

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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A message from the Turleys

Dear Reader,

Every week a team of reporters, editors and people who assemble the paper work hard to bring readers information they need to know about their community. It's hard work and we love it.

Our goal is to provide a clear reflection of the community, and share stories about issues and events in your town as well as those about your neighbors, family and friends; in essence, a clear reflection of the community. We provide news that is difficult to find anywhere else.

Turley Publications has been doing so for over 60 years now, and enjoys being an integral part of the community.

Every year we invite residents to join those who already subscribe to the *Country Journal*, so they too can be informed and join their neighbors in keeping up-to-date on so many aspects of the community. We do that by mailing an issue of the *Country Journal* to everyone in the Hilltowns, on us, so you can see for yourself what types of information we provide.

If you want to know when and why your taxes go up, who is running for election, what successes and challenges are in your school system, what others are doing to make your community a better place, and so much more, we hope you will consider subscribing.

We also value your opinions and ideas. Please let us know what's important to you by picking up the phone and calling us. Let us know if we're meeting your expectations.

You can also call us to let us know about an important event in your family's life. That's why we're here.

We love being a part of this community and maybe even, in a small way, a part of your family.

We hope to be arriving each week at your home holding up that mirror, the *Country Journal*.

Patrick Turley, CEO
Keith Turley, President
Turley Publications

HUNTINGTON

Farm stands see rise in theft

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

It was a social media post that read like a middle school math problem.

If Sally stops at a local farm stand and buys a medium pumpkin, a small pumpkin and a bunch of tomatoes, how much should she pay? The answer definitely more than \$7, which is what a woman recently left in the till at the Jorritsma Farm Stand on Old Chester Road in Huntington.

Leah Jorritsma's stand has posted prices that set the costs for the two pumpkins at \$8 and the tomatoes should have run a few more dollars, depending upon how many the woman, a repeat underpaying offender, took.

Jorritsma's post on the Hilltown Community Forum's Facebook page continued. "Someone this evening grabbed two medium pumpkins and left \$3, when they are \$5 each," she wrote. "Another one paid less for a pumpkin than they should have." Jorritsma reports this is a growing trend, which matters because the farm stand supports the upkeep of



Leah Jorritsma operates a farm stand on Old Chester Road in Huntington and is grappling with a rise in non-payment and under payment for items at her stand.

Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long

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BLANDFORD

Board seeks approval for pole

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Select Board conducted a pole hearing prior to the regular board meeting last Monday, Sept. 29.

Conservation Committee member Colleen Doyle told the board that she felt Eversource should present their case for relocation and/or installation of utility poles to the Conservation Commission because she felt the poles were solely to benefit the additional power generated to the substation expansion.

Eversource representative explained this new infrastructure is designed to promote structure integrity and the addition of three new poles would prevent other poles from

POLE, page 11

WILLIAMSBURG

First Congregational welcomes new minister

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

He's compassionate, caring, and considers himself to be "an agent of change."

This is the new pastor of the First Congregational Church, Rev. Jack Kraaz. If people can say the "Wizard of Oz" he said, they can say Jack Kraaz.

Arriving quite by accident, according to Kraaz, after retiring from Ripon, Wisconsin in 2011, he has taken interim minister positions around the country. He has come to Williamsburg because the church seemed open to looking at avenues of renewal. There is, what he calls, a "no change concept" having been without a

minister for three years.

He is comfortable in his office, which has acquired new furniture and though the décor is somewhat dated, "I can meet people here," he said, much preferring to get up from behind the desk and sit facing the visitor. He sees the desk as a barrier.

During the pandemic in 2020, he and his wife Sarah spent a year in Northampton; daughter Cecile was at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

While they had considered city life, think



Rev. Jack Kraaz



Jennifer Burdick

somewhere like New York City, for their senior years, they found the "vibe" in Northampton culturally invigorating. "We loved it because the community is protective of anybody society deems to be different, and that includes ethnicity," he said.

Now in his second

month here, he spoke of the church's involvement with the Haydenville Congregational Church and the Cake and Eat program. The churches alternate on preparing "from scratch" meals for the homeless community.

"I'm here because this group of people is willing to serve the lost, the least, the marginalized and to restore." He added that is good and important to be "a participant in the healing of the world. I do what I want to do, helping people and look for the spark of light and love." His "Oscar" socks speak to that...think Sesame Street; he is playful and celebratory and said "the good life is the sweet life."

There is the frequent call around the doorjamb, "Hey Jen," as he asks for additional information from Jennifer Burdick, church administrator. She is knowledgeable about all church activities and has a solid base of information for Kraaz.

The relationship context he subscribes to is "the only place you make change." The octogenarian will be 81 years young next month. "I decided I want to live until I die."

His philosophy follows the theme; "If I'm not doing, learning, cultivating or growing," then he can't be living. It's his choice, "to live until I

MINISTER, page 7

HUNTINGTON

Group seeks to improve communications, clarify bylaws

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

A special meeting between the Huntington Select Board, Planning Committee, Zoning Board and Building Commissioner was held on Wednesday, Oct. 1.

Present were Select Board Chairman Roger Booth, member Bill Hathaway, Town Administrator Jennifer

Peloquin, Planning Board Chair Linda Hamlin; Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer George Peterson and Zoning Board members Karon Hathaway (chairman), Victoria Minella-Sena, and Deresa Helems. Select board member John McVeigh was absent.

The question at hand was whether or not two recent actions by homeowners were allowed by Peterson and vio-

lated the town's current zoning bylaws. At issue was the construction of a breezeway and garage at 9 Mountain View Road and a three-week earth removal operation by homeowners at 50 Littleville Road.

Booth opened the meeting stating that he believed that the issue wasn't about a person, but about the current system in place and the goal of this meeting was to come

to a consensus about a solution. Booth also moved that, for this meeting, people could only speak when called upon by the Chair, instructing those present that he would direct questions from the floor and that people were to only speak when called upon. This was affirmed by Bill Hathaway.

Starting with the 9 Mountain View Road property, owned by Deborah McQuade, the Zoning Board

said the property was located in district R25 and that Appendix A of the town's Zoning bylaws state that construction in that part of town must be 30 feet from the road and 20 feet from the side and rear borders of the property.

Building Commissioner George Peterson then read a statement where he acknowledged that the Zoning Board had emailed him on this issue and said that his failure to

acknowledge the emails was not intentional. "I regret the confusion which resulted from a seeming lack of zoning enforcement," Peterson said. He has submitted a summary report for 50 Littleville Road and is working to complete his 9 Mountain View Road summary. He hopes that by sharing his cell phone number, communication between the

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HILLTOWNS

RECREATION COMMITTEE HOSTS APPLE PICKING



Huntington Recreation Committee held their annual apple picking at Jameson's High Meadow farm in Chester on Sept. 27. Forty people participated. Joanna and Mary Arkoette enjoyed picking apples using this tool to reach apples higher on the trees. Submitted photo

Mass DOT lists upcoming I-90 roadwork

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

All work will be completed by 5:30 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 10 ahead of the holiday weekend. All work is weather dependent and

will take place at the following locations and times:

In Stockbridge and West Stockbridge drainage structure cleaning will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound from mile marker 0.0 to mile marker 7.8 nightly now through Thursday night, Oct. 9 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. the following morning. In Becket bridge painting work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 20.0 daily now

through Thursday, Oct. 9 from 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

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.

FALL SCENERY SEEN ALONG LITTLE RIVER



This rock in the Little River in Huntington is known as pulpit rock.



This rock resembles Moby Dick. It is located along the Little River in the Knightville Dam floodplain.



Tiny mouse prints are seen in the river mud on a beautiful fall day. Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniel

THEFT

from page 1

her animals, which includes food and shavings.

Jorritsma is just asking for people to pay for what they take. She has cameras at the stand that capture the license plates of the people who stop, and provides evidence of what they take. She went on, "I have been stiffed by multiple people this past weekend and if it continues the stand will shut down."

Her post, dated Monday, Sept. 28, had 32 comments from people over the first two days. All expressed appreciation for Jorritsma's affordable produce and called on people to do better. A few people suggested she post footage of the incidents on Facebook and call people out publicly or even press charges.

Rachael Dubiel of Lil' Bits Farm in Huntington also installed cameras due to prior issues at her stand. She said her customers have been very good and the stand has a prominent sign saying, "Smile, you're on camera," which may have deterred problems altogether.

But others report they are seeing a climb in free-loaders. Local grower Kate Charbonneau also has a farm stand in town, but posted that she decided not to sell the dozens of pumpkins she'd

grown this year. "You can't put a price on the time and effort that goes into them," Charbonneau wrote. "It's 120 days minimally for them to grow, watering 2-3 times a day in a heat wave." She added that you can go to Walmart and buy a huge pumpkin for \$5 but to her, the value of items like this is so much more.

Kristie Gentile posted that she has a policy of "Take what you need, pay what you can" at her farm stand, explaining that all of the proceeds from her stand support her non-profit horse rescue operation. "In the beginning it was great, but now it's kind of become a free for all," Gentile wrote. "I've thought about closing it down a few times. Sucks for those who really try to help us out."

Jorritsma moved to her home in Huntington in 2017 and put the stand out in 2018. At first, they sold eggs, but then progressed to organic vegetables like summer squash, zucchini, pumpkins, butternut and pattypan squash. She also makes organic dog bones for the stand and might put out a few loaves of zucchini bread from time to time, as long as her dogs don't capture them first. She added tomatoes and corn this year. The corn

didn't sell as well as she'd hoped, but the corn stalks all went for those seeking fall decorations.

Like the other micro-farmers, Jorritsma uses proceeds from the stand to support the cost of her livestock. For example, she's found the best price for feed is \$15/bag at Gateway Farm and Pet and she goes through four bags in three weeks to support her 40 chickens. She swaps out the shavings for their pen weekly, which runs \$8 per bundle. She uses a coop deodorizing product that costs \$20 for two cleanings. In the winter, they run a solar powered electrical line to keep the water from freezing. More recently, they created a covered run for the flock, but had to run a gutter to remove rain water. In a torrential downpour, she buys pellet horse bedding to absorb the water. "It's probably a break even proposition because come winter, the chickens drop production," Jorritsma said.

The going rate for eggs is \$5 per dozen among

homestead farmers like Jorritsma and she's proud of the fact that none of them raised their prices during Covid, when grocery stores gouged customers with \$10 per dozen for eggs.

Her stand used to be positioned at the end of her driveway, which occasionally caused problems getting her school bus out when customers were there. Jorritsma drives for area school districts via Lecrenski Brothers.

They moved the stand to the edge of her property in August and lost a dozen eggs the first night. She has cameras at the stand but thinks most people don't notice the sign stating that. She finds that 99% of her customers typically pay what they owe, although a few people have even been leaving extra more recently, she thinks to help make up for these recent losses.

Her message to people: "If you are hard up on cash, just come and talk with me. I'll work with you."

Beth Richardson of Charter Oak Farm in Huntington agrees. She supervises bus drivers at Lecrenski, who lose their income in the summer months. She is happy to work with them and provides eggs and produce for their families

when needed and finds that most of her drivers pay her back in the fall when the bus driving resumes.

Richardson says that for the most part people pay what they owe, but there are a few, who only leave \$1. Worse, there have been instances when people not only take items, they pretend to leave money in the till while they're actually making off with the cash, as well.

The Richardsons have cameras and they've been watching. They recently put out four dozen eggs and three dozen left without payment. "That's \$15 that we worked for to make life easier and more convenient for them," Richardson said.

"We do lose money and it's a lot of money after a while," Richardson noted. She not only sells her own products, but purchases items to resell if she thinks her customers will like them and if it can promote other growers and businesses. They resell things like maple syrup, honey, chocolate milk and Skyre from area vendors. "All of this adds up. We don't mark it up much. Our goal is convenience for the community," Richardson said.

