

MONTEREY NEWS

April 2025 Est. 1970
Vol. LV · Number 4



Pick up at: the library (in and outside), outside town hall, transfer station, and Roadside Cafe



Mary Makuc



Wendy Germain



Mary Kate Jordan



Julie Shapiro

Today this carefully crafted secret appears to be coming apart (finally) as puzzled town residents find themselves asking, almost in chorus, "How does he do it all?" The Tale of Two Marks, p.2.

Nevertheless, your song... is also my song, and the song of all, which is my song, and your song, too. Here's a Thought, p.18

After a while, I learned which boat was which by its sound, and I could make out the sound of the car that had just dropped me off when it travelled on the other side of the lake late at night.....Memoir, p.19

(Photos: Top left, the ever-helpful Mark Makuc; top right, Pantry PickUp Volunteers prepare the bounty; botton left, the muddy Housatonic; bottom right, Knox Gallery installation.)

Save the Date
Annual Town Meeting
Saturday, May 3, at 9:30 a.m.

Contributing Writers & Artists

Maureen Banner
Maggie Barkin
Susan Cooper
Wendy Germain
Rob Hoogs
Hanna Jensen
Heather Kowalski
Roger MacDonald
Mark Makuc
Bonner McAllester
Kit Patten
Publius
Kathryn Roberts
Lin Saberski
Laurie Shaw
Julie Shapiro
Stephanie Sloane
Nan Smith
Kevin West
MaryPaul Yates

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Editor Shannon Amidon Castille

Copy Editor.....Kateri Kosek

Mailing Labels.....Cindy Hoogs

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may be sent via email to montereynews9@gmail.com or to PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. For advertising rates, contact the editor at the email above.

The *Monterey News* is published monthly by The Monterey News Inc,
PO Box 9, Monterey, MA
01245-0009.

The Tale of Two Marks*



Mark Makuc in front of Monterey Church.

Before Mark was born there was much excitement and preparation including an exhaustive and exhausting search for what was to be the perfect name for this first child of the expecting parents. When twins arrived on that fateful day everyone was so exhausted that they couldn't contemplate another name, so they called both boys Mark while they tried to keep up with the



continual demands of two newborns.

In a few short years, we find that one slippery step of expediency led to another, until the cash strapped and exhausted parents found it much easier and economical to have one Mark in school at a time. This very much suited the boys who got used to sharing everything by taking turns attending classes, sports,

and clubs while incidentally racking up an impressive – and still unbeaten – record of attendance in all these endeavors.

Today this carefully crafted secret appears to be coming apart (finally) as puzzled town residents find themselves asking, almost in chorus, “How does he do it all?”

The boys, now men, who we all know as Mark, have become so practiced and skilled at never showing up at the same place at the same time that there is still no photographic evidence of twins, and yet even more than the suspect cougar sightings in the Berkshires, many town residents have had these experiences of seeing Mark unloading a mower at some residence north of town when they had just seen him at the other end of town checking on a water leak, or showing up on a 911 call when minutes before he checked their books out at the library, or taking care of cattle at Woodburn Farm when he had just been adding a new coat of ice at the Firehouse skating pavilion.

If you've lived in Monterey for even a few months, you probably have already had your own experience of this sense of wondering if you're “losing it” as you see Mark both here and there.



Mark Makuc grilling at Steakroast.

<h2>Christopher Blair</h2>	
<p>DESIGN AND PLANNING</p> <p>Residential Design Kitchen/Bath Design</p>	<p>Construction Management Project Representation</p>
<p>413.528.4960 623 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230</p>	

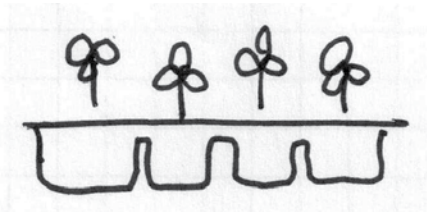


Mark at work in town center.

Now there is the question this reporter poses as to whether we as a town should team up to expose “the lie,” or accept the originally unintended situation as one to be intended as a very good thing.

Both Marks refuse to confirm or deny the allegations.

***April Fools’!**



P. Arnow, Seedlings 1.

my Social Security

Important Changes to Social Security

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is implementing stronger identity verification procedures to prevent fraud.

Beginning April 14, individuals applying for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicare, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) who cannot use a personal *my* Social Security account can complete their claim entirely over the telephone without the need to come into an office. The phone number for the SSA office in Pittsfield is (866) 446-7111.

However, for all other services, individuals who cannot use their per-

sonal *my* Social Security account to apply for benefits will need to prove their identity in person at a social security office. It is strongly recommended to call ahead to schedule an in-person appointment. It is not clear whether walk-ins can be accommodated. Again, the phone number is (866) 446-7111.

People who do not already have *my* Social Security account can create one at www.ssa.gov/myaccount/.

If you need assistance with SSA benefits online, schedule an appointment with the town digital navigator, Cole, at digitalnavigatormonterey@gmail.com. Or, you can contact the council on aging through our outreach coordinator Kathryn Roberts at (413) 528-1443, ext 112.

—Lin Saberski

The Pantry's Current Needs

Old Fashioned Oatmeal (the kind you cook yourself – i.e., not instant), and, if you’re in the mood, cans of tomatoes (diced, crushed, whole, etc.), and coffee.

Remember: every donation, however modest, helps a lot.

All containers of food must be unopened; and please be sure to check “best by” dates: we can’t use date-expired donations. Food should be left on the table inside the basement door of the Monterey Church/Meeting House, directly across from the General Store. Financial contributions are always welcome because we have to purchase some

items directly to ensure freshness, so write your check to Monterey Pantry Pickup Inc. & mail it to P.O. Box 363, Monterey 01245, or visit our website at www.montereypantrypickup.org & click the “donate” button.

Monterey Pantry Pickup Inc. is a Mass. not-for-profit corporation, and is eligible for tax-deductible donations under Internal

Revenue Code §501(c)(3).

For the Pantry Pickup team and its 40 volunteers, thank you!

Photos of the pantry volunteers building the pickup boxes last Saturday. Photos by Wendy Germain.





The first informational meeting about possible changes in how Monterey manages emergency services was well attended on March 29 at the library. The next opportunity to learn about these possibilities is Wednesday, April 9, at 7 p.m. at the Monterey Fire House. See below for more details (provided by Susan Cooper).



Budget Briefing: All about Town Finances and Priorities

Thursday, April 24, 2025 - 6:30pm

The Finance Committee is hosting an informational gathering about the upcoming budget and town warrant.

Purpose: The Finance committee has scheduled this time to host an informal discussion about the budget process, town finances and upcoming votes to be taken at the town meeting.

Ask all the questions you want about the budget items, special articles and town priorities.

On the town calendar, it appears as a "Budget Briefing" to differentiate it from the regular finance committee meetings.

Incentives: REFRESHMENTS SERVED & color charts and graphs available!

Our Town Administrator, Roger MacDonald, as well as Select Board Members will be with us for budget explanations and questions.

Please email or call me with any questions.

Location: Monterey Library

We hope to see you there!

Monterey Finance Committee: Ilene Marcus, Steve Pullen, Jeff Zimmerman

Rescuing Monterey's Emergency Services

10 Things You Need to Know to Vote

- 🔥 Monterey does not have enough volunteer firefighters. Our roster is aging and our younger folks are moving away, work out of town, or are unable or unwilling to volunteer.
- 🔥 All the surrounding towns are in the same situation (even if some can't acknowledge it).
- 🔥 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are in crisis throughout Berkshire County.
- 🔥 Last year Sandisfield lost two Fire Chiefs, and their volunteer ambulance is struggling with equipment and call coverage.
- 🔥 Egremont and Stockbridge/West Stockbridge are going to paid firefighter/EMS in FY 2026. Otis is scaling up their paid ambulance service.
- 🔥 Monterey calls went from 15 in 1978 to 185 in 2024. Two firefighters answered over 130 calls each last year.
- 🔥 It takes a minimum of two firefighters to roll a truck, three firefighters to begin to assess a fire, and six fire trucks to fight a single family home fire.
- 🔥 We need to pay for these services or do without them.
- 🔥 Transition to a full time 24/7 fire department with volunteer support will increase the Fire Department budget \$499,000 in FY 2026, a tax increase of 69 cents/\$1000 assessed value.
- 🔥 In FY 2025 Monterey's average single family assessed value was \$782,966, and would pay \$135 more per quarter, \$540.25/year, for 24/7 fire and emergency service coverage.

Want someone to come when you dial 911? Vote yes.

Want to know more?

Come to the Fire Department Informational Meeting: Wednesday, April 9th at 7 pm at the Monterey Fire House! Bring your questions.



Hundreds of New Trees and a Write-In Candidacy

It's going to be a good year for trees in Monterey. The tree-planting campaign I announced in last month's *Monterey News* sparked many inquiries from residents. I'm still tallying the final order as of press time, but it looks like the total number of trees to be planted by the combined efforts of the tree warden, residents, and other town entities is going to be over 250. Two hundred and fifty-plus new trees! Of those, fifty-plus will be larger saplings. (Eleven saplings will be new town trees, including red oaks, sugar maples, and serviceberries.) The rest will be seedlings, which are sold in bundles of 100 by the Massachusetts Association of Tree Wardens and Foresters. I've selected a bundle each of swamp white oak, *Quercus bicolor*, and redbud. Some are going to residents, and the rest I'll plant in a nursery bed to grow for a few years before transplanting to their future homes.

Residents can still order oak and redbud seedlings! The one-year-old seedlings are 6 to 8 inches high and cost \$5 per tree.

(The ordering period for larger saplings is closed for the year.)

And remember the upcoming town elections! If it's spring, then your tree warden must be asking for your vote. I was honored to be nominated by the Democratic and Republican caucuses. But due to a glitch while I was away from Monterey on a business trip, my name will not be printed on the ballot. Instead, I will stand for re-election for tree warden as a write-in candidate. *So please vote by writing in the name Kevin West for tree warden*, or else those ever-popular write-in candidates Bugs Bunny or Howdy Doody might sweep the day.

