

# Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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

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## SCHOOLS

### Superintendent reflects on four years at Gateway

Smidy leaving district in August, taking post with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Gateway Superintendent Kristen Smidy announced she is leaving Gateway later this summer to accept a job with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

She will serve as an Associate Director of the organization and will oversee the accreditation of 15 schools a year. She was selected from 185 candidates for the position.

Smidy holds a Bachelor's Degree in histo-

ry and Master's Degree in education, both from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She also earned a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in educational leadership from Boston University.

She has risen rapidly through the administrative levels of area public schools. Her first teaching job was as a middle school history teacher in Springfield, which she did for five years. From there, she moved to Hampshire Regional High School as an Assistant Principal, then serving as Principal for eight years. Four years ago, Smidy was



Kristen Smidy

selected as the Superintendent of the Gateway Regional School District, a position that had opened with the retirement of former superintendent Dr. David B. Hopson.

Smidy granted an interview with the Country Journal to reflect on her time at Gateway. "It's been a real pleasure. I feel like I've grown a lot, myself," she said. "I've enjoyed the work here and the students. There's something special in the hilltowns that you don't know about until you're here. People come together and get work done."

She was asked why she

SMIDY, page 11

## SCHOOLS

### Gateway hires former DESE official

Joan Tuttle is Gateway's new Director of Accountability and Grants

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent



Joan Tuttle

Until quite recently, Joan Tuttle served as the Director of the West/Central Regional Assistance Team-part of the Statewide System of Support-for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Beginning Tuesday, July 1, she will become the Director of Accountability and Grants for the Gateway Regional School District. Tuttle worked at DESE for nearly twenty years.

Prior to that job, she had taught in Massachusetts and Florida before taking a Distinguished Educator

position with the Louisiana Department of Education. She said you are assigned at the state level but work in the lowest performing school to lead a turnaround. "The great thing

about Louisiana's model was having an immediate impact on the students," Tuttle said. When she returned to Massachusetts in 2005, she said all of the work was monitoring school performance but not providing any assistance. She was tasked with creating an office to provide systemic support and enjoyed partnering with district and school leaders and deciding how to leverage support and resources. "I believe we had a positive impact in the statewide system of support," she said.

This position replaces the Curriculum Director post, which is being vacated by Deanna LeBlanc who is leaving to become curriculum director in Maynard Public Schools.

When asked what had interested her in coming to Gateway, Tuttle said, "I already knew Gateway was a wonderful district with great teachers. I'm here to support and problem solve with teachers. We're all in this together, through support, partnership and collaboration. I'm excited to jump in and continue the great things that are underway."

Tuttle said that Gateway has done a phenomenal job of getting high quality instructional materials into the schools. Implementing these with fidelity gives students robust learning experiences, but is at different phases

TUTTLE, page 11

## HUNTINGTON

### Select Board discuss well contamination of residence near Basket Street Landfill

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Issues related to the Basket Street Landfill and the new Police Chief's contract were the top agenda items at the Wednesday, June 18 select board meeting.

Attending were members William Hathaway and John McVeigh, with Town Administrator Jennifer

Peloquin. The Basket Street Landfill has been capped for years, but has contaminated the household well at 51 Basket St.. A recent interview with Board of Health Secretary, John Bergeron revealed Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in the house's water sample. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency website, PFAS is a general term

that refers to a collection of chemicals created by industry since the 1940s and found in the ground, in water and even in the blood of humans and animals throughout the world.

These chemicals are slow to break down and studies have shown that some present health risks to humans and animals. Health risks depend upon the particular chemicals that were

detected from this group, but include several forms of cancer, increased cholesterol, decreased fertility and a risk of high blood pressure in pregnant women. In addition, the EPA lists impact on the body's immune system and developmental effects on infants and children that are tied to PFAS. As such, the Huntington Board of Health has been providing bottled water to the house-

hold since the test result came back.

Peloquin announced that the latest water sample at 51 also detected radon. Initially, the BOH was looking at a filtration system for that home, but the addition of radon would require a more expensive system. She added that DEP has not given them a specific date to remedy this issue and test results for the other homes

in the proximity are not back yet.

The Huntington Water Department will put in a temporary water line starting next week, at a cost of \$2,000 to \$5,000. Hathaway asked that Bergeron and someone from the Water Department go door to door in that area to explain what is happening and answer

MEETING, page 3

## BLANDFORD

### Fairgrounds pavilion excavation, new construction begins

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Ditch digging and foundation excavating were tasks this weekend at the Blandford Fairgrounds on North Street.

"Yes, even on top of a mountain you need drainage ditches," said Fair President Matt Ripley Saturday morning. Ripley and Fair Vice President Greg Girard, along with other volunteers, spent the weekend getting things ready for this year's 156th Labor Day Union Agricultural Society Fair, aka, the Blandford Fair.

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources awarded the Fair a \$100,000 grant for the purpose of constructing a new, free-standing pavilion to be located just to the east of the historic Calling Tower, where a performance stage was originally located.

The old stage is gone



Excavation work for the building pad for the new pavilion.

Turley Photos by Mary Kronholm

and its replacement will last a lifetime. The building itself will be 30 by 80 feet on a concrete pad. This was the project worked on this weekend.

The roof will be metal with a metal ceiling and a storage unit at the south end. The roof will be held up by pressure treated beams that will be about five feet

into the ground in cement. Strictly speaking, Girard said, "It's a pole barn."

It is the protection of the uprights that brought about the installation/construction



Fair President Matt Ripley directs Fair Vice President Greg Girard as he deposits gravel in a drainage ditch.

of the large-ish maze of drainage ditches.

The water table on the grounds, according to Girard, is high and it is important to keep the water away; not just

to protect the wood, but to prevent frost heaves.

It's the frost heaves that have caused many of

PAVILION, page 6



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# HUNTINGTON

## Story Cafe set to take stage on June 29 at arts festival

HUNTINGTON – The 2025 North Hall Arts Festival season opens Sunday, June 29 at 2 p.m. with The Story Cafe, a celebration of the Pioneer Valley's large, rich and enormously talented short-story authors.

Combining the work of Pioneer Valley authors Ellen Barry, Emily Everett, Kim Keough, Barbara Lucey, Rick Paar and Christopher J. Sparks with the talents of favorite Pioneer Valley actors Ellen Barry, Raye Birk, Candace Barrett Birk and Tosh Foerster, The Story Cafe will transport the audience through the magic of the spoken word into worlds of joy, discovery and connection.

Ellen Barry appeared in nearly 100 classical and contemporary roles in New York City and at regional theatres across the country. A graduate of Northwestern University where Candace and Raye Birk were classmates, she also has wide experience behind the scenes as stage manager, development/ marketing consultant and script reader for Broadway, Off-Broadway and regional productions. Ellen and her late husband, Paul Barry, founded the New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, now Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. Her North Hall appearances over

many years included her one-woman shows Lizzie Borden at Eight O'Clock, The Infinite Variety of Shakespeare's Women, readings of numerous plays and last year's inaugural Story Cafe.

Candace Barrett Birk is involved in many facets of the arts community throughout her career as actor, teacher, director and administrator. She has been a member of several theater companies including the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the American Conservatory Theatre, the Chester Theatre Company and the Guthrie Theater. She was the Director of the Young Conservatory at A.C.T.; the Founder and Director of The Academy of Theater and Media Arts in San Francisco; the Executive Director of the Children's Museum of Los Angeles and the Director of Mythica: The Center for World Mythology. She is delighted to be returning to North Hall for a third season.

Raye Birk is delighted to be back at North Hall and bring The Story Cafe to the North Hall community for the second year. He has

worked in regional theatres throughout the country including playing leading roles for 9 seasons with the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco and 15 seasons at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

Emily Everett is an editor and writer from western Massachusetts. Her debut novel All That Life Can Afford is the Reese's Book Club pick for April 2025, out now from Putnam Books. Everett grew up on her parents' dairy farm in Williamsburg, studied English and music at Smith College, and earned an MA in literature from Queen Mary University of London. Her work has appeared in the New York Times Modern Love column, the Kenyon Review, Electric Literature, Tin House and Mississippi Review. She is managing editor at The

Common literary magazine in Amherst and a Massachusetts Cultural Council Fellow in Fiction.

Tosh Foerster grew up in Amherst and has been acting and performing stand-up comedy since graduating Amherst High School in 2016. In addition to performing in plays such as When Last We Flew and The Glass Menagerie, Tosh worked with his father and director, Rand Foerster, on the one man show Johnny Got His Gun. As well as acting in on-stage performances, Hw has appeared in music videos and short films over the years and is excited to make his return to Western Mass as a narrator for Story Cafe.

Kim Keough received her BA in English from Mount Holyoke College. Her poetry and photography has appeared in Meat for Tea: The Valley Review. She is the

former director of Voices from Inside, a writing program for incarcerated and formerly-incarcerated women. She lives in Williamsburg.

Barbara Lucey, a Holyoke native, has been writing since producing her first play at age 9. She is the author of "Meet Jimmy Fox" for young readers, with illustrations by Nancy Haver, from Gallery of Readers Press. Her fiction has appeared in a dozen anthologies and she was awarded an OCARC writer's residency in a Provincetown dune shack. After spending her young working life in film production, she specialized in nonprofit financial management at The Food Bank of Western Mass and the Five College consortium and is now a part-time nonprofit financial consultant and editor. She loves to sing jazz standards.

Derek Paar, making his second appearance in Story Cafe, is a psychologist. Twenty-five years ago he realized that literature, in many ways, does a better job of understanding what it means to be human, so he switched from writing academic essays to short stories, novels and a travel memoir, "God Bless

America and Breakfast Burritos to Go," that was published December 2022. He is on the Board of Directors of Straw Dog Writers Guild in Northampton and was a columnist for the Massachusetts Psychological Association Quarterly. He lives in Western Massachusetts, has two grown children, Chelsea and Nick and a grandson, Wyatt.

Christopher J. Starks is a writer, historian and web strategist. He is a historian on Northampton State Hospital and author of Minotaur, a memoir in progress. His work blends narrative history with personal reflection, and his research has been featured in local historical archives.

All performances are free; donations are welcomed. People should come early to get a good seat; doors open about 1:30 p.m. People may visit the website at [www.northhallhuntington.org](http://www.northhallhuntington.org) for program updates. North Hall is wheelchair accessible and air conditioned.

The seven program series is sponsored by the Westfield Bank, Easthampton Savings Bank, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and Cultural Councils of Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Russell, Westhampton and Worthington.



Ellen Barry

Candace Barrett Birk

Raye Birk

Tosh Foerster

## North Hall Association presents free programs including Seeger tribute

HUNTINGTON – The North Hall Association presents its 2025 Historic North Hall Arts Festival with seven free programs in June, July, August, September and October at North Hall, 40 Searle Road. All events are held on Sundays at 2 p.m. and the doors open about 1:30 p.m.

The 2025 North Hall Arts Festival season opens Sunday, June 29 with The Story Cafe. The Story Cafe is a celebration of the Pioneer Valley's large, rich, and enormously talented short-story authors. Combining the work of Pioneer Valley authors Ellen Barry, Emily Everett, Kim Keough, Barbara Lucey, Rick Paar and Christopher J. Sparks with the talents of favorite Pioneer Valley actors Ellen Barry, Raye Birk, Candace Barrett Birk, and Tosh Foerster, The Story Cafe will transport the audience through the magic of the spoken word into worlds

of joy, discovery and connection.

