

# Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

Ashfield, Becket, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Dalton, Easthampton, Florence, Goshen, Granville, Hawley, Haydenville, Hinsdale, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Peru, Plainfield, Russell, Southampton, Washington, Westfield, Westhampton, Windsor, Williamsburg, Worthington

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## CHESTER

### Chester on Track set for May 16

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

This year marks the 35th Annual Chester on Track, which will be held rain or shine on Saturday, May 16 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Events will be held all over the downtown area including at the Chester Railway Museum, a National Historic Landmark, on Prospect Street and on Emery Field. Parking is available at the old elementary school, at the Railway Station, on River Front Drive and along Emery Street. Organizer David Pierce said they might also have parking spaces on Emery Field.

New this year is a van for shuttle service between the various venues and exhibits throughout the day. Craig Boyer, former CONRAIL Maintenance of Way worker, is the parade marshal this year. The parade kicks off at 10 a.m. and will run down Main Street in Chester.

A craft show returns to Main Street next to the Riverside Inn. There's still time to claim a 12' x17' space, but the registration form and non-refundable registration fee of \$30 must be received by Sunday, May 10. The vendor form is on the Chester on Track Facebook page.

Several food options will be available. The Blue Caboose at the Chester Railway Station/Museum on Prospect Street will have hot dogs and grinders for sale. Local Boy Scouts will have

CHESTER ON TRACK, page 8



Wildlife rehabilitator, Tom Ricardi, holds a vulture.  
Photo by Elizabeth Massa



Tom Ricardi holds a barred owl.  
Submitted photo

### Birds of prey program is a hoooooooot

CHESTER – Hamilton Memorial Library recently held a Birds of Prey event with wildlife rehabilitator, Tom Ricardi.

The event was held at the Chester town hall and was very successful with 116 people attending.



Children intently listen to Tom Ricardi, a wildlife rehabilitator who brought several birds of prey to a library program.  
Submitted photo



Pastor Tom Crouse and his wife, Gina

Submitted photo

## BLANDFORD

### FCC has new pastor

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Pastor Tom Crouse began his service with the First Congregational Church of Blandford on Sunday, May 3.

He and his wife, Gina, will be in residence at the parsonage, next door to the church by the end of May.

Pastor Crouse served in the ministry for over 30 years with a passion for preaching the Gospel, strengthening the local church and developing leaders.

PASTOR, page 6

## BLANDFORD

### Board hear projects for Bicentennial Park

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

George Reichert brought the Select Board up to date on ongoing work at Bicentennial Park.

There is a volunteer program involving members of the community, who have taken on garden care at the Main Street Park. There is money to be spent by July 1 and assessing the needs of the park.

The wall on the right-hand side deteriorated and needed to be replaced probably in the fall. Reichert said this required funds.

There are several flat stones that fell or removed and needed to be replaced.

He asked how much money was available for supplies and projects and access to the basement of the old Town Hall for supplies. According to Chair Jackie Coury there was \$8,901 available to spend, and would like him to come back to the board with costs.

#### Memorial bench

Mark Boomsma approached the board as a member of the Volunteer Fire Department, proposing a memorial bench for Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Ackley with plantings. He suggested the rear of Watson Park, and board member Ted Cousineau suggested a place close-

er to the front of the park, "Where the flagpole is, so people can see it," he said. He also asked Boomsma to include talking to the Historical Commission about such a bench.

#### Senior tax write off

The Council on Aging Senior Tax Write-off is organized and set to go according to COA Director Margit Mikuski and Assessor Michaela Smith. Coury asked if it would be possible to get it off the ground July 1.

The Finance Committee has budgeted \$15,000 for this purpose. The program is open to res-

BOARD, page 7



|                         |      |                  |    |                  |      |                      |   |
|-------------------------|------|------------------|----|------------------|------|----------------------|---|
| Blandford.....          | 6, 7 | Cummington.....  | 2  | Opinion.....     | 4, 5 | Schools & Youth..... | 9 |
| Business Directory..... | 3    | Monterey.....    | 9  | Otis.....        | 2    | Westfield.....       | 7 |
| Chester.....            | 8    | Northampton..... | 7  | Plainfield.....  | 2    | Williamsburg.....    | 9 |
| Classifieds.....        | 10   | Obituary.....    | 11 | Puzzle Page..... | 11   | Worthington.....     | 9 |



## OTIS

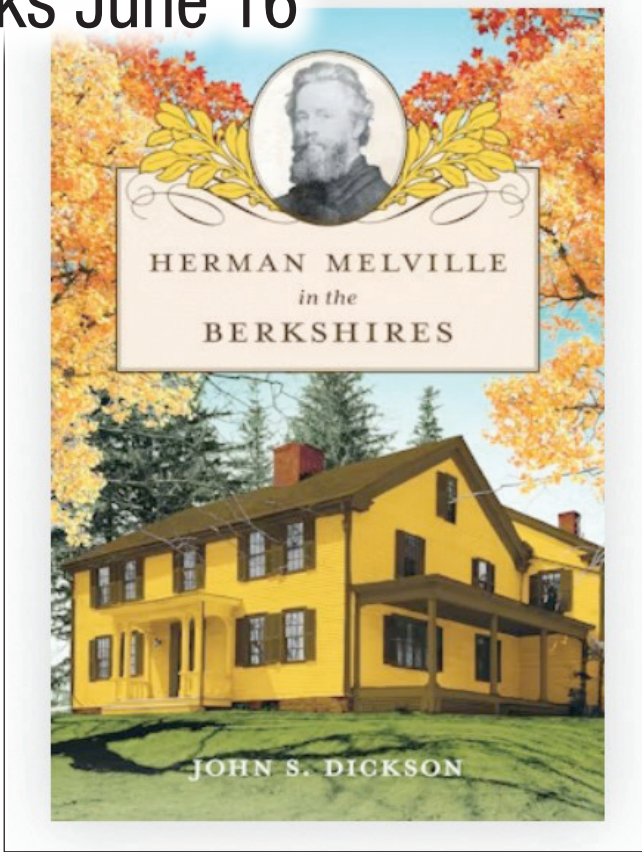
### 'Herman Melville in the Berkshires' author speaks June 16

OTIS – The Otis Historical Commission and Otis Preservation Trust in coordination with the Otis Library present local author John Dickson discussing his newest book “Herman Melville in the Berkshires” on Tuesday, June 16 at 6 p.m. at the town of Otis Library, 48 North Main Road.

Dickson will share his book followed by a question-and-answer session. Admission is free, but registration is required. The author Herman Melville first came to the Berkshires as a young boy and was so inspired by the surroundings that he returned to live here for thirteen years, during one of the most productive writing periods of his life.

He finished his masterpiece, Moby Dick, in his first year, seated in his study with a view of Mt. Greylock. “His first love,” is the way his cousin described his relationship to his adopted home. Here, he wandered on foot and horseback to all corners of the county, tapping into the Berkshires in his art. The places he explored are sprinkled through the pages in his stories. He wrote what he saw; what he saw helped him compose.

For over a decade, John S. Dickson has been a volunteer at Arrowhead, Herman Melville’s home in Pittsfield. He serves on the board of the Berkshire County Historical Society and is chair of the Pittsfield Historic Commission. He moved to the Berkshires following a career in the U.S. Foreign Service. A history graduate of Princeton University and



John Dickson, author of “Herman Melville in the Berkshires” will discuss his book at the Otis Library on Tuesday, June 16 at 6 p.m. Submitted photo

University of Massachusetts, he is the author of “Berkshire County’s Industrial Heritage and History Shock,” “When History Collides with Foreign Affairs.” He is married with three children and five grandchildren.

Otis Preservation Trust works with the Otis Historical Commission to organize and preserve the history and heritage of Otis for future generations by supporting efforts to preserve, restore, repurpose and educate about buildings, monuments, lands and memorabilia of Otis.

OPT is a not-for-profit

(501c3) organization operated for fundraising and educational purposes. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Otis Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Space is limited. To register for this free event, or for more information, people may call 413-269-0109 or stop by the Town of Otis Library. There is no charge to attend this event but pre-registration is required. Donations are welcome.

## HILLTOWNS

### MassDOT lists I-90 roadwork

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announced daytime and nighttime bridge repairs and guard-rail work on I-90 eastbound and westbound in the towns of Lee, Montgomery and Russell.

All work is weather dependent and will take place at the following locations and times: In Lee, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound at mile marker 8.8 now, through Friday, May 8 from 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound

from mile marker 9.8 to mile marker 10.7 nightly beginning now through the morning of Friday, May 8 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m.

In Montgomery and Russell, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 36.0 now through Friday, May 8 from 6 a.m.-2 p.m.

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

weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit [www.mass511.com](http://www.mass511.com) to view live cameras, travel times, real time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions. 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.

## PLAINFIELD

### Historical Society presents Our Old House: Uncovering the Past

PLAINFIELD – Our Old House: Uncovering the Past is a project that explores the histories of thirteen historic homes located within Plainfield’s Historic District.

Together, these houses offer a glimpse into everyday life in Plainfield from the late eighteenth century to the present day. By examining the buildings themselves, along with deeds, maps, photographs, and other historical records, the project reveals how architecture, ownership and community history intertwine to tell the larger story of the town.

The Plainfield Historical Society will present this project in a special muse-

um-like exhibition at the Shaw Memorial Library. The exhibition will feature posters, photographs, slideshows, historic artifacts, and a virtual tour highlighting the homes and the stories uncovered through research. The exhibit will run from Saturday, May 9 to Saturday, June 27.

An opening reception will be held on Saturday, May 9 from 10-11:30 a.m. At 10:30 a.m. Lori Austin will introduce the project and discuss how to research the history of an old house, sharing the methods and sources she used to uncover the stories of the homes featured in the exhibition.

In early June, the Historical Society will host a gathering bringing together many of the homeowners featured in this project to share and discuss the stories of their historic houses. In addition, Austin will lead a Saturday morning demonstration offering practical guidance for those interested in beginning research on their own old homes.

This project is partially funded by the Plainfield Cultural Council and the Plainfield Historical Society. A big thanks to the students at the Smith Vocational Graphics Design Department for the printing and design layout for this project.

## CUMMINGTON

### Lonesome Brothers return to Friday Night Cafe

CUMMINGTON – Lonesome Brothers, “Hick Rock” returns to the Friday Night Cafe on May 8 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church.

Ray, Jim and Keith are regulars at the cafe for quite a few years now and for good reasons. The Lonesome Brothers formed in 1985 and are alt-country/Americana favorites since before the terms Alt-country and Americana were coined.

The Lonesome Brothers are fronted by Ray Mason on bass and Jim Armenti on guitar and backed by former Blood Oranges drummer,

Keith Levreault. Ray and Jim share songwriting and vocal duties and perfect a warm, comfortable and often humorous style that weaves personal insights, experiences and homespun characters and stories into the fabric of their music.

These accomplished musicians share a love of a wide array of music and play with an incredibly varied roster of players who run the gamut from punk rock and avant-jazz to traditional Yiddish and Klezmer music. Really, these guys are incredibly talented and they’re still

having fun after 41 years.