She reports that, like Jorritsma, she is willing to work with customers, who are short on funds. "We have an elderly person, who comes for eggs and only has \$3. She apologizes, but they are happy to let her have them at that cost. Anybody who we know is in need,

and they ask, that's fine," Richardson said.

But the flip side is they also use the money they make from the stand for the grain for their chickens and cows. Most of this is for the grain; it costs a couple of hundred dollars every week to feed these animals. They care for 85 chickens and most weeks have a couple of dozen eggs to sell. Sometimes the stand funds a needed part for their tractor. Occasionally, they can even treat themselves to a dinner out. And they also buy more chickens, cows and pigs for their own meat.

Both Richardson and Jorritsma say they're not sure what to do. Richardson, too, has thought about posting pictures of the free-loaders at the stand but hesitates to do so. "But at the same time what if that person really did need it and we just didn't know it?," Richardson posed. "I don't want anybody to go hungry, but I don't want to be ripped off."

Jorritsma also doesn't want to shame people on social media, despite others encouraging her to do so on the Facebook post. Her best response, she thinks, may be to bring evidence to the police chief and ask him to confront the woman, who stiffed her last weekend, and has done so previously. She'd like to see if he'll advise the woman to stop going to Jorritsma's stand altogether, so she can stay open for her paying customers.



Karen Kaminski-Marchetto

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HUNTINGTON

Council on Aging list events

HUNTINGTON – A fall birthday celebration and bingo will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 1 p.m. at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Road.

On Wednesday, Oct. 15 from 1-2 p.m., Bob Kidd will provide a presentation on Scat Identification. David Herrera will perform on Wednesday, Oct. 22 from 2-3 p.m. Blood pressure checks will be provided by the Hampshire Public Health

Preparedness Coalition's nursing team on Wednesday, Oct. 29 from 1-1:30 p.m.

Also on Wednesday, Oct. 29, the movie "Halloween" will be shown at 2 p.m. The Hilltown Memory Café is held weekly on Wednesday at 2 p.m. The weekly café provides seniors with activities while their caregivers participate in a support group. The café is open to all with and without memory issues. The café is made possible by a

grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act and by a grant from the Huntington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

All events are free and open to residents of any community. For more information, people may call Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283.

Trunk or Treat event happens Oct. 25

HUNTINGTON – Trunk or Treat will be held on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 5 p.m. at the Huntington Public Library.

People may sign up to host a trunk with their favorite theme by emailing recreation@huntingtonma.us or calling Vicki at 413-667-0085. There will be

live music and a bonfire following. This is a collaboration between the Recreation Committee, Huntington Public Library and the Huntington Fire Association.

A bonfire was part of the Halloween celebration in Huntington.



This family hosted a trunk at last year's Trunk or Treat in Huntington.

Submitted photos



Dale Rogers, organizer of the Empty Bowls fundraisers and owner of the Gray Catbird pottery studio, sets out hand-crafted bowls for their first event at the Chester Train Station, which was held Sept. 27.

Submitted photo

First ever Empty Bowls event benefits food pantry

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – Dale Rogers, organizer of a four-week series of "Empty Bowls" fundraisers, reports that the first event held Sept. 27 at the Chester Railway Station raised \$845 for the Huntington Food Pantry.

"It was very encouraging and went smoothly," Rogers reported. "It included the sale of 28 bowls and a generous donation collected and delivered by the Chester Fire Department. We are so grateful for the support of the Chester folks."

"Empty Bowls" events are taking place from 3-6 p.m. each Saturday. Community members can purchase a pottery bowl made by Rogers and Master Potter Linda Siska for a suggested price of \$25. As a thank you, each bowl will be filled with a choice of soup (chicken noodle or vegetable) and a roll. Area musicians will perform. Children's portions will be offered in small, disposable bowls at a suggested donation of \$5.

The Huntington Food Pantry, located at the Pioneer Valley Assembly of God Church on 63 Old Chester Road, has had their federal grant funding cut in half for 2025-2026, leaving a \$30,000 deficit to be filled by other grants, fundraisers and public contributions. The pantry offers shelf stable food items (cereal, canned vegetables and fruit, canned meat, soup and more), fresh produce, baked goods, dairy products and an array of proteins (pork, beef, chicken, fish). It currently serves 45-60 families each week, who live among a dozen hilltown communities and added 188 new patrons in the first six months of this year.

Rogers, owner and teacher at the Gray Catbird Pottery Studio in Huntington, is holding three more events on consecutive Saturdays. Oct. 4 at Montgomery Town Hall was set to feature musical entertainment by Jerry and Kara Noble, who will perform again on Oct. 11 at Stanton Hall in Huntington. The series concludes on Oct. 18 at the Pioneer Valley

Assembly of God Church in Huntington, with music provided by members of the PVAG Worship Team.

Rogers reports that she has also received some donations to help cover the overhead so that all funds raised can go to the Huntington Food Pantry. The Mennonite Youth Group is preparing and donating the dinner rolls each weekend. Performers are donating their time and venues have waived their fees. Darryl Fisk of Moltenbreds is preparing the soup at cost, which is the only overhead that Rogers has to cover.

"The Huntington Food Pantry and the whole Gray Catbird team (teachers and students) are very grateful for the generosity of Moltenbreds Market, the Mennonite community, our local musicians, the volunteers who have signed up to help at every event, and for the support and participation of our whole hilltown community-at-large," Rogers said. "This is how we can fix a little bit of our chaotic world. We come together to help each other."

Corrections policy

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

Corrections will be printed in the same section where the error originally occurred.

Correction

The Sept. 25 issue of the *Country Journal* listed Deen Nugent's name as Pat Nugent in error in an article about the 75th anniversary celebration for the Hilltown Community Health Centers.

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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN



SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

When will my disability become my regular Social Security?

Dear Rusty:

I hope you can answer this question.

I'm currently receiving Social Security Disability benefits, and I will be turning 65 in February 2026. I'm confused as to how Social Security Disability transitions to regular Social Security, and when. I assume it's age 65, but maybe it's my retirement date?

Also, does the amount remain the same or will it change? I'm not working. I've been on SSDI for about 15 years. Thank you.

Signed: Disabled Senior

Dear Disabled Senior:

If you are collecting Social Security Disability Insurance benefits, those SSDI benefits will automatically convert to become your regular Social Security retirement benefit when you reach your SS Full Retirement Age, which, in your case, is age 67. For information, FRA today is somewhere between age 66 and 67, depending on your year of birth, and the full retirement age for everyone born in 1960 or later is age 67.

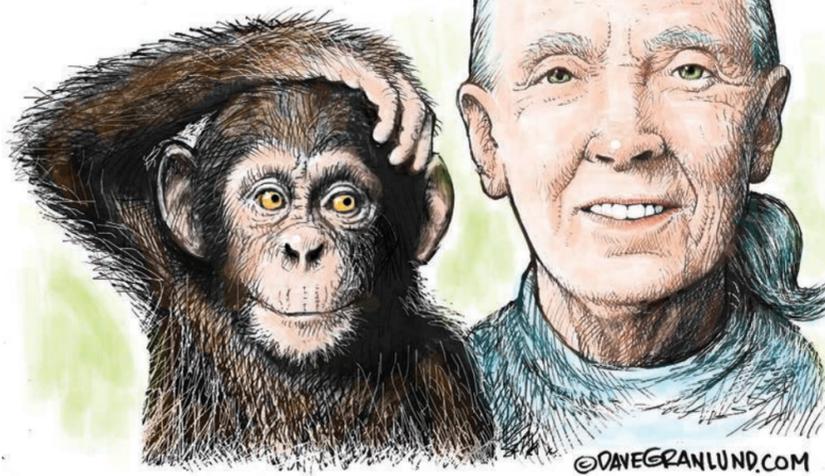
The change from SSDI to your regular Social Security benefit will be transparent to you because your monthly benefit amount will remain the same. SSDI benefits were originally awarded to you based upon your full retirement age entitlement when you applied for SSDI, even though you hadn't yet

reached your FRA when you went on SSDI. Thus, the monthly benefit amount will not change because it is based on your lifetime earnings record, from before you became disabled.

FYI, although age 65 was once Social Security's "retirement age," full retirement age for Social Security today is based on the year you were born. So, your SSDI benefit will automatically switch to become your regular Social Security retirement benefit as soon as you reach age 67. Essentially, the only thing that will change is the Social Security Trust Fund from which your benefits will be paid.

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 informational purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Jane Goodall 1934 - 2025



GUEST COLUMN

A unique question on a unique plant

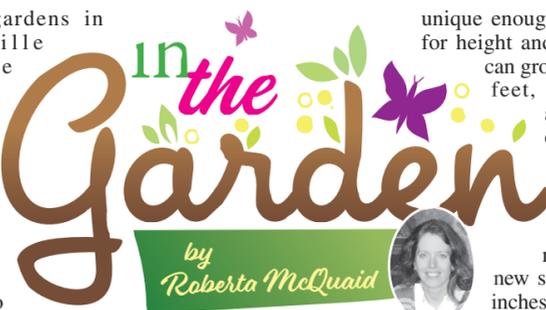
Sue, who gardens in Gilbertville, called the Garden Lady with a question about Stinging Nettle. Apparently, she has it growing in numerous places on her four-acre property and wants to eradicate it.

"Roberta, are you familiar with this plant?" All I could say, was "Ah, yes," and then I began the story.

Not too long ago I was grabbing weeds by the handful, stuffing them into a bucket. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye I saw the familiar saw-tooth shaped leaf and distinctive hairy stems within my clutches. As soon as my brain registered what I had just plucked, my hand started to sting...burn, really.

Yup, I was fooled again by stinging nettle. Ice helps a little, but usually the burn has to run its course.

Once you have identified stinging nettle, it won't be hard to miss. Urtica dioica and other members of



by Roberta McQuaid

unique enough to spot, look for height and girth! Nettles can grow as tall as five feet, maybe more, and make large colonies easily, thanks to a tangled web of underground runners that sprout new stems every few inches.

Once it has gotten a foothold it can be difficult to eradicate – think mint but on a larger, pickier scale! Expect to find it growing in rich soil along the forest's edge, in moist woodlands and even flood plains.

If you shuddered at my suggestion of eradicating stinging nettles, chances are you are aware of some of its reported health benefits. Some herbalists even go as far as to plant it on purpose!

I'll admit I even bought some dried leaves once to use along with other herbs in a spring tonic rich in vitamins and minerals. Although it grows wild all over my property I was afraid to harvest it! Since then, I have learned

GARDEN, page 5



Red-bellied woodpecker

On Sept. 30, I saw two red-bellied woodpeckers fly from one tree to another.

Since I do not feed the birds suet or seeds until winter due to bears, I had not noticed them before. The red-bellied woodpecker has a black and white barred back and a pale belly. Males have a red crown and nape and the females have just a red nape, but no crown.

These woodpeckers cling to tree bark and use their stiff tail feathers for support while they probe into the bark for insects. White is visible on their wings in flight. They are about nine inches long, the same size as the hairy woodpecker.

Like other woodpeckers, they have an undulat-

ing flight. They pick at the bark rather than drill into it like many other woodpeckers. They inhabit woodlands and forests from old stands of oak and hickory to young hardwoods and pines. They also appear at backyard feeders especially for suet.

They nest in a cavity excavated in dead wood. Males may begin cavity excavation with the female selecting one of the holes and completing it. The female lays two to six eggs. Their most common call is a shrill rolling "kwirr" or "churr" given by both sexes. They also make a "cha cha cha" sound.

