

Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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HUNTINGTON

Margaret Sharron sets new record at Mt. Washington car race

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Margaret Sharron of Huntington was named “Queen of the Mountain” in a Sunday, Aug. 9 car race up the auto road of Mt. Washington.

The “Climb to the Clouds” race had 80 entrants and Sharron made history for besting the women’s record by 11 seconds, previously set by her in 2021. She also had the first all-women team to ever compete at the Mt. Washington CTTC, which is the oldest motorsport event in the United States.

“It wasn’t just the biggest race of the season,” Sharron said. “That race hasn’t run in five years.”

It marked the first time that the Climb to the Clouds named a “Queen of the Mountain,” which may have paid homage to Sharron’s all woman rally team. Her co-driver was Jen Holden and crew members were Gaia Marien, Amy Dilks, Sara Dolezel and Seraphim Le.

The co-driver reads the course notes that have been written about the road so that



Margaret Sharron stands on the podium after being named “Queen of the Mountain” at Mt. Washington’s hillclimb, where she and her all-woman team made history on several fronts.

the driver can anticipate what is coming next as they run the course at high speeds. The crew attends to the car before the race and in-between heats when service is allowed.

Sharron made history at this 2026 race on a number of fronts, not only having the first all-woman team in a CTTC race and setting a new

women’s course record, but also having the fastest Audi of the day and taking third overall in the Rally Class.

In accepting her award, Sharron said, “Women in motorsports, let’s support them, let’s honor them and cheer them on” as the crowd chanted, “Mar-gret, Mar-gret, Mar-gret.”

The second-place woman to finish was one second behind Sharron.

The three-day event began with practice runs on

SHARRON, page 3



Margaret Sharron with co-driver Jen Holden racing the Climb to the Clouds up the Mt. Washington Auto Road. Sharron set a new course record for women on Sunday, Aug. 9.

Courtesy photos

HUNTINGTON

Library Trustees meet Aug. 19

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

At their Wednesday, Aug. 19 meeting, the Trustees of the Huntington Public Library discussed the need to replace long-time Trustee Karen Wittshirk, who will not seek reelection when her term expires in 2027.

Wittshirk has served as a trustee for 20 years. Anyone interested in learning more about the work of the Library Trustees is welcome to attend a monthly meeting, held on the third Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. in the library.

Trustee meetings are open to the public and agendas are posted on the town of Huntington website. Attending can provide a unique opportunity to learn more about the role and determine whether or not it is a good fit for a potential candidate.

Also of concern to the

LIBRARY, page 2

BLANDFORD

Select Board waive temporary license fee

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Select Board waived any fee for a temporary license for the Skyline Beer Company to be at the Blandford Fair from Friday, Sept. 4 through Saturday, Sept. 7 at the Monday, Aug. 17 meeting.

The board also approved the placement of a guy wire in the Blandford Burial Ground with a 30-foot protected easement behind the pole where there can be no trees shrubbery or other plantings.

Guy wire

The guy wire and easement area, according to Ted Cousineau, former Cemetery Commissioner, are not on or near any burial sites. He did say there is a foundation in the area, however.

Emergency 911 process

The board then discussed the Emergency 911 process. As head of the Emergency Management Team, Fire Chief Adam Dolby is in charge and may use the R911. Included in this process are the Board of Health, Select Board chair, Police Chief and the board agreed to include Joann Martin on the list of town officials

who can log in and use the service.

The R911 process may be used for any public health emergency, a lot child, a water main break, winter parking regulations, impending weather, or anything that can affect employees of the town.

Senior tax work off

Board member Corinne Shartrand is working on developing Senior Tax Work jobs/descriptions for all departments and will have more information when available. Worker requests for different departments will be posted on the website.

Message board

Chairman Jackie Coury said she wants someone to assist the board with communications by providing UpToDate information for the new message board that will be in the lobby. The board approved the request.

Post Office lease

Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera brought the board information on the Post Office lease.

