

# Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

Becket, Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Otis, Plainfield, Russell, Sandisfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Worthington

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## BLANDFORD

# Special Town Meeting has record attendance

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

There were no surprises with the voting results at the Special Town Meeting Monday, Sept. 22.

It was the largest attendance at any town meeting in recent history, with over 170 people present and 169 registered voters. The meeting was set for 6 p.m. but did not begin until just after 6:30. There were many residents who came to the meeting but were found to be inactive and had to be reinstated as active voters in the Town Clerk's office.

The group was orderly and as chairs were filled, voters found seats along the kitchen wall on the floor and on the edge of the stage. Moderator David Hopson said that the first four questions would all be by secret ballot. Ballots had been prepared, color coded and num-

bered to avoid confusion during counting.

The first three questions were specifically asking for guidance for the Select Board. The first asked that the board express the town's opposition to the expansion of the North Blandford Road substation. Voters responded in the affirmative, 104 to 25.

The second asked that the board oppose the development of commercial-scale solar energy projects and consider restricting same. Voters again responded in the affirmative 134 to 26. The third question asked that the board express opposition to the siting of Battery Energy Storage Systems in town. Voters also responded in the affirmative to this question 142 to 22.

Moderator Hopson delayed question four and moved on to funding a

MEETING, page 6



Paul Dirschka asked voters to support funding for article four while opposing the first three non-binding directive articles.

Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

## HUNTINGTON

# Select Board meets with new Gateway officials

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

At their Wednesday, Sept. 24 meeting, Huntington Select Board members Bill Hathaway and John McVeigh, along with Town Administrator Jennifer Pelloquin, met three recently appointed officials from the Gateway Regional School District.

Dr. Melissa Matarazzo, Gateway's new Superintendent was joined by Human Resources Director Stacy Stewart and School Business Administrator Amy Mason. All three have been named to these roles within the past six months and are introducing themselves to town officials with plans to continue such meetings quarterly. Matarazzo is new to Gateway and started in late August. Mason started as a teacher/leader of Gateway's Visual Impairment Program (VIP) eight years ago. Stewart is

a long-time employee who most recently served as the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.

In her opening, Matarazzo said that the schools had a relatively smooth beginning and commended Police Chief Brian Kowal, who she said has been a very good partner with the school in dealing with some students who have been making poor choices. McVeigh asked about enrollment and Matarazzo said it appears to be 729 students, although the next official census will be taken on Oct. 1. McVeigh also asked if the new Superintendent foresaw any big changes coming this year. Matarazzo responded that she has found the district to have organized, effective systems in place. They are currently working on three strategic goals: high quality teaching and learning, supporting students and engaging with parents and the larger community. The school commit-

tee is almost full, reported Matarazzo.

**Health insurance**  
Stewart reported that health insurance rates are especially challenging for public organizations across the state right now. They are looking at all options including staying with the Hampshire County Group Trust or moving to the Group Insurance Commission (GIC). Mason reported that the budget is running as expected and that health insurance costs are under budget so far, which is fortunate. Stewart further clarified that the Hampshire County Trust is not likely to be impacted if a few schools or municipalities withdraw; half of the people/organizations would have to leave in order to break the trust. The bigger immediate issue, Stewart said, is health insurance costs exceeding revenue.

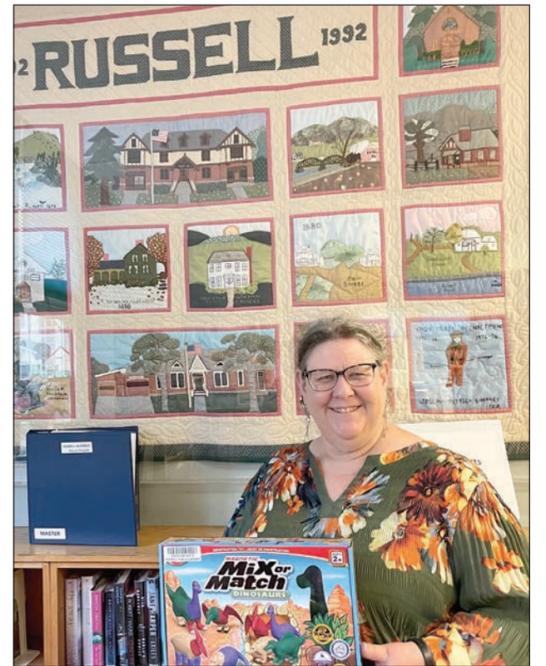
After the women left, the town then moved on to discuss its own health insurance

costs. Pelloquin said the town could pursue other quotes but past experience has shown that bidders might bid low to attract customers and later raise costs higher than if the town had stayed put. Right now, rates are up 20% and the 4 active employees have opted not to downgrade to a lower cost HMO policy. There are also 4 active retirees in the town's health insurance coverage. It was agreed to have Ryan Mailloux, Huntington's new treasurer, at the next meeting to discuss further, look at lock-in options, and determine whether or not to express interest with GIC.

**Zoning issues**  
In other business, they decided to schedule a special meeting to attend to ongoing disputes between town officials over zoning issues. Chairman Roger Booth was absent.

An ongoing dispute over Zoning Bylaw issues at 50 Littleville Road, which operated an earth removal operation without a permit and 9 Mountain View Drive, over a proposed garage and breezeway whose placement may not meet zoning regulations) has continued over the past two weeks. There have been numerous emails between town departments, Pelloquin and the Select Board, with no resolution reached on either issue. A special meeting has been scheduled for next week to include members of the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Commissioner George Peterson, Pelloquin and the Select Board to stem the unproductive emails and come to consensus. This will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 1

SELECT BOARD, page 3



Jennifer Waldorf, new Library Director at the Russell Public Library, holds a dinosaur mix and match game, part of their "Library of Things."

Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long

## RUSSELL

# Jennifer Waldorf takes helm of Russell Public Library

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Jennifer Waldorf was named the Library Director of the Russell Public Library, effective July 1, 2025.

She had started working at the library July 1, 2024 and replaced prior director Dawne Piers-Gamble, who remained on staff. The Russell Public Library has two other paid staff members Montana Paradis and Kate McKenney.

"I have always loved to read and be around books," Waldorf said,

which she feels shaped her interest in applying for the staff position last year. When Piers-Gamble announced she was stepping down, Waldorf decided to apply; she saw it as a way to make more community connections as a newer town resident and to continue with the direction that Piers-Gamble had led for the library.

Waldorf also demonstrated a new project called the "Library of Things," which allows patrons to borrow a range of items that people might need

LIBRARY, page 7



New faces/roles at Gateway: School Business Administrator, from left, Amy Mason, Director of Human Resources Stacy Stewart and Superintendent Dr. Melissa Matarazzo met with the Huntington select board at their Sept. 24 meeting.

Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long



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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES

## Hikers provide guided saw property tour

CHESTER – Sunday the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers welcomed several groups for their second annual Housatonic Heritage guided tours of their Granite Saw historical property.

Guides Liz, Greg and Frank led personal tours around the historic stone finishing mill, the largest and earliest in Western Massachusetts built in 1880 when granite was discovered in Becket. They learned about equipment, the different varieties of granite and how the granite was brought here on the Chester and Becket Railroad, built for this mill, to be cut and finished then shipped out across the country.

Events like these and the other public group tours held year round are fundraising events for the Hilltown Hikers. All the historical restoration work here is done by volunteers and the Hilltown Hikers Directors and all funds for signage are by fundraising. The Chester Granite Saw property was purchased two years ago by Hilltown Hikers President, Liz Massa. Liz then donated it to the Hilltown Hikers non-profit to historically conserve it for generations to come.

In 1880 the Chester Granite Company formed to open the Becket quarry. The company was incorporated in New York, but a large local investor was Frank S. Gross of Lee, who was also owner of the Lee marble quarry. In addition to the quarry in Becket, they built a large cutting and polishing factory in Chester near the railroad depot.

In 1891 the Hudson and Chester Granite Company was formed and purchased the Becket quarry and the cutting operation in Chester from the Chester Granite Company. Most of the investors in the new company were from Hudson, New York, hence the Hudson in the company name.

In 1910 the Hudson and Chester decided to get out of the cutting and polishing business and concentrate on their quarries, so they leased their Chester cutting and polishing operation to a newly formed company by the name of Chester Granite and Polishing Works. This

new company was formed by a group of local Finnish people and was operated on the cooperative model with most of the workers also being owners of the company. The Hudson and Chester Granite Company sold their Becket quarry in 1918 to the Chester Granite Quarries, Inc.

The Hudson Granite Quarry is located on Quarry Road in Becket, it was first quarried there in 1876, there is no granite in Chester even though it's called Chester Blue. William York from Maine first discovered granite as he was riding to Hudson, New York. Seeing a ledge of granite, he stopped to investigate; this was in Becket on the Frank Mitchell farm.

He then decided to start a granite curbing quarry there by using the boulder quarrying technique, all by hand and moving it by teams of oxen and horse and cart. York found a giant field of granite further back on the hill while he was exploring the hills behind the Mitchell property. He started working it and at the time it was only about four acres.

This became the largest granite quarry, known today as the Becket Quarry. The granite quarrying in its infancy was cut by hammering holes in the stone to break it, called the plug and feather method. The granite was brought down from Becket to Chester Factory Village to the stone sheds to be worked and shipped out across the country on the Boston and Albany Railroad.

York opened his first quarry operation in 1870 in Middlefield, formed York and Co. and called the quarry The Snowflake Quarry. There were several granite quarries located in Becket and Otis, and one in Middlefield and Chesterfield. Each was of a different quality and color. All of the granite was finished here and shipped out on the railroad. Even Marble from Lee was finished here. Finishing was a process that included rough and fine cutting, polishing and engraving.

Take a visit to their newest property, their two year anniversary of conserving it is Sept. 25. Thank you to all of the volunteers, who have made so much progress here.



The most recent find, a marble gravestone that was buried.

Submitted photos



These granite blocks tumbled when the derrick fell. Volunteers have been moving them with a come along.



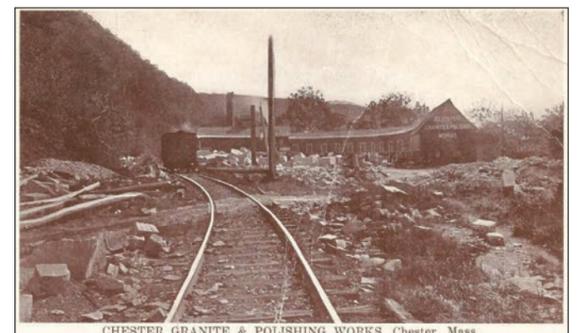
Liz describes how the derrick operated around the mill.



Cybill, a Hilltown Hiker canine, sits on the last piece of granite to be cut at the mill.



Hikers take a closer look at the polishing machine during a recent guided tour of the Chester Granite Saw property.



This is one of two known postcards of the granite mill.



Frank stands on the loading dock stairs which were rebuilt by volunteers.

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# HUNTINGTON

## SELECT BOARD

at 5 p.m. at Stanton Hall.

