

# MONTEREY NEWS

April 2018  
Est. 1970 Vol. XLVIII · Number 4

Pick up at: the library (in and outside), town hall, community center, Roadside Cafe, Bracken-Brae farm stand (in-season), Swap Shop



*A detail from Lenny Weber's Monterey Townscape. Notice the creative license of showing the Bidwell House overlooking the village. For more about Lenny, see page 22.*

"As his iridescent plumage flashes in the sun, he appears as a creature cast in polished bronze and blued steel."

The Grackle page 16

Her personal garden reflects working with plants and nature, and cultivating herbs and vegetables.

Who's Who page 11

Humor is interjected throughout his work. As he says, "I can't help it, so I may as well call it intentional!"

Knox Gallery page 12

The museum is looking for eight to ten interns to participate in the Bidwell Young History Scholars program this summer.

Bidwell House page 17

A group of students and teachers from Mount Everett, among other young people and caring adults, rode in two buses to the march in Washington, DC. March for Our Lives page 3

Primary among the LGWG considerations was a review of the sixty-three page report of the research conducted in 2017 on nutrient loading in Lake Garfield.

Lake Garfield Working Group page 10

Another landmark was the Howard Johnson's restaurants that then dotted the Pike. They promised a hot dog in a split-bread-loaf bun, and my choice of any one of twenty-eight flavors of ice cream.

Here's a Thought... page 13

Steven Weisz and Don Coburn are running for the select board seat, and Rick Piepho and Scott Jenssen are running for the planning board.

Candidates Forum page 2

Monterey's annual town meeting will be on May 5, beginning at 9 a.m., at the firehouse. Think spring—and come to the meeting!

Select Board Business page 3

Candidate statements for library trustee, ZBA and planning board, tree warden, and select board. pages 2, 5 & 6

The Southern Berkshire Regional School District school committee has scheduled one of their regular meetings to be held in Monterey on April 26, at 6 p.m., at the Monterey Community Center.

School News page 14

you take the why do  
what you do  
to the compost pile  
to turn and turn and turn again.

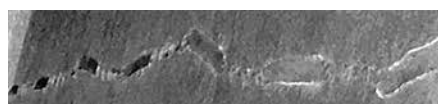
Take a Feather page 15

The next board game night is planned for Friday, April 13, at 7 p.m., and all Montereyans are invited to come and be a part of the fun.

Board Game Night page 9

In a surprise announcement, a group of guys who were young in the 70s have announced a revived gravity race.

New Course, New Challenge page 7



Otter tracks page 24



Soon page 17



Possum tracks page 25

## Candidates Forum

April 21 at 10 a.m.

At our town elections this year, on Tuesday, May 8, at the fire house, the voters have the opportunity to make choices for two contested positions. As of this writing, Steven Weisz and Don Coburn are running for the select board seat, and Rick Piepho and Scott Jenssen are running for the planning board.

The *Monterey News* would like the voters to have an opportunity to meet candidates standing for town offices, to ask questions, and make their own views known. The forum will be on Saturday, April 21, beginning at 10 a.m., in the church basement.

The candidates forum will open with conversation with the two select board candidates. After the select board candidates, the candidates for the planning board, and then any of the uncontested offices, will have opportunities to make statements and take questions.

This will be a good opportunity to learn what the candidates bring to the offices, and whether, as a voter, you wish to vote for one or the other for the betterment of our town. This is also an opportunity to show appreciation for everyone who offers their time and skill to the benefit of the whole town.

We hope you will attend.

—Stephen Moore, Editor

## Candidates' Statements

Any candidates who wish to are encouraged to submit statements to the *Monterey News* to be published in the May issue, which will hopefully be available no later than Friday, April 30. The deadline for statements is April 15.

Statements can be submitted by email to [MontereyNews9@gmail.com](mailto:MontereyNews9@gmail.com), or mailed to PO Box 9.

### Transfer Station Summer Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

## Town Elections

Tuesday, May 8

The year's election for town officers will be held on Tuesday, May 8. Polls will be open from 12 noon until 7 p.m., at the Monterey firehouse. The last day to register as a voter is Saturday, April 14, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Below is the slate for the elections. Incumbents are indicated by asterisks. Party affiliation, or Independent status, is noted in parentheses for contested seats.

*Note: This list is as accurate as could be when going to print. Information for this list came from party committees, the town clerk's office, and from candidates contacting the Monterey News directly.*

### Contested Seats

#### Select Board (3 years)

Don Coburn (D & R)

Steven Weisz\* (I)

#### Planning Board (5 years)

Richard Piepho\* (R)

Scott Jenssen (D)

### Uncontested Seats

#### Board of Appeals (Zoning) (5 years)

Scott Jensen (D & R)

#### Board of Assessors (3 year, vote for 2)

Donald Hopkins\* (R & D)

Julio Rodriquez (R & D)

#### Board of Health (3 years)

Roy Carwile\* (R & D)

#### Cemetery Commission (3 years)

Linda Thorpe\* (D & R)

#### Finance Committee (3 years)

Rebecca Wolin (D)

#### Library Trustee (3 years, vote for 2)

MaryPaul Yates\* (R & D)

Ann Canning (D & R)

#### Moderator (1 year)

Mark Makuc\* (D & R)

#### Parks Commission (3 years, vote for 2)

Peter Poirer\* (D & R)

Michal Strawbridge\*

#### Parks Commission (1 year)

Vacant

#### Planning Board (5 years, vote for 2)

Pat Salomon\* (D & R)

Don Coburn (D & R)

#### Tree Warden (1 year)

Kevin Fitzpatrick (R & D)

## Candidate Statement

Library Trustee—Ann Canning

As an advocate of both public libraries and Monterey, I am excited about the timing of this library board opportunity, given the future of our library as we embark on the planned construction.

I have been a registered Monterey voter and full-time resident since 2012. Prior to that, I was a second-home owner in Monterey for ten years. I am originally from western Massachusetts, where I benefited from spending countless hours at the main library in Springfield where my mother worked full time in the office of the Springfield Libraries and Museums. For thirty-four years, my primary residence was Boston, and for most of that time I lived in Copley Square just around the corner from the beloved Boston Public Library, the nation's first major, tax-supported public library, where I immersed myself in books, music, film, movie scripts (a personal favorite), and participated in countless programs.

I have an enormous appreciation for public libraries—and I consider our own public library, and the community that supports it, a treasure. In addition to being a longstanding member of the adult book group, I have enjoyed many of the library's excellent programs and events, often with my now-grown nieces and nephews. With the hard work the current board has put into planning the upcoming construction, we all can look forward to an even bigger, brighter future for our library and our town.

Professionally, my career has been focused in the advertising/communications industry serving large clients in the financial industry. I hold an MA in Professional Writing and Publishing and a BA in English/ Communications from Emerson and Emmanuel Colleges, respectively.

It would be a pleasure to serve you in this role and do my part for the town.

—Ann Canning

*Additional candidate statements on pages 5 and 6.*

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

## March for Our Lives

Four Mt. Everett students from Monterey, Donovan Sawyer, Elisabeth Enoch, Jake Martin, and Marya Makuc, went to the March for Our Lives in Washington DC on March 24. At right is the group of students and teachers from Mount Everett who attended the March. A community member sponsored two buses full of young people and caring adults for traveling to the March. Railroad Street Youth Project coordinated the buses, and students from Monument Mountain, Mount Everett, and Berkshire Waldorf schools were able to attend without paying for transportation or breakfast and lunch. A huge thank you is owed to the generous donor.

More reflections and photos will (hopefully) be in the May issue.

—Marya Makuc



## In My View Select Board Business

Monterey's annual town meeting will be here about one month after you receive this April edition of the *Monterey News*. The meeting will be on May 5, beginning at 9 a.m., at the firehouse. For many town residents, this is their only exposure to the workings of town government, other than paying their tax bills or visiting the transfer station.

What keeps the select board, town employees, officials, and various town board members busy during the year between meetings? Well, these are some of the issues that cause the occasional sleepless night, in no particular order, and I've probably forgotten more than a few. We are currently dealing with:

- Operating budget, working collaboratively with the Finance Committee;
- Schools—questions about the Monterey kindergarten, Southern Berkshire Regional School District, and other local and county schools;

- Broadband;
- Library building project;
- Curtis Road Bridge, and numerous other infrastructure concerns;
- Community Development Block Grant, and continuing assistance for homeowners;
- Renewable energy, and potential participation in Green Communities;
- Lake Garfield Working Group, ongoing efforts on water quality and the environment;
- Temporary moratorium on marijuana businesses during legislative transition;
- Planning Bylaws;
- Monterey General Store—anything we can do to encourage reopening this vital institution?

Then there are the usual concerns, like shoveling out the driveway, mud season, caring for our families and world peace. Think spring—and come to the meeting!

—Carol Lewis Edelman

Select Board

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## In My View Monterey Challenges Ahead

There are many challenges that Monterey faces. What I have learned during my three years on the select board, is that the key to overcoming these challenges is a vibrant and active board, one that faces these obstacles and more importantly, prepares for them in advance.

