

# Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

## Principal Sullivan to leave Gateway

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Dr. William Sullivan, Principal of Gateway Regional School, announced his resignation in an email to families, students and staff on Tuesday, Sept. 8, and to the general public at the Wednesday, Sept. 9 meeting of the Gateway Regional School Committee.

Sullivan is leaving to accept the position of Curriculum Coordinator at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School in Charlton. His last day at Gateway will be Friday, Sept. 25.

Sullivan came to Gateway Regional School as an assistant principal in July 2022 and was named principal in January 2024. He holds a Bachelor's degree in history/psychology from Rivier University and a Master's degree in secondary education and social studies from Plymouth State University.

He also earned a second Master's degree in curriculum and teaching from



Dr. William Sullivan

Fitchburg State University and has an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership from Liberty University. Before coming to Gateway, he taught eighth grade social studies at Williams Middle School in Longmeadow.

"I have absolutely loved my time at Gateway," Sullivan emphasized in a recent interview. "As my very young family begins to get older, I want to be home to see them. I feel like this is a great next opportunity for me to grow as an instructional leader and work with teachers to improve outcomes for students."

Sullivan said that his work with staff and students to reimagine the high school experience, with funding and guidance from the Barr Foundation, was a highlight of his work at Gateway. "We had to confront some things that we weren't doing well," Sullivan said. "We had the ability to reflect on where we needed to grow and the

PRINCIPAL, page 7

CUMMINGTON



Turley Publications photos by Ryan Drago

Artists Sergei Isupov (left) and Kadri Parnamets created the ceramic sculpture "Miss Comet" that was featured during the Cummington community event Riverfest.

## Riverfest returns to Main Street

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer

The community of Cummington brought back Riverfest on Saturday, Sept. 19.

The festivities happened throughout Main Street in Cummington, which become a rural hub where art, history and ecology are celebrated. The event made its debut

last year and was heavily inspired by being in close connection to the Westfield River.

Organizers Maude Haak-Frendscho and Kate Eiseman agreed that creat-

ing Riverfest was all part of having "a celebration of place and community."

The event is made possible thanks to sever-

RIVERFEST, page 8

BLANDFORD

## Select Board approve Conservation Restriction

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Select Board met Monday, Sept. 14 with representatives of NextEra Energy for the second time this summer to request approval of proposed conservation restrictions on their solar field property on Otis Stage Road.

The property is on the Blandford/Otis town line and cannot be seen from the road. There has never been any public access to the property.

Springfield Water and Sewer Commission will hold and benefit from the Conservation Restriction, conserving approximately 50 acres of Miller Swamp, which abuts other conserved land.

The CR is required by the Mass Department of Environmental Protection storm water mitigation and will permanently protect a wetlands area.

According to NextEra the "overall benefits" include storm water and flood plain protection, water quality and supply, wetlands, habitat and biodiversity protection as well as open space protection.

Conservation Chair Richard Gates told the board that commission had



Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm

Highway Department employee Ryan Keach works on repair maintenance for the sidewalk that runs from Main Street (Route 23) to the Town Hall on Russell Stage Road. The walkway has been in need of repair.

not seen the area since 2019 and asked for a tour of the property. NextEra Energy General Manager Joel Walker agreed to a tour.

The board approved the request.

Halloween party

Board member Corinne Shartrand announced a Halloween Party set for Saturday, Oct. 31 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the Town Hall gym. The event includes music, games, a costume party and she said she would ask the Fire Department to join in. She is looking for volunteers and judges. Contact her or the Select Board to do so.

Town Administrator report

Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera told the board contracts for the Post Office chimney repair and the roof repair at the Town Hall have been submitted, waiting for scheduling. Highway Superintendent Ray Hultay is on track. She expressed thanks to all who joined in to help search for the missing person.

Board member Ted Cousineau asked if the shrubs at the kitchen window could be cut back as they block the sunlight.

Other business

C e m e t e r y

SELECT BOARD, page 6

HUNTINGTON

## Library trustees approves five year strategic plan

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

The Huntington Library Trustees voted to approve a five-year strategic plan compiled and prepared by Library Director Amanda Loiselle, in collaboration with the Trustees.

The plan was approved with no changes at the August 19 Trustees meeting. The Strategic Plan forecasts library needs and direction for 2027 through 2032. It includes the library's history and mission, a brief history of the town, a community profile and describes the planning process.

Five goals are outlined: to maintain an inclusive library, to strengthen town connections, to reimagine space for all generations, to expand access and impact, and to promote cultural engagement and collaboration.

The appendices include the community survey and data collection methods used to inform the plan.

The report concludes with a SOAR Summary, which came out of a community focus group facil-

itated by Michelle Eberle, a Massachusetts Library System Consultant.

The summary outlines the strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results that were identified during that focus group. Identified strengths included the staff, technology support, a diverse collection, the creative use of space, resources, the new website and the Artist of the Month series.

Opportunities included community outreach, connecting people with shared experiences, outdoor space (the pollinator garden, seating), collaboration with schools, non-profits and the town's recreation programs, increased donations to the Friends of the Huntington Public Library and advocacy through storytelling.

Identified aspirations were to improve salaries, benefits and the workspace for staff; have an accessible community meeting space; serve as the cultural hub of the community, offer an outdoor gathering space with a path to the town's playground, focus on reading and knowledge, and offer a makerspace.

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HUNTINGTON

Library holds beginners digital photography workshop

**By Wendy Long**  
*Correspondent*

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Public Library, 7 East Main St., host a workshop on Saturday, Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. called “Digital Photography for Beginners.”

The workshop will be run by John Forgey of 4G Photo in Westfield. Forgey will have a slideshow of photos he’s taken and will go over digital photography basics at a beginner level. People are encouraged to bring their digital cameras, if they have one, so that he can help answer questions about set up.

For other October events, the library’s regular book clubs all continue and will open with a discussion of September’s read, “Why Fish Don’t Exist” by Lulu Miller on Thursday, Oct. 1 at 4 p.m. The Book Swap Club will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 13 at 4 p.m.

Instead of everyone reading the same book, patrons bring in a favorite book to discuss and recommend to others. The bi-monthly Cookbook Club meets this month on Thursday, Oct. 29 at 5 p.m.

This month’s topic is “Harvest Theme” so bring a cookbook that features people’s favorite fall recipes; readers are also welcome to prepare an item from the book to share.

The Book Club’s read for the month of October is “The Frozen River” by Ariel Lawhon. As the Kennebunk River freezes over and entombs the body of a local man, area midwife and healer Martha Ballard is called

upon to examine the body and determine the cause of death.

Meanwhile, Ballard has taken the testimony of a woman, who says she had been raped by the man in the ice. While this book is a work of fiction, a midwife named Martha Ballard did exist and kept a detailed journal of her life and work from 1785 - 1812, delivering over 800 babies in Hollowell, Maine and never losing a mother. “A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on her Diary” was published in 2021 and inspired “The Frozen River.”

Co-working Coffee Hours will be held on Wednesdays, Oct. 14 and 28 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. For those, who need to finish coursework, professional work or just trying to nail down a short story will find some extra motivation and inspiration with others at the Co-working Coffee Hours at the library. The coffee and tea pots will be on!

People are invited to stop in for their favorite ongoing events at the library this month. Children’s story hours will be held on Mondays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.

This month’s “Crafternoon” will be held on Thursday, Oct. 8 from 4-6 p.m. People may bring a project that they are working on or try some of the library kits, projects and materials.

Finally, the Monthly Game Night will be held on Thursday, Oct. 15 from 2-4 p.m. People are invited to bring in their favorite game and some buddies to play or try a new game on for size.

COA lists upcoming events

HUNTINGTON – A Health Fair takes place on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 10 a.m.-noon in the Town Hall.

This is an opportunity to connect with representatives from local health organizations. The fair features flu vaccinations, massages, a medical equipment donation drive and a free prize drawing.

Jack and His Guitar will perform on Wednesday, Sept 30 at 2 p.m. at the Town Hall. Seniors can sit back and enjoy an afternoon of live music.

October events include Blue Cross Blue Shield Dental Blue 65 Presentation on Oct. 7 from 1-2 p.m. Brian Guagnini, BCBS Medicare Field Outreach Consultant, will return to answer questions and provide information about Dental Blue 65.

