

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving." – Albert Einstein

# 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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## HUNTINGTON

### Southern Hilltowns Domestic Violence Task Force celebrates quarter century of progress

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

The Southern Hilltown Domestic Violence Task Force held a 25th anniversary celebration at Stanton Hall on Thursday, Oct. 26.

The event was well attended by survivors, current and former task force members, allies and local dignitaries. In all, about forty people attended. Missing from the event, sadly, was Monica Moran, who has staffed the Task Force since its inception. She was unable to attend and accept the many accolades for her, due to illness.

Hosting the event in Moran's absence were Kim Savery, Director of Community Programs and Family Support for Hilltown Community Health Centers and Donna LaRocque, who has become Moran's Co-Coordinator for the SHDVTF. HCHC sponsors Hilltown Safety at Home—a program originally developed by the Task Force that provides local resources in the hilltowns.

Savery welcomed everyone and asked for a moment of silence to remember Karen Hart and Jessica



A 2009 photo of three of the SHDVTF's early and most long-serving members. Shown from left are, Massachusetts State Police Lieutenant Dan Kennedy, Friends of Hilltown Safety at Home President and longtime Task Force member, Phil Barry and SHDVTF Coordinator Monica Moran. Submitted photo

Dana, two hilltown women who had been murdered by their partners in recent years, as well as the many other victims of domestic violence in our state and across the country. She then introduced Larocque who invited attendees to examine the dis-

play of milestones achieved by SHDVTF over 25 years.

Most notably, she said, victims are now much more likely to encounter police officers, doctors or faith leaders who know about

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## BLANDFORD

### Assessors wait for DOR paperwork to hold tax hearing

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

Town Administrator Christopher Dunne told the Select Board Monday night that the tax rate is a work in progress; the assessors are waiting for the Department of Revenue to complete some work before the tax classification hearing can happen.

Dunne said Tuesday that will possibly happen after Thanksgiving. He is actively searching for a replacement for himself and is looking for possibly an interim administrator. The job has been posted and several people have either been approached or have volunteered to serve on the search committee.

### Shepher Farm barn

The board approved a letter to the Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation and Recreation regarding the removal of the new(er) barn at the Shepard Farm property by the Union Agricultural and Horticultural Society. The barn will be relocated to the fairgrounds. The letter, signed by Chair Cara Letendre, also notes that the town plans to demolish the farmhouse and create a trailhead at the site.

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Co-Coordinator of the Southern Hilltown Domestic Violence Task Force Donna Larocque, delivers remarks at the 25th Anniversary Celebration. Turley photo by Wendy Long

## HUNTINGTON

### Highway staffing main topic at meeting

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

The primary topic of business continued to be highway staffing for the Huntington Selectboard's Oct. 25 meeting.

Former highway superintendent Dan Donovan's last day was Oct. 20, Phil Camp is now working three days a week, and Jim Arnold was the sole applicant for maintaining the sidewalks; he has held this job before and was unanimously approved for Fiscal Year 2024. Currently, the town needs to hire a new Highway Superintendent

and at least one more worker.

Brad Curry, with prior experience in Blandford and current experience in Sandisfield, was interviewed. Discussion included how he had worked through completing the rebuild of the highway garage in Sandisfield that had been destroyed by fire. In addition, most of the department records had been destroyed in that fire and had to be reconstructed. Much of the equipment in that garage was either surplus or unusable; it's been sold or scrapped, raising about \$90k that they

were able to put back into the town. Under Curry's leadership, the town now has a capital plan and road plan and manages equipment repairs in a timely manner. He has also added equipment and a process for pretreating roads for certain conditions that makes the salt more effective and saves the town money.

Curry also described his success in raising staffing levels and securing grant funding for special projects. He is also proficient with graders, wings,

**MEETING**, page 2

## BLANDFORD YOUNGSTERS ENJOY HALLOWEEN PARTY



The halls of the Blandford Town Hall had tables of Halloween treats for youngsters to enjoy. Photos by Joann Martin



This "little giraffe" heads to the Annual Halloween party held in the town hall.



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## HILLTOWNS

# Library commissioners double funds for LEA

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

At its October board meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners doubled its funding to support Library eBook and Audiobook program by approving \$1 million in grants to Automated Networks, for purchase of eContent for LEA.

LEA gives Massachusetts residents access to eBooks, audiobooks, and more from 380 participating libraries from across

the Commonwealth. The state-funded grants directly support the growing patron demand for eBooks and audiobooks. In June alone, checkouts through LEA totaled more than 140,000, up from 66,000 during the same period in 2019. Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing, or C/W MARS, is the network for most of Western Mass libraries.

There are 151 public libraries in C/W MARS and in the Country Journal coverage area, those libraries are: Becket, Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield,

Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Otis, Westhampton and Williamsburg. There are also four academic libraries and the State Library.

All C/W MARS library patrons have access not only to eBooks and audiobooks, but also print media as well as multiple data bases.

President of the Western Mass Library Advocates Nicole Daviau said, "Hilltown residents are impacted by dual challenges of access to transportation and adequate library funding. eBooks are an important

part of solving this challenge for many readers, specifically younger kids seniors and those with disabilities."

She continued, "By funding eBooks this grant will help all of our community members access library materials and increase the availability and equity of library services."

Daviau is also the Director at the Porter Memorial Library in Blandford.

For more help learning how to access eBooks and audiobooks, people may reach out to their local library.

# Clark Art Institute opens British works exhibit Nov. 18

WILLIAMSTOWN – In celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of its Manton Research Center, the Clark Art Institute presents a richly varied selection of British works on paper acquired over the last fifty years.

"Fifty Years and Forward: British Prints and Drawings Acquisitions" opens on Saturday, Nov. 18 and is on view through Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024 in the Eugene V. Thaw Gallery, located in the

Manton Research Center.

"The Manton Research Center is the home of our works on paper collection and its fiftieth anniversary commemoration provides us with a wonderful opportunity to showcase the exceptional British prints and drawings that are a part of this collection," said Olivier Meslay, Hardyman Director of the Clark. "We are indebted to the Manton Foundation for the exceptional generosity of the gift

they presented to us in 2007 that greatly enhanced our British holdings, endowed a gallery dedicated to British art and created our Works on Paper Study Center. aaaa"

"As a complement to the British paintings that are always on view in the Manton Gallery, it is very special to be able to exhibit such a wide selection of our British works on paper," said Anne Leonard, Manton Curator of Prints,

Drawings, and Photographs. "The collection assembled by Sir Edwin and Lady Manton, and given to the museum in 2007, at one stroke established the Clark as a necessary stop for anyone interested in British art. The range and quality of the Manton drawings and prints have set a high bar for the acquisitions we continue to make in this area, and it is wonderfully exciting to be able to share many of these works for the first time."

# 104th Fighter Wing conducts training exercise Thursday

BARNES AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, WESTFIELD – The 104th Fighter Wing will be conducting increased operations during a training exercise Thursday, Nov. 2 through Sunday, Nov. 5.

This exercise is critical in maintaining the highest degree of readiness for us to execute their mission in the community and anywhere in the world when called upon. This training event will allow all the elements of the 104FW to hone their skills in support of both State and Federal missions. During the training there will be simulated smoke, weapons fire and explosions on and near the base in support of the exercise.

Additionally, we will be flying more frequently than normal on these days to prepare and train as many pilots and maintainers as possible. The 104th Fighter Wing appreciates the continued support from the community.



# Lammers Hall no longer considered shelter for migrant families

WESTFIELD – Lammers Hall at Westfield State University was no longer being considered by the state as a possible emergency assistance shelter for migrant families.

"Simply put, putting an emergency shelter in the heart of a campus defies all logic and reasoning. And unlike buildings considered at some other institutions like Salem State University, Lammers Hall also lacks access to critical services and is fully inadequate to serve as an emergency shelter," said Senator Velis, who was recently activated by the Massachusetts National Guard as part of their mission to support the Commonwealth's Emergency Assistance Shelter System. "I've always felt that it was misguided to attempt to solve one problem, the federal govern-

ment's inability to mitigate an immigration crisis by exacerbating another problem, namely, requiring higher education to deviate from their core mission of educating students."

A September report from MEMA comes after an end-of-August tour of Lammers Hall by state officials where Senator Velis expressed initial concerns about the proposal. The MEMA report found that Lammers Hall was only "technically feasible" to be an emergency assistance shelter. In addition to the building being in the middle of campus, the report also noted that the dorm building faces ADA accessibility challenges, potential asbestos tiling issues and lacks access to medical clinics and kitchen services for families.

## HUNTINGTON

### MEETING

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plows, bulldozers and backhoes. A resident of Blandford, he said he could be in Huntington within 15-20 minutes in bad weather.

Curry has worked with Huntington's new Highway Department Administrative Assistant, Joanne Grybosh, and reports that they work well together.

In describing the board's view for the future of the town and highway department, Selectboard Chair Ed Renauld reported that the last few years had been tough with other towns and companies poaching employees. Two years in a row, highway employees asked for raises as a condition of staying on. Last spring, the town gave all town employees a 7% COLA (cost of living allowance). Still, the town finds itself short of staff and lacking a Highway Superintendent as we head toward winter.

"It would be nice to build a cohesive team," Curry said.

Selectman Roger Booth added that Huntington has more state-owned roads than most area towns and there are unlikely to be any new roads for subdivisions. Securing grant funding will be critical, Booth said.

Discussion included working with PVPC for grant money (including use of Community Development Block Grant funds for roads), anticipated bridge repairs, and coordinating

projects with other town departments such as water/sewer, and coordinating weather responses with police and utility companies. An upcoming bridge need will be the Norwich Bridge near the end of Littleville Road, which will require keeping one lane open throughout repairs because closing the entire bridge would require lengthy commutes for residents, school buses and emergency responders.

A second interview was held later in the meeting with Jonathan Lampson, a candidate for a highway department driver/operator/laborer position. Lampson described his prior experience with catch basins, drainage, and plowing work. He started plowing at age 14 with his father, doing the Westfield Courthouse. As an adult, he has also held jobs plowing the Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 91. He described some of his experience with encountering ledge while putting in storm drains, in some cases breaking it up by hand or bringing in a blast company to keep from dulling equipment. He also has experience with foundations, developments and water, sewer and electrical lines. "Safety is a key factor in my business. Always know where everybody is. If you can't see them, stop and see where they're at," Lampson said. "I don't want anybody getting hurt."

The selectboard has several more candidates to consider for the Highway

Superintendent and the highway driver/operator/laborer position.

#### Insurance

Following the interviews, the board reflected on their difficulty in keeping pay and salaries competitive with other towns and businesses. Treasurer Aimee Burnham ran a report that concluded it would cost \$4,000 to bring all town employees to 75/25% (town/employee) for health insurance, up from the 60/40% they currently have. There is still \$211,000 in ARPA funds that have not been obligated and the board unanimously approved paying for the increase from that source. This change will be effective for all town employees on Dec. 1.

