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# 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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June 29, 2023 | Vol. 45, No. 10 | 75¢

www.countryjournal.turley.com

## HUNTINGTON



Superintendent Kristen Smidy laughs with Assistant Superintendent Stephanie Fisk, who received a Friend of MASBO Award from the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials.



Superintendent Kristen Smidy honors retiring teacher Karen Smith, as School Committee Chair and reception emcee Sarah Page looks on. *Submitted photos*

## HUNTINGTON

# Select Board hold telephone meeting

By Wendy Long  
*Correspondent*

The Select Board was down a member with Roger Booth unavailable for the Wednesday, June 21 meeting.

Chairman Edward Renauld telephoned into the meeting, which began at 5:45 p.m. due to William Hathaway working late on the longest day of the year.

With support from Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin, the board ran through routine business including approval of May 10 minutes, along with several requests for the use of Stanton Hall and North Hall. Hathaway signed payroll and bill warrants, with Renauld planning to stop in tomorrow to provide the second signature.

Huntington received a \$17,132 grant through the Pioneer Valley

**MEETING**, page 3

# School retirees honored at reception

By Wendy Long  
*Correspondent*

Staff and committee member recognition took place at a reception preceding the final meeting of the Gateway Regional School Committee for the 2023-24 school year.

On Wednesday, June 14 Superintendent Kristen Smidy and Chairperson Sarah Page honored eight retiring staff members, one

member of the school committee, who is stepping down, one current staff member for years of service and two current staff members, who earned outside awards.

Retiring staff members were Christine Bresnahan, Linda Coffey, Anne Fisk, Stephanie Flinker, Donna Morrissey, Kathy Murray, Melinda Slowey and Karen Smith.

Chris Bresnahan started at Gateway in August, 1985

and has been a Kindergarten Teacher at Littleville; Preschool/Special Needs Teacher at Russell, Littleville and Blandford Elementary Schools; and a Title I Reading Teacher at Chester and Littleville. She has also held several stipend positions such as Early Childhood Coordinator, Family Engagement Coordinator, Title I Tutor, Title I Summer Program Coordinator and District Professional

Development Committee.

Outside of Gateway, Bresnahan was a Reading Teacher at Amherst/Pelham Regional High School, Chapter I Teacher at Nexus School in Northampton, Teacher at the Marks Meadow After School Day Care, Internship Coordinator and Art Teacher for the Massachusetts Migrant Education Program,

**RETIREES**, page 3

## SANDISFIELD

# Sandisfield Arts Center hosts annual outdoor sculpture show

By Mary Kronholm  
*Correspondent*

"It's a wonderfully eclectic assortment of sculptural works," said Josie Miner speaking about the second ever bi-annual outdoor sculpture showing for the Sandisfield Arts Center.

The Miners have volunteered to host the sculpted selections from local, regional, national and internationally acclaimed artists on their property at the intersection of Cronk and West streets.

The exhibit opens with an artists' reception on Sunday, July 2 from 4-6 p.m. Refreshments will be served. There is a suggested donation of \$10.

**SCULPTURE**, page 10



Bill Carson's geometric aluminum sculpture is one of the pieces of art at the Sandisfield Arts Center outdoor sculpture show.



Selena Weld Granbery is one of the exhibitors. Here is her bronze Undulaton.



Bob Osborne exhibits his Large Complex. *Submitted photos*



Becket.....7	Hilltowns .....2	Obituary.....14	Stockbridge .....10
Blandford.....16	Huntington.....2, 3	Opinion.....4	South Worthington .....10
Chester.....7	Lee .....10	Pittsfield .....10	Schools & Youth .....5
Classifieds.....15	Middlefield.....10	Public Notice .....14	Westhampton .....12
Goshen.....7	Montgomery .....7	Sandisfield.....10	Worthington .....12



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## HILLTOWNS

# MassDOT announces upcoming roadwork schedule

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces crews will be conducting overnight and daytime paving operations and bridge guardrail and drainage repair work on I-90 eastbound and westbound in Montgomery, Russell, Lee, Becket, and West Stockbridge.

Bridge repair work in Montgomery and Russell will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 36.0 through Friday, June 30, during overnight hours from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the following morning. All work is anticipated to conclude on Friday, June 30 by 5 a.m.

Pavement milling operations in Lee and Becket will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound from mile marker 14.5 to mile marker 21 through Friday, June 30, during

overnight hours from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the following morning. All work is anticipated to conclude on Friday, June 30 by 5 a.m.

Guardrail repair operations in Lee will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound from mile marker 10.5 to mile marker 14 through Friday, June 30, during overnight hours from 7:00 p.m. to 5 a.m. the following morning. All work is anticipated to conclude by on Friday, June 30 by 5 a.m.

Bridge repair operations in Lee will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 9.4, through Friday, June 30, during overnight hours from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the following morning. All work is anticipated to conclude on Friday, June 30 by 5 a.m.

Drainage repair operations in West Stockbridge will be conducted daily at I-90 westbound from mile marker 0 to mile marker 3.0, on Monday, June 26 and Tuesday, June 27, during daytime hours from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All work is anticipated to conclude by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27.

Drainage repair operations will be conducted daily at I-90 eastbound from mile marker 0 to mile marker 3.0, through Thursday, June 29, during daytime hours from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. All work is anticipated to conclude on Thursday, June 29 by 5 p.m.

Traffic will be allowed through the work zones. The work will require temporary lane closures to allow crews to safely conduct the paving, and bridge and guardrail repair operations.

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

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

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

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

Dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions.

Follow MassDOT on Twitter @MassDOT to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

## HUNTINGTON

# North Hall Arts Festival presents seven free concerts

HUNTINGTON – The 13th Historic North Hall Arts Festival, presented by the North Hall Association, opens the summer with seven free programs in July, August and September, six on the North Hall stage and one on the Huntington Town Green. All events are Sundays at 2 p.m. For updates, people may visit [northhallhuntington.org](http://northhallhuntington.org).

The Time Stretchers open the 2023 season on the Huntington Town Green on Sunday, July 16 playing classic rock, country, swing from the 50s and 60s to now, including covers of Johnny Cash, The Beatles and more. Barry Searle and Clark Howell will be on guitar and vocals, Pete Rzasa will be on vocals, pedal steel and harmonica, Sarah Miller will be on percussion and vocals. In case of rain this concert will be held in Stanton Hall.

On Sunday, July 30, La Voz De Tres brings the Historic North Hall Arts Festival back to its roots with six programs of music and spoken word on the

North Hall stage. The trio opens with seven-string guitarist Jason Ennis, Chilean vocalist Natalia Bernal and pianist Mike Eckroth, bringing a blend of jazz and the infectious rhythms of Latin America with original compositions and picks from the American Songbook. On Sunday, Aug. 13, Duo Mundo (acclaimed cellist Rebecca Hartka and guitarist José Lezcano) will offer a program called Songs of Freedom rich in passion and self-reflection from Cuban composers such as Cervantes, Piazzolla Tangos, Massenet's Meditation.

On Sunday, Aug. 20, there will be a staged reading of Joe DiPietro's The Last Romance. This romantic comedy with a twist about finding love at any age features the cast of three professional actors including Ellen Barry and real life husband and wife Candace Barrett Birk and Raye Birk.

On Sunday, Sept. 10, there will be a staged reading and World Premiere of Mitch Giannunzio's Fresh Horses.

This suspense thriller about obsession and the human need to redeem the past will star Broadway actors Kenneth Tigar and J. Anthony Crane with P. J. Adzima and Michelle Joyner, and Director Mitch Giannunzio. On Sept. 17, Old Country Road takes you back to the Grand Ole Opry playing the best vintage country and bluegrass of Hank Williams, Carl Smith, Kitty Wells, and a tribute to Willie Nelson's 90th year.

On Sunday, Sept. 24, the North Hall Association will close out the festival with an Opera Arias & Song Showcase featuring the accomplished NYC ensemble of tenor Antonio Abate, soprano Amy Orsulak, and pianist Jerome Tan performing opera aria and song favorites.

All program updates will be listed on [northhallhuntington.org](http://northhallhuntington.org). The North Hall is located at 40 Searle Road and the Huntington Town Green is located at 24 Russell Road on Rt. 20 and Rt. 112 in Huntington.

The seven program series is

sponsored by the Westfield Bank, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and Cultural Councils of: Chester, Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Russell, Westhampton and Worthington.



**Williamsburg  
Anne T. Dunphy School**

**PART-TIME  
CAFETERIA HELPER**

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School Year Only  
Beginning August 2023**

*Deadline 6/29/23*

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or at 268-8421

AA/EOE

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## Gateway Class of 2003 updating classmate contact information

HUNTINGTON – Gateway Regional High School Class of 2003, it's been 20 years since our graduation and we are updating the classmates contact information and will be sharing the list

with fellow classmates.

People in the class of 2003 should send an email to [grhsma2003@aol.com](mailto:grhsma2003@aol.com) and a form link will be sent out to them to complete.

*Responsible harvesting is the first step in producing our lumber. We mill over four million board feet per year, with most coming from local privately-owned forests. We use only the best cutting processes for minimal impact to the land. If you are interested in managing or foresting your land of three acres or more, let our family walk it with your family, and we'll give you a free assessment and suggestions on how to best manage your woodlot. Contact the office by email at [lashway@live.com](mailto:lashway@live.com) or by phone 413-268-7685 and we will have our forester set up an assessment.*

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DEADLINES**

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there will be an  
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**Thursday, June 29**  
– Thank you!

