

# MONTEREY NEWS

September 2021  
Est. 1970 Vol. LI · Number 9

Pick up at: the library (in and outside), outside town hall, transfer station, Bracken Brae farmstand mid-June



*This month we remember twenty years ago and the gripping sense of the unknown. Beginning on page 2 are remembrances, some from 2001 and others more recently. The photo above commemorates the twelve fire fighters from Squad One who died responding to the attack on the World Trade Center. Bob Cutick's essay about his work over eighteen months with the surviving firefighters from Squad One begins on page 3.*

The Housatonic Heritage Walks are a partnership between the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, and numerous heritage organizations.  
Housatonic Heritage Walks page 16

I wondered whether anything good could possibly arise out of the ashes of this catastrophe. Twenty years later, bombarded by news of Afghanistan falling, temperatures rising, and democracy under threat, nothing springs to mind.  
Ground Zero -New Millennium page 8

I wake up slightly depressed, thinking, *something terrible has happened*, hunt around in my head until I find it, and then look out the bedroom window at the New York skyline, and see that, indeed, *it really happened*.  
The View Across the River page 2

Our total circulation went from 15,064 to 23,029, an increase of over 50%.  
Library Stats page 10

As the artist describes: "The sky slowly relinquishes its light to the street lamps, car lights, lighted windows, and electric signs of the night."  
Knox Gallery page 11



Do you know where your next meal will come from? Feeding Friends provides prepared meals to vulnerable residents in south Berkshire County.  
Feeding Friends page 13

Chief Shawn Tryon joined the department in 1995 and he says that the department has been called out more in the past six weeks, forty-eight times, than in the entire first year of his service.  
Fire Department Responses page 12

There has been so much about Covid that we forget the regular flu is a killer, too, and we can do something about it to protect ourselves without controversy.  
Council on Aging-Flu Clinic page 12

On this the twentieth anniversary of 9/11, the story of their sacrifice and of the brothers who mourn their loss, deserves telling.  
A Remembrance of Squad One page 3

The State of Massachusetts has a very detailed law regulating the holding of meetings by public bodies.  
Open Meeting Law page 24

Equinoxes aren't flashy, like the solstices. But the fall and spring equinoxes are made of more subtle stuff.  
Equinox Celebration page 23

Abraham Lincoln had said at another time of national crisis: "As our case is new, so we must think anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."  
How Then Shall We Live? page 2

The run will be on Sunday, September 26. Registration is at 8 a.m., and the race begins at 9:30.  
Gould Farm 5K Run page 16





This image appeared (unattributed) on the front page of the October 2001 issue of the Monterey News.

## September 11, 2001... and After

Will Marsh, editor of the *Monterey News* in 2001, asked folks "to send in reflections, prayers, poems, or anything else" for the October issue after 9/11. Below are some abbreviated thoughts from that issue.

### The View Across the River

Every morning since September 11, I wake up slightly depressed, thinking, *something terrible has happened*, hunt around in my head until I find it, and then look out the bedroom window at the New York skyline, and see that, indeed, *it really happened*. Then I remember, with thanks, that my family and my friends are all okay, and that there are many good people in my life. I think a lot about Monterey, made up, as it is, of residents whose families have been there for generations, others who are new in town, retirees, "summer people," and "weekend people," all living together. I am convinced that LakeFest wasn't trivial, that our concerns to strengthen the bonds among the diverse populations in our town are not trivial. We may come from many backgrounds, and have different aspirations, perspectives, and talents. But we've demonstrated that with such a strong sense of community, we can live together and work together, "[as we] hope will someday be the way all humanity works together."

Nothing could be less trivial.

—Harriet Harvey

### US "Second" Day of Infamy

The events of 9/11/01 should come as no surprise. We have been warned time and again by our own and foreign experts on terrorism that an assault on the U.S. was going to happen - not if but *when*.

Now it is our duty to civilized people all over the whole world to be world leaders and, sparing no resources, bring these terrorist organizations to justice in any way that is possible.

We have good reason to act, and act we should or freedom-loving people may not ever have another chance.

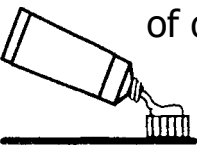
Fortunately, we have experienced and excellent leadership in charge, both in the executive and legislative branches of government.

Let us wholeheartedly support their decisions and actions with our resources and prayers.

—Dean P. Amidon

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## How Then Shall We Live?

If we truly believe in the ideals our country is founded on, shouldn't our response to this great evil that has been done to us be one that comes out of those ideals and not just a knee-jerk military action? How can we, a country based on freedom, equality, and justice, respond without banning innocent people and inadvertently contributing to the conditions that help such evil to grow—without becoming that evil ourselves? How can we have security without a deterioration of the civil liberties, the respect for diversity, the freedom that makes up the very heart of the country?

I sat on the rock. I waited. What next? How then shall we live?

After a time I heard a rushing and rumbling approaching. I thought a weather front was coming in, only it was coming much too fast. Then in the sky in the distance, I saw it—an airplane. How strange.

On my way back down the trail toward Benedict Pond I picked up a pocketful of newly fallen acorns to scatter in the tornado scar below my home.

When I got back to the house I wandered around the yard. Then I went inside and looked up a quotation, something Abraham Lincoln had said at another time of national crisis: "As our case is new, so we must think anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

We must think anew ...

At this dark and troubling time, we grieve for those who didn't come home on September 11 and acknowledge our great debt to and respect for the firemen, the policemen, the rescue workers, those extraordinary ordinary people. We also hope and pray that our leaders speak and act from their higher natures. But we can only hope for that in our leaders if we strive to do so ourselves and help them and each other to do so. Now is the time to show our affirming flame.

Every action matters. Every word matters.

—Will Marsh



## In The Firehouse: A Remembrance of Squad One

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, a crystalline late summer morning, I was at the Brooklyn Veterans Administration clinic consulting with staff when, within the space of seventeen minutes, two commercial airliners were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. On Saturday, September 11, 2021, I will be at St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church for a memorial Mass honoring the lives of twelve firefighters from Squad One who perished in the towers, and of 331 of their brothers in the FDNY.

On this the twentieth anniversary of 9/11, the story of their sacrifice and of the brothers who mourn their loss, deserves telling.

The 9/11 Memorial and Museum in Manhattan, one of the most frequented sites in New York City, is rife with facts and artifacts about 9/11. The stories told there are well worth the visit. My story, as one of the “firehouse clinicians” recruited by the Fire Department of New York (FDNY), is more personal—a story of devastating loss and resilience, and ultimately of character.



Bob Quick

*This memorial sculpture of firefighters raising the flag at the site was given to Squad One by a visitor from the west coast.*

### The Attack

On that Tuesday morning, my biweekly consultation at the Brooklyn Vet Center had just started when the clinic receptionist interrupted our meeting to tell us that a plane had just crashed into the World Trade Center. Six of us sat in stunned silence. For that moment, despite the perfect weather, one could hope that a small plane had accidentally hit the building. After sharing some thoughts about it, we resumed our meeting, only to be interrupted again by the news of the second strike. Now no one doubted that this was a terrorist attack.

I sat there detached, aware that thousands far from New York were celebrating the tragedy inflicted upon us. I realized that I was in a dissociated

state—aware of what was happening but emotionally numbed.


The clinic was located a stone’s throw from the Brooklyn Bridge. We could see black smoke billowing from the burning towers, and soon afterwards hordes of people walking across the bridge from the Manhattan side, like refugees fleeing a war zone. It was hard to connect this scene with my hometown.

There was nothing for me to do at the clinic. I had skated there from my home in Carroll Gardens under beautiful, clear skies. Skating home was on ghostly, empty streets, the sun visibly dimmed by clouds of smoke, the air filled with choking debris as the wind blew south from lower Manhattan to downtown Brooklyn. Days later, among the debris that had fallen into our garden was a business card of a man who worked in the south tower. “Did he survive?” I wondered. We kept the card.

Immediately after the attack, long lines at blood donor sites attested to the felt need to do something, anything to help with recovery efforts. Sadly, blood donations were not needed. I knew that mental health services would be. However, I heard nothing about efforts to engage clinicians. I just showed up at the site and convinced a National Guardsman to let me go to the hotel where first responders were being fed and rested. I and other clinicians just circulated among them, our antennae up for signs of distress.

I didn’t feel I was helping much until I was referred to a maintenance worker at the hotel adjacent to the towers who had come upon body parts while making his rounds. I met with him a few times and >

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*In the Firehouse, cont.*

helped him return to his hotel job after a brief leave of absence. A second referral, Lilia, was a young woman whose fiancé was killed in the north tower. I met with her weekly for about a year at temporary mental health offices near the site. After our sessions, I'd walk to the new "R and R" location set up for first responders and make the rounds as I'd done previously. My work with Lilia aside, I still felt just marginally useful. This was soon to change.

## The Firehouse Project

Dr. Warren Spielberg, a Brooklyn colleague, started volunteering on his own at a firehouse in Red Hook, near the entrance to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel. He felt positive enough about his experience to present the idea to the FDNY Counseling Service Unit (CSU), stressing the importance of using experienced clinicians. They launched a five-site pilot in December 2001 which proved promising enough to expand it to firehouses that suffered the greatest losses. Funded by Project Liberty, thus was born the Firehouse Project.

I learned of the project from Dr. Tom McGoldrick, a Veterans Administration colleague. Tom, team leader at the Staten Island Readjustment Counseling Center, was a staff psychologist there in January 2002. I was their clinical consultant. Tom was one of the five clinicians involved in the Firehouse Project pilot. He chose to work at Engine 219/Ladder 105, a firehouse with two companies. Near his home, the house held special significance for him. A high school and college friend was one of seven firefighters with L-205

who perished on 9/11. Tom encouraged me to connect with CSU.

## The New Normal

The FDNY rightly prides itself on how well they care for and support the firefighters and their families. No tradition or responsibility, except their work of saving lives, was more important. But the scope of the horrific loss overwhelmed the department's resources. More than 60% of its firefighting capacity was called to the towers. Furthermore, because the planes struck at the time of shift change in the firehouses, far more men raced to the scene, sometimes with their rigs if they were still at their firehouse, often on their own. For this and other reasons, it was impossible for FDNY to quickly establish who was at the World Trade Center, and consequently, who was lost.

While the CSU welcomed the Firehouse Project as a potential resource to support firefighters and their families, it was not certain that firehouses would welcome clinicians. Fire companies are like families, and the firehouse is part workplace, part sanctuary, part home. "What you say here, when you leave here, let it stay here," prominently written on the Squad's kitchen transom, speaks to the well-tended boundaries of the house.

Wisely, FDNY made two important decisions. First, firehouses would receive clinicians only if the officer in charge, usually a captain, agreed to it. Second,

clinicians would be accompanied by and introduced to the firehouse by someone on CSU staff. I was lucky to have Chris, a firefighter on medical leave, go with me to Squad One. He was sensitive to the issues involved in having firefighters accept a stranger to their house. His opening remarks, prescient in ways none of us then could have imagined, were that all of us had to accept a "new normal." This was the first time I'd heard that phrase. For the men of Squad One and their brothers in FDNY, the new normal was anything but.

It is impossible for anyone not a firefighter to comprehend how profoundly their lives had changed. Squad One lost more than a third of their brothers, and many more close to them working in other houses. For weeks after the attack, when they were not on duty, they were at the pile\*, first in the desperate search for survivors; later, to recover bodies, few of which were found. This made dealing with loss more difficult. In the absence of a body, denial makes accepting loss and the grieving process harder. It wasn't until May 30, 2002, in a solemn ceremony at the site, that recovery efforts officially ended.

