

"Motherhood: All love begins and ends there." Robert Browning

# Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

Becket, Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Otis, Plainfield, Russell, Sandisfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Worthington

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## CHESTER

# Chester on Track set for Saturday, May 18



Last November, a lucky photographer captured a rainbow extending from the Chester Common Table restaurant to the Chester Railway Station/Museum. The 33rd Anniversary of Chester on Track takes place on Saturday, May 18, rain or shine. Photo Submitted

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Chester on Track will take place on Saturday, May 18 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and will be held rain or shine. Activities celebrating

all things railroad, all things local history, and all things Chester will take place at various venues throughout the downtown area.

This year marks the 33rd anniversary of Chester on Track, and the 183rd year

since the Western Railroad opened. This rail, which runs through the town of Chester and alongside the Chester Railway Station/Museum, was the world's first mountain and wilderness railroad and travels over sever-

al Keystone Arch bridges, which were the first cluster of such bridges in America. Both the Chester Railway Station and the Keystone Arch bridges have been

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This spring ephemeral is known as Wake Robbin or Red Trillium.

Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel

## Forest wildflowers make brief appearance

Spring ephemerals are the wildflowers that appear each spring in deciduous forests.

They last only a brief time until the trees leaf out. They live off of the decomposing fall leaves before the trees draw the moisture from the soil, produce new leaves and cast them in shade. These were found in Huntington. According to Mass Wildlife, trilliums can take up to 10 years to bloom from seed.

## WORTHINGTON

# Controversial zoning amendments pass at ATM

Rose narrowly reelected to Worthington Select Board

By Kathryn Koegel  
Correspondent

In a voter turnout that increased 44% from 2023, Worthington Select Board chair Charley Rose was reelected by a narrow margin according to figures supplied by town clerk Katrin Kaminsky.

Gabriel Unger, Rose's challenger, received 46% of



Attendance was high for Worthington Annual Town Meeting with two zoning amendments being voted on.

Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel

the vote. In all, 371 of the 993 registered voters cast ballots.

"My opponent worked

hard and he had a significant group backing him. I

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## BLANDFORD

# Select Board discuss lack of immediate action on water break

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

The Select Board Monday evening discussed the apparent lack of immediate action when it was learned that there was a leak or water break losing 125 gallons of water a minute.

The problem was located on the Mass Turnpike property, putting

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This wildflower is Sessile Bellwort.



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## HILLTOWNS

# Southwick Land Trust seeks to preserve open space property

**SOUTHWICK** – The Southwick Land Trust, a non-profit, non-governmental organization of community volunteers, will be introducing itself to the public through two events this spring: the “Southwick Spiff Up,” a community clean-up to take place starting at the Daily Grind cafe on May 18 at 9 a.m. and a Welcome Celebration to be held at the Brass Rail Meeting House Sunday, June 23 from noon-2 p.m..

Formed in 2024, the Southwick Land Trust’s goal is to conserve important ecological, scenic, historic, and agricultural land in a community where protecting the town’s rural character was deemed valuable by 75% of more than 900 people who responded to Southwick’s 2022 Master Plan town-wide survey.

Unlike many Massachusetts towns, Southwick is still rich in farmland. The Southwick Land Trust seeks to conserve this precious resource while supporting farms for the future, providing equitable access to outdoor recreation, promoting appreciation of open space and protecting Southwick’s diverse ecology and rural heritage.

“Growing up, Southwick was primarily a farming community,” Southwick native, Janis Prifti, said. “It’s nice to have long-term residents tell me of their enjoyment recalling watching our 30 cows, each with their own names and behaviors, orderly exit their spots in the barn following herd leader Beulah into the road, blocking traffic a short while as they headed to either day or night pasture.”

Prifti, a Southwick Land Trust board member, grew up on the dairy farm her grandparents purchased in the 1920s. When her father owned the farm, he worked multiple jobs to keep it viable. Today, Prifti is trustee for a 55-acre parcel added 70 years ago to family farmland and while her family continuously explores options for the parcel, preference continues for protecting and preserving the land rather than development.

Prifti’s experience led her to join a group of like-minded citizens to establish the Southwick Land Trust, a locally-grown effort focused on a streamlined response to local conservation needs

without complex government hurdles.

Dave MacWilliams is a Southwick Land Trust co-director. He’s a former chair of the town’s Conservation Commission and served on Southwick’s Master Plan committee.

“There’s some beautiful land here that, should it become available, should be preserved,” MacWilliams said. “We just want an opportunity for land in Southwick to be preserved without having to rely on the Town or taxpayer dollars.”

The Southwick Land Trust, he said, provides previously absent infrastructure to do just that.

As an independently funded entity, the Southwick Land Trust isn’t limited by the constraints of the town budgeting process. Instead, volunteers for the organization raise funds through grants, donations, events, and merchandise sales. As private citizens, the volunteers have more freedom to work with non-governmental donors and agencies and, unlike town officials tasked with myriad responsibilities, conservation is their top priority.

“I don’t know if my land is going to fit in the Land Trust or not, but I applaud the effort,” Prifti said. “Recent development in Southwick focusing on housing increases the need for both recreational green space and agricultural production.”

For Southwick resident Deborah Randzio, land conservation is integral to quality of life. “Scientific studies show that people who have access to open space are healthier,” Randzio, a Southwick Land Trust trustee, said.

Research demonstrates that time spent in nature can reduce BMI, blood pressure, and pulmonary disease. It alleviates stress, improves focus, reduces symptoms of depression and encourages physical activity. Growing up with access to nature is linked to long-term mental health benefits for children. In short, studies indicate access to nature can be a prescription for well-being.

“Not to mention the fact that trees retain carbon and keep our air clean, and preserving wetlands keeps our water clean, so open spaces keep us healthy that way, too,” Randzio said. “And open space is an economic driver for this



Deborah Randzio, Dave MacWilliams and Janis Prifti, all of Southwick, are founding members of the Southwick Land Trust, a nonprofit, non-governmental group formed to conserve local ecological, scenic, historic and agricultural land.

*Submitted photo*

community.”

With minimal investment and upkeep, greenspaces increase local revenue by attracting tourism and recreation while reducing the need for expensive infrastructure. Outdoor amenities attract businesses and new residents, and greenspaces reduce municipal expenses by providing effective flood, drought, heat, and clean air mitigation in the face of severe weather and climate change.

In a town bordered by more congested Hampden County neighbors, Southwick’s farms, lakes, woodlands and wildlife make it ripe for green tourism and regional food security. The Massachusetts Farmland Action Plan states the Bay State lost nearly 60,000 acres of farmland between 1997 and

2017 alone. Before that trend seeps home, the Southwick Land Trust strives to preserve this rural town’s open spaces for public benefit.

“My parents taught me to always leave a place better than we found it, but nobody can do this alone. It takes all of us to make change happen,” Randzio said. “We’ve lived here for 48 years. We raised our children here. Southwick was a good place for them to grow up,” she said. “We want it to be a good place for the next generation to grow up as well.”

For more information about the Southwick Land Trust or options for conserving your land, please visit [www.southwicklandtrust.org](http://www.southwicklandtrust.org).

## Woronoco Bridge restoration project moves into next phase

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces construction activities will continue on the Woronoco Bridge project, which carries I-90 over the Westfield River on the Montgomery-Russell line.

The project is moving to the next stage and a new traffic pattern will be implemented. The traffic pattern will shift from two eastbound adjacent lanes to a split set up, where both eastbound lanes are separated by the work zone in the middle. No changes will be made to the westbound traffic pattern at this time.

The work to shift the pattern will take place nightly from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. now through Thursday, May 9 with all work concluding on Friday, May 10 by 5 a.m. Once in place this traffic pattern will remain until early July 2024, while deck repairs are being performed, weather dependent.

Vehicles with widths greater than 11 feet will be unable to travel on I-90 eastbound between exits 10 and 41. The width restriction will have no effect on passenger vehicles or most other traffic.

No changes will be made to the current weight posting restriction of 20-45-50-55 tons.

The current project began in 2020

and is about 64% complete. The bridge was previously rehabilitated in 1990, 1994 and 2011.

The scope of the project includes staged deck replacement, deck truss spans repairs, gusset plate reinforcement, replacement of rivets with high-strength bolts, and paint work. The entire project is budgeted at \$47 million dollars.

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

Drivers who are traveling through the affected areas should expect delays, reduce speed and use caution.

All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

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

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

Follow @MassDOT on X, (formerly known as Twitter), to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

## BOARD

*from page 1*

it into the hands of the Department of Transportation. Water for both east and west bound services areas was turned off and work was expected to begin Tuesday morning to make necessary repairs. This is now a concern for both the Department of Transportation and the town’s Board of Health.

Highway Superintendent David Waldron told the Select Board Monday night that the application process for securing Chapter 90 road funds has been simplified and he was authorized to make the applications. He asked that the board look into securing letters of support from the town’s legislators for grants for his projects.

He reported that Gibbs Road has had new material placed in the road and the road’s surface has been graded and work on cost estimates for other projects including Russell Stage Road is ongoing.

### Appointment of Christopher Dunne

The board agreed to appoint Christopher Dunne, the town’s former Town Administrator, as a consultant for the town and follow through with the fiscal year 2025 budget, the warrant for the annual Town Meeting, and a Fiscal Year 2025 narrative.

### Insurance savings

Jennifer Girard reviewed the town’s Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) commitments and pointed out how the town can save money on the policy by having a Risk Management person responsible for pulling together departments’ representatives to discuss, among other things, a job hazard analysis. “The potential to save a lot of money is there,” she told the board.

### Electricity service provider

Peter Langmore presented an option to the board to use Constellation as the electricity source for town buildings for a five-year period at a rate lower than what Eversource charges the town result-

ing in considerable savings. The board approved changing the electricity service provider for the town.

### Job description and appointments

The board reviewed qualifications to be included in a job posting for a Town Administrator.

The Select Board made the following appointments: Jennifer Girard to Emergency Management for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; Adam Dolby to Emergency Management for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; Aaron Poteat as Plumbing and Gas Inspector for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; Theodore Cousineau as PVPC (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission) Alternate for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; David Waldron as Highway Superintendent for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; David Waldron to Emergency Management for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel to Emergency Management for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025; Janet Strausberg to the Cultural Council for the term April 01, 2024, through June 30, 2026; Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel as Chester/Blandford Police Chief for the term July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025 and Joann Martin to the Recreation Committee July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027.

### Other business

In other business, the Select Board authorized the use of town equipment and a town employee to pick up and deliver several yards of donated pine bark mulch for Bicentennial Park. The board was also asked to consider a committee to see if painting the former town hall now the Fire Department training area could be done with volunteer labor.

The board voted to go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations.



## HILLTOWNS

### Freedom Credit Union collecting donations for 'Bed for Every Child'

SPRINGFIELD – “Good night, sleep tight.”

Freedom Credit Union believes every child deserves a great night's sleep, every night. That's why it is again holding its annual “Month of Giving” campaign to provide A Bed for Every Child throughout the Pioneer Valley. The community is invited to stop by any Freedom branch throughout the month of May to support this worthy endeavor with cash donations.

“We appreciate the commitment of our members, staff and community in supporting this important annual initiative,” said Freedom Credit Union President Glenn Welch. “With ongoing support, we can help make sure all children have a warm, cozy place to dream every night.”

This effort began in 2011 when the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless learned that many public-school students were not getting enough sleep because they did not have their own beds. In response, they launched A Bed for Every Child in 2012 with a mission to help children get the

restful sleep they need to learn and succeed.

Partnering with schools, healthcare institutions and nonprofit community partners, each child receives a brand-new mattress and a sturdy custom wooden bed frame. On average, A Bed for Every Child receives more than 200 referrals for beds each month statewide. To date, more than 1,598 children have been helped.

Freedom Credit Union has partnered with the Pioneer Valley Chapter of the Cooperative Credit Union Association to support this initiative annually since 2017.

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. Freedom Credit Union has conveniently located Massachusetts branches 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.

### AAA Northeast offers guidance for bicyclists and drivers

WESTWOOD – With the weather warming, more cyclists are sharing the roads with drivers.

This May, for Bicycle Safety Month, AAA Northeast is urging all roadway users to take responsibility for preventing crashes on the roads. More than 1,100 cyclists were killed in traffic crashes across the country in 2022, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Bicyclist deaths are highest in late spring and summer, coinciding with the busy summer travel season.

In Massachusetts, 33 bicyclists were killed in traffic crashes between 2018 and 2022, according to NHTSA data.

“Respect on the roads between cyclists and drivers alike can go a long way to ensuring streets can be safe for all users,” said Mark Schieldrop, Senior Spokesperson for AAA Northeast. “As warmer temperatures bring more people outside, now is the time for drivers to be ready to share the road with cyclists and for those on bikes to refresh their safe riding skills.”

