

MONTEREY NEWS

December 2019
Est. 1970 Vol. XLVIII · Number 12



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

Chief Backhaus not only drove me home,
he offered to pick up lunch for me.

Letters-Thank you MPD page 6

Do you like to cook? Do you like to try
new recipes and share them with friends?
Do you like to talk about food?

Cookbook Club Beginning page 9

If I am the successful bidder, my plan
is to form a nonprofit to stabilize the
building, and seek permission to move it
from its current location, to the Monterey
Community Center property.

Monterey Schoolhouse page 4

We can't be having hunks of garbably
goop sticking to containers, or half-full
jars of pickles.

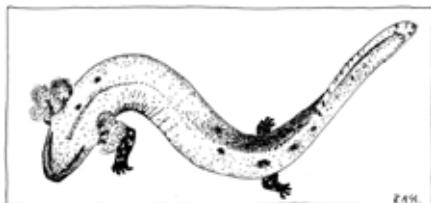
Talkin' (about) Trash page 17

When asked about it, he simply said,
“He got to use it, I figure that’s payment
enough.” The proprietor probably figured
it’s best to let sleeping dogs lie.

The Cement Mixer page 19

Today there are only about four hundred
right whales left in the world, and 85% of
them have suffered from entanglements
from fishing nets.

Right Whales in Fishing Gear page 18



Mudpuppies and Moose page 21

Right: Steven Weisz, Monterey Select Board;
John Szablowski, Hume NE; and Stephen
Kelleher, Vertex Towers. See page 3.



On Thursday, December 5, at 7 p.m., a
special town meeting will convene at
the firehouse. Some of the subjects are
of particular interest, so a large turnout
would be appropriate.

In My View page 2

It reminds me of the scarecrow in the
Wizard of Oz, pointing crossed arms in
different directions.

Letters-Broadband page 4

This program will provide residents
who have unwanted or expired medicine
the opportunity to drop them off at the
Monterey Police Department for safe and
secure disposal.

Unwanted Medicines Kiosk page 5

So starting on Friday, January 3, and for
the following four Fridays in January, we
will be hosting a playgroup for children
from birth to five years old.

Library News page 6

The chestnut blight which began a
century ago, killed virtually all—four
billion—American chestnut trees in a
period of some forty years. The Great
New England Hurricane of 1938 toppled
an estimated two billion trees.

A Ramble Through the Woods page 14



“These boats connect through light.”
Knox Gallery- Connections page 7

In My View



As the end of the calendar year fast approaches, I invite you to review the state of our town. I believe you will agree that though the times are challenging, the town remains a hospitable place in which to live and raise a family, and the government continues to respond intelligently and energetically.

Our delightful new library is serving the community well, the use of our community center continues to increase, work on the general store renovations is surging, the million-dollar Blue Hill Road and culvert project, funded by a grant from the state, has been completed. The grant was obtained by the diligent work of Terry Walker, town clerk, and the installation was carefully supervised by Shawn Tryon, Director of Operations.

Also, the new cell tower, located on the Hume property, is being constructed, and it appears that Verizon will use it, as well as AT&T.

Finally, the attorney general has filed a written opinion approving Monterey's ban on selling or growing marijuana, which was adopted at the last town meeting and confirmed by subsequent vote at the general election.

Special Town Meeting

On Thursday, December 5, at 7 p.m., a special town meeting will convene at the firehouse. Some of the subjects are of particular interest, so a large turnout would be appropriate.

A short while ago, the select board learned that the company providing accounting and treasurer services, Baystate Municipal, was going out of business at the end of December. Given the time constraints, an intense effort began to find replacements. In a search led by select board member Kenn Basler, with

administrative assistant Melissa Noe's assistance, we were able to locate two excellent candidates: Sara Hunter as treasurer, and Eric Kinsher as accountant. Both were highly recommended by our auditor, our software company, surrounding towns, and the Department of Revenue. Sara is the treasurer in Uxbridge and Blandford. Eric's company is located in the eastern part of the commonwealth and will be working under a regional municipal accounting services agreement between the the town and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, located in Springfield.

To finalize these agreements, the town will be asked at the special town meeting for two transfers from free cash to cover the needed services through the end of our fiscal year.

The second major issue for the special town meeting is the select board's request for permission to apply for a municipal vulnerability preparedness state grant. The grant's purpose is to have an engineering study of the old stone dam behind the library and the Route 23 culvert next to the town hall. The culvert appears to need replacement, which is a major project in itself, and the town needs to decide whether the dam should be repaired, replaced, or removed.

The third issue is the select board's request for permission to sell the old Route 23 schoolhouse.

The fourth issue asks for a transfer from free cash of \$15,000 for the legal fees that may arise from litigation involving citizen appeals from actions taken by two town boards.

Governing is not easy. And there have been times recently when members of the select board have been at odds. But there are two points worth noting. First, differences have not interfered with decision making based solely on the interests of the residents of Monterey, and our relations have improved to the point that we are functioning even better and enjoying facing the town's challenges together in harmony.

—Don Coburn
Monterey Select Board

Editor's Note: In My View is an opportunity, for select board members 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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In My View Cell Tower Progress



Monday, November 18, a new cell tower went up at Hume Lake. What you may or may not know, is that it took over ten years to get it built.

Monterey has always needed two cell towers to provide town-wide service to our citizens. The first tower in the western part of town was built by a contractor of AT&T. At that time, the cellular carriers were in a race to get as many subscribers as possible.

Ten years ago, cell service was considered an “extravagance” to some, and a “nuisance” to others. So when progress on the second tower stopped, no one made much noise about it.

Today, cell phones and cellular technology have become an essential service. Not only do they provide access to the internet and email, but they have become a lifeline for those who find themselves in an emergency situation. Countless lives have been saved because folks can contact the emergency services of the police and fire and rescue, and their families, without need of a regular corded telephone.

Ironically, as cell service has become more essential in our lives, the cellular companies have become less interested in reaching rural and sparsely populated areas, such as Monterey. Today, the carriers have gone out of the business of building cell towers and concentrate on cities or other dense markets.

That is why the Monterey Select Board had to go out and find a builder that would be willing to put up a tower, and then go out and find a property owner willing to have the tower built on their land. This was not an easy task and I can safely say that it would not have been accomplished without the diligent hard work of our town officials, Vertex Towers (the tower builder), and Camp Hume (the property owner).

By this Christmas, AT&T will be the first carrier to service Monterey from both towers. Approximately 85% of the Town will be covered. We have reached out to Verizon to join them, and have been told our town is on their “2020 list.”



The cell tower, due to its height, is quite large at the base and required a massive foundation.

Photos by John Szablowski

To make sure that Verizon locates on both towers, we have enlisted the help of your state representatives in the state house and senate, and our congressman and senators.

The safety of our citizens and guests has always been a priority for me, and the Monterey Select Board. Town-wide cellular service will help ensure that.

— Steven Weisz
Monterey Select Board



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Connections

a community exhibition

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KNOX GALLERY
Monterey Library

Knox Gallery is supported by
The Friends of the Monterey Library

Monterey Schoolhouse A New Future?

A plan for our historic little one-room schoolhouse...

On Thursday, December 5, the town will hold a special town meeting. One of the items on the warrant is the sale of the Monterey schoolhouse.

The building has been in decline for many years, and the lack of use has accelerated that decline. Its façade and foundation are crumbling, and it is coated with asbestos and lead paint. As a lover of history and old buildings, this makes me particularly sad.

That is why I have recused myself from all votes on this issue and shall be bidding to purchase the property.

If I am the successful bidder, my plan is to form a nonprofit to stabilize the building, and seek permission to move it (yes, I said ‘move it’) from its current location, to the Monterey Community Center property.

There, I will work to have the building restored and put back into service for the town.

Perhaps it could be used as a day care center, or senior center, or homework/after-school center...or other uses that have yet to be contemplated.

What I am trying to accomplish here is the preservation of another town treasure (like our library and community center), for the benefit of all.

Wish me luck.

—Steven Weisz

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Letters Broadband

I am a citizen correspondent. I am curious about the progress of building out broadband service to the town from the private business, Fiber Connect, LLC. I do not work for the Town of Monterey, Fiber Connect, or any government or public entity. I have been discussing the slow and inefficient progress of bringing broadband service to town. Those of us without service are talking about what is happening, asking when is it going to happen, and trying to understand who is supposed to do what.

This is what I think: broadband is needed in Monterey: for children and their education; personal business development and maintenance; health and wellness connection with elderly, homebound, and others in need; and for the future of Monterey relative to new citizens, real estate, job creation and/or job migration into Massachusetts, and for interactions between citizens.

