

Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

May 21, 2026 | Vol. 48, No. 4 | 75¢

www.countryjournal.turley.com

CHESTER

Sun shines for Chester on Track

CHESTER – Rain or shine, Chester on Track happens, but this past Saturday, May 16 the weather was perfect weather.

The 35th Annual Chester on Track took place all over the downtown area includ-

ing at the Chester Railway Museum, a National Historic Landmark, on Prospect Street and on Emery Field.



Turley Publications photos by Wendy Long
The Continental Revolutionary War reenactors fire a musket along the Chester on Track parade route.



Above, new this year for Chester on Track at the Chester Railway Museum was a 1946 Pullman Coach previously used as a dining car by Berne's Dining Depot in Chicopee. There will be more photos in the May 28 edition. Left, stamp enthusiasts stopped at the Chester Post Office to purchase a one-day special event postal cancellation at the Chester Post Office.

BLANDFORD

Board meets May 11

All vehicle drivers required to sign policy

The town's vehicle use policy was discussed at the Monday, May 11 Select Board meeting.

The policy has a page indicating those who drive a town vehicle have received and read the policy.

Select Board Chairman Jackie Coury said the first order of business is to give Joann Martin and Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera a list of everyone, who drives town vehicles. The board will send the policy to all vehicle users to sign and date having received the policy.

Cemetery Commissioners

The Cemetery Commissioners no longer have the use of a vehicle capable of towing their dump trailer to remove dirt at a gravesite. None of the commissioners have vehicles capable of pulling that, nor is there a hitch on the fire truck.

MEETING, page 8

BLANDFORD

Springfield Water and Sewer Commission removes trees beyond Gate 23

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Coverage of the Select Board meeting in the May 14 issue of The Country Journal referenced Springfield Water and Sewer Commission's tree cutting work on Herrick Road.

Conservation Commission Chair Dick Gates provided additional information to clarify SWSC's work, which is actually at the end of Herrick Road, beyond Gate 23, which is historically known as Falls Road. All of Herrick Road was known as Falls Road at one time.

There is no tree removal on the public portion of Herrick Road. The portion of the road in the SWSC watershed area is still known as Falls Road, according to Gates, where they will be removing 375 trees they refer to as hazard trees.

These hazard trees are, according to Gates, mostly dead or dying Ash Trees (303) affected by the invasive Emerald Ash Borer

Beetle. Other trees include beech, black cherry, red and sugar maples, red and white pines and big tooth poplar.

SWSC Water Supply Manager Nicole Sanford in a letter to Conservation stated, "Commission staff conduct routine work on Falls Road and staff will be conducting regular vegetation removals at invasive sites, beginning as soon as this summer. Not only do standing dead trees pose a hazard to individuals accessing these areas, but downed trees across Falls Road have repeatedly prevented vehicular access and impeded commission operations in the area. Additionally, the commission is cognizant of maintaining passable roads for the purpose of emergency services access."

Due to the number of trees involved, Conservation Commission has met with SWSC on site twice to see if the project "requires further review and approval."

According to Gates,

TREES, page 8

CHESTERFIELD

Ashmere Project at Camp Chesterfield moves forward

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

The Ashmere Project at Camp Chesterfield made tremendous progress on renovating the facilities at the former Scout camp.

Volunteers improved accessibility for people, who use wheelchairs. This group of highly motivated volunteers had some, who brought and operated heavy equipment-on a series of work weekends already underway.

A visit on Saturday, March 15 saw both volunteers and friends with disabilities assembling bunks, widening doorways, organizing the main hall and installing decking boards.

"Once again, the biggest thing I feel is gratitude, especially for the local community. So many individual volunteers and skilled help have been coming out," said Camp Ranger Jakob Palches, one of the chief organizers of preparing the former Scout camp for a two week program in June for friends with disabilities, who are supported by volunteers.

The camp, which started 20 years ago on Martha's Vineyard moved to Western Massachusetts, spending the summers of 2022-2025 renting out Berkshire Lakes

Camp on Ashmere Lake in Hinsdale. The ultimate goal, Palches said, was to find their own property to serve as a permanent site for their

retreat. On Oct. 3, 2025, they purchased the former Chesterfield Scout Camp for \$1.4 million.

Palches said they will

start small this year and run a two-week retreat to continue to serve the 30 friends

PROJECT, page 7



The group of volunteers sat down to a meal in the Lodge.

Turley Production photos by Wendy Long



PAGE 9

Blandford.....	8, 9	Cummington.....	2	Opinion.....	4, 5, 6	Schools & Youth.....	12
Business Directory.....	3	Dalton.....	12	Otis.....	12	Westfield.....	2
Chester.....	7	Easthampton.....	2	Public Notices.....	9, 10	Westhampton.....	3
Chesterfield.....	7	Hilltowns.....	2	Puzzle Page.....	10		
Classifieds.....	11	Monterey.....	6	Sandisfield.....	3		



HILLTOWNS

MassDOT announces road work

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces daytime and nighttime bridge repairs and waterway cleaning and repairs on I-90 eastbound and westbound in the towns of Lee, Montgomery and Russell. All work is weather dependent.

In Lee, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 11.2 from now through Thursday, May 21 from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. Waterway repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound from mile marker 13.0 to mile marker 14.5 on Thursday, May 21 from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 west-

bound from mile marker 10.7 to mile marker 9.8 nightly now through the morning of Thursday, May 21 from 7 p.m.-5 a.m.

Bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound from mile marker 9.8 to mile marker 10.7 on the night of Thursday, May 21 through the morning of Friday, May 22 from 7 p.m.-5 a.m.

In Montgomery and Russell bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 36.0 now through Thursday, May 21 from 6 a.m.-5 p.m.

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

Drivers traveling

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

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

MassDEP honors top public water systems

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and Commissioner Bonnie Heiple celebrated National Drinking Water Week with more than 200 public water systems and operators at the 40th Drinking Water Awards Day.

The event honored 42 systems, four operators, two towns and two childcare advocates for demonstrating excellent service, leading conservation efforts,

and showing a strong commitment to water quality in 2025.

“Water is our most valuable resource,” said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. “MassDEP is proud to recognize our systems and operators who provide superior service, keep Massachusetts residents safe, and improve our resilience.”

2025 public water system award recipients and honorable mentions: Small Community Systems

– Williamsburg Water Department in Williamsburg; Medium and Large Community Systems –

Northampton Water Division in Northampton; Consecutive Systems – Bard College At Simons Rock in Great Barrington and Western Region Distinguished Operator Award – Richard Kilhart, an outstanding operator in the western region by MassDEP’s Western Regional Office.

WESTFIELD

Westfield Bank makes \$150,000 donation to YMCA

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Bank announced a \$150,000 donation to the YMCA of Greater Westfield as a major contributor towards renovations of its Camp Shepard.

The donation, which will go towards the construction of a new welcome center, pavilion and bathhouse, underscores the bank’s ongoing commitment to strengthening the health, wellness and vitality of the community.

For more than 75 years, Camp Shepard has served thousands of children, introducing them to nature while building confidence and friendships that last a lifetime. These upgrades, which will be financed by a larger capital campaign, will update the aging facility, expand capacity from 215 to 300 campers per day and open the site year-round to the community, all while maintaining access and affordability.

“This investment reflects what community banking should be about,” said James C. Hagan, President and CEO of Westfield Bank. “The YMCA of Greater Westfield and Camp Shepard have a tremendous impact on our community, focusing on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. We’re proud to kick off their fundraising campaign and support their goal of replacing the aging camp infrastructure that has been so well used by generations of kids.”

“Westfield Bank’s \$150,000 gift to YMCA Camp Shepard is truly transformative,” said YMCA of Greater Westfield CEO Andrea Allard. “Camp is so much more than a summer experience, it’s a place where kids discover what they are capable of, build friendships that last a lifetime,

and feel like they belong. This kind of generosity makes it possible for us to reach more young people who need that experience the most. We are deeply grateful to Westfield Bank for investing in our community’s children in such a meaningful way.”

Westfield Bank’s contribution is part of its broader commitment to civic engagement and community investment. Through financial support, volunteerism, and longstanding partnerships with local organizations, the bank continues to help create opportunities that make communities more vibrant, inclusive and resilient.

Currently, the bank has twenty-five branch offices, forty-nine ATMs, and an additional thirty seasonal ATMs and serves Hampden and Hampshire counties in Western Massachusetts and the Capitol Region in Connecticut.

CUMMINGTON

Cummington American Legion Post 304 lists Memorial Day services

CUMMINGTON – The Cummington American Legion Post 304 announces the Memorial Day services.

On Monday, May 25 they will be at the Worthington Memorial across from Town Hall at 8:30 a.m.

They will be at the West Cummington Cemetery at 9 a.m. and at the Cummington Memorial at Community House at 9:30 a.m.

They will be at the Goshen Cemetery at 10 a.m. and Chesterfield Veterans’ Park at 11 a.m.

The final service will be in Plainfield at Hilltop Cemetery at 1 p.m.

The Post welcomes all area veterans to join them at any or all of these events.

People may call Post 304 Commander Conrad Liebenow at 413-634-5353 for more information.



Dave Christopolis and The Resistance perform at Friday Night Cafe May 22

CUMMINGTON – The Resistance, an experimental five piece ensemble features Pete Adams on Pedal Steel, Mike Slahetka on stunt guitar, Bruce Mandero on mandolin/acoustic guitar, Jim Dean on drums and objects and composer Dave Christopolis on upright bass, electric bass, uke, theramin and vocals on Friday, May 22 from 7-9 p.m.

The material is punk blues that swings. The group will weave its way through an improvisational

performance of words and music in a two hour interactive sonic performance. People may support local music and celebrate at Friday Night Cafe.

The show is 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, bring your own drinks.

The show will take place in the intimate Vestry space. Once again this is 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 Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor, and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

EASTHAMPTON

bankESB appoints Michael Missle as vice president

EASTHAMPTON – bankESB announces the appointment of Michael Missle as vice president of cash management.

Missle has 25 years of banking experience and expertise in treasury and payment services. In his new role, Missle will lead the bank’s cash management strategy, delivering innovative solutions to help business clients optimize liquidity, streamline operations and enhance financial efficiency.

Prior to joining bankESB, Missle served as vice president of cash management at HarborOne Bank, where he was responsible for developing and managing comprehensive cash management services. Before that, he held the role of vice president, application services at Brookline Bank, overseeing critical banking technology platforms.

Earlier in his career, he

served as director of payment services at Middlesex Savings Bank and head of cash management at Boston Private Bank & Trust Company, where he played a key role in advancing payment systems and client service capabilities.

Missle holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Vermont. He is an active member of the University of Vermont Alumni Association and the Camp Bauercrest Alumni Association. He was previously a soccer coach for Framingham United, reflecting his commitment to community involvement and mentorship.

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton. Through their charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, they support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Hampden and Hampshire counties.



Michael Missle

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

Find it in the Classifieds

413.283.8393 • classifieds@turley.com
24 Water St., Palmer • www.turley.com

NRA
BASIC PISTOL COURSE WITH LIVE FIRE
For License To Carry Permit \$140
Call For Class Dates/Details 413-537-0620 Matt Marcinkiewicz muscione@hotmail.com

LOWER PRICES TO BOOST YOUR BUDGET! INFLATION PRICE BUSTERS PRICES IN RED ARE AT OR BELOW LAST YEAR'S PRICES!

USDA INSP. FRESH COUNTRY STYLE PORK RIBS	\$1.86 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF STRIPLOIN CUT FREE	\$9.88 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN WINGS 10 LB BAG	\$1.55 lb
USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN ASSORTED PORK LOIN CHOPS	\$1.99 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP ROUND LONDON BROIL	\$7.77 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN LEG 1/4s 40 LB BOX	69¢ ea
USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS CENTER CUT PORK LOIN CUT FREE	\$2.09 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN KAYEM CANNON FIRE SPICY HOT DOGS 7 OZ	\$2.99 ea	USDA INSP. HILLSHIRE FARMS POLSKA KIELBASA TURKEY 13 OZ or REGULAR 14 OZ	\$4.79 ea
USDA INSP. FROZEN BABY BACK PORK RIBS	\$2.99 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN HAMBURGER PATTIES 80% LEAN 20 CT BOX	\$17.50 ea	USDA INSP. FROZEN JUMBO APPLE PIE LATTICE CRUST 60 OZ	\$6.99 ea
USDA INSP. STOREMADE ALL VARIETIES ITALIAN SAUSAGE	\$2.79 lb	USDA INSP. STOREMADE FROZEN HAMBURGER PATTIES 80% LEAN 3 OZ	\$22.99 ea	USDA INSP. FROZEN KAYEM OLD TYME NATURAL CASING HOT DOGS 2 1/2 BOX	\$6.99 ea
USDA INSP. STOREMADE BONELESS KOREAN BBQ MARINATED PORK BUTT STRIPS	\$3.65 lb	USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN BLUE SEA SHRIMP RING FULLY COOKED WITH SAUCE 2 LB	\$17.99 ea		
USDA INSP. STOREMADE BONELESS ITALIAN BBQ MARINATED CHICKEN BREAST	\$3.99 lb				

90 Meat Outlet 90 Avocado St. Springfield 413-737-1288 www.90meat.com

HOURS: Mon. - Wed. 8-4 Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3

MEMORIAL DAY HONORING OUR AMERICAN HEROES SALE DATES: 5/21-5/27/26 BUY DIRECT FOR SAVINGS • SELECTION • SERVICE

SANDISFIELD

DCR announces 384-acre land acquisition in Sandisfield

BOSTON — The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation announced the acquisition of 384 acres of land in the town of Sandisfield.

The property, located west of Route 8 along the Farmington River between Sandisfield State Forest and Tolland State Forest, will be incorporated into DCR's existing protected forestland, expanding a connected landscape that supports both ecological health and public access.

"This acquisition protects an important stretch of connected forestland that both wildlife and people depend on," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "By conserving this land, we are strengthening biodiversity and climate resilience, safeguarding clean water resources, and ensuring this land remains a place where people can connect

with nature and enjoy the outdoors for generations to come."

The acquisition is the latest addition to the Berkshire Wildlife Linkage, a region designated by The Nature Conservancy that covers much of Western Massachusetts and is home to the most intact forest ecosystem in southern New England. The Linkage covers numerous DCR parks and forests and serves as a regional habitat and travel route for species such as black bears, moose and bobcats.

