

# The Montague Reporter

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\$2

editor@montaguereporter.org

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

montaguereporter.org

## Gill Assessors Facing Two Open Seats, Unfilled Staff Position

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL** – After two years of simmering, a feud over how much the town of Gill should pay for a dedicated assessor boiled over this month, with the acting principal assessor and two of the three members of the department’s oversight board all announcing that they intend to

leave their roles.

“I will finish the term, and I strongly encourage somebody else to come in,” board of assessors member Pamela Lester told the Reporter on Wednesday.

Lester, whose third three-year term comes to an end in May, announced her decision not to run for see **ASSESSORS** page A3



JACKSON PHOTO

Pamela Lester, approaching the end of her third term on Gill’s board of assessors, announced this week that she will not seek a fourth.

WENDELL SELECTBOARD

## Line Between Public, Private Sometimes Gets the Wiggles

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Former Wendell selectboard chair Christine Heard came to the selectboard’s February 11 meeting with two orders of business.

The first was straightforward. Heard explained that Francesco “Apollo” Compagnone, the library’s neighbor to the south, was once shown by a prior road supervisor a property line that allowed him a strip of land that was actually town property. Compagnone built a fence and planted a garden

and fruit trees up to the line as he understood it.

Surveys done subsequently for the library construction discovered the mistake, but rather than force him to uproot the trees and move his fence, the town allowed him to use the land until his house and property change ownership.

The selectboard has gone through a number of member changes since that agreement was made, and no member serving then is still on the board. Heard said she

see **WENDELL** page A6

## AND NO COLD-PLUNGING



MAGGIE SADOWAY PHOTO

Safety equipment and usage guidelines on a semi-frozen power canal last week.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## New Chief Adds Several Equipment Must-Haves

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard endorsed an additional \$44,000 increase in police spending Tuesday night, bringing the department’s proposed growth to 15%, as it put the finishing touches on a preliminary budget for the coming fiscal year. The budget will go through further discussion and revision before it is released to town meeting members in May for final approval.

The board also approved a contract amendment that would move a proposed raised sidewalk on Main Street, part of a project intended to slow traffic in Montague Center; authorized the use of Unity Park and First Street for a vintage car show in September; and held off on making an official endorsement of a “Rural and Declining Enrollment Schools Week of Action” on Beacon Hill in early March.

Town administrator Walter Ramsey noted that the police budget was “unique” in that it had been developed during the transition to a new police chief, Jason Haskins, in December. Haskins, he said, had identified certain “gaps” in earlier proposals, and the new version included cost estimates for a new cruiser, the replacement of aging Tasers, and better oversight of the department’s information technology (IT), which up to now has been the chief’s job.

Ramsey said properly funding a new cruiser would probably add \$17,000 to the budget, a lease agreement for Tasers would cost \$10,000 in the first year, and a contract with a consulting firm to oversee IT would add another \$17,000.

In addition to these increases in the operating budget, several special articles were proposed for the town meeting warrant to fund police capital requests, including a second new cruiser, HVAC improvements at the public safety complex, and a “catch-all for all the small equipment” including batteries for radios and an upgrade to the evidence refrigerator.

Haskins, who attended Tuesday’s meeting, added more details. He said the “computer side” of the HVAC system is “two generations old,” and needs to be upgraded in order to heat the building properly. He also reported that officers in most police departments carry two radio batteries, rather than just one, and that a large number of cruisers in the town’s fleet are “well past [their] service life.”

“I think you should give yourself some credit for this budget, because the expenses that you’ve described tonight represent level services,” said selectboard chair see **MONTAGUE** page A5

CARE

## Finding Good Company At the End of the Road



KRISTI BODIN PHOTO

Brian McCullough returned to his native western Massachusetts last year, after a career in entertainment, to enter hospice. He never stopped making new friends.

By CHRISTINA TRINCHERO

**TURNERS FALLS** – Brian McCullough’s final chapter began last July when he walked into the Shady Glen Diner for a cup of coffee.

Five months later, waitress Vicki Figueroa and manager Carole Fairbrother would call Kristi Bodin, McCullough’s former wife. “He was sitting in a booth,” remembers Figueroa. “He didn’t look good, so we called Kristi to come and pick him up. That was the last time we saw Brian.”

Far from his 25-plus-year career as a professional Roy Orbison tribute artist, traveling throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Ireland, McCullough found community in downtown Turners Falls. He lived each day of those final months simply – walking up and down Avenue A, feeling the sun on his face, exchanging stories and jokes over coffee, turning strangers into friends – as cancer took its toll.

**A Change of Course**

In 2020, McCullough was scheduled to perform on a cruise ship in Puerto Rico when COVID hit. “The world shut down. He couldn’t perform anymore,” says Bodin, a Montague resident.

McCullough returned to South Carolina and waited for the phone to ring. Suddenly, he found him-

self without a career.

“I didn’t know, when I did my last show, that I was a hopeless addict,” McCullough would reflect in “The Last Interview,” a YouTube series recorded in September by his lifelong friend and high school classmate Jay Appell. “I’ve been in no situation since where someone hollers my name over the loudspeaker and I come out on stage and 300, 500, 1,400 people applaud. I was hopelessly addicted to applause.”

“But I was blessed,” McCullough continued, “in that my last show I did not know was my last. It is not like the situation I am in now – a lot of things that I’m doing now are going to be the last time I do them, because I am running out of time.”

Though COVID sidelined McCullough’s career, cancer would be the ultimate disruptor. In 2024, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and had surgery to try to remove the tumor on his pancreas.

Bodin, who had remained friends with McCullough since their divorce, flew to South Carolina to be with him when he got out of surgery. They talked about returning to western Massachusetts together, where McCullough had friends and a family history going back generations. Bodin offered him a spare room in her house. But see **COMPANY** page A4



KARLA VANA PHOTO

McCullough, who performed for decades as a Roy Orbison tribute artist, is seen here on the Las Vegas-based package tour Legends in Concert in 2019.

### A Shorter Edition In Honor Of Presidents’ Day

The Ultimate Disruptor.....A1	Pulled Back Onto the Tracks.....B3
Regular Manual Intelligence.....A2	Verbal Warning for Speed.....B3
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Gurgling Winter Whispers.....B1	Demon Ravers, Beetlejuice, Oh Dad.....B7
To Let Rabbits Become Friends.....B2	Winning the Rebound War.....B8



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"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

## Letters to the Editors



## Not Running Again

To my fellow Gill Board of Assessors members, Bill Tomb and Rob Whittier; our Principal Assessor Diane Sumrall; my fellow town citizens; the state Department of Revenue (DOR); associated community members of fellow assessors; and beyond:

It is bittersweet to share this with you, but I would like to announce that after serving three three-year terms consecutively in Gill, I will not be seeking a fourth term in the coming Gill election this May.

During my nine years, I believe that the town has seen improved assessing in Gill, and has come to see the value of having a professionally-trained and certified Principal Assessor working for us as our office staff person, answering to each citizen and fellow assessors in the state as well as to the DOR, to attend to all of the needs of Gill and of staying in compliance.

The town budget is funded only by the revenue that the Gill assessing office brings in, along with the contributions of the state and federal governments. Unfortunately, Gill no longer has a Principal Assessor.

In my opinion, the process of trying to fill the Gill office position with a Principal Assessor has been, and continues to be, undermined and influenced by some individuals in town. These actions – again in my opinion – are not good stewardship of Gill taxpayer funds. Rather, it is unwarranted privilege and influence that have gotten us to the point we are at today, a town relying indefinitely on contractors to fill the office vacancy and services.

I want to thank my current Board of Assessors members, and past members Nancy Griswold and Tim Storrow, for their efforts in working tirelessly to this end. We couldn't have done our work without the support of Lynda Hodsdon Mayo and Diane Sumrall in the assessor's office. I am grateful for the time we spent representing this town together.

It's time for others to carry on this work.

I may see you in another municipal capacity in the future.

Pamela Lester  
Gill

## USA Not Towns' Biz

The Belchertown Select Board has a new policy, "The Role of the Select Board Regarding Federal Matters Policy," that affirms its core responsibility is the governance, safety, and well-being of Belchertown residents. This thoughtful policy affirms that the Board's municipal role is to focus on the Town of Belchertown and its residents, and not to engage in national political or ideological debates outside of its role.

Recent events in Burlington, Vermont offer a useful example. The Burlington City Council has faced repeated pressure (including councilors being harassed) to advance a nonbinding "apartheid-free community" resolution. Rather than turn a complex international conflict into an official municipal declaration, the council passed a Community Dialogue Resolution and chose to prioritize and fund community

dialogue and engagement.

My support for the Belchertown Select Board's new policy and the Community Dialogue Resolution adopted in Burlington, Vermont should not be mistaken for indifference to human suffering around the world. People should absolutely speak out about national and global issues as I continue to do. I write letters, attend events, donate, and support organizations such as Indivisible, Women of Vision, Women Wage Peace (partners with Women of the Sun), and World Central Kitchen.

These municipal policies are not about silencing anyone. They are about ensuring that town government remains focused on its proper role while avoiding the kind of polarization that can divide neighbors and erode trust in local institutions.

Andrea Newman  
Amherst



NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

Doreen Stevens has clerked for the Town of Gill since 2019, and reports that the job is more interesting than she thought it would be. Stevens has lived in Gill for 43 years and says she loves working with the local people, though she would love to see more show up for elections and fill vacant spots on committees!

## TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

What a cute little edition! School vacation week! Monday holiday! These truncated **14-pagers are a headache**. Next week will be a real paper, lemme tell you. Please send us some juicy Letters to the Editors.

A Turners Falls reader writes: "I was wondering if you could possibly inquire in the paper if **anyone with mobility issues** is interested in having a **community garden plot** in the Unity garden. A few of us are in talks about repairing existing ones, but also maybe building a different design with easier access."

I am hereby inquiring in the paper. If you, another reader, fit that description, I'm happy to put you two in touch – reach out at the email below or call the MR office at (413) 863-8666 and I'll connect you.

As one consequence of all the jumbling and squishing, a **correction to last week's edition** didn't fit where it was supposed to on this page, so I'm swallowing it within this column – this is the compromise I've made for having *Vicinity* crawl over onto the left-hand page.

In the coverage of the Erving selectboard in our February 12 edition, we wrote that the board heard a proposed new tech school building came with "an estimated cost of \$2.4 to \$2.5 million."

This was a plain old brain burp on our reporter's behalf, but it passed right by three sets of eyes – even though the article in question ran *directly below* one on the FCTS informational forum, which said the price projection had been reduced slightly to \$238 million. I think we all figured it meant the assessment to Erving alone. The article was supposed to say "... of \$240 to \$250 million." Glad we cleared that one up.

If you're having **trouble paying your utility bills** this winter, you may qualify for the federal Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). Get started at [www.toapply.org/CA](http://www.toapply.org/CA).

Apologies for making a habit of subtweeting local Meta slop in print, but this week we saw something pretty funny go down. A phone app that automatically monitors local police scanners with speech recognition software heard – or thought it heard – a Greenfield dispatcher commenting that it was "murder on Pierce Street," and thanks to the **wonders of artificial intelligence**, which has clearly far surpassed regular manual intelligence, an incident of "homicide" was logged on a map.

This apparently ping-ponged around at a low level for a couple days until someone lacking *just enough* in regular manual intelligence asked a roughly 27,600-member Greenfield-themed Facebook page (that's 155% of the population of regular manual Greenfield) if anyone knew what had happened with the whole homicide thing on Pierce Street.

Most people seemed to figure out what had happened after a few hours, but not before (1) someone said they prayed, (2) someone mentioned the need for residents to arm themselves, (3) someone tried to start an argument about whether posting news like that on Facebook was a bad way for the victim's family to find out, and (4) someone trash-talked the city's newspaper, which had not reported a homicide.

They really get you both coming and going, don't they? *Out in the street, they call it mur-der...*

**Stone Soup Café** is hosting a workshop next Tuesday, February 24, from 6 to 8 p.m. at 399 Main Street in Greenfield, featuring

Greenfield People's Budget. "Community members are invited to gather for dinner and conversation, learn about local abolitionist organizing, and explore ways to participate in ongoing efforts for change."

The event is part of Stone Soup's ongoing Solidarity Workshop series, organized in collaboration with the Building Solidarity Economies program at UMass Amherst.

Speaking of UMass! A **Festival of Languages and Dialects** is being organized for April 11 and 12.

"The festival brings together performers, activists, community members, students, and scholars to represent everybody's languages and creoles, tongues and patois, accents and dialects, jargon and slang," the call for participation reads. "While celebrating and learning about each other, we also hope to find common ground about the social issues faced by each language community. How can we support each other?"

