

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world." – Mahatma Gandhi

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

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

April 25, 2024 | Vol. 46, No. 1 | 75¢

www.countryjournal.turley.com

HILLTOWNS

Over 300 paddlers in 200 boats participated in the Westfield River Wildwater Races

Garet Strouse sets new Classic course record

By Kathryn Koegel
Correspondent

Garet Strouse, 30, a member of the USA Wildwater National Team, drove up from the Philadelphia area with a goal of winning the 69th Westfield River Wildwater Races.

He did not just win the Classic Race, which goes eight miles between the center of Huntington and Woronoco, he broke a previous record. According to Eric Jones, who maintains the PaddleStats archive of whitewater racing times, at 43 minutes and 55 seconds, "He shattered it by almost 2.5 minutes off the time Joe Shaw set in a kayak 30 years

RACE, page 2



Amanda Bater, from left was the fastest woman on the course at just over 1:01. Her racing partner was Eric Jones.

Turley photo by Eric Jones



Racers finish the Classic in Woronoco.

Turley photo by Leah Hardacker



Classic Course record breaker Garet Strouse launches on the Expert Course from Knightville Dam.

Turley photo by Kathryn Koegel

BLANDFORD

Interesting mailboxes line the roads of Blandford

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Stop and smell the roses.

Take time to look around. Instead of sniffing the flowers, how about taking in the look of roadside mailboxes.

When taking the time to look, there are many different kinds of mail receptacles. There are homeowner self-styled, resin lollipop look-a likes in multiple colors, some forgotten, some in disrepair, some waiting for the ground to thaw before being righted. And of course, there's the standard quonset hut with the U.S. Mail embossed on the front flap; often painted.

All the containers for lack of a better word than mailboxes have the side flag. The flag is up as a signal to pick up any out-going mail.

A ride around Blandford revealed all sorts of differ-

MAILBOXES, page 11

This mailbox is inside a brick house.

Turley Photos by Mary Kronholm



HUNTINGTON

Rural schools face substantial challenges

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Handouts headlined with the statement, "Every student regardless of their zip-code deserves a high-quality and equitable public education in our Commonwealth" sit at the security booth at Gateway Regional Middle/High School.

They urge parents, staff and even students to advocate for a sustainable future for rural schools like Gateway.

According to Harvard economist Raj Chetty, a zip code is one of the most reliable data points to predict the future success of children. Chetty was part of developing the "opportunity index," an online tool used by the U.S. Census Bureau that compares the likely future success of children, based upon the zip code of where they grew up. Research proving this premise followed 20 million Americans from childhood into their early thirties.

It's a compelling argument and one that is not lost on Gateway Superintendent Kristen Smidy, who continues to advocate for Rural School Aid. In July 2022, a state Commission on the Health Of Rural School Districts released their report, "A Sustainable Future for Rural Schools." In summary, the report said that the state needed to allocate \$60,000,000 under a new dedi-

SCHOOLS, page 3



Gateway teacher Val Zeh, student Joey Pisani and Superintendent Kristen Smidy gave testimony on the need for Rural School Aid before the joint Ways and Means Committee on April 13, 2023.

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HILLTOWNS

Construction operations continue on I-90 eastbound and westbound

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces crews will be conducting daytime and overnight hour guardrail repair, drainage work, bridge repair, and tree trimming operations at various locations and times on I-90 eastbound and westbound during the week of Monday, April 22.

Lane closures will be in place during the construction operations and traffic will be able to travel through the work zones. The schedule for the work and lane closures will be as follows:

In Otis and Blandford guardrail repair operations will be conducted nightly on I-90 westbound between mile marker 21.0 and mile marker 26.0 now through Thursday, April 25 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to conclude on Friday, April 26 by 5:30 a.m.

Drainage work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound between mile marker 21.0 to 26.0 from Monday, April 22, through Thursday, April 25, from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to conclude on Friday, April 26 by 5:30 p.m.

In Blandford bridge repair work will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 26.4 from Monday, April 22 through Thursday, April 25 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to con-

clude on Friday, April 26 by 5:30 a.m.

In Lee bridge repair work will be conducted daily on I-90 eastbound at mile marker 8.0 through Thursday, April 25 from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

In Russell tree trimming work will be conducted on I-90 westbound between mile marker 33.0 to mile marker 36.0, now through Friday, April 26 from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Appropriate signage, law enforcement details, and messaging will be in place to guide drivers through the work area.

Drivers 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 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.

Prescription drug take back scheduled for April 27

NORTHAMPTON – Communities in Hampshire and Franklin counties have signed on to the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day planned for Saturday, April 27 to offer residents a chance to safely dispose of unwanted and unneeded drugs.

People are encouraged to clean out medicine cabinets and drop off prescription or over the counter drugs for humans or pets in a collective effort to save lives by preventing misuse or accidental ingestion.

Take Back collections are scheduled from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at police departments or public safety complexes in Deerfield, Easthampton, Erving, Hadley, Leverett, Montague, Pelham, Southampton, South Hadley, Sunderland and Williamsburg.

Other drop off sites are at Wildwood Elementary School, 71 Strong Ave., Amherst; the Town Common in Belchertown; Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School on Locust Street in Northampton and the

Highway Department at 64 Huntington Road in Worthington.

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office teams up with the Hampshire and Franklin Sheriff's offices, the county-based TRIAD initiatives, local police departments and the national Drug Enforcement Agency to offer the take back events.

"We hope people will take advantage of the drug take back drop off as part of their annual spring cleaning. Unused drugs must be removed from people's homes and not disposed of in the trash or waterways for the good of everyone," said Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan. "This is prevention, and one way to save lives."

Nearly 72,000 pounds of drugs have been safely disposed of since 2011 during Take Back Days offered twice annually and through permanent drug collection boxes stationed at area police departments. These

efforts rid the region of unneeded prescription and non-prescription drugs, keeping them out of water sources, landfills and preventing misuse.



Graduate students present lecture at Clark Art Institute

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Monday, May 13 at 5 p.m., the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., hosts Ricardo Mercado Ruiz and Destini Ross, second-year Master's students in the Williams College/Clark Graduate Program in the History of Art and Judith M. Lenett Memorial Fellows, as they make presentations on the conservation research and hands-on work they have undertaken during their fellowships.

The free lecture is held in the Lunder Center at Stone Hill and is open to the public. A reception follows the event. Each academic year, the Judith M. Lenett Memorial Fellowship is awarded to select second-year students interested

in exploring issues of conservation in the field of American art. Working closely with conservators from the Williamstown + Atlanta Art Conservation Center, each Lenett Fellow pursues a project to research and conserve an American art object.

Ricardo Mercado Ruiz's project focused on the life of American Impressionist Howard Gardiner Cushing and involved treating a portrait by Cushing of Ethel Cushing, his wife and muse, from the collection of the Newport Art Museum. In addition, Mercado Ruiz examined the painting in the context of Cushing's life and times. He explored Cushing's relationship with contempo-

raries, his family, and his social circle, as well as the effect of physical place reflected in his painting techniques. This research built upon what was previously understood about the artist's working technique and inspiration, and his place in the history of American art.

Destini Ross's research involved studying and completing the conservation treatment of a planographic print by an unknown American maker titled Afro-Americans who have served in the Upper and Lower Branches of the United States Congress from the collection of the Chapin Library at Williams College. This important piece of cultural heritage features portraits of twenty-two African

American congressmen who served between 1869 and 1901, including Hiram R. Revels (the first Black man to serve in the United States Senate), Blanche K. Bruce (the first Black man to serve a full Senate term), and John R. Lynch (a notable intellectual of the Reconstruction period who was the first Black Speaker of a State House of Representatives [Mississippi]). Ross's research began with a meticulous examination of the object, followed by a comparison to similar artworks of the period. Ross's efforts have led to a deeper understanding of the print and its historical significance.

For more information, people may visit clarkart.edu/events.

RACE

ago. That's an improvement of more than 5.5%. Mind blowing."

"I thought I had a good chance to break the record and I was pleasantly surprised," said Strouse. "But it was my first race in six months. I thought to myself, 'OK these records have stood, it's something to aim for.' In the Classic Race I had to average nine miles per hour which is doable but the portages slow you down, you have to be as efficient as possible."

Strouse raced in the kayak category. He carried his boat and sprinted through both portages, not even stopping for the traditional water and orange break just before the Russell dam. Strouse also came up the previous weekend to do a practice run of both the Expert and Classic races.

Longtime paddlers like Carl Lafreniere, Julie Marcoulier, Sue Vollrath and Jeff DeFeo also won in their race classes. The full results are at westfieldriver.org/races. One surprise winner in the mixed canoe class (male/female) was Amanda Bater, who posted the fastest women's time on the course at one hour, one minute and 51 seconds. She was not just a racer, but had spent her morning volunteering at registration before hopping in her boat with Eric Jones.

Just over a month before the race was to be run, it was canceled due to lack of funding. "No road or paddling



The entire Ellinger family turned out to volunteer. Megan, Jacob, Ariana, Jaiden and Anthony. Turley photo by Kathryn Koegel

race can operate without sponsors," says race managing director Kathryn Koegel. "You would have to charge participants too much to make it work." Past organizer and racer Jeff DeFeo enlisted the help of local businesses, who were willing to write checks ranging from \$250 to \$4,000 (JL Raymakers & Sons). Local and national businesses

like: JL Raymakers & Sons & ROAR Landscaping, Advance Manufacturing, Boston Brewing – Just the Haze No Alcohol IPA, Clean & Green Junk Removal, Greenfield Savings Bank; Indian Motorcycle of Springfield, Kate's Real Food, Micro Abrasives, Pioneer Valley Waste Solutions, Polish National Credit Union, Westfield Electroplating,

Westfield Bank, Westfield Gas and Electric and the Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee stepped up to fund the race or donate services to keep it going.

Past racer Travis Wheeler set up a Go Fund Me that netted over \$5,000. "We are in such a great financial and operational position going forward into our 70th running," says race committee chair Harry Rock. "We will be starting to organize by early fall and welcome new volunteers to join the organizing committee. We worked collaboratively with the Select Boards of Huntington and Russell along with their police and fire and have a safety plan that worked and that we can build off of next year. We are grateful to all of the donors, sponsors and volunteers who helped make this year's race a success."

