

"A universe that is unknowable is no fit for a thinking being." – Carl Sagan

# 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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## HUNTINGTON

### Westfield River Wildwater Races return

By Kathryn Koegel  
Correspondent

The country's oldest continuously-run whitewater kayak and canoe races announced that they are taking to the Westfield River once again this Saturday,

April 20 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This is a rapid turnaround after the races were canceled on March 8 due to lack of funds.

"We regretfully canceled as we simply lacked the financial resources and the volunteers to successful-

ly run the race," says Race Committee Chair and long-time-paddler Harry Rock. "Costs for permitting and safety have risen dramatically and cannot be covered entirely by registration fees."

"What we did not expect was a rapid groundswell of

community and business support for this historic race," says Kathryn Koegel, Race Managing Director. "Our Facebook page blew up, not just with anger about the race going away, but with offers of volunteer help as well as sponsors stepping up. Champion racer Travis Wheeler created a Gofundme that to date has raised over \$4,100 from individuals and racers who care about the event. Volunteers from all over the region are pledging to work the day of the race at everything from parking to set up and on water safety."

Forty-nine year racer and former organizer Jeff DeFeo presented the challenge to local business contacts at Indian Motorcycle of Springfield and the Raymakers family companies, J. L. Raymakers & Sons, Inc. and ROAR, Inc. of Westfield, who joined as presenting sponsors covering the budget shortfall.

Pioneer Valley Waste Management offered to provide trash services free of charge and the Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee stepped in to fund port-a-potties to keep the river clean. Additional sponsors include



Shown are the Women's Open Canoe two person best in class winners in 2023.

Turley Photo by Kathryn Koegel

WILDWATER, page 3

## BLANDFORD

### Select Board appoint Dolby as Fire Chief

The Select Board approved the appointment of Adam Dolby as Fire Chief, changing his status from Interim Fire Chief.

Several members of the volunteer department attended to support his appointment and Deputy Fire Chief

FIRE CHIEF, page 6



Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Ackley and Firefighter John Carrington present Adam Dolby with the Fire Chief helmet in recognition of his appointment.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm

## BLANDFORD

### Trevor Bruno graduates from Naval Air Station

Philip J. Bruno pinned Wings on his grandson, Navy Lt. JG Trevor A. Bruno at a graduation ceremony March 8 at the Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida.

He will proceed in June to the Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia where he will specialize in piloting MH 60 Sierra Helicopters.

He was trained not only at Pensacola, but also at the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi in Texas.

Lt. JG Bruno graduated from Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont, a private senior military college and from there went on to Pensacola.

He is a 2017 Gateway Regional High School graduate and is the son of Philip T. and Lisa Bruno and grandson of Philip J. and Peggy Bruno, all of Blandford.



Navy Lt. JG Trevor Bruno with parents Philip T. and Lisa Bruno at his graduation



Philip J. Bruno pins pilot wings on grandson Navy Lt. JG Trevor Bruno at graduation ceremony.

Submitted photos



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# HILLTOWNS

## Rep. Boldyga opposes migrant shelter crisis bill

BOSTON – State Representative Nick Boldyga (R-Southwick) recently opposed a spending bill that would commit an additional \$245 million in state funding to cover the ongoing costs of providing emergency housing to migrants, saying the bill does nothing but throw more taxpayer money at the problem without addressing the underlying policies that are incentivizing migrants to flood into the state.

According to Rep. Boldyga, House Bill 4460 that was adopted on March 6 on a vote of 121-33, will bring total spending on the emergency housing assistance program to over \$820 million in Fiscal Year 2024 alone. “Less than four months after the Governor and Democrats in the legislature passed a \$250 million spending bill to support migrant housing, they once again are fleec-

ing taxpayers and residents of the Commonwealth” said Rep. Boldyga. “There is no end in sight to this reckless spending spree that prioritizes illegal migrants over the wellbeing of our own citizens.”

Rep. Boldyga expressed concerns that Massachusetts residents, who are citizens and in need of services, including veterans, are being frozen out of receiving housing assistance as more migrants continue to arrive from out of state. “My office gets heart-breaking calls every week from single moms looking for shelter and are being told they have to wait” said Rep. Boldyga.

There were several attempts to amend the bill that would have ensured emergency housing programs were prioritized for legal residents of the Commonwealth, who have lived in

the state for a minimum of six months. However, those amendments were all rejected by House Democrats, who hold a supermajority in the legislature.

“The motivation of Democrats in Boston has become crystal clear. They would prefer to keep the flood gates of migrants coming into the state open, rather than provide for the wellbeing of the state’s legal residents, who are in need” said Rep. Boldyga. “Make no mistake about it, it’s their failed progressive policies that created this crisis and it’s their failed policies that will continue to make it worse.”

House leadership touted that the bill will impose new limitations on how long people can stay within the shelter system, allowing them to receive benefits for up to 12 months. Rep. Boldyga said those “reforms” fall far short from doing anything to

address the growing crisis. “What happens at the end of 12 months? Is the state really going to start evicting families from the shelter program?” asked Representative Boldyga. “Mark my words, a year from now Democrats will be scrambling to lift or extend those limitations. They are creating a nightmare scenario that is going to end up costing taxpayers billions of dollars” he continued.

Rep. Boldyga warned that this problem is only going to get worse. “Taxpayers are fleeing the state, revenue collections are down and we’re increasing spending on migrant housing. The math doesn’t work” said Rep. Boldyga. “Serious reforms need to be made or we’re going to continue to see painful cuts in funding for our schools, public safety and other areas of critical local aid” he continued.

## Bash Bish Falls State Park closed

MOUNT WASHINGTON – Effectively immediately, the Department of Conservation and Recreation will close Bash Bish Falls State Park in the town of Mount Washington to accommodate reconstruction of the observation area.

The park is expected to reopen in June 2024. Alternate nearby parks include Mount Everett State Reservation, Mount Washington State Forest and Jug End State Reservation & Wildlife management Area.

## Jewish Film Festival takes center stage on April 4 - 11

SPRINGFIELD – The Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival presented by the Springfield Jewish Community Center, celebrates its 18th anniversary with a one-week festival of cinema that kicks off Thursday, April 4 and runs through Thursday, April 11.

PVJFF continues its tradition of bringing the best of independent Jewish film to Western Massachusetts, with 10 in-person screens at seven venues throughout the three-county region. This year’s lineup offers an eclectic mix of films from all genres and for all generations, including comedies, dramas, and documentaries. Along with the screenings, audiences will enjoy live question and answer sessions with filmmakers and expert speakers.

The festival opens on Thursday, April 4 with Ayelet Menahemi’s *Seven Blessings*, Israel’s official entry for the Academy Awards for Best International Feature Film. In this bittersweet dramatic comedy, a boisterous Moroccan-Jewish family reunites for a cross-cultural wedding that surfaces old wounds and secrets. The film swept the Israeli

Oscars, with 10 wins, including Best Film.

As always, the PVJFF features an array of enlightening and engaging documentaries: *Rabbi on the Blink*, *Remembering Gene Wilder*, *Deadly Deception at Sobibor*, *The Monkey House* and *Running on Sand*.

Ticket prices are \$12 for adults, \$11 for students and seniors (65+). Tickets can be purchased online at [springfieldjcc.org/pvjff](http://springfieldjcc.org/pvjff), by phone at 413.739.4715 or in person at the Springfield JCC. Tickets are sold at the door subject to availability; advance purchase is recommended as films do sell out. For information, trailers, and show times, people may visit the film festival online at [springfieldjcc.org/pvjff](http://springfieldjcc.org/pvjff).

The Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival is a nonprofit arts festival, presented by the Springfield Jewish Community Center with support from the following major sponsors: Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame, The Totsy Foundation, Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts, and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

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## Gas prices increase a penny

WESTWOOD – A sizable build in domestic crude oil inventories and a slight drop in gasoline demand last week is tempering the seasonal trend of climbing pump prices for now.

The potential for record-breaking travel this week could spur a spike in gasoline demand as millions of travelers gravitate toward prime total solar eclipse viewing spots on Monday, April 8. Easter-related travel, coupled with many schools taking the week off for spring break, could also fuel increased demand. With crude oil prices up about 15 percent since the start of the year, a surge in demand could accelerate the pace of gas price increases.

The average gas price in Massachusetts is up one cent over last week (\$3.30), averaging \$3.31 per gallon. Today’s price is 13 cents higher than a month ago (\$3.18) and four cents higher than April 1, 2023 (\$3.27). Massachusetts’s average gas price is 22 cents lower than the national average.

“It’s not unusual for prices to wobble this time of year, but the overall gas price trend between now and summer is typically a steady climb,” said Mark Schieldrop, Senior Spokesperson for AAA Northeast. “Gasoline supplies are healthy here in the Northeast, which means pump prices are less vulnerable to price spikes after a surge in demand

or geopolitical events that impact oil and gas markets.”

AAA Northeast’s April 1 survey of fuel prices found the current national average to be unchanged from last week (\$3.53), averaging \$3.53 a gallon. Today’s national average price is 20 cents higher than a month ago (\$3.33) and three cents higher than this day last year (\$3.50).

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with offices in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing more than 6.5 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, finance and auto-related services.





# HUNTINGTON

## Citizen input sought on FRTA van service

**HUNTINGTON** – The Authority van service. Residents are encouraged to attend to voice their questions and concerns. People may email [admin@huntingtonma.us](mailto:admin@huntingtonma.us) or call 413-512-5230 for more information.

## Domestic Violence Task Force meets April 10

**HUNTINGTON** – The Southern Hilltown Domestic Violence Task Force will meet at Gateway High School, 12 Littleville Road, on Wednesday, April 10 at 1-2:30 p.m. This month the task force will be in the Pupil Services Conference Room on the first floor.



Kathryn Koegel is shown with Professor Brian Conz of Westfield State prior to her first run of the Westfield River course.



Brian Conz maneuvers the canoe over the rock scramble at the first portage near the Texon dam. Submitted photos

## Paddler clinics offered

**HUNTINGTON** – Paddlers new to the Westfield River Wildwater Races can join one of two free clinics: Saturday, April 6 and April 13 at 11 a.m. starting from the center of Huntingdon. Paddlers test their skills with experts and stop to compare notes after the most difficult stretch of the Classic race: Hill and Dale in Russell.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

# Annual Westfield River Wildwater Races are back

By Kathryn Koegel  
Correspondent

**HUNTINGTON** – Over 350 paddlers will encounter a fun, fast ride on a river so beautiful and historic that 30 years ago it received Wild & Scenic designation from the US Congress. This annual rite of spring in the Hilltowns of Western Mass this year adds a stand-up paddleboard (or SUP) race class. These racers, who literally surf the river, will add additional excitement of boats navigating the massive boulders that define the river.

Expert paddlers begin at Knightville

Dam north of Huntington at 9:30AM and make their way downriver with up to Class 3 rapids. They are propelled by a rush of spring-flowing water for five miles. The river is raised from its normal height due to a special water release from Knightville and Littleville Dams by the US Army Corp of Engineers.

The Classic Race begins in the center of the village of Huntington at 11AM and makes its way towards Russell with up to Class 2 rapids for eight miles. Paddlers must carry (portage) their canoes or kayaks over two sets of rock outcroppings to evade impassable waterfalls.