The venue is UMass's Thompson Hall and the promoter has a college email address, but it looks pretty grassroots to me. I was scratching my head a little at it, but this week we received a follow-up announcement that the deadline for the call for participation is the final minute of February, next weekend, so I'm putting it here quick so interested readers won't have missed it. The call can be accessed at [bit.ly/fold2026](http://bit.ly/fold2026) – it's a form you fill out; scroll all the way down and hit "Next"...

Hey, so uh, the US is **actively blockading energy delivery** to an island, and our president is saying it's a "failed nation" because its inhabitants are suffering the effects.

"Why are you hitting yourself?"

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**ASSESSORS** from page A1  
 a fourth earlier in the week in an open letter decrying “unwarranted privilege and interest,” and asserting that the board’s effort to build up a well-compensated principal assessor position “continues to be undermined.” (See *Letters to the Editors*, Page A2.)

Robert Whittier, appointed in October to fill a seat on the board made vacant by the resignation of Tim Storrow until the spring election, also said he does not intend to run for the position.

“I’m really busy at work,” Whittier told the *Reporter*. “I was asked to check it out, and I did, but it’s just a bigger time commitment than I am ready to do at this time.”

Only Bill Tomb, the board’s chair, will remain after the spring election.

At central issue in the department is the status of its paid staff position, with multiple failed attempts to attract a suitable candidate for the work. Diane Sumrall, who formerly served as an assistant to the assessors at 30 hours per week, has taken part-time positions in Erving and Buckland and tendered her resignation in September, but was persuaded to continue to work up to 16 hours a week for Gill as a contracted “interim principal assessor.”

Since then, the town tried unsuccessfully to hire a new assistant to the assessors, and then posted for a higher-paid and higher-skilled principal assessor role, but again saw no success.

Negotiations over a proposal to take a hybrid approach, offering Sumrall a principal assessor job at 16 hours and hiring an assistant at 14 hours, apparently broke down earlier this month; on February 8, Sumrall wrote that she was no longer interested, citing “dissension in

the Board as well as the Town.”

This week she confirmed she plans to stay on until a hire is made.

**A Growing Burden**

“Assessing has gotten more complicated over time,” said Lester. “The demands are bigger, the requirements are much more stringent. And that it takes more time is no surprise.”

Members of the Gill board of assessors must take a basic training course, and receive a \$3,067 stipend each year; the chair’s stipend is \$3,374. The assistant role, meanwhile, is on the town’s wage scale at Grade 5, beginning at \$25.33 per hour; principal assessor, a recently-established position, is at Grade 6 and starts at \$30.46.

The department also contracts with the Marblehead-based firm Patriot Properties, Inc. to help assess the value of real estate.

Gill is entering a period of heavy work, as the town is required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to submit a full revaluation of its properties once every ten years – it was formerly on a more typical five-year cycle – and that revaluation is coming due soon.

Sumrall, hired as an assistant in 2021 after Lynda Hodsdon Mayo’s retirement, took classes with town funding and became a Massachusetts-accredited assessor in 2023. Public debate over the staff position’s pay began in March 2024.

Tomb and Lester warned the selectboard that other towns in the area were “very interested in talking to [Sumrall].”

The assistant role had already been expanding, from 20 hours under Hodsdon Mayo to 25 when Sumrall was hired, and then to 30 early in her tenure, reflecting the actual workload she faced.

That May, the selectboard agreed to consider creating a principal assessor position, though not necessarily filling it; members described keeping both jobs on the books but only filling one at a time, establishing a promotion pathway from the assistant to the principal role.

In October 2024, with that request apparently stalled, the assessors asked if the assistant job could be moved to a higher pay grade. The selectboard recommended the decision be delayed until the results of a UMass Collins Center wage study were taken into account by the personnel committee.

The personnel committee apparently did not take up the matter, leading the board of assessors to ask town meeting directly in June 2025 to create the principal position. The budget under consideration already increased Sumrall’s pay by \$6,849; promoting her to a higher pay grade would have made the increase \$10,174.

“I don’t appreciate being caught off guard with this,” said selectboard member Gregory Snedeker. “We have other people in the town hall that I feel are grossly underpaid.”

“This is not a surprise to anyone who’s been a part of this process,” Lester responded.

A number of residents praised Sumrall for her skills, professionalism, approachability, and performance, but the motion was rejected.

In September, when Sumrall resigned, the personnel committee promptly approved the higher-skilled position, followed by the selectboard.

“I believe every town should have a principal assessor,” Sumrall told the *Reporter* this week. “It’s better when you have an employee that knows how to do valuations, and not rely on consultants.... Also,

if the town has a principal assessor, the state isn’t going to push on them to regionalize [assessment], because they know the town knows what it’s doing.”

“There’s no comparison, really, if someone knows the town,” Lester said of the difference between an in-house principal assessor and outside consultants. “When you’re a small town.... people come into the assessing office knowing that there’s knowledge there that they can partake in. It’s a place where if somebody has a concern with a bill, maybe they’re a little upset and they need it to be explained, they can get that information. The property records are complicated!”

**Fumbling Forward**

Reached for comment, town administrator Ray Purington said he did not know what the town’s next step will be, nor why Sumrall had withdrawn her interest.

If the town posts a principal assessor position at 14 or 16 hours, he said, “assuming she’s able to find that many hours in her life schedule, there wouldn’t be anything preventing her from applying, from the town’s perspective.”

The agenda for next Monday’s selectboard meeting includes an item titled “(tentative) Board of Assessors – update on staffing search.”

“Maybe there’s still time to say, ‘Hey, we realize we need to re-evaluate all this,’ Lester said on Thursday. “It’s people above me that need to make those decisions.” Sumrall declined to comment on the hiring process. “I love Gill,” she said. “I knew nothing about assessing, and they started it all for me.”

Attempts to reach board of assessors chair Bill Tomb close to press time for comment were unsuccessful.

**RECYCLE**

**PAPER**  
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**Scene Report: Valentine’s Dance**

By JOE R. PARZYCH

**TURNERS FALLS** – The United Arc of Franklin County had their annual Valentine’s Day celebration and dance last Thursday in their Turners Falls building. Everyone had fun and a great time.

The United Arc is an awesome place, and also has great staff and clients. They’ve been working hard since the 1950s and they’re very proud to serve our community.

In March the Pioneer Club Advocacy Group is going to the State House in Boston to advocate, fight for our rights, and listen to what is going on across the nation with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I am part of the group and I will be corresponding as the photo beat reporter at the State House with my new mirrorless camera, press pass, and notepad, and I will report back to the *Montague Reporter*.

By the way, the United Arc needs more staff, crucially in Greenfield. I recommend that UMass and GCC students apply, and others. Feel free to contact Fred Warren at [fredwarren@theunitedarc.org](mailto:fredwarren@theunitedarc.org). Please spread the word!



JOE R. PARZYCH PHOTOS

**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Nomination Papers Now Available**

**MONTAGUE** – Nomination papers for the annual town election on Tuesday, May 19 are now available at the Town Clerk’s office until Thursday, March 26. They must be returned no later than Wednesday, April 1 at 5 p.m. Open seats are as follows:

- *Selectboard*, three-year term;
  - *Board of Assessors*, three-year term;
  - *Board of Health*, three-year term;
  - *Parks and Rec.*, three-year term;
  - *Library Trustees*, three seats with three-year terms, one seat with a two-year term;
  - *Montague Housing Authority*, five-year term;
  - *Soldiers’ Memorial Trustees*, one veteran seat and one non-veteran seat, both with three-year terms;
  - *Town Meeting Members*, seven three-year seats in each of Montague’s six precincts, two one-year seats in Precinct 3, and one one-year seat in Precinct 6.
- The annual town election will be held Tuesday, May 19, 2026. The deadline to register to vote is Saturday, May 9.
- Nomination papers regarding school committee seats are provided by the Gill-Montague Superintendent of Schools at 35 Crocker Avenue, 863-9324.
- The Town Clerk’s office is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. For more information, please call the office at 863-3200 x. 203.

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**COMPANY** from page A1

at the time, he wasn't ready to move.

McCullough went through two rounds of chemotherapy and an experimental medication, but the cancer continued to metastasize. "Nothing worked," Bodin says. "The cancer was progressing, and the side effects were making him feel like shit."

**Golden Days Before They End**

McCullough was born at Cooley Dickinson Hospital and grew up in the Amherst area. After graduating from Amherst Regional High School he worked in a variety of

odd jobs: driving the Amherst Senior Center van, upholstering caskets at the Florence Casket Company, and working as an apprentice embalmer, to name a few.

A radio enthusiast from a young age, McCullough would go on to become a morning announcer at WTTT, Amherst 1430 FM, where he hosted Swaps, known at the time as the "tag sale of the airwaves." Later, he co-hosted a popular country radio show on Bear Country 95.3 FM.

"Brian was particularly proud of having acted as the newsman aiding Rachel Maddow in her local coverage of the 9/11 events as they

happened that morning in 2001," Bodin notes.

McCullough's rise from local radio personality to sought-after tribute artist happened by accident. An Elvis impersonator heard him singing the Orbison hit, "Crying," and was shocked at the vocal resemblance. As Bodin remembers it, the *faux* Elvis said, "Your voice is great, and I am looking for an opening act."

This triggered McCullough's entry into the impersonator world. "He started opening shows for Elvis impersonators around New England," Bodin recounts, "and eventually, Brian developed his own fan club."

In 1993 McCullough got his big break when, unbeknownst to him, a fan videotaped his act and sent it to Legends in Concert, the largest tribute-artist booking agency in the country. From there, he developed an expansive following.

"While he was performing, Brian was considered the best Orbison voice," Bodin emphasizes. "He got to know Roy Orbison's family members, and was hired by Orbison's wife to host an anniversary concert in her husband's honor because she thought Brian was that good."

For more than 15 years, fellow tribute artists Megan Houde and Eric Hofmanis knew McCullough both on and off the stage. "Brian would start singing, [and] I'd look out into the audience and see people's jaws drop," says Houde, who worked as one of McCullough's backup singers and now performs as June Carter Cash, alongside Hofmanis as Johnny Cash, in the tribute act A Man Named Cash.

Hofmanis played bass in McCullough's band, and performed with him often. "Brian had the look, and obviously the sound [of Orbison]," he says. "He was genuine, without pretense, which is really unique in this business. Once the wig and make up came off, he was just Brian – there was no ego. I think that is why we were friends for so long. He would call us just to check in to say, 'I'm your biggest fan, I love you guys!' and 'Keep up the good work!'"

Hofmanis recalled another, later, phone call: "It was bleak. You could tell Brian accepted where he was, and wanted to help motivate the people he believed in. He was an incredible friend, and an incredible artist to work with."

**Going Back Someday**

In March 2025, McCullough returned to the Pioneer Valley for a visit. He stayed with Bodin for 10 days. "Someone threw Brian a reception at the UMass Dining Commons," Bodin recalls. "About 100 people came, including friends from high school and fans from his tribute artist days."

Again, Bodin offered up the spare room.

By early July McCullough had parted with most of what he had owned, bringing only three suitcases to Montague. Says Bodin, who would become McCullough's caretaker supported by a hospice team, "my ex-husband had moved in with me to die."

For McCullough, mornings in Montague came to mean coffee at the Shady Glen. Bodin offered to make him coffee at home, but he insisted on going out. "I realized later that being present with people was important to Brian," Bodin says. "Going out was his big social thing. It gave him a platform to meet and greet."

Shady Glen waitress Denise Milkey remembers the first day McCullough walked into the diner: "He ordered a coffee, and asked me if he could take it outside – he said he was going to have a cigarette. I said, 'I wish you wouldn't!' He told me he had stage 4 pancreatic cancer."

That disclosure, though sad for Milkey, paved the way for friendship, comfortable conversation, and lots of joking around. "We got to love him, and we all tried to take care of him, too," Milkey says.

Waitress Vicki Figueroa greeted McCullough most mornings. He sat in the same place, at the counter near the placemats. "I wasn't sure what he was like at first. Honestly, he seemed grumpy; I am not going to lie," Figueroa says, laughing. "But he turned out to be the sweetest person."

Diner manager Carole Fairbrother says McCullough befriended the staff. "He broke me out of my shell, too," she adds. "It got to the point that when I wasn't working, I would go to work to hang out with Brian. We would walk around town, stopping first at his favorite place, the Discovery Center. Then we walked down the street towards the Cree-mee, and back to the diner."

"I learned about his life as a singer. We sat outside on a bench, taking in the sun and just enjoying life."

As summer rolled into fall, McCullough had made the Shady Glen, its staff, and its customers part of his daily routine. "He was basically adopted by the waitresses at the diner," says Bodin.