I'll see you at the town meeting in May and can answer your questions then about what happened with town trees last year and what I hope to accomplish in the year ahead, should the good voters of Monterey see fit to return me to office. (Hint: I'd like to develop a tree warden's handbook—best practices, policies, and procedures relating to town trees—in addition to planting more trees.)

—Kevin West
Tree Warden

Tech Goes Home

Tech Goes Home is a digital skills training program that will meet for ten weeks and cover topics including basic computer and phone skills, social media, job skills, and internet safety. You will be given a chromebook to use during the classes. Sign up by calling (413) 442-1521 ext 33, or email digital@berkshireplanning.org.



Tech Goes Home class in March.

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"Who Has Not Seen the Crow?"

Crows have reputations among us folks



Bonner McAllester

and do service for poets and others as material for metaphor and symbolism. Without turning to such fancy and fiction, we will look at the actual crow. The best collection of bird observations is

the 1927 three-volume Boston publication *Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States*. It was written by Edward Howe Forbush, our state ornithologist. I inherited it from my grandmother.

Forbush writes, "... the Crow is the great American bird. Everybody knows him. How many people have ever seen the American Eagle except on a silver dollar? But who has not seen the Crow? If a person knows only four birds, one of them will be the crow."

Another observer, Henry Thoreau, wrote in his *Journals* on January 12, 1885:

"Perhaps what moves us in winter is some reminiscence of far-off summer. How we leap by the side of the open brooks! What beauty in the running brooks! What life! What society! The cold is merely superficial; it is summer still at the core, far, far within. It is the cawing of the crow, the crowing of the cock, the warmth of the sun on our backs. I hear faintly the cawing of a crow far, far away, echoing from some unseen woodside as if deadened by the springlike vapor which the sun is drawing from the ground. It mingles with the slight murmur of the village, the sound of children at play, as one stream empties into another, and the wild and tame are one. What a delicious sound! It is not merely crow calling to crow, for it speaks to me, too. I am part of the great creature with him; if he has voice, I have ears."

Who is this miracle-worker, this bird who keeps summer alive for Thoreau, keeps the exclamation marks hopping out of control off his pen and onto the paper? It is *Corvus brachyrhynchos*, the Common

Crow, cousin to the jay and sister of the raven. She is a bird of remarkably large brain, in fact the largest in all the birds. Parrots come second. She has 23 known (to people) different vocal utterances and spends all her life in family groups where, as any family can attest, it is often necessary to work things out vocally.

This is April, when crows begin their brief quiet time. After a raucous winter they will start their courtship period, during which the males chase after the females, wheeling and diving, and then face off with them on a branch or on the ground. There they will spread their wings and tail, fluff up their body feathers, and bow, giving their "rattle call."

The nests are big, two feet across the outside, seven inches inside, and made of sticks and twigs. They are lined with soft grass, moss, wool and such things. The male and female work together collecting material and building the nest. During the incubation period, which is 18 days, other crows around the central pair help defend the site and may help feed the female while she is incubating. There are usually 3-5 eggs.

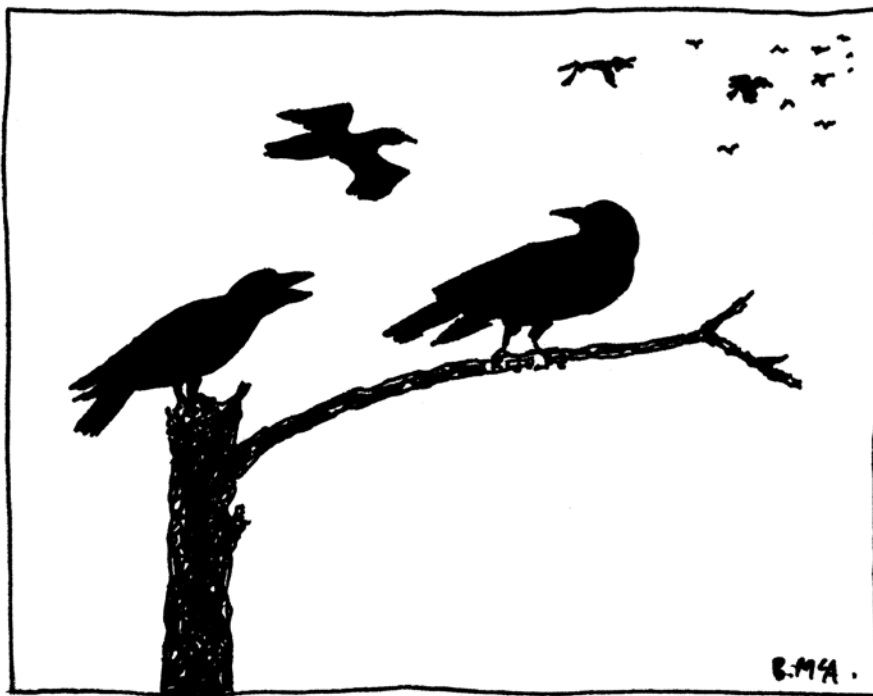
Crows are playful, which is considered a sure sign of intelligence. They chase each other around, often pursuing one who is carrying a bright object. If this is dropped, another grabs it and gets chased. Crows also do acrobatic tricks on perches.

They will fall over backwards, hang from one foot, then switch to the other foot.

There is one delightful account of crows hanging around a place where children are enjoying a bonfire, singing and shouting and generally carrying on. The crows in a nearby tree start hooting and hollering themselves, in their own way. And in days to come, when there is smoke coming out of the nearby house chimney, these crows start making a ruckus as if it were a bonfire party all over again.

Some people have had pet crows which could imitate words. One learned to call the cows, another the cat. One could say, "Now you've done it," also "Come on, Jack." One could imitate the clucking of a rooster calling the hens. The hens came running to the crow's call.

A biologist studied tool-using among *Corvus moneduloides*, crows in the New Caledonia island group 900 miles east of Australia. Here the crows were consistently making two different patterns of specific tools. They were for specialized uses getting insects out of holes. One was a simple hooked twig, with the bark carefully removed to make it smooth. The other was a stepped-cut tool made from a long stiff leaf from a pandanus tree. These narrow leaves have stiff central ribs. In both cases, the tool would be carefully stashed up in a tree in a fork or on a straight branch. The bird would go scouting and find a certain



insect burrow, then return to the “toolshed” for the right tool for the job.

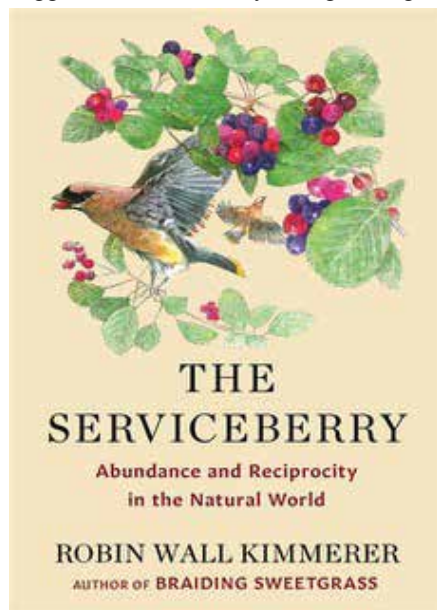
Years ago, one of our friends here in Monterey loved to feed the crows in winter. He said he brought them old donuts and 150 crows would come! First three scouts arrived, then the whole group, and when they all came in they would be talking to each other. “It sounds just like a freight train coming,” he said.

My favorite story of crow intelligence involves ice-fishing in Finland. People bait their lines, drop them through the ice, and then go off to do other things (warm up in ice-shacks, maybe). Along comes the crow who grabs the line in her bill and hauls it up a few feet. She then walks down along on top of the line to the hole, so the line can’t slip back, picks it up again in her bill and pulls up another length. She repeats this until she comes to the bait, and sometimes the fish, which she then eats.

—Bonner McAllister

The Serviceberry – Musings on the gift economy

In a time when rapacious greed, morbid wealth and the discontents of late-stage capitalism are on full display, one can find solace in the latest book by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Her slim volume, *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*, suggests a different way of organizing



economic life, one that can be seen right here in Monterey, a town that gives and gives back. Using the serviceberry as a case in point, Kimmerer describes in detail how finely tuned ecosystems are based on abundance rather than scarcity, reciprocity rather than greed, and trust rather than fear.

One of Kimmerer’s prior books, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, has become a classic for those who love the natural world, a portal into the amazing intricacies of coevolution and interdependence. In that book, Kimmerer, a scientist by training, weaves together two powerful forms of wisdom – indigenous knowledge and scientific inquiry. She discovers and clarifies how well the two ways of knowing complement and inform each other.

In *The Serviceberry*, the author examines the fruit tree, whose white flowers will be visible soon in our local understories and could be mistaken, at a casual glance, for apple trees. When I learned that the serviceberry is one of the trees that Kevin West is ordering for our local spring planting (see related story, page 5), I made sure to buy a few to enrich the abundance of our own yard and to give birds and pollinators an early treat: the serviceberry is an early bloomer, a boon to many of the creatures that partake of its pollen and fruit.

It’s hard to summarize the layered, poetic clarity of Kimmerer, who is a member of the Potawatomi Nation. I encourage anyone in need of some uplift to pick it up – or listen to her essay on a recent podcast by *Emergence Magazine* at: emergencemagazine.org/essay/the-serviceberry.

The idea of natural abundance is highlighted in the Potawatomi language. Kimmerer explains that the syllable min, meaning gift, is embedded in the Native American words for blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, even apple, maize, and wild rice, as well as the serviceberry itself (whose name translates to “the best berry”). By incorporating this idea into their names, she writes, the plant names reflect the generosity, care and creativity of their respective species. “When we speak of these not as things or products or commodities, but as gifts, the whole relationship changes. I can’t help but gaze at them, cupped like jewels in my hand, p.8

April Bloomer: *Sanguinaria canadensis*



Sanguinaria canadensis.