At this time there is no broadband committee in Monterey that has current appointment status from the select board. The last appointments expired around June 2019.

The following information was discussed at the regular meeting of the select board on November 9.

Apparently, the town broadcast a Request for Proposal to install broadband. Fiber Connect was the sole respondent. The town created an action plan (I believe required by Massachusetts Broadband Institute [MBI] as a requisite to obtaining state funds) between the town, Fiber Connect, and MBI.

As Senator Hinds's office has informed me in writing, the select board of Monterey selected an, at the time, unvetted company to do our work. That put the responsibility on Fiber Connect to successfully become an “approved partner.” So it is up to Fiber Connect to successfully complete this process—roadblocks here are self imposed.

Successful completion of this process would allow the town to have Fiber Connect’s fiber optic cable pass 96% of the residential premises in town, and to receive the Monterey-designated portion of funding from MBI of approximately \$1.1 million.

“Make ready” is a process between National Grid and Verizon as owners and lessees of the poles, and Fiber Connect. Senator Hinds attends “Last Mile Summits” convened by Lt. Governor Polito to encourage the utilities in “make ready” progress. Fiber Connect is a prime requestor for make ready services. As of this writing, Fiber Connect believes they are bogged down in discussions with the >

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Unwanted Medicines Kiosk

The Monterey Police Department was able to obtain a service and funding grant through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Health's Unwanted Opioid and Benzodiazepine Product Stewardship Program (the "Program"), which is administered by the MED-PROJECT™ (Medication Education & Disposal Project). The Program supports the safe and secure collection of residential unwanted medicine in the Commonwealth through law enforcement agencies. The service grant pays for the unwanted medicine collection kiosk and unwanted medicine disposal. This program will provide residents who have unwanted or expired medicine the opportunity to drop them off at the Monterey Police Department for safe and secure disposal.

—Chief Gareth Backhaus
Monterey Police Department

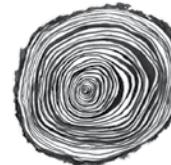


Ice Rink Setup Reminder

Come help set up the hockey rink in the firehouse pavilion on Thursday, December 5, at 9:30 a.m.

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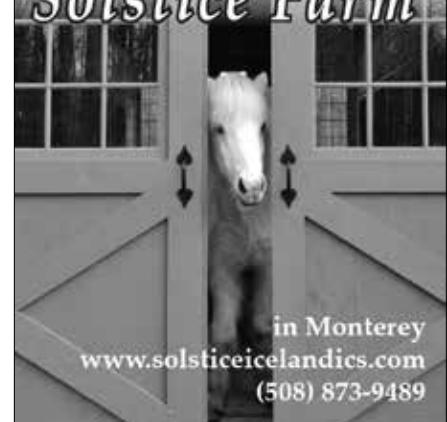
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—Christopher Blair

Thank you.

Library News

The library will be closed on December 25 and January 1, but other than that we are open this holiday season during all our regular hours. Check our website (below) if you don't know what those are (or look on the back page of the *Monterey News*), and if the weather is not looking good for driving because of a winter storm, call ahead 413-528-3795, or check our website.

The new library is allowing us to do things we simply could not do before. So starting on Friday, January 3, and for the following four Fridays in January, we will be hosting a playgroup for children from birth to five years old. There will be free play, story time, songs and more! It's free and no preregistration is required. It is run by South Berkshire Kids, and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. For more information, call 413-464-5095, or email southberkshirekids@gmail.com. We hope to see some of Monterey's youngest generation enjoying their new space in the library. We hope to make this a regular program.

—Mark Makuc
Library Director
MontereyMassLibrary.org



Fridays in January 10 to 11 a.m.
(January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31)

We are taking our playgroup fun to the newly renovated Monterey Library! Join us for free play, storytime, songs and more!! Best for families with children ages birth to 5. This program is free and open to the community, no registration required.



Letters

UPS Driver Paul Retiring

I would like to thank the residents of Monterey for all their help and support over the last fifteen years or so. I've been with United Parcel Service for over forty years, delivering for over thirty-two years. When I started delivering in Monterey I immediately found that everyone here was very friendly, and it was just a pleasure each and every day. From Susan Sellew giving me amazing asparagus to Linda Thorpe taking a delivery for me to the top of Beartown Mountain. I would also like to thank Mark Amstead for pulling me out when I got stuck a few times. The folks at Hume and Gould Farm were always receptive as well. I also want to mention what a highly professional highway department this town has. Every winter they were always on top of everything, and I can't tell you the relief they gave me clearing all the roads.

December 24 will be my last day delivering, as I will be retiring. Thank you



to all the residents of this great town of Monterey.

—Paul Borelli

Your UPS service provider

Editor's note: The dogs all over town are going to miss Paul every bit as much as the residents. His treats were eagerly anticipated.

Letters

Thank you Monterey Police

I am writing to thank and commend Monterey Police Chief Gareth Backhaus and Tyringham Police Chief Patrick Holman. On a recent Tuesday in November, at about 9 a.m., with snow falling and covering ice on the Monterey-Tyringham Road, my car skidded and fishtailed, destroying a utility pole and my car. Police Chief Holman, first on the scene, after making sure I was not injured, called a tow truck and stayed with me until Chief Backhaus arrived. Chief Backhaus not only drove me home, he offered to pick up lunch for me.

Their calmness and helpfulness eased my stress. I am very thankful that we have such understanding and helpful police.

—Lonnie Solomon

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Christmas Eve Service

The Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols will be on Tuesday, December 24, at 7 p.m. Come join in on what is equal parts religious service and community celebration. A warm occasion on what's usually a cold night.

I hope to see you there.

—Rev. Liz Goodman
Pastor and Teacher

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Knox Gallery "Connections" Winter Community Exhibit

Our winter community exhibit, *Connections*, will be on view through Saturday, January 4.

Thanks to all the artists who submitted diverse and exciting pieces that express many interpretations of the theme. We are very happy to have many newcomers participate along with numerous alumni. Our community shows are usually very popular, and we look forward to another successful exhibition. Works over a large price range are available, and we hope visitors will remember that sales of work support the numerous ongoing programs at the library, including the Knox Gallery exhibitions and opening receptions.

"Connections" as a topic inspired many emotional responses and poetic artists' comments. Here are a few:

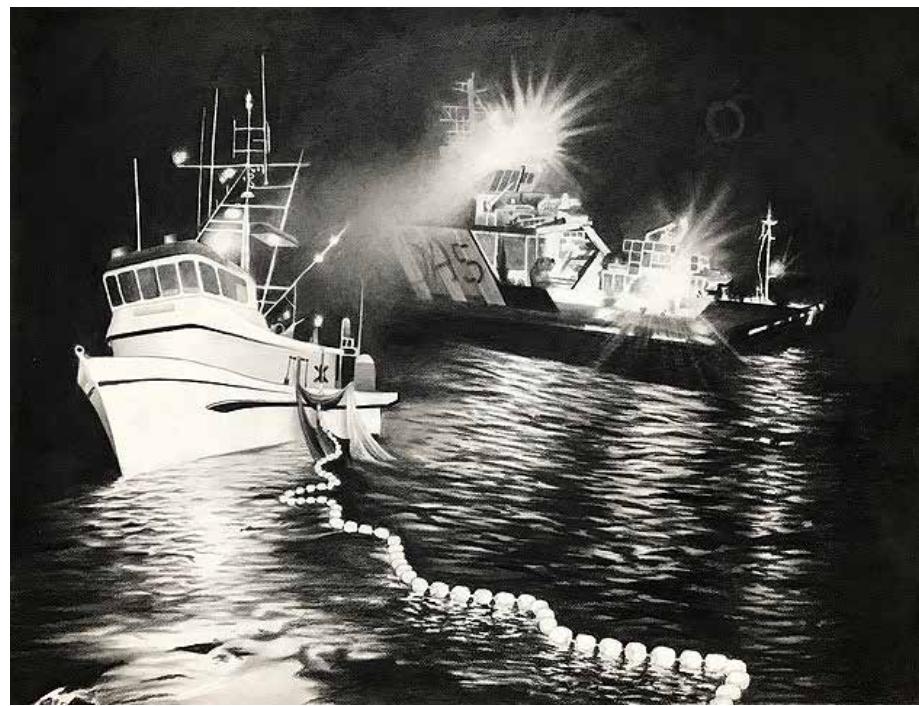
Right: "Plum Blossom," by Tasja Keetman.
(Archival metallic print)

