

Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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

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CHESTER



Turley Publications photos by Wendy Long
Contestants of the longest beard contest at Littleville Fair (left to right) were Nellie Rivera, whose bearded dragon took third place; Joseph Miserendino (first place), Jerry Hodges (did not place) and Evan Duso (second place).

Fairgoers withstand passing storm

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

A quick-moving but massive storm on Saturday evening caused a power outage at the Littleville Fair on Aug. 8, but did not deter the fans and contestants in the annual Demolition Derby.

Twenty-three cars competed and kept on going through the storm with Tyler Main winning the final event. “Hilltowners in the bleachers were covered in mud and said it was awesome,” reported Stephanie Hunter, the entertainment fair volunteer.

Treasurer Jim Burke reported that Saturday Night’s storm was a bit of a scare. “With some back-up power we finished the Demolition Derby after the storm and the October Mountain band played music to get us to the end of the night,” Burke said. “By

Sunday morning we were back up and running.” Burke added that the chicken dinner on Saturday and turkey dinner on Sunday were both a great success and many of the fair goers left with full stomachs and

FAIR, page 8

HUNTINGTON

Select Board offers Garriepy Police Chief post

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin and Select Board Chairman Roger Booth, members, Rob Drabiuk, and John McVeigh, interviewed two candidates for the town’s part-time Police Chief position, to replace outgoing Chief Brian Kowal.

Fire Chief Joshua Ellinger also took part in the interviews.

Former Police Chief Robert Garriepy was interviewed first. Garriepy graduated from American International College and began serving on the Huntington Police Force in 1991. In 1994 he became the youngest police chief in Massachusetts, a record that has since been broken.

He retired in June 2025 and took a part-time position as Deputy Police

Chief to support Kowal through the transition.

Garriepy said he has been in public safety since age 13 and has a passion for the town, where he still lives. He said the town’s pressing needs are supporting the growing senior population in their homes, making the town livable for people on fixed incomes and supporting safety in the schools.

He said he could work a flexible schedule to meet a variety of duties, including such things as magistrate hearings, arraignments (Mondays), gun permits (Wednesdays), court motions (Thursdays) and payroll (Fridays).

Throughout his interview he emphasized the needs of town residents and importance of working with service providers such as Highland Valley

SELECT BOARD, page 2

RUSSELL

Remembering the good old days

Russell Pond

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

It was a slow day at the Russell Pond beach area last Wednesday, Aug. 12, according to attendant Mark Taylor.

Both he and Sawyer Wilkinson were on duty. While Taylor was a certified life guard and worked at the

pond every summer, that is no longer the case.

Certified life guards are in high demand these days and there are too few to work every location that needs them. Therefore, Russell Pond has attendants.

Taylor comes up to Russell from Southampton daily to safeguard those who visit for sun, sand and swimming. He’s been coming to

the pond since he was two-years-old. Wilkinson is from Russell and a long time visitor to the pond as well.

See how times have changed.

Blandford’s Recreation Committee shared the financial responsibility for the cost of lifeguard salaries and upkeep for well over 30 years with Russell.

The tickets, once sold at the beach, were nominal and could also be used at the Russell Town Pool.

In bygone times, most of the Russell residents used the Russell Pool, which closed in 2001, sending more moms, dads and children to the pond.

At one time beach tickets were much less than the \$40 for one tag (if you live in Russell) charge now. And you could buy a day pass to the beach for \$1. The fee schedule for Russell residents is two tags, \$60, three, \$80; four, \$100; five, \$120; six, \$140 and seven, \$160.

Other Hilltown community residents, Blandford, Chester, Huntington, Middlefield and Montgomery passes have a higher rate, which is one tag for \$80; two for \$120, three for \$160, four for \$200; five for \$240; six for \$280 and seven for \$320.

According to the Russell website, these tags or beach passes, “are non-refundable and should be treated like

RUSSELL POND, page 6

CHESTER



Submitted photo

Hilltown Hikers, from left, Liz Massa, Karen McTaggart, Russ Lapierre, Tom Hoffman and Greg Deily at the Chester granite saw that the group has been restoring. The Hikers just purchased an additional three-acre plot of land that housed the company’s office.

Hilltown Hikers purchase historic land parcel

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Liz Massa of the Western Mass Hilltown Hikers announces the organization purchased a parcel of land located on Emery Street in Chester for \$10,000 on Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2026.

The plot is located next to the former Chester Granite and Polishing Works dating back to the 1800s that contained the granite saw that cut material that was quarried in Becket.

According to Massa,

the three acre parcel was originally part of the factory they’ve been uncovering on Prospect Street, across from the Chester Railway Museum.

A house that once existed on the new site served as the office for the granite saw. The previous owner of the parcel had reached out to the Hilltown Hikers to offer it for sale.

“We jumped on that opportunity,” said Massa, who donated her own money to purchase the property.

Not only does the land

have historic value for the work they are undertaking at the saw, it also contains access to water, power and wifi, all of which she said are very important for the group’s fundraising events. Thanks to these utilities, “the pace of the renovations can go faster,” Massa said.

The property also contains two run-down sheds. She believes they will save and use one for storage. The second building is a two-story structure that has heat. They are looking at histori-

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HILLTOWNS

MassDOT lists I-90 roadwork

Gemme named Chief Physician Executive

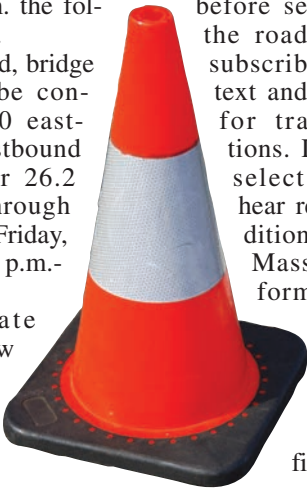
The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces overnight bridge repairs and bridge painting on I-90 eastbound and westbound in the towns of Lee and Blandford.

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

In Lee, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 westbound at mile marker 8.3 on the night of Thursday, Aug. 20, from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the following morning.

In Blandford, bridge painting will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 26.2 nightly now through the morning of Friday, Aug. 21 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m.

Appropriate signage and law enforcement details will be in place to guide drivers



through the work areas.

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

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

SPRINGFIELD – Baystate Health announced Seth Gemme, MD of Montgomery has been promoted to Chief Physician Executive, Baystate Health and President, Baystate Medical Practices.

In this role, Dr. Gemme will serve as a trusted advisor to Baystate Health and Health New England leadership and a strong physician voice in enterprise decision-making and building a clinically driven and physician-led healthcare system.

“Dr. Gemme brings a unique combination of clinical expertise, operational leadership, and a deep understanding of our organization and the communities we serve,” said Peter D. Banko, President and CEO, Baystate Health. “He is a respected physician, team member, and leader, deeply committed to our Mission and the people of Western Massachusetts. Nearly a decade of service and leadership at Baystate has earned him the trust of his colleagues and prepared him to advance access to care, physician engagement, quality, and transformation across our system. We are excited for his leadership as we continue to deliver on our

mission and build a stronger, more accessible health system for our patients and communities.”

Dr. Gemme joined the Department of Emergency Medicine at Baystate in 2017 and has served in progressively advancing leadership roles across the organization. In his most recent position, he served as Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine for both Baystate Health and UMass Chan Medical School-Baystate.

His previous leadership roles include system Vice Chair of Clinical Operations for Emergency Medicine, Chief of the Emergency Department at Baystate Wing Hospital and Associate Chief and Education Director of the Emergency Department at Baystate Noble Hospital.

As Chief Physician Executive, he will lead efforts to improve access and clinical throughput across the five hospitals, advance physician-led transformation and accountability, and strengthen quality, safety, patient experience, and high-reliability practices. He will also foster collaboration and engagement across the physician enterprise, support the academic mission,

and help build a culture of transparency, accountability and operational excellence.

“I am incredibly proud to continue serving Baystate Health and the communities that have been such an important part of my career and my life,” said Dr. Gemme. “Since joining Baystate in 2017, I have had the privilege of working alongside exceptional physicians, caregivers, and team members who share a deep commitment to our Mission. I am honored to step into this role and look forward to building on the work we have done together to strengthen our communities’ health for all.”

Throughout his career, Dr. Gemme has led innovative operational improvements, including the design and implementation of the Vertical Model of Care at Baystate Medical Center, which transformed emergency department patient flow by matching care delivery to patient acuity and clinical needs, as well as the development of a real-time emergency department surge tool that provides operational insight to improve patient flow and throughput during periods of high demand.

Dr. Gemme earned his Bachelor of Arts in mathematics from Westfield State University and Doctor of Medicine from the University at Buffalo. He completed his residency training in emergency medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. He is currently pursuing his Master of Business Administration degree from the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is a recipient of Modern Healthcare magazine’s 40 Under 40 award.

Baystate Health is a not-for-profit, integrated healthcare system with hospitals, physician practices, a health plan and more serving over 800,000 people throughout western New England. Baystate Health is the safety net provider in Western Massachusetts.



Seth Gemme, MD

HUNTINGTON

SELECT BOARD

from page 1

Elder Services and Hilltown Safety at Home.

John Vanasse was the second candidate interviewed. He graduated from Suffolk University and Anna Maria College and currently works as Chief of Police for Greenfield Community College.

He previously worked at Holyoke Community College, Springfield College, American International College and for the Springfield School Department. He lives in Northampton and would currently maintain his job at GCC if he gets this position.

He is interested in expanding his police work beyond a college community. His favorite part of police work is serving people and his least favorite part is the current perception that the public has of law enforcement.

He is experienced with budgeting and has successfully acquired grants. His goals for 3-5 years would be to have a fully staffed department and a School Resource Officer at Gateway. He described his extensive experience with both training officers and use of technology.

He has also taken part with Franklin County’s police cadet program, which serves youth ages 13-21 and can help ‘build a



Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long

Gary M. Roux and Jeffrey McCollough of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission offered information on seeking a historic byway designation for Skyline Trail. This public forum that opened the Aug. 12 Select Board meeting was attended by six area residents.

future cavalry.”

During both interviews, Booth emphasized the importance of approaching the interviews without bias, given Garriepy’s long history with the town. The same set of questions was used in both interviews.

The interviewing group met in open session the following evening to discuss the interviews. According to

hour-long travel time from Greenfield to Huntington for emergency response when the Chief is needed. They voted to offer the position to Robert Garriepy and will meet with him in executive session on Wednesday, Aug. 19 to negotiate a contract.

Interviews were not held for a full time patrolman position, which has been reposted until filled.

Scenic byway designation

Earlier that night, the board met with Gary M. Roux, Director of Transportation Planning and Jeffrey G. McCollough, Principal Transportation Planner, both from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). Also attending were six area residents for a public forum on submitting Skyline Trail for a Massachusetts Scenic Byway designation. A small section of Skyline Trail exists in Huntington and the towns of Hinsdale and Peru have already approved the application, which was coordinated by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Roux and McCollough have already met with the town of Middlefield, which has yet to make a decision. Chester Selectman Brian Forgue was in attendance at the Huntington forum and PVPC will be setting up a meeting there.

If all of the towns approve, PVPC will work with them to identify any qualities of Skyline Trail that

they would like to preserve, set plans for the future, and provide input as to how the road might be developed or maintained. If all five towns approve, the designation would be made by an act of state legislation.

