

# The Montague Reporter

Year 23 – No. 44

NOVEMBER 6, 2025

\$2

editor@montaguereporter.org

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

montaguereporter.org

## Leverett Voters Turn Down Taking of Public Easement To Access Preserved Land

By **GEORGE BRACE**

Over 300 Leverett residents showed up to a special town meeting at the elementary school gymnasium Tuesday night and voted, by a slim majority, against a proposal to take an easement by eminent domain intended to formalize a public cut-through to conservation land.

The residents voted in favor of seven other articles, including additional funding for a new roof at the Amherst-Pelham middle

school. Passage of the easement article would have required a two-thirds majority, but the measure was defeated 150 to 148.

Town clerk Lisa Stratford said that by her memory, the meeting had the highest attendance of any special town meeting since the 1980s.

Members of the conservation commission and town counsel Donna MacNicol made presentations, and well over a dozen residents delivered statements for or against see **LEVERETT** page A5

## Turners Soccer Advances In Statewide Tournament



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Turners Falls High School players (left to right) Cam Johnson, Noah Kolodziej, Kevin Perez Cueto, and Mario Pareja move the ball past two defenders from the Hull High School Pirates during Wednesday night's 1-0 home win.

By **MATT ROBINSON**

**TURNERS FALLS** – On Wednesday evening the 12th-ranked Turners Falls Soccer Thunder, fresh off last week's Western Mass championship win, defeated the 21st-seeded Hull Pirates in the first round of the MIAA Division 5 state tournament.

Although the home game didn't officially kick off until 6 p.m., festivities began much earlier. At 2:10 p.m., students and teachers from Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School gathered in the gym, accompanied by the pep band and four cheerleaders.

After some initial remarks were made, the Boys in Blue charged out of the locker room and broke through a paper banner, to the delight and cheers from those assembled.

But after the cheers died down, the Western Mass champions got to work. After all, it was the playoffs: win, or their season ends.

It was a little cold at game time, and it was spitting rain throughout the contest. The stands were packed with Turners fans, though while there were not a lot of Hull fans in the audience, they made their voices heard, too.

The Pirates came out kicking see **SOCCER** page A6

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Public Health Director Finds New Position, Gives Notice

By **JEFF SINGLETON**

At its Monday night meeting the Montague selectboard learned that public health director Ryan Paxton has resigned from his position, effective November 27. The board also accepted a state grant to study the feasibility of creating a trail network through the Montague Plains, endorsed two grant applications to construct affordable housing, reviewed the town's FY'27 budget process, and reduced the number of seats on the energy committee.

Paxton, who was not in attendance, wrote to the board that he had recently renegotiated his employment contract "in good faith," but had "since made a difficult decision to accept a role which ultimately better serves the needs of my family and provides greater opportunities for advancing my career in public health."

"He got an offer he couldn't refuse," said selectboard chair Matt Lord.

Paxton told the Reporter he has been hired as director of the Eastern Hampden Shared Public Health Services, with offices in Longmeadow. He said that the position, which oversees public health boards in Hampden, Longmeadow, Monson, see **MONTAGUE** page A7



The controversial article on the King property drew such a large crowd that voters' residency was checked upon entrance, an unusual requirement in Leverett.

## Town Officially Rolls Up 'Battlefield' Study Group

By **JEFF SINGLETON**

**MONTAGUE** – The town of Montague's Battlefield Grant Advisory Committee held its final meeting on Wednesday after 12 years overseeing extensive research into the 1676 massacre, or battle, of Turners Falls, widely viewed as a turning point in King Philip's War.

Funded by a series of grants from the National Park Service, consultants hired by the oversight committee undertook extensive archaeological research in at least four municipalities, created an inventory of primary and secondary sources from local libraries and archives,

held numerous public events describing their findings, and solicited commentary from five tribes in the region, whose representatives sat on the advisory board.

The project faced initial skepticism about the notion of a "battle" of Turners Falls, which is generally understood as an early-morning massacre of indigenous people by a colonial militia from Hatfield. But the federal grant, modeled on Civil War research, required the study of a battle between two describable forces on a field.

As the research unfolded, the massacre site turned out to be see **STUDY** page A4

## Mini-Grant Grows Community at Gardens

By **BEN GAGNON**

**TURNERS FALLS** – Last Saturday was brisk and bright, hovering about 50 degrees, the perfect day for gardeners to get together and prepare their plots for winter at the Unity Park Community Garden.

On the last day before daylight saving time pulled the shade on sunny afternoons, the mood was cheery as Eli Smith wielded a pitchfork, Michael Baines dug an edge around the shed for a new flower bed, and sisters Kim and Kristen Livingstone planted a row of garlic cloves.

During their first year as the garden's co-coordinators, Smith, Baines, and Lisa Davol noticed that the concept of community seemed to be missing from the community garden. People were coming to work on their plots one or two at a time without much socializing.

"People were staying in their garden boxes the same way they were staying in their apartments," said Davol. "We were talking about how we could get everyone together for some kind of event and then we heard about this grant to combat loneliness."

Working with Suzette Snow-Cobb, the coordinator of the Third see **GARDENS** page A8



GAGNON PHOTO

Kristen Livingstone was pleased to receive a radish last Saturday at the Unity Park Community Garden.

## LISTENERS LIKE THESE



PHOTO AND CAPTION BY MAGGIE SADOWAY

On Sunday, Gill Indivisible Group, a local chapter of the national grassroots Indivisible movement, far surpassed its goal by raising \$7,679 for New England Public Media (NEPM) at the People's Pint in Greenfield. An overflow crowd of more than 100 guests played a rousing game of First Amendment trivia, with radio host Monte Belmonte and state senator Jo Comerford as quizmasters.

While guests feasted on soup and bread, NEPM president Matt Abramovitz told them that due to the federal government's withdrawal of funding from public broadcasting nationwide, many smaller rural stations will disappear, but that NEPM won't be going away.

### Turn The Volume Up, etc.

Describable Forces On a Field.....A1	Emitted Noxious Fumes.....B1
Persistently Smites the Ear.....A2	Filled With Squeaks and Laughter.....B2
Money To Do Other Ridiculous Things.....A3	Loose Tin and Other Scraps All Over.....B3
Beautiful Material That Has Many Virtues.....A4	What That Maniac Has Done.....B4
Witnessed the Gruesome Attack.....A5	Our Singing Bones Grow.....B5
Pirates Did Their Best to Score.....A6	Ambient Church, Habitat Dioramas, Full Beaver.....B6
Addressing Surface Defects.....A7	Warm, Earth, Mesh, Berm, Jumpy, Aura Shards.....B7
Cucumbers Were Really Small.....A8	Flock of Little Golden Ducks.....B8



# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

## Man Of The Hour

These comments, recorded in the *History and Proceedings of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association 1899-1904*, were delivered by PVMA president George Sheldon on September 12, 1900, at Riverside in Gill. The occasion was the dedication of the monument that still stands there, venerating the English captain William Turner, who it says "surprised and destroyed over 300 Indians, encamped at this place, May 19, 1676." — Eds.

"Your soil drank the blood, and from it you turn up the bones and the belongings of an extinct people; and the name of Turner persistently smites the ear from your thundering waters...."

"The blundering attempt to enforce the civil laws of the colony upon the freeborn child of the wildwoods, even to the keeping of the Puritan Sabbath, was sadly out of place, and only added little by little fuel to the concealed volcano. The feeling of hatred for the white man kept pace with their own degradation, and as the years went by, the desire for vengeance on the intruder gradually became a smoldering fire, awaiting but an opportunity to become a withering flame...."

"Hostilities in the Connecticut valley began March 14, with a fruitless attempt on Northampton and Hatfield, by a force from the camp of Philip. As the spring advanced, insulting positions were occupied by the boastful Indians on the Pocumtuck at Cheapside, and at this place. Hundreds of acres of corn were planted on the meadows, and a year's stock of salmon and shad was being cured and stored in convenient underground barns. When their spring work was

done, the hated white man was to be swept from the valley, and as we shall see the governor and council, were practically, if unwittingly, aiding and abetting Philip in his plans. A dark shadow loomed over the settlements below.

"It was at this juncture that Capt. William Turner appeared on the scene as commander-in-chief of the forces in this part of the colony to frustrate the well laid plans of the enemy, save the settlements, and impress his name on the spot we this day commemorate so long as grass grows and water runs.

"Who was this Capt. Turner who gave his life to save our fathers with their wives and children from the tomahawk and scalping knife? This is a fit question to be asked, and I will hastily outline such answer as I may, concerning this true patriot and soldier, this man of the hour!...."

"Deserted by the government the men of the valley rallied around their commander-in-chief.... Turner had been ordered to act strictly on the defensive, that possibly some of the towns might be saved, but as we have seen he had little awe of the governor and council, and less faith in their wisdom. He now took counsel of his own judgment and... he took the responsibility of disobeying orders. You all know the result. His bold action saved the towns and practically closed the war in the Connecticut valley...."

"[H]e gave his life as the last sacrifice, that our fathers' lives and our heritage might be preserved.

"And so to-day we reverently gather to dedicate a monument to the Honored Memory of the Champion of Free Thought, the Christian Patriot, the wise and brave Soldier, Captain William Turner."



Dan Beretsky clears a table in feline style at Dreamhouse in Turners Falls on Halloween. He celebrates his 56th week waiting tables at the Third Street breakfast and lunch establishment.

## Letters to the Editors

### Jewish, Palestinian Safety 'Interdependent'

I am writing in regard to last week's Letter to the Editor entitled "Uncomfortable After 'Apartheid' Vote."

I do not intend to refute, point for point, what was shared by its writer; to do so would require a comprehensive definition of colonialism alongside more historical context on the formation of the state of Israel — and the longstanding US alliance with it — than can be conveyed here.

Instead, as a Jewish community member and Town Meeting Member who voted for and spoke on behalf of the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge, I'd like to clarify a few core intentions of the campaign.

It behooves me to first acknowledge the writer's point that Jews are not a monolith. In the past two years, I don't know of a Jewish

community member who wasn't shaken to the core by the gravity of the situation in Israel/Palestine. And yet, for some, the notion of "Jewish safety" and its conflation with the state of Israel seemed to supersede the staggeringly blatant and continual targeting of Gaza's civilians, cultural institutions, and land itself.

As both a Jew and a human being, witnessing apartheid and yes, genocide in Gaza has not only made me feel unsafe, it has also stirred my moral conscience to advocate for the safety of all people everywhere.

While it is indeed uncomfortable to live in a society that funds foreign governments and war profiteers before it feeds its own people, and shameful to pay taxes towards that end, it is horrific to see the notion of my "Jewish safety" be weaponized

against the survival and sovereignty of Palestinians.

This is, at its core, what the Pledge is all about, to "affirm our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for Palestinian people *and all people*." The Apartheid-Free network formed in 2022, following an emerging consensus among the international human rights community that Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people constitutes apartheid.

Ultimately, I believe the safety, freedom, and liberation of Jews and Palestinians are interdependent. As Jewish activist and poet Emma Lazarus once said: "Until we are all free, we are none of us free."

Kaia Jackson  
Turners Falls

### 'Actions Have Consequences'

Actions have consequences:

I'm not clear why Montague feels entitled to censure Israel. Israel is surrounded by enemies with the explicit intention of destroying it, an intention backed by missiles, bombs, tanks, and armies of dedicated antagonists, some suicidal. While Montague is bordered by Wendell, armed with zoning, intent on eliminating... batteries.

There's a long list of terrible events across Arab countries; a long pattern of persecuted minorities, ethnic, religious, and sectarian, killed, expelled, or starved by state or non-state actors.

Christians, Jews, Kurds, Yazidis, Copts, Marsh Arabs, Non-Arabs in Darfur, Druze, Palestinian refugees, Black Arabs, Sunnis killing Shia, and Shia killing Sunnis by the hundreds of thousands. It's a long and terrible list that dwarfs the war in Gaza.

Of these? Nothing. And now, Hamas, protected by the ceasefire, murders its opposition, in public, on video. We see no anguished self-righteous editorials, not a mumbling word in protest. Just backslapping self-important virtue on parade; how very wonderful is us.

If you don't think the focus on only Israel has the taint of anti-semitism, you're being willfully obtuse.

When I was growing up in New Jersey, my Rabbi, Joachim Prinz, former Chief Rabbi of Berlin, told us that he thought of himself as wholly German, before he had to flee for his life in the 1930s.

He warned, "It can happen here."

And what does this vote at town meeting, encouraged by this newspaper, accomplish? With anti-semitic incidents up 344% since 2019, comprising 69% of all religion-based hate-crime, and up 893% over the last decade, according to the Anti-Defamation League, this vote is not helpful.

And how does this make me feel?

I'm a liberal American Jew. As my children grew up, we didn't let them play with toy guns.

I now have a license to carry.

Thanks, and well done, Montague.

Robert J. Steinberg  
Montague

## CORRECTION / CLARIFICATION

Leverett reader Tom Wolff took issue with a statement in a Letter to the Editor last week from Silas Ball that the land acknowledgement read at the beginning of each Leverett town meeting "explains... how terrible it was that the land we now know as Leverett was taken forcibly and horrifically from its inhabitants by self-serving, greedy people hundreds of years ago."

"I would like you to publish the following correction. We did not state what Mr. Ball alleges," writes Wolff, a member of the citizens' group that drafted the text and successfully petitioned town meeting in 2023 to adopt the practice. "We simply said 'The colonization of

this area led to the displacement of these Native peoples.'"

Wolff further provides the context for this statement in the text:

"We acknowledge the Town of Leverett is located on or near the ancestral lands of the Pocumtuck, Nonotuck, and Nipmuc people. Leverett is located in the Kwinitekw (Connecticut River) Valley, a crossroads of multiple Native nations. This is still their homeland. Their voices are in the air we breathe. They are still here. We give thanks and acknowledge that we are standing on land that Indigenous peoples stewarded for generations. The colonization of this area led to the displacement of these Native peoples...."

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# TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

We tried once again, like lovable furry old Grover in the 1971 metaliterary classic *The Monster at the End of This Book*, to barricade ourselves against **the time change**, but once again someone turned the page. Bah.

The Vic changed hands! Congratulations to Phil and Angel Simon, who last week announced their purchase of the **Victoria Bar** on Greenfield's Chapman Street. Phil Simon runs Simon Says Booking and, on this side of the river, contracts as a programming consultant with the Shea Theater.

As a non-drinker of alcohol I'll admit I can count on one hand the number of times I've hung out in that bar – and once was that Majik Markers show, which probably shouldn't count – but I've always appreciated the friendly, no-pretense atmosphere around it, and I'm interested to see where the Simons bring it next.

It's mostly old news as this paper goes to print, but for the record, the state has been working this week on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge, reducing traffic to one lane in the daytime.

