

# MONTEREY NEWS

February 2016

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## The Town

By Jill Pajka

Notes on select board meetings from January 4 to January 25.

### No Students, No School

Difficult decisions were made in January when the select board met with Monterey School superintendent David Hastings, school committee representative Maria Rundle, and director of student services Sandra Hubbard. At the start of the meeting, Hastings presented the board with a letter concerning the Monterey School and the upcoming 2016–2017 school year.

A second document contained a census-based enrollment data report provided by the Early Childhood Committee.

His letter was to inform the board that there will be no program at the Monterey school during the next school year. Standing by his unfortunate findings, Hastings allowed the news to sink in. His letter was sincere but difficult, stating, “There is no question that the Monterey School has been the home for outstanding educational experiences for young children for decades. Based on the research and the data, however, I believe that one or two families, at most, would register their children for an Early Kindergarten/Kindergarten program

at the Monterey School during the March registration. For pedagogical and enrollment reasons, I do not plan on placing a teacher or aide in the Monterey School in the 2016-17 school year.” In person, Hastings further explained to the board that because the school costs about \$120,000 to run annually, he is simply unable to budget a teacher or aide for the upcoming year.

“The decision you’re leaving us with today is that the school will be closed,” remarked select board member Kenn Basler.

“There are two sides to this issue,” Hastings said seriously, “One side is the kids. The other side is a big, big political issue.”



Matt Warner

*This winter's hockey got off to a late start, but with new goalies and a new scoreboard, everyone can make the most of it. For more about skating, hockey, and the skating party, see page 7.*

The Monterey School, which has provided pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs for Monterey families, is one of three one-room school houses remaining in Massachusetts. Based on enrollment information acquired by the early childhood committee, the projected number of students for next year is six or seven Monterey children. However, three or four of these children are currently attending programs in other districts.

"This is incredibly hard... I'm sad and upset that we have to make this decision," said Rundle. "But we don't even have a pre-k lined up."

According to the regional agreement between the five towns of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD)—Monterey, Egremont, Sheffield, New Marlborough, and Alford—each town is allowed to have its own school. It would take four of the five towns to change this agreement. The group acknowledged that support from

the other four towns has helped to keep the schoolhouse open in the past. Still, the mounting reality of Monterey's aging population and an enrollment decline has amplified the uncertainty of the future use of the school. The board discussed how the future of Monterey starts with and depends upon providing children and young families with education programs in Monterey, but the money necessary to continue these programs can be a difficult, perhaps impossible, investment to make. Egremont, with the second of the three one-room schoolhouses left in the state, can relate to the situation we face in Monterey.

Hastings advocated his support for Monterey children attending New Marlborough Central School, the nearest school to Monterey in the SBRSD. The district has guaranteed priority enrollment to Monterey and New Marlborough children seeking an education in New Marlborough. The school absorbed Monterey students this past year and the town has been told that there is currently space for in-district students requesting placement. While some parents have already opted to enroll their children there, the board notes that the situation has created overcrowding in New Marlborough; a problem they believe should be considered and solved at a district level rather than be viewed on a town-by-town basis. Hastings stated that there


is room for in-district or out-of-district children at Undermountain Elementary School in Sheffield, even though some parents have voiced concerns about bus-sing their young children that distance.

The select board still has \$10,000 in matching funds provided by the district's 2016 budget to be used for repairs and improvements at the Monterey School. This money is still granted even if there is not a program this year.


See page 14 for an important notice about a meeting the select board will hold at the town hall on February 24, at 7 p.m. to discuss our school's future.

## A Broad (band) Education in Technology

On January 4, the select board met with town resident Adam Chait to learn more about broadband technology and other options in network and internet services for the town of Monterey. Chait explained that he was at the meeting as a town resident to continue previous conversations about broadband technology and answer questions at the board's request. Agreeing to educate the board, Chait hoped to help them understand current technologies so they can make more knowledgeable decisions in the town's best interest. He also stated firmly that the board should not view him as representing his business, Fiber Connect, at this particular time.



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During their conversation, Chait discussed the various service options available to our town, describing the difference between traditional copper cable lines and fiber technology. He explained that compared to copper-based technologies like cable or DSL, fiber technology is able to transmit data more quickly over greater distances. Additionally, its size—which is smaller in both weight and diameter than copper—makes it ideal for a wide variety of cabling solutions. Furthermore, fiber is immune to most environmental interference and can even come into direct contact with high-voltage electrical equipment, power lines, and lightning. This unique benefit is a result of fiber's glass core, which cannot conduct electricity.

Chait also simplified questions about network speed and capacity (also known as bandwidth). He clarified that while speed and bandwidth are interdependent, they are not the same thing. For example, when a user reads that a service provider has a "speed" or "capacity" or "bandwidth" of "250 Kbps," or "2 Mbps," these numbers are actually only referring to the bandwidth of the connection (bandwidth is always shown as bytes per second (bps). The greater the bandwidth, the greater the amount of information that can be transmitted simultaneously. The other factor involved with the perceived connection speed is latency. Latency, expressed in mil-

liseconds, is simply the time it takes for the data or request to be sent and returned to the user (the lower the number, the better). He explained that it is the combination of latency and the bandwidth of the connection that gives users the perception that a connection is working quickly or slowly.

"What's the difference between Verizon Fiber Service and FiOS?" asked Basler, inquiring in response to talk about residents considering using Verizon for their internet services.

"Both price point and technology," explained Chait. "But no one in this town has FiOS." Verizon FiOS is a bundled internet access, telephone, and television service that operates over a fiber-optic communications network. Verizon's services are currently not extended to Monterey.

"So you could do this for us?" asked select board chair Jenssen.

"This whole town could be serviced with 240g [gigabytes of fiber technology]," remarked Chait.

"Your company has the means to service Monterey?" asked Jenssen again.

"I've proposed my company before, as other companies have too. I'm willing to make another proposal," replied Chait. "But if I did this, I would expect to start the process right away. I wouldn't agree to then sit on it for seven years."

The select board thanked Chait for his time and for providing them with a

strong foundation in fiber technology and services. In the coming months, Chait will come back to the board, representing himself this time as the CEO of Fiber Connect, to present a proposal with costs for 100% build-out of the town of Monterey.

## WiredWest vs. MBI

Early in the month, WiredWest representative Larry Klein met with the select board to seek support in dealing with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) and WiredWest situation. Klein requested that the board compose a letter to Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) objecting to the recent actions and plans of MBI. MBI is one of MTC's divisions. They decided that Klein will draft the letter and the board will approve and send it to MTC when it is ready.

## Compensation Turned Donation—A Problem for the Town

Earlier this month, the select board discussed town counsel's review of the Monterey Fire Company's current compensation methods for their training and education. It has come to the board's attention that firemen in training are turning >

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the education pay into a donation to the fire company to help pay for their building's renovation mortgage. Town counsel has recommended that the fire company keep the stipend of \$30,000 for the firemen, versus setting the stipend aside for a different use, because such an arrangement could open the select board up to potential litigation.

"We need to have a pretty solid plan," said select board member Kenn Basler, "or we're going to have a station that's torn apart."

"Well, they thought they had a solid base," replied Scott Jenssen, "because the guys agreed to give up their training pay." The core issue is the cycling of money that is paid to the firemen for training and education that is then being given to the fire company as a donation toward the station's renovations.

"Still, it's illegal to compel employees to donate money from their own training," pointed out select board member Steve Weisz.

"Right," nodded Jenssen. "They could've had twenty members agree to it, but two could've disagreed but felt like they had to."

The board discussed town counsel's opinion that if the firemen want to support the renovation of the fire company building with their own training pay, they should make a donation with a personal check instead of using their stipend check.

