

Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

Becket, Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Otis, Plainfield, Russell, Sandisfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Worthington

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BLANDFORD

Knox Trail reenactment



Randy Garfield portrays General Henry Knox and Melissa Hamm portrays a resident of Blandford in 1776. Inset, Randy Garfield portrays General Henry Knox. Submitted photos

General Henry Knox, played by Randy Garfield, will relate the story of the trek to and from Ticonderoga to fetch cannon for General George Washington, who was at Boston with the Continental Army.

Also telling of the passing of the cannon is a 1776 town resident portrayed by Melissa Hamm. She will tell about the traveling mass as it came through Blandford.

The program will take place on Sunday, Jan. 11 from 3:30-5 p.m. at the Blandford Fairgrounds' new pavilion. There will be a bonfire and the Blandford Country Store will provide hot chocolate and doughnuts.



CUMMINGTON

Friday Night Cafe begins this week

Katz/Stevens a musical duo made up of Stephen Katz and Jonathan Stevens, longtime friends and next-door neighbors who share a love of word play melody, and musical spontaneity open the 2026 Friday Night Cafe season on Friday, Jan. 9 from 7-9 p.m. in the vestry at the Village Church, downtown Cummington.

Katz is a singular cellist, celebrated from Nash Hill Road to Carnegie Hall and many places in between. Stevens has been a songwriter and guitarist for over 40 years with four albums and performances around the continent and beyond. He's also the poet behind the vanity press front known as Hungry Ghost Bread.

The event is free, but donations are appreciated. Snacks will be provided and bring your own beverage.

Once again brought the program is brought by the friendly folks at



the Village Church, who believe music can be a powerful force for building community.

Friday Night Cafe receives promotional support from the Cummington Cultural District, and is supported in part by grants from the Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor, and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

BLANDFORD

Jeromie Whalen to speak at Democratic Town Committee

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The first Blandford Democratic Town Committee meeting of 2026 will be Saturday, Jan. 10 at 11 a.m. at the Blandford Town Hall.

Guest speaker Jeromie Whalen, who is running for congress in the state's 1st Congressional District, will take on long-time incumbent Congressman Richard Neal in the Democratic primary Sept. 1. A public school teacher, Whalen announced his campaign to represent the people of this district.

He grew up in Belchertown, built a life with his wife in South Hadley and earned three degrees, including most recently his Ph.D. in mathematics, science and learning technologies, from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He has spent over a decade teaching high school in the Pioneer Valley as a communications and media production teacher.

"I'm a public servant, not a politician," said Whalen. "And honestly, that's exactly what we need right now: real people who you see every day at the gas

station, in the supermarket, at your kid's basketball game, standing up and saying enough is enough – it's time for a change."

There are 83 municipalities in Western and Central Massachusetts, including towns in Hampden, Hampshire, Worcester and Berkshire counties; all in the 1st Congressional District. Whalen has a strong record of civic activism and has dedicated his career to helping future generations gain both the educational opportunities to succeed and the social skills to grow into caring, compassionate members of the community.

Previously, Whalen served as the communications director and building delegate for the Northampton Association of School Employees. He has also served as Vice President of the Board of Directors for Northampton Open Media.

As an educator and community media advocate, Whalen led a team of students and other local volunteers in the Emmy-award winning production of "Young@Heart." This Boston/New England regional award was given



Jeromie Whalen

WHALEN, page 3



At the double arch the Lakeshore Limited Commuter Rail passes the hikers. Submitted photo

HILLTOWNS

Hilltown Hikers explore Keystone Arches

The shortest day of the year got the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers out to the Keystone Arches to explore the beauty of this largest roadless wilderness hiking from Chester through Middlefield and Becket.

They hiked on the historic Pontoosuc Turnpike where stage and sheep traveled from the Hilltowns to Pittsfield on the rugged first road.

At the 65 foot tall stone arch, they followed the original Western

Rail bed to the "gator" arch rarely seen where they watched beavers in their usual place along the West Branch of the Westfield River.

A shout out to all the engineers, who waved the hikers on with good wishes for when the days are long and warm.

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HILLTOWNS

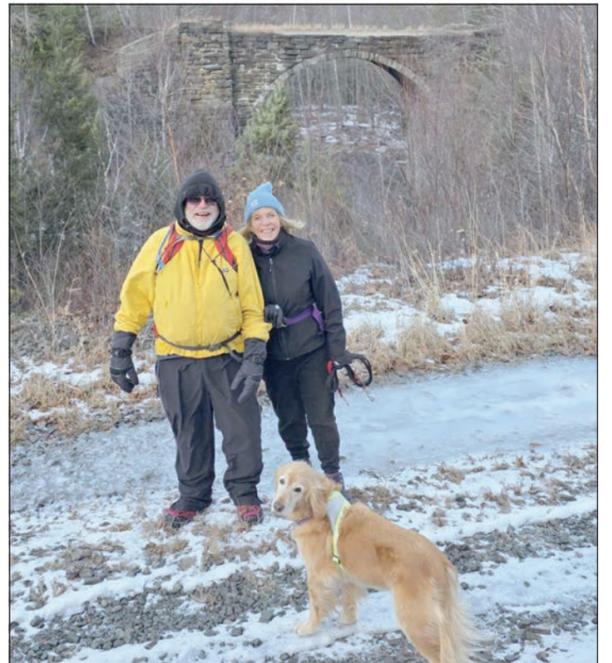
HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



This time of year the trail is almost always covered in ice.



Dayne and Sadie enjoy the winter sun.



Allen, Mary and Elenor stand with the arch shown in the background.



As the sun sets it shines through the double arch bridge.

Submitted photos

HIKERS

from page 1

HAPPY SOLSTICE TO YOU

By Russ Lapiere

Happy Solstice to you
 You look torpid and blue
 Dreaming of vernal climes to renew
 Truly the days will become longer
 But the cold will become stronger.
 The snow will fly in a swirl
 You'll curl up like a squirrel.
 But enjoy your snow shoes and skis,
 Using them as often as you please.
 Spring Merino sheep, were your friend,
 Woolen dress has warmth of no end.
 Geese flee South for a sunny crown,
 You repose warm in bags of down.
 Frozen ponds and lakes are places to skate,
 And ice fishing to fill your plate.
 In a cabin deep in the wood
 Snooze by the fire you should
 Happy solstice dear human
 Happy solstice to you.



The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers include canine hikers as well as human.



The dog wearing the red coat is eager to keep up with the rest of the group.