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# HUNTINGTON

## MEETING

from page 1

Planning Commission (PVPC), to take part in the Age and Dementia Friendly Community Initiative. This will pay for a needs assessment that results in a plan for the town to better serve its aging residents.

### Other business

In other business, Peloquin presented an All Alcohol Liquor License for IFFA, LLC doing business as B&D Variety, which was ready for signature. Town Counsel has prepared the necessary letters for state legislators Representative Nick Boldyga and Senator Paul Mark for special legislation to change the Town Clerk role from an elected to an appointed position.

Tighe and Bond recommended payment of \$111,789.35 to the J.L. Construction Corporation for their work on the Crescent Street Improvement Project, which was approved.

### Police Department

Police department updates included the appointment of Brian Kowal as a Police Officer effective July 1 and effective for one year. This appointment had been recommended by Chief Robert Garriepy, prior to his motorcycle accident. In other police department business, the board officially appointed Sergeant Michael Girard as the Acting Police Chief, which will be rescinded when Garriepy is able to resume desk work. This was deemed necessary because the department has received several gun permits that have to be acted upon within six weeks and Garriepy has already been out for three weeks. There are similar duties-such as Freedom of Information requests-that have required timelines (ten days) and must be completed in a timely manner. The board

will maintain Girard's rate of pay but increase his hours for the additional administrative work.

### Appointments

While FY 2024 appointed positions were informally approved at Annual Town Meeting, Peloquin suggested it be followed up with a formal vote at this meeting. These annual appointments covered nearly 100 positions, 30 of which were election workers. In addition to positions such as accountant, treasurer, collector, fire chief and police department personnel, it also included those sitting on a number of committees such as community events, the conservation commission, emergency planning, Memorial Day parade and the recreation committee.

### Highway Department

Most of the discussion surrounded the highway department. Grading on the town's dirt roads is over halfway completed. Line painting is completely done. Renault expressed approval of the current highway superintendent, Dan Donovan's performance.

"He's really knocking this stuff out," Renault said. Hathaway concurred saying, "He really does things right. He's been an asset to the town." Hathaway, who serves as the Select Board's liaison to the highway department, reported that Donovan is unhappy about moving into a salaried position and the resultant loss of overtime. Renault responded that the town could move him into an hourly position as Superintendent, but they'd have to reduce the pay scale and move some of the money into overtime. Despite the fact that the town is happy with Donovan's performance, he has

expressed a desire to leave the superintendent's position. The board has already posted for his replacement, but admit that if they continue to have a hard time finding applicants, they might need to reconsider. Peloquin added that the highway department is always over in its overtime spending, which would need to be addressed by the Superintendent. If Donovan agrees to remain in the job, they would also hire a 40 hour/week worker. The Select Board had also received a letter from resident Henry Thomas, in support of Donovan as Superintendent. The Select board will resume discussion on this issue at their next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, July 19.

### Audit

Peloquin announced that she had received a quote from King Information Systems to do an audit on how well departments are keeping up with the filing and storage system established by the company in 2020. They are asking for \$776/day to complete an audit. This was not submitted in time to meet the town's budget and it was felt could be done by individual departments.

### Library

Peloquin also said that library staff were reluctant to download an app on their personal devices to meet the new requirements for two-factor authentication using YubiKey, the town's new process. The board affirmed that if they don't do it, they cannot access their email and would have to come off of the town's server.

The Select Board also approved a quote from Civic Plus for domain and hosting. A one time setup fee will be \$274.54, and \$208 annually thereafter.

ter. The changeover will take place in mid-July when Steve Hamlin returns.

### Green Communities Grant application

PVPCA has announced a Green Communities Grant Application, Annual Report and Other Energy Planning Assistance. This could include a plan for net zero emissions for town buildings, clean energy coaching for residents, coaching for residents on weatherization, solar energy and Electric Vehicles, understanding contractors and comparing quotes. Huntington could also take part in a regional clean energy work group. The Board declined to participate at this time.

Approval was granted for engineering by Weston and Sampson, as recommended by PVPC for the Stanton Avenue Improvement Project. The bid of \$58,300 will be covered by the Community Development Block Grant.

### Fire Department

The Fire Department has submitted a quote for new portable radios, using ARPA funding. Renault suggested this be moved to the next meeting to include Booth in the review.

A quote of \$475 for the year from Anchor Motor was reviewed to do routine inspections on the town hall generator. Anchor also inspects the water and sewer department generator. The quote was approved.

### MassDOT

Finally, MassDOT gave notice that their highway divisions Project Review Committee will be looking at a bridge in Huntington for improvements. It was not clear from the letter which bridge was being looked at; Peloquin will follow up.

## RETIREEES

from page 1

a Paraprofessional at Shutesbury Elementary School, Arts and Crafts Specialist at the Greater Boston YMCA, Teacher at St. Joseph's School in Somerville; a Program Coordinator/Mental Health Assistant at Hilltop and a Tutor at the Brandeis University Upward Bound Program. She retired at the end of February, 2023.

Linda Coffey started at Gateway in November of 2005 as the Accounts Payable Clerk. Prior to coming to Gateway, Linda worked as a Payroll Clerk at Parker and Associates in Blandford, and as an Administrative Assistant in the Alumni Office at Westfield State College. She also enjoyed some time as a stay-at-home mom.

Those who know her well know she loves spending time outdoors, hiking, watching animals and birds, and spending time with her family. She is also an accomplished photographer, whose work may often be viewed at the Blandford Fair. Coffey retired in October 2022.

Anne Fisk has taught at Gateway since September 1986 and will retire on the final day of school this month. She was a substitute teacher before becoming a full time 4th grade teacher at Russell Elementary School. She

has taught at Russell, Blandford and Littleville Elementary schools. Fisk has also coordinated the Russell Elementary Craft Fair, which later moved with her to Littleville, where she taught third grade.

Beyond the classroom, she taught mini courses at Littleville, served as Head Teacher, tutored students, and provided professional development classes to her peers. Outside of Gateway, she was a director of the swim program and lifeguard for the town of Russell, and was also a Ski Instructor at the former Springfield Ski Club in Blandford.

Stephanie Flinker was hired last August as a third grade teacher at Littleville Elementary School. While she was only at Gateway for one year, she came from Northampton Public schools where she was a grade 3 and grades 2-5 teacher. She began her career as a support professional and substitute teacher.

Donna Morrissey started out as a substitute paraprofessional before being hired full time in that role at Russell Elementary School in September of 2004. She also worked at Blandford Elementary School. In April 2008, Morrissey became a secretary at the Middle/High School. She concluded her career as the school secretary at Chester Elementary School until her retirement

in December 2022.

Kathy Murray was an Occupational Therapist for the Gateway district from 1995 to 2023 and has worked with students attending Blandford, Chester, R. H. Conwell and Russell Elementary Schools, as well as Gateway Regional Middle and High Schools. She also served as a mentor and took part in the ELA Curriculum Committee. Prior to Gateway, Murray did her clinical hours with the Geriatric Authority of Holyoke, Longmeadow High School and at Western Mass Hospital, among others. Murray is scheduled to retire this September.

Melinda Slowey has been a paraprofessional at Murrayfield and Littleville Elementary Schools since September 1992. She also worked as the substitute caller for many years. She is perhaps best known for starting up and running Littleville's Wrap Around Program, which runs both during the school year and over the summer, a position that also entailed planning weekly field trips. Slowey will retire in August.

Karen Smith started her career working at the Kids Place Child Care Center, Hampden County ARC (now Pathlight), and Sunshine Village.

She started as a paraprofessional

in September, 1992 before becoming a Preschool Teacher at Chester Elementary School. Over her 31 years at Gateway, she also worked at Blandford and R. H. Conwell Elementary Schools, finishing up at Littleville Elementary School. Smith taught Preschool, Kindergarten and Grade 2, also serving as the Early Childhood Coordinator, Varsity Cheerleading Coach, and on the ELA Curriculum Committee. Smith retired on the last day of the 22-23 school year.

Three additional staff members were recognized by the School Committee at their June meeting. Cheryl Miller Harper was honored for 42 years of service, having been hired in October of 1981. Jenna Kakimoto, this year's recipient of the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award, was also acknowledged at the meeting. Assistant Superintendent Stephanie Fisk was recognized for receiving a Friend of MASBO award from the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials.

Finally the School Committee honored one of their own. Terri Garfield, who has served on the Gateway Regional School Committee since 2014, is stepping down at the end of her third 3-year term. Garfield represented the town of Blandford.

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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



### Working widow seeks to maximize Social Security benefits

Dear Rusty:

I was widowed years ago and, when I approached age 60, I looked into Social Security survivor benefits based on my late husband's record. He started receiving Social Security shortly before he died at \$1,200 per month. My income at age 60 was \$42,000 and, since Social Security would keep \$1 for every \$2 above the limit (around \$15,000 at that time), I did not apply.

Next year I will reach my full retirement age of 66½, but I plan to work until I am 70. Will I be able to receive full survivor benefits next year if I continue to work? I plan to switch to my own Social Security benefit at age 70, which will be higher than my husband received.

Since I am waiting to apply for survivor benefits, will there be an increase in the amount I receive? I am a municipal employee and when I retire, I will collect from the state retirement system. I paid into the state retirement system and also paid Social Security taxes, so will my state pension have any impact on my Social Security?

**Signed: Still Working**

Dear Still Working: Congratulations on having an excellent strategy for maximizing your survivor benefit as well as your personal SS retirement benefit. Once you reach your Full Retirement Age next year, you are no longer subject to Social Security's "earnings test" and can collect Social Security benefits without those benefits being affected by your work earnings.