Firefighters love the work they do. This, despite the dangers and the horrific scenes they often witness. Capt. Richie Portello, who came to Squad One in January 2002, said it best: "I never wanted to



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do anything else. When you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life." That said, their work after the attack was incredibly demanding. FDNY decided that two of the twelve SOC (Special Operations Command) companies should be at the site at all times. SOC units, whose primary responsibility is to rescue firefighters, were the only ones allowed to operate in the most dangerous areas of the wreckage that required special training and equipment—in sections that hadn't fully collapsed and were the most likely places to find survivors. For eight months after 9/11, Squad One and other SOC companies bore the brunt of this dangerous, heartbreaking duty while bearing the burdens of unspeakable loss, survivor guilt, and their inability to rescue or recover their brothers. Adding to that, their numbers were reduced from a full roster of twenty-eight to sixteen. It took a year to return the squad to full strength. Everywhere they turned, anytime they came up for air, there was more work to be done.

### Dr. Bob's Nuts

My first day at the firehouse was inauspicious. Capt. Portello assembled the men on that day's shift around the dining room table. Chris spoke briefly about the Project and how it would coordinate with CSU. He asked if anyone had questions. No one did. After Chris left, I stayed, seated at the kitchen table, engaging in small talk with the changing couple of firefighters who moved in and out of the kitchen. They were courteous, offering me coffee or something from the mountain of cookies, candy, muffins, cakes, bagels, and assorted sweets on the kitchen counter.



Bob Cutick

*Squad One's kitchen table where Bob made his weekly offering to the men.*

Finally, one of them asked me about my background. It think it helped a lot when I told of my extensive experience working with veterans. Some of them were vets; some were in the Reserves, later to be called to active duty. The atmosphere of a firehouse is somewhat like that of a military unit, with captains, lieutenants, drills, and, upon returning from a fire, a "critique" or review of "the job," similar to the military's "after action report." It helped too that I was a Brooklynite born and bred, living just a couple of miles away in Carroll Gardens. I said I could be there every week. They suggested dinner-time would be best. Every Tuesday night, from January 2002 until the fall of 2003, I was at the firehouse. I skated there in good weather, in daylight or dark. Many of the guys seemed bemused and perhaps impressed. Others might have thought I

was crazy. But not fitting their image of a therapist likely helped me gain acceptance into their self-reliant, "can-do" world. Asking for help was not their strong suit.

Once the Project was up and running, CSU organized monthly meetings of the firehouse clinicians to share their experiences, both problems and things that worked. Before dinnertime, the ambiance in the firehouse was kinetic; guys walking in and out of the kitchen; working on the rigs; cleaning tools, fixing equipment; working out in the upstairs exercise room; others watching TV. One counselor stumbled on a way that gathered an impromptu group. She brought a large bag of pistachios and set it on the table. Soon one or two, then more firefighters would join her; cracking, chewing, and chatting. I tried it and found that it worked with Squad One.

Understand, this was not group therapy, nor was it intended to be. But they were talking openly with one another in my presence, sharing information about their and brothers' families. Often it was just small talk, but increasingly they were acknowledging difficulties with the multitude of demands on their time. Even the firehouse, ordinarily a sanctuary where they could chill, was intruded upon. The house was literally next door to the Park Slope Food Co-op, one of the busiest places in the Slope. Well-meaning citizens wishing to express their condolences and gratitude to the "heroes" of 9/11 would knock on the door and bring food, cakes, >

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*In the Firehouse, cont.*

and sweets. The guys felt appreciative of these gestures (and it showed), and being the genuinely good men that they were, never complained of the downside of these gestures. But without question, it often interfered with rest time for the physically and psychologically stressed firefighters.

Every Tuesday evening, big bag of pistachios in hand, I'd be "knocking with my elbows" at the firehouse door. This was an expression of a firehouse custom that a visitor should come with some offering, and once inside be treated royally as a guest. They would cook and clean and refuse help from visitors once they'd "knocked with their elbows." My weekly offering soon came to be known as Dr. Bob's Nuts, perfect material for an array of teases. One of their favorites skewered both me and the Captain. "Hey Dr. Bob, I heard the Captain loves your nuts." Another, "Does your wife eat your nuts too?" A tease can come with hostile intent. These clearly did not. I welcomed them as a sign of acceptance, a kind of initiation rite into their community. I was touched when, "knocking with my elbows," I visited the firehouse this July. I learned that only one firefighter I knew from 9/11, Paul Stallone, still worked with the Squad. None of the guys there knew who I was until one of them said, "Oh yeah. Dr. Bob's nuts."

Before FDNY decreed that only men on their tour of duty were allowed on the rigs, I was in the house when the alarm rang. "Come on, Dr. Bob. We're going out." I couldn't believe I was going on a job with the Squad! Minutes later, there I was in the front seat of the rig between the chauffeur, Billy Spiess, and Lt. Dennis Farrell, barreling down the middle of



*The firehouse has a wall with twelve individual plaques, one for each firefighter lost.*

six-lane Ocean Parkway, sirens blaring, Billy rocking in his seat and holding the steering wheel as if it were the reins of a racehorse he was urging to go faster. What kid hadn't dreamed of racing down the street in a firetruck; what adult wouldn't feel like a kid doing it. There was fun to be had with the Squad, and fun was indispensable for all of us.

By March 2002, the mood in the house was a kaleidoscope of hyper-masculinity, sadness, playfulness, bickering, and complaining, and less often, subdued. The Captain, with whom I had a solid relationship, would alert me to someone he was worried about. I would try to engage him individually when a private opportunity arose. Sometimes, again out of earshot of others, a firefighter would acknowledge his need for help, either for himself or for family. I met with a few

of them in my Park Slope office, usually for brief, supportive therapy. With more complicated situations that required longer treatment, I referred them either to the CSU or to another firehouse clinician, someone who knew the territory.

## The Families

"For better or worse.....but not for lunch."

The attacks on 9/11 shocked the nation. For some New Yorkers it was traumatizing. For Vietnam veterans, whose return from active duty was too often met with vitriol rather than appreciation, whose suffering with PTSD was in some quarters derided as phony or exaggerated, hearing civilians talk of trauma felt validating, if not occasion for *schadenfreude*.

Fighting fires is dangerous, a reality not lost on the families. After 9/11 the fear of losing a husband, and for children a father, was orders of magnitude greater. By fall 2002, the toll on family life was clear. Many firefighters resigned or went on medical leave, sick from exposure to the toxins at the site.

Upholding FDNY's tradition of caring for its brothers meant caring for their families as well. Firefighters socialized with one another off duty and knew their brothers' wives and children well. For months after the attack, in addition to their firehouse shifts and their volunteering to work at the pile, they mourned their fallen brothers at the many wakes, funerals, and memorial services. Often, in what spare time they had, they would visit the families of their fallen brothers, helping out however they could. The demands on their time inevitably led to stress in their own families that grew worse as time passed.

CSU, in its vigorous outreach program to families, used money donated to FDNY to host Broadway weekends for couples. I was asked to participate. Couples were treated to a Saturday night dinner, a Broadway show and a night's lodging at a Manhattan hotel. All of Saturday was spent in support and psycho-educational groups led by clinicians. Wives and firefighters met separately, then in mixed groups, sharing their experiences. During a "wives only" group, there were complaints from many whose husbands had recently retired or were on medical leave. At home firefighters are typically

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involved in some project, building or fixing something. They all knew their way around a kitchen and were now at home more. Conflicts were inevitable. As the wives put it: "We married them for better or worse, but not for lunch."

The half-day agenda on Sunday was devoted to couples meeting with individual clinicians. As a result of my work with the families, the high regard and deep respect I had for the firefighters was now matched by that I held for their wives. They were on the front lines of considerable stress. Much like combat veterans who rarely talked about the horrors of their experience, firefighters were equally protective of their families, sharing little of the danger or tragic scenes to which they were exposed. But with 9/11, there was no hiding, no protection possible. The tragedy and its toll were inescapable, there for all to see, wives and children alike.

I came away from the family weekends with a greater understanding of all that these families had been through, of their incredible resilience and of the debt we all owed them.

## Heroes

In NYC at 7 in the evenings you can still hear people outside banging pots, blowing horns, and cheering hospital workers and others who've chosen to put themselves in real danger for the welfare of others. We need them, and we need to show appreciation for what they do. After 9/11, this was certainly what we felt for the heroism of first responders, but especially so for firefighters. However, this is what they choose to do every day, and in part because of that, no one in Squad One nor, I believe, in any other firehouse, regarded himself as a hero. If anything, the label made them uncomfortable. They survived, and hundreds of their brothers died.

On the first anniversary of the attacks, the names of those who perished were read. Among them was that of the man whose business card we'd saved. It felt almost like losing a friend.

I got to know the men in Squad One pretty well. The opportunity I was given to work with them I will treasure forever. Were they heroes? I'll let you decide. But you have to be really brave to rush into places others flee from for their lives. That's what they're called on to do and

what they show up to do every day. And in the aftermath of 9/11, they did a helluva lot more than that. What they accomplished, despite the physical and psychological burdens thrust upon them, was a display of character in its finest, most profound sense.


I look forward to seeing them on this 9/11. The faces will all be familiar, some of the names will likely evade me; but I will greet them all with a smile, some with a hug, and their Captain with a bag of pistachios.

(I am indebted to Capt. Portello for the many details he provided about SOC and Squad One in particular. His experience of that time was invaluable to me. To my friend and colleague, Dr. Tom McGoldrick, my gratitude for steering me to the Firehouse Project and for the information about its inception. Tom has written an insightful, funny, touching account of his experiences with E219/L-105. For those interested, I can provide a link.

—Bob Cutick

\*No one in the Squad referred to "Ground Zero." It was the pile, or the pit. Capt. Portello saw these as disrespectful and used "the site" instead.

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## Letters

### Ground Zero of a New Millennium

I had already voted in the primary and was ironing a blouse that brilliant September morning when I heard and felt the first plane strike about a mile from my apartment. The television cut out when the second plane/bomb took down the antenna atop the World Trade Tower—and so much else. I headed down to my friend's flat on the first floor where we watched on cable as people fell from the sky and the towers imploded and the earth around us trembled. It surprises me still that I didn't go outside to witness the events directly, as we had a clear view straight down East Broadway. I suppose that watching the same images everyone else was seeing and listening to the same narration made me feel part of the collective response. My neighbor was distraught until she heard from her partner, who had been working just across the street from the towers. Though he wasn't hurt physically, he suffers still from what he saw.

The subways shut down right away, and I watched streams of people filing out of Manhattan on the Williamsburg Bridge, which I could see from my window. Since traffic was halted throughout the city, I rode my bike to the Upper West Side where my therapist had agreed to keep scheduled appointments. After talking to him and having a drink with a friend, I glided back downtown on the eerily empty streets through the increasingly acrid stench of death and chemicals. Black smoke billowed into the air from the wound. Sirens wailed relentlessly that day and for weeks to come.

On my way down Second Avenue, I stopped in at the historic Marble Collegiate Church (which burned down just last year). People had gathered there for a prayer vigil. As we sang "Amazing Grace" together in the sacred space, I wondered whether anything good could possibly arise out of the ashes of this catastrophe. Twenty years later, bombarded by news of Afghanistan falling, temperatures rising, and democracy under threat, nothing springs to mind.

