

MONTEREY NEWS

July 2020
Est. 1970 Vol. L · Number 7

Pick up at: the library (outside), firehouse pavilion, transfer station, and Bracken Brae farm stand.



Stephen Moore

Holding the annual town meeting in the pavilion was certainly a break from tradition, but it went very well. See page 2 for the report.

Words were exchanged and who ran quietly into the woods? Not Roxy.

Wildlife Report pages 28–29

The Friends of the Monterey Library have agreed to donate five dollars to the Sheffield Food Assistance Program for every log completed by our young readers!

Library News page 11

“That’s the most boring book I’ve ever read,” exclaimed their father, “the same thing keeps happening over and over and over again!”

The Skunk page 27

We humans are all as fragile, and most are as strong, as those determined little plants. The problem is that the rock of the law shades some of us and rolls over on others.

Here’s a Thought page 13

The district is facing some serious issues about the future, and needs active and thoughtful representatives to lead the towns.

School Committee Nominations page 15

That board’s primary goal is to consider the feasibility of consolidating into one school district the Berkshire Hills Regional School District and the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

New School District? page 30

Then, the tree swallow’s friend came over and they were playing with his wet wings. It turns out, they were drying his wings.

Liam and the Swallow page 17

The Monterey Fire Department responded to a total of 135 calls in the fiscal year 2020. Approximately 65% were for fire-related calls and 35% were emergency medical calls.

Monterey Fire Department page 8



Ladder climbing bear page 28

He also asked everyone to identify themselves before speaking, saying “I know most of you very well but I don’t know your masks!”

Things got a little testy during the discussion of Article 9. The article asked for an appropriation to pay for improvements on the fire company property.

Annual Town Meeting pages 2–7

here come/the fireflies//with their staccato/lights//their tiny headlamps/
My Own Private Fireworks page 22

Due to overwhelming demand, we have decided to hold the steak roast this year—but here’s what to expect regarding all things steak roast.

43rd Annual Steak Roast page 9

195 voters turned out for the town elections on Tuesday, June 30. This was an increase of thirty voters over 2019.

2020 Town Elections page 7

“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow,” said Audrey Hepburn.

Monterey Garden Path Tour page 18

Monterey Town Meeting June 27, 2020

In the history of Monterey town meetings, the one that took place this June was probably the most unusual. All sorts of changes needed to be made in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, so that people could be safe and business could still be conducted. First of all, the meeting was postponed from the beginning of May to the end of June when the curve of the pandemic in Massachusetts had flattened. Then there was the issue of how to gather people together safely. As an indoor meeting would not be feasible, an outdoor space was needed and luckily the pavilion behind the firehouse fit the bill. Much effort was put in by Melissa Noe and Shawn Tryon to organize the space so social distancing could be observed. Chairs were arranged singly or in pairs, spaced seven feet apart. There were arrows marked on the pavement to direct the flow of traffic, and microphones were placed at the head table for the moderator and town clerk, with two additional mics for the select board and the finance committee. Kevin Fitzpatrick and Melissa Noe got their exercise for the day by ferrying more mics with disposable covers to each person in the audience who wanted to make a comment. The sign-in

tables were placed outside the pavilion, allowing for more space within, and again, spacing was designated to keep people from crowding in line.

Thus, all was ready for the masked crowd of sixty-seven participants who ventured from their homes to attend the meeting, determined to participate in the democratic process. Armed with their green voting cards, they found their socially distanced seats and settled in. Prior to the start of the meeting, the crowd mingled as they might at any town meeting, no doubt starved for social interaction and eager to see their neighbors who have been in seclusion for so long. Aside from the masks and the distance between people, it almost seemed like a normal get together. Promptly at 9:30, Moderator Mark Makuc banged the gavel to officially start the meeting. As usual, a motion was made to waive the reading of the warrant by Town Clerk Terry Walker. Then a moment of silence was held for those who had served the town and had passed away during the past year. The long list included Marion Simon, John Field, Patricia Edelstein, Raymond Tryon, Susan Protheroe, Thomas Andrus, Barbara Tryon, Storrs Olds, and Arnold Hayes.

Moderator Makuc then gave some new instructions to the crowd, saying that there would be no voice votes, due to concerns about Covid-19 as well as the poor acoustics in the pavilion, and all votes would take place by the green cards. He also asked everyone to identify themselves before speaking, saying "I know most of you very well but I don't know your masks!" Then the work of the meeting began.

Article 1 & 2: Reports & Salaries

Article 1, to act on the reports of town officers and committee members, was quickly bypassed as there was no business to conduct. Article 2 concerned the salaries for elected officials and except for one inquiry as to why the tax collector makes so much money (\$25,345), this article was passed.

Article 3-The Budget

Article 3 took up the bulk of the warrant as it consisted of the town budget. Each line item was read by Mark Makuc and if someone wanted to discuss it further, they raised their card to put a hold on the item.

Editors Note: As each of the "holds" is discussed, amendments can be approved to modify the budget line requests. If there are no amendments adopted, then the line request stays as proposed. The budget is accepted in entirety by a single vote after all the holds are considered.

John Weingold, who we heard from frequently during this meeting, started off by questioning the administrative assistant's salary, asking why it was higher than the salary for a town administrator and expressed concern as to whether or not that person was being paid for the board of health position during her regular work hours as the administrative assistant. Select board member Coburn quickly squashed this concern by saying that as much as half a year might pass before we actually hired someone for that position. Addressing the question about whether the administrative assistant was being paid double as the assistant as well as the secretary of the

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Maureen Banner

board of health, he said that the person in question is an hourly employee at both her jobs and is not collecting double pay.

Barbara Swann expressed concern about the decrease in funding for the grant writing position. George Cain indicated that both the finance committee and the select board agreed to reduce the line item since less than half of last year's allocation was used. Barbara responded that the allocation of \$10,000 in last year's budget would enable the grant writers to fully explore more options. Select board member Steven Weisz agreed with Barbara, saying that the allocation was lowered due to the current economic crisis but that increasing the allocation may have the effect of helping the town to weather the current financial storm. John Weingold also agreed, saying

that if we are getting three to four times a return on the investment, the line item should be increased and he made a motion to raise the allocation to \$10,000. Select board chair, Kenn Basler, warned that while the two grant writers have produced an incredible return on the investment, it takes a great deal of time to research and write grants that are appropriate for the town. Marcello Peppi said the line item should be increased and suggested the town should look for some other place to cut costs. A vote was taken and the motion to increase the grant writing wages to \$10,000 was passed by a count of 35-13.

The next hold concerned the reserve fund. John Weingold questioned why there was a 50% increase in the allocation for the upcoming year. Weisz fielded

this question, saying that in the current circumstances there may be unforeseen and extraordinary expenses that come up and it seemed wise to have a bit more in the account. Michael Johnson and Kenn Basler also referenced the CARES Act which has provided the town with just under \$20,000 and may provide some additional income for next year. The next item to be discussed concerned the town counsel salary and expenses, and again, John Weingold questioned the figures. Jeremiah Pollard, who is the legal counsel for Monterey, defended his salary by saying that Monterey is one of the busiest towns he represents and he is putting in many hours related to two cases of litigation in land court. The expenses are related to filing fees for these cases. Barbara Swann gave a gentle reminder that we should all appreciate the people who are working on our behalf.

John Weingold also questioned the election line item which had increased from \$4,440 to \$11,951. Weisz stated the obvious fact that this is presidential election year, which requires additional expenses. At this point, Susan Cooper addressed a question to John Weingold asking if he had read any of the associated material that came with the warrant, explaining the budget increases. Mark Makuc diplomatically intervened, saying

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that the meeting was not going to address that point right now. Mr. Weingold then proceeded to question line items about funds for the town offices and administrative overtime which were answered by select board members.

His next inquiry was about an increase in the tree warden expenses which generated a bit of discussion by others. Weingold asked why so much money was being spent on trees given the current economic situation. Basler was the first to defend the \$5,000 increase in the line item saying that Berkshire County is currently experiencing a crisis with regard to disease in trees, with the possibility of losing most or all of our ash trees within the next five years due to the ash borer infestation. The funds are to help the town be proactive and most towns have a much larger budget for tree care. While the town is working with National Grid on this matter, George Cain said that the company is so far behind they can't come to Monterey often enough. A newcomer to town, whose name this reporter did not catch, said that "trees are our biggest asset" and Peter Murkett added that our internet connectivity is affected by trees that are hanging over the wires. John Weingold then made a motion to reduce the line item to last year's allocation of \$35,000. Weisz defended the budgeted allocation saying "tree culling is about safety" and if we want to keep people moving and safe we don't want to wait until the roads are blocked by fallen trees. He went on to say that tree work requires professional expertise with companies that are insured, adding that "you can't just hire an indi-



Stephen Moore

The woman doing the CART service was amazing. She kept up with what everyone said almost word-by-word, even when the Moderator was reading quickly directly off the warrant. Considering the acoustics in the pavilion, it was an excellent service for the townspeople at the meeting.

vidual with a hatchet anymore." Michele Miller commented that the select board and the finance committee have done a great job of crafting a budget to meet the town's needs and suggested to move the vote. That ended all debate on the subject and when the vote was taken, the motion to reduce the tree warden expenses failed.

Line 300- Education

Basler addressed the hold on the operating and transportation costs for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District and asked Superintendent Beth Regalbuto to speak. She said the SBRSD staff are working very hard to get children back to school in the fall while there are


still so many unknowns. They are trying to avoid utter chaos by having a budget in place and are looking at the various options to educate the children in the upcoming year. Finance committee member Rebecca Wolin asked what towns have not yet approved the budget. Regalbuto replied that while not all the town meetings have taken place yet, Alford and Egremont have approved the budget and Sheffield will most likely vote to pass over the budget. New Marlborough voters will be meeting soon. Monterey has always been supportive of the school budget and there were no further questions for Ms. Regalbuto. This year, Monterey's share of the school budget was \$1,582,562, a decrease of \$20,696 from last year.

There were a few more questions about the highway department line items, the salaries for the lifeguards and the Community Septic Loan Program, all of which were easily answered and required no further discussion. With that, the vote was taken on the budget as a whole, and with the approved changes, Article 3 was passed.

Articles 4-18: Additional Funding

Article 4 was pretty straightforward, seeking to fix the maximum amount that might be spent on the five revolving funds in the town. With only one question from Mr.

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Weingold, the article passed. Articles 5, 6, 7, and 8 asked for small transfers from free cash to make up for deficits in the various line items for the police department. (Some of those deficits stemmed from grant funds being incorrectly posted.) Three of the articles unanimously passed but a count of green cards was necessary for Article 6, which was related to the police bulletproof vest grant. Dominick Stucker said that he appreciates the services of the police department, but since Monterey is such a peaceful town, he wondered why bulletproof vests were needed. Police Chief Gareth Backhaus answered this query with a specific example. He said that one of his officers pulled over a car from North Carolina only to see a loaded handgun in the cup holder. He said, "If you were there, you would have wanted a bulletproof vest," adding that the concerns are not about the people in Monterey but rather the people coming through the town. Mr. Stucker made the suggestion that perhaps Monterey could take a different stance, utilizing a non-militarized police force. Once again, Mark Makuc said that this was outside the scope of this meeting and could not be discussed. The vote was taken and Article 6 passed with a count of 53-2.