Your surviving spouse benefit will be more because you are waiting until your full retirement age to claim it. At your FRA you can claim your full survivor benefit from your deceased husband without reduction and collect only that while still allowing your personal SS retirement benefit to grow to maximum when you are 70. Then, at age 70, you can switch from your smaller survivor benefit to your maximum SS retirement benefit and collect that higher amount for the rest of your life. Essentially, your survivor benefit reaches maximum at your FRA and your personal SS retirement benefit reaches maximum at age 70.

Note that you should apply for your benefits a couple of months before you wish them to start. For example, if you reach your FRA in May of next year you can apply for your survivor benefit in February or March, specifying that you wish your survivor benefit to begin in May 2024 at your full retirement age. Just be sure to emphasize that you are applying only for your survivor benefit and wish your personal SS retirement benefit to continue to grow by earning Delayed Retirement Credits until you are 70.

You cannot apply for your survivor benefit online, so you will need to call Social Security, at either the national number (1.800.772.1213) or your local Social Security office, to make an appointment to apply for your benefit as your husband's widow.

And to answer your last question, your state pension won't affect your monthly Social

**SECURITY**, page 5



## GUEST COLUMN



By Ellenor Downer

I received a note from a Williamsburg resident along with a newspaper clipping about a green-tailed towhee spotted in Newport, Rhode Island at Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge.

She said they are native to the Southwestern United States and "having gotten so far, they might be here any day now." The green-tailed towhee is the smallest towhee. They are small, but chunky songbirds with a big head, stocky body and a medium to long tail. Their bill is thick.

They are fairly common in the western mountains and spend most of their time in dense, low thickets where they forages on the ground. It has a gray body, fairly greenish wings and tail with a rufous crown and white throat. These towhees do sometimes wander east.

The female lays three to four white eggs with heavy dots of brown or gray, often concentrated at the larger end of the egg. They build their nests on the ground or in low shrubs. It is a large, deep cup loosely made of twigs, grass, weeds, strips of bark and lined with finer grasses, rootlets and animal hair.

They eat mainly seeds and insects, but they will sometimes feed on berries or small fruits. They make a cat like meowing sound.

### Best cities for birdwatching

New York, New York recently was ranked the number one city for birdwatching; I assume because of Central Park and the sea coast. Other cities on the list from two to ten were: San Diego, California; Houston, Texas; Seattle, Washington, Los Angeles, California; San Francisco, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Phoenix, Arizona; Austin, Texas and Chicago, Illinois.



Green-tailed towhee

On the worst cities for birdwatching list Kansas City, Kansas came in at number one. Other cities were Montgomery, Alabama; Olathe, Kansas; Overland Park, Kansas and Mobile, Alabama (tied for fourth place); Des Moines, Iowa; Huntsville, Alabama; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Henderson, Nevada.



### Wild turkeys

I recently saw a hen turkey with her poults on the edge of the road. The hen was standing on the edge of the road and her young were in the tall grass so I was unable to accurately count how many she had.



### Geese and goslings

Last week, I saw two pairs of adult Canada geese with some young goslings in my hayfield. I spotted the adults heads in the tall grass and stopped to watch. I could see the goslings when they jumped up or stretched their necks to eat grass.

### Nesting cardinal

One of my daughters had a cardinal nesting in her rhododendron bush. They could be observed from a window in the liv-

**BACKYARD**, page 5



Cardinal

## EDITORIAL POLICY

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ISSN NO. 0747-2471

## Country Journal TEAM



**EDITOR**  
Ellenor Downer  
[countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com)



**ADVERTISING SALES**  
Theresa Wegiel  
[twegiel@turley.com](mailto:twegiel@turley.com)

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



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**PATRICK H. TURLEY**  
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Corrections will be printed in the same section where the error originally occurred.

## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### Emma Perry to attend New York Institute of Technology

OLD WESTBURY, NY – Emma Perry of Sandisfield will attend New York Institute of Technology for the fall 2023 semester. Perry plans to major in architectural technology.

New York Institute of Technology's six schools and colleges offer undergraduate, graduate, doc-

toral, and other professional degree programs in in-demand disciplines including computer science, data science and cybersecurity; biology, health professions and medicine; architecture and design; engineering; IT and digital technologies; management and energy and sustainability.

### Erin Jachym makes Dean's List at James Madison University

HARRISONBURG, VA – James Madison University announces Erin Jachym of Westfield made the Dean's List for the spring 2023 semester.

Jachym is majoring in writing

rhetoric and technical communication.

Students who earn dean's list honors must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of between 3.5 and 3.899.

### Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

TROY, NY – Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute announces the Dean's Honor List for the spring 2023 semester.

Local students making Dean's List are Adrien Neveu of Goshen, a mechanical engineering student and Diana Stuzhuk of Westfield, a biomedical engi-

neering student.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Dean's Honor List is compiled at the end of each semester to recognize undergraduate students, who have completed 12 or more credit hours with a 3.5 grade point average or better for that term.

### Fairfield University announces local 2023 graduates

FAIRFIELD, CT. – Fairfield University announces graduates May 2023.

Local students receiving Bachelor Degrees are Diana Raifstanger of Great Barrington and James Knapik of Westfield.

At the time of graduation, a student must have earned a minimum of 120 credits and completed at least 38 three- or four-credit courses, depending on the course of study, and have an overall grade point average of 2.0 or better at the conclusion of the senior year.

### HCC holds summer youth programs

HOLYOKE – Registration is now open for Holyoke Community College's 2023 summer youth programs.

Starting Monday, July 10 and running through Friday, Aug. 25, HCC will offer 17, week-long summer programs in person at HCC and many more online for youth aged 8 to 17 interested in everything from baking, cooking, wilderness survival and computers to YouTube, soccer, baseball, and basketball.

HCC's 2023 on-campus summer youth programs run Monday through Friday for one week, some for a full day, 9 a.m.-3 or 4 p.m., and others for a half day, either 9 a.m.-noon or 1-4 p.m.

All in-person programs will be held on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Avenue except for cooking and baking classes, which are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St. To register, people should visit [hcc.edu/summer-youth](http://hcc.edu/summer-youth).

### HCC Foundation announces scholarship awards

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College Foundation has awarded more than \$300,000 in scholarships to students for the 2023-2024 academic year.

This year, the HCC Foundation awarded 259 scholarships worth \$304,125 to 249 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Many students received multiple scholarship awards.

Local students receiving scholarships were: Sarah Akin of Easthampton, Carissa Batura of Easthampton, Jessie Beland of Easthampton, Joel Bergstrom of Easthampton, Maxime Capitaine of Easthampton, Brianna Coltman of Easthampton, Gracelyn Downer of Easthampton, Noelle Fournier of Easthampton, Cadence Hiller of Easthampton, Elishama Jean of Easthampton, Charles Karpells of Easthampton, Narvanie Lalchand of Easthampton, Maria De La Luz Ortega of Easthampton, Marie Poulin

of Easthampton, Meghan Teague of Easthampton, Casey Wagner of Easthampton, Mary-Alice Wieland of Easthampton, Enette Claxton-Toliver of Florence, Shannon Collins of Florence, Riley Delano of Florence, Fatima Ibrahim of Florence, Bunnary Teng of Florence, Raquel Valentin of Florence, Danielle Canedy of Huntington, Rebecca Noble of Huntington, Angela Farrick of Northampton, Amari Feliciano of Northampton, Barney Garcia of Northampton, Susanna Hoffmann of Northampton, Nicole Howard of Northampton, Jasmine Klingenberg of Northampton, Jacob Kris of Northampton, Lauren Norman of Northampton, McKayla Ulibarri of Northampton, Hans Valdes of Northampton, Jeffrey Wang of Northampton, Amanda Williams of Pittsfield, Timothea Antonio of Southampton, Emma Czarniecki of Southampton, Rylee Altieri of Westfield, James Atkin of Westfield,

Suzanne Baran of Westfield, Paige Cortis of Westfield, Ryan DeFalco of Westfield, Allison Duffy of Westfield, Angelica Gavrilov of Westfield, Emma Ionkin of Westfield, Erin Kennedy of Westfield, Elizabeth Kudrya of Westfield, Cheyenne Lusby Seery of Westfield, Samantha Melchionne of Westfield, Dino Pietroniro of Westfield, Darryll Roberts of Westfield, Tiffany Salvas of Westfield, Fazna Zakir of Westfield, John Boudreau of Westhampton, Cadence Loven of Westhampton, Emily Souza of Westhampton and Ann McGinley of Worthington.

The HCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that works to advance the college's mission, vision, and values. Founded in 1968 as the Friends of Holyoke Community College, in response to a devastating fire that forced the college to rebuild a new campus, the Foundation now manages assets of more than \$20 million, the largest community college foundation endowment in Massachusetts.

### SECURITY

from page 4

Security payments because you paid Social Security FICA payroll taxes from your municipal earnings.

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature American Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security*

*Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org).*

*Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*

### BACKYARD

from page 4

ing room and not be disturbed. The nest is now empty and I hope they fledged and did not meet up with a predator.

*People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling*

*me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing [mybackyard88@aol.com](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.*

### News, photo publication policy

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

All such public service announcements and photos are subject to space limitations and deadlines, therefore publication cannot be guaranteed. Whenever copy for the week exceeds allotted space, news copy will take priority, and public service copy is the first area to be cut. We also reserve the right to edit for style and space, and are under no obligation to print lists of sponsorships, or articles that arrive after deadline, unless time and space allows. **Deadline is Monday at NOON**, on holidays it is **Friday at 2 p.m.**

### FAMILY FUN DAY DELIGHTS ONE AND ALL



Lilie Ripley and her sister, Abbey, visited the Granville Fire Engine at Family Fun Day held at the Blandford Fairgrounds.

