

Country Journal

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HILLTOWNS

Kim Baker takes part in

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

"You have never seen as many grownups in tears and kids having fun," said retired race car driver Kim Baker of Middlefield.

"It was 100% the most rewarding thing I have ever done." Baker was talking about the Dream Ride Experience he recently attended in Farmington, Connecticut.

This annual three-day fundraiser supports the Hometown Foundation, an organization that formed with a mission "to shed light on the countless abilities of the intellectually disabled community and highlight their determination in their daily lives."

DREAM RIDE, page 3



Submitted photo

Dream Rider Jacob was paired with Corvette Hall of Famer Kim Baker on this year's Dream Ride in Farmington, Connecticut, part of a three-day fundraiser for The Hometown Foundation that supports people with intellectual disabilities. He and his mom Vanessa traveled from Maryland to take part in the weekend, which has raised over \$15 million for the organization since it started in 2001.

HUNTINGTON

School committee passes revised bullying policy

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

The Gateway Regional School Committee held a virtual meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 25 to vote to approve the district's revised bullying policy.

The updated policy was developed over the summer and reviewed by legal council in response to a bullying incident reported by a recent graduate at the June School Committee meeting.

About twenty people had attended the June 10 school committee meet-

ing in response to a social media post by 2026 graduate Natalie Tacke, in which she described her car being vandalized last spring while she attended a class fundraiser at a restaurant in Holyoke.

On her way to school the following day, she noticed writing on her back window only to discover a racial slur had been written on her car. She described it as part of a pattern of bullying by a group of classmates that dated back to her freshman year.

POLICY, page 3

BLANDFORD



Turley Publications photo by Mark Kronholm

The performers at the curtain call received a standing ovation from the audience. They are from left, Ben Brady, Melanie Spector, Douglas Martin, Maestro Eve Queler, Catherine Wethinton and Joseph Sacchi.

Maestro Eve Quelar conducts opera

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

One has to continue to accept not only surprise but astonishment on the part of Maestro Eve Queler as she

maintains her certitude as an operatic conductor.

She knows when to lead the vocalist, gently nudging in a very cultivated manor. Her playing is always elegant, classy.

She performed with the vocalists for the first half of Saturday evening's performance before turning

the keyboard over to pianist Douglas Martin, who as been with the Bel Canto performance for over 20 years.

Martin brings his own style to the event with his ability to settle in at the instrument and accompa-

OPERA, page 7

BLANDFORD

Crew gets ready for Blandford Fair

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Saturday, Aug. 29 was warm, not too hot, sunny and just a great day all around for accomplishing maintenance and upgrades at the Blandford Fairgrounds in preparation for the 157th Labor Day Fair.

Director Mandy LaBrecque and son Sam along with nephew Kyle Blanchette wielded paint brushes and rollers to renew the benches for seating at the

new pavilion.

Director Bruce Cooley was on the ride-on mower, no doubt the grass will need to be cut again before the fair opens on Friday, Sept. 4. The fair will run through Monday, Sept. 7 at 5 p.m.

President Matt Ripley and vice president Aaron LaBrecque were both on deck as well. There are new speakers and lights in the process of installation and more.

Premium booklets are available at the Post

Office, Porter Memorial Library and the Blandford Country Store. Premium booklets can also be downloaded from the fair website as well as an entry form.

There will be two demolition derbies, a horse show, car show, truck pulls and family fun events.

Live music at the pavilion is provided by Pine Hills Band with Martha Kronholm Moscovitz on Saturday after-

FAIR, page 7



Turley Publication photo by Mary Kronholm

Giving the benches for the new pavilion a fresh coat of paint are l-r Sam LaBrecque, Fair Director Mandy LaBrecque and Kyle Blanchette

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HILLTOWNS

Dept. of Fire Services has new mobile training maze trailer

The Massachusetts Department of Fire Services announced the expansion of firefighter survival training at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy with the addition of a new mobile Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus training maze.

The new training system will increase access to realistic, hands-on instruction for recruit and veteran municipal firefighters across the Commonwealth.

“One of DFS’s most important responsibilities is ensuring firefighters across Massachusetts have access to the highest-quality training possible,” said Public Safety and Security Secretary Gina Kwon. “That means continually investing in modern equipment and training environments that reflect the dangerous and unpredictable conditions firefighters face in the field. Better training builds more confident, better prepared firefighters, and better prepared firefighters help make communities across Massachusetts safer.”

The new mobile train-

ing maze expands the MFA’s ability to deliver firefighter survival training both on campus and directly to local fire departments. Combined with the Academy’s existing mobile training resources, it will increase access to realistic, hands-on SCBA training for recruits and experienced firefighters alike. The unit also replaces the Academy’s original Stow-based SCBA maze, ensuring this critical training remains available for years to come.

This year, DFS marks 30 years of training Massachusetts firefighters through the MFA. Since 1996, the Academy has prepared thousands of firefighters for the challenges of the job while continually evolving its training programs to reflect new technologies, emerging hazards, and best practices. The addition of the new mobile SCBA training maze builds on that legacy by giving more firefighters the opportunity to train in realistic, high-pressure environments that build the skills and confidence they need to



Submitted photo

The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy’s new SCBA Maze Trailer will provide vital firefighter safety training at the MFA’s Stow campus and at local fire departments. It replaces a 40-year-old permanent installation that is at the end of its useful lifespan.

respond safely and effectively when lives are on the line.

“The SCBA Training Maze is one of our most frequently requested training tools,” said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. “This new mobile unit allows us to deliver critical survival training to more firefighters in more communities while strengthening the MFA’s

ability to prepare recruits and veteran firefighters for the dangerous and unpredictable conditions they face. Providing firefighters with realistic training is one of the best investments we can make in their safety and the safety of the communities they serve.”

Inside the maze, firefighters navigate dark, con-

fined and unfamiliar environments while wearing full turnout gear and SCBA. The training is designed to build confidence under stress, improve air management, and reinforce the skills firefighters rely on during searches, rescues and self-extraction.

Last year, the MFA’s Springfield-based mobile

SCBA maze supported training for more than 500 municipal firefighters. The addition of a second road-worthy mobile unit will expand training opportunities for fire departments across Massachusetts while continuing to support recruit training at the Stow campus.

The new mobile maze is one of several investments that have strengthened training at the MFA in recent years, alongside a forcible entry trailer, flashover training prop, search and rescue buildings on the Bridgewater and Springfield campuses, a hazardous materials leak prop and a Mobile Extraction Unit used to decontaminate firefighting gear.

DFS invested approximately \$500,000 in the new training system, supported in large part by a \$435,000 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant. The investment reflects DFS’s continued commitment to providing firefighters across Massachusetts with access to realistic, state-of-the-art training.

NERIS provides public access to emergency response data

The Department of Fire Services announces Massachusetts Fire Departments achieved the fourth-highest reporting rate in the country for the National Emergency Response Information System.

Ninety percent of Massachusetts Fire Departments reported more than 1.3 million apparatus responses to more than 788,000 incidents.

This achievement reflects the state’s commitment to leading the nation in public safety data collection and will help local and state officials make informed decisions about operations, policies, fire prevention messaging, grant applications and budget proposals and updates to fire and life safety codes.

A project of the U.S. Fire Administration and Underwriters Laboratories Fire Safety Research Institute, NERIS provides unprecedented public access to incident response data through its newly launched public website.

Unlike its 50-year-old predecessor, which required a lengthy data

validation process, NERIS allows users to view near-real-time incident data from cities and towns across the country and conduct independent analysis using dozens of data fields.

“Adopting an entirely new data reporting system was a seismic shift for fire departments across the country,” said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. “They have done a phenomenal job of adapting to NERIS and bringing Massachusetts to the nation’s forefront. I also want to recognize our staff for helping to bring the state’s fire service onboard in a matter of months. The data that local fire departments are reporting will support funding requests, effective resource allocation, community risk reduction efforts, and much more.”

NERIS rolled out in geographic phases throughout 2025. Most Massachusetts Fire Departments began transitioning to the new system in October and several volunteered to serve as early adopters, including Belchertown, Beverly,

Bourne, Dudley, Gill, Greenfield, Huntington, Pittsfield, Sandisfield, Springfield and Walpole.

The new system replaces the National Fire Incident Reporting System and its Massachusetts-level system, the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS). Under the former systems, it could take months to obtain reliable incident and response statistics.

NERIS will also help local, state, and regional agencies understand the impact of large-scale events and prepare for increased emergency activity during major celebrations, disasters, and other incidents.

This summer, NERIS implemented a “special incident modifier” to collect information about emergency responses related to World Cup matches, watch parties and other gatherings.

During that event period, Massachusetts fire departments reported 65 related incidents across six cities and towns, including 31 medical calls, 25 service calls and two elevator rescues.

250th commemorative plate surpasses 100,000 registrations

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation’s Registry of Motor Vehicles Division (RMV) announced it issued over 100,000 commemorative 250th Anniversary license plates, making it the most popular specialty plate in state history.

Introduced in May 2025, the plate celebrates 250 years of American independence and Massachusetts’ central role in the founding of the nation. The distinctive blue background with a white and red design features the year “1776” surrounded by 13 stars representing the original colonies and the phrase “250 Years of Independence” across the bottom.