#### Grant

In other issues, the selectboard approved Fire Chief Josh Ellinger applying for a grant for an Automated External Defibrillator for one of the trucks that does not have one. He will reportedly be asking for \$2,500 and there is no match required.

#### Internet access

Town Hall Internet access has become unreliable. Police Chief Bob Garriepy was on a conference call last week that kept cutting out. The town is currently using an old plan that they originally got through Comcast business, and only supports about 4 devices

at one time. For the same cost, they can get a system with 250 Megabytes per second. Booth suggested that Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin check with the IT committee for a recommendation on speed before proceeding.

#### Other business

Booth reported that he has the general specs written for new library windows with greater energy efficiency and UV ratings. He needs to review with library staff. Peloquin submitted a report highlighting other unfinished/unpaid projects that would use ARPA funds, including paved parking at North Hall.

Garriepy also reported on the final punch list of items that have to be completed on the Crescent St. project.

Among its more routine business, the board received and approved the FY '18 Community Development Block Grant Close Out Report and approved several Stanton Hall Use requests. As there were no applicants for the position of FRTA Administrator, Peloquin submitted an application and was approved; this is a role she has managed in the past. Peloquin noted that a selectboard meeting scheduled for Nov. 22 would occur the night before Thanksgiving; that meeting will be canceled and moved to Nov. 29, but may be canceled altogether if the agenda is light. The selectboard also signed off on minutes, payroll and bill warrants.

## HUNTINGTON

## Domestic Violence Task Force to meet Nov. 8

HUNTINGTON – Southern Hilltown Domestic Violence Task Force will hold an in person meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 8 from 1-2:30 p.m. at Gateway Regional High School, 12 Littleville Road, in the Career Center on the second floor.

PLEASE RECYCLE  
THIS NEWSPAPER

## TASK FORCE

domestic violence and who can help in the hilltowns. “When you ask people in the hilltowns to help, they show up,” noted LaRocque.

Speakers included Hampshire County District Attorney David Sullivan, Phil Barry, longtime task force member and Chair of the Friends of Hilltown Safety at Home, the fundraising arm of the grant-funded program and Lt. Dan Kennedy (retired) from the Russell Barracks of the Massachusetts State Police, who played an integral role in the development of SHDVTF and improving the state and local police response to local domestic violence calls.

Sullivan—who has attended every vigil sponsored by SHDVTF—congratulated the staff, allies, and members and noted, “This is a community response, not an individual one.” In particular, he noted the Task Force’s work with students in the Gateway Regional School District on their healthy relationships social norms campaign as a means to prevent and reduce domestic violence in the future. He concluded with, “I just want you all to know that our office is always going to be there for you.”

Barry, whose sister-in-law Karen Hart was murdered by her estranged husband, helped launch Hilltown Safety at Home, a non-profit organization that developed resources to help domestic violence survivors safely leave their dangerous relationships. Most notably, HSAF hired a Domestic Violence Advocate who followed up on police calls and helped survivors get to court, obtain needed services, and start a new life away from the abuser. Barry said, “I want to thank each and every person who embraced our efforts here in the hilltowns” adding that there is still a lot of work to do.

In his remarks, Kennedy, who was also an early member of the Task Force

## Town Hall to get new ADA complaint ramp

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – The main entrances to Huntington Town Hall and Stanton Hall will be closing soon due to the replacement of the wheelchair accessible ramp that leads to both buildings.

Funded by Community Development Block Grant and American Rescue Plan Act funds, the project is slated to begin on Monday, Nov. 6 and continue through Thursday, Jan 18.

Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin announced during this time,

only the front doors at Town Hall and Stanton Hall will be used for entry. These are the doors located off of the town green that face Route 20.

The town apologizes for the inconvenience, but there will be a brand new, American Disabilities Act compliant ramp for all to use at the end of this project.

Planning for this project began under a CDBG grant in 2018, but was sidelined due to COVID. As construction and materials costs have risen since then, additional funds had to come from ARPA monies. Kenney Masonry, LLC will be

the contractor for the replacement, which was designed by architect Marc Sternic.

Since the front entries are only accessible by stairs, any member of the public who is unable to use the stairs is advised to call Peloquin at 413-512-5200 or the department they wish to see, in advance.

The public is encouraged to conduct as much business as possible by email, phone and mail during this time. Anyone wishing to attend meetings can call in; log in information on the specific board’s agenda by visiting [www.huntingtonma.us](http://www.huntingtonma.us).

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this body for all it has done.”

And, over its 25 year history, it’s done a lot. In addition to establishing services like Hilltown Safety at Home that are located in the hilltowns, as well as materials and training for survivors, community leaders, police, faith leaders, and medical personnel, SHDVTF also has some nationally recognized achievements.

Following the 2002 murder of Karen May Hart by her ex-husband, the Task Force launched an in-depth fatality review. Working with a national expert, the Task Force oversaw a review of all of the warning signs of imminent harm to Hart, as well as all of her encounters with law enforcement and courts. Dubbed the “red flag project,” the results were released at a press conference at the Russell State Police Barracks and went onto influence policy, practice and training across the state and country.

Locally, the District Attorney began requiring that prosecutors request dangerousness hearings for high-risk cases. From there, SHDVTF coordinated with national expert Neil Websdale to create a high-risk assessment guide and train others for using this tool in the community and beyond.

SHDVTF launched their first community bystander campaign using newspaper ads and flyers posted throughout the towns showcasing contact information and using group photos of local people who are trained and agreed to help refer any victim who reached out to them.

In 2006, the task force worked with Gateway Regional High School to launch the first social norms dating violence campaign in the nation. Following a later evaluation, it demonstrated significant improvements in teen attitudes and behaviors, including less trash talk and more willingness to help a friend who is being abused. The campaign was

replicated later at Gateway and in several other states.

In addition to establishing Hilltown Safety At Home, the first local resource for victims, SHDVTF influenced several other important events. First, they fought to secure a domestic violence Safeplan advocate at Westfield District Court in 2008, successfully arguing that several courts in the region with fewer DV cases already had this service. In 2011, they worked with legislators and others to successfully fight the closure of Westfield District Court, arguing that transportation is already a major barrier for rural survivors and that requiring them to travel further would increase danger. That court remains open today.

By 2015, HSAH had become so large it moved to HCHC, which also increased the number of rural towns served by the organization. The success of the Task Force is not only proven by these achievements, but also by evaluation results.

In 2009, an analysis of domestic violence calls to the Russell Barracks showed that two things had happened since HSAH started following up on police calls: 1) the number of domestic violence calls to state police increased and 2) the level of injury among victims decreased, indicating that more victims were calling the police for help before serious physical injuries occurred.

Its most recent initiative (2021) was establishing the first in the nation helpline for people who abuse others and want to learn to change and become safe. A Call For Change Helpline received over 250 calls in its first year, which was five times the number expected.

As noted by Kennedy, it’s hard to measure the number of lives you saved. But there is plenty of evidence to support that SHDVTF has made a tremendous difference in the hilltowns of Western Massachusetts.

## 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 Monday at NOON, on holidays it is Friday at 2 p.m.



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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



### My birthday is on the first of the month; when should I claim Social Security?

Dear Rusty

*I will be 62 on Nov. 1 and I have chosen to take my benefits early. I know that my benefit will be less than it would be if I waited and that does not concern me, but I don't want to be without income for a long period of time. I know that if my birthday is on the first or second of the month, then I can draw that month. Does that mean that when I turn 62 on Nov. 1 that I can receive my first check on the second Wednesday of November? And should I select November as the month I'd like my benefits to start? I also read that I would be paid the month following the month I select, hence my confusion.*

Signed: Confused Senior

Dear Confused

There are a few different Social Security rules, which come into play in your specific circumstance which are likely creating your confusion. First, since you will be 62 on Nov. 1, you will first become eligible for Social Security starting with the month of November.

Those born on the first or second of the month are eligible for benefits for that entire month, whereas those who turn 62 later in the month wouldn't be eligible for benefits until the following month. To claim benefits, you must be 62 for the entire month and, because your birthday is on the first, your first month being 62 for the entire month will be November and that is the month you should specify as your benefit-start month on your application.

The next thing to be aware of is that Social Security pays benefits in the month following the month those benefits are earned. That means that your November benefits will be paid in December. The exact payment date is determined by the recipients birthday – born before the eleventh of the month, SS payments are made on the second Wednesday; born between the eleventh and twentieth of the month, payments are received on the third Wednesday of the month and for those born after the twentieth of the month, payment is received on the fourth Wednesday.

Thus, since you were born on the first of the month and are claiming benefits to start in November, your first Social Security payment will be deposited in your bank account on the second Wednesday of December and all subsequent Social Security payments will be made on that same second-Wednesday schedule.

You can apply for your Social Security benefits up to 4 months prior to the month you wish them to start, and SS recommends you apply at least 2 months prior to allow time for processing your application. On the application, they will ask which month you wish your benefits to begin, and you can indicate November to get your earliest possible payment in December.

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## Corrections policy

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

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



## GUEST COLUMN

### What I did (wrong) last summer



I always joke that gardeners are an optimistic lot. We no sooner pick that last fruit and we are already thinking about next year's garden. Our goal may be to improve on our mistakes or simply try something new.

Mistakes do happen.

Oftentimes it's because we run out of time to do everything we should, or we do this or that to simply "get it done."

Sometimes we underestimate or overestimate. Sometimes we are hopeful but not practical.

Read on to learn about my imperfectness this past summer.

Right now, I have 50, three-inch apples staring at me when I walk to my car. Had I thinned said apples I would have had 10-15 five-inch apples.

What's the big deal? It's likely I'd fill a basket to the same height, be it with three-inch or five-inch fruit.

Of course, we all like bigger apples, but it goes well beyond that. I learned that seed production really tires out the tree, so fewer apples would mean fewer seeds and a happier tree.

I'll have to be observant come spring. Will my tree be too tired to bloom next year or bloom well?

If I'm lucky enough to have fruit clusters, I will indeed thin out all but one fruit per cluster. Ordinarily you would save the biggest one, but if it has any insect damage,

it's best to take off that fruitlet and save another.

Thinning is especially important in young trees. While it's hard to wait for trees to bear, it's best to leave only a few fruit early on so that energy can go to strong roots and developing a healthy scaffold of branches.

As I stare out the window just now, I'm reminded of another misstep. I did not dead-head my spent lilac blooms.

Not only do the blackish seed heads look ugly, I fear that I will lose some flowers because of it. Seed production comes into play here too in terms of the plant expending energy and then being too depleted to perform well the next year.

Pruning or deadheading lilacs can take place any time before July 1, not to sacrifice flowers for the following spring.

My winter squash production was abysmal this summer. I had soil tests done last fall and did I follow the recommendations to the T? No.