Turley photo by Mary Kronholm



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## BECKET

# Becket Athenaeum announces upcoming summer events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., will hold a free movie night for adults on Tuesday, July 11 from 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Choice of movies are “I Wanna Dance with Somebody” or “Hitman’s Wife’s Bodyguard.” People should RSVP by Tuesday, July 4 to vote for the movie

by visiting [bit.ly/BA-Jul-movie](https://bit.ly/BA-Jul-movie). The movie with the most votes will be shown.

Older children 13 plus may come with an adult at the discretion of their guardian. Popcorn, candy and non-alcoholic beverages are provided. People are welcome to bring beverages of their choice including alcohol.

On Thursday, July 13 at 6 p.m., the Becket Athenaeum will present “The Most Active Main in the City: Early Black Abolitionist David Ruggles” with Tom Goldscheider. David Ruggles was a Black abolitionist, who did heroic work on behalf of his people in New York City in the 1830s. Skilled organizer, courageous

activist and prolific journalist, Ruggles inspired a generation of anti-slavery workers including a young Frederick Douglass. Tom Goldscheider is the Education Coordinator at the David Ruggles Center for History and Education in Florence.

People should RSVP to [bit.ly/BA-Ruggles](https://bit.ly/BA-Ruggles). Refreshments will be served.

## CHESTER

# Selectman race has three candidates vying for seat

CHESTER – There are three candidates for a one-year term to the Board of Selectmen. Candidates are Brian Forgue, Craig Gauthier and Avril Willemain.

Two of the candidates submitted statements. The special election will be held Saturday, July 8 from 8 a.m.-noon.

### Brian Forgue Candidate for Selectman

My name is Brian Forgue, and I’m a candidate for the special election for Selectman here in Chester.

I believe with all my being in the value of this community and I hope I can earn your vote to help Chester achieve a bright future.

I know I have the knowledge and drive to deliver results. I’ve been a regular presence at Select Board meetings, participated on the School Committee as a student representative and soon as an elected representative from Chester, and contributed a significant amount of my personal time researching our town processes, history, and policies so I can hit the ground running.

Chester is the community that raised me, and the commitment and hard work to make this town a better place that I’ve seen in my 16 years living here has instilled in me a passion to always work to make tomorrow better than today. There is nothing I want more than to give back to this town after all that its done for me.

As a selectman, I hope to serve as a liaison between the School Committee and the Select Board, expanding the pioneering internship program with town departments, engaging our young people to volunteer and give back to their community, and fight for a district-wide adoption of the alternative assessment budgetary method, so Chester isn’t negatively impacted when more of our kids opt for local education.

I plan on being a fighter in regards to the state, doing everything I can to ensure

that Chester receives the transportation, education and PILOT state-owned land funds it is owed, and with those revenues, work to lower the burden on our taxpayers.

I want to work with department heads to ensure quality town services to our residents and modernize our Town Hall information services.

I know that the history at town hall will make solving the endemic problems in town slow, difficult, and frustrating; I’ve seen too many volunteers burn out and resident anger to even remotely think otherwise. But I am committed to working for all of you, to never lose sight of fighting for a better future in town, and I will never give up.

I promise to be diligent, transparent, patient, and passionate through every moment. If you have any further questions, you can reach me at [bforgue03@gmail.com](mailto:bforgue03@gmail.com) anytime. I hope to earn your vote this July 8.

### Avril Willemain Candidate for Selectman

Hello everyone, my name is Avril Willemain and I am running for the open selectman seat one year term for Chester. I’ve lived in Chester most of my life as well as my children. I feel I can bring a fresh mind to an already great team.

While I may not be able to move mountains I’d like to be given the chance to create some mole hills. I would like to bring activities back to our Council on Aging and encourage the younger generation to become more involved with our towns growth. I look forward to serving our community if given the chance.



Avril Willemain

## GOSHEN

# Goshen COA lists events

GOSHEN – On Wednesday, July 5 the knitting and crafts group meet from 1-3 p.m. in the upstairs dining room at the Goshen Town Hall. All are welcome and should bring a knitting, crocheting, needlework or craft project to work on.

On Thursday, July 6 and Thursday, July 20 at 1 p.m. the walking club walk at their own pace at Tilton Town Field. They should bring water.

On Friday, July 7 from 10- 11 a.m. the Community Connections Group will meet in a new location, outside behind the Goshen Church under a tent

NEW LOCATION- outside behind the Goshen Church under the tent for the summer months. People should bring their own coffee or tea and snacks will be provided. In the case of rain, they can meet in the Goshen Town Hall upstairs dining room.

On Tuesdays, July 18 and July 25 Highland Valley Elder Services will provide lunch with pick up from

noon-12:30 p.m. On Tuesday July 18, the meal will be Egg and Cheese Croissant or Vegetarian Chili and on July 25 the meal will be Chicken Parmesan over noodles or Macaroni and Cheese plus vegetables, milk and dessert. If people have not signed up and would like to for August, they should call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$3 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.

On Wednesday, July 19 the Games Group meet from 1-3 p.m. and continue on the third Wednesday of each month. They meet in the upstairs dining room at the Town Hall. If it is a nice day, they may head outside together. This will be in coordination with the Goshen Library, and the library is open right afterwards.

On Thursday, July 20 from 11:30-12:30 p.m. the Practical Aging Issues

Support Group will meet in the dining room of the Goshen Town Hall. This peer led support group with Grace Gibson and Jackie Compton have discussions and share resources about various topics that are important to participants. Masking is not required but is encouraged. People may call Jackie at 413-268-7265 or email [jackiecompton2@yahoo.com](mailto:jackiecompton2@yahoo.com) or call Grace at 413-374-4357 or email [gracecgibsonphd@verizon.net](mailto:gracecgibsonphd@verizon.net) for more information and to indicate interest in this monthly group.

On Saturday, July 15 at 6 p.m. Bob Labrie will present “Night of a Thousand Sunrises.” At the beginning of March 2020, Bob Labrie took his first “pandemic photo.” Many a morning with equipment in hand, he would climb the Fire Tower at the DAR to wait patiently for the perfect moment to photograph the rising sun. When Covid truly hit and changed many lives, Bob continued his morning mission but now called his photos a “Pandemic Distraction.”

Since that March day in 2020, Bob has amassed an amazing collection of photos, and stories and will be sharing his experiences at the Goshen Town Hall on Saturday, July 15 at 6 p.m. This is sponsored by the Goshen Free Public Library.

Peg Whalen is taking a well deserved break from the drop in services for July and August. She continues to be available on a case by case basis by email to [pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com).

The Goshen COA is looking for volunteers.

People, who are interested in helping out at our various events, should contact Kerry Normandin or any board member or come to the next meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 29 at 1 p.m. held at the Town Offices back room.

# Goshen Hazard Mitigation Plan seeks resident input

GOSHEN – Residents, businesses and surrounding community residents and representatives are invited to learn about and provide input on the town of Goshen Hazard Mitigation Plan, on Wednesday, July 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the Goshen Town Hall, 42 Main St., in the second floor meeting room.

The purpose of the Hazard Mitigation Plan is to identify and assess the risks to Goshen from natural hazards and climate change impacts, and to develop strategies and actions to mitigate these. A mitigation action is any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards.

The meeting will include an overview of the hazard mitigation planning process, a discussion of natural hazards and climate change impacts in Goshen and the current mitigation strategies and capabilities. Municipal officials and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission staff will be available to answer ques-

tions and respond to comments about the plan.

The meeting provides an opportunity for you to share your opinions and participate in the mitigation planning process. All members of the public, representatives from surrounding communities and other interested parties are welcome to attend the event. Public participation and input are essential!

The plan is being updated by the Town with assistance from the PVPC and is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.

Upon completion, the plan will be submitted to MEMA and FEMA for review and approval. A FEMA approved plan makes the community eligible for federal and state mitigation grant funding.

For more information, people may email PVPC’s Mimi Kaplan at [mkaplan@pvpc.org](mailto:mkaplan@pvpc.org) or call 413-285-1188.

## MONTGOMERY

# Library lists reading program, events

MONTGOMERY – The Grace Hall Memorial Library, 161 Main Road, will kick off it’s Summer Reading program “Find Your Voice” on Tuesday, July 11. Library hours on Tuesday are 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. After July 11 on every Tuesday and Thursday is Lego Days at 2 p.m. for ages 6 and up. Stop in and create one of Marvel Mask Iron man or The Hulk, plus more surprise though out the summer. On Thursday, July 13 at 3:30 p.m Fairy Houses with Christine ages 6 and up. She will guide us through these perfect little creations for our Fairy friends.

Star Lab the traveling planetarium will be at the library Monday, July 17 at 6:30 p.m. This huge blow up dome will house the wonders of the night sky and is open to everyone. On Thursday, July 20 Fantastic Frogs with the Mass Audubon is at 1 p.m. Learn about our amphibious friends, all ages. Wildlife on Wheels rolls

into the Library on Tuesday, July 25 at 10 a.m. The Springfield Park Zoo visits us and everyone is welcome to see the animals they bring. Ed the Wizard will have a Balloon Twisting workshop on Thursday, July 27 at 6 p.m. He will show people how to create animals from balloons.

At every event all young attendees receive a free book, a reading prize and are entered into that days raffle. Daily raffles prizes are from the Western Mass Library Advocates and include free admission to the Children’s Museum of Holyoke, The Eric Carle Museum and USS Constitution, plus a “Make your own jar Candle” at the Yankee Candle and free admission to the Basketball Hall of Fame.