Things got a little testy during the discussion of Article 9. The article asked for an appropriation of \$32,000 from the general stabilization fund to pay for improvements on the fire company property. George Cain, from the finance committee said the committee had originally taken the article off the warrant but then put it back in, recommending \$30,000 instead, which would be used for a railing on the

handicapped ramp, and suggested it be put out to bid. Rebecca Wolin, also of the finance committee, said that fire chief Shawn Tryon had only asked for \$30,000 but the amount was bumped up by the select board. Coburn responded by saying, "This has nothing to do with the money, it has to do with the finance committee trying to exercise control." He went on to discuss the complicated relationship the town has with the fire company, including the fact that the building would revert to the town if the fire company dissolved. He also said that the railing was required for a certificate of occupancy. Coburn said that an estimate had been received for \$32,000 for the handrail, and that other estimates would probably be sought, which may be lower, but if they were the entire amount did not have to be spent if it was allocated. Shawn Tryon spoke next, saying that the railing is an ADA requirement and that he had talked to three other companies who gave higher bids. He also said that the fire company wants everyone to have access to the building. Rebecca Wolin then said that she took offense at what had been said about the finance committee adding that it is the job of the committee to try to provide sound financial advice. In this case, it seemed as if the request was very expensive. Chief Tryon cited the need for a quality product that will not need frequent maintenance, saying either "you pay now or pay later." The labor costs also enter into the figure. Weisz indicated that while he was not originally in favor of spending \$32,000 to get a Certificate of Occupancy, he realized it was not just about a railing, it was about getting the project completed. Coburn added that there is still a lot of

work to be done on the building. John Weingold then interjected his opinion that the relationship between the town and the fire company is quite simple and that the fire company should have had a railing on the property originally in order to get the certificate of occupancy. He said that the fire company is coming to the town asking the taxpayers to bail out other people's mistakes. "If the contractor had neglected to put the railing on, then the contractor should have to pay for it!" Shawn Tryon replied, "Get your facts straight." He said the fire company had a temporary certificate of occupancy and now needed a permanent one. The question was then called and a vote was taken regarding a motion to amend the amount of the allocation. The motion failed and Article 9 was passed intact by a vote of 49-4.

There was a much calmer discussion about Article 10, regarding an allocation of \$5,000 for fencing or shrubbery or something similar near the town hall parking lot. Shawn Tryon, now acting as director of operations, made a motion to change the article to read "fencing, shrubbery, or asphalt curbing" and to remove the words "or something similar." This amendment passed. When Mickey Jervas asked where in the parking lot this would be placed, Weisz answered that it was near a neighbor's property and the goal was to keep people from encroaching on that and to keep them on the town hall side instead. Janet Jenssen made a motion to add another amendment specifying "native plant shrubbery" and this was passed as was Article 10.

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Annual Town Meeting, cont.

It wouldn't be a town meeting in Monterey without a discussion about Eurasian milfoil or the Monterey School. The former was addressed in Article 11, which asked for a transfer of \$30,000 from free cash for non-chemical control of the weeds and the hiring of a lake scientist to determine how much of it there is in Lake Garfield. Ed Mandelbaum started off the discussion by saying "we would be shooting ourselves in the foot by not passing this," adding that Lake Garfield is the gem of the community. He said this measure would be an insurance policy that the lake would not be shut down. Steve Snyder, chair of the Lake Garfield Working Group, made a strong case by saying that over \$400 million are being spent across the nation on this problem. He said that non-chemical intervention has been successful in both Connecticut and New York and that we would lose ground gained by stopping this intervention now. He finished by saying that while no one really wants to spend this amount of money, it would come out to be .06% on the property taxes, for an average of \$34 per residence. Coburn retorted that the article was not scientific or defensible at all and that \$30,000 was a figure pulled from the air. He reminded people that Lake Buel has a tax district to take care of the lake. The idea of a Lake Garfield tax district had been shot down in a previous town meeting. Joe Daponte, who lives on the lake, said he felt people were using scare tactics such as saying that the weeds will ultimately become so thick that "cattle can graze on it." He also felt that it was an unfair burden to inflict a

tax on the small group of individuals who live around the lake, not all of whom are wealthy. Weisz admitted that there has been a lot of misinformation about the issue and while diver-assisted harvesting will not completely eradicate it, "we're trying to flatten the curve on Eurasian milfoil." He said we can hope that "maybe it will die down on its own or some sort of magic fish will eat it," but the reality is that we could end up like Stockbridge Bowl which required \$3 million of dredging to save the lake. He concluded by saying that if we have decided as a town not to pour chemicals in the lake, then we have to look at other options. Susan Cooper compared the situation to house maintenance which, if deferred, would only be more expensive in the long run. Michael Germain said that the Friends of Lake Garfield also contribute to the maintenance of the lake and compared this to a three-legged stool which is supported by local government, private sector funds, and state government. He also said that even if the town voted for a lake district tax today, it would take years to accumulate the necessary funds. A motion to call the question was passed and when the vote was taken, Article 11 also passed.

Articles 12 and 13, regarding funding for the Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad and moving funds to the stabilization fund for retiree health insurance, breezed through. However, it was at this time that it began to rain—hard. While rain is not generally considered to be a deterrent to town meeting, the picture changes when you are in an open building with a metal roof. Since it was getting very

difficult to hear, Mark Makuc suggested that we take a break until the worst of the storm passed over. However, with some adjustment to the microphones, the meeting was able to continue, although it was still not easy to hear.

Articles 14 and 15, appropriations for the Retiree Group Health/Life Insurance benefits and the Community Septic Loan program passed through quickly and after a brief discussion, so did Article 16 which had to do with transferring funds from free cash to reduce the tax levy.

The perennial issue of the Monterey School came up next in Article 17. As anticipated, Barbara Swann, who has proven to be passionate on this subject in the past, raised her hand to speak. As president of the Monterey Historical Society, she asked the group to think about the school from a historical perspective. In order to be incorporated as a town in 1847, Monterey was required to have a school house and a church. She cited both of these buildings as being of historical significance, possibly eligible for grants for historical landmark designation. As the last school house remaining in Monterey, she stated that the building is as repairable as the South

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Egremont School, which was recently renovated and was being used by students, until the pandemic. She stated firmly, "We still need a school." In a surprise move, Barbara then made a motion to table the article, which was readily approved by a vote of 38-7. The issue of the school is an emotional one, which deserves its own meeting to sort out, in a setting where everyone is not straining to hear.

Heading into the home stretch, Article 18 was a citizen petition to appropriate \$500 to be used as matching funds for a grant application to the State Department of Environmental Protection to reduce the flow of pollutants in Lake Garfield. Dennis Lynch said that this investment would provide a return of 19:1 and it was unanimously passed.

Articles 19-23: Town Management and Elections

Articles 19-23 were the typical boilerplate items found on every town meeting warrant in Monterey. There was no need to address Articles 19 and 22 this year, and so were "passed," and Articles 20, 21, and 23 were quickly passed. Seemingly in relation to

Article 23, which was an announcement of the upcoming town elections, Michael Germain posed a question to Town Counsel, Jeremiah Pollard, asking if since there was only one candidate for select board (Scott Jenssen having dropped out as a write-in candidate) it would be possible to delay the election. The answer was a firm "No."

Before everyone dispersed, Steven Weisz recognized Melissa Noe and Shawn Tryon for setting up for town meeting, the police department for directing traffic, and especially Kenn Basler for his six years of service on the select board. And with that, the three hour meeting was done, democracy thrived even in a pandemic, and the participants finally got to remove their masks.

—Laurie Shaw

2020 Town Elections

195 voters turned out for the town elections on Tuesday, June 30. This was an increase of thirty voters over 2019.

The tallies below do not include unmarked or blank votes for some offices.

Uncontested Seats

Board of Appeals (Zoning) (5 years)

Susan Cooper 166

Board of Appeals (Zoning) (1 year)

Michael Banner 177

Board of Assessors (3 year)

Gary Shaw 175

Board of Assessors (2 years)

Scott Steibel 171

Board of Health (3 years)

John Makuc 180

Cemetery Commission (3 years)

David Brown 182

Finance Committee (3 years)

Michele Miller 170

Library Trustee (3 years, vote for 2)

John Higgins 176

Shannon Amidon Castille 165

Moderator (1 year)

Mark Makuc 183

Parks Commission (3 years)

Wendy Benjamin 173

Planning Board (5 years, vote for 2)

Laura Mensi 162

No nominee for second seat

Planning Board (3 years)

Bill Johnson 172

Select Board (3 years)

John Weingold 102


Write-ins for select board:

Scott Jenssen 54

Jon Sylbert 1


Tree Warden (1 year)

Kevin Fitzpatrick 179



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Letters

Why Can't a Mouse Eat a Streetcar?

During the town's annual meeting this past Saturday, I heard John Weingold ask if anyone ever calculated the rate-of-return on the money spent on grants. At first, I thought that it was a joke. But when I heard the question repeated over and over again, I realized that it was no longer a joke.

There are a number of ways in which to calculate a rate-of-return. The simplest and most common, however, is determined by comparing an investment with the benefits derived from that investment (always in financial terms and most often in currency). Common examples are the interest earned from a savings account, dividends received from stock ownership, or proceeds from the sale of one's house.

However, one cannot calculate the rate-of-return on the money spent on grants. Why? Although it is simple to determine the amount of the investment, calculating the benefits is a problem. In the case of the grant-writing, the investment is its cost. But what are its benefits?

One can certainly describe the benefits in words, but there is no way of calculating them in financial terms. For instance, what is the benefit of writing a grant? To get funding for a project financed by another entity. Can that benefit be quantified in financial terms? Clearly, the answer is no!

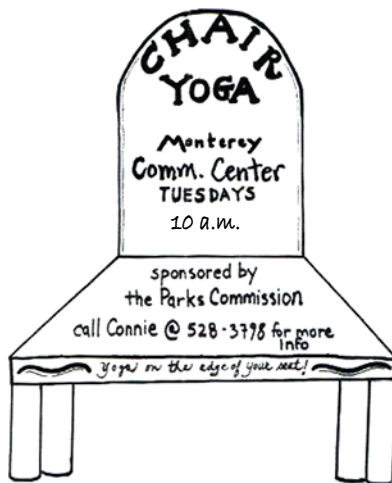
Furthermore, there is no relationship between the cost of grant-writing and the amount of the grant, as in paying a grant-writer \$25,000 for a \$500,000 grant to

rebuild a dilapidated bridge. Moreover, there is no relationship between the amount of the grant (\$500,000) and the benefit of having a new and safer bridge. In other words, can one quantify the benefit of a grant to build a bridge that has the potential to save many lives?

If you are not yet bored, I can offer many more examples, but they would all lead to the same conclusion: There is no relationship between the benefits of grants and the costs associated with getting them—hence there is no rate-of-return for grant-writing. To suggest that there is such a relationship would be misleading and incorrect—and might lead to erroneous decisions.

Maybe Mr Weingold thought that the rate-of-return meant something other than its common meaning(s) in the business world, and if so, he can be excused for his ignorance. If not, his insistence on calculating the rate-of-return for grants was nothing short of bullying behavior.

—Hillel M. Maximon



Monterey Fire Department

The Monterey Fire Department responded to a total of 135 calls in the fiscal year 2020. Approximately 65% were for fire-related calls and 35% were emergency medical calls.

Breakdown of total incidents:

- 47 Emergency Medical Services calls
- 22 Structure Fires
- 3 Motor Vehicle Accidents
- 1 Motor Vehicle Fire
- 1 Brush Fire
- 68 various other emergencies including: public assistance, false alarm activations, rescues, etc.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Chief Shawn Tryon at monterey-fireco@gmail.com.

— Keegan Wellauer
Fire Fighter and EMT
Monterey Fire Department

Editor's Note: There is an important distinction between the fire company and the fire department. When our town-appointed fire fighters/EMTs respond to a call for service, they are compensated as town employees in the fire department. The fire company is a separate, private, non-profit entity responsible for maintaining the fire house, training, and support services. The town owns almost all of the equipment housed and maintained by the fire company, so that equipment is part of the Monterey Fire Department.

Letters

Neighbor to Neighbor

Many thanks to Josh Allentuck for a wonderful casserole!

—Bob and Linda Hebert

Our Lady of the Hills Closed this Summer

Our Lady of the Hills Catholic church in Monterey, on Beartown Mountain Road, will be closed this summer out of an abundance of caution for health and safety due to Covid-19. We look forward to being open for Masses again next year during July and August.

—Deacon Sean Mulholland

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Steak Roast is Still On!

July 25

Greetings from the Monterey Fire Company.

It has been an interesting year no doubt. Due to overwhelming demand, we have decided to hold the steak roast this year—but there will be major differences due to the Covid-19. Here's what to expect regarding all things steak roast.

First things first, we at the Monterey Fire Company want to thank everyone for your confidence and support year after year. We would not be here if it were not for you.

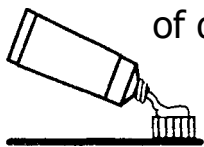
Please check our website on the day of the steak roast, July 25, for any last minute changes and directions go to montereyfire.org.

