

"Presidents come and go, but the Supreme Court goes on forever." – William Howard Taft

# Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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

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## BLANDFORD

### Blandford and Chester Select Boards have shared review

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Select Boards from Blandford and Chester met Wednesday, Feb. 28 for the regular review of the shared services arrangement for police coverage for both towns.

There were no issues and both boards agreed to meet twice a year rather than quarterly as originally contracted to do. The original Memorandum of Understanding outlining the arrangement will be amended.

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Director of Economic and Municipal Collaboration Eric Weiss crafted the original agreement for the two towns and said it would be sufficient to write a memo, have both boards sign it and retain the record. The boards both voted their approval.

Chester Chair John Boldasaro said the police department has "done a good job" and that it is "functional and professional." Both boards were complimentary of the service and Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel.

The possibility of a new cruiser was discussed as a planned purchase, lease to own. The department has acquired a grant funded ATV for search and rescue.

Calls for service for 2022 and 2023 show that Chester had a lot of calls and the following year the towns mimicked each other. The numbers will go up according to Dubiel because "we're out there patrolling" more than before. Statistically, Chester has been at 93% of the calls and Blandford has been at 90.8% of the calls, according to Dubiel.

Regarding the Animal Control vehicle, it was decided to just give the vehicle to Chester. They had invested \$6,500 in it last year and now the transmission is going. The suggestion from the mechanic was to just run it down. Blandford will provide the appropriate memo indicating the transfer of the vehicle to Chester.

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## HILLTOWNS

### Wild & Scenic Westfield River marks 30th year of eco status

By Kathryn Koegel  
Correspondent

Note: Koegel is the Huntington Town Representative for the Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee.

Ask any local what the Hilltowns of Western Massachusetts are and you will get many ideas of boundaries and what villages it encompasses.

A better defining ele-

ment is the river that tumbles throughout the region. The Westfield River is dotted with massive boulders spit out in the glacial age, waterfalls, hiking trails and

WESTFIELD RIVER, page 2



The Chesterfield Gorge in February snow is one of the remarkable areas along the 78 mile Wild & Scenic designation on the Westfield River



The Keystone Arch Bridges is shown in a snowless January on part of the Wild & Scenic Westfield River.

Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel

## HUNTINGTON



Race Committee Chair Harry Rock and Managing Director Kathryn Koegel met with the Huntington Select Board and Police Chief Robert Garriepy, to review logistics for the 69th running of the Westfield River Wildwater Races. Not pictured was Safety Director Mary Ann Richardson. Turley photo by Wendy Long

### Canoe races, legislative priorities topics at meeting

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

At the Huntington Select Board meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 28, board members Roger Booth and William Hathaway along with Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin met with officials from the 69th Annual Westfield River Wildwater Races and considered legislative priorities for the upcoming session.

Attending for the canoe race discussion were Managing Director Kathryn Koegel, Race Committee Chair Harry Rock, Safety Director Mary Ann Richardson and Police Chief Robert Garriepy. Races will run on Saturday, April 20 with the expert start at Knightville Dam at 9:30 a.m. and the classic start from the Mass DOT yard, off the green bridge on route 112, at 11 a.m. Once again, a River Celebration will take place at Strathmore Park from noon-4 p.m. and will include live music from The 413s, race awards, food trucks, face painting and a puppet parade. The group has a website westfieldriver.org/races where canoeists may register and everybody can get additional information. Two clinics will be held on Saturdays, April 6 and 13 at 11 a.m. where experienced paddlers will guide new paddlers down the classic course.

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# HILLTOWNS

## WESTFIELD RIVER

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regular sightings of wildlife like bald eagles, river otters, beavers, foxes and so many bears.

This past November marked the 30th anniversary of the Westfield River getting a special designation from the U.S. Congress as “Wild & Scenic” based on its “outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values.” The Keystone Arch Bridges, part of the world’s first mountain railway, the Chesterfield Gorge and Glendale Falls are among the outstanding features of the river.

As part of that designation milestone, the Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee created a series of town hall events exploring its past, present and future work. The “Trout and Dragonfly Show,” will take place Wednesday, March 13 at the Worthington Town Hall at 6:30 p.m.; Thursday, March 14 at the Washington Town Hall at 6:30 p.m.; Thursday, March 21 at Stanton Hall in Huntington at 7 p.m. and Thursday, April 18 at the Cummington Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. Additional towns are to be announced. Meredyth Babcock, the committee’s outreach coordinator along with Cindy Delpapa, the committee chair for the past two years, will lead the presentation.

“The all-volunteer committee is having fun looking back at how and why the Westfield received Massachusetts’ very first Wild & Scenic designation,” says Babcock.

“We want to share with you the many projects that the committee has been shepherding, advising on and funding,” she continues. “The committee is composed of community members and organizations devoted to the river’s health and well-being. We’re making sure the river has a voice in the communities it passes through.”

Among the projects the committee has engaged in are working with and often funding culvert projects in the ten towns included in the 78-mile designation. These culverts are designed to prevent roads from washing out in the



Cindy Delpapa, outgoing chair of the Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee, inspects a reengineered culvert funded by the committee



Meredyth Babcock educates children at Littleville Elementary about the animals that call the Wild & Scenic Westfield River home.

Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel

heavy storms the area is increasingly experiencing and also enable free flowing of water in areas where fish like the local slimy sculpin move upstream to spawn.

Meredyth Babcock leads various “Remove and Restore” days where volunteers are encouraged to join in the removal of invasive plants like the multiflora rose and barberry which choke

out native plants and degrade riverbanks. The committee and its summer interns are also engaged in research on best practices in removing Japanese knotweed, which is perhaps the most problematic of introduced plants.

Knotweed is a particularly challenging invasive due to its prolific underground root systems which literally spread if you cut it above the ground.

# HUNTINGTON

## MEETING

from page 1

“The race itself was absolutely back last year,” said Koegel. “We had expected 250 racers; we got 350.” Organizers noted that they have emphasized it becoming more of a family event in recent years, which has been built through the involvement of Westfield Wild & Scenic River group.

Safety is a primary focus for the planners this year, following a fatal incident that occurred on the race course last year. Richardson—who runs the National Ski Patrol at the Notchview Cross-Country Ski area is meeting with the fire chiefs for input on a new safety plan that will ensure they have procedures in place to allow a prudent and quick response. “The bottom line is to ensure that we have the right kind of safety expertise in place to coordinate a response,” Richardson said.

Garriepy reminded organizers that the five mile expert race ending along Route 20 opposite Hilltown Community Health Center, will require a permit to extend the amount of time that vehicles can be parked in the pull off. Organizers have been granted permission for additional parking at the Huntington Health Center and confirmed that they will again have a crossing officer to help people get from the river and parking lot.

Another point of discussion was parking for spectators, traffic flow and trash removal. “We are making a concerted effort to get around for trash pick-up,” Rock noted. Koegel added that they

are going to use a shuttle system again that will work differently than last year’s school bus. Garriepy also said that vehicles heading down to the classic race start should be restricted only to paddlers. Spectators, who want to see the race start, should park elsewhere and walk over.

Garriepy also noted that the food booths near the start line for the novice race, restricted the flow of vehicles trying to get their boats to the classic start point. Also discussed was the need to obtain vendor food permits from the Russell Board of Health for food served at Strathmore Park and from the Huntington Board of Health for food offered to paddlers at the start of the races. Alcohol is prohibited at the canoe races.

Also on the agenda was consideration for the legislative priorities outlined by the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts. Among those priorities are addressing crumbling infrastructure by permanently changing the Chapter 90 formula, increasing total funding to more than \$330 million per year to help small towns improve roads, bridges and water systems. The organization also called for the creation and funding of the Municipal Building Assistance Authority; reforming education funding formulas for regional school districts; incentivizing sustainable pathways for districts facing declining enrollment coupled with increased costs for personnel and transportation.

Other legislative priorities includ-

ed increasing state procurement thresholds to reduce administrative and cost burdens on small towns; improving prevailing wage laws by providing exemptions and rural factors that would allow small towns to complete necessary projects. Reforming the Payment In Lieu Of Taxes program to create greater equity for towns constrained for necessary land preservation; providing staffing and support for the Office of Rural Affairs and reducing administrative burdens that prevent small towns from getting state grants concluded the list outlined in a letter prepared for Board signatures. Booth and Hathaway unanimously approved the priorities and signed letters to Representative Nicholas Boldyga and Senator Paul Mark.

Peloquin presented additional items for approval that included a Stanton Hall Use Request from the Hilltown Family Center for a “Zoo on the Go” program on April 12; change orders on the town hall ramp project that included the new gutters and required some funding allocated through ARPA funds. In addition, the railings for the new ramp at Town/Stanton Hall have been delayed; installation is expected for Thursday, March 7 and Friday, March 8 and Monday, March 11 and Tuesday, March 12.

Peloquin has been collecting FY25 Budget requests but has had to follow up with quite a few people because their worksheets weren’t in. She shared the highway department report and informed

The committee is not in favor of using chemical agents, which can potentially leach into the river.

As Babcock relates, landowners with river frontage are a key part of the work of the committee. “The W&S Westfield River Committee has been assisting willing landowners, on designated headwater streams, with mapping and removal of invasive plants that degrade habitat. We are thrilled that landowners want to restore and augment the riparian areas on their land.”

“We are also reminding folks that any project that alters the land within 200 feet of the river needs prior approval from the local Conservation Commission, thanks to the Wetlands Protection Act, our interns assist with this step of our priority project,” said Babcock.

