

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

Field Drive and Fence Viewer need to be filled

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The elected position of Field Driver has not been filled for several years. It is a time-honored position. The first mention for the town, however, dates to 1946, when Blandford was undoubtedly more agriculturally based than it is today. Fence Viewer is another position of the same era and there are two positions still maintained by the town, each a three-year term. There were no nominations for either Field Driver or Fence Viewer at the Annual Town Caucus March 3. In recent years, the Field Driver was reduced to a single slot and usually newcomers were nominated to take on the job. The same for Fence Viewer. In the 1980s the late Bob Lucas, then fairly new

to town, was elected to the position and actually was called to duty once to capture a wandering swine, which he did. More recently, but still several years ago, the Field Driver was contacted about a loose horse on North Blandford Road. Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Ch. 49, sec. 24 lists the duties of Field Driver as, “Every field driver shall take up horses, mules, asses, neat cattle, sheep, goats or swine going at large in the public ways or on common and unimproved land within his town and not under the care of a keeper and any other inhabitant of the town may take up such cattle or beasts so going at large on Sunday, and for taking up such beasts on said day the field driver or such other inhabitant of the town may in tort recover

FILLED, page 2

BLANDFORD

High winds cause damage

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The Blandford Bed shakers have been at it again. Reports have come in from all over town about the damage, the toilet tidal waves, frightened animals as well as frightened folks. Gusts up to and even over 60 miles an hour did their damage Thursday night and into Friday, March 6 and 7. On Blair Road, the Stevens’ horses were “freaked out by the wind,” said Byan Stevens. They broke through the electrified fence, the power undoubtedly off by then, breaking insulators and the wiring. “They basically escaped,” said Stevens, who spent Friday afternoon fence fixing. The horses were fine, although perhaps “a little dazed.” At Ramona Farm on George Millard Road Terri Mitas-Stetz and Joey Stetz reported all four of their toilets sloshed. “There are 35 cleared acres around our house,” Terri said, “and I’ll bet we had the worst of it.” Ray Hultay, soon to



The wind actually blew hard enough through Russell Stage Road, Blandford to cause the safety “breakaway” feature to let the sign tip down, but very quickly and easily put to rights.

Turley Photo by Mary Kronholm

be officially Highway Superintendent, said he and the highway crew were at work at 4:30 a.m. Friday. “There were issues all over town,” he said, and added that the primary concern was to make sure the school bus route roads were clear. Downed trees took wires with them. There were at least a dozen trees down throughout town, including on Russell Stage, Blair, Hiram Blair – which

was for a while impassable – North Blandford and Huntington roads. “There were so many trucks from Eversource,” he said. The Bensons on Haight Road, off Huntington Road, were without power all day Friday as the result of a tree taking out wires on Huntington Road. There was also water damage from so much rain, washouts on Gibbs,

Nye Brook and George Millard Roads. “There was a two-foot cut down George Millard that made it just about impassable,” said Hultay. The department had their hands full, “The crew was really doing good,” said Hultay. The wind was so strong it even tipped a speed limit

DAMAGE, page 3

Signs of thawing and spring appear



These photos were taken at the Smith College Botanical Garden Spring Bulb Show in Northampton.



The water at Knightville in Huntington shows signs of thawing and the dog has a “spring” to its walk. Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel

BLANDFORD

Select Board appoints Hultay Highway Supt.

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The Select Board appointed Ray Hultay as the incoming Highway Superintendent. His new position is in the process of being finalized with terms of his contract under negotiation. During the March 3 meeting all three board members said they had received complimentary community feedback regarding Hultay’s commitment to the community to the Highway Department and for the quality of his work. In the meantime, Interim Highway Superintendent, Rene Senecal, is organizing meetings with pertinent MassDOT District 1 representatives and others, to introduce Hultay ensuring a smooth transition. Executive Assistant The board also approved the reclassification of the position of secretary/administrative assistant to the Select Board and Town Administrator, a position held by Joann Martin, to a new title. The position will now be the Executive Assistant to the Select Board and the Town Administrator. The reclassification was made with the approval of Town

Counsel Mark Reich of KP-Law. Select Board Chair Cara Letendre said that the reclassification was “definitely overdue” and board member T.J. Cousineau agreed and he added, “absolutely.” Town Administrator Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera told the board of her progress towards becoming certified as the town’s procurement officer. Thursday, she took part in the Greenfield class on Operational Services Division for State Contract, learning how to navigate purchasing sites for already state contracted services. Successful completion of Public Contracting Overview, Design and Construction Contracting is another step in a lengthy process. Regarding the installation of the switch generator for the Town Hall, Ferrera decided it was best to start at the beginning of the process with Electrical Engineer Thomas Carlone, who put the engineering plan together. She was looking for historical background information. Prior Town Administrator Christopher Dunne set

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BLANDFORD

Select Board sign contract with Skanska as OPM

BLANDFORD – The Porter Memorial Library expansion project is moving along.

The Select Board approved and signed a contract with Skanska as the Owners Project Manager last week. The const will not exceed \$72,000 and is part of the Massachusetts

Board of Library Commissioners grant funded planning and design process.

The next step in the process will be to post a request for proposals for a designer. Right now, the library staff is working on “identifying the amount of space we need to serve our community,” said Library Director Nicole Daviau.

The building committee has been meeting monthly; these are public meetings so anyone can attend. Skanska, the Owners Project Manager, has found the committee to be well prepared and dedicated according to Daviau.

Water Department Office has new administrative assistant

BLANDFORD – There is a new face in the Water Department Office, administrative assistant Jasmine Ortega from Russell.

Her credentials include the U. S. Air Force, deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and South Korea and a Software Engineer for Raytheon Technologies. The Framingham native also

currently works for Huntington as the administrative assistant for the Highway Department there.

Water Superintendent Gordon Avery said, “We are glad to welcome her aboard

to the Water Department. She will be a great asset in moving the department forward.” Ortega’s public office hours are Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Jasmine Ortega

Trivia night takes place March 22

HUNTINGTON – The Gateway Education Foundation, 12 Littleville Road, announces their fourth annual trivia night fundraiser that will be held on Saturday, March 22 at 7 p.m. with doors opening at 6 p.m. in the Blandford Town Hall.

To date, the foundation funded over 120 projects totaling over \$125,000, benefiting students in pre-K through grade 12! These teacher mini-grants offer enriching opportunities for students so that they can learn, build confidence

and thrive. Activities have included Model United Nations, school-wide musicals, STEM and robotics activities, an interdisciplinary engineering study, team building activities for middle schoolers as well as numerous visits from

authors, museums, ecologists, and storytellers.

