

The Montague Reporter

Year 24 – No. 29

JUNE 25, 2026

\$2

editor@montaguereporter.org

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

montaguereporter.org

COMMERCE

Avenue A's Newest 'Ritual': Healthy Fare, Creative Space



TRINCHERO PHOTO

Queens transplant Cindy Ferrer (left), with her daughter and husband and co-owner Angelo, opened Ritual Bowl to customers this week.

By CHRISTINA TRINCHERO

TURNERS FALLS – A new downtown gathering place is blending nutritious food with artistic expression. Located at 109 Avenue A, Ritual Bowl Art Café, which hosted a soft opening last weekend, offers fresh açai bowls, cold-pressed juices, and fruit smoothies in a vibrant, immersive environment designed to encourage relaxation, creativity, and conversation.

“When I think of a location to open a space that caters to creatives looking for a pause in their day for some refreshing indulgence and art-making, I couldn’t think of a better place,” says Cindy Ferrer, who, along with her husband Angelo, are the owners of the Avenue’s newest café.

While Ritual Bowl is Ferrer’s first café, she previously owned and operated Terrestrial Roots, a small online wellness business

see **RITUAL** page A4

Solar Developer Drops Battery System From Plan After All

By SARAH ROBERTSON

WENDELL – Facing pointed local opposition and a complex permitting process, the developers behind a proposed solar array on Lockes Village Road have removed a 2-megawatt battery energy storage system from their plans.

Representatives of the company, Nexamp, Inc., appeared before the Wendell planning board and conservation commission this month for continued public hearings on an 11.6-acre solar array proposed on land owned by Jake Doody. Originally approved by a special permit in 2018, amendments to the permit adding a battery energy storage system (BESS) and stormwater drainage basins were brought before town boards again last year.

In November an attorney representing abutters, Michael Pill, filed a suit in land court opposing the project. Pill argued that the project’s

see **SOLAR** page A6

WENDELL SELECTBOARD Board Will Be Short-Handed All Summer

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard’s June 17 meeting had a short agenda, which took less than an hour to complete. The meeting closed with the town’s two selectboard members, chair Laurie DiDonato and Paul Doud, signing 50 appointment slips necessary for the coming 2027 fiscal year. Slips for each board member had to be signed only by the other member.

Town treasurer Carolyn Manley assured the board members that this is allowed.

As the selectboard now has only two members, following the resignation of Adam Feltman, if either takes a vacation or a day off that includes a scheduled meeting, the board will have no quorum and can take no action. It needs another member, but elections cost money. A summer vote is considered likely to miss the attention of residents who are taking vacations.

see **WENDELL** page A5

Voters Support New Library

By MIKE JACKSON with JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – By a vote of 1,595 to 1,248, according to a preliminary count, and with three ballots logged as blank, Montague voters approved a debt exclusion on Wednesday to allow the town to issue \$12.4 million in bonds toward building a new main library at 38 Avenue A.

The Yes vote carried four of the town’s six voting precincts, losing only in Precincts 2 and 3, and came in at 56% townwide.

“It was a long election,” town clerk Wendy Bogusz said when the smoke had cleared.

Throughout the day, poll workers in all precincts remarked that the turnout was stronger than any town election in memory. Since 2010, town elections have drawn an average of 832 voters, primaries and off-cycle state elections 1,704, and presidential elections 4,610. Wednesday’s preliminary tally landed at 2,846.



SINGLETON PHOTO

Library supporters hang out near the town’s main polling station.

“I would have hoped for a higher turnout,” assistant town clerk Tina Sulda told the Reporter.

The debt exclusion has been a hot-button issue in Montague this spring, drawing vehement opposition from residents arguing that the proposed library is too large and too expensive – at a projected total cost

of \$23.7 million, with an \$11.3 million match from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners – and that tax bills in the town are already too high.

Supporters of the project, in turn, have argued forcefully that the cost to the town of maintaining the

see **LIBRARY** page A8

Food City Sale Underway, Apparently

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – “Yes, I am purchasing the store,” Nishantkumar Patel told the Montague Reporter on Wednesday. “If the liquor license gets approved, I think we are moving forward with it.”

Patel, a businessman listing a Lowell address, is president, treasurer, secretary, and director of Shiv Holdings Corp., a Massachusetts company organized in March, that has applied for a transfer of the beer and wine license at the Food City grocery store in downtown Turners Falls.

The local hearing is scheduled for next Monday’s meeting of the Montague selectboard.

The application for the license transfer Shiv Holdings filed earlier this month pledges the inventory as collateral to a “lender” – Port 51 Lending, LLC, a small business lending company – and identifies the grocery store’s current local owner, Crooked River

see **SALE** page A6



JACKSON PHOTO

“Employee Owned!,” a banner on the store’s façade reads.

Climbers Fundraise to Regain Access to Ledges

By SARAH ROBERTSON

ERVING – The abrupt closure this spring of a trail leading to the Farley Ledges is adding urgency to an ambitious fundraising campaign already underway to preserve access to one of the most popular rock climbing destinations in New England.

The nonprofit Western Massachusetts Climbers’ Coalition (WMCC) owns the parking lot at the Farley Ledges trailhead off Route 2 in Erving. Historically, the public has been allowed to follow the trail from that parking lot through private land to access the climbing area and an extensive network of hiking trails. However, on April 3, landowners posted “No Trespassing” signs on the access route, and the entire area has been closed to climbers ever since.

“This has nothing to do with climber conduct,” WMCC board member Regina Madden told the Reporter. “This is a personal choice by the landowner.”

Attempts to reach the property owners, Bryant Stewart and Jeanie Schermesser, by phone this week were unsuccessful.

“They own their land, and they have every right to do what they want to do with it,” Madden said, “so they decided to revoke access.”

see **LEDGES** page A7



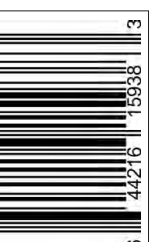
ZANE PROVOST PHOTO

A climber navigates an ascent at the Farley Ledges.

SUMMER SCHEDULE:
VOL. 24 #30: JULY 9
VOL. 24 #31: JULY 23
VOL. 24 #32: AUGUST 6
VOL. 24 #33: AUGUST 20

‘Biweekly?’ It’s Just a Phase.

For Some Refreshing Indulgence.....A1	Find the Starred Clues.....B1
Just Waiting to Do Something.....A2	Chase a Ball For Hours.....B2
Spin the Target or Hit the Flames.....A3	Show Up Around Town.....B3
To Have a Local Floral Vibe.....A4	Eventually Come to an End.....B4
Now Being Fabricated.....A5	Transcending the Divine.....B5
When Passing Through a Floor.....A6	Spiders, Sound Bath, Velveten.....B6
While At Neighboring Crags.....A7	Content Clown, Kisser, Karate Kid.....B7
To Stop the Madness.....A8	To the Clouds Above.....B8



The Montague Reporter

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A New Chapter?

Montague's big library vote squeaked through this week – and no one would have been terribly surprised if it had been voted down. Every other library project going before voters in Massachusetts this year, after all, was nixed. There are some serious headwinds headwinding out there.

While some people seem to enjoy conflict for its own sake, most of us will agree that the way this particular episode played out was ugly and disheartening, and will take some time to repair.

More than anything else, the intensity of this conflict underlined a real dislocation many are experiencing from a recent, massive, spike in assessed property values – driven by actual home sale prices – driven by a real desire out there, by people with purchasing power, to move here.

We probably sound like a broken record on this point, but once again, the gap between the widely-held perspective that "taxes" are "going up" and the decade-long effort at town hall to relieve the tax rate from \$17.61 to \$15.13 per thousand, and to leave millions of dollars in "excess capacity" in homeowners' pockets even at the expense of the regional school budget points to a problem that is not going to get better on its own. Tax bills are going up.

In November 1973, voters in the majority of local towns were called to the polls to approve a bond to construct the new Franklin County Technical School. The price tag then? \$7,244,750.

With standard inflation, i.e. in "today's dollars," that would come to about... \$52.9 million.

And yet, this October, the tech school district's 19 towns are being asked to approve construction of a new building, apparently designed for slightly fewer students than the current one, for about \$236 million. (That's a belt-tightening, mind you, from an original tag of \$248 million.)

Rhetorically, very few people on either side of this month's library fracas dared to challenge or question the request for new FCTS funding – and neither are we. But that escalating cost of municipal building really needs to be kept in mind every time we see a new proposal. After all, if the new library only came in at a total of \$5.3 million, it surely would not have encountered as much opposition, no matter what people think of roof decks and pub-

lic meeting space and Libraries of Things. But that's the same ratio as the difference between simple inflation and *municipal escalation* when it comes to the tech school design.

We'll have to see if anyone brings this up in October when the other debt-exclusion shoe drops on this town. We're hearing rumors that the cost is simply impossible in some other large towns in the district, so there's a bit of a rock-and-a-hard-place scenario on that horizon.

Which brings us to the *other* other big vote here this year: the long-suffering effort to pitch a new, larger, Great River Regional School District to replace Pioneer and Gill-Montague.

Conventional wisdom on this idea is either that it is a complete non-starter and a waste of oxygen even to talk about, or completely inevitable and imposed by the shadowy educational powers-that-be. Supporters certainly have a big lift in towns like Northfield, and unlike the tech school vote, this one must gain majorities in Gill, Montague, Leyden, Bernardston, and Northfield to succeed.

This month, particularly in light of fresh layoffs and restructuring in the Gill-Montague district, we have seen dozens and dozens of online postings pitting the library spending against somehow increasing taxpayers' fiscal support for the schools.

But here's a dirty little secret: Taxpayers in Montague and Gill are already paying out our noses for the schools. The *majority* of property tax money is going into ed – a fixed 48.5% in Montague, under the terms of the 2009 Compact for Funding Education, and the tech school assessment on top of that. The amount the towns freely offer the Gill-Montague district each year as a *starting point* in the budget season is nearly double the minimum contribution required by the state.

As well it should be.

Supporters of super-regionalization aren't saying forming a larger district will result in savings... at first. Their arguments are focused on pooling enough students together to support higher-quality education. But if people are newly activated around making Montague a more affordable place to live, looking at the schools – and building more housing – will yield much better results than simply blocking new capital projects.



Montague DPW worker Eric Cole relishes painting crosswalks on fresh asphalt, rather than working on top of a palimpsest of old stripes, like the Spring Street crosswalk he is about to refresh in this illustration.

Letters to the Editors

May Only Need to Ask

As a taxpayer on both ends of Massachusetts, I have seen many towns face the exact dilemma currently confronting the Montague Center Fire District. At the upcoming annual meeting on June 25, our community is being asked to vote on funding a critical, big-ticket item: a new 3,000-gallon water tanker to replace the aging Engine 2.

While there is no question that our volunteer firefighters need reliable, up-to-date equipment to protect our rural and farm areas, the assumption is often that the municipal tax base is the only way to pay for

it. In my experience, when a town is in genuine need of major fire apparatus and simply cannot afford the steep price tag, there is almost always another way.

Time and again, across various Commonwealth communities, I have witnessed a dedicated resident step forward to make it happen through a private donation, a targeted foundation grant, or a specialized community fundraising drive. There is frequently a person who grew up here, who still lives here, or who deeply values this town, just waiting to do something

impactful for the community – if they are only asked.

Montague is no different than any other tight-knit Massachusetts town rich in history and civic pride. Before we fully commit to traditional, long-term tax funding, we should explore creative philanthropic options, private fire association drives, or corporate safety grants. Sometimes a major municipal hurdle can be cleared simply by tapping into generational town pride and asking the right person.

CJ Lindberg
Montague Center

Parents Seeking Answers

The Gill-Montague Regional School District has a responsibility to ensure that every student is treated with dignity, respect, and compassion. When serious concerns arise regarding the treatment, safety, and educational experiences of students with disabilities, families deserve transparency, accountability, and a voice in the process.

Over the past several months, many parents have raised concerns about practices within a district special education program. These concerns have sparked important conversations about communication with families, mandated reporting obligations, student safety, and whether vulnerable students are receiving the support and educational opportunities they deserve.

As parents, we are not seeking conflict. We are seeking answers, accountability, and meaningful change. Every child deserves to learn in an environment where they are safe, valued, and supported by professionals who work collaboratively with families. Families should never feel unheard when advocating for their children, especially those who cannot always advocate for themselves.

Several mothers of students who have been impacted by these concerns plan to come forward during public comment at upcoming Gill-Montague Regional School Committee meetings on July 14, August 11, and September 8. Their goal is to share their experiences, ad-

vocate for students, and encourage improvements that benefit all children in our district.

Any family member who wishes to speak during public comment is encouraged to contact Tara McCarthy to request a speaking slot. Requests may be made up to 48 hours prior to a School Committee meeting.

If you do not feel comfortable speaking publicly, please consider sharing your concerns in writing with the School Committee and copying Interim Superintendent Tari Thomas. Family voices matter, and community involvement is essential to ensuring that all students receive the education, support, and protections they deserve.

This effort is not about individuals. It is about ensuring that policies are followed, concerns are addressed, and students receive the safe, supportive educational environment they deserve. Transparency builds trust, and accountability strengthens schools.

We invite families, educators, and community members to join us in solidarity as we advocate for transparency, accountability, and a stronger future for students in the Gill-Montague Regional School District. Together, we can ensure that every child is heard, valued, and protected.

Natalie Spatcher
Montague Center

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TURNERS FALLS AND VICINITY.

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

Apologies to all of our readers who don't live in Montague or Wendell. Luck of the draw this week... I hope there's enough in this edition of vicarious interest to keep you all entertained.



Ray DiDonato sent us this bird pic, which is appreciated. "A cedar waxwing," he explains, "seeks food and shade in a mulberry tree in Wendell." Just look at that proud little fellow.

The mulberries around here are starting to pop off, too.

A number of announcements...

FirstLight Power has let us know, and we are letting you know, that they will be replacing the pistons on Bascule Gate 4 of the Turners Falls dam, beginning with installing scaffolding this week across the dam's length.

"The public should expect increased activity in the area for the duration of the project," spokesperson Claire Belanger writes.

The company is replacing the pistons on one gate each summer, beginning last year with Gate 1. Don't worry – this won't entail them draining the impoundment to a super low level. When that happened last year it was due to separate, emergency repairs on the hydraulics of Gate 2.

Hopefully soon we'll see an end to the repeated leakage of hydraulic fluid into the Connecticut River. I dunno, I guess I'm glad I don't own a huge old dam.

The Wendell Meetinghouse has been hosting an Honoring Elders series – giving the advanced members of that community their flowers while they still walk the Earth with us, an extremely good idea if you ask me – and this Sunday, June 28 at 3 p.m. the program honors a pair of extremely well-deserving people, Kathleen Nolan and Josh Heinemann.