"This expansion of DCR land helps fill a gap within the Berkshire Wildlife Linkage, the region of Massachusetts that connects the Hudson Highlands to the south and the Green Mountains to the north, an important corridor for animals moving along the Appalachians,"

said Laura Marx, Climate Solutions Scientist at The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts. "In my role as coordinator of the Berkshire Wildlife Linkage Partnership, I've studied roadkill, wildlife crossings, and culverts along this stretch of Route 8 and it's gratifying to know that wildlife will be able to use this habitat for generations to come."

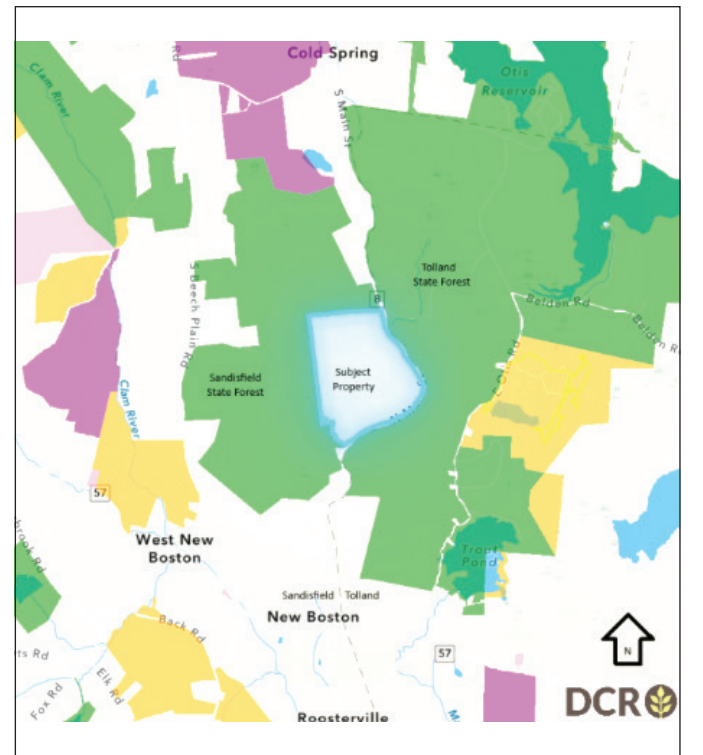
The property was acquired through DCR's Land Protection Program, which is dedicated to conserving lands that protect natural and cultural resources, support biodiversity, and provide recreational opportunities to the public.

The largely forested parcel includes sugar maple, hemlock, birch, and ash, and lies within the Farmington River watershed, helping protect a potential future water supply for the city

of Hartford, Connecticut. Numerous signs of wildlife on the land have been discovered including deer, moose, mink, turkey and bear.

This announcement demonstrates progress towards the state's goals to protect 30% of lands and waters by 2030 and 40% by 2050. The state committed to doubling the pace of land conservation to meet these ambitious targets and pursuant to Biodiversity Goals for the Commonwealth is strategically focusing conservation efforts on areas that are most important for wildlife.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration's Mass Ready Act, proposes historic investments to advance this work, including \$304.5 million for land protection programs and \$20 million dedicated to advancing the Biodiversity Conservation Goals.



The map shows a parcel between Sandisfield and Tolland State Forests. This land acquisition expands protected forestland, strengthens wildlife connectivity and enhances public access.

WESTHAMPTON

Westhampton Public Library announces upcoming news and events

WESTHAMPTON — The Westhampton Public Library, 1 North Road, announces June library programs.

The library will be closed on June 18 in observance of Juneteenth. Library hours are Monday and Thursday from 2-8 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

To place a request for curbside pickup, people should either email westhampton@cwmarc.org or call 413-527-5386.

Recurring programs (holidays may impact schedule) are knitting and crocheting group Mondays at 6 p.m. (no knitting and crocheting on June 22), yoga Mondays at 6 p.m. (no yoga June 22), Scabble group Tuesdays at 2 p.m., book group fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m., walk-in wellness clinics with Westhampton's public nurse first and third Wednesdays from 10-11:30 a.m. and coffee and chat Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-noon.

Tech Connect drop-in tech help is Thursday, June 25 from 2-4 p.m. For children and teens activities are

CFCE Playgroup -Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. and music with Naomi Wednesday, June 3 at 3 p.m.

Summer reading kickoff is Saturday, June 20 from 11a.m.-12:30 p.m. Carrie Ferguson concert is Saturday, June 27 at 11 a.m. Playful Engineers is Thursday, July 9 at 5:30 p.m. Registration is required.

Paper making with Jan Ruby-Crystal is Thursday, July 16 two sessions: 3-4 p.m. and 4:30-5:30 p.m. Registration is required

Macrame Plant Hangers with Via Luino is Saturday, July 25 at 11 a.m. Registration is required. Tom Ricardi and Birds of Prey is Thursday, July 30 at 5:30 p.m.

Summer reading closing is Saturday, Aug. 1 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Field of Dreams concerts are Fridays at 6 p.m. Concerts take place in the backyard of the library.

People should bring a lawn chair or blanket. In the case of inclement weather, concerts will be held at Town Hall.

Dates are June 26 The Wildcat O'Halloran Band, July 10 Zydeco Connection,



July 24 Little House Blues, Aug. 7 The O-Tones and Aug. 21 The Gaslight Tinkers.

Sponsors are Friends of Westhampton Library, Westhampton Cultural Council, Easthampton Savings Bank, Greenfield Cooperative Bank, Florence Savings Bank and Marek

Builders, Inc.

An art reception with Colleen Ahern is Thursday, June 4 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. The majority of her work is in oils though she occasionally dabble in watercolor as well as pen and ink.

On Saturday, June 6 at 11 a.m. there will be a Beatles Evolution concert with Peter Pruyn.

Before the British Invasion of the 1960s, early American Rock 'n Roll invaded the shores of Liverpool. Join Peter Pruyn ("prine"), former keyboardist and vocalist with the Downtown Sounds Beatles Ensemble, to go on a musical journey down memory lane with the songs and stories that inspired the Beatles before they were the Beatles, including hits by: Ray Charles, Eddie Cochran, Buddy Holly, Elvis Presley,

and others, followed by a sampling of the subsequent songs of the Beatles.

Lyn Keating Memorial Sculpture Dedication is Sunday, June 13 at 11 a.m. Community members are invited to an unveiling of the sculpture "Stories Feed the Mind" created by local artist Wade Clement in memory of Carolyn Keating - "Library Lyn." The sculpture will be installed in the front library garden and will greet visitors as they enter the footpath to the library's front door. This work of art is a testament to the dedication and steadfast commitment to the library that Lyn showed during her 25 years of service to Westhampton as library director. Refreshments will be served in the community room after the dedication ceremony.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

George PROPANE INC.
PROPANE GAS PLUMBING • HEATING
 (413) 268-8360
TOLL FREE 1-800-464-2053
 Family Owned & Operated
 3 Berkshire Trail West (Route 9), P.O. Box 102, Goshen, MA 01032
www.georgepropane.com

ARCHITECT
JEFFREY SCOTT PENN
 77 Worthington Road, Huntington, MA 01050
 Tel. 413-531-1868
 Fax. 413-667-3082
 Email: jspsed@verizon.net
 new construction, renovation, historic preservation

FEED • PET SUPPLIES • CLOTHING • COAL
 WOOD PELLETS • WILD & CAGED BIRDSEED
 POOL SUPPLIES • MOTOR OILS • FENCING
 LAWN & GARDEN SUPPLIES • FERTILIZER
GATEWAY FARM & PET
 Poulin Grain RED WING SHOES Carhartt
 59 RUSSELL ROAD, HUNTINGTON, MA 01050
1-413-667-2279 M-F 8am-5pm Sat. 8am-4pm
 TARA GRENIER • PAUL GRENIER

Kirke R. Henshaw, Inc.
 Water Well Drilling, Water Pump Sales & Service
 Water Testing System Evaluations
 Water System Repairs Hydrofracture to Increase Flow
HENSHAW
 800-232-4725 • Fax 413-296-4565
Charles R. Henshaw
 130 Cummington Rd., W. Chesterfield, MA • 413-296-4725

FIVE ISLANDS
 Georgetown, Maine
 2 Bedrooms, 2 Bathroom
 Washer/Dryer, Fully Equipped
 • Walk to Five Islands Wharf and Ledge Wood Preserve Beach
 • Close to Reid State Park
 \$1200/week
207-607-9333

Open for the season!
OUR OWN ASPARAGUS
 PERENNIALS | ROSES | CLEMATIS
 PANSIES | HERBS
 LETTUCE | CABBAGE | SEEDS
 POTS AND SOILS
 STAND IS NOW OPEN WITH
 FRUITS & VEGETABLES
E. Cecchi Farms 1131 SPRINGFIELD STREET
 FEEDING HILLS, MASS. "Everything you'd grow if you had forty acres."
 Facebook Instagram

Dale's Structural & Carpentry
 Home Improvement • Additions • Restorations • Repairs
 Post & Beam Repairs
 Sagging Floors - Beams - Columns
 Sill Timbers - Termite Damage
 Foundation Repairs - Piers & Footings
 Chimney Rebuilds
 FULLY LICENSED & INSURED
 Huntington, MA • 413-667-3149
dalesstructuralandcarpentry.com

DOWN TO EARTH EXCAVATING INC
 Highly Regarded Professionals: Complete Site Work, Septic Development and Repairs. Fully insured.
413-667-5269
 Paul & Randy LaPointe, Owners Huntington, Mass.

AQUA PUMPS WATER SYSTEMS
 Water Pumps • Sewer Pumps
 Water Conditioners
 46 Pitcher Street Donald Washburn
 Montgomery, MA 01085 862-3301

Jeff's Oil Burner Service
 • Tune Ups
 • Installations
 • Oil Tanks
 Huntington, Massachusetts
 Office 413.667.0245
 Cell 413.530.7037
 jeffsoilburnerservice@hotmail.com

OPINION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Select Board candidate Cara Letendre introduces herself to community

I am writing to introduce myself to those in our community who may not yet know me as I seek re-election to the Blandford Select Board.

I was raised in Blandford from the age of one and growing up here in the 1980s and 1990s was truly idyllic. The adults in my life were deeply involved in the community through recreation, the schools, and volunteering in classrooms.

They showed me what it means to contribute and they created a town that felt like family. That example continues to guide me today.

I carried those values with me through college and beyond, volunteering with elementary students

in the Virgin Islands and in Holyoke and participating in service projects in every community where I lived.

When I returned to Blandford in 2009 and learned that the recreation committee had dissolved, I stepped forward to help reestablish it. Together, we brought back traditions like the Halloween party, Memorial Day picnic, skating rink and sledding events—moments that had meant so much to me growing up.

I remained involved with the committee until 2019 and continue to support its work.

My commitment to service grew as I was asked to join a grant-funded committee focused on rebuild-

ing town morale following financial misconduct in the tax office.

From that effort came the Blandford Bugle, a town-wide newsletter promoting positive communication, which I co-edited for several years. I also worked part-time at Porter Memorial Library, leading a weekly Toddler Time program.

In 2012, I began working as an administrative assistant to the Select Board at a time when Blandford faced significant financial challenges, including low tax collection rates, nearly \$1 million in outstanding taxes, negative free cash and no stabilization reserves.

Without a Town Administrator, I support-

ed the board in managing a wide range of responsibilities during a critical period.

Over the following years, the town made important changes—transitioning key financial roles to appointed positions, hiring a Town Administrator and strengthening oversight. In 2017, I was honored to be elected to the Select Board through a write-in campaign.

Since then, I have worked closely with colleagues and staff to improve transparency, strengthen budgeting practices, rebuild reserves, and invest in infrastructure.

By 2019, Blandford had become a model for recovery, recognized by the Department of Revenue as

an example for other communities. That progress was the result of dedicated teamwork.

As chairman, I have prioritized professionalism, transparency and efficient meetings. I am proud of the strong, collaborative board we have today.

There is still important work ahead, and I remain committed to thoughtful, responsible leadership that preserves the character of our town and the safety of our residents, while planning for its future.

It would be an honor to continue serving Blandford. I respectfully ask for your vote.

Cara Letendre
Blandford

GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



Social Security's 'First Year Rule' and withdrawing from SS

Dear Rusty:

I am 63 years old, and about to apply for my Social Security benefits.

I am self-employed but only working part time. I know about Social Security's annual earnings limit but recently I learned I must also be concerned about a monthly earnings limit of \$2,040. My questions are:

1) How do I find out if I will be subject to a monthly earning limit of \$2,040 per month? I thought it was only evaluated annually.

2) If I choose to cancel Social Security within the first year or after, what are the penalties? Would I have to pay them back for the whole amount for the whole time that they paid me? Which makes no sense, since I have been paid into SS since I was 13 years old.

Can you help me understand this?

Signed: Claiming Early and Still Working

Dear Claiming Early:

It can get tricky if you are still working after claiming your Social Security before your SS Full Retirement Age, especially during your first year collecting. I'm happy to answer your specific questions:

1. There is a special rule which applies during your first year collecting early Social Security benefits (e.g., before your Full Retirement Age or "FRA," which for you is age 67). What will happen is this: when the IRS provides SSA with your 2026 earnings (in 2027), SSA will review to see if your total 2026 net earnings from self-employment exceeded the 2026 annual limit of \$24,480.

If not, no further action is necessary. But if you did exceed the full year 2026 earnings limit, SSA will contact you and ask you to provide them with details about your monthly 2026 net earnings. If you have exceeded the monthly limit in any 2026 month after your SS benefit started, you will not be entitled to SS benefits for that month.

Essentially, if you have exceeded the annual limit, you cannot exceed the monthly earnings limit in any remaining month during your first year of collecting. If you exceeded

the annual limit and also any monthly limit, SSA will send you an overpayment notice saying you must repay them for the benefits you were not entitled to receive because you exceeded the monthly earnings limit.