Best spots for spectators include the Rte 20 pull off across from the Hilltown Health Center, Frog Hollow near the bridge across the river in Russell and from a path in Strathmore Park down to the river. There will be no parking at the race finish this year.

A River Celebration will be held from noon to 4pm at Strathmore Park in Russell. This features awards, live music from local rock sensation the 413s, four food trucks and a parade of children with puppets of river animals. All are welcome to attend.

Online registration will be located

at [westfieldriver.org/races](http://westfieldriver.org/races). The price for racers is \$45 up until April 14. Those new to the race are encouraged to attend the two free clinics (April 6 and 13 at 11 a.m.) that leave from the center of Huntington just off the green bridge on Rte 112. They will learn from expert paddlers how to safely navigate the course.

Volunteers for day of race tasks can reach out at [wrvraces@gmail.com](mailto:wrvraces@gmail.com).

The Westfield River Wildwater Races are a subcommittee of the Westfield River Watershed Association, a registered 501(c)(3).

### WILDWATER

from page 1

Westfield Bank, Polish National Credit Union, Green & Clean Junk Removal and Greenfield Savings Bank.

The organizers are filing the necessary permits and opened online registrations. “We are grateful for the thoughtful consideration and hard work put in by the select boards and police of Huntington and Russell to collaborate on a safety plan for the race,” says Harry Rock.

Over 350 paddlers will encounter a fun, fast ride on a river so beautiful and historic that 30 years ago it received Wild & Scenic designation from the US Congress. This annual rite of spring in

the Hilltowns of Western Mass this year adds a stand-up paddleboard race class.

Expert paddlers begin at Knightville Dam north of Huntington at 9:30 a.m. and make their way downriver with up to Class 3 rapids. They navigate around massive boulders as they are propelled by a rush of spring flowing water for five miles. The river is raised from its normal height due to a special water release from Knightville and Littleville Dams by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

The Classic Race begins in the center of the village of Huntington at 11 a.m. and makes its way towards Russell

with up to Class 2 rapids for eight miles. Paddlers must carry (portage) their canoes or kayaks over two sets of rock outcroppings to evade impassable waterfalls.

A River Celebration with awards, live music, a children’s puppet parade and food trucks will be held from noon to 4 p.m. at Strathmore Park in Russell. All are welcome to attend.

Online registration went live at [westfieldriver.org/races](http://westfieldriver.org/races) the week in mid March. The price is \$45 up until the week before the race. Those new to the race are encouraged to attend the

two free clinics on Saturdays, April 6 and 13 at 11 a.m. that leave from the center of Huntington just off the green bridge on Route 112. They will learn from expert paddlers how to safely navigate the course.

Sponsors are encouraged to contact [wrvraces@gmail.com](mailto:wrvraces@gmail.com) for information on how to be integrated into the event. Volunteers for day of race tasks can reach out at [wrvraces@gmail.com](mailto:wrvraces@gmail.com).

The Westfield River Wildwater Races are a subcommittee of the Westfield River Watershed Association, a registered 501(c)(3).

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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN

# in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid

## Asparagus plants – upkeep and harvest

It was so much fun to be outdoors on Easter Sunday. I enjoyed just sitting on the deck, talking with family and moseying around the yard while the little kids enjoyed an Easter egg hunt. It's funny that being outside is one of those things that once you do it, you want to do it more often.

It got me thinking of some of the tasks back home I have to do to get the gardens ship-shape.

One of the tasks concerns my asparagus bed. The grocery stores are teasing us lately, with spears from Mexico making an appearance in the sales circular.

I usually hold off buying it, preferring my home-grown to anything store-bought. I never did get to cut back the foliage in the fall after the first frost.

Presently, its laying down in the beds, making a catch-all for leaves. I'll to get in there with a pair of sharp clippers, cutting away the foliage, then with a rake to further tidy up.

Once complete, I'll sprinkle lime on the beds, followed by some compost, since asparagus prefers fertile soil on the alkaline side.

It'll be a few weeks still before the spears start to poke through the surface. Since my beds are several years old at this point, I will be able to harvest for a good eight weeks.

Be on the look-out for the asparagus beetle midstream and the black eggs that are laid horizontally shortly thereafter, usually apparent on the upper portion of the spears. I monitor my beds often and flick the bugs into a yogurt container of soapy water while squishing the eggs in-situ.

I don't do more than that in terms of pest control and I'm able to keep populations down.

Weeds are another foe. It's important to keep the beds weeded – especially free of perennial grasses, and you will likely have a productive asparagus patch for decades to come.

I usually harvest asparagus with a knife, so that the cut is clean. If the spear has gotten a bit too tall, but the buds haven't opened too much, I will still harvest it at the appropriate length of 6-8" long, and cut the rest of the stem off at ground level.

GARDEN, page 5

## Corrections policy

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

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



## GUEST COLUMN

## When should we claim Social Security?



Dear Rusty

*I am almost 63 and my husband will be 61 soon and we are looking to see when our best time would be to start our Social Security benefits.*

*We would like to know if one of us qualifies for benefits from a previous marriage from 1984 to 1995. And we are wondering if I can start drawing at age 65, in two years or if it is better that I wait until 67 because my spouse is two years younger than me. Also, if I were to continue working limited hours after 65, what would my earning limit be?*

Signed Almost Ready

Dear Almost Ready

The first thing to understand is that Full Retirement Age for both of you is 67. If either of you claim before that, your monthly benefit amount will be permanently reduced and, because you are working, you will be subject to Social Security's "earnings test."

If you claim your benefit at age 65 your monthly payment will be about 87% of what you would get if you claimed at age 67. If your husband claims at age 62, his benefit will be about 70% of his FRA amount.

The only way to get 100% of the benefit you've each earned from a lifetime of working is to claim at your FRA. You can choose to claim at age 65 as long as you're comfortable with the benefit reduction which will occur and as long as your annual work earnings do not significantly exceed the earnings limit for that year. In any case, when each of you claims will not affect the other's retirement benefit amount.

Social Security's "earnings test" for those claiming before FRA sets a limit for how much can be earned before some or all benefits are taken away. The earnings limit for 2024 is \$22,320, but it changes yearly. If you claim early benefits and your work earnings exceed that year's limit, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit.

They take away by withholding future benefits long enough to recover what you owe for exceeding the limit. If you signifi-

cantly exceed the annual earnings limit, you may be temporarily ineligible to receive SS benefits until you either earn less or reach your FRA.

The earnings test no longer applies after you reach your FRA. I cannot predict what the earnings limit will be two years from now, but it will be more than the 2024 limit and published at that time. FYI, in the year you turn 67 your pre-FRA earnings limit will be much higher and when you reach your FRA the earnings test no longer applies.

Regarding your previous marriage, you cannot receive spousal benefits from an ex-spouse while you are currently married. But when to claim may also be influenced by whether either you or your current spouse will get a spousal benefit from the other. If the FRA (age 67) benefit amount for one of you is more than twice the other's FRA entitlement, the one with the lower FRA amount will get a "spousal boost" to their own amount when both of you are collecting.

Spouse benefits reach maximum at one's FRA, but each person's personal SS retirement amount will continue to grow if not claimed at FRA. Waiting past FRA to claim allows the SS retirement benefit to grow by 8% per year, up to age 70.

So, with an FRA of 67, claiming at age 70 will yield a payment 24% higher than the FRA amount, 76% more than the age 62 amount and about 37% more than the age 65 amount. But waiting beyond FRA is only smart if financially feasible and life expectancy is at least average about 84 and 87 respectively for a man and woman your current ages. And, as a general rule, if one's spousal benefit at FRA (50% of their partner's FRA entitlement) is highest, then that spouse should claim at FRA to get their maximum benefit.

*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 informational purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*

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

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## Election letters to the editor welcome

The Country Journal welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Country Journal, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that

Friday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

paper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

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



# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN

### What I learned the weekend we canceled a historic race

By Kathryn Koegel

Correspondent and Westfield River  
Wildwater Races Managing Director

On Friday March 8 at 5 p.m. after much diligent work organizing and meeting with select boards and police, I regretfully hit “send” and transmitted the message to over 300 paddlers that the country’s oldest continuously-run whitewater kayak and canoe races had run into a boulder we could not dodge: permit and safety costs that registration fees alone could not support. The same message was posted to social media.

The reaction was furious and immediate. “How could you do this to an event we grew up with,” was a common refrain. “I’ve raced this for years, it’s a family tradition.” And most hard hitting to me: “Why do we need an organizing committee for a river race?” I turned off my phone and had to take a break from those who said that I, and the rest of the race committee, had done a terrible job.

The Westfield River Wildwater Races, like other committees I am on in Western Mass, suffers from declining involvement and an aging participation base. In my 50s, I am often the youngest and most computer savvy person on the Zoom calls. We need new blood and energy to move things forward. (I should note that the race committee is helped this year by Harry Rock, a longtime paddler and acute problem solver who ran Westfield’s 350th anniversary celebrations.)

For the races, putting on an event on a raging river is more complicated than some of our racers realize. No one is going down those rapids without their boats inspected, flotation devices worn and safety personnel strategically placed on the river. Timers need to be hired and boats strategically released. Registration has to be set up online, bib numbers organized. Permits need to be taken with the US Army Corp

of Engineers to hold back water at two dams so that it goes woosh and raises the level of the river the day of the race. You can’t do that without an insurance permit, and that requires a signed off safety plan from police. This is my third year working with the race. Getting the people power needed to do the unglamorous jobs like parking cars or moving boats is always a struggle.

While the outrage at the race cancellation was immediate, the creative problem solving quickly followed. A racer, who along with his wife are two of the strongest co-ed teams, Travis and Therese Wheeler, stepped up to create a “GoFundMe” page and to date over \$5200 has been raised. Jeff DeFeo of Montgomery, a legendary racer (this will be his 49th year!) and former race chairman, connected with us and said he was so upset he hadn’t been sleeping. He might have been tired, but he reached out to local businesses who had racers who had done the river. He also personally donated \$1000. JR Raymaaker & Sons Construction and their ROAR Landscaping stepped up to cover our shortfall and became our presenting sponsor. Their logo will be on the race bibs.

I opened my mail and found checks for \$20 sent to me as my name was online connected to the race. Stay-at-home mom (of three under four) like Huntington’s Jahala Dufort, who grew up with the race, texted me and said she and her uncle Paul Chrzan, who lives on the river, would help in whatever way they could. They are organizing the over 125 different awards, which are wooden paddles handmade by Westfield resident Phil Sousa.

Most importantly, the committee finally had the people power to effectively manage this race along with the funds so that we could ensure the future of the race. The 69th running of the Westfield River Wildwater Races will indeed happen on April 20th.

You might ask why I care or got involved with the races. I moved to Huntington from the biggest city in the US during Covid as I happened to find a house with magic: a little beach on the river. On the hottest of summer days, I can wade in the river with my dogs as the current flows by. The first spring I was here I was amazed to see kayakers maneuver their way down at high water. My work life has taken me to several different countries and I was involved with sponsorships on the NYC Marathon and the website for the Sydney Olympics but this “little” race is just as important.

