

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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Easter Egg hunt brings smiles and fun



Bennett, age 3, holds the Easter basket he won with his mom, Courtney.



Milo Maisonet, age 3, was another Easter Basket winner. He is with his parents.



Huntington Recreation Committee's annual Easter egg hunt took place Sunday, March 29 at Pettis Field. Approximately 45 children participated. There were three lucky winners in each group, who won an Easter Basket.

Submitted photos

BLANDFORD

Select Board meets

Board approves clothing donation box

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Among other changes at the Select Board meetings, newly elected Chairman Jackie Coury opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

She said from here on at the first Monday meeting of the month there will be a moment of silence for members of the military. The board then approved a request from Parker McClaughlin, a Gateway Project 351 representative, to have a box for clothing donations in the Town Hall lobby. He is looking for clothing for size 12-14 for children and adults. Donations will go to Gateway or the Village Closet.

Highway Department

The board next called Highway Superintendent Ray Hultay and asked about the past due invoice for Gill Engineering. The account was paid, but the check never cashed. There was \$19,604.64 available and Gill Engineering knew the Beech Hill Road project was over budget by \$30,759. Hultay reported that Gill was pleased to have something, and a check was again written to the firm for \$19,604.64 and the account is considered complete. He is also looking for the board's signature for an approved Chapter 90 expense for a calcium/water trailer for the town's road. The board approved signing

SELECT BOARD, page 6

HUNTINGTON

Stanton Hall still in use despite recent boiler failure

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Despite a recent boiler failure at Stanton Hall, the building is still in operation this week thanks to assistance from Fox Excavating and Still Services.

Huntington Selectman John McVeigh said that the boiler had failed at some point over the weekend of March 21-22, caused by an issue with the pressure relief valve on the back. As a result, he estimated that the boiler room had about three feet of standing water that also caused drywall

damage.

Vicki Mayhew of the town's Community Events Committee had gone to Stanton Hall to work on materials for the upcoming Easter egg hunt and noticed there was no heat in the building. Her husband went down and discovered the boiler issue. McVeigh, who is the emergency contact for the building, was called and the fire department came to pump out the standing water.

Short term heating systems were quickly put into place. Fox Excavating brought in a diesel-fed inline heater that is set up

outdoors between Stanton Hall and Town Hall. McVeigh called the system remarkable in its efficiency and that there is no smell from the exhaust. Still Services hard wired electric heater blowers inside for nighttime use so that the outdoor heater can be shut off and not require fuel monitoring.

McVeigh said he had spoken with the insurance adjuster on Thursday, March 26 at the site. Restoration on this event will be covered by the town's insurance including

STANTON, page 3

HUNTINGTON

FinCom recommends debt exclusions

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Finance Committee members Eric Jensen and Bonnie Boguszewski met with the Huntington Select Board to advance a plan to move forward on three expensive purchases coming up for the town.

Chair Roger Booth, members Bill Hathaway and John McVeigh and Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin were all present at the Wednesday, March 25 meeting. Two weeks earlier, the police, highway and fire departments had made a case for debt exclusions to purchase a new cruiser (estimated at \$82,110), a new highway department truck, which Superintendent Brad

Curry said might be able to wait one or two more years and a new firetruck estimated at \$1,126,000.

Since that meeting, the Finance Committee met with the three department heads and brought forth a proposal for the Select Board this week. First priority, Jensen said, is to go out to bond for the new firetruck. After speaking with Curry, Jensen felt replacing the highway truck could wait a couple of years. The committee proposed paying cash for a new cruiser using a three pronged strategy: one pay a portion of the cost by the police detail fees



Sarah Moroney

that have been put into a special account for this purpose; two sell the cruiser they are replacing to another town for an estimated \$8,000 to \$10,000 and three paying the balance out of the town's capital stabilization account.

Police Chief Brian Kowal was invited in and asked if he could wait one more year for a replacement cruiser; he responded that they have put \$5,000 into it since July and it is showing its age. Booth proposed budgeting \$20,000 out of the

FINCOM, page 3



PAGE 8

Becket.....7	Classifieds.....10	Obituaries.....11	Schools & Youth.....8
Blandford.....6, 7	Goshen.....7	Opinion.....4, 5	Westfield.....12
Business Directory.....7	Hilltowns.....2	Pittsfield.....12	Worthington.....7
Chester.....7	Huntington.....3	Public notices.....11	
Chesterfield.....7	Northampton.....9	Puzzle Page.....9	



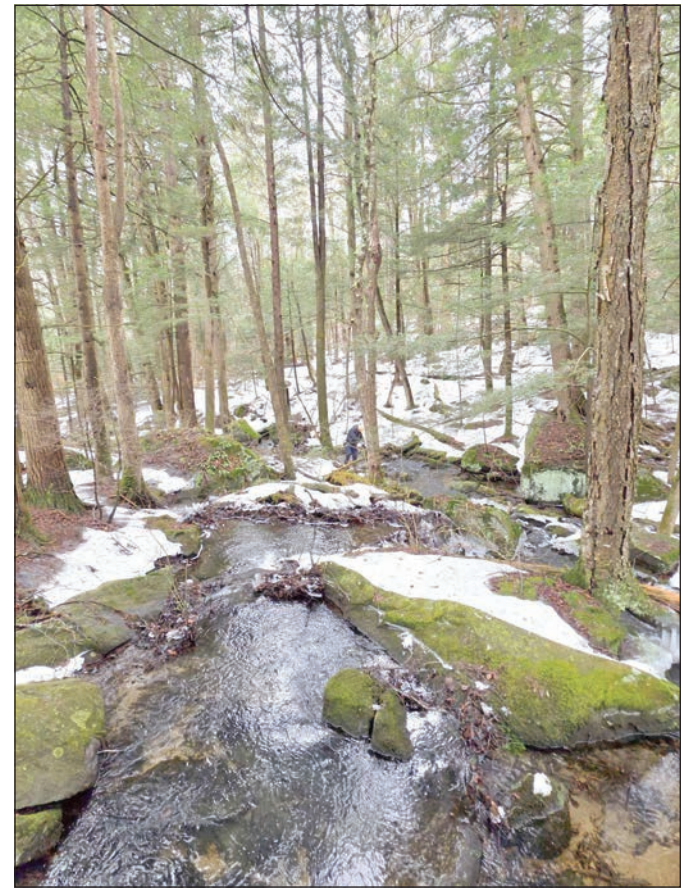
HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



There was still plenty of snow in Washington on Saturday.



Hilltown Hikers explore at the Geer family cellar hole.



Coles Brook is wild and natural.

Submitted photos

Group hike visits Coles Brook Preserve

A group hike Saturday was at the newest Hilltown Destination Coles Brook Preserve and narrated by Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers Director and Washington Historical Chair Tom Hoffman.

In the early 1980s, Roy Bryan and Susan Minnich

built a house deep in the forest here in Washington, Massachusetts, overlooking Coles Brook, a key tributary to the Westfield River. They constructed the house by hand, hauling all the materials in by carts, snowmobiles and ATVs because the driveway wasn't built until the early 2000s.

In their retirement, they decided to conserve their 60 acres of forest. In 2019, they sold the property to The Nature Conservancy and agreed that the house could be removed to fully rewild the land.

In late 2020, the house was taken down, allowing the forest to regrow in its

place and become part of TNC's Coles Brook Preserve. In 2024, TNC built the Headwaters Trail close to the source of Coles Brook and Benson Pond, using part of the old driveway to the former house, as well as old roads used for sheep farming in the late 1800s.

Future generations can

witness the land's rewilding process and enjoy its natural beauty. Coles Brook Preserve is a critical link in a larger network of climate-resilient lands stretching from the central Appalachians to Canada that serve as an important wildlife migration corridor.

Another interesting fact, a large boulder with a dedi-

cation plaque is located along the trail for Robert "Bob" Thieriot, who was a dedicated conservationist who had a lifelong passion for the outdoors and for working with his hands. He led many efforts over the years to preserve open space and woodlands in Massachusetts and California.



Cybill stands next to some interesting sculpture near the old driveway



The hikers take a look at a water trough on the side of the old Colonial Road



Old growth trees aka wolf trees line the trail

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HUNTINGTON

Game Night for children happens April 16

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Public Library Director Amanda Loisele announced that April’s Game Night will have a special focus.

This month’s night falls on Thursday, April 16, which is within the Annual Week of the Young Child (April 11-17) and library staff are encouraging parents with younger children to consider joining this event, which has been growing in popularity at the library.

It is still, of course, open to all ages. People may bring their own game from home or play one of the library’s. People should sign up in advance to join in pizza and refreshments.

Other children’s activities this month include story hours on Mondays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. Crafternoon is sched-

uled for Thursday, April 9 from 4-6 p.m. This is also open to people of all ages. Participants may bring in their own projects to do in the company of others or use their materials.

The library’s second Family Playgroup will take place on Monday, April 20 at 10:30 a.m. The playgroup includes circle time, stories, songs, movement, art, play and fun for children age 5 and under. They will connect with other families and utilize the many resources the library has to offer. This event is made possible with support by the Friends of the Huntington Public Library.

Bookclubs

The Hubbardston Public Library Book Club will meet on Thursday, April 2 at 4 p.m. to discuss the March read “Spying on Whales.” The bi-monthly Cookbook Club will take place on April 23 at 5 p.m. The theme for April is “Out of Your



Game Night has been growing at the Huntington Public Library, with 21 people attending in March.

Submitted photo

Comfort Zone.” This month, they’re encouraging participants to try cooking something they might otherwise shy away from.

The Book Club pick for April is “The Blue Hour”

by Paula Hawkins. Readers will visit the isolated island of Eris off the coast of Scotland, which contains one home, one inhabitant and is only accessible every 12 hours at low tide in this sus-

penseful mystery. Copies can be picked up at the library while available, ordered through interlibrary loan or borrowed through Libby. Discussion on this book will take place on Thursday, May

7 at 4 p.m.

For more information or to RSVP for these events, people call the library at 413-512-5206 or visit their website at huntingtonpubliclibrary.org.

FINCOM

from page 1

police detail account, \$8,000 out of selling the vehicle being replaced and the balance out of the town’s stabilization account.

Booth also said that this strategy was a great recommendation from the finance committee, with John McVeigh also expressing appreciation for the work they had done. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept the finance committee’s recommendation to finance the fire truck using a debt exclusion, hold the new highway department truck for two years and pay for the police cruiser as recommended.

It was agreed that the next steps are to finalize a number for the firetruck for Annual Town Meeting. A second motion was also unanimously approved, which called for asking the town clerk to put the debt exclusion question for the firetruck on the 2026 ballot.

Jensen also spoke with the Select Board about

employees who were requesting salary increases above the usual 2 % pay raise. The town had previously allowed employees whose job included collecting fees to retain that money as part of their compensation.

Starting next year, these positions are anticipating a bump in salary tied to a five-year average of fee collections; collected fees will go into the town’s general fund. The Finance Committee asked the Select Board to negotiate these new rates for positions such as town clerk, building commissioner and fire chief, but will provide the five-year averages. Pelouquin asked for those numbers by Wednesday, April 8.

