

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 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

By Wendy Long
Correspondent



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.

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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HILLTOWNS

MassDOT announces I-90 lane closure

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces an extended lane closure on I-90 eastbound at mile marker 36 in Montgomery and Russell.

This lane closure will be in place now and through Friday, Sept. 18 at 5 p.m. This closure is necessary for crews to complete bridge deck asphalt repairs.

Appropriate signage, law enforcement details, and advanced message boards will be in place to guide drivers through the work area.

Drivers traveling through the affected areas should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution.

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

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit www.mass511.com to view live cameras, travel times, 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 realtime conditions. Follow @MassDOT on X, formerly known as Twitter, to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.



HUNTINGTON

Special Town Meeting takes place Sept. 21

HUNTINGTON The town holds a Special Town Meeting on Monday, Sept. 21 at 7 p.m. at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road.

The following articles will be voted on: Article 1 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$850,000.00 for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a new fire engine, including all incidental and related costs; and as funding therefor, to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow said sum pursuant to G.L. c.44, §7(1), or any other enabling authority; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 2 - To see if the Town will vote to extend its acceptance of G.L. c.59, §5, Clause 56, as voted under Article 12 of the June 5, 2023 Annual Town Meeting warrant, to authorize the Board of Assessors to continue to grant abatements of real and personal property taxes in an amount up to 100% of the total tax assessed to members of the Massachusetts National Guard and reservists who serve on active duty in a foreign country for the fiscal year in which they performed such service, subject to eligibility requirements to be established by the Board of Assessors; or take any other action relative thereto.

Any questions prior to the meeting should be directed to the Town Administrator at admin@huntingtonma.us or 413-512-5200.

ASPHALT from page 1

It can reheat cold material or millings into a workable state, it is sized for a lower shoveling height than a typical truck, which reduces injury and fatigue and it enables leftover material to be saved for the next day reducing cost and preventing waste.

“This was an important local transportation item that John McVeigh and the Select board pitched to me and I was really glad to be able to help with,” said the Senator.

“We were able to secure \$50,000 in supplemental funding from Fair Share revenues for the town of Huntington to purchase and maintain an asphalt hot box for local road maintenance. In a rural community like Huntington, where DPW budgets are limited, funding like this can make a real difference. This is a practical investment that will help Huntington and surrounding towns keep up with road repairs, make local taxpayer dollars go further, and give

the highway department another tool to get the job done. I’m happy to see this funding making its way back to Huntington and being put to good use,” said Sen. Mark.

Voters passed the Massachusetts Fair Share Amendment in 2025, which added a 4% tax on individual income above \$1.2 million. When collections are higher than expected, surplus funds are spent through the supplementary budget on specific, one-time needs in the areas of transportation and education. Funds are used to support the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (subways and buses), local roads, bridges and regional transit systems, local public schools, special education costs, universal free school meals and tuition-free community college.

The asphalt hot box will be shared with Worthington and Russell and will be used for emergency repairs and general maintenance of town roads.

HERBICIDE

adding that she understands that it is an earthen dam and there are reasons why they have to remove whatever weeds grow, but emphasizing that ‘we have to find another way.’

The two were looking for support for their proposed forming of an environmental health group in the hilltowns that could study the effects of such chemicals and their impact on things like air and water quality. The proposed group could also look at other area issues, such as drinking water in Chester.

Lewis said this idea was prompted by the discovery of the spraying at Littleville and Knightville dams, and the lack of public awareness. “It shouldn’t be happening at all,” Lewis said. “But if it is, the public should be very aware.”

Booth, who has forty years experience as an environmental engineer, noted that the spraying could not occur without the Army Corps getting permits from the state, which they have gotten. “We’re not, as a town, able to tell them that they can’t do it,” he said. “The only way you’re going to win this battle is through the Legislature.”

He suggested that the two bring their concerns to larger advocacy groups: the Conservation Commissions of area towns, environmental advocacy groups like the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group or Sierra Club and area legislators. Drabiuk and McVeigh concurred on that strategy being the best use of the advocates time.

When the women questioned the possible use of safer alternatives, Drabiuk noted that government agencies are typically required to select the lowest bidder for tax-funded expenses. With EPA approval of glyphosate, there would be no incentive to go with an alternative unless that was also the cheapest option.

The women shared that they also wanted to increase awareness with the public about glyphosate. Booth’s response was,

“they already know, they just don’t care, and they want a green lawn.”

According to Troy C. Darr, USACE Chief of Public Affairs, treating the vegetation growing between the riprap (stones that cover the earthen dams) is a dam safety requirement, needed “to protect the dam’s structural safety, ensure operational readiness, and meet regulatory standards.”

The extensive root systems of woody vegetation can grow into riprap layers and can create seepage paths that cause internal erosion and weaken the dam’s embankments. Roots can also crack concrete or destabilize slopes, Darr said. Vegetation can also obscure the surface of the dam, making it difficult to visually inspect for cracks, seepage or other distress critical for early detection of problems.

He confirmed that contracts are awarded through a bidding process. This year’s contractor is Regal Tree and Shrub based out of Easton.

Darr said that the “Environmental Protection Agency regulates and approves all pesticide formulations under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, establishing strict safety thresholds for humans, wildlife, and aquatic habitats.

In Massachusetts, local applications are coordinated under state standards and USACE environmental compliance regulations.

This year’s weed killer was Lesco Prosecutor Pro Herbicide, and it was applied recently. This product’s Safety Data Sheet lists a warning for toxicity if the product is inhaled and advises people to avoid breathing in mists, vapor or spray.

The hazardous component of this product is isopropylamine salt of glyphosate. The level of toxicity of this product varies based on the duration and amount of exposure. It concluded that, based upon testing over the lifetime of laboratory rats and mice, it did not meet criteria necessary

Health collaborative offers homebound vaccines

Hampshire Public Health Shared Service Collaborative offers a homebound adults age 18 plus with limited mobility and those with difficulty getting out of their home and their caretakers flu (standard and high dose) and covid vaccines (Pfizer).

The collaborative serves people in Amherst, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Easthampton, Granby, Hadley, Hatfield, Huntington, Middlefield, Northampton, Plainfield, Southampton and Worthington.

They may register on line at northamptonma.gov/2219/vax or call 413-587-4903 if need help registering. Participants should have their insurance card available.

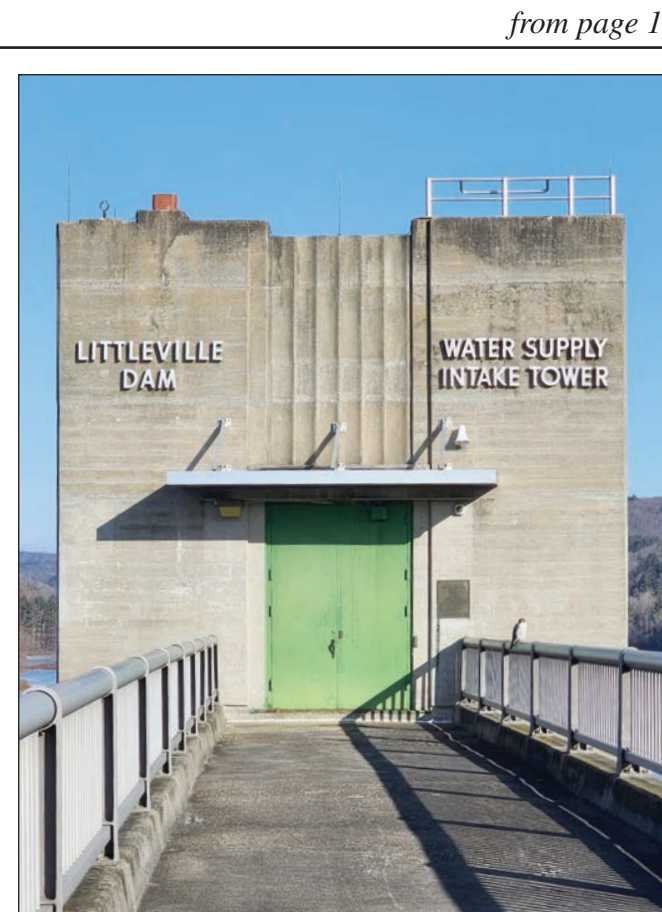


Photo Submitted

Littleville Dam was used to create Littleville Lake, with a dual-purpose of flood control and a back-up water supply for the City of Springfield. To date, it has never been used for that purpose. Sondra Lewis and Renee Baillargeon met with the Huntington Select Board to discuss environmental concerns over herbicide spraying at Littleville and Knightville Dams, required under regulations to protect the integrity of earthen dam structures.

to label it as carcinogenic. However, it also recommends not applying the product directly to water or to areas where surface water is present.