Kathleen (who up until recently has been known on these pages primarily as Katie) and Josh are very longstanding Montague Reporter

contributors, principally covering – for years that have turned into decades – the Erving and Wendell selectboards for us. Josh has been on the beat since the Wendell Post!

They are both absolute sweethearts, and sharp, and helpful and community-minded in countless ways. I had no idea until this event was announced just how senior, in human years, these two are...

I'm frustrated to report I can't make it up the hill this Sunday myself, owing to a prior commitment, but I'm happy to sing their praises here and to anyone who'll listen.

Hey, are you a last-minute poet? This coming Tuesday, June 30, is the deadline for the Elyse Wolf Chapbook Prize, an annual competition held by the member-run Slate Roof Press of Northfield.

Poets of all sorts, anywhere in the US, are invited to send up to 28 pages of their work (in English) to the press, along with a \$10 (or sliding scale) reading fee.

The winner of the Prize will receive \$500, become an "active member of the press" – I'm assuming this means Slate Roof itself – and, best of all maybe, have their work published in chapbook form. The Shelburne, Buckland, Charlemont/Hawley, and Ashfield cultural councils are all kicking in. More details are available at slateroofpress.com/contest.html.

Ann Fisk writes: "The Montague Center Firefighter Association will sponsor the annual bonfire at the Montague Center ball field, at 12 Station Street, on Friday, July 3. New this year will be a craft fair. Vendors will be on site from 4 to 8 p.m., and face painting will also be offered. There will be an opportunity for the young at heart to man the fire nozzle and try to spin the target or hit the flames. The original Lake Pleasant Fire Engine 1 will be on display.

"Burgers and dogs will be ready starting at 5 p.m., with live music provided by Heath Lewis and Michelle Mae. There will be raffles and t-shirts sold to benefit the Association. Be sure to bring a blanket and chairs. The bonfire is lit at dusk."

This one caught my eye: Next Friday, which is First Friday in this vicinity, in the Shea Theater alleyway, there will be a screening of the Montague Historical Society's restored short documentary "Fourth of July at Turners Falls" at 9 p.m., followed by a quiet fireworks show.

"For anyone who could use a quieter 4th of July," the flyer says. This

event is sponsored by RiverCulture and "brought to you by the power of LASER projection." Your dog will be happier, in other words, but your cat will be driven completely insane.

Regular noisy fireworks are scheduled to go off on Sunday, July 5, at 9:35 p.m. from Poet's Seat Tower in Greenfield. I always love gathering to watch them on the canal-side bike path in Turners. Good scene.

Montague town planner Maureen Pollock has a survey. The town has state funding on hand for a big Complete Streets project altering the flow of traffic in Montague Center, and the hope is to do a before-and-after on the project for anyone driving, biking, running, walking, or otherwise transiting through that village.

If this is you – and it's not limited to Center residents – there's a five-minute survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/MontagueCenter.

"The survey asks participants to share their experiences traveling along Main Street in Montague Center today," she writes, "before construction begins, including perceptions of safety, comfort, and overall street conditions. Construction is anticipated to begin at the end of July."

MassHire Franklin Hampshire is leading a new Rural Healthcare Workforce Training Initiative, and is offering six weeks of paid, full-time, hands-on training – at \$18.50 an hour – to adults aged 55 and up interested in a non-clinical healthcare career.

The training is open to residents of Franklin and Hampshire counties, and of the north Quabbin zone. Reliable transportation is required. The program, which is funded by a Commonwealth Corporation Workforce Competitive Trust Fund grant, may lead to employment upon completion but it is not guaranteed.

For more information and application instructions, call MassHire at (413) 774-4361.

Back to Montague Center: the 45th annual Montague Mug Race has been scheduled for Saturday, August 15. Save the date. The 5.5-mile road race will start at 8:30 a.m. from the village common, and loops back around to there. Various tiers of finishers will be awarded shirts and mugs as prizes, with pewter mugs for the fastest.

A shorter, two-mile Mini-Mug Race starts immediately after the real one, also looping back around to the common. Mini-participants will be entered in a drawing for local prizes. Registration for both is open now at runreg.com.

The rent control and income tax cut ballot initiatives – affordability measures from the left and right, not both good ideas in my opinion – have both been struck down by the state's Supreme Judicial Court on eye-rolling technicalities. I imagine both proposals will return, as land values are outpacing wages (see page A1).

Next week is our first summer "off" week; the next issue comes out July 9. Holy cow am I ever looking forward to this one. Later, folks.

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

FREE FRANKLIN COUNTY FIX-IT DAY

Hosted by the Franklin County Solid Waste District

Saturday, June 27 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Conway Grammar School, 24 Fournier Rd. Conway

Local fixers will be on hand. Every effort will be made to repair your item(s).

Bring:

- Lamps and household electrical items
- Wooden items like chairs and stools
- Items needing to be glued
- Knives to sharpen (3 per household)
- Garden tools to sharpen (2 per household)
- Mending (sewing), darning, wool repair
- Sadie's Bikes will offer repairs that do not require parts. For example, adjust brakes, oil chain, etc. They will also provide instruction on repairs.

More repair stations may be added.

MORE FIXERS & VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND UPDATES: Contact the Solid Waste District at (413) 772-2438, fcswwd@crocker.com or visit franklincountywastedistrict.org

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RITUAL from page A1

specializing in handcrafted herbal salves and CBD tinctures, while living in Queens, New York. As an artist, art teacher and studio photographer, Ferrer also had extensive experience organizing art shows and community events throughout the city.

Ferrer left her native New York for western Massachusetts in 2020. "I was a new mom in search of being closer to nature," she explains. "I landed in Turners Falls, a place I find to be a perfect mix of both quirky and artsy, and I never looked back. After being in Turners Falls for six years, I felt ready to plant roots."

Ferrer continued Terrestrial Roots as she got settled in western Mass, working as a vendor at a number of local markets before making the decision to wind down the business in 2024. Shortly thereafter, Ferrer says, she was inspired to create Ritual Bowl.

Those roots have inspired Ferrer's vision for a community gathering space where art and healthy food can serve as pathways to healing, connection, and creative liberation. "I have always believed that making art is a birthright and a tool to nourish our souls," she says.

Step inside Ritual Bowl and you will be greeted by a vibrant, large-scale mural spanning an entire wall of the café. Ferrer provided creative direction to a friend, the Jersey City, New Jersey-based street and studio artist Mr. Mustart, who brought her vision to life. "It was important to me to have a local floral vibe," she says of the mural, "and a hummingbird pollinating the flowers."

Small signs placed on tables throughout the café encourage patrons to express themselves creatively by drawing on their place-mats, coloring pages created by local artists, or exploring the community art studio in the rear of the café. A variety of watercolor paints, acrylic paints, and chalk pastels are provided, as well as paper, to anyone who wants to use these materials while they are in the café.

In addition to the café and art studio, the Ferrers have set up a space they are calling an homage room. The room's shelves are lined with wood carvings, gemstones, framed photographs of Turners Falls's early residents, and reproductions of advertisements celebrating the manufacturing industries that once thrived in the village.

"It was important to us to pay tribute to the people who have helped to make Great Falls what it is today," says Ferrer. "It is also important to remember where you are now, and how we got here."

Ferrer adds that the homage room is still being developed, and that additional artifacts will join the display in the future.

For the Ferrers, opening Ritual Bowl has been a "passion project"



TRINCHERO PHOTOS

Above: Cindy Ferrer says the mural along one wall of the café brings a "local floral vibe" to the space.

At right: Ferrer prepares a London Fog latte, with steeped Earl Grey tea, house-made vanilla syrup, and milk.

Lower right: Ritual Bowl's exterior, the onetime VFW storefront on Avenue A.

they have nurtured from a dream to reality while raising their daughter and juggling work outside of the home. Cindy also teaches art at Crocker Farm Elementary School in Amherst, and Angelo runs a local landscaping business.

Looking ahead, Cindy says she plans to add programming, including art nights for people to connect and make art together through different themes, art mediums, and prompts. These nights would cater to both adults and children, depending on the difficulty of the workshop. "We will also have a kids' art night dedicated just for younger children," she says.

Ritual Bowl will be part of Turners Falls's "First Fridays" lineup, when downtown businesses stay open late. "We look forward to collaborating with other local businesses," Cindy says.

"For me," she notes, "creating art and eating nourishing meals are both different ways we practice ritual. Rituals are small actions we do to allow us to connect to our minds and our bodies.... We encourage those who seek creative space to stop by and try our yummy treats, and our open art studio."

Summer hours at the Ritual Bowl Art Café are Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Readers may follow @ritualbowl on Instagram for news and announcements.



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WENDELL from page A1

Doud agreed with DiDonato's idea that an election for a replacement member should be held along with the state primary on September 1. Nomination papers for the position are available in the selectboard office and due back by August 8, which coincidentally is Old Home Day.

The board discussed leaving forms at the library, and uploading them as the banner on the town website.

Town coordinator Kelly Tyler said other vacant town positions are listed in the town newsletter, which she expected to be available on the town website in early July. Residents who want a paper copy can ask Tyler in her office.

Bridge Getting Somewhere

Highway commission chair Phil Delorey did not attend the meeting, but sent an email with good news about the Farley bridge repair project. In early May, the state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) approved plans for the steel girders, and shop drawings made and approved by the engineer and the contractor, Warner Bros. The girders are now being fabricated.

The state's Rural Development Fund, he reported, also approved a deadline extension for spending the \$500,000 grant and completing the entire repair until

June 2027. The bridge, which connects the towns of Erving and Wendell, is expected to open this August or early September.

The project's total cost is now expected to be \$611,511, with Wendell and Erving each having contributed \$30,000. Rural Development approved a separate \$180,000 to cover any cash shortfall in the project.

Other Business

Manley said annual town meeting voters had accepted transferring \$20,000 from free cash to pay for shortfalls in the winter's snow and ice budget. The remainder of it, she said, can be taken from the current highway budget.

Repaving Farley Road had a \$27,000 overrun, but since that amount was less than 10% of the project's total budget, the state will cover it. Other end-of-year deficits can be covered from the town's reserve fund and unspent money from the veterans' service account.

All town bills for FY'26 must be paid by July 15, or they will have to be approved at a special town meeting.

The selectboards of Orange, Wendell, New Salem, and Petersham must each appoint a representative to the subcommittee revising the Mahar regional school district agreement. The subcommittee's first meeting is at 10 a.m. on Thursday, July 23.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SIX-TOWN REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

Regional Agreement Finalized; Vote May Fall In November

By **MIKE JACKSON**

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Though Montague voters were focused this week on the first of three major decisions they face this year at the ballot box, plans for the second continued to move forward on Tuesday, as the Six Town Regional Planning Board (STRPB) met to discuss updates and strategy about the proposal to create a regional new school district to supersede the Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley districts.

After countless reviews, revisions, and ricochets with the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the text of the regional agreement that will go before voters this fall seems to have been finalized, STRPB chair Alan Genovese reported.

"They apparently had no issues with it," Genovese said of the final DESE read-through. "They thanked us for keeping them in the loop and sharing those revisions... Having heard that, now we can take that document and send it out to the selectboards, and we can put a cover letter to it."

Two versions of the agreement have actually been drafted: one that would consolidate Leyden, Bernardston, Gill, Montague, Northfield, and Warwick, and an alternate "five-town" version that excludes Warwick, which split off from the Pioneer Valley district in recent years after the district school committee voted to close its elementary school.

Talking Points

Montague representative Dorinda Bell-Upp, a member of her town's finance committee, shared the latest version of written materials she has been developing in conjunction with a communications consultant to promote the proposal, which the board has been studying since 2019. The plan is to put most of the information on the board's website, 6towns.org.

The proposed Great River Regional School District (GRRSD) would preserve the existing elementary schools in the towns, but consolidate middle-school grades at

the Northfield secondary school and high schoolers at Turners Falls.

Bell-Upp said a set of maps from an official study of how student transportation would be reconfigured weren't "particularly helpful," and showed an alternate section explaining "how far apart the schools are, what might happen to ride times, and how it's determined," she said.

"People still care about transportation," she added. "It's unlikely at this point that we would need additional buses. Five years ago, it was saying we need an additional bus, but that's no longer... These schools are 17 minutes apart. People are talking about waking up at 5 [a.m.], and hours and hours on the bus, and that isn't realistic."

Genovese said he planned to ask Northfield member Pat Shearer, who was not present at Tuesday's Zoom meeting, to write a newspaper op/ed about the regionalization of the Pioneer Valley towns in the 1950s, an effort her mother had been involved in.

"That would be a great article for her to write," he said, "about the trials and tribulations and concerns they were talking about then, and how similar they are to what's going on today."

Gill member Greg Snedeker reflected that while parents in the districts seem to be expressing concerns about the social impact of the reconfiguration, "our students are [already] a lot more connected to students in all the other high schools and middle schools than we would even predict."

Talking with his own daughter, Snedeker said, led him to understand that in this age of small school enrollments and widespread use of social media, "it's not like it used to be, where you sort of only knew the kids in your own high school... They all tend to socialize with each other, they all play on club teams together."

Northfield representative Deb Potee pointed out that athletes from different area schools have been playing on co-op teams together for "close to 10 years" in the case of some sports.

"When I hear elementary school parents saying, 'Oh, I don't want to send them over there,'" Potee said, "I'm just like, 'If they're not there yet, they will be.'"

Demographic Plight

Snedeker, who had presented at the previous meeting on an economic model he had developed correlating enrollment decline at different grades with impact on district budgets, said he had requested quotes from three research firms to vet his model before it is presented to voters, and had received a quote from only one, the Boston-based Data For Decisions, LLC.

"They are going to review the model and and run it and look for counterfactuals," he reported, "and get back to us probably this week, and then run a more robust analysis of it by the end of the month."

Genovese said that between that cost and the expense – a "couple hundred dollars" – of creating ballots for the fall vote, the STRPB was "com[ing] in on budget" to spend down its final remaining state grant funds this month.

A meeting was scheduled for this Thursday between STRPB representatives and DESE commissioner Pedro Martinez.

"He's very interested in hearing about the long-range [transition] plan in our proposal," Genovese said. "They don't want to spend too much time on the model, but they did review it and said they see the merits of it."

"My advice," Bernardston representative Jane Dutcher said of the meeting with the commissioner, "is to answer the question that you're asked – don't try to figure out why they're asking it – and emphasize the [district] size. The ratio of students to teachers is important, and the fact that we're having less and less students and can't have less and less teachers is the big factor here."

"My husband always says, how small is too small?" Potee said. "It's always the question – is it gonna be too small when there are eight in the class?"

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PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE
MONTAGUE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

In accordance with the Mass. Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, the Montague Conservation Commission will hold the following public hearing at **6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2026** to review the Notice of Intent NOI #2026-05, filed by the Town of Montague Clean Water Facility for improvements to the existing Denton Street pump station at 1 Denton Street, Lake Pleasant within the Riverfront Area of the Pond Brook. A hybrid meeting will be held at the Montague Town Hall Annex, 1 Avenue A in Turners Falls, MA.