The delicate white petals (8-12) of *Sanguinaria canadensis* are perched on a fleshy stalk that is plumped with a surprising sap. It is a bright, sanguine red that gives this native wildflower its common name, Bloodroot. The crimson, rather orange-y juice was once used by Native Americans as a dye for baskets, clothing, and war paint.

In Spring, as it emerges from the leaf litter of the woods, each Bloodroot flower with golden yellow stamens is clasped by a palmate leaf. The flower opens by day, closes at night. Elongate pods hold the plants’ seeds that are collected by ants. But you can collect them yourself, remembering to plant them immediately, as they dry out quickly.

Bloodroot makes an excellent groundcover around the base of trees and combines well with other native woodland wildflowers, as well as ferns, Hosta, and Virginia Bluebells. Attractive to sweat bees, cuckoo bees and other insects, Bloodroot is a favorite of gardeners in the Monterey Native Plant Working Group.

—Colta Ives



and breathe out my gratitude.”

As I was reading Kimmerer’s description of the way in which endless circles of giving and receiving power the natural world, I thought about how well our town also exemplifies the gift economy. At the time, I was helping out with an event at the community center and reflected on that local miracle. For those who don’t know the story, a fairly detailed history of the community center, including a timeline, appears on its website. But essentially it was a bequest from Edith Wilson, a local artist, sculptor and very active member of the community, who provided the seed



Edith Wilson

that developed into its current iteration, an increasingly dynamic institution, one that typically hosts four or more activities a day. It offers pretty much something for everyone, from Mahjong or ping-pong enthusiasts, to those seeking to calm down through Tai Chi, yoga or meditation, to meetings of all kinds.

Upon Ms. Wilson’s death in 1995, her farmhouse and 28.6 acres were offered to the town, with the caveat that the property be used for the community. It took more than two decades – of research and planning and consensus-building and

overcoming hurdles and raising grant funds and many, many acts of individual and collective generosity. But in 2017, our very active community center was opened to the public.

I also reflected on our chestnut restoration project that began with a simple idea to celebrate the iconic American Chestnut species, as well as the two chestnut trees that Mark Makuc planted decades ago and that now bear a decent crop of nuts each year. To learn about the chestnut – perhaps the most productive and beneficial trees to ever thrive in our forests – is to marvel at the abundance and reciprocity this one species, which provided food and shelter and medicine and wood and shade to a vast number of creatures, including humans, who grieved its near extinction a century ago, and have spent four decades trying to restore it.

Five and a half years after our first Chestnut Talk and Roast, with more and more people showing up for what has become a popular annual event at the community center, we are also encouraging the planting hybrid chestnuts from germinated seeds with varying degrees of blight resistance. The enthusiasm of Montereyans has been reciprocated with the generosity of volunteer seedling orchard managers from nearby Granville, who have donated seeds, and seedlings, and know-how and time and energy to make our work more successful. (They’ll be back at the community center, by the way, on May 4 to distribute more germinated seedlings of four chestnut varieties.)

These efforts were also complemented by support from The American Chestnut Foundation, which provided

the interpretive signs that now explain the restoration efforts. And thanks to lumber donated by the community center, and support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and some more volunteer labor, we were able to erect a kiosk that can serve the community and provide information about the many goings-on at the center. The new director of the MCC, Chris Gannon, tells me he is researching plastic-covered cork “to make it easier for folks to post notices while keeping everything protected from the weather.”

The virtuous cycle of reciprocity continues, and soon some of our donated seedlings will begin bearing fruit, giving back to the local community in many ways.

If you feel moved to keep the circle of reciprocity going, consider joining us on Saturday, April 19, at 11 a.m., for our second annual garlic pull at Bidwell Park. Last year we cleared over an acre of the invasive, which is surprisingly easy and gratifying to pull in the spring. We recently learned of another reason to pull garlic mustard: it crowds out plants that are crucial to two endangered butterfly species. So don your tick clothes and meet us down by the river. Rain date, April 26.

For questions, or to sign up for the April 19 Garlic Mustard Pull at Bidwell Park with the Weed Warriors, kindly email the Monterey Native Plants Group at Pollinators01245@gmail.com.

–Janet Jensen



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Knox Gallery News



MaryPaul Yates

For April, the Knox Gallery will continue exhibiting the current show, *Radiant Light*, paintings by Carla Rogozinski and Eva Schuster. This

two-person exhibit will be on view through April 26.

As described in last month's issue of the news, these two artists enjoy painting together, but their locations require that they do so via Zoom. They schedule a session each week! The artists feel that exhibiting together, reflecting their practice, emphasizes the shared artistic dialogue and enhances their pieces.

We appreciate their enthusiasm for the Knox Gallery. Schuster comments: "We especially appreciate the wonderful light in the room, which brings our paintings to life and highlights the joy and light we strive to capture in nature."

Both artists focus on naturalistic scenes, along with flora and fauna, and they call the colorful style they work in "contemporary impressionism." We've had enthusiastic response from library visitors so far, so please come and see it!

Monterey resident Susan Gilbert's *My Kitschy World* opens on Friday, May 2, and the artist's reception will be that evening – from 5:30 – 7 p.m. Please join us to view Gilbert's detailed and colorful paintings, and talk with her about her work. Please put it on your calendars now in case you haven't read your May *Monterey News* yet!

All Knox Gallery events are admission free. Exhibits can be viewed during library hours (see back page of this issue). Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 528-3795; MontereyMassLibrary.org/Knox-Gallery; Facebook.com/Knox

–MaryPaul Yates

Library Notes



Mark Makuc

On Friday, April 11, at 6 p.m., the library will host a talk on travel to the Okavango Delta, Botswana, by Desmond Green. Desmond ran mobile safaris

and safari camp operations in the Okavango Delta for seventeen years. The talk will feature some geography, travel tips, stories, and photos.

Join us Sunday, April 20, when the Friends of the Monterey Library sponsor the annual egg hunt beginning at 1 p.m. Don't be late, hundreds of eggs will be gathered up in a matter of minutes. (We ask that the eggs are returned in the spirit of recycling this year.)

The library is searching for an additional staff member to cover approximately eight hours a week. A full job description can be found on the library website, <https://www.montereymasslibrary.org/new-page-99>, along with more details. Letters of interest can be sent to Montereylibrary@gmail.com. The library is an equal opportunity employer. There's no requirement for previous library experience, but an appreciation of libraries is necessary. We are looking for another staff member that is welcoming and comfortable with library technology. We are willing to train you to do the technology part.

–Mark Makuc

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Meeting House Survey

The Meeting House Steering Committee would like to know how you envision the future of the building. Below you'll see a QR code which will take you to the Monterey Meeting House's website, <https://montereymeetinghouse.org/>. At the top of the home page, you'll find a button which will take you to the survey.

As we begin to gather resources and to work with architects on how to look to the future for the MMH it is very important for us to see what kinds of activities the community would like to see more of in Monterey.

–Maggie Barkin

Help plan the future of
The Monterey Meeting House



Take
the 2-3
minute
survey

*An historic landmark
in Monterey Village, a
vibrant space for cultural
educational and community
gatherings.*

<https://montereymeetinghouse.org/>



**The Future of
Emergency Services**

Public meeting!
Learn about the overall plan,
roll-out scenarios, and
budget details.

**Wednesday, April 9th,
7 p.m.
Monterey Fire House**

Norma Champigny

May 16, 1933 – February 20, 2025



Norma Champigny passed away peacefully on February 20, 2025, at the age of 91. Born in Sheffield, Massachusetts, on May 16, 1933, she married Carl E. Champigny on September 13, 1955.

Norma began her career working for Melvin Katz at Melvin's Drug Store before pursuing nursing. She earned her nursing degree from the Pittsfield Vocational School of Nursing and spent her career working alongside Dr. Katz until her retirement.

She took great pride in keeping a neat and tidy home and had a kind heart for all animals, never turning away a hungry creature in need.

Norma is survived by her daughter, Karen Hutson, and son-in-law, Dean Hutson; her grandson, Kyle Hutson, and his wife, Madison.

In accordance with her wishes, a graveside celebration of her life and the life of her late husband, Carl, will be held at a later date.



Weed Warriors Unite!
Garlic Mustard Pull

Bidwell Park, April 19, 11 am

Pollinators01245@gmail.com

Kate Basler

Aug 28, 1941 – February 28, 2025



Kate Basler with Lynn Webster's Monterey School kindergarteners at the old library.

Katherine Basler, 83, of Eaton Road in Monterey, passed away peacefully on Friday, February 28, 2025, with her daughter, son, and husband at her bedside. She was born on August 28, 1941, daughter of Chester and Eva Sym, of Pennfield, New York.

Kate is survived by Kenn, her husband of fifty years; her daughter Amy Markiewicz and her husband David and their three children Dylan, Liam, and Graysen, living in Hull, MA; her son Adam Gulinello and his partner Valerie Graper and their two children Linus and Ezme, living in Nashville, TN; and daughter Eliane Vantini and her son Benicio in Las Vegas, NV.

Kate grew up on a farm outside Rochester, New York where she developed her love for the outdoors, animals, and country life. She was an early reader and loved learning. She received full scholarships to the University of Rochester for her undergraduate work, and then Boston University, where she graduated magna cum laude with a Masters in Education in 1968.

In 1972 Kate was one of the founders of the Agassiz Children's School in Cambridge, MA, and was the school's first teacher. The school started as a pre-school cooperative at a time of much

change in education. Kindergarten at the public school level was still half-day and classrooms were set up with rows of desks. With the backing of parents from the Children's School, Kate managed to secure an empty classroom in the local public school. There she set up a program that allowed kindergarten children attending the public school to stay at school for the full day.

It wasn't what she accomplished but how she accomplished it. She had the ability to bring people together, to encourage parental involvement in their children's education, and to get school administrators to understand the importance of full-day kindergarten not only for the children but for working parents. She used her classroom as a showcase for educational change with an emphasis on parents being part of their children's learning. It wasn't long before the Cambridge schools changed to full-day kindergarten and Kate became one of the first teachers.