The Village Church is in downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District. The event is free, donations are appreciated, snacks are provided, BYO drinks.

Masks are welcome and encouraged. Once again the folks at the Village Church this concert. They believe music is 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 Ashfield, 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.

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# HUNTINGTON

## Race director offers recap of Westfield River Wildwater race

By Harry Rock  
Race director

**Date:** Saturday, April 18  
**Location:** Huntington and Russell

**River:** East Branch and the West Branch of the Westfield River

**Event:** This is a two race event.

**Expert Race at 9:30 a.m.:** 5 mile race starting at Knightville Dam on the east branch of the Westfield River and ending at the Huntington Rt. 20 pull off across from the Hilltown Community Health Center.

**Classic Race at 11 a.m.:** 8 mile race starting in the center of Huntington on the west branch of the Westfield River next to the MassDOT maintenance yard

and ending in the center of Woronoco Village.

**Official Results Website Link:** <https://www.iresultslive.com/results/?eid=6739&op=reports&racename=ClassicCategoryResults&raw=1>

**Numbers of Boats including Canoes, Kayaks & SUPs**  
**Classic Race:** 50  
**Expert Race:** 22  
**Number of Competitors:** 282 paddlers

**Fastest Times of the Day**  
**Classic Race:** 58:26 Del Cummings & Kevin Chan in OC-2 Male  
**Expert Race:** 32:54 Jeff Parker in K1-Long

States and countries represented were Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine,

Connecticut, New York, Montana, Alaska and Montreal Canada.

This race could not happen without the support, help and partnership with our community partners. Special thanks to Russell Select Board, Russell Police, Russell Fire, Huntington Select Board, Huntington Police, Huntington Fire, Hilltown Community Ambulance, Hilltown Community Health Center, Westfield Police Cadets, MassDOT, Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Police, State Police, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.

This race would not be financially sustainable without the generous support of our sponsors. We are grate-

ful to each and every one of them! Special thanks goes to Westfield Bank as the Lead Sponsor.

There were 60 volunteers giving of their time to help make this annual event go off smoothly with volunteer recruitment & management, treasurer, registration site set up, break down & clean up, registration check in & merchandise sales, starting line timing, finish line timing, in water starters, parking, Strathmore Park coordination, boat transportation, canoe trailer loading & unloading, finish line medical station, emergency command center, emergency command center dispatcher, staging area announcer, staging area lineup team, rescue kayaks, river spotters, sweep

kayak and so many more.

This two race event is totally dependent on the generosity of our many volunteers to cover the myriad of responsibilities that are needed to ensure the entire undertaking is safely run, organized, and fun.

Race Director Harry Rock stated "the 71st running of the Westfield River Wildwater races was a total success. There were no medical emergencies or other issues to have to react to as a result of months of planning and coordination with our community partners and our volunteers. The 288 racers started with a smile on their face, ended with a smile on their face and were filled with adventures, memories and stories to be shared with

their families and friends. This event involved two towns and multiple municipal and state agencies requiring cooperation, coordination, and communication to ensure an effective and organized outcome. We could not be happier and more proud of the relationship we (race organizers) have with our community partners! Thank you to all of the volunteers, sponsors, community partners, supporters, and participants who made this annual event since 1954 so successful and eagerly anticipated by the families and residents of the Huntington and Russell communities." Thank you very much to everyone involved because without you this historic undertaking would not happen.

## Council on Aging announces upcoming May news, events

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Council on Aging host the following events at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road.

Games and goodies take place on Tuesday, May 12 from 1-3 p.m. Seniors play board games and enjoy free snacks. Ed Bentley and Ron Campagna provide great music on May 13 from 2-3 pm.

Blood pressure clinic and Women's Health presentation takes place Wednesday, May 20 from 1-2 p.m. On Wednesday, May 27 at 2 p.m. the movie

"The Titanic" will be shown.

Ongoing events are: chair Yoga Wednesdays from 10-11:15 a.m. (fee is \$5 per class), Thursdays in May "A Course in Miracles" from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., brown bag program pickup every third Friday from 10-11 a.m. and Memory Cafe Wednesday at 2 p.m.

Memory Café include presentations and music events and are open to cafe participants. The weekly café provides seniors with activities while their caregivers participate in a support group. The café is open to

all with and without memory issues.

The café is made possible by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act and by a grant from the Huntington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Memory Cafe events are free and open to residents of any community. Free snacks are provided at all events. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

## Town of Huntington receives \$700,000 DEP grant

BOSTON – The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced more than \$10.3 million in grants awarded to 18 public water suppliers to promote consistent access to clean drinking water for Massachusetts residents.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection selected these projects to help treat and remove contaminants such as Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and manganese. Huntington Water Department in Huntington received a \$700,000 grant. The public water system will use these funds for connection of a household with PFAS contamination to the existing public water system and testing of neighboring private wells.

"Communities are facing growing challenges from emerging contaminants like PFAS and manganese, and they shouldn't have to tackle them alone," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "Through these grants,

and other initiatives like the Mass Ready Act, we're doubling down on our efforts to provide safe, clean drinking water for everyone."

"Small communities across Massachusetts are finding it harder than ever to tackle the myriad issues stretching local budgets," said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. "We're delighted to partner with our cities and towns through this additional funding to support one of the most critical needs: upgrades to aging and inadequate drinking water infrastructure. These projects will both address long-standing challenges and set up these systems to reliably serve residents for decades to come."

This grant program is federally funded; MassDEP collaborates with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to support projects that assist small and disadvantaged communities to address drinking water contaminants, including those identified on EPA's Contaminant

Candidate Lists.

PFAS and manganese are among the list of contaminants that are increasingly impacting water resources. PFAS are a group of harmful man-made chemicals widely used in common consumer products, industrial processes and in certain firefighting foams.

Exposure to sufficiently elevated levels of PFAS compounds can cause a variety of health effects, including developmental effects in infants, impacts to certain organ functions and the immune system and an elevated cancer risk. Manganese is a naturally occurring element that is present in water, soil, air and food.

While a small amount of manganese is necessary for good health, long-term exposure to high levels in drinking water may have adverse impacts to the human nervous system. To learn more about the communities that received these grants, people may visit MassDEP's EC-SDC Grants Map.

## Hydrant flushing occurs May 11-22

HUNTINGTON – The town of Huntington Water Department flush fire hydrants beginning Monday, May 11 through Friday, May 22 between the hours of 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

During the process, water department employees open fire hydrant valves and run water down the street. Although it may appear to waste water, it is an important preventative maintenance activity they undertake to maintain the integrity of the water system and allow them to continue to deliver the highest quality water possible to their customers.

The primary purpose of this program is to verify the proper operation of the towns fire hydrants through periodic inspections, flow

testing and preventative maintenance. Secondly, a proactive hydrant flushing program is the key to mitigating water quality related aesthetic problems by removing accumulated iron and manganese mineral deposits from the water line.

Fire hydrant flushing may cause temporary inconveniences such as a reduction in water pressure and aesthetic issues such as discoloration of the drinking water. Discolored water poses no threat to the public's health, but it will stain laundry and if consumed, it may have an unpleasant taste.

Residents should be certain all discolored water is out of their home's plumbing and hot water heater prior to

laundry clothes or drinking. If they notice discolored water coming from their fixtures, they need to flush the cold water side for approximately five minutes.

Although residents may experience some temporary inconveniences, the flushing program is necessary to maintain a good water supply for both firefighting and domestic purposes. The Water Department appreciate the residents cooperation with this program.

If residents experience continued loss of pressure or water discoloration, they need to contact the town Water

Department by phone at 413-512-5207 or email [WaterandSewer@HuntingtonMA.us](mailto:WaterandSewer@HuntingtonMA.us).

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## GUEST COLUMN



## I want to do everything right when I claim Social Security

Dear Rusty:

I will be 62 in two years. I plan on signing up for SS at age 62, but I have heard there are details that are important when signing up. When it comes time, I want to make sure I do everything right. Can you help me understand?

Signed: Claiming Soon

Dear Claiming Soon:

Deciding when to claim your Social Security benefit is a decision you should make only after careful consideration of your personal circumstances. And details are, indeed, important. For example, if you claim at age 62 (when you first become eligible), your monthly SS benefit will be only 70% of the amount you would get by waiting until age 67 to claim. And there are other considerations as well, including:

If you are still working and claim at 62, you will be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test (AET) which limits how much you can earn from working while collecting early SS benefits. The earnings limit changes each year, and for 2026 it is \$24,480. If the annual limit after you claim early is exceeded, SS will take back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. And, if your work earnings substantially exceed the annual limit, you may even be temporarily ineligible for early SS benefits (until you either stop working full time or reach your SS full retirement age). FYI, the AET lasts until you reach your FRA (age 67).

The benefit reduction for claiming SS early is permanent. After you claim, you will only get increases for Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) which occur annually according to inflation. FYI, the average annual COLA adjustment is about 2.5%.

If you are married, the reduced benefit you get by claiming early will potentially be the basis of your spouse's survivor benefit if you pass first. Surviving spouse benefits are based on the amount you are receiving at your death, thus waiting longer

for a higher personal benefit may also provide your spouse with a larger survivor benefit as your widow.

If you wait longer than age 62, your monthly benefit will continue to increase (by approximately 6% per year) until you reach your FRA, when you get 100% of the amount you are entitled to from a lifetime of working. FYI, you can even wait longer - up to age 70 - to claim an even higher monthly amount (8% more for each year of delay after FRA). At age 70, your SS benefit would be about 75% more than your age 62 benefit amount.

If you haven't already done so, I suggest setting up your personal online "my Social Security" account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount) to see what your SS benefits are estimated to be at various ages. Then, when you are closer to age 62, contact us again to talk about your specific personal circumstances at the time, and we can provide you with everything you need to know about applying for Social Security.

In the end, when claiming your Social Security benefits, you should consider your financial need, your health and life expectancy, your plans for working, and your marital status. We commend you for exploring this well in advance of becoming eligible and we will be here to assist when it is time for you to apply.

*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-advisor](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisor) or email us at [ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*

## OPINION



## GUEST COLUMN

## The Garden Lady takes on spring bulb woes

Debi, who gardens in Hardwick, reached out to the Garden Lady with concerns over her daffodils.

They didn't bloom well this year, and she wonders if they need fertilizer.

"Dear Garden Lady, sorry to bother you in this busy season but our daffodils aren't doing well. I'm guessing they need food. What would you suggest?"

I am happy to answer your question! There are typically four reasons why daffodils don't bloom.

Probably the first mistake gardeners make is removing the foliage too soon after the flowers go by. Foliage needs about six-eight weeks of ripening before it can be removed.

While it is still green, it is photosynthesizing and making energy for next year's flowers.

It can get unsightly as it starts to yellow and finally turn brown and dry up, but we must be patient.

It is ready when it comes off with a gentle tug. Some gardeners get strategic with nearby plants so that the eye moves away from the foliage and to another plant taking the stage in full bloom.

Another reason why daffodils may be stingy with their flowers is that the clumps are overgrown and need to be divided. Wait until the foliage has turned brown, then dig up the bulbs, pry them apart and replant them twice their width from one another and about two to three times their height deep.