I was told that my nitrogen and phosphorus were low. While I amended the rows for individual crops like tomatoes and green beans, I neglected to amend the larger area within my garden in which I grew my cucumbers and squash.

Being frugal I added a little compost to the rows (I was trying the row method and not the hill method this year) and called it done. The vines grew for a while, set a few fruit, then turned yellow.

Squash bugs overran.

I think I have three edible squash (actually I just checked and it's officially two!) from a 200 square foot area. The same area in year one, with fresh soil and no bugs yielded 50 fruit.

I was short on time and energy. Next year I will amend the soil per the test results.

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## Election letters to the editor welcome

The Country Journal welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Country Journal, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Friday'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.

## 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.

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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



I received an email from a Brimfield resident recently reporting the return of the dark-eyed juncos and the sighting of one ruby crowned kinglet.

The ruby crowned kinglet is a small bird of 4 ¼ inches. It is grayish green above with a white eye ring and two white wing bars. As the name implies, the male has a red patch on its head, which is usually concealed. The female lacks the red patch.

Kinglets feed on tips of branches by hovering and gleaning from leaves. They flick wings and chatter as they move. They eat insects, spiders and some fruit and seeds. They also drink tree sap. Kinglets summer in the coniferous



Ruby crowned kinglet

woods of Canada and winter in the northeast and south in woods and brush edges.

The female kinglet lays five to 11 creamy white colored eggs with brown marks in a nest of mosses, twigs and lichens lined with fur and other fine materials.

In winter, kinglets are found in mixed flocks chickadees, titmice, woodpeckers, warblers and golden crowned

kinglets. Their song is a series of descending high notes with three repeated phrases like “see see see you you you look-at-me look-at-me look-at-me.”

The Brimfield resident said he had a flock of ten turkeys that show up occasionally. They were in the yard recently and became nervous by one of the gray fox kits. The fox ignored the turkeys as it looked for something to eat under the sunflower/suet feeder.

### Feeding the birds not bears

The Brimfield resident said he tries to put out feeders all year, taking them down each night. He said if a bear shows up during the daytime, then he takes the feeders down for a week or so.

I was putting out my suet cake feeder during the day and taking it down before dark. It worked for awhile, but a bear came during the day and not only took the suet feeder down, but walked away with it. I am not putting out suet and will wait for the bears to hibernate. I bought another suet feeder to replace the one grabbed by the bear.

I do put a small amount of seeds in a tray feeder and another small cup feeder, which I used for mealworms during the day. I noticed the birds clean the feeders out quickly especially since I have bluejays coming to the feeder.

### Lots of wild turkeys

It seems almost everywhere I go I see wild turkeys often small flocks of Tom turkeys either along the side of the road, in a field or on someone’s lawn. Several times I had to stop my car and wait for them to cross the road.

### Wren

I spotted a house wren in my yard recently. It had its tail cocked in the air as wrens typically do. I was foraging in the leaves.

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.

## Hampshire Regional Educational Association comments on survey results

During the week of Oct. 9 the Hampshire Regional Educational Association (HREA) surveyed their 100 members to assess where teachers stand given the current state of negotiations.

Here is what we found of the 77 HREA members who completed the survey: 67 were teachers and ten were Educational Support Personnel, four teachers and six ESPs (51.9% of those who completed the survey) hold a second job to supplement their income, 44 teachers and seven ESPs (66.2% of those who completed the survey) are considering leaving Hampshire Regional High School for a job in a higher paying school district or in a higher paying job and 17 teachers and five ESP (28.6% of those who completed the survey) are actively looking for other full-time employment.

These numbers are an accurate representation of the low morale of teaching staff and ESPs at HRHS. These numbers are terrifying. If even a fraction of these teachers/ESPs leave HRHS, it will have a devastating effect on our school.

We will become one of the numerous schools in Massachusetts that cannot fill empty positions and we will lose the strong reputation and culture we have developed over the years. A

WBUR article in June 2023 reported that 48% of school districts in the Northeast felt that they were understaffed and an official from the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Schools believes that the teacher shortage is not going away.

HRHS has already lost three teachers before this current school year. We learned how challenging it can be to find replacements for certain positions in our school as we are now paying \$110,000 for Speech and Language contracted services for this school year.

The US Department of Education produces a yearly report of the areas with the greatest teacher shortages. The teacher shortage areas in Massachusetts for the 2023-2024 school year include computer science, science, math, English as a second language, special education, social studies, language arts, and world language.

HRHS teacher salaries are not competitive with local school districts. The wage increases that you have brought forth through bargaining do nothing to bridge the gap between HRHS salaries and those of local school districts. In fact, your offers increase the gap.

A local paper recently reported that the average salary of HRHS is higher than Northampton. While this statement

is a fact, it does not paint an accurate picture of the inequities in salary. If you compare the contracts at the two high schools, you will see that the teachers at NHS with experience are paid significantly higher than HRHS experienced teachers. For example, teachers at NHS who have their master’s degree and are at the top step in their contract, make \$85,614. A teacher at HRHS with the same education at our top step makes \$75,805. This HRHS salary includes the 2% raise currently on the table.

Looking at average salaries only proves that NHS staff are less experienced than the staff at HRHS. Because the HRHS salaries are not competitive, experienced teachers are considering leaving HRHS for jobs that will increase their salary and standard of living. Our less experienced teachers are also looking for jobs elsewhere, because they can clearly see the enormous loss of income they will experience over the years if they stay at HRHS. Our teachers are tired of working second and third jobs to be able to afford working at HRHS.

Some of the teachers who have stated that they plan to leave our school are the teachers who teach AP courses at HRHS. It will be extremely challeng-

ing to recruit the experienced educators needed to teach these higher level AP courses. Only experienced and specifically trained teachers teach AP courses. Why would an experienced teacher take a pay cut to come to HRHS?

We leave you with two questions. What will HRHS do when the school choice students no longer want to be at our school? Where will we be when our district students choice out of HRHS because they are not able to take the rigorous classes that they have been planning on?

The future of HRHS is at a tipping point. We believe that if the HRHS school committee doesn’t bring forth an offer of wages that shows that the district is working toward paying our teachers a competitive salary, teachers will leave in great numbers by the end of the school year. Teachers will find higher paying teaching jobs and HRHS will not be able to fill the holes left by these departures.

**Greg Reynolds,  
Jesse Porter-Henry,  
Mike Braidman, Aidan Linden,  
Susannah Branch, Dawn Young,  
Erin Mahon-Moore, Kim Bush  
and Jen Regan**  
*Hampshire Regional Education  
Association executive board*

## GARDEN

The squash vine that has engulfed the chicken coop (not planted on purpose, mind you) is still lush and green, growing in all that nitrogen rich chicken fertilized soil. I only hope the two beautiful butternuts have a chance to fully ripen.

Another area in which I was lax was removing volunteer plants. I was so proud of my new perennial border, only to have many Cosmos seed themselves.

The bed was pretty enough but the tall cosmos through the whole design off. The Goldfinches were happy so that

was a consolation, but next year they will have to be happy in another part of the garden where the Cosmos will be planted on purpose.

A long time ago someone told me the real definition of a weed: “a plant that grows where it is not supposed to regardless of whether it is a dandelion or a rose!”

I did do a few things correctly.

Planting a bed of carrots after the garlic was harvested was smart. They are ready for harvest and boy are they sweet now that colder temperatures have set in.

The succession of lettuce transplants I put in after the peas are also going strong. I am dreaming about next year already, despite my failures and I hope you are too!!

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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.*



from page 4

## SECURITY

from page 4

Actually, you can simply select the following option on the Social Security benefit application: “I want benefits beginning with the earliest possible month and will accept an age-related reduction,” which will accomplish the same thing.

*The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is*

*intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*

# SHARE your story

*We accept submissions from the community.*

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## MONTGOMERY

### Library announces events

MONTGOMERY – The Grace Hall Memorial Library, 160 Main St., is now an official “Toys for Toys” location of the Marine Corps Reserve.

This holiday season please consider bringing an unwrapped Christmas gift for a child in need.

The Wee Small Hours Cabaret Concert featuring vocalist Mary Jo Maichack and keyboardist Bob Shepherd will take place on Saturday, Dec. 2 at noon in the Montgomery Town Hall.

People may sign up at the library for Holiday Wreaths workshops led by Julie and Laurie. People should bring pruning shears and decorations. The library will provide the ribbons. The fee for this event is \$7 to cover the cost.

A Cookie Exchange will be held

on Thursday, Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m. Participants should bring their favorite homemade cookies to share with others.

2023 Monthly Motif Reading Challenge for November, the theme is “Around or Out of this World.” Dive into books that transport readers to different worlds and perspectives.

Patrons can access a vast collection of eBooks and eAudiobooks through Libby and Boston Public Library. They may visit the library to pick up a flyer and learn how to download eCard for convenient reading on their devices.

People may call the library at 413-862-3894 or email montgomerylibrary@yahoo.com for more information. Library hours are Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Thursdays from 4-8 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

## CHESTER

### Snowflake Festival Craft Fair returns on Saturday

CHESTER – The Snowflake Festival Craft Fair sponsored by the Chester Historical Society will return to the Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

There will be over twenty craft-

ers offering knitted goods, quilts, hand-painted signs, one-of-a-kind jewelry, toy trains, pillows, woodworking, herbal products and many, many more handmade crafts. People can get a head start on their holiday shopping. The town hall is fully accessible.



## BLANDFORD

### Firemen’s Association to hold pancake breakfast on Dec. 2

BLANDFORD – The Blandford Firemen’s Association is already prepping for their annual community event, the Saturday, Dec. 2 pancake breakfast.

Breakfast will be served from 8:30-11:30 at Town Hall. Santa will arrive at about 9:30 or 10 a.m. with gift bags for youngsters. Right now, the Association is looking for donations for the accompanying raffle. Items range from gift baskets to food stuffs and can be holiday themed.

Donors should contact Pat Lombardo to arrange for pickup of donations either

by email to: plombardo58@gmail.com or text to 413-454-5336. Lombardo said, “Please no phone calls,” as he will be at work.

Donations can also be dropped off at the Fire Department’s training center next to the Post Office on Main Street only on Mondays, Nov. 6 and 20 from 6-8 p.m.

The breakfast menu as always will be pancakes, bacon, sausage, coffee, tea, orange juice and cider. Tickets are \$5 each for kids 5 to 11-years-old and all others, 12 and over, \$10 per person.

### Historical Society to hold Annual Meeting Nov. 14

BLANDFORD – The Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

All members are encouraged to attend. The business meeting will be

followed by a fun dessert selection and a presentation of ghostly tales by local Western Mass Historian Dennis Picard. The program is open to everyone and there is no cost.