Later in the month, the board met with Fire Chief Shawn Tryon and Deputy Chief Chris Tryon regarding the fire company's education and training compensation, as well as renovation of

the firehouse. The fire company has a fifteen-year reconstruction mortgage of \$350,000. The \$30,000 annual compensation pay that the firemen receive was considered a planned contribution to that mortgage. However, they have learned that employees may not legally be able to donate back to the same organization that employs them. Furthermore, the town funds allocated for compensation and renovation cannot be switched, which has complicated the money situation. A mid-year switching of funds is simply not possible, or legal, but it is possible to delete the compensation account and create separate renovation funds—if the annual town meeting votes in that favor.

This all poses a serious problem for the fire company.

"We could lower the training and education pay to \$15,000," suggested Jenssen. The group discussed how the extra money that remains after lowering the firemen's compensation could provide \$15,000 for renovations, if added as an extra article at the special town meeting. The board also discussed a second option to have the \$30,000 become allocated for building utilities and rental. In this case, the firemen's training and education compensation would either not exist or be paid directly to the firemen by the fire company for the training through a sum amount or an individual check. Still, the deputy chief and fire chief explained that the firemen's donations hardly even cover the running of the firehouse.

The board initially agreed to place an article for \$5,000 to 10,000 on the special

town meeting warrant in February, planning to follow this request with a larger amount for the annual town meeting. Town counsel had already approved adding an article on the warrant requesting funds for the renovation mortgage. The deputy chief and fire chief agreed to investigate their own expenses and funds to provide numbers for a proposed budget, in the hopes of planning ahead and smoothing out future issues for the fire company.

The board has since developed a different approach (to be discussed in the near future), which removed the need for an article for the special town meeting.

## Monterey Cultural Council 2016 Grant Awards


The Monterey Cultural Council just completed its grant award cycle, using funds appropriated by the Massachusetts Council on the Arts. The state awarded Monterey approximately \$4,000. We award grants through a state-designed application process using our priority-setting criteria of arts and science experiences that serve the interests and talents of Monterey residents.

This year we were able to award twenty-six grants for proposed musical events, storytelling and other library programs, song writing, school programs, and out-of-school science and nature events. We were also able to support the Bidwell House Museum's interns once again. We hope you'll find the perfect event(s) for you and your family to enjoy. We've requested dates for the events and will post a calendar as soon as the information is available.

—Pat Salomon  
Monterey Cultural Council

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## Special Town Meeting Thursday, February 18, 7 p.m.

There will be a special town meeting to consider seven articles.

- Articles 1 through 5 are intended to change the offices of tax collector, town clerk, and treasurer from elected to appointed positions.
- Article 6 is to establish a town grant writer position.
- Article 7 is to authorize the select board to petition the legislature to enact a preservation tax district around Lake Garfield.

For more information, read the Select Board Corner on page 22. For information on the preservation tax district, see below.

## Lake Garfield Preservation Tax District Vote

On February 18, at 7 p.m., at the firehouse, the town will hold a special town meeting. There will be a warrant article to create a Lake Garfield preservation district. The purpose is to create a separate tax assessment district for certain property owners to raise money for maintenance needs for Lake Garfield.

If the voters approve the warrant article, the act creating the new lake district will be sent to the state legislature for approval. Once passed and signed by the governor, it will allow the owners of property on or near Lake Garfield to vote to establish this district. Lake Buel has had such a district for over forty years, and some other lakes in the area have similar districts.

The Friends of Lake Garfield have discussed the pros and cons of creating this district, and a workgroup recommended moving forward. Public meetings of the FLG and all interested parties resulted in little opposition. The select board has approved moving forward with the creation of the district. Approval at town meeting is the next required step.

### Why Create a District?

- It will allow the district to raise funds each year from the “stakeholders” (lake-front landowners plus those with deeded rights to lake access) in order to keep the lake healthy. A rapid growth of invasive eurasian milfoil has resulted in a need for more funds. In the past, the Friends of Lake Garfield have raised voluntary funds each year to meet the needs of the lake, but now the projected expenses for the next few years exceed the amount we are able to raise.
- It will limit the need to ask the town for money for the maintenance of Lake Garfield. The funds for the district will come only from the “stakeholders.”
- A district gives a voice to all stakeholders in the management of the lake.

### Implications for town voters

- There will be no costs associated with this warrant or a future Lake Garfield preservation district for the town of Monterey.
- Although the town will not be financially responsible for the district, they will have a member of the select board will serve as a voting member on the prudential committee, and there will also be an at-large community representative on the committee.

- This will not affect the tax base of the lake properties. The lake properties will continue to pay the same taxes to the town of Monterey general fund.

### Next Steps

- We will ask our state representative to introduce the bill in the legislature.
- If the bill is passed and signed by the governor, there will be a meeting of the stakeholders to vote on whether they want to establish the district. It will require a 50% quorum and a two-thirds vote for the district to be established.
- The stakeholders would then elect a prudential committee to decide annually on how much money to raise from the stakeholders.

For more information, and to see a draft of the act and the warrant, visit [lakegarfieldma.com](http://lakegarfieldma.com) or email [Michael.Germain@bhs.org](mailto:Michael.Germain@bhs.org)

I will also leave copies of the act on the table at town hall.

—Michael Germain  
Friends of Lake Garfield

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## Presidential Primary Tuesday, March 1

This year's presidential primary is on March 1. The polls will open at the Monterey firehouse a 7 a.m. and remain open until 8 p.m.

### Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots are available to people who will be absent on the day of the election, have a physical disability that prevents voting at the polling place, or cannot vote due to religious beliefs.

A request can be made as late as noon the day before the election, but it is strongly recommended that you make your request as soon as possible. Absentee ballots can be received and counted up to ten days after the election but must be postmarked on or before election day.

Applications for absentee ballots are available in the front hall of the town hall, from Jennifer Brown, the Monterey town clerk, during her hours, or by requesting one in writing from her. You should provide your name, your address as registered, the address where you wish the absentee ballot to be sent, and in the primary—the party ballot you want. You must sign with the request with your signature.

The ballot will come with instructions and a set of return envelopes. It may also be hand-delivered to the town clerk, not directly to the polling place.

To learn more, or to download an Absentee Ballot Application, go to [sec.state.ma.us](http://sec.state.ma.us) and search for "Absentee ballots."

## Best Town Website Statewide Award

The Town of Monterey has received an award from the Massachusetts Municipal Association for having the best website of any town under 5,000 people.

The awards recognize excellence in customer service, functionality, convenience, and government transparency delivered by a municipal website.

Awards are presented in four population categories: under 5,000; 5,000–15,000; 15,000–50,000; and 50,000-plus. Judges choose one winner in each population category.

Judges evaluated municipal websites based on the following criteria:

- Clear branding as the official municipal site
- Intuitive navigation tools and organization of material
- Robust search function
- Timely information
- Availability of public records
- Functionality, interactivity, and convenience
- Information about departments (e.g., key personnel, contact information, office hours, and department mission or purpose)
- City/town hall address and hours
- Visual appeal and overall experience

(Source: [mma.org/awards](http://mma.org/awards))



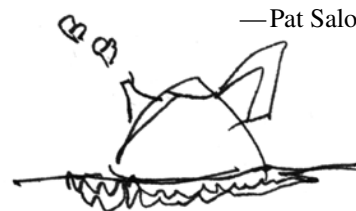
*Select board member Steven Weisz at the Massachusetts Municipal Association gathering where he accepted the town's award for best website for towns under 5,000 people.*

## P.O. Box 9 Come Out and Vote

The Massachusetts presidential primary is on Tuesday, March 1. Our democracy needs you to vote. Your next opportunity to weigh in on your preferred candidate for president is less than four weeks away. Massachusetts uses "semi-closed" primaries, which means that if you are enrolled in a party you may cast a primary vote only for candidates in that party. You can change your party affiliation up to twenty days prior to the primary election. This year, you would need to change your party affiliation by February 10.

In Massachusetts, and in Berkshire County, we have a very high percentage of "unenrolled" or independent voters. Any of these voters can cast a vote for any candidate in any party. So listen to the debates, make your selection, and come out and vote. Independent voters will have a high impact on the outcome of the primaries, but only if they come out to vote.