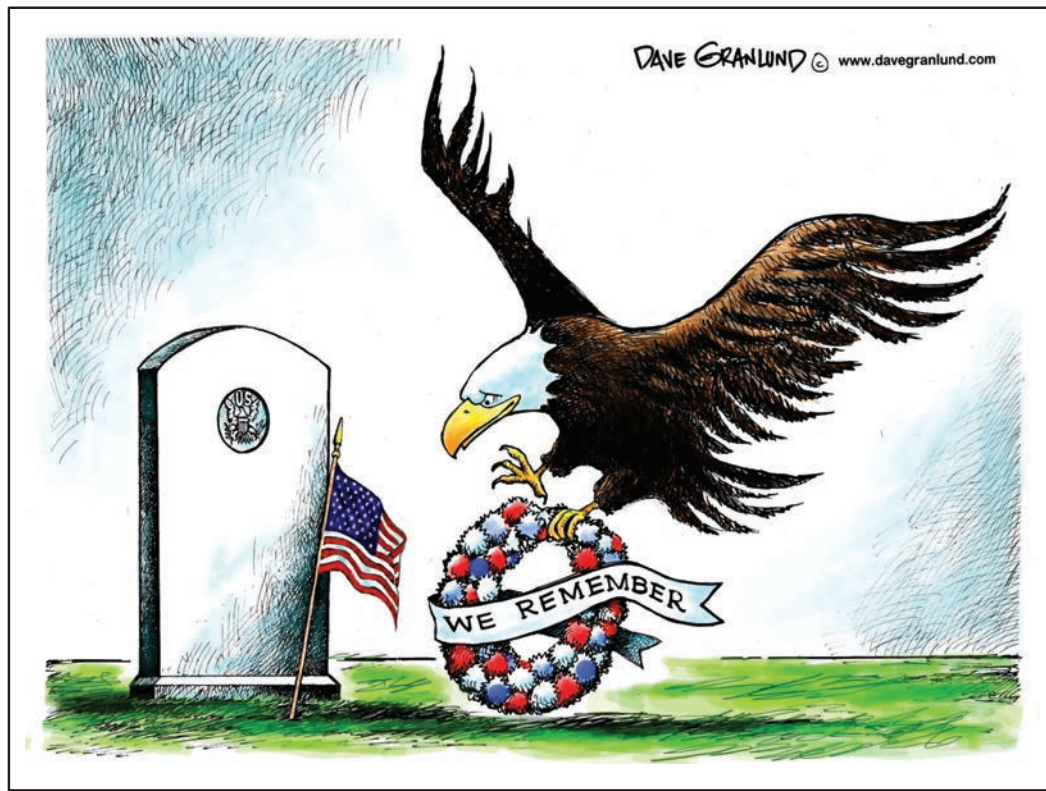
2. You can, within 12 months of applying for Social Security, ask SSA to withdraw your application for SS retirement benefits. They will do that for you, but you will also be required to repay them all SS benefits that they have already paid to (or for) you.

This essentially would "wipe the slate clean" and enable your SS benefit to continue growing, allowing you to apply for a larger monthly benefit later. But if you wait longer than 12 months after you first apply for SS benefits, you can no longer withdraw your application for Social Security. Thereafter, you would be subject to the annual earnings limit (the monthly earnings limit would no longer apply).

FYI, after you reach your FRA, there is no limit on your earnings and you could choose to suspend your benefit payments and earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) to get a higher monthly benefit. Also at your FRA, if SSA withheld any of your benefits because you exceeded the earnings limit before reaching your FRA, you would get time credit for the number of months your benefits were withheld. Essentially, they would advance your benefit-start month by the number of months your benefits were withheld, yielding a slightly higher monthly amount after your FRA.

Finally, it's important to know that the contributions you made to Social Security from payroll taxes (FICA/SECA) over your lifetime are not what determines your monthly SS benefit amount. Your monthly SS benefit is based on two main factors: a) your average monthly earnings (indexed for inflation) for the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime as reported to the IRS, and b) the age at which you claim your SS benefits.

Your contributions to Social Security while working only provide you



GUEST COLUMN

Why do we wait until Memorial Day to plant?

For as long as I can remember, the "safe date" for planting tender crops was always Memorial Day.

This year in particular the holiday is on the early side, the 25th of May, as opposed to the 30th or 31st. Here in New England, five or six days can make all the difference in the world.


Sure, as I write, the mercury is set to rise well into the high eighties for three or four days, then become more seasonable again. It's a wonder the plants know what to do.

Anyhow, read on to learn about some tender plants and how they respond better when soil or air temperatures have warmed.

Although cool loving

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



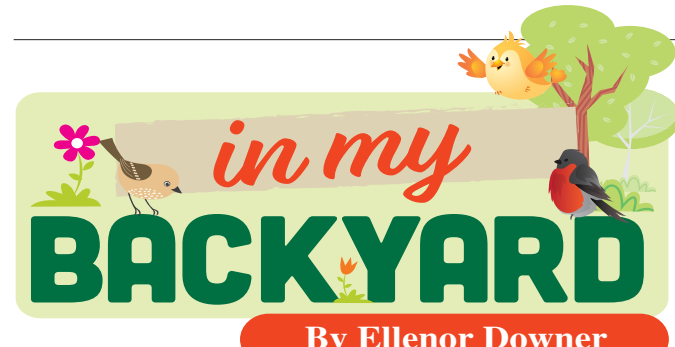
Untreated corn seeds will not germinate in soil below 60 degrees.

We are advised to be patient and trust that seed planted in warm soil will make up for lost time, and they typically will, in no time flat.

Those of us who plant only a small plot have luck starting corn seeds indoors then transplanting the seedlings outside. I sowed my corn two seeds per six pack a few days back and have it on heat along with a sowing of winter squash and melons and all are popping up nicely.

I usually pick the best of the two in the cell of the pack and pinch away the slower one so there is no competition, giving the stronger seedling all of the room to

GARDEN, page 5



By Ellenor Downer

Western Massachusetts resident spotted this brown thrasher in the Berkshire foothills.

Sometimes they visit feeders like the one in the attached photo. Brown thrashers blend in with their surrounding and are tricky to spot.

They are fairly large, slender songbirds with long proportions: the legs are long and sturdy, the bill is long and slightly down curved and the tail is long.

They often cock the tail upward in the manner of

wrens. A bright yellow eye, gray brown face and black and white wings bars are other identifying features.

Thrashers are reddish brown on the head, back, tail and wings. They have a white breast and belly with darker speckling.

They are 9.1 to 11.8 inches long or slightly smaller than a blue jay. The brown thrasher is the only thrasher species found east of Texas.

Thrashers have one of the largest repertoires of any North American songbird over 1,000 different songs. Since they rarely venture

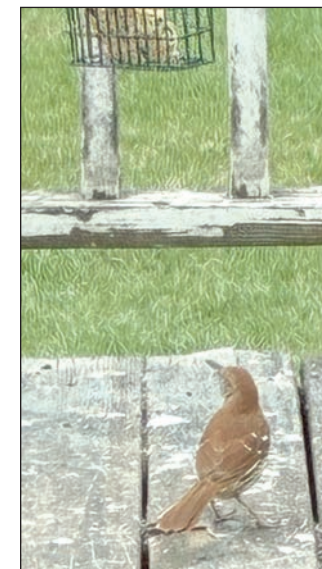


Photo by Connie Schwaiger
Brown thrasher

far from thick undergrowth, there singing give their location away especially when perched in a treetop or shrubs.

BIRDS, page 6

Country Journal

We Want to Hear From You

EDITOR
Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Wendy Delcamp
wdelcamp@turley.com

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



WEB
countryjournal.turley.com



PHONE
(413) 283-8393



ADDRESS
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

Turley Publications, Inc.
www.turley.com

Turley Publications, Inc. cannot assume liability for the loss of photographs or other materials submitted for publication. Materials will not be returned except upon specific request when submitted.

ISSN NO. 0747-2471

EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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

ELECTION LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

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

OPINION

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Hilltown History has connection with war planes

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Those Awesome Flying Machines

*"Oh I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed...
And while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space
Put out my hand
And touched the face of God."*
— John Gillespie Magee Jr.

That poem was written by a 19 year old fighter pilot during WWII and mailed back home to his parents. He would be dead three months later. He flew a Spitfire airplane escorting bombers whose mission was to attack railway workshops in Lille, France.

He survived the Luftwaffe's attack while all the rest of his squadron was shot down. He took part in three more successful convoy missions.

While continuing to practice air fighting tactics, he collided with another airplane that was piloted by another 19 year old pilot-in-training in England. Both pilots were killed. Imagine two 19 year olds, thrilled to the marrow to be pilots defending their country.

Both dead before their 20th birthday. It is hard to wrap your mind around the magnitude of tragedies that were commonplace during WWII. That poem has been cited on many air force missions including the space shuttle.

There have been several war time airplane crashes that happened in western Massachusetts. Memorial

Day is a time we remember and recognize the sacrifices made by our Veterans.

Herein are two stories of such accidents. Peru State Forest was the site of an Aug. 15, 1942 airplane crash. Eleven Army transport planes left Pope Field, North Carolina bound for Hyannis, Massachusetts.

They were Army Douglas C53 twin engine transport planes. They were transporting paratroopers, the 502nd Parachute Battalion to Normandy.

One plane did not make it to Operation Overlord. The planes had refueled at Mitchell Field in Long Island, New York. Stormy weather forced the mission to divert to Hillsgrove Airfield in Warwick Rhode Island.

The planes were separated in dense fog and they were forced to fly relying on their instruments. Only one plane got lost. It crashed into the side of Garnet Peak in Peru, Massachusetts at 9:30 p.m.

The Peru air warden, Matty Bishop not only saw the crash from her spotting tower, but she felt the force of the blast shake the Earth.

She alerted her son, who immediately organized a search party from the 30 families that resided in Peru. A signal gunshot fired from the downed airplane urged them on. The Peru townspeople answered with a shotgun blast into the air, to say help is on the way.

The plane had sliced through the woods clearing a 60 foot wide trail traveling 180 feet before it finally came to a stop. Injured Sergeant Robert Lee was found frantically pulling bodies out of the flaming wreckage, looking for survivors. Airplane debris was scattered

all around.

Three survivors were rescued, 16 paratroopers were killed. The military quickly descended to the scene and closed the area to the public. No further news was forthcoming. Townspeople later placed wooden crosses at the site.

Still later money was raised through church suppers and socials to place a memorial plaque on a field stone, to commemorate the lost paratroopers. There is a hike on an old forest road that leads to the Memorial, called Curtin Road trailhead. The town of Peru holds a memorial service there every year. Their sacrifice is not forgotten.

A B17 Flying Fortress plane returning home from WWII crashed into the southern slope of Mt. Tom in Holyoke/Easthampton. It was flying south from Labrador, heading for Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee. It was July 9, 1946. It was flying in an ink black night when it crashed into the southern slope of Mt. Tom. There were no survivors, mostly men 18- 43 years old returning home from the war. They were Army soldiers, Coast Guardsmen, Red Cross workers and a medical doctor all eager to get home.

There were no answers to how this happened, the truth of this tragedy died there on the mountain. A monument was built in 1994 to commemorate this event. When we talk about the horrors of war, not many of us living today can fathom the levels of sorrow that people suffered. Be sure to thank a Veteran for his service and for keeping the spirit of freedom alive. Be very grateful.



Submitted photos

Spotter's tower located on Mt. Nonotuck in Holyoke, MA. 827 ft in elevation.



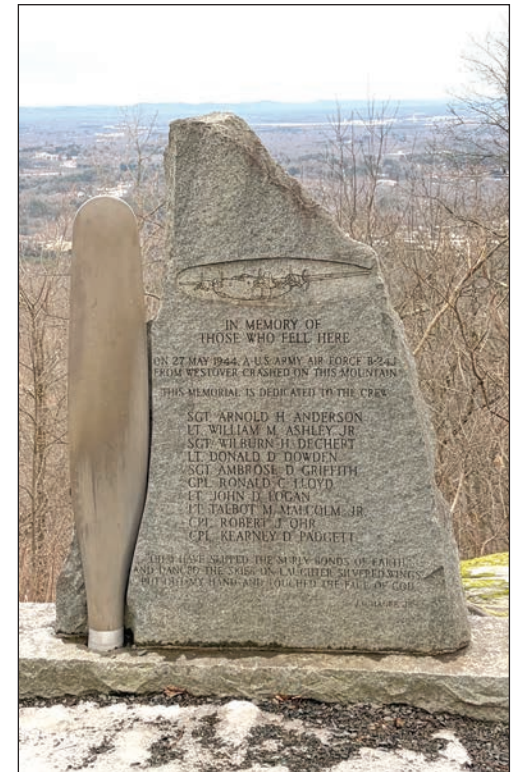
This Douglas C53 twin engine transport plane is like the one that crashed on Garnett Mountain.



This WWII spitfire airplane is like the one flown by John Gillespie Magee Jr. in 1941, author of the "High Flight" poem.



The war memorial with plane debris placed on top is located at Garnett Mountain in Peru, 2,200 ft. in elevation.



This war monument is on Mt. Holyoke in South Hadley, 942 ft in elevation. Note the plane propeller is part of the monument.

SECURITY

from page 4

with eligibility to collect SS benefits; the contributions aren't put into a separate account for you and are not used to calculate your monthly SS benefit.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social

Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff,

trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

GARDEN

from page 4

grow nicely. Never pull out when thinning; roots may be disturbed.

Speaking of seedlings, it's also important not to shock our home grown pepper or tomato seedlings by transplanting them into cold soil or cold air. Night temperatures should be a consistent 50 degrees before planting out peppers.

I typically preheat the soil my peppers are to be planted in with black plastic, laying it right down in the garden bed for a week prior to planting. I cut holes into it at transplanting time, amending each hole as I go.

For added warmth, some gardeners looking to get a head start often use a row cover to add a few degrees of warmth and pro-

tect plants from the wind.

Tomatoes are planted outside after all danger of frost has passed. Typically on Memorial Day! In fact, I think the whole "safe date" theory came to be because of tomatoes! When I was just getting started in horticulture I remember all sorts of contraptions people used to use to try and get the first ripe tomato in the neighborhood.

By planting tomatoes transplants earlier you could get earlier fruiting. Cloches or wall-o-waters were popular before the floating row covers became the rage.

I typically wait to transplant my tomatoes. Mine are huge this year.

Remember, if your plants get big and your are

still a few weeks away from getting them from the six pack into the ground, "pot them up." It's a term for going up a size, say from a cell to a four inch pot, so roots don't get bound before they get the chance to live happily ever after in the garden.

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

NURSES: TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CAREER & MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

- ✓ Become a Private Patient Advocate
- ✓ High Pay | Rewarding Work | Flexible Schedule
- ✓ Online Training & Mentorship with Expert Guidance
- ✓ Help Patients Navigate the Healthcare System



www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com



BOOK A CALL TODAY
WITH TERI FRYKENBERG

Chester Baptist Church

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

First Congregational Church of Blandford

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

First Congregational Church of Chester

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

First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

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

Hilltown Community Church

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

Holy Family Parish

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

CHURCH DIRECTORY



Your Community Church

New Boston Congregational Church

Pastor Eric Kriebel
4 Sandisfield Rd., PO Box 81
Sandisfield, MA 01255
Services held twice monthly, check website:
www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org

Pioneer Valley Assembly of God

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

Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

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

Westhampton Congregational Church, UCC

Pastor Carol Smith
1 Tob Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027
(413) 527-4204
Sunday Worship at 10 a.m.

