

*"Not being beautiful was the true blessing. Not being beautiful forced me to develop my inner resources. The pretty girl has a handicap to overcome." – Golda Meir*

# 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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**HUNTINGTON**

## Murals celebrate 'Wild & Scenic' Westfield River

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

On Wednesday, Aug. 9, students and staff at the Gateway Middle/High School Explorer's Summer Camp revealed painted murals inspired by the 30th Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic designation for the Westfield River.

A large turnout of parents, community members, local officials and the 98 campers themselves were on hand for the unveiling. Five murals were developed during a "Wild About Art" unit of the summer camp, which featured five other Science Technology, Engineering Art and Math units.

The camp was funded through a 21st Century



Art teacher Christine O'Malley and guest muralist Lulu Maiorescu led the mural project at Gateway's summer camp. Photo by Wendy Long

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**HUNTINGTON**

## Rural School Aid doubles for FY24

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

The first person in the Gateway Regional School District to publicly break the news that Rural School Aid had increased was rising senior and student leader, Joey Pisani.

On July 10, he posted in the Parents of Gateway Regional Facebook page, "Shout-out to all of our rural school aid advocates across the district. From parents, students, to staff, faculty, administrators and community members. Today Governor Healey approved \$15 million for Rural School Aid, that is double what was proposed in the original budget."

Pisani himself had testified at the statehouse with a contingent from

AID, page 3

**BECKET**

## Panelists discuss community journalism

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Library Director Jodi Shafiroff welcomed the audience to a discussion on the value of community journalism last Wednesday evening at the Becket Athenaeum.

Moderator Donald Morrison, The Berkshire Eagle columnist and co-chair of the newspaper's advisory board opened the evening.

Monterey News Editor Stephen Moore, Sandisfield

JOURNALISM, page 9



Shown from left are Monterey News Editor Stephen Moore, Country Journal Editor Ellenor Downer, The Berkshire Eagle Columnist and Advisory Board Co-chair Donald Morrison and Sandisfield Times founder and board member, Ronald Bernard. Photo by Mary Kronholm

**BLANDFORD**

## Blandford Fair preparation underway

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Fair President Matthew Ripley, Executive Vice President Greg Girard and Board member David Chaffee were on hand Sunday afternoon at the Fairgrounds.

Besides sprucing up the grounds in preparation for the 154th Annual Labor Day Weekend Fair, Ripley and Girard talked about the major repairs already accomplished, and those projects in the works.

Volunteers have been painting and ridding the area of the invasive Oriental Bittersweet.

"We're improving curb appeal," said Ripley.

There will be a new fence coming on the North Street side. New roofs have already been installed on some of the buildings, but the biggest project in the pipeline is the Agricultural Hall.

A local fair supporter donated in excess of \$20,000 for historically accurate, period-correct windows. Ordered over a year ago, the new windows for

the Agricultural Hall will be installed after the fair.

A new tent has been ordered and will be in place at the Center Stage to provide shade for the audience.

The Blandford Fair Preservation Association, Inc. has the rehabbing of the Agricultural Hall as their primary

fundraising effort.

According to Girard, "It will take over \$100,000" to completely refurbish the hall and keep it historically accurate, which is a goal for all work on all fair buildings.

There are work parties on

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Fair President Matthew Ripley, left, with Executive Vice President Greg Girard work to prepare the fairgrounds for the 154th Annual Labor Day Weekend Fair. Photo by Mary Kronholm



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# HILLTOWNS

## MassDOT announces upcoming I-90 road work

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces crews will be conducting overnight hour line striping work and median pier protection, barrier installation and pavement marking operations on I-90 eastbound and westbound in Becket, Otis, Lee, West Stockbridge and Stockbridge.

The work will be conducted at various times and locations now through Friday, August 18. Lane closures will be in place during repair operations and traffic will be able to travel through the work zones.

Line striping operations in Becket and Otis will be conducted nightly on I-90

eastbound and westbound between mile marker 14.0 and mile marker 21.0 from Thursday, Aug. 17 through Friday, Aug. 18 from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to conclude on Friday, August 18 by 5 a.m.

Median pier protection work in Lee will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound between mile marker 8.3 and mile marker 10.3 from Thursday, Aug. 17 through Friday, Aug. 18, from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to conclude on Friday, Aug. 18 by 5 a.m.

Temporary barrier installments

and pavement marking operations in Stockbridge will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound near mile marker 7.5 from Thursday, Aug. 17 through Friday, Aug. 18 from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to conclude on Friday, Aug. 18 by 5 a.m.

Appropriate signage, law enforcement details, and messaging will be in place to guide drivers through the work area. Drivers who are traveling through the affected areas should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution.

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

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

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

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

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

## CHESTER

### Chester Hill Association to host talk on honey bees Aug. 20

CHESTER – The Chester Hill Association will be hosting a talk on honey bees at the schoolhouse at 343 Skyline Trail on Sunday, Aug. 20 at 2 p.m.

Bob Broga will give the talk on bees. His in-depth knowledge of honey bees is fascinating and super informative. Light refreshments will be served.

## OTIS

### OPD to hold school supplies drive

OTIS – The Otis Police Department will hold a school supplies drive to assist local students now through Monday, Aug. 28. Drop off locations are the Otis Town Hall, Otis Poultry Farm, Katie's and Papa's. Items to be collected include: backpacks, 24 pack crayons, glue sticks,

thin dry erase markers, two pocket folders, colored pencils, pencil boxes, pencils, single notebooks – college ruled, composition books and children's scissors. Distribution will take place at the Otis Town Hall on Tuesday, Aug. 29 from noon-3 p.m. All are welcome.

### PUBLIC NOTICE BAIL COMMISSIONERS NEEDED EASTERN HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COURT JURISDICTION

The Massachusetts Trial Court hereby gives notice of the availability of one or more Bail Commissioner appointments for the Eastern Hampshire District Court located in Hampshire County.

A Bail Commissioner is appointed by the Massachusetts Trial Court to make release and bail determinations for persons arrested when courts are closed (overnights, weekends and holidays.)

**PLEASE NOTE:** This is an appointment only. No salary or benefits are included but fees may be collected from the person in custody at the time of release. The base fee is \$40.00.

Bail Commissioners are required to have reliable transportation in order to travel to the Eastern Hampshire District Court and the police departments located in Amherst, Belchertown, Granby, Hadley, Pelham, South Hadley and Ware. Proximity to the communities listed and familiarity with criminal law and procedures helpful.

*If you are interested in being considered for appointment please contact:*

CATHERINE M. COUGHLIN, ESQUIRE  
STATE BAIL ADMINISTRATOR  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE TRIAL COURT  
tc bail@jud.state.ma.us

*The appointing authorities do not discriminate against any applicant because of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, status as a veteran, basis of disability or any other federal, state or local protected class.*



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# HUNTINGTON

## MURALS

from page 1

Learning Centers grant-with funds and materials from numerous partners-and served 98 students entering grades 5 - 11. Campers received bus transportation, lunch and a weekly field trip at no charge.

"Two of the many ways Wild & Scenic funds can be used are for education and the arts that increase public awareness of the river," said Andrew Petitdemange of the National Park Service, which contributes to managing the Wild & Scenic designation.

Led by teacher Christine O'Malley and guest muralist and Huntington resident, Lulu Maiorescu, the murals were supported by the Wild & Scenic Committee and numerous community partners. Materials and funding for this unit were provided by Sherwin Williams, Clark Paint, Fleury Lumber and Home Depot.

O'Malley has taught art at Gateway Middle School for many years. Maiorescu is a painting student at the Pratt Institute in New York and has spent three years working with urban mural projects in a New York City based program designed for teens.

During the mural activity, students learned about the unique ecosystem of the river-which runs directly in front of their school. Wild & Scenic Westfield River Chair Cindy Delpapa, project coordinator Meredyth Babcock and bot-

anist John Burns kicked off the art project with riverside exploration sessions. Students selected a specific animal to research and work into the murals.

In addition to the environmental study, students were also taught the fundamentals of drawing and painting before creating the panels that show the animals in their habitat. The five resulting panels feature fish, mammals, amphibians and reptiles, birds and insects.

They will be mounted on the dug-outs of the softball and baseball fields and will be visible to passers by on Littleville Road.

"The kids have done an amazing job turning the healthy ecosystem they observed into public art of the river," Petitdemange said. "These murals will encourage those who use the sports fields to take a closer look at the river and consider how important it is to their life."

Gateway's Coordinator of Student Programs and Communication, Martha Clark, was pleased with the project's fit into the STEAM-themed camp. "The murals will still be there when these kids embark on their lives beyond school and we know that the experience of learning about and creating images of animals will give them pride in the remarkable river that defines our landscape," she said.



The fish mural honoring the Westfield River's 30th anniversary of earning "Wild & Scenic" federal designation, is one of five murals, which will be displayed on the athletic fields of Gateway Regional.

Photo by Wendy Long

## AID

Gateway last spring. "It's a tremendous win," acknowledged State Representative Natalie Blais, who co-chaired the commission that issued the report in 2022 on the fiscal plight of rural schools in Massachusetts. "I'm so grateful to everyone-individuals and organizations-across the state who made this happen."