The river we share is the defining feature of the Hilltowns and perhaps our greatest natural resource. Thirty years ago, it got protected status from the US Congress as a Wild & Scenic River, Massachusetts’ first. (Yes, I am on that committee as well.) While it no longer supports the mills and jobs it once did, the river’s future may likely involve responsible recreation which will bring young families and needed dollars to our quaint villages. (I personally would do anything for strong coffee and a breakfast and lunch spot in Huntington.)

Studies have been done in Europe that show that the more people physically engage with a river, the more likely they are to advocate for its ecological protection. In the city of Vienna, the Danube River has been restored to such an extent that people in the city swim in “their” river. All this becomes even more important when you think of climate change and the need for cooling centers accessible to people who are not landowner on the river.

I lived in Brooklyn, NY and actually kayaked on the Gowanus Canal, which at one point was one of the most polluted waterways in the US. Now, there are oysters and even the rare porpoise braving its waters. The Westfield River is an extraordinary story of an ecological comeback in

a region that started the industrial age well before most of the US. Its waters drove 18th century sawmills and turned massive saws to cut our local stone. It is now so clean that we do have mussels in some areas and I startled an otter on my river access last summer. The slimy sculpin (I love the name and this is one fierce looking fish) swims freely here.

As a part of my signing up to help by doing communications (and fearlessly managing all the complaints on Facebook) for the races, in 2022 the race committee invited me to do a test run of the river during one of the clinics that newbies to the river are encouraged to attend. Professor Brian Conz of Westfield State put me in the front of his canoe and I did the first of what is the Classic course. I’m a flatwater paddler with a bit of bay experience but nothing prepared me for this. Yes, the rapids were terrifying and I learned the art of boulder dodging that is essential to this race. But what also astonished me was the unique vistas that you can only get when on this river. I had no idea that a rock scramble to evade a dam was necessary and was relieved when we were over a hill and could slide the very heavy canoe down.

I wasn’t so interested in being fast as in noticing the bald eagle pair that soar across from the Hilltown Community Health Center, the rock formations all through what is called Turtle Bend, the thrills of Hill & Dale Rapids and the Crescent and Strathmore mills that stand witness to the lost livelihoods of so many families in the Hilltowns.

Was it scary? Absolutely. This race is not for the faint of heart. Yes, I screamed at a couple of places, but more important than that, I just paddled harder.

We are still looking for volunteers for the day of the race as well as for the race committee itself. Please join us by emailing: [wrwraces@gmail.com](mailto:wrwraces@gmail.com).

## GARDEN

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If the buds have opened and are too far gone to be edible (at least in terms of looking like traditional asparagus) I will just allow the foliage to grow, figuring that the photosynthesizing will benefit the roots in the long run, just as later foliage does after the harvest period is over. I usually let really skinny spears go to foliage as well – they are usually kind of tough.

Speaking of tough, what about those really thick spears, the kind that are “thumb-thick?”

If you notice the base of these spears to be woody and tough in appearance, get out the potato peeler and remove the outer skin, revealing a much more tender interior portion. An old friend taught me this trick, and it works out pretty well.

I’d be in remiss if I didn’t address the stinky smell associated with eating asparagus.

Yesiree, it can happen even 15 minutes after ingesting it. Use the bathroom and voila, your urine will have a pungent, asparagus-like smell. Only maybe worse.

Our bodies convert asparagusic acid into sulfur-containing chemicals that are volatile enough to fly from the toilet up your nose, that is, if you have the ability to perceive it. Some people don’t.

Call them lucky, perhaps. I consider myself lucky to have such an amazing vegetable growing right in my backyard, stinky or not.

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.*



I had fox sparrows under my feeder for several days now. Most recently I counted five of them usually it is two or three. The fox sparrow is a large sparrow about seven inches long. It has a gray head and back with bold, rufous or brown streaking. It has an irregular shaped central dot on its breast and reddish, brown rump and tail. The reddish coloring resembles the color of a fox, hence its name.



Fox sparrow

It often jumps forward and back, pulling aside ground cover to find food underneath. It may come to feeders when seed is scattered on the ground. I not only put seed in the tray feeders, but I sprinkle some on the ground for the juncos, sparrows and mourning doves.

The female lays four to six light blue green eggs with darker marks in a cup like nest of grasses, lichens and leaves lined with hair, fur and rootlets. When we had horses, I would often find nests with their hair in them. My daugh-

ters and I would leave hairs groomed from their manes and tails on the ground for the birds.

The fox sparrow’s song is a short series of clear melodious whistles and it is more melodic than most sparrows. Males may have one to three versions their songs, which are distinct to each male.

#### Interesting sightings

I have received emails of several interesting sightings. A Granby resident wrote, “I recently saw a bald eagle in my neighbors tree right next to my property. It was on Feb. 28. To make sure what I was seeing, I grabbed my binoculars and sure enough it was a bald eagle. He stayed there for around five minutes then he flew away.” She said, “It was my first time spotting an eagle in Granby. I did spot one in the 90s at the Quabbin flying around. I usually see hawks in my neighborhood on a regular basis. But this was a nice site to see for sure.”

A Barre resident saw a snow bunting on March 15. An Oakham resident saw two sandhill cranes on the morning of March 15. He said, “While driving down Rutland Road in Oakham, I did a double-take and hit the brakes. There, near the road at Eva Grimes’ old place, stood two Sandhill Cranes. They almost could have been mistaken for lawn ornaments, but they were real. One stood erect while the other pecked at the lawn grass. Last year I observed three cranes fly over my house. Perhaps they plan to nest in one of our large beaver-impacted marshes?”

#### Brimfield resident

A Brimfield resident reported on March 18, he saw 22 ring-necked ducks and an immature bald eagle at a pond in Warren. He also said, “On South Street where last year there were three great

blue heron nests and an osprey nest. There were two great blue herons standing in one of the nests used last year and an osprey sitting on the nest used previously. The osprey have been present there for three years, producing at least one chick each year. He also said his wife saw a dozen chipping sparrows in their yard, a first of the year at this location.

They report the only spring arrival in our yard had been one male robin a few days ago. No phoebes yet and he still has some juncos and at least one white-throated sparrow.

The Brimfield resident said he did a tour of some local ponds on Wednesday. At the heron rookery at

Conant Brook in Monson he saw one great blue heron and one tree swallow. In Brimfield, there were 54 male and 18 female common mergansers.

#### Turkey vultures

On Tuesday, I spotted about four turkey vultures perched in a dead tree in Oakham. Several more were circling overhead. I have seen then at this location in past years.

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

## Correction

An article in the Country Journal about maple sugaring incorrectly listed Karen Rowe’s first name as Brenda. She along with her husband run High Hopes Sugarhouse in Worthington.



## BLANDFORD



Blandford Highway Superintendent David Waldron points to the debris pile on Nye Brook Road from a land slide on March 28. *Turley photo by Mary Kronholm*

# Rain causes 'land slide' on Nye Brook Road

BLANDFORD – Last week it rained, heavily on Monday and sporadically the next few days.

On Thursday, March 28 a significant mass of hillside on the north side of Nye Brook Road just off Russell Stage Road dislodged and fell into the brook. The ground was apparently waterlogged.

The debris was mostly trees, roots and dirt, clogging the brook. Highway Superintendent David Waldron, crew and Police Chief Jen Dubiel were on site. Waldron was concerned that the water level in the brook would rise, putting not only Nye Brook Road in flooding jeopardy, but the home immediately across from the brook.

### FIRE CHIEF

Thomas Ackley and Firefighter John Carrington presented Dolby with the Fire Chief helmet in recognition of the permanent appointment. "We're here to support Adam 129%," said Ackley.

Dolby said, when asked if he was ready to take Interim out of his title, replied that this would give him the ability to "move the department forward a little bit more aggressively and be able to appoint some officers as well to boost our leadership ability."

Before continuing, he requested a new American flag for the Post Office.

Regarding the recent meeting with the Chester Fire Department and the discussion of the potential shared services, Dolby was firm in saying that this is only an "initial foray into discovering what might be possible," whether it is a "shared chief...or consolidate other aspects of either department" of the two departments. The research is being "shepherded by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission...on a fact-finding mission" he said, and added that, "there's a difference between fire and police."

"We had one meeting to talk about the potential...it's not the start of consolidating...just the start of a fact-finding mission to see if it is possible to combine the two departments," Dolby said. It may be two years before they know anything. There are challenges for both departments, which are universal, according to

Dolby, the cost of equipment and space; he added that they do have Mutual Aid, which, "works very well," he said.

Board member Jeff Allen asked for Dolby's opinion on potential consolidation. Dolby said he had an opinion and he was willing to discuss in public, and could provide greater detail not in public.

Distance is a consideration, "There are a lot of logistical problems...it's a hard concept to ask the people of Blandford to spend \$600,000 on a fire truck...that's going to be in Chester...I think consolidated aspects are very, very challenging...I'm still somewhat skeptical of whether or not it's a thing," he said.

"We'll come back with the study, we'll find out administratively what can be consolidated," he said, citing buying power as an example.

He was also appointed as Forest Warden and to the Emergency Management team.

Highway Superintendent David Waldron told the board about the landslide on Nye Brook Road, the rock under the swing set in the playground was removed, and Tighe and Bond is working on a scope of work for the Russell Stage Road bridge and playground. He has to advertise for another employee.

Regarding the Nye Brook Road landslide, Chair Letendre asked about preventative care and Waldron said there

# MassDOT announce lane closure on I-90 April 5

BLANDFORD – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces a climbing lane closure will be in effect on I-90 westbound in Blandford, between mile markers 35.0 and 36.0 now through Friday, April 5 from 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

Climbing lanes are lanes used by vehicles when ascending steep hills along state roads. This lane closure will primarily facilitate tree trimming work and is part of additional scheduled lane closures in Blandford and Otis to allow crews to perform necessary guardrail work, drainage work and bridge repair work. Those traveling through the area should expect delays reduce speed, and use caution.

Appropriate signage and messaging will be in place. All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are also encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit [www.mass511.com](http://www.mass511.com) to view live cameras, travel times, real-time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions. Dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions. Follow @MassDOT on X, (formerly known as Twitter), to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

# Library announces events

BLANDFORD – As always, Worm Squirms story, song and craft time is Tuesday afternoon from 4-5 p.m. and Wednesday mornings from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Porter Memorial Library.

On Saturday, April 13 features a snake program for ages five and over. The story for the program is Sarah Kurpiel's "Snake's Big Mistake" and the craft is making a clay pot.

School vacation week begins Monday, April 15 with a Pokeman club for children age 6 through 13 to trade cards, play games and make crafts. This repeats on Monday, April 29.

Thursday afternoon, April 18 is a special art creativity event for ages 8 and up. Local artist Lucia Sullivan will conduct a Tiny Painting afternoon from 4-5 p.m.

Friday, April 19 afternoon from 3-5

p.m. concludes vacation week with Lego Club.

Book club meets on Saturday, April 20 to discuss a novel about the plague, "Hamnet" by Maggie O'Farrell.

Care givers' Coffee Hour is a new offering on Friday morning, April 26 from 10-11 a.m. for a chance to discuss providing care for loved ones as well as the care-giver.

The library's StoryWalk in Watson Park this month is Paul Showers' The Listening Walk. There is a scavenger hunt bag available at the library to take along.