Everyone got each other's phone numbers. "If he wasn't coming in, he would let us know," Fairbrother says. "And if we hadn't shown up, he would call and say, 'Hey, where is everybody?'"

According to Figueroa, he never missed a morning: "Brian was here by 6:50 a.m. We open at 7 a.m., and most days he sat inside or outside, sometimes for hours."

"We would talk, laugh, tell jokes, sing along to songs on the radio," adds Fairbrother. "Sometimes we would lose track of time, and before we knew it, it was time to close!"

McCullough had fallen in love with Turners Falls, and had found a new home away from home.

Sometimes, his diagnosis seemed like an afterthought. "Did I know he was sick?" Figueroa asks herself out loud to this reporter. "Yes... Did I want to believe it? No. Because he seemed like he was doing well."

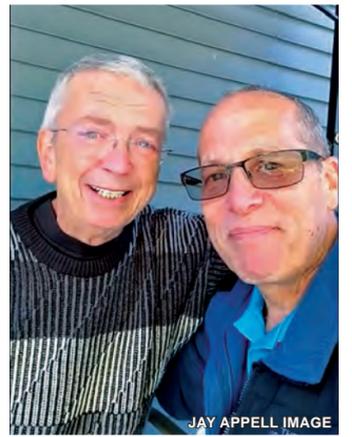
**Life is But a Stage**

When McCullough could no longer drive himself to the diner, his fellow customers chipped in to help. Judi Jackman, who says she has been going to the Glen for as long as she can remember, often picked him up and drove him home. She offered other small gestures, too, like making sure he had a small table to put his coffee on when he sat outside.

"He was a kind person. He didn't seem sick," Jackman notes.

Albert Cummings, another regular, sometimes provided backup transportation when Jackman wasn't available. "Brian was nice, and very funny – I never realized he was so sick," remarks Cummings.

November 2, McCullough's 70th birthday, was a special day at the Shady Glen. Jackman made McCullough a chocolate cake with white frosting, sprinkles, and candles. "He liked chocolate – and color," she says.



JAY APPELL IMAGE

Readers can learn more about McCullough's life in a three-part YouTube series, "Brian McCullough: The Last Interview," recorded and produced last fall by his lifelong friend Jay Appell (above right).

Appell describes the interviews, which can be found by searching for the series title, as "masterclasses in reminiscing, moving from reflections on our long careers in radio and show business to a brave and intimate discussion on facing the end of life."

McCullough had also talked to Figueroa about his love of red velvet cake with cream-cheese frosting. "So the next day, Carole and I made Brian a red velvet cake with cream-cheese frosting," Figueroa remembers. "He loved it, and shared cake with people in the diner."

The Shady Glen became a stage of sorts, with McCullough and his supporters as cast and crew. Once in a while other tribute artists made pilgrimages to the diner. "An Elvis came once," recalls Milkey.

In his final months, McCullough also entertained friends, family, and colleagues at Bodin's Montague home. "A Kenny Rogers impersonator flew in," says Bodin, "[and] Megan and Eric, who perform as June Carter Cash and Johnny Cash; a Frank Sinatra; and an Elvis or two ..."

Three weeks later, Bodin would get the call from Figueroa. McCullough was sitting in a booth, nodding off, and seemed confused and uncomfortable. The staff were concerned. Bodin learned later that when a patient on opioid pain medication begins to experience organ failure, their body becomes less able to process the "toxicity" of the medication, and it begins to damage the brain. "Brian had started to lose touch with reality," she explains.

McCullough would spend his final days at home surrounded by family and Bodin's eight-year-old Labrador retriever, Marty. He died on December 2.

"He was a good man," Figueroa says. "He lifted everybody up."

"He was the nicest person to have in your life," Fairbrother reflects. "In his last months, Brian was taking life moment by moment, and enjoying it." 

A memorial service for Brian McCullough will be held this Saturday, February 21, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Florence VFW.

The significance of the date, according to Bodin, is that both of McCullough's grandfathers and his great-grandfather died on February 21.

"Brian would have wanted to live until February 21," she says, "so we are getting together on this day to honor him." He will be interred across the street at the Park Street Cemetery.



TRINCHERO PHOTOS

Top to bottom: Glen regular Judi Jackman (left) and server Vicki Figueroa (right) were among the new friends who "basically adopted" Brian McCullough last year.

Line cook Ramon Nieves still knows McCullough's go-tos: "a couple of eggs, grilled toast, and home fries – or French toast with kielbasa."

McCullough would sometimes take his coffee outside.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

Matt Lord, referring to the “level-service” budgets the board had originally requested from all departments. “We’re not talking about adding new services – we’re talking about maintaining the ones we have.”

The board briefly discussed the Franklin County Technical School’s proposal to reduce its reimbursement to the town for the school resource officer (SRO) stationed at the school, and indications that the Gill-Montague regional district will be unable to restore funding for its SRO, who was recalled last year to full-time work in the department.

The board did not take a vote on the police budget on its own, but moved on to a discussion of the overall town budget, which needed their approval before going to the finance and capital improvements committees for review.

**Sent to the Experts**

Ramsey cited a number of challenges the town has faced in creating a balanced budget for the next year, including inflation in basic costs, a major spike in health insurance premiums, level-funded state aid, shrinking grant opportunities, and the impact of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement the town signed last year with the FirstLight Power Company, which reduces uncertainty but also lowers projected tax revenue.

He went on to say that since the board had met the previous week, the increase in the police budget and special articles, the lower SRO reimbursement, and a higher assessment from Franklin County Technical School – a 34% increase, due primarily to more Montague students attending the school – had exacerbated those challenges.

The proposed budget, Ramsey said, was balanced by a “controlled” reduction of Montague’s “excess capacity,” the amount of property taxes within the state-imposed limit the town chooses not to collect; an increased use of “free cash,” left-over funds the state certifies may roll over from previous years; and a “temporary pause” in contribution to various stabilization accounts.

**The proposed town budget would amount to an increase of 7% over the current fiscal year, and a projected tax increase of \$150 per year for the owner of an average single-family home.**

Ramsey said he and town accountant Angelica Desroches had also identified a number of “old special articles” that were approved for spending by town meeting, but never implemented. These funds, he said, can be “repurposed” to cover

over \$300,000 in capital purchases in the upcoming year.

All in all, he told the selectboard, this produces a town budget of \$31.9 million, which includes the main operating budget, the municipal airport and Clean Water Facility budgets, and assessments from the two school districts.

This would amount to an increase of 7% over the current fiscal year, and a projected annual tax increase of \$150 for the owner of an average single-family home.

Lord suggested that both police cruisers, rather than just the second, should be proposed at town meeting using special articles, and funded by free cash. This would reduce the use of excess capacity, he argued, as well as the town’s assessment from the Gill-Montague district, which in turn has an impact on Gill’s assessment.

Selectboard member Rich Kuklewicz suggested the town could consider leasing the cruisers.

“[Let’s] put it to the finance committee,” Ramsey said, “and see what they think, because they’re actually kind of the experts.”

The board approved a motion to send the preliminary budget, as presented, on to the finance committee for “review and recommendation,” with the first replacement police cruiser kept within the operating budget but paid for with free cash.

The annual town meeting warrant, as well as motions containing recommendations and proposed funding sources, is scheduled to be finalized by the board on April 6.

**Landscape of Decline**

Ramsey announced that a “Rural and Declining Enrollment Schools Week of Action” is planned for March 9 through 13. He said the campaign is in support of a bill, introduced by Montague’s state senator Jo Comerford and former state representative Natalie Blais, that would increase rural school funding. The bill, he added, would also earmark money for consolidating school districts.

Ramsey said there are a “variety of ways” towns and school districts can participate, including issuing press releases, posting on social media, and “some type of public demonstration or public action.”

Lord said that there were “a bunch of bills out there” which he had not had time to study, and that he intended to talk to Comerford’s staff to “get a sense of the entire landscape.” He recommended delaying any decision until the board’s meeting on March 2, when it could decide “what we would want to endorse.”

**Bumps and Bridges**

The selectboard approved an amendment to the town’s contract with the Bowman Construction Group, which is revising designs for a traffic-calming project in Montague Center. The change, which was recommended by residents of

the village during a public hearing last month, would move one of two raised street crossings from in front of the post office on Main Street further northwest, near the intersection of Main and Center streets.

The amendment adds \$12,250 to the design cost of the project but, according to assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller, this can be financed within its contingency fund.

Nolan-Zeller announced that the state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) will hold an online hearing next Tuesday, February 24 at 7 p.m. concerning the replacement of a bridge on North Leverett Road near Montague Center which has been closed to two-way traffic. The link to pre-register, which MassDOT requires, can be found on the town website under “Latest News.”

“Yahoo,” said Lord, who lives in the area.

**Selectboard member Rich Kuklewicz suggested the town could consider leasing the cruisers.**

**Other Business**

On the cultural front, RiverCulture director and assistant town planner Suzanne LoManto requested the board’s “permission” for the fourth annual Northeast Annual Unity Car Show, which primarily takes place on First Street in Turners Falls next to Unity Park. She said that last year the show featured over 300 “gorgeous custom and vintage cars.”

LoManto said the show’s organizers are in “a kind of chicken-and-egg situation,” as they cannot file for permits until they have advertised for the show and have an estimate of the potential number of participants. The car owners, she explained, often want to make decisions well in advance, as some go to a show every week.

She noted that she and the sponsors would still need to request permits from the town and from FirstLight Power, on whose property many of the cars would park.

The board approved a motion reserving “Unity Park and the surrounding area” for the car show on Sunday, September 20.

Nolan-Zeller revealed that the Massachusetts Municipal Association, which represents the state’s cities and towns on Beacon Hill, is considering having one of its regional meetings in Montague. He said the Shea Theater has agreed to allow the association to use its facility on Avenue A in Turners Falls on the morning of Friday, March 20.

The selectboard’s next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 23.



**TOWN OF LEVERETT HEARING NOTICE – PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES**

A public hearing will be held in person and remotely on **Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 7:00 pm during the Planning Board meeting** to discuss proposed changes to the “Zoning By-Laws”. Public access is available by using the link for the meeting posted on [leverett.ma.us](http://leverett.ma.us).

Changes proposed are in relation to:

- SECTION 3900 Site Plan Review
- SECTION 2200 Use Regulations
- SECTION 2240 Accessory Buildings and Uses
- SECTION 2340 Dimensional Schedule
- SECTION 2400 Accessory Apartments
- SECTION 3120 Schedule of Parking Area Requirements
- SECTION 4400 Flood Hazard District
- SECTION 4500 Stream and Lake Protection District
- SECTION 4970 Ground Mounted Solar Electric
- ARTICLE VI - DEFINITIONS

Complete text of the proposed changes can be found in the Town Clerk’s office or at [www.tinyurl.com/levzone](http://www.tinyurl.com/levzone).

**MONTAGUE PLANNING BOARD PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS: NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A and the Montague Zoning Bylaw, the **Montague Planning Board** will hold a public hearing at **6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 in the Town Hall Annex, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and via Zoom**, to consider and hear public comment on the following proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaw:

- (1) to consider amending Section 5.4 Accessory Uses by replacing Accessory Apartments with Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs); (2) to consider rescinding Section 8.5 Accessory Apartments and replacing it with a new Section 8.5 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) that includes provisions for a local ADU, and for the protected use ADU which are permitted by right in accordance with the Affordable Homes Act; (3) to consider amending Section 9.1.2(e) to remove Accessory Apartments within existing single family homes per §8.5, as a specific use subject to site plan review.

Meeting login instruction and the complete text of these zoning amendments are available for review at [www.montague-ma.gov/calendar](http://www.montague-ma.gov/calendar) or via email from Maureen Pollock, Planning Director: [mpollock@montague-ma.gov](mailto:mpollock@montague-ma.gov).

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**Project Description:** MONTAGUE – Bridge Replacement, M-28-034, North Leverett Road over Sawmill River  
**Project File No. 612164**

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed project in Montague, MA.

**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The proposed project consists of replacing the existing structurally deficient bridge carrying North Leverett Road over the Sawmill River. The project involves Bridge No. M-28-034. Proposed work includes full replacement of the bridge superstructure and substructure, reconstruction of roadway approaches, drainage improvements, and installation of safety features consistent with current MassDOT standards. Traffic will be maintained during construction through staged construction and temporary traffic control measures.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The town is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT’s policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to [MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us) or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 612164. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or post-marked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g. interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices, and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email ([MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us)). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult-to-arrange services including sign language, CART, or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This hearing will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at [www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events](http://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events).

**JONATHAN GULLIVER**  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

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**WENDELL** from page A1

was taking the initiative to keep the memory current.

Heard then joined Brian Kendall, administrator of the townwide Wendell Townsfolk email listserv, with a request to allow the listserv to use the town website as its domain, and give it a place on the town website.