### Physical Challenges

- The physical challenges to our small town are the same as any large city;
- Infrastructure and our land, maintaining without big tax increases or, what's worse, neglecting them until large repairs/replacements are needed;
- Roads and bridges are the obvious focus of any select board, but other significant physical challenges remain;
- Trees, and the ash trees dying off; our beautiful lakes and their battle with milfoil and pollutants;
- Planning and land use impacts on traffic and watersheds, our waste management systems, our downtown district;
- Interest in large-scale marijuana cultivation, and last, but most importantly—
- How we prepare for storms and other environmental impacts of our changing climate.

### Financial Challenges

The financial challenges to any small town are disproportionately impactful, as compared with big cities. Basically, we must live by the same financial rules as Boston, with a tiny percentage of their tax base.

- Budgeting and taxes are the obvious focus of any select board, but some financial obstacles require continual vigilance.
- Yearly audits have raised red flags and revealed record-keeping inconsistencies that may complicate bonding for large projects, like the library expansion.
- The school budget has become unwieldy, with Montereyans shouldering a large portion of the cost, under a funding formula that few people can understand.
- Lastly, we must make sure that Monterey gets its fair share of funds from the Commonwealth and relief from onerous regulations imposed on large cities, which are costly to small towns.

### Demographic Challenges

The demographic challenges to small towns in Berkshire County are considerable. Our population is aging and any select board must recognize this fact and implement programs/projects to meet the increasing needs of our seniors.

- Completion of our Community Center;
- Support for the Council on Aging;
- Cellular service;

- Programs that include wellness visits and foot and blood pressure clinics;
- Affordable broadband for everyone.
- The cost of transportation needs to be addressed;
- Continued discussion for development of senior housing, so that our aging population can remain in town.

### Keep Monterey Special

The final, and most important challenge is—how to keep Monterey a special place to live. We all recognize that Monterey is a small town with a divergent population, of differing views and backgrounds. What makes us special is that we have the goal of a town where everyone gets along and a life that is free of strife. To achieve this goal, a select board needs to promote open communication between residents and within Town Hall. Support for our residents, our employees, our boards and committees and our visitors is very, very important. Lastly, we must also commit ourselves to meeting our challenges together through innovation and ideas, without changing the small town nature of Monterey.

As a member of your select board, that is the most important challenge of all.

—Steven Weisz  
Select Board

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



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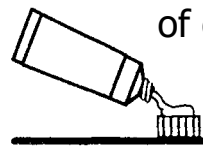
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## Candidate Statement ZBA and Planning Board- Scott Jenssen

I would like to announce my candidacy for the open seat on the Zoning Board of Appeals and for the seat on the Planning Board.

I am a Monterey native, a three-term past member of the select board, a Mt. Everett school graduate, a general contractor living and working here in Monterey, and a former proprietor of the Monterey General Store. I was the coordinator of the town's beloved Memorial Day parade for many years. My wife Tina and I have been married for twenty-four years and live here in town.

I would like to bring to both boards a fresh mind and attitude. Having lived in Monterey for over forty-six years, before the enactment of the 1974 zoning changes, I have the experiences of today and the recall of the past that can assist the board in carrying out the original intent of these zoning bylaw changes.

I promise to be fair, consistent, understanding, and to be a good listener and caring neighbor during our hearings and findings going forward.

Thank you for your consideration.

— Scott Jenssen

## Candidate Statement Tree Warden-Kevin Fitzpatrick

I have been a resident of Monterey for eighteen years and appreciate that we have many beautiful roads in town. As tree warden, I would assure that the trees along these roads are maintained in a way that takes public safety and environmental beauty and conservation in mind. When it comes to the declining health of some of our town trees, I believe we should be proactive and not reactive. My training as a former state-certified horticulturist and twenty years of experience working at Ward's Nursery will help me to do just that.

As a third-year Monterey Highway Department employee, I have a unique advantage that will help make the tree warden position more organized, efficient, and cost effective. My responsibilities as the tree warden would be done separately from my time at the highway department to avoid any conflict of interest, but will also allow me direct daily communication with the director of operations for planning tree removals that coincide with highway projects.

I would appreciate your vote for tree warden on election day, Tuesday, May 8.

— Kevin Fitzpatrick

## Tax Collector's Office

The fiscal year 2018 real estate and personal property bills for the fourth quarter will be mailed by April 1 and are due May 1. If you do not receive your bill, please contact the tax collector's office at (413) 528-1443 x117.

Please direct all questions regarding assessments, abatement applications, and personal property taxes to the board of assessors, PO Box 488, Monterey, MA 01245, or call (413) 528-1443 x115.

To accommodate taxpayers who want the convenience of paying Monterey real estate and personal property taxes online, an online payment option is available. To pay your tax, you must have your current bill and checkbook/credit card in hand. Log on to [montereyma.gov](http://montereyma.gov) and click on Pay Real Estate Taxes Online. You will need to enter your current bill number and the current bill year (2017). The bank will assess a minimal fee of \$0.25 per transaction. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards will be accepted. Please note the credit card company will charge the taxpayer a fee for the service. This fee is not assessed by or paid to the Town of Monterey.

—Mari Enoch  
Tax Collector



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## Candidate Statement Select Board—Don Coburn

An effective and transparent select board is vital to the welfare of our town. Since I am asking for your vote as select board member, I believe you are entitled to know who I am, how I came to be a candidate, and where I stand on the issues facing our community.

Three years ago Monterey became our permanent residence, but we've had a home here since 1976, when my wife Ellen and I bought an old farmhouse on Beartown Mountain Road. We began renting in 1972, the same year my closest friend Stefan Grotz and his family moved to town. Once we became homeowners, we spent time year-round whenever we could, from weekends to extended vacations.

Last year the Democratic Party asked if I would be a candidate for the select board. When I learned Kenn Basler had decided to seek reelection, I urged our party to endorse him. With both Democratic and Republican party endorsements, I became an elected member of our planning board.

This year, I was asked again to run for the select board. Scott Jenssen also expressed interest, but after we mutually tried to defer to the other, he urged me to run while he sought election to the Zoning Board. Subsequently, I was endorsed for the select board by both the Republican and Democratic parties.

I believe the skills I've acquired during a long career in public service will translate well to a position on the select board. Especially valuable will be my experience as a communicator, a manager, a negotiator, and a colleague, working with my peers to arrive at decisions.

I served as assistant attorney for the City of Newark, NJ, handling municipal litigation in state and federal courts. My private law practice also included presentations to municipal planning and zoning boards.

I entered local politics in 1974 and won a race for the Livingston, NJ, Township Council. During my three years as councilman, I also served as deputy mayor, mayor, library trustee, and planning board member.

In 1978, I was appointed Essex County Prosecutor by Governor Brendan Byrne. This position involved management of more than seventy assistant prosecutors, nearly as many detectives, and a large secretarial staff.

I became a judge on the Superior Court of New Jersey in 1981. For the next fifteen years, I presided over civil and criminal cases, served on numerous supreme court committees, including the committee on character, and created New Jersey's first drug court. I also advanced two innovations that are now commonplace in New Jersey: jury note taking and jury questioning of witnesses.

From 1996 until my retirement, I served in the appellate division, where I worked with my colleagues on three-judge panels resolving criminal, civil, and administrative appeals. I retired in 2015 after spending thirty-four years as a judge.

Let me close with brief comments on some of the town's issues.

The state recommended hiring of a town administrator. The annual town meeting agreed. Although filling that position proved challenging, I believe the effort should be made again. As our country's

founding fathers believed, executive powers are best carried out by a single executive, not by a three-person board, whose focus should be on formulating policy.

Attracting young people with children is important. Therefore, we should continue exploring plans for re-opening our school, give strong support to the extension of broadband to all homes, and encourage the expansion of our library. Also, the health of Lake Garfield is critical—we should continue our efforts to preserve this invaluable natural resource.

Recent Massachusetts legislation will require us to address marijuana businesses. I'd rather not have them, but if we must, then strict local regulations are in order.

The general store has always played an important role in this community. I think we all regret that once more it is closed. The select board should become involved and seek ways to make operation of the store financially feasible.

I hope you find this information helpful in deciding how to cast your ballot for the select board. As you can see, I have always liked serving the public. Frankly, I miss it, and I think I could be useful to our wonderful town.

—Don Coburn

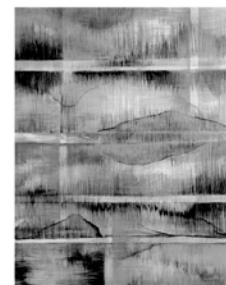
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KNOX GALLERY

Monterey Library

Kit Patton  
*Making Faces*  
April 27 - June 2

reception: May 4, 6-7:30pm

Knox Gallery supported by Friends of the Monterey Library

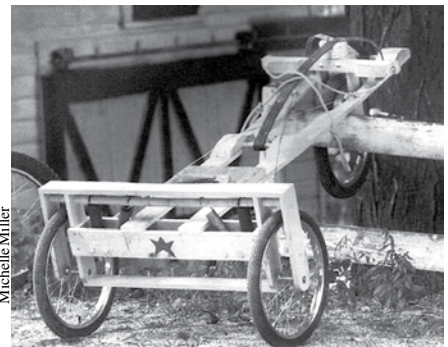
## Library News

The library construction progress is not visible from Main Road this month. We've spent many hours reviewing plans with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), and many of the town boards and departments, as well as the architects and engineers. We thank all the town boards and departments for their patience in going over the project for which we were awarded \$1.85 million by the state, and which the town voters supported at town meeting last year. Continuing to refine the plans is painstaking work, and the details of getting a project ready to go out to bid are endless. Every outlet is marked, every window and door checked, and square footages reviewed again and again. We hope to be able to tell you in a couple of months that the project is out to bid.