Helping birds

Another way to help birds is to plant native trees, shrubs and plants in ones yard. Many provide a food source and others become a nesting site or shelter. Leaving a section of yard not mowed and letting it "run wild" also attracts birds, but provides food, nesting sites and shelter. Putting out bird feeders and water sources also bring birds to one's yard, but they also

attract black bears and other unwanted visitors.



Blue jay

Blue jays

I heard blue jays squawking away on Sept. 30. I looked toward the noise and saw four blue jays flitting about among the trees. They were near a winter feeding spot. In winter, I put out shelled peanuts, which is a favorite of blue jays and tufted titmice to name a few. The first year I fed peanuts, I put out unshelled peanuts. They make a mess with the peanut husks, but I enjoyed watching them fly off with a whole peanut and opening it to get the peanuts inside.

Brimfield birds

A Brimfield birder, who emails regularly said, "In



By Ellenor Downer



Catbird

the yard most summer visitors have headed south but catbirds are still around and a couple of male towhees were seen last week. Also a male and female common yellowthroat visited the bird bath."

He said, "I filled the hummingbird feeders last week but haven't seen a hummingbird in several days and the feeders haven't been used much because they are still almost full."

BIRDS, page 5

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.

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.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

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

Mail letter to Country Journal, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or mail your letter to: countryjournal@turley.com.



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OPINION

Three Signs That You're a Difficult Patient

Difficult patients come in all shapes and sizes, but they all have one thing in common: they make life harder for their healthcare providers, whether they know it or not.

Healthcare providers not only work in a frustrating, fast-paced healthcare system, they spend much of their time helping people who won't help themselves. Are you one of them? If so, it could be interfering with your healthcare and therefore your health!

Here are three signs that your providers might think you're a difficult patient:

You Don't Follow Doctors' Orders

Noncompliance is one of the most pressing issues in healthcare today. When patients don't follow their care plans or medication guidelines, problems arise.

Noncompliant patients have poorer health outcomes—and they waste everyone's time and money.

Yet if a provider were to ask a patient, "Do you plan to be non-compliant?" most patients would exclaim "no!"

So, what's the disconnect? Noncompliance happens for many reasons: a lack of understanding, an inability to pay for prescriptions, or a myriad of behavioral health and social issues.

Unfortunately, it's unlikely your doctor will ask you, "What's your plan for following these instructions?" But if you tend to ignore your doctor's instructions, you need to create a plan to do just that.

You Come off as Being Angry or Entitled

Some patients have good reason to be unhappy with the quality of their healthcare. Some have been on the receiving end of medical error. Some feel they've been treated poorly or have skewed perceptions of the healthcare system.

Whatever the reason, angry, entitled patients are



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

your health



their own worst enemies. Alienating care providers rarely results in better health outcomes.

Doctors, nurses and social workers are human beings. As such, they gravitate to those who are pleasant to deal with. They may subconsciously steer clear of difficult patients and family members. Frankly, in these situations, all a provider can do is to listen to a patient's complaints and address whatever is in their power.

It's never okay to berate a care provider, yet it happens all the time. Often patients don't realize how badly they're behaving. Find a way to share your concerns or frustrations with civility, even on a bad day.

You Talk Too Much During Appointments

When patients talk non-stop, it makes it challenging for providers to discern the important information from everything else. It's rather

like the boy who cried wolf; doctors may eventually tune out.

Doctors have limited time to see each patient. Excessive talkers unknowingly steal time from the next patient, while making it harder for providers to hone in on what's important.

Ask yourself: who does most of the talking during your doctor visits?

How to Be a Good Patient

If you want good healthcare—and who doesn't?—start by being a good patient. Follow your physician's instructions and medications as prescribed, even when you don't feel like it.

Share your healthcare concerns with your physician, but in a respectful manner. Ditto your frustrations. Don't create distractions from the main issue: your health!

Be mindful that in today's healthcare environment, ER doctors and hospitalists are generally allowed

about five minutes per patient. Doctors' office visits are booked in 15-minute increments. So be prepared: create a list of issues you want to discuss and keep the conversation on point.

Remember, it's never in your best interest to be a difficult patient. Partner with your providers to give them what they need, so they can best attend to your health.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NShore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

GARDEN

from page 4

that once cooked or dried, the stinging disappears.

Nettles have been used to treat all kinds of ailments over the years. Urtication was a common, albeit curious, practice in ancient times. It involved slapping inflicted body parts with bunches of stinging nettles to impart a cure of a particular ailment.

Slapping below a man's navel was thought to improve his virility. If a paralyzed limb was slapped it was hoped feeling would be renewed.

There are other bizarre accounts of the application of this herb. I read one case of crushed leaves being packed into the nose to stop a nose-bleed. Ouch! Or used in juice form to make hair grow. Grow? Maybe, but stand on end a definite!

All kidding aside, there

are other benefits of nettles that go beyond folklore.

Studies are being conducted for its use in treating prostate problems, asthma, allergies and arthritis.

Whether or not nettles are part of your apothecary chest, be sure to handle them with kid gloves! Although the stinging and burning sensation may last for only a few minutes, it very well could last for hours!

That brings me back to Sue's question. There are multiple ways to try and eradicate the plant. You can suit up and hand pull or get the mower out and mow the area as you would the lawn. Repeated mowings during active growth will eventually kill it.

You can also take a soil test and make the necessary recommendations to

improve the soil to a point that the grasses in your field will thrive and choke out the stinging nettle. Small areas can be covered in black plastic—again, you would do this when the plant is in active growth. Usually a month or more is necessary for this route to be successful.

Spot spraying with weed killers in another option but one that I only use as a very last resort. Good luck!

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 with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

BACKYARD

from page 4

We didn't see song birds but a few ducks, a couple of great blue herons, three green herons (good looks at one quite close) and one horned grebe. A pair of beaver were out enjoying the nice day and we got good looks at them. A few people walking the trail had never seen beavers before and were quite excited and asked lots of questions. Do they eat fish?"

Warren ponds
The Brimfield resi-

dent frequently visits ponds in Warren. He saw a bald eagle one day and yesterday (Sept. 29) in addition to three great blue herons I saw a northern harrier and two male turkeys.

Trail camera

The Brimfield resident said in his email, "The trail camera near the bird bath captured a visit by a bear one night. Three days later a bear visited again and chewed open a pumpkin and ate the seeds and

then went to one of the poles with sunflower seed heads and knocked the pole down. It didn't bother another pole with seed heads."

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.



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News, photo publication policy

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

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

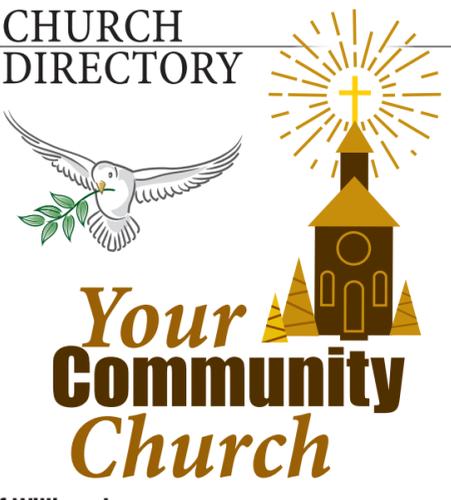
Deadline is Friday at NOON.



Pioneer Valley Assembly of God

Pastor Javier Melendez
63 Old Chester Rd.,
Huntington MA 01050
413-667-3196
pvaglfe@gmail.com
www.pioneervalleyag.org
Facebook: Pioneer Valley Assembly of God
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

CHURCH DIRECTORY



Hilltown Community Church

Rev. Dr. Robert Perreault
55 Main St., Russell, MA 01071
413-275-3232
Office: 413-862-3341
hilltownchurch3341@gmail.com
Sunday Mornings 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Williamsburg

Rev. Jack Kraaz
4 North Main St., Williamsburg, MA 01096
413-268-7557 • burgychurch@gmail.com • burgychurch.org
Facebook: First Congregational Church of Williamsburg
YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHyeekxw5w
Office Hours: 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 • parish@holyfamilyrussell.org
Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m.
Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Your Community Church

OPINION

Warning signs of unhealthy relationships

By members of the Southern Hills Domestic Violence Task Force
Kim Savery, Heather Roy, Lindsey Maxwell, Phil Barry, Desmond Whalen, Stephanie Conway, Donna Larocque and Monica Moran
SouthernHillsDV TaskForce@gmail.com

today could prevent years of harm tomorrow. It makes sense that teens get confused. Most relationships start out healthy enough and if they do become unhealthy it doesn't usually happen quickly or with consistency. There are often cycles that include bad times, followed by apologies and a return to the good times. But if a relationship is headed towards abuse, there can be important signs that can be easy to miss, especially for young people. Intense jealousy can look like love. Possessiveness and pressure to spend a lot of time together, even at the expense

of other friendships, can feel flattering. Controlling behavior can look like a partner who just wants to take care of you, make all the plans and maybe even pay for everything. Mind games and gas-lighting can make teens feel that it is their fault if they are mistreated, and that if they only tried harder their relationship would return to how good it was at the beginning. If things go bad, a partner's plea for loyalty can be convincing, especially when coupled with promises to change. And leaving a relationship can become difficult. Their partner may threat-

en to share intimate photos or secrets on social media, to trash talk them among shared friends or to find some other way to make them regret leaving. Their partner may plead with them to stay, saying they don't know what they will do to themselves if their partner leaves or claiming that their partner is the only one who understands them and the only one that can help them do better. This complexity explains in part why a 2023 survey of Hampshire county youth showed that over one-third of 12th grade students (38%) have at least one friend who has been abused by a dating partner. This is

not something that is happening to just a few teens or something that can be easily dismissed. Teens need guidance, and they need this guidance whether they are being harmed, the ones causing harm, or even witnessing harm. Many people ask us what they can do to help. Here is our answer: Talk about it. Raise the topic. Dive in. Ask the teens in your life what they think about the relationships they see and why. These are not one-time conversations. We can use any opportunity – a song, a movie, a post – to gently raise the topic over time. It helps to

listen without judgment and to add what we know little by little, rather than downloading everything we know at once. If teens disagree with us, this can be a good thing. Let them struggle with new ideas. This is often when the best learning happens. To learn more about how to have these conversations check out loveisrespect.org, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline that focuses on young people ages 13-26. Research shows that one in five people who experience relationship abuse have their first experience of abuse as a teen. We have a chance to change their trajectory, one conversation at a time.

NORTHAMPTON

Hosmer Gallery showcases collages

NORTHAMPTON – The Forbes Library, 20 West St., hosts collages by Kristi W. Colbert, Maureen G. Manning and Ryan Mihalay. Exhibit dates are now through Thursday, Oct. 30. An artists reception will be

held Thursday, Oct. 9 from 5-8 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. The gallery is located on the second floor of the library.



Local chorus invites the public to sing along

NORTHAMPTON – Heart of the Valley Chorus, a women's voices barbershop a cappella group, is inviting members of the community to sing along with them at three free, open rehearsals this holiday season. Anyone aged 9 to 99 who enjoys singing in the "treble" range, soprano, alto, mezzo and high men's parts, are encouraged to come learn a few seasonal and holiday songs and then perform alongside the chorus at the Bombyx Center for Arts and Equity in Northampton on Dec. 13. Singers under 16 are welcome with an adult. Last holiday season, the chorus welcomed over 20 new visitors from up and down the Connecticut River

Valley. There are no frightening auditions and singers do not need to be able to read music. And while "Sweet Adeline" barbershop singing has traditionally been for women, Heart of the Valley chorus is open to anyone who can sing comfortably in the treble or 'traditionally female' vocal range. Heart of the Valley Chorus has been bringing its unique blend of barbershop harmonies to the Connecticut Valley for over 40 years. Members come from Northampton, Greenfield, Belchertown, Hadley, South Hadley, Easthampton, Westhampton, Goshen, Williamsburg, Holyoke and Chicopee, and range in age from their 20's to their 70's!