Gateway's State Senator Paul Mark was also excited about the outcome. "Our entire regional legislative delegation worked together to get this number up as high as possible and I think that work paid off. \$15 million is twice what the Governor initially proposed and nearly three times as much as last year. The advocacy of students and faculty from throughout the region, including at Gateway, was very helpful as we made the case for a funding increase to Senate and House leadership."

In his announcement, Pisani stated that local legislators had said earlier this year, "that our small but mighty Gateway community had done some of the best and most advocacy work about a school topic they had ever seen."

This praise was echoed this week by Gateway's State Representative Nick Boldyga. "This allocation underscores a tangible commitment to addressing the needs of rural education and is a

reflection of the hard work, perseverance, and determination of administrators, teachers, students and parents in the Gateway School District. Their dedicated efforts have not only helped to secure vital resources for rural schools but have also paved a path for continued collaboration and growth. The journey towards equitable education is ongoing, and the success in this year's budget serves as a beacon of hope, inspiring us to strive for even greater milestones in the future."

And the future will require continued and sustained, advocacy for rural schools. The Rural Schools Commission Report called for a \$60 million increase in funding-via a new budget line-to rural schools to level the playing field in the classrooms across the state. Looking ahead, Mark said, "We will be able to build on a \$15 million floor as we continue to fight to get this number as close as possible to full funding as soon as possible."

Superintendent Kristen Smidy was cautiously optimistic about the increase but said that Gateway's portion of that funding was still uncertain. "I know that other communities have seen the attention on rural aid and hope to get in on a piece of the pie now that funding is slowly increasing. If the state decides



Standing in front of North Hall in Huntington are Ellen Barry, Raye Birk and Candace Barrett Birk.

Submitted photo

## North Hall Association presents reading of 'The Last Romance'

HUNTINGTON – On Sunday, Aug. 20 at 2 p.m., there will be a staged reading of Tony Award-winning playwright Joe DiPietro's "The Last Romance" on the stage in the Historic North Hall, 40 Searle Road. stage at 2 p.m. as part of the North Hall Arts Festival, presented by the North Hall Association.

The performance is free, with donations accepted. This romantic comedy with a twist about finding love at any age features the cast of three professional actors including Ellen

Barry and real life husband and wife, Candace Barrett Birk and Raye Birk. This charming, funny and bittersweet play confirms that it is never too late for love, which can make anyone feel young again.

All program updates may be found by visiting northhallhuntington.org. The seven program series is sponsored by the Westfield Bank, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and Cultural Councils of: Chester, Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Russell, Westhampton and Worthington.

## Huntington Evangelical Church to hold large tag sale next weekend

HUNTINGTON – The ladies of the Huntington Evangelical Church announce they will have a large tag sale on Friday, Aug. 25 and Saturday, Aug. 26.

The sale will be inside their Chapel, located on Route 20 on the green. It will be held rain or shine.

There is sure to be something for everybody. Along with the usual vari-

ety of items, there will be a selection of clothing. All items are sold by "Make an Offer." There is also many, many books which will be offered at "Fill a bag" for \$1.

Proceeds from the tag sale goes to the Women's Missionary Guild, which in turn is used to help others including the Hope Totes, the church and others where needed.

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that more towns will be eligible for rural aid by reconfiguring the formula of what constitutes as 'rural' then we would get less, which would be a shame because the whole point of providing this assistance is to address the issues that come from our rurality."

Smidy's concerns are already taking root via a good news - bad news scenario. Governor Healey has created a Director of Rural Affairs position, but the definition of rural communities has recently shifted due to population trends and has resulted in a higher number of towns meeting the new definition.

Smidy concluded, "I do have to say that although the \$15 million in rural aid is a step in the right direction, it is nowhere near what we actually need to level the playing field based on the Rural Schools Report and what we are seeing in practice."

Smidy pointed to testimony on Capitol Hill in late July by Superintendent John Cabral of Taunton Public Schools. With a population of over 8,000 students, Cabral has enjoyed substantial increases in Chapter 70 funding (13.10% for this year) and through the Student Opportunity Act (for which Gateway's increase was 0.4% for this year), which has enabled their district

to increase staffing, expand early childhood programs, reduce class sizes, create early college programs for under-represented students, and establish innovative pathways at the high school focused on careers in technology.

But, Cabral noted, needs for programs like this exist across the state, regardless of zip code. He concluded, "I urge you to support our rural, small, and declining enrollment districts, as I have witnessed firsthand the incredible work that happens with financial investments in our students, schools, districts, and communities."

And Blais reiterated her commitment to continued work on Rural School Aid. She added that the report had also called for other measures in support of rural schools, which also made progress this year. Most notably, she said, was the allocation of \$97.1 million for regional school transportation reimbursement (a \$14.9 million increase from last year) and \$1 million for non-resident vocational student transportation reimbursements, a \$750,000 increase over FY'23.

In other educational funding news, Healey has announced that all lunches in all schools in the Commonwealth will be offered free of charge in the coming school year.



# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



### Why is Social Security withholding my monthly payments?

Dear Rusty:

I have been working since I started collecting Social Security when I turned 62. Last year I was apparently overpaid because of my job. I made \$37,000 and now the Social Security Administration says I owe them \$8,800 dollars because I made too much and they have withheld my \$2000 monthly SS payment.

I am close to the maximum allowable again already this year. So, I am looking at quitting my job so I don't go over, but they are holding my payments so then I would have no money. Any help would be appreciated.

Signed: Frustrated by Social Security

Dear Frustrated:

You are being affected by Social Security's "earnings test," which applies to everyone who collects early Social Security and also works before reaching their Full Retirement Age. If your earned income exceeds the annual limit, which was \$19,560 for 2022, Social Security will withhold \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit.

If you earned \$37,000 in 2022 you were more than \$17,000 over the limit and owe half of that back to Social Security. They usually recover what you owe by withholding your future benefit payments, so they won't pay you benefits until they have recovered that \$8,800, after which your benefits will resume, but only for a while.

If you are working full time and also collecting early Social Security benefits, the earnings test lasts until you reach your full retirement age, which for you is 66 years and 8 months. The earnings limit goes up a bit each year for 2023 it is \$21,240, but if you continue to work full time, you'll receive another overpayment notice and have more benefits withheld.

A better approach might be to contact Social Security in advance and tell them what your 2023 earnings are expected to be, thus permitting them to suspend your benefits in advance and avoid overpaying you. I'm afraid there is no way around this – collecting early benefits while working full time means the "earnings test" will affect your benefit payments.

The "good news" in all of this is that when you reach your Full Retirement Age, you will get time-credit for all months your benefits were withheld. By that I mean they will, at your FRA, recalculate your benefit entitlement as though you had claimed later (later by the number of months you had benefits withheld), which will result in a higher monthly payment after your FRA.

In that way, you may eventually recover some or all of the benefits withheld by receiving a higher monthly amount for the rest of your life, starting at your full retirement age.

I suggest you contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 or at your local office and tell them you want to provide them with an estimate of your 2023 earnings because you are working and collecting early Social Security benefits.

SECURITY, page 5

## 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.



## GUEST COLUMN

### Soil test this fall and beat the rush



A dear friend of mine sent me a picture of her pepper; her one pepper. Granted, the fruit was picked a wee-bit prematurely by her 3-year-old granddaughter Genevieve, but still, one single fruit measuring 2 inches by 2 inches for all of her many pepper plants is nothing to brag about.

If I'm not mistaken, she used the word "pathetic" to describe said plants. Along with "stunted" and "pale."

Alas, what is a friend to do, but recommend a soil test.

I finally got the soil in two of my gardens tested last fall and I am so very happy that I did. With the necessary amendments added to bring up sub-par soil, I am enjoying bush beans and happy flowers in those areas.

Many of us garden for years before we have our soil tested. It is likely that we get fixed on our own routine of liming and fertilizing.

Perhaps too, we live with the same insect and disease problems each season and think

that little can be done to remedy our situation. Maybe with a better understanding of our soil through testing, we will be able to create and maintain a fertile soil that supports healthy, optimal plant growth.

Rather than waiting until spring, beat the rush and send your sample off this fall. Here is a refresher on the nuts and bolts of soil testing.

We test the soil for many reasons. Perhaps the most important reason is to learn its pH.

Here in New England soil tends to be on the acidic side. Vital soil nutrients are unavailable to plants in an overly acid soil, even if they are in great supply.

Optimum pH for most plants is close to neutral, in the range of 6.2-6.8. Before you head for the garage to dust off the spreader, be forewarned that all limes are not the same!

Test results will indicate whether calcitic lime, hi mag lime, or dolomitic lime is best for your soil, and at what rates.

The test will also give you recommendations for boosting necessary soil nutrients, the most common of which are phosphorous, and potassium, magnesium, calcium and more. Let the soil testing laboratory know what crops you grow and what kind of gardener you are, that way their advice can be specific to your needs.

Organic gardeners will want to use natural fertilizer sources such as blood meal, bone meal, bone char, wood ash, rock phosphate

GARDEN, page 5

## A Summer Tour of Community Colleges

By Eric Goodhart

There are many questions that need to be answered by a teenager, who has college aspirations.