OPINION

GUEST COLUMN

Care at home after the hospital



your
health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



It's usually good news when the doctor says you or a loved one can come home from the hospital. Sometimes, though, it's a mixed blessing.

Hospital discharge sometimes means that further hospital care won't improve someone's health condition, and the hospital is eager to get someone else in that bed. People are discharged faster these days, often with significant lingering health issues that have to be seen to.

In the hospital, there's a staff of nurses, nurse aides, therapists and others to care for you or a loved one. When you get home, though, it's just you and maybe a spouse or other family member. That's why the home health industry is booming.

In 2020 (the most recent data available), approximately 3 million patients received home health care services in the U.S., often following a hospitalization or skilled nursing facility stay. They are being cared for by some 12,000 home health agencies, more than 80 percent of which are for-profit companies.

Home health is something patient advocates know a lot about – and there's a lot to know. Here are some of the things I've learned over my years as an

RN and nurse advocate.

Prepare in advance if you can

A best-case scenario is that you know you'll need some help when you get home. For every day you spend in a hospital, you lose a month of muscle tone and mobility, so depending on how long you've been hospitalized, you may need considerable help.

Will you need a walker or wheelchair? Shower chair? A first-floor sleeping arrangement? A bedside commode? These are all things that can be planned for if you know they're coming. Very often, hospitals have social workers who help patients navigate after-hospital care. Medicare has a thorough discharge planning guide on its website; search Medicare Publication No. 11376 in your browser.

Other things to think about are trip hazards like small pets and throw rugs and having some ready-made or frozen meals on hand.

Arrange for help in advance, too

A spouse may be standing by, but they may need help themselves. Adult children, friends or neighbors may be able to pitch in. If there's no one you can call on for help – and more than

50 million Americans over 50 are aging on their own – it's time to contact a home health agency. A patient advocate, who is likely familiar with the home health landscape in your area, is a good resource and go-between.

The cardinal rule is: Ask for assistance when you need it to avoid further complications from falls, lack of nourishment or lapses in personal care.

Understand what Medicare covers

Home health care spending grew at an annual rate of more than 10% in 2024 and shows no signs of slowing down. A significant chunk of the spending in 2023 – \$148 billion – was by Medicare. But Medicare doesn't cover everything, so you may have out-of-pocket expenses.

Medicare-covered home health services include skilled nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology services when ordered by a doctor. Part-time or intermittent home health aide care is covered only if you're also getting those services at home.

Skilled nursing care can include wound care, injections, nutrition services and monitoring unstable health conditions. Medicare also covers durable medical equipment when prescribed by a doctor, such as beds, walkers, wheelchairs, pumps and oxygen.

Medicare doesn't pay for 24-hour a day care, meal delivery, homemaker services or personal care services that help with bathing, dressing, grooming, etc.

Questions to ask a home health agency

There are a zillion questions you could ask, but I think these are among the most important:

- How long has this agency been in business and is it licensed to perform home health care?

- Can you provide references, or can I speak with previous clients?

- Do you accept long-term care insurance, Medicare or Medicaid? If so, do you bill insurance, or do clients pay you and then

- How do you recruit and select caregivers, and do you perform background checks?

- Are your caregivers employees or contractors? Are they bonded?

- Can I meet caregiver candidates and select the ones I want?

- What should I do if my caregiver doesn't show up as scheduled?

- How often is the care plan reviewed?

- How do I communicate concerns and questions to you?

Research has found that patients who recover at home have better outcomes, which is why the hospital-at-home movement is growing. So if you're going to be recuperating at your place, don't go it alone.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

MONTEREY

Diane Taraz performs at 'Surprising But True'

MONTEREY – On Sunday, May 24 at 2 p.m. Diane Taraz will perform her show "Surprising But True" at the Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road.

Fiction often sticks to what seems plausible, but real life does not have to abide by the expectations of what is possible. Over the centuries all kinds of unbelievable things have happened and in "Surprising But True Diane" tells some of these delightful, true stories.

She begins with the age-old tale of the woman warrior in disguise, celebrated in dozens of songs over the last few hundred years. We hear traditional songs and one that Diane wrote about the unlikely life of Deborah Samson, who served during the American Revolution and later became one of the first women to speak in public as she toured New England.

Diane Taraz writes songs and interprets traditional ones, accompanying herself on guitar and

dulcimer. She brings her programs exploring history through music to museums, libraries and historical societies throughout New England.

Following the show there will be a small reception to usher in the new season. Seating is limited and pre-registration is required. Tickets can be purchased on the Museum website, <https://www.bidwellhouse-museum.org/event/surprising-but-true/>

Admission to the show and reception is \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members.

The Bidwell House Museum is a New England heritage site providing a personal encounter with history, early American home life, and the Berkshire landscape through its land, house and collection. The Museum is a non-profit educational institution for the benefit of the community and today's audiences of all ages, dedicated to preservation, scholarship and enjoyment of the landmark site.



Diane Taraz

Bidwell House Museum opens Memorial Day

MONTEREY – On Saturday, May 30 at 11 a.m. Bidwell House Museum will hold a Zoom lecture with Professor Sally Hadden.

Her lecture is on the First Massachusetts Constitution and How Town Actions Derailed It. Members are free. Non-members are \$15. Only one registration is required per household. Lecture will be

held via Zoom. 11 a.m.

Sally Hadden is a legal historian of early America and the antebellum United States. She is a professor of history at Western Michigan University

This lecture will be held via Zoom. Registration via the Museum event page is required by visiting <https://www.bidwellhouse-museum.org/event/the-first-massachusetts-constitution>

and-how-town-actions-derailed-it/

Details for how to access the event will be sent via email 1-2 days in advance.

The Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road, is open for guided tours from Memorial Day to October. Tours are by appointment only on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 11 a.m.,

1p.m. or 3 p.m. Tours can be booked by calling 413-528-6888 or emailing bidwellhm2@gmail.com. The Museum grounds-194 acres of woods, fields, historic stonewalls, self-guided trails and picnic sites are open every day, dawn until dusk, free of charge. The program of events can be found on the museum's website: www.bidwell-housemuseum.org.

BIRDS

from page 4

Their songs are a complex string of many musical phrases, many copied from other birds' songs with each phrase typically sung twice. They also make a distinctive, harsh "tsuck" note.

They imitate other birds including Chuck-will's-widows, wood thrushes and northern flickers.

Both males and females incubate the eggs and feed the young. Nestlings sometimes leave the nest fully feathered within nine days of hatching, earlier than either of their smaller relatives, the northern mockingbird and gray catbird.

An aggressive defender of its nest, the Brown Thrasher is known to strike people and dogs hard enough to draw blood.

Shrubby habitats are popular hideouts for nest predators, which may explain why the thrashers fledge so quickly for birds of their size. Brown Thrashers are the largest common host of parasitic brown-headed cowbirds.

The oldest Brown Thrasher on record was at least 10 years, 11 months old. It was found in Florida in 1978 where it was banded in 1967.

Rose-breasted grosbeak

A Worthington resident saw a rose-breasted grosbeak showed up at his feeder earlier than usual on May 1. He said they always arrive the first week of May. Last year it was not until May 7.

Belchertown birds

A Belchertown resident sent an email reporting birds seen and heard on his property. They included Baltimore oriole, grey catbirds, a Blackburnian warbler in the maple tree, and he heard, but not seen, a northern parula. He also has a pair of eastern phoebes nesting under an eave of the house.

At nearby Lake Wallace, he took photos of yellow warblers and a green heron catching fish.

Red-shouldered hawk

A Montgomery resident saw a red-shouldered hawk recently.

Nesting sparrows

A Belchertown resident said she had sparrows using a nest box in her yard. She found a few of their babies on the ground. At first, I thought something got into the nest, but today a found another one. I think the nestling had died and the parents got them out. She said she may remove the nest box and replace it with a new one in case the sparrows succumbed to disease.

Brimfield birds.

A Brimfield resident

said he put up the humming bird feeders in late April when he learned of a ruby-throated hummingbird in Ware. A couple days later he had an adult male ruby-throated hummingbird and a few days later he saw a female.

He said, "One each gray catbirds, male Baltimore oriole and males rose-breasted grosbeak showed up last week. This week a second male oriole and two more grosbeaks show up, another male and a female. He also has a male eastern towhee in his yard. He said, "A couple of years ago we had two male towhees in the yard and one spent the summer attacking its reflection in the many windows despite best efforts to dissuade it."

He said elsewhere, in Warren on South Street there are three occupied great blue heron nest and two others he was not sure if they were being used. The osprey pair has been around for awhile. The nest has gotten deeper over the years and on a recent visit he could only see the tail or maybe wing feathers barely showing above the nest. I think incubation has started, but can't be sure.

He also has a male common yellowthroat and house wren in his yard.

He said, "House wrens have nested in nesting boxes in the yard several times and I saw feathers near the entrance hole on a box they have used before. The wrens have a habit of building false nests in a couple of boxes that they never use."

He also said, "A male yellow-bellied sapsucker spent some time on a native dogwood and today a sapsucker, probably the same one, spent several hours tapping away at the same tree."

Geese in a pavilion

On May 12, I drove by Camp Putnam in New Braintree and saw four geese under their pavilion near the pond. I see many Canada geese in fields or ponds, but I have never seen them in a pavilion.

Other birds

On May 8 I received an email reporting a scarlet tanager, grosbeaks and hummingbirds.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

Corrections policy

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

Country Journal

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

CHESTER

Chester High Alumni hold 123rd reunion

CHESTER – The Chester High School Alumni will be coming home to Chester this year for their 123rd annual reunion and meeting on Saturday, June 27.

The meeting draws a large group associated with the former Chester High School including Chester residents who graduated from Gateway after Chester High School closed in the late 1960s.

This year's festivities begin with a social hour at 1 p.m. at the Chester Railroad Depot and continue informally throughout the entire weekend as "Blue Devils" and "Quarriers" wander around town visiting old friends and relatives.

The association's annual business meeting will be held on Saturday, June 27 at 2 p.m., and officers and board members will meet at noon.

Chester High has traditions dating back well over one hundred years, but the association has no members from that long ago. Among the many mysteries every year are questions like, "Who will be the oldest member?" and "Who will come from the farthest away?"

There is never a lack of laughter, perhaps because the threat of detention is long gone, even though former

teachers sometimes attend. All classes will be honored, especially the fifty-year class of 1976 and the twenty-five-year class of 2001.

Association president Walter Boomsma noted, "It really is like a homecoming. Some can't resist sitting on the church corner for a while and many tour the area to visit the places that were an important part of their lives."

Boomsma also reports that the association enjoys the support of organizations such as the Chester Foundation and the Chester Historical Society. The Historical Society Museum will be open just prior to the reunion and former scholars are encouraged to stop by.

Reunion invitations have been mailed to association members. "The reunion is not limited to graduates of Chester High or Gateway Regional. Anyone with a connection to Chester is certainly welcome to join ...in the socializing and reminiscing. This is a town event," Boomsma added.

The association maintains a blog at <http://chester-high.wordpress.com> and a Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Chester-High-School/where> alumni can gather information and post comments.

Highway Department gets state funding

CHESTER – The Chester Highway Superintendent Charles "Chip" Dazelle announced the town had received over \$1.3 million in state funding for two upcoming road projects.

The Commonwealth's Community One Stop for Growth program under the Executive Office of Economic Development awarded the grant.

The town received \$980,000 through the MassWorks Infrastructure Program to resurface approximately 9,500 feet of Blandford Road.

This project is important because the road provides a vital detour route when Route 20 is closed. In addition to paving, the grant will improve drainage features to reduce storm damage and prevent sediment runoff and will add roadside safety features.

Funding will pay for developing the bid package and the construction.

A second grant of \$331,000 from the Rural Development Fund will fund the site analysis needed to improve Johnson Hill Road, which connects Middlefield Road with Skyline Trail. The road is steep and winding and runs adjacent to Otis Wait Brook.

Two spots on the road, where the road interacts



Turley Publications Photo by Wendy Long

A section of Johnson Hill Road is eroding due to water run off from Otis Wait Brook. Highway Superintendent Charles "Chipper" Dazelle announced that grant funding has been awarded to the town to redress this issue as well as repave a section of Blandford Road.

with the brook, are showing slope failures and a number of localized drainage and flooding issues. This grant will fund data collection, preliminary design, permitting and the final design for reconstructing this road.

Data collection will include geotechnical, hydrologic and geomorphic analysis. The grants were written and submitted by Dazelle and Alexander Fagnand, a senior project manager for Tighe and Bond in Westfield.

One Stop funded projects in 206 of the state's 351 municipalities, covering 87% of the Commonwealth. This includes grant awards in 158 of the state's 181 rural communities, also 87%.

CHESTERFIELD

PROJECT

from page 1

with disabilities, who have taken part since 2022. Plans included a volunteer orientation from June 24 - 26 and hosting two one-week sessions with some friends staying through for both weeks from June 27 to July 5, and then July 5 through the 11. Volunteers will stay to start the clean up from this season on July 12.

A \$10,000 grant from the Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation supported a series of work weekends. This funding provided food for the work weekends, several mountain wheelchairs to maneuver the camp property and a mobi-mat floating wheelchair for the beach so that people can independently wheel into the lake and float. They also consulted on accessible chairs needed for rugged mobility.

Palches hesitated to start naming some of the incredible contributions made by local people, for fear of overlooking someone, but he gave it his best effort. One big highlight he said was that the college roommate of board member Keenan Bartlett, was on site for two weeks straight.

In that time, Harry Hale of Hale Land Design, LLC moved 500 tons of material to help create ½ mile of accessible trail so that everyone would get around the key areas on the property.

The Ashmere Project rented the equipment and Hale put it to tremendous use, Palches said. Planning and design have been key as the site has an 80 foot elevation change, which can be challenging for wheelchairs.

Another person he mentioned was Bob, stepfather of Miles, one of the friends with disabilities. "Bob has consistently shown up. He called to say he's on his way and has shown up for everything from design work to building ramps," Palches said.

While many of the volunteers had previously been involved with the Ashmere Project, a virtual army of other folks have stepped up from Chesterfield, Northampton, area hilltowns and across the Pioneer Valley.

Palches said a woman named Julie has been to every single work weekend

this spring. She had prior experience with Habitat for Humanity, so she also came with skills.

A lot of folks learned about the project from a presentation held at the Chesterfield Congregational Church some months ago. C. J. Lammers, a former teacher at the Conway School of Landscape Design spent five or six days in a bobcat.

