

"Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love." – Mother Teresa

# 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

# School, retirement updates and interview fill agenda

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Select board members Edward Renauld, Roger Booth and William Hathaway heard from Gateway Superintendent Kristen Smidy, Hampshire County Retirement Board Chairman Patrick Brock and conducted their first interview for a highway superintendent at their March 29 meeting.

Superintendent Smidy announced the resignation of the Littleville Elementary School Principal, and the role is now being filled by Mark Fulta who served as an Interim Principal last year following the resignation by Megan Coburn. In addition, teacher and alumna and Gateway parent, Missy McCaul has been promoted to Student Support Leader for the remainder of this school year at Littleville.

Following the most recent mass school shooting in Nashville, Smidy reported that March 28 saw 28 school

**SELECT BOARD**, page 3



Patrick Brock, Chairman of the Hampshire County Retirement Board, secured a vote to provide an additional 2% Cost Of Living Adjustment this year for town retirees. If 11 more units vote their approval, the additional funding will be retroactive to July 1, 2022.

Photo by Wendy Long

## BLANDFORD

# Select Board discuss ambulance and historic commission

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

There were three significant discussions at the Monday, April 3 Select Board meeting regarding separate town concerns.

The Huntington Community Ambulance Association, the Historical Commission and general concerns about the digital marquee sign. HCAA presented their case for a significant increase in assessments to member towns.

The current fiscal year assessment is \$30,642.17 and \$42,768. is for the new fiscal year.

This reflects an increase of \$12,125.83. Blandford's increase is not the highest nor the least.

According to HCAA Chair Mary Ann Pease, the primary reason for this increase is a result of the state's Nonpublic Ambulance Service Reimbursement Trust Fund

Assessment and Funding which went into effect March 13 this year and it is not yet clear how much this assessment will be.

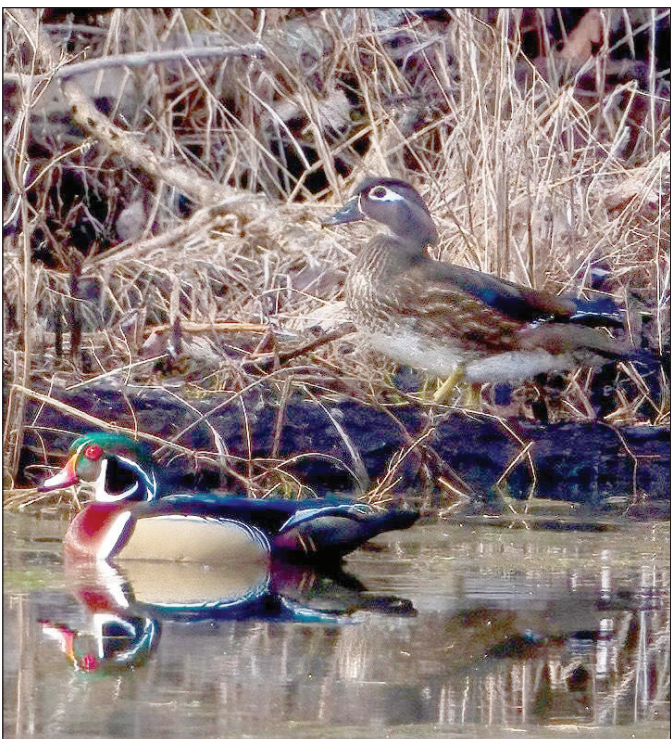
The ambulance association is not financially sustainable if they continue a 2.5% annual increase and commit to a three-year contract with the participating communities.

According to Pease, they cannot compete with benefits and hourly wages of private, for-profit ambulance services. HCAA is a 501c3 non-profit organization. She said the service would like to provide a living wage and benefits for their medics.

Full time HCAA paramedics earn \$26 an hour, part time, \$25 while other services as far as Worcester, according to Service Manager Bailey Jones, pay \$32 to \$33 an hour. Additionally, the non-profit status does not give the employees municipal

**DISCUSS**, page 5

## WOOD DUCKS ARE BACK



This pair of wood ducks were seen on a small pond in South Belchertown.

Photo by Mike Brozek

## WORTHINGTON

# Hilltown Mobile Market expands

In a business model designed to benefit both farmers and consumers, the Hilltown Mobile Market is expanding to include a year-round store in Worthington that will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

Shoppers will now have the option of picking out food in person or continuing to order on-line for delivery on specific days in specific towns. For a small fee, customers will be able to have their pre-ordered food items delivered at home this summer.

This non-profit grocery store is the first in the country and its development has been steered by farmers. According to organizer Hunt Chase, this model has been developed to address what he calls "food apartheid,"-systemic problems

**MARKET**, page 10



Organizers Hunt Chase and Joan Griswold are getting ready to open the year-round Sawyer Farm storefront in Worthington, part of the Hilltown Mobile Market.

Photo by Wendy Long

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# HUNTINGTON

## Creative Movement classes offered at family center

HUNTINGTON – The Hilltown Community Health Centers’ Family Support program hosted a series of four free creative movement classes beginning on Friday, March 24. 10:45-11:30 am at the Hilltown Family Center at 9 Russell Road in Huntington. Doors open at 10:00. Remaining dates are Fridays, April 7 and 21 from 10:45-11:30 a.m. at the Hilltown Family Center, 9 Russell Road. Doors open at 10 a.m.

This program is a collaboration between the Hilltown Family Center and It Takes A Village with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Councils through the towns of Huntington, Montgomery, Blandford, Worthington, and Middlefield, the Hilltown Community Health Centers from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care’s Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant and a Community Development Block Grant through the Town of Chester.

Laurel Lenski of Washington leads the classes. She has a passion for movement and expression, holding degrees in Dance and Expressive Art Therapy. She has long led creative movement groups for preschool aged children, exercise and movement classes for seniors and members of long-term care communities.

This group will help children to understand that body language is a form of expression.

Preschool-aged children are in a critical period of developing fundamen-



Participants enjoy a creative movement class with Laurel Lenski.

Submitted photo

tal movement skills that have a close link with physical activity.

This Creative Movement class aims to improve and reinforce those skills. Moreover, studies on music and movement classes for children have consistently been shown to enhance language capabilities, improve memory, strengthen hand-eye coordination, promote teamwork and heighten problem-solving skills. For the parents and caregivers, classes promote parent-child bonding, peer interaction, and reduced isolation.

It is vital to the Hilltowns to have

local, family-friendly and affordable resources and activities to keep young families connected with their community.

The Hilltown Family Center offers an extensive list of resources for parents, caregivers, and families. The Family Center programs are built around the belief in nurturing strong families, by helping them to strengthen their flexibility and resilience. Programs help families establish strong social connections and give concrete support in times of need, recognizing family’s strengths

and understanding that being a parent is part natural and part learned. The Family Center also helps children connect and relate to their world.

For over 65 years, HCHC’s mission has been to provide accessible, high quality, integrated health services to ensure the health of all Hilltown residents. HCHC is dedicated to the health and wellness of the Hilltown communities and provides a wide range of services at five sites. In addition to medical and oral health/dental services, HCHC provides behavioral/mental health services, substance abuse treatment, eye care, physical therapy, and laboratory services.

HCHC also provides numerous community services and supports through its Community Programs. Located at 9 Russell Road, HCHC Community Programs connect and empower families with resources, education, and assistance. Community Health Workers can help with social services supports and referrals such as fuel assistance, SNAP (food stamps), job search, resume help or information on community resources, chronic disease management or reaching other health goals. Hilltown Safety at Home provides domestic and sexual violence victim advocacy and safety. Health Navigators can help apply for health insurance. The HOPE, Health Outreach Program for Elders, is a free preventative and health maintenance care to Hilltown residents over 60.

