

Country Journal

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RUSSELL

General Henry Knox honored

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

About 20 onlookers gathered at the junction of General Knox and South Quarter Roads in Russell on Friday, Jan. 9 to commemorate the town's role in the American Revolution.

Between Nov. 17, 1775 and Jan. 25, 1776, General Henry Knox of the Continental Army and his crew of teamsters, horses and oxen moved 60 tons of cannons and armaments from Fort Ticonderoga, New York to the outskirts of occupied Boston. Artillery was moved into secret fortifications in Dorchester Heights overlooking the city. Knox's 70-day, 300 mile journey resulted in the ousting of 10,000 British forces and loyalists from Boston on March 17, 1776 and marked the first major victory in the American Revolution.

Troops and loyalists sailed for Halifax, Nova Scotia and the British never retook Boston or Massachusetts. That date became known as Evacuation Day in the Commonwealth.

A series of Knox Trail 250 events are taking place



Russell Historical Commission members Karen Sikes Mctagget and Sue Maxwell, sporting Knox Trail 250 scarves, led the commemoration at the Henry Knox marker on General Knox Road, held Friday, Jan. 9.

Turley Publications photos by Wendy Long

across Massachusetts to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the country in general and Knox's accomplishments in particular. In Russell, a ceremonial wreath was laid on the state marker that reads, "Through this place passed General Henry Knox in the winter of 1775-1776

to deliver to General George Washington at Cambridge the Train of Artillery from Fort Ticonderoga used to force the British Army to evacuate Boston." The marker was erected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1927. Similar events are being held

across New York State and Massachusetts, including in the Western Massachusetts towns of Alford, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, Sandisfield, Otis, Blandford, Russell and Westfield. Blandford's ceremony is tak-

KNOX, page 2

BLANDFORD

Knox Trail reenactors stop in Blandford

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

If Sunday's portrayal of people involved in the Henry Knox Noble Train of Artillery inspired a sense of historic curiosity, then people can follow the trail through Blandford to Westfield.

Take Route 23, historically referred to as Green Woods, which continues from East Otis, hilly and twisting, to Knox's destination, the town center. The teamsters drove their oxen carrying tons of iron cannon through what is still today called the Narrows, from Shepard Road to Blair Pond. It was here, reportedly from diaries and journals, that rock ledges were blasted. This is relayed by Sumner Gilbert Wood in his histories of the town.

At the top of this steep hill that comes into the town center, there is the state's Knox Trail Marker with the war memorials in front of the Highway Department. The Noble Train came

upon the Old Burying Ground just opposite the markers. Established in 1741, it was adjacent to the Pease Tavern and if at Sunday's event, Levi Pease discussed his part in the Revolution. Buried there is, with other Revolutionary War veterans, is Samuel Sloper, who participated in the Boston Tea Party. Proceed left towards the fairgrounds, where there was training for local militia.

Then, return to Route 23 and turn right onto Birch Hill Road until the pavement stops. For the 1976 re-enactment, the state cleared a trail on up the road to connect with Birch Hill Road in the Moses Scout Camp in Russell. This is impassible today and trail followers must return to Route 23 to General Knox Road, a right turn. There is another state Trail Marker there at the intersection of South Quarter Road.

Staying on General Knox Road, steep and

REENACTORS, page 8



Steven Grondin, Interim Water Superintendent, Peter Thayer, Water Commissioner and Brad Curry, Chair, Water Commissioners.

Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

BLANDFORD

Select Board to repost Water Dept. Supt.

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The Select Board meet with Water Commissioners Brad Curry, Peter Thayer and employee Steve Grondin.

It was agreed that the job for a Water Department Superintendent would be reposted. The only viable applicant, to whom the job was offered, withdrew because, according to Curry, he would be "losing money."

The reposting discussion resulted drafting a new job description and changing the salary range from \$85,000 to \$108,000 and using additional state and area wide help wanted publications.

Water Commissioners

will conduct the initial interviews and forward selections to the Select Board.

Select Board also requested additional information for the Water Department budget.

The new financial module, Vadar, created some issues for the department, but it is being looked at. There are also problems with the new water meters and batteries. Curry said, "But, we are making progress." The board also approved an amended contract for work for the water department.

The Historical Society President Chips Norcross, accompanied by Director Jane Rohman, filled the board in on the Knox

SELECT BOARD, page 8

BLANDFORD

Noble Train of Artillery follows Knox's route

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

It may be a small town, but it has a huge history.

That was made clear Sunday afternoon at the Blandford Fairgrounds as over 300 people attended the Bonfire and Cannon Salute program. It was exactly 250 years ago that this event commemorated.

Host Terri Garfield talked about the "saga of raw guts, bitter cold and 60 tons of seized iron" that accompanied the arduous trek. Henry Knox, commissioned by Gen. George Washington, brought cannons from Fort Ticonderoga in upstate New York, to Boston. This ended the British siege of Boston Harbor.

Hours of research and investigation provided the depth of insight and knowledge for the story.

Melissa Hamm portrayed a 1776 resident and told the story of what the town was like then and the arrival of a "procession the likes of which I had never seen or heard before."

She added, "It was Knox's mob of teamsters, soldiers, horses and oxen, pulling sleds loaded with cannons and armaments."

Randy Garfield, as Gen. Henry Knox, told of how he came to be involved, because of his military knowledge and went to Ticonderoga to bring the cannons to Boston.

His "mortal soul was lost to the rebel cause," giving him the impetus to ride out of Cambridge to retrieve the cannons. His return trip began Dec. 5, 1775 and put him in Blandford Jan. 11, 1776, having spent the night before in Otis. Exactly 250 years ago Sunday.

His men were spent and it took him some time and extra animals to convince

the Noble Train to continue. Enter Aaron LaBrecque who played Solomon Brown, and with him, his son, William played by Owen Laurenzo who brought two teams of fresh oxen to the rescue, for 18 shillings.

A long-time military man Brown's service began in 1759 during the French and Indian War. Locally he wore "man hats" including

the local Committees of Inspection, Correspondence and Safety. He told the story of the treacherous descent to Westfield and his possible affiliation with other patriotic minded Blandfordites, including Levi Pease of Pease Tavern.

Bruce Benson as Levi Pease spoke of his secret life

NOBLE TRAIN, page 8



Members of Crane's Continental Artillery from left are, Jeffrey Cooke of Royalston; Carl Hutchinson of Sutton; Elliot Levy of Longmeadow; (rear) Aaron Bravard of Willington, Connecticut; Thomas Cooke of Royalston; Bruce Batten of Peterborough, New Hampshire and Will Hutchinson of Sutton. Crane's brought the cannon and fired it as well at the end of the program

Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm

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RUSSELL

KNOX

from page 1

ing place on Jan. 11, which is exactly 250 years after Knox's team camped there.

One couple attending were Phil and Alicia Levesque of East Greenbush, New York. They have been following the Knox ceremonies since they started at Ft. Ticonderoga and went to Schuylerville, Waterford, Cohoes, and Albany, among others. They had been in Kinderhook this same morning and were planning to follow all the way to Boston. Phil Levesque has a special interest in the project; in 1975, he marched in the Knox Trail reenactment at age 9.

The Russell ceremony was led by Susan Maxwell and Karen Sikes Mctagget, who both serve on the town's Historical Commission. Ahead of the ceremony, Maxwell mentioned that there are differing theories as to the actual path the train of artillery took especially in the hilltowns of Western Massachusetts. And, with interest in the country's 250th anniversary rising, Knox's journey is taking on mythic proportions in the region. She said that the St. Jean property down the road contains an old cellar hole that some think was a place to stop and rest on the journey. Metal detectors on land behind B & G Sporting Goods on Route 20 have reportedly uncovered oxen shoes, although it was pointed out that none have been produced as evidence.

In her remarks, Maxwell said that the area technically belonged to Westfield in 1776 as Russell was not incorporated until 1792. Settlers lived near the marker when Knox went through, with a nearby historic cemetery showing that many lived into the 1800s. "The actual route, 'The Devil's Staircase' that was taken



Western Mass Hilltown Hikers co-founder Liz Massa shows the commemorative Knox Trail 250 scarf. The towns that the artillery moved through are all listed on the back. The first printing did not include the town of Russell, as it wasn't incorporated until 1792. It has since been reprinted.



Phil and Alicia Levesque of East Greenbush, New York attended many of the Knox Trail events and have already booked their hotel room for the final Knox event in Boston on March 17.

Turley Publications photos by Wendy Long

by Knox and his men is still under investigation even 250 years later. It has turned into an urban myth. But we know it was in Russell."

She cited a letter Washington wrote to John Adams, which said, "With respect to General Knox, I can say with truth, there is no man in the United States with whom I have been in habits of greater intimacy: no one whom I have loved more sincerely, nor any for whom I have a greater friendship." Maxwell concluded, "History has caught up with Henry Knox and his accomplishments."

Attending the event was Matthew Chapman, a National Park Service Ranger based at the Springfield Armory, which will be part of a large program on Saturday, Jan. 17 from noon-3 p.m. that will feature horse/oxen-drawn cannon sledge demonstrations, reenactors, artillery demos and information about Knox's expedition. Kelly Fellner, Superintendent of the Springfield Armory, later said that their event will represent the communities of Westfield, West Springfield, Springfield, Wilbraham, Palmer and Warren at their site. "Because of the skilled workers who were here, equipment could be fixed and fresh horses supplied so that Knox could continue. At this point, New York Militia members went home and were replaced by Massachusetts Militia members," Fellner said. "From here on, they largely followed the Boston Post Road, which is pretty much Route 20."

Maxwell noted that Knox and Washington exchanged hundreds of letters, many of which dealt with Knox urging Washington to establish the Continental armory

in Springfield, while Washington preferred Brimfield. Knox ultimately prevailed. Fellner added that the availability of skilled workers and its strategic location along the Connecticut River led to the Springfield location. Originally called The Arsenal, the armory was fully implemented for the Continental Army in 1777.

Conversation continued after the ceremony. Liz Massa, one of the co-founders of the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers, spoke about the challenges of locating the actual Knox Trail in the small towns of Berkshire and Hampden Counties. In many areas, the paths taken have become overgrown and are hard to distinguish. She and a number of regional historians-including Tom Ragusa of Otis, Rob Hoogs of Monterey, Chips Norcross of Blandford, Tom Hoffman of Washington, and Tom Barenski of Lee are working together to uncover the actual trail. While they are pretty confident about some sections, others remain an enigma.

"The Devils Staircase has been unknown as to its actual path and we need to put it to bed," Massa said. "We have had a few scouting expeditions. Seeing parts of it using modern day technology like lidar mapping also helps. All these people are longtime historians and published in many books. We are confident that if we all put our minds together and feet on the ground, we can solve the mystery." Massa is optimistic that they are closing in. "2026 is the year we do it," she said, "for the 250th."

For more information about upcoming events, people may visit the Massachusetts250.org website.



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CHESTER

Chester Municipal Light awarded grant

The Commonwealth awarded approximately \$13.5 million from the U.S. Department of Energy under the formula grant opportunity "Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid," established by Section 40101(d) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Round 1 Awardees included Chester Municipal Light Department of \$30,000 to manage vegetation along one of its power lines. MassCEC has awarded more than \$8 million to eight sub recipients whose

projects will strengthen Massachusetts' electric grid, reduce costly outages, and better protect residents from the impacts of extreme weather.

Increased electricity demand and more severe weather events pose a challenge to Massachusetts grid infrastructure and state energy users. This program funds projects to enhance the resilience of the electric grid, prevent outages, and mitigate the impact of disruptive events.

In collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, MassCEC developed a program that aims to: Identify and fund

projects that can improve energy reliability and resilience, while reducing the cost and number of outages for communities and underserved populations. Support clean energy and decarbonization solutions, including building electrification. Advance MassCEC and DOER equity, environmental and energy justice priorities and create good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union.

In summer 2024, MassCEC posted a Request for Proposals soliciting applications from eligible sub awardees. Prior to the release of that RFP, MassCEC solicited feedback

on draft guidelines for sub awards and responded to all questions from stakeholders. "Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid" funded by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, provides funding to States and Indian Tribes to improve the resilience of the electric grid against disruptive events. Under the program, the DOE will provide grants to eligible applicants to improve the resilience and reliability of their electric grids. These grants offer a unique opportunity to advance the capabilities of States and Indian Tribes to address current and future resilience needs.

Library lists events

CHESTER – The Hamilton Memorial Library, 15 Middlefield Road holds a Library Book Club on Jan. 21 at 4:30 p.m.

They meet the third Wednesday of each month. This month, they will be discussing the popular novel, "The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn. Book themes include historical and political fiction in the 1950s, female friendship, mystery and boarding houses. There will be snacks and lively discussion. The library has extra book copies available.

Free Tai Chi and Qi Gong classes, sponsored by the Hamilton Memorial Library, are free and for all

ages and abilities. These free, three classes will be held at the Chester Town Hall at 15 Middlefield Road, in the auditorium. Classes will be held on the last Wednesdays of the months on Jan. 28, Feb. 25 and March 25 from 4:30-5:45 p.m.

People may sign up with the library by calling 413-354-7808 or emailing the instructor at wellneseducation123@gmail.com. They should leave their name, email and phone number. The instructor will email forms to be filled out prior to class. If people have any questions about the content of the program, they should email the instructor.

PLAINFIELD

Alvord marks 50 years of service to Fire Department

PLAINFIELD – In early January of 1976, young David Alvord who was 25 years old, had recently moved to Plainfield and was living and working at 151 South St., then Cummington Farm Village Ski Touring Center.

While trying to grow and expand the business, he hired local resident Frank Skaling as maintenance manager to help get things going at the farm. Frank Skaling, current fire chief Rob Shearer's grandfather, was also the Deputy Fire Chief at the time. As Alvord and Skaling got to know each other, they found they both had a common interest beyond the Cummington Farm business.

When Skaling heard that Alvord had previous fire training as a member of Simsbury, Connecticut, Volunteer Fire Department,

he inquired whether he would be interested in joining the Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department. Alvord soon made the short trip up to the Main Street firehouse where he met Plainfield legends, Dutch, Buzzy, Ed and of course, Frank.