“The story of America’s independence begins in Massachusetts, and these plates have become a symbol

of the pride people feel in that history,” said Governor Maura Healey. “Reaching 100,000 plates is an incredible milestone, and it’s exciting to see so many residents taking part in our Massachusetts 250 celebration.”

As part of the anniversary celebration, the RMV conducted a special Massachusetts 250 Low Plate Lottery for plates numbered 1 through 999, as well as the commemorative number 1776. The lottery attracted 48,457 eligible entries with winners representing 289 cities and towns from Pittsfield to Provincetown.

More than 4,500 people watched the special prerecorded lottery broadcast featuring stories, trivia and local history connected to selected plate numbers. The program included appearances

by Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Interim Secretary of Transportation and MBTA General Manager Phillip Eng, Registrar Ogilvie and other RMV leaders.

The Massachusetts 250th Anniversary plate may be ordered online at Mass.Gov/RMV, at RMV Service Centers and through participating Electronic Vehicle Registration dealerships. The plate will continue to be offered beyond the end of this year. The biennial cost is \$100, consisting of the standard \$60 vehicle registration fee and a \$40 special plate fee.

In addition to the Massachusetts 250 plate, the RMV offers 56 specialty plates, including charitable, military, organizational, environmental and other distinctive designs.

Old Country Road Band concludes season

HUNTINGTON – The North Hall Association, 40 Searle Road, wraps up its 2026 Historic North Hall Arts Festival with this final free program on Sunday, Sept. 27 at 2 p.m. on the North Hall stage.

Donations are appreciated. Perennial favorites, Old

Country Road Band, dedicated to the Golden Age of country music, will close the 2026 Festival on Sept. 27.

Performers Ron Jackson (rhythm guitar, vocals), Mark Leveille (mandolin, vocals), Dan Pilachowski (flat-pickin’ guitar), Dave Helman (stand-up bass) and guest artist Chris Boucher (banjo) on some performances, will play songs that take people back to the Grand Ole Opry, the Ryman Auditorium and the Nashville bluegrass of Hank Williams, Patsy Cline and others.

This year’s performance will be dedicated to Lorena “Lori” Belhumeur, a longtime committee member and friend to North Hall, veter-

ans’ affairs and the town of Huntington.

Upstairs seating is limited to the first 75 attendees and both of these performances have historically filled the house. Doors open at 1:30 p.m.

People may visit the website at www.northhall-huntington.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.

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on his birthday.
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Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday sweet William,
Happy birthday to you!
Forever missed, forever loved.

Love, Mom

HUNTINGTON

Summer readers celebrate at Huntington Public Library



Seventeen year-old Travis Chrystal and 10 year-old Skylar Forgey, both from Westfield, took part in the map-making activity at the Summer Reading Program's party at the Huntington Public Library on Aug. 22.

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – Area readers stopped in to the Huntington Public Library at noon on Saturday, Aug. 22 to celebrate the Summer Reading Program and turn in their reading logs for raffle prizes.

Pizza, soda, water, veggies and dip were served. Two special beverage concoctions, a “health potion” (a.k.a. cranberry juice, orange juice and lime) and a “stealth potion” (consisting of pineapple, orange juice, lime and blue raspberry lemonade KoolAid) seemed popular and tied nicely into the Dungeons & Dragons themed summer program.

Guests also took part in a special map making activity that enabled creators to include mountains, volcanos, ships at sea, dragons and other symbols to map their own journey. Lyric Thrasher, age 6 from Huntington, was deeply engaged in this activity and explained the many symbols on his map. Lyric and his mother Sara said he read 25 to 30 books this summer and the hands down favorites were

Minecraft books and the graphic novel, “The First Cat in Space.”

Also taking part in the map making were 17 year-old Travis Chrystal and 10 year-old Skylar Forgey, both from Westfield.

They were lucky enough to take part in the four highly popular D&D workshops, led by storyteller Kevin Weldell. Forgey said they were pretty good, adding, “I liked the storyline but I wish there’d been more fighting.” Chrystal agreed. “Yeah. We got into combat once.”

According to Library Director Amanda Loiselle, this summer’s program had 41 participants. While the majority (27) were from Huntington, others came from other towns and states, including Chester, Montgomery, Westfield, Ludlow, and Hinsdale with two participants hailing from Maryland and Nevada.

Loiselle explained that the number falls a little short of last year’s 55, but the town’s summer children’s program took part last year and only came twice this summer. As such, they are seeing a rise in participants from the rest of the community Loiselle

said.

She also said that Huntington had one of the longer running summer reading programs, with some libraries running for only the month of July.

Loiselle credited Weldell with weaving local history and geography into his D&D workshops, even giving a nod to Judge Huntington for whom the town is named.

The D&D workshops were funded by Huntington’s Local Cultural Council, which grants monies from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

The program wasn’t just for children. Ann Kelso of Huntington attended the celebration and said she usually takes part in the summer reading program.

She also takes part in the library’s book club. “I read all of the time,” Kelso said. “I’d rather read than watch TV.” Her favorite books are mysteries that aren’t too creepy, historical novels and mythology.

The library has drawn for and notified raffle prize winners. People who took part can still turn in their reading logs for a set of D&D dice.

POLICY

The Facebook post generated a lot of discussion online and the in-person attendance and testimony of a number of alumni, parents and current students.

Several changes have been made to the policy and to district protocols as a result of that incident. For example, the district’s bullying policy has been extended to cover incidents that occur at school events that take place off of school grounds.

In addition, advisors will now be required to attend, or appoint a staff designee, events that take place off of school grounds. If a staff member cannot attend, things like restaurant fundraisers cannot be held.

After the Aug. 25 meeting, Dr. Melissa Matarazzo, Gateway Superintendent said, “We are grateful that our School Committee engaged in multiple summer meetings to tighten up and clarify elements of the policy that will guide our actions in response to student complaints.”

Matarazzo expressed concern at an earlier meeting this summer that people in June said they had been bullied but had not reported such incidents to administration.

After the Aug. 25 meeting, she said that Gateway had rolled out the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System at the end of the last school year,

which is another way to report concerns without fear of retaliation. It is provided by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation as a free, high quality resource to schools, Matarazzo said.

Dr. William Sullivan, Principal of Gateway Regional School, issued a statement after the August meeting, announcing that school climate work will continue this fall. “We are incredibly excited to welcome our students back for a new school year.” He stated, “As we begin the year together, one of our priorities will be having meaningful conversations with students about bullying, the impact our words and actions can

have on others, and what it means to be part of our school community. Early in the school year, we will create opportunities for students to talk openly about what we stand for and the kind of environment we want to build together. We are committed to ensuring that our school is a safe, supportive, and welcoming place where every student and staff member feels respected, valued, and able to be themselves. Building that kind of community takes all of us, and we look forward to starting the year by reinforcing those shared expectations and values.”

At the virtual meeting, roll call votes proceeded

on several motions and all were passed unanimously. A motion to waive the customary two-meeting rule, which enables the public to weigh in between school committee meetings on a proposed policy, passed. This was necessary so that changes to the student/family handbooks could be approved before the start of school. The policy itself (JICFB Bullying) was approved and a single motion approved the slate of school handbook updates.

Attending the Aug. 25 meeting were school committee Chairman Jason Forgey; Policy Subcommittee Chair Lyndsey Papillon; and school committee members Peter

DeGregorio, Pegg Dragon, Lisa Goding, Alicia Hansen, Katherine McDonough, Jennifer Pappas, Jessica Sakaske, Stephanie Simonowicz and Jakob Wyman. Also present were Matarazzo, Sullivan and School Committee Secretary Melissa McKellick.

“We are all hopeful that this will ease some of the concerns of our parents,” said Matarazzo at the meeting’s end.

She added that the district will reconvene a staff committee that reviews the district’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan every two years and that additional updates might come out of their work..

from page 1

HILLTOWNS

DREAM RIDE

from page 1

The Hometown Foundation also supports charities tied to animal welfare, emergency response personnel, those enduring a major illness or in need, and the military. Along with people who have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, these five pillars mark the mission of charities supported by the Foundation in its surrounding communities.

Baker said his induction into the Corvette Hall of Fame in 2025 came with the duty of being an ambassador to the brand. As a result, he receives invitations to car events worldwide.

But this event, he said, is the best in the world of its type and it was local, so he couldn’t pass it up.

He was on hand to specifically take part in two events.

He took a young man named Jacob on an hour and twenty minute Dream Cruise on Saturday, “along with 600 other very cool cars and kids,” Baker said. The 16-mile drive is a highlight of the weekend that pairs automotive enthusiasts with dream riders, who cruise with a police escort no less, and return to disembark on a red carpet that brings them into Saturday evening’s activities: a buffet dinner and karaoke event.

Baker said a lot of friends wanted him to drive their cars. Not surprisingly, Baker and Jacob rode in a Chevrolet Corvette. “I raced Corvettes to many champi-

onships and important wins,” Baker said

“It was hard to hold back tears since the roads were lined with neighbors, all cheering, waving and taking photos. Some even waved banners, American flags and checkered flags,”

Baker said. “Jacob was so excited. His mother said he is usually very calm but the ride and the post-ride red carpet walk were such an exciting experience for him.”

Baker said they have continued to exchange messages since that weekend and is so happy that Jacob and his Mom loved it especially after traveling all the way up from Maryland.