"Another huge difference this year is that we absolutely found the volunteer base we need to run such a complex event," says Koegel. "Over 80 people stepped up to do unglamorous jobs like organizing parking and loading canoes. Special thanks go to the Hilltown Hikers and The Westfield High School National Honor Society, who brought numerous volunteers to the event."

As to the new course champion? In August he will be racing the Whitewater Nationals on the Deerfield River. Strouse also still has the Westfield River Expert Course record to beat. As he says "I'd love to come back."

from page 1

HUNTINGTON

Intern Town Clerk announces town election information

HUNTINGTON – The annual town election will be held Saturday, May 11 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The last day to register to vote for this election is Wednesday, May 1 from

3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.

Early in-person Voting will be held Wednesday, May 1 from 3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. and Monday May 6 from 6-8 p.m.

SCHOOLS

from page 1

cated Rural School Aid account to make funding for all schools in Massachusetts equitable. Rural schools, which rely heavily on town property taxes due to a severe lack of economic development, are caught between offering equitable opportunities and even, meeting mandated services for their students and remaining fiscally affordable for their member towns.

The journey of Rural School Aid has been a series of forwards and backwards steps since the report came out. For the current school year, the state earmarked \$15 million for RSA and named 68 public school districts that met the criteria for funding. However, it fell far short of the \$60 million called for by the Commission, with Gateway's allocation of \$832,654 falling short of a hoped for \$1,096,272.

As noted in the handout, rural schools in Massachusetts face a number of challenges. They include lower state funding, high student transportation costs and ride times, declining enrollment, limited programming and electives for students and rising special education

costs and needs. "With the House budget putting Rural School Aid at \$7.5 million after the Governor's initial budget of RSA at \$15 million, I am appalled at what appears to be an active move to defund this essential funding for our schools," said Smidy.

There are steps that parents, staff and community members can take to advocate for rural schools. Written testimony may be submitted to the Joint Ways and Means Committee asking for increases to the RSA line item in the budget. They may call and speak with their legislators and Governor Healey and urge them to support increasing Rural School Aid. Talk to people you know about why helping rural schools matters.

While advocating, the handout says, ask for the \$60 million recommended by the Commission on the Health of Rural School Districts in 2022. As of FY'24, the state has only achieved 25% of the needed amount; in the meantime, costs continue to rise.

For more information, people may visit ruralschoolsma.org.

Council on Aging hosts Stop the Bleed training

HUNTINGTON – Educational programs sponsored by the Huntington Council on Aging continue on

Wednesday, May 1 from 1-2 p.m. with a "Stop the Bleed" training.

The Hilltown Community Ambulance will lead the training at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road. All in

the community are welcome to attend.

According to the American College of Surgeons, which developed the Stop the Bleed training, the number one cause of preventable death following trauma or injury is bleeding. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

Rec Committee hosting Mothers Day craft event

HUNTINGTON – A special crafting event will be hosted by the Huntington Recreation Committee on Saturday, May 4 at 3 p.m. in Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road.

Children and adults will be able to create cards, flowers and wall hangings to give to mothers on the upcoming

holiday. Stickers, coloring, paints and cutting faux flowers will be involved. Activities will be led by Brandy Kellogg and Kayla Koivisto.

Sign-ups are requested, but not required. By email recreation@huntingtonma.us with the number of people planning to attend.

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Congratulations **CARLY SMITH**

We are so proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College.

Love Mom, Dad, John and Chloe



SAMPLE

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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



Do it now, while the forsythia is blooming

It's funny how nature is sometimes used as a cue to do this or do that. The term is phenology. When I was first learning about perennials all those years ago at UMass, I remember my instructor saying it was safe to remove winter protection "when the forsythia is blooming."

It is also safe to prune roses and butterfly bush "when the forsythia is blooming." And it's time to sow your peas and plant grass seed, too.

Kinda cool, isn't it, that nature can dictate when it is safe or indeed the best time to accomplish things in the garden?

The forsythia is blooming nicely in my front yard, and I did head out over the weekend to tackle some of the above. My pink "Fairy" rose bush was in dire need of clean up.

There was a wee bit of winter kill that I trimmed back to the next nice node. Shockingly there were still some spent flower clusters left from last year; those were removed as well.

Long arching branches were reigned in – it's not good for roses to be all over the ground where they are more susceptible to fungal issues. Likewise, canes that were crossing each other or branching out at weird angles were remedied too.

I applied a sprinkling of granular organic fertilizer at the base of the plant to support all of the beautiful blooms I'm expecting to have.

My 2-year-old Butterfly Bush (Buddleia) barely suffered any winter kill at all in contrast to last year when it died back all the way to the ground! I'm excited because that means it has a couple of feet head start and earlier blooms to boot!

I had to remove only a couple of inches of dead tips. I applied a balanced fertilizer here too in hopes of many beautiful purple flowers.

Other sections of my perennial beds met with different jobs to be done. Gayfeather (*Liatris spicata*) always looks unkept until new growth ensues.

I try to cut the old stems down a bit further and rake my hands through the dead, grass-like foliage, clipping away what doesn't come free easily. If you look within the plant you'll notice whitish tips of new growth. It won't be long!

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, or call us at 413-283-8393.

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



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Resident supports Cinner for Select Board

I am writing in support of Dee Cinner for the Chesterfield Select Board.

In my 94 years here, I've seen various select boards: some better than others. Often there has been room for improvement, new ideas, a new voice. Now again is that time.

Dee's depth of experience on town committees and commissions makes her highly qualified for this important job. She has helped us care more about our beautiful historic places and buildings, our cemeteries, our libraries, our Veterans' Park. Need a grant? Dee knows how. She keeps modernized records so her work on our Select Board will be transparent for sure.

Dee lives here. She knows Chesterfield people because she sees us on a daily basis. She will want the Select Board meetings to happen at a time more convenient for most of us.

It has been said, "If it ain't broke don't fix it." Just maybe the Chesterfield Select Board is "broke." I believe electing Dee Cinner is a timely step to start the fixing. I know Dee will be accessible, will listen, and make us glad we voted for her and her vision for Chesterfield.

Dee Cinner has my vote.

Nan Clark
Chesterfield

Dee Cinner is running for the Select Board

For years she has volunteered in our town at the Library, the Historical Commission, the Senior Center, and every other place that needed her.

She has weeded the town gardens and written grants worth thousands of dollars to restore the town cemeteries. I know her to

be organized, focused and energetic in the pursuit of improving every aspect of life in Chesterfield.

We can't do better in our choice for Select Board than Dee Cinner.

Gigi Kaeser
West Chesterfield

GUEST COLUMN

Older husband, working wife seek guidance



Dear Rusty:

I am 74 years old, retired and receiving Social Security.

My wife will be 65 in January of 2025. Our hope was to start paying off some credit card expense by her receiving SS when she turns 65, however it appears there would be a substantial reduction to her benefits. Her work income is \$37,500 a year and she wasn't planning on retiring from work at age 65. Because I am 11 years older, we felt it makes sense to use her Social Security as a means to lower our debt. We have \$27,000 in credit card debt and I don't really want to use my 401(k) funds due to taxes. We pretty much live on my Social Security and pension.

Signed: Seeking Suggestions

Dear Seeking:

Your wife's Full Retirement Age for Social Security purposes is age 67. Because she will not yet have reached her FRA in January 2025, when she is 65, if she claims SS to start at that time, not only will her monthly amount be reduced, but she will be subject to Social Security's annual earnings test.

The earnings test sets a limit for how much can be earned by beneficiaries, who claim SS before FRA.

The earnings limit for 2024 is \$22,320. The limit for next year is not yet published (it's based on changes to the national wage index), but will be a bit higher likely about \$23,500.

Thus, I can't provide the exact impact, but if your wife's 2025 earnings exceed next year's limit, Social Security will take back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit (half of the amount over the limit). So, if your wife earns \$37,500 per year, that will

SECURITY, page 5

Election letters to the editor welcome

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

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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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ISSN NO. 0747-2471

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The Country Journal (USPS 483-550) is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069.



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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Cars of past eras found in fields and woods

By Deborah Daniels

What do you do with a car that has reached the end of its life? Encountering cars that are resting, make that rusting in their final resting place in the woods has always provoked the question, did they die here or were they abandoned here? It is amazing how many you run across while hiking.

Did the forest grow up around them because there are no roads to where these vehicles are parked. Were they driven here or were they towed here? No doubt these vehicles represented an expensive item in a household budget so it is unlikely that a working car was abandoned. The photos show some of the cars and trucks that have been observed while out and about hiking in the forest.

What is known is that Henry Ford introduced the Model T car, the Tin Lizzie in 1908 and it went into mass production starting in 1914 to 1927, then the model A came about. General Motors was established by William Durant who made Buicks, Cadillacs and Chevrolets. Henry Leland made Lincoln cars in 1917 and things just kept growing bigger and bigger.

By 1929 America was producing 4.4 million cars per year. How long were these cars being driven? What was the lifetime of a car and when it died where did it go? The old models would have been stripped of parts but no one was thinking about where to locate the final parking lot for these metal vehicles.

Now it must be pointed out that there were some who got creative over what to do with junk cars. There is Old Car City USA in White, Georgia where there are over 4,000 muscle cars and classics resting in the forest with six miles of trails in the woods where you can view these vintage cars in varying degrees of disrepair. It did start as a scrapyards business attached to a general store in 1931. This is one solution to where to put dead cars, in a type of museum.

But what about the millions of other

cars produced?

Now some vehicles are honored by their owners after having served them well. They are placed on display. They have been retired and earned a place of respect for their years of duty. You see old Faithful parked near the house or farm. However this is not the fate of most retired vehicles. Not to mention most neighbors will object if too many vehicles are placed on display.

So let us consider the town dump as a final resting place for the retired car. Did you know that land used to be created by filling the shoreline with trash? Early New York City sold water lots for 1/25th the price of land lots. Owners would fill in the shoreline with a ship's ballast of sand, coral and local garbage to create land.