"when I came upon this flowering
plum blossom tree

I was immediately enchanted.
so delicate, so sweet, yet so strong
and full of hope.
plum blossoms are the first to bloom
when winter still holds its reign and
the landscape is frozen barren and cold ;
they persevere and unfold in their
ephemeral beauty as the earth awakens.
so the plum blossom came to
symbolize perseverance and hope,
as well as transitory beauty, purity,
and the fleeting nature of life.

all of this I did not know, yet felt
deeply.
for me this photo celebrates our deep
connection to nature's innate wisdom"

Exhibiting artists include Yura Adams, Cynthia Atwood, Maureen Banner, Joe Baker, Doreen Beller, Leslie Carmin, Christine Christinat, David Coon, Midori Curtis, Olivia DePreter, Annabel Edelman, Ann Getsinger, Christine Brunoski Goldfinger, Sharon Gregory, Guzman, Pat Hogan, Mickey Jervas, Tasja Keetman, Lanna Knoll, Philip Knoll, Ellen Murtagh, Sue Muskat, Pauline Nault, Marilyn Orner, Kristen Palazzo, Kit Patten, Alex Rodriguez-Benjamin, Ellen Russo, Julie Shapiro, Marc Simmons, Ellie Spangler,



Above: "Two Boats," by Lanna Knoll. "These boats connect through light. Interpreting their interaction is up to the viewer." (Graphite on paper)



Above: "Hold Still," by Napasorn Visuthiwat ("TK"). (Graphite on paper)

"The hands depict a connection, the relationship between generations, inspired by the fact that I am far from my home and family."

November 2019 Contributions

Natalie Powell
Bob & Janice Adams
Ann & John Higgins
Judy & Simeon Brinberg
Judith Friedman

One contribution was received in memory of:

Susan McAllester,
David McAllester,
Beryl McAllester, and
Burling McAllester.

—MaryPaul Yates

Monterey Community Center

The Monterey Community Center continues to be the place to go for all sorts of fun activities and opportunities to socialize. With the cold weather upon us, some winter renewal with chair yoga might be in order.

Chair Yoga

This is the season to restore and rejuvenate, to send energy into your roots as the plants are doing, to rest and renew as the animals are doing. Chair yoga provides the perfect opportunity to take time for yourself to stretch and strengthen as you connect to body, mind, and breath. Monterey chair yoga, led by Connie Wilson, has been an ongoing class since 2012. We practice in chairs or use chairs as props for support. Every class is a new experience—constantly responding to new ways our bodies want to move. People of all shapes, sizes, and fitness levels benefit from the physical experience of yoga, as well as the gift of time-out-of-time, time to be with yourself in a different way than usual.

Connie is a professional Kripalu-certified yoga teacher, leading classes for groups and individuals since 2002. Combining traditional yoga poses with creative movement is Connie's way of providing a unique experience that truly originates from deep within. Her classes

M-C-C: Meet, Create, Cultivate

are known for their flowing pace and rhythm. Students' individual strengths and needs are met with compassion and skill, encouraging deep self-awareness and yoga as meditation in motion.

Starting in January, Monterey's chair yoga classes at the community center will meet at a new time Tuesday mornings, from 10 to 11. The classes are sponsored by the Monterey Parks Commission so there is no charge to Monterey residents. The new year is a great time to make a commitment to yourself. Join in and see for yourself the ways in which yoga can enrich your life. If you have any questions or would like more information, call Connie at 413-528-3798. Hope to see you soon in our circle of yoga.

December

Coming up at the community center is the Hume Cookie Swap on Saturday morning, December 7, at 10. The first meeting of the cookbook club will be held on Friday, December 13, from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. The featured cookbook this month is *Celebrate!* By Sheila Lukins. Choose your recipe from the book at the Monterey Library and make a dish to share at the MCC. (See article on page 9.)

If you are interested in some no-stress chess, relax and play chess with our own host, Joe Makuc, on Thursday, December

ccmonterey.org, go to "Events"

26, at 7 p.m. You won't be timed. No phone ringing, no presents to open or to give. The present you give yourself is the time to unwind with a game of chess. Please try to bring your own board and set. Cookies will be served. You don't need to register, just show up. Any questions, call 413-528-3600.

January

Interested in improving your game of ping pong? Come to the MCC on January 18 to get some expert instruction from Berkshire County Ping Pong champion, Steve Graves. Steve, a resident of Otis, occasionally joins in the Saturday afternoon games and has been known to be an aggressive opponent. However, he also challenges and encourages participants to play their best game. He has graciously volunteered to provide some tips for interested players, as a way of giving back to the town of Monterey. If you want some tips from the best, come to the MCC on January 18, from 2 to 4 p.m.

There will be another free session about the college search process on Saturday, January 25, at 10 a.m. "College Talk and Tips: Questions and Answers" will be led by Sue Young, the college process coach. High school juniors and seniors, and even freshmen and sophomores, along with their parents, can

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submit questions about the college search and application process via email and have them answered at this free event. As with her November presentation, "How to be a Smart College Shopper," Sue will focus on how to choose the right school for the right price, along with other important college search and application questions, such as, "What is the first question you have to answer before you start your college search?" Prior to the event, the questions will be posted on the College Process Coach's Facebook page so you can see all the topics that you will hear about and tips you will learn by attending this session. It is never too soon to start preparing for college. For more information or to pre-register and submit your questions, email collegeprocesscoach@gmail.com, or call Sue at 413.854.5048. You do not need to submit a question to attend. Pre-registration is requested so you can be notified in the event that the College Talk and Tips session has to be rescheduled due to inclement weather. (See "College Shopping Tips" on page 17.)

Coffeehouse Series

Unfortunately, the coffeehouse featuring Linda Worster on November 8 had to be cancelled due to illness. However, we are hoping to reschedule this and begin a series of quarterly coffeehouses soon. Stay tuned for further information.

Ongoing Activities

Al-Anon: Sundays at 9 a.m.

Mahjong: Mondays at 7 p.m., and Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m., except December 25.

Chair Yoga: Tuesdays at 9 a.m. (10 a.m. starting in January)

Cards and Bridge: Tuesdays and Fridays, at 1 p.m.

Community Chorus: Tuesdays at 7 p.m., except December 24 and 31.

Darn Yarners: The first and third Thursday of the month, at 1 p.m. (December 5 and 19).

Canasta (for experienced players): Thursdays at 7 p.m., except for December 26.

Ping Pong: Saturdays at 2 p.m.

—Laurie Shaw

MCC Committee Chair

Cookbook Club Beginning

Do you like to cook? Do you like to try new recipes and share them with friends? Do you like to talk about food? How about lunch in the lovely Monterey Community Center once a month?

A new cookbook club is starting on Friday, December 13, at 11:45 a.m., at the community center. But first you must head to the library and peruse the chosen cookbook of the month, which for this month is *Celebrate!* by Sheila Luskin (co-author of *The Silver Palate*). The book is stationed behind the circulation desk and you should take it to a nearby chair and enjoy. Find a recipe that interests you, make a copy to take home and place a post-it note on that page with your name on it so others will know that recipe is taken. On the day of our meeting, make your recipe as written, and bring it along with your own place setting to the community center. We will have lunch together and talk about each recipe.



This idea comes from the Stockbridge Library, and is a way for us to enjoy our two new exciting community spaces in town, the library and the community center, as well as food and friends. If you are interested, please email Wendy Jensen at wendygj@gmail.com.

Hope to see you there! *Bon appetit!*
—Wendy Jensen and Susan Johnson

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Council on Aging

I hope everyone has called to get a seat for the Mount Everett senior holiday luncheon and concert at noon on December 5. If not, call the Sheffield Senior Center at 413-229-7037. It's a great meal and a wonderful concert, all done by the students,

The Monterey Council on Aging board will be meeting just once in the month of December, on Monday, December 9, 10 a.m. at town hall. We are still working on the prospect of an outreach worker.

The movie this month is *Chicago*, a 2002 American musical crime comedy/drama film, exploring the themes of celebrity, scandal, and corruption in Chicago during the jazz age. It stars Renee Zellweger, Catherine Zeta-Jones, and Richard Gere, and won multiple Oscars. It will be shown at 7:30 p.m., (please note time change) Tuesday, December 10, at town hall.

The Berkshire Visiting Nurse will have a wellness clinic on Thursday, December 12, from 2 to 3 p.m., at town hall. No appointments necessary.

