

Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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HUNTINGTON

Herbicide spraying at dams

Sparks resident concerns

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Sondra Lewis and Renee Baillargeon, both residents of Huntington, met with the Huntington Select Board on Wednesday, Sept. 9 to discuss their concerns about the herbicides sprayed at Littleville and Knightville Dams by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which operates and maintains those dams.

Present were Chairman Roger Booth, members Rob Drabiuk and John McVeigh and Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin.

'I'm very concerned about spraying our reservoirs with glyphosate and I don't think we can continue to make these kinds of errors,' Lewis opened,

HERBICIDE, page 2



Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm
Megan and Charlie Dragon of Hadley's Five Dragon Valley Farm exhibited their Merino Wool sheep.

BLANDFORD

Blandford Fair has another great season

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Have you ever noticed that some people just seem to have music in their soul?

Feet are tapping, fingers snapping, heads clapping, heads bobbing – all in time to the beat. It doesn't seem to matter if it's march time or waltz time.

Watching performers at the new pavilion during the fair, you noticed most people passing by kept their pace in time to the music.

Two townies came back to Blandford to perform at the fair on Saturday. Kyle Mangini with Jeff Lynch, better known as Woodford Way, started a fully scheduled afternoon of live music. Mangini now lives in Chester, but his roots are in town. The duo has performed more than once for the Memorial Day observations.

The other performer, also with roots in town, was Martha Kronholm

Moscowitz with her group from Albany, the Pine Hills Band. They performed at the fair before.

Pine Hills is the Albany neighborhood where the group formed. It started with a couple of musicians jamming together on a front porch on a weekend night and as more instrumentalists happened along, the group became a thing. Now they have regular gigs in upstate New York as well.

Sarah, the Fiddler, Michel is also local, a Western Massachusetts performer and instructor for over 20 years. The Westfield resident has won hundreds of fiddling competitions and continues to entertain. One young man walked by the pavilion keeping in step with a lively quick paced selection and passing on his way back his step slowed to three-quarter time to keep up with Sarah the Fiddler's rendition.

FAIR, page 6

BLANDFORD

Select Board changes meeting time to 6 p.m.

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The Select Board met on Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 4 p.m.

The board did vote to hold their meetings at 6 p.m. going forward rather than at 4 p.m. and have executive sessions at their discretion.

Appointments

The board made the following appointments to the Community

Development Coordination Group through June 30, 2027: Greg Garfield, Planning Board; James Bergland, Zoning Board of Appeals; Raymond Hultay, Highway Department; Jennifer Girard, Board of Health; Adam Dolby, Fire Chief; Corinne Shartrand, Select Board and Richard Gates, Conservation Commission.

The board also appointed Cathy Smelcer to the Cultural Council through June 30, 2029.

The discussion on

SELECT BOARD, page 6

HUNTINGTON

Huntington receives asphalt hot box



Submitted photo
Huntington Highway Superintendent Brad Curry, from left and Huntington Select Board member John McVeigh with seller Jeff Trombley of Crafc. Curry and McVeigh took delivery of an asphalt hot box on Thursday, Sept. 10 thanks to funding secured by Massachusetts Senator Paul Mark through the Fair Share supplemental budget.

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Highway Department took delivery of an asphalt hot box on Thursday, Sept. 10 thanks to an earmark secured by Massachusetts Senator Paul Mark through the Fair Share supplemental budget.

An asphalt hot box is a heated container that keeps hot mix asphalt at a workable temperature during transport and patching jobs. It is a multi-purpose piece of equipment that can keep hot asphalt pliable for up to 72 hours.

ASPHALT, page 2

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Submitted photos
Canine members of Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers enjoy wading in the wetlands.



Frenchie, the bulldog, on a leash, wades in the water.



The Hilltown Hikers pass by these moss covered boulders.

Hikers enjoy hike to Basin Pond

Basin Pond on Becket Road in Lee has quite a few streams running through and some great boulder fields. Mushrooms and fun for dogs in all that water in the summer months make it an interesting hike to the old dam remains for the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers. A 3.5 mile spoon loop takes hikers right off the road into the wilderness filled with the most beautiful fauna in Lee. It seems like they are miles away from the busy Mass Turnpike here. East Lee was devastated in April 1886 when the waters of Mud Pond suddenly burst

through the dam. The second dam, reconstructed on the site of the first, burst in 1968. The area was originally called Mud Pond. In 1873, East Lee mill owners built the first dam to harness water for hydroelectric power, part of the industrial expansion of the late 19th century. This dam was later replaced in 1965 by a second structure intended to create a resort community. Both dams were eventually breached, causing significant environmental and economic damage to the surrounding area. After the 1965 dam, the water body was renamed

Lake Lee in the 1960s before becoming Basin Pond. The failure of the dams allowed beavers to reclaim the site, building natural dams that now dominate the pond's landscape. Today, Basin Pond is a 296-acre preserve managed by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council. It is valued for its wetlands, wildlife habitat and scenic trails. The only remaining man-made structures are the ruins of the 1965 dam and a viewing platform overlooking them. The site serves as a reminder of the limits of industrial development and its failures and why modern day dams have structure and engineering.