But for now, here is just one. Whenever I asked a teenager why they want to go to college I often get one of two answers. "To get a good job" or "It is the expected thing to do."

I have yet to hear a student reply like this. "The career I am interested in is something in the medical profession. Not sure if I want to pursue a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine or a Doctor of Medicine degree. Both cost a ton. My kid sister wants to be lawyer specializing in Health Care Law. She says she is going to keep an eye on me."

"I started in the summer between sophomore and junior year, taking college level classes at our local community college. I continued dual enrollment through junior year. The Salutatorian at my high school did that. He was accepted to Rhodes College as a sophomore plus a \$12,000/year scholarship. He saved his parents over \$102,000. In fact, each of the three years he will be there will cost about \$10,000 less than UMass, Amherst."

Such an outcome is possible. But it takes research coupled with practical planning including factoring in financial considerations.

For the students who are ready for a challenge, dual enrollment is a very good option. Mount Wachusett, Greenfield, Holyoke Berkshire Community Colleges and Springfield Tech all are focused on expanding their Dual Enrollment programs. Right now, summer is when many are offering on campus Dual Enrollment introductory talks

or on Zoom. Greenfield, MWCC, Springfield and Berkshire CC have very easy to navigate websites with that information. Here is the website to visit for all the CCs in the state <https://masscc.org/colleges/>

In addition, each one, including Holyoke CC, has a Phi Theta Kappa honor society chapter. It is not easy to become a member, nor should it be. PTK, founded in 1918, is an international honor society for community college students mirroring the principles of the much older Phi Beta Kappa honor society at four-year colleges. founded in 1776 at the College of William & Mary.

Membership in PTK comes with many perks. More about that next week. Be sure to ask admissions on your tour as to how many students received the honor in the last five years and where are they are now?

Whatever the reason for going to college may be, the first and most important first step of a teenager is to do some self-reflection and selected self-assessments. They are not tests.

Every community college has an academic and career advising department. Part of that advising includes some form of assessment and/or interest survey.

MWCC has a free 60 question interest questionnaire anyone can take resembling the John Holland SDS survey. That is a good start.

The college's overall explanation of its Academic and Career Advising process is very good. However, positive individual results ultimately depend on the student's initiative in taking advantage of that guidance.

Greenfield CC has several self-assess-

COLLEGE, page 5

## EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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# OPINION

## HILLTOWN HISTORY

### Quarrying pink granite in the Hilltowns

By Deborah Daniels  
Correspondent

Three brothers came from Aberdeen, Scotland looking for streets paved in gold in America and they found it. Only the streets were paved with granite, which was as good as gold to these three quarrymen. That is three quarrymen, who knew how to liberate the granite from the rocky ledges it was buried in.

There is a small quarry off of Route 20 around the Chester Becket line, which produced pink granite. The ghostly remnants of a frame, which held a giant stone cutting saw and machinery, lay silent molding back into the ground where the pink granite was extracted.

To clarify this area of the Hilltowns had four quarries stripping granite from the hillsides: the Hudson Chester Quarry in Becket, the Bowe Quarry in Otis, the Otis Chester Quarry and the Berkshire Pink Granite Quarry. These were first operational in the late 1800s and it was mostly blue granite that was quarried.

The pink granite was first quarried around 1910 by one of the Scottish brothers, John Leslie Mitchell. However it was his son, Frank Mitchell, who while working full time for the Hudson Chester Quarry got the Berkshire Pink Granite Quarry established.

This ledge of pink granite required blasting it with black powder to create a quarry so it could be cut. At the time this involved using a jackhammer to create 3 to 4 holes in the granite about a foot apart depending on the size of stone desired.

Then a metal shim was inserted into the hole and a wedge. Then it was time to brute hammer away. The granite would eventually split off from the wall in four or six foot blocks. This was carried to a six foot shot saw and cut down to size.

The shot saw was a saw with foot long teeth that also had a conveyor belt dropping pellet sized BB shot that helped to cut the granite. You could say it was cutting edge technology for 1948, which is when it was introduced at the Berkshire Pink Granite Quarry.

It was described as a real brain ratter. The pink granite was then sanded by a machine and polished with a felt covered buffing wheel and the use of tan oxide, a pigment enhancer.



The frame, which held the granite saw, still stands



This is how the pink granite quarry looks today.



Gail Kusek museum docent stands in front of the Mullen House (museum) in Becket.



These shot pellets were used with the saw to cut granite. Photos by Deborah Daniels

The quarry was small and employed three full time workers in its heyday. It produced paving blocks used to make roads.

However as asphalt replaced paving stones for road making, the pink granite was used as building veneer for homes and buildings. Carm's Restaurant and the garage in Chester are made of pink granite, only they are painted white now.

A house in Becket has pink granite veneer. Pink granite was also used to make gravestones and fireplaces.

Leslie Frank Mitchell was the third generation of Mitchells to work the quarry. He was described as a wizard with machinery, as perhaps he had to be to keep the quarry running.

He had a hobby of fixing clocks and gadgets for which the locals with ailing clocks took full advantage. Their Gothic



These steps are made from pink granite.



Granite cutting saw located in Chester, MA, that was used to cut Chester blue granite.

looking house, originally the homestead, attested to the Mitchell's success in the quarry business.

Leslie and his sister Ida worked hard to maintain the business, but the costs proved too high to modernize the quarry in the 1960s and it was closed in 1968. They donated pink granite that was used to build an addition on the Becket School in 1979. Pink granite was also used to make the large War Memorial in the town of Becket.

The quarry site is now owned by the Becket Land Trust. Local residents donated money to help pay for the property, so it will be preserved. The nearby Mullen House Educational Center in Becket has a terrific exhibit on quarrying with authentic tools, implements and even a quarry worker's diary as well as a museum docent in Gail Kusek. The Mullen House is open Saturdays, from noon-3 p.m. until Labor Day. The Mullen House is a place to celebrate local history and be amazed.

## SECURITY

from page 4

They will work with you to suspend your benefits for an appropriate number of (additional) months to avoid another overpayment situation. Note, you'll likely need to do this each year you continue to work full time, until the year you reach your full retirement age when the earnings limit more than doubles. The earnings limit goes away when you reach your full retirement age.

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

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

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

## COLLEGE

from page 4

ments anyone can take on its website. For a modest cost of \$39 a student even just thinking about attending Greenfield CC can take advantage of that. It illustrates the value and importance the college has in its advising philosophy.

The college recently completed a true Nation-wide search for a new President. Michelle Schutt, Ph.D. has a BS, two MS degrees along with her Doctorate in Education and Human Studies. A Midwesterner at heart she has brought that to Greenfield and

adjusted seamlessly into her new role in Franklin County.

The college is fortunate to have her as the 11th President. Because of her past many leadership accomplishments in both the classroom and as a keynote speaker on leadership in many different stages it is no surprise that she is now in Greenfield. She has the academic and charismatic personality that, by all reports, foretells good things for the college's future and the wider community at the beginning of the Mohawk Trail.

## GARDEN

from page 4

and greensand among others to feed the soil.

The standard soil test will also give you the levels of lead in your soil. As we all know, lead poisoning is a particular concern to children under the age of 6.

Produce grown in soils high in lead can accumulate enough lead in their tissue to be hazardous when eaten. The most likely cause of soil contamination is from particles of lead based paint that have been removed from nearby structures.

To reduce the risk of contamination, locate gardens away from old painted structures and keep pH and organic matter contents at optimal ranges.

For just a few dollars more, the percentage of organic matter in the soil can be determined. Organic matter is very important because it encourages a healthy population of soil microbes that solubilize stored nutrients, making them more available for plant uptake.

As organic material decomposes, humus results. Humus binds sandy soils and improves their water holding capacity; alternately, it aerates heavy clay soils and promotes better drainage.

If the percentage of organic matter in your garden comes in low, add compost, aged animal manure, or cover crops

to bring levels up. Established shrub or perennial borders benefit from an application of bark mulch for the same reason.

It is very easy to gather soil for testing. First, remove a 6-8-inch core of soil from your garden with a stainless steel trowel. Remove surface debris and air dry.

If your garden is large, mix about a dozen cores together to end up with about a cup of soil for testing. The different microclimates of your landscape should be tested separately.

Official directions and an order form are available at <http://soiltest.umass.edu>. The standard soil test is \$20, add an additional \$6 for the standard test including organic matter. Test results could initiate some revisions to our fertilization and liming routine this fall, preparing the way for a healthier, more productive garden next spring and summer, and maybe even a few more peppers for Genevieve to enjoy!

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



## PITTSFIELD

# 1Berkshire awards Facade Improvement Grants

PITTSFIELD – 1Berkshire, thanks to an FY23 Regional Economic Development Projects Grant from the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, has awarded 52 facade improvement grants through its Best Foot Forward Program.

The Best Foot Forward Program, now in its second pilot year, provided small businesses and organizations with a pedestrian-facing facade, storefront or presence with grants of up to \$1,000 to support non-construction improvements to their respective business aesthetic. Improvements ranged from window cleaning to painting, to plantings, lighting, seating, and more.

Through the program in FY23, \$48,000 was awarded across 11 communities in the Berkshires, improving the facade presence of at least 81 individual businesses and supporting over \$67,000 in additional private investment in facade improvements across the grant awardees.