—Janet Jensen

## Cultural Council Grants

### Applications Now Open

If you have a project or performance or idea that you want to move forward, now is the time to start thinking about, or even applying for, a grant through the Monterey Cultural Council.

All applications must be made online, through the Massachusetts Cultural Council website: [massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process](http://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process). (Go to [massculturalcouncil.org](http://massculturalcouncil.org) and click through "Community," "Local Cultural Council" to "Application Process.") The application period opened September 1 and the firm deadline for submission is October 15.

The Massachusetts Cultural Council offers opportunities to get help online at every step of the process. This year our local cultural council, the Monterey Cultural Council, will give priority to applicants that have secured a safe local venue, as well as projects that:

- serve youth or the elderly;
- focus on local history and our indigenous legacy;
- support or encourage local artists;
- bring arts, science or humanities to our community.


In addition to the state criteria, applications will be evaluated using the following review criteria:

- how well the program meets our local priorities;
- community support and involvement;
- evidence of track record and dedication of the applicant;
- ability to address the diverse cultural needs of a community's underserved populations or support diverse forms of cultural activities;
- financial need;
- demonstrated planning.

The awards will be decided by our local cultural council late in the year, with letters of acceptance going out in January. Each year the council awards around \$7800 in funds allocated by the state and the Town of Monterey, to some twenty applicants.

—Janet Jensen and Maggie Barkin  
Co-chairs, Monterey Cultural Council



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## Monterey Community Center

August programs this year included a Zoom series on Genealogy, a pilot games night, weekly “What’s Happening in Monterey,” and lots of bridge, mahjong, a planning board meeting, Tai Chi, Yoga, and more.

The three-evening Zoom series on genealogy with Bryna O’Sullivan, proprietor of Charter Oak Genealogy, was fascinating and those who had already delved deeply into finding out about their ancestors found new helpful resources.

Thank you to Laura Rodriguez for suggesting and following through on beach yoga. We were very glad that we found a sponsor, and that Denise Crocco Carnese could teach. Thanks to Parks Commission for allowing this.

A live music event was slated for Sunday, August 22, with Tim Van Egmond, but hurricane-force winds were looming and for a second time Tim’s MCC event was postponed to Sunday, September 5, from 2 to 3:45 p.m. See the August issue for information about Tim.

There was a huge interest in continuing tai chi, and it is scheduled for Mondays in September, outdoors where the tent was, or indoors if the weather is prohibitive. Please register if you would like to attend.

Game night in August began with only a little local promotion due to our Covid variant concerns. Our enthusiastic leader, Aldeth Lewin, has many, many games and is looking forward to Friday, September 10 at 5:30 p.m., when the second game night is scheduled. Aldeth is engaging and very



*A few of the games Aldeth brought with her to games night last month.*

patient. She will bring games for all ages and many interests.

We are hoping to have Peter Poirier back for more music. We were fortunate to have Peter and friends just before the lockdown in March 2020.

Additional possibilities for the fall include Dr. Barry Rose speaking on compassionate care, a furniture restorer, an offsite mushroom walk and talk, and an amateur painting group. We are hoping to start a monthly meditation hour with Sandrine Harris, possibly late on Friday afternoons, indoors or on Zoom. This would include a goodwill donation.

We are eager to find out what the community wants to see happen and help to make it happen. If we are not a good

venue, we suggest a better one. Recently we have facilitated and advocated for speakers, programs, walks, and talks that ended up at the beach, the library, or the Bidwell House Museum. We will let you know if we are going to host the mobile vaccination van again.

The Monterey Community Center is open now for small group gatherings and will be continuing to ask people to mask when inside, even if vaccinated, during this time period.

Enjoy the fall weather, and let us know if you are interested in an amateur painting group, or anything that might tickle your fancy! Questions or ideas: Call (413) 528-3600, or email [calendar@ccmonterey.org](mailto:calendar@ccmonterey.org).

—Mary Makuc

Community Center coordinator

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## Library News

We continue to ask for your cooperation to make it safe for everyone when using the library by wearing masks and social distancing. We are especially aware of the children who are not yet vaccinated. We have children's masks available. While we've relaxed certain practices, we know that Covid has not left us. Thank you for understanding.

The summer was a partial return to normal. There was a children's reading program with pancakes from Roadside as an incentive to read. Thank you Roadside Store! The Monterey Cultural Council sponsored five children's live programs which were outside, to be safe. That would not have been possible without the use of the community center tent for three of the performances. With our rainy summer the tent made it possible.

### Book Sale

The book sale was the result of many volunteers giving hundreds of hours and thousands of donations. Hume and Roadside Store get another special thank you for providing refreshments for the volunteers. A very big special thank you to Gould Farm for sending a large crew before and after the sale. It was the best sale ever and we are excited that the Friends of the Library will be able to help us out with our future needs. It seems there are more distractions every year for children which pull them away from reading. Showing children that



Catherine Makuc

reading is not just connected to school is so important.

### Library Stats

Now for the best news! We have completed the statistics for July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. It's amazing to think that even with the pandemic we could grow our services to the town. We dropped in numbers of live programs and attendance, which was to be expected.

Our physical collection expanded from 12,395 to 13,485, and collection development was logical during this trying time.

But who would have predicted that children's circulation would have more than doubled, from 2,370 to 4,722, most of which was an increase of 2,139 in print books! Most categories went up, but it was so nice to be able to provide the children in town with books, magazines, audios, and videos.

Total electronic books for circulation in all ages went from 1,287 to 1,746, but actual print books went from 5,789 to 9,826.

That was despite over ninety-two thousand electronic titles being available through CWMARS alone. Between the expansion of cell and fiber optic internet connectivity, it is easier than ever to download reading material, but obviously many people prefer holding a real book.

Our total circulation went from 15,064 to 23,029, an increase of over 50%.

We were open more hours than the previous year, partly because of the ten-week shutdown in fiscal year 2020, but also because the town approved more hours for fiscal 2021. That helped us to socially distance and be safe. We went from 725 hours open to 1,270! We are budgeted to be open almost 400 more hours this fiscal year.

Thanks to everyone's help our library will continue to expand offerings as makes sense during the continuation of the pandemic. At this point we need to thank Rosemary and Molly who staff the desk, as well as David and James, our volunteers, who helped us get through this busy year. They stepped up and did a lot of extra work to ensure we were being as safe as possible while open. Every item that goes out comes back for check-in and then needs to be reshelfed. It is a tremendous amount of work.

—Mark Makuc

Library Director

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## Eight Annual Berkshire Pottery Tour

In Monterey, visit Grenadier Pottery and guest potter Connie Talbot.

On the weekend of September 25 and 26, the Berkshire Pottery Tour will feature the work of five local potters and four of their guest potters.

Ellen Grenadier, Grenadier Pottery, located at 12 Tyringham Road, will be showing new work, saltglazed pieces, old favorites, and more. She'll be available to answer questions and demonstrate techniques.

She will also be hosting her guest, Connie Talbot, who makes flameware pottery—pots you can cook in on the gas and electric stovetop or grill. Connie creates tangines, casseroles, frying pans, pizza stones, and more, all able to go directly onto a hot flame or into a hot oven. You have to see it to believe it. Connie will be demonstrating how to use the flameware during the tour—with sample bites.

### Pottery Tour

The annual self-guided tour takes you through the beautiful valleys of the southern Berkshires in early fall, reaching from Richmond to Monterey. This year Linda Skipper in New Marlborough will offer her work online only at [lindaskipper.com](http://lindaskipper.com). Four of the other potters will host in-person open house and sale of their work in their respective studios. Families are welcome and admission is free.

Look for the distinctive orange and white Pottery Tour road signs at key turns on the weekend of the event. Maps are available at each studio and at [berkshirepotterytour.com](http://berkshirepotterytour.com).

Call Ellen Grenadier at (413) 528-9973 for more information.



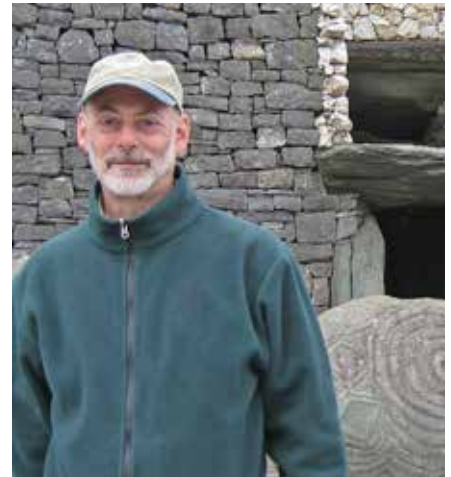
Leaving Port, Montreal ©Lee Backer

## Knox Gallery in September

We are pleased to feature *The Edge of Night: Photographs* by Lee Backer at Knox Gallery. This exhibit opened on August 27, and will continue through October 9.

Landscape—whether rural, urban, industrial, or natural—is Backer's main interest. Born in Brooklyn, he grew up in rural northwest New Jersey, and now splits his time between New Marlborough and New York City, so he comes by his observations of a wide variety of environments naturally. The artist professes his passion for exploration, in particular of industrial and working-class neighborhoods, but in an interesting twist, many of the areas he has long observed have become upscale loft developments. The mix of the old not-yet-converted buildings with those that are now in a state of perfection has provided him new inspiration.

The exhibit focuses on images created just after sunset. As the artist describes: "The sky slowly relinquishes its light to the street lamps, car lights, lighted windows, and electric signs of the night." The long exposures required for photography in



such low light capture "a sense of stillness and a quietness."

As mentioned in last month's article, we have been hoping to feature an exhibit of Backer's work at the Knox Gallery for some time, and are excited that the time has come. Please join us to enjoy his work.

All Knox Gallery events are admission free. Exhibits can be viewed during library hours (see back page of this issue). Please visit the library website for current Covid restrictions, such as admission scheduling. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 528-3795; [MontereyMassLibrary.org/Knox-Gallery](http://MontereyMassLibrary.org/Knox-Gallery); [Facebook.com/KnoxGallery](https://Facebook.com/KnoxGallery).

—MaryPaul Yates





## Fire Department Responses July 2020 to June 2021

The Monterey Fire Department has been very busy during the past year, and even more so in the past six weeks. Chief Shawn Tryon joined the department in 1995 and he says that the department has been called out more in the past six weeks, forty-eight times, than in the entire first year of his service.

The department keeps meticulous records of their responses by state-described categories. During fiscal year 2021 (through this past June) the fire department responded 154 times. This includes twenty-eight fires including structure fires, brush fires, and unauthorized burnings. Fifty-four were emergency medical service (EMS) incidents. Beyond actual fires and health situations, the department responded to search-and-rescues five times, public service assistance eleven times, electrical equipment problems, as well as stand-by coverage at the fire station for mutual aid needs.

They recorded a surprising forty-one responses for problems with detectors—malfunctions or unintentional system detections with no fires. We can all help ourselves, the department, and the town, by making sure our detectors are up-to-date, clean, and with good battery back-ups.

There are a number of miscellaneous types of calls, most famously in Monterey, one “explosive, bomb removal” operation last fall.

It is worth pointing out that “Monterey Fire Department” refers to when the firefighters are paid for services with our tax dollars. The town owns most of the equipment housed in the fire house. The Monterey Fire Company, a non-profit corporation, owns the fire house, organizes trainings, and maintains the equipment. Same folks, but referred to differently depending on the work they are doing.

