOPE Center for the Arts, Springfield: *Makaya McCraven*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *LAVA Film Festival*. Reception at 5 p.m., films at 7 p.m. Discussion with filmmakers. See thelavacenter.org/lava-film-festival. Free and \$.

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

Born Again Vintage, Northampton: *Sapien Joyride, Tiger Moth, Go Go California, Oddball Song Creation, Ants of the Suburbs*. 6:15 p.m. Free.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Square Dance with Devilish Mary's Stringband*, Sally Newton calling. Jammers welcome. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Ben Tousley*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Deep Thoughts, Northampton: *Hazel Basil; Virgo's Moon; Hush, Puppy*. 7 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Tiger Bomb, Mal Thursday Quintet, Ray Mason, The Oranges*. 7 p.m. \$.

Institute for the Musical Arts, Goshen: *Harris Eisenstadt October Trio*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Harvest and Rust*, Neil Young tribute. 8 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Hendersons Blues Band*. 8 p.m. No cover.

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

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Kalbells, Erica Eso*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Midnight's, Brattleboro: *Cousin Greg, Bellwire, Snood*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Sunburned Hand of the Man, Zachary Cale, Anthony Pasquarosa*. 8:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *DJ Lucas, 22BB, Don Gadi*. 9 p.m. No cover.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Dead Tooth, Ruby Lou*. 10 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Costume Swap*. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free.

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

Ashfield Center, Ashfield: *Ashfield Fall Festival, with The Brookside Project, Hilltown Ham Hocks*, more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free.

Retreat Farm, Brattleboro: Sandglass Theater presents *Puppets In Paradise*. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$.

Northfield Mountain Visitors' Center, Northfield: *Creatures of the Night Reptile Show*. 11 a.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *LAVA Film Festival*. Screenings and discussion with filmmakers. See thelavacenter.org/lava-film-festival. 1 to 9 p.m. \$.

United Church of Bernardston, Bernardston: *Roast Beef Supper*. Seatings at 5 and 6:15 p.m. \$.



Kalbells, originally a solo project for Kalmia Traver of Rubblebucket, has grown to include Angelica Bess of Body Language, and Sarah K. Pedinotti of Lip Talk. They play the Stone Church this Friday night with Erica Eso.

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: Reading, *Miriam Saperstein, Stephanie Cawley, ebs sanders*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Norma Dream*, album release party, with the *Mia Friedman Band, Dream Choir, Young at Heart Chorus*, pizza by *Augustine's Pizza Club*. 7 p.m. \$.

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Bridge of Flowers, Truculent, Bent Light, Mibble*. 7 p.m. \$.

The Hoff, Holyoke: *Unrecovery, Microgoblet, Wallball, Owen Manure, Rhubarb Duo*. 7 p.m. \$.

Institute for Musical Arts, Goshen: *Cris Williamson*. 7:30 p.m. \$\$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Michael Glabicki, Dirk Miller*. 8 p.m. \$.

EXHIBITS

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Day of the Dead Altar*, built by local families with support from the Heartwing Center, October 11 through November 2, with a reception Saturday, October 25 from 3 to 5 p.m. *Migrations*, paintings curated by GuateMaya Art and Culture Connection featuring scenes of village life, Mayan culture, and the history of Lake Atitlan in Guatemala, October 18 through November 22.

Montague Center Library, Montague: *Elizabeth Long: Quilts*. Through November.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: Guest artist *Ruby Henry* presents hand-tufted rugs during October and November, with a reception this Sunday, October 12 from 1 to 4 p.m.

Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill: *Bicycles, Beaches, and Bovines*, multimedia work by Gill artist Doug Dale, at the Rhodes Art Center through this Friday, October 10.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Plein Air Voices: Paintings*, group show featuring works by Sally Dillon, Maggie Hodges, Lori Lynn Hoffer, Ruth Rinard, Donna Roy, and Ruth Sanderson. Through

October, with a reception Sunday, October 19 from 3 to 5 p.m.
Leverett Library, Leverett: *Art & Crafts Inspired by the 1774 North Leverett Sawmill*, with work by dozens of artists, through October.
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.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Gray Matters*, monoprints by Karen J. Axtell, October 17 to November 21 with a reception Friday, October 17 at 5 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Tune Croquette*, works by Charlotte Treiber. Through November, with a reception Friday, October 24, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Memorial Hall Museum, Old Deerfield: *Pioneer Valley Picture Show*, images and artifacts from a century of local movie-making, through October.

Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield: *Fall Into Fiber*, group show, through November 2.

