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# 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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## HILLTOWNS

# Wedding ring lost in snow found a few days later

By Kathryn Koegel  
Correspondent

For Harry Rock of Wyben, Dec. 21 was an ominous day, but it did not start that way.

He had spent the afternoon Nordic skiing at the Trustees property Notchview in Windsor. "When I was done skiing, I was sitting in the lodge, putting my boots on and I noticed that my wedding ring was gone. Panic set in."

Rock had celebrated his 45th wedding anniversary in 2024 and the ring, which was detailed and unusual, symbolized a very happy marriage. Rock is the race committee chair of the Westfield River Wildwater Races and familiar to many in the community due to his volunteering, often with his wife Anne by his side.

"The problem was I couldn't remember the last time I had seen it. The prior day I had been working out. I typically take it off and tie it to my shoelaces so I do not scratch it from lifting."

"Rings become part of who you are," he continues. "You just don't think about them. I couldn't decide where I had lost it."

"One thing that occurred to me was that I had taken off my glove while skiing to take a selfie. It was so beautiful that day at Notchview with the trees enshrouded in snow." Rock went back there and knew the spot where he had stopped. "It had been snowing all day and I used my glove to sweep off the fresh snow, but didn't see anything. After a couple of days I thought it was gone forever."

"I told the story to my friend Bruce Townsend of Windsor, who told me his daughter has a metal detector and that we should go back," he says.

"We went back up. Monday afternoon and hiked out. They had gotten flurries for several days. We saw some indentations and started the machine up. That ring could have been anywhere."



Harry Rock, right, holds his recovered wedding ring that was lost in the snow at Notchview but found days later. Bruce Townsend of Windsor, left, pitched in with a metal detector. Submitted photo

LOST RING, page 2

## HUNTINGTON

# Town grapples with new highway roller

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

At their first meeting of 2025, Chair Roger Booth, Selectmen William Hathaway and John McVeigh and Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin met with Highway Superintendent Brad Curry to examine options for equipment that was ordered and paid for last summer.

The item delivered, however, was not what Huntington Highway was expecting. A new 3-1/2 ton roller sits in the same spot that it was delivered to last July, unused.

"This is a far cry from a one ton roller," Hathaway said. "John Deere isn't the only game in town. I think in the future, we need more bids from other companies." Hathaway, who serves as the Select Board liaison to the highway department and Curry have been dealing with



Shown are Select Board Chairman Roger Booth, center, Selectmen John McVeigh, left and William Hathaway at their first meeting of 2025. Turley photo by Wendy Long

the sales department at United Construction and Forestry trying to resolve the issue. Curry noted that he made his first phone call to them in July, when the roller was delivered.

During the Thursday, Jan. 2 meeting, the group tried to figure out where the order had gone awry. The purchase

HIGHWAY ROLLER, page 5

## BLANDFORD

# Select Board signs highway union contract

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

At the Monday, Dec. 30, Select Board's meeting, they signed the new union contract with the Highway Department.

The significant difference in the new version, according to Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera is that wage increases are based on merit, which in turn will be based on goals. he Select Board "in consultation with the Highway Superintendent" will establish goals that "reflect an objective, standards-based, time-sensitive set of achievable and realistic criteria." The contract is between the town and the United Public Service Employees Union, Local 424M and runs through June 30, 2027.

The board received an IRS notification that the standard mileage rate increases from \$.67 to \$.70 a mile for 2025.

The board noted that Town Administrator Ferrera is due for a six-month review.

### Water Superintendent

Water Superintendent Gordon Avery met with the board to make the case for additional funding due vendors for the SCADA project, which are overdue because the town's bond agent has not cleared the department for a loan, nor have grant monies come through yet.

To that end, Ferrera, Treasurer/Collector Sara Hunter, and an accounting rep will meet this week to ferret

CONTRACT, page 12



PAGE 6

Becket.....8	Classifieds.....11	Huntington.....5	Puzzle Page.....9	Worthington.....10
Blandford.....12	Easthampton.....10	Middlefield.....6	Russell.....2, 3	
Business Directory.....5	Goshen.....2	Opinion.....4	Schools & Youth.....7	
Chester.....6	Hilltowns.....2	Public Notices.....10	Stockbridge.....9	



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## RUSSELL

# Project to preserve Strathmore Mills history

As part of a celebration of the Westfield River that is part of the 70th running of the Westfield River Wildwater Races, an oral history project for the Strathmore Paper Mills has been launched.

"In planning the races this year, we are celebrating the past and future of the Westfield River," says Race Managing Director Kathryn Koegel. "The races began in 1954 and the river then supported several mills, most notably Strathmore, which was an entire industry village in Woronoco. Our current finish line is just above the millpond."

"When part of the mills collapsed in November, it inspired me to think of the history that has already been lost. The Strathmore Mills not only inspired generations of artists to create with their papers, they supported so many Hilltowner families. Before we lost more people with the memory of life in those mills, we decided to launch an oral history project," says Koegel.

"I was trained in oral history when I studied at UCLA and the techniques are similar to those of journalism," says Koegel, who is also a correspondent for the Country Journal. "You need to get the facts of who, what, where, when and then start people's memories flowing. We are using technology to streamline the process with a digital survey."

The survey that the group is using to gather the basic facts is now open. Anyone who lived in Woronoco, Russell or the surrounding areas who themselves, or has family who worked in the mills, is invited to participate. From those sur-



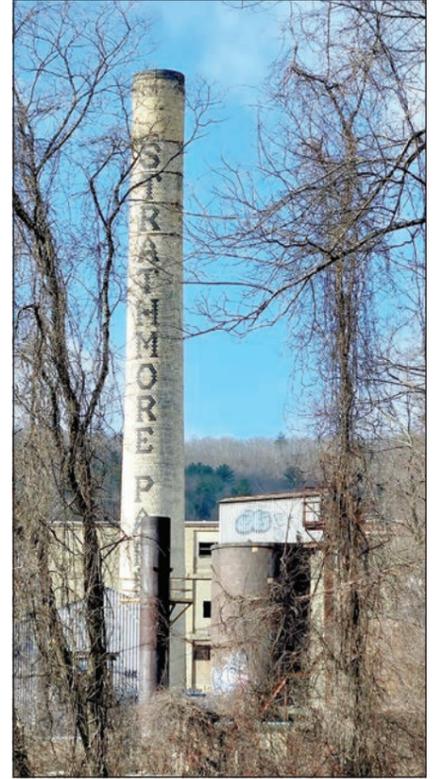
Huntington resident Sharon Heath worked in the finishing department of Strathmore. She presented part of her collection of Strathmore artist papers to Lulu Maioreescu, an art student at the Pratt Institute who is also a Huntington resident. Maioreescu is the artist who created the new logo and tshirt graphics for the 70th running of the Westfield River Wildwater Races.

veys, the people with the richest stories will be personally interviewed and videotaped for posterity.

The project is being conducted with the Russell Historical Commission and its archivist Sue Maxwell, who is digitizing images of Strathmore. The final project will be formally presented to the town of Russell and its Historical Commission.

The initial work will be presented at a talk at Stanton Hall on Thursday, March 27 at 6:30 p.m. The public and especially anyone who was involved with the mills, are invited to attend. There will be a display of original images as well as products produced by Strathmore.

For more information, or to receive a copy of the survey in print or online, people may email [wrvraces@gmail.com](mailto:wrvraces@gmail.com).



This is a photo of Strathmore Mill #2 taken on Jan. 2. *Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel*

People interested in helping with the oral histories or the photo archiving process are encouraged to contact using the same email. "This is a community project and I am excited to teach people how to create digital archives and conduct oral history interviews."

## HILLTOWNS

### LOST RING

from page 1

We noticed tracks from the snow groomer which could have picked it up and dragged it somewhere. The snow tiller could have grabbed and destroyed it."

"Within 30 seconds we heard 'tik tik tik.' The sound picked up intensity and lowered when we moved beyond it. At the strongest response I used the spade I brought and dug down 3-4 inches. It hit a small stone. It was the ice-encrusted ring. Because it was warm on my finger it melted the snow when it fell. I jumped up and bear hugged Bruce. I couldn't believe I was holding the ring. I kept warming it up then put it in my pocket with the zipper."

Rock drove back down through the Hilltowns to celebrate with Anne. When asked what the secret to his happy marriage is, Rock cites common interests and working together. They met when teaching at the same school

in East Hartland, Connecticut.