On Sunday, July 13 at The Festival will present Seeger, a Pete Seeger tribute by writer/performer Randy Noojin. His critically acclaimed multimedia solo shows premiered at The New York

International Fringe Festival and continue to tour nationwide.

Also in July, "A Smaller Place," a Mitch Giannunzio play, returns to North Hall for a benefit performance on July 27. The cast includes the award-winning actress, Ellen Barry and Broadway's Book of Mormon star, P.J. Adzima. The performance will be directed and introduced by Kenneth Tigar, the play's original Jack from a reading 40 years ago at the founding presentation of the North Hall Arts Festival.

On Aug. 3, Trio Mundo presents a fun, rhythmically compelling, dynamic and lyrical program, "Mediterranean

to the Caribbean" with violinist Robert Lehman, cellist Rebecca Hartka and guitarist/composer Jose Lezczano. This unique combination of instruments moves fluidly through a range of styles.

Meadow Flutes is a flute quartet consisting of western Massachusetts residents: Lynn Winsor, Kim Figueuroa, Andrea Taupier and Nancy Miller. They will be performing on C Flute, Piccolo, Alto Flute and Bass Flute on Aug. 24. Their concerts include a wide variety of classical, Celtic, popular, traditional and ecclesiastical styles.

Opera Arias and Broadway Musical Showcase will return to the North Hall stage on Sept. 7. This accomplished New York City ensemble of tenor Antonio Abate, soprano Amy Orsulak and Jerome Tan on piano, will be performing celebrated opera arias and Broadway musical solo, duet and trio favorites.

Perennial favorites, Old



Randy Noojin will reprise Seeger, his Pete Seeger tribute, Sunday, July 13 at 2 p.m. on the North Hall stage.

Photo by Michael and Suz Karchmer

Country Road Band, dedicated to the Golden Age of Country Music will close

out the 2025 Festival on Oct. 5. Performers Dan Pilachowski, flat-pick-

ing guitar; Ron Jackson, rhythm guitar, vocals; Mark Leveille, mandolin, vocals; Dave Helman, stand-up bass and Chris Boucher, banjo will play songs that take the audience back to the Grand Ole Opry, the Ryman Auditorium and the Nashville bluegrass of Hank Williams and Patsy Cline.

All performances are free; donations are welcomed. Seating is limited to the first 75 attendees. Doors open about 1:30 p.m. People may visit the website at [www.northhallhuntington.org](http://www.northhallhuntington.org) for program updates. North Hall is wheelchair accessible and air conditioned.

The seven program series is sponsored by the Westfield Bank, Easthampton Savings Bank, the Massachusetts Cultural Council and Cultural Councils of: Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Russell, Westhampton and Worthington.

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# HUNTINGTON

## Summer reading offer epic adventure

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Public Library recently closed so that contractors could replace the library windows.

Director Amanda Loiselle had to be in the library while the contractors were there and decided to use her time to create a theme and materials for this year's summer reading program and create it she did.

This summer, adventurers of all ages will embark on a Dungeons and Dragons journey through the mythical world of Ceron.

Patrons, who sign up, can travel to and through the imaginary settlements of Stonelichte, Windshaw, Ashtear, Windgate, Camleigh, Ragehille and Oakwich, ending their quest in Rozchild. Each settlement has its own characteristics and weekly activities at the library will be tied to them. For example, during

week one, readers will arrive in Windshaw, collect a Dungeon and Dragons die, visit the alchemist's shop for slime making and the clothier shop to create a dice bag. There will even be a no-sew option for younger children.

By the end of the seven weeks, participants will have all of the dice needed to play Dungeons and Dragons. Along their journey, which is tracked on a map where readers log their reading minutes, they will be immersed in ancient forests, sun-drenched plains, vibrant seashores, desolate wastelands and frozen plains.

The summer reading program kicks off on Saturday, June 28. The library will be open from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and those signing up will create their character and receive a packet of information about the jour-

ney they are about to take. This will include a page of 50 sticker "dots" to place on the map of Ceron as they move along by reaching their reading targets.

Children ages 5 and under will place a dot along their map for reading 15 minutes a day or 1 hour and 45 minutes a week. The ante is upped for those aged 6 - 12, who will place a dot when they read 30 to minutes a day or 3.5 hours a week. For ages 13 and over and adults are welcome to take part a dot on the map is earned for reading an hour a day or seven hours a week; also finishing a book will automatically meet the reading goal for that week and move them through the map.

In addition to things like a scavenger hunt at the library, potion making and creating fairy light jars, the program will include visits from a traveling bard (sto-

ryteller), a wizard (Ed the Wizard who will help people create balloon dragons) and some extra surprises. All participants will receive a Dungeons and Dragons bookmark and there will also be a couple of workshops where people can learn how to play Dungeons and Dragons. The summer reading party will take place on Saturday, Aug. 23 where those who complete the journey through Ceron will be knighted.

This program is supported by state aid funding for libraries, town funding for the library and the Friends of the Huntington Public Library. This year's summer reading theme from the Massachusetts Library System is "Level Up at Your Library" and is tied to gaming. Loiselle chose Dungeons and Dragons as the theme for the Huntington Public Library.



Library Director Amanda Loiselle will unveil the mythical world of Ceron during the summer reading program. Participants will undergo an epic journey as they log reading time and will collect a new die each week. *Turley photo by Wendy Long*

### MEETING

from page 1

questions. The cost of the bottled water and this temporary water line will be borne by the BOH. Work will be done by Down to Earth Excavating, operated by brothers Paul and Randy LaPointe.

#### Police Chief vehicle

Peloquin reported that new Police Chief Brian Kowal, who starts July 1 at a salary of \$83,000 had one issue with his employment contract. Kowal, who lives in West Springfield, objected to having to leave his town-owned police car in Huntington after each shift. He explained that the logistics of this just don't work and would impair his response time in an emer-

gency. McVeigh pointed out that Kowal has a light bar for his regular car and that the fire chief leaves his vehicle at the fire station.

Hathaway noted that mileage on the vehicle could add up quickly, going back and forth to West Springfield. Kowal had said that this was the arrangement that most chiefs had with their towns and Peloquin pointed out that they were running out of time to negotiate. Allowing Kowal to take his police vehicle home was approved by Hathaway and McVeigh.

#### Police Chief transition

Retiring Police Chief Robert Garriepy updated the board on the transition activ-

ities underway to onboard Kowal. At his request, the board signed a statement authorizing Garriepy to complete Kowal's background check, which is more extensive now that the Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training regulations are in place. Garriepy will work at a higher rate (to be determined) while he is acclimating Kowal. Once he is done and has a break in service, Garriepy will become a patrolman and his hourly rate will be reduced. The Board and Garriepy will meet Monday at 5:30 p.m. to set this higher rate.

In other business, the board approved vacation carryovers (one unused week is allowed with approv-

al) for Peloquin, Highway Superintendent Brad Curry, Dave Przbyla of the Highway Department and John Berry from the Water and Sewer Department. Hathaway asked Peloquin to start reminding employees in January to use up their vacation time.

#### New Tax Collector

Peloquin reported that the new Assistant Tax Collector Michael Brennan started work on June 16 and has been able to work with Collector Sue Fopiano quite a bit this week. This is an appointed position and the Select Board determined the end of his contract will be June 30, 2026 in keeping with previous Assistant

Collector Anna Horkun.

#### Local Cultural Council

Two members of the Local Cultural Council, Linda Siska and Amanda Loiselle, need to come off the council after serving two consecutive three-year terms. As required by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, they can return after a one year absence. Lynn Winsor will be coming back on, in a term set to expire on June 30, 2028.

#### Email address protocol

Peloquin announced that town employees are not happy with the new email address protocol announced by the Select Board earlier this year. She suggested

putting the change on hold until the board has a chance to discuss this at their next meeting on Wednesday, July 2.

#### Other business

Peloquin also reminded people of the online MassDOT meeting on Wednesday, June 25 from 6-7 p.m., and information has been phoned to all residents. The project, she said, is slated to take almost five years with work being done (leaving a one lane roadway) in the warmer months only.

McVeigh would like to explore a way to connect Internet lines at various town buildings and have everything on one bill. The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

# CHESTERFIELD

## 78th Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fest!!

*Red, White & Moooo*

<b>Pancake Breakfast (Firehouse)</b>	<b>7:00 - 10:00</b>
<b>Food &amp; Vendor Booths</b>	<b>9:00 - 1:30</b>
<b>Historical Exhibits (Edwards Museum)</b>	<b>9:00 - 1:30</b>
<b>Heritage Pops Orchestra (Town Center)</b>	<b>9:30 &amp; 11:30</b>
<b>Hilltown Art Display (Town Hall)</b>	<b>9:30 - 1:30</b>
<b>Historical Exhibits (Town Hall)</b>	<b>9:30 - 1:30</b>
<b>PARADE</b>	<b>10:30 - 11:30</b>
<i>MARCHING BANDS!</i>	
<i>ANIMALS</i>	
<b>Chicken Barbecue (Church)</b>	<b>11:30 - 1:30</b>
<b>Magic Show (Russell Park)</b>	<b>11:30 - 1:30</b>

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## OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



## SOCIAL SECURITY

## Matters

By Russell Gloor



## What about non-career Veterans and their VA healthcare?

## Dear Rusty:

In your answer to the retired U.S. Navy veteran about why he is forced to enroll in Medicare, you focused on military TriCare's requirement for the member to enroll in Medicare. But you said nothing about regular VA health care. If a non-career veteran is eligible for VA health care, couldn't that be used in place of Medicare?

## Signed: Veteran Advocate

## Dear Veteran Advocate:

Thank you for your feedback. FYI, I have previously explained numerous times that veterans who rely on the VA for 100% of their healthcare can, indeed, disenroll from Medicare Part B (thus saving the monthly Part B premium). I don't personally recommend it because of my personal experience, but it certainly is possible to do so.

Personally, I use the VA for some of my healthcare needs usually an annual checkup and optometry services at my local VA clinic, which is only a mile away from where I live. But for any extensive treatment needs medical tests, etc., I must travel about 40 miles to the nearest VA hospital facility.

For contrast, I have numerous private healthcare services, specialists and hospitals very near where I live, but to use them under the VA I must get VA preapproval and use only certain VA approved providers, which is inconvenient for me.

Personally, I prefer the freedom to go to any healthcare service provider I choose, without restriction, at any time I need to. So, I use my VA coverage when it is convenient for me, but rely

also on non-VA, Medicare-approved specialists who I can choose to use or not at will. For me, it's a matter of convenience and the freedom to use whichever healthcare provider I want.

