

# 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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## BLANDFORD

# Mission Clean Energy manager to speak to Select Board

By Mary Kronholm  
Staff Writer

Mission Clean Energy's Development manager Emma Riley will speak to the Select Board at their Monday, Aug. 11 meeting.

Mission Clean Energy, LLC, is located in San Francisco, California. This is the company that is responsible for the Battery Energy Storage System proposed for North Blandford Road.

The Country Journal

asked questions and respondent Max Bakker, CEO of Mission Clean Energy, hereafter referred to as Mission, provided additional information about the firm and the purpose of the batteries.

Mission Clean Energy (Mission) is a utility-scale renewable energy and storage developer focused on accelerating America's clean energy future. They build world-class infrastructure that strengthens the grid, supports economic growth

and delivers reliable energy where it's needed most.

The team operates in more than a dozen states including Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Missouri, North Carolina, New York, Montana, Texas and Washington, D.C. bringing deep local insight and national experience to every project.

Mission is well-capitalized and built to grow.

Backed by investors with deep experience in American infrastructure and supported by decades of combined development expertise, they manage complex energy projects from concept through completion, working with utilities, municipalities, cooperatives and private industry to deliver dependable, tailored solutions.

Their targeted site strategies, hands-on execution and strong community partnerships have led to the suc-

cessful development of over four gigawatts of contracted and operational energy projects including work completed by their leadership team in prior roles. They focus on reducing risk, maximizing long-term value and building trust with every stakeholder.

At Mission, they're proud to build the energy infrastructure that powers growth, creates jobs, generates tax revenue and supports the host communities where they develop their

projects.

The proposed stand-alone, utility-scale Battery Energy Storage System is 200 MW / 800 MWh composed of lithium-iron phosphate or similar technology batteries, inverters, a medium voltage transformer, a collector substation and other associated equipment to interconnect into the Eversource Blandford 115kV Substation.

SELECT BOARD, page 6

## HUNTINGTON

# Dog dispute dominates meeting

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Due to an agenda item that was likely to draw public involvement, the meeting was held in Stanton Hall instead of the usual Select Board office in Town Hall.

The Huntington Select Board meeting on Wednesday, July 30 had Chairman Roger Booth, members Bill Hathaway and John McVeigh and Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin all present. At issue was a dispute between homeowner Donna Taylor and her renter, John Rheume regarding a dog fight between Rheume's pitbull/husky mix (Luna) and Taylor's chihuahuas on July 20.

Booth led the hearing and began with all witnesses swearing an oath to tell the truth and only report on what they had actually witnessed. Huntington's Animal Control Officer Jim Helems was also present.

According to Taylor, this was the second time that Luna attacked her dogs. This time it resulted in four puncture wounds and her dog required veterinary care, pain medication and antibiotics. Her daughter, Monica Taylor, tried to separate the dogs and was also bitten. At the time of the incident, none of the dogs had an up-to-date rabies vaccine and all three were unlicensed.

Rheume said that Taylor's dogs are never leashed and this marked the third time that they attacked Luna, who he said was tied up. He said he has owned Luna, a rescue, for three months and had been told by the previous owner that it had a rabies shot. Another witness, Kelsey Wyman said

DISPUTE, page 3

## CHESTER



# LITTLEVILLE FAIR breaks records

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

CHESTER – New attendance records were set over the first two days of the 103rd Littleville Fair, which opened Friday, Aug. 1 under sunny skies, low humidity and comfortable temperatures.

A special visitor was on hand just hours before the fair opened: 104 year-old Harriet (Kelso) Gillman was brought to the fair to visit the recently renovated Exhibition Hall, the latest in a series of updates and renovations undergone in recent years. The hall was lifted and its foundation was rebuilt with windows replaced for added security and light.

Gillman, who lived for many years at Bicentennial Farm on Bromley Road, moved to Armbrook Village in Westfield a few years ago. Friend Lee Myers offered her a ride up to see the renovations and the exhibits that featured crafts, photography, fruits and veg-

etables and canned goods. Gillman's parents, Leon and Elizabeth Kelso, were part of the group that founded the Littleville Fair in 1921, the same year that Harriet was born.

"My mother went to every single fair until she moved into a nursing home at age 99," Gillman explained. "She was always very proud of that," Gillman said she believed her father had served as president of the fair association at one point.

According to Chester resident Andy Myers, the fair has benefitted from a

lot of new energy, buildings and activities in recent years. Buildings have been renovated and moved and new rest room facilities constructed, thanks in part to a matching grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This year also has a model dairy cow that kids can actually milk, due to fundraising by the children's activities lead Stephanie (Banach) Hunter. With this new energy, the Littleville Fair has been updated and gained an emphasis on being a family

FAIR, page 9

## HUNTINGTON

# Board meeting discover Basket St. water problem

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

In other business on July 30, Board of Health members George Peterson III, John Bergeron, Kat Peterson and Jean Jackman were joined by Water Commissioner Karon Hathaway for an update to the Select Board on the Basket Street well water problem.

A temporary water line from the municipal water supply is in place to the home whose well showed evidence of contamination, caused by a former landfill on Basket Street. A grant has been received to help defray the cost of bringing the first house online; the town will now pursue bringing all of the Basket Street homes onto the town's water system.

It was decided that Tighe & Bond will put together a draft on the scope and budget for this work, which will be overseen by the town's water department. Once the houses are online, the town can stop paying for a Licensed Site Professional, who has been monitoring the well water. A letter will be sent to all involved households with updated information.

### Carport

Joan Griswold, Director of Community Programs for the Hilltown Community Development Corporation presented a proposal for a carport to be placed in the town's highway yard for the Franklin Regional Transit Authority van used in Huntington. Highway Superintendent Brad Curry was also present, and confirmed that the proposed site would work.

This replicates a similar carport that Griswold had arranged in Chesterfield last year and she has the funding needed for the structure. The Highway Department will prep the site, which Curry said could be done

by the end of September. It will be big enough to keep snow off the van and also allow driver Jack Eisenstadt to park his car there when he takes the van out. Peloquin will check with the town's insurance carrier on this proposal.

### Highway Superintendent

Highway Superintendent Brad Curry presented updates on the summer schedule and dirt road maintenance progress. He has received this year's Chapter funding numbers, which are \$380,000, a little higher than last year. He recommends hiring out for catch basin cleaning and Peloquin said they need to check with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, which manages collective bidding for Huntington and other towns.

### Treasurer

Treasurer Aimee Burnham has resigned as the town's treasurer. Booth said that she served the town in a number of roles, including Finance Committee, Select Board and Treasurer for 26 years. The Select Board interviewed two candidates: Ryan Mailloux the previous day and Collector Sue Fopiano during this meeting. It was decided to offer the position to Mailloux at \$25,000 and to hire Fopiano to manage the transition period to cover payroll, print/mail vendor checks and take turnovers. The offer and draft contract have been sent to Mailloux, who will meet with the Select Board on Aug. 13 to review. Several of the duties previously handled by Burnham will be transferred to Peloquin, including managing the town's credit card and doing CORI checks.

### Other business

Finally, the town has received paperwork

BOARD, page 3



PAGE 3

Becket.....7	Hilltowns.....2	Opinion.....4	Stockbridge.....8
Blandford.....6, 7	Huntington.....3	Otis.....8	Turners Falls.....2
Buckland.....8	Montgomery.....8	Plainfield.....8	Westfield.....7
Business Directory.....3	Montgomery.....7	Public Notices.....9	Worthington.....8
Chester.....9	Northampton.....8	Puzzle Page.....11	
Classifieds.....10	Obituary.....11	Schools & Youth.....2	



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# HILLTOWNS

## MassDOT announces upcoming I-90 roadwork

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces it will be performing overnight and daytime paving and bridge repair operations on I-90 eastbound and westbound in the towns of Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, Becket, Otis, Montgomery and Russell.

All work is weather dependent and will take place at the following locations and times:

In Stockbridge, paving operations will be conducted on I-90 eastbound from mile marker 0.0 to mile marker 3.0 on Thursday night, Aug. 7, from 7:00 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. the following morning. Bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 6.4 nightly now through Thursday night, Aug. 7 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the following morning.

In West Stockbridge, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 1.3 nightly now through Thursday night, Aug. 7 from 7 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. the following morning. In Becket, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 18.4 nightly now through Thursday night, Aug. 7 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the following morning.

In Otis, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 eastbound at mile marker 22.5 nightly now through Thursday night, Aug. 7 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the following morning. In Montgomery/Russell, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 westbound from mile marker 35.9 to mile marker 36.5 on Thursday morning, Aug. 7, from 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

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

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or

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

# SCHOOLS & YOUTH

## Gateway to hold 50th reunion

HUNTINGTON – The 50th Class Reunion for the Gateway Regional High School Class of 1975 will be on Saturday Sept. 27 at the Blandford Country Club.

Information has been sent to classmates about this event through emails, text messages and the

mail. The reunion planning committee are still looking for the contact information from the following classmates: Tracy Bellville, Sarah Beard, Eugene Brooks, Laura Lee Chapman, Kevin Combs, Deb Granger, Deb Laplante, Yvonne Starbird, Tom Loomis and

Paul Wheeler. Anyone, who has information on any of these classmates and how to contact them through their phone number, email address or mailing address, they should email this information to Marcia Pease Estelle at [estellemarcia13@gmail.com](mailto:estellemarcia13@gmail.com).

## University at Albany announces Dean's list

ALBANY, NY – University at Albany recognizes the outstanding academic achievements of full-time undergraduate students, who make the Dean's list.

Local students making Dean's list are Fiona

Bowler of Huntington and Owen Ouimet of Westfield. To qualify for the Dean's list, students must earn a grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher in their first semester of study and a GPA of 3.50 or higher in subsequent semesters.

## Erdman receives degree from Georgia Tech

ATLANTA, GA – Daniel Erdman of Worthington, earned a Master of Science in analytics from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

Erdman was among 6,660 undergraduate and graduate students to be presented Georgia Tech degrees during the Institute's 268th Commencement exercises May 1 to May 3 at Bobby Dodd Stadium.

## Velis supports legislation to limit student access to devices

BOSTON – Massachusetts State Senate passed legislation to limit students' access to personal electronic devices, including cell phones, during the entire school day.

The final legislation was influenced by several similar policies introduced by Senators this session including a bill introduced by Senator John C. Velis. Through careful work alongside subject knowledge experts, Senator Velis received praise for his instrumental work in strengthening the final policy passed by the Senate.

