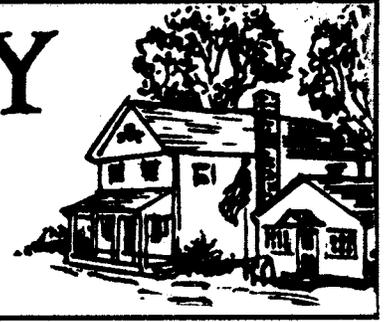




MONTEREY NEWS

January 2019
Est. 1970 Vol. XLVIII · Number 1



Pick up at: the library (in and outside), town hall, community center, Roadside Cafe, Swap Shop, and **now in the church foyer.**



Take advantage of these dark days of winter. Enjoy some "old media," a fire, a hot drink, and companionship.
—Drawing by Maureen Banner

Just the very fact of snow, when you stop to think about it, is an amazement. Overnight, the outdoors becomes totally altered.
A Reflection of Snow page 16

Amaryllis require a bit of attention, but they're definitely worth the care we take of them. Maybe this time of year is also time to take a look at our own self-care.
Here's a Thought page 17

The LGWG recommended that an annual appropriation of \$50,000 be made through an article on the warrant of the May annual town meeting to fund multiple efforts at addressing these related issues.
Lake Garfield Working Group page 9

My experience with neighboring towns' groups (like Maggie's List in New Marlborough) leads me to believe that Monterey would benefit by having a similar group.
Monterey Google group page 21

To date, only about 35% of the grant money allocated to Monterey has been distributed.
Housing Rehabilitation Grants page 3



Listen to the Mockingbird page 18

I appeal for people to attend and participate actively in our meetings. I would encourage honest and frank discussions about the decisions facing our town, both at select board meetings and in this newspaper.

In My View page 6

The town has four trucks/workers, fifty miles of roads, traveling only ten to fifteen mph. It takes on average four to five hours to completely clean up.

Winter Roads page 8

If you still have any mattresses stuck in the attic, drag them out and get them to us by the end of the month.

Transfer Station News page 4

Through his presentation, Alston will provide insight into the basics: "What is true fitness? Why has the industry made fitness unobtainable? How can I safely and enjoyably become fit?"

Community Potluck Supper page 8

Major populations of squirrels would migrate all together to new territories, often in other states. There would be huge moving blankets of squirrels, with hundreds of thousands of animals.

Grey Squirrels page 15



Monterey Library Notes

Library Project Update

The foundation is completely finished and the carpenters have begun work on framing the new addition. Things are moving along and, if the weather permits, you should see the addition structure up this month. Allegrone has lined up the trades so they will be coming in over the winter once the building is closed in. Please check the blog (montereymasslibrary.org) if you'd like to see the concrete pump truck and the crane setting the steel beams. Windows and doors are on order and should be here and ready to install as soon as the frame and roof are done. So far the contractor has done a good job dealing with the weather. We will see how the winter works out. (See pages 21 for construction photos.)

Monterey Oral History

Great news on the Monterey Oral History project. Wendy Germain spent several years recording oral history in Monterey. She volunteered her time, and with equipment from a local cable TV station, she digitally recorded over forty hours of local history. She received grant money from the Upper Housatonic Valley Heritage Area Foundation. Special thanks to Dan Bolagnani, the executive director, and Judith Monachina, the director, for their assistance in making this happen. The Berkshire Community College Oral History Center also gets a shout-out for their help. This support paid for Joe Makuc to transcribe the interviews so they are searchable. That was a requirement for the University of Massachusetts to accept those interviews, store them, and make them accessible to the public. We finally have reached our goal of having these histories available to the public through the internet. Four of them are ready for your viewing. Delight Dodyk, and Terry and Joan Wing; George Emmons; Gould Farm's Bob Gardiner, Bob Rausch, Steve Snyder, and Donna and Wayne Burkhart;

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



Gould Farm's Bob Gardiner, Bob Rausch, Donna and Wayne Burkhart, and Steve Snyder from the recording of Monterey Oral History. (Screenshot from the video.)

and Mary and Gabriella Makuc. They can be accessed with the following link: credo.library.umass.edu, then search for "Monterey Oral History."

We hope to continue interviewing people for this project. If you are interested in sharing your stories, stop by the library and let us know. Everyone has a story and we are interested in recording it. We'll arrange for Wendy and her equipment and preserve these stories for the future. A huge thank you to all who contributed to what has been done so far. This accomplishment was the result of many long hours of volunteer work.

—Mark Makuc
Library Director

Monterey Community Potluck Suppers

Join us January 16 to hear:
Joseph Antoine Alston

Explore the question,
What is functional fitness?

See the community potluck supper
article on page 8.

3rd Wednesdays, October–May
6 p.m. Fellowship Hall
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For more information,
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Housing Rehabilitation Grants

We are happy to announce that applications are still being accepted for the FY17 Monterey Housing Rehabilitation Program. The program is being funded by a Community Development Block Grant awarded to the town by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. To date, only about 35% of the grant money allocated to Monterey has been distributed.

Homeowners

The Monterey Housing Rehabilitation Program is administered by Bailey Boyd Associates, Inc., and is managed by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. The program provides home improvement assistance in the form of 0% deferred-payment loans for low/moderate income residents. The typical cost for a single rehabilitation project is \$35,000. The type of repairs which can be undertaken using program funds include roofing, foundation repair, installation of energy efficient windows and doors, insulation, accessibility improvements, plumbing, electrical repair or replacement, septic, water supply, lead paint removal, exterior paint, etc.

All Housing Rehab Program eligible applicants must be residents or owner-occupants who live in the Town of Monterey. Participants must meet the minimum income requirements. We welcome you to apply.

Contractors

Additionally, we continue to look for licensed general contractors that are qualified to bid on these projects. The work may include carpentry, electrical, heating and cooling, insulation, lead removal, masonry, painting, plumbing, roofing, and siding. Contractors must be licensed in Massachusetts. Contact us to enroll as a bidder.

For more information and to request an application, please call Rebecca Haight at 413-442-1521 ext. 23 or email rhaight@berkshireplanning.org.

—Rebecca Haight
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Council on Aging Events

January Events

Movie Night: Tuesday, January 8, at 7 p.m., at the town hall. This month's movie is a British comedy, *Kinky Boots*. Light refreshments will be served.

Berkshire Visiting Nurse Wellness Clinic: Thursday, January 10, 2 to 3 p.m., at the town hall. No appointment necessary.

Foot Nurse: Thursday, January 24, 9 a.m. to noon, at the town hall. Call for an appointment, 413-528-1443, ext 247. The cost is \$25.

February and March Events

Save the dates, more information next month.

Wednesday, February 27: 1 to 3 p.m., at the Monterey Community Center. A free concert and show (thanks to the Monterey Cultural Council) with Tim Van Egmond, folksinger and storyteller. All ages welcome. Come enjoy!

Friday, March 15: Join us for a bus ride from Lee to the Boston Flower Show. The exact time and cost to be determined. Mary Ellen Brown is in charge, call her at 413-528-1598 if you are interested.

—Kyle Pierce

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Funding for this program is provided by a
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Transfer Station News

Well, it's hard to believe the holidays are over and January is already here. First and foremost, Beth and I want to thank everyone who gave us some of the most wonderful holiday cards this year, not to mention the cookies, cakes, candies, etc. that we also received. We hope each and everyone in town, plus those that have left us for a warmer climate, had their holiday wishes come true.

