

# The Montague Reporter

Year 24 – No. 28

JUNE 18, 2026

\$2

editor@montaguereporter.org

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

montaguereporter.org

## GILL SELECTBOARD

### ‘Urban Sprawl’: Some Question The Need for New Housing

By KATE SAVAGE

Town selectboard meetings are usually focused on the minutiae of making a town function. But at Monday’s meeting in Gill, participants opened a big question: as it plans for the future, should Gill prioritize new housing or preserving farmland?

In April, Gill was designated a Rural and Small Town Housing Choice Community. The designation, which makes it easier to receive some state grants, is given to small towns that “demonstrate certain lev-

els of housing production and adoption of pro-housing best practices.”

Town administrator Ray Purington said his main motivation for pursuing the designation was to help the town receive state funds to replace old sewer pump equipment. “That doesn’t have anything to do with creating new housing,” he said. “It speaks toward keeping housing that we have in Riverside more affordable than it would be otherwise if those residents were picking up a million-dollar upgrade bill.”

Architect and Gill resident Jim see GILL page A6

## MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

### Malfunction at Plant Highlights Growing Sludge Disposal Issue



Montague police chief Jason Haskins, who started last November, attended the selectboard’s Zoom meeting on Monday to present a significant restructuring plan he has developed for the department.

By JEFF SINGLETON

At Monday’s Montague selectboard meeting, Clean Water Facility superintendent Chelsey Little reported that a power surge at the treatment plant last month damaged a machine and caused the facility to release poorly treated

wastewater into the Connecticut River for several days. The board also heard a proposal from police chief Jason Haskins to reorganize the police department, appointed an elementary school building committee, and authorized a search for a paid downtown planter coordinator, among other business.

“Where to start on this one?” said Little, who explained that the equipment failure on May 20 came at a time when the facility was receiving a significant amount of liquid sludge from nearby towns, which it processes for revenue, and when Lowell’s treatment plant, the backup disposal option, had not been accepting sludge for two weeks, “causing a domino effect for all the facilities in the region.”

The power surge knocked out a dewatering press, Little said, reducing the plant’s capacity for treatment and resulting in an increasing level of “suspended solids” in the see MONTAGUE page A7

## LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

### Board Hires Library Temp, Seeks Nuclear Disarmament

By GEORGE BRACE

Leverett’s selectboard agreed to provide support to the global “Mayors for Peace” initiative during a brief meeting on Tuesday, along with making appointments to the school committee and library staff and other business.

Town administrator Marjorie McGinnis said that prior to the meeting, Sister Clare Carter of the New England Peace Pagoda requested that the town work with the Pagoda to recognize Hiroshima Day on August 6, the anniversary of the atomic bomb attack on that city, by sending letters to other towns in the area encouraging them

to join Mayors for Peace.

The non-governmental organization was founded in the early 1980s by the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and calls for “cities throughout the world to transcend national borders and join in solidarity to work together to press for nuclear abolition,” according to its website. As of June 1, it lists 8,579 member cities worldwide, though only 359 are in North America.

McGinnis said Cambridge was the first town in Massachusetts to join, in 2002, and that Leverett joined in 2005; other local members include Greenfield, Northampton, West Springfield, and Easthampton.

see LEVERETT page A5

### Downtown Library Vote Ends Next Wednesday



The Carnegie Library in downtown Turners Falls would be replaced by a new, larger building at 38 Avenue A if a majority of Montague voters approve a debt exclusion for the project next Wednesday, June 24.

By REPORTER STAFF

MONTAGUE – From 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. next Wednesday, June 24, Montague voters will be asked whether borrowing to fund the construction of a new library building may be counted outside the levy limit set by the state law Proposition 2½ – a so-called “debt exclusion.”

Voters in Precincts 2, 3, 4, and 6 vote at the Franklin County Technical School, while voters in Precinct 1 vote at the Montague Center fire station and those in Precinct 5 vote at the Gill-Montague senior center. Residents unsure which precinct they live in can find out at wheredoivotema.com.

Absentee ballots are also available on Monday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the town hall.

If a majority of voters approve the debt exclusion, Montague may issue bonds to raise \$12.4 million, which would be repaid over a 30-year period. Repayment is expected to add 49 cents per thousand dollars in valuation at its peak to property tax bills. The town’s contribution would be matched by an \$11.3 million grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

The Millers Falls and Montague Center branch libraries would remain open, and the Carnegie could be sold or reused by the town.

### Sick of Ticks: Shoe-Spraying Aims at Infectious Vectors

By CHARLOTTE MURTISHAW

FRANKLIN COUNTY – This summer’s hottest trend? It just might be poisonous shoes.

The Montague health department is planning a series of permethrin shoe-spraying workshops this summer to protect residents against seemingly ubiquitous ticks and the diseases they can carry, which can include Lyme, Alpha-Gal syndrome, and more.

After a successful debut on June

10, the next shoe-spraying opportunity will be next Thursday, June 25, from 1 to 3 p.m., in the town hall parking lot. According to a 2011 study in the *Journal of Medical Entomology*, wearing permethrin-treated shoes can reduce tick bites by over 73%.

Permethrin is an insecticide which can be used on clothing, shoes, or other gear, though it should not be applied directly to the skin. While permethrin-treated items are considered safe for humans and pets, the chemical is disabling to ticks, who will fall off a treated surface and often die on contact. Treated shoes must dry for 24 hours before being worn, and though they are deemed non-toxic for cats, as a precaution they could be stored out of feline reach until ready for use.

This year’s tick population has benefited from several environmental factors, according to Dr. Thomas Hart of the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. A generally milder winter prevented the typical seasonal tick die-off while also helping the populations of primary hosts such as deer and mice, the latter of which feasted on a bumper acorn crop.

see TICKS page A6



This local dog tick has not yet enjoyed a blood meal. Unlike deer ticks, dog ticks do not transmit Lyme disease, though they can spread rarer pathogens.

### Layoffs and Restructuring Broader Than Discussed, Says Union

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – In the final days of the school year, staff in the Gill-Montague regional district have been notified of a complex restructuring plan involving layoffs and a web of proposed transfers. Over the winter, the administration and school committee closed a significant FY’27 deficit in large part by reducing the “Instructional” budget to a lower level than the current year, but the details of the cuts were kept under wraps until last Thursday.

“The Gill-Montague Regional School District is currently navigating a ‘perfect storm’ of economic pressures, including revenue stagnation, rising fixed operational costs, and the conclusion of significant federal grant cycles,” a document released by the administration, outlining a “Rationale for Personnel Realignment,” began.

That document, and three others that accompanied it, were still being studied closely by leadership of the

see UNION page A6

### Higher Taxes Last Straw For Mansion Renovator

By SARAH ROBERTSON

ORANGE – An historic mansion at the center of Orange is up for sale, six years after its owner bought the property at a foreclosure auction and moved across the country to restore it.

From her home in Los Angeles, Cynthia Butler saw the Wheeler Mansion featured on the Instagram page “Cheap Old Houses.” She was looking for change, she explained in a recent social media post, so she bid \$150,000 and won the auction in June 2020. Weeks later she moved to Orange and registered a new business, Revival Wheeler Mansion, LLC, to run a bed and breakfast at the 75 East Main Street property.

Since then, Butler has renovated the building into an inn and event space, bringing weddings, themed parties, wine tastings, presentations, paranormal investigations, and other happenings to the town center. She sits on the board of directors of the Greater Athol-Orange Area Chamber of Commerce, and serves as president of the nonprofit that organizes the Orange Riverfest.

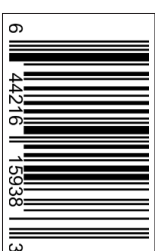
However, she listed the mansion for sale last month, for an asking price of \$1,222,000.

Butler says she is frustrated after years of interacting with unhelpful and obstructive town officials, and after a recent struggle over an inflated tax assessment, she is ready to walk away.

“[A]fter the way the property see MANSION page A5

#### Still Just Zoomin’ With The Humans

Enjoyed a Blood Meal.....A1	Much More Involved Than That.....A7	Piece By Gilded Piece.....B6
Without Any Information.....A2	Out of Our Own Pockets.....A8	Now Deliver the Newspaper.....B7
Can’t Seem to Fathom Exactly.....A3	Obviously Winding Down.....B1	Left Lying on the Ground.....B8
Bigger Than a Staircase.....A4	Even Gets the Zoomies.....B2	Open to Cool Acoustic Zones.....B9
Successfully Growing a Flower.....A5	Rising Towards the Sun.....B3	Sky Furrows, Bass Wizard, Storm King.....B10
The Grandioseness Of It.....A5	Looking Down From Heaven.....B4	Sharp Pins, All Feels, Flute Choir.....B11
Looking and Walking and Stuff.....A6	Piled Up For a Mile.....B5	Until the Mixture Thickens.....B12



# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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## Last Call

Montague has heard such a sustained chorus of improvised and experimental civic debate this month we have found it hard to set aside our fascination with *how* and *why* people are wrong and tell them *that* they're wrong.

The impact of another 49 cents per thousand in annual property tax is not nothing, but there is such a strong consensus that taxes are *up up up* that it feels rude to point out that the property tax *rate*, which is what Montague can control, is *down*, having dropped \$2.48 per thousand over the last decade. (The Montague Center fire and lighting districts have knocked off another 56 cents, though the Turners fire tax has stayed steady.)

We didn't hear any of the people claiming to panic over this 49 cents (or move away, or *die*, according to Facebook – the new trend is to say this line item will cause people to *die*; suddenly we have discovered the theory of social murder!) express five times as much joy and gratitude and survival over the last decade for the rate being brought down \$2.48. Because tax bills *are* way up, which is because assessments are up, and those we can't really control: the state requires the assessors to match the market as closely as they can.

Property values are up everywhere, but the spike has been particularly acute where demand is rising faster than supply. (In other words, if we build enough new housing here your home value will stagnate and your taxes will stop. Who's game?) And then there's the staggering cost of staff health insurance – adding about \$780,000 more to town expenses, across all lines, this single year alone.

But the library department has become the whipping-post.

We've been pressured to issue these corrections to statements made in last week's Letters page and Big Picture interview:

1. Community input *did* indicate demand for a roof deck, community center, and local history room.
2. The selectboard unanimously voted that a new main library will *not* jeopardize the branch libraries.
3. The new library will increase the department's annual budget by 5% to 8%, and the town's by 0.01%.
4. The state will absolutely *not* allow Montague to revise the plans. It either moves forward by June 30 or the \$11.3 million is gone.
5. The building was designed specifically for safe, full staffing

by the *current* number of staff. One part-time assistant would be hired at 12 hours per week, however, to cover the children's room evenings and Saturdays.

6. The town sure *can* sell the Carnegie. Over half of the country's Carnegie Libraries have found second lives. In Massachusetts they have become commercial buildings, private residence, condos, and an insurance agency.

7. The libraries do not circulate chainsaws. They *do* circulate snowshoes, a dehydrator, a basic toolkit, fiber arts supplies, pickleball gear, lessons for kids, lawn games, a projector, etc. etc.. By borrowing rather than purchasing items, Montague households can save money. They sign a liability waiver.

We're always happy to set the record straight, out of sympathy for any historians who might stumble across this archive, but did the above corrections really call any undecided voters off the fence for the Yes campaign?

There are people in this town who don't like each other because they *don't like each other*. The reason it blew up around libraries this time is the exact same reason it blew up around sports last time. And we're going to need to work on that, because otherwise it's going to keep happening, again and again.

## Fire Districts, Town Should Coordinate

It has come to my attention several days ago that within the next two weeks, the Montague Center Fire District (MCFD) will be seeking approval from its members to purchase a new tanker truck. For most members of the District, this news is brand new and comes as a surprise.

It has been explained to me that this purchase has been discussed at regular MCFD meetings for some time. However, agendas and minutes regarding these meetings are not publicly available, and few members attend regular meetings. I attended the annual meeting last June, and I do not believe it was discussed there.

The decision to purchase a major piece of equipment should be made with careful evaluation of needs and opportunities, thorough financial analysis, and significant public outreach. I believe there should be better coordination between the Fire Districts and the Town leaders and committees that bear fiscal responsibility to our citizens. Montague has many priorities that our town leaders and citizens are responsible to consider every year, and especially this year. Without any information, we hamper our good decision-making.

On Sunday, we learned this truck is expected to cost \$580,000, funded with \$300,000 from stabilization and free cash, and \$280,000 in financing. The impact on MCFD rates is still unknown. Even if this information becomes available imminently, there are members who cannot attend the meeting on June 25

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Daisy the rat terrier recently landed at the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter, where she is being cared for by Gabi Trudeau and Gabriel Donelan (pictured above). A fundraiser for the shelter, "Pedal for Pups," will be held next Saturday, June 27 along the bike path in Turners Falls. Register for a 30-mile ride that leaves at 9 a.m., or a 7-mile ride that leaves at 10 a.m., at [bikereg.com/pedal-for-pups](http://bikereg.com/pedal-for-pups). A "pre-ride" spaghetti supper will also be held at the Montague Elks Lodge on Friday, June 26, from 5 to 8 p.m. It is open to the public, with a discount on meals for registered bikers.

## Letters to the Editors

### Rising Costs Make Library More Important

First and foremost, I want to thank the community for their engagement and polite discourse I've experienced in person and online regarding the proposed new library. There are outliers to that, of course. I hope we can all understand that we each have our own individual experience, situations, and priorities that guide our upcoming vote.

Here's mine.

As a local banker, I am keenly aware of folks' financial situations

and needs because they trust and ask me. They ask for help, beyond my role, that a community hub and library can provide – tech help, seminars, socialization with community members of various ages, a way to reliably get physical and digital media that isn't a scam or a trial subscription that is predatory or steals their debit card information. To borrow things from the library of things they need without falling prey to a Facebook marketplace scam.

The very sub-communities that cannot afford a raise in taxes are the ones who would benefit most from a functioning library and community hub. We pay as a town so that enrichment, community, and entertainment does not have a cost for entry.

Selfishly, I want a library I could've navigated with a stroller when my kids were in one, that I could spend all day in with my soon-to-be 8- and 10-year-old without feeling guilty we're taking up space, that they can walk to or ride their bikes to when they're teenagers to hang out with their friends in a safe place that doesn't cost for entry, where they can study, work, or read no matter the weather, and that is still physically accessible to me when I'm no longer able-bodied.

Yes, being able to afford a roof over your head is the acute priority. Of course it is.

My experience is that when faced with tough financial choices, a library remains a place you don't have to say "no" to your kids about because a "yes" will literally overdraw your account. That on a fixed income you don't have to be alone in your home because leaving it means yet another cost. A local library means that as costs continue to rise, our community continues to thrive.

We can't afford not to do this. I am working on fundraising so that the \$159 a year, or \$3 a week or however you want to look at it, is further diminished.

I invite you to join me. Vote "Yes" on June 24 for a new Montague library.

Leigh Rae  
Montague Center

Briggs Doxzen  
Turners Falls

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# More and More Letters to the Editors

## Expansion: The Cost Comparison

I've worked in construction for 35 years, and have been a Library Trustee for eight. (The company I work for does not have the bonding capacity for projects like the proposed library, and is therefore ineligible to bid. I have no conflict of interest, just experience.)

Since I became a Trustee I've tried to envision ways to enlarge the Carnegie. The only possibility is to build an addition on the back. The Carnegie is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The front and sides of the exterior can't be changed or overshadowed. The best fit architecturally for an addition is to extend the 30-foot-wide section under the rear gable roof. The building is 12 feet from the property line, so the most we could build is 12 feet by 30 feet. This would be enough for an elevator, new stairs and accessible bathrooms, but nothing else. The cost of the addition and elevator is at least \$2 million. There would be additional costs to reinforce the second floor and deal with ledge.

(These figures are based on the 2021 architect's study, current construction costs, and the experience of doing renovations in historic public buildings. They would change once the architects and engineers address all the unknowns.)

The rest of the deferred maintenance, including the roof, HVAC system, masonry repointing, and window replacement, should also be done. Asbestos and lead paint would have to be abated, and a sprinkler

system added. The entire building including the stacks would have to be made accessible. Projected costs for this work exceed \$2 million – and we would lose up to 65% of the shelf space on the main floor.

Spending \$4 million, plus a large unknown contingency, would be unlikely to be approved if all we achieved was to make the same space we already have accessible.

The next option is to buy the property behind the library. Acquisition, asbestos abatement, and demolition would be at least \$500,000 to \$750,000 and three households would be displaced. (Please note, the Library Trustees do *not* endorse displacing tenants.)

Frontage for this property is 62 feet. Deduct 20 feet for a fire lane and we have 42 feet, plus the 12 feet of the library driveway, allowing for an addition extending 30 feet by 54 feet off the back of the library. It could widen out to about 46 feet once we reach the location of the existing house. This would result in about 2,000 square feet of additional space, less than one level of the existing building. The addition must remain "subservient" to the Carnegie, so it can't be more than one story, as that lot is already a full story above the Carnegie's first floor.

This plan could include a modest parking lot at the back, with five or six spaces, at least three being accessible. This upper entry could then become our accessible entry. With the front door and the driveway door by

the elevator, we'd have three entry doors. We'd also have three distinct sections needing staff supervision.

My conservative estimate for this option is \$5 million to \$6 million, but once the architects and engineers become involved it could easily climb to \$7 million. The state grant will not cover a project like this.