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

On Wednesday, Oct. 14 at 2 p.m. the movie “Nancy McPhee” will be shown

On Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 2 p.m. musician and songwriter, David Herrera, plays country music mixed with a rock and urban pop vibe. On Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 2 p.m. a free blood pressure check takes place.

The Council on Aging welcomes residents and community members to participate in these programs and activities. Whether they are interested in health and wellness, local history, music, movies or simply spending time with friends and neighbors, there is something for everyone.

For more information, they may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

Huntington Water Department to hold hydrant flushing

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Massachusetts Water Department will be flushing fire hydrants beginning Monday, Oct. 5 through Friday, Oct. 16 between the hours of 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

People may see them operating hydrants and valves and notice water running down the street. Although it may appear to waste water, this is an important preventative maintenance activity we undertake to maintain the integrity of the water system and allow us to continue to deliver the highest quality water possible to customers.

The primary purpose of this program is to verify the proper operation of the towns fire hydrants through periodic inspections, flow testing and preventative maintenance.

Secondarily, a proactive hydrant flushing program is the key to mitigating water quality related aesthetic problems by removing accumulated iron and manganese mineral deposits from the water line. Fire hydrant flushing may cause temporary inconveniences such as a reduction in water pressure and aesthetic issues such as discoloration of the drinking water.

Discolored water poses no threat to the public’s health, but it will stain laundry and if consumed it may have an unpleasant taste. Residents should be certain all discolored water is out of their home’s plumbing and hot water heater prior to laundering clothes or drinking.

If people notice discolored water coming from their fixtures, please flush the cold-water side for approximately five minutes. Although residents may experience some temporary inconveniences, the flushing program is necessary to maintain a good water supply for both firefighting and domestic purposes.

People’s cooperation with this program is appreciated. If people experience continued loss of pressure or water discoloration, they may call the town Water Department at 413-512-5207 or email [WaterSewer@HuntingtonMA.us](mailto:WaterSewer@HuntingtonMA.us).



LIBRARY

Results from these efforts are expected to be increases in library usage and circulation, in support from the town, in donations and financial support, in program engagement, and in reviving literacy collaboration with the Family Center.

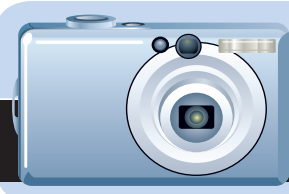
According to Loiselle, having a strategic plan on file with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners allows the library to apply for Library Service and Technology Grant funding through the state.

They offer three types of grants. “Explore” grants offer funding for activities designed to improve services, collections and programs.

“Impact” grants help libraries respond effectively to local needs and align services with local community initiatives or impact areas, and might offer between \$5,000 and \$30,000.

“Inspire” grants support ambitious projects that are more complex, require greater staff commitments, and include substantial involvement with community partners. Inspire grants can extend to up to two years to complete and provide between \$15,000 and \$50,000.

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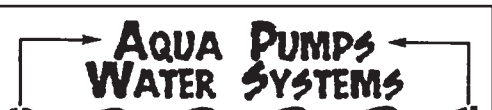
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PLEASE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE

Clarence and Jane Witter's 65<sup>th</sup>

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 AT 12 NOON

BRING A DISH TO SHARE  
BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGE  
(NO ALCOHOL PLEASE)

LOCATION:  
CUMMINGTON FAIRGROUNDS  
97 FAIRGROUNDS ROAD  
CUMMINGTON, MA 01026

1:00 - VOW RENEWAL  
FOLLOWED BY  
GATHERING FOR LUNCH  
3:30 - TESTIMONIAL

NO GIFTS PLEASE

Questions?

CALL/TEXT DEBBIE BURROUGHS  
(508) 864-8168

GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY  
*Matters*  
By Russell Gloor



I'm eevaluating my retirement plan; what are my options?

**Dear Rusty:**  
*I am 69 1/2 years old now and applied for Social Security at the end of June. I am still working and was planning to begin my retirement in September. A couple of factors arose for me to question if I made a hasty decision by applying for SS.*  
*The employer I have been working for the last 29 years has asked if I would stay on a little longer, which would be good because we have some debt I want to lose before I retire.*  
*I was reading about suspending Social Security and continuing to work. If I understand it right, if I suspend my SS, no payback will be required, and I can continue to work until I'm ready to retire. No spousal benefits taken yet.*  
**Signed: Reevaluating my Retirement**

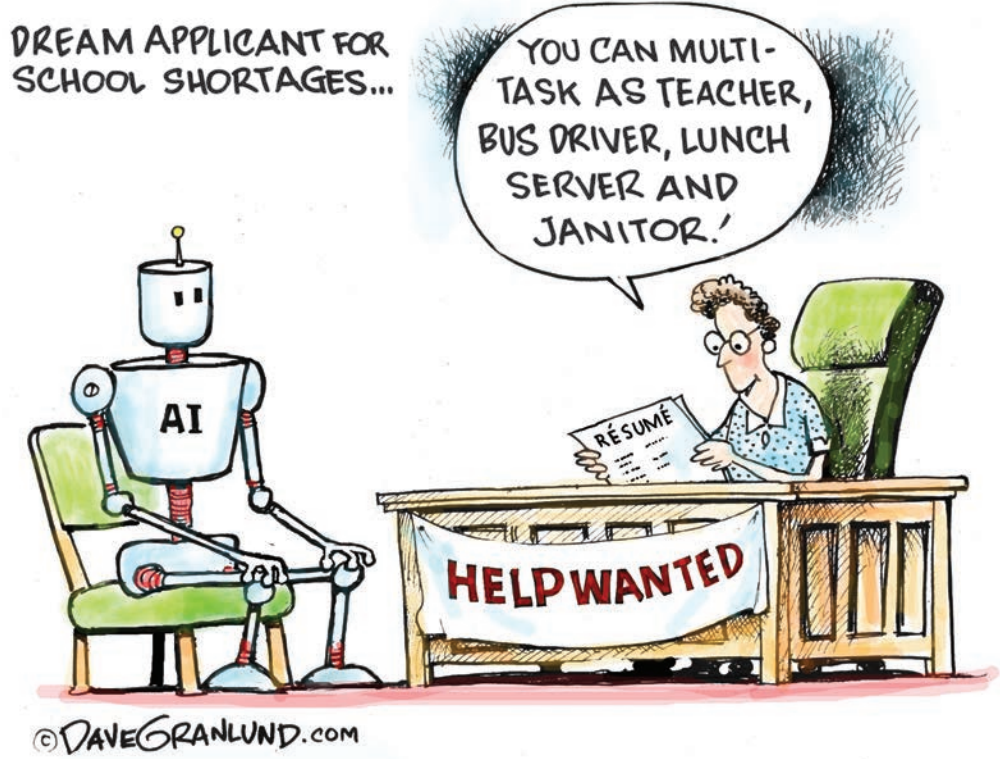
**Dear Reevaluating Retirement:**  
I'm assuming you asked for your Social Security benefits to start in September (when you originally planned to retire), but that you won't be 70 years old until March 2027.  
If that is correct, be aware that you will not immediately get all of your earned Delayed Retirement Credits when your benefits start in September – you will only initially get the DRCs you have earned through the end of 2025.  
That's because Social Security usually applies DRCs in January of each year. So, what will happen is that your September benefit amount will lack the 5.3% DRCs you earned in 2026, until January 2027 when they will apply the DRCs earned in 2026 to your monthly payment amount.  
Said simply, your initial September benefit will not include your full age 69.5 entitlement because it won't include the 5.3% extra you earned in 2026. That extra monthly amount will be awarded in January 2027.  
FYI, if you were to, instead, claim for your SS benefits to start in the month you turn 70 (March 2027), you would get your full age 70 amount immediately (SS awards all earned DRCs if benefits are claimed to start in the month you turn 70).  
Now, on to your question: Yes, if you take your benefits effective with September 2026 you can suspend your benefits, but you can only suspend them until the month you turn 70. And if you are suspending your benefits, you will not need to repay Social Security for any benefits you happen to receive before you suspend.