Clarkdale Fruit Farms, Deerfield: *Doorways*, self-guided audio-visual tour with sculptural doorways and sound pools by multiple artists, through November.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Perspectives*, works by Rochelle Shicoff and Diane Steingart, through October.
Mead Art Museum, Amherst College: New exhibits include *A Contentious Legacy: Paintings from Soviet Ukraine; Spaces That Hold: Swapnaa Tamhane; Re/Presenting: An Activity Gallery*; and the installation of Fred Wilson's chandelier *Dramatis Personae*.
Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Nature's Palette*, group show by members, through October.
Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Old and New*, paintings by father-and-son duo Robert and Matthew Steinem, through November 2.

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CALENDAR

Stone Church, Brattleboro:
Slavic Soul Party. 8 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater,
Easthampton: *Tower, Goblet, The Humanoidz, Bone Church.* 8 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Visceral Filth, Guano, Main Breaker, Schenectavoidz.* 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Abby Jeanne & the Shadowband, Spikenard, August Galactica.* 9:30 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

Ashfield Center, Ashfield: *Ashfield Fall Festival, with Barn Rocket, Over Easy Jazz, High Tea, Jim Matus,* more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free.

Retreat Farm, Brattleboro: Sandglass Theater presents *Puppets In Paradise.* 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$.

Great Falls Discovery Center: *Art Naturally: Leaf Prints for Leaf Peepers.* Materials provided. For all ages; children six to 12 accompanied by an adult. Free. 10:30 a.m.

Westhampton Town Center, Westhampton: *Westhampton Fall Festival.* 12 to 4 p.m. Free.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: Artist reception for *Ruby Henry*, hand-tufted rugs. 1 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Drop-In Genealogy Help* with Phillip Johnson. 1 to 3 p.m. Free.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Arena Civic Theater presents *Hedwig and the Angry Inch.* Benefit for TransHealth. Two shows at 1 and 7 p.m. \$

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *LAVA Film Festival.* Panel discussion, screenings and discussion with filmmakers. See thelavacenter.org/lava-film-festival. 1 to 8 p.m. Free and \$.

Institute for Musical Arts, Goshen: *Cris Williamson.* 3 p.m. \$\$.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Alone-A, Raub Roy.* 4 p.m. By donation.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Leo Kottke.* 7 p.m. \$.

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

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *A Concert of Protest, Memory, and Belonging,* presented by *The Windham Philharmonic* on Indigenous Peoples' Day. Featuring *Voiceless Mass* by Raven Chacon; other works by Kunkle, Seeger, Eastman, Haydn. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Leverett Library, Leverett: Author *Richie Davis*, reading from *True Tales From Extraordinary Lives.* 5:30 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Drop-In Knitting/Crafting.* 6 to 8 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Cultural Council Grant Help.* Last-minute technical help with the application process. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Arena Civic Theater presents *Hedwig and the Angry Inch.* Benefit for TransHealth. 7 p.m. \$

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

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16

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.

Millers Falls Library, Millers Falls: Senior Tech Time, *Cyber Security: Protect Yourself from Online Predators.* 5 p.m. Free.

First United Methodist Church, Greenfield: *Música Franklin Community Concert,* with student performers and special guest *Zaccai Curtis.* 5 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Costume Swap and Campfire S'mores.* 5 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Presentation, *Reclaiming the Greenfield Swimming Area from Invasive Species,* by Wisty Rorabacher of the Floodplain Forest Restoration Project. 6 p.m. Free.

Leverett Elementary School, Leverett: *A Conversation with Congressman Jim McGovern.* See www.tinyurl.com/convwithjim for more info and reservations. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch.* Benefit for TransHealth. 7 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Hollow Deck, Wednesday Knudsen, Raub Roy, Vic Rawlings, Groan Man, Krissy & Jeff, Animal Piss It's Everywhere, Ben Hersey, Kurt & Omeed, Shane Bray Kerr, Foam Block.* 7 p.m. No cover.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Fred Eaglesmith & The Velvet Frogs.* 7 p.m. \$.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Gold Dust, Convinced Friend, Silvie's Okay, Two Wrong Turns,* free pizza from *Vegan Pizza Land.* 7 p.m. \$.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Sleep Destroyer, Soup Dreams, Ruth In the Bardo, Jack O Lantern.* 8 p.m. \$.

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Play, Swamped.* (Second of eight dates; runs through the 26th.) 7:30 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Doctor Gasp, Tender Spot.* 7:30 p.m. \$.

Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield: *The Slambovian Circus of Dreams, The Picky Bastards, Bella's Bartok.* 7:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

Rattlesnake Hill Trails, Leverett: *Hike* with the Leverett Trails Committee. RSVP to steve.weiss47@gmail.com. Rain date October 19. Meet in the Leverett Co-op parking lot to carpool. 9 a.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center: *Archaeology Month: Indigenous Fishing Along the Kwenitekw.* Presentation, activities, and more. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free.

Energy Park to the Town Common, Greenfield: *No Kings Day II* march and rally. 2 to 4 p.m. Free.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Anne Louise White and Friends.* Concert and community sing, benefit for the LUCE Immigrant Justice Network. 7 p.m. \$.

Wizard's Castle, Montague Center: *Gaslight Tinkers,* more. 7:30 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

Leverett Village Co-op, Leverett: *Harvest Festival.* 12 to 4 p.m. Free.

Four Phantoms Brewery, Greenfield: *Sunday Scaries,* double feature by Italian director Lucio Fulci: *The House by the Cemetery* (1981), *The Psychic* (1977). Popcorn. 2:30 p.m. Free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sleep Destroyer, Wall Ball, Big Egg in the Sky.* 8:30 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Light the Bridge.* "An evening of remembrances, awareness, and celebration." Hosted by the Franklin County & North Quabbin Domestic Violence Task Force. 5 to 7 p.m. Free.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: Book launch for Nat Baldwin's *Antithesis*, with *Stella Silbert & Liz Tonne, Mike Bullock & Vic Rawlings.* 6 p.m. By donation.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *The Boo!-52.0s, DJ Quills.* 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Ben Bennett & Kieran Daly, rruuggaa, Ben Hersey.* 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Multiple venues, Brattleboro: *Circuits in the Woods,* feat. *Jeffrey Alexander & The Heavy Lidders, Wet Tuna, Charles Dodge, Caldon Glover-Wessel, Badweatherfriend,* many more. Schedule TBA. \$.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Nova Arts, Keene: *Masma Dream World, Omoo Omoo, Sunken Cages.* 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

The Drake, Amherst: *Pink Mountaintops, White Hills.* 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2

Iron Horse, Northampton: *NRBQ and the Whole Wheat Horns.* 7 p.m. \$.

Submitted Image

Pianist and composer Zaccai Curtis won a Grammy Award for Best Latin Jazz Album this year for his new Afro-Cuban jazz record Cubop Lives! Next Thursday he'll be playing a free set at the Música Franklin Community Concert, along with student performers, at the First United Methodist Church in Greenfield.

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RECIPES from page B1

Indian Cooking (1980), explains that the word *basmati* itself means “queen of fragrance.”

Indeed, as you open a new package of basmati a nutty aroma rises to greet you. It is natural to the rice, but producers enhance it by storing it for a year or more before selling it. By the time it gets to the table, basmati has developed floral aromas and is white, but in the package it is creamy-beige, and the premium Dehra Dun variety available in specialty food stores has a yellowy tinge.

In India it is the most expensive rice, often reserved for weddings or other celebrations. Whenever it appears it is treated as an equal partner to the dishes it accompanies.

While basmati is the pride of India and Pakistan it is also favored in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran, where it is the preferred rice for the classic *chillau*, steamed rice cooked with a crusty bottom called *tahdig*. In Turkey, Greece, and elsewhere throughout the Middle East basmati is the rice for pilafs.

To highlight its characteristics, basmati is cooked slightly differently than short-grain rice such as carnoroli or arborio. First, you must rinse it in a large bowl of water, swishing it with your hands. The water quickly clouds as starch is released. Repeat this step with fresh water three or four times until the water is clear.

Cover it with fresh water and let stand for 30 minutes; drain and let it rest for a few minutes longer.

Then, to make four servings of white rice to accompany a main dish, melt two tablespoons of butter over low heat in a pan. Stir in two or three teaspoons of finely-chopped shallot or onion and then the drained rice, stirring it until it is shiny with butter. Now add a teaspoon of salt and a bay leaf, plus one and a half cups cold water.

Boil this without stirring until the water has evaporated and the top of the rice is pitted with steam holes. Cover it tightly with a lid and leave it on the turned-off burner, letting it rest there for 15 minutes. Fluff it gently for serving.

You can use basmati cooked this way in the recipe (*at right*) for Turkish Rice Cakes. You can also cook basmati with coconut milk, as in the recipe for Coconut Rice with Spicy Shrimp. Other cooking liquids are chicken stock and fish stock, for dishes with chicken or fish.

As for the yellow rice that’s popular in India and Spain among other countries, the sunshine color is achieved by saffron – the world’s most expensive spice – or turmeric, or food colorings designed for specific dishes. The recipe for Yellow Rice with Cashews and Raisins calls for turmeric because of its warm flavor and bright color.