McCollough emphasized that the designation may provide some opportunities but that everything would be custom tailored to local needs. “It is a self-driven opportunity,” he said. “It is not about saving or moving stone walls.”

Drabiuk asked them what the designation would mean to people, who live on Skyline Trail. McCollough said that it is a very unique corridor that has a “wow factor.” PVPC may do a study to determine any resources that should be protected.

They would work with their Berkshire counterparts to collect preliminary data, such as traffic counts and potential safety issues, such as identifying areas with frequent car accidents, if any. They would also locate any points of interest to highlight, decide on signage to obtain and a management plan that might protect some trees.

In the past, the men said, there was money attached to the designation, but that has largely gone away. The designation can sometimes be used to leverage grant funding. The cost to the towns on this would be zero.

If all of the towns agree,

the final step would be to seek state legislative approval. In the end, the Huntington selectmen agreed to support the designation if Chester and Middlefield approved it.

Public Record policy

The board also met with Town Clerk Michelle Fieldstad-Booth to discuss the need to update the town’s public records policy. Fieldstad-Booth began by acknowledging that she is Roger Booth’s wife. She is seeing an uptick in Freedom of Information requests especially from a single group that she did not publicly name.

They are seeking copies of purchase orders from specific vendors and she has received seven of those requests thus far. It is beginning to take a lot of time and the Town Clerk is a part-time position. Agreement for policy changes included providing a half-hour of research at no charge and then charging \$25 per hour afterwards, plus any photocopying costs.

Collected information would not be released until that fee was paid. Fieldstad-Booth will redline the current policy for review at the next Select Board meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 26.

Other business

Among other business, approvals and signatures for the Sept. 1 state primary election warrant and for the Sept. 21 Special Town Meeting warrants were granted.

ROAD SUPERINTENDENT



The Montgomery Highway Department is currently hiring for a **Road Superintendent Position**. The position is responsible for planning, directing, and supervising the activities and operation of the towns’ highway department and will perform a broad range of manual work and operate motorized equipment in support of construction, maintenance, and repair operations for the Department.

Candidate must have experience in management and operation and have all required licenses (see the full job description for required skills/experience/training). Existing CDL and hoisting licenses are preferred. Must pass a MA-DOT physical. Must also provide a current copy of your driving record from the Registry of Motor Vehicles to be considered for this position. The pay rate is \$29.00 to \$35.00 per hour (pay comparable to experience). The town offers paid health and dental insurance, vacation time, a retirement plan and 13 paid holidays.

Please email townhall@montgomeryma.gov to receive a current job description and employment application. This position will remain open until filled.

The town of Montgomery is an equal opportunity employer.

OPERATOR/LABORER POSITION



The Montgomery Highway Department is currently hiring for an **Operator/Laborer Position**. The position works under the supervision of the Highway Superintendent, an operator/ laborer will perform a broad range of manual work and operate motorized equipment in support of construction, maintenance, and repair operations for the Department.

Candidate must have or obtain all required licenses within (1) one year of start date (see the full job description for required skills/experience/training). Existing CDL and hoisting licenses preferred. Must pass a MADOT physical. Must also provide a current copy of your driving record from the Registry of Motor Vehicles to be considered for this position. The pay rate is \$26.00 - \$28.00 per hour, (pay comparable to experience). Paid health and dental insurance, vacation time, a retirement plan and 13 paid holidays.

Please email townhall@montgomeryma.gov to receive a current job description and employment application. This position will remain open until filled.

The town of Montgomery is an equal opportunity employer.

HUNTINGTON

Adventurer gives author talk at Huntington library

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – Local writer, Andrew Myers, gave an author talk on his book “Celebrating National Treasures: A Senior Triathlon” at the Huntington Public Library on Tuesday, Aug. 11.

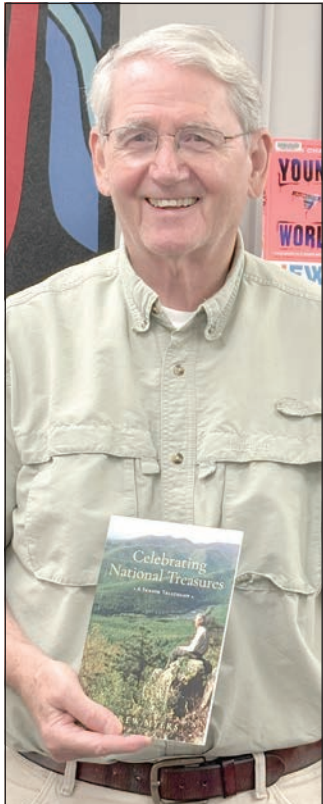
Published in 2022, the book chronicles his trifecta of epic journeys: hiking the Appalachian Trail in 2013, paddling the Connecticut River in 2019 and biking the Erie Canal Trail in 2020. The book can be purchased through Amazon for \$8.95 and is also available through kindle unlimited.

The adventure involved hiking over 2,100 miles from Georgia to Main, paddling 360 miles from the Canadian border in New Hampshire to Long Island Sound and biking 360 miles from Buffalo to Albany. Over 2,870 miles in total, all undertaken by a man in his 70s.

Myers’ opening comment was, ‘Over the last number of years, I was able to take a few adventures.’ He then outlined the three tours and read from the first chapter of his book.

This was followed by a slideshow of photos from the Appalachian Trail set to excerpts from the music of Aaron Copland’s “Appalachian Spring.”

Much of the talk focused on the Appalachian Trail portion of the book. Myers’ trail name was Snow Frog, which is a term that translates in some circles to...well, never mind.



Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long

Andrew Myers, who wrote “Celebrating National Treasures: A Senior Triathlon,” gave an author talk on the three adventures he completed in his 70s: hiking the Appalachian Trail, paddling the Connecticut River and biking the Erie Canal Trail.

From sleet, snow and tremendous cold in March (his first night was 17 degrees) to rain, getting lost twice and managing injuries from a significant fall that required a trip to the doctor, once he got off the trail, Myers’ chronicled the highs and lows of becoming one of the estimated 25% of hik-

ers who set out and are able to complete the Appalachian Trail.

His year, 2013, had 2,500 hikers set out and fewer than 500 finish the through hike.

Despite the accomplishment and the incredible vistas on the AT, Myers said the best part was the camaraderie along the hike. “I started solo, but the beauty of the experience is the people. You meet great people,” Myers said.

He said the most rugged part of the entire trip was the White Mountains and Maine. “The good news is you’ve got some experience and the bad news is you’re kind of tired,” he admitted.

The book also details the contributions of other hill-towners including Chester’s John Garvey, who joined him for a stint on the AT and Worthington’s Chet Brett who paddled with Andy from Putney, Vermont into Massachusetts.

Through it all, of course, are mentions of his wife Lee Myers, who helped get him to the starting points and home from the end points, with visits sprinkled throughout each adventure. His son Crist also joined him for the Eerie Canal biking trip.

Lee said it could get scary not knowing if he was okay. Her husband tried to contact her daily, but cell service and battery life sometimes posed a challenge.

“One thing you do learn is that the world can get along without you,” Myers concluded.



Submitted photo
Antonio Abate, Amy Orsulak and Jerome Tan will perform on the North Hall stage Sept. 13.

North Hall presents opera and Broadway

HUNTINGTON – The North Hall Association, 40 Searle Road, continues its 2026 Historic North Hall Arts Festival in September with another free program on the North Hall stage.

On Sunday, Sept. 13 at 2 p.m. “Opera Arias and Broadway Musical Showcase returns to North Hall.

The accomplished NYC ensemble of tenor Antonio Abate, soprano Amy Orsulak and Jerome

Tan on piano, will be performing celebrated opera arias and Broadway musical solo and duet favorites. Their powerful delivery will take full advantage of the excellent acoustics of the North Hall stage.

All performances are free; donations welcome. Upstairs seating is limited to the first 75 attendees and this performances has historically filled the house.

Doors open at 1:30

p.m. People may visit the website at www.north-hallhuntington.org for any program updates. North Hall is wheelchair accessible and air conditioned.

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

COA hosts Grandparents Day celebration

HUNTINGTON – The Council on Aging will be hosting their annual Grandparents Day celebration on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 1-3 p.m. on the Town

Common, 24-26 Russell Road.

The event will feature a double obstacle course bounce house, craft activities and ice cream. The event is

free and open to adults and children from any community. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

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SUMMER CONCERT PROVIDES ENTERTAINMENT

Turley Publications photo by Deborah Daniels

Young Jackson entertained Huntington concert goers as much as the band a free concert on the green in Huntington.

GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY
Matters
By Russell Gloor



I worked for my ex-husband but wasn't paid and now have little Social Security – What are my options?

Author note: This is article number 500 in the AMAC Foundation's "Ask Rusty" series of Social Security articles, which have been published nationwide every week since February 2017. "Ask Rusty" is provided free of charge as an integral part of the AMAC Foundation's mission to "support and educate America's seniors." If you would like to help the AMAC Foundation fulfill its mission, charitable donations are graciously accepted at <https://amacfoundation.org/donate/>.

Dear Rusty:

Sadly, I was in business with my ex-husband. I'm a nurse and he was a chiropractor. He refused to pay me "on the books" and now, at age 73, after divorcing him due to his financial irresponsibility. (I don't want to burden you with the thefts that he perpetrated), I am stuck with a small \$773 Social Security payment each month.

At age 73 I am now faced with having to go back into the workforce. Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years for my husband, but wasn't paid?

**Signed:
Distressed Divorcee**

Dear Distressed:

We are so sorry to hear of your unfortunate circumstances. Assuming your ex-husband is now collecting Social Security retirement benefits or is at least eligible to if you are divorced at least two years, you should be able to collect an ex-spouse benefit as his former wife.

In that case, you would be entitled to receive 50% of the Social Security benefit he was entitled to at his own Full Retirement Age because he and you were married for over 10 years.

The way that will work is that you would continue to receive your personally-earned \$773 monthly Social Security retirement amount earned from other employment, but you would also be entitled to a supplemental "spousal boost" to bring your payment up to half of the SS payment amount your ex-husband is entitled to at his SS Full Retirement Age.

In other words, because you were married to your ex for more than 10 years, you are entitled to the same Social Security benefits as though you were still married. That is true, even if he has remarried and his new wife is also getting a spouse benefit from his record.

You will still be entitled to an ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband as his former wife. And if he dies before you, as a surviving ex-spouse you will get the same Social Security benefit he was receiving at his death, instead of the smaller amount your will get while you are both living.

Regarding rejoining the workforce, while you can certainly go back to work at age 73 without it

negatively affecting your Social Security benefits, if you are struggling financially, I suggest you visit this website sponsored by the National Council on Aging: www.benefits-checkup.org.

At this website, you can enter your zip code and find much information about other supplemental assistance you may be entitled to where you live, including healthcare and medication assistance, housing, nutritional assistance, etc.

Regarding your question: "Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years and wasn't paid?" Social Security determines benefits based solely on your personal earnings as reported to the Internal Revenue Service, which is, in turn, dependent on how your joint income taxes were filed over the years you worked in your husband's business.

Social Security is unable to assist you with IRS matters. I'm afraid yours is more of a legal matter you would need to pursue by discussing your situation directly with the IRS or engaging an attorney for assistance.

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 informational purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

OPINION



GUEST COLUMN

Weeds and seeds

I came back from vacation and was shocked as to how much the garden had grown.