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MIDDLEFIELD

COOKIE SWAP WINNERS ANNOUNCED



Middlefield Council on Aging cookie swap winners were Tim Parker, from left and Ray Schneller. Tim Parker made peanut butter Hersey Kiss cookies. Ray and his wife made the almond cookies, but she was not at the swap. Submitted photo

CHESTER

JLBA to meet Jan. 8

CHESTER – The Jacob Ladder Business Association will meet Thursday, Jan 8 at 6 p.m. in the Southern Hilltowns Adult Education Center located in the Village Enterprise Center, 26 Main St. The meeting is open to all Hilltown businesses. Both current members

and prospective members are encouraged to attend. JLBA membership 2026 forms will be available at the meeting. The January meeting is an opportunity to reconnect and hear updates on upcoming events, promotions and opportunities for

2026. Attendees will have time for open discussion and informal networking throughout the evening. JLBA has supported Hilltown businesses for over 30 years. Their monthly meetings continue to be one of the best ways to stay connected and informed.

OTIS

COA hosts history re-enactment

OTIS – On Wednesday, Jan. 21 there will be a re-enactment of Mary Surratt and her part in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. She was hanged on July 7, 1865 having been convicted for her part in

the assassination. She was convicted a month after by a military tribunal and not granted any clemency. Her case to this day remains controversial. An actor from the Susan B. Anthony Museum will portray Mary Surratt.

But come to the Otis Town Hall first for a pizza party. The cost for pizza, salad, beverage and dessert is \$10, but those attending must RSVP to the COA by Wednesday, Jan. 14 by calling 413-269-0100, extension 5.

BLANDFORD

WHALEN from page 1

by the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences. The Blandford DTC invites all members of the community to hear from candidates this year, who will be running to represent the voters. Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. at the Blandford Town Hall, 1 Russell Stage Road.

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COA announces January news

BLANDFORD – Joann Martin has designed two Council on Aging lunch menus for January. The first luncheon at noon at the COA room on Friday, Jan. 9 features creamy tomato basil soup, crispy grilled cheese finger sandwiches and a dessert of apple pie with ice cream. The second luncheon on Friday, Jan. 23 will be a baked potato party. The

potato with the diner's choice of toppings, which include chili, shredded barbecue chicken, broccoli, bacon, cheese, pickled or caramelized onion and more. There will be a special dessert. Meals come with beverages. To participate, people should call the COA at 413-848-4279, extension 400 and leave a message with names and number of

people attending. There is no charge for the meals, but a \$5 donation will help keep the program running. First Fridays are Game and Gab at the COA room at Town Hall starting at 2 p.m. Anyone can participate and play various games such as cards, board games or dice. This is a good time for socializing and laughter.

Porter Memorial Library lists events

BLANDFORD – Regular activities at the Porter Memorial Library include Tuesday afternoon from 4:30-5:30 p.m. is Art for All. January features Snowflake Crafts with giant three-dimensional snowflakes, paper quilling snowflakes and beaded snowflakes. These crafts continue through Tuesday, Jan. 27. Every Wednesday morn-

ing from 10:30-11:30 a.m. is Book Squirms time. It includes stories, songs and sensory play, plus socializing for preschoolers and their caregivers. Saturday Jan. 10 stop in for drop-ins at the library from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. to make a bouncy ball. Then participants will go to the gym at Town Hall to see how far it will bounce. CommuniTea Reads

will be held on Saturday, Jan. 17 at 11 a.m. for a discussion of "The Hunting Party," by Lucy Foley, a fun who-done-it novel that takes place the United Kingdom. Books are available at the library. New members are always welcome. Saturday, Jan. at 12:30 p.m. there will be a local author book launch party for Amy Hagstrom's "Now That I Know You By Heart."

MAIN STREET MARAUDER SPOTTED



This very round raccoon also known as the Main Street Marauder visits Main Street in Blandford regularly. Obviously the animal is well fed. Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Are you are interested in steady, local work?

Hilltown CDC is currently seeking General Contractors who are interested in bidding on Housing Rehabilitation projects funded by the Community Development Block Grant. We recently received funding for the FY25 Housing Rehab Program with an anticipated 17 projects to be completed.

Projects are planned in the towns of **Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Savoy, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington** with an average project cost of \$40,000 - \$60,000.00. Contractors working on Housing Rehab projects are guaranteed payment for all construction work along with a steady source of year around work.

GC's must possess a valid **Contractor Supervisor's License and a Home Improvement Contractor's License**. Lead certification is preferred but not required. General Liability coverage as well as Workmen's Compensation insurance (if applicable) is required.

HCDC is an EEO/Section 3 Employer. Women & minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please contact Paula Bilodeau at (413) 296-4536, ext. 109 for an application or email paulab@hilltowncdc.org.

Funding is provided by the US Dept. of HUD/DHCD and MA CDBG Programs.

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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN



My wife believes she can get a spouse benefit while I'm still alive; can she?

Dear Rusty:

A friend of my wife told her and she believes, she could receive a Social Security benefit based on my SS benefit that I'm currently receiving while I'm still alive. I told her she could only receive spouse survivor benefits. Is there any truth to what she now believes? Would you settle this issue for us please? Thank you.

Signed:
Uncertain Husband

Dear Uncertain Husband:

Well, surely I don't want to get in the middle of your marital discussion, but I'll be happy to explain Social Security's rules about your wife's eligibility for spousal benefits while you are both still living. And just for awareness for both of you, the rules about spousal benefits are one of the most confusing areas of Social Security.

Per Social Security's rules, a spouse (e.g., your wife) can receive a "spousal boost" from you – while you are still living – if the SS retirement benefit she is personally entitled to at her Full Retirement Age is less than 50% of the SS retirement benefit you are (were) entitled to at your FRA; full retirement age amounts are used to calculate living spouse benefits, regardless of when each of you actually claimed your Social Security.

So, if your FRA entitlement benefit amount is more than twice your wife's FRA entitlement benefit amount, she can, indeed, get a "spousal boost" from your record while you are both still living. The spousal boost is added to her own SS retirement amount and will be based on the difference between her FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement. Thus, in this discussion, your wife may be correct - she may be able to get a spousal boost from you while both of you are living, depending on how your personal FRA retirement amounts com-

pare. The best way for your wife to find out is to contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to inquire and if she's eligible, also make an appointment to apply for her spousal benefit.