### Grant

The Town of Huntington has received a \$700,000 Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for a new water line on Basket Street due to homeowner well contamination caused by the former landfill on that road. Bids on the work were opened today and the lowest bid was \$479,450 from Western Earthworks. As this work is of an emergency nature, Zach Chornyak of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has already prepared a notice of award and the board voted to authorize Pelouin to sign off on that in Booth's absence. In addition, they decided to test all of the other residential wells in proximity to the contaminated one at 51 Basket St. If contaminants have spread to other wells, their hookups

to the new water line can be covered by the grant.

### Stanton Avenue project

Meetings continue on the Stanton Avenue Infrastructure Project and Pelouin was authorized to approve non-major change orders so the work can stay on schedule. Northeast IT has informed Pelouin that two desktop computers are not going to be compatible with Windows 11 and it will cost \$2,250 to replace them. That funding is already in the budget and the expense was approved; the town-owned laptops are all fine.

### Other business

In other business, the board discussed the possibility of pursuing a grant to create a town Master Plan to be determined later and granted permission to Little League to collect funds for improvements to the fields in Huntington and Russell. A proposed "Batting Helmet" drive (similar to the Fire

Department's "Boot Drive") for the first weekend in October was nixed, however, due to an anticipated increase in traffic because the annual Harvest Festival will be taking place on the town green. The League can set up a donation area at the festival. Also, a technician has determined that problems with the highway mowing tractor stemmed from a recently rebuilt cylinder that needs to be reworked and is still under warranty.

Several items were tabled to the next regular meeting on Oct. 8, including proposed new Gas and Diesel Pump Meters for the Highway Garage, which have a cost estimate of \$12,961.63 from Millers Petroleum Systems, Inc. but will require a bidding process. Also deferred were agenda items 2025 Priorities; bid awards for a new highway trailer, North Hall painting, possible changes to the format of

town email addresses, and the board stipend payout schedule.

Upon his appointment, Mailloux had suggested that Pelouin be bonded as an emergency second signer on the town's bank accounts. Pelouin applied but cannot get a bond until 7/1/26 because she has held her current position since 7/1/23 without being bonded. This will have to take place at the start of her next three-year term. Pelouin said they are covered in the interim because the Town Administrator has \$200,000 of liability coverage; the state only requires bonding for the position of collector/treasurer.

McVeigh announced that Fire Chief Josh Ellinger has secured a \$37,419.04 Assistance to Firefighters Federal grant to replace all of the fire hoses in all of the town's firetrucks. The town will have to cover \$1,870 or 5%, as a match.

## COA to hold Christmas bus trip

HUNTINGTON – On Thursday, Dec. 4, the Huntington Council on Aging is sponsoring a Christmas bus trip.

The first stop will be at the historic Salem Cross Inn, West Brookfield, for a meal and music. Meal choices include Yankee pot roast and chicken pie on a biscuit. They will do their best to accommodate people with food allergies. Next is a visit to the festive Yankee Candle for a little shopping. The day ends with a tour through the stunning Bright Nights at Forest Park.

The bus departs from

Huntington at 9:45 a.m. and Southamptton at 10:15 a.m., returning about 6:30 p.m. The Huntington COA is underwriting part of the cost for Huntington residents. Cost is \$105 per person for Huntington residents, and \$125 per person for other communities.

Reservation deadline and payment due is Tuesday, Nov. 4. People may call COA Trip Coordinator Helen at 413-685-5667 or email hspec@huntingtonma.us, for more information or leave a message at the COA office by calling 413-512-5205.

## HILLTOWNS

### MassDOT list I-90 roadwork

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces it will be performing overnight drainage work and daytime bridge and guardrail repair work on I-90 eastbound and westbound in the towns of West Stockbridge, Becket, Otis, Blandford, Montgomery and Russell.

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

In West Stockbridge, drainage structure cleaning will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound from mile marker 2.0 to mile marker 3.5 nightly now through Thursday night, Oct. 2 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the following morning.

In Becket bridge repair work will be conducted on

I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 18.4 daily now through Thursday, Oct. 2 from 6 a.m.-4 p.m. Bridge painting work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 20.0 daily now through Thursday, Oct. 2 from 6 a.m.-4 p.m.

In Becket, Otis and Blandford guardrail repair work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound from mile marker 15.0 to mile marker 29.0 daily now through Thursday, Oct. 2 from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

In Montgomery and Russell bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 westbound from mile marker 35.9 to mile marker 36.5 now through Thursday morning, Oct. 2 from 6 a.m.-noon.

Appropriate signage

and law enforcement details will be in place to guide drivers through the work area. Drivers traveling through the area should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit www.mass511.com to view live cameras, travel times, real time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions. Dial 511 and select a route to hear real time conditions. Follow @MassDOT on X, formerly known as Twitter, to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

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## Send Us Your Community Dazzler Events

Turley Publications will print your holiday calendar events **FREE OF CHARGE** in our **Dazzler Supplement** which will be published November 19, 2025. Total circulation of 85,000 which reaches over 200,000 readers in the Pioneer Valley. *Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public*

**FREE Calendar Listings Reaching over 200,000 Readers in the Pioneer Valley**

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Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name & phone number for more information \_\_\_\_\_

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or email\* them to: [jamie@turley.com](mailto:jamie@turley.com)  
\*Be sure to indicate "Dazzler" in the subject line of your email.

**Deadline for Calendar submissions is October 20.**

Contact Wendy Delcamp TO ADVERTISE AT 413-283-8393 or email: [wdelcamp@turley.com](mailto:wdelcamp@turley.com)

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## OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



## Should my spouse be getting half of my Social Security amount?

### Dear Rusty:

I was referred to you to ask a question about Social Security benefits.

I receive about \$1,700 a month from Social Security while my husband receives only approximately \$750 monthly. Is he entitled to file for half of my Social Security as a monthly benefit without touching my amount?

Signed: Curious Wife

### Dear Curious Wife:

For information, spousal benefits are one of the most misunderstood areas of Social Security. A spouse does not always get half of their partner's Social Security benefit how much the spouse gets is determined by their age when the spouse benefit is claimed and it is always based upon both partner's Full Retirement Age benefit, regardless of when they actually claimed Social Security.

The partner with the lower SS benefit can only get half of the other spouse's FRA amount if that partner takes the spouse benefit at or after their personal SS FRA. And each spouse's FRA may be different depending on the year they were born. FRA today is somewhere between age 66 and 67, depending on the person's year of birth.

Here are two basic rules for a lower earning marital partner to get spouse benefits:

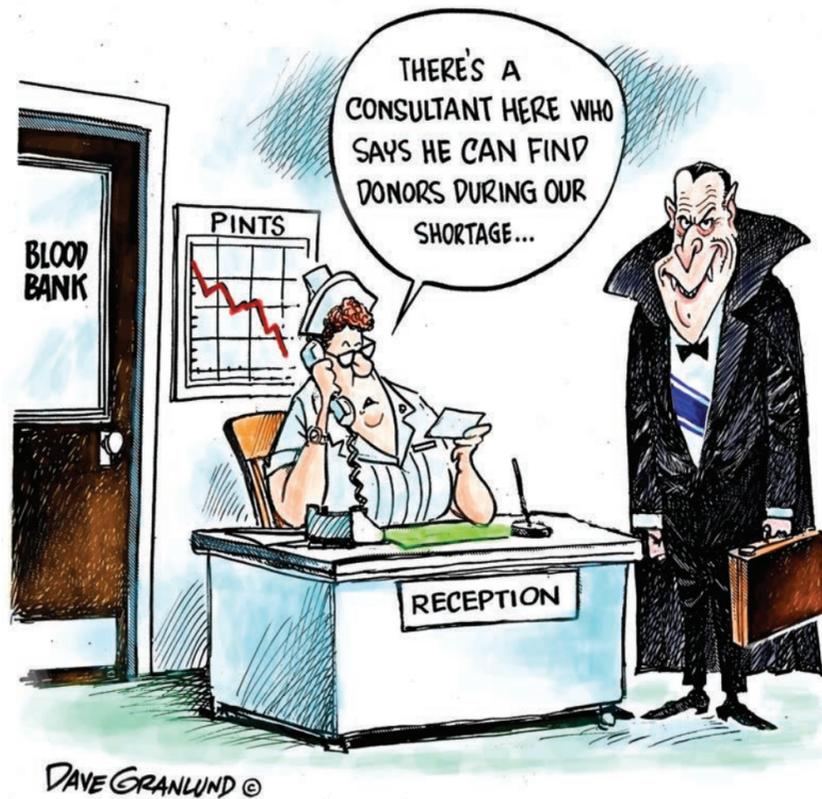
The lower earning spouse's FRA entitlement must be less than 50% of the higher earning spouse's FRA entitlement. FRA amounts are used, even if SS benefits were claimed earlier than or later than, full retirement age, and FRA amounts are frequently different than the monthly amounts actually being received.

If one spouse's FRA amount is less than 50% of the other spouse's FRA amount, the difference between those two amounts can be added to the lower earning spouse's SS retirement amount, to become their spousal benefit. That may, or may not, equal half of the higher earning spouse's FRA amount.

So, if you claimed your Social Security exactly at your own full retirement age and your husband also claimed his Social Security exactly at his own full retirement age, then based on the numbers you provided your husband is likely entitled to about \$850 per month, instead of his current \$750. And that would not affect your own SS benefit in any way.

Your FRA entitlement would need to be more than twice your husband's FRA entitlement for him to receive a spousal boost from you. But if either of you claimed Social Security before (or after) your respective full retirement ages, your husband would not get 50% of your benefit.

*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 [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*



## GUEST COLUMN

## Live in the moment but plan for winter!!

Hasn't the first week of autumn been beautiful weather-wise? Warm and sunny days will have us completely spoiled!

Summer annuals continue to bloom even as we harvest our pumpkins and corn stalks. But alas, while we are enjoying, we must simultaneously prepare for what inevitably will come.

My big task for today was deconstructing a combination planter so that I could (hopefully) overwinter the summer plants indoors. These included a Hypoestes (Polka dot plant), two Fuchsias, and an Ivy Geranium.

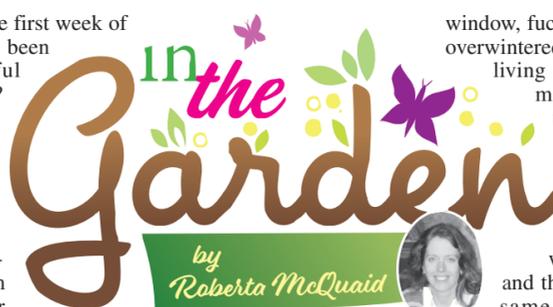
Over the years I've had good luck overwintering regular geraniums, Gerber daisies and fuchsias, but I have never tried ivy geraniums or the finicky polka dot plant. According to my research, ivy geraniums are handled in a similar manner as regular or zonal geraniums.

I typically overwinter them as a houseplant, in a bright sunny window. Sometimes they delight me with flowers through Christmas!

When I was trying to separate the plants from my big planter, though, the amount of roots I was able to get from the ivy geranium was honestly pathetic. The plant looked big enough on top to fit in a ten inch pot, but the root ball, maybe enough roots to fit in a four inch pot.

