

The Montague Reporter

Year 24 – No. 5

editor@montaguereporter.org

JANUARY 8, 2026

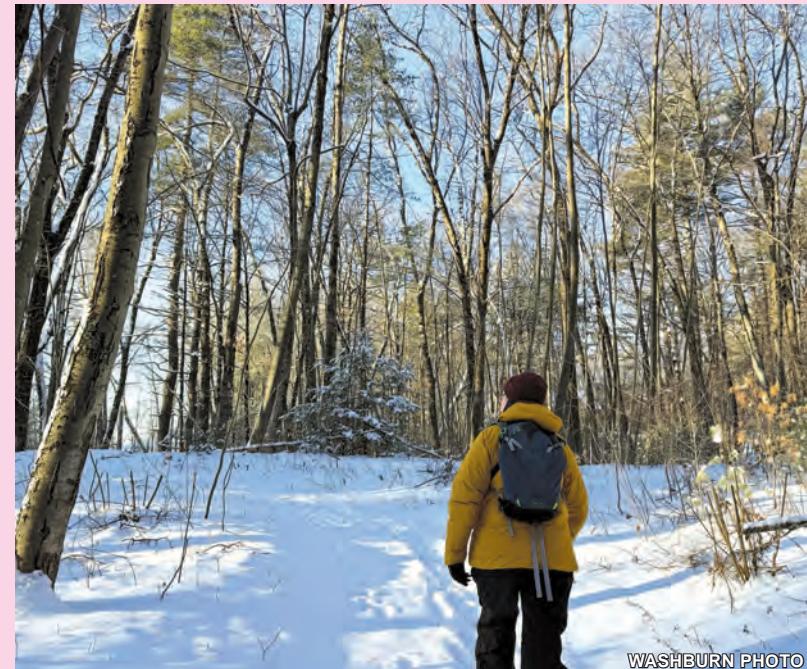
\$2

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

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POPULAR SCIENCE

Counting All the Birds



WASHBURN PHOTO

Volunteer bird-counter Sam McGullam heads into Greenfield's Highland Park last week to take a census.

By KEN WASHBURN

FRANKLIN COUNTY – On December 28, twenty-six local people went out on a frigid and icy morning to participate in the 50th Annual Greenfield Christmas Bird Count – part of the world's longest-running citizen science project.

I was one of those people. When the car thermometer said 8 degrees and most reasonable people were still snug in bed, my new friend Sam and I were traipsing along Highland Park's snowy

trails – hoping to see an owl, mostly seeing Black-capped Chickadees, and counting every individual bird we saw.

If you're wondering what a Christmas Bird Count is, you're not alone. It wasn't until I joined the Hampshire Bird Club two years ago that I learned about this noble but rather intense way to spend a winter morning and afternoon in the service of our winged friends.

For centuries, bird conservation and study required the collection

see BIRDS page A5

High School Sports Week: Back From a Busy Break

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – On Monday, January 5, Turners Falls High School and Franklin County Tech School came back from winter break. But the athletes from both schools did not take the whole time off. Between Christmas and January 5 their basketball teams played a combined eight games, while the Franklin Tech wrestlers hosted a

dual tournament against two other schools – and then grappled against 67 more up at Keene State.

The only teams that didn't compete during the break were the Turners Falls co-op swim teams, who had swamped all three of their previous opponents in December. This week, the girls lost a close one against the Easthampton Eagles – while the boys shut out the Birds,

see SPORTS page A8



Turners Falls's Ivy Lopez drives past Athol defenders as the Thunder hosted the Athol Bears on January 2. Lopez scored 6 points for the Thunder in the contest.

Montague Voters Face Ballot Glut In 2026

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard has endorsed a letter to the town's representatives in the state legislature, Natalie Blais and Jo Comerford, asking them to work for legislation that would allow all six towns that would join in a proposed new school district to vote by ballot election on whether to accept the new regional agreement.

Under state law, Montague is currently required to hold the vote at a general election, because it has a representative town meeting, but Leyden, Bernardston, Gill, Northfield, and Warwick would all typically vote on a regional agreement at their open town meetings.

The request, which originates with the Six Town Regional Planning Board (STRPB) organizing the consolidation, seems to have broad support among the towns, but there is some concern that town clerks

see VOTERS page A5

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Fire Truck, Wastewater Upgrades Move Ahead

By KATIE NOLAN

The agenda for Monday's Erving selectboard was late arriving to the town website, so the meeting wasn't broadcast or recorded by BNCTV, and wasn't attended or viewed by *Montague Reporter* staff. This report is based on the published agenda and meeting document packet, and from town administrator Bryan Smith's draft minutes.

The board voted unanimously to sign an amendment in the agreement between Erving Paper affiliate ERSECO and the town allowing for the installation of new sludge dryers at POTW#2, the town-owned wastewater treatment plant operated by ERSECO.

Wastewater superintendent Peter Sanders will submit the application for the POTW#2 modifications to the state Department of Environmental Protection, with Tighe & Bond providing review services to the town.

Fire chief Philip Wonkka presented an \$860,814 estimate for a new 2,000-gallon pumper-tanker, fully outfitted for firefighting. Wonkka reported that \$450,000 had already been appropriated for the truck, and he was requesting an

see ERVING page A6

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Utility Fills Disputed Pit

By JEFF SINGLETON

Monday's Montague selectboard meeting was short but packed with important topics, including a review of the budget process for the upcoming fiscal year, a letter supporting the request of the Six Town Regional Planning Board to have elections in all six towns of the proposed new school district, and a heavily-attended discussion of evolving plans for traffic-calming measures in Montague Center.

About two-thirds of the way through the meeting a surprise announcement generated a good deal

of excitement, most noticeably from chair Matt Lord.

"I'll deliver some good news," said town administrator Walter Ramsey. "The sinkhole at 42 Canal Road has been filled in." He said this was done by Berkshire Gas at the request of the town. Berkshire, Ramsey explained, has "easement rights" to enter the property to access its underground gas lines, which were "apparently under threat by the hole."

Curtis Sherrer, who bought the property in 2018 to house a cidery, has seen that project fall through

see MONTAGUE page A7

Local Author, Blogger Offers 'Attic' Rummage



Bruce Watson has published over 350 articles on his website over the last decade. Next Wednesday he'll present on the project at the Montague Center library.

By BEN GAGNON

MONTAGUE – Teacher, author, and Montague Center resident Bruce Watson has been using his unique website, *The Attic*, to spread kindness and hope rather than doom and gloom since the day of Donald Trump's first inauguration in January 2017. The site, at *theattic.space*, is non-political, free, and has no advertisements.

"I understand why people are so apocalyptic these days, but I'm tired of it," he said in an interview at the Lady Killigrew Café last weekend. "The media is getting meaner and more negative, so I'm rowing against the tide. It seems like you have to be a doomsayer to get anyone to listen, but I prefer to tell a good story – that's my whole pur-

pose. I think about a world full of children out there who deserve better. Say something good!"

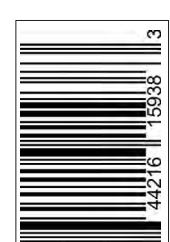
Watson says he's no Pollyanna, but is convinced that pervasive negativity is no way to live. His website opens with the greeting: "Welcome to the Attic, a Kinder, Smarter America." At the Montague Center Library next Wednesday, January 14, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., he'll rummage through the attic with the audience, including readings, songs, and short videos.

"The first thing I tell people is I'm not writing about politics – I try to find times in our history when people treated each other like neighbors, according to the ideals of our country," said Watson, who has published six nonfiction books

see ATTIC page A6

Sorry, We'll Give It Back When He Dies

Apparently Under Threat By the Hole.....	A1
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The Montague Reporter

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Little Updates

After the success, on its own terms, of the US Special Forces' incursion into Venezuela early Saturday to seize Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro and his wife and transport them to New York to face trial under US law, the Trump administration took a victory lap, thumping its chests and threatening various perceived foreign foes.

"Our warriors are the elite of America," Secretary of War Pete Hegseth proclaimed. "No other president has ever shown this kind of leadership.... America can project our will anywhere, anytime.... He *effed* around and found out!"

"If I lived in Havana and I was in the government, I'd be concerned," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that same day of Cuba.

Rubio's parents immigrated from that island to Florida in 1956, three years before the Revolution, and did not apply to become US citizens until well after his 1971 birth, though he implied throughout his early career that they were refugees of Communism in an apparent play to gain cred in the eyes of Miami's Cuban Republican constituency.

Senator Lindsey Graham wore a "Make Iran Great Again" hat on TV, and on Monday Trump told the press the Southwest Asian nation would "get hit very hard by the United States" if any more protesters involved in the latest street demonstrations in that country are killed by security forces.

On Wednesday, US security forces killed a protester, Renee Nicole Good, at a street demonstration in Minneapolis. Trump wrote that Good was "obviously, a professional agitator" who had driven her vehicle toward an ICE officer in an act of "domestic terrorism." As of press time, opinion as to whether this was accurate had already polarized – even among those who viewed the same videos – between supporters and opponents of the Department of Homeland Security's surge of 2,000 border enforcement agents into the state. According to data tracked by The Trace (www.thetrace.org), Good is the fourth person shot to death by these agents during the current immigration crackdown, but the first US citizen.

"We live in a world, in the real world... that is governed by strength, that is governed by force – that is, governed by power," White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller told CNN Monday. "These are the iron laws of the world since the beginning of time." Miller said

that "the United States of America is running Venezuela – by definition, that's true," and he highlighted another goal: "Obviously, Greenland should be part of the United States.... Nobody is going to fight the United States over Greenland."

The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway claimed Greenland as a territory in the early 18th century on the basis of Norse settlements on the island, which it turned out had failed centuries earlier. It was inhabited entirely by Inuit people, who contended with a catastrophic smallpox outbreak during the first decade after Danish contact. Greenland would remain a colony until World War II, when the Nazis projected their will over Denmark and the island asserted sovereignty and fell under US control; after the war it returned to Denmark, but nothing was the same. In 1953 it became an "autonomous" territory; in 1979 a "home rule" arrangement was granted; by 2008 the clear majority of its citizens indicated they favored independence; and independence became the country's official goal in 2024. The shift has been hastened by revelations that Denmark carried out an extensive program of forced sterilization of Inuit women as recently as the 1970s.

Mette Frederiksen, the Danish Prime Minister, warned this week that if the US invades Greenland, "everything stops – that is, including our NATO [membership]."

Meanwhile, piecemeal plans for Venezuela have been announced. Chris Wright, a former fracking CEO and the current US Secretary of Energy, explained that tens of millions of barrels of Venezuelan oil will be sold and the money will go into US-controlled accounts. Trump added Wednesday that this money would then be returned to Venezuela on the condition that it be used to purchase US exports.

"Not long after World War II," Stephen Miller wrote this week, "the West dissolved its empires and colonies and began sending colossal sums of taxpayer-funded aid to these former territories.... The neoliberal experiment, at its core, has been a long self-punishment of the places and peoples that built the modern world."

It was no coincidence the global defeat of Fascism sparked a chain reaction of decolonization. These men hope to reverse both losses. Miller is wrong, though: colonialism was defeated, primarily, by force. "Fuck around and find out."

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Last September, RMP Hair & Co in Greenfield merged with sister company Hair By Phase One in Turners Falls. Staffing the newly remodeled salon on a recent Tuesday are Mo Williams (seated) and Sarah Jessop. Walk-ins are welcome at the 44 J Street salon, open Tuesday through Saturday.

Letters to the Editors

Wendell Petition Reaches Threshold

In mid-November a campaign began to declare our town an Apartheid-Free Community. Montague was the first municipality in Massachusetts to "take the pledge" against the Israeli government's long-standing discriminatory policies. Now we hope Wendell will follow.

During a holiday season that instead of love, family/community, and peace saw violence and discrimination both nationally and internationally, we're glad to report some hopeful local news: as of January 1, 2026 more than 100 registered voters in Wendell had signed the Wendell Citizens' Petition, enough to bring the Apartheid-Free Community pledge to a Special Town Meeting for consideration, following certification.

Signature gatherers braving the cold were uplifted by positive responses, with many thanking us for this initiative. As the situation for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza remains desperate despite the so-called ceasefire, citizen signals of support for justice coming from the US will hopefully be seen as support for a real peace.

We call for the immediate delivery into Gaza of the tons of food, medical aid, and shelters that have been blocked for months, and for an end to the daily Israeli state and settler violence occurring throughout Palestine.

The New Year also started with the Israeli government's banning 37 independent humanitarian aid groups from providing urgently needed help

in Gaza. Among those is the American Friends Service Committee, the lead organization behind the Apartheid-Free Community pledge.

On Sunday afternoon, January 18 at 3:30 p.m. in the Wendell Free Library we will view the informative and tragic film, *Where the Olive Trees Weep*, and discuss the Apartheid-Free Communities campaign. This event is open to the public, and Wendell voters can also sign the petition then, before it goes to the town clerk for certification.

This event is open to the public, free, and will provide information to take home and books for sale. Light refreshments will be served.

Anna Gyorgy
 Wendell

Many Hands Went Into Foot Race

On Thursday, January 1, Montague Parks & Recreation held our Annual Sawmill River 10K Run in Montague Center. Approximately 82 runners (and 10 walkers) from throughout the entire region participated in the race that supports our Sponsor-A-Child Scholarship Program. It would not have been possible without the investment of time, energy, resources, and funding from many within our fine community.

We would like to thank Greenfield Savings Bank and Marathon Sports for their generous financial support, as well as the Montague Common Hall, the Sugarloaf Mountain Athletic Club, and the First Congregational Church of Montague Center for various services.

As many of you know, volunteer assistance is essential to the success of an event of this magnitude, and the Sawmill would not have become a success without the help of many who spent a good portion of their New Year's Day helping us out during registration, along the race route, organizing refreshments,

and help at the finish line.

We would also like to thank the Montague Police Department for providing critical services to ensure course safety, as well as the Montague Highway Department for plowing and treating the course prior to the race. And we would like to recognize members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, who recruited amateur radio operators and others in the area to assist with communications along the course. Besides hams from FCARC, there were others from Longmeadow, Chesterfield, and Saugus who assisted.

Finally, we would like to thank the runners (and walkers) who participated in the Sawmill Run. Your enthusiastic and hearty attitudes certainly made a frigid day significantly warmer. MPRD appreciates your support, and Happy New Year!

Jon Dobosz, Director
Montague Parks & Recreation

**WE WELCOME
 YOUR LETTERS!**

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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

Happy new year, good people! We are getting back on our feet **after our break**, many friends and neighbors seem to be either sick or fighting something off or oversleeping, and a wintry mix has coated us repeatedly this week. Filthy slush season has come early to the sidewalks of Turners Falls.

Discerning subscribers might find this edition slightly fluffy or skimpy or fudgy, but there is plenty of good stuff in here nonetheless.

One item I'd like to point out is Ray DiDonato's investigation of an evocatively titled potato monument (*see Page B1*). I decided this falls into the "winter day trips" series I solicited last January. We only ended up running about three winter-day-trip articles last year, but it's a good theme.

Do you have a good spot, between one and two hours' drive from here? Write it up and send photos! It's a good collective diversion.

Last week's special section, 1893 in the Village, seems to have sunk nearly splashlessly. Our fault for blasting out a surprise 30,000-word gift the day everyone's vacation ended. Have you cracked into it? We're holding onto all our extras, if you missed it... (Okay, we're starting to hear a trickle of feedback as this issue wraps up.)

There is an *awful lot* going on in the outside world this week, much of it *awful*, and there will be plenty of time over the next three months to curl up in an armchair and escape into a previous-century iteration of our vicinity. But I do encourage you to read it. In the next three months.

Someone told me this week that the Gill-Montague school district has been forwarding a **complimentary digital link to this newspaper** to its entire staff each week. This has been going on for... years, maybe? I'm curious to know if this rumor is true.

Gill-Montague currently pays \$120 a year for delivery to its three elementary schools; even the high school cancelled its hard copy a while back. That's 135 cumulative deliveries, quite a bargain just for the papers – 89 cents each including parts, labor, and shipping. The district is spending taxpayer money wisely if it is indeed leveraging those three subscriptions to enrich its entire workforce.



SARAH ROBERTSON PHOTO

If you have been reading this paper each week for free, we don't want you to stop, but we do encourage you to subscribe or donate. Or participate – send in Letters to the Editors, or news tips, or movie reviews, or make a puzzle. Buy a t-shirt or something, I don't know. Start a newspaper.