It didn't take Alvord more than a few minutes to feel at home in the town he has now called home for 50 plus years. Over the years, Dave Alvord held many roles in both town government and volunteer fire service. Among a few, EMT-B, Assistant Fire Chief, Fire Chief and now Safety Officer. He did all this while raising his three boys Jared,



David Alvord

Caleb, and Zachary with his loving wife, Linda. After countless fires, 2 a.m. medical calls and hundreds of hours of training, he still volunteers with the Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department.

As Alvord joins the ranks of the previous-ly mentioned town legends, members of the PVFD offer their heartfelt thanks for his continued service to the town, the community and the neighbors. Fifty years as a volunteer firefighter is not only an achievement of dedication, it is a badge of honor few will ever wear.

Everyone, who have ever had the pleasure to work by his side, under his command or receive care, says thanks.

WORTHINGTON

COA serves grab and go lunch

WORTHINGTON – On Thursday, Jan. 22 from noon-1 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The menu will be a choice of lasagna rolls or barbecue chicken with baked beans, corn and ice cream.

To reserve a meal, people may text 413-238-1999 by Sunday, Jan. 18 and include name, number of meals and the name of the person also receiving the

meal and their meal choice.

New enrollee forms are available at the Town Hall bulletin Board and the COA bulletin board at Corners Grocery. They can also fill one out when they come to pick up a meal. They should bring a bag to carry their meal.

If people have any questions, they may call Phyllis Dassatti at 413-238-5962 or email The Worthington COA.

Parks and Rec host Friday fire and skate

WORTHINGTON – The Worthing Parks and Recreation will hold a fire and skate on winter Fridays beginning at 5 p.m. at Worthington Town Park Pond. This takes place weather and ice quality permitting. Hot chocolate, s'mores and cookies will be served. People are invited to bring a snack to share. All are welcome. People may call 413-977-6293 for any questions.

HUNTINGTON

COA lists upcoming events

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

Jerry and Kara Noble will perform on Wednesday, Jan. 21 from 2-3 p.m. A presentation on Thyroid Disease Awareness and Prevention and blood pressure checks will be provided by the Hampshire Public Health Preparedness Coalition's nursing team on Wednesday, Jan. 28 from 1-2 p.m. The movie "Castaway" will be shown on Wednesday, Feb. 11 at 2 p.m.

The Cabin Fever Luncheon will be held on

Saturday, Feb. 28 at noon. Soup, bread and dessert will be served and Jerry and Kara Noble will perform. There is no charge to attend, but donations are appreciated. Seniors should call 413-512-5200 by Friday, Feb. 13 to sign up.

The annual St. Patrick's Luncheon will be held on Saturday, March 14 at noon and will feature a performance by Wild Thyme. The suggested donation is \$8 per person and reservations need to be made by March 2 by calling 413-512-5200.

The Hilltown Memory Café is held weekly on Wednesdays 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, they may call Jennifer Peloquin at 413-512-5200.

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OPINION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Proposed large scale solar array has no tangible value

On Jan. 8, we attended a public Planning Board meeting regarding a proposal for a massive solar farm installation in Worthington.

The developers team presented a rather pathetic front in that they had very few definitive answers to questions regarding construction design, materials used in construction, battery fire risk, environmental and other key factors in the project. They employed a "kick the can down the road" approach by stating such answers would be available

once their permit is authorized.

Worthington residents in the construction and water quality fields made the point that this is hardly the way any project should proceed. The Planning Board should not approve any permits until citizens of the town and especially abutters to the solar farm are satisfied with the details. Legitimate concerns must be addressed since a large swath of this solar array will be within the boundaries of the Worthington Water Supply

Protection District.

This large scale (7500 unit) solar array has no tangible value to the town of Worthington. Also, the environmental risk of toxic, long-duration, battery fires could cause irreparable damage to our environment, the health of our children and future generations as well as trigger a significant decrease in property values.

Researchers at Virginia Tech published a landmark study of solar farms and the effects on residential property

values in June of 2025 based on an assessment of 8.8 million property sales across the United States. They found that residential properties located within 3 miles of a site lost 4.8% in value on average. When regional differences were examined properties in some regions (such as the U.S. West and Southwest had mixed results or even positive gains. However, all properties examined in the Northeast experienced negative property value impact.

Many, many concerns

were raised and points were made about why this is not the location for such an installation. After attending this meeting, we would hope the landowners and developers will withdraw their application in consideration of their neighbors, in preservation of the rural character of Worthington and, especially in consideration of the health and safety of those who follow all of us.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Scott and Caleb Harris
Worthington

GUEST COLUMN



SOCIAL SECURITY Matters
By Russell Gloor

Why didn't my friend's wife get all her SS immediately?

Dear Rusty:

A friend told me about what he believes is a strange thing in the Social Security system.

His wife reached her full retirement age of 66 several years ago. She delayed filing for Social Security past her FRA and claimed on her 68th birthday in June of that year, exactly two years after her FRA. When she filed, she was told she would receive approximately \$300 per month, which, of course, was more than she would have received at her FRA.

She was told however that she would only receive \$300 per month as of Jan. 1 of the following year. Between June of the year she turned 68 and filed for SS until the end of that year, she would receive an amount less than \$300. This lower amount was the amount she would have received if she had filed in December, the year she turned 67. She said she was told that was how SS works. She would never receive the difference in benefits she lost from June through December of the year she filed. If the above is true, can you explain?

Signed: Astounded Friend

Dear Astounded:

What your friend described is, indeed, a unique methodology for how Social Security handles benefit payments for those who choose to wait beyond their Full Retirement Age to claim SS benefits. To understand it, let me first describe how Social Security retirement benefits are calculated.

At Full Retirement Age, a person is entitled to 100% of the SS benefit they have earned from

a lifetime of working. That FRA benefit amount is known as the person's "Primary Insurance Amount" and is based upon the highest earning 35 years over the individual's lifetime.

From those past years, average lifetime monthly earnings are computed, known as the person's "Average Indexed Monthly Earnings." Their AIME is subjected to a formula which yields their Primary Insurance Amount – the benefit the person is entitled to in the month they attain their full retirement age – typically about 40% of the person's average monthly lifetime earnings. However, if the person chooses to do so, they can wait beyond their FRA to claim Social Security to get a monthly benefit even higher than their PIA, by earning Delayed Retirement Credits.

DRCs are applied to the person's PIA when they claim Social Security. For each month after FRA the person claims, they will have .667% added to their PIA. That means that for each full year of delay, that person will get an extra 8% added to their PIA. For someone (like your friend's wife) who claimed 24 months after her FRA, she would receive a benefit 16% higher than her FRA amount. However, Social Security normally only applies DRCs in January of each year.

So, even though your friend's wife claimed her SS benefits in June, 24 months after her FRA, she would initially only get the DRCs she had accumulated through the end of the

SECURITY, page 5

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, or call us at 413-283-8393.

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

ANNUAL REACTION OF COMMUTERS ...



GUEST COLUMN

Baking bread with herbs

There has been a resurgence lately in doing things the "old fashioned way!" I am definitely all for that, since I have often felt I was born a century too late.

People are making their own soap and laundry detergent, growing gardens, and canning and preserving the harvest. Many have also gotten the sourdough itch, and are baking all sorts of breads, rolls and treats using sourdough starter. My niece shared some of her starter with my husband and I!

It traveled several states to make it to us and boy was our first loaf delicious. I don't feel as if I will give up making yeast-ed bread entirely, though, especially since my favorite bread of all time is a braided bread that incorporates

herbs. (You knew that eventually I would weave in a gardening topic!) I'm excited to share the recipe with you.

Maybe you will even become inspired to grow your own herbs to use in this or any number of recipes down the road.

This time of year it is likely you won't have fresh herbs on hand, so before we begin, I'd like to give you some tips for using dried herbs.

First, remember to break

GARDEN, page 5



In the Garden
by Roberta McQuaid

A resident of Lake Lashaway saw her first ever evening grosbeak in the morning at her feeder on Sunday, Jan. 4.

The evening grosbeak is an eight inch long, chunky, thick billed finch, which wanders widely in winter.

The males are yellow and brown with black and white wings. The females are gray with white and black wings. Both sexes have a thick bill. They have notched, square tipped tails and pointed wings.



Male evening grosbeak

BIRDS, page 5



In my BACKYARD
By Ellenor Downer

Often evening grosbeaks visit feeders in large flocks. They inhabit conifer forests and in winter are seen in box elders, maples and fruiting shrubs. They breed in the coniferous and mixed forests. They are seen in spruce and fir trees in the northern forests and pines in the western mountains. They are seen in winter in deciduous woodlands and semi-open country. Their song is a series of short, musical whistles. Their call note is similar to the chirp of a house sparrow, but louder.

The female lays three to four pale blue to blue green, blotched with brown, gray or purple eggs. The female does all the incubating, but the male may feed the female during this time. Both parents feed the nestlings.

Their diet is mostly seeds and some berries and

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.

Country Journal TEAM



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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.



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OPINION

You can check out your own cognition with a simple test you can download for free

Some days, it feels like the neurons just aren't firing. You call one child by another child's name, can't remember where you left your phone and forgot to pick up something at the grocery store.

Such forgetfulness becomes more common as we age, but it isn't necessarily age-related. Lack of sleep and stress can cause stuff to leak out of our brains, too.

Memory lapses like these aren't necessarily a sign of cognitive decline, either.

They are generally manageable and can be overcome with strategies such as sending yourself text reminders, making to-do lists and maintaining a calendar.

That said, cognitive decline is a reality for millions of people around the world. In 2022, researchers at Columbia University found that almost 10% of U.S. adults ages 65 and older have dementia, while another 22% have mild cognitive impairment. That's practically a third of our senior population.



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

In one of my columns a few years ago, I called dementia the "other pandemic," because, for many people who had mild cognitive impairment before COVID, it blossomed into something more dramatic during our periods of isolation.

At your annual Medicare wellness exam, your health-care provider will screen you for cognitive difficulties by having you try to repeat back several random words and asking you to draw a clock showing a particular time.

(With the number of young people today who can't read a clock, they'll have to come up with another test at some point!)

The Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), an 11-question standardized test that evaluates orientation, memory, attention, language and visual-spatial abilities, might be used for the Medicare assessment because it takes only five to 10 minutes.

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GARDEN

from page 4

them up finely just before you incorporate them into any recipe. Honestly, there is nothing worse than coming across a full-size piece of Rosemary foliage, for example. It's like you are chomping on a pine needle!

Besides making the herbs more palatable, the flavor will be released ever so nicely once they are finely ground. Small amounts of herbs can be crushed between your fingertips – larger amounts can be ground up using a mortar and pestle.

Pulverize whole spices in a coffee grinder. Some folks gently roast them first to intensify their flavor. If

you want to substitute fresh herbs for dried in any recipe, use at least twice as much; likewise in this recipe you would use only have the amount if using dried.

Store dried herbs and spices away from heat and light; even so, they will start to lose their flavor after about a year. When I buy a new jar of dried herbs, I find it helpful to mark the date right on the bottle.

Without any further ado, here is the recipe for that wonderful bread – as pretty as it is flavorful. Certainly a nice addition to a bowl of soup on a winter's night! And it makes the best croutons, too!

Country Herb Bread Twist

1 envelope active dry yeast
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ cup water (110 degrees)
¼ stick unsalted butter, melted (2 tablespoons)
2 ½- 3 cups all-purpose flour
1 ½ teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano
1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme
1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
Sprinkle yeast and sugar over ¼ cup warm water in a large bowl; stir to dissolve. Let stand until foamy (approximately 15 minutes).

Blend 1 cup water and 1 tablespoon of the melted butter into the yeast mixture. Combine 2 ½ cups flour and salt.

Stir into yeast mixture ½ cup at a time to form a slightly sticky dough, adding up to ½ cup additional flour if necessary.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes. Place dough in a large bowl that has been lightly buttered.

Turn dough to coat entire surface. Cover with a clean cloth and let rise in a warm, draft-free area until the dough has doubled in volume, about 1 ½ hours.

Punch dough down. Divide into thirds.

One by one, take each third and knead in the individual herbs. Roll each dough ball between the palms of your hands into a rope about 20 inches long. Taper the ends.

When complete, lay the three side by side and working from the middle, braid each end. Transfer the bread to a buttered baking sheet and cover loosely with a clean cloth.

Allow to rise in a warm place for 45- 50 minutes, until doubled in size.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Brush loaf with remaining 1 tablespoon of

melted butter and bake for 20-30 minutes or until golden and loaf sounds hollow when tapped.

Cool for 30 minutes before serving. Serve it warm with a pat of butter or have some olive oil handy for dipping!

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.

BIRDS

from page 4

insects. They prefer seeds of box elder, ash, maple, locust and other trees. At feeders, they prefer sunflower seeds. They also will feed on oozing maple sap. They extended their breeding range eastward in the 19th century and early 20th century. The population declined in the east in recent years.

Other birds at Lake

Lashaway

The Lake Lashaway resident also had red cardinals, blue jays galore, gold finches and a red bellied woodpecker. She said bald eagles are very common visitors on the lake.

Brimfield birds

I received an email from a Brimfield resident on Jan. 5. He said, "Not much happening in the yard. We've seen one white-throated sparrow after recent snow storms and a group of about a dozen house finches show up often. Yesterday there was a group of American goldfinch in a birch tree eating seeds but they didn't come to the feeder."

Christmas bird count

He said, "My wife and I did the Christmas Bird Count with the Allen Bird Club again this year. We cover the town of Ludlow.

The weather was fine but the birds were not cooperating. We managed 26 species which is a few below our average. Woodpeckers (only 1 downy) and sparrows (3 junco) were hard to find."

He also said, "At the Ludlow Reservoir there was a good amount of open water but few birds, eight hooded mergansers and four mallards. Curiously last year there was a lot less open water at the reservoir but a lot more birds. Go figure."

People may visit <https://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/CurrentYear/ResultsByCount.aspx> to obtain Christmas Bird count results. Enter the county and state to get Massachusetts counts. He said he did not know the Springfield count results, but the Worcester count had 78 species.

Snowy owls

He also heard there have been two snowy owls in Northampton for a few weeks now. Initially they were seen in fields north of Route 9, but lately have been seen in the fields near the airport.

Barred owl and pileated woodpecker

I saw a barred owl and

a pileated woodpecker in the same day, Jan. 6. The barred owl was perched in a tree and stayed awhile before flying off. When I went to pick up my grandson at the bus stop, I saw a pileated woodpecker on Lincoln Road.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.