### HEARING

from page 1

#### pudding Hill Farm, LLC

Letendre also signed a letter to Pudding Hill Farm, LLC, a boutique cannabis growing concern on Julius Hall Road. The letter is in response to a query from the Cannabis Control Commission asking for any costs “imposed on the town related to” Pudding Hill.

Since the facility is so small and little traffic is anticipated, “the town does not plan to document any impacts” as a result of Pudding Hill’s business.

#### Inter-governmental agreement

The board also reviewed an inter-governmental agreement with Springfield Water and Sewer Commission regarding work to be done on South Street.

#### Other business

In other business, the board hopes to build the Bicentennial Park Trust so that it produces sufficient income to maintain the condition of the park. The tree will be pruned and Select Board Member Jeff Allen will remove leaves from the area. Apparently, no funds have been spent yet this year from the trust income.

The recording equipment for the board meetings is apparently found to be sufficient.

Water Department Superintendent Gordon Avery made the observation that for the highway department worker posting, the town should consider a contractual arrangement and cover licensure costs.

### ‘No foul play’ involved in death

By Mary Kronholm  
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – Last Thursday, Oct. 26, the Fire Department received a medical emergency call.

The body of a male was discovered and was possibly deceased for at least two days. Communications Director for the Hampden County District Attorney’s office James Leydon said Monday that the name of the decedent is not public

information as this is an ongoing investigation by the Medical Examiner and the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit assigned to that office.

In addition to the Fire Department, the Chester Blandford Police Department and the Hilltown Ambulance were on site with the State Police.

Leydon said that all instances of an unattended death signals the necessity for the State Police Detective Unit. He also said that “no foul play” was involved.

## WORTHINGTON

### DESE to conduct focused review of Worthington School District

WORTHINGTON – During the week Nov. 27, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Office of Public School Monitoring will conduct a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review of the Worthington School District.

The Office of Public School Monitoring visits each district and charter school every three years to monitor compliance with federal and state special education and civil rights regulations. Areas of review related to special education include student assessments, determination of eligibility, the Individualized Education Program Team process and

IEP development and implementation. Areas of review related to civil rights include bullying, student discipline, physical restraint, and equal access to school programs for all students.

In addition to the onsite visit, parent outreach is an important part of the review process. The review chairperson from the Office of Public School Monitoring will send all parents of a student with disabilities an online survey that focuses on key areas of their child’s special education program. Survey results will contribute to the development of a report. During the onsite review, the Office of Public School

Monitoring will interview one or more parents of students with disabilities. Other onsite activities may include interview of district staff and administrators, review of student records, and onsite observations.

Parents and other individuals may contact Laurie Farkas, by email at lfarkas@hr-k12.org or by phone at 413-238-5856 or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Public School Monitoring Chairperson, Sandra Hanig, by email at sandra.hanig@mass.gov or by phone at 413-314-6707 to request a telephone interview. If an individual requires an accommodation, such as

translation, to participate in an interview, DESE will make the necessary arrangements.

Within approximately 60 business days after the onsite visit, the review chairperson will provide the Worthington School District with a report with information about areas in which the Worthington School District meets or exceeds regulatory requirements and areas in which the Worthington School District requires assistance to correct or improve practices. The public will be able to access the report by visiting <http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/reports/>.



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## PITTSFIELD

### NCB host 'Meet the Donors' event

PITTSFIELD – The Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires hosts a "Meet the Donors" event on Thursday, Nov. 9 from 3:30-5 p.m. at Barrington Stage's Wolfson Center at 122 North St. Nonprofits are invited to attend this free gathering to learn more about local funders and their grant-making programs.

Participating funders include Adams Community Bank, Berkshire Bank Foundation, Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, Canna Provisions, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Lee Bank, Milltown Foundation and Williamstown Community Chest. Nonprofits may register online by visiting [npcberkshires.org](http://npcberkshires.org).

### Zion Lutheran Church Common Room hosts author Kevin O'Hara on Nov. 6

PITTSFIELD – Live at The Common Room at Zion Lutheran Church, 74 First St., presents local author Kevin O'Hara on Monday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. He will relay stories and answers questions about his book "Ins and Outs of a Locked Ward: My 30 Years as a Psychiatric Nurse."

Tickets are \$5 at the door or online by visiting [acommonroom.org](http://acommonroom.org). This is a timely discussion of mental illness.

Light refreshments are provided and copies of Kevin O'Hara's books will be for sale.

Kevin O'Hara, a retired R.N. following a 30-year career at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield, is the recipient of the John Fitzgerald

Kennedy National Award, given for his first two books, "Last of the Donkey Pilgrims," and "A Lucky Irish Lad." In addition, Kevin is a long-time contributing columnist and was named the 2020 writer-in-residence at Herman Melville's Arrowhead.

His latest book, "Ins and Outs of a Locked Ward," chronicles his 30 years as a psychiatric nurse on the Jones Wing at Berkshire Medical Center.

Kevin and his wife, Belita, live in Pittsfield, where his parents first put down roots in 1953, after emigrating from England by way of Ireland. They have two grown sons, Eamonn and Brendan.

Through The Common Room,

Zion Lutheran Church opens the gift of our historic space for the common good of their neighbors, welcoming them into events that connect, nourish and inspire.

The Common Room is an affordable, accessible community space located in the beautiful sanctuary of Zion Lutheran Church in Downtown Pittsfield. From farmers markets to choir concerts, weekly yoga to annual fundraisers, board meetings to public presentations, they host a wide variety of organizations and events year-round.

To host an event at The Common Room, people may visit [acommonroom.org](http://acommonroom.org), email [events@acommonroom.org](mailto:events@acommonroom.org) or call 413-442-3525.

## First Fridays Artswalk in downtown happening Nov. 3

PITTSFIELD – The First Fridays Artswalk in downtown Pittsfield returns on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-8 p.m.

Participating venues include Berkshire Art Center, Clock Tower Artists, Hotel on North, Krol Headquarters, Lichtenstein Center for the Arts, Marchetti Headquarters, Marketplace Cafe, NUarts gallery + studios, Soda Chef and the Unitarian Universalist Church.

Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church will host a Free Kids' Paint & Sip on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-7 p.m. in the auditorium at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 67 East St., as part of the First Fridays Artswalk. There will be a bonus painting craft on wooden owl ornaments sponsored by St. Stephen's.

This free autumn-themed Paint & Sip is best suited for ages 5 to 12, although younger and older children are welcome. All materials, instruction, snacks and juice will be provided. Children are welcome to drop in anytime over the course of the event, and all children must be accompanied by an adult. The auditorium is on the second floor of the parish house and the entrance is on

Allen Street.

The Clock Tower Artists at 75 South Church St. will host an open studios event in their beautiful and ever-expanding space on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-8 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 4 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

The Lichtenstein Center for the Arts, 28 Renee Avenue, will feature "CHAOS: Paintings and Drawings by Julio Granda" through Nov. 17. CHAOS features 54 paintings by Julio Granda. The show will be on view during the First Fridays Artswalk on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-8 p.m. CHAOS can also be viewed Wednesdays through Fridays, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. or by appointment.

The Berkshire Art Center (BAC), 141 North Street, will continue to offer Free Artmaking Drop-Ins on the First Friday of the month from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, year-round. For the month of November, The Berkshire Art Center will also feature two window displays: Landscapes, Seascapes, Skyscapes - curated by Matt Brinton (north window) and Turn the Tables by Deborah Carter (south window).

On Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-8 p.m., NUarts gallery + studios, 311 North St., will open their Hall Gallery featuring

the works of resident artists including Richard Britell, Kathy Gideon, Brent Ridge, Joan Rooks, Marney Schorr and Laura Thompson.

Matthew Brinton will present "Illustrations from a Bygone Era" at Krol Headquarters, 139 North St., for the month of November. There will be an opening reception on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-8 p.m. during the First Fridays Artswalk.

The Marketplace Cafe, 53 North St., will host artwork by Emily Bunnell for the month of November. There will be a reception with the artist during the Nov. 3 First Fridays Artswalk from 5-7 p.m.

Marchetti Headquarters, at 314 North St., will feature Mollie Kellogg's Incognito Witches on Nov. 3. Experience hidden magic revealed in Mollie Kellogg's Incognito Witch paintings and drawings during the First Fridays Artswalk and meet Mollie at a reception on Friday, November 3 from 5 to 7 pm at Marchetti Headquarters. Additional paintings have been added for the November 3rd Artswalk event!

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield, 175 Wendell Avenue, will present "Darling, Darling" by Falcon Laina

and Cassidy Clark, Nov. 3-20. There will be a reception with the artists on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-7 p.m.

Berkshire Medical Center, main lobby at 725 North St., will present "Joy," featuring the joyful works of staff and friends of BMC's Clinical Ancillary Services Division Nov. 1 through Nov. 30. There will be two receptions on Friday, Nov. 2 from noon 1 p.m. and 3-5 p.m.

Hotel on North, 297 North St., will feature Soil Paintings by Sarah Horne through Nov. 29. First Fridays Artswalk is supported in part by a grant from the Mass Cultural Council and a grant from the Pittsfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. This program is also supported in part by The Feigenbaum Foundation as well as a grant awarded by Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation's Arts Build Community initiative with funding from the Barr Foundation.

For more information on First Fridays Artswalk, people may visit [downtownpittsfield.com](http://downtownpittsfield.com) or call Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. at 413-443-6501.

## WILLIAMSBURG

### Williamsburg Grange to hold potluck and meeting

WILLIAMSBURG – The Williamsburg Grange #225 will host its November meeting and potluck dinner on Saturday, Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. in the Grange Hall on Main Street.

The program will include besides the potluck dinner, membership awards, a program by Matt Baron on the Farm Bill and the business meeting. The public is welcome.

## CHESTERFIELD

### Chesterfield Church to hold Harvest Supper Nov. 4

CHESTERFIELD – The Chesterfield Congregational Church, Route 143 located in the center of town, will be holding Harvest Supper on Saturday, Nov. 4 at 5:30 p.m.

The cost of the dinner is \$16 for adults, \$8 for children 4 to 12 years old and free to children

3 years old and under. Reservations

are necessary and can be made by calling 413-358-6567.

The menu includes turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy, butternut squash, cranberry relish, quick breads and choice of apple or pumpkin pie.

This promises to be a popular event, so people should call soon for reservations.

## NORTHAMPTON

### Forbes Library announces upcoming news, events

NORTHAMPTON – Forbes Library, 20 West St., will feature Molly Aronson, cello and Dr. Jasmine Robinso, orator, on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 2-3 p.m.

The concert will music of Johann Sebastian Bach and Gaspar Cassadó, together with texts by Indigenous and African-American authors Robbie Robertson, Joy Harjo and Eloise Greenfield.

Zine Club presents Xerox Seance on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. This is where the ephemeral meets the ethereal in the Arts and Music Department for the collaborative creation of a photocopied print, by the spontaneous writing and drawing of those present, through a game of surrealistic happenstance named "writey/drawey." New members are welcome.