I recommend using a pointed shovel, not a trowel. Sometimes they can be down deep and you want to make sure you get the bulb out intact.

Do this while the brown foliage is there so that you can find them. While it may feel "off" to be replanting in

overcrowded.

I sure hope one of these suggestions will help your daffodils regain their former glory!

Rose, who reads the column in the Ware River News, was concerned that a number of her hyacinths were broken off at ground level when just buds, and she wondered what or who could be the culprit.

"This is so disheartening, I don't want to even grow them any more."

I was astounded to hear this, because the same thing happened to me in one of my gardens at Old Sturbridge Village where I have a multi red, white and blue planting of hyacinths and tulips. Grooming last week yielded at least 10 hyacinth buds that looked as if they were but off at ground level.

Although the experts say rodents could be the cause, the cut was almost perfect, not gnawed in any way, plus hyacinths contain natural deterrents making them rodent proof, typically. I did cultivate the bed awhile back, my thought being that I may have cut a few of them off under ground.

As the stems elongated, they could have forced the bud above ground even though it was already dislodged, but the mystery remains. I'm sorry this happened, Rose, and I wish I had a definite answer for you, but at least know you are in good company with your hyacinth woes.

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



by Roberta McQuaid

early summer, it is a perfectly fine time to do it.

Debi's bulbs could also need fertilizer, like she suggested. A sprinkling of granular fertilizer with low nitrogen, but sufficient phosphorus and potassium for blooming and rooting, respectively, would be ideal.

The two best times to feed are when the bulbs are up a few inches and now, just past bloom. Daffodils do require less fertilizer than tulips and hyacinths, and sometimes bloom for years without the addition of fertilizer.

I am wondering if the trees or the ground cover adjacent to Debi's daffodils were fertilized with a high nitrogen blend and it affected the bulbs? I have a few daffodils near an apple tree that is close to my compost pile, where I mix chicken bedding with vegetable scraps, etc.

I think the high nitrogen run-off from the pile affected my blooming, just as an example. Of five possible clumps I had a measly two flowers. Bone meal, high in phosphorus, is in order to rebalance the soil.

Knowing Debi's sun exposure, I don't think this is an issue, but it is worth the mention for other readers who may struggle with sparse blooms. Daffodils won't bloom in deep shade. Dappled sunlight is fine.

Planting under deciduous trees is also fine. If you think shade is the culprit, wait until the foliage ripens and move them using the guidelines I provided for bulbs that are

## Country Journal

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

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.

Mail letter to Country Journal, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or mail your letter to: [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com).

## ELECTION LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Country Journal welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Country Journal, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Friday to be considered for the following Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

### Campaign news

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

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

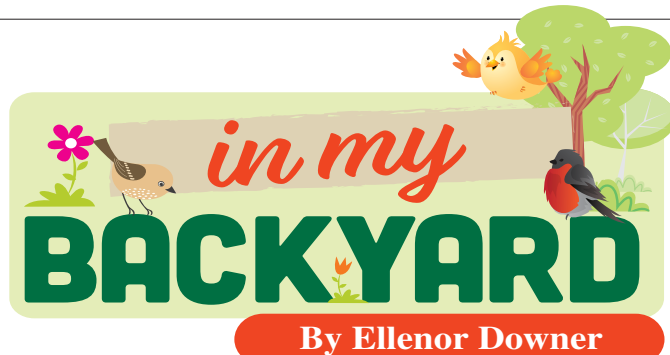
These yellow-rumped warblers, also known as Myrtle warblers, flitted around the edges of Lake Wallace in Belchertown, on April 22.

A Belchertown resident sent an email reporting he saw two yellow-rumped. He attached the two photos. The second photo a rear view of the warbler clearly shows the yellow rump of this aptly named warbler.

These warblers are about the size of black-capped chickadee and have a long bill and narrow tail.

They are gray with yellow on their sides, a small patch on the head and of course, the large patch on the rump. They have white on wings, throat and underneath. They have black and white streaking on the breast. Males have a large black patch around the eye. The female is duller.

In summer, yel-



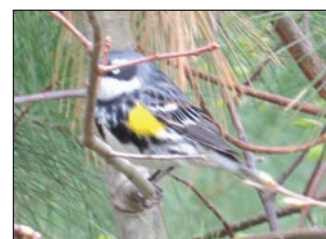
By Ellenor Downer

low-rumped warblers inhabit open coniferous forests and edges and not as often deciduous forests. They primarily feed on insects in the summer. On migration and winter they eat fruit and berries particularly bayberry and wax myrtle. Their song is a series of high-pitched notes often described as "chewy" or "chip-chip."

When males court females, they fluff their feathers, raise their wings and the feathers of the crown and hop from perch to perch, chipping. They may

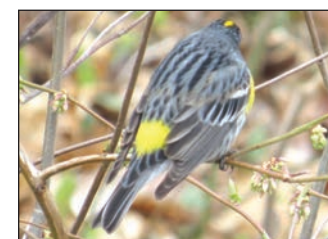
also make display flights in which they glide back and forth or fly slowly with exaggerated wingbeats. The yellow-rumped Warbler's flight is agile and swift and the birds often call as they change direction.

The female builds the nest and sometimes uses material the male brings to her. The nest is a cup of twigs, pine needles, grasses and rootlets. The female also may use moose, horse and deer hair, moss and lichens. The nest takes about ten days to complete. She lays



This photo shows a side view and back view of a yellow-rumped warbler recently seen in Belchertown.

Photos by Doug Moore



a clutch of one to six eggs speckled with brown or reddish gray.

### Bluebirds

A Rutland couple saw two bluebirds in their yard on April 25. They hope they will nest in the yard.

### Great blue heron

I finally saw a great blue heron perched in a tree at the beaver pond, which abuts my hayfield. Every year, one or two are frequent visitors and even nested there.

### Purple martins

A purple martin watcher spotted the first purple

martins in Massachusetts for 2026 in Rehoboth on April 4. The largest species of swallow in North America, they wintered in Brazil and flew 7,000 miles to the United States and Canada.

### Hummingbirds

Soon the ruby-throated hummingbirds will be back. It is time to get out the nectar feeders. Instead of purchasing prepared nectar in powder or liquid form, avoid the harmful dyes and boil a one to four ration of sugar

## OPINION

## HILLTOWN HISTORY

## Barns use Yankee construction

By Deborah Daniels  
Correspondent

Have you driven on Montgomery Road in Montgomery and noticed a barn caving in to time and old age?

It has been living on just mercy for some 30 years. Its gray vertical boards still resist rot, rain, snow, fungi and moss growth since the day it was built. There is a hint of red barn paint on an end board, otherwise it is timber weathered gray.

The barn once used by a large farm, which raised livestock, cattle for beef and kept a smaller herd of cows for dairy purposes. It sits near the top of a hill blending into the trees and bushes that are quickly swallowing it up.

Vertical barn boards were characteristic of early barns. They may have been the easiest to construct. Later barns switched to horizontal boards to reduce the cold winter draft that pierced through the boards. Later still, barns added rooftop ventilators to allow fresh air into large barns and even windows to let in the daylight. Cows prefer a bit of daylight for milk production.

Barns are classified by their roof type such as gable

and gambrel (see the poster). They are also classified by their method of construction such as post and beam, which refers to traditional timber joinery or as a pole barn which are barns easier to construct and more in use today.

Then there is classifying the barn according to its purpose such as a horse barn, dairy and storage barn. It is hard to say what the collapsed barn did for a living. The roof style is in shambles.

It looks as if it might have been centrally located in the farm lot, but not much else can be gleaned about it.

The barn styles of gambrel, gable and menitor maximized loft storage space for hay above with livestock staying below in stalls or open pens. The livestock heated the barn by exhaling warm breath and passing an abundance of intestinal gas, while the stored hay insulated the barn from the cold. Nature's way worked.

Barns were painted red for easy visibility in the landscape and the red color absorbed the sunlight helping to also keep the interior warm in winter. The red paint was made of a mixture of linseed oil, milk and lime mixed with iron oxide (rust) to cre-

ate a protective rot resistant coating that showed a dark reddish color.

It seems there was a purpose for saving all that rust coated farm machinery. It is hard to believe rust was a commodity.

Tearing down old barns has become a contentious deal if the barn is deemed a historic structure or what is called a heritage barn. It is frequently considered illegal to tear that barn down.

The collapsing barn is a testament to the demise of local farming history. The former fields now grow new houses where once verdant green pastureland was all the eye could see.

Now privacy fences block the view, which does beat seeing the neighbor's laundry and small imitation storage barn sheds. People need to pay respect to barns and farming history. A collapsing barn can not be restored, but people can be amazed at its ability to endure.

The owner is interested in selling the boards to a good home. He lives in his home behind the collapsing barn.

Get out and enjoy that lush spring all have waited so long for tis arrival.



This shows a collapsing barn located on Montgomery Road in Montgomery.



This is another view of the side of the collapsing barn.



A traditional red barn also located on Montgomery Road in Montgomery.

Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniels



This poster shows four barn types based on their roof design.

## Correction

In the article last week about local historian John Garvey the address of the Huntington Public Library was incorrectly listed. It is at 7 East Main Street.

## Corrections policy

If you notice a factual error in our pages, please let us know, so that we can set the record straight. Email information to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com), or call us at 413-283-8393. Corrections will be printed on page 4 or 5.

## BIRDS

to water. I preferred to mix small batches, ¼ cup white sugar to 1 cup water on a more frequent basis to avoid spoilage. It can be stored in the refrigerator for about one week if making larger amounts.

Tom turkeys

In my travels, I spotted in three different locations Tom turkeys displaying their tail feathers for one or more hen turkeys. I noticed one Tom with two hens strutting about as the females kept on eating near him.

Bird fact

Annually, over 50 million Americans purchased more than one billion pounds of bird seed and suet.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing [mybackyard88@aol.com](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or mailing

to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

from page 4

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Corrine Shartrand running for Select Board

Hello, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Corinne (Eggleston) Shartrand and I am running for a position on the Select Board for the town of Blandford.

A little bit of my background. I was born in Blandford and grew up in the surrounding hill towns. I purchased my first home in Blandford and later moved to Arizona for 11 yrs. My husband of 35 years and I moved back to my hometown a few miles from my first home. I am a proud parent of a Marine Veteran and grandparent of an Eagle Scout. I

was employed at Strathmore Paper Company for 20 plus years, while earning a degree in Business from HCC. I am now retired, where I enjoy taking care of my rescued animals on my small hobby farm.

I am currently sitting on the Conservation Commission and the Energy Project Siting and Engagement Committee. I have a sincere passion for the land of Blandford and its residents, this is why I am seeking a seat at the Board. I am committed to listening to residents and representing our community fairly. I want

responsible spending to protect taxpayers with transparency and accountable town government. I want to protect the character and future of our town by ensuring our bylaws are strictly adhered to.