We've begun planning our layout for the temporary library in the fire house. The MBLC has requested a plan of how we will empty out this current building and store things which will be in the new building. We're working on that.

And, of course, we are continuing to provide all the services we've been doing. Our summer programming for the children is almost done, though we aren't sure where it will happen. There will be Saturday morning programs in July and the beginning of August for children of all ages, beginning with our perennial favorite magician Jim Snack on July 7. So please come in and take advantage of all that we have to offer; whether it be books, audios, DVDs, museum passes, a moment of reflecting on the art in the Knox Gallery, or internet service.

—Mark Makuc  
Library Director



*Gravity car race athletes may bring Pete Murkett's Red Star Express, winner of the first gravity race, back out of retirement to help Dick back up to the farm.*

## Revived Gravity Car Race New Course, New Challenge

In a surprise announcement, a group of guys who were young in the 70s have announced a revived gravity car race.

Dick Tryon, marshal of the last gravity race, has agreed to a special challenge. Starting at Lowland Farm on New Marlborough Road, and racing down Gould Road to the bridge, Dick's challenge is that anyone who can walk down the hill and arrive at the bridge before him will be entered in a lottery to win a 5% discount on one small jug of maple syrup, or one bale of mulch hay.

The group will announce the timing of this year's race through the town's News and Announcements and in the *Monterey News* as soon as Dick has caught his breath from the last race.



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### APRIL

*In the Gallery*  
**APRIL 28 - MAY 27**  
*Erika Crofut*

RECEPTION: SAT, APRIL 28, 2 - 4 PM



These programs are supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

### MAY

**SAT, MAY 5 6 PM \$88**  
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*To benefit the Sandisfield Arts Center*  
*(reservations required)*

**SAT, MAY 12 4 PM \$10**  
*Sarah Jackson on*  
*Age and Beauty*

**SAT, MAY 19 7 PM \$15**  
*children under 12 - \$5*  
*Family Cabaret with Anni Crofut*

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Above: Ruth Green shows her favorite garden fork with an unusual design.

Below-Steve Pullen demonstrates how to brandish a t-handled fork in self-defense.

Photos by Maureen Banner

## Garden Planning Panel

On Saturday, March 10, interested gardeners gathered at the Monterey Community Center for a panel presentation on various topics relating to planning your gardens: soil preparation and amendments, seed selection and ordering, tools, and more. We all benefited from the expert advice handed out by panelists Ruth Green, Rick Banducci, and Anna Duryea, as well as by moderator Steve Pullen. On some issues opinions varied but for the most part there was reassuring consistency in the methods and choices mentioned. Steve's idea of each panelist introducing themselves by way of showing and describing one of their favorite hand tools turned out to be an excellent way to get the discussion started. Clearly each person had reasons for their preference but there was a noticeable

similarity among the types of tools they brought and certainly a recognizable fondness for the feel of the tool in their hands.

The discussion included planning for both vegetable and flower gardening. Very quickly we had achieved one of Steve's goals of each person learning at least two new things. The morning flew by—how we all wanted to stay indoors dreaming and talking of dirt and growing plants, rather than head home through the reality of snow and wind. Fortunately the community center had provided us with coffee, cider, and a table full of baked goods and fruit. We were glad to linger over these after the meeting broke up.

With the success of this session there is already talk of another gardening panel for the fall to enlighten us on topics pertaining to that time of year. Stay tuned.

—Joe Baker



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Rear table l to r: Gerry Clarin, Elaine Lynch, Joe Baker, Roz Halberstadter; Front table l to r: Wendy Germain, Carole Clarin, Maureen Banner, Julie Kern, Frank Kern.

## Board Game Night

In the midst of snowy weather on a cold night in March, fun was had by all at the Monterey Community Center. It was "Board Game Night."

Newly organized by the community center program committee, the first game night by all accounts was a smashing success. Ten hearty souls braved the elements to join their friends and neighbors in the warmth of the community center located on the former Wilson-McLaughlin property. An array of enjoyable refreshments sat on a corner table and many different games were placed on another table for their perusal and selection.

After seeing many familiar games, the group gravitated toward both Yahtzee and Rummikub, bringing back memories of the joy that a board game can bring. Two tables of players were quickly formed and the fun began.

"Yahtzee Yahtzee" was the first cry of excitement from a player at the Yahtzee table. Another player remarked that it had been a long while since playing the game but it came back quickly after the first turn of the dice.

At the Rummikub table, the players were competing to see who could organize their numbered tiles and "go out" before the other players.

As the evening came to a close, all happily agreed that it was an enjoyable departure from the winter weather and a pleasure to be with friends and neighbors at the community center. The next board game night is planned for Friday, April 13, at 7 p.m., and all Montereyans are invited to come and be a part of the fun. It is scheduled to be held on the second Friday of every month. Hope to see you there!

—Dennis Lynch

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Attic Stairs © Joe Baker

## Paint Your Home A Painting Workshop

Monterey painter, Joe Baker, will teach a one-day workshop, "Paint Your Home," at the Monterey Community Center, on Saturday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bring sketches, paintings, and/or photos of your home, interior or exterior, and plan to jump off from the details they provide, working to create your own personal version of your home. This workshop is designed to engage and enrich beginning and experienced painters alike. Work in any medium—but you must bring your own materials. Joe will demonstrate at the start of the morning using oils.

Joe Baker currently paints in oils and pastels, with his primary subject matter being landscape. A Monterey resident, Baker is a signature member of the Connecticut Pastel Society, and he has been teaching pastels at IS183, Art School of the Berkshires, for five years.

Registration is required for this workshop; enrollment is limited. The cost is \$50. To register and make your payment, visit our website, ccmonterey.org, and go to the Events/Registration page of the website.

—Dorene Beller



## Lake Garfield Working Group

The Lake Garfield Working Group (LGWG), a citizen action team formed to advise the Monterey Select Board concerning the health and management of Lake Garfield, met March 6 to review the progress of projects begun in 2017 as well as the work ahead of us.

Primary among our considerations was a review of the sixty-three page report of the research conducted in 2017 on nutrient loading in Lake Garfield. This was produced by Dr. Ken Wagner and his team from Water Resource Services, Inc., and funded by a matching grant through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Among the more salient aspects of the report, it was noted that, "With regard to phosphorus loading and resultant water quality, Lake Garfield is not in an undesirable condition overall, but has a few shortcomings." Among these are the sources of phosphorus in sediment and storm and snowmelt surface water run-off, which can lead to potentially toxic cyanobacteria and surface scums in the summer. Several of the more cost effective management options are explained, including surface water catchments and oxygenation of water at depth. As with all LGWG materials this report will be made available to the public.

Regarding the seasonal Lake Garfield drawdown, the working group found that

the current agreement extends through 2020 and is a function of the town. It is administered by Shawn Tryon, both director of operations and the fire chief, who takes into consideration drought and other safety and emergency issues.

Members of the working group who attended earlier meetings of the Monterey Conservation Commission reported on efforts to increase communication between the two groups, including details concerning future eurasian milfoil mitigation and diver-assisted suction harvesting using the remainder of town funds appropriated for this purpose.

Dennis Lynch, a grant writer for the town, forwarded to the LGWG information on the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program and details on how the LGWG may best serve as part of the town's efforts to bolster our capacity and resiliency in the face of future climate and environmental hazards.

The members of the LGWG took a moment to reflect on the recent passing of Mercedes Gallagher who informed and encouraged our own efforts and was known as a champion of community organization for the benefit of Center Lake in Becket.

The LGWG will hold its next meeting at the town hall on Monday, April 2, at 7 p.m. and encourages all interested parties to attend.

—Steve Snyder



Dennis Lynch

## Community Potluck, April 18 Using Trail Cameras

Enlightenment was the theme at the March potluck, with Keren Weiner showing us how to do exciting genealogical research without depending on the internet, filling in mundane historical facts with newspaper articles, journals and books. We thank her for a very interesting evening.

For next month, we have Dr. Richard Greene of Goose Pond in Tyringham, where he has lived for thirty years. He will be speaking on the "Use of Trail Cameras in Wildlife Study." Dr Greene has written multiple books, including several crime novels based in western Massachusetts.

The next Monterey Community Potluck Dinner will be held on Wednesday, April 18, at 6 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Please join us, everyone is welcome.

—Kyle Pierce

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## Who's Who in Monterey

### Susan Johnson, Gardener

How does one conduct an interview with an amazing person and not ruin it by turning it into mere chronology? I was fortunate to connect with Susan Johnson. Not knowing Susan beforehand, I didn't know what to expect or what I could write about.