Chicago threw debris from the great Chicago fire into the marshes around Lake Michigan and household waste to fill and create parkland. Boston's Back Bay was once a landfill, so cars would seem to be ideal shoreline land fill material.

However environmental laws were passed in the 1960s and 1970s that put the kabosh to that plan. These laws were created to protect groundwater and the air from pollutants. Town dumps were fingered for polluting water from chemicals leaching from degrading trash. Sanitary landfills came about. Don't you love the term sanitary landfills.

Now most dumps have trash compactors and they separate trash into what can be sold and recycled such as aluminum, paper, cardboard, etc. Gone are the local town dumps where trash was heaped and plowed under. Junk cars were probably not welcome in these local dumps anyway as they took up too much real estate in the dump.

How did these cars in the woods manage to evade the local used car dealership? Who knew more about flogging life into a dead car than a used car dealer? Clearly they were under the used car dealer's radar! You might imagine that



This junk truck was found in Chesterfield.

Turley photos by Deborah Daniels



This junk truck is parked among trees in Chester.



This photo shows junk cars displayed in Old Car City in Georgia.



Another junk truck is photographed in a Chesterfield field.

some of these cars were practice cars for young men and women coming of driving age.

What better to practice driving in than in an old car? If you could drive and dodge the trees you were ready for the open highway. Many a farm field used to be used as a racetrack in the past. Perhaps these cars were the ones too old and too broken to make it out of the woods. It is a mystery. Just how long does it take for a car to disappear into the landscape? We are witnessing it first hand.

It is interesting to view the old cars and try to estimate the year and make of the car. The identifying model and manufacturer information is so often removed, worn away or vandalized from the vehicles. Finding a VIN number,

vehicle identification number would help but these didn't come about until 1954. This number is a 17 digit code number assigned by manufacturers to describe and identify each of the cars they manufacture and it can be used to track ownership of a car. Many of these junk cars predate VIN numbers.

So if you didn't sell or trade your vehicle in for a newer one you had a large piece of trash to deal with. What did you do with trash back in history? You buried it or dumped it in the woods. There they have been rehabbed by wildlife to become shelters for rodents and insects, maybe other animals.

Go outside, enjoy the scenery and ponder what would you do with these decrepit vehicles? See them as trash or pieces of history?

from page 4

GARDEN



I find a lot of satisfaction from cultivating the perennial garden, but it's almost too early to do that. Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) is still weeks away from popping up.

If I haphazardly scratch around in the garden it could be at the plant's expense or at the expense of any self-sown seedlings that germinated. Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) is always a good self-sower, but it's up to you to decide if these tiny plants are worthy of keeping or weeding out.

Same goes for Ballon Flower (*Platycodon*).

Lavender (*Lavandula*) is sometimes slow to wake up too, but this year the plants already look "alive." Many times,

you have to search within the plant for signs of fresh silver-green growth, then cut back to that point.

This year, like we saw with the Butterfly Bush, there seems to be very little winter kill. I'm going to leave be for now and not prune anything yet.

I planted Hollyhocks (*Alcea rosea*) near my lamp post last spring and they grew great all summer. I thought it would be neat to have 6-7-foot spires of pearly pastel blooms reaching for the sky, reminiscent of the Polish hollyhocks my mom had by the porch when I was a teenager.

Admittedly they don't look all that fabulous right at the moment. Hollyhocks like it rich, so I fertilized

and will also provide some compost to further enhance their growth, and maybe just maybe I will re-live the Hollyhocks of my youth come July.

All in all, I feel pretty good at how the perennial gardens fared through the winter. Next week I have to get those peas in – at least before the forsythia stops blooming!

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.

from page 4

SECURITY

likely be about \$14,000 over the limit and Social Security will take back half of that \$7,000.

They "take back" by withholding future benefits or you can repay them in a lump sum. So, you will have a choice repay Social Security from your other assets, or they will withhold your wife's SS benefits for the number of months needed to offset her penalty for exceeding the earnings limit.

The number of months they will withhold depends on how much is owed and what your wife's monthly SS benefit is. For example, if your wife's age-65 SS benefit is about average (\$1,900) and her penalty for exceeding the limit is \$7,000, Social Security would with-

hold your wife's benefit for four months to recover the penalty, but she would receive her full benefit for the remaining eight months of the year.

Unless your wife tells them in advance that she will exceed the limit, Social Security will find out the following year after you file your income taxes. But, in any case, your wife cannot avoid the annual earnings test for working before reaching her Full Retirement Age.

The earnings test goes away when your wife reaches her FRA of 67. Until that time, if she continues working she will have a choice to have her benefits withheld for a portion of the year or simply repay Social Security in a lump sum

in which case her benefits would continue uninterrupted.

FYI, there is a silver lining in this, because if your wife has benefits withheld because she exceeds the earnings limit before her FRA, after she reaches her full retirement age Social Security will give her time credit for the months when benefits were withheld, which will result in her monthly Social Security payment amount increasing somewhat at her full retirement age. Thus, over time, your wife may recover the benefits which were withheld for exceeding the annual earnings limit. But to get 100% of the benefit she's earned from a lifetime of working and be exempt from Social Security's earnings limit,

she would need to wait until she reaches her FRA to claim.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

CHESTERFIELD

Chesterfield Annual Town Election set for May 6

CHESTERFIELD – The Chesterfield Annual Town Election takes place Monday, May 6 with the polls open from noon-8 p.m. for in person voting.

Mail-in ballots will be sent out soon to all voters that requested them when they returned the postcard requesting ballots for all elections this year.

There are three races on the ballot. All positions are for three years unless noted differently. For Select Board, incumbent Roger Fuller is being challenged by Emma Dee Cinner. The seat for the remaining two-year term of the Hampshire Regional High School Committee has a race between Patricia “Trish” Colson- Montgomery, who is currently serving as an appointed member to the committee and is being challenged by newcomer, Noah Berman.

The third race is for the seat on the local Chesterfield/Goshen School Committee. The two candidates are Kimberly Lyons-Snape and Kayla Rida. Geoffrey Gougeon, the current holder of that seat, is not seeking reelection.

Dee Cinner

Candidate for Select Board

Dee Cinner for Select Board ~ A new Vision for Chesterfield

Dee Cinner is a retired medical technologist (BSMT), who worked for more than 45 years in both clinical and research areas.



She was a private compliance consultant specializing in U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations and operated for over 25 years mostly in New England but with clients in Ohio and Pennsylvania. Assessments, site specific manuals and on-site training were provided to clients in healthcare, construction and factories. She also focused on infection control procedures and training.

A Chesterfield resident for 28 years with her partner Rad, she has lived in the Pioneer Valley for more than 50 years. Dee has a grown son and two grandsons. She swims up to five hours per week and is a life-long learner, applying her skills to her work for the Town and learning new ones such as grant writing and implementing digital cemetery mapping and record keeping using new software.

She believes it is time for a positive change in leadership on the Select Board. The Board should work for the people of the town and be responsive to their concerns whether their families have lived here for generations or they moved here last year. Listening is one of the most important parts of a successful Select Board.

Town government should be transparent, courteous and respectful. Meetings should be held at times when citizens can attend, be managed efficiently and members should prepare in advance. A convenient and accessible way for people to learn what is happening in town government is needed. She strongly believes that the Procurement Officer should be state certified by taking free courses offered by the Inspector General’s Office. This would ensure town contract awards that are simple, fair and beneficial for both town and contractors.

Her vision is that with the return of respect and civility the town will make progress forward together to plan for a vital, safe, accessible town center, with new facilities and amenities as envisioned by the citizens. As someone vitally interested in the historical heritage of the town, she has the vision and skills to not only plan but also execute the plan.

Through her work and volunteer activities for the town she has repeatedly demonstrated exceptional project management skills, by seeing complex multiyear projects through from planning through completion in her roles as:

- Chair of Historical Commission – 24years
- Chair of Cemetery Commission – 12 years
- Chesterfield Library assistant for 12 years and maintains COA library

Secured and administered over \$130,000 in grant funding and oversaw construction of Veteran’s Park and Chesterfield’s 11 historic cemeteries.

Secured National Historic Register designations for two districts and two cemeteries and raised the number of surveyed historic properties and sites from 78 to 319 while also helping to secure the restoration of the Edwards Museum.

Modernized cemetery record keeping with interactive maps available soon on the town website.

A vote for Dee on May 6 is a vote for positive change.

Roger Fuller

Select Board candidate for re-election

Roger’s Leadership Skills include working as part of a team; managing projects; reading specifications; reading, negotiating and procuring contracts; budgeting and staying within a budget; keeping track of costs; reading financial statements; communicating with customers, employees, bank presidents, projects owners, other contractors, architects, engineers, attorneys, etc.

All of these skills, combined with integrity, professionalism, and experience, have enabled him to successfully and competently help in the running of Chesterfield for the past 27 years.

Roger has spent most of his life in the Hilltowns. Born and brought up in Ashfield, he was the middle child of seven. That position in the family taught him early on how to mediate and work well with others. He always strove to be the best he could be, graduating with high honors in carpentry from Smith Vocational High School and attaining the leadership rank of Major in the school’s ROTC program.

After working for several years as a foreman for a local window company, he started his own company, R&R Window Contractors, with Rick Hinton as his partner. The company grew to

have 100 employees as it serviced customers throughout the Northeast.

Roger moved to Chesterfield in 1994, after several years living in Westhampton. He has two daughters. Chelsea works as a physician’s assistant at Baystate Cancer Center. Tabby lives in Chesterfield and took over as president of R&R Windows when Roger fully retired.

Roger has worked for better roads. When he joined the Select Board, State Chapter 90 funds were used to pay highway workers and buy equipment. He changed their use so the money went directly towards improving Chesterfield’s roads.

Roger has worked for better town buildings. He was very much involved with the renovation of the highway garage and he construction of the salt shed. He has also served on the Town Office Building Committee.

He has worked for improving Town Internet. During the Broadband Build, he attended weekly meetings, tracked costs and kept the project moving. His work helped the Town by cutting borrowing costs by half and supporting the MLP in paying the remainder with profits. He also worked to get our share of CAF II funds.