What am I to do? First thing would be to prune the top growth. So few roots would have a difficult time supporting all of that foliage. I will take off one third to one half of the top growth. And from this foliage, I will take some cuttings.

Regardless of my predicament, cuttings are a good option if you are short on space in front of sunny windows – you can root them in a three or four inch



pot placed in indirect light until they begin to grow!

You can also store geranium stock plant out of your living space. Here is how: Cut the plants back to a couple of inches above the crown and set them in the cellar, unheated rooms, enclosed porches or other spaces that don't freeze and aren't too damp. Check them every few weeks and water sparingly if necessary, never letting the soil dry out completely.

When spring comes, gradually begin to introduce sunlight and the plant will commence growth. Once the threat of frost has passed the plants can go outside for the summer months. If last year's potting soil is "exhausted" of nutrients, carefully repot the plant into new soil.

Prune away any weak branches and give it some liquid fertilizer. For this situation, storage temperatures can go as low as 45 to 50 degrees.

My fuchsia extraction went much better than the geranium one did. I have equal roots to foliage and flowers. I am going to try and overwinter this plant in a northeast window, knowing that fuchsias don't like bright sun.

The last time I overwintered one of these I got the plant to live into the late winter, long enough to take a cutting. The offspring thrived! The mother plant looked pretty woody, but apparently, if I had waited a little bit longer and gave it a light fertilization, new supple growth would have ensued.

Live and learn. Aside from a part sunny

window, fuchsias can also be overwintered out of the main living space, following my recommendations above.

The polka dot plant is another story all together. The roots were massive and the top growth the same. Although the plant looked diminutive at purchase, there was no saying that now. It became the "hog" of the pot.

I pruned both the roots and the top growth, cutting it back to healthy growth just a four inches tall, settling on an eight inch pot for the three original cuttings that made up the one plant. I don't have high hopes for overwintering, because, I guess, this plant has always been a finicky one as a seedling in the greenhouse.

It looks dry so you water it, only to find out it has root rot and now you've killed it.

My research indicates that overwintering temperatures should be warmer than what you would use for geraniums or fuchsias. We are talking 65 to 75 degrees. Another point of interest is that the plant likes humidity.

Putting the pot in a tray of wet gravel will provide some humidity to the immediate area and may help, especially since winter air tends to be dry. Indirect light is best for these plants as well. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

Be adventurous, by trying to overwinter some annuals. You just may make it a little easier on your wallet come spring, especially if your favorites are growing strong right in your own house!

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.*

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## 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 in the same section where the error originally occurred.

## Country Journal welcomes 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.

## Country Journal TEAM



**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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**PATRICK H. TURLEY**  
CEO

**KEITH TURLEY**  
President

**Turley Publications, Inc.**

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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.

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### PHONE

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**Advertising Sales**  
Wendy Delcamp  
[wdelcamp@turley.com](mailto:wdelcamp@turley.com)

### Editor

Ellenor Downer  
[countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com)

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## SCHOOLS &amp; YOUTH

## Smidy named to Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

An announcement on State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa's Facebook Page confirmed that former Gateway Superintendent Kristen Smidy has been sworn in as a member of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

She was appointed by Governor Maura Healey into a five-year term scheduled to end June 30, 2030.

According to her bio on the BESE website, Smidy considers it a privilege to serve on the Board and believes in building systems that honor the exper-

tise of educators and help students thrive in communities large and small across Massachusetts.

"I got to know her well during her time at Hampshire Regional and she is a strong, fierce and bold advocate for public schools-plus she understands rural schools, the funding issues that plague Western Massachusetts schools, and the population challenges we face," Sabadosa wrote. "She is a voice we desperately need at the table and I'm thrilled to see this appointment."

As stated on their website, the mission of the Massachusetts BESE is to "strengthen the

Commonwealth's public education system so that every student is prepared in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, and in so doing, to close all proficiency gaps." The Board's responsibilities include deciding when to intervene with the state's lowest performing districts, approving Charter School applications, approving the state's learning standards,



Kristen Smidy

and hiring the Commissioner for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's. The Board meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month and includes the Secretary of Education, the student President of the State Student Advisory Council and nine members appointed by the Governor. At least one member must represent parents, a labor organization and a business.

Smidy left the superintendency at the Gateway Regional School District in

August, a post she'd held for over four years, to become the Associate Director for Accreditation and School Improvement on the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Public Schools. "In this role, Kristen helps guide member schools through the NEASC Accreditation process and serves as a partner in their ongoing school improvement," Sabadosa reported.

Before coming to Gateway, Smidy was the Principal of Hampshire Regional High School and began her career as a social studies teacher at Duggan Middle School

in Springfield. She holds a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in educational leadership from Boston University and Bachelors and Masters degrees from UMASS Amherst.

Over her education career, she has served on the Legislative Committee for the Massachusetts School Superintendents; the Executive Board of the Connecticut Valley Superintendents Roundtable and the Massachusetts Inclusive Higher Education task force. Smidy lives in Westfield with her husband and their two sons, who both attend Westfield Public Schools.

## HCC Gateway to College program earns national nods for excellence

For the third consecutive year and sixth time in the past nine, the Gateway to College program at Holyoke Community College received a national excellence award from its parent network, Achieving the Dream.

Achieving the Dream presents excellence awards to its Gateway affiliates when those programs meet or exceed four benchmark criteria: grade point average, retention (one-year persistence and two-year persistence rates and graduation rate. The Gateway to College program at HCC has won one

or more benchmark awards for the last 10 years and the excellence award in 2016, 2017, 2020, 2022, 2024, and 2025.

Through Gateway to College, students who have dropped out of high school or are at risk for dropping out, complete their high school diplomas in college-based programs while simultaneously earning credits toward a college certificate or degree. HCC has hosted a Gateway to College program since 2008. The program enrolled 144 students during the academic year when they received the

award.

"We earned this award because young people who disconnected from traditional education were willing to trust us and give school another chance, and our amazing instructors and staff were patient and flexible and willing to give some grace as our young people navigated really challenging lives," said Vivian Ostrowski, HCC's Gateway to College program director. "We now have 662 high school graduates from 25 school districts, and we hope that our community is stronger and kinder because

of those grads and the hope and investment they bring."

During the assessment year (2024-2025), students entered Gateway with an average GPA of 1.57, compared to a network average of 1.89, and finished their first term with an average GPA of 2.89, compared to a national average of 2.55.

The one-year persistence rate at HCC was 94%, compared to a 63% percent network average; two-year persistence at HCC was 88% percent, compared to a national average of 63%. HCC's three-year graduation

rate was 84%, compared to a national Gateway average of 65%.

"Gateway to College programs provide a critical second chance for vulnerable high school students and a powerful testament to the importance of wraparound support services and creating a sense of belonging in college," said Emily Froimson, executive vice president of Achieving the Dream. "Nearly 75% of program graduates nationwide continue their postsecondary education."

At the most recent HCC

Gateway to College graduation in June, 47 students earned their high school diplomas from nine different communities: Chicopee, Easthampton, Holyoke, Ludlow, Northampton, Palmer, Springfield, West Springfield and Westfield. Collectively, they finished Gateway with an average GPA of 3.1 and collected 398 college credits. Thirty-five of them are continuing on in college, most of them at HCC. "Our graduates have earned more than 100 college degrees, with many more in progress," Ostrowski said.

## BECKET

## Becket Art Center announces upcoming October news and events

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will offer its weekly all-levels yoga class with Rima Sala on Thursday, Oct. 2 from 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Cost is \$5 to \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org). This class will also be held on Thursdays throughout the rest of the month: Oct. 16, 23 and 30.

The Becket Arts Center will present a concert featuring Joanne Redding on Sunday, Oct. 5 from 5-7 p.m. A veteran performer and songwriter, Redding is a master of musical genres, from jazz to blues, country to rock. Accompanying her will be the other members of her "Trifecta:" Benny "Fingers" Kohn, a Berkshire-based pianist, singer, and composer, and Dave Christopolis, an upright and electric bass player who has recorded bass on over 20 records. Part of the BAC's Music Brings Communities Together series, the event is free,

though donations are appreciated.

The Becket Arts Center will present a painting demonstration by Sean McCusker on Sunday, Oct. 5 from 1-2 p.m. McCusker's glazed landscapes are made up of roughly thirty thin, transparent layers, a technique that results in glowing compositions of dark shadows suspended in light. These demonstrations will continue every Sunday until Dec 21.

The Arts Center is offering a free, weekly drop-in community sing-a-long on Tuesday Oct. 7 from 6:30-8 p.m. Led by Paula Langton, a Certified Linklater Voice Teacher, this low-pressure gathering is open to everyone, regardless of experience or confidence level. All that's required is a love of singing.

These sing-a-longs will be held every Tuesday throughout the rest of the month: Oct. 14, 21 and 28.

As part of its Music Brings Communities Together series, the Becket Arts Center will present an

evening with Natalia Bernal and Jason Ennis on Saturday, October 18, from 5 to 7 p.m. Chilean-born Natalia Bernal brings the songwriting traditions of her homeland to her original compositions, as well as unique interpretations to selections from the Great American Songbook. Guitarist Jason Ennis, with a background in jazz, blues, Brazilian and classical music, is in high demand as a soloist, sideman and musical director. The concert is free, though donations are appreciated. For more information, please see [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

The Becket Arts Center will host a free opening reception on Thursday, Oct. 9 from 4-6 p.m. for "Moving Through Color," an exhibit of paintings and drawings by Community Access to the Arts artists. The vibrant works on display were created by teens, adults and elders with disabilities in workshops provided by CATA. All the pictures in the exhibit are available for sale, with proceeds supporting com-

missions for the individual artists.

The Becket Arts Center will offer a Botanical Monoprinting Workshop with Suzanne Gammon on Saturday, Oct. 11 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. with a one-hour break for lunch. Participants in this hands-on workshop will learn to create beautiful, one-of-a-kind prints using real leaves and vibrant watercolors. No experience is necessary. All materials will be provided, though registrants are free to bring their own supplies, such as paint brushes or watercolors. Workshop fees: \$80; \$60 to \$70 for BAC members; \$40 for Card to Culture members and free for students grades 9 to 12. For registration and more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

The Becket Arts Center will present a Fire Cider Workshop with Kimberly

Geisler on Saturday, Oct. 25, from 1-3 p.m. The course will cover the history and uses of fire cider, a traditional cold and flu remedy, as well as provide participants with hands-on experience chopping, combining and infusing this spicy tonic. Each attendee will take home a jar of fire cider to infuse at home. Workshop fees are \$50; \$30 to \$40 for BAC members; \$25 for Card to Culture members. For more information, including a list of supplies, and registration, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

The Arts Center will host a free evening of craft-making on Monday, Oct. 27 from 6:30-8 p.m. People may bring their current project whether it's knitting, sketching, or something else entirely—and work alongside other local makers, sharing ideas and inspiration.

Maker Mondays will continue every second and fourth Monday of the month until the end of the year.

The Becket Arts Center will present a free evening of ghost stories on Thursday, Oct. 30 from 7-9 p.m. Participants should bring stories to share about spooky local legends and scary situations. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).