I am an independent voter who listens to all sides because our town works best when residents are heard and respected. I encourage all voters to come and vote for whom you would like to represent your voice at the table. Voting will take place at the town hall on Saturday June 13 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Corinne Shartrand  
Blandford

## News, photo publication policy

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

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

Deadline is Friday at NOON.



## Chester Baptist Church

Pastor Dan Herr  
14 Middlefield Road  
Chester, MA 01011  
413-354-7743  
Email: [pastor@chesterbaptistchurch.org](mailto:pastor@chesterbaptistchurch.org)  
Website: [chesterbaptistchurch.org](http://chesterbaptistchurch.org)  
Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Worship at 10:45 a.m.  
Sunday Afternoon at 1:30 p.m.  
Wednesday Evening Bible Study and Prayer at 6:30pm

## First Congregational Church of Blandford

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

## First Congregational Church of Chester

Pastor Susan Borsella  
334 Skyline Trail, Chester, MA 01011  
Service with Live Music: 10 a.m. - Sunday  
Coffee and Sweets Social:  
10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

## First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

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

## Hilltown Community Church

Dr. Robert Perreault, Senior Pastor  
55 Main St., Russell, MA 01071  
413-275-3232  
Office: 413-862-3341  
[hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com](mailto:hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com)  
[hilltowncommunitychurch.com](http://hilltowncommunitychurch.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/p/Hilltown-Community-Church-61580281487624/](http://www.facebook.com/p/Hilltown-Community-Church-61580281487624/)  
Sunday Mornings 10 a.m.

## CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your  
Community  
Church



## Holy Family Parish

Rev. Ronald F. Sadlowski, known as Fr. Ron  
5 Main St., Russell, MA 01071  
413-862-4418  
Office Hours: No set times.  
Please call, leave a voice message or email: [holyfamilyrussell.org](mailto:holyfamilyrussell.org)  
[parish@holyfamilyrussell.org](mailto:parish@holyfamilyrussell.org)  
Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m.  
Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. & 11 a.m.

## New Boston Congregational Church

Pastor Eric Kriebel  
4 Sandisfield Rd., PO Box 81  
Sandisfield, MA 01255  
Services held twice monthly, check website: [www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org](http://www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org)

## Pioneer Valley Assembly of God

Pastor Javier Melendez  
63 Old Chester Rd., Huntington MA 01050  
413-667-3196  
[pvagliffe@gmail.com](mailto:pvaglife@gmail.com)  
[www.pioneervalleyag.org](http://www.pioneervalleyag.org)  
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God  
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

## Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

Deacon Jerald Reinford  
400 Huntington Rd., Russell, MA 01071  
(413) 297-6037  
Sunday worship at 10 a.m.  
Visitors appreciated

# BLANDFORD

## Town election takes place June 13

BLANDFORD – The ballot for the annual town election on Saturday, June 13 will have two contests.

Vying for the seat on the Select Board are incumbent Cara Letendre, Bradley E. Curry and Corinne Shartrand. William (Bill) Levakis, a potential fourth candidate, did not turn in nomination

papers and will not be on the ballot.

The second contest is for Water Commissioner, which has Stephen Jemiolo and Levakis running for this position.

Other offices' candidates are as follows: Assessor, Stephen Jemiolo; Board of Health, Pat Lombardo;

Cemetery Commissioner Pete Sparks; Fence Viewer, one slot for three years, a second for two years, is open for write-in votes as is Field Driver for three years.

Other positions are Library Trustee, Byam Stevens; Municipal Light Plant Board, Peter Langmore; Planning Board,

(Michael) Scott O'Connor.

A second seat on the Planning Board is open for write-in votes. Others on the ballot are School Committee Katherine McDonough and Town Clerk Doris Jemiolo.

Polling hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and the application for a mail-in ballot is on the town website.

## Historical Society lists May events

BLANDFORD – The Historical Society hosts Dennis Picard on Thursday, May 7 at 7 p.m. in the Blandford Historical Society Building.

Picard talks on

“Feeding the Continental Army.”

On Memorial Day, Monday, May 25, the Blandford Historical Society holds an open house from 10 a.m.-noon in their building.

## COA luncheon menus

BLANDFORD – Council on Aging Director Margit Mikuski announced chef Joann Martin's May luncheon menus for the second and fourth Fridays in May at noon.

On tap for Friday, May 8, she planned beef and rice, stuffed cabbage with sauce or turkey and rice, stuffed cabbage with sauce; tossed salad, garlic bread and dessert.

The May 22 menu has a

vegetable quiche with crispy “smashed potatoes,” maple sausage and dessert. The meals will include conventional beverages.

There is no charge for the luncheons, but a \$5 donation will help keep the program going.

People may call 413-848-4279, ext. 400 and leave name and number of people planning on attending.

## BHS seeks ‘historical families’ to participate in parade

BLANDFORD – The Blandford Historical Society seeks “historical families” to participate in the Blandford town parade on Saturday, June 27.

The parade is part of the festivities being planned for the town's “Happy Birthday America 250 Celebration,” which will kick off Independence Day a whole week early.

The parade theme is “Then and Now,” celebrating Blandford's history, heritage and community spirit.

If a family has been in Blandford continuously for at least 100 years, since 1926 or before, BHS would like them to honor their ancestors by participating in the parade lineup.

The historical soci-

ety provides banners honoring each family name. The parade is about a half mile, starting at the Town Offices and ending at the Blandford Fair Grounds.

If the walk is too much for elderly family members, there is an option to ride in a vehicle of some kind.

If people aren't sure how long their family has

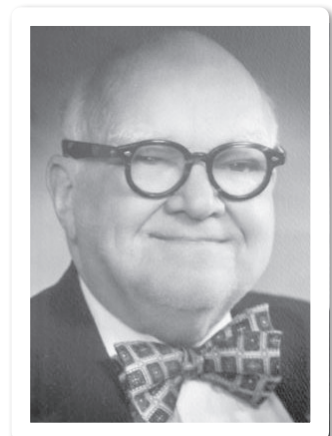
been in town, the BHS can help with that.

People may contact Gary Hart through the BHS website or email him at gary\_hart@sbcglobal.net if they would like to participate and/or for more information. More details on Blandford's Happy Birthday America 250 Celebration will be announced soon.

# Blandford Historical Society... Did You Know?



Dr. Plumb Brown  
Blandford Historical Society  
president 1935-1947



Dr. Brown's son, Eliot Brown  
Blandford Historical Society  
president 1947-1974



A bronze plaque marks the site of Ye Old First Church of the Frontier in the town of Blandford.

sacred and civic where worship and government shared one roof.

Set along the colonial highway, it saw a steady flow of travelers, including members of Knox's Noble Train and later, Hessian prisoners, who reportedly quartered there overnight during the Revolution.

At the unveiling, Brown spoke of the sacrifice and religious conviction of Blandford's Ulster-Scots founders at the heart of the community.

In a detail that became something of a tradition, his young son Elliott stood beside him and helped pull away the covering from the marker, a small but meaningful link between generations. Father and son would do

the same with the unveiling of Knox and Revolutionary War markers on “the triangle” green honoring veterans, so named Veterans' Park at Town Common, in front of the Town's Highway Department.

Saving the Porter House Brown appeared again in 1909 when Blandford faced an unexpected question involving the North Street mansion left by Josephine Porter. The town declined the bequest.

Rather than watch it slip away, Brown organized the Blandford Club to purchase and preserve the house, transforming it into a lively social and recreational gathering place.

At the time, Blandford itself was in transition, shifting from a quiet hilltown of



This newspaper clipping in the historical society archive announces the Knox and Revolutionary War dedication in 1927.

year-round farming families to a destination increasingly shared with seasonal residents seeking refuge from the cities. The club endures to this day.

His lasting gift to Blandford

Brown's interest in local history never faded. He wrote historical pieces himself, collected old records and served as a trustee of the First Congregational Church, the town's “White Church.”

Then, in 1935, he completed perhaps his most lasting work: founding the Blandford Historical Society.

The timing mattered. Many of Blandford's oldest stories still survived



This newspaper clipping in the historical society archive announces the formal opening of the Blandford Club.

only in family papers, fading memories and scattered documents. Brown understood that unless someone gathered them, much of the town's past could vanish.

He served as president of the historical society until his sudden death in 1947. His grown son Elliott, would carry the work forward, serving until 1974, another 27 years.

A doctor by profession, but a preservationist by instinct, Dr. Brown had a habit of keeping Blandford from forgetting itself and because of that, it remains a small town with a big history.

## PASTOR

from page 1

His ministry reflected church revitalization, discipleship and a heart for those often overlooked.

“Everyone is broken, the world is broken and Jesus is the answer for broken people in a broken world,” he said.

He served as staff pastor for Between Bridges Ministry in Springfield from 2023 to 2025, working with the homeless; Lead Pastor of Cornerstone Church in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina from 2015 to 2018 where he helped stabilize and strengthen a fragile congregation.

Prior to that, he served for 21 years, from 1993 to 2014 as senior pastor of Holland Congregational Church in Holland. Under his leadership, the congregation grew from approximately 20 to nearly 500 at its peak.

His greatest joy during that time was, “raising up leaders—training pastors, sending missionaries and implementing a discipleship model that continues to reproduce leadership both locally and internationally.

Earlier in ministry, Tom served as assistant pas-

tor at Faith Bible Church in Agawam, where he developed a thriving inner-city youth ministry.

“Church is a place where broken people can come and find Christ,” he said, “and I'm broken.”

Beyond the local church, he has pastored internationally through Action International and ministry in Costa Rica; trained and encouraged pastors in Gospel-centered leadership.

He is also the founder and chairman of Your Life Matters Pregnancy Center in Southbridge, established to see “lives saved and hearts transformed by the grace of God.”

He also taught high school Bible, history and government and coached varsity basketball, leading teams to two state championships. He hosted a live Christian talk show, “Engaging Your World,” which aired throughout New England for several years.

Pastor Crouse holds a Master of Divinity degree

“Church is a place where broken people can come and find Christ.”

– Pastor Tom Crouse

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## WESTFIELD

## St. Joseph's holds dinner

WESTFIELD — St. Joseph's National Catholic Church, 73 Main St., hosts a community dinner on Sunday, May 17 at noon.

This dinner will feature baked chicken breast with savory stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, glazed carrots and whole berry

cranberry sauce, homemade dessert, coffee, cranberry juice and bottled water. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under.

To purchase tickets and reserve a place, text or telephone Cliff at 413-977-2007. If leaving a message,

provide name and telephone number.

Take-out meals-to-go will be available for pick-up at 12:30 p.m. When ordering tickets, indicate if dinners are to-go. The deadline for purchasing tickets is Thursday, May 14. Everyone is welcome.

## Alzheimer's support group meets Wednesday, May 27

WESTFIELD — On Wednesday, May 27 at 6 p.m. the Alzheimer's Association Support Group meets in Armbrook Village Senior Living and Memory Support Community, 551

North Road.

Caregivers and family members are invited to enjoy light refreshments and to share their personal experiences and strategies for communicating with their loved

ones. The public is welcome.

To join this group, people may call 413-568-0000 or email reception@armbrookvillage.com. Groups are held on the last Wednesday of the month.