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## WESTHAMPTON

# Westhampton Public Library holds movie night

WESTHAMPTON – The Westhampton Public Library, 11 North Road, will host a family movie night on Friday, April 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the community room at the library. The movies “Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit.”

Movies were made for public screenings. The energy of the other people in the room, whether strangers or close friends, powers the experience. Building off of each other, the audience elevates each joke, scare or emotional moment.

## HUNTINGTON

# Library has seed exchange

HUNTINGTON – To promote the saving and sharing of seeds, the Huntington Library, 7 East Main St., established a seed exchange where patrons can come and choose seeds to plant free of charge.

A few individuals donated the seeds at the library. It is hoped that over time gardeners, who save seeds

themselves, will donate extra seeds to the library’s seed exchange. If anyone who has saved their own seeds has seeds to share, the library would be happy to accept them, package them up and offer them along with the seeds already donated.

Seeds can be brought to the Huntington Library during open hours.

## SELECT BOARD

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“swatting” incidents across the state of false reports of intruders and threats. Gateway had held one of their ongoing drills with the Massachusetts State Police the previous weekend and is working with students and parents on the issue of text messaging in a crisis.

In any future crisis, which hopefully never comes, the district will text parents directly to keep them apprised. This would reduce phone alerts sounding and identifying student locations. Gateway was also selected as the first school in the state to have the interior photographed to assist in police efforts in a crisis. Gateway has filed a \$146,000 grant for school safety upgrades and is waiting to hear.

Towns have already received their assessment letters for FY’24. Smidy cautioned that there will be a slight change because Russell, who had requested a listing of all of their students, found a family who had moved to Blandford. This will change the assessments between the two towns and Gateway will be sending out enrollment lists to the remaining towns to review.

Smidy reported on Rural School Aid, which is currently funded in the Governor’s Budget at \$7.5 million, falling far short of the \$60 million called for in the report two years ago to redress equity for rural schools in the state.

### Grant for summer program

Thanks to grant funding, 200 children have signed up for the free summer programs Gateway is offering. In addition, some high school students will be taking part in paid internships as part of Gateway’s new Career Track Training program. Interns will work in a variety of

fields, including electrical, water system operations and even bee keeping.

### STEM education

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education continues at the elementary level with Chester students taking part in an agricultural and hydroponics unit of study and Littleville recently having a visit from a mobile planetarium.

### COLA

Patrick Brock, Chairman of the Hampshire County Retirement Board then met with the Select board, requesting their vote to approve an additional 2% (on the first \$13,000 earned by retirees) cost of living allowance for the current fiscal year. By law, state retirement systems could only approve a 3% Cost Of Living Adjustment, despite huge inflation rates in 2022. A rare, extra 2% was approved by the state with the provision that towns and county systems must have approval from local governments. Huntington was the first town in Hampshire County to vote and the Select board voted unanimously in support. If 12 of its 18 member towns vote to approve, the additional funding will be retroactive to July 1, 2022.

### Highway Superintendent interview

The final appointment for the Select board was an interview with Daniel Donovan, applicant for the position of Highway Superintendent. Three candidates applied, but Donovan was the only applicant to meet all of the qualifications. The interview was conducted in executive session.

## CHESTER

### LOCAL LEADERS ATTEND MMA CONFERENCE



Local leaders attended a Massachusetts Municipal Association Conference on rural issues in Holyoke on Saturday, April 1. They included Middlefield Selectwoman Ann Marie Visconti, from left, Chester Selectman Jason Fogue, Gateway Regional School Superintendent Kristen Smidy, Chester Selectmen Andy Sutton and Middlefield Selectman Curt Robie.

Photo by Don Humason

# Fair Assoc., Hill Assoc. host pancake breakfast, craft fair

CHESTER – The Littleville Fair Association and The Chester Hill Association will be co-hosting a Springfest event on Sunday, April 16 on the fairgrounds on Kinnebrook Road.

A farmer’s breakfast of pancakes, eggs, home fries and meat will be served on Sunday, April 16 from 7 a.m.-1 p.m. The cost is adults \$10 and

children 10 and under \$5. Seventeen crafters will be selling their handcrafted wares in the exhibit hall and outdoors from 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

People can try their luck at a teacup raffle with many local wares and gift certificates. The Pioneer Valley Fiddlers will be performing at 10:30 a.m. All events are cash or check only.

## MONTGOMERY

# MassDOT announces daytime pavement repair operations

MONTGOMERY/RUSSELL – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces it will be conducting daytime pavement repairs work on I-90 eastbound and westbound in Montgomery and Russell.

The scheduled work will require temporary lane closures, and is scheduled to take place as follows:

Pavement repair operations will be conducted daily on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 36.0 on Thursday, April 6 from 7 a.m.-4 p.m.

Appropriate signage, law enforcement details, and messaging will be in place to guide drivers through the work area. Drivers who are traveling through the affected areas should

expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

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

Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit [www.mass511.com](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.

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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN

### Heavenly scents define two favorite Easter plants



Hyacinths



Easter lilies

For the last few days my dining room has been filled with a wonderful fragrance – Hyacinths in bloom.

To me, at least, they are simply the “smell of Easter.” Don’t worry, I didn’t forget about Easter Lilies- they smell great too.

More on those beauties in a bit.

The hyacinths I speak of were purchased in the fall on clearance. I actually think I was out Christmas shopping when I spotted a bag marked 50% off.

I paid around \$3 for 10 bulbs. The bulbs looked and felt fine, no mold and not soft or dried out. Once I got them home, the mesh bag was placed in my mudroom where temperatures run about 50-55 degrees. There they sat for the longest time going through a chilling process.

Sometime in early March I found the bag and potted five bulbs in individual 4” pots and the other half I placed in forcing glasses. Vases, really, the kind that are an hourglass shape, whereby all but the very bottom of the bulb stays dry.

Roots are initiated where the bulb comes in contact with the water. I put the pots and vases back in the cool mudroom to give them a chance to root.

Once roots form down the side of the vase (you can see them through the glass) and green begins to emerge from the top, it was time to share them with my friends so that they could watch the blossoms unfold.

It took about 10 days once the bulbs were moved into the warm house for the flower stalks to emerge and for the individual flowers to open. And boy, when they do, you know it. As I mentioned, the fragrance is heavenly!

I wish I would write dates down, so that I could time the flowers better, but with how busy life is I am happy they got planted at all, even if they are blooming a week before Easter!

There is no guarantee that flowers forced in a vase can be replanted in the garden, but those in pots should be just fine planted the ground post-bloom. Be sure to “dead-head” the blooms and let the greens ripen before moving in the garden once the weather improves; remember, these plants have been coddled indoors and may not be able to withstand a frost.

What nice lead into a conversation about our other favorite Easter flower- the Easter Lily, of course!

Most people assume that it should be hauled off to the compost pile once it has finished blooming. On the contrary, it can become a regular feature of your perennial garden providing you give it the appropriate care.

First, remove any spent flowers from the plant as you did with the hyacinth. We all know that the process of “deadheading” redi-

rects energy away from seed making and back to the bulb. Leaves, however, are left in place until they have browned; as long as they are green they are photosynthesizing and helping the bulb grow stronger.