Roger has worked to protect residents. During emergencies such as the ice storm of 2008, he worked with our Emergency Management Director to oversee operations and communicate with Eversource.

Roger has worked for Chesterfield’s future. He developed the Capital Plan which enables the Town to plan for future capital needs and expenses. He also negotiated the purchase of the 6 North Road property for the Town.

Roger has worked to educate our youth. He was on the Hampshire Regional Renovations and Additions Building Committee. He attended over 100 weekly job meetings and reported on progress to the entire committee. He also served on the New Hingham Salary Negotiation Team.CC.

ELECTION, page 7

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CHESTERFIELD

ELECTION

from page 4

Noah Berman

Candidate for School Committee
Hampshire Regional High School

I am Noah Berman and am running for the School Committee of Hampshire Regional High School. I currently work as a Culinary Arts Instructor at a nearby vocational high school, as well as having my own small catering business.



Before settling down here and transitioning to teaching, I was a chef and general manager of many restaurants over a 20-year career, spanning many states and countries. In my time in restaurant management, I picked up a lot of information and skills on how to keep track of daily changing finances, learning this skill in a variety of different settings.

This experience in hospitality management and my understanding of our educational system would be a great benefit to our school committee. I am running for this position because I believe in providing a well-rounded education to all and that exceptional schools are the center of great communities.

When my wife and I decided to relocate to Chesterfield, the schools here were a big reason for making our decision. Like many younger couples, we looked at the quality of the schools, from elementary to high, knowing that they would be where children would go.

Needless to say, we were happy that we saw such cared-for schools with high-quality education here. Over the last year, it has come to our attention, as well as many others in the community, that our great schools are in danger. I believe it is the role of the school committee to maintain our schools and I recognize that doing so can be a difficult task.

However, I believe if we were to maintain the trajectory that the current school committee has put us on, it would mean the end of our quality education. There is a massive issue in education that extends beyond our small community, but that does not mean we have to succumb to the same problems. We must not let quality educators feel the need to seek jobs elsewhere, and even more, we must entice the few who are left to join us in our educational goals.

Funding schools also goes beyond just educators, it also means making sure there are the supplies needed and access to proven curriculums; it means making sure that everything from arts and music to sports are funded. It's about making sure that all students, regardless of their path, have access to what they need to grow.

We all want our Hilltown communities to grow and prosper into the future and a big part of making sure this happens is providing for the youth. A well-educated and cared-for younger population will ensure our growth and success in the future. A wise man said something to me on many occasions and I believe it rings true when it comes to our current school situation; "If we don't change direction soon, we'll end up where we are going." I hope we can change our current course and continue to have the amazing schools we all want and deserve.

Patricia Colson-Montgomery

Candidate for Hampshire
Regional High School
(appointed until annual election)

Thirty-nine years ago, my husband Jim and I began the search for a home in which to raise our family. We heard about a new listing in Chesterfield and went up to see a house on Smith Road. When we walked in, on the counter cooling was an apple pie that was soon shared with us. The house had not been prettified for viewers, but instead felt like a home. We made an offer then and there. That decision proved positive in every way. Chesterfield was, and is, a great community in which to raise a family. Our kids swam in the Bend, camped in our woods, caught tadpoles and lightning bugs and generally did all the things kids should do.

Eventually the kids grew to the point where I had time to pursue my own interests. One of those was Town governance. Chesterfield had become our home and our community, and I decided to volunteer my time in return for the richness that living in Chesterfield had brought to my family. The first Town committee I joined was the Chesterfield Finance Committee, of which I remained a member until being elected to the Select Board.

My entire working career was spent in education, teaching students ranging from fourth graders to college students. When my own two children reached high school age and the demands of child-rearing lessened, I decided to increase my

time devoted to public service. I thought that my years as an educator would prove valuable as a member of a School Committee, so I joined the Hampshire Regional School Committee.

Along with my regular Committee duties, I served on search committees for the two school superintendents and for the high school principal. I was a member of the team negotiating contracts with teachers and other staff and served on the policy subcommittee, which is responsible for developing school policy, and the finance subcommittee, which is responsible for developing the school budget.

I participated in Interest-Basing Bargaining training, which was run by federal mediators, and I learned valuable skills in negotiation and mediation. I also served as the Hampshire representative on the Board of Governors of the Collaborative for Educational Services.

My years on the School Committee have given me a full understanding of school needs. Having been a long-time member of the Chesterfield Finance Committee, I'm well-aware of Town budget issues and the balance needed between school needs and Town needs. My qualifications to be a member of the Hampshire Regional School Committee can best be summed up in three words: dedication, experience, and expertise.

Experience

40 years as an Educator

30 years in Public Education

10 years teaching in local colleges (Smith College, Hampshire College, UMass Amherst)

14 years on the Hampshire Regional School Committee

Served as Chair

Member of Negotiations Subcommittee

Member of Finance Subcommittee

Member of Policy Subcommittee

6 years on Collaborative for Educational Services Board of Governors

18 years on Chesterfield Finance Committee

10 years on Chesterfield Select Board



BECKET

Louise Mosrie to host songwriting workshop April 27



Louise Mosrie

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, is offering a songwriting workshop with Louise Mosrie on Saturday, April 27 from 4-6 p.m.

Mosrie is known for mixing bluegrass, country and folk and for delivering songs that balance melody and

story-telling. Participants should bring an instrument, pen and paper and their creativity. Cost is \$25 per person, \$20 for members and free for students 14-18. For more information, people may visit www.becketartscenter.org.

Becket Athenaeum announces upcoming news and events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., baby and toddler playgroup starts Tuesday, April 30 from 10-11 a.m.

The playgroup includes circle time, stories, movement, music and play for children birth through age 3. Siblings are always welcome. There is coffee and tea for caregivers and snacks for the children.

RSVP by visiting BecketAthenaeum.org/events, email info@bwlibrary.org or call 413-623-5483.

The playgroup is coordinated by Family and Community Engagement Family Programs.

People may drop off their paper-board eclipse glasses and put them in the box in the entryway by Thursday, May 30.

The entryway is accessible 24/7. Lenses must be in good condition without perforations, tears or punctures.

The Athenaeum staff will send them to an organization that donates the glasses to other locations with upcoming eclipses.

Becket Arts Center to hold Arts and Crafts Marketplace

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, announces its seasonal kickoff event, the Arts and Crafts Marketplace, which will be held on Saturday, June 22 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on the combined grounds of the Becket Arts Center, the Becket Athenaeum and the historic Mullen House.

This will be a great opportunity for jewelry makers, woodworkers, painters, photographers, sculptors, textile artists and other local artists and craft makers to exhibit and sell their work. It will also

give shoppers a chance to meet the talented local artisans living and working in these beautiful Berkshire hills.

Cost per vendor space is \$35 with a discounted fee of \$20 for Becket Arts Center members. This is a rain-or-shine event and the fee is non-refundable. The vendor space is limited and will be allotted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Deadline for applications is Saturday, June 1. For more information and registration, people may visit becketartscenter.org/marketplace.

BAC hosts opening reception

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will host a free opening reception for the exhibition "Into the Light," an extensive review of the work of its artist-in-residence Sean McCusker, on Friday, April 26 from 5-7 p.m.

This show culminates McCusker's

two-year residency at the Becket Arts Center and reflects the inspiration he found working closely with the community, though painting demonstrations, live streams and interaction with a wide audience. For more information, people may visit www.becketartscenter.org.

New deadline for Country Journal

Due to a switch in the day the Country Journal gets proofed, there will be a new deadline.

This change takes place with the May 2 edition. All press releases

and photos will need to be emailed to countryjournal@turley.com on the Saturday before. The May 2 deadline will be Saturday, April 27 at 1 p.m. There will be no exceptions made.

RUSSELL

OTIS

Annual Town Election scheduled

OTIS – The Annual Town Election will be held Tuesday, May 28 from 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

The deadline to apply for a mailed Early Voting or mailed Absentee Ballot is Tuesday, May 21 at 5 p.m.

The deadline to apply for an Absentee Ballot if voting in the Town Clerk's office is Friday, May 24 at noon.

PITTSFIELD

EMT Training classes begin May 2

PITTSFIELD – Tuition will be funded for qualified applicants. Classes will be held at three locations: County Ambulance in Pittsfield, Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance Squad in Great Barrington and Northern Berkshire EMS in North Adams. People may call Tiffany Moreno in the BCC Workforce Office at 413-236-4511.



The Mennonite church was founded about 1998 from New York Mennonites. They built a house of worship on Route 20 one mile outside of Russell center. The congregants own several outstanding businesses, such as Country Side Wood Craft, The Bread Basket, Cream of the Crop Farm, Hill Town Sand and Gravel and Lafond Septic, as well as many independent artisans and contracting services. These are all of the children born recently to the Mennonite church assembly in Russell from marriages, which occurred from 1 to 1.5 years ago. Only four are boys and includes a set of twins. *Submitted photo*

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Bard College holds dance concert

GREAT BARRINGTON – Bard College at Simon's Rock's Dance Program will present their annual Spring Dance Concert this year on Friday, May 3 and Saturday, May 4, both performances begin promptly at 7 p.m.

This year's Spring Dance Concert will showcase over 30 talented dancers and choreographers treating audiences to a wide variety of dance styles ranging from classical ballet, contemporary dance, musical theater, flamenco, and Hip Hop.

"With the beautiful lighting design of John Musall and the support of Jean Volff, Leo Earl and student tech participation, we are expecting to have a grand time," said Kati Garcia-Renart, Assistant Professor of Dance.

This event is free and open to the public. Seats are first come, first served. For more information on this event, people may visit: <https://simons-rock.edu/events/index.php?eID=7727>.

Bard College at Simon's Rock is the only college in the country specifically designed for highly motivated students ready to enter college after the 10th or 11th grade. Simon's Rock offers a challenging program in the liberal arts and sciences, taught exclusively in small seminars by supportive, highly trained

faculty, who are leading scholars in their fields. The college grants degrees in more than 35 majors.