That said, I fully understand that some veterans rely exclusively on the VA for their healthcare needs, and I have explained to many who have written to me that they have that option. I have also published several public articles about this as well. Here is one such article:

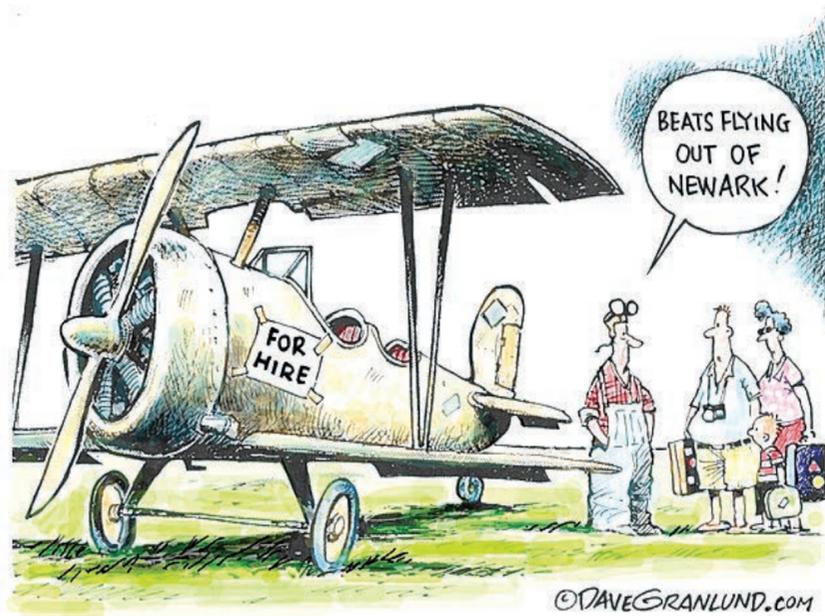
<https://socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-why-should-a-veteran-pay-for-medicare/>

So, please rest assured that we regularly advise our veterans about their healthcare options under Medicare, including the ability to decline Medicare Part B coverage if they have full VA healthcare coverage. FYI, free Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) is mandatory to collect Social Security after age 65, but Medicare Part B coverage is always optional because there is a premium associated with Part B.

A veteran can decline Medicare Part B coverage and save that monthly premium, but they would need to contact Social Security to do so. Social Security will want to interview the veteran to ensure they are aware of the potential financial consequences of not having Medicare Part B. And they may need to file form CMS-1763 Request for Termination. But a non-career veteran can opt out of Medicare Part B if they get all of their healthcare services through the Veterans Administration.

The Association

VET, page 6



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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## U.S. Army marks 250 years of service

I would like to say thank you to our men and women of our U.S. Army for your 250 years of service to our country.

They have stood the line to keep us free. The men and women of the Army have served us with honor, distinction and heroism and pride. They have served with distinction in many wars and conflicts, over the past 250 years.

As I traveled on June 14 I noticed a number of protests on my way to my daughter's home. They were complaining about a no king

or something like that. I knew it was not about King George the Third of England. He's dead.

I was dismayed to think that so many people would take a day, meant to honor 250 years of service of the U.S. Army and make it something else. I must say how small those people must be too deprive the men and women who served with honor, to be treated with such disrespect.

These men and women stood the line to protect us and to hold your right to protest them. And then to be

treated like they are insignificant and don't matter is unjustifiable. There isn't any excuse for way you have behaved, when they have given so much for us. I also believe there will be no apology forth coming from these protesters either. Some people are too self righteous or to arrogant too admit they were wrong. It is what people do that determine their character, not what they say, so sad.

Thank you for your 250 years of service.

Ted Cousineau  
Blandford

## GUEST COLUMN

## Renovate your strawberry patch, divide irises

I started over with new strawberry plants this year, but for those of you who are completing your harvest, it's high time to renovate your patch so that it will remain productive.

Sure, it will be hard work, but it's absolutely necessary if you want to keep the berries coming!

First, get up the courage to run the lawnmower over your row of strawberries. Yes, you heard correctly. This will give you an opportunity to see what you have to work with in a dense planting, as well as cut down on foliar diseases.

Set the mower at a height of two and a half to three inches and use the bagger attachment if you have one. Small plantings can be clipped away by hand. Compost the leaves away from your patch.

Then, remove all the runners that have emerged outside of the boundaries.

Those of us in the business of growing things usually find this part difficult. "Can't just this one stay?" Ease your guilt by giving away the extras; or, use them to start another patch.

Next, get rid of any "mother" plants that are four years or older. Unfortunately, they have aged beyond their productivity. Simply dig them up and send them off to the compost pile.

Finally, remove daughter plants that are spaced closer than four inches from one another—another difficult task, but one that must be accomplished if we want

GARDEN, page 6

## Correction

In the June 12 *Country Journal*, Lois Leonardo Bell's age was incorrectly listed as 90 under Middlefield COA news. She turned 77.

In the Middlefield election article, the date was listed with the correct date in the article and the wrong date in the headline. The election is Saturday, July 19. Early voting takes place on the other date listed July 14.

## Corrections policy

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

## Sheriff urges you to hang up on criminals

By Hampshire Sheriff  
Patrick J. Cahillane  
Guest Columnist

I am again asking the residents of Hampshire County to join together to help stop the crime of phone scamming.

Artificial Intelligence is playing a part in working to undermine the system of criminal justice both locally and nationwide. My best advice is please do not

engage in conversation with people who call you that you do not know who claim they are from a law enforcement agency.

Within the past few months, I have issued to our local media and posted to the Hampshire Sheriff's Office Facebook page multiple statements alerting Hampshire County residents to the prevalence of phone scammers posing as employees of the Hampshire

Sheriff's Office in an effort to extract personal information or extort money.

It distresses me to report that scammers using this same technique are at it again. The calls typically begin with the caller making a vague threat that the receiver has missed a court appearance, or some appointment at the jail, and ends with attempts to extract

CRIMINALS, page 5

## Country Journal welcomes Election letters to the editor

The *Country Journal* welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to *The Country Journal*, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com).

Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by **noon Friday** to be considered for the following Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the

newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's

Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

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

## Country Journal TEAM



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# OPINION

## HILLTOWN HISTORY

### Making soap the old fashioned way

By Deborah Daniels  
Correspondent

Attending the Brimfield flea market, for the first time in May, I ran across a curious square metal basket on a long metal handle.

I turned to the vendor Richard Wright Jr., a man long in years and asked what is it? A soap saver he replied. 'Pon my word, apparently I'm not the only one saving those shards of bar soap. He explained that soap ends were placed in the basket and then swished around in the washing bucket, a touchless laundry system if you will.

Well I remember my mother's bucket soaking my father's used handkerchiefs and I knew immediately she would've appreciated this device. I know many of us have laundry we would rather not touch so it stands to reason this device would have been in every household.

This brought me to thinking about the history of soap. What is it made of and how did pioneers make soap? Soap is made by mixing an oil or fat with sodium hydroxide otherwise known as lye.

Before we get into the history of soap, let's clarify that detergent is not the same as soap. Detergent uses enzymes and surfactants to lift dirt and grease off objects. Bar soap involves a chemical reaction between oil that is found in fat and lye, which is a strong alkali found in ashes made from burning wood. So colonial people made soap by collecting the ashes from burned hardwood and placing it in a barrel. They saved the fat from butchering hogs for soap making. Then rainwater was poured onto the ashes in the barrel and the liquid that was filtered through the ashes was lye. The strength of the lye was tested by floating a small raw egg or potato

in the barrel. If the egg floated halfway beneath the surface, it was considered ideal for soap making.

If you wanted to make the lye stronger, you would boil down the water or add more ashes. Put another way, the lye solution was ready when it dissolved a chicken feather so caustic it was. Another way they tested the lye strength was that it should just tingle the tongue when tasted. The stored fat had to be rendered or cleansed.

Here it was mixed with water and boiled until the fat was melted. Then they added more water to a kettle and cleansed the fat by boiling it. Then this was allowed to cool overnight where the fat solidified and floated to the top. This was now clean fat, that was skimmed off and used for soap making. Next the lye solution and the fat was boiled over an open fire until everything was thick and frothy. It is now soap that they would pour into a pan or mold.

The boiling process could take as much as 6 to 8 hours. It would set in the molds after 24 hours. Then it would be put out to dry or cure for four weeks where the water evaporated out of the soap.

There was a lot of myth involved in soap making such as recipes for stirring the soap using only a Sassafraz stick or stir only in one direction or avoid making soap during a full moon, and by all means you should know the tides and phases of the moon when making soap.

Furthermore many batches of soap were botched before one batch came out right, in other words you expected failure the first time you tried to make soap.

Some other soap facts: transparent soap was first made by Andrew Pears in London in 1807. William Proctor and James Gamble

made a pure white bar of soap called Ivory soap in 1863. This bar of soap floated.

It competed with the Spanish castile soap. Castile soap uses pure olive oil as a base for its soap making. Castile soap was the leading brand of soap in Europe at the time. The floating was attributed to just air whipped into the formula and they claimed that it indicated premium purity. William Proctor was originally a candle maker and he diversified into soap making perhaps he foresaw that Edison's electric light was on the horizon. And this would have put his candle making business out of business.

B.J. Johnson developed soap from palm and olive oil in 1898. That became very popular so much so that the company's name was changed to Palmolive. It too floated like Ivory soap.

There is animal fat in modern soap only it goes under the name of sodium tallowate and sodium lardate. Soap made with vegetable fat is listed as sodium palmitate and sodium cocoate.

Making your own soap still follows the basic formula of the colonials. You add lye solution to fat and mix until emulsified or thickened. You can add color, fragrance or herbs and then you pour the mixture into a mold. You wait 24 hours, then slice the soap into bars and allow it to cure for four weeks, where the water evaporates out.

Other soap, additives are glycerin which act as a softening agent, jojoba oil or Shea, butter, which acts as an emollient or moisturizer and skin softener and pumice can be added to soap to exfoliate the skin, benzalkonium chloride can be added as an antibacterial to soap.

Note triclosan was banned from soap in 2016 over concerns about its encouraging antimicrobial



Richard Wright Jr., Brimfield Flea Market vendor, holding the soap saver antique tool.

Turley photos by Deborah Daniels



A part of a soap box panel from a turn of the century packing crate of soap with the word reliable showing and a Pears' soap postcard from the author's postcard collection also dated early 20th century.



This is a cauldron and stone catch basin for collecting water from boiling ashes to be used for soap making. These are at the Westhampton Blacksmith Museum in Westhampton.



A pioneer woman makes soap. Courtesy photo

resistance. This, however, has not been proven.

Soap does not kill microorganisms on its own. It just makes bugs slippery and with the friction of hand washing that lifts them off the skin, they then can be flushed away with water down the sink. So friction ie vigorous hand washing and soap and running water make the true one two punch to reduce microorganisms.

One word about detergent before closing.

Fragrance free dish detergent is a good idea for you purists because most fragrances added to soap contain phthalates. Phthalates are chemicals called plasticizers. They make hard plastics flexible and harder to break. It is not clear what the health effects are, but it is being studied. It has been found in most people.

Liquid soap is between 80 and 90% water so a bar of soap represents more of a bargain when comparing

soap content. Which do you think will last longer? Also remember effective hand washing

requires friction. So how much friction do you use when using liquid soap?

Be glad you're not saving ashes and animal fat to make soap in a kettle over a hot fire this summer. Do keep a bar of soap handy for when it rains, so you can sing in the rain while washing 'cause you can't wash in the river anymore.

## CRIMINALS

personal information like e-mail addresses and Social Security numbers, while others blatantly demand money. Please be alert to the fact that anything you say may be recorded and reproduced.

These calls are not just annoying and unnerving. They are criminal.