For more information, people may call the library at 413-848-2853 during regular hours, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2-6 p.m.; Wednesday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

# Blandford COA lists menu

BLANDFORD – Council on Aging Board Member and Chef Joann Martin has planned the breakfast and luncheon menus for this month.

Friday, April 12 at noon at the COA room at Town Hall, she has vegetable and bean chili or beef and bean chili with coleslaw and cornbread sides and a dessert of sour cream lemon meringue.

Friday, April 26 10 a.m. breakfast features eggs Benedict with ham, breakfast potatoes and cranberry orange muffins.

There is no charge, but \$5 donations "are most welcome," said Martin. People may call 413-848-4279, extension 400 to sign up for lunch or breakfast or both. They should leave their name and number of people, who will attend.

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is nothing that town can do.

It was brought out that land on Nye Brook Road and Russell Stage was put into a conservation preservation area a number of years ago. The Division of Conservation and Recreation may be contacted regarding this as well as an engineer.

There is another washout area down on Russell Stage Road where a stone wall has fallen. The town will draft a letter asking the property owner to help address the problem.

Regarding the playground area, Waldron suggested relocating the playground to the other side of the basketball court.

To put mulch down now is not appropriate, and very expensive, and storage is an issue, according to Administrative Assistant Joann Martin.

The town will purchase new chains for the swings.

The building committee for fire/highway was to meet Thursday April 4.

There have been further back up issues with the plumbing at the Post Office and work may be required. The second clog is about ten feet further on the line than the first. He also told the board that the motor is apparently burned out on the sprinkler pump.

Letendre is suggested coming up with a long-term plan for the Post Office building, because "It's going to cost us

money," she said.

Szlosek will look into the lease by the Post Office.

The parking lot goes with Bicentennial Park and not the building, which, according to Letendre, complicates the matter. She asked Szlosek to see what might be asked regarding creative design, or a grant for the building.

The loss of the Post Office is a possibility and resident George Reichert cited the interaction of the population there said that "whatever brings people together needs to be reinforced."

Letendre reminded Szlosek to reach out to Dr. David Hopson about working with on union negotiations.

The board also appointed Cindy Carr to the Blandford Cultural Council.

George Reichert returned to inquire about the status of planning for Bicentennial Park and the board's budget process. The board reminded him that the town will be presenting a request for bid for a scope of work to be done.

Szlosek told the board that the state has changed how towns may invest funds which would give the town more options.

He reported that Westfield realtors expressed their concerns for the condition of several homes on Main Street. The resilient plan results will be presented to the board in June, according to Highway Superintendent David Waldron.



## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

# HCC receives grant to continue free para educator training program

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College has been awarded a \$104,000 state grant to continue training para educators to help address workforce needs in Hampden County public schools.

The grant, from the state's Training Resources and Internships Network will fund the next round of HCC's free, seven-week, online para educator training program. The round begins Monday, June 17.

Para educators, also called teaching assistants or teaching aides, typically work in classrooms in a variety of capacities, sometimes assisting classroom teachers with instruction or working one-on-one with students who have Individual Education Plans and require additional assistance.

The 140-hour program blends job readiness and career exploration components with education and training specific to the knowledge and skills needed to pass the Professional Certification for Teaching Assistants exam, which qualifies individuals to

work in federally designated Title I school districts, or those with a significant number of low-income households.

In addition to online instruction, the program includes in-person job shadowing and can lead directly to a four-week internship and subsequent employment with one of HCC's public school system partners in Springfield, Holyoke, West Springfield and Chicopee.

HCC has been running the program four times a year since 2021 and expects to receive additional grants to keep it going beyond the March and June sessions.

The grant to HCC was part of a package of \$1.5 million in TRAIN grants awarded to 13 community colleges across Massachusetts meant to prepare residents for careers in fields such as education, health care, addiction recovery, cyber security, and manufacturing. The grants will provide free career training to more than 400 adult learners at community colleges across Massachusetts, with all programs tar-

geting residents who are unemployed or underemployed. The grant to HCC will pay to train 26 individuals.

HCC's other grant partners include Springfield WORKS, MassHire Holyoke, MassHire Springfield, DTA Works, and United Way Thrive. Individuals who receive state benefits through the Department of Transitional Assistance or Transitional Assistance to Families with Dependent Children may qualify for a "learn to earn" training and internship stipend of \$125 a week.

While the primary focus of the para educator program is to prepare students to pass the PCTA exam, also important is the job readiness curriculum, which covers the basics of applying for a job: writing a resume, preparing a cover letter, gathering references, practicing for an interview. The program also covers subjects such as how to function effectively in a professional setting: working with colleagues, communication, respect for diversity, and reliability.

For more information or to apply, people may visit [hcc.edu/para](http://hcc.edu/para).

# Colleges and universities announce fall Dean's list

### President's list

*Fitchburg State University  
Fitchburg*

Jordyn T. Gagliardi of Dalton and Emily K. Gelinis of Westfield

### Chancellor's list

*UMass Lowell  
Lowell*

Jacob Robbins  
Mechanical engineering major

### Dean's list

*Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Great Barrington*  
Lucy Swindlehurst of Becket

### Dean's list

*Bridgewater State University  
Bridgewater*

Sarah Curti of Dalton, Brady McDonald of Florence, Cam Abdalla of Lee, Karla Calvo of Lenox, Kerrigan Maurer of Northampton, Juliana Hektor of Pittsfield, Rachel Mulligan of Pittsfield, Ian Bacon of Westfield, David Forest of Westfield, Sophia Macqueen Pooler of Westfield and Abigail Chamberlain of Worthington

### Dean's list

*Fitchburg State University  
Fitchburg*

Jordan C. Degrenier of Cheshire, Owen T. Bonney of Pittsfield, Ashley L. Farina of Pittsfield, Miles A Nordskog of Pittsfield

### Distinction list

*Mount Wachusett Community College  
Gardener*

Jasmin Malespin of Northampton

Read the  
Country Journal  
online at  
[countryjournal.turley.com](http://countryjournal.turley.com)

# Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts announces scholarship opportunity

The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts Scholarship Committee announces applications are now available for a \$1,000 scholarship to be awarded to a deserving western Massachusetts high school graduate pursuing higher education in the communication arts in 2024.

Guidelines and application form can be found by visiting [www.adclub-wm.org/scholarships](http://www.adclub-wm.org/scholarships) or by emailing David Cecchi, Scholarship Committee chairman at [cecco@davidcecchi.com](mailto:cecco@davidcecchi.com) or calling 413-786-3236. Completed scholarship applications and all support materials must be submitted to the Ad Club, postmarked by April 15, 2024. Scholarship decisions are made by the Scholarship Committee of The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts and are considered final. The scholarship will be awarded

in May.

Western Massachusetts high school seniors, who plan to attend an accredited college or technical school to study advertising, communications, marketing or graphic design and will be attending school in September 2024 are encouraged to apply. The scholarship must be applied against tuition and fees at the school. Candidates will be judged on academic performance, extracurricular activities, community service and/or work experience, a demonstrated interest in advertising, communications, marketing or graphic design, personal recommendations and a letter of introduction outlining future plans.

The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts is the premier organization for marketing and communications professionals in western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut. Founded

in 1909 as the Publicity Club of Springfield, for more than a century the Club has offered members the ability to advance and enrich the local creative community, by acting as a catalyst for idea exchange, professional development and innovation. The Club continues to create a forum for members to learn, network, recognize achievement and give back to build a stronger advertising and marketing community.

In 1915, the Advertising Club established the region's first community service award, The Order of William Pynchon to recognize outstanding commitment to the community. Since that time, more than 200 deserving citizens have been presented with the Pynchon Medal bearing the likeness of Springfield's founder and the words: The Honor Us Whom We Honor.

# Clark hosts vacation week activities

WILLIAMSTOWN – From Monday, April 15 through Friday, April 19, the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., offers children and families fun activities and opportunities to see great art as part of April School Vacation Week.

Visitors can pick up a set of Looking Carefully Cards, drawing pads and complimentary colored pencils at the Clark Center Admissions desk to use while exploring the galleries and the grounds. Museum goers are also encouraged to stop by the Clark's postcard station on the lower level of the Museum Building. They can create a unique postcard to send to a friend, drop it in the Clark's post box and the Clark will stamp and mail it.

Special April School Vacation Week activities are offered on April 17 and April 19. Sprouting with Seeds Art-Making Workshop is Wednesday, April 17 from 1-3 p.m. This is recommended for ages 5 and older. This program is generously supported by Allen & Company.

Earth Walk with Dogs on Friday, April 19 at 10 a.m. Three walks through the Clark's trails are offered, ranging in difficulty with dogs from the Berkshire Humane Society. Advance registration encouraged; capacity is limited.

Print Room Pop-Up: Dogs and Nature inspired by the morning walk with dogs will take place Friday, April 19 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Children will enjoy a special display of works on paper in the Manton Study Center for Works on Paper showcasing landscapes and nature scenes, as well as the timelessness of dogs as an artistic subject throughout the centuries.

On view during April School Vacation Week is Paper Cities, which examines representations of cities in works on paper created from the late fifteenth to the early twentieth century, located in the Manton Research Center.

Visitors can also view the fifth installment of Clark's public spaces series, featuring works by artist David-Jeremiah in the Clark Center and Manton Research Center. The installation, free and open to the public, represents an overview of and conclusion to the artist's cycle of large circular reliefs, or tondos, collectively titled I Drive Thee.

All April School Vacation Week activities are free. Admission is always free for students of all ages with a valid student ID and anyone aged 21 and under. For more information, people may visit [clarkart.edu/events](http://clarkart.edu/events).

# Max Cares Foundation offers culinary, hospitality scholarships

HARTFORD, CT – Max Cares Foundation, Inc. announced the opening of the application period for the charitable organization's scholarships for graduating high school or currently enrolled college students pursuing a secondary education in culinary arts or hospitality/restaurant management for the 2024-2025 school year.

Students residing in the Greater Hartford and Greater Springfield regions are encouraged to apply. Interested applicants should refer to the Foundation's website for the list of eligible towns. People should visit [maxcaresfoundation.org/scholarships/](http://maxcaresfoundation.org/scholarships/) for an application, requirements and more information. Application deadline is Wednesday, May 15.

Applicants are eligible to receive up to \$5,000 in funds to be used toward their Culinary Arts or Hospitality educational expenses. In 2023, twelve students were provided scholarships totaling \$30,000. Since 2017, Max Cares Foundation has awarded 50 scholarships to students furthering their education in the field.

Applicants of the Max Cares Foundation scholarships must reside in a city or town identified as being in the Greater Hartford or Greater Springfield region and a high school senior or a current college student in good standing, eligible for high school graduation the same year as the scholarship application or a current college student seeking to earn a secondary degree in Culinary Arts or Hospitality and Restaurant Management.

Previous MCF scholarship recipients, who are continuing their education are able to reapply, provided they meet the eligibility requirements.

MCF scholarships may be used at any accredited college, university or trade school providing training in culinary and hospitality fields. Funds must be used within 12 months of this grant and can be utilized to defray tuition, supplies, room or board. Max Cares Foundation reserves the right to pay the institution directly.