The Town of Montague also announces that more of the same is right around the corner:

"Thursday evening starting at 8 p.m." – that's tonight, in the universe of our current edition – "into Friday's workday there will be **repaving work on the Factory Hollow Bridge** on Route 2 between Gill and Greenfield. Construction will be using lane shifts or, if needed, one lane closures."

Another announcement:

"The **Veterans Day Ceremony** is scheduled for 11 a.m. next Tuesday, November 11 at the Soldiers Memorial Park on Avenue A in Turners Falls. Prayers and speeches honoring Montague veterans will be conducted by representatives from the Montague selectboard, Montague Elks, and the Soldiers Memorial Committee. This event is open to the public."

Eversource is planning to widen the cleared corridor on either side of its **WT-11 transmission line**, which connects its Northfield and Ludlow substations and passes through four of our five "coverage towns," Erving, Wendell, Montague, and Leverett, along the way.

It's a large, complicated project, intended to increase the reliability of the power grid by protecting the lines from trees, and we'll all be hearing more about it in the coming months.

A state public comment period is currently underway, through November 21. The plan has its critics, including a group of "volunteers living in Shutesbury and Pelham" who have help-



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

mode, which is good in any case.

One local project I especially want to boost is a **raffle spearheaded by Gill CC Woodworks to benefit Stone Soup Café**, the pay-what-you-can community meals organization, featuring two tables built by craftsman supreme Sam French as the top prizes.

Sam is offering a six-foot-long walnut table, custom-made for the winner's space, with an ash base and tusk tenons made of maple burl – see the top two pics at left for an example. He has also snagged a base from the old Smith College library (the bottom pic) and will fit it with a custom ash top for a second prizewinner.

In just the last few days the other goodies in the raffle have really begun to pile up, courtesy of the Green River Festival, Nartowicz Tree Service, the Gill Tavern, Blue Heron Restaurant, Atlantis Therapeutics, TimeBandit Photography, the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, Hillside Pizza, Colin Ward Music, Danco Modern Furniture and Katie Goodall Photography. Talk about *stone soup*.

Tickets range from \$7.50 for pizza to \$30 for a table – \$30 for a table like that! – and can be purchased at [www.bit.ly/furnishandfeed](http://www.bit.ly/furnishandfeed). Winners will be drawn Monday, December 1.

Community Action Pioneer Valley, which runs the federal **fuel assistance program** in Franklin and Hampshire counties, announced on Monday that due to the shutdown only emergency applicants (i.e. customers with a shutoff notice or less than three days' supply of fuel) will receive aid. Congress hasn't funded the program, and local programs don't have contracts yet.

Associate program director Janna Tetreault says that "once the shutdown ends," she expects the program to go back to normal, so do get your application in if you need fuel aid this winter.

**Airport shutdowns loom.**

If you or someone you know is a Massachusetts high school senior hoping to go to college to study in an environmental field, the Henry David Thoreau Foundation ([www.thoreauscholar.org](http://www.thoreauscholar.org)) is offering **scholarships of up to \$26,000** as well as lifelong membership benefits. Applications will be accepted until February 1.

Anyone who was actually watching the NYC **mayoral race** was not surprised to see Mamdani crack the 50% threshold. The entire country will now be watching to see how successful he is in transitioning that movement into public office!

Send your little bits of news to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).

fully organized numerous documents and maps and talking points and made them available online via [ResponsibleGrid.org](http://ResponsibleGrid.org). Whether or not you agree with their specific take on the project, they've done a huge public education service!

The federal government is still shut down – it recently became the longest-running shutdown – but there is new news since last week about the SNAP food assistance program, which was then looking likely to be unfunded in November and is now purportedly delivering partial benefits, to the tune of 65 cents on the dollar. Progress.

The threat to the program kicked anti-hunger efforts around the country into break-the-glass

## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# Gill's Leaky Buildings: Repair or Despair?

By KATE SAVAGE

Most of Monday's Gill selectboard meeting was devoted to brainstorming how the town can best maintain and repair its aging buildings.

"Second to a town's roads, chances are its buildings are its most valuable asset," said town administrator Ray Purington

Ray Steele, who leads a volunteer crew of repair people known as the "Grayhaired Club," recommended bringing building problems up at town meeting. "I think we could make it an article on a warrant," he said, "say, 'You people want to fix it or not?'"

Steele also recommended doubling the building maintenance budget so problems can be addressed before they become a crisis.

Selectboard member Greg Snek-

deker said he agreed with these ideas, but voiced his worries that education and healthcare costs will make the next budget tight, putting the town at risk of requiring a Proposition 2½ override vote.

"I'm 100% behind you," Snekeder said. "I'm just trying to think through how we're going to sell that to the town, and finance it in a way that's palatable."

Steele agreed to be added to the capital improvement planning committee, and was rapidly appointed to it by the selectboard. "Quick," said selectboard chair Charles Garbiel, "before he changes his mind."

On that committee, Steele said he plans to lead a working group of volunteers focused on the needs of town buildings.

Contractor Steve Striebel offered to volunteer with Steele's working group, and mentioned other peo-

ple in town who know the building trades and might be willing to volunteer some of their time and expertise to save the town's historic buildings.

Regardless of what system the town uses moving forward, the board agreed that the leaky roof on the Riverside municipal building is an emergency that needs immediate attention. The source of funds for the project remains unclear.

"I can't understand why this town doesn't have money to get somebody to go put a roof on that building," said resident Dan Flagg. "They have money to do other ridiculous things."

"I don't think we've done too many ridiculous things," Snekeder countered. "We're just behind on a lot of things."

Purington said he was attempting to determine the legal requirements for the procurement process, and

whether the town may use funds previously set aside for a rooftop solar feasibility study for the building.

### Other Business

The selectboard approved an annual Green Communities report, which showed that energy usage for the town is up from previous years, but remains below the 2010 baseline. Purington pointed to a colder, stormier winter last year as the main reason for the increase. Not only did buildings use more fuel for heating, but the highway department had to plow and treat the roads more frequently.

The board approved the purchase of a quick coupler for the highway department backhoe, at the cost of \$2,058.

The board's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 17, at 5:30 p.m. at the town hall.

**Dove Of Peace Bazaar**  
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*A luncheon will be served.*

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### STUDY from page A1

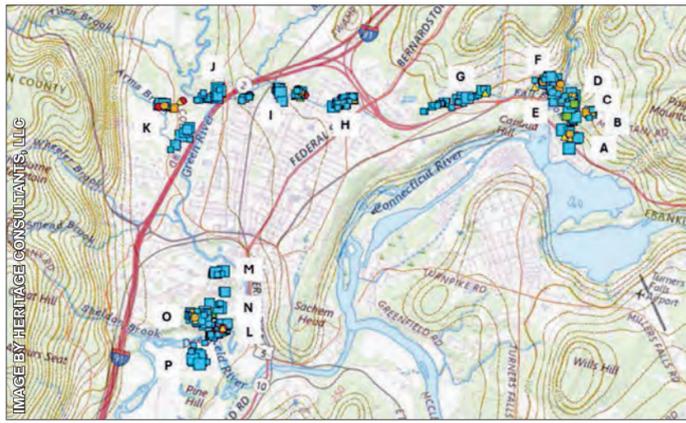
largely under the present-day Connecticut River, above the Turners dam near the Gill bank, and a line of musket balls traced a subsequent battle between Native troops and the retreating colonial militia from Gill through Greenfield.

The project has been documented by six official reports covering various phases of the project and a 402-page final report, all of which can be found on the Battlefield Grant project page on the town website.

Wednesday's meeting was attended by about 15 people, in person and over Zoom. Chair David Brule began by reading a list of people who had served on the advisory board or contributed to the project in other ways since the town's first grant application in 2013. Members of the audience added more.

Brule asked those in attendance if the committee should continue to meet in an informal capacity. He said that Montague town administrator Walter Ramsey had offered the second-floor meeting room for an *ad hoc* group, and suggested that "maybe we should linger on."

While he did not receive an immediate answer, as the meeting progressed, more and more possible future activities emerged. Representatives of Historic Bostons, a group focusing on both Euro-American



"Battlefield Loci and Distribution of Personal, Domestic and Military Objects Battle of Great Falls," a map from the project's final report issued in September, shows the English retreat after the massacre. Blue squares indicate musket balls.

and Indigenous history in the eastern part of the state, proposed a panel discussion on the battlefield project in early May as part of an ongoing project titled "Two Bostons." Advisory committee members, in turn, invited them to a tour of the battlefield.

Brule noted that a "Day of Remembrance" will be held that month at the Great Falls Discovery Center in honor of the 350th anniversary of the massacre. Gill author Lynn Stowe Tomb suggested an installation at the Discovery Center documenting the battlefield project.

There was a lengthy discussion of the desire to upgrade existing sig-

nage about Native Americans along the bike path in Turners Falls, and for new signage along the trail of the battle through Gill and Greenfield.

Brule said he was very disappointed that the weighty final report, which revised some of the speculations and conclusions of the project's earlier phases, did not include the narratives contributed by Native historians – from the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Tribe, the Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck and Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah – in a 2016 report. Several attendees sug-

gested raising funds to republish these narratives as an addendum.

Brule also raised the issue of the controversial monument on the edge of Route 2 in Riverside honoring captain William Turner, the militia leader who played a key role in organizing the massacre and was killed during the retreat. He suggested adding a second monument or installation next to it honoring indigenous cultures in the area.

"I don't want to demolish the Turner monument, but I think we should create some balance," he said, noting that the land on which the monument sits is owned by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association of Old Deerfield, which had originally installed it at a nearby site in 1900.

All of these prospective activities created enthusiasm for continuing the work of the oversight committee on a less formal basis. Members and other attendees agreed to meet next on Wednesday, January 7, and to choose a name for the *ad hoc* group at that time.

The meeting was about to adjourn by itself when a member of the online audience pointed out that the advisory committee still needed to take a formal vote to disband. It did so unanimously, followed by cheering and applause. 

## OP ED

# Conserve Forests – But Localize the Wood We Do Use.

By BRIAN DONAHUE

**GILL** – A recent *Reporter* review of my book *Slow Wood* raised a thorny issue: should we cut trees? Donna Petersen closed by saying that climate change is "beyond scary, and I think we need as many trees as possible to absorb and sequester carbon dioxide... Until we get the runaway train that is climate change under control – if we can – we need trees, the planet's natural climate warriors."

I think we need as many trees as possible, too. But the thing is, we also need wood. We can't just stop building houses until we get climate change under control. And wood is a beautiful material that has many virtues, compared to plastic, steel, or concrete. Getting that wood means cutting trees, somewhere on the planet.

Cutting trees for lumber does store some carbon in buildings, but also causes emissions in the process – though far less than mining and manufacturing steel, let alone concrete. The atmosphere doesn't care whether those trees are cut in Colrain or Quebec.

I'm not in favor of increased logging in the world in general. But as long as we consume wood, I am in favor of more logging *around here*, where we can take environmental responsibility for how it is done – and also enjoy the economic benefits in our rural towns.

How much wood are we cutting here now?

Colleagues and I took a look at the balance sheet for New England in a 2024 report called *Beyond the "Illusion of Preservation."* We found that in spite of being 80% forested, New England only produces about half of the lumber it consumes. Southern New England states like Massachusetts, which is 60% forested, cut about 5% of what we use – far below our capacity. We are not doing our part in sustaining ourselves – not even close.

So where *does* our wood come from? Within New England, most of it comes from northern Maine, where the forest industry cuts hard for pulp and timber. The United States cuts about as much lumber and pulp as it consumes overall, and most now comes from the Southeast, where pines are grown in plantations. Some of our construction lumber comes from Canada, including from old-growth boreal forests.

When we refuse to cut wood close to home but don't change our consumption, in practice we embrace these other sources of supply.

Just letting local trees grow to absorb carbon accomplishes nothing on its own, unless we also address where and how trees are cut.

Is there a viable "local wood" alternative? Yes, there is. In *Beyond the "Illusion,"* we called for three things: protecting our forests, reducing consumption, and expanding ecological forestry.

First, we endorsed the *Wildlands and Woodlands* goal of protecting at least 70% of New England (including 50% of Massachusetts) in forest, along with all our remaining farmland. At least 10% would be set aside as passively-managed wild reserves, while the rest remains available for active management, including wood harvesting.

Land conservation doesn't mean halting construction of needed housing – it's more a matter of clustering development so that less forest and farmland is fragmented by low-density sprawl.

Second, reducing wood consumption is quite feasible – in fact, American paper consumption has been declining for years, while recycling of paper, unlike plastic, is substantial and increasing. Lumber consumption fluctuates with the rate of home construction, which will follow the rate of population growth or decline in coming decades.

But in the meantime, we can reduce that consumption even while meeting pressing needs, by rehabbing existing structures and building more smaller workforce and multi-family housing. We estimated New England wood consumption can be reduced 25% by 2060.

Third, expanding "ecological forestry" means practicing more restrained cutting that puts ecological values first, alongside growing higher-quality timber. It mimics the growth and disturbance patterns that naturally govern our forests: periodic thinning as stands mature; long rotations of well over a century; only harvesting (and thus regenerating) a small part of the forest at a time. This creates diverse forest structure, and leaves lots of deadwood and legacy trees.

Practicing such forestry would require cutting less intensively in the industrial forests of northern New England. But by the same token, it would mean more active management of the family-owned forests of central and southern New England – our own backyard.

In *Beyond the "Illusion,"* we calculated that our region could entirely meet its wood needs by practicing ecological forestry across

a little more than half of the landscape.

Under that scenario, Massachusetts lumber production would roughly double. That is still well below the annual growth of our forest, and is not a heavy cross to bear. Quite the contrary: a forest featuring *both* expanded wild reserves and expanded wood harvesting from ecological forestry would be beautiful, diverse, and resilient. You could still bathe in it.

In *Slow Wood*, I illustrated this idea by describing a timber-frame house we built on our farm, using "low-grade" trees (we love them anyway) that were cut from our woodlot in an improvement thinning: hemlock, black birch, crooked cherry, suppressed maple.

Ms. Petersen wonders if that would be "realistic" for most people, which is a fair question.

About 80% of New England's population (and America's) is urban and suburban, and those housing needs obviously can't be met directly by local forests. They could be met, though, by a regional forest economy that connects to the same ecological forestry, and we need policies to push in that direction. Ecological forestry could supply "mass timber" construction using cross-laminated timber panels and Glulam posts and beams, which is perfect for multi-family housing and has much the same feeling as living in a timber-frame house.

If you want to visit a mass timber building in our area, check out the Design Building at UMass.

About 20% of us live in rural areas, or in small towns embedded within them, such as western Massachusetts. Most don't own a woodlot, but anyplace a person might choose to build a house is, in effect, right next door to a woodlot. Many of these woodlands are managed under long-term forest stewardship plans, and many more could be. Plenty of help is available (see [www.masswoods.org](http://www.masswoods.org)) to any landowner who wants to do so.