A large, healthy bulb will give you the best chance of return.

When the weather has warmed up, it’s time to plant your lily in the garden. Sink the bulb about 3” below the soil surface- just about the depth that it was in the pot. Don’t expect much out of it the first season or even next spring.

Easter lily growers manipulate the plant to bloom much earlier than it would normally. Its natural bloom time is during the summer months.

Hopefully, you will enjoy pure white blooms and a heady fragrance at the height of barbecue season! These same rules can be applied to those of you looking to rebloom colorful Asiatic or Oriental lilies you received as Easter gifts as well.

*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 with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.*

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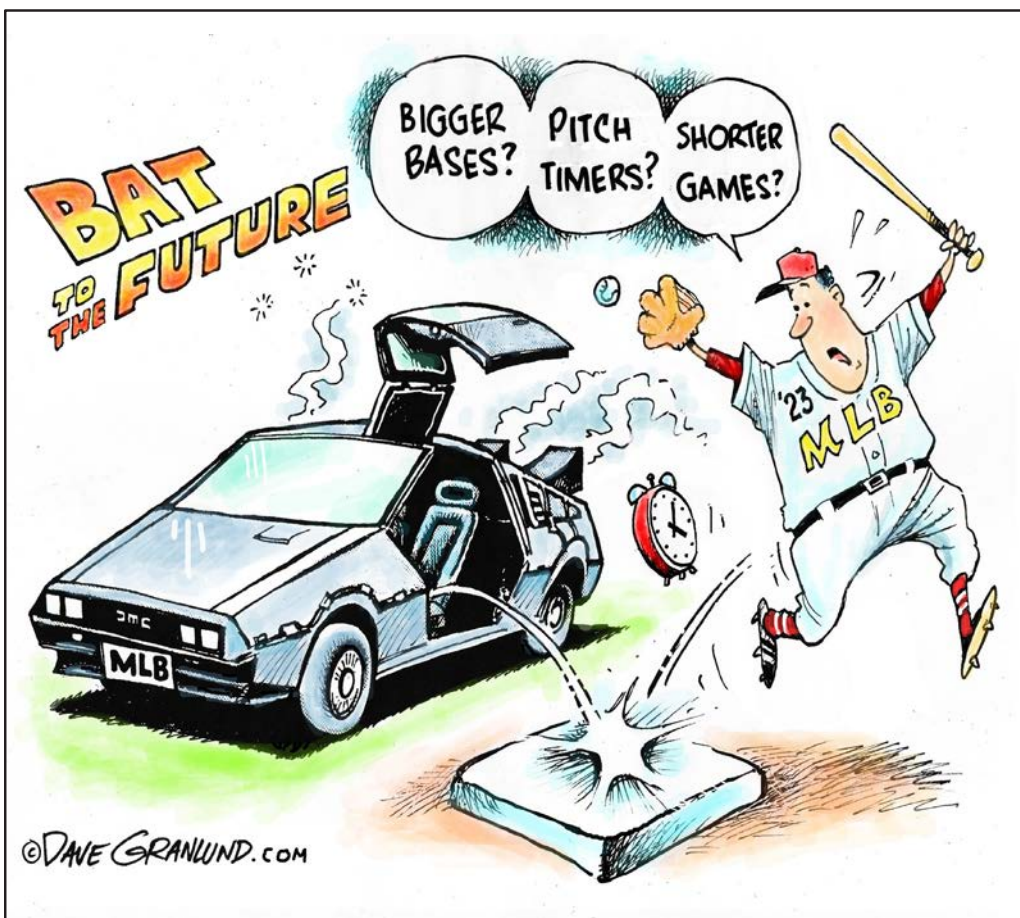
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## BLANDFORD

# Blandford to hold two listening sessions April 14 and 24

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – “Blandford needs to put together a body of work, of information; we need to build a foundation in order to make an application for a grant to fix, help, maintain the town’s dirt roads,” said Community Liaison Paula Bilodeau.

Bilodeau has been named the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant program Community Liaison to bring people together to hear individual

and collective concerns about the town’s approximate 15 miles of dirt roads. She is responsible for promoting the town’s two Listening Sessions.

The first session is Friday, April 14 at noon at the Council on Aging luncheon. There will be a short PowerPoint presentation by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Senior Planner, Erica Larner.

The second session will be Monday, April 24 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall. This session will be accessible virtually on Zoom.

People can bring photographs of dirt roads’ conditions or scenery or these can be uploaded to a link that will be provided.

Blandford, along with Chester and Middlefield, is participating in a two-year grant amounting to \$317,550, which will cover the cost of the investigation and research of the town’s dirt roads. Both Blandford and Middlefield will have \$30,000 to assess dirt roads the first year and \$50,000 to investigate beaver activity the second year. This is all part of

the state’s MVP program that provides support for cities and towns to begin planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects. The state awards communities with funding to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resiliency plans.

This will be a long-term project.

Once the information has all been assessed and organized the towns will be on a firm foundation of knowledge to make applications for grants for dirt roads.

## DISCUSS

from page 1

employee status.

Pease said they have considered a shared service between the six communities, which would eliminate the mandated assessment. Pease offered possible options to help their organization, including adding another town, possibly Middlefield and down the road a chance to compete with Westfield for turnpike calls.

Select Board Chair Cara Letendre asked about what happens next year, considering the possibility of a new ambulance. Pease said she could not promise anything looking forward, “everything is going up.” She can’t say that a 2.5% increase is going to happen. Insurance reimbursement does not cover the costs either.

HCAA board member Jade Rice, who handles the finances, said that every time an ambulance goes out, the cost to the service is \$1,014. Last year they billed Medicaid \$128,000 and, “Only \$20,000 came back,” she said, as the amount recoverable; also reimbursement from insurance is slow.

The non-profit status of HCAA also apparently often precludes them from grant opportunities.

Responding to Letendre’s question about how the other towns respond, Jones said, “I think it’s been positive for the most part. I think there is an understanding that if we don’t take steps to make a sustainable solution, then there’s a real reality that three years from now, five years from now, Hilltown might not be here. The need for an ambulance in rural areas does not go away.”

Letendre said an increase in communication from the service would be helpful. She told the board, the assessment would be on the budget and welcomed HCAA to be at the town meeting.

Responding to Town Administrator Christopher Dunne’s question if the \$42,000 figure included the assessment, Jones said it did not. The assessment amount is based on the prior year’s receipts, which the state has not yet set. Towns that contribute to the HCAA besides Blandford are Chester, Huntington, Montgomery,

Russell and Worthington.

### Historical Commission

The Historical Commission, represented by Linda Barnard, noting other areas of town interest had been discussed was concerned because, “I don’t think we’ve been involved with any discussions...about Shepard Farm in general. We’ve been asking to meet with the Conservation committee and that has gone nowhere.”

She continued, and said, “we’re talking (now) about what to do with Shepard Farm,” and Letendre said, “No, we’re talking about the Conway School of Design.”

The board approved and signed a \$6,000 contract, a service agreement, with the Conway School of Landscape Design. Their students will work on trails at Shepard Farm.

It was the Historical Commission’s understanding that originally Conway was going to have proposals for keeping the building and for not keeping the building, and “Now it’s just trails,” she said adding that she thought it sounded as though the town would not keep the building.

There was an article on the Special Town Meeting to provide funding to do, what the Historical Commission referred to as “mothballing the building” but the vote on the article was tabled. Letendre interpreted it as the people did not want to put money into the building.

