



MONTEREY NEWS

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Pick up at: the library (in and outside), outside town hall, transfer station, and Roadside Cafe



I am so proud of our little fire department -- their leadership, their dedication to training, their commitment to mentoring young people, and above all their ability to show up and reliably do what needs to be done.

Work that is Real.....p.2

Snyder also said, "in terms of a park, I'd give up all the parks we already have in town for this space. It is amazing."

Town Meeting.....p.5

From the 1831 Valuation Records, we learn that, of the 679 men in town, there were 271 "rateable polls, 16 years old and upwards."

Historical Society News....p.10

Top left: Monterey, Otis, and New Marlborough firefighters (MFD, photo); top right: Butternut Fire as seen from Blue Hill Road (Ian Tryon, photo); bottom: the crowd at the lighting ceremony on Nov. 30 at the library (Dennis Lynch, photo).

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Here's a Thought...
Phoenix Rising



Mary Kate Jordan

Snug inside and busy, I didn't hear what I didn't want to know - the wildfire - until that Tuesday after dark. But then, "A forest fire? And they're calling it the Butternut Fire?"

Eerie, impossible, incomprehensible, actual, despite the weeks of fire ban and Red Alert. I was startled, scared and I live on the Butternut side of Monterey, so I hopped into my car to see for myself. The line of other cars parked along the north side of Route 23 west of Monument Valley Road proved I wasn't alone in the need to witness. Yup; wildfire, outlining the whole visible East Mountain ridge overlooking both the ski area and Great Barrington.

Bringing the best of themselves, firefighters and other personnel came

in droves. Monterey's volunteers were among the first to respond to Great Barrington's call for help. And as Ashley Shook and John Budenas posted on WWLP.com on November 19, "Monterey firefighters, along with Otis volunteers, managed to extinguish a smaller brush fire in Bidwell Park" along with assisting in the large-scale firefighting on East Mountain. Help also came from other parts of Berkshire County and from as far away as Montana and Wyoming.

Driving back from the post office on Thursday, I became suddenly aware that I was surrounded by a healthy section of the same forest that was burning further to the west and south. Awareness rose, too, that these trees were in communion through their underground network with those elsewhere in the forest. I don't cry easily, but I did cry then.

Bringing the best of ourselves to others' needs as well, local folks donated water, food, coffee, time, money, and more. So much local gratitude was offered to those who came to help that an equally grateful halt was called after just a few days. The spokesperson for those fighting >

Editor's note: The Butternut Fire began the evening of November 18, and burned over 1,670 acres, spanning over three miles in length with a perimeter of more than ten miles, according to official reports. The town firefighters on the scene included Shawn and Chris Tryon, Del Martin, Felix Carroll, Enrico Simeone, Charity Loy, Tyler Collins, Shamus Gaherty, Dennis McCarthy, Justin Makuc, and Alec Morrison. State and federal resources assisted. The Otis company was in our station, and the first day there was a fire behind the post office. The Makucs were on call in town. Cara Tryon and Ellen Whitbeck assembled food. The Monterey Fire Company thanks everyone for the generous donations. The fire is now officially contained.



Monterey firefighters on the scene of the Butternut Fire in November.

the fire recommended that any purchases that had already been made be donated instead to the Monterey Pantry Pickup.

Maybe the friends and strangers who gave us so much to be grateful for were able to get back home to celebrate Gratitude Day. Maybe some who aren't local will still be among us. Either way, as we let the Butternut fire begin to recede into something that happened last year, as we each return to our own plans and projects, what if we let their, and our, responses to the fire be a guiding light for our own plans and projects for 2025?

What if we're willing to remember that for a time there was no us and them, just people with a common goal? The firefighters from "red" Wyoming and Montana were obviously willing to fight fire in a "blue" state. I'll bet none of the cases of water, coffee boxes, pizzas, or other local donations came in boxes labeled "for people of my political preferences only."

What if there really is no "us and them," just people? What if in 2025 there's only hard work to be done, and the need for every one of us to do it with the dedication and respect for each other that hard work deserves? What if there's more that unites us than divides us? What if we become more willing to hear and admit what help each of us needs? And suppose we each then offer what help we can? Together, we'll be a phoenix rising from the flames.

—Mary Kate Jordan

Work that is Real

I've always been the sort of mom who believes that calling in sick to school is allowed if you are going to participate in real world learning. When Ian asked to skip school to fight the Butternut fire, I agreed. Throughout the day, people asked if I was worried about his safety. I could honestly answer that I knew he was safe while under the watchful eye of his dad, uncle, and other



Shawn and Ian Tryon.

members of the Monterey Fire Department.

I am so proud of our little fire department -- their leadership, their dedication to training, their commitment to mentoring young people, and above all their ability to show up and reliably do what needs to be done. When I think of my Monterey family, I am often reminded of the Marge Piercy poem "To Be of Use."

She writes, "I want to be with people who submerge/ in the task, who go into the fields to harvest/ and work in a row and pass the bags along,/ who are not parlor generals and field deserters/ but move in a common rhythm/ when the food must come in or the fire be put out."

People, she says "long for work that is real."

School is important, but I know Ian learned invaluable lessons in those smoke-filled woods. I am so thankful to raise my children in a place where the lessons of hard work and community are so easily taught.

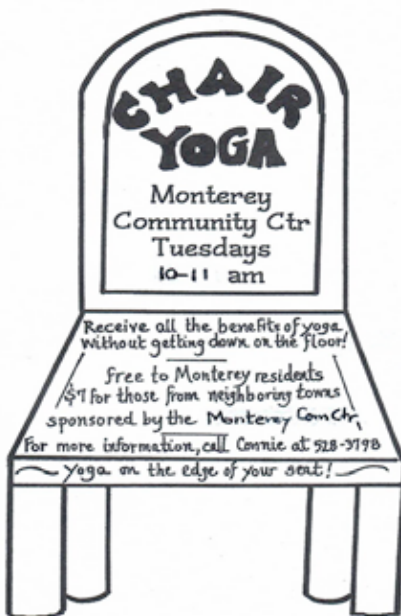
—Carly Detterman,
wife of Chief Shawn Tryon, and
mother of junior firefighter
Ian Tryon

Letter of Appreciation

To the Editor:

We live at the end of Harmon Road, where there was brush fire in late October. With the very dry conditions, any fire could have easily gotten out of control and put at risk the area and the surrounding homes. Fortunately, the Monterey Fire Department quickly came and put it out. We are thankful to the fire department and the support it receives from our community.

—Don and Erica Stern



Thai Yoga Bodywork

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Town Meeting

For many years the select board has called the town to a “special town meeting” in the fall to discuss matters that often arise between the annual May town meetings. Each year the select board must make decisions regarding the need for an additional town meeting, and establish a date. In advance of this past May’s “annual town meeting,” the select board proposed a regularly-scheduled annual town meeting on the first Saturday in November so they need not “reinvent the wheel” each year.

Typically there are some expenses that have yet to be paid from the previous fiscal year ending June 30. There are also often fund transfer needs. (NOTE: See article by Ilene Marcus about the town budget cycle on p. 11) And sometimes, as was certainly the case with this November meeting, reasons arise that can’t wait until the following May.

For this November meeting there were two topics of great discussion—whether to accept a gift of land, and whether to approve a step towards having a community solar project. But first...

Moderator Mark Makuc always opens the meetings in a very timely way, but for this meeting there was a wrinkle. Town clerk Chris Andrews was most unfortunately unable to be present, so there was a need to find a temporary town clerk for the

meeting. Linda Thorpe, who has worked as assistant town clerk and for a time as town clerk, agreed to be nominated for the role. Quickly-made ballots were distributed when voters entered, nominations made, ballots counted, and Thorpe was installed as the meeting’s clerk.

The Articles

Articles 1 through 6 were essentially “housekeeping” questions. Five of the six generated no discussion and were passed unanimously by voice vote. Article 4, regarding retirement funds called for a two-thirds majority, so a counted vote of raised pink index cards was taken and it passed 56–0.

Article 1: Asking for authorization for \$17,500 “to pay in part for the annual financial audit for FY24.”

Article 2: A proposal to authorize \$4,000 to help fund a consultant to prepare an application for approval of a village historic district, with the remainder of the cost paid out of the American Rescue Plan Act funds (ARPA).

Article 3: To move \$1,342 from Free Cash to pay outstanding FY24 bills.

Article 4: To move funds from a stabilization fund for retirement benefits to an “Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund,” and dissolve the stabilization fund. This required a two-thirds majority, and was passed unanimously.

Article 5: To authorize the select board to enter into a five-year contract “to extend participation in the Western Mass Regional Recycling Program” (a program run by Mass Department of Environment (DOE)).

Article 6: A proposal “to increase the previously-voted gross exemption amount limit to \$2,000...for each approved vol-

unteer who participates in the Senior Tax Work-Off Program.” The exemption is for property tax relief.

Moderator Mark Makuc, with his decades of precise meeting management could hardly have moved these articles more quickly. The calls for “moving,” for “seconds,” and for “discussion” found folks eager to speed these articles along.