Bard Academy at Simon's Rock is the nation's first two-year boarding and day program designed to prepare ninth and tenth graders to start college early. A student entering Bard Academy as a high school freshman will earn an Associate of Arts degree from Bard College at Simon's Rock after only four years and a Bachelor of Arts degree after only six years. The Academy curriculum is designed and taught by students' future college professors who are leading scholars in their fields.

The Bard Queer Leadership Project (BQLP) is a revolutionary, new Bachelor of Arts degree program designed for, and by, LGBTQIA+ college students to elevate LGBTQIA+ students and college graduates into leadership roles in school and across the workforce. It serves as a space for actualizing educational practices designed for students to thrive. The centerpiece of BQLP is a four year dual major B.A. degree combining Queer Leadership with a second academic field.

People may visit simons-rock.edu, bardacademy.simons-rock.edu, and bqlp.simons-rock.edu for more information.

Westfield State University to offer OTA program

WESTFIELD – Westfield State University announces the introduction of its new Occupational Therapy Assistant program.

Housed within the University's Health Science Department, this program is designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge needed for diverse careers in the healthcare industry.

This initiative represents a significant milestone for Westfield State, as it becomes the sole provider of an OTA degree program in Massachusetts. It is also the only program in the country, which allows students to interact with a fully simulated community, with accessible digital spaces such as a coffee shop, hospital unit, apartment complex, among others.

As occupational therapy assistants, graduates will play vital roles in various settings, including hospitals, reha-

ilitation centers, schools and nursing homes. Their work encompasses supporting individuals with disabilities or injuries to regain independence and improve their quality of life.

"Simulated communities are fairly common in hospitals across the nation, but Westfield State is the first university in the country to have one right in the classroom," Dr. Karen Slydek, Professor of Health Sciences and Interim Program Director, said. "This is super exciting from the teaching and learning perspective. Our simulated community has a grocery store, a public park with putting green, a car on a road, and a coffee shop in addition to the hospital unit and apartment set up. In addition, we are adding a warehouse work simulation and a subway car seating module. All of these will give students an opportunity to practice skills in areas they may work with clients."

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CHESTER

Chester Library to move to temporary locations

CHESTER – Due to building construction, the Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St., will be temporarily relocating for approximately six weeks beginning Monday, May 6.

Staff are working diligently to make the transition as smooth as possible and the packing up of materials will begin in the first week of May. A temporary location will be open Tuesdays from 1-6 p.m. in the lower level of the Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road in the COA/Senior Center portion. On Thursdays from 10a.m.-3 p.m., they will be open at the Chester Railway Station and Museum located at 10 Prospect St. This will include a regular Story Time and Play.

Regular monthly activities including: second Tuesday of the month

Cookbook Club at 5 p.m., Writers Club on second and fourth Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m. and Book Club on third Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. will all meet at the Chester Town Hall in the Council on Aging area.

Patrons will continue to be able to order materials through the interlibrary loan system and CWMARS. Library staff will have the newest books and DVDs available all day on Tuesdays as well as the Ancestry.com computer.

Patrons can continue to use the grey library dropbox on School Street to return items. They should reach out with any questions by emailing chesterlibrary@gmail.com. For news and updates, they can visit www.hamilton-library.org, facebook at Hamilton Memorial Library and Instagram at [chesterlibrary](https://www.instagram.com/chesterlibrary).

Old Chester Elementary School reuse meeting

CHESTER – Old Chester Elementary School reuse will be the topic of a meeting on Wednesday, May 1 from 6-8 p.m. in Town Hall auditorium.

The purpose of this meeting is to review redevelopment options for the Old Elementary School building, solic-

iting public input and answer questions. Feedback from this meeting will be used for analysis and to draft a report, which will be presented at the Monday, June 3 Select Board Meeting.

People are encouraged to come to this meeting and participate.

YOUNGSTERS ENJOY VACATION WEEK FUN



This boy enjoyed the Pokemon event held at the Hamilton Memorial Library in Chester during school vacation week. Submitted photos



These two boys participated in the craft and story about birds.

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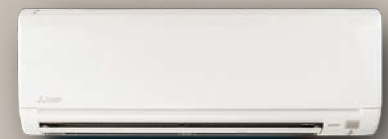
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Bride's Name: _____
Bride's Town Residence: _____
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Groom's Town Residence: _____
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BLANDFORD

Students beautify local park

BLANDFORD – Members of Project 351 from Western Mass returned a second year to plant annuals at the base of the tree in Bicentennial Park.

The project was organized by Regional Leader Reeghan Morawiec. Her areas are Regions 1 and 2, Western Mass and the Berkshires. This year, founder and Executive Director Carolyn Casey came from Boston to help. Wunnyuriti Ziblim of Westfield, another Regional Leader also returned

for a second year.

Jennifer Girard of the Blandford Country Store provided snacks and bottled water for the workers. Morawiec is the daughter of Keri and Michael Morawiec and granddaughter of Joann and Paul Martin.

Project 351 is an independent nonprofit organization that builds a movement of youth-led service by engaging an unsung hero from each of Massachusetts' 351 cities and towns.



The Western Massachusetts 351 team spent Sunday, April 21 working in Bicentennial Park in Blandford. Shown are from left, Keegan Butler, Anna Shadrick, Olivia Manganelli, Maddie Balzano, Haley Chapman, Tricia Theieme, Reeghan Morawiec, Kate McCollough and Wunnyuriti Ziblim. *Submitted photo*



Haley Chapman, Tricia Theieme, Maddie Balzano, Keegan Butler and Kate McCollough plant flower around this tree in Bicentennial Park in Blandford on Sunday. *Turley photo by Mary Kronholm*



This is the final result of their work to beautify Bicentennial Park. *Turley photo by Mary Kronholm*

Select Board discusses Resilient Roads project

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Responding to a request from George Reichert about the Resilient Roads project, the topic will be on the agenda in the coming weeks.

Highway Superintendent David Waldron will provide an update at next week's meeting regarding a final public hearing, date to be announced. Town Administrator Michael Szlosek told the board he had spoken with the project coordinator about this. He said she was not ready for it yet and he did not have contact information for the Project Liaison Paula Bilodeau.

Waldron told the board his contact has been with Angela Panaccione, a Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Planner for Land Use and Environment. She attended the meeting and addressed questions about the Resilient Roads Project. She said deliverables have been established and will provide that information and is "working on standard operating procedures. The actual dirt road study has been completed," she said. A copy of the Dirt Road report was not immediately available.

Panaccione said she will provide all the information to the town via a flash drive.

There will be another Dirt Roads project, 2.0, for the next two years and she is working with a newly formed organization for all of Western Mass. This is the Western Massachusetts Unpaved Road Climate Resiliency Project, a co-

alition with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the Franklin County Regional Council of Governments to establish best practices and update the 2001 Dirt Roads policy manual.

Mass Works grant

Waldron updated the board on the Mass Works grant application and asked for letters of support from both Szlosek and the Select Board. The bucket truck is being repaired, but will be useable soon for putting up American Flags along Main Street. A report has been filed with insurance reports on the fire hydrant that "fell over" according to Waldron. The ash trees on Chester Road will be removed as well as Herrick Road.

ADA report

Linda Barnard representing the Americans with Disabilities Act committee as well as the Historical Commission. The ADA report included Watson Park access, and wanted to install a ramp at the Gazebo and a path to get there.

Three separate ADA grants provide funding for specific items but the funds, according to Szlosek, can not be applied to a park project. He will contact local contractors for an estimate and see what is available. Barnard also asked that the Historical Commission and the Historical Society be involved in the project.

Bicentennial Park

Board member Jeff Allen asked for and received permission to make repairs to the retaining wall at Bicentennial Park

that faces his property. Annual plants will be put in around the edges at the discretion of the group providing the work. Allen expressed thanks to Project 351 group who planted annuals under the tree in the center of the park.

ATM warrant

Szlosek asked that the board open the warrant for accepting articles for the Annual Town Meeting. He is expecting additional budget items, and mentioned the cost for students going to technical schools.

He presented sprinkler repair costs for both repairing a drip on the mail pump for \$5,660 and controls for the primary pump, \$15,000, for a total cost of approximately \$21,000. A five-year certification for the water tank is also coming up, but Szlosek and Allen would like to wait until the sprinkler system is repaired.

Allen proposed getting a cost estimate for a new pump. The current pump is an "obsolete" piece of equipment. "I'd like to have options," said Allen.

Building Committee

The Building Committee, according to Allen, is looking at only a fire station. Both Blandford and Tolland have lost their fire stations to fire, and Allen would like to eliminate a sprinkler system. This would be permitted with a new structure or 7,000 square feet. The committee opted for a steel building possibly located at the highway area on Chester Road.

The next step will be review of a design. Allen said he hoped to have

something for the Annual Town Meeting.

Szlosek said the tax impact would be about \$.10 on the tax rate for every \$26,000 spent at town meeting. Currently there is a big loan which will be paid off so if there is borrowing for a new building will have little impact.

Other business

On another topic, Allen would like to see water customers separated from other residents for specific votes on funds. "I don't know how" he said, but believes it can be done.

Szlosek said he had been to a meeting of the Hilltown Ambulance and noted that the towns contribution would be \$50 up from \$35 per resident. He also said the HCAA would like to "be on more solid financial ground," with an increase.

Letendre said, "We know this is a major concern."

The increase may change if other towns do not support the request for additional funding. According to John Carrington, the town's representative to the HCAA, there is another meeting coming up to discuss funding.

Nothing new on union negotiations according to Szlosek.

The board reviewed department expenses. Discussion on the use of the old town hall included a question about relocating the Post Office to the Town Hall.

The town has been offered a wooden Jungle Gym and Letendre asked if there could be photos available so the board can see the unit and consider locations.

GOSHEN

Goshen Council on Aging announce monthly events

GOSHEN – The monthly local lunch will be at the Town Hall on Tuesday, May 14 at noon.

The back up location plan is Tilton Town Field pavilion. Jerry from Spruce Corner will be treating seniors to a choice of stuffed shells or seasoned chicken thighs, with roasted potatoes, green beans, tossed salad and rolls. A delicious dessert will be created by Peggy Hewes. Seniors should call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 by Tuesday, May 7 with your choice of meal. A suggested \$5 donation is appreciated.