Kids' Gaming Club meets Friday, Nov. 3 from 4-5 p.m. in the Community

Room. The club meets every Friday for children ages 7 to 12 where gamers play the library's Nintendo Switch.

On Saturday, Nov. 4 from 2-3 p.m. a program on tracking dinosaurs around Forbes Library with

Tracking Dinosaurs Around Forbes Library with Amherst College's Beneski Museum of Natural History to learn about the kind of dinosaurs that once roamed Northampton and the trace fossils they left behind. This program is for ages three plus and they will use plaster to recreate the track-making process.

In the Hosmer Gallery, Beadwork by Amalia FourHawks, Scratchboard by Cheri Cross and photography by Ellen Koteen will be on exhibit Thursday, Nov. 2 through Thursday, Nov. 30. An artists reception will be held Friday, Nov. 10 from 4-5:30 p.m.

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## BECKET

# Becket Art Center present 'The Thanksgiving Play'

BECKET The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, presents a staged reading of "The Thanksgiving Play" by Larissa FastHorse on Saturday, Nov. 4 at 2 p.m.

"The Thanksgiving Play" is centered around a cast attempting to create a politically correct theater piece about Native

Americans. When the comedy premiered on Broadway earlier this year, The New York Times labeled it a "critics pick," calling "The Thanksgiving Play" a "brutal satire of American myth making." Tickets are \$20 and are available by visiting the BAC website at becketartscenter.org.

# Becket Athenaeum adds program space with Fitzpatrick Grant

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., Becket and Washington's Community Library, was recently selected by the Trustees of the Jane and Jack Fitzpatrick Trust to receive a generous grant to remodel the library's Children's and Choir Lofts.

These renovations will allow the Athenaeum to increase its programmable space and to better organize and store the diverse resources it offers to patrons. The projects will include the installation of much needed storage solutions in the

Children's Loft, freeing up program space and making room for a peaceful reading corner.

The Choir Loft, which is currently used for storage, will be converted into a private meeting room available to staff, patrons and community groups in need of local meeting space. It is with much gratitude for the generous contribution of the Jane and Jack Fitzpatrick Fund and others that the Becket Athenaeum's Board of Trustees and staff work to meet the ever evolving needs of the library's community.

# Art Center to host 'Art of Giving' exhibition

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will host a free exhibition, "The Art of Giving," featuring local artists Marge Bride, Sean McCusker and Scott Taylor, on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 4-6 p.m.

A diverse selection of oils, watercolors, drawings and prints are samples of works given to and given from these talented artists, exemplifying the creative bonds and the artistry behind the act of giving. For more information, people may visit becketartscenter.org.

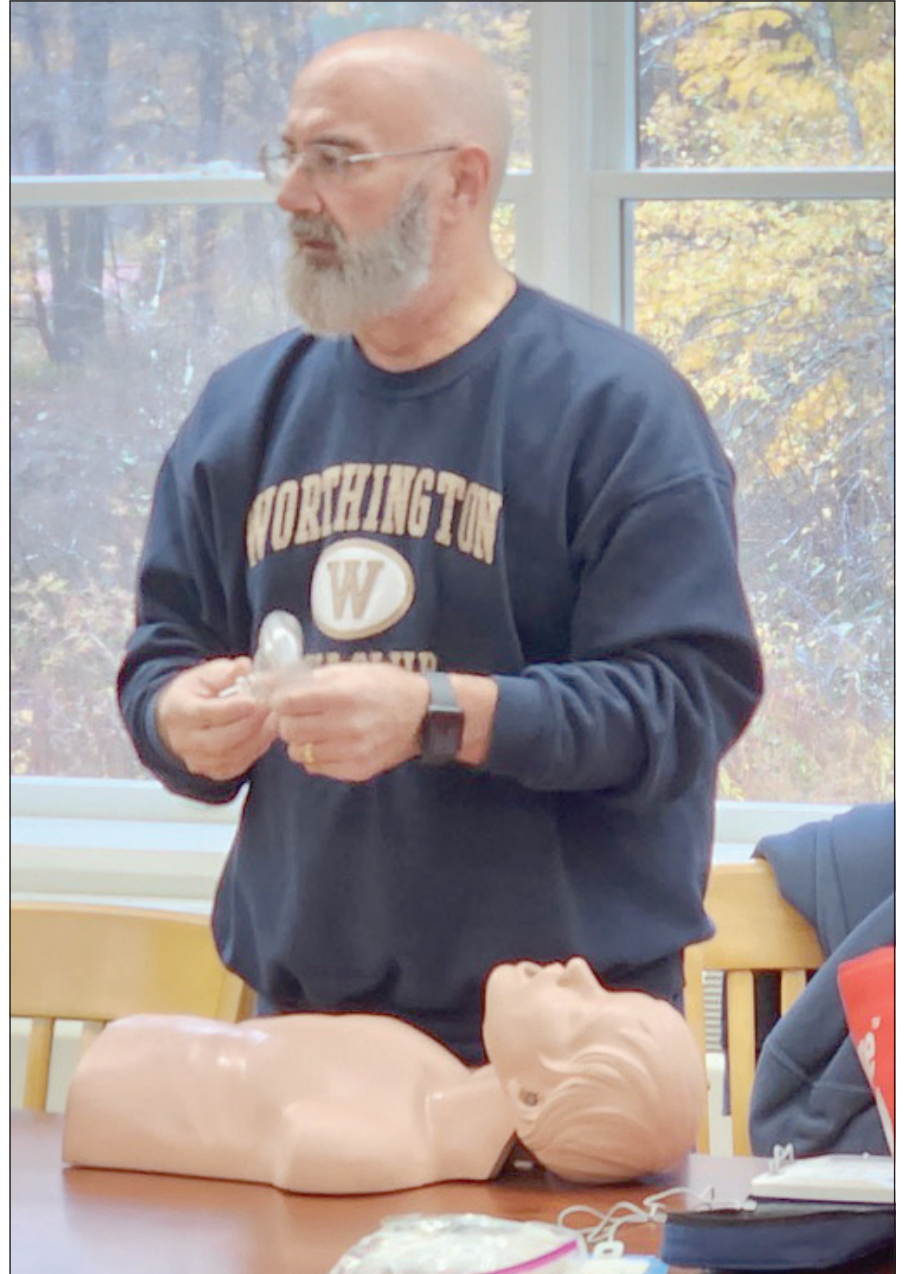


Space by Sean McCusker is on of the works of art on exhibit at the Becket Art Center.

Drawing by Sean McCusker

## OTIS

### COA PROVIDES FIRST AID, CPR, DEFIBRILLATOR DEMONSTRATION



John Muglia demonstrates first aid, Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation and use of an Automatic External Defibrillator at the Otis Council of Aging recently. Submitted photo

# Library to hold Cookbook Club

OTIS The Otis Library, 48 North Main Road, Cookbook Club will meet Friday, Nov. 10 from 12:30-1:30 p.m. This month's cookbook is "Wild

Sweetness, Recipes Inspired by Nature" by Thalia Ho. Participants select a recipe from the cookbook and prepare it to share with other club members.

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# MIDDLEFIELD

## Middlefield Council on Aging announces lunch menu

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Senior Center, 169 Skyline Trail, on Wednesday, Nov. 8 will serve lunch and noon.

The menu is eat in or take out. The

choice is lentil bolognese with slow cooked ham or meatloaf with gravy, spinach, peppers and onions, dinner roll, Mandarin oranges and Veterans Day cake.

People should call 413-623-9990 to reserve a meal the previous Friday, Nov. 3. Suggested donation is \$3.

In Honor of their service to their country, the Middlefield COA invited the

Middlefield Veterans to have lunch with the members of the COA and Daniel Nye, Central Hampshire Veterans' Services.

The Board meeting immediately follows.



Middlefield's Congregated Trick-or-Treating at Blossom Center had many households dispensing candy to costumed kids last Saturday, Oct. 28.



Dimitri Pires gets unneeded adult advice on his candy choices.

Submitted photos

## Blossom Center announces events

MIDDLEFIELD – Blossom Community Center, upper rear at 16 Bell Road, will host the usual calendar of events this month, plus a potluck Thanksgiving dinner.

Bingo by Ray Gero is always the first Friday and will be held Friday, Nov. 3 at 5:30 p.m. Collaborative Cooking is on the second Sunday, Nov. 12 at 3 p.m. for fun sharing recipes or

prep jobs, then eating.

Sue Schneller brings fun arts and crafts on the third Friday, Nov. 17 at 5:30 p.m. A brunch will be held the fourth Sunday, Nov. 26 at 11:30 a.m. Nov 26.

People may visit [www. BlossomCenterMA.org](http://www.BlossomCenterMA.org) or in Dining Hall for calendar reminders and RSVP form for Thanksgiving or Brunch.



People enjoy Bingo night on the first Friday at the Blossom Center.

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## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

# Nursing tuition covered at community colleges

HOLYOKE – The Healey-Driscoll Administration celebrated this year's new nursing community college financial aid scholarship, announcing that for the first time, the funds are sufficient to cover 100 percent of currently enrolled community college nursing students for the year.

Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler made the announcement at Holyoke Community College's Center for Health Education & Simulation, joined by Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Lauren Jones, Commissioner of Public Health Robbie Goldstein, Senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton), Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education, Senator Adam Gomez (D-Springfield), Representative Patricia Duffy (D-Holyoke), Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, Holyoke Community College President Dr. George Timmons, and the administration's Western Mass Director Kristen Elechko. During the event, the Healey-Driscoll Administration highlighted nursing student scholarship recipients attending Holyoke Community College, celebrating the impact the investment is expected to have for nursing students across the state.

"As the daughter of a school nurse, I know how important it is to have expe-

rienced workers in the health care industry. I'm grateful to Senate President Spilka and the Legislature for prioritizing this life changing initiative," said Healey. "This scholarship for community college nursing students will bolster the nursing pipeline to meet the needs of medical facilities and patients across Massachusetts, which were exacerbated by the pandemic. Like our MassReconnect program which delivers free community college for residents 25 years and older who have not yet completed a degree, this financial aid scholarship for nursing students will also serve as a catalyst for progress in breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty, helping residents complete their higher education credentials so they can attain meaningful careers."

"The health care industry is a vital STEM sector in Massachusetts and I am thrilled that, as part of our 2023 STEM week, we could highlight this incredible scholarship and the impact it will have on students who pursue a future in nursing at one of Massachusetts' 15 incredible community colleges," said Driscoll. "As one of the most rapidly growing STEM occupations, it is vital that we open pathways for more people to pursue nursing as a career."

As part of the FY24 budget, Healey, Driscoll, and the Massachusetts

State Legislature are delivering \$18 million in funds for nursing students at community college. The new scholarship program is designed to attract and encourage a pipeline of skilled nurses in Massachusetts.