## 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.

## 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.



**Pioneer Valley Assembly of God**  
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413-667-3196  
pvaglfe@gmail.com  
www.pioneervalleyag.org  
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God  
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**Hilltown Community Church**  
Rev. Dr. Robert Perreault  
55 Main St., Russell, MA 01071  
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Office: 413-862-3341  
hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com  
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YouTube Channel: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHYeekxw5w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHYeekxw5w)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays through Friday 9 a.m. - 12 noon  
Days and Hours of Services: Sundays at 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](http://holyfamilyrussell.org) • [parish@holyfamilyrussell.org](mailto:parish@holyfamilyrussell.org)  
Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m.  
Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. & 11 a.m.

## CHURCH DIRECTORY



Your  
Community  
Church

## BLANDFORD

# Mission Clean proposes another nearby location

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Mission Clean Energy has proposed a two hundred storage container unit in the town of Lanesborough.

Mission Clean Energy gave their presentation to the Lanesborough Select Board at their Monday, September 22 meeting, the same night as Blandford's Special Town Meeting.

Emma Riley told that board that they were representing Pear Tree Energy Center, LLC located in Boston.

The Pear Tree Energy Center listings states it is "a Massachusetts Foreign Limited-Liability Company filed on Feb. 12, 2025 with an active status... the company's principal address is San Francisco, Calif." and Mission Clean Energy, LLC of the same San Francisco address is its only contact on record.

Mission Clean Energy's investment officer Russell Edwards told Lanesborough that their (Mission's) investment was about \$100 million and said that there would be no ongoing demands on the town's infrastructure, such as "families with school age children and no recession risk."

The proposed facility will connect with Eversource's substation in Pittsfield, located nearby.

Riley told the board that the facility would be

in operation by the "end of 2029 or the beginning of 2030."

There are also other locations being looked at as well. The initial inspections show there is no impact on endangered species or vernal pools, "there are none in the area," said Riley.

Mission Clean Energy's Senior Permitting Manager said they would only use a small portion of the land available and all additional space unused.

Riley added that the installation will be unseen.

Edwards projected \$500,000 annually in financial benefit to the town as a "solid source of revenue."

Energy Safety Response Group (ESRG) Senior Consultant Adam Jakubowski, who is also a firefighter, said that the installation will follow current National Fire Protection Agency code requirements. All components of the project will be Underwriters Laboratory testing.

Mission Clean was to conduct an open house for Lanesborough residents on Monday, September 29 at 5 p.m. at the town hall there.

Mission Clean was asked for comment but there was not an immediate response. The Mission Clean presentation to Lanesborough select board can be viewed in its entirety at the town's website at <https://www.lanesborough-ma.gov/>.

# Mission Clean offers safety questions and answers

BLANDFORD – Since safety is one of the most important concerns for residents regarding the potential Battery Energy Storage System on North Blandford Road, Audrey Copeland

Head of Development for Mission Clean Energy has provided frequently asked questions and answers as follows:

**Q: Are there any hazardous materials in the batteries?**

**A:** There are no EPA listed hazardous materials in the battery storage system chemistry that Mission will utilize for this Project. The Project consists almost entirely of steel enclosures with common electrical components. The battery cells used for the Project are lithium iron phosphate (LFP). The LFP chemistry is stable and is not considered hazardous because LFP batteries utilize non-hazardous iron instead of more toxic metals like cadmium or lead.

**Q: What safety codes are in place?**

**A:** BESS for utility scale installations must be UL 9540(A), 1741, and

1973 compliant, as well as satisfy the requirements of the NFPA 855 regulations. These codes and standards are updated periodically to better consider improvements to BESS and lessons learned from other emergency events. Further, BESS suppliers must demonstrate their products' compliance with fire safety codes through large-scale testing and other inspection.

**Q: What happens during an emergency?**

**A:** Energy storage facilities are monitored around the clock by trained personnel that are prepared to maintain safety and respond to emergency events. Mission will develop and maintain emergency response plans to ensure that, if there were an emergency, it is handled safely and rapidly. Mission will work with the local fire department and first responders for training and to share information about risks, response plans, and safety measures.

That plan will be active during all stages of Project construction and operation and will inform all relevant first responders

on the proper emergency response procedures.

**Q: What happens to the Project during a fire?**

**A:** If there is a fire at the Project, the fire would self-consume within a single enclosure, venting mechanisms would automatically deploy, emergency personnel would be automatically notified, and the Project's Emergency Response Plan will kick in.

The BESS enclosures are not occupied, and fire incidents do not pose any significant risk to human health and safety.

**Q: In an emergency, what is the resulting smoke from the Project?**

**A:** In past emergency events, such as in Escondido, California and Warwick, New York, extensive air monitoring was performed around the BESS during and after the fire events were happening. In both cases, fires occurred in outdoor, non-occupiable, containerized BESS units (similar to the proposed BESS). The air monitoring detected no hazardous toxic gas levels in nearby communities during or after the fire

events.

Similar to a vehicle or house fire, the distance smoke from a BESS fire can travel depends on wind and other atmospheric conditions. However, regardless of atmospheric conditions, concentrations of toxins within the BESS smoke will dissipate to safe levels well before the smoke arrives at a home, business, or other sensitive location.

**Q: What are the current statistics of fire incidents?**

**A:** From 2012 to 2024, there were a total of 35 documented fire incidents at BESS facilities in the United States. Only one incident at an antiquated BESS facility in 2019 resulted in any reported injuries to first responders. No incidents were found to have a negative impact on the health or wellbeing of anyone in the immediate surrounding area.

For comparison, there are roughly 820 utility-scale battery storage projects currently operating in the US and hundreds of new BESS projects being proposed across the Country.

# COA switches to two monthly lunches

BLANDFORD – Council on Aging Director Margit Mikuski announced that from here on the COA will host two monthly lunches rather than a lunch and a breakfast.

Maître Cuisinere Joann Martin is ready, willing and more than able to adjust to the two-lunches-a-month mealtimes. More than someone who prepares food,

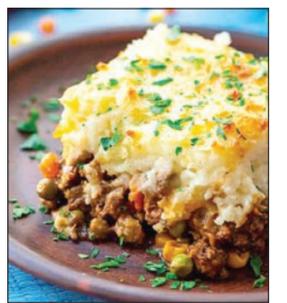
she is the chef de cuisine, or the head of the kitchen. This is a role she not only enjoys, but relishes preparing all sorts of delectable meals for the COA group.

The first luncheon is set for Friday, Oct. 10 and will start off with peach infused iced tea accompanying shepherd's pie, cheddar biscuits, tossed salad and pecan pie bars.

Reservations can be made by calling 413-848-4279, extension 400; leave name and number of people.

There is no charge for lunch, but a \$5 donation will help keep the lunches coming.

On Friday, Oct. 4 from 2-4 p.m., it's Game and Gab time. For more information, people may call 413-848-4279, extension 206.



## MEETING

from page 1

full-time assistant treasurer/collector for \$68, 250, transfer from available Water Department revenues \$24,000 to fund a full-time Water Superintendent, authorizing \$92 from Water Department funds to pay a previous fiscal year Town Counsel bill and authorizing a \$20,000 expenditure to upgrade audio visual equipment for the gym for large meetings. All passed.

Paul Dirschka spoke to the first article saying that safety issues had been addressed by Mission Clean Energy and that benefits to the town included decreased dependency on fossil fuel as well as revenue. He asked for no votes on the first three questions, but a yes on the fourth for the \$200,000 because the town will need the expert research.

Colleen Doyle spoke to the same article referencing the already existing ability of the Eversource substation to accommodate sufficient megawatts and said, "It's not about energy, it's about money," adding that the users will pay for the cost of the expansion.

There were no comments on the second or third articles.

There were comments and questions on article five for funding a full-time assistant treasurer/collector, currently a vacant position originally part-time. It is hoped to bring in someone, who would be able to phase into the treasurer/collector position, which is currently outsourced at a cost of \$126,000.

The fourth article was then taken up after the vote on the first three had been counted and the results announced; this article authorized a fiscal 2026-year expenditure to enable the Select Board to fund engineering services, inci-



At 5:58 p.m. Monday, the check-in line for the Special Town Meeting was still flowing in the parking lot at Town Hall. The meeting was set to start at 6 p.m.



Moderator David Hopson addresses the crowd.



Residents cast ballots. Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm



Crowd at Monday, Sept. 22 Special Town Meeting lined the wall, the stage and sat on the floor in addition to filling seats

dental and related expenses to address what had been affirmed by the first three articles. The funds must be

spent in this fiscal year and whatever is not spent will revert to free cash for the next fiscal year. This was



Colleen Doyle spoke to the proposed expansion of the Eversource substation.

approved 138 to 18.

Regarding article four, Dirschka posed a question for Town Counsel, Mark

Reich, who was present along with his associate Atty. Matthew Skydel.

"How likely is it for Blandford expending these funds to prevail against these projects?"

Reich replied citing Mass. General Law Ch. 48 sec 3 that allows for solar facilities. "There are restrictions on how you (the town) can regulate these types of facilities pursuant to guidelines...it's a difficult process."

Kim Blanchette, long time resident and descendant of early residents said, "Blandford has given a lot already; Springfield Water and Sewer, the Mass Pike divided land that can no longer be used as farm land... and here we are in a situation being told we can't have a voice. Whatever happened to 'we the people.'"

Select Board member Jackie Coury read a statement from State Sen. Paul Mark in part, "Some of what was said made me feel confident that the towns will have a good opportunity to be engaged and if necessary, will have the tools needed to stop projects that are not in the best interest of the community. We will be with you every step of the way if that process unfolds and you need our help. We are there to help coordinate with state executive branch officials and if necessary, attempt to make legislative fixes that will help our rural towns."

He added, "I was less than thrilled with some of the potential problems and ramifications on that end. There is certainly a lot to consider in small towns with volunteer fire departments as a proper balance needs to be met between local public safety capacity and statewide policy goals."

Coury also noted that

Joel Dusoe from State Rep. Nicholas Boldyga's office responded with an email that stated, in part, "the Rep. is in full support of towns having the autonomy and home rule authority to make decisions on whether or not to accommodate/approve these types of projects."

Rep. Boldyga "voted against the clean energy legislation in part because it stripped municipalities of their home rule authority and has since sponsored legislation to restore those rights. He believes this was an egregious example of overreach and certainly shares the concerns that many residents have expressed about the impact on safety, the environment, infrastructure and resources."

After the meeting, Select Board Chair Cara Letendre said, "Now that the vote is done and given direction (to the town)" she hoped that everyone could treat each other as neighbors and act like adults, and "stop the conspiracy theories" referencing social media comments.

Coury said there were "no surprises" with the "broad vote from the town."

Select Board member T.J. Cousineau said he was "very pleased at the turnout, overwhelmed. I wish more people would attend regular meetings."

He added, "It showed how the town is concerned about solar and battery installations, and how the state has treated us in the process... it seems to me that they (the state) doesn't care what happens in the western part of the state."

There were three additional articles on the warrant signed by the Select Board that will be taken up at a subsequent Special Town Meeting.

## BLANDFORD

## Blandford Finance Committee seeking new members

BLANDFORD – There are still seats on the Finance Committee that need to be filled.