The COA is hosting a trip to the Worcester Red Sox on Wednesday, May 15 for the 11:15 a.m. game, the seats will be under cover along the first baseline. The Council on Aging will have transportation leaving the town parking lot at 9 a.m. and returning at approximately at 4 p.m. The COA will cover the cost of the game and transportation, but lunch at the ball park will be the participants cost. People should contact Kerry ASAP at 413-268-9354 and no later than Tuesday, May 7 to reserve a spot. This will be a great day!

The windows of the beautiful town hall have been removed for restoration. The process of re-installing these windows will be happening on various days through May. The COA hopes this will not interfere with any of their events, but they have some back up plans just in case.

Newsletter update

For the last several years the COA have had grant funding for creating, printing and mailing the beloved COA newsletter to residents. This funding has

ended and despite best efforts, the COA was unable to secure further money for the printing and mailing of the newsletter.

The good news is that they will continue to create the monthly letter, but it will only be available online or via email. Seniors should emailing the newsletter designer, Kristen Estelle at regionalcoanews@gmail.com so they can be added to the email list.

If people do not have access to a computer, they may call Kerry 413-268-9354 to come up with a solution together. The goal is to be sure all remain informed of upcoming events and important news. This transition will take place in July.

Crafts Group meets Wednesday, May 1 in the upstairs Dining Room or the Library at the Goshen Town Hall from 1-3 p.m. Participants may bring whatever craft or needlework project they are working on. The group has some very talented people, who are willing to answer questions and give helpful advice and tips.

Community Connections Group meets on Friday, May 3 from 10-11 a.m. on the first floor of the Town Hall. This month will be sound healer, Jennifer O'Connell. Sound healing is an ancient wellness practice which involves listening to and feeling the sounds and vibrations from chimes and crystal bowls. It is a relaxing and rejuvenating experience. This time, time there will be cots and yoga mats available for those who wish to lie down.

On May 7, 14, 21, and 28 Goshen's own Richard Larson is back to teach the Tuesday Tai Chi classes combining the

eight ways of Tai Chi Chuan and extending these to the expressive freedom of more general movement, which will enhance peace of mind, balance and the body's ease of movement. Richard studied at the NY school of Tai Chi Chuan and currently practices at the Long River Tai Chi Circle. He also has been a mover and dancer for many years and enjoys sharing the gift of moving with others. Classes will be held at the Goshen Town Hall from 9-10 a.m., back up location at Tilton Town Field Pavilion.

Joan Griswold teaches a great exercise class in person on Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. in the Goshen Town Hall. She also puts this and other classes on Zoom on the other days of the week. People may email Joan with questions and/or for the zoom links at joan@byb-health.com.

Through the TechConnect Grant, the COA welcomes Tech Hub of Western Mass to Goshen on Friday, May 10 in the upstairs dining room of the Goshen Town Hall. Back up location plan is back room of Town Offices. Tech Hub is a non-profit organization committed to bridging the digital divide in the community. From 9-10 a.m., representatives will teach a class on all the Basics of Email. Participants should bring their own device if they have one, but there will also be computers set up if they do not. From 10 a.m.-noon there will be drop-in hours for any type of assistance they may need with their phone, tablet or computer. Seniors come to learn and come to get your questions answered.

The May 15 Games Group is canceled this month because of the Baseball Game trip.

Tuesdays, May 21 and 28 the Highland Valley Elder Services lunch is on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month with pick up from the Goshen Town Hall from noon-12:30. p.m. The meal choices on May 21 are chicken salad or tuna salad, and on May 28 the meal choices are Sloppy Joes or broccoli and cheese chicken. The meals also include milk, vegetables and a dessert. If seniors have not signed up and would like to for June, they should call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$3 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.

Scam alert

Goshen Chief of Police Fred Bezio has alerted the COA that several local older adults have been targets of "grandparent scams" in which scammers pose as grandchildren in trouble or their lawyers and demand money to be sent by wire, mail or couriers. The FBI offers these tips: limit personal information posted to social media, hang up on suspicious calls from someone claiming to be a family member and calling that person directly, and never share financial information over the phone. Chief Bezio is available to help investigate potential scams by calling 413-268-3116.

Car Fit event coming on Wednesday, July 24, the COA will partner with Springfield College Occupational Therapy program to aid older adults in adjusting their car features to make the fit safer and more comfortable for the driver. This is a national program created by AARP, AAA and AOTA.

BLANDFORD

MAILBOXES

from page 1

ent kinds of mailboxes and there must be more out there yet to be discovered. Surprisingly enough, there are very specific rules and regulations that apply to curbside mailboxes. The Postal Operations Manual not only defines the size and shape, but also the location, the kind of support to hold it up, and many regulations come through the Federal Highway Administration.

Some of the more significant regulations include information about delivery to curbside boxes, which can only be made with prior approval of the Postal Service as long as they can be "efficiently, safely and conveniently served by the carrier" from their vehicle, as well



This is a unique mailbox stylized into a caterpillar in Blandford.

as "reasonable and safe access" by the customer. The Postal Service says that the mailboxes "must be grouped two to a property line where possible."

And the individually stylized boxes must also be approved by the local postmaster, on a case-by-case basis and only for personal (residential) use, not for "boxes produced as a commercial enterprise."

If you put your house number on your mailbox, it has to be in a "contrasting color in neat letters and numerals not less than one inch high on the side of the box visible to the carrier's regular approach." If boxes are grouped, house numbers can be on the front flap. Any advertising on the box or its support is prohibited.

While the postal service does not in itself regulate what can be used to support a mailbox, the FHWA does to some degree.

Any support that is no larger than four by four inches or a two-inch diam-



This box is fixed in place and sure to withstand the snow piles along the road.

eter standard steel or aluminum pipe, buried no more than 24 inches, should safely break away if struck by a vehicle. The box also has to be secured to the post so it doesn't come off if hit. Note that the support post size is not stipulated, but does indicate some support designs can be potentially dangerous. The postal service leaves the support construction to the customers in that they are responsible for posts that are "neat and adequate in strength and size" and it is possible to attach their box to either a fixed or moveable arm.

The postal service manual stipulates that "curbside mailboxes must be placed so that they may be safely and

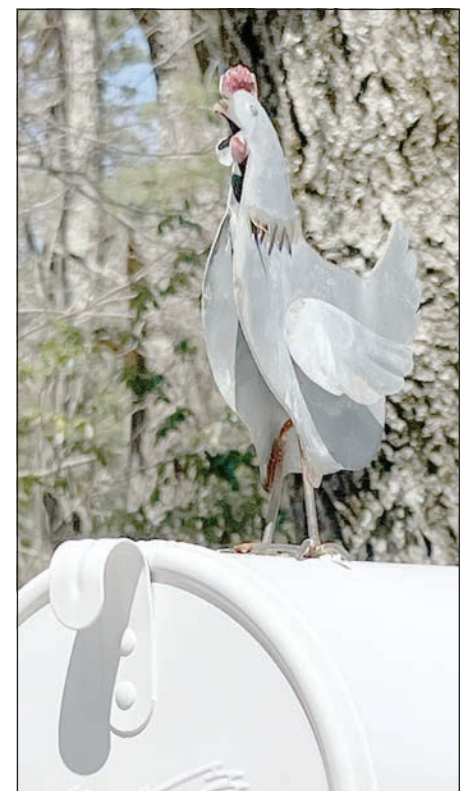


This is a standard mailbox painted green.
Turley Photos by Mary Kronholm

conveniently served by carriers without leaving their conveyances. They must be reasonably and safely accessed by customers. Boxes must also be on the right-hand side of the road and in the carrier's direction of travel in all cases where driving on the left-hand side of the road to reach the boxes would pose a traffic hazard or violate traffic laws and regulations."

The regulations do not stop there; height, distance from the curb or road edge to the mail box door are also noted. And if a receptacle is to be replaced the customer is obligated to contact the postmaster and/or the carrier about any changes.

Next time you head out, take a look at those curbside installations.



This rooster sits atop a mailbox.

LENNOX

MassDOT announces temporary lane closures on Rt. 7 northbound

LENNOX – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces it will be implementing temporary lane closures on Route 7 northbound in Lenox.

The low speed lane will be closed between mile marker 26 to mile marker 27 now and continues Monday through Friday until Friday, May 17 from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Drivers traveling through the affected areas should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. Appropriate signage, law enforcement details and advanced message boards will be in place to guide drivers through the work area. All scheduled

work is weather dependent and/or may be impacted due to an emergency situation.

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

GREAT BARRINGTON

FCC to perform 'The Magnificat'

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Saturday, May 11 at 4 p.m., at the First Congregational Church, 251 Main St., internationally known choral conductor James Bagwell leads professional soloists, chorus and Baroque orchestra in a major choral event: two settings of Magnificat by father and son, J.S. and

C.P.E. Bach.

The Magnificat, also known as the Song of Mary, is one of the oldest hymns in the Christian tradition and the source of inspiration for hundreds of composers over the centuries. The Bach works are among the most beloved.

HAYDENVILLE

Suicide prevention program on Sunday

HAYDENVILLE – The Haydenville Congregational Church is co-sponsoring a program on suicide prevention Sunday, April 28 from noon-1:30 p.m. at the Bombyx Center, 130 Pine St., Florence.

"Talk Saves Lives: A Brief Introduction to Suicide Prevention" is sponsored by the church in conjunction with the American Society for Suicide Prevention and the Bombyx Center for Arts and Equity. The focus of the program is that suicide can be prevented. This presentation will cover what we

know about this leading cause of death, the most up-to-date research on prevention and what we can all do to fight suicide, according to organizers.

Participants will learn the common risk factors for suicide, how to spot the warning signs in others and how to keep ourselves, our loved ones and those in our community safe.

The program is free. Registration is encouraged but not required. Beverages and desserts will be available after the presentation. To register, people may visit the Bombyx Facebook page.

WORTHINGTON

Library hosts pastel painting

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Library, 1 Huntington Road, will host "Seascapes: How to Pastel Paint," inspired by Winslow Homer, with materials, for adults and teens.