"I knew her as a fellow teacher. The school secretary kept trying to fix us up, but I had a rule not to date people I work with. At the end of the school year, the teachers went out for drinks and a celebration dinner. Afterwards, a bunch of us went out to Barkhamsted Reservoir. The moon was out and we were sitting on the bank of the dam. When the group broke up, I asked her if she wanted to take a ride in my truck. I had brought a little used pickup as I was a canoeist and also worked as a pro river guide. She said yes. We found we could talk with one another so I asked her out on a date. One year to the day we were married."

Look for Harry with his Race Official vest when the Westfield River Wildwater Races runs its 70th this April 19 starting at Knightville Dam. Anne typically assists with awards and timing at the race finish.

Send us your news & photos: [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com)

## GOSHEN

### Goshen Town Clerk announces annual street listing mailing

GOSHEN – The Goshen Town Clerk Kristen M Estelle announces the 2025 Annual Street Listings have been mailed to each household in Goshen and residents should be receiving them soon.

For those who did not receive the mailing, blank copies are available on the Town website by visiting <https://www.goshen-ma.us>. People should fill out information for everyone who lives in their house, sign and return to 40 Main St. Goshen, MA 01032.

It is important to keep an accurate count of residents as it determines state and federal funding for the town. Responding to the street listing will also keep people on the active voting list if they are registered to vote.

There has been a delay in receiving the dog licenses for this year. They should be available to have them by Monday, Jan. 13. A dog licensing form was mailed with the street listing and is also available on the Town website as listed above. Neutered or

spayed dogs cost \$5 each to register; intact dogs are \$10. People may pay in cash or with a check made out to Town of Goshen (cash or check made out to the Town of Goshen). Last year's licenses expire on March 31.

To register a dog or dogs people may stop by the Town Clerk's office during office hours on Monday from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. (bring cash or check, valid rabies certificate and spaying/neutering certificate), mail in the license form; mail the dog license form, fee(s) and rabies and spaying/neutering certificate(s) and check along with a stamped self-addressed envelope for the return of the license(s) and tag(s) to: Goshen Town Clerk, 40 Main St., Goshen, MA 01032 or drop the paperwork off in the town clerk drop box., located to the left of the door to town offices.

People may contact Town Clerk Kristen Estelle email [clerk@goshen-ma.us](mailto:clerk@goshen-ma.us) or call 413-268-8236, extension 107 with any questions.



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Country Journal

### OBITUARY POLICY

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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

*Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.*

## RUSSELL

## Looking ahead to bridge repair and mill sites

*Note: This is part one of a two part series. Part 2 will appear in the Jan. 16 edition.*

**By Kathryn Koegel**  
Correspondent

RUSSELL – Driving down Woronoco Road just off of Rte 20 and 10 minutes from Westfield, motorists enter a different world.

The river pools out into a large mill pond with two dramatic waterfalls. The ruins of the large and once picturesque Strathmore Mill #1 stand hulking and ominous. Built in 1911, the mill produced the paper for generations of artists to use.

A collapse left three injured, two critically, in the rubble when part of the building collapsed on Nov. 11. Since then the road has been closed. Half the villagers of Woronoco are cut off from each other and their mail. There is no word on how long that road will be shut down as reported in December.

Look to the northwest side of the Mill #1 and you see a “temporary” bridge that was constructed in 1987 as a replacement for the Bridge Street Bridge, which is just to the south.

The “real” bridge is blocked by a graffiti-covered wall. Scramble a bit down the embankment and the natural wonder is unveiled. According to the Library of Congress the Woronoco Bridge over the Westfield River is remarkable in design and setting. Built in 1923, “the bridge is one of the least altered of eight open-spandrel, ribbed arch type concrete bridges under Massachusetts Department of Public Works Purview.” Nine images of the Woronoco bridge exist in the Library of Congress Historic American Engineering Record, attesting to its significance.

Look below the historic bridge and water tumbles riotously, cascading along rock formations distinct in the Hilltowns called “jambes.” Salmon once ran here, which is why this area on the river is now known as Salmon Falls.

In pre Colonial times this was a significant village of over 1,000 Indigenous people of the Woronoke Tribe. Woronoco in the local Algonkian dialect means “turning about,” which aptly describes what those people saw then and what we, albeit with industrial revolution changes, see now.

The second bridge, called Valley View is one lane and of a type called a “Bailey Bridge,” the style of bridge that could easily be put down and then removed during WW2 in strategic areas in Europe.

Drive across that bridge, walking is forbidden, it’s too narrow, even a compact car bucks and sways with the passage.

Bridges like this have unfixed plates as decking. The bridge was considered temporary in 1987 and is now decades past its original projected life span of 10-15 years. Palm-sized rusted out holes in the decking see through to the river.

What’s most important about that bridge is what it cannot do. “We have trouble getting snow plowers, who are willing to drive across,” says Tom Kulig, Russell Select Board Chair. He also



The deck of the Bailey Bridge, which was temporary when installed in the 1980s, has visible rust holes in the decking. It cannot bear the weight of most fire engines and the trucks needed in the demolition of Mill #2.



This photo of the closed Woronoco Bridge over Salmon Falls was taken on Jan. 4.



A Jersey yearling grazes near Mill #2.

*Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel*

notes that the size and weight bearing of the bridge contributed to the challenges fighting the big fire at Strathmore Mill #2 in July of 2022.

When Mill #2, which is on the opposite side of the river burned, hook and ladder and large pumper trucks could not get across. “Within two hours they had exhausted their water,” says current resident Megan Ellinger. Reports in news organizations noted crews had to come from four counties and as far as New York State to form literal bucket

brigades.

The fire was primarily contained in a few days, but Ellinger says it continued to burn for three months.

The previous year, Ellinger had been invited by the then owner into the mill where she marveled at its size and complexity but she saw large rolls of a black substance that she assumed were some kind of tar paper used for maintenance.

“When it burned all I could think of were those black rolls going up in flames.” This was the newer of the

Strathmore Mills, begun in 1913 and masses of steel beams poke out of the rubble.

Most surprisingly, two cows and a few sheep now graze around that area. “They are rescue cows,” says current owner Oksana Keeny of Chester. “We saved them from the slaughterhouse and they have food, water and a shelter here.”

Is it a good idea to have them so near the mill? “International Paper decommissioned the mill in 1997. They started then and didn’t complete it until 2004. It was an expensive process done in accordance with the Data Processing Agreement and the Environmental Protection Agency,” she says. The EPA continues to publicly list Strathmore Mill #2 as a Superfund Site, a designation “given to locations polluted with hazardous materials.” Superfund status also entitles a property to preferential treatment in clean-up grants.

“When we bought the mill we were told that before it was closed down by International Paper in 1999 they removed all the asbestos. The soil has been tested and it’s fine. We take care of the cows,” says Oksana Keeny.

What International Paper didn’t remove from the mill in its shutdown were some paper making supplies, all of the paper and the residue of chemicals from the rag-based paper making process. According to industry resources, paper making typically involves chemicals like bleach and results in Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances or forever chemicals being created.

Why would Oksana Keeny and her husband Neil, who are contractors (she also worked in real estate), buy the mill after the devastating 2022 fire? The entire property cost \$30,000 and they saw promise in the beauty of the location near the river.

“We bought Mill #2, a year and a half ago. “We see potential,” says Oksana Keeny.

“We’d like to see it made into a kids’ play space. As parents who travel a lot around the area going to places like trampoline parks, it would be terrific for the community. We’d like to see a climbing wall and go-karts. This site would be perfect for that,” says Neil Keeny.

“We are working with Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and following all appropriate guidelines,” says Oksana Keeny. “We are seeing that anything dangerous is taken care of. DEP gives us until Dec 2025 to have a plan in place.”

“This is not just a cleanup, but extensive testing has to be done,” she says. “We have reached out to former employees of the mill that did work with chemicals. We are obtaining documentation that there are no hazardous chemicals remaining” with an acrid smell and black smoke she is still cleaning off of her house walls. Ellinger was so concerned she prepped to evacuate. “I had packed everything we needed and were ready to go. We saw people in hazmat suits walking around the street and the mill. We asked them if we should evacuate and if there was anything dangerous and they said it was all fine.”

## Russell Public Library announces January events

RUSSELL – The Russell Public Library is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3-7 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Library will be closed for Monday, Jan. 20 for Martin Luther King Day. StoryWalks® sponsored by the Hilltown Family Center are at the Noble View Outdoor Center, All Person’s Trail and behind the Russell Public Library

around the Community fruit trees and play area.

The Russell Public Library joined Central and Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing System on Wednesday, Jan. 8. Library card holding Russell residents will be eligible to borrow over eight million items from the library consortium, made up of 160 libraries, with convenient pick up and return, right here at the R.P. Library.