To put this in perspective, \$5.6 million in 2008 – that's \$8.9 million in 2027 dollars – got us a state-of-the-art public safety building. In 2018, \$11.2 million – or \$15.5 million in 2027 dollars – got us a state-of-the-art highway garage.

If the "Yes" vote wins, in 2027 \$12.4 million will get us a state-of-the-art library. If the "No" vote wins, in 2030 or later \$8 million (\$7 million in 2027 dollars) may get us about 2,000 square feet of additional space, and five parking spots.

Which is the better use of taxpayer money?

**Patricia Perham, Montague Building Professional, Public Libraries Trustee**

## Save Carnegie? Really?

It's hard to imagine that argument being added to the misleading argument against a proposed \$23.7 million new library that's posted on signs around Montague.

Those signs, of course, fail to mention that nearly half the total cost would be borne by an \$11.3 million state grant... one that the town isn't likely to be offered again.

But the more preposterous suggestion on those signs urging a "No" vote on June 24 may be that the Carnegie Library, for which Andrew Carnegie provided the town with \$13,500 in 1903, is a landmark that needs to be saved, even if it means declining the state's \$11.3 million.

I'm as strong an advocate of historic preservation as anyone, and saving landmark buildings is a virtue that I hold dear.

But if you consider the 15 daunting steps that someone needs to climb to enter the Turners Falls library, with an additional three steps from the foyer to the main floor... and the three or more steps just to get from an Avenue A parking space

to the sidewalk... that's an obstacle that makes visiting the library pretty formidable.

Once you're inside the building, you immediately sense how cramped the space is... with books stacked on shelves so tall they're hard to reach, with a tiny children's room, limited young adult space, no place for programs or community gatherings, and very limited – and unheated – restroom facilities.

Even the rear handicapped-accessible entrance presents daunting obstacles to this venerable building.

"Saving" the Carnegie and making it truly ADA-compliant would cost an additional \$5 million, and would essentially be trying to retrofit a building without the benefit of a host of other features planned for a new building close to the Discovery Center, with its substantial parking and outdoor amenities.

But the real Carnegie obstacle, as this town anticipates whether to spend \$12.4 on a new building for Turners Falls, is that many people can't seem to fathom exactly the extraordinary role that a public library can still play as a community institution, even as books are perceived as playing a diminished role in society. The saddest element, perhaps, is that those saying "No" can't see the value of a library that meets today's needs – and tomorrow's.

A library that can make computers accessible to adults and kids, that can truly welcome the entire, diverse community as a resource and a hub of activity, would promote the culture and literacy that a thriving community needs.

It's all well and good to point to Greenfield's new library – bright, airy and open, and bustling with activity – and to say yes, it's available to Montague residents. But that's Greenfield's treasure, and if we're serious about attracting newcomers to live in a town with attractive resources, Montague needs to fully serve its own residents with innovative services like loaning out binoculars, an ice-cream maker, soccer set, and more. (The Carnegie, along with the other two libraries in town, already has this "Library of Things," but little space to store and show it off to users.)

It's ironic that the Carnegie was the product of the Gilded Age, although symbolic of the patronage by its industrialist namesake. As we enter a new era where billionaire benefactors aren't rushing to philanthropically encourage libraries or enhancing education for the public, the economy may seem shaky for investing in our infrastructure.

I empathize with taxpayers who are already beset with financial pressures, yet the estimated \$3 additional weekly costs per household seems paltry compared to the benefit of having a new energy-efficient, up-to-date and fully accessible library that can host onsite programs, and actually encourage children and adults to discover whole new worlds at their fingertips. That's what a fully functional library can offer. We should relish this opportunity by voting Yes on June 24.

**Dennis Varuzzo  
Turners Falls**

**Richie Davis  
Montague Center**



RICHIE DAVIS PHOTO

## MR Reporting Imbalanced

In reference to your article last week with the "Vote No" on the new Library contingent group.

I was disappointed when I went to the Carnegie Library and tried to check out the "chainsaw" in the "Library of Things" and was told that there was not and never was a "chainsaw" offered. So, I asked for an appliance: a washer (Nope) and then a dryer (Nope), then a refrigerator (Nope), and then a stove (Nope). In fact all that they had in their "Library of Things" were a few small countertop appliances.

Your interview with the "Vote No" group seemed to be poorly fact-checked. I'm sure that the comments of the interviewed people were just

accepted as opinions or perspectives. However, you are responsible for factual information in your article. I saw no effort to clarify the misstatements made. Not to tell you your business, but you should correct these oversights in your next edition.

This is just my opinion. The *Montague Reporter* is Your Community Business.

**Don Valley  
Turners Falls**

**P.S.:** Perhaps you've also conducted an interview with the "Vote Yes" contingent group, complete with photos, for this week's edition. If not, I don't see balanced reporting on this important issue.

## Voting 'No' on the New Library

We're told Montague's share of this proposal is \$12.4 million. The true cost of this 30-year mortgage would be \$22.8 million, assessed on Montague's homeowners. Homeowners bear the brunt of the cost, but not only homeowners vote....

One recent contributor who was a "Yes" stated our town is growing, which would warrant this new proposal. It is not. My late wife and I bought our home in Turners in 1981 and our population was a little over 8,000. Forty-five years later our population is a little over 8,000. We're not growing, we're aging. The decline in numbers of our TFHS graduating classes over the past couple decades attests to that.

One would think a small town library to be a place of camaraderie and interaction but this proposal separates our various age groups into their own designated areas, hmmm, what happens if someone strays? And a playpen for toddlers? What

could possibly go wrong there? A teen room for study and collaboration? Most teens today can research, formulate a report, edit it and print it right from their cellphones without a trip to a library.

Five restrooms are proposed. Since their street signs say the library is for everyone consider what that means. How many times in recent years has Cumby's or Nouria had some sort of occurrence in their "public restrooms?"

I've heard that Greenfield's library has had some issues with, let's say, non-patrons, causing issues in their building. True or not, it's something to consider. How would it be handled?

Speaking of Greenfield's library, a check of their amenities is a mirror image of the proposal given us, right down to a rooftop terrace. They're essentially proposing a duplicate facility.... three miles down the road from Greenfield's library, our County Seat.

A quick check found that approx. 700 Montague residents have memberships at the YMCA in Greenfield, across the street from their library. I'm sure many go two or three times a week. Has anyone ever raised the possibility of building a Y in Montague because Greenfield's YMCA is too far away?

We have the Gill-Montague School District, Gill-Montague Senior Center and the Gill-Montague Bridge. Was a Gill-Montague Library ever considered, one of reasonable scope and size?

So, homeowners, we must get out and cast our vote because we won't be the only ones voting, but we'll be the ones paying for it. FCTS, Yes. Library... No.

What happens? Time will tell.

**Dennis Varuzzo  
Turners Falls**

**Richie Davis  
Montague Center**

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## OP ED

## Who Gets a Future Here?

By LACHLAN THOMPSON

**GREENFIELD** – Libraries are meant to be for everyone. No matter your beliefs, your race, your gender, or your access to wealth and education. If any public institution should embody belonging, it should be the library.

Yet, as an employee, I am already asking myself questions each day before the Carnegie Library even opens: Do I need to park in the only disabled parking space we have today, or do I leave it for a patron? How many trips up and down the basement stairs to my desk can I manage today? Do I need to reserve one of the four computers for our patrons so I can work without excruciating pain? Can I comfortably use the bathrooms, or will I need to drive home just to pee? If I do, will I still have enough energy to return?

In other words, before the day even begins, I have to ask myself how to ration access.

While my experience is personal, these questions aren't. Every inaccessible public building sends a message about who belongs. Today, the Carnegie Library often sends the message that

access is something some people have to earn, rather than expect, from the institutions meant to serve them.

A few years ago, I might have described needing to go up and down the stairs multiple times in a shift as an inconvenience, not an agony. I certainly wouldn't have thought I'd need to drive to my home in Greenfield just to use the bathroom. (And I shudder to imagine having to schedule my bathroom time around the 35-minute bus ride to my home from the library.)

The consequences are bigger than a staircase, a parking space, or a bathroom. In Montague, roughly 16.4% of residents under the age of 65 live with disabilities affecting their hearing, vision, cognition, or mobility. These are not abstract numbers. They are our neighbors, coworkers, family members, and friends. Real people who deserve to be included in the design of our public spaces.

When we talk about accessibility, we're really talking about who gets to participate in community life: Who gets to work here? Who gets to attend a program, join a committee, serve on a board, or spend a career in public service?

Public buildings shape the answers to those questions. They communicate who was considered during planning, and who was expected to adapt or endure in silence.

As someone who loves this community and wants to continue serving it for many years to come, these questions feel deeply personal. Accessibility determines not only who can enter a space, but who can imagine a future there. When I can't get down the stairs to my desk in the Carnegie Library, when I have to choose between my access or your neighbor's just to park, it's hard for me to see that future.

A new library is an opportunity to determine what kind of community we want this to be. I want it to be one where we take care of each other and invest in each other's well-being. As Montague imagines its next chapter, I hope we choose a story that leaves no one wondering whether they belong.

*Lachlan Thompson is an employee of the Montague Public Libraries. The views expressed in this op/ed are their own.*

## DISPATCHES FROM THE CARNEGIE BASEMENT

## Investing In People Always Pays Off

By CAITLIN KELLEY

**TURNERS FALLS** – As we enter the last week before the voters of Montague determine the future of the Main Library Building Project, I'd like to take a moment to set aside the facts and figures of the project and focus on why this work matters.

I'd like to talk about people and the ways that libraries lift them up. The ways that libraries foster growth, education, and friendships. I've worked in libraries for 15 years, in cities, suburbs, and small towns, and in every community libraries provide some version of the same thing: a safe space where people are welcomed, seen, served, and encouraged, no matter their background or circumstances.

There's the elderly gentleman who visited the library every single day to read the newspaper, to chat with the staff, and catch up with neighbors. He lived alone and didn't have family close by. The library gave him a place to belong.

There are the two boys of different ages and backgrounds, who developed a fast friendship while working on a STEM building challenge to make a marble run roller-coaster. The library provided the space and tools for curiosity, creativity, and learning to grow.

There's the man in his mid-50s who changed careers and pursued a degree at the community college, who used the library almost every day because he didn't have a computer at home. Library staff helped him learn how to use the school's online course management system, and when he made the dean's list, he said he couldn't have done it without our help.

There are the kids who grew up

attending Music and Movement who as tweens became library volunteers, and one who, as a teen, aced their interview and was hired as a substitute library assistant for their first job.

There's the mom who borrowed the donut maker from the Library of Things to make fresh, homemade donuts for her kid's birthday party.

There's the woman who homeschools her children and connected with an arts and culture organization over an exhibit of artworks by Ukrainian children held at the Carnegie. By the end of their interaction, they'd planned a pen pal program for her daughter. Other kids attending that exhibit made their own artwork in response and used library computers to write messages in Ukrainian, which were then sent to the Ukrainian children who had made the art in the exhibit.

There's the guy who asked, sheepishly, for the love poetry section because he messed up with his girlfriend and really, really hoped he could make it up to her.

There's the little girl who participated in a Paint-a-Pot craft event with her mom and went home with a bag of dirt and Bachelor Button seeds. Months later, she excitedly shared that the flowers had grown and bloomed because she always remembered to water them.

There are the two siblings whose apartment burned down. They started coming to the library every day after school, while their mom was at work. I could tell that being in a new neighborhood was hard at first, but the little boy slowly came out of his shell, showing our staff the art he made in school. His teenage sister found a group of friends who loved manga and K-pop just as much as she did.

There's the woman who insists that the blood pressure monitor from the Library of Things saved her life. She had it checked out and used it during what ended up being a major medical event. Her partner made the decision to take her to the hospital, where she received life-saving treatment, in part because of the blood pressure reading the monitor provided.

There's the recent immigrant who used the library computers to video chat with her husband back home and to connect with their immigration lawyers.

There are the Friends of the Library, who take the time to maintain the Carnegie Library's garden beds so the community has something beautiful to enjoy, and who raise money for the annual puppet show that draws over 125 children and their families to Peskeompskut Park.

There's the developmentally disabled adult who could perform all the duties required for a job at a local grocery store but needed a librarian to help them, step by step, fill out a six-page online job application.

There are the kids who watched caterpillars grow a chrysalis in a kit set up in the children's room, stopping by the library to draw the phases of metamorphosis before joining the Youth Services Librarian for an awe-inspiring butterfly release outdoors.

There are countless seniors who have received help navigating their phones, learned how to use web browsers, learned how to FaceTime with old friends, learned how to list and sell things on Facebook Marketplace, learned how to avoid online scams, learned how to look up legitimate health information, or signed up for fuel assistance. Who have

accessed street records to find their great-grandfather's house and been instructed on using Ancestry Library Edition and printed out family histories to share with their grandkids.

While I witnessed a few of the examples above at the Carnegie Library, most happened somewhere else: in libraries with teen spaces, in libraries with enough chairs that anyone who wants to can sit down, in libraries with program rooms and accessible entryways.

The Carnegie Library, beautiful though it is, cannot provide for the Montague community in the way that it ought to. When people can't get into their library building, when the children's room is too cramped, when families flag in the heat because programs must be held outdoors, and patrons can't access the technology and resources they need, they miss out.

For decades, patrons have been missing out on essential services, community engagement that prevents loneliness, programs that promote learning for all ages, and free materials for entertainment and enrichment.

I do this work because I believe investing in people always pays off. Because helping a septuagenarian reconnect with her best friend from high school, watching a room full of children roar in unison while hearing a story about lions, and seeing a little girl gain confidence from successfully growing a flower fills my cup.

I want Montague to have the library it needs to thrive. After three years of grant writing and designing, it is at our fingertips.

Please vote on June 24.

*Caitlin Kelley is the director of the Montague Public Libraries.*

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**LEVERETT** from page A1

Among other projects, Mayors for Peace is working on creating an International Day of Peace on September 1 and sponsors a children's art competition called "Peaceful Towns," which Leverett Elementary School has participated in, she said.

Selectboard chair Patricia Duffy and member Jed Proujansky both said they supported the letter idea. The third member, Tom Hankinson, was not present at Tuesday's meeting.

Proujansky said he would also like the town to consider how to give more than "lip service" to the International Day of Peace initiative.

McGinnis said the Peace Pagoda regularly sponsors walks for peace, and may be considering one for August 6; she suggested this might be something the town could participate in. She noted that the Pagoda has asked to be received by the selectboard during previous peace walks, and that she and town clerk Lisa Stratford have greeted the walkers at town hall "multiple times."

Proujansky said that perhaps something could be done at the new band shell at the library once it is completed.

**Desk Coverage**

The selectboard and school committee voted unanimously to appoint Adam Hartwell to the school committee. Votes from both bodies were required to fill the elected position, which had been vacant after no candidates were nominated at the annual town meeting in May.

School committee chair Marnie Genre said Hartwell has a child at Leverett Elementary School and was "instrumental" in securing a grant for the recent playground project, and that the committee was "super-excited" to have him on board.

The selectboard appointed Ralph Hurwitz to a temporary library assistant position, at five hours per week. Library director Hannah Paessel said the personnel committee had approved the position without town funding, but that the library has received enough in donations to cover the cost. The additional staff member will allow the library to remain open on Fridays.

Paessel said Hurwitz is a 20-year resident of Leverett, has been working as a substitute library assistant since July 2023, and has over 20 years of experience at the Jones Library in Amherst.

Proujansky said the library was an important community center, and that the town will "hopefully" fund the position next year, but that he wanted Hurwitz to be clear that the position was funding-dependent and temporary.

Paessel reported that she is hoping for a mid-September opening of the library's community park, but that it may not be completed until October.

**Quick Charging**

The selectboard opted not to pursue a potential privately-owned "intermediate fast" electric vehicle charging station at the library.

McGinnis said that she felt it would not be used enough to be worthwhile, partly due to its three-to-four hour charging time.

Proujansky said it made more sense to include one or more town-owned fast-charging stations – which can fully charge a vehicle in 20 minutes – in the plans currently being developed for an electricity "microgrid" centered at the public safety complex. He likened the grid to Leverett's town-owned broadband project.

Energy committee member Richard Nathhorst said his committee supported the selectboard's decision, and was already planning on including photovoltaic canopies and chargers as components of the microgrid.

**Other Business**

The selectboard awarded variable-price FY'27 contracts for gas and diesel to O'Connell Oil Associates of Northampton and Kieras Oil, Inc. of Amherst respectively, the two low bidders for those contracts.

"Unfortunately, it's not a great market right now," McGinnis said, and the town had received only one fixed-price bid for diesel and none for gas. Under variable contracts, the town will be charged a fixed sum over the daily spot market price.

The board approved a conflict of interest exemption for health agent Stephen Ball. Ball lives near the North Leverett Sawmill, and may be called upon to review or act on septic system plans in his neighborhood.

At the request of the Friends of Leverett Pond, the board authorized money from its own expense account for hydro-raking at the public boat access to the pond, expected to take two hours at \$312.50 per hour, and for a retirement gift for a town employee, in line with gifts to previous retirees which have cost approximately \$200.

A request for the purchase of three cubic yards of mulch for the gardens in front of town hall was passed over after highway superintendent Matt Boucher informed McGinnis he had some old mulch that could be used.