—Pat Salomon



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## Hockey Rink Improvements for 2016

Monterey now has guest goaltenders for the 2016 season, Gerry Cheevers of the Boston Bruins and Ken Dryden of the Montreal Canadiens. These paintings were done and donated by one of our regular players, Geoff Bell-Devaney. Geoff worked really hard and did a great job!

We also have a new scoreboard thanks to Steve Graves and the Parks Commission. It is protected by a cage that was built and donated by another one of our players, Daniel Breton.

We are looking forward to another great season—all we need is some cooperation from Mother Nature.

—Peter Poirier  
Parks Commission

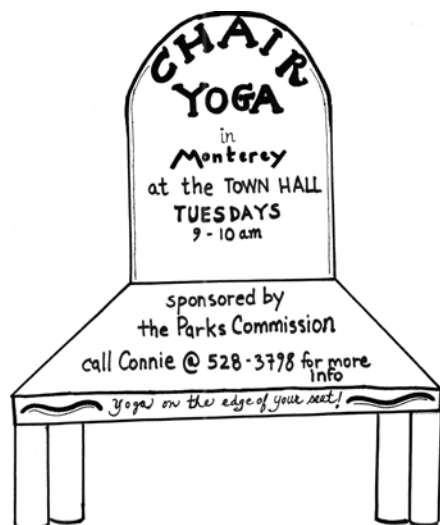


Peter Poirier



After a month of mild weather, the Monterey skating rink opened on January 20. The first adult pick-up hockey game, with scoring against Boston Bruins goalie Gerry Cheevers and Montreal Canadiens goalie Ken Dryden, ended with the Canadiens winning 7–6 in overtime. Monterey's Peter Poirier had a goal and an assist. Informal, adult, soft-puck hockey games are Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 p.m. and Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m., weather permitting. The rink is open for general skating six days a week from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and from 11:30 to 7 p.m. on Sundays.

—Steve Graves



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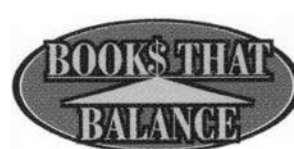
# SKATING PARTY



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## Monterey Library News

It has been a while since we covered some of the basic services the Monterey Library offers. If you haven't been in to the library lately you might not realize all that we have to offer. Many people come to the library to gallery openings and are surprised to find out that we have more than just books. If you like books, we have them for all ages and reading levels. There are board books, picture books, children's fiction and nonfiction, and young adults and adult fiction and nonfiction. We also have even more e-books than physical books, and those can be accessed online if you have a library card. You will have to make that initial visit here, but you can keep your e-reader, tablet, or phone full of materials without ever coming back.

If, however, you'd like to come back, you can browse our extensive collection of audio books, including nonfiction, fiction, and even some for younger listeners. There are plenty to choose from in our growing collection. Of course, you can download them as well, but just as with e-books, you will need to get a library card first.

If you haven't checked out our DVD collection lately, this winter would be a great time to come and browse. In addition to many popular movies, we have documentary sections including National Geographic, a classics section, many shelves of foreign films (including a large section of British ones), and even many of the television series that people can't seem to get enough of. There are many films for the kids to watch as well.



George Cain, Rod Palmer, and Karl Finger share stories in the Knox Gallery.

We have magazine subscriptions from *People* to *The New York Times Book Review* and even *Sports Illustrated for Kids*. You can sit and read them by our fireplace or take them home to yours. Of course, we can only have so much material in our one room of holdings, so if you don't find what you want, it probably is only a couple of clicks away from being delivered to Monterey free of charge. We are more than happy to assist in getting items, but again, if you have your library card, you can order from your own home and you will get an email when it is delivered here to the library.

We also have many museum passes and even a Massachusetts state park pass. The passes offer free or reduced admission charges. Check out the list on our website, [montereymasslibrary.org](http://montereymasslibrary.org). We also have public access computers not just for library business but also for internet use. One of the best secrets in town is our 24/7 Wi-Fi that means you can park your car in the center of town and surf in the village of Monterey.

We would like to thank Wendy Germain for having held several sessions of oral history recordings at the library. Extra

thanks go to the cable television station for supplying equipment and to the Monterey Cultural Council for assisting with the funding. On Saturday night, January 23, Rod Palmer and Karl Finger entertained several people with their stories, including that of the proposed Route 23 village bypass of the 70s that was never built. Rod covered a lot of what happened around Bidwell Road since 1939 when his family bought a place there. These stories will be preserved for future generations here at the library. Our next session is February 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. Come by if you have a story to record. If you'd like to listen to stories of Monterey that you've probably never heard before, come and enjoy listening. This project was long overdue. We're planning on a session every month as long as interest holds. If you can't make the Saturday evening sessions but feel the need to tell a story, let us know and we will schedule a session that works for you.

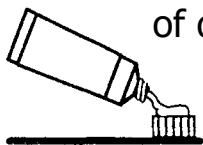
—Mark Makuc  
Library Director

[MontereyMassLibrary.org](http://MontereyMassLibrary.org)

(Correction—Last month's Monterey News incorrectly stated that the story telling recording was a part of StoryCorp, a different project.)

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## Community Potluck Feb. 17 Deborah Alecson: Bereavement

The January potluck brought a marvelous presentation by cookbook author Alana Chernila, who shared her funny, thoughtful, and insightful discussions about food, cooking, life choices, and how it all blends together. Everyone also seemed to bring very special dishes, so the food was great, too. Alana grew up in Monterey, so it was a kind of homecoming. We all hope she'll come back when her next cookbook is ready this fall.

For the February potluck, we have another local author, Deborah Golden Alecson, who is a death, dying, and bereavement educator who resides in Lenox. She will speak on "dying well in a death-phobic culture." She has written three books that deal with her personal loss and has started an end-of-life consultation practice. The next Monterey community potluck dinner will be held in the fellowship hall of the Monterey meetinghouse on February 17, at 6 p.m. Please bring a dish to share, a label for your dish, a serving utensil, and a plate and a place setting for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

— Kyle Pierce

## Council on Aging

The council can report a good start to the Tuesday card games at the town hall from 12:30 to 3:30. So far, twelve people have been playing pitch and bridge. The bridge players are looking for a few steady players for duplicate bridge. Some of us are learning as we play. More games and people would be very welcome. A volunteer is needed two hours a week to host the games. Please call 528-9151 if you can help.

We hope the Wii Sports games will get started in February.

— Kay Purcell

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## Berkshire Commission Status of Women

On February 26, the Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women will host its second annual legislative breakfast from 7:30 to 9:00, in the Bernstein Theater, Shakespeare & Company, located at 70 Kemble Street in Lenox. The event is open to the public.

The forum provides an opportunity for a community conversation on existing and emerging issues affecting all women and girls in the county. This year's discussion will highlight Berkshire stories and related public advocacy opportunities in relation to women subject to domestic violence, opiate addiction, recovery, and stigma; and positive pro-socioemotional strategies and opportunities in our county. We welcome all service providers as well as any Berkshire resident to contribute a story of Berkshire women in the form of a one-hundred word statement that can include a personal story or summary of a public policy that would benefit from legislative advocacy and support. We will have a brief open forum with the commission and attending members of the delegation. All written statements will be collected and shared with the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women at the state house and the Berkshire delegation.

"Following the success of last year's event, we look to once again engage and inspire delegates, women, and supporters of women and girls in the work to create

equitable access to success, services, and safety in the Berkshires," said commission chair Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant.

The Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women, enacted into law in 2004, shares the mission and vision of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women. The Berkshire Commission works on issues such as the feminization of poverty and domestic violence, and on creating social and emotional practices in early K-12 education to end violence and early pregnancy, as well as establishing bridges to college campuses.

To RSVP, and for more information, contact the BCCSW chair at Gwendolyn@multiculturalbridge.org, or call 413-777-8164; or call or text BCCSW Program Committee Chair Luci Leonard, at 413-358-5296. A light continental breakfast will be offered from 7:30 to 7:45 during a networking opportunity. Early arrival's suggested for parking. Program starts promptly at 7:45 a.m.