I have posted to the HSO Facebook page several scam alerts recently, along with other information about phone scams and how to avoid falling prey to them. In each statement I have declared forcefully and unequivocally that the Hampshire Sheriff's Office does not make calls like

these. If a caller claims to be an employee of the HSO and issues a vague threat, it's not just a scam. It's a crime. If a caller claims to be an employee of the HSO and asks for personal information, it's not just a scam. It's a crime. If a caller claims to be

an employee of the HSO and demands money, it's not just a scam. It's a crime.

If you receive a call from a number you don't recognize, don't answer it. Friends and family, health care providers and other professionals doing legitimate business will leave you a message

If you answer a call that seems suspicious, please hang up immediately and call our main office at 413-584-5911 and let us know about it. You need not disclose your name, or any other information. Just let us know that you helped stop a crime. Let your friends and neighbors know about it

from page 4

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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.

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## BLANDFORD

## Select Board appoints Thomas Ackley highway liaison

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – The Select Board appointed Thomas Ackley to be the volunteer liaison between the Highway Department and the board at their Monday, June 2 meetings.

Ackley owned and operated Tom Ackley Tractor Service, worked for the town on the Highway Department, retired as Fire Chief and now serves as Deputy Fire Chief and served the town as a member of the Select Board.

“His knowledge of the town, its roads, inhabitants as well as myriad heavy

duty construction vehicles – trucks, graders, plows and more – make him uniquely qualified for this position,” said Ray Hultay, Highway Department Superintendent. He added he looks forward to continuing the relationship with Ackley as liaison.

Hultay said he has worked with Ackley already as he is on the Fire Department and with the Highway Department

As liaison, the board



Thomas Ackley

expects Ackley to be a direct link between the board and Highway and as liaison serve Highway in an advisory capacity, “providing oversight and support on behalf of the board.”

The official description indicates he will offer “input on strategic direction, budgeting, project coordination as needed and report regularly to the Select Board with updates, concerns and recommendations.”



Climate Leader Community Designation Committee from left are Charles Benson, Chairman Deborah Lundgren and Secretary Paul Dirschka.



The Blandford Team is now complete with a full Select Board. Standing, Ted Cousineau and Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera, seated Chairman Cara Letendre and newly elected board member Jackie Coury.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm

## Climate Leader Designation Community Committee holds first meeting

BLANDFORD – The Climate Leader Community Designation Committee held its first meeting on Monday, June 16 at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall.

The three-member

ad hoc advisory committee appointed by the Select Board organized itself as Chairman Deborah Lundgren, Secretary Paul Dirschka and member Charles Benson.

The committee will

meet twice a month, the first and third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall starting Wednesday, July 2. The committee reviewed the Select Board’s charge and will begin their research.



A digital rendering of the new pavilion now under construction at Blandford Fairgrounds.

Turley Photos by Mary Kronholm

## PAVILION

from page 1

the buildings to skew out of alignment.

“Ninety percent of the water will be drained away from the area and it will dissipate,” said Girard, assuring the longevity of the structure.

Contractors will arrive the week of July 23 to construct the pavilion. “It will only be a few days” to construct, said Girard.

The building itself is the largest cost incurred, about \$75,000, then concrete, stone and an additional \$8,000 is needed beyond the grant funding for electrical work.

“We’ll probably string lights this first year,” said Girard. Money has been saved through discounts, volunteer labor and lower sales prices. “But we will still need about \$30,000 more,” said Girard.

Not only for the necessary electrical work but also to make important repairs to the Calling Tower. “We’re moving along,” Girard said, “we have enough to get the structure up.” The goal for the next ten years is, as improvements are made, according to Girard, is “to do things right, so we don’t have to redo things in our lifetime.”

The grant from the MDAR is from the Agricultural Fairs Infrastructure Grant Program, which will help improve existing buildings and build new ones at agricultural fairs throughout the Commonwealth. He said the Fair has already purchased a portable stage for performance purposes and added that the pavilion will be



Drainage ditch maze will protect the new pavilion from any possible water damage.

available for rent which will help support the Fair’s sustainability.

According to Blandford Fair Preservation Association Chair David Hopson, there are numerous facility and ground issues the fair is facing. The current work on the new pavilion and stage for entertainment was made possible by a state grant that was obtained through the dedicated work of Greg Girard.

As with many grants, the fair has to provide additional matching funds to complete the project. Hopson said, “We are still working through the

Blandford Fair Preservation Association to fund replacing the standing seam roof on the exhibit hall and are approximately half way to our original goal.”

He added, “We also need to replace and repair livestock barns as well as the yearly maintenance and repair items. Whether small or large, any donations are greatly appreciated.”

Specific contributions for an intended purpose may be made through the and can be made online. The website is [www.bfpa.net/](http://www.bfpa.net/). Identify what the donation is for, or simply set it for the general fund. Anything will help.

## CHESTERFIELD

## Chesterfield receives MassDOT CIP funds

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Board of Directors voted to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2030 five-year Capital Investment

Plan, which includes approximately \$18.5 billion in planned transportation investments.

Chesterfield received \$14 million for the recon-

struction of North Road and Damon Pond Road.

For more on MassDOT’s CIP, people may visit: [www.mass.gov/CIP](http://www.mass.gov/CIP).

## OPINION

## GARDEN

large, healthy berries. As you work within the row, be sure to eradicate any and all weeds that you come upon, since these will compete with your strawberry plants for moisture and nutrients.

Now that your patch has been renovated, it’s time to reinvigorate. Add an inch or two of compost or aged manure to the row, along with a sprinkling of balance organic fertilizer.

Water at least every other day for the next couple of weeks or until a healthy stand of leaves has returned to the plants. Keep up with weeding, and continue to pinch back runners until frost hits.

Managed in this fashion, a strawberry patch can remain productive for five years or more.

Another favorite plant that may be in need of rein-

vigoration is your iris. If once upon a time they bloomed strong and now there is barely a blossom to be seen, chances are they are overcrowded. It’s time to divide them and replenish their soil.

In our climate, this should be accomplished every three or four years. Surprisingly, and unlike most other perennials, division of irises should take place no later than July or August.

This will give them ample time to take hold in their new location prior to the ground freezing.

At first glance the act of dividing irises may appear to be difficult. An overgrown iris patch does look like a maze of thick roots, but take heart, the rhizomes are shallow rooted and come out of the ground with relative ease.

Start digging at the outer edge of the clump,

lifting as you go. Once the entire clump is removed, rhizomes can be pried apart by hand. The healthiest “fans” of foliage are those the furthest from the center. Leave about two inches of rhizome attached to each fan for replanting.

If you are changing your site altogether, keep in mind that irises need at least six hours of full sun a day for optimal flowering. They despise “wet feet,” so plant where drainage is good.

If your soil is lean, compost can be added to richen it up. While you’re at it, add a sprinkling of lime as well; irises prefer a soil near neutral. Dig a shallow hole wide enough to fit the rhizome. Make a ridge of soil in the hole for it to sit on so that its fibrous roots can hang down.

The top of the rhizome should be level with the soil

surface and exposed, not buried. This goes for bark mulch as well, keep it clear or blooms may be sacrificed. If your irises hardly flower but aren’t overcrowded and are planted where they receive enough sun, assess your planting depth and adjust if necessary.

Examine your rhizomes closely when replanting. If you notice a lot of soft, rotten tissue, your iris patch could be infected with the iris borer.

Usually by midsummer, one to one and a half inch larvae have made their way from the leaves into the rhizomes. They hollow out the fleshy roots causing foliage to collapse and rot to take over. Control this pest by proper sanitation.

In the fall, after a hard frost, cut iris foliage back to the ground as low as possi-

ble. Throw it and any nearby debris or mulch away. With any luck, overwintering eggs will be removed by your efforts.

In the spring, about the time that the tulips are blooming, inspect iris foliage for chewn edges, small holes, or tan colored water marks running down the leaf. If these are present, tiny larvae can be crushed inside the leaf before they burrow into the rhizome.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

## VET from page 4

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

## BECKET



Lucky 4 will perform Saturday, June 28 from 5-7 pm. On the lawn of the Becket Arts Center. Submitted photo

## BAC showcases Lucky 4

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will present The Lucky 4, a hard-swinging jazz band, on the Arts Center lawn on Saturday, June 28 from 5-7 p.m.

Comprised of highly

seasoned touring musicians, the band blends 30s and 40s swing with gypsy and Parisian flavors to create a unique mix of originals and reworks of old standards. Part of the BAC's "Music Brings Communities

Together" series, the concert is free, though donations are welcome. People should bring lawn chairs, coolers, snacks, friends and children. For more information, they may visit [www.becketartscenter.org](http://www.becketartscenter.org).

## Art Center hosts members show

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will open its Members Show with a free reception on Friday, June 27

from 5-7 p.m.

This year's exhibition will feature artists from the Guild of Berkshire Artists as well as members of the

Becket Arts Center. For participating artists and more information, people may visit [www.becketartscenter.org](http://www.becketartscenter.org)

## BUCKLAND

## Buckland Historical Society hosts program and pie social

BUCKLAND – The Buckland Historical Society will host a program on the history of trains and trolleys in Buckland and a pie social on Friday, June 27 at 7 p.m. in the Buckland Public Hall,

15 Upper St.

The program by Sam Bartlett will be accompanied by slides.

He will take people back to the heyday of Buckland's trains and trol-

leys. The pie social with a selection of delectable homemade pies, coffee and cider follows.

Admission is members \$10, non-members \$12 and family \$20.

## WORTHINGTON

## COA annual picnic is July 14

WORTHINGTON – The Council on Aging will hold their annual picnic at the Worthington Rod and Gun Club, 458 Dingle Road, on Monday, July 14 at noon in the club's pavilion.

This annual event will be held rain or shine with Worthy-Que BBQ providing their barbecued chicken, sides and desserts. This barbecue is by reservation only as seating is

limited.

The deadline for reservations is Sunday, July 6 and may be made by calling 413-238-1999.

It is underwritten by the Rolland Fund.

## Library hosts summer reading

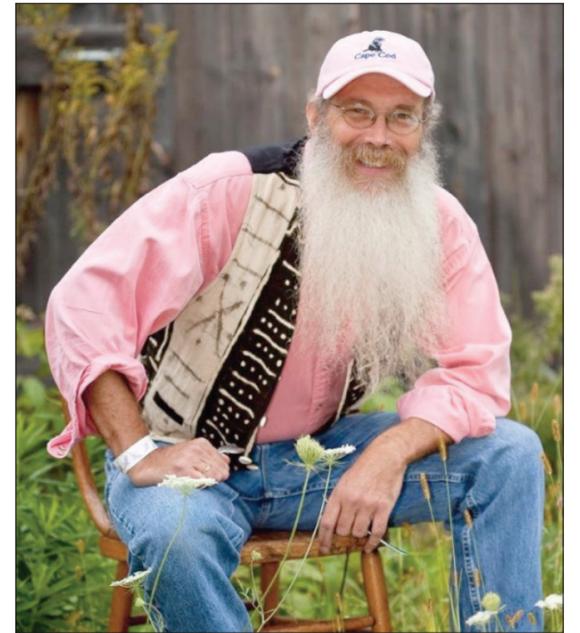
WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Library, 1 Huntington Road, announces 2025 Summer Reading Program, "Level Up at Your Library."

Throughout July, the Worthington Library is offering a series of programs for youth this summer. Programs will run on Thursdays from 10:30-11:30 a.m. starting Thursday, July 10 and wrapping up on Thursday, July 31. Programs will take place on the library lawn or on the library's lower level depending on weather. All events are free and open to the public.