The meeting had opened earlier at 5 p.m. with a public hearing regarding the FY ‘26 Community Development Block Grant application. Sarah Moroney, senior planner from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission reported on the early assessment

on Blandford Hill Road, which will be worked on with this grant. Weston Sampson looked at the sewer pipes and they appear to be in good condition, which could potentially save a lot of money on this project. A surveillance camera has confirmed that the clay pipes under the road for drainage have been crumbling. They will be drilling this week and will learn more about whether or not some of the material can be used on the roadway. “If tests come back that materials can be reutilized it will save a good amount of money on the final project,” Moroney said.

Phase 1 will have new drainage and utilities up to #18 Blandford Hill Rd. with a total estimate including project management from PVPC of \$950,000. She will provide firmer numbers at the next Select Board meeting on Wednesday, April 8. They want costs to be as close to actual as possible to avoid the need to reprogram the grant

later to reallocate unspent funds.

Hathaway made a case for dealing with problems on the road that start above #18, saying that it would require grading and drainage. Moroney will schedule a walk with the engineer on that section to look at this and confirm that the income surveys in that area make it eligible. It had originally ended at #18 because that was where the utilities, water and sewer, end. McVeigh also asked if there was a plan for fire hydrants and Moroney answered that would also be reported on April 8.

Addressing resident concerns, Moroney affirmed that there will be no active construction until 2027. Once the grant application is in, they will slow down the design work and do some walks and meetings with road residents. Two residents attended this hearing. Eileen Narad of 24 Blandford Hill asked how far they were going up. Maroney said that water and

sewer currently end at #18, which is why they were ending there, but the final design is not 100% set. Narad said that water already goes up to them but they are interested in having the sewer system brought up. “We need to deal with the infrastructure of the road before we lose that road,” Booth reiterated.

Amy Perry of #22 Blandford Hill Road asked if they would consider extending sewer up the road if there was leftover funding. Booth said it would have to be weighed against the other needs/priorities in town, but advised the women to keep bringing this issue up at these meetings.

The Select Board unanimously passed a motion authorizing the PVPC to do the FY ‘26 CDBG application not to exceed \$950,000 to include phase 1 of the Blandford Hill Road project. The public hearing closed at 5:34 p.m.

In other business, McVeigh brought up estab-

lishing a memorial for Wayne Granger at Pettis Field. A 1962 graduate of Huntington High School, Granger became a professional baseball player after college as a relief pitcher for several teams including the St. Louis Cardinals and the Cincinnati Reds. In 1982, he was only the second relief pitcher inducted into the Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame. Granger died in February of this year. A motion to authorize fundraising for this purpose, with design approval by the Select Board, passed unanimously.

Pelouquin reported that the town has received \$221 thousand back on the Basket Street Water Main Extension project. This is being used to pay for the work done prior to the Nov. 12 contract date and for some work done after that date.

The Select Board also held two executive sessions during the meeting: one at 6 p.m. and one at the end of the meeting, not to return to public session.

STANTON

from page 1



Standing water is shown in the boiler room in the basement of Stanton Hall. The boiler failed sometime during the March 21-22 weekend.

Photos Courtesy by John McVeigh

the fuel and electrical costs for running the heaters.

“It’s still a functional facility,” McVeigh noted, adding that it is very comfortable inside. Town

Administrator Jennifer Pelouquin said the heating system will be repaired and the drywall in the boiler room replaced. The heating system is scheduled

to be repaired on Monday, March 30. Asbestos testing will also be done on that day, which will determine the timeline for the drywall removal and replacement.



Stanton Hall, which suffered a boiler malfunction, is remaining open thanks to back-up heating systems provided through Fox Excavating and Still Services.

Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long

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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

I'll be 70 on New Year's Day. When should I apply for Social Security?

Dear Rusty:

I was born on Jan. 1, 1958, so I believe Social Security considers me to be 70 as of December 2027. I'm planning on filing when I turn 70 to maximize the payment. I'm not sure if I should start in December, with the first payment in January 2028. Or should I start in January with the first payment in February 2028? I know I can start anytime, however I don't want to file before the maximum payment, even by one month.

Signed: Wanting Maximum Benefit

Dear Wanting:

You are correct that if your birth date is Jan. 1, 1958, you are entitled to your full age 70 benefit in December 2027. So, if you claim your SS benefit to start in December 2027 you will get your maximum benefit amount and you will receive that payment in January 2028 (on the second Wednesday). Basically, anyone born on the first of any month is considered to have been born in the previous month for SS benefit purposes.

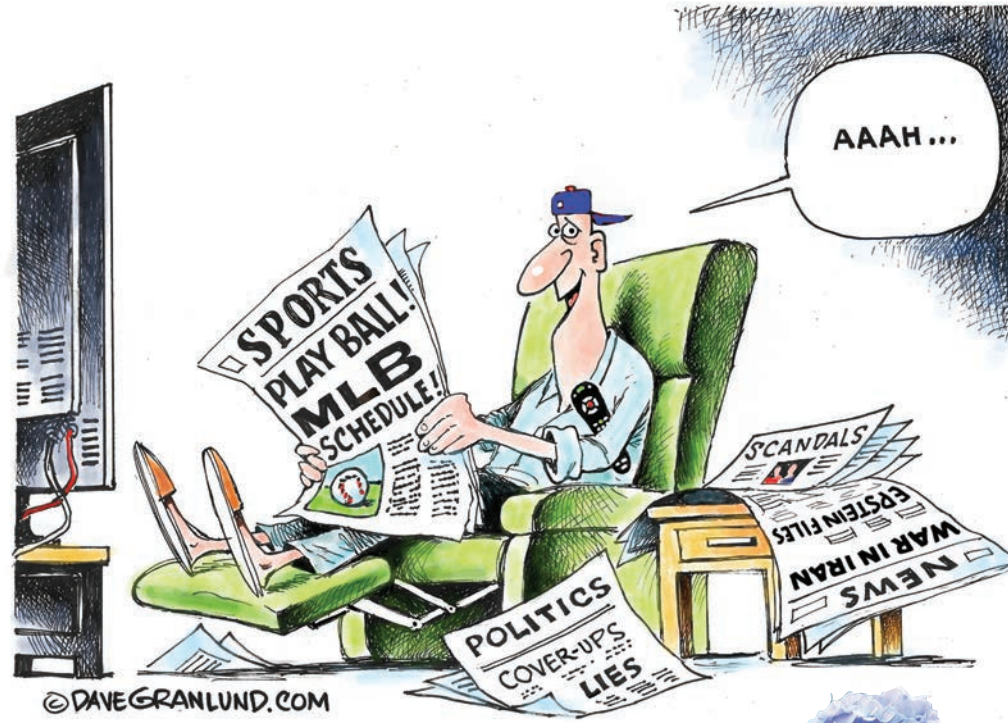
You can apply for your benefits up to four months prior to your birthday month and SS usually suggests applying about three months in advance to give them time to process your application. When you complete the application, you will specify the month you wish your benefits to start, so applying early does not present a problem. You can either call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to apply

over the phone or you can apply online at www.ssa.gov/apply.

The one thing you might want to do is put the following in the "Remarks" section of your application for SS benefits: "I do not wish to receive any retroactive Social Security benefits. I want my benefits to become effective with the first month of my age 70 eligibility (December 2027 because I was born on the first of January)."

Including that remark will ensure that your benefit will be the full maximum amount you are entitled to at 70 years of age, without any reduction. And I congratulate you on choosing a strategy which maximizes your monthly benefit and will likely provide you with the most in cumulative lifetime 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 ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



GUEST COLUMN

Pruning your hydrangeas

It was encouraging to see so many gardeners out in force this past weekend, regardless of the fact that it remained a little chilly.

I got outside too, mainly to clean up some leaves and debris from a bed near the front door. While I was there, I began pruning my pink flowered Hydrangea (*H. paniculata*), mainly by removing last year's blooms.

I often get questions about blue hydrangeas and how to prune and what to do to coax it into bloom. So, before you get the pruners out and have at it, read on.

Most established hydrangea bushes, the "Mophead" types (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) say those older than 15 years or so, flower on "old" wood, in other words, from buds made on the previous season's stems. That is why they are not pruned in the fall or in the spring for that matter, unless the stem is dead or partially dead.

An early autumn frost, a hard winter, or a late spring frost can kill buds or even entire stems. If the stem does not leaf out at all the further we get into spring, it is likely dead, and you should cut it down to the ground.

Usually the plant's roots are not harmed, and new

growth will emerge from the base of the plant. However, with these older cultivars, you will be left with just foliage in summer because the buds made the previous year will have been cut away. Sometimes a stem is only partially winter killed and it may leaf out midway down the stem.

In that case, just prune away the portion that is dead and leave the rest. Don't worry that you may remove flower buds in the process; more occur further down the stem and will bloom if they too haven't been eliminated by Old Man Winter.

Perhaps you have one of the newer cultivars such as "Endless Summer," "Penny Mac," or others that bloom on new growth as well as old growth. In that case how much you cut away is not as critical. You should get flowers even if last season's stems are cut to the ground because soon enough new stems will produce new buds.

Sometimes people complain that they still don't get flowers and this is very perplexing. I've been to forums where everything from proper siting (morning sun, dappled shade) to fertilization is discussed (not too high in nitrogen, please).

One complaint was that our growing season is just borderline long enough for flowers to appear on new growth and reportedly some of these early repeat bloomers are being phased out because of it. If that's the case, I am sure they are breeding more dependable cultivars as we speak.

I had always wanted a hydrangea and finally bought one as a Mother's Day gift to self maybe four years ago. It is a newer generation and so far I have been very happy. It's filled out nicely and had well over two dozen flowers last year.

Hopefully the harsh winter will not effect my hopes for a repeat performance this summer. I wish you much success and many blooms on your hydrangeas!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 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.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Corrections

Last week's article on the permanent appointment of Todd Gazda as Principal of Chester Elementary School was incomplete. The principal's position was posted and there was, in fact, a screening committee that included administrators, teachers, parents and school committee members. The committee reviewed the applications and recommended Gazda's appointment to Superintendent Melissa Matarazzo. We apologize for the mistake.

The date of the Westfield River Wildwater Race shown in the headline of an article in the March 26 edition was incorrectly listed. The dates should be Saturday, April 18.

Dementia patients may find peace, connection in music

your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

Elaine Lebar became a TikTok sensation at age 92 when her daughter Randi posted a video of her playing "Moonlight Sonata" at her senior-living facility on the Massachusetts coast. At the time, Elaine had been living

with dementia for nearly 10 years.

Randi Lebar said her mother had lost many parts of herself, but the music she began learning at age 3 was still there. "When she wasn't playing, she was lost and confused, but at the piano,

she was happy and grounded," Randi said. Elaine passed away in September at age 97.

Randi, a retired orthopedic surgeon who lives in Sagamore, told us about her mom at the New England Patient Advocacy Conference, which I hosted at Ascension University in Worcester in October. And she got me to thinking about the power of music to soothe and connect with dementia patients.

A 2018 study found that music activates parts of the brain that are more resistant to diseases like Alzheimer's, including the prefrontal cortex. Other research has consistently found that memories of music, along with the ability to play music, are often preserved longer than

language and other memory skills. Yes, the brain works in mysterious ways.