Barred owl

SECURITY

from page 4

previous year - in this case, about 18 months' worth of DRCs or an SS payment about 12% higher than her PIA (her FRA amount).

She would not get her remaining earned DRCs (another 4%) until January of the following year. So, in effect, the wife's initial benefit didn't reflect all her earned DRCs until her later January benefit payment. Thus, the wife essentially lost that extra benefit money for the period between June and December of the year she claimed Social Security. In other words, she wouldn't get the full 16% amount until SS applied the additional 4% DRCs to her benefit payment the following

January. And that is why your friend's wife initially received a payment a bit less than the \$300 Social Security said she was entitled to by waiting two years after her FRA to claim.

This surprises many who choose to wait beyond their full retirement age to claim Social Security. But, curiously, this process doesn't apply to those who wait until age 70 to claim their SS benefits. For those who wait until age 70 to claim, Social Security will immediately apply all DRCs that they have accumulated and provide them with their maximum SS benefit immediately.

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.

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
pvagliffe@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

Gateway girls medal at Massachusetts Skills USA

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Leah Fulton, Addison Green and Amelia Steward-Frey attended the Massachusetts Skills USA Fall Leadership Conference in Marlboro on Nov. 23 and 24 and all three won leadership medals by the end of the 36-hour event.

The three are juniors at Gateway Regional School and are enrolled in the school's Early Education and Care Chapter 74 (vocational) program. Students were accompanied by EEC teacher Kelly Bartolo and Chapter 74 Instructional Assistant Richard Huard and sported new red Skills USA jackets funded by the Gateway Education Foundation. Students graduating from this certified vocational program will have completed two years of coursework in child development and 150 internship hours in an early childhood classroom and/or community child care center.

"We were booked from early morning until 11 p.m.," emphasized Green, who is the secretary of Gateway's Skills USA Chapter. The conference is open to sophomores and juniors and this was the second year that Fulton (Gateway's Chapter president) and Green attend-

ed. It was a first experience for Steward-Frey, who is the Chapter's vice president. Skills USA Massachusetts champions skilled trades in the state and promotes the personal, technical and workplace skills needed for students to be successful in work or continued vocational education after high school.

Fulton signed up to work on technical skills, which is one of the three frameworks of Skills USA. She was assigned to a group of students that she did not know and they had to create a tri-fold that explained what Skills USA is, where it started, why it was created and how technical skills are promoted.

Steward-Frey and Green signed up to complete a community service project and they were also assigned to different groups. Each of the ten community service teams had to build a bike for the Boys and Girls Club. They also had to explain the project, the Skills USA framework and present this information using a tri-fold poster and video. Teams had to "earn" their bike parts by correctly answering trivia questions about Skills USA. In the end, the bikes were checked to ensure they were built safely and correctly and teams had to rebuild them if



Gateway juniors Amelia Steward-Frey, from left, Addison Green and Leah Fulton show the awards they earned at the Skills USA Fall Leadership Conference in Marlboro. All three are enrolled in Gateway's Early Education and Care vocational program. *Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long*

they weren't. Green added that they had to create a commercial to "sell" their bikes that included a jingle.

First timer Steward-Frey admitted that it was overwhelming at first when she learned about the bike building project. "But it was less stressful than I thought it was going to be, once I started talking with my group. It really helped me break out of my shell."

Even Green, attending

for the second time, found herself anxious at first. "Sometimes it makes me anxious to talk to a lot of people I don't know," she said. "It was cool to go outside of my comfort zone."

Fulton said she was excited to return and felt prepared based on her prior experience. "But it's still nerve wracking to do it with different people. It was really rewarding to see the finished project." Fulton's technical

skills team competed against ten other teams and took third place.

Steward-Frey's group also placed well. Out of ten community service project teams, they took second place for their film and third place for their presentation.

While Green's team didn't place, all three girls tested their knowledge of Skills USA. According to Bartolo, "The third part of the weekend is the Leadership

Award. Students study all aspects of SkillsUSA, such as the motto, pledge, creed, colors, parts of the SkillsUSA emblem, state executive council and more. There is a 50 question test. Students who score above the required score receive a Leadership medallion." Students earning at least 90% on the test win a certificate, pin and a Skills USA coin and all three Gateway girls hit the mark and won leader awards. "I'm so proud of them," Bartolo said.

All three were unanimous in recommending the leadership conference to others.

Back at Gateway, the girls are planning their own community service project. Fulton reports that they plan a hat, scarf and mitten drive to benefit the homeless. They are also selling baked goods at home basketball games and snack bags in the morning before school to raise money for a scholarship for middle schoolers in Skills USA.

Next up for them on the Skills USA calendar is to demonstrate competence in their field of study at a district-level competition in March. Winners will advance to a state competition. Top vocational students in Massachusetts will go onto a Skills USA national competition.

HCC announces fall 2025 Dean's list

HOLYOKE – Each semester Holyoke Community College recognizes superior scholarship through the Dean's list.

Local students making Dean's list for the fall 2025 term are: Olivia Rose Kanner of Blandford, Ian Cartmill of Chester, Elizabeth Margaret Jenks of Chester, Campbell Rae Lemelin of East Otis, Alexandra Joanne Adams of Easthampton, Hind Bourhim of Easthampton, Scarlett Nancy Brewer of Easthampton, Hannah Rose Carrasco of Easthampton, Joshua Ryan Carrasco of Easthampton, Brenda Lee Carrier of Easthampton, Christian Alberto Castro of Easthampton, Brianna Rose Chartier of Easthampton, Zachary Anthony Clapp of Easthampton, Matthew Thomas Counter of Easthampton, Gabrielle D'Amour of Easthampton, Jasmine Davidson of Easthampton, Raegan Lynn Delisle of Easthampton, Alec William Donahue of Easthampton, Gavin Daniel Downer of Easthampton, Tetiana Dudiak of Easthampton, Natalie Samantha Dugas of Easthampton, Christopher James Eriquezzo of Easthampton, Sadie Amelia Flink of Easthampton, Laura Gangne of Easthampton, Isabella Gitana of Easthampton, Mary Elizabeth Gowins of Easthampton, John David Guertin of Easthampton, Allen Hall of Easthampton, Erik Richard Hardy of Easthampton, Sean Rexford Hopkins of Easthampton, Steven James Hoynoski, of Easthampton, Alison Janocha of Easthampton, Melanie Jimenez of Easthampton, Elizabeth Kate Kaposin of Easthampton, Sawyer Peelle Kirley of Easthampton, Nicole Lapointe of Easthampton, Morgan Ann Latour of Easthampton, Anna Marie Mascaro of Easthampton, Olivia Meredith of Easthampton, Ryan James O'Donnell of Easthampton, Emma Lynn Pelletier of Easthampton, Lisa Marie Peltier of Easthampton, Rita Pereira of Easthampton, Harley River Perausse of Easthampton, Jennifer M. Purdon of Easthampton, Donna Marie Smith of Easthampton, Caleb Michael Subocz of

Easthampton, Kyle Andrew Thoma of Easthampton, Zoe Jennelle Thomas of Easthampton, Noel Truehart of Easthampton, Rick Wilcoxon of Easthampton and Leah Brooke Zielenski of Easthampton.

Other students making Dean's list for the fall 2025 term are: Jack Carpenter, of Florence, Alexa Mae-Wakefield Colly, of Florence, Nicholas Grimaldi of Florence, Hannah May Guertin of Florence, Brandon Robert Learned of Florence, Elissa Nicole Lennon, of Florence, Mia Martinez of Florence, Timothy Finch Miller of Florence, Lydia Ngoy of Florence, Iara Jamila Oliveira-Torres of Florence, Sebastian Alexander Pacheco of Florence, Matthew Erick Pagacz of Florence, Liliana Grace Pollard of Florence, Simon Barr Sinclair of Florence, Kyla Therien of Florence, Megan Marie Tierney of Florence, Jadin Jean Kies of Haydenville, Kateryna Sarnatska of Huntington, Shaliyah Toledo-Cruz of Huntington, Bushra Ibrahim Asha of Northampton, Sarah Kathryn Belote of Northampton, Jennifer Judy Buri Yunga of Northampton, Natalie Gillan Caruk of Northampton, Rauterica Ford of Northampton, Asher Garretson of Northampton, Walden Groundwater of Northampton, Theodore Paul Guglielmo of Northampton, Susanna B. Hoffmann of Northampton, Lijah Sky Joyce of Northampton, Lydia Disthanusorn Ladd of Northampton, Erin Margaret Lampron of Northampton, Henry Mikhail Senev of Northampton, Elizabeth Graham Siegel of Northampton, Xavier Rolando Torres of Northampton, Todd Francis Van Mourik of Northampton, Brie-Ann Michelle Wilber of Northampton, Reece Nolan Wilber of Northampton, Harrison Scott Woodland of Northampton, Zachary Young of Northampton, Amber Lynn Pensivy of Peru, August Assarian of Russell, Ruby Stella Chicoine of Russell, Kenneth Donald Conway III of Russell and Rebecca Lynn Farnham of Russell.

Also making Dean's list for the fall 2025 term are: Megan Jean Adams of Southampton,

Sophia Mae Bernier of Southampton, Alina Bondar of Southampton, Olesya Bondar of Southampton, Cassidy Mae Clark of Southampton, Jessa Mae Craig of Southampton, Amy Dressel of Southampton, Emerson William Folta of Southampton, Beatrice Hamilton of Southampton, Addison M. Hufnagle of Southampton, Koleton Timothy Kolodziej of Southampton, Kathleen Mary Ley of Southampton, Liam Charles Packey of Southampton, Kevin James Pascoe of Southampton, Colman Flaherty Radowicz of Southampton, Haydyn Mathew Savoie of Southampton, Stephanie Noelle Sawyer of Southampton, Anna Selin of Southampton, Maria Selin of Southampton, Tobias Carlson Stearns of Southampton, Ambria Lynn Stine of Southampton, Casey Marguerite Thayer of Southampton, David Thibodeau of Southampton, Isabelle Judith Wiemer of Southampton, Gabriela Artin of Westfield, Cari Joy Avalone of Westfield, Neremy Gloria Babu of Westfield, Alina Balan of Westfield, Evelina Balan of Westfield, Anna Balan of Westfield, Tyler Bazegian of Westfield, Kyle Robert Beis of Westfield, Taryn Kacie Black I of Westfield, Maximilian Blackack of Westfield, Sean Patrick Boyle of Westfield, Nicholas Andre Bradley of Westfield, Abigail Beth Brenzel of Westfield, Corrin Olivia Brockney of Westfield, Lyla Dawn Bronner of Westfield, Christopher Joseph Bruno of Westfield, Luz C. Caballero of Westfield, Dara Grace Cassidy of Westfield, Janina A. Cepek of Westfield, Grace Olivia Clendenin of Westfield, Jeffrey Michael Collingwood of Westfield, Jocelyn L. Correia of Westfield, Amie Marie Crosier of Westfield, Madison Johanna Czepiel, of Westfield, Jaden Elizabeth Dekastrozza of Westfield, Shanna Deng of Westfield, Emily Elizabeth Diaz of Westfield, Rebecca Dixon of Westfield, Marcus Anthony Ezquin of Westfield, Isek Flaherty, of Westfield, Akeeva Forcier of Westfield, Nathaniel Thomas Garcia of Westfield, Mark Gavriluk of Westfield, Laura Gilbert

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Lasell University announces Dean's list

NEWTON – Lasell University announces the fall 2025 Dean's list. Includes students.

Local students making Dean's list are: Kate Brough of Easthampton and Lyssa Tirrell of

Westhampton.

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

SNHU announces 2025 President's list

MANCHESTER, NH – Southern New Hampshire University announces the fall 2025 President's list.

Local students making the President's list are: Kimberly Morin of Worthington, Dominique Rogers of Westfield, Katherine Guildner of Westfield, Raphaella Dupras of Westfield, Felicia Dearborn of Westfield, Kale Carter of Westfield, Viviana Piotrowski of Westfield,

Jason Ilnicki of Huntington, Cody Leveille of Easthampton and Megan Moynihan of Easthampton.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

SNHU announces fall 2025 Dean's list

MANCHESTER, NH – Southern New Hampshire University announces the fall 2025 Dean's list.

Local students making the Dean's list are: John Kruck of Becket, Andrew Brown of Westfield, Gavin Foster of Westfield and Ashley Yost of Westfield.

Full-time undergrad-

uate students, who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term, are named to the Dean's list. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired eight-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring and summer.

Caela Scanlon makes Saint Anselm Dean's list

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Saint Anselm College released the Dean's list of high academic achievers for the first semester of the 2025-2026 school year.

Caela Scanlon of Easthampton, an education studies elementary

education major, made the Dean's list.

To be eligible for this honor, a student must have achieved a grade point average of 3.4 or better in the semester with at least 12 credits of study which award a letter grade.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO
RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

STCC announces local students on fall 2025 Dean's list

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College announces the students named to the fall 2025 Dean's list.

Local students making the fall Dean's list are: Rachel Maire Levasseur of Becket, Scott Michael Smoak of Dalton, Jacob Kellam of East Otis, Christopher Douglas Campbell of Easthampton, Colby John Clapper of Easthampton, Ryan Thomas Cowan of Easthampton, Kaiden George Dion of Easthampton, Anaia Zane Isaza-Malloy of Easthampton, Ivanna Kabushka of Easthampton, Anna Marie Dorothy Light of Easthampton, Sherri Mulholland of Easthampton, Timothy James O'Keefe of Easthampton, Desirae Adalene Redfern of Easthampton, Aaron Scott Sparko Jr. of Easthampton,

Lukas Alexander Zarvis of Easthampton, Claire Blakely of Florence, Karen M. Plaza of Florence, Molly Pingxian Smith-Eilenberg of Florence, Alexander Podel of Haydenville, Jamie Biscoe of Huntington, Megan Lorraine Courtney of Huntington and Megan C. McIntyre of Lenox.

