

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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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Rural School Aid falls short of expectations

Superintendent Smidy calls for continued advocacy

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Education dealt good news-and bad news-to the Gateway Regional School District.

In the good news column, DESE awarded \$832,654 in Rural School Aid funds for Gateway Regional School District, 12 Littleville Road. On the minus side: the funding level fell short of Gateway’s expected \$1,096,272.

In July 2022, a state Commission on the Health Of Rural School Districts released their report, “A Sustainable Future for Rural Schools.” In summary, the report said that the state needed to allocate \$60,000,000 under a new dedicated Rural School Aid account to make funding for all schools in Massachusetts equitable.

Rural schools, which rely heavily on town property taxes due to a severe lack of economic development, are caught between offering equitable opportunities and even, meeting mandated services for their students and remaining financially affordable for their member towns.

“Working with our local legislators, we knew that the



Superintendent Kristen Smidy managed a selfie with the students and staff who accompanied her and testified before a joint committee on education. Submitted photo

SCHOOL AID, page 8

BLANDFORD

Select Board appoints Interim Town Administrator

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The Board of Selectmen heard from Town Administrator Christopher Dunne about his plans for transitioning an interim Town Administrator while the search committee does its work.

Dunne said there is a substantial field of qualified candidates and he believes the search will not take too long. The search committee so far includes Assessor David Hopson, Interim Fire Chief Adam Dolby, Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel, Planning Board Chair Paul Martin and Municipal Light Board Chair (Broadband) Peter Langmore, according to Dunne.

The Select Board will confirm and appoint the committee next Monday, Nov. 13. If anyone is interested in serving on the search committee, they should contact Dunne at the Town Hall.

In the meantime, Ira Brezinsky, late of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission where he was Project Assistant to Eric Weiss, Director of Municipal and Economic Collaboration was appointed Interim Town Administrator Monday night. Brezinsky will begin shadowing Dunne Monday and will work for at least the next six to eight weeks for \$50 an hour

SELECT BOARD, page 6

HUNTINGTON

Hilltown Holiday Help accepting applications

For more than twenty years local families have received help with gifts for their children through a community project called Hilltown Holiday Help.

Children of families with low to moderate income in the hilltowns are eligible to receive clothing, books and toys. This effort is organized by the Hilltown Community Health Centers in conjunction with the National Honor

HOLIDAY HELP, page 3

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAM DISCUSS 1880 MURDER



About 30 people attended the Nov. 5 event about the 1880 murder of Huntington resident Parley B. Hutchins, sponsored by the Huntington Historical Society. Steven V. Cormier, author of the book “The Life and Times of Parley B. Hutchins” spoke about Hutchins’ life and death and how he compiled the historical research on both. These wooden bowls from Peterman Bowls in Gill were created using the same wooden lathe technique patented by Hutchins. His innovative machine was also capable of producing wooden plates and platters.

Photos by Wendy Long

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HILLTOWNS

MassDOT announces overnight I-90 roadwork

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces crews will be conducting overnight hour traffic marking, bridge repair and pavement finishing operations on I-90 eastbound and westbound in Lee, Becket and Otis.

The work will be conducted at various times and locations now through Friday, Nov. 10. Lane closures will be in place during the construction operations and traffic will be able to travel through the work zones. Traffic marking operations in Lee will be conducted on I-90 eastbound between mile marker 7.4 and mile marker 14.6, on Thursday, Nov. 9, from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the next morning.

Finishing work for the paving project in Becket and Otis will be conducted nightly on I-90 eastbound and westbound between mile marker 14.6 and mile marker 21.7 now through Friday, Nov. 10, from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. the next morning. The work is expected to conclude on

Friday, Nov. 10 by 5 a.m.

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

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit www.mass511.com to view live cameras, travel times, real-time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions.

Dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions. Follow @MassDOT on X, (formerly known as Twitter), to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

Hilltown coat drive returns

Isabella LeBarron, a parishioner of Holy Family Parish in Russell and an 11th grader at Hampshire Regional School District, will coordinate the tenth year of the Hilltown Community Coat Drive.

This will continue the community effort that her sisters initiated ten years ago. If people would like to donate, they may bring washed, gently used or new coats, boots, mittens, and hats for local Hilltown adults and children to collection boxes at the following locations beginning on Saturday, Nov. 11:

Gateway Regional High School lobby during normal school hours from 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.; Hilltown Family Center across from Huntington Fire Department; Hilltown Community Health Center, Route 20, Huntington Monday – Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Holy Family Church (Route 20, Russell Center, during Mass times;

Hilltown Community Health Center, 58 Old North Road, Worthington Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Littleville Elementary Lobby

during normal school hours from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and Hampshire Regional High School, 19 Stage Road, Westhampton during normal school hours from 7:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m.

Coats and winter items will be available for Hilltown families at the end of November through It Takes a Village in Huntington. People may email Bella LeBarron at bella.lebarron44@gmail.com for more information.



Mass. Broadband Institute launches Gap Networks Program

WESTBOROUGH – The Massachusetts Broadband Institute at MassTech, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, has launched the Broadband Infrastructure Gap Networks Grant Program, a new competitive grant program funded by \$145 million from the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Capital Projects Fund that aims to deliver high-speed internet infrastructure to areas that currently lack broadband-level service.

The Gap Networks program aims to expand connectivity to unserved and underserved locations throughout the state to help bridge the digital divide, with a particular focus on communities with substantial low-income households and disadvantaged populations.

Full details on program requirements, including details on the Technical Assistance webinar MBI is hosting on Nov. 14 at 10 a.m., are

available on the MassTech procurement page by visiting <https://masstech.org/broadband-infrastructure-gap-networks-grant-program>.

The Gap Networks program will consist of two solicitation grant rounds:

Round #1:

Application deadline: December 11, 2023

Expected awards: January/February 2024

Round #2:

Application deadline: April 17, 2024

Expected awards: May/June 2024

As outlined in the grant solicitation (PDF), organizations that are eligible to submit applications for awards include private entities: corporations, limited liability companies, general partnerships, limited partnerships, etc.;

Local governmental entities: municipalities or municipal light plants that offer broadband service, Native American Indian Tribes and nonprofit organizations; Co-operatives, electric co-operatives, and utilities; Public-private partnerships: long-term agreements between local government entities and private entities for the delivery and funding of broadband services and Entities that develop and/or operate broadband networks: organizations that can demonstrate the experience, capacity and financial resources and stability to satisfy the grant obligations.

The program is administered by the MassTech Collaborative and the state’s Executive Office of Economic Development to fund projects that will deploy broadband infrastructure in areas that currently lack access to high-speed internet service, which is defined under the federal program guidelines as ser-

vice that offers download speeds of at least 100 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps.

The MBI is still accepting applications from cities and towns to receive support through the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program, which has supported 62 municipalities to date with free technical assistance to identify barriers to internet access. The agency is also funding projects through the Digital Equity Partnerships Program, as well as efforts to address the digital divide across the state through six connectivity programs, including enhanced WiFi Access, modernization of public space internet, connectivity initiatives for those facing economic hardship, digital literacy efforts, device distribution and refurbishment, and education, outreach and adoption programming.

People may learn more by visiting <https://broadband.masstech.org>.

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HUNTINGTON

Hilltown Family Center, Worthington Library expand family programs

HUNTINGTON – The Hilltown Family Center, 9 Russell Road, in collaboration with the Worthington Library, One Worthington Road, Worthington expands its free programs for families with young children.

Beginning Monday, Nov. 13 at 8:30 a.m. the Hilltown Family Center will hold an infant group (birth to 9 months) from 8:30-9:30 a.m. followed by a play group (9 months to 5 years) from 9:45-11 a.m. in the children's room of the library located at One Worthington Road. This is a great opportunity for both new parents and caregivers with a little more experience. The family center coordinator will greet families at the library door.

These two programs will bring together mothers, fathers, grandparents and other caregivers of children to meet

and support each other in the community, learn about child development and connect their children with the Hilltown Family Center and its many programs including the ASQ developmental screening program, Hilltown Holiday Help, Ready4K learning messages, ParentChild+ home visit literacy program, Rise and Read Book bag program, parent education, as well as services and referrals through Hilltown Community Health Center.

The Family Center Coordinator will have circle time with a book, songs, and fun movement activities as well as a weekly craft. Children will begin to learn routines around transitions during the group. This is an opportunity for young children to socialize with other children and for families in the community to meet and support each other in learn-

ing and parenting. The Family Center Coordinator models adjusting the challenge level for each child and encourages an environment of problem solving and extending children's thinking. Parent education workshops help families learn more about child development and parenting strategies such as understanding communication and language development or handling challenging behavior.

This program is made possible through the Hilltown Family Center through a Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant through the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, The United Way of Hampshire and Franklin Counties and in collaboration with the Worthington Library.

For more about this program or the Hilltown Family Center people visit

their Facebook page at Hilltown Family Center or Parent & Family Supports – Hilltown Community Health Center – hchcweb.org or call Susan LeBarron, Hilltown Family Center Coordinator at 413-667-2203 or email slebarron@hchcweb.org. The Hilltown Family Center houses many of the Hilltown Community Health Center's community programs and services, and offers an extensive list of resources for parents, caregivers, and families. The Family Center programs are built around the belief in nurturing strong families, by helping them to strengthen their flexibility and resilience. Programs help families establish strong social connections and give concrete support in times of need, recognizing family's strengths and understanding that being a parent is part natural and part learned.

Final listening session for seniors

HUNTINGTON – The final Age and Dementia Friendly Listening Session will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 15 from 1-2 p.m. at Stanton Hall, Route 20.

This is the third and final open session to gather input from area residents about ways the town might become more "age and dementia friendly." The topic for this meeting will be Health and Community Services, Communications and Public Safety.

Older adults who are living and aging in the town of Huntington are encouraged to attend and share their experiences and challenges and to hear

about programs and services that are currently available to Huntington residents or might be sought in the future.

Members are still sought for the Age and Dementia Friendly Task Force; to join, people should email the Huntington Council on Aging atcoa@huntingtonma.us.

This grant-funded project is being led by Becky Basch at Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and will result in a plan to improve resources for Huntington's senior citizens and those who have dementia. People may email bbasch@pvpc.org for more information.

HOLIDAY HELP

from page 1

Society with contributions from other organizations and individuals throughout the hilltowns and beyond.

For families in need, wish lists will be available through Hilltown Community Center staff from now through Saturday, Nov. 25 via telephone, email or by stopping by the Gateway School-Based Health Center or the Hilltown Community Center located at 9 Russell Road. Families with children from newborns through the age of twelve, may be eligible. Gifts will be distributed on Wednesday, Dec. 6 and Thursday, Dec. 7 through contactless curbside pickup or delivery. People may call 413-667-2203 for more information.