During her time in Cambridge, and drawing on her early life on the farm, Kate helped found the Agassiz Community Gardens, a forty-five-plot garden site on an empty lot. Kate was most proud that both the Agassiz Community Children's School and the Agassiz Community Garden are

both going strong forty-plus years later.

Kate was a life-long learner. She approached everything as a learning experience, always looking for ways to improve her teaching skills. Trips to Japan to study their approach to early childhood education, trips to Plumb Village in France to study the role of meditation in education, and to the Lake District in England, her favorite destination.

Paws, both large and small, were always underfoot in the house.

Kate enjoyed training and grooming her dogs, taking her favorite Irish Water Spaniel, Tess, to a “best in breed” at a New York show. Tess also competed in agility but to Kate’s chagrin Tess always seemed to find something in the attending crowd to break her concentration and lead her off course. There was an air of anticipation from Kate’s friends wondering when Tess would end up in the crowd. Just another learning puzzle to solve for Kate.

Kate and Kenn discovered Monterey in the late 70s. Friends in Cambridge had a summer house on Lake Garfield and invited them up for a weekend. It was love at first sight. This was a magical time in Monterey with the Gravity Car Races, Tall Pines Produce Stand, Rawson Brook Farm, swimming lessons with Fran Amidon, an open general store. It didn’t take long for Kate, Kenn, and the kids to want a place of their own. They found the perfect piece of land on Eaton Road. A house soon followed, and they spent more time in Monterey, becoming full-time residents in 2003.

One summer, as the house was being built, Kate complained to Susan Sellew about the poison ivy around the house. Who knew that poison ivy is a favorite food of goats? The next time I arrived from Cambridge I was greeted, not by family, but by two goats. What a summer adventure that was!

Kate discovered the one-room Monterey school house and became friends with the teacher. She was so envious of the mixed grading philosophy which matched her own.

In 2004 we saw the opportunity to take over the Monterey General Store, which we operated until 2009, with Kate’s daily support. She greeted the customers wearing her hallmark leather cowgirl hat.

The house led to a barn and as retirement was approaching, the talk of horses became serious. We cleared several acres for pasture and Kate discovered a local stable that was raising the Icelandic horses. Soon our house was filled with books on Icelandic horses and, as she patiently explained, you cannot have just one horse. They are herd animals. Two Icelandics found their way to our pasture and to make a herd Kate rescued a mule. Retirement looked perfect—horses, dogs, and, of course, grandkids in the country. Not to mention the best library in the Berkshires two minutes away. Life was good.

Ten years ago Kate was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease and that brought changes, small at first but increasingly more impactful.

Riding was no longer possible and when we lost one horse to old age, then the mule, we found a farm to retire our remaining horse. Kate rescued a couple of shih tzu dogs who provided great cuddles and proved to be invaluable as she lost


her mobility. Then came dementia, the disease that cruelly robs sufferers of not only their memory but their personality. Kate stayed strong to the end. With the help of hospice, Kate was able to spend her final days at home with Adam, Amy, and Kenn by her bedside.

In keeping with Kate’s wishes, there will be no services. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Friends of the Monterey Library and/or Hospice of the Berkshires. Kenn would like to thank the Monterey first responders for their quick response, the great team of doctors and nurses at Berkshire Medical Center, and Hospice Care of the Berkshires that provided care and support during Kate’s final days.

—Kenn Basler

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Charles "CJ" Edward Walton, Jr. July 3, 1980 – February 5, 2025

"The highest forms of understanding we can achieve are laughter and human compassion."

—Richard Feynman



Charles "CJ" Edward Walton, Jr., 44, of Richmond, passed away on Wednesday, February 5, 2025. Born on July 3, 1980, he was the son of the late Charles E. Walton and Linda Walton. He is survived by his mother, Linda Walton; his ex-wife, Amy Robandt; his sister, Tracey Williamson; his brother, David Walton; and his ever-loyal puggle, Maggie.

CJ was a man of many talents and boundless curiosity. A farmer, baker, scientist, mechanic, and teacher, he moved through life with an insatiable drive to learn, create, and repair. He saw potential where others saw problems—whether in

an engine that refused to turn over, a garden that needed tending, or a mind searching for direction. His intellect was matched by a deep concern for others, a love of debate, and a willingness to challenge assumptions, often leading to spirited discussions with those around him.

At the age of nineteen, CJ earned a B.S. in biochemistry from Bard College at Simon's Rock. He sought meaning in work that connected him to land, food, and people, which led him to Gould Farm. There he became a work leader and supported guests on their own paths towards recovery and healing over many years. His love for baking led him to study at the Culinary Institute of America, where he refined his craft and deepened his understanding of artisan bread making. He brought that expertise to Gould Farm's Harvest Barn, where he helped create a bakery program. For CJ, baking wasn't just about flour and fermentation—it was a way of creating something tangible, nourishing, and shared for those around him. His colleagues and friends from Gould Farm remember him as a kind and compassionate work leader with a talent for identifying and fostering strength in others.

Beyond Gould Farm, CJ's work and interests expanded in many directions. He became a certified auto mechanic, mastered the art of coffee roasting, and found a niche repairing restaurant equipment, particularly water filtration systems.

He approached each trade with the same intensity and depth that he brought to everything he did. His love of poetry, gardening, and cooking were constants, as were his tireless work ethic, strong opinions, and sharp wit. CJ had a gift for finding humor around him, often punctuating a sharp bit of wordplay or an inside joke with a deep, barrel-chested laugh, head thrown back in surprise, eyes twinkling.

Alongside his many gifts, CJ wrestled with moments of strength and setback, clarity and hardship. Even amid his struggles, he sought something bigger than himself—a way to make sense of the world, of suffering, and of the possibility of transformation and renewal. Through it all, he remained a person of deep generosity, always willing to help those around him.

CJ will be remembered for his independent mind, his care for and kindness towards others, and his generosity in sharing his knowledge and skills. Those who knew him carry his memory in the lessons he taught, the meals he prepared, and the countless repairs he made along the way.

If you feel inspired to make a donation in CJ's name, he supported and cared deeply about the following organizations: Gould Farm, Partners in Health, Doctors Without Borders, and Rural Recovery/South County Recovery Center.

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Railroad Street Youth Project Presents Free Screening of *Recovery City*

Monterey resident Laura Rodriguez invites all to attend a special free screening of *Recovery City* on Wednesday, April 9. This event is open to parents, young people, educators, professionals who work with youth, the recovery community, and all community stakeholders. Members of the press are also encouraged to attend.

The evening will begin at 5 p.m. with a welcome event in the Triplex lobby,



featuring alcohol-free mocktails, recipe cards, and an interactive discussion on the 2025 Prevention Needs Assessment Survey findings. This will be the first public presentation of RSYP’s insights into substance use trends and behaviors among southern Berkshire County youth, including concerns about shifting patterns of alcohol and cannabis use and community norms that influence these behaviors.

At 6 p.m., a guest MC from the South

County Rural Recovery Center will offer brief opening remarks, sharing personal perspectives on substance use in South County. The screening of *Recovery City*, an acclaimed documentary directed by Lisa Olivieri, will follow from 6:10 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The film explores addiction recovery journeys and community resilience, themes deeply relevant to the youth and families of Berkshire County.

Immediately following the film, RSYP will host a virtual Q&A session with Lisa Olivieri and some of the individuals featured in the documentary. The discussion will be moderated by RSYP and the

South County Rural Recovery Center, with a focus on the film’s themes and their local relevance. Audience members are invited to submit questions in advance or during the event.

For more information or to submit

questions for the Q&A, please contact Laura Rodriguez at laura@rsyp.org.



Nan Smith




+

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KNOX GALLERY

Monterey Library

Knox Gallery is supported by Friends of the Monterey Library

Supper Club



Hanna Jensen

I was thanking my lucky charms at Supper Club last month as I excitedly served myself spoonfuls of Roberta Weiss's heavenly Guinness beef stew. Despite the controversy that plagues the headlines these days, spirits were high as plates were piled with corned beef and cabbage (three different options...boiled, smoked, and Pastrami) with boiled carrots and potatoes, a hefty shepherd's pie, shamrock ravioli (which was quite the fun, bright sight in the middle of the table), a chopped cabbage salad, fried cabbage, mushroom hash, sourdough bread, and of course, Irish soda bread (which I was frantically begging to finish baking just minutes before dinner started – my pleading did the trick, it was ready and well received - thank you to everyone for the compliments).

Our dessert carts were overloaded,



festively erupting with the green hue of the pistachio pudding, brought by one Officer Melanie, one of Monterey's finest - it was so great to have you there, Mel! There were Guinness stout cupcakes in addition to stout cake, pistachio muffins, Saint Paddy's Day cupcakes, a lovely Irish apple cake (brought by first-time



Clubbers Diana and Dennis Downing... welcome!), frosted brownies...it surely was quite the array.

As we move to April, green stays in our lives as the snowbanks shrink and bulbs begin to demand their time in the sun. It's a bit too soon to start the gardens outside, but on Monday, April 21 at 6 p.m. (eat at 6:15 p.m.) we'll kickstart the season with our theme: Olive Garden. The church basement is going Italian, and you're invited. RSVP is required. Please email supperclubmonterey@gmail.com if you'd like to attend.

—Hanna Jensen

Photos by Hanna Jensen.

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Jane and Marty Schwartz
Gregory Carnese
John Callahan, as thanks to Kyle Pierce
for all her volunteering in Monterey
Jane M. Allen

For fifty years, the *Monterey News* has been free to the community because of donors like you.

Thank you for helping us
continue this tradition.

Letters



Monterey Friends,

Like many of you, I feel caught in the chaos of the moment, with anxiety and concern for the vulnerable, whose lives are being impacted by the dismantling of federal institutions and by authorities on the right whose actions appear sometimes to disregard legal requirements. Those on the 'right' appear also to be reacting to the 'left's' efforts to dismantle the carbon-based energy system, and to dismantle traditional social mores, replacing them with moral relativism.

It seems we are in the Age of Dismantling Social Structures which have worked quite well for decades, until now.