Crops were ready to be harvested and weeds that were merely inches tall had grown by leaps and bounds! Of course, we did have nearly a half foot of rain that week, and this probably played a part in such exuberant growth.

Read on to learn how indiscriminate watering by Mother Nature can mean weeds, weeds and more weeds.

Why such a growth spurt? Because just like other seeds, those of our least favorite weedy plants need both sunlight and water in order to germinate and grow well.

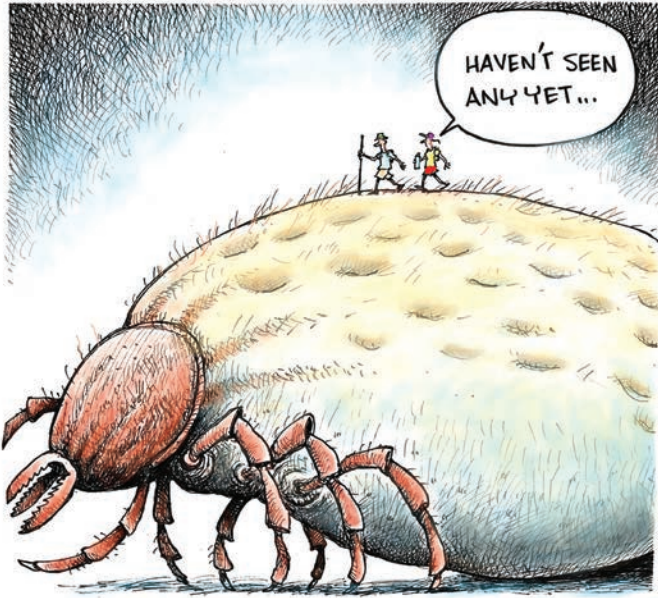
When we water on purpose, we can direct the rain where we'd like – usually at the base of the plant. Unfortunately, rainfall that lands on a brick path, the garden aisle, and also in between plants within the row can cause a lot of weeds to sprout.

Hand weeding and hoeing are both great exercise, and the best option for otherwise bare areas of young weeds.

Many gardeners make the mistake, however, of hoeing too deeply and exposing more weed seeds to sunlight. Try to just scrape the surface of the soil.

Stirrup hoes are particularly effective, skimming across the soil and severing the stems of weeds at the root line as they go. Very tall weeds can be cut down by use of garden shears, scissors or a week whacker, depending on the size of the area.

Once cut back, you can



cover the whole area with a tarp, or black plastic to fry what was underneath, killing weed seed.

In the future you can use mulch to reduce the amount a weeding you have to do – it will also help to conserve soil moisture in years that rainfall isn't so plentiful. Mulch doesn't have to be expensive – it can be as simple as a "biscuit" of spent hay, a few sheets of newspaper secured with stones, pine needles or grass clippings – as long as these materials are applied thick enough to exclude light, weed seeds should not sprout.

Sometimes I will put a layer of corrugated cardboard down first, wet it then add the mulch on top. It really seems to make a difference having that preliminary layer to keep light out.

This may be an unlikely pairing for this column, but there are plants that we desire to grow this time of year, and they are cover crops. Cover crops add lots of organic matter to the soil when incorporated in during the spring or summer months.

While winter rye is the standard, you can grow oats, too. If sown right now, oats will germinate but die back as soon as frost hits.

Leave the plants in place, though, and they will prevent erosion by holding onto the soil with their roots. Plant parts can be incorpo-

rated come spring time.

In preparation for sowing cover crop seed, the soil surface should be scuffed up so that the seeds will make good contact with earth. Once prep is complete I rake the soil smooth and broadcast the grain, first throwing the seed in one direction and then the other.

It's a good idea to divide the seed in half and try to cover all the area you have once, then go back and fill in the light spots with the rest. After the seed has been sown I'll drag the flat end of a steel rake over the soil surface to bury it ever so slightly.

My goal is to have the seed sprout now, so that its roots will hold the soil and its nutrients in place over the off season.

Winter rye will put on an amazing amount of top growth by spring – weed whack or mow it first to make incorporating easier.

I am also contemplating "tarping" it to solarize the soil at the same time, then working in the dead plants by hand.

Either way, if you do this for a few years in a row you'll watch the organic matter content of your soil soar, reportedly at a rate of three to four thousand pounds per acre!

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

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid





your health



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

Imagine you're 6 years old again and playing Simon Says.

"Simon says, 'Stand on one leg.' Now, stand on the other one."

Oops, you're "out," because there wasn't a "Simon says." But you can be "in" better health

if you can train yourself to stand on one leg for a few seconds or as long as a minute.

A recent article posted by the BBC detailed the positive health effects of being able to balance on one leg.

It can improve and maintain balance, mobility and even memory. The thing is, our ability to do it peaks at around age 10 and then slowly declines with age.

"If you find that it's not easy, it's time to start training your balance," Tracy Espiritu McKay of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, told the BBC.

Quite a lot of research has backed this up. For example, it's been found that for older adults, including those with dementia, regu-

Simon says, "Stand on one leg"

lar single-leg training significantly reduces the risk of falls and helps maintain muscle strength, balance and the ability to perform those all-important activities of daily living (ADLs). These are the things that, if you can do them on your own, keep you out of assisted living and nursing homes.

Balancing on one leg also significantly increases muscle activity in the legs and ankles compared to standing on both feet. This includes the hamstrings, which is beneficial for stabilizing our knees.

It seems counterintuitive, but standing on one leg even challenges the brain, improving its alertness and motor control, improving posture and maintaining stability.

In addition, when performed with specific instructions (such as focusing on an external object), the exercise significantly activates core muscles, including the abdominals and back mus-

cles, which is vital for preventing and rehabilitating lower back injuries. It's also a key tool for recovering from ankle and knee injuries.

It's even good for your heart and overall cardiovascular fitness. Balancing on one leg is more physically demanding than standing on two, increasing oxygen demand and metabolic rate.

Doctors can use the ability – or inability – to stand on one leg as a reliable indicator of future fall risks and cognitive decline. "In Alzheimer's patients, researchers are actually finding that if they're unable to stand on one leg for five seconds, it usually predicts a faster cognitive decline," Espiritu McKay told the BBC.

So let's get going – I mean standing. And we need to start slowly and safely.

If you can't hold a one-leg stance for more than a second or two, hold on to

Country Journal

We Want to Hear From You

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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.

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

ELECTION LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Gateway policy subcommittee finalizes bullying changes

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – The Policy Subcommittee of the Gateway Regional School Committee held their third and final meeting of the summer remotely on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 3:30 p.m., to finalize proposed changes to the district’s bullying policy.

Attending were subcommittee chairman Lyndsey Papillon, members Peter DeGregorio, Pegg Dragon, Lisa Goding, Jennifer Papas, school committee chairman Jason Forgue, Gateway Regional School Principal Dr. William Sullivan and Superintendent Dr. Melissa Matarazzo.

Three summer meetings of the policy subcommittee were scheduled after a contentious school committee meeting held last June, which had twenty parents, alumni and current students expressing concern on this issue stemming from an incident posted to a social media page run by district parents.

Recent graduate Ashley Tacke had described an incident she’d experienced at a class fundraiser in March.

Tacke had posted the incident on the Parents of Gateway Regional Students Facebook page after graduation, which resulted in a great deal of community controversy, disturbing responses and the page administrator pulling the post.

Tacke described driving herself to the fundraiser at Red Robin in Holyoke. On her way to school the next day, she noticed writing on her back windshield, which reportedly said, “I hate (racial slurs).” She stated that she reported the incident to Dr. William Sullivan, Principal who she said was appalled.

A number of people were called to the office. Tacke described the incident as a hate crime, part of an ongoing pattern of harassment from a group of her classmates that had happened to her over all four years and had been previously reported and as actually endangering a minor, who was driving around Western Massachusetts with inflammatory language on her car.

Subcommittee meetings were called to look at whether or not there were areas of the policy that might have limited Gateway’s response to this incident.

Questions such as whether or not the bullying policy covered an off-grounds fundraiser, the length of time that bullying data carries over from year to year, how to maintain data to ensure that one bully is not victimizing multiple targets and alignment with district disciplinary procedures and the student handbook’s Code of Conduct were all looked at during July meetings.

Suggested changes were proposed and sent onto legal counsel, Russ Dupere.

The Aug. 13 meeting was held to review Dupere’s legal responses before finalizing a draft of the updated policy for full school committee approval.

The committee proposed removing the term “repeated” from the definition of bullying in the policy; however, Dupere noted that the term is required by Massachusetts General Law.

Sullivan confirmed that any report of bullying launches an investigation, whether or not it is repeated.

Even if it is a single reported incident that does not meet the bullying policy, it may be found to violate other school policies.

Likewise, an effort to add a single egregious event of a serious nature to the policy was legally disallowed. Matarazzo pointed out that such an event could still be addressed by the district as it would qualify as harassment and potentially break the Code of Conduct or Title IX, both of which also come with consequences.

For example, harassment does not have to be repeated to be actionable and schools have a duty to address harassment. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not require that harassment be addressed in a district’s bullying policy.

One area that was corrected was defining places where school bullying may now be deemed to have occurred. Not only has this been updated to include off grounds fundraising, but class advisors must now arrange staffing at such events so that students are supervised and there is a staff member to intervene if a problem arises. If staff cannot be arranged, the fundraiser cannot be held. Another area added was school bus stops while students are waiting for buses or have just disembarked from buses.

A term that the committee did remove was the word “viable” in its previous statement that an investigation would begin “upon receipt of a viable report.” It would not be known whether or not a report is viable until the investigation occurs.

The committee voted unanimously to adopt those changes and bring the updated policy to the full school committee for approval before the start of school. Matarazzo later said that this has been tentatively scheduled as a special virtual meeting on Thursday, Aug. 20 for 7 p.m., but will be posted once this is confirmed.

Cell phone ban continues

In other business, Matarazzo reported that Massachusetts public schools had expected a new law from the state prohibiting cell phone usage during the school day. Because that law has not passed yet, there is no guidance to schools from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

In anticipation of the new ban, Gateway had begun phasing in reductions of cell phone use last semester. Sullivan explained that by the end of the year Gateway had a “bell to bell” cell phone ban.

He said that staff had reported positive changes as a result, including students talking with each other more at lunch and overall less drama during the school day.

They also saw a reduction of student meet-ups in bathrooms with more students staying in classrooms as a result. Gateway Regional School will continue this cell phone ban from 7:20 a.m.-2:20 p.m. each day in the coming school year.

While they await the new law and guidance from MASAC, they are investigating apps that would allow students to have their phones near them if needed in an emergency, Matarazzo said.

HEALTH

from page 4

the back of a chair. Stand upright with a slight bend in your knees and lift one foot off the ground. Lift your hands off the chair briefly, then repeat on the other side. Keep practicing several times a week until you can maintain a one-leg stance for 10 seconds without holding on and without too much wobble.

Then you can move on to other variations. Wear different kinds of shoes, have socks on or go barefoot. Stand on different types of surfaces: carpet, wood, tile, sidewalks. Focus on an object in front of you, like a clock so you can time yourself. One minute is longer than you think.

Or try it with your eyes closed, which is especially challenging!

The nice thing about

this exercise is that you can build it into your everyday routines, such as waiting for the coffee to perk or brushing your teeth before you go to bed.

What else can you do to improve your ability to stand on one leg?