Searching online reveals differing opinions on this chemical. While considered safe by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, the International Agency for Research on Cancer classifies it as “probably carcinogenic to humans” and likely to be tied to non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma in workers such as farmers, who have repeated exposure to the chemical when it is mixed with other formulations.

Glyphosate is a key ingredient in “Round Up.”

After the meeting, the women said they understood that the town had no control over the bidding process, but questioned if town officials would be able to influence a more robust notification process to town residents. Darr says the Corps posts signage a week ahead saying that spraying will occur between certain dates, although the specific dates will be weather dependent. Lewis and Baillargeon feel it would be prudent to do an auto-dialed phone call to town residents, who might choose to research the chemical being used and decide to stay away from the dams, their waterways and not eat fish from the lake or streams.

Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin confirmed that the town is notified when the railroad (CSX) sprays but, to her knowledge, they do not receive any notification from the USACE.

“As a citizen of the town, I think the residents have a right to know about this. Everyone has their own opinion about this, but people should have the right to know,” Baillargeon said.

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Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

CHESTER

Chester Railway Museum takes part in Watershed Week

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

CHESTER – The Chester Railway Museum will take part in the Connecticut River Watershed Partnership’s Second Annual Watershed Week running Sept. 19 - 27.

The museum will offer a program called “Rivers and Railroads: An Enduring Partnership.”

Dave Pierce, President of the Chester Railway Station and Museum on Prospect Street, said they are proud to have been included in the festivities.

“Though the National Historic Landmark museum is primarily railroad-themed, it features the narrative of the Western Railroad,” Pierce said, noting that it was the first railroad to go over a mountain and the first to pass through wilderness.

The progress of the Western Railroad was heavily dependent upon area rivers and waterways, he said.

Using his extensive command of the railroad’s history, Pierce explained its strong ties to Western Massachusetts waters.

He said that the Connecticut River in Springfield hosted the world’s longest bridge of its age. Built by William Howe for the Western Railroad, the then wooden bridge opened on July 4, 1841.

The Westfield River then guided engineers over the Berkshires and became home to the first cluster of keystone arch railroad bridges in America.

Muddy Pond, near the Hinsdale/Washington border and serving as the headwaters of the Housatonic River, “swallowed the railroad three times in the super-unstable organic mud below its surface,” Pierce said.

From Sept. 18 - 27 the museum will be running a loop of a helicopter ride along the Westfield River that was filmed in 2008. Visitors are also welcome to hike out to see the Keystone Arches, magnificent cathedral-like bridges built for the railroad in the 1830s that have also been designated as National Historic Landmarks.

The museum is open Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.. If they



Submitted photo

National Historic Landmark Keystone Arch Bridges can be visited during the Connecticut River Watershed Partnership’s Second Annual Watershed Week running Sept. 19 - 27.

wish to come another day, they may call 413-354-7878 before they visit and the museum will be opened for them.

Kathy Baugh of Massachusetts Audubon said

that the Connecticut River Watershed Partnership welcomes everyone to celebrate the watershed, which is both a national treasure and a defining element of the New England region.

Baugh, who serves as

the Outreach Coordinator of the CRWP, can be contacted for more information by emailing friendsofconte@gmail.com.

The entire schedule of events is posted at <https://ctriverwatershed.org/watershed-week> and events are taking place in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Watershed Week is funded, in part, by the Westfield River Wild and Scenic Committee.

CUMMINGTON

RiverFest set to take place Sept. 19

CUMMINGTON – The Cummington Cultural District and Hilltown Vision invite participants to RiverFest 2026, an annual fall community event on Saturday, Sept. 19 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. along Main Street.

This event is in partnership with several arts, culture, historical, and environmental groups that takes place along the Westfield River in Cummington. Rain date is Sunday, Sept. 20.

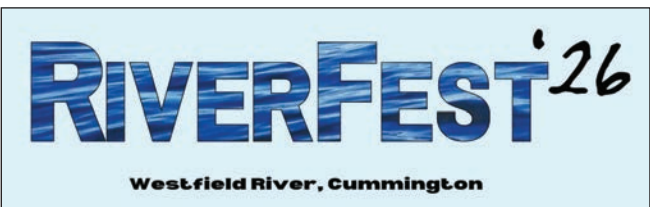
People may take part in a guided walk, hands on arts and ecology projects for all ages, a local artisan and artist vendor fair, a music showcase featuring Hilltown musicians, a screening of the film “The Cummington Story,” an art

walk exploring several open exhibitions and a self-guided Public Art on Main Street tour, and info tables from community organizations.

Light refreshments will be provided for this free community event.

At 10:30 a.m. there is a guided ecology walk led by John “Burnsie” Burns, botanist, from Pettingill Memorial Pavilion and from noon- 6 p.m. Hilltown Music Showcase on the Cummington Community House lawn and Local Artisan and Artist Fair on the Cummington Community House lawn

From 1-3 p.m. there will be a River Ecology puppet-making project for all ages led by Meredyth



Babcock at the Cummington Community House.

At 3:30 p.m. is the screening of “The Cummington Story” at the Cummington Community House.

From 4-6 p.m. Art Walk! Explore open exhibitions at the Cummington Community House Gallery, Old Parsonage, and Project Art, as well as a self-guided Public Art on Main Street tour.

More details on the program schedule, musicians and

play times, participating artist and artisan vendors, and open exhibitions is available on the Cummington Cultural District website by visiting <https://cummingtonculture.org/riverfest>.

RiverFest is funded in part by a grant from the Cummington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, as well as by a Mass Cultural Council Creative Experiences grant.

SANDISFIELD

New Boston Church to host yard sale Sept. 19

SANDISFIELD – The New Boston Congregational Church, 4 Sandisfield Road, announces its second annual multi-family yard sale on Friday, Sept. 19 and Saturday, Sept. 20 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Proceeds from the event will go towards a new roof for the church and repairs to the belfry.

The sale includes a large and wide-ranging assortment of interesting and practical things – all at bargain prices. There are many antiques.

The sale is billed as a family event. Burgers, hot dogs, freshly made popcorn and beverages will be

available for purchase. On Saturday afternoon there will be a thrilling free performance by Boston area artist, Ali O’Donnell, also known as “Dame of Flames.” For a small donation, visitors can ring the church bell.

The historic (c.1879) all-chestnut building, which is in virtually original condition, is one of the most important architectural elements in the New Boston Village National Historic District. The building will be open for tours on request.

For more information, people may contact Ron Bernard at Ronbernard@aol.com or visit NewBostonCongregationalChurch.org.

HUNTINGTON

COA announces upcoming events

HUNTINGTON – The Council on Aging presents local author, Steve Cormier on Wednesday, Sept. 23 from 1-2 p.m.

He will discuss his recently published book, “Good Golly...Missed Trolley.” The author’s explores the trolley era from its beginning to “the end of the Line” and examine how the trolley system directly impacted the Hilltown area.

Also on Wednesday, Sept. 23 the movie “Fly Away Home” will be shown at 2

p.m. Popcorn will be provided.

On Saturday, Sept. 26 the Huntington Health Fair takes place from 10 a.m.-noon. This is an opportunity to connect with representatives from local health organizations. The Health Fair will feature flu vaccinations, massages, a medical equipment donation drive and a free prize drawing.

Seniors can enjoy Jack and His Guitar on Wednesday, Sept. 30 at 2 p.m. Brian Guagnini, BCBS

Medicare Field Outreach Consultant, will return to answer questions and provide information about Dental Blue 65 on Wednesday, Oct. 7 from 1-2 p.m.

Fall birthday celebration and BINGO takes place on Tuesday, Oct. 13 at 1 p.m.

The Council on Aging welcomes residents and community members to participate in these programs and activities. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

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GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY
Matters
By Russell Gloor



Must I Enroll in Medicare at Age 65?