Mattress Grant

Several months ago we mentioned that our mattress grant may be running out. Unfortunately, we have been notified by the state that the grant will end on January 31. After this time we will still be accepting mattresses and box springs but there may be a charge. So if you still have any stuck in the attic, drag them out and get them to us by the end of the month.

Clean Recycling

As most of you have probably heard or read about, recycling is becoming a real problem. As of now your transfer station and our recycling center are doing okay, but it's getting more and more important to keep our recycling clean. By "clean" we mean without material mixed in that cannot be recycled.

Container bin: We need to keep absolutely all paper, styrofoam, hard plastic, oil containers, sheet plastic, etc. out of the "containers" (cans, bottles, and plastic) dumpster. This includes any containers that held hazardous material such as paint, anti-freeze, weed killer, etc. We have a separate dumpster for hard plastics such as five-gallon buckets, kids' toys (with all metal parts removed), tote bins. Do not bring your containers in plastic bags. It's always best to ask Beth or Dave first.

Cardboard compactor: We need to keep all plastics and dirty paper out of the cardboard compactor. "Dirty" paper that has been contaminated by any kind of oil or food stuffs cannot be recycled. Any residue oils are a real problem in paper making. Think of the circles of cardboard under pizzas, unclean ice cream containers, etc. If it can be simply wiped clean, it's probably okay, but not if the contaminant has soaked into the paper. Tape, spiral notebooks, paper clips, and staples are okay as they are easily removed.

Mixed materials packaging: Some food items come in containers with metal bottoms, cardboard or paper sides, and plastic tops. Some of these contain coffee or snack foods, etc. They have to go into the trash. All styrofoam products and any plastic sheet, or film plastic, regardless of use, must be placed into the household trash.

General Rule: We need to keep recycling everything we can but we need to do it the right way. If you have any questions, Beth or I should always be around. When in real doubt, it is better to put things in

the general trash that you think might be recyclable than to try to recycle something that can't be recycled. Let's keep up the good work.

Recycling is the law in Monterey. It is good for the town, and it is good for the environment. The town receives some income from good, "clean" recyclable loads, and we pay for the general trash and construction debris. If the recyclables are contaminated, we risk losing that income, which could result in higher sticker fees. Do your part and recycle properly.

With the long cold winter season here remember there are always games, puzzles, and books to be had at the Monterey Swap Shop to help you while away those winter nights.

Have a wonderful winter season.

—Beth Parks and Dave Gilmore

The Springfield Materials Recycling Facility is reminding residents that the following recyclables should be kept out of household recycling as they can cause safety hazards and shutdowns when they wrap around conveyor belts and equipment: plastic bags, bagged materials, items that wrap and tangle, syringes, food waste, hazardous waste containers, styrofoam, plastic cups, light bulbs, pots, pans, scrap metal, dishes and electronics. For a complete "Yes and No" list of what can be recycled please visit springfieldmrf.org, or call the recycling hotline at 888-888-0784 x52293 for more detailed information.

—Town of Monterey

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Events Coming Up

History Talk

Bidwell House Museum will show a film of one of Simon Winchester’s history talks, on Sunday, January 13, at 1 p.m. See the Bidwell House article on page 15.

Concert on February 27

The Monterey Council on Aging is asking you to save the date to be entertained. On February 27, at 1 p.m., there will be a free concert and show, storytelling and folk music by Tim Van Egmond. All ages welcome. Light refreshments will be served. Please call Kyle Pierce at 413-528-9213 with your questions.

Events Recently Held

Made in Monterey

On December 1 there was a smashing turnout for the Made in Monterey holiday art sale with about 175 people coming through during the day to admire and purchase basketry, wrought iron, silver-work and fine jewelry, hand-crafted gifts, pottery, oil and pastel paintings, colorful pillow covers, and amazing baked goods. See you next year.

Christmas Cookie Exchange

Hume Camp held their second Christmas Cookie Swap on December 8. What a beautiful and tasty way to mingle with and appreciate your neighbors. The Hume crowd supplied lovely holiday decorations for the community center, including a tree.

Ongoing activities

Ping Pong: Adult ping pong will be available at the Monterey Community Center from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., on Thursdays, January 3 and 10. In addition, there will be play on Saturdays, January 19 and 26, from 2 to 4 p.m. Please come and enjoy the thrill of play with your friends and neighbors.

Darn Yarners: First and third Thursday of each month, January 3 and 17. This is an informal group of fiber artists (knit, stitch, mend, spin, crochet and such) meeting to work on individual projects in a somewhat social setting. No cost. Facilitated by Wendy Jensen.

Singing for All: Tuesdays, 7 to 8:15 p.m., except on January 1. Group singing of familiar songs from various genres in a friendly, neighborly setting, led by Oren Rosenthal. Donation.

Library Book group: This month’s book is *The Great Alone*, by Kristin Hannah. January 28 (fourth Monday each month), at 7:30 p.m. No cost. Contact Laurie Shaw with questions at 528-0343.

Dancercise: Barbara Cohen will once again lead Dancercise sessions this winter—her own version of Zumba-type activity—on Thursdays in late afternoon, time TBD. Please see our event calendar for the time. The weekly sessions will start up on January 3. No cost.



Christmas Eve service

See our Event Calendar: Visit us at any time through our website (ccmonterey.org), where you will find the event calendar, use policies, and other information, and where you can donate to the center through PayPal. You can always contact Mary Makuc, event coordinator, at 413-528-3600, or email her at calendar@ccmonterey.org. We thank you for your support.

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In My View



Ed Koch, former mayor of New York City, was well known for often asking New Yorkers as he walked the streets, “How am I doin’?”

As I looked over recent issues of the *Monterey News*, I was struck by how one-sided the political writing is, consisting almost entirely of members of the select board describing projects and reporting their success. Doubtless, local politics are discussed elsewhere, and I would suppose that criticisms are exchanged about what the town government does and how its members conduct themselves. But this potentially valuable information remains largely inaccessible.

Some time ago, I asked the editor of this newspaper, Stephen Moore, why he did not have reporters regularly covering the major town boards and in particular the select board. Although this had been done in the past, the short answer was that no one has been found to serve in that position. Although Stephen occasionally comes to select board meetings, he is there to participate rather than report. Nor has it been his practice to write editorials about the goings-on in town hall. I think that too is unfortunate. He is very well informed about the town and its people, and his editorial views would likely be useful to all of us.

The select board frequently faces difficult issues that have real impact on life in our town. And yet the presence of citizens at meetings is quite rare. Perhaps this indicates that although we make mistakes from time to time, most people are generally satisfied with the way things are. But we are always searching for ways to improve life in Monterey. I am sure citizens’ views freely expressed at our meetings would be helpful in increasing our rate of success.

Harmony and unity are solid and important values, and they are certainly displayed extensively in the *Monterey News*. But life in our town is not always idyllic. We have real issues, different views about them, and, I think, a need for more discussion beyond the annual town meeting.

Here are some of what I consider to be important issues coming up this year—
What path should we pursue to bring broadband to Monterey?

Should we have a town administrator as our chief executive, leaving issues of policy to the select board?

Should we budget for a second study of our government to be sure that hiring a town administrator would be wise and prudent?

Should we regularly schedule select board meetings at night so that the working public could more easily attend?

And, more generally, I would ask what are we not doing now that should be done, and what are we doing that we could be doing better?

In short—“how are we doin’?”

So, I appeal for people to attend and participate actively in our meetings. I would encourage honest and frank discussions about the decisions facing our town, both at select board meetings and in this newspaper. Finally, I hope someone is willing to work as the town news reporter, and that Stephen will consider writing editorials on occasion.