- Lift your knees as high as you can, one after the other, balancing for a few seconds between lifts. Incorporating hand weights makes it more challenging – as well as helping you work on your upper body.
- Sit and stand without using your arms for 30 or so seconds. A dining chair or other straight-backed chair is good for this exercise. (Also works the upper legs and glutes.)

Older adults who work on maintaining strength, balance and mobility have a

better chance of remaining independent, being able to drive and aging in place. In addition, research is finding that older brains that are able to keep generating neurons are less subject to cognitive decline.

Do your body and brain a favor by playing a little “Simon Says” every day.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a Monson resident, is a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate. She is the author of several books on advocacy and founder of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which equips medical professionals with the knowledge and skills to start their own advocacy businesses. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.



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NOTICE

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

News, photo publication policy

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

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

Deadline is Friday at NOON.



COLLEGE NEWS

Colleges and Universities announce Dean’s list and graduates

DEAN’S LIST
Emmanuel College
Brandon Shuman of Westfield
Lydia Donatelli of West Chesterfield
Rowan McDonald of Westfield

Goodwin University
Ryan Taylor of Westfield

Hartwick College
Maya Liberman-Bachman of Huntington, *Bachelor of Arts in art with a minor in art history*

CHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH

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

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BLANDFORD

Pastor Tom Crouse
91 Main St., Blandford, MA 01008
413-269-5055
Website: fccblandford.com
Sunday service 10 a.m.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHESTER

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

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WILLIAMSBURG

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

HILLTOWN COMMUNITY CHURCH

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

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

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



Your Community Church

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Services held twice monthly, check website: www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org

PIONEER VALLEY ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

PIONEER VALLEY MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

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Pastor Carol Smith
1 Tob Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027
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Sunday Worship at 9 a.m.
(Summer hours for July and August)

CHESTERFIELD

FAIR SEASON IS ON



Turley Publications photo by Deborah Daniels
Not every home grown wins a beauty contest or a blue ribbon like these vegetables grown in Chesterfield.

OTIS

Council on Aging announces upcoming events

OTIS – Council on Aging Director Karen Yvon announces the upcoming September programs.

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

Mat Yoga is every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and Chair Yoga is every Thursday at 10 a.m. Exercise class, Strength and Balance, is every Monday at 10:30 a.m. at the COA center at Town Hall except Labor Day Monday, Sept. 7.

Wednesday, Sept. 2, the Tri Town Health blood pressure clinic is set for 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Seniors may go out to lunch on Thursday, Sept. 3 at noon at the Russell Inn in Russell. They should call the Senior Center at 413-269-0100, extension 5 to RSVP.

Cyber Seniors meet Wednesdays Sept. 2, 16 and 30 from 10:30-11 a.m. Anyone having issues with a tech device, notebook, cellphone or computer can bring their device for expert help with Destiny Eisler.

The Center will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7, Labor Day but will be open on Tuesday, Sept. 8 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

On Wednesday Sept. 9 the foot nurse holds appointments from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Seniors should call the COA for availability at 413-269-0100, extension 5. There will be an “overflow” nurse this month as all appointments are booked. For the extra nurse, the fee for Otis residents is \$45 and for all others, non-Otis residents, \$55.

Haircuts will be available on Monday, Sept. 14. Seniors should call the Senior Center at 413-269-0100, extension 5 to make an appointment.

Friday, Sept. 18 is Brown Bag from 11 a.m.-noon.

Wednesdays are Food Pantry days from 9-11 a.m.

People should be sure to pick up their items on time.

On Wednesday, Oct. 7 there will be Game Shows to Go and pot luck at noon. This features interactive fun for everyone plus prizes for every winner. To participate, senior must call the Senior Center by Wednesday, Sept. 30 to sign up.

Open enrollment for Medicare opens Thursday, Oct. 15 and open enrollment for the Fuel Assistance Program opens Sunday, Nov. 1. Otis residents should call Berkshire Community Action Council at 413-445-4503 to enroll.

GREAT BARRINGTON

Du Bois Freedom Center dedicates Elizabeth Freeman kiosk

GREAT BARRINGTON – The Du Bois Freedom Center invites the community and visitors to join them as they welcome dignitaries, historians, and community leaders to commemorate the installation of a permanent interactive storytelling

kiosk on Saturday, Aug. 22 at 3 p.m. at Great Barrington Town Hall.

All are welcome to attend; no registration needed.

The kiosk honors Elizabeth Freeman, the first enslaved African American

woman to win her freedom under the new Massachusetts Constitution. It will stand in front of Great Barrington Town Hall on Main Street, where residents and visitors alike can learn the remarkable story of how Elizabeth Freeman won her freedom

in a court of law in 1781, a case that paved the way for the abolition of slavery in Massachusetts.

Fittingly, Great Barrington Town Hall is located on the exact site of the courthouse where her case was heard.

NORTHAMPTON

Library holds end of summer reading party

NORTHAMPTON – An end of summer reading party takes place on Saturday, Aug. 29 from 1-3 p.m. at the Forbes Memorial Library, 20 West St.

All-ages are invited to the celebration on the lawn to wrap up this year’s summer reading program.

Participants can pick up their summer reading prize, enter raffles and groove to global tunes spun by DJ Studebaker Hawk. They may bring their friends and family and a picnic lunch for this annual event.

If people didn’t fill out a reading tracker this summer, no problem. They

can top by and share what they’ve been reading this summer.

All types of reading count print books, e-books, audiobooks, podcasts; reading to others or having them read to them; newspaper and magazine articles, reading for homework.

Communities Restorative Justice Program seeks volunteers

NORTHAMPTON – The Northwestern District Attorney’s Office partners with Communities for Restorative Justice, a community-based restorative justice organization, to divert certain cases out of the traditional court system and into a restorative justice process.

This partnership has been in place since 2020 in Hampshire County and recently expanded to Franklin County in 2026. The restorative justice process has resulted in positive outcomes in cases where a responsible party is willing

to acknowledge harm.

Through this process, victims and other impacted parties may participate in determining how harm can be addressed and repaired, including through community service, meaningful apologies, restitution and other restorative practices. Upon successful completion of the process, the criminal case may be dismissed.

C4RJ’s work is primarily volunteer-driven and the organization is currently seeking new volunteers interested in restorative justice work, both online and in person, in Hampshire

and Franklin Counties. Volunteers receive training to prepare them to work within restorative justice principles and the C4RJ process.

Upcoming volunteer training will consist of four Zoom sessions held on Saturday, Sept. 26 and Sunday, Sept. 27 with sessions running from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m. each day.

Individuals interested in learning more about C4RJ and what volunteering involves may visit C4RJ’s volunteer page at <https://www.c4rj.org/join-us/volunteers>.

RUSSELL



Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm
Moms and tots enjoy the water at Russell Pond Wednesday afternoon, Aug. 12.

RUSSELL POND

from page 1

cash. If lost, no replacement tags will be issued.”

Prior to 2001 most Blandford moms would drag play pens, diaper bags, lunches, drinks and snacks to the pond for the afternoon. The children all knew each other and enjoyed splashing in the water and jumping off the raft.

People enjoyed their time at Russell Pond; it brought peace to their day,

joy to their children and built friendships among those who could participate. The Blandford Club dock members joined in the fun and all watched from the beach to see the Boy Scouts learning to sail.

Local YMCA lifeguards taught swimming lessons every summer at the Scout Camp for Blandford residents through what was then the Park and Recreation

Committee. It is now just Recreation Committee.

Nonetheless the summer whiled away at the pond. More often than not dads arrived at dinner time bringing pizza from the Hart’s Good Times Pizza on Route 23, now the Breadbasket. Times have changed. And they may continue to change for Blandford.

That part of the story will continue next week.

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If you have job postings to fill, get them the exposure they need.

Join us in highlighting what positions you have available in our Job Connection!

Each week this available jobs section will run in your community newspapers.

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Please see www.townofware.com for further information and other employment opportunities.

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Materials Highway Department
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or by email at highway@townofhardwick.com
For full job description go to www.townofhardwick-ma.gov

TOWN OF HARDWICK HELP WANTED
The town of Hardwick is seeking qualified candidates to perform high-level clerical, and administrative work assisting the Town Administrator and Select Board.

This is a part-time 19 hours per week position. For full job description, go to www.hardwick-ma.gov.

Qualified applicants should send cover letter and resume to admin@townofhardwick.com or send to PO Box 575 Chesterfield, MA 01021.

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• Represent the town of Hardwick in the community and at the state level.

Job Skills & Qualifications
• Bachelor's degree in Public Health or related field.
• Minimum of 5 years of experience in a similar position.
• Excellent communication skills.
• Strong organizational and management skills.
• Ability to work independently and as part of a team.

Compensation
• Salary: \$45,000 per year.
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Application Process
• Submit your resume and cover letter to the Town of Hardwick, 100 Main Street, Hardwick, MA 01021.
• Deadline: September 15, 2026.

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BLANDFORD



Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm
Blandford Chef de cuisine Joann Martin preps bread for genuine southern Baked Muffuletta for Friday's lunch. Ingredients include bread, cheese, ham, Muffuletta Salad (olives, peppers, onions and more), then special salami and more cheese, then warmed.

COA enjoys special birthday lunch

BLANDFORD – The Council on Aging noon-time lunch on Friday featured Joann Martin’s now famous New Orleans-style Baked Muffuletta with a side salad, a variety of chips and make your own sundae dessert, complete with whipped cream and a cherry to top.

There were many August birthdays to celebrate. Celebrants included Rick Barnard, Mary Burns, Jennifer Girard, Clarissa Hart, Leisa Hollings, David Hopson, Doris Jemiolo, Barbara Langmore, Neal MacKinnon, Mary Martin and Susan Racine.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT PREPS ROAD FOR PAVING



Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm
Highway Department personnel, from left, Ryan Keach, Clayton LaPointe and Michael Carr prep Watson Park Road for paving project. Superintendent Ray Hultay expects the road to be paved before winter. The road will be level and safer for pedestrians as well as vehicular traffic.

YOUNGSTERS MAN LEMONADE STAND



Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm
Selling lemonade and eggs last week in Bicentennial Park, were from left, Aeden and Mason LaFrance and Charley and Jack Entrepreneurship is alive and well on Main Street. Aeden and his brother Mason LaFrance with friends Charley and Jack Ducharme set up a lemonade stand in Bicentennial Park Wednesday afternoon, Aug. 12. “Business is good,” said Aeden. Money earned will go back into the business, Aeden added, to keep it going. Huge hand-lettered signs promoted the lemonade, at \$1 a cup. The young businessmen also sold fresh eggs. “We have 31 chickens,” Aeden said. And the entrepreneurs were back on Thursday.

DALTON

Dalton library hosts loss of life partner peer group

DALTON – The Dalton Library, 462 Main St., offers a peer group for people of any age, who have lost a spouse or life partner and are seeking conversation and encouragement as they move forward.

The group meets once a month on Saturday from 2-3 p.m.

Upcoming meetings are Saturdays, Aug. 22, Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 14 and Dec. 12, all from 2-3 p.m. at the library.

If people have any questions or want more information, they may email dalton@cwmmars.org or call 413-684-6112 and ask for Ellen or Janet.

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

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

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

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.



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WORTHINGTON

Town advises roadwork continues

WORTHINGTON – The week of Monday, Aug. 17 Morais Construction Crew # 1 on Thursday, Aug. 20 and Thursday, Aug. 21 continues reconstruction of the roadway beginning at East Windsor Road to Lindsey Hill Road.