—Stephen Moore



*Coffee club members patiently wait for the general store's reopening (or just wondering what's holding up the rest of the crew—punctuality is everything! Photo-Scott Margol*

## Council on Aging Flu Shot Clinic

The Council on Aging is happy to announce there are two new public health nurses, Jill Sweet and Amy Hardt, who will be serving our town, among others, through the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative under a multiple-year grant. One of the first things they have arranged is a flu shot clinic. There has been so much about Covid that we forget the regular flu is a killer, too, and we can do something about it to protect ourselves without controversy. The clinic will be held Monday, September 20, at the fire station pavilion, from 1 to 4 p.m., using the CHP van. No appointment is necessary; please bring your Medicare card. They will have

both the regular flu shots and the high-dose which is recommended for seniors. Please protect yourselves—come and get a flu shot!

Sorry to say the annual Pittsfield Suns Baseball game and picnic was canceled at the last minute due to rain (we surely have had enough of that this year!), but they offered free admission to the remaining games, which several families used.

We have held several focus groups and an Open House to get suggestions from seniors here in Monterey for increased participation and socialization. Many great ideas have come from them; just when we are ready to break out, along comes the Covid delta variant. Everyone, please continue using your masks and be careful!

— Kyle Pierce,  
Chair, Council on Aging

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## Pantry PickUp Welcoming In-Person Shopping

The Pantry Pickup has been a tremendous success in helping those in our community needing extra support.

We are pleased to be able to now invite shoppers into The Pantry to make their own selections. Masks are required and we ask that you bring your own shopping bags, although we have some on hand if you forget yours.

This summer The Pantry has been the grateful recipient of not only the produce supplied by Berkshire Bounty, but has also received weekly donations from local farms, including beautiful fresh produce and eggs. Thanks to all of you.

**Who:** Pantry PickUp is open to all residents of South Berkshire County. There are no income guidelines and shoppers are welcome to visit every week all year. Food is distributed on a first come-first served basis.

**When:** Pantry PickUp is open to shoppers every Saturday from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

**Where:** Monterey United Church of Christ, 449 Main Road, Monterey MA 01245

**What:** The Pantry offers fresh fruit and vegetables as well as milk, eggs, cheese, meat or chicken, and canned goods.

Since The Pantry started last October, we have distributed more than nine hundred boxes of food, serving at least thirty Monterey residents per week. More

than twenty-five community volunteers are engaged in picking up food from our suppliers, sorting it for distribution, and, in many cases, delivering it to our neighbors who are unable to come to The Pantry.

Supporting households at risk of hunger strengthens the greater community and we are very grateful for those who are donating money or food to make The Pantry PickUp a success!

If you would like to participate in this effort, please consider donating food or making a financial contribution.

The food items most needed now are staples like mac n' cheese, pasta, pasta sauce, and tuna. Food donations can be dropped off at the church basement during daytime hours, but please avoid the Saturday morning 10 to 11:30 distribution time.

### Contributions

Financial donations are tax deductible and may be made to the Pantry via the Monterey United Church of Christ in two different ways. You can donate online on the church website, [montereychurch.org](http://montereychurch.org), click "Support," and write Pantry PickUp in the notes. You can also donate with a check to the church. Please write Pantry PickUp on the memo line. Mail checks to: Monterey United Church of Christ, Attn: Pantry, PO Box 182, Monterey, MA 01245. Again, indicate either way that it is for the Pantry.

Thank you for your support.

—Andrea DuBrow



## Feeding Friends

Do you know where your next meal will come from?

Feeding Friends is run by the Rural Health Network and provides prepared meals to vulnerable residents in south Berkshire County, delivered free of charge, through local service organizations to assure that we reach those in need. If you or anyone you know of needs weekly prepared meals (if they don't have other ways to make food or to obtain food), please refer them to Feeding Friends at (413) 591-0301. They have an intake form and a committee to review the forms. There's now a Facebook page as well.

Donations are what keep the program going. \$20 provides a meal for two. To donate: Send a check payable to Berkshire Bounty, 33 Commonwealth Avenue, Great Barrington, MA 01230 and write "Feeding Friends" in the memo line, or go to [berkshire-bounty.org](http://berkshire-bounty.org), click the "Donate" button, choose your donation amount and type "Feeding Friends" into the memo box. (You can also learn more about the Berkshire Bounty program through their website.)

Feeding Friends is a project of the South Berkshire Food Access Collaborative Working Group.

—Andrea DuBrow



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## Tiny.cc URLs

The use of website addresses (URLs) is ubiquitous in media these days. The internet is such a huge resource for information, so huge that these URLs are sometimes very lengthy and/or complex with numbers and symbols and combinations of characters. In digital media URLs become a very simple way to send someone to a specific website, even a specific page on a website.

But in print media, no matter how many times you might tap on the paper with your fingertip, it does you no good! As editor I often alter or annotate URLs that have been included in an article to include directions on how to navigate to the site. Recently I learned of services that allow me to provide a custom URL that is much shorter and simpler to use. When you use one of these custom URLs your browser (Chrome, Safari, Firefox, etc.) connects to the Tiny.cc service which then immediately redirects your request to the full and accurate page. The *Monterey News* now has an account with Tiny.cc which provides this service. I hope this simple functionality will make accessing an internet resource easier for our print readers. (For technical reasons having to do with the *News* being essentially a print media, including active links for the digital pdf would be complicated.)

At right is an example (in bold). This link references a *Berkshire Eagle* article.

Give it a try... I hope this helps.

—Stephen Moore, Editor

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## Monterey Move-ins

On Wednesday, August 25, the *Berkshire Eagle* published an article written by Francesca Paris that looked at population changes throughout Berkshire county. This article has the data for just Monterey, and it is significant.

### From the *Eagle*:

How many people moved to or from the Berkshires in the last few years?

One new dataset—from the United States Postal Service—provides important clues that go beyond information released this month by the US Census.

The *Berkshire Eagle* broke down what they do and do not know about the current Berkshire population changes. (To read the full article for more detailed information covering all of Berkshire County, go to [tiny.cc/MontereyMove-ins](http://tiny.cc/MontereyMove-ins).)

People moving often put in change-of-address requests with the US Postal Service when they switch addresses, and USPS logs those requests in publicly available datasets.

Change-of-address requests from March 2020 to July 2021 show a net

gain of nearly 4,000 movers in Berkshire County—a number that can refer to either households or individuals. For comparison: During the same period from March 2018 to July 2019, the county saw a net gain of fewer than 100 movers.

The data specific to Monterey and surrounding area (click on the map in the article for each town's statistics):

Net gain/loss in movers during the pandemic: 24.4%

Net gain/loss in movers pre-pandemic: 6.58%


What does that mean? During the pandemic, the area has seen 297 change-of-address requests from people moving in and 93 from people moving out, for a net migration of 204.

During the same period in 2018-19, there was a net migration of 55.

### Monterey Impacts


The impact of this change has been visible in Monterey. See the library report on page 10 for increased usage. The town has had to adjust the budget for the transfer station due to increased traffic. Even the town beach has had issues with higher than typical use. This article helps to quantify that change.

—Stephen Moore



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## Library Plant Sale

The last day of July had the most perfect weather to present a book fair and plant sale. With the library's parking lot brimming with tons of tomes, and the lawn scattered with scores of annuals, gardeners especially had much to admire and plenty to purchase.

There were crates containing such attractive annuals as impatiens, begonias, sunflowers, dahlias, and parsley.

All the plants were donated by family run Clark's Garden Center, on Route 102 in Lee, resulted in the raising of over \$400 for the library. Young pollinating plants donated by the biodiversity garden group members added an additional sum to the plant sale.



A huge thank you to all the shoppers who made this such an exciting and successful event.

—Myrna Rosen

## Town Administrator Report

Please welcome our newest employee, Tyler Collins. Tyler joined us on July 26 as a laborer for the highway department working with Shawn Tryon, Director of Operations; Kevin Fitzpatrick, foreman; and Jim Hunt and Randon Ziegler. We'd like to congratulate Randon Ziegler on successfully obtaining his CDL-A license last month, allowing him to operate all the town's equipment and earning a raise.

The towns of New Marlborough, Sheffield, Great Barrington, and West Stockbridge, along with Monterey, have been diligently preparing to hire our first ever shared, full-time human resource director. Funds to pay for this position were received through an "Efficiency & Regionalization" grant I wrote a few months ago. We will be interviewing candidates on August 27 with hopes of having someone in place shortly thereafter.

In other grant news, the Council on Aging successfully completed the Outreach Worker program for which the town received a grant back in April. The Council on Aging and myself are now reviewing all of the very valuable information collected. We are working on new and improved Council on Aging programming. We hope to have an outreach coordinator position in place by the beginning of the new year.

Respectfully,

—Melissa Noe  
Town Administrator

## August Contributions

Michael & Lois Storch  
Bruce Wilkens  
Ruth Rosenblatt  
Tom & Melissa Scheffey  
Pauline Banducci  
Lonnie Solomon  
Morton Salomon  
Margaret Dudley  
Chris Blair  
Roger Kane  
Melissa & Bill Kolberg  
June Thomas  
Bill Enlund

Thanks to the good folks who keep the lights on and help keep the town informed.



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## Housatonic Heritage Walks September & October Weekends

Visit sites within the Housatonic River Valley: tours of historic buildings and town centers, hikes on the Appalachian Trail and other trails, walks through industrial heritage sites, a canoe paddling trip on the Housatonic River, bike rides on old country roads that have a history, behind-the-scenes tours at performing arts venues, and strolls through formal gardens and estates. Explore with knowledgeable and local historians, naturalists, and environmentalists. All ages and all people are invited to join us.

There are several walks based in Monterey, and many others in south Berkshire towns. Three hikes take place at the Bidwell House Museum (see below and page 28), and one begins at Gould Farm (below).

The Housatonic Heritage Walks are a partnership between the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, the numerous heritage organizations in the Upper Housatonic River Valley, the Berkshire Visitors Bureau, and the National Park Service.

Go to [HousatonicHeritage.org](http://HousatonicHeritage.org) for a downloadable brochure of all eighty-six events. Click under "Events" for the walks.

**Sunday, September 5:** Woodland hike from Gould Farm to the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery, 1 to 3:30 p.m.

Learn about Gould Farm's history, mission, and connection to the land as you begin your walk along the forested trails with Liz Halla-Mattingly and Bob Rausch. The second half of the walk will be led by Joseph Xamountry from the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery, who will take you on a tour of the historic property, where, for over a century, hundreds of thousands of fish have been cultured in a pristine aquifer that supplies a system of beautiful, natural pools with two hundred gallons of water per minute. The hike begins at the Harvest Barn at Gould Farm. Van service back to Gould Farm will be provided. Rain or shine. 2.5 hours–3 miles.

**Sunday, September 26:** "Re-frame the outdoors through kid-tinted glasses," at the Bidwell House Museum, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Join this child-led walk at the Bidwell House Museum grounds with Taylor Staubach, from Berkshire Family Hikes, and discover how to see things through "kid-tinted glasses." While we're worrying about covering ground, they're uncovering small wonders that we've overlooked. 1.5 hours, 1.5 miles. To register, email [taylor@berkshirefamilyhikes.com](mailto:taylor@berkshirefamilyhikes.com).



## Gould Farm 5K Run

This September, The Gould Farm 5K is back and better than ever. After taking a year off due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are so excited to welcome our local community onto our grounds for a morning of fun and camaraderie. For 2021, we've added a virtual component for folks who are unable to attend in person.