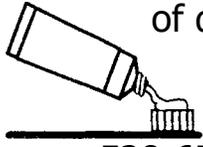
—Don Coburn

Select board member

Note: Please see the editor’s response on page 7.

Editor’s Note: In My View is a monthly feature for this paper. Select board members have an opportunity, on a rotating basis, to communicate their thoughts about town affairs—reflections, opinions, and updates on topics of their choice. The views expressed are solely those of the writer, and are not meant to reflect the views of the full select board.

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Monterey News Town Reporter and Editorials

In the preceding article, “In My View,” by select board member Don Coburn, he makes two appeals with regards to the *Monterey News*.

The first, wishing that the *News* had a town reporter, shines a light on the fact that the paper has been without a town reporter for a while now. This has been a significant deficit since the middle of 2016. Since then the *Monterey News* board of directors, and I, as editor, have approached many people to see if they would be interested, but without success. Several appeals for a reporter have been published in the *News*.

Independent reporting on town governance is a vital function for a local paper. The role of a town reporter requires attending select board meetings and writing a monthly summary of those meetings organized by topic (versus chronologically). The select board publishes approved minutes, which are the legal record of their meetings, and can serve as a resource to the reporter, but the minutes often do not tell the full story of the meetings, and the individual voices of the select board members and other participants can be lost.

An ideal reporter would be a person who has the time to attend two or more meetings each month, and who has a genuine interest and some knowledge in governance and the town. Strong writing skills are helpful, but any writing would be reviewed by two editors for clarity and accuracy. There is a small stipend that comes with the job. Please contact me at montereynews9@gmail.com, or give me a call at 528-4007, if you would like to talk about joining the paper for this important function.

As for editorials, the *Monterey News* has rarely, if ever, published editorials. The *News* is the only town-wide media, but this position does not imbue either the paper generally, or the editor specifically, with any special wisdom or insight into town affairs. While some of the other nearby town papers do publish editorials, the *News* chooses not to do this. The *Monterey News* provides individuals with a forum for letters of opinion about town issues, or on just about any other subject. Your letters are welcome, and, as with the town report—if it helps—please take some comfort in the process whereby two editors review any submissions.

— Stephen Moore
Monterey News editor

Open Burning Permits

The Monterey Fire Department will again be using an online application for burning permits. Permits will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily, only when weather conditions allow for open burning. The DEP requires fires to be started after 10 a.m. and be extinguished by 4 p.m. for air quality purposes. Open burning season is from January 15 to May 1.

Go to bcburnpermits.com, read the regulations, and follow the section titled “How to obtain a permit.” If you cannot obtain a permit online, you can call 413-445-4550 (Berkshire County Sheriff’s office) between 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., and follow the prompts. Make sure you print out your permit and keep it with you when burning.

- You may only burn brush—no leaves, grass, hay, stumps, building debris, or any other material.
- All open burning must be a minimum of seventy-five feet from a building or structure.
- Burning is allowed only from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Any open fire must be attended at all times by the permit holder.
- No person shall set, maintain, or increase a fire in open air except by permit.
- You must be eighteen years or older to apply for a permit and tend the fire.
- You must have a means to extinguish an open fire completely at the end of the day or if requested by the fire department.
- The fire department can refuse or cancel a permit at any time.
- Open burning season is from January 15 to May 1.



Christopher Blair

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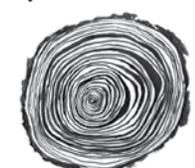
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Monterey's Winter Road Policy

What follows is an abbreviated statement of the town's winter roads policy. The full version was published in the November issue of the *Monterey News* on pages 26 and 27.

General Considerations

Winter Parking Ban: Do not park in any place that hinders road plowing, which includes any town roads or town property, with the exception of downtown during the daytime, in designated parking places. Parking in driveways must be well away from the roads.

Private Plowing: It is illegal to plow or blow snow onto, across, or otherwise dispose of snow onto town roads.

Mail Boxes: Anything placed in the town's right of way is at the owner's risk. The town is not responsible for mailboxes damaged by plowing operations.

Winter Salt and Sand: Limited quantities of mixed salt and sand are available at the transfer station for personal use only.

Winter Storm Operations

Paved Roads: Salt is usually applied as snowfall begins to prevent bonding with the pavement. Many factors affect the timing and amount of salt applications. Bus routes are done early before other roads when schools are in session.

Gravel Roads: Gravel roads are plowed after paved roads, with the goal of no more than four to six inches of accumulation on unpaved roads. Sand is applied once snowfall has ended, and reapplied as needed.

Rain and Freezing Rain: Salt is spread on paved surfaces to prevent roads from icing up. Salt is reapplied as needed. On unpaved roads, sand is applied when possible. During a rainstorm with road temperatures below freezing, unpaved roads ice up instantly, and sand applied is quickly frozen over. Sand may be applied three to four times to allow some travel, but remember that unpaved roads can freeze up quickly.

Storm Management: Each storm is unique. The intensity of a storm may

dictate the amount of time the highway crew can safely and effectively work. The town has four trucks/workers, fifty miles of roads, traveling only ten to fifteen mph. It takes on average four to five hours to completely clean up.

Helpful Suggestions:

- Use common sense—don't go out during a snow/ice storm if you don't have to. The fewer people on the road, the fewer accidents and the easier for us to clean them.

- Slow down—reduce your speed and drive cautiously. 4x4 or all-wheel-drive vehicles are not invincible. Everyone should cut their speed in half during a storm.

- Put snow tires on your vehicle—all-season radials are not enough.

- Don't leave your vehicle on the traveled way.

- Listen to the weather forecasts and pay attention to changing conditions.

Snow issues or concerns should be reported to the Monterey Police Department by calling 528-3211, or the Monterey Highway Department (if appropriate) at 528-1734 or both.



Community Potluck Joseph Alston- January 16

At the December potluck, we had a lovely gathering listening to John Arthur Miller from Berkshire Elder Services, who enlightened us about the myriad of services they offer. There were multiple questions, from people asking for themselves and those asking about their one-hundred-year-old parents. We are very grateful to John for sharing all the information.

For the January potluck, we have Joseph Antoine Alston, who is the founder of The Alston Center—a Hub for Health and Fitness, located at the former Eagleton School property just across our town line with Great Barrington on Route 23. At the root of Alston's work is functional fitness, and he brings more than twenty-five years in the wellness industry to the exploration of this topic. Through his presentation, Alston will provide insight into the basics: "What is true fitness? Why has the industry made fitness unobtainable? How can I safely and enjoyably become fit?"

The next Monterey Community Potluck Dinner will be held January 16, at 6 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil, and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome—please join us.

— Kyle Pierce



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Lake Garfield Working Group

The Lake Garfield Working Group (LGWG) held their monthly meeting in the town hall on Monday evening, December 17. Foremost on the agenda was an interview with Lake Buel property owners Kyle Pierce and Pete Hagen, who gave an account of the nature and history of the Lake Buel Tax District and its experience in controlling the pervasive weed growth in the lake. Both Kyle and Pete have lifelong association with Lake Buel and were a wealth of information concerning its social, economic, recreational, and ecological facets. Among the salient points of interest was that the Lake Buel Tax District raises \$86,000 a year in taxes to pay for the forty hours per week of weed harvesting that takes place from Memorial Day to Labor Day, a season which is anticipated to lengthen, as it did this year, by an additional three weeks. This expense is in addition to the initial expenditure by the tax district of \$230,000 for the purchase of the harvester, truck, trailer, and conveyer used in the operation.