This year's summer reading theme, "Level Up at Your Library," encourages play as a way to learn, foster friendships and think creatively through puzzles and games.

On Thursday, July 10 Parents Choice Award singer and storyteller, Davis Bates, will present A Summer Reading Celebration Songs and Stories for All Ages. The program will involve the audience in a variety of cultural traditions. Participants will hear how stars came to be in the sky, how foam came to be in the ocean and be prepared to sing, move and clap your hands. The program will include plenty of sing-alongs, as well as a short lesson on how to play music with spoons and an appearance by an Irish dancing wooden dog named Bingo.

On Thursday, July 17 Diane Edgecomb presents Game Time. Game Time features three topsy-turvy adventures where everybody wins. Diane's jazzy version of the Tortoise and the Hare encourages reading at one's



On Thursday, July 10 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. singer and storyteller Davis Bates will present the first in a series of summer reading programs. Submitted photo

pace. No matter what the level they win big in the end. Edgecomb has been featured on NPR and is the winner of the ORACLE award for Storytelling Excellence in the Northeast, five Storytelling World awards and a Parents' Choice Silver.

On Thursday, July 24 Mary Jo Maichack presents Color My World with Tales and Tunes, a lively mix of upbeat and participatory stories for children and adults. Participants will sing and clap along, dance, and laugh with Maichack as she shares tales.

On Thursday, July 31 Ed the Wizard presents Pirate Party, an interactive event with pirate-themed

games such as "Swab the Deck," "Hot Cannon Ball" and "Walk the Plank." Participants test their pirate knowledge, go on a treasure hunt and leave the event with their own treasure.

These events are made possible with support from the Worthington Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, The Friends of the Worthington Library and the Connie Dorrington Memorial Fund.

For more information, people may call the Worthington Library at 413-238-5565 or email at [worthingtonlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:worthingtonlibrary@gmail.com).

## PUBLIC NOTICES

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No.  
HD25P1291EA  
Estate of:  
Judy Bergland  
Date of Death: 03/24/2025  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by David A Givens of Waterloo, IA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: David A Givens of Waterloo, IA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 07/15/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days

of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

### UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: June 17, 2025  
Rosemary A Saccomani,  
Register of Probate

06/26/2025

### LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON

Notice is hereby given under Chapter 138, Section 15 of Mass. General Laws that the Huntington Selectboard, as Local Licensing Authority, has received an application from Andrea McKittrick of Pizigee Enterprises Inc. D/B/A Huntington Liquor Store for a transfer of an All Alcoholic Beverages Section 15 Package Store license currently held by Huntington Liquor Corp. for 21 Russell Road, Huntington, MA.

A public hearing will be held on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 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  
06/26/2025

### TOWN OF BLANDFORD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to MGL, Ch. 40A Sec. 9 the Blandford Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing at the Blandford Town Offices, 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008 at 7:05 pm on Wednesday, July 9, 2025. This hearing is scheduled under the following Blandford Zoning By-Laws: Section VIII – Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations and Section IX – Site Plan Review and Special Permits. The Hearing is to consider the application for a request for a Site Plan Review and Special Permit for Gibbs Brook, LLC, solar photovoltaic installation with battery energy storage system, located at 30 Huntington Road and Huntington Road Off (Map 416, Parcels 10, 11 & 12) in Blandford, MA 01008.

The Applicant is proposing the installation of a large-scale ground-mount PV solar facility with Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and a gravel access driveway that would utilize an existing entrance from Huntington Road. The system will be rated at 2.8MW (DC) and will consist of PV modules attached to a Single-axis tracker racking system. This system slowly rotates the modules as they track the path of the sun during the day, allowing for greater efficiency and fewer modules.

The completed application and plans are available for public inspection at the Town Offices or on the Town of Blandford's website: <https://townofblandford.com/planning-board-project-details/>

com/planning-board-project-details/

You may also make an appointment to view a hard copy of these forms at the Town Hall by e-mailing the Planning Board Chair at [planning@townofblandford.com](mailto:planning@townofblandford.com).

Any person interested or wishing to be heard should join the virtual meeting as outlined above or e-mail the chair at: [planning@townofblandford.com](mailto:planning@townofblandford.com). Please submit comments, in writing, to the Blandford Planning Board at 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008. Failure to make recommendations on the matter for review shall be deemed lack of opposition thereto.

Paul Martin, Chair  
Blandford Planning Board  
06/26, 07/03/2025

### TOWN OF BLANDFORD NOTICE OF CONTINUATION OF 6/4/2025 PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to MGL, Ch. 40A

Sec. 9 the Blandford Planning Board will hold a continuation of Public Hearing of June 4, 2025 at the Blandford Town Offices, 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008 at 6:05pm on Wednesday, July 9, 2025. This hearing is scheduled under the following Blandford Zoning By-Laws: Section VIII – Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations and Section IX – Site Plan Review and Special Permits. The Hearing is to consider the application for a request for a Site Plan Review and Special Permit for Peebles Brook, LLC, solar photovoltaic installation with battery energy storage system, located at 89 Chester Road (Map 108, Parcel 19.1) in Blandford, MA 01008.

The Project proposes the construction of a 4.04 megawatt (MW) direct current (DC) single-axis tracking solar photovoltaic (PV) installation with a battery energy storage system (BESS). The project will in-

volve construction of a gravel access road and minor grading for stormwater management features on 32.6 acres, that is currently zoned as Agricultural.

The completed application and plans are available for public inspection at the Town Offices or on the Town of Blandford's website: <https://townofblandford.com/planning-board-project-details/>

You may also make an appointment to view a hard copy of these forms at the Town Hall by e-mailing the Planning Board Chair at [planning@townofblandford.com](mailto:planning@townofblandford.com).

Please submit comments, in writing, to the Blandford Planning Board at 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008. Failure to make recommendations on the matter for review shall be deemed lack of opposition thereto.

Paul Martin, Chair  
Blandford Planning Board  
06/26, 07/03/2025

# EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of July 4th,  
**PUBLIC NOTICES**  
EARLY AD DEADLINE  
Place your public notice  
no later than NOON  
**Thursday, July 3**  
– Thank you!

## CHESTER

# Lupario brothers sell hemp based products

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

CHESTER – Brothers Michael and Brian Lupario started Western Mass Hemp in 2019 and, these days, are moving their business into the public eye.

“We are trying to give the plant a platform,” said Michael, who was showing their space at the Pease Store in Chester, where they sometimes sell three hemp-based products. As noted on their website westernmahemp.com their mission is to “promote, preserve and deliver hemp’s natural chemistry.”

The two were inspired to find a holistic solution to the pain and discomfort they’d seen among family members who have Multiple Sclerosis.

They had discussed the side effects and even lack of effectiveness, traditional medicines were causing in people they knew and cared about and sought an alternative. As such, MS is a cause near to their hearts and 10% of all sales are donated to “Walk MS.” The brothers also plan to ride this summer in the Cape Cod Getaway, a 175 mile cycling trek from Boston to Cape Cod, which raises money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Their college choices laid an early foundation for their business’s success. As noted on their website, Michael studied plant and soil science at the Stockbridge School at UMass/Amherst. He focused on the science of hemp cultivation and previously led the growing operations of several licensed cannabis facilities. Brian attended the Isenberg School of Management also at UMass Amherst where he studied marketing. Together, their skill sets are producing a mission-based business where they strive to give customers the best possible product.

They grow hemp on a two-acre plot in Chesterfield. Once the hemp flowers are harvested, they produce their products in the Drowsy Kitchen located next to the Pease Store, a commercial kitchen available for rent to small vendors. “Drowsy Kitchen is a nice community asset,” Michael said. “It’s an incredibly valuable service



Brothers Brian and Michael Lupario show their hemp-based products, which they produce in the Drowsy Kitchen in Chester.

Turley photo by Wendy Long

being able to rent a commercial kitchen.”

They explained that hemp and marijuana are two different entities. Hemp is lower in THC, the part of marijuana that gives a euphoric effect and higher in CBD. Marijuana, on the other hand, is higher in THC and lower in CBD. While related, both products offer very different effects to the user.

Western Mass Hemp produces two varieties of oil caplets and a cream. One caplet is geared for daytime use and can be beneficial for general aches and pains, mood elevation and daily wellness. The other is formulated for nighttime use for restlessness, insomnia, chronic pain and recovery. The Hemp Cream is formulated to provide localized pain relief and reduce inflammation. For this product, they use a scientific formulation of wintergreen, comfrey and wild lettuce, which they say are proven to heal bones, reduce swelling and combat pain naturally, all while being non-intoxicating. They grow the comfrey at their farm and forage in the wild for the other materials.

The challenges for a business like this are real. According to the Luparios, the holistic industry suffers from not being FDA approved, which makes it hard to prove these products are safe and effective. “They are non-toxic and non-habit forming. Hemp has been used medically for thousands of years,” they said.

A brief google search

verifies that hemp has been used medicinally since ancient times in both China and Ancient Egypt. The Consensus App cites a number of research studies indicating that hemp is beneficial in the treatment of anxiety, stress, inflammation, pain and (although not formulated for this use by WMASS Hemp) epileptic seizures.

What’s also challenging for holistic businesses like this is their products are not covered by insurance and people have to self-pay. “The concept of investing in your health is a foreign concept for some,” Michael admitted. Nonetheless, they say they enjoy a very high retention rate among their customers.

At one time, they distributed their products through cannabis dispensaries, but found that their typical customers don’t really frequent dispensaries.

So they now offer products for sale online at WesternMaHemp.com. They also have booths at community events where they are on hand to speak with both new and returning patrons one-on-one and answer questions.

Their goal this year is to be fully transparent about their business. They will give farm tours in July and August, where the public can see where the hemp is organically grown. And they are happy to explain the degree to which their product is unprocessed and free of toxic solvents.

For more information, people may visit their website at WesternMaHemp.com.

# Historical Society museum open Sundays in August and September

CHESTER – The Chester Historical Society was organized in 1994 and incorporated in 2002.

The museum will be open Sundays in August and September from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. or by appointment by contacting any member. The original officers were President, Fay Piergiorganni; Treasurer and Archivist, Grace Oppenheimer; Clerk, Janice Brown. Additional board members were Robert Oppenheimer, Louisa Piergiorganni and Edwin Carrington.

The town allowed the society to use the old jail on Route 20 to hold their meetings and display their archives.

An early project for the society was the campaign to save the Maple Street bridge which started when the bridge was condemned in 1994 and finally culminated in its preservation and reopening in 2008.

In 2004 the former Methodist Church/Masonic Lodge on Route 20 was transferred from the Chester Foundation to the Chester Historical Society. The building was in rough shape after being vacant for a couple of decades. The roof was leaking, the steeple was compromised and paint was peeling inside and outside.

Their first major work on the property was through a 2009 Massachusetts Tourism Grant of \$105,000 which put on a new roof, repaired the steeple and painted the exterior.

After extensive fundraising the society was able

to put \$22,000 towards a \$44,000 Massachusetts Historical Commission matching grant in 2016. With this grant the society was able to stabilize the building structurally by repairing rotted sills, shoring up the sagging foundation walls and replacing rotted flooring and walls on the first floor.

After more fundraising the society had a handicapped bathroom installed on the first floor and then many hours of painting and cleaning led to the official opening of the Chester History Museum in 2017.