This year, of the approximately 3,000 nursing and pre-nursing students currently enrolled in one of Massachusetts' 15 community colleges, all 3,000 are attending at no-cost of their own. The funds for the new nursing financial aid program were sufficient to cover the cost of the estimated 1,500 nursing and pre-nursing students currently enrolled in one of Massachusetts' 15 community colleges. Another 1,500 community college nursing students had their entire cost of attendance funded by other state and federal resources.

"I am proud of this response to the needs of our healthcare workforce and Holyoke Community College's role. This campus is a gateway to opportunities and meaningful careers for our region and supporting that is one of my top priorities," said Duffy.

The new nursing financial aid scholarship is one investment within Healey, Driscoll, and the legislature's historic commitment to higher education in the FY24 budget. The budget included \$330 million total in student financial

aid to allow Massachusetts residents to more easily access their higher education at a cost they can afford, including \$84 million to MassGrant Plus. The Healey-Driscoll administration also launched MassReconnect, a brand-new program allowing Massachusetts residents 25 and older to earn their community college degree for free, regardless of area of study.

The budget also accomplished tuition equity this year, allowing all Massachusetts high school students, regardless of immigration documentation status, to qualify for in-state tuition and financial aid.

The health care workforce is a critical part of the Commonwealth's STEM Economy. More than 40 percent of Massachusetts's economy centers on jobs in STEM fields, including health care, advanced manufacturing, information technology, biotechnology, and clean energy. According to the Massachusetts Department of Economic Research, Nurse Practitioners as an occupation is expected to be the third STEM occupation with the highest growth from 2020 to 2030. Increasing access to higher education is critical to meet employer needs for skilled workers in these high demand industries and inspiring people to pursue meaningful careers.

## Lasell University welcomes new local students

NEWTON – Lasell University welcomed over 370 new students into the Class of 2027.

Local students entering the uni-

versity this fall are Cameron Gainley of Westfield, Jocelyn Mettey of Easthampton and Julia Smidt of Russell.

## Durkee named Resident Adviser

SPRINGFIELD – Westfield resident Dakota Durkee has been named a Resident Adviser for the 2023-2024 academic year at American International College.

Resident Advisers are students chosen for their leadership qualities, interpersonal skills, and dedication to fostering a positive impact on their fellow students. Among the RA's responsibilities are mentoring, community building, safety and security, policy enforcement and communication.

As mentors, RAs at AIC provide guidance and support to students living

in the residence halls, helping them adapt to college life, resolve conflicts and make responsible choices. RAs also create a sense of community within the residence halls by organizing activities and social events and serving as a liaison between residents and the college. These leaders also ensure the safety and security of AIC students living on campus by monitoring the building, responding to emergencies and enforcing college policies.

Durkee is working toward a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

## HCC vice president selected for national leadership program

HOLYOKE – Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement at Holyoke Community College, has been selected for a fellowship for aspiring college presidents by the AGB Institute for Leadership & Governance in Higher Education.

Now entering its fifth year, 27 college administrators from institutions around the country began their fellowships with an in-person symposium in Washington, D.C., in September. To date, 18 past participants have become presidents or chancellors of higher education institutions and many other participants have successfully progressed on the pathway to the presidency with commendations and new positions.

The program consists of two symposia, four online workshops, attendance at the AGB National Conference on Trusteeship, and a shadowing experience with a sitting president. The institute features more than 30 higher education expert presenters including current and former presidents, trustees,



Amanda Sbriscia

search consultants and other sector professionals.

"It is an honor to be part of this fellowship program and to have the opportunity to learn from such an impressive faculty of college and university presidents," said Sbriscia, who also serves as the executive director of the HCC Foundation.

Sbriscia, 39, holds a bachelor's degree in communication from Cedar Crest College, a master of science in higher education from Drexel University and a doctorate in education in educational leadership from Gwynedd Mercy University.

Before being hired at HCC as vice president of Institutional Advancement in 2017, Sbriscia served as senior director of Advancement at Bay Path University, following her role there as director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations. Before Bay Path, she worked in fund development for the Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts and as director of Annual Giving for Anna Maria College in Paxton.

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## State officials announce nursing scholarship program at HCC visit

HOLYOKE – Like so many of her Holyoke Community College classmates, Katelynn Richards struggled for many years as she tried to balance the demands of parenthood and a college education. As a stay-at-home mom of three special needs children, she had long deferred her dream of becoming a nurse.

Affordability was a principal factor. Now a second-year student in HCC's associate of science in nursing program, Richards is one of the beneficiaries of an \$18 million state-funded scholarship initiative that will pay 100 percent of the costs of her nursing education and the education costs for all community college nursing students in Massachusetts.

"The effects of receiving the scholarship funding impact my entire life," said Richards, who lives in Ludlow. "It will allow me to have a healthier work and school family balance. It will cover all my expenses so I can focus on my education and pursue my dream degree in nursing."

"The new scholarship program was designed to attract, incentivize and encourage a pipeline of skilled nurses," said Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler, "and I'm truly so thrilled to be able to announce this ... that every single one of our currently enrolled community college nursing students will be able to attend this year for free."

Statewide, there are about 3,000

students enrolled in community college nursing programs in Massachusetts, Tutwiler said.

State Sen. Jo Comerford called the \$18 million funding allocation a "historic investment," noting a report from the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association that shows western Massachusetts has the second highest number of people currently housed in hospitals awaiting nursing home beds.

"That's second only to the Metro Boston area," Comerford said. "And that's all connected to a workforce shortage. As the labor market blueprint for the Connecticut River Valley shows, a supply gap of well over 1,000 nurses are needed to meet demand."

Secretary of Labor and Workforce

Development Lauren Jones, Commissioner of Public Health Robbie Goldstein, state Sen. Adam Gomez, state Rep. Pat Duffy, and Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia were also present at Tuesday's Oct. 17 event, which was scheduled as part of statewide Science Technology Engineering Math Week activities.

"Here, our nursing students learn the skills that prepare them to become capable, compassionate healthcare leaders," said HCC President George Timmons. Combined with MassReconnect, another new state program that provides free community college to students 25 and older, "there has never been a better time to earn your college degree," he said.

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## REGION

# Bay State doctors recommend getting a flu shot

SPRINGFIELD – No one knows exactly what to expect about the severity of this flu season, but flu is already in the community.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend getting a flu shot by the end of October, it's never too late. Those who haven't gotten the vaccine yet, they should get their shot to protect themselves and those around them.

"Whether we have a severe or mild flu season predicted should not matter when it comes to getting your flu shot. Everyone with some exceptions needs to get one," said Dr. Armando Paez, chief, Infectious Disease Division, Baystate Health.

The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older, who does not have any conditions that may prevent them from getting flu vaccine, such as a prior reaction after receiving the flu vaccine, should be vaccinated now, preferably before the end of October. The flu vaccine composition for 2023-2024 has been updated to best match the flu viruses that are anticipated to be commonly circulating this season.

One-dose flu shots are appropriate for most people, with rare exceptions for children younger than six months of age and those with severe, life-threatening allergies to any ingredient in the flu vaccine or who have had a previous severe allergic reaction to a dose of flu vaccine. Some children ages six months through eight years may require two

doses.

Flu vaccinations are particularly important for those individuals at risk of severe illness and complications from flu. These include older adults, residents of long-term care facilities, women who are pregnant, adults and children with a weakened immune system and those with chronic medical conditions and obesity. Persons, who live with or care for individuals at risk of severe infection such as healthcare personnel and others living in the home, are also essential to be vaccinated.

For people 65 years and older, there are three preferentially recommended higher-dose or adjuvant flu vaccines: Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent vaccine, Flublok Quadrivalent recombinant flu vaccine and Fluvad Quadrivalent adjuvant flu vaccine. More information on the flu vaccine is available by visiting <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/65over.htm>.

Yet another concern, according to Dr. Paez, "In addition to flu, COVID-19 and RSV infections can complicate and pose additional threats to vulnerable individuals with weakened immune systems."

And a flu outbreak can be devastating for children.

"Influenza and RSV have always been a significant illness in young children. Children with underlying medical conditions, especially prematurity, asthma and immunodeficiencies, children under age five, as well as those with

asthma or serious underlying pulmonary, cardiac, neurologic or immune system illnesses are at particular risk for a serious influenza infection," said Dr. Cecilia Di Pentima, chief, Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Baystate Children's Hospital.

During the 2022-23 Influenza season, 174 children of all age groups died of influenza.

She noted the best way to protect children from more severe influenza infection is with annually available vaccines. While protection from immunization might not prevent getting sick with influenza, it does offer protection against more severe illness. Children between six months and eight years of age who have never received at least two doses of flu vaccine at any point in time during their lives (not necessarily during the same flu season) need two doses of flu vaccine given at least four weeks apart in order to be better protected from flu.

"As the RSV season arrives, newborns, and infants under eight months of age can be protected for severe RSV infection with a single intramuscular injection of a newly-approved monoclonal antibody (Nirsevimab). Older infants between eight months and 19 months of age with underlying risk factors are also eligible to receive Nirsevimab," said Dr. Di Pentima.

Monoclonal antibodies are man-made proteins that mimic the antibodies our bodies naturally produce when

exposed to harmful germs. Because these antibodies are not produced by our own immune system, they are called "passive-immunization."

Although COVID-19 infections in children tend to have a milder impact than in adults, severe lung and heart disease can lead to complications in children as well. Since the onset of the pandemic, over 2000 children and teenagers 17 years of age and younger have died of COVID-19 infection. Infants as young as six months of age and older can be protected with the updated COVID-19 vaccines.

Given the potential triple-demic of respiratory infections by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), flu and COVID, Dr. Paez noted Americans at risk of severe disease from these infections are urged to get vaccinated.

Flu shots can be given at the same time as other vaccines, including the updated COVID-19 vaccine. However, there are mixed messages on adding the RSV vaccine at the same time. The CDC has stated that it may be given at the same time as other vaccines. However, some health experts cite the fact there is little research about administering an RSV shot with another vaccine. People may consult their doctor if they are unsure as what to do.

For more information on Baystate Health, people may visit [baystatehealth.org](http://baystatehealth.org) or for more information about Baystate Children's Hospital, they may visit [baystatehealth.org/bch](http://baystatehealth.org/bch).

## HCC to host health careers open house Nov. 15

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College will host an open house at its Center for Health Education and Simulation, 404 Jarvis Avenue, just off the main HCC campus, on Wednesday, Nov. 15 from 4-6 p.m. for anyone interested in exploring educational programs and careers in healthcare, animal care or human services.

Visitors to the Health Careers Open House are welcome to tour HCC's state-of-the-art health education facility and talk to representatives from the

college's programs in nursing (RN and LPN), radiologic technology, veterinary and animal science, medical assisting, Community Health Worker, direct care, Emergency Medical Technician, Foundations of Health (Public Health), Certified Nursing Assistant, medical billing and coding and human services.