Frequent *Reporter* reporter Sarah Robertson sent **the above photo from Lake Wyola**. "Ice conditions were fantastic on Wyola on Christmas Eve-Eve on these borrowed skates," she reports.

Passings of two major local elders: **Dorthee**, whose obituary is on the next page, and **Jay Lord**, whose many local legacies include co-founding the Greenfield farmers market, the Center School and from it Responsive Classroom, and Just Roots. I know that both inspired countless people over the decades.

A number of worthy public-service **announcements** have piled up on my desk. Here we go:

Starting next Monday, patients at the **Community Health Center** down in Montague City can access same-day care on a walk-in basis, 7:40 to 11 a.m., five days a week.

The FCCHC lists ailments appropriate for this walk-in care: cough,

cold, or flu symptoms; ear infections, pink eye, or allergies; bug bites or stings, including tick bites; UTIs or yeast infections; minor rashes; cuts, burns, or sprains; desire for pregnancy, blood pressure, or STD screening; mouth or oral pain; and sutures in need of removal.

Don't seek morning walk-in care for chest pain, severe shortness of breath, or abdominal pain, or for chronic or routine issues. And don't call it urgent care!

The Brick House Community Resource Center and the Salasin Center are offering a free eight-week program, "**Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey**," starting next Wednesday, January 14 at 1 p.m.

"This confidential support and discussion group explores the impact of interpersonal violence and trauma on individuals," Brick House program coordinator Stacey Langknecht writes. "The group will learn about how trauma affects us and will explore ideas for creating safety and developing healthy relationships while sharing healing activities for the mind, body, and spirit. This group is open to people who identify as female and are age 18 or older." The 90-minute weekly program, which runs through March 4, will be held at the Salasin Center in Greenfield and via Zoom. Contact Stacey at (413) 800-2496 to register or for more information.

From now 'til February 1, Life-Path is accepting proposals for grants under its **Age & Dementia-Friendly Community** program. "The application process is straightforward and equity-focused," program director Jason Molony writes, "supporting projects in Franklin County and the North Quabbin that make communities more welcoming, connected, and accessible for people of all ages. Full details are available at www.lifeopathma.org/about/doing-business-with-us/ ... Call (413) 829-9198 with any questions."

Communities for Restorative Justice, a community-based restorative justice organization, works with the

Northwestern District Attorney's Office to divert cases out of the court system and into a **restorative justice process**. When a responsible party acknowledges harm and the victims and other impacted parties help determine how it can be repaired, a criminal case may be dismissed.

The initiative is expanding to our county. C4RJ's work is primarily volunteer-driven, and they're seeking new volunteers. Twelve hours of training will take place over Zoom the weekend of January 25 and 26. Readers are encouraged to check out www.c4rj.org/join-us/volunteers if they are interested.

And even when your ailments are unexamined, your traumas not yet transcended, your age and/or dementia unwelcome, and your harms left unrepairs, there is poetry.

This notice pops up reliably every year, just like the groundhog:

"The Friends of the Greenfield Public Library (FGPL) are seeking poems for the **35th Annual Poet's Seat Poetry Contest**. The contest is open to all Franklin County residents and to students ages 12 to 18 who attend school in Franklin County. Entries via USPS must be postmarked by February 21; emails must be date stamped by February 21...."

First, second, and third place prizes will be given in the Adult category, and two unranked winners selected in each of the Age 12 to 14 and Age 15 to 18 categories. An awards ceremony and poetry reading will be held the evening of April 28 at the Greenfield Public Library.

The competition is held in honor of Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, a Greenfield poet reportedly considered by several more famous contemporaries to be gifted, but now best remembered by his seat.

A new barber shop, pinball bar, and record café are all nearly **opening in downtown Turners**. Anyone want to place bets on which is first?

Be **careful** out there.

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

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PAPER
Week of January 12 in Montague



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ATTORNEY GENERAL'S NOTICE

Pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 32

TOWN OF LEVERETT – CASE NO. 11822
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF MAY 3, 2025
ARTICLE # 17

Attorney General's Limited Authority to Waive Procedural Defects in the Notice of the Planning Board Hearing

Pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32, if the Attorney General finds there to be any defect in the procedure of adoption or amendment of any zoning by-law relating to the form or content of the notice of the Planning Board hearing prescribed by G.L. c. 40A, § 5, or to the manner or dates on which said notice is mailed, posted or published as required by that section, then instead of disapproving the by-law or amendment by reason of any such defect, the Attorney General may elect to proceed under the defect waiver provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32. Under those provisions, the Attorney General is conditionally authorized to waive any such defect.

Defect Determined in Notice of Planning Board Hearing

The Attorney General has determined that the planning board hearing notice relating to the above Article failed to comply with the notice requirements for such hearing established by G.L. c. 40A, § 5. Section 5 provides in part (with emphasis added):

No zoning...by-law or amendment thereto shall be adopted until after the planning board in a...town has...held a public hearing thereon...at which interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard.... Notice of the time and place of such hearing, of the subject matter, sufficient for identification, and of the place where texts and maps thereof may be inspected shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the...town once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing, and by posting such notice in a conspicuous place in the...town hall for a period of not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing. Notice of said hearing shall also be sent by mail, postage prepaid to the executive office of housing and livable communities, the regional planning agency, if any, and to the planning board of each abutting city and town.... In cases involving boundary, density or use changes within a district, notice shall be sent to any such nonresident property owner who has filed such a request with the city or town clerk and whose property lies in the district where the change is sought.

Based on the materials submitted to this Office, we have identified the following defects: (1) the only planning board hearing notice that was posted was the Planning Board's agenda under the Open Meeting Law and therefore the posting did not include information where the text (and map if any) of the proposed by-law amendment can be inspected, as required by G.L. c. 40A § 5; and (2) the planning board hearing notice (agenda) was posted on March 10, 2025 for a hearing to be held on March 19, 2025. As such, the posting was only nine days before the hearing, not fourteen days, as required by G.L. c. 40A, § 5. For these reasons, the 90-day period prescribed for the Attorney General's review of Article 17 is suspended in accordance with G.L. c. 40, § 32.

Attorney General's Election to Proceed Under the Waiver Provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32

The Attorney General has elected to proceed under the limited defect waiver authority conferred by G.L. c. 40, § 32.

Suspension of Review of Zoning By-Law Amendments

The 90-day period prescribed by law for the Attorney General's review of local by-laws is therefore suspended in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32.

Posting and Publication of This Notice

The Town Clerk shall post a true copy of this Notice in a conspicuous place in the Leverett Town Hall for a period of not less than 14 days and shall publish a copy once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Leverett.

Filing of Claim That Defect in Notice Was Misleading or Otherwise Prejudicial

Within 21 days of the date on which this Notice is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Leverett, any resident of the Town of Leverett, or the owner of any real property in the Town of Leverett or any other party entitled to notice of the planning board hearing may file with the Town Clerk a written statement that the notice defect was misleading or otherwise prejudicial. The statement must include the reasons supporting the claim that the defect in the Planning Board Notice was misleading or otherwise prejudicial. This statement must be actually on file with the Town Clerk not later than 21 days from the date on which this Notice is published in the newspaper.

Town Clerk's Certification of Compliance with This Notice

After the expiration of the 21-day period, the Town Clerk shall submit to the Attorney General a true copy of this Notice with a certification of compliance with the publishing and posting requirements of the preceding paragraph, and a certification that either (a) no claim was filed within the 21-day period, or (b) one or more claims were filed within the 21-day period. The Town Clerk shall submit to the Attorney General true copies of any such claim(s).

Resumption of Attorney General's Review

Upon receipt of one original copy of this Notice with the Clerk's certification, the 90-day period provided for the Attorney General's review under G.L. c. 40, § 32, shall resume. If no claim is made, the Attorney General has the discretion to waive any such defect; if any claim is made, however, the Attorney General may not waive any such defect.

Note: By not filing a claim under this provision, a person shall not be deprived of the right to assert a claim of invalidity arising out of any possible defect in the procedure of adoption or amendment, as provided in G.L. c. 40, § 32, and in G.L. c. 40A, § 5.

Date: December 17, 2025

Very truly yours,

ANDREA JOY CAMPBELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Nicole B. Caprioli
By: Nicole B. Caprioli
Assistant Attorney General
Deputy Director, Municipal Law Unit
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OBITUARY

Dorthee

1/16/1929 – 12/28/2025



Born Dorothy of the Thompson family of Five Islands, Maine, Dorthee grew up primarily in Michigan, where her father taught at a private school, and spent summers on the coast of Maine.

She met Nehemiah Boynton in Georgia, where he was a naval cadet at the end of WWII. Also a Five Islands Maine native, though they had never met before, he bravely asked her out, even though her father was the officer in charge of cadet discipline.

After one year of college at Simmons, Dorothy dropped out to marry Nehemiah, a newly frocked Congregational minister, and have the first of her four children, giving birth to them in Nehemiah's various early parishes. One child, Paul, died tragically of leukemia at the age of eleven.

When her youngest child reached the age of twelve, Dorothy returned to college, completing her BA at American International College, in Springfield, Massachusetts, then went on to complete her PhD in Clinical Psychology at the University of Rhode Island in 1976, writing her dissertation on agency/communication balance and its relationship to sex role stereotyping. Residing in Connecticut she established her own practice as a therapist.

In 1980, at the age of 50, Dor moved to Northampton, Massachusetts and joined vibrant lesbian feminist and progressive communities. Rather than practice as a therapist, she joined a women's clothing collective and crafted objects from Maine sea treasures. She participated in social change activities and protests, as well as groups studying the philosophies of Mary Daly and Sarah Hoagland.

The lesbian feminist thinking on the power of words led Dor to reframe herself in 1990, legally setting aside both her father's name and her former husband's. She kept the "Dor" and re-spelled it with an added "thee" in a nod to the Quaker testimony of simplicity. As the State could never tolerate leaving blanks blank, her driver's license read "fnfn Dorthee," and even after her death, the bureaucratic morph of "fnfn" (no first name) had to be explained to every clerk of officialdom.

Attracted to the lesbian strain of the area's hippie back-to-the-land movement and the beauty of the wooded hilltowns, she followed friends to the unique community melding of Wendell in 1989, where she helped build a 380-square-foot home of her own design. MAC Construction, a women's business, supervised the work parties of women volunteers, mostly lesbian, that pounded in the nails and lifted the walls.

The little house became her place of peace as well as a great source of pride and satisfaction. Her own place. In the years that followed, that peace was only disturbed by the untimely death of her daughter Grace in 1993, deeply felt by Dor.

While she made at least annual summer visits to her still-beloved coastal Maine, the town of Wendell claimed her heart in her last decades. She was an active volunteer where needed, tending the Free Box overflow, spending time in the library, shepherding the Good Neighbors food pantry through change, and giving rides when called in her teal Toyota "Duckie." She made friends all across the town and its many communities, especially the town lesbians, sure to appear at regular potlucks and work parties.

It was a great unanticipated joy for Dor to reconnect with Helen Beebe, whom she had met long ago (1969) in Stockbridge, when they were both married (to men). They began a long-distance commuting relationship that included dancing in the kitchen and being slobbered on by Helen's bulldog Pumpkin. The too-brief partnership continued until Helen's death in 1998.

Dorthee was connected to the area's progressive movement as well as Wendell's. From 2001 to 2014, she vigiled weekly at the Orange Veterans Park with North Quabbin Women in Black to oppose United States wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the military industrial complex. From 2006 to 2013, when the Energy Corporation closed the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant, Dorthee was arrested tens of times with the Shut It Down Affinity Group encouraging the end of Vermont Yankee.

kee. Dorthee produced her broadside publication, *Witness*, around 2010 as a chronicle of community nonviolent political action.

In Dor's last years she replaced her much-loved Toyota with a super-Cadillac of a walker, able almost daily to perambulate out to the mailbox and quite often across the street to listen to elder friends who needed to be listened to. For a therapist who didn't practice, she did an astounding lot of therapy. The world now mostly came to her, not only via NPR but regular calls from out of the country, from her children and her many, many friends. She became, at last, Wendell's Eldest Citizen.

Her decline this Autumn was rapid, over a several-month period, with a fall and then a stroke. Once she got home from the hospitals, at her insistence, her journey into death was a nine-night wonder, surrounded by friends and loved ones. She eased out in her sleep December 28.

At age 96 Dor had outlived her parents, all of her siblings, two children, an ex-husband, an ex-partner, a partner, and her cat Olivia. She is survived by her son Carter Boynton (wife Patricia, Fort Myers, Florida); her daughter Charlotte Boynton (husband Antonio Sanfilippo, Alexandria, Virginia); her grandchildren Paul Boynton (Alexandria, Virginia) and Michelle Manches (husband, Andrew Manches, Lake Forest, California); her great-grandchildren Amelia and Felix Manches (Lake Forest, California); and a large circle of friends.

Her remains were interred on January 5 at Wendell's Osgood Cemetery. A Celebration of Life for family and friends will be held in the Spring in Wendell.

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VOTERS from page A1

will be faced with a burdensome number of elections this year, given that there are local elections in May, state primaries in September, and the national midterm election in November.

The problem is particularly acute in Montague, which is facing as many as six elections this year – a Proposition 2½ debt exclusion for a new library, another exclusion for a new Franklin County Technical School building, and the vote on school regionalization.

Montague town clerk Wendy Bogusz told the *Reporter* that she would like to consolidate some of these elections. “I would like them to be combined in the annual spring election, if possible,” she said. “They cost about \$11,000 if done separately, and it is very hard to get people to work the polling stations.”

On Monday, the selectboard was asked how the town should handle the problem. “Some of this we get to control, some of it we don’t,” said chair Matt Lord. “We’re at the point now where none of this is urgent, and we’re seeing how things lay out.”

“There’s a lot of moving pieces for all these projects,” said town administrator Walter Ramsey, “but we’re definitely actively thinking about it.”

Voters will be asked to weigh in on a plan to build a new public library in downtown Turners Falls, after an expansion of the Carnegie Library was determined to be impractical to meet the department’s needs. Montague was accepted last year into the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP), which would reimburse the majority of the construction cost, but the town’s match is expected to be large enough that it would require a debt exclusion.

Public libraries trustee Will Quale said there is strong support among the trustees for a separate election for the library question. Quale said he did not believe there would be enough time under state statutes to approve a debt exclusion at the annual town meeting on May 2, and then vote on it at the local election on May 19.

He also said the final decision on the local match for the MPLCP grant might not be consistent with the date of town meeting. A project timeline on the libraries’ website has MPLCP commissioners calculating grant awards in February and voting to award them in March; this will determine the required match.

Debt exclusion votes went to the ballot box in Montague in late June 2015 – to renovate the auditorium at

Sheffield Elementary School – and late June 2016, to fund upgrades to the combined sewer system and material cleanup at the Strathmore paper mill. In 2018 a special town meeting was held at the end of March to appropriate money to build the new public works complex, which sent a debt exclusion vote to the May 21 ballot.

On Monday, Ramsey said he did not see the need for a special town meeting this winter.

A proposal to build a new building for the Franklin County Technical School would need the approval of member towns countywide, as well as a debt exclusion vote for the town’s costs. Superintendent Richard Martin said that the final cost of the project, and assessments to the member towns, will not be finalized until the fall, and predicted that the debt exclusion votes would probably need to take place in October.

Martin also pointed out that a bill currently working its way through the Massachusetts legislature would extend the required hours for polls to remain open during debt exclusion elections.

As for the new school district, there is significant support in the five towns currently required to vote on regional agreements at town meeting – Leyden, Bernardston, Gill, Northfield, and Warwick

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– for changing to an open election, according to Greg Sneedker, who serves on the STRPB and the Gill selectboard.

A number of questions remain about the process. The letter sent by the STRPB to the member towns, which in turn is addressed to their representatives in the legislature, rejects amending the law governing school consolidation or approving “home rule” petitions for the towns:

“Amending Chapter 71 Section 15 would take a considerable amount of time and a Home Rule petition could potentially take even longer. We ask for your support to explore and hopefully offer other pathways to accomplish this given the unique

circumstances noted above.”

Leyden town coordinator Michele Giarusso told the *Reporter* that her town’s selectboard endorsed the proposal in late December. “We thought it was important to have as many people as possible vote on this issue, [who] might not want to sit through a long town meeting,” she said.

The Northfield selectboard voted to endorse the letter on Tuesday, though one member abstained, and the Bernardston board unanimously did the same on Wednesday, with chair Brian Keir commenting that it was “a well-written letter.”

Gill will be voting on the proposal next Monday, according to town administrator Ray Purington.