The legislation, S2561 An Act To Promote Student Learning And Mental

Health, would require local districts to develop policies that prohibits access and possession of personal electronic devices during school hours by the 2026-2027 school year. The legislation ensures that districts receive support and guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and also provides exceptions for students with Individualized Education Programs. The legislation also requires that school



Senator John C. Velis

policies ensure that parents and students can contact one another if requested during the school day.

"We are so grateful for Senator Velis's leadership, and we commend Senator Velis, the Senate Ways and Means committee and the hardworking staff of the Senate for making a bell-to-bell policy work for the Commonwealth's students, teachers and families," shared Casey Mock, Senior Director of Policy for The Anxious Generation. "We look forward to

Massachusetts joining 19 other states in adopting a strong statewide policy."

"We have a serious five-alarm fire on our hands. Our kids are distracted from their education, their social development is being hindered and they are struggling with their mental health like we've never seen before. I don't think it's a coincidence that when you look at data related to lower academic scores or increasing diagnosis of anxiety, that the trends drastically changed for the worse right around 2012 when smart phones became widely accessible," said Senator Velis, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental

Health, Substance Use and Recovery. "When you bring up the idea of limiting a kids access to their cell phone, they are usually incredibly defensive and outraged, and in many respects, their reaction doesn't look that much different from telling someone in the throes of addiction that they are being sent to rehab. The very least we can do for their well-being and to support our incredible educators is restrict the use of cellphones during school hours."

With the legislation having been passed by the Senate, it now goes to the House of Representatives for their consideration.

## Westfield High Class of '71 to hold reunion

WESTFIELD – The Class of 1971 Westfield High School will hold their 54th Reunion on Saturday, Sept. 20 from 1-5 p.m. at the Italian Club, 57 Katherine St.

A group of classmates have been gathering yearly at this location. Class members should bring a snack or side dish to share. A cash bar is available. St Mary's and Westfield Vocational are also invited to attend. The cost is a donation for further reunions. For more information, people may email [c.cortis@comcast.net](mailto:c.cortis@comcast.net).

# TURNERS FALLS



Above, This woman holds a turkey feather fan. Right, tiny bearskin watches over children. Small bears were believed to guide and protect children. Red was a color spirits could see so it often is the background for messaging spirits.



## Native American Festival held in Turners Falls



Above, this teepee is made of bark and set up at an annual Native American Festival in Turners Falls. Right, A dugout canoe made of white pine and burned to form seating area of canoe. Native American made the canoe in the Native American tradition.



Turley photos by Deborah Daniels

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# HUNTINGTON

## COA hosts events at Stanton Hall

HUNTINGTON – A free ice cream social for all ages will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 12 from 1-2 p.m. at Sanford Hall, 26 Russell St.

A presentation on food borne illnesses and blood pressure checks will be provided by the Hampshire Public Health Preparedness Coalition's nursing team on Wednesday, Aug. 13 from 1-2 p.m. The Elder Law program scheduled for Aug. 20 has been canceled and will be rescheduled.

Doug Pi & Company will entertain seniors on Wednesday, Aug. 27 from 2-3 p.m. Heather Morgan from Southern Hilltown Adult Education Center will provide computer and cell phone help on Wednesday, Sept. 3 from 1-2 p.m.

Wanda Houston will perform on Wednesday, Sept. 3 from 2-3 p.m. The annual Grandparents' Day

celebration will be held on Saturday, Sept. 6 from 1-4 p.m. and will feature bounce houses, crafts and snacks.

The Hilltown Memory Café is held weekly at 2 p.m. The weekly café provides seniors with activities while their caregivers participate in a support group. The café is open to all with and without memory issues. The café is made possible by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act and by a grant from the Huntington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

All events are free and open to residents of any community. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

## Meadow Flutes to perform Aug. 24

HUNTINGTON – Meadow Flutes was founded in 2010 in Longmeadow in order to explore and bring to audiences flute chamber repertoire of all kinds.

The quartet performs on C Flute, Piccolo, Alto Flute and Bass Flute and its members, Lynn Winsor, Kim Figueroa, Andrea Taupier and Nancy Miller, all reside in western Massachusetts. They will perform on Sunday, Aug. 24 at 2 p.m. on the North Hall stage, 40 Searle Road.

Their concerts include a wide variety of classical, Celtic, popular, traditional and ecclesiastical styles.

They love playing and entertaining audiences with music, both familiar and new.

Kimberley Figueroa has played in the Western Massachusetts area for the last 15 years. She is a member of the Tuesday Morning Music Club and an active member of South Congregational, where people can hear her play frequently in seasonal events and during Sunday morning worship. She works as a career professional at the Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst.

Nancy Miller has performed locally on both flute

and piccolo as part of the Old Post Road Orchestra of Wilbraham, as well as the Seven Hills Orchestra of Worcester. She performs with Meadow Flutes on piccolo, C flute and alto and bass flutes. She also plays for local retirement homes, assisted living and nursing homes, and for many churches throughout Massachusetts. She believes that music has the power to enrich and brighten our lives, no matter what age we are. Miller has been working in the western Mass community for over 40 years as an insurance agent.

Andrea Taupier has performed locally as part of the

Zephyr Woodwind Quintet, as well as the Old Post Road Orchestra, at various churches, in several theater pit orchestras and with the Hampshire Choral Society. She is a founding member of the Meadow Flutes, playing alto and bass flute in addition to C flute. While pursuing a degree in history at St. Olaf College, Taupier discovered that it is possible to hold a full-time job and maintain a long-time relationship with music. She recently retired as Library Director at Springfield College and lives in Longmeadow.

Lynn Winsor holds a B.M. degree from the Boston Conservatory of Music. She has taught at the Community Music School in Springfield and been associated with the Pioneer Valley Symphony, Hampshire Choral Society, Hilltown Choral Society and numerous chamber ensembles throughout the area. She is a founding member of Meadow Flutes, playing piccolo, C flute and alto flute. Winsor has been living and teaching in western Mass for 30 years.

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

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



Meadow Flutes, from left, Lynn Winsor, Nancy Miller, Andrea Taupier, Kim Figueroa will grace the North Hall stage on Sunday, Aug. 24.

Photo by Amanda Taupier

## DISPUTE

from page 1

she had seen an earlier incident when Luna was lying down and tied up while the other two dogs, on leashes that were not being held, jumped on Luna.

Police had been called to the house on July 20. Monica Taylor reported that she had sought medical care and opted not to undergo a set of rabies shots on advice of her physician. It was discovered that Luna's rabies vaccine had expired earlier this year. As a result, the dog had to be quarantined for ten days to ensure it did not have rabies. Luna was just released from that quarantine and, at press time, had an appointment on Aug. 4 for a rabies shot. Taylor's dogs were both vaccinated shortly after the incident, as instructed by the ACO. Both parties disagreed about whether or not the dogs were on a leash or tied up.

Booth then asked Helems to summarize his report. He confirmed that a dog fight occurred around 8:30 p.m., when he was called to the scene by dispatch. State Police Trooper Savoy, who also

responded, told Helems he believed Luna had been on a rope. Helems verified that Monica Taylor had been bitten when she was breaking up the dog fight, but said it was not clear, which dog had bitten her. Helems said he found all three dogs to be very friendly towards him and the small dogs were off leash when he was there. This is the first complaint that Helems has dealt with on these dogs.

After closing the hearing, the Select Board members deliberated. They concluded that the Taylors dogs are allowed to be off leash while on their own private property. Booth announced that Luna is to be on a leash and supervised by an adult at all times when outside at the 30 Russell Road property, until she is vaccinated for rabies and licensed by the town. At that point, it will be up to Rheaume and Taylor to decide how Luna will be restrained on the property. Luna must be on a leash and supervised by an adult at all times when on public property, even after her vaccination and licensing.

## BOARD from page 1

from the National Opioid Settlement through Perdue. While the amount of funding is not yet known, it will be used to obtain a sharps container for safe disposal of needles at the transfer station. Also, the town's gasoline tank ran out this week. This tank is used by police, fire, highway, water and sewer, and Gateway Regional. Pelouquin will be tasked with improving this system, which is currently on a 21 day refill.

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## GUEST COLUMN

## SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



### Why hasn't my Social Security benefit changed because I am still working?

#### Dear Rusty:

I am currently receiving Social Security benefits while continuing to work full time.

There are no restrictions on my wage earnings because I waited until full retirement age before beginning benefits. However, I was also told that my benefit amount would be reviewed each year if my current earnings were higher than past earnings.

That held true for the first two years, but has yet to be adjusted for 2025. I thought it might be because of HR 82, which does not impact me directly, but I think it may be the reason my payment has not yet been changed. Has enough time passed so I should contact SSA now to see if this is the case?

**Signed:**  
Waiting Anxiously

#### Dear Waiting:

If you are already collecting benefits, Social Security reviews your earnings each year to see if your more recent earnings are high enough to warrant an increase in your monthly benefit. They do this automatically, after they get your most recent earnings data from the IRS and they typically do that review by the end of the third quarter of each year. If a higher benefit is indicated, they will increase your monthly amount and pay you retroactively to the beginning of the year for any difference in your benefit.

SSA has, indeed, been vigorously working on changes resulting from HR82 (the Social Security Fairness Act), which may have affected the timeliness of their review of your recent earnings. However, I suspect that is not why your SS benefit has not yet changed. More likely, it has to do with the fact that your past earnings have been adjusted for inflation, which is a normal part of Social Security's process

when calculating your benefit amount.

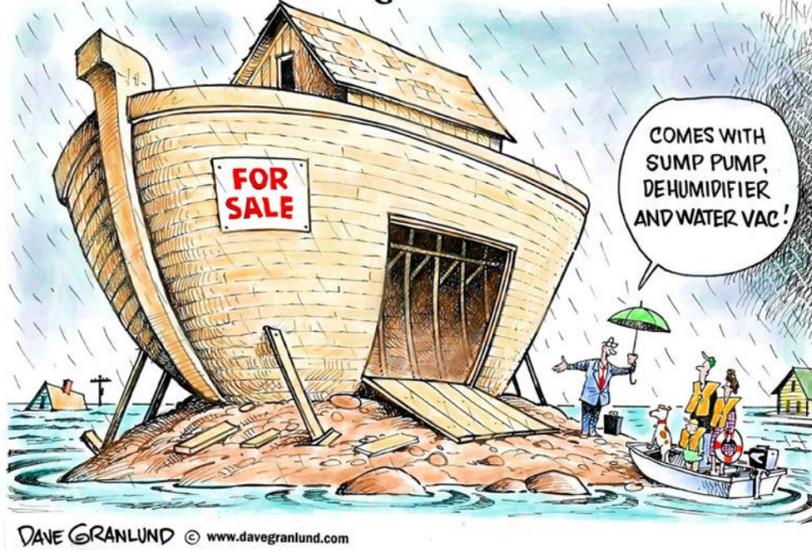
Your earnings for each year in your lifetime up to age 60 were adjusted for inflation when you originally claimed SS and your recent earnings would need to be higher than the inflation-adjusted amounts used by SS when you claimed. They use the 35 highest earnings years adjusted for inflation over your lifetime to calculate your benefit and inflation has a substantial effect. For example, \$50,000 earned in 1990 would require over \$100,000 in earnings today to cause an increase in your benefit. Thus, you cannot go by the actual dollars you earned in earlier years, because SS uses inflated amounts to calculate your benefit.