From more information about the events, raffle prizes schedule or to sign up, people may call the library at: 413-862-3894 or email [montgomerylibrary@yahoo.com](mailto:montgomerylibrary@yahoo.com).

# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES

## Hikers visit crash site

PERU – The Hilltown Hikers hiked at Peru State Forest up the old road past the fire pond built by the Civilian Conservation Corps to the plane crash site to the moment.

The group held a moment of silence and one of them read the Berkshire Evening Eagle story of that stormy night, Aug. 15, 1942 and the fiery explosion.

That night in Peru was hot, damp and stormy much like the day of the hike. Most people just went to bed at night since most of the town did not have electricity. The quiet of Peru was suddenly disturbed by the sound of a plane flying low and lost; then came the blast that shook the hills.

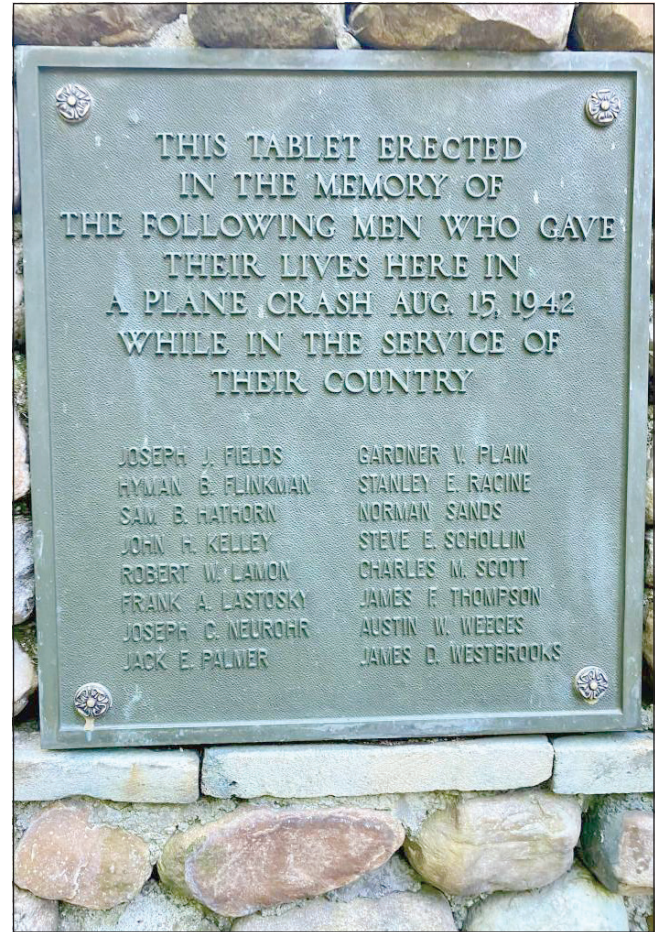
Several explosions followed and the people of Peru set off to search for survivors. Search parties gathered and finally located the crash off to the left of the old CCC road from Curtin Road in Peru near the summit of Garnet Hill. The crash cut a sixty foot by sixty yard stretch of the woods.

Ken and Bob Torrey were among the first to arrive, also Peru's civil defense and the State Police. Sergeant Robert Lee of Columbus, Ohio badly burned but alive, carried two of the men out of the burning wreckage. The plane was on its way to Rhode Island transporting paratroopers from Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Sixteen men died, making it one of the worst disasters ever in Berkshire County. The sky opened up and down poured on us right after the reading. We then continued another mile to the foggy summit of Garnet Hill at 2,175 feet. Four miles total, this hike was dedicated to all 16 men, who lost their lives that night.



This monument commemorates the crash site of a military plane in 1942.



The monument has a plaque listing the names of the servicemen, who were killed in the crash.

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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



Debris from the crash sits atop the monument.

*Submitted photos*



The hikers gather around the monument to pay their respects to those who lost their lives in the 1942 crash.



The hikers reach Garnet Hill summit in the rain.



Everyone including this dog got wet on the hike in Peru State Forest.

## CHESTERFIELD

76th Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fest!!

The Spirit of '76

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

Sponsored in part by the Arts Council of:  
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## Hilltown Family Center StoryWalks

"Berry Song" @ Russell Public Library

"We are Water Protectors" @ AMC Nobleview Outdoor Center in Russell

"Strictly No Elephants" @ Huntington Public Library

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This program is free and open to the public and was generously funded by the Hilltown Family Center through a Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant through the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. The school committee does not support, condone, or in any way adopt the philosophical or ideological beliefs of the group as an official policy.

Hilltown Community Health Center

MASSACHUSETTS Department of Early Education and Care

Scan the QR code for more information

## SOUTH WORTHINGTON

# Sevenars Music Festival opens concert season

SOUTH WORTHINGTON – The opening concert of Sevenars Music Festival 55th anniversary season will be held Sunday, July 9 at 4 p.m. at Sevenars Academy, 15 Ireland St.

There will be piano, cello, duos, solos, including two U.S. premieres. Schrade and James musicians play piano and cello solos and duos by Debussy, Lalo, Milhaud, Rachmaninoff, Rorem, Sibelius and a U.S. Premiere of selections from “Amazing Africa” by Sören Sieg.

The concert is free, but donations are welcomed at the door. Refreshments are free.

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

This 2023 season in particular is

made possible in part by the LCC’s (Local Cultural Councils) of the following towns: Agawam, Buckland, Chester, Concord, Cummington, Everett, Gardner, Goshen, Huntington, Lee, Montgomery, Northern Berkshire, Otis, Russell, Springfield, West Springfield, Westford, Westhampton, Wilmington and Worthington. These LCC’s are local agencies which are funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Sevenars was also grateful to be one of just three organizations in Western Massachusetts to be awarded a Cultural Facilities Fund grant from MassDevelopment to help fortify the foundation of the Sevenars concert hall.

## LEE

### Historical Society to hold exhibit

LEE – The Lee Historical Society will hold an exhibit entitled “Lee Comes of Age: 1850-1900” exhibit

Saturday, July 1-Monday, July 31 at the Lee Library. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

## STOCKBRIDGE

### Berkshire Environmental Action Team to hold tree identification walk

STOCKBRIDGE – Berkshire Environmental Action Team will lead a free tree identification walk on Sunday, July 2 at 9:30 a.m.

Participants will meet at the trailhead of Lower Bowker’s Woods, a Laurel Hill Association property located near Stockbridge on Glendale Middle Road, off Route 183. The walk will last between 1.5 and 2 hours. Anybody is welcome to join, but the number of participants is limited. People must register to join by emailing [chelsey@thebeatnews.org](mailto:chelsey@thebeatnews.org) or calling 413-464-9402.

Participants will learn key characteristics of common trees in western Massachusetts and get tips to help iden-

tify them by species. The one-mile trail meanders along the Housatonic River and through a charming upland forest.

The trail is typically considered an easy route, but it has uneven terrain in some areas with many roots; Participants should wear sturdy shoes that can handle getting muddy and possibly a little wet. Long pants and long socks are recommended, as there is poison ivy along the trail and ticks can be abundant this time of year.

This walk is sponsored by Berkshire Environmental Action Team in Pittsfield. To learn more about BEAT, people may visit [www.thebeatnews.org](http://www.thebeatnews.org), email [team@thebeatnews.org](mailto:team@thebeatnews.org) or call 413-464-9402.

## SANDISFIELD

### SCULPTURE

from page 1

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet some of the artists.

The grounds are open Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Additional alternate or weekend viewings may be made by emailing Gallery Chair and coordinator Jess Cofrin at [gallery@sandisfieldartcenter.org](mailto:gallery@sandisfieldartcenter.org).

Selena Weld Granbery, one of the many artists whose work is on display, hails from Lakeville, Connecticut where her studio work is inspired by nature. She works primarily in bronze along with “concrete, wood, stone and other metals,” according to her website.

Bill Carlson works with glass and metals engaging light as a focus for his free-standing work. A series of his pieces are on display.

Bob Osborne, another minimalist artist who uses light as an optic in his work, selections on display. On his website, he states that he hopes “to make viewers really look closely and think about the images and their interactions...”

Other artists exhibiting include Robert Adzema, Jaye Allison Moscardiello, Karl Saliter, Peter Thorne, Natalie Tyler and Peter Vacchina. Parking is available and the area is wheel-chair accessible.

## PITTSFIELD

### First Fridays Artswalk returns

PITTSFIELD – The First Fridays Artswalk in downtown Pittsfield returns on Friday, July 7 from 5-8 p.m.

Thanks to grant support from the Pittsfield Cultural Council, the Mass Cultural Council, and The Feigenbaum Foundation, First Fridays Artswalk has expanded in 2023 with new programming including an Art Market on Dunham Mall, live music in Persip Park and live art demonstrations.

On July 7, the popular Free Kids’ Paint & Sip will return to the outdoor seating area in front of Hot Harry’s and the Marketplace Café, 53 North St. Other participating venues include the Beacon Cinema, Berkshire Art Center, Clock Tower Artists, Hot Plate Brewing Co., Hotel on North, Lichtenstein Center for the Arts, Marchetti Headquarters,

Methuselah Bar and Lounge, NUarts gallery + studios, ReDefine Community Center, Soda Chef, Soma’s Aromas and the Unitarian Universalist Church.

People may link to digital tour for July: <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/Pittsfield-July-7-First-Fridays-Artswalk-in-Pittsfield-MA-8493>.