Drivers play a critical role in helping keep cyclists safe. Look for bicyclists before opening a car door and when pulling out from a parking space. When parked on a street, drivers can use their right hand to open their door when exiting the vehicle to ensure there are no oncoming bicyclists before fully opening the door. Pay extra attention for bicyclists when turning. NHTSA reports that more than a third of fatal bicycle crashes occurred at intersections in 2022. Particularly in urban areas, drivers should check their mirrors for bicyclists before making a turn.

Keep designated bicycle lanes clear, never using them for parking or passing.

Share the road and give bicyclists room. Do not pass cyclists too closely, and only pass when it's safe to move over into an adjacent lane. Be focused and alert; never drive distracted. Distractions take a driver's eyes and attention off the road. Put the phone away to help keep everyone on our roads safer.

AAA Northeast offers the following safety tips for bicyclists.

Follow the rules of the road by traveling in the right direction, signaling turns and obeying traffic signs and lane markings, just like a car. NHTSA reports that 129 bicyclists were killed in 2022 while riding the wrong way. Always wear safety gear, including a properly fitted helmet, which offers the best protection. Refer to NHTSA's step-by-step guide to ensure the best fit and comfort.

Make yourself as visible as possible. Reflective vests, lights on bicycles and brightly colored clothing can increase a bicyclist's visibility, especially in low-light conditions. Practice bicycle maintenance and always check your equipment before taking off, especially tires and brakes. Ride together, when possible. There is safety in numbers, and riding with others can improve visibility.

AAA Northeast members automatically receive two bicycle calls per year. If a member's bicycle breaks down while they're out for a ride, simply call the AAA Roadside Assistance number and AAA will transport them and their bicycle anywhere within 10 miles at no cost.

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

### Virtual Support Group meets May 29

WESTFIELD – Alzheimer's Association Virtual Support Group sponsored by Armbrook Village Senior Living and Memory Support Community, 551 North Road, will be held Wednesday, May 29 at 6 p.m.

Caregivers and family members are invited to share their personal experi-

ences and strategies for communicating with their loved ones. This month's group is virtual. People should email their name and phone number to reception@armbrookvillage.com to be added to the Zoom list or call 413-568-0000. Groups are held the last Wednesday of the month.

### Hilltown Land Trust seeks to protect additional 500 acres per year

Residents encouraged to donate both funds and lands for conservation

The Hilltown Land Trust, in affiliation with The Trustees of the Reservation held a meeting on Sunday, May 5 to kick off a new fundraising period. They aim to raise \$420,000 by June 2025 after securing a \$210,000 challenge grant from an unnamed donor.

Katie Theoharides, President and CEO of the Trustees, introduced the initiative at a public meeting held at the William Cullen Bryant Homestead, which is a Trustees managed property. Theoharides was born and raised in Western Mass and spoke of her love for the region and the increasing urgency of land conservation in the era of climate change.

Sally Loomis, Executive Director of the Hilltowns as the greatest conservation opportunity in the state due to their relatively wild and undeveloped lands. “Right now we are working with 25 landowners regarding over 3,000 acres and we do not have the money to support what conservation takes. Landowners may donate the land but they do not typically pay for the surveying and other administration it may take.”

The current goal is to conserve 500



Sally Loomis, Executive Director of the Hilltown Land Trust introduced the new donation drive at the William Cullen Bryant Homestead.

Turley photos by Kathryn Koegel

acres per year, fund a new staff position and move on more strategic projects. They are also working with Indigenous groups including members of the Nipmuck Tribe to learn from their base of knowledge regarding plant life and cultural history. To date, the Hilltown Land Trust has conserved over 5,000 acres in 13 Hilltowns. The Hilltown Land Trust encourages anyone wanting to donate funds to reach out to: trustees.org/hilltowncampaign



Hilltown residents attending the meeting studied a map of proposed conservation areas.

### Bidwell House Museum announces 2024 season

MONTEREY – The Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road, announces its 2024 season program.

Throughout the summer, the museum will be showcasing its red ware collection via multiple programs and a small exhibition visible at the end of the house tour. Favorite programs from past years, including the Bidwell Country Fair and the Summer History talk series, will be returning along with new programs centered on the museum herb garden, a meditative forest walk and a Banjo concert.

The museum's second annual members week begins on Monday, May 20 and museum members are invited to visit the house for a tour, without an appointment on May 20, 23 24 and 2 at 1 p.m. or 3 p.m. The official season of guided tours of the house will begin on Memorial Day, May 27 and are by-appointment only on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. or 3 p.m.

Tours must be booked 24 hours in advance and can be booked by calling 413-528-6888 or emailing the muse-

um at bidwellhm2@gmail.com. During these personal, small- group tours of the home and gardens, visitors will learn about the 18th century Berkshires and everyday life in that era through the story of the Bidwell family. The museum grounds-194 acres of flower, herb and heritage vegetable gardens, woods, fields, historic stonewalls, trails and picnic sites-are open all year, free of charge and can be explored via two self-guided tours, the Native American Interpretive Trail and the “Outside the House” tour created in 2020.

On Sunday, May 26 there will be a pottery demonstration and talk with Rick Hamelin at 2 p.m. Each participant will also have the chance to create their very own pinch pot. After the demonstration refreshments will be served to celebrate the start of the 2024 season. Admission is free for members/\$20 for non-members. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Monterey Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



## OPINION



### Widower's retirement stymied by Social Security's WEP and GPO rules

Dear Rusty

My wife passed away four years ago. I want to retire so called SSA and was told I can collect my own SS at 62, reduced by Windfall Elimination Provision.

My wife's SS was greater than mine, but they said I do not qualify for hers at age 60 because of the Government Pension Offset. This seems odd that I get zero for her, however I can collect mine at the two thirds reduction at 62. Is this true? This zero dollar amount places my retirement on hold for now. I was counting on her SS.

Signed: Discouraged Widower

Dear Discouraged

The Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset are two of the most confusing and unpopular of Social Security's myriad rules. From the way you describe your conversation with the Social Security Administration, it doesn't appear to have concluded with you fully understanding how these provisions work, so allow me to elaborate.

WEP and GPO affect anyone who has a retirement pension from a federal, state or local government agency which did not participate in Social Security, meaning neither the employee nor the employer paid into Social Security based on the employee's earnings. Obviously, you have such a pension, which means that WEP will reduce any Social Security retirement benefit you have earned from other employment where SS payroll taxes were withheld and the GPO will affect any survivor benefit you are entitled to.

WEP affects only the SS retirement benefit you earned elsewhere; WEP does not affect any surviving spouse benefit you might be entitled to from your wife. Rather, it is the GPO, which affects your survivor benefit, again because of your state retirement, called a "non-covered pension" - one earned without contributing to Social Security. The GPO will reduce any surviving spouse benefit you might be entitled to by 2/3rds of the amount of your "non-covered" state pension. Depending on the size of your state pension, that reduction may entirely eliminate your surviving spouse benefit from your wife.

Under normal SS rules, a surviving spouse does not become eligible for survivor benefits until they reach age 60 (age 50 if

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### Corrections policy

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

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



### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Week of May 5 recognizes Correctional Professionals Appreciation Week

The week of May 5 is recognized as Correctional Professionals Appreciation Week.

Here at the Hampshire County Sheriff's Office we like to call it Staff Appreciation Week because we are more than correctional professionals. Those who are members of this department are hard-working educators, nurses, chefs, maintenance and administrative professionals, deputy sheriffs and correctional officers, who contribute to the health and safety of their fellow residents of the Hampshire County community, 365 days a year.

I am proud of my many years of appointed and elected service to my community. I am also proud of the work that

the members of the Sheriff's Office do every day of the week. These staff members provide community services through our Civil Process Office, our Community Justice Support Center, our Bridge to the Future House, the Rocky Hill Re-Entry Collaborative, our regional police lock-up, our Triad Department for senior services, as well as the rehabilitative programming taking place at the jail and house of correction.

If you happen to recognize a member of the Hampshire Sheriff's Department, all I ask is that you give a nod of thanks for what they do to keep us safe.

Patrick J. Cahillane  
Sheriff, Hampshire County



### Pointers for happy plants

I read somewhere that the new frost free date for our area is May 8.

In discussing this finding with a fellow gardener, she said, "I still wait until Memorial Day. It just seems way too early to put peppers or tomatoes into the garden." I wait too.

It is more than just the frost free date, it's also about how sufficiently the soil has warmed up. With temps hovering in the mid 40's today, I can't imagine our tropical loving plants would be very happy dealing with that.

Besides choosing an appropriate planting date, there are a few other pointers at this stage of the game will help to get your garden off to a good start.

Whether you purchase plants at a local garden center or grow your own on windowsills or under lights, it is important that they be hardened off before being set into the ground.

Some nurseries take care of this for you by removing them from the greenhouse and placing them on benches outdoors where they get accustomed to wind, rain, fluctuating temperatures, and hot sun. If the plants you purchased came from inside the greenhouse hardening them off at home is relatively easy.

Introduce seedlings to the outdoors gradually, by placing them in a protected location, safe from whipping winds and scalding sun, for a small amount of time each day. Water frequently but withhold any fertilizer.

Over the course of a week to 10 days the amount of time spent outdoors should increase until plants have spent a full day outside. Once they have, they can be considered "tough enough" to be planted in the ground.

Transplanting is best done on a cloudy, drizzly day. Early evening is another option should nice days persist.

Under these circumstances roots will be allowed some recovery time before having sustain the plant in the sun and wind. Seedlings should be watered well prior to transplanting.

On occasion I have even kept a bucket of water with me in the garden in which I submerge six packs of plants for a few seconds to moisten them thoroughly before

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### Election letters to the editor welcome

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

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

#### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

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

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

### 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.

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## OPINION

## HILLTOWN HISTORY

## Finnish brought skill to granite cutting

By Deborah Daniels  
Correspondent

Hiking the Finn's trail at the Chester Becket Quarry was a fascinating divergence from the usual direct path to the quarry, well worth the trek.

The path meanders through the forest dotted with huge boulders and small brook waterfalls. Did these boulder behemoths clue early settlers that there might be a canyon of granite beneath their feet? Hats off to those who planned this trail, it is a gem.

You may well ask what did the Finns have to do with the quarry? Turns out they were the quarrymen doing the extracting, that is cutting the blue granite free of the hillside cliffs from 1860 to the 1940s. Sure there were chisels, wedges, hammers and later steam and then air powered drills to free the granite, but the work began and ended powered by human labor. Some of that labor came from Finland.

The first commercial quarry opened in Barre, Vermont after the War of 1812.

Granite was used for millstones, home and building construction and for paving stones. There was a work order in 1890 for 10 million hand cut paving stones for Troy, New York and Barre, Vermont met the order. Vermont had 68 quarries in operation by that time. Quincy opened its first quarry in 1825 to supply granite for the Bunker Hill Monument and to supply granite for buildings in Boston and New York City as well as to supply paving stones for roads.

Have you ever noticed how most early post offices, court houses, state houses and cathedrals were all built of granite? You could say the pyramids of America, like the pyramids in Egypt were built of granite. There was no concrete.

Have you been to Halibut Point State Park in Gloucester, it was formerly the Babson Farm Granite Quarry, another early quarry venture. Americans were prepared with manpower but lacking in know power for quarrying techniques. Finnish people were skilled quarrymen with a good hard work ethic. American mining and shipping companies actually recruited Finnish workers in the 1870s. The US Government stopped that by the 1880s. However some 350,000 Finns packed up and sailed to America from 1830 – 1930 looking for a better opportunity.

Well they had reason to leave Finland. First off there was a famine due to crop failure in 1867. Then they had a system where only the oldest son inherited the farm, forcing many brothers to leave to find work. Combine that with the Russian government's aggressive effort to indoctrinate the Finnish people into



A photo of the Chester Becket Quarry.

*Turley photos by Deborah Daniels*



This granite boulder contains a steel rod and a dot of 1894 carved into it.

*Turley photos by Deborah Daniels*

Russian culture in 1899 and you have a formula for Finnish exodus.

Many Finns chose to escape to America. They settled in Gloucester as well as upstate New York, Michigan, Montana and Minnesota. Gloucester had many Finnish granite quarry workers who established a community there that thrived from 1910 into the 1930s. The U.S. Government did establish a quota limiting Finnish immigrants to 529 in 1929. The gate had closed to immigrants.

Culturally the Finns were hard working laborers. Their Lutheran faith required that they be able to read in order to be confirmed or to marry. They came from a land known for its thousands of lakes so fish was a staple of their diet. Here salted herring was popular probably because it was the only preserved fish available and could be stored apart from their catch of the day. They were used to dairy farms so cheese and milk were a big part of their diet. Breakfast was often a serving of viili, a kind of ropy yogurt eaten with fruit. Their language is closely related to the Hungarian language. They had to learn English upon arrival and they did.