This event is Gould Farm's only community fundraiser, and all donations directly benefit Gould Farm's longstanding and effective therapeutic program helping adults with mental health and related challenges move toward recovery.

The Gould Farm 5K will be on Sunday, September 26. Registration is at 8 a.m., and the race begins at 9:30. To register online or for more information, visit [gouldfarm.akaraisin.com/ui/5k](http://gouldfarm.akaraisin.com/ui/5k).

—Liz Halla-Mattingly  
Gould Farm development team



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**WORDS OF OUR ANCESTORS: REVISITING INDIANTOWN**  
TALK BY BONNY HARTLEY, PRESERVATION OFFICER, STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE COMMUNITY. **ON SITE EVENT AT THE ARTS CENTER!**

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*Alice Schick passed away last month. Alice and Joel lived in Monterey for forty years. Joel sent the Monterey News this "Editor's Note" and a selection of D. R. Strange's poems. Alice also authored a series of read aloud books, which Joel Schick illustrated. These can be found and read at familygorilla.com.*

## Editor's Note

First of all, let me state categorically that I am not D.R. Strange.

I am not going to tell you who is D.R. Strange, because absolute secrecy was the price I paid for the privilege of making this extraordinary collection available to the public. I am not even permitted to reveal whether D.R. Strange is male or female. I have chosen to use the pronoun he both for simplicity of expression and to underscore the fact that D.R. Strange is the pseudonym of someone other than Alice Schick.

I was introduced to the remarkable poetry of D.R. Strange when I was editing the *Monterey News*, a modest, monthly newsletter produced by volunteers in the small Massachusetts town where I lived. It was (and remains) the practice of the *Monterey News* to publish poetry submitted by its readers. All submissions were printed. As might be imagined, the quality of the poems varied wildly. Although I was not

much of a poetry fan, I found myself reading the poems, if only to correct typographical errors. Newly sensitized to the art form, I reacted with excitement when D.R. Strange showed me his work. I cajoled him into allowing me to print some of his poems.

D.R. Strange uses the humble daily newspaper as the source of his art. Where we might quickly skim the paper, then toss it onto the recycling pile, Strange mines each daily edition for verbal treasure. His medium of choice is his own local daily, the *Berkshire Eagle*, but he emphasizes that his art can be practiced with any newspaper.

I have been privileged to watch D.R. Strange at work, observing him as he selects and copies down promising phrases, and then later, as he weaves these fragments into new forms. The poems speak to our ideas of culture, context, continuity. Some are funny; some poignant; some profound. All carry the illusion of meaning.

I stand in awe and admiration of this uniquely talented artist who, despite the accolades his work is starting to bring, continues to insist that what he does is "nothing special."

—Alice Schick

## Passing as Art/ 31

I live in the shadow of a monster.  
He's not a particularly sentimental fellow,  
abnormal and perverse,  
mean-spirited and intolerant,  
denouncing witchcraft and yoga.  
I don't want this shadow cast on me.

Barring unforeseen developments,  
I hope to resume something  
that might resemble a normal life.  
People are dying every day,  
sacrificed to international outrage.  
Public feeling is very strong.

It's a revolutionary concept to impose on people,  
a standard more stringent than exists in law,  
a political civil war that presages a battle for the national soul,  
the right program for the '90s and beyond.  
I acknowledge and live with ambivalence.  
I am responsible, but not guilty.

## Passing as Art/ 9

He spoke more bluntly than ever before.  
We're on a mission to Mars to look for signs of life.

A self-satisfied establishment,  
savagely competitive, spiritually dysfunctional,  
thought the storm was over.

If they had any waking life,  
they showed hardly any character at all.  
Another dreadful reality—  
the disillusionment, the depression, the despair,  
the amazing capacity to destroy people's lives,  
a kind of euphoria.  
There is no victory.

The antediluvian circuits of our brains  
sense the tragedy.  
We're taking it to heart.

## Passing as Art/ 42

No matter your breeding,  
your school,  
or your previous contribution to mankind,  
money goes into a blind trust,  
memory goes into a dark hole.  
With the ritual telling of stories,  
stories that are almost entirely fictional,  
we fall into the abyss  
of poor character and chaos.  
I want the finger-pointing and the blaming to stop.  
I want to send a powerful signal.  
I want a cigarette.

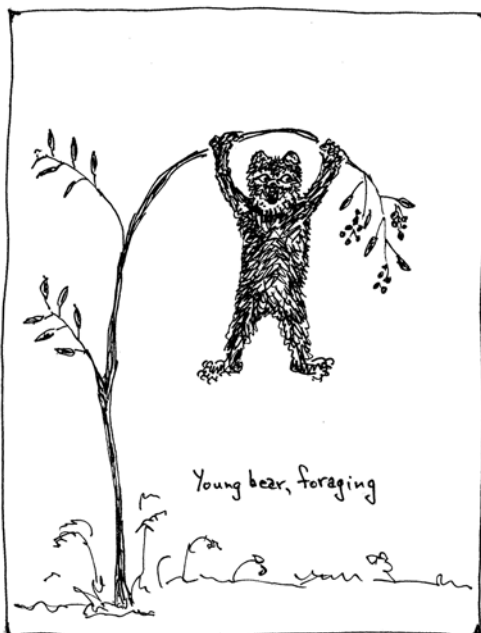


## Foraging for Nuts, Fruit, & More

Winter is coming, to all us folks in the bioregion. Anyone who gets up early can feel the tilt of the earth's axis, the dark morning. At the top of the garden now we have to wait for the sunrise, and that means the insects come out later in response to the flowers that don't open and send out their allure until they are lit up and warmed up. This is what the birds wait for, and some mornings they don't get it at all, just more cloudy, rainy times. No insects today. These are the still times when we wait.

Some animal folks are foraging now in any weather, for the late summer nuts and fruits. They are packing away those goods either in caches or by gobbling them down for storage in their bodies. Bears, for instance.

It does not take a bag of birdseed to get a bear ready for winter, though we might think so as we patch up the feeders, take them in at night, lock up that garage where the seed bags sit. Fruit is ready and anyone with an orchard is putting peaches in canning jars and picking up apples for sauce. And we may not be so happy to share with the tree climbers who seem happy to grab things just a bit earlier than we would. (See page 28 for an invention to keep porcupines and raccoons out of a peach tree.)



The wild fruits are ready. Fox grapes, thimbleberries, and little dark cherries. Black cherry trees feed many a bird and mammal, large and small. Late in August there came a scratching and whacking against the side of our house, and there was a junior bear climbing a slim tree, going for the ripe cherries at the top. The tree had bent toward the house. Think of "Bending Birches" by Robert Frost. The bear jumped down and the tree sprang right up again, like the slim birches when bent by kids climbing them for a lark.

Bears are in it for the fruit. Cherries also have a good nut, a relatively large pit with a sweet almond-y kernel inside. But these pass right through and you can find bear droppings full of these pale round seeds. They look unscathed. The bear did not crunch them up for the treat inside, so there

they sit in a well-fertilized pile, where they will sprout by the hundreds next growing season. Nuts that have been through the digestive system with all its potent enzymes are "scarified," which means they will be ready to sprout when the time comes.

Grey squirrels are way up in the beech trees here, opening burs for the nuts inside. I have always heard you can see the claw marks of bears going up for beech nuts, but I have only seen such marks in the bark occasionally, and I've tried to imagine how such a heavy animal would get hold of the little nuts, which only occur high in the sun and way out at the slim twiggy ends of the branches. Bears are so big you'd think they would have to eat something big. They have big teeth, jaws, paws, and claws. Around here what I see is places where a bear has used these powerful tools to open up a rotten log or stump, but then delicately picked out the little larvae of carpenter ants and other insects to make a meal. I have also seen where "our bear" has knocked down all of the corn patch, working night after night, and carefully nibbled one or two bites from the little unripe ears of corn.

Besides beechnuts, we have beaked hazel nuts in these parts, also called wild filberts. We have some right around the brushy edge of our garden and I have kept an eye on them, wanting to taste them when they are "ready." It turns out my idea of when this might be is different from the idea of a squirrel. And who knows? Maybe even a bear. They go for them when they are green, with the hull still on and quite intact. I am waiting for them to get hard and dry, with a little filbert inside that

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looks like what you get in the store. None of our wild nuts stay on the tree that long. They are long gone, and sometimes you can see a squirrel heading across country or through the treetops with a big green hickory nut in its mouth, hull and all. So I have tried gathering them green, putting them to dry on screens in the house. The green hulls of black walnuts turn black and walnut hulls make a famous dark dye. I have a sweater made for me by a friend. It is brown, its wool colored by walnut hulls.

Squirrels are famous for burying nuts, to eat later. Some people have written that it is a matter of chance for a squirrel ever to find a buried nut again, but in his *Pictorial Guide to the Mammals of North America* (1967), Leonard Lee Rue III writes that he watched a squirrel “dig down through a foot of snow and locate a nut it had buried in the ground.” How did the squirrel do it!

Chipmunks race up the black cherry trunks. The bark is sturdy and scaly and makes a good ladder up to the fruit department. The chipmunk will eat the thin layer of fruit on each cherry and then pack very many of the pits into its cheek pouches to carry down to an underground larder, for safe snacking during the winter. Though chipmunks are hibernators, they wake from time to time and eat a little, then go back to sleep.

So we all get ready for the darker, colder time here, lucky to live in a place where the earth provides. The land community: air, water, sunshine, critters, trees, flowers, fungi, bacteria. We are in this together, even or especially us.

—Bonner McAllester

## Yard Waste and Water Quality

Fall is nearly upon us with its riot of orange, yellow, and reds. Before we know it, leaves will crowd our roads and sidewalks and clog our storm drains. While leaves are natural, too many concentrated in our waterways can increase nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen as they decompose. The same is true for yard waste of all kinds including grass clipping, eroded soil, and other yard debris. This is especially a problem where there are more streets, more storm drains, and more catch basins. Leaves and other organic matter tend to wash off surfaces and fill catch basins. This becomes a hassle for highway department crew as well as for lake or pond-side residents who may see the increased nutrients lead to algal blooms and an increase in invasive plants.

What can you do?

Left on land, decomposing leaves enrich soil by depositing nutrients back into the ground. You can capture those nutrients for your garden by composting your yard waste. Even better, combine your leaves with food scraps from your kitchen to balance the compost with brown matter and really pack in those nutrients to use on your garden next year. Clean gutters and drains will prevent ice build-up and flooding, while reducing the chance that excess nutrients will make their way to the nearest water body.

—Courteny Morehouse  
Berkshire Regional Planning  
Commission



## Harvest Festival Berkshire Botanical Garden

October 9 and 10, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Garden's legendary Harvest Festival returns on Columbus Day weekend, continuing an eighty-seven-year tradition celebrating autumn in the Berkshires. Considered one of the Berkshire's most iconic autumn events, it encompasses the entire twenty-acre Garden campus. The weekend will include continuous live music and entertainment, local and artisan food and refreshments, a clothing and accessories sale, plant sale, regional vendors, a farmers' market, workshops, pony and hayrides, hay jump, a haunted house and more. Proceeds from this event benefit the Berkshire Botanical Garden's horticulture and education programs.

Admission to the Harvest Festival is \$10 for adults and free for children 12 and under. Parking in BBG lots is free. Advance ticketing is available.

—Charlotte Gardener



Monarch butterfly

—Bonsai Cox



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## Return of the Gypsy Moths? Beware of the Egg Masses

Last week I noticed how different the woodlands to the west of our cottage appeared compared to last year—or last May for that matter. The scene was suffused in a soft green, almost aquatic light from the sun filtering through the diminished canopy. It was maybe a third to a half of what it had been.