They will backfill shoulders behind the blacktop paving crew.

On Thursday and Friday Crew # 2 with Palmer Paving will pave blacktop base course from East Windsor Road to Lindsey Hill Road.

The week of Monday, Aug. 24 through Friday, Aug. 28 Morais Construction Crew #1 will backfill shoulders behind the blacktop paving crew.

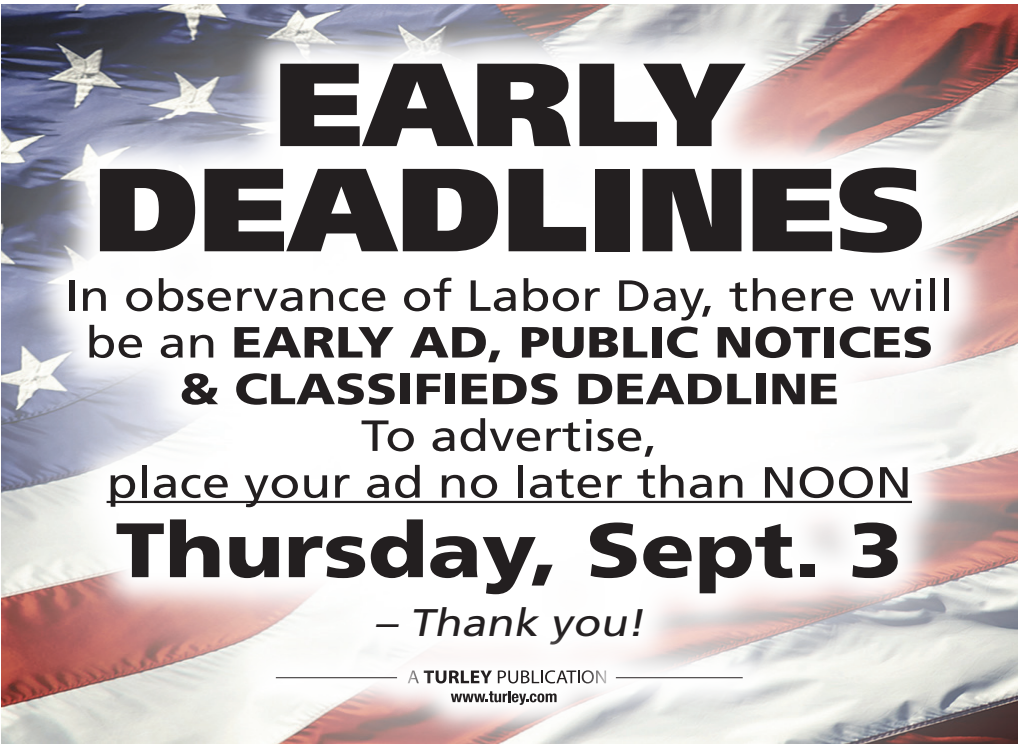
Crew # 2 Monday, Aug. 24 and Tuesday, Aug. 25 Palmer Paving will pave blacktop intermediate course from East Windsor Road to Lindsey Hill Road.

Work hours for non-blacktop paving work are 7 a.m to 3:30 p.m., one-way alternating traffic will be in place with traffic officers directing traffic.

Work hours for blacktop paving Palmer Paving are 7 a.m.-5 p.m. with the same one-way alternating traffic with traffic officers.

With the paving underway next week, motorists may want to consider the detour from East Windsor Road to the center of Peru. It adds approximately 7-12 minutes to the trip depending on where they’re headed, but it’s time you can count on rather than a possible wait and rough road in the construction areas.

It’s a little twisty, but signs are up and it’s well marked. Lindsey Hill Road remains closed and is not available as a detour.



EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of Labor Day, there will be an **EARLY AD, PUBLIC NOTICES & CLASSIFIEDS DEADLINE**

To advertise, place your ad no later than **NOON Thursday, Sept. 3**

– Thank you!

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CHESTER

HIKERS

from page 1

cally renovating that building and temporarily using it as an indoor museum to protect artifacts they have been uncovering at the granite saw. She hopes to someday have that museum open on weekends.

The granite saw opened to the public three years ago and they are working through a phased plan to restore and protect it. To date, 100% of the work has been completed by volunteers.

“It’s all hard labor,” Massa said, adding that they are unable to drive equipment

up to the saw. This has been advantageous, as they have been able to unearth some amazing items by hand that might have been damaged by equipment.

The next stage will have local welders working on the saw blade and shot elevator, which she expects will be done before snowfall.

In a joint venture between the Hilltown Hikers and Littleville Fair, they are also currently raising \$25,000 to build a permanent pole barn to protect the saw, which is an important industrial

landmark that draws visitors from outside the hilltowns.

The heavy metal has undergone some decay and needs to be shielded from the elements to be maintained. This campaign is dedicating 100% of the funds to the construction materials and labor for the barn, which will use locally sourced materials and a historically accurate structure.

The Hikers purchased the granite saw property in 2023. A special tour is scheduled on Sunday, Sept. 27 from 1-3 p.m. at the site,

where visitors can see the restoration work completed thus far and learn more about the importance of the granite industry to the region.

In its heyday, the Chester Granite and Polishing Works was the largest shot-saw granite finishing site in the state.

The Western Mass Hilltown Hikers formed in 2010 by a small group of friends, who enjoyed hiking in the area. As they explored new trails and locales, they uncovered the rich history of the region—one they share

with the public through guided hikes.

To date, they have found everything from lost cemeteries, mines, mills and quarries. The group was also part of work with several historians in recently plotting the “devil’s staircase,” a previously lost section of the Knox Trail referred to in historic journals.

The trail was used by then Colonel Henry Knox to bring the “noble train of artillery” down a treacherous and steep area from Blandford and Russell into Westfield.

The Knox Trail refers to the route taken to bring artillery drawn on sleds by oxen over 300 miles from Fort Ticonderoga in the winter of 1775-76 to drive the British army out of Boston.

The Hilltown Hikers are a non-profit 501c3 organization incorporated in Massachusetts. Donations are always welcome and may be mailed to the Western Mass Hilltown Hikers, P.O. Box 3, Chester, MA 01011. People can also join the hikers and stay informed of upcoming events.

FAIR

from page 1

smiles on their faces.

A new highlight to this year’s fair was WeeWee Pig racing, which ran every day. Fairgoers reportedly had a great time watching them. Burke said they hope to have them return at next year’s fair, to be held Aug. 5, 6 and 7, 2027.

This year’s fair had a total attendance of 2,387, which was down from 2025s record-breaking year.

The heat on Sunday made the dunk tank the most enviable volunteer assignment. But there were few willing to try to dunk Gateway seniors Elle DeMoss and Anya Niles on Sunday morning.

The two took turns covering the dunk tank and the pop-a-shot basketball venue next to it. Both play for the Lady Gators basketball team and got creative. Not to be deterred by the lack of action in the morning, Demoss was sitting on the tank’s platform and shooting baskets toward the pop-a-shot. Niles favored her with rebounds.

Among this year’s winners at the fair were Cole Main, who took first in the stone boat pull. Moe Boisseau and David Janisieski won the Jack and Jack Cross Cut competition. And Ted LaPointe grew the largest zucchini at 9.38 pounds.

Burke said that the fair was only possible with the large number of sponsors and volunteers. “The donations we receive from the

local businesses make the Littleville Fair a great community event every year,” Burke said. “We appreciate their support and the

commitment to promoting agricultural events in our region.”



Turley Publications photos by Wendy Long
Liz Massa holds the First Place ribbon and State Award for a presentation on Chester mines and quarries, in the Exhibit Hall of the Littleville Fair.

Above, Best in Show chicken was entered by Pinnie Sears of Montague. Left, fair-goers took a much needed break in the shade to see Janoah the Jester, who performed outside of the side of the Exhibit Hall.



Turley Publications photo by Deborah Daniels
Liz Massa and Jim Franklin, holding a copy of the Country Journal, stand beside a newly excavated giant wooden acorn found buried on the latest piece of property acquired by the Hilltown Hikers next to their saw site in Chester.

REGION

E-bike crashes highlight emerging roadway crisis

WESTWOOD – E-bikes and e-scooters are surging in popularity, alongside an alarming spike in crashes and injuries associated with their use.

Battery-powered bicycles and scooters, which fall under a category called micromobility devices, can be fast, efficient and affordable modes of transportation. But unsafe riding and driving behaviors, confusion about where certain devices are allowed and limited public understanding regarding their sale and use have created a new traffic safety crisis on roadways.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, emergency department visits nationwide for injuries caused by micromobility crashes rose from 37,300 in 2017 to 149,100 in 2024, a 300% increase. Over that period, at least 533 people were killed, with fatalities rising from five in 2017 to 135 in 2024.

“Troublingly, many injured e-bike riders are children who lack the skill and experience to ride at high speeds or the training and practice to operate what is essentially a motor vehicle

on public roads,” said Mark Schieldrop, senior spokesperson for AAA Northeast. “And all too often, they gained access to an e-bike or scooter as a gift from a parent or caregiver who was unaware of just how fast and risky these devices can be.”

In Massachusetts, there were 889 crashes involving motorized bicycle and scooter riders between 2023 and 2025, according to the Massachusetts IMPACT Crash Data Portal. More than 90% of those crashes involved injuries, and four were fatal. Crashes involving motorized bicycle and scooter riders increased more than 33% from 2024 to 2025.

Meanwhile, the rules that determine who can ride e-bikes and where vary between states and sometimes even from town to town. There is no singular national standard to classify e-bikes and scooters, nor is there widespread uniformity in existing laws about age restrictions, helmet usage or licensing and insurance requirements. Knowing whether an e-bike is safe, legal and appropriate for a particular rider is difficult.

The current regulations

in Massachusetts are as follows:

Current Massachusetts E-Bike Law
Recognized Classes
Class 1: Pedal-assist, maximum speed 20 mph, motor under 750 watts
Class 2: Throttle-actuated, maximum speed 20 mph, motor under 750 watts
Helmet required for riders ages 16 and younger

Proposed Massachusetts Legislation
Classes
Class 1: Pedal assist, up to 20 mph
Class 2: Throttle-assisted, up to 20 mph
Class 3: Pedal-assist, up to 28 mph

Additional Classification
Four-tier speed framework ranging from 0 mph to 40+ mph

Minimum Riding Age
All e-bike riders must be at least 16 years old
Helmet required for all e-bike riders

Where E-Bikes Are Allowed
Access determined by speed tier; Current law prohibits riding on sidewalks and natural surface trails.

License, Insurance and Registration
Registrar may establish

regulations covering registration, licensing, insurance requirements and fines

If you’re exploring buying an e-bike or e-scooter for yourself or a child, consider the following before making a purchase:

Buy from a local bike shop, if possible. They should be able to provide guidance about what bikes might work best for your environment and will help you avoid purchasing devices that are marketed as e-bikes but are technically illegal.

Understand the difference between e-bike classes and consider whether throttle-only or Class 3 e-bikes are appropriate for the rider’s skill level.

Never purchase an e-bike for a child younger than the minimum age requirement listed for that vehicle, or for their first bicycle.

Understand that riding a bicycle is not the same as riding an e-bike; e-bikes are heavier, much faster and harder to steer and stop than traditional bicycles.