## NORTHAMPTON

## Freedom Credit Union supports 'Bed for Every Child' program

Freedom Credit Union invited the community to support A Bed for Every Child by making cash donations at any of its branches throughout May.

Donations helped provide beds to children in Massachusetts, who do not have a bed of their own.

A bed is more than a place to sleep. It provides comfort, stability and a sense of security that every child deserves. Through this Month of Giving campaign, Freedom is proud to support an effort that helps children rest easier and wake up ready to learn, grow and thrive.

"Every child deserves a safe, comfortable place to sleep," said Freedom Credit Union President

Glenn Welch. "We're proud to support A Bed for Every Child and invite our members and the community to join us in helping make a meaningful difference for children and families."

A Bed for Every Child partners with schools, health care providers and community organizations to identify children in need and engage volunteers through its Build a Bed Project. As many families continue to face financial strain, essential household items such as beds can remain out of reach. The organization works to ensure more children have this basic necessity and the comfort that comes with it.

Freedom Credit Union's support of A Bed

for Every Child is part of its ongoing Month of Giving campaign, which raises donations for charitable organizations serving local communities. Funds collected through May 30 will support this effort and help provide beds for children who need them.

Originally chartered in 1922 as the Western Massachusetts Telephone Workers Credit Union and renamed in 2004, Freedom Credit Union is a nine-branch, full-service financial institution. Branches are in Chicopee, Feeding Hills, Greenfield, Ludlow, Northampton, Turners Falls, West Springfield and two in Springfield, as well as a Loan Production Office in Enfield, Connecticut.

## FLORENCE



Officials stand on Hulmes-Warner Field, known as "Mini Fenway." Florence Bank donated \$25,000 to the Belchertown Little League to renovate the ball field. Submitted photo

## Florence Bank supports Belchertown Little League

FLORENCE — The Florence Bank announced it donated \$25,000 to the Belchertown Little League to support the renovation of Hulmes-Warner Field, affectionately known as "Mini Fenway."

The planned upgrades include a covered batting cage, American Disability Act compliant restrooms, a storage shed and a concession stand. Additionally, the iconic "Green Monster" wall, which had previously been constructed by volunteers using donated materials, will be completely rebuilt.

Founded in 2002, the Belchertown Little League serves over 4,000 children from across Belchertown and seven of its neighboring towns including Granby, Chicopee, Holyoke, South Hadley, Ware, Warren, and Palmer. They offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for boys and girls of all abilities, including those with physical and developmental disabilities through their Challenger League, supported by the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services.

Florence Bank President and CEO Matt Garrity said

the bank is proud to support the League's efforts to enhance safety, accessibility and overall experience for the community and each child that plays on the field.

"Mini-Fenway has been a symbol of what a town can build together, and we are pleased to support the Belchertown Little League make critical improvements and enhance accessibility," said Garrity. "We believe this project will help ensure a memorable experience for kids of all abilities for generations to come."

For the community, the "Mini-Fenway" at Hulmes-Warner Field has become a place for all ages to come together to play ball, chase dreams, and make long-life memories.

"The Mini Fenway wall project is more than just a field upgrade—it's about creating a one-of-a-kind experience for our players and a gathering place for the entire community. We're building something these kids will remember for a lifetime," said Ashley O'Connor, Belchertown Little League Secretary.

In addition to supporting the "Mini Fenway" upgrades, Florence Bank is

sponsoring teams in the 7U Baseball and 10U Softball leagues for the upcoming season.

Kyle Toelken, manager of Florence Bank's Belchertown branch and a Belchertown resident, is excited to see the proposed plans and the progress being made thus far. "Mini-Fenway brings the community together and provides our youth with growth opportunities that help on and off the field. I am eager to see the finished product and the look on the kids' faces when they step onto the field for the first time," said Toelken.

The upgrades are underway, with the construction of the ADA-compliant sidewalk currently in process. Other components of the project, such as the "Green Monster" wall, are slated to start later this summer.

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

## BLANDFORD

## BOARD

from page 1

idents, who own their homes who are 60 or older and would be paid the state minimum wage and the senior would be responsible for the Medicare portion of the monies to go to the tax amount. There will be an adjustment on their tax bill.

Mikuski said that the COA would like to send a memo to all the department heads regarding the details of the tax write-off program; not to create a new job or task, but something they actually need help with.

She cited the Town Clerk's office and tax collector's mailings as examples. Department jobs available will be posted in several places, similar to other town postings and be listed on the website.

Coury then moved on to "one of the things we're going to do is post the hours of when people are in the building." The vision is to coordinate the Americans with Disabilities Act functions in the town hall with signage and a "scrolling announcement" on a television in the lobby letting people know who is in the building and where they are located.

And if necessary, how to contact an office if no one is in the building from that particular office. The assessors office, for example, is open Monday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Messages can be left on the telephone or sent via email and the assessors office, Smith, responds.

## Cleaning

There was a discussion

of cleaning in the Town Hall offices because Coury said she had seen office workers cleaning. "They're getting paid way too much money to be maintenance people, right?" She added that she did not want people working in an office to feel like they had to "clean up."

Letendre said, "The concern would be...she was not sure that what we pay janitors...they are able to clean every room every week..."

Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera said that John Hoppe, who does cleaning in the building "does a lot more" for the town and has the "institutional knowledge" to know what needs to be done. She said she had discussed with him having a comprehensive maintenance man for town property.

Again came the possibility for a full-time maintenance worker rather than people, who are paid to do different work sweeping and mopping. Coury proposed using town seniors for an "adopt a room" program for dusting and general cleaning, "say once every two weeks," said Coury.

## Regular hours

A discussion for regular hours ensued, with Town Clerk Doris Jemiolo who said the posted public office hours are 4-6 p.m. Monday, but she is in the office other days and available by appointment. She told the board she was told she could only work "19 hours" a week. Letendre was concerned about any other departments that had "super flexible" hours. She

was looking for more regular hours posted with the understanding that there are fluctuations around elections.

Coury wants to post the hours so that residents know when they can "physically" see the town clerk or how they can reach the town clerk. She asked about "turn around" time for messages and asked if it was "24 hours" and Jemiolo said, "yes."

Regarding a "flexible" hour job, Jemiolo told the board that she is normally in the office three days a week, but not always the same three days, except for Monday.

## Office moves

Coury then asked about moving. The clerk's office cannot move until the Board of Health relocates and there is no definite date for that yet. Jemiolo also has to get permission to move the state computers.

Conservation will move into the Water Department, at least that is the plan so far.

Coury said it is "cheaper" to have Internet Technology and the telephone company do all the offices at the same time. Coury said, "Everybody has to come up with their dates, what do they need..." and considered filing cabinets and cleaning.

Letendre said the town should look at the cost of hiring movers to help move. There would be the possibility of asking for volunteers, but it would have to be during the week for the Board of Health, not weekends. Board of Health mem-

ber Jen Girard said if she were to get her own volunteers, she could not come up with a date.

Planning Board will move with Conservation into the Water Department area. According to Water Commissioner Bradley Curry there will be a need to move phone and computer jacks to accommodate a third department. Right now the room can accommodate two departments.

Coury would like to see the moves organized because the library will move into the Town Hall on May 19. Excess filing cabinets for Water, Conservation, Planning and Cultural Council can temporarily be moved to the stage area in the gym.

Conservation Agent Sabrina Pooler, participated virtually, asked about Planning and Conservation sharing the Building Inspector space and having the Building Inspector move into the Water Department area. Conservation Chair Dick Gates was under the impression as well that Conservation would move into the Building Department space.

Letendre said that there had at that point been no discussion with Building Inspector Jason Fogue about moving into the Water Department area. The final decision was to move Planning and Conservation into the Water Department and leave the Building Inspector's office intact.

## Public hearing

Planning Board Vice

Chair Edna Wilander presented the results of their public hearing the previous Friday. Planning approved the proposed bylaws for commercial ground mounted solar fields and Battery Energy Storage Systems. The bylaws will be on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting as approved by Select Board vote.

## Water Department

The Water Department has additional applicants for Water Superintendent and one, according to Curry, meets requirements. The Water budget is based on revenue and they are looking for a better rate on their United States Department of Agriculture loan. Which means to adjust the rate the department would have to take out another loan. There may be other options.

The Finance Committee had to move funds from retained earnings to bring their budget into the black.

The Upgrade charges have been made whole, and Coury said the rate study has to be done. "Because next year the town has to pay the bill," she said.

There are delinquent water bills, approximately \$12,000. Coury, Curry and Town Accountant Kelli Pontbriand will "sit down and go through" records to see what exactly should be on the water bills. The debt charge is not the same as a rate increase.

The department received a federal grant of \$1,092,000 for the Blandford Water Treatment and Distribution System

Upgrades which requires a match from the town and there is another \$80,000 state grant for the water inlet pipe replacement.

## Highway paving

Highway paving Superintendent Ray Hultay then met with the board, who approved going forward with a Chapter 90 request for \$61,000 to pave Watson Park Road with a milling and a three-inch overlay. According to Hultay this will be good for about 15 years.

He will be back at next meeting with prices for a culvert on Sperry Road and has learned that Ch. 90 funds can be used to purchase a canopy to protect and shelter highway equipment. He will try for a quote less than \$170,000 for a 60-by-80-foot canopy.

## Public comment

Public comment brought a question on water meter reading and when will users be billed for the actual amount of water used, for example a household of two vs. a large family's use. Curry said meters are being read now to create a base line, and anticipates the process will begin universally soon, but could not commit to a date.

Another question had to do with solar bylaws and it was noted that under intent the solar installations should "minimize impacts on scenics, natural, historic and agricultural resources," and why was this not included in the BESS bylaws. The question will be directed to Planning.

# CHESTER

## Granite saw tour takes place May 16

CHESTER – The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers announced a day of open tours at the historic granite saw property in Chester.

Tour guides will be at 9 Prospect St. across from the Historic Chester Railway Station from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. Historical tours are on a rolling basis with no need to register.

Historical artifacts, media boards and more all from this era are on display. Participants take home a piece of Chester blue granite for all who visit. They have raffles, granite saw and lost railroad shirts, safety vests, water bottles, free handouts and more

People, who have a connection to the granite saw or a relative who did, call or text Liz at 413-302-0312 or email at westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com.

The Chester Granite Saw is a stone cutting and finishing plant established in 1870 in Historic Chester Factory Village. It was purchased by the current president of the Western Mass Hilltown Hikers in September 2023 and donated to that non-profit to conserve and historically preserve the entire mill operation.

It is open to the public dawn to dusk every day with a walking path that passes by



The Hilltown Hikers hold tours at the historic granite saw on Saturday, May 16. Submitted photo

the old buildings, machinery and the twelve-foot diameter shot saw structure, which is still standing today. The Hilltown Hikers and its volunteers are cleaning up this property after eighty years of abandonment by cutting back invasive species, dead ash trees, fallen trees and eight to twelve inches of sediment that has covered its floors.