# MIDDLEFIELD

## Community Service Group celebrates spring with tea party



Tamarin Laurel, Lois Bell and Jennifer Conde got all dressed up for the Alice in Wonderland Tea Party

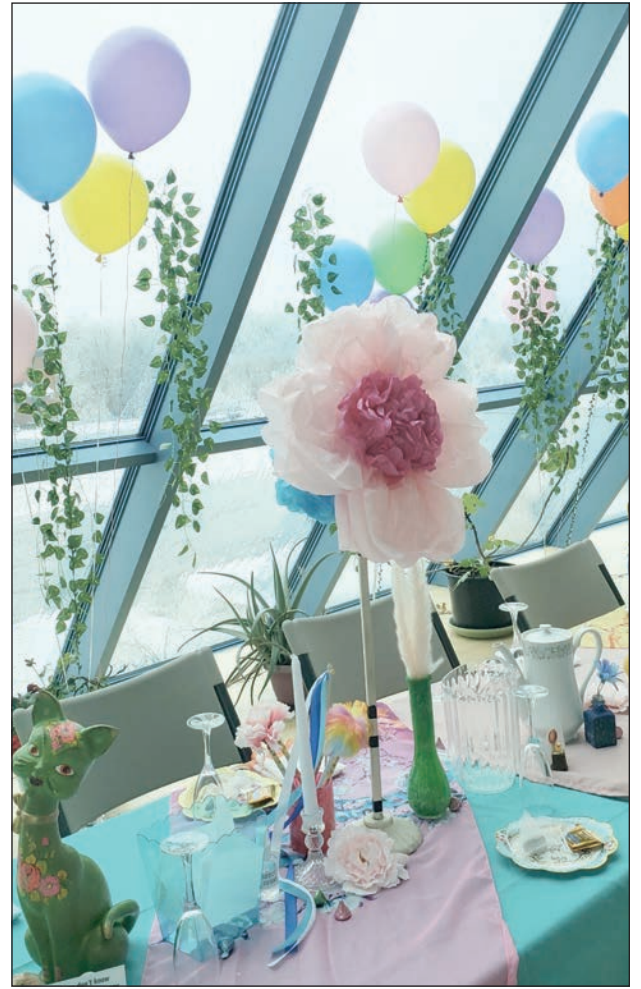
MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Community Service Group celebrated Spring on Saturday, March 23 with an Alice in Wonderland Tea Party at the Blossom Center on Bell Road.

Even with an ice storm outside it was spring fun on the inside. Bright decorations and places for photos. Many people came in costumes and everyone was ready to celebrate.

There was a delicious array of tea sandwiches, wonderful desserts and an exotic assortment of teas. Lois Bell, our local librarian, shared excerpts from the book by Lewis Carroll.

It was a fun afternoon filled with friends, food and games. Plans for next year's Spring event are already in the works.

For more information as to how you can become a part of the Middlefield Community Service Group message us on Facebook/ Middlefield Events.



Spring colors added to the Welcome Spring tea party by the Middlefield Community Service Group. Submitted photos

### Veterans in Motion 5K

When: 27 April 2024  
 Time: 10:00 a.m.  
 Where: 5 Bridge St. Haydenville, MA. 01039  
 Run \$30  
 Walk/Run \$20



Scan this QR Code with your phone



OR type the following into webbrowser:  
<http://racewire.com/register.php?c=13931>  
 Help our Legion to help our veterans and our community



## Middlefield to hold STM and pre meeting discussion April 5

MIDDLEFIELD – Bingo takes place on the first Friday, April 5 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Center at 16 Bell Road.

Adair Laurel will host a pre-Special Town Meeting and pre-Annual Town Meeting discussion on Saturday, April 6 at 3 p.m. on Saturday. He has asked Tamarin Laurel to experiment with using

Google Meet for a remote option. People hoping to attend remotely, should email Middlefield.Tamarin@gmail.com Other times to review Town Meeting Warrants also possible.

The Saturday, April 13 Special Town Meeting warrant is online on: Facebook.com/MiddlefieldMA/.

## BECKET

### Congregational Church holds turkey dinner fundraiser to be held April 13

BECKET – The 2024 dinners are beginning with a roasted turkey dinner with stuffing, mashed potatoes, roasted carrots and peas, rolls and homemade pineapple upside down cake with real whipped cream on Saturday, April 13 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church Guild Hall on YMCA Road.

This is fund raising for the First Congregational Church maintenance and continued powder post beetle repair work. People may eat in or take out. If ordering take out, they should call 413-623-8300 or 413-623-6455 and state whether they want white meat, dark meat or both. Cost is \$15 for adults and free for children under 12.

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# RUSSELL

## Youngsters enjoy egg hunt and a visit with the Easter Bunny



The Russell Recreation Committee held their annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30. Despite the cool and windy weather, they had a great turnout. Thanks to everyone who participated and volunteered to make this event successful. *Submitted photo*

# CHESTER

## Hamilton Memorial Library announces upcoming events

CHESTER – The Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St., lists April events and ongoing activities.

Story time and play meet every Thursday at 11 a.m. Toddlers and preschoolers will enjoy a story, work on puzzles or take part in creative play. LEGO Club meets the first Saturday of every month (April 6) at 11 a.m. for all ages.

Cookbook Club will hold a potluck gathering the second Tuesday of each month (April 9) from 5-6 p.m. They will be sharing recipes this month from the book, “Milk Street, Tuesday Nights Mediterranean” by Christopher Kimball. People may stop in for a copy of the book or to print off a recipe to create. Writer’s Club now meets twice a month on the second and fourth Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m. (April 10 and April 24). All are welcome.

The week of April 7-13 is National Library week. People are encouraged to stop into the library and show their support.

The library will host events during April school vacation April 13-20.

Saturday, April 13 from 10 a.m. -noon in the Chester Town Hall, local writer Steve Cormier will talk about the history and mystery surrounding the life and death of Parley B. Hutchins.

Tuesday, April 16 there will be spring crafts all day. Children may stop in anytime that day 1-6 p.m. for a fun spring themed craft. RSVP by calling 413-354-7808 is helpful.

Wednesday April 17 Tween/teen Graphic Novel Club will meet from 2-4 p.m. They should stop in now to get their copy of: “Spy Camp, The Graphic Novel”

by Gibbs/Sarkar. Participants will discuss the novel and then each teen/tween will get to take home their very own Create Your Own Graphic Novel Notebook, which has helpful tools to get the creative process started. They should RSVP by calling 413-354-7808. It is limited to seven participants.

Wednesday April 17 Book Club meets at 4:30 p.m. They will be discussing “The Lost Girls” by Ellen Marie Wiseman. Extra copies are available. Thursday April 18 is special story time and bird craft program. Children bring their big brother, sister, or a friend for story time. They should RSVP by calling 413-354-7808.

Saturday April 20 will be the first Pokémon Club meeting for ages eight and up. RSVP by calling at 413-354-7808

The library will be closed temporarily beginning Monday, May 6. This period is scheduled to last approximately six weeks. People may visit the website at [hamilton-library.org](http://hamilton-library.org) or follow on social media for up-to-date information. The library is working diligently to find a location to house a limited collection of books, DVD’s, magazines etc. during this period. The drop box will be available in the same location. The inter-library loan program will continue throughout this period.

Since the library is now a CWMARS library patrons can order any book they’d like online by visiting [catalog.cwmars.org](http://catalog.cwmars.org). Their username is the barcode on the backside of their library card and their password is the last four digits of their phone number. People may stop by the library prior to May 6 and staff will show them how to access the catalog from home.

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**AN INFORMATIONAL NIGHT ON PUBLIC POWER**

**GUEST SPEAKERS Q & A SESSION LIGHT REFRESHMENTS**

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**6:00 PM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2024**

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## NORTHAMPTON

# Northampton Jazz Festival welcomes new board members

Talented individuals bring experience in entrepreneurship, marketing, community organizing and music

**NORTHAMPTON** – The Northampton Jazz Festival welcomed two new board members, who bring broad skills and deep experience in entrepreneurship, marketing, community organizing and music from world cultures.

“I am thrilled to add these two dynamic and energetic individuals to the Northampton Jazz Festival Board of Directors. In a very short time, they have both contributed much to the organization,” said Ruth Griggs, president of the board. The new members are Ricard Torres-Mateluna, who joined last month, and Jillian Duclos, who came on the board in September 2023. “Their ideas are fresh, realistic and are help-

ing us expand the depth and scope of our offerings this September, like adding children’s programming, more jazz events in September and bringing musicians of world cultures to the stage,” said Griggs.

Duclos of Easthampton is a mom first and community builder at heart. After earning a bachelor’s degree in politics at Mount Holyoke College as a Francis Perkins Scholar, class of 2017, she became a grass-roots organizer, a driver of work-force development and then a business owner. Now, as executive director of the Downtown Northampton Association, she facilitates collaboration with city leaders, downtown organizations and community members to drive economic development for downtown Northampton and to provide a much-needed safety net to local and small businesses who anchor the community. On the Northampton Jazz Festival board, Duclos looks forward to using her experience to explore

the best ways all can work together to make Northampton thrive.

Torres-Mateluna of Belchertown, is a communicator and brand and marketing strategist, who thinks with a global perspective and seeks solutions at the local level. Over his more than 20 years in the field, he has successfully worked toward uplifting educational entities and nonprofit organizations, having worked in advertising agencies and startups, large and small, at home and abroad, run by people from all backgrounds.

Torres-Mateluna’s current role is vice president of marketing and communications for the Springfield-based human services agency Viability, Inc. He has been a jazz lover since childhood and is also a member of the editorial board and U.S. correspondent for Papeles de Jazz Magazine in his native Chile. He holds a double bachelor’s degree in journalism and mass communications from the Universidad ARCIS, Chile and a master’s degree in litera-

ture from the University of California, Santa Cruz. As a first-generation college student and immigrant, he understands intimately the challenges “first” groups face and uses that empathy and perspective to create solutions that effectively incorporate everyone. “The only way a brand, a campaign or a strategy can be successful is by truly connecting with people,” he states.

The Northampton Jazz Festival, founded in 2011, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The 2024 festival will stage seven or eight live jazz concerts on Friday, Sept. 27, and offer 10 or 11 performances on Saturday, Sept. 28 throughout downtown Northampton. Other events include Jazz Film Night at Northampton Center for the Arts on June 20, Jazzy Arts Night Out on Sept. 13, and an outdoor lawn concert at the Forbes Library in early September. More information can be found by visiting [northampton-jazzfest.org](http://northampton-jazzfest.org).

## EASTHAMPTON

# bankESB hires Lauren Tabin

**EASTHAMPTON** – bankESB recently hired Lauren Tabin as assistant vice president, branch officer of its King Street, Northampton office.

Tabin of Holyoke has nearly 30 years of banking experience. Prior to joining bankESB, she was assistant vice president, branch officer at PeoplesBank, and previously held various other positions there including banking center manager, branch officer, trainer and teller. She brings an extensive background in management and leadership experience to her new role, where she will man-



Lauren Tabin

age the Northampton office team while remaining engaged in the community.

She currently serves on the board of the Holyoke Chamber and the Rotary Club, and previously served on the board of the Black Horse Trust, the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round and Providence Ministries.