For more information on the commission, please visit the group's Facebook page, Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women.

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## *Perceptions in Clay* Sculptures of Marjorie Heller Miner

February 5 - March 5

Opening Reception: Friday, Feb. 5, 6-7:30pm

KNOX GALLERY

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Knox Gallery supported by Friends of the Monterey Library

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## February at the Knox Gallery

Longtime Monterey summer resident Marjorie Heller Miner will display some of her sculptural ceramic objects in the Knox Gallery during February.

*Perceptions in Clay* will open on February 5, with a reception that evening from 6-7:30 p.m., and will remain on view through March 5.

After a career as a legal secretary, author, craftsperson, and poet, Marjorie Miner took up sculpting when she was in her late sixties, while living on Long Island. She initially studied with three well-known New York sculptors—George Gach, Angelo Bona, and Alice Riordan. Now just a few months shy of her one hundredth birthday, Miner has been creating prolifically for over thirty years. Since moving to the Whitney Center retirement home in the late 1990s, she works in clay several hours each day, displays her work around the Center, and gives occasional

classes to other residents. She was the subject of an article by *New Haven Magazine* in 2013, which described her as “Grandma Moses of Clay.” In 2015, she won second prize for one of her sculptures in an all-Connecticut Senior Juried Art Show at Pomperaug Woods, CT.

Miner works primarily from photos of people and animals, rendering her subjects in a rough and primitive style, using a variety of tools. She whimsically and colorfully paints her Massachusetts-sourced red clay pieces with acrylic after they are bisque-fired. Miner finds energy and joy in her creative endeavors, and expresses great appreciation that she is able to keep working at her age.

All our exhibits can be viewed during library hours. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, [MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/](http://MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/) 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 528-3795. [Facebook.com/Knox Gallery](https://www.facebook.com/KnoxGallery). @Knox\_Gallery on Twitter.

—MaryPaul Yates

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## Monterey Community Center News

We are now working on interior carpentry in comfort, as the heating system has been completely installed and is working beautifully. Our special thanks to Carlson Propane who did a meticulous job with the installation, and very were generous with their labor. The Wilson-McLaughlin House retains heat in a way it never did before because of the highly efficient foam insulation in the walls and ceilings and the tight new windows and doors.

We celebrate the enormous progress we were able to make in 2015 thanks to the donations of money, tag sale items, and volunteer labor from many, many Monterey neighbors. We feel that we can see the “home stretch” for the renovations, though funding is still necessary for final materials and paid contractors. You can find more details at [ccmonterey.org](http://ccmonterey.org)

Thank you for your ongoing support!

—Joe Baker

Friends of Wilson-McLaughlin House



Stephen Moore

*Mike Banner and Roy Carwile finishing installing the drywall in the first floor of the coming-along community center.*



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[scott@bottomlinebuilders.net](mailto:scott@bottomlinebuilders.net)  
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Stephen Moore

*Phragmites in winter bordering the wetland down behind the Monterey Community Center. Open winters like this are excellent opportunities to explore areas that are generally wet during the warmer months.*

## Everything Has Changed

From bottom to top. Nothing is the same. But that isn't a bad thing, in some ways. I do know that I still remember Monterey, always will forever and ever. Now I live here in Ringwood, Hampshire, in the United Kingdom, three thousand miles away.

Yet the memory is still vivid in my mind. So much is different and so much has changed since the hot, silent August day last year when we loaded our truck and drove to Boston. And even though it has been months since then, I still remember everything.

All the emotions that swarmed me. Fear, anxiety, excitement, and pure, striking sadness, all hitting me straight in the heart. It was hard to take. I didn't want to leave. You have no idea how many times I broke down. So much was coming at me too quickly. But once I got here, it all relaxed.

It's not as horrible as I imagined it to be. We live in my grandfather's house now. I remember coming here since I was very young, and running around the house, playing with my brother in the garden. I called it my fairy tale garden. I love walking around Ringwood and visiting the park, or the Bickerly, as it's called.

School is a whole different story. I totally love school. Although it is so different from my old school, I love it. There's a whole new freedom to it, a concept that I never had the opportunity to experience back in the US. Here at school, once you finish your two-lesson block, you're free. No adults watching you or monitoring you. You can go anywhere on the school campus (and the school is huge), and the only thing to guide you is the bell that goes off after lunch and break. Most people don't like the way that it is completely up to you to get to lessons on time. But I like it.

Not only is education different, but the people and the landscape and the weather are all different. Starting with the people—the way they speak is like you are living on another planet compared to the US. There are different words to learn and different spellings to get the hang of. The accent is so thick, as thick as clotted cream. I remember hearing all sorts of stereotypes about Brits back in America,

and now that I'm here, I can prove most of them wrong. The famous cup of tea. Well, most people that I know don't like tea at all. In my opinion, it should be a cup of coffee instead! We do like our coffee and toast in the morning.

Another thing that I have noticed is that there are many different forms of transportation in this little-big town (15,000 people) besides cars and buses. As I walk to school in the morning (as many people do), I see children as young as four speeding around at top speed down the sidewalks or roads on bikes, and sometimes even on scooters! The other day, I saw two children, a brother and sister, only five years old at the oldest, zooming down one of the busiest roads, unaccompanied, on bikes. I was blown away. It's amazing to see how skilled these kids are, barely toddlers. You certainly wouldn't see that in Monterey.

Every time I walk down the street in shorts and a t-shirt and see someone wrapped up in a parka and wooly hat, I smile to myself and remember how the temperature is so different. Three thousand miles is a large difference. Not only in distance, but in emotion. Three thousand miles cuts off relationships, and letters just sometimes aren't enough. I miss all of you in Monterey, every single one of you. I cannot wait to come and visit and catch up. But until then, I hope you all have a great rest of 2016.

—Charlotte Micklewright  
Age 11, Ringwood, Hampshire, UK

## January 2016 Contributions

With so much to be thankful for everyday, it is easy to take some things for granted. Our dedicated readers show that they do not take the *Monterey News* for granted, and we're all grateful for this.

James Zell & Jody Ratner  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Skolnik  
Bonner McAllester & Joe Baker  
Ken & Laurel Kahn  
Roselyn Halberstadter  
Eileen Clawson  
Larry & Jane Burke  
Judith Kaminstein  
Michael & Laura Arnow  
Cathy & Gerry Cocco



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C.G. Jung

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## Wellness Wishing

Missing it.

Most do with every breath

Forget the ones before.

Reverse osmosis...

Carelessness taking only a whisper

And no work,

Wishes and mountains needing giant steps in comfortable shoes.

Today I am tired and old.

I choose a creamy stick of fire because blood is life and red is passion.

Staying mostly in the lines

Not wasting the energy to grab a tissue and blot.

Swallowing a pain pill

Slumping in the driver's seat

I try to remember which stop is most important but I've gone blank.

There was a list... somewhere...

Staring at the teller questioning my cynicism

While wondering if her mother ever told her

"Put a little lipstick on. It'll make you feel better."

Humanity sometimes reaches out to save itself.

Surely spirits or angels put the boy in front of me in the grocery store line,

Big brown eyes matching the chocolate creased lips saying, "Have some?"

In the next minute I am thanking God

For the black-eyed susans along the highway

And the evening southern sky all purple.

(Wanting to believe in something)

Even candy bars and lipstick weapons

Having lost their venom

Though antiques and charming

To understanding.

—Shannon Amidon

January, 1996



## Fight for our School

Weds., Feb. 24, 7 p.m., Town Hall

The town of Monterey once again finds itself fighting for our one-room school. The superintendent has declared that they will not be placing a program or any faculty in the building for the upcoming school year, essentially closing the school for the second year. They cite decreased student population in Monterey as the main reason. However, the actual number of kindergarten and pre-kindergarteners in the New Marlborough classroom is above twenty-two students. These twenty-two students could be spread out and alleviate the congestion that is evident. The district does not seem to realize that students in Monterey are not the only students who can come to the Monterey School. Back in the '60s and '70s the school was brimming with students from Harts-ville, New Marlborough, and Monterey. The district seems to be taking an end-run on the original, and still in effect, regional agreement on the proper way to close outly-ing schools, while still anticipating our full cooperation with their budget, etc.