Teens and adults are welcome to participate on Thursday, Jan. 16 from 6-8 p.m. for the rescheduled winter/Valentine themed quilling workshop. Quilling involves using strips of paper that are rolled, looped, curled, twisted and otherwise manipulated to create different shapes and glued together to create decorative designs. Participants will decorate a framing mat or make cards. Materials will be provided. They may register by

emailing [rpldirector@townofrussell.us](mailto:rpldirector@townofrussell.us), calling 413-862-6221 and leaving a message or coming in and sign up at the library by Monday, Jan. 13.

Adults may attend the library’s first Technology Help session Thursday, Jan. 23 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Kate will be available to help individuals with their technology questions. They should bring phone, laptop or tablet to learn an app and/or get the tech support they need.

# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



### Can my wife claim her SS now and get half my SS benefit later?

Dear Rusty:

*My wife will reach her full Social Security benefit at 66.5 years of age which is just under 2 years away for her now.*

*If she were to begin to get her monthly check now (i.e. early), would that prevent her from being eligible for the spousal benefit to receive half of what I am currently drawing?*

Signed: Curious Husband

Dear Curious:

If your wife claims her own SS retirement benefit now (e.g., at 64.5 years) and you are already collecting your own SS benefit, then she will be automatically deemed to be filing for her spousal benefit immediately when she claims her own benefit. She does not have the option to defer claiming her spousal benefit until later.

This is a change made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, which requires all those first claiming SS to file for all benefits they are eligible for when they claim. What that would mean is that your wife's benefit now, including her spousal boost from you, would be actuarially reduced by the number of months early she claimed.

Her own SS retirement benefit would be permanently reduced by about 15% and her "spousal boost," the additional amount she would get as your spouse, would be reduced by about 19%, yielding a combined benefit which is roughly 42% of your Full Retirement Age SS benefit.

The only way your wife can get half 50% of your FRA benefit entitlement is by waiting until her own full retirement age (66 years and 10 months) to claim. Note too that your wife's spousal benefit will be based on your FRA entitlement, so if you claimed earlier or later than your own full retirement age, her spousal benefit will still be based on your FRA entitlement.

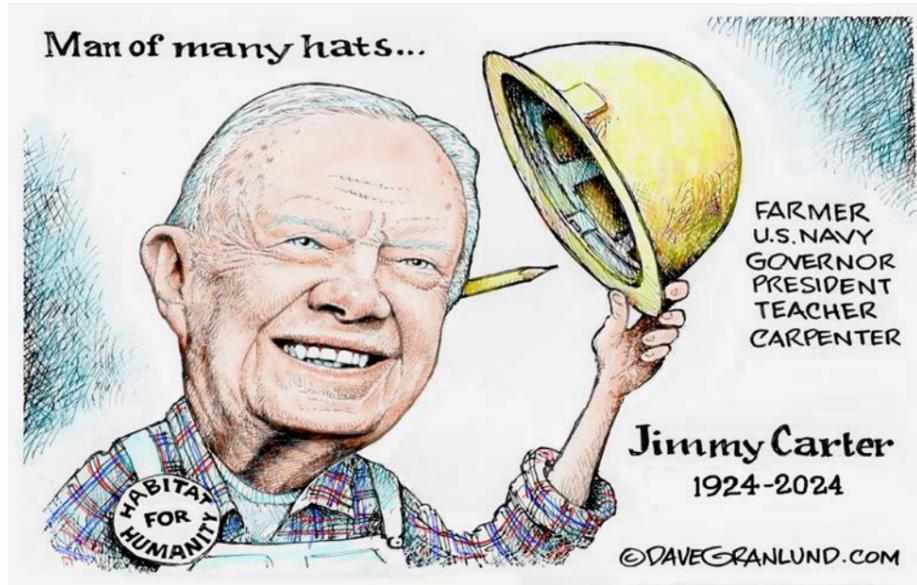
Also, your wife should be aware that anyone, who claims early, is subject to Social Security's "earnings test," which limits how much can be earned while collecting early benefits. Thus, if your wife is working, she will be restricted on how much she can earn before Social Security takes away some of her benefits.

FYI, the earnings limit changes annually, but for 2025 it is \$23,420 and, if that is exceeded, SS will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit. And, FYI, the earnings limit goes up a lot during the year FRA is attained and the earnings test no longer applies once full retirement age is reached.

I hope this answers your question, but if you have need additional information, please feel free to contact us directly at SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org, or call us at 1-888-750-2622.

*The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated*

SECURITY, page 12



## GUEST COLUMN

### Prepping for this years' big garden



Last week I wrote about the desire to go back to my roots, so to speak, and embrace my homesteading self this New Year.

It's funny how when you are young and inexperienced you just "have at it" without much thought or planning. Sure, I had a general idea when it was best to sow my seeds indoors so that my transplants would be a good size come Memorial Day, but beyond that I sort of gardened when and how I felt like it.

These days I find it's good to have a plan of action. Here is where I will start in the coming weeks.

The first thing on the agenda is to go through my seed stash and decide what to keep and what to chuck. I usually throw out any seed that is older than three years, except for maybe tomatoes. I have had 5 or even 7-year-old tomato seeds germinate.

The three year rule does not apply to hybrid onions, carrots or parsnips. Those I get rid of at the two year mark.

If you are into growing herbs, I rarely have luck with lovage, dill or valerian after the first year. After I've whittled down my stash based on age, I will then look at what I have left in the envelopes and if I like that particular variety enough to buy more, or if I'd better start off with a new type altogether.

If it didn't work last year, why grow it again? I feel this way especially as I get older.

I used to have a friend who was a bit morbid as he aged, and he'd say, "if I'm lucky I'll get another 10 gardens." While that used to depress me to hear that, I guess it's a good point to make.

Once I've got the seed package pile figured out, the fun begins. I'll get my seed orders in early, to beat the rush, especially if I want to grow transplants that take a lot of time to size up.

Onions are best started indoors around Valentine's Day. For flower lovers among us the fun starts earlier.

Wax begonias can be sown now! Yes, now! Coleus and petunia are not long after.

While many decades of growing have approximate dates burned into my brain on some things, others I will have to look up, especially since I am trying to grow more of our food with vegetables coming in as soon as possible and without gaps.

There are some fantastic resources out there for custom tailoring your growing/sowing schedule. Seed catalogs are just one. I love Johnny's Selected Seed ([www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com)) for this reason. Because they cater market growers as well as home gardeners, this catalog is packed with useful tips.

Online you will find a treasure trove of topics that will get you excited and well-equipped.

Speaking of equipped, it's also a great time to take inventory of your supplies. Do I have enough seed starting mix on hand, and did I like it enough to use again?

One year I bought germinating medium that had such little fertility. My plants were on the yellow side and stunted.

I try to grow organically as much as possible, and this soil nearly made me run for the blue water. I ended up mixing that lousy soil with some good soil, and added some fertilizer to the whole batch before using it in bigger container plantings.

Many soil bags will actually state that supplemental fertilizer is necessary after three-four weeks. And I should say that I do find it worth the investment to buy potting soil that is geared specifically to seed sowing, ie the germinating medium or seed-starting mix I speak of. It is milled finer for tiny seeds and will not stay too damp, or too dry, leading to a higher success rate.

In addition to assessing your soil, take a look at your stash of containers and labels. If you are re-using, make sure to wash both well, so that any diseases or pathogens won't infect this years' efforts.

You really don't need fancy, purchased containers.

The plastic boxes that mushrooms come

GARDEN, page 12

## EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor should be 500 words or less in length. We require letter writers to include his or her name, town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources.

Mail letter to Country Journal, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or mail your letter to: [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com).

## CORRECTIONS POLICY

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](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com), or call us at 413-283-8393.

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

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## Election letters to the editor welcome

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](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that

Friday'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 news-

paper 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.

# HUNTINGTON

## Council on Aging lists upcoming January events

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Council on Aging announces the following events at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road.

The Winter Birthday Celebration and Bingo will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 1 p.m. Everyone is welcome to enjoy free cake and bingo to celebrate seniors with birthdays in December, January and February. Performer Larry Southard will entertain seniors on Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 2 p.m.

A presentation on medication safety and blood pressure checks will be provided by the Hampshire Public Health Preparedness Coalition's nursing team on Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 1 p.m.