The listserv has recently had glitches, and Kendall said he was not happy with its internet service provider, and that putting it under the town domain would make changing providers simpler for the administrator. Kendall said the emails use a fairly low volume of data, and do not need any local storage. He added that the Wendell Country Store sponsors the listserv.

Selectboard member Adam Feltman said he was hesitant, with the thought that the town should not be sponsoring a private entity, but that it was "not a mountain" he wanted to "die on."

He did not protest when chair Laurie DiDonato and member Paul Doud both said they felt that if moving the listserv to the town web domain does not cost the town money and could make the listserv more stable, it would be comparable to Good Neighbors using the town hall, and could be tried for a limited time.

The board agreed to re-examine the situation in a year.

**Healthcare, Energy Hikes**

Town treasurer Carolyn Manley reported that the state Health Insurance Advisory Board plans to meet on February 25 to discuss FY'27 pricing and options. She said the insurance Wendell currently offers its

employees now has a zero deductible, and zero copay, and costs the town \$80,544.

One option now available to the town would see a 16% increase in public cost, to \$93,431, with some plans having \$500 personal and \$1,000 family deductibles, a \$65 copay, and up to \$250 cost for an emergency room visit.

A 20% increase in Wendell's cost, to \$98,351, may allow employees to maintain zero-deductible and zero-copay plans. Feltman said that if possible, he would prefer keeping benefits as they are.

Since not all the necessary information was available, the board did not make a decision.

Town coordinator Kelly Tyler reported that Wendell's three-year contract for aggregating homeowner electricity costs is experiencing a bump in prices, from \$0.1295 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to \$0.1411/kWh, still less than National Grid's price.

"We have to put the word out," she said.

**Special Town Meeting**

The selectboard confirmed 7 p.m. on Monday, March 9 as the date and time for a special town meeting. The draft warrant has four articles that would use the town's free cash to pay expenses, and one that would put the remainder of free cash - \$269,854, if all four are approved - into stabilization.

Article 1 would use \$159 to pay building expenses, and Article 2 would use \$3,231 to pay the Leverett police department for animal control services, an item overlooked

in the shared policing agreement between the towns.

Article 3 would add \$2,491 to the town clerk's salary to pay for work added to her position, and Article 4 would add \$8,734 to the town coordinator's salary, bringing it up to the amount on the contract she signed, which was reduced last year when citizens voted against an override budget.

Article 5 would accept an amendment to MGL Chapter 200A, Section 9A, adopting new notice requirements and an alternate procedure for managing abandoned funds, such as unclaimed checks or tailings.

The finished warrant must be posted by Monday, February 23, and had to be given to the clerk a week before that so she would have time to post it to the town website.

**Other Business**

As the meeting was scheduled to begin, selectboard members tried unsuccessfully to get the town's Owl device, which permits hybrid meetings, to work. Eventually a Zoom connection worked, and Tyler used her computer so that recording secretary Cynthia Bolling, who typically attends the meetings remotely, could watch and listen.

Board members approved an updated agreement between the town and Good Neighbors and returned it to the organization for review, noting that 40 years of cooperation without incident makes action not terribly urgent.

The board approved an annual business license request for Mormon Hollow Auto, as well as a sustainable purchase policy for the town, with members commenting that most Wendell purchases are already made with sustainability in mind.

They approved town librarian Miriam Warner's authority to oversee a contract for work at the library.

The board members wondered whether a \$2,000 bill to pay for MassMapper software was already in the assessors' budget, or whether it was already paid as part of the department's payments to Regional Resource Group (RRG), the town's outside assessing firm. They held off on approving that expense until they have more information.

They approved of an offer by the state Department of Conservation and Recreation to buy 13 acres of forested land off Old Farley Road, with the thought a public hearing might be needed.

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Applications for the scholarship are available on our website, [dollarsforwendellscholars.org](http://dollarsforwendellscholars.org). Hard copies are available at local high schools, at the Wendell Free Library, and through the contacts listed below. They must be returned to the email address below by April 15 or mailed to P.O. Box

232, Wendell, MA 01379.

Our twelfth annual fundraiser was initiated with a mailing to all Wendell residents in February. Donations are tax-deductible! Donations may be made to Dollars for Wendell Scholars, P.O. Box 232, Wendell, MA 01379 with checks payable to "Dollars for Wendell Scholars." Please help us support Wendell residents seeking post-secondary education!

For more information, contact Carolyn Manley at (978) 544-7028 or [dollarsforwendellscholars@gmail.com](mailto:dollarsforwendellscholars@gmail.com), or Christine Heard at (978) 544-2282 or [cheard59c@aol.com](mailto:cheard59c@aol.com).

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features@montaguereporter.org OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER FEBRUARY 19, 2026

Above: Tree, snow, Central Street.

# High School Sports: Grand Finale

By MATT ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – Both Turners Falls High School basketball teams wrapped up their 2025-26 season with victories. The boys opened up a huge lead in the second quarter against Saint Mary and let their JV players finish the job. For the very-much-improved girls’ team, it was not only their second win of the season but also their second in a row, giving hope to their true Blue supporters.

For Franklin Tech’s basketball teams, their seasons are not over. They will be back on the court facing other vocational schools.

## Girls’ Basketball

TFHS 31 – Westfield Tech 23

Last Thursday, February 12, the Turners girls beat the Purple Tigers of Westfield Tech off a strong fourth quarter, in the White Thunder’s second straight victory.

With center Jojo Hayman riding the bench with an ankle injury, Turners had to field three guards and two forwards. This forced the ladies to shoot from the outside. Autumn DiMare complied with a three-point bomb to open up the scoring.

Turners ran a great defense throughout the game, causing turnovers and forcing jumps. On the other end, they took their time before shooting, passing the ball around the horn several times before taking shots. This led to a relatively low-scoring first quarter. At the end of the period, with Turners leading 8-2, a foul was called on Autumn Thornton. Purple hit both freebees, and it was an 8-4 game going into the second.

The second period featured jump balls – lots and lots of jump balls. It seemed that every time a girl stopped dribbling, opposing players would swarm her, drawing

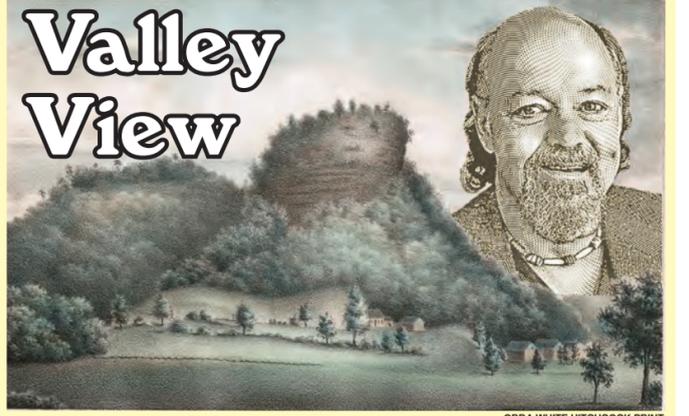
the jump call. “That’s the most jump balls I’ve ever called in a game,” one of the refs said at halftime.

Going into the third with Turners ahead 14-12, DiMare and Thornton hit baskets sandwiched around see **SPORTS** page B8



Turners Falls’s Kainen Stevens (right) goes up for a shot in the paint with St. Mary’s Brody Dominik rushing into defend as the Thunder hosted the Saints last Thursday.

# Valley View



ORRA WHITE HITCHCOCK PRINT

# The Salmon Believers

By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – As local trout streams eagerly await the rush and roar of spring and emit gurgling winter whispers through icy cracks and crevices, it’s time to revisit a topic I’ve addressed often over five decades of outdoor writing. Call it an evolving discussion about Connecticut Valley’s historic and prehistoric anadromous fisheries, with occasional diversions into the neighboring Merrimack Valley.

The impetus is an article in the most recent *New Hampshire Archeologist*, co-authored by my South Deerfield friend Peter Thomas and his Amherst research partner Stuart Fiedel. The two respected, retired, Ph.D. archeologists share careers of rich field experience. Their 30-page piece, “Casting Our Nets Wide: Exploring Native Fisheries in Interior Southern New England,” is the condensed Reader’s Digest version of a comprehensive, 429-page online book on which they collaborated: *Fishing and Hunting at the Falls: New Perspectives on Connecticut River Valley Archaeology and Ethnology*.

The book awards a third author credit to well-known Northampton avocational archaeologist David “Bud” Driver, who offered enthusiastic assistance, encouragement, and access to private collections along the long, winding road of inquiry.

This in-depth scholarly undertaking began years ago with informal conversations about the dynamics of the annual spring spawning runs of American shad and Atlantic salmon, as well as the accompanying herring, alewife, sturgeon and lamprey eels. Their probe then explored the importance of these migratory fish to indigenous and colonial inhabitants.

Last year I reported that the book was underway and promised to share it upon completion. So, true to my word, here it is, fresh off the press, so to say. It first came to light online in November

at [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net), and it can still be read there, as well as at [www.peterthomashistory.com](http://www.peterthomashistory.com). Driver promises to have a copy privately printed between two covers for his personal library.

Though unstated, this new work is a necessary addendum to West Coast anthropologist Catherine Carroll Carlson’s 1992 UMass Amherst doctoral dissertation, *The Atlantic Salmon in New England History and Prehistory: Social and Environmental Implications*. Viewed at the time as a groundbreaking study by an aspiring archaeologist from the opposite side of the continent, her thesis sounded the death knell for a struggling Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Restoration Project by identifying a curious absence of salmon remains in New England’s archaeological record.

Carlson concluded that this lack of salmon remains proved that New England salmon migration had been insignificant, and could not have approached the great numbers ballyhooed in fishing lore. All the fanciful tales of abundant New England salmon runs, she surmised, were grossly exaggerated – even intentionally so – by 17th- and 18th-century colonial leaders attempting to increase the flow of European emigrants to the New World. In her scholarly opinion, it was a clever ruse in a new world where salmon presence was, in fact, nothing to write home about.

Thomas and Fiedel propose that advanced technology might be able to get new answers from the acidic riverside New England soils in which preservation of fish remains and perishable fishing tackle is poor. Though they don’t mention Carlson, they obviously differ with her assessment of historic and prehistoric salmon runs.

Their opinion rises from a nuanced look at the deceptively sparse archaeological salmon record, including a careful review of thin documentary evidence by such chroniclers as 18th-century diarist Matthew Patten (1719-1795) of see **VALLEY VIEW** page B2

# MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

Interview by J. BURKETT and TROY CURRY

**TURNERS FALLS** – This week we have another very special interview. Gary Higgins, a guitarist and songwriter, is known around here for his amazing concerts at places like the Shea Theater, the Brick House, the Montague Book Mill, and the Root Cellar.

He is also very well-known for recording a legendary record, *Red Hash*, in Connecticut in 1972. Many interesting details of that can be found online,



#87:

CC PHOTO BY SETH TISUE

# Gary Higgins

but we will add that it really holds up these days, blasting beyond the “psych-folk-rock” genre to a unique place in history, and is worth listening to for fans of all kinds of music.

Gary often plays with his son now, who is a good musician as well, and recently started releasing some new songs, the first of which is called “Windy and Warm.” We hope he will release another LP soon!

**MMM:** Hi Mr. Gary! Did you grow up in Connecticut? If so, did you enjoy it?

**GH:** Yes, I grew up in Northwestern Connecticut, Salisbury and Lime Rock. Lime Rock is actually just another part of Salisbury. It was a great area to grow up in. Several nearby families with similar-aged children. Beautiful country geography. Sort of a Norman Rockwell-like area really. I enjoyed my childhood greatly! Many fond memories.

**MMM:** What were your favorite guitars growing up?

**GH:** I started playing a real guitar around 14 or 15. I did have a plastic/nylon string toy guitar (Roy Rogers?) around 9 or so, which I really liked. It was the reason I wanted a real one years later.

I finally got a real one from a pawn store. It was a Kay, my pride and joy for a while. It was not so great for tone or action! Killed my fingers. However, I learned a lot with it.

Later on I got a really nice Epiphone Frontier model, see **MUSIK** page B4

# Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

## 'BABU'

Meet sweet Babu! Babu is a six-month-old Holland Lop, an easy-going guy who enjoys roaming free and interacting with his people. He loves exploring his surroundings, and will approach you for gentle head pats.

Babu enjoys a variety of greens and other veggies and is nearly 100% litterbox-trained. He would do best without any other male bunnies; however, he may do well with a spayed female with slow introductions. It takes patience to let rabbits become friends.

Rabbits typically live eight to 10

years. Most housing sold at pet stores is too small for small pets. Minimum housing requirements for enclosed spaces is 10 square feet. Check the Dakin Humane Society thrift shop for available housing options.