Dear Rusty:
I will be turning 65 next month, I am currently retired and I am not on Social Security.

My question is; Is there anything I have to do, if I don't want Medicare? I am on my wife's employer plan and she works for the Postal Service as a Rural Carrier.

She doesn't plan on retiring for another eight years. Also, I would like to wait till my Full Retirement Age before I draw Social Security at 67. Do I have to draw Medicare at that point?

Signed:
Retired but Curious

Dear Retired but Curious:

As long as you are covered by a "creditable" healthcare plan such as that from your wife's US Postal Service employer, you can defer enrolling in Medicare until your Postal Service Health Benefit coverage from your wife's employer ends.

When that happens, you and your wife will enter a Medicare "Special Enrollment Period" during which you can enroll in Medicare without incurring a Late Enrollment Penalty. Thus, in your specific circumstances, you don't need to do anything about enrolling in Medicare when you turn 65.

That is still true, regardless of when you claim your Social Security benefits. If you claim Social Security at age 67 and before your wife retires from the USPS, you will be required to take Medicare Part A coverage for inpatient hospitalization services, but Medicare Part A is premium-free for those also eligible for Social Security.

However, enrollment in Medicare Part B (coverage for outpatient healthcare services) is always optional because there is a premium associated with it and you can continue to defer enrollment in Medicare Part B as long as you have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your wife's employer even while you are collecting Social Security.

When you apply for Social Security, you can inform SS that you are declining Medicare Part B because you are still covered by your wife's USPS employer healthcare plan.

Then, when your wife retires and you lose your USPS healthcare coverage, you can enroll in Medicare Part B at that time without a late enrollment penalty.

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 ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Reader clarifies her public comment statement at Select Board

The 'Public Comment' section of the Select Board meeting article about the town of Blandford written in the Sept. 10, 2026 issue of the *Country Journal* in my opinion does not portrays what was said.

I have written the following to clarify any misunderstandings. First of all, I didn't 'have concerns' about Dolby's assessment of membership.

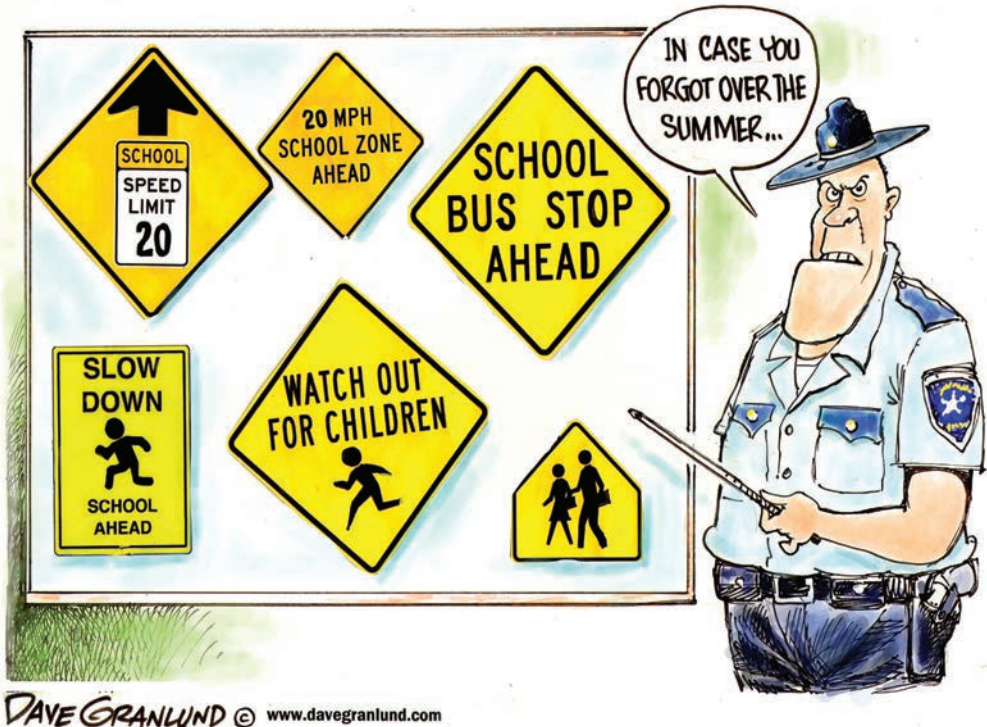
Only that his figures for

the number of responders to calls didn't portray reality. Secondly, the mention of needing eight or more people in an emergency was in regards to a larger emergency situation such as a structure fire, not just any 911 emergency call and the number was stated by fellow firefighters in the room, not myself.

And lastly, the comments on paid membership were also not accurately portrayed. We were discussing

OPINION

Back to School refresher course ... for drivers ...



GUEST COLUMN

A fall blooming vine worthy of merit

On my drive home from work this morning, I happened to notice the flowers of a familiar vine climbing up a lamppost.

It brought me right back to my old house and landscape. It is easy to miss the simplicity of that time in my life and wonder the age-old question of "Where did time go?"

When we moved some years back we left behind numerous plants (the obvious outcome when you sell your house with two feet of snow on the ground). One of my very favorites was the sweet autumn clematis.

Each year, right about now, the vine would explode into clouds of white blossoms. And because the vine grew up a trellis on the gable end of my house, it made a beautiful, tall backdrop for the annuals and perennials still in flower.

I hadn't really thought about this plant recently, until my drive earlier today. The white blossoms were abundant and beautiful.

Let's take this opportunity to learn more about a fall plant that is used not nearly enough.

Clematis ternifolia (aka



will stay cool but where top growth receives ample sunshine. You can accomplish this situation by providing a thick layer of mulch at the base of the vine.

Autumn clematis will tolerate all but the worst of soils and is hardy in zones 4-10.

Panicles of one inch flowers delight the eye and the nose for about six weeks beginning in late summer. Some liken the sweet fragrance to vanilla; others call it the smell of "springtime."

After blooms have passed, silvery seed heads add another short season of interest to the garden before the leaves fall.

Admittedly, a brown vine is not the most attractive thing to look at during the winter months, but it is a small price to pay for the abundance of flowers you get at a time of year when most other plants are winding down.

I enjoy reminiscing, but I can't think about it for very long or I'll miss what is right in front of me; there is plenty blooming here, too.

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

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.

Nurse advocate offers advice on getting hip to joint replacement surgery



your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



A few weeks ago, I underwent my second total hip replacement. I had already replaced my left hip, and now it was time for the right one.

About 10 years ago, I also had both of my knees replaced. After nearly four decades as an ICU nurse, the physical toll of caring for patients, some weighing up to 300 or 400 pounds, had caught up with me. This is a common story among nurses: We prioritize others' needs

and often ignore our own warning signs.

Obviously, I'm not alone. Around 7 million Americans are living with hip or knee replacements, allowing them to maintain mobility despite severe arthritis. Annually in the U.S., there are about 700,000 knee and 400,000 hip replacements, with studies showing many replacements lasting 25 years or more.

We're just not as healthy as we used to be. Arthritis

OPINION

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Lake Pleasant has spiritualist history

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

What do you think you did for a good time in 1880? A trip to Lake Pleasant in Montague was a sure bet in the summer back then. This was where Victorians gathered to celebrate spiritualism, a cult that believed in communing with ancestors through mediums, psychics and clairvoyants.

They held that the human spirit survives physical death and moves on to live in a spirit world where living people can communicate with the dead through a medium. Many people in the 1870s (1870-1930 was the height of Spiritualism) had suffered the loss of a loved one from disease, especially childhood diseases and soldiers, who did not return from fighting the Civil War.

Death was rampant. So when the Fox sisters communicated with a dead man buried under their house through knocking on their walls, the world listened and embraced the notion of communicating with the dead. That was how spiritualism was started.

Originally Lake Pleasant was the site where spiritualists gathered to hear speakers while camping outside in tents on 50 acres. Speakers spoke about spiritualism, politics, the temperance movement and current issues.

The Lake provided recreation for picnic parties, swimming and boating in between lectures. The spot became enormously popular bringing people from all over New England to experience two-three weeks of outdoor camping.

Lake Pleasant was advertised heavily by the Fitchburg Railroad as a vacation spot. It was bringing people from all over New England to vacation here especially after it built a hotel on site.