**BIRDS** from page A1

of birds in a violent manner – usually by shotgun. John James Audubon himself was a prolific bird-killer, and to that nasty business we owe the fabulous detail in his paintings. After all, it’s much easier to paint a perfectly still goldfinch than one moving about in the canopy of a maple.

By the turn of the 20th century, the impact of several decades of industrialization started to ring alarm bells for conservationists – bird populations were already being noticeably impacted. The Passenger Pigeon, a bird once so numerous that its immeasurable flocks blocked out the sun, was declared extinct in captivity in 1914. The last Passenger Pigeon in the wild had been shot by 1900. That same year, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, working for the early Audubon Society and concerned about bird decline, proposed an idea: a non-lethal census in which the birds would be *counted* instead of shot.

Around Christmastime 1900, Frank managed to cobble together 27 people to count birds in 25 North American areas from Ontario to California. The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was born.

Today, counts are conducted in 20 countries throughout the Western Hemisphere. It is primarily overseen by Audubon, with partner organizations in other countries. Once compiled and organized, Audubon publishes the data, which is accessible to the public.

The CBC results are a treasure trove for statistics enthusiasts. For example, in the United States last year the CBC revealed that the USA’s most numerous bird in December is the Red-winged Blackbird.

While there is plenty of fun to be had sifting through the numbers, though, the fun stops when you read the scientific papers that rely on CBC data. Many of them paint a stark portrait of devastating decline. A study published in 2019 used CBC data to determine that since 1970, the United States has lost one in four birds. It is difficult to wrap one’s head around, but it is true: we now have *three billion fewer individual birds* than we did 50 years ago.

This decline is one of the many reasons I decided to join the Christmas Bird Count. I am not an ornithologist, a biologist, a PhD student, or a conservationist. I manage a grocery store and make it a point to bird heavily



McGullam (above, at the former Center School field) and the author (not pictured) identified 22 bird species during their eight-hour survey of eastern Greenfield. Others spotted an additional 40 species in the local count.

in my free time. It feels important to me to do something to help these special creatures that have given my life focus and meaning. The Christmas Bird Count is something I can do without a degree – all I need are eyes, ears, and thermal undergarments.

There are other reasons to participate in a CBC besides altruism: it’s a great way to build camaraderie with other birders; 17,000 steps in subzero weather make one feel like a star athlete; and there’s always the potential to find something incredibly rare and be king for a day in the local birding Facebook groups.

That didn’t happen this time – maybe next year.

Sam and I were given a specific territory to cover and count: an oblong oval that stretched north-south from Stop & Shop to Cheapside. We started at Highland Pond and heard barely anything over the crunching of the snow under our boots. The nearby neighborhoods revealed a bit more: White-throated Nuthatches doing their nasal beeping and American Crows harassing a Red-tailed Hawk at the top of a pine tree.

From there, we went to Poet’s Seat Tower,

where we encountered almost no birds except for a mob of Black-capped Chickadees off in the woods.

Sam had been hoping to spot a Long-Eared Owl, reported in the area by someone on Facebook months ago, unaware that the owl in her video was extremely unusual. No luck. We went down the hill to stalk the Center School’s former campus, and were met with a glut of White-throated Sparrows, which announce themselves with the tiniest “eep.” We also set off the alarm calls of the diminutive but extremely loud Carolina Wren.

After a lunch break, Sam and I headed to our last joint stop: the swampy, undeveloped area across from Stop & Shop.

This was the most exciting area of the day. Way up high, a Common Raven croaked loudly. Eastern Bluebirds gave their trembling warbles from somewhere, and deep in the brush next to a still-flowing stream, I spotted a perfectly-still Hermit Thrush – a rarity! We both agreed that the thrush was our Bird of the Day, and I decided to call it quits, as both pairs of socks I wore were wet from snow. Sam, now solo, bravely surveyed

a few more spots.

After almost eight hours of birding, we ended up seeing a total of 22 species. If this count happened in spring, we could easily have seen 22 species in as many minutes. While I’m looking forward to those days returning, birding in every season has its charm. Winter affords the opportunity to see tracks in the snow, and there’s no need to peer through a thick green canopy, trying desperately to see your target bird. In winter, nature is laid bare for us to discover, and, of course, to count.

After the sun went down, Sam put together a report and sent it off to the Greenfield CBC’s official compiler since the late 1980s, Mark Fairbrother, an excellent Franklin County birder who I run into semi-regularly at the usual haunts. Mark’s task is to take the data from every group participating, put it into a spreadsheet, and send it off to Audubon. He was kind enough to email me data from the entire 50-year tenure of the Greenfield CBC, with notes.

Mark calls the 62 total species seen this year “respectable.” Last year’s CBC netted 63 species, and 2023 had 62, so 2025 was perfectly average, though some rarities appeared, Barrow’s Goldeneye and a handful of Saw-whet Owls among them.

The most common bird by far across the Greenfield CBC’s history is the European Starling, introduced to North America in the late 19th century by an amateur ornithologist. He released 100 birds in Central Park and they became the first starlings to have a successful nest in North America. Today European Starlings number in the hundreds of millions, and this year Greenfield bird counters recorded 1,209 of them.

This year’s Christmas Bird Count participants tallied 7,415 birds across all species, compared with 6,724 last year. Of course, there are so many birds that get missed, which is why as far as science projects go, the Christmas Bird Count focuses on the big picture.

Overall, traipsing around Franklin County in the service of birds was a great way to spend a winter Sunday. If you want to learn more about Christmas Bird Counts, visit www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count.

And please consider joining us next year!



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Montague Community Television News

One Last Sniff

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS — We're back to business, but first, just a little more Christmas! The "Nightmare Before Dragmas," Montague Center's "Santa Parade," and "It's a Wonderful Night" in Turners Falls are all available to view on our Vimeo page, if you're not quite ready to shake that holiday feeling.

For the rest of us, the Montague and Gill selectboard meetings have been updated, and will be aired on Channel 9 and found on our Vimeo page as well.

Our Vimeo page can easily be

found linked through our website, MontagueTV.org, by clicking the "Videos" tab. There you can find folders directing you to all of our archived Montague and Gill selectboard meetings, past and present.

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

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Bystander Intervention; Several Warrants; Dog Surrendered; Yoga Ball Neutralized

Sunday, 11/2

2:59 a.m. Fire alarm, Mountain Road. No visible smoke or flames. FD determined it was a hair dryer issue.

12:48 p.m. Paperwork service on Main Road.

2:50 p.m. Welfare check on a car at the French King Highway traffic lights.

The elderly operator fell asleep; she was evaluated by EMS.

Monday, 11/3

1:35 p.m. Rollover crash, Main and Munn's Ferry roads. Wires down, occupant trapped. Operator extricated, alert and talking. Eversource stabilized pole. Road open.

Tuesday, 11/4

8:49 a.m. Assisted Eversource with street light replacement, French King Highway. 10:18 a.m. Main Road caller reported a stolen trailer.

Wednesday, 11/5

10 a.m. Hoe Shop Road caller reporting a vehicle parked in the area since before sunrise. Owner lives behind the caller's house, and paving work is being done. 11:16 a.m. Notified the Barton Cove Road gate is closed for the season. 3:58 p.m. MassDOT reported damaged guardrails, Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. Tractor-trailer struck them the previous evening.

Thursday, 11/6

11:27 a.m. Served a warrant on Main Road. 11:38 a.m. Main Road business calling regarding failure to pay for tires/service.

Friday, 11/7

9:43 a.m. Served a warrant on Setback Lane. 11:16 a.m. Main Road caller reports a truck in the middle of the road with an operator who appears impaired. Keys taken by bystanders.

Saturday, 11/8

1:39 p.m. Mountain Road caller reporting a loose gray pitbull.

Gone on arrival. 9:37 p.m. Hayfields Road caller notifying PD of bonfire on lower fields until 11:15 p.m. Caller later advised the friend was picked up by family.

4:06 p.m. Motorist reporting a disabled vehicle in the left turn lane, French King Highway.

Handled by power company.

5:26 p.m. Mountain Road resident secured a loose dog that was bothering ducks. ACO notified.

6:30 p.m. ACO reports a quarantined dog got loose, Mountain Road.

Monday, 11/17

1:30 p.m. Update on loose dog: held at shelter; owner to complete surrender paperwork.

Wednesday, 11/19

7 p.m. Small black dog secured by ACO, Cove View Lane. Owner located via microchip.

Friday, 11/21

1:57 p.m. Main Road caller reporting leaves being blown into the road. No hazard found.

Sunday, 11/23

8:26 a.m. Construction vehicles blocking the travel lane for crane work, Riverview Drive.

1:50 p.m. Served a warrant on Main Road.

Friday, 11/14

8:32 a.m. Tree crew briefly blocking roadway, West Gill Road.

10:31 a.m. Main Road caller reporting a scam.

Saturday, 11/15

4:41 a.m. Main Road caller heard screaming near bus stop. Troopers checked area thoroughly; nothing found.

6:08 p.m. Caller reported a dead animal in the roadway, French King Highway. Removed.

4:33 p.m. Brush debris removed from roadway, West Gill Road.

Monday, 11/24

1:03 p.m. Lights malfunctioning, French King Highway. MassDOT notified; reset.

Wednesday, 11/26

2:10 p.m. Two-vehicle crash with injuries, French King Highway.

Thursday, 11/27

2:09 p.m. Flat tire, French King Highway. Assistance arrived.

2:39 p.m. Fire alarm, Lamplighter Way.

Friday, 11/28

5:09 a.m. West Gill Road caller struck a deer. Vehicle drivable; deer removed.

2 p.m. Loose German Shepherd returned to owners, Barton Road.

Sunday, 11/30

4:17 p.m. Assisted Northfield PD.

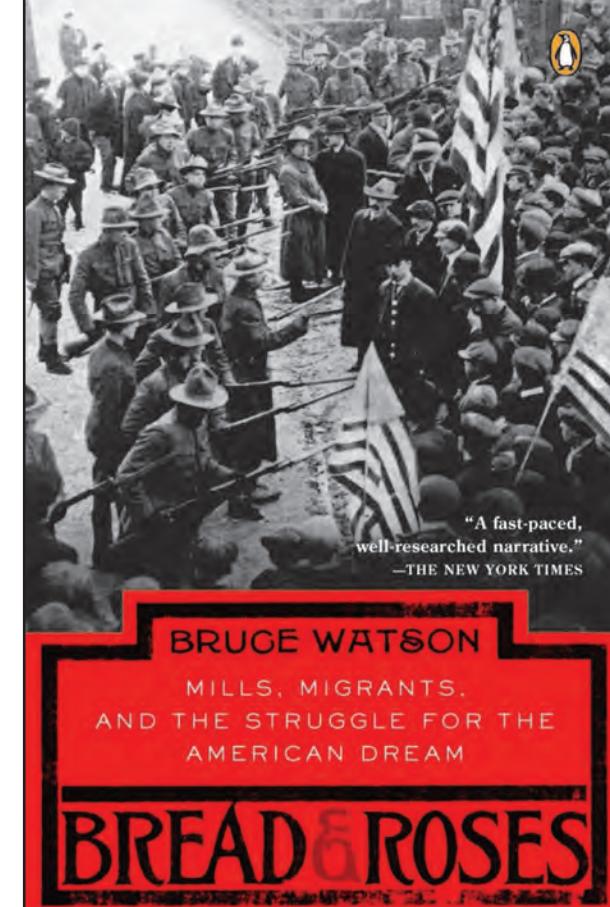
ATTIC from page A1

and taught at UMass Amherst, Deerfield Academy, and Hampshire College.

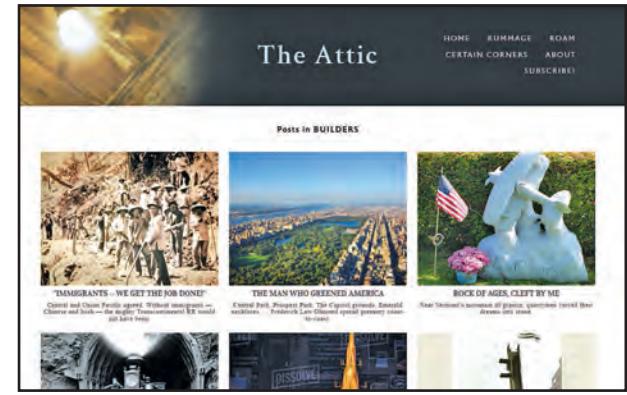
One of his books, *Bread & Roses: Mills, Migrants, and the Struggle for the American Dream*, literally struck a chord recently when singer Lucy Dacus sang the song "Bread and Roses" at the inauguration of Zohran Mamdani as mayor of New York City on January 1. The book focuses on one of the least-known but most important strikes in American history in the city of Lawrence, Massachusetts, starting on January 12, 1912.

Occurring in the midst of the Progressive Era, the strike lasted two months and led to Congressional hearings in Washington, DC, that shamed textile mill owners across New England into raising wages and making other concessions. Bread symbolized wages and roses represented dignity and beauty.

"It was erroneously branded the 'Bread and Roses' strike, which makes it sound romantic, when it was actually a brutal event playing out over two months," said Watson. "The strike was very well-organized by the International Workers of the World, including soup kitchens to support the workers, but when the strikers decided to send their children out of town for their own safety, that's what captured the attention of the country."



Watson's 2006 book on the Lawrence textile strike.



American author and political activist Upton Sinclair claimed he saw a "Bread and Roses" placard at the Lawrence strike, referring to a poem written a year earlier by James Oppenheim. The poem was put to music in 1974 by Mimi Farina, the sister of Joan Baez, and further popularized by Judy Collins.

"I'm thrilled to see it come back," said Watson, who learned of the strike while teaching school in Lawrence in the early 2000s. "I was stunned to find that no one had written a book about it."

At Wednesday evening's presentation, Watson will "rummage through the attic" including some of the 350 articles he's posted over the past nine years, along with songs and videos. He was inspired to start the site during the 2016 election campaign, "when suddenly it was OK to demonize people like FDR and LBJ, and to simplify and dumb down history. I got so fed up, I decided to write basic, non-political, upbeat stories about American culture."

He posts a new story every Sunday, only about 800 to 900 words long, "so people can read it on their phones." The latest is titled "Facing the Future! (And It's About Time!)"

"I'm not talking about AI or global warming, but how we have faced the future before," he said. "How did we keep our hopes up? It's about looking at the future without dread, like the Jetsons and techno-utopias."

Watson says he chose to name his website "The Attic" because the mind is "kind of like an attic you can rummage through, and you never know what you'll find." The site is broken down into numerous categories, including "Heroes and She-roes," "Dreamers," "Wits," "Rebels," "Attic at the Movies," and "Battling the B.S."

Watson's nonfiction books include *Hearth and Soul: A History of the Jones Library at One Hundred* (2019), *Light: A Radiant History from Creation to the Quantum Age* (2016), *Jon Stewart: Beyond the Moments of Zen* (2012), *Stephen Colbert: Beyond Truthiness* (2014), *Freedom Summer: The Savage Season That Made Mississippi Burn and Made America a Democracy* (2010), and *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Men, The Murders, and The Judgment of Mankind* (2007).



ERVING from page A1

appropriation of \$420,000 in the FY'27 budget.

The selectboard asked for changes in the contract for the pump-tanker specifying that if this second appropriation is not approved at town meeting, the town will not face a cancellation penalty. The board agreed to review the tanker request at its January 12 joint meeting with the finance and capital planning committees.

A Winter Special

The board discussed a potential special town meeting, tentatively scheduled for February 19.

Draft warrant articles presented by Bryan Smith include authorizing a schematic design for the roof and heat pump repair at Erving Elementary School; designating the Erving school committee the appointing authority for the town's secondary education representatives; establishing a museum committee; amending the dog bylaw to conform with changes in state law; transferring free cash for health insurance and the assessors' overlay; transferring old unspent balances to stabilization funds; and paying bills of prior years.

The board and finance committee will review the proposed articles at their January 12 meeting.

Full-Time Tech

The board held a lengthy discussion of the town's current and future information technology (IT) needs. Chairman Jacob Smith, recusing himself from the selectboard and speaking as the town's IT consultant, said the town has 80 computers, printers in every building, 80 to 100 email addresses, mobile devices, cloud storage, and archiving features. He recommended a change to full-time IT staff in FY'27.

Selectboard member William Bembury said he has met with the library director and police chief, and is scheduled to meet with other department heads. He said he understands that the departments need more support and that a part-time position is not enough.

Bembury and selectboard member James Loynd agreed to continue discussing IT requirements at future meetings. Later in the meeting an executive session was held to discuss aspects of the town's systems that could pose security concerns.