Residents are appointed so as to represent different areas of the town equally. Cutting to the most simple requirements, if anyone can balance a checking account, it is possible to serve on this committee. Spending cannot be more than the town's income unless special provisions or actions are taken.

That said, according to the Town Bylaws, the Finance Committee considers estimates and statements filed by town boards, officers and committees and hold hearings, if they deem it advisable.

The Town Accountant takes the lead and assembles the town's finance team, Finance Committee, treasurer/collector and assessors to work on the overall budget.

The Finance Committee

will recommend presented budgets as it considers necessary and convenient.

Other duties include consideration of "all matters of business within articles of any warrant for a Town Meeting and shall, after due considerations, report the recommendations as to each article before each meeting or vote."

The recommendations shall be those of a majority of the entire committee, but

this shall not be construed to prevent recommendations of a minority as such. The committee shall hold a public meeting with respect to the warrant at least seven days prior to the Town Meeting.

In reporting, the committee shall state the total amount of the appropriations recommended by them on the entire warrant and the appropriate tax rate based on such recommendations.

The report for the annu-

al Town Meeting shall contain a statement of the activities of the committee during the year, with such recommendations of suggestions as it may deem advisable on any matters pertaining to the welfare of the Town. It may make recommendations of referenda and other matters on any ballot other than the choices of individuals for office.

The busiest time for this group is approximate-

ly December through March and then participate in the Annual Town Meeting in June. Sometimes Special Town Meetings require their actions and again, participation in these meetings is essential.

Anyone interested should contact a member of the Finance Committee for more information or email the Select Board at selectboardadmin@townofblandford.com expressing interest.

## Council on Aging holds eggs Benedict breakfast

BLANDFORD – Kitchen maven Joann Martin again demonstrated her culinary skill with a breakfast of eggs Benedict, breakfast potatoes, aka home-fries, frozen fruited yogurt and traditional beverages for the Friday, Sept. 26 culinary feast.

The eggs Benedict are created in layers on an English muffin as the base, then Canadian bacon, then the poached egg and then over all, Hollandaise sauce. Martin is a traditional egg-swirler of a very competent caliber. Poaching eggs is no slight feat. It takes patience, skill and egg-knowledge.

The first step is understanding that you have to break the eggshell without breaking the egg yolk when it goes into the already eddied water. It takes two to three minutes to cook the egg so

that the yolk is runny yet the egg white is solid. That is the fine nuance to achieving the perfect poach and then when to skim the egg out of boiling water. It takes a bit of practice.



Serving breakfast at Friday, Sept. 26 Council on Aging breakfast were Deb Lundgren and Sue Racine.

Then, for the eggs Benedict, after the muffin has its slice of Canadian

bacon, there is the simple turn of the wrist to slip the perfectly poached egg



At the table, the complete breakfast was eggs Benedict, breakfast potatoes, frozen fruited yogurt and orange juice.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm

to top the bacon. The final elegance creating step is by this time, easy. Spoon Hollandaise over all. Martin uses a bit of lemon as an accent. Voila, there it is, for breakfast or lunch.

Historically, this is an American dish and has many versions of creation. You

can believe Mrs. Benedict requested something different in the 1860s or in the 1940s as a sure-fire hang-over cure. Whatever pleasure tale one takes as possible gospel, the creation is worth it. Seniors are looking forward to the menu for October.

## NORTHAMPTON

## Girl Scout troops welcome

NORTHAMPTON – There a troop openings in multiple troops for girls in grades 3 through 8.

Hilltown girls welcome. Three Girl Scout troops in Northampton have openings for girls in grades 3 through 8. Girl membership registration fee is \$55 for the year. Hassle free financial assistance is available and previous Girl Scout experience is not necessary.

There are a range of meeting days and times as follows: Girl Scout Troop 65028, grades 4 and 5, meets bi-weekly Sundays, at 6:30 p.m.; Girl Scout Troop 40500 grades 4 through 8 meets bi-weekly Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. and Girl Scout Troop 65207, grade 3, meets bi-weekly Sundays at 3:30 p.m.

To register, people may visit [go.gscwm.org/Northampton](http://go.gscwm.org/Northampton). People may

email [nonotuckgirlscouts@gmail.com](mailto:nonotuckgirlscouts@gmail.com) with questions. Girl Scouts is the premier organization for girls to learn about leadership, financial literacy, life skills, science and technology, the outdoors, and community service.

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts serves over 6,000 girls in grades K through 12 with the strong support of over 3,000 adult volunteers in 186 towns and cities in central and western Massachusetts. The Girl Scout program allows girls to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together while building their personal leadership qualities. GSCWM supports girls by giving them extraordinary opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about their world and helps girls recognize that they are vital members of their communities.

## GREAT BARRINGTON

## Group hike planned for Oct. 5

G R E A T BARRINGTON – The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers plan a guided tour to Reservoir Rocks on Sunday, Oct. 5 at 1 p.m.

Parking is at Quarry and Pine Street intersection. Parking is roadside, so please do not block driveways. The hike is a moderate three miles on a footpath to see boulders. Footing will be uneven and there will be some elevation and walking in between boulders with options for more.

Christy Butler, author of Berkshire Destinations and Rockachusetts, will guide the boulder expedition to see an enormous field of boulders, some larger than busses and houses. Automobile sized boulders are everywhere on East Mountain with many

propped up against each other, a landslide of boulders.

This area is a mecca for climbers and boulders with many challenging and unique bouldering problems that adventurers flock to. The land was purchased from the George D. Goodrich estate in 1922 by the Great Barrington Fire District. Spend a day with us seeing these geological wonders while Butler entertains with rocks and more rocks, a true rock heaven for rock hounds right here in Western Massachusetts. Friendly dogs are welcome, but keep in mind porcupines love rocks too.

They will hike rain or shine. Registration is required. People register per car load by visiting <https://westernmasshilltownhikers.com>.

ticketleap.com. Maps and bottled water are provided. Suggested donation is \$15. More details are available by visiting [www.hilltownhikers.com](http://www.hilltownhikers.com).

People may email [westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com](mailto:westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com) or call/text 413-302-0312 if they have any questions. As always be prepared for rocks, mud and roots and bring trekking poles/

People should consider becoming a member of Hilltown Hiker if they like hiking every weekend. They can sign up by visiting [www.HilltownHikers.com](http://www.HilltownHikers.com).

Tees, hoodies, hats, patches and bags will be for sale by donation at the event. People may find out about events, maps, blog and photos by visiting [www.hilltownhikers.com](http://www.hilltownhikers.com).

## RUSSELL

## LIBRARY

occasionally. Examples include small kitchen appliances, such as a crockpot, waffle maker or air fryer, power tools, outdoor recreational equipment and puzzles and games.

"We've had a few items for a while, but are expanding," Waldorf said, explaining that this can save community members money on items they might not use often. "The broader benefit," she said, "is it reduces public consumption of items that are lightly used and eventually end up in landfills." Having 50 people share an air fryer, for example, has less of an environmental impact than having 50 people each purchase an air fryer.

Children's items are already on the shelves and include five exploration backpack kits for different topics. An insect backpack includes a book on identifying bugs, a collection container and magnifying glass to look more closely at the small creatures. Topics for the other four backpacks are ponds and rivers, birds and wildlife, plants and trees and the night sky. Adult items should be available to take out within the month, Waldorf said.

Originally from a small town in North Carolina (Sparta), Waldorf's husband had an Air Force career that kept them moving all around the country. They also spent six years in England, which

she said was lovely. When he retired, they returned to North Carolina. When their daughter graduated from college and took a job in Boston, they moved to Russell to be closer to their only child.

Waldorf appreciates the sense of community that you get by living in a small town. Working at the library has helped her meet more of her neighbors in a social setting, and get to know people she might not otherwise come in contact with.

Waldorf said, "She doesn't see that she will make a lot of changes and plans to keep going on the good path they are already on." As a staff, they plan to expand their programs,

events and speakers. They have just started sending out an electronic newsletter, which lists new books and upcoming events. She encourages people who want to stay up to date with what's going on to subscribe by emailing [rpdirector162@gmail.com](mailto:rpdirector162@gmail.com) or call 413-862-6221.

She said the town of Russell has always been very financially supportive of the library, beyond what a lot of libraries our size see. This is helpful as the biggest challenge is the uncertainty over the future of federal and state funding. "It is very important for our library to be able to provide materials that our community wants to read," she said. "This is an issue

of concern to libraries across the country."

One of the library's immediate goals includes expanding the non-fiction collection, which Waldorf said has some gaps. "We want to provide a balanced collection, and try to have at least a couple of books on most topics," she said. As an example, the collection has a lot of political and governmental biographies and some bios of musicians, but very few representing sports and other artists. They have a lot of cookbooks, but little about other homemaking skills. "We want to fill in the gaps to ensure there's something for everybody."

October is National Book Month and all are

invited to stop in, check out the Russell Public Library, and get a library card. This spacious and well-equipped small town library has something for everybody: a growing local history section, fiction, non-fiction, juvenile and young adult books (including graphic novels), picture books, audio books, periodicals and DVDs. Three computers are available for the public and include new monitors, which give a better "gaming experience." Always available: coffee and tea and a craft table. The Russell Public Library is open from 3-7 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturday.

## OTIS

## COA lists events

OTIS – Regular Council on Aging events will continue on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the month.

Exercise class is every Monday at 10:30 a.m. at the Town Hall Senior Center. Haircuts will be available on Monday, Oct. 6 at the Senior Center. On Wednesday, Oct. 8, the foot nurse will be available. People should call 413-269-0100, extension 5 for an appointment for either a haircut or foot care.

The Senior Center is closed for Columbus Day on Monday, Oct. 13 but it will be open regular hours for seniors on the next day, Tuesday, Oct. 14. There is a Halloween pot luck lunch at noon on Wednesday, Oct. 1 and Halloween theme costumes are optional. Lee Landing Assisted Living will conduct an informational seminar on their services.

The regular COA board meeting will be on Oct. 20 at 2 p.m. The flu/covid vaccination clinic is set for Wednesday, Oct. 29 at the Senior Center from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

On Monday, Nov. 10, Steve Rosenthal from Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone will be available at 10 a.m. There will be a sign-up sheet available if anyone would like to speak with him privately. Tommy T and the Black Velvet Band will perform at the Veterans' potluck luncheon Wednesday, Nov. 12 at noon.

The holiday luncheon will be on Dec. 4 at noon at the Pittsfield Country Club. The buffet menu includes rosemary lemon chicken, braised beef brisket, salmon with maple mustard glaze, soup, salad, seasonal vegetables, potatoes and dessert and coffee. Attendees are asked to bring a \$10 grab-bag gift. The cost per person is \$35.

For more information about any of the events, people may call Kendra Rybacki or Director Karen Yvon at the COA at 413-269-0100, extension 5.

from page 1

## WORTHINGTON

# FinCom hosts information meeting on 2 ½ override

WORTHINGTON – The next informational meeting on the proposed 2 ½ proposition override will be on Saturday, Oct. 4 at 9 a.m.