Baker also served as one of the world-class judges for Sunday’s Dream Car Show. Over 15 classes of cars competed in the show from Alfa Romeos to jeeps to British, Italian, and German sports cars.

His celebrity did not go unnoticed by the car community and Baker filled in his time signing autographs and joining fans for selfies.

He said he was able to speak with lots of former acquaintances and also make new friends. He was part of a three-man team of judges that scored the Trucks and American Muscle Cars classes.

“I’m sorry to say that a Corvette did not win this time,” he noted.

The Dream Ride Experience started in 2001

as a humble event with 12 motorcycles, launching the first fundraiser for the fledgling Hometown Foundation.

Today, it has grown into a three-day extravaganza and the signature fundraising event for that organization. Thus far it has raised over \$15 million for the Foundation.

Events are based at the Farmington Polo Grounds in Farmington, Connecticut. In addition to the Dream Cruise, which still has a motorcycle component and Car Show, the weekend includes a firefighter chili cookoff described as the “ultimate chili throw-down”, a K-9 exposition and challenge, polo match, and a weekend-long pet adoption program.

Live music and food are available throughout the grounds along with family fun and adaptive activities such as basketball, cheerleading, baseball, fishing, corn-hole, swimming and Zumba.

According to Baker, car people are “the most generous people on the planet”. This year’s event raised \$8 million, setting a new record for the weekend.

The experience left a lasting impression on him. “It took a couple days to recharge. But after three full days I’m all ready and can’t wait for next year,” Baker said.

People may visit dream-ride.org for more information on the Dream Ride Experience,

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GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY
Matters
By Russell Gloor



Will Social Security run out of money soon?

Dear Rusty:

I'm concerned about Social Security running out of funding, since I rely on it for my income and I'm at an age where my having to go back to work is not an option I can consider.

The job market for people my age is slim. I've been reading reports and it doesn't sound reassuring. Your thoughts?

Signed: Concerned Senior

Dear Concerned Senior:

Thanks for sharing your concerns. This topic is a fairly complicated one, but I'll do my best to explain it.

Social Security income from payroll taxes, interest on reserves, and income tax on SS benefits has been insufficient to pay 100% of SS benefit obligations since about 2020.

Since that time, SS has been drawing money from the Social Security Trust Fund reserves to pay full monthly benefits to everyone.

In 2020, there was nearly \$3 trillion in SS reserves held in the SS Trust Funds, but as of the end of 2025, those reserves have dwindled to about \$2.56 trillion because they are being used to pay full SS benefits to all.

Without program reform, the SS trust funds will be fully depleted in 2032, which would result in an across-the-board cut of about 22% to everyone's monthly SS payment. And that would be devastating to millions of Americans!

However, Congress is acutely aware of this issue; they have been for years but have largely ignored previous warnings. Now, however, those predicted benefit cuts are dangerously close to becoming a reality.

As a result, we are beginning to see serious, even bipartisan, discussions in Congress about reforming Social Security

to restore it to solvency to avoid future benefit cuts.

For our part, AMAC and the AMAC Foundation have been working on a proposal to restore SS to full solvency for generations and we have offered our proposal to various Congressional Representatives and to the SSA Commissioner and his executive staff.

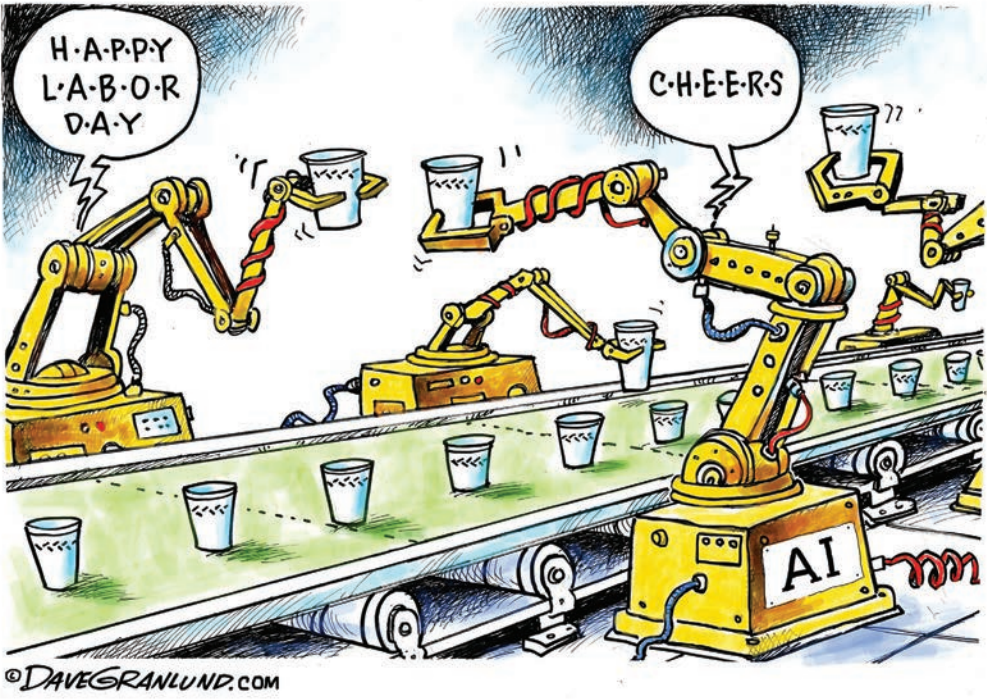
The proposal has been well received, and we are very optimistic that Congress will finally take real action to restore SS to solvency to avoid any benefit cuts. Frankly, doing otherwise would amount to political suicide!

AMAC is closely monitoring this situation and are very proactive in Washington, D.C. to ensure that benefits are not cut in 2032 and thye will continue their vigorous efforts and their vigilance to avoid Social Security insolvency.

They are confident that Congress will act in time to avoid any reduction in SS benefits, and they can stay informed of their efforts by watching the AMAC Social Security information website at www.socialsecurityreport.org.

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

OPINION



GUEST COLUMN

Rooting cuttings great way to overwinter plants

Late summer is a great time to take cuttings of summer plants such as geranium, fuchsia, and coleus.

Oftentimes planters containing these beauties are too big to overwinter. Likewise, these plants may be growing in your yard and maybe you are fearful of trying to dig them up and move them inside before frost hits.

It's also fun to root herb plants like rosemary or mint, so that you can enjoy them as seasoning in your favorite dishes over the winter months.

Getting a piece of stem to form roots is relatively easy. Here are a few tips that will guarantee your success.

First, make sure that the plant you are taking the cuttings from, called the "stock plant," is insect and disease-free and well hydrated. Plan to take cuttings in the morning before the heat of the day has a chance to cause any wilting.

A clean, sharp pair of scissors or hand pruners is the best tool for the job. Cuttings can be taken at any time during the growing season.

Spring is also a great time to take cuttings of plants that you've overwintered provided they are growing well.

Begin by examining your stock plant. Those stems with the closest placed nodes are the best choice for cutting material.

Nodes are the point on the stem from which the leaves grow. There is a strong accumulation of hormones in this area; for that reason stem cuttings are taken just after a node.

Terminal cuttings, (those from the growth tip) three-four inches long are desirable. It is tempting to take longer pieces, figuring that the end result will be a larger plant.

These are likely to wilt before they root or take a very long time to root because the stems are woodier the further down you go.

Play it safe with stout cuttings.

There are all kinds of potting mediums in which to place the cutting while it is grows roots. Ideally it should be able to hold enough moisture to keep the cutting turgid yet not hold so much that it rots the stem.

Sand, perlite, and soilless potting mixes have all been used with success. Water is not recommended as "watery roots" will have a harder time adapting to potting soil later on. I have had good luck

rooting cuttings in peat-based potting mixes that are formulated for seed starting.

Moisten the material well and fill your clean container of choice up to the top and tamp it down.

Cut only a few cuttings at a time so that wilting doesn't occur while you prepare the stems for insertion into the growing medium. Strip off the bottom one-third of leaves from the cutting.

If you wish to shorten the amount of time it takes for rooting to occur a commercial rooting hormone can be used. These come in powder or liquid forms. Follow the directions on the container.

I have found that "less is more" when using these products. When you are ready to "stick" the cutting make an indentation into the growing medium with a pencil or dibble first- do not push in with the stem!

After the cutting is inserted firm around it well so that it stays in place. Put the container, cuttings and all in a clear plastic bag and place in a shady location.

The humidity within the bag ought to prevent the stems from wilting.

Water well, only about once weekly. After a month or so roots will begin to form on the scented geraniums; rosemary may take six weeks or more.

GARDEN, page 5

Smoking cessation is beneficial at any age

If there's one habit every doctor wishes you would break, it's smoking. Quitting significantly improves health and reduces the risk of diseases.

And this is true no matter what age you are, from your 20s right into your 70s. While some older adults may believe it's "too late" to change, evidence shows that about one-third of older adults who attend specialized clinics successfully quit and stay off cigarettes for at least a year.

Research has also found that even 75-year-olds who are able to stop cigarettes gain an average of one year of life expectancy. That's one more year to do some of the things you enjoy, like visiting with grandchildren (and not being relegated to the patio to light up).

Besides life expectancy, other benefits for older quitters are

- A lower risk of disease: Older adults who quit have lower rates of death from heart attacks, strokes and cancer compared to those who continue to smoke.
- Reduced frailty: Stopping smoking is asso-



your health



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

ciated with a lower degree of "frailty" (a measure of increased vulnerability and weakness) over time, promoting healthier aging and better physical function.