Regional Councils Meeting

In January, we are hosting the regional Councils on Aging on Monday, January 13, at 10 a.m., at the community center. Vicky Linscott from elder services is a social worker who is their caregiver coordinator. She will be presenting their "Family Caregiver Support Program," which includes multiple kinds of support, such as support groups, community referrals, and one-on-one counseling. This meeting is open to everyone in the southern Berkshire area.

—Kyle Pierce
Chair, Council on Aging

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Community Potluck

December 18

Tom Ryan, our state Department of Conservation and Recreation forester, spoke enthusiastically at the November potluck of his love of forestry and how he and his family ended up right back near where he grew up. We learned the history of the Berkshire landscape since colonial times, and I, for one, a veteran tree-hugger, understood that it isn't always wrong to cut down a tree. (See "A Ramble Through the Woods" on page 14.)

For the December potluck, we have Egremont writer Eleanor Windman. She is a retired designer who, she says "at eighty-two years old, started writing to keep old age from blindsiding me—it worked, I've found something I love to do." During the past three years, she has participated in the San Miguel Literary Sala, the Iowa Summer Writing Festival, and Women of Woodstock.

She will be reading two personal essays that are part of a memoir that she has been working on for the last few years.

Please join us at the next Monterey community potluck dinner on Wednesday, December 18, 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.

—Kyle Pierce

"Monterey News" for January

Due to Christmas and travel plans around New Year's, the January issue might not be available until the end of the first full week of the month. For mailed copies this might make delivery very late.

Heartflow

Celebrate the Housatonic River

Celebrate the coming of longer days in recognition of the watershed that has literally shaped our south county.

Join us in Sheffield on December 21 for the winter solstice "Heartflow," a community celebration in music, song, meditation, education, and dedication in honor of the Housatonic River and its watershed, and indeed, the priceless gift of water.

When: Saturday, December 21, 1 to 3 p.m.

Where: Sheffield Yoga Studio, 1224 North Main Street, Sheffield (on Route 7, 2.9 miles south of Guido's in Great Barrington)

Who: Families and people of all ages are invited to participate in this observance hosted by Rights of Nature-Berkshires.

Why: To recognize, honor, and protect the Housatonic River and all Earth's waterways.

This is a free event but donations are welcome for the use of the space. Please dress appropriately for a short procession at the beginning and end of this celebration. Sorry, no pets.

—Janet Jensen

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Remembrance Raymond Wallace Tryon

Ray Tryon, 90, of Monterey, died Saturday, November 16, at home surrounded by his loving family.

Ray was born September 28, 1929, in Monterey, son of Albert Wallace and Marquerite (Stedman) Tryon. From a young age, he was fascinated with machinery and had an intuitive sense about how things worked. He spent his free time in the backyard creating prototypes for a snowplow on a tractor (when the only known plows were on horses) and a front loader (before there was such a thing). He was a graduate of the former Searles High School class of 1948. Because of his mechanical genius, he was awarded a full scholarship to the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

He founded Tryon Construction, an excavation and site work company known throughout the Berkshires for its quality work. Ray was appointed to the Monterey Fire Department in 1953 and served as fire chief for fifty-five years. He was a fierce advocate for the fire service and worked to build a new Monterey fire station, and laid the groundwork to support a robust paid call department in an era in which small town fire departments were struggling to survive. He mentored many young firefighters and was a member of the Fire Chiefs Association, even after his retirement.

He was also active in Monterey town politics throughout his life. He served as town constable for sixty-six years, from 1953-2019, and held various



A celebration of life was held in Ray's honor at the firehouse on Saturday, November 23. It was well attended by Monterey folks and firefighters and others from the whole region.

other positions including fire warden, gas inspector, and election warden. At various times in his life, he was a member of the conservation commission, capital highway improvement committee, safety committee, veterans' memorial committee, and historical committee.

Ray had a team of Percheron horses who lived in his backyard barn, and he spent time showing them at regional fairs with his family. He also enjoyed playing softball for the infamous team, the Monterey Mothers. In his retirement, he kept himself busy refurbishing old Caterpillar bulldozers as a member of the Caterpillar Machinery Owners Club, being an active member of Monterey Coffee Club, ballroom dancing, and keeping up with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Those who loved Ray will remember him for his mental sharpness, his ability to never mince words, his no-nonsense approach to life, and his steadfast commitment to his community and family.

Ray is survived by his wife, June (Champigny) Tryon; son Leigh Tryon (Wendy), daughter Kathie Tryon (Raymond Becker); grandchildren Shawn (Carly) and Christopher (Cara); and great-grandchildren Ian, Phoebe, and Owen.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made out to the

Monterey Fire Company in care of the Birches-Roy funeral home, 33 South St., Great Barrington, MA 01230. Condolences may be made through birchesroyfuneralservices.com.

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Here's a Thought...

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies...

When I moved to the Berkshires, I came home to my childhood night sky. I lived in Manhattan between childhood and the Berkshires, so the difference was significant and heart-warming for a dark-sky fan like me.

I fell in love with the winter night sky when I was still young enough to be cozy-carried into the house from my parents' car. For all of my school years, except kindergarten, I lived in the country surrounded by a few neighbors, some majestic old maples, poplars, white chestnuts, and a neighbor's L-shaped pasture. The same neighbor's wheat field stretched for wide-open acres across the street, so there was plenty of room for the night sky to arch overhead in ways that spoke to my soul in every season.

This felt connection was—is—permanent, but went on AWOL for most of my twenties. I'd moved to the city. Neither Queens, nor most of Manhattan, was conducive to star gazing.

My last New York apartment was on the (very) Upper East side, more south of East Harlem than north of Beekman Place. It was exactly what I'd been hoping for: secure; gas stove in the kitchen; closet space; hardwood floors; blue tiles in the bathroom. I hadn't asked for the five flights I had to walk up and down with laundry or groceries, but they became an exercise in appreciating great exercise. I also hadn't asked for that apartment's greatest gift to me because it hadn't occurred to me as possible. I had a view of the night sky that included, at times, a few bright stars. So when I arrived here, I was more than ready to see more than three or four of them at once.

Like skiing, winter stargazing's a local opportunity not to be missed and, admittedly, some of our Monterey skies are more spacious now that the leaves have fallen. So, along with celebrating the spiritual and cultural feasts of light gracing us with their presence this month, why not spend a little dark-night-sky time outdoors on some of our (hopefully) cloud-free December nights? The feast of lights overhead deserves our attention, too.

— Mary Kate Jordan



Here's a seasonal star from the heart of the earth.



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The birds are served on this cold winter day.
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friends.
They bring music to our ears, one of my favorite trends.

—Margaret Vorck

Who Dared

(for my mother Charlotte Iczkovics Neufeld)

When I write about you, you stand beside me.
Impossibly, we're together again
defying death, returning to a garden—
to Eden lost—where you were happy and free.

Surmounting fate, earth's fires, silenced places,
life's currents of loss, surviving, to touch home:
Jerusalem around us—not a dream.
On Carmel, a sea breeze kisses our faces.

We ride blue waves beyond the clear light of years
to Carmel's sun-filled shore where the sea still sings
of how you crossed storms of war on the wings
of a dove. Gave birth here—despite your fears.

Dared to live, love after a sea of losses.
Lived open-hearted through storms and silences.

—Amos Neufeld

“Who Dared” appeared in the poetry journal *Shirim* (2019)

Free in this Field of Hay

(for my grandparents: Yitzhak and Sarah Iczkovics, and Alexander
and Perl Neufeld)

You rose to fields of hay glowing in dawn's light,
a wealth of family around you. Stood tall,
unbowed, shouldered a world, praised days burning bright,
not knowing a flesh-fired whirlwind would take all

your fields and gardens—not one petal left:
house burnt, vineyards ashen, lives lovingly sown
torn from earth—just thorns of piercing loss. Bereft,
back broken, forced into a brickyard ghetto crowned

with barbed wire walls where only terror grew,
what did you hold onto three crushed, stunned days and nights
in a cattle-car destined to join choked bodies of smoke rising to
graves in the silent heavens of eclipsed light?

A world unburied—endlessly rising. Here, free
in this field of hay, I see you: tall, growing stronger—speaking to me.

—Amos Neufeld

“Free in this Field of Hay” appeared in the poetry journal *Shirim* (2019)



A Ramble Through the Woods Across Time

As I've been told, by the early 1900s, with the sheep gone, the land probably looked pretty much like today, although the forested areas would have a mix of growth, with more immature growth than today.
—Richard Tryon's essay "Farming in Monterey" in *Monterey: A Local History* (available and on sale at our library)

Our beautiful, seemingly timeless forests are actually the product of centuries of dramatic ecological transformations—including catastrophes of blight, a major hurricane, shifting land use regimes, and unsustainable harvests.