Connecting these local woodlands with home construction is also quite feasible. We know several people in Gill who have built in a similar way, and these are not big, fancy houses. If you have the means to build a house, you can build with local wood – there is no real trick to it other than finding the right builder, and having a little patience. It helps to start with the trees and work towards the house – let the local forest express itself in your home.

Obviously, all rural building can't start

using local wood overnight – the infrastructure and skills simply aren't there. But if just a few more people moving to rural towns were to build with local wood, it would provide the needed demand to help expand that infrastructure – the sawmills, millworkers, timber framers, and so forth. That would put us in a better position to make such housing more broadly accessible.

Using local wood won't make housing any cheaper – but it won't make it much more expensive, either, given all the other costs involved. That was certainly our experience. Meanwhile, the benefits to rural communities would be immense, rebuilding these honorable vocations from the ground up.

Is cutting more of our wood locally good for the climate? Beats me – it depends what you count.

A recent *Forest Carbon Study* done for the state by researchers at Harvard Forest and UMass Amherst reached a refreshing conclusion: protecting our forests from sprawling development is critical to storing carbon, and after that, it really doesn't matter much whether we cut more local wood or designate more wild reserves. That is because cutting wood releases more emissions in the short run, but leads, on average, to faster growth and sequestration in the long run.

And here's what else they found: future hurricanes will likely cause far more carbon loss from our forests than any small differences among the ways we may choose to manage them. So, what are we arguing about? Not carbon, really.

Like Ms. Petersen, I have met many smart people with strongly differing opinions about how forests "ought" to be managed – sustainably logged, or just left alone. But thoughtful people I know believe in more wood harvesting and more wild reserves, working together. My own belief is that if we cannot reconnect with our forests through *both* bathing and building, we will never have the political strength to defend them from what is coming.

*Brian Donahue is Professor Emeritus of American Environmental Studies at Brandeis University. He co-owns a farm in Gill and serves on the Gill conservation commission, Franklin Land Trust, and Massachusetts Woodlands Institute. He is the author of several books about New England farms and forests.*

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The gym was so packed that some residents sat through the meeting on the floor.

**LEVERETT** from page A1

the proposed taking. In question was a 7,214-square-foot path that provides the easiest access to the Gordon King Life Estate, along with other conservation areas, which have been used regularly for decades by residents to access their blueberry bushes, trails, and other features.

The land containing the path is owned by Dave and Norma Evans, with their daughter Julie Evans Marlowe holding a life estate. In 1955, a prior owner deeded to Gordon King and his heirs a right to travel across a portion of the property.

Dave Evans and Gordon King were both prominent, longtime residents of Leverett, and their past wishes and contributions to the town have been cited by residents on both sides of the issue since last summer, when a public debate first developed about the right of way.

The Evans family has lived elsewhere for some years, but is planning to return, and in 2024 barred entry to the path by locking a gate and putting up “No Trespassing” signs. Citing privacy concerns as well as a belief that the deeded right-of-way should only guarantee access to the conservation lands for maintenance work, they filed a lawsuit seeking to clarify their property rights.

Five other routes to the conservation land exist, but supporters of the easement argue that the one crossing the Evans’s land is the only one level and short enough for use by people with mobility issues, such as some older residents, and that Gordon King, now deceased, would have wanted it that way.

The nature of the conservation restriction King gifted to the town in 2000, which includes language allowing access for its maintenance, is disputed by the Evanses, and the land court case is reportedly complicated. After efforts at mediation failed, the selectboard turned to the eminent domain proposal in the hope of resolving the issue more quickly and less expensively.

Tuesday’s meeting began with an acknowledgement, read at all Leverett town meetings, that the

town sits on land once occupied by indigenous people who were displaced by colonists. The statement urges residents to “learn and relearn to listen to Native voices as they teach us, guide us, and remind us how to live in balance and reciprocity. This is the critical part of building relationships.”

Speakers would later reference this statement both in support of and in opposition to the taking. While several arguing against the article cited specific legal aspects of the case, sentiments were also expressed supporting private property rights more broadly.

Supporters of the taking argued that the potential harm to the Evans family would be small and could be mitigated, whereas the continued access would provide a large benefit to the community. Resident Nancy Grossman said she was generally opposed to eminent domain takings by large corporations, but that this easement would be for the common good.

Others said they felt the action was too strong, with one likening it to using a “cannon” to settle a minor dispute. Speakers on both sides expressed regret over the divisiveness the disagreement had caused.

The question went to a paper ballot, and when the final count was read, many applauded.

Several people spoke with the Reporter after the meeting about the dispute and the future of the case.

Julie Evans Marlowe and Dave Evans said that when they went to the conservation commission two years ago seeking to clarify the path’s status, they thought it would be easily handled, and “never wanted it to escalate as it did.” The pair thanked the people of Leverett for letting them speak at Tuesday’s meeting even though they are not current residents, and said they were especially grateful for the large turnout.

Evans Marlowe also commented that the issue has been difficult, and that while it is not yet settled, she felt a major hurdle has been overcome and she and her family look forward to returning to Leverett.

Resident Silas Ball said he wor-

ries town officials may continue to try to take the easement on the principle of adverse possession, based on the past decades of public use.

“Donna MacNicol stood up and said basically the selectboard plans on continuing the fight,” Ball wrote. “She spoke about using affidavits that they’ve already received from townspeople about publicly accessing that property for the past 20 years.”

Selectboard member Tom Hankinson said that the court case is still pending, and that the board is “considering next steps in arriving at a permanent solution.”

“This town meeting vote,” he wrote, “which fell far short of the two-thirds majority needed to pass, is a message from Leverett voters that it wants the selectboard to resolve any and all disputes, real or imagined, between the town of Leverett and Evans Marlowe amicably and with all deliberate speed.”

On a public email listserv, Hankinson wrote that he felt there was “good reason to believe” the relationship between the town and the Evans family is “already in the process of repair.”

**Other Articles**

By a voice vote, residents unanimously approved an increase in funding to replace the roof on the Amherst-Pelham regional middle school. The project, now projected to cost \$10 million, was originally approved at a lower figure in 2019, contingent on receiving a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority for 61.95% of the cost, but the grant was not awarded until this year, and costs have risen.

In 2019 the four towns that make up the district, Amherst, Leverett, Pelham, and Shutesbury, would have been responsible for \$3 million of the cost, but their share now comes to \$4.2 million. Leverett’s new assessment adds \$155,000 to what was previously approved, for a total of \$410,000.

School committee member Tim Shores said the roof leaks and contains asbestos, and that failure to replace it will result in the loss of the building.

Six other articles were approved by voice vote. One authorized additional funds – \$33,935 for the town and \$74,870 for the elementary school – for FY’26 to cover the recent mid-year rise in insurance rates.

Another authorized an additional \$10,000 for part-time police. Police chief Scott Minckler explained that the loss of full-time officers and the requirement for part-time officers to attend the police academy had caused an unforeseen rise in the use of part-timers.

Four articles were minor book-keeping measures, and the warrant’s final article, which would have funded a visual barrier between the path and the Evans’s house, was passed over after the easement article was rejected.

**Selectboard Meeting**

The selectboard returned to work Wednesday morning to conduct a dog hearing, a tax classification hearing, and other business.

Ricky Carey, the complainant in the dog hearing, testified that on October 15 a German Shepherd named Biggy, owned by Pierre Benoit of Sprinkle Road, entered his backyard and mauled and killed a smaller dog named Annie belong-

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**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**

**MONTAGUE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

In accordance with the Mass. Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, the Montague Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting at **6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 13, 2025** to review the Request for Determination of Applicability RDA #2025-04, filed by **First Generation Investments Group**, to determine whether regrading and paving of a new parking area in buffer zone only at 11 Tenth Street (Assessor’s Map/Parcel 03-0-048) is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act. A hybrid meeting will be held at the Montague Town Hall Annex, 1 Avenue A in Turners Falls, MA. Remote meeting login information and the filing is available for review at [www.montague-ma.gov/calendar](http://www.montague-ma.gov/calendar).

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**ZBA #25-12: ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE**

Notice is hereby given that the Montague Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom and in-person** at the Montague Town Hall upstairs conference room, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA, at the request of **Zaharia Nichita** for a Special Permit to allow an additional 96 square feet of signage for a total of 128 square feet, where 32 square feet are currently permitted, under Sections 7.1.4 and 9.2 of the Zoning Bylaws, located at **221 Millers Falls Road (Map 23, Parcel 28), in the General Business (GB) District**. The filing is available for review at Town Hall. In-person meeting details and remote meeting login information can be found at [www.montague-ma.gov/calendar](http://www.montague-ma.gov/calendar).

ing to his neighbors, David and Kathy Boron.

Carey said that the Borons’ grandchildren, who were visiting his property, witnessed the gruesome attack and remain fearful of Biggy. Other children in the neighborhood also feared the dog, he said.

Chief Minckler reported that he had received two prior complaints about Biggy, including one in which the dog pulled a boot off a child’s foot, and another for aggressive behavior in 2023.

Regional animal control officer Kyle Dragon testified that Biggy has been unlicensed and unvaccinated for five years. Dragon said residents he interviewed reported additional incidents of aggressive behavior, including toward children. He said that in his opinion it was within the board’s purview to declare the dog either a “nuisance” or “dangerous.”

All three board members said they were dog lovers, and criticized Benoit for being irresponsible in caring for Biggy. Chair Patricia Duffy said Benoit had failed to “properly control” the animal, who was “clearly dangerous” and “terrorizing the neighborhood.”

Duffy said it was the board’s duty to protect the community, and recommended that the dog be euthanized.

Hankinson said he was not convinced training would change the situation, and agreed with Duffy’s assessment, “as much as I dislike it.”

Member Jed Proujansky also agreed. “I hate punishing a dog for the behavior of an owner,” he said, but he didn’t have confidence Benoit would follow through with other requirements.

The board unanimously voted to order the dog euthanized. Benoit has 10 days to appeal the decision to a district court.

In the tax classification hearing, the board followed the recommendation of the board of assessors and set a single tax rate for residential and commercial property of \$14.80 per \$1,000 in value, down from \$15.18.

David Burgess of the Regional Resource Group, hired to assess properties in Leverett, presented a range of options showing that due to the small amount of commercial property in the town, changing to a split classification would have little effect on residential taxes.

The average assessment for single-family homes in Leverett is now up to about \$501,000, Burgess said, so the average tax bill for FY’26 would be \$7,401, a \$254 increase over FY’25.

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**SOCCER** from page A1

immediately, keeping the ball in the Turners end. "They're much bigger than us," someone in the audience observed.

"And they can move," another spectator added.

The Pirates kept the pressure on, and seven minutes into the game they were awarded their first penalty shot. It was blocked, but Hull maintained control, and with 8:42 left in the half they got another penalty shot.

That's when the Turners fans got loud. A diving stop by Jackson Cogswell prevented the score, but again Hull stayed in charge, keeping the action in Blue territory. The Thunder managed to break up several attacks with fancy footwork, and the half ended in a scoreless tie.

In the second half, Turners came out shooting. They used smart passing to move down the field and coordinated formations to set up shots on goal, though each one

went wide, or high, or was stopped by the Pirate goalie.

At 18:31, a yellow card was awarded to a Turners player. This infuriated the home crowd, who let their displeasure known, quite loudly. Game play was stopped while officials warned folks to keep it civil.

And then with less than 13 minutes to go, the Pirate goalkeeper deflected a shot and the ball bounced around in front of the goal. Yolvin Ovalle-Mejia found the loose ball and kicked it into the net, giving Turners a 1-0 lead with 12:43 remaining.

This charged up the crowd – and the team – and Ovalle-Mejia was given a yellow card for excessive celebration.

As his players scrambled excitedly around on the field, coach Matt Kolodziej kept telling them to slow it down. Meanwhile, on the other side of the field, the Hull coach was yelling "Quicker, quicker!" every time the Pirates took possession.

The scoreboard clock froze at five minutes while the official time was kept on the field. For the remainder of the contest, Turners used delaying tactics while the Pirates did their best to score the tying goal. Finally the whistle blew, and the players and their supporters celebrated the hard-fought 1-0 win.

The Thunder cannot rest on their laurels. They have advanced into the Round of 16, and are scheduled to play in Rockport this Saturday against the fifth-ranked Rockport Vikings.



*Left to right: Yolvin Ovalle-Mejia, Kevin Perez Cueto, and Sergey Alexeyenko celebrate Ovalle-Mejia's game-winning goal in Wednesday's playoff match against the Hull High School Pirates. Though Ovalle-Mejia was penalized for the celebration, the 1-0 win sent the Thunder to the Round of 16, where they face Rockport High School.*



DAVID HOITT PHOTO



DAVID HOITT PHOTOS

Top: Franklin Tech's Madison Pettengill goes up high to send the ball over the net in last Saturday's Round of 32 game against Holbrook. Teammates Lihyan Baldwin (left) and Jenna Petrowicz (right) look on.

Above: TFHS's Maddie Haight sends one over during last week's playoff lost to Avon. Haight tallied five aces, two kills, and 10 assists in the contest.

## The Week in Turners Falls Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – Both the Turners Falls High School and Franklin Tech volleyball teams were ousted from the playoffs this week, while both the Franklin Tech girls and the Turners boys (see article, Page A1) advanced in the soccer brackets.

The Franklin Tech Football Eagles, meanwhile, continued to roll over their opponents, burying Mahar 65-0 to cap off a 151-0 three-game scoring blitz.

### Girls' Soccer

FCTS 3 – DSA 0

On Monday the hybrid girls' soccer team defeated Dearborn STEM Academy in the preliminary round of the Division 5 state tournament.

Tech scored their first goal five minutes into the game when Mady Lynde kicked the ball to Faythe Sobieski, who knocked it into the net. The game remained 1-nil until midway through the second half, when Tristan Bliss scored her first career goal on an assist from Sobieski.

With 15 minutes left in regulation, Sobieski scored again on a direct kick to ice the 3-0 win. In goal, Shayly Martin only had to make one save to preserve the shutout.

The Eagles get back on the pitch this Thursday in Monson in the Round of 32 against the fourth-seeded Monson Mustangs.

### Volleyball

Avon 3 – TFHS 0

FCTS 3 – Holbrook 2

Lenox 3 – FCTS 0

The Volleyball Thunder were knocked out of the playoffs in a Round of 32 home game last Thursday by the visiting Avon Panthers.

There weren't a lot of Panther fans in the house, but the Avon bench made up for it with loud chants and soccer cheers. The Turners fans filled the center stands, and the student section was replete with loud kids and the Western Mass champion boys' soccer team.