Singing a variety of music - jazz, Broadway, contemporary, and inspirational - all in four-part barbershop style, the group is dedicated to sharing their music with underserved populations and creating a safe and welcoming space for all singers. The group's open holiday rehearsals are scheduled for Wednesdays Nov. 19; Dec. 3, and Dec. 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Christ United Methodist Church on Rocky Hill Road in Northampton. Heart of the Valley Chorus is not a religious group. Anyone interested in joining this special holiday program should email Stephanie at heartofthevalleychorus@gmail.com or visit www.heartofthevalleychorus.org to sign up.

WESTFIELD

Alzheimer's Assoc. holds support group

WESTFIELD – On Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 6 p.m. at Armbrook Village Senior Living and Memory Support Community, 551 North Road. Caregivers and family members are invited to enjoy

a light dinner and to share their personal experiences and strategies for communicating with their loved ones. This month they will have guest speakers from adult day programs presenting at 6 pm. Group is held in the

second floor Creative Arts Room. The public is welcome. To join this group, people may call 413-568-0000 or email reception@armbrookvillage.com. Groups are held on the last Wednesday of the month.

St. Joseph's Church to hold Polish fare

WESTFIELD – St. Joseph's National Catholic Church, 73 Main St., is hosting a community dinner featuring authentic Polish fare on Sunday, Oct. 19 at noon. This community feast will feature delicious cheese Pierogi, Kielbasa, Galumpki, lazy cabbage

Pierogi, pickled beets, rye bread and apple crisp with vanilla ice cream for dessert. Coffee, apple cider and bottled water will also be available. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$10 for children under 12. For tickets, people may phone or text Cliff at 413-977-2007. Deadline

for purchasing all tickets is Thursday, Oct. 16. A limited number of meals-to-go will be available at 12:30 p.m. when buying their tickets, people should indicate if they are dining with them or planning take-out. All are welcome. All welcome to join in an authentic, traditional Polish dinner.

STOCKBRIDGE

Grange to hold community dinner

STOCKBRIDGE – The Stockbridge Grange is having a community dinner on Sunday, Oct. 12, featuring ham, scalloped potato, vegetable, bread and dessert choices of chocolate cream or

apple pie. Dinner is \$17 per person. They will be serving both in-person and take out from noon-1:30 p.m. at the Stockbridge Grange Hall at 51 Church St. In-person reserva-

tions and take out orders be made by calling either 413-243-1298 or 413-443-4352. The Grange dinners are held to raise money for non-profit projects and building maintenance.

Send Us Your Holiday Event Information

Turley Publications will print your holiday calendar listings FREE OF CHARGE in our Holiday Dazzler Supplement which publishes Nov. 19th.

Deadline for submissions is October 20th

Community Holiday Events

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or email* them to: jamie@turley.com
***Be sure to indicate "Holiday" in the subject line of your email.**

RUSSELL

Wellness on Wheels bus visits

RUSSELL – The town is part of the Western Hampden County Public Health District and the Baystate Wellness on Wheels bus will be available to all on Wednesday, Oct. 29 from 2-6 p.m. at 155 Highland Avenue, the site of the former Russell Elementary School.

There will be flu and

covid vaccines available, diabetes and blood pressure screenings as well.

Other participating towns in the WHCPHD are Russell, Blandford, Southwick, Tolland, Montgomery and Granville. For more information, people may visit the website at whcphd.com/.

WILLIAMSBURG

MINISTER

from page 1

die and make the most sense of the reality I'm in."

In addition to theological study at the Theological Seminary at the University of Chicago, he has multiple degrees in counseling and family therapy from North Park University and Northern Illinois University.

Sarah is the organ-

ist at the Northampton Congregational Church. She is a retired professor of music and her instrument is the organ and other keyboard instruments.

The couple has four daughters, "Who still talk to us," he said smiling. They are scattered from Illinois, Ohio and New York City.

WORTHINGTON

Rod and Gun Club host BBQ Oct. 18

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Rod and Gun Club, 458 Dingle Road, will hold a chicken barbecue will take place on Saturday, Oct. 18 at 3 p.m..

There will be live music from Greg Reil of Reil Country.

Tickets are \$20 and include chicken and all the fixings. There will be a Chinese raffle and a 50/50 raffle. For tickets, people may call Deana at 413-443-0009.

ELAINE SPIRO RECEIVES BOSTON POST CANE



A golden Boston Post Cane was presented to Worthington's oldest resident, Elaine Spiro, age 101 at the Sept. 8 pot luck luncheon. The cheers and laughter made her day.

Submitted photo

MONTGOMERY

Music in Montgomery series spotlights performers on five Thursdays

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

MONTGOMERY – October is a five-Thursday month, which gives music lovers five opportunities to see performers at the Music in Montgomery series.

Ed Bentley, Eva Cappelli and Doug Pi will each be joined by musical friends. Jerry and Kara Noble return and the month closes with Helen Arbour and Joe Nerney. Performances are held on Thursdays at Montgomery Town Hall, 161 Main Road, from 3-4:30 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are always welcome.

Ed Bentley and Friends opened the month on Oct. 2.

Known for representing "men of a certain age," Bentley and Friends brought a range of country, rock and folk tunes to the stage. Bentley has a regular presence at Ray Ray's Cafe in Westfield of late and has been seen performing with Jane Martin Pelletier, Ron Campagna, Gary Kotros, Brian Johnson and Bob Chipolli in the last few months. Bentley can also be seen at the Daily Grind in Southwick, Bright Ideas Brewing or Shortstop Bar & Grill in Westfield or the Southwick Inn.

Singer/songwriter Eva Cappelli will take the stage on Thursday, Oct. 9. Capelli has performed with groups Lil Eva and the Studebakers, Eva

Cappelli and the Watersheds Band and Wild Heart-a Fleetwood Mac tribute band. With a style reminiscent of Bonnie Raitt or K. D. Lang, she has performed at the Hard Rock Cafe, Iron Horse, Big E and Majestic Theatre and was the Musical Coordinator for the Academy of Music's production of Sojourner Truth. She has a lot of musical friends and connections, so it is always a surprise to see who joins her.

On Thursday, Oct. 16, driving rock/country guitarist Doug Pi will be joined by surprise guests. Doug Pi & Company are regular performers at the Hilltown Memory Cafe in Huntington and Northampton Country Club.

Doug Pi and the Harmonics have performed at the O's in Sunderland, Fishtails in Hatfield and Papa Bob's in Becket.

Husband and wife team Jerry and Kara Noble, who perform on thursday, Oct. 23, have really been making the rounds of late. They have donated two Saturdays of entertainment for the Empty Bowls benefit for the Food Pantry at Pioneer Valley Assembly of God Church that's been moving through the hilltowns and closed the Sevenars Music Festival in Worthington in August. Jerry was also part of a trio that opened this year's Tuesday Moming Music Club at Trinity United Methodist Church in

Springfield, which performed Mozart's "Kegelstaff Trio" and Bartok's "Contrasts." Jerry is a pianist, guitarist and composer and Kara plays bass. Their performances are dubbed, "We are the people our parents warned us about."

Closing the month will be perpetual favorites Helen Arbour and Joe Nerney on Thursday, Oct. 30. Singer/songwriter Helen Arbour (Elmes) has performed with bands Skyline, Sure Shot and Liquid Floyd. Saxophonist Joe Nerney studied music education at Boston Conservatory at Berklee; in addition to performing with Helen Arbour and Ursula Elmes, he can be seen performing throughout the area with the likes of Seth

Glier and as part of the duo the West Hill Two and his larger ensemble, West Hill Groove. He also hosts "Podcast from Joe" on apple podcasts.

This series is co-hosted by the Montgomery Public Library and by Gray Catbird Pottery Studio. Attendees are invited to bring baked goods to share. Donations are accepted for the refreshments, with money split between the Montgomery Volunteer Firemen's Association and the Town Library. Donations are also accepted to tip and thank the fabulous musicians who perform each week. These events are open to everyone. For more information, people may call Dale Rogers at 413-875-5205.



HILLTOWN REAL ESTATE
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James Adams Owner/Broker
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The Jonathan Woodbridge House, built in 1806, exhibits the classic hallmarks of Federal Worthington :Georgian design: elegant proportions, symmetry and magnificent carved Palladian details. The eleven gracious rooms retain original Georgian details and moldings and include four bedrooms, two parlors, a library, two grand hallways, six fireplaces, and two baths. Few structures in the Berkshires possess this degree of both architectural and historical significance. The house has undergone a complete restoration with modern amenities including custom kitchen/great room, new mechanicals and restored chimneys. The property includes nearly three acres of gardens and woods. **\$925,000**



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Worthington October Online Land Auction on Two Farmland Properties. This is prime farmland which will be sold to the highest bidder. The first Parcel is 268 acres with 172 acres of open land with premium soil and newer four strand, high tensile solar powered electric fencing, Perfect for livestock or crop farms. The second parcel is 138 acres with over 68 acres of open premium farmland. A large pond and a landing strip. Both properties are To be used only for farming and cannot be used for residential development. This auction is a cooperative offering with Hilltown Real Estate LLC and Jacquier Auctions inc Visit www.jacquierauctions.com for details and date of auction. Call James Adams of Hilltown Real Estate for details. 413-205-7580



Worthington Wonderful 6 Bedroom Home with Two full Bathrooms set on almost an acre of Worthington well-manicured grounds. This property abuts picturesque, protected farmland and is walking distance to all that Worthington has to offer. The home has plenty of room for a large family or for those who work remotely and need extra room. The first floor has a large Bedroom and a bath for those who are looking for first floor living. The covered Farmers porch is a great spot to relax or use the rear deck to enjoy your backyard. The home will need cosmetic updating, but this low price makes it well worth it. **Great price of only \$270,000**

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CHESTER

Southern Hilltowns Adult Education Center offers free classes

CHESTER – The Southern Hilltowns Adult Education Center at the Village Enterprise Center, 26 Main St., offers free October classes in their Chester classroom.

The classes include a series on using the online design program Canva, day and evening offerings of Digital tools for everyday life, Accounting with Wave and Aromatherapy for Emotional Support. These classes are in addition to SHAEC's ongoing GED classes, Monday and Wednesdays from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and monthly senior center computer/tech and phone help.

New this fall, SHAEC is experimenting in offering daytime and evening class options classes at their classroom at the Village Enterprise Center to better accommodate the different needs of the community members.

Steph Stoudenmire is

also teaching a free series on using the online design program Canva. Canva is a free, beginner-friendly design tool that makes creating beautiful, professional-looking materials simple. The first class: Intro to Canva: Making flyers, Cards and More, is Tuesday, Oct. 14 from 6-7:30 p.m. Participants will learn the basics of navigating Canva and will produce their first Canva project, ready to print or share online.

Other classes in the Canva series include Making Business Cards and Brochures with Canva on Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 6 p.m. and Creating a Simple Website with Canva, on Tuesday Oct. 28, also at 6 p.m. People may reach out to SHAEC to reserve a place by calling 413-354-1055 or emailing Southernhilltownsaec@gmail.com.

SHAEC offers a two-part class on Accounting with

Wave, taught by retired CPA and tax preparer Rosemarie Goyette. WAVE accounting is a relatively user friendly and low-cost alternative to higher priced online accounting programs. The Accounting with Wave class meets on Wednesdays, Oct. 15 and 22 from 6-7:30 p.m., at SHAEC's Chester Classroom, 26 Main St., at the Village Enterprise Center. Preregistration is encouraged to reserve a spot.