And to clarify your wife's options as your possible widow, a surviving spouse can also get a survivor benefit if their marital partner passes away, but only if the deceased spouse's current benefit at death was more than the surviving spouse is already receiving. The surviving spouse receives the higher amount, instead of their own smaller Social Security retirement benefit.

But here is an important thing to know: Whenever any Social Security benefit (including a spousal or surviving spouse benefit) is claimed before the recipient's Full Retirement Age, the payment amount is permanently reduced, both spousal and survivor benefits do not reach maximum until the recipient's Full Retirement Age. And just to complete the picture for survivor benefits, a surviving spouse is also entitled to a one-time, lump-sum death benefit of \$255 if their marital partner dies, in addition to any other benefit they are entitled to.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



GUEST COLUMN

TLC for overwintering plants

Have you taken a good look at your tender plants lately? Maybe you have a Gerber daisy, coleus, fuchsia or geranium that you are attempting to overwinter because you loved it so much this past summer.

Perhaps the flower color or leaf shade was perfect in a patio planter and you thought if you could get through the winter you wouldn't have to buy it new this spring. Or maybe you intend to use your overwintered plants as stock plants.

Soon you'll be taking cuttings and making your own new plants. Likewise, maybe you brought in some tender herbs in hopes of growing your own seasoning year round.

Whatever the case may be, closer examination of each plant at this point in the winter might be a smart idea.

What I have noticed almost across the board, especially with my Gerber daisy, fuchsia and geraniums is that there are a lot of older leaves turning yellow or showing discoloration. To me, that indicates that fertilizer is needed.

The fact that this coincides with the lengthening of the daylight hours is no accident. And all three plants have continued to bloom inside, which certainly has taxed their nutrient reserves.

I will start watering with half strength fertilizer twice a month now through mid March. I sure bet that old foliage will start to perk up and new growth won't be too far behind.

In the Garden
by Roberta McQuaid

up my plants using a mild dish detergent and hosed them off in the shower.

One pest in particular attacks the herb rosemary and is especially troublesome. I noticed stippling on the leaf tips and clear winged insects flying away when I brushed by the plants. After placing sticky yellow monitoring cards nearby I learned it was leaf hoppers!

As carefully as I could I carried the lighter plants outside and gave them a good shake to dislodge any eggs or nymphs (and to make me feel better) then I doused them to the point of run-off with insecticidal soap. I will have to be careful here, because tiny 3 mm size, wedge-shaped (adult) insects can transmit viruses from plant to plant.

I'll put out new monitoring cards near the rosemary plants to check if the population is decreasing. Regardless, I am glad I caught this situation early.

With the pests under control and a proper fertilization regiment, these plants will be in great shape come springtime, and ready for new adventures in the landscape.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

Don't push growth by fertilizing more than what I recommended or growth could become lanky and weak – just what aphids are looking for.

Speaking of pests, if you notice distorted foliage, webbed areas or stippling on the leaves, take a closer look at your plants. There are many tiny bugs with mouthparts that suck plant juices. Even in your sunny window spider mite, mealy bugs, aphids or white fly might be becoming more active.

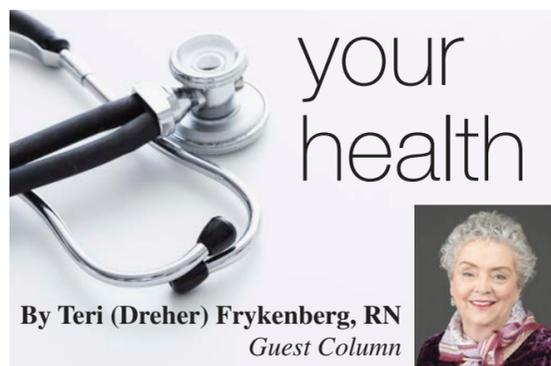
Spider mite cause webbing, and are usually indicative of hot, dry conditions. Dousing with cold water will really set them back.

Mealy bug show up as a cottony blob usually on growth tips or at the junction of leaves and stems. Rubbing alcohol on a swab applied directly to the blob will dissolve that protective layer and the insect underneath.

Aphids are usually green and congregate in clusters on stems or leaf ribs. White fly usually hang out on the underside of leaves. They fly around if disturbed.

Both insects are best stopped in their tracks by use of an insecticidal soap. Safer's Soap or M Pede as it's known commercially work well. I've even soaped

Measles are a serious business



All it takes is one kid with measles to infect up to 18 others in their classroom. With school beginning soon, public health and education officials around the country are concerned about new outbreaks.

In the not too distant past, measles was considered "eliminated" in the U.S. because cases were almost unknown and 95 percent or more of Americans were vaccinated against it or had it in childhood. That herd immunity is slowly eroding, and

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If you notice a factual error in our pages, please let us know, so that we can set the record straight. Email information to countryjournal@turley.com, or call us at 413-283-8393.

Corrections will be printed in the same section where the error originally occurred.

Country Journal welcomes Election letters to the editor

The Country Journal welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Country Journal, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to countryjournal@turley.com.

Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by **noon Friday** to be considered for the following Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the

newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's

Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Country Journal.

OPINION

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Snow removal using a shovel

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Looks like we are going to have an old fashioned winter – one full of snowfall.

So let us arm ourselves with the proper weapon, a snow shovel up to the task of moving snow. Get your hot hands out.

Have you heard of the Bend Knees Push Not Lift method of snow removal? Well to be truthful the first line of defense should be to hire the neighbor youth, but that can be hard to find a willing youth. Perhaps attaching a smart phone to the snow shovel might give people a fighting chance of attracting a youth for the task.

One interesting fact is that children under 18 years are 15 times more likely to be hurt from being hit with a snow shovel than adults (Nationwide Children's Hospital). It is not know if those shovels were thrown deliberately or not. So leaving the idea people can attract a neighbor youth to the job, let's press onward.

Blue Cross would like us all to bend our knees, push the snow and avoid lifting it, the BKPSNL method of snow shoveling. Considering there are

4,000 back injuries treated in emergency rooms from snow shoveling per winter, they have to reckon with its hazardous nature. You have every right to put the shovel down and hibernate like the rest of nature! And we know how to store fat on our bodies if we quit the GLPI drugs.

So what should one consider when purchasing a snow shovel? The first decision is to choose between a straight handle or a bent one? The bent handle shovel reduces the force that strains the lower back and muscles by 16.5%. However the bent shovel is awkward for lifting and throwing the snow. It puts more strain on arms and shoulders to throw the snow. The straight handle shovel works better for lifting and throwing snow, as it scoops the snow up for tossing. The length of the shovel shaft should be mid chest height. A wooden shaft will last longer if a coat of linseed oil is applied once a year. Most plastic handles will become brittle if left out in sunlight. The weight of the shovel is important to consider because the weight of the snow will add to the lifting burden, which is the big widow maker in shoveling – heart attacks.