Babu's adoption fee is \$75 and includes a vet exam and neutering. If you're ready to adopt and want to learn more about Babu, you can start the process by coming to Dakin in Springfield during our open adoption hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m., or calling us at (413) 781-4000, or visiting [www.dakinhumane.org](http://www.dakinhumane.org).

**VALLEY VIEW** from page B1  
Bedford, New Hampshire. Patten painted the picture of a viable Merrimack River salmon run during the second half of the 18th century, and Thomas and Fiedel believe this would have been analogous to what was contemporaneously occurring at Connecticut River falls in Enfield, Connecticut; Holyoke and Montague, Massachusetts; and Vernon and Bellows Falls, Vermont.

Precolonial- and colonial-era salmon runs, they say, were consistent, plentiful, and highly valued by those who harvested them with nets, traps, spears, and arrows. So, put that in your Catline pipe and smoke it.

Thomas, who crossed archaeological paths with Carlson back in the day, has a leg up on her regarding the local scene, having led archaeological excavations and produced site reports at Riverside/Gill and the so-called Sokoki Fort near the site of Vermont's Vernon Dam. Carlson had no hands-on digging experience at any of the 75 Northeastern indigenous sites on which she based her study, arriving at her conclusions by analyzing the work of others.

Based on his own Gill and Sokoki Fort excavations, private artifact collections, archaeological discoveries made by others at Merrimack River sites, and a sparse but revealing historical record, Thomas concludes that salmon runs were significant enough to attract annual, organized, sophisticated fish-gathering operations. Yes, shad was the annual staple, but salmon were a sought-after delicacy, whether taken coincidentally in spring shad seines or speared in their fall spawning lairs on small, cold, clear, gravel-bedded tributaries.

Thomas and Fiedel put a welcome new twist on our understanding of the multi-seasonal, multi-component fishing camps maintained around waterfalls, which offered the best opportunities for plentiful harvests in clogged settling pools and highly effective manmade weirs and traps. They believe that the artifact assemblages, midden contents, and fish and faunal remains prove that well-known

indigenous "fishing camps" hosted a mix of many three-season hunter-gatherer activities.

The new monograph presents far too much information – including photos and illustrations, maps, tables, and diagrams – to adequately summarize here. The authors needed 30 pages to whittle it down for the *Archeologist*. My suggestion is to visit Thomas's website and start by reading the 30-pager, noting special points of personal interest that are expanded upon in *Fishing and Hunting at the Falls*.

Though it may take time to get comfortable with archaeological lingo, your diligence will be rewarded with cutting-edge histori-

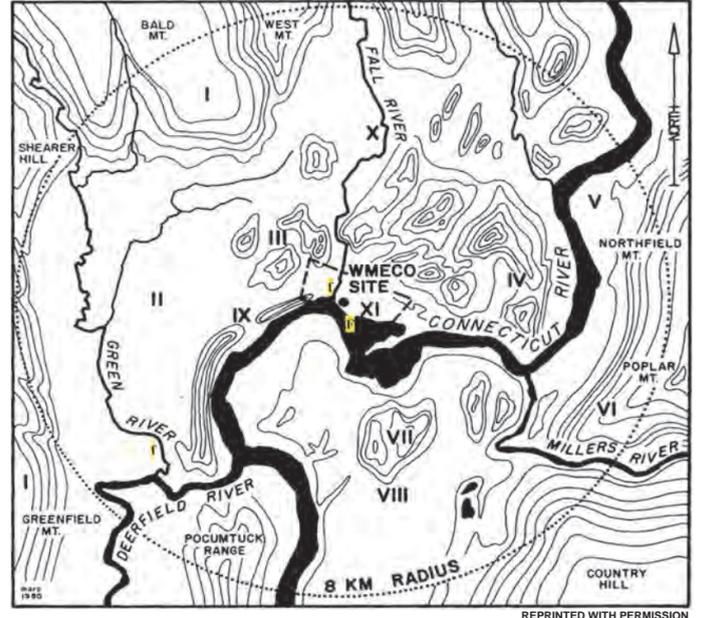
cal scholarship about anadromous fisheries, not to mention the vexing Atlantic salmon question.

This new look at our inland anadromous fisheries, and what they meant to indigenous people before us, is sure to be acknowledged as *the* definitive work on the fascinating topic.

The way I look at it, Carlson got the ball rolling, and Thomas and Fiedel booted it into the back of the net.

The final word? Unlikely. New questions always arise.

Gary Sanderson lives in Greenfield. Comments and questions welcome at [gary@oldtavernfarm.com](mailto:gary@oldtavernfarm.com).



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The New Hampshire Archeologist article and the sprawling, 429-page *Fishing and Hunting at the Falls* both reprint this figure, first published in Peter Thomas's 1980 article *The Riverside District, the WMECO Site, and Suggestions for Archaeological Modeling*. It maps "major physiographic and environmental zones" within an 8-kilometer radius of the Riverside fishing spot. Yellow tags mark the "focal area for fishing," plus two "secondary fishing sites."

"To reiterate," Thomas and Fiedel write, "fishing was a prime activity at the Falls, while other sites nearby provided additional opportunities. Fish vertebrae and skull bones, including shad, were recovered from eight cultural features at WMECO. The map presents a rough picture of what individuals or task groups living at the Falls might have been able to find within a day's time if they chose to collect and hunt plants or animals in the surrounding area. The faunal remains from WMECO attest to some of the species that were hunted or snared in forest and wetland zones: bear, moose, deer, chipmunk, muskrat, beaver, turtle, water snake and bird."

## TV REVIEW

# Star Trek: Starfleet Academy (Paramount+)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy* premiered on January 15, 2016, the 60th anniversary of the original *Star Trek*'s first airing. The premiere ended up being two episodes on the same day.

In this show, *Starfleet Academy* turns out to take place on a real-life starship. This show has some very interesting characters. One is Captain Nahla Ake, played by Holly Hunter, who is in charge of the Academy.

We learn that Ake used to be a judge. An arrest took place, which involved a man named Nus Braka (played by Paul Giamatti), and a mother and son, Anisha and Caleb Mir, who this doesn't turn out well for. The best help Ake can give is a prison camp with visitation rights. Caleb quickly goes on the run, and the Captain ends up regretting her call so much that she quits *Starfleet*.

Years later, she is given a chance to run *Starfleet Academy*. She finds Caleb, and tries to make amends



Klingon named Kraag, and someone called Genesis Lythe is also friendly toward him.

You might be very surprised at what comes together with these people, especially with Caleb, who doesn't easily trust anyone. Nus Braka comes back on the scene and causes trouble. I really like how some of these individuals interact with each other. One could call it the beginning of new friendships, which I really like since this world has become one where people aren't exactly friends with everyone.

The hologram doctor from *Star Trek: Voyager*, played by Robert Picardo, is also at the Academy, and he has become halfway decent with people by this point, which is ironic considering how bad his character was with people when *Voyager* began. He still loves opera, and at the Academy he has his own opera club.

I want to see more episodes of this show for further interactions of these unique new characters. It will probably not be a boring show.

### Senior Center Activities

**FEBRUARY 23 THROUGH 27**

**ERVING**  
Open Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1 Care Drive. Daily snacks and coffee. Fitness room and pool table open.  
**Monday 2/23**  
9 a.m. Good for U  
10 a.m. Seated Fitness  
12 p.m. Pitch Game  
1 p.m. Yoga  
**Tuesday 2/24**  
9 a.m. Stretch & Balance  
10 a.m. Line Dancing  
11 a.m. Social Stringer  
**Wednesday 2/25**  
9 a.m. Interval Training  
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
11:30 a.m. Bingo  
**Thursday 2/26**  
9 a.m. Barre Fusion  
10 a.m. Pilates Flow  
**Friday 2/27**  
8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting and Open Sew

**GILL and MONTAGUE**  
The Gill-Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, please call 863-9357.  
**Monday 2/23**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
3 p.m. Beginner Yoga  
**Tuesday 2/24**  
9 a.m. Chair Yoga

12:30 p.m. Tech Tuesday  
3 p.m. Tai Chi  
4 p.m. Spanish Class  
**Wednesday 2/25**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo  
4 p.m. Mat Yoga  
**Thursday 2/26**  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday 2/27**  
8 a.m. Tax Return Preparation by Appointment  
*All classes cancelled today.*

**LEVERETT**  
Chair Yoga classes are held Wednesdays at 10 a.m., hybrid, at the town hall and on Zoom. Foot care clinics are the third Tuesday of each month. The next clinic is March 17.  
Luncheons are the fourth Friday at town hall. For more information, contact (413) 548-1022 or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us), or check the town newsletter or the Leverett-Connects listserv.

**WENDELL**  
Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. The next clinic is March 4. Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for information or appointments. For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

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# LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on February 18, 2016: News from the Montague Reporter archive.

## Propane Train Derails

The derailment of several freight cars containing liquefied petroleum gas between the Connecticut River and Greenfield Road about 1:50 p.m. Monday has raised concerns about hazardous materials and the protocols for dealing with such accidents.

Eight cars on a 41-car train were involved; two of the tank cars were empty, and all were eventually pulled back onto the tracks, with no evidence of gas leakage.

## Selectboard Meeting Derails

Tuesday night's Erving selectboard meeting had already dragged on for nearly three hours when all hell broke loose.

Forced to appoint only one of his fellow selectboard members onto the screening committee that will narrow a range of candidates for the town administrator position down to three finalists, chair Bill Bembury announced he had chosen Jacob Smith. This set the snubbed

Art Johnson off on an angry, shouting tirade.

"That's how you cut me out of the last one!" Johnson began. Over the next 30 minutes, he argued that he should have been appointed given his seniority on the board, alleged Smith was "tucked under the wing" of Bembury, referred to the chair as the "king of Erving," described the board as "broken," insisted that he had a mandate from town voters to supervise each step of the hiring process, and threatened to attend the committee's executive session interviews.

Much of the dispute revolved around last winter's process of hiring an interim senior/community center director. Johnson's feeling was that a family member had been qualified for that position.

"There was zero respect then," he said. "Think about the common courtesy in the town – you have a newly elected selectman; his wife applies for the job, and she doesn't even get an interview?"

"That sounds like you're looking for preferential treatment," Smith replied.

"You can say it any way," answered Johnson. "I call it respect."

# 20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on February 16, 2006: News from the Montague Reporter archive.

## So It Begins

The town of Montague is considering a new home for the Carnegie library, the Gill-Montague senior center, and the Montague parks and recreation department – all under one roof. The one site under consideration is the paved area to the southeast of town hall.

Discussion about the police station sharing a safety complex with the Turners Falls fire department

at the intersection of Turnpike and Turners Falls Road is ongoing.

## Like Bears at a Bird Feeder

The gods of cocoa smiled down on the Gill Store, providing a perfect day for a chocolate tasting on Saturday. Cashier Elizabeth Worthington played a cha-ching cha-ching melody, ringing up purchases by rabid chocoholics who stood, shameless, with chocolate-ringed lips and a glazed look in their eyes.

The vast majority appeared to be bona fide card-carrying members of Chocoholics Unanimous.

# 140 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on February 17, 1886: News from the Turners Falls Reporter archive.

## Turners Falls and Vicinity

George W. Carey finished filling his large ice house with excellent quality of ice just before the late thaw.

Mrs. N.B. Hall has moved her dressmaking and stamping rooms to Thomas's block, on K street.

Some nice cattle were shipped from Greenfield last Monday. One pair purchased by C.W. Smead of Mr. Rowe of Montague, weighed 4420, and were as fine a pair as has been brought into Greenfield this year.

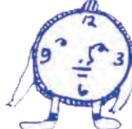
A Troy, N.Y. firm wants to start a shirt factory in Rutland, Vt., provided the citizens will give the rent of a factory for five years. The work would require 300 women hands, with a pay-roll of \$15,000

a month. That is the kind of a concern that ought to be encouraged to come to Turners Falls.

L.J. Marsters, who has recently kept the livery and boarding stable in Chet. Davis' barn, died this morning, of consumption. He came to town many years ago, and was a well-known and worthy citizen.

We heard some good news today. We heard a manufacturer say he would move to the village the first of May. He will have a hearty, whole-souled welcome, and two brass bands will hardly be sufficient to do honor to the occasion. Is a different day beginning to dawn?

The man who will stick a knife into a man in the dark is not so cowardly as the wretch who will deliver liquor to a young boy until he is made drunk, and it is done in Turners Falls every day, and if such kind of people are going to dictate the policy of the town, it is about time for the public to object.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

# Eviction in Millers; Dog Bite on Taylor Hill; Clicking Noise; Four Unregistered Vehicles Caught; Gun Shot; Laser Pointed

### Monday, 2/9

10:37 a.m. Department supervisor for supportive housing agency requesting a police presence on East Main Street while they serve a tenant with eviction papers and issue a trespass order to a male party staying with her. Officer stayed in area, but was not needed. No incidents.