Tickets will be available online by scanning the code with this article and at the event. People may save money by signing up as a table of eight. There will be an award for the most creative table theme. Snow date is Saturday, March 29. For more information on the event and the Gateway Education Foundation, people may visit www.gatewayeducationfoundation.org or email us at gatewayeducationfoundation@gmail.com.



HIGHWAY

from page 1

the process in motion. According to Ferrera, Elm Electric has been very slow in responding, and she needed more information on the project in order to move forward.

Conservation Commission’s Agent position. The Commission is in the process of filing the open position but here has been no interest despite advertising the role and posting the slot on the Town’s website.

According to Ferrera, the job is crucial since several Battery Energy Storage System vendors have approached both the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission with interest in establishing facilities in town. Neighboring communities are already navigating this complex process, making it essential for the Conservation Commission to have an agent on staff to function effectively.

Given the importance of this role, the Commission seeks guidance from the Select Board on how to attract qualified candidates

or adjust the position to increase interest. The position is advertised as five- to ten-hours a week, with a compensation range of \$23 to \$25 per hour.

Other business

Water Department Superintendent Gordon Avery inquired about getting training for Water Department employees in the Town’s new accounting software, Vadar. Ferrera reached out to Vadar to see how many available remote trainings the Town has left contractually- if more are needed than are available, they will come at a cost of approximately \$800. Several departments need this training. Ferrera continues work on the FY26 budget with the Finance Committee, as well as organizing articles for the June 2 Annual Town Meeting.

HUNTINGTON

Town Clerk available for dog license applications at March 16 rabies clinic

HUNTINGTON – Town Clerk Michelle Fieldstad-Booth will be available at Gateway Farm and Pet Rabies Clinic with the Fiscal Year 2026 dog

license applications and licenses for Huntington residents.

The Rabies Clinic will be on Sunday, March 16 from 10 a.m.-noon. For

more information including fees and payment, people may call the Town Clerk at 413-512-5209 or visit the town website at www.huntingtonma.us.

DAMAGE

from page 1

sign on Russell Stage Road. The signs are built with a safety feature, a breakaway, according to Hultay, so the sign can quickly be

restored to its proper stance. The posts are solid in the ground, but the breakaway feature allows the post to bend without breaking,

making it possible to bring it back the way it should be.

It was still another 24 hours before the winds diminished.

News, photo publication policy

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

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



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Westhampton Elementary School Information: Preschool and Kindergarten Registration and School Choice Information

In March, Westhampton Elementary School will register preschool and kindergarten students for fall 2025.

If you reside in Westhampton and your child is five years old by September 1, 2025, they can register for kindergarten.

If you reside in Westhampton and your child is three or four years old by September 1, 2025, they can register for preschool. Flexible scheduling may be available for non-special education preschool students, and parents will be responsible for tuition.

Also, Westhampton Elementary School may have the potential of limited school choice slots for Kindergarten through sixth grade for the upcoming school year, 2025-2026.

Additional information about our school choice program and registering for preschool and kindergarten is available at our website www.westhamptonelementaryschool.org.

If you want to register your child for preschool or kindergarten at Westhampton Elementary School or apply for one of our potential school choice openings via lottery, please contact the school at 413-527-0561 and ask to speak to Ashley.

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GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor



Did we make a mistake starting my wife’s Social Security now?

Dear Rusty:
I hope we haven’t made a mistake.
My wife just applied for her Social Security benefit. She was born in May 1962 and the estimated amount of her benefit is \$1,280 per month. Her work income last year was \$5,616; however, mine was about \$65,000. I do not plan on taking my benefit until the age of 70 in July of 2027.
My worry now is about the penalty for earning too much. We figured that since her income was so low, we wouldn’t have to worry about that penalty, so we signed her up, and then it hit me: what if they look at my income, especially since our tax return is filed as Married Filing Jointly. Do we have a problem, or are they just going to look at her income to determine if there is a penalty? I hope I haven’t messed this up. Also, I think I read that any penalty you are assessed for earning too much is returned to you once you reach Full Retirement Age; is that true?

Signed:
Uncomfortable Senior Citizen

Dear Uncomfortable Senior:
First, let me ease your anxiety – you haven’t “messed this up.” While it’s true that your income will be included when the IRS determines how much of your wife’s Social Security benefits are taxable, changing your IRS filing status is usually not wise. However, considering your combined income and your “married/jointly” IRS filing status, up to 85% of the SS benefits your wife receives during the tax year will be included as part of your overall taxable income as a married couple. Your wife’s monthly SS benefit is about \$1,280, so about \$13,000 annually will be included in your Adjusted Gross Income when you file your taxes. You can have income tax withheld from your wife’s SS benefit by filing IRS Form W-4V at your local SS office (you can have 7%, 10%, 12% or 22% withheld). Note your wife’s tax obligation for this year will be less because she will not get SS

benefits for all of 2025.
The other thing you are concerned about is whether your income will be counted when determining if your wife will be subject to Social Security’s “Annual Earnings Test” and the answer to that is “no.” At her current earnings level (about \$5,600), your wife is well below the annual earnings limit (\$23,400 for 2025) for those collecting early Social Security benefits. So, the AET will not apply and will not reduce your wife’s monthly Social Security benefit. FYI, if her earnings did exceed the annual earnings limit, it is true that some of the resulting penalty would be recovered after she reaches her full FRA of 67.
Note the distinction between “taxation of SS benefits” and the “annual earnings test” for those collecting early benefits. Taxation of benefits is always based on your joint income when filing married/jointly, but the Annual Earnings Test looks only at your wife’s personal work earnings until she reaches her FRA.
As I expect you already know, by claiming now (at age 62 plus), your wife’s monthly SS retirement benefit will be permanently reduced (by about 26%). Until you later claim your SS benefit, your wife will receive her reduced personal SS retirement amount. But, when you claim, her benefit amount will be reassessed to see if she is also entitled to an incremental amount as your wife. If her SS entitlement at her FRA (even though she claimed at 62+) is less than 50% of your FRA entitlement, then her benefit will increase. However, she will not get the full 50% of your FRA entitlement because she claimed her own SS retirement benefit before her FRA (more likely, she will get about 34% of your FRA entitlement).
In the end, you really did not make a mistake by filing for your wife’s Social Security to start now. By the time you personally apply at age 70, your wife will have collected about