The meeting will be available virtually via GotoMeeting and in person at R.H. Conwell School. Attendees can use either phone or computer to participate in the meeting. They may visit <https://www.goto-meet.me/CharleyRose/select-board-meeting> or phone +1 (646) 749-3112 – Access

Code: 233-643-381.

Baked goods will be available. Childcare is available. People may email Gretchen Morse-Dobosz, gmorsedobosz@rhconwell.org or call 413-238-5856.

The FY26 Town Budget, as approved by Town Meeting voters on June 7, has a shortfall of \$145,527.70. Like all communities in Massachusetts, Worthington needs to have a balanced budget before it can submit its tax rate to the Department of

Revenue for approval.

The majority of the town's expenses are fixed costs, such as employee salaries and cost-of-living increases. Additionally, the prices of goods and services have been rising rapidly for the past several years, while town revenue from new growth has remained relatively flat. The Massachusetts law known as Proposition 2 ½ strictly limits the amount of property tax revenue a community can raise through real

and personal property taxes.

Ways to balance the budget include applying money from available funds, such as from the stabilization fund or free cash to meet the shortfall, possibly increase local estimated receipts or reduce expenses.

The Worthington Select Board has voted to hold an election on Nov. 8, asking the town to consider an override of the property tax growth restrictions of Proposition 2 ½. The Saturday, Nov. 8 bal-

lot will include two questions, one with an override amount of \$195,000 and a second with an override amount of \$290,000. To pass, a question must be approved by a majority of the voters. If both questions pass, the one with the higher dollar value will prevail.

If an override is approved by the voters, the FY2026 operating budgets, as approved by Annual Town Meeting in June 2025, will utilize approximately

\$145,000 of either override. This would leave \$45,000 or \$145,000 in untaxed excess levy capacity for future use subject to appropriation by voters at Town Meeting, enabling the community to plan for increased cost of living and inflation expenses.

Based on our current estimate of the deficit at \$145,527.70, an Average Single Family Property Value of \$382,004 would see an increase in their annual tax bill of \$286.50.

## Worthington to hold fall vaccine clinic

WORTHINGTON – On Friday, Oct. 10 from 1-4 p.m. there will be a fall vaccine clinic at the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.

Pre-registration is preferred by visiting [northamptonma.gov/2219/vax](http://northamptonma.gov/2219/vax). People should bring their insurance cards and wear a short sleeved

shirt.

Vaccines are free. Regular and high dose flu vaccine and COVID vaccine Pfizer 65+ will be available. For those who need held registering, they may call 413-587-4903. Hampshire Public Health Shared Services collaborative will administer the vaccines.

## Fire Extinguisher Day takes place Oct. 4

WORTHINGTON – On Saturday, Oct. 4 from 8 a.m.-noon, people may bring their old fire extinguishers to the Worthington Fire Station, 51 Huntington Road, to be evaluated and refilled if possible by Massachusetts Fire Technologies.

The event will be held rain or shine. They will be able to refill only type ABC extinguishers from their truck.

Cost will depend on size. Other types (B & C) may be able to be refilled at their facility in West Springfield and returned for pickup at a later date.

Fire Extinguishers will be available for sale on the truck. They will evaluate people's extinguisher and offer disposal if it's not refillable for a small charge. There will also be demonstrations of fire extinguisher usage.

## Grab and go lunch offers two menu choices

WORTHINGTON – On Thursday, Oct. 16 from noon-1 p.m. at Worthington Town Hall the grab and go lunch menu will be a choice of cheese lasagna or baked potato with chili con carne with corn bread, vegetable blend and chilled peaches

To reserve a meal, people may call or text 413-238-1999 by Sunday, Oct. 12 and leave their name, number of meals and the name of the person also receiving the meal, and

their meal choice. New enrollee forms can be downloaded here and are also available at the Town Hall bulletin Board and the COA bulletin board at Corners Grocery. People can also fill one out when they come to pick up.

They should bring a bag with them to carry their meals to the car. If they have any questions, they may call Phyllis Dassatti 413-238-5962 or email The Worthington COA.



## Police investigate fatal crash last Tuesday

WORTHINGTON – Police are investigating a crash resulting in the death of a Chesterfield man Tuesday, Sept. 23 in Worthington.

The crash took place

shortly after 1 p.m. on Ireland Street near Conwell Road. Police were called to the site of the single-vehicle motorcycle crash in which a 76-year-old man had been pronounced

dead by emergency workers at the scene.

Worthington Police, State Police detectives attached to the Northwestern District Attorney's Office as

well as with the State Police Collision Analysis and Reconstruction and Crime Scene Services sections also responded to the crash. The investigation continues.

## PITTSFIELD

# 1Berkshire welcomes Youth Leadership Program Class of 2026

PITTSFIELD – 1Berkshire welcomes its 18th Berkshire Youth Leadership Program class.

This group of 31 high school juniors from across the Berkshires was selected through a competitive application process to begin a year-long leadership development program that kicked off in late May with a three-day, two-night retreat held at Camp Becket.

The 2025-2026 Youth Leadership Class participants are: Marlie Auger - Drury High School,

Shiloh Bennet - Monument Mountain Regional High School, Zachary Berry - Taconic High School, Sunny Cart - Mount Greylock Regional High School, Reese Cook-Dubin

- Pittsfield High School, Armando Coreas - Pittsfield High School, Danielle Cramer - Drury High School, Sadie Cullen - Wahconah Regional High School, Charlotte Culver - Lenox Memorial Middle and High School

Haydn Derby - Mount Greylock Regional High School, Leanna Driscoll - Lee Middle and High School, Sara Ehle - Mount Greylock Regional High School, Benjamin Glockner - Pittsfield High School, Lucy Grant - Wahconah Regional High School, Robyn Gregg - Mount Greylock Regional High School, Sabine Guerra - Mount Greylock Regional High School, Clara Janis - BART Charter,

Cecelia Keogh - Mount

Greylock Regional High School, Elizabeth Klepetar - Pittsfield High School, Anna MacPherson - Charles H McCann Technical High School, Greta Mathews - Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, Gabriella Nicastro - Mount Greylock Regional High School, Anna Oliva - Lee Middle and High School, Grace Radzick - Wahconah Regional High School, Brooklyn Rodriguez - Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, Ethan Senzel - Lenox Memorial Middle & High School, Olivia Silvernail - Hoosac Valley High School, Abe Vengalil - Pittsfield High School, Alanmichael Victor - Lee Middle and High School, Gloria Williams - Pittsfield High School and Sage

Winkler - BART Charter.

This year's class brings a wide breadth of experiences, backgrounds, and potential to this program. The 1Berkshire Youth Leadership Program is focused on helping students in our region develop and grow through career opportunity awareness, leadership skill development, and the design and completion of a 9-month-long collective-impact project focused on the betterment of the Berkshires. Selected students have shown a significant capacity to grow their leadership skills and a strong desire to have a positive impact on their communities.

Over the next seven months, these 31 students will convene at locations all around the region to partici-

pate in workshops, engage in meaningful group dialogue, learn from speakers and one another, and to develop and execute their selected collective-impact project. With a focus on sustainability and diversity, equity, and inclusion, this year's program will also aim to engage students in meaningful discussions that create critical reflection and new levels of self awareness as we seek to support qualities associated with global citizenry and cultural humility

Made possible through the financial and resource support of sponsors including Berkshire Bank, Berkshire Health Systems, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA, NBT Bank,

and Berkshire Agricultural Ventures, the 1Berkshire Youth Leadership Program is coordinated by 1Berkshire with the dynamic support of the volunteer Youth Leadership Program Steering Committee, chaired by Julie Haagenon of New Pathways Coaching & Consulting. This committee is composed of professionals from across the region who commit their time and expertise to develop and facilitate the monthly sessions for the class, while also offering advice to the students as they look to their own futures.

1Berkshire is a county-wide marketing and economic development organization that works to simultaneously preserve, position, and promote Berkshire County's profound sense of place.

## Downtown Pittsfield celebrates Halloween Oct. 18

PITTSFIELD – Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. announced the return of Downtown Pittsfield... It's Alive to celebrate the Halloween season.

This year's event will be on Saturday, Oct. 18 and will feature three parts: a Kids' Zone on the St. Joseph's Church lawn from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; a Night Circus from 3-6 p.m. on Dunham Mall, North Street, and School Street and Depot After Dark: Teen Dance Party Edition from 7-9:30 p.m. on Liberty Street.

The Kids' Zone will feature a bounce house, Halloween-themed arts and crafts, games, face painting, balloon twisting, giveaways,

live entertainment, and more All Kids' Zone activities are free, and costumes are encouraged.

There will be free Face Painting and Balloon Twisting by BTC Family Entertainment (Bowie the Clown and Magic Brushes); a live DJ, and Opal Raven Cirque will perform a variety show at 11 a.m. and noon. Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. will host a Halloween Paint and Sip activity.

Berkshire Art Center will be there with a spooky ghost pull art project for all ages; and Berkshire Museum will be there with their Mobile Museum Unit and Large Dinosaur Bone Blocks for children to make their own dinosaurs.

There will be additional free activities provided by the Berkshire Athenaeum, Berkshire County Head Start/Pittsfield CFCE, Berkshire District Attorney's Office, Berkshire Music School, Foster MA/Adopt MA, Susan B Anthony Birthplace Museum, and The Berkshire County Kids' Place.

The Night Circus will feature live ska and punk rock bands presented by 413ska; a fire show with Last Ember; free Tarot Readings by Emily Dunsay Wild at 90 North Studio; a beer garden with Hot Plate Brewing Co.; specialty alcoholic beverages from handcrafted Catering; food from Flavourful Bites,

Hand Crafted Catering and Cookie's Cupcakes and vendors curated by Jake Seeley of Bomb Shack Vintage.

Last Ember will bring two fire performances to School Street at 4 and 5 pm. Jesse M. Thomas (Last Ember) has dedicated much of his life to the mastery of prop manipulation and fire-spinning. J professional training. 413ska will present three bands on Dunham Mall: Carson Daluy City Train from 3-4 p.m., Datura from 4:15-5 p.m. and HardCar from 5:15-6 p.m..

Depot After Dark: Teen Dance Party Edition is open to Berkshire County high school students only and attendees must have a current, valid high school ID.

## BCDA announces fall event Oct. 22

PITTSFIELD – The Berkshire County Development Alliance announces its fall event, "Fundraising in a Small Town," to be held Wednesday, Oct. 22 from 5:30-7:00 PM at Berkshire Health Systems' Bishop Clapp Building, 742 North St.

This engaging program will feature Lisa Lewis, Director of Development at Berkshire Health Systems, who will share her expertise and insights on strategies for successful fundraising in small and close-knit communities. With a career spanning Boston, San Francisco, and over two decades supporting the Berkshires, Lisa's perspectives will resonate with nonprofit professionals, volunteers, and community members alike.

All community members are welcome. Parking is available on Wahconah Street and at the intersection of Wahconah and North Streets. Light refreshments will be provided. People should RSVP by Friday, Oct. 17 via email [413BCDA@gmail.com](mailto:413BCDA@gmail.com) or visit [bit.ly/4cDsUjA](http://bit.ly/4cDsUjA) to learn more.