Article 7: This was the meatier topic that folks came prepared to discuss. It sought to authorize the select board “to accept as a gift of land of three contiguous parcels,” comprising about 6.5 acres, with lake frontage along the northeastern shore of Lake Buel. After a lengthy discussion of pros-and-cons, a voice vote was taken, with a clear majority voting to accept and a vocal minority opposed. It was an energetic debate, which, after the voice vote, the moderator Makuc asked the opponents if they would wave a counted vote, to which, in the spirit of respect and direct democracy, the opponents agreed. (See “Lake Buel Property” below.)

Article 8: This article asked the town to authorize the select board to enter into an agreement with other parties over the creation of a community shared solar photovoltaic system located on town-owned property and a portion of the gravel pit on Gould Farm property. (See the map.) The discussion was primarily questions about the process.

A voice vote passed with a clear majority voting “yea” and a handful of “nay” votes. (See “Solar Project” below.)

Lake Buel Property

The Lombardo Group LLC proposed to the town a gift of three contiguous parcels for the purpose of open space. They are at 60 Williams Lane, 40 Williams Lane, and 134 Pixley Road (Route 57). This is the site of the former Leaside Lodge, which was renamed Blue Heron Landing. The buildings had been demolished around 2005.

A deed would include a restriction against any buildings other than those necessary to support recreational use of the property (shed, toilets, etc.), and a requirement that the property be named after the donor. These three parcels (labeled 7, 8, 9 on the assessor map) total just under 6.5 acres and have a current assessed value of



Stephen Moore

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approximately \$1.3 million. The article would give assent to the select board to engage in due diligence and negotiation over the gift. (The combined Lombardo properties have approximately 600 feet of lake frontage; Lake Garfield town beach has 175 feet of lake frontage on just over one-half acre.)

ring additional expenses. Chris Cobb, who lives at the west end of the lake, made this point a few times, and added that as the town added services, thereby raising our taxes, it makes the town less affordable for young families. Kim Alcantara disagreed with the loss of revenue, and that the town desperately needs affordable housing, pointing out that if the town accepts this gift, then these lots would no longer be available for such housing. Jennifer Brown said that accepting this gift would be shutting the door on affordable housing.

The concern about affordable housing was resolved by several comments. A condition of the gift precludes construction of housing, or for the town to sell the property for housing. Select board member Susan Cooper, and Noel Wicke from the conservation commission, along with others, made it clear that the land is so low to the water table, with a clear risk of flooding, that no permit could likely be granted for building there.

Steve Snyder pointed out that the previous structures had been condemned and demolished because of the flood plain issue.

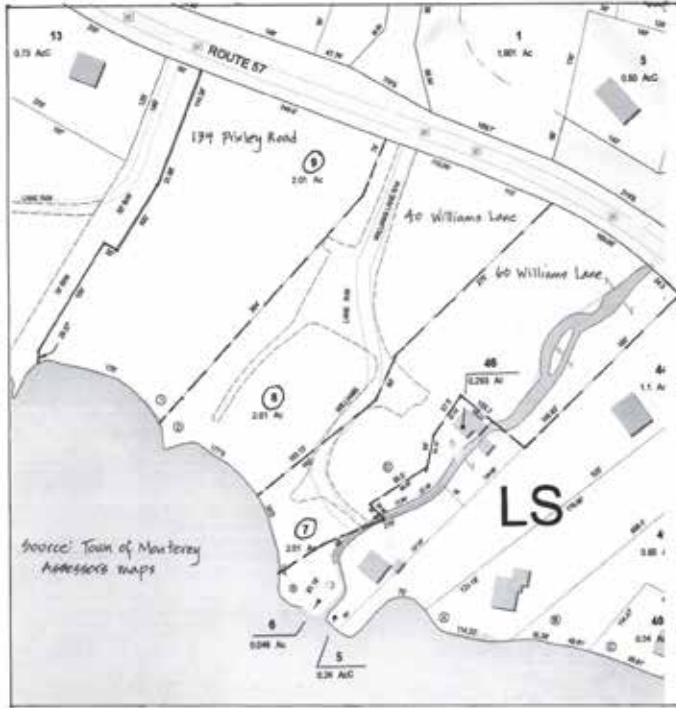
Along with the loss of tax revenue, there would be some expenses. Justin Makuc, select board chair, said that currently the property is mowed bi-weekly at a cost of \$2,800 per year, and greater recreational use might necessitate mowing weekly. There would also be other maintenance costs (tree removals, clean up, etc.) He did add that there are grants available specifically for renovating parks to support future plans. The select board would probably transfer the property to the parks commission for management.

Gerry Clarin of the parks commission pointed out that a town-wide survey recently showed real interest for a pickle ball court, senior exercise equipment, a dog park, and more kayak racks, and suggested this property could be used for this.

Mayra Rodriquez made the point that Lake Garfield gets pretty busy, with a lot of cars moving around. She said this potential park might relieve traffic at Lake Garfield. "And think about what it would offer to children of young families, which the town wants."

Snyder also said, "in terms of a park, I'd give up all the parks we already have in town for this space. It is amazing."

The discussion moved towards potential issues with the property itself, especially with regard to environmental problems. Steve Pullen raised the serious point of prior use and unknown environmental hazards. Elizabeth Andrus, who owns properties adjacent to the east side of the Lombardo properties, pointed out that there's a brand new, fifty-two unit septic system installed for the Lakeside >



Lombardo properties (#7, 8, & 9) map from town assessor's parcel maps.

Some of the initial discussion raised the points that the town would be losing tax revenue from the property, and incur-



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(continued) Lodge that has never been used. Justin Makuc added that with the demolition permits from twenty years ago the town might have a rough idea about possible issues.

It was clear that many in attendance were quite concerned that the town might be accepting a gift that could have significant hidden environmental issues. Jeff Zimmerman offered an amendment that would call for an environmental study to demonstrate that there were not “costly hazardous environmental conditions.” Moderator Makuc pointed out that amendments must be in exact language, which is difficult to do on the fly, and Susan Cooper pointed out that the word “costly” was too undefined.

With more wrangling over a possible amendment, select board chair Makuc made an appeal. Asking the town to trust the select board, he said, “We volunteered for this job to take care of the town,” to which there was a nice applause. He made the point that this article authorized the board to negotiate the gift, and that they certainly would not sign a deed without full due diligence, including environmental concerns.

Zimmerman followed by withdrawing his amendment, and with that a member spoke up, “I call the question,” which ends

debate and requires the article to go to a vote. The voice vote provided a clear majority in favor of the board going forward with the possibility of accepting the gift.

Solar Project

This article was the most technical and complex at the meeting. Peter Murkett, from the renewable energy working group (REWG), spoke to the proposal. He mentioned that the whole process is far more complex than he’d imagined when he began working on it, but feels it is worth following through on. The article is only one step towards completion. (A great deal of work has been done already with a paid consultant guiding the process, an RFP issued, and a developer selected.) As

with the discussion around the Lombardo properties, passage of this article would permit the REWG to continue negotiations with all the parties involved.

A question from a member of the Gould Farm community came up quickly. The speaker was concerned about the prospect of the facility being well lit at night, and the subsequent disruption of dark skies. Murkett responded that he didn’t believe there was any intention of having lighting during the dark hours, and was certain that no one on the REWG would support the inclusion of lighting in the project.

Part of the contract addresses revenues to the town in the form of property tax and PILOT (payment in-lieu of taxes)



Above map includes two large, ground-mounted solar arrays—one on the old town landfill south of the current transfer station, and one in an open area owned by Gould Farm. Note the two roof-mounted components at the highway garage on the salt shed and maintenance building. Source: Beacon Integrated Solutions.

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The Bridge Called Grief
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 The Bridge Called Grief
 Photo Essay by Mary Kate Jordan
 A conversation around the journey of solace.

Missed this event? Look for Mary Kate’s column next month to learn more.

revenue. Ilene Marcus, finance committee chair, questioned whether the PILOT payments would keep pace with values over the twenty-year term. Chris Aidun, a member of the REWG, said there would be an escalator clause in the contract for the PILOT payments. Murkett added that PILOT would be negotiated between the developer, HESP Solar of New Jersey, and the town board of assessors.

It is worth pointing out that the developer would be taxed on the real value of the equipment in the project, with the PILOT based on the value of the land which is owned and would continue to be owned by the town but would provide substantial benefit to the developer.

At the end of the discussion Murkett said, “What the article does is open the door to resolving these issues.” A vote was taken and with only a few dissenting voices, the measure was passed.

(For more details, go to montereyma.gov, click on “Select Board” under “Boards & Commissions.” At the top of the left sidebar is “11/2/24 Special Town Meeting” for all the documents pertinent to the articles.)