As is obvious, you will not receive any SS payments while your benefits are suspended, and you will earn DRCs for the months your benefits are suspended, resulting in a higher monthly amount at age 70. Also, since you have already passed your SS Full Retirement Age, you can work and earn as much as you like, without your Social Security benefits being negatively affected.  
Regarding your comment "No Spousal benefits taken yet." FYI, you cannot get spousal benefits while your benefits are suspended, nor can your wife get spousal benefits from you while you SS retirement benefits are suspended.  
To be clear, spouse benefits are only paid when one spouse's benefit at their FRA is less than 50% of the other spouse's FRA benefit. Spouse benefits are always based upon FRA entitlements, not on the larger amounts which will result from waiting longer to claim.  
In other words, your wife would only be eligible for a spousal benefit from you if her FRA entitlement was less than 50% of your FRA entitlement (not your age 70 SS entitlement). And she cannot get a spousal benefit while your benefits are suspended.  
To recap: Yes, you can suspend receipt of your SS retirement benefits until the month you turn 70 and get credit for that delay (resulting in a higher benefit). And, yes, you can continue working as long as you wish and your benefits will not be negatively affected.  
And just for added information, you can also ask Social Security to withdraw your current application for SS benefits and then reapply in January 2027 for your benefits to start in March 2027, the month you turn 70. You have both options.  
*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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@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](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com), or call us at 413-283-8393. Corrections will be printed on page 4 or 5.

OPINION



GUEST COLUMN

Raised garden beds? Why not!

I have to say that today I am having a hard time thinking of something to write about.  
As I scan my mind of all the seasonal gardening topics, I come up blank. Winter squash? Done it. Mums? Ditto. Seed saving. Yup.  
So, on this rainy Sunday, I give you all the luck of the draw. I will grab a gardening book off of my shelf, twirl the pages, and where my finger lands, I will expound on the subject. It may not be autumnal, but it will be interesting. I guarantee that.  
Here we go...

The book I grabbed from the shelf was "The Dirt Cheap Green Thumb," by Rhonda Massingham Hart. My finger landed on page 189, with the heading "Raise Your Beds, Not Your Expenses."  
I have some experience with raised beds. In my home garden I have four rock-edged beds. Prior to that I had beds edged in pine slabs.  
My friend uses hemlock edged beds and is happy with them. I envy how neat and orderly they are. Another friend is using galvanized metal beds this year. They seem to be all the rage.  
Her tomatoes and peppers continue to produce like gangbusters even late in the season. She has just gotten back into gardening after a two year hiatus and I am proud of her and happy she has been so successful.  
Let's begin our chat with some of the advantages of raised bed gardening.  
The first one that comes to mind is that you can be selective about the soil you fill it with. I've enjoyed using the Coast of Maine Raised Bed Mix.  
Blending loam and aged manure or compost at a 2 to 1 ratio is another option. Additionally, raised beds make it easy to concentrate fertilizers where they are needed.  
In large garden plots we often broadcast fertilizers and other amendments throughout the bed. Some inevitably gets wasted in walkways or around hills of plants.  
Raised beds can be constructed to suit your needs. I wanted to be able to reach into the middle of my beds from either side, so they are about four feet wide.  
Some gardeners construct them 36 inches wide so there is less of a stretch.  
In my four beds, I have a pretty good crop rotation system going. Each crop does a slide to the next bed each year. That way it is four years before onions are

grown in the same space.  
Another interesting thing I have set up is that onions, for example, follow melons in my rotation. I grow the melons on black plastic. All season long the black plastic is limiting weeds from germinating, so that hopefully next year, the onions, who hate weeds, will see less weed pressure.  
Raised beds warm up quicker in the spring, and stay warmer later into the fall. Sometimes the edging material helps with that.  
My rock beds, for example, hold heat. So does the metal to some degree.  
In mid spring, prior to the frost-free date, raised beds can be easily fitted with hoops on which plastic or polyester row covers can be draped to offer even more frost protection. They can also be covered with the black plastic I mentioned to grow crops like melons or peppers, who appreciate the heat.  
With raised beds you will likely never need your rototiller. Beds can effortlessly be turned over by hand from either side.

Typically, unless you walk all over them, the soil in the raised beds stays nice and friable, as well.  
If I need to get into my beds, say to separate crops, sometimes I will position a plank across the width of the bed, and step on that to disperse my weight, therefore avoiding compaction. Plants always grow better in loose soil.  
I almost forgot the obvious! Raised beds are easier to work with. Beds are typically a foot or so tall, sometimes a bit taller.  
Bring out a short stool to the garden and you can comfortably sit and work in the beds. No more long periods of stooping or crouching.  
Well, I hope you enjoyed reading this luck of the draw column as much as I did writing it! And if you haven't gardened in a couple of years, give raised beds a try and maybe you will be as fortunate as my friend, with six foot tomato plants still going strong at the end of September!  
*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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



Submitted Photo by Dawn Rudnansky

Country Journal

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**EDITOR**  
Ellenor Downer  
[countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com)  
**ADVERTISING SALES**  
Wendy Delcamp  
[wdelcamp@turley.com](mailto:wdelcamp@turley.com)

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**WEB**  
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**PHONE**  
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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](mailto: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.

OPINION

in my  
BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

Someone reported hearing a sandhill crane calling in New Braintree, but did not see it. Recently, someone saw a pair of sandhill cranes in a field on Pleasant Street in Barre. The cranes stayed about a week and then left.

Sandhill Cranes are large birds that live in open habitats, so they’re fairly easy to spot. They are gray overall, have red foreheads, white cheeks, a long dark bill and dark legs.

Immature birds have reddish-brown upper parts and gray underparts and lack the red foreheads. This makes it easy to pick out the parents from the youngsters even when they are the same height.

Sandhill cranes make a loud trumpeting call that can be heard for long distances. They are mainly herbivores, but feed on other

foods depending on availability. They will feed on berries, small mammals, insects, snails, reptiles and amphibians.

These cranes raise one brood per year. The female lays one to three brownish eggs. Both sexes build the nest using plant material and both incubate and feed the young.

In summer cranes are often seen in small bogs, marshes and prairies across northern North America and the southeastern United States. In winter they form immense flocks in places like Bosque del Apache, New Mexico and Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, Texas.

Sandhill crane’s call is a loud, rolling, trumpeting sound whose unique tone is a product of anatomy. They have long tracheas that coil into the sternum and help the



Sandhill crane

sound develop a lower pitch and harmonics that add richness.

Sandhill cranes are also known for their dancing skills. Courting cranes stretch their wings, pump their heads, bow, and leap into the air in a graceful and energetic dance.

Many years ago, a Barre resident saw a pair dancing in a field. He said it was a “sight to behold.”

Although some start breeding at two years of age, Sandhill cranes may reach the age of seven before

crane on record was at least 37 years, 3 months old. Originally banded in Florida in 1982, it was found in Wisconsin in 2019.

**Scarcity of birds**

I received an email from a woman who lives on Lake Lashaway.

She said, “Since Sunday, Aug. 30, they had most days without birds...any type, large or small at our feeders or just in the shrubs or anywhere. All my neighbors have noticed their feeders are full too.” One neighbor said he has seen a falcon. She wonders if the falcon has anything to do with the lack of birds.

Several people at the Oakham Senior Center reported, they see only a few birds and the feeders remain full of seeds.

**Massachusetts Audubon sighting**

This report to the Massachusetts Audubon Society supports the lack of birds. Someone stated, “On Sept. 11 we birded around Hardwick and on Sept. 12 we birded around Warren. Both days were very poor for passerine migration.” They also

stated, “On both days we only saw 1 species of warbler: common yellowthroat. In general, song birds were in very low numbers and poor variety. And we went to spots that had proven good for migrants in years past. We really worked hard to turn up migrant warblers, and it just was not happening, at least where we were.”

**Migrating hawks**

The Massachusetts Audubon Society listed migrating hawks spotted on Friday, Sept. 11 at Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham. They included 3 osprey, seven bald eagles, ten sharp-shinned hawks, 131 broad-winged hawks and one merlin.

**Canada geese**

On Friday, Sept. 4, I saw a large flock of over fifty Canada geese in a field in Spencer. On the same day, I also saw a small flock of wild turkeys and about six Canada geese in field in Barre.

*People may report a bird sighting by emailing edowner@turley.com or calling or texting 774-262-5882.*

EASTHAMPTON

TruNorth Bank announces promotions

EASTHAMPTON – TruNorth Bank, 36 Main St., announces the promotions of Brenna Breeding to assistant vice president, digital marketing and Gerardo Sanchez to assistant vice president, digital banking product manager.