Other Business

The board unanimously approved amendments to the police department cadet policy. Changes were made in the section describing physical requirements to align them with the patrol officer requirements.

The board held a second reading of a request for a lime tower at POTW#2 to be declared as scrap. Jacob Smith noted that the town is waiting for the results of lead testing for the tower. A third reading will be held January 12 if the results are in.

The board appointed Rebecca J. Miller to a two-year term on the board of registrars.

The board voted to approve a contract for Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to assist the open space committee in submitting an open space and recreation plan update to the state. At a previous meeting on December 22, FRCOG's contract to help the town update its hazard mitigation plan was extended through June.

At the December 22 meeting Emily Pollard was hired as a temporary assistant in the assessors' office, at 21 hours per week.

At the end of the public meeting on Monday, the board retired into three scheduled executive sessions: one with respect to collective bargaining with the police officers' union; one concerning contract negotiations with the police chief; and the third about "deployment of security personnel or devices."

Keith Waters provided additional reporting.



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MONTAGUE from page A1

in part due to the degraded condition of the rear section of the building, a former paper mill. He has also suggested that the water eroding the hole may be leaking from the adjacent power canal, which is owned by FirstLight Power, and that his property may in fact be located somewhat southwest of the parcel which appears on the assessors' map, placing the hole on town property if true.

Neither issue has been entirely resolved by the actions of Berkshire Gas. Board of health chair Melanie Ames-Zamojski told the *Reporter* that she was unsure what the gas company had filled the hole with.

"The area will need to be monitored," she wrote. "As the property lines are being questioned by the owner, that can be confirmed and sent to the owner. This is clear that the property is his (either the BOH or town can confirm the property lines).... [T]here are some lingering questions for the long term."

Beacons of Calm

An obscure-sounding but complex agenda item, termed an "Update on the Montague Center Complete Streets Project Design," drew a large crowd of mostly Montague Center residents, who largely attended the hybrid meeting via Zoom.

The town has been awarded a grant under the state Complete Streets program to mitigate traffic in the village. Plans were first presented last year, and initial designs received extensive feedback from residents in September.

The new design, produced by Bowman Consulting Group — which has replaced the previous engineers from the firm VHB — contains 12 changes from the original. Among these are connections from Main Street to Center and North streets at 90-degree angles; upgraded stormwater management through enhanced curbing; moving the regional transit bus stop currently near the Village Store further to the north, and adding a "small sidewalk tunnel with a grate" in front of the post office.

After assistant town administrator Christopher Nolan-Zeller re-

viewed the highlights of Bowman's updates, he said the new company had agreed to come to next week's board meeting to answer questions about the revised design.

Lord accepted a few comments from those in attendance. Duston Spear, who said she was a new resident at the village, wondered if there were any "interim solutions, like crosswalk signs," that could slow traffic while the project is in progress. She said she had seen only one crosswalk signpost, which was not by itself effective in slowing traffic through the neighborhood.

Nolan-Zeller said the public works department has a limited number of these posts, and "move them around on occasion to make sure that they're hitting the high-profile intersections where there are risks of pedestrian collisions," but that the town is "definitely open to alternative suggestions in the meantime."

Flashing crosswalk "beacons" were also discussed. Resident Sally Pick said she was "very pro-beacon, so you can call [Montague Center] Beacon Valley instead of Beacon Hill." Nolan-Zeller noted that the Bowman proposal eliminates a proposed new beacon at the corner of Center and Main streets.

No votes were taken. "More to come with this exciting traffic-calming project next week, with the engineers," said Lord.

Nolan-Zeller said the town hopes to begin construction on the project this summer.

Matches and Stakes

The selectboard authorized Nolan-Zeller to apply for a small bridge grant from the state to repair the bridge on Swamp Road, which runs between Route 63 and Turners Falls Road north of Montague Center. He said the total cost of the project is estimated at \$850,000, which means the town would be "on the hook" for a match of "about \$170,421, if awarded."

Nolan-Zeller said he was aware that the project, which would be started in 2027, could affect the regional transit bus route to Sunderland, and that the town would collaborate with the transit authority to

find alternatives. He also noted that the project was only for repairs, so "I'm not sure if there would be a closure of that [bridge] — I imagine it would be temporary."

Nolan-Zeller also noted that residents on top of the Hill in Turners Falls may see some "staking going on" this week as an early step in a project to mitigate stormwater runoff in that neighborhood, funded under the state Municipal Vulnerability Program. He said all the work will be taking place within the town's right-of-way, so it should not leak over onto private property.

In other updates Nolan-Zeller said that the project to remediate contaminated soil in the town-owned lot on First Street slated for Habitat for Humanity housing is well under way. He said the state Department of Environmental Protection has removed several truckloads of soil generated by the project, and is expected to return soon for "the rest."

Other Business

The selectboard approved a request from Joshua Breitner, representing Cocina Lupita, a Central American restaurant that opened this year on Avenue A, for an entertainment license to play dance music on Fridays and Saturdays between 7 and 9:30 p.m., twice a month.

Breitner said that this was the most the restaurant currently wanted the dance music, but that if it works out well it may return to the board for an amended license.

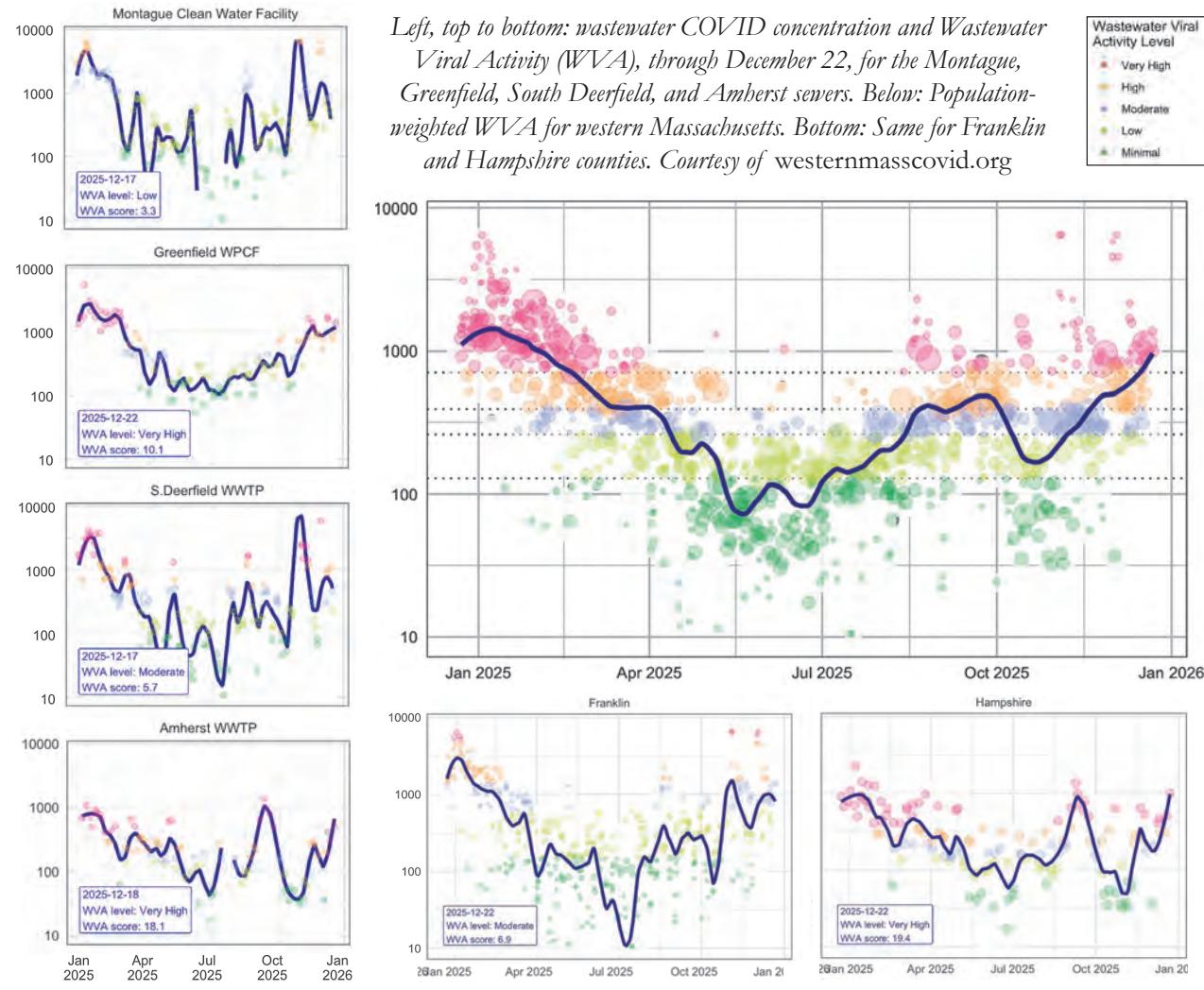
At the request of public works superintendent Sam Urkiel, the board moved Brandin Coates to the position of groundskeeper. Lord noted that in light of the conversation two weeks prior about employees moving to a lower pay grade because their new job requires less work and expertise, the town should maintain Coates's old pay rate for the first year, but grant him lower step increases after that.

The board had voted to adopt this approach on a case-by-case basis. Urkiel said Coates was aware of the change, and is "OK with that."

The next selectboard meeting will be held Monday, January 12.



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LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on January 7, 2016: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

All Safe in
Third Street Blaze

Crews from eight local fire departments spent the better part of Wednesday morning, and well into the afternoon, putting down a house fire at the western end of Third Street, reportedly lit by a fallen candle. One woman, believed to be the only person in the building when the fire broke out around 9 a.m., was taken to the hospital.

One of the only wooden structures on a block lined with brick buildings, 23-25 Third proved hard to save. By noon, much of the roof had fallen in and a steady flow of ashen sludge poured out its

door and down its front steps. A state rehab trailer stood by, but no firefighter injuries were reported.

Just Buy Some Photos

Wendell historian Pam Richardson learned that Harvard's Peabody Museum holds eight Native American artifacts that were found in Wendell. The artifacts, a five-pound mortar and a matching pestle, date to the woodland period, roughly 1000 BC to 1600 AD.

In October, the selectboard sent the museum a letter asking that those artifacts be sent for viewing in town at a reduced cost.

At its December 30 meeting, the board learned the museum refused the request, and instead suggested that the town purchase photographs of the artifacts.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on January 5, 2006: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Racing Into the New Year

On the day after New Year's in Montague Center, 201 runners showed up to usher in 2006 with a 10-kilometer race around the streets of the snow-clad village.

The road race was a success, according to organizer and Montague selectboard chair Allen Ross. Ross originated the race 16 years ago, when 20 runners turned out to raise money to preserve 100 acres along the Sawmill River on North Street that was up for sale.

The presence of an owl perched above one of the midway stretches provided favorable augury. Brian Halferty of Northampton was the first to cross the finish line, at 35 minutes and 28 seconds.

140 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on January 6, 1886: News from the Turners Falls Reporter's archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

New moon yesterday morning. How many times have you written 1885 this year?

Has the spasm of virtue which induced you to "swear off" last Friday, been relieved yet?

The early closing movement has struck the town in earnest.

The days have increased ten minutes in length.

Venus has now reached her greatest brilliancy and is a perfect gem in the evening sky.

A popular sport these days is pickerel fishing through the ice.

All members of the Ladies Union Aid Society who feel interested are invited to join an excursion to visit the Children's Hospital at Baldwinville, Tuesday, January 12th.

"Kerry Gow" will be played at Colle's opera house by John Murphy on the 21st of this month, and the "Jollities" party comes on the following night.

R. Lovenbein has marked down woolen underwear on account of the warm weather.

Allen Brothers advertise all

wool brown overcoats for \$6.50.

The open winter has been very favorable to Contractors Thomas Brothers in the prosecution of their sewer contract, and much more work will be accomplished this year than any one ever supposed possible under the circumstances.

Every other "set" has plans laid for a charter for an aqueduct company to supply the village with water.

The Clark Machine Co. are making one of their largest sized pumps for the Turners Falls Company to be used in supplying the village with water.

Tramps are not so numerous this winter as usual, but such as are on the road keep each other posted as to soft snap, where they will meet kind-hearted people and where the watch-dog has something to say about it.

The ice in the river went out, yesterday, something that has not been known in January before. The water was quite high, and the crashing and crumbling cakes made quite a sight.

Hundreds of pounds of figuring blocks of all sizes and qualities of paper for sale at this office at exceedingly small cost. They are the waste cuttings that accumulate.



SPORTS from page A1

simply because no Easthampton boys came to the meet.

Swimming

TFHS 71 – Easthampton 0
Easthampton 51 – TFHS 43

Although the co-op swim teams did not hold a meet during the break, they were both sitting pretty at 3 and 0. The boys had won those early meets by a combined score of 284-36, while the girls outscored their opponents 258-70.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Turners girls dropped their very first meet of the season to the undefeated Easthampton Eagles. It all came down to the last relay race of the afternoon.

When I arrived at the pool, the Eagles were ahead 28-22. After the 500-yard freestyle race and the 200-yard relay, Eastie had increased their lead to 41-27 with three races to go. The Thunder then finished first and third in the backstroke and first and second in the breaststroke, making it 45-39.

That's when coach Abby Heathwaite came to the scorer's table. "You can still win," the scorekeeper told her. "You just have to finish first and third!" The place erupted as parents and coaches urged their swimmers on.

In the third leg, though, Easthampton took a substantial lead,

and Turners was unable to catch up. Easthampton tapped the wall first to take the match, while Turners finished second and third for a final score of 51-43.

In the boys' meet, Turners took every single match. Although it's hard to race against yourself, the swimmers still managed to try their best.

Boys' Basketball

McCann 41 – FCTS 27
TFHS 61 – Pioneer 45
FCTS 47 – Mohawk 19
Westfield Tech 70 – TFHS 54

The boys' basketball teams from Franklin Tech and Turners are both currently at .500.

Last Tuesday, December 30, the Eagles lost to the McCann Green Hornets, but they reversed their fortunes last Friday with a win against Mohawk. Mason Bassett, Brody Hicks, and Nolyn Stafford led the Eagles in the two games.

The Eagles host Westfield Tech this Thursday, and then cross Millers Falls Road to take on the Thunder on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Turners also kept their record even by defeating Pioneer on December 30 and then dropping a road game against Westfield Tech on Monday. Jackson Cogswell, Kainen Stevens, and Cameron Johnson were the high scorers for the Thunder during the break.

On Thursday they play Pioneer

Chinese Immersion at Hampshire College, and on Saturday have the home game against Franklin Tech.

Girls' Basketball

FCTS 44 – Hopkins 26
Athol 46 – TFHS 22
Pioneer 37 – FCTS 32
Mahar 50 – FCTS 28
FCTS 51 – TFHS 24

The Franklin Tech girls went 1-and-2 during the break, defeating Hopkins Academy last Monday, December 29 and then losing games against Pioneer on Friday and Mahar on Monday, January 5. Brayleigh Burgh, Madyson Lynde, Samantha Duncan, and Ariel Peters were the Eagles' high scorers across the three games.

The Turners girls lost at home against the Athol Red Bears last Friday. Autumn Thornton and Ivy Lopez led the Thunder in scoring.

On Wednesday night, the Franklin Tech girls came to Turners and defeated the Thunder 51-24. Stats were not available as of press time.

Wrestling

FCTS 66 – Mohawk Trail 12
Mt. Greylock 59 – FCTS 18

On Tuesday, December 30 Franklin Tech hosted a dual wrestling meet with Mohawk and Mount Greylock, with Franklin going 1-and-1 on the night.

On Saturday, they traveled to

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Keene State to compete against 67 other teams in the "Mini," the annual Minickiello High School Wrestling Tournament. Carsten Couture, Dillon Laffond, Jared Currier, Johnathan McIntyre, Kaylan Costello, Landon Purington, Maxon Brunette, Paul Giard, and Seamus Collins all competed, and the Eagles finished in ninth place.



Sawmill River 10K Results

MONTAGUE CENTER – Eighty-two runners crossed the finish line at a chilly Sawmill River 10K Run that was held in Montague Center on New Year's Day. Frances Duncan of Somerville and Jacob Barnett of Whately were the overall winners. Duncan finished with a final time of 41:47, with Wright bringing in a time of 33:22. Results per division are as follows:

Open Division, ages 18 to 39: Duncan, and Michael Keebler of Montague (33:30).

Master Division, ages 40 to 49: Elena Betke-Brunswick of Hadley (41:58), and Barnett.

Senior Division, ages 50 to 59: Daniel Mickus of Greenfield (40:35). No female runner.