The custom that made most Americans' eyes pop was their sauna. Traditionally they built wooden saunas where they used dry heat from heated rocks to warm the hut. Here they sat, unwound and relaxed after their day's work. They would often plunge into a cold stream or snow after. They used a vihtoja or sauna whisk to gently beat their skin during the sauna, to improve circulation. The whisk was made of birch branches with their leaves attached and tied into a bundle. The leaves would

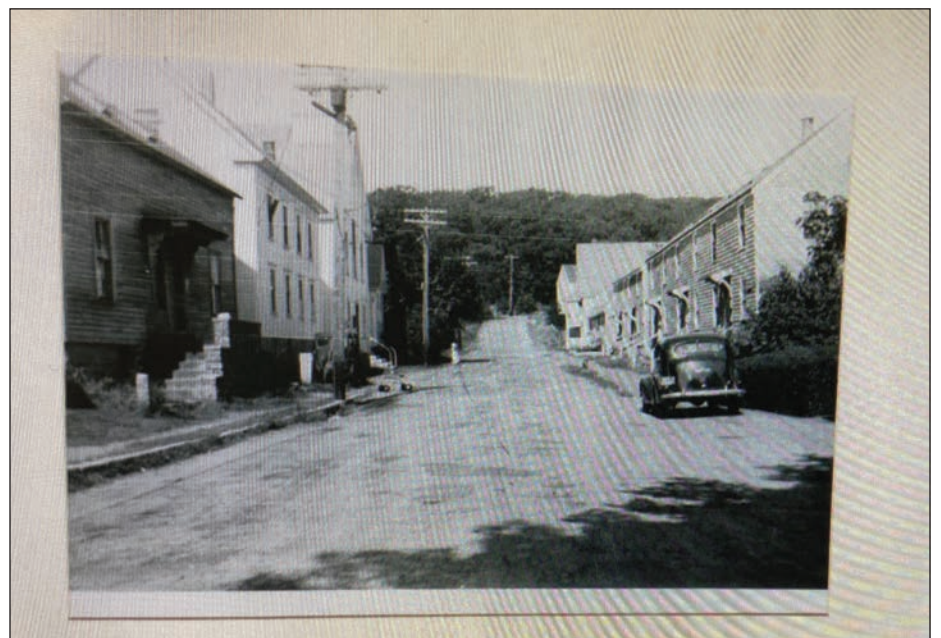
soak in hot water and they would whisk this onto their backs during the sauna. No clothes were required. The booklet, "A history of Chester" has a photo dated from 1939 showing a Finnish family making vihtoja.

Many of the Finnish workers were single, they came to make their fortune and then return to Finland. Many did just that, made their money and returned to Finland. Early photos show barracks or rentalas (apartments) for single quarry workers to stay in on the north shore of Massachusetts. Finnish ancestry was traced to northern China, Mongolia actually. So thousands of years ago they had migrated from east Asia to Siberia and

then northern Europe. They had family and traditions they planned to return to.

The Chester cutting and finishing shed was bought by Finnish quarry workers, who turned to the business of quarrying showing they were enterprising as well. Some Finns left Chester to work at the north shore quarries where business was brisker.

So if you notice a double ii or aa in a name you have a clue to some Finnish ancestry. You will have to visit the Chester History or the Becket History Museum to learn more about the Finnish presence here in the Hilltowns. Kiitos means thank you. People should consider hiking the Finn Trail.



Rentalas or housing for bachelor Finnish quarry workers in Cape Ann.

*Submitted photo*



Finnish granite quarry workers take a breather from the hard work.

*Submitted photo*



A plaque shows what early road granite pavers looked like.

*Submitted photo*



## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### Tom Stewart earns national award for excellence

HOLYOKE – Tom Stewart, director of athletics and student engagement at Holyoke Community College, is the recipient of the 2024 George E. Killian Award of Excellence, the highest award bestowed each year by the National Junior College Athletic Association.

The award is given to those who demonstrate the ideals of voluntarism, achievement, service, leadership, and excellence. It is named after George E. Killian, the first executive director of the NJCAA, which led for nearly 40 years.

“Thank you for all you do to ensure a great student-athlete experience and for your dedication to the NJCAA,” Christopher J. Parker, NJCAA president and chief executive officer, said in the award letter.

Stewart, a resident of Westfield and a graduate of Westfield State University, has worked in college athletics for more than 35 years, the past 26 at HCC, where he has been director since 1999.

At HCC, he oversees nine intercollegiate sports programs and manages the David Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation. He serves on the NJCAA Board of Regents as the representative for Region 21. He chairs the NJCAA Division III Men’s Golf Committee and the NJCAA Division III Women’s Golf Committee while also serving on the NJCAA Track and Field Committee.

During his career, HCC has hosted nine NJCAA cross country championships and a track and field championship. In 2016, he was elected second vice president for the association’s men’s division. In that role, Stewart oversaw the complete budgetary activity of the association. He has previously served as the co-chair of the finance and

budget committee.

Stewart and other award winners were recognized April 17 in Charlotte, North Carolina, during the 2024 NJCAA annual convention.

Representing 550 schools, the NJCAA is the largest athletic association for two-year colleges in the United States. Stewart is the first recipient of the George E. Killian Award from any college in New England since it was first presented in 2006.



Tom Stewart

“That means a lot,” Stewart said. “It’s kind of a culmination of all my work for all these years. And as I’m winding down towards the end of my career, it’s kind of nice to be recognized, even though I’m not big on getting these kinds of awards.”

Stewart started his career in higher education at Westfield State where he worked for seven years as student activities administrator and director of intra murals and coached cross country. He was hired at HCC in 1996 as student activities director and became assistant athletic director in 1999 and athletic director in 2007. He now also supervises the Student Engagement department at HCC, which includes Student Activities and the Student Senate.

In October, he was inducted into the Westfield State University Athletics Hall of Fame. As an undergraduate there, Stewart was a four-year member of the WSU Owls cross country and track and field teams. An all-conference runner in 1985 and 1987 in cross country, he won the Westfield State Invitational and was an all-New England runner in steeplechase his sophomore year. The WSU cross country and track teams won conference titles all four years he was on the team.

### Jeremy Trottier honored at College of Business Senior Award Ceremony

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University held its College of Business Senior Awards Ceremony on April 30 in the St. Germain Campus Center.

Jeremy Trottier of Westfield received the Outstanding Student in Sport Management award. This award recognizes a graduating senior selected by the faculty for excellence

in the study of Sport Management. The award was presented by Daniel Covell, Professor of Sport Management. Trottier is working toward a Bachelor of Science degree in Sport Management. The University honored 13 graduating seniors, selected based on their academic achievement in their major or their overall class standing.

### GARDEN

from page 4

planting in dry soil.

The planting hole should be dug slightly larger than the container in which the plant was growing. Depending on the type of plant, compost and fertilizers can be added to the hole and mixed with the surrounding soil to insure adequate fertility.

Plant the seedlings at the same depth they were growing in their containers, no deeper. One exception to this rule is tomatoes, whose stems sprout roots!

For less leggy tomatoes, plant them deeply, even in trenches with only a few sets of leaves above ground.

Examine the root ball of seedlings carefully. If the roots are tightly woven together, they may need to be “butterflied,” or gently pulled apart to encourage future rooting in new soil.

After planting, firm soil around roots, and water well. If water drains away from the seedling make a basin of soil a few inches from the plant’s stem to keep water where it is needed.

If sunny days and warm temperatures are expected soon after transplanting it is a good idea to shade plants for a few days with overturned pots, tree branches, or other devices. Again, less transplant shock means less time spent on recovery, and more time spent on making fruits and flowers!

Continue to water well and deeply for the first week or two. Deep watering will encourage deep rooting, and deep roots will best withstand summer droughts.

Taking good care of your plants in the early stages will certainly insure a summer of productivity.

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.*

### HCC lists 2024 Phi Theta Kappa inductees

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College announces students, who have been accepted for membership into the Alpha Xi Omega chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa national honor society for 2024.

Local students inducted in Phi Theta Kappa are; Dana Berrios of Easthampton, Nathan Biddulph of Easthampton, Evan Duso of Easthampton, Lincoln Kanelong of Easthampton, Matthew Geary of Haydenville, Colette Piotrowski of Haydenville, Rebecca Boisseau of Huntington, Jesse Conner of Northampton, Dylan Cowart of

Northampton, Anthony Knowles of Northampton, Mystie Ford of Plainfield, Tyler Livingston of Southampton, Justin Meunier of Southampton, Kayla Carlin of Southwick, Alivia Glynn of Southwick, Mia Phillips of Southwick, Ashley Brazier of Westfield, Ryan Defalco of Westfield, Wandeliz Gonzalez Marrero of Westfield, Travis Guin of Westfield, Rhys Maryn of Westfield, Sonja Pease of Westfield and Sarah Shoemaker of Westfield.

Students are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa when they have completed 15 college credits while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

### Holyoke Community and nonprofit agree to support for young women at risk

HOLYOKE – Representatives from Holyoke Community College and the Springfield-based nonprofit I Found the Light Against All Odds Foundation agreed this week to work closely to increase educational and workforce training opportunities for young women at risk for homelessness.

HCC President George Timmons and Stefan B. Davis, CEO, president and founder of the Springfield-based I Found the Light Against All Odds Foundation met at the college on Tuesday, April 30, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the terms of the agreement.

I Found the Light Against All Odds Foundation provides support services for young women to help address social and economic issues that can lead to poverty and homelessness. Specifically, by signing this MOU, HCC and the foundation agree to broaden support services for area women, age 18-20, to help them

obtain safe housing and career opportunities through education and training.

“This agreement is firmly in line with HCC’s mission and vision to remove barriers to student success,” said Timmons, “to break cycles of poverty and provide opportunities for education and training that will allow more young women to be successful, earn a livable wage, and enjoy all that life has to offer.”

According to statistics cited in the MOU, Hampden County has a poverty rate of 16.9%, which is higher than the national average of 11.5%. Meanwhile, the poverty rates in Springfield and Holyoke are even higher at 25.5% and 26%, respectively.

Through the agreement, the foundation is looking to connect with HCC’s existing academic support services, such as admissions and financial aid counseling, as well as career and transfer advising, and more.

## HAYDENVILLE

### Sen. Mark announces staff office hours

HAYDENVILLE – State Senator Paul W. Mark announces his staff will host office hour in Haydenville.

Office hour is Tuesday, May 28 from 1-3 p.m. Town Offices, 141 Main St. Residents of any of the 57 municipalities in the Senator’s Berkshire,

Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire District are encouraged to share ideas on current or potential state legislation, or to ask for assistance with issues involving any state agency.

Appointments are not required.

### SOCIAL SECURITY

from page 4

disabled). Normally, a surviving spouse benefit claimed at age 60 is reduced by 28.5% and it is the GPO that will affect your survivor benefit whenever you claim it. However, even without GPO, your age 60 survivor benefit amount would be only 71.5% of the amount your wife was receiving or entitled to receive at her death. If you are already collecting your non-covered state pension when you claim your SS survivor benefit from your wife, then that reduced age 60 survivor benefit would be offset by 2/3rds of the amount of your state pension. And that, according to what Social Security told you, is what eliminated your age 60 eligibility for a surviving spouse benefit from your wife. If you don’t claim it at 60 your survivor benefit will continue to grow until you reach your Full Retirement Age of 67, but if 2/3rds of your state pension is more than 100% of your SS survivor benefit, you still won’t get any surviving spouse benefit from your wife’s record.

A further consequence of your non-covered state pension is that the SS retirement benefit you earned elsewhere will be reduced by WEP. WEP will reduce, but cannot eliminate, your Social Security retirement benefit. The WEP formula is complex but, gener-

ally, your WEP-based Social Security retirement benefit will likely be roughly half of what you would get if you did not have a state “non-covered pension.” You could claim your WEP-reduced SS retirement benefit as early as age 62 or, if financially feasible, delay longer to get a somewhat higher, but still reduced amount.

Just For Your Information, your state employer had an obligation to fully inform you of the consequences of not contributing to Social Security while earning your state pension. It appears as though they may not have fulfilled that obligation.

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



# CHESTER

## Chester re-use meeting gathers citizen input

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

CHESTER – The Chester Old Elementary School Re-Use Committee hosted their second public meeting to look at options for redeveloping the property.

About 45 people attended the meeting held on Wednesday, May 1 from 6-8 p.m. in the Chester Town Hall Auditorium. President Robert Stevens and Project Development Manager Neil Goldberg, both from M & S Development, shared their analysis on five options for reusing the former elementary school, which is located opposite town hall and is seen by many as a focal landmark for the town. M & S Development specializes in rural redevelopment projects and is based in Brattleboro, Vermont.