SHAEC has partnered with Kay Judge of Blue Skye Wellness to bring a series of classes this fall on various ways to safely use essential oils. These classes will be held at Kay's Blue Skye wellness studio/ store, adjacent to SHAEC's classroom at 26 Main St. in Chester. Both Day and Evening sessions are being offered for this series. October's topic is Aromatherapy for Emotional Support, With an evening ses-

sion at 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 17 and a daytime option at 2 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 24. In these classes, Kay will discuss the use of aromatherapy to support cognitive functions such as memory, focus, motivation and concentration as well as the use of essential oils to manage stress and to promote emotional balance. This is a make and take class, where participants will have the opportunity to create a personal inhaler and a custom blend in a roller bottle. A materials fee of \$10 will be collected. People may call SHAEC at 413-354-1055 to preregister, or email Southernhilltownsaec@gmail.com or go to SHAEC's website at www.Umass.edu/shaec.

UMass PHD candidate Katy Dieber is leading up SHAEC's GED prep classes and tutoring for the fall, with mid-day math for 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the

fall at the SHAEC classroom. Those interested in exploring GED topics are encouraged to reach out to SHAEC program Director Michele Kenney at 413-354-1055 to discuss their academic goals.

SHAEC also offers free computer/ tech help at the area's local Senior Centers. SHAEC Computer Teacher Heather Morgan is at the Huntington Senior Center at Stanton Hall on the first Wednesday of every month from 1-2 p.m. She is at the Chester Senior Center, located in the basement of the Chester Town Hall, on the second Wednesday of the month, from 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. She is at the Russell Senior Center, located on the second floor of the Russell Town Hall, on the third Wednesday of the month from 11a.m.-12:30 p.m. The fourth Wednesday of the month she is at the Middlefield Senior Center, from 12:45-1:30 p.m.

People can also call or email SHAEC to request individual computer assistance, either at the SHAEC classroom or virtually.

SHAEC's classes are free and open to residents of Chester, Huntington, Russell and Middlefield, as they are funded by a Community Development Block Grant serving these four Hilltowns. SHAEC is an off-campus program of the University of Massachusetts Partnership for Worker Education program, serving the Southern Hilltowns since 1999. Pre-registration for classes can be made by calling SHAEC at 413-354-1055 or emailing Southernhilltownsaec@gmail.com with their name, class(es) they are interested in, and contact information (phone number and email address). Pre-registration can also be done on SHAEC's website by visiting www.Umass.edu/shaec.

Hobo Harvest Dinner takes place Oct. 18

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

CHESTER The Chester Foundation's Hobo Harvest Dinner will be held on Saturday, Oct. 13 starting at 4:30 p.m.

This annual fundraiser for the Chester Railway Station will be held at the station, 10 Prospect St and will feature musical guests The Pitoniak Brothers. Weather permitting, there will be a re-enactment of a hobo encampment on the station's lawn.

On the menu is "Trackside" beef stew, homemade rolls and a choice of apple or pumpkin pie for dessert. As always, corn pudding will be made from an old railroad recipe book. The cost is \$15 for adults, \$8 for children 6 to 12 and free for children 6 and under. Drinks will be available for purchase from the drink cart inside the station. For \$2, patrons can



Last year's Hobo harvest re-enactors Matt O'Brien, Chet Brett and Dave Pierce. Submitted photo

choose from coffee, cider or bottled water.

Meals may be eaten at the station or picked up using the "Hobo To Go" option. Both are available in half-hour increments from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Reservations are required and may be made by calling 413- 354-7878 and leaving a message with name, phone number, number of people coming and arrival time. Also, they should name the choice of pie for each guest, if they will mail payment or pay at

the door, and whether they are eating in or taking out. Checks made payable to the Chester Foundation may be mailed in advance to P. O. Box 743, Chester, MA 01011.

People can also reserve by emailing the same information to Dave@chesterrailwaystation.net. Someone will get back to them either way to confirm their reservation. This event typically sells out

and the cutoff date for reservations is Wednesday, Oct. 15.

The Pitoniak Brothers perform frequently in the area and have been seen at "Music in Montgomery," the Littleville Fair, the Southwick Inn, and at previous Chester Railway Station events.

"Thank you for supporting the Chester Railway Station," said President David Pierce, President of the Chester Foundation. "It is a National Historic Landmark and contains artifacts of the Boston-Albany railroad: the first railroad in America to go over a mountain, use pusher engines, be built through wilderness and used the first Keystone Arch Bridges to traverse the Westfield River."

The Chester Foundation is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization.

Library lists programs

CHESTER – Story and fun time is every Thursday at 11 a.m. in the Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St.

This is a great opportunity to foster a love of reading in young patrons while providing an opportunity for socialization and learning new skills through crafts and play.

The Book Club meets on Wednesday, Oct. 15, every third Wednesday of the month. At 4:30 p.m. This month they will be discussing the novel, "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho. This is the story of Santiago, a shepherd boy, who strikes out in search of treasure in Egypt and who gains wisdom through his experiences and the people he meets on his journey. Light refreshments are provided and extra book copies are available.

Play, learn and dance takes place Thursday, Oct. 16 at 11 a.m. in place of the weekly story and fun time. Laurel Lenski of Intrinsic Movement will once again bring her enthusiasm and contagious energy for a fun-filled learning experience for young patrons.

The library will be sponsoring the Great Inflatable Costume Race as part of the town's Halloween celebration on Saturday, Oct. 25 beginning at 5 p.m. at Emery Park, 47 Emery St. Participants will enjoy a variety of activities and events designed to bring neighbors together and make Halloween memorable for everyone. The race will begin after the costume contest parade. Registration is helpful at by calling 413-354-7808. People may also visit chester.cwmars.org for more information.

COA announces events

CHESTER – The Council on Aging, 15 Middlefield Road, located in the basement of the Chester Town Hall, have planned fun fall events.

On Tuesday, Oct. 18 at 10 a.m. senior craft day will make sun catchers.

On Friday, Oct. 21 starting at 8:30 a.m. there will be a hair cutting day. Appointments are in 45-minute block.

The cost is \$10 for men and \$15 for women.

This new service will now take place every third Tuesday of the month. People should call 413-354-

7735 to reserve a spot.

On Tuesday, Oct. 25 the town Halloween trunk or treat celebration begins at 5 p.m. at Emery Park.

The COA is sponsoring the costume contest with cash prizes, plus face painting for the children.

Ongoing programs are a foot clinic the second Tuesday of every month and tech help on the second Wednesday of every month (drop ins).

People should call 413-354-7735 to reserve a spot for the foot clinic or for more information on any of the programs.

Hilltown Hikers host Sinister Saw haunted trail

CHESTER – On Saturday, Oct. 25 at 5 p.m. all the ghouls come out with no holds barred for the Sinister Saw Halloween event.

The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers light up the trail and in places, the rest of it is dark scary woods. Crazy clowns, masked chainsaw men and evil witches will haunt this abandoned mill in Chester Factory Village including a complete sound show, live props and gags.

This is a spine tingling walk through the "haunted woods" at the Hilltown Hikers Granite saw property. They have a haunted trail complete with a 12-foot diameter cutting saw, real tombstones, haunted gags,

bloody ghouls, skin crawling sound show, zombies and more. They will make sure people get out alive. No dogs are allowed on the haunted trail.

This event is volunteer organized. Suggested donation to the Granite Saw is \$5. More details are available by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com. People may call/text 413-302-0312 or email westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com if they have any questions or would like to volunteer as a live ghoul.

Donations are welcome to support the historical renovations to the Chester Granite Saw. People may donate by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com. They should wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for

uneven ground.

On the same night, the town of Chester invites all ghouls, ghosts and goblins to gather at the Chester Ball Field on 47 Emery St. for frights and fun.

Parking is across the street from the ball field. Things kick off at 5pm for the little ghouls with pumpkin painting, face painting, followed by a rag-shag parade. When the darkness comes, there will be an inflatable costume race at 5:30 p.m. All are welcome to participate.

There will be a Trunk or Treat, live music, beer tent and a food truck feast while spooky spirits roam the grounds. People may dress to impress or terrify for the cos-

tume contests, followed by an award ceremony with trophies and prizes for trunks and costumes. People may warm up by the fire at the snack shack, where s'mores and other sweet treats await.

Events on Saturday, Oct. 26 are sponsored by the town of Chester, Western Mass Hilltown Hikers, Chester Rec Committee, Chester Fire Department, Chester Police Department, Our Mother's Kitchen, Kosinski Farms in Westfield, Mel's Kitchen in Chester, Hamilton Memorial Library and the Pease Store. People should call Jessica at 413-207-4152 or email jsakaske@live.com if they would like to do a trunk or compete in the inflatable race.

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BECKET

Becket Athenaeum lists events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., will show the documentary film “Judy Blume Forever” on Wednesday, Oct. 15 at 7 p.m.

A discussion will follow at 8:30 p.m. People may RSVP by emailing bwlibrary.org/blume. On Thursday, Oct. 16 at 7 p.m. the poetic and musical genius of Taylor Swift will be discussed on Zoom.

People register by emailing bwlibrary.org/swifties16. Other Taylor Swift programs on Zoom

include on Monday, Oct. 20 Taylor Swift style fashion through the eras; register at bwlibrary.org/swifties20 and on Thursday, Oct. 30 Taylor Swift by the book, the literature behind the lyrics; register at bwlibrary.org/swifties30.

The Becket Athenaeum will be closing on Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. On Saturdays there is story time for children and their caregivers from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and stay and play from 11:30-12:30 p.m. RSVP is appreciated by emailing bwlibrary.org/

storytime.

Baby and toddler playgroup meets on Tuesdays from 10-11 a.m. There is circle time, stories, movement, music and play for birth through age 3. Siblings are always welcome. RSVP is appreciated by emailing bwlibrary.org/events.

Other events include cook book club on Monday, Oct. 13 at 6 p.m., game night on Thursday, Oct. 16 from 6-8 p.m. and movie night for adults on Saturday, Oct. 25 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. with the movie starting at 7 p.m.

CUMMINGTON

Neilie and George Wilson to perform

CUMMINGTON – The Friday Night Cafe hosts father George and daughter Nellie Wilson together for folk music that connects them on Friday, Oct. 10 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church.

A talented, multi-instrumentalist and singer, George Wilson’s repertoire samples a wide variety of traditional and folk styles. As a fiddler, he has over 500 tunes for dancing and listening - tunes from New England, Quebec, Cape Breton, Scotland, Ireland and Shetland. His dynamic fiddling, strongly influenced by Cape Breton and French Canadian styles, has been popular with contra dancers and

concert-goers since the late 1970s. Nellie Wilson, who lives in West Chesterfield, revisits her folk music roots, joining in song with her father. From the silly to the sweet and everything in between, enjoy an evening of family folk music connection.

The Village Church is in beautiful downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District. The event is free, donations are appreciated. Due to on-going renovation of the Village Church the show will take place in the sanctuary. The vestry and the usual snack table will not be available. They will provide some simple

snacks and drinks in the main entry area for consumption during intermission.

Once again this is brought by the friendly folks at the Village Church, who believe music can be a powerful force for building community. Friday Night Cafe receives promotional support from the Cummington Cultural District, and is supported in part by grants from the Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

GOSHEN



Charlie Flint of Pittsfield dips into the stone soup.

Submitted photos



Betsy Wassmann of Northampton puts finishing touch on historical scarecrows.

Stone Soup event takes place Oct. 11

GOSHEN – Step into a 16th century folk legend on Saturday, Oct. 11 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. when Goshen’s Williams-Boltwood Project hosts its annual stone soup celebration at 2 Williams Drive.