On the evening of Wednesday, December 19, members of the LGWG attended a joint Monterey Select Board and Finance Committee meeting to present our work to address the three issues of phosphorus loading, blue-green algae (cyanobacteria), and invasive weed growth. The LGWG recommended that an annual appropriation of \$50,000 be made through an article on the warrant of the May annual town meeting to fund multiple efforts at addressing these related issues.

After lengthy discussion focusing primarily on doubts some members of the select board and finance committee expressed regarding the reliability of the research presented and the cost effectiveness of investing in the unknown biology of the lake, nothing was determined. The select board and finance committee had many questions and wanted more detailed information to support the request. The question of who would put an article on the warrant for the town meeting in May was discussed. The possibility of an article to have a re-vote on a Lake Garfield tax district was also raised. These issues will remain on the agenda for the next LGWG meeting, on Monday, January 14, at 7 p.m., at the town hall, unless otherwise posted on the town website. All interested parties are encouraged to attend.

— Steve Snyder
Chair, LGWG



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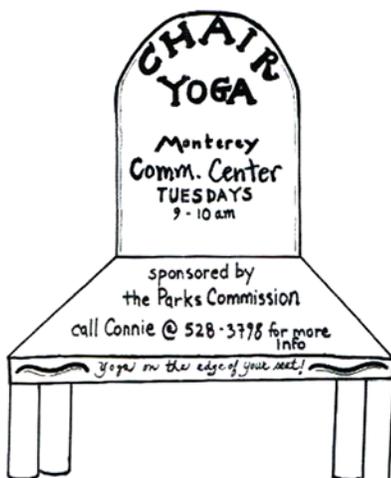
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Fiber Connect Update Monterey Phase 2 Status

With Monterey releasing the town's RFP (request for proposal) for a town-wide high speed broadband services network, we have been receiving calls, emails, plus messages to our Facebook page asking where Fiber Connect stands with regards to Monterey's Phase 2 "make ready." ("Make ready" is work that needs to be done by the utilities that own the poles to accommodate the additional cables to meet relevant codes.)

The short answer is that we are still negotiating the cost of make ready work with pole owners National Grid and Verizon. The make ready estimates from the utilities are questionably high based on the estimates we received from our independent surveyors. Each week we contact the utilities for an update and to push for mutually agreeable costs. As we continue this process, we are also exploring alternative options to deliver fiber throughout town. However, even once we reach agreements, the utilities are under little pressure to get the work done.

Phase 2 includes Broderick Road, Chestnut Hill Road, Dowd Road, Garfield Lake (east end), Hupi Road (east end), North New Marlboro Road, Route 23 between Chestnut Hill and Hupi Road.

We apologize for this lengthy delay with Phase 2, and thank you for your patience. While we wait on the utilities,

we are preparing our response to the Monterey's RFP to meet the January 7, 2019 deadline.

Some of you have asked how you can help to move the utilities to a more reasonable position. MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Institute) is in weekly contact with National Grid and Verizon applying pressure on the utilities to resolve the "make ready" issues. We need our state representatives, Senator Adam Hinds and Representative Smitty Pignatelli, to bring Monterey's make ready delays to MBI's attention for action. You can help make this happen by contacting your local select board, and Hinds and Pignatelli for their assistance.

Senator Hinds can be reached by calling 617-722-1625, or by email at adam.hinds@masenate.gov.

Representative Smitty Pignatelli can be reached by calling 413-637-0631, or by email at rep.smitty@mahouse.gov.

Community Center Connection

As recently reported by the *Monterey News*, the Monterey Community Center now offers password-free high-speed WiFi. We are happy to have provided the center with zero cost for both installation and ongoing service. We thank the Monterey Select Board, community center personnel, and volunteers who also helped make this possible.

—Adam Chait, CEO
Fiber Connect



Remembrance Kenneth Heath

Kenneth Robert Heath Jr., 56, of Pittsfield, died December 1, 2018, at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield. Kenneth was born on August 19, 1962, in Pittsfield, to his parents Kenneth Robert Heath Sr. and Gail (Lanoue) Heath. He was educated at Mount Everett High School and was a member of the wrestling team while there. After high school Kenneth proudly served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps and was stationed in Spain.

Kenneth graduated from the fire academy in Stow, MA. He worked at the Great Barrington Fairgrounds as a groundskeeper, for area tree companies including Haupt and Asplundh, and as a chef at the Red Lion Inn and the Peppermill. Kenneth was a member of the Tolland and Monterey fire departments, was in 4-H and Boy Scouts, and enjoyed fishing.

Kenneth is survived by his mother, Gail Heath of Monterey; one daughter, Sherri Lee Heath of Monterey; and adopted brother Mark Little of Monterey. Kenneth was predeceased by his father and his sister Kristine Heath.

A private graveside service with military honors will be held in Corashire Cemetery at a later time. In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made to Soldier On in care of Birches-Roy Funeral Home, 33 South Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. Condolences may be made through birchesroyfuneralservices.com.





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Looking Back Five Years

For the past several years I have prepared a feature, "Looking Back Twenty Years." This December did not permit the time to go back through the *Monterey News* issues of 1999, but I started to make a list of town gains over the past five years. Many of these gains have been largely supported by voluntary contributions, while some have been direct expenditures of taxpayer funds. At the end of reading this list, keep in mind that Monterey still has one of the lowest tax rates in Berkshire County, and statewide, and is well positioned with all these recent improvements to continue in the future with a low tax rate.

I hope to have the review of 1999 in the February issue.

— Stephen Moore, Editor

Town of Monterey Facilities

- Siting, design, and construction of our transfer station and swap shop;
- Construction of Jamie's basketball court at Greene Park;
- Widening and repaving of the town hall parking lot;
- Planning, design, grant application, and now construction of the library renovation;
- Years-long effort by a group of community-minded people for the opening of the community center.

Town Government

- Town clerk and treasurer become appointed positions;
- Hiring professional firm for the town's financial operations;
- Hiring Shawn Tryon as Director of Operations.

Roads

- Route 23 reconstruction (2015-2016);
- Replacement of dozens of culverts, including a very large one at the intersection of Route 23 and River Road;
- Replacement of the New Marlborough Road bridge with a temporary bridge, later used as the Wellman Road bridge, and then with a permanent bridge (2015-16);
- The strengthening of the Curtis Road bridge (2018);
- Significant stretches of our paved secondary roads repaved (2016).

Major equipment Purchases

- New road grader (2013);
- Fire department Rescue 9 truck (2013);
- New Ford 550 Trucks with snow equipment (2014 & 2015);
- Fire department new ladder truck (2016);
- Small excavator (2018);
- New loader (2018);
- New police cruiser (2018).

Other Improvements

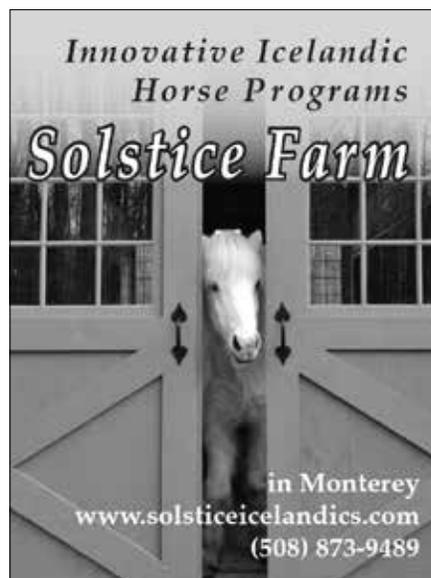
- Blue Hill Road cell tower and AT&T coverage;
- Repainting of the Monterey meeting-house;
- Considerable preservation and accessibility work at the Bidwell House;
- Installation of the biomass heating plant at Gould Farm;
- Build-out of fiber optic broadband network over a large part of the town.