The town tried for a feasibility study grant, to get some idea of possibility, but was denied.

Letendre hopes that Conway will come up with “something we can do with the property” to help the town decide.

Barnard reminded the board of the land swap, but Letendre said that due to Covid it went by the boards.

Dunne said that the Conservation Commission said the property needs to remain intact, in other words, no swap. He said, “It looks like there are irreconcilable differences...” and Barnard countered with, “But we’ve never met.”

Letendre said the Historical

Commission ought to be part of the conversation and is looking for something positive to come.

Dunne is looking for some kind of vision so the town can move forward. Funding for Conway is coming from Conservation and Select Board expenses.

He said the town could ask Conway for scenarios both with and without the building.

There are two goals for the property, for historic preservation and for historic space and the Historical Commission wants to honor those goals which are reflected in the deed.

Letendre said the board is waiting for the public to say what should be done with the property. She said the feasibility study would have provided opinions on the worthiness of the structure.

Theodore Cousineau said that if the town is going to do something, it has to be done now.

This has been an ongoing conversation in town for many years.

The Commission had a list of their concerns they presented to the board for consideration about the property and the building.

What the Commission is interested in achieving is to decrease or eliminate walls built around Blandford commissions and committees and allow a more openness of working together and encouraging an increased sense of community for all residents of Blandford.

They want to complete the town inventory which will allow increased opportunities to apply for grants and to determine if we might qualify for a Historic District.

And if possible, determine if there is a feasible option for preserving Shepard Farm and the One Room School House on Nye Brook Road at their present sites or if moving to Blandford’s Town Common area to promote understanding of our town history.

### Other Business

The board also approved and signed the contract with Soofa Signs after discussion made it clear that the proposed

solar-powered digital marquee contract for \$20,000 is paid for by funding from Bay State Better Together and the Regional Economic Development Organization program grants. The contract is for three-years. Any advertising income will yield 20% to the town. According to Dunne, Soofa believes this would be in the neighborhood of \$700 annually.

Jeffrey Allen asked about making the sign meet the Zoning Bylaws.

We definitely want to set this up so it’s not disturbing anyone,” said Dunne. He said he would look at the bylaws and he said, “Right now we are the Zoning Board. It’s not going to be some kind of disturbing monstrosity,” he added.

Letendre explained that a brainstorming meeting with local businesses is what prompted the sign.

Town content on the sign can be designated to day and time, according to Dunne.

In other business, Highway Department Superintendent David Waldron reported an arrangement to replace a culvert on Gibbs Road. Both Eversource and Verizon met with him regarding tree trimming on Beech Hill Road. It was determined that Eversource had taken care of what is their responsibility and that Verizon will take care of necessary trimming of branches and trees that potentially threaten their lines. Eversource will not trim all the utility poles because the utility has no power on all of them.

The roads all seem to be in reasonable condition.

Dunne told the board the Finance Committee is trying to work on wages, stipends and salaries based on recommendations from the Collins Center report. They are still working on the budget, and our legislators have been asked to seek state aid funding since there was no federal disaster declaration for the March 13 to 15 storm.

He is also looking into an arrangement for additional paid sick leave for Highway Department employee Ray Hultay, who is caring for a family member.

## NORTHAMPTON

# Cooley Dickinson Hospital launches work program for disabled adults

NORTHAMPTON – Cooley Dickinson Hospital, in collaboration with the non-profit organization New England Business Associates, launched a program that will provide employment training to young adults with disabilities.

The program, entitled Project SEARCH, offers participants internships in a variety of the hospital’s departments. Cooley Dickinson is the first hospital to lead a Project SEARCH program in western Massachusetts.

“It’s extremely exciting to collaborate with NEBA and operate a Project SEARCH program here at Cooley Dickinson,” said Ruth O’ Connor, director of support services. “It’s very important to our organization that we provide oppor-

tunities for those in our community with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They provide valuable support to our operations each and every day.”

Participants in the program will gain valuable work experience through month-long internship rotations. The goal is to support young adults with disabilities, who are transitioning from school to work, through a community/agency partnership that allows them to gain employability skills. Many of the program’s interns are ultimately hired for both part-time and full-time positions.

The Project SEARCH model involves an extensive period of training and career exploration, innovation adaptations, long-term job coaching, and continuous feed-

back from instructors, job coaches, and employers. It is dedicated to workforce development that benefits the individual, community, and workplace.

“We’re thrilled to collaborate with Cooley Dickinson, as part of our mission to empower those with disabilities through employment,” said Ruth Poirier, NEBA’s division supervisor and Project SEARCH program coordinator. “Partnerships like these help us break down barriers of social injustice and assist those who have been historically marginalized in our community.”

Founded in 1983, NEBA’s mission is to provide meaningful employment opportunities for disabled individuals. For 35 years, the organization has worked

with the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services to assist in making programs like Project SEARCH available for young adults. NEBA became the first agency in western Massachusetts to provide a Project SEARCH program when it partnered with Springfield College in 2018.

Project SEARCH has more than 400 program sites in 40-plus states in the United States, as well as programs in Australia, Canada, England, Scotland, and Ireland.

“Programs like this are a win-win-win: for the individual, the organization, and the community, so we’re very excited to welcome these new employees in training into our Cooley Dickinson family,” said O’ Connor.

## SCHOOLS &amp; YOUTH

## Lilie Ripley receives Career Technical Education award

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

GRANVILLE – Lilie Ripley was nominated by Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in Northampton where she is a student for the MASS Career Technical Education (MASSCTE) award as a non-traditional student.

Donald Erickson, Awards Chair for MASS CTE, presented an engraved plaque to Ripley Saturday, at an awards dinner at Patriot Place in Foxborough. Smith Vocational Superintendent Dr. Andrew Linkenhoker and Principal Joseph Bianca attended the award banquet.

This is the first time in MASS CTE 90-year history that a student from Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in has received this award.

Andrew Linkenhoker, Ed.D said, "Lilie was honored as being a great female student in the male dominated Career and Technical field of Horticulture, but that doesn't give her the credit she deserves, as she is a standout student in the field, regardless of gender. We are very proud of her."

Vocational and Technical secondary schools throughout the Commonwealth can participate as a MASS CTE school and make nominations. The MASS CTE board makes the decision on naming award recipients. There are several categories

for which nominations can be made, and this year, Smith, the Northampton Fire Department and Criminal Justice teacher Joseph Brewer were included as well as a police officer who has turned to education.

As Executive Director Brian Cummings explained, this year Smith had a fire destroy one of their buildings and some equipment but it brought out the Northampton Fire and Police Departments and they were nominated as Friends of CTE while Brewer was nominated for the New Teacher award as a new faculty at the school in the Criminal Justice department.

The MASS CTE plaque presented to Ripley read that it was a "Vocational Technical Non-Traditional Achievement Award. A Student who shows personal commitment and success in both vocational technical education and academic areas." And, "Good personal character, leadership and involvement in school and community activities which challenge the student," dated April 1, 2023. There is \$500 that accompanies the award as well.

At the podium, Ripley thanked her family, school administrators and her teachers for their support.

Ripley, as a non-traditional student, has chosen a field, forestry, which is traditionally male dominated. But, she said, operating equipment and chainsaws sounded "kind of fun". Some of the equipment she is competent using

includes tractors, backhoes, loaders, and skid steers. And she has grown up in a Maple Syrup producing family and is aware of tree care and maintenance as well as sustainability. Ranking third in her class, she has a GPA of 3.86. She was nominated by the Administration, Horticulture Instructor James Anspach and History Department Chair Emily Dumais.