The first match went point for point until the 20s, when the visitors scored three straight points to make it 24-20. Turners got the serve back and narrowed the margin to 24-21, but the Panthers got the match point.

Turners fought desperately for every point in the second battle, diving for

digs, hitting the ball with non-dominant hands, and making acrobatic saves. This led to long volleys, but Avon always seemed to hit the gap between players, and coasted to a 25-18 win.

Some of the True-Blue Faithful began to panic. "They need to win this one," one father said, and then called to the players, "You need to want it!"

Others in the crowd began to chant "Give me a T..." as the third match progressed. Turners overcame an early Panther lead and pulled within one point, 24-23. But a long fault gave the Panthers the match, the game, and their entry to the Round of 16. The Turners fans kept cheering as the players shook hands, even though the girls on the court were heartbroken.

Maddie Haight finished with five aces, two kills, and 10 assists, Addison Talbot made two kills and 11 digs, Jakiah Williams had seven kills and two blocks, while Abby Moffatt served an ace and made 18 digs.

On Saturday afternoon Franklin Tech outlasted the Holbrook Bulldogs in an extended fifth match in the Round of 32.

The game began on a comical note, as the national anthem did not play. Fans stood for a few minutes with their hats over their hearts, looking at each other, until the players on the court finally began to sing it *a cappella*. Then the loudspeakers kicked on, and people again faced the flag.

Franklin had their way in the first match, using hard spikes and winning the battle in front of the net. But with the score 14-8, the officials stopped the match and conferred. As they met, one of the Tech fans asked, "Why are there no flagmen?"

Sure enough, the officials couldn't tell if the ball was in or out of bounds, so they called a do-over. This didn't deter Tech, as they defeated the Bulldogs 25-13.

In the second match Holbrook took advantage of some Eagle miscues, winning it 25-12 and tying up the game.

The third match was a battle of spikes and digs. Hard shots caromed off bodies or were caught in the net. It ended on an Eagle kill shot, giving Franklin a 2-1 edge. The fourth match was all Bulldogs, who shot out to a 23-7 lead and held on to win 25-11, sending the game into a shortened deciding match.

This one was as even as it could get. With the score knotted at 14-14, Tech scored the next two points to win the game, advancing deeper into the playoffs.

Janiyah Wan led the team in digs, Lily Baldwin gave the most assists, Madison Pettengill had the most kills, and Sarah Beckwith served the most aces. Also contributing were Jenna Petrowicz, Emma Petersen, Taylor Underwood, and Laura Fuess.

On Monday, the Eagles were eliminated in the Round of 16 by the fourth-seeded Millionaires out in Lenox. Petrowicz had an ace, three kills, and seven digs; Petersen two aces, four kills, six digs, and three blocks; Baldwin nine digs, 10 assists; Beckwith six kills, four digs, and a block; and Pettengill four aces, one kill, six digs, two blocks as the season came to an end.

### Football

FCTS 65 – Mahar 0

Last Thursday the Franklin Tech impeached the Mahar Senators out in Orange. The Eagles scored 32 points in the first quarter, led by 55 at the half, and coasted to a nine-touchdown victory.

Although they did not qualify for the MIAA playoffs, the win propelled them to the #2 seed in the MVADA State Vocational tournament.

Mason Bassett only needed to throw once against Mahar, an 11-yard reception to Hunter Donahue. On the ground, Tech amassed 421 yards. Their top rusher was Maxon Brunette with 243 yards, followed by Brady Gancarz and Oliver Schwenger-Sartz.

Brunette also returned Mahar's only kickoff 72 yards and scored six touchdowns and a 2-PAT. Gancarz scored two touchdowns, Donahue scored a TD and a 2-PAT, and Nathan Sabolevski three 2-PATS, while Joseph DiSciullo kicked an extra point.

Defensively, Sabolevski led the Eagles in tackles, Justin Lent, Camden Cousineu and Sabolevski registered sacks, Samuel Bodenstein patted away a pass, Donahue caused a fumble, and Lent and Caleb Begos recovered fumbles.

Tech hosts Northampton for a consolation game this Thursday, and will host Cape Cod Tech next Saturday, November 15 at 3 p.m. in the MVADA State Vocational quarterfinals.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

and Wilbraham, will allow him to play “a progressive role in local public health.”

Paxton had only positive things to say about his experience in the Montague department, and said he was “optimistic” about the town’s ability to hire a qualified replacement, given “recent workforce development initiatives” statewide.

“It has been a great place to work, with lots of innovation,” he said.



Ryan Paxton, in a 2023 file photo.

The search process which eventually chose Paxton in the spring of 2023 was arduous. His predecessor, Daniel Wasiuk, who was frequently at odds with the selectboard over policies during the COVID-19 pandemic, resigned in late September 2022. The search committee for his replacement chose three finalists several months later, but one was deemed unqualified, a second took another job, and the third, Paxton, withdrew his application.

The committee then landed on an environmental health officer from Turks and Caicos, a British island chain southeast of the Bahamas, but the town did not clear the lottery for an H-1B visa required for the hiring of foreign nationals as professional employees.

Paxton, who had initially taken a position with the state health department, then chose to re-apply and was quickly hired.

At Monday’s meeting town administrator Walter Ramsey suggested the board not create a large hiring committee this time, but instead designate him and health board chair Melanie Zamojski to perform an initial search and bring finalists to the board of health for recommendation to the selectboard.

“We talked about it at our last board meeting, and we’re all on board and would like to get somebody on board as soon as possible, so we can limit the [need for outside] coverage,” said Zamojski. She noted that the town currently has the ability to receive services through the Val-

ley Health Regional Collaborative, which in addition to Montague includes Greenfield, Deerfield, Shutesbury, Leverett, and Sunderland, and that Paxton will be trying to “get as many things off the books as possible” before his departure.

The two selectboard members at the meeting, Lord and Rich Kuklewicz, nodded but did not take a formal vote.

**Coordination Shed**

Still wearing their personnel board headgear, the selectboard accepted the resignation of town clerk Wendy Bogusz as IT coordinator. That position, which involves overseeing the work and budget of an outside firm that responds to technology problems, is typically held by a town hall staff member who is paid a small stipend for the work.

Bogusz served as the coordinator in her previous role in the selectboard office, but is seeking to shed the work to focus on her new role as town clerk.

Ramsey said he had “put out a call” for any employees who might be interested in the position.

**Plains Paths**

Town planner Maureen Pollock came before the board to request that it accept a \$35,700 grant from the state Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR) MassTrails program to study the feasibility of creating a “shared path network” through the Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area “with connections to the five villages.”

The Plains, a sandy pine barren atop a large glacial outwash at the center of Montague, are largely under the control of the DCR’s Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. The area is crisscrossed with trails, which are often used for biking or driving and coincide with town “rights-of-way,” which Pollock said the planning department hopes to “formalize.”

The project will begin next July and must be completed by the end of June 2027.

“There’s lots of trails through those plains – lots of informal ones – and we’ve heard from folks that they get lost and it gets confusing,” Pollock said. “We hope that through this study we could design a well-laid-out trail.” She suggested that signage and benches could be installed along the routes.

“Lovely,” said Lord as he and Kuklewicz voted to accept the grant.

**Cracks, Defects, Waning Energy**

At the request of assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller the

board authorized a change order of \$7,794 for the screw pump improvement project at the Clean Water Facility. Nolan-Zeller noted that the project had already been awarded to Associated Construction Company, but that some of the tasks, such as “crack injections,” turned out to be less costly than planned while others, like addressing “surface defects,” turned out to cost more.

The net additional cost will come from the project’s contingency fund.

The board then approved a request from Nolan-Zeller to reduce the required seats on the energy committee from nine to seven, making it easier for the committee to obtain a quorum.

“I think finding more than seven members from most any committee is a stretch,” said Kuklewicz. Lord noted that the committee was probably the only nine-member board in town.

Nolan-Zeller said the annual Green Communities grant report will need to be submitted this week, though the topic was not on the agenda. The board took a vote to authorize its submission.

**Other Business**

Ramsey bundled together two requests for the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program, one involving the resubmission of an expired grant to Habitat For Humanity to build affordable housing on First Street, and the other concerning a new grant to Rural Development Incorporated, an arm of the regional housing authority, to rehabilitate the building at 10 Unity Street.

The board approved the requests after being assured that the two agencies would not be competing with each other.

Ramsey reviewed the projected timeline for developing next year’s budget, including a tax classification hearing on December 1 and potentially a winter special town meeting on February 4. He also noted that a hearing about a dangerous or nuisance dog would be held November 24, and wondered if the board would be comfortable holding two “in-person” meetings in successive weeks.

Both Lord and Kuklewicz said they were comfortable meeting in person for both the dog and tax classification hearings.

The board went into executive session to discuss the town’s collective bargaining strategy *vis-à-vis* the National Association of Government Employees.

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, November 10.



**LOOKING BACK:  
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK**

Here’s the way it was on November 5, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

**Thirty New Parking Spaces in Turners**

Last week, the state Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development awarded Montague a \$352,785 MassWorks grant to develop a parcel on the corner of Canal and Third streets into a 30-spot parking lot in 2016.

A concept design for the project has existed for 14 years, dating to the beginning of efforts to knock down a hazardous abandoned garage and remove toxins from the soil. But its main interim use has been a highly visible public art project marked as the “3rd Street Youth Sculpture Park.”

Town planner Walter Ramsey said some of the sculptural installations at the site may be able to remain, since construction would not require any blasting of the rocky outcrop.

**Green Burial in Erving**

At Monday’s Erving selectboard meeting, a local family asked about making a change that would allow burial within 24 hours of death, even in winter. Like many New England towns, Erving has a vault where the deceased await a spring burial. The same family also requested changes to permit “green” burial in a simple pine box, not allowed by present cemetery bylaws.

Both items were tabled until November 22.

**20 YEARS AGO**

Here’s the way it was on November 3, 2005: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

**Honoring Vets at Loggerheads With Freedom of Assembly**

On Monday, Soldiers Memorial Trustees chair Michael Cenzano asked the Montague selectboard to determine whether anyone wishing to use the space in front of the Veterans Memorial near the Carnegie library must ask the Soldiers Memorial committee for approval.

Cenzano also asked whether his committee could refuse permission to a group wishing to use the memorial without infringing on the right to free speech and free assembly.

In a campaign coordinated by

the nationwide group *MoveOn.org*, a candlelight peace vigil took place there on October 26 without permission of the Trustees, to mark the death of the 2,000th American killed in Iraq.

Cenzano said his committee was elected to care for the memorials. “That’s kind of sacred ground,” he said. “We’re there to honor the veterans. That should not be a place to protest anything.”

**On Paper, One Hundred Years**

The Erving Paper Mills, one of the region’s oldest companies and a pioneer maker of recycled paper, marks its centennial in 2005 and recently held a celebratory event, attended by more than 300 employees, former employees and retirees, and family members.

**150 YEARS AGO**

Here’s the way it was on November 3, 1875: News from the Turners Falls Reporter’s archive.

**Turners Falls and Vicinity**

We had quite a snow storm here Sunday.

You voted early and often yesterday, of course.

Workmen commenced this morning to grade K street from Seventh to School.

The weather is now doing a pretty good thing for the undertakers.

The Bohemian glass blowers will be at Colle Hall, this and tomorrow evening, and have a matinee tomorrow afternoon.

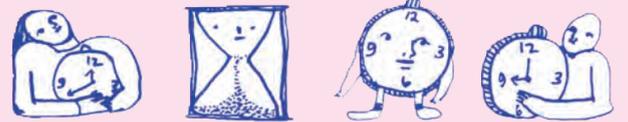
Andrew Costello got drunk the other day, and was raising Cain, when Constable Allen jugged him, Justice Barton fined him, with costs. \$10.50.

Campaign documents print-

ed in German in the interests of A.H. Rice, were sent to this place by the thousands yesterday. They didn’t have much influence on the German vote.

Contrary to all expectations, Mr. Oakman has been defeated, but by a man who will do credit to the district. The watchword of the canvass was secrecy, and the election of J.H. Root, Esq. was a complete and gratifying surprise to him, as much as he did not know one week before the election that his name was to be used as a candidate, and he took no personal part in the canvass whatever. Mr. Root has been in the Legislature before, and will go this time with the perfect confidence of many friends and no enemies.

The subject of new railroad connections has been dropped for the present but will be taken up early in the spring, when something definite will be arrived at.



**Six-Town Vote By Ballot Box Sought**

By MIKE JACKSON

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – The Six-Town Regional Planning Board (STRPB), which has been meeting since 2019 and currently endorses consolidating Montague, Gill, Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick into a single school district, met Tuesday night to discuss its strategy.

STRPB chair Alan Genovese said he planned to meet Wednesday with staff from the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to attempt to finalize the text of the proposed regional agreement.

The board decided last month to postpone public voting on the proposed agreement until the spring. By statute, voters would weigh in at the ballot box in Montague, which has a representative town meeting, and at open town meetings in the other five towns.

On Tuesday Bernardston representative Jane Dutcher

moved that the board “support requesting special legislation to allow the towns in this effort to all go to the polls, at an annual or special election.” Dutcher said she “felt disenfranchised” in not having the same opportunity as Montague residents to vote on the agreement.

Dutcher’s motion was approved, 11 to 0. Genovese said the next step is to ask the selectboards in the six towns to send letters in support of the special legislation.

The STRPB must spend out its remaining grant money from DESE by the end of 2025. Members agreed to use it to hire an “experienced communications expert” to review and finalize their written campaign materials, and to advise them on volunteer recruitment.

Genovese, Gill member Greg Snedeker, and Montague member Dorinda Bell-Upp were nominated as a working group to hire and oversee the expert, and authorized, by a 12-0 vote, to spend up to \$9,000 on the hire. The STRPB will meet next on November 18.

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**GARDENS** from page A1

Street and Fourth Street community gardens, the new coordinators at Unity Park applied for and were awarded a \$1,500 mini-grant offered by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) through the Healthy Communities grant program. The grant was aimed at combating loneliness and social isolation, supported by the state Department of Public Health's Office of Rural Health.

"We wanted to break the mold and make it OK to meet each other and talk to each other," said Davol, who helped organize meals for all the gardeners at Great Falls Harvest, which was coincidentally looking to use their front room for community events. They also organized a workshop on planting herbs.

"We all hung out and got to know each other – it was



GAGNON PHOTOS



Top: Eli Smith was in charge of mulching last Saturday. Above: Ell Davis uses a sifter to make mulch.

really nice," said Davol. "And we needed this work today to do all the things you have to do to get the garden ready for winter."

The new sense of community was evident last Saturday as a group of gardeners worked together to mulch and plant cover crops with the help of a "how-to" manual written by Smith, who built a series of wood boxes in the corner of the garden for the mulching process.