Monterey has about one hundred school-aged students, with about fifty or so currently enrolled in the district. Our town pays about \$1.4 million per year to the district, making up about a third of our total budget. It is time to really look at other possibilities. We are fortunate that on our borders are three different districts. There should be a discussion regarding our town's response to the district's poor performance on placement of students, on the end-run of closure without proper protocol's, etc. All ideas pertinent to the town's future dealings with the SBRSD should be open for discussion. I feel we should be reaching out to other districts and attempting to find alternative ideas. I would like to hear from as many citizens as possible regarding these and other district issues. If you are interested in this topic and feel that you would like to be heard, please check the town website for the date of this important meeting. Please come on Wednesday, February 24, at 7 p.m., in the town hall meeting room and share your thoughts. Thank you.

— Scott Jennsen  
scottjennsen9@gmail.com  
528-1260

## P.O. Box 9

### Greetings Fellow Monteruvians

I wanted to go on record that I will not be seeking re-election to the select board this coming May.

I am thankful to you for your support over the last nine years. I need to spend my time on my business and family.

The business of selectman has changed greatly over the past years. It is a position that requires a lot of time. Evening meet-ings, school committee meetings, shared services meetings, BRPC meetings, etc. are all a big part of the position. I will admit that I do not have the time to put forth, and thus I need to allow the position to be filled by someone who has this time available.

The position is a double-edged sword: some will love the things you do, and some will loathe them. It is not a position for the weak or timid. I would suggest, if you are interested in running for selectman, that you start coming to our meetings and get a feel for the job. It is now budget time. I really enjoy this area the most. The num-bers and needs of different departments are always a difficult juggling act when it comes to funding.

I feel that over the past ten years the town has been very well served in regards to our town's finances. The finance com-mittee has done a great job. Our police department has always done with less than they need; our highway crew is wonderful and deserving of praise and due compensa-tion. We have a new finance team in place, and they are really good at their jobs. Our clerk's office is running well, and the entire feeling of town hall has relaxed. Melissa's office is, as always, a solid platform for go-to information. We have been able to catch up on a lot of backlogged informa-tion, and we are now seeing past the clutter.

Our town faces a lot of the same situations as most towns throughout Mas-sachusetts, and we have been able to stay a bit ahead of the changes. I attribute this mainly to the quality of our elected and appointed people here in town hall.

The next few years will test our abili-ties. We are looking very hard at the school district, transfer station, shared services, town manager position, roads and bridges, and, of course, the elephant in the room, broadband services.

## ACLU

### Summer Advocacy Institute

At the ACLU, we know that the fight for freedom requires people who are in it for the long haul. That's why we've created the ACLU Summer Advocacy Institute—to invest now in the next gen-eration of social justice advocates. We're looking for rising high school se-niors to join us at Georgetown University this summer, June 19–25.

The ACLU Summer Advocacy Insti-tute will bring together a diverse group of students from across the country for an intensive seven-day program that includes:

- Learning through hands-on activities what it means to build advocacy strate-gies that create real, substantive change;
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- Direct engagement with elected officials, lawyers, lobbyists, community activists, journalists, and other experts working to defend civil rights and liberties;
- Opportunities to hear from luminaries such as ACLU executive director An-thony Romero, whistleblower and patriot Edward Snowden, immigrant rights champion Cristina Jiménez, and others;
- Grounding in this country's proud legacy of student activism through workshops with civil rights leaders and the March on Washington Film Festival.

To learn more, or to apply, go to [aclu.org](http://aclu.org) and search "Summer Advocacy Institute."

— Pat Salomon

There is no doubt that in the near future a Proposition 2.5% override will be necessary in order to meet these financial challenges. I feel that both Kenn and Steve have done a good job in their first years and that the years will continue to be prosperous for the town. I am hopeful that someone with ample time, who is a good listener and has a small ego, will consider running for this important position.

As always, I am available for com-ments. Thank you.

— Scott J. Jenssen



## From the Meetinghouse Fire and Ice

Last December's *Astronomy* magazine, featured an article also called "Fire and Ice." That one focused on the Milky Way galaxy, but I'm staying a lot closer to home. Like the photo (right), I'm sticking with February in the Berkshires.

The snow, the horizontal wood ready for the stove, the living wood reaching for the sky are all relatively small concerns compared with the size of the whole galaxy. They're pretty important in the local here and now, though. Wood and winter are also an important part of my personal history.

A few decades ago, in a small house in New Marlborough heated only by my woodstove, I felt like a pioneer, deeply connected with my physical world. I moved from there to a historic saltbox nearby, a two-story structure with small rooms, narrow hallways, a stone-walled basement with an earthen floor, no insulation, and one large woodstove. My pioneer daydreams were over.

The wood arrived cut-to-size for my stove. It was also dumped in a number of large piles along one side of the house. Wood, I discovered then, not only heats you once or twice. That winter my thirteen cords of wood heated me four times.

First I filled the covered porch along the long side of the house with stacked wood. Heating task #1, check. Over the next few days I turned the rest of those heaps into a number of stable woodpiles



Mary Kate Jordan

*This woodpile from last February was restacked in the garage for use this winter—it's already heated me once, albeit in the summer!*

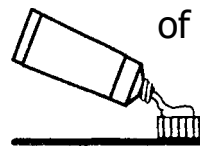
covered with tarps. Warmed up again, check. Then came the easy parts: I restacked wood from the covered porch near the stove, then finally tossed it in. Double-check, and repeat items 1, 3, and 4 until late spring. I was in the best shape of my life by the end of that April.

Now I relate to wood, heat, and winter in a whole different way. Here in our house in Monterey, a wood fire's most often a beautiful luxury while snow falls and the furnace cranks. Primary heat source or backup system—fire in the stove in February is a precious gift.

—Mary Kate Jordan

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## Oops!

In writing about the firehouse renovations and the support received from the Salomon Family Foundation, I omitted listing the newest family member who is now a resident of Monterey—Gabriel Salomon, a young composer and musician. Gabriel and his colleagues have been offering music workshops at various Berkshires high schools, Railroad Street Youth Project, and several other venues. You may also run into him busking in Great Barrington. He's too important and special to miss.

—Pat Salomon



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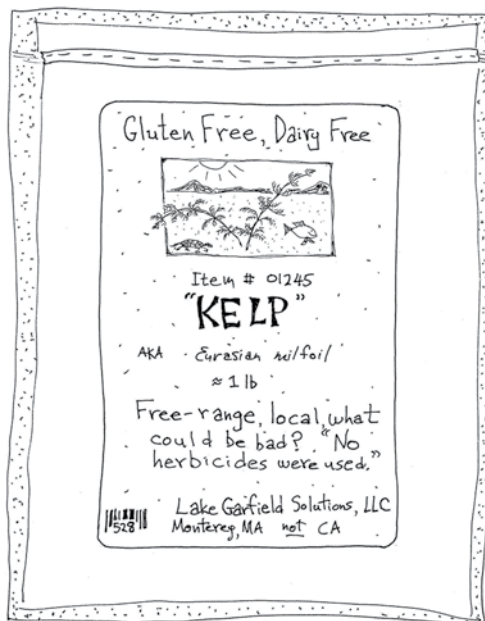
## Kelp

Berkshire County, though full of life and variety, does seem at first glance to be a landlocked bioregion, at least in the marine sense. We have rivers, lakes, springs, and streams. We get big, wet storms rolling in from far-off oceans, but those seas are a long way from my house. Though we may on a deep level grok our one-ness with everything, it could be a stretch to be in touch with the Marine Algae Within, at least on a daily basis.