Despite the progress, the former sanctuary on the second floor remained untouched. After more years of fundraising the society was able to put \$42,000 towards a \$84,000 Massachusetts Historical Commission matching grant. This replaced the sanctuary ceiling, sand-blasted and painted the decorative tin walls and restored the stained glass windows.

The Chester History Museum now has two floors of displays documenting Chester history. They are currently creating a conditioned room in the museum to hold textiles and fragile items to conserve them for the future.

The next major projects include painting the exterior of the museum and creating handicapped access to the second floor.

The current officers are President, John Hultman; Treasurer, John Garvey;

Clerk, James Higby. Members of the board are Charles Schoonmaker, Annette LaMountain and Judy Davenport.

Since its founding the society has helped with countless genealogical questions and that is still an active function today. They organize a November craft fair at the Town Hall as an annual fundraiser. For years they ran a popular Penny Social fundraiser at the town hall but changing times has ended that activity.

The society enjoys collaborating with other Chester organizations. When the North Chester Chapel Association was active the society gave an annual history talk at the chapel. Since its founding the society has hosted a visit from the Chester Elementary students, first at the Old Jail and now at the new History Museum.

Two years ago they hosted their first cemetery tour at the Chester Factory Village Cemetery, followed last year with a Chester Center Cemetery tour co-hosted with the Chester Hill Association. They plan on continuing the cemetery tours this year with a tour of the Pine Hill Cemetery in October.

Other recent collaborations include co-hosting a talk on the history of Chester Center with the Chester Hill Association and leading a section of two Housatonic Heritage Hikes in Chester organized by the Western Mass Hilltown Hikers.



Members of the Chester Historical Society are busy restoring their building on Route 20.

Submitted photo

## CUMMINGTON

# William Cullen Bryant homestead reopens

CUMMINGTON – William Cullen Bryant homestead will be open again for tours this summer.

It’s been five years since this historic home has been open to the public. The William Cullen Bryant Homestead, a special place stewarded by The Trustees of Reservations, will reopen this summer for the first time since 2019 to offer tours of the coun-

try estate of the prominent 19th century poet, journalist, and conservationist. The homestead is located at 207 Bryant Rd. in Cummington.

The tour, Literary Legacy: A Guided Tour of the William Cullen Bryant Homestead, will be offered at 1 on Saturdays, June 28, July 19, Aug. 16, and Sept. 28 at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m.. Visitors can explore inside Bryant’s

thoughtfully preserved country estate where he spent his formative years and later returned for inspiration and retreat. Visitors are also welcome to self-tour the first floor of the house for free between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the days the tour is offered. The guided tour will include the second and third floors of the house.

Additionally, on Sept. 28, Adventure East will

offer an old-growth forest walk on the property led by naturalist William Randolph. Tickets are \$45, with Trustees members receiving a 10% discount.

The Literary Legacy tour requires advanced registration and tickets. Tickets are \$5 for Trustees members and \$10 for non-members. To become a Trustees member, people may visit [www.thetrustees.org/jointoday](http://www.thetrustees.org/jointoday).

# Friday Night Cafe presents 1975 Re-Played

CUMMINGTON –The last show of the Friday Night Cafe Session 1 is 1975 Re-Played Friday, June 27 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church in downtown Cummington in the hear of the Cummington Cultural District.

Session 2 starts Friday, Sept. 12. The show is a reprise of songs

released in 1975. A group of Friday Night Cafe performers selected songs they like from 1975 and will replay them in their own styles.

“Boomers” will know these songs, but everyone should enjoy listening to these classic songs and hear what Friday Night Cafe players do with them.

The event is free;

donations are appreciated. Snacks are provided, bring your own drinks. The show will take place in the intimate Vestry space. Masks are welcome. Once again this program is brought by the friendly folks at the Village Church who believe music can be a powerful force for building community.

Friday Night Cafe

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

## GOSHEN

# COA lists events

GOSHEN – On Wednesday, July 2 the crafts group meets in the Goshen Library located on the second floor of Town Hall, 42 Main St.

People may bring their own craft project to work on. People who have an idea for a craft or art project should let the Council on Aging now as they may be able to gather the supplies.

On Thursdays, July 3, July 24 and July 31 Tilton Treks returns from 9-10 a.m. at Tilton Town Farm for a walk around the grounds and/or on the trails for a bit of exercise. Walking is great for physical and mental health. People should bring their own water bottle. Rain or extreme heat will cancel.

On Tuesday, July 15 and 22- Highland Valley Elder Services grab and go lunches are delivered to Goshen COA on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Participants pick up their hot lunch at the Goshen Town Hall from 12:30-1 p.m. The lunch for July 15 is a

choice of pollack Florentine or spinach quiche and the choice for July 22 is chicken Parmesan or chicken cordon bleu. The meals also include milk, vegetables, and dessert. There is a suggested \$4 donation given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal. People may call Kerry at 413-268 9354 if they would like to sign up to get these nutritious and delicious meals.

On Wednesday, July 16 games group will meet in the library from 2-4 p.m. They have a variety of games to choose from and they will also have cards. Some weeks, if there is the right number of people, they play the card game Pitch. It’s really fun.

On Thursday, July 17 technology help in the library will be available from noon-2 p.m. People can ask questions regarding their computer, phone, tablet or any other technology related question and volunteers will do their best to help.

# OBITUARY

## Daniel (Danny) B. Krug, Jr.

WESTHAMPTON – Daniel (Danny) B. Krug, Jr. of Westhampton died unexpectedly, June 15, 2025 at age 76. He was the first son born to Daniel B. Krug, Sr and Jessie Snow Krug. He graduated from Williamsburg (Burgy) High School in 1968 and went on to Springfield Technical Institute and Hobart welding school. During the Vietnam era, he enlisted in the Navy becoming a submarine fireman on the USS Dogfish. Afterward, he took a hitchhiking tour across the states with an extended time in

Alaska. Most of his employment was with the Veterans Hospital of Leeds where he retired as stationary engineer.

Danny had many, varied interests, always researching, learning and applying his knowledge. Younger years were spent in 4-H, working Krug's sugarbush, member and officer of the Western Massachusetts Model T and Model A Antique Car clubs



and in recent years, on the board of the Westhampton Historical Commission devoting countless hours to the Westhampton Museum & Blacksmith Shop. In other spare time, he would craft knives, wooden stir sticks hammers, and machine parts/tools, garden, hunt or fish.

Through the years, he has been a caring, thoughtful son, brother, friend and uncle.

Krug leaves behind his

mother Jessie; two sisters, Diane (husband and friend Geoff Browne), Deborah (husband Tom Root), brother Donald (Whitey); nephews William (Will) Krug, Shaun and Christopher Root, Travis Browne and nieces Nicole (Niki) Browne and Elizabeth (Beth) Chudzick and also Jason Dodge. He is preceded in death by his father.

A family only service is pending with burial in the Westhampton Cemetery. Please direct memorials to the Westhampton Museum & Blacksmith Shop, 5 Stage Road, Westhampton, 01027.

## DEATH NOTICE

**KRUG JR., DANIEL (DANNY) B.**

Died June 15, 2025  
Family only service pending  
Burial in Westhampton Cemetery

## Country Journal OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

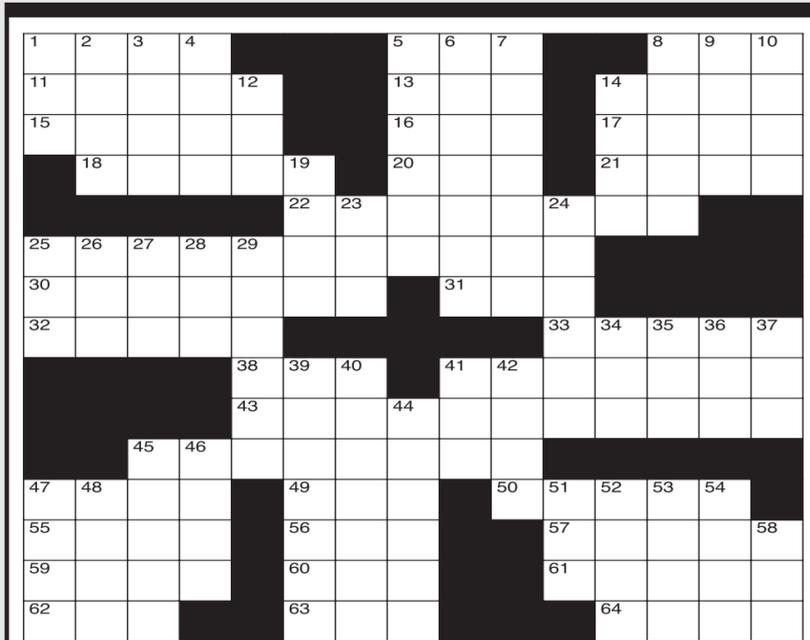
One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

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

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



**Send Us Your Photos!**  
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**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Computer manufacturer
- 5. Noted space station
- 8. Kurt Russell film "Captain"
- 11. Automaton
- 13. Everyone has one
- 14. Incline from the vertical
- 15. Fights
- 16. Dunn & Bradstreet (abbr.)
- 17. Finishes off
- 18. Places to store things
- 20. Dutch painter Gerard
- 21. Smaller quantity
- 22. There's a North, South and Central of these
- 25. In an early way
- 30. More spacious
- 31. Short-term memory

- 32. One who possesses
- 33. Sesame
- 38. Forbid
- 41. A way to explain
- 43. Not around
- 45. Evoke or suggest
- 47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 49. Dekameter
- 50. Fencing sword
- 55. "Luther" actor Idris
- 56. Affirmative (slang)
- 57. Afflicted
- 59. One point north of northeast
- 60. Born of
- 61. Arabic name
- 62. Hong Kong food stall: \_\_ pai dong
- 63. Not the start
- 64. Post

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Creative expression

- 2. Fiber from the outer husk of a coconut
- 3. City in ancient Syria
- 4. College army
- 5. More disturbed
- 6. Pays no attention to
- 7. Restored
- 8. Competitions
- 9. Lyric poems
- 10. Famed American lawman
- 12. Expression of disappointment
- 14. Scars
- 19. Satisfy
- 23. Central European river
- 24. Brass instrument
- 25. One who gets paid to perform
- 26. Propel with oars
- 27. Long period of time
- 28. Woman (French)

- 29. Type of plane
- 34. Pitching stat
- 35. Pointed end of a pen
- 36. Pro sports league
- 37. Body part
- 39. Inoffensive
- 40. Yellowish cotton cloth
- 41. Feline
- 42. Does not tell the truth
- 44. Set out to attract
- 45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 46. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician
- 47. Repair
- 48. Genus of flowering plants
- 51. Tributary of the High Rhine
- 52. Prejudice
- 53. C. European river
- 54. Restrain
- 58. Father

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**

Mar 21/Apr 20  
Nothing is too much for you to handle right now, Aries. But don't take on even more as a way to prove something to someone. That could be a recipe for trouble.

**TAURUS**

Apr 21/May 21  
Your physical energy is strong right now, Taurus. This may work to your advantage regarding your relationship. Your desire for love and passion is intense right now, so explore it.

**GEMINI**

May 22/Jun 21  
Matters of the heart may need a little work right now, Gemini. If things haven't been going too smoothly, you might have to examine the dynamics of the relationship and make changes.