In any case, if you believe that the Social Security Administration neglected reviewing your earnings from last year or in any year since you claimed, you can make an appointment to review that with them by calling 1-800-772-1213. SSA typically does such appointments over the phone, so you likely won't need to make a personal visit to your local SSA office to investigate this.

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

## OPINION

### Alternative to buying flood insurance...



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

## GUEST COLUMN

### Maintenance will keep annuals going strong

The half dead pot of petunias on the rental house's steps got me thinking about the perfect column for this time of year! After all, we invest hard earned money in annual flowers and plants, and we expect that they will provide us with color through the first frost. What steps can we take now to ensure that they will?

Read on for some useful advice, straight from the archives.

#### Remove spent flowers

Most annuals will continue to bloom abundantly if they are deadheaded on a regular basis. Deadheading is an entertaining term used to define the removal of spent flowers.

A plant produces flowers for one purpose: to survive. You see, once a flower has been pollinated it will produce seed; seed that will grow future plants.

If a plant has produced enough flowers that have gone to seed it will consider its job to be done, flower production will cease, and it will begin to decline. By deadheading, we keep the plant in reproductive mode, in other words, in flower!

When you remove dying blossoms, make sure to pinch off the entire flower, not just the petals, or it will do no good. Include the stem as well to keep the plant tidy.

Petunias, marigolds, zinnias and salvia, among others, are examples of plants that require regular deadheading to look their best

throughout the growing season.

**Shear them back to encourage new growth**  
Some annuals start to get a leggy appearance about now. Others may have brown tips.

These plants require more drastic measures to bring back their youthful good looks. Give them a good haircut.

Simply look within the plant and find healthy, green growth. Cut calendulas, pansies and snapdragons back to that point. Alyssum or lobelia can often be sheared to within inches of the ground.

Don't worry; they won't look bad for long! You can jump start regrowth with a bit of liquid fertilizer.

#### Feed your plants

Annuals that are well fertilized at planting time likely look a bit pale by now. If foliage is off-color and flower production is nil, pull back the bark mulch and sprinkle some organic fertilizer granules at the base of each plant.

Cultivate gently and water in a little bit. You can also use a water soluble liquid fertilizer every couple of weeks.

If going natural is your cup of tea, make some!

Compost or manure tea has long been used to keep growth lush. Steep a burlap bag of either compost or aged manure in a large trash bucket filled with water and use as needed.

Smaller batches can be made right in a watering can. Likewise, there are numerous blends of seaweed and fish emulsion on the market that can be watered in or used as a foliar feed.

#### Water, water, water

Be careful not to let your plants dry out. When you need to water the garden, remember to do so in the early morning, if possible, to avoid evaporation. Early evening is another good option, but try to get the job done with enough time for the foliage to dry before darkness sets in.

Deep waterings twice a week are far better than numerous quick showers. The former will promote deep, penetrating roots and future drought tolerance.

Well-watered, well-fed and well-groomed annuals will reward you with beautiful bountiful blossoms for another two months – well worth the effort indeed!

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

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Why are you doing this now?

This past weekend, the Plainfield Volunteer Fire/EMS Dept. were called out to respond to a trauma incident on South Union Street.

This incident turned into a potentially violent event after volunteer highly trained personnel arrived at the scene. Police Chief Justin Litchfield arrived on this scene and, already knowing the individuals at the address, was able to calm the injured party down and avoid escalation of a bad situation until additional resources arrived from the valley- Mass. State Police and Northampton Fire Paramedics.

Chief Litchfield worked with Plainfield Fire/EMS to once again improve a bad situation as he has so many times in the past. A month ago, Chief Litchfield was told by Plainfield Select Persons that his position as Plainfield Police Chief would not be renewed next fiscal year. This announcement was a surprise to him and a shock for Plainfield Public Safety.

Who did the Select Persons reach out to for help in deciding to go down this road? Certainly not anyone in public safety, those who work so closely with the Chief in

difficult situations.

Unless you work in our world of public safety, how do you know what our needs and expectations are? There are fewer and fewer trained first responders and EMT's responding to medical and trauma incidents in our small, rural Hilltown. Don't make our world that much more dangerous and difficult than it already is. Keep the Chief.

**David Alvord**  
Plainfield  
Retired Fire Chief/  
Safety Officer/ EMT-B  
Plainfield Volunteer Fire/  
EMS.

### Corrections policy

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

Find it in the  
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### Country Journal welcomes Election letters to the editor

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

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

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

#### Campaign news

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

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

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

## Country Journal TEAM



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

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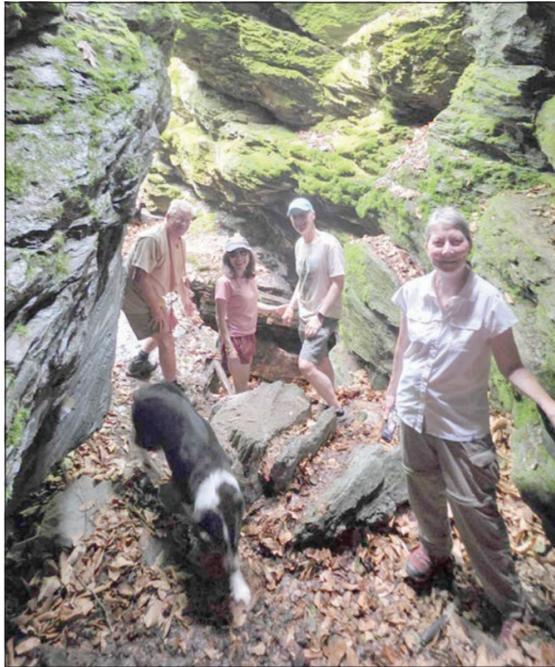
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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



Greg gets in the snow hole first. This is looking in from the top edge.



These hikers pose for a photo along with a canine friend.



Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers head to one of the lookouts along the Tacoma Crest Trail.



This is a great view of Petersburg less than a mile in on the trail.

Submitted photos

## Hilltown Hikers visit snow hole

Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers took a group hike this past weekend on the Taconic Crest Trail through New York to Pownal, Vermont to the wild and epic Snow Hole.

A six mile in and back hike led them through abandoned grazing fields now covered with waist high ferns and a few lookouts along the way. The Snow Hole is a vertical fissure in the bedrock lined with mosses and other moisture-loving plants. One end offers a fairly easy descent to the bottom while the other end is a 60-foot drop.

But the fissure is narrow enough and deep enough that its bottom never

gets direct sunlight and that leads to the conditions from which it gets its name. The Snow Hole is what is known as a tectonic feature, formed by physical forces.

The steep slope of the ridge contains extensive cracks in its bedrock known as joints that run parallel to the ridge line. Over millennia, water and ice have eroded this fissure and because it is located on the very steep north slope of the ridge, it has widened and deepened under the pull of gravity.

Several much narrower fissures are found between The Snow Hole and the main ridge trail which the group also explored.

This hike is a pop-

ular adventure so you are sure to see other hikers along the way. Parking is at Petersburg Pass just over the Massachusetts State Line in New York with the trail head just across Route 2. There are a few climbs along the way and hikers are treated with a glorious view after less than a mile looking West over Petersburg.

There was no snow or ice at the bottom, but most times of the year you will find it here. A big thank you to Williams College for maintaining the trails here at Hopkins Memorial Forest, which holds even more beautiful trails with views to the East of Mount Greylock.

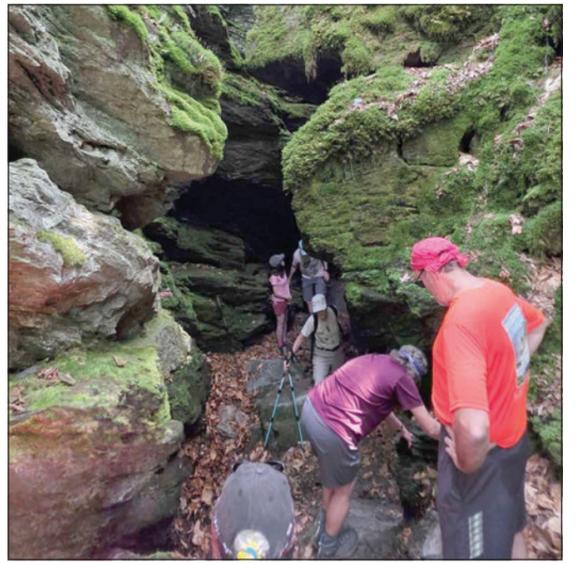
For those looking for a real adventure, this is it.



Hikers are shown in the snow hole. There was no snow it.



The group explores the snow hole.



The hikers explore the snow hole.

**NOVENA TO ST. JUDE**  
 May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world, now and forever.  
 Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us.  
 St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us.  
 St. Jude, helper of the hopeless, pray for us.  
 Thank you St. Jude. Amen.  
 Publication promised, C.D.  
 Say this prayer 9 times a day for 9 days.  
 This novena has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised.

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 pvaglfe@gmail.com  
 www.pioneervalleyag.org  
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## BLANDFORD

## Eversource officials met with Select Board

BLANDFORD – Several representatives from Eversource presented the company's work towards decarbonizing in the state.

According to media representative John Caldwell, Eversource is planning decarbonizing by migrating to wind, and solar produced energy. Eversource delivers the power and will modernize the Distributed Energy Resources available by increasing the size of the substation on North Blandford Road. This will enable 40 mega wats of power. The size will increase from 0.65 acres to 1.13 acres. The substation will continue to operate during construction.

For the increase in sized, some vegetation clearing is necessary; there will be no "underground penetration" and "secondary protection" is part of the plan according to Hakob Mkrtchyan from Eversource.

Project Director Chris Lombardi said that the reason the project went to Energy Facilities Siting Board was because it is "highly specialized." The zoning relief, according to the Eversource handout, would require a special permit to extend a non-confirming use, site plan approval, variance for signage and approval for a construction trailer.