These woodlands, however, have proven to be extraordinarily resilient, even as now they face unprecedented threats: new infestations, excessive fragmentation due to development, and more frequent extreme weather events, as well as the incremental effects of climate change.

These are takeaways from Tom Ryan's 'Virtual Walk in the Woods' presentation at November's community potluck. Ryan, a forester for the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation, managed to engagingly encapsulate his love of forests, more than three centuries of natural history, and an overview of current forestry practices and programs into his hour-long talk.



American chestnuts being recovered after the disasters of the chestnut blight and the 1938 hurricane.

Ryan is a Berkshires man. He grew up in Dalton and fell in love with his wife in this area. After working in forestry in Colorado, the Southwest, and the Pacific Northwest, the couple returned to the Northeast when they realized that it offers much of what they loved in more far-flung places, with the added bonus of family and friends.

The forests that early settlers found in the Berkshires were quite different than those we find today, Ryan said. Five fairly long-lived species dominated: beech, hemlock, oak, pine, and chestnut. Those old-growth forests were largely shaped by natural forces, although the Native

Americans had sophisticated fire regimes to encourage wildlife.

By the mid-1800s, the forest vistas had become meadows, farms, and pastures. The woodlands—which had so generously supplied the settlers with materials for building homes, furniture, fences, ships, and railroad ties, and been burned for heat, land clearing, or to make potash, were gone. William Cronon's *Changes in the Land* describes how much of that wood (probably the largest share) was split for firewood. He estimates that a typical Northeastern household—with little insulation and often fires in every

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room, would go through thirty to forty cords of firewood in a year. A seemingly inexhaustible supply of the forest's bounty was in fact exhausted, with profound impacts on the hydrology, soil composition, habitat, and even microclimates.

Once the Industrial Revolution commenced, and the railroads opened up the west, around 1880, stories of the deep black soil of the Midwest lured would-be farmers away from the hardscrabble farms here, and stands of saplings quickly took advantage of the sunlit open spaces. Later in the century, up until the early 1900s, colliers cut and smoldered huge quantities of hardwood into a lighter and hotter-burning form of fuel, charcoal, for use in the iron-ore foundries in Richmond. It was grueling work and dangerous; Ryan described the process of cutting and piling massive amounts of wood, burying it in a mound under clay, and baking it at a low temperature, monitored around the clock for a week.

From the 1880s to the 1930s, with the abandonment of the farms, the woodlands began to regenerate, when two natural disasters took their toll. The chestnut blight, which began a century ago, killed virtually all—four billion—American chestnut trees in a period of some forty years, in what has been called “the greatest forest loss of history,” by the American Chestnut Foundation. The foundation says the species, sometimes called the “Redwood of the East,” comprised one out of every four trees in the east, their massive trunks and full crowns towering over the landscape. Their nutrition-dense and delicious nuts

fed wildlife, livestock, and human beings, who often gathered them as a cash crop or a survival strategy. Chestnut wood, which can still be seen in the posts and beams of older homes and barns in the region, was legendary for its straight grain, strength, splittability, and resistance to rot. Once the blight struck, efforts were made to salvage as much of the wood as possible.

In 1938, another disaster struck: the Great New England Hurricane, which killed about six hundred people, destroyed some forty-five hundred homes, and toppled an estimated two billion trees in New York and New England, according to Wiki. Another such wind event, Ryan said, is “my biggest fear.”

The fact that our forests remain robust in spite of so many assaults points to their resilience, “as long as we can let them grow,” Ryan said. He told us that 62% of Massachusetts is forested, making it the eighth most densely forested state. Most of its woodlands comprise middle-aged hardwood mixes, with less than 1% being old growth stands that have managed to survive over the last couple of centuries.

The state is currently making an effort to help middle-aged forests mature further, even while encouraging a more diverse species mix. That was, in fact, one of the stated goals of the recent Brett Road timber sale in Beartown State Forest, which will result in the removal of some of the diseased red and white pine plantations that were planted in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

In this way, Ryan said, logging and timber harvesting, carried out in line with

best practices, can create healthier forests in the long run. But threats are looming: the invasion of non-native plants, such as Japanese barberry and bittersweet; the encroaching impacts of climate change; and insect and disease infestations, such as the woolly adelgid, which can kill hemlocks and the Emerald Ash Borer, which is attacking ash trees throughout the region. Ash borers have not yet been seen in Monterey, to Ryan’s knowledge, but it seems just a matter of time, as they have made it to the nearby towns of Sheffield, Egremont, and New Marlborough, and no promising treatments are on the horizon, according to Ryan. “It’s awful,” he said. “I feel like I’m saying goodbye to an old friend.”

But the worst threat is their increasing fragmentation of forests due to development. Every year, Ryan said, we lose 6,250 acres to new construction, in a fairly permanent conversion of forests, as trees are cut down, lawns seeded, driveways paved, habitats lost, and edge ecosystems created. The borderlands, in turn, open the way for invasive species and a decrease in biodiversity. The fact that more than three quarters of the state’s forests are in private hands makes fragmentation difficult to address, but there are a number of tax abatements, conservation easements, and forestry management programs that make it easier for residents to keep their woodlots out of development.

Still, overall, the state is growing more trees than it is losing them, by a ratio of about five to one.

And, in Ryan’s words, as long as the trees are growing back, there’s hope for a healthy forest.

—Janet Jensen

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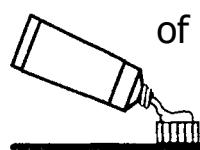
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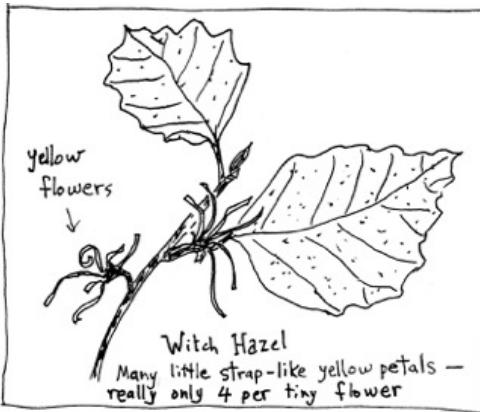
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Route 23 Monterey

Witch Hazel, Divining True Gold

Witch hazel is described by many folks as a “shrub.” This is one of those categories with a lot of leeway. One person’s bush may be another’s shrub, tree, or thicket. Besides this, there are many kinds of witch hazels, from the wild type to the kind you buy at the nursery. The cultivars from the nursery are mostly ones that bloom in the spring, but the wild ones here are the latest blooming thing there is. Henry Thoreau, that excellent observer and record-keeper, writes of them year after year in his *Journal*, noting them particularly as the very last wild thing to bloom in these parts. Some years the fringed gentian takes the prize for “last to bloom,” but almost always it is the witch hazel, putting out its yellow blossoms right about October 10, year after year.

These blossoms are remarkable in themselves, consisting of several slim, twisty yellow petals. Some may curl up, some just twist, some do both. This will change over the course of the day, and the flowers on one part of a bush will be in a different stage of opening or of twisting from those on another. The schedule of leafing out, too, varies from one place to another, but they all turn yellow or golden in the fall, and are bright. Sometimes it’s hard to notice the little twisty flowers among these showy leaves, but then the leaves fall and leave the blossoms sparkling on their own, against the grey twigs and trunks.



Some know witch hazel as a medicine or astringent. It has stood on the shelf in our bathroom medicine cabinet all my life. It has a particular smell and is said to be good for burns, bruises, and strains.

Witch hazel has other powers, too. When used by just the right person, a forked wand of witch hazel wood can be used to divine things under ground. I read in my grandmother’s old book, *The New Nature Library* (1900), that the wood must be chosen with care. Look for a naturally forked branch that is oriented north to south, so that the rising and setting sun shine through the fork. This gives the wood its ability to find things, from water to precious metals such as gold. But it must be worked by a person who also has the ability, and not all of us do. I wonder if we have to spend some important part of our day or our life standing in a north-south orientation. Maybe if we are lucky, the bed of our mom, during our gestation, will have

been set just right in the house. Whatever the variables, the clues, the luck, divining is a partnership between the right person and the right rod or fork.