Educate children about the rules of the road and take practice rides along-

side them before allowing unsupervised rides. If they engage in risky behaviors, have a conversation with your child about safety.

Know that e-scooters are less stable than e-bikes due to smaller wheels and are more likely to tip over on bumpy roads.

AAA Northeast urges e-bike and e-scooter riders to: Always wear a helmet, regardless of age, skill level or legal requirements. The higher speeds attainable on an e-bike increase the risk of traumatic brain injuries.

Stay alert. The faster you go, the less time there is to react to obstacles. Stay focused, avoid distractions and resist the temptation to speed.

Stay visible. Wear reflective clothing at night and use lights and reflectors.

Be predictable. Don’t weave around cars, ignore traffic signals or ride close to pedestrians.

Be wary of parked cars. When approaching parked cars, anticipate that a door may open and cause a severe crash.

Be careful on hills. Due to their increased weight,

e-bikes can reach dangerous speeds downhill and can be difficult to stop.

“As the presence of e-bikes and e-scooters rapidly increases in our communities, it’s never been more important for drivers to slow down and ensure they are driving without distraction,” Schieldrop said.

“These devices are often traveling at higher speeds than drivers might expect and can be difficult to see, especially from larger vehicles. Always double-check for e-bikes before turning, opening your door or entering an intersection.

Anticipate unpredictable behaviors, especially from younger riders. The best way to increase safety for all road users is to be patient and give yourself more time to react to sudden and unexpected situations.”

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with offices in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing more than 6.9 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, financial and auto-related services.

STOCKBRIDGE

Berkshire Art Center announces fall classes, workshops

STOCKBRIDGE – Berkshire Art Center invites artists of all ages and experience levels to embrace the changing season with a vibrant lineup of fall 2026 classes and workshops.

With programs offered at Citizens’ Hall in Stockbridge as well as partner locations including Berkshire Music School, WANDER Berkshires, and the Mass Audubon’s Canoe Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary, BAC’s fall season celebrates creativity through ceramics, painting, drawing, printmaking, mixed media, photography and more.

Ceramics students will find exciting opportunities to develop their skills this fall. Faculty Artist Paula Shalan returns with Tableware: Creating with Soft Slabs, where students create functional pottery such as mugs, tumblers, and bowls, as well as Cut, Add, and Stretch: Creating with Soft Slabs, which explores more contemporary approaches to hand-building.

Jess Cropper-Alt teaches Timeless & Tactile: Handbuilding Traditions, while Donna Bernstein leads Wheel Throwing for All!, an all-levels course featuring demonstrations, individualized instruction, and ample studio time.

For those looking to try

clay for the first time, Lorimer Burns offers Try Your Hand at the Pottery Wheel, a welcoming two-hour introduction to wheel throwing. BAC also offers fun, social workshops including Wall Pocket Party, perfect for beginners, friends, couples, and families with children ages 10 and up and Pottery Night: Beer Stein Social, an evening of creativity and community where participants craft their own handmade ceramic beer stein.

Mixed media and printmaking enthusiasts will find an inspiring variety of offerings throughout the season. Jody King Camarra teaches Color Theory Through Collage, Print Lab: Collagraph, Drypoint and Relief, Working in a Series: Creating Cohesive Collages, Monoprint Magic, and concludes the season with the festive workshop Handmade Holidays: Winter Layers in Gel Plate Printmaking.

Additional printmaking opportunities include Eco-Printing: Basics and Beyond with Malloreay Caron, where students create beautiful botanical prints using real flowers and leaves, Gelatin Plate Printmaking with Johanna Merfeld, an introduction to playful experimentation with layering, texture, stencils, and image transfers, and Image Transfers and Mixed Media, where Diane

Firtell shares versatile techniques that can stand alone or enhance existing artwork.

Photography lovers can celebrate the beauty of autumn alongside Thad Kubis, whose seasonal workshops include Photography of Daniel Chester French’s Studio at Chesterwood in Stockbridge and Photographing Fall Colors in the Berkshires at Canoe Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary in Pittsfield.

Painters and drawing enthusiasts will discover classes ranging from foundational techniques to expressive exploration. Jill McLean returns with Watercolor Foundations and Watercolor Landscapes at Berkshire Music School, along with shorter, 1-day workshops including Berkshire Polaroids in Watercolor and Handmade Holidays: Watercolor Bookmarks.

Wednesday Nelena Sorokin offers Creative Writing & Abstraction, where students use stream-of-consciousness writing to inspire expressive abstract paintings, along with Painting Basics, Two-Dimensional Composition Workshop, and the popular Abstract Painting: Color, Design and Spirit. Artists looking for a relaxed, supportive studio environment can also enjoy the return of Friday Painting Studio, fea-

turing a new and more accessible tuition rate and experienced facilitators who provide encouragement, feedback, and creative community while participants work on independent projects.

BAC’s popular monthly workshop series at WANDER Berkshires in Pittsfield also continues this fall. Held on the second Saturday of each month, these welcoming two-hour sessions invite participants to sketch, paint, journal, and experiment in a relaxed community setting-no long-term commitment required. The series begins September 12 with Commonplace Visual Journaling led by Kaily Ritz, followed by Mini Nature Assemblage Boxes with Johanna Merfeld on Oct. 10, Indoor Urba Sketching with Jill McLean on Nov. 14, and concludes Dec. 12 with Watercolor Reset for the New Year, led by BAC Executive Director Laura Thompson.

For a complete schedule of classes and workshops or to register, people may visit www.berkshireartcenter.org/classes.

Berkshire Art Center (formerly IS183 Art School) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and advancing creativity in the Berkshires through classes, workshops, and community art programs for all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels.

PITTSFIELD

MassDEP penalizes Tree Service Company for violations

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection issued a \$35,000 fine to Kelley Brothers Enterprises, LLC, for solid waste and wetlands violations associated with unauthorized operations at the closed Pittsfield South Landfill.

MassDEP discovered that the company expanded portions of its tree processing operation onto the closed municipal landfill without the approvals required under Massachusetts solid waste regulations. The company stored wood chips and other tree materials on the landfill, disturbed portions of the landfill cap, installed unauthorized stormwater infrastructure and created an unpermitted stormwater discharge that affected an adjacent bordering vegetated wetland.

“Environmental

requirements are in place to protect both residents and natural resources,” said Michael Gorski, director of MassDEP’s Western Regional Office in Springfield. “These unauthorized activities threatened to compromise both the environment and the landfill cap. MassDEP expects corrective action to address these violations and full compliance moving forward.”

Kelley Brothers Enterprises agreed to the terms of MassDEP’s consent order and will pay the \$35,000 penalty. The company also agreed to remove all materials and equipment from the landfill property, restore disturbed portions of the landfill and adjacent wetlands, obtain the necessary environmental approvals and complete corrective work under MassDEP oversight.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

PUBLIC NOTICES

TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG Zoning Board of Appeals

A Public Hearings will be held at **5:30 PM on Wednesday, September 9, 2026**, in the Williamsburg Town Offices, 141 Main St., Haydenville, MA to consider the following application: The application of Julie Elias of 13 High St., Assessors Map K, Lot 74.0 to demolish, rebuild, and enlarge a pre-existing non-conforming garage on a pre-existing, non-conforming lot as required by Section 12.0e of the Williamsburg Zoning Bylaw.

Kelly Blaser, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
08/20, 08/27/2026

TOWN OF GOSHEN Conservation Commission

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 131 Section 40 of the Wetlands Protection Act the Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, August 31, 2026 at 6 p.m.** at Town Hall, 40 Main Street, Goshen, MA for a Notice of Intent filed on behalf of Wendy Berg, 51 Aberdeen Road, for a retaining wall replacement.

08/20/2026

Goshen Conservation Commission

The Goshen Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting under the provisions of the Wetlands Protections Act (M.G.L. Chapter 131 Section 40) on **August 31st, 2026 at 6:00 PM** at the Goshen Town Offices to review a **Request for Determination** filed by Talon Zdaniewicz for at 124 Spruce Corner Road, Goshen MA. The work to be reviewed is a proposed residential garage.

08/20/2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE CHESTERFIELD PLANNING BOARD

A public hearing will be held at **6:30 PM on Thursday, August 27, 2026** in the Davenport Town Offices, 422 Main Road, Chesterfield, MA to hear public comments on a final Battery Energy Storage (BESS) Zoning Bylaw to regulate BESS of capacities up to 100 Mwh whether Co-located, Freestanding or Accessory, in any zoning or overlay districts. This bylaw can be found on the town website, www.townofchesterfieldma.com, and/or in the Town Clerk’s Office.

The meeting can also be attended by Zoom at: <https://us06web.zoom.us/>

Sarah Hamilton
Acting Chair,
Planning Board

08/13, 08/20/26

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC MEETING Williamsburg Conservation Commission, Haydenville, MA 01039

The Williamsburg Conservation Commission, in accordance with MGL Chapter 131, Section 40, the Wetlands Protection Act, will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, September 2nd, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** via Zoom using Meeting ID 885 935 4972, and at the Williamsburg town offices, 141 Main St, Haydenville, MA to review a Notice of Intent for the Reconstruction of Mountain Street submitted by the Town of Williamsburg. The subject area or activity is located along a 2.84-mile segment of Mountain Street. The limits of the project start at the town line between Williamsburg and Whately and continue south into Williamsburg proper.

08/20/2026

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT HAMPDEN, Div. Probate & Family Court Dept. HD26E0036PP

To Melissa J Reid, of Hampshire County, and to all other persons interested

A petition has been presented to said Court by Robert S. Reid, of Morris County, NJ, representing that they hold as tenants in common in an undivided part or share of land lying in Chester, in the County of Hampden, setting forth that they desire that all of said land may be sold at private sale for not less than Two Hundred Forty Thousand dollars (\$240,000.00), and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided at private sale, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof after full adjudication of the equitable claims contained in said petition and supplemental memorandum filed with the Court.

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection in said Court at **Springfield** on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **September 17th, 2026**.

Witness, CLAUDINE T. STOUDEMIRE, First Justice of said Court, this 23rd day of July 2026.

Rosemary A. Saccomani,
Register

08/06, 08/13, 08/20/2026

Town of Chesterfield Date: August 12, 2026 ATTORNEY GENERAL’S NOTICE Pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 32

Town of Chesterfield - Case No. 12276 Annual Town Meeting of May 11, 2026 Articles # 28, 29, and 30

Attorney General’s Limited Authority to Waive Procedural Defects in the Notice of the Planning Board Hearing

Pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32, if the Attorney General finds there to be any defect in the procedure of adoption or amendment of any zoning by-law relating to the form or content of the notice of the Planning Board hearing prescribed by G.L. c. 40A, § 5, or to the manner or dates on which said notice is mailed, posted or published as required by that section, then instead of disapproving the by-law or amendment by reason of any such defect, the Attorney General may elect to proceed under the defect waiver provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32. Under those provisions, the Attorney General is conditionally authorized to waive any such defect.