Menu

The menu is changed slightly to accommodate take-out dining. We will be serving steak as usual. All steaks will be served rare to medium rare. Have your grill ready to finish them off when you arrive home if you want your steak cooked further. Instead of swordfish, we will be serving shrimp kabobs. The shrimp dinner will consist of a shrimp skewer and a vegetable skewer (peppers, onions and cherry tomatoes). As in the past, we will be serving baked potato, corn on-the-cob, and a garden salad. Hamburger and hot-dog options, as well as a children's meal option, will be available. Dessert will be cookies and brownies. We will *not* be serving ice cream.

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Tickets

All tickets are \$35 each, are available in advance only, and only from our website. On the website, you will be allowed to choose an arrival time between 4 and 7 p.m. This will be similar to a restaurant seating or reservation time and we ask you to please be on time.

What to Bring

We suggest that you bring a cooler for your desserts and drinks and a second cooler or a box and blanket to keep your food warm. There will be no bathrooms open at the fire station, so please take care of business before you arrive.

Arrival

All arrivals will go into a staging area whose location will be posted on our website as we get closer to the steak roast day. Do not come to the fire station before going into the staging. We will have staff sorting traffic in the staging area and directing traffic at the appropriate times into the serving lanes. We will need all of our space at the fire station for this and as such, there will be no on-site parking. *Please stay in your car.*

During the day of the steak roast, we will be conducting updates of serving times via our website and Facebook.

Serving

There will be no on-site dining. All dinners will be take-out and served to you curbside on Fox Hill Road (next to the fire station). As there will be no bar, drinks will also be served take-out in closed containers and must be consumed at home. You will be served by a masked/gloved firefighter and we ask you to please stay in your vehicle, and *please, wear your mask.*

Important: Group orders will be served into a single vehicle—as a group. If you make a group order make sure you have enough room in your vehicle for the entire group order.

Cooking at Home

If you prefer, you may pickup uncooked dinners earlier that day, from noon to 3 p.m., and cook them at home at your convenience.

Please adhere to all of the precautions described above.

This is completely new to us and we are doing some careful planning so that we have a smooth running steak roast. With your help, we believe it will be. We like doing it and are grateful for your support and enthusiasm. We look forward to seeing you.

—Captain Del Martin
Monterey Fire Company



You are invited to the
Monterey Fire Company's

43rd Annual Steak Roast
Saturday, July 25

Take out dinners will be served
by curb-side pickup from 4-7 pm.

Tickets are will-call only and
are available only in advance from our website:
www.montereyfire.org

For a Complete Census All Seasonal Homes Included

If you live at multiple places throughout the year, count yourself at the address where you live and sleep most of the time. If you split your time evenly between two or more places, count yourself where you were staying on April 1, 2020.

A census response is required from each and every property.

For any property you own, but only use part of the time, follow these instructions:

1. Visit my2020census.gov.
2. Enter the Census ID or address for this secondary property.
3. Enter "0" for the number of people living at this property.
4. Hit "Next," and if a "soft error" occurs, click "Next" again.
5. Select "No" when asked to confirm no person lives at this property.
6. Select primary reason—Seasonal (most likely).
7. Complete!

It is important to ensure that all properties are counted.

For more information, go to 2020census.gov

—From the Town of Monterey

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Knox Gallery News

The Knox Gallery, like all other cultural venues in Massachusetts, plans to reopen as soon as allowed. In the meantime we want to keep you up to date with our plans.

In addition to the Alan Roland and Katherine Waveris Ryan exhibitions mentioned in the last *Monterey News* issue, Julie Shapiro and Lee Backer shows will all be rescheduled for 2021.

Everyone in town surely looks forward to resumption of in-person services at our beautiful, new, barely-used Monterey Library. When it does safely reopen, Knox Gallery will be featuring *Patty Meriam: Nature's Beauty and Fragility*, which was cut short due to the pandemic.

We intend to offer more specific plans for our fall season in the August *Monterey News*, and we hold out hope that we will be able to mount our traditional community group show in December. Get your artwork ready!

For updated information, go to MontereyMassLibrary.org/Knox-Gallery or check on [Facebook.com/KnoxGallery](https://www.facebook.com/KnoxGallery).

—MaryPaul Yates

Council on Aging Support Survey

The results of the Council on Aging survey are in- and the big news is that we have a great town, but we knew that! We received fifty-plus responses, which showed a very high volunteer base, and very few people saying they needed assistance, or they had already arranged for help and were doing all right. Along with the survey, we had sent out a list of resources (see page 26), especially helpful during the Covid-19 pandemic where we're all still trying to self-isolate. That list has been added to and revised and is now on the town website. If anyone needs help with food shopping, picking up prescriptions, or other transportation, please call the CoA at 413-528-1443, ext 247, and leave a message. We are still unable to make our usual summer plans, going to the Pittsfield Suns or the road trip to the William Cullen Bryant House. Maybe in the fall.

—Kyle Pierce



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Library News

The Monterey Library is following the reopening plan set out by Governor Baker. Currently we are in step 2 of phase 2. Step 1 of phase 2 was curbside delivery. Step 2 allows us to let you come into the library to pick up your holds. We still will put your materials outside in a paper bag if you'd like. We started out with the curbside only for the materials in the library building. Our first delivery from the state-wide service was on June 22. It will take a while for the delivery system to catch up to all the libraries, and not all of them are open yet. So you are now able to place holds as you always did, across the state. Go ahead and order what you'd like to read, listen to, or watch. It might be a few weeks yet before it runs as smoothly as it was back in the beginning of March, but the system will straighten out.

Virus Safety

A recently completed study by the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences had some very interesting results. This was done specifically using ordinary library materials. A book was opened and the virus put on a page. Seventy-two hours later it had disappeared. The same test was applied to plastic book jackets, DVDs, and cases—and by seventy-two hours in every case the virus was gone. Currently the Monterey Library is quarantining materials that are coming in, whether returned directly to the library or coming to us from delivery, for a week. So please feel safe that materials that you take out of the library are virus free.

We don't know what the future holds, but we will follow the recommendations of the governor's administration. Masks are required in the building, even if you are just picking up a book. We ask for your patience as we follow our disinfection plan which protects all of us.

Extended Hours

Town meeting approved our library budget which allows us to expand our hours starting July 1. We have already begun by extending the Thursday evening shift which starts at 4 p.m., to 8 p.m. (instead of 6 p.m.). Look for more hours as we determine where the greatest need and benefit for the town lies.



The library received its first delivery through the CWMARS interlibrary loan system on June 22. It looks almost normal!

Summer Children's Programs

It is summer, and we always have had summer reading programs, including both incentives for our children to read during the summer vacation as well as come to interesting and fun programs. This year we are in the process of seeing what we can do for the children. The best and latest information will be available on our website, montereymasslibrary.org/kids. If you go there you'll find fun links for children to explore.

We also have a reading incentive program. Children who read independently, as well as those who are read to, should keep track of their hours this summer. The Friends of the Monterey Library have agreed to donate five dollars to the Sheffield Food Assistance Program for every log completed by our young readers! In this time of great need it is a good way to teach our children social responsibility. Thanks to the Friends for being so generous, but it is up to the kids to make it happen. The simple form is available on the website. There is no limit to how much reading the children can do. Let's try to give the food pantry a big boost.

On the website we also have links to programs from our favorite performers. We've already got links to magician Jim Snack (who has promised a Zoom session

for anyone wanting to learn magic—stay tuned to the website for that date to be announced), singer Tom Seiling with his "Tromp through the Swamp," and Science Tellers. Keep checking the website for these recorded programs which will be available throughout the summer. Let us know your favorites from years past and we can see if we can get those performers as well. Our performers have had to adjust, so keep checking the website for more fun things for the kids to do this summer.

Esther Heffernan Retiring

Our last bit of news from the library is not so happy for our patrons. Esther Heffernan is retiring after working here since 2005! Unfortunately we can't have a last shift to send her off due to the virus right now, but we hope to when it becomes safe. She has been doing the Wednesday shift faithfully for all those years. Please wish her a good retirement. She promises to come back often and if you catch her here, she will, as those of you who know her know she will be happy to give you excellent recommendations.

—Mark Makuc
Library Director

MontereyMassLibrary.org



In My View



If you prefer to avoid conflict at all costs, stop reading now. If you believe that conflict resolution can enable progress, read on.

Two years on the Monterey Select Board have taught me a lot about this town and its people. And I really like what I've seen. Commitment to improving life in Monterey shines out in the work of our many dedicated volunteers and is demonstrated daily by our highly professional and competent town employees. Making a town run well in these complex times is no easy task. But our volunteers and employees are diligent, caring, hardworking, and creative. We all owe them our thanks. Do they all work in a conflict free environment? Of course, not. But contrary to the assertions of some folks, conflicts are put to rest and the work goes on.

Occasionally, conflicts do arise which cannot be resolved within town hall. Generally, those are matters for the annual town meeting. I want to begin a discussion of one of those issues in this essay.

There is a recent conflict between the select board and the finance committee on a point of law which cannot be fully resolved without action by the town meeting. The issue is which board is responsible for managing the budgetary process and presenting the proposed budget to the annual town meeting.



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Since Monterey was incorporated, the select board has managed the entire process. Over sixty years ago, the town meeting adopted a by-law creating the finance committee. That by-law defined the role of the finance committee by reference to Commonwealth statutes by section numbers without any detailed explanation.

For over a half century, the town meeting has assumed that the select board was in charge. The finance committee was understood to be an independent agency whose main task was to advise the town meeting on budget issues when it believed the select board had exercised poor judgment. However, the finance committee also played the useful role of lending its expertise to the select board as the latter made budgetary decisions. The finance committee now wants to reverse that very well-settled precedent and take over the budget process entirely.

Although I've described this as a legal issue, which it is in part, it is far better understood as an issue of policy. For, in point of fact, the Commonwealth law allows each town to decide for itself which body will be responsible for developing and presenting the budget.

The finance committee is technically and perhaps legally correct in its interpretation of the literal language of our by-law. For me, the problem is that the history of Monterey shows, without doubt, that no one understood the by-law in this way when it was adopted, and no one has so understood it since, with the exception of the present members of the finance committee. When you want to change over a half century of a town's understanding of its by-law, I believe that you should welcome presentation of the issue to the town meeting.

I proposed to the select board that we present a by-law to the town meeting to settle the issue with our 2021 budget warrant. Although the other members of the select board believed in keeping the budget process under the select board's control, they were unwilling to submit the issue to the town meeting.

This year the budget process was very difficult as the finance committee kept trying to gain control of the process. Those difficulties will continue as we address the

2022 budget. The members of the finance committee will be frustrated again because ultimately the budget is presented in the warrant and the warrant is the work of the select board.

I hope that this matter can be addressed at a special town meeting later in the year, and if not I hope that it will come before the next annual town meeting.

In the meantime, I'm sure that both boards will work together, as they should, to develop the best possible budget for 2022. I certainly pledge that I will carefully consider the views of the finance committee members, but I won't yield my right to be one of three votes on the select board as it decides what budget shall be presented to the town meeting.

This past year began with the finance committee announcing without prior notice that it would run the budget process and that individual members of the select board were welcome to stop by. The resulting process was poorly planned and poorly executed, resulting in, among other things, the use of far too much of our employees' valuable time. I hope that the finance committee will recognize that the select board, as chief executive, should manage the process, but do so in a way that includes and respects the views of the members of the finance committee.

Of course, compared to the great national issues confronting us, this issue is patently insignificant. But it is a local issue that will unnecessarily continue to disturb our tranquility until it is resolved at town meeting.

I believe the finance committee is best used when its role is advisory to the select board and the town meeting. I believe most towns follow that model. But whatever your view, let us face this issue and put it behind us.

—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.

Here's a Thought

I snapped this photo (at right) of desert flowers growing in Cortez, Colorado, a decade ago. Our current times make them relevant for me again now.

Weather-wise, we're past the summer solstice and into July, the month generally the hottest of the year in Massachusetts. Politically, it's summer in a presidential election year best described as heating up both around its edges and from the inside out. Culturally, and by that I mean racially, Monterey demographics tell me I'm writing this article mostly for white folks. And you're reading my words at a time when we white folks are being asked whether we believe that our collective silence makes us complicit in the fact that black lives don't matter before the law as much as white lives do in our country.