Thoreau kept lists and records of botanical and zoological comings and goings, cycles. He carried twigs and leaves home to observe in a jar of water. His “botany box,” as he called it, was his hat. Since he was so likely to go for a swim, wherever he was (he called this “bathing”), his hair was often damp and he credits this moisture in the botany box with his specimens’ good condition when he arrived home, after his long hours outdoors. He said that you can think about nature when you are in the house, but to be wandering outside is the better place to be. “I keep out of doors for the sake of the mineral, vegetable, and animal in me.” Also, “Health requires this relaxation, this aimless life. This life in the present.”

Though we may have witch hazel in a bottle on the shelf, ready for easing our bruises and such, we should get outside with this plant. And we don’t even need to cut a fork and engage a diviner to find the real gold. Thoreau writes in early November, 1857:

“I see witch-hazel in the swamp by the south end of the Abiel Wheeler grape meadow. Some of it is quite fresh and bright. Its bark is alternate white and smooth reddish brown, the small twigs looking as if gossamer had lodged and draped them. What lively spray it has, >



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College Shopping Tips

On Saturday, November 2, Sue Young, the college process coach, met with families from Great Barrington, New Marlborough, and Monterey to help us be smart college shoppers. The attending families had children in tenth through twelfth grades. Each family knew that choosing the right college and trying to get a price you can afford for tuition is not easy. She gave us all some tips and tools. The more information to help your child make these decisions, the better.

Sue compared the college experience to making a batch of chili. Do you need the most expensive ingredients? Nope. You can still create a delicious and nourishing chili without breaking your piggy bank. Likewise, your child can attend a college that is a really good fit for them without you going broke. She taught us how to use each college's "net price calculator"

both in form and color! Truly it looks as if it would make divining-rods — as if its twigs knew where the true gold was and could point to it. The gold is in their late blossoms. Let them alone and they never point down to earth. They impart to the whole hillside a speckled, parti-colored look."

Here in Monterey, we are always out in the woods on October 10, on a certain hillside, where we love to celebrate by taking "Joe's Birthday Hike." We go to Benedict Pond, around the Loop Trail, and then branch off up onto the Appalachian Trail so we can sit on "the ledges," with our sandwiches, and admire the view. Nearly every year, all these decades, we come to a certain place on the hike and are treated to a mysterious wonderful aroma, which we call "Joe's Birthday Smell." We have never discovered its source! It is something like compost, rich earth, dampness.

Looking back to Thoreau this week for his notes on witch hazel, I found this from October 13, 1859. "I perceive the peculiar scent of the witch-hazel in bloom for several rods, which at first I first took as decaying leaves."

Aha! Something to remember to divine next fall, when I am out-of-doors in mid-October "... for the sake of the mineral, vegetable, and animal in me."

—Bonner McAllester

to figure out what the true cost may be after any available financial aid is applied. She explained how FAFSA and the EFC (Expected Family Contribution) is utilized. She discussed financial aid that is need-based and merit-based.

She had a slide presentation showing the cost of attendance of many of the state-funded programs plus popular private colleges—their tuition, room and board charges, plus other expenses, and how much they might really expect families to pay depending on the family's income. She showed how it may be less expensive to go to a private school—if it is heavily endowed—as they can afford to give a lot more financial aid.

Sue offers individual consultations with families, students, and parents. She will also have additional free talks in 2020, starting with one on January 25, at 10 a.m.—Mary Makuc

ॐ

Talkin' (about) Trash

Dear Trash Talker,

My wife insists on rinsing or even washing out food jars and containers before putting them in the recycle bin. I tell her don't bother, that it'll all get washed somehow, and beside, they're just going to melt all the plastic together.

—Mr. Can't Be Bothered

Dear Bothered,

Do you need to wash items? No, but rinsing them out, yes. Can't be having hunks of garbably goop sticking to containers, or half-full jars of pickles. There's money for the town for fairly clean loads, not for gunky loads.

Also, there's so many kinds of plastics in containers that they have to be sorted.

Your friend talkin' trash,

—R. E. Cycle

You got trash questions? I've got answers. Fire away. The folks at the paper will pass'm along. Write to Trash Talker, c/o MontereyNews9@gmail.com.



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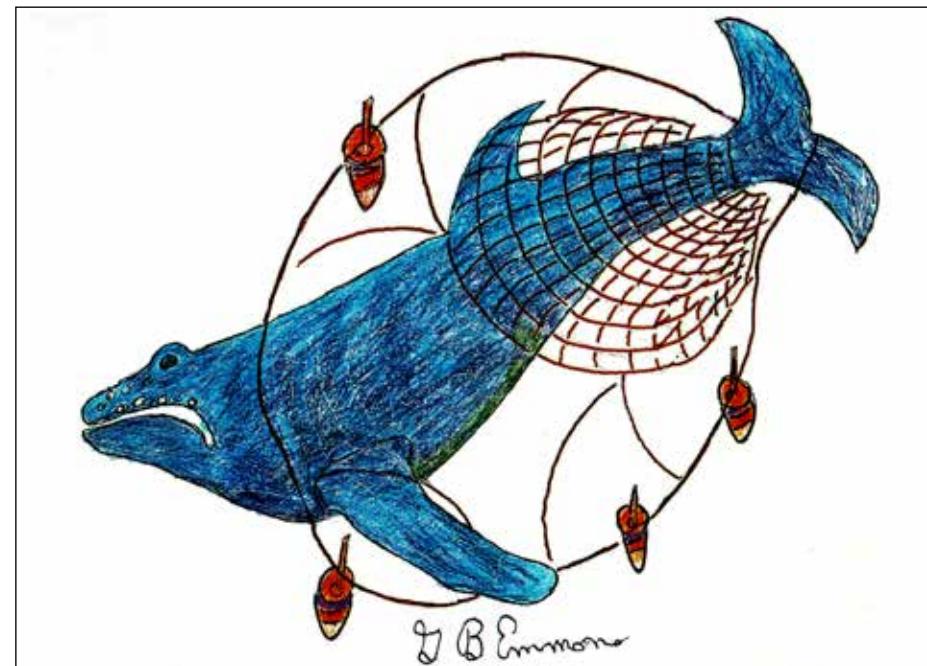
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Right Whales Entangled in Fishing Gear

Right whales are so named because they are the *right* ones to hunt, as they often swim close to shore, are quite docile, not afraid of approaching boats, and float when killed. They are classified as endangered, having been hunted nearly to extinction and often dying by entanglement with fishing nets and lobster traps, as illustrated. They are the second largest whale in the world, next to the blue whale in size, and both are on display at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. They were first sighted along the New England coast by pilgrims in the Mayflower, even before they landed at Plymouth in 1620.

In the years to follow, the first settlers along the Long Island coastline reported Indians killing them with harpoons made of whale bone and tied with a rope made of strips of tree bark. Montauk and Shinnecock tribes both shared in the rise of so called off-shore whaling. The coastal industry peaked there in the year 1726 when eighty-six right whales were harvested in the sound and shipped to Boston. For the Puritans, whaling on the sabbath was not permitted so those sighted on Sundays could not be harvested.

Right whales were often found beached after a storm, and one-third of the monetary take went to the person sighting the whale, one-third to the town, and one-third to the church. As the industry grew, a strong fishy odor permeated the locations of these beached harvested whales as well as the clothes of citizens involved. When the Dutch took over New York from the English, the government decreed that the



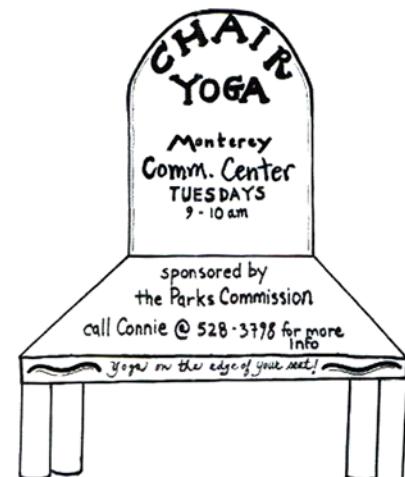
growing whaling income should be taxed and paid to the chamber of commerce. However, the whaler's local representative, one Samuel Mulford, strongly objected, and he went to London in both 1704 and 1706 to plead that King James had given perpetual rights to fish coastal waters without interference.

My wife Jan is descended from Mulford on her mother's side of the family. Although he appeared before the lords of parliament dressed as a humble plain spoken commoner, he won his case. The offshore industry continued to be lucrative for residents. In 1712, Captain Hussey, a whaler out of Nantucket, was blown far out to sea and discovered a pod of sperm whales. The sperm whale was to revolutionize and relocate the center of the whaling industry to this remote island of Quakers ready to

adopt whaling as their livelihood. It also turns out that the first lighthouse keeper there was Richard Pinkham, my wife Jan's great-great-grandfather, on her father's side of the family. Consequently his name is included in the Nantucket heritage along with the named families of Coffin, Starbuck, and Folger.