This event is free and open to the public. The Center for Health Education and Simulation is home to the college's nursing and radiologic technology programs, and medical sim-

ulation labs.

There will also be representatives attending from the offices of financial aid, admissions, advising and workforce development to talk to prospective students about their educational options and career pathways.

To register in advance for this event, people may visit [hcc.edu/open-house-health](http://hcc.edu/open-house-health). For more information, people may email [Dee Westcott at dwestcott@hcc.edu](mailto:Dee.Westcott@hcc.edu) or [advising@hcc.edu](mailto:advising@hcc.edu).



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# THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**  
Mar 21/Apr 20  
Aries, beware of misinformation and make an effort to form your own educated opinion. Take everything with a grain of salt and verify the facts.

**CANCER**  
Jun 22/Jul 22  
It is time to balance the energy between yourself and another person that has felt cumbersome, Cancer. Start with a conversation and discover if the other party is feeling the same way.

**LIBRA**  
Sept 23/Oct 23  
Be aware of someone who is trying to take advantage of you. Remind that person that you have strict limits. Never get pushed in a direction you do not want to go.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22/Jan 20  
Surround yourself with the best friends you can find, Capricorn. These people will have your back when a tricky situation pops up sooner than you might think.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan 21/Feb 18  
Aquarius, embrace any challenges that arise in the days ahead. You can be successful if you maintain your focus and prevent distractions from blocking your path forward.

**PISCES**  
Feb 19/Mar 20  
Pisces, if everyone seems to be moving at a faster pace than you, you may feel pressured to speed up. Just keep working at a rate that is comfortable for you.

**TAURUS**  
Apr 21/May 21  
If someone is struggling right now, show some support or offer helpful words, Taurus. A small gesture can go a long way, even if you do not think it will have a major impact.

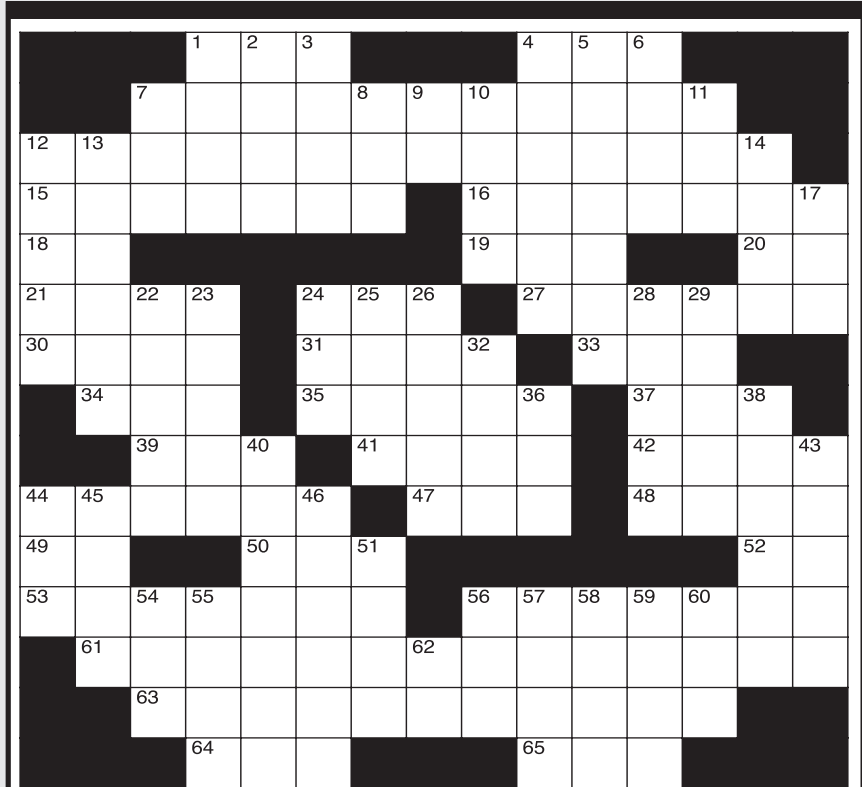
**LEO**  
Jul 23/Aug 23  
When you are full of self-confidence, others' actions do not bother you much. Those people can be arrogant or even abrasive and you'll be comfortable in your skin.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct 24/Nov 22  
You do not have to change your plans or ambitions to what others want. Stick with your own ideas and goals and you'll be surprised at what you can accomplish.

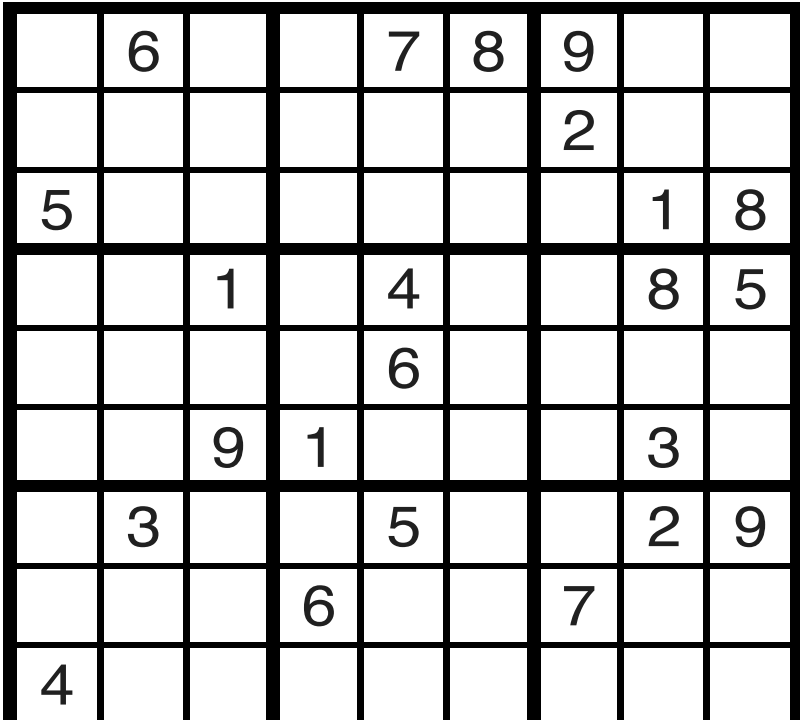
**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 23/Dec 21  
A friend might want to sell you on some big idea. It may ultimately prove a sound venture, but you need to do your own research and figure things out for yourself.

**GEMINI**  
May 22/Jun 21  
Gemini, if you are feeling out of sorts in a situation or do not know how to proceed, ask someone who has been in this situation before. It never hurts to ask for help.

**VIRGO**  
Aug 24/Sept 22  
Virgo, ambition may be good for the workplace, but you need it in your personal life as well. Figure out some goals on a personal or even romantic level, and get started.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. A way to drop
  - 4. Bits per inch
  - 7. Ghosts
  - 12. Presents
  - 15. Noises
  - 16. Honorable fourth name in ancient Rome
  - 18. Elevated railroad
  - 19. A way to drench
  - 20. The Tarheel State
  - 21. Lilly and Manning are two
  - 24. Where golfers begin
  - 27. Harvester
  - 30. Unit of subjective loudness
  - 31. Jewish calendar month
  - 33. Dash
  - 34. Armed conflict
  - 35. Daisy \_\_: Broadway actress
  - 37. Jump
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Mountain in the Julian Alps
  - 2. A domed or vaulted recess
  - 3. Trade agreement
  - 4. Larger
  - 5. Edged
  - 6. Data
  - 7. Something curved in shape
  - 8. Root mean square (abbr.)
  - 9. Farm state
  - 10. Pre-1917 emperor of Russia
  - 11. Short-term memory
  - 12. Indigenous peoples of central Canada
  - 13. Honor as holy
  - 14. Monetary unit of Samoa
  - 17. Company that rings receipts
  - 22. City in Finland
  - 23. Small finch
  - 24. Arctic explorers (abbr.)
  - 25. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
  - 26. Very willing
  - 28. Partner to "ooed"
  - 29. Turntable
  - 32. Major Hindu deity
  - 36. Move head slightly
  - 38. Plain-woven fabric
  - 40. Die
  - 43. Shipped as cargo
  - 44. Something highly prized
  - 45. Individual thing or person
  - 46. Humbled
  - 51. Speak indistinctly
  - 54. No seats available
  - 55. Financial obligation
  - 56. Green vegetable
  - 57. Tough outer skin of fruit
  - 58. \_\_ Spumante (Italian wine)
  - 59. Troubles
  - 60. Singer Charles
  - 62. Camper



# 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!

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# OBITUARY

## Frederick D. Wellspeak, 87

CHESTER – Frederick Donald Wellspeak, age 87, formerly of 59 Middlefield Road in Chester, died on Friday, Oct. 27, 2023 in Pittsfield at Springside Rehab & Skilled Care Center with his stepchildren, Marvin Friend of Middlefield and Melodie Mazzaferro of Chester by his side.

Fred was born on June 30, 1936 at Hazelhurst Hospital in Westfield and was the son of the late Mary A. (Fox) Wellspeak and Noel F. Wellspeak. He was educated in local public schools and graduated from Trade High School.

He went to work shortly after graduation as a Millwright Journey Man at the Strathmore Paper Company and worked there for his entire 44 year career, retiring on July 31, 1997. He was an avid hunter with an astonishing 116 deer in his lifetime, he also spent much of his time fishing with his wife Patricia and his friend Carl Bednarsky.

Fred was predeceased by his parents and the love of his life, his wife Patricia A. (Exware) Wellspeak on May 18, 2019, along with his uncle, “Bud” Francis



Fox and brothers; James and Bernard.

He leaves behind his best friend, Carl Bednarsky; stepchildren: Derek Friend of Chester, April Schulz of Dalton, Holly Whitaker of Westfield, Stacy Friend of North Adams and also, Marvin Friend of Middlefield and Melodie Mazzaferro of Chester; nieces; Darlene Buikus and Donna Montiero, both of Montgomery, nephew; James Wellspeak Jr. of Russell and many step-grandchildren and step-great grandchildren.

Funeral services and calling hours for Fred are scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 7 from 10 a.m.-noon followed by a funeral home service at noon, at the Graham Hilltown Community Funeral Home, 27 Russell Road in Huntington with burial at Saint Thomas Cemetery in Huntington.

Donations are requested in Fred’s Memory, to the Chester Fire Department, 300 US-20, Chester, MA 01011 or the Hilltown Community Ambulance, 1 Bromley Road, Huntington, MA 01050

For online condolences please visit, [grahamhilltowncommunityfuneralhome.com](http://grahamhilltowncommunityfuneralhome.com).