SECURITY, page 5

Corrections policy

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

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

OPINION



GUEST COLUMN

Sweet potatoes get my vote

My dad was a “meat and a very good kind of guy. Mashed, baked or fried, potatoes were his thing.
Growing up, we usually had potatoes most nights for dinner. Since I have been an adult, I don’t eat potatoes very often at all.
I often wonder if that particular Irish gene missed a generation, since I prefer the sweet potato over the regular potato any day of the week. Read on to learn all about this nutritional powerhouse.
According to www.nutritiondata.com, sweet potatoes are “low in sodium, and very low in saturated fat and cholesterol. They are also a good source of dietary fiber, vitamin B6 and potassium, source of vitamin A, vitamin C and manganese.”
If these facts aren’t reason enough to try adding this veggie to your garden this growing season, delight in the fact that it is also a very pretty vine!
In fact, once I grew “sweet potato vine” in the planter boxes at Old Sturbridge Village. I didn’t know at the time that the variety I was growing also produced bountiful tubers. It was one of those obvious things that I just didn’t put together.
It’s kind of funny that when I attempted to grow them on purpose at home, they were an utter failure. By the time I peeled the thumb-size roots, there was literally nothing left to eat.
It is time for a refresher on sweet potato culture.
Sweet potatoes require a long growing season – somewhere between 90-150 days. The tender shoots are cold sensitive, and must be planted into the ground after all danger of frost has passed. In our area we use Memorial Day as our “frost-free date.”
Then, the edible root, **GARDEN**, page 5

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer



Male and female cardinal

I received an email from a Worthington resident, who reported the one male “red bird” in his yard all winter.
He said, “I feel like I know him and throw seeds to a special place he likes. His habit of showing up in the dim light of dusk and dawn almost makes him shine. He’s real quiet right now, but I really look forward to hearing him as it warms up.”
The red bird is also known as the northern cardinal. The male cardinal is bright red with black around the base of its red beak. The female is grayish brown above with buffy color below. Her beak is reddish and she has dark around her bill, but not as black as the male.
Both sexes have crests and are 8 ½ inches long. Although the Worthington resident said the cardinal was quiet now, soon he will sing a series of clear repeated whistles that vary and sound like “whoit whoit whoit, cheer, cheer, cheer.” The call is a metallic “chip.” Both male and female sing.
The female cardinal lays two to five buff white eggs with dark marks in a nest of twigs, bark strips, vines, leaves, rootlets and paper lined with fine grass and hair. They build their nest in dense shrubbery or among branches of small trees.
Bird watchers may witness mate feeding, a common ritual between a breeding pair. The male picks up a seed and brings it to the female. They touch beaks and his mate takes the offered seed. Mate feeding continues through egg laying and incubation.
Cardinals come to feeders. They feed either on the ground and come to platform style feeders. They prefer sunflower seeds, safflower seeds and cracked corn.
Tuesday morning I saw a female cardinal in a lilac bush. I love to see the male cardinal perched on a snow covered branch or ground especially after newly fallen snow. I have a pair of cardinals, which I usually see early in the morning or at dusk.
BACKYARD, page 5

Red-winged blackbirds
The Worthington resident saw a red-winged blackbird at his feeder and heard them on snow shoe recent hike by a beaver pond. He said, “They don’t sound very confident and I wonder what they find down there with the pond totally frozen and the cattails denuded by the wind.” He said, “The arrival of redwings is exciting for me, as I consider them our first migratory returns.”
Bald eagle
In his email, the same resident wrote about seeing a bald eagle. He said, “Two weeks ago driving along the East Branch in Cummington, I saw an eagle lite in a dead tree, break off a small branch and fly off, hopefully to a new or repaired nest. It sure didn’t feel like spring then and even today [written March3] I had zero degrees this morning.” He also reports pretty good numbers of goldfinches at his feeder along

Election letters to the editor welcome

The Country Journal welcomes readers to participate in this year’s election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Country Journal, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to countryjournal@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by **noon Friday** to be considered for the following Thursday’s newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.
Campaign news
As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor’s Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.
Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Country Journal.

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OPINION

HILLTOWN HISTORY

‘Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living,’ Mother Jones’ war cry

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Finding myself in possession of a fine metal button assist device with the name Childs Holyoke stamped on it led me to quite a fascinating journey into some mill history.

The compelling photo that clinched the topic showed a woman sorting rags to be recycled into fabric in the early 1900s. The caption read that many rags came from hospital wards and were infected with disease. Horrors, did the woman know that? Were there any safety precautions taken to protect her from this? This was just the kind of injustice that Mother Jones would champion.

Who was Mother Jones? She was a labor activist who encouraged workers to protest poor and unsafe working conditions and to demand a living wage for the factory work they did. Holyoke was an “Irish Depot” for immigrant workers looking for work as America industrialized and grew factories instead of farms.

Mother Jones was born in Cork, Ireland in 1830 and christened Mary Harris. She saw first hand the starvation and poverty of the Irish people as the potato crop failed in 1845. Her family fled to Toronto, Canada to escape the famine. Mary learned dressmaking skills and was trained to be a teacher.

She taught in Michigan and Chicago before moving to Memphis, Tennessee. Here she married George Jones in 1861, a foundry worker and member of the International Iron Molders Union. They had four children. A yellow fever epidemic struck Memphis in 1867 and killed George and all four of her children. The tragedy left Mary Jones a grieving widow mourning her losses and without income. The Union supported her for a time.

She moved to Chicago



This button hole assist device has Childs Holyoke stamped on it.



Mother Jones is shown in her typical black dress which she customarily wore.

and opened a dressmaking shop. Calamity visited her again, the great Chicago fire of 1871 burned her shop down. She had survived famine, a plague, the loss of her family and now the destruction of her business. She knew only hard work would save her. And work she did for the next 25 years. She became good at organizing workers by the turn of the century. She was paid a stipend by the United Mine Workers Union to increase membership, which she did tripling membership from ten thousand to three hundred thousand. She wore a black old fashioned dress and urged workers to join the union. Workers referred to her as Mother Jones. She organized the wives into mop and broom brigades that developed in them a sense of support for their working husbands. Her mantra was that strong working families needed decent pay and working conditions.

Mother Jones led a march of mill children from Philadelphia to President Theodore Roosevelt’s summer home on Long Island in 1903. The children aged 12-14 years walked to new towns and staged rallies with music, skits and speeches advocating for better working conditions in the evening. This kept her and the move-

ment in the news all summer long.

She was effective at getting people to think about how factory management was exploiting workers. She was by far the most charismatic organizer for The United Mine Workers Union. She attended strikes for economic justice for the working poor. It was a time when wages shrunk, working hours increased and there was no insurance for unemployment, health care or old age.

She was financially supported by the Socialist Party briefly. She worked to help striking garment workers in Chicago, bottle washers in Milwaukee breweries, Pittsburgh steelworkers, El Paso streetcar operators and Calumet copper miners. She shone a light on horrifying accident and mortality rates in the mining industry and opposed obligatory “Company housing” and exclusive use of the “Company store” for workers.