3:52 p.m. Walk-in states she had called earlier today to report a hit-and-run accident, and no officer came. There was more damage than she thought, so she came to report it again. Report taken.

7:31 p.m. Officer attempting to serve a warrant on Park Street. Officers spoke with a party who stated that the male they are looking for moved out around July 2025.

### Tuesday, 2/10

2:32 a.m. Residential burglar alarm on Wentworth Avenue. While obtaining additional info, alarm company advised that they received a notice to cancel. Units advised.

8:08 a.m. Burglar alarm at Crestview Liquor called in by alarm company. Rear entry motion. Accidental/defective alarm.

5:27 p.m. Motor vehicle stop near the Shea Theater. Verbal warning for speed.

### Wednesday, 2/11

8:02 a.m. Party into station to fill out a permit. Left for chief.

9:45 a.m. Shelburne Control called to report that they took a 911 misdial from someone at Lightlife Foods who stated it was a pocket dial; no need for emergency services.

12:35 p.m. Turners Falls Fire Department requesting PD respond to East Main Street to assist with a male party. Male party is calmed down, and will cooperate with EMS.

3:28 p.m. Officer out with two parties on Montague Street; they will be coming in to the station to fill out the forms they need in order to solicit.

3:42 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Bridge Street. Verbal warning for speed.

3:52 p.m. Caller from Taylor Hill Road states she was bitten by a dog and wanted to know what she should do. ACO contacted; will follow up.

4 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road. Citation issued.

4:55 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Montague City Road. Citation issued.

5:04 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on L Street. Verbal warning for stop sign violation.

5:48 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Montague City Road. Verbal warning for speed.

7:53 p.m. 911 caller from Old Northfield Road states

he was going to a call in Lake Pleasant when he slid off the road and hit a tree. Caller reports the airbag was deployed, but the vehicle is driveable. Officer reports that vehicle owner is going to try to drive it home. A friend will follow him to make sure he makes it home safely.

### Thursday, 2/12

3:50 p.m. 911 hangup call from Turnpike Road. Confirmed misdial.

4:04 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Millers Falls Road. Officer requesting tow for vehicle. Criminal application issued for unregistered motor vehicle, uninsured motor vehicle, and operating after suspension/revocation.

8:57 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on First Street. Tow requested. Male party picked up by a friend.

Criminal application issued for unregistered motor vehicle, uninsured motor vehicle, and operation after suspension/revocation.

### Friday, 2/13

1:35 a.m. Received faxed warrant from probation for violation of curfew. Sergeant advised.

5:11 a.m. Motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road. Verbal warning for stop sign violation.

5:57 a.m. Vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road. Verbal warning for speed.

7:54 a.m. Alarm company reporting alarm sounding in main entrance/reception area at 253 Pharmacy. Employees on scene; false alarm.

10:38 a.m. Caller from Turnpike Road states that a man in a blue hatchback pulled into the driveway and went on the porch for an unknown reason. Caller saw this occur on a security camera. No vehicles in area upon officers' arrival; property checked; no issues.

2:30 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road. Verbal warning for stop sign violation.

3:49 p.m. Motor vehicle

stop on O Street. Citation issued.

4:26 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Montague City Road. Tow requested. Operator is walking home. Criminal complaint issued for operating after suspension of license and speed greater than reasonable.

5:41 p.m. 911 abandoned call from Hillside Plastics. Upon callback, female stated she was trying to pick something up, and the line disconnected. No history with the number in house.

5:56 p.m. Caller states that he just picked up his mom on Prospect Street and vehicles are parked in the driveway next door; the house is abandoned, and nobody should be there. Officers verified with other neighbors that a company has been at the property doing some work.

6:31 p.m. 911 caller believes a fairly large dog is injured and in the road on Turnpike Road; would like an officer to respond. Neighbor states that the dog belongs to a nearby residence and that the dog is OK. Owner located and spoken to. The dog is fine, not injured, and his name is Hank.

8:19 p.m. 911 call; keys locked in a box truck; caller needs help getting them. Unable to gain access. Caller notified.

8:46 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road. Verbal warning for inspection sticker.

8:50 p.m. Caller from Meadow Road advises they are not towing in the area tonight and a vehicle has been left in the area; will have to try again tomorrow. Vehicle is off the road; will be fine for the night.

### Saturday, 2/14

12:13 a.m. Caller from Avenue A reports she is hearing a buzzing and clicking noise near one of her outlets. No smoke or fire at this time. Shelburne Control advised.

3:31 a.m. Commercial burglar alarm at Franklin

County Technical School, in the music room zone. No contact with keyholder at this time. Officer advises gate to location secure; nobody appears to be in the area.

8:20 a.m. Caller states that there is a car off Millers Falls Road near the airport with some tire damage. Officer requesting tow. Vehicle being towed to Town Fair Tire in Greenfield.

10:04 a.m. Caller from Walnut Street states that a male party with a black hooded jacket and tan pants pulled on the screen door at the front of the caller's house, then heard dogs barking and took off on foot towards the golf course. Officer spoke with caller and checked area; no one in area matching description.

1:52 p.m. Motor vehicle stop at L and Second streets. Verbal warning for speed.

5:06 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Avenue A. Citation issued.

6:01 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on Millers Falls Road. Citation issued.

6:34 p.m. Motor vehicle stop on First Street. Tow requested. Criminal application issued for unregistered motor vehicle, uninsured motor vehicle, and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended registration.

7:54 p.m. Caller from Greenfield Road states a truck pulled into his driveway and he heard what he thought was a gunshot. They ate dinner, then went outside to check and found a 9 mm round. Caller picked it up, and put it back on the ground. Officer spoke to neighbors who did not see or hear anything; saw a Ring camera on a nearby house and would like to see if that caught anything.

10:27 p.m. Caller states that someone was shining a laser pointer at him while he was driving; has it recorded on a dash cam in the area of K Street. Referred to an officer.

## Montague Community Television News

# Taste the Voices

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** – There are many different kinds of voices in our villages, though most of the ones on MCTV at the moment are from elected and selected officials.

We have the most recent recordings from the Montague selectboard, the Gill selectboard, and the GMRSD school committee – including the big GMRSD budget presentation. And then there is the program called "Voices in the Village," where you can get a taste of something different.

If you want to share your voice with

the village, please reach out to MCTV! We are always looking for new voices to broadcast on our village-wide channel. You can find MCTV by tuning into Channel 9 on local cable, or watching any of our recordings on our Vimeo page linked from our website [MontagueTV.org](http://MontagueTV.org).

Feel free to come by the station at 34 Second Street in Turners Falls to talk with Dean or Deirdre, Mondays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can email us at [infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com) or even call us up at (413) 863-9200.

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

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MUSIK from page B1

and also briefly a Gibson Hummingbird and a J-200. I wish I still had them! I would be a rich man. They were not new then, so they probably dated back to the late '50s or very early '60s – pure gold in vintage years!

Eventually I got a Martin D-18S which was my favorite at that time, around age 22. That is the guitar in the Red Hash album. I sold it, sadly, in 1974 for way too little. In those days you figured you could easily replace any instrument, which of course turned out to be quite inaccurate. It was a slotted-head nylon string guitar originally that I put steel strings on. It had a spit on top, but had real soul. I would bet it's still out there somewhere.

MMM: You lived with Simeon [Coxe], of the Silver Apples, back in the day – what was he like back then? What was his art like?

GH: Simeon was a great guy. I met him at a local Jewish camp in our area where he was the art teacher. I worked there as a dishwasher.

I was exposed to lots of folk music there, and we used to play music after hours, with him and several other area people. We formed a jug band! Simeon played the jug, jew's harp, and spoons. He was older than us by some 10 years, and wiser to the ways of the world.

His art was, I guess, impressionistic? I'm not much of a visual art expert. It was different and bold. I believe I, or a family member, may still

have an original Simeon painting.

Simeon helped the Random Concept tremendously early on, when we were all still in our teens, and he was instrumental later on in the Random Concept saga. He became our lead singer and front man. He pushed us to go to NYC and make our stand. He helped us a lot, buying us amps and PA equipment which we paid off to him little by little.

We lived in the Hotel Albert, with the likes of John Sebastian and the Butterfield Blues Band, rubbing elbows often and sharing rehearsal space in the hotel basement. We were very young and wide-eyed. We had a suite there, which we all chipped in for, but it was still too much of an expense for our thin pockets.

When we decided to move back to Connecticut, Simeon was totally entrenched in NYC life and the potential music-based lifestyle, and the desire of Rock stardom. We parted ways then. He went on to form Silver Apples and the rest, as they say, is history.

It was at that point I became the Random Concept's drummer, giving up the bass to Dave Beaujon. We grew musically by leaps and bounds in the ensuing few years. It was a great time of musical growth.

MMM: What were some records that influenced you? Were there local bands that you liked back then? How about books?

GH: I was really influenced by Doc Watson, Bill Keith, the Kings-

ton Trio, Dave Van Ronk, Odetta, and other folk and bluegrass artists. My roots, really. I liked blues too, but not really as much. John Hammond yes!

There were not too many local area groups back then. My friend Eliot Osborn had a group that I always thought were fantastic. He still lives locally, and still plays out with his group, The Joint Chiefs. There was little competition back in the early- and mid-'60s. Now everybody has a band – a guitar in every home.

Honestly, books were not really my thing. I read, of course, but don't remember much about who or what.

MMM: What are some things you liked about Connecticut over the years? Have you always lived there?

GH: I have lived in Connecticut most of my life. As stated earlier, I lived in NYC briefly, and also Wisconsin and Venice, California for a bit, after getting out of prison. But I always ventured back here sooner or later.

I think mostly I like the country feel of this area. The comfort of familiar sights, faces, and places. I like the season changes and the space and views here. Very laid back. Suits me well.

MMM: We know you've talked about Red Hash a lot... Is there anything new you want to add at this point? Has all of the interest been a surprise, and happy-making?

GH: Red Hash! Well, yes, I have talked a lot about it over the

years. I would have to add it was a real stroke of luck – despite the bad circumstances – to have made that record. It could have just as easily never happened. It certainly kept me in the spotlight for a very long time, and still is! It continues to sell actively through Drag City. Still garners thousands of listens weekly or monthly on the major platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon.

It's pretty cool to see that so many people are still active listeners all these years later. The original records from 1973 are still sought after by vinyl collectors. The last one I saw on Ebay, sealed, went for over \$1,000. Blew my mind.

I think the interest is a real surprise. I never dreamed some 30-plus years later, when Drag City did the reissue, that things would take off like they did. Happy that it did! So that's also happy-making – I am truly honored and flattered by it all. I knew there was interest by vinyl collectors, from a scarcity perspective, but it is super cool that people really like the music! That's the part I like the most.

MMM: Anything that you could add about RH that would be a surprise to readers?

GH: Some may know already, but the whole thing was recorded in just 40 hours, and all done on a four-channel reel-to-reel. Bouncing down four parts to stereo, and overdubbing two more – as many times as needed to get all parts recorded.

I did not get to do the final mix... I was behind bars by that time. It was mastered by committee, a few of the other players and key individuals. It would have been different if I had, for better or worse, and I would still like to do that...