Mass General Laws "authorizes the EFSB to grant exemptions from the Zoning Bylaw an alternative to seeking the aforementioned zoning relief. Therefore, Eversource filed



Eversource team at July 28 meeting, are from left, Evan Piacente, Program Manager; Chris Lombardi, Project Director; John Caldwell, Media and a Community Relations spokesman.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm



Hakob Mkrtchyan

for the exemptions given the four-year timeline. There will be a public hearing by EFSB in Blandford for comment and notices will be appropriately posted.

There is a construction timeline through 2026 and outreach has already started and will continue.

Select Board Chair Cara Letendre opened the meeting to questions. It was asked if the Eversource project would move forward without Battery Energy Storage System. The Eversource response was that these are two different projects and Eversource "has nothing to do with the BESS project, we're not associated."

Select Board member Jackie Coury asked if the \$64 million expansion increase in the substation was part of "some broader plan" and "is this thing supporting other towns?"

The substation serves

other towns.

She also asked about what prompted the project to go to the state and not through the town. Again, the Eversource response reiterated was that the project is specialized.

The substation is the only one in the immediate area. Mkrtchyan responded, as well as another associate, that the increase in the size of the substation would increase the ability to use additional power. This is to accommodate new input, not to serve the customer.

This was also the response to a query about what would be the benefit to Blandford.

Conservation Commission member Colleen Doyle said that the utility is not funding the project, but it will be funded by increased fees and that was confirmed. Mkrtchyan explained that much information was considered for the budgeting process.

She also questioned

increase and said that Eversource is the town's "largest taxpayer already."

"What is in the plan to benefit our town so we can respond," asked Cousineau, looking for aid from the utility for the town's infrastructure for safety concerns. Eversource's response was that would be looked at on a "case by case basis."

Kim Bergland from the Zoning Board of Appeals asked if the 1968 substation still had that year's capacity. The utility said additional upgrades have been made.

Responding to Coury's question about a bigger "grandiose plan" having to do with the substation, the response was that over time, with the number of applications the utility's infrastructure is not big enough to sustain the income and this presented the need to upgrade. All of the developers are sharing the cost of the upgrades.

Gates asked if the utility would continue to be involved going forward. There are several entities involved. Residents' comments included lighting, vegetation, water runoff and sizing. The board then moved on to regular business.

#### Logging

Complaints regarding logging starting at 5:30 a.m. with chainsaws running have prompted the Board of Health to notify the logging company that noise producing work cannot start prior to 7 a.m. There are fines involved, and start at \$200 a day. Gates said the best way to handle this would be to contact the state forester, who sees all logging plans. The town's Conservation

Commission is not involved. Letendre asked that the logger and state forester attend the next board meeting. Police Chief Jen Dubiel suggested a town bylaw addressing noise.

#### Highway Department

The Highway Department is on track with seeking quotes for repairs to sanitary facilities. The job description for laborer was finalized and will be posted.

#### Ambulance

Town Administrator Christian Ferrera reported that Hilltown Community Ambulance response time is 20 minutes, 18 seconds with 18 calls in the recent quarter, April through June, and the average response time for all towns is 14 minutes, 22 seconds.

#### Town Administrator

The board presented a list of goals for Town Administrator Ferrera for the coming year. Hopson asked if the goals had been developed collaboratively and they had not. Ferrera will review the goals and discuss them at the next board meeting.

#### Other business

The job posting for an assistant treasurer has been posted, a town audit is in process as well as a supplementary audit of the Water Department.

The board will discuss fire house priority at the next meeting. "Where are we now, and what is the next step," said Letendre. The discussion will be "re-engagement for the project."

The board is considering Monday, Sept. 8 for a Special Town Meeting.

## SELECT BOARD

from page 1

BESS store energy from the public power grid when the energy supply is greater than the energy demand and release that energy during high demand periods. BESS are reservoirs of energy; balancing supply and demand. They keep energy costs low, maintain grid reliability and reduce blackouts.

The expected project life is 20 years.

The dimensions of a standard BESS enclosure is (W \* H \* D) 238.5" wide, 114.0" high and 96.0" deep, the approximate size of a shipping container.

BESS include equipment and systems designed to detect and suppress fires, to vent gasses and incorporate fire-proof barriers. Projects are equipped with thermal management HVAC systems and temperature sensors that automatically shut off the batteries if they are too hot or too cold. BESS meet strict technical uniform design standards – UL, NEC, NFPA 855 including use of fire-resistant materials, physical barriers, separation distances to prevent thermal runaway events.

BESS technology has come a long way since their early deployments. Modern day BESS installations significantly reduce thermal runaway because of the more stable Lithium-Iron-Phosphate chemical composition of the cells that do not contain any toxic heavy metals. Additionally, the modular containers that house the batteries are physically separated and the batteries are located within non-occupiable cabinets, instead of within closed buildings like in earlier configurations.

Energy storage facilities are monitored around the clock by trained personnel prepared to maintain safety and respond to

emergency events. Mission will develop and maintain emergency response plans to ensure that, if there were an event, it is handled safely and according to best practices. Mission will work with local fire departments and first responders for training and to share information about risks, response plans and safety measures.

The batteries will be installed in non-habitable steel cabinet-enclosures the size of a shipping container. The enclosures will have multiple isolated battery storage racks, with relay and communications systems for remote, automated monitoring and managing of the batteries. Each rack contains dozens of battery units. The BESS are also equipped with a battery management system to control the charging and discharging of the batteries in addition to temperature monitoring and regulation of each individual battery at the cell level with an integrated cooling system.

There is a site layout with locations of the containers. This is a preliminary design and will continue to be optimized based on feedback from the ISO and the utility, particularly around the interconnection components.

The current site layout is designed to blend in with the surrounding environment, including positioning the containers behind forested areas far away from residences to minimize any potential sound and visual impacts from the public road. The design also minimizes tree clearing to the greatest extent possible while also incorporating large buffers to avoid all wetland impacts. As the name suggests, the site plan is intended to be "hidden," supporting power grid resiliency without sacrificing

the rural character of the environment.

The project is required to have a decommissioning plan as part of the permit process with the town of Blandford. There is also a decommissioning and restoration obligation in the land agreement with the property owner where the project will operate. Mission is required to decommission the project at the end of its operating life (20 years).

Decommissioning of the project at the end of its useful life includes the removal of BESS equipment from the foundations, disconnection of wiring, and removal of site infrastructure. Batteries and other equipment and materials will be recycled to the extent feasible to minimize disposal in landfills.

Mission is required to restore the land to its original state at the end of its useful life. This includes hiring a reclamation contractor to determine specific measures that could include restoring landform features, vegetation, hydrologic functions and replacing any disturbed areas with appropriate natural features that blend with the surrounding environment.

Riley holds a Master of Arts in international economics with a concentration in energy, resources and the environment from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a Bachelor of Art in philosophy from Columbia University. Max Bakker holds a Master in Business Administration in sustainable management from Presidio University in San Francisco California

Mission's Head of Development Audrey Copeland and Senior Development Engineer Jack Hitchcock will join Riley on Monday, Aug. 11 at the Select Board meeting.



Planning Board members, from left, are Sarah Simpson, Greg Garfield and Vice Chair Edna Wilander at Monday, July 28 meeting.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm

## Planning Board/Select Board appoint Planning Board members

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – At the Monday, July 28 Planning Board meeting, the board nominated three residents whose names were to go to the Select Board as the Planning Boards choice to fill vacant, unexpired terms.

A joint meeting of both boards immediately followed the Planning Board's meeting. Board members present were Vice Chair Edna Wilander, Greg Garfield and Sara Simpson constituting a quorum. Those residents put forward were Scott O'Connor, Brian Nimerowski and Ron Racine.



Ron Racine



Scott O'Connor



Brian Nimerowski

At the subsequent joint meeting, the Select Board finalized the appointments. Scott O'Connor and Ron Racine will fill unexpired vacant seats while Brian Nimerowski was appointed as the auxiliary member. He must attend all meetings and

if necessary will be qualified to vote on something before the board in the absence of a regular member.

All must complete the state's Ethic Training and submit the certificate to the Town Clerk and acknowledge the Open Meeting Law.

## Huntington Council on Aging invites Blandford seniors to upcoming events

The Huntington Council on Aging extended an invitation for Blandford seniors to participate in the following two events.

Grandparents Day Celebration takes place Saturday, Sept. 6. The event will feature two bounce houses for children

of all ages, crafts and ice cream.

A bus trip is planned for Dec. 4 to the Salem Cross Inn which is known for their excellent cuisine and service, also visiting Yankee Candle and a tour of Bright Lights in Springfield. This is the

only trip this year that leaves from Huntington, making it very convenient for Hilltown residents.

Any questions or for more information, people may call Helen Speckels at 413-685-5667 or email AreaCOAContacts@huntingtonma.us.

## BECKET

## Becket Arts Center announces upcoming events

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will host a free opening reception on Friday, Aug. 8, from 5-7 p.m. for “Bits and Places,” the work of Kristi W. Colbert, the winner of the BAC’s poster contest.

This solo exhibition will be on view in the Art Lounge Sunday, Aug. 31. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

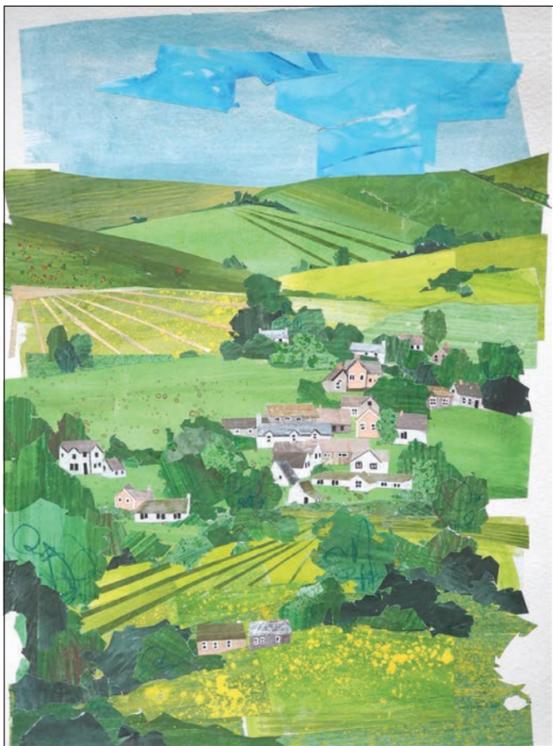
The Becket Arts Center will host a free opening reception on Friday, Aug. 22 from 5-7 p.m. for “Motif,” a juried art show that explores repetitions, abstractions and patterns in contemporary visual arts. Participating artists are Jen Delgado, Christine Koldys, Judy Lilleston, Michael Manning and Nina Rossi. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

The Becket Arts Center, in collaboration with the Guild of Berkshire Artists, will hold a Plein Air morning of painting, drawing and photographing outdoors in Becket on Wednesday, Aug. 27 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Participants should bring their oils, acrylics, watercolors, pastels, pencils, cameras or digital painting equipment and their own lunch. This open to artists of all levels, \$10 per person and free for members of the

Becket Arts Center and the Guild of Berkshire Artists. For reservations and more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org) or register at [berkshireartists.org/pleinair](http://berkshireartists.org/pleinair).