The building maintenance costs are very high year after year and the Post Office lease from 2022 to

SELECT BOARD, page 6

BLANDFORD

Surveyed residents want swimming site available

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The town’s Resilient Master Plan supported the need for a local, in town, place to swim.

This was brought to the attention of the town’s legislators to possibly work something out with Springfield Water and Sewer Commission for the use of Blair Pond on Otis Stage Road.

There has been no new information from Sen. Mark’s office as his aid, Jon Gould, who was working on the idea, has not been in the office for several months.

Former State Sen. Adam Hinds was aware of the potential possibilities as Gould was also his aid. Gould had visited the site.

There is accessibility right off Otis Stage Road. The water is right there. A few dump trucks of sand to create a proper beach area, a life-guard stand, picnic tables and perhaps even a gate house would make a “local swimming hole” for Blandford residents,

The town’s most recent Resilient Master Plan, which is on the town website, revealed survey results indicating residents desire for a local, preferably in town, swimming area.

Because the town has maintained Springfield Water and Sewer

Commission’s Cobble Mountain Road since 2011 with no compensation, it was thought this could leverage access to Blair Pond as a swimming area for residents.

Immediately adjacent to Blair Pond, the town acquired Shepard Hill Farm, a 121-acre site on Otis Stage Road for \$1 from Springfield Water Sewer Commission in 2009, but did nothing to improve the area or the buildings on site.

The one-time house and

home for Avalon School is in need of demolition. There are no restorative efforts to be made. The Blandford Fair has an eye on one of the out buildings and it will be moved to the fairgrounds.

In the meantime, the 121-acres have Conservation Restrictions on them, but are available for public use, for hiking, forestry, limited agriculture, meaning no livestock, no new construction. However, maintaining existing structures is permitted.

Blair Pond is not part

of the 121-acres, but almost borders the area via Watson Brook, which flows west to east on the back side of the town-owned land.

There are restrictions on Blair Pond, but the use of the water for recreation would require an act of legislature.

Conservation Commission Chairman Dick Gates said that change would “take an act of God, as any changes to

SWIMMING, page 6



Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

Blair Pond on Otis Stage Road is a possible site for swimming in Blandford.

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HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers make their way up to the summit on the blue trail at Tekoa Park in Russell.



Hikers stand on the big rock at summit looking over Pochassic Hills.



Hikers trek the lower section of the blue trail.

Hilltown Hikers clean up Tekoa Park

The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers made some history Saturday at Tekoa Park in Russell with an official group hike bringing an exceptional park back to life.

Previously known as Little Mountain and Hosmer's Park this property dates back to 1662 when Native Americans owned this land. Over many years it has changed ownership, titles and its overall layout and several volunteers and donors have made changes here.

The Hilltown Hikers paid a visit to this great Westfield Town Park a few years ago and saw it was badly neglected, so the directors went to the city of Westfield and asked if they could clean it up.

The Westfield Parks and Rec Department was happy to see a local organization wanting to renew this gem of a spot just outside the city; it is actually located in the town of Russell.

So once again, history repeats itself and Tekoa Park has been reborn with freshly blazed trails, tree and brush cleanup, trash removal and the overgrowth has been cut back to again reveal the beautiful views at both Hosmer's Lookout and at the summit. Thank you to Ken Magarian of Westfield Parks and Rec and Don Podolski

from New Horizons Bike Shop, who were both part of the original revival crew.

This place has been revived three times before,

let's keep it going this time.

Thanks to all of the volunteers, who cleaned up trash, brush, dead trees, trail blazing and more over the last two years. Plans include a new kiosk, signage and more renewed trails in the near future here at Tekoa Park.



Volunteers clear dead hemlocks at the summit.



Pochassic Hills can be seen in the background of the summit.



This is the new view from the summit.

Submitted photos



An original blaze on the blue trail at Tekoa Park.



The old sign and kiosk still stand at the trailhead.

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