In his reference letter for this award Anspach wrote, "Lilie is incredibly effective at communicating both with her student peers and all agriculture teachers in her role as officer. Lilie is on track to earn her FFA (Future Farmers of America) American Degree after high school graduation. Less than half of one percent of the 650,000 FFA Members nationwide ever achieve this honor. Lilie is a very unique and driven student who I have thoroughly enjoyed working with."

At Smith Vocational where she is regarded as a leader, she is an FFA Officer, member of the National Honor Society, and a member of the Horticulture Advisory Program, along with her father. Her community activities include Vice President of her local 4-H, and training with the Granville Volunteer Fire Department to become a volunteer fire fighter when she turns 18.

Ripley, who is in the Horticulture cluster, found out about the award when Dr. Linkenhoker made the announcement



Shown from left are Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School Superintendent Dr. Andrew Linkenhoker; Lilie Ripley, MASS CTE Award Recipient and Principal Joseph Brewer. Submitted photo

during a class break at school, and she added that she "felt good" about receiving the award.

She will pursue her studies in Agricultural Business Management this fall at State University of New York Cobleskill in Cobleskill, N.Y.

Accompanying their daughter at the awards presentation dinner were Jessica and David Ripley.

## Smith Vocational visit Fire Academy Springfield campus

NORTHAMPTON – Students from the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in Northampton recently spent a day learning about the fire service at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in Springfield.

The group of ten juniors arrived at the Department of Fire Services' Springfield campus at 8:15 a.m. on March 21 and started the day with a short tour of the facility, which houses DFS administrative offices as well as MFA classrooms, props, and apparatus. Assistant Coordinators Rich Craven and Mike Gelinis of the Academy led a discussion on the mission, values, and duties of the fire service, then brought the students into the apparatus bay to don the full sets of turnout gear, from helmets to boots, that they wore during all exercises.

The students progressed across the campus in two groups to observe and practice basic firefighter tactics. They conducted forcible entry training at the Multi-Force door prop using Halligan bars, both on their own and with partners



Ten students from Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in Northampton attended the Fire Academy Springfield campus recently. Submitted photo

who used either a second Halligan or an eight-pound axe. They learned about interior search tactics in the two-story Search and Rescue prop, conducting two-person right-hand searches in the darkened building, then reversing direction and using their left hands to find their way out. While at the Search and

Rescue prop, they also joined municipal firefighters observing a tabletop back-draft demonstration led by Assistant Coordinator Bill Schuetze using a fire dynamics training prop.

Back on the drill yard, the students learned about the different types of ladders that firefighters use. They practiced

carrying and throwing 16-foot ground ladders, and they tried their hands at raising an extension ladder using a stationary prop. Afterward, the group doffed their personal protective equipment and had a lunchtime discussion of careers in public safety with Deputy State Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier, who has also served the Commonwealth with the Massachusetts State Police and Department of Correction, before watching local firefighters performing live fire exercises.

The SVAHS visit was coordinated by Dr. Sara Praguski Walsh, the Academy's instructional design and curriculum development specialist. It was the second visit of its kind at DFS, following a June 2022 visit by Shrewsbury High School students to the Department's Stow headquarters. Additional visits to Springfield and Stow are scheduled for later this year. DFS officials hope to expand the opportunity to young people from across the Commonwealth at all three campuses.

## Pollard makes St. Lawrence Dean's List

Clarissa Pollard makes St. Lawrence University Dean's List CANTON, N.Y. – Clarissa Pollard from Cummington was named to St. Lawrence University's Dean's List during the fall 2022 semester.

Pollard is a member of the Class of

2024 and is majoring in English and art and art history. Pollard attended Stratton Mountain School. To be eligible for the Dean's List, a student must have completed at least four courses and have an academic average of 3.6 based on a 4.0 scale for the semester.

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<b>US - China Relations</b> , April 28	<b>James Holmes</b> Naval War College
<b>Climate Migration</b> , May 5	<b>Malcom Sen</b> UMass Amherst

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# GRANVILLE



Edna and James Pultz enjoy coffee near a wood stove at Maple Corner Farm while they wait for their breakfast.

## Maple Corner serves last breakfast for season April 8

GRANVILLE – Next Saturday, April 8, is the last hurrah for breakfast at Maple Corner Farm this season.

After breakfast, if the Sugar House is still operating, it might be possible to tour the operation, from sap gathering to bottling. The Maple Corner Lodge is on Beech Hill Road and breakfast runs from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. There are maple products sugar, candy and syrup and other farm preserves like jams, jellies and relishes available as well.



This group fills a table at the Maple Corner Farm in Granville recently.

Photos by Mary Kronholm



## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### Valley Press Club award scholarships available for high school seniors

SPRINGFIELD – The Valley Press Club will award \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors in Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut, who are interested in pursuing a career in journalism.

The Valley Press Club Scholarships, funded by contributions and dues to the Press Club, are for students planning

careers in print, online or broadcast journalism.

Primary emphasis is placed on career goals, writing ability, scholastic aptitude and overall achievement as measured by an applicant's high school transcript, class rank, academic awards, SAT scores and extracurricular activities. The deadline for submissions is

Saturday, April 15.

Scholarship applications are available by visiting [www.ValleyPressClub.com](http://www.ValleyPressClub.com), high school guidance offices or by emailing [Ntassinari@TheBigE.com](mailto:Ntassinari@TheBigE.com). Applications may be sent by mail to Noreen Tassinari, VPC Scholarship Chair, Eastern States Exposition, 1305 Memorial Avenue, West Springfield, MA

01089 or electronically to [Ntassinari@TheBigE.com](mailto:Ntassinari@TheBigE.com).

Over the course of five decades, The Valley Press Club has presented over \$130,000 in scholarships to eligible students. The Valley Press Club consists of active and retired journalists and public relations professionals from corporate and nonprofit organizations.

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USDA INSP. FROZEN HALF SPIRAL HAM ...	\$1.29 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH SMOKED BLUE SEAL EASTER KIELBASA (Local from Chicopee) \$4.99 lb	\$5.55 lb
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USDA INSP. FRESH SMOKED KAYEM BUDABALL WHOLE PIT HAM.....	\$3.49 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN AT SEA TALAPIA FILLETS.....	99¢ lb
USDA INSP. FRESH WHOLE HAM (PORK LEG).....	\$1.79 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN AT SEA 26/30 COUNT RAW SHRIMP 2 LB BAG.	49¢ lb

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## WESTFIELD

### Harmonia V to perform at Westfield Athenaeum April 20

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Athenaeum and Musicians of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra will present the third of a three-concert chamber music series, with Harmonia V performing on Thursday, April 20 at 7 p.m. at the Westfield Athenaeum, 6 Elm St.

This is the second year of MOSSO's partnership with the Westfield Athenaeum. Guy McLain, Executive Director of the Westfield Athenaeum, will offer a pre-performance talk at 6 p.m., which is free to ticket holders.

The Connecticut-based Harmonia V, an innovative woodwind quintet, performs the best standard literature, seldom heard treasures, and the most dynamic contemporary music available today. Members of the quintet are: Springfield Symphony Orchestra and MOSSO horn player Robert Hoyle; Jennifer Berman, flute; Janet Rosen, oboe; Jim Forgey, clarinet and Jackie Sifford Joyner, bassoon. The Harmonia V program, April in Paris, includes music by Fauré, Ravel and Debussy.