Susan warmly welcomed me into her home on a Brett Road, near Beartown State Park. She and her husband Michael moved here from Great Barrington in 2000. What I liked, and put me at ease, was Susan finding out who I was. This led to a relaxed time and great conversation.

So while chickadees, mourning doves, and very large blue jays pecked at seeds on Susan's deck, we traveled down the path that brought Susan to Monterey.

Briefly, Susan was raised in Middlebury, Vermont, the daughter of a bookstore owner. Like many of our generation, Susan left home for other horizons. She attended the University of Washington in Seattle as an art major. Seattle led to the diamond district in the lower east side of New York City, where she worked as a jeweler using her art background.

What I found most interesting about Susan was that on her return to Vermont, she became a homesteader, gardener, and junior staff member at Spring Lake Ranch, which is much like our Gould Farm.

The interview only became more interesting. While many of us have attended yoga classes at Kripalu, Susan was part of the team who transformed Kripalu from a Jesuit monastery to what it is today. She met Michael Johnson there.

They married shortly after and left Kripalu to travel around the world. Returning to the Berkshires a year later, Susan began working as a gardener, incorporating her artistic background into landscaping and ornamental gardening.

As we spoke into the early afternoon, I learned about Susan's love of nature. This was exemplified by the birds that flocked on her deck (no snow that week), her love of hiking, tracking animals, and collecting seashells. Her personal garden reflects working with plants and nature, and cultivating herbs and vegetables. It will be wonderful when the snow melts and nature begins to breathe once again.

Monterey, a place that may have found many of us rather than the other way around. A place of natural beauty, artistic people, civic-minded people, people who take care of things in a conscientious way. This is how we concluded. But what I most took away from our conversation was Susan's observations regarding mankind, "There are so many ways to be human." This is the kind of person Susan is. She exemplifies the town we are so fortunate to be part of and she still practices yoga!

—Cheryl Zellman



## March 2018 Contributors

We have mailed out our annual fund appeal. The *News* relies each year on hundreds of contributions from folks near and far. These contributions cover roughly two-thirds of the \$24,000 annual expense of producing and mailing the paper, with advertising revenue for the balance.

If you haven't received an appeal, but would like to contribute, you can mail a check to The Monterey News, PO Box 9, Monterey, MA 01245. Your contribution will be much appreciated, as is the *Monterey News* to town life.

Thank you to the folks below for getting the annual appeal rolling this year!

Elizabeth Wool  
Glenn Wall  
Margaret Vorck  
Dick & Barbara Tryon  
Cathy Roth & Vicki Reed  
Bob Rausch  
Rodney Palmer  
Al & Beth King  
Judy Kales  
Peter & Susan LePrevost  
Cindy & Rob Hoogs  
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## Knox Gallery News

### Deborah Pressman

The Knox Gallery will host a reception for Deborah Pressman's *Lines in the Landscape*, which is currently on exhibit, on Saturday, April 14, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Pressman, who lives in the Boston area, will be at the reception, and we hope that all our Knox Gallery fans, artists, and neighbors will come to meet her.

Pressman, a recently retired physician, has been a longtime metalsmithing student of Monterey silversmiths Michael and Maureen Banner, and is thrilled that, after packing away her white coat and stethoscope, she can finally concentrate her time and effort on her art. On first glance, the translucent color, feathered forms, and repeated frames of Pressman's recent paintings appear to be completely non-figurative—but the seascapes and landscapes that are the starting points for her abstractions reveal themselves upon further observation. Please see the March issue of *Monterey News* for more information. *Lines in the Landscape* will be on view through April 21.

### Kit Patten

Monterey resident Kit Patten will present *Making Faces*, which is the result of a year-long project during which he painted faces—one every day during 2017. The artist cites tremendous admiration for artists “who truly capture the essence of other humans through portraiture,” from the iconic caricaturist Al Hirschfeld to the seventeenth-century Flemish painter Anthony van Dyck—as his inspiration for this undertaking.



Joanne Spies

Patten hopes that his work invites viewers to look at the world around them from a different point of view. Humor is interjected throughout his work. As he says, “I can’t help it, so I may as well call it intentional!”

Please mark your calendars for the opening of *Making Faces* on May 4, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., with an artist’s talk immediately before at 5:30 p.m. (That is the evening before the town meeting.) *Making Faces* can be viewed from April 27 through June 2. Look for more information on this exhibition in the May issue of the *Monterey News*.

All exhibits can be viewed during library hours. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, [MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/](http://MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/) 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 413-528-3795. Facebook.com/Knox Gallery Instagram.com/knoxgallery @Knox\_Gallery on Twitter.

—MaryPaul Yates



Joanne Spies

Left: Face and Faceless © Kit Patten, acrylic on wood;

Above: The artist in self-made third-eye hat.



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## Here's a Thought...

### Enough Winter White. Bring on the White Birches.

When I was a girl, we'd often take summer vacations in Massachusetts. No matter how long it took to get here from western New York, no matter how sleepy I was, I never napped after we passed Albany. I was on the alert for my three Massachusetts landmarks.

One was the Massachusetts Turnpike sign, with its iconic pilgrim hat shot through with an arrow. A powerful image for me long before it became politically incorrect, that sign promised me that, yes, history really does live here. Another landmark was the first sight of the bright orange roof of one of the Howard Johnson's restaurants that then dotted the Pike. It promised a hot dog in a split-bread-loaf bun, and my choice of any one of twenty-eight flavors of ice cream.

In between, best of all, and all around, stood the white birches. We didn't seem to have white birches on the hills in western New York, so these trees were exotic to me.

I knew the white folks' version of the native lore, knew about birch bark canoes long ago on the mighty Niagara. So I realized we must have had them, maybe still did. If so, they were few and far between, and certainly not the elegant, energetic, determined hill-climbers I saw along the Pike. To me those were quintessentially Massachusetts.

Once I saw them, I always relaxed. Their promise to me was simple—wel-

come back. You're home now. Sometimes I'd relax enough then to snooze the rest of the way to Boston, or the Cape.



This last promise was part of what ultimately drew me to the Berkshires. But I'd never experienced a New England winter until after I'd moved across the state line, changed my driver's license, and set up a new bank account.

That first year, 1980, it wasn't the snow that startled me. I'd grown up near Buffalo, so significant snowfall wasn't a new thing. What startled me was how long the air stayed bitterly cold. That first year, I wore long johns in June, and asked myself more than once, "What have you done?"

Happily, I've only had one other long-johns-in-June year since then. I've even learned to distinguish the change to spring while there's still snow on the ground. The birds arrive, and start to sing. The sun rides higher in the sky and the sunshine is warmer. The great outdoors smells different; spring's literally in the air. As for the cold, it's not winter cold any more. It's softer, somehow sweeter.

The HoJo restaurants are long gone. Few of the Turnpike signs sport the hat-and-arrow. One promise Massachusetts made to me in my childhood is still alive and well. This is still white birches country. No matter how long there's snow on the ground, winter white always surrenders precedence to white birch. Even this year. It's inevitable.

—Mary Kate Jordan



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## School News Southern Berkshire Regional

### Safety, Security, & Wellness

As promised, one goal we have been working on is a commitment to review, revise, and enhance our practices and protocols around ensuring a safe learning environment which includes the physical plant, social and emotional supports, and wellness of the whole child. Our school resource officer (SRO) has begun her work in the district, she was introduced to families at the "Coffee with the SRO and Friends," and she is heading to several trainings this spring. I am interested in creating a district safety team to address the significant undertakings that will be made up of administrators, teachers, support staff, and our community partners. We are hoping to use grant funding for a safety summit which will provide professional development for staff, students, and the community safety personnel, with the hopes of hosting an informational forum for families too. I will continue to share our progress on this goal as it will remain our highest priority.

### Budget

The school committee adopted the FY19 budget on March 15, 2018. The \$16,690,011 represents a 1.98% or \$323,298 increase, including the debt service. The goal was to develop a budget that was level service with the flexibility to allocate resources based on program and student needs while sustaining

the commitment to educational excellence. Our recommendation is based on working to ensure that SBRSD is operating as efficiently and effectively as possible, and proactively creating a culture of continuous improvement. My hope is that the budget is approved by the member towns at the annual town meetings. The SBRSD budget documents can be found at [sbrsd.org/budget](http://sbrsd.org/budget), or from the school website, [sbrsd.org/mt-everett.html](http://sbrsd.org/mt-everett.html), go to "district" and drop down to "budget."

### Superintendent's Entry Plan

At the last school committee meeting, I presented a report containing a summary of my observations, findings, and themes from all the information I have gathered in the last eight months in the district. This data provides the administrative team with a foundation for developing a strategic plan to ensure our students are prepared for their futures, whether that is college readiness or alternative pathways to a career. The strategic plan will be vetted and approved by the school committee, and will contain action steps with measurable goals. The entry plan report can be found at [sbrsd.org/superintendent/superintendents-entry-plan](http://sbrsd.org/superintendent/superintendents-entry-plan). I want to thank all of you, our school community, for sharing traditions, history, information, and for the continued support—SBRSD continues to be better because of you.