—Stephen Moore

Reporter’s note: *For anyone who despairs over democracy in this country, attending our town meetings among friends and neighbors and people you likely don’t know yet, is refreshing, very participatory, and at times entertaining. It seems that regardless of the issues raised, and the depths of disagreements, everyone leaves with a feeling of satisfaction over the process, even if they aren’t happy with some of the outcomes.* ❁❁❁

Your Town Trees: Firewood and New Plantings



Kevin West

For residents in need of firewood, please note that the tree warden has scheduled the next round of roadside cutting for December 16–18 to remove hazard trees from the town’s right of way. Crews from John Field Tree Service will begin at 7:15 a.m. on December 16 on the paved section of Beartown Mountain Road. The next two days they will be working on Route 23/Main Road east of Sandisfield Road.

Hazard trees for removal will be marked by the tree warden with a yellow dot. Most of what’s being cut are ash trees that have been killed or weakened by emerald ash borer. Ash provides superior firewood, and many of the ash marked for cutting are the ideal size, under 20” diameter.

Crews will leave logs neatly stacked in the town right of way for two weeks only. During that time, residents can take firewood on a first come, first serve basis. Anyone who uses firewood to heat their home is welcome to a fair share, but the town asks residents to be respectful of others’ needs. Don’t take more than you can use yourself and leave enough for others to benefit from what is, in effect, a public resource belonging to all.

Now the good news for those who hate to see trees come down and love to

see trees being planted: This fall, for the first time in years, the tree warden and town residents got together to plant new town trees.

Our symbolic first step was taken with help from the Monterey Native Plants Working Group and residents who attended my October talk at the Monterey Community Center. The topic was why and how to plant native hardwoods in the fall. Afterwards, a group of us put out a blight-resistant “Jefferson” elm, *Ulmus americana*, across from the schoolhouse—a tribute to the magnificent elms that once lined Main Road. Then, in early November, Gould Farm guests and crew



Ash firewood showing the damage caused by emerald ash borer. The feeding channels or “galleries” girdle the tree and quickly kill it. Photo by Kevin West.

helped me plant five tupelo or black gum trees, *Nyssa sylvatica*, along Route 23 on the straightaway across Gould Flats. They replaced three weeping willows cut last year because of storm damage.

Come spring, we’ll be back at it! In the New Year, I’ll share information about plans for a town-wide spring tree-planting campaign to celebrate Arbor Day 2025. Watch the *Monterey News* for information on how you can participate, both by helping to plant town trees and by buying trees to plant on your own property.

—Kevin West
Monterey tree warden



"Something Marvelous is Going On Here!"

Rutherford Platt, 1952



Bonner McAllester

What could it be? It is a tree. When he sat down to write his remarkable book *American Trees* in 1952, this was the only way Platt could think to start out, so wonderful is a

tree and so smitten was he. He tells us any tree should have a sign hung on it saying this very thing. Then he assures us that such a sign *does* hang on every tree. He writes that the sign is addressed to all our senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

He goes on. "Sometimes it is spectacular, and appears and disappears like a big electric sign in Times Square; the fall flaming of the maple; the white foam of dogwood in the spring; cottonwood 'snow' covering the ground; the roar of trees in a storm." He tells us some trees are big and eye-catching, some have a delicious fragrance, and all trees have "little intimate signs that point the way to discoveries of the spirit, of art, of mechanics, of astonishment at natural miracles, and of reassurance about life itself in a violent world."

Finally, as we are champing at the bit

to read the book, Platt leaves us with this introductory reassurance and challenge. "The spirit of a tree is our spirit. Its art is our art. Its color, designs, and the values of its wood and fruit are ours. If you would discover what kind of life is hidden in the shadows of leaves, and behind tough, silent bark, you must find it within yourself. Name tags and identifying features can only point the way."

This year, this fall, the oaks have showered their leaves and acorns as never before. Or so it seemed to many woods walkers during our long dry spell. Those leaves did not lie down quietly! They reared up, stayed a little curly and were they ever noisy to walk through. Not only that, but under them, out of sight like a generous blanket of scattered marbles, was a crop of acorns like we do not often encounter.

We in North America are well-endowed with oaks. The 1968 Golden Field Guide lists sixty species native here, though it only takes up forty to describe in its pages. The oaks are listed as members of the beech family, along with the beeches we know, and the chestnuts. Among oaks there are those of the white oak group and those of the red oak group. Some call this the black oak group, as taxonomy and common parlance attempt to get together.

The white oaks have leaves that are a bit rounded looking at the ends of their lobes. Trees in the white oak group have nuts that grow and fall off in a few months, ready to sprout. They can also break up rapidly and vanish into the soil, unless



they are first gobbled down by blue jays, crows, squirrels, mice, or folks. Their meat is sweet.

The trees in the red oak group mature in their second season. Then they can germinate and start up a new tree. But to last all that time without being eaten they get put on earth real bitter. Some people will still eat them, maybe because there are no white acorns handy, or maybe because they read somewhere that you can do this if you shell the nuts, grind them, then boil them six times throwing away the water from each boiling. We tried that in our family and after all that processing the acorn flour did not taste like much, plus it was too scant and too precious to use. We probably still have it in some little jar in the back of the cupboard.

One old book says the wood from the red oak group is "inferior" to that of the white oaks. But it still can be used in cooperage, for making cheap furniture, for construction, and for fuel. This book

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was written in 1905 and belonged to my grandmother. The bark of the red oaks is greyish brown and widely furrowed. Between its ridges the bark has a red tinge, and the small twigs are also reddish. There are black oaks, red oaks, and chestnut oaks in this group. All their leaves have pointy lobes.

Oaks in history were sacred among Greeks, Romans, Teutons, and Celts. Norse shipbuilders made sure to build in "hearts of oak" to make the ships strong enough to withstand fierce storms. Druids held sacred gatherings under the shade of oaks, also gathered mistletoe from the trees using a hook made of gold. Mistletoe was important for welcoming in the New Year, as was the "yule log." This was oak, of course, dragged in to a fireplace and burned as a sacrifice to Yaiol, Celtic god of fire. There would be a big feast.



Tenth Century Norse ship. Public domain.

Yaiol would then help the people out by loosening winter's grip on the region and making the days get longer again.

As if this were not enough benefit, it was widely known that sleeping under the shade of an oak was a cure for paralysis. Also, if you have a black horse and wish for a change, feed it little oak galls in with its oats and within a few days your horse will become a dapple grey.

If Rutherford Platt were alive today, I know he would like this song, written by an old friend. The chorus:

By golly I admire a tree, big, tall and sappy, really makes you happy.

I love 'em 'cause it seems to me, nothing could be finer than a big green tree.
(Dennis Murphy, of Plainfield, Vermont)

—Bonner McAllester



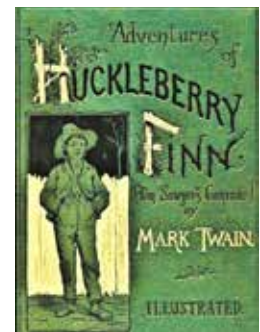
Veterans Day Ceremony at the library, 2024.

Ice Rink Prep

Can't believe it's that time again! This year's Monterey ice rink setup is on Saturday, December 7, at 9:30 a.m.

Please bring a cordless drill if possible. Also if anyone has a two-wheel dolly, or a leaf blower that would be helpful. Thank you.

—Peter Poirier



Daytime Book Club

Last month we read and enjoyed *James* by Percival Everett. As a result we decided to read the book *James*

was based on, *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. Hope you can all make it to our next meeting on Wednesday, December 11, at 1:30 p.m., when the library opens.

—Beth Hoffman

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Historical Society News

What Was Our Town Like in 1830?



Rob Hoogs

I often try to imagine what Monterey was like in the past. Records are helpful in piecing together the puzzle. Recently I ran across a book

with 1831 Massachusetts Valuation Records which enumerates statistics about each town. The 1830 Federal Census is also helpful, although only the names of the Heads of Household are listed, with numbers indicating the other household members by age and sex. We also have an 1830 map of Tyringham (both North Tyringham, and South Tyringham, now Monterey). The map shows roads and many of the mills (Figures 1 and 2). With these, we can start to see the

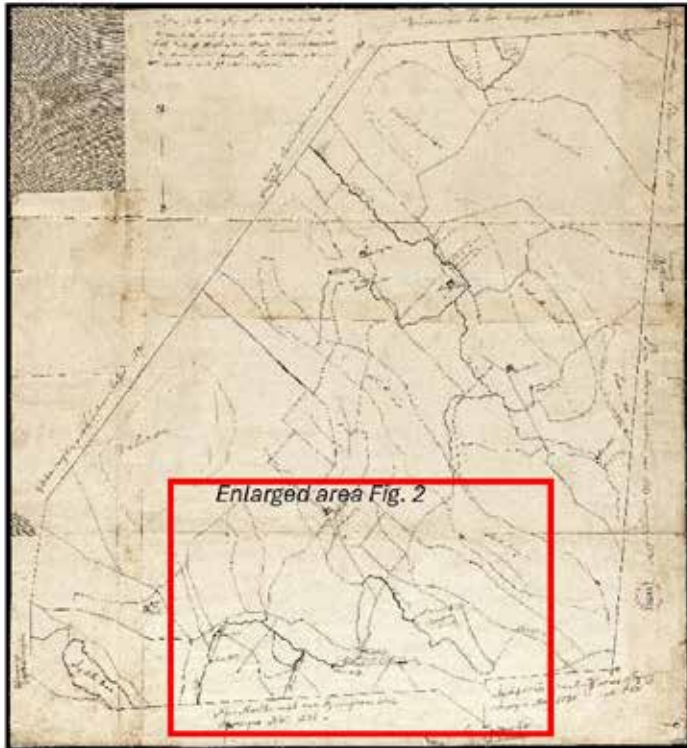


Figure 1 1830 Map of Tyringham (North and South)