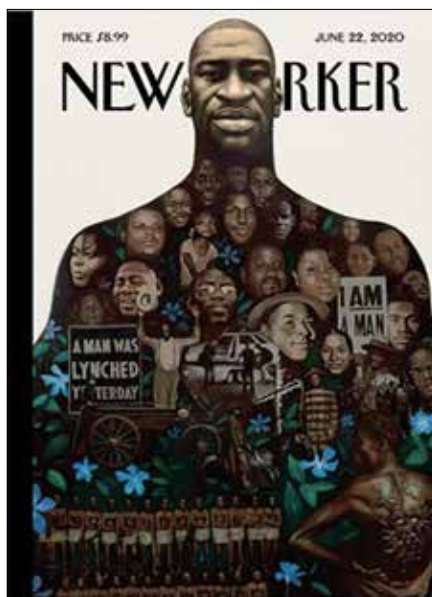
Say his name out loud: George Floyd. Take a look at a recent *New Yorker* cover and say the other names he now carries with his own. Imagine how many names you and I don't know. I'm not suggesting anyone for sainthood here, just humanhood.

I'm old enough to also say, Rodney King. Bold enough to drag us all back more than eighty years to bow before the courage of Billie Holiday singing "Strange Fruit." (Check YouTube for her 1959 performance; Nina Simone's 1965 rendition; and Beth Hart and Joe Bonamassa's 2013 version.)

You already know that song's about lynching, right? In the 1930s, Abel Meeropol was haunted by a photo of a southern lynching, wrote the lyrics in 1939 as a cathartic poem, and then put the words to music.

I do a little songwriting myself and I'm a far better lyricist than musician. I originally came to songwriting as a poet hoping to find a musician who'd want to collaborate. Moving on to plan B, I picked up the guitar myself. Now I get by both ways.

"Another Monday in America," my song about illness, death, and the month of May, 2020, includes the line, "it's still lynching if you kneel." And, yes, it's meant to be unpacked both ways. Yes, it's still lynching if you bypass the tree and the rope and just kneel on



Strange Fruit

Southern trees bear a strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees
Pastoral scene of the gallant South
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
Scent of magnolia, sweet and fresh
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh
Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck
For the sun to rot, for the tree to drop
Here is a strange and a bitter crop

—Abel Meeropol, 1937

a man's throat until he's dead. Yes, you still risk lynching if you take a knee at a sporting event.

And that brings me back to those desert flowers in the photo, growing in sand and whatever shade that nearby rock provided. We humans are all as fragile, and most are as strong, as those determined little plants. The problem is that the rock of the law shades some of us and rolls over on others. Too often that has to do with skin color, money, local zip code, and conventional practice.

Am I blaming cops as a species? No; I'm not willing to simply substitute blue for black, white, brown, yellow, or red. This is too big a moment, and too important a wake-up call, to settle for such an easy, such an external, target. What needs fixing is making itself clear. A cultural boil has burst, spewing response to the toxic, smelly substance of imbedded racism all over our streets and calling it by its right name. It's televised even more widely than Walter Cronkite's coverage of the war in Vietnam. As it should be.

Agree or disagree; call me an aging flower child, if you like. Looking at that photo, I'll take that as a compliment.

—Mary Kate Jordan

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Friends of Lake Garfield Health, Welfare, and Enjoyment

Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG) was formed over fifty years ago and has been a non-profit organization since 2015. We must rely and depend on member donations to accomplish our mission of maintaining the health, welfare, and enjoyment of Lake Garfield.

The Friends would like to invite you to a meeting open to all on Saturday, July 11, at 9 a.m., at the firehouse pavilion.

Lake Garfield is a slice of heaven on earth which benefits the town and its full-time residents and second-home owners and visitors. We are blessed to have this very special lake in Monterey, but we cannot afford to take Lake Garfield for granted. Therefore, FLG continues its commitment to partnering with our members, the Town of Monterey, the town's appointed Lake Garfield Work Group (LGWG), and the state (which controls the lake) to accomplish our goals. However, we cannot do so without the sustained financial support of our members and the community.

To better understand what FLG does and why we urge you to join our membership and donate to our cause, we share the following summary of FLG activities and accomplishments that donations support and sustain:

- We have consistently done monitoring of lake health through annual surveys

and testing by a lake scientist to assure its safety for public enjoyment.

- We survey, monitor, and take actions to mitigate invasive species from our lake. Fortunately, we do not have zebra mussels. Unfortunately, we do have milfoil, an invasive weed species that will continue to spread and threaten the health of the lake unless it is diligently and consistently monitored and mitigated. FLG advocated with the state and town to approve and help fund diver-assisted suction harvesting (DASH) of the milfoil in the spring and fall annually. DASH has made significant progress in reducing the presence of milfoil as a method of control, but it must continue, or the milfoil will continue to spread further and threaten lake health.
- Weeds in general, and milfoil, thrive on nutrients, phosphorus, etc. These nutrients mostly enter the lake from the watershed (streams) during periods of heavy rain and snow melt. The FLG has worked with the town and state to mitigate the stormwater runoff by supporting grant applications, and with matching funds with the town, to obtain funding to place retention devices and rain gardens to help reduce phosphorus levels in the lake.
- With global warming, cyanobacteria blooms (which thrive on phosphorus) have become more and more common. Some forms of cyanobacteria can be toxic to animals and humans. FLG does

summer weekly monitoring of cyanobacteria to monitor the lake health and safety for swimming and water sports. (See "Cyanobacteria Monitoring" on page 15.)

- The FLG partners with the town. We have several FLG members participating in the LGWG and we continue funding to lake projects. We also partner with the EPA on cyanobacteria monitoring and the Western Massachusetts Lakes and Ponds Association.
- We provide educational information to our members and the public through our website.

More information about Lake Garfield and FLG can be found on our website, friendsoflakegarfield.org.

FLG needs members and donations and we hope we can count on you for both. We want our members to be involved and to have a say in what the FLG does.

We welcome your input and comments. Feel free to reach out to us if you have questions or want to learn more about FLG, or to make suggestions on how FLG can improve on what we already do. Join us on July 11 for our annual meeting. The most important thing is to join. No matter how much or how little you contribute, your membership is greatly appreciated.

Happy Summer and thanks for your support!

Best regards,

—Greg Carnese
FLG Board of Directors




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Monterey*

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Cyanobacteria Monitoring Lake Garfield 2020

Lakes, ponds, and other bodies of water have microscopic organisms living in the water. Some of these organisms can be toxic in large quantities to humans, pets, and local wildlife. A particular group of potentially toxic organisms are called cyanobacteria. Cyanobacteria are aquatic bacteria that obtain their energy through photosynthesis (a process of obtaining energy using sunlight). Cyanobacteria are more commonly called "blue-green algae." There are many different species of cyanobacteria, and not all of them produce toxins. When optimal conditions are in place, the cyanobacteria can grow in large blooms which could be toxic to the body of water. Optimal conditions include warmer temperatures, abundant sunlight, more intense rainfall, pollution from human activities, and plentiful nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus.

Last summer, samples were taken on Lake Garfield and Lake Buel following the guidelines of the EPA and its Cyanobacteria Monitoring Collaborative Program. The samples were frozen and sent for analysis to the EPA and the data was added to the regional data of the EPA program. Each sample, before it was frozen, was analyzed for phycocyanin (blue-green pigment emitted by cyanobacteria). Last summer's testing also gave an idea of

what cyanobacteria genera are in the lake and at what time of the year. We have a baseline data set to compare this summer's results too. At the end of the summer, the data was presented at the Western Massachusetts Lakes and Ponds Association's West Symposium and later at a Westfield State University Conference.

For summer 2020, the plan is to conduct cell counts to provide a quantitative reading on the genera present in the lake, the phycocyanin readings, and send samples to the EPA. Testing will be conducted every two weeks until August where it will be once a week because it is the optimal time of the year for blooms. The state's threshold for unsafe levels for recreational use of the lake are 70,000 cells/mL of cyanobacteria. Every citizen can participate in the monitoring by watching the lake for any sign of blooms (anything abnormal on the surface and/or water column) and letting us know so we can test it. If you have something to report, please email me at spoulin4149@westfield.ma.edu.

We will post the results on the FLG website, friendsoflakegarfield.org.

— Shannon Poulin

Editor's Note: Shannon began monitoring Lake Garfield in 2019. She is a graduate of Westfield State University, with a B.S. in Biology and a minor in chemistry. She lives locally and works for Camp Half Moon on Lake Buel.

School Committee Nominations Represent Monterey

Candidates are needed for Southern Berkshire Regional School District school committee. The SBRSD serves Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough, and Sheffield. The district is facing some serious issues about the future, and needs active and thoughtful representatives to lead the towns. (See page 30.)

Nomination papers are available in the District Office at 491 Berkshire School Road, Sheffield, and may be picked up by appointment only. Please call 413-229-8778 Monday to Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The following school committee seats will be included on the ballot in November 2020:

- Egremont, one seat, four years
- New Marlborough, one seat four years
- Monterey, one seat, four years
- Sheffield, two seats, four years

Candidates must submit nomination papers to local registrars of voters for certification no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, July 21.

All papers must be filed with the clerk of the regional school district no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, August 18.

If you have a strong interest in the future of our children's education, please consider taking out nomination papers for the November election.

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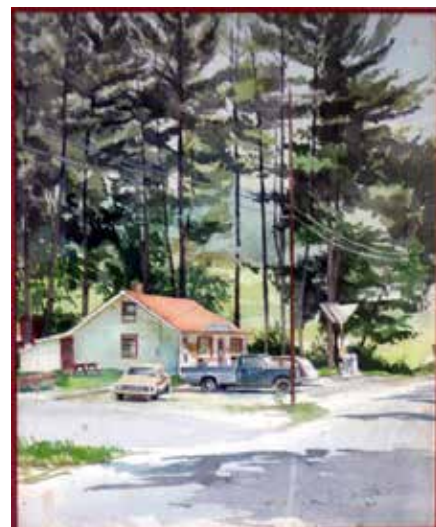
Come Join the Fun!



Work zone sign along Stevens Lake Road. Makes you wonder if they ever finished the job.



Flowers alongside the community garden at the community center.



The Roadside, Frank D'Amato, undated.

Monterey Community Center News

Drumming

Do you ever feel like banging on something—really hard? In this ongoing saga of the Covid-19 pandemic, the need to get out our frustrations about health, finances, and social isolation is real and the solution is to be had at the Monterey Community Center. Kit Patten has come up with the idea of a drumming circle that will allow all the participants to blow off a little steam and have some fun. What, you may ask, is a drumming circle? It is a group of people who bang on drums and spontaneously create music—or something like it, anyway. Kit will start out with a beat, then everyone else will join in with their own additions to that beat. The drumming continues until it feels done, then another beat will be given for the next round.

You do not need to be a musician to join the drum circle, nor do you even need a real drum. Got a joint compound bucket laying around? That will do, or anything else you can think of that you can drum on. No experience is needed, and this group is appropriate for participants of any age. Kit is going to start out with two sessions on Tuesdays, July 21 and August 4, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Depending on how it goes, maybe more sessions will be offered. The whole idea is to have fun and relieve a bit of stress.

The drum circle will take place outside at the community center. There will be a tent

put up to keep everyone out of the sun or rain. This is what you need to bring with you.

A drum, or something you have improvised that will make a good sound,

A chair to sit on,

A mask.

There will be enough room to make sure that everyone can observe social distancing. You can bring sticks to drum with if you want or just use your hands. The whole thing is very informal and the idea is to create music with whatever everyone brings. So mark your calendar for July 21 and August 4 to join the fun and release a bit of tension.

Chair Yoga

In other MCC news, Connie Wilson's yoga classes are now taking place at the community center as well as on Zoom. For those who feel comfortable meeting in person, the group meets outside, well separated, and masked, while Connie simultaneously conducts the class on Zoom for those who would rather participate from home. The class takes place on Tuesday mornings at 10, and lasts for about forty-five minutes. If you would like to participate, either show up or get the Zoom contact information by calling Connie at 528-3798, or emailing the MCC at calendar@ccmonterey.org.