The Hilltown Memory Café is held weekly at 2 p.m. The weekly café provides seniors with activities while their caregivers participate in a support group. The café is open to all with and without memory issues. The café is made possible by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act and by a grant from the Huntington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

All events are free and open to residents of any community. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

## HIGHWAY ROLLER

from page 1

was made through Sourcewell, which is designed to help cities and towns with public purchasing. One of the possibilities is that the specs in the Sourcewell bid did not match the item the town received, which Peloquin has been asked to look into. She noted that there were five different models of the item # they wanted on the Sourcewell list, which may be where the error occurred.

The new roller not only hasn't been used, it can't be used because the town doesn't own a trailer that is big enough to handle the weight.

After the meeting, Hathaway explained that the roller is bigger than what we need; the town simply wanted a one ton roller to use in patching potholes. The town paid \$41,000 for the unit before they had received it. United Construction has offered to buy the large roller back for \$30,000 and sell them a one ton roller for \$35,000. "The loss of \$10,000 is not acceptable. That's what bothers me the most," Hathaway said. "The taxpayers are losing \$10,000. That's not good business."

Another option, Hathaway said, is to keep the larger roller and apply the \$10,000 toward a heavy duty trailer, so the town gets something for its lost funds. In the long run, this could also save the town money. For example, when the town has to rent larger equipment such as the huge roller used to pack down dirt roads or when a backhoe is needed, it also needs to pay someone to move the rental units around the town. During the meeting, Booth added that a larger trailer could also be useful instead of paying a heavy-duty tow truck when large pieces of town-owned equipment stop working and have to go in for repairs.

"We're just trying to make the outcome the best it can be," said Hathaway. After unsuccessfully dealing with the sales staff, Hathaway spoke to United Construction's General Manager on Jan. 2, who said he would look into the matter and get back in touch soon. In the meantime, Curry and Peloquin plan to sort through the paperwork to determine if the error occurred through Sourcewell.

Another issue is that the town paid the bill for the disputed roller before it was delivered, which reduces their leverage in resolving the problem. "That can't happen again," Booth said, offering a motion that anything purchased and billed at a cost of above \$5,000 has to go through Peloquin, effective immediately. This was unanimously approved. Peloquin was named Chief Procurement Officer at the Dec. 4 Select Board meeting.

### Shovel ready project

In other highway department news, a shovel-ready project will be submitted to the state's RIP List,

which-according to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission may increase access to grant funding. Curry also named projects lined up after winter including Blandford Hill Road when the logging operation is over and culvert issues on County Road. Booth reminded Curry that his department needs to secure the software they need to manage these projects. Hathaway added that the town needs to make sure all water and sewer maps of roadways are complete and up-to-date. This needs to be part of the timeline for any highway projects to avoid the broken water main they experienced on Crescent Street last year, Hathaway said.

Hilltown Community Ambulance Hilltown Community Ambulance has already submitted their budget to the town, whose share is only up \$4200 for operating costs. There is also a \$6500 assessment, which will eventually be used to replace an ambulance. Booth suggested they invite HCA to a meeting in February, to discuss further.

### Cyber security training

Since the last meeting, eight people have completed all of their cyber security required training. Nine are still pending, but none of these are town employees. Those who choose not to complete the training will lose their town emails.

### Town Administrator

In her updates, Town Administrator Peloquin reported that Mimi Caplan of PVPC informed her of a request from the Westfield River Watershed for river access in Huntington. McVeigh pointed out that this is a Mass DOT issue, not the town's. Booth reminded everyone that he had said in a meeting last year he would not do any more work on this issue without an inter-agency meeting that included government groups like state and federal fish and wildlife, public works, and DOT. He restated his willingness to lead the effort once those entities are on board.

### Other business

In other business, the board approved the 2025 used car dealer license for Jackalynn's Auto Sales; authorized Peloquin to sign contracts through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Collective Highway Bid and signed a contract for the roof coating on the highway garage through J.D. Rivet & Co. Budget worksheets are going out to all town departments on Friday, Jan. 3 and are due back Sunday, Feb. 2.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Huntington Select Board will be Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 5 p.m.

### THE ROCKS HAND OUT RACE AWARDS



Anne and Harry Rock handing out awards together at the 2024 Westfield River Wildwater Races. They just celebrated their 45 wedding anniversary.

Turley photo by Kathryn Koegel

## It Takes a Village has brand new sneakers available

HUNTINGTON – Subaru of America is providing the children of It Takes a Village with brand new sneakers in partnership with The Village Closet, 2 East Main St.

To receive a free pair of sneakers, parents or guardians must register by Sunday, Jan. 10 by visiting <https://bit.ly/SLTH2025>. Sizes available are kid's 2 and 7 and men's 8 and 9.

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# MIDDLEFIELD



An evergreen tree adorned with white lights and handmade ornaments added festive cheer to the gazebo in the new town park.



Young and old had pictures taken with Santa following the tree lighting ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 7.

*Submitted photos*



The Eagles Community Brass Ensemble Band entertained with a concert, which included holiday songs and a Carol sing-a-long at the Middlefield Congregational Church.

## Town held holiday event with Santa, concert and tree lighting

MIDDLEFIELD – On Saturday, Dec. 7 the community came together to celebrate the holidays with a tree lighting ceremony and holiday concert.

An evergreen tree adorned with white lights and handmade ornaments

was placed in the gazebo in the new town park at the previous site of the Ole's Country Store. After the ceremony, Middlefield Congregational Church hosted Santa and his helper Elf Judy, who took pictures with young and old believ-

ers. Refreshments of hot chocolate, apple cider and baked goods were enjoyed by all. Gift bags, coloring books and candy canes were handed out.

The Eagles Community Brass Ensemble Band entertained the crowd

with a concert that included holiday songs and Carol sing-a-long. The residents of Middlefield brought their singing voices and were totally enthralled with the band's performance. Thanks to the towns people who assembled this event.

# CHESTER

### CHILDREN MAKE FIREWORKS DRAWINGS AT STORY TIME



Children at the Hamilton Memorial Library, story time enjoy making a painting of fireworks on Thursday, Jan. 2.



Children painted their own fireworks or dipped a stencil into put to create a fireworks.



These are the finished fireworks art. *Submitted photos*

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## Hamilton Memorial Library announces January events

CHESTER – The Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St., will hold a Winter Social on Saturday, Jan. 11 from 10 a.m.-noon.

People may stop in any time for a warm beverage and light refreshments. Library staff will have a puzzle on the table but people may bring along their knitting, coloring book or other activity to enjoy while chatting with friends

The Book Club meets Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 4:30 p.m. The club meets on the third Wednesday of the month. They will be exploring the literary classic, "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen, which takes place during the Regency Era in England. They will travel back in time to the late 1700s and early 1800s for a peak into the lifestyles, etiquette and social norms and prejudices of the times. Light refreshments will be served. Extra copies are available.

## SCHOOLS &amp; YOUTH

## Holyoke Community College announces Dean's list

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College, 303 Homestead Avenue, recognizes the students who earned Dean's List honors for the fall 2024 semester.

Local students making the Dean's list were: Leia Gail Cartmill of Chester, Alisha M. Desnoyers of Chester, Nevaeh Ellen Judson of Chester, Misty Raye Robitaille of Chester, Alexandra Joanne Adams of Easthampton, Sarah Akin of Easthampton, Lamia Amgdoul of Easthampton, Hind Bourhim of Easthampton, Brenda Lee Carrier of Easthampton, Zachary Anthony Clapp of Easthampton, Gabrielle D'Amour of Easthampton, Marlina Christine Devine of Easthampton, Gavin Daniel Downer of Easthampton, Natalie Samantha Dugas of Easthampton, Angelina Dvorak of Easthampton, Donald William Eggleston of Easthampton, Ashleigh Elaine Fox of Easthampton, Chandler Morgan Frantz of Easthampton, Anthony Giard of Easthampton, Isabella Gitana of Easthampton, Renee Hill of Easthampton, Alison Janocha of Easthampton, Morgan Ann Latour of Easthampton, Caroline Mary Laveck of Easthampton, Elizabeth Marie Loiselle of Easthampton, Tatiana Madera of Easthampton, Anna Marie Mascaro of Easthampton, Matthew McGrath of Easthampton, Emily Moszynski of Easthampton, Emma Lynn Pelletier of Easthampton, Summer Rose Poudrier of Easthampton, Jennifer M. Purdon of Easthampton, Aidan Daniel Rist of Easthampton, Sarah Sabo of Easthampton, Samson Stolar of Easthampton, Caleb Michael Subocz of Easthampton, Kyle Andrew Thoma of Easthampton, Zoe Jennelle Thomas of Easthampton, Noel Truehart of Easthampton, Faith Dawn Vittum of Easthampton, Alyssa Ware of Easthampton and Rosio Soledad Yungalazo of Easthampton.