"Both mulching and cover crops keep the soil from blowing away or washing away over the winter," said Smith. "Mulching is easier because you just lay down a nice thick layer of hay or wood chips. Planting cover crops like winter rye or winter wheat also holds the soil in place." Cover crops are largely dormant over the winter, but still produce nutrients that are tilled back into the soil in spring.

Last Saturday, Smith handed out radishes to the grateful gardeners while Ell Davis did her part by removing twigs and stones with a sifter to make compost.

"I just moved here, and this is my first year at the garden," said Davis. "My mom had a big garden so I grew up with it – she called it 'playing in the dirt,' and it was weird not doing it anymore. I only have one plant on my porch at home, and being new in town I wanted to make new friends."

Most of the gardeners don't have space or available sunlight to grow vegetables and flowers at home, but many live within walking distance of Unity Park and enjoy the fresh taste of homegrown tomatoes, cucumbers, leeks, garlic, and other veggies.

The Livingstone sisters attended the North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival in Orange in late September and came away with a mixed bag of garlic bulbs, which they planted last Saturday. The different varieties of garlic will be ready to harvest next July and August.

"Next year we'll see which ones taste the best," said Kristen. "Mom had a small garden when we were growing up, so we're interested in local foods and supporting farmers markets."

Kim added, "It's really satisfying to taste the fruits of your labor – much more delicious than something shipped halfway around the world."

Much like local farmers, the gardeners at Unity Park engage in a process of trial and error, and learn to adapt to changes in weather that are beyond their control.

"We've had varying degrees of success, and we're learning what works and what doesn't," said Kristen. "Last year we had so many cucumbers we couldn't give them away. This year the cucumbers were really small because it was so dry."

Baines is the handyman of the group, repairing the shed and the raised beds while taking on mowing duties.

"I just like to take care of things," he said. "And I love tomatoes and cucumbers, and I can't grow them where I live."

As one of the three coordinators, Baines was at work digging an edge around the shed to plant some of the 50 tulip bulbs donated by "Garden Angels" Jacob and Marina Goldman as part of the *Montague Reporter's* recent bulb fundraiser. As the sun peaked overhead, the group gathered at the edge of the garden for a group picture to send to the Goldmans as a thank-you for the tulips.

"Turners Falls has amazing assets here," said Davol. "The skate park, the kids' park, the river – it's all so nice, and it's a real community. Next year all these tulips will make it that much nicer."

More information on the gardens is available through the Montague parks and recreation department, which administers the program.



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**The Hidden Temple**  
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**221 Pine Street Florence MA**

Artwork by Siwar Al-Araj

**Director of Public Health Hiring Notice**

The Town of Montague (pop 8,500) is seeking qualified applicants for the position of **Director of Public Health**. Position requires the ability to manage and provide essential public health services to the community under the policy direction of the Board of Health. The position requires the ability to read, interpret, and enforce the MA Code of Regulations as well as MA General Laws as they pertain to public health. A familiarity with local public health and foundational public health services is highly advantageous. Director supervises one full-time administrative assistant, a part-time animal/barn inspector, and contracted public health nurse.

The candidate for this position should have a bachelor's degree in public health or a related field and 2-3 years of relevant experience. The candidate should possess or be capable of acquiring a MA Registered Sanitarian license or become a Certified Health Officer within one year of date of hire. Within two years of the date of hire, Director must obtain the following certifications/licenses: MA Soil Evaluator, MA Title 5 System Inspector, Certified Pool Operator, Certified Food Protection Manager, and Certified MA Lead Determinator. The position also requires a valid driver's license. For a full description of the position, job description is available at [montague-ma.gov](http://montague-ma.gov).

This position is full-time, with a 35 hour per week schedule Monday through Thursday. The position is exempt from collective bargaining and has a range of starting annual salary from \$71,507 to \$93,275.

Applications received by **November 25, 2025**, will be given first consideration, however, the position will remain open until a qualified candidate is hired. The Town of Montague is an equal opportunity employer.

Interested candidates should submit a resume and letter of interest via email to [healthclerk@montague-ma.gov](mailto:healthclerk@montague-ma.gov) or in person or by mail at: Montague Board of Health, C/O Geneva Bickford, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

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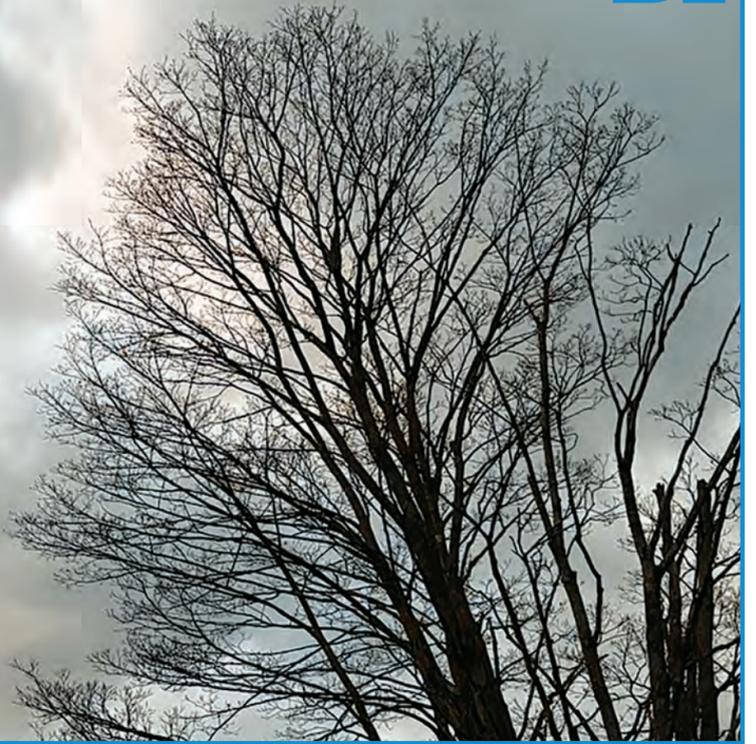
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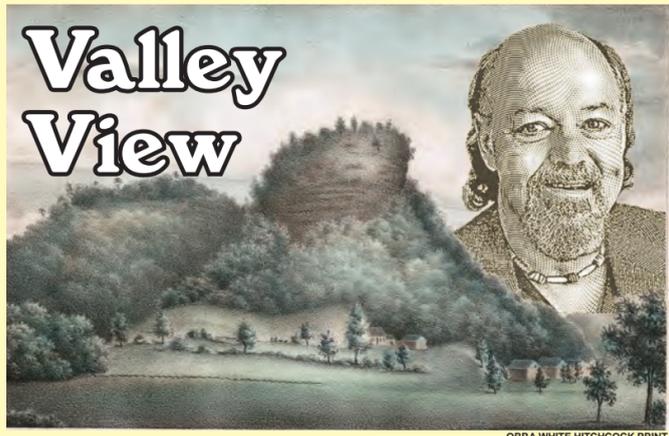


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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

NOVEMBER 6, 2025

Above: November arrived over Turners Falls last Saturday.



## Valley View

ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

### Cupola Woes Are Over!

By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – Hallelujah. Job complete. Finally.

Just the sight of it, as I approach the driveway leading to my carriage-shed stall, has lowered my anxiety-elevated blood pressure 10 points.

I'm talking about our 19th-century Old Tavern Farm cupola, long a vexing concern for me. For more than 10 years I had tried unsuccessfully to get it roofed. Yeah, yeah, there was lots of talk, and soft commitments. But no follow-through until recently, when a roofing company from faraway Barre, Vermont finally stepped to the plate and completed a first-class job last week.

My sincerest thanks to *Roofing Vermont* for metal-roofing and painting a cupola worth saving, and for removing a high-priority home-improvement project from my checklist.

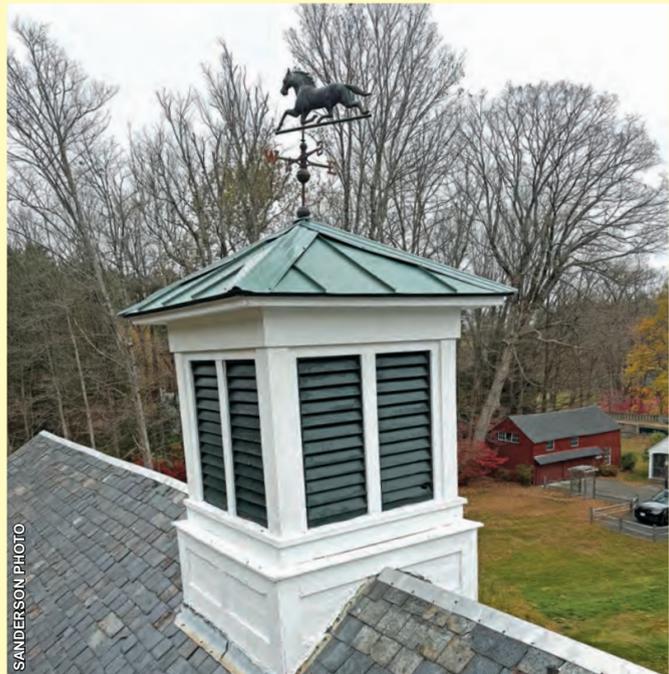
Why? Because today's families go to the store for meat, eggs, fruit, vegetables and dairy products, which they don't even associate with farms, and old folks on fixed

retirement incomes can't afford to keep up old properties, including the cupola-ed barns that give the local landscape character. And, frankly, even middle-class working families residing on old farms are up against it when trying to maintain their properties.

Stately cupolas seem to be the first architectural elements to go. They started to appear on new and improved local barns in the mid-19th century, when families were expanding their farming operations. During the post-Civil War era of the mid-1860s and 1870s they really started to multiply.

Because postwar barns were constructed of lumber from improved sawmills, the structures were more airtight than earlier, looser, draftier barns. Thus, they needed better venting systems to remove moisture from their hot, humid interiors, where hay cured and livestock emitted noxious fumes. A louvered cupola created a chimney effect, pulling out moisture to minimize mold and mildew, and helping prevent spontaneous-combustion hayloft fires.

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3



SANDERSON PHOTO

The cupolas on 19th-century barns were designed to vent heat and moisture.

## CAFÉ REVIEW

### Common Variety Ticks Every Box

By SILAS LOCKWOOD

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – I often dream of the perfect café. I've tried my fair share and I know what I like – plentiful seating that isn't too cramped, a menu with variety, flavorful drinks, great pastries, and an outlet or two for good measure. Over the years, many of my favorite cafés have come and gone. To find one that ticks all the boxes is a rare treat.

As soon as I walked in, I knew Common Variety would be making the list. Not only did they meet all of my nit-picky requirements, but they did so with a smile.

I was amazed at how they transformed the space. A few years ago, when my wife and I had a Red Fire farm share, we would stop in on a weekly basis but never stuck around to take advantage of their pizza oven. At the time, the café felt dark and cramped. Now, the room is flooded with light even on an overcast day. Every inch has been



JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTO

The pastry case at Common Variety, the new café on Route 63 in Montague, at the former site of the Montague Inn and more recently Red Fire North.

scrubbed and painted. The decor is minimal but in a way that feels purposeful and inviting.

Normally, I would order a coffee, but since it was 3 p.m. and I'm edg-

ing closer to 30 by the day, I opted for a hot chocolate and a gluten-free almond cake instead.

The man at the counter was kind, see **CAFÉ** page B4



## Travel with Max

By Max Hartshorne

### Food: A great reason to return to the Eastern Townships.

**SOUTH DEERFIELD** – I got an email a few months back, just as the ice was cooling between Canada and the United States. Even though American wine was still off all of the shelves of Quebec's SAQ state liquor stores, the writer from a local tourist board in Quebec, Titouan Bussière, said it was time to visit.

Titouan's region encompasses the lower section of Southeastern Quebec, from Brome-Missisquoi to Megantic. Nine territories full of farms, wild lands, and forests, it's known as the Eastern Townships, about 4,800 square miles, about 180 miles across.

The region has four ski areas, four national parks, 30 vineyards open to visitors, and a whopping 180 agri-tourism businesses. If you enjoy visiting farms and farmers, these Eastern Townships are for you!

We decided to take Titouan at his word, so we set up an August visit to part of the Townships, just ten minutes from the Vermont border. The best time to visit the largest

province of Canada is during the summer and fall seasons.

We would start in the village of Bromont, a lively little town with shops and art galleries, and, to our left, the view of the ski mountain, Mont Sutton, which you can see

around every corner.

Our hotel in nearby Dunham, the Gîte La Maison Bleu, was a real standout. Why? It just made me feel at home. Wine and beer waited in a nearby fridge, the lounge was full of

see **TRAVELS** page B8



HARTSHORNE PHOTO

Audrey-Anne Lussier and Marc-Antoine Arsenault-Chaisson, owners of Ferme Cidricole Equinoxe in Farnham, Quebec.

# Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

## 'EVE' & 'BEZUS'

Meet Eve and Bezus, two lovely senior ladies looking for a retirement home to call their own.

While they are five years old, they still enjoy doing day-to-day activities such as zooming around during playtime and chowing down on their daily veggies. Eve and Bezus have lived in a home with other animals, including dogs and cats, and did well with them supervised.

While they are considered se-

nior in guinea pig years, at this time the pair is healthy and happy. They will make sure every day is filled with squeaks and laughter. Guinea pigs are incredibly social animals who need to be kept in pairs or groups to thrive.

There is no adoption fee. As most of the small animals are in foster care, if you're ready to adopt, start the process by calling Dakin at (413) 781-4000, ext. 1, or email [springfield@dakinhumane.org](mailto:springfield@dakinhumane.org).

## Senior Center Activities NOVEMBER 10 THROUGH 14

### 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 11/10

9 a.m. Good For U  
10 a.m. Seated Fitness  
12 p.m. Pitch Game  
1 p.m. Yoga

#### Tuesday 11/11

Closed

#### Wednesday 11/12

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

#### Thursday 11/13

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

#### Friday 11/14

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.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 11/10

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

#### Tuesday 11/11

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

4:15 p.m. Spanish Lessons

#### Wednesday 11/12

Foot Clinic by appointment  
10:45 a.m. Outdoor Yoga  
(weather permitting)

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

#### Thursday 11/13

11 a.m. Fiery Hope Chorus  
Performance  
12:15 p.m. Members' Lunch  
(by reservation)

2 p.m. Pitch

#### Friday 11/14

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 November 18. Luncheons are the fourth Friday at town hall. For more information, contact (413) 548-1022 or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto: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 December 3. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

## MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN #84:

By J. BURKETT

**TURNERS FALLS** – No interview this week... just a little ramble down a certain musical memory lane, as I'm one of those folks who spend a lot of time dwelling on the past, and on past music.

This column is about the year 1988. I fell down this "88 wormhole" after talking with a friend about how my Connecticut high school "school band" actually did an exchange concert that year with Turners Falls. It really doesn't seem that long ago to me, but I'm guessing some readers out there weren't even born yet!