If you do stop by the community center, please take a look at the lovely accessible flower garden right near the door. Many thanks to Wendy Jensen, Libby Wolfe, and Pat Nourse for providing us with such a delightful visual treat.

Goodbye Art Department

The Art Department, the studio and gallery space run for many years by the late Frank D'Amato, will be closing its doors at the end of this season. Frank became a full-time resident of Monterey in 1983, after teaching art at the high school level. He immersed himself in the fabric of the town, first as co-chair of the arts council, which produced several memorable seasons of cultural and artistic events. In addition, he was the designer of the Veterans' Memorial at the cemetery at the corner of Route 23 and Blue Hill Road. Frank also served as a member of the Veterans' Committee. He was known for his popular holiday cards, which had a different rendition of Monterey Center each year.

Frank passed away last September, and left a large body of original art works, including water colors, oils, and drawings, many featuring Monterey landmarks. His estate is offering these for sale. If interested, please contact me. Call me at (413) 528-3723, or email me at contessachiara@hotmail.com, to schedule an appointment.

—Claire Dosick

Gradually, the Monterey Community Center is coming back to life and we hope to offer more programs as the summer progresses and it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we hope everyone continues to stay well.

—Laurie Shaw

Chair, Monterey Community Center



Liam and the Swallow

On Friday, June 5, Liam Flicker (five and one-half years old) found a tree swallow on the propeller of his grandparents' boat. The following story is Liam's telling:

On a sunny day, I saw a bird that was in the lake. It came up on the propeller of my grandpa's boat, and then me and my friend Gabi got a net. The bird was a tree swallow. It flew onto the edge of our net.

We brought it to a bench. We tried feeding it a worm, but we Googled it and it said, "Never try feeding a tree swallow a worm, or big things, because they eat insects, water flies, and things."

Then my daddy came over and we tried to give it a little warm blanket. It took a few tries to catch the bird in the soft rag. We wrapped it up. We called Bonner McAllester and then she said to put it in a box.



Then, we dried it and my daddy fed it with water through a little straw. We fed it with flies. The bird just swallowed them in one little bite.

Then, me and my friend were playing. Daddy called us because the bird flew away, up onto a telephone wire! Then, the tree swallow's friend came over and they were playing with his wet wings. It turns out, they were drying his wings. My daddy brought his binoculars, and we looked. They were just playing, and battling!

At the end, we saw that he had pooped a little on the towel he was wrapped in.

The End.

—Liam Flicker, photos and transcription by Gabriella Makuc

Wildlife Editor's note: One fun fact: These birds are called tree swallows because they nest in hollow parts of trees. Source: The Cornell Lab, online, at allaboutbirds.org/.

Lost Suns

When I face the dark
afraid of the long night
that is whispering in me
like a wind scattering leaves,
I feel the shiver of a wintry tree
and imagine the wide lonely place
I live in.

A secret wood of my own.
An enclosure which cannot be resisted
without tearing darkness from light
or the child from home.

Yet there are times I imagine
shafts of light blazing on air,
dust flaring freely as happiness in space
and the light of lost suns,
visions not born of sadness,
waiting to be entered
until the end of days.

—Amos Neufeld
(First appeared in *Jewish Spectator*, 1988)



Correction Elephant Rock Book Swap

Last month the *Monterey News* published a photo of the Elephant Rock Book Swap sent in by Paul Epstein. In a few ensuing emails concerning the little library it was never made clear that this little country gem was not Paul Epstein's. Yet another assumption made that has now faltered on new information.

Katharine Walker, of 29 Elephant Rock Road, wrote to say that, "It was designed, built and decorated by my two grandsons, Cody and Justin Moskal." Katharine added that, "I am a summer resident/home owner (five generations), so all of Monterey is near and dear to my heart."

Feel free to check out the shelves, and bring a book to contribute!

—Stephen Moore, Editor



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Monterey Garden Path Tour Saturday, July 18

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow," said Audrey Hepburn. So there is no more perfect time than today to be a part of nature either by planting a garden, or by visiting one. Mark your calendar for the Monterey Garden Path Tour to be held Saturday, July 18 (rain date Sunday, July 19) from 1 to 4 p.m. All proceeds will go to The People's Pantry in Great Barrington.

What You Will See

(A sample photo tour is on page 19. Photos by Myrna Rosen and Carole Clarin.)

Garden #1: 20 Point Road on Lake Garfield. This quarter-acre property is devoted to several flower beds showcasing perennials and annuals. A ten-foot wall of *macleania cordata* along the path takes you to the raised beds of perennials and cutting flowers along the lake.

Also at Garden #1 there will be a plant sale of perennials and annuals donated by Clark's Nursery on Route 102 in Lee. So bring a few extra dollars! Complimentary bottled water will be available at gardens #1 and #3.

Garden #2: 24 Point Road. This is a picture-book garden entered through a flowering archway. Only four hundred square feet, it is packed with an array of perennials against beautiful contrasting foliage.



Garden #3: 19 Point Road, a few steps down from Garden #2. (The numbers are not sequential.) Garden #3 takes you into an enchanted forest! Follow the stone path to see sculptures living in lush beds of vinca, solomon's seal, and wild ginger under eighty-foot-tall trees.

Don't miss the birdhouse collection.

Garden #4: 37 Sylvan Road. The woodland garden path of goshen stone circles the house with a diversity of shade-loving plants and ground cover. Flowering pots along the deck bring additional color to the bucolic setting.

Joining the Tour

Admission for the garden tour is a \$10 donation to the food bank in Great Barrington. Please make checks payable to

The People's Pantry, which is run entirely by volunteers. You may mail the checks to P.O. Box 604, Monterey, MA, 01245, or bring a check or cash to any of the entrances to the gardens where receptacles will be in place. It would be helpful if you could pre-register by calling 528-9090; we may decide to extend the hours if there is strong interest.

Respecting social distancing, travel on the garden paths will be in one direction. Please come with your mask.

Each location will have maps available with directions and plant identifications.

The August issue of the *Monterey News* will feature photos of gardens, so you may want to bring your camera in case you see a photo opportunity along the way, or even some from your own garden!

All four gardens are in close proximity to one another, only a short walk from the beach, so you may wish to park at the beach and take a stroll. Otherwise there is limited parking at all four locations.

It's not too late to include your garden on the tour. Please call 413-528-9090 to add yours, or if you have any other questions.

And remember, there are no garden mistakes—only experiments!

—Myrna Rosen



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Garden #2



Garden #1



Garden #4

August Monterey News Focus on Gardens

On the heels of this small garden tour I thought it would be nice to have a photo section in the August issue of the *Monterey News*. Already some people have sent in some beautiful photos of the gardens.

If you really enjoy your garden, or if you have some special features to your garden or landscape, send photos to the MontereyNews9@gmail.com by Monday, July 20. If possible, please try to send the photo file in "full" or "actual" size.

Feel free to provide a caption for each photo, and a credit for who took the picture.

— Stephen Moore, Editor



Garden #3



Garden #3

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Gossamer Mornings

When the sun is just up and slanting down to me over our orchard, I see wafting lines of sparkling light in the air. This has only begun recently, but I used to see them last year, too, into the fall. These are specialized strands of spider silk called “gossamer,” a word that may derive from “goose” and “summer” or maybe not. It has come to mean anything light and airy or filmy, but is used mostly to refer to these lines of spider silk.

Henry Thoreau saw them in late October and wrote of them in his Journal in 1853. He had a book from England called *An Introduction to Entomology*, by Kirby and Spence, which he quotes. “In Germany these flights of gossamer appear so constantly in autumn that they are metaphorically called ‘*Derfliegender Sommer*,’ (the flying or departing summer.)”

Thoreau’s description is of a scene more thick with silk than what I see in our orchard and garden. But he notes the same thing I do, which is that as long as the silk is between me and the sun it catches the light and I can see it. Otherwise it is invisible, and this is true at other times of day here because the light is not right. We don’t have much open ground, just the garden and orchard.

Over open water, Thoreau saw “myriads” of spiders on the surface, some with lines of silk attached. He writes the spiders were being blown along quite fast and



were of varying sizes and colors, though some were very small. Passing by some willows, which were bare of leaves in late October, Thoreau notes, “They are so completely covered with these fine cobwebs or lines, mainly parallel to one another, that they make one solid woof, a misty woof against the sun.”

Another observer, Charles Darwin, noticed gossamer on board the HMS Beagle twenty years earlier. He found thousands of tiny spiders on the ship, at a time when he was sixty miles off Argentina. “All the ropes were coated and fringed with gossamer web,” he wrote. And he could not attribute their presence to a strong wind from shore since it was

a calm day. The next day he watched the tiny spiders take off with “great speeds” on another windless day.

Thoreau thought the spiders must be carried on small winds, “zephyrs,” as he put it. He went back the next day, November 1, 1853, after a cold night of frost. There were no spiders out, but lots of gossamer remained. He puzzled why all this expenditure of silk at a time when there were no insects to be caught. Like many people, he thought of all spider silk as designed solely for trapping insects.

Now we can learn about all sorts of specific uses spiders have for their silk and how each use gets a different sort of fiber made by specialized glands and spinnerets. We speak of “spinning” but that’s not the way spider silk is made. It is produced by “pultrusion,” which is a marvelous word related to “extrusion,” but which means pulled out, not squeezed out. Sometimes the “pulling” is done by the spider with its feet, and sometimes just by gravity. When a spider makes a drop-line, a way to travel downwards from a branch or bush, with the option of beating a fast retreat back up again if need be, then it is gravity or the spider’s weight which pulls out the fiber.

This fiber is produced on demand. It is not all wound up and stored somehow inside a spider. Rather there is a stored “liquid silk precursor” which, when pulled out, becomes a strand. Spider silk has been noticed by folks for a long time. In fact, there was once an attempt made to keep captive spiders so their silk could be collected and used for weaving into textiles. But spiders could not be domesticated and raised like barnyard animals. They killed and ate each other when kept captive. Silkworms turned out to be much more manageable: they spin their cocoons when they are caterpillars and *then you can kill them* before they grow up. Then you simply unwind the cocoons.

People don’t give up easily, though, and as recently as 2009 a piece of cloth eleven-by-four feet was made from the silk of over one million golden orb spiders in Madagascar. It took eighty-four people four years to collect the spiders and extract the silk. This had to be done by “pultrusion,” just the way the spiders do it: pull by hand that fiber out from the spinneret in the abdomen of the spider.



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Folks have used spider silk as the thread to make crosshairs in telescopes, microscopes, and telescopic rifle sights, and in 2012 someone or perhaps many people working at “pultrusion,” made a set of violin strings by milking a spider. Probably it was many spiders.

That silk precursor or gel-like unspun silk dope has been the subject of much study as folks work to make synthetic spider silk. The molecular structure is both complex and very long, I have read. Meanwhile, the spiders continue to make it for several kinds of webs, also for wrapping up prey. In one species of spider the prey-wrapping silk actually contains venom. The silk is light weight and can absorb a lot of pull without breaking. It has toughness and tensile strength. If there were one strand long enough to encircle the world, it would weigh eighteen ounces.

We know, or can read and try to understand, that spiders use the earth’s electric field to travel fast, to kick off and go by the repulsion of negative charges. I hope Darwin can read about this. Thoreau was satisfied with the idea of zephyrs carrying spiders along, but he didn’t know their silk would some day be found one thousand miles out to sea, also two and one-half miles up in the air.

Lines of gossamer sparkle every clear morning early, as I look east. They are horizontal, wafting, glinting in the early low sun, and disappear for the rest of the day.

—Bonner McAllester

Remembrance Jean Tillie Nightingale

Jean Tillie (Westberg) Nightingale, of Marshfield, MA, passed away on June 14, 2020 at the age of ninety-five. Beloved wife of the late Gordon T. Nightingale who passed away ten years ago; loving mother of Steven Nightingale and his wife Jane of Maryland, and the late Mark Nightingale; dear grandmother of Christina, Michael, Elizabeth, Angela, and great-grandmother of Brianna, Billy, Alyssa, Ashley, Ryan, and Sam. Jean also leaves a sister-in-law, Bobbin Lanciani.