—Beth Regulbuto  
Superintendent of Schools

## SBRSD School Committee Meeting in Monterey

The Southern Berkshire Regional School District school committee has scheduled one of their regular meetings to be held in Monterey. We hope that Monterey parents and families will mark the date on their calendars, and plan to attend if possible. Towns have been requesting that the committee reach out further to member towns, and this is a chance to be more visible in the workings of the district.

Thursday, April 26, 6 p.m., at the Monterey Community Center

### Monterey Community Potluck Suppers

Join us April 18 to hear:  
Dr. Richard Greene

Use of Trail Cameras  
A fantastic tool for wildlife studies  
See the community potluck supper  
article on page 10.

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    a stone, a flower, an herb, a root  
        to help the open close  
        to help the closed open  
        to unknot the knotted  
        to knit the frayed and fractured

you take the pristine waters  
    from the pond, the river, the ocean  
    the raindrops off your hair  
you take the fire  
    the sun off your face  
        to soften the grief  
        to retrieve what's been stolen  
        to make sense of the senseless  
        to find forgiveness for the unforgivable

you take the oracle  
    the Bible, the Gita, the holy scriptures  
    for your cushion, your zafu  
        while you read the stars  
        while you listen to the moon  
        then pass on the celestial poetry  
        to the tiny berry picking hand in yours  
        to the wrinkled callused hand gripping yours

you take your newly shorn  
    dreaded locks  
    tangled temperaments and snarled ego  
        to feed the forest in the furrows the dozers left behind  
        to burn in the churches  
        to bring the many to the one  
        to send the devil back to his hole

you take what name, sister?  
    daughter, lover, mother, friend?

you take your work  
    your art, your craft  
        in who's name?  
        under what benediction?

you take the why do  
    what you do  
    to the compost pile  
    to turn and turn and turn again.

—Boney Oscar  
November 2017

## Holidays End

The holidays have come & gone  
But deep inside is left a song,  
However tired we may be  
God has blessed the family tree.

Thank you God for all your grace.  
Help us keep continued faith.  
The world changes day by day,  
With faith & hope & courage, pray.

No matter how the “tests” may come  
God gives that grace to all, not some.  
So take, don't leave, that grace behind.  
Those gifts of God—a special kind.

—Margaret Vorck



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## Polished Bronze and Blued Steel—the Grackle

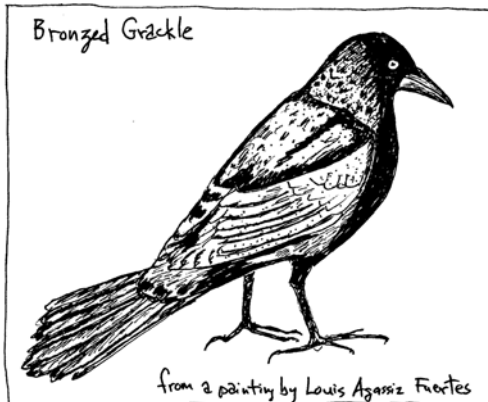
“As his iridescent plumage flashes in the sun, he appears as a creature cast in polished bronze and blued steel.” This is Edward Howe Forbush, writing nearly a century ago, describing the male grackle, *Quiscalus quiscula*. Forbush goes on, putting together such words as “metallic reddish-violet, bronzy-purple,” and “bottle-green.” These are the remarkable iridescent colors of the feathers of a big black bird common in these parts from early spring until late November. Grackles travel in flocks as they arrive, and then again as they leave for their more southern wintering grounds. Watching such a flock in late October, 1904, Forbush stood on a hilltop and saw, “An army of birds extending across the sky from one horizon to the other... a great rainbow of birds three rods wide, flying one hundred feet above the hilltop.” (Three rods is about fifty feet.) He says it is impossible to estimate the number of birds in this flock but his birding companions that day “believed there were millions.”

Years ago ornithologists described the Purple Grackle and the Bronzed Grackle, two subspecies with slightly different colorings, but with overlapping ranges. Back then, ours would have been the Bronzed Grackle, the same big size and with much the same habits as the purple one. Now we call both of these the Common Grackle.

The male is the bigger of the sexes, being about a foot long with a wingspan of eighteen inches. The tail is long and some say wedge-shaped. It is often carried in such a way as to have a V-shaped keel in the center, where the feathers are longer, but this is not used for steering or stabilizing purposes, rather for show and courtship. Grackles have big black feet and are built for walking, which they do in a deliberate manner, with that long tail held up unless it is courtship time. Then the tail may be stiffened and dragged on the ground, for special effect. Sometimes grackles walk in shallow water, and they hold the tail well up then. They like to eat small fish.

Much of the grackle’s diet is animal: insects, spiders, crawfish, worms,

sowbugs, small snakes, clams, fish, frogs, salamanders, lizards, birds, birds’ eggs, and even mice. They also gobble down beetles, grasshoppers, caterpillars, cutworms, all sorts of bugs, and ants. In season, grackles eat grain, fruit, beechnuts, various “weed seeds,” plant galls, grass, and some leaves.



Most writers extol the flashy iridescence of the grackle, but take a different tone regarding the song, which is described as a “chuck,” a sound like a creaking gate, or “not musical.” Besides the Common Grackle, we have in the Americas a Boat-tailed Grackle along the salt marshes here in Massachusetts and elsewhere, and a Great-tailed Grackle, in the southern and southwestern parts of this continent, including Mexico. I have seen this one, when I visited Big Bend National Park in Texas. The tail is remarkable. Even the bird book calls it “extremely long.” (*The Sibley Guide to Birds*, Knopf, 2000.) Anyone with an internet ability and bird apps can listen to the songs of all these kinds of grackles and find that there is great variety, including, but not limited to, the “chuck.”

While singing the praises of the grackle, we must put in a verse for its yellow eye. Why is it like this? In a dark purple head this stands out just as remarkably as any iridescence or extremeness of tail. To answer questions like this, folks get out in the marshes and onto the hilltops and take notes. After awhile the picture emerges: some kinds of birds have dark eyes as youngsters, and then the iris changes to pale in adults. This is an age-related eye color correlation and is true of most grackles. But the adult Boat-tailed Grackles on the Gulf Coast and in Florida never do get yellow eyes. The ones up the Atlantic coast do.

In some kinds of birds the females have eyes of one color and the males of another, no matter what age they are. Young Sharp-shinned Hawks have bright yellow eyes, and the adults’ are red, both in males and in females.

Some kinds of birds experience dramatic changes in eye-color during the breeding season, suggesting a hormonal correlation.

The more we can learn, standing on top of a hill or sitting quietly in a marsh, the more we will realize we don’t know, so the more questions we will have. Lucky for us, this sends us back up the hill and back to the marsh. There we may see the long, tall, gleaming, whistling, and chucking Common Grackle and learn a thing or two, and take notes.

—Bonner McAllester

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## Bidwell House Museum Heading Towards a New Year

Happy spring from the Bidwell House Museum.

March certainly came in like a lion this year with the museum receiving over forty inches of snow just in March. As the days get longer and the sun shines brighter, the icy white landscape has slowly given over to brown and green with everyone hopeful for the first flowers to soon make their appearance.

In between March snowstorms, the museum hosted a great talk by Bernie Drew at the Monterey Community Center. A packed crowd listened to Mr. Drew tell of tall tales and “fake news” surrounding East Rock in Great Barrington, which people were convinced would careen down the mountain and destroy the town. It was a fun morning and a great look at some forgotten local history.

Behind the scenes at the museum, we have been working hard on our summer programs and have a fun schedule planned that is sure to have something for everyone. Our opening celebration will be held on May 27, with beloved local singer Diane Taraz. We plan to rejoice in the completion of our fundraising campaign and welcome visitors to our 2018 season. A new event planned for this year is the open-mic festival on Sunday, July 8. Show us your musical talent from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and then stay to hear the rockin’ sounds of the BTU’s until 8:30. For more information, contact the museum by calling 413-528-6888, or by emailing to BidwellHouse@gmail.com.

The Bidwell Country Fair (formerly Township No. 1 day) will be held on Saturday, July 7, and this year we are planning a pie baking contest. We can’t wait to see all of the delectable desserts. If you are interested in baking for this event, please contact the museum.

On Saturday, August 4, we will hold our annual garden party fundraiser at the Art School, just down the road from the museum. Look for a save-the-date arriving in the mail soon.

For the full schedule of history talks and exciting programs, check out the museum website under “events.”



*Clark W. Nichols, Bernie Drew, and Bonner McAllester enjoy a laugh at the Monterey Community Center after Bernie’s entertaining lecture on the tales of East Rock.*

Finally, the museum is looking for eight to ten interns to participate in the Bidwell Young History Scholars program this summer. If you know any local high school students who love history and would like to know more about the inner workings of a museum, direct them to the information and application on our website. All applications are due on April 30. Find out more about the internships at the bidwellhousemuseum.org, under the Information tab.

—Heather Kowalski  
Executive Director



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## From the Meetinghouse April 2018

This year Easter coincides with April Fool's Day, which is rare. It will only happen three times this century.

One wouldn't want to make too much of this coincidence.

On the other hand, why not?

