

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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CHESTER

Todd Gazda surprises school at assembly



By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Todd Gazda, Interim Principal at Chester Elementary School, opened Friday's assembly for students, staff and visitors.

"This is an opportunity for us, as a school community, to learn about Veterans Day and why it is so important." The gathering opened with the school community standing to recite the pledge of allegiance. When they had finished, Gazda shared, "A lot of times we say and do things without really knowing why. Today's an opportunity to explain the 'why' of Veterans Day and the Pledge of Allegiance." This was followed by a short video that included a musical version of the pledge and

Todd Gazda, Interim Principal at Chester Elementary School, played the National Anthem on his saxophone, as American Legion members Ruth Kennedy and Jim Cortis were among those honored at the school's Veterans Day assembly.

Turley Publications
Photo by Wendy Long

ASSEMBLY, page 7

BLANDFORD



Dining at the Veterans dinner are, from left, Peter and Barbara Langmore, Nancy and Tom Ackley, T.J. and Co Cousineau and Linda and Rick Barnard.

Turley Publications photo by Mary Kronholm

Veterans honored at dinner

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Once again Chef de Cuisine Joann Martin dazzled diners with pot roast, baked potato and glazed carrots and onions on Saturday, Nov. 8.

The meal started immediately, the tables having

been set with salad and rolls. One by one, tables were called to the buffet line where all were served by the Boomsma family and friends.

There was hot mulled cider, sodas and Starbucks Coffee and dessert courtesy of the Firemen's Association and Stop and Shop of apple or pumpkin pie.

Maggie and Jan Zaiko created the patriotic centerpiece on the tables and the festive Veterans Welcome decorations at the main entrance.

The Historical Society had their display of local veterans portraits and special showing of Donald Shepard and his work on discovering

Blandford's Revolutionary War Veteran, Jethro Jones.

Veterans Agent Joe Henning read Gov. Maura Healey's proclamation for Tuesday, Nov. 11 and another reading, that of John F. Kennedy citing Nov. 11 and its significance.

DINNER, page 6

HUNTINGTON

Select Board sets Fiscal Year 2026 single tax rate

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Chairman Roger Booth, members William Hathaway and John McVeigh and Town Administrator Jennifer Peloquin considered the town's Fiscal Year 2026 tax classification.

The Nov. 5 meeting opened with a public hearing to establish the percentage tax share of property taxes to be borne by residential and non-residential property owners for Fiscal Year 2026, in accordance with Chapter 797 of the Acts of 1979.

Nohika Cherubin, an Associate Assessor from Regional Resource Group, Inc. attended. Booth quickly moved to set a single tax rate for both residential and non-residential taxes, which was unanimously approved.

Peloquin later explained that the Regional Resource Group had looked into this issue last year, and had found that commercial, industrial and personal property tax rates would have to rise by 18% and to only yield an average 1% decrease to the residential tax rate. In short, the study found that the town cannot achieve an economy of scale on this issue due to its relatively small commercial and industrial base. With no other input or townspeople present, the hearing closed two minutes after it opened.



Water and Sewer Chairman H. Daniel Oliveira, Water Plant Operator James Gobeille, Sewer Plant Operator John Berry, Commissioner Karon Hathaway and Water and Sewer Administrative Coordinator Laura Driscoll discuss next steps on the well remediation project on Basket Street, following the Nov. 5 meeting with the Huntington Select Board. To date, one home's well has tested positive for Poly FluoroAlkyl Substances contamination from the former landfill on Basket Street.

Turley Publication photo by Wendy Long

They also continued planning for a town water line to 51 Basket St., a residence that has a well contaminated with Poly Fluoro Alkyl Substances "forever chemicals" that have leached into ground water from the former Basket Street landfill. Members of the Huntington Board of Health (George Peterson (Chair), John Bergeron (Administrative Assistant) and Kathleen Peterson and Water and Sewer Commissioners H. Daniel Oliveira (Chairman), Karon Hathaway and Sue Fopiano,

were joined by Sewer Plant Operator John Berry and Water Plant Operator James Gobeille; were joined by Melanie Galecki, resident of 51 Basket St. to discuss next steps in the water line extension project on the road. Grant funding was obtained to bring the town water line to Galecki's home, as her well has been contaminated by the former landfill located nearby. It was announced that the next nearest residence on 42 Basket St. recently passed their water test and is still showing no signs of PFAS

contamination.

Karon Hathaway proposed offering connections to the town water line for the other six homes at the town's cost as it would be more cost effective to do them all at once. She suggested giving them a six-month window to opt in or sign that they are opting out, which would keep the project within the current fiscal year.