She defended Industrial Workers of the World leaders accused of causing riots, violence and murder in their attempts to unionize miners and railroad workers. She lived out West for a time and she was appalled at the events in Ludlow, Colorado. Coal miners struck against poor labor conditions. The Colorado National Guard and



This is a Lewis Hines photo of an overseer of child workers at a bobbin winding machine in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

private soldiers attacked the tent colony where the miners lived and 21 people were killed, wives and children among them.

The miners retaliated, destroying property and fighting with the National Guard. John D. Rockefeller Jr. was part owner of the mining company and Mother Jones spoke out against “oily John” for his exploitation of the miners. Congress and President Wilson demanded an investigation.

The miners were vindicated and unions gained a

Child Labor in Holyoke in 1879

Child Labor in Holyoke in 1879						
age	totals	Lyman	Hadley	Merrick	Alpaca	Hampden
10	5	1	0	2	0	2
11	13	2	1	1	1	1
12	37	10	2	8	5	4
13	49	8	4	8	6	4
14	181	80	7	14	18	28
15	221	70	24	24	26	33
16	32	10	6	2	1	0
total	538	181	44	59	57	72

This is a work chart of child laborers in five mills in Holyoke dated 1879.



Mother Jones is shown in a library.
Submitted photos

of canals that powered the many factories that produced paper, textiles, steam boilers, cutlery, wire and more. They made up 1/3 of Holyoke’s population of 5,000 in 1855. There were also German and French Canadian immigrants located here, but the Irish were the most numerous living in the “Patch” in one room shanties.

Childs was not a mill, but a Holyoke department store that must have sold or given the button assist device out, it was not a mill as I had thought.

GARDEN

aka the sweet potato, must be harvested before the first frost of fall. By my records, the first frost usually occurs in early to mid-October.

This equates to 100 days bare minimum of growing time.

You can purchase plants through the mail or try sprouting your own from sweet potatoes purchased from the grocery store.

Dick Raymond, author of my favorite gardening book of all time, “Garden Way’s Joy of Gardening” (Storey Publishing \$24.95) has some great tips for doing this: Seven or eight weeks prior to Memorial Day, simply cut the spuds in half

lengthwise and lay them down in moist peat moss in a shallow tray. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a sunny window until sprouting occurs.

Slips should be separated and planted about six inches deep, twelve to fifteen inches apart from one another.

He advises to water well for the first two weeks; after that sweet potato plants are reportedly somewhat drought tolerant. When fertilizing, choose a formulation that is a bit lower in nitrogen, otherwise you will have lots of vines at the expense of sweet potatoes.

Dig up your bounty on a dry day, being extra careful

not to damage the skin. Don’t leave them exposed to the sun for more than an hour and don’t wash them either.

Picky, aren’t they?

Fresh sweet potatoes aren’t all that sweet – a curing period of two weeks in the dark at 70-80 and at high humidity will bring out the great flavor we are accustomed to. Long-term storage should be at temperatures around 60 degrees.

To make sweet potato fries simply cut the root into thick wedges then toss them with seasoned olive oil (or a favorite salad dressing). Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees for one hour, flipping occasionally. Some ketch-

up as a dip may help reluctant kids to give the “funny orange French fries” a try.

My dad is probably looking down and wishing I did an article on good, old fashioned russets. Sorry, Dad, but Happy St. Patrick’s Day anyway!

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.

from page 4

SECURITY

\$46,000 in Social Security benefits which, I’m sure, will be helpful. And only a relatively modest amount of income tax will be paid on her Social Security benefits.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and

does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

from page 4

BACKYARD

with the winter regulars.

Brimfield birds

On Feb. 19, I received an email from a Brimfield resident, who sends emails on a regular basis. He said, “Hope you survived our recent bout of nasty weather. Our driveway was cleared on Sunday evening and subsequently

turned into a skating rink. Fortunately I had lots of sand and rock salt and a little calcium chloride on hand. Using all of that, I was able to get our cars up and out of the driveway. Of course I had to get the frozen garage doors unstuck before I could get the cars out of the garage.”

He took part in the

Great Backyard Bird Count of Saturday and Sunday. He said, “I had nine species Saturday, things got a little more interesting on Sunday when there were 15 species seen including an adult sharp-shinned hawk that chased some junco into a quince bush (it missed) and a Carolina wren.”

Bluebirds

He had a pair of eastern bluebirds earlier in the day on Feb. 18 and later five bluebirds showed up, two males and three females. He said, “That’s the most we have ever seen in the yard. Previously we had seen a single bird a few times and a pair investigated a nesting box one year

but were chased away by house wrens.”

Non-bird critters

During the snow/ice storm in February, my daughter and I saw a wet opossum digging in the snow for seeds while clearling my walk and driveway. On March 1, two of my grandchildren and I saw a

porcupine in a tree while driving on our road.

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



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GREAT BARRINGTON

Group hike to be held at Berkshire Street Railway site

GREAT BARRINGTON – Berkshire Street Railway Great Barrington trolley line will be the location of the Saturday, March 22 at 10 a.m. group hike sponsored by the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers.

Participants should park at 817 South Main St., at the Great Barrington Historical Society. This hike is easy to moderate and three miles in and back. Gary Reveille, published author and historian, will lead a walk on the historic Berkshire Street Railway from Great Barrington to Egremont.

At its peak in the early decades of the 20th century, the Berkshire Street Railway operated an electric trolley car system that was one of the longest in the United States. The company ran trolleys within four states, from Canaan, Connecticut through numerous Berkshire towns to Bennington, Vermont and Hoick Falls, New York.

Two spur lines brought service from Great Barrington to South Egremont and from Lee to Huntington. The trolley line had snowplows to clear the rails before most towns had highway plow trucks. As the automobile became more affordable and popular, travel by electric rail declined. The company was further challenged by political/legal problems, strikes, coal shortages for generating electric power and several severe winters. The final trolley entered Great Barrington on Jan. 28, 1930.

Reveille is the author of seven books including a best-selling history entitled “Old Route 7, Along the Berkshire Highway. He has over 40 years of experience as a writer, editor, author, photographer, publisher and newspaper columnist. He was formerly a senior editor and editorial project supervisor for Hasbro Games. He has worked on



At one time Main Street in Great Barrington the Berkshire Street Railway operated electric trolley car system.

Submitted photographer

numerous projects for Milton Bradley, Hasbro, Parker Brothers, Disney, National Geographic, Antiques Roadshow and many others.

He is a columnist for the online Berkshire Edge newspaper where he produces the popular “Then

and Now” photo history column. An avid local historian and researcher, he is a member of the Great Barrington Historical Commission and serves on the Board of Directors of the Great Barrington Historical Society as well as the Upper

Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. Reveille resides with his family in Lee.