The bank recognizes their contributions to its continued growth and digital innovation.

Brenna Breeding is responsible for developing and executing digital marketing strategies that support the bank’s brand, products and services across online channels. Breeding joined the bank in 2020 as digital marketing manager and most recently served as digital marketing officer.

In that role, she helped advance the bank’s digital marketing initiatives and strengthen customer engagement across digital platforms.

Prior to joining TruNorth Bank, Breeding served as marketing communications associate at VentureWell. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in sport management from the University of Delaware, earned a certificate in bank marketing from the American Bankers Association Bank Marketing School and holds

the Certified Financial Marketing Professional designation.

Gerardo Sanchez, based at the bank’s 241 Northampton St. office in Easthampton, brings 28 years of banking industry experience to his role. Since joining TruNorth Bank in 2021 as electronic banking systems manager, Sanchez has played an important role in the evolution of the bank’s digital banking offerings.

After being promoted to digital banking product officer, he continued to lead initiatives designed to enhance digital banking products and services and improve the customer experience.

Before joining the bank, Sanchez served as financial center operations manager at Bank of America. He earned a Bachelor’s Degree in business management from Bridgewater State



Brenna Breeding



Gerardo Sanchez

University and an Associate Degree in business studies from Holyoke Community College. He also attended the Massachusetts Bankers Association’s New England School for Financial Studies.

These promotions reflect TruNorth Bank’s commitment to developing talent and investing in leaders, who help drive innovation, strengthen customer relationships, and support the bank’s strategic growth.

Headquartered in Easthampton, TruNorth Bank and its TruNorth Mortgage division have more than \$6.9 billion in assets and offer consumer and business banking in 54 locations throughout Massachusetts, northeastern Connecticut and southern New Hampshire. Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal, reaffirming our status as one of Massachusetts’ most charitable companies.

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News, photo publication policy

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

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

Deadline is Friday at NOON.

Chester Baptist Church

Pastor Dan Herr

14 Middlefield Road

Chester, MA 01011

413-354-7743

Email: pastor@chesterbaptistchurch.org

Website: chesterbaptistchurch.org

Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Worship at 10:45 a.m.

Sunday Afternoon at 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study and Prayer at 6:30 p.m.

First Congregational Church of Blandford

Pastor Tom Crouse

91 Main St., Blandford, MA 01008

413-269-5055

Website: fccblandford.com

Sunday service 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Chester

Pastor Susan Borsella

334 Skyline Trail, Chester, MA 01011

Service with Live Music: 10 a.m. - Sunday

Coffee and Sweets Social: 10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

Rev. Jack Kraaz

4 North Main St., Williamsburg, MA 01096

413-268-7557

burgychurch@gmail.com • burgychurch.org

Facebook:

First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHYeekxw5w

Office Hours: Tues. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 12 noon

Days and Hours of Services: Sun. at 10 a.m.

Hilltown Community Church

Dr. Robert Perreault, Senior Pastor

55 Main St., Russell, MA 01071

413-275-3232

Office: 413-862-3341

hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com

hilltowncommunitychurch.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Hilltown-Community-Church-61580281487624/

Sunday Mornings 10 a.m.

Holy Family Parish

Rev. Ronald F. Sadlowski, known as Fr. Ron

5 Main St., Russell, MA 01071

413-862-4418

Office Hours: No set times.

Please call, leave a voice message or email: holyfamilyrussell.org

parish@holyfamilyrussell.org

Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m.

Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. & 11 a.m.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your Community Church

New Boston Congregational Church

Pastor Eric Kriebel

4 Sandisfield Rd., PO Box 81

Sandisfield, MA 01255

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

Pioneer Valley Assembly of God

Pastor Javier Melendez

63 Old Chester Rd., Huntington MA 01050

413-667-3196

pvaglife@gmail.com

www.pioneervalleyag.org

Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God

Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

Pioneer Valley Mennonite Fellowship

Deacon Jerald Reinford

400 Huntington Rd., Russell, MA 01071

(413) 297-6037

Sunday worship at 10 a.m.

Visitors appreciated

Westhampton Congregational Church, UCC

Open and affirming. All are welcome.

Pastor Carol Smith

1 Tob Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027

(413) 527-4204

Sunday Worship at 10 a.m.

9 a.m. for July and August

# CHESTER

## CHESTER HAS A SOAPSTONE MINE



These soapstone cliff walls are in Chester. Soapstone which was used to make sinks and kitchen and bathroom counters. It has a very slippery feel to it and has a shimmery silver grey color.

*Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniels*



Carvings and initials adorn the quarried cliff walls today in Chester.

*Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniels*



This is a sample of green grey soapstone quarried in Chester. Frankie, an Eagle Scout led the hike to soapstone mine.

# RUSSELL

## Russell Public Library announcing upcoming news and events

RUSSELL – The Russell Public Library, 162 Main St., hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3-7 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 10a.m.-2 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The library will be closed for Indigenous Peoples’ Day/ Columbus Day on Monday, Oct. 12.

The Russell Public Library Trustees will meet on Wednesday, October 21 from 3:15-4:30 p.m.

The library will have the monthly adult book club on Tuesday, Oct. 6 from 6-8 p.m. The book is “Too Old For This” by Samantha Downing.

Books are available at the

library. People may register by email at [rpldirector162@gmail.com](mailto:rpldirector162@gmail.com), call 413-862-6221 and leave a message or come in and sign up at the library by Friday, Oct. 2.

The next book for November’s book club will be “The Berry Pickers” by Amanda Peters. Books will be available for pickup mid-October.

Dennis Picard presents an adult program “The Hessians of the Revolutionary War in Western Massachusetts” on Oct. 17 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Folklore holds that the Hessians soldiers of the Revolutionary War period were blood thirsty mercenaries pur-

chased by King George III to fight in the rebellious colonies.

Even though there were no battles in Western Massachusetts during the American Revolution there were, in fact, Hessians here. Participants will hear how these men got to the area, why they were here, who they really were and in the end, why some stayed.

People may register by email at [rpldirector162@gmail.com](mailto:rpldirector162@gmail.com), call 413-862-6221 and leave a message or come in and sign up at the library by Thursday, Oct. 15.

A bats and spiders craft for children takes place Wednesday, Oct. 21 from

5-6:30 p.m. They will create a spooky bat or spider to take home.

All materials will be provided by the library. They may register by email at [rpldirector162@gmail.com](mailto:rpldirector162@gmail.com), call 413-862-6221 and leave a message or come in and sign up at the library by Friday, Oct. 16.

Jean Bergstrom of Her Wild Roots ([www.herwildroots.com](http://www.herwildroots.com)) will offer Ecoprinting with fall leaves for adults on Saturday, Oct. 24 from 1:30-4 p.m. When a leaf drops to the ground in the fall they might think there is no life left in it. Many of those darlings still have something lovely to offer. They can trans-

fer their hidden colors to fabric using the unique technique of ecoprinting. Participants will make a printed dish towel to brighten up their kitchen or to give as a gift. They will have pretreated fabric (mordanted), all the equipment needed and leaves for them to experiment with. People can bring your own pressed, dried, fresh or frozen leaves too. They will use heat and steam to transfer the color to the fabric and each creation is a surprise and unique. They may register by email at [rpldirector162@gmail.com](mailto:rpldirector162@gmail.com), call 413-862-6221 and leave a message or come in and sign up at the library by Wednesday, Oct. 21.

The library will offer “Stop the Bleed,” on Oct. 27 from 7:15 p.m. Participants will learn proper training so they can be an “immediate responder” to help someone who is experiencing traumatic bleeding. Be ready to save the life of a family member, a friend, a colleague or a perfect stranger. This event is presented by the Hilltown Community Ambulance in partnership with the Western Hampden County Public Health District. They may register by email at [rpldirector162@gmail.com](mailto:rpldirector162@gmail.com), call 413-862-6221 and leave a message or come in and sign up at the library by Friday, Oct. 23.

# BLANDFORD

## Cultural Council accepting applications

BLANDFORD – Applications for cultural programming that directly benefits the citizens of Blandford and neighboring Hilltown communities may be submitted now.

The deadline for all on-line submissions is Thursday, Oct. 15.

According to Cultural Council Chair Sue Racine,

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. She may be reached by email at [susanthe1591@outlook.com](mailto:susanthe1591@outlook.com).