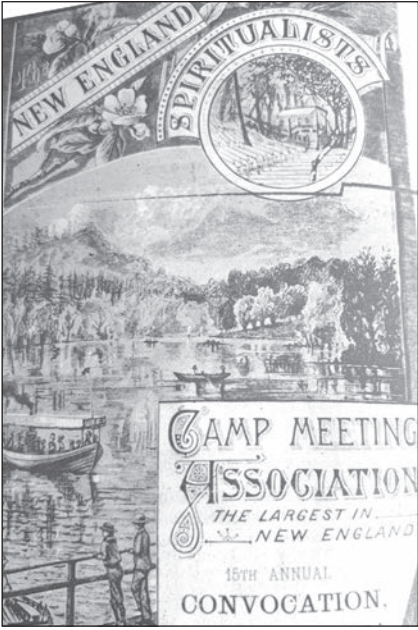
By 1900, 196 cottages were built where once a tent city existed. The railroad also built a band stand, (band concerts were held two-three times a day) a dance pavilion and a large train depot.

Grange parties, Masonic and Odd Fellows groups and schools had outings here as well as outdoor conventions featuring famous speakers of the day.

What of the spiritualists? They thrived here



A group enjoying boating in the earliest days at Lake Pleasant.



This is a flyer advertising a spiritualist convocation at Lake Pleasant.



This is the bell tower, which was on the temple building originally.

evolving to have mediums holding forth to the public in front of their tents. While they had started with tents held up between two pine trees, with straw filled mattresses to sleep on and the surrounding trees holding kettles, dippers, teapots, towels and dishcloths enjoying a simple time camping, the public at large had invaded.

Spiritualists met in a large wooden building called the “Temple” to gather and for want of a better term worship. They agreed a new opportunity had presented itself. With the public at large taking over, with as many as 10,000 people jamming the Lake, their bucolic camping days were over. They began to offer their services directly to the visitors.

Mediums helped people communicate with the spirit world, which translated to speaking with visitors’ dead relatives. Psychics helped people understand the “hidden side of the human world.”

Psychics tapped into energy given off by the seeker but they also used tarot cards, palm reading, crystal gazing, runes, astrology, ouija boards, automatic writing and many more methods to gain insight into a person’s past, present and future. They practiced divination, interpreting signs and omens. Whereas mediums communicated from the spirit of the dead to the living. They channeled communication from a spirit to a seeker.

The Lake Pleasant Hotel burned in a fire in 1907 as well as one half of the community. The Temple was



Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniel

Spiritualist names are on the wooden bridge connecting the two lakes.

destroyed by an arsonist in 1955. The spiritualist movement died out in the 1940s.

However there are still some practitioners living in Lake Pleasant. They have a Sunday service and continue to have a mid week meeting. There is a wooden bridge that holds the names of Spiritualists on each plank that is in continuous use today.

The tents that transformed to gingerbread houses are lived in. The Independent Order of Scalpers building still exists. This was a private club of men who wielded hunting clubs and gathered to socialize like the Masons. If people visit Lake Pleasant, they will see the building.



This is a view of Lake Pleasant through the bridge.



A cat walks along the bridge by the fence with the spiritualists names.

PLAINFIELD

50th annual Plainfield race lists winners

PLAINFIELD –Resident Joseph Huston defended his title finishing first overall during the 55th Annual Plainfield Firefighters barbecue this past Labor Day weekend.

His winning time was 7:08 and he becomes one of only a few two-time winners of the race. Finishing second overall and Junior Cup winner with a time of 7:22 was 14-year-old Gabe Huston, while third overall was brother, Josh Huston, with a time of 7:49, their mother, Sarah Huston, was the first and only woman to complete the race.

All contestants, who entered the race completed, the deceptively hilly 1.1-mile course including two-year-old Henry Alvord pushed in a carriage by father, Jared Alvord.

FIREFIIGHTERS HOST BARBECUE

Submitted photo

On Sunday, Sept. 6 Plainfield Volunteer Firefighters Association sponsored 55th firefighters barbecue. In spite of rain, the served 400 dinners.

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.pioneervalleyag.org
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

Deacon Jerald Reinford
400 Huntingdon 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 10 a.m.
9 a.m. for July and August

BLANDFORD

Blandford Historical Society...*Did You Know?*

William Ker has no gravestone of his own in Blandford. Yet his name—and the story of his violent death—has been carved into a Blandford gravestone for nearly 250 years.

The stone belongs to his daughter, Eleanor Ker. Its inscription identifies her as the daughter of Katharine and William Ker, who “was slain by the Indians at Fort George in a morning scout on August 4, 1757. Aged 46.” Fort George was the later name for the British fort originally called Fort William Henry in New York, which was destroyed.

Eleanor was only seven when she lost him.

William was among Blandford’s first settlers and drew settling lot No. 2. He was a cordwainer—a shoemaker who worked with new leather.

Behind The Stone

In 1757, Britain and France were battling for control of North America in the French and Indian War. Native nations allied with both sides, influenced by trade, rivalries and the struggle to protect their territories.

William served in the provincial militia, made up of colonists called from civilian life to support British forces. Fort William Henry stood at the southern end of Lake George, about 120 miles from Blandford.

On the second morning of what became a six-day siege, Ker was killed.

The fort’s defenders were badly outnumbered by a French and Indigenous force of roughly 8,000 men, including about 1,800 Native warriors. The British waited in vain for reinforcements before surrendering on August 9 after being promised safe passage.

But the retreat became a nightmare.

Native warriors attacked the departing soldiers. Many were killed, wounded or taken captive.

Fear Spreads

News of the violence raced through the colonies, raising fears that French and Native forces might continue south into western Massachusetts.

In 1757, Blandford was still a young, rugged community of homes, farms and forests—and a whole lot of determination.

But memories of earlier dangers lingered. Several years earlier, under threat from Native Americans, Deacon Robert Blair had abandoned his remote cabin in “The Gore,” in northern Blandford.

Rather than take refuge



Photo by Terri Garfield
Connor Doyle portrayed William Ker in Ghost Walk 2025.

in the town’s fortified house, near today’s westbound service plaza, Blair put his family on horseback and fled to Worcester. He remained there for several years before

returning.

The Tide Turns

The war ended in 1763, but its consequences did not. Britain’s enormous war debts led to new taxes on the col-

onies. Colonists, increasingly accustomed to governing themselves, resented paying them.

Those taxes helped turn dissatisfaction into rebellion. Many historians view the French and Indian War as a prelude to the American Revolution.

Eleanor lived until 1778, dying at just 27—long enough to witness the birth of a nation her father could never have imagined.

Her gravestone connects one Blandford family to a clash of empires, frontier terror and the unlikely, bloody road to American independence. Proving once again that Blandford is a small town with a big history.

Coming Up

Blandford’s Second Annual Ghost Walk, Hill Cemetery, North Street, across from the Fairgrounds, Oct. 3, 2–4 p.m. Rain location: inside The White Church. Free admission, doughnuts and cider.

The Western New England Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies will hold its fall meeting at BHS on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 10 a.m.-noon. The public may sit in on the discussion, followed by a visit to the Old Burying Ground.

Finding Jethro: Uncovering the History of Blandford’s Early Black Community, Sunday, Nov. 22 at 11 a.m. meet at the junction of Blair Road and Jones Road for a hike to the burial ground and a talk sponsored by BHS and Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers.

SELECT BOARD

what town positions need or could use a municipally paid cellphone resulted in having Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera drafting a warrant article for a spring Special Town Meeting for funding for identified positions.

Public listening session

The Healey-Driscoll Administration will host a public listening session on energy facility siting. The meeting is in Blandford Monday, October 19 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Gym. Rural Affairs Director Anne Gobi will be there with a team to hear from residents. These sessions will provide an opportunity for community members to share their perspectives with Administration leaders, ask questions, and learn more about the new energy facility siting law. According to Chair Jackie Coury, this will cover Battery Energy Storage Systems and solar installations.

Fire station

There will be an information session to discuss a fire station on Friday, Nov. 13. Discussion will cover the original vote for a conjoined highway/fire building.

Contracts

The board signed two

contracts for repairs to the town hall roof for \$9,500 and the post office chimney for \$6,500 by Greenwood Industries of Worcester.