Tillie was an avid reader and also enjoyed gardening and traveling. She treasured her extensive collection of paperweights which she acquired in her travels. She enjoyed nothing more than spending time with family and visits from her many friends. Linda Thorpe wrote that Jean was born and grew up in Monterey, and, “Even though she moved away earlier in her life, she kept returning to Monterey. She sold the family home twenty years ago, but she returned to visit with friends during the steak roast week in July up until ten years ago.”

Having a Good Day

- Last year your oldest friends promised to finally make the drive to Monterey for this year’s steak roast.

When you found out that the steak roast was still happening, it seemed likely that they’d made other plans.

But they hadn’t!



In keeping with Tillie’s wishes, funeral services and burial will be private. Donations in memory of Jean T. Nightingale can be made to Beacon Hospice Care, and Amedisys Company, by mail to 32 Resnick Road, Suite 3, Plymouth, MA 02360.



I was desperate for a hug from my sixteen-year-old granddaughter, Jordan Schwartz. I devised a “shield” made from a sheet of six-foot-high soft plastic, two six-foot dowels, and ordinary plastic garbage bags. It took me two hours to create, for just a twenty-second hug at a Starbucks in Connecticut. Was it worth it? Absolutely!

—Myrna Rosen



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here come/the fireflies//with their staccato/lights//their tiny headlamps//blinking//in silence/through the tall grass//like constellations/ cut loose...

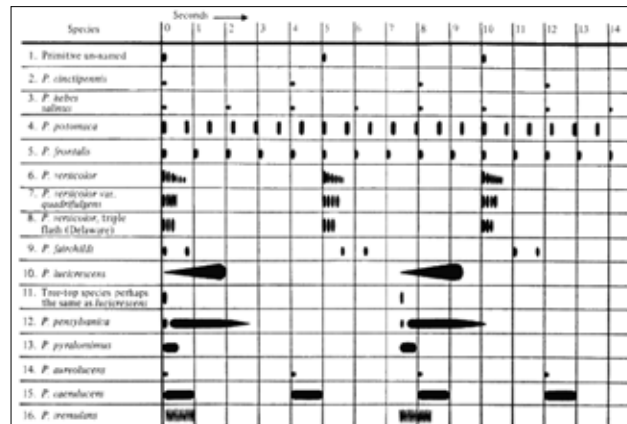
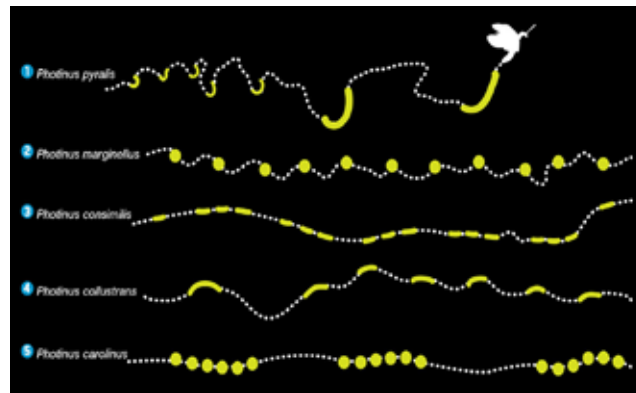
—Linda Pastan

I think of myself as one who loves to camp.

Bradley and I frequently talk about taking camping trips, with me piping up that perhaps we might try a dry run at Beartown, where a forgotten essential, or a sudden downpour could be mitigated by a short drive home.

But when I count how many times we have camped out in nearly five years together, it doesn't add up to much: two nights, one at a commercial campground after a bluegrass festival, and one adventure in "glamping" at a campsite organized by a friend on a woodland knoll he owns, complete with an outdoor kitchen, running water, porta-potty, music system, and fire pit.

My yen for camping was fulfilled when we picked up a large tent and canopy—essentially a free-standing screened-in porch—in advance of hosting our first distanced outdoor gathering. Bradley set it up on a level mossy patch up the hill. Pitched at the forest's edge, the setup offers the thrill of being nestled within the woods without the fear of ticks, the annoyance of mosquitos, or the sacrifice of creature comforts. What I noticed most particularly was the natural soundscape, so much sharper and more immediate than the muffled bird calls and critter sounds that make it into the house.



And the fireflies.

During June and early July, the show they put forth is mesmerizing, the seemingly random bursts of light coming so quickly from so many directions.

Given how much I enjoyed evenings in the tent, I figured I might as well put my observations to use in the service of science. I like the idea of scientific research in much the same way that I enjoy camping, more in the abstract than in the full fine misery. The idea of being able to advance scientific endeavors as just one individual in a larger crowdsourcing event, rather than

Fireflies

*here come
the fireflies
with their staccato
lights
their tiny headlamps
blinking
in silence
through the tall grass
like constellations
cut loose
from the night
sky
(see how desire
transforms
the plainest
of us)
or flashes of insight
that flare
for a moment
then flicker out*

—Linda Pastan

taking on the patient tedium and minutiae of field research, is appealing.

So I enrolled in the Mass Audubon Firefly Watch. "Anyone in North America can participate in Firefly Watch," the website (fireflywatch@massaudubon.org) cheerfully announces. "All you need to do is spend at least ten minutes once a week during firefly season observing fireflies in one location. All firefly sightings—or lack thereof—are valuable!"

Sounds easy enough—count how many fireflies you see in three ten-second intervals over a ten-minute period. But try it this time of year, in a nice dark patch of the county, and you may find that it gets more complicated. So many flashes going on, so hard to count them all. And then trying to reconcile how many of the flashes come from the same individuals. (Later I found out that just registering the number of flashes will do.)

If my observations are to have any value at all, I reasoned, I should learn more about what I was looking at. A two-and-a-half-hour webinar by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, originally presented on June 12, was just the background I needed. The entomologist presenters, Chris Cractsley and Clyde Sorenson, talked about the main



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genera and species of fireflies that would likely be found in Massachusetts, and their respective anatomy, habits, and behaviors.

As they noted, of some two thousand firefly species worldwide, around 175 are found in the United States, with perhaps twenty in Massachusetts (all of these numbers are somewhat speculative, as some species may not yet be discovered, and some are disappearing). Like butterflies, another wondrous form of winged insects, they undergo a complete metamorphosis. Fireflies spend most of their lives, a year or two, underground as aggressive and voracious larvae. After transforming into the pupa stage, they emerge a couple of weeks later as “silent sparks” (the name given them in a 2016 guidebook, *Silent Sparks: The Wondrous World of Fireflies*, by Sara Lewis). In this final phase of their lives, lasting just a couple of weeks, they have a single focus—getting their genetic material into the future. For these creatures, bioluminescence functions in the way that pheromones do for other insects, as a language of mating.

In preparation for my actual data collection I spent a few evenings in the tent honing my observational skills. It was interesting: observing a phenomenon in a purposeful, analytical frame of mind proves to be quite different from simply being taken in by the blooming, buzzing confusion of it all. Although firefly numbers are said to be in decline, you wouldn’t know it from sitting in our dark backyard near the canopy of oaks and the unmowed grass, both great habitats for the sparks whose show I have come to prefer to noisy man-made fireworks.

In “citizen scientist” mode, distinctions come to the fore. Firefly lights glow in different shades—like the stars they seem to reflect. Some (in the *Pyroctomena* genus) flash an amber-toned light. *Photinus* shines in a warm liquid yellow, with species in the *Photuris* genus giving off a decidedly greenish tint. Some species fly high in the trees, others hover closer to the ground. Some prefer open habitats, others are partial to specific woodland habitats. Some species like dusk and quit when darkness descends. Others don’t come out until darkness has fully settled.

But what is most distinctive, once you begin isolating them, are the flash patterns,

the secret language by which male fireflies announce their presence to the opposite sex. Females, some of them wingless, sit waiting in the grass, or sometimes high in the trees, blinking a species-specific response to particular flashes.

The cacophony of patterns animates the view: Some species flash regularly, once every four seconds (more slowly if there’s a chill in the air). Others flash twice in quick succession, followed by a pause. Some cast a train of quick dots, almost indistinguishable from one another. Some seem to angle downward quickly, like falling stars. Sometimes different-sized bursts—tiny to explosive—come from several directions all at once, like paparazzi reacting to the expected appearance of a celebrity. Some flashes illuminate a section of dark woodland in a freeze frame. And then sometimes the expanse goes dark. For a few seconds there are no flashes at all.

Researchers document these flash patterns in interesting graphics. They may use dots and dashes charted over time in a kind

of Morse code of quick bursts and longer pulses, with the female responses charted in adjacent rows. Some of their graphics resemble a choreographer’s directions or the score of a contemporary piece of music. And in a kind of synesthesia, the flashes begin to feel like a symphony of light. Tracing individual flight patterns takes on the quality of listening to one specific instrument in an orchestra. After a couple of nights trying to analyze them, I began, sometimes, to be able to follow individuals.

So, with that background, I feel fully ready to track and submit my interval observations. And if those go well, perhaps I’ll graduate to Firefly Watch Pro, a much more elaborate and demanding version of the exercise, one that researchers are piloting this year.

But maybe not. As the training video noted, when you catch sight of higher densities of fireflies, sometimes it just makes sense to sit back and enjoy the show.

—Janet Jensen

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Bidwell House Museum

Zoom Events

The warmth and sun have finally made it to Monterey and summer is definitely here. As the state of Massachusetts begins to carefully re-open, the Bidwell House Museum is happy to share with you two online events in July, along with a new “outside of the house” tour.

To look at the program of events at the museum, or to receive the Zoom links to attend the museum events, you must purchase tickets in advance on the museum’s website. Go to bidwellhousemuseum.org, and click on “Events.”

Wednesday, July 15, at 6:30 p.m., we will be presenting the play *I Now Pronounce You Lucy Stone*. In honor of the

2020 centennial celebration for Women’s Suffrage, the Bidwell House Museum and the Berkshire County Historical Society at Herman Melville’s Arrowhead are excited to join with History At Play™, LLC to share Lucy Stone’s incredible story. The first woman from Massachusetts to earn a college degree (1847), Lucy was an ardent supporter of human rights. As a scholar, Lucy studied Greek and Hebrew, insisting that ancient scriptures had been mistranslated to objectify women. As a wife, Lucy refused to take her husband’s name, becoming the first to do so in the nation, and leading to the moniker of “Lucy Stoner” to describe a woman who does just that! Lucy and her comrades were evolving from successful abolitionists to struggling suffragists.

Saturday July 18, at 10 a.m., join the Bidwell House Museum for our second Zoom history talk with author Tom Shachtman. In his talk you will learn how the Founders dealt with tariffs, taxes on the wealthy, and regional disparities in ways that are startlingly relevant today.

Shachtman makes the case that affluence played a greater role in the Revolution than has been acknowledged, exploring this theme through the activities of wealthy individuals such as Robert Morris, John Hancock, Elias Hasket Derby, and dozens of international traders, plantation owners, and pioneering businessmen, as well as of financial strategists Alexander Hamilton and Albert Gallatin. He will also discuss how the disparity between social classes affected the Revolution, and the ways in which capitalism’s growth spurt in the new United States of America helped more of its people climb the economic ladder.

The Museum Outside

While the museum is happy that we can offer many of our events digitally, we have also created a self-guided “outside the house” tour along with new signage on our trails. This outdoor tour includes a Bidwell History Primer, a map, and a scavenger hunt for kids. You can find paper copies of the map at the parking kiosk or download the pdfs from the tour page of our website.

The new signage on our trails includes additional stops on the Native American Interpretive Trail, educational displays throughout the property, and improved trail signs. The museum’s trail map and Native American Interpretive Trail map can also be found at the parking kiosk or downloaded from our website.

In addition to our digital programs, we also send out twice-weekly email newsletters, “Bidwell Lore” on Tuesdays and updates from the museum on Fridays. If you would like to receive the museum’s newsletters, head to the bottom of the museum’s home page to sign up.

The museum is located at 100 Art School Road and while the house will remain closed for tours for the time being, the museum grounds—192 acres of woods, fields, historic stone walls, trails and picnic sites—are open every day free of charge.