Other recent projects have included working with children at Gateway Regional School District to learn about the animals that call the river ecosystem home and creating puppets and public murals inspired by them. Babcock is both an environmentalist and trained puppeteer whose enthusiasm for the river is perhaps best expressed in a boat puppet she created that literally encompasses her. She participates in local parades with the boat to raise awareness of the committee’s work.

In 2021 the committee went through a larger project evaluation process and determined that future work would focus in two areas that would have large scale impact on the river: switching to brining rather than salting roads and invasive plant removal. These topics will be discussed at the town hall events.

“The committee continues to have community grants available to support the many ways in which our towns celebrate and protect the river corridor,” says Babcock. All community members are encouraged to attend these free events and also to learn more about the river and its special ecological designation by visiting their newly redesigned website [westfieldriverwildscenic.org](http://westfieldriverwildscenic.org). For more information on the events, people may email [westfieldriver@gmail.com](mailto:westfieldriver@gmail.com).

the board that they wish to do a capital request for a new big truck; the department wanted to know if the select board wanted them to look for a new or used truck. Hathaway felt that buying a used truck can often mean “you are buying someone else’s problems.” Following discussion, board members concluded that they were not completely averse to a used truck but the timing could be tricky because it would have to be approved at town meeting.

A small glitch occurred due to the absence of Chairman Ed Renauld: Town Clerk Linda Hamlin had asked if Karon Hathaway, wife of Select Board member Bill Hathaway, could be appointed as an election worker. With Bill Hathaway recusing himself and Renauld absent, the approval could not be granted by a sole Select Board member. As the election is six days away, Peloquin agreed to post a special Select Board meeting for March 4 with one agenda item; Renauld and Booth can meet to formally approve.

Peloquin announced that State Representative Nicholas Boldyga has posted a bill on the state website for the Huntington Town Clerk to be appointed. It is unclear if this bill will be taken up before the town election scheduled for Saturday, May 11. The Hilltown Community Ambulance submitted a report to the board stating that they had received 51 calls from October to December and were able to respond to 48, all at the paramedic level.



# HUNTINGTON

## Moltenbrey's Market unveils renovations

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – Moltenbrey's Market, located at 44 Worthington Road, was closed from Feb. 18 – 25 to complete renovations.

According to owner Darryl Fisk, the first thing people asked after the store reopened was if they had installed new lighting. Another frequent question was if he now has more shelving space and products. The answer to both questions, he says, is no.

"It's been 35 years since the last time we renovated," Fisk said, noting that he felt it was overdue.

Increasing the space for the deli and butchery along with refreshing the store in general were the goals of the project and patrons will see a new footprint in

the store. The additional deli space was needed because the market has begun offering sandwiches. The project was led by Fisk, his cousin Brad Fisk and friend Bobby Broga. Once the revised footprint was drawn out, the store closed, shelving, refrigerators, freezers and the deli counter were moved into position. Harry Kellogg completed the painting, which brightened the store and led to the assumption that there was new lighting.

While many patrons think the store is offering more products, Fisk said he has actually discontinued a few things to make the new layout work. But it's mostly the same.

He reports he is still waiting for a new freezer and new dairy case, which were damaged en route and have been reordered.



Owner/butcher Darryl Fisk behind the meat and deli counter in his new location in the renovated Moltenbrey's Market.



A new rack in a new place showcases fresh produce. *Turley photos by Wendy Long*

## Hilltown Family Center offers family education series

HUNTINGTON – The Hilltown Family Center, 9 Russell Road, across from the Fire Station, is offering a free family education opportunity, "Positive Discipline," on Friday mornings from 10:15- 11:45 a.m. beginning on Friday, March 15.

This series is six sessions and parents and caregivers will receive a "Positive Discipline" workbook and book. Each week, we will have a drawing for participants to have a chance to receive other tools such as tool cards and other age or topic specific books.

Positive Discipline is a program developed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Positive Discipline teaches important social and life skills in a manner that is deeply respectful and encouraging for both children and adults including parents, teachers, childcare providers, youth workers, and others.

Recent research shows children are hardwired from birth to connect with others and that children who feel a sense of connection to their community, family and school are less likely to misbehave. To be successful, contributing members of their community, children must learn necessary social and life skills.

The Positive Discipline Parent Education model is aimed at developing mutually respectful relationships. Positive Discipline teaches adults to employ kindness and firmness at the same time and is neither punitive nor permissive. The tools and concepts

of Positive Discipline include Mutual respect. Adults model firmness by respecting themselves and the needs of the situation and kindness by respecting the needs of the child; Identifying the belief behind the behavior.

Effective discipline recognizes the reasons children do what they do and works to change those beliefs, rather than merely attempting to change behavior; effective communication and problem-solving skills; discipline that teaches (and is neither permissive nor punitive); focusing on solutions instead of punishment and encouragement (instead of praise).

Encouragement notices effort and improvement, not just success, and builds long-term self-esteem and empowerment. Unique characteristics of the Positive Discipline Model also include teaching adults and students through experiential activities. Creating opportunity to practice new skills and to have fun learning by doing.

The Hilltown Family Center is a program of the Hilltown Community Health Centers. Positive Discipline is part of their Friday fun series. Free childcare will be provided with registration.

This program is free and open to all parents and caregivers of children, but registration is required. People may call Kim at 413-685-3500 or email ksavery@hchcweb.org or call Susan at 413-307-6012 or email slebarron@hchcweb.org for more information or to register. Group size is limited, so register early.

### PIONEER VALLEY FIDDLERS PERFORM AT MEMORY CAFE



Members of the Pioneer Valley Fiddlers performed for the Huntington Council on Aging Memory Cafe on Thursday, Feb. 28. *Turley photo by Wendy Long*

## Council on Aging to host St. Patrick's Day luncheon

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Council on Aging will host a sit-down St. Patrick's Luncheon on Saturday, March 16 at noon at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road.

Entertainment will be provided by

Wild Thyme. Suggested donation is \$7 per person. Reservations are limited to the first 70 people, who sign up. The deadline to sign up has been extended to Monday, March 11. People should call 413-512-5200 for reservations.

## Southern Hills Domestic Violence Task Force to meet March 13

HUNTINGTON – The Southern Hills DV Task Force will meet in person on Wednesday, March 13 from 1-2:30 p.m. at Gateway High School,

12 Littleville Road, Career Center, second floor. Those unable to be there in person may participate via Zoom by calling 413-693-9977 for the link.

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Ellenor Downer  
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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN

# in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



## Blueberry pruning 101

**M**y blueberry bushes came to me as full grown plants uprooted from an acquaintance's yard.

He needed the space for something else, so I happily agreed to take the eight bushes off of his hands. They struggled a lot the first few years of being in their new home, I think because the move was a stressful one.

Over the last couple of seasons we've seen more fruit production, thankfully, but I know there should be more. I think I may need to improve my pruning practices.

We are nearing the end of the dormant season, but if I get right to it, the job can still be accomplished this year.

There are many good reasons to prune in the dormant season. Because there are no leaves on the bushes, you can really take a good look at what you have to work with. You can notice off-colors, bent branches and the like when there is no leaf cover.

Late February into early March is perfect timing because theoretically the coldest part of the winter has passed. Sometimes pruning reduces cold hardiness, but like I mentioned, we should be OK since we are nearing winter's end.

Some rules transfer from pruning one type of plant to another; in other words, you'd make these same type of considerations for pruning roses or other woody plants. Let's call these the obvious cuts.

First concentrate on dead wood. Prune away any entirely dead branches all the way to the ground.

If parts of branches are dead, make a cut to the next living part of the branch. If you see anything that looks diseased or a little "off," cut that section or branch away too.

Sometimes branches get damaged from animals or ice storms. Likewise, cut damaged branches back to a section that shows no signs of damage.

Now it gets a little more tricky, but it still should be straightforward and it applies to mature blueberry plants, not new plantings or super old neglected bushes.

Look at the base of your plant. Is it wider than 18 inches in any direction from the center? If so, cut away these stems at ground level or try to dig them up, roots and all in the coming weeks, then move them to a new spot, preferably a nursery bed where they can grow up a bit. I'm into a whole new topic, so let's get back to the task at hand.

Once the plant has been cut back to within its limits, look for growth coming from the base that is on an angle or crossing over other branches. Cut that away too, so that we encourage upright growth instead.

Okay, with that behind us, let's dive into more difficult territory. Here is when you begin to rejuvenate the plant (listen carefully, self).

Old canes will be gray in appearance and thick. You probably don't want to cut away every one, but perhaps removing one-third of these stems would be a good plan.

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## Local fishing holes...



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

## GUEST COLUMN



By Ellenor Downer

**A** brown creeper regularly visits an oak tree in my yard. The other day I watched the creeper fly to the bottom of the tree and make his way up the tree. A few minutes later a white-breasted nuthatch made its way down the same tree. I think the creeper also grabs some mealworms, which I have out for the bluebirds and any other birds that wants them.

The brown creeper is a small brown bird about 5 ½ inches long. It has brown streaking above and white underneath and



Brown creeper

BACKYARD, page 5

## Why must I pay into Social Security when I'm collecting benefits?



By Russell Gloor

### Dear Rusty

*I am collecting full Social Security benefits at age 72 and also working full time.*

*Why is the Federal Government still taking money from my paycheck? I have written to Social Security experts on this issue and they tell me "It's the law." That is not a good answer for me. Approximately \$4,400 was taken from my pay in 2023 for Social Security and, yes, I get a pittance of a Cost Of Living Allowance increase, but not equal to what I pay. No one has been able to fully explain the Federal Government's thought process on taxing me for Social Security when I am getting full Social Security benefits. Can you?*

Signed: Working Senior

### Dear Working Senior

Far be it from me to try to explain the federal government's thought process on anything, but I can explain why those already collecting Social Security benefits must continue to pay Social Security payroll taxes while working.