The group will hike rain or shine. Registration is required. People should register per car load by visiting [https://westernmasshill-](https://westernmasshilltownhikers.ticketleap.com)

[townhikers.ticketleap.com](https://westernmasshilltownhikers.ticketleap.com) Maps and bottled water provided. Well behaved dogs are allowed. The event is volunteer lead. Suggested donation is \$15. More details are available by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com.

People may email westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com or call/text 413-302-0312 if they have any questions. As always be prepared for rocks, mud and roots, bring trekking poles.

For those that want to hike every weekend year-round should consider becoming a member of Hilltown Hikers. They can sign up by visiting www.HilltownHikers.com. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Tees, hoodies, hats, patches and bags will be for sale by donation at the event. See all our events, maps, blog and photos at www.hilltownhikers.com Please keep our beautiful places clean and carry in and carry out.

CUMMINGTON

Friday Night Cafe holds ‘Ashfield Night’ March 14

CUMMINGTON – It will be an “Ashfield Night,” at the cafe on Friday March 14 at 7 p.m. featuring fascinating stories from Ashfield’s past and a whimsical mix of folk and Americana music from Ashfield musician Brendan Leowolf.

The evening begins with he Ashfield Historical Society Junior Curators reading from the Society’s collection of journals and letters written by 19th and early 20th century Ashfield young people. It will be a compelling glimpse into Ashfield’s history, as their words from over a century ago are brought to life in the voices of today’s youth.

The music will go from 8-9 p.m.. Leowolf’s songs are a mix of outlaw country and Americana, with a dash of folk whimsy for good measure. He accompanies himself on guitar with percussion and harmonica. He may have a cat head on his kick drum, but he admits to becoming more of a dog person.

The show is from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church in beautiful downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District.

The event is free, donations are appreciated. Snacks are provided and bring your own drinks. The show will take place in

the intimate Vestry space. Masks are welcome and encouraged. Once again this event 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.

WILLIAMSBURG

Meekins Library lists events

WILLIAMSBURG – The Meekins Library, 2 Williams St., hosts the Hampshire County Food Policy Council’s Community Story Archive:Sharing Stories, Creating Change a collection of food stories sharing community wisdom for a better future

It will be on display in the Neil Hammer Gallery

in the Hawks~Hayden Community Room at the Meekins Library through the month of March. On Saturday, March 15 at noon Representative Lindsay Sabadosa will hold a Town Hall. People should bring questions.

On Saturday, March 22 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. people may join Makayla Skubel in making No-Sew

Sock Friends.

They will earn how to make sock animals without sewing by upcycling humble socks into whimsical and endearing soft animal sculptures. Use a sock from the library or bring an old favorite.

People may call 413-268-7472 or visit www.meekins-library.org for more information.

OTIS

‘Traveling hairdresser’ will be at Council on Aging April 7

OTIS – The Council on Aging has Linda Lewis, the “traveling hairdresser,” coming to Otis on Monday, April 7.

Appointments are available during the COA regular hours from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

The charge for Otis residents is \$10 and for all others

is \$15.

People may call the Council on Aging for an appointment at 413-269-0100 extension 5.

WEST STOCKBRIDGE

MassDOT announces bridge painting

WEST STOCKBRIDGE – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces that bridge painting operations will take place on I-90 eastbound at mile marker 1.3 in West Stockbridge.

Work is scheduled now through Friday, March 14 between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. each day.

Lane closures will be in effect during these hours. At least one travel lane will remain open at all times and

police details will be present to assist with traffic control.

Drivers traveling through the affected area should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. Appropriate signage and messaging will be in place to guide drivers through the work zone. All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to:\

Download the Mass511

mobile app or visit www.mass511.com to view live cameras, travel times, real-time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions. Dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions. Follow @MassDOT on X, formerly known as Twitter, to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

CHESTERFIELD

FCC to hold coffeehouse March 23

CHESTERFIELD – Irish, folk, soft rock and bluegrass music will be featured at the first coffeehouse held at First Congregational Church in Chesterfield on Sunday, March 23 from 2-4 p.m.

This will be a soft opening for an event, which orga-

nizers hope to offer monthly except for June, July and August on the fourth Sunday of the month. A free-will offering will be collected at each table.

Local area musicians The Rolling Scones, AJ and Sylvia Lapinski, Geneva Clark and

Jeff and Zoe Greenwood, the Bluegrass Sweethearts, will perform.

Coffee, tea, cider, cocoa and homemade goodies will be available for a small fee. People may call Zoe Greenwood, 413-358-6567 for more information.

WORTHINGTON

Town Clerk announces town election informational

WORTHINGTON – The Town Clerk announces the annual town election will be held on Saturday, May 3.

Nomination papers are now available from the town clerk by calling 413-238-5577, extension 110 to make arrangements. Officers to be elected by ballot and the current holders of the office are: Select Board for three years Amy Wang, Select Board for one year Stephen Smith (resignation), Assessor

for three years Richard Wagner, Board of Health for three years Camille Smith, Cemetery Commissioner for five years Willard Brown, Cemetery Commissioner for five years Cindy Manley, Finance Committee for three years Michael Krezmien, Planning Board for five years Kathy Ford, School Committee for three years Cai Walkowiak and School Committee for three years Alison Todd.

Nomination papers must be signed by 21 registered voters and must be returned to the Town Clerk by Friday, March 28. The last day to object or withdraw nomination papers is Tuesday, April 1The last day to register to vote for the Town Election and Annual Town Meeting is Wednesday, April 23. Mail in voter registration form is available on the Post Officer Counter and at Town Hall.

COA hosts Grab and Go meal

WORTHINGTON – The March Senior Grab and Go meal will be on Thursday, March 20 from

from noon-1 p.m .at Town Hall.

The menu will be a choice of tomato and basil quiche or salmon and dill sauce with rice, zucchini, corn casserole and fresh fruit. To reserve a meal, seniors

should call or text 413-238-1999 by Sunday, March 16 and tell their name, number of meals and the name of the person also receiving the meal and their meal choice.

New enrollee forms are available at the Town Hall bulletin Board and the Council On Aging bulletin board at Corners Grocery. People can also fill one out

when they come to pick up their meal. They should bring a bag to carry their meals to the car. If people have any questions, they may call Phyllis Dassatti 413-238-5962 of the Worthington COA.

The meal is sponsored by the Worthington Council On Aging and Highland Valley Services.

Conwell holds pancake breakfast

WORTHINGTON – R.H. Conwell Elementary School, 147 Huntington Road, will host a pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 15 from 9-11 a.m. in

the school cafeteria.

This breakfast supports the fifth and sixth grade nature classroom trip.

Cost is \$10 for two pancakes and sausage and

\$7 for on pancake and sausage.