Their proposals were measured against five goals for the property: building preservation, community green space, public access to the building, property tax impact, and sustainable, long-term use of the property. In his introduction, Stevens said it was clear that townspeople they'd spoken with feel strongly about the building having a continued use and wanted to retain its charm and nostalgic value to the town. "In short," he said, "people want that building to find a sustainable, long-term life."

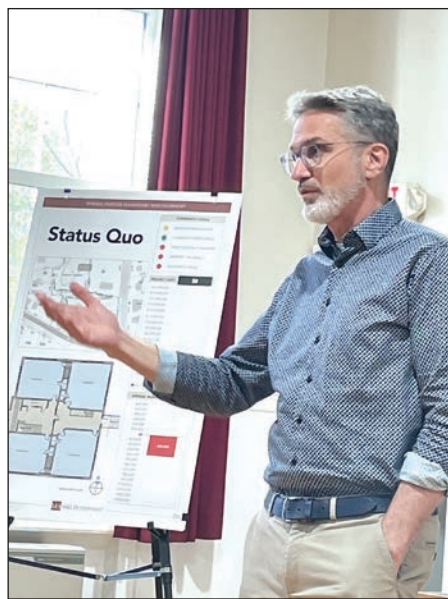
Stevens presented five alternatives, which included status quo (making no changes to the building), municipal office use, a community center, affordable housing and market rate senior housing. Maintaining the status quo is not a viable solution and only meets the green space goal. Without investing in some form of renovation, Stevens said, the building fails to provide tax revenue to the town and is likely to fall into further disrepair.

Town Administrator Don Humason added that the town has to insure the building, which currently lies empty and unused. The insurance company had required that the town repair the chimney, which had falling bricks that were hazardous. Insurance would also like the town to fix broken windows, repair the parking lot and mow the grounds. Current insurance costs are \$15,000 a year, which is as low a policy as the town could secure, but it does not allow for public use. Even vacant buildings require sprinkler systems, which need heat to keep from freezing.

The other four options are viable, Stevens said. "The cost per square foot in rural areas has skyrocketed," he said. For the municipal office use and community center, the estimate of \$3.5 million brings the building up to 'codes and standards,' heating, ventilation, ADA accessibility, capital needs and repairs and basic cosmetic improvements. He clarified that it does not include a deep energy retrofit, which would bring the project to a whole different cost level.

In the presentation, each option listed the five goals (preservation, green space, public access, property tax input and successful long-term reuse). Each presentation board included the goals, which were color-coded for a quick visual understanding. Green dots indicated a goal area was met, yellow dots were for partially met, and red dots were for unmet. "These are not a scorecard, they should just be used to compare," Stevens said.

Looking at municipal office use opened with the statement, "I don't think there's a crying need for more space," a perspective that was quickly disputed by people in the audience. With no changes to the site plan or room arrangements, the cost will run \$3.5 million to bring the building online with heat, storm windows, but not window replacement and an elevator. It is based on a belief that there is only a small amount of asbestos



Bob Stevens, president of M & S Development, presented five models for possible re-use of the former Chester Elementary School, located at the corner of Route 20 and Middlefield Street in Chester.

Turley Photo by Wendy Long

or lead to be managed. It scored "green" on every goal except tax impact.

Establishing a community center at the building would also cost \$3.5 million and would need the same level of renovation. Stevens cited several assumptions about the model he proposed. First, a non-profit would own the building and rent out some of the spaces. Second, the going rate of \$9 per square foot might be a stretch for Chester, but would just barely cover the operating costs. There'd be no excess revenue to pay for debt. Grants and tax credits might cover \$1.5 million, but citizens would have to fundraise the remaining \$2 million. This model meets the goals of preservation, green space and public access. Tax impact and long-term sustainability would be neutral or less successful. Having an established non-profit organization to manage this would make it more likely to succeed.

Costs jump to \$13 million for the affordable housing model. It takes 24 units to get the economy of scale needed to make the finances work. Plans include rebuilding the parking lot, adding a second building (for two, 12 unit buildings), and rebuilding the septic system. Humason pointed out that the septic system for the current building is shared with town hall, which would have to continue going forward.

There would be a deep energy retrofit on this model. With tax credits and grants, the total debt incurred would be about \$1 million. The buildings would be privately owned and offer an estimated \$30,000 in taxes to the town; it preserves the building and could generate long-term successful reuse. But there is no public access to the building and it reduces green space. The parking lot would have a total of 50 parking spaces and continue to be shared with Town Hall. Concern over the egress of 24 – 48 cars onto Middlefield Street or Route 20 was raised. Stevens said that whatever project goes forward will have to have a peak traffic impact study on intersections. Financial estimates were based on this being a low-income housing option, with residents at 60% of median income or less.

The last model revealed was market rate senior housing, which would use the same site plan as the low-income housing but target a different user. The cost would jump to \$14.3 million, due to higher end finishes. This model addresses preservation, long term use and property tax goals, but does not meet green space or public access goals. This scenario, Stevens said, would require a private developer, who would also need to do a market study. However, the site meets some interesting qualities: it's across the street from Town Hall, which also houses a summer theater company and

public library, and is walkable to two restaurants, several shops and the Chester Railway Museum.

A number of good points and questions were raised, such as whether or not they could blend the municipal office and community center models (answer was yes) and whether or not a project could use partial bonds (anything is possible with the right investor). Also raised was the need for a new fire station or safety complex, but the fire chief had already nixed this site for that purpose.

Bob Daley responded, "I think what you're demonstrating here is the art of the possible."

Humason cautioned that the town would soon unveil its FY'2025 budget, which he expects will be very tight.

"We're not going to get there today," Stevens said. "And maybe not even at the next meeting."

Residents were each given three stickers and invited to post them on the models they liked best. People could put

all three on one model or spread them out. The final tally was 13 votes for a community center, 12 votes for affordable housing, eight votes for market rate senior housing, two votes for municipal offices and one vote for doing nothing.

After the meeting, the Town Administrator explained his concern further. "Last year the budget was actually around \$3.6 million, with 53% of that going to education spending, which includes Gateway, Smith Voke, Westfield Voke, and (vocational) transportation," Humason said. "My point to the proponents of having the town renovate the old elementary school for town offices and community centers was this: it will cost more to bring that building up to code and regulations than we have in the entire budget."

The re-use committee will use the feedback from this meeting and expect to submit an in depth final analysis to the Select Board at their Monday, June 3 meeting.

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# BLANDFORD

## Blandford election set for June 8

BLANDFORD – Annual Town Election is set for Saturday, June 8 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mail-in ballots will be sent out before Memorial Day to those registered voters who requested them. There is one contest on the ballot for Tree Warden, incumbent Mark Boomsma will go up against Gordon Avery IV for the position.

All other offices are uncontested. On the ballot will be Assessor

Paul Martin; Board of Health Bret Hartley; Cemetery Commissioner Stephen Jemiolo; Library Trustee Mary Kronholm; Moderator David Hopson; Municipal Light Board Kim Bergland; Planning Board Edna Wilander and Paul Martin; School Committee Keri Morawiec; Select Board Theodore Cousineau and Water Commissioner Brad Curry All positions are for three-year terms except both Planning Board positions are for five-year terms.

## Black bear seen in Blandford yard

BLANDFORD – Monday morning, May 6 at 8 a.m. Birch Hill Road resident, Chips Norcross, looked out his bedroom window to see a “good sized bear” visiting.

It was a black bear. The bird feeders Norcross has are “quite high” and not within reach of the interested visitor. He said he had a brief conversation with the animal and then it loped away.

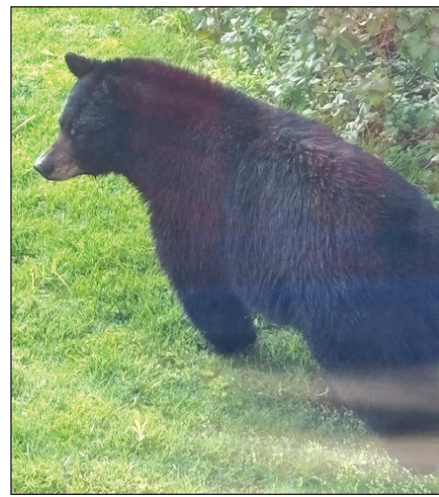
Everyone needs to be aware that black bears are out and about this time of year. According to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife website, black bears are everywhere in Massachusetts, while mostly in the Western Massachusetts area, they are expanding their territory eastward.

The important thing to remember is to avoid attracting them. Keep trash cans secure and covered, take down the bird feeders and keep a watchful eye on pets. According to Mass Wildlife, bears have “excellent long-term memory and can remember the location of food sources years after the first visit.”

Compost and berry patches can be lures for bears, too. MassWildlife indicates that black bears have been “increasing in numbers and distribution since the 1970s...statewide population of bears is estimated over 4,500.

Black bears are black overall with a brown muzzle and sometimes a white chest patch.

“Their feet are large and well-pad-



This black bear visited a residence on Birch Hill Road in Blandford Monday.

Photo by Chips Norcross

ded, with moderate-sized, curved claws. Male black bears generally range in weight from 130 to 600 pounds and females from 100 to 400 pounds,” according to MassWildlife.

“Good eyesight, hearing and an extraordinary sense of smell helps find food and recognize potential danger. They are excellent climbers and use trees to rest, escape threats and protect their young,” according to the website.

People may visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-about-black-bears> for more information.

## Blandford has busy Memorial Day

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – The Annual Memorial Day Parade, observance will be on Monday, May 27.

U. S. Airforce TSgt. Douglas Emo is parade and memorial services organizer, which he has been doing for Blandford since 2000.

Emo said, “The parade will start promptly at 11:30 a.m. from the parking lot at Town Hall.”

The parade route goes up Main Street to Veterans’ Park at Town Commons where students from the Chester/Blandford elementary school will read their essays and Woodford Way will provide patriotic music.

Emo asks that all participants in the parade be at Town Hall no later than 11 a.m.

Any questions about the parade and observances call or text Douglas Emo at 413-561-3993.

The Blandford Historical Society will have an open house from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Society President Chips Norcross, said, “There are all sorts of new exhibits on display relating to Blandford residents’ participation in the Revolutionary War celebrating the 250th anniversary.

The Recreation Committee has organized the annual town-wide picnic immediately following the morning’s observances. The picnic is behind the Town Hall and Recreation has organized hot-dogs, hamburgers, sausage/pepper/onion



Wreath placed annually at the Revolutionary War Memorial Marker at Veterans’ Park at Town Commons.

File photo

and condiments. There will be salads, and residents are encouraged to bring a dish to share.

The ice cream truck will be on hand at 1 p.m. and stay for the afternoon. There will be a treasure hunt, face painting and tattoos. There is a community tag sale again this year along the Watson Park Road. There is no fee to set up for the tag sale.

For any questions about the afternoon’s events, people may call Joann Martin at the Town Hall at 413-848-4279, extension 206.

## Water break occurs over weekend

BLANDFORD – There was a water main break discovered over the weekend which forced shutoff of water to North Street, Chester Road and limited homes on Huntington Road.

There was a huge loss of water as compared to what is usually used on a daily basis. There were two reverse 911 calls from the Water Department on Sunday to let residents know the water

would be shut off and also alerting residents to be mindful of any large pools of water.

Drinking water was made available at the Town Hall for those affected and there was non-potable water available from the Fire Department

The water was subsequently turned back on Monday when the leaking main was discovered on Mass Turnpike property.

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# BLANFORD

## Health and Wellness Fair has good participation

BLANDFORD – The Western Hampden County Public Health Department Health and Wellness Fair happened Friday, May 3 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the auditorium at the Blandford Town Hall at 1 Russell Stage Road.

MaryAnn Deming, RN of the health department's shared services said that there were many vendors representing all phases of health and wellness that were available to everyone.



Blandford Council on Aging represented from left are Board Member Judith MacKinnon, Director Margit Mikuski and Board Member Linda Barnard. Submitted photos



Dale Sparr and Ann Reichert represented It Takes a Village which provides free post-partum care and has clothing available on Sunday mornings for those who can use apparel.

## Chips Norcross attends Home Grown History Fest

BLANDFORD – Historical Society President Chips Norcross reports that he was at Westfield State University Saturday May 4 for Pioneer Valley's Home Grow History Fest.

The event took place in the newly renovated Parenzo Hall. The Keynote Speaker Joe Carvalho presented 200 Years of American Journalism: The Story

of the Springfield Republican.

There were 25 different presentations and workshops in the course of the day-long event, which included topics such as Challenges in Caring for Municipally Owned Historic properties, Railroads of the Connecticut Valley and the Bootleg Queen of Springfield's Little Italy.

## Library lists upcoming events

BLANDFORD – Library Director Nicole Davio reminds families with pre-schoolers that Book Squirms runs every Tuesday from 4-5 p.m. and Wednesday mornings from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Porter Memorial Library.