Music therapy is widely recognized as a valuable non-drug therapy that can help manage many dementia symptoms, such as depression, agitation, apathy and anxiety. It can also encourage speaking and social interaction and even improve cognitive function. Family members and caregivers also enjoy the benefits of music therapy because it may make their jobs a bit easier.

There are some 8,000 licensed music therapists around the country who work with people of all ages and abilities, including those with physical and cognitive challenges. Whether or not

HEALTH, page 5

Country Journal welcomes Election letters to the editor

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

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

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

Campaign news

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

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

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

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OPINION

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Mendets fix holes in metal cookware

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Picture Buffalo Bill's consternation when his snakes were lying comatose with no movement at all in their viewing cages.

This wouldn't do at all for the "greatest show on earth," his Wild West show in Amsterdam, New York in 1912. Mendets came to the rescue and sealed all the leaks in the leaking hot water bags. Voila the snakes came to life and they moved for the circus gawkers.

Mendets were a pretty big thing for their day. Clarence C. Collette (1876-1965) first patented Mendets in 1907 and continued to manufacture them in Amsterdam, New York until his death in 1965. They were tiny washers that were screwed into holes in aluminum and enamelware cooking pots and pans to seal leaks.

Remember when broken things were repaired and used again and again? There was no trash and replace mentality here, fix it was king. I remember cleaning out my grandparents pantry and being mystified by all these screws screwed into the bottom of her cooking pots.

Mystery solved they were Mendets. Mendets were used to patch holes in gutters, granite ware pans, hot water bottles, iron skillets and in sheets of tin, copper, iron and brass. The holes were repaired by simply tightening a Mendet in the hole to seal the leak.

Mendets became a staple in repair kits in most kitchens during WWI and WW II. Civilian use of metal was rationed thus people repaired their pans and made do. They may remember even metal zippers were ripped out to be reused. Those washed out pickle jars in the basement held recycled buttons, screws, bits of metal, wire and pencil nibs. Call it Yankee frugality but nothing was wasted.

C.C. Collette went from having 30 workers to 300 workers making his Mendets. Much of his business was conducted by "traveling junkmen" visiting neighborhoods selling Mendets from the back of their carts. A show was put on to impress the local folk that most probably rivaled Buffalo Bill.

That was how the latest household inventions were revealed and promoted. It is hard to imagine a fortune built on a ten cent item, huh?

And just what were they doing to those aluminum pots and pans to get those holes in them? Well it turns out cooking tomatoes, vinegar, citrus and anything acidic on high heat will destroy aluminum pans pretty quickly. This is how anodized aluminum was designed to harden pans through an electrochemical process. That process prevents the aluminum from leaching into food while cooking. It also preserves the aluminum

pot. If buying aluminum cookware be sure it is anodized aluminum.

And if people are wor-

ried about cooking with aluminum pans, scientists no longer believe people can get Alzheimers from eating food

cooked in aluminum pans. Whew because that is all we ate out of as children.

Yes you may still buy

Mendets on Amazon and in WalMart. They won't be C.C. Collette's though, his business was sold in 1985.



This is Mendet package from 1920.



This is a Mendet package from 1930.



Submitted photos

This is a skillet that showed repair by a Mendet.



This shows more recent packaging. There was a tiny flat wrench which is included in this package.



This is a Mendet package from 1940. The dresses and hairstyles changed through the years.



This blue granite ware cooking pot was found on a hike in the woods. A Memdet would not fix this pot.

HEALTH

from page 4

a music therapist is on staff, some memory-care facilities incorporate music into their care of dementia patients.

Over a decade ago, residents at the Coler Memory Care Unit in New York were given iPods with personalized playlists. Results showed a decreased use of antipsychotic medications, reduced falls and fewer physical altercations, they reported. Not incidentally, staff morale improved and the approach was shown to be highly cost-effective.

There are two main types of music therapy.

- **Active:** Playing an instrument – even simple percussion instruments – and singing appear to be most effective for reducing depressive symptoms and improving cognition.

- **Receptive:** Just listening to music seems to reduce agitation and may be more suitable for patients in advanced stages of dementia.

While a structured music therapy program may involve weekly lessons, art activities and guided listening, you don't need to be a music therapist to try music to help a loved one with dementia.

Here are some recommendations and caveats:

Results may vary.

Dementia patients are all individuals, and they may not respond in the same way to music. The stage of their disease, personal preferences and cultural background can impact a patient's receptivity.

Introduce it gradually. Experiment with an hour of music at different times of the day. You may find that evening or bedtime is best because many patients experience "sundowner" syndrome, which tends to increase agitation and anxiety.

Personalization seems to provide the best outcomes. Did your loved one play an instrument? You could see if their muscle memory will let them play it. Otherwise, think about the kinds of music they enjoyed before their illness and prepare playlists just for them. Some baby boomers today may enjoy some soft rock more than classical.

Be wary of loud or fast-paced music. This can increase the agitation that you're trying to reduce.

Observe the effects. Music may prompt a loved one to reminisce, improving their sense of self.

Remember that, as of yet anyway, there's no cure for Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. All you

can hope for, really, is a calmer, happier loved one who is perhaps reliving some fond memories or emotions.

As Randi said, "If it were not for her music, my mom would have just been another lost little old lady."

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

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413-354-7743
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Website: chesterbaptistchurch.org
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Sunday Worship at 10:45 a.m.
Sunday Afternoon at 1:30 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Bible Study and Prayer at 6:30pm

First Congregational Church of Blandford

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

First Congregational Church of Chester

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Pastor Susan Borsella
Service with Live Music: 10 a.m. - Sunday
Coffee and Sweets Social:
10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

Rev. Jack Kraaz
4 North Main St., Williamsburg, MA 01096
413-268-7557
burgychurch@gmail.com • burgychurch.org
Facebook:
First Congregational Church of Williamsburg
YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHYeekxw5w
Office Hours: Tues. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 12 noon
Days and Hours of Services: Sun. at 10 a.m.

Hilltown Community Church

Dr. Robert Perreault, Senior Pastor
55 Main St., Russell, MA 01071
413-275-3232
Office: 413-862-3341
hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com
hilltowncommunitychurch.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Hilltown-Community-Church-61580281487624/
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Pastor Javier Melendez
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pvaglfe@gmail.com
www.pioneervalleyag.org
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God
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Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

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Visitors appreciated

BLANDFORD



Norman Rockwell's Freedom from Want, Freedom of Speech, John Trumbull's painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and Rockwell's Freedom from Fear and Freedom of Worship. Turley Publications photo by Mary Kornholm

Chamber gets new look

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Newly elected Select Board Chairman Jackie Coury and member Cara Letendre spent Saturday March 21 cleaning out and re-arranging the Select Board Chambers.

The board will now sit with their backs to the left wall, rather than having the windows behind them.

Coury would like to have the seating arrangement facing the board so gallery visitors can see who is speaking and have

guests parties who present to the board with their backs to the windows, again, so everyone can see and hear.

As for hearing, Coury said that there will be a new sound system installed and there will be no need for microphones and the screen for those, who participate by Zoom, will be movable for convenience.

Coury has donated framed copies of Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms, two on either side of John Trumbull's painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which

she has also donated.

On either side of the board's table are four flags. The left side (as the audience would look at the board) has the American Flag, the Massachusetts State Flag, the military flags for the United States Marine Corps and the United States Air Force. The opposite side of the table has another American Flag and the flags for the United States Coast Guard, the United States Navy and the United States Army.

Trumbull's painting is also reproduced on the back of the \$2 bill.

Library lists upcoming events

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – The library is getting ready to make its move to the temporary location at Town Hall. With the move in mind and getting closer, there is a DVD giveaway through Friday, April 10. The staff has been reviewing the collection and weeding out some movies/programs. People may stop by often to see what's available, first come, first choice and no limit.

Regular activities at the Porter Memorial Library include every Wednesday morning from 10:30-11:30 a.m., Book Squirms time. Participants they visit for stories, songs and sensory play plus socializing for preschoolers and their caregiv-

ers. On Saturday, April 11 at 10:30 a.m. The BaNannies will present a special performance. Participants may bring their little ones for a special performance by The Banannies, in celebration of the Week of the Young Child. This music and dance program is perfect for children ages 0-5 and their families and is sponsored in part by Massachusetts Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative grant funding.

April 13-18 celebrates the Week of the Young Child. Children will come to the library all week long and pick up free books to keep.

On Monday, April 20 starts school vacation week. Monday, April 20 is a holiday and the library is closed. Tuesday, April 21 at 3 p.m.

visit the library to Bug Out. They will learn about moths and butterflies, listen to a story and make a craft. There are live butterflies and caterpillars to look at. After April 15, there will be praying mantis egg cases, cocoons and chrysalises.

On Thursday and Friday, April 23 and 24 Mystery Craft Clean out stop by to choose a surprise craft bag. On Saturday, April 25 at 11 a.m. Pokemon Club returns with trading, crafts, trivia and a scavenger hunt. Nathan and other Pokemon friends will talk about the world of Pokemon.

CommuniTea Reads on Saturday, April 28 at 11 a.m. offers a discussion of "The Paper Menagerie," a collection of short stories by Ken Liu. New members are always welcome.



Protesters stand on the east-bound side of the overpass. Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

No Kings rally braves cold

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – There were about 35 bundled-for-the-cold-temperatures who ventured to the I-90 overpass Saturday morning March 28 from 9 to 10 a.m. Thermometer reading was 17 degrees Fahrenheit. And there was a breeze.

The group participated in what was a nationwide day of protest against Pres. Donald Trump and his actions.

According to Democratic Town Committee member Pam Dirschka, "All went well." Tom Hendrickson, Agawam City Councilor who is running for State Representative, was on the overpass as well.

Veteran protester Bob Kidd was on board as well. He said he was familiar with protests as he participated in many as a student attending college in Boston during the 1960s.

The group left to participate in the Westfield – where it was warmer – rally on the green at 11 a.m. where there were about 1,000 people. Participants, according



A bundled-up Mary Martin braved the cold Saturday morning, March 28 to stand on the I-90 overpass

to Kidd, were "shoulder to shoulder."

According to national

organizers, there were 31,000 demonstrations across the United States.

Town Clerk announces election mail in voting

BLANDFORD – Town Clerk Doris Jemiolo announce voting by mail for the Annual Town Election scheduled for Saturday, June 13 is possible and registered voters

should notify the clerk's office soon.

Applications for mail-in voting may be picked up at the clerk's office and will be available on the town website. Ballots will not be

available until after May 19.

A mail-in application must reach the Town Clerk by 5 p.m. five business days before the election. No matter when the appli-

cation is postmarked, they must be at the clerk's office by the deadline. People should allow at least seven days for the postal service to have sufficient time for mailing; suggested time at

least seven days.

To ensure that voters receive their ballot with enough time to mail it back, they should apply at least two or three weeks before Election Day.

Blandford STM set for April 28

BLANDFORD – The date for the Special Town Meeting to vote on proposed solar bylaw changes has been set for Tuesday, April 28 at the Town Hall.

SELECT BOARD

the contract pending legal's approval.