Any drainage repair to correct problem of water in the Council on Aging room will be a separate bid item.

Ferrera reported to the board that Paul Dirschka had praise for the Highway Department’s pothole repairs on Beulah Land Road.

Voter registration question has been addressed and all found to be in order.

Blair Pond

Paige Dolinski from Sen. Paul Mark’s office will con-

tact Springfield Water and Sewer Commission about possible swimming at Blair Pond. Coury asked if town residents were still interested. Ferrera said it was part of the issues raised in the town’s Resilient Master Plan.

Fire truck

Fire Chief Adam Dolby, who was present virtually, told the board it would be better to repair the transmission in Engine One than to wait two years for a replacement. He has the \$15,000 cost covered in the department’s budget. The board voted to approve the repair.

Coury, in response to

Dolby’s information about poor sound from the meeting said the board is aware and will continue to address the issue.

Other business

An invoice issue with Gateway Farm and Feed has been cleared up, multiple department charges were on the same bill.

Highway Department Superintendent Ray Hultay told the board that winter supplies were all set.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation has a recovery program they have put together. The first half is the Winter Recovery

Act Program that the town receives funding for winter deficits and the second half has “a pot of 20 million put aside for winter maintenance related projects.” He had all quotes and estimates for a 65 by 80-foot canopy to protect equipment and submitted to the DOT since it would be related to winter maintenance. He will know by mid to end October if the town has been awarded funding to proceed with this project, which would be at no cost of the town.

The board then voted unanimously by roll call vote to go into executive session.

from page 1

FAIR

tion of Jay Ungar’s “Ashokan Farewell.”

If you live in town, there is no avoiding the fair. You work at the fair, you attend, you enter, you eat, you visit with folks you haven’t seen for a while. And you certainly

hear the fair – far beyond the music.

The horse show calls are heard far and wide, as are the trucks at the truck pull and the vrooming from the demolition derbies. If you are new to town, get ready for

next year. Grow the veggies, flowers, practice baking your favorites, crank up the crocheting hooks. It’s all worth it, the fun, the games and the participation.

There was a food plenty and vendors galore. The youngsters played myri-

ad games or had their faces painted or balloon figures to take home. Plus the youthful exhibitors, either with animals or in the Youth Barn, which echoes the Agricultural Hall with entries.

Fair President Matt Ripley said, “We have com-

pleted another successful year. We look forward to what the future will bring and are already working on plans for 2027 to continue to improve the fair.”

Fair Vice President Greg Girard said that a fairgoer told him that the Blandford

fair is one of the nicest fairs he has been to this summer. “The family activities, games, Agricultural displays, crafts, Music, Food...it has a real Norman Rockwell feel to it.”

Friday to Monday, the weather cooperated. Everyone was pleased.

from page 1



This garden display won a rosette winner.



These Nigerian Dwarf Goats are from Step by Step Animal Adventures.

Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm



Pine Hills Band, from Albany, with Martha Kronholm Moscovitz on banjo and vocals entertained on Saturday.



Blandford's Woodford Way with Jeff Lynch and Kyle Mangini entertained on Saturday.

MIDDLEFIELD

Cultural Council accepting applications

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

These grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in the community including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies or performances in schools, workshops and lectures.

The Middlefield 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 nation’s largest grassroots cultural funding network, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities and sciences every year.

The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency that allocates funds to each community. This year, the Middlefield Cultural Council will distribute about \$5,700 in grants.

Previously funded projects include field trip to MassMOCA, entertainment

at the Middlefield fair and an astronomy presentation.

For local guidelines and complete information on the Middlefield LCC, people may email Andrea Tosi at middlfield.culturalcouncil@gmail.com. Application forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available online at www.massculturalcouncil.org.

Middlefield holds 250th anniversary celebration event

MIDDLEFIELD – On Saturday, Sept. 19 beginning at noon a 250th anniversary celebration for the United States of America.

There will be a chicken dinner at noon in the Town Hall, 199 Skyline Trail and music at the gazebo at 2 p.m.

PITTSFIELD

Local Love Arts Festival happens Sept. 27

PITTSFIELD –The inaugural Local Love Arts Festival will take place on Sunday, Sept. 27from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at The Common in Downtown Pittsfield.

Local artists will take center stage showcasing their work, connecting with new audiences and reminding the community that some of the region’s most talented creators are right here in their own backyard.

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 20+ artisanal vendor booths, the Berkshires Jazz Summer Showcase, food and beverages, a children’s activity area with free face painting and balloon twisting, sidewalk chalk art with Pittsfield Parks and Rec, and interactive arts experiences throughout the day.

Bruce Bowey of BTC Family Entertainment will host a free, family-friendly magic show that contains some puppet routines and some ventriloquism. Live jazz entertainment will be provided by Berkshires Jazz throughout the event.

Performers include Junk, featuring Will Hudgins on vibraphone; Joe Finn with Jack Dinicola and Friends and The Wanda Houston Band. A schedule will be posted to downtownpittsfield.com. The Berkshires Jazz Summer Showcase is sponsored by the Berkshire Eagle, Pittsfield Cultural Council and Mill Town Foundation.

Artists Mike Carty and Diane Firtell will be painting live during the event, Berkshire Art Center will be providing an interactive art activity and Katunemo

Art and Healing will host a Faces of Pittsfield community art project.

Pittsfield Parks and Recreation will host chalk art drawing for the duration of the event. People of all ages and abilities are invited to transform the paved walking paths of The Common into a vibrant outdoor gallery using sidewalk chalk.

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.

For a full event schedule and vendor lists, people may visit downtownpittsfield.com.

The Local Love Arts Festival is sponsored by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Mill Town Foundation, and the Feigenbaum Foundation.

BLANDFORD

Cultural Council seeks members

BLANDFORD – Chair of the Blandford Cultural Council Sue Racine is looking for additional members to serve with this group that supports cultural programming.

This is programming that directly benefits town residents and as well as neighboring Hilltown communities. This programming includes: concerts, plays, art shows, library programs and classes in the community and in-school and field trip cultural programming for the students at the Gateway Regional

Schools.

The time commitment is minimal, with perhaps four or five meetings in the fall to review applications for funding.

Anyone interested should email Racine at Susantracine1@gmail.com or call 413-478-3600.

OPINION

HEALTH

from page 15

a patient advocate and a patient. If you’re facing a joint replacement, here are some considerations:

Hospital or surgery center?

All four of my joint replacements took place at outpatient surgery centers, which I consider much cleaner environments than hospitals. After early morning surgery, I was home by noon and received home health care, so I never went to rehab.

A 2023 study by University of Pennsylvania researchers found that the rates of revisits and complications for surgery center patients were lower than for similar patients who had surgery in a hospital. However,

that could have something to do with healthier patients choosing surgery centers and those with other health conditions, heart failure for example, going to hospitals.

That said, this is a topic for you and your doctor to discuss. In the end, you will decide where to have your joint replacement, so go where you are most comfortable.

Choosing a doctor

Look for a surgeon who is affiliated with professional organizations and has completed fellowships in the surgery you’re having. You should also prioritize their experience, asking how many times they’ve performed this particular surgery.

Studies have found that

surgeons who have performed more than 50 procedures have lower rates of complication and revision. You can ask the doctor directly how many times they’ve performed the surgery and what their complication rate is. Also ask whether you can speak with other patients the doctor has treated.

Second opinions

Joint replacement is a major medical undertaking, so if you’re feeling at all unsure about it - or the doctor isn’t all you had hoped - Medicare covers second opinions subject to the 20% co-insurance. Medicare Advantage plans also generally cover second opinions, but check with your plan for details.

Robots or no robots?

Robot-assisted joint replacement is becoming more common. A study published in the Journal of Arthroplasty reported an increase in surgeons who have adopted robotics, from 10% in 2018 to 35% in 2023.

Nearly half of partial knee replacements were robotically assisted. Fewer total knee and hip replacements were reported.

The study noted that further research is needed on outcomes, but surgeons who use robotic assisted systems say that the robot is simply the navigation system while the doctor is in the driver’s seat.

Rehab in a facility or at home?

With my surgeries, I wanted to avoid a rehab facility because that’s another name for nursing home, where there are a lot of germs, more patients with compromised immune systems and generally higher infection rates.