The legend describes how a village comes together to create a sumptuous soup from nothing but a stone plus offerings the reluctant villagers eventually “borrow” from their larder to produce a soup worth celebrating. The soup cauldron bubbling over an open fire on the lawn of the historic Williams-Boltwood House awaits fresh vegetables or herbs. People may throw them into the cast iron cauldron no later than noon, then let creativity soar as they help fashion historical scarecrows

to decorate the property for the season.

People will learn about local history and tour the old general store and tavern that still exist in the house. Soup’s on by 1 p.m. so bring a mug and spoon and a lawn chair to relax. This will be a vegan and gluten-free meal. Remember to add veggies to the soup by noon.

The stone soup event is family friendly and free thanks to funds from the Goshen Cultural Council and Mass Cultural Council. Donations are appreciated to support the restoration of the historic Williams-Boltwood House. For more information, people may visit www.williamsboltwood.com or call 413-250-2333

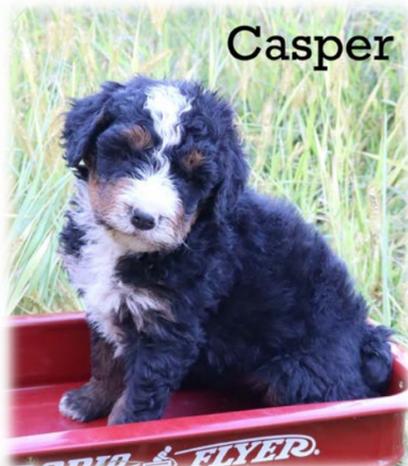
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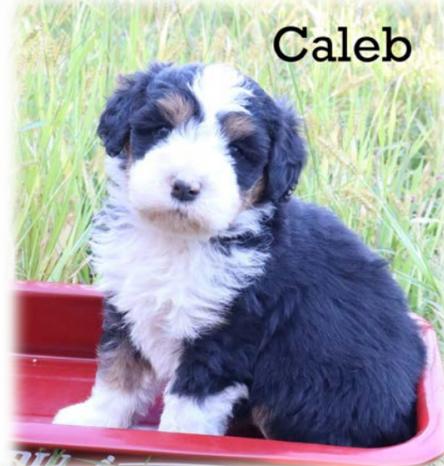
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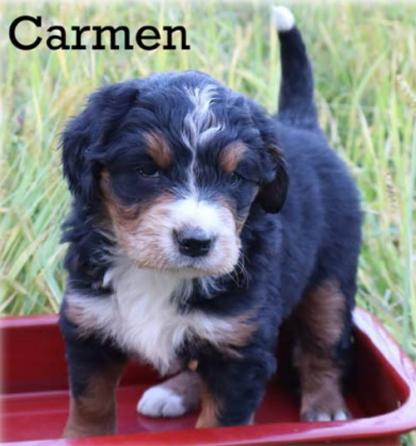


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BLANDFORD

Blandford celebrates 250th Revolutionary anniversary

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – There are two upcoming events to commemorate the town's contribution to the American Revolution.

Jethro Jones

The first is the installation of the Jethro Jones American Revolutionary Marker on Saturday, Oct. 11 at 1 p.m. at the intersection of Blair and Jethro Jones

Roads. This event will coincide with the celebration of the upcoming 250th anniversary of the United States.

The Mercy Warren Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) will dedicate this historic marker honoring Revolutionary War veteran Jethro Jones. The Henry Knox Regimental Color Guard of the Sons of the American Revolution Musket Salute will participate at the Jethro Jones Dedication. The

dedication's featured speaker will be Jocelyn Jones Arnold, the great-great-great granddaughter of Jethro Jones.

There will be a reception immediately following the installation at the Blandford Historical Society on North Street. This event is open to the public. Mercy Warren Chapter Registrar Mary Hull not only applied for grant funding for the marker, she has organized this weekend's events.

Ghost Walk

The following weekend, on Saturday, Oct. 18, Historical Society Board Member Jane Rhoman has conceived and planned a Ghost Walk in the Old Burying Ground, the cemetery at the top of Main Street just before Herrick Road. Blandford's Revolutionary War heroes will be there, in costume, as well as other significant town historical personages. The event will take place rain or shine unless

severe weather is forecast. In that case, cancellation will be posted at www.blandfordhistoricalsociety.org by noon.

The event is free, open to the public and it is not necessary to sign up, just enjoy the local lore. Portable seats are fine to bring; umbrellas if rain is forecast.

The town's history is rooted in the American Revolution in unexpected ways, according to Rhoman.

Visitors will hear and see stories come alive from

a dispatcher running clandestine operations for the military while still serving patrons at the family tavern to selectman Samuel Sloper who secretly participated in the Boston Tea Party in 1773 and more.

The character portrayals are done, for the most part, by Blandford residents and Blandford family members. Donuts and cider will follow at the Blandford Historical Society across the street from the cemetery.

Highway depts. participate in chain saw safety

BLANDFORD – Multiple highway departments spent time in Blandford last week for three days learning about chainsaw safety, a class offered by Baystate Roads Local Technical Assistance Program.

This program provides technology transfer training to municipal Departments of Public Works and Highway Departments across the Commonwealth. Additionally, there is the opportunity for municipalities to ask for cus-

tom classes that offer training. In lining up the workshop, Blandford Highway Department Superintendent Ray Hultay said "This is important. In the winter the

SAFETY, page 11



Geared up and chain-saw equipped members of multiple Highway Departments from the area were ready Wednesday morning for the advanced chain-saw safety class at the Blandford Highway Department salt shed area on Chester Road. They are from left front, Henry Harrison, Easthampton; Michael Carr, Blandford; far right front standing Frank Gentile, Longmeadow and rear from left, Jim Atwell, Washington; (blue shirt), Ryan Keach, Blandford; Justin La'Hote, Washington; Mario Godbout, Blandford; Joe Dieterie, Sandisfield, Brian Hearn, Longmeadow; Clayton Lapointe, Blandford and Mike Smith, UMass technical training specialist.

Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm



Community Service Day founder George Reichert, Select Board member Jackie Coury and former Select Board member Jeff Allen on Thursday discussed necessary fall tasks and potential dates for another Community Service Day for Bicentennial Park.

Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

Community Service Day happens Oct. 10

BLANDFORD – Select Board member Jackie Coury and George Reichert are planning the Bicentennial Park Community Service Day for this Saturday, Oct. 10 beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Anyone who can volunteer time and energy to keep the center of town attractive can be at the park at 8:30. Coury and Reichert expects to complete the tasks by 12:30 p.m. Things

that need tending are the marquee needs a fresh coat of paint; the plexiglas needs to be cleaned; new mulch needs to be put down on the beds and the leaves swept up. Volunteers may want to bring their own rake or broom.

Reichert with the help of Highway Superintendent Ray Hultay and the department will, on Friday morning, remove the old split rail

fence and install the new fencing. "We will do it all in one morning," said Reichert.

Coury said, "Bicentennial Park is a small part of the center of our town which is where, when people drive through, they are reminded of the beauty of Blandford." She added, "We hope to decorate a little during the holiday season as well in early December."

LIBRARY CHAIR RE-CANNED



Blandford's Porter Memorial Library Director, Nicole Daviau is shown with Joel and Rita Hayden of Agawam and Doris Hayden's library chair. Joel is Doris Hayden's grandson. Doris Hayden re-canned the seat and it will have a place of honor in the expansion when it is completed. Doris Hayden served as assistant librarian director for Frances E.T. deBaal in the mid forties. She became librarian in 1947, a post she held until 1972.

Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

American Legion Post 356 donates to Blandford Fair

BLANDFORD – Saturday morning, Commander of American Legion Post 356 Douglas Emo was at the Blandford Country Store to honor Blandford Fair President Matt Ripley. The American Legion enjoyed a long-term relationship with the fair from 1946 through 2011.

Emo explained that the Legion's booth at the fair started when the "GIs came home from WWII." It was hotdogs and hamburgers, fries – and started under a tent.

"Matt took over and has been doing great things and we (the Legion) wanted to continue our fair association anyway we could," he said.

The Legion donated \$2,500 "so Matt can continue to do great things at the fair," he said.

On hand for the presentation were Blandford's Viet Nam Veteran Mike Wojcik, Viet Nam Veteran James Cortis, Blandford Fair Executive Vice President Greg Girard and onlookers.



American Legion Post 356 Commander Douglas Emo presenting \$2,500 check to Blandford Fair President Matt Ripley, Blandford Fair Executive Vice President Greg Girard, Viet Nam veterans Michael Wojcik and James Cortis.

Turley Publications Photo by Mary Kronholm

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Council on Aging lists lunch menu and program

BLANDFORD – The second of the two monthly Council on Aging luncheons is set for Friday, Oct. 24 at noon.

Chef Joann Martin created a lunch menu with apple cider, tossed salad, Teriyaki chicken kabobs and rice pilaf followed by a cranberry upside-down cake for dessert.

After lunch, the Alzheimer's Association will present a program discussing brain healthy habits and reducing your risk of dementia.

Regional public health nurse MaryAnn Deming from the Western Hampden

County Public Health District said, "Join us for an inspiring and informative program."

The program will present findings from a clinical trial exploring how lifestyle changes can protect cognitive function in older adults at risk for decline.

Positive, achievable actions can make a difference in brain health, and when combined into a program that targets multiple factors like diet, exercise, heart health and cognitive engagement. Attendees will also learn about Alzheimer's, dementia, and local resources.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

STCC offers affordable public dental clinic services

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College, One Armory Square, invites members of the community to take advantage of its on-campus dental hygiene clinic, which provides comprehensive and affordable oral health care.

The clinic is staffed by STCC dental hygiene students under the supervision of licensed dental hygienists and dentists. Patients receive high-quality care while helping students gain hands-on experience as part of their professional training.

“Access to dental care can be difficult for those without insurance,” said Professor Darlene O’Brien,

Dental Sciences chair and Dental Hygiene program coordinator. “Our clinic provides an affordable option for the community while preparing our students to become skilled dental hygienists.”

The announcement comes as National Dental Hygiene Month is observed throughout October, a time to recognize the importance of good oral health and the role dental hygienists play in the community.

Christopher Scott, Dean of the School of Health and Patient Simulation at STCC, said the clinic reflects the college’s mission to serve the public while training the next generation of healthcare professionals. “National Dental

Hygiene Month reminds us that oral health is an essential part of overall health,” Scott said. “At STCC, we’re proud to give our students hands-on learning opportunities that also provide affordable dental care to members of our community.”

Services include: oral examinations; dental hygiene diagnosis and treatment care plans; cleanings, polishing, fluoride treatments and sealants; X-rays and radiographs; tooth whitening; mouth guards/night guards; oral health education, nutritional counseling and tobacco cessation support and additional preventive and therapeutic services.

The dental clinic loca-

tion is in STCC Health Sciences Building (B20), Room 238. Hours are Monday and Tuesday from 1-4 p.m. and Thursday and Friday from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Dental hygiene diagnosis and treatment are \$35 (one-time fee, even if multiple appointments are required), full mouth radiographs \$30, panoramic radiograph \$30, sealants per tooth \$10, tooth whitening kit \$85, mouthguard/nightguard \$75 and additional services available. Payment is required at the time of service. The clinic accepts personal checks, cash, debit and credit cards. To schedule an appointment, people may call 413-755-4900.

Juliana Schuerer enrolls at SUNY Delhi

DELHI, NY – Juliana Schuerer of Becket is one of nearly 1,200 new students who enrolled at SUNY Delhi for the fall 2025 semester. Schuerer is pursuing a degree in Veterinary Science Technology.

PEOPLE/MILESTONE NEWS

As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a “people news” form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content.

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BLANDFORD

Sue Racine teaches monthly water color class at Town Hall

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Local award-winning water color artist Susan Racine conducts monthly watercolor classes in the Council on Aging room at the Town Hall.