Selectman Bill Hathaway suggested they install curb stops and taps at each home now, while everything is opened up,

at a cost of approximately \$1,500 per house, thereby reducing the need (and cost) to reopen and patch pavement later on. Bergeron pointed out that if they choose to not hook up to the system, their wells will have to continue to be monitored at a cost of up to \$10,000 per year. Discussion continued with Booth suggesting offering the residents free water for a certain period of time, to encourage them to sign on now.

Other points discussed included the fact that their homeowners insurance rates will drop with town hydrants nearer to their homes. Fopiano noted that the Water Department had \$12,000 in their water improvement account that could be loaned to the project. Booth noted that town departments that chip in funding on this would be reimbursed after a Special Town Meeting being planned for January. In the end, Peloquin was advised to run their options by town counsel, which might include putting a lien on any homes that opt out.

ACO Other business included granting Animal Control Officer James Helems access to post on the town's Facebook page (Town of Huntington MA). This was granted with the provision

SELECT BOARD, page 3

BLANDFORD

Select Board discuss water dept.

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Select Board met with the Water Department last Monday, Nov. 3, to discuss financial parameters surrounding the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition.

SCADA is essential to the town's water treatment operations and it combines all technological hardware and software to monitor, control and make the water process run smoothly.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Select Board, with the approval of the Water Commissioners present, approved the amendment orders, or contract amendments by Wright-Pierce.

Wright-Pierce is the environmental engineering firm contracted with the Water Department for upgrades to the water treatment plant at Long Pond. According to Town Accountant Kelli Pontbriand there is enough funding in the Water Department's account to cover the cost of the two change orders.

A fifth amendment, change order, was withdrawn by Wright-Pierce and this was also approved by

WATER DEPT, page 6



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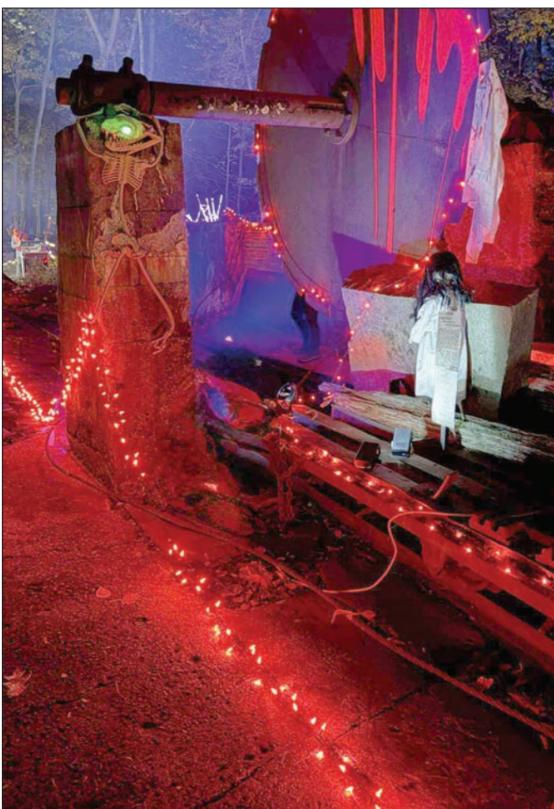
This was one of the spooky creatures with its canine companion participants encountered along the Sinister Haunted Trail.

HILLTOWN HIKERS OFFER SINISTER HAUNTED TRAIL

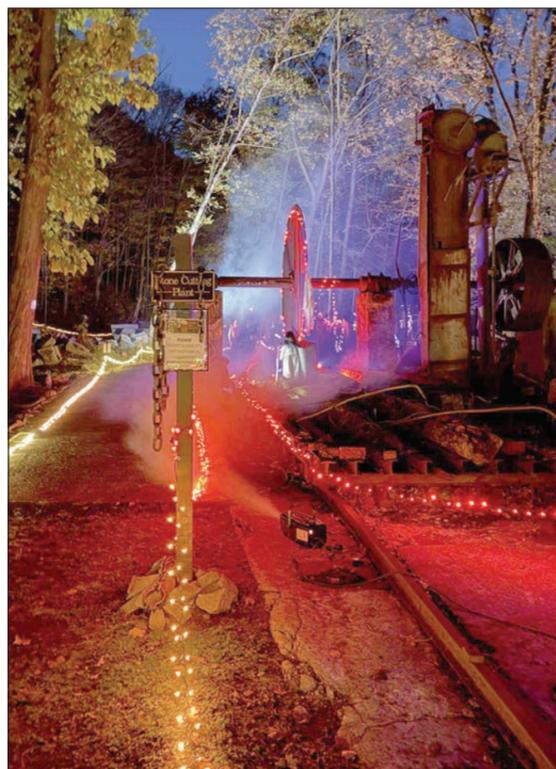


CHESTER – On Saturday, Oct. 25 the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers held a Sinister Haunted Trail event. They had over 600 people walk through their haunted trail located at the granite saw in Chester.