Tickets for the concert, \$25 per person and must be purchased in advance at the Westfield

Athenaeum during business hours or online by visiting <https://www.westtath.org/>.

MOSSO is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, which is not a subsidiary nor affiliated with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra Inc. MOSSO was organized by the musicians in 2021 to produce and perform concerts in Greater Springfield and Western Massachusetts. For further information about MOSSO's programs, people may visit MOSSO at [www.SpringfieldSymphonyMusicians.com](http://www.SpringfieldSymphonyMusicians.com) or find MOSSO on Facebook at: [Facebook.com/mossomusicians](https://www.facebook.com/mossomusicians).

The Westfield Athenaeum, located in downtown Westfield, serves as the cultural center for the city. In addition to an active public library, which provides a range of information services, the Athenaeum features an art museum with regular exhibits of regional artists and a history museum, documenting the history of Westfield and the surrounding region from 1669 to the present day.

## FLORENCE

### Florence Bank promotes Tower

FLORENCE– Florence Bank promoted Emily Tower of Bernardston to the position of vice president / branch manager of the bank's main office in Florence.

Prior to her promotion, she was the assistant vice president / branch manager in the Florence branch.

A graduate of the New England School of Financial Studies, Tower brings over 15 years of banking experience to her role. She has been with Florence Bank since 2006 and has worked in the Belchertown and West Springfield



Emily Tower

offices as well.

"Emily has consistently shown exceptional customer service and team-leading skills. Her promotion is well-deserved," said Matt Garrity, president and CEO of Florence Bank.

Florence Bank is a mutual savings bank chartered in 1873. Currently, the bank serves the Pioneer Valley through 12 full-service branch locations in Florence, Northampton, Easthampton, Williamsburg, Amherst, Hadley, Belchertown, Granby, Chicopee, West Springfield and Springfield.

## RUSSELL

### Second quarter taxes due May 1

RUSSELL – Wendy M. Brunet, Collector/Treasurer reminds residents the 2023 Real Estate second half bills have been issued and are due on Monday, May 1.

Bills are due back to the Collector office by Monday, May 1, 2023.

Payments can be made on-line by visiting [www.townofrussell.us](http://www.townofrussell.us) and looking for the online payment button mailing to Tax Collector, P.O. Box 407, Russell, MA 01071 or paying in person during office hours Tuesdays from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and Fridays from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

## PLAINFIELD



Shown from left are Hilary Weeks, select-person; Walt Jennings, Highway Superintendent; Mert Taylor, Jr. and David Alvord, Fire Chief.

Photo by Duane Meehan

### Mert Taylor, Jr. retires after 35 years over service

PLAINFIELD – This past week, Mert Taylor, Jr. retired after contributing 35 years of his life to the well-being of Plainfield. His work included: Highway Department 1988-2023 including Superintendent from 2012-2021, Plainfield Volunteer Fire/EMS 1988-2023 including a fire officer and EMT-B 1994-2019 and Plainfield Emergency Management Director

2006-2022.

He was recognized for his long-term efforts with a surprise gathering of co-workers and friends. The Plainfield Volunteer Firefighter's Association presented Mert with a plaque showing his multiple positions held through the years for the town.

We all wish him the best as he starts a new chapter in his life.

## CUMMINGTON

### Village Church Cafe welcomes Hilltown Jazz Quartet

CUMMINGTON – The Hilltown Jazz Quartet will perform at the Friday Night Cafe on Friday, April 14 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church in downtown Cummington.

Hilltown Jazz Quartet has been together since 2017, exploring and inventing music in private jam sessions and offering occasional concerts. The band members are: Cummington residents Laura Pierce, vocalist, and her husband, saxophonist Mike Kolodny, Windsor native Ben Kohn on piano and Michael Dunning of Ashfield, on bass.

The group shares a deep commit-

ment to, and immersion in, the jazz idiom. Decades of experience guide their shared aesthetic and rapport in communing on jazz standards and originals. Their musical priorities include soul, feeling, fine musicianship, intimacy, intricacy, simplicity, beauty, truth, love, lyricism and groove to list but a few areas of passionate attention.

Cider and cookies will be available before the performance. Once again this cafe is sponsored by the friendly folks at the Village Church, who believe music can be a powerful force for building community.

## OTIS

### Transfer Station closed April 9 and 17

OTIS – The Otis Transfer Station will be closed on Sunday, April 9 for Easter. It will also be closed on Monday,

April 17 for the Patriot's Day holiday. The transfer station will be open Tuesday, April 18 from 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

### Otis to hold Caucus on Tuesday, April 11

OTIS – Citizens of Otis will hold a Caucus Call on Tuesday, April 11 from 7-8 p.m. at the Otis Town Hall for the purpose of nomination candidates to be voted at the Annual Town Election on Tuesday, May 23.

Nominations are sought for the following positions: Select Person for three-year term, Moderator for one-year term; Tree Warden for one-year term, Finance Board for three-year

term, Assessor for three-year term, Cemetery Commissioner for three-year term, Library Trustee for three-year term, Planning Board for three-year term, Planning Board for five-year term and School Committee for three-year term.

The Caucus will be called to order by the Town Clerk, until a Chairman is chosen. The Australian system of voting shall be used.

### News, photo publication policy

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

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

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





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# THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**  
Mar 21/Apr 20  
A message from a romantic partner or business associate could come this week, Aries. Keep a watchful eye on your email inbox or the regular mail.

**CANCER**  
Jun 22/Jul 22  
Keep an eye on the front door, Cancer. A delivery may be coming your way in the next few days. It's not something you ordered, but could be a gift.

**LEO**  
Jul 23/Aug 23  
Leo, you could use a diversion this week. When a friend seeks your company, this can be the perfect way to direct your mind somewhere else.

**VIRGO**  
Aug 24/Sept 22  
Virgo, financial paperwork could take up some of your time in the days to come. It's a necessary evil to keep things on track. Seek help from someone else if you get frustrated.

**GEMINI**  
May 22/Jun 21  
You likely will have a lot of physical and mental energy this week, Gemini. Figure out a project you can stand behind and put that energy to good use.

**LIBRA**  
Sept 23/Oct 23  
Speaking with someone else on a fascinating subject triggers your curious side, Libra. You may want to take a class or pursue this subject in another way.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct 24/Nov 22  
Your emotions might get the better of you this week, Scorpio. Try to focus attention onto something that doesn't trigger negative feelings. Distraction could be the key.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 23/Dec 21  
Stimulating social occasions are what you need right now, Sagittarius. Such get-togethers will introduce you to new people and new ideas that can inspire.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22/Jan 20  
Capricorn, this week you have an opportunity to impress others and get them talking, likely changing their opinions of you. Make every effort to win others over.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan 21/Feb 18  
It's important to keep in touch with friends even if they have moved away. Phone calls, texts and video chats can bridge the gap created by physical distance.

**PISCES**  
Feb 19/Mar 20  
Pisces, tally up your investments because they could be worth more than you think, especially if you are invested in real estate.