Benjamin Lamb, 1Berkshire Vice President of Economic Development said “It’s programs like this that showcase how small investments and support can inspire incredible things, bolster economic development, and improve our small business community in grassroots ways.”

The grant recipients for the FY23 program are: Braytonville Properties LLC – Adams, Adams Theater LLC – Adams, Full Well Farm – Adams, The Neon Newt – Becket, B. F; Sullivant Post 155 – Dalton, Berkshire Dry Goods – Great Barrington, Robin’s Candy – Great Barrington, Familiar Trees – Great Barrington, Red Shirt Farm – Lanesborough, Concepts of Art LTD – Lenox, Ventfort Hall – Lenox, The Mount Mount – Lenox, The Gifted Child – Lenox, Hado-Mark Gallery – Lenox, His Daughter Paloma – Lenox, Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio – Lenox, Church on the Hill – Lenox, Brook Farm Inn – Lenox, Belvoir

Terrace Inc. – Lenox, WAM Theatre – Lenox and Catwalk Boutique – Lenox.

Other recipients are Gail Grandchamp Personal Training Studio – North Adams, Roots Teen Center – North Adams, Berkshire Cider Project / The Garage – North Adams, Wallasauce & Conscientious Cloth / Wait-A-Minute – North Adams, Boxcar Media LLC – North Adams, Heart’s Pace – North Adams, Berkshire Emporium – North Adams, Kempville Flags Inc. – North Adams, Trail House Kitchen and Bar – North Adams, 42 Summer LLC – Pittsfield, Berkshire Graphics Inc. – Pittsfield, Pittsfield Residences LLC – Pittsfield, Circa – Pittsfield, Soma’s Aromas – Pittsfield, Steven Valenti Inc. – Pittsfield, Berkshire Music School – Pittsfield, Ledgewood Team LLC – Pittsfield, Berkshire Art Center (IS183) – Pittsfield, Deidre’s Special Day – Pittsfield, Harte’s Package and Variety – Pittsfield, Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield – Pittsfield, Norman

Rockwell Museum – Stockbridge, The Floor Store – West Stockbridge, Flourish Market – West Stockbridge, Nature’s Closet & The Smoothie Spot – Williamstown, Mezze Bistro + Bar – Williamstown, Images Cinem, Williamstown Chamber – Williamstown and Cricket Creek Farm – Williamstown.

Work associated with the grant awards is complete in many cases and still underway for some. Be sure to visit and check out the inspiring work of the grant recipients and all of the small businesses in the Berkshires to see the great things happening in the region.

1Berkshire is a county-wide organization focused on economic development and promotion of the region as a preferred place to visit, to live and to grow a business. It provides programs that connect businesses with each other and with potential customers and works to develop future leaders and support entrepreneurs. For more information, people may visit 1Berkshire.com.

## Annual Berkshire Biodiversity Day set for Sept. 23-24

PITTSFIELD – Celebrating local biodiversity during a time of unprecedented global biodiversity loss, the 14th Annual Berkshire Biodiversity Day, also known as Berkshire BioBlitz, welcomes community members of all ages to join biologists, naturalists and environmentalists to identify as many plants, animals, fungi and other organisms as possible during a 24-hour period.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will take place from noon on Saturday, Sept. 23 beginning at noon to Sunday, Sept. 24 at noon at Greenagers’ April Hill Education and Conservation Center, 62 N Undermountain Road, South Egremont. Participants may take part at any time during this period to record a survey of their findings and experience first-hand the importance of

a healthy, active ecosystem in their community.

This year’s program is packed with guided walks, presentations, and demonstrations led by experts. Presentation topics include: leaf-mining insects from Charley Eiseman, fungi and mushrooms from John Wheeler, and arachnids from Joseph Warfel. Aliza Fassler will present about native bees and lead a wild bee walk. Professor Tom Tynning will lead an amphibian and reptile walk that will involve checking under cover boards—a common surveying method used by herpetologists. Rene Wendell from Hoffmann Bird Club will lead an owl prow and early morning bird walk, and Ben Nickley of Berkshire Bird Observatory will also conduct a bird banding demo. People may visit [www.berkshirebioblitz.org](http://www.berkshirebioblitz.org) to find a detailed schedule of the 24-hour program.

running alongside vernal pools and wetlands. All other activities will take place at April Hill.

This year’s event is organized by Berkshire Environmental Action Team and Nature Academy of the Berkshires. It’s co-sponsored by Greenagers, Hoffmann Bird Club, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Panera, Nature Academy of the Berkshires and BEAT.

Biological surveys and expert-led walks will be conducted in Bow Wow Woods—a 50-acre parcel of land just off Rte 41 on Bow Wow Rd—which was recently acquired by Greenagers and will soon be protected by a conservation restriction to be held by the Sheffield and Egremont Land Trusts. There are two half-mile trail loops in Bow Wow Woods: one on relatively flat ground and another that descends a small hillside before

To learn more about this 24-hour biological survey, people may visit [www.berkshirebioblitz.org](http://www.berkshirebioblitz.org) or [www.facebook.com/BerkshireBioBlitz](http://www.facebook.com/BerkshireBioBlitz).



## MIDDLEFIELD



Middlefield Council on Aging will host lunch on Wednesday, Aug. 23 at the Middlefield Senior Center. Submitted photo

## Council on Aging lists menu

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Senior Center, 169 Skyline Trail, on Wednesday, Aug. 23 will serve lunch at noon.

The menu is eat in or take out. The choice is vegetarian chili with corn-

bread or ham and cheese quiche with scalloped potatoes, zucchini and orange juice.

People should call 413-623-9990 to reserve a meal by the previous Monday.

## EASTHAMPTON

### bankESB promotes Peter Gilbert

EASTHAMPTON – bankESB recently promoted Peter Gilbert to assistant branch manager of its 241 Northampton St. branch in Easthampton.

Gilbert of Westhampton started as a teller at bankESB’s Hadley branch in 2018, was promoted to teller supervisor in 2019 and moved to a float retail supervisor in 2021. He holds an associate degree



Peter Gilbert

in liberal arts and science from Springfield Technical Community College, as well as a bachelor’s degree in computer information technology from the College of Our Lady of the Elms.

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton and operates 11 branches throughout Western Massachusetts.

## STOCKBRIDGE

### BEAT sponsors tree identification walk

STOCKBRIDGE – Berkshire Environmental Action Team will lead a free tree identification walk on Sunday, Aug. 20, at 9:30 a.m.

Participants will meet at the trailhead of Lower Bowker’s Woods, a Laurel Hill Association property located near Stockbridge. The walk will last between 1.5 and 2 hours.

Anybody is welcome to join, but the number of participants is limited. Registration is required to join. People may register by visiting this link: <https://tinyurl.com/August2023-BEAT-Tree-ID>.

Participants will learn key characteristics of common trees in western Massachusetts and get tips to help identify them by species. The 1-mile trail meanders along the Housatonic River and

through a charming upland forest.

The trail is typically considered an easy route, but it has uneven terrain in some areas with many roots; it also intersects railroad tracks. Some areas of the trail can be wet and muddy.

All questions regarding this program can be directed by email to [chelsey@thebeatnews.org](mailto:chelsey@thebeatnews.org).

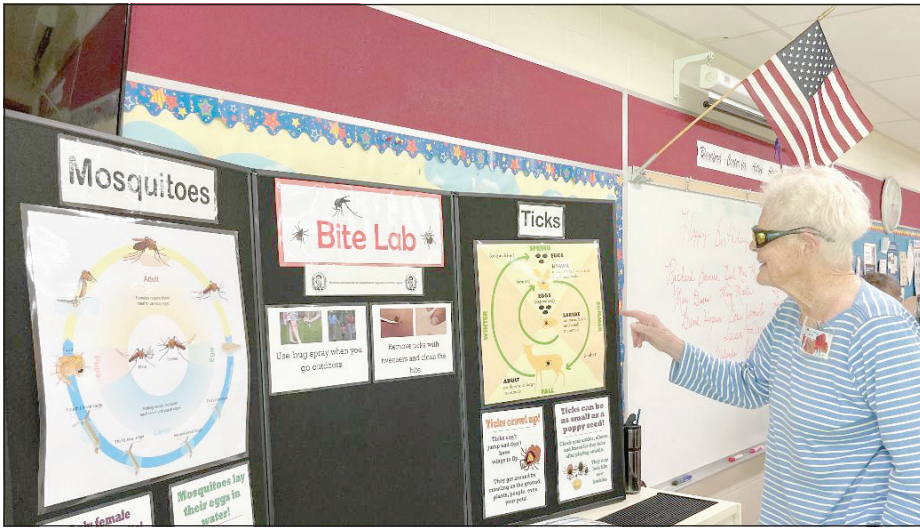
This walk is sponsored by Berkshire Environmental Action Team.

BEAT is a 501(c)(3) non-profit based in Pittsfield. They work with the community to protect the environment for wildlife in support of the natural world that sustains us all. To learn more about BEAT, people may visit their website at [www.thebeatnews.org](http://www.thebeatnews.org), email them at [team@thebeatnews.org](mailto:team@thebeatnews.org) or call 413-464-9402.