- Cognitive and sexual health: Quitting smoking can lead to improved brain function and has been shown to improve long-term sexual function recovery following procedures like prostate surgery.

- Surgical success: For older adults facing surgery, quitting at least eight weeks prior can significantly decrease the risk of lung-related complications. If you can go eight weeks, you can keep going.

Quitting cigarettes is really, really hard because of the addictive properties of nicotine, which has been shown to boost dopamine in the reward circuits of the brain, but causes cravings and withdrawal symptoms when it's stopped. This is true whether your source of nicotine is a cigarette or a vape.

Most adults who smoke say they want to quit. A 2022 survey found that more than half of adult smokers tried to quit in the previous year. If you fall into that group, don't go it alone, especially if smoking is a decades-long ingrained habit. Chances of success improve with support



from doctors and family.

Support for smoking cessation is everywhere you look. The National Cancer Institute hosts a website, smokefree.gov, which is chock full of tips and techniques to help you on your journey to becoming a former smoker.

For example, there's guidance on nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), which has been shown to increase the success rate, especially when several forms are used, such as a nicotine patch supplemented by lozenges or gum. Some studies suggest that older adults may actually have higher success rates using NRT compared to

younger smokers.

You can also find apps, texting and social media sites that offer support, along with how to build a quit plan.

Medicare wants you to quit smoking, too. After all, it will save them money. Medicare covers counseling sessions to help you stop smoking under Part B, allowing up to eight sessions every 12 months at no cost if your provider accepts Medicare. Additionally, Medicare Part D covers certain prescription medications to assist with smoking cessation.

Medicare Advantage Plans are required to cover

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Country Journal

We Want to Hear From You

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EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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.

WESTHAMPTON

Westhampton Public Library announces upcoming events

WESTHAMPTON – The Westhampton Public Library, 1 North Road, will be closed on Labor Day Monday, Sept. 7

Regular library hours are Mondays and Thursday from 2-8 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesday from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

To place a request for curbside pickup, please email westhampton@cwmars.org or call 413-527-5386.

Recurring programs are computer help with Bob Miller Mondays from 10 a.m. noon (Due to holiday this month classes will be held on Sept. 7), knitting and crocheting group Mondays at 6 p.m., Yoga Mondays at 6 p.m., Scrabble group Tuesday at 2 p.m., Book group fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m., walk-in wellness clinics with Westhampton’s Public Health Nurse first and third Wednesdays from 10-11:30 a.m., coffee and chat Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-noon and tech connect drop-in tech help Thursday,

Sept. 24 from 2-4 p.m.

People should call ahead to ensure that Tech Connect is meeting.

Programs for children and teens are: CFCE play-group returns on Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 10:30 a.m.; story time with Emily returns on Wednesday, Sept. 20 at 10:30 a.m.; story time with Emily on Wednesday, Sept. 30 at 10:30 a.m.; children’s Thursday after school programs and teen craft night resume in October.

The Hilltown Plein Air Painters exhibit is up through the end of September in the Community Room Gallery. This group of local artists has been painting together since 2003, exploring the Hilltowns and beyond.

Weekly outings are planned for morning paint outs with helpful support, critiques and friendship. Plein air painting in a natural setting captures the beauty of this area that continues to inspire our work.

The clothing sway was rescheduled to Saturday, Sept. 12 from 10:30 a.m.-



12:30 p.m. Local teens are coordinating another community clothing swap.

People may drop off donations between Tuesday, Sept. 8 through Thursday, Sept. 10 during library hours. It is also okay to bring donations during the swap on Saturday, Sept. 12 between 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

People are welcome to take clothing even if they do not donate. Clothing for all ages and sizes is accepted. Please do not donate used bathing suits, undergarments, socks and non-apparel items.

On Thursday, Sept. 17 at 6 p.m. Myco Marty’s Mushroom Mania is the program. Easthampton’s Marty Klein is a wild mushroom expert, with decades of experience foraging, identifying, learning and teaching about these amazing organisms. An award winning photographer and artist, Marty’s stunning images of fungi will be projected throughout the talk. His talk will be followed by a question and answer session.

Navigating the Journey of Dementia Care takes place Saturday, Sept. 19

from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. This program will provide information about brain changes related to dementia, caregiving strategies for common challenges, legal and financial considerations, navigating the healthcare system and connecting with local resources. This program will be held at Westhampton Public Library and is coordinated by Westhampton Council on Aging.

Heidi Zahra, MSN RN, is on the faculty of the Elaine Marieb College of Nursing at the University of Massachusetts and is an RN case manager at Cooley Dickinson hospital.

A community silent reading party takes place Thursday, Sept. 24 from 6-8 p.m. This is a peaceful evening of reading for pleasure at the library.

People may bring a book or check one out from the library collection. All ages are welcome and audiobooks are reading too-just be sure to bring headphones. Tea, hot cocoa and snacks will be provided.

According to a recent study by the National Institute of Health reading for pleasure amongst the aged 15+ population in the United States has declined by about 3% per year between 2003 and 2023. The study’s introduction reports that more significant declines have occurred amongst young adults aged 17-18 in the nationally representative Monitoring the Future survey, with the proportion who read a book or magazine every day decreasing from 60% in the late 1970s to 16% by 2016.

UMass entomology collection visit takes place Saturday, Sept. 26 from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Participants will see a sampling of live and preserved insects up close. UMass students will be on hand to share information about the bugs and answer questions.

Fall Festival 2026 will be held on Sunday, Oct. 4. The library will be open on Oct. 4 and then closed on Monday, Oct. 5 as well as Monday, Oct. 12.

OPINION

HEALTH

from page 4

counseling and some medications as well, though benefits vary by plan.

Here in Massachusetts, 1-800-QUIT-NOW is Massachusetts’ tobacco and nicotine Quitline, where you can connect to a free trained quit coach by phone or line. They share strategies to curb cravings, handle life’s big and small stresses and tackle. You can track your progress and learn how to access free NRT supplies.

Talking to your healthcare provider is also important, both as a source of support and advice on using certain prescription medications to curb smoking such as varenicline (Chantix). This

medication can be used by older adults, but caution is advised because of a higher likelihood of age-related kidney issues. Your doctor may also recommend cognitive behavior therapy (CBT).

What does a quit plan look like? Pick a date you’re going to quit and rid the house of cigarettes, ashtrays and other smoking paraphernalia. You might need to take some things to the dry cleaner to get the cigarette smell out. Tell everyone that you’ve made a quit plan and you need their help.

Be proud of what you’re accomplishing! Let people know when you’ve been smoke-free for a week, a

month, a year. If you do happen to light up, don’t give up. Tomorrow is another day.

And you may have more tomorrows when you’ve become an ex-smoker. Good luck.

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.

GARDEN

from page 4

Transplanting into individual pots can be done once the roots equal or surpass the size of the cutting. I like to start out with a small pot and transplant up a size or two at a time as the plant grows.

The Ware Grange will be hosting workshop on this timely topic on

Friday, Sept. 11 at 7 p.m. at the hall on Route 9 in Ware. Bring a potted plant to share cutting material or use a selection of plants that I will bring to try your luck at this skill.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at

the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.



Teri Frykenberg, RN
Founder and Conference Chair

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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.



Chester Baptist Church

Pastor Dan Herr
14 Middlefield Road
Chester, MA 01011
413-354-7743
Email: pastor@chesterbaptistchurch.org
Website: chesterbaptistchurch.org
Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m.
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
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.

CHURCH DIRECTORY



Your Community Church

New Boston Congregational Church

Pastor Eric Kriebel
4 Sandisfield Rd., PO Box 81
Sandisfield, MA 01255
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.pioneervalleayag.org
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

Deacon Jerald Reinford
400 Huntington Rd., Russell, MA 01071
(413) 297-6037
Sunday worship at 10 a.m.
Visitors appreciated

Westhampton Congregational Church, UCC

Open and affirming. All are welcome.
Pastor Carol Smith
1 Tob Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027
(413) 527-4204
Sunday Worship at 9 a.m.
(Summer hours for July and August)

CHESTER



Summer reading program participants helped plant a pizza garden of tomatoes, peppers, vegetables and herbs at the Hamilton Memorial Library.



Above, Riverside Reptiles as part of the summer reading program brought a snapping turtle for all to see. Top right, Riverside Reptiles entertain a large group of youngsters and their family members at the Hamilton Memorial Library. A staff member holds a snake so youngsters could touch it.



Abi and Bri Little display their reading activity logs.

Library holds summer reading program

CHESTER – Hamilton Memorial Library, 15 Middlefield Road, concluded this year’s summer reading program. This year’s theme was “Plant a seed, Read.” The children enjoyed a variety of

programs including planting a seed of music, planting a pizza garden and planting a seed of science with a solar beetle program along with many other engaging activities. They finished out the

program learning how insects and reptiles are pollinators too, with a visit from Riverside Reptiles of Enfield, Connecticut. The library staff appreciates the support of the local businesses, Mel’s Kitchen,

Gateway Farm and Pet, Jacob’s Ladder Tavern, Carm’s Restaurant, Chester Theatre and Pease Store, which helped to make the summer even more enjoyable.