It actually goes back to 1935 and the panel commissioned by President Roosevelt to create America's Social Security program. Said panel determined how the program would be financed, Congress approved it and FDR signed it.

That methodology was essentially this:

Workers who earn and their employers must contribute to Social Security via payroll taxes to fund the program (we

now know this as FICA for employees and SECA for the self-employed). When the program first started, certain employees and their employers were required to each contribute 1% of the employee's first \$3,000 of earnings. Obviously, those amounts have risen over the decades. And, for clarity, only certain workers originally participated in Social Security, which has also changed over the decades so that now nearly everyone, who works must pay Social Security payroll taxes.

Starting in 1937 and still today, SS payroll taxes paid by those now working are used by the federal government to pay benefits to those who are currently receiving. Said another way, Social Security is a "pay as you go" program where income from those working and their employer is used to pay benefits to those receiving.

Payroll taxes collected aren't put into a personal account for the worker; rather they are used to meet current SS payment obligations. Any excess money collected is invested in special issue government bonds as reserves for future use, although current annual SS income is less than annual program costs – an entirely different topic.

So, the financing method enacted in 1935 and started in 1937 still applies – those who work and earn and their employers must pay into the system to fund benefit payments to those, who are now receiving and that includes those workers who are already collecting their Social Security. FYI, there was a time when, if someone worked after starting their SS benefits, they lost all of their benefits. Fortunately, that rule no longer exists, so those, who are collecting SS benefits can now continue to get

SECURITY, page 5

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# OPINION

## BACKYARD

from page 4

long, downward, curved bill. Noticeable behavior is creeping up a tree trunk, then dropping down to the base of the same tree or another tree to start the process all over again. It probs bark for insects and larvae. Sometimes it visits feeders for chopped nuts or suet.

The brown creeper blends in with the tree bark. When alarmed it will flatten itself against the tree and remain motionless. Its song is a series of high pitched whistles, "see wee see to wee." The call is a high "tsee."

The female lays five to six white eggs with dark spots in a hammock style crescent shaped nest of bark, twigs, mosses and lined with feathers. It constructs the nest behind a loose piece of bark on a dead tree or in a natural cavity

about five to 15 feet above the ground.

### Brimfield resident

I received an email from a Brimfield resident, who keeps me up to date on his bird sightings.

He said in a recent email, "I did a walk yesterday at Quabbin gate 43. A small group walked to the area where people can rent or launch boats. No much about." He said some folks heard pine siskins and saw a few white-throated sparrows. On the water, there were a few hooded mergansers and black ducks and in the distance some gulls flying about. On the way home he stopped by the ponds in Warren and the water was not open, so no birds.

He also took part in the Great

Backyard Bird Count on Feb. 16 and 17. Here are his results: one red-tailed hawk, four mourning doves, two red-bellied woodpeckers, two downy woodpeckers, one hairy woodpecker, three blue jays, two black-capped chickadees, three tufted titmice, two European starlings, two American robins, three house finches, 97 dark-eyed juncos, four white-throated sparrows, one common grackle and three northern cardinals.

He reported his first sighting on Feb. 16 at 1:40 p.m. and watched for 25 minutes and his second sighting on Feb. 16 at 3:30 p.m. was for one hour. On Feb. 17 his sightings were 8:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., both for 45 minutes at a time. Missed species, ones he has seen before, included pileated woodpecker,

white-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, American crow and American goldfinch.

### Bluebirds

The bluebirds continue to come to my feeder for the mealworms. I am purchasing more mealworms or the bluebirds than when I had chickens. I used to purchase the mealworms as a daily treat to my small flock. One hen would jump up and eat them out of my hand before I could put them in their feeder.

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.

## GARDEN

from page 4

Cut them back to ground level. Your next cuts will be what I can "fine tuning," or making cuts that thin out older twiggy growth in the upper part of the plant by cutting back stems to a younger, upright branch.

Go by color here. Younger growth is reddish in appearance. Hand pruners are your desired tool of choice, while bypass loppers or a hand saw is essential for the bigger cuts I mentioned first.

You'll be surprised by how great your blueberry bushes will look and just how productive they will be with this type of maintenance pruning accomplished annually. I think there is just enough daylight for me to get to my own pruning.

I can almost taste the blueberry pie come July. Yum.

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



## SECURITY

from page 4

benefits if they work, but they must also still pay into the program from their work earnings to help pay benefits to SS recipients.

I hope this provides some insight for why you must continue to contribute to Social Security even after you have started collecting your benefits. It is a result of how the program is financed predominantly by workers through payroll taxes on their earnings and to a lesser extent from interest on Trust Fund reserves and income tax on Social Security benefits. With very few exceptions, everyone who works helps pay benefits to those now receiving.

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

## 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 Monday at NOON, on holidays it is Friday at 2 p.m.**



## Country Companions

If you have a special animal companion in your life, send us a photo by email to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com) or by mail to Country Journal, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

We look forward to hearing about your pet.



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## BLANDFORD

## Residents reminded not to leave books outside of bin

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Often when people have books they want to discard, they will arrive at the Porter Memorial Library.

The books are put into the BetterWorldBooks book bin in the parking lot. These donations are reviewed by BetterWorldBooks and most often, sold online. This benefits the library financially, perhaps not significantly, but nets ten cents on the dollar of any item BetterWorldBooks sells. Books that are not resold online are donated or used for pulp, not thrown out.

The trustees and Director Nicole Daviau asked via donation policy that anyone with more than just a few books to discard calls to make sure that the Better World Book Bin has room for their donations as the library does not have room to store donated books. For books that are newer than three years, in good condition and hardcover, patrons can make arrangements to bring in those items for possible addition to the library collection.

A huge number of volumes was left outside the BetterWorldBooks bin either overnight or before opening hours last Sunday, Monday and Wednesday in the rain. The bin was completely full and

could not take any more books, so the books were left by the side of the bin. The library does not have room to store books inside so could not bring them in and rescue them.

All the books had absorbed water and were spoiled. Special arrangements had to be made for the removal of these wet books because they would destroy all of the other books in the donation bin. Additionally they can no longer be resold or even pulped.

“There are many books here that we could have shelved to benefit our patrons,” she said. There were several children’s books on science, picture

books, and middle grade chapter books even a few books that had been previously in the library, but then given away at programs.

This is an example of a loss, not only to the library, but to the community as well. The loss of “books that could be added to our shelves,” said Daviau, but also potential dollars for the library as a result of re-sale by BetterWorldBooks.

She reminds would-be book donors to contact the library when there are multiple books to pass on to make sure that there is room in the bin. She added, “Please never leave any books or items outside of the bin.”



The book bin at Porter Memorial Library in Blandford is shown completely filled and with bags of books outside the bin.



Library Director Nicole Daviau looks over books, which were water damaged.

Turley Photos by Mary Kronholm

## SELECT BOARD

from page 1

## Shared fire service

The boards then discussed the proposed study to explore a shared fire service. Chester Fire Chief Henry Fristik was present but Blandford Fire Chief Adam Dolby came to the table mid-way through the discussion, he had not been notified of the agenda item.

The topic has been under consideration for a long time, apparently. Fristik said, “34 years,” for the idea and said that should departments regionalize, they go to the top of the list for grant funding opportunity.

The job has changed a great deal and Fristik said he spends 40 to 50 hours a week and according to former Fire Chief David Mottor, “it’s only going to get worse. The administrative requirements on the chief take 96% of the day behind a desk. He added that for the

Hilltowns to survive, there has to be cooperation, a joint department or a fire district.

There are three examples of towns that have formed regional fire organizations: Wendell and New Salem, Richmond and West Stockbridge and another two in Franklin County.

Fristik told the boards, “We already work together now...a large-scale call, every one of us show up.” He also cited recruitment and retention.

PVPC representative Ira Brezinsky told the board next steps include developing a scope of work and organize a committee and set up a time-line.

A committee to study the shared fire department will be made up of the two fire chiefs, the town administrators, two community volunteers, one from each town, and a select board member from



Blandford Fire Chief Adam Dolby, Town Administrator Michael Szlosek and Chester Town Administrator Don Humason.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm



Seated at table are Chester Select Board John Baldasaro, Andy Sutton, Brian Fogue and Administrative Assistant Terry Donovan Back row those seated at the table are other Chester officials: l-r Richard Holzman, Bob Daley and Andy Myers.

each town. The first meeting is expected to be in late March.

## Water Department

The boards then moved on to a discussion of the shared services water treatment operator. No one from the Blandford Water Department attended. It

was learned later that they did not know about the meeting.

Wages and equipment expenses were reviewed. There are two operators in training, and Chester has a Gateway graduate from that program. According to Brezinsky, Boston (DOR) needs to approve budgetary concerns

as some of the expenses have changed. Documentation has to be provided and the Select Boards will go over a ‘revamped budget’ according to Brezinsky. There will be a meeting to review the budget and expenses.

The boards then reviewed the Dirt Roads grant. Primary concerns are about flooding, which can be a safety issue with beaver dams. Once the report on the investigation of the dirt roads and flooding, the towns involved with be better situated to apply for grants.