Coming up in 2019

- A second cell tower high on Cronk Road with AT&T coverage;
- Reconstruction on Blue Hill Road;
- Renovations and (hopefully) reopening of the store;
- Awaiting (hopefully) the state to award Monterey's share of MBI funds to complete broadband network.

Losses

- The permanent closing of the Monterey village school.
- The sale and conversion to a private residence of the last commercial lodging (Lakeside Terrace).



Letters

In Praise of "Praise"

Congratulations on another great edition of the *Monterey News*.

Although I am not a resident of Monterey, I am a fan of your paper, an avid reader, and an occasional contributor to the wildlife column. The article that grabbed my attention in the December issue was, "In Praise of Dark Skies," written by Janet Jensen. As a boy, I lived in Manhattan most of the year and in rural Sullivan County, NY during the summer, with my aunts and my favorite uncle. So I really did appreciate the article.

It was very disappointing to discover that the "dark skies" were nowhere to be seen after we relocated to Route 7 in Sheffield in 1989 to open a retail business. To my dismay, I discovered that lighting by the town and county, and private lighting, destroy the potential beauty of a New England night sky.

Ms. Jensen, I would like to suggest that you send your well thought out and even better written article to all of the local newspapers, and to *The Record* and even to *The Berkshire Eagle*, and especially the *Sheffield Times*.

Thank you for your efforts.

— David J LeBeau
Sheffield, MA

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Volunteers attach kick boards to the Monterey Rink located in the pavilion behind the fire station. Weather permitting, the rink should be flooded and open in early January.



The kids weren't waiting patiently for layers of ice to be built up before having some cold weather fun in the pavilion.
—Rink photos by Steve Graves



The rink wranglers and their young support crew. Stay tuned for ice!

Monterey Skating Rink

The volunteers, led by Monterey Parks Commission's Peter Poirier (standing third from left in bottom photo), assembled the Monterey ice rink located behind the fire station on December 1. The job entails installing hockey boards around the posts of the Monterey Fire Company's pavilion. The rink will be flooded by volunteers with gradual coats once daytime temperatures continuously fall below freezing. The rink has free skate rentals and a heated locker room for observing skaters. For more info, see the Monterey, MA Outdoor Skating Rink on Facebook.com, and look for the hockey rink schedule in the winter issues of this paper.

—Steve Graves

Skating Party

The Monterey Parks Commission has set Martin Luther King Day, Monday, January 21, for the Monterey Rink skating party. Please stop by the firehouse pavilion from noon to 2 p.m. There will be refreshments and music and skating. Skates are available for folks who need them.

—Peter Poirier
 Parks Commission

Hockey Rink Schedule:

Free Skating: Figure skaters, families, and recreational skaters.

Sundays through Fridays, noon to 7 p.m.

Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Adult hockey:

Sundays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to noon, and 7 to 9 p.m.

Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30.

Skate responsibly!

Please shovel before you leave.

For updates—call Parks Commission at 528-1443 x248 (voicemail), or

Facebook—Monterey MA Outdoor Skating Rink

Having a Good Day

- Good ice, sharp skates, and visiting friends.
- No SPAM calls for National Grid account holders

My Difficult Country

The climb,
like exile,
is always difficult—
the distance I have known.

The journey—
this blind seeking, sometimes
promising
a country of pure vision,
the marriage of flesh and peace.

Year after year,
bewildered by the distance—
this far away from myself,
but still climbing.

—Amos Neufeld

Apologies to Amos Neufeld. "My Difficult Country" appeared in the December issue, but due to an error in transcribing the poem, a line was missing.

Winter solstice

We sink deeper into the darkness
that candles and lights and sparkles
labor to dispel.

Glimmering, shimmering, flickering, twinkling

Casting shards of light in all directions

they invite one to be still and gaze through the patterns.

To get lost in reflections, memories, intentions, remorse.

The play of light and shadow illumines the sense that

everything is perfectly timed:

That just when we feel we can bear no more of the darkness

Gradually, surely, the nights begin to wane.

—Janet Jensen

first star

there in the now twilight
in the clear sky of quick evening
in the rose golden aura of
our setting sun
in the chill minutes of early dark
in the still recognition of the
retreating field and wood
in its own snow bright singularity:
the first star
of the frost bit night
pointing the way
back homeward
to the aggressors!

—R. Zukowski
January 2006

Grey Squirrels and Hardwood Forests

These grey squirrels, we see them in or under the birdfeeder this time of year and think they are somehow undeserving, unfit to receive the bounty. We bought this in town and brought it home to give the little birdies a boost these cold and difficult months, and we like to watch the little fliers partaking of our generosity. We look for the return of our avian dependents in the winter, so small and lovely, and miraculous. We feel warm and loving.

Then a big squirrel lands in the feeder and no more warm and loving for us. We feel robbed, intruded upon. If there ever was an unwelcome guest, an alien on the birdseed scene, it is the native Eastern Grey Squirrel.

Over the decades I have wondered how we'd respond if this cute, furry, native neighbor were rare and endangered. Maybe we'd be putting out the seeds in hopes of encouraging the population to grow, to inhabit our part of the world once more as they did way back when. Why do we hate them so? What can we learn about ourselves by considering this question?

Is it that they cost us money because they can tank down so many sunflower seeds at one sitting? Is our prejudice built on economy, our bottom line? Is it some long-lived battle or struggle learned at our parents' knees? My mom and dad fed the birds, and when a squirrel showed up in

the feeder, Dad would go tiptoeing down to the cellar, get out his "spear" and head into the yard heaving a long-straight goldenrod stalk towards the feeder, butt end first.



Dad was pre-Columbian Man, with his hand-made weapon. He was taking on the natural world, altering the scene, making his own brand of balance. He was favoring the birds. The squirrel? Leapt clear of the feeder, scampered across the lawn and up a tree, chattering its warning. The birds had much the same response, not liking the spear-thrower any more than the squirrel did. In a few minutes Dad was back at the breakfast table, happy with his daily return to Early Times. Within minutes the birds were back, and then the squirrel. This was a good thing all 'round, we felt, a great way to start the day. Then

Dad was away to his office, we were away to school, Ma sat down in the peace and quiet with another cup of coffee and her organizing lists. But we'd all had a taste of another way of life, thanks to the grey squirrel.

I like to read my old book by Leonard Lee Rue III, *Pictorial Guide to the Mammals of North America* (Thomas E. Crowell Co., 1961). I recommend it, over Wikipedia or anything offered to me by Google. Thanks to Rue, I have some facts and observations to pass along. He says that years ago there were huge populations of these squirrels in these parts. There were big old nut trees everywhere in the Northeast forests, producing acorns, hickory nuts, chestnuts, and walnuts. They also provided fine nest trees. When an old limb died and fell off, an opening on the trunk was made, letting in water and weather, so the tree

would rot a little. Tree dens were easy to make, and the squirrels knew enough to keep nibbling off the bark around the place where the branch had broken off, so the hole was kept open.

If we keep an eye on our grey squirrels today, we'll see plenty of bark-nibbling still going on. Our sumacs, sugar maples, and lots of other trees and shrubs have bald spots on their branches where the squirrels skin off the bark.



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Back in the day, Mr. Rue writes, the forests hereabouts supported major populations of squirrels. These would migrate all together to new territories, often in other states. There would be huge moving blankets of squirrels, with hundreds of thousands of animals. Then the area abandoned, with only a remnant population left, would show an increase again within a year or two to "astronomical proportions" (Rue, 1961).