We've been seeing deer grazing out back more than in the past, nibbling on the new undergrowth. The oaks and maples have re-foliated, partially. Their leaves are smaller, lighter in color, and sparser than in the past.



Janet Jensen

And if you look closely at the tree trunks (above), you can see dozens, sometimes hundreds, of egg masses from *Lymantria dispar dispar*, the moths formerly known as “gypsies.” I can see

why the Romani community objected to the name, which the Entomological Society of America, as Bonner McAllister reported in the August issue, plans to change, along with that of the gypsy ants. After their invasion of Butternut and the ridge line of Three Mile Hill, in June, I find everything about them distasteful. For the purposes of this article, I shall refer to the species as LDD, as the entomologists recommend until they can come up with a better common name.

As I learned in sixth grade science, most insects metamorphosize through four stages of life: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The LDD invasion gave us a disturbingly close and graphic view of the process. First, as I wrote in the July issue, we noticed a rain-like patter in the woods, which we later realized was the forest canopy passing through the guts of thousands, possibly millions, of the LDD larvae. Each can eat a square yard of leaves.

Then we noticed the caterpillars themselves, munching away at leaves and needles, growing larger by the day—they molt five or six times over the course of six weeks or so to accommodate their voracious appetites and subsequent growth—and literally climbing up the walls of the cottage. Around that time, I broke out in itchy, bubbling bumps on the back of my legs and arms. I first took the rash to be poison ivy, but later found out it was a reaction to the tiny hairs, called setae, on the caterpillar, which can travel on the wind and cause a histamine reaction.

As their numbers diminished toward the end of June, we ventured back into the woods, which the caterpillars had rendered somewhat unappealing. On almost every

limb we found dark purplish-black, grape-sized pupae dangling like some weird necrotic fruit. We batted them down with sticks, hoping that ground critters might make meals of them (although I later learned that they will probably survive on the ground. It seems to take two days in soapy water to kill them.)

Then for a couple of weeks, the very atmosphere around us came alive with hundreds of nondescript moths, like large brown confetti fluttering in the air. And that was just the males. The females are flightless, and wait for mates to come around, attracted by a pheromone they emit.

Now, when we enter the woods, we go armed with knives and a bucket of warm soapy water in which to scrape off fuzzy yellowish egg masses. We know it's literally just a drop in the bucket. But for every egg mass destroyed, we may be reducing next spring's population by five hundred to one thousand. If some drop to the ground, and they have, the eggs can still survive and hatch. And, since the tiny larvae can travel for a quarter mile or so—they climb up and then balloon off, buoyed by the air on strands of silk until they find a likely host—armies of them are likely to land on our property anyway.

We may also spray the trees right when the larvae hatch in May, with *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (Btk) a strain of bacteria used to control the moths, but which does not affect animals, birds, or people. However, it could harm beneficial insects, according to what I read. It has to be applied in May when caterpillars are less than one-half-inch long, as it has little effect on older caterpillars. At that point, they feed at night and hide out on the undersides of leaves or toward the base of trees, so they are not that noticeable.

Last season, some ten thousand acres of defoliation was mapped across Berkshire and Franklin County, according to Nicole Keleher, the Forest Health Program Director for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. “It was more severe and widespread than we had hoped,” she wrote in an email. She said her team is still wrapping up some of our ground surveys with final numbers and a map is expected for public release this month.

“The good news is that nearly all impacted areas have re-foliated (above),







Janet Jensen

*The oaks are beginning to put out new leaves now.*

and the trees are recovering well. It is normal for this second flush of leaves to be smaller and a little misshapen compared to normal oak leaves," she noted, adding that fall colors may be less vibrant and shorter lived after a stressful event like a LDD outbreak. "It is more advantageous for the trees to just drop the leaves and expedite the process to winter dormancy when they are under stressful conditions."

All of the trees are expected to be able to leaf out full, healthy canopies next spring, Keheler predicts. "However, the bad news is we are anticipating another year of significant LDD defoliation next spring. A substantial percentage of caterpillars were able to successfully complete their life cycle to adult moths, and we are seeing high densities of egg masses." Oaks are hit especially hard by the moths, and the additional stress can be hard on trees dealing with drought or other stressors. The heavy rains in July, I surmise, helped out the trees after the stress of the defoliation.

The Mass Audubon website puts a fairly positive spin on the LDD infestations, which "may produce a healthier, more diverse, and perhaps a more resistant stand of trees." According to the website, "Moderate defoliation benefits forest wildlife by stimulating understory growth of shrubs and berry-producing thickets. The larval frass (droppings) fertilize the soil, the larvae provide food for birds and mammals, and the skeletal remains of trees that succumb provide habitat for

wildlife, thus promoting diversity in the forest ecosystem."

Still, it is a dispiriting sight to see the trees denuded in early summer. If you have woodlands, you might want to look out for the egg masses, because many have been found in areas that had very light to non-noticeable defoliation, Keheler said. An extensive egg mass survey will be conducted over the winter to better identify locations at risk of defoliation in 2022.

"How severe the defoliation is in 2022 will be dependent on the spring conditions, temperatures, and rainfall in late April and early May," Keheler wrote. Those conditions affect the success of the *Entomophaga maimaiga* fungus, which was introduced to control the LDD. The invasive moths have been with us ever since some escaped from a Massachusetts lab in the 1869, where their silk was being researched. As a Cornell University blog describes (and shows in a time-lapse video), if spores of the fungus land on the caterpillars, they'll grow through the

cuticle and start eating up its tissues from the inside out. ("Think *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*," said the blog.)

"Besides our planned surveys, there is not much to do but wait," Keheler said. "In the century and a half we have had LDD in our oak forests, we have experienced a cycle of periodic LDD outbreaks. The populations will build from their typical low, background levels until the natural control processes (fungal pathogens, virus, and predators) drive the population back down."

Knowing that the background levels are high, and that the impacts of climate change seem to be throwing normal cycles off balance, we will wait and watch and do what we can to prevent another outbreak.

[Correction: In my July story about the invasion, I wrote that in 2016 the caterpillars had destroyed 100,000 acres of forests in the state. I should have said "defoliated," as most of the trees recovered.]

— Janet Jensen

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## The Clamorous Blue Jay

An accurate description of blue jays within hearing in our backyards is the loud alarming bird call that Henry David Thoreau wrote as sounding like an unreal steel scream shattering the silence on an otherwise quiet day. It sounded to him like catching a thief in the act of committing a crime or an arsonist lighting a fire in a schoolhouse. Their habit of vocally warning other creatures that something in the forest is remiss, an inherited behavior to perceived trouble afoot, makes them appear as official caretakers of peaceful tranquility in the environment around them.

As in my illustration, blue jays teach their siblings at an early age that noisy demonstration by opening their hungry mouths wide and screaming their heads off is an attention getter, and is often rewarded by being fed a juicy morsel by a responsive parent. Adults find and store food for them such as acorns which they also hide to be available in hard times. They also bring to the nest seeds and soft fruit, and even small anthropoids. Along the coast blue jays benefit by foraging in the nearby sandy soils of Cape Cod as well as shores of Buzzards Bay and Cape Ann.

Blue jays have a high profile of colorful plumage including a signature crest—a crown of feathers on their head which may be lowered or raised depending on the individual's mental mood or sense of alarm. When feeding or resting the crest is flattened on the head. The black plumage on its throat varies extensively by individuals and is believed to assist in recognition by birdwatchers in their own backyards. Blue jays take special care of their feathers



when they start to molt in warmer weather using a process called “anting,” or rubbing themselves with chemicals found on ants and other substances found on insects.

The blue jays's scientific name is derived from Greek and Latin roots meaning “chattering bird” or Corvidae to include ravens, rooks, jackdaws, crows, and magpies. They are all of the order of Passeriformes or perching songbirds. These birds are of ancient lineage with fossil remains of corvids identified from Miocene deposits twenty-five million years ago. Today they are often thought of as the bully birds of our backyards and were actually painted by Audubon in a group showing a habit of robbing nests of eggs and hatchlings, but this was entirely incorrect and unjustified.

Blue jays deserve a lot of credit for being smart enough to survive very well

in areas with a wide range of human beings, climate transitions over the ages, and greatly deteriorated environments. They have long been kept on a high-profile pedestal among bird watchers for having a personality of doubtful behavior that nevertheless deserves to be written about and illustrated for your interest and appreciation.

—George Emmons



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## Here's a Thought!... Equinox Celebration

Autumn equinox ceremony cancelled at the Monterey Community Center.

Earlier in the summer I'd planned to hold a ceremony to celebrate the autumn equinox at the community center. With the increase of Covid-concern, I'm cancelling the face-to-face event and switching to hosting an online equinox ceremony on Zoom.

Equinoxes aren't flashy, like the solstices. At summer solstice, daylight is at full force. And it's the reverse with the winter solstice—the sun stays abed late and goes down before dinnertime. Neither has to clamor for attention. We notice. But the fall and spring equinoxes are made of more subtle stuff.

They celebrate the semi-annual moments of balance between the solstice extremes of light and dark, the quiet shift when lengths of darkness and daylight are basically the same. Usually, that subtle moment just slips by, just like the tiny pause when our inhale becomes our exhale. So the equinox is a perfect time to dissolve our inattention with a bit of ceremony. Because circumstances prompted me to choose a virtual venue, the event will be more subtle than I'd planned, too.

Open mic group singing on Zoom is painful, even with "original sound," so we'll have poetry instead of song. And you'll each have to provide your own cake—and maybe ice cream—to indulge in while listening to the poems, or while others are sharing their own insights, or maybe, after dinner. You choose.

Instead, we'll take a short time to gather together, to honor our purpose, to focus our intention and then mark the actual moment of the equinox with silence; a bit of storytelling will follow. Then you'll be invited to share a bit about attitudes and tools you are finding useful for our human work of moving from one moment of balance—one equinox—to another together during our less-than-balanced times before we close our time together.

My choice to hold the event at its actual time on its actual date goes back sixty-five, seventy years. When I was in grade school, we celebrated all our holidays on their actual dates. February meant two actual school holidays, Lincoln's birthday



Stephen Moore

*The Friends of the Library, with Karen Shreefter's advice, installed planters in front of the library.*

on the 12th, and Washington's birthday on the 22nd. And our Fourth of July parades, picnics, and fireworks occurred right on July 4, even if that was a Wednesday. But folks moved further distances from family and the growth of outside-the-home employment increased. Our holidays morphed into long weekends. Good as that's been, and continues to be, maybe it's not the only way of things any more.

And we all know change has happened in how we get together, too. If you'd like the Zoom link to the equinox ceremony on Wednesday, September 22, at 3 p.m., email me by September 21 at [marykate@thejordancenter.com](mailto:marykate@thejordancenter.com).

Breathe deep, breathe easy, and see you then.

—Mary Kate Jordan

PS: If you can't make it to our ceremony but want to mark the Equinox moment itself, the actual time is 3:21 pm.



Mary Kate Jordan

*Instead, we'll honor the fleeting balance of light and dark with a virtual mid-week, mid-afternoon ceremony on Zoom.*

### John A. Ryder Memorial Service Postponement

The family of John "Jack" Ryder has postponed the planned September 5 graveside service and Celebration of Life to spring of 2022 due to ongoing Covid concerns. We hope to see you then.