I think progress results from the dynamic between structure and vitality. Unbridled vitality can be frightening and evoke feelings of uncertainty, like now. What will the new/revised social structures look like? How will the use of AI or the knowledge emerging from medical science or from the James Webb Telescope, etc., help us?

The descriptions of the 'right' and the 'left' seem not to work well

anymore. Each 'side' is somewhat unmoored. I am trying to keep a sense of hope and optimism alive, envisioning the possibility of new shared action. In the meantime, it is a very painful time. I hope we can get through it. I hope that Monterey can still be one of the communities that 'lights the way' forward.

—Virgil Stucker

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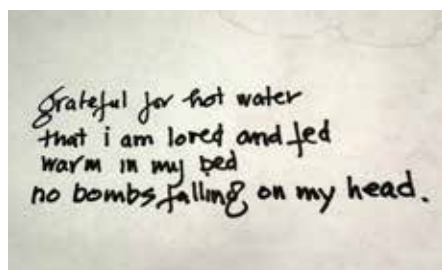
Nan Smith

Dear Neighbors,

Just a year ago, over 100 people gathered at the Guthrie Center to try to find peace amidst the wreckage of our shared human values. We sang, lit candles and read poems. The most stirring of these was Refaat AlAreer's poem, "If I must Die." That was so long ago.

Tens of thousands have died since then. No number of calls or letters written turned the Titanic of our time from its course, and now we have awakened to a world where the rules no longer seem to apply. Some of our acquaintances have lost jobs, been whisked away to deportation camps, or labeled as other. Some are dead. Now is not the time to turn away. There are many resources and ways we can set a new course. There is "No Other Land." So we must begin.

—Michele Miller



Poem, by Michele Miller

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BUY IN THE BERKSHIRES TO PADDLE WITH FRIENDS

Monterey Meeting Houses through History

This article is the first of a series about the history of Monterey United Church of Christ (MUCC) and the three Meeting Houses that the Monterey community has used for civic and religious functions since 1750. The Monterey Meeting House (MMH) steering committee is moving forward with planning for future ownership and stewardship of the building for ongoing community gatherings. The Monterey Historical Society is re-printing these informative articles to highlight the importance of the Meeting House to Monterey in the past and future. If you're interested in learning more or helping with MMH's efforts, please go to their website: <https://montereymeetinghouse.org>

These articles were originally written by Kathy Page Wasiuk and Delight Dodyk and printed in the Monterey News from October 1996 through May 1997 as part of the MUCC congregation's outreach for their capital campaign for restoration and preservation work. The articles are reprinted with the permission of the authors.

Part I: In the Beginning ...

Monterey Church History, Part I, Wasiuk, Kathy P., (originally printed in the Monterey News, Oct. 1996, pp. 6-8)

It seems obvious that the history of a New England town and of its meeting house reflect each other, and that the shape and location of one changes with the other. So it is with Monterey.

Six years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, the Dutch built a fort on the Hudson River where Albany now stands. This first interior settlement of the New Netherlands supported Dutch claims of all land eastward to the Connecticut River, territory eventually claimed by the Massachusetts Bay settlers. (Dutch assertion of ownership east of the Hudson proved extravagantly optimistic.) The English slowly pushed west beyond Springfield. Mountainous terrain, fear of Native American incursions from the north, and unpleasant relations with the neighboring Dutch

proved to be formidable barriers to early permanent establishments in the hill country. Reports of those who passed through the mountains did not stir enthusiasm: in the mid 1690s, for example, Benjamin Wadsworth of Boston, accompanied by a guard of soldiers, crossed the province to Albany; he reported the journey as "most

frightful" and returned home through Connecticut rather than repeat the experience (Scott, p. 10).

The Dutch eventually transferred to English claimants the right to negotiate with native people for title. Native Americans crossed regularly through the middle portion of what would become Monterey,

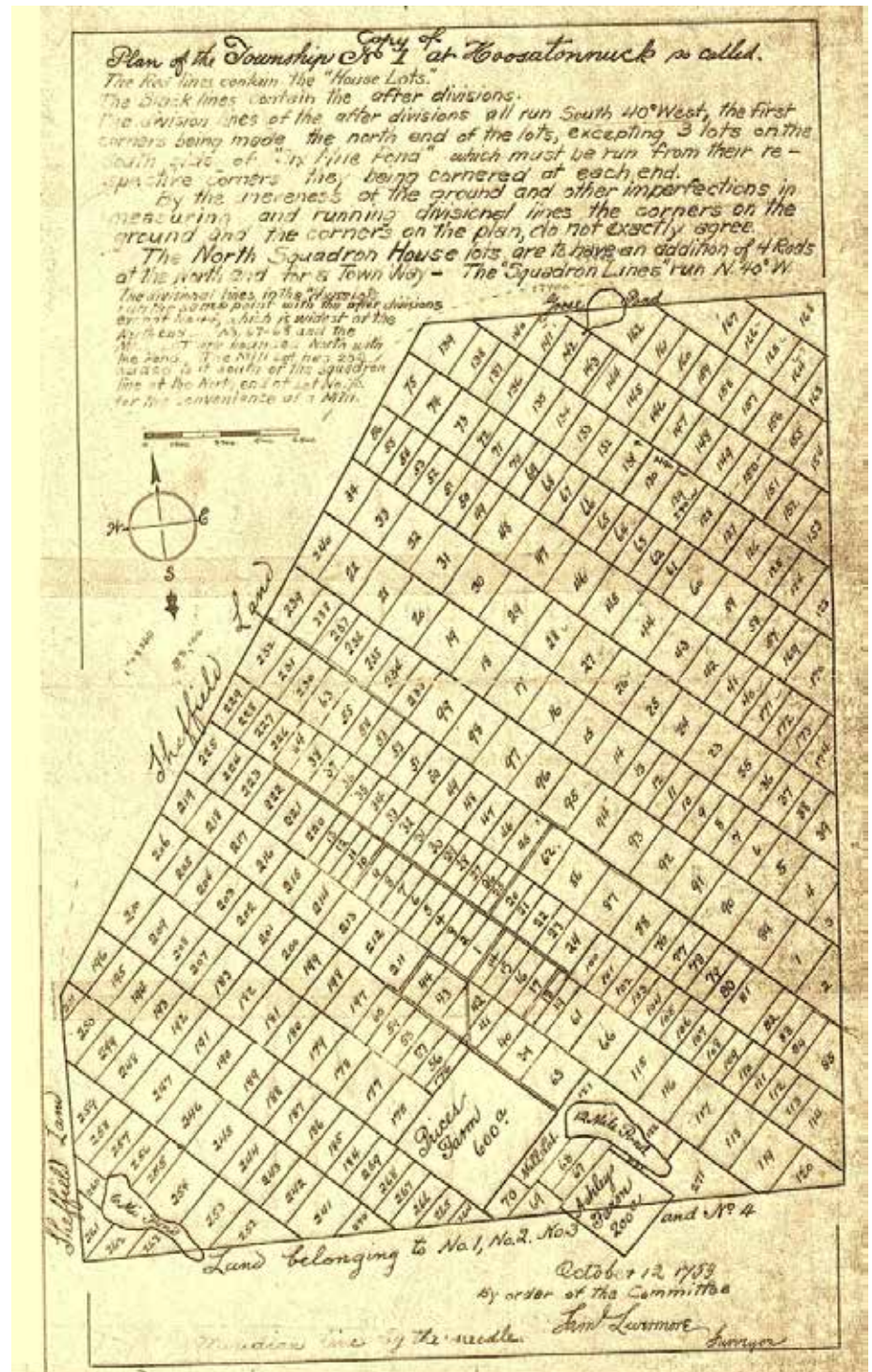


Figure 1 Copy of the 1754 Proprietor's Plan of Township No. 1. The First Meeting House was on the north end of Lot #1 (now part of the Bidwell House Museum property).

following animal trails that became the so-called Great Path, and doubtless fished the lakes and hunted the game. Great Barrington and Sheffield had been purchased for £460, three barrels of cider, and thirty quarts of rum. (Giving cider and rum to Native Americans in payment for lands was a common practice of colonials, and a subversive one, given the debilitating effects of alcohol on a people unused to it.) A petition filed in the Massachusetts General Assembly in 1722 granted organizing rights for those two townships as Lower and Upper Housatunnuk. In June of 1737, negotiations by a lawyer and a soldier—Ephraim Williams, Esq., and Col. Nahum Williams—produced a further deed signed by Chief Konkapot, nine other Native American men, and one woman, granting land in exchange for £300. And so, a hundred years after Pilgrims covenanted together in Salem, a portion of the land ceded by Chief Konkapot was organized into a paper township by a simple act of the legislative pen.

Lines on Paper Create Boundaries...

Township Number One (of four) came into being in response to demands to open land to settlement along a proposed road from Westfield to Sheffield. The first town meeting of Number One, held at the inn of Thomas Harrington in Watertown in October 1737, heard a report from William Chandler, surveyor, and the Committee to

Survey regarding the twenty lots they had boundaried thus far. Within a month, there being no distinction between matters civic and ecclesiastic, the proprietors set aside two lots for the first and second ministers, and one for a meeting house.

A meeting house was necessary for many reasons: certainly to fulfill Protestant belief in preaching the Gospel, but also to attract further settlers to the land the proprietors had recently acquired and now hoped to sell, as the building would be a visible sign of amenities the new community could offer. A meeting house had civic as well as religious functions—host to town meetings, emergency shelter, etc.—and a town could not be incorporated until a church had been built and a “learned and orthodox minister” settled and ordained there (Parker, p. 18). Voting to tax themselves for support of the proposed ministry and meeting house, the proprietors proceeded to sell lots to settlers with the tax (based on acreage) attached. Thus did church and commerce simultaneously organize the first plan for European settlement.