Other students making Dean's list were: Ariana Mei Espinas Aquilino of Florence, Edward Cade Benson of Florence, Meredith Jean Caven of Florence, Meredith Jean Caven of Florence, Alexa Mae-Wakefield Colly of Florence, Alexiz Monique Cruz of Florence, Nicholas Grimaldi of Florence, Aidan Layne Jones of Florence, Oliver E. King of Florence, Matthew Krueger of Florence, Khailee Elizabeth Lastowski of Florence, Laura Michon of Florence, Stephanie Marie Raftery of Florence, Karissa Marie Robinson of Florence, Anthony Rushmore Scalzo of Florence, Julian John Mayhew Skowron of Florence, Bunnary Reanna Teng of Florence, Megan Marie Tierney of Florence, Teagan Ann Andross of Haydenville, Zachary Michael O'Connell of Haydenville, Colette Rose Piotrowski, of Haydenville, Stachyiah Toledo-Cruz of Huntington, Staci Alice Barrett of Lee and Preston Coffey of Montgomer.

Also making Dean's list were: Leah Ansaldo of Northampton, Hilary Vanesa Barraza I of Northampton, Sarah Kathryn Belote of Northampton, Natalie Caruk of Northampton, Alexandra Marie Carvache of Northampton, Alexandria Ann Casavant of Northampton, Caroline Elisabeth Cole of Northampton, Jesse Knox Conner, of Northampton, Bethany Fields of Northampton, Maddalena Figueroa-Starr of Northampton, Imane Fikry of Northampton, Mercedes Fitch of Northampton, Zachary Harold Fox of Northampton, Jesus Gonzalez of Northampton, Susanna B. Hoffmann of Northampton, Daniel Patrick Horton of Northampton, Olivia Iarossi of Northampton, Alyssa Kaylee Jost of Northampton, Haomin Li, Juliette Long of Northampton, Caitlin Menzyk of Northampton, Orlando Morales of Northampton, Christina Ruggiero-Corliss of Northampton, Greta Sleepers

of Northampton, Gregor Miles Toulson Wimmer of Northampton, Rebecca Gene Tremblay of Northampton, Nathan William Wack of Northampton, Brie-Ann Michelle Wilber of Northampton, Daniel Aaron Winter of Northampton, Harrison Scott Woodland of Northampton, August Assarian of Russell, Amber Renae Coley of Russell, Katherine Murphy of Russell, Megan Jean Adams of Southampton, Joseph Robert Bartolucci of Southampton, Vincent Robert Bartolucci of Southampton, Olesya Bondar of Southampton, Laci Enid Chapdelaine of Southampton, Jessa Mae Craig of Southampton, Emma Kathleen Czarniecki of Southampton, Kyle Shawn Dale of Southampton, Laurel Florek of Southampton, Emerson William Folta of Southampton, Wilson Mark Heath of Southampton, Zeynep Ibic of Southampton, Justin Andrew Meunier of Southampton, Meredith Megan Mielke of Southampton, Reagan Jessie Mott Jr. of Southampton, Liam Charles Packey of Southampton, Alaina Grace Pellegrini of Southampton, Matthew Steven Riel of Southampton, Ambria Lynn Stine of Southampton, Isabelle Judith Wiemer of Southampton, Eve Katherine Bartlett of Westfield, Molly Eleanor Bernardara of Westfield, Nicholas Andre Bradley of Westfield, Clay Jameson Bradley of Westfield, Abigail Beth Brenzel of Westfield, Corrin Olivia Brockney of Westfield, Dominic Anthony Campana of Westfield, Jenna Marie Cardin of Westfield, Raven Elexio Carrasquillo of Westfield, Grace Olivia Clendenin of Westfield, Jamie Renee Collier of Westfield, Abigale Corliss of Westfield, Jocelyn L. Correia of Westfield, Grace David of Westfield, Zabria Ashley Davis of Westfield, Adrienne Fleck of Westfield, Kevin Ediel Flores Colon of Westfield, Mackenzie Allison Grace Frazier of Westfield, Brooke Elisabeth

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A student is placed on the Dean's List if their G.P.A. is 3.2 or higher.

## Horace Smith Fund offers scholarship, fellowship funds

WESTFIELD – The Horace Smith Fund has scholarship and fellowship money available for graduates of Hampden County public and private high schools.

Graduating high school seniors and students already in college may apply for Scholarships of up to \$12,000. Those in their final year of college and previous college graduates pursuing advanced degrees may apply for Fellowships of \$15,000. Applicants must maintain at least a B average in college and be enrolled as full-time students.

Awards are made based on both academic achievement and merit. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance and their goals in pursuing higher education.

Last year, \$297,000 was awarded to 24 individuals. Scholarships were given to 16 graduating seniors from 13 Hampden County high schools. Five scholarships were also awarded to current college stu-

dents to assist them in completing their undergraduate degrees. Three fellowships were given to college graduates pursuing advanced degrees, who had graduated from Hampden County high schools.

The Horace Smith Fund was established in 1899 by the successful and generous philanthropist named Horace Smith, co-founder of Smith & Wesson, established in Springfield. The scholarships and fellowships are named for Walter S. Barr, a West Springfield businessman, whose widow left the bulk of the family estate to The Horace Smith Fund in 1950.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or by mail to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than Saturday, March 15. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, online by visiting [www.HoraceSmithFund.org](http://www.HoraceSmithFund.org) or by calling 413-739-4222.

## Lasell University announces fall 2024 Dean's list

NEWTON – Lasell University announces the fall 2024 Dean's list.

Local students making Dean's list are Kieran Oliver of Westfield, Kate Brough of Easthampton and Lyssa Tirrell of Westhampton.

To be named to the Dean's list, Lasell students must complete at least 12 credits as a full-time student and achieve a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher.

## Lindsey Ledoux makes Dean's list at Husson Univ.

BANGOR, ME – Husson University announces Lindsey Ledoux of Chesterfield making Dean's list for the spring 2024 semester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

She is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in health sciences and a Doctor of Physical Therapy. Deans list students must have a 3.60 to 3.79 semester grade-point average.

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## HOUSATONIC

## Berkshire Pulse purchase building near current locations

HOUSATONIC – Berkshire Pulse, Berkshire County’s dynamic dance and performing arts education center celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2025 announces the recent purchase of an historic mill building in downtown Housatonic to serve as the organization’s future, permanent home.

Pulse closed on the three-story, 13,350 square foot facility at 410 Park St. on Dec. 20 made possible through gifts from several generous donors.

“Berkshire Pulse was founded with the core belief that dance and the cre-

ative arts can profoundly enrich people’s lives-and that everyone should have direct access to the arts, regardless of their age, abilities, or life circumstances. Our community in Housatonic has been incredibly supportive of this mission since we first started holding classes here nearly 20 years ago, and we are grateful for their continued encouragement today,” said Bettina Montano, Founder and Artistic Director of Berkshire Pulse.

“This new space will allow us to expand our programs, offer more opportunities for local artists, and deepen our

impact and connection with the community. We can’t wait to envision how our Pulse will evolve now that we finally have a permanent home and a place to grow,” said Montano.

Early in 2025, Pulse will begin the planning process to refine the renovation designs, timeline and funding requirements to convert 410 Park from a private residence to a new, dynamic dance and creative arts center. Project planning costs will be partially supported by a feasibility study grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Cultural Facilities Fund program.

The purchase of 410 Park was made possible thanks to the incredible generosity of several anonymous donors. Though the building’s purchase and acquisition costs have already been fully underwritten through these contributions, the project’s planning and construction expenses will need to be raised separately through an anticipated multi-million dollar capital campaign to be launched by Berkshire Pulse’s Board of Directors and volunteers later in 2025.

“We are so grateful to these extraordinary donors whose transformational gifts have laid the foundation for what promises to be a bright new future for Pulse,” said Abigail Rollins, Executive Director of Berkshire Pulse. “And on the cusp of Pulse’s 30th anniversary, we look forward to seeing how our future home will not only allow us to fulfill our mission in new, exciting ways, but also

to serve as a community resource for Berkshire-area artists and families for generations to come.”

Thirty years ago, Bettina Montano began an after school program (initially called “The Flowering Child Performing Arts Program”) for children in a gym in Stockbridge. Pulse has had many “homes” since its founding. Coincidentally, one of the locations rented to host Pulse classes in the early years and Pulse’s first home in Housatonic was at 410 Park Street. Friends of the organization donated considerable time and resources to convert raw space on the bottom floors of 410 Park into two dance studios where Pulse held classes for seven years before the property was ultimately sold and converted into a private residence.