A.J. Lapinski used heavy equipment to move trees and materials. Neighbor Sarah Donnelly arrived with her backhoe and worked on many different things.

She also offered a discounted rate on her basement Air B and B for people, who have traveled out to do work. A man named Darryl came in with his tractor to take down some trees.

"I'm sure I'm forgetting some people," Palches said. He's also forgetting some last names as he goes on to credit students Liz and Sophie and staff members Emily and Roxie all from the Conway School for their valuable contributions.

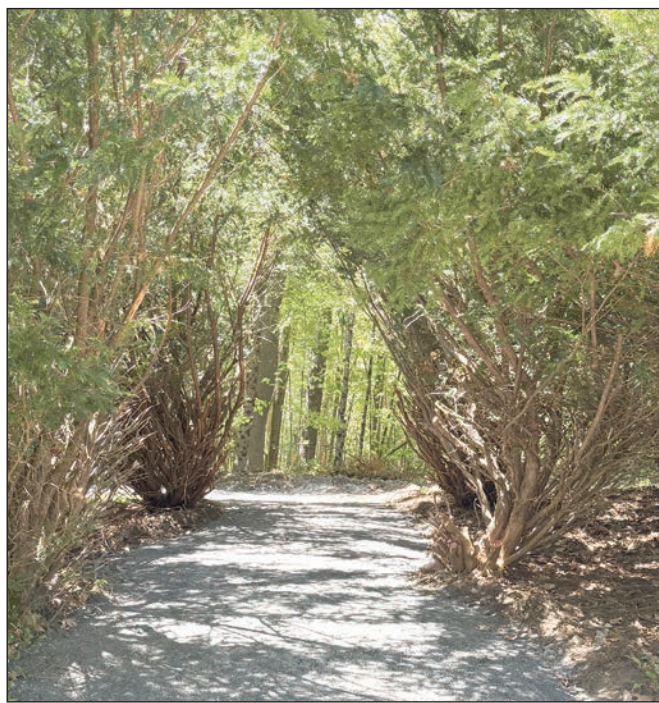
One of their tasks has been to create an online community presentation that includes videos and maps of the area, along with an 80-page document of the history of the lands before and during the scout camp presence.

They created a half-mile trail using crushed granite from Tonlino and Sons in Otis. The trail designed to connect key areas of the property, minimized the 80 foot elevation gain to be wheelchair-friendly, and met the conservation restrictions that came with the property.

Palches said this material binds up well using a walk-behind compactor, was porous, environmentally friendly and a permeable surface.

Last weekend was the first inclusive weekend where friends with disabilities were able to come and help. Palches' friend Miles, who used a wheelchair, traversed the new trail with him, an experience that left Palches fairly emotional as he and Miles talked along the trail.

Renovations to the main cabin are in the works thanks to an anonymous donor.



This is the ½ mile of accessible trail at the former Scout Camp in Chesterfield.

The Main Lodge kitchen was just cleaned where volunteers will cook for the final work weekends. Its fire suppression system has been serviced.

Gillette Restaurant Equipment has taken away the old appliances and dropped off newer, usable items including a warming oven, convection oven and ice maker.

The lodge's roof will be fully redone in the fall but they are in need of a short-term repair to get them through camp, if anybody's available for that, Palches said.

Charlie Gadvois of Whelan Construction coordinated with gaf shingle to put a new roof on McGee Lodge. "The 3500 square foot building now has a nice new asphalt roof, which is amazing," Palches said. Gadvois also donated a bunch of materials from his construction warehouse, including kitchen counters.

A donor on Martha's Vineyard gave the project a 90-foot yurt. They needed to go and pick it up and Trip Barnes of Barnes Trucking has offered to help with the transport.

Upcoming needs

Two more work weekends starting Friday, May 29 and Friday, June 12 are scheduled and a third one will soon

be announced. Meals, safety gear and instruction are all provided.

Top of need are those with skilled carpentry and plumbing skills. They also need a zero turn mower if anyone can help or provide a deal.

Beyond site work, core programming is coming up from June 24 - July 12; from set up and orientation through clean up. They still need a few volunteers to be paired one to one with a friend with disabilities.

Lots of the volunteers who have come to camp have gone on to become speech, occupational or physical therapists or work in related fields. Palches himself completed an independent



Turley Production photos by Wendy Long

JoJo Romero de Slavy, nurse and one of five camp directors of the Ashmere Project and Hannah Gant, who has restaurant experience, serve up roasted asparagus prepared in the camp's new oven. This was Gant's first day volunteering.

major in wheelchair development, inspired by his work with the camp 20 years ago. "Volunteering can be a point of growth and learning in an amazing inclusive environment," he said.

There are no paid staff, which makes this project unique. People are either volunteers or friends with disabilities, and there are a couple of people who fall into both circles. Palches would be happy to see more crossover when they expand.

"Everybody fills out the same forms when they sign up, and there is only one part of the form that is different, where people check 'I expect

to support' or 'I expect to be supported'" in activities of daily living."

Another exciting piece of news is that a documentary about the project will premier at the Academy of Music in Northampton on Friday, July 10 at 6 p.m. "It's free and open to the community and we hope everyone will come," Palches said.

A series of small vignettes will be performed at the camp in the Main Hall the next day. Details will be on their website AshmereProject.org. A new blog will start in the middle of June and folks, who want to stay informed, are invited to subscribe.

TOWN OF CHESTER MASS HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Truck Driver/Laborer – Highway Department (Town of Chester) The Town of Chester seeks a skilled Truck Driver/Laborer for full-time work 40+ hours/week. This role involves operating light and heavy trucks, including snowplows, sanders and performing construction and maintenance on roads, sidewalks, parks, cemeteries, and public spaces. Responsibilities include road repairs, snow and ice removal, landscaping, signage installation, and maintaining storm drains and public facilities. The position also involves operating equipment such as loaders, backhoes, sanders, chainsaws, and power tools, along with performing basic equipment maintenance and minor repairs. Occasional assistance with water system operations and grave site preparation is required. Candidates must have a high school diploma, a Class B CDL (preferred) with air brake endorsement, minimum of 2C hydraulic license or able to get within 6 months of employment. At least one year of relevant experience or equivalent training. This is physically demanding outdoor work in all weather conditions, requiring heavy lifting and availability for emergency call-ins and sometimes long winter hours. This is a fully benefited job. Pay rate \$25 to \$30 an hour negotiated on experience and licensees.

This job will stay posted until it is filled.

Please send cover letter and resume to Charles Dazelle at highwaysuper@townofchester.net
The Town of Chester is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

BLANDFORD

TREES

from page 1

there are historical foundations and the remains of other historical structures in the area. The Historical Commission has also been involved with the on-site visits, not only on Falls Road, but on an additional parcel off North Blandford Road at SWSC Gate 29, which is referred to as Cobble Mountain Forest Lot.

the tree removal at the second location, besides involving “even more trees,” is that SWSC has submitted a forest cutting plan to the Massachusetts Division of Conservation and Recreation State Forester for approval. This project involves “425 hazard trees,” said Gates. Not only will trees be removed, but there will also be invasive plant

removal. “That means that the Conservation Commission has no jurisdiction over the project if the State Forester approves it, even though there is a stream and wetlands in the affected area,” said Gates in an email.

The state forester has approved what is referred to as the Ash Hazard Tree Project on North Blandford

Road involving tree removal on five and a half acres.

Conservation did provide comments on the cutting plan. There are also historical foundations, stone walls and “remnants of other historical activities” at the North Blandford Road area.

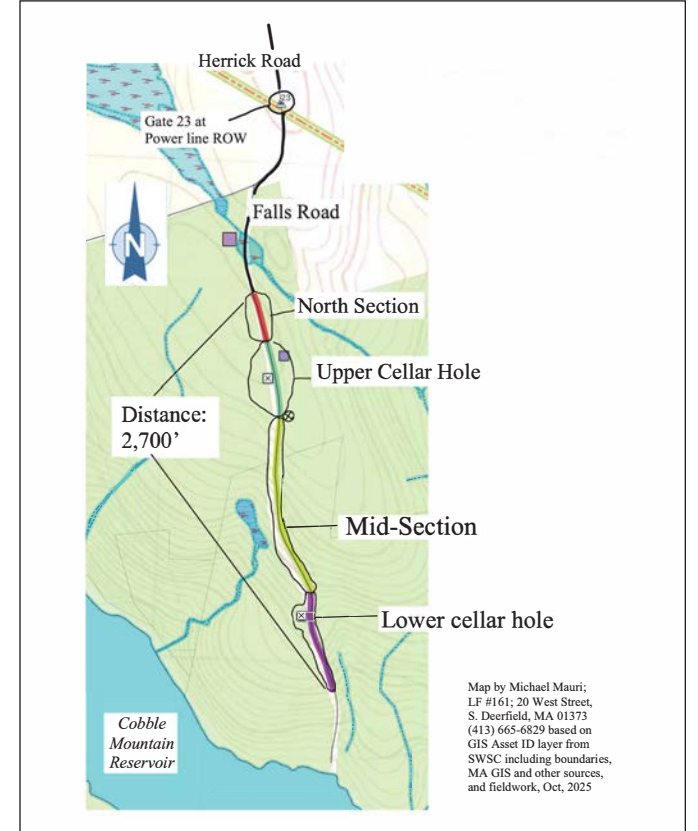
The Historical Commission was on hand because of the history of industry and homesteads

there. Gates said it is a “stretch to call the projects routine maintenance; they are really two big projects.”

The difference in the two areas is that the lower end of Herrick Road, is a discontinued town/public road, so it is open to walkers while the property on North Blandford Road is posted as belonging to SWSC, pre-

venting trespass.

Having reviewed the approved plan, Gates said, “The cutting plan is good, but again the down side with any approved cutting plan is that the Conservation Commission has no jurisdiction even if wetlands are involved. That said, the State Forester does a good job of making sure the logging crews do things right.”



This is a map showing the area of tree removal. Courtesy map



Courtesy photos Dick Gates of Blandford Conservation Commission's

These photos are of trees already cut on Falls Road, the lower part of Herrick Road which is the public road through Springfield Water and Sewer Commission land.

Planning Board votes updated bylaws

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – The Planning Board voted in favor of replacing current Ground Mounted Solar Voltaic and Battery Energy Storage System zoning bylaws with more current, updated bylaws at their Friday, May 15.

The end result is the work of the Planning Board and members of the Energy Projects Siting and Engagement Committee. The lengthy detailed new version of these zoning bylaws is available on the town's website, at the Post

Office and the Town Clerk's office.

EPSEC committee chair Jackie Coury wanted to make sure that it's as clear as possible for residents to understand. The bylaws only affect large commercial solar and Battery Energy Storage System installations, not residential.

Residential installations do not require special permitting. Regarding decommissioning of the commercial installations, Coury told the board that to date 20 solar companies have gone “belly up” and she wants to make sure the town is not

held liable for decommissioning.

As far as residential installations, the contracts are made with the home/property owner. The Planning Board will revisit the commercial decommissioning bond every five years, according to Chair Greg Garfield.

The board was praised for their efforts by residents in attendance. Planning presented their vote to the Select Board on Monday, May 17.

The public hearing on the bylaws is set for Friday, May 29 at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall.

MEETING

from page 1

Select Board member Ted Cousineau said that Mark Boomsma has already opened a grave and he used his own equipment; they might have to have the use of a highway department truck to remove dirt. And, if Boomsma is not available, they might have to hire someone.

Memorial bench

The Fire Department in conjunction with the Historical Commission presented the board with a drawing of the location for a memorial bench honoring late Fire Chief Thomas Ackley. The bench would be close to and facing Main Street, outlined with stone perimeter. The bench will be wooden with a metal base.

Joanne Auclair from the Historical Commission told the board the plans for the bench “look really nice.”

It was discussed possibly putting names or initials of deceased firefighters on the inner row of bricks outlining plantings. The plantings include azalea, hydrangea, peony, astilbe, salvia, heuchera and spring bulbs. Boomsma told the board that there would be people within the department to help with maintenance. The Historical Commission would like to see the plantings as natural as possible.

Gazebo

Coury brought up the gazebo, which needs rehab work. The Select Board is expecting a quote.

Auclair said care had to be taken there for the historical perspective, and care for the historical plantings

in the area.

Lighting the area was discussed, possibly small solar lights, attached to the gazebo or on the ground.

Coury said that there were funds available in the Watson Park trust.

The road in Watson Park cost will have to wait until after the beginning of the new fiscal year because the cost increased dramatically. There is a Pin Oak on the back side of the park road that the Historical Commission asked the highway department be mindful of as it is a historic planting.

Coury asked Hultay if all the employees were forklift certified. This came up because of drug testing. She said that Jennifer Girard from the Board of Health will discuss this with Ferrera because “drug testing is much broader.”

Beaver trap

Then regarding beaver traps, Springfield Water and Sewer said a beaver trap would cost \$10,000. Hultay told the board that a beaver trap should never cost more than \$1,000.

Coury will go back to Ferrera, who spoke with SWSC to “get clarity” regarding the trap.

Hultay said that when the water rises on SWSC land it affects “numerous Blandford roads” and it would be nice for SWSC to pay for the traps/trapping because they are the property owners.

It's usually \$500 to \$700 for trapping. He added that the town uses a professional trapper, who has a

flat fee. The trapper checks the traps every night. If SWSC puts \$10,000 aside for beavers, that would be “very much useful” for the town.

Bicentennial Park

Corinne Shartrand told the board that she and George Reichert, working on Bicentennial Park, were going to purchase about 70 plants for about \$500. Also, some plants will be donated.

They are also getting quotes for repairs to the retaining walls around the park.

Other business

In other business, appointments to town positions continued as follows: Adam Dolby as Fire Chief for one year and Jennifer Girard as Election Warden for one year, July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

Other one-year appointments were made, all to the Emergency Management team, Adam Dolby, Cristina Ferrera, Raymond Hultay and Jennifer Girard. Girard was also appointed as Environmental Certifying Officer for one year.

The Hilltown Community Ambulance Association reported a total of 20 calls for the first quarter of 2026. HCAA responded to 17 calls at the paramedic level and of those 17, ten calls required transportation. The average response time was 18 minutes, 58 seconds.

At the end of business, the board then held a roll call vote to go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations.

News, photo publication policy

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

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

Deadline is Friday at NOON.



BLANDFORD

Car and bear collide on Mass. Pike last Saturday

By **Mary Kronholm**
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – There was an accident on the Mass Pike Saturday, May 16 early evening.