Defect Determined in Notice of Planning Board Hearing

The Attorney General has determined that the planning board hearing notice relating to the above Articles failed to comply with the notice requirements for such hearing established by G.L. c. 40A, § 5. Section 5 provides in part (with emphasis added):

No zoning...by-law or amendment thereto shall be adopted until after the planning board in a...town has...held a public hearing thereon...at which interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard.... Notice of the time and place of such hearing, of the subject matter, sufficient for identification, and of the place where texts and maps thereof may be inspected shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the...town once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing, and by posting such notice in a conspicuous place in the...town hall for a period of not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing. Notice of said hearing shall also be sent by mail, postage prepaid to the executive office of housing and livable communities, the regional planning agency, if any, and to the planning board of each abutting city and town....In cases involving boundary, density or use changes within a district, notice shall be sent to any such nonresident property owner who has filed such a request with the city or town clerk and whose property lies in the district where the change is sought.

Based on the materials submitted to this Office, we have identified the following defect: the Planning Board hearing notice that was posted did not contain information about the place where the text (and maps if any) of the proposed zoning amendments could be inspected, as required by G.L. c. 40A, §

5. For this reason, the 90-day period prescribed for the Attorney General’s review of Articles 28, 29, and 30 is suspended in accordance with G.L. c. 40, § 32.

Attorney General’s Election to Proceed Under the Waiver Provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32

The Attorney General has elected to proceed under the limited defect waiver authority conferred by

G.L. c. 40, § 32.

Suspension of Review of Zoning By-Law Amendments

The 90-day period prescribed by law for the Attorney General’s review of local by-laws is therefore suspended in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32.

Posting and Publication of This Notice

The Town Clerk shall post a true copy of this Notice in a conspicuous place in the Chesterfield Town Hall for a period of not less than 14 days and shall publish a copy once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Chesterfield.

Filing of Claim That Defect in Notice Was Misleading or Otherwise Prejudicial

Within 21 days of the date on which this Notice is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Chesterfield, any resident of the Town of Chesterfield, or the owner of any real property in the Town of Chesterfield, or any other party entitled to notice of the planning board hearing may file with the Town Clerk a written statement that the notice defect was misleading or otherwise prejudicial. The statement must include the reasons supporting the claim that the defect in the Planning Board Notice was misleading or otherwise prejudicial. This statement must be actually on file with the Town Clerk not later than 21 days from the date on which this Notice is published in the newspaper.

Town Clerk’s Certification of Compliance with This Notice

After the expiration of the 21-day period, the Town Clerk shall submit to the Attorney General a true copy of this Notice with a certification of compliance with the publishing and posting requirements of the preceding paragraph, and a certification that either (a) no claim was filed within the 21-day period, or (b) one or more claims were filed within the 21-day period. The Town Clerk shall submit to the Attorney General true copies of any such claim(s).

Resumption of Attorney General’s Review

Upon receipt of one original copy of this Notice with the Clerk’s certification, the 90-day period provided for the Attorney General’s review under G.L. c. 40, § 32, shall resume. If no claim is made, the Attorney General has the discretion to waive any such defect; if any claim is made, however, the Attorney General may not waive any such defect.

Notice: By not filing a claim under this provision, a person shall not be deprived of the right to assert a claim of invalidity arising out of any possible defect in the procedure of adoption or amendment, as provided in G.L. c. 40, § 32, and in G.L. c. 40A, § 5.

Date: August 12, 2026

Very truly yours,

ANDREA JOY CAMPBELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By:

Nicole B. Caprioli
Assistant Attorney General
Deputy Director, Municipal Law Unit 10
Mechanic Street, Suite 301
Worcester, MA 01608
(774) 214-4418

cc: Town Counsel Jonathan D. Eichman
08/20/2026

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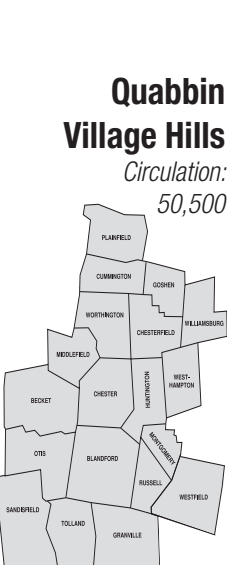
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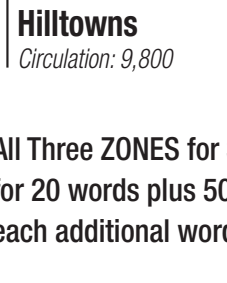
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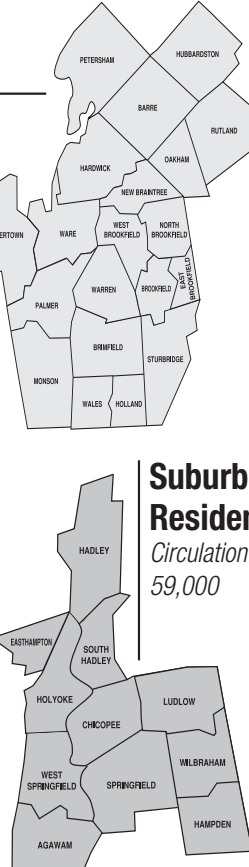
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OBITUARY

Paul LaPrise, 94



Paul LaPrise passed peacefully on May 3, 2026 in Hobe Sound, Florida. Paul was born at home in Housatonic, Massachusetts on Feb. 26, 1932, to William A. LaPrise and Minerva Lee LaPrise.

He grew up there with sister, Jane and brother, Lee. Paul graduated from Searles High School in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1949 and from Antioch College in Dayton, Ohio in 1955.

After college graduation he served in the United States Army as a member of the Counter Intelligence Corps including a stint at the Pentagon, in Washington, DC.

After leaving the Army, he returned to Massachusetts and began a long career in sales with the Old Colony Envelope Company in Westfield. Upon retirement in 1997, he split his time between Russell, Massachusetts and Hobe

Sound, Florida.

Paul is survived by his beloved wife, Ruth (Clark) and together they raised their four children. Paul will be deeply missed by his children: son Jeff and his wife Allison Beason of Windsor, Connecticut and their children Benjamin, Samrin, and Lia; son Jay and his wife Carole of Shelton, Connecticut and their children Jillian and Jayson; daughter JoEllen Felkl and her husband Rob of Cornwall, Vermont and their children Nick and Derek and son Jed of Andover, Vermont and his children Thatcher, Loganne, and Maisen.

Paul was a truly wonderful person whose kindness touched everyone fortunate enough to know him. He was a constant source of love, encouragement and support, always ready to listen, share



a funny story, lend a helping hand, or sweep a sidewalk.

His warm smile made people feel safe and valued, and his generous spirit brought comfort and joy to Ruth, their children, and all their grandchildren. Though his loss leaves an immeasurable emptiness, the love he gave, the lessons he taught, and the memories he created will remain with us forever.

Paul's family extends heartfelt gratitude to all the nurses and caregivers who helped care for their dad in his final days.

The family welcomes others to join them for a Celebration of Life on Saturday, Aug. 29, from 2-4 p.m. at the Blandford Country Club, on 17 North St., in Blandford. Light refreshments will be served.

In lieu of flowers dona-

tions may be made to the Blandford Fair Association, c/o Jackie Coury, P.O. Box 875, Blandford, MA 01008.

DEATH NOTICE

LAPRISE, PAUL

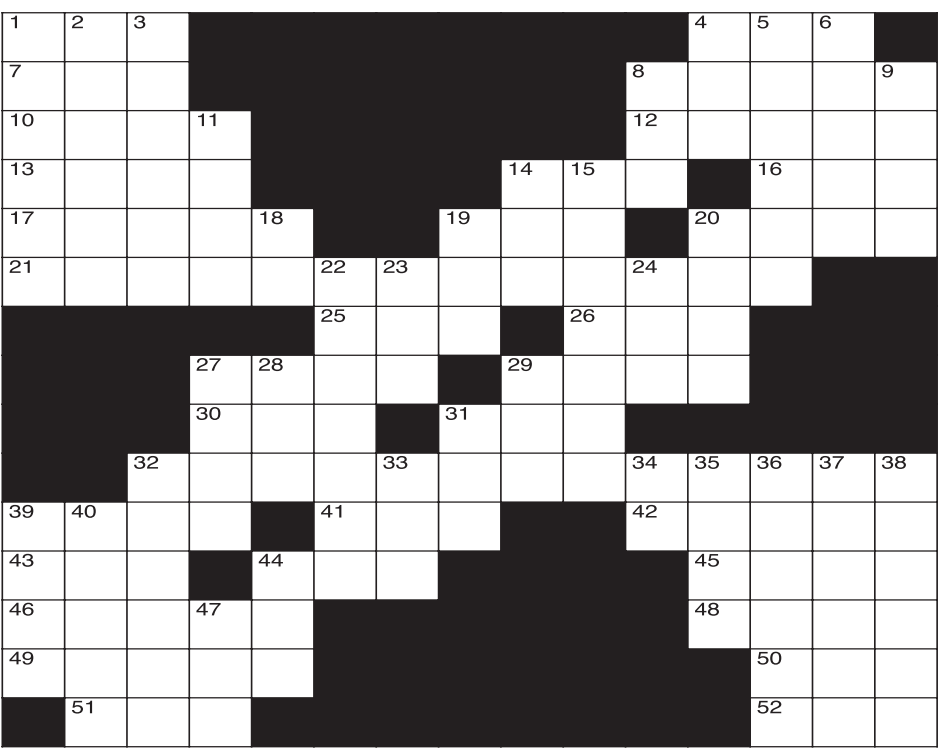
Died May 3, 2026
Celebration of Life Aug. 29 from 2-4 p.m.
at Blandford Country Club, 17 North St., Blandford

Country Journal
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

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

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



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Microgram
- 4. Fixed charge
- 7. Each
- 8. Feeling of humiliation
- 10. Coat with sticky substance
- 12. Powerful "Severance" family
- 13. Japanese city
- 14. "Pulp Fiction" actress Thurman
- 16. Hat
- 17. Place where rockers work
- 19. Psyche
- 20. Snakelike fishes
- 21. Where people live
- 25. Body part
- 26. Old towel
- 27. One's essential being

- 29. Japanese alcoholic beverage
- 30. Boxing's GOAT
- 31. Wet muddy ground
- 32. Christian Laettner is one
- 39. A place to store lawn tools
- 41. Large tub for liquid
- 42. Old World lizard
- 43. One-time European member group
- 44. Healing student
- 45. Nuclear weapon
- 46. "Kiss of the Spider Woman" actress Sonia
- 48. Silk garment
- 49. About some Norse poems
- 50. Woman religious community member
- 51. Congressman (abbr.)

- 52. Two-year-old sheep

CLUES DOWN

- 1. An insane person
- 2. "Homeland" actress Danes
- 3. Buttock muscles
- 4. US federal agency
- 5. Birds of prey
- 6. Electronic communication
- 8. Ocean
- 9. Terminates
- 11. Low-pitched sound from a bell
- 14. Exclamation: yuck!
- 15. A place to attach a boat
- 18. Exclamation of surprise
- 19. Make a mistake
- 20. Border line
- 22. Have religious faith
- 23. Klutz
- 24. Large tree
- 27. House of __ rulers
- 28. Red deer
- 29. Small coin (French)
- 31. Popular sandwich
- 32. 10-year period
- 33. Not good
- 34. Government lawyer
- 35. Egypt's intelligence agency
- 36. Without an occupant or incumbent
- 37. Stain with one's hands
- 38. Crippling
- 39. One point east of southeast
- 40. Large, united groups
- 44. __ and cheese
- 47. Alcoholic beverage

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20
Make the most of every opportunity that comes your way this week, Aries. You may not get many chances to test your mettle in the weeks to come, so it's important to act now.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, something that started out as a part-time venture could turn into much more. Figure out if this is the path you see yourself going and then make your move.