Since 2014, it has rented 6,500 square feet on the third floor of Rubin Mill (located next door at 420 Park St.) for its studios and administrative offices. Pulse will continue to operate its Youth Performing Arts and Community Classes at Rubin Mill for the next several years while it undergoes the construction and capital campaign work required for 410 Park. In addition to maintaining classes in Housatonic, Pulse will continue to offer its many off-site In-School and Community Outreach programs, including its expanded presence in Pittsfield through its partnership with the Berkshire Boys & Girls Club.



Berkshire Pulse’s future home, 410 Park St., Housatonic, is on the left side of the photo, while their current home, 420 Park St., is on the right. *Courtesy photo of Birch Properties*

## BECKET

## Becket Cultural Council announces 2025 Grant Awards

BECKET – Leigh Davis, State Representative of the 3rd Berkshire District, and Cathy Terwedow, Chair of the Becket Cultural Council announce the awarding of 22 grants totaling \$13,500 for the 2025 calendar year.

The grants will support a wide range of arts, humanities, and science programming for people of all ages in Becket. “I’m proud to support the Becket Cultural Council and its dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to enrich our community through the arts, culture, and local initiatives,” stated Leigh Davis. “Their thoughtful stewardship ensures that every grant strengthens the fabric of Becket, benefiting residents and inspiring creativity for all.”

The Becket Cultural Council is one of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving

every town in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences and humanities every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community.

Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of municipally appointed volunteers. The members of the Becket Cultural Council are Cathy Terwedow, chair; Andrea Pecor, treasurer; Lisa Rosier, secretary; Sarah Reedy, publicity; Andi Cawein; Shelley Chanler; Karen Ludington and Jane Markham.

This year’s grants include: Becket

Arts Center for its Music Brings Communities Together; Becket Athenaeum for its Museum Passes program and community programs; Becket Beat for local journalism; Becket Washington School for Interactive Science Exploration, BTG Plays!, and Jacob’s Pillow Curriculum in Motion; Becket Washington School PTO for Picnic in the Park and a STEAM Assembly & Events; Berkshire Music School, Inc. for Rhythms of Brazil: A Journey Through Traditional Musical Instruments; Facepaint, Inc for the donation of books and online resources to the Becket Athenaeum; Jodi Hostetter for Music in the Park; Kate Hubbell for Introduction to Tools and Carpentry Basics; Berkshire Art Center for the ARTcentric after-school program at

the Becket Washington School; Mollie Kellogg for Incognito Witch, the Musical; Laurel Lenski for Kinesthetic Learning with Intrinsic Movement; Jana Pfeiffer for The Juckets; Q-MoB Inc for Celebrating Becket/Hill Town Pride Queer History & Culture; Sevenars Concerts for their 57th Anniversary Season; The Stockbridge Sinfonia, Inc. for their concert series; Town of Washington for Family Fun Day and Lara Tupper for Beginning to See the Light: A Cabaret Evening with Lara Tupper and Benny Kohn.

To apply for a 2026 grant, people may visit <https://www.townofbecket.org/becket-cultural-council> in early September. For more information about the Becket Cultural Council, they may email to [becketculturalcouncil@townofbecket.org](mailto:becketculturalcouncil@townofbecket.org).

## BAC accepting show applications

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, is accepting submissions of visual art to display in their galleries.

Applications close on Friday, Feb. 28. Artists will enter for a chance to win \$300 and have a solo show Aug. 8-Aug. 31. People may visit [becketartscenter.org/2025-juried-application](http://becketartscenter.org/2025-juried-application) to learn more.

## Art Center to hold ‘Knit and Knot’

BECKET – Beginning Thursday, Jan. 9 and continuing on Thursdays through the month of January, the Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will host a free “Knit or Knot” evening from 6:30-8:30 p.m. People should bring their knitting, crocheting or other textile work and enjoy coffee, tea and conversation. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).



Kilashandra Live will perform Saturday, Jan. 11 from 7-10 p.m. at Becket Art Center.

*Submitted photo*

## Kilashandra Live to perform Jan. 11

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will host a concert, Kilashandra Live, featuring the Irish Celtic-inspired jam band, on Saturday, Jan. 11, from 7-10 p.m.

Mixing traditional and modern Irish

music with twists of blues, rock and soul, Kilashandra will record this performance, a first for the Becket Arts Center. Tickets are \$20 for non-member and \$10 for member. People may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org) for more information.

## Becket Art Center accepting submissions for juried shows

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, is now accepting submissions for its How Many 2025 summer juried shows.

One work will be selected for the season poster and that artist will be awarded \$300 as well as a solo exhibition in August. For those who need help with the application, the Becket Arts Center will offer a hands-on workshop with artist Sean McCusker on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost is \$20 for non member and \$10 for members. For more information and registration, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

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THIS NEWSPAPER

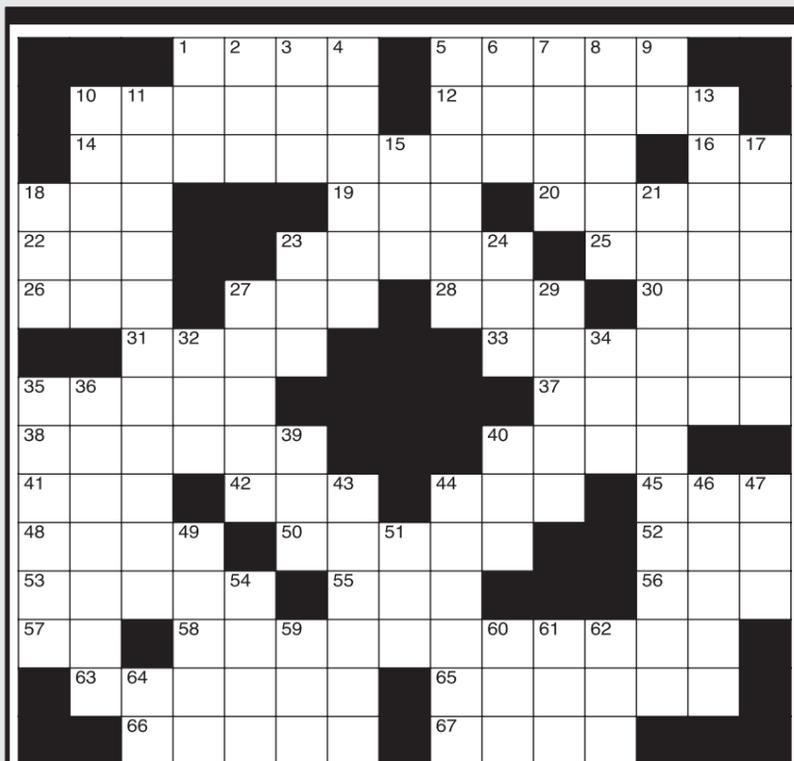
# STOCKBRIDGE

## Stockbridge Grange to hold community dinner Sunday

STOCKBRIDGE — The Stockbridge Grange will hold a community dinner Sunday, Jan. 12 with take out only with noon-1:30 p.m. pickup at the Stockbridge Grange Hall, 51 Church St. The menu features Swedish meatballs with egg noodles and vegetable

with dessert choices of chocolate cream or lemon meringue. Dinner is \$15 per person. Orders may be made by calling 413-243-1298