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton and have 11 branches located throughout Western Massachusetts.

## CUMMINGTON

# Contra dance event scheduled for April 20

**CUMMINGTON** – Beginner and family friendly event Contra Dance will be held Saturday, April 20 from 7-9 pm. At the Cummington Community Hours, 33 Main St.

All dances will be taught in

a smoke and alcohol free location. Donations will be accepted at the door.

People may email Sadie Stull at [sarahstull@gmail.com](mailto:sarahstull@gmail.com) or call 413-634-5013 with any questions.

# Samara Kuchee Weeqashum to present Master’s thesis

**CUMMINGTON** – Samara, Kuchee Weeqashum, Julia Jackson Tobey will present her Master’s thesis, from the University of Washington on Saturday, April 20 at the Village Church, 32 Main St.

She studied learning ecologies, place-making, self-determination and historic movement(s). But most of all she is thrilled to bring back the stories she has learned as a young Mashpee, Wampanoag citizen, who has been navigating the world.

She’ll share what her travels have

taught her about learning, tradition, teaching and relationship that has re-valued what’s important at home and in the world.

This program is supported in part by grants from the Cummington, Charlemont-Hawley, Windsor, Local Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and the Nolumbeka Project

The program is free and the location has accessible access.

## GREAT BARRINGTON

# Non-profit center offers spring webinar series

**GREAT BARRINGTON** – In today’s interconnected world, partnerships can help nonprofits open new avenues to amplify impact and extend reach.

Through the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires, non-profits can sign up for a series of six short webinars on “Increased impact through Strategic Partnerships.” Presenter Alice Ruhnke from GrantStation will provide practical insights and actionable strategies for nonprofit leaders to harness the power of partnerships across various sectors for greater impact and success.

Webinar topics include: Monday, April 8 – Identify and Cultivate

Meaningful Partnerships; Monday, April 22 – Maximize Growth by Partnering with Businesses; Monday, May 6 – Increase Your Impact Through Nonprofit Partnerships; Monday, May 20 – How to Cultivate Local Government Support;

Monday, June 3 – Unlock Partnerships with Financial Institutions and Monday, June 17 – Partner with Communities of Faith for Social Impact. All sessions run from 2-2:45 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

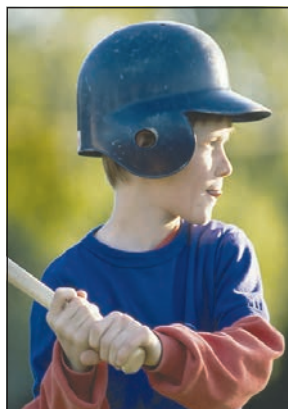
The fee for the bundle of six webinars is \$60. Participants can watch live or view a recorded version afterwards. People from non-profits may register online at [npcberkshires.org](http://npcberkshires.org).

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

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

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



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National Multiple Sclerosis Society

## Country Journal OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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## OTIS

# Story walk and story hour to celebrate Earth Day

OTIS – The Otis Library story walk celebrates Earth Day.

The story is “We Are Water Protectors” by Carol Linstorm and illustrated by Michaela Grade. The walk is along the Farmington River

Trail and is located behind St. Mary’s of the Lake Church, 72 North Main Road. The walk will be up now until Tuesday, April 30.

A new weekly story hour starts Wednesday, April 24 from 9-10 a.m.

# MassDOT announces lane closures in Otis and Blandford

OTIS AND BLANDFORD – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces lane closures along I-90 will be in effect beginning Monday, April 1, at 7:00 p.m., in Otis and Blandford.

These include: Lane closures on I-90 westbound, in Otis and Blandford, between mile markers 23.5 and 27.0. Lane closures on I-90 eastbound, in Otis and Blandford, between mile markers 21.5 and 27.0. Lane closures on I-90 eastbound and westbound, in Blandford, at mile marker 26.1.

Work in these locations began on Monday, April 1 and will be conducted through Friday, April 5 morning at 5:30 a.m. starting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 4 during evening and overnight hours.

These closures will allow crews to perform necessary guardrail work, drain-

age work, and bridge repair work.

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

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are also encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit [www.mass511.com](http://www.mass511.com) to view live cameras, travel times, real-time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions. Dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions. Follow @MassDOT on X, (formerly known as Twitter), to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

# Library to hold book sale April 20

OTIS – Friends of the Otis Library will hold a book sale and more at Otis Ridge Ski Lodge, Rte. 23, on Saturday, April 20 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Tons of gently used books, puzzles, games, CDs and DVDs will be available

at reasonable prices. People can stock up for rainy days. The Ridge Canteen will be open for soft drinks and light snacks such as ice cream, chips, candy. For information, people may email [FriendsOtisLibrary@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOtisLibrary@gmail.com) or call/text 413 429-1083.

## MONTGOMERY

# Library hosts turtle program

MONTGOMERY – Grace Hall Memorial Library will hold a children’s event for spring break at the library

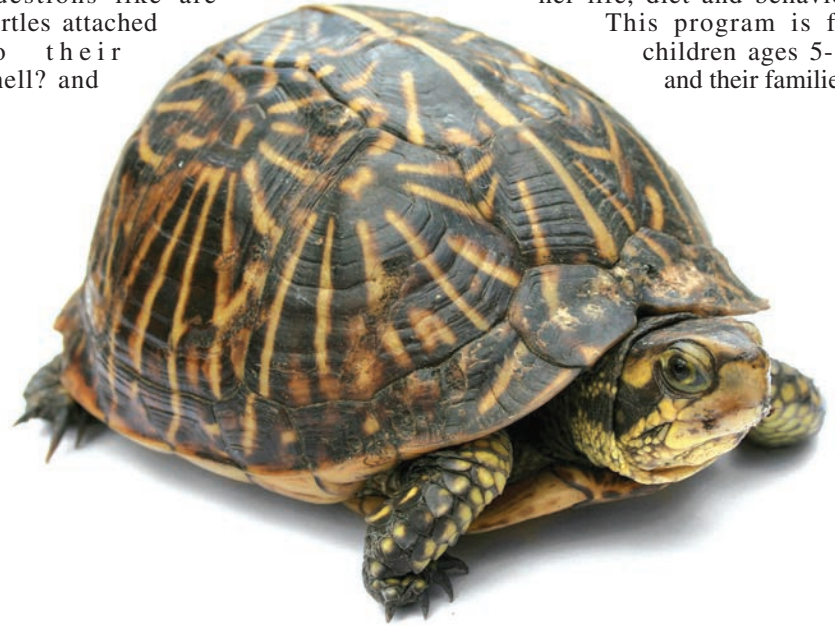
On Thursday, April 18 at 3 p.m. Mass Audubon presents turtles, which includes a visit from a live ornate box turtle.

Participants will get answers to questions like are turtles attached to their shell? and

how many species of turtles live in Massachusetts? A Mass Audubon educator will explore the wonderful world of turtles by playing games, touching a variety of real turtle shells and making a turtle craft.

They will also get to meet Pita the live ornate box turtle and learn about her life, diet and behavior.

This program is for children ages 5-12 and their families.



## HAYDENVILLE

# Senator Mark holds staff hours

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

Residents of any of the 57 municipalities in the Senator’s Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire District are encouraged to share ideas

on current or potential state legislation or to ask for assistance with issues involving any state agency.

Hours are Tuesday, April 9, and Tuesday, April 23 from 1-3 p.m. Town Offices, 141 Main St., Haydenville. Appointments are not required.

## REGION

# Experiencing a solar eclipse with Richard Sanderson

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
Staff Writer

WARE – People across the country are excitedly awaiting the upcoming total solar eclipse on Monday, April 8 which will cross over New England.

Richard Sanderson, Adjunct Curator of Physical Science at the Springfield Museum, gave a slideshow presentation about eclipses at the Young Men’s Library Association on Monday evening.

Unlike lunar eclipses, which are able to be seen by more people, solar eclipses are rare. They occur when the moon travels between the earth and the sun, effectively blocking it.

“To us, the moon and sun look the same size because of the distance and sizes of them,” Sanderson explained. “The amount the moon covers the sun during an eclipse can ‘change’ depending on how close or far away the moon is relative to the earth as it passes in front of the sun.”

There are two types of eclipses: total and annular. A total eclipse is when the moon is closer to the earth and completely covers the sun, only with a small ring of light, called a diamond ring effect.

An annular eclipse is when more of the sun is present in a ring around the moon, which is farther away from the earth on its axis.

When it comes to the best spot to view the eclipse just two weeks away, it is within the path of totality, or the path the eclipse will be able to be seen most clearly.

“On April 8, if you’re in the right place, you’ll be able to see the moon completely cover the sun,” Sanderson

said of the upcoming total eclipse. “The farther you are from the path of totality, the smaller the ‘bite’ out of the sun will be.”

This “bite” is the part of the sun that is blocked by the moon. While those who go to Vermont or northern Maine along the path of totality will see the full eclipse, those in Massachusetts may only see a partial eclipse, or only part of the sun blocked out.

While a solar eclipse is very rare, for the first time in centuries, we have had the opportunity to witness three just within a single lifetime.

Sanderson was able to see his first on June 30, 1973, which became known as the “Eclipse of the Century” because it lasted a whopping seven minutes, the second longest recorded eclipse we have ever recorded in human history.

Sanderson viewed the 1973 total eclipse with his father and a group of researchers in the Kaisut Desert in Northern Kenya.

“When you are in an eclipse, sometimes that shadow only lasts two or three minutes,” Sanderson explained. “It was a really encompassing experience. About 30 seconds before totality, it was like the sky had a dimmer effect as the sky went dark and the stars came out.”

The second eclipse Sanderson experienced was on Aug. 21, 2017. This became known as the “Great American Eclipse” because it’s path of totality ran through the direct center of the country, cutting it in half.

“There’s something about eclipses that triggers a deep and emotional connection in people,” Sanderson said. “Fear and excitement as the sky goes dark when it shouldn’t be.”

The upcoming total eclipse on

April 8 has left people with a mix of fear, speculation, and excitement as people plan to take off work to see this once-in-a-lifetime event.

However, one should take into consideration the safety concerns of eclipse-viewing. During an eclipse, the sun is covered, yes, but that means its heat and light are far more concentrated.

“Think of a magnifying glass reflecting light from the sun onto a leaf, which in turn makes it burn. That can happen to your retinas if you look directly at an eclipse,” Sanderson warned.

As such, special glasses with dark filters (not sunglasses) must be worn to look at an eclipse, but take care you only glance at the sun, not stare for long periods.

The upcoming eclipse, for those not travelling to get into the path of totality, can be best seen in the Greater Springfield area at specific times.

A partial eclipse will become visible at 2:14 p.m., the maximum eclipse that we in Massachusetts can see will be at 3:28 p.m., and it will wane off to a partial eclipse by 4:38 p.m.

The eclipse is said to only be visible for a total of four minutes, but again, that all depends on where you are.

“It’s a really rare opportunity to be able to see an eclipse,” Sanderson said. “Bring your kids and special glasses because this experience will last a lifetime.”

The Museum of Springfield will be open specially on the day of the eclipse and will have two planetarium teachers available with a special telescope to view the eclipse. Arrive early for parking and enjoy the sight.