Today, in fact, most joint replacement patients do recuperate at home. A project by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services found that patients who can safely recover at home heal faster, have fewer complications and have a greater sense of ownership in their own recovery.

Not everyone can come home immediately, though, if they lack family support or

access to home health care. Be sure to have this conversation with your doctor before your surgery.

Chances are your joint replacement will get you back to doing the things you enjoy, especially with a little bit of education and preparation.

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



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WORTHINGTON

Food drive benefits Hilltown Food Pantry

WORTHINGTON –A food drive to benefit the Hilltown Food Pantry will be held Saturday, Sept. 19 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Worthington Highway Garage on Huntington Road (Route 112).

The event is sponsored by Indivisible Hilltowns, a local volunteer community organization.

The pantry is located in Goshen and serves 11 surrounding Hilltowns.

Need at the Hilltown Pantry increased this year,

according to pantry manager Julia Lemieux, as households continue to need to spend more money on food. A number of local residents are facing uncertainty due to the loss of SNAP benefits.

Any amount, people can donate is appreciated. In Worthington 10% of residents use SNAP benefits. Other town SNAP percentages include: Huntington 15%, Cummington 8%, Plainfield 11%, Goshen 5% and Chesterfield 6%, according to the most recent state

statistics.

Pantry Director Julie Lemieux said these items are in demand: nuts, trail mix, canned ravioli, baked beans, cup of noodles/instant noodles, women’s sanitary pads, creamed corn, tea/hot chocolate/ coffee, stuffing mix, boxed cake/cookie/brownie mix, toiletries, paper goods, cleaning supplies and pet food are also appreciated.

All items must be unopened and not expired to be accepted. Other shelf-stable foods are also welcome.

Monetary donations are also accepted. Make checks out to Northampton Survival Center with Hilltown Pantry in the memo line. Supermarket gift cards are also useful.

For more information about the drive and to volunteer to help on the day of the drive, people may email indivisiblehilltowns@gmail.com. For more information about the Hilltown Pantry, people may call 413-268-7578 on Wednesday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Council on Aging plans fall foliage bus trip Oct. 12

WORTHINGTON – A new day trip on Monday Oct. 12 Worthington Council on Aging fall foliage bus trip.

The trip includes a Hudson River narrated cruise aboard the Rip Van Winkle II, choice of gourmet boxed lunch on board and market

stop. There is a discounted price for Worthington Seniors over 60 and \$140 for other seniors.

People may call Phyllis 413-238-5962 or email coa@worthington-ma.us for details and to reserve a seat. Room is still available.

COA and Board of Health to host vaccine clinic Sept. 24

WORTHINGTON – A fall vaccine clinic sponsored by the Council on Aging and Board of Health takes place Thursday, Sept. 24 from 1-4 p.m. at the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.

Flu vaccine regular (6 months and older) and high dose (age 65 plus) and COVID vaccine Pfizer (65 plus and 18 and up considered high risk.

Pre-registration is required by visiting

northamptonma.gov/2219/vax. Those needing help registering should call 413-587-4903 or email nurses@northamptonma.gov.

People should wear a short-sleeved shirt and bring their insurance card.

Rod and Gun Club holds car show

WORTHINGTON –The Worthington Rod and Gun Club, 458 Dingle Road, hosts their annual car show to benefit Special Operations Warrior Foundation on Saturday, Sept. 19 with the gates opening at 8 a.m..

Breakfast and lunch foods will be available. There will be a few raffles.

The club is still accepting donations and any vendors who would like to participate. For more information people may email Worthingtonrgclub@gmail.com or visit Facebook.

In October, the club will be having their annual chicken barbecue on Saturday, Oct. 17. Dinner served at 3

p.m. and doors open at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 per ticket and include salad, rolls, baked potato, half a chicken, dessert lemonade. People are welcome to bring their own beverages. There will also be a raffle and live music. People should call Deana at 413-433-0009 by Friday, Oct. 9 for tickets.

RUSSELL

Library offers fun summer reading program

RUSSELL – The Russell Public Library hosted “Wild Readers,” for their 2026 Summer Reading program.

Each weekly program provided children with the opportunity to learn outdoor adventure skills. The most popular programs were, “Be a Pack Rat” Daypack vs. Backpack, what to pack and Leave No Trace.

Other programs were

“Animals in the wild, curious caution” with herpetologist Tom Tynning and his wiggly, hoppy friends and “How to avoid needing First Aid, But if you do” with EMT Jade from Hilltown Ambulance.

The Summer Reading program culminated with five families (19 people) participating in the “Camp Like a Pro” overnight at Noble View Outdoor Center, co-sponsored by the

Russell Public Library and the Western Massachusetts Appalachian Mountain Club Family Outings Committee.

The event included outdoor team building games, a cookout, a headlamp hike and s’mores by the fire under the shooting stars. It was a successful first time campout for more than half the families. Multiple families reporting their “Littles” wanted to go camping again.



Submitted photos

Herpetologist Tom Tynning brought some of his wiggly friends to a summer reading program at the Russell Public Library.



The summer reading program concluded with five families camping overnight at Nobel View Outdoor Center.



Children enjoy playing games at the end of summer reading overnight camping trip co-sponsored by the Russell Public Library and Western Massachusetts Appalachian Mountain Club Family Outings Committee.

Bruce Mandel to perform at library

RUSSELL – Singer/songwriter Bruce Mandel will present “The View Behind the Guitar” on Saturday, Sept. 19 at 1:30 p.m. at the Russell Public Library, 162 Main St.

This free program is supported in part by a grant from the Russell Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Mass. Cultural Council, a state agency.

People should register by Thursday, Sept. 17for this program by calling 413-862-6221. emailing rpldirector162@gmail.com or sign up at the library.

Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

Town of Worthington Highway Position Opening

The Town of Worthington is soliciting letters of interest from qualified candidates to fill a full-time Equipment Operator/General Laborer position in the Town Highway Department.

Valid MA CDL operator, Hydraulic Hoister’s licenses and OSHA-10 certification preferred.

• **Salary range: \$24.64 - \$32.49 per hour**

Further information can be found on the Town’s website: www.worthington-ma.us

Questions will be answered by the Highway Superintendent at 64 Huntington Road, Monday – Friday, 7 AM to 3 PM; the telephone number is 413-238-5830. Send letter of interest, resume and three (3) references with relevant contact information to: selectboard@worthington-ma.us and highway@worthington-ma.us or to Worthington Highway Department, PO Box 643, Worthington, MA, 01098. This posting will remain pertinent until the position is filled.

The Town of Worthington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Part-Time Selectboard Administrative Assistant

The Town of Cummington Selectboard is seeking a Part-Time Selectboard Administrative Assistant to provide administrative, clerical, file organization, records, scheduling, communications, and meeting support to the Selectboard. The position is 15–19 hours per week, including biweekly, in-person evening meetings, and works under the direction of the Selectboard. The position assists with the preparation and distribution of meeting materials, maintenance of Selectboard records, coordination of routine correspondence, public postings, and follow-up on Selectboard actions as directed. The role is administrative and support-oriented, assisting the Selectboard with efficient, lawful, organized, and transparent operations while referring policy, legal, financial, personnel, or management decisions to the Selectboard. Strong written and oral communication skills; organizational skills; attention to detail; accuracy; discretion; customer service skills; a self-starting approach; and the ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a team with elected officials, staff, volunteers, residents, vendors, and outside agencies are required. Prior experience with grant funding and human resources record keeping is desirable.

Qualified applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to the Cummington Selectboard, Town of Cummington, P.O. Box 128, Cummington, MA 01026, or by email to selectboard@cummington-ma.gov. The position will remain open until filled unless a closing date is established by the Selectboard. The Town of Cummington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

PUBLIC HEARING
The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold a public hearing on **September 28, 2026 beginning at 6:00 pm** in Stanton Hall.

The Public Hearing is scheduled for **6:00 pm** for the Special Permit Application of Chloe McLeod DBA Cryptic Captures of 7 Old Chester Road to open a photography studio and teaching space at 13 Main Street, Parcel # H1-54-0.