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| <p><b>CLUES ACROSS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Colas</li> <li>7. Single-celled animals</li> <li>13. The rear car of a train</li> <li>14. Endangered</li> <li>16. It cools your home</li> <li>17. Helper</li> <li>19. "The First State"</li> <li>20. More aged</li> <li>22. Partner to cheese</li> <li>23. Type of wrap</li> <li>25. From a distance</li> <li>26. Satisfies</li> <li>28. "Dallas Buyers' Club" actor Jared</li> <li>29. God of battle (Scandinavian)</li> <li>30. Cooking utensil</li> <li>31. Soviet Socialist Republic</li> <li>33. Able to perform</li> <li>34. Big man on campus</li> <li>36. Second epoch of the Tertiary period</li> <li>38. Porticos</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40. Alban and Peter are two</li> <li>41. Gets up</li> <li>43. Humble request for help</li> <li>44. One-thousandth of an inch (abbr.)</li> <li>45. Unhappy</li> <li>47. Hint or indication</li> <li>48. A way to plead</li> <li>51. Digits</li> <li>53. Broadway actress Daisy</li> <li>55. Jewish calendar month</li> <li>56. Author Gore</li> <li>58. Peacock network</li> <li>59. White poplar</li> <li>60. Promotional material</li> <li>61. A period of calm</li> <li>64. Take too much</li> <li>65. Emit energy</li> <li>67. Something you can take</li> <li>69. Mended with yarn</li> <li>70. Inconsistent</li> </ul> | <p><b>CLUES DOWN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Calm down</li> <li>2. One quintillion bytes (abbr.)</li> <li>3. One who pretends</li> <li>4. Hang glide</li> <li>5. Distinctive practice</li> <li>6. Mariner</li> <li>7. Peaks</li> <li>8. Queens ballplayer</li> <li>9. Geological times</li> <li>10. Twofold</li> <li>11. Atomic #13</li> <li>12. Tranquillizing</li> <li>13. Metric weight unit</li> <li>15. Indicates</li> <li>18. Unwanted rodent</li> <li>21. Partly cooked with hot water</li> <li>24. One who can be recommended</li> <li>26. Resembles a bag or pouch</li> <li>27. Midway between south and south-east</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30. Sets up for a photo</li> <li>32. California white oak</li> <li>35. More (Spanish)</li> <li>37. After B</li> <li>38. Decorated tea urn</li> <li>39. Island</li> <li>42. Car mechanics group</li> <li>43. Wordplay joke</li> <li>46. Cut a rug</li> <li>47. Prickly plant</li> <li>49. Speech in praise of a deceased person</li> <li>50. European buzzard</li> <li>52. Influential linguist</li> <li>54. West African languages</li> <li>55. Siskel's partner</li> <li>57. Skinny</li> <li>59. Oblong pulpit</li> <li>62. Consumed</li> <li>63. Small, mischievous sprite</li> <li>66. Powerful lawyer</li> <li>68. Indicates position</li> </ul> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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			9	7		2		3
		9	6		1	8		
7						3		
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answers

A	T	O	P	S	D	E	N	R	A	D	V	
E	G	R	M	B	E	T	E	V	I	O	V	
O	D	E	I	C	E	P	E	D	A	V		
L	E	A	B	C	N	B	A	S	D	I	A	
U	L	E	N	A	V	G	A	N	S	E	N	O
G	U	E	C	U	E	D	V	S	T	L	I	M
V	L	E	A	P	L	E	S	E	S	I	A	V
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I	F	I	S	R	S	N	A	P	R	V	T	
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N	V	A	R	V	M	V	A	S	R	I	F	E
D	E	N	A	T	I	T	M	A	S	C	O	
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4	7	8	1	5	6	6	2	3
5	8	9	3	4	1	3	6	8
3	4	2	6	7	9	7	4	3
9	1	7	5	2	8	9	3	4
8	3	9	2	4	7	5	9	1
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7	1	2	9	6	5	3	4	8

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# MIDDLEFIELD

## Middlefield announces events

MIDDLEFIELD –The Easter Bunny visit and Egg Hunt for children in town is Saturday April 8 at 11 a.m. in the Town Hall, 188 Skyline Trail and is held rain or shine. Children should bring a bag or basket to collect eggs.

The Middlefield Public Library, located at Town Hall, is starting a new book club, meeting monthly on the second Wednesday of the month. The first meeting is Wednesday, April 12 at 5:30 p.m. and the group will discuss preferred book or genre or freeform discussion to hear about whatever books attendees choose to read.

The Blossom Center, 16 Bell Road, will be the host location for Jacob's

Ladder Business Association meeting at 6pm on Thursday April 13 at 6 p.m. JLBA always welcomes prospective members.

The following week has multiple chances to share meals: third Monday Potluck Dinner is on Monday, April 17 at 5:30 p.m.

School Vacation Week Wednesday, April 19 at 10 a.m. is kids' pizza making and all-ages pizza eating at 11:30 a.m. There will be slime-making after lunch. Saturday April 22 at 11:30 a.m. will be the RSVP Brunch moved from its usual fourth weekend day because of Fair Pancake Breakfast on April 23.. The full calendar is available by visiting [www.BlossomCenterMA.org](http://www.BlossomCenterMA.org).

## Middlefield COA lists April 12 menu

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Council on Aging announces the menu for lunch for Wednesday, April 12 at noon. The menu is pulled pork or cheese

pizza, parmesan spinach, roasted cauliflower and pudding with whipped topping. People may eat in or take out a meal.

## Voters pass all STM articles

MIDDLEFIELD – All articles passed, without amendment, at the Saturday, March 25 Special Town Meeting, which ran from 10 a.m. to past noon on Saturday, with over 70 voters attending. Of the

Of the \$224,646 in Free Cash certified in January of 2023, \$167,802 was allocated. The additional \$69,912 voted for Senior Center building repairs and the \$49,000 voted for replacing Town Hall floor tiles were explained as being a 10% match to the full estimated cost of those projects.

Voting the matching money was said to improve Middlefield's chances of receiving state grants, to be submitted this spring with results learned in the fall. Voters allocated \$12,500 for the match and reimbursable funding for an existing "MVP Dirt Roads" grant in

progress over the next two years. First public meeting on Dirt Roads issues is on Monday, April 17 at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Voters allocated \$30,000 for the estimated labor and materials for completing the park at town center, excluding the cost of benches.

Three articles altered votes previously taken: \$26,000 spent on paving projects was re-allocated. \$10,000 previously allocated for Town purchase of the former Skyline dump had a correction of account name. And previous authorization for offering \$60,000 (plus benefits) for a shared Town Administrator with Washington was increased to \$80,000 salary plus benefits. Budget impact of half the cost to each town, as reduced by a one-year grant for "regional services."

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# WORTHINGTON

## MARKET

from page 1

that create barriers for both farmers and customers.

Chase and Joan Griswold, Rural Health Project Manager for Hilltown Community Development, emphasize that this isn't charity and is open to everybody regardless of income level. "This is food access through a lens of economic development for rural producers," noted Chase, adding that everything they provide will be ethically sourced and consist of products raised from birth or seed by the growers. Under this "win-win" model, farmers are fairly compensated while barriers to healthy foods-including finances, transportation, or simply access-are addressed.

Built from the ground up in partnership with 20 local farmers, the store and the mobile market (delivering pre-ordered items for central pick-up in towns, and later, at home) will offer meat, cheeses, milk and shelf-stable produce.

The new storefront is located at Sawyer Farm, 19 Sawyer Road in

Worthington. It opened on Wednesday, April 5 and will operate Tuesday – Friday from 8 a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Online ordering will roll out shortly afterwards and they are again pursuing USDA approval to process SNAP online. "It's for absolutely everybody," said Hunt. "We just want to make fresh, local food accessible to everybody."

A popular component of last year's program is coming back, as well. People who self-identify (by emailing [market@hilltowncdc.org](mailto:market@hilltowncdc.org) with their name) will receive a "Golden Ticket" worth \$150 in products for the season.