# BLANDFORD

## BLANDFORD COA HOSTS BAKED POTATO LUNCH



Above, Ann Southworth inspects the seasonally significant Bite Lab for information about the many sorts of insects that can be harmful this time of year. Shared Nursing Services Regional Public Health Nurse Christine Southworth provided the information on display at Friday's Council on Aging baked potato lunch. Right, Council on Aging board member Barbara Langmore assists Nancy Ackley find name tags at Friday's lunch-time baked potato fest.

Photos by Mary Kronholm



## STORK REPORT



Arthur David Dunne-Hall and his big sister, Louise Dunne-Hall.

## Welcome Arthur David Dunne-Hall

BLANDFORD – Arthur David Dunne-Hall arrived on Saturday, July 15, 2023 at 11:46 p.m. at Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton.

Big sister Louise, two-and-a-half years old, welcomed her brother and is pleased to have a sibling. Arthur's birthweight was 7 pounds, 14 ounces and he measured 21 inches.

Mom Mary Hall and Arthur are

well and thriving. Dad Christopher Dunne, Blandford's Town Administrator, in the meantime, has returned to his desk at Town Hall following maternity/paternity leave.

Maternal grandparents are Claire Grady and David Hall of Rochester, New York. Paternal grandparents are Allison Cook and John Dunne of Northampton.

## MOOSE ON THE LOOSE



A youthful moose is seen at the cattle water trough at Van Werkhoooven pasture North Blandford Road. The moose is sharing the space with long-horned steers.

Photo by Mary Kronholm

## 24-year-old motorcyclist lost control on Russell State Road Friday evening

BLANDFORD – A 24-year-old Westfield man lost control of his motorcycle early Friday evening on Russell Stage Road.

The emergency call came in on Aug. 11 at approximately 6:50 p.m. According to Chester/Blandford Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel, the young man was

traveling up Russell Stage Road towards the center of town.

He believed he hit some sand in the road, which caused his rear tire to fishtail, which in turn forced him to the road's shoulder where he hit soft dirt and "dumped the motorcycle."

Speed was not a factor, according to

Chief Dubiel. The accident happened near 39 Russell Stage Road.

He sustained minor injuries and was transported to Baystate Medical Center for treatment.

The motorcycle was driven away from the scene with minor damage, according to Chief Dubiel. Chester/

Blandford Officer Grzelak was also on site.

Several units responded to the accident, including the Blandford Fire Department, Hilltown Ambulance and Massachusetts State Police. His name is not being released due to respecting his medical privacy.

## FAIR

from page 1

the fairgrounds every Saturday and volunteers are always welcome.

According to Ripley and Girard, volunteers are needed for many jobs on the grounds both now and during the

Fair. Volunteers will receive two one-day passes to the fair and lunch for their efforts.

Prospective volunteers may email Girard at ggirarsr@yahoo.com.

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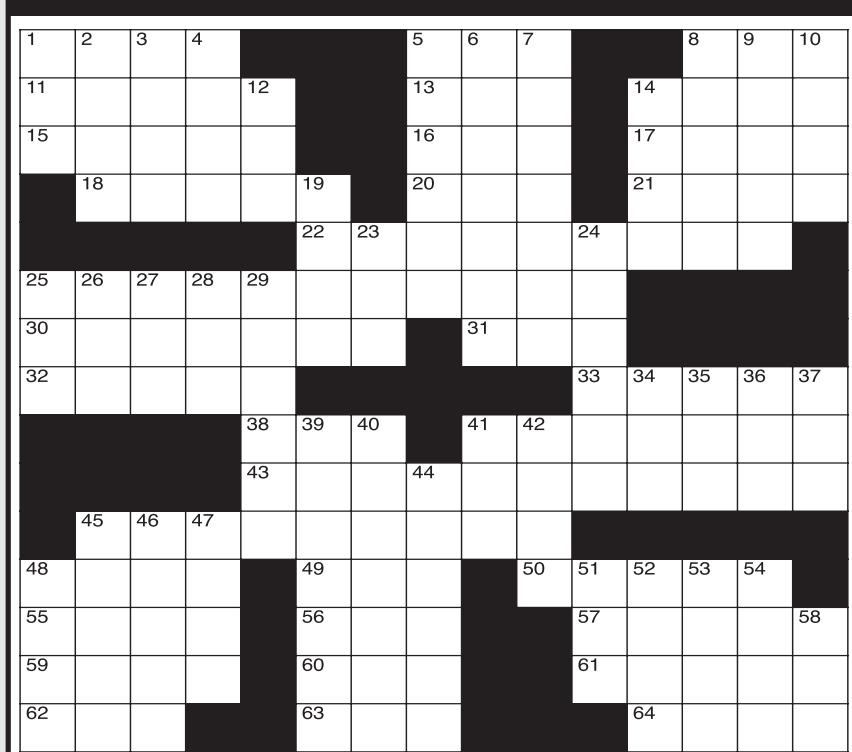
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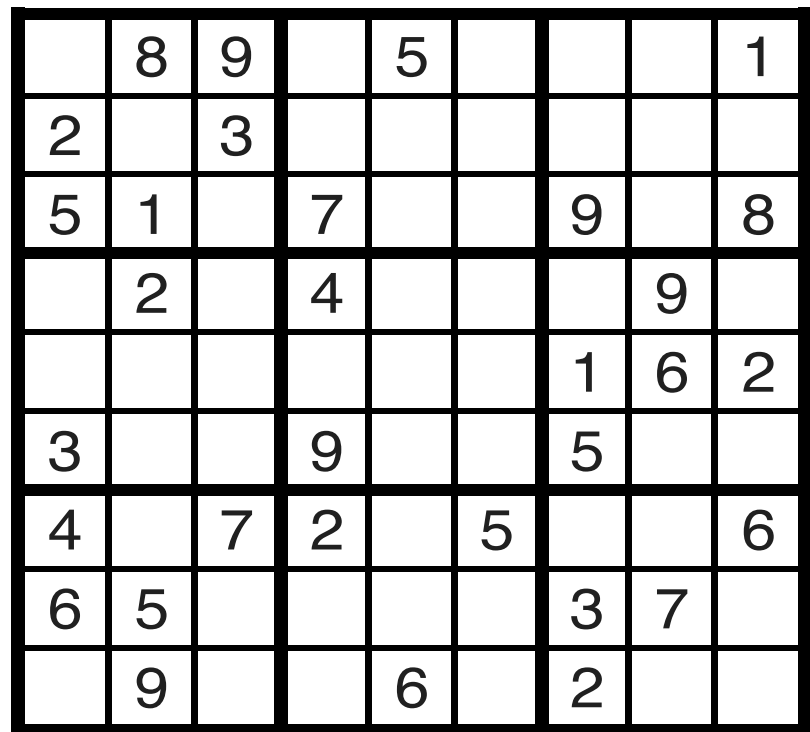
Mike Morin **562-3391** Alice Morin **562-1704**



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Civil rights organization
  - 5. Calendar month (abbr.)
  - 8. Monetary unit of Burma
  - 11. Twyla \_\_, US dancer
  - 13. Everything included
  - 14. "Antman" actor Rudd
  - 15. Italian city
  - 16. Nowhere to be found
  - 17. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
  - 18. Turkish officer
  - 20. Perform on stage
  - 21. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
  - 22. Canadian coastal provinces
  - 25. Furnishes anew
  - 30. Edible mollusk
  - 31. No seats available
  - 32. Garden figurine
  - 33. Two-legged support
  - 38. Rest here please (abbr.)
  - 41. In a silly way
  - 43. One from the Golden State
  - 45. Photographers
  - 48. Native religion in parts of China
  - 49. Dickens character
  - 50. Broadway actress
  - 55. Ancient Greek sophist
  - 56. Undivided
  - 57. Daniel \_\_, French composer
  - 59. Nocturnal S. American rodent
  - 60. Rusty
  - 61. Jewish spiritual leader
  - 62. Patti Hearst's captors
  - 63. Popular global holiday (abbr.)
  - 64. Tall, slender plant
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Defunct US energy company
  - 2. Fellow
  - 3. It's issued from
  - 4. Type of acid
  - 5. Winged nut
  - 6. Arouses
  - 7. Things are served on it
  - 8. San Diego ballplayer
  - 9. Currency and a Chinese dynasty
  - 10. \_\_ mater, one's school
  - 12. Exclamation that denotes disgust
  - 14. Hairstyle
  - 19. Supreme ancient Egyptian god
  - 23. They \_\_
  - 24. Connecting line on a map
  - 25. Mock
  - 26. One point north of due east
  - 27. Chinese philosophical principle
  - 28. Type of tree
  - 29. Persuade to do something
  - 34. A place for travelers to rest
  - 35. National Gallery of Art designer
  - 36. Panamanian province
  - 37. Field force unit (abbr.)
  - 39. Whalers' tool
  - 40. Simply
  - 41. Nigerian City
  - 42. Not one
  - 44. Obstruct
  - 45. Political plot
  - 46. Manila hemp plant
  - 47. Dough made from corn flour
  - 48. Fishes by letting the bob fly
  - 51. Swiss river
  - 52. Plant that makes gum
  - 53. A French abbot
  - 54. One point east of northeast
  - 58. Get free of

# THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

- ARIES**  
Mar 21/Apr 20  
Do not fight your emotions over the next few days. You need to embrace your feelings or you might not grow in your relationships. Show everyone the true you.
- CANCER**  
Jun 22/Jul 22  
Cancer, you are seemingly more irresistible than ever before and you're not quite sure what to do about this newfound attention. You may want to retreat, but enjoy the limelight.
- LIBRA**  
Sept 23/Oct 23  
People do not operate as efficiently when they are running on fumes caused by stress, Libra. It's time to slow down and let others handle things for a change.
- CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22/Jan 20  
Capricorn, fantasy keeps moving closer to reality for you this week. Don't count out any of those dreams you have been having as they may be inspiration for new plans.
- AQUARIUS**  
Jan 21/Feb 18  
You cannot help being unusually focused on all of the little details. It could be a way to quiet your mind, which has been running non-stop for a few weeks.
- TAURUS**  
Apr 21/May 21  
Taurus, capture all of your great ideas on paper or in digital form to refer to later on. You're feeling creative right now, and soon you can turn this into projects that have legs.
- LEO**  
Jul 23/Aug 23  
Leo, roll with whatever energy you feel coming off of the people around you. If everyone is subdued, then take that cue. If others are revved up, then you will want to light your own fire.
- GEMINI**  
May 22/Jun 21  
Time isn't on your side right now, Gemini. You may wonder how you can add hours to the day, but you must make due with the time you have.
- VIRGO**  
Aug 24/Sept 22  
Hush your inner critic, Virgo. You are doing the best possible job you can at this time. You're simply too hard on yourself and you need to cut yourself some slack.
- SCORPIO**  
Oct 24/Nov 22  
Scorpio, lately you have taken on the role of project manager and it fits you perfectly. Even though you're juggling multiple tasks and details, somehow things will work out fine.
- SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 23/Dec 21  
You're usually content being the world explorer, Sagittarius. However, lately you find the most comfort sticking closer to home. Do whatever makes you happy.
- PISCES**  
Feb 19/Mar 20  
This could be your chance to indulge a little more. Whether it's a big purchase or a night out on the town, do not resist the opportunity to get out and have fun.



## SUDOKU

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

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

answers

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11			12		13			14
15					16			17
	18			19		20		21
			22	23			24	
25	26	27	28	29				
30					31			
32						33	34	35
			38	39	40		41	42
			43			44		
	45	46	47					
48				49		50	51	52
55				56		57		58
59				60		61		
62				63			64	

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## SOUTH WORTHINGTON

### Celebration set for Aug. 20

SOUTH WORTHINGTON – The annual South Worthington/Conwell Sunday celebration will take place Sunday, Aug. 20 at 2 p.m. in the old South Worthington (Methodist) Church just off Route 112 on Ireland Street, across from the Sevenars Concerts facility.

The program features a light-hearted recreation of old-time Sunday School classes. Using teachers' ledgers and other materials from the 1876 Sabbath School at South Worthington Church as a guide, this is an interactive event where attendees can choose one of the student names available on entering the church and see how their alter ego fared long ago.

Music on the old pump organ, piano and cello will be provided by

David James, pianist and Christopher James, cellist, second and third generations of the Schrade-James family of concert artists.

Active as a Methodist Church until 1915, it was deeded to the South Worthington Church Association in 1973 by the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. It was recognized in 2005 as an integral part of the South Worthington National Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

A free-will offering is taken to continue maintenance of the church and refreshments will be served on the veranda. People can enjoy a Sunday afternoon drive into the hills and stop at the old church for a relaxing interlude.

## CUMMINGTON

### Council on Aging lists events

CUMMINGTON – An Old Time Sing-along Community Concert with Roger Tincknell will be held Saturday, Sept. 9 at 3 p.m. in Cummington Community House.

It will be held outdoors if good weather or indoors if rainy. If outdoors, people should bring a blanket or chair and seating is provided if indoors.

This concert is open to all ages. Lyrics to the songs will be provided and people can bring their ukulele if they want. For more information, people may call the COA at 413-634-2262. The concert is paid for by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services.

The Cummington Council on Aging received a generous grant from the Cummington Cultural District Committee for en plein air or "in the open air" painting workshop.

Participants will set up folding tables, chairs and easels along Main Street in Cummington and paint the scene. This is currently scheduled to take place on Saturday, Sept. 30 and Sunday, Oct. 1 from 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., with rain dates to be determined.

The completed work will subsequently be on display at the Community House. The COA will supply canvases, paint, brushes and palettes, as well as some easels. People should bring a folding table and chair and an easel if possible.

People interested in participating in this weekend workshop (all skill levels are welcome!) or would like more information may email the COA at [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) or call 634-2262 by Thursday, Aug. 31. Pre-registration is required.

## BECKET

### JOURNALISM *from page 1*

Times founder and board member Ronald Bernard and Country Journal Editor Ellenor Downer participated; each relaying their roles in being local and keeping local people up-to-date.

While the Monterey News and Sandisfield Times are very specific in their coverage areas, the Country Journal today covers 16 towns in an area about the size of Rhode Island.

Social Media, agreed the panelists, can often sideline the facts so the local publications are a good source for true and accurate information.

Representatives from the Otis Observer and the Becket Beat, a newer publication, were also in the audience.

### Becket Arts Center announces upcoming events

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, Main Street (Route 8), presents Westfield River Wild and Scenic Committee Chair, Cindy Delpapa, volunteer and projects coordinator, Meredyth Babcock, as part of its speaker series on Sunday, Aug. 20 at 4 p.m.

She will discuss programs designed to protect and enhance the Westfield River, whose 78 miles of headwater tributaries and three major branches are designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. People will hear what the community is doing to preserve the river's uniqueness and how they too can be a river steward. For more information,

people may visit [becketartscenter.org/music](http://becketartscenter.org/music).

The Becket Arts Center offers creative modern Dance for people age 18 and over on Monday, Aug. 21 and 28.

The classes include a warm up, simple phrases across the floor and creative movement improvisations. All ability levels are welcome. Cost is \$10 per class.

The Becket Bash, a fundraiser for the arts center, will be held Sunday, Aug. 27 with food and music by Jack Waldhem. It will be held rain or shine at Camp Watitch. People may purchase tickets at a reduced cost of \$55 per

person by Sunday, Aug. 20 or at the door for \$65. There is a limited supply. Proceeds benefit children's art camps, local lecture series, workshops, exhibits and more.

The Becket Arts Center will hold an Arts and Craft Marketplace on Saturday, Sept. 9 from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Crafters or artists interested in participating should fill out an application form no later than Sunday, Aug. 20 by visiting [becketartscenter.org/marketplace](http://becketartscenter.org/marketplace). The marketplace will be held in a field adjacent to the Becket Fire Station, about a quarter mile north on Route 8 from the Becket Arts Center.

## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### Colleges and universities announce President's and Dean's Lists

#### Bemidji State University

*President's List spring semester*  
Asher Swank of Northampton

#### Dean College

*Dean's List spring semester*  
Raeana Edward of Westfield, Gracia Jorgensen of Westfield and Skylar Raskevitz of Easthampton

#### Emerson Colleges

*Dean's List spring semester*  
Tierney Boyle of Easthampton, Class of 2023 Business Creative Enterprises major; Kolbie Jones of Easthampton, Class of 2023 Media Arts Production major and Ella Mastroianni of Westfield, Class of 2026 Media Arts Production major

#### Holyoke Community College

*Dean's List Spring semester*  
Dylan Charles Bradshaw of Blandford, Eileen Marie Gates of Blandford, Cheyenne Elizabeth Russell of Blandford, Liliana Manley of Chesterfield, Erin McCormick of Chesterfield, Selah Rotas Axelrad of Easthampton, Jessie Beland of Easthampton, Joel Bergstrom, of Easthampton, Nathan Alexander Biddulph of Easthampton, Janine Leia DiCarlo of Easthampton, Gracelyn Helen Downer of Easthampton, Carolyn Ann Drzik of Easthampton, Lily Ann Dunphy of Easthampton, Evan James Duso of Easthampton, Jessica Lynne Grygorowicz of Easthampton, Cheyenne Horner of Easthampton, Assya Houfr of Easthampton, Nikaia Liana Jimenez of Easthampton, Lincoln Xavier KaneLong, of Easthampton, Norvanie Lalchand of Easthampton, Morgan Ann Latour of Easthampton, Vadym Malenkyy of Easthampton, Jenna Marie Malouin of Easthampton, Natalia Anna Marcinowski

of Easthampton, Parker Scott Mason of Easthampton, Peter Jeffrey Michaud of Easthampton, Robert Abel DeBerry Mobley of Easthampton, Emily Moszynski of Easthampton, Marie Claire Poulin of Easthampton, Garrett David Santos of Easthampton, Meghan Genevieve Teague of Easthampton, Ariel Tourmaline of Easthampton, Casey Emma Wagner of Easthampton, Madelyn Elizabeth Wodecki of Easthampton, Samuel Spencer Bridgman of Florence, Shannon Collins of Florence, Riley Elizabeth Delano of Florence, Emily Elizabeth Langer of Florence, Nicole Perez of Florence, Mary Ann M. Romain of Florence, Crystal A. Rosa of Florence, Bianca Segarra of Florence, Hamenth Swaminathan of Florence, Connor Patrik Tobin of Florence, Zachary Michael O'Connell of Haydenville, Dylan Douglass Nicolle of Huntington, Rebecca Thelma Noble of Huntington, Justin Thomas Shatwell of Huntington, Christofer Adair Thrasher of Huntington, Shareef Shawky Badawy of Lenox, Joshua King of Lenox and Karen Armington Bouquillon of Montgomery.