The hour-long toddler program has stories, songs sensory play and socializing for pre-schoolers and their care givers. This month the Book Club meets on Saturday, May 18 at 11 a.m. to discuss Gail Honeyman's "Eleanor

Oliphant Is Completely Fine." This is the story of an "out-of-the-ordinary heroine. Copies are available at the library.

Monday, May 13 from 4-5 p.m. the Pokemon Club meets to trade cards, play games and make crafts. At the end of the month, the StoryWalk in Watson Park will feature "The Twenty-one Steps: Guarding the Tomb of Our Unknown Soldier," which will be installed and available for Memorial Day Week.

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## RUSSELL

### Laura Lavoie speaks on dementia and effect on five senses

RUSSELL – On Monday, May 13 at 4:30 p.m., Laura Lavoie, founder of Our Dementia Life, will be at the Russell Senior Center, 65 Main St., to talk about how the disease affects all five senses and how memory is just one small part.

She will help attendees have a better understanding of and a better way to communicate and build on a relationship

and what remains rather than focusing on what is missing. Western Hampden County Public Health District brings this presentation to the Russell COA. All are welcome, but people should register by calling the Russell COA at 413-862-6217 or leave a message at 413-361-8069. Light refreshments will be offered.

## ON TRACK

from page 1

named National Historic Landmarks.

Dave Pierce, President of both the Chester Railway Museum and the Friends of the Keystone Arches, helped organize the very first Chester on Track event in 1991.

At the time, Pierce lived in Worthington and was joined by Lucy Conant of Chester, Russ Moore of Blandford and Ted Brahm of Montgomery. According to Pierce, that first event formed to celebrate 150 years of the railroad operating through Chester. The first COT took place one year after they moved the historic railway station to its current location as a museum and Pierce recalls that they had to unboard the windows of the station that first year. “Lucy and Russ had died before the second year came up. Ted and I made it into an annual event.”

Food will be available all day, with a number of options. The 105 year old Blue Caboose at the Railway Station on Prospect Street will open at 8 a.m. for breakfast, and will offer a hearty railroad man’s menu throughout the day where you can eat “hobo” style in an antique boxcar. Carm’s and Classic Pizza will be open all day, as well as The Village Market for take-out. A number of specialty food vendors will be posted throughout the area.

This year’s event promises to be spectacular with a massive parade at 10 a.m. on Main Street in Chester. Stay in the area after the parade because there will be a lot to see and do. Included in the Main Street area: a large craft fair, face painting, “one-lung” steam and gas engine demos. Classic cars from Model “T” s to the newest Corvettes will line up on Maple and Main Street, which will also have an appearance by Maggie the Railroad Clown, formerly of Ringling Brothers Circus. Local police, ambulance and sheriffs will be posted downtown and will have information on new community programs. The Chester Fire Department will hold their annual Duck Race on the Westfield River, beginning at 3 p.m. Their booth will be on Riverfront Drive.

The Chester Theatre Company will present a 30-minute excerpt of “The Last Train to Nibroc” by Arlene Hutton at 11:30 a.m. in the Town Hall on Middlefield Street. This performance will be directed by Chris Rohmann and will star Abuzar Farrukh and Hero Marguerite. Also in that vicinity, the Chester Council on Aging and Hamilton Memorial Library will host a book and bake sale, with items in the Town Hall and on the grounds of the former Chester Elementary School, across the street from Town Hall.

Also downtown, the Chester Historical Commission will offer tours at the 19th century Old Chester Jail and History Museum from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Located at 15 Middlefield St., the tiny jail also houses historic maps, photos, documents, and memoirs that are used by genealogists and researchers. The Riverside Inn on Main Street will host live musicians on the porch, including “Just Us” and the Pioneer Valley Fiddlers. The inn will also host the Jacob Ladder Business Association’s Home Show featuring local services and businesses. A Reason to Pause, a new art gallery that occupies the former A &

L Market on Main Street, will also be open.

Stop by the Railway Station on Prospect Street for a train show and a “Visit with Leonard,” featuring this year’s Parade Marshall Leonard Alexander of Otis. He will share memories of working as a call boy at the Chester Roundhouse while in high school and describe his experience changing the teeth on the Chester Granite Saw located across the street. The Granite Saw, an outdoor interpretive museum on Emery Street, will have a soft opening during Chester on Track. As in the past, the Chester Postmaster will be in the station for one day only, to personally cancel commemorative envelopes or your own mail with a special postal cancellation honoring the Western Railroad. The design will celebrate the original, little-known, elaborate Egyptian Station in Chester before the present station was built in 1862. Tee shirts will also be available with the design.

On the North Lawn of the railway station, Revolutionary War re-enactors will be on hand to speak with you about their experience in the Continental Army. Nearby, the Wild & Scenic Westfield River group will host an activity for children on making fish prints. The North lawn will also include a CCC information booth and a ham radio base camp, which will demonstrate Morse code and contact other enthusiasts around the world.

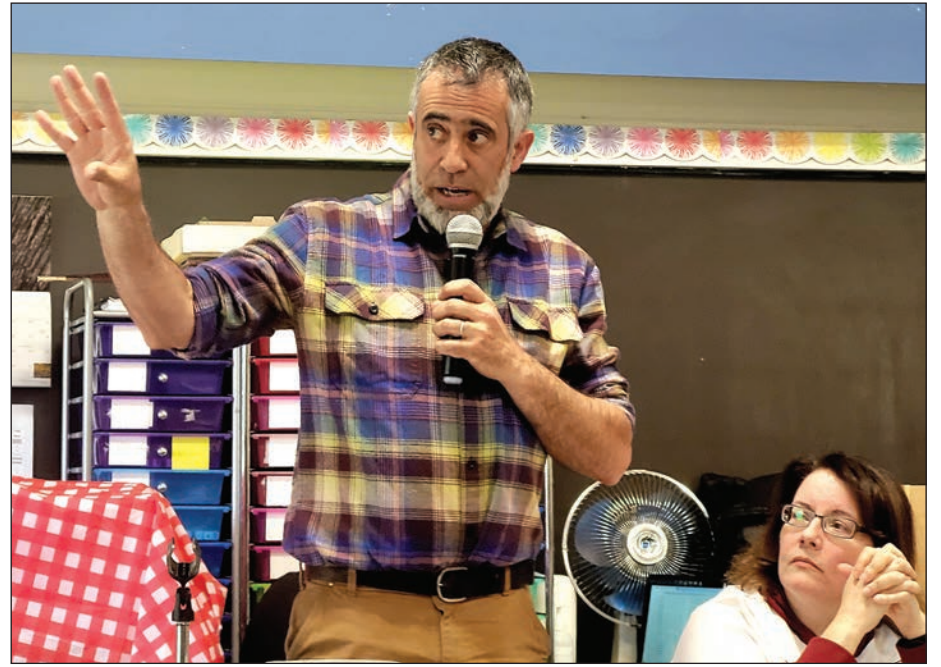
The station’s outdoor stage will also host live music, starting at 11 a.m. with Mark Franklin and Steve Pitoniak. Local favorites, “The 413’s” and Baird Souls will also perform on the station stage. These performances can be accessed remotely on the Chester Railway Station webcam or Facebook page. The Pioneer Valley Live Steamers will showcase their large-scale operating steam and diesel locomotives and a selection of rolling stock on the station’s south lawn.

There are still more events at the Emery Street ball field. There will be donkey rides, a “Little Engine That Could” story walk, a bounce house, an archery booth by the Boy Scouts of America and mounted and K-9 units from the Massachusetts State Police and Hampden County Sheriff’s Department.

While the events are all located within the same area of town, patrons might want to use the shuttle bus in order to save time and see everything. The Gateway Regional School District is sponsoring the bus to make this possible.

Anyone having a shred of energy remaining after taking part, is welcome to head up Middlefield Street to the trailhead for the Keystone Arches-located about two miles up the road. The entire trail is five miles round trip, but adventurers can get to the first bridges without doing the entire trail.

Chester on Track continues to grow each year, and is partially funded by the Chester Cultural Council, a local agency that is funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. For more information, people may follow the Chester Railway Station on Facebook, visit the website [chesterrailwaystation.net](http://chesterrailwaystation.net) or call 413-354-7878.



Bart Niswonger, chair of the Planning Board, explains the amendments.

Turley photo by Kathryn Koegel

## ZONING

from page 1

was a little surprised at the turnout this year but it was even higher during Covid when we had mail in ballots,” said newly reelected Select Board Member, Charley Rose.

Unger, who moved to Worthington from New York City in 2021, is encouraged by the broad base of support he received, especially from the business community including endorsements from the Goldenrod Inn, Sena Farm Brewery, The Links at Worthington, Liston’s and Four Corners Farm. “I ran on a platform of bringing democracy back and giving voice to those, who are not counted. I now have an obligation to my 172 constituents to keep fighting for the improvements to the town they supported with my robust campaign and we will do so.”

In his latest term, Charley Rose plans to increase communications, an area he pioneered for the town when he was first elected nine years ago. “The newsletter and the town website, I started them. We do need to build up our email and phone lists so that we can administer emergency notifications and news to both landlines and cell phones. Residents can sign up on the website.”

Opponent Unger takes issue with the chair of the Select Board also being Worthington’s chief communicator, which Rose says fell to him given his background in broadcasting and marketing. “If Unger wants to do it, he should say so,” says Rose. “I did it for free, but it’s a ton of work and last year, I asked for an appropriation. It’s part of the Select Board job. Somebody has to get paid to do it.”

Rose would also like to see more community engagement in town meetings. “They are all available on GoToMeeting and recordings are uploaded to YouTube and cross posted on the website and the Facebook page.”

The Long and Lively Town Meeting

Kevin Ryan managed order and procedures for a town meeting that stretched from 9:30 a.m. until nearly 2 p.m. There was extensive discussion of zoning board amendments that broadened the definition of outdoor activities and now require permits for larger scale events held on private property. Article 32, which broadened the definition of outdoor recreation passed 97 to 38. Article 33, which made more events eligible for permitting, but restricted the number of times they could be held per year at a given property, passed 71 to 16. By the laws of the town meetings, all amendments must pass by a two-thirds majority.

Unger was vocal at the town meeting raising concerns about the definitions and scope of the zoning amendments. “This current Select Board and Planning Board talked repeatedly about neighbors rights and concerns, but they never once talked about personal property rights. Good laws balance the two.

The Select Board pushed the Planning Board to create these amendments five weeks ago. I find they want to turn our rural town into an Eastern Mass suburb or some HOA on a lake. We are a rural hilltown of 1,000 people. We do not need more laws and regulations, even those sold as giving more liberties.”

Rose believes the point of the new zoning regulation has been misunderstood. “People did not get the context from the website. They don’t understand zoning. It’s about what you can do rather than what you can’t. There is a fundamental misunderstanding of the process and not bothering to learn. I have no problem with change, but do your homework.”

According to Bart Niswonger, chair of the Planning Board, the changes in zoning were largely driven by concern over two key events: a performance with attendance of approximately 250 held on private land and a motocross event two years ago. “It came to a head due to an injury at the motocross event. The police did not know it was happening and we have a tiny volunteer fire department.” The performance in question was held on candidate Unger’s property.

“We have people who want to hold events: big public events,” says Niswonger. “No, this is not birthday parties or weddings. There is currently no possibility to do it. If the town is interested in people holding [large scale] events, the role of Planning Board is in question.”

“There is a piece of Worthington that is libertarian,” says Niswonger. “Zoning law is there to protect the rights of the landowner, neighbors and the town. When the road is ripped up because you hold an event in March we have to pay to fix it.”

“The second amendment is about temporary events,” continues Niswonger. “We want to change uses that are allowed by right to include: fairs, carnivals and outdoor recreation, but the use is constrained. There are no more than three discrete events over eight days in a calendar year. You have to go to the Select Board and get a permit. We will look at traffic, parking, trash and sanitation.”

Rose is aware of grumblings about the decisions made at town meeting from some town residents. “I’ve heard proposed changes that don’t make a lot of sense such as ‘why do they get to make these changes at town meeting,’ ‘the weather was too nice to show up,’ or ‘we should change it to another day or time.’”

“Town meeting started in the 17th century in Massachusetts. New England is one of the only places in the world that has it. It is what it is. You’d have to change state law and traditions. Think of it this way: the whole town gets together and votes on how money is going to get spent. It’s a neat system.”



## BECKET

### Becket Arts Center lists events

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will present a talk by Chris Ferrero, a Cornell Master Gardener, on protecting plants and vegetables from marauding deer on Thursday, May 9 at 5 p.m.

Titled “Deer Defense for Home Gardeners: Outwitting the Wiliest of Wildlife,” this lecture is part of the Becket Arts Center’s Speaker Series. The event is free, but donations are welcome. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

The Becket Arts Center presents an evening of music with singer-songwriter Cliff Eberhardt on Saturday, May 11 from 7-9 p.m. With a solid background in both acoustic folk and pop standards, Eberhardt is known for creating original compositions with memorable lyrics. He is a great story-teller.