Application forms for

the 2027 round of grants and detailed information about completing submissions is available at the Mass. Cultural Council website at [massculturalcouncil.org/](http://massculturalcouncil.org/).

Late submissions cannot be accepted. Information is also available by contacting Blandford’s Cultural Council at [culturalcouncilsec@gmail.com](mailto:culturalcouncilsec@gmail.com).

## Ghost walk conjures the past

By Mary Kronholm  
*Correspondent*

BLANDFORD – The Blandford Historical Society will present its second annual Ghost Walk on Saturday, Oct. 3, from 2-4 p.m. at Blandford Hill Cemetery, North Street across from The White Church and the Fairgrounds.

Admission is free, along with apple cider doughnuts from the Blandford Country Store and cider. In the event of inclement weather, the program will move indoors to The White Church at the same time.

This year’s theme is “Great Americans of Blandford—Movers, Shakers and History Makers.”

A ghost walk is a guided cemetery tour where costumed performers portray people from the town’s past. History comes alive as they share courage, sacrifices, surprises, and stories behind Blandford’s remarkable past.

This year, guests will meet a colorful cast of characters from Revolutionary War, Civil War, and World War II veterans to statesmen, entrepreneurs, educators, and hometown legends. These “ghosts” helped shape the town—and often the nation—in ways you might not expect.

“People are hungry for history, and Blandford is sitting on a gold mine of amazing stories just waiting to be told,” said Jane Rohman, BHS executive board member and vice president, who spearheaded last year’s event.

She has since led other ghost reenactments, including Knox 250 last January and an appearance at the town’s 250 celebration by the Knox family of Blandford—unrelated



*Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm*

Mandy LaBrecque, from left, Michele Crane, Connor Doyle and Randy Garfield will participate in the Ghost Walk Attend the Ghost Walk to see who they portray. Doyle and Garfield were both in last year’s ghost presentation.

to General Knox—under the pavilion.

Returning costume director Terri Garfield, whose creative work has helped bring historical figures to life at all these productions, is once again working behind the scenes outfitting the cast.

Last year, about 140 people from Blandford and surrounding communities attended the first Ghost Walk, an impressive turnout for a hill town event. Some were visiting the Berkshires during the beautiful fall foliage season.

No sign-up is required. As last year, guided groups will depart every 15 minutes. Enjoy a donut and cider and visit with neighbors, families and friends while waiting.

The tour lasts about an hour, with each ghost stop running five to six minutes. Guests will be on their feet, comfortable shoes are suggested and a folding chair if you’d like a seat at the stops.

The ground is mostly level, with a gentle incline at

the end. Organizers hope to have the police department’s six-seater vehicle available for anyone who needs a little lift on the final leg.

Hill Cemetery sits behind a hedge on North Street. Its paved entrances will be closed during the event. Park in designated roped off areas along North Street and in front of The White Church. And, look for the navy blue “WELCOME” banners marking the Ghost Walk entrance, not far from the donut truck.

This year in the event of rain, the performance will move indoors. Ghosts will speak from the podium in The White Church, and free donuts and cider will still be served, of course.

“There’s a reason we say Blandford is a small town with a big history. Come see why,” said Rohman.

For more information, contact the Blandford Historical Society through its website, [www.blandfordhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.blandfordhistoricalsociety.org).

## SELECTBOARD

*from page 1*

Commissioner Pete Sparks is working on stump removal.

It was also announced that members of the Mennonite congregation cleaned up along Route 23.

During the public comment segment, it was noted that the political signs on

town property would be removed and left at the Town Hall.

George Reichert asked about the piece of fire department equipment left out on Blair Road. Cousineau explained that the ATV is intended for out-

doors and requires no tarps but it is also kept in the garage at the cemetery on North Street.

Reichert asked to be on the agenda in two weeks to report on the successful maintenance of Bicentennial Park.



*Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm*

Select Board Clerk Ted Cousineau, Chair Jackie Coury, member Corinne Shartrand, environmental consultant David Klinch of Epsilon Associates, NextEra General Manager Joel Walker, and Atty. Adam Kahn from Foley and Hoag, LLP.



## Digital Photos

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# SCHOOLS & YOUTH

COLLEGE NEWS

## SNHU proudly announces President’s and Dean’s lists

**PRESIDENT’S LIST**  
**Southern New Hampshire University**  
*Manchester, New Hampshire*

Zoe Lewis of Cummington  
Diana Shia of Westfield  
Hayley Aloisi of Easthampton  
Jason Ilnicki of Huntington  
Megen Moynihan of Easthampton  
Viviana Piotrowski of Westfield  
Jeremiah Reagan of Savoy

**DEAN’S LIST**  
**Southern New Hampshire University**  
*Manchester, New Hampshire*

Caylee Carter of Russell

## Financial Education Innovation Fund grants available

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Treasurer’s Office of Economic Empowerment, in partnership with the Massachusetts Division of Banks and the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, announced funding for the 2027 Financial Education Innovation Fund Grant.

Created in 2015, the Financial Education Innovation Fund gives students the opportunity to practice making many of the real-world financial decisions they’ll face after graduation.

Financial education fairs, such as Credit for Life fairs, offer a fun and unique opportunity for students to learn about personal finance. These fairs often serve as a supplement or capstone to financial education classes and engage students in real-world saving, spending and budgeting scenarios.

Students choose or are assigned an occupation and make a variety of money decisions, ranging from where to live and how to save for retirement to buying a television or owning a pet.

Massachusetts public or charter high schools and special education programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are eligible to apply. Applicants looking to start a new program can receive up to \$4,000 and those enhancing or expanding an existing fair can receive up to \$2,000.

Schools designated as Special Education or Collaborative programs and those with over 50% of the student population designated by DESE as low-to-moderate income, can apply for an additional \$500 in funding.

Applications are open until Oct. 23 at 5 p.m. Schools can learn more and apply by visiting [mass.gov/oeefin-ed-fairs](https://mass.gov/oeefin-ed-fairs).

The Financial Education Innovation Fund was established as an ongoing effort to strengthen access to financial literacy throughout Massachusetts and is funded by the Division of Banks through the Settlement Trust. Since 2015, over 92,000 students have attended financial education fairs supported by the fund.

# Holyoke Community College invites ‘graduates of the last decade’ to celebration

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College invites graduates from the last decade to attend a free evening of fun and food at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St. on the corner of Appleton Street.

HCC’s second-annual “Fall Back Together: Graduates of the Last Decade” or “GOLD” event will be held on Thursday, Sept. 24, from 5-7 p.m. All HCC graduates from class years 2016 through 2026 are invited.

In addition to complimentary gourmet appetizers and desserts prepared by faculty and students from HCC’s culinary arts program, “GOLD” event attendees will be able to pick up free HCC swag, reconnect with their favorite HCC professors and advisers, listen to live music, win raffle prizes, network with other alumni, get a free professional headshot and learn about HCC’s alumni podcast, The Green Thread, volunteer opportunities and other alumni events.

“We’re excited to celebrate the second year of GOLD — our graduates of the last decade,” said Natalia Castagno, HCC assistant director for alumni relations. “When alumni join us for this event, we want them to feel their HCC community again: to celebrate their time here and reconnect with the campus that shaped them.”

Space is limited, so pre-registration is requested. To register, people may visit [hcc.edu/gold](https://hcc.edu/gold).

Questions may be directed to the Alumni Association by emailing [alumni@hcc.edu](mailto:alumni@hcc.edu) or calling 413-552-2576.

PRINCIPAL

from page 1

courage to do something about it.”

His assistant principal, Val Zeh, agreed. She credited Sullivan for having a strong sense of ethics and said that he did not know the word no when it came to what was best or right for Gateway’s students. She describes him as a great man, who has made a difference in the lives of Gateway’s students, staff and community. “He will be missed,” Zeh said.

Mathematics teacher leader Cheryl Wright offered a similar description. “In education, many times we default to no, we can’t do that because...” Dr. Sullivan was always focused on figuring out how we “could make things happen,” Wright said. “His presence at Gateway was transformational. He was unwavering in his belief that our students and staff can do great things.”

One way that Sullivan demonstrated his confidence in the school and its students was exemplified last spring, when 10th graders presented their demonstration of learning in order to meet their competency determination for high school graduation.