April Fool's Day began, it seems, from a foolish mistake. Lots of cultures the world over have a traditional day for playing pranks on friends and neighbors, many going back centuries. The earliest trace of this, though (which I conclude from the most cursory research), is English, is indeed tied to April 1, but might be so only by error.

Chaucer's 14th century *Canterbury Tales* includes in the "Nun's Priest's Tale" a fox who tricks a vain cock, which is said to have happened "Syn March bigan thritty dayes and two." Modern scholars suspect this was to say thirty-two days after March, which would be May 2, the anniversary of the engagement of King

Richard II to Anne of Bohemia. Readers, however, took the phrase to mean March 32, as in a silly way to say April 1.

Well.

Given that Chaucer could have been clearer, I don't blame those readers. But, by this folly, we have April Fool's Day, April 1st, forever after.

As it happens, Christian tradition has its own take on the sort of pranks you might play on your chosen April fool. John Chrysostom, in a 4th-century Easter Vigil sermon, spoke of the resurrection of Jesus as God's playing the ultimate prank on the devil. Recounting an image that had come to him, he described Christ confronting the devil and laughing at him. Others joined in that spirit—Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa. This "Big Joke" came to be drawn in the early church as a mousetrap, in which Jesus was the bait and the devil was the one to become trapped.

It developed into a practice. On the Monday after Easter, people would gather in sanctuaries to tell jokes and funny stories, to revel in the absurdities of life, to

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share a laugh. And so it continues. In some places, congregations use the Sunday after Easter to celebrate Holy Hilarity—though we don't there in Monterey because it often involves pastors telling jokes instead of preaching sermons, and that just sounds painful, whether I imagine myself in the pulpit giving stand-up comedy a try or as someone in a pew being told, "Today, we laugh." One of the joys of actual hilarity, in my experience, is that it doesn't come on schedule but as a surprise.

This year, though, might be a good time to give it a try. (Nope—not gonna happen.) After all, we're living amidst a global politics that is becoming increasingly humorless. All these strong men striving after authoritarian power—one of the marks of all these guys is their heavy, horrible, self-seriousness.

Winnie the Pooh has been banned in China because of a picture taken of Xi Jinping with Barack Obama back when Obama was president. Xi looked like Pooh to Obama's Tigger. Tigger, of course, is the bigger fool in world of Pooh, but the one thought to be Pooh-like is the one who can't take the meme.

Bassem Youseff is an Egyptian in exile, now living in Los Angeles. What forced him to flee his homeland was the satirical news program he wrote, produced, and performed for Egyptian television, and for which he faced charges of "insulting the state." When the military took over, things got scary for him and his young family.

Closer to home, it appears that one of Donald Trump's primary motivators is the thought that, "Everyone's laughing at us." This fear of being laughed at drives

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foreign policy, economic policy, trade agreements, nuclear agreements. It's said his seeming inability to be the butt of a joke might even be the reason he ran for president in the first place.

Comic writer Armando Iannucci, the creative force behind "Veep" and more recently "The Death of Stalin," and a student of Charlie Chaplin's brilliant satire, "The Great Dictator," claims in a recent interview in *The Atlantic*, "Humorless politicians are the most dangerous."

Maybe our next election cycle should feature a debate at a comedy club, or while the candidates take in an episode of Saturday Night Live.

Meanwhile, however, our humor must be more than palliative. Our laughter, especially in difficult times, must do more than keep our spirits light while everything else goes dark. Holy hilarity isn't nihilism—for it's true as Youseff claims: "Satire is great, but it doesn't do anything by itself." So, of course, holy hilarity is other than mere satire or some spoonful of sugar as might make a cyanide pill taste sweet. Spirited hilarity is hope against hope, a resistance to that which would hold our spirits captive to apathy, cynicism, or despair. Laughter, as a force of wind that fills you up and knocks you breathless, is recognition that the absurdities of life aren't necessarily our destruction, and might even be the circumstances in which delight and wisdom can take us by happy surprise.

Regular readers of this column will suspect I have a strange fixation on the two most recent Star Wars films because, here I go, writing about them again. Not everyone liked these films, though, as is to be expected. One argument people had with them is that were too "jokey." But that's what appealed to me. The people in the "resistance," Poe and Rey and Finn, even Leia and Luke: they all seemed to be having fun.

Poe prank-called the imperial general, Higgs, even calling him "Hugs." (Unsurprisingly, "Hugs" never got the joke, never even got that it was a joke.)

Luke, who's expected to be so very serious, got in a few good lines—about Leia's hair, about Rey's place of birth. ("No one's from nowhere," he claimed philosophically, though, on learning she >

## Council on Aging

There is another opportunity to increase balance and reduce the risk of falls. (This is not referring to the luncheon we had at the Roadside last month!) The Matter of Balance program will present a series of eight classes at the community center this spring. The classes will be from 1 to 3 p.m., on the following Fridays: April 27, May 4, 11, 18, 25, June 1, 8, and 15. There is no cost but registration is required. Call 1-413-445-9232 and press 1 at the options menu. —KayPurcell



*From the left, above: Maryellen Brown, Betty Wool, Linda Gero, Julio Rodriquez, and Mary Makuc. From the left, below: Cynthia Weber, Norma Champigny, Pat Andrus and Tom Andrus. Not shown is Michael Banner and Wendy Germain. Maureen Banner was busy taking the photos.*



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*From the Meetinghouse, cont.*

was from Jakuu, he had to admit, “Yeah, that’s pretty much nowhere.”)

That their mission to resist the oppressive rule of a heavy hand and iron fist came with a healthy dose of humor—I understood then why they would fight that fight, not only for freedom, but moreover for the freedom to share a laugh with a friend. It should be said no one siding with the empire could so much as smile. They’re as humorless as the Soviets in Milan Kundera’s novel, *The Joke*, wherein a joke ruins a young man’s life. The joke? Something he wrote on a postcard and sent to a classmate over their summer break. “Optimism is the opium of mankind! A healthy spirit stinks of stupidity!” For this, he would be punished among dissidents, taken as he was to be one.

Absurdity upon absurdity! That it’s disallowed even to call out the absurdity as an absurdity—this makes everything all the more absurd!

You’re likely reading this after both Easter and April Fool’s Day have passed, so unless you were at the Meetinghouse that morning you probably don’t know whether you missed some good jokes delivered from the pulpit. (You didn’t.) But what you did miss is something we’ve always got going on, if not quite so explicitly, this Easter sentiment expressed in an old German hymn, whose translation to English is just partial: “The whole bright world rejoices now! Hilariter! Hilariter!”

We’ll have sung it, the act of singing resembling laughter in its use of breath and its expression. And we’ll conclude with what we’ve had to refrain from saying all six weeks of Lent, “Alleluia! Alleluia!” So, joke’s on you, death. You had us all serious and afraid. But now we see beyond you. And we’re free.

Alive!

Ha-ha!

—Pastor Liz Goodman

#### Having a Good Day

- You’ve got no place to be when the third Nor’easter of the month blows through.
- The snowdrops blossoming at the base of the tree were unexpected.



### The Peregrine Falcon Avian World Traveler

The Peregrine Falcon is often found not far from the coastal shore lines of both North and South America, but is also a world traveler. Peregrine actually means wanderer or pilgrim. After nesting and raising fledglings on edges of rocky cliffs, ledges of buildings, or even unused Osprey nest platforms, as in my illustration, they feel free to follow their instinct to travel. They are drawn in both distance and direction along routes of ample food supply, including pigeons, ducks, birds, small mammals, snakes, and even bats. At our new seabird-watching home on Buzzards Bay, one patrols the waterfront

with a spectacular high flying performance followed by a controlled high-speed plummet as it dives down on waterfowl. We are amazed to catch sight of one of the most widely distributed species of the raptors in the world.

The name “falcon” is derived from the Latin term *falco*, meaning a swept-back wing posture. In what falconers call the “stoop,” their aerodynamic wings permit diving speeds of over two hundred miles per hour. The axiom, “speed kills,” is exactly what happens as the sudden, surprising blow of their elongated main talon, held close to their body, impacts on their prey in flight like the clenched fist of a prize fighter, knocking them from the sky. If this is not fatal, the peregrine also





has an elongated razor-sharp extension of the upper beak, called a tumial tooth, that fits around the neck of a victim to sever the head. This weapon is thought to be an evolutionary leftover from the prehistoric ancestry of birds evolving from reptiles.

Like all raptors, a falcon has extraordinary ability to perceive prey. To gain a broad vantage, it soars on thermals, attaining high elevation, and then pauses like a hover craft. This opens a broad perspective and elevates their advantage for predation. The black feathers that cover its head act like a hooded mantle for protection against the glint of the Sun. Almost like dark glasses around the eye sockets, they render some visibility in ultraviolet light not shared by most other mortals. Bird-watching experts have also observed that the intensity of color of a falcon is a good barometer of its degree of adaptation to its environment.

The practice of falconry, which includes many types of birds of prey, not just falcons, goes back at least a thousand years to the medieval skill of training raptors to hunt in cooperation with humans. Falconers often rode on horseback to keep up with the fast-moving aerial chase. In modern falconry events, the Peregrine is favored, and rated highly in performance among all raptors in prowess and proficiency.