Senior+ Division, ages 60 and up: Debra Hevey of Chicopee (56:27), and Jeffrey Mish of Hadley (47:49).

Super-Senior Division, ages 70 and up: Sidney Letendre of Florence (47:49) and Bob Austin of Turners Falls (48:11).

Proceeds from the event benefit the Montague Parks and Rec Department's Sponsor-A-Child Scholarship Program.



Left: Turners Falls's Autumn Thornton gets a good look as the Thunder hosted the Athol Bears last Friday, January 2. Thornton was the Thunder's high scorer with 8 points, including two 3-pointers. Right: Franklin Tech's Jared Currier (left) grapples with Brandon Tavares of Salem (New Hampshire) High School in a Round of 32 match at 165 lbs. in the David Minickiello Invitational Wrestling Tournament last Saturday in Keene. Currier won the match with a pin at 3:26. The tournament, which honors the legacy of former Keene High wrestling coach David Minickiello, included 472 wrestlers from 68 schools representing every New England state.

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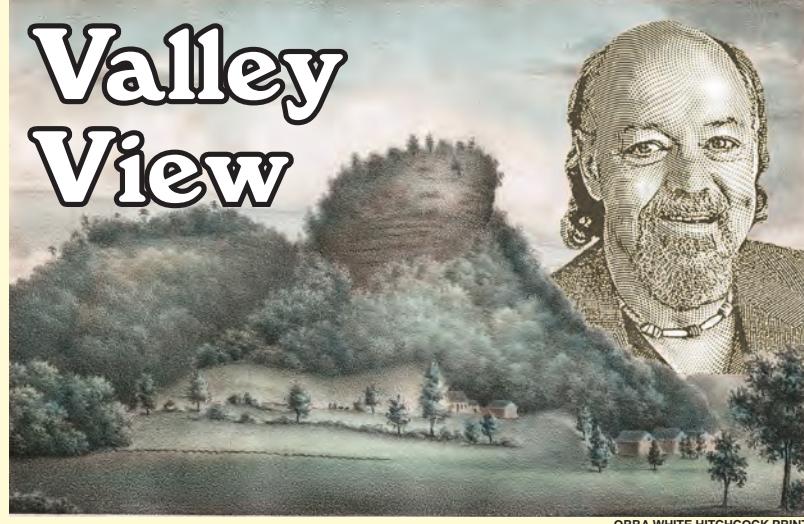
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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

JANUARY 8, 2026



Pigeons and Powder Horns

By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – With the new year upon us, our deer can breathe a sigh of relief after surviving the hunting season, my previously bloated woodshed is rapidly hollowing out, and right here within reach of my favorite recliner stands a slim stack of three recently purchased books to read.

The books represent the last of the itemized 2025 purchases that'll accompany my annual income-tax package to the accountant in a few weeks. As much as I dread this annual bookkeeping chore, I have often told my wife that the hourly wage dwarfs anything I ever made as a newspaperman. So, I force myself to do it, and have learned to total each month on the fly to simplify the conclusion.

The task is not nearly as arduous as the old QuickBooks income-and-expense report I once annually compiled for our bed-and-breakfast statement.

My three new books cover an eclectic mix of topics that may help me solve lingering questions I've been exploring in recent months and years. One of them focuses on the extinct passenger pigeon, long a personal fascination of mine. Another digs into the ancient, mysterious, Stonehenge-like standing stones on Scotland's Orkney Islands. And the third examines well-known historic-archaeological sites of French and Indian and Revolutionary War fame up and down the bloody, war-scarred, 18th-century Lake George-Lake Champlain corridor.

A.W. Schorger's *The Passenger Pigeon: Its Natural History and Extinction* was published in 1955 and is generally accepted as the definitive scholarly work on the subject. I marked and bought it from a monthly snail-mail catalog I receive from a Peterborough, New Hampshire dealer whose offerings focus on sporting topics. It surprises me that anyone can still make a living in that genre, but he and his wife seem to be doing just fine, thank you.

I have picked off some great stuff from their catalog, which, for sophisticated collectors, always includes rare, antiquarian books about fly fishing, Tonkin-cane rods, fine European shotguns, wing-shooting, and related topics.

I bought the passenger-pigeon book as a useful reference for my library. To get a feel for it, I blew through the first 100 pages and learned about the spring and fall flocks that once darkened bright sunlit skies for scores of miles and left the forest floor beneath their clogged, chirping roosting sites covered with a foot-deep layer of dung that suffocated young understory.

Though this is not the type of book the average reader would tackle cover to cover, if one is looking for scientific passenger-pigeon data, it's all there between two cloth hard covers.

The other two new books in my waiting stack are written by archaeologists whose topics just so happen to send enticing tendrils into our verdant slice of the Connecticut Valley: Mark Edmond's *Orcadia: Land, Sea and Stone in Neolithic Orkney* (2019), and David R. Starbuck's *The Great Warpath: British Military Sites from Albany to Crown Point* (1999).

Though I have not yet read a word of Edmond's book on Orkney's megaliths, I did read Alex Ross's gripping December 1 *New Yorker* piece about the British archaeologist's cutting-edge observations and interpretation of the mythical Scottish landscape. Ross's article, titled "Written in Stone: In Scotland's Orkney Islands, the Neolithic Age Dominates the Landscape," brought me straight to a high, lonesome, thought-provoking, commercial wild-blueberry field crowning a special spot in the Heath highlands. There an ancient assemblage of mysterious standing stones, similar but smaller than those at Orkney and Stonehenge, point to the heavens.

I have been transfixed on every visit to Heath by the stunning, see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3

WINTER DAY TRIP

On the Trail of the (Other) Millers River

An Off-the-Beaten-Path Boston Monument to the Humble Potato, and Its Unassuming River Companion With a Checkered Past

By RAY DIDONATO

WENDELL – My travels often take me to Boston and Cambridge. One afternoon, while looking up the location of a business in Cambridge, I noticed an unusual landmark on Google Maps called the "Millers River Potato Monument," which sits on the namesake river in Middlesex County.

Not believing what I was seeing on my computer screen, as I spent my graduate years in Boston in the late '90s and had never heard of such a monument – or



The Millers River Potato Monument, on a recent winter day in Charlestown.

a Millers River in Charlestown, for that matter – I decided that I had to check it out.

The Millers River in Middlesex County is not to be confused with the river we are familiar with in Franklin County, which winds 52.1 miles from Ashburnham to the Connecticut River outside Millers Falls.

Rather, it is a small river, mostly filled in, save for a half-a-mile or so estuarine stretch.

Before it was filled, the river formed the boundary between Cambridge and Charlestown.

According to a few sources, the river was known as "Willis Creek" in Revolutionary times, and it was in the relative backdrop of the famous battles of Bunker and Breed's Hills.

The river in Franklin County known as Papacontuckquash by the Nipmuc appears as the Millers River as early as the 1600s on colonial maps, but the origin of its name is disputable, with some local folklore claiming it is named after an early settler who drowned in the river.

By contrast, the Millers River in Middlesex County seems to have been named for past landowners.

According to a 2025 article appearing in *Cambridge Day*, "The great fire of 1963 and the end of meat packing in East Cambridge," and a chapter entitled "Industry Along the Charles and Miller's Rivers, 1855-1914" in the *Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge: East Cambridge* published by the Cambridge Historical Commission in 1989, the river became fetid in the 19th century due in large part to the slaughterhouse waste regularly dumped into it.

The most significant polluter was John P. Squire & Company. The slaughterhouse boomed from its humble

see **ON THE TRAIL** page B8

BOOK REVIEW

Are You Part of the Problem?

By GEORGE SHAPIRO

LAKE PLEASANT – In the same way that "upstate" (from New York City) could encompass all of the state of New York, but usually means just the Hudson Valley, "Western Mass" doesn't refer to a specific place. It's not geography, perhaps more of a feeling or point of view. To be in Western Mass is an expression of the degree to which you see yourself as no longer (spiritually) in Boston (or New York City) but still in a state (it's a commonwealth) of Massachusetts.

Elana Michelson, a retired English literature professor from New York City now living in the Hudson Valley, has published a new mystery novel set in Western Mass. Specifically, she has located her mystery in the fictional Berkshire County town of Flanders, five miles south of Williamstown.

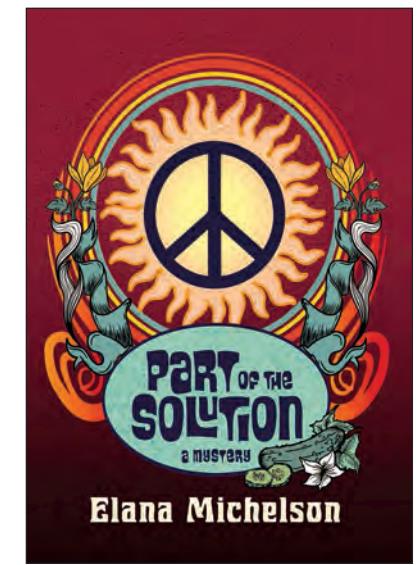
The year is 1978, and the "chil-

dren of the Sixties" have settled in Western Mass in search of "knowable communities" but also escaping from the failures of "the Sixties." As the earnest sign in the pastoral office of Flanders' Presbyterian church says: if you aren't part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

But what, exactly, is the problem?

Michelson positions her novel within the confines of the "cozy village mystery." Flanders appears to consist of a church, a hippie food co-op, a hippie café, and an assortment of hippies and students or faculty from Williams College.

This reader found Flanders to be geographically implausible and could much more imagine the events to occur within the real town of Florence, Mass. The fictional Flanders appears to exist in almost total isolation from the wider world, without the people, jobs, roles, and connections that make a place real.



Elana Michelson,
Part of the Solution: A Mystery
(Torchflame Books, 2025)

Either way, this hermetic society lends events the feel of a British "manor house mystery," wherein a host of temporary visitors to a see **BOOK REVIEW** page B8

Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

‘WANDA’

Meet Wanda, a friendly, easy-going beauty who enjoys being around people, making her a lovely companion for someone looking for a social bunny. She enjoys hanging out, relaxing in her space, and munching on her greens.

Wanda came to Dakin with her daughters, Trixie and Vicky, if you're looking to adopt a group of three. Whether you're interested in adopting Wanda on her own or with Trixie and Vicky, she's sure to bring lots of joy to your home.

Rabbits typically live eight to 10 years. The adoption fee for rabbits

is \$75 for a single or a pair, and includes veterinary exam and spay/neuter. Most housing sold at pet stores is too small for small pets. Minimum requirements for enclosed spaces is 10 square feet for one or two rabbits. Check in with Dakin to see if there are any available options in their thrift shop.

As most of Dakin's small animals are in foster care, if you're ready to adopt now and want to learn more about Wanda, the best way to start the process is to call (413) 781-4000 ext. 1, or email springfield@dakinhumane.org.

SOUTH HADLEY – I recently watched the film *The Materialists*, which centers around a Manhattan matchmaker played by Dakota Johnson choosing between two matches for herself. She meets her ideal match, her criteria involving ungodly wealth, played by financier Pedro Pascal.

As they begin their dating partnership, she notices scars on his legs and deduces he had leg-lengthening surgery. When she asks him about this, he confirms he indeed spent \$200k on this procedure, gaining him six inches in height, as well as priceless nonverbal respect and interest in most social settings ranging from walking through an airport to attracting women at a bar.

I also learned recently that some people, generally men, get calf implants to enhance their musculature.

Until this point I did not think that cisgender men could or would do anything major to alter their bodies, other than some typical types of plastic surgeries (nose jobs, maybe a chin tuck), weight loss strategies like specific fad diets or stomach sleeves, or use of steroids for bodybuilding.

But learning about leg lengthening and calf implants sent my head spinning.

I think everyone is aware of the lengths many women go to in order to alter and improve their appearances, including basic makeup application, hair dye, botox, all kinds of dieting, weight loss medication and surgeries, Spanx, bras, breast implants, plastic surgeries, liposuction, piercings, mani/pedicures, tanning, shaving, exercise, and everything in between.

I modify my own appearance with a little makeup and hair dye, ear piercings, tattoos, manicures – mostly to prevent nail biting – and exercise, as well as facials. I spend money on regular facials in particular to stave away some of the inevitable aging signs.

And yes, people have been applying paint to their faces for thousands of years. Conjure an image in your mind about Cleopatra and you will immediately imagine black eyeliner. Some indigenous groups have also historically used paint on their bodies, or lengthened their necks or earlobes.

Additionally, some transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming (TGNC) folks take hormones or undergo surgeries in order to help their outward appearance and features, as well as their hormonal make-up, better match their inner experience of gender. These changes can be life-saving for TGNC, transforming gender dysphoria to gender euphoria and joy.

I was under the impression that

with body diversity for all genders represented and visible in the world, as I have observed in the last decade or so in commercials, TV, films, magazines, and retail catalogues, that our society might actually be moving towards more acceptance overall of the vast variety of unaltered physical appearance for cisgender folks, and recognition of the essential changes some TGNC folks make.

However, I appear to have been proven wrong.

As I wrap up teaching Adolescent Development at Westfield State University this semester, many of my students wrote about social media increasing pressure to modify and attend to their appearance. As part of their course work they each wrote an essay, using the structure of the ongoing NPR series “This I Believe,” to state a belief they have about adolescence, drawing from their own experiences as well as pulling in research to support their belief.

Out of 34 total students, a full 14 chose the theme of social media pressure, mostly remarking on the negative impact early exposure to social media had on their ideas of how they were supposed to look. Many reported unfettered access to social media around age 12, but some had exposure around age 10.

One statistic a student included was a near-universal use of social media (up to 95%) by youth ages 13 to 17, with more than a third reporting they use social media “almost constantly.” Another statistic mentioned was that almost 40% of children ages 8 to 12 access social media, even though the minimum age is generally 13.

Lastly, researchers have recently determined that more time spent on social media is associated with increased stress, depressed mood and anxiety, and more sleep problems, as well as lower self-esteem, especially for younger girls, leading to a Surgeon General warning.

The May 2023 “media warning” by the US Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy is an advisory and call to action regarding the mental health risks of social media for young people:

• Social media use poses a “profound risk of harm” to adolescent mental health.

• Murthy has asked Congress to require warning labels on social media platforms, similar to those on cigarette packs, to raise awareness.

• The advisory also provides recommendations for parents, policymakers, and technology companies to help mitigate the risks.

Needless to say, all this has me greatly worried about the lengths humans of all genders might keep going to, to modify and change

just about any aspect of their appearances.

Additionally, nearly any body-altering method requires money. And, typically, whatever is hardest to achieve is the thing that people spend the most money and time on, as we know from changing beauty standards over the centuries. When it is difficult to find regular nourishing food, such as during the Renaissance age and Great Depression, larger bodies for women become more fashionable. When it costs more money to sculpt one's muscles, getting a six-pack or calf implant becomes more desirable. When it is harder to live to an older age, people wear white wigs (i.e. our founding fore-parents) to appear older, wiser, and more experienced than they actually are.

My Christmas/Holiday miracle wish is that we all wake up tomorrow morning and have the spell of physical primacy removed, finding ways to be satisfied with and enjoy the bodies our minds and spirits are housed in. Just think what we could do with the money and time saved if we all collectively agreed to let our wrinkles and flab hang out, to not place any hierarchy on height – there are some advantages to shortness (airplanes!) – and to find ways to truly embrace the human body as the miracle that it is.

Lastly, specifically bringing sex into this topic of body image, I've had many clients (of all genders) who report not fully enjoying or being present during sexual activity due to hyperfocus and self-consciousness of a disliked body part. What if the majority of those who experience this self-consciousness could wake up tomorrow accepting and even loving that shunned body part or feature? (Or, for TGNC, having the gender features they desire?) Imagine how free they might feel during sexual activity – automatically worthy and deserving of pleasure and desire?

Then, after everyone has had their fill of pleasure, alongside wrinkle and flab celebration, imagine all the world's problems we could solve by redistributing the trillions of dollars spent on unnecessary physical alterations towards things like poverty and education.

Just a small wish, no big deal.

Stephanie Baird is a certified OWL facilitator and an EMDR psychotherapist and consultant who encourages her clients towards thriving sexual health. She is the author of the book EMDR Therapy and Sexual Health: A Clinician's Guide (2023). She welcomes feedback and suggestions at sexmatters@montagueresporter.org.

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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

panoramic view from a spot that drops off at about the same angle in all directions.

Experiencing that local site triggers me into deep internal reflection about its spiritual possibilities. In the following days, I keep reconsidering the same thoughts, pondering the ritualistic possibilities. Fascinating questions linger. Such as why were the spiritual stones erected thousands of years ago? What did they mean? What was their function?