NEWMAN MARSH TRAIL OFFERS EASY TO MODERATE HIKE



Sanderson Brook Falls located in Chester tumbles down a 60-foot drop.



Civilian Conservation Corps workers made these stairs on the Newman Marsh trail. The trail is a two mile round trip easy to moderate hike.



Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniels
This square piece of granite can be seen from the trail.



Submitted photos

Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers hosts group tour at the Hudson and Chester Granite Works. This large granite saw is the highlight of the tour.

Hilltown Hikers to host guided tour

CHESTER – Western Mass Hilltown Hikers host a guided tour the Hudson and Chester Granite Works on Sunday, Sept. 27 at 1 p.m. Participants may park at Emery Street in the Granite saw parking lot across from the ball field. They should wear sneakers and no open toe shoes. The hike rating is an easy one mile, mostly flat terrain on dirt. The Chester Granite Company was one of two

granite finishing works in Chester for cutting and polishing stone brought down to the Historic Factory Village on the Chester and Becket Railroad, which was built for this purpose in 1896. “Chester Blue Granite” was brought down the steep mountain railroad from the Hudson and Chester quarry, known today as the Becket Quarry in Becket. The finishing works burned down after many prosperous years in

business making monuments and gravestones and has been private property since, until recently. In September of 2023 the Hilltown Hikers purchased this lot, including a twelve-foot shot saw and all the remains of its buildings and equipment. This was the second largest stone finishing plant in the state. The saw is still the largest historical stone cutting saw in existence. Tour the property



on the newly created walking path with a guide and learn about the Granite Industry in Chester and Becket. People may purchase I Saw it In Chester T-shirt. Donations for the conserved Chester Granite and Polishing Works property are greatly appreciated. People should register per vehicle by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com. Maps and

bottled water are provided. Well behaved dogs welcome. Event is volunteer lead. Suggested donation is \$15. People may email westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com or call/text 413-302-0312 if they have any questions. As always be prepared for rocks, mud and roots, bring trekking poles and a snack. Those who want to hike every weekend year round

may become a Hilltown Hiker member. People may Follow them on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Tees, hoodies, hats, patches, water bottles and safety vests will be for sale by donation at the event. People may see all their events, maps, blog and photos by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com.

BECKET

Becket Arts Center lists upcoming events

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will offer Improvisational Circle Singing on Thursday, Sept. 3 from 6-8 p.m.

This class will also be offered on Thursdays, Sept. 10 and 17. Singer Nick Atlas, who trained with Bobby McFerrin and Rhiannon among others, will introduce a variety of accessible techniques, exercises and simple music theory to help participants create spontaneous a capella music and soundscapes.

This is open to singers of all levels. Suggested donation is \$10 to \$20. Walk-ins are welcome, though registration is recommended. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

The Becket Arts Center will offer its weekly all-levels yoga class with Rima Sala on Thursdays, Sept. 10 and 24 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. There is no class on Sept. 17.

Fee is \$5 to \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

On Saturday, Sept. 5 and Sunday, Sept. 6 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., the Becket Arts Center will host its 2026 DriveAbout. This community-focused event gives local and visiting art lovers a

chance to meet Hilltown artists in their personal studios as well as at the Becket Arts Center's historic Seminary Hall. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

The Becket Arts Center will host a free opening reception on Saturday, Sept. 5 from 2-4 p.m. for "Gathered Ground: Ritual, Community and Earth," the work of Karen Dolmanisth. This show, which will be in the Art Lounge, features her photographs, paintings, drawings and small-scale sculptures, will be on display until Sunday, Sept. 27.

It will provide visual and material studies for Dolmanisth's large-scale, site-specific sculptural environment that will occupy the Upstairs Gallery from Thursday, Sept. 24 to Sunday, Oct. 18. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

The Becket Arts Center will host a free opening reception on Saturday, Sept. 26, for "Gathered Ground: Ritual, Community and Earth," a large-scale, site-specific sculptural environment that will occupy the entire Upstairs Gallery until Sunday, Oct. 18. The installation will evolve over the course of its run through public workshops, ceremonial gatherings as well as community contributions of

materials and stories. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

The Becket Arts Center will launch a five-week course, Basic Watercolor Painting, taught by local artist and instructor Suzanne Gammon, on Friday, Sept. 11 from 1-3 p.m. This beginner-friendly class introduces students to the fundamentals of watercolor, including color mixing, brush techniques, washes, layering and composition.

Participants will learn in a relaxed, supportive environment while developing confidence and creativity with the medium. No previous watercolor experience is required. Class fees include all materials, though people are free to bring their own: Fee is \$40, \$30 to \$35 for members, \$25 for Card to Culture members. For registration and more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

The class will also be offered on Friday, Sept. 18, 25 and Oct. 2, and 9.

The Becket Arts Center will present a talk by best-selling author and journalist Bob Reiss on Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 6-7:30 p.m. He will present his most recent book, "The Impossible Detective," a crime novel involving a self-driving car. For infor-

mation and registrations (tickets \$10; \$5 for members), people may visits becketartscenter.org.

The Becket Arts Center, in collaboration with the Guild of Berkshire Artists, will hold a Plein Air morning of painting, drawing and photographing outdoors in Becket on Wednesday, Sept. 16, from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Artists should bring their oils, acrylics, watercolors, pastels, pencils, cameras or digital painting equipment and their own lunch.

This is open to artists of all levels. Fee is \$10 per person; free for members of the Becket Arts Center and the Guild of Berkshire Artists. For reservations and more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org or register at berkshireartists.org/pleinair.

The Becket Arts Center will hold its Works in Progress on Wednesday, Sept. 16, from 7 -8:30 p.m. This month will feature a reading of Judith Kerman's "The Steamer Trunk," a work inspired by Lydia Rosner's memoir "The Russian Writer's Daughter."

Set in the late 1940s., as the shadow of the Cold War seeps into everyday life, the play raises such issues as home, citizenship, identity and belonging. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

MassDOT announces overnight bridge repairs

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

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

In Becket, bridge repairs are conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 20.0 nightly now through Thursday, Sept. 3 from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. Bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 westbound at mile marker 17.3 on the night of Thursday, Sept. 3 from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the following morning.

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.

CHESTERFIELD

Chesterfield Cultural Council seeks proposals

CHESTERFIELD – The Chesterfield Cultural Council seeks proposals for community oriented arts, science and humanities programs for 2027.

Applications opened

on Monday, Sept. 1 and are due by Thursday, Oct. 15 by 11:59 p.m. People may visit <https://massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/chesterfield/> for more information and to apply,

BLANDFORD

Council on Aging lists lunch menu

BLANDFORD – Joann Martin, culinary creator for the Council on Aging has prepared this month's menus for Friday noon-time lunches at the COA room at Town Hall.

On Friday, Sept. 11 she will present chicken Française with a tossed salad and oven roasted potatoes and an apple square for dessert.

On Friday, Sept. 25 Martin will have diners enjoying Caesar salad, garlic bread, an entree of either meat or vegetable lasagna and a dessert yet to be decided upon.

The luncheons are free but a \$5 donation is always welcome.

People should call the COA at 413-848-4279, extension 400 and leave name and number of diners.



Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

At the Blandford COA lunch last Friday, a record number of sides were available for baked potatoes. There was everything from sour cream to bacon bits including broccoli, chili, pulled pork and more.

FAIR

noon at 2:30 p.m. and later at 7 p.m. On Sunday it's Jesse Linn; an 80s tribute group, Aquanette at 1 p.m. and the Brat Pack at 6 p.m.

Monday, Sarah the Fiddler at performs at noon after the National Anthem and at 2:30 p.m. Southern Rain finishes off the live entertainment.

Adult admission is \$12, seniors and military admission is \$8, children 12 and under admitted free and parking on the grounds is \$5.

And if the forecast is accurate, there may only be a little rain early Sunday morning, otherwise look forward to a fun-filled fair.

Turley Publication photo by Mary Kronholm

Fair Director Bruce Cooley trims the grass.



from page 1

OPERA

ny the singers in a prominent and supporting way. His instrumental eloquence echoes that of Maestro Queler and the music guides him.

The four vocalists were sopranos Melanie Spector and Catherine Wethington and bass-baritone Ben Brady and tenor Joseph Sacchi.

Spector's voice stood out in her interpretation of Marten aller Arten, which is a tour de force of the coloratura soprano repertoire.

Although mentioning that it was the first time she sang the aria in public, she sounded totally assured and impressive.

Her mastery of the vocal range contributed to her performance.

Wethington's youthful soprano voice was perfect for singing Caro Nome, a delicate and dreamy, lyrical aria with high shimmering notes allowing the soprano voice to relay the intimacy of a young girl's first romance, a recog-

nizable piece for the audience.

Since her performance here last year her voice has matured and grown.

Brady's masterful lower toned bass-baritone voice shown in his rendition of Verdi's Come dal ciel precipita from Macbeth. He never went beyond his voice. The selection was elegant, professionally delivered and a well-balanced interpretation. He sang to the audience, making eye contact.

Tenor Sacchi presented a well-prepared and powerfully lyrical Wagnerian Winterstürme from Die Walküre. Singing in German, he truly demonstrated his powerful voice and made interesting vocal intensities with this yearning and romantic aria. His voice rang out throughout the venue.

The program ended with a surprise encore of Brindisi, the Drinking Song, another familiar selection and brought the audience to their

feet in a final standing ovation.