Their aerial acrobatics during mating are spectacular. They fly in rapid figure eight patterns for courtship displays. The

courting invitation may be followed by the male making high circles followed by spectacular dives and chases by both sexes. Then it is said they mate for life. They do not build nests, but often merely scrape out a shallow hollow on the edge of a rooftop or platform to lay several brownish eggs. The buff-colored chicks hatch out to be fed by the mother with food brought by the father. Perfect matrimony continues until fledglings are old enough to take their own journey in life.

There is an established history of mythology around Peregrines on six continents. Similar to the Raven superstition that their presence at the Tower of London ensures its future, long before that the presence of Peregrine Falcons was thought to have ensured the independence of Malta, as guaranteed by the emperor of Spain, providing the Maltese citizens gave him one as a gift every year.

The falcon was immortalized in the novel *The Maltese Falcon* and the subsequent Oscar-winning film by Dashiell Hammett. For readers of the *Monterey News*, I hope this article raises the readers appreciation of these spectacular raptors as they rise up in numbers like a pheonix after their near extermination in these regions from the indiscriminate use of pesticides. I hope this for the sake of their species, and for the continued human appreciation for their way of life.

—George B. Emmons

## Sweet Show

A daily collection of birds  
come to feed  
On the long rock wall.  
It answers their need.

The upside down bird bath  
Also sprinkled with seed  
for the shy small birds  
very cautious to feed.

The squirrels so bold  
take their turn on the wall.  
They're not afraid  
of the crow's loud call.

I eat near the window  
and view with delight  
a sweet show on earth  
birdies eat, then take flight.

—Margaret Vorck



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## Remembrance Lenny Weber, Almost Made 100

Leonard J. Weber, 99, of Main Road in Monterey, passed away peacefully on Tuesday evening, January 9, 2018 at his home.

Born in New York, NY on July 18, 1918, he was the son of the late Isador and Sophie Fisher Weber. He graduated from local schools and attended the Art Students League in New York City. Encouraged by his mother, Leonard discovered his love of art early in life and pursued it with passion throughout.

A veteran of World War II, Mr. Weber served in the US Army from 1941 until being honorably discharged in 1945. After the war, Leonard returned to the New York area, where he trained in opera and resumed building his reputation as an artist. He met Cynthia, his future wife, on a boat trip to Italy in 1953 and they married the following year in New York.

Leonard's participation in New York's annual 5th Avenue Art Show indirectly led him to Monterey in 1958. He described the experience, saying, "We came over the hill (from Tyringham) and it was so charming, so picturesque." He found the

small-town lifestyle a perfect fit, and soon became a fixture in the local community, making many good friends in the process.

Leonard opened the Hayloft gallery in Monterey the following summer. It was soon widely recognized as a place to find high quality art and picture framing, lively conversation on numerous and diverse topics, and a reliably open door for hikers on the nearby Appalachian trail. On a nice summer afternoon, visitors would often find Leonard outdoors "enjoying the sunshine" on the gallery's deck.

Leonard was an accomplished portrait artist. Multiple generations of many families found their way to—and back to—the Hayloft over the years. Leonard also enjoyed sharing his love of art with others. He was an active participant in the artistic communities of the Berkshires, nearby New York, and Connecticut. He taught art in a variety of settings, including local public and private schools, college programs, and private groups.

Leonard and Cynthia launched the Townscapes series of lithographs in the 80s. (To view the series, visit Leonard-Weber.net.) With a remarkable gift for establishing relationships, Leonard found success both domestically and internation-

*Above: Lenny's Monterey Townscape was well known in town. Below: Working in his studio.*



ally, in Japan and Europe. Of the many places he visited, the people and lands of Italy, Japan, Mexico, and Portugal held special places in his heart.

Leonard enjoyed many hobbies and interests. These included nutrition, classical music, swimming, opera, jogging, reading, chess, calisthenics, discussing politics, and collecting historical documents related to Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln. He was a man of many interests, diverse beliefs, and a few contradictions. He was a devoted and supportive father and grandfather who loved his family and valued his friendships.

He is survived by his wife Cynthia Weber of Monterey, MA, his son Jason W. Weber of Groton, MA, and his grandson.

A memorial service celebrating Leonard's life will be held in the spring at Corashire Cemetery in Monterey, MA at a date and time to be announced.

Donations in memory of Leonard J. Weber may be made to the National Association of Women through Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, 426 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. To send remembrances to his family, please visit [www.finnertyandstevens.com](http://www.finnertyandstevens.com).

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## Konkapot Stream Teams Stream Assessment 2018

The Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) invites interested individuals to help form “stream teams” to complete a stream assessment of the Konkapot River this spring and summer. Stream team volunteers will walk (sometimes in the river) or paddle along an assigned segment of the river and record information along the way. All of the information collected will be compiled into a final stream assessment report which will include conditions and use of the river sections plus possible recommendations for future projects. These surveys help HVA better assess the health of the river and what is needed in that part of the watershed. A training session is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, 5 to 7 p.m., at the Mason Library (Community Room) in Great Barrington. Funding for the river assessments is provided by the Berkshire Environmental Endowment Fund, a fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. If you are interested in participating in this project, please call HVA at 413-298-7024, or email Alison at [adixon@hvatoday.org](mailto:adixon@hvatoday.org).

The two stream assessments to be completed this year are along the Williams and Konkapot Rivers. Both of these rivers are tributaries of the Housatonic River and no previous assessments have been conducted. The Williams River flows south and southeast through West Stockbridge and Great Barrington where it joins the Housatonic River, while the Konkapot River begins in Monterey and continues south through New Marlborough and, after a dip into Canaan, Connecticut, flows into the Housatonic River in Sheffield. Stream teams for each of the rivers will be made up of small groups of two or three volunteers, and the teams are typically assigned a one to two-mile section of the river. HVA will train stream team volunteers on how to conduct the survey, what information to record, and safety protocols. Volunteers will be asked to record things of note such as pipes that are seen, invasive plants or wildlife observations, and general river conditions and usage. Following the surveys, the stream team volunteers will come together to share their findings and discuss



*Housatonic Valley Association volunteer Marcia Arland recording stream survey notes*

suitable recommendations. The information gathered will be compiled into final stream assessment reports—one for each of the tributaries.

Not all stream team members need to be involved in conducting a survey. If you have an interest or knowledge about either the Williams or Konkapot Rivers, HVA welcomes your input. Surveys will be completed from mid-May through August (weather and water levels permitting). The final reports, which are expected to be compiled in late summer, will be submitted to the local municipalities, state government, and interested individuals. This report should be available for the public by October 2018. The assessment report will be available on the HVA website along with previous assessments. Past reports are available on our website (<https://hvatoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/SouthwestBranch-2018update.pdf>) or call us to receive a digital or hard copy.

### **Housatonic Valley Association**

Founded in 1941, HVA is uniquely dedicated to protecting the entire Housatonic River Watershed. The watershed includes about two thousand square miles of land stretching from western Massachusetts through western Connecticut and eastern

New York to Long Island Sound. HVA's offices are in Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut; Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and Wassaic, New York. For more information, visit [hvatoday.org](http://hvatoday.org).

—Alison Dixon

HVA Berkshire Outreach Manager

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## Wildlife Report, Mid-February to Late March

February was the dream of summer, on the wrong page of the calendar. Back then Ed Salsitz saw a herd of about fifteen white-tailed deer in a field in Sharon, Connecticut and took their picture, with easy grazing that day. In the first week of March, the turkey vultures were back, soaring in Great Barrington, where Steve Snyder saw them, also red-winged blackbirds, at Gould Farm. Steve saw raccoons cross the road, one on Route 23 and the other on Curtis Road, and we heard the barred owls calling about this same time here on East Hupi Road.

Carol Edelman wrote of a flock of grackles at the feeders, during the early March snowstorm, and after that storm we saw an otter trail near here, where two otters had come along using the same toboggan trail, one directly after the other. Right about this time Jay Amidon saw otter tracks on Brewer Pond and took a good photograph (below) showing about fifteen short toboggan slides, with a few paw prints between each run and the next where the otter ran a little to get up the momentum for another slide.



We had winter back again, thanks to the reliable month of March, but bluebirds were undaunted by this and came checking out the boxes on New Marlborough Road at Steve Moore's and Wendy Jensen's house. Kit Patten called to tell of a remarkable collection of spruce cones in a shed at his place, so I went over to look.

We had to slog through the snow, deep from another storm by now, and inside the

shed saw several tidy big piles of cones. Kit had noticed they were stacked up like firewood, though even more neatly placed than some folks put their wood: all the big ends of the cones on the same side, the tips on the other. They were laid up on a windowsill, and on other shelves in the shed, and then down lower there were the middens, or heaps of scales. We feel sure this is the cupboard of one or more red squirrels, coming in regularly through the winter for a reliable meal of the seeds inside the cones, leaving the "cores" all over the floor in deep piles. I read that sometimes the squirrels stash new cones in these old piles, so the cones don't dry out and open so fast, spilling out the seeds.

Kit also told of a bobcat he saw near Stevens Lake, on Route 23. He was thrilled to see it and felt the cat had a brindled pattern on its coat.