GEMINI

May 22/Jun 21
Let loose and have fun for a change. Don't delay when others want to invite you out for a night on the town or even a brunch. Say "yes."

CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22
There's a lot going on right now and it may have your head spinning, Cancer. Delegate some of your workload if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself.

LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, it is important to remember that your on-line presence never goes away. Watch what you post and be mindful of what you support in social media groups.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22
Family matters require your undivided attention this week, Virgo. You must dig in deep to address them. There are two sides to every story.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, just when you started to lose hope, the new horizon you were seeking comes into view. It is well-deserved.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22
Scorpio, if you find yourself with too much extra time on your hands, why not volunteer with the community to pass the time? This can be a great way to meet people.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21
When plans change on a dime, you are ready to roll with the new situation, Sagittarius. Higher-ups may get a peek at your quick thinking, which can land you a promotion.

CAPRICORN

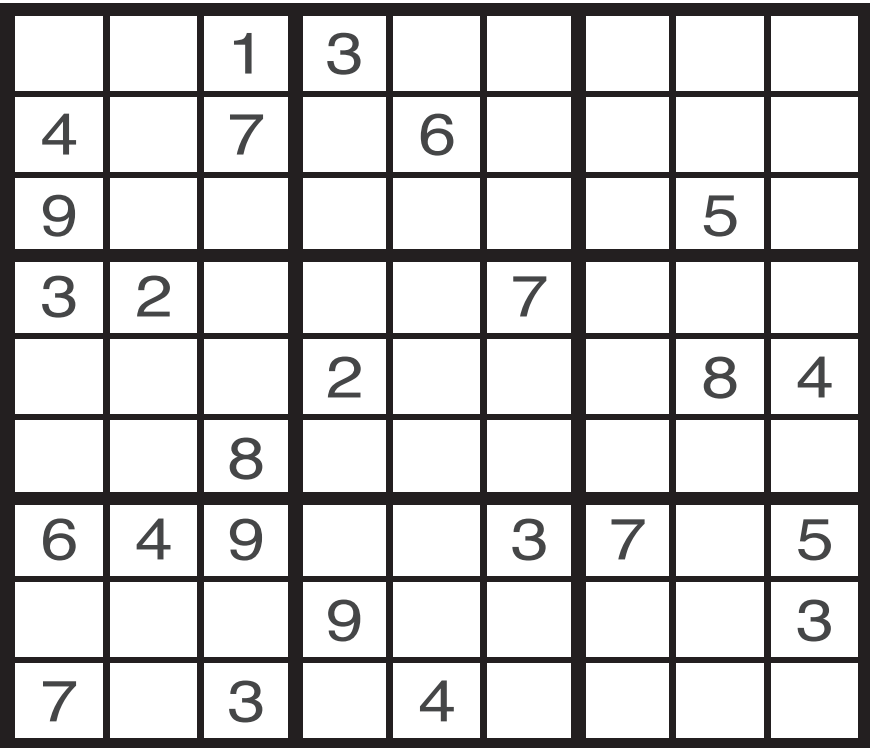
Dec 22/Jan 20
It's time to make amends with someone who did you wrong, Capricorn. Life is too short to hold grudges, and this person has since mended their ways.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18
Unless you take swift action, you could be heading for a financial free-fall, Aquarius. Start to pull back spending for a while and see if the situation will right itself.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, you are on fire lately. There's seemingly nothing you touch that isn't turning to gold. This trend will continue, but try not to let it go to your head.



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

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answers

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HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



The potholes are under the old Strathmore Bridge, a favorite paddling location on the Westfield River.



The Hilltown Hikers explore the potholes, carved by the river over centuries.



This paddler takes a closeup look at one of the potholes.

Woronoco potholes are a Westfield River geological wonder

The Woronoco potholes are one of the favorite Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers paddling spots so they sat down to research how these were actually formed.

They are a striking geological feature along the Westfield River in Russell. They are deep, circular depressions carved by the river over centuries, with both vertical and horizontal potholes formed by the erosive action of water.

The potholes are under the old Strathmore Bridge. This area is a favorite for paddlers. The parking is available at the canoe portage on the road and its just a

short walk to the water with the boat.

The river pools here and creates a nice area of very slow moving water so its great for people, who want to experience paddling on the river.

To get up close to the potholes paddlers need to drag their boat over a very rocky and shallow short section to the next pool, which is under the old bridge.

Here the water moves a bit faster so paddling up to the potholes is a bit more challenging. It's the best way to get an up close and personal pothole experience.

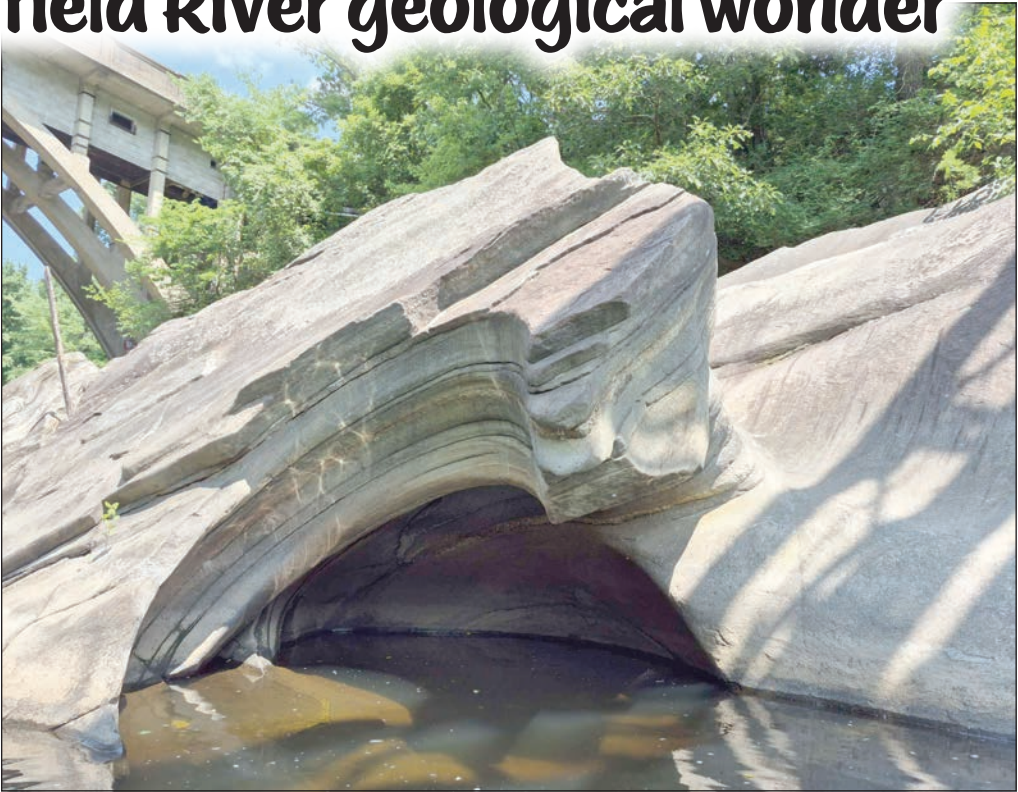
These potholes are created by a process called fluvial erosion the river's

flow has worn away bedrock, creating smooth, bowl-shaped cavities. The vertical potholes are deep, narrow channels, while the horizontal ones are wider and more shallow, both shaped by the river's constant movement.

Their formation is tied to the region's glacial history and the Westfield River's long-term erosive power.

To top things off this site has Native American heritage too as Salmon Falls was a place that the original inhabitants of Woronoco used quite a bit for fishing.

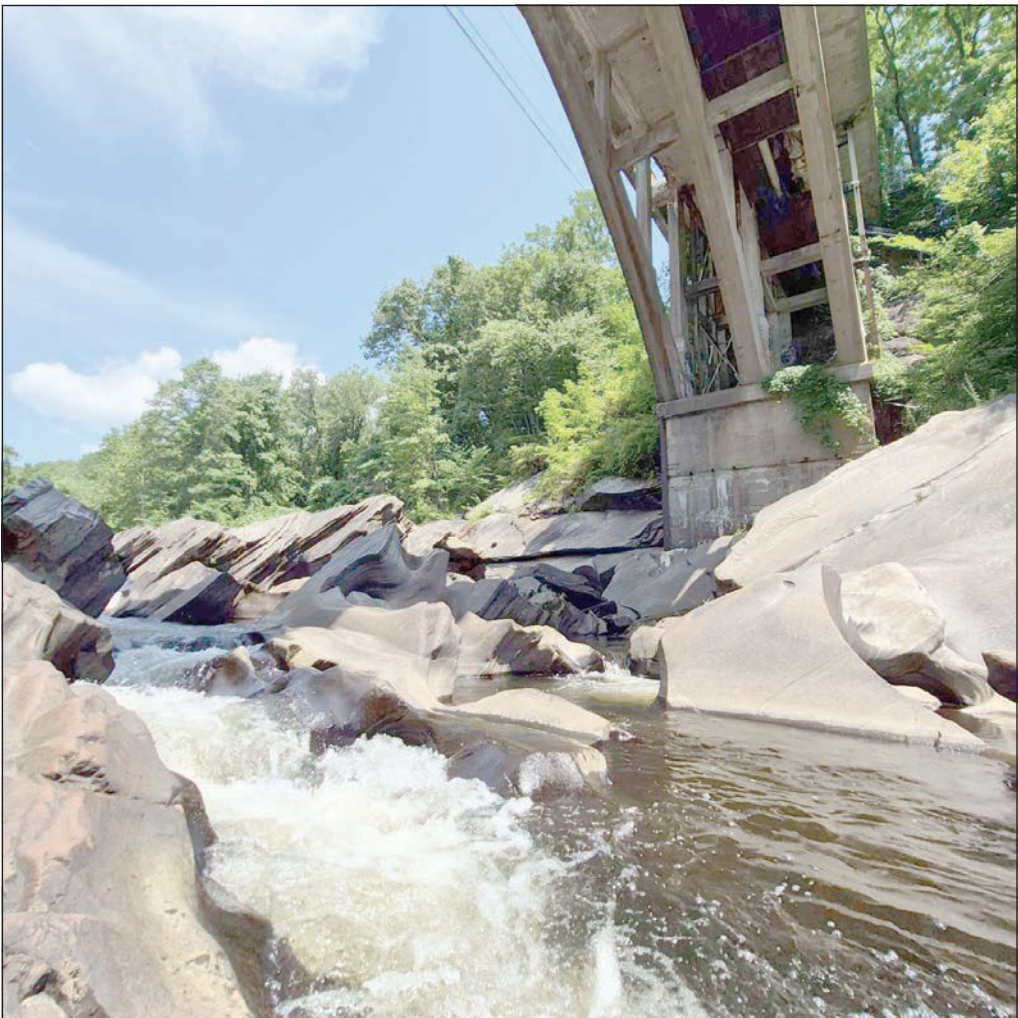
People should get out on the Westfield River while the weather is still warm to enjoy what is right in our backyard.



This is a closeup view of one of the potholes along the Westfield River.



A member of the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers approaches the potholes under the old Strathmore Bridge in the Woronoco section of Russell.



Water rushes under the old Strathmore Bridge.

Submitted photos

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