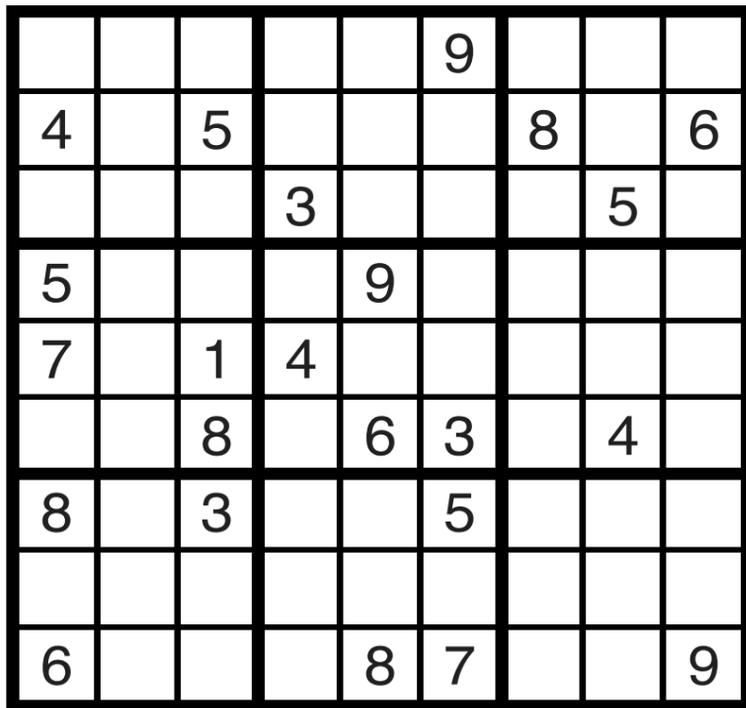
or 413-443-4352. Grange community dinners are designed to raise money for non-profit projects and building maintenance.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Hand (Spanish)
  - 5. Siskel and \_\_, critics
  - 10. Seaman
  - 12. Chemical weapon
  - 14. One who eliminates
  - 16. They precede C
  - 18. Baseball stat
  - 19. Americans' "uncle"
  - 20. Cassia tree
  - 22. Surround
  - 23. Crisp and Pebbles are two
  - 25. A sudden very loud sound
  - 26. Affirmative
  - 27. Disadvantage
  - 28. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
  - 30. OJ trial judge
  - 31. New York art district
  - 33. Become more bleak
  - 35. Upstate NY city
  - 37. Clarified butters
  - 38. One who witnesses
  - 40. Condemn
  - 41. \_\_ juris
  - 42. Natural
  - 44. Prohibit
  - 45. Swiss river
  - 48. Greek war god
  - 50. 5 iron
  - 52. New Zealand mountain parrot
  - 53. Scandinavian surname
  - 55. Follows sigma
  - 56. Doctor of Education
  - 57. Spanish be
  - 58. One that feeds on bugs
  - 63. Tooth issue
  - 65. Get into
  - 66. Lumps of clay
  - 67. Overly studious student
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Variety of Chinese
  - 2. Boxing's GOAT
  - 3. Japanese classical theater
  - 4. Prayer
  - 5. Inspire with love
  - 6. Ballplayers' accessory
  - 7. Retailer payment system
  - 8. More raw
  - 9. Atomic #81
  - 10. Fencing sword
  - 11. Hostilities
  - 13. Sea dweller
  - 15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
  - 17. Businessmen
  - 18. Rest here please (abbr.)
  - 21. Loud devices
  - 23. Make a soft murmuring sound
  - 24. One point west of due south
  - 27. Trout
  - 29. Type of grass
  - 32. South American plant
  - 34. Letter of the Greek alphabet
  - 35. Not secure
  - 36. Traveler
  - 39. Sweet potato
  - 40. Period after sunrise and before sunset
  - 43. Some are choppy
  - 44. Asian country
  - 46. Genus of mosquitoes
  - 47. Cool!
  - 49. Shri!l, wailing sound
  - 51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
  - 54. Within
  - 59. Unhappy
  - 60. Decorate a cake with frosting
  - 61. Videocassette recorder
  - 62. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
  - 64. It cools a home

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

- ARIES**  
Mar 21/Apr 20  
Focus on collaboration this week, Aries. Teamwork leads to unexpected rewards if you are open to others' ideas, so remain receptive to the input of teammates.
- CANCER**  
Jun 22/Jul 22  
It is important that you take time for some self-care this week, Cancer. Your emotional well-being is just as important as your physical fitness. Reflect on some personal goals in this area.
- LIBRA**  
Sept 23/Oct 23  
Embrace your artistic side this week, Libra. Consider a new hobby that will keep your mind busy. Social activities that involve creative pursuits also can bring inspiration and joy.
- CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22/Jan 20  
Financial matters may require some attention right now, Capricorn. Examine your budget and figure out if the new year requires some changes to how you're managing money.
- TAURUS**  
Apr 21/May 21  
Taurus, when a project presents itself to you, stay grounded and run through all the components carefully. Employ the same strategy when going over financial opportunities.
- LEO**  
Jul 23/Aug 23  
Leo, you often excel in group settings, and social gatherings this week are a place where you can shine. Use all opportunities to network and connect with others.
- SCORPIO**  
Oct 24/Nov 22  
Allow home and family to take center stage, Scorpio. Spend as much time as possible with loved ones and try to get to the root of any persistent, unresolved issues.
- AQUARIUS**  
Jan 21/Feb 18  
New ideas may lead to some personal projects that inspire you. You might find that you'll be quite busy on these self-imposed tasks.
- GEMINI**  
May 22/Jun 21  
Gemini, clear up any misunderstandings and express your thoughts openly with others this week. Communication is certainly key at this juncture in time.
- VIRGO**  
Aug 24/Sept 22  
It is important to focus on your work-life balance right now, Virgo. Prioritize important tasks, but also make time for relaxation. Small changes to your routine can be ideal.
- SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 23/Dec 21  
Sagittarius, this week focus on activities that afford a chance to learn and explore. You might want to take a class or try a new hobby. Curiosity can be exciting.
- PISCES**  
Feb 19/Mar 20  
This is a good time to focus attention inward, Pisces. Make time for reflection and even some meditation if that is something that interests you. The rewards will be worth it.



## SUDOKU

**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!

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**answers**

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## EASTHAMPTON

# bankESB raises \$28,000 for local food pantries

EASTHAMPTON – Matthew S. Sosik, president and CEO of bankESB, announced the bank’s fourth annual Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraising drive raised \$28,000 for local food pantries.

This brings the program’s four-year total to \$137,000. The appeal is part of bankESB’s charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, which reflects the bank’s commitment to making a difference in the neighborhoods it serves. Throughout November, the bank invited customers, employees and members of the community to donate at bankESB branches. All donations received were matched, dollar for dollar, by bankESB and the total divided among food pantries in Western Massachusetts communities the bank serves.

Each of these participating food pantries received \$2,000: The Best Life Food Ministry in Agawam; BUCC Helping Hands Cupboard Food Pantry in Belchertown; The Chicopee Cupboard; Easthampton Community Center Food Pantry; Easthampton Congregational Church Food Cupboard and Oasis Kitchen; The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts in Chicopee; The Hadley Food Pantry; Hilltown Food Pantry in Goshen; Margaret’s Pantry in Holyoke; Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc. in South Hadley; Northampton Survival Center; Not Bread Alone in Amherst; Southampton Community Cupboard and Westfield Food Pantry.

“On behalf of bankESB, I’d like to thank all those who generously donated to our Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraiser to help fight food insecurity in our communities,” said Sosik. “We’re pleased to host this annual appeal and that so much was raised to help families



bankESB’s Southampton office Branch Officer Betsy Schabacker, from left, presents a \$2,000 check to Candice Iwanicki, executive director of Southampton Community Cupboard, one of 14 pantries receiving donations from the bank’s Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraising campaign to help fight food insecurity.

*Submitted photo*

in need this past holiday season and into this new year.”

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton. Through their sponsorship and charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, bankESB and the Easthampton Savings Bank Charitable Foundation support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Hampden and Hampshire counties. In 2023 alone, The Giving Tree donated nearly \$635,000 and over the past decade has donated more than \$3.6 million.



Daniel R. Carey (D-Easthampton), left, was sworn in as Hampshire County Clerk of Courts with his wife, Melissa and son, Mick at his side by Superior Court Judge Michael K. Callan on Wednesday, Jan. 1.

*Submitted photo*

# Daniel Carey sworn in as Clerk of Courts

EASTHAMPTON – Daniel R. Carey (D-Easthampton) was sworn in as Hampshire County Clerk of Courts during a New Year’s Day ceremony at Old Town Hall in Easthampton.

“I’m excited to get to work tomorrow to ensure that the Hampshire County Superior Court continues to be among the very best in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,” Carey said after thanking his family, friends and supporters.

Carey was elected to the posi-

tion in November 2024 after serving three consecutive two-year terms in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Carey succeeds retiring Clerk Harry J. Jekanowski, Jr.

The oath of office was administered by Superior Court Judge Michael K. Callan. Carey’s father, retired Superior Court Judge Richard J. Carey, served as the emcee. The event was legally required to take place on the first Wednesday of January, which this year happened to fall on the holiday.

## WORTHINGTON

# COA to hold potluck luncheon

WORTHINGTON – The Council on Aging will hold a potluck luncheon on Monday, Jan. 13 at noon in Town Hall.