There also will be bake sale.

People may call the school at 413-238-5856.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Colleges and universities announce Dean’s List

DEAN’S LIST
Emmanuel College
Boston
Bushra Khan of Westfield, biology and health sciences major
Ryan Lambert of Westfield, psychology and counseling and health psychology major
Brandon Shuman of Westfield, finance major

Lydia Donatelli of West Chesterfield, nursing major
Rowan McDonald of Westfield, nursing major

College of Holy Cross
Worcester
Olivia Lawry of Westfield, class of 2026

University of Twin Cities
Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota
Kathryn Barrett of Sandisfield, non degree College of Continuing and Professional Studies

Barr inducted into honor society

WILLIMANTIC, CT – Margaret Barr of Easthampton, a sophomore majoring in health science at Eastern Connecticut State University was

inducted into Eastern’s chapter of the Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society on March 2 in the Student Center Betty Tipton Room.

The inductees were chosen based on their commitment to leadership within the campus and in their own communities.

MassDOT and MAPFRE hold roadway safety contest

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation, in collaboration with global nonprofitFundación MAPFRE, announces the launch of the third annual roadway safety public service contest for Massachusetts high school students.

The contest, which was launched in 2022 as part of Fundación 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.

“MassDOT is excited to renew our partnership with Fundación MAPFRE for the third annual roadway safety education contest,” said Transportation Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbits-Nutt. “Engaging young drivers in safety education is a crucial step in our mission to enhance road safety, and we look forward to seeing the innovative ideas that students will present this year. Their participation is vital to our efforts to create a future free of roadway injuries and fatalities.”

“While statistics show a decline in road-related fatalities among young drivers over the past several decades, it remains the leading cause of death for that group,” said Jaime Tamayo, Chief Representative of Fundación MAPFRE in the United States and CEO of MAPFRE USA. “It is inspiring to watch students deliver a serious message in creative ways to reinforce the importance of safe driving habits. This contest represents a great example of how peer-to-peer engagement can encourage change.”

To enter the contest, high schools can visit <https://www.fundacionmapfre.org/en/look-both-ways/>. The deadline for contest submissions is Friday, March 21. Students with the winning submission will work with the Boston Creative Communications Agency to produce the spot, which is anticipated to air in the spring before prom and graduation season. Additionally, the winning students’ school will receive a \$3,000 prize provided by Fundación MAPFRE.

1	2	3	4			5	6	7		8	9	10	11
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16					17		18			19			
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				39	40	41		42	43				
			44	45				46					
49						50				51	52	53	54
56						57				58			
59						60				61			
62						63					64		

- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Unsheared sheep
5. Rock TV channel
8. Streetcar
12. Concerning
14. Expression of recognition
15. Greek goddess of youth
16. An iPad is one
18. Adult beverage
19. Manning and Wallach are two
20. Makes a petty verbal attack
21. Tyrion Lannister's nickname
22. Pointed ends of pens
23. Wristwatches
26. Body part
30. Made a mistake
31. Adjusted
32. Turkish honorific title
33. Yell
34. Historic Alabama city
39. Cub
42. Type of sea bass dish
44. To call (archaic)
46. Unfortunate
47. Separate oneself from others
49. Hero sandwiches
50. Former OSS
51. Open spaces in a forest
56. Innermost brain membranes
57. Fortune
58. Hunting expedition
59. Doomed queen Boleyn
60. Peyton's little brother
61. Type of wrap
62. Scottish tax
63. Soviet Socialist Republic
64. An increase in price or value
- CLUES DOWN**
1. Works of body art
2. Abba __, Israeli politician
3. A desert in Asia
4. Eat greedily
5. Doomed French queen
6. Beat
7. One who survives on blood
8. As a consequence
9. Counted on
10. Acquired Brain Injury
Behavior Science
11. Unclean
13. One who does not drink
17. Wild ox of the Malay Archipelago
24. __ student, learns healing
25. Bacterial skin infection
26. Expresses surprise
27. What one says on a wedding day
28. Crony
29. Where you entered the world (abbr.)
35. Unit of length
36. Side that is sheltered from the wind
37. More (Spanish)
38. Autonomic nervous system
40. Violent troublemakers, originally in Paris
41. Statements that something is untrue
42. Greek alphabet letter
43. Suspends from above
44. Popular types of cigars
45. Girls
47. U.S. philosopher and logician
48. Nocturnal hoofed animal
49. Relaxing spaces
52. From a distance
53. Form of Persian
54. Amounts of time
55. Trigonometric function

THIS WEEK’S HOROSCOPES

- ARIES**
Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, you are in a leadership position this week, whether you realize it or not. Your confidence may inspire others to follow your lead. Just be sure not to micromanage.
- CANCER**
Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, you might be craving an emotional connection this week. You may feel drawn to someone who shares your values and outlook. Pay attention to signs that may guide you.
- LIBRA**
Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, you and your partner might come up with plans to improve your living situation or finances this week. Collaboration is really the best way to tackle this.
- CAPRICORN**
Dec 22/Jan 20
With so much creativity flowing, you might want to express yourself through hobbies or an art project. Approach challenges in new ways and the solutions will come.
- TAURUS**
Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, stability is important to you. This week you may find yourself craving a deeper connection. Explore the different types of relationships in your life and make a plan.
- LEO**
Jul 23/Aug 23
Now is the time to push forward with creative projects or ideas at work. You might receive recognition for your efforts, so don't worry about the spotlight if it happens.
- SCORPIO**
Oct 23/Nov 22
Scorpio, a transformation could take place this week. You might feel like stepping into a new version of yourself and figuring out the best path to personal growth.
- AQUARIUS**
Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, you might find yourself taking a step back at work to focus on personal matters. This doesn't mean you are slacking off. It just means you need to shift priorities for a bit.
- GEMINI**
May 22/Jun 21
This is an excellent week for networking and making new friends, Gemini. Just be careful of overcommitting, as it's easy to fill up your plate with too much to handle.
- VIRGO**
Aug 24/Sept 22
Don't lose sight of the bigger picture, Virgo. For too much time you have focused on the small details that are getting in the way of the bigger plan. A mentor might offer guidance.
- SAGITTARIUS**
Nov 23/Dec 21
Stay focused on what matters most, Sagittarius. You will find that most things will fall into place. Prioritize your health and finances this week.
- PISCES**
Feb 19/Mar 20
Avoid any miscommunications by expressing yourself clearly and concisely, Pisces. Focus on strengthening your communication and connection with others in the days to come.