Classes usually meet the first Tuesday of the month, the next class will be Nov. 4 at 10 a.m. The subject will be a Birch Tree.

Racine has been painting and artistically creative since she was a child, creating her own paper doll clothes. She said that she has been actively painting since she was in high school when she studied different mediums including clay, pencil and silk screening, but settled her passion on oil painting.

She has studied oil painting with local artist Stanley Malek and was a member of the Holyoke Art League.

She also studied oil painting with Russell artist Ruth LaPrise for ten years, during which time LaPrise encouraged her to work with water colors. That was in the mid-1990s.

Racine admits that she “grew tired of doing oils” and considered herself to be a “copy artist.” She said, “With water colors you become freer, but it’s not an easy medium.” With oil painting, she said that you can “always paint over oils, but not water colors.”

Some of her work she refers to as “happy accidents,” when the paint does its own thing. This is what makes water color painting more challenging.

Her class last Wednesday was full at 14 blooming artists, who worked on an iris water color.

“The class today was so very good,” she said, and noted how far some of the students have come. She cited Sue Bloomrose as an

example of an artist, who has improved the technique and who has become quite accomplished.

Racine has become a proficient artist having studied also with Westfield artist and Marie Flahive and California watercolorist Joan Boryta. She has been a member of Arts West in Westfield since 2015 and regularly shows her work throughout the area, including the Blandford Fair Art Show, receiving multiple ribbons as well as the Director’s Choice Award for her work, “Winter’s Road.” Her work has also been exhibited at the Westfield Athenaeum, the Agawam Library, North Hall in Huntington, the Monson Art Exhibit, and a solo exhibit at the Otis Library.

She has also been a participant in several juried art shows, including Agawam, Southwick and Monson.

Her work has been selected for publication in a French magazine, *The Art of Colour*. Her submitted picture was viewed by thousands and over 10,000 people voted their choice, and her work, “The Bicycle,” was selected for publication.

Racine is currently the chair of the Blandford Local Cultural Council and organized the artisan craft show at the Blandford Country Club. She has taught water color painting at the Blandford COA since 2023.

She lives in Blandford with her husband Ron, of 53 years, and the couple have two daughters, Tricia and Jamie. People may register for the monthly 10 a.m. classes by emailing susanracine1@gmail.com.



Artist Sue Racine works with Jen Tourville.
Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm



Jen Tourville displays her completed water color, an iris.
Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm



Sue Racine’s Tuesday, Sept. 30 class display their works.
Courtesy photos by Sue Racine



Water Color artist Sue Racine exhibited at Juried Art Show at the Agawam Public Library 2019.
Courtesy photos by Sue Racine

SAFETY

from page 10

guys need to know how to be safe when they have to deal with fallen trees or branches.”

Mike Smith is the University of Massachusetts, Amherst Technical Training Specialist who conducted the three-day workshop. The first two days covered skills and safety and topics included basic safety equipment, personal protection equipment, the saw’s reactive forces, chain and tooth parts (the cutting pieces on the chain), felling, notch and hinge, cutting techniques, wedging techniques and calculations.

Having the appropriate gear is a necessity. Smith spoke about his equipment he put it on; chainsaw resistant everything: pants, vest, helmet, boots and protective eye-wear. According to Smith, the class is designed for professionals or home-

owners. Set up to be a 16-hour long course that includes a hands-on skill portion for each student to fell one tree.

The final day was a more advanced course, Chainsaw Storm Debris Pickup. Smith taught participants how to deal with trees that have fallen due to bad weather or other reasons.

Topics covered included: pressures from trees falling and branches bending once in contact with the ground or other trees; rolls, which may be encountered if a log rolls because of an incline. Spring poles, Smith explained are what you get when a tree that is bent over is pinned to the ground by another falling tree. Hangers and leaners are trees that are leaning into other trees and do not make it to the ground and pulls and

splits are what happens when a tree is stretched and begins to shred from tension and splits are caused by too much pressure on one part of a tree casing it to split, but not fall.

This class was all hands-on after a 1.5-hour classroom instruction. Participants worked in groups and used their chainsaws. Towns represented for the workshop included Blandford, Dalton, Easthampton, Hampden, Longmeadow, Sandisfield, Shrewsbury and Washington. Hultay offered to have Blandford host the workshop and had two participants given free admission and the Highway Department covered the fees for the other two applicants. The university provided breakfast and lunch for those attending all three days.

POLE

from page 1

falling.

Doyle told the board there should be preliminary approval by Conservation.

The Select Board voted against confirming the poles until that could happen. Eversource asked for a continuance, but the board could not provide a date. Conservation Commission Chair Dick Gates is reviewing the list of pole placements.

Roundtable discussion

The Departmental Roundtable Discussion with department heads from the Board of Health, Town Clerk, Highway, Water, Assessors, Library and Council on Aging were

present to discuss their many accounting concerns. The Fire Department was not present.

Town Accountant Kelli Pontbriand participated virtually, via Zoom and her presentation was handed out to those attending. She covered financial procedures from bill submission to payment via warrant, turnover sheets for submitting checks or cash to the treasurer/collector and payroll processing as well. She also discussed how to process corrections of line-item assignment or any errors.

She has five towns she works for, each assigned their own day; Blandford’s is Monday. She will address

any urgent situation by telephone but said she does not review emails daily by each town.

After the accountant’s presentation the board discussed how to handle licensing for Highway Department personnel when the employee takes courses to acquire specific licenses for work. The board will review policy.

Other business

In other business, the board acknowledged Michael Keier’s resignation from the board of Water Commissioners. The two remaining commissioners are Brad Curry and Peter Thayer.

MOUNT WASHINGTON

Becker Pond Dam to be removed, deemed public safety concern

M O U N T WASHINGTON – Nestled inside The Nature Conservancy’s 1,500-acre Mount Plantain Preserve is the nearly 100-year-old Becker Pond Dam that is failing and deemed a public safety concern.

Closed to the public since 2016, the 95-foot earthen embankment dam will now be removed, beginning in November 2025 and eventually a new, improved walking trail will provide access there. The Becker Pond Dam is located on an unnamed

stream that flows into Sage’s Ravine, a popular walking and hiking area in Sheffield in the Southern Berkshires, that empties into Schenob Brook. The Appalachian Trail crosses about one mile downstream from the brook. An old deteriorating wooden bridge crosses over the dam as well.

Environmental leaders are pleased about the long-planned dam removal. “It’s a win-win for nature, and for all the people who hunt, hike, ski, walk and use this beautiful area in the Berkshires with a safer, improved trail and

access,” said Karen Lombard, The Nature Conservancy’s Director of Stewardship and Restoration.

After a 2016 inspection found serious deficiencies in the dam’s stability, the dam area was closed to the public. One of the walls is cracked and detaching from the dam’s main core, causing it to be a serious hazard to hikers and hunters who frequent that recreational area, adjacent to the Mount Washington State Forest and south of the YMCA Camp High Rock.

The Nature Conservancy

has been working with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game’s Division of Ecological Restoration to permit, fund and remove the dam. Once complete, Lombard said the hope is that the cold-water stream will be restored as a vital habitat for brook trout. A new, higher quality trail will also be built in the vicinity.

“We are proud to partner with The Nature Conservancy on this important project,” said DER Director Beth Lambert. “By removing the Becker Pond Dam, we are

restoring a healthy, free-flowing, cold water stream. This isn’t just about taking a structure out; it’s about giving fish and other wildlife the space they need to survive and adapt during a warming climate. Investing in these projects is one of the most effective ways we can protect the biodiversity of Massachusetts for future generations.”

T N C ’ s new Massachusetts State Director Kris Sarri said: “This project demonstrates The Nature Conservancy’s commitment to restoring natural habitats.

Removing this dam reconnects the river and reopens pathways for native fish to migrate and spawn. Dam removal also reduces flooding risks to people and allows more diverse wildlife to thrive throughout the river system—creating healthier communities and habitats for generations to come.”

Funding for removal of the dam has been provided by the MA Division of Ecological Restoration, the Massachusetts Environmental Trust and two anonymous foundations.

GREAT BARRINGTON

Berkshire Community Radio Alliance hosts music festival

G R E A T BARRINGTON – Berkshire Community Radio Alliance announces Sound/Art, the second Annual WBCR-Ip Experimental Music Festival on Sunday, Oct. 12 from noon-midnight in WBCR-Ip’s studio at 320 Main St.

It will be simultaneously broadcast at 97.7FM and streamed at www.berkshireradio.org. Artists will be performing a variety of experimental music genres including electronica, noise, ambient, drone, live coding and more. Performers will be coming from all over New England, New York, and as far away as Philadelphia. Artists

featured include: Allegra Geller/Moon Pox, Belltone Suicide, Alice Hixon Kirk, Laughter Has Long Legs, Larry Legend, Eli Mattern, Melting Regular, Neonach, P.U.S.H., Sisterhood of Sleep, Michael Slyne/Russell Linder, Spreaders and Strange Mono.

Admission is free. Limited seating is available in the radio studio or audience members will be able to enjoy the performances from the sidewalk in front of the station. The festival is being produced by Berkshire Community Radio programmers Jason Palmieri and John Prusinski with volunteer assistance from other WBCR-Ip vol-

unteers.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Great Barrington Cultural Council, a local agency that is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

For more information, people may visit <https://www.berkshireradio.org/events>.

Berkshire Community Radio Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization operating WBCR-Ip 97.7fm. They are a volunteer-based, non-commercial, community broadcast station in the town of Great Barrington, licensed by the Federal Communications Commission.

REGION

FCU accepting donations for Rays of Hope

SPRINGFIELD – Throughout the month of October, Freedom Credit Union is accepting cash donations at all its

branches to benefit Rays of Hope Walk & Run Toward the Cure of Breast Cancer, a Baystate Health Foundation charity that provides vital support to breast cancer patients, survivors and their families throughout western Massachusetts.

“For more than 30 years, Rays of Hope has been a lifeline for people in our community impacted by breast cancer,” said Freedom Credit Union President Glenn Welch. “At Freedom, we are deeply committed to helping our neighbors, and

we are proud to once again support an organization that makes such a meaningful difference close to home.”

Since its inception in 1994, Rays of Hope has raised over \$17.2 million. Funds support research at the Rays of Hope Center for Breast Cancer Research, provide funding for state-of-the-art equipment, breast health programs and outreach, patient and survivor support as well as grants for complementary therapies and cancer programs offered by community partners. Importantly, all funds raised remain local in western Massachusetts.

Community members are encouraged to donate at

any Freedom Credit Union branch through Friday, Oct. 31.

Originally chartered in 1922 as the Western Massachusetts Telephone Workers Credit Union and renamed in 2004, Freedom Credit Union is a nine-branch, full-service financial institution. Today, membership is available to anyone who lives, works or attends school in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin or Berkshire counties in Massachusetts, and Hartford or Tolland counties in Connecticut. Offering a complete range of banking services and loan products, Freedom Credit Union has conveniently located Massachusetts branches in Chicopee, Feeding Hills, Greenfield, Ludlow, Northampton, Turners Falls, West Springfield and two in Springfield, as well as a Loan Production Office in Enfield, Connecticut.



BYLAWS

from page 1

departments can be improved in the future, as Peterson spends much of his time in Maine in late summer and fall.

“The Zoning Enforcement Officer is appointed by the select board and serves under their authority,” Peterson said, adding that when he receives a written complaint alleging a violation, he follows the procedures outlined in Section 9, Part B, numbers 1-2 from the by-law. In determining that McQuade could proceed with constructing her breezeway and garage, Peterson said he referred to item “J” in the appendix cited by Karon Hathaway, which states that “accessory buildings may be located as close as 10 feet from lot side and rear lines, as long as they are 50 feet from the lot front line.”

Hamlin, however, pointed out that item “J” referred only to industrial sites, not to residential sites.