Local students also making the fall Dean's list are: Dimitra A. Chatman-Gray of Northampton, Christopher Clough of Northampton, Jordan Michael Drinkwine of Northampton, Dixie Durrenberger-Schroeder of Northampton, Shelby Jillian Frey of Northampton, David Hetzner of Northampton, Shuxiang Li of Northampton, Bobby Lopez of Northampton, Arianna Santiago Padilla of Northampton, Abigail Cole of Pittsfield, Nicholas Joseph Hassett of Pittsfield,

Elizabeth Marie Barcomb of Southamton, Jason William Jones of Southamton, Julia Kushner of Southamton, Rebecca Ann Mooney of Southamton, Ashlynn Isabelle Packey of Southamton, Ava Mae Pease of Southamton, Justin Valerio Lara of Southamton, Alison S. Acevedo Vega of Westfield, Emily Elizabeth Arris of Westfield, Jordan Attanasio of Westfield, Tanya Babinova of Westfield, Cameron David Beaudette of Westfield, Nathaniel Joseph Berrian of Westfield, Emmarose Yongxiao Bombardier of Westfield, Amanda M. Bruno of Westfield, Ottavia Assunta Bush of Westfield, Evan Cardenales of Westfield, Shailee Cardona of Westfield, Katherine Cervonayco of Westfield, Amelia Ciubotaru of Westfield, Bryan Danish of

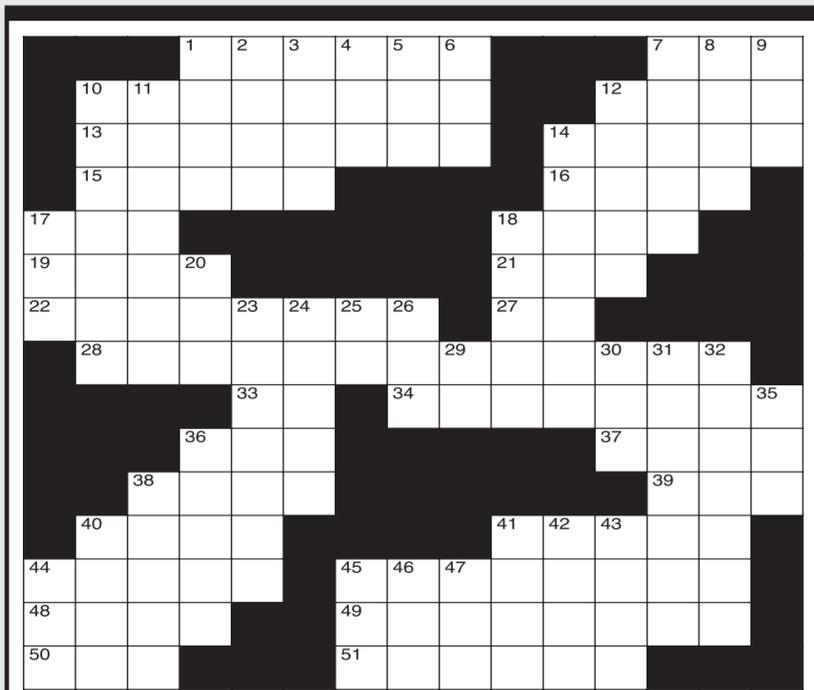
Westfield, Nicholas R. Diaz of Westfield, Illya Domin of Westfield, Robert Donnelly of Westfield, Rebecca Favors of Westfield, Pablo L. Feliciano of Westfield, Colin Foyle of Westfield, Ulyses Garcia of Westfield, Samuel Gelmudinov of Westfield, Allison C. Giguere of Westfield, Kyanna Marie Giordano of Westfield, Stefan Goretskiy of Westfield, Ashlee Paige Hall of Westfield, Brandon L. Hodgdon of Westfield, Brian Russell Kimball of Westfield, Emily Lezhnyak of Westfield, Decarlo Rodimus Lincoln of Westfield, Elina Lisyanya of Westfield, Kelly Lopez of Westfield, Veronika Lukin of Westfield, Ester Mikhailinichik of Westfield, Hector Omar Miranda of Westfield, Yelena Misiruk of Westfield, Darvin Anthony Munger of Westfield, Kierra Nadeau of Westfield,

Chantel Marie Ouimette of Westfield, Nanjilis D. Padin Santos of Westfield, Emily Elizabeth Paliy of Westfield, Diana Svetlana Panasyuk of Westfield, Elina Panasyuk of Westfield, Devon Leon Parhm of Westfield, Denys Prymych of Westfield, Luz Selenia Rivera of Westfield, Joseph Keane Romero of Westfield, Sarah E. Rouse of Westfield, Amya Ruiz of Westfield, Marangeliz Salgado of Westfield, Samantha M. Santos of Westfield, Jack Scott Sarmiento of Westfield, Brianna Kimberly Sgambati of Westfield, Karina Shevchenko of Westfield, Timothy Skazhynuk of Westfield, Alyssa Soto of Westfield, David James Spice of Westfield, Benjamin Alan Tatro of Westfield, Elicia Tionna Tracey of Westfield, Fathima Yusraah Zakir Ghouse of Westfield, Julia

Paige Guiel of Williamsburg and Valentine Bird of Windsor

To be considered, degree seeking students must earn 12 or more college level credits in the current semester, or a total of 12 or more combined college-level credits earned during the fall and spring semesters and achieve a 3.3 or above grade point average.

STCC, the Commonwealth's only technical community college, continues the pioneering legacy of the Springfield Armory with comprehensive and technical education in manufacturing STEM, healthcare, business, social services and the liberal arts. Founded in 1967, the college, a designated Hispanic Serving Institution, seeks to close achievement gaps among students, who traditionally face societal barriers.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mechanical lever
- 7. Rocky peak
- 10. Leave a country
- 12. Discount
- 13. D.C. ballplayer
- 14. Partner to "oohed"
- 15. Engine sound
- 16. Japanese ornamental box
- 17. Fido is one
- 18. Amounts of time
- 19. DiFranco and Phyo are two
- 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 22. Make secret plans
- 27. "Tiny Bubbles" singer
- 28. "His Airness"
- 33. Morning
- 34. Perfected
- 36. Winger guitarist

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Yugoslavian communist leader
- 2. Exchange rate
- 3. High school dance
- 37. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 38. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 39. A way to save money
- 40. Pulpit
- 41. Make ecstatically happy
- 44. Once more
- 45. Works on
- 48. Nocturnal S. American rodent
- 49. State again
- 50. Expression of disappointment
- 51. Type of door

- 4. Peter's last name
- 5. When you anticipate arriving
- 6. Israeli city __ Aviv
- 7. Goat-like mammals
- 8. Margarine
- 9. End-of-the-spectrum color
- 10. Make poisonous
- 11. Popular beverage
- 12. Actress Lathan
- 14. Where planes land and depart
- 17. Political fundraising entity
- 18. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era
- 20. Buffer used in microbiology
- 23. Light, open carriage
- 24. Metrical feet
- 25. Email subject line feature
- 26. A street with lots of nightmares
- 29. Rapper Rule
- 30. River in Scotland
- 31. One who settles a dispute
- 32. Most chummy
- 35. We all have our own
- 36. Arab tribe
- 38. Slap
- 40. Ottoman military commanders
- 41. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language
- 42. Emit coherent radiation
- 43. Sun or solar disk
- 44. Inclined to
- 45. Olfactory reference syndrome
- 46. Chest muscle (slang)
- 47. Body part

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20
ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
 Your attention is focused on finances and deeper connections, Aries. This is the week to speak honestly about budgets, debts or your investments with a partner.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21
TAURUS, the spotlight is shining on your relationships, whether in love or business. Expect some meaningful conversations that define your approach going forward.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21
GEMINI
 Your focus turns to work and wellness as part of your daily routine this week, Gemini. You may feel a strong urge to get more organized and capitalize on resolutions made.

CANCER

June 22/July 22
CANCER
 Your inner child is leading the way for the week, Cancer. Spend time on hobbies, connect with children or plan a memorable date night. Don't be afraid to take a creative risk.

LEO

July 23/Aug 23
LEO, your energies are best spent on your home and family life right now. You may be dealing with a domestic project, a renovation or sorting out a matter with a relative.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22
VIRGO
 Communication is your strongest tool this week, Virgo. With ideas flowing, you may be up to signing an agreement or running errands. You may want to reconnect with an old friend.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23
LIBRA
 Libra, review your income streams and spending habits to give you a clear picture for the new year. This isn't about cutting things out, but about understanding what you value.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22
SCORPIO
 It is your time to shine and redefine yourself, Scorpio. With cosmic energy focused your way, you have the drive and the focus to launch a personal project or make a major change.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21
SAGITTARIUS
 Take some necessary steps back for quiet work and rest, Sagittarius. This week favors wrapping up older projects so you can think more clearly. Don't overschedule yourself.

CAPRICORN

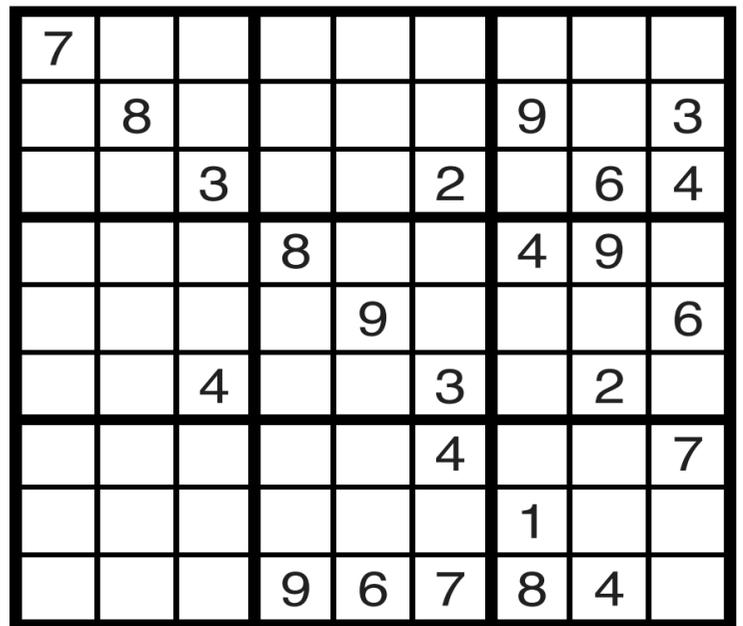
Dec 22/Jan 20
CAPRICORN, social activities and future goals take center stage right now. It might be wise to start networking or join a new group that will open you up to different people.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18
AQUARIUS
 This is an important period for your career. If you've been mulling over making a move, now is the time to get a jump on it. Your professional achievements are getting noticed.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20
PISCES
 Pisces, finalize plans for a trip or a new pursuit, such as returning to school. Seek experiences that will broaden your horizons. Adventure beckons you this week.



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

2	4	8	7	9	6	5	3	1
9	5	8	3	2	7	4	6	8
7	3	9	4	5	6	2	8	1
8	2	5	3	7	9	4	6	1
9	7	3	1	6	4	8	5	2
1	6	4	5	2	8	9	7	3
4	9	7	2	8	1	3	6	5
3	1	6	9	5	7	2	8	4
5	2	8	9	4	3	1	6	7

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BLANDFORD

BLANDFORD COA SERVES LUNCH



Judith MacKinnon serves Cosette “Co” Cousineau crispy cheese finger sandwiches at COA lunch on Friday, Jan. 9. They were also served creamy tomato basil soup and apple pie a la mode for dessert.

Allison Craig named member of Finance Committee

BLANDFORD – At the Jan. 5 Select Board meeting the Nominating Committee for the Finance Committee met and interviewed Allison Craig of Huntington Road.

Craig said she was interested in participating because she believes “It’s important to support the community.” She said she had heard from several people that the Finance Committee needed members.

This is her first time serving on a municipal committee.

Select Board member Jackie Coury asked if she had ever managed a budget. Craig responded that her Associate’s degree was in business management and when she worked in Chicopee, she was responsible for the school store.

Nominating Committee Chair David Hopson asked, “Do you know what the role of the Finance Committee is?” Craig said, “... to figure out if we have enough money for the needs of the town and where we should allocate it.”

Hopson explained the role of the committee concluding with the bottom line that the Finance Committee makes recommendations to the town, the Select Board makes recommendations to the town, but in the end, it is the town, at town meeting, that “actually votes the amount of money to spend.”



Allison Craig

Then, he added, that it becomes the job of the assessors to raise the funds.

Craig was unanimously selected by the appointing Committee to serve three years on Finance.

Members of the Nominating Committee, per town bylaw, are Moderator, Select Board and Town Clerk.

She is currently a math interventionist specialist for the Gateway Regional School District. Her Bachelors Degree is from Westfield State and she also holds a Masters Degree in education from Our Lady of the Elms.

Pokemon club meets Jan. 16

BLANDFORD – The Pokemon Club will meet again on Friday, Jan. 16 from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

People may visit the Porter Memorial Library for crafts, card trading and trivia.

They will find out about what’s new in Pokemon and there will be the usual scavenger hunt.

NOBLE TRAIN

by night he “carried the life-blood of the Northern Army,” those who would take delivery of Knox’s cannons, while by day he filled tankards of ale at the tavern.

Terri Garfield continued the afternoon introducing Jethro Jones, a long-time Blandford resident and Revolutionary War veteran. An historic marker bearing his name is on Blair Road, less than a mile from where Knox and his teamsters traveled and travailed.

Jesse Tappin as Jones recalled “one of the proudest moments of my life” in December 1783 at West Point where he received an honorable discharge from the Continental Army, signed by Knox himself.

Repaying that honor, Jones ordered the cannons to fire rounds. The first for Knox for embodying the great American Spirit; the second for the patriots and ordinary citizens, many from town whose “quiet courage made our independence possible” and the third, a three-round volley for the United States of America. He concluded with “God bless this nation.”

Terri Garfield then invited those interested in continuing to learn more about the story to the Historical Society. Tappin is on the faculty at Westfield State University, and all the other personages are local and some have generational connections to town. All the actors participated as volunteers.

Members of Crane’s Continental Artillery provided the cannon and the cannon fire. Not only does tiny Blandford have a tremendous history, it also has a big community minded heart.

Right, the oxen that came to participate in the Bonfire and Cannon Salute came from the Lorenzo’s Hickory Hollow Working Steers in Belchertown. Below, the cast of reenactors are Terri Garfield, host; Jesse Tappin, Jethro Jones; Bruce Benson, Levi Pease; Randy Garfield as Knox, Owen Lorenzo as William Brown; Aaron LaBrecque as Solomon Brown and Melissa Hamm as the 1776 Blandford resident.



The Crane’s Continental Artillery fires a volley from the cannon.

Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm

from page 1

SELECT BOARD

from page 1

event at the fairgrounds. The budget process is underway with departmental meetings ongoing.

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission notified the town that they are looking for volunteers to serve on a Metropolitan Planning group, whose duties would involve approval of all major road and bridge infrastructures.

In other business

Highway Superintendent Ray Hultay asked the board to sign an application for a grant for culvert installation on Julius Hall Road, which they did. It would provide funding for the first phase of design work and for the second phase, up to \$1 million for the actual construction.

The board also voted unanimously to affirm the Energy Projects Siting and Engagement Committee.

REENACTORS

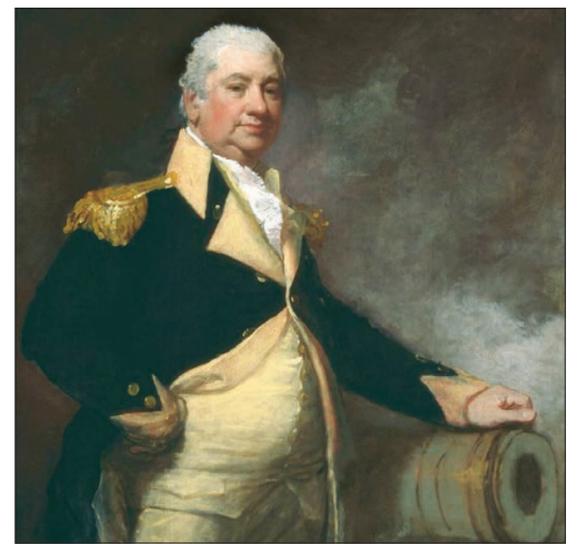
from page 1

winding, was what Knox called the “terrible Glasccow and Westfield Mountain,” also known as the Devil’s Staircase taking the Noble

Train into Westfield.

This is the entire route, beginning to end.

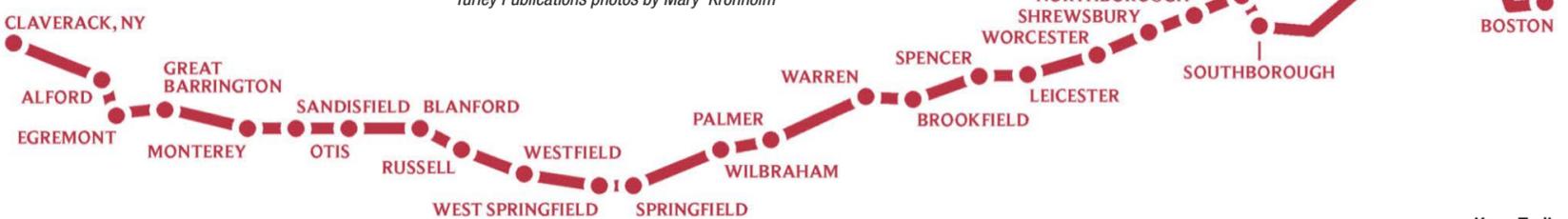
Note: Put Knox Trail map here.



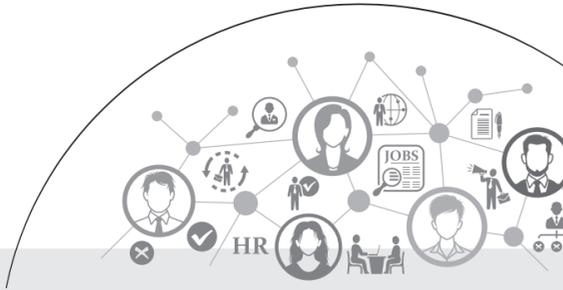
“Henry Knox,” by the American artist Gilbert Stuart. 47.88 in. x 38.63 in. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



A crowd listens to Melissa Hamm, who portrays a 1776 Blandford resident.



Knox Trail map



CAREER Education

HCSS: Empowering students for a brighter future

Are you searching for a school where academic excellence meets a supportive community? Hampden Charter School of Science (HCSS) is a top-ranked, tuition-free public charter school serving grades 6-12 in Western Massachusetts. Since its founding in 2009, HCSS has been dedicated to preparing students for college, careers, and a lifetime of success.

Why Choose HCSS?

HCSS stands out as a premier choice for families because of its unique combination of academic rigor, personalized attention, and community spirit. Our two campuses—the Middle School in West Springfield (Grades 6-8) and the High School in Chicopee (Grades 9-12)—offer students a seamless transition from middle school to high school and beyond. Here's what makes HCSS truly exceptional:

Academic Excellence: Our rigorous curriculum is guided by the College Board's AP standards and the Common Core. With honors courses beginning in 7th grade, 15 AP offerings in high school, and innovative programs like Project Lead The Way (PLTW), students are challenged to reach their full potential.

Comprehensive College and Career Preparation:



HCSS begins college and career readiness as early as 6th grade, including SAT/PSAT prep, dual enrollment opportunities, and experiential college campus visits. With a 100% college acceptance rate and over \$49M in scholarships awarded in 2025, our graduates are set for success.

State-of-the-Art Technology: Students benefit from one-to-one Chromebook access, SMART Inter-

active Displays, and hands-on science labs, preparing them for a tech-driven world.

Award-Winning Extracurriculars: From robotics, drone, and science olympiad clubs to competitive athletics and social activities, students thrive outside the classroom as well.

Join Us for an Open House

Explore what HCSS has to offer during our upcoming Welcome Saturday Open

House events. Meet our dedicated staff, tour our campuses, and learn how HCSS can help your child achieve their dreams. Interested families can also join a Virtual Information Session for an in-depth look at our programs from the comfort of home.

What Parents and Students Love About HCSS

Parents and students consistently praise HCSS for

its nurturing environment, where every student feels valued and supported. The school's commitment to diversity and inclusion fosters a vibrant community that celebrates different perspectives and cultures. Families also appreciate the convenience of free transportation and extensive tutoring services, ensuring all students have the tools they need to succeed.

Student Success Stories

HCSS alumni have gone on to attend prestigious universities, including Ivy League institutions like Harvard, Columbia, and Dartmouth. Our students' achievements are a testament to the school's dedication to academic and personal growth. With a consistent college matriculation rate of over 95%, HCSS prepares students not just to attend college but to excel once they get there.

How to Apply

Applications for the 2026-2027 school year are now open. Rising 6th-10th graders should apply no later than March 1, 2026, to secure a spot in our admission lottery. Visit www.hampden-charter.org to apply and take the first step toward a brighter future.

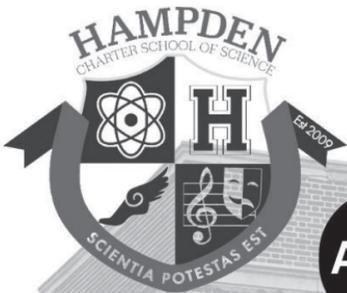
At Hampden Charter School of Science, we believe every student deserves a world-class education. Join our community of learners, achievers, and leaders today—because your child's future begins here.

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Tel. 413-593-9090

HCSS Middle School

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hampdencharter.org



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- ATHLETICS
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January 24th
February 7th
February 28th

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MARCH 1, 2026





CAREER Education

St. Joan of Arc School offers comprehensive education

Located in Chicopee, MA, St. Joan of Arc (SJA) School is a private Catholic institution serving students from Pre-K through Grade 8.

St. Joan of Arc School provides a comprehensive educational environment focused on physical, intellectual,

and spiritual wellness.

In the fall the school community welcomed Mrs. Ashley Mahan as the new principal. A lifelong Chicopee resident and former educator in the local public school system, Mrs. Mahan brings extensive experience and a personal connection to the community.

Students can engage in several new and returning enrichment opportunities this year, including:

- Creative Arts: Liturgical Dance Troupe and Choir.
- STEM & Literacy: Robotics, 3D Printing, LEGO,

Book and Newspaper Clubs.

• Curriculum: Academic programs are integrated with technology, music, library, and physical education.

• Student Services: The school offers free breakfast and lunch programs and has hot meal options available for students.

• Extended Care: Affordable extended care and extracurricular programs are available to support families.

• Language Learning:

Innovative offerings include foreign language instruction through tools like Duolingo.

• Our Preschool program for ages 3 and 4 offers full and part-time care, geared toward preparing your child for Kindergarten. Children learn Kindergarten readiness and pre-reading skills through a developmentally appropriate teacher-created curriculum designed to hold your child's interest and spark their curiosity.

The school will be holding an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 3 and Thursday, Feb. 5 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Please call Janine or Chris in the Business Office at 413-276-4608 for registration information, or to make an appointment. To learn more visit www.sjachicopee.org.

We look forward to meeting you.

ST. JOAN OF ARC SCHOOL

Pre-K to Grade 8

587 Grattan Street, Chicopee ~ 533-1475

sjachicopee.org

Learning Rooted in Christian Values



OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, January 31st, 9am-12 noon

No Appointment Needed

Tuesday, February 3rd & Thursday, Feb 5th, 3pm-7pm

By Appointment Only



Affordable Tuition & Extended Care ~ Free Breakfast & Lunch

Extracurricular Programs~ Technology ~ Physical Education

Music ~ Library ~ Duolingo

Welcoming, Safe & Secure School Community

Social, Physical, Spiritual & Intellectual Wellness Tuition Assistance

Easy Access to I391 & I90



St. Stanislaus School students shine as servant leaders

St. Stanislaus School proudly announces the success of its recent community service initiatives, exemplifying its motto: "Servant Leaders for Today and Tomorrow."

In a spirited effort to support those in need, Student Council organized a can drive that collected an impressive 3,500 items, surpassing their original goal by 1,000 donations. The drive demonstrated the school community's commitment to service, teamwork, and making a tangible difference in the lives of local families.

Building on this momentum, St. Stanislaus students also gathered toiletries, diapers, and other personal items to fulfill the wish lists of The Gray House and Christina's House in Springfield. These organizations provide critical support and safe spaces for individuals and families facing challenging circumstances.

"This can drive is run by our Student Council in grades 4-8," said Mrs. Katherine Rorrio, Principal of St. Stanislaus School. "This drive aligns with the state-

ment that we believe our students are servant leaders for today and tomorrow. It assists our school community in understanding the global community, where we are all neighbors and members of God's family. Our school theme this year is 'Go Make Disciples of All Nations.' Our students are wonderful examples of disciples going out and making a difference in the community. We are so proud of all of our students and families for being so generous to those in need."

St. Stanislaus School remains committed to fostering a culture of compassion, responsibility, and service, preparing students not only for academic success but also for meaningful engagement in their communities.

Founded over 125 years ago, St. Stanislaus School has a rich history of serving families in Chicopee and surrounding communities. Although the original building was lost to fire, the school will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its current building on Saturday, Jan. 31, beginning with Mass at 4 p.m., followed by an Open House and

Celebration. Families interested in scheduling a private tour at another time may call the school at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society.

The school has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK 3 & 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before and after school program, and one-to-one use and integration of iPads and Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to spend a day with us. To learn more please visit www.saintstansschool.org.

We can't wait to meet you.

ST. STANISLAUS SCHOOL

SERVANT LEADERS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW



Servant Leaders for Today and Tomorrow

PREK - 8TH GRADE SCHOOL
PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Welcoming Franciscan environment
- Strong core curriculum
- Enrichment classes
- Certified faculty
- Full day Preschool & Kindergarten
- Free breakfast and hot lunch
- Before & After school program
- One to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum
- Modern facility - full gym, full cafeteria, air conditioned, carpeted classrooms.



To learn more



Call us for more information and to schedule a tour. We welcome the opportunity for you to experience St. Stanislaus School! Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us."

www.saintstansschool.org
534 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013
413-592-5135

CALL TO SCHEDULE A PRIVATE TOUR!





CAREER Education

HCC opens registration for Spring 2026 noncredit classes

Holyoke Community College has opened registration for its Spring 2026 catalog of noncredit personal enrichment and professional development classes.

The spring calendar begins Jan. 12, with individual classes running on different schedules throughout the semester.

New next semester is a series of classes for seniors focused on basic technology. Each one-hour class is available for just \$20 and cover a wide range of subjects, including Windows 11, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Canva (for graphic design), Artificial Intelligence, Zoom, smartphone use (Android or iPhone), managing and editing photos, document storage, web browsers, and computer scams.

Other classes for spring include cooking (Caribbean, charcuterie, Puerto Rican, Southern), wine tasting (winter reds, Tuscany, New Zealand, Rose, summer wines), sewing (for beginners), sewing (machine), watercolor painting, acrylic painting, drawing, piano, conversational French, conversational Spanish, music technology, voiceover coaching, financial literacy, retirement planning, K-12 education (professional development), writing and publishing (fiction, nonfiction,



tion, screenwriting, short stories, query letters, mysteries, travel, blogs), ChatGPT, how to launch a pet-sitting and dog-walking business, and Quickbooks.

Most classes meet in the Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave. Cooking and wine-tasting classes meet at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St. Some classes meet over Zoom.

To see complete spring course listings and schedules, or to register, please visit hcc.edu/bcs.

More classes will be added as spring approaches.

The Commonwealth's oldest community college, Holyoke Community College opened its doors in 1946 as the first two-year college in Massachusetts. In the decades since, the college has paved the way for generations of learners from western Massachusetts and beyond, a beacon of hope and opportunity for people

seeking better lives. Please visit us at hcc.edu.

HCC's Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development is the Pioneer Valley's premiere resource for workforce training, professional development, and personal growth. It provides innovative and affordable programming that helps businesses, organizations, and individuals achieve their goals.





HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A premier healthcare educator in our region.

- + Nursing
- + Radiologic Technology
- + Medical Assisting
- + Veterinary and Animal Science

hcc.edu/healthcare



CAREER Education

Jump Start Preschool invites families to learn, play, and grow together

Two Locations in Feeding Hills and West Springfield

Jump Start Preschool is proud to welcome families to a nurturing, play-based learning environment where children are encouraged to explore, grow, and develop essential life skills. Serving children ages 2.9 to 5 years old, Jump Start Preschool focuses on learning through play while fostering independence, creativity, and confidence.

At Jump Start Preschool, social-emotional learning and communication are key components of each age group's curriculum. Children learn how to problem-solve with peers, practice self-regulation strategies, and build the foundational skills that help them succeed academically and socially. By supporting emotional growth alongside academics, Jump Start helps children thrive both in and out of the classroom.