Remote meeting login information and the filing are available for review at www.montague-ma.gov/calendar.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Project Description: Greenfield – Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements on Route 2A
Project File No. 613591

A Public Informational Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed project in Greenfield, MA.
WHERE: **John Zon Center, 35 Pleasant Street, Greenfield, MA 01301**
WHEN: **Tuesday, July 21, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments made at the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of constructing a proposed shared-use path for bicyclists and pedestrians along the north side of Route 2A between Colrain Road/Robbins Road and Shelburne Road/River Street. It connects two existing projects and fills a gap in the bicycle and pedestrian planned network that will connect further to Greenfield City Center.

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices, and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603), or email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign language, CART, or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In the event of inclement weather a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER

eight kids in the classroom," Dutcher replied. "But when the student body is so small that you can't support enough teachers to have a diversity of subjects, that's a problem."

"I would say Pioneer's already at that," Potee said.

Genovese said many people have been asking when the vote will take place. "September or October, or even November," he said. "We've got to coordinate it with the towns, and there are a lot of moving parts. If we can piggyback it with [another election], that would be helpful."

Franklin County Technical School, Genovese said, had declined an offer to hold the six-town vote in October in the same election as a vote across the tech school district's 19 towns about building a new school building. The remaining elections are the primary on September 1 and the state election in early November.

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on June 23, 2016: News from the Montague Reporter archive.

Resource Officers Said to Prevent Violence

On June 14, police chief Charles "Chip" Dodge told the Gill-Montague school committee, "The mere presence of a police officer in a school prevents violence."

Dodge presented a proposal to staff the Turners Falls High School with a resource officer, a position that has not existed for several years. He explained that he would like to apply for a federal grant that would cover 70% of the cost for the first three years

of employment. The board voted 7 to 1 to back Dodge in pursuing the grant, with Sandra Brown voting against the motion.

TFHS Girls Softball: State Champions!

On Saturday, the Turners Falls softball team won their second straight D-III state championship, defeating the Austin Prep Green Cougars 2-0. It was the eighth state championship for Powertown, and their third in four years.

Turners' bats were mostly silent in the final game, but through crisp defense, smart base running, and sheer determination, Blue successfully defended their title.

20 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 22, 2006: News from the Montague Reporter archive.

Only 4,631 Fish Climb Ladder

The Turners Falls fish ladder had a good year in terms of human attendance, but cold water temperatures and heavy flow impeded fish passage somewhat. Sunday was the last day to view fish passage through the viewing window.

Here are the number and kind of fish that used the ladder this season: sea lamprey, 2,730; American shad, 1,703; small mouth bass, 118; large mouth bass, 20; brook trout, 19; rainbow trout, 17;

salmon smolt, 9; common carp, 6; pumpkinseed, 3; rock bass, 2; blueback herring, black crappie, Atlantic adult salmon, and brown trout, 1 each.

TFHS Girls Softball: State Champions!

Evenly matched for perhaps the first time this year, the Turners Falls girls softball team emerged triumphant in the Division III state championship tourney in Worcester this Saturday on a two-out, bottom of the fifth stand-up triple to deep center field off the bat of junior Ashleigh St. Peter, driving in Kim Arsenault for the game's one and only run.

140 YEARS AGO

Here's the way it was on June 23, 1886: News from the Turners Falls Reporter archive.

Turners Falls and Vicinity

The prevailing question – "Where are you going this summer?"

All but one share of stock in the local electric light company has been taken, and the work of putting up the plant will soon be commenced.

Patucket hall and the offices of the Turners Falls Company will be lighted by electricity.

Deputy Sheriff Allen, who means always to drive a good horse, has just purchased a handsome bay of his late prisoner, H.L. Couillard. The animal is not only fair to look upon, but a very good stepper on the road.

Administrator John G. Eppler has done a good thing in putting up three substantial iron hitching posts around Schuler block. The granger horse will have now no excuse for eating tree boxes.

L. E. Fales has some extraor-

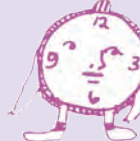
dinary strawberries in his garden, requiring a whole ball of twine to measure their circumference.

Gus. Milke, John J. Hawkes' clerk, caught a Leyden woman stealing a pair of ear drops the other day. He accused her of the theft, but she denied it. An examination of her hand-bag, however, discovered the missing jewelry. Few people imagine to what an extent shop-lifting is carried, and very "respectable" people have often been known to pocket things when not watched.

Tim Sullivan was careless enough to stick his toes over the platform of a mill elevator the other day, and when passing through a floor, a couple of his toes were sheared off.

If you see anybody selling or using fire crackers this year, "spot him on the snoot."

Friends of the Reporter would confer a favor by sending in all the news they hear of when it is fresh. Many persons are going and coming from seasons of vacation, and their friends like to know of their whereabouts.



SALE from page A1
Corp., as the "seller."

Founded in 1985, Food City is headquartered in Lewiston, Maine, and is currently comprised of six grocery stores in Maine, one in Vermont, and one in Turners Falls. In 2019, the family-owned chain surprised its employees by announcing that it was transferring ownership to them in the form of an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP). All employees working 1,000 hours a year or more were to be vested in the company's stock over a six-year period, reaching 100% ownership in 2024 or 2025.

Multiple local Food City employees the Reporter spoke with this week declined to comment on the record and said they knew no details of a rumored sale.

Attempts to reach Food City CEO Zak Sclar on Wednesday and Thursday by phone and email for com-

ment on the proposed sale had received no reply as of press time. Calling the local store, this newspaper was told the manager would be out until Friday.

Patel declined to comment on the plan for the employee shares, or to offer many other details, while the sale is pending, though he shared that his company was purchasing the Turners Falls location first, and hoped to acquire the rest of the chain "as a separate purchase."

"I feel like we can make these places better, and running great," he said. "We want to make this as a community place." Patel said his team had visited Turners Falls.

According to local news articles and filings in Maine, Patel is a young entrepreneur who has in recent years acquired a number of grocery and convenience or country stores in the state, including in Levant, Hudson, Camden, and Mechanic Falls, and is an active member of the Rotary Club.



SOLAR from page A1

original special permit had expired, as it was not being used, and that the developers should have to re-apply under the town's new, more stringent solar zoning bylaws and the board of health's new BESS regulations.

Days later, Nexamp filed a motion to dismiss Pill's suit on the grounds that it was not filed under the correct legal statute, and should technically have been filed against the company's subsidiary, Wendell Solar, LLC.

According to Pill and Nexamp attorney Michael Rosen, the court has taken the under advisement, and no further litigation will take place until project plans are finalized or the suit is officially withdrawn.

Nexamp sent a revised version of the plan to town officials on June 9, with the lithium-ion battery removed after all. An engineer representing the company reviewed details at a planning board meeting on June 15, but offered no explanation for the removal of the BESS.

Rosen said the company has incurred about \$200,000 in expenses since the permit was issued as it has worked to establish interconnection agreements with utility companies, which he argued qualifies as a "substantial use," meaning the permit remained valid.

"This wasn't something that we put on a shelf and forgot about," said Nexamp senior vice president of business development Michael Cucchiara. "This was part of – unfortunately – the standard that it takes to

bring a project through an interconnection process in Massachusetts."

Town counsel Alex Weisheit said he believed the 2018 special permit was still valid, and the planning board agreed. Its members voted unanimously to recognize the permit as in effect until October 10, 2029.

"I respectfully disagree with the planning board's conclusion," Pill later told the Reporter. "The town attorney works for the selectboard, where money is a crucial problem. When a solar project would generate revenue for the town, they may not feel like they're in a position to take on Nexamp, which is a subsidiary of the multi-billion-dollar multinational Mitsubishi Corporation."

Confusion seemed to linger around the status of the land court case. A neighbor of the proposed project, Lisa Hoag, asked why the board was not waiting until the court determines whether the permit is still valid.

"The lawsuit is unlikely to proceed much further, because the... applicant and the abutters agreed to resolve the lawsuit based on dropping the battery storage," Weisheit said. "There is not going to be a judge ruling on that."

"I am one of the people involved in the lawsuit, and I made no such [decision]," said Linda Hickman.

Hickman and her co-plaintiff, Benjamin Schwartz, have repeatedly shared concerns at public meetings about potential fire safety, noise, and environmental hazards associated with the BESS. With this

element now removed, according to Pill, his clients are focused on obtaining a 100-foot vegetative buffer between the array and the road, as was approved in the original plan, rather than the 50-foot buffer Nexamp is currently proposing.

Nexamp representatives told the planning board they believe their plan still satisfies the requirement for a 100-foot setback, though a 50-foot vegetative buffer would cover only part of the facility's frontage.

"They are renegeing on a prior commitment," Pill told the Reporter. "I think they are buying themselves another lawsuit."

At a conservation commission meeting on Tuesday, con com members requested that Nexamp provide updated project narratives removing references to the BESS from the plan, and hire a third party to evaluate the original 2018 wetlands delineation.

Rosen said the firm would need to consider the request for the wetlands review, and pointed to the plans introduced last year for stormwater drainage as a positive addition. "We came up with a better way to do something that you had already approved," he told the commissioners.

As of this week, the board of health had not yet received notification from Nexamp that the BESS application was being withdrawn, according to clerk Tom Siefert. The con com continued its public hearing until July 7, and the planning board hearing will continue July 27.



SUMMER'S ABUNDANCE SWELLING



MAGGIE SADOWAY PHOTO

The community garden at Unity Park in Turners Falls offers 32 plots to residents, with vacancies filled by a wait list.

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LEDGES from page A1

Prior to the closure, the WMCC had already been pursuing a plan to buy land and build a new parking lot on it in order to improve access to the cliffs and boulders of Farley Ledges. Last December the group purchased a 70-acre parcel on Old State Road for \$182,500. The money came from a loan from the Access Fund, a national nonprofit focused on preserving climbing locations.

“Having those funds was one of the biggest hurdles,” Madden said. “But now it’s a matter of doing the work to construct the lot.”

The WMCC has raised over \$340,000 thus far from 136 different donors. This sum includes an anonymous matching gift of \$125,000, a grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts, and about \$6,000 raised by members of the Central Rock Gym in Hadley.

“Farley is a second home for so many climbers and its closure has been devastating,” said Stephanie Giguere, an operating executive at the WMCC. “However, it’s been amazing to see the entire community come together to help us take the steps needed to reopen!”

The goal is to raise at least \$430,000, which organizers say is the amount needed to pay back the Access Fund loan, install a parking lot, informational kiosk, and tool shed, and maintain the property. The new lot would have space for at least 60 vehicles. The existing lot, which has space for about 15, would serve as an overflow lot for hikers and climbers once the new lot is complete.

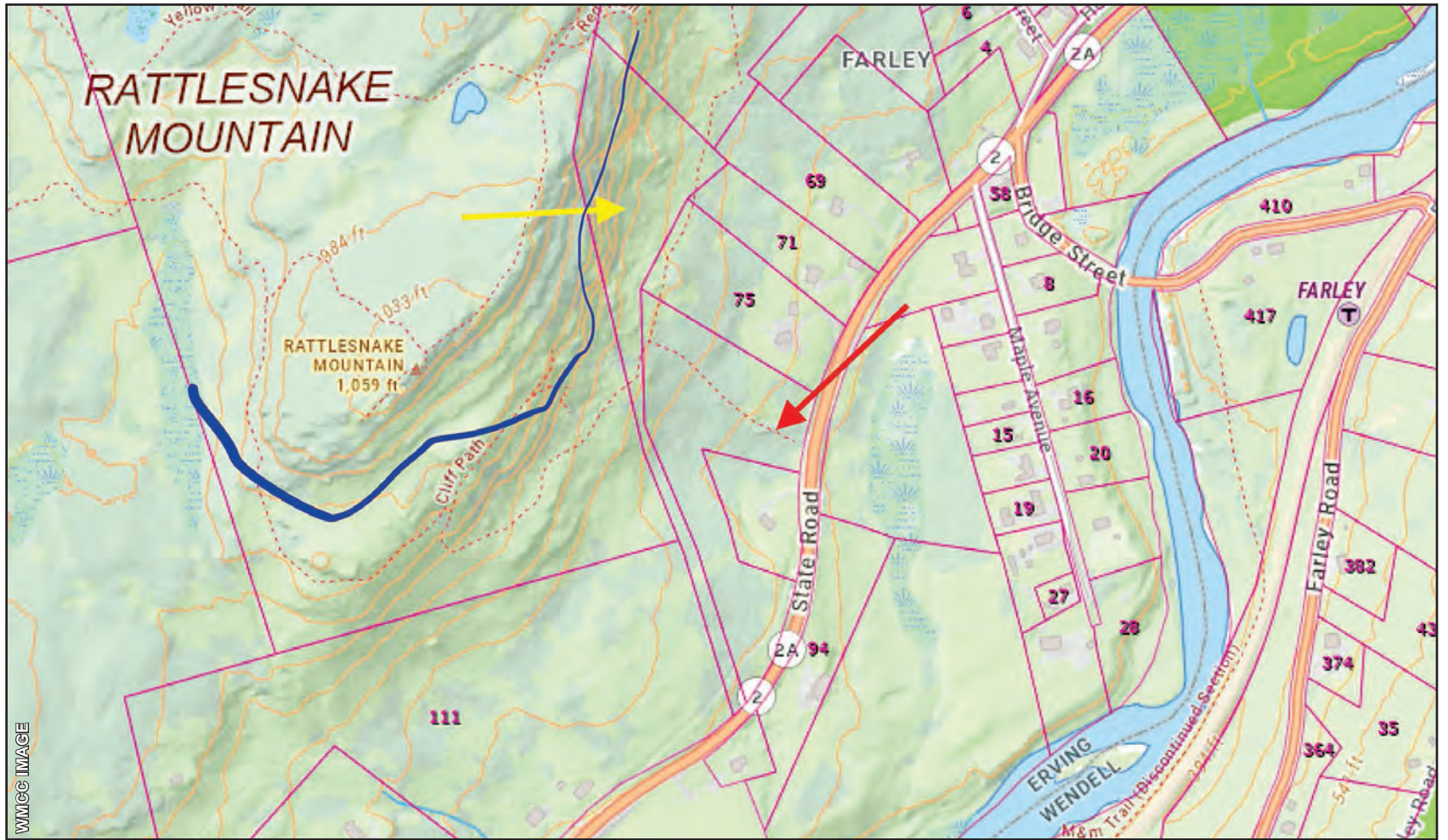
The WMCC’s parking lot project has already received a special permit from the Erving planning board, as well as an order of conditions from the conservation commission, according to town planner Glenn Johnson-Mussad.

“Thoughtful outdoor recreation investments like this support our local economy by drawing visitors while also protecting the natural resources that make Erving special,” Johnson-Mussad told the Reporter. “Their conservation-focused design and strong track record of stewardship give us confidence that this project will balance access with care for the landscape.”