One way to address this connectedness deficit would be to check the ingredients list of, let's say, ice cream. Unless I make it myself, of my own goat's cream and a few strawberries, maybe some maple syrup from right here, I am looking at a long list of words. Some are foreign-looking, as in spoken organic chemistry, which is not a first language for most of us. Other words might be Latin, also in limited daily use. One we see a lot is "carrageenan," and this word has been around long enough for it to seem familiar, though I never looked it up until this minute. I did know it meant "seaweed," and as an old intertidal biologist, I have eaten enough seaweed right off the rocks for it not to make me squeamish on the ingredients list.

Rocky shore foraging is not for everyone, especially in places where the river runoff after a rainy spell has so many toxic ingredients the shellfish go on a "do not eat" list. Still, carrageenan is a safe thread to follow in the dictionary any day, and lo and behold we English

speakers got the word from the Irish *carragin*, which means "little rock." One big source of carrageenan is known as Irish moss, or *Chondrus crispus*, and I have gobbled it down in Oregon, North Wales, and Maine. Irish moss is what's called a red alga, and it only lives in the sea. You can also find green algae in the sea, and brown algae. Now we are getting to the



kelp. This we will not encounter in the Berkshires, unless we get it at the health food store or spot it on an ingredients list. It grows in the ocean, and it is large.

I look for it in silvery envelopes or baggies so I can put it on the ingredients list for a vitamin mix I make for the house pets. I read about it in a book and the pets like it okay. Last week I asked for it in a

shop, and there was one package left. "Kelp Powder Organic," it said, and then it gave the scientific (Latin) name: *Ascophyllum nodosum*. This is too much information for some shoppers, but especially for me, since I know it is not the name of kelp!

Ah, who cares. At least it's the name of some other seaweed (alga) and probably is fine for the pets. We call this other one "knotted wrack," and maybe "kelp" is a more palatable name, more familiar. "Knotted wrack" might sound like just looking for digestive trouble, so let's call it whatever. It is still seaweed.

I am looking at that silvery envelope, that one-pound package of false labeling. Maybe it has both kelp and knotted wrack inside! Let's hope so. Meanwhile, I dug out my old books and looked at kelp. Those are the very big ones, the natural seaweed forests, home to sea otters and all sorts of fish and crabs and creatures that are so marvelous in form and lifestyle that you get folks taking boat rides out to have a look. You get the marine leisure industry off California in places like the Channel Islands near Santa Barbara, where there is national park, complete with elephant seals, California sea lions, and harbor seals. Folks make a living taking visitors on nature hikes by boat. The cold California current comes down from Alaska just the right temperature for the giant kelp beds. The plants are anchored by the "holdfast," which is not the roots. It has no roots. Then there is a long stem or "stipe" reaching up and up, with the flattened "blade" at the top.

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These plants can grow one and a half feet a day, thanks to photosynthesis and a list of other life requirements. They can be two thousand feet long, maybe fifty feet tall and the rest floating along the surface soaking up the sun.

Closer to here, from Maine to Connecticut, we have the New England kelp farmers. They put out thick ropes seeded with teeny kelp plants, and then go out later in boats to haul them in to harvest the broad blades, dry them, chop them up or even powder them, and put them into slivery envelopes and baggies to sell to me for my house pets. Or they can do the same kind of thing with knotted wrack and just tell me it is kelp. I will buy it anyway, and the pets don't care.

I get the *New Yorker* magazine in the library here in landlocked Monterey, and there it was in early November, 2015: seaweed is "the next superfood." This article tells about kelp farming, including many ways kelp can be roasted and toasted to appeal to the shopping public so accustomed to burgers and fries, or bacon and cheese. "Fakin Bacon" and "Tofurkey" have done well for years. But look out, soybeans, make way for algae. The labels are sure to be good, if not so accurate.

Here in Monterey I am what I eat, and if this does not make me one with everything on land and sea, I don't know what will. I don't care what the label says.

—Bonner McAllester

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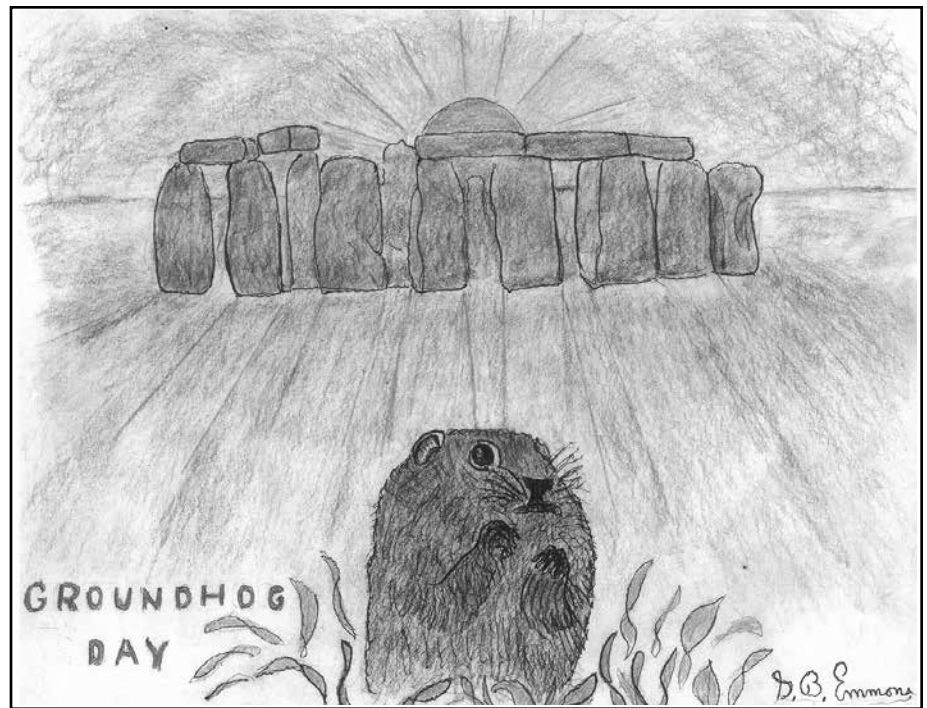


## Groundhog Day Ten Hours of Daylight

According to eighteenth-century German Pennsylvania folklore, if it is cloudy on February 2, halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, when a groundhog emerges from its burrow, then spring will come early. If it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly see its shadow and retreat into its burrow, and winter will last for six more weeks. This myth has its origins in ancient European traditions known as “Candlemas,” in which the prognosticator was a badger or sacred bear.

The modern-day performer is given the anthropomorphic name of Punxsutawney Pete (or Phil, to his friends) in honor of the re-enactment site, which is widely publicized and photographed. According to the *Stormfax Weather Almanac*, Pete’s predictions have been correct only 37% of the time, and he has been known to bite his handler when awakened from his long winter nap and reluctantly dragged out in front of camera flash bulbs. No wonder a groundhog might be afraid of his own shadow.

Astronomical measurement of the sun’s seasonal path among the stars, apparently in a great circle about the Earth, dates back in time more than five thousand years to Stonehenge, in Wiltshire, England. Today, Stonehenge (stone circle) stands as



a prehistoric monument to a megalithic calendar. The center “heel” stone, viewed through the front of the face points at the midsummer sunrise, registers exactly opposite to the setting of the midwinter sun, and thus to Groundhog Day.

Another ancient station of the zodiac was called Imbolc, mentioned in some of the earliest Irish literature, marking and celebrating the halfway point between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox, when daylight appears to make progress

against the night. Longer daylight hours have proven psychologically beneficial, as when a brighter sun rose over Chestnut Hill in Monterey, overlooking our home at 585 Main Road. It was an energizing inspiration as I drove up the hatchery driveway every morning.

We are now living in Mattapoissett, an Indian name meaning “place of rest.” The sun rises up out of the ocean to shine into our bedroom window as our wake-up call. Not far away but long ago, to the east camped Wampanoags, who called themselves “people of the rising sun.” Even closer, to the west, lived Narragansetts, who called themselves “people of the dawn.” With each new day, I feel closer to my roots, but I miss the mountains and my friends.