This project is one

of a kind in Western Massachusetts as the first stone finishing plant in the area where granite and even on occasion, marble was brought to Chester to be cut and finished for monuments, historical buildings and more and shipped throughout the country by rail on its own Boston and Albany siding which visitors can see today. People maybe a part of this

historic project to be enjoyed by generations to come by donating or volunteering on [www.hilltownhikers.com](http://www.hilltownhikers.com).

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Tees, hoodies, hats, patches, water bottles and safety vests will be for sale by donation at the event. People may see all their events, maps, blog and photos at [www.hilltownhikers.com](http://www.hilltownhikers.com).

## Hamilton Memorial Library announces May news, events

CHESTER – Read with Monster is a special upcoming program for children, who would like to practice their reading skills in a fun, unique way.

Monster, a Bright Spot Certified Therapy Dog and his handler, Cara Pease will be coming to the library on the Third Tuesday of the months of May 19, June 16 and as part of the Summer Reading Program on July 21.

Children who have signed-up, will have the opportunity to spend time reading to this furry friend in a safe, non-judgmental environment. Parents or guardians call the library at 413-354-7808 to register their child for any of the sessions.

Book Club meets Wednesday, May 20 at 4:30 p.m. They will be discussing "Time of the Child" by Niall Williams. This touching story takes place in 1960s Ireland,

when a doctor and his daughter's lives are turned upside down when a baby is left on their doorstep as Christmas approaches. Extra copies are available.

Bake, book and tag sale takes place on Saturday May 16 during Chester on Track. The library welcomes any bake sale donations. People wishing to participate in the tag sale should call the library at 413-354-7808.

A free self-defense class will be taught on Saturday, May 20 from 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. in the Chester Town Hall by women for women ages 10 plus. Children under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Participants should wear comfortable clothes and RSVP by calling the library at 413-354-7808. This program is sponsored by the Chester Tae Kwon Do School and Hamilton Memorial Library.

## CHESTER ON TRACK

from page 1

a booth at the end of Main Street with burgers and fries.

Food is also available at Classic Pizza and the Village Market on Main Street and Carms Restaurant on Route 20. Baked goods will be available among some of the crafters and at the town library.

As always, featured for this event is the Railway Station and Museum on Prospect Street. This 1840s era station includes freight cars from the 1920s, various train cars and a "children's

boxcar."

This year's event marks the grand opening of their latest acquisition, a 1946 Pullman Coach previously used as a dining car by Berne's Dining Depot in Chicopee. While in the area, the Chester Granite Saw across from the railway station is an interesting stop as is the self-guided hike to the first American cluster of Keystone Arch Railroad Bridges, which are also National Historic Landmarks. They are along

Massachusetts first National and Wild Scenic River.

History buffs enjoy meeting with Continental Revolutionary War re-enactors, Civilian Conservation Corps camp re-enactors and viewing a blacksmith demonstration. There are numerous vehicles and engines in the parade and exhibits afterwards including antique fire engines, Model As and Model T cars, a "one-lung" steam and gas engine demonstrations and a G-scale live steam exhibit.

Lots of child friendly events are available with many on Emery Field. These include donkey rides (noon-2 p.m.), garden tractor pulls, a petting zoo, story walk, state police K-9 demonstration, Scouts America archery booth, a bounce house, a kiddie hand-car ride. Brie the Balloon Lady, magician Chris Robertson and Smokey the Bear are also there.

The whole town is in on the fun with crafts and food on Main Street, a book and bake sale at the town library,

The Chester Fire Department holds their annual Duck Race at 2 p.m. The Post Office offers a one-day commemorative postal cancellation stamp so stop in to post mail in the morning.

Live music takes place at the railway station and around town, featuring the Pitoniak Brothers, D. Rod and the Uprising, Tom Willy Filliault, Down the Alley and Just Us with Linda Burns.

For up-to-date information follow the Chester Railway Station on Facebook,

people may visit the museum's website at [www.ChesterRailwayStation.org](http://www.ChesterRailwayStation.org) or call 413-354-7878. This program is subject to change without notice.

Events are free but donations are always appreciated and may be mailed to the Chester Railway Station at P.O. Box 743, Chester, MA 01011-0743. Chester on Track is supported by the Chester Cultural Council, a local agency, through the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

## Cultural Council lists 2026 grants

CHESTER – The Chester Cultural Council announced the 2026 grant recipients of the Mass Cultural Council and town of Chester funding total of \$7,500 for the 2026 local cultural grants cycle.

Receiving twenty-two grant requests, the council awarded thirteen grants. The Chester Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the nation's largest grassroots cultural funding network, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities and sciences every year.

The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency which then allocates funds to each community. A council of municipally appointed volunteer members makes decisions about which activities, programs, festivals and projects to support at the community level. The Chester Cultural Council members are Muriel Hall, chair, Kim Fox, Clerk, Carol Hepworth, Karen Kaminski-Marchetto, Melissa McAuliffe and Charles Shoemaker.

"It's the local volunteers who really make this system work," said MA Senator Paul Mark. "They make limited resources go as far as possible, and they make tough decisions about which projects should be supported. Thanks to them, the arts, sciences, and humanities are part of people's everyday lives in every community across the state." Senator Mark is the Senate chair of the Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development.

Statewide, more than \$5.7 million will be distributed by Local Cultural Councils in 2026. Grants will support 329 grassroots activities: concerts, exhibitions, radio and video productions, field trips for schoolchildren, after school youth programs, writing workshops, historical preservation efforts, lectures, First Night celebrations, nature and science education programs for families, and town festivals. Half of LCC funds support educational activities for young people.

The Chester Cultural Council will seek applications again in the fall. For guidelines and complete information on the CCC, contact the Administrative Assistant@

[townofchester.net](http://townofchester.net). Applications and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available online at [www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org). Applications are due in late October 2026.

This year's grants include: Chester Historical Society - \$650 – Snowflake Festival; Chester Foundation - \$500 – Chester on Track; Steven Cormier – Author - \$200 – Good Gooley, Missed Trolley, "Hilltown Trolley Dilemma;" Chester Theater Company - \$1,250 – 2026 Chester Theater Productions; Western Mass Hilltown Hikers - \$500 – Chester Granite Saw Interpretive Signage; North Hall Association - \$400 – North Hall Arts Festival 2026; Chester Community Fair Association - \$1,250 – Littleville Fair 2026; Erica-Wells - \$500 – Community Garden Huntington Public Library; Hilltown Families - \$350 – Hilltown Families Suggests; Gateway Regional School District - \$500 – Guest Artist Series; Sevenars Concerts - \$650 – Sevenars 58th Anniversary Season; Hilltown Community Health Centers - \$500 – Build Your World and Gateway Regional High School - \$250 – MassMoca Field-Trip.



Ed Carrington, last year's parade marshal in the black hat, rides in a convertible in the Chester on Track parade. File photos



Nicole, the Railroad clown, formerly of the Ringling Brothers Circus, entertained the children and adults last year.



At the 2025 event, the Gateway Middle/High School Band performed during and after the Chester on Track parade.



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## WORTHINGTON

### Garden club holds program May 12

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Garden Club presents ornamental alternatives: replacing invasive species with natives on Tuesday, May 12 at 6 p.m. in the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.

This program, open to the public, calls out trees, vines, shrubs and perennials from Massachusetts' invasive

list and offers native alternatives that deliver extra landscape value. Chris Ferrero, Cornell Master Gardener, is the presenter.

Worthington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency provides funding for this program.

### Rod and Gun Club holds spaghetti meatball supper

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Rod and Gun Club, 458 Dingle Road, holds their annual spaghetti and meatball supper on Sunday, June 7 at 5 p.m.

The doors open at 4 p.m.

The cost is \$20 per person.

People may call Deanna at 413-433-0009 or see a club member for reservations.

### COA hosts workshop, potluck and bingo

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Council on Aging hosts a workshop on Wednesday, May 27 at 1 p.m. in the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.

Anne Marie Perrone from the Hilltown CDC Housing11 Rehab Program will present a short talk regarding their programs for seniors. A question-and-answer period follows.

All are welcome. Light refreshments will be served. On Monday, May 11 there is a potluck luncheon at noon in the Town Hall.

Bingo takes place on Monday, May 18 at 1 p.m. in the Town Hall. Seniors There is a chance to win a non monetary prize. Light Refreshments will be served.



### Firefighters get brush fire under control

WORTHINGTON – A shift in the wind and a dry brush pile fire got out of control.

A quick response by the Worthington Fire Department assisted by the Chesterfield Fire Department, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and with traffic control by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Police, got the fire under control. The Worthington Fire Department thanks all who helped out.



Firefighters get the fire under control.

Submitted photos

A shift in the wind caused a brush pile fire to get out of control.



Firefighters stay on scene to make sure the fire stays under control.



The Worthington Fire Department Rescue truck responded to the fire.

## WILLIAMSBURG

### Photographer Bill Arnold art reception, exhibits at Meekins Library

WILLIAMSBURG – Photographer Bill Arnold hosts an exhibit in the Neil Hammer Gallery at the Meekins Library, 2 Williams St.

An artist reception hap-

pens Saturday, May 9 from 2-4 p.m. celebrates a farm stand in Hadley taken with a plastic children's Kidamento camera, and a 17' x 4' narrative banner offering 23 paired images side by side consec-

utively along the banner, beginning with an homage to creative photography, placing Arnold in that tradition.

Arnold sees his role as an artist, as finding the beauty in everyday experiences and cap-

turing them with the lens of a camera. He has been highly influenced by new technologies in photography, including the Itek reading and printing machine he uncovered in 1970 at a public library and the

Kidamento, point and shoot digital camera; hind-sized; designed for children; slip in the pocket camera, which creates high quality photos.

He has received many honors including a National

Endowment for the Arts grant. His work has been exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

## MONTEREY

### Bidwell House Museum announces events

MONTEREY – The Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road, announced its 2026 season program for May and June.

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, the Museum is planning a season of intriguing and educational programs to connect visitors with the history of the Berkshires and beyond. Plan your first visit for Memorial Day weekend where the Museum will present an opening concert by local favorite Diane Taraz, which will then be followed by a reception to celebrate the start of the new season. The Museum's summer history talk series returns with four talks on topics as varied as the Massachusetts state constitution, the plight of Loyalists during the Revolutionary War, women's clothing during the Revolutionary era and the first Indigenous soldier to die at the Battle of Bunker Hill. In June visitors can attend the Bidwell Artisan

Fair, a free community event with craft demonstrations, music and family fun on the grounds of the Museum.

On Sunday, May 24 from 2-4 p.m. there will be a concert Surprising But True with Diana Taraz. Taraz tells some true stories. There will be a small reception and light refreshments after the program. Admission is \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members.

On Saturday, May 30 at 11 a.m. a history talk "The First Massachusetts Constitution and How Town Actions Derailed It" with Sally Hadden. In the first of a four-lecture summer history talk series, Western Michigan University Professor Sally Hadden will discuss the Massachusetts state constitution. Massachusetts enjoys the distinction that its constitution is the "oldest functioning constitution" in the world. But this honor applies to the 1780 state constitution, which

is far better known than its proposed predecessor, the Massachusetts 1776 state constitution. This lecture will be held via Zoom. Admission is free for members and \$15 for non-members. Pre-registration is required to receive the Zoom link.