“We received no opposition to this project,” Madden said. “We have excellent relationships, and longstanding relationships, with the surrounding landowners.”

While trails leading to the climbing area cross various parcels of private land, the cliffs and boulders most sought by climbers are on property owned by the hydroelectric company Firstlight Power. The WMCC leases land from the power company to maintain public access, Madden said.

As a stipulation of the “recreation settlement” negotiated by Firstlight Power and a number of organizations and government agencies in 2023 as part of the company’s federal hydropower relicensing process, portions of the Ledges would be placed under a permanent conservation restriction for public recreation. The company also agreed to exclude this conservation land from its project boundaries, in order to make it possible for a third party to eventually take ownership of it. These provisions are widely expected to be included in a new federal license.



With the recent closure of the private land, about 20% of the climbing features at the Farley Ledges will remain off-limits even after a new trail is established.

The Ledges are “the most popular crag local to Boston,” Madden said, attracting about 10,000 visits every year. Their accessible location makes Erving a popular spot for climbers from Boston, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, and further afield. Located immediately off Route 2, the existing 15-space parking lot fills quickly on warm autumn weekends, and neighbors sometimes sell additional parking spots in their private driveways and yards.

“Parking is very limited when you consider how popular Farley is,” Madden said. “This new lot would massively expand our capacity.”

In accordance with an agreement with other landowners, no guidebook advertises climbing routes or rock features at the Ledges, and there are no plans to develop one.

“Recreation – especially on private land – is a privilege,” WMCC president Andy Neuman said in a statement this spring. “Now more than ever, it is paramount that we climbers respect the closure and honor the wishes of the landowners. We also ask that climbers maintain outdoor etiquette while at neighboring crags.”

WMCC leaders say they hope the parking lot project will be completed next year. The new lot would be open to anyone who wants to enjoy the outdoors – not just climbers – and donations would be collected at the kiosk at the trailhead.

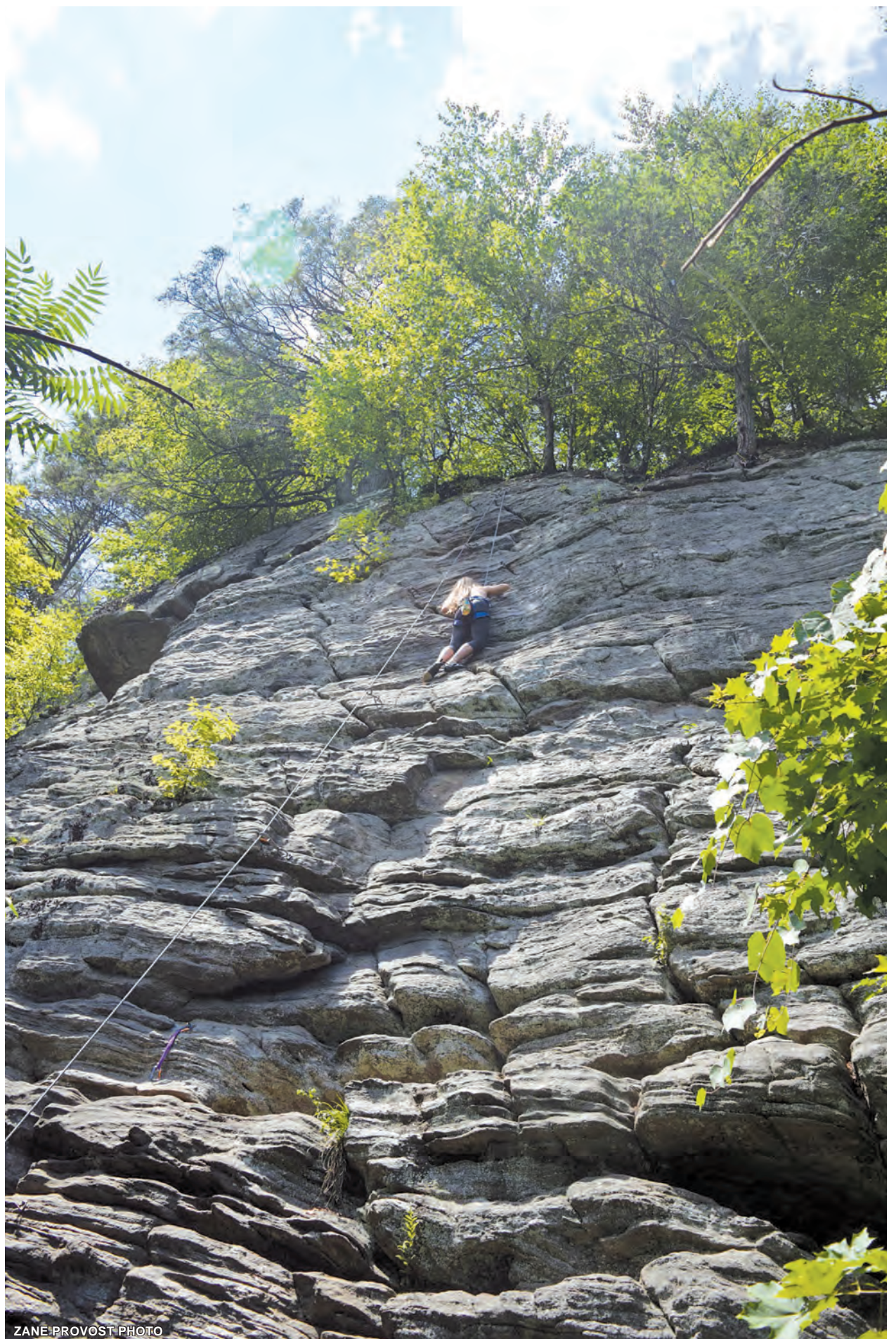
Madden said the WMCC’s board of directors will convene this weekend in Northampton to discuss the next steps for the project, as well as the future of the organization.

“We have a lot to do, like clearing the land, invasive species testing, and the actual construction aspect of it,” Madden said. “We will be making a lot of those decisions at our board retreat, and once we vote on that, we will put that information out to the public.”

In the meantime, the WMCC recommends climbers in western Massachusetts visit other local crags such as Rose Ledges in Northfield, Catamount in Charlemont, and the Sanctuary and Mormon Hollow in Wendell.

Above: The trouble with accessing the Ledges. The dark blue line outlines the face of Rattlesnake Mountain most appealing to rock climbers. The red arrow points to a trail connecting the primary Route 2 trailhead with the Ledges zone. The yellow arrow points to a “pork chop-shaped” parcel of land, a flag lot with narrow Route 2 frontage, which is newly restricted to the public. Not pictured: The planned access route to the Ledges from Old State Road, to the west. The parcel of land in the map’s lower left corner is the one acquired by the Western Massachusetts Climbers’ Coalition.

Below: Though not listed in any guidebook, the Ledges attract climbers from far and wide.



ZANE PROVOST PHOTO

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LIBRARY from page B1

current main branch, the 1906 Carnegie Library, is also mounting, and that it is inaccessible and too small for the town's needs.

Public interest in the vote exploded after May 2, when town meeting voted 81 to 3 to authorize the appropriation and send the debt exclusion on to voters, and the town's streets are now lined with hundreds of lawn signs on each side of the issue.

On public Facebook groups the polarization became particularly acute in the final weeks before the vote, with numerous expressions of paranoia and distrust from opponents - "I am curious as to whom is behind libraries across the state," one woman wrote rather ominously - and of frustration and condescension from supporters.

When it came down to voting, however, residents in the divided town remained civil.

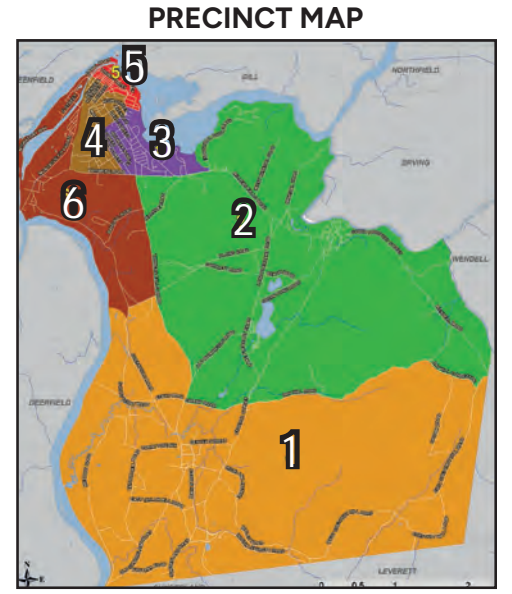
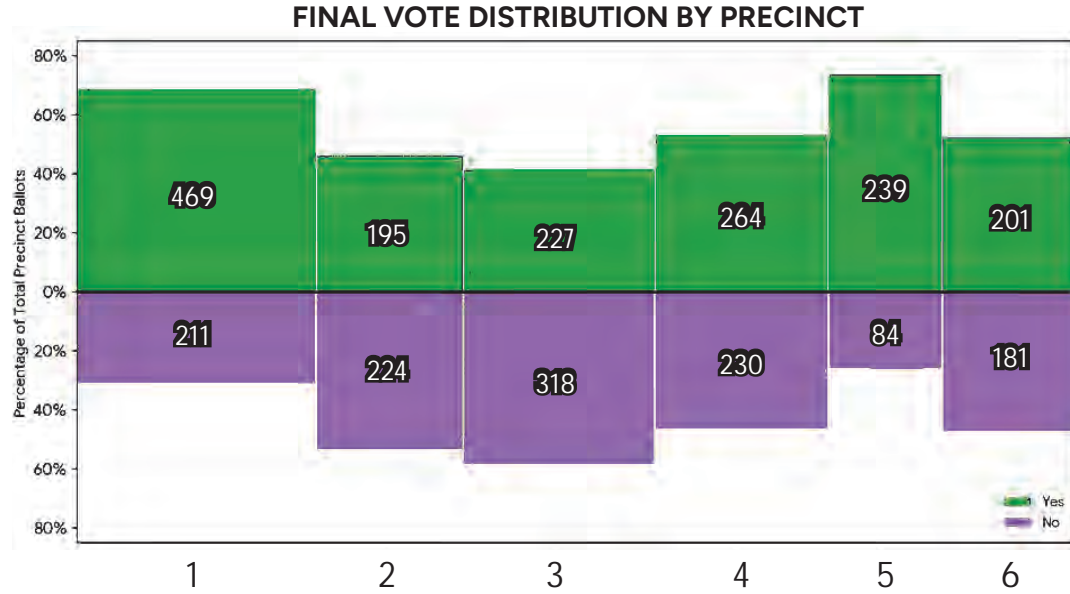
"You'll have plenty to write about this one," former selectboard member Chris Boutwell told our reporter as he left the Franklin County Technical School gymnasium, where Precincts 2, 3, 4, and 6 all vote.

"I'm voting to stop the madness," said another man who declined to give his name. Both also declined to say how they had voted.

"I think libraries are essential to everyone," Jamie Berger of Precinct 4 said when asked what had motivated him, "including people who don't like this new library."

"This has definitely become a culture war, unfortunately," said musician and sound engineer John Koehler, who lives in the same precinct.

At the Gill-Montague senior center, where Precinct 5 votes, turnout was lower than elsewhere in town - as it typically is - but much higher than usual. "It's been steady all day,"



precinct warden Annabel Levine reported.

"I'm excited to see what the library is going to be like," downtown resident Sam Mulligan said after casting a ballot. "It feels like it's a worthy investment in our town, and I think it would be a real missed opportunity to pass up that state money."

Numerous voters came in to vote with their children. Outside the tech school, organized camps on both sides of the issue picketed. A white pickup truck parked on the corner of Industrial Boulevard was scrawled with slogans: "Greenfield's Disaster," "Save Small Business," "It's a Big Lie-Brary."

Around 4 p.m., Bogusz and Sulda arrived on the scene with measuring tape, responding to a complaint that supporters of the question were campaigning within the proscribed buffer zone of 150 feet from the station's entrance. The group was required to move about 25 feet further away, with no discernible impact on its rather mild messaging.

By 4:30 p.m. the townwide count already exceeded 2,000, and a late afternoon surge after that was heaviest in Precincts 3 and 4.

"I've got more voters checked off than

I ever have," Precinct 2 poll worker David Jensen marveled as voting drew to a close in the gymnasium. "On some streets, more checked than not checked."

At final count, the library spending won 74% support in Precinct 5, 69% in Precinct 1, and 53% in Precincts 4 and 6. The "No" vote, meanwhile won 58% of Precinct 3 and 54% of Precinct 2. Following a well-established pattern, the turnout was highest at opposite ends of the spectrum, in Precincts 1 and 3.

"We thank everyone who came out to vote on this important question of whether to raise taxes for this project," Montague Affordability Committee chair Ken Morin said after the tally was announced. "While we are disappointed with the outcome, the vote demonstrates that a not insignificant number of residents share our concerns about affordability and rising taxes.... Our message has been simple: Montague must balance its many needs with its ability to pay."

Will Quale, chair of the public libraries trustees as well as the Vote Yes for a Montague Library committee, said "hundreds of designers, writers, canvassers, organizers, donors, and above all conversationalists" had contributed to Wednesday's win.

"This was a campaign of neighbors meeting each other, acquaintances becoming friends,

and strangers listening and unexpectedly connecting," Quale wrote. "This library will be a public building for all of us, not just for those who voted for it today. It's incumbent upon us to help each person in town discover the ways this investment will benefit them."

According to Quale, the next steps in the plan are 10 months of developing a bid-ready design, putting the project out to bid next spring, and breaking ground next summer. After 16 months of construction, he said, the new building could open in early 2029.

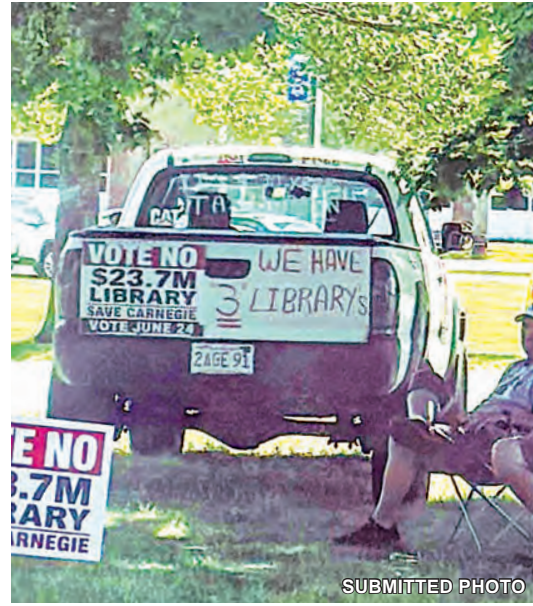
The town must then decide whether to use or sell the historic Carnegie building.

"I'm thrilled by the outcome," public libraries director Caitlin Kelley said when reached for comment, thanking "the nearly 100 volunteers who tirelessly supported the campaign."