The board agreed that if the old mulch is not up to par, the town will consider buying more.

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**LEVERETT BOARD OF HEALTH NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Board of Health will hold a public hearing June 25, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Leverett Town Hall, 9 Montague Road, Leverett, MA to act on a request for variances under Chapter 218 of Leverett Code provisions 218-4 and 218-9. The applicant/owner is the Friends of North Leverett Sawmill, Inc., 77 Jackson Hill Road, Leverett, MA 01054 for work (construction of a new onsite sewage disposal system) at 63 North Leverett Road. Copies of the request, exhibits, and plans can be obtained by contacting Foresight Land Services, Inc. at (413) 499-1560.

**MANSION** from page A1

assessment was handled, I realized I'm not interested in the constant negativity of small town politics, so I decided to sell," Butler told the Reporter this week by email. "The assessment was done out of spite and I'm sure no other property has been assessed this way."

The Wheeler mansion was assessed at \$354,300 in 2025, according to town data. This year, the property was reassessed at \$1.4 million. After Butler argued against the dramatic increase at a March 2 board of assessors meeting, the board decided to decrease its assessment to \$956,000.

"We reconsidered our original assessment and reduced it by a significant percentage to what we considered the correct value in light of the size and quality of the property as well as the business results reported by the owner," board of assessors chair Cynthia Brown told the Reporter. "We have to be fair to all of the town's taxpayers, and we can only do that by following state assessing laws for everyone."

Butler said that she has struggled to get clear answers from town officials concerning building code requirements, occupancy limits, parking requirements, and licensing.

"These tactics are the reasons I am choosing to move on because unfortunately, this isn't the first unfortunate situation," she said.

The three-story, 13,500-square-foot mansion was built in 1903 for the wealthy industrialist John Wheeler, then president of the New

Home Sewing Machine Company. After his death it served as a rest home for female members of the Order of the Eastern Star, a Masonic-style fraternal organization, from 1925 to 1990. As the property was bought and sold in the subsequent years, the buildings and grounds fell into neglect, and the mansion was foreclosed on in 2015.

After Butler purchased the property, she lived in a carriage house behind the mansion while renovating the derelict structure.

"This wasn't necessarily a purchase to flip a property – it was more a purchase to reinvent myself or revitalize my own life, and I completely fell in love," Butler said in a video posted with the online real estate listing on June 2. "I hope that the next owners are really able to preserve the soul of this property. It's incredibly detailed. The architecture, the grandioseness of it, is just a craftsmanship you don't see today."

To pay homage to the "ladies" of the Order of the Eastern Star, Butler built a large star-shaped hedge maze last year on the grounds. The project was partially financed with funds raised by a 501(c)(3) non-profit she had founded in 2023, The Revival Society, Inc.

The non-profit's declared goal is to "preserve and maintain the historic residence known as the 'Wheeler Mansion' in Orange, Massachusetts through repairs, upgrades, and facility improvements as well as producing community events in the Wheeler Mansion and property." The mansion's main website,

[www.revivalwheelermansion.com](http://www.revivalwheelermansion.com), states that donated funds will be used to purchase building supplies, pay contractors, and furnish the space.

It is unclear how the non-profit's contributions to the mansion's renovations will impact the sale of the private property.

Butler serves as president of the Revival Society, Inc. board of directors. Its two other board members, Orange residents Josefa Scherer and Rose Marie Thomas, serve as treasurer and clerk respectively.

The federal statute that governs tax-exempt organizations, US Code Section 501, reserves the charitable status for organizations "no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual."

Another section of the code states that a "disqualified person," which in 501(c)(3) organizations includes directors, may not "directly or indirectly" receive an "economic benefit" in excess of the value of services they provide to the organization.

Scherer did not return a request for comment before press time.

In a separate June 2 Facebook video, Butler told her followers that the Wheeler Mansion would not be the first property she has restored and sold.

"I've flipped properties for 26 years now," she said. "This is my 14th property. Although I had no intention of selling it, it's just the right time. And I always make them look incredibly beautiful before I let them have another life with someone else."

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The budget to install the maze was \$30,000, Butler told her social media followers. Butler added that she intends to continue renovations to the building and its grounds "right up until the moment I sign those papers."

The Revival Society solicited donations by selling personalized bricks intended to be laid in the mansion's patio. The non-profit also received enough support to purchase a number of arborvitae bushes, according to its website.

Butler told the Reporter that the terms of the sale "will dictate what happens with the mansion and the nonprofit since it's listed for sale as a business and as a residence."

"I also keep meticulous records,"

she added, "so any assumptions of co-mingling of funds would be inaccurate." Properties Butler recently acquired in Shutesbury and Wendell, she emphasized, were purchased using money from a recent inheritance unrelated to the Wheeler Mansion business or the non-profit.


Though she intends to stay in the area with her family, she said, she is looking forward to the mansion's sale.

"I really hope that the people or person who purchases this property really honors the history that it's brought to this town in general," Butler said in the June 2 video. "I really feel like this is a building that needs to be shared."

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**GILL** from page A1

Asbel asked the selectboard if anyone was making plans to increase housing, walkability, and affordability in the town, particularly now that residents have voted to pay for a new roof on the elementary school. He said he was considering new projects to support young families in the region interested in starting small farms, but that the issue still faced “a very clear history, here, of resistance to housing.”

Selectboard chair John Ward expressed his support for a more walkable town center. “If we get some young families up there, wouldn’t it be great if they just walked down the hill and across the bridge and over to school?” he asked.

Farmer and resident Dan Flagg pushed back against Asbel’s ideas. “I am so entertained by words some days, ‘cause they sound great, and things on paper sound great,” he said. “But you want to bring a whole bunch of kids to the center of town?” Flagg said the bridge near the school has been unsafe and closed for decades, and that the town should instead use state grants to conserve agricultural land.

Asbel said he worried that the various officials and committees in town were not creating a unified plan. “Right now I don’t see that Gill has a vision of its future, period,” said Asbel.

Selectboard member Charles Garbiel, formerly a Turners Falls resident, also challenged the idea of building more housing in Gill. “I moved to Gill to get the hell out of the neighborhood, because I got sick of the neighbors and people looking and walking and stuff,” he said.

“Does the urban sprawl start, and then when I’m at retirement age I’ve got seven houses around me?” Garbiel asked. “Because there goes my rifle range, and I’m not happy.”

**Free Cash Follow-Up**

At Monday’s meeting, the selectboard approved a purchase order for \$4,500 for materials needed to fix the railing on the wheelchair ramp at the Riverside Municipal Building. The work would be completed by local volunteers led by resident farrier Ray Steele.

However, following a discussion of concerns, Purington said he would not place the order until after

the upcoming special town meeting, at which residents are expected to vote on setting aside funds to fix the building’s roof.

“I want to keep the structure if we can keep the structure,” said Ward. “But what I don’t want to do is agree to spend chunks of the town’s money, and then have it change.”

The meeting, which will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, June 29, at the town hall, will deal with the question of where to allocate free cash. The money was not certified by the state in time for the second part of the annual town meeting last week, but it can only be used this fiscal year if it is allocated by the end of June.

The articles on the warrant allow town meeting to vote on where to put that money. One article places some amount of it into stabilization funds, to help replenish the sum withdrawn to avoid a Proposition 2½ tax override. Another puts some of the money toward the town’s “other post-employee benefits” (OPEB) fund, which will cover the future cost of health insurance for retired town employees. The third puts some toward the roof account for the town-owned building, which once housed the Four Winds School.

The total amount of certified free cash this year had not yet been announced by the state as of Monday’s meeting.

**Other Business**

The selectboard approved a purchase order of \$68,314 for a new Bandit 15 XP wood chipper for the highway department. The allocation of money for the equipment from the capital stabilization fund was approved by town meeting earlier this month after a lengthy discussion.

The board appointed Ray Steele as Gill’s representative to the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans’ Services district advisory board, and appointed Steele and Doreen Stevens to the cable advisory committee.

Purington announced that free laptop classes will again be held at the Gill-Montague senior center for residents 60 and over. They will take place every Friday from July 10 to August 14, and those who complete all six free classes will also be given a free laptop. Applications are available at the senior center.

Those interested in attending should sign up by July 3.

**UNION** from page A1

staff union, the Gill-Montague Education Association (GMEA), on Wednesday of this week.

“We had no idea how devastating and widespread the ‘restructuring’ plan would be,” GMEA president Heidi Schmidt told the *Reporter*. “It was very different from how we interpreted the plan when it was shared in school committee in the

spring. Much more was cut than previously alluded to.”

During that March 10 presentation, business manager Joanne Blier and interim superintendent Tari Thomas told the committee their approach was to make a “strategic pivot” in the division of educational labor: eliminating an unspecified number of reading and math interventionists, who work with students

one-on-one or in small groups, and instead supporting classroom teachers in providing stronger core, “Tier 1,” instruction with the help of a new team of teaching coaches.

Eighteen “non-essential hires,” either unfilled vacancies or new requested positions, were also frozen at that time. The net loss of positions was not specified.

With the unveiling of the plan, the net loss is still difficult to immediately discern. A list of “Personnel Realignment and Position Eliminations” appears to terminate 16 full-time jobs. According to GMEA co-vice president Ramona LaTronica, however, many of the ousted staffers reappear on a list of “Positions Reassigned / Transferred & Openings.”

Of the 16, two were unfilled vacancies, one coincided with a retirement, and eight staff members were offered transfers – only five, in other words, were outright layoffs. However, two of the transfers would be replacing other laid-off staff members, so the net impact appears to be seven layoffs.

The list of transfers includes 22 names, and LaTronica explained that in many cases staff are being asked to fill each other’s jobs in chain reactions. Her own name, for example, is on the list – leaving an elementary school librarian position for the high school, while a colleague in the high school library department would become an “elementary library / general IA.”

“It seems as if we are just being switched,” LaTronica mused.

Complicating the situation even further, GMEA plans to help “many” employees appeal the transfers.

A press release from the union on Monday highlighted that the plan would reduce services for special ed, music, reading and math intervention, support for English learners, health education, and theater.

“The district moved on hiring a human resource position, as well as an administrative position that was not included in the school budget passed in March,” it pointed out.

Last Tuesday, Schmidt and co-vice president Nikki Henderson presented the school committee with a petition, signed by a majority of the union’s membership, urging them to settle contracts, which are currently under a cyclical negotiation.

“While the steps for the restructuring plan [announced in March] highlight a collaborative effort, GMEA and staff have not experienced this collaboration,” Schmidt added, saying the administration had not yet shared with the union the list of positions not being refilled.

Slides in the March 10 presentation had promised: “Consulting with the GMEA to ensure the deployment of staff aligns with our collective bargaining commitments.... Working closely with the GMEA to navigate these difficult shifts with integrity.... We will navigate the coming months in partnership with the GMEA and with a focus on empathy for every colleague....”

This week, with the list in hand, Schmidt was blunter: “There has been no communication with staff and no collaboration with the union,” she said.

A request Wednesday for comment from Blier and Thomas was unsuccessful, though Thomas wrote back on Thursday morning as this edition went to press, apologizing. “The last few days of school have us in meetings,” she explained.



## Tree Warden Resigns, Calls Role ‘Underpaid’

By MIKE JACKSON

**MONTAGUE** – The town’s tree warden submitted his resignation on Tuesday, and a conversation is developing about whether the position has been properly supported.

Jason Kingsbury, who works as a grounds maintenance lead in the public works department, has been serving in the tree warden position for about a year and a half, following the death in October 2024 of Mark Stevens, who had been the warden for decades.

Kingsbury gave town officials his notice to step down as of July 1. “It has been way too much to manage, and severely underpaid,” he wrote. “At this point it has been almost another full-time job, and after the last few very rude and disrespectful residents I have dealt with, it’s enough to call it.”

The tree warden is an elected position in Montague, and comes with a stipend of \$147 per month, or \$1,764 per year – slightly less than members of the board of health and selectboard, slightly more than the town’s barn inspector, and on par with the inspector of animals.

“The position could easily be a full-time position,” Montague tree advisory co-chair Eli Smith told the *Reporter* this week after news of the resignation spread. Smith said he felt the warden’s working budget was also underfunded, and the position was too highly “prioritizing tree removal, and not tree planting or maintenance.”

Smith said Stevens had contributed many volunteer hours to the job during his tenure.

Multiple members of the tree

advisory committee said they had been trying to schedule a time to discuss the lack of support for the position at a selectboard meeting for weeks, but had not yet won a spot on a meeting agenda.

In 2021, town meeting approved a lengthy new “Public Tree Protection Bylaw,” drafted by the advisory committee with input from Stevens. This increased the warden’s procedural responsibilities significantly, not least in enforcement of the bylaw. The involvement of the tree committee has also seen a significant acceleration in recent years in the planting of new trees throughout the town.

“We’d love to be a leader in [the tree warden] position, because climate change is not slowing down,” Smith said. “Our town is not going to get cooler unless we take action, and planting trees is a huge thing we can do to cool it down.”

Reached for comment on the resignation, town administrator Walter Ramsey thanked Kingsbury for his service. In his main role at the public works department, Ramsey said, Kingsbury “will continue to be a valuable steward of our beloved public trees without the administrative responsibility of the warden.”

After July 1, he said, public works superintendent Sam Urkiel will fill in “while the town explores options for filling the position.”

“At this time I don’t have a lot to comment,” Urkiel told the *Reporter*. “We’re in conversations internally to transition from a very longstanding tree warden. It’s a tough role that is a large time commitment to do well. So we’re looking at how to do it well.”

**TICKS** from page A1

And ironically, he said, the heavy snow cover this winter further insulated the ticks’ habitat.

Reflecting on the upward trend of tick-related illness in recent years, Montague public health director Ashley Gough offered pragmatic optimism: “Maybe the problem gets worse, but hopefully our preparedness will too.”

The Centers for Disease Control released early warnings about tickborne illnesses in late April, after the volume of emergency room visits for tick bites exceeded every year prior since 2017.

Dr. Stephen Rich, who studies ticks in his work as the director of the Medical Zoology Lab at UMass Amherst, cautions that even those numbers are low: “There is an annual account of reported [Lyme disease] cases that steadily increase year on year, but those are thought to be less than 10% of the actual cases.”

“Lyme disease can be life-changing,” said Robin Neipp, the shared services public health nurse for Montague and Greenfield. Neipp recommends anyone discovering an embedded tick remove it as soon as possible, and to contact their healthcare provider to be evaluated for a prophylactic course of doxycycline, an antibiotic that greatly reduces the chance of contracting Lyme from a bite.

Though the most prevalent, Lyme is far from

the only tick-related medical concern. Other common diseases spread by the arachnids include anaplasmosis and babesiosis, though as tick populations mount in Massachusetts, healthcare providers are also bracing themselves for emerging concerns, such as Alpha-Gal Syndrome, spread by the Lone Star tick – so-called for the distinctive white dot on its back.

While Lone Star ticks have had a presence in Massachusetts for over a decade – especially in the Cape Cod region – this is the first year that Alpha-Gal has been added as a category for statewide reporting. Alpha-Gal is an acquired, often severe, allergy to red meat and other animal products which contain the galactose-alpha-1,3-galactose (“alpha-gal”) sugar molecule.

Another growing issue is the Powassan virus, which is comparatively rare but often carries severe consequences, which can range from long-term neurological impairment to encephalitis and death.

According to data from the National Arbovirus Surveillance System, there have been five confirmed cases nationwide in 2026: one in Michigan, and the other four in eastern Massachusetts. Last year marked a historic high for the disease, with 76 identified cases spread across the eastern seaboard and Great Lakes regions. In comparison, there were 79 total re-

ported cases from 2004 to 2015.

Unlike many other tickborne illnesses, scientists caution that the timeframe for Powassan transmission from an embedded tick is relatively short – estimated at 15 to 30 minutes.

The best way to avoid the negative effects of tick-borne illnesses? To state the obvious, it’s optimal to not get bitten in the first place.

By and large, most New Englanders have already heard all the usual tips for defending against these bloodsuckers: wear light clothing; tuck long pants into socks; use bug spray; and check yourself – and any outdoor pets – daily. “They love to be up in your hair, behind your ear, the armpits, the groin,” advised Neipp. “And they’re fast – a tick can crawl onto your shoe and up your leg in 20 or 30 seconds.”

Additional precautions include cycling outdoor clothes on high heat for 10 minutes after coming inside, if you have a dryer at home. Yard maintenance can go a long way for homeowners: Neipp recommends mowed lawns, which are inhospitably hot, and creating a barrier between your yard and any wooded areas using mulch or rocks, which the ticks are unlikely to cross.

“You should still go outdoors and enjoy the outdoors – I wouldn’t want anyone not to,” Neipp said. “There are things you can do.”

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

effluent it discharged into the river. The plant stopped receiving sludge from outside Montague. Though the state Department of Environmental Protection told her to tell the board of health to warn residents to steer clear of the river, she said, public notification was not required, and the incident was not a sewer overflow.

The press was revived in manual mode on May 22, she said, though it took a few days to return the plant to normal operation. Sludge from other plants was accepted again on June 1.

Little suggested installing a second press, but said there was still a need for more places to dispose of the dry "cake." She called legislation on Beacon Hill to ban all land application of composted biosolids, understood to be a vector for PFAS chemicals, "unfortunate." Montague has been studying the feasibility of building a sludge composting facility.