YELLOW BASMATI with CASHEWS AND RAISINS

- ¾ cup basmati rice
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup cashews
- 1 Tbsp. bland oil
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ¾ tsp. turmeric
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ cup defrosted frozen peas

Rinse and soak the basmati rice as described above. Set it aside covered by an inch of water for at least half an hour, and up to 2 hours. Prepare the raisins by soaking them in warm water for half an hour.

For the cashews, heat the oil in a small pan without letting it get to smoking point. Put the cashews in and fry them for 2 minutes, shak-

ing the pan and stirring to prevent them from burning. As soon as they are golden, tip them from the pan and set aside.

To make the rice, melt the butter in a large pan and stir in the chopped onion. Let it cook gently for 3 or 4 minutes, then stir in the turmeric and then the rice. Add the salt, bay leaf, and one and a half cups of water. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 8 to 10 minutes or until the top of the rice is pitted with steam holes.

Stir in the peas and raisins, scatter the cashews on top, and cover the pan tightly. Turn off the burner, but leave the pan standing on it for about 15 minutes or until the rice is tender. Serve on a large platter.

Serves 4 as a side dish.

TURKISH RICE CAKES

- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 medium-large onion, finely chopped
- 2 cups basmati rice, cooked as described (at left)
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 cups grated sharp Cheddar
- a tiny dash of cayenne
- 2 tsp. oregano
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 cup panko or seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- vegetable oil for frying
- pomegranate seeds or Italian parsley for garnish

Melt the butter in a medium saucepan. Stir in the onion, then simmer gently stirring often until it is soft but not browned – about 4 or 5 minutes.

Stir in the rice then the cheese, dash of cayenne, and oregano. Mix with your hands to disperse the cheese and oregano throughout the rice. Mix in the beaten egg. Turn the oven to 200 degrees.

Have the panko or seasoned crumbs on a plate. Now take a handful of rice and press it firmly into a patty that is more or less round. Place it on the panko or crumbs. Working quickly, make three more. Put these also on the plate, then sprinkle some of the panko or crumbs on top.

Heat 3 Tbsp. of oil in a large frying pan over moderately high heat. Place the first four prepared patties in the hot oil, pressing the tops with a spatula so they spread to about two and a half inches across.

Cook for about 4 minutes, then flip carefully and fry the other side for 3 minutes. While the first batch is cooking, prepare the next batch and add more oil if



necessary to fry them. Keep the patties warm in the oven until you have cooked them all.

Serve sprinkled with pomegranate seeds – very popular in Turkey – or scattered with Italian parsley, or some snipped chives or basil. Pair with a vegetable such as green beans, baby carrots, or mashed butter-nut squash.

Makes about 12. Serves 3 to 4.

COCONUT RICE with SPICY SHRIMP

- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped shallot or onion
- 2 tsp. finely chopped fresh ginger
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. finely sliced hot (or sweet) red pepper
- 1½ tsp. powdered cumin
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- ½ tsp. sugar
- 1 cup fish or vegetable stock or water
- ¾ lb. cooked shrimp
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 cup basmati rice
- 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger
- ½ cup unsweetened shredded dried coconut
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 can coconut milk (not low-fat)



HOPLEY PHOTOS

To cook the shrimp, melt butter in a medium frying pan over low heat. Stir in the shallot or onion, ginger, garlic, and red pepper strips. Cook for 3 or 4 minutes.

Stir in the cumin, curry powder, and sugar over the heat, then add

¾ cup of the stock and bring it to a simmering point. Remove from the heat, let cool to lukewarm, then add the shrimp. Toss them in the liquid and set aside for an hour, or up to four hours if more convenient. Turn the shrimp in the liquid occasionally during this time.

To cook the rice, melt more butter over low heat in a saucepan. Stir in the rice and grated ginger until it glistens with the butter.

Remove and reserve the white cream from the top of the can of coconut milk. Pour the rest of the milk into the pan and stir in the shredded coconut. Bring it to boiling point, then simmer until most of the liquid has evaporated and steam holes appear in the top of the rice – about 8 to 10 minutes. Cover the pan tightly; turn off the heat, but leave the pan on the burner.

Put the reserved coconut cream into a medium frying pan over low heat. Add the shrimp, including all the liquid, and the tablespoon of Worcestershire. Bring to simmering point and cook for 3 minutes, stirring to toss the shrimp. Add more stock or water if you like.

Spread the rice onto a large platter and pour the shrimp on top. Good with Major Grey or mango chutney.

Serves 3 to 4.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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