For donors, please arrange for a drop off time with staff or send monetary donations via US Mail to the Attention of

Kim Savery c/o HCHC Finance Office at 58 Old North Road, Worthington, MA 01098 with checks made out to Hilltown Community Health Center with Holiday Help in the memo.

If people are unable to commit to becoming a sponsor this year, they may look for the National Honor Society's fundraiser at <https://gofund.me/70ec5f03>, or the boot drive in Huntington on Saturday, Nov. 11 or consider donating their money or volunteering to deliver, a great opportunity to channel their inner Santa.

If people are interested in donating or have questions, they may call Susan at 413-667-2203, extension 0311, email slebarron@hchcweb.org or call Kim at 413-685-3500 or email ksavery@hchcweb.org.

STOCKBRIDGE

Grange holds community dinner

STOCKBRIDGE – The Stockbridge Grange is having a community dinner Sunday, Nov. 12 featuring roast pork, mashed potatoes, vegetable with dessert choices of chocolate cream pie or apple pie.


Dinner is \$15 per person. The meal is take out only with noon-1:30 p.m.

pick up at the Stockbridge Grange Hall at 51 Church St. Orders may be made by calling 413-243-1298 or 413-443-4352. Reservation deadline Thursday, November 9, 2023.

Grange Community Dinners are designed to raise money for non-profit projects and building maintenance.




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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN



Two ways to enjoy bulbs next spring

My spring bulbs are almost all in the ground. That is saying a lot, considering at work I plant over 2,000 of them! Daffodils, tulips and hyacinth will all welcome visitors to the museum in April and May.

Bulb planting is a ritual that I have come to love. I think in part because the process assists Mother Nature in her efforts to usher in springtime and all of its glorious color!

Did you ever wonder why certain bulbs bloom in the spring? Once you understand the life cycle of specific bulbs you can succeed with bulbs outdoors as well as inside.

Most spring flowering bulbs are native to areas of the world where the fall and winter is cool, and rainfall is abundant. Summers are typically hot and dry.

During the summer bulbs lie dormant, but when temperatures drop and rain moistens the soil each fall, they are awakened and begin to grow new roots and mature their flower buds. Roughly three months later, as soil temperatures rise, bulbs send up foliage and flowers.

When spring rains cease and the soil dries out, bulbs are cued into dormancy once again - their foliage yellows and disappears and the bulbs wait out the arrival of fall to start the cycle all over again.

What this tells us is that we should plant our bulbs before the mercury dips too low. This will give them a chance to root.

Soil temperatures of 50-55 degrees are ideal. If the fall is dry, providing supplemental watering is also a good idea to encourage the rooting process...this year we don't have to worry about that.

What do roots do exactly? You know that they provide food and water to the bulb, but in addition, they anchor it into the soil - very necessary during the freeze/thaw cycles of winter and early spring.

We also learned that there are two times when the bulb is in active growth - when it is rooting, and again in the spring when it sends up its leaves and flower stem. Feeding during these periods is most effective.

I generally broadcast a small amount of organic, well-balanced granular fertilizer into the garden, turn over the soil and plant my bulbs, usually in clumps of at least five bulbs, two-three times their width apart and the same for depth. If you are careful about marking where you've planted them, a top dressing of fertilizer can be added in early spring.

Likewise, you could also wait until you see the first stems poke through the ground and feed them.

I'm sure many gardeners never even thought about what flower bulbs did during the summer months. Now that we understand that they are dormant, merely waiting, we can plant them accordingly, away from spots that pool water and that stay as dry as possible.

GARDEN, page 5

Corrections policy

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

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



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

GUEST COLUMN

When should I retire and claim my Social Security benefits?



Dear Rusty:

I am 64 years old and having difficulty working due to my arthritis, but I can continue part time as a podiatrist. I do not know the best way to determine when to retire. What is the formula or a way to determine which is a better choice?

Signed: Undecided

Dear Undecided

There is a difference between deciding when to retire from working and deciding when to claim your Social Security benefits. For the former, you should consult with a certified financial advisor, but I'll provide you with how Social Security fits into your personal circumstances. In deciding when to claim Social Security, you should look at your financial needs, your life expectancy, your work status and your marital status. There is no one formula right for everyone because everyone's circumstances are different, but here are some things to help decide what is right for you:

Social Security has an "earnings test" which applies to anyone who collects Social Security before reaching their Full Retirement Age. Your FRA is 66 years and 8 months and that is the point at which you get 100% of the SS benefit earned from a lifetime of working.

If you collect SS before your FRA and continue to work, there is a limit to how much you can earn without jeopardizing

your benefits. For example, the earnings limit for 2023 is \$21,240 and, if that is exceeded, SS will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. They "take away" benefits by withholding future payments until they recover the penalty for exceeding the limit. If your earnings are substantially over the limit, you will be ineligible to collect Social Security until either your earnings are less or you reach your FRA.

If you claim SS before your FRA your benefit amount will be permanently reduced. If, for example, you claim SS to start at age 65 your monthly benefit will be about 89% of what it would be at your FRA. That reduced benefit would not change thereafter except for Cost of Living Adjustments usually granted annually.

If Social Security will be a major part of your retirement income, then waiting to get a higher monthly benefit may be a prudent strategy for you. The longer you wait to claim the more your benefit will be.

Your SS benefit will continue to grow until you are 70 years old and at 70 your monthly benefit will be about 27% more than it would be at your FRA. Your maximum SS benefit will be attained at age 70 but waiting until age 70 to claim is only prudent if you anticipate a long life expectancy.

Life expectancy is a very important factor in deciding when to claim SS. If you claim at age 70 instead of at your FRA, you will need to live until you are about 83 to breakeven money wise. If you live even longer than that, then waiting until 70 will yield the highest monthly amount and the most in cumulative lifetime benefits. But if

SECURITY, page 5

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. 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

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Making donuts for freedom

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Veteran's Day is Nov. 11. If you get a chance to thank a veteran for their service to this country, offering them a donut is an honorable gesture of gratitude. Donuts did play a role in many of our wartime conflicts.

The French people watching American soldiers gobble down doughnuts during WWI aptly named them doughboys from America or so the legend goes. Where did those donuts come from? Well the Salvation Army sent some 250 volunteers to France during WWI to ease the plight of American soldiers fighting in the trenches. Their mission was to provide some diversion to soldiers. Volunteers offered religious service, helped soldiers write letters home, mended clothing, played music on Victrolas for them and socialized with them.

It was Helen Purviance (1889-1984) and Margaret Sheldon, who hit upon the idea of donuts. They wanted to satisfy more than physical hunger with this touch of home cooking. They had been assigned to support the American Expeditionary 1st Division force three miles from the rain soaked trenches of Montiers-sur-Saulx in France.

They were issued gas masks, helmets and .45 caliber revolvers, which they were taught to use. However what they most needed was a rolling pin and cookie cutter to turn out donuts. They went to work patting dough flat, cutting it in strips and twisting each strip into a circle. They then fried seven donuts at a time in hot lard on a pot bellied stove. The women complained they were cooking on their knees because the stove was so small.

Purviance improvised making a rolling pin from a wine bottle, a cookie cutter from an empty condensed milk can and a narrow tube that held camphor ice to cut out the donut hole. Their first donuts rolled out in October 1917. They were an immediate success.

The donuts were smaller than those we eat today. The recipe was simple



Helen Purviance wearing her Salvation Army uniform and donut gear circa WWI serves soldiers.

enough, flour, sugar, eggs, milk, salt and baking powder. It sure beat their orders to make pies and cakes for the soldiers while they were three miles from the fighting. What better than a donut to stick to your ribs in wartime and it was served by "mighty good looking girls."

The practice took off along the cantons on the front lines. General Pershing didn't want the women at the front. Women were not allowed to serve in the military until 1942, heck they couldn't even vote in 1917. Helen Purviance and Margaret Sheldon didn't want to change the military world.

They did however change the world of every soldier they served on the front lines. They were there to support the soldiers and they took this responsibility seriously. They became known as Donut Lassie's. They churned out some 2,500 donuts with 255 gallons of cocoa per day when they hit their stride. You might be interested to know there is a national donut day created in 1938 to celebrate the Salvation Army Donut Lassies. The U.S. makes some 10 billion donuts per year today. On the first Friday in June, national donut day, there is a pretty good chance of snagging a free donut, thanks to these Donut Lassies. You know all those soldiers developed quite an appetite for donuts once they returned from the war. Adolph Levitt, a Russian immigrant invented the automatic donut making machine in 1920 in a bakery in New York City.



Red Cross Clubmobile serves donuts during WWII.

The story doesn't end there. During WWII the Red Cross created a Clubmobile Service using London buses. The buses were equipped with donut machines donated by the Donut Corporation of America, a total of 468 donut machines were donated.

Demand for donuts still outstripped production and the Red Cross opened up several centralized bakeries to keep the donuts coming. Women, who volunteered to work on the Clubmobiles, became known as Donut Dollies. Besides serving donuts they provided recreational activities such as sing alongs, card games, ping pong and pool games. They were required to be between the age of 25 - 35 years old, have some college education and work experience, to be healthy, physically hardy, sociable and attractive.

At the time of the Normandy invasion (June 1944) there were one hundred Red Cross Clubmobiles working the scene. They were usually staffed by three women and a staff driver. They continued to serve in France, Belgium, and Germany until 1945. There were Donut Dollies serving in the Korean War, 1953-1973 and in the Vietnam War, 1962-1973.

The Donut Dollies provided a boost to the soldiers morale during war time. Nurses and Doctors took care of the soldiers health while the Donut Dollies gave psychological and emotional support to the soldiers. Share a donut and coffee with a veteran Nov. 11, tell them you are grateful they served. The actress Renee Zellweger ate 20 donuts a day for



A poster from 1918 advertising The Salvation Army Lassie. Submitted photos



A Donut Lassie holds a doughnut cutter and a rolling pin during WW I.

five weeks to gain the 30 lbs. of weight she needed to put on to play the role of Bridget Jones in the Diary film.

GARDEN

from page 4

Now that we understand a bulb's life cycle, how can we use it to ensure some indoor cheer?

Bulbs need anywhere from 11-20 weeks of chilling and a few more thereafter to bloom. This guide can be used: Crocus require 15 weeks of cold; hyacinth 11-14 weeks, daffodils 15-17 weeks and tulips 14-20 weeks (depending upon season of bloom).

Pick a date which you'd like the bulb to bloom and count backwards. Hypothetically if I want hyacinths to bloom in time for Valentine's Day, planting them within the next week or two would be right on target.

Bulbs can be planted quite close to one another in regular potting soil and your choice of pot. Clay is not recommended because it will dry out readily.