Dispatch sent out a call about a bear vs car in the east bound lane. There is

not much information available except to say there were apparently no real winners.

The car was pretty banged up and apparently the bear did not make it.

Speaking, albeit somewhat indirectly, of road kill, there are currently a number of critter-corpses in the road-

ways. Squirrels, opossums, porcupines and yes, even birds. The crows and turkey vultures are feasting on remains.

Usually, if anyone has ever taken the time to notice, squirrels will “stop, look and listen” when they run out into the road. They will stop in the

lane opposite from traffic and stay put or turn around and scamper back from whence they came.

Squirrels are always on the alert for predators, usually birds of prey, and they will run in a zig-zag path. But they are able to sense vehicles because of the size and

noise and will often freeze in their tracks before making a move according to University of California at Davis studies.

According to National Geographic, bad weather will often determine a squirrel’s reactions crossing a road. If the driver of the vehicle slows down to allow the squirrel to

maneuver across the road, this confuses the animal and often causes its death, according to a local firefighter.

It may be possible to assume that the other road kill animals also struggle in bad weather, which is something the Hilltowns had recently.

Blandford Historical Society... *Did You Know?*

Few people realize that the land beneath Blandford was once tied to one of colonial New England’s great surveying blunders, a mistake that helped support what became Yale University.

The Surveyors who got lost

The story began in 1642, when Massachusetts tried to establish its southern boundary with Connecticut. But the two English surveyors hired by Massachusetts never fully walked the line and, through rough guesswork, botched the job.

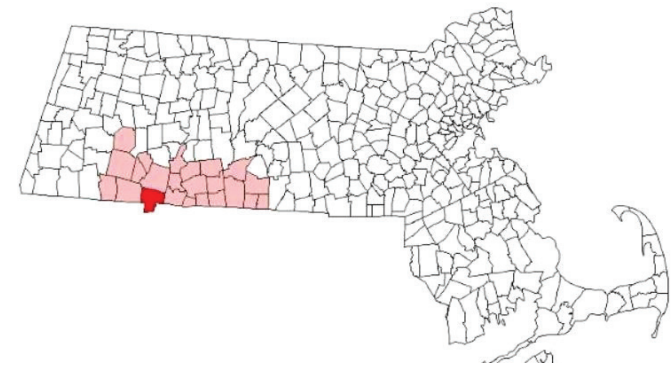
Lines wandered. Measurements drifted. Entire towns ended up claimed by both colonies.

Massachusetts insisted Suffield and Enfield belonged to Massachusetts. Connecticut disagreed.

Massachusetts pays with land

When a joint 1713 survey exposed the error, the colonies negotiated a compromise. Massachusetts kept jurisdiction over the settled towns, but gave Connecticut over 100,000 acres of its wilderness to sell as compensation.

Connecticut auctioned off the land in 1716. These became known as the



This map of Massachusetts shows the whole state shows the irregularity in the southern border in red with Connecticut.

“Equivalent Lands.”

But it wasn’t over yet. Sixteen years later, the Massachusetts General Court carved out another six-mile-square wilderness tract to compensate disgruntled Suffield property owners.

Realizing local farmers had no desire to clear rugged Berkshire forests, Christopher Jacob Lawton, a shrewd Suffield lawyer, bought up their land rights and consolidated the tract. He then brought in investors and recruited Scots-Irish immigrant families. This second wave of Equivalent Lands was first settled as New Glasgow in 1735 and incorporated as Blandford in 1741. Suffield and Enfield would officially become part

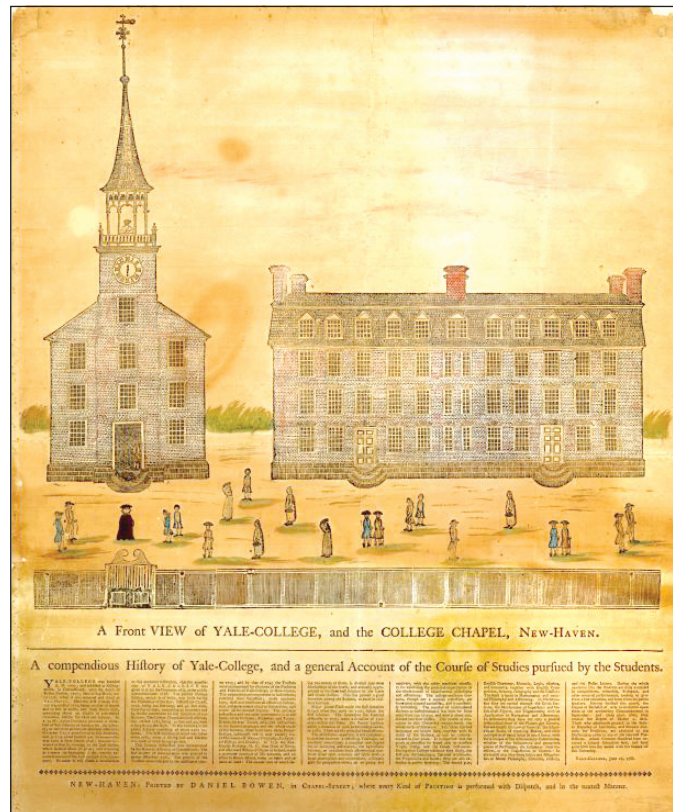
of Connecticut in 1749.

What does Yale have to do with it?

A substantial portion of the money raised from the sale of the Equivalent Lands helped support the struggling Collegiate School of Connecticut, a college barely hanging on in the early 1700s.

That little school eventually became Yale University.

Yale itself had been founded because conservative Calvinist ministers feared Harvard was drifting toward religious liberalism. As it turned out, the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who later settled Blandford carried much the same stern worldview — disciplined, doctrinal, and wary of distractions



Submitted photos

This is a print of Yale College and church from an old New Haven paper.

from the pure Word of God. A mistake that echoed for centuries

Over time, Yale evolved into a far broader intellectual institution, much as Harvard had before it. Generations later, it helped educate and

enlighten men who would shape both Blandford and the nation.

Among them were Yale graduates and early town ministers Joseph Badger and John Keep. Badger later became legendary for liv-

ing among Native American communities in the Western Reserve. Keep opened a classroom for Black children in his parsonage before later founding the first American college to admit Black students alongside white students.

Blandford native George Ashmun, Yale Class of 1823, was chairman of the 1860 Republican National Convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln for president. Summer resident and town library founder Josephine Porter’s father endowed Yale’s Sheffield Scientific School, an early science and engineering center. Her son, another graduate, would go onto to become the nation’s first Press Secretary under President McKinley.

And the list goes on

One badly botched colonial surveying job eventually rippled outward into frontier settlements, religious movements, institutional reform, abolitionism, and the survival of a small college that became Yale University.

Not bad for a town of about 1,200 people. Then again, Blandford has always been a small town with a big history.



Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

Porter Memorial Library from left, staff member Michele Crane, Sherri Quinn, Lucia Sullivan, Julie Hagstrom, Carol Charla, Janet Strausberg, Vicki Soler, Beth Lanzoni (partially hidden), Director Nicole Daviau, Terri Garfield and Mary Powers.

Book club meets for last time at library until renovation complete

BLANDFORD – Porter Memorial Library book club met Saturday morning at the library.

The group discussed

“Lost Towns of the Swift River Valley” by Elena Palladina, the story of flooding four communities to make way for the Quabbin

Reservoir.

The next meeting will be at the library’s new location at Town Hall and the club will discuss “A Guardian

and a Thief” by Meghan Majumdar covering extreme poverty, climate changes, moral ambiguity and ethical dilemmas.

Meet the Candidates Night set for June 2

BLANDFORD – Meet the candidates night for all candidate running for town office takes place on Tuesday, June 2 at 7 p.m. in the gym at Town Hall.

“This is an opportunity for townspeople to ask questions of the candidates about town issues and how they would handle them,” said organizer George Reichert.

Each candidate will have five minutes to tell the audience about themselves

and how they will conduct town business if elected.

This will be followed by a question-and-answer period. Residents will have written questions, which will be read by a moderator, who will not be a town resident.

Reichert said in following the program outlined by the League of Women Voters, a non-local moderator would have no bias in asking questions.

Historical society holds open house May 25

BLANDFORD – The Blandford Historical Society will hold an open house on Memorial Day,

Monday, May 25 from 10 a.m.-noon in the historical society building.

Memorial Day starts at noon

BLANDFORD – The Memorial Day parade will start promptly on Monday, May 25 at noon.

This start is half-an-hour earlier than in prior years. All participants should form at the Blandford town offices no later than 11:30 a.m.

A town-wide picnic follows immediately following in Watson Park with standard picnic fare: hotdogs, burgers, sausages, salads, desserts. Residents

are invited to bring their favorite dessert or salad to share. There will be face painting and tattoos, all temporary, not permanent and there is a tag sale along the Watson Park Road.

The ice cream truck will serve ice cream starting at 1:30 p.m. following the picnic. For any questions or more information, people may call Joann Martin at 413-848-4279 extension 206.



- Check Out Our For Sale, Services, Pets and Other Classifieds
- Real Estate: For Sale, For Rent & Vacation Rentals
- Help Wanted: Part Time & Full Time Career Opportunities

Call to place your classified ad: **413-283-8393**

the **best** around
CLASSIFIEDS
TURLEY PUBLICATIONS, INC.
Reaching readers in
50 local communities every week.



PUBLIC NOTICES

Williamsburg Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE

The Williamsburg Conservation Commission, in accordance with MGL Chapter 131, Section 40, the Wetlands Protection Act, will hold a public meeting on: **June 3, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** at the Williamsburg town offices, 141 Main St, Haydenville, MA to review a:

Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) submitted by Courteny Morehouse. The subject area or activity is located at: 18 Williams St. Williamsburg, MA 05/21/2026

District (TC), Water Supply District (WS), Floodplain District (FP), Westfield River Protection District (WRP), Mass Wildlife BioMap3 Core Habitats, all permanently protected areas, all areas with prime agricultural soils. Adopt a zoning bylaw to amend sections of the Chesterfield Zoning By-law to define and regulate BESS.

A copy of the full proposed bylaws is available for viewing at the Chesterfield Town Clerk's Office.

Sarah Hamilton
Planning Board Chair
05/21, 05/28/2026

TOWN OF CHESTER Public Hearing Monday, June 1, 2026 at 6:00 PM FY 2024 CDBG Re-Programming Funds

The Town of Chester, acting as the lead community on behalf of the Towns of Huntington, Middlefield and Russell, in association with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a public hearing regarding the town's ongoing FY24 Community Development Block Grant Programs, and considering re-programming remaining grant funds. This hearing will also review the Town of Chester's current FY25

CDBG award to consider reallocating drainage funding to water main replacement. The hearing will take place at **6:00 PM on Monday, June 1, 2026**, in person at the Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA 01011.

The hearing will review the projects funded through the town's FY24 Community Development Block Grant Program including the current phase of drainage improvements on Prospect Street, a regional housing rehabilitation program and public social services (the Huntington Food Pantry, Southern Hilltowns Adult Education Center, Hilltown Social Service Project and the Southern Hilltowns Domestic Violence Task Force). The drainage improvements awarded through the FY24 program have been substantially completed. Remaining funding is available for re-programming. These activities received funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, Massachusetts CDBG program.

All persons with questions or comments regarding the performance hearing will have an opportunity to submit comments up until and through the public hearing. Please submit comments

to Joe Hagopian at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission @ jhagopian@pvpc.org or 413-781-6045. Persons who require special accommodation should contact the Town prior to the hearing date at 413-354-7760. 05/21/2026

TOWN OF BLANDFORD PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE - MGL c.40A, §5

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Blandford Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing at the Blandford Town Hall, 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008 at **6:00 PM on May 29, 2026** to consider amendments to the Town's Zoning Map and its Zoning By-law concerning the placement and regulation of Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) installations. The proposed amendments include adoption of an overlay zoning district to limit the siting of such installations and substantial revisions to Section VIII - Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations and Section XVI - Battery Energy Storage Systems of the existing Zoning By-law. A copy of the proposed overlay energy district

map and amendments is on file and available for inspection at the Blandford Post Office and Town Hall, and at <https://TownofBlandford.gov/planning>.

Any person interested or wishing to be heard should appear at the time and place designated. If unable to attend please submit comments, in writing, to the Blandford Planning Board at 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008.

Greg Garfield, Chair
Blandford Planning Board
05/14, 05/21/2026

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON

Notice is hereby given under Chapter 138, Section 15A of Mass. General Laws that the Huntington Selectboard, as Local Licensing Authority, has received an application from Holly & Colin Neylon of 112 Enterprises, LLC D/B/A The River House Bar & Grill for a transfer of an All Alcoholic Beverages Section 12 Restaurant license currently held by 200 Worthington Road, Inc. D/B/A The Rapids for 200 Worthington Road, Huntington, MA.

A public hearing will be held on **Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.** before the Selectboard

at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road, Huntington, MA.

The public is invited to share questions, comments, or concerns.

Jennifer Peloquin
Town Administrator
05/21/2026

Town of Goshen Conservation Commission Legal Notice

At its next regularly scheduled meeting on **Monday, June 1st, 2026, at 6:00 PM** at the Goshen Town Hall, 40 Main Street, the Goshen Conservation Commission will consider a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the construction of a driveway and single-family home and the possible location of a common drive to avoid a wetland crossing on West Street, in the Town of Goshen. NOI submitted by Smith Environmental, representing Ruger Properties Inc. The Commission will make its determination in accordance with the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. c 131, Sec. 40 (as amended).