Then there is the blade

material to think about. Metal blades are good when shoveling in gravel or dirt pathways or when you need to chip at ice. Plastic blades are lightweight and flexible but prone to cracking on uneven surfaces.

Then we have some new developments on the scene. There is the wheeled snow shovel that eases the effort in pushing the snow out of the way. There are two wheels behind the blade that kinda makes it like mowing the snow.

And then there is the "Snow Joe shovelution," a shovel that has a second shorter handle that uses a spring loaded device to dump the snow off the blade. No this one is not for Grandma to use, as it well and truly launches the snow into the neighbors yard. That concludes the latest technology in snow shoveling.

My grandmother always cleared the snow on walkways with a straw broom very effectively. Of course she was the first one up and the post man loved her for it.

Embrace the snow, it's winter. You can't beat shoveling for exercise, just remember to bundle up. Oh and pace yourself, quit early and often if you are north of 50 years.



Tools of the trade, the red shovel blade is all that is left of a favorite snow mover that lost its handle. Turley Publication photos by Deborah Daniels



This man is using the latest technology "a shovelution."



According to Blue Cross this is the correct method of snow shoveling, ie. Bend Knees Push Not Lift.



This is a wheeled snow shovel.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

HEALTH

our children are at greater risk of illness because of it.

Measles is one of the most contagious diseases out there, even more so than COVID and flu virus. It spreads through tiny droplets when people cough or sneeze, and can live in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours (think school desks, cafeteria tables, lab stations).

And while today's measles is no more dangerous than before, it can still result in pneumonia, encephalitis (brain swelling) or even death in very young children or those with immunocompromised systems. We've seen three deaths in Texas attributed to measles.

In addition, measles can leave someone with a weakened immune system, making them more susceptible to other infections.

Illinois generally has experienced herd immunity, with vaccination rates at or above 95 percent. The state has seen 10 cases of measles this year, some in Cook County and others in the southern part of the state. There's evidence, however, that vaccination rates are dropping in some Chicago schools and among kinder-

gartners.

Massachusetts hasn't seen a single case – yet – because its citizens maintain a vaccination rate of about 98%. There's evidence, however, that the vaccination rate is not as strong among incoming kindergartners.

We all play a role in keeping our communities safe and healthy. The best way to keep the measles away from your child is to make sure they've had two doses of the MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine, which has been proven safe and is 97% effective at prevention. Even if they do catch the virus, the illness is likely to be mild and short-lived.

That said, it's possible there will be children in your child's class who are unvaccinated and could well bring measles to school along with their homework and lunchbox. It will be easy for them to infect other unvaccinated children, causing an outbreak.

To help stop measles in its tracks:

If you're unsure of your immune status and believe you were exposed to the measles, consult your health-

care provider right away. An MMR immunity blood test can show whether you have measles antibodies. (If you were born before 1957, you likely had measles and enjoy "presumptive immunity.")

Consider getting an MMR booster shot, especially if you were immunized between 1963 and 1967. The vaccine used during those years was less effective because it was made from a killed rather than live virus. A booster is a harmless precaution, as long as your doctor says you are eligible to receive a live virus vaccine.

Regularly disinfect surfaces and common touchpoints, like door handles and light switches.

Keep your unvaccinated child home if any of these symptoms show up. It could be a cold or the flu, but it could also be measles. Symptoms usually appear seven to 14 days after exposure.

- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- White spots inside the mouth (Koplik spots)
- A red, blotchy rash that starts on the face and spreads

downward

Wait four days before going to a hospital to reduce the chance that the disease will be transmitted to others.

As a registered nurse and someone who's worked in the medical field for most of my life, I advocate for science, not social media or crackpot theories about cod liver oil. (Cod liver oil, by the way, contains a lot of Vitamin A, which can be toxic in large doses, particularly with children.) Measles, once someone has

it, is incurable – it has to run its course. It is a virus, not a bacteria, so it can't be treated with antibiotics.

Fall is approaching, and with it will come flu season and RSV season. Cases of COVID are already on the rise around the country. We are so lucky to live in an era in which vaccines can keep us and our children safe from some of the most common human diseases. Please take advantage of it.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, is a regis-

tered nurse and board-certified patient advocate and founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to Turley Newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

from page 4

News, photo publication policy

As a community newspaper our focus has always been local news. While we try very hard to run upcoming events as a public service whenever space allows, space does not allow us to run an upcoming event repeatedly. Our policy is to limit publication of upcoming events to one article in advance of the event and, space permitting, a second brief reminder article the week prior to an event, and to run those articles in only one section of the paper, and not in multiple sections simultaneously.

All such public service announcements and photos are subject to space limitations and deadlines, therefore publication cannot be guaranteed. Whenever copy for the week exceeds allotted space, news copy will take priority, and public service copy is the first area to be cut. We also reserve the right to edit for style and space, and are under no obligation to print lists of sponsorships, or articles that arrive after deadline, unless time and space allows.

Deadline is Friday at NOON.



First Congregational Church of Blandford

Pastor Ciprian Droma
91 Main St., Blandford, MA 01008
413-848-2052
Sunday service 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Chester

334 Skyline Trail, Chester, MA 01011
Pastor Susan Borsella
Service with Live Music: 10 a.m. - Sunday
Coffee and Sweets Social:
10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

Rev. Jack Kraaz
4 North Main St., Williamsburg, MA 01096
413-268-7557

burgychurch@gmail.com • burgychurch.org
Facebook:
First Congregational Church of Williamsburg
YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHYeekxw5w
Office Hours: Tues. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 12 noon
Days and Hours of Services: Sun. at 10 a.m.

Hilltown Community Church

Rev. Dr. Robert Perreault
55 Main St., Russell, MA 01071
413-275-3232
Office: 413-862-3341
hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com
Sunday Mornings 10 a.m.

Holy Family Parish

Rev. Ronald F. Sadlowski, known as Fr. Ron
5 Main St., Russell, MA 01071
413-862-4418
Office Hours: No set times.
Please call, leave a voice message or email: holyfamilyrussell.org
parish@holyfamilyrussell.org
Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m.
Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. & 11 a.m.