"Not only is it difficult to dispose of," she said, "but it is part of the nitrogen cycle, and I think it's really important that we're able to put that back into the land."

Town administrator Walter Ramsey commended Little and her staff for their response to the incident, including working over the weekend. He called on the board to ask the town's representatives in the legislature to prioritize "the need for sludge disposal sites for Montague, and communities throughout Massachusetts."

Little announced that the plant's foreman and operations manager, Sam Stevens, has received the Operator of the Year award from the Massachusetts Water Environment Association. She said she was particularly proud because she had trained Stevens to be an operator when she was the superintendent of Northfield's treatment plant.

"I know his dad would be very proud of him right now," said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, referring to the recently deceased town tree warden Mark Stevens.

The board authorized Little and assistant town administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller to work on a grant to upgrade the plant's secondary clarifiers, which were installed in 1980. Borrowing for the project has been approved by town meeting, and the town would be entirely reimbursed by the state's Long Island Sound Partnership Nitrogen Reduction Infrastructure Grant.

The board also approved a job description for a second mechanic at the plant.

**New Chief Wants Deputy**

Police chief Jason Haskins gave a lengthy presentation on an "initial proposal" to restructure his department.

Haskins stressed significant changes in policing since the current structure was created, with increases in state oversight, accreditation and technology requirements, and administrative complexity. He noted the challenge of retaining trained officers, and said that "the public is holding us to a higher standard."

"A lot of people think of policing as you go to a call, you leave the call, and you're done," he said. "It's much more involved than that."

Haskins argued that too much responsibility now falls on the chief, including applying for and managing grants, coordinating with other agencies and levels of government, long-range planning, and "commu-

nity relations initiatives."

His proposal would eliminate the staff sergeant position and have patrol sergeants report directly to the lieutenant – a position that currently exists, but is vacant – who would oversee "operations." The lieutenant, dispatchers, and detectives would then report to a new "deputy chief" position, focused on administrative and compliance work, who would then report to the chief, who would handle "strategic leadership" and community relations.

Haskins said it would be "tough" to evaluate the cost of these changes, and emphasized the "hidden costs" of the current system including compliance failures, missed grant opportunities, delayed projects, and increased risk. Changing the staff sergeant to a lieutenant and the lieutenant to a deputy chief, he estimated, could add between \$18,000 and \$24,000 a year to payroll.

There was only a brief discussion of the proposal and the board did not take a vote.

Board member Nate Card asked if simply filling the vacant lieutenant position would help Haskins. "It still keeps us a little flat," said Haskins. He added that promoting a member of the department to lieutenant could "disrupt the whole agency."

Kuklewicz said that when the staff sergeant position was created, "it probably at that time should have been a lieutenant," and that when the lieutenant position was later added there was talk of making it a deputy chief.

The board approved an agreement with Greenfield fire and emergency management departments on the shared use of aerial drones. Ramsey said the draft agreement had been reviewed by the town's attorneys, and no "substantive changes" were made.

At Haskins's request, the board placed officer Cody Wells on 111F injured-on-duty status and appointed Benjamin Duga as a reserve officer. Haskins said this brought the number of reserve officers to two, and that he would like to have four.

**Public Property**

The board authorized Nolan-Zeller to put out a "request for quotes" for a person or firm to maintain the 31 planters lining Avenue A, in collaboration with the public works department. The intent, he said, is to replace the town's "patchwork management approach" which has relied for years on volunteers, though he assured the board that the contractor would not replace the voluntary efforts of local businesses.

The board also approved updates to the town's surplus property policy, including allowing the use of the online Municibid platform. Nolan-Zeller said he had "cleaned up" the procedure for choosing among multiple interested non-profits, which was previously decided by pulling pieces of paper out of a container.

The board appointed a building committee to begin studying the consolidation of Hillcrest and Sheffield elementary schools, which are town-owned buildings. Ramsey said the group will convene "sometime in the late summer or early fall" to focus on the tasks of the current "eligibility period," as set by the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Ramsey, selectboard member Marina Goldman, interim school superintendent Tari Thomas, district business manager Joanne Blier, Hill-

crest principal Cindy Sheehy, Sheffield principal Kerry Heathwaite, special ed teacher Pamela Reynolds, school committee member Clifford Spatcher, former town administrator Steve Ellis, capital improvements committee member Greg Garrison, and resident Allison Page were all appointed to the new committee.

**Other Business**

At the request of town planner Maureen Pollock, the board endorsed an agreement with the Bowman Consulting Group for the design of a shared-use path system that would connect the town's villages. The project is being funded by the state Department of Conservation and Recreation. One possibility would be to upgrade existing trails through the Montague Plains.

The board also approved an agreement with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to update the town's housing production plan, using funds from the state Executive Office of Economic Development.

An agreement with MassPower-Choice, LLC, to launch a program to pursue the municipal aggregation of electricity was approved. The firm is a subsidiary of Peregrine Energy Group, which had presented about the process to the board two weeks earlier.

A common victualler's license was granted to Ritual Bowl, a new eatery on Avenue A. The board also approved a "temporary pilot" allowing bars and restaurants with on-premises alcohol licenses to apply to extend their hours until 3 a.m. "We haven't heard any interest from the town's licensed establishments," Nolan-Zeller noted.

The selectboard's next meeting will be on June 29.

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**NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD**

# Grumbles of a 'Bait and Switch' As Wheeled Excavator Skyrockets

By **KEITH WATERS**

The Erving selectboard meeting on Monday, June 15 began with the swearing in of two new police officers, Nick Stone and Fred Bezio. Stone is new to the service and has to go through the state training program for new police officers, while Bezio is the chief of police in Goshen and is becoming an Erving officer to add some work hours.

The town is putting together a screening committee for the new information technology director position, and has four of the five seats filled. The selectboard appointed its chair, Jacob Smith, to serve as its liaison to that committee.

Board member Jim Loynd suggested that the town try to get one of the other town committee chairs to serve as the fifth member, but said he was not opposed to asking the community if there is a volunteer who would serve as the fifth.

The board approved a job description for an activities coordinator position, as well as a committee to screen applicants. Selectboard member William Bembury will be the board liaison to that committee.

The town must also form a committee to appoint the new appointed treasurer role. For this, the board settled on a complete cast and a full committee was formed.

Highway superintendent Glenn McCrory was present to give an update on the procurement of a wheeled excavator. Prices have gone up, he said, and financing has also become more expensive in the months since the procurement was approved – it had been at 0% when originally quoted, but is now at 2%.

Additionally, McCrory explained that an attachment that is needed is now much more expensive than it had

been when quoted.

The selectboard was not happy with the news of the price change. Loynd said it sounded like a "bait-and-switch" to him. Jacob Smith checked the math on the financing numbers McCrory conveyed, and said the vendor seemed to not be doing its calculations right.

The town was counting on having this piece of equipment soon, to do roadside mowing in the coming season. Loynd concurred that something was off in the math, and said the town must go back to the vendor to ask for an explanation before buying the equipment. The other board members agreed, and McCrory said he would do that.

McCrory also gave a report on the dump truck procurement. That price has slightly increased, he said, but the board approved the purchase. The truck should be delivered to the town in December or January.

McCrory reported that most of the Ridge Road repairs have been made, and that there is now a question of whether to widen the road or build a retaining wall. He said he would support trying to avoid building a wall as it would be more expensive to maintain. Widening the road would require some re-engineering, but the board approved the idea and it will be sent to the engineers.

Since the retirement of the town's Council on Aging van driver last year, the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) has been temporarily providing van service to Erving. The town has advertised for the position, but has been unable to find a willing candidate. FRTA is now asking to officially take over the service.

The selectboard agreed to allow this, and to check back within the next year to make sure that service continues to be acceptable, which it is felt to have been during the six months FRTA has been doing it so far.

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GARTH SHANEYFELT PHOTO

“Rock Dam looking lovely on this hot afternoon,” Montague Reporter business manager Garth Shaneyfelt noted last Friday at around 4:30 p.m. Please be careful if you enter the water in this area. The river behaves very differently at different levels and flow rates, and as this spot is in the “bypass stretch” of the power canal, that flow can change relatively quickly. Several people have lost their lives near there. The summer solstice is this weekend, though the current forecast says the longest day and shortest night will likely fall during a dreary four-day stretch of mild, cloudy weather and intermittent rain.

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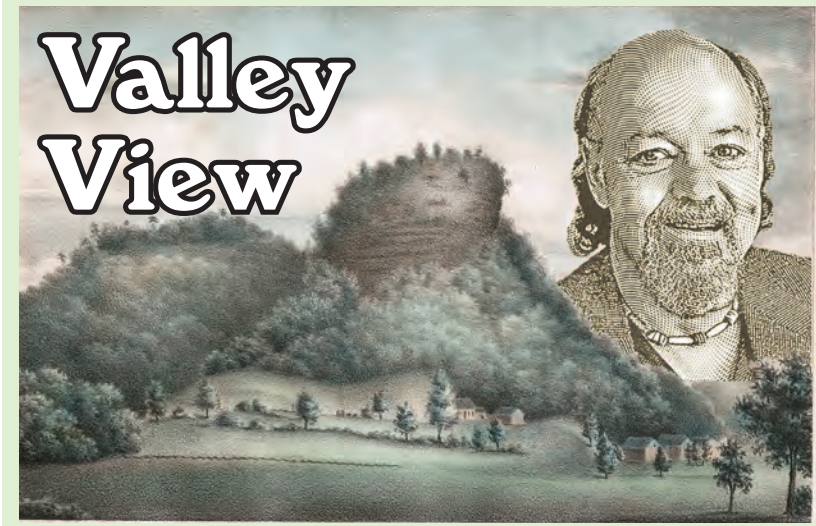
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### There Goes the Count

By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – I knew something had changed when I wasn't receiving my customary weekly US Fish and Wildlife Service anadromous fish-migration tallies from the Connecticut River Fish and Wildlife Conservation office at the Conte Lab in Montague City.

For nearly 50 years, these weekly reports have arrived like clockwork in my inbox from beginning to end of the annual spring spawning migrations of American shad, Atlantic salmon, alewife, blueback herring, lamprey eels, shortnose sturgeon, and in later years striped bass.

This year started as usual. On May 1, I received a press release announcing that the runs were underway. I didn't ponder the unfamiliar name attached to the release, that of one "Corey Eddy, PhD, Fish Biologist / Field Dive Officer" from the Conte Lab.

Hmmmm? I was used to receiving these reports from Ken Sprinkle, who I knew as the Connecticut River Coordinator, a lofty title that appears to have gone the way of the Wells Fargo Stage. Though I paused at the appearance of a new name, I didn't pay much attention to it, assuming Sprinkle was out of town or on vacation. I later discovered that he has retired.

So, there's a new sheriff in town. Maybe it was reported in the local newspaper. Maybe not. I wouldn't know. Newspapers are no longer part of my daily routine, haven't been for many years, despite being a 40-year newsroom veteran.

My first report from Mr. Eddy showed numbers from Day 1, April 30, at Holyoke's Barrett Fish

Lift and three largely insignificant fish passageways on dams in the State of Connecticut. That inaugural report also informed recipients that he would be out of the office "Wednesday, May 6th through Friday, May 16th, so regrettably there will be no weekly report until early in the week of May 18th."

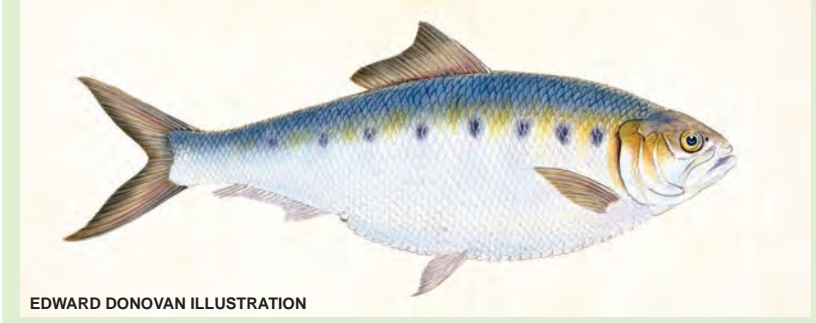
What that meant, in simple English, was that the reports would be unavailable to devoted anglers during the height of the shad run, when the riverbank is annually clogged with sportfishermen and women at the Holyoke Tailrace and other easily accessible migration channels along the river, such as Montague City's Rock Dam, along the river. Oh well, looks like this season the fellas were on their own, forced to rely on word of mouth or trips to the river for news.

What they would have discovered was good news – that of a bountiful shad run that by now may have topped 500,000 through Holyoke, translating into a better-than-usual Powertown fishing season compared to recent years.

The second report to reach me came indirectly, curiously enough, through my wife's Gmail account, and not as promised, "early in the week of May 18th," either. Dated June 5, it showed that a whopping seasonal total of 448,327 shad had passed through Holyoke as of the previous day.

Strapped in a regional drought with water temperatures ranging between the mid- and high 60s Fahrenheit at the time, the run was obviously winding down. Shad stop running upstream and start establishing their spawning lairs once river temperatures level off between 65 and 70 degrees.

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B3



Above: Reader Don Plante shared this photo of Nourse Farms's fields in Deerfield, just across the bike bridge from Montague City.

## Carving the Faces of War & Peace: A Nationally Recognized Sculptor and His Mark on Our Region

By RAY DIDONATO

**WENDELL** – On a recent sunny weekend morning, Laurie and I took a trip to Greenfield to grocery shop and thrift. As we passed the library on Main Street, I noticed a bright green sculpture and wondered aloud what that was all about, making a mental note to check it out on the way home.

But our wanderings led my mind to wander as well, and before I knew it, I had forgotten about the lone statue standing in front of the Leavitt-Hovey House, the former site of the Greenfield Public Library and recently acquired and renovated by Greenfield Savings Bank.

But memory is a funny thing. On my way to an appointment in Greenfield the following week, I remembered the statue and made another mental note, which stuck this time. Later that evening I ventured back to the center of Greenfield.

I was initially unsure whether the statue commemorated a person or an event, but as I drew nearer, I learned that the memorial, which depicts a soldier with a rifle in his hand, paid homage to veterans of the Spanish-American War, with the words *CUBA, PORTO RICO, U.S.A.,* and *PHILLIPPINE ISLANDS* etched into a cross-shaped plaque adorning the sculpture's base. The cross is the hallmark of the United Spanish War Veterans (USWV), an organization founded in 1904.

The *New Bedford Evening Standard* reported at the time that the memorial was dedicated in June 1928 to Spanish War veterans of Franklin County. It was unveiled during the 29th annual encampment of the Massachusetts Department of the USWV, hosted that year in Greenfield.

Through some simple internet sleuthing, I learned that the statue itself was sculpted by Joseph P. Pollia, see **SCULPTOR** page B2



DIDONATO PHOTO

The Spanish War Memorial in Greenfield, in front of the Leavitt-Hovey House on Main Street, was sculpted by Joseph Pollia.

### RECIPES

## SAVORY GOODNESS IN A TIN

By CLAIRE HOPLEY

**LEVERETT** – For many years now, fresh fish has been more expensive than many cuts of meat because of the high cost of hauling a catch from declining stocks of fish. But you can still eat fish on a budget if you choose canned fish. While prices for cans of tuna, sardines, salmon, and other fish have increased along with everything else, canned fish is still affordable, and many dishes riff on its special flavors.

The most familiar of canned fish is tuna. There are several varieties. Skipjack, a smaller, commoner tuna, is usually the cheapest; albacore is larger, with paler, firmer flesh; and yellowfin – often called *ahi* when served in sushi – is a Pacific tuna that often swims with other tuna va-

rieties. Cans marked "chunk light" tuna are usually skipjack or yellowfin; "chunk white" tuna is small pieces of firm-textured albacore.

Any tuna variety is good in sandwiches, though it makes sense to use the cheaper skipjack because it

see **RECIPES** page B12



HOPLEY PHOTO

Fish within reach can still make for high cuisine. Read on for recipes.

# Pet of the Week



CARMODY COLLAGE

## 'PINECONE'

Meet Pinecone, a one-year-old male lionhead rabbit who enjoys head scratches and even gets the zoomies. At his foster home this hopper has a large pen where he is safely confined, but he prefers free roaming and can be trusted loose in a room without supervision. While on the lam he hasn't nibbled anything off-limits. Instead, he enjoys toys, treats, and veggies. He even uses the litter box, 100% of the time.

Pinecone prefers the layout of his primary living area to stay the same, and gets grumpy if humans

rearrange things. He needs an experienced adopter with no young children in the home. The minimum requirement for enclosed spaces is 10 square feet for one rabbit.

Pinecone has been treated for an upper respiratory infection, and has likely had them in the past. Because of this he should be an only rabbit.

There is no adoption fee. To begin the adoption process, call Dakin at (413) 781-4000, ext. 1, or email [springfield@dakinhumane.org](mailto:springfield@dakinhumane.org). If you already have a cage, send a picture of it when you inquire.

## SCULPTOR from page B1

a Sicilian-born Italian American who emigrated to the United States in the late 1800s, landing in Boston with his family.

I learned that Pollia is kind of a big deal, and had influence not just locally, but also nationally, even making a mark in Boston during his student days.