I began to think about the year 1988 – where I was at, my mindset, my friends – and realized I could kind of tap into my 1988 mindset a bit. In a few ways, my life hasn't really changed that much since then: I'm still in weird bands, still eat some of the same food, and still talk to some of the same friends. And I for sure still listen to music from that year.

Thinking about it now, I'm realizing what a cool time it was. I was getting into music then, big time. Almost every week I heard something for the first time that seemed life-changing. I got my first record store job that year – before that I had washed dishes – and I was DJing at a college radio station.

The school band was OK, too, and after the exchange trip a new teacher took over, Mr. Nardine, who would really try to make it into something better.

I was a quiet, spaced-out teenager, and music was so huge and massive. I was open to almost anything, and I was out in nature quite a bit, and spending a good amount of time with my family, so it was a good balance. I was also making new music friends.

A year or so earlier I had gone to my first high school party with my brother. They were playing The Cure's "Head On The Door," and I couldn't believe how amazing that record sounded... it kind of changed my life. Someone there was playing a 12-stringed acoustic guitar, and said something like "No way am I joining a band, that's for chumps!" I think he was a friend of the famous "Rivers," who was there too, and who did have bands.

My brother was into stuff like the Beastie Boys and Jane's Addiction, who both blew me away, though he would soon enter his hippy phase and got into Phish early on. (Yuck – one of the few bands I have really hated in my life.)

In '88 I was starting to hang out more in Willimantic, which was cooler and more edgy than my town. It had a leftist bookstore and a used music store, Platter Connections, which was where I started my big-time habit of trading in LPs for other sounds.

Populous Pudding was starting up around that year, too, a local art collective that found a cool space to use... a strange old fur locker. They hosted tons of amazing music, "local and beyond," in that space, though I think the weekly shows there wouldn't really take off until '89.

And there were many great shows near where I lived, too, at UConn in Storrs. I started going to everything and anything everywhere, and was just blown away all the time. At



UConn I saw a lot of punk and hardcore (Verbal Assault, Gorilla Biscuits), ska, great underground shows (Paul Flaherty, Eugene Chadbourne, Live Skull), cool local bands, and bigger rock stuff like the Psychedelic Furs, the Alarm, and Midnight Oil. Even Bob Dylan played there... though the '80s weren't his best years. It all seemed so cool!

I think 1988 was also the year of my first big "underground band" obsession – before that I was obsessed with stuff like Madonna. The band was Sink Manhattan, a Philly band who released an album on the No Age label. SM were kind of a less arty Einstürzende Neubaten, with lots of drumming on huge metal sheets that sparked a lot. I was getting into Neubaten then, and loved Lydia Lunch. They had a bit of a punk vibe, way beyond the Pistols, who I was obsessed with. I wrote them my first fan letter, and got a cool reply, too.

I was also skateboarding quite a bit, and around that time I met a great friend at summer art school named Joe who had a "devilok" and loved the Misfits.

I had been in a bad metal band, with a loud metalhead kid named Chris N. (RIP) who came with us on the Turners Falls exchange trip and was much more popular up here. I had also just been in a band that played REM and Reducers songs. But later that year I joined a super-cool Willimantic-based political-punk-underground-free-jazz-style band: the Shrinners, a.k.a. Bimbo Shrineheads. They still play sometimes, and they were life-changing.

Like every other kid around then, I watched a lot of MTV. My family had gotten a huge early VCR and I figured out how to set it to record *120 Minutes*, which I couldn't wait to watch the next day. I often watched MTV's metal video show, *Headbangers Ball*, when I got home from school, or the occasional bad Elvis movie.

Other cool stuff that came out in '88: *They Live* (still great, a precursor to this horrible era), *Die Hard* (which I maybe watched early on VHS, and do consider a Christmas movie), *Mississippi Burning* (worth seeing), *Naked Gun* (hmm), *Grave Of Fireflies* (great Studio Ghibli, way out of my zone until much later). I was way into the *Spinal Tap* movie back then – my friend Matt had it on VHS.

Pretty soon there would be that real music momentum that can happen in teenage years when DJing and playing in bands happens: mega-listening, records piling up, trading mix tapes.... Things really start to blur, and it becomes easy to take your favorite records for granted as

you move from one to another so fast... not really appreciating them, maybe not even deciding who your favorite bands really were.

*But!* During this pivotal year, my favorites were: Sink Manhattan, Joy Division, The Cure, Sisters of Mercy, Cocteau Twins, Public Enemy, Sex Pistols, PIL, Bowie, and the Subhumans. Hallelujah to them all! They are all such amazing bands.

The exchange concert was not the best time. The highlight for me was probably the big outing to the Hampshire Mall, where I bought my first record by The Church. But in retrospect, the trip really was OK, as it introduced me to Turners Falls and helped me get to know a few high school friends better, and I also got to meet more cool metalheads.

In Turners, the metalheads seemed to be the popular ones, and *Master of Puppets* seemed to be playing everywhere, maybe because *And Justice...* came out that year and made everyone remember that *Puppets* and *Lightning* were so much better. I personally didn't mind metal, but was more into punk and goth.

I hadn't really heard much '60s stuff, besides a few radio songs, though on the next year's school band exchange I would go to a '60s-themed light show at a planetarium in Canada, with a white rabbit that hopped around, and it was so weird and blew me away.

Growing up in Connecticut in the late '80s wasn't bad for buying records. The store I worked at was a chain that had some import LPs, and I got my first Nico, Sex Pistols, New Order, and Billie Holiday there. I could get some underground stuff and used Sonic Youth, Prince, etc. at Platter Connections – I remember buying that Ciccone Youth there and wondering "What the heck?" – and they had random stuff like live Christian Death LPs. I might have bought my first Sun Ra LP at a flea market that year.

But going to Boston was even better. Newbury Comics was totally different then, with all the Homestead Records stuff and the new underground, and sometimes the singer of Salem 66 worked there. Tower Records was mind-boggling, too. They had an entire floor of classical and jazz. I might have gone into Looney Tunes in '88, but it was messy-looking for a record store back then.

Here are some of the bands I saw that year, though a few might have been in '89: Verbal Assault, the Dispossessed, Judge, Holiday Clocks, Operation Ivy, Eugene Chadbourne, Volcano Suns, Siouxsie, Zombie Squad, Jawbreaker, Jawbox, 6 Feet Under, 7 Seconds, Soul Side, Alien Sex Fiend, Flaherty & Colbourne, Live Skull, Living Colour, Echo & the Bunnymen, Ant Farm, Laughing Hyenas, Fishbone, Crucial Youth, Cocteau Twins, the Count Basie Orchestra, Screeching Weasel, 76% Uncertain, and 24-7 Spyz.

I have been so lucky, going to so, so many amazing shows. Eternal thanks to my great "music buddy," Scary TK Caustic.

Here's to 1988, and all its great music adventures! They still live close to my heart. The '80s do seem to still be around – especially the music, as the radio still plays those hits over and over. Some days one can almost pretend it *is* still the '80s. (I wish it was...)

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**VALLEY VIEW** from page B1

Different designs of cupolas and their weathervanes became marks of status and distinction personalizing family farms. Attractive cupolas drew the eyes of travelers upward during the slower horse-and-carriage days; they thus became the focal points of roadside farm profiles.

Family tradition ties my cupola to the Lincoln assassination of April 15, 1865. I was told by descendants of previous owner Elijah Worthington Smith (1830-1901) that carpenters adding the front section of my 70-foot barn and joining it to the house with carriage sheds learned of Honest Abe's murder from passersby. The cupola displays a traditional, simple, early Victorian style, which likely came down to the personal taste of either the builder, the owner, or both.

I personally prefer the simple elegance of this early-Victorian template over the more ornate later styles, some with windows instead of shutter-like louvers. But that's just me. I'm sure others prefer the asymmetrical later look.

E.W. Smith bought my property in 1858, when its days as a stage-coach tavern were in peril due to the railroad's arrival. His 1865 expansion doubled the length of the barn while extending the rear east wall some 16 feet for a saltbox section to house a few dairy cows. The new front addition contained horse stables topped by a haymow, along with a scale house to weigh cartloads of apples and other products being transported by wagon to the freight yard.

The front section was then connected to the house with a three-bent carriage shed that stored buggies and carriages, and kept family members walking from house to barn out of the weather.

The expansion also brought in the

cupola, and the name "Old Tavern Farm" painted across the new carriage sheds. The painter was likely the famed Greenfield house, sign, and furniture paper and folk artist George Washington Mark, who had previously grain-painted the tavern's interior doors and feather-painted its wide pine floors.

Although I can only speculate about Mark's creation of the name Old Tavern Farm across my carriage sheds, I can positively identify the last man to carefully repaint it. That would be the late John McAulay, an interesting man in his own right, who, over the five-year period between 2004 and 2008 – living in his Chevy van with an interior decorated as a ship-captain's quarters – hand-scraped every inch of my home and outbuildings, then hand-painted it three times with a brush.

Less than a year after he was finished, in July of 2009, my wayward friend John was dead, stricken by a fatal heart attack at the laundromat on the west end of Main Street in Greenfield.

Though John didn't list roofing as one of his many skills, I'm sure he would have found a way to paint my cupola had I asked – and, I might add, paint it right. Sadly, he never got the chance. Here today, gone tomorrow, John was a good man, a great painter and handyman, and an interesting New England character worth studying.

What's interesting is that the painters McAulay and Mark came from the same neighborhood on opposite sides of the Connecticut River – McAulay from Springfield, Vermont and G.W. Mark from Charlestown, New Hampshire.

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



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Fleeing Parties Injured; Handprint Found; Pitbull Nips; Roommates Misunderstood; 'Parents Need To Sober Up'**

**Monday, 10/27**

9:21 a.m. Caller from K Street would like to speak to an officer about her neighbors harassing her. Referred to an officer.

10:50 a.m. Caller from Highland School Apartments reports that a truck driving by pulled down a wire, which is now in the road. Comcast states they are confident it is not their wire, and they do not have active services in the area; will send someone out to evaluate. Emergency detail officer and Comcast on scene.

12:42 p.m. Walk-in looking to speak to an officer regarding a scam and potential fraud. Advised of options.

5:39 p.m. Caller would like to speak to an officer about scams. Referred to an officer.

**Tuesday, 10/28**

7:05 a.m. Caller from Turnpike Road would like a check on his neighbor, whose truck has been running since 9 p.m. last night. Referred to an officer.

10:41 a.m. Greenfield PD states that a vehicle involved in an attempted breaking-and-entering took off heading into our town. GPD states vehicle stopped on bridge at bottom of Turners Falls Road. Two parties took off on foot and possibly jumped over the bridge. GPD has eyes on subjects, one complaining of injuries. PD unable to get down the embankment to

them. MPD has bridge closed at Fifth Street. Officer advises Tech Rescue is needed. Shelburne Control advised. Parties roughly 20 feet down. Officer advises one party detained. AMR requests Life Flight. Officer requests FirstLight be contacted and advised of the rescue operation; advised to hold spill gate until personnel are out of area. Officer and FD advise roadway back open.

**Wednesday, 10/29**

12:04 a.m. Anonymous caller reports the lights to the Third Street Laundry are shut off at this time, and usually are not. Officer advises sign on door of location states it closes at 10 p.m. Door is locked.

8:55 a.m. Caller from Chestnut Street states that a big dog in the apartment upstairs has been barking for three days and sounds like it is starting to lose its voice. Caller called back stating dog has started barking again. Could hear loud barking in background. Voicemail left for animal control officer. ACO called back; states he talked to involved parties yesterday and they are babysitting a dog with separation anxiety. The dog is healthy and happy; no issues on their end.

1:53 p.m. Caller from Turnpike Road requesting to speak with officer. Officer states there is an older handprint on the window with a brownish-red color consistent with blood. Party advised of options. Investigated.

2:10 p.m. Officer out with Gill PD on a mental health evaluation on Riverside Drive.

5:30 p.m. Report of kids having a fire in the parking lot on Canal Street. Fire not contained. FD advised.

10:25 p.m. Assisting Northfield with two dogs at shelter.

12:42 a.m. Officer assisting state police on L Street.

7:09 a.m. Caller states that a vehicle that passed her at a very high rate of speed, estimated at 80 m.p.h., heading north from the center of Montague. Officer advised.

7:43 a.m. Caller states there is a loose dog on Federal Street near the crossover; states dog does have a collar. Caller is running late and unable to stop. While on the phone, caller states there is another dog in the area of Federal Street and Central Street. Unable to locate.

8:12 a.m. Caller states he was out for a walk and was attacked by a pitbull in the area of Federal Street and Main Street. Caller states the dog had

him trapped and was nipping at his leg but did not actually bite. Caller states he is concerned because kids were waiting for a bus in the area. Officer unable to locate dog; spoke with people in house on corner; they don't own a dog.

10:53 a.m. Caller states she has received scam calls for the past three days; one was at 4 a.m. States multiple calls from different numbers leaving the same message about selling her house and needing to sign paperwork. Officer called number and said it was a scam automated message; unable to speak with a person. Officer left message for caller.

**Friday, 10/31**

1:58 a.m. TFFD advises they received a call from Cooley Dickinson Hospital requesting a welfare check for a party on Montague City Road who left the hospital after taking out IVs. Officer advises negative contact; house is dark; no answer upon knocking. TFFD advised.

2:12 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states she can hear loud knocking/banging noises coming from somewhere in the building. Officer unable to gain entry into building. Attempted calling caller back; forwarded to voicemail. Officer advises he did not hear anything from outside the front or back of the building.

11:58 a.m. Walk-in reporting that someone is taking checks out of the mail and cashing them to themselves. Third time this has occurred. Officer gave party a statement form to complete.

6:20 p.m. 911 caller from Second Street states someone is actively trying to break into his apartment. Officer advises misunderstanding. Attempting to speak with caller. Involved male states he has a dog he walks downtown and will be on his way. Caller will call back if issue is ongoing.

6:26 p.m. Caller reports that a Domino's driver with a Vermont license plate almost hit a bunch of children near Hillcrest Elementary School. Possibly a Subaru. Officer spoke with vehicle operator. No signs of impairment; confused due to traffic from trick-or-treating; went around a vehicle and was yelled at. Not malicious.

6:36 p.m. 911 caller from Morris Avenue states her male roommate is on drugs and is attempting to get into the house and being violent at this time. Officers advised. Phone disconnected after stating "Please help." Caller called back in stating she and another female locked them-

selves upstairs and will not come out unless an officer goes to get them because the male party is freaking out. Units advised. Involved male has address at residence; it's his property. Miscommunication between roommates. All advised of options.