Founded over two decades ago, the Berkshire County Development Alliance is an informal group of 150+ development professionals who represent Berkshire area nonprofit organizations in a fundraising capacity. Members gather up to six times per year to share information and engage in dialogue about advancement issues affecting the industry. There are no fees to join and the group is open to all interested parties.

## REGION

# Calendar raffle benefits Cancer House of Hope

Team Butterflies of Hope will be selling raffle tickets during the month of October.

All proceeds will be donated to the Cancer House

of Hope in West Springfield. Cost is \$20 per raffle ticket. There will be 36 chances to win a prize.

Drawings will be every-day for the month of October.

Fridays will be bonus day, two names drawn on that day. For more information or to purchase calendar/raffle tickets

People may text at

413-478-7711, call Cheryl at 413-441-0868. Melinda at 413-244-5831, Joanne at 413-693-6731, Carole at 413-355-4838 and Cancer House of Hope at 413-733-1858.

Check us out on the web  
[countryjournal.turley.com](http://countryjournal.turley.com)

# OBITUARY

## Ann (Annie) Marie, Laurie, 66

Ann (Annie) Marie Laurie, 66 of Middlefield, passed away Sept. 20, 2025 at Berkshire Medical Center in the company of her daughter, Jessie Sullivan Laurie and her wife Mary F. Courtney after a courageous battle with a protracted illness.

Annie was blessed with a beautiful daughter in 1979, Jessie, who was the center of Annie's universe and for whom Annie was fiercely loyal and protective. Annie took great pride in nurturing and watching Jessie grow into the strong and independent woman she is today, just like her mother. Annie was the tree and Jessie, her own apple and neither of them would have wanted it any other way.

Annie was born in Springfield on Feb. 21, 1959, the daughter of Earl Laurie (deceased) and Marguerite Ryan Laurie, she was the sister to Doug Laurie (Sherry) and Shawn Laurie. After a time living among the grape vineyards of California, her family returned to Chester, Massachusetts by way of the Woodstock traffic jam which she remembered with great fondness. She attended Gateway Regional High School in the 70s, spending most of her time with her best friend Tina Cook, or in the art class cultivating her natural artistic talent that would become her touchstone and lifelong passion for the years to come.

As the adventurous person she was, Annie traveled back to California on a Greyhound bus in 1977 reconnecting with her favorite Uncle Ray and his clan

until returning to Middlefield where she would settle down, become the proud mother to Jessie and create her own family. She valued spending time with her mother sharing stories of her life in Canada, stopping by Doug's garage to catch up and often holding family gatherings at Annie's home for the holidays with various members of both the Laurie and Courtney families in attendance. Annie cherished the small-town community and relationships she made in Middlefield over the years and loved you all.

Annie was a collector of sorts, mostly of lost children, wild souls, eccentric misfits and artistic outcasts as she would sometimes refer to herself with unapologetic pride. She was the most authentic, generous and kind-hearted person you could meet with a touch of cantankerous sarcasm and humor thrown in on the side. She would, and did, give people the shirt off her back expecting nothing in return. If she had an opinion, and she usually did, about something that was important to her, she was brave enough to speak up and share it while accepting that others had a place for their own beliefs.

As her mother would say, Annie was always a free spirit and stubborn in the best way possible, both traits she carried with her throughout her life. She and her mother weathered the growing pains most mothers and daughters do and came



through the storm both the better for it.

Annie spent her early professional years working with special needs children in residential programs, where she and Mary met in 1984. They became fast friends, grew into partners and soon settled down with Jessie, as a family in all its meaning. After more than twenty years together, Annie and Mary officially tied the knot, on July 17, 2004. They were lifelong partners; co-Mom's to Jessie and the best of friends born of a life together of more than forty years. Annie was truly the yin to Mary's yang. They established a homestead, affectionately called Petticoat Junction in Middlefield, frequented by creatures of all descriptions, family and friends from all walks of life and blessed with the peace only mother nature can provide. A coffee and a game of dominos on the front porch listening to Bob Dylan and being visited by the not so occasional bear, hummingbirds, bald eagle affectionately named "six" and various other furry and feathery neighbors made Annie's day. It truly was the simple things in life that meant the most to her art, music and a good campfire with family and friends was really what mattered most.

She returned to art school in 1990 and was very proud to earn a 3.9 GPA and received her associate's degree in fine arts, from Berkshire Community

College. Learning and collaborating with the faculty and art students at BCC were some of Annie's most treasured relationships.

Annie was the original creator of the Art On No, community art project in Pittsfield, followed by her realizing her lifelong dream of opening her own community art gallery, A Reason To Pause Art and Artisans Gallery in 2022 in Cheshire. She treasured collaborating with her good friends, Bob Stone and Scott Taylor and would want them to know their friendship was deeply important to her always.

She is survived by her wife, Mary Courtney of Middlefield; her daughter, Jessie Sullivan Laurie of Becket and various grand puppies, her mother Marguerite Laurie, brothers Doug Laurie and Shawn Laurie, her beloved Courtney clan especially including her many nieces and nephews, who all held a very special place in Annie's heart, and large extended family of friends.

A celebration of life service will be at Becket Federated Church, 3381 Main St, Becket, on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025 at 11:30 a.m. with lunch to follow, across from the Becket Library.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Middlefield Senior Center c/o Middlefieldma.coa@gmail.com.

The family wishes to thank Dr. Alsmann, Dr. Olberg, the nurses and the incredible CCU staff of Berkshire Medical Center for their compassionate care.

## DEATH NOTICE

**LAURIE, ANN (ANNIE) MARIE**

Died Sept. 20 2025

Celebration of Life Service Oct. 4 at 11:30 a.m.  
Becket Federated Church, 3381 Main St., Becket  
Donations Middlefield Senior Center

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 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.*

## 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 Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.*

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

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD Senior Center Crawspace Structural Repairs and Renovations – Phase II Invitation to Bid

The Town of Middlefield is accepting Bids from state certified general contractors to make repairs and renovations to the crawspace area in the Town Senior Center located at 169 Skyline Trail in Middlefield, MA 01243. Work will include selective building demolition, existing building services MEP/FP selective demolition and new services, construction of an access door to the crawspace, installation of ventilation equipment, the installation of insulation in the crawspace, insulation of utility lines, and related work included in the plans and specifications.

Bid documents will be available commencing on September 29, 2025, by contacting the Town Assistant Administrator at [middlefield.assistant@gmail.com](mailto:middlefield.assistant@gmail.com), or by calling the Middlefield Town Hall at 413-623-2079 ext.2. Bids can also be picked up at the Select Board Office in person, from the Middlefield Administrative Assistant on Mondays from 1:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. and Wednesdays from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. The Select Board Office is located in the Town Hall, 188 Skyline Trail Mid-

dlefield MA 01243. There is no cost for the first set of Bid Documents.

A Pre-bid Site Visit will be held for all interested parties on October 6, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. at the front entrance to the Senior Center, 169 Skyline Trail Middlefield, MA 01243.

**The Bid deadline is October 15, 2025, at 2:00P.M.** Bids will be opened immediately after the close of Bidding. The project will start immediately after award (approximately October 22, 2025) and shall be completed no later than December 12, 2025.

Note: Massachusetts Prevailing Rates are required to be paid on this project.

Questions can be directed to Curt Robie, Member, Select Board by calling 413-623-2079, 413-374-2082, or by email: [middlefield.CDR@gmail.com](mailto:middlefield.CDR@gmail.com). 09/25, 10/02/2025

### NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Justin Day to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Inland Bank and Trust, dated December 17, 2015 and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in

Book 12155, Page 171, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Inland Bank and Trust, its successors and assigns to Wells Fargo Bank N.A., recorded on September 27, 2018, in Book No. 13089, at Page 30 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. to J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp., recorded on February 2, 2021, in Book No. 13965, at Page 108 J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp. to DLJ Mortgage Capital, Inc., recorded on May 19, 2022, in Book No. 14556, at Page 212 DLJ Mortgage Capital, Inc. to J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp., recorded on November 1, 2024, in Book No. 15273, at Page 290 DLJ Mortgage Capital, Inc. to J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp., recorded on June 20, 2025, in Book No. 15452, at Page 123 J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp. to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as owner trustee for RCAF Acquisition Trust, recorded on June 20, 2025, in Book No. 15452, at Page 126 for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **2:00 PM on October 14, 2025**, on the

mortgaged premises located at 14 Pleasant Street, Huntington, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT: The land in Huntington, in the County of Hampshire and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the southeasterly corner of land now or formerly of James Kirby at a stone post on the westerly side of Pleasant Street, so-called;

thence SOUTHERLY on said Pleasant Street one hundred and nineteen (119) feet to a stone post at land now or formerly of Mary E. Graney;

thence WESTERLY on land of said Graney about ninety-eight (98) feet to a stone post at land formerly of Fred P. Stanton;

thence NORTHERLY on land formerly of Fred P. Stanton one hundred and nineteen (119) feet to a stone post at land of said Kirby;

thence EASTERLY on land of said Kirby about ninety-eight (98) feet to a stone post, it being the place of beginning.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 12155, Page 168. These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the

benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCAF ACQUISITION TRUST Present holder of said mortgage By its Attorneys, HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C. 150 California St. Newton, MA 02458 (617)558-0500 26241

09/18, 09/25, 10/02/2025

### Town of Worthington Invitation for Bids Wood Heating System

The Town of Worthington is seeking a highly qualified contractor to design and install a renewable, modern wood heating system compliant with 225 CMR 16.00: the Alternative Portfolio Standard, to be located at the town's fire station at 51 Huntington Road. To request the complete IFB email Peggy at [selectboard@worthington-ma.us](mailto:selectboard@worthington-ma.us).

**Mandatory pre-bid site visit will be held at 4 PM on October 8th, 2025.**

Bids are due by noon, Friday, October 17th, 2024. It is necessary that the project be operational prior to the 2025/26 heating season. 10/02/2025

## ADAMS

### DCR lists viewing dates at Mount Greylock State Reservation

ADAMS – Beginning Saturday, Oct. 4 and continuing through Sunday, Oct. 19, the Department of Conservation and Recreation will limit recreational activities on the eastern vista on the summit of Mount Greylock State Reservation to viewing only on weekends and holidays.

Other activities like hang-gliding and paragliding will be permitted on weekdays, but not on weekends or holidays to ensure the safety of all park visitors, during peak fall foliage.

The park will be open for viewing only on the following days: Oct. 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 18 and 19.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

## WESTFIELD

### Westfield Bank promotes Kelly Pignatare to First VP

WESTFIELD – Kelly Pignatare recently was promoted to First Vice President, Manager of Retail Banking and Business and Government Deposit Services at Westfield Bank.

Pignatare has over two decades of banking experience, in both retail and business capacities. In her new role, she will drive deposit and loan growth, as well as customer service excellence, across all Westfield Bank branch locations and the bank's Business and Government Deposit Services Department, responsible for providing deposit and cash management ser-

vices to commercial and municipal customers.

"Kelly brings a valuable blend of experience, strong leadership and a deep commitment to community," said Kevin C. O'Connor, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Westfield Bank. "We're excited to see her continued growth at Westfield Bank and are confident in her ability to lead the Retail Banking and Business & Government



Kelly Pignatare

Deposit Services teams."