"Montague is finally going to get the library it deserves," she added. "I can't wait to break ground."



Town clerk Wendy Bogusz and assistant town clerk Tina Sulda measure the distance of pro-library campaigners' lawn chairs from the Franklin County Technical School entrance.



Signs of the times: a No-mobile.



Precinct 3 poll worker Joyce Morin shows the tiny bell she rings each time a first-time Montague voter casts a ballot. "We've had at least 15," precinct warden Sheryl Jablonski reported as polls drew to a close. "And I'm sure we missed some."

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TUE-SAT 4-9



NINA ROSSI PHOTO

features@montaguereporter.org

OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

JUNE 25, 2026

Above: Clouds, puffy and majestic, float over the Cove.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

By BEN GAGNON

WENDELL – Five men surrounded a wood splitter on Montague Road last Saturday morning, filling up a trailer with firewood. Just down the road, two women cleared brush that had been suffocating a beautiful wormwood tree.

It may sound like business as usual for a weekend in Wendell, but this bustle of activity was a little different. The work was being done by volunteers from the Wendell Historical Society, helping neighbors who needed a hand. Since 2023, the community has rallied around the formation of a historical society and the purchase of the old depot store and post office, where artifacts are being gathered for display.

Splitting wood and clearing brush was one way of giving back.

“We’ve been getting help from the community, by the community, and for the community – they’ve been supporting us for three years,” said Wendell Historical Society president Edward Hines. “Helping others is just one small way we can



GAGNON PHOTO

From left to right, Joe Coll, Edward Hines, and Cirdan Kearns help with wood-splitting duties last Saturday in Wendell.

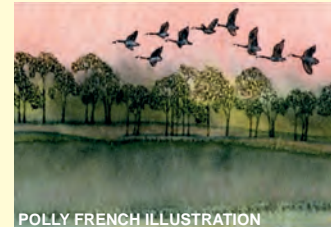
let people know we appreciate what they’ve done.”

Hines asked to keep the beneficiaries of the group’s work anonymous.

“These are people who are very proud and self-reliant, and you have to be self-reliant, because we live in Wendell and you have to work hard to keep up the land,” said Hines.

“This is a small thing, but we’ve been living through a period of darkness, and I think people all over are starting to do things that bring some light. This kind of thing starts at the local level, but it makes a difference in people’s lives.”

Trevor Kearns, who has lived in see **WENDELL** page B4



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

WEST ALONG THE RIVER

RIGHTING A WRONG AT PESKEOMPSKUT

By DAVID BRULE

PESKEOMPSKUT FALLS, GILL – How do you decolonize a landscape?

How do you right a wrong?

Some say that in this particular case you can’t, it’s been too long.

Some say actually, you *can* bit by bit help to heal the river, the land, entire nations of those who named this place: call it *Peskeompskut*, or *Peske-Tuk*, *Pesquamskut*, *Wissatinnewag*.

Think about the stepping stones that led to May 16, 2026: the *Wissatinnewag* site saved from Walmart; the ceremonial hill at the airport saved from the bulldozer, the great drums of the Pocumtuck Homelands Festival booming out along the river and up the shady streets of the village, sweet flute music lifting into the air and helping the healing at the falls.

Then there’s the completion, especially, of a 12-year study by Indigenous people and local historians diving into the deep history of the 1676 massacre to find out what *really* happened at the falls.

And now we celebrate the return of the Indigenous nations to a very small, symbolic parcel of what was a continuously-inhabited 12,000-year-old camp site before the slaughter of the innocents in May 1676.

The place at the head of the falls holds many memories from before 1676, when for thousands of years it was a joyous gathering place for Native nations from all over the Northeast.

I wrote in an essay years ago:

“Imagine tribal peoples from hundreds of miles around converging on the campsites and vil-

lages at Peskeompskut as they had for thousands of years. Nipmuc, Wampanoag and Massachusetts paddle down the Paguag (Millers) River from the regions of Mount Wachusett and beyond. Abenaki, Pennacook, Sokoki stream down from the north. Mohican arrive from the west, Narragansetts from the southeast, extended families of the Pocumtuck confederation of Agawam, Woronoco, Norwotuck and Nonotuck move upriver to the falls.

“Hundreds of *wetus* and wigwams dot the fertile shores above the roaring Falls.

“Shouts of joy and yelping dogs join in the greetings of those just arriving.... For 12,000 years, but no more. On May 19, 1676 the long history of peace, sanctuary, abundance, and spiritual renewal was forever destroyed for Native people in the valley.”

The story of the disastrous dawn raid on the encampment is recounted by Nipmuck storyteller Basket Maker in Kelly Savage’s book *The Pond Dwellers*.

She recounts the terror of being woken in the predawn darkness by the flash of musket fire inside her wigwam, when she remembers her little brother’s blood spurting over her, the yelp of her dog being struck by a musket ball.

She recounts gathering up her little sister and running to the cliff at the edge of the river above the falls.

People screaming, elders being run through by sword, after Turner told his men to save their powder and to use their long knives. The People hid in crevices in the rock cliff of Peskeompskut, but they were rooted out mercilessly and see **WEST ALONG** page B8

It’s Not Main Street!

threnodywilston@gmail.com

Across

- 1 Texting format, in brief
- 4 Titanic title
- 7 Form of colonialism
- 14 Peter or a piper
- 15 Night school subj.
- 16 C-worthy
- 17 Down to the last drop
- 19 One of 20 on a standard soccer ball
- 20 Fresh start
- 21 * Waterway ____

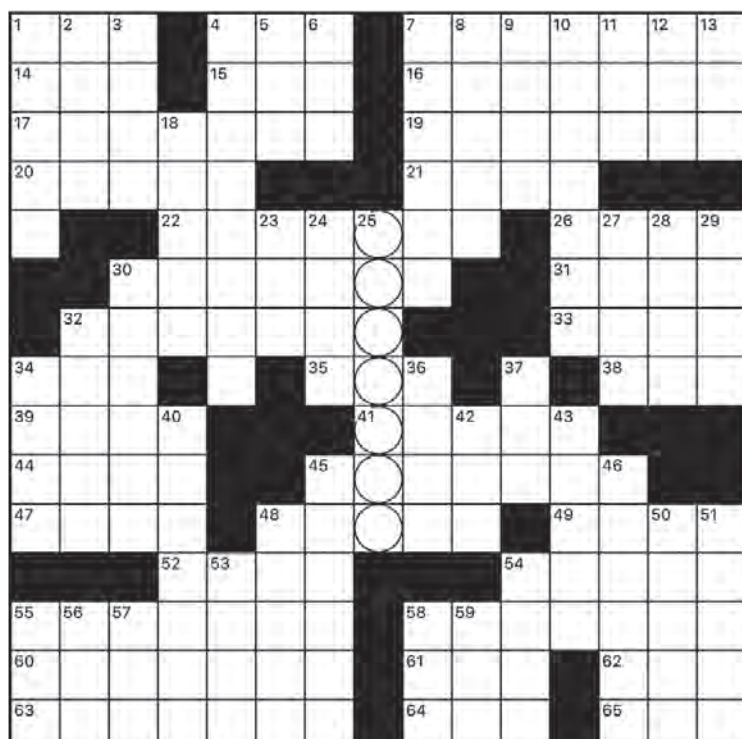
- 22 * Where you might find a Teen Room one day
- 26 Mad Man Jon
- 30 Fantastic, informally
- 31 ____ Blue Ginger, in Greenfield
- 32 * Where the kiddies are huge
- 33 Guy known for his diagrams
- 34 * Hubie’s or Between the Uprights, e.g.
- 35 Information

- molecule
- 38 Prefix of sentence or way
- 39 Washingtons
- 41 *Bend bruncheonette
- 44 First horror film shot on 65mm
- 45 Cross-reference phrase
- 47 Of the subcontinent
- 48 * Glen of breakfast
- 49 ____ check
- 52 * Home of the Cinemastorm

Down

- 1 Cutlery portmanteau
- 2 Horse hair
- 3 Platformer platform
- 4 Eastern hog-nosed snakes, say
- 5 Phoenix hrs.
- 6 Family Stone frontman
- 7 Rainless region
- 8 Kind of dog who has his day
- 9 WhatsApp transmission
- 10 Love Island, to critics
- 11 Fall behind
- 12 Sense of self
- 13 Kind of faire
- 18 Brawl
- 23 Global social movement (abbr)
- 24 Regretted
- 25 Home of the Montague Reporter office, where you also might find the starred clues
- 27 [Clears throat]

- 28 Spa do (abbr.)
- 29 Obey
- 30 Co. recruiters
- 32 Object known natively as a mishoon
- 34 007
- 36 Mimicked
- 37 It’s not a lamprey!
- 40 Kind of activity measured on the Richter scale
- 42 Salary
- 43 Host’s requests
- 45 Sign of virality
- 46 Five-time winners of the Stanley Cup
- 48 “Doctor” born and raised in Springfield, MA
- 50 Clears a table
- 51 Woman’s name that sounds like the two letters of the alphabet contained in 65-across
- 53 Sharpen
- 54 “Brain massage” response to soft speaking, in brief
- 55 Constitution change that would have prohibited sex discrimination (abbr.)
- 56 Cornhusker state (abbr.)
- 57 “__ gratia artis” (MGM motto)
- 58 Starmer, Modi, and Netanyahu, for short
- 59 Yes, in Montreal



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Solution in the next Montague Reporter



JUSTIN KENNICK PHOTO

Left to right: Elnu Abenaki councilor Jim Taylor, Abenaki scholar Marge Bruchac, the author, and Elnu Abenaki spokesman Rich Holschuh stand last month at the old monument to Captain William Turner.

Pet of the Week



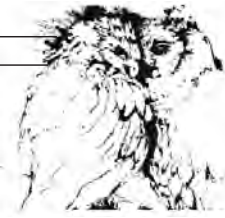
'REX'

Meet Rex, a stately, purebred adult German Shepherd dog living in Millers Falls. He's a lovable, playful gent, and will chase a ball for hours. Rex loves hugs and will stand right up for them when you get home. Belly rubs are also a favorite, and he will let you know when it's time.

Rex is great with kids, cats, and other dogs, and is housetrained. Due to an unforeseen relocation for

work, Rex's owner has to find a good home for Rex. He is required to be neutered within 30 days of his adoption.

To begin the adoption process, visit the Dakin Humane Society website, www.dakinhumane.org, and find the "Available Community Animals" link. (Dakin offers these listings as a courtesy.) Adopting Rex will require direct communication through Adopt-A-Pet. The fee is \$50.



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

SOUTH HADLEY – I was talking with a friend the other day, describing the process my partner (a cisgender man) and I had used to decide whether to have a child together. She suggested I share this process for a column, as she thought it could be helpful for other couples trying to figure this out.

When B. and I met and dated, I had been adamant that I did not want to have children. I mainly felt this way for two reasons: I had experienced a dysfunctional childhood and did not want to inflict that on my own children, and I was dedicated to my career and creativity, and did not want child bearing and rearing to disrupt it.

B. also agreed that he felt ambivalent about having a kid, and said he would be fine without having one.

After we married, my partner revealed that he actually *did* really want to be a father, and wondered what it would take for me to reconsider my stance. Other than universal free childcare, a guaranteed equitable distribution of child rearing labor, and him somehow being able to nurse the child, I wasn't sure. So, he suggested couples therapy to help address my concerns. At this point I was around 36 years old, so if we were going to procreate, we'd need to get busy soon. Procreation can be a part of sex mattering!

We spent the next several months with a wonderful couples thera-

pist – now retired, sorry! – running a fine-toothed comb through all of my concerns. The therapist helped us dig into our dysfunctional childhoods, through a trauma-informed lens, helping us to see how differently we behaved from our own parents. She helped us recognize our resilient qualities, authentic identity choices, and the helpful and unhelpful behaviors and beliefs we still carried. We were both able to let go of some of our fears and worries of replicating the poor skills of our parents.

And indeed, 15 years after giving birth, I have mostly been able to consistently embody the authoritative and secure parenting style I strive for, as opposed to the highly dictatorial, and emotions-denying authoritarian parenting I experienced, with a side of neglect, from my self-involved Baby Boomer parents. So, yes, my psychological fears diminished through our work in couples therapy, though I still carried quite a bit of logistical anxiety.

In my heart of hearts I knew the daily ins and outs would be tremendously exhausting and stressful, and not much fun for me, being a person not interested in babies and small children. In fact, I may have only held one other baby, before my own, and could not recall ever changing a diaper. B., on the other hand, loved babies, and even used to work summers at a nursery school, helping his mom.

B. reassured me he would handle as much physical child labor as possible. He is a teacher and artist, so I knew this help would be coming after his work day and on weekends. However, his father also vowed to come out from Boston one day a week to provide babysitting, allowing me to work some daytime hours.

Both men kept their vows, with B. taking on parent duties much of the evenings, often carrying our child L. in the baby sling while I worked a few hours providing psychotherapy.

When our kid was about 14 months old, we enrolled her in daycare two mornings a week, giving me some quiet alone time at home. I finished my first novel during this time! Nothing like a time limitation to motivate a project's completion. We also hired a neighbor teen as a parent helper a couple afternoons a week, allowing me more work time.

To make it fair for B., I began finding activities to take L. on weekend mornings, principally to give him alone time in his art studio. One of those places was the UU Society in Northampton, where L. hung out in the baby area while I re-

ceived spiritual sustenance upstairs during the service. Another organization that was a huge help was the Holyoke YMCA. I dropped off L. at their childwatch while I swam and worked out, to maintain my sanity. B. also agreed it was important for me to continue my long social bike rides on weekends.

These were important and essential logistics we contemplated prior to and during pregnancy, which allowed me to feel more relaxed about the prospect of caring for a brand new, completely needy, entity.

B's parents also came through with keeping L. for one to two overnight weekends a year, beginning when she was about 2 years old. This gave B. and me much-needed time to connect without distraction and exhaustion. We were also fortunate in that L. was a good sleeper from about six months on, allowing us to have regular connecting together time in the evenings before we passed out.

So, yes, ultimately I am extremely grateful I was convinced to have a child. We did stop at one child, as she was very active and interactive from Day 1, constantly exhausting us. And because both of us remained dedicated to our careers – we could not afford to raise a child on one career alone – as well as our creative endeavors, we knew we could really only fully give our time and attention to one child. It would be an unfair situation for multiple children.

This collaborative teamwork approach, which we built with the help of our therapist, family, friends, and community, helped me feel fully supported in something I was initially greatly ambivalent about. There are now even more official systems beyond couples therapy, such as Fair Play (www.fairplaylife.com), that parents can access to help with the division of all kinds of visible and invisible labor – physical, emotional, financial, and logistical.

I truly believe every family can benefit from talking out loud about each member's expectations, needs, wants, strengths, and dislikes regarding parenting and household management.