Talk about esotericism. Up in the refreshing air of that natural hilltop chapel, it's smothering. When you consider that such stone monuments appear to celebrate the same beliefs on at least two continents, it suggests a worldwide spiritual cosmos uniting ancient man millennia before Columbus.

As for Starbuck's book, it pulled me in due to its relationship to a fascinating, Revolutionary War powder horn a friend bought at auction a couple years ago. Illustrated with an interesting array of hand-carved images, not only was this horn buried deep in an otherwise uninspiring general-merchandise sale, it came with an unsettling written caveat that the auctioneer couldn't be certain it was created in the 18th century.

In other words, it could have been a Centennial phony, created a century after the Revolution, when engraved powder horns were gaining popularity among collectors and pursued by some with deep pockets.

My friend wanted to know if I had seen the listing. No, I told him. I had indeed opened the online preview, but closed out of it before reaching the powder horn. *Nothing for me*, I thought. Nonetheless, he asked if I minded returning to the site for a quick evaluation as we spoke on the phone. He was curious if it looked right to me.

So, I took a peek and, though no expert, believed it had everything a collector desired. When I spotted the name "T. Nash" inscribed in large letters across the center of a circular cartouche, I immediate-

ly thought of Greenfield Meadows blacksmith and Revolutionary militiaman Tubel Nash, whose old deeds from my neighborhood I had studied. (His first name was also spelled "Tubal," but I'm going with "Tubel" in this column because that's how it's spelled on his FindAGrave profile.)

Upon a quick inspection of Nash's Revolutionary War service record, I found that his deployments on the so-called Northern Campaign mirrored the years (1777 and 1778) and sites identified on the horn. That, in and of itself, indicated to me that the horn was for real. Think of it: what's the chance that a counterfeiter 100 years down the road would research an obscure country soldier's military record to create a phony powder horn?

I bumped into a local expert at an antiques show and asked if I could email photos for his evaluation. Yes, he said, by all means, send them along. I did so and he suspected mischief. Though I took his evaluation under consideration and didn't share his expertise level, I reserved judgment. I still believed it was real.

Tubel Nash (1754-1816) was an interesting Greenfield Meadows character and skilled craftsman. The son of Greenfield miller Daniel Nash (1715-90) of Nash's Mills fame, Tubel got restless after his father's death, and by 1801 moved to Conway. Nine years later, he sold his Conway property and took his family to Canton/St. Lawrence County, New York, where he died and was buried in 1816.

It seems to me most likely that the relic never left the local area with Nash. It probably remained here in the possession of family or friend before hitting a dead end and going to auction recently.

I was hoping Starbuck's *Great Warpath* would provide insight into the mysterious "No. 10" engraved into the horn. An obscure, vernacular fort reference, perhaps? Starbuck offers no clues. So, the search continues.

Stay tuned. I don't give up easily. MD



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The author was asked to assess whether this purported Revolutionary War-era powder horn is the real deal.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**Increasingly Erotic Behavior Wins Ban From Bar; Not Her Job; Hit-and-Run Crashes; Envelope Full of Cash; Burnt Bone Broth****Monday, 12/15**

6:02 p.m. Multiple calls regarding a transformer in the Dry Hill Road area. Eversource contacted.

Tuesday, 12/16

12:38 a.m. Caller reports she is pulled over by Highland Cemetery and believes there is a kitten stuck under her car. Cat ran off prior to officer's arrival. Checked under car; negative findings.

6:39 p.m. Caller from Avenue A states two boys are riding scooters and throwing items toward the trash, missing, and not picking items up. Would like an officer to speak with them. Officer reports boys were looking for a lost backpack from the other night, and put all the trash back.

Thursday, 12/18

10:06 a.m. Caller from L Street states that her car was sideswiped overnight and there is some damage. Report taken.

11:16 a.m. 911 call reporting a disturbance on Stevens Street. Officers standing by for a custody exchange. Peace restored.

5:31 p.m. 911 call reporting a two-car accident at the Routes 47/63 crossover. No smoke, fluids, flames, or injuries. Officers advised.

7:10 p.m. Cumberland Farms employee reports an elderly female in the store is stating that her husband got out of the vehicle and is missing. Officer out with male party in front of Creemee. Courtesy transport back to Cumberland Farms provided.

8:06 p.m. 911 caller from the Rendezvous reports

that over the last couple of days they have been dealing with a male party whose behavior is increasingly erratic. They have asked him not to come back, and now he is sitting outside, possibly masturbating. Male party moved along and verbally trespassed for the evening. Officer advising staff how to get a trespass order through the sheriff's office.

8:07 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road reports she thinks someone stole a package off her porch. Stated she has not contacted the company because that's not her job, then hung up. Officers advised.

9:06 p.m. 911 call reporting threatening/harassment. Officers spoke to both parties and advised them to bring further custody issues to court.

Friday, 12/19

7:18 a.m. 911 call from Greenfield Road; party just got home, and her house is full of smoke.

Transferred to Shelburne Control.

12:53 p.m. 911 caller from Turnpike Road states her kitchen is on fire. Trans-

ferred to Shelburne Control. Officers state flames showing; requests to have road shut down from Turnpike to Walnut. Officer states fire caused by cooking.

4:29 p.m. A 39-year-old South Deerfield man was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

5:43 p.m. Caller from Cumberland Farms reports that he followed a blue Chevy from Greenfield; vehicle was driving very slowly and swerving in and out of lanes. Witnessed the driver hit another vehicle and take off. According to witness, other vehicle was parked by the paper mill. Minimal damage to side view mirror. Officer attempting to locate.

Saturday, 12/20

5:53 p.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road. Vehicle has no rear illumination of any kind. Owner lives approximately one mile away. Advised to turn on flashers so vehicle can be seen. Citation issued.

7:45 p.m. 911 call from Rendezvous employee who states that a male who has been trespassed is refusing to leave and talking about masturbation. Officer states male had been verbally trespassed two days ago. Male party verbally trespassed again and moved along. Caller advised to seek no trespass order through sheriff's office. Advised caller that the male party's information would be available through a records request.

Sunday, 12/21

3:13 a.m. Cumberland Farms employee states he had to kick out a customer who was being very aggressive and threatening toward him. Male party currently sitting in a black SUV outside the store. Party gone upon officers' arrival.

3:22 a.m. Cumberland Farms employee reporting second customer who was aggressive and swearing at him over use of the bathroom. The two involved parties have been verbally trespassed for the night. Employee advised of trespass procedure through sheriff's department.

7:25 p.m. Checking on vehicle at Nouria gas pumps with no plates. Spoke with owner of vehicle, who advised he was working on the vehicle on Seventh Street and needed gas.

Advised party vehicle needed to be registered. Verbal warning issued; advised party to get vehicle back to Seventh Street for the night. NCIC check negative for stolen status.

Monday, 12/22

6:16 a.m. 911 caller from

East Main Street states a male stole roughly \$200 from her. Officer reports caller is not answering the door at her apartment. Units advised.

8:46 a.m. Caller states there are seven needles on the ground next to the dumpster in the Eleventh Street alley. Items picked up and secured.

11:20 a.m. 911 caller reports that while driving, a black sedan sideswiped her vehicle pretty hard near West Chestnut Hill Road, causing some damage. Other vehicle did not stop and kept driving towards the Four Corners area. Officer advises damage and airbag deployment on caller's vehicle; following trail of vehicle debris on East Chestnut Hill. Suspect vehicle located, still warm to the touch. No answer at door. Reporting party requesting Rau's to tow vehicle.

11:38 a.m. Walk-in reports that a female came to his home yesterday and took a dog that he claims is his. Party has no proof of ownership and does not know where the female and her boyfriend live. Advised of civil options; advised to contact PD if he learns the female's location.

Friday, 12/26

7:16 p.m. 911 call from G Street; caller states a person passed out, then a female yelled to hang up, and the line was disconnected. Referred to an officer.

8:48 p.m. Caller from L Street would like officers to speak with the operator of a red tractor-trailer that is parked on the street while it is snowing. Officer left ticket in mailbox.

10:16 p.m. While on patrol, officer located a vehicle off the road on the Third Street hill with heavy front-end damage. No injuries; tow requested.

Saturday, 12/27

12:28 a.m. Report of unwanted person making threats on Fourth Street. Officer speaking with caller. Advised of options.

8:07 a.m. DPW employee advised via radio that he just had an accident with the loader he was driving and another vehicle. Officer requesting Rau's to tow van. Report taken.

8:41 a.m. 911 caller advises that he just crashed into a tree on J Street behind Aubuchon. Not injured. Report taken.

9:27 a.m. DPW foreman reports that people on Turners Falls Road are blowing snow into cars driving by, creating a hazard. Negative observation of residents blowing snow into oncoming traffic. Remnants of snow in roadway consistent with blowing snow in the road. No answer at doors of involved residences.

Sunday, 12/28

11:38 p.m. 911 caller from Fifth Street states that upon arriving home, there was a male party standing on his porch stating he had a hurt back and needed medical aid. Caller does not recognize male party and left the area. Officer out with male party, who has a gash near his eye.

see MPD next page

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MPD from prev pg

Associated with subsequent medical call.

Monday, 12/29

4:19 a.m. 911 caller from Third Street reports she left bone broth on the stove and awoke to smoke in her building. No fire. Transferred to Shelburne Control.

3:11 p.m. Caller from G Street reports someone stole her shovel off the porch. Just wants on record at this time.

5:19 p.m. Request to assist Greenfield PD with K9 track. Services rendered.

Tuesday, 12/30

6:39 p.m. Caller reports that there is an abandoned Mustang in the Second Street alleyway that has been there for months, and he wants it towed to-night.

Officer advises vehicle is on town-owned property and the town can request that it be towed. Officer calling caller back. 7:04 p.m. 911 report

of hit-and-run accident on J Street. Referred to an officer.

Wednesday, 12/31

12:14 a.m. Caller reports seeing a tree limb in the Third Street lot cause sparks by touching a wire from a nearby pole. Officer checked area; nothing showing at this time.

11:23 a.m. Off-duty officer states he was on Avenue A and witnessed a vehicle almost hit an elderly man in the crosswalk. Operator exited vehicle and approached elderly man. Officer identified himself and moved male party along.

Thursday, 1/1/2026

1:17 a.m. Officer requesting DPW be called and advised of road conditions. DPW contacted; guys will be coming in.

Friday, 1/2

10:08 a.m. 911 caller states that he was rear-ended while pulling into his driveway on Turners Falls Road.

No injuries. Officer requesting tow for one vehicle. Chief Haskins providing courtesy transport to BFMC.

2:16 p.m. Turners Falls High School employee would like on record that there have been multiple suspicious acts at the school pool. It appears someone has been vandalizing equipment relating to the pool. They will call back if they get additional information.

2:35 p.m. Montague Bookmill employee asking to have on record that someone has been leaving anti-Semitic writing on the bathroom walls and in some books. They have no idea who it could be, but will call if they learn more.

Saturday, 1/3

6:24 p.m. Caller would like to speak to an officer about abuse and neglect of a family member.

Referred to an officer. **MQ**

TELEVISION**The War Between the Land and the Sea**

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I have seen several spin-off shows in the *Doctor Who* universe, and have mostly liked them. So when the latest one, called *The War Between the Land and the Sea*, premiered online with two episodes on December 7, I wanted to see it.

The conflict between the Land and the Sea has been mentioned before in *Doctor Who*, and the Sea Devils are part of its universe. UNIT, an intelligence unit that deals with this kind of stuff, has been featured in the *Doctor Who* universe several times. Its current leader is Kate Lethbridge-Stewart, who has ties to the Doctor; at one time one of her relatives had a good friendship with the Doctor.

UNIT investigates an incident in which someone kills a Sea Devil. Russell Tovey plays a character called Barclay who is part of UNIT. He gets drawn into this when he is put down as a last-minute replacement for another member. He sees the first appearance of the Sea Devils in person.

The Sea Devils, also called the *Homo Aqua*, make a worldwide announcement that consists of a bunch of their structures appearing on land. Humans build a junction called the Waterway per the Sea Devils' request. The diplomacy between the species is called H₂O Diplomacy.

The creatures still look like they have previously been portrayed on *Doctor Who*, but now there are some that look almost human in a way. They can speak English and Russian. One such individual, basically



their ambassador, is named Salt. She is played by Gugu Mbatha-Raw, who I have seen in some films.

Because Barclay was at this first meeting, it's not too surprising he's at the H₂O Diplomacy one. What is surprising is when he is made an ambassador by Salt herself, because he showed a bit of respect to a fallen member of their species.

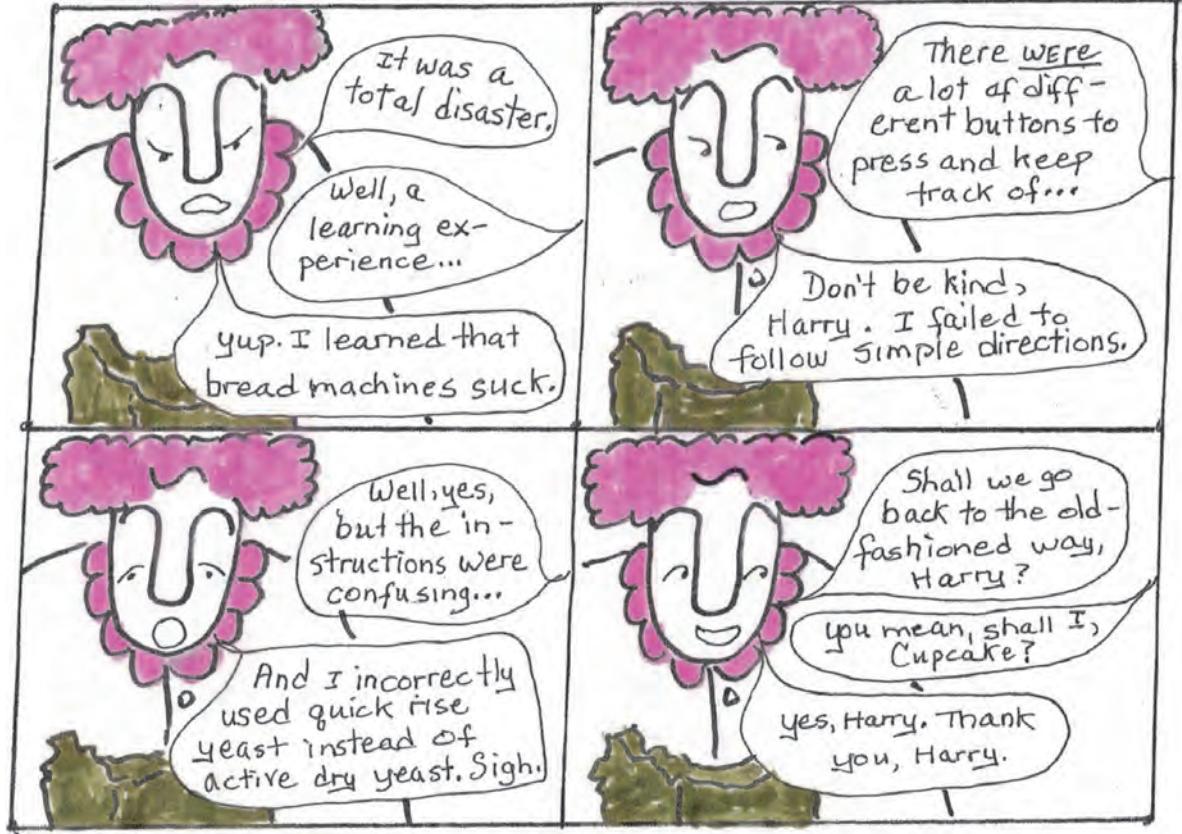
Barclay knows he's not exactly someone you could say has experience with dealing with aliens. He only met the Doctor once. He's just a family man who barely did anything the one time he filled in as a replacement. He points some of this out to Salt, but she says they want him for his character, which is shown again to be decent when he speaks about humanity's mistakes.

All hell breaks loose when the Sea Devils decide to clean up the pollution in the ocean. The second episode of the show ends with Barclay agreeing to meet with them underwater.

My reward for seeing these two episodes was that I would call it good science fiction, which made me happy.