Marianne Shelvey, a Worthington resident and the First Assistant District Attorney of the Berkshire County District Attorney’s Office, will present “Knowledge of Power – Elder Safety Empowerment” following the luncheon at 12:30 p.m.

Rachel Webber, Elder Abuse Unit Coordinator for the Northwestern

District Attorney, Northampton Office will also speak along with a representative from the Consumer Projection Unit. The District Attorney’s office is trained and prepared for the special needs of the elderly population and to ensure equal access to the criminal system. People can attend one or both events.

They will also have a blood pressure clinic. People may call the podiatrist nurse, Deb Deane, at 413-667-5363 to make an appointment.

# ‘Book Nook’ offers books to The Maples residents

WORTHINGTON – On Wednesday, Jan 15 at 1:30 p.m. The Worthington Library and The Maples will kick off their new collaboration, “Book Nook” at The Maples, 48 Old North Road.

The Worthington Library is delivering books and audiobooks to The Maples for residents each month beginning this month.

The Maples director has distrib-

uted a survey to the residents asking for their preferred authors and genres.

The Worthington Library director has compiled a selection of books and board members will bring them to The Maples on Wednesday Jan 15.

Residents and library board members will be in attendance in the community room to peruse the selections and for cookies and cider.

# Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

## JOB POSTING – OPERATOR/LABORER Town of Montgomery

The Montgomery Highway Department is currently hiring for an Operator/Laborer Position. The position works under the supervision of the Highway Superintendent, an operator/ laborer will perform a broad range of manual work and operate motorized equipment in support of construction, maintenance, and repair operations for the Department. Candidate must have or obtain all required licenses within (1) one year of start date (see the full job description for required skills/experience/training). Existing CDL and hoisting licenses preferred. Must pass a MADOT physical. Must also provide a current copy of your driving record from the Registry of Motor Vehicles to be considered for this position. The pay rate is \$22.00 to \$26.50 per hour. Paid health and dental insurance, vacation time, a retirement plan and 11 paid holidays. Please email townhall@montgomeryma.gov to receive a current job description and employment application. This position will remain open until filled. The town of Montgomery is an equal opportunity employer.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold the Continuance of the May 14, 2024 public hearing on **Tuesday, January 21, 2025 beginning at 6:00 pm** in Stanton Hall.

The Public Hearing Continuance is for the Special Permit Application of Hull Forestlands, LP c/o William B. Hull for

an Earth Removal Operation at 61 Goss Hill Road (Parcel # 324-32-A), 0 Goss Hill Road (Parcel # 326-26-0) & 0 Worthington Road (Parcel # 326-24-0).

A copy of the application will be available for review at the Public Hearing.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold another public hearing on **Tuesday, January 28, 2025 beginning at 6:00 pm** in Stanton Hall.

This Public Hearing is for the Special Permit Application

of Robert Hebert and Ingrid Evenson to operate Boulder Designs by Huntington Stone Works, LLC in their garage at 224 Worthington Road, Parcel Number 326-12-0.

A copy of this application will be available for review at the Public Hearing, or by appointment with the Town Administrator during regular office hours (Monday-Thursday 10-3).

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON  
01/02, 01/09/2025

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## HELP WANTED

### TOWN OF BLANDFORD HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

The Town of Blandford is seeking a qualified individual for the position of Highway Superintendent. Salary range starting at \$75,000-\$80,000+ negotiable based on experience/skills.

Please visit our website [TownOfBlandford.com](http://TownOfBlandford.com) or email [Administrator@TownofBlandford.com](mailto:Administrator@TownofBlandford.com) for more information.

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# BLANDFORD

## Library to hold focus groups on expansion

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Library Director Nicole Daviau and Library Trustees invite residents to participate in one of two focus groups about the library expansion planning.

“We need ideas from community members about what they want and need in a new library space,” said Daviau. The focus groups will be Wednesday, Jan. 22 from 4-5 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 1 from 10-11 a.m. at the town hall in the Select Board room.

According to Daviau, the two focus sessions will provide an opportunity for residents to dream and brainstorm about what library will look like in the future. These groups will be led by Library Building Consultant Pat Basler, who will use the input to make the building plan for the architect.

In addition to these focus groups, there will be idea boards at the Library, Town Hall and Post Office with pictures of different options for areas long term in the future library. These idea boards are up now and will be available until Saturday, Feb. 1. Residents are asked to please put



The present library building in Blandford. Two focus groups are planned for Wednesday, Jan. 22 from 4-5 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 1 from 10-11 a.m. Public comment is needed regarding library expansion project.

Turley photo by Mary Kronholm

sticker dots on things that they would like to see in the future library space; options include study rooms, a meeting and programming space, teen’s, children’s room and more.

“Please share your ideas,” said Daviau, both on the idea boards and at the Focus Group meetings.

The library expansion is grant funded through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and is an opportunity for the community to bring their historic building up to code while increasing space to provide essential services for every member of the town.

## GARDEN *from page 4*

in work great as sowing packs; just drill holes in the bottom. Cut up yogurt tubs make wonderful labels, and clear lidded salad boxes are perfect to place the seed packs in until germination occurs.

Low budget and earth friendly!

Next week we’ll look at the role heat and light play in indoor seed starting.

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.

## SECURITY *from page 4*

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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



Bob Twyman, from left, Deb Lundgren, Faith Carpenter, Don Carpenter, Lloyd Martin and Mary Martin play Ouisi at the Council on Aging Game Day held Friday, Jan. 3.

Turley photo by Mary Kronholm

## COA host First Friday Game Day

BLANDFORD – The first Friday of the month the Blandford Council on Aging hosts Game Day starting at 2 p.m. This past Friday, Jan. 3, found a group

working out the logistics of a new card game, Ouisi, which is a game based on visual connections such as similar patterns, shapes, colors and themes

## Library presents author talk

BLANDFORD – David Bartone writes for the Old Farmer’s Almanac, writing the Calendar Essays from his multi-acre permaculture homestead in Easthampton.

He will present “The Old Farmer’s Almanac Author Talk” at the Porter Memorial Library on Saturday, Jan. 11 at 11 a.m.

He is a faculty member at UMass Amherst’s University Without Walls, where he teaches courses in writing, sustainability, systems thinking and other subjects. His poetry books include “Spring Logic” (H\_NGM\_N, 2010) and “Practice on Mountains” (Ahsahta Press, 2014). For “Practice on Mountains”, he received the Sawtooth Prize for Poetry.



Armel Romelus of Belle Fleur Cannabis Cultivation, from left, Select Board Theodore Cousineau, Chair Cara Letendre, Jeff Allen and Town Administrator Cristina Ferrara discuss a Community Host Agreement between Belle Fleur and the town.

Turley photo by Mary Kronholm

## CONTRACT *from page 1*

out any issues creating a delay for the Water Department.

### Community Host Agreement

Armel Romelus of Belle Fleur, representing the Cannabis Cultivation project on Otis Stage Road met Monday, Jan. 6 with the board to request an updated Community Host Agreement. The Cannabis Control Commission has made several changes to host agreements and a new agreement will be reviewed by town counsel according to Ferrara.

### New Town Accountant

The new town accountant Kelly Pontbriand has started and is working closely with Eric Kinsherb through the month.

A line-item error for Pioneer Valley Planning Commission was corrected to a full amount of \$5,000 for historical work. The board approved and signed a collective highway bid for gas and oil with Franklin Regional Council of Governments for the fiscal year.

Regarding the prior meeting’s discussion of Water Department funds, the board requests copies of the contracts with the vendors from Water.

### Board of Health update

Board of Health representative Jennifer Girard brought the board up-to-date on a pending sale of one of the Nichols’ properties on Main Street, an offer has been made on one.

She also told the board of several on-going complaints regarding animals, trash and property on Brookman Drive.

Inspections have started and on the agenda for the Board of Health are the businesses at the turnpike service plazas.

Even with a \$6,000 grant for construction of the Swap Shop at the Transfer Station, according to Girard, Board of Health Chair Bret Hartley estimates the need for an additional \$15,000 to complete the project.

### Other business

In other business, the board heard from Ferrara that a notice of best accounting practices has been sent to departments for turning over payment checks; all checks must be turned in to the treasurer/collector within a week of their receipt.

The board has also requested a meeting with Plumbing Inspector Aaron Poteat regarding permits.

### BOARD OF HEALTH MEETS FIRST AND THIRD MONDAY



The Blandford Board of Health met Monday, Jan. 6 for their regular session at 4 p.m. Shown from left are Pat Lombardo, Jennifer Girard and Chair Bret Hartley. The board meets the first and third Monday,

Turley photo by Mary Kronholm