**CANCER**

Jun 22/Jul 22  
You have an incredible passion for life, Cancer. It's attracting friends and family members into your circle. Partner with someone who shares your energy.

**LEO**

Jul 23/Aug 23  
Leo, if things aren't going smoothly at work, be careful about blaming yourself. You need to look at the bigger picture and figure out who all the players are in this situation.

**VIRGO**

Aug 24/Sept 22  
Virgo, even when others may count you out, you can be full of surprises. Do not let a recent success go entirely to your head, however. You still have a lot of work to do.

**LIBRA**

Sept 23/Oct 23  
Libra, even though you may like to plan ahead and take things slowly, sometimes you need to throw caution to the wind. When an opportunity all but falls in your lap, run with it.

**SCORPIO**

Oct 24/Nov 22  
Scorpio, recent conflicts may ignite some mixed feelings, which could prove confusing. Think about solutions that potentially benefit all around you, including yourself.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Nov 23/Dec 21  
You might not be having the best luck right now, but things can change quickly. Keep your chin up and your eyes set on your goal. Networking may help you move forward.

**CAPRICORN**

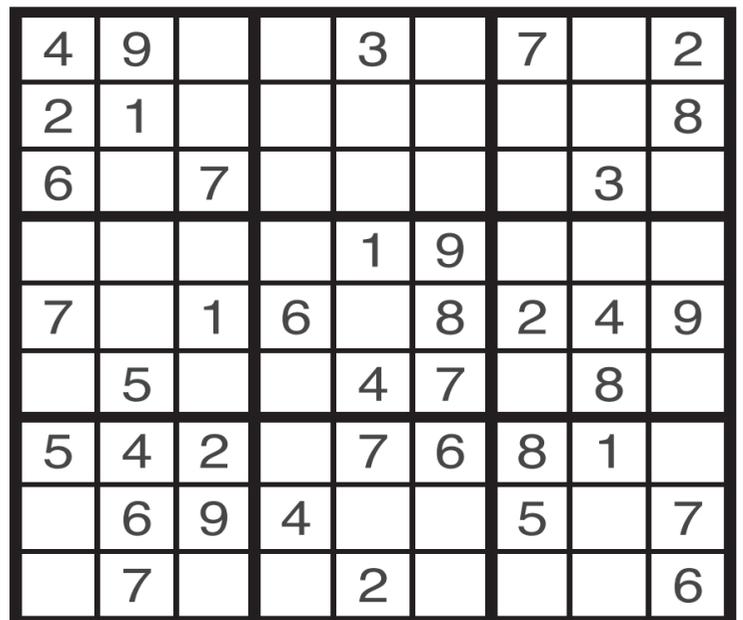
Dec 22/Jan 20  
Capricorn, if you have any health questions, make an appointment to talk to someone right away. It is important to stay ahead of things.

**AQUARIUS**

Jan 21/Feb 18  
Something that has been taking up a bulk of your time is finally coming to a close, Aquarius. This will be a big relief and a lot of stress will be lifted in the process.

**PISCES**

Feb 19/Mar 20  
People keep coming up to you expecting all of the answers, Pisces. Don't feel pressured to please everyone. Right now you may be content to enjoy some alone time.



# 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**

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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# \_\_\_\_\_  
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## SCHOOLS &amp; YOUTH

## Colleges and universities announce academic awards

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Nick Brisson of  
Williamsburg  
Marina Slivca of  
Westfield

**Hofstra University**  
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**PROVOST'S LIST**  
Reese Givson of  
Westfield

**University of Hartford**  
West Hartford, Connecticut  
**DEAN'S LIST**  
Avery Brooks of  
Westhampton  
Gia Forry of Westfield

**University of New England**  
Biddeford and Portland,  
Maine  
**DEAN'S LIST**  
Jackson Harding of  
Chester  
Kelly Couch of East Otis

**Vermont State University**  
Randolph Center, Vermont  
**DEAN'S LIST**  
Megan Ward of  
Easthampton

**Worcester  
Polytechnic Institute**  
Worcester  
**DEAN'S LIST**  
Gabriel Rapoza of  
Easthampton, class of 2027  
aerospace engineering major  
Marissa Whalley of  
Westfield, class of 2026,  
architectural engineering  
major

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## HCC lists graduates of alternative high school program

HOLYOKE – The Gateway program at Mount Holyoke Community College is an alternative high school program.

It started in 2008 and belongs to the National Gateway to College network. The Gateway modus operandi is to take students who have dropped out of high school or are at risk for dropping out and put them into college classes, where they can secure their high school diplomas while also earning transferable college credits.

Spring 2025 Gateway to College graduates are: Rhys Perusse of Easthampton, Linda Huddle Award from Gateway National (minimum GPA of 3.0); Sawyer Kirley of Northampton; Jasper Sargent of Northampton; Lily-Alice Farrelly of Westfield; Julianna Garcia of Westfield; Amelia Gravel-Blaney, Linda Huddle Award from Gateway National (minimum GPA of 3.0); Azaiah Ortiz of Westfield; Zeik Wiemer of Westfield,

Linda Huddle Award and President's Award from Gateway National (minimum GPA of 3.7) and Tati Zuniga of Westfield.

Each year, Gateway National recognizes individual students for their academic performance. Fifteen HCC Gateway students received the Linda Huddle Award, which honors graduating students who earned a minimum GPA of 3.0. Seven received the President's Award, presented to students with a minimum GPA of 3.7.

## TUTTLE

from page 1

with different subjects. She will work to align these materials with district priorities and will be partnering with Gateway educators to do that, Tuttle said.

The grant half of her job will be based on the same philosophy, to assure alignment with district and school priorities and goals. Her goal, she said, will be to utilize funds effectively to have the most impact.

Tuttle acknowledges that the grant front faces challenges. "The fiscal situation at the Federal level is uncertain, Tuttle said. "We will adapt. We will seek out all viable funding sources and will utilize every resource we can obtain. Extra funding is critical for supplementary things that need to be done."

Tuttle said she is very

excited about getting this job. "Because I already have some insight as to what a wonderful district this is, I am so excited to jump in and start working with everybody." She said that she's happy to become part of this tight-knit community but added that she will also be able to bring in an outside perspective. "I've worked with many districts across the Commonwealth. I'm thrilled to bring those experiences and ideas," Tuttle said.

It's not without a low note. "Kristen leaving is heartbreaking. But I think the systems she's put in place will be sustained. I'm excited to be a part of that." Tuttle officially starts on July 1, but has spent a few days in the district working with LeBlanc.

## MassDEP lists Green Team awards

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection acknowledged students from 475 classrooms across the state who participated in the Green Team program, making the 2024-2025 school year the highest registration in the program history.

MassDEP recognized 94 Green Teams across Massachusetts with Green Team Awards for outstanding environmental stewardship and educational activities. The Green Team is a statewide program sponsored by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and MassDEP to empower students and teachers to help the environment by acting in their communities.

"I applaud the thou-

sands of Massachusetts educators and students who successfully completed the Green Team program this school year," said Education Secretary Patrick A. Tutwiler. "This initiative not only finds innovative and engaging ways to teach students about conservation, clean energy and recycling, but also encourages them to get out in their communities and make a real difference for the environment."

For more than 20 years, the Green Team program has been open to Massachusetts students of all ages who share in the goals of reducing pollution and protecting the environment with a focus on recycling, composting, and sustainability.

Participating teams

were entered in a drawing for prizes, and 94 Green Teams received prizes for their efforts. Eight schools won grand prizes, and 24 schools were recognized for going "above and beyond" with their efforts to promote sustainability and responsible leadership in their communities in particular areas of focus. All 32 winners will receive a gift card that can be used for a party to celebrate their hard work and dedication, or for materials or equipment that support their Green Team efforts.

Additionally, each participating student in 62 Green Team classes will receive a "Bee the Change" pollinator seed packet for their impressive work this school year.

One of eight grand

prize winners was HEC Academy, Collaborative for Educational Services of Northampton. The HEC Academy Green Team, led by Amy Stamm, maintained their previous environmental efforts while accelerating new initiatives this school year. The Team was hands-on in the community, maintaining the multi-city bike path, supporting food donation programs, and volunteering at multiple reuse organizations throughout the Pioneer Valley. The Green Team worked with a regional rabbit rescue to distribute nutrient-rich droppings to local farms for fertilizer. Stamm's Team developed a powerful sense of community, empowerment, and peer-mentorship among the students.

## SMIDY

from page 1

had decided to leave after four years and said that the superintendent's position requires many skills and pulls the person's focus to do a variety of things. "As much as I liked being challenged by different things-like the roof, the budget-my real passion is teaching and learning. When I saw the NEASC position posted, it's sole focus was to support schools in implementing high quality instruction. It really aligned with what I'm passionate about and what brings me joy."

When asked how she would describe Gateway to others, Smidy said that it's tight-knit, strong and a community that focuses a lot on its relationships. "That level of care makes Gateway really special. It almost sounds cliché, but the staff truly and

deeply care and frame their work around that," she said.

Smidy went on to describe what she felt were Gateway's biggest assets. "The staff. There's a willingness to do what it takes to really support students, even if it means them taking on much more work," Smidy said. "It's incredible. Because we are so small, everyone takes on so much extra to elevate the community." Smidy said that she had numerous examples of this at both the elementary and upper (Gateway Regional School, covering grades 6-12) schools. "It's so personal and it's unique in education." Smidy added that another area the district was improving on was putting structures in place to increase student opportunities across the board both academic and

extra-curricular. She also praised the facilities and the staff's cultural level of community.

She was then asked to name Gateway's biggest challenges. She began by reiterating that Gateway does the best with what they have and really stretches things to make them as wonderful as they can be for students. "At some point, it can't be stretched anymore," she acknowledged. "A lot of what happens is out of the goodness of people's hearts. But when will Gateway get a fair allocation of Rural School Aid to give it the resources it needs? It's risky to design a system around the good in people."

"We're small. Everyone does everything. Keeping up with state mandates requires the commitment of people

who are already overcommitted. We have gaps. For example, we don't offer computer classes or study the use of AI. There's only so much that people can do." Smidy added that the contractual time of Gateway's teachers is already higher than any surrounding district. "It's not the staff. It's not the towns. It's the level of state resources," she said. "In the towns, people are volunteering to keep their towns running. That's a tricky model to sustain."

She also looked back on her favorite accomplishments about her time at Gateway. First and foremost, she said, was acquiring the Barr Foundation grant, which helps districts plan ways to propel both excellence and equity in their schools. Barr typically focuses on high schools but, given Gateway's

small staff and student numbers, they granted multi-year funds to allow the reimagining of education district-wide. She said it really gave them permission to dream about what we could do here and provided opportunities to see what other innovative schools throughout the country are doing.

"Barr is aligned with having people feel respected and valued, which is joyful for me. I have found joy in reflecting respect in as many ways as we can come up with. It has been amazing," Smidy said.

She also said that they had invested in the structural work that students have sought, especially with bullying prevention and Title IX. "It created a stronger sense of safety, which has been important," she said.

The departing superintendent was asked what characteristics her replacement will need in order to succeed. "They need to be smart, open to listening to all of the concerns and ideas that people have, and be a very strong communicator," Smidy said. "They need to truly care about the community. I don't think people will be successful here if they don't."