On Friday, July 7, from 5-6 p.m. at Persip Park, ambassadors from the Rites of Passage and Empowerment Program and individuals from Choices Mentoring Initiative will share the stage with each performing a 30 minute set. R.O.P.E. will provide musical performances in the form of song, dance, and other music-related art forms and the Choices Mentoring Initiative will provide a musical performance featuring drumming.

### MassDOT closes Holmes Road Bridge

PITTSFIELD – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces it will be implementing a full closure of the Holmes Road Bridge in Pittsfield.

The closure began on Friday, June 23 at 5 p.m. and will continue through late August. The closure is needed to allow crews to safely and efficiently conduct bridge replacement operations. The work, which will be conducted using an accelerated schedule, will occur weekly, Monday through Saturday, from 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

Motorists will be directed to use Pomeroy Avenue, Crofut Street, and Route 7 and Route 20 (South Street) during the bridge closure.

The bridge work will require the closure of Holmes Road from address #650 to #677. While Holmes Road is closed, delays are expected along South Street and motorists are advised to avoid this area during peak travel

periods including on weekday mornings and afternoons and mid-day weekends.

Access will be maintained on either side of the bridge for businesses and local residents.

Appropriate signage and messaging will be in place.

Those traveling through the area should expect delays, reduce speed and use caution.

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 Twitter @MassDOT to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

### BEAT and HVA plan River cleanup

PITTSFIELD – Volunteers are invited to help clean up the west branch of the Housatonic River with Berkshire Environmental Action Team and Housatonic Valley Association at one of their annual river cleanups on Saturday, July 22 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

After the cleanup, volunteers will be provided a free hot lunch from a local restaurant. Volunteers must RSVP in advance to reserve a free lunch.

Participants are asked to meet at Wahconah Park, 105 Wahconah St., Pittsfield, at 9 a.m. on July 22. Cleanup teams will disperse to nearby locations, gathering miscellaneous trash from the river banks and bottom. Canoes will be used to transport the trash. Old clothes, a hat, sunscreen, old sneakers or waterproof boots/waders, a full water bottle and sunglasses are recommended. The cleanup will be canceled in the event of pouring rain or lightning.

Cleanups make a considerable difference in the health of the Housatonic River. Over the years, BEAT and HVA have collected a startling array of debris including mattresses, shopping carts, inflatable pools, bicycles, televisions, tires, construction materials, metal barrels and all kinds of everyday trash. Once, they even found an empty ATM. Since beginning annual cleanups, their efforts have made a noticeable difference, with the piles of trash getting smaller and this wouldn’t be possible without the help of their volunteers.

For more information or to register to volunteer, people may email BEAT at [team@thebeatnews.org](mailto:team@thebeatnews.org) or call 413-464-9402.

West Branch river cleanups are organized by Berkshire Environmental Action Team and Housatonic Valley Association and co-sponsored by Blue Q, Panera, Greylock Federal Credit Union and the city of Pittsfield.

## MIDDLEFIELD

### Middlefield COA announces menu

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Senior Center, 169 Skyline Trail, on Wednesday, July 5 will serve lunch at noon.

The meal is eat in or take out. The choice is cinnamon glazed French toast

sticks or Penne with meatballs and marinara sauce with zucchini, French bread and fresh fruit. People should call 413-623-9990 to reserve a meal the previous Monday.



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## REGION

### Baystate Health commits to hiring age diverse workforce

SPRINGFIELD – The American Association of Retired Persons announced Baystate Health signed their employer pledge recognizing the value of experienced workers and committing to an age diverse workforce.

The AARP Employer Pledge Program encompasses a nationwide group of employers who understand that the multigenerational workforce yields a strong pipeline of talent, protects business continuity and taps into new resources to address labor shortages.

AARP research notes that given the need for talent by so many employers today, it makes sense to hire experienced workers.

“Our multigenerational workforce is a great asset, adds significant value, and reflects our commitment to growing a diverse workforce of clinical and non-clinical team members with a variety of life and work experience. The result is a better, more diverse and stronger organization. At Baystate Health we know that treating one another with dignity elevates respect, as reflected in our core values. That mutual respect drives our community of healthcare professionals, to be their best, every day,” said Pam Snyder, Vice President, Talent, Baystate Health.

AARP Vice President for Financial Resilience Carly Roszkowski noted they are “thrilled” that Baystate Health has signed AARP’s employer pledge.

AARP’s employer pledge reads: “We believe in equal opportunity for all workers, regardless of age, and that 50+ workers should have a level playing field in their ability to compete for and obtain jobs. Recognizing the value of experienced workers, we pledge to recruit across diverse age groups and to consider all applicants on an equal basis as we hire for positions within our organization.”

AARP’s Job Board and other employer resources connect 50+ job seekers with employers like Baystate Health and hundreds of other employers who recognize the value of experience.

To learn more about current career opportunities throughout their health-care system, people may visit [www.baystatehealthjobs.com](http://www.baystatehealthjobs.com).

AARP is the nation’s largest non-profit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. To learn more, people may visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org) or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

### Senate and House partners to mark gun violence awareness

WASHINGTON- On National Gun Violence Awareness Day, Sen. Edward J. Markey, a member of the Gun Violence Prevention Caucus, announced a package of gun violence prevention bills that would significantly decrease the threat of gun violence across the United States by putting an end to the 3D printing and distribution of ghost guns, strengthening accountability measures for irresponsible gun dealers, helping banks detect and report suspicious activity related to mass shootings, and strengthening state-by-state gun-licensing regulations through federal incentives.

“We’ve had more mass shootings in 2023 than days in the year,” said Markey. “Every day, gun violence in our schools and on our streets steals lives and rips families apart. We can’t keep living like this, and Americans can’t keep dying like this. Congress took an important step last year in passing the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, but the evidence is overwhelmingly clear that it’s not enough. We have an obligation to pass commonsense solutions, like my gun safety package, so that not one more life is lost to this unnecessary, man-made public health crisis.”

Today, Senator Markey and his colleagues announced the reintroduction of four gun violence prevention bills, including; 3D Printed Gun Safety Act, Keeping Gun Dealers Honest Act, Gun Violence Prevention Through Financial Intelligence Act, Making America Safe and Secure (MASS) Act.

The gun violence prevention bills are endorsed by Brady, Giffords, March For Our Lives, and States United to Prevent Gun Violence.

In March, Markey and Rep. Elissa Slotkin, Mark Takano and Marilyn Strickland reintroduced legislation that would fund research at the CDC to better understand and address the United States’ ongoing gun violence epidemic, a public health crisis that has taken more than 180,000 lives across the nation.

In May 2022, Markey led his Senate colleagues in a letter to 28 shipping companies expressing concern over lax shipping security measures leading to firearm theft and making it easier for criminals to get their hands on lethal firearms. Markey also led 10 Senate colleagues in a letter to the Federal Trade Commission urging the agency to open an investigation into the marketing of lethal firearms, including assault-style rifles, to children.

# 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 13, 2023.**

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

**Deadline for Calendar submissions is August 16.**

## Community Autumn Events

Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public

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

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

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

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Cost \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**or email\* them to: [jamie@turley.com](mailto:jamie@turley.com)**  
**\*Be sure to indicate "Autumn Event" in the subject line of your email.**

# WORTHINGTON

## Friends of library to hold town wide tag sale July 22

WORTHINGTON – The Friends of the Worthington Library will hold its town-wide tag sale on Saturday, July 22.

On the day of the sale, maps of the sale sites will be available by donation at the Worthington Library, 1 Huntington

Road, from 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

To reserve a space on the map, people may sign up at the library during its open hours by Saturday, July 15. Participants will need to provide the address of the sale site, time of the indi-

vidual sale and a short description of items for sale. The fee to be listed on the map is \$5.

For people to reserve a space on the library lawn to hold their tag sale, the fee is \$10. The library will not accept drop-

off sale items. Reservations and payments are due on Saturday, July 15 by 4 p.m.

The money raised will support library programs. For more information, people may call Judy Babcock at 413-238-4457 or email jabneb@juno.com.

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**Be sure to include a high resolution, clear photograph for printing.**

# WESTHAMPTON

## Friends of the Library prize won by Westhampton resident

WESTHAMPTON – A 25-year veteran member and officer of Westhampton's Friends of the Library board was the winner of a collection of Westhampton-themed memorabilia being offered as a 2023 membership incentive prize.

Library Director Meaghan Schwelm had the pleasure of telling Andrea Pichette the good news.

Andrea is the longest-serving member of the Friends board, an organization begun in 1998. She recalled that Library Trustee Cindy Tillson stepped down from her position to establish the group, a non-profit to benefit the library. Some of the original members included Ellice Gonzales, Andrea Belanger, Diane Kwolek, Cindy and herself, as Treasurer. The group's first fundraising endeavor, called "Blossoms, Books & Backrubs," garnered over \$1,000 for the library. "My biggest pleasure is that the Friends can now focus on programming. In the former library building, there wasn't even room for an author reading. Eight people would be a crowd in that limited space. Now, our library is a busy place with plenty of room and activities for all."

When asked to explain her extraordinarily long commitment to the town library, Andrea said, "I stay with the Friends because I am able to volunteer this little bit in Westhampton, a town so rich with volunteerism. And I'm inspired by fellow board members who work so hard and effectively for the library."

Sue O'Rourke, Chair of the current Friends of the Library board, was

pleased that Andrea was the winner. "Andrea has done so much over the years to benefit the library, which benefits the community as a whole. We appreciate Andrea's contributions to our meetings and value her long history with the group. She currently leads a Friends initiative to assess and improve the accessibility of the library grounds. She is also a library gardens volunteer. A well-deserved win."



Andrea Pichette is shown with her Westhampton Memorabilia prizes.