Also Dahlia Josphine Bialek of Northampton, Dane Braastad of Northampton, Diana Andrea Chavez DeMiranda of Northampton, Jesse Knox Conner of Northampton, Cassandra M Cook I of Northampton, Renna Earp of Northampton, Angela Grace Farrick of Northampton, Zachary Harold Fox, of Northampton, Barney Rudolph Garcia IV of Northampton, Amber Rose Gormley of Northampton, Nicole Marie Howard of Northampton, Jasmine F. Klingenberg of Northampton, Anthony Scott Knowles of Northampton, Jacob Kris of Northampton, Star Dryad Lunar of Northampton, Jalyn Amelia Morin of Northampton, Jozelyn Chandara Nem of Northampton, Jessica Lyn Nicol of

Northampton, Lauren Eileen Norman of Northampton, Samantha Nurenberg of Northampton, Sasha Batz Stern of Northampton, Chelsea R. Taxman of Northampton, Hans Christopher Valdes of Northampton, Jeffrey Chuyang Wang of Northampton, Daniel Aaron Winter of Northampton, Kevin Wright of Northampton, Ashley Bellio of Pittsfield, Madison Nicole Crawford of Russell, Ashley DeRosier of Russell Mary Ann Emmonds of Russell, Connor Michael Hourihan of Russell, Dylan Heath Lafreniere of Russell, Benjamin Kenneth Adams of Southampton, Timothea Stone Antonio of Southampton, Colin Avery Bush of Southampton, William Joseph Durie-Poliwoda of Southampton, Tatiana Gero of Southampton, Nathan Thomas Hogan of Southampton, Nicholas Michael Kubosiak of Southampton, Charles Dean Little of Southampton, Meredith Megan Mielke of Southampton, Alice Santana Murray of Southampton, Katherine Nicole Pawlikowski of Southampton, Matthew Steven Riel of Southampton, Ariana Rose Ringenbach of Southampton, Stephanie Noelle Sawyer of Southampton, Alexandra Marincic Seney of Southampton, Gabrielle Dominique St. John of Southampton, Gabrielle Terasina Tisdale of Southampton, Emma Lorraine Cronin of Southwick, Jacquelyn Crosler of Southwick, Kya Lorraine Cummings of Southwick, Autumn Skye Lalli of Southwick, Mia Phillips of Southwick, Zachary Reiser of Southwick, Brienne Nicole Senez of Southwick, Ronald Daniel Singh of Southwick, Reiley Donavynne Young of Southwick, Rebecca Harris of Stockbridge, Ryan Thomas Beattie of Westfield, Ashley Noelle Brazier of Westfield, Matthew Bruno of Westfield, Gianna Buoniconti of Westfield, Samantha Call of Westfield, Jillian Elizabeth Carter of Westfield,

Ashley Elizabeth Cigal of Westfield, Jamie Renee Collier of Westfield, Jordan Paige Cooper of Westfield, Paige Abigail Cortis of Westfield, Rebeca Marie Cuba of Westfield, Ryan Victor DeFalco of Westfield, Stephanie Dintzner of Westfield, Lindsey Kristine Dion of Westfield, Allison Lynn Duffy of Westfield, Jessica Laurel Ferrara of Westfield, Kendall Ellen Marie Fox of Westfield, Hannah Lynne Gardner of Westfield, Angelica Gavrilov of Westfield, Wandeliz Gonzalez Marrero of Westfield, Heather Lynn Hall of Westfield, Quinn River Hamilton of Westfield, Moia Hamilton of Westfield, Elizabeth P. Hancharonak of Westfield, Anna Hryhorenko of Westfield, Lindsay Marie Hughes of Westfield, Elizabeth Sasha Kudrya of Westfield, Sergey Sergeevich Lapik Jr. of Westfield, Envii Marie Luciano of Westfield, Melissa Ann McDonald of Westfield, Michael Steffan Navarro Jr. of Westfield, Edward Shawn O'Grady of Westfield, Daviannie Marie Ortiz of Westfield, Sonja M. Pease of Westfield, Graciana Marie Phillips of Westfield, Kaitlyn Nicole Phillips of Westfield, Dino Anthony Pietroniro of Westfield, Adareasheia Rose Pinsky of Westfield, Maria Megumi Pless of Westfield, Darryll Nycole Roberts of Westfield, Stephanie Rodriguez of Westfield, Ethan Miguel Romero of Westfield, Adriana Tot-Lupien of Westfield, Karen Elizabeth Varao of Westfield, Christian Vera-Salazar of Westfield, Jack Henry Watson of Westfield, Megan Weidig of Westfield, Fazna Zakir of Westfield, Cy Lucien Francis of Westhampton, Allison Elayne Griswold of Westhampton, Cadence Elizabeth Loven of Westhampton, Andrew Gordon Delisle of Williamsburg and Katherine Sibella Towler of Williamsburg.



# OBITUARIES

## Ralph E. Cortis, 94

WESTFIELD – Ralph E. Cortis, 94, died Sunday, Aug 13, 2023 at Genesis, Westfield Center.

Born in Russell on Aug 31, 1928, he was the son of Robert and Hildred (Palmer) Cortis. He attended his early school years in Woronoco and graduated from Westfield High School in 1947.

Ralph was active in the Boy Scouts as a committee member, Scout leader and other roles for 20 plus years. He was a member of Mount Moriah Lodge of Masons for 60 years and Melha Shrine Temple for 40 years.

He devoted many years of research on both the Cortis and Goodwin family genealogies and their related ancestral lines. His interest in local history also included several years as an active member of the Westfield Historic Commission.

Ralph's 25 plus years of research on the history of the town of Russell culminated with the 2013 publication of "Russell Massachusetts, Establishment of a New England Town and early historical notes," which he co-authored with his son.



Ralph was pre-deceased in 2011 by his wife of 62 years, Jeanne L. (Goodwin) Cortis. He was also predeceased by three brothers: Stanley, Harold and Chester and one sister, Lois Losaw.

He leaves three sons and their wife's: James E. and Carol of Russell, Bruce W. and Carolyn of Feeding Hills, Alan F. and Gail of Westfield. He also leaves eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He is also survived by a brother, Wallace of Southwick, a sister, Pearl Patino of Agawam and his special friend, Marilyn Warchol.

Firtion Adams Funeral Home, 76 Broad St., Westfield is in charge of arrangements. Calling hours are Friday, Aug 18 from 4-7 p.m. and Saturday, Aug 19 from 10-11 a.m., followed by a funeral service and burial in Russell Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Shriners Hospital for Children, 516 Carew St., Springfield, MA 01104 or First Congregational Church, Broad Street, Westfield, MA 01085.

## Alyson Lynn (Prescott) Flechsig

MECHANICSBURG, PA – Alyson "Ali" Lynn (Prescott) Flechsig, age 40, of Mechanicsburg, died at UPMC Shadyside Hospital, Pittsburgh surrounded by her loving family on Thursday, July 6, 2023, after a long battle with metastatic breast cancer.

Ali was born on Tuesday, Nov. 16, 1982, in Bethlehem to Thomas Russell Prescott and Debra Ann (Litts) Prescott.

Ali's survivors include her husband, Kenneth Flechsig; her two children: Derek Flechsig; Kaitlyn Flechsig; her parents, Thomas Russell Prescott of Front Royal, Virginia and Debra Ann (Litts) Prescott of Vandling, Pennsylvania; her four siblings: Jason Prescott and his wife, Paula Prescott, of Forest City; Benjamin Prescott and his fiancé, Kimberly Niedzielski, of Westfield; Stacy Strock and her husband, Adam Strock of Stanley Virginia and Timothy Prescott and his wife, Tiffany Prescott of Duncannon.

Ali graduated from Gateway Regional High School in Huntington as part of the class of 2001 and from Westfield State College in Westfield in 2005 and in 2007 she received her Master's degree from Shippensburg University.

She worked for Select Medical as an Accounting Manager. Ali loved kids and was involved in Cub Scouts with her son Derek. She enjoyed lighthouses and the beach especially Cape May, New Jersey and Ocean City, Maryland. Ali could best be described as loving, caring, friendly, sweet and kind. She was loved



by everyone.

All were welcome to join Ali's family at her celebration of life open house on Friday, July 21 from 1-4 p.m. with a time of remembrance at 2 p.m. at Buhrig's Gathering Place, 25 East Main St., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, (717) 766-3421 (next to Buhrig Funeral Home & Crematory) and her virtual gathering of family and friends and service via video chat or telephon; with Celebrant Patti Vogl officiating.

Over 100 parking spaces are available; just look for the "Buhrig" parking signs in all of the parking lots. Cremation was private.