She added, "Gateway has had great momentum in work that is important and valued and said the new superintendent will need to lead that work going forward. They need to gain the trust and respect of the community. The roof and regional agreement both need attending to. But the most important thing is to keep their head up and keep the district moving forward," she said.

## REGION

## MassDOT lists I-90 lane closures

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces a number of lane closures will be in effect along I-90, in Beckett and Stockbridge, to facilitate road and bridge maintenance work.

There will be lane closures Stockbridge and West Stockbridge lane on I-90 westbound from mile marker 8.2 to mile marker 3.0 now through Thursday, June 26 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. Work concludes at on Friday, June 27 a 5:30 a.m.

There will be land closures Stockbridge: high speed

lane closure I-90 eastbound, from mile marker 5.0 to mile marker 5.8, turn around, from now to Thursday, June 26 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. Work concludes on Friday, June 27 at 5:30 a.m.

Other lane closures are Stockbridge on I-90 eastbound and westbound, at mile marker 7.5 on Thursday, June 26 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. - work concludes on Friday, June 27 at 5:30 a.m. and Beckett: lane closures on I-90 eastbound and westbound, at mile marker 18.4, from now to Thursday, June 26, from

7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. -work concludes on Friday, June 27 at 5:30 a.m. Daytime lane closure is in Becket on I-90 westbound, at mile marker 17.6 is Thursday, June 26, and Friday, June 27, from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Appropriate signage and messaging will be in place to guide drivers through the work area. Drivers traveling through the affected area should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

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

## BEAT hosts tree identification walk

WILLIAMSTOWN – Berkshire Environmental Action Team will host a free tree identification walk at The Clark Art Institute's grounds and walking trails in Williamstown on Saturday, June 28 at 9:30 a.m.

Rain date is Sunday, June 29. This informative and engaging walk will last approximately two hours and will feature slow-paced stops along the way. Participants will be outdoors for the entire duration of the walk, so appropriate footwear, clothing and drinking water are recommended.

On this guided walk, participants will learn key characteristics of trees commonly found in Western Massachusetts. Led by a Berkshire naturalist and tree enthusiast, the walk will offer tips and tricks for recognizing tree species throughout the year, regardless of the presence of leaves. In addition

to learning how to identify trees, participants will have the opportunity to view some of the artwork integrated into the natural landscape of The Clark.

This event is free and open to the public; however, space is limited and registration is required. For more information or to register, people may email [chelsey@thebeatnews.org](mailto:chelsey@thebeatnews.org).

This tree walk is part of a grant awarded by the Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts to Berkshire Environmental Action Team. BEAT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Pittsfield. They work with the community to protect the environment for wildlife in support of the natural world. To learn more about BEAT, people may visit their website at [www.thebeatnews.org](http://www.thebeatnews.org), email them at [team@thebeatnews.org](mailto:team@thebeatnews.org) or call 413-464-9402.

## Bidwell House hosts summer history talk

TYRINGHAM – On Saturday, June 28 a 11 a.m. Bidwell House Museum will host a summer history talk.

A Lecture on Mason's Tool Chest: 18th and 19th Century Stone Work with Dennis Picard will be held in person at the Tyringham

Unior Church anr via Zoom. Members are \$15 and non-members \$25. Zoom. In this second history talk of the 2025 season we take a look at the history of masonry work in New England.

The Bidwell House Museum is open for guid-

ed 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](mailto:bidwellhm2@gmail.com). The

Museum grounds-194 acres of woods, fields, historic stone walls, 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.bidwellhousemuseum.org](http://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org).

# WESTHAMPTON

## Westhampton Public Library announces upcoming events

WESTHAMPTON – The Westhampton Public Library, 1 North Road, is open

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.

The library will be closed Saturday, July 5 in observance of Independence Day. To place a request for curbside pickup, people may email westhampton@cwmar.org or call 413-527-5386.

Ongoing events include knitting group on Mondays

at 6 p.m., yoga on Monday at 6 p.m. (no yoga July 28), Scrabble group Tuesday at 2 p.m., book group Thursday, July 1 with guest author Emily Everett, walk-in wellness clinic with Westhampton's public nurse first and third Wednesday 10-11:30 a.m. and coffee and chat Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-noon. Yoga is drop-in, first-come/first-served, and registration is not required.

Tech Connect drop-in tech help is Thursdays, July 24 and Aug. 28 from 2-4 p.m. Hilltown Permaculture Club meets fourth Thursday

of the month at 7 p.m.

June/July Artists, Hampshire County Food Council, there will be a collection of food stories. Refreshments will be served and the exhibit will be on view in June and July during library hours.

Summer Reading 2025 Level Up at Your Library will be happening this summer. Special thanks to The Westhampton Cultural Council for sponsoring Escape Room with Wicked Fun Games and Stitched Journal Workshop. The Westhampton Cultural

Council is a local agency funded by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. Thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Programming Fund for sponsoring all other summer reading programs and incentives.

On Wednesday July 2 at 10 a.m. Little Roots Music Class for preschool-aged program takes place. It is limited to 15 families.

On Wednesday July 9 at 2 p.m. Escape Room with Wicked Fun Games Ages 8+, limited to 10 participants.

On Wednesday July 16

at 2 p.m. Cosplay Workshop with Eliza Eldredge of EldritchArts ages 12+, limited to 20 participants takes place.

On Wednesday July 23 at 2 p.m. Stitched Journal Workshop with Lisa Hersey of Antler Editions ages 12-18, limited to 8 participants, takes place People may email ewayne@cwmar.org to register for any or all of these programs.

Monday July 28 at 5:30 p.m Tom Ricardi's Birds of Prey will be at the library. Participants will learn about different birds of prey with

a licensed rehabilitator. All ages are welcome.

On Wednesday July 30 at 2 p.m. Brightspot Reading Buddies/Read-In for Double Points come to the library to read to one of the Brightspot Reading Buddies, or spend some time reading at home for double the points. Reading Buddy slots at the library are first-come, first-served

Saturday Aug 2 at 11 a.m. summer reading ends. Participants can collect prizes. Winners will be announced online Saturday morning.

# FLORENCE

## Florence Bank hires Callie Flanagan as VP/small business lender

FLORENCE – The Florence Bank welcomed Callie Flanagan of Holyoke as vice president/small business lender in the commercial originations department of the Florence headquarters.

Flanagan has 13 years of small business lending experience and most recently worked at the U.S. Small Business Administration as

lender relations specialist/Springfield branch manager.

Skilled at building relationships, credit analysis, underwriting, portfolio management and SBA lending, Flanagan has also served as a loan officer and director of lending at Common Capital. While in the latter role, she led a small lending team to achieve top lender in the state

with the U.S. Small Business Administration for multiple loan products over multiple years.

"A small business lender works with small businesses in the community to obtain financing that will help that business launch, grow and expand," Flanagan said. "I will assist with the direction and coordination of

small business lending activities, and I look forward to counseling customers where possible regarding business management and financial matters."

She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Fordham University and is vice chair of the Holyoke Economic Development and Industrial

Corporation and a member of the Ladies' Ancient Order of the Hibernians.

"We are excited to have Callie on our team. She brings excellent lender experience, SBA knowledge and passion and will surely be a valuable asset to our customers," said Florence Bank President and CEO Matt Garry.

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

# GREAT BARRINGTON

## Sculpture to be unveiled July 19

G R E A T BARRINGTON – A life-size sculpture of W.E.B. Du Bois will be unveiled on Saturday, July 19 at 2 p.m. in front of the Mason Public Library on Main Street, a fitting site in the heart of Du Bois's hometown.

All are welcome to attend this free public event, which will serve as the centerpiece of a week-end-long celebration of Du Bois's enduring legacy. The bronze sculpture, created by renowned artist Richard Blake, will sit on a curving marble bench at the center of a redesigned library plaza. The site features renovated steps, added seating, and a sense of welcome.

"This moment represents years of dedication from so many people," said

Ari Zorn, co-chair of the W.E.B. Du Bois Sculpture Project. "We are bringing Dr. Du Bois home in a way that invites everyone to sit with him, reflect with him, and carry forward his legacy. This sculpture isn't just a monument - it's a space for justice, remembrance, and stewardship."

Founded in 2021, the W.E.B. Du Bois Sculpture Project is a grassroots initiative that has raised funds and community support to commission the statue and create the surrounding plaza as a gift to the town of Great Barrington. Programming partners and supporters have helped plan a meaningful week-end of events, including two special programs hosted by Chesterwood, the historic home of sculptor Daniel Chester French, as

well as the fourth annual Du Bois Forum Roundtable at Jacob's Pillow.

Born in Great Barrington in 1868, W.E.B. Du Bois was a pioneering sociologist, civil rights leader, author and co-founder of the NAACP. His 1903 work, "The Souls of Black Folk," is a foundational text in American literature and thought. Dr. Du Bois graduated from Searles High School in Great Barrington in 1884, and his early education was supported by members of the local Congregational Church, located next door to the Mason Library.

The project reflects a broad coalition of private donors, local businesses, and community partners, whose collaboration and vision helped make this tribute possible:

## CDCSB names Lane executive director

GREAT BARRINGTON – The Board of Directors of the Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire announces the appointment of Stephanie Lane as its new executive director.

Lane, an experienced leader in affordable housing and real estate development. She brings to CDCSB more than two decades of expertise in nonprofit and mission-driven housing, including prior leadership roles at Shires Housing, Inc. in Bennington, Vermont and Housing Resources of Columbia County, Inc.. Her background in property development, project management and cross-sector collaboration positions her to lead CDCSB during a time of significant growth and opportunity.

"Stephanie brings exactly the kind of expertise we need at this moment," said

Jim Harwood, Chair of the CDCSB Board. "Her deep knowledge of real estate development and her ability to navigate both the public and private sectors will be invaluable as we expand our impact. We're thrilled to welcome her to the organization."

"I've long admired CDCSB's mission and community focus," said Lane. "This is an extraordinary organization doing critical work in addressing critical issues in workforce housing and economic development in the Berkshires. I'm honored to join the team and excited to help deepen its impact in the community."

Lane holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in business administration and management from The College of Saint Rose in Albany.

CDCSB is a non-profit developer of workforce and affordable housing in the

Southern Berkshires. Recent achievements include the completion in September 2023 of 49 units of affordable housing at the Windrush Commons development just south of downtown Great Barrington, and the acquisition of the historic Sumner Block in 2023, which preserved six workforce housing units in the community's walkable downtown.

CDCSB also supports economic development in the Southern Berkshires, providing technical consulting assistance at no charge to local small businesses. During COVID, CDCSB's Small Business Technical Assistance program has helped more than 60 businesses launch, pivot or stabilize and helped secure more than \$1.5 million in funding for those businesses. For more information on the CDCSB or to make a donation, people may visit cdcsb.org.

# Send Us Your Autumn Event Information

Turley Publications will print your Autumn event **FREE OF CHARGE** in our **Autumn Fest Supplement** which will be published **September 10, 2025.**

Total circulation of **85,000** reaching over **200,000** readers in the Pioneer Valley.

**Deadline for Calendar submissions is August 11.**

# Community Autumn Events

Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public

**FREE** Calendar Listings Reaching over **200,000** Readers in the Pioneer Valley

Event Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name & phone number for more information \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO:**

**Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email\* them to: jamie@turley.com**

**\*Be sure to indicate "Autumn Event" in the subject line of your email.**