—Karen Consolati

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## Open Meeting Law

The State of Massachusetts has a very detailed law regulating the holding of meetings by public bodies. These rules cover how the meetings must be warned and recorded; who may attend and how; access to records; and how to file complaints if one feels the rules haven't been followed.

To read the full Open Meeting Law guide, go to [tiny.cc/MA-OMLguide](http://tiny.cc/MA-OMLguide), or search for "MA Open Meeting Law guide."

The following is meant to be only a primer on the OML. The twenty-six page guide leads with a table of contents should the reader wish to get more details. This article is not a comprehensive statement of the rules.

Elected or appointed members of public bodies must become familiar with the law and sign a certification that they have received and reviewed copies of the law and related materials, and the certificate is filed with the town clerk. *(Text below in quotes are direct from the state OML guide.)*

### Opening Statement for the Guide

"Dear Massachusetts Residents: One of the most important functions of the Attorney General's Office is to promote openness and transparency in government. Every resident of Massachusetts should be able to access and understand the reasoning behind the government policy decisions that affect our lives. My office is working to achieve that goal through fair and consistent enforcement of the Open Meeting Law, along with robust educational outreach about the law's

requirements. The Open Meeting Law requires that most meetings of public bodies be held in public, and it establishes rules that public bodies must follow in the creation and maintenance of records relating to those meetings."

—Maura Healy  
Massachusetts Attorney General

### Purpose

"The purpose of the Open Meeting Law is to ensure transparency in the deliberations on which public policy is based. Because the democratic process depends on the public having knowledge about the considerations underlying governmental action, the Open Meeting Law requires, with some exceptions, that meetings of public bodies be open to the public. It also seeks to balance the public's interest in witnessing the deliberations of public officials with the government's need to manage its operations efficiently."

For the purposes of the OML, the OML applies to all elected and appointed public bodies (boards, commissions, councils, etc.) as well as any subcommittees of the same. There are exceptions to this. The principal one that occasionally occurs in Monterey is executive sessions. The guide lists ten specific purposes for executive sessions.

### Notices/Agendas

Meeting notices must be filed and posted at least forty-eight hours (not including weekends and legal holidays) in advance. These agendas are filed at town hall and then posted on the town website as the approved method of posting.

"Meeting notices must ... contain the date, time, and place of the meeting;

and list all topics that the chair reasonably anticipates, 48 hours in advance, will be discussed at the meeting. The list of topics must be sufficiently specific to reasonably inform the public of the issues to be discussed at the meeting."

"If a discussion topic is proposed after a meeting notice is posted, and it was not reasonably anticipated by the chair more than 48 hours before the meeting, the public body should update its posting to provide the public with as much notice as possible of what subjects will be discussed during the meeting. Although a public body may consider a topic that was not listed in the meeting notice if it was not anticipated, the Attorney General strongly encourages public bodies to postpone discussion and action on topics that are controversial or may be of particular interest to the public if the topic was not listed in the meeting notice."

### Participation

Historically, if a person wanted to participate and speak at public meetings, then physical attendance was required. The state has permitted widespread exceptions to this due to Covid-19. The town has adopted remote participation through either phone or video meeting apps to make meetings more accessible. "Text messaging, instant messaging, email and web chat without audio are not acceptable methods of remote participation."

"While the public is permitted to attend an open meeting, an individual may not address the public body without permission of the chair. An individual may not disrupt a meeting of a public body, and at the request of the chair, all members of the public shall be silent. If, after clear warning, a person continues to be disruptive, the chair may order the person to leave the meeting. If the person does not leave, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person. Although public participation is entirely within the chair's discretion, the Attorney General encourages public bodies to allow as much public participation as time permits."

### Minutes

"Public bodies are required to create and maintain accurate minutes of all meetings, including executive sessions. The minutes,

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which must be created and approved in a timely manner, must include:

- the date, time and place of the meeting;
- the members present or absent;
- the decisions made and actions taken, including a record of all votes;
- a summary of the discussions on each subject;
- a list of all documents and exhibits used at the meeting;
- the name of any member who participated in the meeting remotely.

While the minutes must include a summary of the discussions on each subject, a transcript is not required. No vote taken by a public body, either in an open or in an executive session, shall be by secret ballot."

## Meeting Records

"The Open Meeting Law requires public bodies to create and approve minutes in a timely manner. A "timely manner" is considered to be within the next 3 public body meetings or 30 days from the date of the meeting, whichever is later, unless the public body can show good cause for further delay. The Attorney General encourages minutes to be approved at a public body's next meeting whenever possible."

As of this writing, the select board is investigating how to make video recordings of meetings easily available online. If there is an interest in viewing a specific meeting, make a request to the town administrator.

## OML Complaints

"The Attorney General's Division of Open Government is responsible for enforcing the Open Meeting Law. The Attorney General has the authority to receive and investigate complaints, bring enforcement actions, issue advisory opinions, and promulgate regulations."

"The Division of Open Government will take complaints from members of the public and will work with public bodies to resolve problems. While any member of the public may file a complaint with a public body alleging a violation of the Open Meeting Law, a public body need not, and the Division of Open Government will not, investigate anonymous complaints."

Complaints must be filed within thirty days of the violation. Complaints must be filed using the online complaint form available from the AG's website, [mass.gov/ago/openmeeting](http://mass.gov/ago/openmeeting).

"The public body has 14 business days from the date of receipt to meet to review the complainant's allegations, take remedial action if appropriate, notify the complainant of the remedial action, and forward a copy of the complaint and description of the remedial action taken to the complainant. The public body must simultaneously notify the Attorney General that it has responded to the complainant and provide the Attorney General with a copy of the response and a description of any remedial action taken."

Thirty days after the filing with the AG's office, a complaint is considered "ripe" for review by the AG's office. They will seek to resolve complaints in a reasonable period of time, generally within ninety days of the complaint having become ripe.

Mediation is a possibility with five or more complaints by a complainant within twelve months.

Intentional violations: The AG's office may impose a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000 for each intentional violation.

"In determining whether a violation was intentional, the Attorney General will consider, among other things, whether the public body or public body member 1) acted with specific intent to violate the law; 2) acted with deliberate ignorance of the law's requirements; or 3) had been previously informed by a court decision or advised by the Attorney General that the conduct at issue violated the Open Meeting Law."

## Monterey Agendas and Minutes

All filed agendas and minutes are available on the town website. At the left margin of the home page, [montereyma.gov](http://montereyma.gov), there is a button for "Minutes & Agendas." You'll find a list of all of Monterey's public bodies.

You can also choose to receive minutes and agendas via the "Subscribe to E-Alerts" button. This option allows you to receive emails containing not only the agendas and minutes of your choosing, but also other news and announcements.

— Stephen Moore

## Remembrance Minna Zaret, 96

Minna Zaret died August 13, 2021 in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Teacher, journalist, jeweler, artist, poet, peace and civil rights activist. An incredible woman. Her husband, Sol, died before her as did her sisters Bea Rosenheck and Shirley Gordon.

She is survived by her sons David, Joshua, and Peter, her daughters-in-law, Julie Knost, Elisabeth Karlin, and Marilyn Zaret, and two grandchildren Anna and Max. Also survived by her nephews, grand-nieces and nephew, and great-grand niece and nephew. She was deeply loved and we miss her.

A service was held on Monday, August 23 at Finnerty and Stevens Funeral Home in Great Barrington, MA. She was laid to rest next to Sol at the Corashire Cemetery in Monterey, MA, near where they lived for three decades.

To send remembrances to her family please go to [finnertyandstevens.com](http://finnertyandstevens.com).

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## Wildlife Report for August Bears, Birds, Bumblebees, & More

Early in August, Ellen Coburn spotted a bumblebee on a thistle flower and a honey bee on a bee balm in bloom (see page 28). Honeybees have short tongues (proboscises) and can't reach very far down into tubular flowers. Bumblebees are just bigger, including their tongues. So the two species of nectar feeders are not always in competition for the same blossoms.

Suzanne Sawyer sent in photos from her bluebird box, including youngsters looking out the door and then mama hovering at the hole (below), with a big lunch (dragonfly, looks like) for the brood.



Still in the first week of August, Ian Lindsay of New Marlborough Road got videos on his wildlife camera: a bear during the night, and a bobcat by daylight. Ian was able to get a good still photo from this film (above right).

Wendy Jensen sent in a photograph of a cicada on the screen (below), also in early August. These usually emerge from



underground in August and sing often in the heat of the day. This one Wendy has identified as a "Linne's cicada," as distinct from the less-often-seen periodical cicadas we are hearing about this year. These, if you see one, look quite different. They are black, with red eyes.

Still in the world of insects, we have Bonsai Cox's bumblebee, in a wonderful close-up photograph on a flower at her place near Stevens Pond. Some bumblebees are commonly seen around here, and some quite rare. There is the "common eastern bumblebee," and there is the rare "black-and-gold-bumblebee" with its particular stripe of black from wing to wing, as well as a black first segment of the abdomen. Get out the "Field Guide to Bumblebees," if there is such a thing, and see what you can find.

Michael and Maureen Banner were visited by a katydid in the flower garden and got a great photograph (below right). Maureen also got a great close-up of a striking insect, winged but not your typical fly or bee, sitting on a flower. I am including it as an example of a gorgeous mystery, of which we are lucky to have quite a few around here.

Byron Gilderdale saw a red-tailed hawk on August 1, and got a great portrait photo (next page, top right) of the bird posed with a promising meal held under one foot: a chipmunk. Carol Edelman reported early in the month that there were plenty of barred owls, both seen and heard, in their yard. She took a photo of one as it sat on the internet cable right outside the window (next page, bottom left). This owl was giving a "whistling call and response"



right at dusk. Maybe she was calling to her youngsters, Carol thinks, having read that the owls will do this. Lin Saberski saw three different kinds of butterflies in her garden: a checkerspot sharing an echinacea blossom with a honeybee (see page 28), also a black swallowtail on its very own echinacea blossom, and a fritillary in the tall grass.





Bonsai Cox took a photograph of a tree full of vultures on that famous vulture perch at Gould Farm (at right), where we all turn right to go to the dump. My feeling is that these are the black vultures I wrote about last month, just because they look smaller to me than the familiar turkey vultures, and because I can't see that any of them have red heads, which the turkey vultures have.

Suzanne Sawyer sent photographs and wrote of her concern about one or more female house finches coming to her cylindrical feeders. Suzanne was able to get good close-ups (at right) showing the crusty and swollen eyes of the bird, just as we have seen described in an alert from Mass Wildlife. We have been urged to take down our feeders and birdbaths, in case this affliction is contagious among the birds, though really not much is known about it for sure. Suzanne sent her photographs to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and they replied with a page they have put out to answer folks' questions about this. Suzanne's documentation proves the illness does occur right here. Cornell's page was updated in mid-August, at which time the trouble had not been reported in Massachusetts and some writers were calling it "too soon" to be taking down the feeders here. In other states the problem had been seen and the advice was clear: best not to create an attraction that brings the birds close together. Of course, most small birds are social and forage in groups wherever they go. They are usually safer that way.



*David Abromowitz's photo of a young bear.*



# Berkshire

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Our bears are looking steady and healthy, including a young one here the other day that climbed partway up a mighty thin black cherry sapling close to our house (see page 18). There are ripe cherries up near the top, but the tree bent over and scraped and scrubbed against our outside wall. I went to the window for a look and that little bear ran off. Earlier in August, Myrna Schneiderman wrote of a mama bear and two cubs that walked out her driveway and then along Hupi Road, before going off into the woods. On the same day, David Abromowitz saw a bear youngster (page 27) and wrote that he'd "spotted this puppy loping along the road around Stevens Lake. Out for a Sunday stroll."