Water lightly to settle the soil, then place the container in a cold, dark location where temps fall between 38 and 45 degrees. One year I used an old refrigerator; another year the crawl space under our office.

I even tried placing pots of bulbs under the bottom steps of my bulk head. Each worked at maintaining low temps, but did have its own idiosyncrasies.

Keep bulbs away from fruit in storage- especially apples, whereby ethylene gas could disfigure the bulbs, and also be on the lookout for rodents looking for lunch.

Daffodils and hyacinth are usually unappetizing.

Check bulbs often, especially as the chilling period draws to a close. You will know the bulbs are close to being ready to move to a new location when sprouting occurs and roots are visible through the drainage holes; soon after, the top will start to grow as well.

After the top has put on an inch of growth, move it to a cool, bright location, about 50-55 degrees. Stems will elongate and flower buds will form after a few weeks.

When in flower, keep the plants cool to prevent legginess - consider enjoying them in your living spaces during the day, but moving them to a cooler climate at night for increased longevity.

It's about now when the garden centers begin their mark-down of spring bulbs. Try your hand at forcing once and it will become your annual ritual!

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.

SECURITY

from page 4

your anticipated life expectancy is less, claiming earlier may be a better choice.

If you are married and expect your wife to survive you, consider that the benefit your wife can get as your widow will be based on your SS benefit when you die, thus the longer you wait to claim the more your wife's benefit as your widow may be.

If you predecease your wife, her benefit will be based on the amount you were receiving at your death if that is more than her personally earned SS benefit.

So, as you can see, deciding when to claim Social Security is a decision to be made after carefully evaluating your personal circumstances as described above. I hope this provides what you need to make an informed decision, but if you

have further questions, people may call 1-888-750-2622 or email [SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org).

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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BLANDFORD

Hunter transported to hospital following accident

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – There have not been too many reports of hunting accidents over the past few decades as there are not as many hunters any more. No longer does Route 23 churn with hunting traffic starting at 4 a.m. during the season.

There are even fewer incidents of hunting accidents that involve bows and arrows. But that's what was reported over this past weekend.

Blandford Fire Department, according to Chief Adam Dolby, was dispatched

for "male party shot with an arrow." Due to the nature of the incident, with any mechanism of injury like that, law enforcement first declares the scene safe to approach. In this incident, due to location, Mass State Police and Environmental Police Office made that declaration and located the party. Blandford along with Russell Fire Department and Hilltown Ambulance assessed the party and controlled bleeding.

Massachusetts State Police Office of Media Relations Trooper Brandon Doherty had limited information about the accident. His statement in part it

was, "Around 3 p.m. last Saturday, Massachusetts State Police dispatch received a call from a hunter that accidentally shot his hunting partner with an arrow. The two were in the woods off of Russell Stage Road. State Police was assisted by the Russell Police Department and Fire Department, and the Environmental Police were en route and the State Police Drone Unit was also involved in searching for the pair."

According to Doherty, at 3:54 p.m., the hunters were located north of the 32.4 mile marker on the Mass Pike. By 5 p.m. the injured party was removed from the

woods and Westfield EMS transported them to the hospital.

According to local officials the rescue process started on Russell Stage Road just below Nye Brook Road on the left-hand side. According to Dolby, due to the location of the injured party, it was determined that the best extraction point was the Mass Pike. MSP controlled traffic and Westfield transported the injured party.

Apparently the hunters were a father and son team from the area, but not local. No further information was available and the cause of the injury is under investigation by MSP and EPO.

Porter Library lists events

BLANDFORD – Every Tuesday afternoon from 4-5 p.m. and Wednesday mornings from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Book Squirms meet at the Porter Memorial Library, 87 Main St.

The regular event features stories, songs, sensory play and socializing for preschoolers and their care givers. Every Friday afternoon from 3-5 p.m. Archivist Sam Stevens is available to help with genealogy research and local history questions.

The library will again hold Family Photo Days on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 24 and 25 from noon-2 p.m. and 11 a.m.-2 p.m. respectively. Sign up for appointments with photographer Michele Crane to

reserve a time.

Something new is the Pokemon Club starting Monday, Nov. 27 from 4-5 p.m. Participants will do crafts and have fun trading cards.

The month-long StoryWalk in Watson Park is the book Windows by Julia Denos and illustrated by E.B Goodale. This inspirational story tells of one youngster catching glimpses of the lives around him as he walks his dog on a fall evening. The library will have crafts and activities to accompany the story.

The library will close on Wednesday, Nov. 23 at 2 p.m. and be closed on Thanksgiving, Nov. 24.

Blandford list holiday events

BLANDFORD – The first weekend in December promises to be a busy one in town.

The Pancake Breakfast starts Saturday, Dec. 2 off, followed by the ongoing Craft Fair at the Historical Society from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

There will be 12 local crafters The Porter Memorial Library hosts a cookie day, which starts at 10:30 a.m. with preschool and elementary patrons with a gingerbread story time, a gingerbread man hunt around the library and a cookie craft. From 11 a.m.-noon, teens and

tweens can come decorate gingerbread houses. All supplies are provided.

They then join the library staff from 1-3 p.m. for a Cookie Party. People should bring cookies to share with neighbors and friends. The library will also have cookies, cocoa, coffee and tea. Director Daviau said, "Plan on leaving with a full stomach and an empty platter."

The Annual Christmas Tree Lighting will happen Sunday, Dec. 3 at 5 p.m. at the Historical Society with caroling and cookies.

Snow removal by laws announced

BLANDFORD – Snow season has arrived, albeit a bit earlier than usual this year and with it the problems of snow removal.

Highway Superintendent David Waldron reminds residents to keep snow plowed from home driveways should remain on that same property and not plowed into or across any town road.

According to town bylaws, "No person, other than an employee in the service of the Town of Blandford or the Commonwealth or an employee in the

service of an independent contractor acting for the Commonwealth or the Town of Blandford shall pile, push or plow snow or ice into Town Roads so as to impede the flow of traffic on such way. Whoever violates this bylaw shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred fifty (\$150) dollars."

Waldron said this will be strictly enforced.

Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel will issue an on-street parking ban should emergency snow conditions warrant.

SELECT BOARD

from page 1

for 19 hours a week.

Dunne has prepared what he referred to as a "job aid" with things to do, how to go about doing things, a "guide or a how-to" reference for a new Town Administrator. He also prepared a draft of possible interview questions, and gave the board a list of his current and ongoing activities. This list includes programs or projects yet to start, those delayed, and those on track.

Programs currently underway and progressing include solar payments in-lieu-of-taxes, cannabis businesses, water metering, new municipal finance software, Beech Hill Road bridge, disability planning and more.

The new fire station and highway garage remains a work in progress.

The board went into executive session with a roll call vote not to return to open session shortly before 6:30 p.m.

CHESTER

Chester and Russell receive clean water grants

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust's Board of Trustees approved \$47,005,405 in new low-interest loans and grants at its meeting on Nov. 1.

Chester received a \$68,100 Asset Management Planning Grant and Russell received a \$90,600 Asset Management Planning Grant.

The Trust, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), helps communities build or replace water infrastructure that enhances ground and surface water resources, ensures the

safety of drinking water, protects public health and develops resilient communities. It accomplishes these objectives by providing low-interest loans and grants to cities, towns and water utilities through the Massachusetts State Revolving Funds. The SRF programs are partnerships between the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. SRFs function like an environmental infrastructure bank by financing water infrastructure projects in cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

JLBA to hold meeting Nov. 9

CHESTER – On Thursday, Nov. 9 at 6 p.m. the Jacobs Ladder Business Association will be meeting at the Blue Note Cafe located at 29 Main St in Chester.

This is a net working and monthly meeting to finalize the 2024 slate of officers, discuss 2024 membership fees and anticipate an update on collaborations with the Westfield Chamber of Commerce.

Church to hold Veteran's Appreciation

CHESTER – The Chester Baptist Church, 14 Middlefield Road, across from the Chester Town Hall, invites all local veterans and their families to attend Veteran's Appreciation Sunday on Sunday, Nov. 12 at 10:45 a.m.

During the service, all veterans will be honored and recognized for their service for our country. At noon a deli-

cious meal will be served for all who attend. Sunday Services include Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m. followed by morning worship at 10:45 a.m.

After lunch, an afternoon service is held at 1:30 p.m. for all, who are able to attend. People may call Pastor Dan Herr with any questions at 413-668-7768 or email pastor@chesterbaptistchurch.org.

WORTHINGTON

Worthington Gardners to host wreath making workshop

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Gardeners are hosting their annual wreath making workshop on Sunday, Nov. 26 at 2 p.m. at the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road.

This is a fundraiser for the Gardeners. All supplies will be provided including fresh greenery, pine cones, berries, wire frames, florist wire and ribbons

to make a beautiful two-sided wreath. Instructions and guidance are provided. People should bring their own clippers and scissors. Cost is \$20.

Cider and snacks will be served. This event will be inside and numbers will be limited. Reservations are required to ensure a space and greenery. To register, people should call Elodi McBride at 413-238-4466 by Monday Nov. 20.

Hilltown Artisans Guild to hold show and sale this weekend

WORTHINGTON – The Hilltown Artisans Guild will hold a holiday show and sale on Saturday, Nov. 11 and Sunday, Nov. 12 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. in

the Worthington Town Hall.

The show and sale features the works of artist and craftspeople from the Hilltowns.

BOH and COA hold vaccine clinic

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Board of Health in conjunction with the Council on Aging will be offering both COVID-19 vaccinations and flu shots, both regular and senior sized on Monday, Nov. 13 from 1-3 p.m. at the Worthington Town Hall.

The clinic immediately follows the COA potluck lunch. All are welcome to the clinic regardless of age. Pre-registration is preferred and will allow the maximum number of people to

receive their vaccines as well as making sure there are enough supplies. Health insurance information is collected at the time of registration to help cover the cost of the vaccine administration. However, there is no direct cost or bill to the patient to get the COVID or flu vaccines.

The link to register is: <https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/northampton>. or call 413-587-1314 for assistance registering over the phone.



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DANA WOODS ANNUAL tag sale. Belchertown: George Hamum Rd off Rt 9 (turn at Stop & Shop) Children's clothes, toys, furniture, housewares, tools and more! **Saturday, June 10th, 9:00am-3:00pm**

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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

YouthTruth survey hits participation goals

In an update on the work underway through this year's \$100k Barr Foundation Grant, Gateway Regional School District Superintendent Kristen Smidy reported that all Gateway schools met their target participation rates in the YouthTruth Survey, with each school earning a special celebration as a result.

For the high school, 84% of students, 96% of staff and 89% of families completed surveys. At the middle school, 95% of students, 67% of staff and 78% of families completed a survey.