Chair Cara Letendre asked Szlosek to see if the town has a maintenance contract for the beaver deceivers that are now in place.

Board member Theodore Cousineau said that something must be available for private land owners to help reduce flooding on public ways.

## Treasurer Tax Collector

The board heard from Joann Martin regarding her interest in the treasurer tax/collector clerk position. She is still interested and is willing to take on the work. Letendre wants to take a closer look at the pay scale, for both positions. She started the new position this week.

## Special Town Meeting

The board signed the warrant for the March 18 Special Town Meeting. Articles include transfers from free cash to purchase the mini excavator, correcting an error in the broadband account, permission for the Porter Memorial Library to apply for, accept and expend funds toward building expansion and amendments for solar installations and battery storage for same and additional funding for the treasurer’s salary.



## BLANDFORD

## State goal sets Clean Heat mandate by 2050

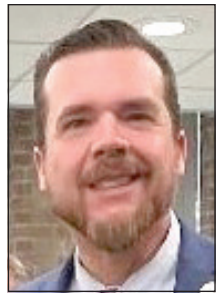
By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Steve Chase, President and CEO of Fuel Services in South Hadley has been getting the message out about the mandated change for the state to be all-electric or net-zero emissions by 2050.

This is the Massachusetts Clean Heat Standard.

The Mass Department of Environmental Protection has set in motion a draft of rules, regulations and fines pushing their goal of having every home in the Commonwealth convert to electric heat.

The fines impact fuel dealers, oil and propane and will eventually hit homeowners' pockets according to Chase. He has a detailed report on what can be expected if this moves forward. Visit the FSi website at fsioilandpro-



Nicholas Boldyga



Steve Chase

pane.com for detailed information about the Massachusetts Clean Heat Standard.

David Frasco, owner of Frasco Fuel Oil in West Springfield said that the CHS essentially puts oil businesses out of business. "People need to know about the fines," which are outlined in great detail in the FSi report.

Frasco said the state does not have

"the infrastructure" to carry sufficient electricity to accommodate all the living units and other buildings that must change over. The legislators, he said, "must consider the consequences of (their) actions."

Blandford's Third Hampden state Representative Nicholas Boldyga, who represents Agawam and the towns of Blandford, Chester, Granville, Montgomery, Russell, Southwick and Tolland in Hampden County and Huntington and Middlefield, in Hampshire County expressed his concern.

"The Clean Heat Standard regulations being proposed by MassDEP are alarming. If adopted, homeowners and ratepayers will face massive increases in the cost to heat their homes. It's hard to fathom how regulators are moving forward with these punitive policies at a time when Massachusetts has an

affordable housing crisis and one of the highest costs of living in the country."

He continued, "In 2021, I was one of the few members of the legislature who voted against the bill that gives out-of-touch and ideologically driven regulators at the DEP the power to create these types of rules. I'll continue to urge my colleagues in the legislature to adopt new legislation that would prevent the Clean Heat Standard from being imposed on Massachusetts residents, many of whom are already struggling to make ends meet."

An example detailed in Chase's draft report indicates fines for each home electrification at \$6,000 in 2026, increasing \$1,000 each year to \$10,000 in 2030 and will remain at \$10,000 per household annually after that. And these fines will get passed on to the consumer. Chase estimates an additional \$425 to heat a home by 2030.

## Stop the Bleed Class to be held March 23

BLANDFORD – The Board of Health and Hilltown Community Ambulance Association will sponsor a Stop the Bleed class on Saturday, March 23 from 1-3 p.m. at the Fire Department Training Center next to the Post Office on Main Street.

Anyone interested in learning

how to help stop a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives is encouraged to participate. Everyone is welcome and it is not necessary to register. There is no charge for the instruction. Fire Department Emergency Medical Technician Pat Lombardo will lead the class.

## Blandford library to hold construction info session

BLANDFORD – There will be a library construction grant information session on Wednesday, March 13 at 5 p.m. the Porter Memorial Library, 87 Main St.

This will be an opportunity to learn more about the expansion planned for the library and how residents can help. Grant specialists from the Massachusetts

Board of Library Commissioners will be available to answer questions and detail the process.

People may either attend in person or call the library at 413-848-2853 for the Zoom meeting access. The information session will be recorded so it will be possible to view later if anyone interested cannot attend.

## Highway Superintendent to seek grants for road repairs

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Highway Department Superintendent David Waldron asked Monday evening that residents of Gore and Beech Hill roads send him letters regarding the condition of their roads for him to use as part of grant applications to fund necessary repairs on those roads.

Cost estimates for repairs for Gore Road are about \$560,000 while Beech Hill Road will be at least \$1.5 million. Board member Theodore Cousineau asked if it would be possible to widen Gore Road in the process and Waldron said possibly with permission of landowners to perhaps extend the width of the road onto private property.

## Russell Stage Road

A discussion of the water draining onto Russell Stage Road resulted in the board asking Waldron to engage the services of an engineer to fix the problem. The drainage comes under Kaolin Road and exits from the hill near the Massachusetts Turnpike.

The board approved the necessary removal of pine trees on Chester Road which impede line-of-site for trucks exiting the Highway Department's salt shed area.

## Fire sprinklers

In other business, it was brought to the board's attention that the fire sprinklers are still inoperable. Town Administrator Michael Szlosek will follow up.

He is working on grants with the

Water Department; the budget meetings have begun and will continue and he has several meetings coming up including Environmental Emergency Planning and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association.

## New software

The board signed the VADAR contract for a new municipal finance computer software application and approved grant rehab funding for homes on Herrick and Wyman roads.

## Shared water operator

There is some question regarding the grant for the shared water operator services and the board asked Szlosek to discuss it with Chester's Finance Committee member Andy Myers.

## Holyoke parade

Chair Cara Letendre announced the town will participate in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade and anyone interested in so doing should contact the board. She also proposed an Earth Day project of cleaning the trash from Chester Road near the east-bound service gate. Earth Day is April 22. Anyone interested should contact the board.

## Seedlings for residents

Tree Warden Mark Boomsma will again have trees available for residents. He will order seedlings and they will be available on a few Saturday mornings and Tuesday evenings at Town Hall in April.

Dates and varieties will be available closer to April.

## CHESTER

## Chester library announces upcoming events

CHESTER – Patrons can now use the front door of the Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St.

They should park on either Middlefield Road or in the lot across from Town Hall.

With the library's new CW Mars library card, people will conveniently be able to take and return any library items from any CW MARS library. People may stop in and staff will show them how to place a book hold or download an audio book from home.

On Thursdays, the library holds drop-in story time and play. People may bring their little ones in, anytime on Thursdays and staff would be happy to read, work on puzzles or take part in creative play with their child. This is perfect for toddlers and preschoolers.

Drop in Lego Club meets the first Saturday of every month. The next meeting is Saturday, April 6 at 11 a.m. Cocoa will be served.

The new Cookbook Club meets every second Tuesday of the month. Next meeting is Tuesday, March 12 from 5-6 p.m. Everyone will choose a recipe from the same cookbook to bring to the potluck gathering to share and discuss how it turned out and how difficult or easy it was to make. For the first meeting, they will be making recipes from "Welcome Home: Super Simple Entertaining" by Hope Comerford. People may come to the library and staff will make a copy of their recipe choice for the potluck.

The library will have copies of the cookbook, "Milk Street Tuesday Nights Mediterranean" by Christopher Kimball available at the March meeting for April's potluck. People should RSVP.

Writer's Club continues to meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting is Wednesday, March 13. For the first quarter of the year, the club will be using a writing prompt each session to get the

creative juices flowing and work on creating content with the goal of submitting a short story. All are welcome.

The Monthly Book Club meets the third Wednesday of every month at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting is Wednesday, March 20. The club will discuss "The Personal Librarian" by Marie Benedict.

Ancestry.com is available at the library. People may reserve a time slot to research their family's heritage.

Watch for virtual story time on the library's social media platforms Tammy Merenda with her red-shouldered hawk, Ptolemy, will be reading "My Side of the Mountain" by Jean Craighead George, a book that helped inspire her to become a falconer.

People may follow the library for updates and news on Facebook at Hamilton Memorial Library and Instagram @chesterlibrary and by visiting their website at www.hamilton-library.org.





# GRANVILLE

## Ripley's Farm serves up pancakes, maple syrup and more

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

GRANVILLE – A trip to Ripley's Maple Corner Farm for breakfast is always a treat and you'll always see a friend or neighbor there.

This weekend was no different. Although promoted as a cross-country ski area, the lodge is always filled with breakfast enthusiasts. The menu includes pancakes, French toast, breakfast sandwiches, bacon, sausage, corned-beef hash and of course maple syrup. They serve the syrup warmed.

There are tables for two, four, and more to accommodate any number of breakfasters. After breakfast, there's the chance to see how maple syrup is made with a visit to the Sugar House across the road from the lodge.

The sugar house, new as of 2017, is now a high-tech operation. Everything is done mechanically and is very efficient. From the evaporator to the bottling process, almost everything is automated.

Some sap comes to the sugar house from over a mile away via tubes and some via trucks that carry large tanks. Single buckets are no longer the tree-tap device. It's tubing. Sap is filtered prior to evaporation and then again before bottling.

Ripley bottles syrup in glass maple leaf souvenir containers as well as larger containers.