In response, Peterson said that he believed that some of the criteria from the bylaws’ most recent revision in 2022 had not moved forward into the current version and might have clarified this. He has been researching changes to the Zoning Bylaws over recent years to determine if this is the case. Booth agreed, noting that there was also an “I” in the appendix that is not there now and he doesn’t believe that the Zoning Board meant to take that out in their last revision.

Also coming to light was the homeowner reportedly first approached the Planning Board for a variance on the 20 foot rule and was denied. She then went to Peterson for a permit, which he approved. Had the two entities communicated with each other over the homeowner’s requests, the issue might have been resolved before construction began.

In terms of 50 Littleville Road, homeowners Dennis and Sue Ellen Nolt ran a three-week earth removal operation from their land with material moved by a tri-axle dump truck belonging to Hilltown Sand and Gravel. As an earth removal operation, this should have required approval by the Zoning Board. According to Peterson, the Nolts said the embankment on their property was too close to their house and was causing water in their basement, so he allowed it.

Bill Hathaway responded that this did not involve a small amount of material and went on for several weeks. Booth countered that he was making an assumption that might not be fair, but Hathaway continued to disagree, adding that something similar had happened in Russell and was shut down by their Zoning Board.

According to Hathaway, the property that now contains Countryside Woodcraft had dug a bunch of gravel out and an excavator sat on the gravel for a long time before being moved to another gravel operation in Montgomery. After the meeting, he also said there was a family connection between Countryside, Hilltown Sand and Gravel and the Nolts.

Illyd Fernandez-Sierra, Chair of the Russell Zoning Board, confirmed that a similar situation had arisen about a year ago at Countryside Woodcraft, involving dirt that had been excavated during previous construction. Fernandez-Sierra said he believed it to be a misunderstanding by the property owner. The building permit would have covered the soil being removed from the site while construction was underway. But because it had stayed on the lot, it later required a special permit to be moved. After communication from

the Russell Zoning Board, the property owner applied for, and received, that permit.

A number of actions resulted from this meeting. Peterson will continue to study the bylaw revisions and determine if some items were unintentionally removed that would have provided better clarification. No further accessory building permits will be issued as Peterson does this. The town needs to more clearly define an “accessory building” and what determines whether or not a breezeway and garage are “attached.” In the meantime, Booth will draft a policy on communications protocols between the Planning Board, Zoning Board and Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer for their input and approval, to prevent further incidents like this. In the future-for instances like 50 Littleville Road. Peterson said he will ask for more detailed plans from homeowners, and Minella-Sena suggested putting in the ability to monitor this kind of work. Hamlin also suggested that town counsel do a review of the bylaw and make recommendations for corrections before the updates are voted on by the town and go before the state’s attorney general.



Zoning Board member Victoria Minella-Sena, Zoning Enforcement Officer George Peterson and Zoning Board Chair Karon Hathaway were part of a special meeting to discuss different interpretations of bylaws.

Turley Publications photo by Wendy Long

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HAYDENVILLE

Haydenville Church to hold lasagna and bake sale

HAYDENVILLE – There will be a homemade lasagna and bake sale, Sunday, Oct. 12 and Monday, Oct. 13 from noon-2 p.m. at Haydenville Congregational Church, 143 Main St.

Church cooks will be selling homemade spinach and meat lasagna in two sizes: half-lasagna (four plus servings, \$25) and quarter-lasagna (two plus servings, \$15) sizes. The lasagnas are fully baked and ready to be heated up or kept frozen for later.

The church will also be selling a big range of baked goods, tee-shirts, handmade aprons and more.

Lasagna pre-orders will be filled first and remaining lasagna will be sold to walk-ins while supplies last.

A portion of the proceeds of the sale will go to support the Gaza Soup Kitchen, a grassroots initiative feeding thousands, who are facing starvation. Pre-order lasagnas by visiting haydenvillechurch.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.

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.

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

OBITUARY

Margaret D. Graveline, 75

CHESTER – Margaret D. Graveline, 75, of Chester passed away suddenly, in her home, on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025. Born Margaret Dorine Joseph, on February 5, 1950 in Waterbury, CT. The second of eight children and eldest daughter, to George E. Joseph, Sr. and Bernice L. (Grenier) Joseph. Affectionately known to her family and friends as “Peggy”. She was the mother of three children, Sihtric, Aaron and Adam Graveline; and a grandmother of three grandchildren, Zachary Graveline, Sean Sears and Isabelle Graveline. Margaret is survived by three sisters, Denise V. Bergin, Karen M. Coble and Lorna D. Foley.

She is also pre-deceased, by her siblings, Nancy P. Joseph, George E. Joseph, Jr., Mary B. Young, and Cory M. Joseph, Sr.

Peggy devoted most of her working career in administration with the United Way and YMCA. She had a deep love and devotion for her family, as well as a keen sense of civic duty. She served many years across multiple positions within her local community organizations, such as, volunteer firefighter, a member of the Womens Auxiliary, board member on The Chester Hill



Association, and later as director of the Council on Aging for Chester. She was also actively involved as a member of The First Congregational Church of Chester. Some

of Peggy’s many hobbies included her love of dancing, knitting, quilting, crochet, birdwatching and baking. Those who knew and loved Peggy, will always remember and cherish her gentle voice, her giving and humble nature, and her soft, calm presence wherever she went. She will be deeply missed by so very many.

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www.turley.com

DEATH NOTICE

GRAVELINE, MARGARET D.

Died Sept. 20, 2025

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55						56				57		58
59						60				61		
62						63						64

CLUES ACROSS

- Comedic actor Rogen
- Bits per inch
- Tire pressure measurement
- Angels great Mike
- Own (Scottish)
- Notable FI racing team
- Upper bract of grass
- Tax collector
- Electronic counter-countermeasures
- Informal loan clubs
- Skeletal muscle
- Popular fish type
- Salts of acetic acid
- Arriving early
- Worded
- Single Lens Reflex
- Amphibians
- Warm greeting

CLUES DOWN

- Engine additive
- Amounts of time
- Fragrant brown balsam used in perfume
- Color properties
- One who hands over
- Thieves of the sea
- Put in
- Nocturnal rodents
- Pouches
- Systems, doctrines, theories
- Greek alphabet letter
- Greek goddess of youth
- Satisfy
- Partly digested food
- Dictator
- Parts per thousand (abbr.)
- The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet

CLUES ACROSS

- Belonging to a thing
- Segmented worm
- Concerns
- Audacious
- Wings
- Type of drug
- Wind chill formula scientist Charles
- Island close to the U.S.
- “To the ___ degree”
- Daniel ___, French composer
- A way to march
- Where golfers begin
- Spiritual leader
- Of she
- Mental disorder concerning body odor (abbr.)
- Tall, slender-leaved plant

CLUES DOWN

- A major division of geological time
- Angry
- St. Francis of ___
- Romanian monetary unit
- Stale
- Go quickly
- Commercials
- Canadian city
- One who slices
- Perform perfectly
- Nest of pheasants
- Tactile sensations
- Sword
- Climactic
- Adrenocorticotrophin
- Fisherman’s tool
- Swiss river
- Plant that makes gum
- A French abbot
- One point east of northeast
- Get free of

THIS WEEK’S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

This week is all about fresh starts, Aries. The stars are aligning to give you the green light on a new project or personal goal. Don’t hesitate to jump on the first step.

CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22

Expect a breakthrough in your personal life. You’ll gain a new sense of clarity and emotional understanding, allowing you to move forward with confidence.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Harmony in your relationships is a prominent theme this week, Libra. Your diplomatic nature will help you resolve any lingering conflicts and form deeper connections.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Your hard work is about to pay off, Capricorn. This week you may see progress on a long-term professional goal. Some well-deserved recognition may be on the horizon.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Focus on building a solid foundation this week, Taurus. Whether it’s in your career or personal life, your hard work and persistence will pay off in a big way.

LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23

Your leadership skills are on full display, Leo. This week you’ll be called upon to inspire and guide others. Don’t be shy about stepping into the spotlight at work or in a group setting.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

A powerful transformation might be underway, Scorpio. You might feel an urge to dig deeper and uncover hidden truths, both in yourself and in your life. Embrace the process of growth.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18

This week you could find joy and inspiration by connecting with like-minded people. A collaborative project or a group event will be particularly successful.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21

Your social calendar is buzzing, Gemini. This week you could be a magnet for interesting conversations and new ideas. Don’t be afraid to network and share your thoughts.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

This is a week for practical improvements, Virgo. Take a look at your daily routines and find small ways that you can be more efficient. Organize your space or adopt a new health habit.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

Expand your horizons this week, Sagittarius. You’ll feel a strong pull to learn something new, whether it is a skill or a different language. Your optimistic outlook is contagious.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, dedicate some time this week to new pursuits. You may be itching to try something new and this is the time to sign up for a class or get out and meet new people.

					8	9	5	
	9				5			
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1		5	3			7	9	
8					2			
			4				6	3
7				3			1	2

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

D	E	R	S	O	R	H	T	2	1	5	6	3	8	9	4	7	
I	B	B	V	H	E	N	K	3	9	8	1	7	4	7	6	2	
R	B	U	H	I	N	V	C	6	7	4	2	9	5	3	1	8	
N	V	A	C	O	I	V	L	4	7	4	2	9	5	3	1	8	
D	E	R	I	R	I	S	4	6	7	6	2	3	5	8	1		
S	E	D	U	I	O	S	S	5	3	2	4	8	1	7	9	6	
D	I	L	N	N	V	T	I	1	8	9	7	5	6	2	3	4	
H	O	L	V	S	D	O	T	8	2	1	3	6	9	4	7	5	
S	E	T	E	C	O	V	7	8	2	1	3	6	9	4	7	5	
S	S	V	B	L	V	L	S	7	4	3	5	1	2	8	6	9	
W	C	C	E	S	R	I	P	4	7	4	3	5	1	2	8	6	9
S	V	H	S	N	I	V	T	6	9	5	8	4	7	1	2	3	6
S	I	P	I	P	B	H	T	5	6	9	8	4	7	1	2	3	6

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TAG SALE

164 METACOMET ST., BELCHERTOWN. OCT. 11 & Oct. 12, 9am-4pm. Miscellaneous household items, books, toys, game, Barbies.

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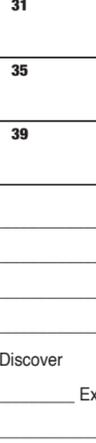
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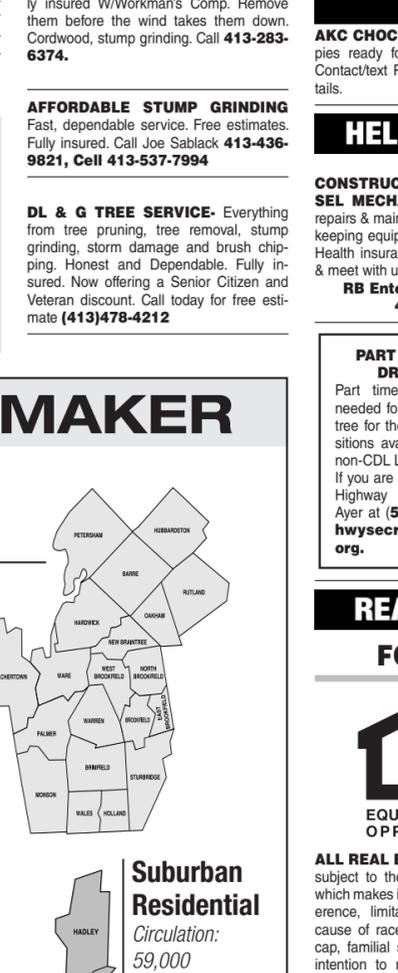
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