Photo by Meaghan Schwelm

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## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**  
 Mar 21/Apr 20  
 Aries, you will likely be giving much thought to your future and strategies that may increase your financial security. Reach out to your network for advice.

**CANCER**  
 Jun 22/Jul 22  
 Cancer, a social gathering presents you with an opportunity to meet new friends who may become valued business contacts. Treat every introduction with care.

**LIBRA**  
 Sept 23/Oct 23  
 Libra, you want to make a new start but may just need a little push to get you moving. Thankfully, your mind is clear from distractions that normally might derail your plans.

**CAPRICORN**  
 Dec 22/Jan 20  
 A new understanding with others comes from improved communication and more flexibility, Capricorn. Optimism and understanding will spill into all areas of your life.

**TAURUS**  
 Apr 21/May 21  
 Taurus, if communication has been difficult in the past, you will find that things change for the better in the days to come. You will gain a deeper understanding of others.

**LEO**  
 Jul 23/Aug 23  
 Leo, you may be wondering what the next few months will hold for you. It is impossible to know all the details, but there are strong indications that there is a big change coming.

**SCORPIO**  
 Oct 24/Nov 22  
 Soul searching is to be expected due to the positioning of the planets this week. Once you figure out your true goals you may be surprised at what you discover.

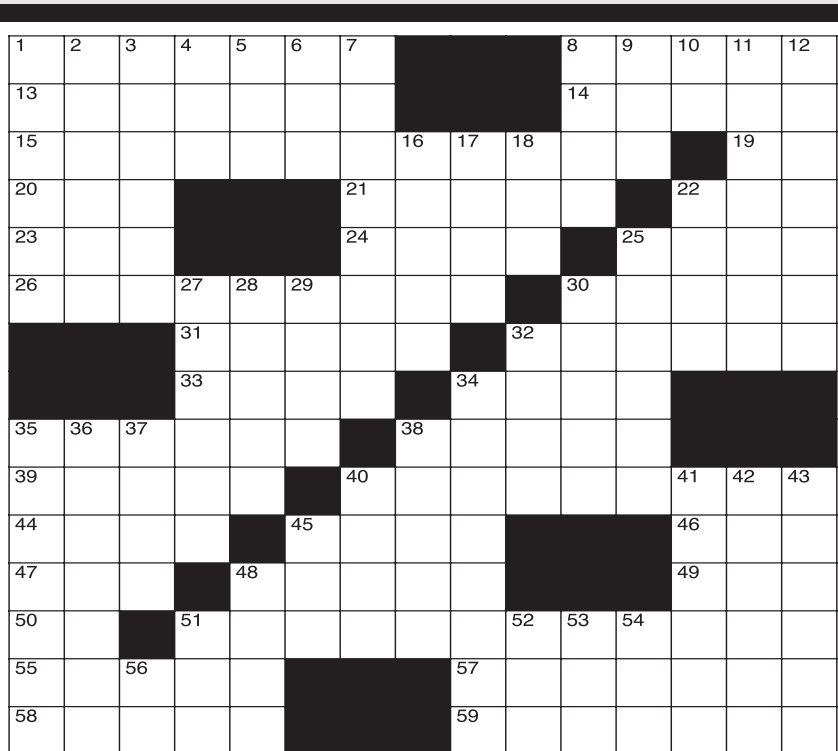
**AQUARIUS**  
 Jan 21/Feb 18  
 Your mind is on family and those close to you right now, Aquarius. Any decisions you make in the weeks ahead will be focused on the priority people in your life.

**GEMINI**  
 May 22/Jun 21  
 Gemini, useful information reaches you this week, which helps you make important decisions about your finances. Use this opportunity to make changes.

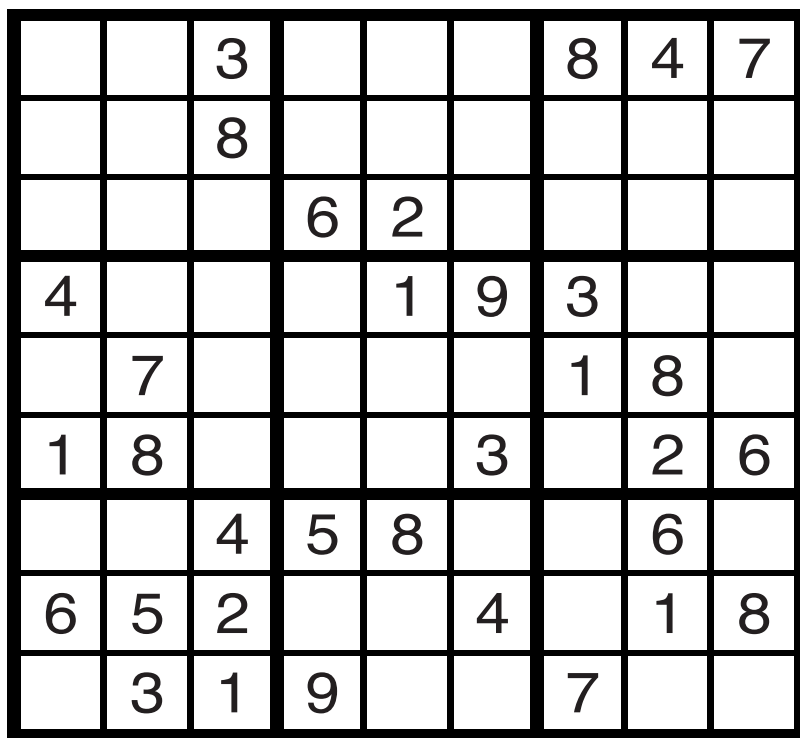
**VIRGO**  
 Aug 24/Sept 22  
 Career goals may come together even further this week, Virgo. This enables you to move into a position that will not compromise your needs or ideals.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
 Nov 23/Dec 21  
 Take time out from some of the exciting things that have been happening to you, Sagittarius. Figure out if you're satisfied in your career. You may decide to make changes.

**PISCES**  
 Feb 19/Mar 20  
 Information about investments and career potential may come to you soon. Take everything with a grain of salt until you can investigate.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Excited movements
  - 8. Soap opera actress Patsy
  - 13. Unknowing
  - 14. Dangerous mosquitos
  - 15. Exaggerated and sensationalized
  - 19. Military policeman
  - 20. Touch softly
  - 21. Wrap
  - 22. A story of one's life
  - 23. Midway between east and southeast
  - 24. Toward the mouth or oral region
  - 25. A list of dishes available at a restaurant
  - 26. Changes the meaning of
  - 30. Semitic Sun god
  - 31. Sneaker parts
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. A type of pool
  - 2. Malaise
  - 3. Seasoned
  - 4. A pair
  - 5. Young male
  - 6. Make a mistake
  - 7. Experienced
  - 8. It often accompanies injury
  - 9. Old world, new
  - 10. Commercial
  - 11. Course of lectures
  - 12. Promote
  - 16. Female horses
  - 17. Greek mythological figure
  - 18. Small amount
  - 22. Orthodox church altar
  - 25. Actress Tomei
  - 27. Excited
  - 28. Looked directly at
  - 29. Popular cold desserts
  - 30. More reasonable
  - 32. Disk above the head of a saint
  - 34. Devoted to the extreme
  - 35. Make an effort
  - 36. It's in the surf
  - 37. Member of aboriginal people of Japan
  - 38. Discounts
  - 40. Cliff in Hawaii
  - 41. Extremely wild person
  - 42. All persons
  - 43. Aromas
  - 45. Popular kids' game
  - 48. A difficult situation
  - 51. Popular Georgia rockers
  - 52. It's in all living cells
  - 53. Unspoken language
  - 54. 'Talk to you' abbreviation
  - 56. Influential lawyer



## 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!

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# OBITUARY

## David E. Champiney, Sr., 87

David E. Champiney, Sr., 87, passed away on June 22, 2023 at home surrounded by his family.

He was born in Westfield to the late Louis and Christine (Lafreniere) Champiney. David, with his wife Helen, fostered 35 newborn babies over a span of ten years. David proudly served in the Army National Guard in Westfield.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife of 60 years, Helen M. (Brin)



Champiney and is survived by six children, 21 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated for David on Thursday, June 29, 2023 at 1 p.m. in Holy Family Church, 5 Main St. Russell, MA 01071, with burial to follow in Russell Cemetery, Russell. Arrangements are under the direction of the Firtion Adams Funeral Service, 76 Broad St., Westfield, MA 01085. [www.firtionadams.com](http://www.firtionadams.com)

## DEATH NOTICE

### CHAMPINEY SR., DAVID E.

Died June 22, 2023  
Services June 29, 2023

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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 \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

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### NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the *Country Journal* please email [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com).

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### OPPORTUNITY

## newspaper correspondent

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

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

Send writing samples with resume to



Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor  
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or email directly to [ekennedy@turley.com](mailto:ekennedy@turley.com)

### JOB OPENING

## STAFF WRITER

Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

Experience in covering town government is a huge plus, and any experience in community journalism is as well. Staff writers cover all aspects of communities from features to municipal meetings to crimes and fires. Successful candidates must have people skills, plenty of curiosity and able to tell a story.

If you're a self-starter who enjoys community journalism and who can envision themselves connecting with our communities, we encourage you to apply for this position. Not a remote position.

#### Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- A determination to get the story, whatever it might be
- Equally comfortable writing hard news, features and event coverage
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Proficiency in Associated Press style

Please tell us in a cover letter why you would be a good fit for this position and send it along with a resume and three writing samples to



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## PUBLIC NOTICE

**Legal Notice:**  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**  
The Middlefield Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Saturday, July 8, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.** at the Middlefield Town Hall, 188 Skyline Trail, Middlefield MA to pres-

ent bylaw changes.  
**Article 1:**  
Changes to bylaw 3.2 Discontinuance, Alteration or Extension, Reconstruction.  
**Article 2:** Definition for Accessory Building.  
**Article 3:** Definition Conforming Residence.  
06/22, 06/29/2023

**EARLY DEADLINES**

In observance of July 4th,  
**PUBLIC NOTICES EARLY AD DEADLINE**  
Place your public notice no later than NOON  
**Thursday, June 29**  
- Thank you!

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

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

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

## Community Newspaper EDITOR WANTED

Turley Publications is looking for a "hands on" energetic candidate who loves telling stories to be the editor for two weekly publications. This position will include managing and coaching a small news staff that will provide the community with a great local newspaper.

The editor will need to cover local government and events while representing the newspaper at public venues.

The successful candidate will have strong community journalism skills and is also expected to gather news and write stories for the two papers as well as for other occasional companywide publications.

This is a job for a self-starter who has a vision for growing and connecting with our valued readers, and who thoroughly enjoys community journalism.

This full-time position with flexible schedule is based in our Palmer office at 24 Water St., this is not a remote position.

#### Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Willingness to mentor a staff writer and correspondents
- Editing experience and ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Proficiency in Associated Press style
- Management experience and/or experience managing content for a print publication.

#### Please send resume and writing examples to:

Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor  
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or email directly to [ekennedy@turley.com](mailto:ekennedy@turley.com)

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## HELP WANTED

### TOWN OF WILBRAHAM

**FIREFIGHTER/EMT** The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill a vacancy for Firefighter/EMT. For application and more information please visit **www.wilbraham-ma.gov**. Open until filled. EOE

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## CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

QUABBIN & SUBURBAN FRIDAY AT NOON  
HILLTOWNS MONDAY AT NOON

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Think about it this way, how many stories do you see about your town, the businesses that thrive in them or the people who live and work next to you, on the pages of your daily newspaper? You won't find many. And that's what makes us different and keeps us thriving. Turley Publications has long recognized the importance of community and remains strongly committed to those we serve. It's not po-ta-toe, potato when it comes to comparing newspapers, it's apples and oranges.

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

# MassDOT announces work on Old Chester Road bridge

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Highway Superintendent David Waldron told the board last Thursday night that the state Department of Transportation would be working on the bridge over the turnpike on Old Chester Road.

Roadside tree trimming and mowing are underway. He met with the Springfield Water and Sewer discussed possible incidents that could involve dams at Cobble Mountain and Borden Brook collapsing. This is a planning session and will continue. The department is also looking for an arm over the rail mower for the back of a truck.

### Audit

Town Administrator Christopher Dunne reported that he had received a draft of the management letter for the audit of the year ending June 30, 2022. The four-page document, significantly shorter than those completed in prior years, suggested areas the Town should work on, some of which were Capital asset accounting, lease arrangements, pension and other post-employment benefits, and compensated absences among others.

Roselli, Clark and Associates, CPA is doing the audit. Dunne said the town is “looking at a good outcome.”

### New sign

Regarding the new grant funded town crier sign, the primary purpose is for meetings, community events and emergency information. “Placement is one question” Dunne said he wanted to ask about. He showed a placement next

to the Post Office stairway.

Position is critical as the sign is solar powered. “The question is where do we want it?” said Dunne. The library lawn was suggested and one of the trees there must come down, exposing more area to sunlight. The size of the message areas was also discussed. The digital sign will have a low-light emission and will power down at some point overnight.

### Shepard Farm trails

Draft copy of the plan for trails at Shepard Farm was provided for Conservation and the Historical Commission, each offering comments which were not available. A final draft by the Conway students will be forthcoming.

“Lots of good ideas where trails might go,” said Dunne. At this point they are still in discussion.

A challenge for the site is the topography, according to Dunne. Jeffery Allen was concerned for liability because of the condition of the building. Dunne said there will be a final draft later this summer with rough costs.

### Shared services

Regarding the shared water department operator, Water Commissioner Brad Curry told the board that the commission had come to an agreement with Chester. They shortened the term (of the contract), cut down on some of the shared services and start with the shared operator and then meet as a full board monthly and discuss needs. Curry also said a new memo of understanding needs to be drafted because of the changes.

“I think with the adjustment of what we have made I think concerns were

met,” Curry said, and anything else that comes up within the next three to six months “we can say this is not going to work.”

This arrangement enables both towns to keep the grant funding and Blandford will take on the administrative tasks, just as Chester has taken on the administrative tasks for the Police Department.

### Resignation

Terri Donovan has resigned as Animal Control officer, she will continue as Animal Inspector. According to Dunne, she said her reason behind the resignation was frustration with the town’s animal bylaws. According to the Town Clerk’s office, the town’s bylaws accurately reflect the state’s animal control laws.

### COLA

The board approved a one-time five per cent increase cost of living adjustment for Hampden County retirees. According to Dunne it will not impact appropriations at this time.

According to Finance Committee member Kevin Greene the increase for retirees is only computed on the first \$13,000 of a pension.

He said, “It’s a one year deal...and not unreasonable” given the increase in Social Security last year.

### Other business

In other business, the board tabled performance reviews for both Waldron and Dunne until the next meeting, agreed on a by-weekly schedule for the summer beginning July 10; confirmed four year-end transfers as discussed at last week’s

meeting; appointed Don Carpenter to the Historical Commission through 2026, confirmed the Water Department’s hiring of Gordon Avery as Water Superintendent for a year, which, according to Administrative Assistant was a tool to keep appointments orderly.

The board also heard from Dunne that the financial software needs to be updated and the most used is VADAR. The town will apply for a Community Impact IT grant to help cover the cost: installation \$60,000 but will be about \$10,000 less annually. Other quotes will be sought.

Regarding the proposed transfer switch for the generator, Allen asked about replacing the 20-year-old generator along with the transfer switch. Dunne will ask Electrical Inspector John VanHeynigan for other options that might be considered. No decision was made.

Jason Fogue proposed a new schedule of building fees some time ago, and had not been acted on. Chair Cara Letendre asked that the board review the minutes of the meeting when the increase was first proposed. The board will consider this next week.

Permittees is now charging \$25 for manual entry of permits; the board approved adopting a \$25 fee for processing manual entry of electrical permits. The form requires inputting a great deal of information which might be missed by manual entering.

T.J. Cousineau asked about what options are available for a Main Street problem. Letendre said this could not be discussed in open meeting but assured the board that the Board of Health and Building Inspector were involved.



Marina the Mermaid captures bubbles and read “How to Catch a Mermaid” by Adam Wallace and Andy Elkerton.

Photos by Mary Kronholm

## Marina the Mermaid helps kick off summer reading program

BLANDFORD – Marina the Mermaid made a special appearance at the Town Hall Saturday, June 24. She entertained dozens of young library patrons with a story and lessons about caring for oceans.

There were thousands of bubbles enhancing the undersea adventure with Marina, much to the delight of the youngest, who tried to catch as many bubbles as possible.

The six Gateway Regional School District town libraries, Blandford, Chester, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery and Russell all came together for this kickoff program for all the communities’ Summer Reading Programs.

All in all, “This is a combined effort on the part of the Hilltown Family Center and the Hilltown libraries towards building community and establishing early childhood literacy and education,” said Porter Memorial Library Director Nicole Daviau. Blandford hosted the morning’s activities.

Everyone had an opportunity to take

home ocean-based books, participate in different activities including sensory play and sign up for all the libraries’ Summer Reading Programs.

Hilltown Family Center Community Program and Family Support Director Kim Savery said that the “collaboration had been in the works since the beginning of the pandemic.” She added, “The purpose behind the programming is to establish this regional literacy collaborative process with goals to benefit all the Hilltown communities.”

There will be a second collaboration event Aug.19 from 10 a.m.-noon at the Blandford Town Hall when the Whalemobile visits.

Marina the Mermaid is Alexandria Holbrook from Something Royal Party Company in Agawam.

Both happenings are funded by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care under the auspices of the Hilltown Community Health Center’s Hilltown Family Center.

## Criollo Trio to perform July 1

BLANDFORD – The Blandford Historical Society presents Jose Gonzalez and the Criollo Classico Trio Saturday, July 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the White Church.

The distinguished and multi-talented Puerto Rican musical group performs a blend of Latin, classical, and jazz compositions. Gonzales and his sons, Ahmed and Rene, are best known for their upbeat style, high energy arrangements and versatility as they bring to life the vibrant music of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean including its African and Spanish influences.

Audiences all over the Caribbean, Latin America, U.S. and beyond have marveled at Criollo Classico’s use of guitar, cuatro, a Latin guitar relative, African influenced drums and flute. The trio explains each of the instruments and their heritage as they weave them into their songs, which

may showcase Puerto Rico’s Jibaro music on the cuatro, African tinged percussion with bomba and plena, as well as traditional Spanish guitar voicings.

Criollo Classico has recorded a number of CDs over the years and has performed with symphonies and orchestras around the world, doing its part to popularize Latin music.

One thing is for sure; when you hear these musicians, you will want to jump up and dance.

There is a \$20 suggested ticket donation for the performance. Tickets are available online by visiting [thewhitechurch.org](http://thewhitechurch.org) or at the door. Children accompanied by an adult, under 16, are free.

The White Church is a fully accessible facility. Parking is available on the church grounds and directly across the street.



Jose Gonzalez and the Criollo Classico Trio will perform Saturday, July 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the White Church.

Submitted photo