# The Total Solar Eclipse in April

HOLYOKE – The US is lucky that this April we will be able to view a Total Eclipse of the Sun. It will not be near the path of a total eclipse again until 2044.

In Holyoke and surroundings, we should start to see it around 2:15 p.m. with a maximum coverage at 3:27 p.m. and the end around 4:27 p.m..

To see these safely, the Holyoke Public Library with the support of the Space Science Institute, and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation is offering free solar viewing glasses.

Come to the library lobby any time the library is open from today until Saturday April 6 to get your free Solar glasses.

There is a limited supply, one pair per person or maximum two per family. Glasses may run out but it is easy to share.

Partial Total Solar Eclipse Visibility  
If it’s partly cloudy, remember that the total eclipse lasts over two hours, so glimpses of the Sun may be possible as the cloud cover changes. If the Sun seems to have no chance of peeking through, don’t despair. Watch a live feed from NASA eclipse viewing locations on the NASA TV Channel at <https://www.nasa.gov/nasatv/>.

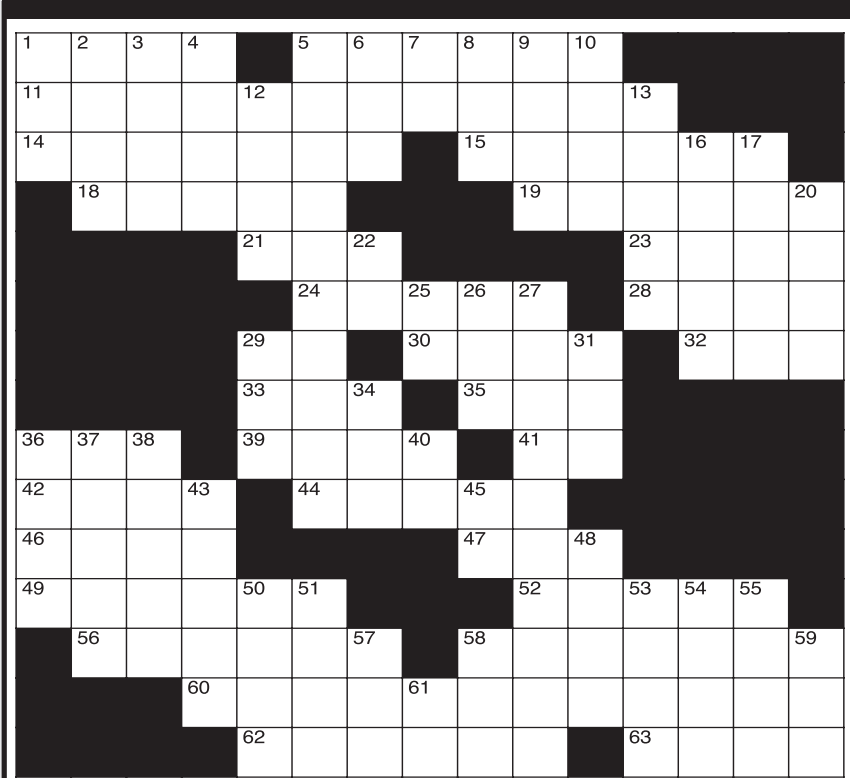




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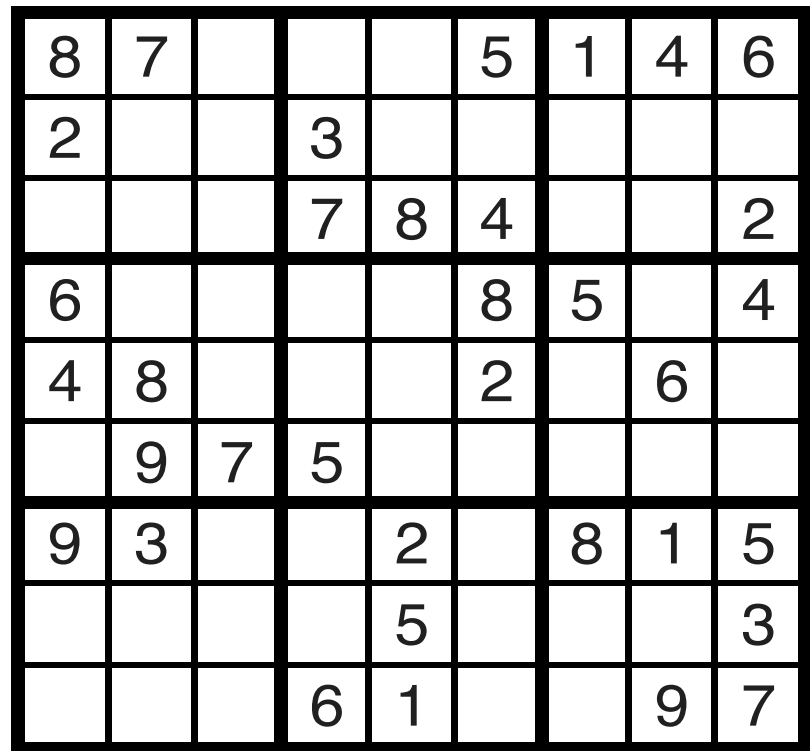
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| 5. Mystical or magical                | 41. Commercial                          | 4. Clip                           | 38. Hebrew calendar month              |
| 11. Shortening                        | 42. Spots where golfers start           | 5. In a way, misleads             | 40. Designated hitter                  |
| 14. More satisfying                   | 44. Polite form of address (Indian)     | 6. Human gene                     | 43. Norther Poland village             |
| 15. Other side                        | 46. French river                        | 7. The Golden State (abbr.)       | 45. A passport is one form             |
| 18. Philippine island                 | 47. Reduce the light                    | 8. Lizard genus                   | 48. Hand (Spanish)                     |
| 19. More unnatural                    | 49. Blood-sucking fly                   | 9. Parasites that invade the skin | 50. Hit with the open hand             |
| 21. Mutual savings bank               | 52. A way to categorize                 | 10. Took apart                    | 51. Actor Idris                        |
| 23. Famed designer Chanel             | 56. Procrastinates                      | 12. Mild yellow Dutch cheese      | 53. Shakespeare's nickname "The ___"   |
| 24. Makes less wild                   | 58. Tall slender tower                  | 13. S. California town            | 54. Northern U.S. lake                 |
| 28. At some prior time                | 60. Where researchers work              | 16. Suffix plural                 | 55. Marvin and Horsley are two         |
| 29. The cops who investigate the cops | 62. Office of the Pope                  | 17. Painting technique            | 57. Soak                               |
| 30. Immune system response            | 63. Office furnishing                   | 20. Small Eurasian deer           | 58. Partner to cheese                  |
| 32. Distress signal                   | <b>CLUES DOWN</b>                       | 22. Mr. T character               | 59. Expression of disappointment       |
| 33. Engine additive                   | 1. Possesses                            | 25. Microsoft                     | 61. College dorm employee              |
| 35. "No Scrubs" trio                  | 2. American Board of Orthopedic Surgery | 26. Shock therapy                 |  |
| 36. Very fast airplane                | 3. Ancient Syrian                       | 27. Able to be sold               |  |
| 39. A reward                          |   | 29. A doctrine                    |  |
|                                       |   | 31. These three follow A          |  |
|                                       |   | 34. Pulse                         |  |
|                                       |   | 36. Quantitative fact             |  |

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

- ARIES**  
Mar 21/Apr 20  
Grit and guts will get you what you deserve. You may have an opportunity to make a good deal of money, so give this plan careful consideration. Ask for advice if the need arises.
- CANCER**  
Jun 22/Jul 22  
A big shift in your perception and attitude will bring new components to your life that you may not have anticipated. This week you'll certainly have a few eyes-wide-open moments.
- LIBRA**  
Sept 23/Oct 23  
Even though some drama may be swirling in your universe, you find it tolerable because it's coming at you in small portions. Just stay on the sidelines.
- CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22/Jan 20  
You are not normally characterized as "impulsive," but you may surprise everyone. An opportunity to travel or another adventure could drop in your lap.
- TAURUS**  
Apr 21/May 21  
Taurus, there has been change in your life and you may want to blame the stars. Things will move out of your comfort zone and you will have to sharpen your ability to adapt.
- LEO**  
Jul 23/Aug 23  
There will be no hiding out this week, Leo. You will soon learn that things will come your way at a rapid pace. Do your best to keep up, mighty Lion, as it's bound to be exciting.
- SCORPIO**  
Oct 24/Nov 22  
If boredom has set in, it's better to look to new experiences instead of doing something rash just for the thrill. See which classes you can take or find new restaurants to explore.
- AQUARIUS**  
Jan 21/Feb 18  
Try to create some tranquil spaces at home, Aquarius. You can use a haven, especially when a lot of stuff is thrown at you outside your home.
- PISCES**  
Feb 19/Mar 20  
Pisces, you may be on a mission this week to get things done. Don't rush in your efforts to complete everything or you are bound to make mistakes that are not easily fixed.
- SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 23/Dec 21  
Self-care and healing are what you should focus on right now, Sagittarius. You may have been pushing your needs to the side lately and you need to make this a priority.



## SUDOKU

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

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**answers**

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# PUBLIC NOTICES

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

### Town of Worthington Planning Board

The Worthington Planning Board will hold a public hearing for proposed amendments to Zoning Bylaws:

1. Update section 4.4(a) (USES AUTHORIZED ON SPECIAL PERMITS) to consolidate several recreational uses under a single Outdoor Recreation use, and add a definition of Outdoor Recreation.

2. Addition of section 4.4(c) clarifying that temporary events that fall outside of typical uses for a property shall be governed by an Event Permit issued by the Selectboard.

The Hearing will be held **Thursday, April 18 at 6:30 PM** at the Worthington Town Hall.

A copy of the proposed amendments may be reviewed on the town website <http://worthington-ma.us> or by emailing the town clerk at [townclerk@worthington-ma.us](mailto:townclerk@worthington-ma.us).

04/04, 04/11/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street

Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23P2337EA

Estate of:  
Alfred L. Caron  
Date of Death: 05/30/2023  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR SALE OF REAL ESTATE BY A PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Sale of Real Estate has been filed by: **Scott Caron of Westfield, MA** requesting that the court authorize the Personal Representative to sell the decedent's real estate at a private sale.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/30/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice

to you.  
WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: March 26, 2024  
**Rosemary A Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
04/04/2024

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG  
Office of the Zoning Board of Appeals  
Haydenville, MA  
**LEGAL NOTICE**

Public Hearings will be held starting at **4:30 PM on Tuesday, April 23, 2024** in the Williamsburg Town Offices, 141 Main St., Haydenville, MA to consider the following applications:

4:30 PM- The application of Jeffrey Ovitt, 9 Goshen Rd., Assessors Map C, Lot 57.0, for a variance as required by Section 9.0a, and a Special Permit required by Section 12.0e of the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Williamsburg, to rebuild a new non-conforming home to replace an existing non-conforming home in regard to front lot set-backs.

5:00 PM- The application of Richard & Diane Karowski, 47 Goshen Road, Assessors Map C, Lot 129.1, for a Special Permit as required by Section 5.10a, to

change an existing agricultural building into a residence.