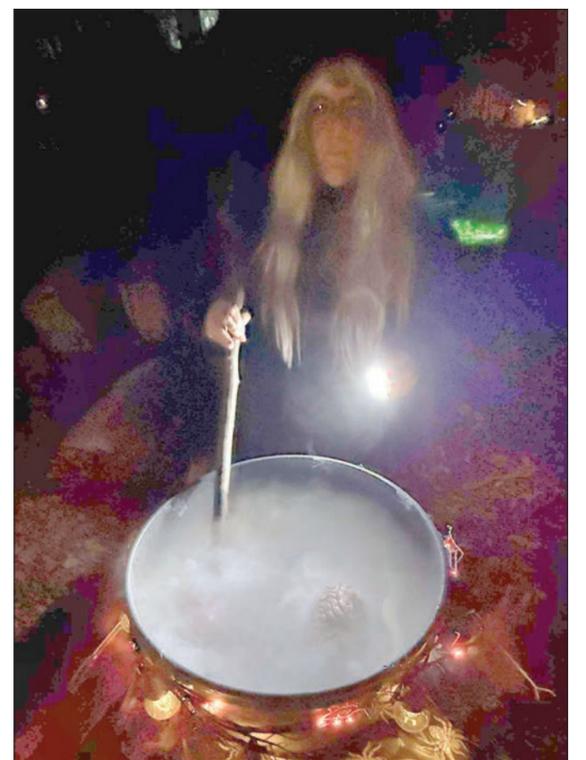
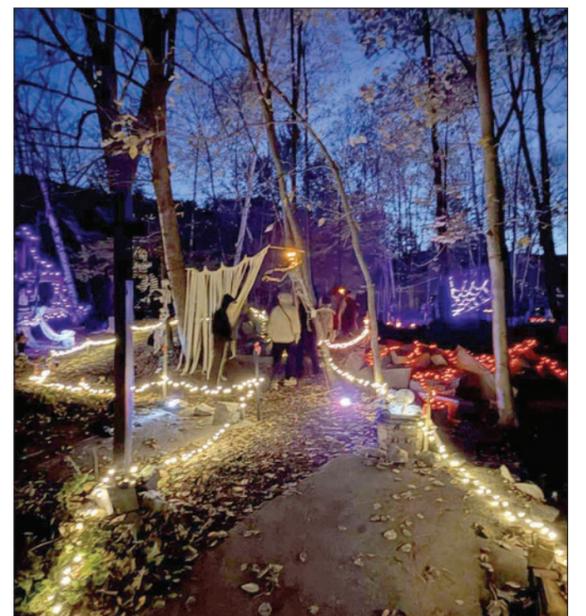
Here are some more spooky creatures getting ready to haunt the trail when night falls.



The large granite saw was one of the scary scenes along the Sinister Haunted Trail sponsored by the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers.



Above, this section of the Sinister Haunted Trail led to the large granite cutting saw in Chester owned by the Hilltown Hikers. Right, this was one of several scary scenes people encountered along the Sinister Haunted Trail in Chester. Bottom right, a witch stirs her cauldron along the trail.



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St. Jude, helper of the hopeless, pray for us.

Thank you St. Jude. Amen.

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HUNTINGTON

SELECT BOARD

that Helems agrees to only post facts and not opinions on the town page. McVeigh suggested that rules be posted on the town page for all employees and for the public. The town is close to finalizing a new social media policy for employees that will fully outline requirements and expectations.

Holidays

Looking ahead, the select board meeting falls on Dec. 31, which is New Year's Eve. Town Hall will close at 1 p.m. (2 hours early) and the select board will make themselves available to sign the warrants by 11 a.m. The town will continue to close on standard legal holidays that have been followed in past years. As July 4th falls on a Saturday, Town Hall will be closed on Friday, July 3.

Records destruction policy

Town Clerk Michele Fieldstad-Booth and Pelouquin will draft a records destruction policy for town files. Pelouquin researched how other towns handle businesses renewing their business certificates on time; 20 of 27 towns polled said they send out renewal reminders. Despite the fact that a late fee can be charged under MGL, all 27 towns said they do not charge a fee if a business is late.

Stanford Avenue

Pelouquin gave an update on the Stanton Avenue Infrastructure Project. A household water line froze over the weekend, it was buried below the sewer line, which is not allowed. They installed a new line from the road to the house. A change order was made with extra

funds; \$73,250 was allocated for temporary black top to get residents through winter, because the road had been torn up. Hathaway reported that all of the temporary water lines are gone and the permanent lines are hooked up.