The Becket Arts Center will offer a two-day Mosaic Workshop with Denise White on Thursday, Aug. 28 from 1-3 p.m. and Friday, Aug. 29 from 1-2 p.m. This hands-on course will focus on the fundamentals of mosaic art, and apply them to the creation of a pair of one-of-a-kind wine glasses. All materials will be supplied. Workshop fee: \$60; \$40 to \$50 for BAC members; \$30 for Card to Culture holders. For more information and to pre-register (space is limited), visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

As part of its Speaker Series, the Becket Arts Center will present Natalie Tyler discussing the making and installation of her monumental glass piece “Tornado,” at Chesterwood, in Stockbridge, on Thursday, Aug. 14, from 6-7 p.m. The cast-glass and steel sculpture is part of Chesterwood’s “Global Warming/Global Warning” exhibit, which continues until October 31. Tyler has been a US Embassy-sponsored artist twice, and has exhibited her sculpture WildFire at the United Nations in 2022.



Kristi Colbert was the winner of the Becket Arts Center poster contest.

For more information and to register and to pay (\$10 per person; \$5 for BAC members), people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

The Becket Art Center will launch its Becket Stories

Oral History/Storytelling Project on Thursday, Aug. 28, from 5-7 p.m. This evening of storytelling and coaching will focus on the people, places and events that capture the experience of living



Plein Air will be held Wednesday, Aug. 27 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Submitted photos

in Becket. If participants are interested, their stories will be recorded at a later date and included in the oral history project. These stories, supported by related pictures,

documents and other artifacts, will ultimately be posted on the Becket Arts Center website. For more information and registration, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

## MONTGOMERY

## Music in Montgomery features returning bands in August

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

MONTGOMERY – August’s “Music in Montgomery” series will feature four returning acts: We Three on Aug. 7, Kara and Jerry Noble on Aug. 14, Ellen Redman and Last Night’s Fun on Aug. 21, and Doug Pi and Friends on Aug. 28.

Performances run every Thursday from 3-4:30 p.m. at Montgomery Town Hall, 161 Main Road. We Three consists of Barry Searle on guitar and vocals, Sarah Miller on percussion and vocals and Pete Razasa on vocals, pedal steel guitar and harmonica. The group performs a variety of musical styles. Searle is also seen with a number of musicians throughout the region and in the jazz string group “Ravenwood.” An album of original songs

called “The Awakening” was released earlier this year. We Three kicks the month off on Thursday, Aug. 7.

Kara and Jerry Noble return on Aug. 14. Kara plays bass and Jerry is a well-known pianist, guitarist and composer. Together they are known for great music and stories across the decades. The pair have also performed with the Bob Sparkman Trio with Sparkman playing clarinet. That trio has a CD called “Tunes in the Key of Three,” which was released in 2018. Also, the Nobles have a company called Artist Tec, which supports creative people in sharing their art through technology.

Fans of Celtic music cannot miss Ellen Redman and Last Night’s Fun on Thursday, Aug. 21. This trio includes Sean Burke on vocals, mandolin and Irish bouzouki; David Clopp on



The band Last Night’s Fun, consisting of Sean Burke, from left, Ellen Redman and David Clopp returns to the Music in Montgomery Series, held weekly at Montgomery Town Hall, on Thursday, Aug. 21.

Submitted photo

Irish bouzouki, guitar and vocals and Ellen Redman on Irish flute, tin whistle, contra and vocals. Redman is a flute player and the principal piccolo player with

the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. Individually, band members also play with local Celtic bands Banish Misfortune, Black Sheep and Spencil Hill.

Doug Pi and Friends will close the month on Thursday, Aug. 28. A driving rock/country guitarist with a deep, signature voice, Pi also performs with Doug Pi and the

Harmonics, which has headlined this year at the O’s in Sunderland, Fishtails in Hatfield and Papa Bob’s in Becket. People never know which of Pi’s friends will show up in Montgomery and it’s always fun to see who does.

This series is co-hosted by the Montgomery Public Library and by Gray Catbird Pottery Studio. Attendees are invited to bring baked goods to share. Donations are accepted for the refreshments, with money split between the Montgomery Volunteer Firemen’s Association and the Town Library. Donations are also accepted to tip and thank the fabulous musicians, who perform each week.

This event is open to all, who are interested. For more information, people may call Dale Rogers at 413-875-5205.

## BLANDFORD

## COA lists monthly lunch and breakfast

BLANDFORD – Joann Martin has prepared the menus for the Council on Aging monthly lunch and breakfast.

The next schedule lunch is Friday, Aug. 8 at noon in the COA room at Town Hall. Diners will have a choice of either beef chili or turkey chili with corn bread followed by peach cobbler for dessert.

Breakfast on Friday, Aug. 22 at 10 a.m. features a favorite, blueberry French toast with maple sausage links, sliced melon and Bloody Mary deviled eggs.

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

Seniors may call 413-848-4279, extension 400 for a reservation

## Blandford Finance Committee has vacancies

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – The town’s Finance Committee has vacancies that need to be filled.

According to the town bylaws, the Finance Committee considers estimates and statements filed by Town Boards, Officers and Committees and hold hearings, if they deem it advisable. The Finance Committee will recommend presented budgets as it considers necessary and convenient.

Other duties include consideration of “all matters of business with articles of any warrant

for a Town Meeting and shall, after due considerations, report the recommendations as to each article before each meeting or vote.” The recommendations shall be those of a majority of the entire committee, but this shall not be construed to prevent recommendations of a minority as such. The Finance Committee shall hold a public meeting with respect to the warrant at least seven days prior to the Town Meeting.

In reporting, the Committee shall state the total amount of the appropriations recommended by them on the entire warrant and the appropriate tax rate

based on such recommendations. The report for the annual Town Meeting shall contain a statement of the activities of the Committee during the year with such recommendations of suggestions as it may deem advisable on any matters pertaining to the welfare of the town. It may make recommendations of referenda and other matters on any ballot other than the choices of individuals for office.

Anyone interested should contact a member of the Finance Committee for more information or email the Select Board expressing interest to [selectboardadmin@town-ofblandford.com](mailto:selectboardadmin@town-ofblandford.com).

## WESTFIELD

## Armbrook Village hosts Alzheimer’s Association Support Group Aug. 27

WESTFIELD – On Wednesday, Aug. 27 at 6 p.m. at Armbrook Village Senior Living and Memory Support Community, 551 North Road, invites caregivers and family members to enjoy a light dinner and to share their personal experiences and strategies for com-

municating with their loved ones.

The public is welcome! To join this Alzheimer’s Association Support Group, people should call 413-568-0000 or email [reception@armbrookvillage.com](mailto:reception@armbrookvillage.com). Groups are held on the last Wednesday of the month.

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## NORTHAMPTON

# ALS Association to host annual walk

**NORTHAMPTON** – Hundreds of people will rally to support people living with ALS at the 2025 Walk to Defeat ALS Western Massachusetts on Saturday, Sept. 6 at 10 a.m. at the Frank Newhall Look Memorial Park. Registration for the 2025 Walk to Defeat ALS is now open. Every 90 minutes, someone is diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, a progressive neurodegenerative disease affecting nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. ALS robs people of the ability to walk, talk and eventually breathe. Through an extensive network, the ALS Association is on the ground in all 50 states providing support for people living with ALS and their loved ones by ensuring they have access to critical care programs and services.

Walk to Defeat ALS is

the world's largest signature event focused on supporting people living with ALS and their families. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the annual Walk to Defeat ALS. Through Walk to Defeat ALS fundraising efforts, the ALS Association has been able to dramatically accelerate the fight against ALS by funding the development of new ALS treatments, by discovering new ALS genes, by creating new global research collaborations, and by significantly expanding access to ALS care.

Walk to Defeat ALS events are more than fundraisers; it's a movement that unites the community in support of those affected by ALS. Many, who participate, have a loved one battling ALS while others participate in memory of a loved one, who has lost their fight. Some participate

simply because they want to make ALS a livable disease for everyone, everywhere while we tirelessly search for a cure.

The 2025 Walk to Defeat ALS is supported by their dedicated national sponsors including Mitsubishi Tanabe Pharma America, Numotion Foundation and Permobil Foundation. Their unwavering commitment fuels our mission to make ALS livable and cure it.

To raise funds and awareness for ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a progressive, fatal neurodegenerative disease. There is no known cause or cure for ALS and it is always fatal. All proceeds will benefit the ALS Association to support cutting-edge global research, nationwide advocacy and local care services.

Participants are encour-

aged to fundraise to advance the fight against ALS. Registered participants who raise \$100 or more will receive a commemorative t-shirt. To learn more, to register or donate, people may visit [als.org/WalkWesternMA](http://als.org/WalkWesternMA).

The ALS Association is the largest ALS organization in the world. The ALS Association funds global research collaborations, assists people with ALS and their families through its nationwide network of care and certified clinical care centers, and advocates for better public policies for people with ALS. The ALS Association is working to make ALS a livable disease while urgently searching for new treatments and a cure. For more information about the ALS Association, people may visit their website at [www.als.org](http://www.als.org).

# Hosmer Gallery exhibits works by Hodes, Harrington, Hoffman

**NORTHAMPTON** – Forbes Memorial Library, 20 West St. exhibits works by Ryn Hodes, Giselle Harrington and Paul Hoffman now through Friday, Aug. 29 in the Hosmer Gallery, located on the second floor.

An artist reception will be held Thursday, Aug. 7 from 6-8 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. The gallery is closed Sundays and holidays.

Ryn Hodes' "Remnants: A Surviving Trace" is a series of collages using paper, needle-felted wool, yarn, silk, and other fabric to depict ruined

homes in imagined landscapes. Giselle Harrison's "Maine to Georgia: Watercolor Studies from Life" is a collection of watercolor scenes of landscapes, people and buildings along the East Coast.