From Mattapoissett to friends in Monterey, when you go into town for coffee and a paper in the general store or church basement, let me quote Robert Burns, as I often did, “May the sun shine in your face, the wind be at your back, and the road ahead rise up to greet you.

—George B. Emmons

*George has assumed the duties of our eastern-shores correspondent, and may guide landlocked Monterey to a greater understanding of seacoast life.*



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## Wildlife Report

### Mid-December to Mid-January: Cats, Dogs, Birds, and Bears

Late in December Maureen Banner wrote to say she and Michael had seen “the neighborhood mink” leaving their pond on Griswold Road. With binoculars, they were able to make out the white chest blaze against the very dark fur of the mink.

Also in December, George Emmons called to say his friend Ed Briggs had been out during hunting season and had seen something big and dark under a brush pile. When he went closer, he saw that it was a bear, sleeping, or at least motionless, that had seemed to have pulled the brush over itself. I also heard that a bear had been seen up and about in Mill River late in December. Around here some people wonder if it’s safe to put up the birdfeeders, if the bears are sleeping by now. Hard to say!

Jeanne Randorf, our neighbor on Route 23 just over the line in West Otis, sent in some bobcat news. She and Bob McMahon had two of these wildcats in their pasture in mid-January, and another neighbor, T.J. Crowe of East Otis, got some great photographs there.

Stephanie Grotz wrote in the middle of January with four photographs of a bobcat visiting her and Stefan. The photos show the bobcat walking right across a brick patio and then out over the yard.

Up the hill from here, along Hupi Road, I have again seen young Blackling, the orchard porcupine. She looks okay. Joe Baker reports mink tracks up there,



T.J. Crowe

too. Now that we have some snow, we can just imagine all the comings and goings, thanks to the “snow album.” (It was Ernest Thompson Seton who wrote about the “mud album,” for tracks.) Around here we have every size dog prints: small (fox), medium (coyotes), and large (our own dog, Russell). We see bobcat tracks in the driveway, the paths, the woods, and the garden. Clearly these cats and dogs know each other well.

Big birds are socializing in the tree-tops by New Marlboro Road. Barred owls are talking back and forth there, according to a couple of reporters who both heard and spotted them in a dusky silhouette. Mating time for owls will soon be upon us, and them. The chorus will be remarkable.

Thank you for your sightings and enthusiasm.

—Bonner McAllester  
528-9385, bmca@berkshire.net.

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## Lakeview

Lake Garfield is scarcely a mile from my house. Nestled comfortably into the surrounding hills, it is a magnet for local residents and visitors alike during the warmer months of the year. Its public sand beach serves as a centerpiece for families, there to congregate and socialize. Kids dig and splash along the water's edge, teens cavort on and off two rafts floating not far offshore, while canoes and kayaks are launched from the near-by ramp to disappear away from the shoreline.

Surrounding the lake is a ring of waterfront properties, premium-priced because of their proximity to the shoreline. Many feature spacious, manicured lawns that slope downward to end at the water's edge. At that point, docks jut out into the lake to which are attached a variety of "seaworthy" craft. Chairs and lounges are scattered about on the grass. Here people sit, read, or simply enjoy the surroundings.

There is much to see on and above the lake, especially on those wondrous days when bright sunshine illuminates all. Morning mist produces shimmering images such as those impressionist artists once found so inspiring, while puffy clouds drifting by are mirrored on the lake's normally tranquil surface. Men and women in kayaks are often out early, gliding about noiselessly and often aimlessly. Motorboats, some dragging water skiers, and houseboats follow later, scurrying about before cutting power and drifting along. Folks more energetic choose paddleboats that move only in response to their exertions. The larger vessels leave their mark, their passage

agitating the water, creating waves along with anxiety among those nearby who occupy lighter craft.

Throughout most days, boats can be seen drifting about close to the shore. On board, fishermen cast their lines toward submerged rock formations, water foliage, or nearby shallows. Every so often a rod bends, the line snaps taut, a fish breaks the surface and is hauled in.

These notably idyllic scenes are hardly exceptional, are duplicated at thousands of other recreational lakes. Far more unusual, however, is the transformation we all witness. Every fall Monterey "draws down" the lake, substantially empties it by opening a dam and allowing much water to run out. Draining the lake in this manner exposes the shoreline dock areas and encourages homeowners to repair them if necessary and to remove unwelcome plant life nearby. The water, having receded over significant patches of the lake, causes the scene at the lakeside to change dramatically. The water basin has been transformed into a sterile, alien, uninviting landscape, virtually unrecognizable when compared to its exquisitely scenic appearance over the spring and summer months. The prince has become a frog, Cinderella's coach a pumpkin, the emperor is without clothes.

Mud flats now stretch out in all directions. Scattered puddles abound. Many an exposed dock appears fragile and rotted. Without water to hide in, debris is evident—cans, bottles, rotted wood, tree stumps, etc. The surrounding hills, their trees stripped bare, reinforce the drabness and sense of desolation. No people are present, few birds, no motor engine sounds—simply silence.

Sometimes it's best not to be around in the off-season, not to look behind the scenes. How often have we been warned about the way sausages are produced, legislation devised, or stars appear before their make-up is applied. I had in late fall peered behind the curtains, entered through the back door, viewed the lake at its worst.

Hopefully, by now the remaining water is frozen and snow has blanketed the area, creating an unbroken surface of pristine purity. And before we know it, spring and summer will arrive and the beauty, serenity, and familiar sounds and sights of Lake Garfield will be ours once more to savor.

—Richard Skolnik

Someday my father will die  
and sorrow will rise in my heart  
and I will hope it is a dream  
but I cannot control my sadness.

—Massimo Monjardo [age 8]

April 1996

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## Hockey Rink Schedule:

**Youth hockey:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings from 7 to 9.

**Adult hockey:**

Tuesday and Thursdays evenings from 7 to 9.

Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30.

**Mt. Everett High School** hockey team plays Sunday evenings from 7 to 9. All other times are shared with figure skaters, families, and recreational skaters—so skate responsibly! Please shovel before you leave.

For updates—call Parks Dept. at 528-1443 x248 (voicemail), or Facebook—Monterey MA Outdoor-Skating Rink

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## Hampshire Solar Community Solar Farm

*The Monterey select board met with a representative of Hampshire Solar on January 25, and asked that the Monterey News publish this letter below.*

Residents of western Massachusetts are getting increasingly used to seeing solar panels popping up on people's homes and businesses. However, obstacles to installing your own panels still exist—upfront costs can be prohibitive and renters are left without a surface on which to install. Fortunately, there is now a way for ratepayers who cannot install their own panels to still save money with locally generated solar power.

Hampshire Solar is a program that allows ratepayers in western Massachusetts to subscribe to a community solar farm that is located remotely. There is no need to install any equipment on your individual property. The solar farm puts renewable energy onto the grid and you receive the associated net metering credits as a negative line item on your utility bill. For every \$1 of credits transferred to your electricity bill, you will be charged only \$0.85 by the solar developer, meaning that you receive a guaranteed 15% discount on your electricity.

Nexamp is the Massachusetts-based solar developer that constructs and operates the community solar farms in the Hampshire Solar program. If you pay an electricity bill in National Grid, Ever-source, or Unitil territory, you are eligible to participate in Hampshire Solar and begin saving 15% on your electricity bills while supporting local renewable

## "Can You Hear Me Now?" Second Cell Tower for Monterey

The Monterey select board is pleased to announce that a deal has been made to provide reliable cellular service to the town of Monterey. Board member Steven Weisz explained that this deal will effectively lead to the construction of the second tower needed to ensure adequate coverage for most of the town.

"This process actually began in 2011," Weisz said. "However, the second tower was never built due to a change in ownership at the tower site." The new land owners, Hume New England, were introduced to Vertex Towers by the board, and a lease deal was negotiated. The lease was signed near the end of January.