CHURCH DIRECTORY



Your Community Church

New Boston Congregational Church

4 Sandisfield Rd., PO Box 81
Sandisfield, MA 01255
Services held twice monthly, check website:
www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org

Pioneer Valley Assembly of God

Pastor Javier Melendez
63 Old Chester Rd., Huntington MA 01050
413-667-3196
pvaglife@gmail.com
www.pioneervalleyag.org
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

Deacon Jerald Reinford
400 Huntington Rd., Russell, MA 01071
(413) 297-6037
Sunday worship at 10 a.m.
Visitors appreciated.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

STCC launches Workforce Readiness Academy

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Technical Community College is now enrolling for the Workforce Readiness Academy, a free, 20-hour-per-week program designed to help prospective students build the digital, academic and career skills needed to thrive in today's job market and succeed in college.

The Workforce Readiness Academy offers a hands-on, personalized learning experience that equips participants with essential digital literacy skills, industry-recognized certifications and strengthened college and career readiness competencies. Whether students are entering the workforce, changing careers or prepar-

ing for further education, the Academy provides the foundation they need to move forward with confidence, said Assistant Vice President of Workforce Development Gladys Franco.

"This program is an incredible opportunity for anyone looking to gain confidence, earn meaningful credentials and take their next step toward a rewarding career or higher education," Franco said. "The Workforce Readiness Academy was intentionally designed to remove barriers and meet students where they are. Our goal is to ensure every participant leaves with the skills, support and resources they need to succeed."

The Academy is supported by the state Gaming Commission's Community Mitigation Fund.

The Academy is offered in two sessions. The first runs Jan. 26 – April 9, 2026, while the second runs April 13 – June 25. Both run Monday-Thursday. Enrollees can choose day from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. or evening from 5-9 p.m. options. Each participant is paired with a dedicated College and Career Advisor for individualized support throughout the program.

The Academy offers the opportunity to develop computer competency and workforce readiness skills every employer expects.

Students will work toward industry-recognized certifications, including ServeSafe and OSHA 10, while also engaging with local employers through networking and career connection opportunities.

"The Workforce Readiness Academy is a powerful starting point for anyone looking to build skills, earn credentials and gain confidence as they pursue new educational or career pathways," Franco said.

Spaces are limited. To learn more or register, people may visit stcc.io/wra or call the Workforce Development Center at 413-755-4225. To enroll in person, they may stop by Building 27 at STCC.

Legacy Scholarship accepting applications

WASHINGTON – Undergraduate and graduate students studying music may apply for the DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship through Saturday, Jan. 31.

Sponsored by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, the scholarship provides a one-time \$5,000 award to one student annually who is pursuing undergraduate or graduate study in music.

Marian Anderson (1897-1993) was a groundbreaking African American contralto and an inspiration for civil rights. "This scholarship pays tribute to Marian Anderson's life, and the Daughters of the American Revolution seeks to honor her legacy through aspiring musicians. Her legacy lives on in others who aim for excellence in musical studies, are committed to their communi-

ties, and willing to stand up for what is right," said Ginie Sebastian Storage, DAR President General.

Applicants should be accepted or currently enrolled in an accredited university or college in the United States and have a concentration in music in their course of study. Music performance, composition, theory or education are all areas that students may be specialized in to qualify for the scholarship. They should have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent GPA on the scale used by the institution.

Applications are available by visiting <https://www.dar.org/outreach/education/scholarships>.

Applications require references sent through the application system, so students need to request their references ahead of the Jan.

31 application deadline.

In honor of Anderson's commitment to the community throughout her life and her willingness to share her incredible talent with the world, applicants are asked to write a personal statement describing their humanitarian or volunteer contributions on behalf of their community and/or country. To recognize the city Marian Anderson called home, preference is given to students from the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania metropolitan area, even if they are not pursuing music studies in the Philadelphia area.

While this scholarship is not automatically renewed, recipients may reapply for consideration each year for up to four consecutive years. The scholarship is supported by the Daughters of the American Revolution's Marian Anderson Legacy

Fund. People may learn more about the relationship between Marian Anderson and the DAR and the organization's on-going efforts to honor her memory at www.dar.org/MarianAnderson

The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution is one of the largest patriotic women's service organizations in the world. DAR has 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters across the country and several foreign countries. DAR members promote historic preservation, education and patriotism via commemorative events, scholarships and educational initiatives, citizenship programs, service to veterans, meaningful community service and more. For additional information about DAR and its relevant mission, people may visit www.dar.org.

WINDSOR

Snowshoe, tracking treks

WINDSOR – A fir forest snowshoe trek will take place on Sunday, Feb. 15 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Tamarack Hollow Nature & Cultural Center, Savoy Hollow Road.

Snowshoe in the Boreal forests of Windsor with director and naturalist Aimee Gelinias M.Ed on a hike featuring recently conserved land and trails and a cascading waterfall along with winter Boreal/Northern forest tree ID, wildlife tracking and forest ecology. The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation Berkshire Environmental Endowment and Crane Funds help supported this program. The fee is \$20 per person and \$5 for snowshoe rental if trails require snowshoes. People may also bring their own. This will be a hike if conditions do not require snowshoes. Registration is required by emailing full_circle_o@yahoo.com.

A winter boreal spruce-fir forest ecology, wildlife tracking and tree ID snowshoe treks will be held at Notchview on Mondays Jan. 19 and Feb. 16 from 10 a.m.-noon. This round trip, two-mile trek on the Hume Brook Trail will be led by Tamarack Hollow Nature and Cultural Center director

Aimee Gelinias M.Ed, who is a seasoned boreal forest naturalist guide and certified Cybertracker Wildlife guide. Participants will learn about spruce-fir boreal forest ecology and how to identify wildlife tracks, signs of wildlife and trees along the way. Program is a snowshoe or hike depending on trail conditions. Registration required, email full_circle_o@yahoo.com to register. Fee is \$25 per person, which includes snowshoe rentals if needed. Tamarack Hollow Nature and Cultural Center is a non-profit educating about and conserving 88 acres of boreal forest along the northern border of Notchview.

Tamarack Hollow Nature & Cultural Center & Gaia Roots World Music present ongoing West African and Caribbean drum and song classes with Aimee Gelinias M.ED at the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts in Pittsfield at 5:30 p.m. beginner and 6:30 p.m. advanced every Monday. Registration is required for all new students. Class cost is \$10 per class/person. Drum rental fee \$5. For registration or for more information, people may email full_circle_o@yahoo.com. They may visit www.tamarackhollow.com for more information.