Paul Hoffman's paintings in this collection explore a range of environments expressing aspects of their ecologies through a language of form and pattern. The element of place or environment, be it a tree-top, meadow, woodland, river or pond, provides a narrative setting and framework, while the array of natural forms depicted in each work articulates the idea of nature's diverse range and variety.

## WORTHINGTON

# COA to hold foliage bus trip

**WORTHINGTON** – The Worthington Council on Aging will hold an annual foliage bus trip on Wednesday, Oct. 8.

Reservations are required. The trip includes a stop at the Salem Cross Inn in West Brookfield for a traditional luncheon. Menu includes garden salad with chef's homemade dressing and a choice of baked had-dock or Yankee pot roast with pan gravy and apple

cake for dessert.

Following lunch, they will travel to Quabbin Reservoir with their guide. Before returning home, they will stop at Brookfield Orchards in North Brookfield, home of the apple dumpling.

Cost is \$53 per person for senior Worthington residents and \$103 for senior non-residents. Tax and gratuities are included in the cost. People

should make check to Town of Worthington and mail to COA, P.O. Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098. They should include meal choice, emergency contact and their phone number. They may call Phyllis Dassaitt at 413-238-5962 with any questions.

The bus will depart Worthington Congregational Church, Huntington Road at 10 a.m. and approximate return is 5:15 p.m.

# Vendors sought for Car Show benefit

**WORTHINGTON** – The Worthington Rod & Gun Club, 458 Dingle Road, Rte. 112, announces its third annual car show to benefit the Special Operations Warrior Foundation on Saturday, Sept. 20 with gates open at 8 a.m.

Vehicles of all years are welcome and can enter for \$10. The first 100 will receive dash plaques and a goodie bag. The Special Operations Warrior Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides "cradle to career" educational funding and advocacy for the children of fallen Special Operations

Personnel, children of deceased SOF spouses, and Medal of Honor recipients. In addition, the SOWF offers immediate financial assistance to critically injured and ill active Special Operations Personnel. For more information on this organization, people may visit [www.specialops.org](http://www.specialops.org).

The club is now seeking vendors, crafters and donations for this event. They are offering 10' x 10' spaces for \$20. Those interested should email [Worthingtonrgclub@gmail.com](mailto:Worthingtonrgclub@gmail.com).

Rain date is scheduled for Sept. 21. Judging will

take place from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., with awards presented at 2 p.m. Live music will be provided by Back in Time and the Westfield Cruisers. Food will be available along with a Chinese raffle, 50/50 raffle and a special raffle of a Martin Brothers signed sweatshirt, t-shirt and hat, as well as a Kindig-it design signed t-shirt.

People may visit the club's website at [www.worthingtonrgclub.com](http://www.worthingtonrgclub.com) or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/WorthingtonRodandGun> for updates and rain date information.

## BUCKLAND

# Historical Society to hold openhouse

**BUCKLAND** – The Historical Society will hold an open house on Sunday, Aug. 10 from 1-4 p.m. at the Buckland Historical Society Museum, 20 Upper St.

The museum is a former circa 1865 School House, which now houses three floors of artifacts and town records

The Wilder Homestead,

a furnished 1775 salt-box with five fireplaces, a restored 1780 English barn and a shoemaker shop, is located at 129 Ashfield Road, Rt. 112.

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## MONTEREY

# Knox Trail documentary airs Aug. 14

**MONTEREY** – The Otis Historical Commission and Otis Preservation Trust in collaboration with the Monterey Historical Society presents "The Knox Trail" a 12-minute documentary video tracing the history of the famous route on Thursday, Aug. 14 at 7 p.m. at the Monterey Public Library, 452 Main Road.

A discussion with the producers of the film, Jessica Provenz and Joshua Briggs alongside local historian Tom Ragusa, follows the video viewing. Admission is free but registration is required.

The Henry Knox Trail, also known as the Knox Cannon Trail, is a network of roads and paths tracing the route of Colonel Henry Knox's train of artillery from New York State to Boston, Massachusetts during the American Revolutionary War. Knox was commissioned by the Continental Army commander George Washington in 1775 to transport 59 cannons from captured forts on Lake Champlain to the army camp outside Boston.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Otis Cultural

Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The event is live, in-person and via Zoom on Thursday, Aug. 14 at 7 p.m. at the Monterey Public Library. To register to attend this event, or for more information, people may visit: [www.otispreservationtrust.com](http://www.otispreservationtrust.com); or [www.townofotisma.com](http://www.townofotisma.com). There is no charge to attend this event but pre-registration is required. Donations are welcome.

## STOCKBRIDGE

# Botanical Garden hosts grow show

**STOCKBRIDGE** – Celebrating a 55-year tradition of growing and showing, Berkshire Botanical Garden's, 5 West Stockbridge Road, annual Grow Show will be held Saturday, Aug. 9 from 1-5 p.m. and Sunday, Aug. 10 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

On both days, floral designers and backyard gardeners are the celebrities. Beautiful floral arrangements and the peak summer harvest are spotlighted in this upbeat, judged event featuring five design and nearly 80 horticulture classes on display in the Exhibition Hall.

Anyone can enter.

Whether people bring a single bloom or enter every category, there is no charge to participate in the Grow Show. Gardeners of all ages and experience levels are welcome to enter the blue-ribbon event known as the Horticulture Division.

Floral Design entries will take delight in the natural world's splendor while recognizing that beauty's intrinsic value is its harmonization of form and purposefulness. Designers focus on guiding people to make more connections between the richness of flora and the critical role it plays in the sustainability and restoration

of our environment and the human condition. Designers are asked to use sustainable design practices using materials that can be reused or recycled.

New for 2025, the event will include a youth category, featuring a flower stem or vegetable for display. Youth entries will not receive official judging. Youth entries should be brought to the Garden on Friday, Aug. 8 from 3-5 p.m.

The Grow Show is free with Garden admission. People may visit [BerkshireBotanical.org](http://BerkshireBotanical.org) or call 413-298-3926 for more information.

## PLAINFIELD

# Church to host concerts

**PLAINFIELD** – The Plainfield Congregational Church, 356 Main St., Rte. 116, will hold Monday concerts on Aug. 11 Aug. 18 and Aug. 25, all at 7 p.m. in the church.

On Monday, Aug. 11 the Yin Quartet will perform. The quartet consists of Robin Scott and Janet Ying, violins; Phillip, viola and David Ying, cello. They will perform Bella Bartok Sting Quartet No2 Derek Bermel Songs of Nameless Ancestors, Antonin Dvorak Sting Quartet in F major Op. 96 "American."

On Monday, Aug. 18 the Verona Quartet will perform Maurice Ravel String Quartet in G Major, American Jazz Standards, Dmitri Shostakovich String

Quartet no. 9. Member are Jonathan Ong and Dorothy Ro, violins; Abigail Rojanskey, viola and Jonathan Dormand, cello.

On Monday, Aug. 25 the Hartford Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet will perform. Members are Joh Charles Thomas and Alison Marseglia, trumpets; Barbara Hill, horn; Brian Diehl, trombone and Jarrod Briley, tuba. Selections include Vidor Evald Quintet #3, works of Reena Esmail, Gwyneth Walker and Eric Emazen. Concerts are free, but donations are accepted. This program is supported in part by grants from local cultural councils, which are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

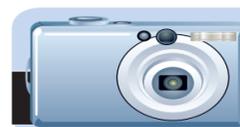
## OTIS



# North Blandford Rd. closed

**OTIS** – North Blandford Road between Algeria Road and Lincoln Road will be closed to through traffic now until possibly Monday, Aug. 18 from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. for road construction.

Motorists should seek an alternate route during that time/



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# CHESTER

## FAIR

from page 1

friendly attraction.

The Littleville Fair features many food options-including fried dough, apple fritters, kettle corn, tater tots, and fried oreos-along with a daily dinner. One of this year's chicken dinner preparers said they had purchased an unprecedented 104 half-chickens for Saturday's meal, which still managed to sell out.

Other events included live music, exhibits from local groups, animal contests, a petting zoo and

some of the more interesting attractions, which included a blueberry pie eating contest, cross saw competition and frying pan throwing contest. Oxen and tractor pulls were augmented by a children's pedal tractor pull. And the always popular demolition derby drew such a record crowd this year that Saturday's cars filled up the fairground and were parked along Kinnebrook Road and all the way down to Dayville Dam about 3/4 of a mile away.

Daily drawings for new children's bicycles were held each day, with two raffled off on Friday and four each on Saturday and Sunday. Bikes were donated by Dirats and bicycle helmets by Firtion Adams. Children had to be present to win.

At press time, it was unknown if Sunday would see another record breaking crowd, but the weather looked to be promising! Results from the fair events will be submitted for a later issue of the *Country Journal*.

## FCC holds Sunday worship

CHESTER – The First Congregational Church of Chester, 334 Skyline Trail, holds worship on Sunday, Aug. 10 at 10 a.m.

Pastor Susan Borsella will preach about "Foolish Things You Can Do With Your Money" based on the Gospel of Luke 12:13-21.

The First Congregational Church of Chester is an open and affirming congregation. Everyone is welcome.



Fair volunteer Nancy Boisseau, from left, speaks with Lee Myers and Harriet Gilman, whose parents Leon and Elizabeth Kelso were part of creating the Littleville Fair in 1921, the year Harriet was born.



Two of the winners in Saturday's bike raffle were Easton C., age 8 from Easthampton, and Remmi, age 10 from Westfield.



An unknown competitor gets ready to launch in the frying pan throwing contest.



A large crowd settled onto the hillside above Saturday's Demolition Derby at the Littleville Fair.



A row of food trucks at the Littleville Fair served up everything from Kettle Corn to fried Oreos.



Cars got into it during the third heat of Saturday's demolition derby at the Littleville Fair.