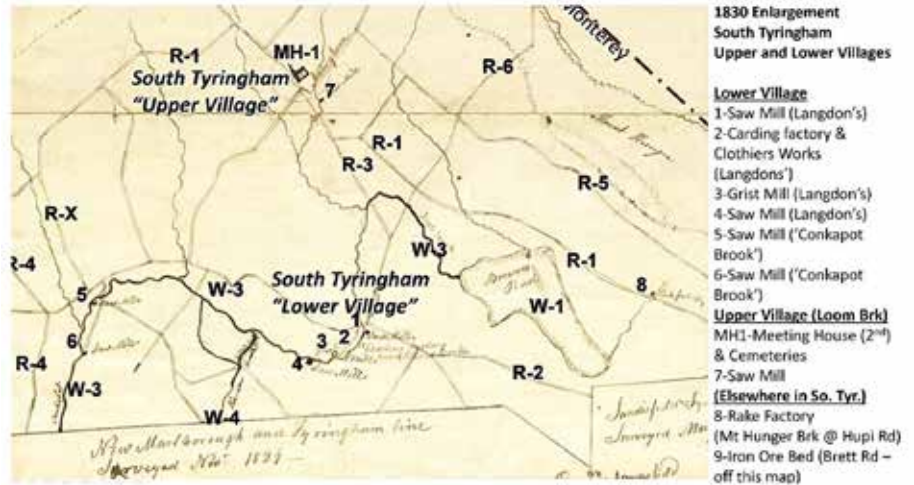


Figure 2 Enlarged 1830 Map showing South Tyringham. The "Lower Village" is what is now Monterey Village. Annotations indicate Mills(#), Roads (R), and Streams (W).

North and South Tyringham – was 1,348. That's not too different from the full-time population here today. But the population was declining. In 1830, Tyringham had 92 people fewer than the 1820 census and 364 fewer than the 1800 census when there were 1,712 people, it's high point.

The white population was 1,327. The population of "Free Colored Persons" was 21. (No slaves were listed.) The population was almost evenly split between males and females. As to ages, 507 of the people, about 38%, were between the age of zero and 14! (No wonder there were nine schools in town.) Five hundred and twenty-eight (39%) were between 15 and 39. One hundred and ninety-three (14%) were 40 to 59. 120 were 60 and upwards. One man was over 90.

Who were some of these people? There were a lot of familiar names from our history: ten families were

named Brewer, eight Garfield, seven Dowd, seven Heath, six Thomson (or Thompson), six Langdon, five Bill, four Tyrrell, four Stedman, three Webster, three

Mansir, three Townsend, three Bidwell, two Hale, two Judd, two Fargo, and one Slater. Many other extended families were in town including Hitchcock, Wheelock, Chapin, Harmon, Miner, Orton, Curtis, Rewey, Markham, Rogers, Pixley, Northrup, and MacCollum. (The Tryons did not arrive until one to two decades later.)

From the 1831 Valuation Records, we learn that, of the 679 men in town, there were 271 "rateable polls, 16 years old and upwards." These were men who owned sufficient property, and paid a "poll tax" to be entitled to vote. There were 191.5 dwelling houses. (Who had half a house?) Two of the dwellings were apparently boarding houses, with 25 residents in one and 60 in the other.

One of the dwelling houses had a shop within or adjoining it. There were two tanneries, three warehouses and stores, >

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broad outlines of the town 200 years ago. Here are some of the facts. The 1830 total population of the town – both



MONTEREY NEWS

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For more than fifty years the *Monterey News* has helped to enrich the Monterey community with its comprehensive reporting of the events and people in town. From the latest cultural events to the wildlife report to the latest actions of town governance, the *Monterey News* has been there to inform Montereyans about the comings and goings in and about town.

However, many small town newspapers including the *Monterey News* need financial support to enable them to survive in the world of larger publications and the digital media.

Since the *Monterey News* is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, monetary donations are tax-deductible and most appreciated. Please consider supporting this request as you close out 2023. Donations may be made out to the *Monterey News*, and mailed to the Monterey News, P.O. Box 9, Monterey MA 01245-0009.

Thank for your support, enjoy the holiday season and have a safe and happy New Year.

—Kyle Pierce, Dennis Lynch, Steve Snyder, Cindy Hoogs, Bonner McAllester, Roz Halberstadter, and Janet Jensen, the *Monterey News* Board of Directors.

The valuation records naturally had a lot of data about farming. There were 239 barns in Tyringham, about 1.25 barns per dwelling house. 408.5 acres were in tillage, including orchards that were tilled. The tilled land produced 40 bushels of wheat, 1023 bushels of rye, 2852 bushels of oats, and 1947 bushels of Indian corn. One source states that local wheat production was low because cheaper wheat was being imported from the “west” (meaning New York and Ohio).

One thousand, nine hundred and thirty-eight acres were mowed hay fields producing 1,994 tons of hay, about one ton per acre. Another 2,775 acres were pasture, used by 1,602 cows and 450 steers and heifers. There were 1995 sheep, 325 swine, 343 oxen for plowing, and 242 horses (and lots of manure).

The numbe of acres of Tyringham listed as woodland was 15,744. (This was before charcoaling for the iron furnaces resulted in the woodlands being almost totally clearcut by the 1880s.)

And 2,671 acres were “unimprovable,” probably too wet, rocky or steep to use. Monterey has always been a tough > p.20

two grist mills, two carding machines with their buildings (for “carding” wool), two fulling mills (for fulling wool), and an amazing nine sawmills! Six of the nine sawmills, one of the two grist mills, and one carding factory are shown on Figure

2 along with other businesses. There was also one paper mill, and one other mill not otherwise classified. There were 17 other shops in town, such as blacksmiths, shoemakers, rake factories, mouse trap factories, etc.



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Bidwell House Museum



Heather Kowalski

The board of directors and staff of the Bidwell House Museum want to say a heartfelt thank you, as 2024 is coming to a close, to all of our friends and neighbors in Monterey.

Whether through a chat while attending programs, volunteering in the gardens or emailing me to tell the Museum how much you love our



trails, you have shown us again and again how much you care about the Bidwell House. We feel so lucky to be a part of such a supportive and friendly community.

Our seasonal house tours concluded at the end of October, and after two lovely and intimate programs at the house in November, the museum is now in the quietest part of its year. Inside the office, however, staff members are hard at work

planning for a slew of interesting programs for 2025. These include lectures on early colonial currency, historic architecture and early American taverns; a concert of music from the Revolutionary War; and a weekend-long living history event in October.

In order to continue this planning work throughout the winter, we are asking for your help! Our annual appeal campaign letter, with an update on the museum and images from this past year, went out in November and we ask you to please consider donating to this end of the year fundraising campaign. The donations from our annual appeal allow us to keep sharing our trails, the Bidwell story and history education with the entire local community. If you would like to support the museum head to bidwellhousemuseum.org/donate/ and select *Annual Appeal* from the drop down menu on the left.

As we say each winter, don't forget that the museum gardens and trails are open year round for hiking, walking your dog or even snowshoeing and cross-country skiing! Winter is a truly special time to visit the museum grounds and connect with the property and the animals that leave their mark. Trail maps, along with information about our two self-guided outdoor walks, can be found on the front porch, the parking kiosk and on the museum website at bidwellhousemuseum.org/trails and bidwellhousemuseum.org/the-museum/guided-tours.

Have a wonderful holiday season!

—Heather Kowalski
Executive Director

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Coffee Club Invitation

We would be happy to have some new folks come join us for our gatherings. We only have two rules: for the most part, no politics, and no extended medical discussions! We just enjoy a friendly start to our day. A few brave women come too.

Tuesday and Thursday, church basement. Wednesday, Roadside. Fridays Southfield Store (all at 8:30 a.m.). Saturday, Monterey Community Center at 9 a.m. Hope to see you there!