A grey squirrel can live fifteen years, giving birth to one or two litters per year, with four or five babies each time. The males are polygamous and don't take part in rearing the litters. Babies are born blind, naked and helpless, as we say, but they have remarkable moms who will move them to safety if any danger threatens. By six weeks of age, they open their eyes and are fully furred. They stay with the mother through summer, fall, and the first winter, forming social groups of twelve or more inside those hollow tree dens.

The squirrels are diurnal, only active during the day, and particularly in the 6 to 9 a.m. slot and then again 3 to 6 p.m. They are holed up for the night, safe from the nocturnal predators, but by day they are prey to foxes, bobcats, house cats, dogs, pine martens, fishers, hawks, and snakes. Hard on the squirrels? Not too bad, and certainly supportive to many a wild neighbor. We should welcome them all. As we fret about our birdseed bill, we should remember the economic multiplier effect. Our dollar influence does not stop at the birdseed store, nor even at our feeder. This is a web, here, and we are a part. Feed a squirrel, feed a tree full of them, feed the martens, the fishers, the hawks. Don't feed the squirrel? That's okay she will feed herself just like she did before we came along. But she needs us to leave the hardwood forests standing.

—Bonner McAllester



Bidwell House Museum Keeping Busy in the Off-season

History Talk Replay: The Bidwell House Museum may be closed for tours but we have joined with the Monterey Community Center to present a new off-season program called "History Talk Replay." Join the museum on one Sunday each month to view a screening of one of our popular summer history talks. The next History Talk Replay will take place at the Monterey Community Center on Sunday, January 13, at 1 p.m., when we will show the 2013 lecture by Simon Winchester titled, "The Men Who United the States," based on his captivating book of the same name. Coffee and refreshments will be served. Check the museum website in January for information about the February screening.

In December the museum's annual appeal mailing went out to all of the museum's members and donors. If you did not receive a letter but you are interested in making a donation, please call the museum or head to the museum's website, bidwellhousemuseum.org. Every dollar donated supports the preservation of the historic 1760s homestead, 192-acre grounds, and history education programs. And don't forget the grounds of the Bidwell House Museum are open all year. Hike the trails, take a leisurely walk, or go cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing on a snowy afternoon.

Happy New Year from the Bidwell House Museum.

—Heather Kowolski
Executive Director



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A Reflection of Snow

By the time you read this, the winter solstice will have passed, the days will be getting longer, and the New Year will spread out before us, in all its dazzling possibilities, like a field of newly fallen snow.

But, as I write this, December has just gotten underway. And yet, we have already had several snow showers in Monterey. These have restored my sense of wonder about snow.

These early snows countered the typical bleakness of the month—already I've gone cross-country skiing!—without causing undue hardship. On a couple of occasions, the snow seemed to be falling, or swirling, most of the day and into the night. But somehow only a few inches accumulated, just enough to brighten the landscape, to erase irregularities, to unmask the nocturnal activities of our critter friends, and to limn each bough, branch and twig into a filigree of nature's handiwork.

These delightful early snows were a contrast from the fierce snowstorms I recall from recent years. Remember the early season nor'easter in 2011 that dumped

heavy snows and brought down hundreds of trees that had not yet lost their leaves? There was the Thanksgiving storm in 2014 that left many of us without electricity just as we were getting ready to cook a feast. During a couple of recent winters, it seems we were buffeted by one nor'easter followed by a thaw, or a polar vortex, or an Atlantic clipper. And then another. The extremity of those blizzards, and the dangers and the messiness and inconvenience they caused, had whited out in my mind the many positive associations snow evokes. And unfortunately, ferocious storms are beginning to seem like the new normal.

More pleasant memories go way back to my childhood, to when snow was not a problem—others worried about our provisions and safety. It was, rather, a whole new medium of sculpture, sport, warfare, and thrills. Snow in the Chicago suburb where I grew up also meant trips to the nearby Swallow Cliff toboggan run, built in 1930 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Up 125 limestone stairs were six wooden shoots that opened to a roller coaster of a ride down the steep bluff. The frigid air and the challenge of climbing to the top only added to the excitement. And once I started to cross-country ski, snow meant the exhilaration of gliding through the silent snowy woods hardly feeling the cold.

In my school days, long before the internet, snow storms also meant all ears

attending to the radio for the morning list of school closings. The announcement would come like an act of grace—a sudden serendipitous release from the strictures of routine. And I'm old enough to remember the legendary Chicago snowstorm of 1967, which paralyzed the area for days. Time itself seemed suspended: School was closed for a record four days; cars proved useless; people trudged through the snow with sleds in search of provisions. The world was white and shadows. When we tired of playing outdoors, we amused ourselves with board games and hot chocolate.

But extreme storms aside, just the very fact of snow, when you stop to think about it, is an amazement. Overnight, the outdoors becomes totally altered. Reflected sunlight brightens everything—clean white fresh snow nearly doubles the amount of light we observe. Sounds are muffled, the world appears new. But there are other reasons to regard snow as something of a miracle.

Snowflakes themselves are lattices of water, space, and light. Individual snow crystals form around tiny specks of dust or pollen high in the atmosphere, their shapes forged into symmetrical six-pointed figures by the structure of water molecules and by the atmospheric conditions they meet coming to earth. These become the individual, exquisite forms of snowflakes. >



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Here's a Thought...

I've recently been drawn to James Finley's phrase, "the invincible preciousness of our self in our fragility." When I read the phrase, the two words that touched me most were *invincible preciousness*. I wondered, what might change in our world, if we believed in the unshakable value of each other? What else might change, if we actually act on our belief in that indestructible worth?

The thing is, Finley, a core member of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, NM, founded by Catholic monastic Richard Rohr, does mean those words to apply to all of us. But if we're going to start applying a sense of invincible worth to each other, we're going to have to start with ourselves.

Not an easy task. The thing that shocked the Dalai Lama most when he first arrived in our Western culture was our lack of self-compassion. He couldn't comprehend our cultural inability to accept ourselves, and each other, as innately precious.

Try this experiment. Make eye contact with yourself in the mirror. Then say to yourself, quietly and sincerely, "I am a precious person. I'm as precious as the person I love most." Use a tone of voice you'd use to a beloved child, or even a dear household pet. Seriously, go try it.

Snowflakes also reflect a physical anomaly of water—its expansion upon freezing, in contrast to most liquids. As they solidify, water molecules trap space, which lowers their density. This property is responsible for burst pipes in winter. More consequentially, it makes the world as we know it possible, since otherwise ice would sink and bodies of water would freeze from the bottom up, upending oceanic dynamics.

As I was writing this, I glanced out the window at a faint shower of snow clumps. Feathery light and far apart, they drifted down and around lazily, unbound, it seemed, by the forces of gravity. The brief shower lasted just a few minutes, leaving only a faint shimmering of white. But it was a reminder that snowfall, like snowflakes, come in an endless variety. They can wreak havoc. Or, they can be a delight.

—Janet Jensen

Or not. No need to change, right? We don't really have to think of ourselves as supremely valuable, and think of others as just the same, do we? Can't we just stay with the same old attitude and expect a different outcome? Or, as Renee Harvitt sings on her new CD, *Alright Already*, "Here we are in all of our sweet, self-sabotaging, glory."