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

SUDOKU

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

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

answers	E	S	I	R		H	S	S		S	S	E	S
	N	V	H	V	S		I	L	E		E	N	N
	I	R	V	V	V	S	V	V	H		S	V	I
	S	E	D	V	L	G	V	I	O		S	B	N
							E	N	I	L	N	V	V
	S	S	E	L	V	H		E	P	E	L	C	
	N	V	E	L	I	H	O		D	V	L		
	V	W	L	E	S					V	L	L	O
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	E	B	E	H		V	H	V		L	O	N	B

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

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&
Tractor Parts

CHESTER

Hamilton Memorial Library hosts fun eventsssss

CHESTER – The Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main Road, had a lively full house for their Thursday Story and Fun Time with 20 people in attendance.

The children and their parents are thriving with the social interaction and using their fine motor skills during craft projects. This week’s book theme and craft was about snakes. Next week the theme will be giraffes and library staff has a cute stories and a giraffe craft planned.

Feeling overwhelmed with clutter in your space? Do you have trouble letting go of mementos or family keepsakes? Would you benefit from some clever ideas on how to store your belongings? Hamilton Memorial Library welcomes guest presenter, Keely Schoeny on Saturday, March 22 at 11a.m. She will share her expertise

in helping others declutter and organize their home. RSVPs are appreciated! 413-354-7808.



Children learned about snakes at Story and Fun Time and made a snake craft. Submitted photos



Children enjoy socializing at the Thursday Story and Fun Time at the Hamilton Memorial Library.



This is a photos of the monthly movie night. The movie was “The Secret Life of Pets.”

BECKET

Athenaeum lists March events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 336 Main St., will hold movie night for adults with book discussion on Saturday, March 29 from 5:30-10:30 p.m.

The new motion picture “Wicked” will be shown at 6 p.m. with discussion at 8:45 p.m. of the book Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West” by Gregory Maguire. Attendees are encourage to read, but not required, to read the novel prior to the event. Copies of the book are available

for checkout at the Becket Athenaeum.

Popcorn, candy and non-alcoholic beverages are provided. Registration is appreciated by visiting bwlibrary.org/wicked.

“Spring Forward: Nature Journaling for the New Season” with Lara Tupper will take place Sunday, March 30 from 11 a.m.-12:30 ;p.m. at the Becket Athenaeum. In this nature journaling workshop, participants will celebrate spring and pause to consider the effects of the equinox

on the body and mind. They will briefly circle the library grounds weather permitting, hone their senses and discuss methods for keeping a nature journal at home. People should bring a notebook and pen and come prepared to go outside.

Refreshments will be served. Space is limited and registration is required by visiting bwlibrary.org/spring. This program is made possible by a grant from National Endowment or the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Chester Municipal Electric Light Department
LEGAL NOTICE

The Chester Municipal Electric Light Department has filed the following rates with the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities. These rates cancel previous rates filed with the MDPU March 25, 2020:

Residential Service:	
Customer Charge	\$6.60
Transmission Charge	\$0.02445/kWh
Distribution Charge	\$0.12246/kWh
Energy Charge	\$0.05748/kWh

MDPU No. 53 Residential Service Schedule
MDPU No. 54 Commercial Service Schedule
MDPU No. 55 Municipal Rate Schedule
MDPU No. 56 Large Power Rate Schedule
MDPU No. 57 Street Lighting Rate Schedule
MDPU No. 58 Purchases Power Cost Adjustment Charge Schedule

These new rates will be effective April 1, 2025. AIL rates are available at the CMELD office, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester MA 01011. (413) 354-7811.

Electric Light Board
Chester Municipal Electric Light Department

03/13/2025

TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG
Zoning Board of Appeals
Haydenville, MA 01039
LEGAL NOTICE

Public Hearings will be held starting at **5:00 PM on Tuesday, April 1, 2025**, in the Williamsburg Town Offices, 141 Main St., Haydenville, MA to consider the following applications:

5:00 P.M.- The application of David Nehring and Susan Fortgang of 16 Walpole Rd., Assessors Map G, Lots 65.0 and 65.A and Map K, Lot 14 Williamsburg, MA for amendment of the Special Permit granted Nov. 22, 2016, specifically changing hours of operation.

5:30 P.M.- The application of Aruna Goldstein and James Law of 16 Pine St., Assessors Map K, Lot 113.0 to enlarge a pre-existing non-conforming garage on a pre-existing, non-conforming lot as required by Section 12.0e of the Williamsburg Zoning Bylaw.

6:00 P.M.- The application of National Grid on land owned by Jacqueline and Donald Lawton of 39 Goshen Rd., Assessors Map C, Lot 129 to install three wireless panel antennas on existing cellular tower and a new equipment platform within the existing platform.

Kelly Blaser, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
03/13, 03/20/2025

Town of Goshen
Conservation Commission
Notice of Public Meeting

The Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting under the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Chapter 131 Section 40) on **Monday, April 7, 2025 at 6:30 PM** at the Goshen Town Offices to review a **Request for Determination** filed by Jeffrey Dan, 19 Lake Drive, Goshen, MA. The work to be reviewed is to modify rear porch and add deck

03/13/2025

Town of Williamsburg
Planning Board Legal Notice

The Williamsburg Planning Board is herewith giving notice that it will hold a public hearing on **Monday March 24, 2025 at 7:00PM** at the Town Office Building, 141 Main Street, Haydenville, MA. The hearing is to consider proposed changes to Zoning Bylaw Section 9.1 on the topic of Accessory Apartments, also known as Accessory Dwelling Units. The changes are to align Williamsburg’s zoning with Chapter 150, Section 7 and 8 of the Massachusetts Acts of 2024. These changes will make Accessory Apartments permissible by right in all zones and owner occupancy will no longer be required. The full text of the

proposed changes will be available in the Town Clerk’s Office and on the town website www.burgy.org

Stephen Smith
Planning Board Chair
03/06, 03/13/2025

Town of Chester
Bids for Three Year Contract
Chester Transfer Station

The Town of Chester is accepting bids for the Chester Transfer Station Three Year Contract for Rubbish Hauling and Disposal, Bulky Waste Hauling and Disposal and Recycling Hauling for July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028. This includes rental of a 40-yard rubbish compactor container and a 30-yard open top bulky waste container. Bids are also being accepted for providing an open top 30-yard container for scrap metal and the hauling of ferrous scrap. Please mail and/or email bids by **March 31, 2025** to Boardofhealth@townofchester.net Town of Chester Board of Health, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA 01011.

03/13/2025

TOWN OF CHESTER
Public Hearing
Monday, March 24, 2025
6:00 PM
Town Hall
15 Middlefield Road
Chester, MA
Proposed FY25 CDBG Application

The Town of Chester, in association with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a public hearing regarding the FY25 Community Development Block Grant Program. The hearing will take place at **6:00 PM on Monday, March 24th, 2025**, in person at the Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA 01011. If the meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, the hearing will take place during the rescheduled Board of Selectmen meeting.