Littleville Elementary School had 96% of students, 86% of staff and 94% of families take part. And Chester

Elementary School had a whopping 96% of students, 100% of staff and 100% of families complete surveys.

Chester students will celebrate with multiple bounce houses set up outside the school on Thursday, Nov. 9. Littleville will have an outdoor celebration on Thursday, Nov. 16. Middle

and High School celebrations will be announced soon.

In her newsletter "Gator Bites," Superintendent Smidy reported that the highest percentage of family participation from any other Barr Foundation school was 25%, stating that Gateway's results are "truly incredible."

SCHOOL AID

from page 1

\$60 million in rural aid was not going to be allocated (this fiscal year)," said Gateway Superintendent Kristen Smidy. "However, the Rural Schools Report did a projection that if rural aid was funded at \$20 million or of the recommendation, Gateway was anticipated to receive \$1,096,272."

Massachusetts allocated \$15 million for RSA this fiscal year and released a list of 68 school districts who qualified and their allocations.

In her email to the Gateway Regional School Committee, Smidy wrote, "The reality is that I am simply breathing a sigh of relief that many more districts weren't added to the formula for RSA and we don't need to make additional cuts."

She also pointed out that the amount was not enough "to offer everything we need in order to have equitable programming compared to other districts, but it is enough to not have to reduce more staff or services to students."

Smidy reports that all of the RSA funding is allocated to essential expenditures.

Smidy also called for continued advocacy to raise RSA. "Our advocacy should include the push to fully fund rural aid as detailed in the Rural Schools Report (plus inflation) and a more timely notification of what we can expect moving forward." Senator Jo Comerford and Representative Natalie Blais have already introduced a bill to ask that RSA be fully funded next year at the \$60 million level called for by the Commission.

Recently, Gateway students, staff, administrators and school committee members testified in support of

this bill before the Joint Committee on Education. The Nov. 3 issue of "Gator Bites" has a link to a video of testimony from senior Joey Pisani, Curriculum Director Deanna LeBlanc, fourth graders Sophia Stone, Tucker Robitaille, Brewtus Briggs and Destiny Martinez from the Chester Elementary School Student Advisory Council, sophomore Theo DeAngelis-Page, Spanish teacher Alexis Batra and School Committee/Chester Select board member Brian Fergie.

Gateway cut or deferred a number of items to keep its combined assessments to the towns as close to 2.5% in total as possible. Shifts in enrollment in each town resulted in higher or lower percentages in assessments, as the towns have declined to calculate their share's based on a five-year rolling average, which would steady these fluctuations.

With the announcement of a confirmed funding level in late October, Gateway was able to restore: a new intercom system for the middle/high school, which was not operational; increased speech and language services based on the needs reflected in Individual Education Plans; a special education teacher at Littleville for required programming; three paraprofessionals to address students' IEP needs; special education tuitions for out-of-district placements; partial salary for the Assistant Pupil Services Director, due to increased programming and needs; a full time school nurse to ensure a nurse in each building; safety upgrades that were strongly recommended by the Department of Homeland Security and required supplies for the vocational programs.

"I am not sure what we would have done if we didn't get rural aid," Smidy said. "Even still, we did end up making reductions to our library program and reduced multiple teaching positions in art, science and an interventionist."

In short, Smidy admits that the funding helps keep the district afloat without undue pressure on the towns, but still falls short of making districts like Gateway equitable with other districts in the state.



Members of Chester Elementary School's Student Advisory Council at the Massachusetts State House were among Gateway students, staff and administrators, who testified before a joint committee on education: shown from left, Sophia Stone, Tucker Robitaille, Brewtus Briggs and Destiny Martinez. Submitted photo

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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Berkshire delegation commends advocacy of constituents

BOSTON – State Senator Paul Mark, D-Becket, on behalf of the Berkshire Delegation, is announcing that funding for the Rural School Aid grant program has been raised to \$15 million for Fiscal Year 2024, resulting in increases ranging from 30-210% for schools in the Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire District.

The program provides financial assistance to the Commonwealth's most rural school districts. The Berkshire legislative delegation worked together this session in coordination with several students and staff from local school districts to continue to build awareness and support for the unique needs of rural schools. That work culminated in an increase in Rural School Aid from \$5.5 million in FY23 to \$15 million for FY24.

The Rural School Aid grant program helps school districts with low population densities and lower-than-average incomes address fiscal challenges and take steps to improve efficiency. Rural School Aid can be used for a wide variety of purposes to support district operations, with priority given to efforts increasing regional collaboration, consolidation, or other strategies to improve long-term operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Rural School Aid is a source of funding separate from Chapter 70 aid. According to DESE's 2018 study of rural schools, there was a 12.4% spending gap between rural and nonrural districts for in-district students. The study found that the average in-district expenditures for students enrolled in all non-vocational school dis-

tricts was \$17,293 in FY20, the most recent year for which this data is available.

Multiplying this amount by 12.4% results in the identification of a per pupil spending gap of \$2,144. Applying this amount to the 27,219 students identified as attending rural districts in the same DESE study, the total spending gap for rural schools equals \$58,357,536. The Commission on the Fiscal Health of Rural School Districts recommended at least \$60 million be appropriated in annual aid.

"Making sure that students throughout our region can access a high-quality education, equal to their counterparts around the state, is extremely important to me and our regional delegation," said Senator Mark. "Tripling the amount of Rural School Aid that will flow to our local districts this year is going to help our rural communities significantly and represents a major milestone in progress to full funding."

"The significant increase in rural school aid in this year's budget will go a long way in providing high-quality education for all students, regardless of what district they live in," said Rep. John Barrett III, D-North Adams. "This investment is an important step in delivering on the recommendations included in the Rural Schools Report."

"This \$15 million is a very big step in our collective fight to level the playing field for rural communities. I am proud of the results we are seeing with the Rural School Aid Program, and I am sure this project will continue to be a positive force for education in the Berkshires," said Rep. William "Smitty" Pignatelli, D-Lenox. "While this is a

great first step, I am eager to see this funding flow continue towards our rural schools down the line."

For FY24's Rural School Aid, DESE identified districts eligible based on their student density of not more than 35 students per square mile and their per capita income of less than \$58,820 per capita, according to 2020 data from the Department of Revenue.

Based on these criteria, there are 68 school districts that are eligible to receive rural school aid in FY2024.

Senator Mark represents a large-ly rural, western Massachusetts district spanning 57 communities in Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden Counties. Those schools to receive funding within his district are:

Berkshire Hills Regional School District, FY24 \$388,000; FY23 \$154,000; 151% increase over FY23

Chesterfield-Goshen School District, FY24 \$78,000; FY23 \$29,000; 168% increase over FY23

Central Berkshire Regional School District, FY24 \$1,325,000; FY23 \$532,000; 149% increase over FY23

Clarksburg School District, FY24 \$120,000; FY23 \$49,000; 144% increase over FY23

Conway School District, FY24 \$26,000; FY23 \$14,000; 85% increase over FY23

Florida School District, FY24 \$63,000; FY23 \$26,000; 142% increase over FY23

Gateway Regional School District, FY24 \$832,000; FY23 \$300,000; 177% increase over FY23

Hampshire Regional School District in Westhampton, FY24 \$313,000; FY23 \$134,000; 133% increase over FY23

Hancock School District, FY24 \$33,000; FY23 \$11,000; 200% increase over FY23

Hawlemont School District, FY24 \$90,000; FY23 \$35,000; 157% increase over FY23

Hoosac Valley Regional School District, FY24 \$228,000; FY23 \$93,000; 145% increase over FY23

Lee School District, FY24 \$32,000; FY23 \$12,000; 166% increase over FY23

Mohawk Trail School District, FY24 \$621,000; FY23 \$262,000; 137% increase over FY23

Mount Greylock Regional School District, FY24 \$286,000; FY23 \$92,000; 210% increase over FY23

Rowe School District, FY24 \$20,000; FY23 \$7,000; 185% increase over FY23

Savoy School District, FY24 \$17,000; FY23 \$13,000; 30% increase over FY23

Southern Berkshire Regional School District, FY24 \$256,000; FY23 \$101,000; 153% increase over FY23

Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District, FY24 \$385,000; FY23 \$141,000; 173% increase over FY23

Westhampton School District, FY24 \$35,000; FY23 \$14,000; 150% increase over FY23

Whately School District, FY24 \$42,000; FY23 \$14,000; 200% increase over FY23

Williamsburg School District, FY24 \$109,000; FY23 \$49,000; 122% increase over FY23

Worthington School District, FY24 \$43,000; FY23 \$15,000; 186% increase over FY23

United Way, HCC to celebrate grand opening of Holyoke food pantry

HOLYOKE – The United Way of Pioneer Valley and Holyoke Community College celebrated the grand opening of the Holyoke Community Cupboard, a downtown food pantry for residents dealing with food insecurity, on Thursday, Nov. 2 from 10:30 a.m.-noon at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute.

The result of a partnership between HCC and the United Way of Pioneer Valley, the new food pantry will serve Holyoke residents, as well as residents from neighboring towns. The Holyoke Community Cupboard is located on the basement level of the HCC facility at 164

Race St., in an area of the city identified as a "food desert."

The pantry will be open Thursdays from 2:30-5:30 p.m.

"HCC has generously provided the United Way with access to space at the culinary arts institute to operate a food pantry as part of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts's network," said Lee Drewitz, director of program operations for the United Way of Pioneer Valley. "This is the third pantry operated by UWPV after we opened sites in Springfield and Chicopee."

Thursday's celebration began at

10:30 a.m. with tours of the cupboard and the culinary arts institute, along with a continental breakfast prepared by students in HCC's culinary arts program. A short speaking program began at 11 a.m. with remarks from HCC President George Timmons and representatives from United Way of Pioneer Valley, followed by networking and information sharing about programming at the culinary arts institute and UWPV.

"We hope to use this collaboration as a means of finding innovative solutions to food security and to collectively support other initiatives," said

Drewitz. "This includes offering food demonstrations using food pantry staples and educating the community about the Emergency Food Pantry system."

"HCC faculty chefs and students will also be offering live food demos quarterly where residents can learn how to boost up pantry items in creative ways," said Stacy Graves, the culinary arts institute facility coordinator.

HCC also operates a food pantry on campus as part of its Thrive Student Resource Center, which was founded in 2015 with assistance from the United Way of Pioneer Valley.

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Jingle Valley Fair
Saturday, November 18th
9 am - 2 pm

GIFT BASKET OPPORTUNITY TABLE
Food (Pies, Breads, Baked Beans, Cookies, Cakes, Fudge & More)
Lunch Available for Purchase
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Gifts (Jewelry, Holiday Decorations, Stocking Stuffers & More)

MIDDLEFIELD



The sound bath of crystal singing bowls is set up at Blossom Community Center.