Teri Salomon saw a bear in her driveway on Tyringham Road and got a fine photograph (at right). She said this was a "mama super focused on her cubs."

Steve Moore has protected his peach tree with a blue barrel cut and installed at its base (right). The plan was to keep porcupines on the ground, welcome to the peaches dropped there but not to any still on the tree. This has worked well, and Steve's wildlife camera shows the porcupine on the ground, making do with what's there.

Many thanks to Chris Traynor for his photograph (right) and sighting of a white-tailed deer and fawn, crossing Tyringham Road headed toward Brewer Pond, across from the town beach.

Joe Baker took a walk up "Hupi Extension" as we call it out here across Route 23 from our end of Hupi. Up near the top, where the Bob's Way trail comes around, he spotted a northern water snake curled up in the shrubbery and took a photograph (below). This was near the beaver pond up there.



And thanks to all of you, for paying attention and for letting us all know about the wild neighbors around here, from the bugs right on up to the bears, and including the deer and the snakes.

— Bonner McAllester  
(413) 528-9385 bonnermca@gmail.com



*Ellen Coburn spotted a bumblebee on a thistle flower (above) and a honey bee on a bee balm in bloom (below).*



*Lin Saberski saw three different kinds of butterflies in her garden: a checkerspot sharing an echinacea blossom with a honeybee (below).*



## Letters Newsworthiness

An editor's conundrum: Just what is newsworthy for our small town?

### Weingold's Lawsuit

Was it newsworthy that one public body member filed a lengthy lawsuit in late April against current and former board members, and others, claiming corruption, fraud, bribery ("...the parties engaged in civil fraud of the taxpayers and the voters of Monterey to further their own personal financial gains,") and libel ("baseless and offensive statements/comments slanderous and libelous against the plaintiff")? Certainly.

What followed the filing was a ninety-day period during which the suit could be served on the named individuals, but it was not, and so the court dismissed it. Is it news now that this lawsuit was dismissed? Essentially, is it news that something *didn't* happen?

Is this even relevant now that the charges, filed publicly and reported in the *Berkshire Eagle*, and which provided essentially no evidence, get to hang in the air of Monterey without the defendants having an opportunity to refute non-existent evidence? (Lawsuits are protected speech, thus are not libelous.) What news is there to actually report?

(A request for commentary on the lawsuit or its dismissal was sent to John Weingold who did not acknowledge the inquiry.)

## Open Meeting Law Complaints

*Editor's Note: See a primer on the OML on page 24-25.*

This year has seen many open meeting law complaints filed. The finance committee is cycling through complaints and responses, followed by additional complaints about the response process. Some of the recent OML complaints against the finance committee, filed by a committee member, allege "intentional violations" which may be subject to fines of up to \$1,000.

This summer an OML complaint was filed against the select board which some people feel could have been solved with just a conversation, and not having to involve the attorney general's office. One point of that complaint referenced a meeting held in March, long past the thirty-day limitation.

There are three complaints listed by the attorney general's office (August 27) as "pending" from late March, which were filed against the select board by a member of the select board. These may be subject to review by the AG's office, but these reviews can take up to ninety days. (These complaints are well past that time period now.)

Obviously, public bodies have to function within the law. Open meeting law exists to support transparency and participation. If there are intentional and

egregious violations, there should be consequences. However, if you live beyond the fractious arena of what is happening with some of these public meetings, is any of this news?

I surveyed most of the other elected and appointed boards, as well as researched OML complaints filed with the state's attorney general's office. I'm aware of no other filed complaints against any other public bodies reaching back for a couple of years.

That town affairs are being taken care of, and work is being done to keep us headed in positive directions is not necessarily news. It doesn't take much attention to trust that the town seems pretty well managed. If you take time to read the minutes from the other boards, commissions, councils, trustees, etc., and you'll see earnest efforts to contribute to the town's wellbeing.

If you have opinions on what constitutes news in all of this, please share your thoughts as letters to the paper.

—Stephen Moore

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## Bidwell House Museum Raid on Township No.1

We are thrilled to be hosting the weekend-long living history event “Raid on Township No.1” on the weekend of September 18 and 19.

Experience a re-creation of raids from 1778-1783 conducted by British, Native, and loyalist allies in the Mohawk Valley. Battles were fought over control of disputed land between the Native Americans and settlers.

Re-enactors will put on two public battle demonstrations. Visitors can walk through both the American and British/Allied camps and learn how both soldiers and followers lived camp life during the American Revolution. Learn about the weapons—musket and artillery demonstrations; how the forces made use of vendors; and the roles played by women and children who either followed the army or struggled on the home front. There will be lectures on war medicine, midwifery, and clothing.



### Program Details

**Artillery Demonstration (Saturday and Sunday):** Learn all the steps in loading and firing a cannon, as well as the roles that each artillerist and tool played to help the operation run smoothly on the field.

**Medicine and Health (Saturday):** Join Paul Supley as he discusses the difference between civilian doctors and military surgeons and keeping people of the 1770s healthy.

**“Last Man Standing” musket competition (Saturday):** Soldiers were required to constantly drill and master the use of the musket. Witness a competition amongst participants as they load and fire their musket as quickly as possible.

**Fashion Show (Sunday):** Join Tom Tringale and his fellow re-enactors as they show off various clothing and accoutrements worn/used during the 1770s as military and civilian culture changed.

The event begins 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, September 18, and Sunday, September 19. There will also be a special ticketed preview night on Friday, September 17 where you can meet “Martha Washington” and also see a special artillery demonstration. Details about the Friday event and ticket prices can be found on the museum website in early September. Tickets to “Raid on Township No.1” must be purchased in advance on the museum’s website [bidwellhousemuseum.org](http://bidwellhousemuseum.org). Walk-ins will not be permitted. You can purchase either one-day or two-day tickets, and tickets for children 12 and under are free.

There will be snacks and drinks for purchase onsite. A tentative schedule for this event can be found on the museum’s website. A final schedule will be posted in September. “Raid on Township No. 1” is supported by grants from the Monterey, Tyringham, and New Marlborough Cultural Councils.

### Housatonic Heritage Walks

We are also hosting two Housatonic Heritage walks in September and early October.

**Saturday, September 11:** Rob Hoogs will lead a walk along the Royal Hemlock Trail, “In the Steps of the Early Settlers.” This guided walk on the Bidwell grounds, as well as on the Berkshire Natural Resource Council’s (BNRC) Hudson-Howard property, traces the route of the early settlers of Township No. 1 from their homes to the first meeting house on a hill near the museum. You will view old roadways, past foundations of long-ago homesteads, and explore flora and fauna along the way. This walk will meet in front of the Museum.

**Saturday, October 2:** Join Rob Hoogs for another hike, “A Walk Through History on the Bidwell Grounds.” This historical hike will take you along two old colonial roads on the Bidwell House property and BNRC’s Hudson-Howard Preserve. You will investigate four cellar holes, a charcoal hearth, and beautiful old stone walls, ending on a hillside



overlooking Steadman Pond with filtered views into the Tyringham Valley.

These hikes begin at 10 a.m. and will take about three hours. Expect to encounter some rough woods, roads, and trails. Wear good hiking shoes, bring water, and a snack if you like. Both walks are limited to twenty-five participants, and all attendees must pre-register on the museum’s website.

**Saturday and Sunday, October 9 and 10:** We are hosting a program with Robert Oakes called “Scary Stories Around the Fire.” Oakes, author of the recent book *Ghosts of the Berkshires*, will share readings on Berkshire colonial-era history and ghost lore and tell the tale of “The Ghost of Green River.” Robert will lead a candlelit ghost walk through the house. Saturday 7 to 9 p.m., Sunday 4 to 6 p.m. Information and tickets for this event can be found on the Museum website in September.

**Tours:** Don’t forget the house is open for tours by appointment. Tour times are Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. Check out the “Plan Your Visit” page on our website for more information. As always, the museum grounds—192 acres of woods, fields, historic stone walls, trails and picnic sites—are open all year free of charge. Maps of the trails can be found on the front porch of the Museum or downloaded from the website. The program of events can be found on the museum’s website at [bidwellhousemuseum.org](http://bidwellhousemuseum.org).

—Heather Kowalski  
Executive Director



## MontereyMA.gov

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

— Steven Weisz, Chair  
John Weingold and Justin Makuc  
Monterey Select Board  
([steve@montereyma.gov](mailto:steve@montereyma.gov))  
([weinjohnsb@gmail.com](mailto:weinjohnsb@gmail.com))  
([justin@montereyma.gov](mailto:justin@montereyma.gov))

## Correction

In the small article published on page 5 of the August *Monterey News* about Dave Gilmore and Beth Park's wedding reception at the fire company's pavilion, on Friday, September 10, at 5:30. I added a humorous line (in italics even) about checking out the wedding registry at the swap shop. It was not meant to imply that either of them were trying to solicit gifts as town employees.

The town is very concerned that even the appearance of soliciting gifts by town employees could be a serious ethical problem.

— Stephen Moore, Editor

## Calendar

MCC- Monterey Community Center

**Sundays:** Monterey softball begins again.  
Batting practice at 10, games begin at 10:30.

**Mondays:** "What's Happening," discussing local arts, 4 to 5 p.m., MCC.

**Tuesdays:**

Chair yoga with Connie Wilson, 10 a.m., MCC.

Bridge and cards, 1 p.m. MCC.

**Sunday, September 5:**

Housatonic Heritage walk, beginning at Gould Farm's harvest barn, 1 to 3:30 p.m. See page 16.

Tim Van Egmond in concert, 2 to 3:45 p.m., MCC. See page 9.

**Friday, September 10:**

Wedding celebration for Dave Gilmore and Beth Parks, 5:30 p.m., fire house pavilion.

**Saturday, September 11:** Housatonic Heritage walk with Rob Hoogs at the Bidwell House Museum. "In the Steps of the Early Settlers." 10 a.m. See page 30.

**Saturday, September 18, and Sunday, September 19:** Bidwell House Museum's "Raid on Township No. 1" living history event. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. See page 30.

**Monday, September 20:** Flu clinic, 1 to 4 p.m., firehouse pavilion. See page 13.

**Wednesday, September 22:** Celebrate the fall equinox on Zoom with Mary Kate Jordan, 3 p.m.. See page 23.

**Saturday, September 25 and Sunday, September 26:** Eighth annual Berkshire pottery tour. See page 11.

**Sunday, September 26:** Gould Farm's 5K run. Registration at 8 a.m., race begins at 9:30 a.m. See page 16.

**Saturday, October 2:** Housatonic Heritage walk with Rob Hoogs at the Bidwell House Museum. "A Walk through History." 10 a.m. See page 30.

**Saturday, October 9, and Sunday, October 10:** Berkshire Botanical Garden's annual harvest festival. See page 19.

## 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](mailto: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.

## 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

[calendar@ccmonterey.org](mailto:calendar@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

**SBRSD** (Schools): (413)-229-8778

**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.

## Police Emergency Contacts

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Treasurer.....Cindy Hoogs

*Contributions from local artists this month:  
Maureen Banner, pgs. 8, 11, 12, 13; Pat Arnow, p. 11;  
Rachel Jo Arnow, p. 12; George Emmons, p. 22;  
Bonner McAllester, p. 18.*

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