### Pollia's Early Years

A 1912 article in the *Boston Globe* described how an "ambitious 18-year-old Italian youth" was finishing a clay sculpture of Samuel Morse, one of Charlestown's own, who had invented the telegraph.

Pollia spent his days working for a lithographer in Chelsea, and his nights sculpting. He studied at the Museum of Fine Arts under the accomplished sculpture Bela Pratt, his \$100 tuition having been "paid by a wealthy woman." Pollia described how he learned how to sculpt by shaping bread dough his mother gave him into various subjects. In 1913, he won a \$5 fourth place class prize in the clay modeling category.

A 1920 article in the *Boston Post* described a bas-relief likeness of John Mason Little that Pollia had created for the Little Building on Boylston Street, now owned by Emerson College. The article also reported that he had created the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Salem, which had been unveiled the year prior.

Pollia was prolific, and he made it onto the "map" in 1924, when, according to articles in the *New York Times*, he created a sculpture titled "My Buddy," depicting a "doughboy" – a nickname for World War I infantrymen – mourning a fallen comrade, head looking down at a small mound of dirt adorned with a cross. By that time, Pollia was a resident of New York City.

The doughboy monument and an accompanying memorial in Forest Park, Queens honored the 70 American soldiers from the borough who had lost their lives in World War I, referred to then as "the Great War."

The memorial's dedication was attended by over 5,000 people, including 150 Gold Star Mothers and veterans of previous wars.

### Riding High

In his later years, Pollia won a competition to design a monument commemorating the Civil War Battle of Bull Run, depicting the Confederate general Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson. He is perhaps best known for this work, which would be one of his last.

The memorial was placed on the Manassas site at a cost of \$22,500, equivalent to around \$607,000 in today's money. The initial model, crafted by Pollia, depicted Jackson on horseback and wearing a cape. The model was controversial, but not as we would expect today. Rather, as the *New York Times* reported on October 8, 1939:

*The latter was vigorously belabored as looking like General Grant, while one commentator felt that the General's mount resembled a lion rather than a horse. The prevailing opinion now appears to be that while the Daughters of the Confederacy would have preferred another model, and they still object to the fact that Jackson is depicted as wearing a cape (the battle was fought in July), it feels there has been a "great improvement."*

I have not seen the Manassas statue in person, but various online sources mention that it depicts Jackson and his horse, Sorrel, in rather epic proportions and dissimilar to Jackson's rumored "slender" physique. One blogger ascribes this to the particular Italian style of sculpture Pollia used, while another, named Civil War Fan Girl, muses that "I'm thinking [Pollia] maybe read superhero comics cause Jackson & Sorrel look some sort of dynamic duo from a Marvel movie."

Another inaccuracy was that Jackson wasn't riding Little Sorrel into that particular battle.

What interests me most about Pollia was not only his national

prominence, or that he created one local sculpture I happened upon, but that in fact he created several sculptures in our region.

### A Doughboy in Barre

The Barre Common District is a long stretch of public land, bounded on its north by the Barre Congregational Church. It is a picturesque common which I find somewhat unique in its layout, with multiple sections divided by roads.

In North Park, a bronze statue of a World War I doughboy stands resolute, bayoneted rifle on hand.

It was dedicated on November 12, 1929, the anniversary of Armistice Day, and only weeks after the stock market crash that ushered in the Great Depression. A boulder bears the name of 208 local men who served in World War I, donated by local sportsman Harry Worcester Smith, while the statue stands six feet tall, according to a contemporaneous article in *The Springfield Republican*.

That article also noted that Pollia had created the Spanish-American War memorial in Santiago de Cuba, further attesting to his prolific works.

The Barre Common is striking in its layout, and at the time also hosted a Civil War monument built in 1866. Memorials for the Vietnam War and 9/11 would be added later. North Park, the *Republican* article noted,

*... is the section of the common where the first meeting house was erected, where the first schoolhouse stood, where the agricultural fairs were held in olden time, where the Whigs held the famous Harrison rally in 1840, with Daniel Webster as the speaker of the day.*

A parade followed the dedication. Enmeshed in history, the soldier stands as a silent tribute to those who served and died in World War I, and to those who serve today.

### A Monument to Peace

Veterans Memorial Park is located within the Orange Center Historic District, a triangle of land between Water, Depot and South Main streets. It is nestled between Orange Fire Station 1, which sits on Water Street and old brick apartment buildings and storefronts along East Main and Depot streets.

The Massachusetts Peace Statue, another creation of Pollia's, sits within this park. It depicts a soldier, his left arm held against the back of a young schoolboy carrying a book, and his right palm raised to the sky, perhaps sharing a nugget of wisdom with the young man. A 1933 *Republican* article detailed how the teen was to be depicted as "grasping for an ideal which the soldier is passing to him."

I like to think the soldier also hopes he fought the War so that this boy's generation wouldn't have to fight another one. A plaque is inscribed with the words, "IT SHALL NOT BE AGAIN," with a mourning, grief-ridden figure leaning next to the inscription.

The statue was completed in 1934, and I can only surmise Pollia's likely disappointment that the world would break out into war again only four years later, bringing with it the new horrors of the Holocaust.

On May 13, 2004, the 70th anniversary of the dedication of the Peace Statue, when the United States was at war both in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Congressional Record includes a speech made on

see **SCULPTOR** next page



DIDONATO PHOTO

The World War I memorial in the Common District in Barre, Massachusetts.

## Senior Center Activities JUNE 22 THROUGH 26

### GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill-Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, please call 863-9357.

#### Monday 6/22

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise

#### Tuesday 6/23

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

#### Wednesday 6/24

Closed for Special Election  
10 a.m. Outdoor Yoga at  
Discovery Center

#### Thursday 6/25

10 a.m. Smashed Pottery  
Mosaics Part Two  
1 p.m. Pitch

#### Friday 6/26

10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11 a.m. Chair Exercise  
12 p.m. Pizza Party  
2 p.m. Chair Dance

### ERVING

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

#### Monday 6/22

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

### Tuesday 6/23

9 a.m. Stretch and Balance  
10 a.m. Line Dancing  
11 a.m. Social Stringer

### Wednesday 6/24

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

### Thursday 6/25

9 a.m. Barre Fusion  
10 a.m. Pilates Flow  
1 p.m. Wound Care  
1 p.m. Ice Cream Social

### Friday 6/26

8:30 a.m. Quilting and Open Sew

### LEVERETT

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

### WENDELL

Foot care clinic is the first Wednesday of each month. The next clinic is July 1.

Call Katie Nolan at (978) 544-2306 for info or appointments. For Senior Health Rides, contact Nancy Spittle at (978) 544-6760.

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The Massachusetts Peace Statue in Veterans Memorial Park, Orange, depicts a soldier and a schoolboy.

**SCULPTOR** from page B2

the House floor by Representative John Olver (D-Massachusetts), in which he remarked that it is the “only ‘peace statue’ of its kind” and went on to say:

*Seventy years ago today this statue was unveiled as a memorial to the brave men of Orange who gave their lives to protect our country. It has also served as a beautiful reminder that peace is an alternative to war.*

Wendell writer Cathy Stanton points out to me that Joseph Pollia also sculpted the 1935 statue of John Brown that stands at the abolitionist’s historic farm near Lake Placid, New York, which has parallels to the statue in Orange. That statue features a bearded John Brown standing beside a black youth, his hand on the youth’s back – much in the same way the soldier’s hand is on the back of the

youth on the Massachusetts Peace Statue. The statue is both moving and aspirational. The money for it was raised through small donations from black donors.

In 1932, Pollia’s sculpture “Hail to the Sunrise” was erected in Charlemont in Mohawk Park, “near the spot where the Deerfield crosses the highway,” according to an article at the time in the *North Adams Transcript*. It depicts a Native American man, hands outstretched toward the sky, face rising toward the sun.

According to a *New York Times* obituary, Pollia died in 1954 at Parkchester Hospital, in the Bronx, at age 61, but his legacy survives to this day, both locally and nationally. He was a talented sculptor who captured the human condition, as well as the painful, and at once uplifting, memory of war and the hope for peace which many of us so long for.



**VALLEY VIEW** from page B1

So, it’s probably a long shot that we’ll reach the half-million mark for the first time since 2017, when the total through Holyoke was 527,249. The only other figure over 400,000 since then was 437,553 in 2024, in keeping with but still a bit less than this year’s total.

The record also showed that 18,423 shad had passed Turners Falls through June 4, and 17,343 of them had made their way upriver of the dam in Vernon, Vermont.

Oh yeah, and how about this one? Through June 4, three lonely At-

lantic salmon had passed Holyoke. They may be swimming today in a gravel-bedded tributary near you, such as the Deerfield or Green rivers, considering that none seemed to have passed Turners Falls.

Of course, we’re relying on old news. Perhaps a final report will arrive soon after the counting stations shut down. I won’t hold my breath. Sooner or later, it’ll arrive.

In passing, I wish all the best to my old friend Ken Sprankle. Hope he experiences the same retirement bliss I savor more with each passing day.



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Apple Tree Chopped Down; Eleven Turkeys Abducted; Vehicle Hits Bear; Friends Roughhouse at Town Hall**

**Monday, 6/8**

10:49 a.m. Walk-in advising that there is a male party who walks up and down Millers Falls Road on a regular basis, and that yesterday, that male was walking and urinating at the same time with his private part exposed. This same male reportedly often walks in the road, creating a hazard. Referred to an officer.

11:42 a.m. Caller from Turnpike Road believes someone entered her home, possibly at night, and she is now missing a laptop and a set of keys. Investigated.

12:18 p.m. Report of an accident at Avenue A and Third Street involving a FRTA bus and a passenger vehicle. No injuries reported.

7:25 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road states that someone has cut down the apple tree that she has in her yard. Caller advises this occurred sometime in the past week. Officer spoke to party about tree issue; advised her to pick up security cameras and other ways to feel secure at her residence.

7:34 p.m. 911 caller states someone vandalized his vehicle. Caller advises he is near the bridge in Erving. Transferred to Shelburne Control. Erving PD advises involved vehicle was on East Mineral Road in Millers Falls; caller was advised to go to our PD to fill out a report.

8:03 p.m. Repossession company advises they faxed over a repo for a vehicle on Industrial Boulevard. Officers requested to the scene as there is a report of a hostile male on the scene, and his repo man is not answering the radio. Officer advises repo company has vehicle; no issue.

**Tuesday, 6/9**

12:09 p.m. Caller from Lake Pleasant reports that her neighbor keeps knocking on her door and asking her for things. Officer spoke with caller, who advised she was just asking if the police were knocking at her door while she was in the shower.

2:41 p.m. Anonymous caller reporting that a vehicle ran through a stop sign on Fourth Street and almost struck them. Report taken.

9:26 p.m. Anonymous caller reports that a male party is trying to start another fire in the Fourth Street alley, and he isn’t supposed to. TFFD advises male is allowed to have a fire within his fire pit outside, which he has been advised of numerous times. Officer advises he spoke to the neighbors

and advised them of the complaint. Fire is small, and contained. Caller called back in stating there are flames shooting into the air and it’s a hazard. Officer returned call; party states he didn’t call, but that his neighbor used the phone to call. He was advised the fire is within a fire pit, well-contained, which was approved by the fire department. Referred to that department if he has further concerns.

**Wednesday, 6/10**

6:52 a.m. Caller from Montague City Road would like an officer to respond to her home; states a guy was there yesterday and now things are missing and there is interference with her inner communication devices. Officer met with caller. Not quite as reported.

4:05 p.m. Caller reports that a male broke into the Brick House last night. She has this on camera; states that he is there now and has an active warrant; would like him picked up and trespassed from the property. Caller reports that yesterday a coworker called in reporting the male party and suspicious behavior, and that a laptop was stolen. Caller does not believe there is enough evidence to press charges at this time. An 18-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on a default warrant.

**Thursday, 6/11**

2:28 a.m. Caller from Bridge Street states the neighbors are being loud; would like officers to check the area. Officer spoke with a tenant who stated she was fixing something and shouldn’t have been loud.

8:49 a.m. Caller reports that when she got to work at the library a few minutes ago, there was a male in the yard under their tents who was throwing their tables and yelling at himself. He then walked over to the Food City lot. Officer advised. Argument between partners. They have calmed down. Units clear.

9:29 a.m. Caller reporting he hit a bear with his car on Millers Falls Road just past the airport. Bear ran into the woods; damage to the vehicle. Environmental Police notified; states if bear isn’t on scene, no services are needed. Report taken. Units clear; officer checking Lake

Pleasant Road. 3:04 p.m. Caller reports that a male is riding a moped on Avenue A; would like him to be told to ride on the other side of the street. Area search negative.

8:41 p.m. 911 call reporting that two females entered North Village Smokehouse under the influence; they are currently in the middle of Route 63, and one of the females is in a baby stroller. Officer located one of the parties in the area. Second officer checking area for other party. Both involved females have out-of-state warrants; warrants are non-extraditable. Officer has one party in cruiser; providing courtesy transport to her residence. Party left in the care of her aunt. Officers located baby stroller. Unable to locate other female party.

**Friday, 6/12**

8:32 a.m. Caller states he was walking on Fifth Street and two dogs, a pitbull and a Chihuahua, tried to attack him. States the neighbors started yelling at the dogs, and the dog owner then came running up, yelled at him, and started threatening to beat him up. Caller then ran to the bus stop in front of Food City. Caller called back in stating the male followed him in his vehicle to the bus stop, yelling and making homicidal comments, and then sped off, headed toward Cumby’s. Caller advises he is making an animal complaint. Dogs were off leash, and handler of dogs got aggressive and protective of dogs when caller stomped his foot at the dogs. Handler of dogs has a Greenfield address.

4:19 p.m. Caller advises that RVs are parked in the area of the church lot on J Street; states individuals are throwing out trash, litter, and human excrement in the bushes by the wooden guardrail. Message left with the board of health.

6:53 p.m. Officer advising of a noise complaint regarding a male revving a motorcycle as he is leaving a Mormon Hollow Road property. Ongoing issue between both parties involved in call. Advised of options; officer will attempt to locate involved party to notify him of the complaint.

7:05 p.m. Caller states that her juvenile son was walking on Avenue A and when he passed by the liquor store, he was accosted by an individual who was not wearing any shoes. Caller advises involved male was shouting profanities and making threats to harm her son. Officer attempt-

ing to locate male, who resides behind a Fourth Street address. Officer requesting copy of security footage when store owner is able to send it.

**Saturday, 6/13**

9:06 a.m. Caller from Montague Street reports that yesterday her tenant was outside and the neighbor’s teenage son started barking, whistling, and howling at her and would not stop when asked to. States when he went inside his house, he then removed all his clothes and kept walking back and forth so the tenant could see him. Caller states this is the same teenager who broke her window on June 8. Caller wants this on record for now; states she spoke with the teenager’s mother this morning. Officer attempting to call mother of juvenile.

10:46 a.m. Caller reports that a new business has opened on Route 47 about a mile from the Bookmill; the business has put pylons out, and some have fallen into the roadway, causing a hazard. Officer clear; advises pylons and cones are intact and in the road properly due to the open house.

6:46 p.m. Caller advises there are 40 or 50 people having a bonfire down by the swimming hole near the Patch. Units advise not as reported; roughly four people in the area, and no fire.

8:58 p.m. 911 caller reporting active fight among four individuals in the town hall parking lot. Officer advises not as reported; friends roughhousing and having a sleepover.

10:01 p.m. Caller reports that he was pumping gas at Cumberland Farms and observed a screw that was placed in the pump. Caller advises that when he went to pump gas, gas started flowing due to the screw. Caller advises he has read/heard about this happening more often and believes the PD should be aware of this. Caller states that he told the clerk; however, the clerk did not seem to care and placed a bag over the pump to mark it out of order. Officer advises he is responding to Nouria to check pumps. Clerk at Nouria is familiar with this scam. Officer states it appears that the pumps at Nouria are not susceptible to this scam.

**Sunday, 6/14**  
7:46 a.m. DPW employee reports a male taking returnables from the recycling bin at the landfill. Officers report the male has permission to be there collecting cans for a charity.

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# PHOTO BEAT: 75 Years... and Five Kilometers



JOE R. PARZYCH PHOTO

By REPORTER STAFF

**BERNARDSTON** – The *Montague Reporter's* photo beat guy, Joe R. Parzych, and his dad Joe M. Parzych both took photos while participating in the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism's 5K race in Bernardston last Saturday.

"Wow, it was fun," Joe R. writes. "There were a lot of people this year, including from different parts of the state and a few from New York. We raised a lot of money, both for the Doug Flutie Foundation for Autism and the United Arc. I got to see my friends and meet new people, and there was awesome food. The people who are in the race win medals.... Everyone had an awesome day, and we hope to see you next year. By the way, next year is going to be a bigger event."

Staff from both organizations gave speeches and handed out awards on stage at Incandescent Brewing after the race.

Joe R., currently a resident of Greenfield, says that he and his friends walked in the race, though others ran. "We had an awesome, fun time, even though it was hot outside," he said. "My dad took some photos, and I took two photos."

"Before the 5K race I worked out at the YMCA," he adds, "including practicing walking. Then we went to Hillside Pizza in Bernardston."