This event, part of the BAC’s Music Is My Story series, is free, but donations are welcome.

For more information, people may visit [www.becketartscenter.org](http://www.becketartscenter.org).

### Athenaeum lists upcoming events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St. will hold creative movement and story time on Saturday, May 11 at 10:30 a.m.

Children will hear a story and practice creative movement with Laurel Lenski. On all other Saturdays, there will be story and craft. RSVP by visiting [bit.ly/BA-storytime](http://bit.ly/BA-storytime).

Baby and toddler playgroup meets Tuesdays from 10-11 a.m. This is for birth to age 3. Siblings are welcome. RSVP by visiting [BecketAthenaeum.org/events](http://BecketAthenaeum.org/events).

Game night will be held Thursday, May 16 from 6-8 p.m. There will be board and card games. RSVP by visiting [bit.ly/BA-MAY16-game](http://bit.ly/BA-MAY16-game). Starting Saturday, May 18 from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. story time and stay and play

will take place. RSVP by visiting [bit.ly/BA-storytime](http://bit.ly/BA-storytime).

On Thursday, May 23 at 6 p.m. there will be a program on spring flower arranging. Space is limited and registration is required by visiting [bit.ly/BA-flower](http://bit.ly/BA-flower). This program is free and open to adults and older teens. Refreshments will be served.

Adult movie night was rescheduled to Saturday, May 25 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. The movie starts at 7 and is free. The movie with the most votes will be shown. Popcorn, candy and non-alcoholic beverages are provided. People should RSVP by May 18 by visiting [bit.ly/BA-May25-movie](http://bit.ly/BA-May25-movie). Older children 13 plus may come with an adult at the discretion of their guardian or parent.

## GREAT BARRINGTON

### Bard college host immersive EV ride and drive event June 8

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Saturday, June 8, the Recharge Berkshires EV Ride and Drive Event will take place at the Daniel Arts Center from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Bard College at Simon’s Rock, 84 Alford Road.

Event attendees will have the opportunity to explore the world of EVs with a variety of makes and models to test drive. In addition, there will be updates on current and near-future plans for charging, and ways to learn about local, state and federal rebates. EV experts will also be on-site to answer any questions that may arise regarding vehicle specs and ranges, charging processes and how EVs fit into their everyday lives. People may visit

<https://recharge-america.org/events/berkshires-2024/> for more information.

As part of the day’s event, attendees can hop on an e-bike for a test ride, enjoy delicious local bites from food trucks and visit with exhibitors from regional businesses and organizations with information on state and federal EV and solar incentives, electrification, sustainability, careers/jobs/training in those fields, community/local programs, events and services, and more. The event is free and open to the public. The EV expo is presented in partnership with Recharge Massachusetts, Bard College at Simon’s Rock and Bard College at Simon’s Rock Center for Food and Resilience.

### Jazz Ensemble concert set for May 10

GREAT BARRINGTON — The annual Bard College at Simon’s Rock Jazz Ensemble Spring Concert begins Friday, May 10 at 8 p.m. at the campus on 84 Alford Road.

Conducted by Professor of Music, Electronic Arts, and Cultural Studies John Myers, the concert will include new arrangements of pieces by iconic artists such as Thelonius Monk, Johnny Mandel, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and others, as well as the debut of John Myers’ original composition “Lifeline.” Along with talented student players, the concert will also include faculty guest artists Allan Dean on trumpet, Pete Toigo on bass and the voice of emeritus faculty guest artist Bill Dunbar.

“My students are multi-talented, not just in music, but in other disciplines as well, including physics, linguistics and mathematics. Our drummer, Yonah Sadeh, is already an award-winning filmmaker, and both of our guitarists are performing composers with online followers,” said Myers.

Among those talented student performers are David Bronshvay on vio-

lin, Damien Brown on trumpet, Tzedek Fishman on piano/keyboard, Megan Hackett on guitar and providing vocals, Zoia Levit on accordion, Paul Rose on piano, keyboard, and vocals, Maayan Rosenberg on clarinet, Yonah Sadeh on drums, Bohdan Lastochkin on guitar and Ace Thompson on bass.

“One of the many special features of the Simon’s Rock Jazz Ensemble is that I create my own original arrangements of all the music, shaped by the abilities and personalities of the players. Another feature is our unusual instrumentation, which this semester includes accordion and violin as well as the more traditional jazz instruments,” said Myers.

On performing Myers’ personal composition at the upcoming concert, he also said, “My composition “Lifeline” uses three levels of 7: 7/8, 7/4, and 7/2. The students enjoy the challenge of playing in these kinds of meters and I supply one of my own pieces every semester.”

People may visit <https://simons-rock.edu/events/index.php?eID=7785> for more information.

## CUMMINGTON

### Justin Beatty spoke at Indigenous Voices recently



Justin Beatty spoke as at Indigenous Voices held at the Village Church.

Submitted photo

CUMMINGTON – Indigenous Voices in the Berkshires hosted their 11th annual event on April 20 at the Village Church in Cummington.

Justin Beatty, a multi-disciplinary artist of Native American (Ojibwe, Saponi) and African-American descent offered a talk with question and answer afterwards. He opened his talk by honoring his ancestors in his language and the Indigenous people on whose lands we are all guests of.

He wove stories from his family and growing up as an Indigenous person, raised far away from his families’ communities. Through sharing stories of his personal journey, he illuminated the understanding of some aspects of current life for Native American people.

Beatty clarified that some Indigenous

ways are shared generally by all Native American cultures, other things are specific to certain tribes, and some things can and are shared with people of all backgrounds. The word “indigenous” means that it arises in relation to a specific area, with its own seasons and that the people, the culture, music etc that arise from that place are Indigenous to that place.

The languages, customs, foods etc are all intertwined with how the culture emerged in relation to the Earth in a place. He encouraged all people to learn a few words from their ancestral languages. Such as “thank you, hello.”

Everyone is invited to upcoming public events such as the Odenong pow wow in Amherst and Day of Remembrance at Great Falls Discovery Center Montague.

### Friday Night Cafe happens May 10

CUMMINGTON – The first half of the evening at the Friday Night Cafe on Friday, May 10 will be a Spoken Words set with the participants in Rochelle Wildfong’s storytelling workshops taking the stage and sharing their stories.

This is the first storytelling set, it as a kind of mini Moth Radio Hour with local folks they may know telling the stories, We are very excited to roll it out for you.

For the second hour another first. Dave Christopolis will perform. H is one of the Hilltowns great bass players. He has accompanied everyone, playing jazz, rock, blues. Tonight he gets center stage when “Dave Christo, sideman goes solo. Joined by accompanists, multi-instrumentalist Christo will deliver blues and lies to anyone listening. All original, not lazy.”

The show is from 7-9 p.m. at the

Village Church in beautiful downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District. The event is free; donations are appreciated. Snacks are provided and people should bring their own drinks. The show will take place in the intimate Vestry space. Masks are welcome and encouraged. This is sponsored by the friendly folks at the Village Church, who believe music can be a powerful force for building community.

Friday Night Cafe receives promotional support from the Cummington Cultural District and is supported in part by grants from the Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## EASTHAMPTON

### Valley Jazz Voices present concert

EASTHAMPTON – On Saturday, May 18, Valley Jazz Voices will hold a concert at 7 p.m. and there will be a singers open mic at 8:15 p.m. in The Blue Room at CitySpace, 43 Main St.

Valley Jazz Voices is the longest-running, community jazz vocal ensemble in Western Massachusetts. Celebrating its 10th year, the 30-member ensemble is staging its spring concert to share the love of jazz vocals with its community. Directed by Jeff Olmsted and accompanied by a professional jazz trio with Ellen Cogen on piano, George Kaye on bass and Chet Pasek on drums, the

ensemble sings a wide range of songs from standards to modern arrangements of familiar songs to originals by director Jeff Olmsted.

After the concert, it opens up to a singers’ open mic when singers are encouraged to bring their chart of a jazz standard and sing accompanied by the band.

Cost is \$20 on Eventbrite by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/VJV-May-18-Concert-Tickets> or at the door. Children under 12 are free.

People may visit [valleyjazzvoices.org](http://valleyjazzvoices.org) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/valleyjazzvoices](http://www.facebook.com/valleyjazzvoices).



# OBITUARY

## Miriam Wood Watkins, 92

BELFAST, ME – Miriam Wood Watkins, age 92, passed away peacefully at home in Belfast, Maine on Monday, Nov. 6, 2023, due to respiratory failure.

Miriam was born Sept. 16, 1931 in West Springfield, Massachusetts to Helen Moore and Berton Aubrey Wood. After living in West Springfield until age five, where her father owned a flower shop, she and her family moved to Huntington where Berton took up farming.

In 1944, at the age of 13, Miriam moved back to West Springfield and while taking on nanny jobs to support herself, graduated from West Springfield High School in 1949. This capacity for making decisions would take her through a life of many adventures. She showed an early capacity for gardening and growing flowers and many will recognize this in gardens she grew and tended.

She entered a Nursing Program at Massachusetts General Hospital. While studying there, she met James Watkins, serving at Fort Devens in Ayer, Massachusetts and seeing a secure future with James, asked to marry him. On March 23, 1952 they were married and the same year, she graduated from MGH. After a honeymoon at Niagara Falls, James was deployed to Germany, and Miriam traveled to visit him there. They spent three more years in Boston.

The young couple left Boston in 1956 eventually settling in Western Massachusetts, Miriam's childhood home. In 1960, eager to start a family, they purchased a small bungalow on Allen Coit Road in Huntington where they would live for the next 47 years.

Their family grew to include four boys, many cats and two dogs. The bungalow was enlarged to accom-



modate them. Miriam settled into her new role of raising the boys and keeping the household going.

One by one, the boys entered primary school with the last able to attend Kindergarten. Miriam continued to keep house, was active in church and other groups such as the Ladies Aid and the "CB's" or Community Benefit, a women's group in their neighborhood of Norwich Hill.

In 1975, with others, she and James co-founded the Fare-Thee-Well Wholeness Center, whose mission has been to support holistic practices of body, mind and spirit. They were active members of FTW until 2007.

As the boys grew up and left home, Miriam started to fill her time with vocations such as home health, and hobbies such as dried and pressed flower arranging. Many water colors she created may still be found in her portfolio. Her political life took the form of nine years on the Huntington Select Board and also on the Conservation Commission.

In 2007, realizing the burdens of keeping house in Massachusetts, she and James moved to the small coastal city of Belfast, Maine where she developed a great circle of friends through her active participation in such groups as The Peace and Justice Group of Waldo County, Raging Grannies and Heart Song. She could be seen often walking the streets of Belfast and her joy of walking carried her through to 2023.

Miriam will be remembered for her generous spirit, listening ability, big smile, and joyful laughter.

Miriam is survived by her sons Mark, Eric, Andrew, Todd and daughter-in-law Eliza.

## CHESTER

### Hilltown Hikers hold opening event of new property

CHESTER – Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers announce they will have a soft opening event of their newest property, the Chester Granite Saw on Saturday, May 18 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. during Chester on Track.

Purchased in September of 2023, volunteers have worked endless hours cleaning up the "jungle." This lot was unmaintained for approximately 80 years. The volunteers have been removing invasive species, dead ash trees and trash for the past seven months.

The Granite Works was started in the early 1800s to cut and finish the granite that was extracted from local quarries including the Trustees of Reservations Becket Quarry. It features a 12 foot diameter saw blade, originally operated by steam power with some remarkable

mechanisms designed to handle the massive blocks of quarried stone.

Hilltown Hikers staff will be at the Granite Saw property main entrance from 9am to 4pm located at 7 Prospect Street across from the ball field. There is also a foot path entrance located across from the Chester Railway Station. This property is in phase one of its cleanup, preservation and presentation to the public, expect much more here in the next year.

People may donate to keep this project and the Hilltown Hikers funded with more information available by visiting [www.hilltownhikers.com](http://www.hilltownhikers.com). People may email [westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com](mailto:westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com) or call/text 413-302-0312 if they have any questions. They are a 501 C3 non profit. Donations are appreciated.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Goshen Conservation Commission Legal Notice

The Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting under the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40) on **May 20, 2024 at 6:30** at the Goshen Town Hall for 54 Fuller Rd., Goshen, MA 01032. The work to be reviewed is installing four concrete piers for a rear deck attached to the north side of the house.  
05/09/2024

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD23P2337EA

Estate of:  
**Alfred L. Caron**  
Date of Death:  
**May 30, 2023**

### INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Scott Caron of Westfield, MA**.

**Scott Caron of Westfield, MA** has been informally

appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without** surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
05/09/2024

**Town of Worthington Conservation Commission**

### Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40, the Worthington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing in response to a Request for Determination of Applicability regarding the resurfacing of Route 112 (Huntington Road), from Worthington Corners to the Worthington/Huntington Town line – all within the Town of Worthington.