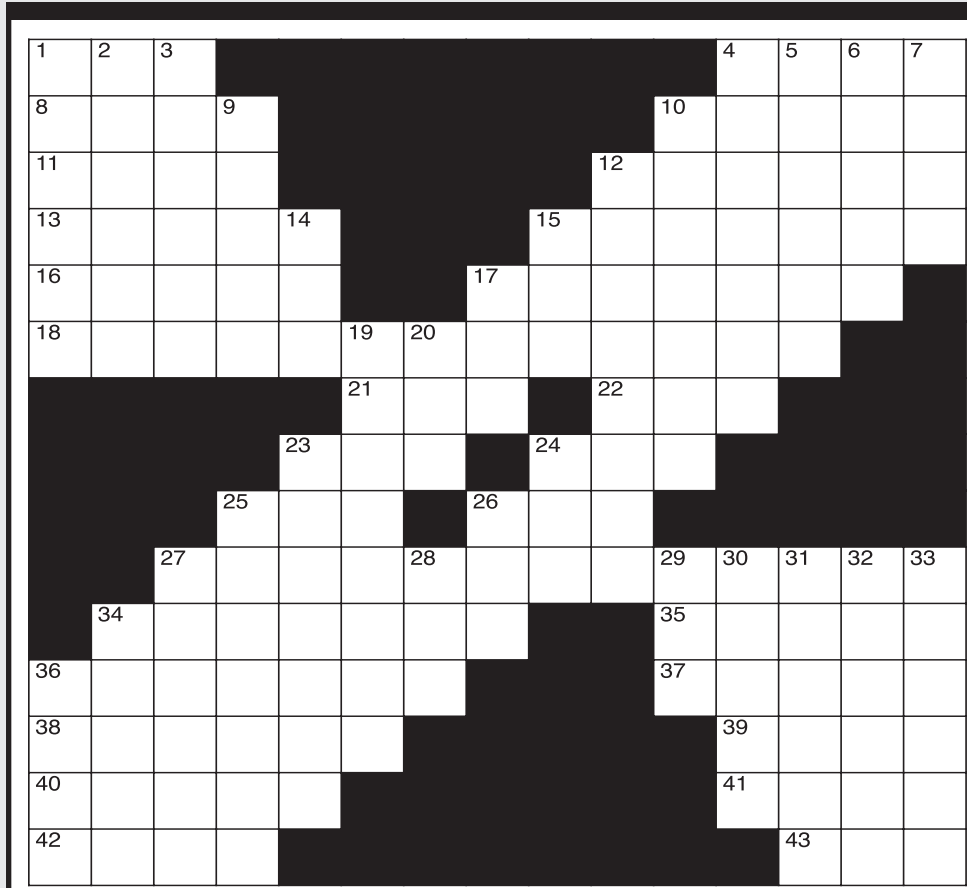
Plans and additional information are on record in the Office of the Conservation Commission.

Town of Goshen
Conservation Commission
05/21/2026

Chesterfield Planning Board LEGAL NOTICE

A Public Hearing will be held at 6:30 PM on **Monday, June 8, 2026 at 6:30 PM** in the Town Offices, 422 Main Road, Chesterfield, MA to consider the following Zoning Bylaw changes:

Adopt a temporary moratorium bylaw on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), expiring on Sept. 30, 2026, unless ended earlier by a vote of Town Meeting or Extended by a subsequent vote of Town Meeting, Co-located, Accessory and Freestanding BESS of any capacity; and, on the use of BESS in Town Center



CLUES ACROSS

- Government lawyers
- The back of a person's neck
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- In a less flashy way
- Living room piece
- Shepherd dog
- A citizen of Iran
- Moved slowly
- Small finch
- Previously
- What a kid does on Halloween
- Monetary unit
- Using dry humor
- Ocean

CLUES DOWN

- Abstain from
- Admirer
- Expedition to observe animals
- Act that is legally void
- WW2 combatants
- A tool
- Looked at
- Showing wild excitement
- Banknotes
- Tired
- Printers need it
- Women's patriotic group
- When you anticipate getting somewhere

CLUES DOWN

- Functions
- Breed of sheep
- Mocking pieces
- A major division of geological time
- Andiron
- Many not ands
- Cuban city
- He voiced "Olaf"
- Criticize
- "Thundercats" character
- Markings
- Gets up
- MLB lefty reliever A.J.
- An assembly of witches
- High energy lasers (abbr.)

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20
Slow down to smell the roses, Aries. You've been running at full speed, and your body is asking for a break. A low-key evening at home will recharge your batteries.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21
Creativity hits you in an unexpected place. It might even come while you're doing chores. Explore a new idea thoroughly, as it might be the creative spark you've been looking for.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21
A misunderstanding is cleared up by a simple phone call, Gemini. Don't let a text message stew in your mind. Direct communication is the only way to keep your peace of mind this week.

CANCER

June 22/July 22
Focus on your work-space. A little reorganization and some new decor will shift the energy and help you focus. You'll be surprised how much your environment affects your output.

LEO

July 23/Aug 23
Your generosity is noted. Helping a colleague or friend with a thankless task will earn you major karma points. Expect a small, pleasant surprise to come back to you.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, steer clear of over-analyzing a recent social interaction. You did fine, and people enjoyed your company. Focus on the future instead of replaying the past on a loop.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23
A financial risk might be tempting, but the stars suggest sticking to the plan for now, Libra. Focus on "slow and steady" gains rather than "get rich quick" schemes this week.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22
You're feeling extra protective of your time and that's okay. Saying "no" to an invitation isn't a rejection of the person; it's an investment in your own mental health.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21
Laughter is your best medicine this week, Sagittarius. Seek a person who always makes you giggle. A lighthearted approach to a serious problem will reveal the simplest solution.

CAPRICORN

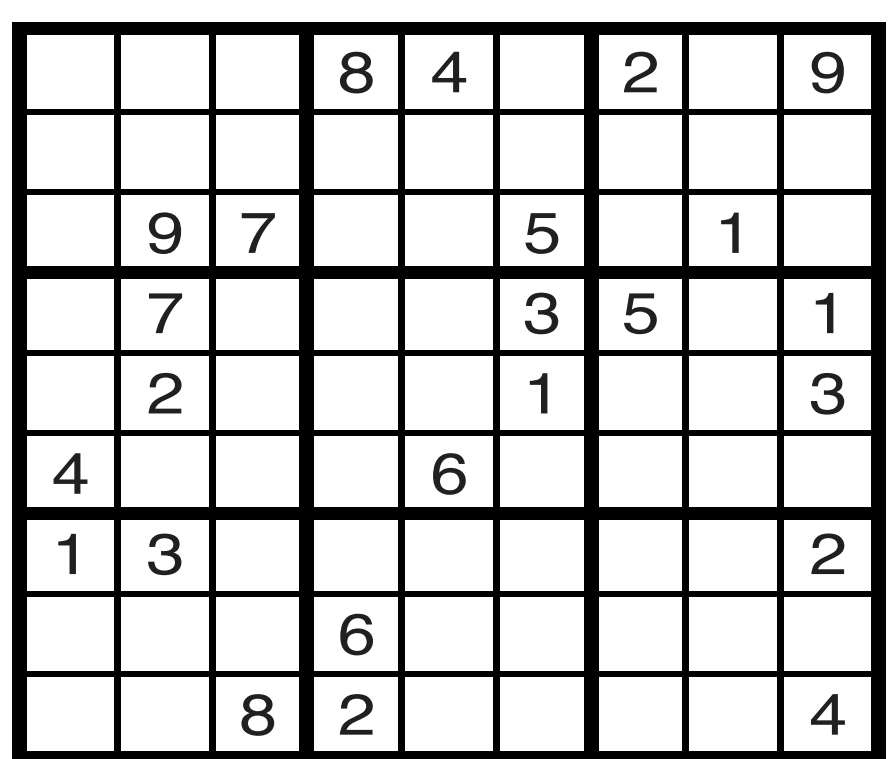
Dec 22/Jan 20
Your reputation is preceding you in a good way, Capricorn. Someone in a position of power has their eye on your work. Keep your standards high; the payoff is closer than you think.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18
An old hobby is calling your name. Dust off those tools or that camera. Reconnecting with a past passion will give you the emotional boost you've been looking for.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20
Trust the timing of your life, Pisces. Something you wanted didn't work out, but that's because something better is currently in the works. Keep your heart open and your head up.



SUDOKU

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!

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!

answers

WESTFIELD AUTO PARTS INC

AUTO PARTS & SUPPLIES

NATIONALLY ADVERTISED MERCHANDISE FOR ALL MAKES & MODELS

WHOLESALE RETAIL

★ Complete Auto Machine Shop Service ★ Engine Rebuilding Of All Kinds
★ Authorized Caterpillar Hydraulic Hose Dealer ★ Hydraulic Hoses

Call "DALE" 8-12 BIRGE AVE., WESTFIELD

Now stocking Car Quest Filters made by WIX, Amalie Oil, Bailing Twine & Tractor Parts

Dial 568-8944 or 568-1611 FAX # 568-1554

Classifieds

12 WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS | SERVING 50 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE

Call us at 413.283.8393

FOR SALE

BUSINESS FOR SALE
BIOLINKS OF NEW ENGLAND
 Grease trap pumping business. Ninety customers, two pump trucks.
 Call Les 413-297-1513

FIREWOOD

FIREWOOD
 Fresh cut & split \$240.00
 Seasoned cut & split \$375.00
 All hardwood.
 Tree length available
 *Also have seasoned softwood for outdoor boilers (Cheap).
 Quality & volumes guaranteed!!
 New England Forest Products
 (413)477-0083

MORE HEAT LESS WOOD. Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX Outdoor Wood Furnace. EPA Certified. Titanium Stainless Steel. \$2K Tax Credit.
 Call (508)882-0178

MISCELLANEOUS

HARMON PELLET STOVE MODEL XXV. Like new condition, dark maroon enamel. \$2750. 413-848-2298.

TAG SALE

BARN SALE
 Goss Hill Road, Worthington. Fri., May 22-Sat., May 23
 9am-5pm. Many vintage items, prints, collectibles, small furniture and quilts.

WANTED

WANTED! CASH for:

- Machinist tools, power tools & Snap on.
- Electronics & Audio Equipment.
- Sports Cards.
- 70s/80s/90s Toys.
- Antiques & Collectibles. Much, much more!

Call/Text Sam
 413-531-5381

WANTED TO BUY

ALL ANTIQUES AND OLD STUFF WANTED.

BUYING Bottles, Crocks, Jugs, Pottery, Costume Jewelry, Toys, Games, coins, sterling, Glassware, Silver-plated items, watches, Musical instruments, typewriters, sewing machines, tools, radios, clocks, lanterns, lamps, kitchenware, cookware, knives, military, automotive, fire department, masonic, license plates, beer cans, barware, books, oil cans, advertising tins, hunting, fishing, signs, and more.

Donald Roy (860) 874-8396

WANTED

ALWAYS BUYING ALL ANTIQUES:

Musical instruments, guitars, horns, keyboards, vintage electronics, jewelry, coins, watches, military cameras, sports memorabilia, art, sterling, signs, automotive, hunting, advertising, radios, ham radio equipment, audio equipment, toys, one item or entire estate.

Call Paul 413-206-8688

JUNK REMOVAL

ARA JUNK FURNITURE REMOVAL

Full house cleanouts, attics, basements, garages, pools, hot tubs, sheds, decks. Same day service. 8am-9pm. Credit cards accepted. Free estimates on phone.
 Fully insured.
 Call Pete 413-433-0356.

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

SERVICES

A B Hauling and Removal Service

2***A & B HOUSEHOLD REMOVAL SERVICE*******

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

Advertise your **HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICES** in our classifieds.
WE GET RESULTS!
 Call 413-283-8393



SERVICES

DRYWALL, PAINTING AND CEILINGS, plaster repair. Drywall hanging. Taping & complete finishing. All ceiling textures. Fully insured. Jason at Great Walls. (413)563-0487

ELECTRICIAN

PJ's Electrical MASTER ELECTRICIAN
 • Licensed & Insured •

Providing safe, reliable electrical services for residential and commercial projects.

NOW OFFERING FREE CONSULTATIONS.
 Call today to schedule your appointment.
(413) 366-1703
 (Lic. #24046-A)

GAGNON ELECTRIC
 All types of electrical work. Fully insured. All work fully guaranteed. Free estimates. Lic. #14960A.
 413-533-8867

LICENSED ELECTRICIAN

I offer good quality electrical work, no project too small. Service upgrades, pools, trustworthy, dependable & insured.
 Master Elec. #20773A.
 Text/call Luis 413-218-3301.

ZEN ELECTRIC COMPANY LLC
 Fully licensed and insured; Master Electrician on staff. Call for all your electrical needs. No job too small. Senior citizen and Veteran Discount. A veteran owned company. MA License #8101A1.

Call John at (413)206-6509

HOME IMPROVEMENT

HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIALIST

Decks, porches, repair service, roofing and siding contractor.
 Tim 413-563-2229. Licensed/insured. 35 year construction supervisor.

HOME IMPROVEMENTS. REMODELING Kitchens, baths. Ceramic tile, windows, painting, wallpapering, siding, decks. Insurance work. Fully insured. Free estimates. (413)246-2783 Ron.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Handyman Services

Walker Home Improvement

Finish Carpentry • Framing • Drywall • Painting • & more!

(413) 687-5552



SERVICES

CHAMELEON PAINTING & REMODELING
 INTERIOR/EXTERIOR
Remodeling & Deck Specialists
 Residential/Commercial
 Fully Insured • Free Estimates
413-351-1147

LANDSCAPING

A. ROZELL'S LANDSCAPING & BOBCAT SERVICE
 Excavator Services
 Overgrown property?
 Extreme Brush Cutting!
 Shrub, Stump, Tree Removal
 Lawn/Arborvite Installed
 Loam, Stone, Mulch, Sand
 Storm Clean-up
 Small Demolition/ Junk Removal
 Insured
Josh Rozell 413-636-5957

****ALL SEASON****
 Specializing in shrub trimming, pruning, design, deliveries, loader, backhoe, insured. Professional.
 Please call Bob (413)537-5789.

MATT GUERTIN LANDSCAPING
 Landscape Design and Installation
 Paver Patios, Walkways
 For more services visit
mattguertinlandscaping.com
 Call or text 413-266-9975
 Insured - Commercial - Residential

LAWN & GARDEN

A.A.A. ROTOTILLING Yes time to till gardens and flower beds too. Be safe grow your own. Call for appointment, fair and reasonable rates. Suburban residential only. 413-626-1927.

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES
FRIDAY AT NOON

SERVICES

MASONRY

STOP WET BASEMENTS
ABC MASONRY & BASEMENT WATERPROOFING

All brick, block, stone, concrete. Hatchway doors, basement windows, chimneys rebuilt & repaired, foundations repaired, basement waterproofing systems, sump pumps. BBB+ rating. Free estimates. Lic #14790.
 Call (413)569-1611, (413)374-5377

PAINTING

PRO PAINTING
 Low, low prices. All phases interior, exterior painting and wallpapering. Also minor carpentry. 413-310-5099.

PLUMBING

GREG LAFOUNTAIN PLUMBING & HEATING Lic #19196 Repairs & Replacement of fixtures, water heater installations, steam/HW boiler replacement. Kitchen & Bath remodeling. 30 years experience. Fully insured. \$10 Gift Card With Work Performed. Call Greg (413)592-1505

RUBBISH REMOVAL

BOB ROBILLARD'S RUBBISH REMOVAL Attics, Cellars, Garages cleaned, Pools/Hot Tubs Removed. Family owned/operated since 1950 (413)537-5090

TREE WORK

AAA-TROM'S TREE SERVICE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE. Residential removal of trees. Free estimates. Fully insured W/Workman's Comp. Remove them before the wind takes them down. Cordwood, stump grinding. Call 413-283-6374.