The state had recently given schools the option of not using tenth grade MCAS test scores as a requirement for graduation. Instead, Gateway had planned for sophomores to each give a presentation of their learning to a panel of staff. These included work samples, their career goals and outlines for their final two years of high school to achieve those goals. “They were absolutely wonderful,” Sullivan said.

School Committee Chairman Jason Forgue reflected on Sullivan’s tenure at Gateway. “The loss of Will Sullivan from the Gateway family will create an impact lasting many years. I do not mean that only professionally but also personally, not only for myself but for hundreds of students, parents, and throughout the faculty and staff,” Forgue said. “The genuine, supportive demeanor with which Will carried himself provided many with the comfort needed to get through difficult situations and also thoroughly revel during the entertaining ones. I wish Will the absolute best in his next endeavor and look forward to following the news of all his future accomplishments.”

Sixth grade team leader, herself a Gateway alumna, Laura Flisk put it this way. “Will’s departure is a true loss for the Gateway community. He led GRS with an abundance of positive energy and an infectious desire to ready our students for the future. Will truly immersed himself into bettering our school; it will be hard to replace someone who was the first to arrive and the last to leave each day,” she said. “Although his time here was brief, he will go down in the books as a true Gateway Gator.”

Social studies teacher Jim Duggan concurred. “Dr. Sullivan’s greatest strength as a principal was his ability to model a positive attitude and an instructional vision,” Duggan said. “Will treated GRS as a family, and because of that, Gateway students, staff, and families will sorely miss his charisma and steady leadership.”

But it was Sullivan’s own family that weighed heavily on his decision to leave. He said his best advice to parents is to be home for

dinner and ask their children how their day went. He loved being at Gateway, but now has a child who is starting kindergarten. And while he thoroughly enjoyed going to soccer games, concerts, plays and even proms, he realized that level of involvement was not allowing him to check in with his own children.

“I wouldn’t change my time at Gateway for anything. This is a really hard decision for me. But I know Gateway is going to be fine. The work is not going to stop. The staff and students are committed to moving this work forward,” Sullivan said.

To ensure this, Superintendent Dr. Melissa Matarazzo has posted for both an interim principal and for a full time replacement. Sullivan said Matarazzo is really committed to a robust search with staff, student and community involvement and has shared that she wants to make sure that the next principal is committed to continuing to move forward in the direction that has been set through work with the Barr Foundation.

Matarazzo had high praise for Sullivan’s leadership to improve school climate, advance rigor in the classroom, and become a community where members like students, staff, and families feel they are heard and respected. “He also fostered strong teacher leadership, which will be tremendously helpful in sustaining our efforts in these

same areas, where we want to get better and better,” the Superintendent said.

According to Matarazzo, the search for Sullivan’s immediate replacement is open and could wrap up in a week with the appointment of an interim principal. They are developing a Principal Hiring Recommendation Committee who will work with her to review applicants, interview candidates, host finalists and provide a recommendation on the next principal.

The committee will include students, staff, administrators and parents. She will also invite input from parents and families at the Thursday, Oct. 8 GRS Open House about their vision for the next principal.

Sullivan believes the next principal is in for an amazing experience. “I am very thankful for the time I had here. I wouldn’t trade it for anything. Every day I felt that the students and staff were here to learn and for the right reasons. It made me want to work harder,” Sullivan said. “I fell in love with Gateway after my first three days. There is something special about this school and community and I’m confident that it will never go away.”

Zeh affirmed that Sullivan’s faith in the future of Gateway has never wavered. “Even as he prepares to step away from the frontline, Will still exudes a contagious optimism for our district’s future,” she said.

**NOTICE**

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

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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

TURLEY PUBLICATIONS CELEBRATES

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Dr. Ana Serrenho is the owner of POP Orthodontics, located in Post Office Park in Wilbraham. Dr. Ana is a Wilbraham resident and grew up in Ludlow. She completed her dental training and orthodontic residency at Boston University. In addition to her private practice, she is a faculty member at NYU Langone, where she teaches pediatric dental residents. She has been recognized by the Massachusetts Dental Society and the Massachusetts Association of Orthodontists.

POP Orthodontics recently celebrated its first anniversary, and our team looks forward to continuing our mission of providing convenient, comfortable and conservative treatment. We offer both traditional braces and Invisalign, as well as interceptive treatments such as expanders. We use the latest in dental technology and offer daytime and evening appointments. We are excited to be able to provide a locally-owned option for orthodontic care to the community!

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## WESTHAMPTON

# Westhampton Public Library announces upcoming programs

WESTHAMPTON – The Westhampton Public Library, 1 North Road, will be closed on Monday, Oct. 5, the day after the Fall Festival and on Monday, Oct. 12 for Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

Library hours are Monday and Thursday from 2-8 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

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

Recurring programs are Monday from 10 a.m.-noon computer help with Bob Miller, Mondays at 6 p.m. knitting and crocheting group, Mondays at 6 p.m. slow yoga, Tuesdays at 2

p.m. Scrabble group, fourth Tuesdays on Oct. 27 at 6 p.m. and book group “Miss Bates: Emma Revisited” by Catherine Cliff. People should email mschwelm@cwmars.org to be added to the book group email list.

Other recurring programs include first and third Wednesdays from 10-11:30 a.m. Walk-in Wellness Clinics with Weshampton’s public health nurse, Wednesday from 10 a.m.-noon coffee and chat and Thursday, Oct. 22 from 2-4 p.m. Tech Connect drop in tech help. People should call ahead to ensure the Tech Connect is meeting.

On Sunday, Oct. 4 from noon-4 p.m. the 19th Annual Westhampton Fall Festival at the Westhampton Town

Center. There will be an inter-faith church service at 10 a.m. and pumpkin hall at 4:15 p.m.

Other activities include Steeple Tours with Valley Views, Axe Throwing & Lumberjack Demo, Blacksmith Demo, History Museum, corn husking, cider making, sledge hammer throw, skillet toss. cow pie Bingo, potato cannons, giant pumpkin competition, scavenger hunt, farm animals, haybale maze, lawn games, children’s games and crafts, donkey, pedal-powered tractor pull and much more.

On Saturday, Oct. 17, there will be an art reception for Steve Allen from 11a.m.-noon.

People will enjoy paintings by local artist, Steve

Allen, in the community room gallery. Allen’s work is informed by the local landscape and time spent in nature. This exhibit will be on view during the months of October and November.

On Saturday, Oct. 24 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. there will be a Beatles sing-along. People, who like singing Beatles songs, this in the right place for them. Daniel Johnson and friends will lead the Beatles singalong at the library. Instrumentalists are encouraged to bring their instruments. This is a no judgment zone. Daniel Johnson and friends provide the lyrics and guitar and piano accompaniment.

On Thursday, Oct. 29 from 6-8 p.m. there will be a pumpkin carving workshop

with Jo Martin.

To register for the pumpkin carving, people should register by emailing westhampton@cwmars.org or call 413-527-5386. This workshop is for all ages and is limited to ten participants. Children must be supervised at all times by a responsible parent or guardian as sharp tools will be used.

Participants should bring a pumpkin any size and two addition small pumpkins or gourds.

They should bring any tools they will want to use including loop tools, scrapers, etc. People can get tools from Amazon and the instructor will have some to share too.

Chris Lafond, a certified midwife, will lead two ses-

sions: Thursday, Nov. 5 from 6-7:30 p.m. and Thursday, Nov. 12 from 6-7:30 p.m.

A Death Café is an opportunity to talk about death with cake. There is no agenda, and no presentation when using the this model. It’s simply a time to come together, share refreshments, and talk about death, with the topics arising from the group gathered. While it is not a question-and-answer session, there will be some takeaway information and follow up available.

This is recommended for adults of all ages. Youth 15 plus are welcome with accompanying adult. Registration is requested by emailing westhampton@cwmars.org or calling 413-527-5386.

## MONTGOMERY

# Music in Montgomery welcomes Ravenwood String Band

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

MONTGOMERY – Hosts for the Music in Montgomery program announce the October schedule.

Co-hosted by the Montgomery Public Library and the Gray Catbird Pottery Studio, Music in Montgomery takes place at Montgomery Town Hall, 161 Main Road, every Thursday, starting at 3 p.m.

This month sees five performers returning, including Barry Searle and Ravenwood, Ed Bentley and Friends, Kara and Jerry Noble, Doug Pi and the Harmonics and Bob Cipolli.