The Flutie Foundation was founded in 1998 by former NFL quarterback Doug Flutie and his wife Laurie, whose son Doug, Jr., was diagnosed with autism at an early age. The foundation "offers several programs to help people and families of all ages affected by autism live each day to the fullest by alleviating the financial distress caused by an autism diagnosis and making sure services are available to all people with autism regardless of their ability to pay."

The Bernardston race, now in its

second year, is held in collaboration with the United Arc, and raises funds to support the western Massachusetts agency. On Monday, organizers reported the event netted over \$9,200.

"This is a great cause," Joe explains, "going toward individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities through the Doug Flutie Foundation, including the United Arc of Franklin County, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary next week."

"My dad's sister, the late Christine Parzych, who was born with Down syndrome and was part of both the United Arc of Franklin County and Pathlight, would be looking down from heaven smiling and being proud. So would his mother, Edna Carleton Parzych, and his other sister, Joann Parzych Olsen, who were both board members at the United Arc and would be proud seeing everyone there after 75 years."

Joe R. also reports that he has recently been awarded a scholarship from the Flutie Foundation to help fund his soon-to-be published book of photography, *Photo Beat, Past and Present – Moving Forward in Time, Capturing of the Moment*. He says the idea behind this book is that his photographic storytelling "provides an autistic perspective to everyday objects that people overlook."

"Stevie Cormier, a development and events manager at United Arc of Franklin County, is helping me get my book published," he writes. "Thank you very much to the United Arc and Doug Flutie Foundation for helping me with the book, including asking for blurbs from the *Montague Reporter*, the *Springfield Republican*, and others."

The proceeds of the book will go toward good causes, Joe R. reports, and he hopes to have readings at schools including in his hometown of Gill, and to have it on shelves at local libraries and bookstores.



JOE M. PARZYCH PHOTO



JOE M. PARZYCH PHOTO



JOE R. PARZYCH PHOTO



JOE M. PARZYCH PHOTO

Top: Sweating for a good cause on Saturday. Middle: Joe R. Parzych cools off after the race – and displays his medal. Lower left: United Arc events and development manager Stevie Cormier (left) and Flutie Foundation development manager Joe Katusich (right) pass out awards and swag at Incandescent Brewing after the race. Above right: Joe R.'s new Nikon Z250II mirrorless camera.

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Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

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**PEREY**

TUE-SAT 4-9

REFLECTION

# The Carnegie Library... ...and the People It Shaped

By SANDER CASINO

**RALEIGH, NC** – On June 24, voters in my hometown of Montague, Massachusetts (Village of Turners Falls) will decide whether to fund a new public library. Town Meeting members voted this spring to send the \$23.7 million project to a townwide vote, and the question has generated real discussion, as one might expect when a community contemplates the future of a building that has stood for generations.

The current library is a Carnegie library.



TOWN OF MONTAGUE PHOTO

The local history reading room at the Carnegie Library.

Andrew Carnegie funded it with a grant of \$13,500 in 1903, and the building opened its doors on Avenue A in Turners Falls a few years later. It sits elevated above the street, its classical columns and stone facade conveying permanence and civic purpose. Like many Carnegie libraries across the country, it is beautiful. And like many Carnegie libraries across the country, it has become increasingly difficult to adapt to modern expectations for accessibility, technology, and public use.

As I followed the discussion, I found myself returning to a memory from my youth. I distinctly remember sitting in the upstairs reading room of that library during elementary school for a reading of *The Little Engine That Could*. I cannot tell you who the reader was, and I cannot remember the exact year. But I remember the story.

*"I think I can. I think I can."*

For a child, it is a simple story about perseverance. For an adult, it becomes something more.

Only later in life did I come to appreciate another story connected to that building: the story of Andrew Carnegie himself. Carnegie arrived in America as a poor immigrant with little formal education and few advantages. As a young working boy, he gained access to a library through the generosity of a benefactor who believed that working people deserved access to books and learning. That experience changed his life.

Years later, after becoming one of the most successful industrialists in history, he set out to provide the same opportunity to others. Between 1883 and 1929, more than 2,500 Carnegie libraries were built around



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PHOTO

Andrew Carnegie and his wife, Louise Whitfield, circa 1910.

the world. One of them found its way to a small Massachusetts mill town by the name of Montague.

At first glance, it is tempting to think Carnegie was funding buildings. The more I have reflected on it, the more I believe he was funding something else entirely.

He was funding institutional operating systems. The building was simply the visible artifact.

To receive a Carnegie grant, a community had to provide the land, commit to annual funding, guarantee free public access, and maintain the institution for future generations. Carnegie was not simply writing checks. He was creating durable civic infrastructure, aligning capital, governance, incentives, and mission in an arrangement designed to outlive him.

The architecture reflected the same thinking. Grand staircases elevated visitors, physically and symbolically, into what many described as a "Temple of Learning." Large windows flooded the interior with natural light. Open stacks encouraged discovery. Community rooms turned libraries into gathering places. Every element served a purpose. Yet the true measure of success was never the architecture. The true measure was whether the institution changed lives.

Looking back, I find it difficult not to notice the continuity. A library helped shape Carnegie. Carnegie helped create a library in a small Massachusetts town. That library helped shape another child. More than a century after the building was constructed, the institution was still doing exactly what it had been designed to do.

That is a remarkable return on investment.

Which brings me back to the decision in front of Montague. Some have understandably focused on the future of the building itself. I understand that instinct, and I feel it myself. The Carnegie remains a beautiful piece of civic architecture and an important part of the town's history, and I hope it is preserved and given a meaningful next chapter. But over time I have come to believe that Carnegie's deeper legacy was never the building. It was the purpose: the belief that ordinary people, given access to knowledge and opportunity, could improve themselves and strengthen their communities.



A postcard, ca. 1908, depicting the Carnegie.

The Carnegie Library's greatest contribution was never the building. It was the people it helped shape.

I can trace part of my own life back to that upstairs reading room. Years later, I came to see that Andrew Carnegie's own life was, in many ways, a real-world version of *The Little Engine That Could*.

A new library may not carry Carnegie's name above the entrance. It may not have the same stairs, columns, and windows, or the same historic presence on Avenue A. But it can carry the purpose. If it expands access, welcomes more people, serves more children, supports more families, and creates more space for learning, then it is not moving away from the Carnegie idea. It is extending it.

The building may change. The purpose should not. And if Carnegie's goal was to create self-reliant citizens capable of learning, striving, and contributing to their communities, then the fact that a small town is still wrestling with how best to do that more than a century later seems like a remarkably good return on investment.

*This article originally appeared in Sander Casino's newsletter, Institutional Architecture. Mr. Casino is founder and principal of Calibra Group and a former Turners Falls High School student-athlete and 1991 graduate. He has more than 30 years of experience in banking, treasury, finance, and leadership, and writes on and works in the areas of leadership, systems, and durable institutional design. He holds a B.S. from the UMass Isenberg School of Management, a graduate certificate from Boston University, and an advanced certificate from MIT Sloan. He lives in Raleigh, North Carolina with his wife and two sons.*

## LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on June 16, 2016: News from the Montague Reporter archive.

### Will FirstLight Impact Relicensing, Tax Appeals?

On June 1, the Canadian company PSP Investments closed on the purchase of FirstLight Power Resources from the French energy giant ENGIE, formerly GDF Suez.

Both the Northfield Mountain Project and the dam, canal, and power stations, known collectively as the Turners Falls Project, are in the process of renewing their federal licenses. Organizations such as the Connecticut River Watershed Council are advocating for changes in how much of the riv-

er's water FirstLight diverts into the mountain reservoir and canal.

### Free Parking Attracts Business

On Tuesday, Montague town planner Walter Ramsey told members of the Montague Business Association that parking challenges are a symptom of a healthy, growing downtown. With the help of a \$324,000 state grant, a new municipal parking lot is expected to open in the fall at Third and Canal, the site of a former toxic dump and youth sculpture park.

Ramsey described the village's free parking as an "economic development tool" that attracts tenants and customers, and said there is no talk of adding metered parking.

## 20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 15, 2006: News from the Montague Reporter archive.

### Wendell Opts For New Library

The groundbreaking ceremony for the new Wendell Library on Depot Road was attended by over 80 people of all ages on June 11.

The original town hall, built in 1846, will be completely renovated and expanded to house the library. The new library will feature much more room for a growing collection of books and audio-visual materials, computers, and meeting space.

### Viper Eviction

Responding to a complaint on Tuesday that a snake was loose in

a house on Swamp Road, Montague's animal control officer removed a three-foot copperhead from the residence.

### Block Grant Funds Mural

Woodworkers Mike Langknecht and Spencer Peterman, whose studio faces the Brick House, noticed that the garden the teens were planting would give the men a nice view. They decided to return the favor by letting the young folk paint a mural on the men's long cinderblock wall.

So began the Brick House Mural Project. The staff encourages local residents to drop by to see the progress, tour the building, and learn about the programs the Brick House offers the community.

## 140 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 16, 1886: News from the Turners Falls Reporter archive.

### Turners Falls and Vicinity

Dr. Coy has a pear tree that blossomed fully and fruit came in abundance, but the crazy thing has begun to blossom again just as though it was the beginning of spring.

John Klee has just taken the census of the school children in the village of Turners Falls, and he found 947 between the ages of 5 and 15 years.

The schools of Turners Falls will close this week as follows: Those in the G street building on Thursday morning; Second street school, on Thursday at noon; those in the Central street building on Thursday afternoon; Eight street, Friday morning, and those in the Oakman building on Friday afternoon. The schools in the other part of the town will close next week.

Messrs Thomas Brothers have finished their contract of the sew-

ers, and the engineer and committee are inspecting the work now. It is considered remarkable that so few accidents have occurred, but these were to the eyes of the workmen. Michael Strahan lost the sight of one eye some time ago, and a stranger had both eyes blown out more recently.

The meeting of the Turners Falls fire district called for the purpose of accepting the charter to supply the village with water, was well attended, and was the most harmonious affair of the kind the village has yet seen. The vote to accept was unanimous, not a soul having courage to put in a not vote.

The drive of logs coming down the Connecticut formed the largest jam at Waterford, that has ever been seen on the river. The logs were piled up for a mile and in some places to a height of 25 feet. Three hundred men have been using explosives to break the jam, at a cost estimated at \$20,000.

St. Mary's strawberry festival to-morrow night.



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CALL FOR ARTISTS

Our Fifth Wrapping Paper Edition!

By REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS - In 2020, we invited seven local artists to design pages for a special edition of the newspaper to be sold as unique, recyclable wrapping paper.

In 2025 we decided to vary things a little by trying a flower bulb fundraiser. A few thousand bulbs went into the ground last fall as a result, including some at community gardens, parks, and cemeteries, through our "Garden Angel" program.

Seven artists will be chosen for the 2026 Wrapping Paper Edition by jury selection from submissions made between now and September 1.

copies of the Wrapping Paper Edition, fame, and goodwill.

We will give each artist the space of two full adjacent pages for their design, making a double page measuring approximately 20 by 22 inches.



tattoo artists, comic illustrators, graffiti specialists, painters, street sketchers, kids, photographers, geometry nerds, and type designers - please send us ideas for cool, original wrapping paper pages!

Winners will be notified by

September 14, and will then have until early November to submit their finished work, at which time they will receive the stipend.

During Thanksgiving week, when we skip regular publication, we will print the Wrapping Paper Edition and get it out to stores for sale.

Artists and designers may submit up to three designs or proposals by September 1 using the submission form at tinyurl.com/MRwrap2026.

If you can't use the online form, send your name, address, phone number, and up to three proposals to features@montaguereporter.org with "Wrap" in the subject line.

For more information, contact Nina at (413) 834-8800 or features@montaguereporter.org.

If you are a shop or business owner who would like to sell copies of the Wrapping Paper Edition, get in touch with Garth at garth@montaguereporter.org.

LAVA's 'On the Boards' Fest

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD - "On the Boards" is a festival that the LAVA Center runs every year in June, with readings of new plays by local writers.

Some of the names of the plays are quite interesting. One is called A Rare Sight, written by Jem O'Hara. Another, written by Jan Maher, is named Phoenix.

I was able to talk with Jan about her play, and the festival. Jan told me she's been involved with the On the Boards festival "since the Boards started, in 2023."

As We Were is the name of a play Jan entered in the festival two years ago. Last year was the first year she didn't direct or have anything in the festival.

I also talked to the director of her play. His name is Liam Castellan, and he has been directing for over 20 years, but this was his first time directing in the festival and for working with the LAVA Center.

Liam said he has tried his hand at writing plays himself, but finds it more fulfilling working with playwrights and supporting them as a director.

doing that in his Northwestern University dorm and then for 11 years in the Philadelphia theater community.

Liam told me he learned about the open call to be a director at this festival through a member of Berkshire Voices, where he works as a co-moderator of their new play development program.

"It's kind of a new play. I think it will give the audience a lot to think about and discuss. Jan Maher has achieved a rare feat with her drama. She explores some tough subject matter in 25 pages without anything feeling rushed or incomplete, and finding moments of humor as well.

The reading of Phoenix took place on June 5. "For the festival, we get a medium big crowd," Jan told me. "The audience has been growing year after year."

On The Boards continues this Friday and Saturday, June 19 and 20 at 7 p.m., with readings of plays by CL Dukes and Patricia Crosby. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and tickets are \$8 to \$30, sliding scale, with no one turned away for lack of funds.



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Submit your comics (and puzzles) to editor@montaguereporter.org. Original & local creations only, please!

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# The Children's Page

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# 2025 Water Quality Report

## Turners Falls Water Department

226 Millers Falls Road  
Turners Falls, Massachusetts 01376-1605  
PWS ID#1192000

We are once again proud to present our annual water quality report, covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2025. Over the years, we have dedicated ourselves to producing drinking water that meets all state and federal standards. We continually strive to adopt new methods for delivering the best quality drinking water to you. As new challenges to drinking water safety emerge, we remain vigilant in meeting the goals of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users.

Please share with us your thoughts or concerns about the information in this report. After all, well-informed customers are our best allies. For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Jeffrey Hildreth, Water Department Superintendent, or Suzanne Leh, Clerk/Collector, at (413) 863-4542.

### Community Participation

You are invited to participate in our public forum and voice your concerns about your drinking water. We meet the first Wednesday of each month, beginning at 4:30 p.m., at the Water Department Office, 226 Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls. Our Annual Meeting of the Turners Falls Fire District is held in the spring.

2025 Board of Water Commissioners: Bruce Merriam, Edward Pelis, John Miner. 2025 Certified Water Operators: Stephen Fitzpatrick, Austin Felix. Water Operator: Anthony Peterson.

### Where Does My Water Come From?

The Turners Falls Water Department's main source of water consists of one ground water artesian well located off Center Street in Montague Center. Gravel-packed Well #1192000 2G pumps 1.2 to 2 million gallons of water per day to the filter plant. At the plant, the water is sand filtered for the removal of iron and manganese; the treated, filtered water is then discharged into the gravity-fed distribution system. The Hannegan Brook Well located near Lake Pleasant can yield 1.44 MGD to meet future water demands.

The water quality is good and only requires the addition of water treatment chemicals for pH adjustment. The storage facilities in Turners Falls have a total storage capacity of 6.3 million gallons. Lake Pleasant and Green Pond are emergency backup surface water supplies. Please call Jeff or Suzanne to answer any questions at (413) 863-4542, [clerk@turnersfallswater.com](mailto:clerk@turnersfallswater.com), [\[superintendent@turnersfallswater.com\]\(mailto:superintendent@turnersfallswater.com\), or \[www.turnersfallswater.com\]\(http://www.turnersfallswater.com\).](mailto:superinten-</a></p>
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### Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants may be particularly at risk from infections.

These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or <http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.

### Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the MA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) prescribe regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Substances that may be present in source water include: Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife; Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; Pesticides and

Herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources, such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses; Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and which may also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems; and Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

### Water Conservation

You can play a role in conserving water and save yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water.

Here are a few tips: Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.

Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.

Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.

Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.

Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Write down the meter reading before going to bed at night or leaving for a day. Include all numbers, write down the new reading in the morning and subtract the prior reading. If there has been a change it is probably due to a leak.

### What Is a Cross-connection?

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand), causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden

hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cesspools, or garden chemicals.

Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. For more information, review the Cross-connection Control Manual from the U.S. EPA's Web site at <http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/drinkingwater/prws/crossconnectioncontrol/index.cfm>. You can also call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

### Source Water Assessment, Protecting Turners Falls Water Supply:

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) for the water supply source serving this water system. This report is a planning tool to support local and state efforts to improve water supply protection. Although the TFWD has many safeguards in place, the overall susceptibility ranking to contamination of the groundwater supplies is HIGH, based on the presence of numerous high-ranking threat land-uses within the Zone II water supply protection areas. The report commends our water system on its proactive approach to source protection. A complete SWAP report is available at the TFWD, the Board of Health office, and online at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/swapreps.htm>. For more information, call the TFWD at 863-4542.

### Things You Can Do to Protect Our Water Supply

Take used motor oil and other such fluids to the town's hazardous waste collection sites, use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly, and do not use the riverbeds to dispose of any waste.

### Lead in Drinking Water

*How does lead get in my drinking water?*

In Massachusetts, most drinking water sources like reservoirs and groundwater are lead free. When lead is present in water, it is typically due to the water flowing through lead pipes or plumbing in homes with lead parts or solder. Service lines, which are the pipes that connect your home to the water main, could have lead in them. Inside your home, you may have lead pipes, copper pipes connected with lead solder, or brass faucets or fittings containing lead. Lead levels are highest when the water has been sitting in lead pipes for several hours. Hot water causes lead to enter water faster.