Family and community partnerships are at the heart

of the Jump Start Preschool mission. In support of this commitment, Jump Start Preschool will host a 5K Run/Walk on May 30, bringing the community together to raise funds for Autism Allies and the children of Jump Start Preschool. Sixty percent of all donations will benefit Autism Allies. The event will feature live music, local businesses, exercise, and great company. Community members are encouraged to participate and support children and families.

Event information and registration: <https://Miles-of-hopeforautism.eventbrite.com>

Jump Start Preschool offers a wide range of perks designed to support both children and working families, including:

- Open year-round
- Reasonable tuition
- Family-friendly hours
- Feeding Hills: 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- West Springfield: 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- Free healthy morning and afternoon snacks
- Community and in-

house field trips

- Family engagement activities throughout the year
- EEC-certified staff trained in CPR, First Aid, and medication administration

- State-of-the-art playground

- Preschool graduation with a professional photographer

- School photos twice per year

- Free occupational therapy and speech screenings twice annually

"Timeless moments come from learning through movement, creativity, and connection," said Jump Start Preschool. "We invite families to come dance with us and experience the joy of early learning."

Families interested in enrolling are encouraged to visit www.jumpstartpreschoolma.com and complete an interest form. Jump Start Preschool is currently enrolling preschoolers ages 2.9 to 5 at both the Feeding Hills and West Springfield locations.

Watch out — learning is happening.

Various ways newspapers are good for kids

Newspapers have long been part of the fabric of the communities they cover and serve. Whether it's a big-city daily tabloid or a small town weekly, newspapers keep readers and residents up-to-date on the latest goings-on in their communities and across the globe.

Newspapers have been linked to a range of benefits for adults that include greater civic engagement and stronger voter turnout. Such benefits are indispensable, and it's equally important to recognize ways in which newspapers benefit children.

• Reading and discussing newspaper stories can foster stronger language development. A 2022 study published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* noted that parents who provide newspapers at home for their children to read and then discuss stories with young readers can help kids develop strong language skills, which could ultimately benefit them in the classroom and in their personal interactions. The study also noted that discussing newspaper stories with youngsters creates opportunities for children to explore their thoughts.

• Newspapers can help children develop their critical thinking skills. A meta-analysis examining ways to teach students critical thinking skills published in the *Review of Educational Research* noted that critical thinking skills are vital because they bolster students' ability to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and make inferences. Newspapers are an invaluable resource for educators aiming to bolster kids' critical thinking skills, as they can be used to teach students to recognize why stories were written, how information in a given story was learned and gathered and how to verify information in a news story. Each of those lessons requires interpretation, analysis and evaluation, ultimately instilling in students vital critical thinking skills that can serve them in the classroom and beyond.



• Newspapers help students develop vital communication skills. A 2024 study published in the *Elementaria Journal of Educational Research* found that reading newspapers helped student participants in the study improve their vocabulary, enhance their writing skills and more effectively articulate their ideas. Authors behind the study ultimately characterized newspapers as valuable educational tools, a conclusion that has been reached by researchers across a range of academic disciplines.

Newspapers are part of the fabric of the communities they cover, and children have much to gain from being granted access to their local papers in the classroom and at home.

Jump Start Preschool

Enrolling Now for the 2026-2027 School Year!




Jump Start Preschool provides a safe, loving, nurturing and high-quality childcare and education that promotes and enhances each child's development with the assurance of our parents' peace of mind.

Full Day & Half Day Programs

Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten

Research-based curriculum that builds confidence & excitement about learning

- Social & Emotional Skills
- Language & Literacy Skills
- Cognitive Skills
- Physical Skills

Ages 2.9 to 5 years old

Two Beautiful Locations!

For more information, call or visit our website:
www.JumpStartPreschoolMA.com

- Feeding Hills: 413.789.4987
- West Springfield: 413.301.5694



Interested in a Career with Jump Start Preschool?
Please Contact Us



WELDING

- Real hands-on experience
- Includes on site and off site internship
- State-of-the-art facilities renovated in 2022 including a robotic arm

Gateway's Welding program is a Chapter 74 vocational education program that prepares students for a career in Metal Fabrication and Welding!

www.grsd.org




JOIN US! Apply today!

EARLY EDUCATION & CARE

At Gateway you can join our Early Education and Care program (EEC) in 9th grade!

By the time you graduate, you will be ready, certified, and prepared to work with young learners!



You will also be on track to:

- Know how to plan engaging activities and lessons
- Have CPR & First Aid certification
- Experience awesome internship opportunities



Visit:
www.grsd.org
for more information!



CAREER Education

Well-rounded education benefits students

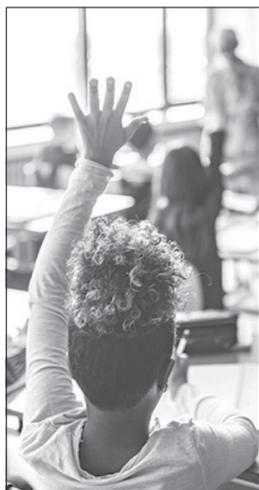
Academic environments have undergone quite a change over the last several decades. Technological advancements have changed the way educators teach and how students learn, but there's also been a notable shift in what students are learning.

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) has become a point of emphasis in twenty-first century classrooms, and for good reason. The U.S. National Science Foundation notes that a workforce educated in STEM is vital to a country's prosperity and security. Opportunities in STEM fields are on the rise as well, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates STEM occupations will grow by roughly 11 percent between 2022 and 2032.

The value of STEM is undeniable. However, students and parents also should recognize the many ways a well-rounded education that includes math and science but also the humanities and social sciences facilitates strong academic performance.

Critical thinking skills

A well-rounded education can instill important and useful critical thinking skills in students. When students direct the bulk of their attention to a single subject or



category of subjects, they're less likely to understand how interconnected coursework, and indeed the world, can be. A well-rounded education can instill in students a more nuanced way of looking at problems and potential solutions. That ability can positively affect students' personal lives and ultimately their professional lives when their formal schooling ends, as they will be in position to better assess situations.

Comprehension

Tests are designed to gauge students' grasp of material. Students' ability to comprehend lessons taught in the classroom is a big part of that, and a well-round-

ed education fosters strong comprehension skills. A 2018 report from the New York State Education Department noted that research has found that students are better readers after they have been exposed to the language and vocabulary of the natural world, the sciences and social studies.

Crossover benefits

A well-rounded education can help students perform better in all of their subjects. In 2021, a University of Buffalo academic and researcher studying children and dyslexia made a startling discovery regarding the value of reading and how it affects performance in subjects like math. The research found that reading proficiency crosses academic domains and actually guides how students approach various tasks and solve problems. That means a well-rounded education that includes reading-heavy subjects, like those in the humanities and social sciences, could actually improve how students perform in STEM classes.

A well-rounded education pays a number of dividends for students. Recognition of those benefits might compel parents to support a curriculum that includes a wide array of subjects and academic disciplines.

Gateway announces expansion of career pathways, Chapter 74 vocational opportunities

Gateway Regional School (GRS) is proud to announce the expansion of its personalized learning model, featuring anticipated openings in its premier Chapter 74 Vocational Programs for the fall of 2026. Designed as a "launchpad" for student success, GRS continues to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world career readiness for students in grades 6–12.

Innovative Middle School Exploration

The journey begins in the middle grades (6–8), where students engage in an expansive exploratory program. With 26 unique course options—ranging from Intro to Tourism and Woodshop to Data and Statistics in Sports and Sociology—students are encouraged to uncover their passions early.

By the eighth grade, students can gain a head start by accessing Gateway's Chapter 74 vocational programs, providing hands-on introduction to high-demand fields before they even enter high school.

Challenging Chapter 74 Vocational Programs

Gateway's commitment

to excellence is anchored by two flagship programs that prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce:

- **Welding & Metal Fabrication:** This program offers real hands-on experience in state-of-the-art facilities renovated in 2022. Students learn on modern equipment, including a robotic arm, and participate in both on-site and off-site internships.

- **Early Education and Care (EEC):** Starting in 9th grade, students in the EEC program are put on a track to become certified professionals. The curriculum includes lesson planning for young learners, CPR and First Aid certification, and immersive internship opportunities.

A Personalized Path to the Future

As students reach the 10th grade, they participate in a "demonstration of learning" to chart their specific goals for their final two years. This tailored approach allows for meaningful experiences, including:

- **Internships and Co-ops:** Real-world placements in students' fields of interest.
- **College Credits:** Through dual-enrollment and concurrent enrollment

partnerships with universities across the country.

- **Work-Study Placements:** Providing a practical balance between education and professional experience.

"At Gateway Regional School, education is more than coursework—it's a launchpad," Dr. Will Sullivan, GRS Principal, states. "We empower our students to excel in life after graduation through intentionally personalized learning pathways crafted to foster achievement and community impact."

Join the Gateway Community

Gateway Regional School welcomes students from its six member towns and surrounding communities. Families interested in exploring these opportunities for the Fall 2026 semester are encouraged to apply today.

For more information on programs and how to apply, please visit www.grsd.org.

Media Contact: Gateway Regional School District Website: www.grsd.org

Gateway Regional School District is located at 12 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA 01050.

WELCOME TO GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL



"AT GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL, EDUCATION IS MORE THAN COURSEWORK – IT'S A LAUNCHPAD."

Gateway Regional School (GRS) is proud to educate and welcome students from the six member towns and surrounding communities in a vibrant, forward-thinking learning environment designed to prepare students for life beyond the classroom.

Serving students in grades 6-12, Gateway Regional School is built around one central goal: helping every student discover their interests, develop their strengths, and chart a clear path toward future success. That journey begins in the middle grades, where students in grades 6-8, participate in an expansive exploratory program offering 26 unique course options. From *Intro to Tourism and Woodshop* to *Data and Statistics in Sports, Financial Literacy, Engineering, and Sociology*, students are encouraged to explore new ideas, uncover passions, and start thinking about possible career pathways early on. Eighth-grade students can take that exploration even further by accessing Gateway's Chapter 74 vocational programs in *Early Education and Care* and *Welding*, giving them a hands-on introduction to high-demand fields before they enter high school.

Once students reach high school, Gateway shifts into a highly personalized learning model. In grade 10, students complete a demonstration of learning, sharing their goals and aspirations for their final two years at GRS. These plans guide meaningful experiences such as internships, co-ops, and work-study placements, allowing students to gain real-world experience in fields they are excited to pursue.

Gateway's strong partnerships with colleges and universities across the country further expand student opportunities through dual-enrollment and concurrent enrollment programs, helping students earn college credit while still in high school. Looking ahead, Gateway Regional School is excited to announce anticipated openings in its Chapter 74 Vocational Programs for fall 2026, creating new opportunities for students interested in *Early Education and Care* and *Welding*.

GATEWAY REGIONAL'S COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE AND TO EXCELLENCE:

AT GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL, STUDENTS ARE EMPOWERED TO EXCEL IN LIFE AFTER GRADUATION THROUGH INTENTIONALLY PERSONALIZED LEARNING PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES, CRAFTED TO FOSTER A FUTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT, CONTRIBUTION, UNDERSTANDING, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY IMPACT.



CAREER Education

PVPA continues to invest in Arts-focused education



At a time when many public schools are trying to manage difficult budgets by cutting Art programs, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Public Charter School continues to invest in Arts-focused education for students in Grades 7 - 12.

With an extensive Course Catalog of challenging Academic and Arts courses, PVPA employs 15

full-time Arts teachers, and now has five Arts Departments: Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts and new this year, Technical Design and Production.

Students are encouraged to find their artistic voice through a range of introductory courses and audition level course options, with multiple performance opportunities, all integrated with

their core academics.

PVPA students consistently show that incorporating the arts into education creates, not just better artists, but better students who are equipped to be active participants in their future.

Visit for an Open House on Thursday, Jan. 22, and see why PVPA is consistently voted one of the Best Charter Schools in the Valley.

As a public charter school, admission to PVPA is free and open to all Massachusetts students by lottery; no tuition or audition required.

Now accepting applications for the 2026/2027 school year for Grades 7-12 at pvpa.org/admissions.

For more information, please email admissions@pvpa.org.



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts
Charter Public School
15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley
413-552-1580

Apply Now!

Grades 7-11

2026/27 school year



PVPA Open House

Thursday, Jan 22
4:00-6:00pm

registration encouraged

Free, Arts-focused College-prep Education

Dance, Music, Theater
Visual Arts
Technical Design/
Production

Free Bus Transportation within PVPA region

www.pvpa.org/admissions

APPLY NOW!

Deadline Feb 11, 2026

REGISTER FOR OPEN HOUSE






Teaching the Next Generation

Are you passionate about making a positive impact on young minds within a dynamic public school environment? Springfield Public Schools is seeking knowledgeable, highly effective, diverse educators, to join our K-12 district!

Join Our Team!

WE'RE HIRING!

TO APPLY
Visit our website or scan the QR Code!



Be part of a school system that is thriving in
A Culture of Equity and Proficiency serving over 26,000 students.



springfieldpublicschools.com




[springfieldk12](#)

OBITUARIES

Sue Henning



Feb. 21, 1942 -
Dec. 29, 2025

Sue Henning of Worthington, 83, died unexpectedly at her home on Dec. 29, 2025. Recently, Sue had been valiantly engaging with recurring health issues, which intensified in the past month. She was the widow of Peter Foley, who passed away in May of 2024.

Sue and Peter relocated from Nantucket to Worthington in 2005. Peter, a loyal alumnus of the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), fondly recalled the Berkshires from his college days. The area became their new home after Little Compton R.I. was eliminated in a "run-off" competition Peter created to determine the location of their of their new home.

After Peter passed away, Sue would often say that their shared love of Hampshire County, its rural character and bucolic nature, made the selection of Glendale Falls in Middlefield, the final and logical resting place for Peter's remains in 2024. His send-off was capably administered by Sue who, while on her own one Summer day, leaned over the perilous waterfalls and released him, as they agreed. She would warmly recall this among close friends.

Sue was born Feb. 21, 1942 in Selma, Alabama

and was the daughter of Joseph and Eleanor Henning. Her father, a proud son of Kentucky, finished his tour of duty in the U.S. Army Air Corps and the family re-located to Cleveland, Ohio where his employment prospects were greater. The Hennings settled on the west side of the city where Sue attended public schools.