The Hearing will be held **Thursday, May 23, 2024, at 7 PM** in the Selectboard meeting room at Town Hall.  
05/09/2024

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts County of Hampden The Superior Court CIVIL DOCKET #2479CV0157

**RE: Farm Credit East, ACA f/k/a First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA vs John Stopa a/k/a John O. Stopa a/k/a John A. Stopa, Robin A. Humphrey and Amy Distefano**  
**ORDER OF NOTICE BY**

### PUBLICATION

TO: John Stopa a/k/a John O. Stopa a/k/a John A. Stopa, and Robin A. Humphrey individuals with an address of 99 Reagan Road, Granville, Massachusetts 01034 and Amy Distefano an individual with an address of 183 Reagan Road Granville Massachusetts 01034 in the County of Hampden; all in said Commonwealth;

**AND TO ALL PERSONS ENTITLED TO THE BENEFIT OF THE SERVICE MEMBERS' CIVIL RELIEF ACT OF 1940 AS AMENDED 2003 as amended:**

**Farm Credit East, ACA f/k/a First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA**, a banking institution with its principal office located at 240 South Road, Enfield, CT 06082

**claiming to be the holder of mortgage covering** property known as 99 Reagan Road, Granville, Hampden Massachusetts f/k/a 53 Reagan Road, Granville, Hampden County, Massachusetts and also encumbering

West Side Reagan Road, Granville, Hampden County, Massachusetts

**given by**, the Defendants, Stopa and Humphrey to Farm Credit East, ACA f/k/a First Pioneer Farm Credit ACA dated September 17, 2002

recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds, Book 12570, Page 120, has filed with said court a Complaint for authority to foreclose said mortgage in the manner following: by entry on and possession of the premises therein described and by exercise of the power of sale contained in said mortgage.

If you are entitled to the benefits of the Service Members' Civil Relief Act of 1940 as amended, and you object to such foreclosure you or your attorney should file a written appearance and answer in said court at Springfield in said County on or before 6/6/24 or you may be forever barred from claiming that such foreclosure is invalid under said Act.

**Witness**, Michael D. Ricciuti, Esquire, Chief

Justice of the Superior Court, at Springfield, Massachusetts, this 24th day of April, 2024.

Laura S. Gentile,  
Clerk of the Courts  
By: **Lauramarie Sirois**  
Assistant Clerk  
05/09/2024

### LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON WATER AND SEWER

The Water and Sewer Commissioners will hold a public meeting regarding Water and Sewer FY 2025 rate increase and receive public input from the community on **Thursday, May 23, 2024, at 6:00 PM** at Stanton Hall, Huntington Massachusetts FY 2025.

Public input on the FY2025 rate increase is welcomed and encouraged by attending the public hearing.

Commissioners:  
Dan Oliveira  
Sue Fopiano  
Karon Hathaway  
05/09, 05/16/2024

## DEATH NOTICES

### BISBEE, DAVID

Died April 26, 2024  
Celebration of Life May 18 at  
First Congregational Church of Chesterfield at 11 a.m.

### WATKINS, MIRIAM WOOD

Died Nov. 6, 2023

Country Journal

## OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

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

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

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



# WORTHINGTON

## Worthington Library announces 2024 scholarship available

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Library announces the 2024 Worthington Library Scholarship.

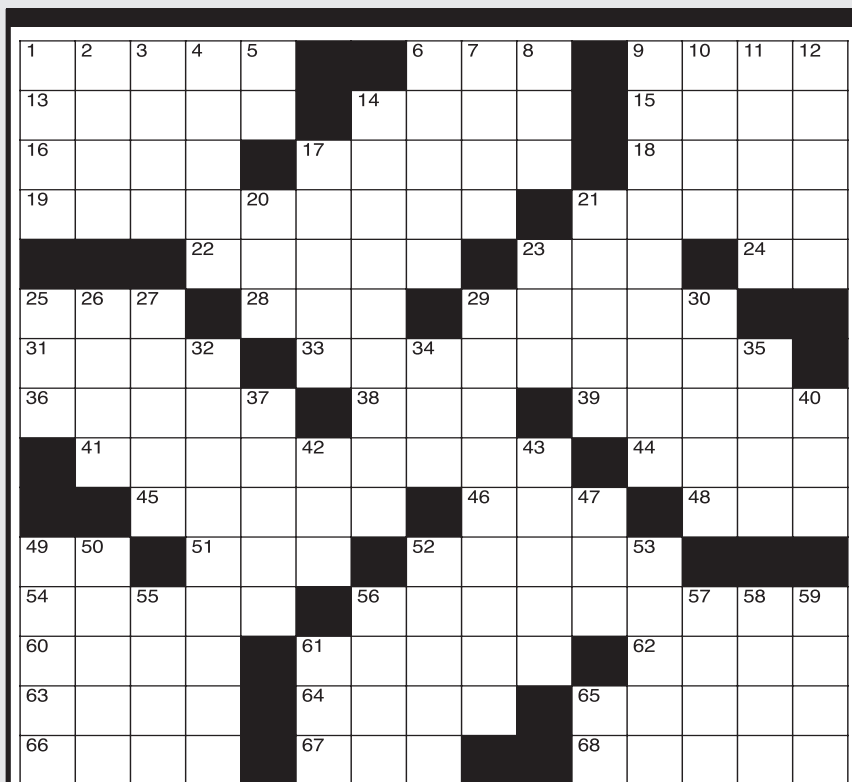
This award is available to any student completing their high school stud-

ies and continuing their education at a post-secondary learning environment. Applicants are asked to write an essay introducing themselves, describing their next educational pursuits and answer this

question, “When you look back, what book has been your favorite and what lessons will it bring you in the future?”

The essay must be submitted by Tuesday, June 4 either by hand deliv-

ering it to the library or mailing: The Worthington Library, P.O. Box 598, Worthington, MA 01098. For more information, people may call Eileen at 413-238 4461.



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. It wakes you up
- 6. A place to sleep
- 9. Czech village
- 13. Appetizer
- 14. African country
- 15. Dark brown or black
- 16. Parent-teacher groups
- 17. Saturates
- 18. ESPN personality Kimes
- 19. Songs to a lover
- 21. Cavalry-sword
- 22. Begat
- 23. Patriotic women
- 24. Famed Princess
- 25. One who does not conform
- 28. Neither
- 29. Nigerian monetary unit
- 31. Body parts
- 33. Hit Dave Matthews Band song
- 36. Depicts with pencil

- 38. Make into leather without tannin
- 39. Plants grow from them
- 41. Alias
- 44. Fingers do it
- 45. More dried-up
- 46. Clod
- 48. Senior officer
- 49. A way to listen to music
- 51. The bill in a restaurant
- 52. Historic center of Artois region
- 54. Cyprinid fishes
- 56. Poisonous perennial plant
- 60. Scottish Loch
- 61. Heads
- 62. Extra seed-covering
- 63. Wings
- 64. Britpop band
- 65. Forearm bones
- 66. Small immature herring
- 67. Female sibling

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Vipers
- 2. Not on time
- 3. Resembling a wing or wings
- 4. Tears down
- 5. Professional designation
- 6. Noise a sheep made
- 7. Type of lodge
- 8. Speak poorly of
- 9. Ties the knot again
- 10. Apron
- 11. Studied intensively
- 12. City in Finland
- 14. One who monitors
- 17. 18-year astronomical period
- 20. Trent Reznor's band
- 21. Takes to the sea
- 23. Split pulses
- 25. Valentine's Day color
- 26. Wyatt
- 27. Type of rail

- 29. One from the Big Apple
- 30. Asteroids
- 32. Made more sugary
- 34. Change in skin pigment
- 35. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- 37. Koran chapters
- 40. A place to relax
- 42. Young woman ready for society life
- 43. Female horses
- 47. Half of Milli Vanilli
- 49. Icelandic poems
- 50. Indiana town
- 52. Golden peas
- 53. Closes tightly
- 55. It's mined in mountains
- 56. Cliff (Hawaii)
- 57. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
- 58. Monetary unit
- 59. Primordial matter
- 61. TV station
- 65. Rise

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**

Mar 21/Apr 20

It's challenging for you and a romantic partner to get together this week and that may lead to stress. Over time you will be able to reconnect and get things back in sync.

**CANCER**

Jun 22/Jul 22

You may feel like you don't want to get involved if a friend or colleague is in trouble. But this person can really use your help and you should step up.

**LIBRA**

Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, you may be inclined to protect loved ones from the truth this week, but they need to hear all of the details in this instance. Break any news to them gently.

**CAPRICORN**

Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, misinformation may be spreading around you and it can be tempting to add your own input to the discussions. Make sure your contributions can be backed up.

**TAURUS**

Apr 21/May 21

Normally you are very open, but all of your communication channels seem to be blocked of late. Don't be too hard on yourself as things will return to normal soon enough.

**LEO**

Jul 23/Aug 23

Don't let your career get sidetracked by gossip and office politics, Leo. You should stand up for yourself if others are speaking poorly about you. Avoid getting involved in gossip.

**SCORPIO**

Oct 24/Nov 22

You are a workaholic by nature, but when fatigue hits you this week, you'll need to step back and give yourself time to rest. There's a lot coming your way soon enough.

**AQUARIUS**

Jan 21/Feb 18

You are finally putting some of your longstanding plans in motion, Aquarius. However, this week you may receive some information that might delay progress.

**GEMINI**

May 22/Jun 21

Gemini, if a family member has been in a bad mood or is feeling unwell, it is up to you to get to the root of the situation. Provide whatever assistance you can.

**VIRGO**

Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, what seems to be bad news about your financial situation may not be as bad as it once appeared. Double-check the details before you become panicked.

**SAGITTARIUS**

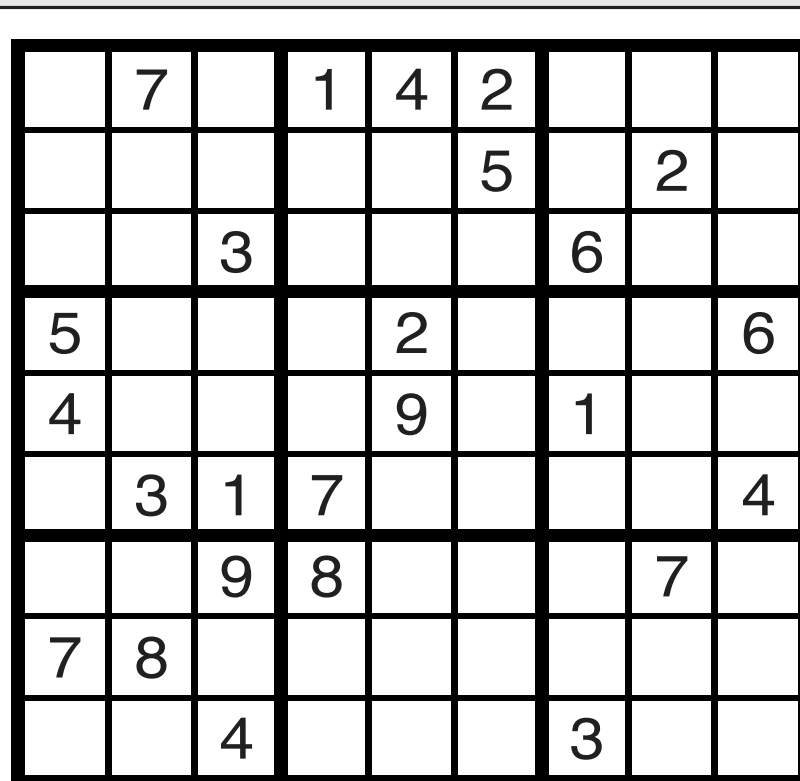
Nov 23/Dec 21

A person who is no longer in your life may be on your mind a lot these days, Sagittarius. Cherish the fond memories you have of this person and don't worry about being preoccupied.

**PISCES**

Feb 19/Mar 20

Someone may try to mislead you with some inaccurate information this week, Pisces. Conduct your own research and you'll get all of the details you need for to draw your own conclusion.



# 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**

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

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

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29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	31 Base Price \$31.50	32 Base Price \$32.00
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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# HUNTINGTON

## Select Board allows 2024 dog licensing before catching up back years

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – The May 2 issue of the Country Journal reported on the April 24 Select Board meeting.

Town administrator Jennifer Peloquin and Interim Town Clerk Michelle Fieldstad-Booth have issued updates on two items from that article: the Memorial Day Parade and annual dog licenses.