Saturday, June 20 at 1 p.m. the second history talk takes place "I Have Scarcely a Mouthful of Bread for Myself or My Children" The Plight of Loyalists on the Eve of Independence with Alexander Cain.

He will share how unwavering loyalty to the Crown led to the loss of homes, freedom, and security for numerous families. This will be held at the Monterey Meeting House, 449 Main Road. Admission is \$15 for members and \$25 for non-members for in-person and free for members and \$15 for non-members to attend via Zoom. Pre-registration is required to attend via Zoom.

On Saturday, June 27

from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. will be the Bidwell Artisan Fair. Everyone is invited to this fun and free community event on the grounds of the Bidwell House Museum. Local artisans will demonstrate 18th and 19th crafts such as spoon carving, chair making, lace making, blacksmithing and paper making.

There will be music by Shinbone Alley, a project of Alex Harvey, an old-world folklorist who performs street ballads and songs of the sea. There will be scavenger hunts for the kids, mini-tours of the house and a Revolutionary era camp kitchen demonstration behind the museum, weather permitting. Food and snacks will be available for purchase. This program is supported in part by grants from Lee Bank along with the Monterey, Otis, Sheffield and Tyringham Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### SAMPSON GETS 100TH CAREER STRIKEOUT



Smith Vocational High School Varsity Softball pitcher, sophomore, Grace Sampson of Worthington, got her 100th career strikeout on Monday April 27 in a win against Gateway Regional High School. She finished the game with nine strikeouts.

Submitted photo

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## FOR SALE

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**2 Christopher Lane, Wilbraham Saturday, May 9 only, 9am-3pm**  
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## MISCELLANEOUS

**2022 LOADRITE BOAT TRAILER**, Model C650-1T. Capacity 650 lbs. Used two seasons with canoe. Adjustable for conventional boat. Original owner, \$1500, 413-244-4520.

**SIT-IN KAYAK, Santee Hurricane 126**, \$300.00. Call 413-583-5278.

**WHEEL HORSE COLLECTORS:** 4 old models, 312-B (2), C-81 Elctro 12. Call Eleanor 413-283-3540.

## TAG SALE

**FRIDAY, MAY 8 AND SATURDAY, MAY 9, 8am-3pm.** Rain/shine. 63 Walker Rd., Wales. Antiques, furniture, plants, arts, rare finds.

**HUGE ESTATE SALE DON'T MISS IT!**  
**2 Christopher Lane, Wilbraham Saturday, May 9 only, 9am-3pm**  
 Everything is priced to sell – and it all must go! Browse a wide variety of items including: extensive holiday decor, Beanie Babies, household items, furniture, Disney collectibles, New England sports memorabilia. Come early for the best selection!

## WANTED

### WANTED TO BUY

**ALL ANTIQUES AND OLD STUFF WANTED.**  
**BUYING** Bottles, Crocks, Jugs, Pottery, Costume Jewelry, Toys, Games, coins, sterling, Glassware, Silver-plated items, watches, Musical instruments, typewriters, sewing machines, tools, radios, clocks, lanterns, lamps, kitchenware, cookware, knives, military, automotive, fire department, masonic, license plates, beer cans, barware, books, oil cans, advertising tins, hunting, fishing, signs, and more.  
 Donald Roy (860) 874-8396

## WANTED

**ALWAYS BUYING ALL ANTIQUES:**  
 Musical instruments, guitars, horns, keyboards, vintage electronics, jewelry, coins, watches, military cameras, sports memorabilia, art, sterling, signs, automotive, hunting, advertising, radios, ham radio equipment, audio equipment, toys, one item or entire estate.  
 Call Paul 413-206-8688

## JUNK REMOVAL

**A Call We Haul FAST REMOVAL**  
**Junk, Appliance, Cleanouts.**  
 We load it & take it.  
**413-531-1936**  
 CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

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 Fully insured.  
 Call Pete 413-433-0356.

## SERVICES



**2\*\*\*\*\*A & B HOUSEHOLD REMOVAL SERVICE\*\*\*\*\***  
 Cellars, attics, garages cleaned, yard debris. Barns & sheds demolished. Swimming pools removed. Cheaper than dumpster fees and we do all the work. Lowest rates. Fully insured. (413)283-6512, cell (413)222-8868.

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 Josh Rozell 413-636-5957

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## SERVICES

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## CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

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 Email: [bradwayconstruction@yahoo.com](mailto:bradwayconstruction@yahoo.com)  
 with your resume and for more information.

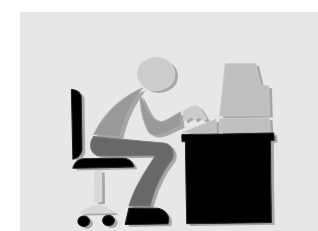
**SEEKING YOUNGSTER(S)** for assisting older couple with organizing/moving items for tag sale/clean-out. Computer skills a plus. Call Bob at Hilltown Animal Control, 413-374-8451.

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**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.



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|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
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| 5                     | 6                     | 7                     | 8                     |
| 9                     | 10                    | 11                    | 12                    |
| 13                    | 14                    | 15                    | 16                    |
| 17                    | 18                    | 19                    | 20 Base Price \$26.00 |
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| 33 Base Price \$32.50 | 34 Base Price \$33.00 | 35 Base Price \$33.50 | 36 Base Price \$34.00 |
| 37 Base Price \$34.50 | 38 Base Price \$35.00 | 39 Base Price \$35.50 | 40 Base Price \$36.00 |

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**Suburban Residential**  
 Circulation: 59,000

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 Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount of charge: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# EASTHAMPTON

# OBITUARY

## bankESB's Funding Their Futures program supports local education

EASTHAMPTON – bankESB announces the success of its Funding Their Futures program, a community-driven initiative that supports local education while helping to strengthen the communities it serves.

In 2025, the program raised more than \$8,000, benefiting 13 local schools, school systems and educational foundations.

As part of The Giving Tree, bankESB's charitable giving initiative focused on unlocking potential in local communities, Funding Their Futures turns everyday banking into meaningful impact. Through the program, bankESB donates \$10 for every new Get Real Checking® account opened, with customers choosing which participating local school, school system or educational foundation

receives the donation. Each organization can then use the funds in whatever way is most beneficial for its students and educational priorities.

"Education is essential to strong communities, and through Funding Their Futures and The Giving Tree, we are proud to partner with our customers in unlocking potential for students across our region," said Matthew S. Sosik, president and CEO of bankESB. "By giving customers the opportunity to direct their donation locally, we're able to make a real and lasting difference where it matters most."

Funds generated through the program have supported a variety of initiatives, including classroom resources, technology enhancements, student enrichment program and other needs identified by schools

and educational partners. The flexibility of the donations ensures that each organization can address its most pressing priorities and create meaningful opportunities for students.

BankEST presented donations for 2025 to the following participating schools and organizations: Agawam School System, Amherst-Pellham Regional Public Schools, Belchertown High School, Easthampton Public Schools, Gateway Education Foundation, Granby Public Schools, H.B. Lawrence, Hadley Public Schools, Northampton Public Schools, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, South Hadley Public School, Westfield Public Schools and William E. Norris School.

bankESB remains committed to investing in educa-

tion and community development through programs like Funding Their Futures and The Giving Tree, helping to strengthen local communities and create brighter futures for the next generation.

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton. Through their charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, supports non-profit organizations and causes throughout Hampden and Hampshire counties. In 2025 alone, The Giving Tree donated more than \$716,000 and over the past decade has donated \$4.4 million. bankESB was named a Corporate Citizenship Award winner for the past 11 years by the Boston Business Journal, reaffirming their status as one of Massachusetts' most charitable companies.

### DEATH NOTICE

#### CAPUTO, ROSEMARY S.

Date of Death Feb. 21, 2026

A committal service will be held on May 16, 2026 at 11 a.m. at the St. Thomas Cemetery in Huntington.

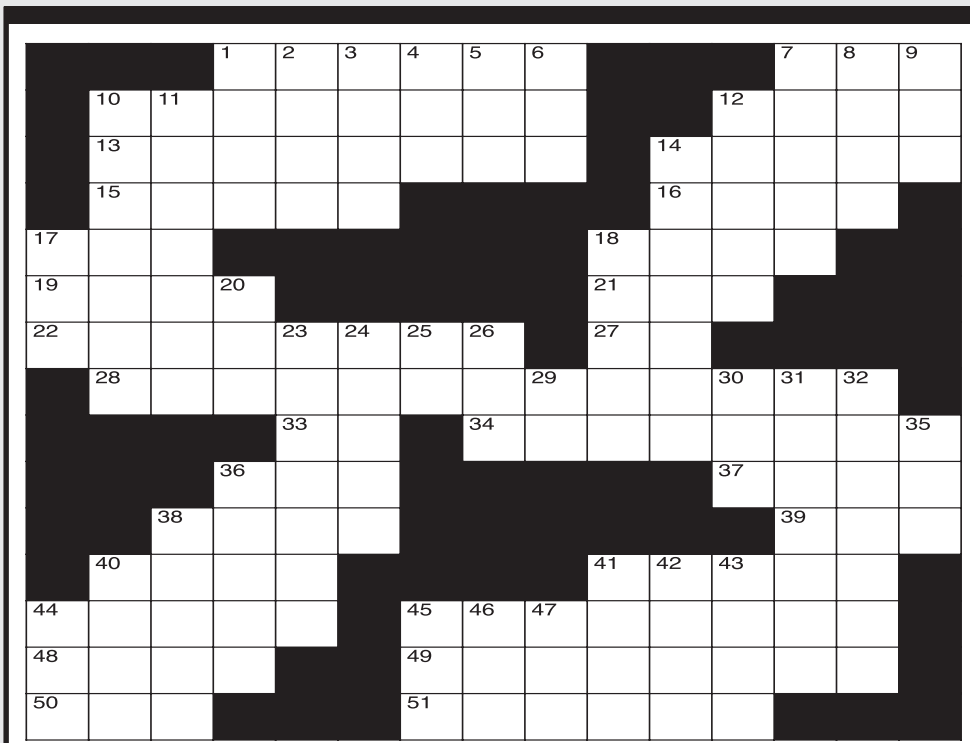
### Country Journal OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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



#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Large dung beetle
- 7. Gambling game \_\_\_-lo
- 10. Further along
- 12. Type of tobacco
- 13. Looked for
- 14. Silk fabric
- 15. Computer method to solve equations
- 16. As fast as can be done (abbr.)
- 17. Tear
- 18. Brews
- 19. "Famous" cookie baker
- 21. Women's Army Corps
- 22. Front parts of an animal
- 27. It's causing quite a stir
- 28. Beloved March holiday

- 33. 12th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 34. More impudent
- 36. Indicates center (French)
- 38. A cause of distress
- 39. Santa's helper
- 40. Hillside
- 41. Many wombs
- 44. Is afraid of
- 45. Popular baked goods ingredient
- 48. Popular computers
- 49. Conceiving of
- 50. Google certification (abbr.)
- 51. Sturdy

#### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Peruse quickly
- 2. Automobiles
- 3. Razorbill genus

- 4. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 5. Consumed
- 6. A place to sleep
- 7. Small seeds
- 8. Legendary law man Wyatt
- 9. Female sheep
- 10. Indigenous peoples of eastern Siberia
- 11. A place ships dock
- 12. Reciprocal of sine
- 14. Discomfort
- 17. British Air Aces
- 18. Exit sleep
- 20. Solar energetic particle
- 23. Plagues characterized by starvation
- 24. Short musical composition
- 25. Trauma center

- 26. Habitual twitching
- 29. A place where checks are exchanged (abbr.)
- 30. Decameter
- 31. Hinged surface in a wing
- 32. Shouting
- 35. Sports official
- 36. Volcanic craters
- 38. Supportive device
- 40. It's part of a rosary
- 41. Two-toed sloth
- 42. Body art
- 43. Let out
- 44. Foreign medical graduate
- 45. Nonprofit journalism organization (abbr.)
- 46. Couples say it
- 47. Bird's beak

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

#### ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Your energy is at an all-time high. If you've been sitting on a wild idea, Tuesday is the day to pitch it to someone. Your charisma is your superpower right now.

#### CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22

The stars suggest that a little luxury could go a long way for your mental health right now. A small investment in your comfort will pay off in productivity.

#### LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Your social calendar is buzzing right now, Libra. You are the main character in your friend group this week, and your ability to connect people will spark a brilliant new collaboration.

#### CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Your intuition will be 100 percent accurate this week. Trust your gut on a new opportunity; it's leading you toward something that feels like home. Comfort is coming your way.

#### TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Expect a spotlight moment. Whether it is a compliment from a stranger or a win at work, the universe will validate your hard work this week. Keep your chin up.

#### LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23

The mental or physical clutter in your life is finally clearing out, Leo. You will find a lost item or a solution to a nagging problem by the end of the week. The relief will feel good.

#### SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

A lingering tension with a loved one melts away this weekend, Scorpio. It will be replaced by laughter and mutual understanding. It's a great time for a reset.

#### AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, this week you are shedding an old skin and it feels amazing. A boost in your confidence makes you feel untouchable in the best way possible.

#### GEMINI

May 22/Jun 21

Adventure is calling. Even if it is a new coffee shop or a different route home, no voyage is too small. A spontaneous conversation midweek could lead to an opportunity.

#### VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, your discipline is producing tangible results. Take a moment to look back at where you were three months ago. You have climbed higher than you realize. Celebrate the progress.

#### SAGITTARIUS

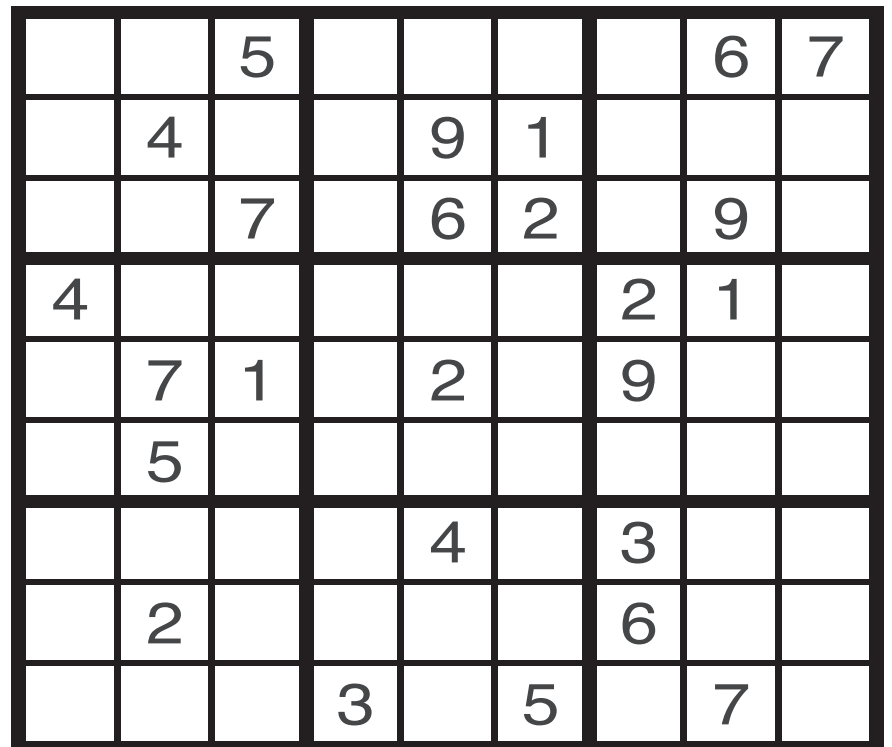
Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, your brain is a lightning bolt of innovation right now. Write down every thought you have, even if they seem weird. One of them will be a game changer.

#### PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, creativity is overflowing. Whether you are painting, cooking or solving problems, your flow state is easy to find. Expect a sweet message from someone you are missing.



## SUDOKU

#### Fun By The Numbers

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

#### Here's How It Works:

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

**answers**

|    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3 | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
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| 48 |    |   |    |    |    |    | 49 |    |
|    |    |   |    |    |    |    | 50 |    |
| 50 |    |   |    |    |    |    | 51 |    |

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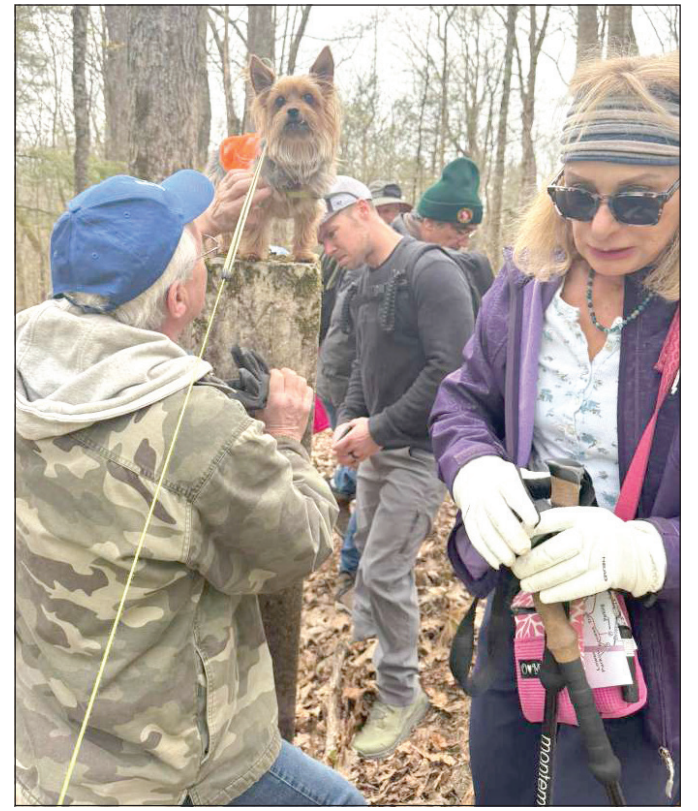
# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers group hike followed the glacial kettle loop trail/



Hilltown Hiker Chet looks at an ash tree, part of the giant groves here, showing damage by the emerald ash borer.



Submitted photo  
Cybill, a canine member of the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers, perches on a town boundary stone.

## Hilltown Hikers plan group hike to fish hatchery

The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers April group hike at the Friends of the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery offered hiking, a barbecue and a fly tying clinic.

The Fish Hatchery in New Marlborough is a national facility, which is unique from all others because

the water that feeds the fish here and keeps it operating is entirely spring fed making it cost effective and has some of the best of the Berkshires water quality from its aquifer.

The Friends group created great trails and are open year round to hikers even when the hatchery is closed, the trailhead is alongside Hatchery Road with parking.

Over six miles of trails here include sights to see; cellar holes, a charcoaling site, a glacial kettle and a town boundary post. The Pinnacle trail is the steepest trail offerings a gradual rise with switchbacks climbing to the "Pinnacle," which overlooks Beartown State Forest and Dry Hill.

Most of the trails here offer something unique including quartzite boulders and views from above the glacial kettle. A tree stand of enormous ash trees still stands here as well.

The Berkshire National Fish Hatchery was established along the Konkapot River in the late nineteenth centu-

ry by Dr. Samuel Camp. He selected the site for its immediate proximity to the spring at the base of the mountain that flowed through a 10-inch pipe and ran a cool 48 degrees year-round.

Much of Dr. Camp's original vision and structure remains today. The Berkshire National Fish Hatchery is situated on 148 acres of forested land, which is the source of a pristine aquifer, supplying 200 gallons per minute of the pure oxygen-rich water trout love through various pools.

The woodland trails that surround the aquifer are home to many diverse species of wildlife, making the hatchery a special place for learning about not only fish culture, but also about the natural history of the Berkshires. Along the Konkapot River, the old stone pools can still faintly be seen.

The Berkshire National Fish Hatchery supports the restoration of lake trout populations in the Lower Great Lakes by supplying lake trout eggs to other federal hatcheries and rearing native brook trout for stocking in local waterways to support recreational fishing and educational programs.

They operate under the supervision of the USFWS and the Berkshire Hatchery Foundation to support the restoration of lake trout populations in the Lower Great Lakes by supplying lake trout

eggs to other federal hatcheries. These eggs are hatched, grown and stocked into Lakes Ontario and Erie.

The restoration efforts are part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. They produce upwards of 1.2 million fertilized Seneca lake wild strain lake trout every year. The conservation efforts both enhance the lake trout population and habitat, but also provide recreational fishing opportunities to anglers in the area.

Learn how to fly tie and bring the family for more great events sponsored by the Friends of the Berkshire Fish Hatchery. Details at [www.hatcheryfriends.org](http://www.hatcheryfriends.org) and on social media. The friends group sponsors fishing derby's and an open house Saturday Aug. 8 from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and

more. To further understand how our this tiny little hatchery is important for the future of lake trout in the Great Lakes, there is a very good documentary film called "The Fish Thief: Mystery of the Great Lakes" available on Amazon Prime. The Hilltown Hikers thank the Friends of the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery for hosting an exceptional day of hiking and learning about the hatchery.

The glacial kettle loop trail.jpgChet at an Ash Tree, part of the giant groves here, showing the damage by the Emerald Ash Borer.jpg

# GET HIRED

## Full-Time Advertising Sales

- ▶ Do you want to work in your community helping local businesses connect with their customers?
- ▶ Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?
- ▶ If so, then join our team! Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers. The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.
- ▶ You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills. Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.



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Jamie Joslyn  
24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069  
Email: [jamie@turley.com](mailto:jamie@turley.com)



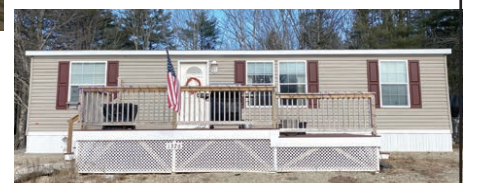
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2x3 Black & White Grad Ad

Congratulations Karly Smith! We are so very proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College!



Love, Mom & Dad