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

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Montague: People Needed

MONTAGUE – Village Neighbors can use your help! We currently have 308 members and 167 volunteers. However, only about one-third of those volunteers are currently providing regular support.

There are many ways you can help. Some of our members would like to go for walks and could use a companion. Gardening requests are at their yearly high, so if you want

to get outside and get some exercise, please respond to them. They are usually light physical labor, not master gardening, so don't be shy.

Call (413) 545-6894, email volunteers@villageneighbors.org, or check out our newly designed website, villageneighbors.org.

And if you are a member and need any of these services, please just ask. That is what we do!

Senior Center Activities

JUNE 29 TO JULY 10

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 6/29

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

Tuesday 6/30

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

Wednesday 7/1

9 a.m. Interval Training
10 a.m. Chair Aerobics
11:30 a.m. Bingo
1 p.m. Veterans' Services

Thursday 7/2

9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow
12 p.m. Brown Bag Lunch

Friday 7/3

Closed for Independence Day

Monday 7/6

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

Tuesday 7/7

8:15 a.m. Nail Clinic
8:30 a.m. Nurse
9 a.m. Stretch and Balance
10 a.m. Line Dancing
11 a.m. Social Stringer

Wednesday 7/8

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

Thursday 7/9

9 a.m. Barre Fusion
10 a.m. Pilates Flow
Friday 7/10
8:30 Quilting/Open Sew

GILL and MONTAGUE

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

Monday 6/29

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

Tuesday 6/30

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

4:30 p.m. Office Hours with Marina Goldman

Wednesday 7/1

9 a.m. Veterans' Agent
10 a.m. Outdoor Yoga at the Discovery Center

Monday 7/6

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. Chair Exercise
12 p.m. Bring Your Lunch Bingo
4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Thursday 7/2

1 p.m. Pitch
3:30 p.m. Montague Neighbors Board Meeting

Friday 7/3

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

Monday 7/6

10:30 a.m. Brown Bag
1 p.m. Kitchen Club

Tuesday 7/7

9 a.m. Chair Yoga
9:15 a.m. to 2 p.m. Chair Massage (by appointment)

12:30 p.m. Tech Tuesday
3 p.m. Tai Chi

Wednesday 7/8

Foot Clinic (by appointment)
10 a.m. Outdoor Yoga at the Discovery Center

Thursday 7/9

1 p.m. Pitch

Friday 7/10

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11:15 a.m. Chair Exercise
2 p.m. Chair Dance
4 p.m. Computer Class (must pre-register)

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, 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 '250th' Art Walk

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – The city of Greenfield recently created an art walk in connection with its abolitionist history, which I have really enjoyed seeing around town. I managed to cover two of the artists involved with the project.

So a new art walk, commemorating the 250th anniversary of our country and involving Greenfield's history with the American Revolutionary War, is something I very much wanted to write up.

Greenfield's Revolutionary War history is very cool. I learned that one Greenfield Minute Man, a man named Calvin Munn, served time as a drill sergeant, including training a woman named Deborah Sampson who was posing as a man named Robert Shurtliff. Other officers who were Minute Men were named Isaac Newton and Agrippa Wells.

This walk is supposed to have six murals downtown, at five places around town: the Jon Olver Transit Center, the Franklin County Justice Center, the public library, Main Street at Sears Avenue, and the pocket park on Fiske Avenue. The payment for an initial drawing of a mural design was \$100, and each artist gets \$1,100 for a four-foot by four-foot mural on the sidewalk.

Around the time I found out about this, the murals had started to show up around town. The library already had its own, which was a hand holding a paper with writing on it. I was able to learn about it from the artist, Youme Nguyen Ly. She was someone I had already talked with after she did the same thing for the abolitionist art walk. The mural she did that time was similar to what she did for the library. It had also had writing on a piece of paper, with a fiddle near it.

Nguyen Ly calls her latest mural



Submitted photo
Youme Nguyen Ly's new sidewalk mural celebrates the poet Phyllis Wheatley.

"Let Virtue Reign." It celebrates the African-American poet Phyllis Wheatley. She told me it took "eight hours over four days, including sealant and socializing with interested citizens of Greenfield, to paint."

Being an artist is something that runs in Nguyen Ly's family, first her grandmother and then her mother. She used watercolor at home to paint murals. She has now painted murals around the world, and has written and made pictures for three nationally award-winning books. Her artist background is in "studying cross-cultural communication through art, some international work, and education in Japan, Kenya, Lao PDR, Haiti, and Cuba."

She told me she decided on the image because hands have been an important part of her work. "Phyllis Wheatley wrote her poems out," she added. "The hand I have shown here represents Elizabeth Freeman finding Phyllis Wheatley's poems."

An inaugural guided tour of Greenfield's MA250 Guided Art Tour will begin at 5 p.m. in front of Greenfield City Hall this Friday, June 26. It will travel to the six murals centrally located downtown. A QR code beside each mural leads to a self-guided tour of all 10 murals in the project.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Manual Disturbance; Likely Woodchuck; Horn Issues; Smoke; Traffic Detail; Rock Dam Event; Off-Leash Pitbull

Monday, 6/15

7:39 a.m. Caller would like to speak with officer about an e-bike issue and threats. Caller reports increasing hostility from his neighbor and would like it documented. Today he had to get off his tricycle when the neighbor blew by him on an e-bike. Advised of 258E options.

10:26 p.m. Caller from Bridge Street is highly upset; states his landlord told him today that he can't be masturbating loudly as he has gotten multiple complaints from other tenants about it. Landlord reportedly stated that if he couldn't control the volume, an eviction would be taking place. Caller is highly upset, stating the landlord has assaulted him and is sexually harassing him, and gets away with it because of his ethnicity. Caller would like to discuss further with an officer. Second caller, a neighbor within the building, is requesting officers to the scene; states male party has been screaming for hours and is smashing things around within his apartment, causing a disturbance.

Tuesday, 6/16

12 a.m. Caller from Franklin Street states she heard a loud noise and two kids went running to the church parking lot; would like the area checked. Unable to locate.

6:39 a.m. Caller from James Avenue states she has a skunk in a Havahart trap. Referred to animal control officer (ACO).

3 p.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting a vehicle on fire on Millers Falls Road. No one in the vehicle. Transferred to control; officers advised. Fire extinguished. Heavy smoke in area. Vehicle owner contacted tow truck; officer remaining on scene until arrival.

5:46 p.m. Call taken from TFFD; caller reports that a beaver is stuck inside the side entrance of Our Lady of Peace Church and appears to be in distress. ACO advises they are on another call; would like PD to respond to assess situation. Also states it's most likely a woodchuck. Animal has been removed; ACO notified.

7:04 p.m. Caller reports that a male party in an SUV hit a woman with his vehicle and is now yelling that if she doesn't get in the car he's going to kill her. States he is blaring the horn and refusing to leave her alone. Officer advises not as reported: all parties are fine; verbal dispute.

8:34 p.m. Caller reports that his partner is staying inside the band shelter at Peskeompskut Park tonight and a red-headed man in black clothing approached him and asked if he could stay with him. When he was told no, he walked away and said he was going to rob a Chinese restaurant. No other description given. Referred to an officer.

8:39 p.m. Family Dollar employee reports that a vehicle from a previous call is in the parking lot blaring the horn and both parties are screaming at each other continually. Involved parties advised officers they are having horn issues and they will be leaving the area shortly.

10:40 p.m. Three 911 calls from witnesses to what appeared to be a domestic disturbance on West Chestnut Hill Road. Officers spoke to involved female, who did not wish to identify herself and advised it was a verbal altercation with an unknown male party who left for the night. Declined need for services.

Wednesday, 6/17

12:16 a.m. Caller from Mormon Hollow Road states she has an unwanted person and would like her removed. Officer transporting party to T Street.

4:36 a.m. Caller from Hatchery Road reporting thick smoke; doesn't believe it's fog. Transferred to FD. Officer states small flames up the hill and signs stating smoke ahead; will contact Control. FD captain called; he was scanning the radio and will take a ride to investigate the site of a controlled fire yesterday.

8:32 a.m. Caller reports she is receiving texts and voicemails from an ex-boyfriend threatening to kill her. Advised of options.

4:34 p.m. Caller states she received a call from an unknown female, talking in a quiet and low voice, telling her to leave the area. Caller states she has lived in town for a while. Requesting to speak to an officer. Officer advised caller to block the number and to call back if she receives more harassment.

Thursday, 6/18

8:04 p.m. Caller from Mormon Hollow Road states he was told by people currently on the

property that someone is currently on a skid steer or tractor; caller advises nobody should be on that property. Ongoing issue. Caller called back and advised to cancel response; states someone on the property checked and advised that someone is mowing the lawn.

9:44 p.m. Caller advises that she was passing by the intersection of Avenue A and Third Street and observed what appeared to be a young child in the middle of the roadway with no parents around. Caller advised male was wearing a green shirt with gloves that lit up near the fingertips. Caller stated it appeared the child was directing traffic. Units checked area; unable to locate.

Friday, 6/19

11:25 a.m. Walk-in reporting a new incident at the Gun Rack with a male party who had come in two and a half years ago. Male party is again making threats towards staff and acting in an erratic manner.

4:37 p.m. Caller from Chestnut Hill Loop reports she has had a bat in her house for a number of days and states she has captured it. Caller unsure if she or anyone else, including pets, were bitten. On-call ACO notified; he will be reaching out to caller.

6:01 p.m. Anonymous caller reports lots of vehicles speeding on Migratory Way and advises there is a group of younger kids in the vicinity of Rock Dam. Officer advises there are roughly 10 to 15 vehicles parked near Rock Dam. Officer advised individuals of the consequences of their "event." Officer advises 30 or more individuals are starting to leave; no one appears drunk at this time. Units will remain in area until everyone is gone. Calling party advises she was down walking by Rock Dam and a group of individuals was being rude to her and threw a can at her, which hit her shoulder; she wants this logged. Nothing of that nature was seen upon officers' arrival; all individuals are cooperative at this time. All parties moved along.

6:48 p.m. Caller reports she was driving by Scotty's Convenience Store and observed a male party urinating outside. Caller states she saw the party's private parts and states he was headed away from the center of town. Officers checked area; nobody around.

Saturday, 6/20
2:53 a.m. Caller would like an officer to respond as he believes Pump 5 at Cum-

berland Farms was tampered with and the store employee won't take action. Officers state pump not tampered with; Cumberland Farms aware of it; units clear.

8:50 a.m. 911 caller from K Street states she was outside mowing her lawn and her neighbor came outside and started yelling at her. Parties separated at this time; caller is inside her residence. Officer advises quiet upon arrival; spoke with both parties, who gave different accounts of what happened. Situation mediated. Parties advised of options.

2:16 p.m. Report of a mangy fox in the Norman Circle area. Per ACO, there is not much they can do for that situation, but she will call the caller back to advise.

6:07 p.m. 911 caller states there is a half-naked male running around screaming, was in the roadway, and was last seen running behind a house on Turners Falls Road. States male was wearing khakis and no shirt. Officer located male, who is inside with a friend. No active issue. Involved male called 911 advising officers were at his house and he doesn't know why. Officer advised party as to why they responded.

8:22 p.m. Two reports of an off-leash pitbull whose owner frequently walks it in the Fifth Street area and becomes aggressive when asked about leashing his dog. No aggressive behavior observed on dog's part. Advised callers calls would be logged.

Sunday, 6/21

2:13 a.m. 911 caller from Fifth Street reports an ex-boyfriend is going through her car; he had cornered her, and she was able to get inside. Investigated. Advised caller how to obtain a harassment protection order.

2:45 a.m. Officer out on Montague City Road with person from previous call; spoke to party about the situation and advised of consequences. No signs of impairment.

4:24 p.m. Walk-in report of an active brush fire at Turners Falls and Hatchery Roads. TFFD en route.

7:07 p.m. 911 caller from Avenue A reports a male party walked into a restaurant stating he was verbally assaulted and needs a police officer. Second caller reports male party is in the roadway screaming at people, causing a scene, and scaring juveniles. Third caller reports male is yelling racial slurs at juveniles and trying to start a fight. Officers out with male party. All parties separated and sent on their way.

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WENDELL from page B1 town since 2009 and volunteers for the Historical Society, was on hand as part of the firewood crew.

"Ed's a friend, and he's poured his heart into reviving the Historical Society," said Kearns. "People have given us a lot recently, so why don't

we give back? It's entirely in keeping for the Historical Society to make connections in the community."

Trevor's son Cirdan came along to help out as well.

"Christ commands us to love our neighbors and to help vulnerable people," said Cirdan. "Ed was my

music teacher in elementary school, and I have a lot of respect for what he's doing to revitalize the Historical Society and bring the community together around that."

Joe Coll is on the organization's board of directors, and has deep ties in the community.

"I made a temporary move from New Jersey 38 years ago," said Coll with a smile. "People in town have really helped us out, and we're just trying to pay it back and show some appreciation."

Tim MacLean is a recent transplant to Wendell, where he raises chickens, goats, and horses.

"I just fell in love with the culture here so I'm looking to help preserve it," said MacLean.

Down the road, Pam Richardson and Jackie Hunt were clearing thorny rose bushes from the base of a wormwood tree. Both serve on the Historical Society's board.

"We've depended on the community a lot to help us get to where we are," said Richardson. "People have been so generous, so this is a way to give back. We figured we'd help out where we could."

Hunt wielded a weedwacker around the wormwood's base.

"There's a strong sense of community here that's sort of offbeat and quirky," she said. "You have to be skilled and creative to live here. We're trying to find creative solutions to issues in town. Hopefully we'll be trendsetters to bring some light to the world in difficult times."

While dragging a pile of thorny bushes to a mulch pile, Hunt offered a final thought with a smile: "It's a feel-good project."

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Mammals of the North Woods; Friends of the Disco Center

TURNERS FALLS – This Saturday, June 27, from 2 to 4 p.m., Dawn Marvin Ward will present a slide show on mammals common to the New England woodlands, followed by a hands-on sharing of related nature findings, at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Ward is an educator and naturalist who has been sharing her appreciation of nature with folks of all ages for over 30 years, and is a board member of the Friends of the Discovery Center. This free presentation is appropriate for ages 8 and up, and will be held in the Great Hall. The public is invited to learn about the Friends group in a brief annual meeting before the program begins.

On Sunday, June 28, from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the Great Hall, residents ages 4 and up are invited to make their own bee habitat by "painting" with yarn, fleece, pre-felt shapes and water, and learn about the importance of native bees.