The Special Permit Application will be available to view **by appointment** in the office of the Selectboard during regular business hours, as well as at the Public Hearings.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS TOWN OF HUNTINGTON 09/10, 09/17/2026

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING Project Description: BECKET Bridge Replacement, B-03-045, Quarry Road Over Cushman Brook Project File No. 609069

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the 25% design of the bridge replacement on Quarry Road over Cushman Brook.

WHEN: Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 6:00PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to introduce the public to the proposed design for the Quarry Road bridge replacement over Cushman Brook.

All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: This project consists of replacing the existing Bridge (#B-03-045) which was built in 1939 on Quarry Road with a new bridge which includes both the superstructure and substructure. Widening the bridge and approach roadways in accordance with current standards and specifications are also

included. Utility poles will be temporarily relocated away from the bridge during construction and back to their final alignment along the bridge similar to what exists currently. During construction, the bridge will be closed, and all traffic will be detoured, the closure is estimated to be 15 months.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 609069, any statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This hearing will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
CARRIE E. LAVALLEE
CHIEF ENGINEER
09/17, 09/24/2026

Commonwealth of
Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court

Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P1889EA Estate of: Earl Leroy Foss Date of Death: 10/25/2001 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Robert J Henrichon of Westfield, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that **Robert J Henrichon of Westfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/30/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A **Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of**

assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: September 02, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
09/17/2026

TOWN OF BLANDFORD REQUEST FOR BIDS

The Town of Blandford is accepting bids for the Porter Memorial Library Addition and Renovation REBID Project. Project documents will be available 9/16/2026 through www.biddocs.com. All bidders must use BidDocs.com for all bidding processes. Businesses certified by the Supplier Diversity Office are encouraged to participate.
09/17/2026

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 encumbrances 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, Aaron 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

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.

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2026-2027

Maximum Household Income Eligible for Free Meals			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$20,748	\$1,729	\$399
2	28,132	2,345	541
3	35,516	2,960	683
4	42,900	3,575	825
5	50,284	4,191	967
6	57,668	4,806	1,109
7	65,052	5,421	1,251
8	72,436	6,037	1,393
Each additional person	+7,348	+616	+142

Maximum Household Income Eligible for Reduced Price Meals			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$29,526	\$2,461	\$568
2	40,034	3,337	770
3	50,542	4,212	972
4	61,050	5,088	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	1,983
Each additional person	+10,508	+876	+203

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

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

09/17/2026

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

1

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Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.

3

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Email qualifications to:

Tamarin@azuregreen.com

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Inquire at *Girly's Grill*,
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or call **413-284-0005.**

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cause of race, color, religion, sex, handi-
cap, familial status, or national origin, or
intention to make any such preference,
limitation, or discrimination." We will not
knowingly accept any advertising for real
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CATEGORY:

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Base Price \$26.00
21 Base Price \$26.50	22 Base Price \$27.00	23 Base Price \$27.50	24 Base Price \$28.00
25 Base Price \$28.50	26 Base Price \$29.00	27 Base Price \$29.50	28 Base Price \$30.00
29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	31 Base Price \$31.50	32 Base Price \$32.00
33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
37 Base Price \$34.50	38 Base Price \$35.00	39 Base Price \$35.50	40 Base Price \$36.00

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

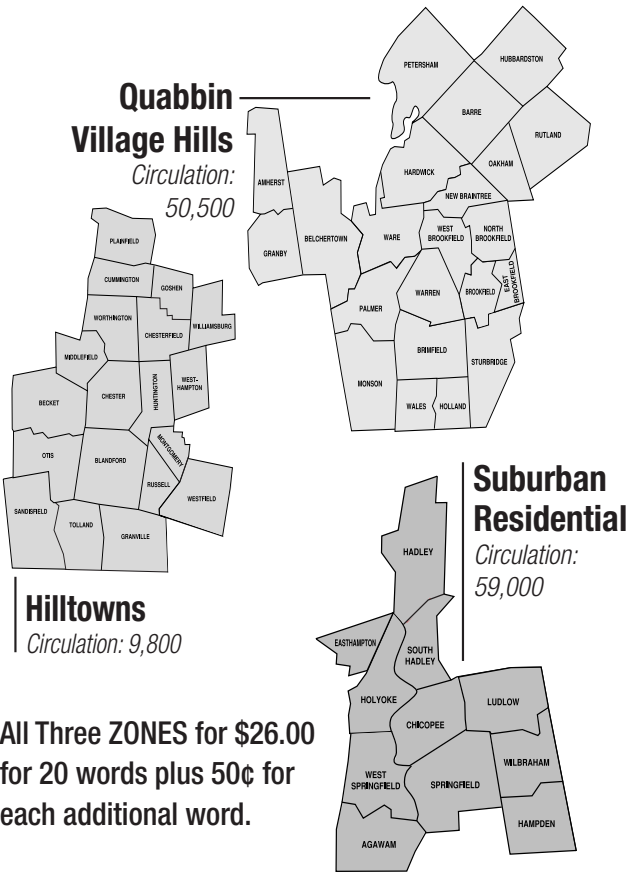
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____

Credit Card: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ Discover ☐ Cash ☐ Check# _____

Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____

Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____



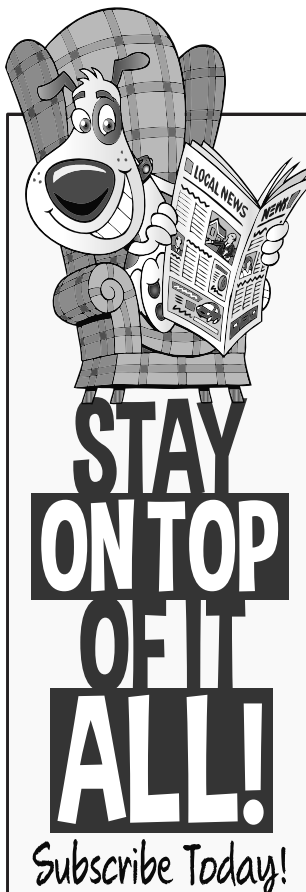
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Nobody dreams of having multiple sclerosis

Some dreams are universal: hitting a ball over the Green Monster; winning the World Series with a grand slam in the bottom of the ninth inning. Finding out you have have MS is not one of them.

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To help make the dream of ending MS come true, call 1-800-FIGHT MS or visit us online at nationalmssociety.org.

MS
National Multiple Sclerosis Society

OBITUARY

Roy Ripley

Roy Ripley was called safely home on Friday, Sept. 4 surrounded by the love and comfort of his wife, son and faithful companion.

Roy was the son of the late Stanley H. Ripley and Carolyn Ripley Herrick. He leaves his wife of 38 years, Ann Marie, son, Daniel and his faithful companion, Ozzy. He also leaves his brother, Robert Ripley (Karen) of West Virginia, sister Robin Fournier (Norman) of Tennessee, brother-in-law, Richard Radzick (Leona), brother-in-law, William LePage and many beloved nieces and nephews.

As a proud American craftsman, the proprietor of Roy's Custom Carpentry, he always had a long list of clients waiting for his expertise; whether new construction or crafting custom cab-



inets and wood-work (his specialty).

Roy took great pride in his work and always strived to give his clients the "WOW" factor. Just OK wasn't good enough for him.

Consequently, Roy built his clientele over the years and many clients became good friends and repeat customers. Needless to say, he never had to advertise.

As an avid outdoorsman, Roy loved hunting and fishing, carrying on his Blandford family tradition.

His two great escapes were Mt. Holly, Vermont (aka the Hawkins Farm), where he and Danny enjoyed many years hunting with the Hawkins family and friends and Lake George, where he and his family enjoyed summer vacations and fishing trips at Candlelight Cottages

in Bolton Landing.

He was known as Captain Roy of the Mothership pontoon, treating friends and their children to fishing excursions.

Above all, Roy cherished his family, lasting friendships and the beautiful home he built for his family.

We would like to thank family and friends for all of their love and support during Roy's illness. And a special thank you to the nurses and aides from Beacon Hospice for their support and compassionate care.