Ripley said that the sap has been flowing well most recently because of the warm days and the nights that are below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

"You want the nighttime temperature to be below freezing," he said, adding



Leon Ripley stokes the fire under the evaporator to make sure the sap boils continuously.  
Turley Photos by Mary Kronholm

that 26 to 28 degrees is good. He's not certain how this week will be for successful sap harvest. Maple sugaring is really at the whim of Mother Nature.

Leon is a member and former President of the Hampden County Farm Bureau, a subset of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Maple Corner Farm is also a member of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of maple sugaring in Massachusetts.

People may visit their website at [maplecornerfarm.com](http://maplecornerfarm.com) for more information.



Maple syrup-meister, chief Sugar House guru Leon Ripley at the evaporator; the steam fills the hood to overflowing as the sap begins to boil in earnest.



The Reinford, Seeberg and Fox families from Blandford and Russell enjoyed their breakfast gathering Saturday



Bill Woodsome places breakfast order with Jess Ripley at Maple Corner Farm Saturday, March 2. Woodsome, from North Granby, Conn. said he is a "regular" at Maple Corner.

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# WILLIAMSBURG

## MEEKINS TO HOST PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT



This photograph by Emily Dines will be part of an exhibit at the Meekins Library in Williamsburg for the month of March. An artist reception will be held on Saturday, March 16. The Meekins Library, 2 Williams St., will hold an artist reception for photographer, Emily Dines on Saturday, March 16 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The exhibit entitled "Another Point of View: Gentle Promises," will be on exhibit at the library's Neil Hammer Gallery during the month of March.

Photo by Emily Dines

## Meekins Library to host mending workshop

WILLIAMSBURG – On Saturday, March 23 at 1 p.m., the Meekins Library, 2 Williams St., will hold a mending workshop.

Participants should bring their torn socks, sweaters, shirts and pants. Attendees will receive help and instruction with mending, darning and button sewing.



These pants have a unique, patch fix to make them still wearable.



Embroidering flowers over a torn area of this sweater makes it even more attractive.

Submitted photos

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## CUMMINGTON

# Friday Night Cafe has poetry reading and folk music

CUMMINGTON – Friday Night Cafe comes 'round again on March 8 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church in downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cultural District.

The first hour will be "Spoken Words" with Patty Crane. Patty Crane, author of two award-winning poetry collections and translator of the complete works of Swedish Nobel laureate Tomas Tranströmer, will read a blend of her poems and translations.

Some will be spoken Swedish, learn a bit about the fascinating poet/psychologist/pianist and what led Crane to translate him and hopefully join in a discussion as she tries to talk about the interplay between her own poetry and her translations.

The second hour will be music with Sarah Stockwell-Arthen. With her vast and unusual repertoire, Stockwell-Arthen spins a story into a lyrical web of sound, that she wraps ever so gently

around the listener, moving and changing them. Her presence is as compelling as her performances are unforgettable, awakening the heart and mind of those lucky enough to hear her remarkable song interpretations.

The event is free, donations are appreciated, snacks are provided, Bring Your Own drinks. The show will take place in the intimate Vestry space. Masks are welcome and encouraged. Once again this program is sponsored

by the friendly folks at the Village Church who believe music can be a powerful force for building community.

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

## EASTHAMPTON

# Seth Clark promoted to wire transfer officer at bankESB

EASTHAMPTON – bankESB recently promoted Seth Clark to wire transfer officer, based in the 36 Main St., Easthampton office.

Clark of Westfield, has 11 years of banking experience and has held a variety of positions since joining bankESB in 2013, including wire transfer manager, assistant branch manager, personal banker and senior teller. He holds a Bachelor's Degree from Westfield State College. Outside of work, Clark has been a part-time church organist in Westhampton and Holyoke



Seth Clark

for 20 years.

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton. Through their sponsorship and charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, bankESB and the Easthampton Savings Bank Charitable Foundation support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Hampden and Hampshire counties. In 2023 alone, The Giving Tree

donated nearly \$635,000 and over the past decade has donated more than \$3.6 million.

## MIDDLEFIELD

# COA lists lunch menu

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Senior Center, 169 Sklyline Trail, on Wednesday, March 13 will serve lunch at noon. The menu is eat in or take out. The choice is cheeseburger chowder or chicken cordon bleu, wheat bread, corn and

green peas and dessert chocolate chip cookie. People should call 413-623-9990 to reserve a meal the previous Monday, March 11. Suggested donation is \$3.

There will be a COA Board meeting following the meal.

## BECKET

# Becket Arts Center announces upcoming news and events

BECKET – The coffee bag art fundraiser and submissions are coming in.

People may still pick up two bags and create an entry for a chance to win a \$100 cash prize generously provided by Barrington Coffee Roasting Company. Deadline to submit bag art is Sunday, March 24.

The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will hold a Masquerade Ball on Friday, March 29 at 7 p.m.. Snow date is Saturday, March 30 at 7 p.m. There will be bidding on items and a raffle. All proceeds from the projects and ticket sales will go into our children's art fund, keeping art free for children.

Becket Community Day is Saturday, March 9 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Canterbury Farm. People may stop by the Becket Art Center and make their masquerade mask from non-2 p.m.

Community Storytelling, "Beware the Ides of March! Your Greatest Fear"

will take place on Friday, March 15 from 7-9 p.m. People may share stories about being frightened or a story when they confronted their biggest People are invited to come to this special free event, tell their story or just sit back and listen.

Songwriting with Johnny Irion workshop is on Saturday, March 23 at 4 p.m. in the upstairs gallery space. Participants should bring their instruments, a pen and paper and their creative spirit. Cost is \$25 and free for students ages 14-18. Registration is necessary for the songwriters workshop, but not the performance in the evening.

"Music Is My Story," an evening with Johnny Irion, will be held on Saturday, March 23 from 7-9 p.m. in the upstairs gallery space for an evening of music. Local musician Johnny Irion will perform a collection of songs. This event is open to the public. Suggested donation is \$10.

## OTIS

# Town Clerk lists election info

OTIS – Town Clerk Lyn O'Brien lists positions on this year's caucus.

They include: one Select Person for three years, on Moderator for one year, one Tree Warden for one year, one Fiance Board Member for three years, one Cemetery Commissioner for three years, one Library Trustee for three years, one Planning Board Member for five years and two School Committee members for three years.

Registered voters wishing to run for any of these positions may come by the Town Clerk office and pick up a town of Otis Nomination Paper and/or a Caucus Request Form to start the election process. Most people are unaware that nomination papers are available and just run at the caucus. Candidates can do both.

If people choose to run at the Caucus, they should stop by the Town

Clerk's office and fill out the Caucus Request Form and their name will appear on the caucus ballot for Tuesday, April 16. This form must be filled out by Tuesday, April 9 at 5 p.m.

If people choose to run for office on a Nomination Papers they must get at least 20 signatures from registered voters in the town of Otis. If the required 20 signatures are obtained and certified, then their name will appear on the Annual Town Election ballot on Tuesday, May 28, 2024. They must pick up the nomination paper in the Town Clerk's office, get the required number of signatures and return the nomination paper to the Town Clerk by Tuesday, April 9 at 5 p.m.

If people have any questions, they may call the Town Clerk's office at 413-269-0100, extension 112.

## CHESTERFIELD

# Hilltown Community Development offers classes

CHESTERFIELD – Hilltown Community Development is dedicated to increasing the economic development of the region and furthering the prosperity of local small businesses.

There is still time to register to participate in a free, financial fitness workshop series. Small business owners may sign up for one offering or the entire series. The first class was held Tuesday, March 5. There are three remaining Tuesday Zoom meetings. On March 12 from 4:30-6 p.m. Financial Fitness: Tax considerations for Small Businesses and taught by Rosemarie Goyette. On March 25 from 4:30-6 p.m. Financial Fitness: Unlocking the Secrets to the

three Basic Financial Statements and taught by Katishia Gallishaw. On April 2 from 4:30-6 p.m. Financial Fitness: Mastering Cash Flow and Budgeting Essentials and taught by Katishia Gallishaw.

For more information, people may call Joan Griswold at 413-296-4536, extension 102, email her at Joang@hilltowncdc.org or visit www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org.

Hilltown Community Development's free business assistance program is made possible through The Small Business Technical Assistance Program grant from the Mass Growth Capital Corporation.

## PLAINFIELD

# Tim Van Egmond to perform

PLAINFIELD – Folksinger and storyteller, Tim Van Egmond, will perform for a free public concert on Wednesday, March 13 at 12:45 p.m. following lunch in the Plainfield Town Hall, 348 Main St.,

This program is supported by a grant from the Plainfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. In honor of St. Patrick's Day, Van Egmond's "Enchanted Tunes and A Magic Wish" program will present a "leprechaun's treasure" of Irish songs and stories, ranging from the rib-tickling to the spine-tingling to the heart-warming. He'll accompany himself with guitar, hammered dulcimer and lumberjack, a wooden puppet that taps out a rhythm

on a paddle board.

A resident of Montague, Van Egmond has performed for over 40 years throughout the country, appearing at hundreds of schools, libraries, and community centers, as well as on a number of television and radio programs. He's been chosen for the New England States Touring Program and the Massachusetts Cultural Council's STARS Residency Programs. His dynamic talent, warmth and humor create a moving and enjoyable experience for all. Renowned author and storyteller Jane Yolen said, "Tim is a triple treat. He can sing, he can play a variety of wonderful instruments, and he can tell whopping good tales."

For more information, people may call the Senior Center at 413-212-1581.

### Correction

On page one of last week's Country Journal, the Becket Town Administrator's last name was incor-

rect. It should be Kathe A. Warden not Waldon.