Submitted photo

Sound Bath Meditation set for Nov. 11

MIDDLEFIELD – The pyramid room at Blossom Community Center, upper rear at 16 Bell Road, will host a relaxing sound bath of crystal singing bowls and other healing instruments at 6pm on Saturday Nov 11 at 6 p.m.

Donations are appreciated. People should wear comfortable clothes to sit or lie down and listen. Next sound-bath meditation will be Sunday, Nov 26 at 1:30 p.m. People may visit www.BlossomCenterMA.org for full calendar.

BECKET

Becket Athenaeum lists events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., serving Becket and Washington, announces upcoming events.

Now through Saturday, Nov. 18, libraries are participating in a scenic drive through Western Massachusetts for the Ultimate Library Road Trip. People visit a library, pick up a passport at the first library they visit and then drive library to library, collecting passport stamps to track their progress. They take a photo of themselves at each library and tag themselves at WMLALibraryRoadTrip23. They may help complete a 500 piece puzzle by decorating a piece. They may also enter a prize raffle.

An online silent auction will be held Monday, Nov. 13 to Monday, Nov. 27. This is an opportunity to do some holiday shopping and support the library. Starting Nov. 23, people may bid online by visiting bit.ly/BA-2023 auction.

The Cookbook Club meets Monday, Nov. 13 at 6 p.m. People should email info@bwlibrary.org to register and request a copy of the cook-

book, “In a Garden” by barefoot con- tessa fool proof recipes you can trust. Attendees prepare a recipe to share. They should let the library know which recipe they will prepare.

Game Night will be held Wednesday, Nov. 15 from 5-7 p.m. at the library. This is an evening of board and card games funded by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundations. Participants should RSVP by visiting bit.ly/BA-Nov-game. Ages 13 plus are welcome.

Creative Movement Story Time will be held Saturday, Nov. 18 at 10:30 a.m. with Laurel Lenski. All other story times on Saturdays children listen to a story and make a craft. They should register by visiting bit.ly/BA-storytime.

The Becket Athenaeum will host a reading and poetry workshop with Jose Gonzalez on Sunday, Nov. 19 at noon at the library.

Following the free workshop there will be materials available for attendees to craft their own journals. Refreshments will be served. The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundations funds this program.

Church holds pie sale and craft sale

BECKET – The Congregational Church of Becket will be sponsoring a Holiday Pie Sale and Craft Sale on Saturday, Nov. 18 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Guild Hall on YMCA Road.

Local artisans will be there as well as a sale of Guild sponsored Becket sweatshirts and tee-shirts as well as Save the Bell tee-shirts. The members appreciate that neighbors and friends have graciously donated rhubarb, blueberries

and apples for the pies.

Types of pies include apple, blueberry, blueberry rhubarb, strawberry rhubarb, rhubarb and pumpkin. The price is \$14 per pie and people can call to reserve pies at 413-623-8300 or 413-623-6455.

There will also be a PIE BAR to enjoy a slice of pie and a hot drink at that time. Proceeds will benefit the Save the Bell Building Fund.

Becket Arts Center presents singer-songwriter

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, presents singer-songwriter Bernice Lewis in concert on Saturday, Nov. 11 at 7 p.m.

A story-teller, published poet, producer and educator, Lewis has toured extensively in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Israel. The event is free,

though donations are welcome. Lewis will return to the BAC on Saturday, Nov. 18 at 4 p.m. to lead a songwriting workshop for musicians, poets, writers and other creatives. The fee for the workshop is \$25. For more information and to register, people may visit www.beckartcenter.org.

Select Board sets STM on Nov. 18

MIDDLEFIELD – The regularly bi-weekly Select Board meeting for Wednesday evening Nov. 1 was cancelled in favor of a Friday, Nov. 3 morning meeting to coordinate with guests from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and town Historic Commission.

PVPC staffers, Eric Weiss and Ira Brezinsky, will assist Middlefield in honing a Capital Planning document by the end of December.

The annual Tax Classification Hearing, which had tentatively been planned for Nov. 1 was postponed to occur after a hurried scheduling of a Special Town Meeting to allow adjusting two budget amounts voted at May’s Annual Town Meeting. ATM votes had relied heavily on Raise and Appropriate votes, because Free Cash was spent at the March 2023 Special Town Meeting.

Selectwoman Ann Marie Visconti was surprised to learn that Raise and Appropriate votes had driven the FY24 Tax Levy up by \$283,000 over FY23, which calculated to an approximately \$3.63 increase in the Tax Rate.

Rather than “raise and appropriate,” the two STM warrant articles would amend the vote to pay \$57,010

toward Highway Dept truck from Capital Stabilization account, and pay \$61,719 in increased school costs from the School Stabilization account. (\$21,719 increase in Gateway School bill and \$40,000 increase in Voc-Ed allocation.) Stabilization accounts are town savings accounts that require a 2/3 majority vote.

The Tax Rate calculation is: expense divided by the taxable value of the town in thousands (,77,900), so the truck vote (57,010,77,900) changes the tax rate by 73 cents, per \$1,000 in property valuation. The \$61,719 school amount changes the tax rate by 79 cents. A home valued for \$290,000 which had a tax bill of \$4,800/last year (at tax rate of \$16.55), would have a bill of \$5,745/this year based on previous votes. But that would be reduced to \$5,302/this year if both articles pass, with a tax rate of \$18.28 per \$1,000 in valuation.

Finance Committee member Adair Laurel will be available for informal discussion of the budget on Sunday, Nov. 12 at 4 p.m. at Blossom Center, 16 Bell Road.

Postings on the new Town Website can now be found by visiting www.middlefield-ma.com.

Winter road closures announces

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Select Board announces five roads will be closed to

the public from Friday, Dec. 1 to Monday, April 15, 2024 for purposes of snow removal.

The roads include Arthur Pease Road from #63 to the Peru Town line, Chipman Road from #63 to the Worthington Town

line, Clark Wright Road from #40 to #69 at the Chipman Road intersection, Cone Road from #83 to #111 and West Hill Road from #39 to #68.

The Select Board also announces there is no on-street parking during a snowstorm. For further questions, people may call the Select Board office at 413-623-2079.

OTIS

Otis Historical and Otis Preservation featuring historian program Nov. 9

OTIS – The Otis Historical Commission and Otis Preservation Trust are hosting the first Notice Otis Series cultural event of the 2023-24 season featuring historian Dennis Picard presenting, “Draught, Musketeer, Prisoner: The Hessians of the Revolutionary War in Western Massachusetts” on Thursday, Nov. 9 at 7 p.m. via zoom.

Folklore holds that the Hessians soldiers of the Revolutionary War period were blood thirsty mercenaries purchased by King George the Third to fight in the rebellious colonies. They are often associated in our mind’s eye with the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow fame. But is that a truthful depiction of these citizens of the German States? Even though there were no battles during the American Revolution in Western Massachusetts, there were, in fact, Hessians here. Hear how these men got to our area, why they were here, who they really were, and in the end, why some stayed.

Dennis D. Picard has been a museum professional in the living history field for over forty years. He began his career in 1978 at Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge and served on the staff of Hancock Shaker Village. Picard is the

recipient of various grants for research and implementation of programs and events at several historic sites and museums. He has authored many articles on the lifestyles and folkways of New England.

Picard has taught at Westfield State University in Massachusetts as well as served as a member and president of the Board of Directors of the Pioneer Valley History Network. He recently retired after 27 years at Storowton Village Museum, West Springfield.

The Otis Preservation Trust works with the Historical Commission to organize and preserve the history and heritage of Otis for future generations by supporting efforts to preserve, restore, repurpose and educate about buildings, monuments, lands and memorabilia of Otis. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Otis Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The event is via zoom on Thursday, Nov. 9 at 7 p.m. To register or for more information, people may visit www.otispreservationtrust.com or www.townofotisma.com. There is no charge to attend this event. Donations are welcome.

Otis Library hosts story walk Nov. 30

OTIS – The Otis Library, 48 North Main Road, hosts a story walk on the Farmington Rive Trail behind St. Mary’s of the Lakes Church now through Friday, Nov. 30.

The story is “Bear Says Thanks” by

Karma Wilson and Jane Chapman. Lego Club meets Saturday, Nov. 18 at 1 p.m. in the library.

For more information, people may call the library t 413-269-0109 or visit www.otislibraryma.org.

NORTHAMPTON

Drug Take Back Day disposes of more than 1 ton of drugs

NORTHAMPTON – Saturday's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day events in Hampshire and Franklin Counties collected 2,568 pounds of drugs, safely disposing of the unwanted and unneeded substances. Nine communities in Hampshire county and five towns in Franklin County participated.

That means the Northwestern District has safely disposed of 71,584 pounds of drugs since 2011 during Take Back Days and the permanent drug collection boxes stationed at many area police departments, ridding the region of unneeded prescription and non-prescription drugs, preventing misuse and keeping them out of water sources and landfills.

Saturday's total is significantly more than the 1,681 pounds collected

in April; Take back tallies in 2022 were 1,900 and 1,935 pounds.

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office teams up with local police departments, the Hampshire and Franklin Sheriff's offices, county-based TRIAD initiatives and the national Drug Enforcement Agency to organize the twice-a-year collections. Local drug prevention coalitions, including Hampshire HOPE and the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County support the efforts.

The following communities took part in Saturday's event: Amherst, Belchertown, Deerfield, Easthampton, Hadley, Leverett, Montague, Northampton, Orange, Pelham, South Hadley, Sunderland, Williamsburg, Worthington.



Shown are the Drug Take Back crew in Hampshire County.

Submitted photo



Shown is the Cooley Dickinson Hospital Bariatrics program team.

Submitted photo

Cooley Dickinson Hospital expands Bariatrics program

NORTHAMPTON – Cooley Dickinson Hospital has expanded their services to offer anti-obesity medication management.

The medication management program is ideal for patients with a BMI greater than 27 and obesity-related complications and patients who have a BMI over 30.

"CDH has a truly comprehensive Bariatrics and Weight Management program now," said nurse practitioner Sofia Buford, who is certified in obesity medicine from the Obesity Society. Buford is providing medication management to patients as part of Cooley Dickinson's evidence-based, high-quality nutrition and bariatrics program. She also has experience managing obesity in patients with co-morbid eating disorders.

"Our team is really special," said Buford. "We each bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion for this work. Obesity is a complex, chronic and relapsing neuroendocrine disease

with behavioral components. There are various treatment options, both surgical and non-surgical. Each patient who sees us will receive individualized, compassionate care."