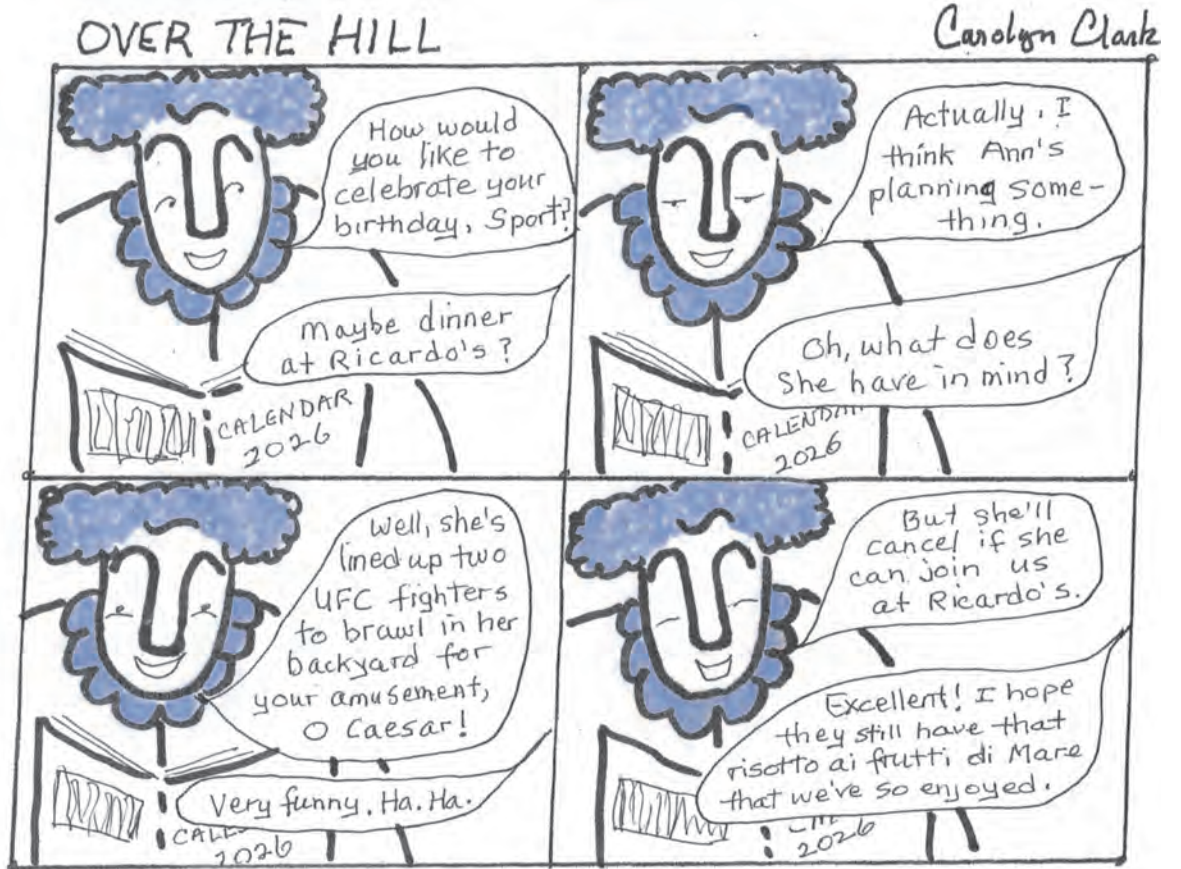
For more information, visit greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org.



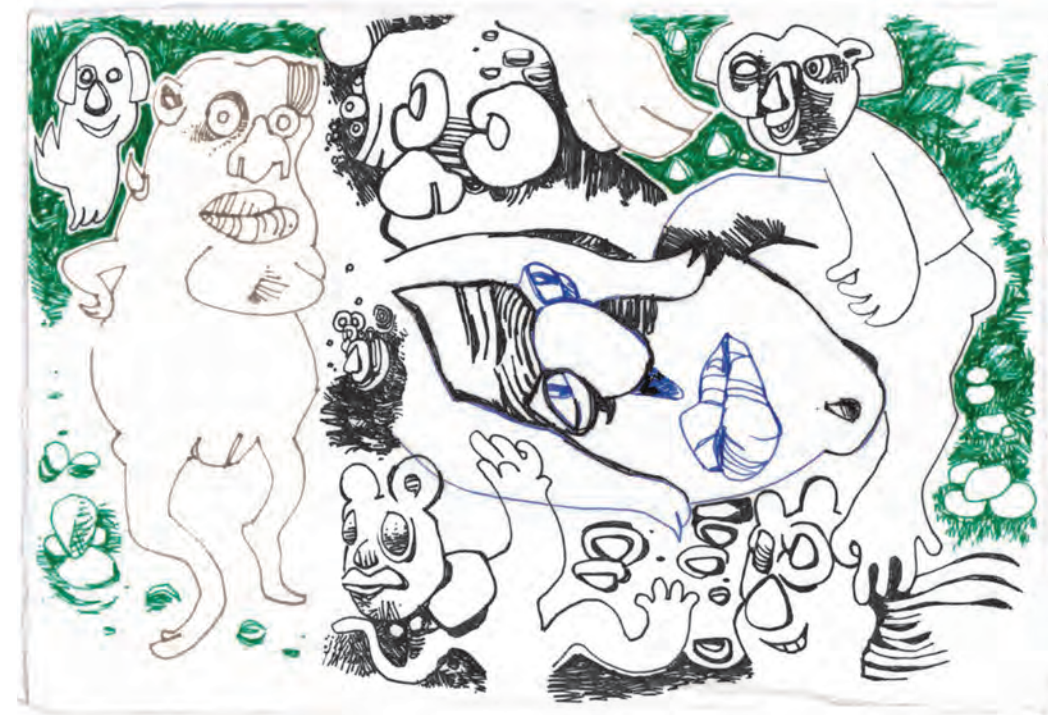
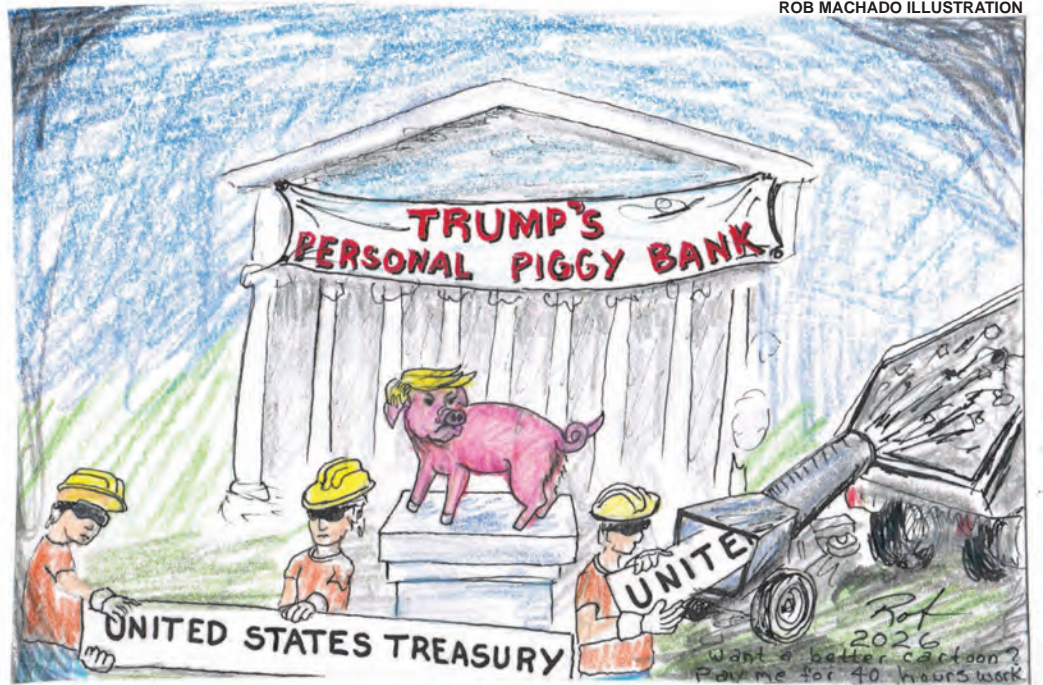
Pam Richardson and Jackie Hunt drag brush.



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Above: A KC-135 refuels US jets on their way to bomb targets in North Vietnam.



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The Architect of Surrender

By JOSH WATSON

TURNERS FALLS – In late October 1962, desperate to resolve the nuclear crisis between the US and the USSR centered around Soviet nuclear missile installations on Cuba, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and President Kennedy signed a secret agreement under which Khrushchev would remove the missiles from Cuba and Kennedy would remove US nuclear missiles from Turkey and parts of Italy. The US public only heard about the Soviet concessions, and to them it appeared Kennedy had made Khrushchev blink first. Kennedy's approval rating, which had ebbed throughout that year from 80% to 62% approval, rebounded 12 points and the Democrats gained four Senate seats that fall.

"But Kennedy knew," writes Peter Beinart in his 2010 book *The Icarus Syndrome: A History of American Hubris*, "that the toughness ethic that he publicly upheld was at odds with reality. By promising not to invade Cuba and to withdraw US missiles from Turkey, Kennedy had made two key concessions of his own. He just hadn't forthrightly explained them to the American people."

One of Kennedy's advisors, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Beinart writes, "was already thinking about how to apply the lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis to another place where he believed communist aggression needed a firm American reply: Vietnam."

In early November 1963, the CIA sparked a *coup d'état* that left the president of South Vietnam, Ngô Đình Diệm, with a bullet in his head. Three weeks later Kennedy was assassinated, and the war in Vietnam was Lyndon Johnson's to execute.

The toughness ethic that proved valuable to the Democratic Party in 1962 came naturally to Johnson. "He saw doves as little boys or, worse, as women," Beinart writes. He quotes a Senate colleague on Johnson, "Lyndon's ideas were set in concrete by World War II. Every big action he takes primarily on the basis of whether he thinks any other action will look like a Munich appeasement."

"I am not going to lose Vietnam," Johnson declared, in a meeting two days after Kennedy's death, to

the US ambassador to South Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. "I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went."

The idea of *hubris* comes to us from ancient Greece: the sin of arrogance transcending the divine, and the disasters that come from that. Icarus, his wax wings melting as he approached the sun, is the most famous example.

In 2008, British physician and politician Lord David Owen wrote of what he called "Hubris Syndrome," in which those who exercise power might be prone to hubris, and to growing increasingly hubristic the more their power accrues and the longer it lasts. He cited a number of symptoms, among them "a predisposition to take actions which seem likely to cast them in a good light, taken in part in order to enhance their image," "exaggerated self-belief, bordering on a sense of omnipotence, in what they personally can achieve," and...

a consequent type of incompetence in carrying out a policy, which could be called hubristic incompetence. This is where things go wrong precisely because too much self-confidence has led the leader not to worry about the nuts and bolts of a policy. It can be allied to an incurious nature. It is to be distinguished from ordinary incompetence, where the necessary detailed work on the complex issues involved is engaged in but mistakes in decision-making are made nonetheless.

Richard Sennett, in his 1977 book *The Fall of Public Man*, compared hubris with the asceticism of Weber's Protestant work ethic; with a lack of appreciation for the "rituals of piety," he writes, "concretized reality must appear suspicious."

Johnson was certainly guilty of hubris, and famously narcissistic. (A 2013 release by the Pew Research Center touts a study of presidents through George W. Bush which finds Johnson as the most narcissistic of the 42 other presidents to that time. Millard Fillmore comes in last.) It is unclear whether he was suspicious of concretized reality, but he was reportedly a real bastard to deal with.

"As a twenty-three-year-old congressional assistant," Beinart writes, "Johnson began his lifelong

habit of demanding that subordinates accompany him not only into the bathroom, but into the stall. By the time he reached the Senate, he was urinating openly in his office washbasin during meetings. Fellow members of Congress described encountering him in bathrooms and watching with discomfort as he shook his penis in their direction while commenting on its size."

Narcissism also comes to us from the ancient Greeks, from the story of Narcissus, a young man so beautiful he could desire only his own reflection. Around the end of the 19th century, neurologist and alienist Havelock Ellis attached the concept of narcissism to auto-erot-

presence that conceals an underlying coldness and ruthlessness, and a lack of empathy."

By early 1965, Johnson had lost the trust of the American people. Historian Robert Dallek relates a popular joke of the time in his 1996 article "Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam: The Making of a Tragedy" in the journal *Diplomatic History*: "How do you know when Lyndon Johnson is telling the truth? When he strokes his chin, pulls his earlobe, he's telling the truth. When he begins to move his lips, you know he's lying."

On February 28, 1965, *The New York Times* published a column by James Reston:



Caravaggio's Narcissus, ca. 1600.

icism. By the 1960s, Austrian psychoanalysts Otto Kernberg and Heinz Kohut proposed that narcissism is a personality disorder.

Kernberg, writes Seth Rosenthal in his 2006 article "Narcissistic leadership," published in *The Leadership Quarterly*, described people with "an inflated self-concept and inordinate need for tribute from others, shallow emotional lives, envy, vacillating extremes of idealization and devaluation of others, exploitativeness, a charming and engaging

President Johnson is making no excuses for anything he has done in Vietnam, and is visibly irritated with the critics of his policy. He knows he is now up against the most difficult policy decision of his life, and that all the options open to him in Vietnam are risky, but this is all the more reason, in his view, for the country to back the President and stop the critical chatter.

He is particularly sensitive to charges that he is not talking enough to the American people

about the complexities and risks of the Vietnamese war. He carries around in his pocket a series of private polls that purport to show that the vast majority of the people not only know what he is doing but approve what he is doing.

But Johnson was right; through 1965, the war still was widely supported by the American people. Why was he still not being clear with the public about the status of the war, or the need for more troops? "Johnson," Dallek writes, "was fearful that encouraging public discussion of an expanded war would divert the Congress and the country from agreeing to the explosion of Great Society legislation – federal aid to elementary, secondary, and higher education, Medicare, Medicaid, Voting Rights, clean air and clean water bills." Stunning achievements, pushed through a reluctant Congress by Johnson's hubris.

In Christopher Lasch's prescient 1977 book *The Culture of Narcissism*, Lasch wrote passingly about the Johnson administration having "blundered" into the war. "When policy making, the search for power, and the pursuit of wealth," he wrote, "have no other objects than to excite admiration or envy, men lose the sense of objectivity, always precarious under the best of circumstances. Impressions overshadow achievements."

On the first of February 1966, Johnson got on the phone with Minnesota senator Eugene McCarthy. "We oughtn't be there," Johnson said, "and we ought to get out."

McCarthy, who would run against the war two years later when he challenged Johnson for the Democratic presidential nomination, replied, "Well, I guess that's about what it – as I say, the bombing really doesn't disturb me very –"

"These other things are just offshoots," said Johnson. "Well, I know we oughtn't to be there. But I can't get out. I just can't be the architect of surrender. But they don't have the pressure that will bring them to [the] table as of yet."

If you have questions, comments, or news tips for our Science Page Editor, please send them to science@montaguereporter.org.

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THURSDAY, JUNE 25

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

Holyoke Media, Holyoke:
Chestnut People, Edwards / Snyder / Delgiudice trio, 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. \$\$.