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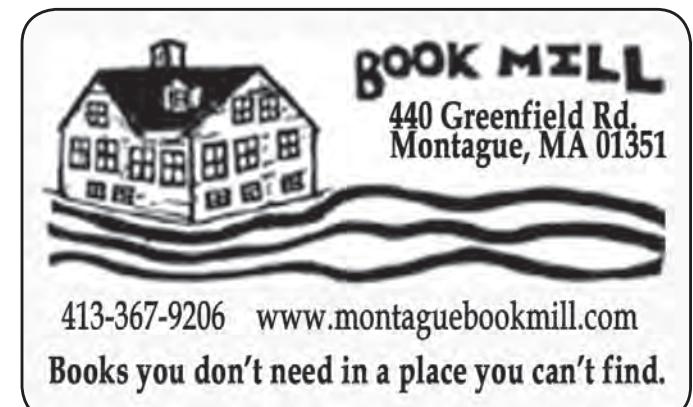
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Descendientes de Moctezuma: el mestizaje.

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO
DE AGUILERA

GREENFIELD – La conquista de México suele presentarse como un acontecimiento cerrado, ocurrido entre 1519 y 1521, cuyo desenlace fue la caída de Tenochtitlan y el inicio del dominio colonial español. Sin embargo, sus efectos políticos, sociales y simbólicos siguen presentes hasta hoy.

Un ejemplo especialmente revelador es la historia de los descendientes de Moctezuma II, quienes no sólo sobrevivieron a la conquista, sino que fueron incorporados a la nobleza española y, con el paso del tiempo, se convirtieron en parte de la élite del propio imperio que había derrotado a sus antepasados.

En esta página les voy a proponer hoy una diferente lectura de la conquista en la que voy a intentar conectar tres dimensiones: el papel de los descendientes de Moctezuma en el mundo colonial español; el debate actual en el México contemporáneo sobre la exigencia de disculpas al rey de España, que ha sido impulsado por los dos últimos presidentes del país; y por último, una comparación con otros procesos coloniales, en particular la conquista de los pueblos indígenas en Massachusetts y las disculpas oficiales ofrecidas en Canadá.

Empecemos por el principio: Moctezuma Xocoyotzin era el *tlatoani mexica*, es decir, el representante de los humanos y de los dioses, en el momento de la llegada de Hernán Cortés. Su figura ha sido interpretada de múltiples maneras por investigadores históricos, algunos lo ven como un gobernante paralizado por presagios religiosos, otros como un político que intentó ganar tiempo mediante la diplomacia, o como una víctima de un choque cultural sin precedentes.

Su muerte, ocurrida en 1520 en circunstancias aún debatidas – algunos dicen que a manos de las tropas de Cortés y otros como resultado de las pedradas de su propio pueblo – marcó simbólicamente el derrumbe del poder central mexica.

Eso sí, su muerte, y por lo tanto, el fin del imperio no implicó la desaparición de su linaje. Moctezuma tuvo numerosos hijos e hijas que, tras la conquista, quedaron en una posición ambigua: despojados del poder político tradicional, pero reconocidos por los españoles como miembros de una nobleza indígena útil para legitimar el nuevo orden colonial.

La Corona española entendió pronto que para gobernar la Nueva España se requería algo más que fuerza militar. La colaboración de las élites indígenas era clave para la estabilidad política, la recaudación de tributos y el control del territorio. En este contexto, los descendientes de Moctezuma recibieron un trato excepcional.

Entre los hijos de Moctezuma II destacan Pedro e Isabel de Moctezuma, de los que la UNAM ha podido documentar más de 500 descendientes.

Isabel Moctezuma, cuyo verdadero nombre era Tecuichpo Ixcajochitzin, fue bautizada como Isabel en honor de la Reina Isabel la Católica, y reconocida legalmente como heredera de su padre. La leyenda dice que Hernán Cortés prometió a Moctezuma cuidar de sus hijas, Isabel y María. Primero fue obligada a casarse con Cortés, que más tarde la regaló a uno de sus capitanes. Isabel tuvo una hija con Cortés, Leonor Cortés Moctezuma, a la que Isabel siempre repudió porque la consideraba un símbolo de la conquista.

A través de sus matrimonios con conquistadores y funcionarios españoles, su linaje se integró en la sociedad colonial. Sus descendientes recibieron *encomiendas*, rentas, títulos nobiliarios y reconocimiento jurídico, sentando las bases de una nobleza mestiza que sobreviviría durante siglos.

Con el tiempo, algunos descendientes de Moctezuma se establecieron en la Península Ibérica. Allí obtuvieron títulos nobiliarios como el de conde de Moctezuma y, posteriormente, duque de Moctezuma de Tultengo. Estos títulos implicaban privilegios reales y confirmaban que la sangre del último gran tlatoani mexica formaba parte oficial de la aristocracia española.

La historia de los descendientes de Moctezuma desafía la narrativa simplificada de vencedores y vencidos. Mientras la mayoría de la población indígena sufrió despojo, explotación y violencia, una minoría logró adaptarse al nuevo sistema colonial y preservar parte de su estatus mediante alianzas estratégicas.

Este proceso no elimina la violencia de la conquista, pero sí revela su complejidad. La dominación española no fue únicamente un proyecto de imposición, sino también de negociación. El mestizaje biológico y cultural fue acompañado de un mestizaje político, en el que ciertos linajes indígenas fueron incorporados al aparato imperial.

Cinco siglos después, la conquista sigue siendo objeto de debate público.

Durante su presidencia, Andrés Manuel López Obrador reabrió la discusión sobre la responsabilidad histórica de España. En 2019, envió una carta al rey Felipe VI en la que solicitaba una disculpa por los abusos cometidos durante la conquista. En un acto público, AMLO declaró: “Es tiempo ya de que se haga un relato compartido de lo que ocurrió, y que se ofrezcan disculpas a los pueblos originarios por las violaciones a lo que hoy conocemos como derechos humanos.”

Para López Obrador, la disculpa no tenía un carácter legal ni



Moctezuma II

buscaba reparaciones económicas, sino que debía entenderse como un gesto simbólico de reconocimiento histórico. En otra ocasión afirmó: “No se puede celebrar la conquista como una hazaña sin reconocer la violencia, las matanzas y el sometimiento de los pueblos indígenas.”

Su sucesora, la presidenta actual, Claudia Sheinbaum, ha mantenido esta línea, aunque con un tono más académico y menos confrontativo. En declaraciones recientes, señaló que “la memoria histórica no es un asunto del pasado, sino una herramienta para entender las desigualdades del presente.”

También afirmó que una reflexión crítica sobre la conquista “no busca culpar a sociedades actuales, sino reconocer procesos históricos que marcaron profundamente a México.”

En España, los políticos de izquierdas están a favor de una disculpa oficial ya que apoyan la idea de que una disculpa del rey de España es un acto simbólico con valor pedagógico y moral. Sus principales razones son estas:

- El reconocimiento explícito del sufrimiento de los pueblos indígenas, históricamente silenciado o minimizado;
- La posibilidad de construir una narrativa histórica menos eurocéntrica y más inclusiva;
- El fortalecimiento del diálogo entre México y España desde una base de honestidad histórica.

Desde esta perspectiva, el caso de los descendientes de Moctezuma no contradice la necesidad de

progresivamente marginadas, desplazadas o exterminadas.

Las guerras, las epidemias y la pérdida de tierras redujeron drásticamente a la población indígena. No hubo una estrategia sostenida de integración simbólica de los linajes indígenas en el poder colonial, lo que produjo una ruptura mucho más radical con el pasado precolonial.

Hoy en día, el debate sobre disculpas en Estados Unidos es fragmentario y mayoritariamente local. Algunas universidades, iglesias y gobiernos estatales han reconocido públicamente el despojo de tierras indígenas, pero no existe una disculpa formal a nivel federal comparable a las demandas planteadas en México.

Nuestro país vecino, Canadá, ofrece otro punto de comparación relevante.

En las últimas décadas, el Estado canadiense ha emitido disculpas oficiales por el trato dado a los pueblos indígenas, en particular por el sistema de internados escolares destinados a la asimilación forzada de niños indígenas. Estas disculpas han ido acompañadas de comisiones de verdad y reconciliación y de políticas públicas orientadas al reconocimiento cultural.

Aunque las disculpas no han resuelto las profundas desigualdades estructurales, sí han establecido un marco institucional para abordar el legado del colonialismo. Para algunos analistas, este modelo demuestra que los gestos simbólicos pueden tener efectos políticos reales cuando se integran en procesos más amplios de memoria y justicia histórica.

En conclusión, la historia de los descendientes de Moctezuma muestra que la conquista de México fue un proceso complejo, marcado tanto por la violencia como por la adaptación y la continuidad de ciertas élites indígenas. Este legado histórico reaparece hoy en el debate sobre las disculpas de España, impulsado por los dos últimos presidentes de México.

Comparado con otros contextos coloniales, como Massachusetts o Canadá, el caso mexicano destaca por la persistencia simbólica de los linajes indígenas en el relato nacional. La discusión sobre las disculpas no tiene una respuesta sencilla: para algunos es un acto necesario de reconocimiento; para otros, un gesto anacrónico o políticamente instrumental.

Más allá de las posiciones encontradas, el debate revela que la conquista no pertenece únicamente al pasado. Sigue influyendo en la forma en que las sociedades interpretan su historia, construyen su identidad y enfrentan las desigualdades heredadas.

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EVENTS

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events@montaguereporter.org

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

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

Millers Falls Library, Millers Falls: *Book Club.* Rebecca Solnit, *A Paradise Built in Hell.* 5:30 p.m. Free.

Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Library Trivia Night.* 6 p.m. Free.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Same Old Same Olds, Haitlin, Gritter, Dirt.* 7 p.m. Free.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Nidia Góngora, Gaia Roots.* 7 p.m. \$.

Bellows Falls Opera House, Bellows Falls: *John Gorka, Patty Larkin, Cliff Eberhardt, Lucy Kaplansky.* 7:30 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

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

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Lofi Creativity Zone.* A creative hangout for tweens and teens. 4 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Local history talk, *Keeping It Cool: Ice Harvesting.* 4 p.m. Free.

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls: *27th Gumball Machine Takeover* with featured artists *The Connecticut River Brick Carvers* and *Joel Paxton.* Free; bring quarters. 5 p.m.

Artspace, Greenfield: Reception for *Making Light*, community art show featuring work by 28 local artists on the theme of illumination. 5 p.m. Free.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Square Dance with The Catydids*, Sally Newton calling. Jammers welcome. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: *Pothole Pictures* presents *Across the Universe* (2007). Music at 7 p.m.: *Wallace Field*; movie at 7:30 p.m. \$.

New City Brewery, Easthampton: *Aaron & The Clones, Blindspot.* 7 p.m. \$.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Adam S.Z & The Inner Fiyah.* 7:30 p.m. No cover.

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

Marigold, Brattleboro: *BriezyJane & The Hurricane.* 8 p.m. Free.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Ramble On Rose, Grateful Dead tribute.* 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Scott Hsu, Tobey Sol LaRoche.* 9:30 p.m. No cover.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

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

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Author Prudence Marsh reads from her latest children's book, *A Place for Poe.* 11 a.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Local history talk, *The Strathmore, a.k.a. Keith Paper Mill.* 2 p.m. Free.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Valley Jazz Voices Winter Concert.* 3 p.m. \$.

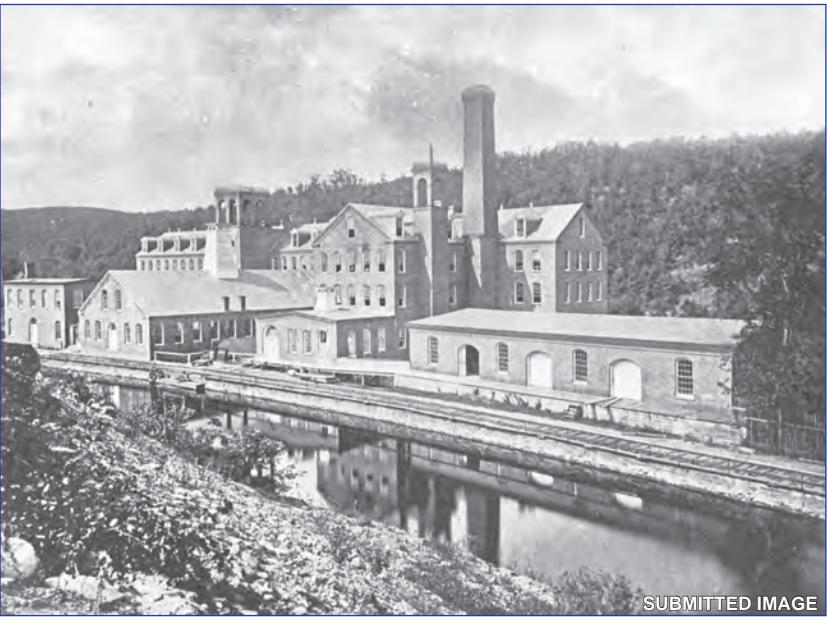
Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Little House Blues.* 6 p.m. No cover.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open Mic*, with featured performers *The Enchantivists* (Claire Dacey, guitar, viola, drum; John Genyo Sprague, recorder, piano, drum). 6:15 p.m. By donation.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Posthumous, Singe, Gearteeth, Dirt Pile, Hauzu.* 7 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Documentary screening, *Nocturnes* (2024). Two scientists study



SUBMITTED IMAGE

Now slated for demolition, the iconic Strathmore Mill complex - formerly the Keith Paper Company - will be the subject of a local history talk this Saturday afternoon at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: *Pothole Pictures* presents *Across the Universe* (2007). Music at 7 p.m.: *Colin and Friends*; movie at 7:30 p.m. \$.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *The Future*, book release and reading featuring Andrea Lawlor, with Sarah Fran Wisby and students from Looky Here's 2025 prose poem class. 7 p.m. \$.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Kwartetto Mambo.* 7 p.m. Free.

Darling's, Easthampton: *Editrix, Hat, Hot Dirt.* 7 p.m. \$.

Workshop13, Ware: *The Green Sisters.* 7 p.m. \$.

Stage 33, Bellows Falls: *Deep Seize, Dutch Experts, Holly Brewer, Snowglobe Almanac, The Y Lie.* 7 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Minibeast, The Vermen.* 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Start Again, Immune Friction.* 9:30 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

hawk moths and nocturnal insects in a Himalayan rainforest. 2 p.m. Free.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Livingston Taylor, Matt Cusson.* 2 p.m. \$.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Ian St. George, Man Jumping To Heaven.* 5 p.m. By donation.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Wolfman Jack, Grateful Dead tribute.* 6 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Livingston Taylor, Matt Cusson.* 7 p.m. \$.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *Group Therapy, Ben Hersey, Wishbone Zoë, Rare Geese.* 8 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

Wendell Senior Center, Wendell: *Memory Café.* "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.

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *Monday Night D&D.* "Self-contained adventures designed to be played in a single session." 6 p.m. No cover.

EXHIBITS

Waterway Arts, Turners Falls:

Local Local, small works by 21 local artists using material from Franklin County, through this Friday, January 9.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Will Close*, paintings showing the beauty and complexity of the natural world, with text from experts and longtime New Englanders. Through January.

Montague Center Library, Montague: *Mark Mariani*, pastel paintings, through January.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: Guest artist *Annaleah Moon Gregoire* presents paintings at the gallery through January.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Meandering Through France*, photographs by David Pueschel, through February.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Making Light*, community art show featuring work by 28 local artists on the theme of illumination. Through February 20, with a reception this Friday, January 9 at 5 p.m.

Hope & Olive, Greenfield: *Flora, Fauna, & Figures*, paintings by Julie Kumble, through March 15.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Psychedelic Filly*, art by Emily Tatro, through January.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Magic of Moonlight*, member exhibit, through January 26.

Augusta Savage Gallery, UMass Amherst: *Reserved Passages*, watercolors by former teacher

Richard Yarde and his student Susan Montgomery, through February 26.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *Alliterations*, paintings by Gordon M. Green, and *Radical Hope*, paintings by Evelyn Pye. Both through January.

Black Birch Vineyard, Hatfield: *Quabbin Art Association*, member exhibit featuring a wide range of media, through February.

CALL FOR ART

Montague Center Library: Call for art and poetry on the theme of "Books!" Make art out of a book, or inspired by a book. Submissions due by February 2, to be exhibited through March. A reception on February 11 will feature a reading of poems on the subject. Email kmartineau@cwmars.org

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CALENDAR



Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Presentation Night*. "Want to nerd out in a fun, supportive environment?... We will provide a laptop and a projector, for slides or reference materials, a mic, a timer, and an eclectic, community oriented audience." Hosted by Olivia Nied. 8 p.m. No cover.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Young Entrepreneur Business Class: Creating Your Business Plan*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Giant Wasps of Franklin County*, with biologist Paul Sievert. 6 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Public Library, Greenfield: Presentation: *Winter Ecology and Horticulture: Setting the Stage for Spring* with horticulturist Erik Vegeto. 6 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Organizing Your Digital Life, Simple Practical Systems*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

Brick House Community Resource Center, Turners Falls: First session of *Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey*. Confidential support and discussion group. Eight-week program in conjunction with the Salasin Project, in person and on Zoom. Register at slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org. 1 to 2:30 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Wildlife on Wheels*. Call (413) 423-3348 to register. 2 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Read with Marley*, a gentle therapy dog. 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Free.