The hike to Basin Pond in Lee had some great boulder fields.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Hampshire Regional School District offers meals at no cost for all students

Hampshire Regional School District participates in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. As part of this program, Hampshire Regional High School, Anne T. Dunphy, New Hingham, Westhampton Elementary, William E. Norris offers healthy meals every school day. The Commonwealth is supplementing National School Lunch Program funds to ensure all students have access to healthy school meals in Massachusetts, regardless of household income. We ask that families complete a Meal Benefit Application as this provides data for school funding and community resources. The results from each Meal Benefit Application is used to ensure sustainability for this program. Families who qualify for free or reduced-price meals for their children also qualify for Sun Bucks starting in the summer of 2026. Sun Bucks provides extra money for groceries during the summer months when kids aren't in school. Qualifications for children to receive free or reduced price meals include: belonging to a household whose income is at or below the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, belonging to a household that receives public assistance, or if the child is homeless, migrant, runaway, foster, or participates in a Head Start or Even Start pre-K program. Household size and income criteria are used to determine eligibility for free and reduced-price benefits if the household does not receive assistance or the children are not in the other categories mentioned above. Children can get free or reduced-price meals if the household's gross income falls at or below the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guideline chart.

[Insert chart which I sent to format]

To apply for free or reduced-price meals, households can fill out the application and return it to the

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2026-2027						
Household size	Maximum Household Income Eligible for Free Meals			Maximum Household Income Eligible for Reduced Price Meals		
	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$20,748	\$1,729	\$399	\$29,526	\$2,461	\$568
2	28,132	2,345	541	40,034	3,337	770
3	35,516	2,960	683	50,542	4,212	972
4	42,900	3,575	825	61,050	5,088	1,175
5	50,284	4,191	967	71,558	5,964	1,377
6	57,668	4,806	1,109	82,066	6,839	1,579
7	65,052	5,421	1,251	92,574	7,715	1,781
8	72,436	6,037	1,393	103,082	8,591	1,983
Each additional person:	+7,348	+616	+142	+10,508	+876	+203

school unless the household has already received notification that their children are approved for free meals this year. Application forms are being distributed to all households with a letter informing households of the availability of free and reduced-price meals for their children and what is required to complete on the application. Applications also are available in the main office of each school. Only one application is required for all children in the household and the information provided on the application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility and verification of data. Applications may be verified at any time during the school year by the school or other program officials. An application for free or reduced-price benefits cannot be approved unless it contains complete eligibility information as indicated on the application and instructions. In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or disability. Families can apply for benefits at any time. If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size increases, the household should contact the school. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for benefits if the household's income falls at or below the Federal Guidelines. Contact your schools main office at any time to request an application. Under the provisions of the free and reduced-price policy, The cafeteria manager will review applications and determine eligibility. Parents or guardians dissatisfied with

the ruling of the official may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. Parents wishing to make a formal appeal for a hearing on the decision may make a request either orally or in writing to your cafeteria manager. When known to Hampshire Regional School District households will be notified of their children's eligibility for free meals if they are members of households receiving assistance from the: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR); or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), if the State program meets Federal standards. An application is not required for free meal benefits for Assistance Program participants and all the children in the household are eligible for free meal benefits. If any children were not listed on the notice of eligibility, or if a household does not receive a notice of eligibility, the household should contact the school to have free meal benefits extended to them. Participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals, but they will need to turn in an application including household size and total income. When known to Hampshire Regional High School households will also be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals if the individual child is considered "Other Source Categorically Eligible", because the child is categorized, as defined by law as: Foster, Homeless,

Migrant, Runaway, Enrolled in an eligible Head Start, or Enrolled in an eligible pre-kindergarten class. If any children were not listed on the notice of eligibility, the household should contact the school about their eligibility through the list above, or should submit an income application. Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the school if the household chooses to decline the benefits. For more information, you may call Carol Inman at 413-527-7680 or e-mail at cinman@hr-k12.org. **Community Eligibility Provision** Hampshire Regional School District will be participating in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. As

part of this program, Anne T. Dunphy, New Hingham, Westhampton Elementary, will offer healthy meals every school day at NO COST to the students due to the implementation of the Community Eligibility Provision for school year 2026-2027. Students will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee or submit a household application. **Non-Discrimination Statement** In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or

USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov.

SOCCER TEAM WINS U11 DIVISION TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP



Submitted photo
Angelo Merenda, Ely Dulude and Luke Hoffmann proudly represented the Hilltowns as members of the Boston Bolts soccer team at the New England Surf Metro tournament. The boys competed in the U11 Elite Division and came away as tournament champions. Their hard work, teamwork, and dedication paid off with an exciting victory and their families and community are incredibly proud of their accomplishment.