## GREAT BARRINGTON

# Jamie Goldenberg's Material Record on exhibit at Bard College

GREAT BARRINGTON – Material Record, Jamie Goldenberg's exhibition at the Daniel Arts Center at Bard College at Simon's Rock, opens on Friday, March 8 at 5 p.m. with a collaborative weaving project and opening reception.

The artist will briefly teach the principles of weaving and ask visitors to weave on her loom using yarns from her studio that she dyed over the past eight years. The interactive weaving will be available for the duration of the show.

The final community-woven piece will be displayed at the closing event, which will take place on Wednesday, April 17 at 6 p.m. in the Black Box Theater at the Daniel Arts Center. Jamie Goldenberg will be in conversation with Simon's Rock librarian KellyAnne McGuire. In "Archiving

as Artistic Practice," Goldenberg and McGuire, also a fiber artist, will discuss process-based art making, the impulse to keep records and how creativity is essential to experience as human beings.

The exhibition is a collection of woven, stitched, and dyed works created between 2016 and 2024. Each piece tells the story of the specific moment and place where it was created. The collection explores themes of awe, uncertainty, grief, and reverence for the natural world. Each piece is an experiment in which the artist holds equal regard for her given circumstance and the impulse to act upon it.

Goldenberg describes the process of creating her piece, Marigold Curtain, 2017. "Every week, for several months, I harvested marigolds from my garden, dyed wool and then wove it on my loom.

Throughout this time the parcel of land and materials remained consistent while the seasons and my own personal circumstances (sun, frost, grief, parenting, distraction) shifted. These fluctuations imprinted on the texture and color of the fibers. When I took the weaving off of my loom and stitched the piece together I found myself looking at proof of my survival."

Jamie Goldenberg has spent most of her life in New England. She received a Bachelor of Arts in photography and critical theory in visual arts from Bard College at Simon's Rock. She was a 2015-16 resident at the Textile Arts Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., instructor at Parsons School of Design and has attended residencies at Penland School of Crafts and Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. She currently owns a craft

shop and classroom in Great Barrington, where she aims to make art making as accessible as possible to anyone who wants to learn and create.

Material Record is on view until April 17.

Bard College at Simon's Rock is the only college in the country specifically designed for highly motivated students ready to enter college after the 10th or 11th grade. Simon's Rock offers a challenging program in the liberal arts and sciences, taught exclusively in small seminars by supportive, highly trained faculty, who are leading scholars in their fields. The College grants degrees in more than 35 majors.

For more information, people may visit [simons-rock.edu](http://simons-rock.edu), [bardacademy.simons-rock.edu](http://bardacademy.simons-rock.edu), and [bqlp.simons-rock.edu](http://bqlp.simons-rock.edu).

## MONTGOMERY

# Montgomery library presents author talk, Cookbook Club

MONTGOMERY– The Grace Hall Memorial Library, 161 Main Road, will host Huntington author, Steven Victor Cormier on Saturday, March 16 at 1 p.m. in the Montgomery Town Hall.

He will discuss his book, "Life and Times of Parley B. Hutchins: The Mystery Continues." Hutchins lived and worked in Huntington in the mid to late 1800s on property where the author currently resides. Hutchins death was an unsolved murder. Hutchins is buried in the Norwich Cemetery on Littleville Road.

The author will be at the Russell Public Library on Saturday, May 11 from 2-4 p.m. He will also be in Worthington and Chester at to be determined dates.

Books will be available for sale at each venue for \$9.99."The Life and

Times of Parley B. Hutchins" is also available for sale on Amazon. The book is Cormier's second. His first book, "Oil Change," a murder mystery with political overtones, is also available for sale on Amazon. Cormier said he is currently doing research for a third book.

Cookbook Book Club will meet on Thursday, March 21 at 6:30 p.m. This month's theme is Irish Cooking with a variety of Irish Cookbooks to choose from, from traditional to contemporary Irish cuisine. find a favorite recipes and bring it on March 21 to share, learn about others dishes and enjoy the sharing.

The Grace Hall Memorial Library is open Tuesday from 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Thursday from 4-8 p.m. and Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

## HAYDENVILLE

# Sen. Mark lists office hours

BOSTON – State Senator Paul W. Mark announces his staff will host office hours in Williamsburg for two days in March.

Office hours are Tuesday, March 12, and Tuesday, March 26 from 1-3 p.m. Town Offices, 141 Main St., Haydenville.

Residents of any of the 57 municipalities in the Senator's Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin, and Hampshire District are encouraged to share ideas on current or potential state legislation, or to ask for assistance with issues involving any state agency.

Appointments are not required.

## NORTHAMPTON

# Northampton artist exhibits at Taber Art Gallery

HOLYOKE – The Taber Art Gallery at Holyoke Community College will host a reception Thursday, March 7 from 4:30-7:30 p.m., for Northampton artist Raishad J. Glover, whose show is on display until March 20.

The reception celebrates Glover's work and his recent addition to the HCC faculty. The Taber is located off the main lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the Donahue Building.

Cubes, hexagons, the environment, as well as other shapes and themes, come together in Glover's exhibit, "Geo-Spec: Cultural Introspection Wealth."

"The cube acts as a form of building block," said Glover. "Building blocks for family. Building blocks for community. Building blocks for ecosystems."

A hexagon, he notes, is essentially the outline of a cube and a form prevalent in nature, such as in the honeycombs found in beehives.

Glover studied studio art at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University in Boston and holds a master's degree in fine art in painting and printmaking from the Yale School of Art in New Haven.

He joined HCC in the fall after nine years teaching art at Claflin University and South Carolina State University

in Orangeburg. At HCC, he teaches two-dimensional design and painting.

"I have a lot of history up here, a lot of family, and a lot of friends, and a gallery in Boston that is used to exhibiting my work," said Glover, who lives in Northampton and maintains a studio there. "I wanted to get back to other areas that I'm familiar with and build connections."

The "Geo-Spec" exhibit explores concepts such as culture, mind growth, wealth and ecological design. "Geo" refers to geometry, "spec" to spectrum. Glover experiments with multiple mediums, such as lenticular printing, graphite powder, beeswax, dura-trans/backlit film, analog and digital photography, and LED Lights.

He is an advocate of sustainable design and chooses materials that are more environmentally friendly. Geo-Spec includes pieces constructed from granite, paper, glass, bamboo and wool, among others.

One of the pieces is a refurbished portable television from the 1940s, retrofitted to play videos from an Amazon Fire TV Stick.

The Taber Art Gallery, located off the lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, is free and open to the public Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. during regular school sessions.

## RUSSELL

# Library announces events

RUSSELL – March story walks sponsored by the Hilltown Family Center at Noble View will feature "Thanks to the Animals" by Allen J. Sockabasin and "A Stone Sat Still" by Brendan Wenzel at the Russell Public Library, 162 Main St.

On Saturday, March 23 from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. families and adults may join Appalachian Mountain Club Leader and Library Director Dawne Piers-Gamble for a sweet spring maple syrup hike. Participants will hike the Conwell Property Trail in Worthington, part of Hilltown Land Trust and then partake in a sugarhouse buffet at High Hopes Farm in Worthington. Children eat or free courtesy of Appalachian Mountain Club.

The hike is rated an easy 2.1 mile out and back route with one water crossing and takes about 60-90 minutes to hike. It is a good hike for families with children. People should visit outdoors.org or email [dawne4amc@gmail.com](mailto:dawne4amc@gmail.com) or call

413-862-6221 (leave message) to register. They may also sign up at the library by Tuesday, March 19.

On Saturday, March 16 from 2-4 p.m. adults may attend a presentation by Bruce Cortis on the history of Russell and view pictures and documents of Russell's past in the Russell History Room at the library. They should register by email [rpldirector@townofrussell.us](mailto:rpldirector@townofrussell.us), call 413-6221 or sign up at the library by Thursday, March 14.

Children are invited to join Ms. Dawne for Marching into Spring, an hour of backyard science, books and preparation for spring on Saturday, March 16 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. They should register by email [rpldirector@townofrussell.us](mailto:rpldirector@townofrussell.us), call 413-6221 or sign up at the library by Thursday, March 14.

Library hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3-7 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

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**SESSION 4: JULY 15-19**  
**SESSION 5: JULY 22-26**  
**SESSION 6: JULY 29-AUG 2**  
**SESSION 7: AUG 5-9**

Visit [Bement.org/summer](http://Bement.org/summer) for more information and to register. Register early!