*How does lead get into my body?*

In many cases, most exposure to

lead is from paint dust, paint chips and soil contaminated with lead. Lead can also get into your body by drinking or cooking with water containing lead. Young children absorb lead more easily than adults, and lead can be passed from a mother to her unborn child. For these reasons, lead in drinking water can be an important source of exposure for pregnant women, young children, and infants that are fed powdered formula.

Lead is not absorbed through the skin. Bathing or showering in water containing lead should be safe.

*What can I do right now to protect my family?*

Run your water before using and use COLD water. Always use cold water for drinking and cooking. Do not use hot water for cooking or baby formula. Hot water usually has higher lead levels than cold water. Running the water before using will usually reduce any lead levels by flushing out the water that has been sitting in lead pipes for several hours.

Boiling water does not eliminate lead. If there is lead in your water, boiling it will increase lead levels.

### Statement from the Environmental Protection Agency:

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and home plumbing. Turners Falls Water Dept. is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home.

Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formulas, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period.

If you are concerned about lead in your water, and wish to have your water tested, contact Turners Falls Water Dept. at (413) 863-4542. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

## Service Line Inventory:

The Turners Falls Water Dept. was required to conduct an inventory of service line materials throughout its distribution system. This inventory can be obtained at our Office located at 226 Millers Falls Rd., Turners Falls MA 01376, M-Th 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Fridays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The inventory will inform you of known and unknown pipe materials currently in place at all of our water service customers.

## Turners Falls Water Quality Data

During the past year, we have taken many water samples to determine the presence of any contaminants and to comply with state and federal drinking water quality parameters. The tables below show only those contaminants that were detected in the water. MassDEP has reduced the monitoring requirements for volatile organic contaminants, inorganic contaminants, synthetic organic contaminants, and perchlorate because the sources are not at risk of contamination.

The last sample collected for these contaminants was taken on the following dates and was found to meet all applicable US EPA and MassDEP standards:  
*VOCs: 11/8/2023; IOCs: 8/10/2020; SOC's: 7/22/2021; Perchlorate: 8/16/2023.*

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community. Our next round of lead and copper sampling will be in 2028.

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Date Collected	90th percentile	Action Level	#MCLG	# of sites sampled	Range of Tap Sampling Results	# of sites above Action Level	Possible source of Contamination
Lead (ppb)	7/22/2025 7/24/2025	0	15	0	20	0 - 0.001	0	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	7/22/2025 7/24/2025	0.026	1.3	1.3	20	0 - 0.0551	0	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservation

Secondary Contaminant	Date Collected	Result or Range Detected	Average Detected	SMCL	ORSG or Health Advisory	Possible Sources
Manganese	7/30/2025	0 – .003 ug/L	.0015 ug/L	50 ug/L	300*	Natural sources as well as discharges from industrial uses.
Sodium	8/16/2023	10.3 – 11.1 mg/L	10.7 mg/L	20 mg/L		Discharge from the use and improper storage of sodium-containing de-icing compounds or in water softening agents
Iron	7/30/2025	ND	ND	300 ug/L		Naturally occurring, corrosion of cast iron pipes

\* US EPA and Mass DEP have established public health advisory levels for manganese to protect against concerns of potential neurological effect and a one-day and 10-day HA of 1,000 ppb for acute exposure.

Radioactive Contaminants	Date Collected	Result or Range Detected	Average Detected	SMCL	Possible Sources
Gross Alpha Particle Activity	8/21/2024 8/22/2024	ND – 0.24 pCi/L	0.12 pCi/L	15 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium 226 & 228 (combined values)	8/21/2024 8/22/2024	ND- 0.72 pCi/L	0.36 pCi/L	5 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits

Inorganic Contaminants	Date Collected	Result or Range Detected	Average Detected	MCL	Violation?	Possible Sources
Nitrate	7/30/2025	ND - 0.139 mg/L	0.0695	10 mg/L	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewage; erosion of natural deposits

## PFAS Sampling:

On October 2, 2020, MassDEP published its PFAS public drinking water standard or Massachusetts Maximum Contaminant Level (MMCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L), or parts per trillion (ppt) applicable to community (COM) and non-transient non-community (NTNC) systems for the sum of the concentrations of six specific PFAS. This drinking water standard is set to be protective against adverse health effects for all people consuming the water. **The Turners Falls Water Department did take samples in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and has had No Detects for PFAS.**

### Definitions:

**90th Percentile:** Out of every 10 homes sampled, 9 were at or below this level.

**AL (Action Level):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level):** The highest level of contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

**mg/L:** Milligrams per liter.

**MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level):** The highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that the addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant**

**Level Goal):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**ND (Not detected):** Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

**pCi/L: picocuries per liter**

**ppb (parts per billion):** One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

**ppm (parts per million):** One part substance

per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

**SMCL (Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level):** They are established as guidelines to assist public water systems in managing their drinking water for aesthetic considerations, such as taste, color, and odor. These contaminants are not considered to present a risk to human health at the SMCL.

**TT (Treatment Technique):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**ug/L:** Micrograms per liter.

# MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

By J. BURKETT and TROY CURRY

**TURNERS FALLS** – We have another special interview this week! And it's with Jacquelyn Roy.

Jacquelyn is an up-and-coming name, so you might not have heard of her yet, but watch out world, because she's really talented and is hopefully getting ready to do her first tour. She has definitely blown some folks away around these parts, at places like the Great Falls Harvest during the recent 30-year anniversary Mystra Ooze Fest, and last year at the Rendezvous.

And yes, she is yet another vocalist/acoustic guitar player, but she doesn't really sound like anyone else. Well, we guess she is in the same ballpark as other Ooze favorites, such as Allysen Callery and Karen Zanes, and also some New Zealand solo types and '90s underground America folkies. But her songs are very unique, and moving for sure. We recommend her stuff to almost anyone with a mind open to cool acoustic zones.

Check her out ASAP and buy some cassettes, or find her on Bandcamp and stream her stuff that way.

She's from Gloucester, Mass by the way!

**MMM:** Hi Jacquelyn! Can you tell us about some of your early music favorites?

**JR:** Some favorites: Neil Young, Cat Stevens, Radiohead.

**MMM:** How did you get started with your solo stuff? Were you in bands?

**JR:** I was writing under the name "Loon Lantern" for a while, but decided to start playing classical guitar, and everything shifted for me. I bought my first Yamaha classical about eight years ago, and that is when I started writing more seriously. I wrote all of *Westward To The Sunrise* on that guitar. I just loved to tinker with different tunings and wordings.

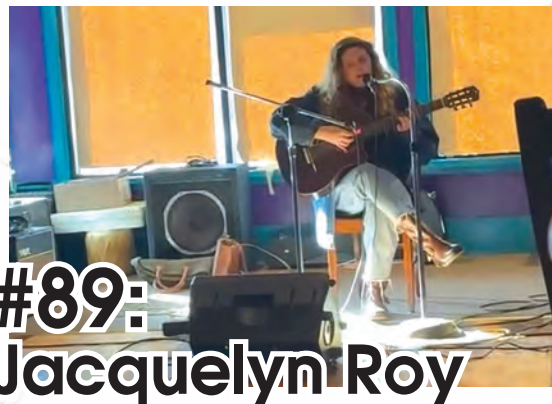
No bands, but I would love to play in one!

**MMM:** Do you do any covers? Are there any you would like to do?

**JR:** I'd love to cover some Bruce Springsteen songs!

**MMM:** Do you record at home? Does anyone help?

**JR:** My first album and my second EP were both recorded at home. I had help mixing and mastering on those. *Museum of Time* was recorded at Distorted Forest Studio in Rhode Island.



**MMM:** Any favorite live shows? Have you toured?

**JR:** My favorite show was seeing Mount Eerie at a church in Portland, Maine. I greatly admire his lifestyle and music. I'd love to tour once I break my hermit shell.

**MMM:** Did you have fun at the Mystra Ooze fest?

**JR:** I had a blast! I absolutely love the Turners Falls community, and how kind and genuine everyone is.

**MMM:** Any ideas for your next release?

**JR:** I've been greatly inspired by Bruce Springsteen recently, and would love to make a more cosmic/desert highway type of album in the future.

**MMM:** How about all-time favorite musicians?

**JR:** I deeply admire Robert Wyatt and Joanna Newsom. I love good writing and storytelling from a musician. Joanna Newsom is probably my biggest inspiration. I regret not being able to see her in 2019.

**MMM:** Favorite movies?

**JR:** My favorite is *Aguirre: The Wrath of God*.

**MMM:** And books?

**JR:** I love anything by Ursula Le Guin! *Always Coming Home* is amazing.

**MMM:** What do you like most about music?

**JR:** I like building worlds and expanding spiritually within music. I love the process of writing and songwriting because it feels like dipping my hands into a very mysterious universe.

**MMM:** Anything else you want to add? This is kind of a short interview..

**JR:** I think short and sweet is my style! Hahaha... I appreciate the opportunity!

### Montague Community Television News

## Enlisting You Now

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** – Are you looking for a way to get involved with your community? You should consider joining the MCTV board! We are a fun group that meets once a month, eats pizza, and collectively coordinates the business of running our non-profit community television station. Reach out by emailing a letter of interest to [infomontaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetv@gmail.com), calling us up at (413) 863-9200, or stopping by the station at 34 Second Street to talk with Dean or Deirdre, Mondays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. And if

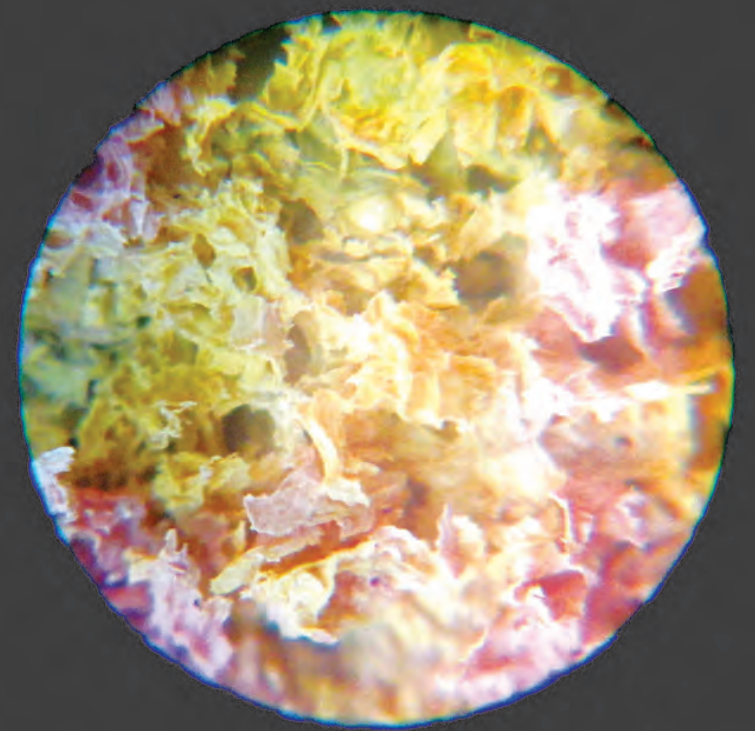
you see us out there filming, say hi!

You can find all of MCTV's videos online. Our Vimeo page is linked from our website, [MontagueTV.org](http://MontagueTV.org), by clicking the "Videos" tab. You can find folders there directing you to all of our recorded Montague and Gill selectboard meetings.

If there is a particular video you would like to find, locate the small magnifying glass below the title "Montague Community Television's Videos" and click there. If you try to search for an MCTV video in the search bar at the top of the screen, you will search "all of Vimeo," and you will have a harder time.

### TINY GIANTS

views of our world from a pocket microscope



**GUESS WHAT WE'RE LOOKING AT!**

is this a strawberry-banana omelet?  
send answers to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org)

by Oscar and John Magee  
Fellows-in-Residence at the Permanent Secretariat for the International Dialogue of Pocket Microscope Enthusiasts, Franklin County branch

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events@montaguereporter.org

## THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Gill-Montague Senior Center, Turners Falls: *AARP Driver Safety Course*. Learn the current rules of the road, defensive driving, new features in cars, and more. Contact (413) 863-9357 or [coa@montague-ma.gov](mailto:coa@montague-ma.gov) to register. Bring lunch; beverages provided. 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free.

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

All Souls Church, Greenfield: Author talk, *Claiming Earth as Common Ground: The Ecological Crisis Through the Lens of Faith* by Rabbi Andrea Cohen-Kiener. Discussion follows. 12:30 p.m. Free.

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Open Mic and Karaoke*. Musicians, poets, performers welcome. Food available. 4 p.m. Free.

Energy Park, Greenfield: *133 Skeele, Hope Street, Little Wild Bouquet*. 6 p.m. Free.

New Salem Public Library, New Salem: *The Beauty and Magic of the Celtic Harp* with Ina Peebles. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Spirit Circle* featuring Shell Hines. 7 p.m. By donation.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Open Stage*. Similar to an open mic, artists share theater, dance, music, spoken word, and more. Five-minute limit. Sign-up at 6:30 p.m., show at 7 p.m. By donation.

Palladium, Worcester: *WORM, Ancient Death, The Oracle*. 7 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *J Mascis, Deloyd Elze*. 8 p.m. \$.

## FRIDAY, JUNE 19

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope Story Hour: Hummingbirds*. Ages 3 to 6. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Charley Crockett, The War and Treaty, Lila Iké, Kashus Culpepper, Southern Avenue, Swamp Dogg*, and many more. 1 p.m. \$\$.

St. Kaz, Turners Falls: *Paw Paw Club*, with vegan sandwiches and chowder, DJs. 6 to 10 p.m. No cover.

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

Nova Arts, Keene: *Wolfman Jack, Grateful Dead tribute; Jair Rohm Parker Wells & Dei Xhrist*, tribute to Ned Lagin's *Seastones*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Francesca H. & Alex McGrath, Raub Roy, Hotrod*. 7 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play reading, *The Hungry Ghosts...*, written by CL Dukes and directed by Lauren Stock. 7 p.m. \$.

Pink Edwards, Greenfield: *Pocket Vinyl, Hedgewitch, Chris Goudreau*. 7 p.m. \$.

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

Hutghi's, Westfield: *Sky Furrows, Fugue State, Animal Piss It's Everywhere*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ollie Schechter, Magick Lantern, Bo Malcolm, Blue Ranger*. 9:30 p.m. \$.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 20

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Great Falls Farmers Market*. SNAP accepted. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$.

Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, Turners Falls: *Pierogi Sale, Tag Sale, and Bake Sale*, including several Polish desserts. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free.

Rattlesnake Gutter Road, Leverett: *Hike*, led by Steve Weiss. Meet at the west gate; bring water and bug repellent. 9 a.m. Free.

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Spoon, The Beths, Kurt Vile & The Violators, Tunde Adebimpe, Pawpaw Rod, Ratboys, Folk Bitch Trio, Etran de L'Air*, and many more. 11 a.m. \$\$.

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Favorite Storybook Character Day*. Art projects inspired by storybook characters. Materials provided, costumes encouraged. All ages. 1 p.m. Free.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Ice Cream Social* with music by Eli Elkus. 3 to 5 p.m. Free.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Shape-Note Sing* with Stefan Amidon. Benefit for Rick Falcon memorial expenses. Singing school 3 p.m., sing 4 p.m. By donation.

Four Phantoms Brewery, Greenfield: *North Street Collective*. 6 p.m. No cover.

Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club, Montague: *Chick'n'Wire*. 7 p.m. \$.

Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Joe Crookston*. 7 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play reading, *Calling*, written by Patricia Crosby and directed by Penney Hulten. 7 p.m. \$.

THCC, Easthampton: *Epicenter, Slaughtersun, Ice Giant*. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Cry Matthews*. 7:30 p.m. \$.



This year's Green River Festival showcases a wide range of degrees of creative integrity, from 83-year-old eccentric soul legend Swamp Dogg (above) and Colombian cumbia innovators Frente Cumbiero all the way to the hottest new private-school pay-to-go-viral emperor-has-no-clothes NYC indie rock garbaggio.

Next Stage Arts, Putney: *Tone Forest*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *New Radiant Storm King, The Oranges*. 8 p.m. \$.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Pollinator Solstice Stroll*, 1.5 miles. Ages 6 and up. 10 a.m. Free.

Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield: *Geese, Big Freedra, Wednesday, Frente Cumbiero, Lucius, J Mascis, Hurray for the Riff Raff, Mal Devisa*, and many more. 11 a.m. \$\$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *HWY91*. 4 p.m. \$.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *The World Wide Web, Bass Wizard*. 5 p.m. By donation.

Hotel Vernon, Worcester: *Neptune, There, Bastian Void, Signal Chain*. 7 p.m. \$.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: Documentary, *Maintenance Artist (2025)*, discussion with director Toby Perl Frielich. 7:30 p.m. \$.

# EXHIBITS

**Waterway Arts, Turners Falls:** *Please Touch*, participatory works by 15 artists, through August 7.

**Discovery Center, Turners Falls:** *Nature's Colors*, landscape and floral paintings in an abstract and expressionistic style by Kate Marion Lapiere, through June 28.