After high school, Sue enrolled at Ohio University, (Athens) where she received her Bachelor's degree in 1963 and then continued her education at The University of California (Berkeley), after which Sue and a close friend and classmate, headed for Nantucket in their recently purchased used VW Beetle.

Starting on the low rungs of the Nantucket employment ladder as a nineteen year old, Sue worked at the Harbor House Hotel as a chambermaid. Her energy, Southern roots and her comfort level with anyone from the "Bluegrass State," promptly resulted in job offers for both girls from "Willy" House and his wife, the Kentucky-born African-American proprietors of what has now become a Nantucket institution known as "The Chicken Box." Once a fishing shack, it served moderately-priced honey-fried chicken to the numerous servants and chauffeurs, who were given Thursdays and "half-Sundays" off by the "cottagers,"

who brought their staff to the island each summer. From the sixties on, the popularity of the Chicken Box grew exponentially; largely as a result of its down-home ambience; good food and its friendly staff, including Sue.

She would often humorously recall that The Chicken Box was the starting gate for her life on the island. A few years later, it took another island resident to point out to her that if she really wanted to pursue a full-time career in teaching either on or "off-island," working in a local juke joint where the parents of her pupils might gather, was not going to be viewed as career-enhancing.

Sue went to work as an educator at The Papago (now Tohono O'odham) Indian Reservation in Sells, Arizona, a remote part of the state. Sue's gifts as an artist and educator were recognized and her close bonds with the children and her infectious activism resulted in the exposure and subsequent dismissal of a number of administrators, who had been tolerating and shielding abusers of the Native American population there.

After returning to Nantucket she became a highly regarded elementa-

ry school teacher where her artistic ability and her easy and warm rapport with her pupils were recognized. In addition to teaching full-time, Sue was elected as President of the Nantucket Teacher's Association from 1985-1986 where she represented her fellow teachers in contract negotiations; salary and benefit matters and staffing and working condition requirements.

A fellow teacher of biology at Nantucket High School named Peter Foley, the gentleman that had informally been her career advisor, requested her hand in marriage, to which she assented. That marriage, in November 1978, marked the beginning of a joyous union for both blessed with humor, love and mutual respect.

As a couple they visited several continents and countries including Australia, Czechoslovakia, South America, Tibet and Russia. Together, they avidly pursued, understood and appreciated the cultures of each of these nations. One trip to Ireland, recalled with true joy, involved Sue and Peter hosting two women, both members of the Sisters of Mercy (one of whom was Peter's sister) for the 125th anniversary of the religious

order founded there in 1831.

Sue had numerous friends locally and on Nantucket. She cherished all of them, but none of them were held with the same high regard she had for their pets or their children. As the owner of a few King Charles Cavalier Spaniels and her beloved cats, she showered animals of all kinds with love, kibble, bones, bird seed, toys and affection. Sue believed that the children of her numerous friends and relatives deserved higher regard than they did and she demonstrated her generosity with gifts that transformed young children. Her homemade Valentine's Day cards, reflecting her artistic abilities were sent every year to numerous recipients along with books, calendars and miscellaneous gifts from her inveterate weekly harvest of local thrift shops.

Sue was always a true humanist. She engaged with others with warmth and authenticity. She suspended judgment and offered acceptance; she declined indifference and extended friendship; she deferred the average and chose to elevate those she encountered.

If so inclined, please make donations in her memory to your local animal shelter or The American Indian College Fund, 8333 Greenwood Boulevard, Denver, Colorado 80221.

DEATH NOTICES

COSTELLO, MAUREN BURY

Died Jan. 2, 2026
Services at later date

HENNING, SUE

Died Dec. 29, 2025

MIKUSKI, WILLIAM A.

Died Jan. 8, 2026
Services Jan. 16, 2026
Firtion Adams Funeral Home

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 (with a word limit of up to 500 words) 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.

Maureen Bury Costello

Maureen Bury Costello, 90 years of age from Agawam, Massachusetts, died peacefully in her sleep on Jan. 2, 2026.

Maureen is survived by her husband of over 69 years, Robert. Her brother, Vincent Bury. Her four children, Michael, Mark, Kate and Laura, in addition to nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She also leaves behind multiple people that called her a dear friend, cousin, teacher and confidant.

Maureen was born in Orange New Jersey and went to St. Dominics High School, then received her Bachelor's Degree at Caldwell College in English literature and Thomistic philosophy. She started her professional life as an English teacher in Island Heights, New Jersey. She then moved to Blandford, Massachusetts with her husband Bob 60 years ago to raise her family as well as multiple farm animals. She continued her professional career teaching special needs children at Gateway Regional

High School in Huntington.

She took to nature right away and later gained the reputation as a holistic herbalist, weaver, spinner and entrepreneur. You would often find her volunteering her time teaching weaving, spinning and workshops in dyeing wool from plants found in nature. She was involved in "Sheep to Shawl" groups as well as local weavers guilds. She opened a shop called Sheepgate to give local artists a place to showcase their work. She was even featured on the cover of her alma mater magazine "Echoes" as the Artists' Entrepreneur.

Sheepgate was well known not only in the Hilltown's, but nationwide since it had visitors from all 50 states as well as multiple countries. The shop intrigued everyone as it surrounded you with its classical music and exquisite artwork. Maureen



loved to talk and listen with customers and a quick stop by people would turn into a couple of hours of conversations. She would then call her sheep by name to be hand fed by the patrons. In the summer months Maureen started "Talent under the Tent" a place for an artist to work on their latest masterpiece out in the open for anyone to watch. Sheepgate was an outlet that many, if not all in the art world, needed and appreciated.

In summary, Maureen loved people, animals, nature and the arts. She had lived a wonderful fulfilling life, as her last sentence was "It's been a great ride."

A memorial for Maureen will be announced at a later date. Southwick Forastiere Funeral & Cremation, 624 College Highway, Southwick, www.forastiere.com

William A. Mikuski



William A. Mikuski "Bill", 88, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026 at Berkshire Medical Center. He was born in Springfield on March 29, 1937, to the late Myron and Veronica (Jegelewicz) Mikuski and raised in Westfield.

Bill was an altar boy for St. Casimir's Church that his family attended. After graduating from Westfield High School in 1955, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy for 4 years, spending most of that time on the USS Roy O'Hale as a radioman. After his time in the Navy, he worked as a carpentry apprentice in Springfield and gradually started his own construction business. He also served as Chief of Police in Russell for many years.

Bill later was employed by the US Postal Service



as a rural mail carrier in the Hilltowns of Russell and Blandford and retired in 2002. He was a self-taught and talented woodworker creating many unique

pieces of workmanship. Bill spent many years attending craft shows and selling the beautiful wooden banks that he built with old post office fronts that came from post offices that were modernizing their mailboxes. During his younger years, Bill was an avid hunter and fisherman.

Bill is survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Margit (LaMontagne) Mikuski; her two sons, Kenneth Deveno and Thomas Deveno, Jr. and his wife, Jean Deveno; two step-grandchildren, Jamie Bird, Sarah (Bird) Chase and her husband Dan Chase, as well as Bill's

brother, David Mikuski; several nieces, nephews and cousins, along with his extended family consisting of the Howes and the Ciejkas, who all lovingly, referred to him as Mr. Bill.

Visiting hours will be held on Friday, Jan. 16, 2026 from 10 a.m. - noon in the Firtion Adams Funeral Service, 76 Broad St., Westfield, followed by a Funeral Home Service at noon in the funeral home. A private celebration of life will be held in the spring at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Alzheimer's Association. www.firtionadams.com.

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL "On-Call" Architectural Design Services

The Town of Middlefield is seeking proposals for "On-Call" General Architectural Design and Services for several miscellaneous town capital improvement projects. **Services will be effective from date of award through June 30, 2027 with two options to renew for two additional years ending on June 30, 2031.**

The Town acting through its Town Select Board, is seeking qualified architectural firms to provide on-call "house Doctor and Consulting Services for the Town of Middlefield. The Town of Middlefield will award contracts as needed by the Town.

The scope of work will generally involve repair, rehabilitation, or renovation to municipal buildings/structures. Projects may include re-roofing, window repair and replacement, building insulation, building structural repair, elevator installation, exterior envelop repairs, mechanical, electrical and structural repairs or replacement, renovations for accessibility, design and construction oversight of small municipal buildings and additions and minor interior renovations to building elements and offices as necessary.

Applicants must have experience in and be fully licensed or registered for the work mentioned in this RFP by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and must list the names of the licensed consultants that will be used as part of the RFP response. The selected firms shall have demonstrated previous experience in providing specified services to Massachusetts municipal governments. A complete RFP may be obtained, without charge, by contacting the Middlefield Administrative Assistant at, 413-623-2079 Ext.2 or at middlefield.assistant@gmail.com. **Documents will be available beginning on January 16, 2026 in the Town of Middlefield Select Board Office, Town Hall 188 Skyline Trail Middlefield MA 01243 on Mondays from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. or Wednesday's from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. and Friday's from 9 A.M. to 11 A.M. They can also be obtained by contacting the Town Administrative Assistant at middlefield.assistant@gmail.com or by calling 413-623-2079 Ext.2. It is recommended that respondents to this request familiarize themselves with the detailed RFP.**

It is the intent of the Awarding Authority to award contracts within thirty (30) business days after receiving the proposals.

The deadline for submitting Proposals to the Town of Middlefield Select Board Office 187 Skyline Trail Middlefield, MA 01243 is Wednesday February 4, 2026 by 2:00 P.M. Proposals can either be dropped off at the Select Board Office located at 187 Skyline Trail in Middlefield Massachusetts 01243 or can be sent by mail to the Middlefield Town Administrative Assistant, Mark Doane at P.O. Box 238 Middlefield, MA 01243. Proposals should be clearly marked as such on the exterior of the envelope.

RFPs will be opened in the Select Board Office located in the Middlefield Town Hall 188 Skyline Trail Middlefield, MA 01243 on Wednesday February 4, 2026, at 2:00 P.M. A completed Non-Collusive Affidavit, Certificate of State Tax Compliance, completed Reference List, and a completed Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Designer Application Form for Municipalities and Public Agencies not within DSB Jurisdiction that is attached are required with the RFP Proposal. Questions should be directed to the Town Administrative Assistant at: middlefield.assistant@gmail.com or by phone: 413-623-2079 Ext. 2. The deadline for questions on the documents is

11:00 A.M. on Monday January 26, 2026.
01/15, 01/22/2026

HUNTINGTON Public Hearing Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 5:00 PM FY 2024 CDBG Progress Hearing, Re-Programming Funds Hearing and FY 2026 CDBG Application Forum

The Town of Huntington, in association with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a performance hearing regarding the town's ongoing FY24 Community Development Block Grant Programs, Re-programming of remaining funds hearing in the FY24 grant, and a public forum regarding the FY2026 CDBG application. The hearing will take place at 5:00 PM on Wednesday January 28, 2026, in person at the Town Hall, 24 Russell Road, Huntington, MA 01050.

The hearing will review the project funded through the town's FY24 Community Development Block Grant Program including Stanton Avenue infrastructure improvements and how the Town will re-program remaining funds in the grant post completion of construction. This activity received funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Ur-

ban 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 Huntington FY26 Community Development Block Grant application. All community 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 Sarah Maroney at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission @ smaroney@pvpc.org or 413-781-6045. Persons who require special accommodation should contact the Town prior to the hearing date at 413-667-3500. 01/15, 01/22/2026

**Commonwealth of
Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampshire Division
Docket No.
HS25P0795EA
Estate of:
Jane Elizabeth Tesla
Also Known As:**

Jane E. Tesla Date of Death: 10/8/25 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Merle L. Pomeroy of Rochester, NH**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Merle L. Pomeroy of Rochester, NH

has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 01/15/2026

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DALTON

Dalton Free Public Library announces upcoming news and events

DALTON – The Dalton Free Public Library, 462 Main St., has a number of great programs coming up in January and February.

All programs are free and open to anyone. People do not need to be a library card holder or a resident of Dalton. Some programs require registration if there is limited space. People can see all of the programs on their website by visiting www.DaltonLibrary.org/events.

Monthly Knitting Circle meets the first Thursday of each month. People should bring their own needles and yarn.

On Wednesdays, Jan. 21 and 28 and Feb. 4, 11, 18 and 25 from 6-8 p.m. a writing group, “Curious Writers,” meet for dedicated writing

time with a focus on: getting settled and acquainted, writing goals for the session, one hour of concentrated writing and recap. Participants should bring their laptop, journal, pen and paper. No experience is required.

On Wednesday, Jan. 21 at 6 p.m. monthly grown up craft night will make New Year’s Bingo cards.

Participants will each decorate a Bingo card filled with their goals, aspirations and “Bucket List” for 2026 using markers, colored pencils, magazine clipping and other materials. All supplies are provided. On Monday, Jan. 26 at 3 p.m. monthly movie club will watch “Interstellar.” The monthly movie club meets on the last Monday of each month.

They will select a film for participants to watch on their own in advance and then they’ll gather at the library to discuss what they thought. Films are available on Kanopy or on DVD from the library.

On Tuesday, Jan. 27 at 6 p.m. there will be a community paint along with artist Lisa Swigart.

They will be exploring color values, textures, mark making and other creative ways to play with art. Attendees will have opportunities to add their marks as they work to produce one large painting that will be viewed in the library after the exploring art session. No art experience is necessary.

On Thursday, Jan. 29 at 1p.m. the Monthly Book

Discussion Group will discuss “Weyward” by Emilia Hart. The monthly book discussion group meets on the last Thursday of each month. People may stop at the library to grab a copy of the book in regular print, large print or audiobook. For a complete list of this year’s selections, they may email dalton@cwmmars.org.

On Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 5:30 p.m. there is a Metta Meditation and Mini-Affirmation Art workshop. Participants will learn to practice loving-kindness meditation and design mini affirmation cards. This one hour workshop will be led by Amanda Raymond, who is the founder of One Life. Live It and is also a Licensed Mental Health Therapist,

Ayurvedic Health Counselor and Kripalu Yoga Instructor.

On Thursday, Feb. 12 at 6 p.m. Secret Source of Peace Yoga Class takes place. Participants will join certified Yoga instructor Dylan Lundgren for an evening of Reiki, movement and guided meditation. Using a combination of reiki (soothing and appropriate touch-with permission), movement (yoga), and meditation, this evening will leave participants feeling relaxed and restored to a sense of peace and well-being. Participants need to bring their own yoga mat and are welcome to bring any other items to make them comfortable such as a pillow, blanket, yoga blocks, etc.