A Funeral Home Service was held on Saturday, Sept. 12 at 11:30 a.m. in Firtion Adams Funeral Service, 76 Broad St., Westfield, MA 01085. Visiting hours preceded the service from 9-11:30 a.m. in the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, please contribute to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

DEATH NOTICE

RIPLEY, ROY
Died Sept. 4, 2026

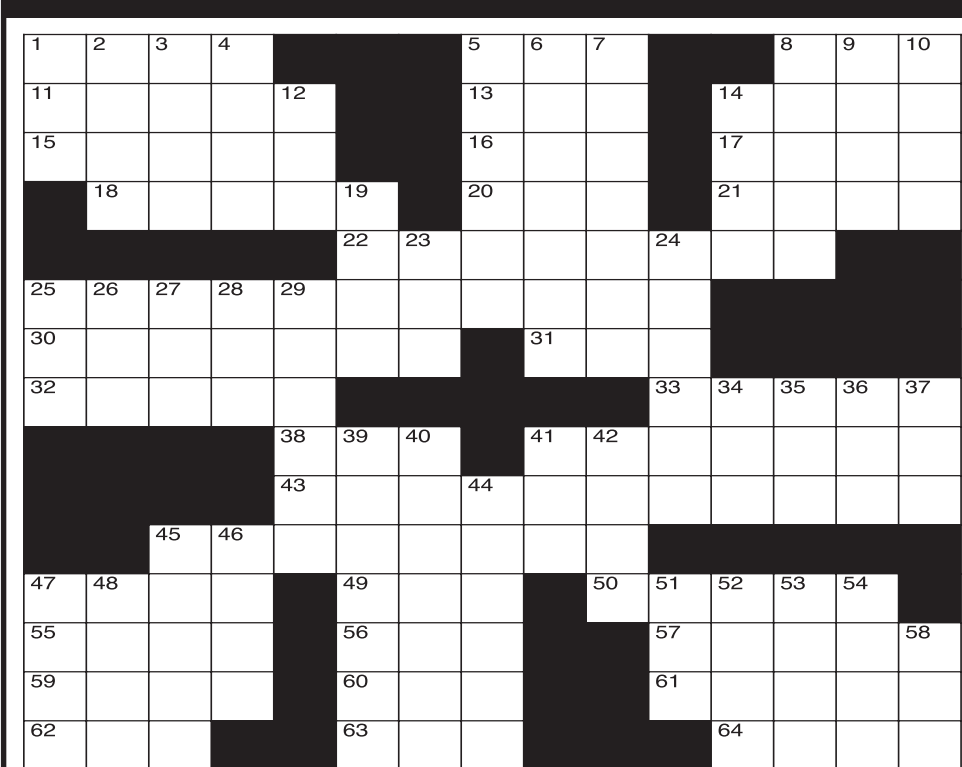
Country Journal OBITUARY POLICY

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.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Egyptian bull god
5. A young canine
8. North Carolina university
11. "Oddbod" actor Tom
13. Midway between northeast and east
14. A place to shop
15. Mysterious "Severance" family
16. Single Lens Reflex
17. Malaria
18. Informal loan organizations
20. Twitching
21. Holm oak
22. Willing to consent
25. In an early way
30. Stuck it out
31. Language in Ghana
32. Obtain
33. Ancient Greek currency

CLUES DOWN

38. One point east (clockwise) of due north
41. Popular baseball movie
43. Group of islands
45. Church building
47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
49. Late AC/DC frontman
50. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
55. Thick piece of something
56. Breakfast food
57. One mole of solute per kilogram of solvent
59. Ancient Greek City
60. Bitterly regret
61. Don't forget it
62. Dishonorable man
63. Affirmative
64. "___ and flows"

CLUES DOWN

1. Bridge-building degree
2. Expression of sorrow or pity
3. Lizard species
4. Turkish leader title
5. A way to bother
6. Blank
7. A fine, closely woven cotton fabric
8. Sports broadcaster Ian
9. Popular whodunit board game
10. Alkali flats mineral
12. Large African antelope
14. It's delivered most days
19. Satisfy
23. Water soaked soil
24. Of a past era
25. Chest muscle (slang)
26. Ribonucleic acid
27. Doctor of Education
28. Coffee receptacle
29. Where rockstars work
34. International airport in Connecticut
35. Russian river
36. It's used to make cabins
37. OJ trial judge Lance
39. A means to persuade
40. Short poem
41. A way to begin
42. Multi-function radar (abbr.)
44. Joints
45. Blatted
46. Swedish rock group
47. Millisecond
48. ___ podrida: Spanish stew
51. Doctors' group
52. Trunk of a tree
53. Tattle
54. Metrical foot
58. ___ Angeles

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, this week calls for a break from your usual fast pace. If you've been burning the candle at both ends, your energy reserves will be depleted. Focus on fortifying yourself and your space.

CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22
The spotlight is firmly on you right now, Cancer. You might feel a sudden urge to change your style, update your resume or shed an old identity that no longer fits. Trust this instinct.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23
The spotlight shines brightly on your professional zone this week, Libra. Instead of waiting for recognition, create your own. Update your portfolio or pitch an idea you have been sitting on.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20
Relationships take center stage, Capricorn. If there is an imbalance of power, it will need to be corrected. Approach conversations this week with diplomacy.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21
Miscommunication is likely if you rush your words, Taurus. Take an extra breath before responding when someone asks you a question or when addressing emails.

LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23
The universe is asking you to clear out some psychic debris this week. It is a great time for journaling and heavy solo time. If secrets or old resentments bubble up, just let them go.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22
Scorpio, you may be craving a breakdown of boredom. If you can't physically travel right now, satisfy this urge by stretching your mind another way.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, your daily habits are catching up to you. If you've been eating poorly or skipping sleep, your body will demand a reset. Focus on micro-habits to get back on track.

GEMINI

May 22/Jun 21
It's time to audit where your money is going. If you've been overspending as a balm to stress, hit the brakes. Look for areas where you can plug any financial leaks.

VIRGO

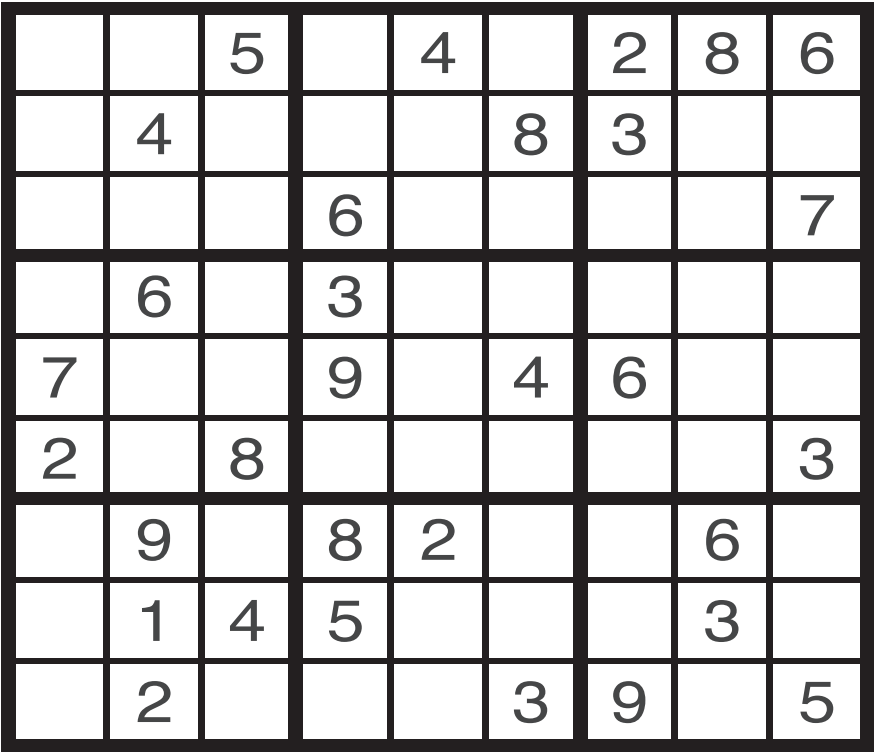
Aug 24/Sept 22
Your social life is getting a bit of a reality check. You might realize that certain friendships have felt a bit one-sided. Seek people who inspire you.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21
This week drags you into deeper psychological waters than you might care to swim in, Sagittarius. It's a powerful time for intimacy or understanding behaviors.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20
Your playful side is begging for attention, Pisces. Make time for hobbies, art or romance that serve no purpose but to bring you joy.



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!

answers

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Filters made
by WIX,
Amalie Oil,
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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.