5:30 PM-The application of Adin & Llama Maynard, 61 Adams Rd., Assessors Map E, Lot 45, for a Special Permit, as required by Section 12.0e of the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Williamsburg, to allow a rebuild of an existing seasonal camp structure to the specifications as included with the application and for personal use only by the adjacent property owner.

Gerald Mann, Chairman  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
03/28, 04/04/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD24P0690EA

Estate of:  
Francis Joseph Zak, Sr.  
Date of Death: 03/07/2024  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Francis J. Zak, Jr. of Westfield, MA** requesting that the Court enter a for-

mal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Francis J. Zak, Jr. of Westfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/24/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
A Personal Representative appointed under

the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: March 28, 2024

**Rosemary A Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
04/04/2024

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

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**GRANT WRITER/FACILITATOR**

The Town of Brookfield is seeking qualified applicants for a part-time (15 hours per week) Grant Writer/Facilitator. See job description at [brookfieldma.us](http://brookfieldma.us). Salary is commensurate with experience. Current appropriation is \$30.28 per hour. Please submit a resume and cover letter to [selectmen@brookfieldma.us](mailto:selectmen@brookfieldma.us) Open until filled. *Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer*

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**HELP WANTED**

**SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF PALMER** seeks a skilled, outgoing, and caring Church Administrator to manage the business affairs of the church and to work closely with our Pastor, Moderator, and church members to advance church missions and community outreach. The ideal candidate will have strong communication and organizational skills, be proficient in the use of computer and website technologies, and be creative in developing procedures and practices. The applicant must maintain strong, positive interpersonal relationships with members, ministries, and staff. This job is a 25-hour/week position, Monday-Friday, 9am-2pm, with PTO benefits. Pay commensurate with experience. Please email resumes to [scc1847media@gmail.com](mailto:scc1847media@gmail.com).

**TOWN OF HAMPDEN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

The town of Hampden Highway Department is seeking to fill a full-time skilled worker/truck driver position. All applicants must possess a valid Class B CDL, 2B Hoisting License, OSHA 10 Certificate of Training, and a copy of current driving record. Applicants must have the skills and knowledge necessary to perform general road and grounds maintenance and the ability to operate and maintain all associated tools and equipment. The capability to perform maintenance/repair on trucks and equipment, welding, and the use of other garage tools, along with light construction and snowplowing experience, would be beneficial. Please call the Hampden Highway Department **(413) 566-8842**, or email [highway@hampdenma.gov](mailto:highway@hampdenma.gov) for inquiries and application/resume submittals.

**TOWN OF WILBRAHAM FIREFIGHTER/EMT**

The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill a vacancy for Firefighter/EMT. Paramedic Certification or currently attending paramedic school highly preferred. For application and more info, visit [www.wilbraham-ma.gov](http://www.wilbraham-ma.gov). Deadline 4/17/24

**HELP WANTED**

**TOWN OF WILBRAHAM HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR 1 P/T BORROWER SERVICES ASSISTANT P/T RECYCLING ATTENDANT SUMMER CAMP COUNSELOR SUMMER LIFEGUARD**

The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill several vacancies. For application and more information please visit [www.wilbraham-ma.gov](http://www.wilbraham-ma.gov). Open until filled. EOE


**TOWN TREASURER:**

The Town of Brookfield is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time (40-hour week) position of Town Treasurer. Full job description at [brookfieldma.us](http://brookfieldma.us). Salary commensurate with experience. Current appropriation is \$80,498.62. Submit cover letter and resume to: [selectmen@brookfieldma.us](mailto:selectmen@brookfieldma.us). Reviews begin week of April 15th. Open until filled. *The Town of Brookfield is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.*

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**FOR RENT**



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

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

**Classified Advertising DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON**

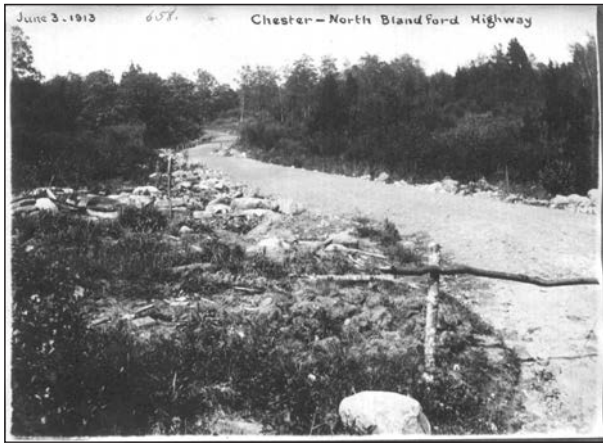


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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



The original North Blandford Road, which is no in the woods.



The original stone walls lining the North Blandford Road still can be found in the woods

Submitted photos



The Tower Car used to attach the cross bars and insulators to the poles.

## Hilltown Hikers follow the old trolley line

There are a few spectacular remains from the Huckleberry Trolley Line, which ran through North Blandford.

Construction started here in 1911. In a dark and protected section the rail ties still remain. Ties have only been found in two other places for short 10 foot and 20 foot section on the electric street railway from Lee to Huntington similar to this.

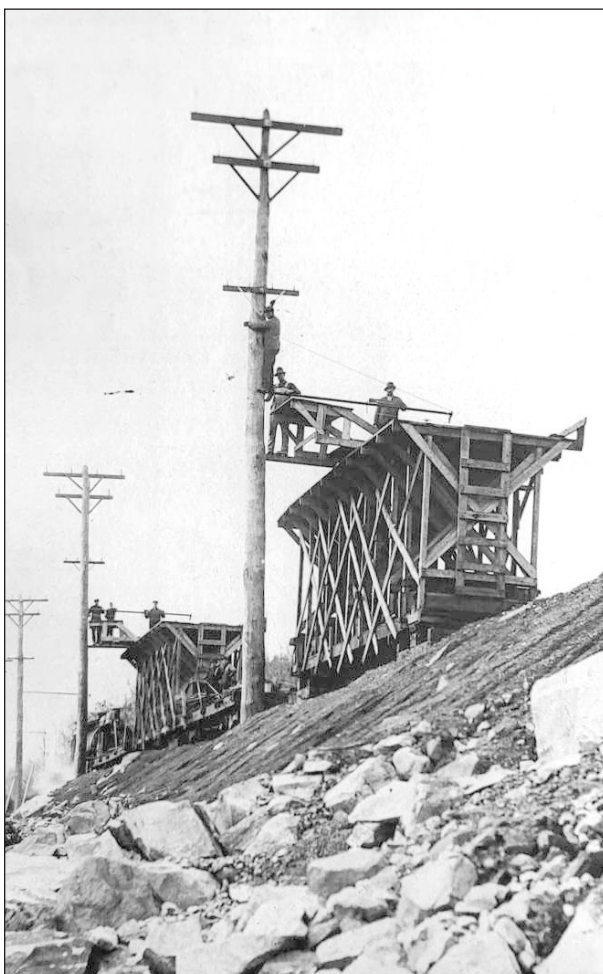
The Hilltown Hikers have been documenting the Huckleberry Trolley for the past ten years, including hiking the entire distance of the line. A cross pole which held the electric cable, about 20 feet long was found recently in North Blandford, this is the first one ever found. During the war any metal remaining in the woods on the trolley line was removed for scrap metal making any remains found very rare.

The ties and poles were hand cut from local Chestnut and Black Locust trees and used for their hardness. The North Blandford section of the line also caused the relocation of North Blandford Road, eliminating the sharp curve since the trolley cars needed to travel as straight and level as possible, optimally at a three percent grade.

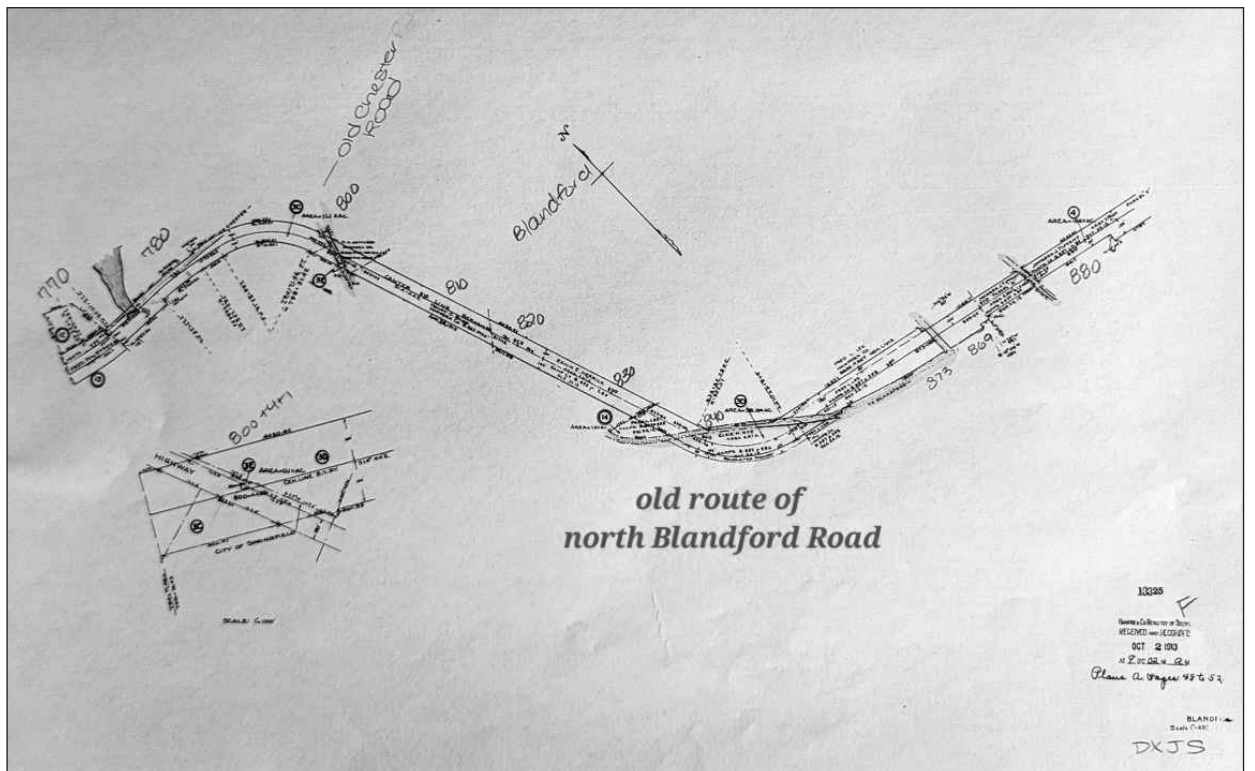
Using mostly man power provided by Irish and Italian Immigrants, the Electric Street Railway was built through the Southern Hilltowns to bring economic development to the area, farmers being able to transport their goods, people being able to travel easily from Huntington to Lee and also for the Granite Quarry in Otis, then Newell Quarry (present day Williams Stone) to transport granite to the more populated areas. Known as the "three million dollar failure" the Huckleberry Branch of the Berkshire Street Railway operated in its complete end to end route for only ten short months.



Russ holds a 20 foot cross bar.



A 1911 photo of the Tower Car showing workers.



This map shows the North Blandford Road relocation.