Turley Photos by Wendy Long

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**LEGAL NOTICE  
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON  
PLANNING BOARD  
PUBLIC HEARING**  
The Planning Board (PB) of the Town of Huntington will hold a Continuance of the July 28, 2025 public hearing on **Monday, August 25, 2025 beginning at 7:00 pm** in Stanton Hall.  
The Public Hearing Continuance is for the Special Permit Application of Rene Gonzalez representing T-Mobile from 10 Church Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401, to install equipment cabinets and a generator on a 10' x 15' concrete pad inside the existing compound, and new equipment and mounts on the existing Telecommunications Tower at 19 Basket Street, Parcel Number H2-4-0.  
**PLANNING BOARD  
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON  
08/07/2025**

**LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT  
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON  
STANTON AVENUE  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT  
- PHASE 1**  
The Town of Huntington invites sealed Bids for the Stanton Avenue Improvement Project - Phase 1. Sealed bids will be received at the offices of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street, Springfield, Massachusetts 01104 until **2:00 p.m., prevailing time, on Wednesday August 20, 2025** at which time said bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.  
The project is being administered by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and funded by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, FY24 Huntington Community Development Block Grant Programs.  
The Base Bid scope of work

includes installation of approximately 1,090 feet of 8-inch ductile iron water main, eleven water service connections, thirteen pre-cast concrete drainage structures, 960 linear feet of 12-inch HDPE drain pipe, 310 linear feet of 8-inch PVC sanitary sewer, one sanitary sewer manhole, trench repair, asbestos cement pipe removal and disposal, and associated work.  
The estimated project cost for the Base Bid is **\$677,000**.  
Contract Documents, including plans and specifications, may be viewed electronically beginning Wednesday July 30, 2025. Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available at [www.biddocs.com](http://www.biddocs.com) (may be viewed electronically and downloaded at no cost) or hard copies may be purchased online at [www.biddocs.com](http://www.biddocs.com) or at Nashoba Blue, Inc. at 433 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749 (978-568-1167).

Bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit in the amount of five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount, considering all alternates, and made payable to the Town of Huntington.  
All bids for this project are subject to the provisions and minimum wage rates required by M.G.L. c.30, §39M as amended, and M.G.L. c.149, §26 to 27H, inclusive. All applicable Federal minimum wage rates and applicable Federal labor standards shall also apply pursuant to the Davis-Bacon Act. When both State and Federal wage rates are applicable, the higher rate must be paid.  
This project is subject to Build America, Buy America (BABA) requirements. A memorandum documenting BABA compliance shall be provided within 30-days of the Notice to Proceed.  
The Awarding Authority encourages, to the extent feasible,

the use of minority-, women- and disadvantaged- owned businesses for work under this contract and likewise encourages, to the greatest extent possible, that all bidders take affirmative steps to ensure training and employment for lower-income project area residents and award of subcontracts to HUD-defined Section 3 businesses. Bidders on the work shall make a good faith effort to achieve the goals of the Federal Minority and Women's Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) policy regarding utilization of MBEs and WBEs in order to be deemed a responsible bidder.  
Bids may be changed or withdrawn prior to the bid opening, but not within the sixty (60) days subsequent to the bid opening, by submission of such a change in writing in a sealed envelope, identifying the submitting party and indicating that it contains a correction of the bid for the

Stanton Avenue Improvement Project, Huntington, MA.  
The lowest qualified responsible bidder shall be awarded the contract subject to availability of funds under the EOHLC Block Grant program. The Town of Huntington, the Awarding and Contracting Authority, may cancel this Invitation for Bid (IFB), in whole or in part, at any time that such an act is deemed in its best interest, reserves the right to waive any informality in the bidding or to reject any and all bids in total or in part as may be deemed to serve the best interest of the Town, and will not be responsible for any costs incurred by a bidder in preparing and submitting a bid in response to this IFB.  
08/07, 08/14/2025

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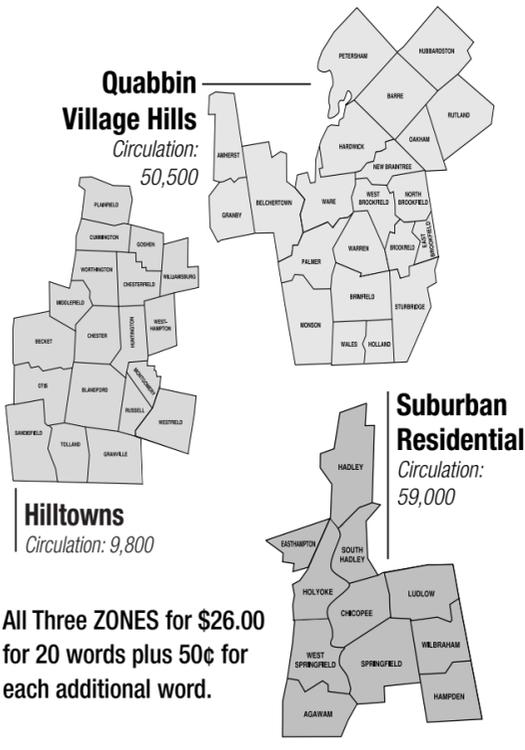
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24	Base Price \$29.50	Base Price \$30.00	Base Price \$30.50
25	Base Price \$30.50	Base Price \$31.00	Base Price \$31.50
26	Base Price \$31.50	Base Price \$32.00	Base Price \$32.50
27	Base Price \$32.50	Base Price \$33.00	Base Price \$33.50
28	Base Price \$33.50	Base Price \$34.00	Base Price \$34.50
29	Base Price \$34.50	Base Price \$35.00	Base Price \$35.50
30	Base Price \$35.50	Base Price \$36.00	Base Price \$36.50
31	Base Price \$36.50	Base Price \$37.00	Base Price \$37.50
32	Base Price \$37.50	Base Price \$38.00	Base Price \$38.50
33	Base Price \$38.50	Base Price \$39.00	Base Price \$39.50
34	Base Price \$39.50	Base Price \$40.00	Base Price \$40.50
35	Base Price \$40.50	Base Price \$41.00	Base Price \$41.50
36	Base Price \$41.50	Base Price \$42.00	Base Price \$42.50
37	Base Price \$42.50	Base Price \$43.00	Base Price \$43.50
38	Base Price \$43.50	Base Price \$44.00	Base Price \$44.50
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# OBITUARY

## Gregory Heath "Duke" Allen

Jan. 6, 1976 – June 21, 2025

Gregory Heath Allen, lovingly known as "Duke," passed away on June 21, 2025, in Malden, Massachusetts, at the age of 49.

Born on Jan. 6, 1976, Gregory grew up in Blandford. He later lived in Westfield, Gloucester, and Malden, making meaningful connections and lasting memories along the way.

A 1994 graduate of Smith Vocational Agricultural High School, Gregory worked as a machinist, landscaper, tree worker, and often took on odd jobs to help others. He was always ready to lend a hand and was known for his hardworking and

dependable nature. Gregory was a son, brother, nephew, father, uncle, cousin and a loyal friend. He is survived by his daughter, Jane Allen and her family and his sister, Jennifer Pensivy, and her family. He was predeceased by his parents, Nancy J. Allen and Thomas W. Allen of Blandford.

Some of Gregory's happiest moments were spent outside, camping at the island with loved ones, hiking or just being surrounded by nature. The outdoors wasn't just a place he loved; it was a part of who he was.

In keeping with the family's wishes, services will be private.

### DEATH NOTICE

#### Allen, Gregory Heath "Duke"

Died June 21, 2025  
In keeping with the family's wishes, services will be private.

### Country Journal OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

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

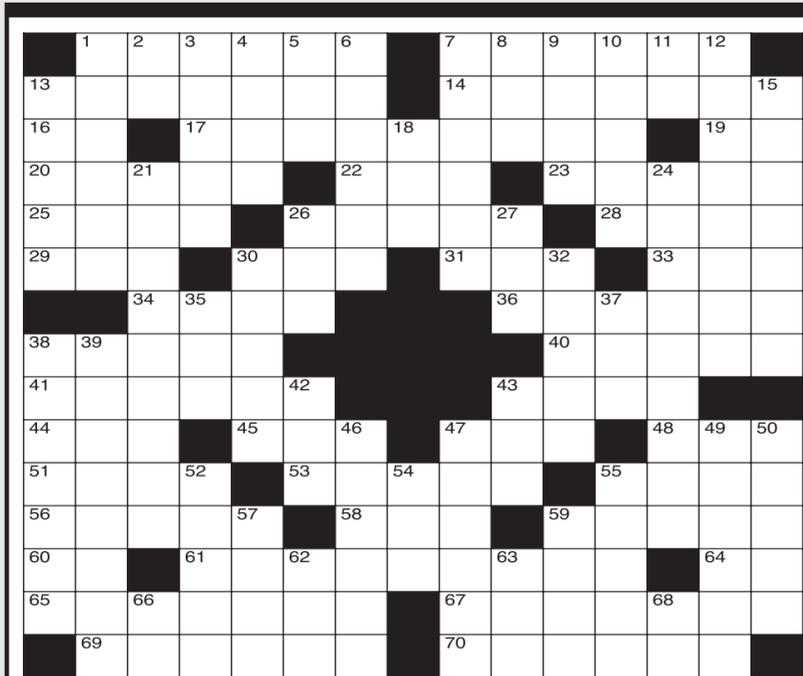
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#### CLUES ACROSS

- Spiritual leaders
- Salt
- Fortified wine
- Edible mollusk
- They precede C
- A way to compare
- State lawyer
- "Game of Thrones" actor Ciaran
- Eighth month (abbr.)
- Very willing
- \_\_ ex machina
- Satisfies
- Mountain in New Zealand
- A doctrine
- Popular Dodge truck model
- Dekagram
- Naturally occurring solid
- Company officer
- Villains
- Cricket frogs
- One of the founders of

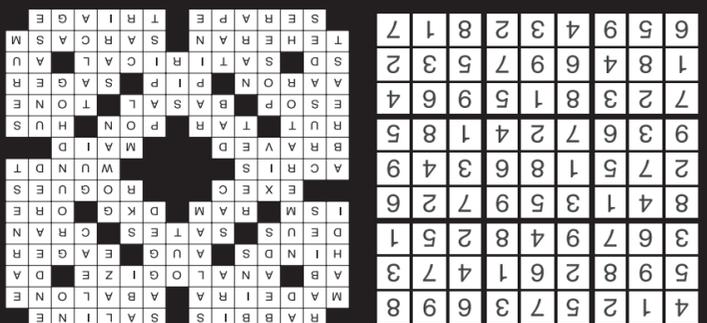
#### CLUES DOWN

- Animal disease
- Commercial
- Necklace materials
- Containers
- Investment account
- Colorado Heisman Trophy winner
- Dipped down
- Head injury category (abbr.)
- Lay about
- Intestinal
- Not yes
- Caused to be loved
- Muslim spiritual leader
- Showing sincere conviction
- Not in
- Number above the line in a fraction
- Lawn pest
- Pouch
- Ancient language in India (abbr.)

#### CLUES DOWN

- Start over
- Wild white flower
- Fourteen
- Visual way to interact with computer (abbr.)
- Side by side and facing the same way
- Religious conflicts
- Touch lightly
- "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
- Violent seizure of property
- One who supports the pope
- Malaise
- Body fluid
- Inauthentic person
- Title of respect
- Chilean city
- Japanese city
- Silk garment
- Draw from
- Automobile
- The man
- Top government lawyer

## ANSWERS



## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

### ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, if you long to take your romantic relationship to the next level, this might be the week to focus on your feelings. Your partner may be waiting for you to make a move.

### TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Tranquility you have been feeling of late enables you to listen more attentively to your inner self, Taurus. Take advantage of slow times to evaluate events and make important decisions.

### GEMINI

May 22/June 21

You can look forward to an enjoyable week, Gemini. Career issues or family matters are nothing to worry about right now, as everything seems to be moving along smoothly.

### CANCER

June 22/July 22

This week you may find satisfaction that will put a smile on your face and boost morale. You also may find yourself embracing some of the core values that have been a part of your life.

### LEO

July 23/Aug 23

Leo, others may have been asking questions of you since you've uncharacteristically been out of the limelight. Reveal what you want to share. Even you are allowed your secrets.

### VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

You have a tendency to avoid conflict instead of facing things head on, Virgo. If you've been circumventing something that needs attention, it is time to see it through.

### LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, if you feel that your power has increased, it may be time to take on some more responsibility right now. Embrace your new role and remain confident in your ability to handle it.

### SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, right now you are going through a period where circumstances are trying to shed light on your hidden motivations. You're not ready to show everyone your cards just yet.

### SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, your ego may take a hit this week, but you'll need to roll with the punches. You are finally understanding that simply willing something to happen won't always work.

### CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Your actions lately have been going against your nature to want to please others, Capricorn. It will be difficult for you to get back on target, but not impossible.

### AQUARIUS

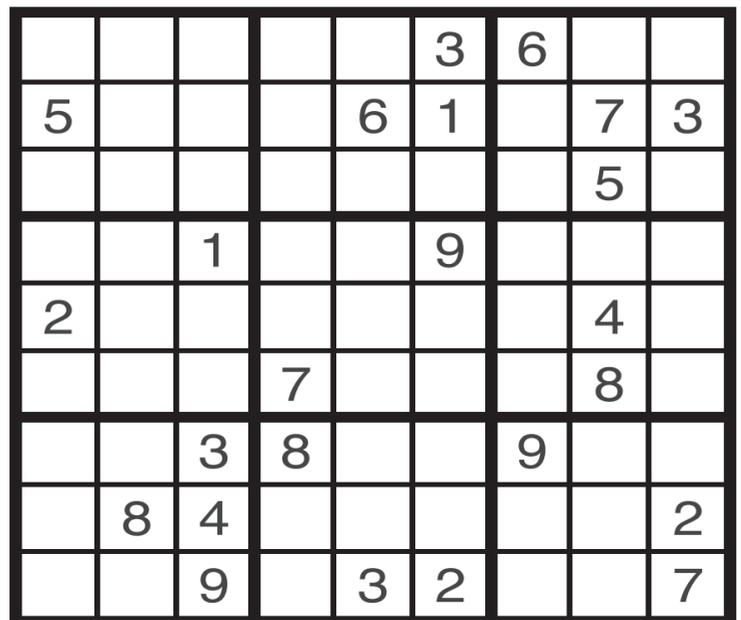
Jan 21/Feb 18

It is becoming evident that you might need to bring in a little extra help on a situation that has been brewing for some time, Aquarius. Figure out who you can trust and go from there.

### PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Your powers of concentration and self-discipline are impressive, Pisces. There are lessons that others can learn about these admirable traits if you're willing to share.



## SUDOKU

#### Here's How It Works:

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

#### Fun By The Numbers

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

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# REGION

## DCR Awards grants through Volunteer Fire Capacity program

The Department of Conservation and Recreation announced it has awarded \$117,000 to 43 rural, call or volunteer fire departments across Massachusetts through the Volunteer Fire Capacity Program.

The funding will help smaller departments train personnel, prevent forest fires and enhance community safety. "The VFC grants provide critical funding to rural fire departments across Massachusetts, enabling them to invest in the training and equipment they need to quickly and effectively respond to wildfires," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "As a former mayor, I know firsthand the

importance of partnerships between federal, state and municipal entities. These grants are a great example of what we can accomplish when we work together, ensuring that we can protect our natural resources and continue to provide safe outdoor spaces."

Towns that received an award from this year's program are: Huntington \$1,060, Montgomery \$2,963.50, Plainfield \$2,026.33 and Williamsburg \$2,225.

"The Healey-Driscoll Administration leads in recognizing the dedication of our firefighters and I especially appreciate knowing that our rural communities are so well protected," said

Director of Rural Affairs Anne Gobi. "Congratulations to the towns and thank you firefighters."

VFC grants are only eligible to municipalities with a population of 10,000 or lower that are home to community volunteer fire departments responding to wildfires. To be considered for a VFC grant, fire departments must be made up of at least 80% call or volunteer firefighters, be a state-recognized fire department, and be National Incident Management System compliant. Many of the communities receiving VFA funds are designated high-risk areas, where local firefighters partner with federal firefighting

agencies to respond to wildfires.

"The Volunteer Fire Capacity Grants are examples of the Healy-Driscoll Administration's continuing commitment to partner with federal agencies like the US Forest Service in helping rural and volunteer fire departments enhance their ability to provide public safety," said DCR Chief Fire Warden Dave Celino. "The historic statewide wildfire activity last fall showed the need for and the value of this collaborative grant effort in support of our rural fire departments, who are the first line of defense in response to these incidents."

This year's awards rep-

resented seven additional communities and nearly \$30,000 in funding over last year's program. The VFC program is authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 and is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and administered by DCR on a 50% reimbursement basis.

Last fall Massachusetts experienced an unprecedented level of wildfire activity, with the

DCR, Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry reporting wildfire occurrence increased by roughly

1,200% during the

months of October and November. This accounted for roughly 1,300 separate wildfires that burned across the state.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams and parkways. The agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the well-being of all. To learn more about DCR, facilities and programs, people may visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr).

## Clark presents talk on Berenice Abbott

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Wednesday, Aug. 13 at 1 p.m., the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., presents Berenice Abbott Bonus Selection, the third in a summer series of free curatorial talks highlighting rarely exhibited aspects of the collection in the Manton Study Center for Works on Paper in the Manton Research Center.

American-born, Parisian-trained Berenice Abbott (1898-1991) is one of the most skillful and celebrated documentary photographers of the twentieth century. Grace Hanselman, curatorial

assistant for works on paper, presents a sampling of portrait and architectural photographs that complement the works currently on view in Berenice Abbott's Modern Lens.

This event is part of a series of Works on Paper Highlights Talks in the Manton Study Center, which houses the Clark's collection of more than 6,500 prints, drawings, and photographs. Each Wednesday through Aug. 26 from 1-1:30 p.m., a member of the Clark's curatorial department provides a special look inside a facet of

the works on paper collection, including rarely exhibited prints, drawings, watercolors, and photographs. T

The next talk in this series, America's Grand Tour, takes place on Aug. 20 at 1 p.m. and is presented by Hannah Chew, graduate intern for works on paper.

People may visit [clarkart.edu/events](http://clarkart.edu/events) for more details. Capacity is limited. Seating is first-come, first-served. The Manton Study Center for Works on Paper is located next to the Berenice Abbott's Modern Lens exhibition in the Manton Research Center.

## Gas prices decrease one cent

WESTWOOD – Like an ice cream cone on a hot day, the cost of a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline is dribbling down across the Northeast as inventories and modest demand remain conducive to falling prices.

Even as inventories of gasoline fell by a substantial 3.3 million barrels in the Northeast last week, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), stocks still sit squarely above levels seen in each of the past two years and are just shy of the five-year average. The significant drop last week is due in large part to a brief shutdown of refinery operations at Phillips 66's Bayway refinery in Linden, New Jersey, after severe thunderstorms knocked out power and caused flooding issues. The refinery is a critical source of gasoline for the region.

Demand for gasoline, meanwhile, climbed last week to 8.967 million barrels a day, an increase of nearly 500,000 barrels a day from the previous week, according to the EIA. The figure is more in line with expectations for this phase of the summer driving season,

but is not high enough to raise concerns about impact on supply.

Another factor weighing down pump prices is the cost of crude oil, which settled at a three-week low Friday as markets remain unsure about the strength of the global economy.

"Typically, a refinery outage like the recent incident at the Bayway refinery in New Jersey could cause price spikes at the pump," said Mark Schieldrop, senior spokesperson for AAA Northeast. "Thanks to the region's healthy gasoline inventories, the potential price increases did not materialize and drivers are still enjoying seasonably low prices compared to last year."

The average gas price in Massachusetts is down a penny from last week (\$3.05), averaging \$3.04 per gallon. Today's price is four cents lower than a month ago (\$3.08) and 43 cents lower than this day last year (\$3.47). Massachusetts' average gas price is 10 cents

lower than the national average.

AAA Northeast's July 28 survey of fuel prices found the current national average unchanged from last week (\$3.14), averaging \$3.14 per gallon. Today's national average price is five cents lower than a month ago (\$3.19) and 46 cents lower than this day last year (\$3.50).

Today, Mississippi and Oklahoma have the lowest prices in the nation at \$2.70 and \$2.72, respectively. Hawaii and California hold the highest prices in the nation this week at \$4.48 and \$4.47, respectively. Massachusetts holds the 26th place on the list of highest gas prices in the nation.

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with offices in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing nearly 6.8 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, financial and auto-related services.



## Clark hosts self care activities

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Tuesday, Aug. 19 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., presents a "Morning of Self-Care" with activities designed to engage and relax.

Local yoga instructor, Mary Edgerton, leads the season's final free all-levels yoga session inspired by the sights and sounds of the Clark Art Institute's natural landscape. Yoga takes place on the Reflecting Pool

lawn and is free. Participants should bring their own mat.

Participants can continue a morning of self-care and introspection indoors when the museum opens at 10 a.m. Visitors can pick up a Pause and Reflect Guide at the Clark Center admissions desk and embark on a contemplative engagement with art in the galleries, alone or with a loved one.

At 11 a.m., Reflections: Introspective Gallery Talk offers a guided gallery experience in which visitors, led by a Clark educator, work together to explore a singular work of art in the Clark's permanent collection. Reflections gallery talks meet in the Museum Pavilion and are free with gallery admission; advance registration is required. For more information, people may visit [clarkart.edu/events](http://clarkart.edu/events).

The next Reflections gallery talk takes place on Tuesday, Sept. 9, at 11:30 a.m.

## Send Us Your Autumn Event Information

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

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

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

## Community Autumn Events

Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public

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

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

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

Location \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Cost \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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