STOCKBRIDGE

Grange holds dinner

STOCKBRIDGE – The Stockbridge Grange will hold a community dinner on Sunday, Jan. 11 with pickup from noon-1:30 p.m. at the Stockbridge Grange Hall, 51 Church St.

The menu features Swedish meatballs with egg noodles, vegetable, bread and dessert choices of chocolate cream or lemon meringue pie.

Dinner is \$17 per person. This meal will be take-out only and pickup is between noon-1:30 p.m. at the Stockbridge Grange Hall, 51 Church St.

Reservations can be made by calling 413-243-1298 or 413-443-4352. Grange dinners are held to raise money for non-profit projects and building maintenance.

WILLIAMSTOWN

Clark Art Institute open Jan. 19

WILLIAMSTOWN – The Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., is open on Monday, Jan. 19 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Admission is free for all through March 2026. Beginning at 11 a.m., the Clark honors the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a video capturing

some of his most memorable speeches.

The video, broadcast in the Manton Research Center auditorium, plays on a continuous cycle throughout the day.

Visitors can view special exhibitions Raffaella della Olga: Typescripts in the Eugene V. Thaw Gallery for Works on Paper and Shadow

Visionaries: French Artists Against the Current, 1840-1870 in the Clark Center special exhibition galleries.

Also on view is Mariel Capanna: Giornata, an installation in public spaces in the Manton Research Center and Clark Center lower level. Outdoors, Ground/work 2025 is on view.

Electric guitar quartet to perform

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Sunday, Jan. 18 at 3 p.m., the Williams College Department of Music and I/O Fest 2026 welcome the intrepid electric guitar quartet Dither to the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St. for a program featuring selections from The Expanding Universe, the iconic 1979 album by the electronic composer and computer-music pioneer Laurie Spiegel.

This concert takes place in the Manton Research Center auditorium. In 1977, one Spiegel composition, Kepler's Harmony of the Worlds, was included on "The Sounds of Earth," an LP compilation that accompanied the Voyager spacecraft as it traversed the solar system. Dither captains its concert voyage of The Expanding Universe with four electric

guitars through a galaxy of live effects.

Tickets are \$10, \$8 members and free for college students and children 17 and under. For more information, people may visit clarkart.edu. For accessibility questions, people may call 413-458-0524. This program is presented by the Williams College Department of Music and the Clark.

WESTFIELD

Vicki Baldyga named Westfield Bank branch manager

WESTFIELD – James C. Hagan, President and CEO of Westfield Bank, announces the appointment of Vicki Baldyga as retail banking officer and branch manager at its Ware Office, 350 Palmer Road, Ware

Baldyga joins the bank with over 25 years of banking experience. In her new role, she will be responsible for leading and managing the branch, including customer service, retail and business product sales, employee development, and overseeing general branch operations, as well as business and community development within the Ware market.

Since joining the banking industry in 1999, she has held various management positions at other community banks across the local area. She holds several diplomas and certificates from the Center for

Financial Training and is a 2024 graduate from the New England School for Financial Studies, completing an intensive two-year program for banking professionals.

"I am very excited to welcome Vicki to Westfield Bank," said Kelly A. Pignaturo, First Vice President and Manager of Retail Banking and Business & Government Deposit Services. "She is an experienced and knowledgeable banker with a strong commitment to customers and community. As a Ware native, she knows and understands the market, and we're thrilled to have her leading the team in Ware."

Active in the community, Baldyga is the treasurer and board member of the Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce and has served past roles for Big Brothers Big Sisters, United Way of Hampshire County and Crossway Clothing Outreach.



Vicki Baldyga

Westfield Bank, headquartered in Westfield, is a federally chartered savings bank organized in 1853 and is the largest publicly traded bank headquartered in Western Massachusetts. Currently, the bank has 25 branch offices, 49 ATMs, and an additional 30 seasonal ATMs and serves Hampden and Hampshire counties in Western Massachusetts and Hartford County in Northern Connecticut.

St. Joseph's to host dinner

WESTFIELD – St. Joseph's National Catholic Church, 73 Main St., is hosting a chicken pot pie dinner on Sunday, Jan. 11 at noon.

Dinner will feature homemade chicken pot pie with vegetables. Accompanying the entree will be a tossed garden salad. Dessert will be a brownie topped with vanilla ice cream drizzled with chocolate. Beverages include coffee, cranberry juice and bottled water.

Everyone is invited

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. To purchase tickets and reserve a place, text or telephone Cliff at 413-977-2007 and if leaving a message, provide name and telephone number. Take-out/meals-to-go will be available for pick-up at 12:30 p.m. When ordering tickets, indicate if diners are to-go. The deadline for purchasing tickets is Wednesday, Jan. 7.

Alzheimer's Association Support Group meets Jan. 28

WESTFIELD – The Alzheimer's Association Support Group will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. at Armbrook Village Senior Living and Memory Support Community, 551 North Road.

Caregivers and family members are invited to enjoy

a light dinner and to share their personal experiences and strategies for communicating with their loved ones. The public is welcome. To join this group, people may call 413-568-0000 or email reception@armbrookvillage.com. Groups are held on the last Wednesday of the month.



Nobody dreams of having multiple sclerosis

Some dreams are universal: hitting a ball over the Green Monster; winning the World Series with a grand slam in the bottom of the ninth inning. Finding out you have MS is not one of them.

Multiple sclerosis is a devastating disease of the central nervous system where the body's immune system attacks the insulation surrounding the nerves. It strikes adults in the prime of life - and changes lives forever.

To help make the dream of ending MS come true, call 1-800-FIGHT MS or visit us online at nationalmssociety.org.