Award-winning pastel artist Gregory John Maichack will present "Seascapes," a pastel painting workshop for adults and teens 18 plus hosted by the Worthington Library on Saturday, May 4 from 2-4 p.m. This is a pastel painting workshop designed for both sheer beginners to advanced participants. People may call 413-238-5565 or come to the library to pre-register.

This all-new "Seascapes: How to Pastel Paint," is inspired by Winslow Homer's painting "Summer Squall" and "West Point, Prout's Neck." Participants will create the wave effect of spray, embedding pigment particles into the painting. This is fun, and has an ocean of possibilities, having instruction in expressive pastel strokes, blending, slurring, and layering. All participants keep their 12 X 18 pastel painting of their personalized vivid seascape and waves. Photo references of waves are supplied for ideas allowing unfathomable possibilities. Maichack's own pastel painted work will unveil the process.

All will be entertained by lively anecdotes on Winslow Homer.

Maichack, is an award-winning artist, twice Mass. Cultural Council Gold Star Award Program nominee, a seasoned pro from instructing at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, colleges, to 100's of libraries. Maichack lives in the Berkshires and is a portraitist and painter working primarily in pastels. Maichack was commissioned by Westfield State College to paint the pastel portrait of the past president of Westfield State University, Doctor Frederick Woodward, which was unveiled at the dedication of the Woodward Center and pastel painted dictionary great Charles Merriam, unveiled by Merriam-Webster Co. at Merriam-Gilbert Library. He has been in many national juried shows and was awarded numerous Massachusetts Cultural Council grants. In addition to portraiture, his still lifes and landscapes are represented by galleries from Kennebunkport, Maine to San Francisco, California. People may visit his web site at www.GregoryMaichack.com.

This project is supported in part from a grant from the Worthington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

CUMMINGTON

Friday Night Cafe happens April 26

CUMMINGTON – Singer songwriter guitarist Laura Wetzler will perform hilltown originals, music from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas plus folk, boomer and great American songbook classics on Friday, April 26 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church in downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District.

The event is free, donations are appreciated. Snacks are provided; Bring your Own drinks. The show will take place in the intimate Vestry space. Masks are welcome and encouraged. Once again, the Friday Night Cafe is

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

Friday Night Cafe receives promotional support from the Cummington Cultural District, and is supported in part by grants from the Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor, and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. People may visit <https://laurawetzler.com> for more information on Wetzler.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Town of Huntington Conservation Commission Public Hearing

The Huntington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on May 15, 2024 at 8:00 pm in Stanton Hall to review a Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by Hull Forestlands, LP. The proposed activity is for an earth removal facility and associated excavation 61 Goss Hill Rd; 0 Goss Hill Rd & 0 Worthington Road. This hearing is in accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 131 Section 40 of the Wetlands Protection Act. 04/25/2024

Goshen Conservation Commission Legal Notice

The Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting under the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40) on **May 6, 2024, at 6:30 PM** at the Goshen Town Offices to review a Request for Determination filed by Lorraine Brisson for 115 West Street, Goshen, MA 01032. The work to be reviewed is the construction of a metal carport. 04/25/2024

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. HD24P0890EA Estate of: Ellen Marie Noble Date of Death: 02/12/2024 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by John W. Noble, Sr. of Chester, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **John W. Noble, Sr. of Chester, 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 05/20/2024. 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: April 22, 2024

Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate 04/25/2024

DEPARTEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WETLANDS PROGRAM 401 Water Quality Certification Application Public Notice

Pursuant to 33.U.S.C.1341 and MGL c21 §43, notice is hereby given of a 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) application for the Borden Brook Reservoir Culvert Replacement Project in Blandford by the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC), 1515 Granville Road, Westfield, MA, 01085 on property owned by SWSC. The project involves the replacement of an existing culvert. Additional information may be obtained from the applicant's agent – Tighe & Bond, Inc. c/o Melissa Coady, 53 Southampton Road, Westfield, MA 01085 (413-562-1600).

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

David Wong
(David.W.Wong@mass.gov)
Department of Environmental Protection Wetlands Program
100 Cambridge Street,
Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 874-7155

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

Any group of ten persons of the Commonwealth, any aggrieved person, or any government body or private organization with a mandate to protect the environment that has submitted written comments may also appeal the Department's Certification and that failure to submit comments before the end of public comment period may result in the waiver of any right to an adjudicatory hearing. 04/25/2024

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, May 14, 2024 beginning at 6:00 pm** in Stanton Hall. The Public Hearing is for the Special Permit Application of Hull Forestlands, LP c/o William B. Hull for an Earth Removal Operation at 61 Goss Hill Road (Parcel # 324-

32-A), 0 Goss Hill Road (Parcel # 326-26-0) & 0 Worthington Road (Parcel # 326-24-0).

A copy of the application will be available for review (by appointment) in the office of the Board of Selectmen in Town Hall between April 22 and May 9, 2024.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS TOWN OF HUNTINGTON 04/25, 05/02/2024

Town of Huntington Conservation Commission Public Hearing

The Huntington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **May 15, 2024 at 7:15 pm** in Stanton Hall to review a Notice of Intent submitted by Mark and Cheryl Wilkinson of 6 Cullen Hill Road. The proposed project consists of agricultural land management within the westerly riverfront area of Pond Brook and the establishment of a small clearing and installation of a historical marker within the easterly riverfront area. This hearing is in accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 131 Section 40 of the Wetlands Protection Act. 04/25/2024

MIDDLEFIELD

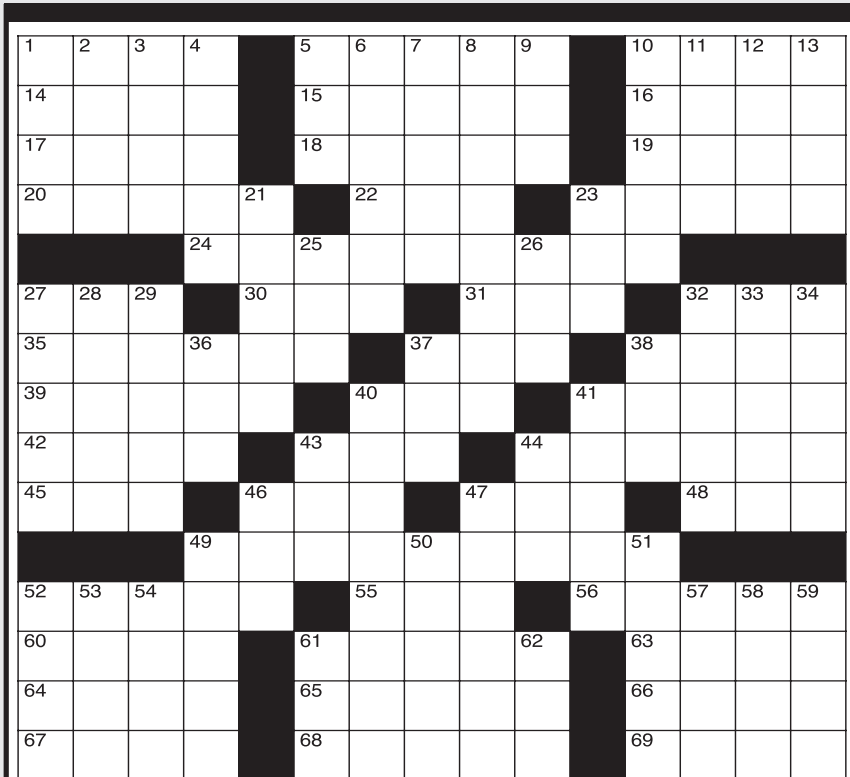
Election and ATM set for May 4

MIDDLEFIELD – The Annual Town Election will take place Saturday May 4 from 8 a.m. -noon in the Middlefield Town Hall, 188 Skyline Trail. Middlefield's Annual Town Meeting will take place on Saturday, May 4 at 1:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Submissions are always welcome.

Send us your engagement, wedding, baby, anniversary and graduation news and photos.

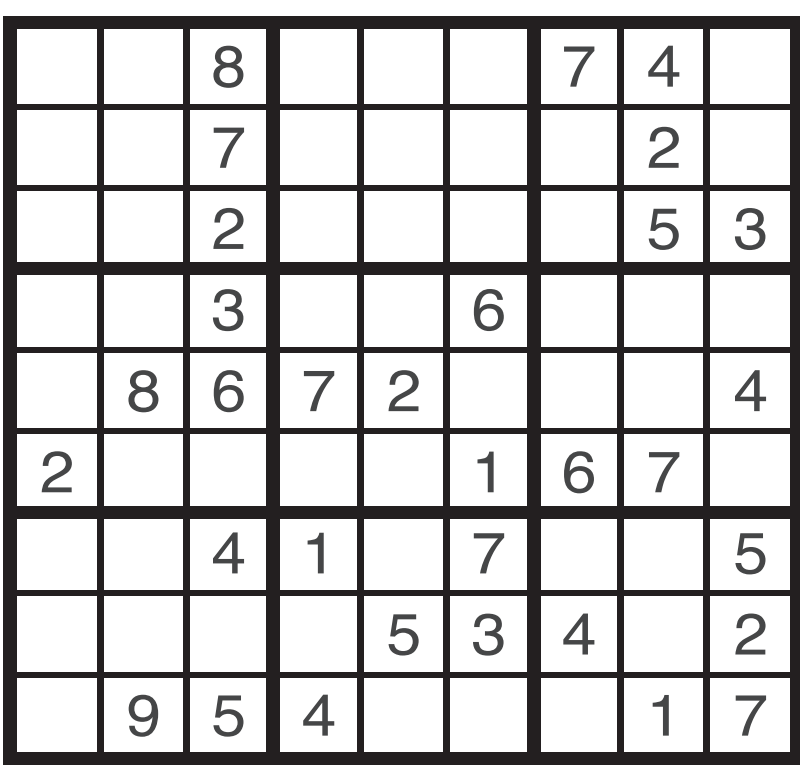
Country Journal
24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069
email: countryjournal@turley.com



- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| CLUES ACROSS | 41. Slang for sergeant | CLUES DOWN | 33. Hot fluid below the earth's surface |
| 1. Excessively theatrical actors | 42. Canadian flyers | 1. "Mad Men" leading man | 34. Partner to trick |
| 5. Footwear | 43. Actress Ryan | 2. Water (Spanish) | 36. British Air Aces |
| 10. A way to disfigure | 44. Highly unpleasant vapor | 3. Annoy | 37. Ammunition |
| 14. Exchange rate | 45. Body part | 4. Bulgarian capital | 38. Supervises flying |
| 15. Hawaiian wreaths | 46. Halfway | 5. Japanese title | 40. Health care for the aged |
| 16. North-central Indian city | 47. Cool! | 6. Capital of Zimbabwe | 41. Flanks |
| 17. Bungle | 48. Consume | 7. Giraffe | 43. Millimeters |
| 18. Extremely angry | 49. Salts | 8. A mixture of substances | 44. Where wrestlers perform |
| 19. A short note of what's owed | 52. Upper bract of a floret of grass | 9. Midway between south and southeast | 46. Not around |
| 20. Criminal organization | 55. Housepet | 10. Staffs | 47. Flightless bird |
| 22. Mimic | 56. Cavalry-sword | 11. Turkish title | 49. Bell-shaped flowers of the lily family |
| 23. Try to grab | 60. Symbol of a nation | 12. Type of acid | 50. Expressed concern for |
| 24. U.S.-born individuals | 61. Frocks | 13. Thin, flat strip of wood | 51. Satisfies |
| 27. Some are covert | 63. Used to carry food | 21. Russian river | 52. Flew off! |
| 30. Order of the British Empire | 64. Portuguese folk song | 23. Ribonucleic acid | 53. Wings |
| 31. Don't know when yet | 65. Sharp mountain ridge | 25. Partner to flow | 54. Load a ship |
| 32. Payment (abbr.) | 66. Ireland | 26. Airborne (abbr.) | 57. Vigor |
| 35. Winged angelic being | 67. Where golfers begin | 27. Earthy pigment | 58. British title |
| 37. Variety of Chinese | 68. Greek mythological sorceress | 28. Genus of earless seals | 59. Whiskeys |
| 38. A way to be anxious | 69. Fluid suspensions | 29. "Key to the Highway" bluesman | 61. ___ Adams: founding father |
| 39. Famed wrestler Hulk | | 32. By or in itself | 62. Body of water |
| 40. Partner to cheese | | | |

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

- ARIES**
Mar 21/Apr 20
You can get your spark back with some help from friends, Aries. You may have been struggling in one form or another, but others can provide the perspective needed.
- CANCER**
Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, like it or not, you have to stand by a promise or a commitment you made to someone, even if you no longer feel like doing so. Once it is finished, you can go your separate ways.
- LIBRA**
Sept 23/Oct 23
Making room for your needs right now is challenging as others seem to require all of the attention, Libra. You will have a chance to balance the scales soon enough.
- CAPRICORN**
Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, you are ready to move forward, but others in your orbit may be holding you back. Know when to cut loose and do things according to your bigger vision.
- TAURUS**
Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, you are a dependable rock and that comes with a lot of responsibility. Sometimes you may feel overwhelmed, and in those instances feel free to delegate some tasks.
- LEO**
Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, if others have underestimated you or written you off in the past, you will have an opportunity to prove them wrong this week, even if you already know the truth.
- SCORPIO**
Oct 24/Nov 22
Right now you may be reluctant to commit or comment on an issue that is affecting some in your circle, Scorpio. You can get involved once you dig further and do your own research.
- AQUARIUS**
Jan 21/Feb 18
Thinking about all of the things in your life that may not be going to plan could have you feeling down, Aquarius. Flip the perspective and start focusing on the right things.
- GEMINI**
May 22/Jun 21
Too much joking around may strike a nerve of someone close to you, Gemini. Feel out every situation before you start communicating in such a laid back and jovial way.
- VIRGO**
Aug 24/Sept 22
Your keen eye for detail has you pointing out a mistake that may have cost someone a lot of money. Your reward could be a promotion or another commendation.
- SAGITTARIUS**
Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, when you hang out with friends, you may be tempted to spend more than is in your budget at the moment. Set a limit, and perhaps leave your credit cards at home.
- PISCES**
Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, you are known for being a dreamer, but right now you have to come down from the clouds and develop a solid plan of action. There will be time for fanciful ideas later.



SUDOKU

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

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answers

S	L	O	S	V	E	D	E	M	S	E	E	T
E	R	I	E	T	E	R	V	O	D	V	F	L
A	V	R	T	S	I	R	V	S	G	V	L	F
R	E	R	S	E	T	C	I	V	A	L	E	P
S	E	T	A	V	C	I	L	I	S			
T	V	E	D	R	A	D	I	M	R	E		
V	W	S	V	I	M	G	E	M	F	E	C	O
E	G	V	S	C	O	V	M	N	V	O	H	
R	V	E	F	N	I	W	B	N	E	H	C	O
T	M	P	C	B	T	E	B	G	S	P	O	
H	C	V	E	R	I	M	V	A	F	V	M	
T	I	H	C	E	T	V	R	I	F	U	M	
V	R	G	V	S	N	K	V	H	O	I	G	V
L	U	L	M	A	V	S	O	S	H	S	A	V

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

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REGION

Baystate Health names Peter D. Banko President and CEO

SPRINGFIELD – The Baystate Health Board of Trustees announces it appointed Peter D. Banko as Baystate Health’s new President and Chief Executive Officer.

He succeeds Dr. Mark Keroack, who previously announced his plans to retire after serving as the system’s leader for 10 years. A transformational executive experienced in leading multi-faceted health systems in markets throughout the country, Banko was chosen after an extensive national search by the Board of Trustees. Banko will officially join Baystate Health the beginning of June 2024.

Banko most recently served as president and CEO of Centura Health, in Centennial, Colorado, which was a part of the national system CommonSpirit Health. The \$3.8 billion hospital and health services system comprised more than 20 owned and affiliated tertiary and rural hospitals, an extensive network of physician partners and numerous community-based services and clinics across Colorado, Kansas and Utah.

“Among a slate of high-qualified candidates, Peter stood out for both his commitment to our community-based healthcare mission and decades of experience leading complex health systems in diverse and competitive markets. He offers a proven track record of strengthening programs and services, growing revenue and market share, improving operations and operating discipline, and serving as a workforce champion,” said Harriet A. DeVerly, chair, Baystate Health Board of Trustees. “We look forward to him joining the organization.”

“Baystate Health has a stellar reputation around the country and I greatly appreciate the immense responsibility that comes with joining such a truly mission and values-driven team,” said Banko. “I am beyond excited to embark on an exciting new era of healthy growth with my fellow 13,000 caregivers – in care for our patients, in com-



Peter D. Banko

munity, in business, and in spirit. The possibilities for us together are endless in redefining health and health care in western Massachusetts and beyond.”

Banko, a native of New Jersey, started his calling in healthcare as a junior volunteer and has served in CEO-level roles for several decades. He has an industry reputation of leading innovation, transformation, integration, and partnerships with hospitals, physician groups, and health plans. He earned his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of Notre Dame and his Master of Health Administration degree from the Sloan Program in Health Services Administration at Cornell University.

In his role, Keroack was a leading voice during the COVID-19 pandemic for the region, offering public-health information and partnering with pub-

lic-health officials to address the crisis. A native of Springfield, he joined Baystate Health in 2011 as chief physician executive and president of Baystate Medical Practices and was appointed to the CEO role in 2014. He has had a long career in both medicine and health administration, serving in leadership roles at UMass Memorial Medical Group and the University HealthSystem Consortium

“We are immensely grateful for the contributions of Dr. Mark Keroack as an exceptional leader and clinician who has successfully led the organization for the last 10 years with a deep commitment to Baystate Health and to our community,” said Colleen W. Holmes, vice chair, Baystate Health Board of Trustees. “We congratulate him on his upcoming retirement.”

Baystate Health is a not-for-profit, integrated healthcare system serving over 800,000 people throughout western New England. Baystate Health is the largest healthcare organization in western Massachusetts.

Gas prices increase 19 cents

After the switchover to summer blend fuel last week, Northeast gas prices have surged by double digits.

But softening gasoline demand, falling oil prices and growing oil and gas inventories could stave off even more rapid price increases, for the time being.

The average gas price in Massachusetts is up 19 cents over last week (\$3.37), averaging \$3.56 per gallon. Today’s price is 27 cents higher than a month ago (\$3.29) and eight cents higher than April 22, 2023 (\$3.48). Massachusetts’s average gas price is 11 cents lower than the national average.

“Drivers might be seeing red at the gas pump this week, but there are signs that the pace of price increases could ease,” said Mark Schieldrop, Senior Spokesperson for AAA Northeast. “It’s not unusual to see a lull in demand between the end of spring breaks and Memorial Day. Regional gasoline inventories are ahead of last year’s levels – and growing. And oil prices, which had been climbing since the start of the year, fell sharply last week after markets digested the latest developments in the Middle East and lackluster demand figures from

China, the world’s largest oil importer.”

AAA Northeast’s April 22 survey of fuel prices found the current national average to be up four cents from last week (\$3.63), averaging \$3.67 a gallon. Today’s national average price is 14 cents higher than a month ago (\$3.53) and was the same price on this day last year (\$3.67).

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.



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Detailed job description can be found here:

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and on the Town’s website: www.worthington-ma.us.

Please mail your letter of interest, resume and references for all related positions held in the past five years to:

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Crossing this mountain starts with a 700 foot elevation climb which is moderate, taking you up to

the favorite vistas at the boulders giving the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers west, south and east bound views. Once across the ridge the trail drops into the Shatterack Brook Valley with its mountain waterfalls, seven mile loop coming back through Hull Lumber. Maps are available by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com.



Cybil and Betty, expert hiking dogs, enjoy the rocky ledge. Submitted photos



Hilltown Hikers head down the trail during a hike on Unkamit's Path.



Hilltown Hikers and their canine companions enjoy the view overlooking Russell.



Mary and Betty look west toward Huntington.



Stephanie is seen on the rocky ledges

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