He also asked the board to consider paving Watson Park Road, which is also covered by Ch. 90 funds. A three-inch overlay would last about 10 years, according to Hultay. Coury asked if he had the time to do this.

Coury asked about his priorities and mentioned the Town Hall parking lot which is not covered by Ch. 90 funding; a price for paving the lot was requested. The board agreed to move forward on the Watson Park Road. Letendre suggested looking into the balance

available in the Watson Park Trust funds.

Cannabis cultivation

Isaac Fleisher, the attorney for Mike Zapp who owns property at 39 Gibbs Road spoke about Zapp's application for cannabis cultivation. The existing building will be used and three greenhouses (100 by 50-feet) will be added, and there will be an outdoor growing area of 20,000 square feet, of which "something under that" will be used. Zapp will use a mechanical process to extract the cannabis distillate, which would eventually be sold and transported elsewhere.

They need a special permit and are scheduling with the Planning Board. There will be no retail, and he anticipates three to four full time employees. Traffic will be minimal.

Coury asked about the timeline and was told that they need the Host Community Agreement to submit to the Cannabis Control Commission and the entire process would be at least two to three months.

There are outlines of the property indicating locations of greenhouses and outdoor area in the Select Board office.

The board then discussed the Eversource/NStar intervenor status and Coury said it will be overwhelming and the board needs to decide how to move forward, but "Not something we need to decide now." All agreed it is "good to have a seat at the table."

Coury and Letendre also met with the Mayor of Agawam and a Becket representative and generally

discussed challenges facing communities as far as solar and Battery Energy Storage Systems are concerned.

Coury bottom lined it with the need to "create a process" so that any such applications are funneled to all the appropriate parties. This needs to be worked out.

Special Town Meeting

Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera told the board she is working on a draft for the Special Town Meeting, and there are 32 articles so far. The Planning Board hearing is set for this Friday, April 3 with the STM set for April 28.

Highway Superintendent review

The board then conducted their review of Highway Superintendent Ray Hultay who felt he was doing a "pretty good job." When responding to the question about what he thought he could improve on, Hultay said having patience with the employees, and needing to step back and let "the guys

do more."

Coury applauded the fact that Hultay is aware of the "art of delegation."

Board member Cousineau said the "integrity of the dirt roads this winter is one of the best." Hultay singled out Mario Godbout as one of the employees he considered to be reliable and said he noted similar potential in the other new employees.

Coury said the board is most concerned about oversight of things that happen outside the daily operations.

As he works for the Select Board, he should take care of policy issues.

Coury continued saying "And you need to stay away from Union discussions... the union is no more..." She continued and said, "I hope you take these things as mentoring."

Another example was the lack of response on his part to the state for reimbursement for snow and ice removal for the most recent storm. "No response is not good," she

said.

Hultay countered with the information that his numbers only came up to \$3,100. Coury said again that he should have responded. The board also discussed the \$1,500 fee to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. Hultay explained their duties.

The board overall was encouraged with Hultay's performance. Cousineau addressed leadership, management and delegation skills.

Letendre asked about his goal for the next six months. He said he'd like to see the storage facility at the garage so equipment does not have to sit outside in the sun. He looks forward to maintenance and equipment protection... protecting the town's investments.

George Reichert under public comment said he has seen a tremendous change in the quality of the work done by the highway department and cited work on Blair Road.

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from page 1

GOSHEN

Goshen voters scheduled to caucus on April 13

GOSHEN – The 2026 town caucus will be held on Monday, April 13 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall, 40 Main St.

All registered voters are invited to participate. Any registered voter may be nominated for any of the positions named below. Positions on the ballot and current hold-

ers include: Almoners for three years Sabrina McGill; Assessors for three years Paula Pedersen (No); Board of Health for three years Joshua Lafond; Chesterfield/Goshen Regional School Committee for three year Heather Crocker Aulenback; Finance Committee for three years (two posi-

tions) Dawn Scaparotti (?) and Gina Papineau (No); Hampshire Regional School Committee for three years Paul Marcinek; Library Trustees for three years (two positions) Rosemary Bienz and Jane McGrath; Library Trustees for two years Donna Kolodziej; Library Trustees for one year Richard Larson (No);

Planning Board for five years Robert Raymond; Select Board for three years Kristine Bissell (No) and Tilton Farm Supervisors for one year (three positions) Robert O. Go, Richard K. Polwrek and Roger A. Culver.

The individuals with a “no” next to their name want to step down; others

have expressed interest in continuing. One position is marked with a question mark, as its status has not yet been finalized. At least 25 registered voters are needed to make a quorum of 25 voters. Once a quorum is met, the meeting is generally over in less than 15 minutes. Brief descriptions of the elected posi-

tions can be found by visiting www.goshen-ma.us.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 16. The Annual Town Election will be held on Saturday, June 6. People may email Town Clerk Kristen Estelle with any questions at clerk@goshen-ma.us or call 413-268-8236, extension 107.

Council on Aging announces upcoming news and events

GOSHEN – The Goshen Council on Aging will hold a snack bar luncheon on Tuesday, April 14 at 11:30 a.m. in the Williamsburg Snack Bar, 109 Main St. Haydeville.

This is a change of time. Seniors will order off the extensive menu and enjoy each others company. People may email or call Kerry at 413-268-9354 by Monday April 6 to let her know you are joining us so she can tell the restaurant how many to expect. Suggested donation to the COA of \$5 is greatly appreciated.

On Friday, April 3 Community Connections

meets from 10-11 a.m. This month they welcome Goshen’s Shannon Wade, owner of Ripple Studio in Williamsburg. She is skilled in integrative body work, functional movement training and pregnancy/postpartum/peri-post menopause support. For this session Wade will lead us in functional exercises to build and maintain the strength and balance. They will meet in the upstairs dining room of the Goshen Town Hall.

On Wednesday, April 15 the crafts group meets in the library from 2-4 p.m. This month they have Goshen crafter Mickey Malinowski leading them in a special

class creating beautiful beaded garden decorations. They will each choose the beads for a unique design to jazz up a houseplant or the garden. Malinowski is a skilled leader and teacher and is generously donating her time and talent for this special class. Class size is limited, people should call Kerry by Friday, April 10 to sign up. Class is free, but donations are welcome to offset the cost of supplies.

On Thursday, April 16 technology help in the library will be available from noon-2 p.m. People can ask questions by calling 413-268-8236 extension 118 or email coa@goshen-ma.us

regarding their computer, phone, tablet or any other technology related question and they will do their best to help.

On Tuesdays, April 21 and 28, Highland Valley Elder Service delivers grab and go lunches delivered Goshen COA on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Participants pick up their hot lunch at the Goshen Town Hall from 12:30-1 p.m. The lunch for April 21 is a hamburger or vegetarian chili and the choice for April 28 is tuna salad or chicken salad. The meals also include milk, vegetables and dessert. There is a suggested \$4

donation given to Highland Valley Elder Service to offset the cost of the meal. Please call Kerry at 268 9354 if you would like to sign up to get these nutritious and delicious meals. They would love to increase participation in this program.

The COA will sponsor an upcoming trip to the Norman Rockwell Museum on Tuesday, May 19. The COA hopes to fill the 50 passenger bus. They will leave the Goshen town parking lot at 9:20 a.m. and return at 3:45 p.m. They have a luxury bus reserved that has seating availability for two wheelchairs.

The plan is to spend a few hours viewing “the best of American Illustration art that tells the stories of our lives, explores historical perspectives, and provides a delightful escape from spring/summer clothing exchange.” We will wander through 10 galleries and 36 acres of scenic views and have a pre-ordered boxed lunch on the beautiful museum grounds. This trip will be paid for by the Goshen COA, however donations are gratefully accepted. People may call Kerry at 413-268-9354 or email at coa@goshen-ma.us by Tuesday, May 5 to reserve a spot.

WORTHINGTON

COA distributes flowering plants

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Council on Aging will be distributing a flowering plant on Monday, April 13 from 11 a.m.-noon at the curbside of the Worthington Congregational Church while supplies last.



CHESTERFIELD

Program on spotted lanternfly takes place April 11

CHESTERFIELD – A program with Tawny Simisky, UMass Extension, landscape, nursery and urban forestry program will be held on Saturday, April 11 at 3:30 p.m. in the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main St.

The spotted lanternfly is a non-native insect recently discovered in Massachusetts for the first

time in 2021. Since then, it has spread rapidly to over 50 communities in the state. At present, Chesterfield is not known to have a population of this insect.

Participants will learn more about this insect and should bring their questions. All are welcome to this free program, which is sponsored by the Friends of the Chesterfield Library.

CHESTER

Hamilton Memorial Library lists events

CHESTER – Hamilton Memorial Library, 15 Middlefield Road, Suite 7, host a children’s story time every Thursday at 11 a.m. Keely Flynn Schoeny owner of Tidyish, will share her professional tips and tricks to spring-clean and declutter space on Saturday April 11 at 11a.m. with question and answer to follow. April Book Club will be discussing the novel, “By



Any Other Name” by Jodi Picoult on Wednesday April 15 at 4:30 p.m. Extra books are available.

Special sensory story time in honor of Week of the Young Child, will be held on Thursday April 16 at 11 a.m. Children will enjoy engaging in their senses while exploring and learning through story, touch and play.

The library will hold program during school vacation week. A friendship bracelet making class will be held on Tuesday April 21 at 4 p.m. for boys and girls ages 7 plus. A special children’s story time followed by music,

movement and loads of fun with guest Laurel Lenski takes place on Thursday April 23 at 11 a.m.

Birds of Prey with Tom Ricardi will be held on Friday April 24 at 1 p.m. at the Chester Town Hall. Ricardi, a licensed rehabilitator and wildlife biologist, will present a special look into the lives of birds of prey such as eagles, owls and hawks. He will bring some of his birds for the presentation. This program is being sponsored by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

People should RSVP for events by calling the library at 413-354-7808.

BECKET

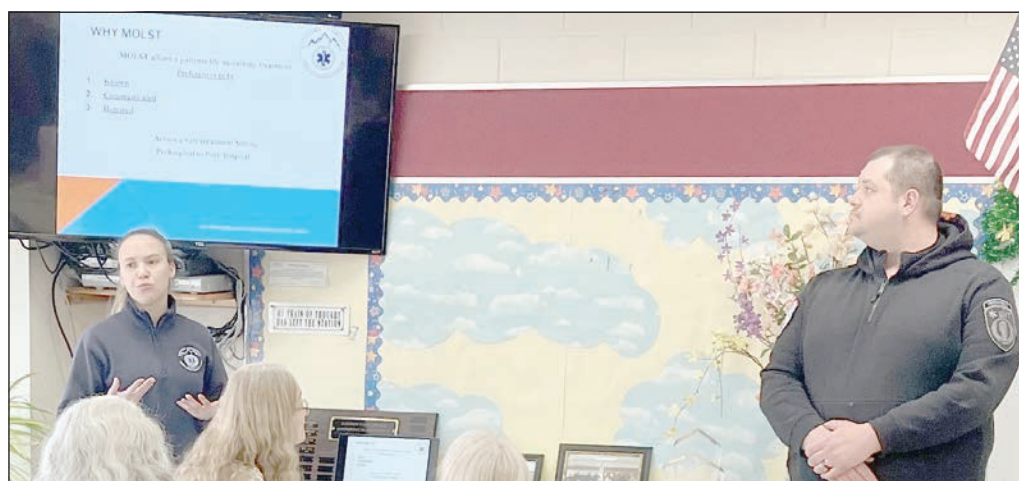
Church holds turkey dinner

BECKET – A spring turkey dinner will be held on Saturday, April 11 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Congregational Church Guild Hall on YMCA Road.