Opening the month will be the Ravenwood String Band on Thursday, Oct. 1, led by guitarist Barry Searle and featuring Sarah Miller on vocals, Don Calsyn on fiddle,

John Alphin on mandolin and Chet Fairchild on bass.

Searle’s other ensembles have included Broken Spoke, the Time Stretchers and Barry Searle and the Wolf Hill Band. Recent and upcoming gigs for Ravenwood include the Hardwick Winery, Brimfield Winery and North Brookfield Common.

Ed Bentley and Friends take the stage on Thursday, Oct. 8. The audience never knows who Ed will show up with him, but his August performance in Montgomery included Rom Campagna, Jane Martin Pelletier and Mark O’Meara.

He has been seen throughout the area, including the Southwick Inn, Luthiers, Shortstop Bar & Grill, and the Daily Grind in Southwick.

Husband and wife duo Kara and Jerry Noble return

on Thursday, Oct. 15. Pianist and composer Jerry (Clifton) Noble is also a regular performer with the Tuesday Morning Music Club, which has a 125 year run of bringing amateur and professional musicians together to perform at Trinity United Methodist Church.

They also offer a 12-concert series of high caliber musicians each year, and Noble is scheduled to perform in several of this year’s ensembles.

Doug Pi and the Harmonics will perform on Thursday, Oct. 22. Known for his deep signature voice and driving rock/country guitar playing, Pi and his band have performed at Fishtails in Hatfield, Papa Bob’s in Becket and at the O’s in Sunderland this year.

Closing the month on Thursday, Oct. 29 will be singer/guitarist Bob Cipolli.



Submitted photo

The Ravenwood String Band will open Music in Montgomery on Oct. 1.

This cover artist offers music from the 70s including Jim Croce, Loggins and Messina, Van Morrison and the Beatles.

All are invited to come, listen and bring baked

goods to share. Donations are accepted for the refreshments, with money to be split between the Montgomery Volunteer Firemen’s Association and the Town Library. Donations are also

accepted to tip and thank the fabulous musicians who perform each. This event is open to all who are interested. For more information, people may call Dale Rogers at 413-875-5205.

## PLAINFIELD

# Plainfield Park gets new name

PLAINFIELD – During the 55th annual firefighter’s barbecue held last weekend, Plainfield Fire Chief Rob Shearer announced the renaming of Plainfield Town Park to the “Ed and Sandy Morann Town Park.”

The Select Board approved the dedication this past month and a new plaque on a large stone near the fire pit, installed last week, was uncovered at the barbecue.

In addition, a new park sign at the entrance to North Central Street, to be installed soon, were both funded by the Plainfield Volunteer Firefighter’s Association.

The park has been and continues to be used by Plainfield families and friends for their enjoyment. The PVFA thank Ed and Sandy for being so involved and active at the park and throughout town for so many years.



Submitted photo

Plainfield Fire Chief Rob Shearer announces the new name Ed and Sandy Morann Town Park at the annual chicken barbecue.



A large stone with a plaque show the park’s new name, Ed and Sandy Morann Town Park.

# Plainfield foot race celebrates 50th years, winners announced

PLAINFIELD – This past Labor Day weekend, during the firefighter’s barbecue, the Plainfield Foot Race celebrated its 50th year while the Plainfield Youth Foot Race celebrated its 40th foot race.

The race has run the same course, 1.1 mile run around the center of town, originally starting and end-

ing at the Shaw Memorial Library, now starting and ending at the Public Safety Complex on North Central Street.

Though the course is short, it is deceptively hilly, making for longer race times than expected. Over the past 50 years hundreds of men, women, boys and girls have run this race and when you

look at the race bowels on display at the library, many names, now older, are familiar ones having grown up and/or lived in our town.

Certain names deserve mention after all these year. The course record overall was set by then resident Vince O’Connell in 1985, the town Bicentennial year, with a time of 5:28.

A time that has not been challenged for many years. The women record was set in 2002 by Sidney Letendre with a winning time that year of 6:24.

We also need to mention two other runners; five-time winner Meghan Davis, now a well-known and respected runner locally and four-time winner Rick Gowdy, both of

which started there running careers at Mohawk Trail Regional High School.

The Plainfield Youth Foot Race has its own race-course best times for those age 14 and under. Scott Zalinski ran an overall best time in 1986 of 6:26, while Meghan Davis set the fastest girls time so far back in 2015 of 6:33.

The Plainfield Foot Races were started by the town’s Recreation Committee, originally back in 1976, Youth Race in 1986, to help celebrate the country’s Bicentennial. The funding, organizing and running of these races are now handled by Plainfield Volunteer Firefighter’s Association.

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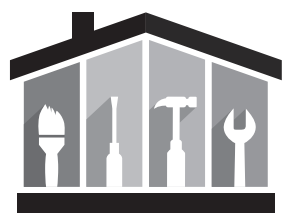
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# PUBLIC NOTICES

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF 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 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

## Town of Blandford Conservation Commission Legal Notice

At its regularly scheduled meeting on **Tuesday, October 13 2026 at 6:05 PM** at the Blandford Town Hall, 1 Russell Stage Road, the Blandford Conservation Commission will consider a Notice of Intent (NOI). The applicant is MassDOT District 1 and the proposed project is routine maintenance work for drainage structures located along Interstate 90 and Route 23. The Commission will make its determination in accordance with the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. c 131, Sec. 40 (as amended).

Plans and additional information are on record in the Office of the Conservation Commission.

Richard Gates, Chair  
Town of Blandford Conservation Commission  
09/24/2026

## Town of Worthington Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with Chapter 87 of the Massachusetts General Law, a public hearing will be held at the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road, Worthington on **October 2nd,**

**2026 at 6:30p.m.** to consider the proposed removal of sixteen marked hazardous trees at the town park adjacent to the transfer station.

Steven W. Strom  
Worthington Tree Warden  
09/24/2026

## Goshen Conservation Commission Legal Notice

The Goshen Conservation

Commission will hold a public meeting under the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Chapter 131 Section 40) on **October, 5, 2026 at 6:00 PM** at the Goshen Town Offices to review a **Notice of Intent** filed by Judith Walsh and Ned Wilson at 91 Aberdeen Road. The work to be reviewed is a Boathouse Replacement and Cabin Assessment/resupport.  
09/24/2026

# PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

1

Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)

2

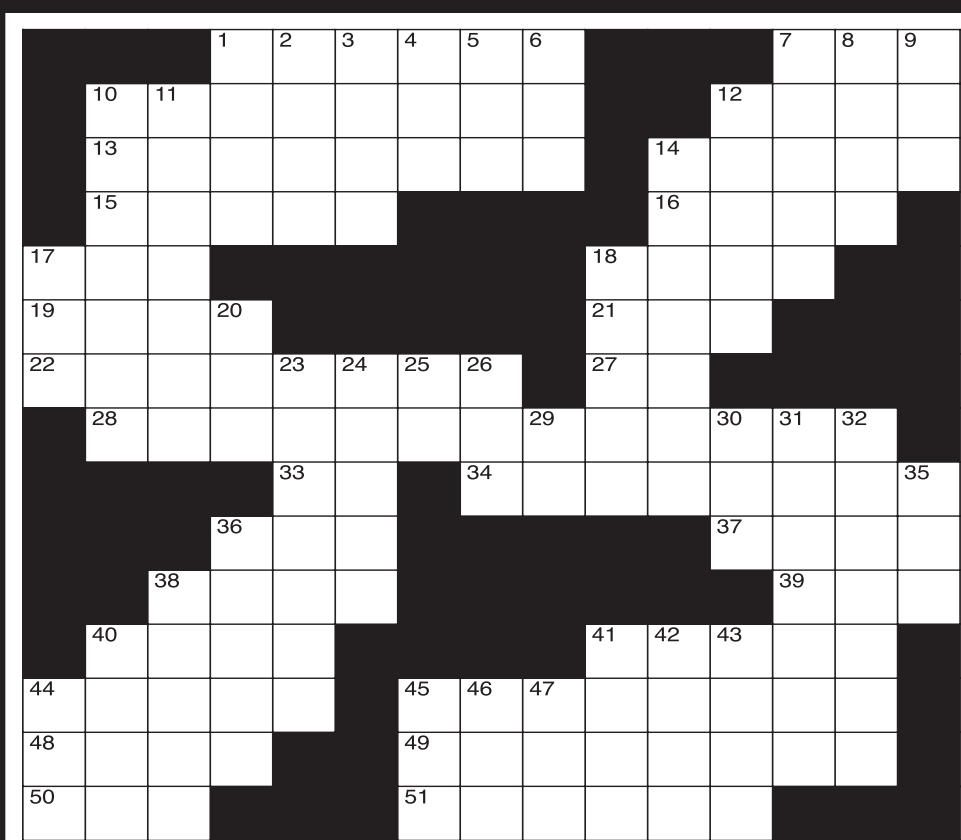
Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.