9:26 p.m. Caller from Meadow Road reporting extremely intoxicated female destroying house; wants her removed. Officer requesting medical; female took an unknown amount of Gabapentin. Female cleared by medical. Courtesy transport provided; female released to brother.

9:46 p.m. Caller reporting that it sounds like the roof is collapsing in the back area of the dog shelter where dogs are located. ACO notified and en route. Officer advises area checked; there is loose tin and other scraps all over, but everything else seems structurally sound. ACO can better advise on scene.

10:01 p.m. Caller reports intoxicated male sitting in his car in front of the Millers Pub after almost causing an accident. No vehicle matching description in area at this time. Officers out on foot. Unable to locate.

**Saturday, 11/1**

5:35 p.m. Shelburne Control called in a black Lexus all over the road in Millers Falls with no units available; heading up Route 63 from Amherst. Officer has vehicle pulled over by Lake Pleasant Road. Officer contacting Keene PD for details.

6:25 p.m. 911 caller states a truck hit a deer on Federal Street and it flung into her car and she hit it; it is still in the road. Officer states deer is deceased. Deer taken by hunters.

10:33 p.m. Caller dropping off son's girlfriend is concerned for her safety as he believes her parents are intoxicated and she doesn't want to be there. Second caller states she is the girlfriend's mother and that the boyfriend and his father are sitting outside her house; she asked them to leave, and they won't. Officers on scene. Officer advises units clear; situation mediated. Daughter is going to stay with boyfriend tonight. Parents need to sober up.

**Sunday, 11/2**

12:50 a.m. Officer advises he is moving a bear along on Montague City Road. Officer clear; states bear took off into woods.

8:38 p.m. 911 abandoned call; caller states he grabbed his watch and it called 911 and he hung up. States he doesn't need police, fire, or EMS. Officer advised.

**ARTIST PROFILE**

**Bill's Steampunk Lamps**

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – Maura Menard, the wife of Bill Valois, who creates steampunk lamps among other things, spoke to me recently about her husband's art, which I found the couple selling last month along with other items at the Franklin Food Fest at the Greenfield Fairgrounds.

The lamps are made of pipes, shaped in various interesting positions, and they look very unique.

The couple lives in South Hadley. Menard told me Valois had an idea how to make these lamps because he worked with the Department of Conservation for over 30 years. "He used to be a repairman for the place for many years," she explained, "and he obtained many skills."

The way they look have to do with the way he began. "He started with a rocketship lamp," she said, "and then added a fencer. People saw them and saw a person holding a light bulb, and would make suggestions. All of these suggestions have made him add new lamps to his selections."

He uses black pipes, and buys lamp parts. The time it takes him to make each one depends on the lamp – "a couple of hours, or days."

I personally find myself to be uniquely drawn to them. "The most popular one is the rocketship one," Menard told me. "They sell well. He's sold quite a few of them."

They mainly sell the lamps at craft fairs, and mainly in western Mass. Past fairs they've set up at include the Apple Squeeze in Lenox and an annual fair in Lanesborough. In December, they'll be at a



*One of the lamps Bill Valois makes out of pipes.*

craft fair a church is having in Wilbraham called the Holly Fair, with over 60 vendors from New England. Another one they will be at in December is the Holyoke Lodge of Elks' annual craft fair.

The prices for these lamps range from \$50 up to \$200.

You can find images of the lamps at their Instagram account, @wood\_and\_fabric14, as well as which craft fairs they will be at.

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JULIA HANDSCHUH PHOTOS

CAFÉ from page B1

explaining that their customers have so many hopes and dreams for the place. “The biggest suggestion so far is a suggestion box,” he told us. And I can understand why; this particular corner of Montague is on the edge of a food desert, and residents have high expectations for any establishment that might close that gap.

I couldn’t help dreaming myself as I sat in the dining room: *I can’t wait until they have gluten-free bread, and I hope they open the patio in the spring.*

The almond cake was delicious. It was crumbly, packed with flavor and texture, and didn’t have the signature sandy texture of so many other gluten-free treats. The hot chocolate was quite good! It was made fresh – you could tell from the few semi-melted pieces of chocolate at the bottom.

The following day, I brought my wife along for a second taste, insisting that we break from our normal Saturday morning Upper Bend routine to have a proper breakfast together.

I ordered a cortado and the Farmer’s Plate – roasted cabbage, hard-boiled eggs, some kind of soft cheese (I didn’t quite catch the name, but it tasted more like a sharp cheddar than a Brie), and pumpernickel bread. She had an iced mocha and an egg sandwich.

And yet again, I was duly impressed. It wasn’t just because of the food or the ambiance, but because when the barista came over to ask how our meal and our drinks were and my wife mentioned that the iced mocha wasn’t quite right – the chocolate had resolidified when the ice was added, creating



a grainy texture – he promised to start experimenting with the drink to fix the issue, and offered to make her one on the house next time we visited.

I realized then that Common Variety had raised my expectations for a perfect café. Of course I want great coffee, thoughtful seating, and an outlet or two, but as a part of this community we need care, consideration, and a willingness to improve in order to build a neighborhood’s spirit, not just its caffeine habit.

4 out of 5 gluten-free almond breads.



JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION



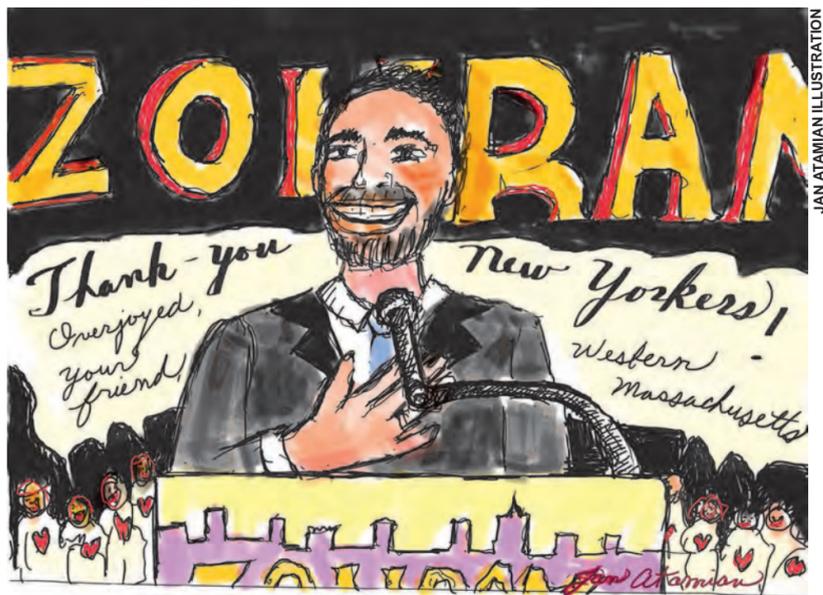
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It is difficult  
to get the news from poems  
yet men die miserably every day  
for lack  
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

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

# November's Featured Poet: Ernie Brill

## New Wailing Walls

Gaza  
Come. Mother, father. Find me. Quickly.  
The entire building is collapsing.  
I never knew so much blood was in me.  
How in the world could this happen?  
I see only darkness, jagged concrete chunks.  
I want to share my last breaths with you. Come.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT

Perilously pinpointing soon-to-be corpses,  
You will be what you were ago,  
Within a whiff of nowhere  
Still poison-poised, pernicious.  
Did you decide to increase genocide?  
Is it true God can't stop vomiting?

## Ali

You know, you're one of the few Jews I've ever met

Who didn't make trouble with me?  
I had to come - what is it? - seven thousand miles  
Straight from Turkey's hills to San Francisco's  
(And even here many despise me)  
To find someone who meets me as I am -  
With you I am a filmmaker first,  
Then an Arab, but never enemy.  
With you I share books, protests, movies, meals;  
I will make you our Turkish coffee.  
My friend, you'll think you're up in Heaven!  
I know you are a Marxist atheist,  
But trust me, our coffee will transport you.  
Why else would the moon keep winking at us?

## The Occupation of Palestine

The sky is occupied  
The trees are occupied  
The thyme is occupied  
The sea is halted at a checkpoint  
God's Hands are UP in the air  
At gunpoint

RUSH!

Be ambulance Be siren  
Be swirling red lights  
SCREAM YOUR THROAT OPEN

Mother Earth:

Move over, Abraham Excuse me, Hamid  
We need room in this expanding graveyard  
Under the earth our singing bones grow  
Knowing no border no stops no country  
If you're not sure this claim is in order  
If you're not sure this claim is true  
Feel the voices and music flowing through the ground  
And let the dead report back to you

## Immigration/Deportation Haiku Blues

We clean your toilets  
Your lawns, your kids too.  
When we're gone, what will you do?

## Contributor Notes:

Greenfield resident Ernie Brill is a fiction writer who also writes poetry. He is originally from Brooklyn, which nurtured his inspiration, and San Francisco, which, in his twenties, confirmed for him the world of social justice exploration and battling in the trenches.

The poem "The Occupation of Palestine" is from his book *Journeys to Voices and Choices*. His favorite poets include Mahmoud Darwish, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sterling A. Brown, Martin Espada, and Vasko Popa, and he highly recommends reading these books by Palestinian authors:

- *Victims of a Map: A Bilingual Anthology of Arabic Poetry*, featuring poems from Adonis, Mahmoud Darwish, and Samih al-Qasim;
- *Wild Thorns*, a novel by Sahar Khalifeh;
- *Palestine's Children: Returning to Haifa and Other Stories*, by Ghassan Kanafani;
- *Birthright*, poems by George Abraham;
- *Modern Palestinian Literature*, edited by Salma Jayyusi;
- *Heaven Looks Like Us: A Palestinian Poetry Anthology*, edited by George Abraham and Noor Hindi.
- *The Butterfly's Burden*, by Mahmoud Darwish;
- *My First and Only Love*, by Sahar Khalifeh.



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# EVENTS

submissions:  
events@montaguereporter.org

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Montague Center Library,  
Montague: *Bilingual Music  
and Movement*. 10 a.m. Free.

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

Dickinson Library, Northfield:  
*Environmental Book Group*.  
Octavia Butler, *Parable of  
the Sower*. 3 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library,  
Erving: *Friends of the Library  
Meeting*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

Hidden Temple, Florence:  
*Johanna Warren,  
Dan W.* 7 p.m. \$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield:  
*Jessica Beck, Rumyn,  
Secondaries*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro:  
*Norma Dream, Elijah Berlow,  
Lyle de Vitry*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Arun  
Ramamurthy Trio*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
*For the Love of Mary*.  
9 p.m. No cover.

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Carnegie Library, Turners  
Falls: *Library Learning  
Lab*. 10 to 11 a.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield:  
*Coffee/Tea Social*.  
10 a.m. Free.



Drew Paton, a fixture of the local music scene, continues his long-running *Rendezvous* residency this Friday at 6:30 p.m., playing “memorable hits and love songs from the ’30s right thru to the ’80s to dine and unwind.” No cover.

Great Falls Discovery Center,  
Turners Falls: *The Great  
Scavenger Hunt Challenge*.  
“Test your spotting skills  
in our Connecticut River  
watershed habitat dioramas.”  
3 to 5:30 p.m. Free.

Carnegie Library, Turners  
Falls: *Lofi Creativity Zone*.  
Drop-in writing and drawing  
hangout for grades 6 to 12.  
4 to 5 p.m. Free.

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls:  
Reception for *Local Local*.  
5 to 8 p.m. Free.

Ja’Duke Theater, Turners  
Falls: *Annie*. 6 p.m. \$.

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

LAVA Center, Greenfield:  
*Smack Dab Queer Open Mic*:  
18+, LGBTQIA. 7 p.m. Free.

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls:  
*Donna The Buffalo*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Last Ditch, Greenfield:  
*Partygirl, Sapien Joyride,  
Annie Collette*. 8 p.m. \$.

The O’s, Sunderland:  
*DJ Lucas, 22BB, Caplito  
& Swvnc*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro:  
*@, beetsblog, Free Body  
Estimate*. 8 p.m. \$.

Hutghi’s, Westfield:  
*Intensive Care Unit,  
Clacker, Dimension,  
Demented FX*. 8 p.m. \$.

Midnight’s, Brattleboro:  
*Bonebone, Dutch Experts,  
Soli G*. 9 p.m. \$.

Asbestos Farm, Hadley:  
*Ruby Lou, Clearwater  
Swimmers, Vega, Raboon,  
Temporary Friends*. 9 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:  
*Matt Charette, The Royal Me,  
Les Derailleurs, Teen Driver*.  
9:30 p.m. By donation.

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Shelburne-Buckland  
Community Center, Shelburne  
Falls: *Country Christmas Fair*.  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Public Library,  
Greenfield: *Winter Farmers  
Market*. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield:  
Opening reception, *Sixth  
Annual Community Art  
Show*. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

71 Main, Montague:  
*Art Show and Sale* with 14  
local artists. 12 to 5 p.m. Free.

Leverett Library, Leverett:  
Reception for *Flora, Fauna  
and Fantasy* art exhibit.  
12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center,  
Turners Falls: *Full Beaver  
Moon Gathering* with  
guest speaker *Willow  
Greene*. Hosted by the  
Nolumbeka Project.  
All ages welcome.  
Raffle drawing. 1 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Savings Bank,  
Turners Falls: *LifePath  
Information Session*.  
“An overview of their  
programs to keep seniors  
safe and living in their  
own homes.” Light snacks  
provided. 1 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library,  
Wendell: *Poetry Reading*.  
Local author *Jess Mynes*  
reads from his recently  
published book. 1 p.m. Free.

# EXHIBITS

**Great Falls Discovery Center,  
Turners Falls:** *Migrations*, paintings  
curated by GuateMaya Art and  
Culture Connection featuring  
scenes of village life, Mayan culture,  
and the history of Lake Atitlan in  
Guatemala, through November 22.

**Waterway Arts, Turners Falls:**  
*Local Local*, small works by  
21 local artists using material  
from Franklin County. Through  
January 4, with a reception this  
Friday, November 7, from 5 to 8 p.m.

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

**Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center:**  
Guest artist *Ruby Henry* presents  
hand-tufted rugs during November.

**Leverett Library, Leverett:**  
*Flora, Fauna, and Fantasy: a Leverett  
Homecoming*, Elena Watson and  
Julie Kumble share works inspired by  
scenes of Leverett. Through December,  
with a reception this Saturday,  
November 8, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

**Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett:**  
*Oh Beautiful Glass*, group show by  
glass artists, with paintings by *Susan  
Mulholland*. Reception Sunday,  
November 23, from 12 to 6 p.m.

**Rhodes Art Center,  
Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill:**  
*Primal Reflections*, paintings by  
Walker Antonio, through December 12.

**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. *Sixth Annual Community  
Art Show*, work by 36 local artists,  
through December 20, with a reception  
this Saturday, November 8 at 11 a.m.