The town was subdivided into sixty-three lots, and when demand for land outstripped availability, the proprietors added seven more names to their lists, and the town was further subdivided into house lots, town lots, and mill lots of seventy-five acres, created as squares on paper to be parceled out by auctions (November 15,

1737 through February 28, 1738) to the original proprietors. Four of these were clergymen: Rev. William Williams of Weston (who sold to Daniel Garfield), Rev. John Cotton of Boston, Rev. Warham Williams of Waltham (who sold to Jonas Brewer), and Jonathan Townsend of Needham. Proprietors could either retain or sell their rights to other speculators or to settlers; each head of household was required to give a £40 surety and a bond that he would “build and furnish a dwelling house upon his lot 18 foot square x 7 foot stud at least” and would within five years “improve five acres either by plowing or mowing or planting the same with English grass” and would guarantee to actually live on the lot (Myers, p. 5). Grantees could receive land in consideration of work undertaken opening a road through the Township, or for building and operating certain public utilities, like a mill.

The meeting house and the minister’s portion were centrally located. While theologically and politically apt, and logical on paper, the decision did not go far enough in considering terrain, and held serious implications for the future.

— Kathy Page Wasiuk

References:

Tyringham Old and New, by John A. Scott, 1905

“The Mother Church,” by Deborah Parker, *Berkshire Magazine*, April/May, 1990

Find Coffee, Fun, and Friendship at the Coffee Club

If you’re bored or frustrated by the crazy times we live in, and looking for a distraction with a new group of eclectic friends, join the Monterey Coffee Club. Although we’re relegated to the church basement, we’re just happy to be anywhere these days. We gather in the only place in town, or perhaps in Berkshire County, where you can find coffee for \$2 dollars a pop. Good fun and meaningless discussions are endless. So, defeat the boredom, and reduce your frustrations! Join the coffee club (before we’re not around anymore to cheer you up*).



The Coffee Club meets Tues. - 8:30 - 9:45a.m. in church basement, Wed. - 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. at the Roadside, Thurs. - 8:30 - 9:45 a.m. in the church basement, Fri. - 8:30 - 10 a.m. at the Southfield Store, and Sat. - 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. at the community center.

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Here's a Thought...

I Thank You, Life

Sometime in, or around, 2014, thirty years after I'd spent three months in Chile, I wrote about one part of my experience.

¡Gracias a la Vida!

It was a time when and a place where
people disappeared.

I don't mean they sailed off to some
sweet by-and-by.

I mean they were disappeared.

And when the bell told, no one else
spoke

above a whisper,

except in song:

¡Gracias a la vida!

¡Gracias a la vida!

¡Gracias a la vida!

even when la vida went wrong.

Yes, the word "told" was deliberate, not "toll'd." The title, of course, had been previously used by Chilean composer Violeta Parra for a love song she wrote in the 1960s in La Paz, Bolivia. Here's the way someone translated the last verse of that song for me in 1984:

*I thank you, life./You give me so much:
laughter as well as tears/so I can tell hap-
piness from sadness,/the two materials that
make up my song/and your song, which is
also my song,/and the song of all, which
is my song, too./I thank you, life, you give
me so much!*

Parra took her life while she was in

Mary Kate Jordan



*This river's the Housatonic as it ran over
its banks in Great Barrington in 2009.
But this is an article circling through
communities and rivers.*

detainment in Santiago, the capital city, after Augusto Pinochet took power. He was still in power while I was there. The city was, probably still is, a beautiful place, in part. Some sections were well-groomed, full of substantial and well-maintained homes, gardens, governmental and commercial buildings. The rest? Riddled with poverty.

The Mopocho River runs through it all, dividing the city in two, physically as well as socially. Maybe that was what helped Parra distinguish happiness from sadness in the first place. Not the river, but the unhealed divisions running through her homeplace.

We have the Konkapot, not the Mopocho, but we do have divisions, recently made clearer than before on Brett Road. Nevertheless, your song... is also my song, and the song of all, which is my song, and your song, too.

So, join me once a month, 11 a.m. to noon, on any of three upcoming Thursdays, April 17, May 15, and June 26 in the Knox Gallery at the library. We'll share in building community by taking an hour to consider some poems together and to listen to a song.

Not Parra's song; we'll hear other music born from the soul of love. Last month's song offering was called Rest Your Heart. (Now that's a community-building title, isn't it?) April's poems will include work by Mary Oliver, James Crews, and others. Join us, community builders, one and all.

—Mary Kate Jordan



Nan Smith

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This project was funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the MassTech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Flood Recovery Funds.

Memoir

Growing Up on Lake Buel

PART 2

As a teenager, I discovered friends from the other end of the lake. My mother learned to drive, and she had a different old car each summer. She would drive me across and down the lake on weekdays, and I would spend the entire day at a casino there with my new friends. The jukebox played Elvis Presley's "Blue Suede Shoes" and "Heartbreak Hotel."

At night, one of them would drive me home, but not until after we stopped at his house to listen to Harry Belafonte's "Calypso" album. To this day, I can't hear that music without thinking of him. At the Berkshire Eye Center one day last year, I heard his name announced. After re-introducing myself, since it has been a long time, he asked incredulously, "... from Lake Buel?"

My trips to the library were now for Nancy Drew mysteries, which were on their own shelf.

I could still locate them, but I'm sure they're not there anymore.



Lake Buel on a glittering summer's day.

Every summer, for four summers, I dated the same boy from the other end of the lake. We didn't have contact with each other the rest of the year. That's when I came to hate having a party line, because after each Saturday night, a neighbor would ask, "How was the movie?" You'd

think she would at least not let me know she was listening in.

Every Saturday night, everyone from the lake went to the movies regardless of what was being shown. The parents went to the 7 p.m. show, and the kids to the 9 p.m. We all waited in the tiled lobby. I remember seeing Leonard Bernstein and his wife there late one summer. He was wearing a bright red sweater, and jumped around the lobby gathering attention, which he didn't seem to mind at all. Whenever the movies ended, usually around 11, we drove into New York State, almost to the Taconic, for pizza. There were no restaurants in Great Barrington.

At the house, phone numbers were written in pencil on the knotty pine wall of the bathroom. After a while, I learned which boat was which by its sound, and I could make out the sound of the car that had just dropped me off when it travelled on the other side of the lake late at night.

As years went by, I married and had three children, my sister married and had two. We all spent every summer at the same house. On weekends, we were eleven people! The house, not really ours, was never expanded, but seemed to expand to encompass us all. When I think of it now, I don't know how it held eleven people, with only three bedrooms and one bathroom. We did use the living room as an extra bedroom and enclosed half the screened porch to sleep two. I do know that I wasn't able to dress in the bathroom until about 11 a.m. As we bought new dishes, linens, carpeting and furniture, the house would absorb our old things until it was filled with our "stuff".

With its easy entry, the house had its fair share of small animals. One weeknight, while sharing a bed with my sister and listening for mice, I grabbed my sister's arm and she asked, "Was that you?". I meant the noise we heard, she meant who grabbed her arm. I said "No," and she screamed!

One Saturday night, our parents took all the children to the Mahaiwe to see "The Natural" starring Robert Redford. My sister and brother-in-law and my husband and I went to dinner at a restaurant near the lake. At the next table, sat Robert Redford with his wife. When we returned home, we asked our mother, "Guess who



The author at 10, and her sister, Jackie, 5, in 1950(ish).

we saw?" After unsuccessfully naming everyone from the lake, she finally said jokingly "Robert Redford." Who would have guessed?

Not only did my sister and I grow up in that house, but my children and my nieces did too. Their heights were measured and written in pencil on a wooden wall also.

We all have our own memories. Rather than remembering the cramped quarters, we have fond memories of family dinners on the porch and spending time together. The cousins are all still good friends. When I dream, the dream often takes place at that house.

We stopped going to the lake when my father died. The house was eventually torn down and sold, along with the other two cottages that shared the same lot. In their place, sits a big McMansion. If you look closely from the lake now, in the brush that has grown, you can make out a steel pipe painted white that used to be a banister when the steps to the lake were made of concrete blocks.

That steel pipe is the only thing that remains except for all those memories.



— Stephanie Sloane

Wildlife Report

This is spring. The birds are telling it, the ticks are up and hungry, ducks are migrating, all the boy robins are back in droves. Besides this, the salamanders will be crossing the roads any time now, some wet, warm night, headed to their natal pools for egg-laying. The large “mole salamanders” are terrestrial as adults and we rarely see them, as they stay under the leaves and old logs to keep themselves safe and their skins damp. But their egg laying and fertilization, also the larval stage of their life cycle, is aquatic. Many don’t have road-crossing to accomplish, of course, but those that do will move very slowly across after dark, looking like short pieces of wood, or sticks in our headlights. Drive slowly, stop and move them across if you can. Your handling will not hurt them or you. If you can, wet your hands first, all the better. They choose wet nights

Back a few weeks, before the ice went out, Larry Burke took a photo of two otters (below) “. . . on our pond. They were



slipping in and out of a small opening in the ice, often coming up with yummy bluegills, which they then devoured. Also early in March, Kit Patten called to tell of a red-shouldered hawk he’d seen, with a “russet-y head and white underbelly.” The big bird perched on an ash tree at the edge of a field.

Kit also recounted in some detail the odd two-tone vocal sounds of a crow. There were two crows, definitely not ravens Kit

says, and one spoke the familiar “caw, caw, caw.” The other made a two-tone sort of sighing sound which is hard to write down. “Ahh--awh, ahh-awh.” Kit wonders if this were some sort of mating song or come-hither. One bird book I have says crows can make twenty different vocalizations. This is better than some people I know!

The Banners sent a photograph of a “snag tree,” a remarkable sculpture (top right) showing the practical artistry of many species, some clearly inspired by others. We can see that a “dead tree” is full of life. We also have a fine close-up from the Banners’ place of a small tree frog (center right) up against a window with suction cups on each toe.

Mac Holzer writes “. . . after an ongoing cold winter (we) were greeted by the eagles. . .” and sent this photograph (bottom right) of a bald eagle on the ice.

Later in March I watched a small group of ring-necked ducks on Royal Pond. This is on Route 23, just west of the Otis-Monterey line. There are a couple



dive, feeding up before heading on north for their annual migration. Already I am not seeing them any more on Royal Pond. Happy trails, dear ducks.