Roast turkey, mashed potatoes, carrots, stuffing and gravy will be served with pineapple upside down cake for dessert. Cost is \$15 for adults and free for those under 13. Sit down or take out are available.

Reservations would be great, but walk-ins are welcome. People may call 413-623-8300 or 413-623-6455. Funds will be used for charities and building upkeep.

BLANDFORD



Hilltown Community Ambulance Association EMT Jade Rice and Paramedic Bailey Jones at the COA luncheon Saturday, March 28. *Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm*

COA holds luncheon March 28

BLANDFORD – After diners had eaten Shepherd’s pie and a read whipped cream banana dessert, EMT Jade Rice and Paramedic Bailey Jones of the Hilltown Community Ambulance Association discussed what people should have available in the event of an in-home emergency.

They urged seniors to have available a copy of Massachusetts Medical Orders for Life-sustaining Treatment, completely filled

out. The document contains information about resuscitation, ventilation, transport to a hospital and must be signed by the patient as well as the patient’s physician. The HCAA representatives suggested the form be on the refrigerator or bedside stand.

The assumption is that this form is for someone, who is terminally ill or possibly in hospice care.

The forms are available on the state website at [mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-pub-](http://mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-pub-lic-health)

lic-health and asking for the MOLST forms.

The birthday celebrants for the month, listed on the board, included Don Carpenter, Doug Emo, Hazel Holman, John Hoppe, Cheryl Hopson and Pat Lombardo.

April lunches will be the second and fourth Thursdays, April 9 and 23 and Friday Game Day is April 3 from 2-4 p.m. in the COA room. No reservation is required.

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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Gateway welders creat commercial display board

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – “It was definitely a big learning experience,” reflected Gateway senior Bow Briggs.

“It definitely took us some trial and error. But it was really cool and something we really wanted to do.” Briggs was referring to a commercial project that had landed in the welding program at Gateway Regional School in Huntington.

Teacher Paul Atkinson had been approached by Alan Niesel, Vice President of Sales and Solution Engineering at Bridgestone. Azuga Fleet Management, a subsidiary, makes products including smart detection software and dual tracking dash cams to keep track of drivers and vehicles in real time. In 2021, Azuga was purchased by Bridgestone for \$391 million.

Niesel said that he and Atkinson grew up together and have remained lifelong friends. “I’ve always admired his transition from the private sector into teaching,” Niesel said. “I always had it in the back of my mind to find a way to collaborate with him.”

That opportunity recently presented itself when Azuga’s marketing team needed trade show displays to showcase their products. After reviewing quotes from traditional suppliers that reached \$14,000 for what was essentially a cardboard build, Niesel reached out to Atkinson. “He confirmed my suspicion that the cost was inflated and suggested it would be the perfect hands-on project for his students. We sent over our engineering drawings and proprietary hardware and the students went to work,” Niesel said.

The welding shop’s mission was to create a display board to showcase Azuga’s tracking devices and cameras at trade shows. It needed to include wiring to backlight the devices and a tv screen to show videos of the products in action. It also needed to be light and portable enough to break down into a transport box and move easily.

Atkinson assigned Briggs and fellow welding student Levi Savoy, both of Chester, to create the solution. They set to work over the next three months. The process, as explained by the students included failing, doing a little better on their second attempt and eventually hitting on the right materials and design.

Key to their success was using a Swift Cut Plasma Cutter. It posed a particular challenge in that it was a new piece of equipment, bought with grant funding, that no one—not even the instruc-



Instructor Richard Huard, students Levi Savoy and Bow Briggs, and instructor Paul Atkinson in the welding shop at Gateway Regional School.

Turley Publications photos by Wendy Long



Alan Niesel of Azuga Fleet Management visited Gateway and spoke with students about his company's work and the need for the display boards created by Savoy and Briggs for trade shows.



The finished display boards designed and created for Azuga by Savoy and Briggs at Gateway Regional School.

tors-had ever used. The pair did what anyone their age would do in this situation: they turned to YouTube videos.

“We learned about it because we had to,” Briggs said. “Nobody had ever used this equipment before. We were at the very bottom.”

Savoy laughed, adding, “We learned a lot of tips and tricks about working with this machine. This thing can do so much when you learn to use it.”

“These two did most of it,” Atkinson said. “Smaller add ons were done by other people. Richard Huard, the other welding instructor, made the pieces fit so they could be welded on.” Atkinson also credited two other students for contributing: Ethan Silvagni and Kaitlyn Bihler, who he said helped with the wiring for the lighting and video screen.

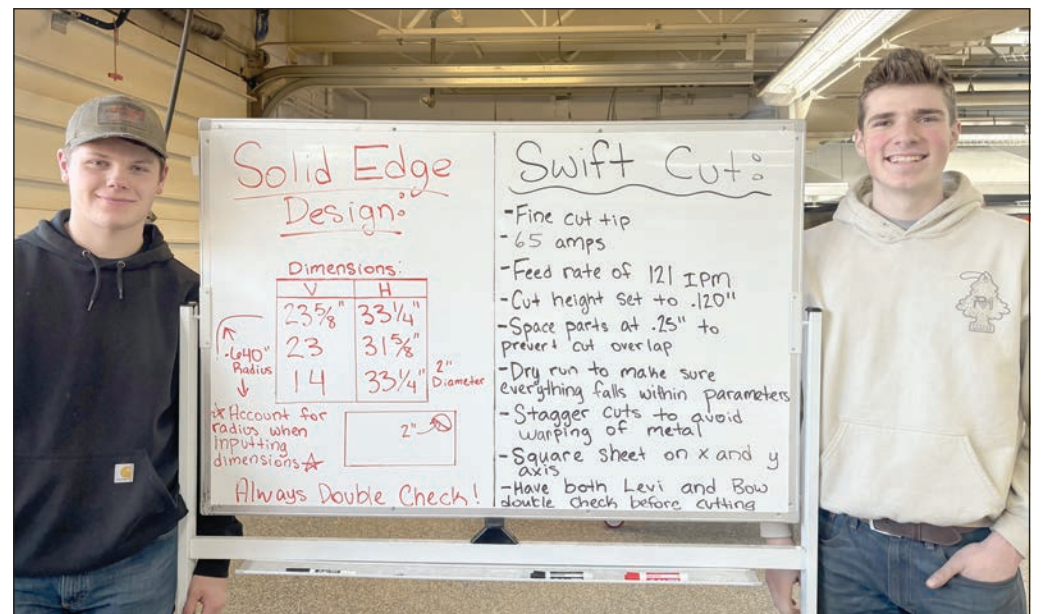
Savoy explained that they were given a poster that showed the measurements each item would need and a map of everything that had to be displayed. Briggs added that it had to be 30” x 20” with feet that could be dis-

connected. When the feet were disassembled, everything needed to fit into a case for transport. The display had to showcase all of the products and grab people’s attention.

Briggs said they had to make all of the cutouts and everything had to be properly centered. The plasma cutter had to be programmed so that everything would be spaced correctly. “It had to be meticulously designed,” he emphasized.

“It was the most difficult solid edge I’ve seen in this shop,” Atkinson said. Both students also credited Huard with the attention grabbing heading on the showcase, which had the company’s name printed in 3D and affixed to the display case.

Azuga produces dashboard cameras that record who’s at fault in an accident. The display’s video screen shows actual video of what the cameras capture. A variety of cameras sat on backlit display shelves. Wiring for the lights and screen had to be flush against the backside to safely fit into the case. Power banks had to be



Students Levi Savoy and Bow Briggs show their design notes on a display case they created for Azuga Fleet Systems, a division of Bridgestone.

included to run everything. And it had to have a clean, professional look.

Azuga paid for the materials Gateway used: \$500 for the aluminum, \$60 for the lights, \$50 for the wiring and \$899 for a pelican box to store and transport.

Niesel traveled from California to Gateway on Thursday, March 5 for a presentation on the two display boards created at Gateway. “Meeting the students is an experience I’ll never forget,” Niesel said. “Seeing their passion and technical proficiency firsthand was truly inspirational. It’s clear that they aren’t just learning a craft; they are mastering it.”

“He was amazed when he came down here,” Savoy said. “He was so surprised. It was so bright.”

That impression was underscored by Niesel himself. “The quality was absolutely amazing. Not only did they meet our requirements, but Paul and his students actually improved upon the original engineering designs we provided. They integrated a complex mix of proprietary hardware, mini PCs, monitors and LED lighting seamlessly; he reported.

Briggs said the experience was invaluable. “It really puts into perspective that it

is a real world item and they will use it. We made it happen for them.”

Savoy agreed. “I’d say a big thing was for this project was that we were not just given the process or answers. We had to figure it out and brainstorm how we were going to improve it. It felt nice to have it fully accomplished.”

Atkinson shared his opinion of the project. “It’s a daily thing that goes on here that we do. The kids learn from their own mistakes. To have them so dedicated to making it perfect made me so proud. It’s nice to have their focus and dedication,” he said.

This week, Niesel reported they are using the displays and they have been a huge success. “It’s a functional, professional-grade piece of equipment that represents our brand perfectly at trade shows,” he said.

Niesel said that they are excited about the potential to participate in more projects with Gateway. “This is exactly the kind of community partnership Bridgestone values,” he said.

Atkinson said Gateway could consider some of Azuga’s products for their own bus fleet, citing a bus incident last winter where an

elementary school driver had a medical incident and got lost bringing students home. Their solutions to this might include cameras for all of the Gateway buses or tracker IDs between school and home.

Ironically, Briggs’ younger brother was on that same bus. Now, older brother Bow might have had a hand in addressing events like that in the future.

Metal Fabrication and Joining Technologies (welding) is one of two vocational programs at Gateway Regional. Students graduate with 500 hours of welding and their OSHA 10 certification. The program serves close to 60 students with 14 in the shop at a time.

Atkinson said they learn to do a range of applied welding and mechanical skills and some are currently working on a ‘54 Austin Healey and ‘65 Mustang. Atkinson also offers an exploratory seminar to all students on vehicle maintenance that includes things like checking and changing the oil, changing tires, fixing rust spots and what to look for when buying a car.

For more information about Gateway’s welding program, people may call the Gateway Regional School office at 413-685-1105.

Former state rep. Aaron Vega named to HCC Board of Trustees

HOLYOKE – Former state Rep. Aaron Vega, an HCC alum and now the president and CEO of the Western Mass Economic Development Council, has been appointed to the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees by Gov. Maura Healey.

Until the end of 2025, Vega, a Holyoke resident and city native, was the director of the Office of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Holyoke. From 2013 to 2021, he represented the 5th Hampden District in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He started his career in public service in Holyoke as a two-term city councilor at large.