By the middle of March we had true deep snow here and Steve Snyder wrote about the places he'd seen where the deer had bedded down, also of finding deer tracks following exactly in his own earlier footprints in the snow. They'd taken advantage of his having broken trail. Here we noticed our otters had been traveling the same route, but not able to toboggan any more. Instead, there was a loping sort of trail, still showing a belly mark, but no lengthy glides, as we'd seen in snow that was much less deep.

A robin came back in the middle of the month, to Steve and Wendy's place, and they had an exciting visit from an opossum, too. Wendy saw it trundling along, headed across the field in the middle of the day. The opossum visited the compost, and left tracks which were very different in differ-

ent kinds of snow, as Steve's photographs show. In the deep soft snow, the tracks are not very detailed and delicate. You can't really count the toes (five on a 'possum) but you can see the tail drag and certainly get the idea how difficult progress can be in deep snow, even for a relatively small animal like a 'possum. Travel was much easier where the snow was a bit crusted, and thanks to a light skift of snow on top, the tracks are clear, including the track of that tail. Opossums have naked tails and sometimes get some frostbite in a cold winter, also on their naked ears. But the tails seem not damaged and still function like another arm or hand, able to curl around and hang from a tree branch. This is handy in many ways, including making it possible to reach down into a birdnest on a lower branch, for a welcome meal. Last month we had that good photograph of a 'possum who had just climbed into the nestbox with a hen, maybe for eggs, or maybe for grain. Opossums are quite omnivorous, which is one key to their success.

March is the month that officially brings us spring, with some early flowers. I saw a skunk cabbage blooming in Canton, Massachusetts, and red maples with their pompoms bursting out along Route 23 in Great Barrington. Right here in Monterey, Maureen Banner has witch hazels blooming in her yard and sent us a wonderful photograph.

The first bear report of 2018 is just in from Bob Carlson. In the last week of March he saw clear tracks in the snow on Mount Hunger and took some good photographs. They show what looks very like a human footprint, barefoot in the

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*Possum tracks in the midday softer snow, and then later afternoon with a slight crust*



*Maureen Banner's witch hazel*



snow, plus those claw marks way out in front of each toe.

Thanks, everyone, for all you see and pass along. Keep it coming!

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*Nor'easter vista*

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## Select Board Corner

Welcome to the Select Board Corner. Our goal is to submit an article each month to the *Monterey News* to keep everyone up to date on important issues, office closings, highway projects, etc.

### MontereyMA.gov

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

### Meetings and Events

**Board of Health:** Monday, April 2, at 4 p.m.

**Chair Yoga:** Tuesdays 9 to 10 a.m., at the community center.

**Conservation Commission:** Wednesday, April 11, at 6 p.m.

**Council on Aging:** Monday, April 9 and 23, at 10 a.m.

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

**Foot Nurse:** Thursday, May 24, until 11:30 a.m., by appointment (please call 528-1443 x247). All ages are welcome.

**Parks Commission:** Wednesday, April 4, at 6 p.m.

**Planning Board:** Thursdays, April 12 and 26, at 7 p.m.

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

### Town Hall Closings

The transfer station will be closed Sunday, April 1, for Easter and will be open Monday, April 2, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Town Hall is closed Monday, April 16 for Patriot's Day.

Most individual office closings are

posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message. We recommend always calling ahead.

### TA or No TA?

At the upcoming annual town meeting on May 5, we anticipate a worthwhile discussion of our recommendation to lower the town administrator salary and expense line items to \$1. This would put on hold efforts to hire a part-time town administrator for 2018-19. We believe this would save the taxpayers substantial money, while we continue numerous improvements which have been made in town government in the past year.

A town administrator is typically responsible for administration of all officers appointed by the select board and their departments, provisions of laws of the Commonwealth, bylaws, coordinating activities of town departments, keeping the select board informed as to the needs of the town, recommending actions, serving as procurement officer, managing personnel matters for employees, and preparing an annual operating budget. In the meantime, without a town administrator, we have made several effective changes within town hall, including bringing in a professional, experienced municipal accounting firm to handle our accountant and treasurer functions. Since hiring this firm, we are successfully preparing for a new initiative of annual audits. We have begun meeting with department heads, employees, and town boards on a more regular basis. There is greater transparency and accountability throughout.

When voters approved Article 23 at the May 2015 annual town meeting, the governing statute (MGL Chapter 41 section 23A) stated that the select board "may" appoint a town administrator. We tried that route, and have decided other efforts seem to be more suitable for the town's needs. One argument you may hear at town meeting is that the town adopted a "town administrator form of government." This is incorrect. There is no legal requirement to rescind the vote if we choose not to fund or hire for this position.

For FY19 the savings would be \$35,000 in salary, \$1,500 in expenses, and approximately \$22,370 in benefits. Monterey is a very small town, and this is a significant saving. We are confident that the changes being made will continue the collaborative efforts to create a positive, team approach to solving problems and proactively managing town business. After a six to eight-month period we will form a committee to evaluate town hall and make a recommendation for FY20. We recommend lowering the town administrator budget items for FY 2019.

— Steven Weisz, Chair  
Carol Edelman and Kenn Basler  
Monterey Select Board  
(steve@montereyma.gov)  
(carol@montereyma.gov)  
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For general inquiries, please click "Contact Us" at [www.montereyma.gov](http://www.montereyma.gov).



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# WEBSTER

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## Calendar

**Every Tuesday:** Cards and games, 1 p.m., community center.

**Every Wednesday:** Balance Review classes, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., community center.

**Every Thursday:** Dancersize, from 4 to 5 p.m., community center.

**Fridays, April 27 through June 15:** Matter of Balance classes, 1 to 3 p.m. Registration required. See page 19.

**Through Saturday, April 21:** Knox Gallery, Deborah Pressman, *Lines in the Landscape*. See page 12.

**Monday, April 2:** Lake Garfield Working Group, 7 p.m., town hall. See page 10.

**Thursday, April 5:** Darn Yarners, 1 to 3 p.m., community center.

**Friday, April 13:** Board game night, community center, 7 p.m. See page 9.

**Saturday, April 14:**

“Paint Your Home,” painting workshop with Joe Baker. See page 9.

Knox Gallery reception for Deborah Pressman, *Lines in the Landscape*. 6 to 7:30 p.m., Knox Gallery, Monterey Library. See page 12.

**Wednesday, April 18:** Community potluck, 6 p.m., church basement, with Richard Greene on the use of trail cameras. See page 10.

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

**Saturday, April 21:**

Candidates Forum, 10 a.m., church basement. See page 2.

Lenox Contra Dance. Live music with Stomp Rocket, Steve Zakon-Anderson calling. 8 to 11 p.m., beginners session at 7:45. All dances taught. Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. Lenox-ContraDance.org. Contact 528-4007. [lenoxcontradance.org](http://lenoxcontradance.org)

**Monday, April 23:** Adult book group, *The Souls of Black Folk*, by WEB Dubois, 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library.

**Thursday, April 26:** South Berkshire Regional School District school committee meeting, 6 p.m., at the Monterey Community Center. See page 14.

**Friday, May 4:** Knox Gallery reception for Kit Patten’s *Making Faces*. Artist’s talk at 5:30 p.m., reception to follow, 6 to 7:30.

**Saturday, May 5:** Annual town meeting, 9 a.m., at the firehouse.

**Tuesday, May 8:** Town elections from 12 noon until 7 p.m., firehouse. See page 2.

## Monterey News

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

## Town Contact Information

### Emergency! 911

#### Administrative Assistant:

528-1443 x111

[admin@montereyma.gov](mailto:admin@montereyma.gov)

(for town boards and misc. questions)

#### Assessor: 528-1443 x115

[assessors@montereyma.gov](mailto:assessors@montereyma.gov)

#### Building Department: 528-1443

x118 [buildingsafety@montereyma.gov](mailto:buildingsafety@montereyma.gov)

#### Community Center: 528-3600

[center@ccmonterey.org](mailto:center@ccmonterey.org)

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

528-3136

[chief@montereyma.gov](mailto:chief@montereyma.gov)

#### Highway Department: 528-1734

[dpw1@montereyma.gov](mailto:dpw1@montereyma.gov)

#### Library: 528-3795

[montereylibrary@gmail.com](mailto:montereylibrary@gmail.com)

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

528-3211, Alt./Emergency 528-3211

[mpdchief@montereyma.gov](mailto:mpdchief@montereyma.gov)

#### Post Office: 528-4670

#### Tax Collector: 528-1443 x117

[montereytax@yahoo.com](mailto:montereytax@yahoo.com)

(for questions about your tax bill)

#### Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113

[clerk@montereyma.gov](mailto:clerk@montereyma.gov)

Town website: [Montereyma.gov](http://Montereyma.gov), under each department, for office hours.

Monterey Library

[www.montereymasslibrary.org](http://www.montereymasslibrary.org) 413-528-3795



Pre-dawn light at Main House on Gould Farm

—Mary Makuc



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*Contributions from local artists this month:*

*Pat Arnow, p.8 George Emmons, p. 20;*

*Bonner McAllester, p. 16.*

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