National Multiple Sclerosis Society

OBITUARIES

Walter J. Beard, 70

1955 – 2025
 WESTFIELD – Walter J. Beard, 70, of Westfield, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2025 at home. He was born on Nov. 15, 1955 in Westfield and was the son of the late Henry S. and Faith (Johnson) Beard. Walter was a graduate of Edison State College in New Jersey and worked as a computer programmer for various companies. He had the biggest and most generous heart. He loved hard and deep-friends, family and pets. Walter was a lifelong learner and had a passion for reading in subjects ranging from history to science to art to science fiction. Walter was a big fan of Pentatonix. He is survived by his partner, Christine Bednarski of Springfield; two brothers, James S. Beard and wife, Charlotte of Martinsville, Virginia and Stuart Beard and wife,

Carla Romney of Medfield; two sisters, Philadelphia Beard and husband, Jonathan Hood of Cape Coral, Florida and Sarah Beard and husband, John Fitzgerald of Blandford; a niece, Emily Beard and a nephew, Stuart Beard and Goddaughter, Jasmine Montanaro of Westfield and her sister, Rachael Dubiel of Huntington. Besides his parents, Walter was predeceased by his wife, Natalie Bozarth. He was a friend of Rosanne. Calling hours are on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026 at the Cierpial Memorial Funeral Home on 61 Grape St. in Chicopee from 2-4 p.m. with Remembrances at 3:30 pm. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Southern Poverty Law Center, 4000 Washington Ave. Montgomery, AL 36104. Please visit: cierpialmemorialfuneralhomes.com. Cierpial Memorial Funeral Homes 413-598-8573

Mary Ann (Gindele) Sullivan, 77



Mary Ann Sullivan (nee Gindele) of New York NY, Chester MA and Southwick MA, passed away peacefully on Dec. 27, 2025 at the age of 77. She was surrounded by her loving family. A 21 year cancer survivor, she leaves behind Joseph, her husband and devoted caregiver of 57 years; her daughter Julie, son-in-law Scott and grandson Flynn and her brothers Otto (and wife Betty), John and Joseph and a long list of loving nieces and nephews and their children. She is predeceased by her brother, Thomas (and wife Eileen) and her parents, Otto and Marie, who

emigrated to this country in the early 1920s from Germany and Czech Republic respectively. Mary Ann graduated from the Bronx High School of Science and received both her Bachelor's and Masters of Education from City College in New York City. She was the director of the William Woodward Jr. Nursery School in New York City for 17 years and then relocated to her weekend home in Chester where she and her husband Joe opened the Chester Hill Winery. She was the CEO, salesperson, case deliverer, tasting room madam and chief bottle washer. She was president of the Jacobs Ladder

Business Association and served on the boards of the Chester Hill Association and the Hamilton Memorial Library in Chester. Later in her life she helped care for her young grandson, showering him with the dotting love and affection only grandmothers can provide. She was a skier, loved to travel, host and entertain and enjoyed drinking wine, working in her garden and reading books. Over her life, Mary Ann's caring, generosity and beautiful smile touched many people and we will miss her dearly. Donations in Mary Ann's name may be made to New England Public Media and the show Nature. Please include Nature in the comments. <https://donate.nepm.org/nepm/tribute>. www.firtionadams.com.

DEATH NOTICES

BEARD, WALTER J.
 Died Dec. 17, 2025
 Calling hours Jan. 5 from 2-4 p.m., remembrances at 3:30 p.m.
 Cierpial Memorial Funeral Home, Chicopee

SULLIVAN, MARY ANN (GINDELE)
 Died Dec. 27, 2025
 Donation to New England Public Media and the show Nature



Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief Death Notice listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a Paid Obituary, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com. Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

- CLUES ACROSS**
- Former CIA
 - Language
 - Constrictor snake
 - Demand
 - Rich man
 - Short-tailed marten
 - Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
 - Superconducting super collider
 - International group of countries within the Americas
 - Sacred state for Muslims
 - Shock therapy
 - Engrave
 - Localities
 - Paddle
 - Periodical
 - Dishonestly gained money
 - Gain possession of
 - Actor DiCaprio
 - High schoolers' test
 - Mr. October
 - Sign of healing
 - One's grandmother
 - Entrap
 - One who simultaneously buys and sells
 - ___ Francisco
 - Web-based data provider of marine life
 - Type of snake
 - Dark mark or stain
 - Member of the Salii
 - Former measure of length
 - CNN's founder
 - Witness
- CLUES DOWN**
- Acquire
 - Console
 - Hunting expedition
 - Pie ___ mode
 - Simple shoes for peasants
 - Eurasian shrub
 - Reciprocal of a sine
 - Work together in harmony
 - Grenade
 - File extension
 - Minute pores in a plant
 - Medal of Honor
 - Make a mistake
 - Advance slowly, as if by inches
 - Sandwich meat
 - An awkward stupid person
 - Strong tree
 - Commoner
 - Electroencephalograph
 - ___ Mahal
 - Congressman
 - Disorderly crowd
 - 007's creator Fleming
 - Atomic #55
 - Part of a door
 - Short-tail martens
 - Baltimore ballplayer
 - Cuddle
 - Gang in "The Outsiders"
 - Of Croatia
 - Body cavity
 - Get free of

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

- ARIES**
 Mar 21/Apr 20
 Minor obstacles are in your path, Aries. It's easy to get frustrated right now. Once you clear the hurdles it will be smoother sailing before long. Remain patient.
- CANCER**
 Jun 22/Jul 22
 Unavoidable situations may cross your path this week, Cancer. It is important that you stay the course. Committing to tackling things head-on is the most productive approach.
- LIBRA**
 Sept 23/Oct 23
 Your energy will remain high this week, Libra, enabling you to come up with some innovative ideas that have true staying power. Pursue your options.
- SCORPIO**
 Oct 24/Nov 22
 The conditions are right for finishing an important task, Scorpio. You will be able to come up with wonderful ideas that have true staying power. Pursue your options.
- AQUARIUS**
 Jan 21/Feb 18
 Aquarius, you may feel uneasy or worried for unknown reasons. Trust your gut in this instance and steer clear of trouble should it try to get in your way this week.
- PISCES**
 Feb 19/Mar 20
 Family tops your list of priorities right now, Pisces. You are likely to spend considerable time with loved ones in the days to come. Relish in all the opportunities to connect.
- GEMINI**
 May 22/Jun 21
 Gemini, you may have to reset your priorities, as new information has come to the surface. Prioritize responsibilities so major issues are taken care of first.
- VIRGO**
 Aug 24/Sept 22
 Virgo, be confident and listen to your instincts, Libra. Do so before taking on any important tasks that might turn up in the days or weeks to come. A surprise might be around the corner.

SUDOKU

Fun By The Numbers
 Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
 Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

answers

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BECKET

Planning Board to hold public hearing

BECKET – The Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. to review a special permit application by Lot

40 Trust, 2 Battery Wharf #2310, Boston, for a common driveway under section 7.2 of the Becket Zoning Bylaws.

The shared driveway

access is being requested for access from South Cove Road to lot 40 Ronald Drive. The hearing will be both in person and via Zoom.