As bouquets were presented to the women, they, in turn, took a long-stemmed red rose from their arrangement and presented it to the men. This has been a signature for the Bel Canto performance since the beginning.

Terri Garfield, Melissa Hamm and Judith MacKinnon are the new reins for this most successful event.

And the weather was perfect.

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.



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Please send cover letter and resume to Charles Dazelle at highwaysuper@townofchester.net

The Town of Chester is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

CUMMINGTON

CUMMINGTON FAIR



Glen, a baby chick master farmer along with his daughter, Anna, brought these baby chicks to the Cummington Fair.



An alert kestrel, right, and a sleepy barn owl, left, were at the 158th annual Cummington Fair on Aug. 27 through Aug. 30.



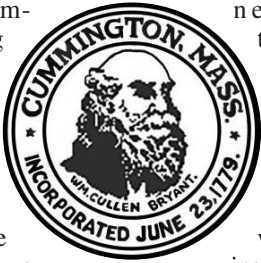
Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniels
The judges awarded ribbons including the coveted blue ribbon to exhibitors at the Cummington Fair.

Cummington receives MVP Action Grant funds

\$322,225
allocated to town

CUMMINGTON – The town of Cummington announces it received \$322,225 in climate resilience grant funding. Cummington will transform the former Berkshire Trail Elementary School, now the Berkshire Trail Building, into a climate-ready Resilience Hub with a local and regional emergency shelter, a USDA funded \$1M regional food hub and climate-resilient landscaping such as a floodway garden and native pollinator gardens. This project implements priority actions identified through the Town’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness planning process and grows Cummington’s commitment to taking action towards greater climate resilience.

Select Board Member June Lynds said, “The Resilience Hub will make a direct impact through concerted action on multiple fronts, from emergency response to lasting public health programs and nature-based climate solutions. The impact will be amplified over time as residents take part in community engagement programs and become



invested as stakeholders, and educated to be more prepared.” In close partnership with the Hilltown Community Development Corporation, the town will oversee BTB renovations, while HCDC installs a full-building generator (non-MVP funded) to ensure operations during climate emergencies. MVP-funded work includes oil tank removal, insulation upgrades and energy-efficiency improvements. Community engagement will be supported

through Cultural District programming, town website updates, and a virtual climate resilience hub. Community engagement opportunities will be announced as the program begins. Community members are encouraged to visit the town of Cummington website to stay up to date on opportunities to get involved. The MVP Grant Program is a partnership between state and local communities to build climate resilience through grant-funded projects. Communities start with a planning grant, become an MVP-certified community, and then are eligible for action grant funding.

RiverFest to be held Sept. 19

CUMMINGTON – RiverFest is a free, family-friendly celebration of place and community in Cummington on Saturday, Sept. 19 from noon-6 p.m. Set up begins at 11 a.m. The Cummington Cultural District invites local artists and artisans to table at the Cummington Community House, 33 Main St. along the driveway throughout the event. There are no fees to participate. Artists and artisans are responsible for their own tables, tents and other event supplies. Applications are due by Sunday, Sept. 6 and artisans and vendors will be notified by Thursday Sept. 10. Cummington-based residents are prioritized, followed by adjacent Hilltown communi-

ty-based artists. People may email culturaldistrictcummington@gmail.com The Cummington Cultural District seeks to activate and promote a vibrant Village along Main Street, celebrating all that makes Cummington unique. Cummington hopes to use artists’ vision and creativity to revitalize its economy, improve underutilized space and bring residents together around a shared identity. They achieve this through collaborative marketing and programming, facilitating inclusive processes for identifying local priorities and both showcasing and supporting the arts and culture groups and events that enliven the district and attract new visitors and businesses.

GOSHEN

Williams-Boltwood House receives donation

GOSHEN – A shipment of six large boxes of family photographs, letters, diaries, books, handmade dolls and textiles are providing new perspectives into the generations connected with the historical Williams-Boltwood House, 2 Williams Drive. The materials were recently donated by Lee Smith, son of Dorothy Babcock Smith, whose family line reaches directly back to the Boltwoods of Goshen. Dorothy was the daughter of Ruth Babcock, granddaughter of George Boltwood, and great-granddaughter of Clarinda and Lucius Boltwood. The connection came through Nancy Clifford, who serves as clerk for the Williams-Boltwood Project. For those working to understand a historic house,

After hearing from Clifford about the preservation and research taking place at the property, members of the Smith family began going through Dorothy’s belongings and identifying materials that had been preserved within the family. What emerged was far more than a few photographs or keepsakes: six large boxes containing family photographs, correspondence, diaries, books, handmade fabric items and dolls. The boxes were first opened following WBP’s summer’s Colonial Tavern event in July, and although only a portion of the collection has been examined, several previously unseen family photographs have already been scanned. For those working to understand a historic house,

family papers can be every bit as important as the building itself. A beam can reveal how a room was constructed, and a layer of paint can tell something about how a space once appeared, but letters, diaries, photographs and personal belongings can help answer a different set of questions. That is what makes this collection especially valuable. Among the people represented in that family story is Clarinda Boltwood, pictured here with her daughter Elvira. Clarinda and her husband, Lucius Manlius, are ancestors of the family that preserved the materials now being returned to the Williams-Boltwood collection. Photographs like this help restore individual faces to names that otherwise

appear only in genealogies and historical records. The six boxes will be carefully catalogued and researched off-site, with photographs and documents scanned as appropriate. Letters and diaries may reveal new names, relationships and events; books may contain inscriptions or notes; handmade objects may preserve family traditions that do not appear in official records at all. For The Williams-Boltwood Project, the donation is a reminder that important pieces of the house’s history may still survive in family collections far beyond Goshen-and that sometimes, generations later, those pieces find their way back.



Courtesy photos by Kammile Osborne
This sweater was also a donation to the Williams-Boltwood House.



Robert Labrie and Melanie Lamere go through the boxes of donations by Lee Smith, whose family line reaches directly back to the Boltwoods of Goshen.



These dolls were part of the recent donations to the Williams-Boltwood House.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

It Takes A Village delivers on school supplies

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – As of this writing, 608 families received backpacks that they were able to fill with school supplies, thanks to a back-to-school project headed by It Takes A Village.

In an event held on Sunday, Aug. 16 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. in the parking lot at Gateway Regional School, families and students lined up to choose a new backpack and then selected school supplies that they need for the coming school year.

Littleville Elementary School Principal Melissa McCaul was thrilled with the outcome. “What an awesome event! It Takes A Village is such an incredible resource for our community. Their generosity helps make sure our students have the supplies they need to start the school year feeling prepared, excited, and ready to learn,” she said. “We are so lucky to have an organization that cares so much about our children and families.”

Her colleague, Chester Elementary School Principal Dr. Todd Gazda, concurred. “We’re very grateful for the work done by It Takes A Village to support our families. Back-to-school expenses can add up quickly and cre-

ates a challenge for some of our families. Having a new backpack and the supplies they need helps kids start the year feeling prepared and ready to learn.”

According to ITAV Communications and Development Director Kenzie Kinsella, the event used to be held at their site on Main Street. But the growing number of recipients required a more open space to manage the traffic flow and give people time to make thoughtful choices and meet their needs.

Funds, materials and volunteers were acquired at donation sites, through ITAV’s Amazon Wish List for donors, and through the generosity of a number of community partners including Multi Cultural Community Services of the Pioneer Valley, Baslie Subaru of Hadley, Done Right Chimney, Florence Bank, Greenfield Savings Bank, the Haydenville Congregational Church, Salvation Army, and the Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ. Oliver’s Farmstand in Goshen even hosted a collection box at their Main St. business.

Savannah Colon of Williamsburg Hair was also on hand to offer complemen-

tary back-to-school haircuts, and managed 20 haircuts during the event.

Kinsella said the goal of this event is to help local families feel connected to community resources and to have kids feel ready to go back to school. “With every year, we see an immensely growing need. We wanted to make sure ITAV was prepared with the proper number of backpacks and supplies,” she said.

The model has changed from their earlier days of handing out backpacks already filled with school supplies.

ITAV recognized that each school and classroom had unique resources and needs; it made more sense to empower families and students to select their own supplies for the coming year. Some teachers and schools had already posted supply lists for the new year by the time this took place.

Of course, not everyone is able to make a single event. There are still some supplies and backpacks at the Village closet for people who stop in on Sundays.

They have a table at the Dept. of Transitional Assistance office in Pittsfield. New this year, ITAV also delivered backpacks to local school districts

like Gateway, Hampshire Regional and the Hilltown Charter School to cover families who were unable to attend or who might move into the area after the start of school.

ITAV’s surplus stock of school supplies was also distributed between the schools so that kids and educators all feel supported.

“Life can get so busy, sometimes it is not feasible to make it to a single event. Having supplies at each school helps keep people from slipping through the cracks,” Kinsella noted.

Kinsella said there are so many barriers to getting back to school supplies, especially for families in rural hilltowns. The amount of time it takes to get to a store and the price of gas alone increases the benefit for events like this.

Since 2019, It Takes a Village has offered a safety net for Western Massachusetts families, including providing basic needs supplies at their site at 2 East Main St.