It was reported last week that Memorial Day Parade committee members Josh Ellinger and Lori Belhumeur were in the process of nailing down details for the annual parade and ceremony. Huntington's Memorial Day Parade will take place on Monday, May 27 and the public is invited to take part or observe the proceedings. Marchers will assemble at Pettis Field at 8 a.m. and the parade will begin at 8:15 a.m..

It will proceed down Route 112, over the green bridge, and finish at the town green. The ceremony will take place from the Gazebo on the town com-

mon. Veterans and other groups, who are interested in marching or riding in a vehicle, are asked to call Memorial Day Parade Committee Chair Lori Belhumeur at 413-887-9746. Parade observers are reminded to remove hats and stand with their right hand over their heart when the American flag held by the color guard passes by.

Interim Town Clerk Michelle Fieldstad-Booth has provided new information about 2024 dog and kennel licenses, which cover the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Applications will be available online by visiting [www.huntingtonma.us](http://www.huntingtonma.us) and at the Town Hall beginning May 15. The deadline to apply for the new license is June 30, 2024. A late fee of \$10 per dog will be charged for applications that are received after July 15, 2024.

Licensing fees are as follows: \$6 per dog for an intact male, neutered male or spayed female; \$10 per dog for an intact female; \$25 per kennels that have a capacity of 4 - 10 dogs and \$75 per kennel for those that have a capacity of more

than 10 dogs. A current rabies certificate must be on file with the Town Clerk or provided at the time of registration.

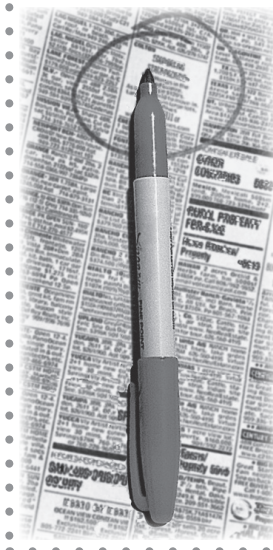
Due to issues with dog licensing in recent years, the Huntington Select Board has decided that owners will have a fresh start for 2024 and will not

be required to catch up on prior years' licenses before the 2024 license can be issued. If you have any questions, people may contact Interim Town Clerk Michelle Fieldstad-Booth by emailing [townclerk@huntingtonma.us](mailto:townclerk@huntingtonma.us) or calling 413-512-5209.

# Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

Connect with the Best Opportunities in the Classifieds



## CORRESPONDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Turley Publications seeks **Experienced Writers/Journalists** to produce news and/or feature stories of local interest for various towns and cities.

- **Must be dependable, professional and able to meet strict deadlines**
- **Salary based on a flat rate by story and photo**

Send writing samples with resume to

Deanna Sloat  
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or email directly to [dsloat@turley.com](mailto:dsloat@turley.com)



## Huntington COA lists educational programs

HUNTINGTON – The Council on Aging announced two upcoming educational programs in May and June.

On Wednesday, May 15 at 1 p.m., local craftswoman Sue Maxwell will lead a workshop on jewelry beading in Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road. Maxwell is a seasoned crafts person known for her beaded jewelry and her paper cut greeting cards, which have been sold locally

at craft fairs and in shops on commission. Beads and materials will be provided by the COA.

Kathleen Peterson will present a workshop on creating garden pots on Wednesday, June 5 also at 1 p.m. and also at Stanton Hall. Participants will create their own potted plant to bring home. Plants and materials will be provided by the COA.

# Classifieds

12 WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS | SERVING 50 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | [www.turley.com](http://www.turley.com)

Call us at 413.283.8393

### HELP WANTED

**CLASS A DRIVER.** Triaxle dump trailer work. Local deliveries, minimum 40 hours, rate based on experience. **RB Enterprises, Ludlow, MA. 413-583-8393.**

**FULL TIME, 5 NIGHTS PER WEEK FLAT BED DRIVER NEEDED.**

Monday-Friday \$1500 per week. Must be able to remain on the property and work out of Early's Towing located at 536 Park Avenue, Worcester. We will have you responded to Worcester Police, Mass. State Police, AAA and in-house accounts and customer calls. You will be doing tows, jump starts, lock-outs, tires changes and out of gas calls. Experience is a must! You must be responsible, organized, clean in appearance and dependable. We have new trucks and equipment. We provide uniforms, benefits, paid time off, retirement plan and several other benefits. We are a family run small business looking for a team player to join our team. Please call Jim to schedule an interview **508-753-1123.**

**HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC.** Construction equipment and trucks. Experience required, full time. **RB Enterprises, Ludlow, MA. 413-583-8393.**

**The Russell Public Library in Russell, MA is seeking a PART TIME (8 HOURS) LIBRARY CIRCULATION ASSISTANT.** Required, strong interest in working with the public, good organizational skills and solid computer skills. Bachelor's Degree with 1 year of library/administrative/ public service experience or an Associates Degree, with 2 years of library/administrative/ public service experience. For more info see library page on **Town of Russell website.** Please send a cover letter and resume to **Russell Public Library Trustees P.O. Box 275 Russell, MA 01071** or email to [rpdirector@townofrussell.us](mailto:rpdirector@townofrussell.us) to be received by May 21, 2024.

### HELP WANTED

#### DRIVERS

**INTERSTATE BATTERIES IS SEEKING A DRIVER** for deliveries in Western Mass area. Qualifications include: clean driving record; ability to lift heavy weights; stable job history; good communication skills; high work standards & strong self-organizational skills. Apply in person 8 am-5pm M-F 9am-12pm Sat. **230 Chauncey Walker Street (Rte 21) Belcher town**


### REAL ESTATE

#### FOR RENT



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

**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.

You will find, **mystical success...**  **In the CLASSIFIEDS!**

### REAL ESTATE

#### FOR RENT



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

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



Post your job openings in our classifieds. **WE GET RESULTS!** Call **1-413-283-8393**

## HELP WANTED

# VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The Digital Literacy program of the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of seven Councils on Aging provides technical support and training to adults age 60 plus. We are hiring an enthusiastic, community-oriented person with great people skills who can join us immediately as our part-time Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible for supporting implementation of the grant as written, active community outreach to recruit volunteers for providing technical support and technology training. Position involves locating, screening, scheduling, supervising, and recognizing volunteers. Volunteer Coordinator also will help plan a 2nd Digital Fair in fall 2024.

Position requirements include:

**Experience:** Work or personal experience with volunteer older adults 60+ helpful.

Demonstrated ability to communicate well in-person, by phone and electronically and connect with a variety of community partners, and older adults.

Proven ability to function equally well as a team member and independently to execute the grant program model.

Have a desire for flexible work schedule and able to work some weekend hours.

Must be flexible, take initiative with volunteer recruitment and enjoy a varied workload.

Technology knowledge for position work helpful but not required. Use of personal tech device helpful but project may be able to provide a dedicated device.

Local, hilltown retirees and recent graduates encouraged to apply. Flexible hours with opportunity to work from home.

**Availability:** Available weekly on Monday mornings from 9:00 – 10:00 am for Zoom Team Meeting. Must be able to mutually schedule and attend in-person meetings at times/locations with Digital Development Coordinator.

**Job Type:** Part-time contractor, up to 60 hrs/month, paid monthly  
Time period: Limited time 16 month commitment through December 31, 2024.

**Pay:** \$25.00 per hour

**References:** Required

**CORI Submission:** Required

**Email letter and resume to:** Jan Gibeau  
Northern Hilltowns Consortium of Councils on Aging  
[nhills7consortium@gmail.com](mailto:nhills7consortium@gmail.com)

or deliver/mail to  
Chesterfield COA  
Box 7, Chesterfield MA 01012



# PLAINFIELD

## Firefighters complete six weekend training

PLAINFIELD – Two Plainfield Volunteer firefighters completed the six-weekend day fire training program sponsored by the Hampshire County Fire Defense Association over the past two months at the Williamsburg Fire Department along with 14 other firefighters from departments throughout Hampshire County.

The course includes firefighter skills training in on-scene safety, Personal Protective Equipment, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus donning and doffing, search and rescue, ladders, hose operations, skill review and building construction, culminating with

live fire training at the Granby Fire Department “Burn building.”

In order to participate in the course, firefighters must have completed Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation and First Responder certification, use National Fire Protection Association compliant turnout gear and have obtained ICS 100 and 700 certifications.

All instruction is provided by Massachusetts Fire Academy trained instructors and firefighters must complete all classes. Congratulations to Jared Laroche and Hunter Menard for successfully completing this training.



A crew gets last minute instructions from Instructor Williamsburg Asst. Chief Springman before entering the “Burn Building.”



Plainfield firefighters Hunter Menard, from left and Jared Laroche prepare for entering live fire conditions.

Submitted photos

# STOCKBRIDGE

## Stockbridge Grange holds community dinner

STOCKBRIDGE – The Stockbridge Grange is having a community dinner Sunday, May 19 featuring roast pork, mashed potato and vegetable with dessert choices of chocolate cream or lemon meringue pie.

Dinner is \$15 per person and is take out only with 12-1:30 p.m. pick up at the Stockbridge Grange Hall, 51 Church St. Orders may be made by calling 413-243-1298 or 413-443-4352.

Grange Community Dinners are designed to raise money for non-profit projects and building maintenance.

# WESTHAMPTON

## Westhampton ATM happens May 11

WESTHAMPTON – The Westhampton Ann Town Meeting will be held on Saturday May 11 starting promptly at 9 a.m..

People can visit <http://www.westhampton-ma.com> to download a copy to the town meeting warrant.

# WORTHINGTON

## R.H. Conwell School to host bike rodeo

WORTHINGTON – R.H. Conwell Elementary School, 147 Huntington Road, partnered with Safe Routes to School, Hampshire Regional Mountain Biking Club and Northampton Cycling Club to offer a bike rodeo on Saturday, June 1 from 9:30 am-noon.

They will have games, a skills course, safety information, bike and helmet decorating, snacks and more. Students preschool through sixth grade are welcome, may drop in anytime and must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Organizers ask that middle and high school aged siblings do not attend or come as peer support. The games and skills courses will be targeted for the elementary school level to foster a love for being physically active on a bicycle while also promoting road safety and etiquette.

Children must register by Friday, May 17 by visiting town website at <https://worthington-ma.us> and click on R.H. Conwell Community News. Students must have a helmet to participate

and need to bring their bicycle to ride. If your student would like to participate, but does not have a bicycle or a helmet, and your family is unable to provide one for them, please email Nurse Steph ([sfaas@he-k12.org](mailto:sfaas@he-k12.org)). We are also accepting any donations of outgrown bicycles or helmets (that are not expired) and in good, working condition. If you have a donation, please also email Nurse Steph ([sfaas@he-k12.org](mailto:sfaas@he-k12.org)).

Parents, Grandparents & Friends  
**SPECIAL** Congratulations Class of **2024**  
**Honor Your Graduate**

We are offering a great deal for you to celebrate your graduate in your community graduation issue. Submit a photo and a brief message.

**2 x 3 Black & White Graduation Ad**  
Regular Price \$76 **SPECIAL \$55**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION **MAY 17th**  
EMAIL YOUR AD TO: **wdelcamp@turley.com**  
HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE

MAIL YOUR AD WITH PAYMENT TO:  
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Palmer, MA 01069  
Pay by check or credit card:  
Checks Payable to Turley Publications.  
Credit Cards  
be sure to include:  
Newspaper you would like the ad to appear,  
Your Name, Address, Phone Number,  
Credit Card Number, Exp. Date & CVV.

2 x 3 Advertisement

Congratulations **CARLY SMITH**

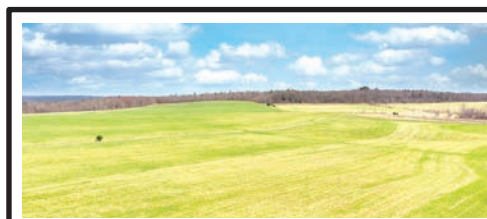
We are so proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College.

Love Mom, Dad, John and Chloe



**SAMPLE**

think OUTSIDE of the **BIG BOX** SUPPORT COMMUNITY BUSINESSES



WORTHINGTON, MA - 268 acres of premier farmland. The “Jones Lot” has a rich history of over 100 years in the Western Mass farm community. Over 172 acres of open land. The land has excellent soil, conducive for crops, hay, and vegetables. Excellent for cattle and livestock grazing. **\$989,000**



ALSO IN WORTHINGTON - 138.37 acres of prime farmland with Over 63 acres of open land set on three pastures. A pond, brook and long paved area for staging crops **\$599,000**

Both properties can be purchased separately or combined and are a 30-minute drive to Northampton and interstate 91. Both Properties are exclusively for farming purposes and development is restricted. Buyer needs to be an experienced bona fide farmer and needs to be approved by MA. Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) as such. subject to Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR) held by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the (MDAR) Do not trespass.



Farms are presented by **James Adams Owner/Broker**  
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