The Budget Cycle

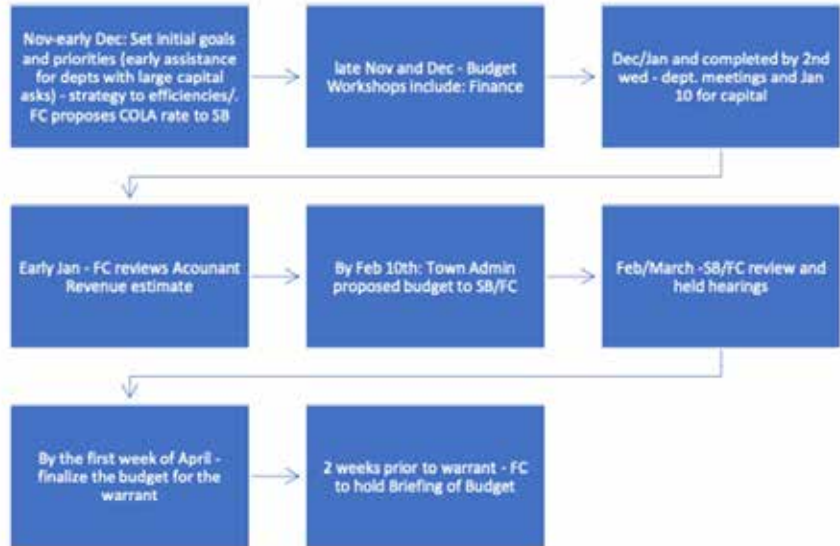


Ilene Marcus

Budgeting is an annual process and as most processes go, the better information we get, the better the process and even better the outcome.

Everyone can have a say in the preparation of the Town’s budget. There are departmental, board and commission meetings, to gather information about operations, determine needs, set priorities, and estimate expenses.

Budgeting is a lengthy iterative process, starting with a review of what happened last year both in spending and revenue collection. Next, we collect information from those providing the operations and services, seeking stakeholder input, including boards, staff, and trusted advisors, researching policy changes, and finding comparable data and facts. This all leads up to a proposed budget, includ-



ing expenditure and revenue projections, discussions and review on the items included, and the finance committee and select board presenting a proposed budget at our annual town meeting.

The Budget Cycle

There are four major steps we follow in Monterey to project our expenditures, produce our town budget, approve our budget and then track expenditures (graphic right).

The Budget Timeline

We follow a process dictated by our town bylaws and other laws pertaining to open meetings and disseminating information. Most importantly, we want to make sure there is time for research, follow-up, and conversations to set priorities and understand each expenditure.

This process is used for both operating expenses – items that happen annually and capital plan requests, items whose

cost will be spread out over several years (may include borrowing) due to the nature of the expense and it’s long-term purpose (graphic above).

How are Proposed Expenses Calculated?

The finance committee has adopted zero-based budgeting. This is a budgeting method that requires all expenses to be justified and approved in each new budget period. This method analyses each department’s needs and costs by starting from a “zero base” at the beginning of every budget period. Zero-based budgeting requires every item in our budget to be justified, including quantity needed, price, usage, and other factors that influence the cost.

Here is a link to an article that goes more in-depth: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/z/zbb.asp>

The Role of the Finance Committee

We meet with the town administrator, department heads, board and commissions and ask questions such as:

- What was used and spent last year. What will be different this year?
 - Is the primary function these dollars were allocated to being achieved?
 - Was a procurement process utilized? Is this efficient?
 - How do other towns get it done?
 - What are the ideas to improve operations and lower costs?
- (continued)



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- What needs may arise in the future?
 - What information from the town's strategic plan and other planning process needs to be reflected in this budget?
 - Are there grants or other funding sources to accomplish this?
- And of course, situational questions based on the information we gather.

What's Next?

Have any questions, come to a finance committee meeting, check the town website for times. Contact the finance committee through the link on the Town Website at <https://www.montereyma.gov/user/676/contact>.

Stay tuned for more updates.
 It turns out it does take the whole village. Or in our circumstances, it takes the whole town to prepare the budget.
 —Ilene Marcus
 Finance Committee Chair

Library Notes



Mark Makuc

The library will be open normal hours Dec. 24 (9-1), Dec. 26 (9-1; 4-8), Dec. 31 (9-1), and Jan. 2 (9-1; 4-8). It will be closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1.

The big news from the library is that the strategic plan for the next five years is now available on the library website, and will be, if not already, available to look at in hard copy when printed. Many of

you contributed to the plan by survey or by going to the forum. We appreciate the feedback, and have organized it into a plan that will guide the direction of the library. We have seen increased use of the building since it was finished over five years ago, with the reality of a pandemic that certainly affected that in a negative way. We hope to grow our service to the community even more with our space and library services through more efficient communication, so that everyone feels welcome and benefits from all our different resources.

—Mark Makuc
 Director

Digital Navigator

My name is Cole Rosseter, and I'm excited to fill the new position of digital



Cole Rosseter

navigator for the Monterey Library. I grew up in New Marlborough and graduated Mt Everett High School. I enjoy using technology

to stay organized and informed, and appreciate how each advancement makes life a bit more efficient. When I'm not on a device, I enjoy hiking, biking, and reading.

In today's world, technology is essential for staying connected. This position was created to bridge the digital divide, and ensure everyone has the tools they need to succeed in the modern age.

Whether it's learning to use a device, accessing online resources, or trouble-

shooting everyday technology issues, my goal is to help people embrace technology in their everyday lives.

Through this program we are now offering iPads for people to borrow, mobile hotspots for those without internet, and Chromebooks will soon be available.

This program is made possible by a generous grant from the AARP, whose funding has brought this opportunity to life. However, this position will only be available until December 31. I encourage everyone to take advantage of this resource while it lasts. I will be at the library on Mondays from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m., Thursdays from 4 p.m. – 8 p.m., and Saturdays 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. My email is digitalnavigatormonterey@gmail.com. Please, never hesitate to reach out. It's a pleasure to serve the town in this capacity, and I'm grateful for the chance to make a positive impact.

—Cole Rosseter
 Digital Navigator

December Contributions

- James and Catherine Miller
- Gail Heath
- Richard Greene & Lindsay Crampton

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Thank you for helping us continue this tradition.

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Knox Gallery News



MaryPaul Yates

All attendees enjoyed Pat Badt's reception on Friday, November 29, and were intrigued by the discussion of her work and Sarah Varney's

interview of the artist. The exhibit, *Reading Between the Lines*, is up through 1 p.m. on December 7, so you still have a few days to see it.

Thanks to the Monterey and Massachusetts Cultural Councils for supporting our artist talks and discussions, and to the Friends of the Monterey Library for supporting the Knox Gallery.

Our traditional holiday group show will open on Friday, December 13, and be on view through January 25, 2025. This year instead of a show title we offered a prompt from Dr. Seuss: "You'll never get bored when you try something new. There's no limit to what you can do." We are excited to see the "something new"

from our very creative community.

For example, Dan Mead and Sally Eagle (image below) offered, "Hot air ballooning, at dawn, no matter where you are, is a magical experience. Above the Bagan Plains in Myanmar was an exceptional opportunity!"



Please join us for the opening reception on the thirteenth, and if you can, please bring a finger food to share. Paul dePreter and James Boneparth are granted special brownie points for helping with this event.

Work to be exhibited must be dropped off at the gallery either Monday, December 9, 7-9 p.m., or Tuesday, December 10, between 10 a.m. and noon. (Intent to Enter was due on November 25.)

We do not have the capacity to store

work, so your work must be submitted and retrieved during the designated hours. It must be properly mounted, framed, and wired to be shown. Special thanks to Maggie Barkin and other volunteers for agreeing to handle accepting the artwork. More special thanks to Michael Banner for installing our exhibits. We also appreciate Connor Simone for getting our Google document sign-in set up, and Mark Makuc for help on a million things throughout the year.

We hope the topic inspired – and continues to inspire – all of you, and we look forward to seeing your results. Thanks to all participating artists and volunteers, from Knox Gallery co-directors Julie Shapiro and this author.

All Knox Gallery events are admission free. Exhibits can be viewed during library hours (see back page of this issue). Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 528-3795; MontereyMassLibrary.org/Knox-Gallery; Facebook.com/Knox.

—MaryPaul Yates

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Letter of Appreciation Brewer Pond Trail

We would like to thank the parks commission, and anyone else who was responsible for the construction of the trail that goes around Brewer Pond, opposite the town beach, and into which Lake Garfield drains.

I learned about the trail from an article that Mark Andrews wrote in the November 2023 (page 7) *Monterey News*. The trail was just opening then and all the finishing touches and signage had yet to be done.

We walked the trail with our three grandkids, five, eight, and ten year-olds, and had a lovely time just exploring around the pond. The beavers have been quite busy doing their tree work!

The pond is an impoundment with a dam alongside Beartown Road. It is a lovely spot to sit and have some quiet time looking out over the pond, just not with three excited children. Part of the structure there provides a dry hydrant for the fire department to fill their tanker trucks.

The access to the trail is marked by a sign in the kayak racks yard opposite the boat ramp. The northern end emerges behind the guardrail along Tyringham Road and we walked back to our car at the beach area. With all our inquisitive explorations we spent perhaps an hour.

—Stephen Moore and Wendy Jensen



The kids were very engaged with one area where the beavers had recently been very active.



Evie is six and is in the first grade at Berkshire Country Day School. Evie loves cats but loves dogs more- especially her own dog, Moby. She loves taking Moby for walks in Monterey. This photo of Evie

was taken in November on Diane's Trail at Gould Farm.