**Montague Center Library, Montague:** *The Divine Lives in You*, paintings and upcycled works by Donna Estabrooks, through July.

**Sawmill River Arts, Montague:** *Nature's Magic*, abstract landscapes by TL LaFleur; through July.

**Leverett Library, Leverett:** *Convergence*, pastel and acrylic paintings by the Friends Who Paint group, through June.

**Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett:** *Merry Melange*, creations by Mary Schreiber in media including ceramic, pastel, polymer clay, and found or upcycled materials, through June.

**Artspace Gallery, Greenfield:** *Green Light: A Love Letter to Greenfield*. Acrylic paintings, lamps, and ceramic wares by Danielle Lucier. Opening next Friday, June 26 with a reception at 5 p.m. Through July 17.

**Downtown Greenfield: MA250 Sidewalk Art Tour.** View ten murals by local artists Danielle Lucier, Jill Strait, Youme Nguyen Ly, Althea Keaton, and Cameron Schmitz with diverse perspectives on 250 years of American independence. A guided tour starts at City Hall on June 26 at 5 p.m.

**LAVA Center, Greenfield:** *Chaos on a Plate Presents The Rainbow Arc - Phase 1: Violet*, paintings by Donna Barrett, through July. *The Peace Birds Exhibit*, artistic and community responses to ongoing events in Palestine, through July.

**Looky Here, Greenfield:** *Emily Holt and Chris Davis*, visiting artists in residence through July. Closing event July 31.

**Gallery A3, Amherst:** *Gesture and Line*, paintings by Karen Iglehart, through June.

**Mill District Local Art, North Amherst:** Forty-plus artists show work on the theme of *Charmed*, through June 25.

**Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls:** *Shimmer*, new-mixed media work by Nina Rossi incorporating colorshifting glass rhinestones, through July 6.

**Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne:** *Q Li Holmes*, recent paintings by the Ashfield artist; *Stay in the Day and Have the Long View*, mixed media by Dale Schwarz. Both through June.

**Elusie Gallery, Easthampton:** *Below and Within*, Julie Kumble of Montague and Martha Brouwer of Hadley explore the underwater world, through June.

## CALL FOR ART

**Bridge of Flowers Show & Sale:** Work must be for sale, with the option to donate all or some of the proceeds to the Bridge of Flowers. Apply by August 11. Details at [bridgeofflowersmass.org](http://bridgeofflowersmass.org). The exhibit will be held August 14 to 16.

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# CALENDAR



## looking forward...

### MONDAY, JUNE 22

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Pollinator Pals Storytime*. 1 p.m. Free.

Montague Center Library, Montague: Audio documentary, *Room To Grow: The Inner Lives of Farm Workers in the United States in an Age of Turmoil* (2026). Interviews explore the lives, stories, and connections formed with farmworkers in the Connecticut River Valley. Bring a dish with local produce to share while listening, if you would like. 5 p.m. Free.

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Montague Community Band*. 7 p.m. Free.

Palladium, Worcester: *PUP, Babe Haven, Cheap Perfume*. 8 p.m. \$\$.

### TUESDAY, JUNE 23

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *The String Cheese Incident*. 6 p.m. \$\$.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Permaculture Journey*, presentation by Danny Botkin. 6:30 p.m. Free.

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

Space Ballroom, Hamden CT: *Downtown Boys, Gang of Four*. 8 p.m. \$.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

Porter-Phelps-Huntington House, Hadley: *Amherst Area Gospel Choir*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

Tree House Brewing, Deerfield: *G. Love, Donavon Frankenreiter, Moon Taxi*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *Downtown Boys, Perennial*. 7 p.m. \$.

Buoyant Heart, Brattleboro: *Eliza Niemi, beetsblog, bobbie, Kristine Leschper*. 8 p.m. \$.

### THURSDAY, JUNE 25

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

Energy Park, Greenfield: *R&D, Psychedelic Farm Girls*. 6 p.m. Free.

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

Holyoke Media, Holyoke: *The Chestnut People, Edwards/Snyder/Delgiudice, KaneLoggiaHYPOTHESIS, Dei Xhrist*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Marigold, Brattleboro: *Cady Ternity, Idiot Savant, Remi Russin, Rose House*. 8 p.m. Free.

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

### FRIDAY, JUNE 26

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope Story Hour: Spiders*. Ages 3 to 6. 10:30 a.m. Free.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Wilco & Billy Bragg, Gang of Four, Billy Bragg, Sharp Pins, L'Rain*, more. 5 p.m. \$\$.

Dickinson Library, Northfield: *Sound Bath with Sheryl Sadler-Twyon*. 6 p.m. Free.



Left to right: guitar god Bill Frisell, who gets to hand-pick his touring band from the world's best improvisers, will be joined on the Shea Theater stage next Friday by drummer Rudy Royston and bassist Thomas Morgan, as well as reed player Gregory Tardy (not pictured). Tickets are still available.

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Magic Mojo*. 6 p.m. No cover.

Element Brewing, Millers Falls: *Bingo*. 7 p.m. Free.

Gill Town Hall, Gill: Documentary screening, *Living Through Fear: The Resilience of Immigrants in the United States* (2026). Explores policies, enforcement, and historical context of immigration, with a focus on New England and the impact of ICE. 7 p.m. Free.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: Play reading, *The Birth/Death Project*, presented by Real Live Theatre. 7 p.m. \$.

Living Room, Florence: *Eliza Niemi, beetsblog, Kristine Leschper*. 7 p.m. \$.

THCC, Easthampton: *Western Massacre, Inverter, Skincrawl*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Princess Kikou, Shokazoba*. 7 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Bill Frisell Trio*. 8 p.m. \$.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Secret Chord*, Leonard Cohen tribute. 8 p.m. No cover.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *All Feels, Rose House, Cowperson, Mibble*. 8 p.m. \$.

The Drake, Amherst: *Victor Wooten & The Wooten Brothers*. 8 p.m. \$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Hannah Cohen, Lily Seabird*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

### SATURDAY, JUNE 27

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Great Falls Farmers Market*. SNAP accepted. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$.

Unity Park, Turners Falls: *Pedals for Pups*. Costumes encouraged, e-bikes welcome. Benefit for the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter. Register at [tinyurl.com/puppedal](http://tinyurl.com/puppedal). Two routes: 30-mile at 9 a.m.; 7.3-mile at 10 a.m. \$.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Wilco, The Breeders, Ryan Davis & The Roadhouse Band, Souled American, The Messthetics, Setting, Mini-Mekons, Prewn*, many more. 11 a.m. \$\$.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Klezmer Music Workshop*. Emphasis on improvisation, self-expression, and spirituality. Register at [weathervane.community.arts@gmail.com](mailto:weathervane.community.arts@gmail.com). 1 p.m. By donation.

Leverett Elementary School, Leverett: *Kathak Dance Performance*. 1:30 p.m. Free.

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Mammals of the North Woods*, with naturalist Dawn Marvin Ward. 2 p.m. Free.

Pulaski Park, Northampton: *Russell Brooks, Onatah Lova Band, Matthew Andrews, Tony Vacca, Música Franklin*, speakers. Benefit for food relief organizations. See [feedthehungry.love](http://feedthehungry.love). 3 p.m. By donation.

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Guachinangos, Minqi Wang, Myrtle Street Klezmer*. 4 p.m. Free.

Mystery Train, Amherst: *SofiaSofia, Tomatoverse, Part Time Job The Worse The Better, Jacquelyn Roy*. 4 p.m. By donation.

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: *Richard Meier, Lisa Fishman, Jordan Dunn*, readings. 6 p.m. Free.

Lupinewood, Greenfield: *E.A.M Open Mic*, with host *Silvie's Okay*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Documentary, An Artist Responds to War* (2026), with local filmmaker Robbie Leppzer. 7 p.m. Free.

THCC, Easthampton: *Miracle Blood, Conan Neutron & The Secret Friends, Sapling*. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *The Klines*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Paul Simon*. 7:30 p.m. \$\$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Ruth Garbus*, album release show; *LUCY; Julie Bodian*. 8 p.m. \$.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Cimafunk*. 8 p.m. \$.

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Great Barrington: *BEATrio: Béla Fleck, Edmar Castañeda, Antonio Sánchez*. 8 p.m. \$.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *BASSTHOV3N*. 9:30 p.m. No cover.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 28

Erving Public Library, Erving: *Summer Reading Kick-off Party* and nature crafts with Mass Audubon. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free.

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Art Naturally: Bee Habitats*. Art workshop; materials provided. Ages 4 and up. 10:30 a.m. Free.

MASS MoCA, North Adams: *Jeff Tweedy & Friends, Autumn Defense, Richard Dawson, George*, more. 11 a.m. \$\$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Old Hippies... New Hips: Reflections on Decaying in Place*. Comedy and storytelling. 2 p.m. \$.

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

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *Honoring Elders: Katie Nolan & Josh Heinemann*. 3 p.m. Free.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Valley Arabic Music Ensemble*. 4 p.m. \$.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Rhythm Inc*. 5 p.m. Free.

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Footings, Greenland Shark*. 5 p.m. By donation.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Joke Writing Boot Camp*, with Andrea CK. 6 p.m. By donation.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Paul Simon*. 6 p.m. \$\$.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Sister Wife Sex Strike, Dusty the Kid, Marxist Jargon*. 7 p.m. \$.

### TUESDAY, JUNE 30

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Juggler Meadow Band*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

### THURSDAY, JULY 2

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Technicolour Ltd, Wolf Girlz, PV*. 7:15 p.m. \$.

### FRIDAY, JULY 3

Brick House, Turners Falls: *The Leafies You Gave Me, The Freeps, Content Clown*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

### FRIDAY, JULY 10

Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls: *Movie, Karate Kid* (1984). 8 p.m. Free.

### SATURDAY, JULY 11

Unnameable Books, Turners Falls: *Sophie Mae Wellington, Ava Brennan, Camie Camper, Norma Dream*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

### FRIDAY, JULY 17

Riverfront Park, Erving: *Connecticut River Flute Choir*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Screening, Fantastic Planet* (1973), live soundtrack by *The Emphyreans*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

### FRIDAY, JULY 31

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Kabaka Pyramid*. 8 p.m. \$.

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 8

Palladium, Worcester: *Dimmu Borgir, Suffocation, Hulder*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

### TUESDAY, AUGUST 18

Tourists, North Adams: *Winged Wheel Trio*. 8 p.m. Free.

### FRIDAY, AUGUST 28

The Drake, Amherst: *Cloud Nothings, Knifeplay*. 8 p.m. \$.

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Forbes Library Lawn, Northampton: *William Hooker, Mal Devisa*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Diemand Farm, Wendell: *90th Anniversary Celebration*. Farm tours and demonstrations, food, craft fair, family-friendly activities "designed to reflect both the farm's history and its present-day operations." 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

Palladium, Worcester: *The Dillinger Escape Plan, Many Eyes, Johnny Booth, Godseyes*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

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**RECIPES** from page B1

is flakier. If you want bigger chunks in cooked dishes, choose albacore or yellowfin.

All varieties come packed in either oil or water. Water-packed tuna has fewer calories, while oil-packed tuna is more flavorful.

The Mediterranean Sea is a tuna breeding ground, so fresh tuna is always available in surrounding countries – but it is expensive. Canned tuna is therefore equally popular there, both in snacks and cooked dishes, including some beloved classics.

It's vital in French *Salade Niçoise*, a salad of lettuce, scallions, green beans, radish, and cucumber spiked with chunks of tuna canned in olive oil. Spain has *marmitako*, a fisherman's stew of potatoes, bell peppers, and either fresh or canned tuna chunks. From Italy there's *viello tonnato*, classically made from veal immersed in tuna sauce, though turkey or pork often substitute. Served chilled, it's the perfect hot-weather dish.

Sardines are another Mediterranean specialty. France pioneered canning them in 1824, and other

countries followed suit, because these flavorful little members of the herring family are cheap as well as tasty.

Nowadays the fish you get in a can of "sardines" will quite likely be small herring or anchovies – or sprats, as in the case of mild Norwegian "brisling" sardines. These are among the 21 species listed as permissible by the Food and Agriculture Organization, a flexibility prompted by the fact that sardines are popular everywhere but live only around the Mediterranean, so fish from other waters were co-opted.

One of the smallest of those fish is anchovies, a love-it-or-hate food. Aficionados enjoy them on pizza or as a paste for toast. Their haters may be surprised to learn their flavor merges with other ingredients and enhances them – in Worcestershire sauce, for example, and Caesar dressing.

The other major canned fish is Pacific salmon. Red salmon is the more expensive and flavorful; pink salmon is milder, and often packed in larger 15-ounce cans. Until a few decades ago, canned Pacific salmon was virtually the only form

you could eat on the East Coast, because Atlantic salmon were rare and super-expensive. Salmon farming brought fresh Atlantic salmon to every supermarket, where it's now usually among the cheaper fish.

Nonetheless, canned salmon still has a place in sandwiches and dishes such as Salmon and Pea Wiggle, an oddly named New England clas-

sic popular during the Depression and beyond.

Less commonly, mackerel and herring are both sold canned. Canned mackerel, which costs around \$4 for 15 ounces, is excellent cooked in casseroles. Herrings are usually pickled and canned in glass rather than metal tins. Alternately, they are smoked into kippers and packed in flat cans. Both are Northern Europe-

favorites: kippers in Britain, while herrings in many forms are loved in Baltic countries such as Poland and northern Germany.

Canned fish is more flavorful than white fish such as hake and cod, and it retains many of the nutrients of fresh fish, so it is a good inclusion in the diet. The following recipes show some of the many ways you can use it.



**MACKEREL AND POTATO CASSEROLE**



HOPLEY PHOTOS

Serves 4.

about 4 or 5 medium potatoes, peeled  
1 Tbsp. chopped parsley  
salt and pepper to taste  
one 8-oz. can tomato sauce  
one 15-oz. can chub mackerel  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 cup milk

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Slice the potatoes as thinly as possible, then cut the slices into matchstick pieces. Toss with the parsley.

Discard about half the liquid in the can of mackerel, then break up the fish into biggish pieces in a bowl and mix them with the reserved liquid and 2 to 3 tablespoons of the tomato sauce. Add pepper to taste. You probably won't need salt, as the fish is already salted.

Spread another couple tablespoons of the tomato sauce in the base of a 6-cup casserole or baking dish. Scatter a third of the potatoes on top, and season with salt and pepper.

Now add as a layer half the mackerel; scatter on half the chopped onion, followed by another third of the potatoes. Add the remaining mackerel, and then the remaining onion, seasoning the layers as you go. Finish with the remaining potatoes.

Mix the remaining tomato sauce with the milk and pour over the top layer. Cover and bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Remove the lid and bake for another 45 to 55 minutes, until the potatoes are tender. Check occasionally to make sure the top doesn't dry out.

**TURKEY TONNATO**

1½ to 2 lb. turkey tenderloin or breast  
1 carrot, scraped  
1 celery stick  
1 small onion, peeled  
3 stems parsley  
1 bay leaf  
one 7-oz. can oil-packed tuna, drained  
3 anchovy fillets, rinsed  
3 Tbsp. capers  
½ cup mayonnaise  
4 Tbsp. lemon juice  
¼ cup olive oil  
salt to taste

Wash and dry the turkey. If using tenderloins, check them for a white line, and cut it out because it's tough and will pull the meat out of shape.

Put the carrot, celery, onion, parsley, and bay leaf in a pan, cover them with water, and bring to a gentle simmer. Add the turkey, and extra water if necessary to cover. Cook at the slowest possible simmer for 20 minutes. It is done when it is 155° F on a meat thermometer or is firm under pressure. Cool

completely in the broth.

For the sauce, reserve a tablespoon of the oil from the tuna. Mash the drained tuna and anchovies, or process them in a food processor. Chop up 2 tablespoons of the capers and add them along with the mayonnaise, lemon juice, the reserved fish oil, and the quarter cup olive oil. Thoroughly mix, then taste. Season with a little salt if needed, and add a little more lemon juice or mayonnaise if you would like it.

Serve on either a narrow serving dish or a large platter. Smear a little of the sauce on the dish, then lay the turkey slices turkey on top, touching but not overlapping. Spread the remaining sauce over the meat. If necessary, add a second layer of meat and sauce on top of the first layer.

Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours to let the sauce flavor the meat. To serve, garnish with the remaining capers. Lemon slices and parsley leaves may be added, too.

Serves 4 or 5.

**SALMON AND PEA WIGGLE**

two 7-oz. cans red or pink salmon  
3 Tbsp. butter  
3 Tbsp. flour  
1¼ cups whole milk  
¾ cup defrosted frozen peas  
1½ Tbsp. snipped chives or parsley  
salt and pepper to taste

Drain the salmon. Mix 3 tablespoons of its liquid with the milk, and reserve the fish.

Melt the butter in a saucepan over low heat. Stir in the flour, then a little of the milk mixture. Continue adding milk a little at a time, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens.

Stir in the drained salmon, the peas, and half the chives or parsley; save the rest for scattering on the finished dish. Continue cooking until the sauce is hot and thick. Taste, then season as needed.

Traditionally served over crackers or toast, it's also good with rice or orzo, tossed with chopped red peppers and green herbs.

Serves 4.

*A New England classic popular during the Depression – and for long after.*



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