—Heather Kowlaski
Executive Director

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Bird Island Lighthouse

When we moved from Monterey to our seaside home along the south shore of Buzzards Bay, the literary and artistic inspiration of the immortal New England lighthouses that was captured by writers, poets, photographers, and film makers were an inspiration for me to follow. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote his famous poem, "The Lighthouse," Winslow Homer and Edward Hopper left us with a visual heritage of the sense of danger, hardship, isolation, and awe inspiring natural and historic settings of the lights. My wife Jan's great-great-grandfather was the first lighthouse keeper on Nantucket, and charted the first waters around the island, Martha's Vineyard, and Block Island. All this was already in my mind.

A few miles east up the coast from us is the Bird Island Lighthouse, which was built in 1819 at the mouth of Marion harbor, for safe navigation in the busy whaling and industrial shipping port that built up around the turn of the nineteenth century.

The lighthouse stands on a rocky acre and a half island where the prevailing afternoon winds are still a signature navigational phenomena for heavily-laden vessels, sort of a funnel of wind linking Buzzards Bay and Cape Ann.

It is also a strategic nesting site for terns during their northerly thousand-mile spring migration along the Atlantic flyway from the West Indies. Today more than 3,500 pairs of endangered Roseate Terns, along with Common Terns, nest there. Amazingly, this constitutes 25% of the entire continental population of Roseate Terns. I find that the Roseate Terns, as I've illustrated, are among the most beautiful and elegantly colored birds, with dark heads, pale rose-colored underbodies, and long split tails that flutter in flight. The Common Tern is smaller, with a dark wedge on its body. In recent years, both have been severely decreasing in numbers.

In September of 1938, a hurricane with more than 120-mile-an-hour winds whipped up a tidal surge of more than fifteen feet over the island. The residence, oil shed, and boathouse were all swept away, leaving only the beacon structure for visual identification by the terns. The light was decommissioned and remained so until



1996 when a committee was formed as the Bird Island Light Restoration effort. The light was relit in 1997, after sixty-two years of darkness. Today, the lighthouse is owned and operated by the town of Marion, Massachusetts. Last year, at the two-hundredth anniversary ceremony of the tower, the US Fish and Wildlife Service gave more than five hundred nesting boxes to help turn the ebbing annual reproduction into a recovering upward curve for their population.

The stewardship responsibility for the lighthouse itself was then given to the Marion harbor master, who installed a solar powered, timed, blinking light, which operates from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The shining historic beacon lights the way out of the maritime past into the conservation-minded future.

— George Emmons



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- Brien Center: acute care, addiction, mental health: Pittsfield (413) 499-0412, Great Barrington 528-9156
- 24-Hour crisis hotline: (800) 252-0227
- Council on Aging: phone calls, wellness checks, 528-1443 ext. 247

Covid-19 Testing

If you have symptoms call (855) 262-5465. Open 8 a.m. thru 4:30 p.m. You will speak with a hotline triage nurse. If the nurse determines your symptoms warrant a test you will be given an appointment for the test later that day or the next day, depending on when you call.

The testing is being done at Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington outside and/or you can choose BMC in Pittsfield.

You cannot just show up without following this protocol.

The last local option is contacting the CVS store in Pittsfield.

Food Access

- **The People's Pantry**, 5 Taconic Avenue, Great Barrington
- Open to shoppers Mondays 5 to 6:30 p.m., and Thursdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Pre-packed bags of staples and fresh foods. www.saintjamesplace.net
- **CHP Great Barrington**, 444 Stockbridge Road
- Mobile food distribution, first Tuesdays (July 7)

- Mini-mobile food distribution, (supplemental food) third Wednesdays (July 17). Check their website for date. chpberkshires.org/calendar/
- **WIC Great Barrington**, 442 Stockbridge Road
- Food distribution on Tuesdays at 9:15 a.m.
- See WIC guidelines at chpberkshires.org. Go to “Services,” then “Berkshire South WIC”
- **Berkshire South Regional Community Center**, 15 Crissey Road, Great Barrington
- Wednesdays, from 1 to 3 p.m.: Five hundred cold meals from local restaurants will be available through a drive-thru. Reservations for delivery for those who are home-bound can be made each week before Tuesday at 10 a.m. Call (413) 717-2674, or email: meals@berkshiresouth.org.
- **Roots Rising**, a virtual Farmer's Market, lets you select fresh food online from farmers and food producers and have it delivered to your door, anywhere in Berkshire County. Delivery is free to seniors, those at high risk for Covid-19, SNAP (food stamps) recipients, and those with economic hardship. Financial assistance is available with a \$30 per week discount to fifty shoppers on SNAP, or who have economic hardship. rootsrising.org.
- **Breaking Bread Kitchen**: American Legion Hall, Sheffield. Thursdays, 5 to 6 p.m. Drive through to pick up a cooked meal that you have ordered by end of the day, Wednesdays. (413) 229-7037
- **Sheffield Food Assistance Program**: Old Parish Church, Sheffield. Available to residents of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. Monday mornings 9 to 10 a.m. grocery pickup. One-time phone registration required. (413) 229-2624.
- **Supplemental Assistance Nutritional Program (SNAP)**
- Walmart and Amazon are now accepting online essential food orders. SNAP cannot be used for delivery fees.
- **Take-and-go lunch programs available**. This is administered through the school districts. The Marketplace is a partner in this effort and you can make a donation for a meal by calling (413) 248-5040. A \$24.95 (plus tax) donation feeds a family of four.

Senior Shopping Hours

- Big Y and Price Chopper, 7 to 8 a.m. daily
- Guidos Marketplace, 9 to 10 a.m., Monday to Saturday
- Berkshire CO-OP Market, 10 to 11 a.m., daily
- CVS and Walgreens drugs, Monday to Friday, 8 to 9 a.m.; Saturday and Sunday 9 to 10 a.m.
- Free store-to-door volunteer delivery service for elderly and immunocompromised community members during Covid-19 outbreak. doorstepdeliverers.org

Face Masks

Monterey Mask Brigade is a group of local volunteers, making reusable cloth masks in their own homes. You can get one for free. (413) 200-8545. Some have behind-the-head ties and some have elastic loops. Leave a message with your name, address, phone, and/or email. We have a volunteer who can deliver to your home, contact free. Let us know how many and if any need to be pediatric or extra-large sizes.

Boxxa Vine Masks is a mask-making business in Monterey. You can order adult (\$6) or children's (\$4) masks. Place an order through BoxxaVine.com and they can be shipped or picked up inside the Monterey firehouse pavilion. Lots of fun fabrics for kids and adult. For more information, email facemasks@boxxavine.com

Make your own: If you want to make your own mask, go to [NYTimes](https://nytimes.com/article/how-to-make-face-mask-coronavirus.amp.html) for pattern: nytimes.com/article/how-to-make-face-mask-coronavirus.amp.html.

Or you can get plenty of information on making your own mask through suayla.com and their mask coalition.

Transportation

- Sheffield Senior Van: Medical visits, shopping, (413) 229-7037
- CRT/Cabulance: 24/7 medical, (413) 447-3800
- Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation, errands, (413) 528-4776
- Volunteer Drivers (Monterey Council on Aging), (413) 528-1443 x 247
- Elder Services of Berkshire County: Support programs, Meals on Wheels (413) 499-0524

The Skunk

Years ago in Hartsville there was a family with two boys close in age. Raising two rambunctious boys is a challenge no matter when or where you live. Young minds and bodies are ever inquisitive, ever probing, and ever testing their own limits and their parents' patience.

Their father was a hard-working man whose chief form of relaxing and unwinding was reading. This was the era before TV reached our corner of the earth. In the evenings after supper it was his custom to retire to his favorite chair in the corner of the room and read one chapter in his currently selected book. The boys had learned not to disturb him during this time. After reading one chapter he would leave the book open but turn it face down and place it on top of the radio on the stand next to his chair. This was his routine night after night during the week, a routine that did not go unnoticed by the boys.

One day the boys hit upon what they thought was a brilliant idea. They took their father's book and turned it back one chapter. That evening, as usual, their father

retired to his chair, read his one chapter and again left the book face down on the radio. The next day they turned it back once more, and once more in the evening their father reread the chapter. So it went for four evenings. On the fifth evening their father sat down and began to read when suddenly there was an oath, and the book went flying across the room!

"That's the most boring book I've ever read," exclaimed their father, "the same thing keeps happening over and over and over again!"

The boys quietly decided that would be the last page turning they would do.

In time the boys grew older and it reached the point when the oldest boy got his first car. This was during the 1950s and his car was a 1930s Dodge Brothers four-door sedan. Nothing special, just a big, old, black Dodge, but it brought with it all of the pride and joy that goes with having your own car. One fine summer day he decided it needed a facelift, so with a gallon of gloss black paint and a paint brush he started in. By afternoon the Dodge had a fresh coat of paint so in the house he went to call his friends and tell them the news.

As he was going in the front door his brother came out the kitchen door with a flour sifter full of flour. While the older brother was on the phone saying, "Yep, I just painted the big Dodge, come by and take a look," his brother was going up one side of the car and down the other with the flour sifter.

It doesn't take much imagination to visualize what happened when the white flour contacted the still tacky black paint. Nor does it take much imagination to envision the row that took place between the brothers.

The Dodge however was referred to by whoever saw it afterwards as "The Skunk."

—Lyman Thomson

End note: I beg the readers' indulgence because I do not remember the name of the family or the names of the boys but there was in truth a car owned by a young fellow in Hartsville that was known as "The Skunk" and this is to the best of my recollection how it came to be. The car burned some oil as most older cars did then, thus leaving behind a cloud of smoke as it departed its location, adding to its reputation.



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Contributions During June

Jeff Purvis
Peg and Clint Burt
Margaret and Frank Abbott
Robert and Janice Adams
Debby and Mark Bauman
Charles and Sydney Brandwein
Margaret Dudley
Francine Eget
David Emmel
Greg and Chris Fahlund
Isabeth Hardy
Judy and Bruce Kaminstein
Alan & Kathryn Klingenstein
Elizabeth Maschmeyer
Jon Melzer
Cait Ryan
Chang Family
Martin and Jane Schwartz
Edwin Salsitz
Dave and Jody Soules
Susan Weiner & Chris Aidun
Donald and Carol Welsch
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Wildlife in May and June

Biodiversity Galore

Nine wildlife watchers saw bears in the last month, and some saw four bears at one time. We had two right out our kitchen window, one climbing the ladder that leans against the house (page 1), so she could gently but firmly pull down a hanging cylindrical feeder. She was an expert, both with ladders and with Droll Yankee feeders. Our neighbor Joe Wasiuk on the other end of Hupi Road saw a bear walking right up the road and Joe Stein and his small dog

Roxy encountered a peaceful big bear in the yard. Joe had walked out with binoculars to get a better look at a wild turkey, Roxy tagged along and was the first to see the bear. Roxy is a Shih Tzu dog about fifteen pounds. The



bear was *Ursus euarctus americanus* and maybe four hundred pounds (top right). Words were exchanged and who ran quietly into the woods? Not Roxy. Also off Hupi, a friend on Dowd Road, which goes steeply down to the lake, sent Kyle Pierce a photo of a visiting bear. Over on Mt. Hunger Road, Mike Skagerlind saw a huge dark bear with a dark nose, accompanied by a much smaller one, and sent a photo. Driving along River Road, Ed Salsitz saw a bear beside a red shed, and over on Sandisfield Road, Steve Snyder saw one cross the road by Lanny Lanoue's house.

On New Marlborough Road, Steve Moore and Wendy Jensen's dog set up a barking alarm when an adult and three young bears came to visit. Not so far away, on Chestnut Hill Road, Julie Johnston saw a mother and three little ones at the end of May and urged them into the woods to stay safe. About a week later she wrote that "Bad Attitude Bear" had taken Jim's shirt off the clothesline. Julie sent photos of a somewhat mauled and mouthed shirt, now sporting a few large tooth holes. Her name for this bear refers to a time a year or so ago when quite a few articles of clothing and one quilt were taken off the line and some things were taken quite a ways off. She wonders if this is the same miscreant bear.



We have reptiles and amphibians in Monterey. Both Sue Schmerler (above) and Marcey Pontell (pg. 29) took photographs of a northern water snake, sunning on a dock by the lake. These were not the same snake. Though the water snakes have patterns on their skin, some individuals are so dark you can barely see the design and others are much paler and more colorful. These two, in their photos, are both very dark, but still quite different in appearance. Another colorful patterned snake hereabout is the milk snake, and Kathy Frome recently got a good photograph (above right).