Maybe it's time to let our self-sabotage die a worthy death. Honor it as a habit that used to be useful, and then let it skittle off to catch up with 2018. Maybe it's time for each of us to put our own oxygen mask on first, then reach out

to some of the rest of the valuable cargo here on planet Earth. Maybe it's time to follow the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." It doesn't say "...instead of you." It's both-and, or not at all.

Which brings me full spiral to the end of my last month's article. Though the old year is history, and the old article with it, the need is still alive. I mentioned then that the number of children still being held after forcible separation from their families at our southern border was down to seventy. That lower number is still something to celebrate. But we still have plenty of other people in need of help scattered all around this country. Some are folks whose intention here is to seek



Indoor flowering plants like this amaryllis can make such a difference at this time of year. They require a bit of attention, but they're definitely worth the care we take of them. Maybe this time of year is also time to take a look at our own self-care.

—Photo by Mary Kate Jordan

asylum. Other folks in need may have had ancestors who immigrated to these shores in 1620, 1779, or 1890. Many Californians are still not back on their feet after the recent fires. And we certainly have plenty of cold, hungry people in need right here in the Berkshires.

Again, make sure you've put your own oxygen mask on first. Then, once your own worthiness of care is secure in your heart, reach out to assist more folks this year than you did last year. Leap in. Go for it. And if you'd like some theme music for the journey, consider Renee Harvitt's new CD, *Alright Already*. There's no self-sabotage there, except for the line I quoted. You can reach her at reeneharvitt.com.

—Mary Kate Jordan

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Listen To The Mockingbird

The Northern Mockingbird, formerly primarily a southern bird, has gradually increased its habitat northward and now it is common to most of New England, and is enjoyed as one of the true singers of our natural world. It is classified in Latin as *Mimus polyglottos*, meaning “many-tongued mimic.” It has become a year-round resident in this area, with only a minor southerly migration for winter. It is renowned for a vast vocabulary of up to two hundred or more songs. Each tune is usually repeated from three to six times during the day, as well as at night, during the mating season. It is believed that as the male expands his song repertoire, he becomes more attractive to females looking for a mate. Perhaps like the crooning of Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra, the mockingbird’s soothing moonlight performances might encourage a prospective female’s romantic inclination.

Most people do not know that a mockingbird has also learned a similarly wide range of sounds emanating from inanimate objects. It can imitate loud laughter, the ring of an alarm clock, a telephone ringing, door bells, and various alarms, causing exasperation to anyone reacting to a false household alarm. It can mimic a train whistle or a siren from a fire house. As in my illustration, it can also pick up a holiday tune being rung from the bell tower of a church. Perhaps seasonal Christmas carols such as “Silver



Bells,” or “The Bells of St. Mary’s” would be appropriate for this mimic.

We may never understand completely which sounds this bird selects to emulate, but two physical features of its ability to vocalize are worthy of explanation. The construction of the mockingbird’s vocal organ aids its capacity of mimicry. Mammals’ sound-producing membranes are down in the throat close to the lungs, whereas the mockingbird has seven pair of membrane muscles much higher up in the syrinx. So a vocal pitch is sent through the windpipe that resonates like the tube in the horn of a trumpet. Thus, what goes into the ear, comes out loud and clear through the surface of the voice box, resonating loud and clear.

At one time in this country, prior to the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1918, young mockingbirds were taken from the nest to be sold for domestication, like parrots or parakeets, endangering their dwindling population in the south. But the quality of these captured birds’ songs did not come close to those in the wild. Charles Darwin remarked how it developed such a remarkably broad vocabulary in its evolution. Native American Choctaws called it “the bird that can speak foreign tongues.” This ability has inspired countless popular songs, lullabies, paintings, poems, and literature. The most famous is the song title of this article, “Listen To The Mockingbird,” written in 1855, having sold twenty million copies of sheet music

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December Contributions

Thank you to these folks who remembered the *Monterey News* during the dark days of December.

Mike & Laura Arnow
Enid Michelman
Francine Eget
Louise Amstead
Robert Johnson
Andrew Somers

Transfer Station Winter Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

since then. It is romantic verses about a young man dreaming of a mockingbird singing over the grave of his lost lover.

I will leave you with the musical image of this mockingbird, whose song is now intertwined with the sentimental life of mankind. We imagine its songs being about mortal life, love, family, and friends, orchestrated in tune with all the natural environmental blessings, and is appropriately brought to mind at this time of holiday celebration.

—George B. Emmons

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MONTEREY RECOLLECTIONS (Continued)

I have been asked what I recall about winter activity in the teens. Aside from assigned household chores, including bring-in wood, sliding was very popular, as was skiing, which for most of us was on barrel staves with toe straps. I think I once obtained a couple of rather thin boards about 3 inches wide and tried to bend one end up, runner-fashion, but it didn't work any too well, so I stuck with the barrel staves which were then always plentiful.

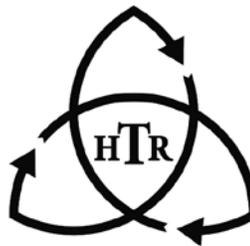
There was one particular Saturday which comes back to me. As I have said, the steep hill beside the schoolhouse was great, and this Saturday quite a crust had formed, enough to bear one's weight with a little powder snow on top.

We were living at the present Brookbend, so I was the first one there, followed by the Gregory kids, and it was nothing at all to whiz across the road, down into the meadow, across an ice bridge, and up the next slope a ways.

The word got around; soon people of all ages were trying it out, among them Elmer Kinne, who must have been into his 60's.

Not only did everyone "have a ball", but the same conditions prevailed for several days more.

Linda Thorpe provided a continuation of last month's recollections by Dwight Campbell about winter fun in the village.



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Winter Wildlife November and December

The bobcat is back (or maybe never has left) at Ray Norrell's place on Blue Hill Road, and Lynn Ryan has sent another photo of the wild cat against the snow there (at right). Ray also wrote of seeing a red fox on the lower part of his hay field. The fox stopped, "bounced" on the packed snow, and then moved on. This is the way some dog relatives get through a snow crust to the mouse tunnels below, often with good results.

Several folks have seen remarkable, healthy, bushy foxes in the last month, including me. Here in East Monterey, we have a fox leaving tracks in the snow every day, and finally I was lucky enough to look out the window at just the right time and see the perfect, gorgeous fox walking unconcernedly by our doorway and then up the hill on the path to the garden, where I go every morning to see the sun coming up. So now when I see those tracks I can picture their author.

We also saw a fine fox cross Route 23 heading south at the Schicks' old place, and Ed Salsitz of Beartown Mountain Road saw a fox at his neighbor's over Thanksgiving. Ed has been studying his bird feeders and grey squirrels and put up a deflector of clear plastic, a large convex cup facing down the pole. This did not slow the squirrel at all and Ed and Arrie



got some photos of this wild Houdini out-maneuvering the device, the "Baffle."

Ed also told of a couple of deer crossing Route 23 down on "the Flats" which is the level, straight stretch of road just east of the Roadside Store. A doe went across, and then a buck, the first Ed had seen. At this time of year the bucks have their antlers grown and up, quite visible. At other times, the antlers have been shed and it's not so easy to tell a buck from a doe.

David LeBeau wrote of seeing a low-flying bald eagle in Goshen, Connecticut, over Route 63. Besides this, David and Phyllis have been noting tracks in the snow—rabbits and domestic cats, with "no contact evidenced between them."

Mickey Jervas called to tell about two coyotes she has seen, one on Swann Road and the other over on Stonybrook Road. She also has seen a bobcat crossing Route 23 on the Flats, and at the end of November, she had bear tracks coming up onto the porch at her house. This is the latest bear sighting I know about for this year, winter 2018-19.