His five-year term runs until March 2031.

No stranger to HCC, Vega is an alum from the

class of 1990 and received a distinguished alumni award from the college in 2015. He is the son of the late Carlos Vega, the Holyoke social activist and co-founder of the nonprofit Nueva Esperanza, himself a 1971 graduate of HCC who was honored with a Distinguished Service Award at Commencement in 2004. Vega’s daughter, Courtney Joaquin, graduated from HCC in 2018. Vega’s work for Holyoke as a city councilor and director of economic development has also kept him in close contact with the college through the years.

After HCC, Vega transferred to Keene State



Aaron Vega

University, where he earned bachelor’s degrees in psychology and film studies. He spent the first part of his career as a documentary filmmaker, working for Ken Burns’ Florentine Studios.

He and his wife, Debra, are the owners of Vega Yoga & Movement Arts in Holyoke. Aside from the HCC Board of Trustees, Vega serves on the boards of the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, Mass Humanities and New England Public Media, and is chair of the Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice. Vega attended his first HCC board meeting on Tuesday, March 24.

Berkshire students invited to participate in juried art show

WILLIAMSTOWN –The Clark Art Institute, Living the Change Berkshires and Cooler Communities present the student art show, “How Shall We Live: Berkshire Youth Artists Explore Their Relationship with the Earth in the Time of Climate Change,” on view at the Clark Art Institute, 225 South Barre Road from April 18-26.

Following the closure of the show at the Clark, it will be on view at Pittsfield’s City Hall from May 1 (aligning with the May First Fridays Artswalk) through June 8 and Sheffield’s Dewey Hall from June 12-21. A free, public reception celebrating the opening of the show and

the work of participating artists takes place on Saturday, April 18 from 2:30-5 p.m. in the Hunter Studio at the Clark’s Lunder Center.

For the fourth year, Berkshire County high school students were invited to participate in a juried installation of student art about climate change. Submissions could be individual or collaborative and 2-dimensional or 3-dimensional. Students were asked to respond to one or more elements in the following prompt:

In the age of climate change, what does nature provide? What are the earth’s needs? What matters most? What is resilience? Where do you find guidance and inspi-

ration? Four local artists/art educators were selected to serve on the jury for the show: Anne Legène, Enaya A. Ogletree, Michelle Raszl, and Stephanie Trotto.

Advance registration for the April 18 public opening reception is encouraged. For accessibility questions, people should call 413 458-0570. For more information and to register, people may visit events.clarkart.edu.

This student art show is co-organized by the Clark, Living the Change Berkshires, and Cooler Communities, with financial support from the Feigenbaum Foundation, Lee Bank and Greylock Federal Credit Union.

NORTHAMPTON

Forbes Library invites community to honor Russ Carrier

NORTHAMPTON – In celebration of Russ Carrier's 44 years of service to Forbes Library, the library invites community members to give to the Youth Programming Room.

On Thursday, April 2, Library Giving Day, the library hopes to reach its fundraising goal of \$50,000. All donations up to \$25,000 will be matched by the Friends of Forbes Library. Gifts made in honor of Russ will help create a vibrant space where young

people can learn, create and connect and will serve as a lasting tribute to the leadership and dedication that he has given to Forbes Library for more than forty years.

For more than four decades, Russ Carrier has been a guiding force behind the growth and transformation of Forbes Library. Now, as the library prepares to open a new youth programming room this spring, the community is invited to honor Russ's extraordinary service by help-

ing furnish this new space for young people.

Russ Carrier was first elected to the Board of Trustees in 1981 and was chosen as President of the Board at his very first meeting. Over the next four decades, his leadership helped shape nearly every major improvement to the library. During the 1990s and early 2000s, Russ guided the library through a decade of ambitious renovations that restored the historic building, modernized its infra-

structure, redesigned every floor, and introduced computer technology throughout the library.

His leadership continued through major projects in the years that followed, including extensive exterior repairs in 2008 and a renovation of the Children's Department in 2010. In 2013, Carrier spearheaded the campaign to fund the accessible elevator at the library's front entrance, dramatically improving access to the building. More recently,

he led fundraising efforts for the library's outdoor performance stage, renovations to children's and teen spaces and planning for a major redesign of the Coolidge Museum.

Before stepping down from the Board, Carrier helped plan one final project: a new youth programming room that will serve children and teens for generations to come.

The youth room is scheduled to open during April school vacation week and will

provide a welcoming gathering place for young people of all ages to attend free library programs such as story times, gaming clubs, crafting workshops, and book discussions.

The city of Northampton has funded much of the construction through its Capital Improvements Program, while the library and the Friends of Forbes Library are raising funds to furnish the space with a mural, technology, furniture, floor coverings, and program supplies.

Children's Advocacy Center holds events to mark Child Abuse Awareness Month

NORTHAMPTON – The Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County will host a series of

events throughout April to mark Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, including flag-raising

ceremonies and the annual "This Little Light of Mine" Luminaria.

Community members are invited to attend and stand

together in support of children and families. "These events are an opportunity for our community to come together and reaffirm our shared

commitment to protecting children," said Kara McElhone, Executive Director of the CAC. "By raising

awareness and recognizing the work of those who advocate for children every day, we continue building a

community where every child is safe, supported, and heard."

The events will culminate with the sixth annual "This Little Light of Mine" Luminaria on Wednesday, April 29 at 5:30 p.m. in the Garden House at Look Park in Northampton. The luminaria event will feature a brief program, guest speakers and recognition of individuals and organizations, who have made

meaningful contributions to the protection and well-being of children in Hampshire County.

Flag raising events are: Belchertown Flag Raising at the Town Hall, 2 Jabish Street, April 2 at 10:30 a.m.; Amherst Flag Raising on the Town Common, 1 South Pleasant Street, April 3 at 9 a.m.;

Easthampton Flag Raising in front of City Hall,

50 Payson Avenue, April 1 at 9 a.m.; Northampton Flag Raising at the Police Station, 29 Center Street, April 1 at 10:30 a.m.;

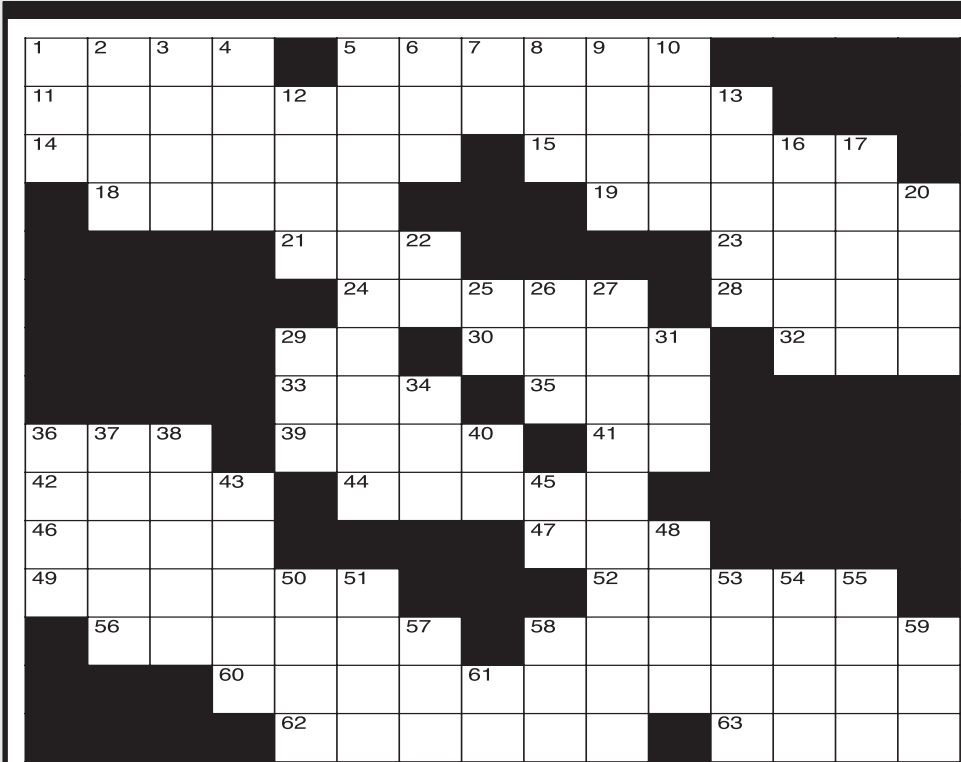
South Hadley Flag Raising at the Police Station, 41 Bridge Street, April 2 at 9 a.m. and Hadley Flag Raising in front of Town Hall, 100 Middle Street, April 2 at noon.

Community members are invited to attend these events and stand together in support

of children and families in Hampshire County. Individuals who wish to further support the work of the Children's

Advocacy Center can make a donation to help sustain advocacy programs, prevention efforts and vital

services for children in need. Donations can be made by visiting the CAC's website cachampshire.org.



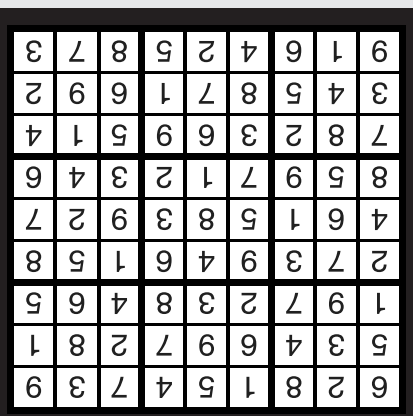
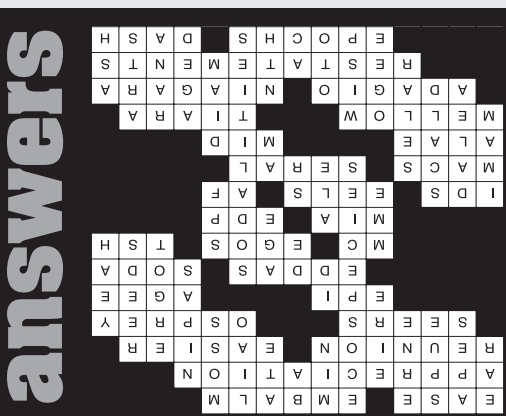
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Absence of difficulty
- 5. Preserve a dead body
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. The act of coming together again
- 15. More cushy
- 18. Visionaries
- 19. Large fish-eating bird
- 21. Indicates near
- 23. Former CIA and CIA critic
- 24. Icelandic poems
- 28. Pop
- 29. Hammer is one
- 30. Selfs
- 32. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
- 33. Nowhere to be found

- 35. Electronic data processing
- 36. Drivers' licenses and passports are two
- 39. Snake-like fishes
- 41. Air Force
- 42. Popular personal computers
- 44. Stages in ecological succession
- 46. Wings
- 47. In the center
- 49. Pleasantly smooth
- 52. Jeweled headress
- 56. In slow tempo
- 58. ___ Falls
- 60. Reiterations
- 62. Eras
- 63. Hyphen

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Body part
- 2. Mimics
- 3. Expel or eject (variant sp.)
- 4. Sea eagle
- 5. Taxonomic category
- 6. Chinese languages
- 7. Mr. T's "A-Team" character
- 8. Consumed
- 9. Chinese dynasty
- 10. NFL legend Randy
- 12. Ireland
- 13. Palm trees with creeping roots
- 16. Fungal disease
- 17. Tall, slender-leaved plants
- 20. Affirmative! (slang)
- 22. It says who you are
- 25. Atlantic coast state
- 26. Grow older
- 27. Associations
- 29. Woman (French)
- 31. Sunscreen rating
- 34. Brew
- 36. Leader
- 37. Indigo bush genus
- 38. Burn with a hot liquid
- 40. Junior's father
- 43. Mackerel genus
- 45. Morning
- 48. Straight line from side to side (abbr.)
- 50. Type of molding
- 51. Small, thin or twisted bunch
- 53. Worn by exposure to the weather
- 54. Mars crater
- 55. Humanities
- 57. Relating to the ears
- 58. "To the ___ degree"
- 59. Residue when something is burned
- 61. It cools a home



THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Your confidence is at an all-time high, Aries. This is the week to pitch an idea or finally send that text you've been mulling over. The universe is backing your bold moves.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, this week you're entering a cycle of "treat yourself." You deserve it right now, so enjoy. Whether it's a brunch out with friends or a mental health day, lean into the experience.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21

Expect a random invitation to create a new connection, Gemini. Your wit is extra sharp this week, so use it to charm the room. Your social calendar is likely to fill up.