Richard Pinkham was the first to chart Nantucket waters of the channels through shoals and sandbars that would allow ships to enter the harbor with barrels of spermaceti from the sperm whale, which were worth their weight in silver. Spermaceti was the first very light oil for lubrication, and was much cleaner burning for lighting, displacing the common rendered lard candles in the more affluent households of the time.

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The Cement Mixer

In the November issue I introduced Art Hasted and an incident that occurred early in his life in "Singing Houses." Art always had many tales to tell, and as I have learned over the years, truth is as unbelievable as fiction at times. I worked with Art briefly when we were both employed by R. W. Tryon Construction Company and later when we both worked for the Monterey Highway Department. During those periods, Art talked occasionally about his father.

As I recall, Art related his father had been in the German merchant marine as a young man and traveled the world. However, he could see the war clouds building on the horizon, so rather than be conscripted into the German military machine, when he was in port in the U.S., he parted company with his ship. (Not a mutually agreed upon parting.) I don't recall what port it was, but the short version of a long story is that he worked his way inland until he came to Monterey, where he put down roots and raised his family.

Most people living a rural life at the time could and did turn their hand at numerous tasks to get by in those lean

Today there are only about four hundred right whales left in the world, and 85% of them have suffered from entanglements from fishing nets and the lines from lobster traps. A bill just passed in Congress on October 18 entitled "Save The Right Whale" requires the Department of Commerce to provide financial assistance for the conservation of such whales. Rules are being developed for ships to avoid individuals or pods of these whales to prevent injuries and deaths from propellers.

A firm called Ashored Innovations in Nova Scotia has devised a buoy system for strings of lobster traps which rest on the seafloor and rises to the surface when the fishing boat is nearby, thus avoiding entanglements. (For a short informational video about the hazards of entanglements, and this company's solutions, go to ashored.ca/.)

These are all steps in the right direction to avoid entanglement of the right whale, and hopefully will save it from extinction.

— George B. Emmons

years, and so it was true with Art's father. There arose a point when he needed to mix and pour some concrete. Today you just call the concrete company and they send the truck or trucks with the cement and pump it into the desired places, but back then almost everybody did it by hand. Art's father borrowed a cement mixer from someone he knew. The mixer had a drum for mixing the cement, sand, stone, and water. It could be powered by hand or a small motor, gas or electric. The mixer also had wheels and a hitch that allowed it to be towed behind a vehicle. Art's father towed the borrowed mixer home behind his car.

I'm not sure just what happened or when, but somehow the cement mixer suffered a mishap rendering it unusable. There was still hope however, because in Hartsville there was Whitney's blacksmith shop, a well known and often visited establishment for shoeing horses, forging iron, and repairing machinery. I know my great-grandfather Martin Thomson, and grandfather Jared Thomson took their horses there for shoes along with many other farmers in the area. In fact, it was reported that there was a huge pile of used horseshoes stacked in the shape of a silo outside the shop. The old timers could have told you how many tens of thousands of shoes or how many tons of scrap iron were in the "silo," but they are no longer with us, and I did not pay close enough attention when I was younger. The "silo," along with many other things, went for scrap iron to support the war effort during the war years.

The damaged mixer was towed to the blacksmith shop where, after a lengthy discussion with the proprietor, Art's father was told that the mixer was not worth repairing. However, he could leave it there if he wanted because there might be a part or two that might be able to be salvaged to repair something else if the need arose. The mixer was left and he returned home. It was a blow to the struggling family because Art's father had made compensation to the owner of the mixer for the loss that occurred while it was in his charge.

Life and time kept moving forward and some months passed. Then one afternoon while driving by the blacksmith shop he spotted the proprietor in the yard mixing cement with *his* mixer! It seems that the mixer wasn't worth the time and trouble to repair for someone else, but when he personally had a need arise, it suddenly became worthwhile to fix. Art's father, who I was told was a large, very physically fit man, who was also known to have a bit of a temper, stopped, backed his car across the yard up to the mixer, got out and hooked it on the back of his car, and drove off home without saying a word.

The proprietor just stood there, shovel in hand, and watched the mixer disappear with his cement still inside the drum. Art's father never paid for the repairs to the mixer. When asked about it, he simply said, "He got to use it, I figure that's payment enough." The proprietor probably figured it's best to let sleeping dogs lie.

— Lyman Thomson

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Bidwell House Museum

The museum may be closed for the season, but behind the scenes the staff and board of trustees are hard at work planning all of the events and programs for 2020. In 1990 the museum opened its doors to share the story of Adonijah Bidwell and his family and through them, the story of life in the eighteenth century Berkshire hills. Since its opening, the museum has welcomed thousands of people, young and old, to the bucolic property and restored home, its remote forested setting a perfect backdrop to imagine life three hundred years ago.

In 2020 the museum will be celebrating its thirtieth anniversary—traditionally, the “pearl” anniversary—which seems a fitting symbol to celebrate the thirtieth year of this “hidden gem” in the Monterey woods. To make the Bidwell House Museum a vibrant and educational facet of the community each season requires hard work and planning. The Bidwell country fair, the young history scholar intern program, the history talk series, guided nature walks, and tours of the house can only happen with the support of the local community. Please consider donating to the museum’s annual appeal campaign, either on the support page of the website, bidwellhousemuseum.org, by calling the museum at 413-528-688, or via the reply envelope if you received



Bidwell house with the early November snow.

Photo by Heather Kowalski.

our letter in the mail. Your contribution to our annual appeal helps us continue to tell our story and make a difference in the lives of visitors from near and far. The museum is so thankful to be part of such a wonderful community.

Don’t forget that the museum gardens and trails are open year round for hiking, walking your dog, or even snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. The snow started in early November this year and winter is a wonderful time of year to experience the beautiful Bidwell property.

—Heather Kowalski
Executive Director



Erin Hunter

Above: Sue Farnum taught us a lot about the first Thanksgiving in her reenactment of Pacience Brewster at the community center. She relayed facts about the life, culture, foods, and the challenges of the pilgrims, and their journey across the Atlantic. Sue is a veteran reenactor; and Rob Hoogs, also dressed in colonial garb, introduced her before her talk on November 10. This program was jointly sponsored by the Monterey Community Center and the Bidwell House Museum. Rob is the chairman of the Bidwell House Museum board of directors.

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November Wildlife

Mudpuppies to Moose

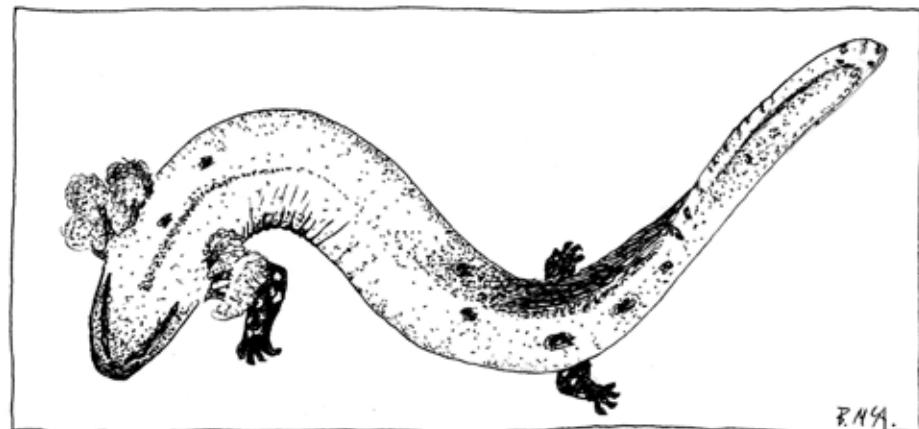
Mudpuppies (at right) are a kind of salamander and they can get very big, even two feet long. From time to time someone spots one in Lake Garfield, and most recently this was one of the diver assisted suction folks vacuuming up pond weeds in the lake. Some call these harmless creatures "hellbenders" or "devil dogs." They have a quiet life and like to eat crayfish. They have frilly external gills, quite distinctive.

Another salamander on the scene recently was a much smaller red-lined salamander that took up residence outside our house on a big flat rock, right under our carved jack-o-lantern pumpkin. (See page 23.) This was our Halloween treat for a few days.