Christmas Trees, by Phoebe Tryon.



Photos to the left on this page (with doughnuts) and on p. 17 were shared by Maureen Banner, Dennis Lynch, and Mark Makuc. They were taken at the library on November 30 in celebration of the Monterey Lights the Holidays annual event. This was the fifth year of the town tradition. Learn more on p. 17.



Wreath found on Diane's Trail. Photo by Denise Carnese.

Poetry, Music & Lights



Monterey Lights the Holidays: A Tradition of Community

Two days after Thanksgiving, at 7 p.m., eighty-nine friends, neighbors, and families gathered on a crisp evening at the library to celebrate Monterey Lights the Holidays. Mother Nature's gusty winds during the afternoon had given way just in time for Bonner McAllester to play welcoming music. Then Mark Makuc greeted the crowd dressed in their warm winter clothing for the big moment – the lighting of the library lights, and perhaps of our hope for our community and beyond.

Monterey Lights the Holidays was conceived by the Monterey community center committee in 2020. With grant funding from the Monterey Cultural Council, it was a small community's answer to the indoor isolation and detachment brought about by the pandemic. The darkness and horror of those days was to be broken



Light Goes Everywhere

Coffee from a sprawling cup
escapes you while you mop it up.
Sunlight too flows everywhere --
between blinds and across a chair.

And when somebody throws a switch
(after the accustomed glitch)
to light the village Christmas tree,
besides bright faces what we see

is our neighbor, blind from birth,
smiling for all she's worth
at glimmering lights against the sky,
or rather at our happy sigh

reminding her that our word *light*
rhymes with *night* and *height* and *bright*.

—Don Barkin

by lights of hope and resolve in a small Berkshire gathering. Town members first came together for the community lighting ceremony in an outdoor setting (widely considered safer than indoors) to celebrate the meaning of the word community.

Following Mark's words of welcome, master of ceremonies, Maggie Barkin, introduced acclaimed poet (and her husband) Don Barkin, who delivered his thoughtful poem "Light Goes Everywhere." After I reminded the group of how this tradition came to be, Maggie invited all present to ready their battery-powered hand-held lights as the countdown to the lighting of the tree and Menorah began in front of the library. "Five, four, three, two" ...and town center glowed along with the soft LED lights of houses from Sandisfield Road



to the Monterey Firehouse, the church, the General Store, the Corner House and Riverbend. Next, Bonner joyfully invited all to a sing-along before everyone gathered in the library for warm apple cider and scrumptious doughnuts provided by Cheryl Zellman (donuts were courtesy of the Friends of Wilson-McLaughlin House). Inside holiday melodies played by Allan Dean, trumpet; John Myers, guitar; and Pete Toigo, bass, set the perfect scene for the lighthearted celebration filled with laughter, and friendly conversations. As the band played, the intense attention of an attendee's young grandson gave pause to an observer: what a gift for the child to be so connected in the moment, so captivated by the music and the act of bringing it into the world.

Let's hope that this town holiday tradition continues to inspire all those young granddaughters and grandsons. May they pay it forward to all they meet throughout their lives.

—Dennis Lynch

Supper Club

When I chose the theme “Turn Up the Heat” for Supper Club last month, I would have never thought that it would apply so well throughout the following week. One week after Supper Club, the heat was definitely turned up in the (terrifying) wildfire that started in Great Barrington, and Old Man Weather was spinning warm, sunny days through Wednesday. However, as Thursday ticked in on the clock, we were bowing at the mercy of the rain gods, and it was all-hands-on-thermostats as the temperature dropped. When I woke up on Friday to a dusting of snow from the fluffy, frosty flakes that were falling, I was floored. Nature had given us quite the grab bag of landscape shifts, and I found the integration of our supper club theme to be peculiarly humorous. Irony, anyone?



Chowder.

Our buffet table had dishes that were fitting for the course of the following week (with the exception of the wildfire—I don’t know of any recipes for “Wildfire Crepes with Ice Cream and Raspberry Sauce,” nor do I think the emergency personnel at the forefront of fire control were sitting down



to enjoy a warming plate of Meatball Marsala with Roasted Butternut & Potatoes).

For the warmer days, our wonderful police officer Jen Brown, having made pesto from basil she grew over the summer, whipped up some Pesto Penne, there was a “not too hot” Honey & Tahini Glazed Veggie dish, and a delightfully flavorful “Kitchen Sink” green curry made by Monterey’s resident cartoonist, Kit Patten. Kit, was it Spirogie that inspired your dish?

To warm us up and address our need for classic appetizers, we had bread and cheese (with the most amazing cheese knife I’ve seen in my life), Cheesy Chili Crisp White Beans, corn casserole, and a much-enjoyed Lentil and Mushroom Soup. Ending the day on a sweet note, we enjoyed (the aforementioned) crepes, Chocolate Orange Panettone, Cider Glazed Apple Bundt Cake, fresh cheesecake with a palate-pleasing tart/sweet balanced Lemon Curd (made from Michael and Elizabeth Germain’s homegrown lemons), and not-too-spicy *Gochujang* cookies. “Another notch in the belt,” I thought as I fittingly turned down the heat of the

church basement when Supper Club was over. “Nothing was lacking on this one.”

What will be lacking for our December Supper Club, however, will be liquid. I’ve been wanting to do a “Souper” Supper Club since we had our first meal in June of 2023, but the idea of bowls as far as the eye can see has prevented me from entertaining the thought as realistic. I unintentionally found the loophole when I was making chicken broth a few weeks ago—it’s cold season, and broth should always be on hand for hydration...excitedly, I found our theme for Supper Club this month: “Soup-Not-Soup: Save the Broth.” Dishes will be the makings of soup, but without broth—Cream of Mushroom Soup becomes creamed mushrooms, minestrone morphs into a flavorful pasta dish, beef & barley bakes into a beautiful casserole. We will plate up with soup-not-soup goodness on Monday, December 9, around 6 p.m. in the church basement.


Side note—we will have name tags this time, so be sure to fill one out. Please send your (required) RSVP to supperclubmonterey@gmail.com by Sunday, December 8.

—Hanna Jensen


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Wildlife Report

In the middle of last month I was lucky to see once again two otters gamboling in Royal Pond, which was not yet frozen. Often in the winter they have kept a hole open in the ice there and will come right up and settle safely on the ice, sometimes bringing up a fish to gobble down, and sometimes just enjoying the sun, I think.

Liza Catino of Lake Buel sent in a photo of geese in the open water, one tipped up looking for a meal (below). She



also sent along a photograph by her friend Paula Hatch, showing two handsome bald eagles up in a pine. This is near Lake Buel (photo top, next column).



Carol Edelman of Hupi Road has enjoyed porcupines visiting her yard over the years. She sent a photograph of the most recent one to come by, calling him Mr. Pricklepins, referring to a poem by Beatrix Potter. Though I know many little books



by Potter, I had to look up this critter. There is a nice drawing/painting so it looks to me as if she is writing about a hedgehog (left). Those Brits

have to cross the Atlantic west to see a porcupine, last I knew. And we have to cross east for a hedgehog, or hedge-pidge as some of them say. The Brits are quite fond of their hedgehogs. Our porcupines eat bark, also apples. They are rodents. The hedgehogs are omnivores, liking all sorts of worms and insects, even snails and frogs and toads, but they do not eat bark. Hedgehogs hibernate but porcupines stay active all winter, often holing up in a crevice in a rocky place, to be safe, or

else climbing a tree and relaxing up there in a good crotch of a branch.

We have a Carolina wren visiting our off-season garden, flitting on the empty pole trellises hoping for some insect tucked away under the bark there.

Steve Moore wrote of a visiting fox “patrolling our now-asleep garden.” The fox “tipped his/her head side to side, then did a four-legged pounce. . . and came up with some lunch and in a minute that lunch was gone.” From Steve’s description, I think this was a grey fox. It did not have a white tip at the end of the tail, which is so typical of red foxes. There is some variety in the colors on a grey fox, and the legs may be dark, but never as dark as the very black legs on a red fox.

Mickey Jervas also brought news of successful canine feasting, from over in Richmond where some coyotes have already enjoyed an early turkey dinner.

In the insect world, Cora Baker knew someone was munching on her sunflowers, and from the looks of things I thought it might have been a deer. Big mouthfuls of petals gone, also leaves. It turned out to be one real large caterpillar, of the cutworm family. We put it in a jar, with a sunflower leaf, and relocated it to a place where it can find plenty of “various forbs,” which the book says it will like. It may also be ready to head underground for the winter, to pupate there, and then emerge as a “yellow under-wing moth.” We let it go far from anyone’s garden, under a crabapple tree near the Otis Library.

Thanks, everyone, for keeping an eye out for the wildlife and for reporting to me.

—Bonner McAllester

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(continued from page 11) place to earn living from farming. Mount Hunger was not named by accident.

I hope this snapshot gives you a sense of what Monterey was like two centuries ago.