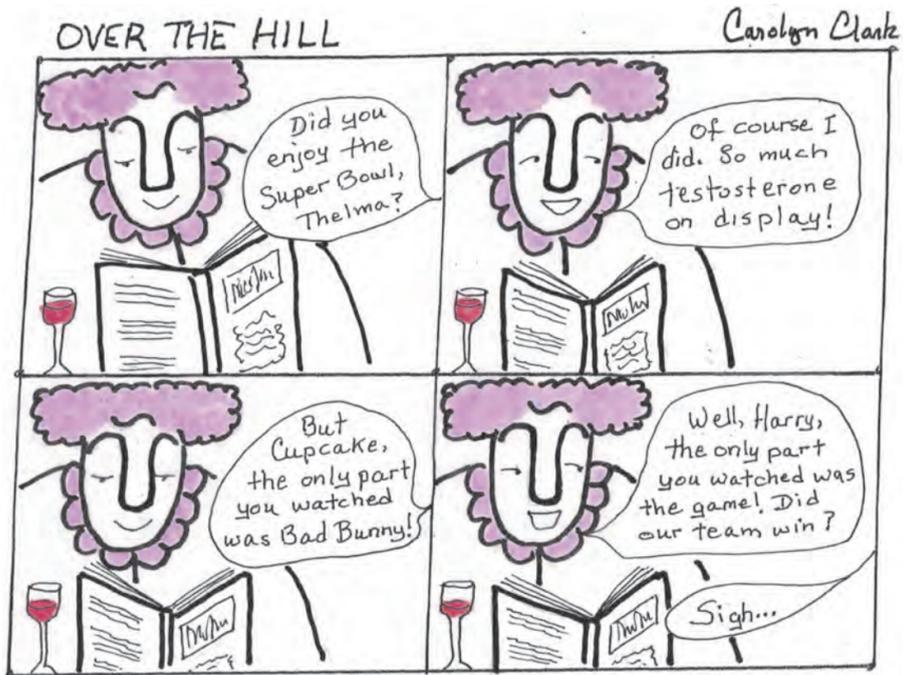
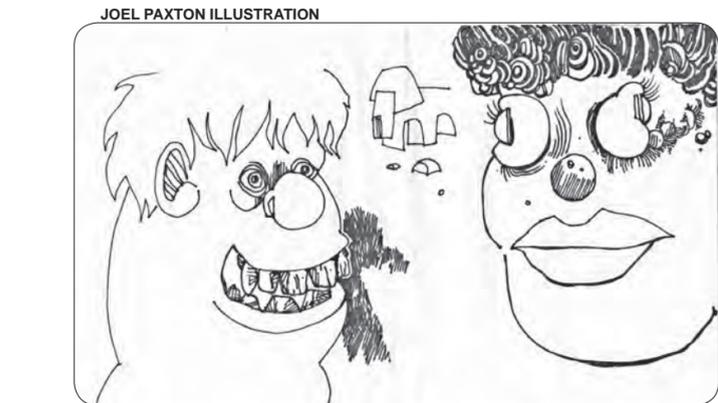
MMM: What are some contemporary music acts that you appreciate, and some all-time faves?

GH: I was, and still am, a fan of Steely Dan. Donald Fagen solo, as well. I like the Eagles, Bruno Mars, Kenny Loggins, Bonnie Raitt, Earth Wind and Fire. Some main ones from a pretty long list. I don't listen to much modern folk, and I should probably listen to more.

There ends up being a lot of music I like when I hear it, then never find out who it is... There are so many very talented artists out there... and part of the problem with the modern music business these days. A ton of great music out there, and not enough time in the day to listen to it all!

MMM: What surprises you most about these modern times, if you picture them from the mindset of the old days?

GH: I couldn't conceivably expect the fact that so much music would be instantly available to anyone, with the quality of sound so improved. The equipment to play on and capture sound is so advanced and accessible. So many great players and songwriters. Amazing.



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# The Children's Page

YONERNOD ILLUSTRATION

## The Lovelights and The Operetta part 2

WORDS BY BEVERLY KETCH & PICTURES BY HANNAH BROOKMAN



STELLA AND VIOLA BOARDED THE TRAIN TO NYC WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION. THE WHOLE WAY THERE, THEY TALKED HAPPILY, AS THEY EXPLORED THE TRAIN'S VIEWING CAR THAT OVERLOOKED THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND WHILE THEY ATE IN THE DINING CAR THAT SERVED TASTY SANDWICHES.

CHANDELLE MET THE LOVELIGHT SISTERS AT GRAND CENTRAL STATION AND BROUGHT THEM TO A LOVELY RESTAURANT WITH VELVET CURTAINS AROUND THE DOOR. THEIR GLAMOROUS COUSIN HELPED THEM TO CHOOSE WHAT TO ORDER SINCE SHE CAME TO THIS RESTAURANT ALL THE TIME. IT WAS ONLY A BLOCK AWAY FROM THE GRAND THEATER WHERE THE OPERETTA WAS TO BE PERFORMED. CHANDELLE LEFT EARLY TO GO TO FULFILL HER SPECIAL OBLIGATIONS AS THE LIBRETIST OF THE OPERETTA, AND SHE MADE SURE THAT HER COUSINS HAD BROUGHT THEIR TICKETS BEFORE SHE LEFT.



VIOLA AND CHELLA WERE PROUD TO PRESENT THEIR VIP TICKETS AT THE DOOR AS THEY JOINED THE FINELY-DRESSED CROWD FILING IN TO THE GRAND OPERA THEATER.



THEY COULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT WHEN THEY FOUND THAT THEIR SEATS WERE IN THE FRONT ROW! FROM THE MOMENT THE CURTAIN ROSE THEY WERE UNDER A SPELL, THE TALE WAS A DRAMATIC ONE!

THE SOPRANO WAS A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LAUNDRESS WHO, IN A MOMENT OF MADNESS, DECIDES TO DRESS IN ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL GOWNS THAT SHE IS MEANT TO CARE FOR AND GOES TO A MASQUERADE BALL.



EVEN AS SHE ARRIVES, ALL OF THE ATTENTION GOES TO HER. BUT AS SHE IS RELISHING THE ADORATION SHE SEES THE OWNER OF THE DISTINCTIVE GOWN AND SHE TOO IS SPOTTED!



CHASED FROM THE BALL AS AN UNKNOWN THIEF, THE YOUNG LAUNDRESS HIDES BY RUNNING INTO A BEAUTIFUL CATHEDRAL. A YOUNG MONK TAKES PITY ON HER AND GIVES HER A NUN'S HABIT TO CHANGE INTO AND KINDLY DOES THE TASK OF RETURNING THE GOWN.

THE YOUNG WOMAN THEN ENTERS THE MONASTERY AND BECOMES A VERY DEVOUT AND RADIANT NUN HELPING ALL OF THE POOR PEOPLE IN THE CITY.



AT THE END, CHANDELLE AND THE COMPOSER OF THE OPERETTA HAD A STANDING OVATION. CHELLA AND VIOLA HAD BEEN THE FIRST TO LEAP TO THEIR FEET! (TO BE CONTINUED)

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# EVENTS

Shelburne Falls Theater  
**POTHOLE PICTURES**

Feb. 20 and 21 at 7:30 p.m.  
**MONSOON WEDDING**  
Bollywood at its best. An Indian family gathers for an old-fashioned wedding ceremony.

Music at 7 p.m.: Friday, Abdul Baki; Saturday, Eveline & John.

51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls 625-2896

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## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

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

Brick House Community Resource Center, Turners Falls: *Family Game Event*. Snacks provided. RSVP to [slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org](mailto:slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org). 2 to 4 p.m. Free.

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Patch Burger Popup*. 5 to 8 p.m. No cover.

Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Silverback Swing*. 6 p.m. No cover.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *A Century of Research in Our Local Forests*. 6 p.m. Free.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Multigenerational Singing Group*. Contact [laurajosephs@protonmail.com](mailto:laurajosephs@protonmail.com) to sign up. 6:15 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Open Stage*. Similar to an open mic; artists share theater, dance, music, spoken word, magic, puppetry, circus, comedy, and more, in any stage of development. Five minutes per act. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Hoonah, Hazel Basil, Stadia*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *TydePod, Veticles Skal, Mon.Ark Ammo, Mummies and Wolves, Brujo*. 8 p.m. \$.

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

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

Greenfield Public Library, Greenfield: *Ukulele Players*. Bring your ukulele and music stand. 1 to 2:30 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Slab Mug Clay workshop*. For teens. Registration required. 4 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Community College, Greenfield: *The Sound of America: Influences of Negro Spirituals on American Music*, with operatic tenor *Perry Brisbon*. Light refreshments. 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Free.

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Pawpaw Culinary Club: Hot Doughs*. Bazlama, awarma, grilled halloumi, mezze, knafeh; cocktails, DJ. 6 to 11 p.m. No cover.

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

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Goodness Shakes*, community dance. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Hani Thompson*, record release, with special guests *Cloudbelly*. In the Shea's Lounge. 7 p.m. \$.

Looky Here, Greenfield: Reading, *Adrie Rose, Liz Falco, Melissa Dickey*, open mic. 7 p.m. By donation.



First we take Manhattan, then we take the Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse: Western Mass.-based *The Secret Chord*, touted as the only Leonard Cohen tribute band in the US, plays the Leverett venue this Saturday night.

Marigold Theater, Easthampton: *Soul Keys*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Two-Step Night* featuring *Les Taiouts, Honky Tonk Angels*, country karaoke. Masks required. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: Pothole Pictures presents *Monsoon Wedding* (2001). Music at 7 p.m.: *Abdul Baki*; movie at 7:30 p.m. \$.

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

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Zepp-Tunes*, Led Zeppelin tribute. 8 p.m. No cover.

The Drake, Amherst: *All Feels, Lost Film, Two Wrong Turns*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *The Gaslight Tinkers*. 8 p.m. \$.

Haze, Northampton: *Care O'Leary, Asher Isak, The Whip Appeal, Saliba, Britt Brideau*. 8 p.m. \$.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Dar Williams, Peter Mulvey*. 8 p.m. \$.

THCC, Easthampton: *Bag Lady, The Agonizers, HardCar*. 8 p.m. \$.

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Big Girl, Perennial, Sapien Joyride, Gut Health*. 8 p.m. \$.

Marshhouse, Amherst: *Ruby Leftstep, Solgyres*. 8:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jeff Unfortunately*, singing the songs of Daniel Johnston; *Intac*. 9 p.m. No cover.

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Watershed Mosaics*. Ages 6 and up. 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Savings Bank, Turners Falls: Local author *Fred Warren* discusses his new book, *Deadline Dallas*. Snacks provided. 1 p.m. Free.

Element Brewing Company, Millers Falls: *Bekka Dowland*. 3 to 5 p.m. No cover.

## EXHIBITS

**Waterway Arts, Turners Falls:** *Jesse Connor: New Works*, oil paintings that echo the joy, humor, and mystery of the artist's experience. Through March.

**Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls:** *Maps of River History*, artistic maps by geologist and cartographer Joe Kopera that reveal hidden topography of rivers and floodplains. Through March 28, with a reception Saturday, March 7.

**Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center:** *2026 Small Works Show*, featuring works under ten inches in size by local artists, through February.

**Montague Center Library:** *Art of the Book*, art made from or about books, through March 30.

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

**LAVA Center, Greenfield:** *Trees*, informational exhibit celebrating tree projects in Greenfield, and *Positively Deerfield Street*, photographs by Geoff Bluh spanning decades of change in the Deerfield Street neighborhood, both through February.

**Geissler Gallery, Stoneleigh-Burnham School, Greenfield:** *Earthly Possessions*, sculpture by Cassie Brown, through March 3.

**GCTV, Greenfield:** *Eve Christoff's Gallery of Work*, vibrant large-scale paintings by Christoff celebrating the natural world and divine female energy, through March.

**Greenfield Library, Greenfield:** *If I Can Paint, You Can Too*, oil paintings by Fran Corriveau, through February.

**Greenfield Community College, Greenfield:** *Rachel Portesi: The Nature of Things*, installation examining themes of mortality, regeneration, and interconnectedness, in the South Gallery through February 27.

**Rhodes Art Center, Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill:** *Shop Rats*, prints, paintings, sculpture, and photography by six faculty members. Through March 6.

**Fiddleheads Gallery, Northfield:** *Sixth Annual Photography Exhibit* by New England artists featuring black and white, color, phone and camera prints. Through March 29.

**Hampden Gallery, UMass Amherst:** *Fragile Connections*, neon-lit sculpture and delicately engraved glass forms by scientific glass blower Sally Prasch. Through May 8, with a reception April 23.

**Hampshire College Art Gallery, Amherst:** *Dæmonomania*. Anthony Discenza uses a diverse range of materials to illuminate our relationship to technology through occult metaphors. Through March 21.

**Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls:** *Heart to Heart*, member exhibit in a wide range of media, through February.

## CALLS FOR ART

**Looky Here Kids' Art Show.** Kids up to age 12 are invited to display their art at Looky Here in Greenfield during March. Bring framed, ready-to-hang work to the gallery by 5 p.m. on February 15 labeled with name, age, phone number of parent or guardian, and price/NFS. An opening reception will be held March 6.

The **New England Visionary Art Museum, Northampton** is looking for experimental and invented-instrument compositions for performances next fall in the Charles Miller Experimental Performance Arena: "You or somebody you know organizes sound and silence in such a way to create forms, harmony, melody, and rhythm. We are seeking artists who create unique instrumentation to these ends." Find out more at (413) 588-4337.

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# CALENDAR



## looking forward...

### SUNDAY, MARCH 1

Rhodes Arts Center, Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill: *NMH Orchestra, Concert Band, Jazz Ensemble*. Benefit for LifePath. 3 p.m. By donation.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Unnamed Books, Turners Falls: *Stefan Weiner, Corey Laitman, Ciarra Fragale*. 5:30 p.m. By donation.