CANCER

June 22/July 22

Cancer, the things you have been visualizing are about to materialize. You might feel an urge to organize your space or redecorate. Jump on that opportunity.

LEO

July 23/Aug 23

Leo, you have been feeling underappreciated lately, but that ends soon. Expect a moment when your unique talents become the star of the show. It's a great week for travel.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, a puzzle that you have been trying to solve finally clicks into place. You are moving among different social circles and it can be tricky to balance it all. Trust your intuition over logic.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, harmony is an ideal to aspire to this week. If there has been any tension in your circle, you are able to help dissolve it quickly. This is prime time for a date night or friends' dinner.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, people are drawn to you this week, and you have that certain something that is impossible to ignore. Use this influence wisely.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

This week you're in the mood to see what happens and let fate take the lead. Letting go of control might put you in a very fun situation, Sagittarius. Agree to a spontaneous plan.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

This week you are ticking off your to-do list with amazing efficiency, Capricorn. The real magic happens when you sign off of work and head home to great news.

AQUARIUS

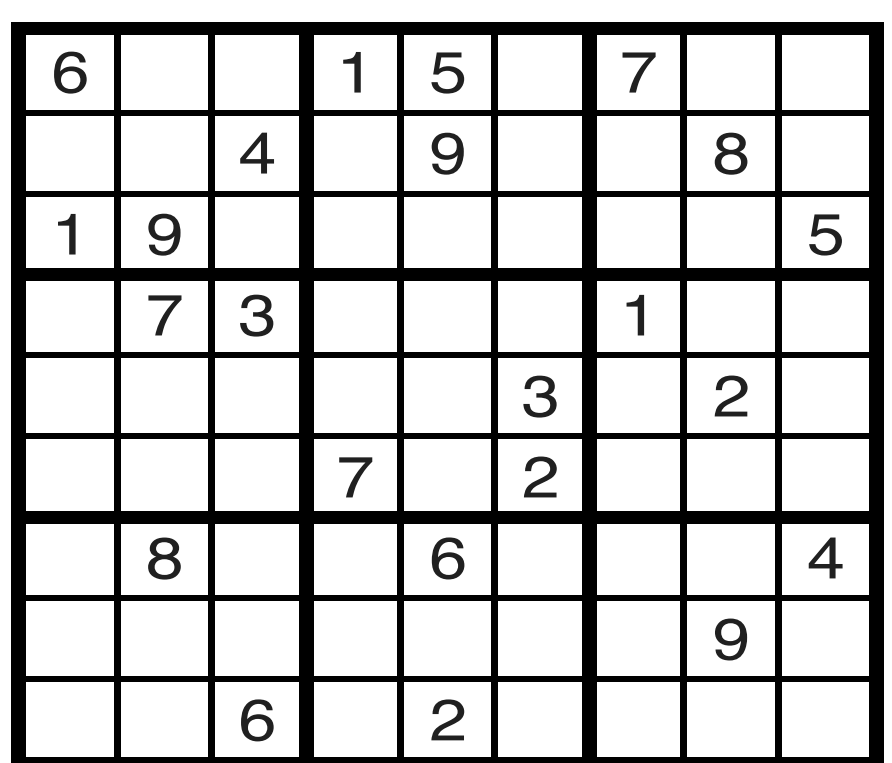
Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, you are thinking light years ahead of everyone else right now. Share your ideas, however unusual they may be and see who is along for the ride.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

The universe is making you choose whether to enjoy financial riches or riches of the heart this week, Pisces. It can be a tough choice to make, so give it some time.



SUDOKU

Here's How It Works:

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

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OBITUARIES

Benedict A. "Dick" Leerburger, 94



1/2/32 – 3/6/26

Dick died March 6, 2026 eagerly awaiting the next day. His was the quintessential glass half-filled life. He was 94.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Julie; his daughters, Marian and Ellen Leerburger, his son-in-law Ed Durkee; his grandchildren Alec Leerburger-Mahl, Katie Leerburger, Lanie Durkee, Porter Durkee, and his devoted collie, Augie. He is predeceased by Mickey, Christopher, Timmy, Randy and Ollie.

Beginning after his stint as a Naval pilot during the Korean War, Dick worked as an accomplished writer and editor in the fields of science and technology. He moved to editorships of various encyclopedias and other editing jobs for McGraw-Hill, Look Magazine and The New York Times.

After he became a freelance writer, he authored a variety of books, including "Marketing the Library," used as a standard text for years in graduate programs in library science.

He was dedicated to his profession, but his primary

focus was always his family and community. He was devoted to his wife, Julie, and his daughters, Marian and Ellen, and later to his four grandchildren, all of whom he was immensely proud and supportive. Before it was the style, he was a hands-on father, helping with household work, eager to take his daughters along for weekend chores, and just as eager to play practical jokes with a sense of good hearted mischief. His antics with Sammy the Talking Suitcase, outlandish scripts for "General Hospital," imitations of giraffes and seabirds, and "Happy Trails" are legendary. Scores of now grown up children remember him as the ideal father, involved, funny, kind and non-judgmental.

He was a 1950 graduate of Scarsdale High School and a 1954 graduate of Colby College where he majored in geology and was the drummer in his own Dixieland jazz band. Later, when he and Julie returned to Scarsdale to raise their family, he was the drummer in a local Dixieland group called "Three Shrinks and a Fink." Dick was the Fink.

He was involved in the community with many committees including president of the Friends of the Scarsdale Library for several years and then president of the Westchester Library System for even longer. After retirement as a freelance writer, he was for years president of Purchase College Friends, a group that raised funds for Conservatory students, who had financial needs such as a cello repair or a dance costume.

Dick and Julie built a vacation house in Chester, Massachusetts in 1975 that soon became a summer retreat. Enconced on the screened porch, Dick wrote articles and books on a used computer for part of every day in the summer.

He was a wonderful host, and regular guests in the summer recall early morning chats on the porch as well as a disarming tendency to inquire about the next day's breakfast preferences while guests were still eating dinner. In later years, joined often by friends, the weekend routine consisted of Jacob's Pillow Dance in Becket every Friday matinee, a Tanglewood rehearsal

in Lenox Saturday morning and a Sevenars concert in Worthington Sunday afternoon.

An enthusiastic traveler, he and Julie visited 36 countries. As a solo traveler and the recipient of a National Science Foundation grant in 1968, Dick travelled to Antarctica, the subject of many photographs and articles. There he also met Sir Edmund Hillary, a highlight of his career. Scores of Heathcote School elementary students remember the annual Antarctica/ penguin slide presentation.

Dick was a voracious reader, highly intelligent, dryly witty, possessed of a huge general knowledge and liked by just about everyone. He loved music, dance, opera, theater and the visual arts. He was glued to the television set during the major games of football, baseball and basketball seasons.

He loved good food, took classes in Chinese cooking and mastered the art of wok preparation. He always had room for dessert.

Please consider a contribution in Dick's name to Sevenars Concerts, Inc. at www.w.Sevenars.org

DEATH NOTICES

LEERBURGER, BENEDICT A. "DICK"

Died March 6, 2026

TEBO, NORMAN WESLEY

Died Feb. 9, 2026

Celebration of Life will be held in warmer weather

Country Journal

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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.



Norman Wesley Tebo, 77



Norman Wesley Tebo, 77, of Worthington, passed away on Feb. 9, 2026. Born on July 1, 1948 in Westfield, Norm was the son of Harold Tebo and Ellen Carrington Tebo.

In his youth, Norm was an active member of the 4H Club, he raised vegetables and lambs on the family farm in Westfield and he took many first place prizes with his baked goods, year after year.

After enlisting in the Navy in 1966, he served in Viet Nam as a member of the SeaBees Construction Battalion until 1970. After the war, Norm and his partner Joel, as the Teton

Builders, built homes all over Western Massachusetts for over 40 years. He was known throughout his life for his integrity, reliability, loyalty, kindness and hard work, as well as his mischievous sense of humor. He loved nature, gardening, kayaking and reading. He made many close friends as a member of the Suffolk Punch Horse Association. He enjoyed working with his horses, often using them to log for firewood on his homestead. He traveled all over



the country to attend the Annual Suffolk Gatherings and loved exploring museums along the way.

Norm is survived by his partner Deborah Crossman, his children and their spouses Ray Tebo (Melissa), Seth Tebo, and Jennifer Hofmeister (Ed), his sisters Martha Kunst and Mary Johnson-Reed (Ray), Deb's children Robert Crossman (Mallory) and Kathryn Crossman (Jonah), his beloved grandchildren Skylar Hofmeister and

Owen, Miles, and Lydia Crossman, his sister-in-law Carol Tebo, brothers-in-law Timothy Sena (Catherine), and Paul Sena (Judith), and innumerable loved ones. He was preceded in death by his wife Cynthia Sena Tebo, his brother Warren "Butch" Tebo, sister-in-law Sondra Huntley (Bud) and brothers-in-law Robert Johnson, and Richard Kunst.

A Celebration of Life will be planned for warmer weather. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Norm's name to The Hilltown Ambulance Fund, The Suffolk Punch Horse Association or a charity of choice.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Town of Worthington Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40, the Worthington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing in response to a **Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA)** regarding proposed work associated with the upgrade to an existing septic system at 58 Paterson Road

The Hearing will be held Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Selectboard meeting room at Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.
04/02/2026

Town of Worthington Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40, the Worthington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing in response to a **Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA)** regarding the following work associated with a proposed ground-mounted solar photovoltaic facility at 105 Old Post Road:

- Improvement of existing perimeter fencing
- Management of existing field edges – brush cutting and tree removal
- Replacement of existing access road

The Hearing will be held Thursday, April 16th, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the big meeting room at Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.
04/02/2026

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT HAMPDEN, Div. Probate and Family Court HD26E0007PP

To Deborah A. Davignon, Hampden County, Brian J Murphy, Gallatin County (MT), Dennis G. Murphy, Hampden County, Yolanda Murphy, Hampden County, and to all other persons interested.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Paul D. Murphy, of Hampden County, representing that they hold as tenants-in-common in an undivided part or share of land lying in Chester, in the County of Hamp-

den, setting forth that they desire that all of said land may be sold at private sale or public auction for not less than Two Hundred and Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$280,000.00), and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof after full adjudication of the equitable claims contained in said petition and supplemental memorandum filed with the Court.