Monterey Village Historic District

On Thursday, October 24, the Monterey Historical Commission in collaboration with the Historical Society hosted an informational program at the Monterey Library about the potential for listing Monterey Village as an Historic District. Over 30 people attended and seemed interested in this possibility. More information and additional meetings will be held to explore this.

Become a Member

Thank you for your interest in local history. If you'd like to participate, please join the Monterey Historical Society. Annual membership is only \$25 for a household. Membership forms are available at the Monterey Library. Memberships now will count through 2025.

—Rob Hoogs

OSRP Receives Final Approval

The OSRP Committee received notice last week from the state that the 2024 Open Space and Recreation Plan submitted in June, after ten months of work, has been approved.

Monterey is now eligible to apply for a number of Land Conservation and Park grants from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). Monterey is eligible to apply for grants through September 2031. Look for more information on the Town website under the OSRP tab.

—Susan Cooper, Margy Abbott, Gerry Clarin, Rob Hoogs, Mark Andrews, Jim Hunt, Dennis Lynch

Cane and Able? Durable Medical Equipment

What if, with a little wordplay, the story of Cain and Abel were changed to *cane and able*? A shift from a story of jealousy and fratricide to one of generosity and support. Think how important the simple cane is to so many of us who need more than a shoulder to lean on. This appeal is about canes...and much more.

Under the aegis of the Monterey Council on Aging, the leadership team of the Parkinson's Support Group (PSG) has undertaken a project to set up a Durable Medical Equipment (DME) donation program. We want to collect good clean equipment no longer needed, enabling us

please let us know. The PSG's team contact person for this appeal is Roberta Weiss. At the monthly PSG on October 10, Roberta gave a thorough, informative talk about and demonstration of many DMEs, from the simple cane to folding wheelchairs. Some examples of DMEs:

- Canes and crutches, preferably adjustable
- Rollators, folding wheelchairs
- Walkers, with and without wheels
- Tub and shower benches and seats
- Handrails for tubs
- Commodes, raised toilet seats.

If you have some equipment that you'd like to donate or request to use, please call Roberta Weiss at: (413) 528 8096.

— Bob Cutick



to provide such items to residents who cannot afford them either for temporary (e.g. post hip or knee replacement), or long term use.

The success of this program depends on finding a suitable place where the equipment can be safely stored. If you have any leads to one, please get in touch with us. The Transfer Station is one possibility we will explore. If you or someone you know has a shed or large basement that has room,



Bonner McAllester, Christmas Tree.



The Berkshire Pond Hockey Classic, presented by Berkshire Bank is back for its third year, after a successful inaugural outdoor tournament last year on Benedict Pond, recaps available by Googling “Berkshire Pond Hockey Classic” in the



Live action from last year’s tournament.

Berkshire Edge and the Berkshire Eagle.

The dates for 2025 are tentatively Saturday, February 15, or Saturday, February 22, weather depending (teams are asked to set aside both weekends) and we will know in early February whether either weekend is doable. The permit is pending for Benedict Pond in Beartown State Forest in Monterey/Great Barrington.

Format: 16-teams (there were 12

last year). Six skaters per team. Four on four (96 total skaters), coed and many of our Monterey community members/businesses participate.

There will be a Food truck (Charlies Bistro Bus), coffee for sale from No. Six Depot, tea from Extra Special Teas, music, and bonfires. The event is child friendly and free for spectators, thanks to our generous sponsors: Berkshire Bank, Classical Tents, Berkshire Magazine, Great Barrington Bagel Company, Great Barrington Brewery, Canna Provisions, Herrington’s Lumber (who provided free lumber for the 4 rinks worth of boards) and Elegant Stitches in Pittsfield who are printing custom jerseys.

To apply for a team or to request to be put on a team, please visit berkshire-pondhockeyclassic.com and there is a contact form there. Please note: The event is coed and 21+ with a \$50 entry fee for skaters (which goes toward the cost of the free breakfast, and custom jerseys). Spots are limited and 12 teams out of 16 are already penciled in, so contact ASAP if you want to play.

The Monterey Parks and Recs Committee is co-sponsor. And the whole event falls under the umbrella of the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires and is fiscally sponsored by their 501c3. Our chief of police, fire chief, and the Beartown DCR are major partners in making this event possible.



Lost and (Hopefully) Found

Yours? Adirondack Chair , yellow, floated over on Lake Garfield. Can be picked up at 23 Point Rd. anytime.



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Mail financial donations to:
P.O. Box 363, Monterey, MA 01245. Please include the name and address to which the receipt is to be mailed.

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Drop off food: the church basement.

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HomeShare Interest Survey

Take this [survey](#) to help us gauge community interest in bringing a HomeShare Program to Berkshire County.

A HomeShare program is a safe, reliable way to match a homeowner with extra space with someone looking to provide household support for free or low-cost accommodation.

This survey **does not** commit you to participation in a HomeShare Program and is intended solely to gauge community interest.

BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission



November COA lunch at Roadside.

CATCHING UP WITH THE COA

Happy Holidays all! We wish you a healthy, happy and safe holiday season spent with those you love. Many thanks to everyone who supports the COA by joining us at events and helping with ideas, baking, shopping, set up, and clean-up, too. We appreciate you! And we hope to see you soon.

To reach me to reserve for events, with questions about scheduled events, or suggestions for new ones, please call (413) 528-1443, extension 112 or email me at coaoutreach@montereyma.gov. Phone messages are picked up once daily, Monday through Friday.

- Kathryn Roberts
COA Outreach Coordinator/
Administrative Assistant

Coming Events

Friday, December 6: Monthly Lunch at Mt. Everett High School Seniors Luncheon at noon. 491 Berkshire School Road, Sheffield. Reservations with Kathryn are encouraged.

Monday December 9: COA Board Meeting at Town Hall 10:30 am to 12:00 pm. The agenda is posted on the Town Hall website. All are welcome.

Wednesday, December 11: Movie Night at the Monterey Library 7 pm Little Women. This 1994 adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's classic proves that a timeless story can succeed no matter how many times it's told. Get there a few minutes early for schmoozing and light refreshments.

Wednesday, December 18: Afternoon at the Movies at the Monterey Library 2 pm with the original Miracle on 34th Street. Warm up the holidays with this heartwarming classic. It's the best! Get there a few minutes early for schmoozing and light refreshments.

Monday January 6: COA Board Meeting at Town Hall 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. The agenda is posted on the Town Hall website. All are welcome.

Wednesday, January 22 : Monthly Lunch at Pleasant and Maine, 1063 Main St, Housatonic at Noon. Reservations

with Kathryn are encouraged.

Ongoing Services

Parkinson's Support Group: This month's meeting is on Thursday, December 5, from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Monterey Library. Caregivers are encouraged to attend. Call Kathryn at the number above if you'd like more information.

Transportation: Transportation is available to all Monterey residents for trips to Great Barrington, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, Egremont and Sheffield. Call (413) 591-3826. Hours are Monday - Thursday, 6:30 am - 9 pm, Friday 6:30 am - 11:30 pm, Saturday 7:30 am - 11 pm., Sunday 7:30 am - 9 pm Rides to New Marlborough are available Monday - Friday only, 8 am - 4 pm only, and limited to seniors and people with disabilities. Pittsfield is limited to Monday and Wednesday only, 8 am - 4 pm, for medical visits only.

Foot Nurse: Beverly Dunn is available for home visits. Call (413) 446-2469 to schedule an appointment. The COA covers \$10 of her fee.

Free Safety Vests: Vests to ensure you are visible to car traffic when walking, running or biking are available in town hall.



Kathryn Roberts holiday decorating at town hall.



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Community Center Calendar

Weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly activities:

Mondays:

Hablemos! 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., first three Mondays of the month; 10 to 11:30 a.m. on the fourth Monday. *Inter-medio y superior*—to practice Spanish and meet new friends.

Simple meditation, all are welcome, 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

Not meeting in December: Cook book club.

December 23: Book club, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Fourth Monday of the month.

Tuesdays:

Chair yoga, 10 to 11 a.m.

Vikki True, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Bridge and pitch, 1 to 4 p.m.

Mahjong, 7 to 9 p.m.

Wednesdays:

Tai chi with David Crowe, at 10 a.m. \$8 per class, or \$30 for the month.

Ping-pong, 2:30 to 4 p.m. for advanced, 4 to 6 p.m. for beginners. **Third Wednesday of the month, only 4 to 6 p.m., all play.**

December 18: Monterey Quilters, 1:30 to 3 p.m. Third Wednesday of the month. Please send an email if you are interested to Lindarneilson@gmail.com.

Thursdays:

Mahjong, 2 to 4 p.m., does not

meet first Thursday.

December 5, Darn Yarners, 1:00 p.m. first Thursday of the month.

December 5 and 19: Chorus with Oren Rosenthal, 4:15 to 5:45 p.m.

November 21: Open Studio with Beth Hoffman, last two Thursdays of the month, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Music jam sessions with Mark Andrews. December 5 and 19, 6:30 to 8 p.m. All skill levels are welcome, instruments, and singers. If you are interested, please contact Mark at mccjamgroup@gmail.com.