Contributions in celebration of Ali's life can be made to Pink Hands of Hope, 5325 E. Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17050 and Chief Stephen Frye Memorial Scholarship, C/O Montgomery Fire Department, 159 Main Road, Montgomery, Massachusetts 01085.

Ali's family has entrusted her care to Buhrig Funeral Home & Crematory in Mechanicsburg, (717) 766-3421. Read Ali's full obituary, view her memorial video and portrait, offer condolences and sympathy, share stories and memories, upload photographs and videos, light a candle and sign her official guest book by visiting Buhrig.com.

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Alyson Lynn (Prescott) Flechsig, please visit our floral store.

# NORTHAMPTON

## Library seeks artist exhibit proposals

NORTHAMPTON – Forbes Library, 20 West St., invites exhibit proposals for the Hosmer Gallery.

The library will be planning exhibits for February 2024 through February 2025. Applications close Friday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. The schedule will be finalized in October.

The Hosmer Art Gallery, which opened in 2002, is designed to provide opportunities for local artists to show their work to the public. Exhibits include a wide range of media and content reflecting the diversity of the greater Northampton community.

The Hosmer Gallery has versatile display pan-

els, cases and pedestals to accommodate a variety of two- and three-dimensional art formats. They offer an inclusive space that builds community and belonging. Artists living and working in western Massachusetts (Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin and Berkshire counties) are eligible to apply. Criteria for review include technical and artistic quality, a coherent theme, and contribution to an interesting and varied program for the year.

Artists may find the online application and information for prospective exhibitors by visiting <https://forbeslibrary.org>.

## DEATH NOTICES

### CORTIS, RALPH E.

Died Aug. 13, 2023  
Funeral Aug. 19, 2023

### FLECHSIG (PRESCOTT), ALYSON LYNN

Died July 6, 2023

Country Journal

## OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Goshen Conservation Commission Legal Notice

The Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting under the Provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. chapter 131 section 40) on **Monday, August 21, 2023 at 6:30 PM** at the Goshen Town Offices to review

A **Request for Determination** filed by Berkshire Trail Properties at 82 South Main Street, Goshen, MA. The work to be reviewed is Replacement of storm damaged driveway pavement. Date of notice 8-10-23  
08/17/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD23C0220CA In the matter of: Jaclyn Rose Lemelin CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**

A **Petition to Change Name of Adult** has been filed by **Jaclyn Rose Lemelin of Westfield, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

**Jaclyn Rose Sibylla**  
**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court**

**before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 08/28/2023.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: July 28, 2023

**Rosemary A Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
08/17/2023

### Town of Blandford Massachusetts PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be held by the Blandford Select Board on **Monday, September 11, 2023 following the conclusion of the 6:00 pm Select Board meeting, at Town Hall located at 1 Russell Stage Road** on the pole petition from NSTAR ELECTRIC COMPANY DBA EVERSOURCE ENERGY, upon the plans marked: #10359894. The petitioners are seeking to be granted permission to relocate and/or install poles, wires, cables, and fixtures, including the necessary anchors, and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures to bring electrical service to 43 Beech Hill Road. Members of the public who wish to participate in the meeting may do so remotely by visiting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82168083073> - Meeting ID: 821 6808 3073- One tap mobile: +19292056099,,82168 083073#  
08/10, 08/17/2023

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

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# WILLIAMSTOWN

## Clark concludes movie series

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Wednesday, Aug. 30 at 7:30 p.m., the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., concludes its five-part Summer Outdoor Movie Series with a screening of “Johnny Guitar” near the Clark’s Reflecting Pool.

The event is free and people may bring a picnic and should bring their own seating. One of the boldest and most styl-

ized films of its time, “Johnny Guitar” (1954; 1 hour, 50 minutes) is quirky, political and twisted—a psychosexual drama between two powerful women, wrapped up in the duds of a B-Western. Joan Crawford stars as the tavern-owner, Vienna. Her archenemy, Emma—a cattle baron (never baroness) is played by Mercedes McCambridge.

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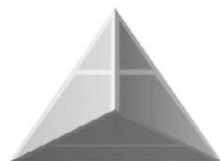


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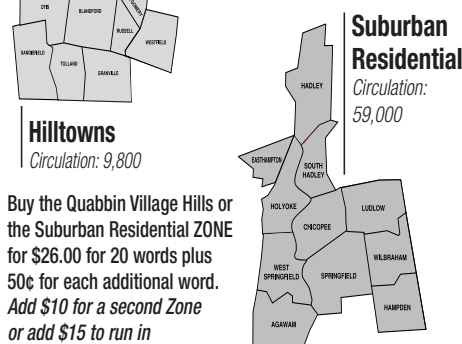
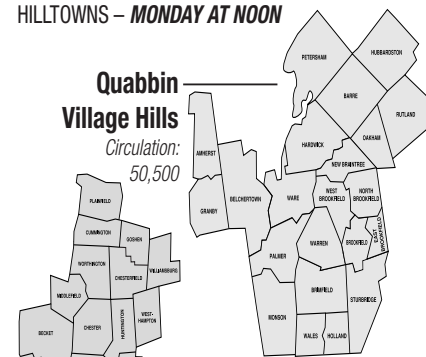
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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES

## Hilltown Hikers backpack 15.8 mile overnight



These Hilltown Hikers sign the guest book at the summit of Becket Mountain.

Hike leader Stephanie Brown joined up with Hilltown Hiker member Heather Bayliss to lead a backpacking overnight section hike on the Appalachian Trail starting from the Jacobs Ladder Scenic Byway overnight parking near Goose Pond on the Lee/Becket line heading North.

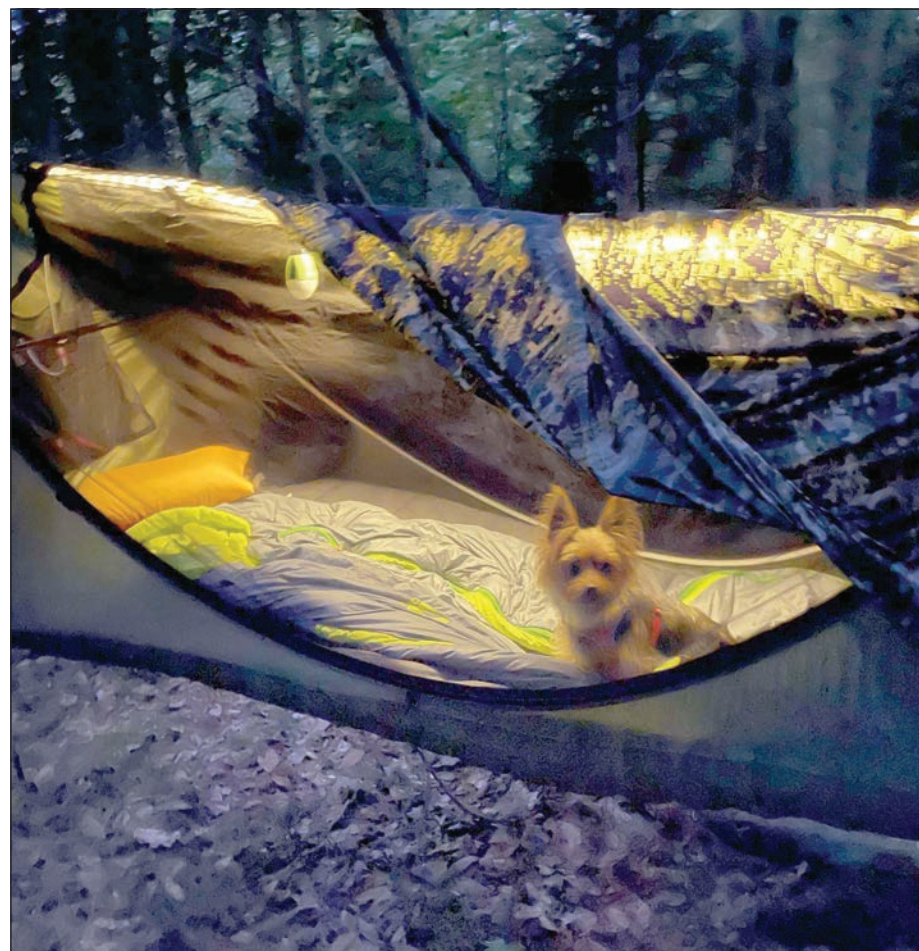
This section rises steeply up Becket Mountain into October Mountain State Forest, continuing up Walling Mountain around Finnerty Pond and up Bald Top in Becket. They chose to camp at the shelter mid-way after about eight miles in Washington meeting other through hikers from around the world and even got to experience a little trail magic.

They hiked 15.8 miles in two days completing their journey in Washington at Blotz Road. Section hikes on the Appalachian Trail are a great way to see how different the Western Massachusetts forests are. In many Hilltowns like Becket and Washington it is the only way to see the diverse plant life and get a glimpse of how different each town is.

Washington's high elevation swamp lands are beautiful and Becket's geology is diverse. The trail crosses many roads so they can spot vehicles with a friend to hike each section. Hikers meet people from around the world who come to hike this long distance trail.



Cybill feels right at home in the shelter.



Cybill sleeps in a hammock on the trail during an overnight hike on a section of the Appalachian Trail.



This is one of the Appalachian Trail boundary markers.

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