DL & G TREE SERVICE - Everything from tree pruning, tree removal, stump grinding, storm damage and brush chipping. Honest and Dependable. Fully insured. Now offering a Senior Citizen and Veteran discount. Call today for free estimate (413)478-4212

TUNE UPS

LAWNMOWER TUNE UP & REPAIR
A&M TUNE-UPS
 Push Lawnmowers, Riding Mowers and Small Engine Repair.
 Work done at your home.
FREE PICKUP OF UNWANTED LAWN EQUIPMENT
 Call Mike (413) 348-7967

SERVICES

STUMP GRINDING

AFFORDABLE STUMP GRINDING
 Fast, dependable service. Free estimates. Fully insured.
 Call Joe Sablack
413-436-9821, Cell 413-537-7994

DL & G STUMP GRINDING Grinding stumps of all sizes, insured & certified. Senior discounts. Call Dave 413-478-4212

AUTO CAMPERS

2011 KEYSTONE MONTANA MOUNTAINEER MODEL RKD
 LENGTH 33; 2 SLIDE-OUTS, REAR KITCHEN, SLEEPS 4, LOTS OF STORAGE. \$8000.
 BRIMFIELD - (413)374-1880

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: PAINTING, CLEAN-UP.
 413-297-1513, LES.

HOUSE CLEANER POSITION AVAILABLE!
 Established company, flexible schedule, competitive wages, supportive team, respectful clients! Work around college classes or meeting the bus! Call today to see if we are the right fit for you! We are eager to have you join our Team!
413-267-4297 or 413-695-8087.

LABORERS AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR
 Positions available with local work. Proper licenses required including OSHA compliance. Compensation will commensurate with experience. Transportation required.
 Email: bradwayconstruction@yahoo.com
 with your resume and for more information.

REAL ESTATE

FOR RENT


15 MAPLE ST., BROOKFIELD.
 Available June 1. Unit 2, 2 bedroom, 1 bath, fenced yard, washer/dryer/dishwasher. Country style kitchen cabinets, quiet location. \$1500/mo. First/last/security. Good credit 700+.
Stone Group Realty 774-262-6667.



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.

WALES: SECOND FLOOR ROOM RENTAL. \$750 per week, no pets, no visitors, non-smokers. Lease month to month. References required. First/last. 508-344-0732.

FOR RENT



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

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

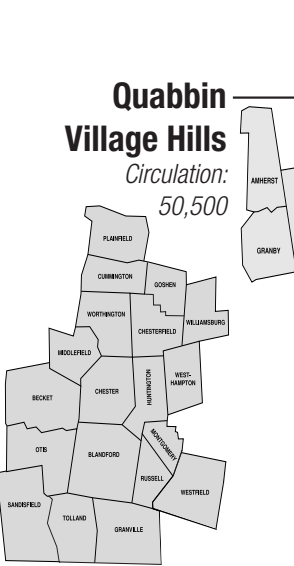
FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 DEADLINES: FRIDAY AT NOON
 or call: 413-283-8393

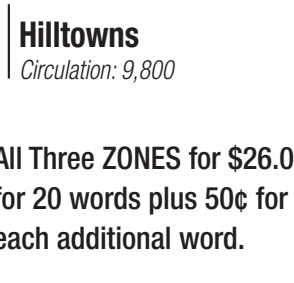
CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Base Price \$26.00
21 Base Price \$26.50	22 Base Price \$27.00	23 Base Price \$27.50	24 Base Price \$28.00
25 Base Price \$28.50	26 Base Price \$29.00	27 Base Price \$29.50	28 Base Price \$30.00
29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	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

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Address: _____
 Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____
 Credit Card: MasterCard VISA Discover Cash Check# _____
 Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____
 Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____

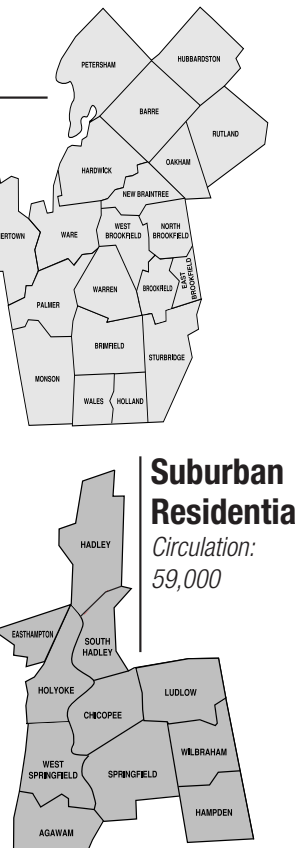
Quabbin Village Hills
 Circulation: 50,500



Hilltowns
 Circulation: 9,800



Suburban Residential
 Circulation: 59,000



All Three ZONES for \$26.00 for 20 words plus 50¢ for each additional word.

GREAT VALUE!
ALL 3 ZONES NOW FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!

Make checks payable to Turley Publications

OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!



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

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Student representatives bid farewell to school committee

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – Every Gateway Regional School Committee agenda includes an item called “Student Representative Update.”

Gateway Regional School elects two high school students to research and report to the committee on events and activities taking place across all three Gateway schools.

Theodore DeAngelis-Page and Ana Holmes, alternate, served in this role since they were elected in June 2024. The two issued their final report at the Wednesday, May 13 school committee meeting, ending with a poignant statement read by Holmes that was met with a warm ovation from the committee and audience members.

In their closing statement, Holmes said, “We wanted to take this moment to acknowledge the unique opportunities and experiences that student representation has provided us. We’ve discussed it at length, and the trips and conversations that our positions have facilitated have given us a new perspective on civic responsibility. We got to see inner workings on how a school runs and how people navigate difficult monetary situations and conflicting opinions.” She also said, “Over the last two years, more than once we have been asked whether or not we would recommend the position to a future student. Our answer has always been an overwhelming yes. Though we will probably not see the school committee again, at least not anytime soon, and though we both have plans for the future, we will certainly go forth and model the lessons and skills we learned here. This posi-

tion will always hold a place in our hearts and as a cornerstone of our civic character.”

The two had also reported on the many activities the schools were undertaking as the end of the year approached. Field trips, sports banquets, prom, music and drama performances were all announced.

Of particular interest, however, was the students’ insight into Gateway Regional School’s performance on Advanced Placement exams. AP exams measure student achievement following college level coursework.

Students entering college, who score high enough on their AP exams can receive college credit and/or have courses waived during their college career. In the 2023-2024 school year, Gateway assumed the cost of taking AP Exams for its students.

The cost of taking an AP exam runs anywhere from \$90 - \$130. Holmes said that she had announced last year that a record-breaking 61 AP tests were taken as a result. This year, the number rose to a total of 82 AP exams. The number of students taking AP tests skyrocketed this year from 21 to 34 students with a number of students taking multiple subject area AP tests. “That’s roughly half of the junior and senior class,” Holmes noted. “On top of these increasing numbers, our AP pass rate in 2025 was an astounding 81%. For context, the pass rate in 2023 was 71% and in 2024 was 66%.”

Holmes explained that the expectation had been that making it possible for more students to take AP exams would result in the school’s pass rate dropping; instead, it had increased substantially in the first year. This year’s



Gateway seniors Theodore DeAngelis-Page and Ana Holmes, student representatives to the Gateway Regional School Committee, gave their final updates on student activities and school events at the May 13 meeting after serving in this role for two years.

scores and pass rate will not be known until all test results are back, likely by fall.

Dr. William Sullivan, Principal of Gateway Regional School, weighed in after the meeting. “The district’s commitment to covering the cost of AP testing continues to demonstrate its dedication to putting students first. Over the past several years, we have seen an increase in the number of students choosing to take AP exams and challenge themselves academically without the financial barrier of exam fees,” Sullivan said. “I am very grateful that the committee continues to prioritize opportunities that support our students and invest in

their future success.”

In other business, the committee welcomed Jessica Sakaske (Chester), Elizabeth Canedy (Huntington) and Jacob Wyman (Montgomery), who were recently elected. New members selected committee assignments and were voted in for those.

Superintendent Melissa Matarazzo announced that the town of Middlefield held its Annual Town Meeting and approved the budget. Two towns have granted funding for the new graduation stage that will be owned by the district and prevent the need for future classes to rent one while still allowing graduation to be held out-

doors on Booster Field.

The committee also approved their meeting schedule for the 2026 – 27 school year, which will be posted to the Gateway website at www.grsd.org. With a few exceptions, most meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month.

Also approved were a number of donations given by area businesses and individuals for teacher appreciation week. These donations totaled \$600 and were given by Gateway Farm and Pet, Moltenbrey’s Market, Applebees and Dunkin Donuts (donated by Matarazzo).

The school committee

will host its annual reception for retiring staff at 6 p.m. near the courtyard, before their June 10 meeting. Twelve staff will be honored this year.

Matarazzo shared several announcements. First, they have heard that their application for continued funding through the Barr Foundation will be approved. Second, a three-year employment contract has been agreed to with the district’s Instructional Assistants and will be voted in at the June 10 meeting.

Chester Selectman Brian Fogue announced, at this time, Rural School Aid is slated to be higher than anticipated for the coming fiscal year.

Before closing the meeting, Chairman Jason Fogue suggested some upcoming goals for the committee. A new regional agreement is long overdue. And while “pay-to-play” (student athletic fees) have been eliminated, there are still issues to be addressed with regard to Gateway athletics. The gym and athletic field scoreboards are not working reliably. The cost saving measure of eliminating non-league games has become an issue for our athletic teams. They not only play fewer contests than most other schools as a result, their strength of schedule leads to a low power ranking which impacts their tournament seeding.

Fogue noted that strategies such as fundraisers and business advertising on playing fields and gyms might solve this issue without reinstating athletic fees, but current policy doesn’t allow for this. He said he’d like to see the Policy Committee revisit this. “I hope we don’t return to user fees,” Fogue said. “Hopefully we can redress this and fix it going forward.”

Art and Peg Rolland Scholarship applications due June 30

WORTHINGTON – The late Art and Peg Rolland established a scholarship fund to benefit citizens of Worthington seeking to further their educational goals.

The annual interest earned on the Fund is distributed each

year to qualified students by a committee consisting of the Town Clerk, a member of the Select Board and a School Committee member.

The requirements for consideration are: The applicant must have been a resident of

Worthington for at least two years prior to the date of application. The applicant must be a high school or secondary school graduate, pursuing a course of study at an approved school or college.

The applicant must

demonstrate financial need. Applications must be post-marked no later than June 30. All application essays must be tied in order to receive consideration.

Each scholarship awarded will be for at least \$500,

but the actual amount and the number of scholarships awarded will depend on the number of applications received and the Fund interest available. Funds will be distributed by Sept. 1, payable to the appropriate institution.

To apply, people should mail the application to: Rolland Scholarship Committee c/o Town Hall, P.O. Box 247, Worthington, MA 01098-0247 or leave in the dropbox outside the Town Hall door.

Holyoke Community College announces Alpha Xi Omega chapter of Phi Theta Kappa inductees

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College announces HCC students, who have been accepted for membership into the Alpha Xi Omega chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa national honor society for 2026.

Students are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa when they have completed 15 college credits while maintain-

ing a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

The 2026 inductees are: Ian Cartmill of Chester, Brianna Chartier of Easthampton, Alec Donahue of Easthampton, Tetiana Dudiak of Easthampton, Nataly Gonzalez of Easthampton, Eliot Papadakis of Easthampton, Emma Pelletier of Easthampton, Zoe Thomas

of Easthampton, Alexa Colly of Florence, Nicholas Grimaldi of Florence, Simon Sinclair of Florence, Chelsea O’Brien of Huntington, August Assarian of Russell, Beatrice Hamilton of Southamton, Addison Hufnagle of Southamton, Zeik Wiemer of Southamton, Alicia Booth of Westfield, Akeeva Forcier

of Westfield, Danielle Hctor of Westfield, Sabir Hussain of Westfield, Olivia Irving of Westfield, Chloe Phillips of Westfield, Sandra Rhoden of Westfield, Angelray Rosa of Westfield, Jessica Starkey of Westfield, Casey Stegbuchner of Westfield, Lauren Yates of Westfield and Geoffery Gougeon of Williamsburg.

Wesley LaValley III makes Phi Kappa Phi honor society

BATON ROUGE, LA – Wesley LaValley III of Easthampton, was recently elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation’s oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society, at University of Massachusetts.

LaValley is among approximately 20,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initi-

ated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10% of seniors and 7.5% of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10% of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

ADVERTISING
SALES

HELP
WANTED

- ▶ Do you want to work in your community helping local businesses connect with their customers?
- ▶ Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?
- ▶ If so, then join our team! Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers. The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.

You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills. Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.

We are a locally owned family business, offers a competitive commission structure, 401k, and health plan.

Send resume & cover letter to:
Jamie Joslyn
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069
Email: jamie@turley.com

Turley
Publications, Inc.

OTIS

Council On Aging announces news, events

OTIS – Council on Aging director Karen Yvon announced the upcoming May programs.

The regular COA events will continue on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the month.

Exercise class is every Monday at 10:30 a.m. in the COA center at Town Hall.

Haircuts will be available on Mondays.

Mat Yoga is every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and Chair Yoga is every Thursday at 10 a.m.

Wednesdays are Food Pantry days from 9-11 a.m. People should pick up their items on time.

The center will be

closed on Monday, May 25, Memorial Day but will be open on Tuesday, May 26 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Haircuts are available on Monday June 1. Seniors should call the 413-269-0100, extension 5 to make an appointment. Wednesday, June 2, the Tri Town Health blood pressure clinic is set

from 9:30-10:30 a.m..

And an early announcement, the Annual bar-b-que will be Wednesday, July 15 at the COA rooms at noon. Reservations are required and there will be no walk-ins allowed. People should call the COA at the 413-623-8932 to make a reservation.

DALTON

Dalton library presents musical programs

DALTON – The Dalton Free Public Library, 462 Main St., offers musical programs during the month of the June.

The concerts are free, no registration required and all are welcome. On Thursday, June 4 at 6 p.m. Kevin Sherwin “Exchanges” offers

the musical entertainment.

On Thursday, June 11 at 6 p.m. The O-Tones Power Trio will provide swing, blues, soul, Motown and

Latin. On Saturday, June 18 at 6 p.m. Jon and Li Waterman, roots of American popular music will provide songs and stories.