Fridays:

Super Gentle Yoga, 10 to 11 a.m. Please register by emailing james-boneparth76@gmail.com.

Bridge, 1 to 4 p.m.

Saturdays:

Coffee club, 8:30 to 10 a.m.

Ping-pong, 1 to 2:30 p.m. for advanced, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. for beginners.

Sundays:

Al Anon family group meeting, 9 a.m.

Monterey Marijuana Anonymous, 7 to 8 p.m.

Special Events

Light Bath * Breathwork * Reiki. Monday, December 30 at 6 p.m. \$30 (sliding scale available).

This listing is based on information we had as of November 20. You can find updated information on events on our website, ccmonterey.org, or by calling (413) 528-3600, or emailing monterey-communitycenter@gmail.com.

—RJ Supa, MCC director, and Nancy Kleban.



by Gwendolyn E.

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by Hannah M.

Memorable December Events in American History

For the generation of Americans alive in the early 1940s, one December event – “a date that will live in infamy” [FDR] – stands out above all others:

December 7, 1941 - On a quiet Sunday morning, the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked without warning by nearly 200 Japanese aircraft which took off from a fleet of Japanese carriers north of the island that had avoided detection in their travel from the Japanese home islands -- a surprise raid lasting just over an hour which left nearly 3,000 Americans dead and many U.S. warships destroyed or badly damaged. Japan attacked all across the western Pacific that day and over the days that followed, seeking to eliminate the U.S. as a Pacific Rim military power. The following day, President Roosevelt asked Congress for, and received, a declaration of war against Japan, thus entering World War II, a war as to which the U.S. until then had at least nominally been neutral.

FDR did not seek a declaration of war against Germany; but a week later Hitler did the U.S. the “favor” of unilaterally declaring war against the U.S., though for no immediately apparent reason. Hitler lived to regret his decision: FDR decided to prioritize the European war over the Pacific war; and nearly 80% of the U.S. war effort focused on Europe until Germany’s

defeat in April/May 1945.

By December 7, 1941, Japan had already invaded and occupied parts of China and had indicated its expansive intentions in no uncertain terms; and the Roosevelt Administration had responded by attempting (with some success) to cut off Japan’s access to oil -- essential to its expansive intentions -- and thus by December 7, Japan’s oil reserves were apparently limited to but a few months (it had none of its own). That fact -- unquestionably at the root of Japan’s decision to attack the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor -- later gave rise to conspiracy theories that FDR had (a) deliberately maneuvered Japan into war and (b) knew the attack was coming at Pearl Harbor, but (c) did nothing to protect the fleet in order to create (d) the maximum shock for the American people in order to gain maximum support for the war. On December 7, Japanese diplomats had been in Washington for some days pursuing discussions with the U.S. about working out a solution to the U.S.-imposed oil embargo.

Unquestionably, the FDR Administration should have realized that its oil embargo would be perceived by Japan as an act of war, given Japan’s commitment to Pacific expansion; and unquestionably FDR and his advisors know the situation was serious; but the rest of the conspiracy theory -- (b), (c), and (d) -- was and is utter nonsense. No credible evidence for it has ever surfaced because, quite simply, it doesn’t exist. That didn’t stop opposing politicians from jumping all over it, however. Familiar?

But that early Sunday morning raid on Pearl Harbor -- which most Americans at the time couldn’t have located on a map -- has been matched as a transformative event in the minds of Americans only once since then: by the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in NYC and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2001.

Other Transformative Events in December

December 16, 1773 - The “Boston Tea Party” -- American colonials disguised as Mohawk Indians boarded British ships anchored in Boston Harbor and dumped 342 casks of imported tea into the water. The Brits called them “terrorists”. They were.

December 22, 1783 - George Washington, victorious Commander-in-Chief of the American Army, appeared before Congress, voluntarily resigned his commission, and announced his return to private life on his Virginia plantation. Most historians regard that as one of his two most important decisions. The other one? After having been elected virtually by acclamation to two terms as our first President -- he was unopposed -- his decision **not** to seek a third term, a political norm honored by all subsequent U.S. presidents until FDR was elected to four terms in the nineteen thirties and forties. A two-term limit is now enshrined in the Constitution’s 22nd Amendment.

December 15, 1791 - Our Bill of Rights (the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution), which Madison had promised skeptics in order to gain broad support for ratification of the Constitu-



tion, became effective during the U.S. First Congress.

December 2, 1859 - Abolitionist John Brown was executed for treason at Charles Town, VA, following his raid on the U.S. arsenal at Harper's Ferry. Some thought he was a terrorist; others that he was God's messenger; it depended on where you lived, North or South, and especially on whether you owned slaves or not.

December 20, 1860, after Lincoln's election as President in November, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union, **before** Lincoln took office and **before** he announced his policy on slavery: OK where it is now but no expansion into the western territories. As secession and war spread, his policy would change.

December 13, 1862 - At the Battle of Fredericksburg during our Civil War, the Union Army of the Potomac under General Ambrose Burnside suffered defeat, losing 12,653 men **after 14 frontal assaults on well-entrenched Confederates all failed.** "We might as well have tried to take hell," said a Union soldier. Confederate losses were 5,309. Was Burnside court-martialed and executed? No - he was transferred. Burnside himself had a low opinion of

his own military skills and turned down senior command appointments 3 different times. But Lincoln was desperate 'til Grant arrived.

December 6, 1865 - The 13th Amendment to our Constitution was ratified: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, save as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." ("States" was then a plural noun.)

December 1, 1955 - The birth of the modern American civil rights movement occurred as Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white man and move to the back section of a municipal bus. Her arrest resulted in a year-long boycott of the city's bus system by African-Americans and led to legal actions ending racial segregation on municipal buses throughout the South.

December 29, 1890 - U.S. 7th Cavalry troopers massacred more than 200 Sioux men, women and children at Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota. Why?

December 17, 1903 - Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved the first powered, controlled flights using a heavier-than-air

machine. They made four flights near Kitty Hawk, NC, the longest lasting about a minute. Unquestionably, it was transformative.

December 30, 1922 - The USSR was established, initially, by treaties creating a confederation of Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine and the Transcaucasian Federation.

December 8, 1991 - by treaties among the republics, the USSR ceased to exist.

December 2, 1942 - an international team of physicists led by Italian Enrico Fermi secretly carried out the world's first successful nuclear chain reaction underneath the football stadium at the University of Chicago -- the critical step in development of the U.S. atomic bomb - the Manhattan Project. Again: transformative.

—Publius



Bonner McAllester. *Wild chipmunk.*

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New Marlborough Central School Holiday Auction, Fair

The wait is over—our Holiday Fair online auction is officially open, and we're thrilled to share an incredible lineup of items and experiences for you to bid on!

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of local businesses, artisans, authors, service providers, and friends like Elite Island Resorts, Winter Water Factory, and Coral and Tusk, we have over \$40,000 worth of fabulous items waiting for you, with new items added daily!

The online auction is live until December 11 at 8 p.m. Here's a sneak peek at what you can win:

Caribbean Resort Vacation Vouchers | Acupuncture & Massage Treatments | Museum Memberships | Art, Pottery & Dance Classes | Horseback Riding Lessons | Home Décor | Summer Camp Vouchers | Gift Certificates to Local Restaurants, Shops & Outdoor Adventures | A Scenic Flight Experience | Tickets to Shows | Curated Gift Baskets...and so much more!

This is our biggest fundraiser of the year, and your participation helps directly support the students, teachers, and staff at New Marlborough Central School by providing educational field trips, new books and classroom supplies,



Students preparing for the Holiday Fair after school at NMC Crafternoons.

Visit: <https://givebutter.com/c/2024HolidayFair/auction>

Not bidding, but still want to help? Consider a donation. Your generosity makes a difference! <https://givebutter.com/c/2024HolidayFair>

The Holiday Fair is on Saturday, December 7, 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The Holiday Fair is our signature event and is a delightful occasion that brings together students, families, and friends for a day of delicious food, crafts, holiday shopping, and festive activities. Please mark your calendars!

—The New Marlborough-Monterey Parent Teacher Association

The New Marlborough-Monterey Parent Teacher Association hosts the Holiday Fair online auction. This event is neither sponsored nor endorsed by Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

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Beginning December 6

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4 PM Fridays

Come join us for a relaxing evening of board games, including Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit, Backgammon and more! Please email Thalia at trapeze@gmail.com for more information and to RSVP.

Pictured above: Theodore Rombouts, The Backgammon Players, 1634 (Flemish), on view at the North Carolina Museum of Art



Monterey moms' annual wreath-making party.



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Assessor: 528-1443 x115
assessors@montereyma.gov
Building Department: 528-1443 x118
buildingsafety@montereyma.gov
Community Center: 528-3600
calendar@ccmonterey.org
Fire Department (non-emergency):
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chief@montereyma.org
Highway Department: 528-1734
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Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113
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