Another new item this year will be a refrigerator on the porch of the Sawyer Farm store, which will provide food staples for free, seven days a week. As the storefront is located on a working farm, it is asked that patrons avoid disrupting the farm when they visit. Selections will include abundance items, made available through a Local Food Purchasing

Assistance Grant. Farmers will still be paid, but these surplus items are free to patrons.

Hunt plans on giving away \$30,000 in food over the next two years. Area producers include Berniche Blueberry Farm (Chesterfield), Clark Brothers Orchard (Ashfield), Cream of the Crop (Russell), Fern Hill Farm (Buckland), Lambrico (Whately), Four Corners Farm (Worthington), Romeo Farms (Worthington), Foxtrot Herb Farm (Ashfield), Good Bunch Farm (Charlemont), Grace Hill Farm (Cummington), Hart Farm (Conway), Cure for Boredom (Worthington), Intervale Farm (Westhampton), Kinne Brook Farm (Worthington), Mayval Farm (Westhampton), Sawyer Farm (Worthington) and Stone Bridge (Chesterfield).

The number of eligible communities has grown this year to 24. And their base of 120 customers in 2021 grew to 470 by the end of 2022. Projections for

this year are that there will be close to 1,000 participants.

Hunt, who was a farmer for 15 years and spent 25 years in the restaurant industry, seeks to build community through food. This model is taking root and he's working with groups from across the country who are interested in replicating it.

While area growers will provide most of the food, the project will supplement where needed. Emphasizing that eating "with the seasons" provides the greatest nutrition, some items may be purchased from outside sources-although they will seek organic options as much as possible. Their website-[hilltownmobilemarket.com](http://hilltownmobilemarket.com)-will list sources and their growing practices. Interested people may also sign up on the website for emails keeping them informed.

Online orderers may pay using credit card or SNAP; those shopping in the store may pay with cash, credit card or SNAP.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Town of Blandford Conservation Commission Public Notice

At its regularly scheduled meeting on **Monday, April 10, 2023 at 6:00 PM** at the Blandford Town Hall, 1 Russell Stage Road, the Blandford Conservation Commission will consider a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) received from the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC). The RDA is related to proposed maintenance/tree removal near the Borden Brook Reservoir spillway in the Town of Blandford within the SWSC Watershed. The Commission will make its determination in accordance with the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. c 131, Sec. 40 (as amended). Plans and additional information are on record in the Office of the Conservation Commission. Richard Gates, Chair  
04/06/2023

### (SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

#### Docket 23 SM 001219 ORDER OF NOTICE To: Maura A. Gamache

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):

#### THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON FKA THE BANK OF NEW YORK AS TRUSTEE FOR THE CERTIFICATE-HOLDERS OF CWABS, INC., ASSET BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2004-3,

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Huntington, numbered 40 Littleville Road, given by Robert T. Briand and Maura A. Gamache to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Full Spectrum Lending, Inc., dated February 11, 2004, and record-

ed in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 7694, Page 45, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **May 8, 2023**, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on March 22, 2023.

Attest:  
**Deborah J. Patterson**  
Recorder  
22-004385  
04/06/2023



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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES

## Walking the Old South Otis Road



The Hilltown Hikers stopped to explore Standard Cemetery on the old road from Blandford to Otis.

*Photos by Karen Sikes McTaggart and Liz Massa*

BLANDFORD – Old South Otis Road in Blandford, was once a well-traveled way from Blandford to Otis.

From the other end it is called Swamp Road, just about where Papas Gas station is in Otis. Hiking it today is actually quicker than driving to Otis from Beech Hill Road.

When Cobble Mountain Reservoir was built this entire corner of South Blandford, North Granville and Tolland was abandoned because so many roads went underwater as part of flooding for the reservoir and townspeople were cut

off from other villages.

The old road makes its way by Stannard Cemetery, a large one reflecting just how many families

lived here. Homesteads along the way since 1857 are the Ripleys, Miners and Stannard families. Coles Brook, Hiram Blair Road, Shepard Road and the Tolland State Forest intersect here and this is also used by snowmobiles so bridges are maintained.

The giant old growth oaks are impressive and this hike took us back in time as the land was left by the original settlers.



Hikers travel an icy section of the Old South Otis Road during a recent outing.



The Hilltown Hikers passed the Old Ripley homestead.



One of the hikers took a photo of the Bridge Closed sign.



Glacial erratics are scattered along Shatterack Mountain in Russell.



Dogs are always welcome on these hikes. *Submitted photos*

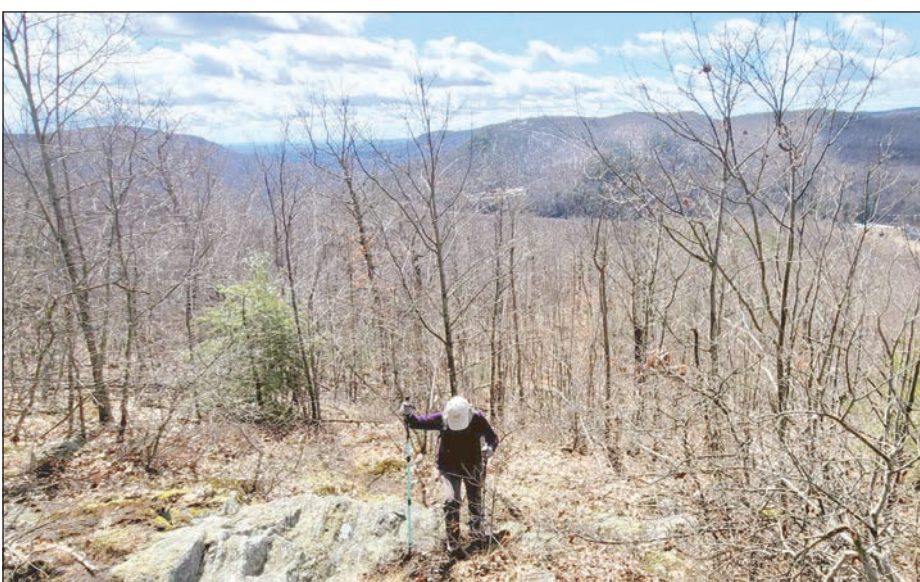
## Climbing Mount Shatterack

RUSSELL – The March Group Hike was to the Blue Rock in Russell on Mount Shatterack elevation 1,138 feet, achievable by everyone at a slow pace to reach the jaw dropping vistas. Shatterack Mountain is the birthplace also the club patch.

Hilltown Hikers have climbed this mountain many times and its views and vistas, glacier scraping, mica and glacial erratic's, pitch pine, blueberry bushes and wild wildlife is the gateway to the most beautiful place in Western Massachusetts. The Hilltowns! Shatterack Mountain in Russell has the Wow factor for those who love the views.

This trail is part of Unkamt's Path section 7, starting at Main St Shatterack Mountain with views of the village of Russell, the White Church of Blandford, Turtle(Tuttle) Bend Mountain and Holiday Hill. If that's not enough, as you hike across rock and pitch pine you get spectacular views down the valley to both the West and East.

Shatterack's blue painted rock is a monument to our first responders, painted by locals. Another rock of interest is simply called "the Rock," painted different colors depending on the season. Both can be plainly seen from the Village of Russell and Route 20.



This hiker climbs the rocky trail.



This hiker enjoys the view during a March hike to Mount Shatterack.