Vertex Towers will meet with the cellular carriers to offer the location for their use. "Since both Verizon and AT&T are looking to complete their Route 23 corridor service, the board expects that both will locate on the new tower by the end of the summer," said Weisz.

energy. There's no cost to participate. Space is limited and slots are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Interested residents can visit [hampshiresolar.org](http://hampshiresolar.org) to upload a copy of a recent utility bill and receive a customized proposal based on your energy usage.

—Jennifer Engelson (Sayers)

Hampshire Council of Governments



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Massachusetts 01230

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## Select Board Corner

Welcome to the Select Board Corner. Our goal is to submit an article each month to the *Monterey News* to keep everyone up to date on important issues, office closings, highway projects, etc. This article may be especially important for those who cannot access our website. This is a work in progress, and we welcome any comments or suggestions on the articles.

### www.MontereyMA.gov

Our town website is a great way to access information about the town.

## Meetings and Events

**Board of Health:** Monday, February 1, at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

**Conservation Commission:** Tuesday, February 9, at 6 p.m.

**Council on Aging:** Wednesday, February 10 and 24, at 10 a.m.

**Wellness clinic:** Berkshire VNA on Thursday, February 11, from 2 to 3 p.m.

**Foot Nurse:** Thursday, March 10, 9 to 11:30 a.m., by appointment (please call 528-1443 x247). All ages are welcome.

**Parks Commission:** Wednesday, February 3, at 6 p.m.

**Planning Board:** Thursday, February 11 and 25, at 7 p.m. Please call Maggie Leonard at 528-9685 to be placed on the agenda.

**Select Board:** Mondays, February 1, 8, 22, and 29, at 8 a.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

**Special Select Board meeting:** Wednesday, February 24, 7 p.m., town hall meeting room, to discuss the future of the town's school. See page 14.

## Office/Town Hall Closings

Town hall will be closed Monday, February 15, for President's Day.

The administrative assistant's office will be closed February 11 and 12.

Individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message.

We recommend always calling ahead.

## Other News

There will be a Special Town Meeting on Thursday, February 18, 2016, at 7 p.m. at the firehouse to discuss the following articles:

Articles 1–3 will ask the town to change the positions of tax collector, town clerk, and treasurer from elected to appointed. (In addition to needing approval at town meeting, this will also need to pass on the ballot at the annual town elections in May.)

As Monterey evolves and grows, it is going to become harder to fill these positions with qualified individuals if we limit ourselves to a pool of candidates that must live in Monterey. Changing the positions to appointed would allow the board to appoint the best qualified applicant and will also give the town the option of sharing one of these positions with another town, making the positions more desirable and potentially cost-effective for tax payers.

It should be noted that the board will still look to Monterey residents to fill these positions. However, many towns have already made these changes in order to access the best pool of candidates.

Articles 4–5 will ask the town to vote to change the term of the tax collector and treasurer from three years to one year. The board is asking this, so that appointments (if approved under Articles 1–3) may be made should these positions become vacant. (It should be noted that the board wishes the current tax collector and treasurer to remain in their respective positions.)

Article 6 will ask the town to approve and establish the position of "town grant writer." The person in this position will identify grants available to Monterey and apply for them. If a grant is secured, the grant writer will be paid a percentage of the grant awarded rather than receiving a salary or stipend thus encouraging the grant writer to apply for and secure as many grants as are available for the town.

Article 7 has been placed on the warrant at the request of the Friends of Lake Garfield, asking that the town authorize the select board to petition the legislature to enact a special act titled, "An Act Establishing the Lake Garfield Preservation District in the Town of Monterey." Members of the Friends of Lake Garfield will be at the special town meeting to discuss this further and answer any questions. (See "Lake Garfield Preservation Tax District." on page 5.)

If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please do not hesitate to email one of us, or call Melissa at 528-1443 x111 to be placed on an upcoming meeting agenda.

— Scott Jenssen, Chair

Kenn Basler and Steve Weisz

Monterey Select Board

(scott@montereyma.gov)

(kenn@montereyma.gov)

(steve@montereyma.gov)

For general inquiries, please click "Contact Us" at montereyma.gov

## Town Contact Information

### Emergency! 911

#### Administrative Assistant:

528-1443 x111

admin@montereyma.gov

(for town boards and misc. questions)

#### Assessor: 528-1443 x115

assessors@montereyma.gov

#### Building Dept.: 528-1443 x118

buildingsafety@montereyma.gov

#### Fire Department (non-emergency):

528-3136

fire\_service@montereyfire.org

#### Highway Dept.: 528-1734

mhw@verizon.net

#### Library: 528-3795

montereylibrary@gmail.com

#### Police Dept. (non-emergency):

528-1443 x116,

Alternate emergency 528-3211

mpdchief@montereyma.gov

#### Post Office: 528-4670

**Tax Collector:** 528-1443 x117

montereytax@yahoo.com

(for questions about your tax bill)

#### Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113

clerk@montereyma.gov

(for licenses and town records)

## Calendar

### Hockey rink schedule on page 21

**Every Monday except holidays:** Select Board meetings, 8 a.m. for February.

**Every Tuesday:** Chair Yoga with Connie Wilson, 9 to 10 a.m., Monterey Town Hall. Free, sponsored by Monterey Parks Commission.

**Every Tuesday:** Duplicate Bridge club, at 12:30 p.m. at the town hall.

**Tuesdays, February 9 and 16:** Sewing circle, 10 to 11:30 a.m., Monterey Library.

**Friday, February 5:** Knox Gallery, *Perceptions in Clay*, by Marjorie Miner. Exhibit opens at 5 p.m., with reception from 6 to 7:30. See page 10.

**Wednesday, February 10:** Last day to register for presidential primary.

**Thursday, February 11:** Wellness clinic, town hall meeting room, 2 to 3 p.m.

**Monday, February 15:** Skating party, 1 to 4 p.m., fire company pavillion.

**Wednesday, February 17:** Community potluck supper, 6 p.m., fellowship hall in the Monterey church. See page 9.

**Thursday, February 18:** *Monterey News* deadline.

### Saturday, February 20:

Record your story, 7 p.m., Monterey Library. See page 8.

Lenox Contra Dance from 8 to 11 p.m., new dancer session at 7:45. Live mu-

sic by Alchemy—Eric Martin, Karen Axlerod, and Rachel Bell— with all dances called and taught by Linda Leslie. Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. LenoxContraDance.org. Contact 528-4007. lenoxcontradance.org

**Monday, February 22:** Adult book group, *The Secret History of Wonder Woman*, Jill Lepore. 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library.

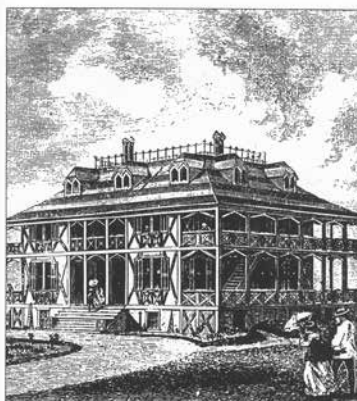
**Wednesday, February 24:** Meeting to discuss our school's future. 7 p.m., at the town hall. See page 14.

**Monday, February 29:** A day to leap!

**Tuesday, March 1:** Presidential primary. Polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monterey firehouse.

## Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be sent to the email address below. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4007 or email [montereynews9@gmail.com](mailto:montereynews9@gmail.com).



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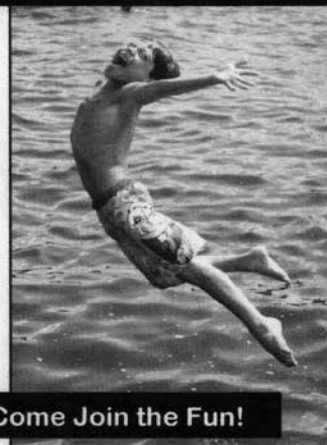
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*Contributions from local artists this month:  
Maureen Banner, p. 6, 21; George Emmons, p. 8;  
Bonner McAllester, p. 16.*

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