Unnamed Books, Turners Falls:
Ariel Delgado Dixon novel launch, *Allegra Hyde*. 6 p.m. By donation.

Court Square, Greenfield:
Zoe Lemos, Tobey Sol LaRoche. 6 p.m. Free.

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

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

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

Town Hall, Gill: Documentary,
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:
Cicada Theo, Virgo's Moon, Berm. 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 fundraiser. Costumes encouraged, e-bikes welcome. Benefit for the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter. Register at www.tinyurl.com/puppedal. Two routes: 30-mile at 9 a.m.; 7.3-mile at 10 a.m. \$.

Second Street at Unity Park, Turners Falls:
Community Potluck. Bring a dish to share. Yard games, kids' activities, face painting, more. Sponsored by The Village Project. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free.

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, through July 17.

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

LAVA Center, Greenfield:
Chaos on a Plate Presents The Rainbow Arc - Phase 1: Violet, paintings by Donna Barrett, and *The Peace Birds Exhibit*, artistic and community responses to ongoing events in Palestine, both through July. Friday, June 26 at 5 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield:
Desire Paths. Work by 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. *Patterns of the Forest*, interactive art by Rachel Loeffler, in July.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls:
Shimmer, new-mixed media work by Nina Rossi incorporating colorshifting glass rhinestones, through July 6. Group show by coop members in July.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne:
Q Li Holmes, paintings by the artist, and *Stay In the Day and Have the Long View*, mixed media by Dale Schwarz, both through June. *Margot Apple* and *Kate McClelland* show their work in July and August, with a reception Saturday, July 11 from 2 to 4 p.m.

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



Guachinangos, a New York City band fusing Mexican son jarocho with Colombian cumbia and other Latin American rhythms, headline this Saturday's free "World Music Mini-Fest" at Peskeompskut Park in Turners Falls.

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

Brick House, Turners Falls:
Klezmer Music Workshop. Emphasis on improvisation, self-expression, spirituality. Register at 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. Fundraiser for organizations. See feedthehungry.love for information. 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.

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 Lapierre, through June 28. *Ways of My Ancestors*, photographs of New England Native Americans by Scott Strong Hawk Foster, July 2 to August 26.

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.

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CALENDAR



looking forward...

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*, more. 11 a.m. \$\$.

Greenfield Records, Greenfield: *Couchboy, Lizcore, Jamey Wolff*. 2 p.m. Free.

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. \$.

Lady Killigrew, Montague Center: *Brian Dickens, Maki Matsui*. 5 p.m. Free.

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

Feeding Tube Records, Florence: *Footings, The 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. \$.

MONDAY, JUNE 29

Redistro, Greenfield: *Warm Floating Horse*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 30

Millers Falls Library, Millers Falls: *Cooking Demo* with the Food Bank of Western MA. 1 p.m. Free.

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

Tanglewood, Lenox: *Jerry Garcia Symphonic Celebration With the Boston Pops*. 7 p.m. \$\$.

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Sister Wife Sex Strike, Brook Pridemore*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

Porter-Phelps-Huntington House, Hadley: *Thea Hopkins*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

West Whately Chapel, Whately: *Skye Consort with Emma Bjorling*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

THURSDAY, JULY 2

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Butterfly Discoveries* with Mass Audubon. Costume party with games, butterflies, storytime. Ages 10 and younger. 4 p.m. Free.



Famed Genoese guitarist and singer Beppe Gambetta, known for bringing Italian and Ukrainian folk elements into the American bluegrass scene, plays the West Whately Chapel on July 8. Tickets are still available as of press time.

Forbes Library Lawn, Northampton: *Nanny, Trash Panda Kill Kill*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Jennie McAvoy, 133 Skeelee, Orlen Gabriel & Avery*. 6 p.m. Free.

Greenfield Garden Cinemas, Greenfield: *Movie, Young Washington (2026)*. Red, white, and blue clothing encouraged. 6 p.m. \$.

Brewery at Four Star Farms, Northfield: *Silverback Swing*. 6 p.m. Free.

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

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Miranda & The Spatulas, Animal Piss It's Everywhere, Kenner*. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JULY 3

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Needle-Felted Carnivorous Plants*, crafting and education for ages 8 to teens. 12:30 to 3 p.m. Free.

Mystery Train, Amherst: *SOP, Federico Balducci, Spectre Folk, Belltone Suicide*. 5 p.m. By donation.

Element Brewing, Millers Falls: *David Brule & His Irish Band*. 6 p.m. Free.

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

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

Riverfront Park, Erving: *Jason Robinson Trio*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *L Scully, Zac Smith, Madison Murray, Mayah Monet Lovell*. Variety show with open mic. 7 p.m. By donation.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Tori Jock & Damage Control*. 8 p.m. Free.

THCC, Easthampton: *Gold Dust, Rick Rude, Pretty Out*. 8 p.m. \$.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *James Taylor*. 8 p.m. \$\$.



SATURDAY, JULY 4

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

398 East, Easthampton: *Nanny, People's Princess, Virgo's Moon, Eldest Daughter*. Fundraiser for Decarcerate Bail Fund. 3 p.m. \$.

Floodwater Brewing, Shelburne Falls: *Periscope Jazz*. 7 p.m. No cover.

Tanglewood, Lenox: *James Taylor*. 8 p.m. \$\$.

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *Inverted Agenda, Impetigore, Moosi & The Dolls, Cinnabun, Eris Electra*. 8:30 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, JULY 5

Wendell Meetinghouse, Wendell: *World Circle Dance Day Celebration*, with dances led by Gwyn Peterdi and Hope Jinishian. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. By donation.

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Arthur Terembula*. 2 p.m. No cover.

Palladium, Worcester: *Hatebreed, Devourment, Snuffed on Sight, Balmora, Face Yourself*. 4:30 p.m. \$\$.

MONDAY, JULY 6

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

TUESDAY, JULY 7

Last Ditch, Greenfield: *The Dotted Line*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

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

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Porter-Phelps-Huntington House, Hadley: *Zikina*. 6:30 p.m. \$.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Writers Read*, featuring *Nisse Greenberg, Ernie Brill, and Nina Gross*. 7 p.m. By donation.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Charlie Parr, Gwenifer Raymond*. 7 p.m. \$.

West Whately Chapel, Whately: *Beppe Gambetta*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

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

THURSDAY, JULY 9

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Austin & Elliott, The Brookside Project*. 6 p.m. Free.

Four Phantoms Brewing, Greenfield: *A New Blue Jazz Ensemble*, open jazz jam. 6 p.m. No cover.

Brewster Court, Northampton: *Hot Dirt, Goldsetter*. 6 p.m. Free.

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

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Buck Meek, Kisser*. 8 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, JULY 10

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

Incandescent Brewing, Bernardston: *Alex Cohen*. 6 p.m. No cover.

Smith Academy Park, Hatfield: *Carol Devine & The Mighty Fine*. 6 p.m. Free.

Riverfront Park, Erving: *Farley String Band*. 6:30 p.m. Free.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Breadwinners*. 7 p.m. No cover.

THCC, Easthampton: *Proles, MIDNIGHTCHOIR, Blitz*. 7 p.m. \$.

Nova Arts, Keene: *Blackberry Jam, Minc*. 7 p.m. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Louise Coombe*. 7:30 p.m. \$.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Quinn Sullivan*. 8 p.m. \$.

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

SATURDAY, JULY 11

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Rhythm Inc., Amandla, Rebelle, Drums of Passion, SoulKeys, Wheel Out, Wendell Warriors, Root Fiyah*, many more. Wendell Reggae Fest. 2 p.m. \$.

SUNDAY, JULY 12

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Elaine Carey & Ava Mendoza Duo, Wednesday Knudsen, Erica Dawn Lyle*. 4 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, JULY 14

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

FRIDAY, JULY 17

Cold Spring Hollow, Belchertown: *Editrix, Phroeggs, Mummies and Wolves*. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JULY 18

Energy Park, Greenfield: *The Most Wuthering Heights Day Ever*. 6 p.m. Free.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Twisted Teens*. 8 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, JULY 25

Mystery Train, Amherst: *Frozen Corn, Colossus Pine, Owen Manure, Chad Cooper*. 5 p.m. By donation.

SUNDAY, JULY 26

Tourists, North Adams: *William Tyler*. 8 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

Retreat Farm, Brattleboro: *Bread & Puppet Circus*. 4 p.m. \$.

Moose Lodge, Greenfield: *The Outerspace Band*. 7 p.m. \$.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7

Emily Dickinson Museum, Amherst: *Kimaya Diggs*. 5:30 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

CitySpace, Easthampton: *Chicha Libre, DJ Bongohead*. 8 p.m. \$.

Dream Away Lodge, Becket: *Home Body*. 8 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

The Drake, Amherst: *Gyedu-Blay Ambolley & His Sekondi Band*. 7 p.m. \$.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Palladium, Worcester: *Dying Fetus, Left to Suffer, Sanguisugabogg, Crowbar, Deterioration*. 6:30 p.m. \$\$.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Horse Lords, No Thankyou*. 7 p.m. \$.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

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

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Montague Community TV News

Without Mosquitos

By HANNAH BROOKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – Nothing is better than enjoying a summer evening at Peskeompskut Park with the Montague Community Band. But watching them on MCTV is a close second! You can enjoy all of the music without any of the mosquitos.

MCTV has new uploads from the Community Band, as well as all of the recordings of the recent public meetings, including the annual town meeting and selectboard meetings from Gill. All of MCTV's videos are online on our Vimeo page, which

can easily be found by clicking the "Videos" tab at MontagueTV.org.

If you are still reading this blurb, why don't you join our board? You don't need any experience to join, but it would be a big help if you were interested in taking notes, as we are in need of a new "clerk." Please email a letter of interest to infomontaguev@gmail.com, call us at (413) 863-9200, or stop 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!

WEST ALONG from page B1

killed, while others leapt into the roaring cataract to their deaths at the foot of the falls.

Basket Maker recounted the specter of the thunder spirit dancing, his staff moving up and down over the waters as lightning bolts struck and he danced their deaths, until everyone in the camp of 300 had perished.

In 1895, on the other hand, George Sheldon, the esteemed historian of Deerfield, wrote in phrasing that the English chose to memorialize the event:

"At a given signal, the crash of a hundred shots aroused the stupefied sleepers. Many were killed at first fire. The astonished survivors rushed to the river and jumped pell-mell into the canoes which lay along the shore... the paddlers were shot, and falling overboard, upset the canoe; many in the confusion attempting to escape by swimming. Nearly all of these were swept over the cataract and drowned. Others, hiding about the banks of the river, were hunted out and cut down... Captain Holyoke killing five, young and old, with his own Hands from under a bank."

In 1900, Timothy Stoughton donated a plot of land to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA) to serve as a memorial to the event that had taken place there.

The deed specifies: "The said land is to be forever kept for monumental purposes in commemoration of the battle May 19, 1676 between the English under Captain William

Turner, and the Indians."

On September 12, 1900, Ralph Stoughton intoned at the dedication of the Turner monument:

"Here beside the waters of the river below us, the men of Hatfield, the men of Hadley, the men of the Pocumtuck valley, wrote in bloody characters the concluding chapter in the history of the Pocumtucks as a nation.... [These men] came with shot and sword and fire, and from this very ground, swept the Indians to the river below, ground their cabins into dust and sent their wigwams to the clouds above, and freed our valley forever from the thralldom of barbarism."

In 1910, Edward Pressey, in his *History of Montague*, wrote:

"Captain William Turner... fell upon the Gill section of the camp, close to the falls in the gray of the morning of May 19. He slew them in their beds, men, women, and children, gun muzzles... being poked through the entrances of the wigwams. They killed about two or three hundred..."

And so it was over all those centuries, the dominant story that emerged and was repeated was one of a battle (it was a massacre), of erasure of Native people, of the justifiable extermination of the Indian tribes, of the heroism of Captain Turner and Lieutenant Holyoke.

*Captain William Turner
With 142 men surprised and
Destroyed over 300 Indians
Encamped at this place
May 19, 1676*



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But that was the way then, this is now, and a new perspective on the story has emerged.

On May 16, 2026, exactly 350 years after the atrocity of 1676, the wrong committed was moved just a few degrees into being righted.

The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association turned over the deed of the plot and monument to an Indigenous coalition which has now taken over ownership.

A procession of 60 people crossed the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge to the site where the slaughter was memorialized.

Below us on that span, bridging the falls of Peskeompskut, roared the terrifying cataract of an angry river. The floodgates were lowered to release the waters of the flooding Connecticut, swollen by recent spring storms as they would have been on that fateful day in 1676.

It was not hard to imagine Native people being pulled over the falls to be thrown up onto the stony beaches of the Wanaskatok (Fall) River below.

We reached the plot on the Gill side, a roughly 30 foot by 20 foot rectangle, its surface nowadays reduced by intruding sidewalks. The widened Route 2 with its heavy traffic, across the way a gas station, and other businesses are now on the site where so many died.

The roar of the passing trucks

and cars was the deafening backdrop to the commemorative speeches where 60 people were gathered in May 2026, a far cry from the 3,000 we are told gathered there on September 16, 1900.

That day, George Sheldon had flattered the crowd with his assurances that they were the descendants of those destined to rule: "You live on classic ground. Nowhere in New England was there a more vital question of the seventeenth century finally settled: *should the Indian or the Englishman dominate the valley of the Connecticut?*"

Dr. Margaret Bruchac, Abenaki scholar, standing before the memorial stone tribute to William Turner, stated in reference to hundreds of years of similar Antiquarian pronouncements:

"This narrative style of historical erasure has been repeated so often, and weaponized by so many that the sheer emotional impact of these words has nearly obscured the truths of that history. We are here today to tell a very different story – one not of Indigenous erasure, but one of Indigenous survival, persistence, and continuance, against all odds. In thanks and remembrance of all of our relatives, across time."

In conclusion, and in contrast to her predecessor George Sheldon, the current president of the PVMA Council, Carol Letson, stated:

"I am here to honor the indigenous peoples of the region surrounding the Connecticut River... The members of PVMA believe we can recognize this significant piece of land... given to PVMA by a farmer of this land over 100 years ago.... I am here to convey ownership of this monument, and the land under it, to the Nolumbeka Project... and to [Nolumbeka's] partners in stewardship, the Nipmuck and Abenaki tribes.

"This is an appropriate time to acknowledge that so much land was taken by colonists, farmers, early governments.... The significant events that occurred here make this location important to our clearer understanding of the long-standing effects of past events."

We returned across the river, across the bridge, pausing long enough to let fall an offering of fish, tobacco, sweetgrass, and shadbush flowers to the thundering falls below.

David Brule is president of the Nolumbeka Project board of directors. Nolumbeka, along with the Nipmuck and Abenaki tribes, has organized a fund drive to create and place an Indigenous symbol on the plot to counterbalance the monument memorializing Captain Turner. Information is available on the Nolumbeka Project website.



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