3

Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

**Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.**

**visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)**



### CLUES ACROSS

- A place for worship
- Referee declaration
- Torsos
- Used to introduce something
- Healing method
- Takes to the sea
- Make law
- French coastal city
- Hawaiian dish
- Young of domestic cattle
- Women's undergarments
- 60-minute intervals (abbr.)
- One after another
- It's a hot topic these days
- Folk band frontman

- They precede C
- Heavenly
- Fiddler crabs
- Major Hindu deity
- Hebrew given name
- Cost per mile
- \_\_\_ Romeo, car
- Rural municipality in Manitoba
- Narratives
- "A tragedy had \_\_\_ him"
- Iranian city
- Praises publicly
- Founding Father Franklin
- Herbal tea

### CLUES DOWN

- Indian unit of mass

- "Tears in Heaven" singer Clapton
- Part of a sailing vessel
- Part of (abbr.)
- Polynesian garland of flowers
- Keyboard key
- One who steals
- Large oven
- Former CIA
- Idea
- Solomon Islands capital
- Afrikaans
- Remove thatch
- Television network
- Jalen Brunson is one
- Title of respect
- Flowering trees

- Occurring in a tube
- Exists
- Woman (French)
- Expression of doubt
- NHL legend Bobby
- Accomplished
- Makes slightly wet
- National Assn. of Manufacturers
- Not sated
- Poe's middle name
- Swiss river
- Rhythmic pattern in Indian music
- "Shane" actor Ladd
- Popular whodunit board game
- Bar bill
- Ballplayer's tool
- Indicates near
- Feet per second

# THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

### ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, it is time to be on the lookout for fresh financial opportunities. Set new goals for yourself, and put your finances at the top of your priority list.

### CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, if you want others to open up, you have to start the conversation by sharing something from your heart as well. Make an effort to be more open in the days ahead.

### LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, a dear friend or relative could use your support right now. Offer a helping hand or even a shoulder to cry on so this special person knows you're there to help.

### CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Don't be afraid to shake things up a bit this week. You may not have time to mince words, so don't hesitate to get to the point. Others will appreciate your candor.

### TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, don't bother attracting people through false advertising. Instead, be authentic and you will find you garner much more attention and adoration.

### LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, this week you have the strength and motivation to accomplish your goals. You will sigh with relief when everything gets accomplished on time and in order.

### GEMINI

May 22/Jun 21

Gemini, the universe is trying to send you cues this week. But you will only receive these cues if you keep your eyes and ears open. Things may not be what they seem.

### VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

You have a green light to spoil yourself this week, Virgo. It isn't something you do often, so let loose a little bit and splurge on some luxuries.

### SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

Make an effort to be a social butterfly in the week ahead, Scorpio. This will quench your thirst to be around others. Don't be afraid to reconnect with old friends.

### SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, this is a great week to establish a financial strategy that fits into your lifestyle. If this involves revisiting your professional ambitions, then so be it.

### AQUARIUS

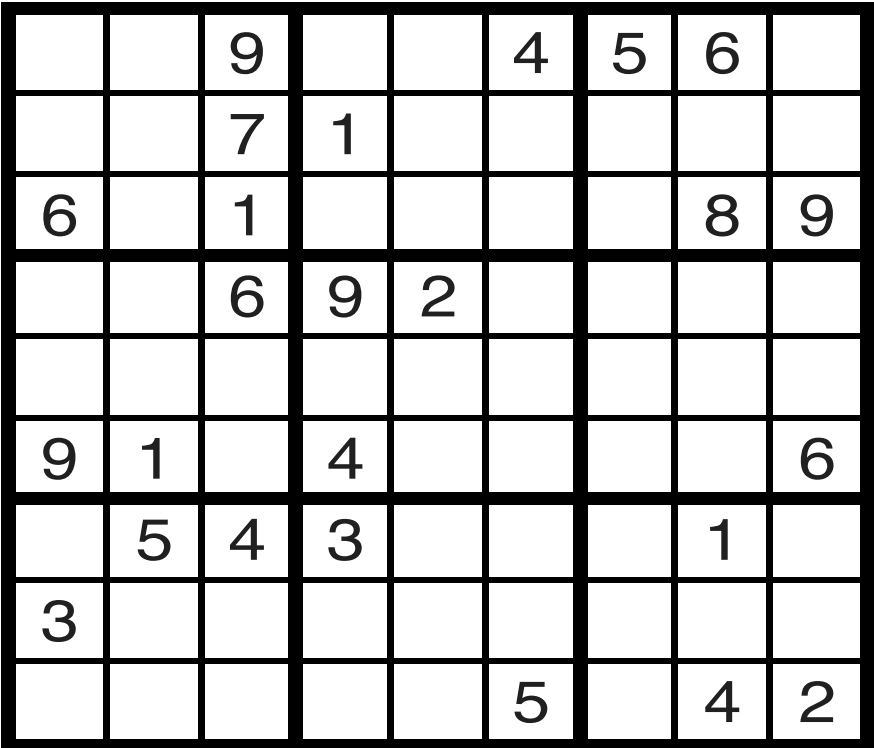
Jan 21/Feb 18

It is time to be your own teacher and become an expert in any subject you desire, Aquarius. Start doing your research and you may be surprised at the discoveries.

### PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, this week you might start seeing a platonic pal in a more amorous way. The affinity you share may be the foundation for a great relationship.



# 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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# Hilltown Hikers visit Bisbee Mill Muesum

Granite Saw.  
The feel inside of the museum was impressive and three hours is barely enough time to see all of the artifacts. The hikers were impressed by the many sleds, carts and even the hearse cart complete with a coffin, yes a hearse.

The Westfield Whip history even has a presence here as thousands of whip handles were crafted here. The massive penstock still remains intact and can be seen in the cellar when water from the canal in the back of the mill was used to power this mill.

They also learned about the Bisbee family and all of the different industries that they were involved in here in Chesterfield including the manufacturing of broom handles, wagons, buggies, carts, wagon wheels, sleighs, coffins, farm tools and so much more.

In the mid 1960s the operations here ended and the building became a lumber warehouse. People may visit the Bisbee Mill, right here in their backyard, one of the most impressive pieces of hilltown history the Hilltown Hikers have seen.



Another view of the mill at the Bisbee Mill Museum.



Flour ground at the grist mill are stored in cloth sacks.

A black and white photograph of a traditional blacksmith's workshop. In the foreground, a large, ornate, cylindrical metal furnace sits on a wooden base. To its right, a large wooden wheel is mounted on a stand. In the background, a workbench is visible with various tools and materials. The walls are made of dark wood, and a window lets in natural light.

This photo shows some of the other exhibits on display at the Bisbee Mill.

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### HUNTINGTON

## Local history talk by John Garvey

By Wendy Long

Correspondent

Local historian John Garvey will present a talk in the Huntington Public Library, 24 Russell Road, on Saturday, May 16 at 7 p.m.

Titled "Living Memories: The Blandford, Chester, and Chesterfield," the talk will be about the history of these three towns, which were once part of the same of Chester and Newbury.

Garvey said that the origin of the name of Blandford is somewhat of a mystery, but he said that it was probably named after a Blandford man who lived there in the 17th century.

Garvey said that the origin of the name of Chester is also a mystery, but he said that it was probably named after a Chester man who lived there in the 17th century.

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### BLANDFORD

## Blandford remembers Fire Chief Thomas Ackley

By Nancy Krasulova

Correspondent

The town last night a fire-fighting team with the joining of Thomas Ackley.

He served the town and its people on the volunteer fire department for over 20 years.

Ackley was born in the town of Blandford, and he was a member of the Blandford Fire Department.

Ackley was a member of the Blandford Fire Department, and he was a member of the Blandford Fire Department.

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John Garvey

Chief 2

Chief 2