Pignatare has served in many roles at Westfield Bank, most recently as a Vice President and Regional Manager. In 2023, she graduated from the New England School

for Financial Studies, completing an intensive two-year program for banking professionals.

A local resident, Pignatare is deeply involved with the community, and serves as a board member

for the Pathlight Advisory Board and the Pioneer Valley Conference for Women, where she was chosen as a panelist for the 2025 conference held earlier this year.

Westfield Bank is a federally chartered savings bank organized in 1853 and is the largest publicly traded bank headquartered in Western Massachusetts. Currently, the bank has twenty-five branch offices, fifty ATMs and an additional thirty-three seasonal ATMs and serves Hampden and Hampshire counties in Western Massachusetts and Hartford County in Northern Connecticut.

## GOSHEN

# Council on Aging announces events

GOSHEN – The Goshen Council on Aging announces a foliage ride and picnic will take place on Friday, Oct. 3 at 11:30 a.m. at Mt. Sugarloaf State Reservation.

People should meet at the town parking lot. The COA arranged to have the Easy Ride Van drive those who would like a ride or they can choose to meet us there. They plan to have a picnic lunch at the top at 12:30 p.m.

There are trails to hike from the bottom if they would like or take a drive to the top and walk some trails from there. The van will leave the Goshen Town Parking Lot at 11:30 a.m. and Kerry needed to know if they would like to ride on the van by Sept 26. If they plan to drive themselves also let Kerry know so they have enough food for the picnic.

On Friday, Oct. 3 Community Connections Group meets from 10-11 a.m. downstairs in the Town

Hall. Jennifer O'Connell will be the presenter and she will complete a Sound Healing session with participants. She uses crystal bowls and chimes to promote relaxation, reduce stress and help the body enter a restorative state. If people have not yet tried this type of class, they should consider joining. It is a very unique and restful experience.

On Tuesday, Oct. 14 the monthly luncheon will be a festive one Martha and the Strummers, a thirteen piece ukulele band that includes several Goshen residents, will entertain after lunch. They came last year and had people dancing in the aisles with their lively music. The lunch will be catered by Spruce Corner Restaurant and they will have teriyaki chicken, vegetable fried rice, vegetables and a salad. They will also serve a festive and delicious dessert. People should wear Hawaiian shirts or colorful clothing to make this a

fun day. People should call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 by Tuesday, Oct. 6 to sign up. Suggested \$5 donation appreciated.

On Wednesday, Oct. 15 games group meets from 2-4 p.m. in the library. Games are available, but people may bring a game if they like. On Thursday, Oct. 16 Technology Help, Goshen's own Stephen Morley, will provide drop in help for technology questions from noon-2 p.m. in the library. This is held on the third Thursday of the month. The COA is grateful for his willingness to volunteer his time and talent.

On Tuesday, Oct. 21 from 12:30-1:30 at the Town Hall come meet the new public health nurse for the Foothills Health District, Lily Stafford RN, BSN. She plans to visit the Goshen COA monthly and can do blood pressure checks, answer health questions, referral questions and connect people

to resources.

On Tuesdays, Oct. 21 and 28 Highland Valley Elder Services provides lunches on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month with pick up from the Goshen Town Hall from 12:30-1 p.m. The meal choices on Oct. 21 are chicken and vegetable soup or turkey and gravy, and on Oct. 28 the meal choices are chicken and white bean chili or spinach and cheese quiche. The meals also include milk, vegetables, and a dessert. If people have not signed up and would like to, they may call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$4 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.

On Friday, Oct. 31 is Halloween. The COA plans on decorating a car and handing out treats at the Goshen Trunk or Treat Event this year. Volunteers

## BUCKLAND

# Historical Society to hold colonial sampler

BUCKLAND – The Buckland Historical Society will offer a Colonial Sampler at the Wilder Homestead, 129 Rte. 112, on Sunday, Oct. 12 from 2-5 p.m.

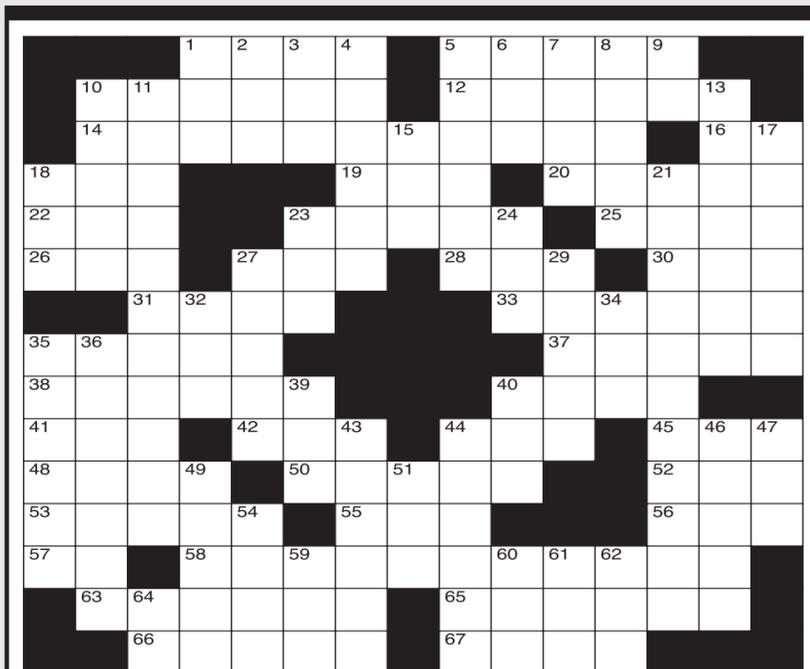
People will step into the past at the Wilder Homestead and sample activities from the Colonial era. There will be open hearth cooking, farm

animals, spinning, weaving, folk painting display, music of the 1700s and Morris dancers.

In addition, there will be tours through the Saltbox Home Museum, the Shoemaker Shop and view the restoration of the 1780 English barn. Admission is free.

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### CLUES ACROSS

- Native American people of CA
- Long periods of time (Brit.)
- Classroom tool
- Rods
- One who renews
- They start the alphabet
- Periodical (slang)
- Smooth singer Cole
- Dorsal sclerites in insects
- One from Utah
- The world of the dead
- Singer Redding
- Mafia head
- Wrongly
- Unhappy
- Anger
- Dark olive black
- Places to sit and

### CLUES DOWN

- Witch
- Utilize
- Writing utensil
- Where rockers work
- Becomes less intense
- Consume
- Type of catfish
- "Horsetown, U.S.A."
- Atomic #50
- The Muse of lyric poetry
- Brings back to life
- Humorous critiques
- Cool!
- Worst
- Wet dirt
- Useful
- Hebrew unit of liquid capacity

- Accompanies nook
- Vogue
- Highly excited

- High schoolers' test
- Internet device
- City in India
- A place to rest
- Chat responder
- A way to move on
- What consumers are given
- Digital audiotape
- More (Spanish)
- Disfigured
- White (Spanish)
- Church building
- Georgia rockers
- Surgeon's tool
- "Much\_\_ about nothing"
- Make by braiding
- Local area network
- Unit of work
- Indigenous person of Thailand
- Liquefied natural gas
- Distance to top

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

### ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Your energy is off the charts this week, Aries. This is the perfect time to start a new fitness regimen or tackle projects that you've been putting off for a while.

### TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Focus on your finances this week, Taurus. A new opportunity to increase your income or make an investment comes your way. Your practical nature will facilitate sound decision-making.

### GEMINI

May 22/June 21

Your communication skills are very powerful right now, Gemini. Whether it is a difficult conversation or a creative collaboration, you will find the right words to express yourself.

### CANCER

June 22/July 22

Take some time for self-care this week, Cancer. Your intuition is strong and your inner voice will lead you to what will ultimately bring security and comfort.

### LEO

July 23/Aug 23

Leo, you are shining brightly right now. This is your time to be seen and celebrated. Step into the spotlight at work or in your social circle. Your confidence will be contagious.

### VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

Productivity and organization are the name of the game this week, Virgo. You will feel a sense of satisfaction from checking off tasks and bringing order to your surroundings.

### LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Your natural charm and diplomatic skills make you a sought-after companion, Libra. This means your social life may be buzzing right now with plenty of people staying close.

### SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

You are in a powerful position to achieve your professional goals, Scorpio. A new project or recognition at work might be on the horizon. Stay focused.

### SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

Adventure is calling you, Sagittarius. Whether it is travel plans, a new work project or trying a new restaurant, you will be seeking novel experiences this week.

### CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Take some time for deep reflection, Capricorn. You can find clarity by looking inward and understanding what drives you. Expect some good news by midweek.

### AQUARIUS

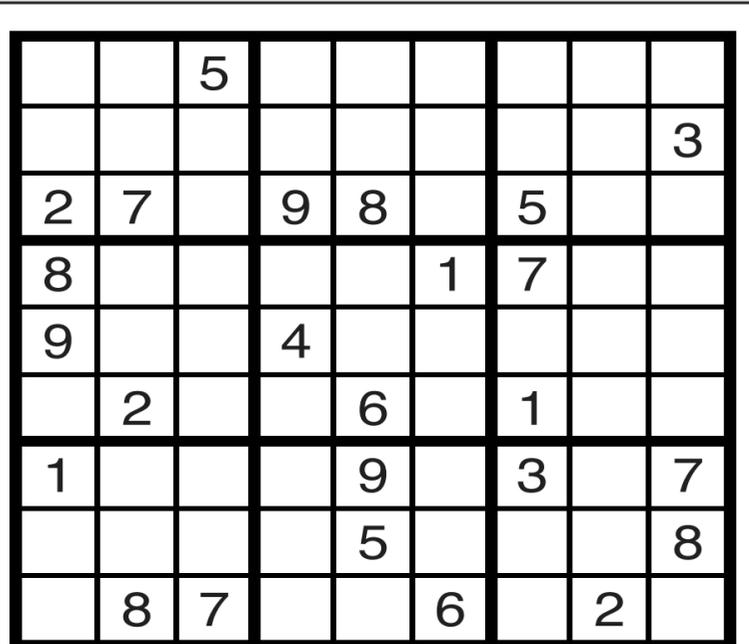
Jan 21/Feb 18

Your relationships are a great source of joy this week, Aquarius. You may connect with others who share your unique vision and ideas. Don't be afraid to be yourself.

### PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Creativity is flowing right now, Pisces. Devote some time to a passion project, whether it is art, music or writing. It is alright to daydream a little while as well.



## 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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**MISCELLANEOUS**

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Call Paul 413-206-8688.

Find archives of this local newspaper at [www.newspapers.turley.com](http://www.newspapers.turley.com)

**WANTED**

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**HOLE SPECIALIST.** Ludlow MA is looking to hire machine shop assistant. Good mechanical abilities and basic blueprint reading required. Full and part time positions available.  
Email Bob@HoleSpecialists.com

**PART TIME SNOWPLOW DRIVERS NEEDED**

Part time snowplow drivers are needed for the Town of New Braintree for the 2025-2026 season. Positions available for both CDL and non-CDL License.  
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hwsecretary@newbraintree.org.

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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29	30	31	32
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