They receive funding and donations through The Irene E. and George A. Davis Fund, the Women’s Fund, the United Way of the Franklin and Hampshire Region, the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, and



Photo submitted

School supplies were made available to families at a back-to-school event hosted by It Takes a Village, held at Gateway Regional School on Sunday, Aug. 16. To date, over 600 new backpacks have been gifted to families who were able to fill them with school supplies. Complementary haircuts were given at the event.

the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

They offer a Family Free Store at their site with clothing, toys, books, diapers and furniture, along with Free Stores in area schools where students can select clothing, sports gear and hygiene supplies. They also have a postpartum home visiting program that supports parents of newborns.

ITAV also relies on the support of businesses and individuals. One upcoming event is Diaper Need Awareness Week from Sept. 14 - 21. Diapers can be dropped off at It Takes a Village, 2 E. Main St. in Huntington.

Volunteers and donations are always welcome. People may visit hilltownvillage.org for more information.

MassDOT holds video contest for high school students

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation launches its 13th annual Safe Streets Smart Trips High School Video Contest, inviting students across Massachusetts to use their creativity to help promote safer travel on the state’s roads.

This year, students are being asked to create a 30- to 60-second video focused on safe riding behaviors for electric micromobility devices, including e-bikes, e-scooters and e-skateboards.

Submissions are due on Sunday, Oct. 4 by 11 p.m.

“Under the leadership of the Healey-Driscoll Administration, safety is a shared responsibility and engaging the next generation of drivers is one of the most important ways we can build a culture of safety on our roads,” said Interim Secretary of Transportation and MBTA General Manager Phil Eng.

“This safety video contest gives young people an opportunity to use their creativity and their voices to

remind all of us that the choices we make behind the wheel can have a lasting impact. We are proud to support efforts that empower young people to be leaders in roadway safety and help make state roads safer for everyone.”

“Year after year, we have found high school students a great resource for safety-related content that is current, effective and resonates with all roadway users across all modes,” said Undersecretary and State Highway

Administrator Jonathan Gulliver.

“Given the continuing rise and diversity of micromobility devices, we will for the 13th year of this Safe Streets Smart Trips campaign turn to these students to be part of our continuing efforts to make the Commonwealth’s roadways safer for everyone.”

The contest is an initiative of the Massachusetts Strategic Highway Safety Plan and is open to all Massachusetts public high school students. Students

will compete in two categories: freshman/sophomore and junior/senior.

A MassDOT panel will select a grand prize, runner-up and honorable mention in each category. Winning videos will be shown on Tuesday, Oct. 27, at MassDOT’s annual Moving Together active transportation conference.

Grand prize winners will receive \$500 Amazon gift cards, runners-up will receive \$300 Amazon gift cards and honorable mention winners will receive \$100 Amazon

gift cards. Selected videos may also be featured in future MassDOT roadway safety campaigns.

More information about the Safe Streets Smart Trips High School Video Contest including contest guidelines and submission information, is available by visiting Mass.gov/roadway-safety-video.

Past winning videos are available on the Roadway Safety Video Contest Results page and MassDOT’s YouTube channel: Mass.gov/roadway-safety-video.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Matthew F. Montague and Happy Montague to Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust, said mortgage being dated June 6, 2014, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 11659, Page 145, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, September 30, 2026**, upon the premises described in said mortgage, namely 61 Chesterfield Road, Westhampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

A certain parcel of land in Westhampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, with the improvements thereon, located on the easterly side of Chesterfield Road, and being shown as Lot

A on a plan of land entitled, “Plan of Land in Westhampton, Massachusetts Prepared for Peter E. Montague,” prepared by Holmberg & Howe, Inc. dated May 17, 2013 and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 229, Page 121, to which plan reference may be made for a more particular description.

Containing 6.50 acres of land, more or less

Being the same premises conveyed to the Mortgagors by deed from Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust, Dated July 2, 2009, recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds immediately prior hereto, and subject to the right of first refusal in said deed.

Said premises will be sold subject to and/or with the benefit of any and all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax title, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, rights of parties in possession, and existing encum-

brances of record created prior to the mortgage, if any there be, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the Deed.

No representations, express or implied, are made with respect to any matter concerning the premises which will be sold “as is”.

The successful high bidder will be responsible for paying the Massachusetts State Documentary Tax Stamps, all closing costs and all recording fees.

TERMS OF SALE: The highest bidder in the sale shall be required to deposit cash, bank treasurer’s check or certified check in the amount of **TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$25,000.00)** at the time and the place of the sale of the premises to qualify as a bidder (the present holder of the mortgage is exempt from this requirement) to be held by the Mortgagee. The successful bidder will also be required to deposit an additional sum equal to ten percent (10%) of the amount bid less the \$25,000.00 deposit (but no less than \$25,000) with the Mortgagee’s auctioneer, Aar-

on Posnik & Co., Inc., 31 Capital Drive, West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089 or the Mortgagees attorney as may be directed within five (5) days of the date of the sale to be held by the Mortgagee, and the balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified or bank treasurer’s check at the closing which shall occur within thirty (30) days after the date of foreclosure sale, time being of the essence, unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The successful bidder at the sale will also be required to pay a buyer’s premium of 5% and shall sign a Memorandum of Terms of Sale containing the above terms at the auction sale.

In the event that the successful bidder at the public auction shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of this Notice of Mortgagee’s Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale executed at the public auction, the Mortgagee reserves the right, at its election, to sell the property to the second highest bidder at the public auction provided that Mortgagee, in its discretion, may require (1) said second highest

bidder to deposit the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within three (3) business days after written notice to the second highest bidder of the default of the previous highest bidder, (2) the second highest bidder to execute a Memorandum of Sale, and (3) the closing to occur within twenty (20) days of said written notice, time being of the essence unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The Mortgagee reserves the right to sell any parcel or any portion thereof separately, or in any order that Mortgagee may choose and/or to postpone this sale to a later time or date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the sale and to further postpone any adjourned sale date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the adjourned sale date.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the time and place of the sale.

The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Peter E. Montague and Mary

P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust
Present Holder of said Mortgage

By /s/ David A. Lavenburg
David A. Lavenburg,
Its Attorney
BACON WILSON, P.C.
33 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
413-781-0560

09/03, 09/10, 09/17/2026

Town of Worthington Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing

The Town of Worthington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 7:00 PM** in the Meeting Hall at 160 Huntington Road. The Commission will consider the filing of a Notice of Intent for the following project: A Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation (LSGMSPI) at 190 Ridge Road.

Virtual access is available via a link found on the Community Calendar Posting.
09/03/2026

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.

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SERVERS WANTED
Inquire at Girly's Grill,
1315 Park St., Palmer, MA 01069
or call **413-284-0005.**

TOWN OF WARE JOB OPENING

Part-Time Custodian
The Town of Ware is seeking applicants for the position of custodian. Duties include cleaning restrooms, sweeping, vacuuming, and mopping floors, cleaning windows, taking out trash and restocking supplies. Part-time, non-benefitted, \$1750 per hour, 12 hours per week.
Job applications can be found on the Town of Ware website **https://www.townof-ware.com** under Human Resources, at the Ware Town Hall, or e-mail your application or resume to **resumes@townof-ware.com**. AAEOE

REAL ESTATE

FOR SALE
Duplex for sale at 812/814 East Street Ludlow.

Built in 1974, each unit has 2 bedrooms, 1 ½ baths, private basements, gas heat and central air on 0.23 acres of land. Great rental potential, good location with nearby schools and close access to the highway.
The house needs cosmetic updates. Property is being sold strictly in AS-IS condition. Priced accordingly \$425,000.
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ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

FOR RENT


All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.


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OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!

PITTSFIELD

Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. announces Local Love Arts Festival on Sept. 27

PITTSFIELD – For many years, Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. worked to create opportunities for local artists through programs such as Artscape, First Fridays Artswalk, the Let It Shine on Sunday, Sept. 27 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Common, First Street.

This fall, DPI takes that commitment a step further by launching a brand-new event dedicated entirely to celebrating the incredible artistic talent that calls Berkshire County home.

It is envisioned as a day where local artists take center stage showcasing their work, connecting with new audiences and reminding our community that some of the region’s most talented creators are right here in their own backyard.

The goal is for this

to become a signature Downtown event that artists, organizations and residents look forward to year after year.

The event will celebrate the incredible talent of Berkshire County’s artists while creating a vibrant Downtown experience filled with art, music, food, family activities and community. Visitors will enjoy artist vendor booths, live entertainment, food and beverages, a children’s activity area, sidewalk chalk art and interactive arts experiences throughout the day.

A portion of the proceeds from the festival will support Downtown Pittsfield, Inc.’s ongoing work to promote local businesses, public art, placemaking and community events throughout Downtown Pittsfield.

Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. is now accepting applications for Berkshire County based artisanal vendors to showcase their wares at the Local Love Arts Festival on Sunday, Sept. 27.

Only those who make their own handmade products will be accepted. DPI is looking for visual artists, craftspeople, textile artists, jewelry makers, and those who make quality packaged foods and sweets. All vendors will go through an approval process and the organizers of the Local Love Arts Festival reserve the right to reject any vendor who is not a fit for this market. Spaces are limited. The booth fee is \$75 and vendors are responsible for their own tables, tents, and set-up. No resale products will be accepted. The link to apply to be a vendor is <https://forms.>

[gle/3c9u8oymsafznnfDA.](https://forms.)