Thank you for your sightings and your interest.

–Bonner McAllester
bonnermca@gmail.com,
or 413-528-9385



Seth Pitman said, "My kids and I spotted a moose down by the Tyringham transfer station on March 12." This moose sure struck a pose.



"It was so nice to watch a movie with our neighbors. Promises to cheer us," said Kathryn Roberts. Shown here are Richard Pargament, who selected the monthly movie African Queen, with Maureen Banner.

Parts of Me

My chiropractor could not fix my aching arthritic hip, but now I use the gymnasium, with a joint made of titanium.

Long-COVID caused my ticker to need a circuit breaker, so, about three years later, was implanted a pacemaker.

At the airport security sector, I light up the metal detector and find it a little demonic that my body is now bionic.

If they have me cremated, I'll be melted down for scrap. Most of me is water but a lot of it is crap.

Better to recycle a bit of this and that. Metal and a battery, a cornea, a kidney.

Perhaps another organ. I'm blessed with two or three. I'd like to think, when I die, they will get the best of me.

—Mike Arnow



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Bidwell House Museum News



Heather Kowalski

Spring has arrived, with the pops of green and yellow signaling the warmer days to come. Looking past the daffodil blooms, the museum is happy to have a wonderful slate of programming planned for the 2025 season,

and we are excited to share a preview this month.

Before we get to that, we want to let you know about a two Zoom programs coming up in April. First, on April 24 at 7 p.m. we host a discussion, *Creating History: The Art of First Person Interpretation*. If you attended either of our past historical reenactment events at the museum, you may have wondered how the participants started down the historical reenactment road and what they have to do to ensure accuracy in their presentations. During this program we will have a conversation with four of the reenactors from those events to learn more about this incredible hobby. Then, on April 30, at 7 p.m., we welcome Suffolk University Professor Robert Allison to discuss the many factors in 1775 that led to America's War for Independence. Both programs are free for museum members, and \$15 for non-members. Pre-registration is required and attendees can sign up on the events page of the museum website: <https://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org/events/>

A few short weeks after the April 30 Zoom program, we will begin our 2025 season. On Sunday, May 17, the museum welcomes "Martha Washington" for a program called *A Personal Conversation in Mrs. Washington's Bedchamber* where you will learn about the life of Martha Washington as she gets ready for the day. The program will be followed by a small reception with refreshments to celebrate the opening of the season. The following week we will host our third annual Members Week, where museum members can take a guided tour of the house without an appointment. These tours will take place

on May 19, 22, 23, and 24 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., or 3 p.m. If you are a new member who has yet to see the house, or a member who has not visited in a while, stop by at any of those times for a personal tour.

The Bidwell House Museum's programmatic theme for 2025 is "historic trades," which we will showcase with a small in-house exhibition, and several programs, including a history talk about the masonry in New England in the eighteenth century on June 28, and a history talk about building the museum on July 26. We hope to also have a few trade demonstrations throughout the season. Beyond the historic trades theme, we have also planned two more history talks, a concert of historical music and guided hikes on the property. Our season will culminate with in our third Eighteenth Century Living History Weekend, October 3-5. As in past years, reenactors will set up camp on-site to demonstrate life during the time of the Revolutionary War. There will be talks about taverns, sutlery, and midwifery, and participants portraying Mercy Otis Warren, Martha Washington, and Frederika Charlotte Riedesel. In addition to the talks, visitors will explore the camps, see tactical demonstrations, and speak with the reenactors about the person they portray. We will share more details here in the *Monterey News* and on the museum website as we get closer to all of our season events.

To make all of these programs happen each season, we depend on a number of dedicated volunteers. This year we are looking for people to help with weeding and watering in our gardens; to assist with programs, most especially the reenactment

weekend in October; and to occasionally lead house tours. If any of those volunteer opportunities pique your interest, contact the museum at (413) 528-6888 or bidwell-house@gmail.com for more information.

Our summer internship program is back this year. We hope to host 3-4 interns who are interested in learning about history or horticulture, giving tours, and helping with events. Each internship lasts 40-50 hours, has a stipend, and flexible hours. If you know a high school or college student who loves history and is looking for an enlightening summer experience, contact the museum at the phone and email address in the previous paragraph. Find more information about internships on the museum website: <https://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org/internships/>

Finally, as we frequently remind readers, the museum gardens and grounds are open every day, year-round, free of charge. Mud season should be almost over by the time you read this, but if you are thinking of visiting and there have been recent heavy rains, it is worth checking on the condition of the road, which you can do by calling the museum at (413) 528-6888 or checking for updates on the museum's Facebook page.

See you at the museum!

—Heather Kowalski



Shannon Amidon Castille

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Dance and Music with the Parkinson's Support Group

Lin Saberski



The March Parkinson's Support Group featured two presentations – *Making Music*, and *Moving to Music* – both activities known to help those coping with the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease. Monterey's Vikki True (right) led the group in song, helping to create lyrics directly relevant to the group's shared experience. Katherine Stoessel had everyone dancing, first while seated, and then standing, and rocking out. Join Vikki's spirited sing-along every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at the community center. Katherine is planning a dance group for people with Parkinson's, likely at Kimball Farms.

– Lin Saberski

Lin Saberski



ATTENTION SOUTH COUNTY CONNECTOR RIDERS!!!! (previously known as TriTown Connector)



South County Connector has proposed drastic cost increases. The Monterey Council on Aging (COA), which pays for the van, needs to speak directly to the riders. The COA needs to know how to proceed to best protect your interests. We need to know how much of a fare increase is manageable for you and whether you are open to alternatives to the van, like using Instacart for groceries, or taking private taxi services to medical appointments.

But, WHO ARE YOU? We don't know...South County Connector doesn't share the names of riders with the COA.

PLEASE CONTACT THE COA ASAP at the email or phone number below. WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

Thank you. Lin Saberski, Chair Monterey Council on Aging
lbscpw@yahoo.com
(347) 839-0745

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COA CALENDAR

Coming Events

Monday April 7: COA Board Meeting at town hall 10:30 a.m. to noon. The agenda is posted on the town website. All are welcome.

Wednesday, April 9 : Coffee Club Breakfast at the Roadside, 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 9: Movie Night at the library, 7 p.m. *The French Connection*, a classic starring the late great Gene Hackman continues to be a popular film to revisit after many years. Released in 1975, the film tells the story of a New York narcotics detective Popeye Doyle who travels to Marseille to find the drug smuggler who eluded him in New York. Running time one hour and 59 minutes. Get there a few minutes early for schmoozing and light refreshments.

Thursday, April 10: Monthly lunch at noon at Rio, 403 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington. Reservations with Kathryn are encouraged.

Tuesday, April 15: Wellness Check, 11 a.m. - noon at the library. Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative (formerly Tritown Health) will be there to check blood pressure, vital signs, and to arrange for vaccines they do not offer. Information about ticks will be available. For Covid and flu vaccines, call ahead to arrange with Jill Sweet at (413) 717-7209.

Wednesday, April 16: Coffee Club Breakfast at the Roadside, 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 16: Afternoon at the Movies. 2 p.m. library. *Our Souls at Night* is based on the novel by Kent Haruf and stars Robert Redford and Jane Fonda. Filmed in Colorado Springs and Florence Colorado. A gentle tale of regret and romance between a widow and widower in their golden years. Robert Redford and Jane Fonda are two of our all-time great actors of American cinema. Running time one hour 43 minutes. Get there a few minutes early for schmoozing and light refreshments.

Thursday, April 17: Paint or Draw with Beth Hoffman. 11:30 a.m. at the community center. A still life will provide inspiration or draw from your own imagination. Anything goes! Bring your own supplies. Coffee and a snack will be provided. Call Beth with any questions: (201) 463-9543

Wednesday, April 23: Coffee Club Breakfast at the Roadside, 8:30 a.m.

Thursday, April 24: Paint or Draw with Beth Hoffman. 11:30 a.m. at the community center. A still life will provide inspiration or draw from your own imagination. Anything goes. Bring your own supplies. Coffee and a snack will be provided. Call Beth with any questions: (201) 463-9543

Monday, May 5: COA Board Meeting at town hall 10:30 a.m. - noon. The agenda is posted on the town website. All are welcome.

Thursday, May 8: Monthly lunch at noon. Pizza House, 36 State Road, Great Barrington. Reservations with Kathryn are encouraged.

Ongoing Services

Parkinson's Support Group: This month's meeting is on Thursday, April 8, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the library. Caregivers are encouraged to attend. Call Kathryn at the number above if you'd like more information.

Transportation: Transportation is available to all Monterey residents for trips to Great Barrington, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, Egremont, and Sheffield. Call (413) 591-3826. Hours are Monday - Thursday, 6:30 a.m. - 9 p.m., Friday 6:30 a.m. - 11:30 p.m., Saturday 7:30 a.m. - 11 p.m., Sunday 7:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. Rides to New Marlborough are available Monday - Friday only, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. only, and limited to seniors, and people with disabilities. Pittsfield is limited to Monday and Wednesday only, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., for medical visits only.

Foot Nurse: Beverly Dunn is available for home visits. Call (413) 446-2469 to schedule an appointment. The COA covers \$10 of her fee.

Free Safety Vests: Vests to ensure you are visible to car traffic when walking, running or biking are available in town hall.

AND REMEMBER: if you have concerns about the well-being of a senior neighbor or family member - or yourself - call me at the number immediately below. I will discuss the situation with you and then reach out to the Monterey PD and/or appropriate provider agencies as needed.

To reach me to reserve for events, with questions about scheduled events, or suggestions for new ones, please call (413) 528-1443, extension 112 or email me at coaoutreach@montereyma.gov. Phone messages are picked up once daily, Monday through Friday.

— Kathryn Roberts
COA Outreach Coordinator/
Administrative Assistant



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Community Center

A Note from Chris

Before diving into my first update as programs manager, I want to say how grateful my family and I are to be part of this amazing community. The warm welcome from the MCC Committee, the Friends of the Wilson McLaughlin House, town hall, volunteers, and so many others has been truly humbling. Monterey is a special place, and its generosity makes it unlike anywhere else.