WORTHINGTON

COA offers grab and go meals

WORTHINGTON – The Council on Aging provides a grab and go meal every third Thursday of the month for pick up from noon-1 p.m. at the Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.

Participants should bring a bag for easy transport of their meal. The meal for Thursday, Jan. 22 is either a choice of lasagna with roll or barbecue chicken with baked beans, corn

and ice cream. An enrollment form must be completed before requesting a meal.

People may call Phyllis Dassatti at 413-238-5962 to arrange participation.

NORTHAMPTON

Hosmer Gallery exhibits four artists

NORTHAMPTON – The Hosmer Gallery located on the second floor of the Forbes Library, 20 West St., will be displaying art work by four artists now through Friday, Jan. 30.

The gallery is accessible by stairs and elevator. An artist reception will take place on Friday, Jan. 9 from 6-8 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and closed Sundays and holidays. People may visit forbeslibrary.org/info/hours for any updates.

Artist Sasha Kopf said, “I began learning woodworking from my father in 2022, after I had left my job as an attorney and was trying to figure out my next career move. My intention was just to learn a bit of basic cabinetry while I had some spare time on my hands, but pretty soon, I was coming to the wood shop every day and doing projects on my own.”

Her work features marquetry, a technique in which many pieces of wood veneer are cut and pieced together to form an image. She cuts each piece of wood on a scroll saw and a single image can include hundreds of pieces of veneer of different colors and patterns. She said, “I enjoy making portraits of animals, especially obscure and under-appreciated ones. I also enjoy making abstract shapes that mimic natural forms.”

Artist Esther S. White of Northampton makes functional pottery decorated with scenes and characters from classical mythology, heroic poetry and superhero comics. White features Beowulf, Wolverine, Theseus and the Minotaur, Cerberus, Arachne, Argus, the Apple of Discord and the Muses.



Also on display at the Hosmer Gallery is this and other woodcuts by Myrrh Brooks.

Artist Myrrh Brooks explores themes of home, belonging and the understated moments that often go unnoticed beside the whirs, clicks and flashes of modern life. She graduated from Smith College as an Ada Comstock Scholar in 2022 with a degree in studio art - book studies concentration. There she fell in love with woodcuts and has built her artistic practice around woodcuts and making books. The prints shown here are the illustrations for her 2024 children's book, “Apples For Georgia,” published by Penny Bun Press. Copies are available at several Western Massachusetts libraries and other locations around the continent. Prints, framed prints, and book copies are available online and by visiting www.pennybunpresspublishing.com.

Chenda Cope

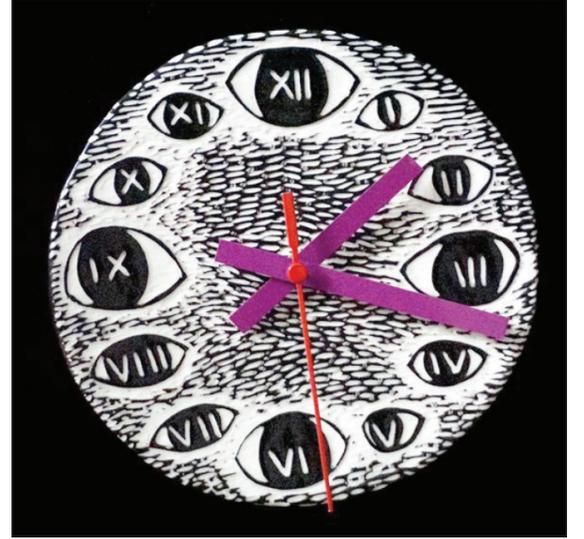


This marquetrie is by Sasha Kopf and will be on display along with others at the Hosmer Gallery at the Forbes Library, 20 West St., Northampton.

“Remnants” is a collection of gestural casts that straddle the line between abstraction and representation. These objects are primarily composed of waste materials,

saved and sorted from her trash.

Due to the way in which these forms are made, the contents of each piece is not readily obvious, offering a



Esther S. White is displaying her art at the Hosmer Gallery this month. Courtesy photos



Chenda Cope displays her casts using waste materials.

slow viewing experience in which texture and color shifts are slowly emergent. These bodies bring that which has been forgotten/ignored/erased into visible forms.

Hung on the wall are “remnants of the remnants,” drawings and material sketches made as a byproduct

of the casting process. The accompanying text, available in both audio and written form, blends poetry, memoir and scholarship to speak to the experience of living with invisible illness, drawing connections between illness, waste, the body, material and art.

PUBLIC NOTICES

SOUTHERN HILLTOWNS Public Hearing Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM FY 2022/2023 Construction Progress Hearing & FY 2026 Application Forum

The Town of Russell, on behalf of the Towns of Chester, Huntington and Middlefield, in association with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a performance hearing regarding the town's ongoing FY24 Community Development Block Grant Programs. The hearing will take place at 6:00 PM on Tuesday January 20, 2026, in person at the Town Hall, 65 Main Street, Russell, MA 01071.

The hearing will review the projects funded through the town's FY22/23 Community Development Block Grant Program including Valley View Avenue infrastructure improvements, public social services, and housing rehabilitation. These activities received funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, Massachusetts CDBG program.

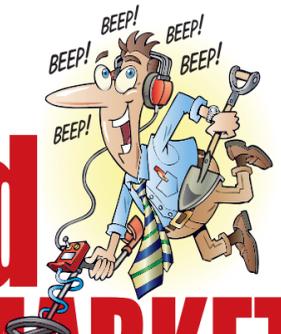
This hearing will also serve as the first public forum to solicit community input on potential activities to be included in a potential Southern Hilltowns FY26 Community Development Block Grant application. All communi-

ty members and stakeholders are invited to share thoughts on potential CDBG-eligible activities to be included.

All persons with questions or comments regarding the performance hearing will have an opportunity to submit comments up until and through the public hearing. Please submit comments to Joe Hagopian at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission @ jhagopian@pvpc.org or 413-781-6045. Persons who require special accommodations should contact the Town prior to the hearing date at 413-862-6200.

01/08/2026

Goshen Conservation Commission Notice of Public Meeting
The Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting under the Provisions of the Wetland Protections Act (M.G.L. Chapter 313 on Section 40) **Monday, January 19, 2026 6:15 pm** at the Goshen Town Offices to review a Request for Determination filed by Martha Christenson Lees for 31 Aberdeen Road. The work to be reviewed is to replace the eroded concrete piers that support the seasonal cottage. The contractor will hand dig and remove the eroded piers and replace them with new piers in the same locations.
01/08/2026



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