**Artspace, Greenfield:** *Gray Matters*,  
monoprints by Karen J. Axtell, through  
November 21. *Open House* to celebrate  
the new ceramics studio, Saturday,  
November 15, from 12 to 5 p.m.

**Looky Here, Greenfield:**  
*Tuna Croquette*, works by  
Charlotte Treiber, through November.

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

**Von Auersperg Gallery,  
Deerfield Academy:** *Chameleon*,  
sculptures by Alicia Renadette and  
paintings by Scott Reilly. Opens with  
a reception this Sunday, November 9 at  
5 p.m.; on view through December 19.

**Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls:**  
*Glass: Color, Light and Motion*,  
mosaics, stained glass, and glass  
painting by Sam Meyers, through

December 31. *Robert Osborne:*  
*Optical Confusion*, aluminum and glass  
sculptures exploring light, perception,  
and structure, through December 31.  
Reception for both exhibits this  
Saturday, November 8 from 2 to 4 p.m.

**Mocha Maya’s, Shelburne Falls:**  
*Mark Majeski*, detailed drawings of local  
birds and plants, through November 16.

**Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls:**  
*Whimsical Dreams*, group show by  
member artists, through November 24.

**Gallery A3, Amherst:** *Artwork Looks  
Inward and Outward*, paintings by John  
Krifka and photographs by Larry Rankin,  
through November 29 with a reception  
tonight, Thursday, November 6, at 5 p.m.

**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*.

**Lyman Plant House, Smith College,  
Northampton:** *Koanbanchinemma  
(do you see the light (in me))*, works  
by six Nipmuc artists, cultural and land  
stewards: Rachel Healing Willow Bayliss,  
Willow Daly, Keely Curliss, Scott Strong  
Hawk Foster, Andre StrongBearHeart  
Gaines, Jr., and Kimberly Toney.  
Opens Thursday, November 20 with  
a reception from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

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# CALENDAR



## looking forward...

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *Crafternoons: Making Beeswax Hand Cream* with Chuck Neveu, local beekeeper. 1 to 2 p.m. Free.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Banish Misfortune*. 7 p.m. \$.

Water Street Barn and Studio, Shelburne Falls: *Psychedelic Farm Girls*. 7 p.m. No cover.

Marigold, Easthampton: *Samuel Boat, beetsblog, Mia Friedman Band, Pond 1000*. 8 p.m. \$.

### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Glenn Jones, Liam Grant, Michael Slyne*. 7 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Weakened Friends, Nova One, Perennial*. 8 p.m. \$.

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Dungeons & Dragons*. Single-night campaign for ages 16 and up, all XP welcome. Register at [northfieldrec.com](http://northfieldrec.com). 5 p.m. Free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown, Royal Hartigan, David Bindman, Matan Rubinstein*. 8 p.m. No cover.

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Pookah's Soup CSA*, with stew, cornbread, pickles, and cocktails and music by *Chris Gray* and *Beth Lewand*. 6 to 11 p.m. No cover.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Movie, The Dark Crystal (1982)*, with opening music by *Adipocere*. 7 p.m. \$.

### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Leverett Crafts & Art, Leverett: Reception for *Oh Beautiful Glass* group show. 12 p.m. Free.

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Bella's Bartok, Cloudbelly*. 8 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Tom Rush*, accompanied by *Matt Nakoa*. 7 p.m. \$.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Carol Devine and the Mighty Fine*. Benefit for No Assault & Batteries. 7:30 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Cursive, AJJ*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Ja'Duke Theater, Turners Falls: *Annie*. 6 p.m. \$.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open mic* with featured performer *French Press*. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

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

Nova Arts, Keene: *Hot Dirt, Terraces, Dinger*. 7 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Freak Phone, Whyte Lipstick, Owen Manure*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

Midnight's, Brattleboro: *Archtrave, Oum Kamar, Wicked Louder*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *All-Prince dance party with DJ Cashman*. 8 p.m. \$.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Stiff Curls, Mozzaleum, Cycles Inside*. 8 p.m. \$.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Saleem, Ian Kovac Jr Jr, Friendship Ceremonies, Jenifer Gelineau*. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Hannah Mohan, Hammydown*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Bunnies, Modern Ego, Warm, Neon Fauna*. 8 p.m. \$.

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *PMS, Sun Urchins, Nanny*. 8 p.m. \$.

Ralph's Rock Diner, Worcester: *The F.U.'s, Psycho, Execution Style, D.O.D.* 8 p.m. \$.

No Fun, Troy NY: *Earth, Stebmo*. 8 p.m. \$.

### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Ja'Duke Theater, Turners Falls: *Annie*. 2 p.m. \$.

Shelburne-Buckland Community Center, Shelburne Falls: *Country Christmas Fair*. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Free.

Second Congregational Church, Greenfield: *GCC Community Chorus concert, "Peace,"* with works by Hassler, Bell, Mendelssohn, Haydn, Walker, more. 4 p.m. Free.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *K/S/R, Russian Tarlag*. 4 p.m. By donation.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Omar Sosa's Quarteto Americanos*. 4 p.m. \$.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Cookbook Book Club*. Pick up a copy of *Ottolenghi Comfort* for a potluck-style book discussion. RSVP to [wendell@cwmars.org](mailto:wendell@cwmars.org). 4:30 p.m. Free.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: *18th Annual Domino Toppling Extravaganza*. 5 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Mesh, Added Dimensions, Jeanines*. 6 p.m. \$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Hazel Basil, Entifan, May Saito, Indë*. 6:30 p.m. \$.



Northampton indie-pop band Winterpills play the Iron Horse this Friday to celebrate the release of their eighth album, *This Is How We Dance*.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Marshall Crenshaw, James Mastro*. 7 p.m. \$.

Darlings, Easthampton: *Berm, Erin Morse, Chris Goudreau*. 7 p.m. \$.

### MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Wendell Senior Center, Wendell: *Memory Cafe*. "Social gathering for people living with changes to their memory or thinking and the people who care about them." 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Free.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Sensory Friendly Hour*, low lighting and sensory activities for preschoolers, 9 a.m.; *Playgroup*, for preschoolers and their caregivers, 2 p.m. Free.

### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Soldiers Memorial Park, Turners Falls: *Veterans Day Ceremony*. 11 a.m. Free.

Asbestos Farm, Hadley: *Jack Alboher, Kristine Leschper, Jumpy*. 7 p.m. By donation.

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Music and Movement*, for toddlers and their caregivers, 10 a.m.; *Tech Help*, bring your device, 1 to 3 p.m.; *Book Group*. Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, 3 p.m.; *Read to Marley*, a gentle therapy dog, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Afterschool Activities*, games, makerspace, snacks, 1:30 to 3 p.m.; *Tapestry Information Session*, for ages 11 to 19, 3:30 p.m. Free.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *LEGO at the Library*, for ages 6 to 11. 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Matinee Movie: After Hours*. 4 p.m. Free.

Montague Center Library, Montague: *Benefits of Joining Five College Learning in Retirement*. 6 to 7 p.m. Free.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Deerist, Libyan Hit Squad, Aura Shards, Willie Gussin*. 7 p.m. Free.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Jens Lekman, yeemz*. 7 p.m. \$.

Palladium, Worcester: *Death To All, Gorguts, Phobophilic*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

Bowker Auditorium, UMass Amherst: *Brandee Younger Trio*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Haunted Like Human*. 9 p.m. \$.

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Lofi Creativity Zone*. Drop-in writing and drawing hangout for grades 6 to 12. 4 to 5 p.m. Free.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Family Game Night*. Board games provided, or bring your own. Register at [slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org](mailto:slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org) or call (413) 800-2496. Dinner included. 5 to 7 p.m. Free.

Ja'Duke Theater, Turners Falls: *Annie*. 6 p.m. \$.

Four Star Brewery, Northfield: *Hoppy History: Beer and Revolution in Early American History*. 6 p.m. Free.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Square Dance with the Clover Valley Boys; Erica Weiss* calling. "Jammers welcome." 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *The Juggler Meadow Band*. Coffeehouse with refreshments. 7 p.m. By donation.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Author *Annie Cheatham* reads from her new book, *The Baby's Gotta Have Somethin': Glimpses of a Southern Childhood*. 7 p.m. Free.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: *Documentary, Far Out: Life On & After the Commune (2024)*. Live music before the film by *Verandah Porche* and *Patty Carpenter*; discussion to follow. 7 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Melanie Blackbird*. 8 p.m. No cover.

The Drake, Amherst: *Nick Shoulders, Jackson & the Janks*. 8 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Four venues, Brattleboro: *Circuits in the Woods*, feat. *Jeffrey Alexander + The Heavy Lidders, Wet Tuna, Charles Dodge, Caldon Glover, Badweatherfriend, The Vermont Synthesizer Society Showcase*, many more. Full schedule at [citw.online](http://citw.online). 12 p.m. \$.

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From left to right: Bromont, Quebec; Burrata at the Tire-Bouchon de l'Orpailleur in Dunham; Centre National de Cyclisme de Bromont, which has paved and woody trails, plus a velodrome and pickleball courts.

**TRAVELS** from page B1

comfy indoor and outdoor seating, a Keurig coffee machine stood at the ready, and the sheets were Egyptian cotton at its finest.

And the breakfast they brought me the next morning was the most beautiful sight I'd seen on a plate in months. Really perfect. The owners were right there serving it, and answering questions about Dunham, in French and English, to a full house of locals visiting from Montreal.

Martine, Éric, and Lily, their friendly Basset Hound, welcomed me with pleasure. I love that dog, too!

**Carbon-Neutral & Sparkling**

The morning was crisp and clear in the 70s – a perfect morning to visit a local cidrerie. As our friend's website, Tourism Eastern Townships, described it:

*The Domaine Héritage Cidery invites you to come and taste its sparkling and effervescent, sugar-free ciders, made with complete carbon neutrality. Located in the enchanting village of Frelighsburg, with breathtaking views of the Vermont mountains, it is the ideal place to enjoy a glass of cider and have a snack during a getaway on Quebec's wine route....*

Tom Rand moved here from California ten years ago, marrying a Quebec woman. Today, he runs Domaine Héritage, which he bought several years ago, 10 minutes over the border from Vermont. He enjoys

the challenge of making cider from century-old apple trees.

Tom loves to share the story of these hundred-year-old trees as he explains the intricacies of cider making. And climate change. And a hundred other topics. He's an animated guy, complete with a young son and his wife to run this big operation.

**Pickling in the Vélodrome**

We had goals for our trip, including finding time for fitness. For this, we stopped into the Centre de Cyclisme in Bromont, near Dunham, for a spin around the mountain biking trails with a local guide.

But the best part of the Cycling Center wasn't on wheels. It was the pickleball courts they set up in a big wooden gym, surrounded by the impressive Vélodrome Sylvain Adams bicycle racing track, essentially a balcony for riders to spin around.

I found some worthy opponents for a round of pickleball, as I like to do when traveling, just like every morning when I'm home. Great fun!

Bromont has the energy of Manchester, Vermont, or Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The main drag is long and has many different businesses and eclectic food stores, like one featuring a huge selection of Korean and Japanese noodles and foodstuffs. We found the coffee joint, one of several called Cafe N Latte, for a creamy afternoon pick-me-up.

**Further Ferments**

The next day was devoted to food and agriculture, and we had set up

many different stops to educate and feed us in this endeavor. The first was Ferme Cidricole Équinoxe, right off the highway. This is a family affair, run by Audrey-Anne Lussier and Marc-Antoine Arseneault-Chaisson.

Again, Tourism Eastern Townships gave us the background:

*More than an orchard, more than a cider house, the Ferme Cidricole Équinoxe is the vision of the future that two young entrepreneurs have had in their heads for a few years. This idea was set in motion during their university studies and following a trip to the land of the Normans....*

*[T]his human-scale agricultural enterprise is dedicated to the cultivation and transformation of multiple fruit trees and shrubs, as well as to small-scale breeding. All their ciders are made from fruit grown in their fields, spontaneously fermented with the wild flora found on our apples, and this, without artificial inputs or added sulfites.*

Audrey-Anne took me on a tour that began with a flock of little golden ducks. They are enjoying their swimming hole and little hutch 'til their day of reckoning, in 12 months, when they would grow up to be featured on the menu, just like the lone cow that was tied up in a field.

What this couple has built is becoming a big hit. They have a small al fresco dining area and find all kinds of products from their farm to add to the menu. They make poutine, bruschetta with their own tomatoes, cheese, and charcuterie

plates to go with the many ciders they make here. Plus apple fritters.

Like many of the farmers we would meet in this area, Audrey-Anne commented on the drought in Quebec, which had nearly depleted their water source.

**Farms & Forks**

One of the dining establishments in this area that really stands out and gets a lot of deserved attention is the Espace Old Mill, where Jean-Martin Fortier creates the ultimate farm-to-fork experience, beginning before you even set foot in the restaurant.

You're greeted with a glass of wine by one of the staff, who invites you to walk with them and tour the gardens, where all their food comes from. Holding the evening's small seven-course menu, we got a chance to see and taste the unusual vegetables they grow here, which all end up on the plates. A tiny piquant pepper from Jamaica, or an heirloom tomato with a red-tinged color.

On a plate in the greenhouse, you can see three of these diminutive yet tender varieties we ate that night for dinner. Sweet woodruff, marigold, lemongrass and shiso, an aromatic Japanese herb.

Right down the same road from the Old Mill is the Vignoble de l'Orpailleur, a large winery opened many decades ago by a group of locals and French investors. The name references a gold digger, and their elegant restaurant, le Tire-Bouchon de l'Orpailleur, was first-rate. I was treated to a boun-

teous lunch, delicate cod with a creamy onion tart paired with their Quebec-grown wines.

If you are interested in the wine-making process, tours are available to show you the whole operation of the vineyard and the aging and bottling areas.

**Hucking Discs**

Mont Sutton looms large in these parts. With 44 kilometers of mountain bike trails and introductory classes, one giant zipline over a kilometer long and another with twists and turns, visitors find plenty of outdoor activities here.

In fact, nature lovers can enjoy a game of disc golf, or take a chair-lift ride to admire the breathtaking scenery. We golfed with a ranked pro who plays disc golf every weekend. Julien Quenneville takes this game, played with modified frisbees, and wire cages, very seriously. And why not?

Mont Sutton welcomes disc golfers on the weekends, and the 18-hole course progresses along the sides of the slopes, so it's not an uphill climb to walk to each hole. It is a growing sport in Quebec, combining a lot of different sports in one. There are 83 courses to play disc golf in Quebec, Quenneville told me. One of the world's top disc golf courses is Westy Acres in Greenfield, Massachusetts.

Max Hartshorne, from South Deerfield, is the editor of GoNOMAD.com.

HARTSHORNE PHOTOS

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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