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection in said Court at **Springfield** on or before **10:00 A.M.** on the return date of **April 27th, 2026.**

Witness, **Claudine T. Stou-demire**, First Justice of said Court, this 2nd day of March 2026.

Rosemary A. Saccomani, Register

03/26, 04/02, 04/09/2026

TOWN OF HUNTINGTON WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HUNTINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed Bids for the construction of the "**Town of Huntington, MA SCADA System Upgrades Project**" will be received by the Town of Huntington, Water and Sewer Commission, Town Hall, 24 Russell Road **until 2:00 p.m. local time on April 23, 2026** at which time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read. Sealed Bids must have outer envelope marked as "**Town of Huntington, MA SCADA System Upgrades Project**".

The work consists of the installation of a new SCADA system including new equipment, panels, and enclosures at the water treatment building. Bids shall be on a lump sum basis as indicated in the Bid Form.

All Bids for this project are subject to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 149, Section 44A - 44J inclu-

sive as amended.

In accordance with Section 44D of Chapter 149 of the General Laws of Massachusetts as amended, the prospective General Bidders must submit with their Bid, a certificate of eligibility issued by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM), showing that the Bidder has been approved to bid on projects of the size and nature as advertised herein. Prospective General Bidders must also submit an updated statement summarizing their record for the period between the latest DCAMM certificate and the date of the Bid submittal. The DCAMM certificate of eligibility to be submitted by the General Bidder shall be for the category of work defined as "**Electrical**".

Bidding Documents may be obtained electronically from the Tighe & Bond website at: http://www.tighebond.com/Projects_Out_to_Bid.php

Prospective bidders must complete a one-time registration process on the web site in order to receive log-in credentials. Bidders must log in to the web site to download bidding docu-

ments for the project. Bidders will be added to the "planholders" or prospective bidders list upon downloading the bidding documents for the project.

All general bidders shall furnish with their bid a bid deposit in the form of a bid bond in the amount of 5% of the total amount for the Bid and made payable to the Town of Huntington.

Minimum Wage Rates as determined by the Commissioner of Department of Workforce Development under the provision of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 149, Section 26 to 27D, as amended, apply to this project. It is the responsibility of the Contractor, before Bid opening, to request, if necessary, any additional information on Minimum Wage Rates for those trades people who may be employed for the proposed Work under this Contract.

Consulting Engineer:
Tighe & Bond, Inc.
53 Southampton Road
Westfield, MA 01085
413-562-1600

Jennifer Peloquin
Town Administrator
04/02/2026

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to 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

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PITTSFIELD

Berkshire Art Center announces spring classes

PITTSFIELD – Berkshire Art Center announces its Spring 2026 lineup of classes and workshops, offering a wide range of creative opportunities in ceramics, mixed media, drawing, painting and mindful art practices for artists of all levels.

BAC's ceramics studios will be especially active this season with courses such as Natural Sculptural Forms in Clay with Paula Shalan, Handbuilding Techniques: Altering Slab Forms with Ingrid Raab, and Thrown Forms for Teapots with Sharon Pollock. Additional

offerings invite students to explore the expressive possibilities of clay through both handbuilding and wheel throwing.

For those interested in mixed media, BAC will offer workshops including Natural Dyeing with Plants: Eco-Printing Basics with Mallorey Carron, as well as Joyful Collaborative Collage and Joyful Jewelry Studio with Kim Waterman. Students can also join artist Jody King Camarra for Intuitive Collage or experiment with printmaking in her Print Lab sessions.

Drawing and painting

classes will take place in BAC's spacious 2D studio, where instructor Wednesday Sorokin will lead courses including Painting Basics, Abstract Painting: Color, Design, and Spirit, and Drawing for Everyone, welcoming beginners and experienced artists alike. Friday Morning Painting Studio, a supportive and relaxed group setting for painters, will continue this season with guidance from Faculty Artist Diane Firtell. Open to artists working in any medium, the studio offers participants dedicated time to paint alongside others while

receiving feedback and encouragement in a welcoming creative environment.

Executive Director Laura Thompson will lead a free three-week online series, Spark Your Creativity, inviting participants to explore reflection and creative renewal through guided meditation. Artist Thomas Libetti will also offer Drawing from Observation & Meditation, combining foundational drawing techniques with practices inspired by yoga and mindfulness.

BAC is also launching a new series of monthly work-

shops at Wander, located at 34 Depot Street, Suite 101 in Pittsfield. Held on the second Saturday of each month, BAC at Wander will introduce participants to creative techniques in a welcoming, community-centered setting. April's workshop, Indoor Urban Sketching with Jill McLean, will explore capturing scenes from everyday life—people, food, drinks, or interiors—using layered ink and watercolor. In May, Botanical Watercolor Resist with Johanna Merfeld will invite participants to draw from live plant materials while experimenting

with the vibrant interaction between oil pastel and watercolor. In June, Visual Journaling with Kaily Ritz will guide students in creating a small sketchbook diary, combining drawing with collected mementos such as receipts, notes, and keepsakes to document daily life through art.

BAC's Spring 2026 programs are designed to foster creativity, connection, and exploration across a wide range of artistic disciplines. For a full list of classes and registration information, people may visit berkshireartcenter.org.

WESTFIELD

Music Club presents benefit concert at First Congregational

WESTFIELD – On Sunday, April 12 at 2 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 18 Broad St., the Tuesday Morning Music Club presents its annual fund-raising concert "If Music Be the Food."

Internationally acclaimed percussionists Tony Vacca and Massamba Diop and talented young performers of the TMMC Junior Extension will present an afternoon of amazing music making to benefit Open Pantry Community Services of Springfield.

Massamba Diop is one the most renowned masters of the tama, a talking

drum from Senegal, West Africa and he performed as the talking drum soloist for the Grammy- and Oscar-winning score for the film Black Panther.

The concert will also feature solo performances by selected members of the Junior Extension of the Tuesday Morning Music Club. The Junior Extension offers opportunities for talented school-age performers to gain confidence and hone their skills as performers. In addition to solo performances, the concert will present Junior Extension students performing together in a col-

laborative ensemble for especially for this performance. Over the course of this school year, members have worked together to learn and put their unique stamp on a specially written arrangement of Soir, a piece originally written for piano trio for French composer Mel Bonis. They will share the product of all their hard work at the concert.

This concert is free and open to the public. Financial donations will be collected to support the work of Open Pantry Community Services of Springfield. The suggested donation is \$10.

Berkshire Climate Action offers program energy efficiency

PITTSFIELD – 350Mass Berkshire Climate Action presents Bringing Climate Action Home, on Tuesday, April 7 at Wander, 34 Depot St. Suite 101.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. to provide time for attendees to meet with and learn more about participating community organizations, speakers begin at 6 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

This program will provide valuable resources for anyone considering home renovations, new construction, and upgrading to energy efficient electrical appliances. It will include information for homeowners, landlords and renters. Wendy Brown, AIA,

CPHD, Owner/Architect at Terra Design-Build will address critical energy efficient design issues for new and existing homes, Mass Save, and how climate disruption impacts us locally.

Joe Carry, Decumanus Green Design-Build, will offer sustainable building insight based on his local home building experience which includes net zero design/construction.

Amanda Parker, Green Energy Consumers Alliance, will discuss the adoption of residential battery storage, window heat pumps, plug-in balcony solar, and more with a focus on the needs of renters and low-income house-

holds. In addition Amanda will outline current available financial incentives including rebates for implementing energy efficient measures.

In recent years 350MA Berkshires Climate Action has supported local efforts to convert Pittsfield's polluting "Peaker Plants" to clean energy, ensure that new school buildings are designed sustainably for the long term and has worked on passage of statewide legislation supporting climate and social justice issues as well as clean affordable energy.

For more information, people may visit: 350maberks.com or email: berkshires@350mass.org.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission receives \$63,255 grant

BOSTON – The Healey-Driscoll Administration awarded \$267,000 to seven regional watershed coalitions and planning collaboratives to help communities better manage stormwater and keep harmful pollution out of Massachusetts waterways.

Stormwater is created when rainwater and snow melt flows over hard surfaces like pavement, collecting pollutants like oil from roadways and bacteria from pet waste. This polluted stormwater runoff travels through storm drains directly into rivers, lakes and other waterbodies harming water quality and limiting fishing, boating and swimming.

The funding enables regional watershed coalitions and planning collaboratives to develop innovative programs to limit pollution, better detect illicit discharges, manage construction site runoff and enhance public education and participation in stormwater management.

"Stormwater is one of the biggest drivers of pollution in our waterways," said Energy and Environmental Affairs

Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "These grants strengthen our commitment to protecting water quality by empowering communities to take action where it matters most so we can deliver real, measurable improvements for everyone."

The awarded projects will help communities meet the requirements of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit permits are required to manage stormwater discharges and prevent pollutants from entering storm sewer systems. Two hundred sixty Massachusetts municipalities are subject to the MS4 permit. The MS4 Permit is issued by the EPA under the Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and the projects are selected by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission received \$63,225. The BRPC will work with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Waterstone Engineering to improve stormwater planning tools for local communities. The project will add

new stormwater management designs, create a practical guide to help communities choose the right solutions for specific locations, update cost estimates and provide training for municipal staff on the planning tools. MS4 representatives, as stormwater officials, will help shape the work to ensure the tools are user-friendly and effective for public infrastructure projects.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's mission is to protect and enhance the Commonwealth's natural resources - air, water, and land - to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of all people, and to ensure a clean and safe environment for future generations. In carrying out this mission MassDEP commits to address and advance environmental justice and equity for all people of the Commonwealth, provide meaningful, inclusive opportunities for people to participate in agency decisions that affect their lives; and ensure a diverse workforce that reflects the communities they serve.

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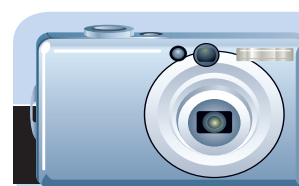
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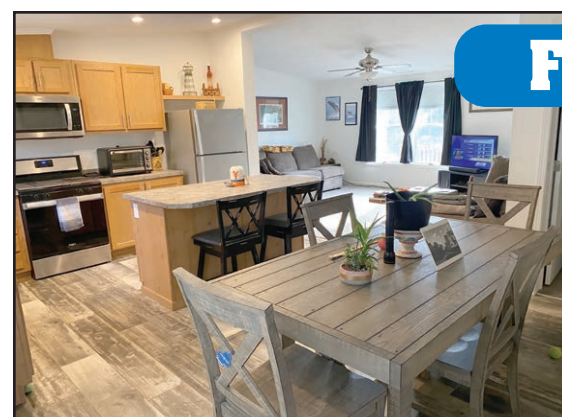
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