The public is encouraged to attend this hearing to discuss the town’s FY25 application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for up to \$850,000 in available Community Development Block Grant Funds. All persons with questions or comments regarding the grant application will

have an opportunity to be heard. Those unable to attend can send written comments to the Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA 01011, Attn: Donald Humason.

The Town is encouraging input on community needs and projects which would benefit from grant funding. Projects currently being considered include an additional phase of infrastructure improvements on Prospect Street and Soisalo Road. Additional projects may be discussed and may be included in the grant application Additional community needs that can be addressed through the Block Grant program will also be discussed.

Persons who require special accommodations for the hearing should contact the town at least one week prior to the hearing date at (413) 354-7760. For further information contact Joseph Hagopian at PVPC at (413) 781-6045 or jhagopian@pvpc.org.

03/13/2025

TOWN OF HUNTINGTON
Public Hearing
Wednesday, March 26, 2025
5:00 PM
Town Hall
24 Russell Road, Huntington
Proposed FY25 CDBG Application

The Town of Huntington, in association with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a public hearing regarding the FY25 Community Development Block Grant Program. The hearing will take place at **5:00 PM on Wednesday, March 26th, 2025, in person at the Town Hall, 24 Russell Road, Huntington, MA 01050**. If the meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, the hearing will take place during the rescheduled Selectboard meeting.

The public is encouraged to attend this hearing to discuss the town’s FY25 application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for up to \$850,000 in available Community Development Block Grant Funds. All persons with questions or comments regarding the grant application will have an opportunity to be heard. Those unable to attend can send written comments to the Huntington Selectboard, 24 Russell

Road, PO Box 430, Huntington, MA 01050, Attn: Jennifer Pelouquin.

The Town is encouraging input on community needs and projects which would benefit from grant funding. Projects currently being considered include the phase II construction of the Stanton Avenue Infrastructure Improvement Project, Blandford Hill Infrastructure Improvement Project, and a Town ADA Self-Assessment. Additional projects may be discussed and may be included in the grant application.

Persons who require special accommodations for the hearing should contact the town at least one week prior to the hearing date at (413) 512-5200. For further information contact Sarah Maroney at PVPC at (413) 781-6045 or smaroney@pvpc.org.

03/06, 03/13/2025

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON
ZONING
BOARD OF APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold 2 public hearings on **March 25, 2025 beginning at 6:00 pm** in Stanton Hall.

The first Public Hearing is scheduled for 6:00 pm for the Special Permit Application of Greyson Dice Lyon of 11 Circuit Road North, West Yarmouth, MA to operate a tattoo shop for select clients at property he co-owns at

25 Allen Coit Road, Huntington, Parcel# 508-83-0.

The second Public Hearing is scheduled for 6:15 pm for the Special Permit Application of Jonathan Groff of 38 Russell Road to operate a new trailer sales, repair, parts and possibly rental business at 38 Russell Road (former Smith’s Sled Shop), Huntington, Parcel # H3-28-0.

Both Special Permit Applications will be available to view **by appointment** in the office of the Selectboard during regular business hours, as well as at the Public Hearings.

See a separate Planning Board Public Hearing Notice in next week’s paper for a Public Hearing the same evening for Zoning Bylaw changes.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON
03/06, 03/13/2025

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Country Journal

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



Tom Hoffman and Jim Moore sat with trail dogs, Cybel and Argie, during the pack class held by Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers.



The pack workshop was held at the historic Chester Railway Museum.



Liz and Stephanie show the difference between a waist pack and backpack. Submitted photos

Hikers offer backpack class

The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers presented on Sunday a Pack Class. The event was full of good gear advice with a complete go through of day packs and overnight packs presented by hike leader Stephanie Brown and volunteer Heather Baylis. A smartpack and the right basic gear including a headlamp, poncho, battery pack, whistle, compass, and first aid kit is where to start.

There were great tips and advice for everyone; because hiking should be fun, comfortable and safe. The hikers brought a lot of their gear so folks could try out packs and see what really is in the backpacks. The hikers said what were their preferences and tips and tricks. If hiking with a dog, hikers should bring water and treats for them too

They offers tips to make the trip safe and fun."Day hiking" means any hiking outing that can be done in one day. A day hike can be a

stroll around a town park or a four-hour trek up the nearest mountain. No matter how long or how far one goes, getting outdoors and experiencing nature offers mental and physical benefits.

A two-hour hike and a six-hour hike are different when it comes to preparation and gear. The longer and more remote the hike is, also taking the weather into account, the more clothing, gear, food and water hikers are going to want.

The best way to get a pack ready is to make a checklist. This really helps when it comes to overpacking too.

The ten essentials is the most common and they are:

- Navigation: map, compass, GPS device, personal locator beacon.
- Headlamp
- Sun protection: sunglasses or safety glasses
- First aid including bug spray
- Knife
- Fire starter or a lighter

- Shelter carried at all times like a bivy or emergency sleeping blanket
- Snacks
- Water or Gatorade (more than you think you may need)
- Clothes including a poncho or rain jacket and an extra pair of socks

I also bring a battery pack every time because extreme hot or cold drains a cell phone and if people are relying on it for their navigation it is a life saver. Always be prepared for the unexpected and be prepared because getting lost or caught in the rain is no fun. Relaxing and enjoying the beautiful hills is what the Hilltown Hikers are out there for.

The Hilltown Hikers thank everyone for coming out to yet another great workshop at the Chester Railway Station part of the Hilltown Hikers Educational Series. The Hilltown Hikers will be at the Littleville Fair in August.

Tips for Packing Your Backpack

Ready for an overnight hike?
Organization and easy access are key.

Store essentials such as sunscreen, a compass, maps and guidebooks in outer pockets.

Lighter Items such as sleeping mats and bags should remain at the bottom.

Put your tent in a waterproof bag and strap it to the outside.

Waterproof bags should be used to store items that must stay dry, such as spare clothing and your sleeping bag.

Pack rain gear at the top where you can get it quickly.

The heaviest items should sit between your shoulder blades and as close to your back as possible.

Store water bottles upright and outside the pack.

Keep first-aid items accessible.

How to pack gear makes a big difference in comfort on the trail.

Stephanie shows her Ultralite overnight pack and her day pack. There is a big difference.

Amid an assortment of packs, Heather shows how to filter water from a stream.

A jet boil warms food and makes tea and even coffee on an overnight trip.

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INFLATION

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July 26 **Perkins Cove for a Day**..... \$110

Share the Adventure with us soon!

For further information call Randall at (413) 436-5357 or email adventuretours@att.net or go to www.adventuretoursforwarren.com