Dr. Ursula McMillian, the team's bariatric surgeon, championed the growth of Cooley Dickinson's program and noted that "we celebrate our patients' successes with them." Rebecca Rand, the team's dietitian, works with patients to help them make healthy food choices and has experience in physical training as well.

"This is a really exciting time to work in obesity medicine. There are several new medications on the market and more coming down the pipeline. We understand obesity as a disease much better than we did in the past, which means we can now offer our patients various treatment approaches," added Buford. For more information on the program, people may call 413-584-4637.

PITTSFIELD

Berkshire Green Drinks hold hybrid meeting Nov. 9

PITTSFIELD – Tom Ryan, a forester with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation will present at the November Berkshire Green Drinks event on Thursday, Nov. 9, in person and online via Zoom.

The in-person gathering begins at 5:15 p.m. at Big Elm Brewery Sheffield Taproom, 65 Silver St., Sheffield. The presentation and Zoom meeting starts at 6 p.m.

Ryan will touch on several areas within forestry, including an overview of the current state of our forested

landscape, a summary of state forestry programs and the existing land use designations for DCR state properties, conservation options for private landowners, forest-climate adaptation and carbon management concepts, landscape-scale habitat restoration efforts, Massachusetts forest product consumption trends, biochar and supporting local forest products and how this can help mitigate climate change.

Pre-registration is required to attend this free event. To pre-register, people may visit <https://tinyurl.com/Nov2023-Berks-Green-Drinks>.

Tom Ryan has been a forester with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation since 2003. In 2022, he shifted from the service forestry program, working with private landowners and municipalities, to the management forestry program, helping to manage and steward some 314,000 acres of state forest, park and reservation lands.

He and his family live on a small working farm in southern Berkshire County. Tom serves on the Tyringham volunteer fire department, as well as on the board of directors for the Bidwell

House Museum located in Monterey, where he focuses on forest stewardship. He is also a member of the Berkshire Woodworkers Guild.

A guest speaker talks for about 30 minutes and the presentation is followed by a discussion and Question and Answer. These nights are free and open to everyone with any environmental interest. The drinks aren't green, but the conversations are. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join and bring along questions. Berkshire Green Drinks is sponsored and organized by the Berkshire Environmental Action Team.

Shaker Village hosts Community Day

PITTSFIELD – Hancock Shaker Village, 1843 Housatonic St., announces its annual Community Day will take place on Sunday, Nov. 11 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Admission is free all day. Fun activities for all ages include craft demonstrations, wood working and blacksmithing, interpreter led tours and Shaker talks, plus children's activities and farm animals. All buildings in the historic village are open for exploration and several special exhibitions including Handled With Care: The Function of Form in Shaker Craft and Stillness and

Light by John Mancina.

The accessible, one-mile Farm and Forest Trail, including the South Family Trail, is also open for everyone to explore. Food and beverages will be available in our Café and the Mercantile is open for those looking for the perfect gift.

Community Day at Hancock Shaker Village is made possible by the generous support of Mill Town. For more information about Hancock Shaker Village, people may email Michael Crotty at mcrotty@hancockshakervillage.org or visit HancockShakerVillage.org.

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.

GREAT BARRINGTON

Simon's Rock Theater presents 'The Moors'

GREAT BARRINGTON – The Bard College at Simon's Rock Theater program presents "The Moors," an anachronistic dark comedy by contemporary playwright, novelist, poet and screenwriter Jen Silverman.

Set in the 1840s(ish), The Moors follows spinster sisters Agatha and Hudley, their overworked scullery maid Marjoy, and their despondent Mastiff as they all live out their monotonous lives on the bleak English moors and dream of love and power. When Emilie, a hapless governess, is summoned under false pretenses and a moor-hen falls from the sky, all become entwined in a strange and elusive game.

Directed by Assistant Professor of Theater and Simon's Rock alum Sara Katzoff, this production is a semester-long partnership between faculty, students, staff, and guest artists working collaboratively across disciplines of performance, technical theater and design.

The performances will be held in the McConnell Theater at the Daniel Arts Center on the Simon's Rock campus, 84 Alford Road. All performances are free and open to the public.

Performance dates are Thursday, Nov. 9 at 7 p.m.; Friday, Nov. 10 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 11 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 12 at 2 p.m.

BUCKLAND

Buckland Historical Society selling 2024 calendars

BUCKLAND – The Buckland Historical Society is selling full color 2024 calendar of Robert Strong Woodward's paintings entitled "Rugged New England" for \$20.

The calendars can be purchased at: Andy's & The Oak Shoppe, 352 Deerfield St., Greenfield;

Boswell's Books, 10 Bridge St. and Nancy L. Dole Books & Ephemera, 20

State St., Shelburne Falls and the Buckland Public Library, Upper Street, Buckland. They can also be viewed and ordered on line by visiting www.bucklandmasshistory.org.

People may visit www.robert-strongwoodward.com, where they can see his art. Woodward was a New England artist from Buckland 1885-1957 and sold his work to celebrities such as Jack Benny, George Burns, and Robert Frost. Woodward was born in Northampton in 1885. At the age of 21, Woodward

suffered an accidental gunshot wound and was permanently paralyzed from the waist down. He settled in Buckland on his uncle's farm and turned to painting. During his career, he lost three studios to fire. In his lifetime, Woodward painted around 600 oils and 285 known chalks.

WESTHAMPTON

Robert Miller honored for 40 years as medical responder

WESTHAMPTON – About 50 Westhampton residents assembled at the new safety complex to express gratitude to Robert "Bob" Miller for 40 years of being a medical responder.

Miller received two proclamation awards by Chief David Antosz on the behalf of State Representative Ronald Mariano and State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa. In closing it has been said that there is no household in Westhampton that Miller has not responded to.



Westhampton honored Robert "Bob" Miller for 40 years of being a medical responder. Submitted photo

MONTGOMERY

Ed the Wizard presents balloon twisting workshop

MONTGOMERY – Ed the Wizard and his Wildlife Life Balloon Animal Twisting Workshop will appear at the Grace Hall Memorial Library, 160 Main Road, on Thursday, Nov. 30 at 6 p.m.

Patrons will learn the art of balloon twisting as they create their own balloon animals. No balloon twisting experienced required. This program is free

and opened to the public but may require pre-registration. People may call the library at 413-862-3894 for more information and registration.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Montgomery Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."

RUSSELL

Library lists upcoming events

RUSSELL – The Russell Public Library, 162 Main St., invites Veterans and friends to the library on Thursday, Nov. 9 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. for coffee, doughnuts and conversation to honor them for their service to their country.

On Saturday, Nov. 18 from 10:30 a.m.-noon their will be an interactive story time for children. The story is "How to Wake Up Piggy." This is a musical story time and children will build their own instrument. A snack will be served. No registration is necessary.

Adults and teens are invited to a screening of "Indigenous Voices From the Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts on Thursday, Nov. 30 from 6-7 p.m. People must register by Monday, Nov. 27.

Russell was one of the many municipalities that provided Cultural Council Grants for the making of this film.

On Saturday, Dec. 2 from noon-1 p.m. adults may choose a cookbook from the library and then sign up to make a holiday appetizer and dessert for tasting.

CHESTERFIELD

Chesterfield Congregational Church holds breakfast Nov. 12

CHESTERFIELD – The Chesterfield Congregational Church, located in the center on Route 143, will be having its monthly breakfast on Sunday, Nov. 12 from 8 a.m.-10 a.m.

The cost of the breakfast is a voluntary donation. The menu for this month is pancakes with or without blueberries,

French toast, both with pure Chesterfield maple syrup, free range organic farm-fresh eggs any style, breakfast sandwiches, sausage, home fries, home-made corned beef hash, juice, tea and coffee. Also, featured this month are home-made bread pudding fruit muffins.

All are welcome to attend.

CUMMINGTON

Friday Night Cafe happens Nov. 10

CUMMINGTON –The last cafe of 2023 is Friday, Nov. 10 from 7-9 p.m. at the Village Church, Main St.

The Friday Night Cafe will return on Friday, Jan. 12 for the start of the 2024 season. At the Friday, Nov. 10 cafe the first hour of the evening 7-8 p.m. is entitled "Spoken Words." It will be devoted to stories and poetry with Rochelle Wildfong. People may her website at Rochelle Wildfong.

Then, from 8-9 p.m. the one-man band Brendan Leowolf will take the stage. People may check his music out at Brendan Leowolf. It will be a double dose of creativity from two versatile performers.

Once again the cafe is brought by the friendly folks at the Village Church who believe music can be a powerful force for building community. The event is free, donations are appreciated, snacks are provided, BYO drinks. Masks are welcome and encouraged. The Friday Night Cafe happens at the Village Church on Main St. Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District.

This program is supported in part by grants from the Cummington, Chesterfield, Goshen, Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council a state agency.

WILLIAMSBURG

Meekins Library's Hammer Gallery exhibits Harold Dumas art

WILLIAMSBURG – The vibrant paintings of Holyoke artist, Harold Dumas are on display in the Neil Hammer Gallery at the Meekins Library, 2 Williams St. for the month of November.

There will be an artist reception on Saturday, Nov. 18 from noon-2 p.m. in the Neil Hammer Gallery.

Dumas discovered oil painting as a young adult, rendering the world around him by drawing inspiration from the scenic landscapes of Western Massachusetts.

His paintings, "Frozen moments in time, captured in paint, preserved on canvas," have been self taught through the years by trial and error.

Through the internet he discovered art teachers and with online courses has honed his skills and techniques.

Retiring in January 2020, he seized the opportunity to immerse himself in his art, and has successfully made sales through his website and Facebook. His work has been shown at the Southampton August

Fair, Northampton Artisan Fair, ARTery Gallery in Holyoke and at the Paradise City Arts Festival.

His artistic goals are straightforward: to secure gallery representation and to continue evolving and expanding his craft. For more information, people may visit haroldjdumasart.com.