Dennis and Elaine Lynch live on Tyringham Road, just up from the town center, and they have a good view over an open field downslope from their house. Early in November they were lucky and saw a moose in this field.

The red foxes are about. Steve Moore and Wendy Jensen saw one recently as they were headed out their driveway. They slowed down and the fox moved off a little and was clearly waiting for them to leave so she or he could continue regular rounds on their place.

In the insect department, Steve Moore has seen small brown butterflies, quite late in the season, flying up from the decaying leaves or "duff" along New Marlborough Road. He also reports evidence of insect life in a dead tree about thirty feet off the road, as there recently were pileated woodpeckers flying low over the road to alight in this tree for some foraging. The



question comes up: for how many years does a given dead snag provide for how many insects and their woodpeckers?

We did have a good report on some white-tailed deer, one a handsome buck, but we here at the *Monterey News* wildlife editorial office prefer not to reveal the locations of so-called game animals during this season. This has been called "deer hunting season," and maybe nowadays we say "harvest time," or "management opportunity." However it is called, we maintain a lips-sealed policy. The same goes for bears. Yes, they too are a harvestable forest crop.

A friend in Tyringham has reported seeing a "big black canine," once when driving on Route 23 through Monterey and then two weeks later near the McLennan Reservation in Tyringham. She wonders about wolves and we certainly have had some credible sightings in the last few years. None have been black animals and any wolf here is probably a grey wolf or timber wolf or eastern wolf. In some cases one name includes the others. As with our grey squirrels, which sometimes come in

a melanistic or black color variation, the grey wolf has a melanistic or black form. This could be what our friend has seen, though such animals are rare, and the ones she saw may not have been big enough to be a wolf. But I would not rule it out.

Here in our house, the familiar long-bodied cellar spiders have made their annual disappearance from ceiling corners and around the windows. Watching this happen in past years makes us confident they will soon be back, emerging to put up their webs and feast on lady bugs and those mysterious mosquitoes that show up one at a time in the house, every winter.

We have titmice, nuthatches, goldfinches, chickadees, and juncos here, after a long spell of few little bird visitors. There are some blue jays, even three red squirrels lately.

Thank you everyone for noticing so much in the wild, and for passing it along to the rest of us.

—Bonner McAllester

528-9385, bonnermca@gmail.com

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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.

MontereyMA.gov

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

Meetings and Events

Board of Health: Mondays, December 2 and 16, at 4 p.m.

Conservation Commission: Wednesday, December 11, at 6 p.m.

Council on Aging: Mondays, December 9 and 23, at 10 a.m.

Visiting Nurse: Berkshire VNA will be here on Thursday, December 12, from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment necessary.

Parks Commission: Wednesday, December 18, at 6 p.m.

Planning Board: Thursday, December 12, at 7 p.m.

Select Board: Wednesday, December 4, at 6:30 p.m., and December 18, at 9 a.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Town Hall Closings

All town offices will be closed on December 25 for Christmas. Most individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message. We recommend always calling ahead.

Other News

We are excited to announce that we are partnering with the US Census Bureau to support the 2020 Census. As a partner, we will be working to make sure our community is accurately represented in the upcoming decennial count. The census counts everyone in the United States. Census results are the basis for congressional representation and help determine how more than \$675 billion in federal funds is distributed each year to support vital programs in states and communities across the country. These funds shape local health care, housing, education, transportation, employment, and public policy. As the 2020 Census approaches, we will continue to share information about how you can make sure our community is fully represented. Visit 2020Census.gov anytime to get the latest news.

The Census is hiring 500,000 part-time and temporary workers for the 2020 Census. For more information or to apply please visit 2020census.gov/jobs.

— Kenn Basler, Chair
Don Coburn and Steve Weisz
Monterey Select Board
(kenn@montereyma.gov)
(don@montereyma.gov)
(steve@montereyma.gov)

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

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1-800-877-8339 TTY/ASR

www.gsa.gov/relayservice

The U.S. Census Bureau is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



An advertisement for Berkshire Greenscapes. The text reads: "Berkshire Greenscapes Organic and Sustainable Garden Care For a Healthier Tomorrow". Below this is the NOFA logo, which says "ORGANIC LAND CARE NOFA organiclandcare.net ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL". To the right is a phone number "413-207-1281" and a website "www.berkshiregreenscapes.com". There are also some decorative illustrations of flowers and leaves.

An advertisement for House Checking Unlimited. The text includes "Alarm Response - Security Checks", "Key Holder - Property Management", "Residential - Commercial", and "KMB" with a house icon. Below this is the company name "HOUSE CHECKING UNLIMITED". Contact information at the bottom includes Kristopher M. Balestro, 10 Stevens Lake, Great Barrington, MA 01230, and email "kbalestro@aol.com", phone "home 413.528.3944", and cell "cell 413.429.7094".

Calendar

Regular Events

Mondays: Mahjong, 7 p.m., community center.

Tuesdays:

Chair Yoga, with Connie Wilson, 9 a.m., community center. Sponsored by the parks commission. (10 a.m. beginning in January)

Cards and bridge, 1 p.m., community center.

Community chorus, 7 to 8:15 p.m., community center, except Dec. 24 and 31.

Wednesdays:

Balance review classes, 10:30 a.m., community center.

Mahjong, 3:30 p.m., community center, except December 25.

Thursdays:

Canasta lessons, 7 to 9 p.m., community center. See page 6.

December 5 and 19: Darn Yarners, 1 p.m., community center.

Fridays:

South Berkshire Playgroup, 10 to 11 a.m. See page 6.

Cards and Bridge, 1 p.m., community center.

Saturdays: Ping pong, 2 p.m., community center.

December Events

Thursday, December 5:

Ice rink setup, 9:30 a.m., firehouse pavilion.

Special town meeting, 7 p.m., firehouse. See page 2.

Saturday, December 7: Hume cookie swap, 10 a.m., community center.

Monday, December 9: Council on Aging, 10 a.m., town hall.

Gong Bath

Profits for the Library

The November gong bath raised \$245 for the Monterey library. Five couples as well as a few dedicated friends came to relax and enjoy this experience.

The next gong bath for charity will be in January.

If you have a charity to suggest, please email me at susancain9@gmail.com with a time of the day that would be beneficial for Monterey citizens.

— Susan Cain

Tuesday, December 10: Movie night, showing *Chicago*. 7:30 p.m., town hall.

See page 10.

Friday, December 13: Cookbook Club, 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., community center.

See page 9.

Wednesday, December 18: Community potluck supper, 6 p.m., church basement. See page 10.

Thursday, December 19: Monterey News deadline.

Saturday, December 21:

Heartflow celebration, 3 p.m., Sheffield Yoga Studio. See page 10.

Lenox contra dance—holiday dance and potluck, 5 to 11 p.m. Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. LenoxContraDance.org. Contact 528-4007.

Tuesday, December 24: Christmas Eve service, 7 p.m., Monterey church. See page 6.

Saturday, December 28: Sheffield contra dance, 7 to 11 p.m., Dewey Hall.

Monday, December 30: Adult book group, 7:30 p.m., community center. *Lab Girl*, Hope Jahren.

January Events

Monday, January 13: Regional councils on aging meeting, 10 a.m., community center. See page 10.

Saturday, January 25: College process presentation, 10 a.m., community center. See page 8.

Monterey Community Potluck Suppers

Join us December 18 to hear:
Eleanor Windman

Share her reading of two personal essays from her memoir.

See the community potluck supper article on page 10.

3rd Wednesdays, October–May
6 p.m. Fellowship Hall
Monterey Church

For more information,
call Kyle Pierce, 528-9213

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* editorial address is PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions or inquiries may also be sent to montereypress9@gmail.com or telephone us at 413-528-4007.



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 calendar@ccmonterey.org

Fire Department (non-emergency):

528-3136

chief@montereyma.org

Highway Department:

528-1734

dpw1@montereyma.gov

Library:

528-3795

montereypress9@gmail.com

Police Department (non-emergency):

528-3211, Alt./Emergency 528-3211

mpdchief@montereyma.gov

Post Office:

528-4670

SBRSD (Schools)

413-229-877

Tax Collector:

528-1443 x117

montereypax@yahoo.com

(for questions about your tax bill)

Town Clerk:

528-1443 x113

clerk@montereyma.gov

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

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*Contributions from local artists this month:
Maureen Banner, p. 20; George Emmons, p. 18;
Bonner McAllester, p. 16, 21.; Glynis Oliver, p. 5;
Kit Patten, p. 13.*

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