Montague Center Library, Montague: *The Attic Live*. Local author Bruce Watson presents his web magazine. (See article, Page A1.) 5:30 p.m. Free.

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

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Myriam Gendron, Wednesday Knudsen*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Curmudgeon Bingo*. 7 p.m. No cover.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

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

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Lofi Creativity Zone*. A creative hangout for tweens and teens. 4 p.m. Free.

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Young Shakespeare* Players East present *Julius Caesar*. 7 p.m. Free.

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Young Shakespeare* Players East present *Julius Caesar*. 7 p.m. Free.

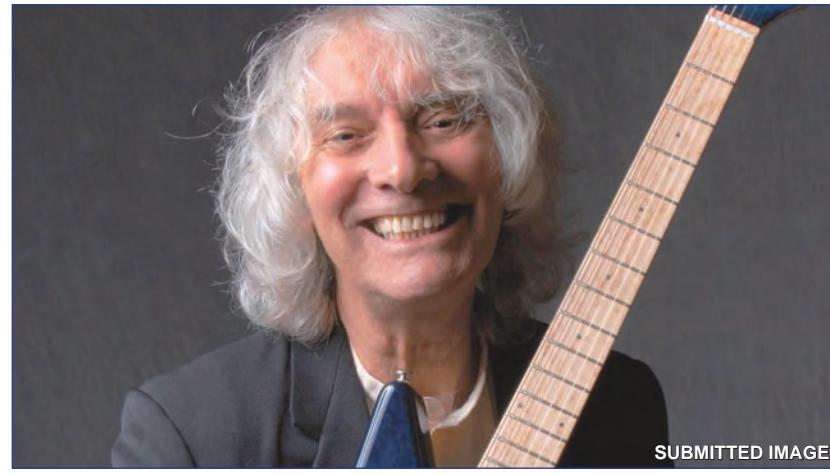
Mount Toby Friends Meeting, Leverett: *Reggie Harris*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

Nova Arts, Keene: *Bex Burch, Tori Young, John-Francis Quiñonez*. 7 p.m. \$.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Lloyd Cole, Vance Gilbert, Melissa Ferrick*, more. Tribute to Jill Sobule. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Big Huge, Jeanines*. 8 p.m. \$.



SUBMITTED IMAGE

British guitar whiz Albert Lee won *Guitar Player* mag's "Best Country Guitarist" five years in a row, and has backed up everyone from the Everly Brothers to Emmylou Harris to Eric Clapton. Catch him next Wednesday in Hamp.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Cheap Kiss, \$500, babe wait*. 7 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Breadwinners*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Nanny, People's Princess, PMS*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Clap Your Hands Say Yeah*, piano and voice. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Bumpin Uglies, Joey Harkum*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Comedy Open Mic with Lana Epstein*. 8 p.m. No cover.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Wolfman Jack, Grateful Dead tribute*. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Tree-Pruning Workshop*. Registration req'd. 12:30 p.m. Free.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Young Shakespeare* Players East present *Julius Caesar*. 1 p.m. Free.

New England Youth Theatre, Brattleboro: *Play, Swamped*, written and directed by Court Dorsey. 2 p.m. \$.

Element Brewing Company, Millers Falls: *Bekka Dowland*. 3 p.m. No cover.

Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Eleanor Levine*. 4 p.m. Free.

The Drake, Amherst: *Spectre Folk, Mark Robinson, Willie Lane*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Young Shakespeare* Players East present *Julius Caesar*. 1 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Craft Day with the Friends*. For older teens and adults; instruction and materials provided. Call (413) 423-3348 to register. 1 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Cajun Danse Party with Back O'Town Cajun Band*. Dance instruction at 1:30 p.m., event at 2 p.m. \$.

New England Youth Theatre, Brattleboro: *Play, Swamped*, written and directed by Court Dorsey. 2 p.m. \$.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: Documentary screening, *Where Olive Trees Weep* (2024), about the occupied West Bank. Sponsored by Traprock and the Markham-Nathan Fund for Social Justice. Discussion to follow; light refreshments and information from the Apartheid-Free Communities campaign. 3:30 p.m. Free.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Wolfman Jack, Grateful Dead tribute*. 6 p.m. \$.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Doctor in Homespun*. Susan Wright and Loris Epps tell the tale of a local female doctor/weaver from the 1800s. 6 p.m. Free.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Jessica Beck, Rumyn, The Survey*. 7 p.m. \$.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *JHK, Kiran Arora, Kjostad, Scald Hymn, Snake in the Garden, Dimension Viewer*. 7 p.m. \$.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *The Real World, Made Manifest, Rhubarb Duo, Hexrot*. 8 p.m. Free.

MONDAY, JANUARY 19

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center: *Snowshoeing for Beginners of All Ages*. Free rentals and demonstration. Pre-registration required. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Free.

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *Monday Night D&D*. "Self-contained adventures designed to be played in a single session." 6 p.m. No cover.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Fiber Group / Mending Circle*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Live Insect Zoo*. All ages. 2:30 p.m. Free.

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *The "M" Word*, first of a three-part monthly class on menopause and perimenopause with Rachel Lempert, RN. 4:30 p.m. By donation.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Knitting Night*. 5 p.m. Free.

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

Hutghi's, Westfield: *The Damage, Demented FX, Gluebag, Black Dog, Grem*. 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wes Brown with Eugene Uman and Jill Connolly*. 8 p.m. No cover.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

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

Millers Falls Library, Millers Falls: *Cooking Demonstration*, with Abigail from the Food Bank of Western Mass. 1 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Doctor in Homespun*. Susan Wright and Loris Epps tell the tale of a local female doctor/weaver from the 1800s. 6 p.m. Free.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Jessica Beck, Rumyn, The Survey*. 7 p.m. \$.

looking forward...

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Patch Burger* pop-up, with DJs John Moloney, Sarah Gibbons. 6 to 11 p.m. No cover.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Shadowcatcher, Feldspar 00000, Rhubarb Duo, Baldwinville*. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *Brass Band Jam*. All ages. 1 to 3 p.m. No cover.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Movie, Before Sunrise* (1995), with opening music by Kath Bloom. 6:30 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Tashi Dorji, Che Chen*. 4 p.m. By donation.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Groff Park, Amherst: Community celebration, *Groundhog Day's Eve*. Dances, groundhog effigies, songs. Dress warmly. 4 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *John Sheldon*, benefit for Good Neighbors. 7:30 p.m. \$.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

The Drake, Amherst: *Mdou Moctar*. 8 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Eliza Niemi, Stoner Will & The Narks; Crimson Blue*. 9 p.m. By donation.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Jonathan Richman*. 8 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

Stage 33, Bellows Falls: *Hiroya Tsukamoto*. 2 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Reprise, Phish tribute*. 8 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

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

TUESDAY, JULY 21

Tanglewood, Lenox: *"Weird Al" Yankovic*. 7 p.m. \$.

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BOOK REVIEW from page B1

drafty and mostly empty estate, each of whom represents a well-known archetype, are confronted with the realization that a crime has been committed.

The novelist Balzac is often paraphrased as saying that "behind every great fortune there is a great crime." If behind every manor house is a great fortune, and thus the manor house represents a great crime, then we rightly expect that further crimes should haunt it. The manor house mystery relies on the reader recognizing the little society within the manor house as a toy model of the real society they live in – and that the foundations of that society are haunted.

The dinner party guests of Flanders consist

of an English-lit grad student escaping New York City and her dissertation, an obvious stand-in for the author; a New Left professor on parole from prison for Vietnam War draft resistance; a New Age lothario with a mysterious past in the Haight-Ashbury; a grown-up flower child with a head full of astrology and tarot; an acerbic dope-dealer-slash-poet; a stoic hippie carpenter; an organic farmer and aspiring Earth mother; a progressive Protestant pastor; each of whom wants to save the world.

Soon, one of them is dead. Can the intelligent but high-strung protagonist and the sexy small town cop with a heart of gold solve the case? And will their *steamy romance* survive the shocking revelation?

The "cozy village" depends upon the pre-

historic myth of country life.. The "cozy village mystery" is about threats, from either without or within, to that mythical stable order. Once you move to the country, you discover that country life has no firm foundations. Small-scale agriculture and handicrafts aren't self-sustaining, many people work remotely or not at all, and the children who grow up there tend to leave for greener pastures, creating a kind of metastasized retirement community.

Without a firm foundation, the village of Flanders becomes a game board made up of well-appointed rooms, each one with a hippie and a murder weapon. Michelson is not unaware of these questions, or of others: the in-built conflict between hippies and townies; the unsteady hand of law enforcement, the

catastrophe of US politics from the '70s to today. And yet, she seems to be so convinced of the good intentions of her generation that she – the mystery writer as self-appointed judge and jury – finds them innocent, even in the face of the crimes they commit.

As a literature professor, Michelson includes in her book a pithy observation that the novel and the mystery are inverses of each other. We suggest that, if the novel has reduced society to psychology, the mystery still remains as social critique, even if only as an amusement.

Part of the Solution is engaging, but the author's failure to decide just what the crime was in moving to Western Mass leaves the resolution of its mystery unsatisfying.

**ON THE TRAIL** from page B1

beginnings of slaughtering one hog per day, to receiving up to 120 car-loads of hogs per day, prompting residents in the 1870s to complain of the stench of the polluted river and triggering concerns about health hazards.

The state Board of Health concluded that 800,000 hogs had been slaughtered along the Millers River in 1873 alone. When it did not take action, local communities filled in a portion of the Millers River and installed sewers to mitigate the impacts of the slaughterhouses' operations on the river.

So how does a Potato Monument fit into all this?

Anyone coming into North Station by commuter rail or Amtrak knows that a number of railroad tracks converge in this area of Boston. The area surrounding the Millers River hosted not only slaughterhouses, but also potato sheds, serving as a waypoint for Maine potatoes on their way along the Boston and Maine line to market destinations across southern New England and the rest of the United States.

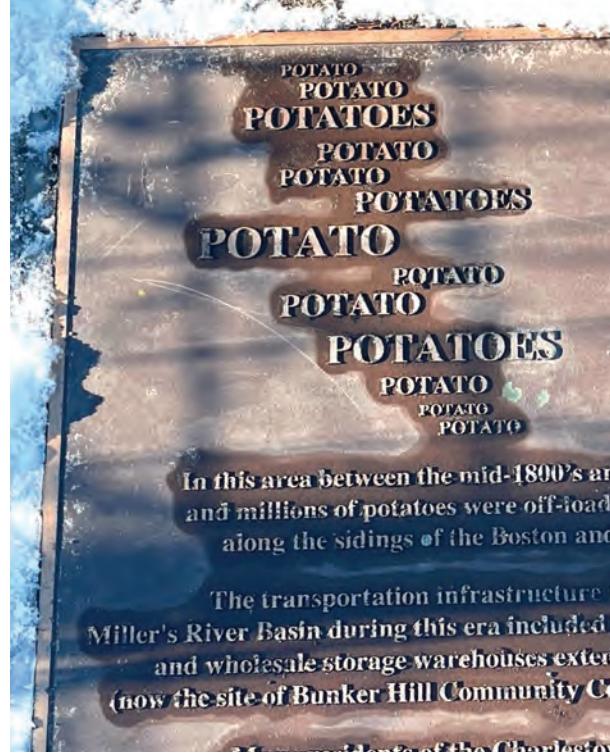
What's left of the Millers River lies nestled, somewhat neglected, between Charlestown and Cambridge – and under the Zakim Bridge and Interstate 93. This area was historically known as "Prison Point," but now houses parking for Bunker Hill Community College while Boston Sand & Gravel lies on the other side of the Millers River.

The Millers Creek Path, also known as the Millers River Littoral Way and where the Potato Monument is located, runs from New Rutherford Avenue in Charlestown toward the Millers River and ultimately connects with North Point Park.

The Millers River Potato Monu-



DIDONATO PHOTOS



Left: The Millers River of Middlesex County, as it exists today.
Right: A plaque glorifying the potato and explaining the history of the potato sheds.

ment is tucked away in an unassuming nook, a silent memorial to the potato sheds that lined this area of Charlestown in the 1800s through the early 1930s.

According to a 2017 *Boston Globe* article, the monument was the brainchild of Ross Miller, a visual artist who worked in the Central Arterial Visual Art Program, a part of the Big Dig project, in the 1990s, but funding didn't find its way to the project until Obama-era stimulus money became available in 2009.

Sacks full of potatoes were neatly, but "casually," stacked. After Miller reviewed the placement of the sacks, a concrete-fiberglass mold was poured, which explains the intricate details on the mesh potato sacks captured in concrete.

According to local lore and the monument plaque, Charlestown

residents frequently went to the potato sheds to purchase, or sometimes steal, potatoes for dinner.

The sheds were meant to house potatoes, but at one time, a shed was the scene of some mischief.

As mentioned above, the general area was called Prison Point at one time, housing Charlestown State Prison, and a potato shed played an indirect role in a prison break in the 1930s. A *Globe* article from December 3, 1935, reported some carnage after five convicts escaped the prison and were pursued by around two hundred Boston Police officers.

A few of the convicts, armed with "long knives" as well as a gun, attempted to flee by stealing an occupied truck that they had found backed up to one of the potato sheds. The five fugitives were eventually either killed or recaptured.

Not all good things last, including sheds full of potatoes for residents to take home for dinner.

The monument plaque cites fire in the 1930s as destroying the sheds, but other reports and local blogs report that the sheds burned in the 1960s and that the area smelled like scorched and baked potatoes for weeks.

The slaughterhouses and potato sheds eventually gone, the Millers River remained neglected, though not forgotten.

A 1990 *Globe* report outlined opposition to "Scheme Z," which included the Storrow Drive Connector as part of the Big Dig. Controversial at the time, groups like Sierra Club and the Conservation Law Foundation cited the "long neglected" but "still pristine" Millers River as one of the resources that

would be impacted by the project.

The Connector was ultimately built, and is perhaps better known as the Leverett Circle Connector Bridge. Visiting the area today, the Millers River Littoral Way is a quiet path with a deep history, but it does seem somewhat neglected and dwarfed by the highway above and industrial surroundings.

The waterway is surrounded by roadway and Bunker Hill Community College parking on the Charlestown side, and massive piles of salt and sand, likely for winter road treatment, at Boston Sand & Gravel. The river itself is peaceful, and in spring it has some vegetation, though on the winter day I visited it was quiet and mostly frozen over. Footprints in the snow on the path indicated the area is visited.

I did notice two plastic shopping carts dumped into the water, and a third fastened to the railing of the pedestrian walkway with a bike lock, likely to prevent it from being stolen from its current owner.

Nonetheless, the remnants of the river and the Potato Monument serve to mark the significant history of this location for both Charlestown and Cambridge.

The best way to access the Millers River Potato Monument is to park in Lot 1 of Bunker Hill Community College, off New Rutherford Avenue in Charlestown. From there, you can easily walk to the Monument and enjoy the Littoral Way. Be sure to check for parking hours; fees may apply.

With the Bunker Hill monument visible over the Charlestown skyline, the Potato Monument is an easy diversion for history buffs already exploring the general area – or an easy solo trip to make off the beaten path.



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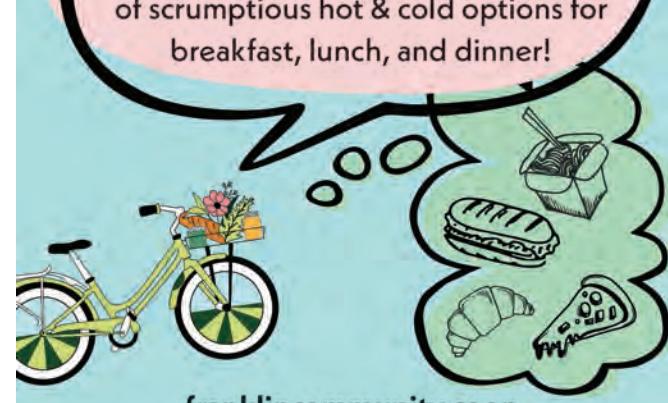

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