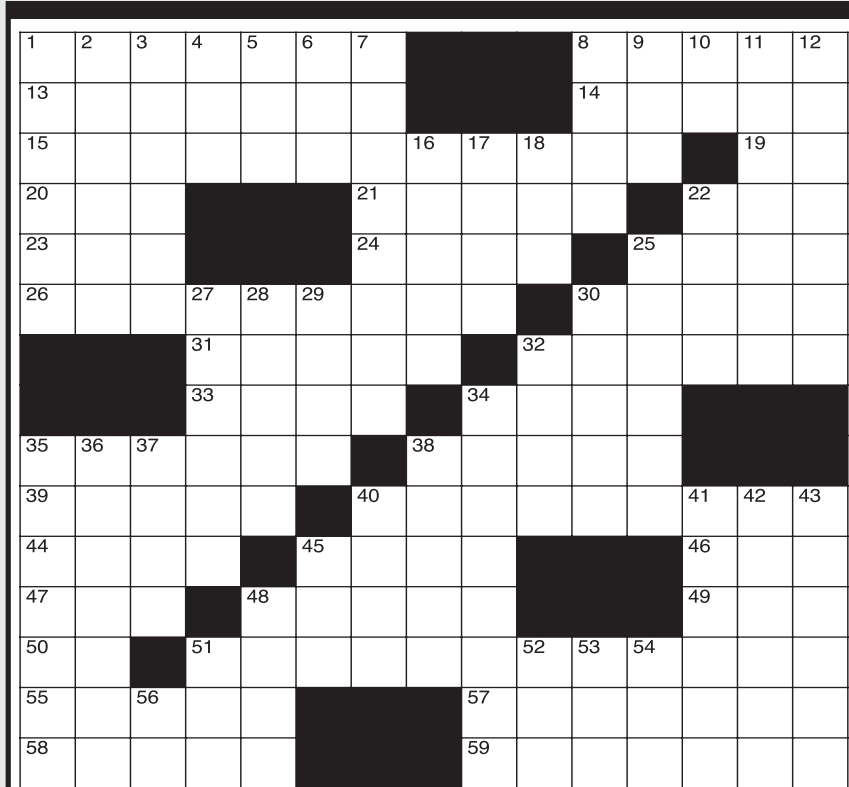
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Happen again
- 8. Large flightless birds
- 13. A type of account
- 14. Beyond what is natural
- 15. Beloved comfort food
- 19. Rural delivery
- 20. Belonging to us
- 21. Typical
- 22. Pie ___ mode
- 23. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- 24. Not us
- 25. Discharge
- 26. Made empty
- 30. Fishing net
- 31. Fast-moving, harmless snake
- 32. Analyzed into its parts
- 33. In a way, chilled
- 34. Hindu queen

- 35. Circles around the sun
- 38. Used for emphasis
- 39. Reactive structures
- 40. Recommendations
- 44. Feel intense anger
- 45. Puke
- 46. Rural Northern Ireland community
- 47. Naturally occurring solid material
- 48. British watch brand
- 49. Toddler
- 50. Integrated circuit
- 51. Being revered
- 55. "Pets" you can grow
- 57. Continual
- 58. Puts together in time
- 59. Houses temporarily

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Vital public document
- 2. Disinter
- 3. Musical performances
- 4. After B
- 5. Every body has one (abbr.)
- 6. Utilize
- 7. In a way, disproved
- 8. Fisherman's tool
- 9. Of she
- 10. Trauma center
- 11. Commercial flyer
- 12. Administered medicine to calm
- 16. Popular R&B performer
- 17. Regretted
- 18. Leg (slang)
- 22. "Night Train" author
- 25. More supernatural
- 27. Baltimore ball-player
- 28. Shoe parts
- 29. Scores perfectly
- 30. More lucid
- 32. Trim by cutting
- 34. Disreputable people
- 35. Dramatic behaviors
- 36. Disorder
- 37. Private box in a theater
- 38. More dried-up
- 40. Raw
- 41. In operation
- 42. Pillager
- 43. Butterflies with brown wings
- 45. Disallow
- 48. Own up
- 51. Hungarian city
- 52. A way to condemn
- 53. Tax collector
- 54. Lease
- 56. Not out

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20
 Play to your strengths to reach your goals, Aries. You do not have to change much about yourself to get ahead. In fact, people will appreciate you being honest about who you are.

CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22
 For some reason you are really interested in a friend or family member's behavior and comings and goings, Cancer. Are you having trust issues? Give them the benefit of the doubt.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23
 Unchecked anxiety can lead you down a slippery slope, Libra. It's not easy facing new situations, but worrying about things before it is necessary will not do right now.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20
 Capricorn, you have been making pleasure and play time your priority of late. It's now time to get down to business. Own up to your responsibilities.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21
 Do not worry about being passionate about what you do. If you weren't this passionate, you may not be able to persuade others to listen up and follow your suggestions.

LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23
 Cosmic energy could see you pushing some boundaries. It's fine to take risks as long as you have someone to pull you back if you go a bit too far.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22
 Scorpio, you are no stranger to psychic feelings. This week you know what a loved one is thinking and want to help this person out in any way you can.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18
 Unraveling old patterns or actions will be good for you right now, Aquarius. If you can't do it on your own, work with a friend or therapist to get to the root of any issues.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21
 Gemini, you may not have had the entire story, but you certainly will get it this week. It's up to you to make up your mind how you want to act on the information you gather.

VIRGO

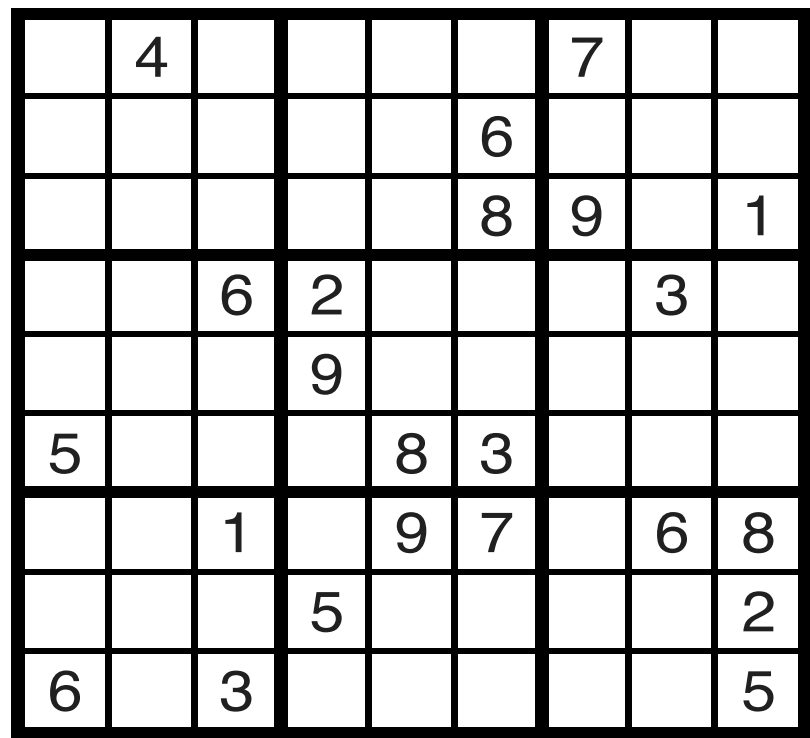
Aug 24/Sept 22
 A romantic adventure may prove the catalyst for change in your life, Virgo. Many exciting prospects are ahead if you allow yourself to get swept along in the momentum of your feelings.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21
 Sagittarius, you cannot control the world or others' behaviors. All you can do is control how you react to situations. Don't be sidetracked by noisy distractions in the days ahead.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20
 Pisces, think about collaborating with others to bring out the best in yourself. In fact, you might find any group activity transformative. Don't shy away from these ventures.



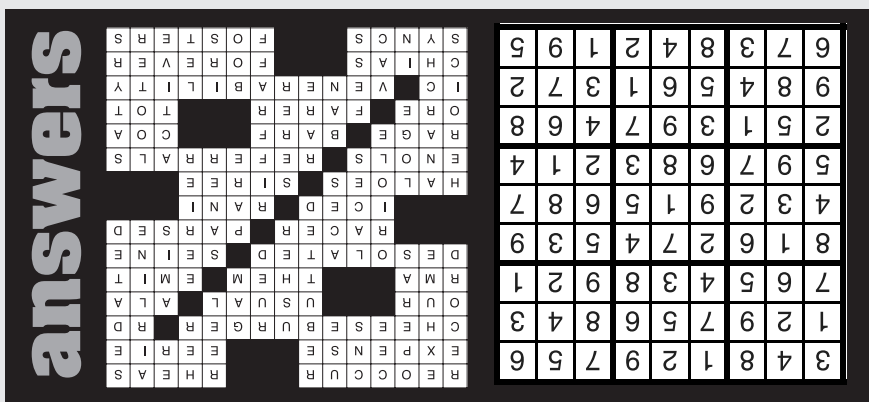
SUDOKU

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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REGION

Baystate Children's Hospital welcomes Isabela, Facility Dog

SPRINGFIELD – Not all new employees are announced with great fanfare unless they are Isabela, Isa for short, Baystate Children's Hospital's first-ever facility dog, who joined the team thanks to a \$150,000 grant from the Dunkin' Joy in Childhood Foundation.

Baystate's newest employee goes to work every day to provide special animal assisted therapy to pediatric patients, their families and staff members.

The Foundation's Dogs for Joy program seeks to increase the number of in-resident dogs in children's hospitals across the country. Facility dogs like Isa are professionally trained to work in a healthcare setting.

Unlike volunteer dogs that visit a hospital or medical center for a short time, facility dogs are at the hospital every day with their handlers. In most cases they are used exclusively for clinical work. The dogs can physically interact with patients to provide comfort and love. These dogs are trained to help with tasks like teaching children how to take medication, keeping a child calm during medical intervention and providing incentives for children to get out of bed for a walk, these dogs serve as a source of happiness and provide a sense of normalcy for patients.

Research shows that animal-assisted therapy can lower stress and anxiety levels, affect blood pressure, increase patient mobility, and provide an alternative focus from pain. They help patients lower their stress and anxiety and encourage them to complete their health care goals.

"Dogs like Isabela are often described as better than any medicine. They just know when someone needs

comfort, support, and love, and they give it unconditionally without judgement and expect nothing in return," said Dr. Charlotte Boney, chair, Department of Pediatrics at Baystate.

The program is made possible by the Dunkin' Joy in Childhood Foundation, the charitable organization powered by Dunkin' and the generosity of its franchisees, partners, team members and guests. The Foundation's mission is to provide the simple joys of childhood to kids battling hunger or illness, even on their most difficult days. Support for Isabela is also being provided through donations from Universal Electric and the UMass UDance Marathon event held last spring.

"We are thrilled to bring joy to patients and their families at Baystate Children's Hospital through our Dogs for Joy program," said April McGonnigal, Director of the Joy in Childhood Foundation. "We have seen the incredible impact that these special pups bring to children's hospitals throughout the country and look forward to seeing the meaningful impact that Isa has on the patients, staff and families at Baystate."

Isabela, a Golden Retriever, was born and raised at Canine Assistants in Milton, Georgia, a non-profit organization which teaches and provides service dogs for children and adults with physical disabilities or other special needs. In 2009, they partnered with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta to create a new and groundbreaking community service dog program which has now grown nationwide. To date, Canine Assistants have over 80 facility dogs placed around the country. Already a star before arriving at

Baystate Children's Hospital, Isabela, now almost 19 months old, began her education at just seven weeks. She has completed over 1,500 hours of individual instruction and 2,250 hours of group instruction and was the first of her litter to graduate at only 17 months old.