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# STOCKBRIDGE

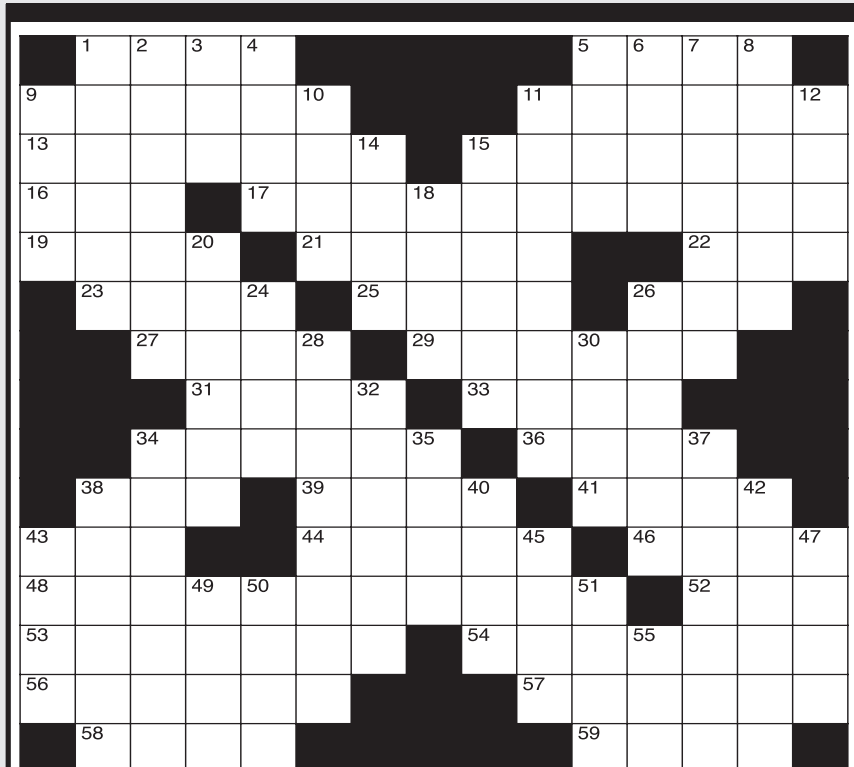
## Stockbridge Grange hold take out dinner on March 10

STOCKBRIDGE – The Stockbridge Grange will hold a community dinner Sunday, March 10 with pick up from noon-1:30 p.m. at the Stockbridge

Grange Hall, 51 Church St. The menu includes corned beef, cabbage, potato and carrots with dessert choices of chocolate cream or lemon

meringue pie. The dinner is \$15 per person with take out only. Orders may be made by calling 413-243-1298 or 413-443-4352.

Reservation deadline is Thursday, March 7. Grange Community Dinners are designed to raise money for non-profit projects and building maintenance.



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Chaps
- 5. Currently fashionable
- 9. Collision
- 11. More slim
- 13. European city
- 15. Implicitly
- 16. The side of something that is sheltered from the wind
- 17. The Mount Rushmore State
- 19. Gold or silver wire cord
- 21. Muscles along insects' diaphragm
- 22. Trent Reznor's band
- 23. Sweet juicy gritty-textured fruit
- 25. Broken branch
- 26. Indicates ten
- 27. Expression of

- annoyance
- 29. Brings together
- 31. Ancient city in Thrace
- 33. Sailors' spirit
- 34. Looked into
- 36. Muckraking woman journalist Rheta
- 38. A type of cast
- 39. One's responsibility
- 41. Where golfers begin
- 43. Make a mistake
- 44. Semitic Sun god
- 46. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- 48. Beheaded
- 52. A place to stay
- 53. Unwise
- 54. Most supernatural
- 56. "Dennis" is a famous one

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Baseball managers assemble it
- 2. Revised
- 3. Mountain is a popular kind
- 4. Takes to civil court
- 5. Pouches
- 6. A type of veil
- 7. Chants
- 8. Boston hoopster
- 9. Elongated appendage
- 10. Sailboat
- 11. 2017 Oscar-winning film
- 12. Actor Gosling
- 14. Monetary units
- 15. Assembly
- 18. Russian pop duo
- 20. Embellished with expressions
- 24. Infrequent
- 26. Temperature unit
- 28. Hydrophilic amino acid
- 30. Honk
- 32. Legislative body
- 34. Swinish
- 35. Russian assembly
- 37. Take over for
- 38. Put in advance
- 40. Satisfy
- 42. Felt
- 43. Dutch cheese
- 45. Witnesses
- 47. Strong insects
- 49. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
- 50. Ancient people of Scotland
- 51. Cheerless
- 55. Sick

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**

**Mar 21/Apr 20**  
Think about collaborating on a fun project with someone close to you. Find out if anyone needs help on something they may be working on if you don't have a project in mind.

**CANCER**

**Jun 22/Jul 22**  
Cancer, if you are feeling content with yourself and life in general lately, that is excellent. Embrace this positive state of mind and take the necessary steps to continue the good feelings.

**LIBRA**

**Sept 23/Oct 23**  
Uncertainty regarding long-term plans may be driving emotions of shyness, Libra. If you are having trouble, plan excursions or events with friends you trust.

**CAPRICORN**

**Dec 22/Jan 20**  
Your busy schedule this week has everything feeling more hectic even if it really isn't, Capricorn. Carve out some time to sit quietly or enjoy some alone time to refresh.

**TAURUS**

**Apr 21/May 21**  
An excitement concerning work goals or a business venture may compel you to take some action to get your ideas heard by higher-ups. The audience will be receptive.

**LEO**

**Jul 23/Aug 23**  
Leo, this week you may be feeling nostalgic or sentimental. Look over old photographs or watch family movies for a bit. If you want to take it further, reach out to childhood friends.

**SCORPIO**

**Oct 24/Nov 22**  
Scorpio, encouragement comes from people you may not feel are on your team. Take all of the support you can get as you start plowing through some long-term goals.

**AQUARIUS**

**Jan 21/Feb 18**  
This week you may be feeling especially charitable. Open your heart up to others who may need some extra support. This may be a stranger or someone you know.

**GEMINI**

**May 22/Jun 21**  
Trying to resolve issues in a relationship this week may leave you feeling unsettled. It might be that you are trying to avoid sensitive topics that you will have to address eventually.

**VIRGO**

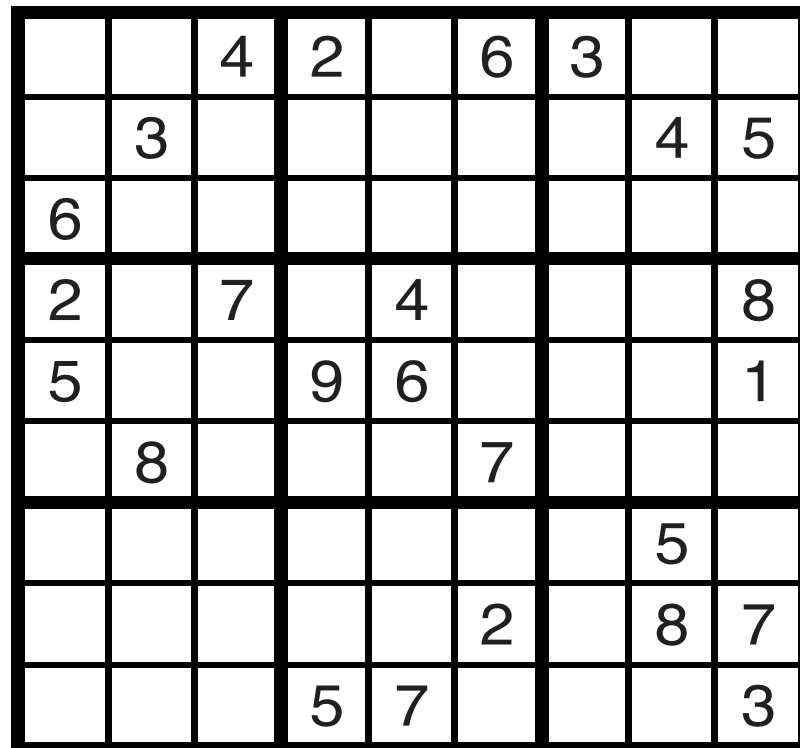
**Aug 24/Sept 22**  
Find new activities that you can add to your daily routine, Virgo. This may be a sport, hobby or even a new club. Add a dose of creativity to each and every day for good effects.

**SAGITTARIUS**

**Nov 23/Dec 21**  
It's always the right time to tell others how much they mean to you, Sagittarius. It will not take grand gestures to do so, merely your loving words.

**PISCES**

**Feb 19/Mar 20**  
Some news from a family member may catch you off-guard, Pisces. You'll soon recover when you learn that it is extremely happy news. You may even get good news of your own.



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

**answers**

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### FOR RENT



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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Project File No. 608886

A Public Informational Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed North Road & Damon Pond Road Improvements project in the Town of Chesterfield, MA.

#### WHERE:

The Community Center  
400 Main Road  
Chesterfield, MA 01012

#### WHEN:

6:00 PM, Wednesday,  
March 13, 2024

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed North Road & Damon Pond Road Improvements project. All views and comments made at the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The project proposes to reconstruct North Road & Damon Pond Road. North Road improvements are proposed from Main Rd (Rte. 143) to the intersection of North Road and Damon Pond Road. Damon Pond Road improvements are proposed from the intersection of North Road and Damon Pond Road to the Goshen town line. The total project length is approximately 2.5 miles. Improvements include full-depth reclamation and multiple culvert replacements throughout the length of the project, including the culvert at the base of the Damon Pond dam. Horizontal and vertical geometry will be adjusted to improve sight distance and user safety. Finally

new pavement markings will be applied within the project limits.

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email ([MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us)). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In the event of inclement weather, a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY  
ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE  
CHIEF ENGINEER  
02/29, 03/07/2024

DEPARTEMNT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION OF WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS  
401 Water Quality Certification Application Public Notice  
P u r s u a n t t o

33.U.S.C.1341 and MGL c21 §43, notice is hereby given of a 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) application for Kinne Brook Tributary Culvert Replacement at Kinnebrook Road, Chester, MA by Trout Unlimited, 54 Portsmouth St., Concord, NH on property owned by Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. The proposed project includes the removal of the undersized culvert on Kinnebrook Road, replacement with a large open-bottom structure which meets Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards, and restoration for full fish passage. Additional information may be obtained from Erin Rodgers, Trout Unlimited, 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301, 603-228-2200.