The community center itself is a testament to that generosity—from Edith Wilson's donation to the dedicated residents who renovated and continue to sustain it. I'm excited to help ensure it remains a welcoming space where neighbors can connect, learn, and enjoy all it has to offer.

Looking forward to a beautiful spring with all of you. If you have ideas for events, workshops, or new groups, I'd love to hear them. Let's keep making MCC a place where everyone feels welcome and connected.

See you around town.

—Chris Gannon

Looking Back: Winter MCC Events

Canceling WinterFest was a tough call, but with heavy snow, freezing temperatures, and widespread power outages, it was the right decision. Safety comes first, and we appreciate the community's

understanding.

On a brighter note, Jane Burke's Ceramics Workshop at Flying Cloud Farm was a hit. MCC Jam Sessions continue to be very well attended! Open to musicians and singers of all levels, this is a space to play, learn, and enjoy music together—no judgment, just good vibes. Interested? Contact Mark at MCCJamgroup@gmail.com.

New!

Non-Competitive Ping Pong for Fun Mondays, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Due to high demand, we're adding another ping-pong session! This relaxed, all-skill-levels-welcome group is all about fun, movement, and friendly rallies—no pressure, just play!

Yantra Yoga with Ben Corbett

Thursdays, 9 to 10 a.m. | Sponsored by the COA | \$10 suggested donation
Now held every Thursday, this class offers a great opportunity to explore movement and mindfulness. Open to all ages and experience levels!

Weekly, Bi-Weekly & Monthly Activities

Mondays:

Hablemos! 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., first three Mondays of the month; 10 to 11:30 a.m. on the fourth Monday. Intermedio y superior—to practice Spanish and meet new friends.

Non-Competitive Ping Pong for Fun Mondays, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Simple meditation, all are welcome,

4:30 to 6 p.m.

April 28: Cookbook club, 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Fourth Monday of the month. Register by emailing WendyGJ@gmail.com.

April 28: Book club. This month's book is *Pigeons* by Andrew Blechman. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Tuesdays:

Chair yoga, 10 to 11 a.m.

Vikki True, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Bridge, 1 to 4 p.m.

Mahjong, 7 to 9 p.m.

Wednesdays:

Tai chi with David Crowe, at 10 a.m. \$8 per class, or \$30 for the month.

Ping-pong, 2:30 to 4 p.m. for advanced players, 4 to 6 p.m. for beginners. Third Wednesday of the month, 4 to 6 p.m. only, all play.

April 16: Monterey Quilters, 1:30 to 3 p.m. Third Wednesday of the month. Please send an email if you are interested to Lindarneilson@gmail.com.

Thursdays:

Yantra Yoga, 9 to 10 a.m.

Mahjong, 2 to 4 p.m.

April 3: Darn Yarners, 12 to 1:30 p.m., first Thursday of the month.

April 3 and 17: Folk Chorus with Oren Rosenthal, 4:15 to 5:45 p.m.

April 17 and 24: Open Studio with Beth Hoffman, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

April 10 and 24: Music jam sessions with Mark Andrews. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Fridays:

Super Gentle Yoga, 10 to 11 a.m. Please register by emailing jamesboneparth76@gmail.com.

Bridge, 1 to 4 p.m.

Saturdays:

Coffee club, 8:30 to 10 a.m.

Ping-pong, 1 to 2:30 p.m. for advanced players, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. for beginners.

Sundays:

AIAnon family group meeting, 9 a.m.

Monterey Marijuana Anonymous, 7 to 8 p.m.

Based on March 18 information. Find updated information on our website, ccmonterey.org, or by following us on Facebook and Instagram (@montereymacc), or by calling (413) 528-3600, or by emailing montereycommunitycenter@gmail.com.

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Community Center

Coming Up

Post-Arbor Day Tree Distribution May 4, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Join Kevin West as he distributes pre-ordered trees and shrubs and shares expert planting tips. Special germinated chestnut seeds will also be available for those who signed up in advance. Thanks to dozens of "chestnut champions," Monterey could one day boast a thriving population of blight-resistant American Chestnuts. Register by leaving a message at (413) 528-3600 or emailing montereycommunitycenter@gmail.com.

Annual Native Plant Sale June 7, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. A great opportunity to find beautiful native plants for your garden while supporting local ecosystems. Stay tuned for details.

We're also in talks with Berkshire Bounty to bring back the farmers market this season. If you're interested in volunteering—especially for setup and breakdown—please reach out to montereycommunitycenter@gmail.com.

Community Input and Staying Connected

We want to hear from you. What programs and events would you love to see at the community center? Take our MCC Community Interest Survey and help shape future offerings. Scan the QR code below.



New Monterey News Website

The *Monterey News* now has a website themontereynews.org!

A few features we are proud of include:

A real page turner! A full-color copy of the latest issue that you can easily flip through, instead of opening a pdf.

Town links (AKA Monterey: A User's Guide). Find contact information and links to services, advocacy and support organizations and other local points of interest. All important local numbers and urls are now just a click away.

Advertisers: You can also easily link to our advertisers who enrich our paper's local interest with their ads as well as their financial support. Also, everything you need to know if you are thinking about placing an ad.

All about us : A little context on the history of the Monterey News, how it is managed, and how much we rely on our town to provide its always-interesting content.

Searchable digital archive: This is a real treasure for local historians and those of us who are just curious. The archive, created by the Internet Archive with lots of help from the Monterey Library, includes every issue of the Monterey from 1970 to 2005. Since 2012 the Monterey Church has kept an archive on their website .

Acknowledgements: The Monterey News gratefully acknowledges the Massachusetts Cultural Council and our local council for financial assistance in making this website a reality through the work of Connor Simeone. We also had help on earlier iterations of the site from Justin Edelman, and we appreciate his efforts to make the website a reality. Janet Jensen and Shannon Amidon-Castile are responsible for the copy and editing.

Local Immigrant Resources:
basicberkshires.org

Get Red Cards (know your constitutional rights) from Immigrant Legal Resource Center
<https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards-tarjetas-rojas>

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News Stories from The Past

April 18/19, 1775 : The Midnight Rides of Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Samuel Prescott occurred as the three men rode out of Charleston at 10 p.m. to warn Sam Adams, John Hancock, & other patriots at Lexington & Concord of the approaching British Army.

April 3, 1860: The Pony Express – a private for-profit mail service unconnected to the U.S. Post Office – began as the first rider departed St. Joseph, Missouri bound for San Francisco and Sacramento, CA. For \$5 an ounce, letters were delivered 2,000 miles to California within ten days and about the same schedule on the east-bound leg. The Pony Express riders each rode from 75 to 100 miles before handing off the saddlebags with the letters to the next rider. Horses were changed at way stations every 5 to 20 miles, depending on the terrain. Riders varied in age but all were small and slender; most were teenage boys. Horses were generally ridden at a canter (10 to 15 mph) on firm flat ground but could be ridden at a full gallop, as when chased by angry Paiute Indians. A total of 190 way-stations were located about 15 miles apart with some intervals considerably longer. The service lasted less than two years and lost money, ending upon the completion of the transcontinental telegraph. Some riders became famous for their daring in all kinds of weather and terrain and for their bravery under fire – the rider with the most lasting fame (for this and other exploits): Buffalo Bill.

April 6, 1896: After a pause of 1500

years, the first Olympics of the modern era (including a Marathon race) was held in Greece. Publius ran in the 100th anniversary run of the Marathon in 1996, starting in the tiny seaport of Marathon, continuing across the Plains of Marathon, and then on to the finish in Downtown Athens – 26.2 miles.

April 3, 1948: First proposed by Secretary of State George C. Marshall in June 1947, President Harry S. Truman signed the European Recovery Program, better known as the Marshall Plan, to stop the spread of Communism in Western Europe and restore the economies of European countries devastated by World War II. The program was passed by a Republican-controlled U.S. Congress. Over four years, the U.S. program distributed \$12 billion (the equivalent of \$158 billion in today's dollars) to 18 nations in Western Europe, focused on industrial recovery and modernization. Marshall Plan assistance was offered to the Soviet Union, our ally during the war. Stalin refused. Right-wing economists have asserted in hindsight that Marshall Plan assistance was ineffective in restoring European economies and thus a waste of U.S. taxpayers' money. Left-wing economists have asserted that Marshall Plan assistance was merely a cover for U.S. economic domination of Western Europe, just as the Soviet Union dominated the economies of Eastern Europe. Some recipients of the aid have since insisted they accomplished their post-WWII economic recoveries on their own. None turned it down.

April 4, 1949: Twelve European na-

tions plus the United States and Canada signed a treaty creating NATO for the purpose of military defense against the threat of expansion by the Soviet Union into Western Europe – an attack against any one member state being deemed an attack against all. NATO now has 32 member states; 30 are European.

–Publius

NOTE: Publius is a year-round resident of Monterey and has been for the past twenty years. If you would like to suggest history events, or discuss history with Publius, please write to publiusinmonterey@outlook.com.

Town Contact Information

Emergency! 911

Town Administrator:

528-1443 x111

admin@montereyma.gov

(for town boards and misc. questions)

Assessor: 528-1443 x115

assessors@montereyma.gov

Building Department: 528-1443 x118

buildingsafety@montereyma.gov

Community Center: 528-3600

calendar@ccmonterey.org

Fire Department (non-emergency):

528-3136, chief@montereyma.org

Highway Department: 528-1734

dpw1@montereyma.gov

Library: 528-3795 montereylibrary@gmail.com

Police Department (non-emergency):

528-3211, Alt./Emergency 528-3211

mpdchief@montereyma.gov

Post Office: 528-4670

SBRSD (Schools): (413) 229-8778

Tax Collector: 528-1443 x117 montereytax@yahoo.com

(for questions about your tax bill)

Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113

clerk@montereyma.gov

Town website: Montereyma.gov, under each department, for office hours.



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