Ed Salsitz sent photographs (at right) of a marvelous big snapping turtle, with green water plants growing on its back along the seams in its carapace. I stopped on Route 23 at Keyes Corner to slow traffic and escort a big snapper over under the guardrail. I think both this one and the one Ed saw had been up laying their eggs and would soon head back for their home lake or pond. Suzanne Sawyer heard a visitor on the deck one night and it was a big frog. It was quite a ways from the pond out back and seemed to want to come in the house.



In the canine department, besides Roxy the thirteen-year old Shih Tzu bear dog described in paragraph one, above, we have accounts of three foxes and at least five coyotes. Julie Johnston saw four coyote pups on the dirt road where she takes her morning run. She says they were "healthy, playful, and curious." This was the second week in June. On Beartown Road, Nancy Kleban saw a coyote in her driveway. Here on East Hupi, our neighbors saw a pale red fox trotting right up the road, headed west. Steve Moore, plagued by many chipmunks this year, put out a wildlife camera and caught a photo of a fox on the path in the garden. He, Steve, hopes the chipmunks and fox will meet.



Steve Snyder was out by Barnam Flat (along Route 23) and saw a red fox “combing new fallen hay and stashing its findings under tufts of hay.” Foxes, like many canines, will dig a shallow hole, drop in some treasure, and then use their noses to cover the hole with dirt or moss.



The little spiders have been hatching and Colta Ives saw hundreds of teeny spiderlings (above) in some webbing which involved a couple of grass stems in bloom. She also saw her first monarch butterfly the third week in May and a tiger swallowtail on a fothergilla shrub blooming at her place. Ed Salsitz took photographs of a tiger swallowtail on magenta allium flowers at his house on Beartown Mountain Road (below). Steve Snyder wrote of “amazing fireflies of varying cadence and light” on Curtis Road.



I heard about the 2020 chipmunks from several people this month, and thanks to Steve Snyder I also heard about a beautiful skunk, raccoons and their offspring, and porcupines.



Steve saw his first black vultures when he was out on his bike, and took photographs (above). These are a different species from the red-headed ones we usually see, and some say they are making their way north, so we will see them more often. Mickey Jervis called to exclaim over a great mess made by phoebes at her place. They seemed to be attempting nest-building in an impossible place, a little crack with a narrow ledge over some windows. The result was a lot of moss and mud needing to be cleaned up. Over at Cora Baker’s house there is a phoebe nest with an approach zone that involves Cora’s car, even though she has tried moving it around to different parking places. As with Mickey’s phoebes, there is cleanup involved.

Steve Snyder has seen a scarlet tanager, pileated woodpeckers, veeries, thrushes, and warblers. Jay Amidon got a recording of a red-bellied woodpecker with chipmunks chipping in the background.

This has been quite a list of animal biodiversity, but we also have Kit Patten’s observation that some plants are growing unusually tall this year. Dame’s rocket has been very tall, up to my eyebrow around here. Also the angelica and the promising cow parsnips, already as tall as I am. Still in the botany report, we have our neighbors strolling past Joe’s remarkable woodpiles and writing their appreciation. They write, “Joe Baker’s artistry isn’t limited to paint and paper but graces his stacks of firewood as well.” They sent in a good photograph.

Thank you one and all, for all these reasons to be glad. Send me your wild notes.

—Bonner McAllester
528-9385 bonnermca@gmail.com



Suzanne Sawyer’s American Restart



Suzanne Sawyer’s frog



Marcey Pontell northern water snake



Greta Skagerlind’s bear



MontereyMA.gov

Our town website is a great way to access information about the town. Use the website to access a calendar for upcoming meetings, and how to log into them. While the state's Open Meeting Law still applies, recent legislation has provided flexibility for online or conference call meetings to allow public participation.

All non-essential meetings have been canceled. Go to "Boards & Committees," select the group, and click the agendas listed in the right column for the call-in instructions.

Calendar

It's not much, but it feels like a new beginning of sorts. Zoom has now become a location.

Tuesdays: Chair yoga with Connie Wilson, 10 a.m., on Zoom. See page 16.

Saturday, July 11: Friends of Lake Garfield annual meeting, 9 a.m., firehouse pavilion. See page 14.

Wednesday, July 15: Bidwell House Museum play, on Zoom, 6:30 p.m. See page 24.

Saturday, July 18:

Bidwell House Museum history talk, on Zoom, 10 a.m. See page 24.

Garden Path Tour, 1 to 4 p.m. See pages 18 and 19.

Saturday, July 25: Monterey Fire Company's 43rd annual steak roast. See page 9.

Tuesdays, July 21 and August 4: Drumming, with Kit Patten. 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., MCC. See page 16.

A New Regional School District?

Last year the select board appointed Mary Ellen Brown, Jon Sylbert and me to represent Monterey as members of the newly formed Regional School District Planning Board. That board's primary goal is to consider the feasibility of consolidating into one school district the Berkshire Hills Regional School District and the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. The board includes three representatives from each of the eight towns involved. Participation includes the superintendents of both school districts and entities with relevant expertise. This planning board was created under the laws of Massachusetts, which charge it with the responsibility of studying the fiscal and educational advisability of establishing a new regional school district.

The planning board's meetings are presently being conducted on Zoom and are open to the public. Agendas are posted and minutes are prepared.

This planning board has no legislative power. Rather, its charge is to study the educational and fiscal issues and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the select boards in the eight towns. The matter would then come before the respective annual town meetings for final decision.

This complex study was officially begun in February 2020 and may take several years. We've had several meetings, secured a state grant allowing us to engage two consultants, and established three subcommittees: (1) finance, (2) operations, and (3) educational quality. We recognize that their separate work will nonetheless overlap. One of our initial goals is to publish a preliminary report on the first phase of our work later this year.

We are particularly fortunate to have as our chair Lucy Prashker from Alford.

As one of your three representatives on this planning committee, I would very much like to hear the views of as many people as possible on the complex decisions we face.

For example, you might want to consider the following questions:

- (1) What are the educational defects in our present schools?
- (2) Should a new high school be built?
- (3) If you tend to look favorably on a new high school building, how should it differ from the one we have?
- (4) Should the consolidation include all schools in the new district or only the high school?
- (5) Would you support the consolidation to get educational benefits if the overall costs of operation were not planned to decline?
- (6) Even if there were no immediate savings from a consolidation, would you be satisfied if the plan would improve our educational system while keeping future increases down?
- (7) What are your reasons for favoring or opposing district consolidation?

Those are just a few of the questions on my mind. There may be many aspects of this of which I am yet unaware. But I think it would help the process if Monterey began weighing in at the early stages. So, please let me hear from you, preferably by email, but phone is okay too, at (413) 528-0627.

I will do my best to have your views considered by the planning committee.

As we move along, I will keep you up to date from time to time.

—Don Coburn,

Chair, Monterey Select Board

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lenoxucc.org/blog

Elizabeth Goodman, Pastor

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or Assistance:

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www.montereychurch.org

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admin@montereyma.gov

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.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

SBRSD: (Schools) 413-229-877

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

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may be sent via email to montereynews9@gmail.com or to PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. For advertising rates or other information, contact the Editor at 413-528-4007 or email.

Transfer Station Recycling No-Nos

One of the secrets to the successful recycling that Monterey enjoys (one of the best in the state) is how “clean” the recycling loads are that ship out. This means including only items that can be recycled, without including items that cannot be recycled, or which are otherwise contaminated.

Many people think that the containers bin is for any kind of plastic, but this just isn’t so.

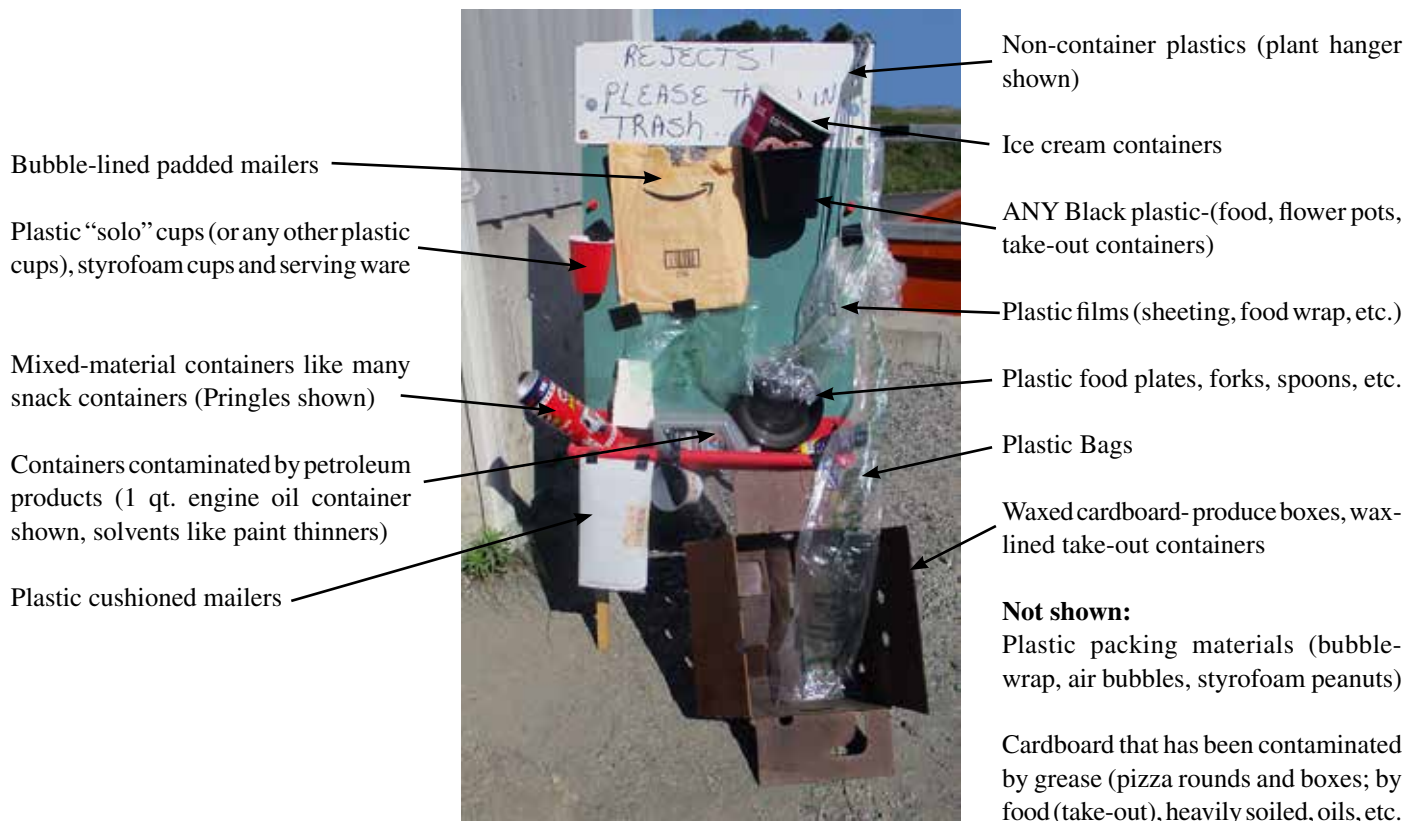
The best way to keep our program successful, which pays for some of the station’s operating expenses, is through educating folks in town about what can, and cannot, be recycled. It can be a little confusing at times, and the rules can be fussy. To keep our loads “clean,” our transfer station attendants spend time forking out un-recyclable items and carry them over to the household trash compactor. Not very efficient, especially during peak station usage times.

Beth Parks made up this display to help educate our “customers” for when they bring materials to the station. It was sitting outside the containers bin when she took this photo. Look for it next time you’re at the station, and if you have any questions, please ask.

Remember this rule:

When in Doubt, Throw it Out.

—Dave Gilmore



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Tuesday	9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2-5 p.m.
Thursday	4-8 p.m.
Friday.....	4-8 p.m.
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Contributions from local artists this month:

*Maureen Banner, pgs. 18, 19; George Emmons, p. 25;
Bonner McAllester, p. 20.*

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