On Monday, Feb. 23

at 3 p.m. monthly movie club meets. They meet the last Monday of each month. They will select a film for participants to watch on their own in advance and then they’ll gather at the library to discuss what they thought. Films are available on Kanopy or on DVD from the library.

On Thursday, Feb. 26 at 1 p.m. monthly book discussion group will discuss “North Woods” by Daniel Mason. The monthly book discussion group meets on the last Thursday of each month. People may stop at the library to grab a copy of the book in regular print, large print or audiobook. For a complete list of this year’s selections, they may email dalton@cwmmars.org.

FLORENCE

Florence Bank donates \$40,000 to Valley CDC

FLORENCE – The Florence Bank recently contributed \$40,000 to the Northampton-based Valley Community Development Corporation (Valley CDC), a non-profit corporation formed in 1988 to address the shortage of affordable housing and the needs of the community through economic and housing development.

Valley CDC serves Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties for homeownership and small business services and primarily Amherst, Hadley, Northampton, and Easthampton for affordable housing development. The bank’s donation to Valley CDC will help support its ongoing work, which includes creating affordable housing and providing financial education to first-time and existing homebuyers,

foreclosure prevention services to struggling homeowners and offering small business services.

Last year, Valley CDC worked with over 200 local small businesses and 250 first-time home buyers with education and counseling. It built 80 affordable apartments in Northampton, has 30 affordable homes under construction in Amherst, and plans to have another 120 apartments built over the next four years.

Florence Bank President and CEO Matt Garrity said, “We are pleased to be able to support Valley CDC in its efforts to build affordable housing, while supporting first time home buyers and small businesses in our communities.” Since 1988, Valley CDC has built or preserved over 400 affordable homes and apartments

throughout the community, assisting nearly 9,000 people in their homeownership journey. Additionally, Valley has worked with 3,000 small business owners and entrepreneurs to assist their ideas become reality.

Florence Bank is a mutual savings bank chartered in 1873. Currently, the bank serves the Pioneer Valley through 12 full-service branch locations in Florence, Northampton, Easthampton, Williamsburg, Amherst, Hadley, Belchertown, Granby, Chicopee, West Springfield and Springfield. A Holyoke branch will open in the spring of 2026. Additionally, Florence Bank offers 23 ATMs and a wide range of financial services, including investment management through Florence Financial Group to consumers and businesses.

PITTSFIELD

Berkshire Lyric announces rehearsals for youth and adult choruses

PITTSFIELD – Berkshire Lyric, the region’s oldest and largest community choral organization, announces the start of spring semester rehearsals for both its youth and adult choruses.

With performances scheduled throughout the spring, including concerts at Tanglewood and collaborations celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States, Berkshire Lyric invites singers of all ages to take part in a vibrant season of music-making.

Berkshire Lyric invites young singers to join its tuition-free educational programs for the spring semester. The Lyric Children’s Chorus (ages 6–13) and Melodious Accord (ages 14–18) began rehearsals on Jan. 10, at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. respectively. Both ensembles rehearse at the Berkshire Music School on Wendell Avenue.

During the spring season, the youth choruses will be featured in the annual

March “Kick the Winter Blues” pops concerts, a special America 250th anniversary concert with The Eagles Band in April and their own Young Singers Concert in May. On Sunday, May 31, young singers will also perform alongside the 90-voice Berkshire Lyric Chorus and a full orchestra in Bach’s St. Matthew Passion at Seiji Ozawa Hall, Tanglewood. All of Berkshire Lyric’s year-round educational programs are tuition free. For more information, contact Artistic Director Jack Brown at 413-298-5365 or visit www.BerkshireLyric.org.

Founded in 1963, Berkshire Lyric is the oldest and largest community choral organization in the region, offering five distinct choruses and serving more than 140 singers. The organization has collaborated with dozens of cultural institutions and has been featured in concert broadcasts by WMHT-FM for over a decade.

The Berkshire Lyric Chorus began rehearsals for its spring season on Monday, Jan. 12, at the Bernstein Rehearsal Studio of Shakespeare & Company in Lenox. Interested new singers are welcome and are admitted by audition. The chorus currently includes 85 returning singers with a limited number of openings in each section.

The annual Spring Masterworks Concert will take place on Sunday, May 31 at Seiji Ozawa Hall, Tanglewood, featuring Bach’s St. Matthew Passion. Additional spring performances will honor the 250th Anniversary of the United States, including a joint concert with The Eagles Band in Pittsfield.

For more information about singing with the Berkshire Lyric Chorus, people may visit www.BerkshireLyric.org or call Director Jack Brown at 413-298-5365 to schedule an audition or ask questions.

SPRINGFIELD

FCU accepts donations for Mass. Coalition

SPRINGFIELD – Freedom Credit Union once again invites the community to support its Month of Giving campaign by donating funds at any of its branches throughout western Massachusetts during the month of January.

Donations will benefit the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, helping to provide vital support for individuals and families facing housing insecurity during the coldest months of the year. “It’s a basic human need to feel safe and warm,” said Freedom Credit Union President Glenn Welch. “The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless works every day to make that a reality for thousands of people. We’re proud to support their mission and to invite our members and neighbors to join us in making a difference.”

The Coalition expects

to assist more than 1,500 low-income households in 2026, families who are either at risk of losing their homes or currently experiencing homelessness. With Massachusetts ranked among the least affordable housing markets in the country, many are struggling to meet rent as costs rise faster than wages.

Freedom Credit Union supports a different nonprofit each month as part of its community commitment. All funds raised through Saturday, Jan. 31 will help the Coalition provide direct assistance and address inequalities in housing, income, health, education and more.

“Every contribution, no matter the size, helps keep someone safe and supported,” added Welch. “We’re grateful to everyone who gives so generously to our

Month of Giving.”

Originally chartered in 1922 as the Western Massachusetts Telephone Workers Credit Union and renamed in 2004, Freedom Credit Union is a nine branch, full-service financial institution. Today, membership is available to anyone who lives, works or attends school in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin or Berkshire counties in Massachusetts and Hartford or Tolland counties in Connecticut. Offering a complete range of banking services and loan products, Freedom Credit Union has conveniently located Massachusetts branches in Chicopee, Feeding Hills, Greenfield, Ludlow, Northampton, Turners Falls, West Springfield and two in Springfield, as well as a Loan Production Office in Enfield, Connecticut.

WASHINGTON

BWES holds community forum Jan. 26

WASHINGTON – The Becket Washington Elementary School will hold a community forum on Monday, Jan. 26 from 6-7

p.m. in the Washington Town Hall, 8 Summer Hill Road.

The forum will discuss future enrollment at Becket Washington Elementary

School., future focused modes, Fiscal Year 2027 budget preview and opportunities for community engagement.

WILLIAMSTOWN

Clark Art Gallery talk takes place Jan. 25

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Sunday, Jan. 25 at 2 p.m., the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., presents “In Focus: Mythology and Nudity in European Art,” a free thematic tour of the permanent collection that

examines mythological scenes in paintings and sculptures from the sixteenth to the twentieth century.

Capacity is limited. People may pick up a ticket at the Clark Center

admissions desk; they are available on a first-come, first-served basis. They should meet in the Museum Pavilion.

For more information, people may visit events.clarkart.edu.

HEALTH

If your provider feels your cognition needs further evaluation, they may refer you to a specialist who will perform the MoCA, or Montreal Cognitive Assessment. It takes only 20 to 30 minutes, and has long been validated as an effective tool for early detection of mild cognitive impairment in hundreds of studies. Its sensitivity for detecting cognitive impairment is estimated at 90%, and it is considered much more effective than the MMSE.

The MoCA is designed to assess:

- Short-term memory
- Visual-spatial abilities
- Executive functions, which help us man-

age actions, emotions and thoughts

- Attention, concentration and working memory
- Language
- Orientation to time and place

The test has to be administered and scored by a trained clinician. Any medical professional can get the training, which takes only an hour and gives clinicians more confidence in administering the test and explaining the results to patients. Training and certification are free for students, faculty members, academic researchers and public health-care institutions.

Here are some of the activities the MoCA asks

of us:

- Naming certain animals
- Counting backwards from 100 by sevens
- Saying as many words as possible that start with a particular letter in one minute
- Copying a simple drawing
- And, of course, drawing a clock and remembering a series of random words

Evaluating age-related cognitive decline isn’t the only use for the MoCA. People of any age who have suffered head trauma are often given the assessment to look out for immediate or delayed symptoms of cognitive damage. Many times,

traumatic brain injury (TBI) is missed or misdiagnosed, which can leave a person with long-term cognitive issues.

Other conditions that might affect cognition are cancer treatment, Parkinson’s, depression, heart failure, brain tumor, sleep disorders and substance abuse disorders.

Now, though, you don’t have to wait for a doctor’s appointment to get a general assessment of your cognitive abilities or those of a loved one. The neurologist who developed the MoCA, Dr. Ziad Nasreddine, last year created XpressO, a quick and fun digital self-assessment designed for anyone to use

on their own desktop computer, tablet or smartphone. (Laptop screens aren’t large enough.)

Once all the tasks are completed, you will receive a clear and simple report stating low or elevated risk of cognitive decline. You can monitor your cognition over time and share the results with your health-care provider.

XPressO requires registration and creation of a password. Learn more at MoCAcognition.com, or you can download the XPressO app from the Apple and Google Play app stores.

Dementia and cognitive decline, already a reality for millions, are a source of fear

and anxiety for millions of others. Using this simple tool might put your mind at rest, or it may signal that you need to be talking to your doctor.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, is a registered 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](http://TurleyNewspaper.com) readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

from page 5

HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



The First Day hikers posed for a photo at Chester Blandford State Forest.

Submitted photos Stephanie and Matt from Agawam loved the photo booth.

Hilltown Hikers host First Day Hike

Since 1992, First Day Hikes have been a New Year's Day tradition in state parks all across Massachusetts.

What started here has now expanded to every state in the country. The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers celebrated First Day with the nation at Sanderson Brook Falls in the Chester Blandford State Forest with some chilly temperatures, wind and even snow. They had hot cocoa, cookies, a bubbly toast and free Berkshire Destinations Waterfalls Posters and First Day Department of

Conservation and Recreation hats. Alec Gillman, DCR Interpretive Coordinator plus all of the favorite rangers led the group.

First Day Hike is a national celebration of our State Parks and Massachusetts is where it all started. This year there were new locations added for first day hikes including Mount Tom and Kenneth Debuque State Forest in Plainfield. The Hilltown Hikers were proud to host this event with the Department of Conservation and Recreation, bringing folks out to beautiful Chester.



Alec and Russ try out the oversized DCR photo booth.



The group stops for a photo at the bottom of the frozen Sanderson Brook Falls.



Adam Dion from New York spends some quality dog time.



Cybill, the Yorkie, is ready for 2026.

HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Eligible Work:

- Electrical/plumbing
- Sheetrock
- Doors/windows
- Kitchens/baths
- Handicap accessibility
- Septic systems
- Roofs/chimneys
- Asbestos removal
- Floors/joists
- Wells/pumps
- Boilers/furnaces
- Insulation
- Hot water tanks
- Lead paint remediation

Eligible Towns:

- Chesterfield
- Cummington
- Goshen
- Peru
- Plainfield
- Savoy
- Westhampton
- Williamsburg
- Worthington

Consultation:

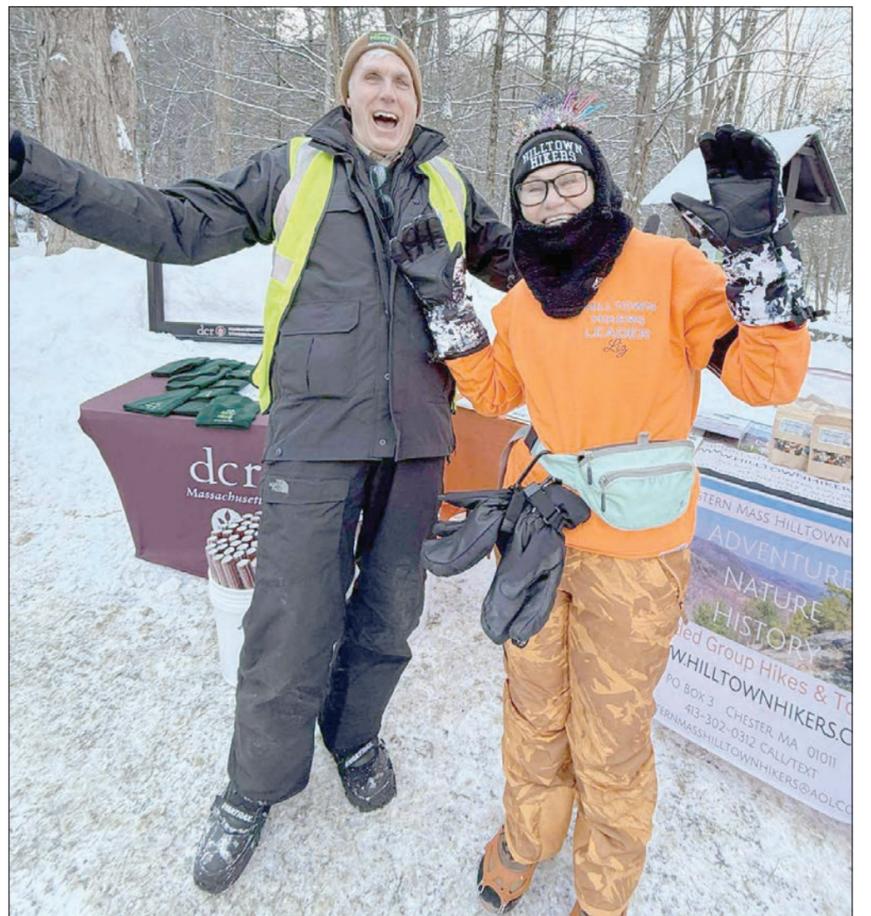
☎ (413)296-4536 Ext.109

📍 387 Main Rd, Chesterfield, MA 01012

🌐 <https://www.hilltowncdc.org/rehab>

Before

After



Alec Gillman DCR Interpretive Coordinator and Liz Massa President of Hilltown hype up the crowd in the 8 degree weather.