## DEATH NOTICE

### Wellspeak, Frederick D.

Died Oct. 27, 2023

Funeral service Tuesday, Nov. 7 at noon  
Graham Hilltown Community Funeral Home, Huntington

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 \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

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

## JOB OPENING

### STAFF WRITER

Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

Experience in covering town government is a huge plus, and any experience in community journalism is as well. Staff writers cover all aspects of communities from features to municipal meetings to crimes and fires. Successful candidates must have people skills, plenty of curiosity and able to tell a story.

If you're a self-starter who enjoys community journalism and who can envision themselves connecting with our communities, we encourage you to apply for this position. Not a remote position.

#### Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- A determination to get the story, whatever it might be
- Equally comfortable writing hard news, features and event coverage
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Proficiency in Associated Press style

Please tell us in a cover letter why you would be a good fit for this position and send it along with a resume and three writing samples to

**Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor**  
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or email directly to [ekennedy@turley.com](mailto:ekennedy@turley.com)



## PUBLIC NOTICES

### TOWN OF WORTHINGTON PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Town of Worthington will hold a public hearing at Town Hall **November 14, 2023, at 6:30 PM**, to discuss the discontinuance of winter maintenance on the following roads from **November 15, 2023, to May 1, 2024**:

**Almon Johnson Road:** Feakes' Driveway to West Street

**Dingle Road:** Samarov & Bell's Driveway to Hall's Driveway

**Goss Hill Road:** Augustin's Driveway to Chester Line

**Kinne Brook Road:** Mason's Drive-way to Chester Line

**Patterson Road:** Justamere Farm Driveway to Chester Line

**Prentice Road:** Upton's Driveway to Fairman Road

**South Worthington Road:** Beyond Barry's Driveway

**Starkweather Road:** River Road End will not be plowed

**Thayer Hill Road:** Sweeney's Drive-way to John Ryan's Drive

**West Street:** #829's Driveway to Chester Line

11/02/2023

## Community Newspaper EDITOR WANTED

Turley Publications is looking for a “hands on” energetic candidate who loves telling stories to be the editor for two weekly publications. This position will include managing and coaching a small news staff that will provide the community with a great local newspaper.

The editor will need to cover local government and events while representing the newspaper at public venues.

The successful candidate will have strong community journalism skills and is also expected to gather news and write stories for the two papers as well as for other occasional companywide publications.

This is a job for a self-starter who has a vision for growing and connecting with our valued readers, and who thoroughly enjoys community journalism.

This full-time position with flexible schedule is based in our Palmer office at 24 Water St., this is not a remote position.

#### Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Willingness to mentor a staff writer and correspondents
- Editing experience and ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Proficiency in Associated Press style
- Management experience and/or experience managing content for a print publication.

Please send resume and writing examples to: Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor  
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or email directly to [ekennedy@turley.com](mailto:ekennedy@turley.com)

## Digital Photos \$12.50 Each

TURLEY PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Purchase a photo that recently ran in one of our publications. Go to [newspapers.turley.com/photo-request](http://newspapers.turley.com/photo-request)



# EARLY DEADLINE

In observance of **THANKSGIVING**

There will be an

**EARLY CLASSIFIEDS & ADVERTISING DEADLINE**

Place your advertisement no later than

## Thurs., Nov. 16 Noon

FOR PUBLICATION THE WEEK OF NOV. 20-24

A TURLEY PUBLICATION

24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 • 413-283-8393 • [www.turley.com](http://www.turley.com)

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Fax: 413.283.7017  
Subscriptions: 413.283.8393

**EMAIL**  
Advertising Sales  
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[twegiel@turley.com](mailto:twegiel@turley.com)

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

Subscriptions  
[cgriswold@turley.com](mailto:cgriswold@turley.com)

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A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

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Call us at 413.283.8393

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**CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE**  
**November 4th-5th, 9am-5pm**, both days.  
 Antiques and vintage, Christmas collectibles and jewelry.  
**Wintergarden Farm Antiques, 359 Stafford Rd., Rt. 32, Monson, MA near CT State line.**

**JUNK REMOVAL**

**A Call We Haul FAST REMOVAL**  
 Junk, Appliance, Cleanouts.  
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**413-531-1936**  
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**PAINTING**

**WE DO LLC** Painting interior, exterior and drywall repair. Resident epoxy flooring. We treat your home like our own homes. Fully licensed and insured. Call WE DO today for a free estimate ask for Mac **(413) 344-6883**

**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

**FIREWOOD**

**MORE HEAT LESS WOOD.** Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX Outdoor Wood Furnace. EPA Certified. Titanium Stainless Steel. 26% Tax Credit. Call **(508)882-0178**


**SERVICES**

**CHAIR SEAT WEAVING** & refinishing - cane, fiber rush & splint - Classroom instructor, 20+ years experience. Call Walt at **(413)289-6670** for estimate.

**HELP WANTED**

**THE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON** is in need of snow removal and salting for sidewalks and stairs at Town Hall and Stanton Hall for the winter. Snow removal and salting must be done by 8:00 a.m. on weekdays. The Town is also seeking contractors for snow plowing and sanding roads on an as needed basis. Please visit <https://www.huntingtonma.us/bidding-proposal/quotation-opportunities> or email [admin@huntington-ma.us](mailto:admin@huntington-ma.us) for more information.

**FOR RENT**



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

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

**HAY FOR SALE**

**ROUND, WRAPPED HAY BALES**, First & Second Cutting. Dry & Wet. Worthington, MA. Call **(413)478-0178**.

**HOME IMPROVEMENT**

**NAWROCKI HOME IMPROVEMENT** Kitchens, bathrooms, replacement windows & doors, roofing, siding, decks, custom woodworking, drywall. Full insured & registered **413-237-2250** Mark

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**  
**Town of Blandford**  
 Town of Blandford seeking Town Administrator candidates. Salary range: \$65,000 to \$85,000 w/ great benefits. Application info: [www.townof-blandford.com/job-openings/](http://www.townof-blandford.com/job-openings/). Apply by Monday, November 13, 2023, at noon. Position open until filled. EEO-AA.

**JUNK REMOVAL**

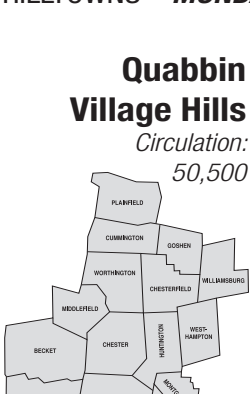
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 Full house cleanouts, attics, basements, garages, pools, hot tubs, sheds, decks. Same day service. 8am-9pm. Credit cards accepted. Free estimates on phone.  
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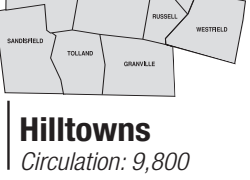
MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 or call: 413-283-8393

DEADLINES: QUABBIN & SUBURBAN – FRIDAY AT NOON  
 HILLTOWNS – MONDAY AT NOON

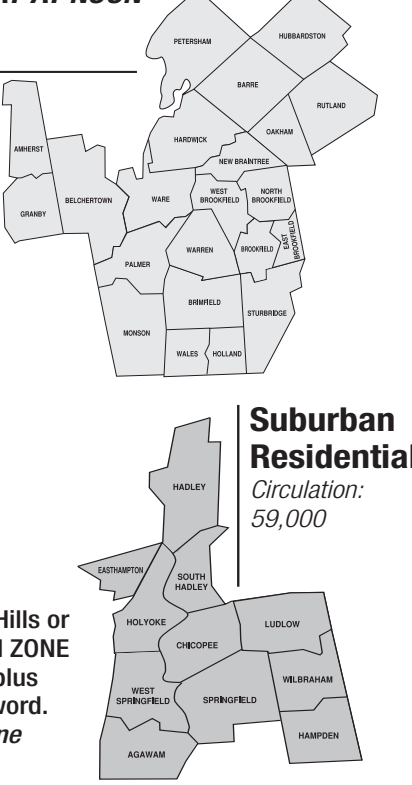
CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
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9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	Base Price \$27.00	Base Price \$27.50
22	Base Price \$26.00	Base Price \$27.00	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	Base Price \$29.00	Base Price \$29.50
26	Base Price \$29.00	Base Price \$29.50	Base Price \$30.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	Base Price \$30.00	Base Price \$30.50
28	Base Price \$30.00	Base Price \$30.50	Base Price \$31.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	Base Price \$31.00	Base Price \$31.50
30	Base Price \$31.00	Base Price \$31.50	Base Price \$32.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	Base Price \$32.00	Base Price \$32.50
32	Base Price \$32.00	Base Price \$32.50	Base Price \$33.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	Base Price \$33.00	Base Price \$33.50
34	Base Price \$33.00	Base Price \$33.50	Base Price \$34.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	Base Price \$34.00	Base Price \$34.50
36	Base Price \$34.00	Base Price \$34.50	Base Price \$35.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	Base Price \$35.00	Base Price \$35.50
38	Base Price \$35.00	Base Price \$35.50	Base Price \$36.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	Base Price \$36.00	Base Price \$36.50
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Run my ad in the following ZONE(s):  
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**OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!**

# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



Western Massachusetts Directors Russ La Pierre and Greg Deily take a break from clearing brush and debris around the granite cutting saw.



This part of the saw bears a manufacturing stamp upon it.

Submitted photos



A large ash tree was cleared from the saw sled.



This shows a close up of some of the parts to the saw.



These belt driven wheels operated the saw.

## Volunteers work to clear trail to 'saw lot'

CHESTER – Since Sept. 25, the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers worked on clearing the “saw lot,” the location of the Hudson and Chester Granite Company’s granite works plant.

They held several workdays and made progress on clearing the lot of years of debris including fallen trees, brush and trash. This is all to create a historical trail and eventually open up this historic site to the public.

Since this lot has always been private property, all historical designation

aspects need to be fulfilled including adding it to the Chester Factory Village overlay. The Directors of the Western Mass Hilltown Hikers thank the many volunteers who helped “dig out” the past and bring this granite finishing works back to life.

The first step was to clear the building known as Building 1, the saw plant. This building housed the giant shot saw. Here the raw granite came down the Chester and Becket Railroad to Chester from what is now the present day Becket

Quarry. The stone was delivered on rail directly to this building where it was then lifted onto a sled and passed through the saw blade to be cut.

It continued on to the finishing buildings to be polished and worked into monuments. The edges of the building remain, the lights and piping that was on the ceiling of this building burned where they fell when the building burned.

Miraculously the wooden belt used to move the sled survived the fire. Western Mass. Hilltown Hikers continue

their fundraising effort in order to raise money for services needed including tree work to remove the dead, but still standing ash trees looming above the equipment.

In addition to a walking path here, they would also like to create an Americans with Disabilities Act accessible trail complete with historic kiosks so all may enjoy the history.

To donate, people may visit [www.hilltownhikers.com](http://www.hilltownhikers.com), a Massachusetts registered non-profit 501c(3) organization.

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