Written comments on this 401 WQC Application may be emailed to:

David Wong  
([David.W.Wong@mass.gov](mailto:David.W.Wong@mass.gov))  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Wetlands and Waterways  
100 Cambridge Street,  
Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 874-7155

Within 21 days of this notice. The Department will consider all written comments on this 401 WQC Application received by the Public Comments Deadline.

Any group of ten persons of the Commonwealth, any aggrieved person, or any government body or private organization with a mandate to protect the environment that has submitted written comments may also appeal the Department's Certification and that failure to submit comments before the end of public comment period may result in the waiver of any right to an adjudicatory hearing. 03/07/2024

### PUBLIC HEARING TOWN OF CHESTER WATER COMMISSION

The Chester Water Commission will hold a Public Hearing on **April 5, 2024** at Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield St, Chester at 6:pm for operational update & discussion of FY'25 Water Rate/ 03/07, 03/14/2024

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

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold 3 public hearings on **March 26, 2024 beginning at 6:00 pm** in Stanton Hall.

The first Public Hearing is scheduled for 6:00 pm for the Special Permit Application of Rob LeClair DBA Archimedes Plumbing and Heating Inc., under Huntington Zoning Bylaw Sections IV.E: Multiple Uses on a Lot; IV.H: Off-Street Parking; IV.I: Signs, and V: Special Permits at 70 Worthington Road, Assessors Map #N-1, parcel #5-0 in the garage portion of the former Huntington Country Store.

The second Public Hearing is scheduled for 6:15 pm for the Special Permit Application of Rob LeClair DBA Hilltown Cafe Inc., under Huntington Zoning Bylaw Sections IV.E: Multiple Uses on a Lot; IV.H: Off-Street Parking; IV.I: Signs; IV.D.2.a. Cafe and V: Special Permits at 70 Worthington Road, Assessors Map #N-1, parcel #5-0 in the store/restaurant portion of the former Huntington Country Store.

The third Public Hearing is scheduled for 6:30 pm for the Special Permit Application of Adam Ragazzini DBA Absolute Detailing, under Huntington

Zoning Bylaw Sections IV.C. Category 2: Slight Effect on the Residential Character of the Neighborhood; IV.I: Signs, and V: Special Permits at 4 Harlow Clark Road, Assessors Map #444, parcel #101-0 (home of Shirley St. Peter in her garage)

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON  
03/07, 03/14/2024

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)

## 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 \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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



## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

# Gateway Education Foundation supports robotics teaching

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Science, Technology, Engineering Arts Mathematics teacher Rebecca Nicholson has implemented a coding and robotics unit for fourth and fifth graders at Littleville and Chester Elementary Schools.

Students are coding Finch 2.0 robots to drive different distances and speeds, turn at a variety of angles, light up, play a pre-made or student-created musical melody, and even “say” words by having them spelled out on the Finch’s microbit lights.

“I cannot thank the Gateway Education Foundation enough for providing the upper elementary students with this opportunity to code with the Finch 2.0 robots,” Nicholson said, in a report to the Foundation’s Board.

Nicholson explained that students use the Makecode computer program to create their code and are then able to see it acted out in real life by the robots. “This hands-on experience is a bridge that demystifies technology by allowing students to see how technology works and a way to use coding,” she said.

Working in pairs, students communicated, collaborated and shared their ideas as they created their code. They also developed their computational thinking skills, Nicholson said, as they reasoned through the bugs or problems with their code. To date, students have explored the basics of what Finch can do as well as completed several coding challenges. Among these: making their Finch display and act out emotions, coding it to move in a square around a



Anthony Lucia, from left and Tristan Dunn, fifth graders at Chester Elementary School, took part in the coding unit funded by the Gateway Education Foundation.

cup without knocking it down and coding it through an angle maze.

“These challenges were all from the Finch curriculum guide, which was a huge benefit to get students (and myself!) confident using the robots,” Nicholson said. “I am so excited about how the Finch robots will continue to be used in my STEAM instruction.” Nicholson added that she plans to design additional Finch robot challenges linked directly to curriculum-based

science topics.

She reports that students are excited and engaged in the work. One student said, “I like that I can see what I have coded and it is easy to find a mistake or change my code.” Another added, “They are awesome. I’m going to ask my dad to buy me a Finch for my birthday.”

The Gateway Education Foundation formed in 2012 to educate, elevate and inspire the students and classrooms of



Violet Letendre, from left and Liv Dulude, fifth graders at Chester Elementary School, with the Finch 2.0 robots that they learned to code in Rebecca Nicholson’s STEAM class. Submitted photos

the Gateway Regional School District in Huntington. This private, non-profit organization raises funds and disburses them through a small grants program. Examples of other funded projects include Model United Nations, author talks, summer reading programs, Girls State, Braille library materials for visually impaired students and much more. Since its inception, GEF has funded over 30 projects totaling over \$115,000.

GEF relies upon donations and fundraisers. To support projects like the Finch robots, people may mail their donation to GEF, 12 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA 01050.

People can also have a great night out while supporting GEF by attending their third annual Trivia Night fundraiser, which will be held at Stanton Hall in downtown Huntington on Saturday, March 23. Doors open at 6 p.m. and trivia runs from 7-9 p.m. People can form a team of eight people or come and be placed on a team. They should bring their own food and beverages or order from nearby Comfort Kitchen. The Master of Ceremonies for the evening will be D. J. Steve Nagle, a frequent presence on the Rock 102 Bax and O’Brien Show. For more information, people may visit the GEF website at gatewayeducationfoundation.org.

## HCC Foundation extends scholarship deadline

HOLYOKE – The deadline to apply for scholarships from the Holyoke Community College Foundation for the 2024-2025 academic year has been extended until midnight on Friday, March 8.

Each year, the HCC Foundation awards hundreds of scholarships worth more than \$300,000 to incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Many students receive multiple scholarship awards.

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships,

which are awarded through the HCC Foundation, HCC’s nonprofit fundraising corporation.

Applicants only need to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students and students transferring to other institutions, scholarships based on financial need, scholarships for students in specific majors, scholarships for residents of certain communities, and scholarships that recognize academic achievement.

To make the process of applying

easier, HCC opened a Scholarship Resource Center in January on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158). The center is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Those in need of assistance can drop in any time during office hours to ask questions or to use one of the center’s three computer workstations. They can also schedule appointments to meet with center staffers.

To view scholarship opportunities and begin the application process, people may visit [www.hcc.edu/scholarships/](http://www.hcc.edu/scholarships/).

## Colleges and universities announce fall 2024 Dean’s list and graduates

### Dean’s list

Dickinson College  
Carlisle, PA

Sofia Getoff-Scanlon of Easthampton, sophomore Spanish and Portuguese studies and political science major, attended Pioneer Valley Performing Art Charter Public School and daughter of Christopher Scanlon and Sarah Getoff

### Dean’s list

Endicott College  
Beverly

Abigail McClafin of Easthampton, nursing, and daughter of Lorri McClafin and Shane McClafin; Haley Routhier of Easthampton, exercise science and daughter of Brenda Routhier and Dennis Routhier; Irini Mahida of Great Barrington, interdisciplinary studies and daughter of Chrisoula Mahida and Vijay Mahida; Keveen Delgado of Pittsfield, exercise science; Charlotte Mcknight of Pittsfield, psychology, and daughter

of Stacy Chojnowski; Diana Goddard of Westfield, criminal justice and psychology and daughter of Christine Goddard; Kyle Grabowski of Westfield, engineering and son of Jennifer Grabowski and Peter Grabowski; Karlie Harlin of Westfield, nursing and daughter of Amie Harlin; Alena Rickson of Westfield, interior architecture and daughter of Effie Rickson and Donald Rickson and Bailey Tymeson of Westfield, exercise science and daughter of Kerri Tymeson and Eric Lusignan

### Dean’s list

University at Albany  
Albany, N.Y.

Fiona Bowler of Huntington

### Graduate

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Madison, Wisconsin

Jason Torchinsky of Pittsfield, Doctor of Philosophy in mathematics, College of Letters and Science

## MassDOT, Fundación MAPFRE announce contest for high school students

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), in collaboration with global nonprofit Fundación MAPFRE, announces the launch of a roadway safety public service contest for Massachusetts high school students.

The contest, which was launched in 2022 as part of MAPFRE’s Look Both Ways Program, seeks to help students raise awareness with their peers and underscore the importance of being safe while driving on roadways across the Commonwealth. Safety experts and state officials caution that, as data for 2023 continues to be received and analyzed, the results could show a third straight yearly increase in road-related fatalities.

“MassDOT is pleased to continue our collaboration with Fundación MAPFRE through the second annual roadway safety education contest,” said Transportation Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbits-Nutt. “Getting young drivers involved in safety education is

an important action towards making our streets safer, and we are eager to see the great ideas that students come up with this year. Their participation is important in helping MassDOT to envision a future without roadway injuries and deaths.”

“Our youngest and most inexperienced drivers are disproportionately at risk for being involved in a crash,” said Jaime Tamayo, Chief Representative of Fundación MAPFRE in the United States and CEO of MAPFRE USA.

To enter the contest, high schools simply visit: <https://www.fundacionmapfre.org/en/look-both-ways/>.

The deadline for contest submissions is Friday, March 29 at 5 p.m. on Friday. The students with the winning submission will work with the Boston Creative Communications Agency to produce the spot which is anticipated to timely air in the spring before prom and graduation season. Additionally, the students’ school will receive \$3,000 provided by Fundación MAPFRE, toward road safety education.