Three certified child life specialists from Baystate Children's Hospital, who provide psychosocial and emotional support to children and families within the hospital, traveled to Georgia for a week-long training camp with Isabela and staff from Canine Assistants. After the training session, the child life specialists, who serve as the dog's three handlers, flew along with Isabela to her new home where she is continuing to learn and grow alongside them in her new role as a part of the Child Life & Healing Arts team.

Isa and her handlers provide goal-oriented interventions such as preparation and support for medical procedures, assistance with physical and occupational therapy, help with meeting ambulation goals, socio-emotional support, and bereavement support. She will be working with pediatric patients across many areas of the children's hospital including inpatient units, the emergency department, radiology, and some outpatient areas. Isa also has some designated time to support hospital staff across the medical center. She has a calm and intuitive demeanor and has been an added support for staff during debriefs following difficult situations, or when rounding on units to help uplift spirits.

There is published evidence that facility dogs reduce stress, relieve pain, decrease anxiety and inertia, not to mention improving everyone's including

patients, families and staff mood and morale, noted Dr. Boney.

A 2021 study showed that animal-assisted interventions in hospitalized children on acute care units and pediatric intensive care units (PICU) lowered the stress hormone cortisol and increased mood and activity compared to the control group. Another study from 2022 surveyed 73 healthcare professionals who handled 46 facility dogs in 17 children's hospitals and found that facility dogs decreased stress, improved well-being and job-related morale, and benefited patients by building rapport, providing a comforting presence and normalizing the hospital environment.

For more information on Baystate Children's Hospital, people may visit baystatehealth.org/bch.

To learn more about the Dunkin' Joy in Childhood Foundation's Dogs for Joy program, people may visit www.bringjoy.org and follow on Facebook or Instagram.



Isabela is an almost 19 month old Golden Retriever and Baystate Children's Hospital's first ever facility dog. Submitted photo

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



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PUBLIC NOTICES

Huntington Conservation Commission

The Huntington Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting at **November 15, 2023 at 7:15 pm** at Stanton Hall to review a Notice of Intent submitted by Mark Reed representing Vicky Puza-Allen. The proposed activity is for reconstruction of a three bedroom cottage, the installation of a sewage disposal system and the installation of a drinking well located at 121 Rocky Point Rd Norwich Lake. This hearing is in accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 131 Section 40 of the Wetlands Protection Act.
11/09/2023

**Commonwealth of
Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and
Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758**

Docket No. HD23C0320CA

In the matter of:
**Heather Galen-Allison
Morgan**

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A **Petition to Change Name of Adult** has been filed by **Heather Galen-Allison Morgan of Russell, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Heather Allison Morgan IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/24/2023.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: October 27, 2023

Rosemary A. Saccomani

Register of Probate

11/09/2023

Public Shade Tree Hearing

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 87, Public Shade Tree Law, Section 3 (Cutting of Public Shade Trees; Hearing; Damages), the Town of Williamsburg Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing regarding the removal of three public shade trees on **Monday, November 20, at Town Offices, 141 Main Street, Haydenville at 7:00 PM.** Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this matter should appear at the time and place designated. The affected town trees are located at 5 Conway Road and are three 8-inch diameter Hemlock trees and are marked with a blue string.

Stephen Smith,
Planning Board Chair
Thomas Por, Tree Warden
11/09, 11/16/2023

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.

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

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TOWN OF SANDSFIELD EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
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 Please submit resume and three references to Sandisfield Highway Superintendent, Brad Curry at Highways@sandisfieldma.gov. Positions open until filled. The Town of Sandisfield is an EEO employer. For complete job descriptions visit www.sandisfield-ma.gov under Employment.

Grader Operator/Laborer: Full-time, 40 hr/wk benefited position. Grader Operator/Laborer position is an elevated rate of pay for a well-qualified candidate with a minimum of 5 years' experience that has completed training for the grader and is found to be proficient in repairing, as well as maintaining the towns dirt roads. Applicant must be able to lift 50lbs, and have construction/mechanical knowledge. Other duties include physical labor, driving trucks, operating heavy machinery, and plowing snow. Must be able to follow written and verbal instructions. A CDL Class A or B License, Hydraulic Class 2A or 2B License, and 4G Mowing License are required. Hourly wage is \$32.90 with licenses.

DPW Working Foreman: Full-time, 40 hr/wk benefited position. Working Foreman will be expected to assist in the coordination of daily work cooperatively with the Superintendent as well as coordinate all daily work when the Superintendent is absent. The Working Foreman is responsible for overseeing daily operations at the worksite to ensure the completion of projects in a safe and efficient manner. Applicant must be able to lift 50lbs, and have construction/mechanical knowledge. Other duties include physical labor, driving trucks, operating


HELP WANTED
 heavy machinery, and plowing snow. Must be able to follow written and verbal instructions. A CDL Class A or B License, Hydraulic Class 2A or 2B License, and 4G Mowing License are required. Hourly wage is \$34.93 with licenses.
 Please submit resume and three references to Sandisfield Highway Superintendent, Brad Curry at Highways@sandisfieldma.gov. Positions open until filled. The Town of Sandisfield is an EEO employer. For complete job descriptions visit www.sandisfield-ma.gov under Employment.



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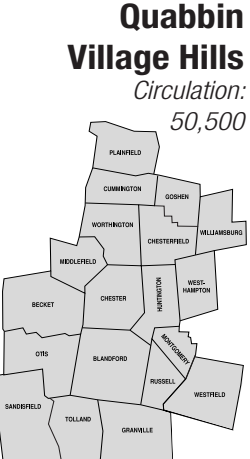
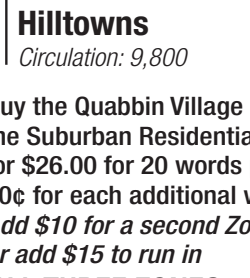
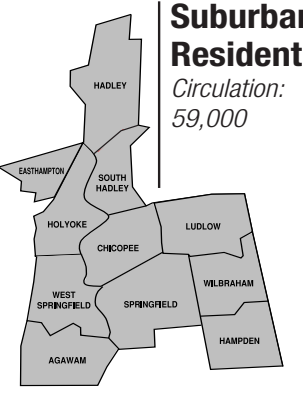
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HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



Director Adam Dion holds a wooden insulator on the trolley line.



Submitted photos Director Liz Massa explains the trolley pole with its electrical wiring still intact.



Tables were set containing photos of the trolley line, maps and much more for hikers to peruse.



This photo dated July 20, 1913 show Carter's Bridge over the Huckleberry Trolley line

Hiking the Huckleberry Trolley line

BECKET – The November Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers group hike event was on the Becket Section of the Huckleberry Trolley line.

Construction began on May 1, 1911 at the Lee end and was completed in Huntington on Aug. 16, 1917. During the years of construction, huge amounts of men, money and equipment built the line encountering mountainous terrain and many ponds.

Almost a thousand men a day,

mostly Polish and Italian immigrants were employed at \$1.90 per day for nine hours. Construction methods were still primitive using horses, oxen and mules. The poles were the largest ever seen, made from local chestnut.

The full length tress were hand hewn by hand with broadaxes and cut to eight foot lengths. Dynamite was used to move the rock that stood in the way and steam shovels scooped the debris out to keep a three percent grade. The

steam shovels weighing seventy tons were one of the modern machines used, people came from miles away to watch them operate since most had never seen one.

Some of the most difficult problems encountered during construction were the bridges. Ponds had to be filled in requiring tons of dirt, as much as 75,000 yards. When ponds could not be filled, bridges were built.

When the line was complete, there

was not another trolley road in the state of Massachusetts like it because of the country it passed through. The trolley was built to improve economic development and for the scenery, which brought many tourists to Western Massachusetts.

The round trip took three hours from Lee to Huntington and cost \$1.60. There were four round trips per day. The entire project cost approximately three million dollars and ran for just over a year.

WESTFIELD

Athenaeum and Westfield on Weekends host art exhibit

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Athenaeum and Westfield on Weekends announces the opening of the art exhibit, "Inspired: Two Centuries of Westfield Art."

This exhibit, which will be shown at two sites, the Rand Art Gallery of the Athenaeum, and Westfield on Weekends' location in the Rennova Building, will feature more than 30 artists, who have made Westfield home. Included in the show will be a variety of landscapes, still-life compositions, interior scenes, and modern abstractions.

The exhibit opened on Monday, Nov. 6 and will run through Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024. An artist's reception is planned for Thursday, Nov. 9 from 5-8 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend and meet the artists, who are featured in the show.

Westfield has long been known for its business and industry. During the course of the 19th century the city grew rapidly as several important industries were

established here. By the later decades of the century, Westfield was known as the capital of the whip manufacturing industry and thousands of residents worked in the business. Westfield was also known as the home of the Johnson Church Organ Company, making some of the best organs in the country at that time, and H.B. Smith, one of the largest makers of boilers in the United States.

What is less well known is that Westfield has also maintained for at least 150 years an active and thriving art scene. The expansion of industry, the founding of several important educational institutions, and the increase in population during the Victorian era, created a city with a significant middle class population that possessed both the leisure time and the wealth to support artistic activities. This environment fostered the development of a community of artists. As early as the 1840s, professional artists were working in Westfield.

By the early decades of the 20th century there were a number of highly original artists working in the city. The creation of the Rand Art Gallery at the Westfield Athenaeum in the 1920s further enhanced the city's art scene by creating an excellent location for the display of local art. Town residents were now able to see art exhibits on a regular basis.

This exhibit attempts to show the range of art created by Westfield artists over the last two centuries. The earliest work of art in the exhibit dates back to 1815 and the latest paintings in the show were created this year. Guy McLain, Executive Director of the Westfield Athenaeum, commented that, "This is a rare opportunity to see just how rich the cultural life of Westfield has been from the very earliest years of the 19th century to the present day. Westfield has long been associated with industry. Hopefully, this exhibit will show that the city has also fostered a rich cultural life as well."

Westfield Bank donates to Pathlight program

WESTFIELD – Westfield Bank announces a \$20,000 donation to the Pathlight Group's Whole Selves Program.

The Whole Selves program provides social and relationship programming for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and with the help of the bank's donation, Pathlight will be piloting the new workbook component of their relationship curriculum.

"We are proud to continue our support of this wonderful organization," said James Hagan, Westfield Bank President and CEO. "Over the past 60-plus years, Pathlight has done incredible work supporting and advocating for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities across the region. Westfield Bank is proud to have supported these efforts for the past 26 years."