Wendy Jensen

Maybe the most unexpected news we have comes from a correspondent (who wishes to remain anonymous), who sent a photo (above) to support his having seen an Arctic Cuckoo recently in these parts. Here is his report:

"A very rare Arctic Cuckoo, found swimming in a Monterey stream alongside an ice floe in a local brook (location withheld to prevent capture or worse). The downward posture is believed to be to aid searching for crayfish."

That's all the wild that's fit to print here in Monterey, except to say that here at my house the "long-bodied cellar spiders" have disappeared. We take great care not to do them any harm, no dusting, no vacuuming around the windows. And then one day they have vanished. We'll be glad to see them back, and will certainly make a note in the wildlife report.

Thank you for all of your reports, your enthusiasm for the wild.

—Bonner McAllester
528-9385, bonnermca@gmail.com

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Monterey*

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Monterey Library Photo Blog

The library building continues to move ahead. The carpenters are busy building up the framing on top of the new foundation.

The foundation has a three-layer waterproofing system: an asphalt primer, a butyl membrane, and then a dimpled sheet for shedding water. The foundation will then be insulated with three inches of semi-rigid rockwool which does not absorb water.

To stay current with the progress, go to the library website, montereymasslibrary.org, and click on the banner at the top of the home page. Library director Mark Makuc has been documenting the project and uploading the photographs.



Monterey Community A Google Group

I am forming “Monterey-Community,” an email-based Google group. It is intended as a simple, community-building channel. My hope is that we might have robust conversations about whatever is on the minds of Monterey citizens.

Our group is a no-cost, no advertising network of email threads over common questions (Where to get some firewood?) or more general information (How can I read minutes from public meetings?). I will moderate the group, so when you send an email to monterey-community@googlegroups.com your email will be safely distributed to the whole of the membership. Right now, it is a small group; hopefully, with your support, it will grow.

My experience with neighboring towns’ groups leads me to believe that Monterey would benefit by having a similar group. Maggie’s List has been active in New Marlborough for quite a while and serves a valuable function there. We have other means of communicating within town—the *Monterey News*, and Facebook channels. Monterey-Community is not intended to compete with these channels, but can provide connections in a broader and more timely way.

Email me (below) to join in.

—Chris Blair
monterey-community@googlegroups.com

From the Tax Collector

The fiscal year 2019 real estate and personal property third quarter tax bills have been mailed and are due February 1. If you do not receive your bill, please contact the tax collector’s office at (413) 528-1443 x117. These bills are the actual tax bills for fiscal year 2019 and reflect the new assessments and tax rate. You will receive another bill for the fourth quarter in late March (due May 1). However, if you wish, you may pay both the third and fourth quarters now.

To accommodate taxpayers who want the convenience of paying Monterey real estate and personal property taxes online, an online payment option is available. To pay your tax, you must have your current bill and checkbook/credit card in hand.

Log on to montereyma.gov and click on Pay Taxes Online. You will need to enter your current bill number and the current bill year (2019). The bank will assess a minimal fee of \$0.25 per transaction. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards will be accepted. Please note the credit card company will charge the taxpayer a fee for the service. This fee is not assessed by or paid to the Town of Monterey.

Questions regarding personal property, assessments, abatements, or exemptions should be directed directly to the board of assessors at (413) 528-1443 x115. The deadline to submit applications for abatements is February 1.

The Tax Collector’s office will be closed on Saturday, January 26.

—Mari Enoch
Tax Collector

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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.

MontereyMA.gov

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

Meetings and Events

Board of Health: Monday, January 7, at 4 p.m.

Conservation Commission: Wednesday, January 9, at 6 p.m.

Council on Aging: Mondays, January 14 and 28, at 10 a.m.

Visiting Nurse: Berkshire VNA will be here on Thursday, January 10, from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment necessary.

Parks Commission: Wednesday, January 2 at 6 p.m.

Planning Board: Thursdays, January 10 and 24, at 7 p.m.

Select Board: Wednesday, January 9 at 4 p.m., and January 23 at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Town Hall Closings

Town hall will be closed Tuesday, January 1 for New Year's Day and Monday, January 21 for Martin Luther King Day.

Most individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message. We recommend always calling ahead.

Other News

On December 13, the select board hosted a holiday party for town employees and volunteers. This festive event was attended by more than sixty cheerful firefighters, public works crew, various board and committee members, families, and even a delightful baby. Many thanks to Melissa Noe, Terry Walker, Shawn Tryon, and many other helpers for arranging this delicious event.

As we head into the New Year, why not consider joining those who do so much for all of us in Monterey? Step up and find out about participating on a town board or committee, volunteer at a library event, try out a different activity at the community center, get involved! Melissa will have a list of opportunities and contacts available at the town hall. Ring in the New Year with a new interest right here in Monterey. Wishing all our neighbors, friends and families a very merry 2019.

— Carol Edelman, Chair
Kenn Basler and Don Coburn
Monterey Select Board
(carol@montereyma.gov)
(kenn@montereyma.gov)
(don@montereyma.gov)

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

Open positions on town boards

Board of Appeals-alternate	5 years
Care of Soldiers' Graves	3 years
Conservation Commission	3 years
Council on Aging	3 years
Cultural Council	3 years
Field Driver	3 years
Memorial Day Coordinator	3 years
Board of Assessors	3 years*
Parks Commission	3 years*

*Unfilled terms are appointed until the next elections.

Please contact administrative assistant, Melissa Noe, for further information.

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Calendar

Tuesdays: Chair yoga, with Connie Wilson, 9 a.m., community center. Sponsored by the parks commission.

Tuesdays, January 8 to January 29: Singing for All, 7 to 8:15 p.m., community center. See page 5.

Thursdays, January 3 and 17: Darn Yarners, 1 to 3 p.m., community center. See page 5.

Thursdays, January 3 to January 31: Dancersize, community center. See page 5.

Thursdays, January 19 and 26: Ping pong, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., community center. See page 5.

Tuesday, January 8: Movie night, *Kinky Books*, 7 p.m., town hall. See page 3.

Thursday, January 10: Berkshire Visiting Nurse wellness clinic, 2 to 3 p.m., town hall. See page 3.

Sunday, January 13: Bidwell History Talk Replay, Simon Winchester, 1 p.m., community center. See page 15.

To subscribe to a printable monthly calendar via email, write to monterey-news9@gmail.com, and put "calendar email" in the subject line or text area. Print it (one page) and forward it.

Monday, January 14: Lake Garfield Working Group, 7 p.m., town hall. See page 9.

Wednesday, January 16: Community potluck supper, 6 p.m. See page 8.

Saturday, January 19: Lenox Contra Dance, live music, all dances are called. 8 to 11 p.m., Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. Contact 528-4007. Lenox-ContraDance.org.

Sunday, January 20: *Monterey News* deadline.

Monday, January 21: Skating party, 2 p.m. See page 12.

Thursday, January 24: Foot nurse, 9 a.m., at town hall. See page 3.

Monday, January 28: Adult book group at 7:30 p.m. *The Great Alone*, by Kristin Hannah. See page 5.

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.

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Sunday	10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

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 Department: 528-1443

x118 buildingsafety@montereyma.gov

Community Center: 528-3600

center@ccmonterey.org

Fire Department (non-emergency):

528-3136

chief@montereyma.gov

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

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.



MONTEREY NEWS

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*Contributions from local artists this month:
Maureen Banner, pgs. 1, 8; Chris Carnese, p. 15;
George Emmons, p. 18; Bonner McAllester, pgs. 1, 14.*

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