### FRIDAY, MARCH 13

Canal Lanes, Southampton: *Mal Devisa, Cclng, LUCY*. 9 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Loculus Stodio, Holyoke: *bobbie* album release show; *Cow Person, beetsblog, DJ Mommy Issues*. 7 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Shirese, Slowpoke Records*, more TBA. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Jordana, the booyah! kids*. 8 p.m. \$.

### FRIDAY, APRIL 10

Parlor Room, Northampton: *Jane Siberry*. 6:30 and 9 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, MAY 16

Nova Arts, Keene: *Natural Information Society, Kalie Vandever, Cole Pulice, Gregory Uhlmann, Undertow Brass Band, Monadnock Music*, more. 12 p.m. \$.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Geese, Wednesday, Lucius, J Mascis, Big Freedia, Hurray for the Riff Raff, Mal Devisa*, many more. \$\$\$

### SATURDAY, JUNE 27

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Wilco, The Breeders, Ryan Davis & The Roadhouse Band, Souled American, The Messthetics, Prewn, Mini-Mekons, Setting*, much more. Info at [www.solidssoundfestival.com](http://www.solidssoundfestival.com). 11 a.m. \$\$\$.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 28

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Sister Wife Sex Strike, Dusty the Kid*. 8 p.m. \$.

### TUESDAY, JULY 7

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Steve Earle*. 8 p.m. \$\$\$.

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Carrie Underwood*. 7 p.m. \$\$\$.

Unnamed Books, Turners Falls: Poetry reading, *Aristilde Kirby, Katerina Zadé, Napoleon Touafek, Robin Arble*. 6:30 p.m. By donation.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *The Secret Chord*, Leonard Cohen tribute. 7 p.m. \$.

Midnight's, Brattleboro: *Regals, Coffin Flop, Not It, Flyeater*. 7 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Cinemastorm* double feature: *Waiting for Guffman* (1996), *Beetlejuice* (1988). 7:30 p.m. Free.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: Pothole Pictures presents *Monsoon Wedding* (2001). Music at 7 p.m.: *Eveline & John*; movie at 7:30 p.m. \$.

Vermont Jazz Center, Brattleboro: *Nate Smith*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Freeps, Rick Rude, babe wait*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Iron Horse, Northampton: *K-Pop Demon Ravers Kids' Rave*. 12 p.m. \$.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Writers Workshop* with Paul Richmond. 1 p.m. Free.

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Book Club*. Lily King, *Writers & Lovers*; copies available at the library. Refreshments. 2 p.m. Free.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *French/Breton Jam Session*. 2:30 p.m. Free.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Frank Hurricane, beetsblog*. 4 p.m. By donation.

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Elliott Smith Cover Show*, housing fundraiser featuring *Norma Dream, Jim Bliss*, more. 7 p.m. \$.

North Mandelle Hall, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley: *Bugslam, Blandest, Velvet, Anne*. 7 p.m. \$.

Quarters, Hadley: *Western Mass Electronics*. Bring your own synth, drum machine, sampler, etc. 8 p.m. No cover.

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *Monday Night D&D*. Single-session adventures. 6 p.m. No cover.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Tommy Feeley*. 8:30 p.m. No cover.

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: Montague selectboard member *Rich Kuklewicz* drop-in office hour. 4 to 5 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Knitting, Crafts & Game Night*. 7 p.m. Free.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Poetry Discussion Group*, no pre-reading required. 3 p.m. Free.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: Matinee movie, *Lost in Translation* (2003). 4 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Community College, Greenfield: Documentary, *Shuffle* (2025). Discussion with filmmakers follows. 6 p.m. Free.

Whately Town Hall, Whately: *Tim Kliphuis & Jimmy Grant*. 7 p.m. \$.



The recently-departed Catherine O'Hara stars twice in the *Cinemastorm* free double feature at the Shea Theater this Saturday evening: in *Waiting for Guffman* (left) and *Beetlejuice* (right).

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Brick House Community Resource Center, Turners Falls: Clinical and Support Options staff will give info about their programs. To RSVP contact Stacey at [slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org](mailto:slangknecht@brickhousecommunity.org). 10 a.m. Free.

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

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Patch Burger Pop-up*. 5 to 8 p.m. No cover.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Comedy Project Workshop*. Contact [andrea@thelavacenter.org](mailto:andrea@thelavacenter.org) to participate. 6 p.m. By donation.

Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Silverback Swing*. 6 p.m. No cover.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Multigenerational Singing Group*. Contact [laurajosephs@protonmail.com](mailto:laurajosephs@protonmail.com) to sign up. 6:15 p.m. Free.

THCC, Easthampton: *Bastian Void, Belltonesuicide, Caldon Glover, The World Wide Web*. 7 p.m. \$.

Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton: *Arturo O'Farrill*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Moviola, Wet Tuna, Animal Piss It's Everywhere*. 8 p.m. \$.

Prescott Tavern, Hampshire College, Amherst: *Letters of Marque, Laika, In Plain Sight, Film & Gender, Time Held Me Green and Dying*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope Story Hour: When Will It Be Spring?* Story, activities, and crafts. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Greenfield Public Library, Greenfield: *Uncertain Times: The U.S. Supreme Court Today*, with constitutional law expert Rory K. Little. Discussion follows. 3 p.m. Free.



Deja Brew, Wendell: *Village Neighbors Meetup*. Snacks provided. 4 p.m. Free.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Multimedia Night*. Poetry and multimedia presentations, light refreshments. 6 p.m. By donation.

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Midnight Floyd*. 6 p.m. No cover.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Postcards From the Promised Land*, featuring poet and storyteller Marlon Carey. 7 p.m. \$.

Floodwater Brewing, Shelburne Falls: *Briezyjane and The Hurricane*. 7 p.m. No cover.

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Corey Harris*. 7 p.m. \$.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: Pothole Pictures presents *The Killing* (1956). Music at 7 p.m.: *The Chester Vale Trio*; movie at 7:30 p.m. \$.

Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton: *Marta Sanchez*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The Giant's Harp*. In the Shea's Lounge. 8 p.m. \$.

THCC, Easthampton: *Murder(Sword), Neon Fauna, Durk Drone*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Folly of Three, Teen Driver, Spikenard*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

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

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Local history talk, *Getting Across: Connecticut River Ferries*. 2 p.m. Free.

Music Connection, Turners Falls: Listening party for Morrissey's *Makeup Is a Lie*. 2 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Reading and discussion, *Frederick Douglass's "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"* With Marlon Carey, Nina Gross, and Nate Woodard. 2 p.m. Free.

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *Vimana*. 6:30 p.m. No cover.

Midnight's, Brattleboro: *Mimi Fang, Hush Puppy, Oh Dad*. 7 p.m. \$.

JJ's Tavern, Florence: *Booshido, Caedus, Cliffrose, Ghost, Sleep Destroyer, Six2Twelve*. Benefit for LUCE. 7 p.m. \$.

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

Bombyx Center, Florence: *Solas*. 7 p.m. \$.

De La Luz Soundstage, Holyoke: *Mtali Banda, Shafaah*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Jonee Earthquake Band, Coffin Flop, Phrogs*. 7 p.m. \$.

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Hauzu, Rhubarb Duo, The Divergents, American Empire*. 7 p.m. \$.

Stage 33, Bellows Falls: *Sunburned Hand of the Man*. 7 p.m. \$.

Agricultural Engineering Building, UMass Amherst: *Baby's Breath, Creedbratton, Remedies, Summers in Autumn*. 7:30 p.m. By donation.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Bayou X, SambaGanza*. Mardi Gras night. 7:30 p.m. Free.

Shelburne Falls Theater, Shelburne Falls: Pothole Pictures presents *The Killing* (1956). Music at 7 p.m.: *Whisperholler*; movie at 7:30 p.m. \$.

Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton: *Wayne Horvitz*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Pinc Louds, The Freeps, Moimus, Content Clown*. 8 p.m. \$.

Academy of Music, Northampton: *Keb'Mo*. 8 p.m. \$.

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**SPORTS** from page B1

a Tiger one-pointer, and the Thunder opened up a five-point lead. Such a low-scoring affair was certainly anybody's game, and the crowd knew it. As more and more fans trickled in to catch the boys' game, the gym grew louder. But Turners began missing their shots and losing rebounds, while the Tigers clawed their way back into it.

With a minute left in the third, Purple took their very first lead of the game, 20-19.

It got worse for Turners before it got better. Westfield scored the first hoop of the fourth to expand their lead to three points. But the Thunder followed up with two three-pointers and a foul shot to go up 26-22. Purple hit a free throw to bring it to 26-23, but Turners scored the last five points of the game to coast to the 31-23 victory.

Four players scored for Turners: Thornton and DiMare with 15 and 14 points, and Bethany Whitney and Ivy Lopez with 1 each.

Next year, the 2-17 Thunder Ladies will start the season riding a two-game winning streak.

**Boys' Basketball**

*TFHS 70 – Saint Mary 41*

*FCTS 48 – Smith Academy 23*

In the second game of last Thursday's mixed double-header at Turners Falls, the Boys' White Thunder defeated the Green Saints of Saint Mary. Although some of the players will participate in the league All-Star game, this would be the last time they play as a team.

By the time the boys' game tipped off the arena was packed. In fact, so many people participated in the halftime Chuck-a-Duck that some participants had to leave their rubber duckies from the third row of seats. In lieu of the usual canned National Anthem, eighth-grader Lydia Cadran gave a wonderful rendition of *The Star-Spangled Banner* from the press box.

White took an early lead off a jumper by Cameron Johnson and a long pass to Kainen Stevens. But the Saints marched back, and with seconds left in the first period, they had the ball leading 11-10. As Green was setting up for their final shot, with the crowd chanting "D-fence," a steal and a fast break by Stevens gave the Thunder a 13-12 lead going into the second quarter.



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

*Turners Falls's Ivy Lopez drives the baseline as the Thunder earned their second consecutive win of the season last Thursday against visiting Westfield Tech. Also on the court is Autumn DiMare (right), who scored 14 points in the Thunder's final season game.*

The second was all Turners, as their transition game turned Green miscues into points on the other end. When Stevens snagged a defensive rebound and went coast-to-coast to put White up 27-14, coach Gary Mullins sent in the reserves.

At the end of the period, Brody Girard hit a three-pointer to put Turners up 36-17. But the scoreboard was wrong. It read 36-16. This led those of us who were keeping

score on paper to scratch our heads. After a halftime huddle, the score was reconfigured and going into the second half, the Thunder was officially on top by 19 points.

The Saints refused to go away in the third period, going tit-for-tat with the Thunder, so going into the fourth White was up by 49-32. With three minutes left in the game, the Thunder was still leading by 17, but then Christopher Ulloa, Sergy Alesey-

enko, and Curtis Kretchmar hit consecutive three-pointers to put the game away.

That's when the crowd began chanting, "We want Spencer!" The coaches complied and sent in the JVs. Seventh-grader Spencer Towne hit a jumper for his first career varsity points, and eighth-grader Anthony Cronin put the cherry on the sundae with a three-point swisher.

Stevens led White with 16 points, followed by Jackson Cogswell and Johnson with 10 each; Freilyn Abarua at 9; Aleseyenko with 5; Brayden Sloan with 4; Girard, Ulloa, Kretchmar, and Cronin with 3 each; and Towne and Robert Goff 2 each.

The next day, Friday the Thirteenth, the Franklin Tech White Eagles grounded the Smith Academy Purple Falcons by winning the rebound war. This was a little surprising, because Smith had beaten Tech back in December. But the game was not even close.

As always, after selling tickets at the door and introducing the starters and coaches, Kevin Hollister belted out the National Anthem.

In the opening period Franklin had difficulty hitting the hoop, but they dominated on the boards, and several times shot three or four times before hitting the mark. On the defensive end of the court they pulled down rebounds, allowing only one shot per possession for the visitors. Leading 8-0, Tech committed two consecutive fouls, and Smith followed up with a three-pointer to make it 8-5 after one complete.

In the second, the Eagles kept the Smithies off balance, making steals, capitalizing on Smith mistakes and continuing to pull down rebounds. By the half, they were leading 21 to 11. Tech weathered some early fouls in the third quarter to build on that lead, and when Nolyn Stafford hit a jump shot with two minutes left in the period, Tech had increased the lead to 20 points, 33-13.

Franklin did not let up in the fourth, and with the score at 44-17 coach George Gutierrez, Sr., emptied his bench. Nine players scored for the Eagles: Stafford (18); Brody Hicks (10); Mason Bassett (5); Hunter Donahue, Landon Benz, and Boden Myre (3 each); and Dustin Reade, Owen Zilinski, and George Gutierrez, Jr. (2 each).

This was not the last game of the season for Tech. They will be competing against other vocational schools later this week.



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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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