Since 1983, Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. has been the recognized leader, facilitator and principal advocate for downtown. DPI has developed strategies and programs, mobilizing resources resulting in a creative, lively, sustainable environment.

DPI is a membership organization consisting of property owners, businesses, residents, cultural and entertainment venues, restaurants and non-profit organizations, who have joined forces to increase economic activity by promoting downtown as a great place to live, work and play.

For more information on Downtown Pittsfield, Inc., people may visit downtownpittsfield.com or call Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. at 413-443-6501.

WORTHINGTON

Worthington lists work on East Windsor and Lindsey Hill Roads

WORTHINGTON – Crew # 1of Morais Construction will continue back filling shoulders and constructing driveway aprons from East Windsor Road to Lindsey Hill Road the week of Monday, Sept. 7

Working hours are 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. with one-way alternating traffic will be in place with police officers officers directing traffic. Blacktop road paving is completed for the season

There will be no work on Monday, Sept. 7.

Work has begun on the repairs and replacement of culverts on Lindsay Hill Road.

The Highway Dept. has done the needed tree cutting and clearing. They plan to finish installing the sediment control by Friday, Sept. 4.

The culverts are expected to be delivered the end of next week and they’re planning starting the installation of those the week of Sept. 7. Everything is weather dependent.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Manila hemp plant
- 6. Turkish river
- 10. Something to read
- 14. In a way, initiated
- 15. Popular Apple TV series
- 17. King Charles is part of it
- 19. Earlier
- 20. Foot (Latin)
- 21. Zodiac sign
- 22. A browning of the skin
- 23. Remain as is
- 24. Turfs
- 26. It's used to slaughter animals
- 29. Volcanic crater
- 31. The mother of Jesus
- 32. One's life story
- 34. One-time Liverpool coach Slot
- 35. Counterparts
- 37. Jacob __, American journalist
- 38. Digital audiotape

- 39. River in South Africa
- 40. Kimono sashes
- 41. Rooting somewhere
- 43. American spy Aldrich
- 45. A way to call for
- 46. Taxi
- 47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour
- 49. Swiss river
- 50. Popular type of video game (abbr.)
- 53. Have surgery
- 57. Formal withdrawal from a union
- 58. Performs spoken improv
- 59. Greek war god
- 60. 2,000 lbs.
- 61. Helps to evade capture

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Swedish rock group
- 2. "Friday Night Lights" director Peter
- 3. Currency exchange fee

- 4. Feline
- 5. Folk singer DiFranco
- 6. Ghastly pale from distress
- 7. Rapid eye movements
- 8. Monetary unit of Macao
- 9. Lawmakers
- 10. Colorless mineral
- 11. At some prior time
- 12. American protest singer
- 13. Opener
- 16. Seldom
- 18. Relaxing places
- 22. Touchdown
- 23. From end to end
- 24. Kids love him
- 25. Metal-bearing solid
- 27. Skin care product manufacturer
- 28. Thirteen
- 29. Angry
- 30. Member of a Semitic people
- 31. One-thousandth of an inch

- 33. Former CIA
- 35. Most lemony
- 36. Engage in
- 37. Mass of fish eggs
- 39. Food supplies
- 42. Backbones
- 43. American real estate investment firm
- 44. Megabyte
- 46. "Three Coins in the Fountain" songwriter
- 47. Dutch colonist
- 48. Full-grown pike fish
- 49. Emergency prep expert Edwards
- 50. Flute
- 51. Dismissive sound
- 52. Slang term for marijuana
- 53. Young women's association
- 54. Cosmopolitan city
- 55. Narrow isthmus in Thailand
- 56. Pointed end of a pen

THIS WEEK’S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, you are bursting with momentum, but your tongue may move faster than your brain this week. You don't need to force a final decision or push an agenda right now. Speak thoughtfully.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Reshuffled schedules might test your patience, Taurus. Focus on finding a healthy balance and do your best to adjust.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21

A gap between your grand vision and your current reality might feel frustrating, Cancer. However, necessity is the mother of invention. Trust the small opportunities that crop up.

CANCER

June 22/July 22

Cancer, right now you are focused on rest and relaxation. It's been a busy time for you and the batteries certainly can do with some recharging.

LEO

July 23/Aug 23

Leo, even though you love supporting others, this week is all about re-directing energy inward. Practice care with whom you trust. Allow yourself to rest later in the week.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

Leo, even though you have creative free reign to improvise in a situation that pops up this week, Virgo. Stick with your intuition right now.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

A roadblock might delay you for a little while but it's not going to completely stop your progress. Find a way to settle a discrepancy with a coworker before it escalates.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

If you recently came out on top of a conflict, let the other person bow out with dignity. Do not make a big deal of your win.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

You are in a position where you need to be direct but not very pushy, Sagittarius. Figure out what you need or want, and then step back to let others make up their own minds.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, you cannot expect others to read your mind. You must spell out in detail what you mean and what you expect from those around you.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18

Pay attention to informal conversations around you this week, Aquarius. The "little things" often can provide a lot of meaning and insight.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Step into natural leadership role at work or in a volunteer environment, Pisces. Trust the opportunities that come from your steady presence.

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SUDOKU

Here's How It Works:

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

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HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



The dam, which paddlers had to portage around to continue on their river trip.



The portage area to get around the dam. River racers use this same route.



This tree shows marks of a beavers gnawing.

Hilltown Hikers paddle to Crescent Mills

As summer draws to a close, the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers try to get out on the beautiful Hilltown rivers and lakes to enjoy sunny skies and cool water.

Both a historic and beauty spot Crescent Mills developed as a village within the town of Russell, about four miles from Russell Center and 1.5 miles from Huntington containing 180 acres.

The site originally operated as a gristmill owned by Cyrus W. Field. In 1858, Field sold the gristmill, dam, water rights, and surrounding acreage to Charles C. Chapin and Henry A. Gould.

Chapin & Gould converted the site into a paper manufacturing operation specializing in high-grade writing and ledger paper for 79 years. Three departments operated around the clock.

Longtime superintendent W. D. Kites introduced innovations such as a hillside draft chimney connect-

ed to the boilers and patented improvements to the “dandy roll” a watermark device.

Filtered water was originally fed via wooden pump logs from a reservoir up on the hill and people can still see it today. Chapin & Gould owned the mill buildings, boarding houses, and worker tenements. The village featured its own schoolhouse with an upper hall for theater productions and dances, sports teams, a communal barn and regular deliveries from nearby Huntington and Montgomery farms.

Company executives commuted daily by train from Springfield, using a pedestrian swing bridge across the Westfield River near the dam until spring ice carried it away.

In the 1930s during the Great Depression, Chapin & Gould went bankrupt. The Springfield Five Cents Savings Bank foreclosed on a \$100,000 mortgage on May 29, 1936, leaving the

mill idle for three years.

In 1939, the mill was leased to E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. The bank sold the entire property in April 1942 to the Crescent Paper Corp., which liquidated after selling the industrial mill buildings and water rights directly to Du Pont.

Under Du Pont and later operations, the mill transitioned from paper to manufacturing “Texon,” a specialized leather substitute used for footwear midsoles and innersoles, employing around 90 workers.

A holding firm, the CVM Company, Inc., sold the residential company housing to private owners. The village modernized with paved roads (Route 20), town-supplied water from Blandford Mountain and a new school building erected on the former company barn site.

No doubt this spot has always been this beautiful with bald eagles diving for fish in the river.



Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers paddle their way toward a dam on the Westfield River in Russell.



Submitted photos

Hilltown Hikers pull their kayaks up by the portage area by a mill on the Westfield River.



Hilltown hikers continued paddling on Westfield River past the dam.

RUSSELL

Cultural Council seeks funding proposals

RUSSELL – The Russell Cultural Council set a Thursday, Oct. 15 deadline for organizations, schools and individuals to apply for grants that support cultural activities in the community.

Applications must be made online by visiting www.massculturalcouncil.org.

According to Council spokesperson Lorrie Bean these grants can support a

variety of artistic projects and activities in our community – including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies, or performances in schools, workshops, and lectures.

The Russell Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grass-

roots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences and humanities every year.

The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community.

This year, the Russell Cultural Council will distrib-

ute about \$5,700 in grants.

Previously funded 2026 projects included: Littleville Elementary School, Russell Library, Russell Council On Aging, Hilltown CARE and North Hall Association to name just of few.

Application forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available online by visiting www.massculturalcouncil.org.

WESTFIELD

St. Joseph’s Church hosts pot roast dinner

WESTFIELD – St. Joseph’s National Catholic Church, 73 Main St., hosts a community pot roast dinner on Sunday, Sept. 13 at noon.

Dinner will feature tender pot roast, home-made mashed potatoes with beef gravy, glazed carrots and chocolate cake and includes coffee, ice tea and bottled water.

Tickets are \$18 for

adults and \$10 for children under 12. For tickets, people may call Cliff at 413-977-2007.

The deadline for purchasing tickets is Thursday, Sept. 10. A limited number of Meals-To-Go will be available at 12:30 p.m.

When buying tickets, people should indicate if take-out. Everyone is welcome.

CORRECTIONS POLICY

If you notice a factual error in our pages, please let us know, so that we can set the record straight. Email information to countryjournal@turley.com, or call us at 413-283-8393. Corrections will be printed on page 4 or 5.