Communication

McVeigh announced that he is meeting with Senator Paul Mark and Representative Kelly Pease to discuss the news that Verizon will sever all communication lines with fire departments after March 2026. Everything will move to dispatch/800 systems, which will require new interoperable radios across small towns in the region. The estimated cost of this is \$153k for Huntington and a total of \$561,000 for six area towns. McVeigh said it

marks yet another unfunded mandate for small communities.

Other business

Also discussed, a junior firefighter program is being looked at by the Huntington Fire Department; Hilltown Firewood was approved to again remove snow at Town Hall/Stanton Hall at the same rates they charged last year; and the Sr. Citizen and Veterans Tax Work off program will be offered for FY '27 at the same criteria as this year (\$15/hour with slots awarded to 8 sr. citizens and 6 veterans). Names will be drawn from a hat if there are more applicants than slots available.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. The next meeting of the Huntington Select Board will be Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 5 p.m.

FUTURE HIKERS



These young children already love to hike. Maybe they will be future Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers.

Turley Publications photo by Deborah Daniels

CUMMINGTON

Friday Night Cafe wraps up Nov. 14

CUMMINGTON – Session 2 of the 2025 Friday Night Cafe wraps up Friday, Nov. 14 from 7-9 p.m. with Sean and Heather at the Village Church in beautiful downtown Cummington in the heart of the Cummington Cultural District.

These two always put together a beautiful, thoughtful, surprising show. "Sean and Heather have been singing together for more than 30 years. Their performances are driven by their eclectic taste, and their enduring love of vocal harmony. As usual, their November Café show

will be an entire evening of music they have never performed before. Heather doesn't know why Sean insists upon doing this every year, but she goes along."

The event is free, donations are appreciated. Due to on-going renovation of the Village Church the show will take place in the Sanctuary. The Vestry and the usual snack table will not be available. We will provide some simple snacks and drinks in the main entry area for consumption during intermission.

Once again this is brought by the friendly

folks at the Village Church, who believe music can be a powerful force for building community. Session 1 of the 2026 season kicks off on Friday, Jan. 9.

Friday Night Cafe receives promotional support from the Cummington Cultural District, and is supported in part by grants from the Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale-Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Windsor, and Worthington Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

HILLTOWNS

MassDOT list I-90 roadwork

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces daytime bridge work, bridge painting, milling and paving and guardrail repairs on I-90 eastbound and westbound in the towns of Becket, Blandford, Otis, Montgomery and Russell.

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

In Becket, bridge work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 18.4 now through Friday, Nov. 14, from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Bridge painting work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 20.0 now through Friday,

Nov. 14 from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

In Blandford, milling and paving will be conducted on I-90 eastbound from mile marker 26.0 to mile marker 32.0 now through Friday, Nov. 14, from 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. In Otis, guardrail repairs will be conducted on I-90 westbound at mile marker 27.0 on Friday, Nov. 14 from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

In Montgomery and Russell, bridge repairs will be conducted on I-90 westbound at mile marker 36.0 now through Friday, Nov. 14 from 6 a.m.-noon.

Appropriate signage and law enforcement details will be in place to guide drivers through the work areas. Drivers traveling through the

area should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. All scheduled work is weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

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

BECKET

Becket Athenaeum list November events

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., will start the evening of Friday, Nov. 21 with an in person performance by Wahconah High School's pep band, Blood Type:Blue at the Becket Arts Center at 6:30 p.m. People then can go to the Becket Athenaeum for a

simulcast "We the People" wi Yo-Yo Ma. He will play Bach's Cello Suites live from Boston's Symphony Hall. This simulcast is free and open to all. RSVP is appreciated by visiting bwlbrary.org/yo-yo.

A gratitude get together will take place on Tuesday,

Nov. 25 from 3:30-5 p.m. at the Becket Athenaeum. The program begins with story time and games at 3:30 p.m., make a gratitude tree at 4 p.m. and snacks and cider at 4:30 p.m. All materials will be provided. RSVP is appreciated by visiting bwlbrary.org/gratitude.



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EARLY DEADLINES FOR ADS & LEGAL NOTICES

Thanksgiving will bring early deadlines for all legal notices to run in TURLEY PUBLICATIONS the week of November 24-28, 2025.

Thursday, Nov. 20 at 2 PM for November 27 issue

- Agawam Advertiser News • Country Journal
- The Register • Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Friday, November 21 at 2 PM for November 27 Issue

- Sentinel • Quaboag Current

Monday, November 24 at 2 PM for November 27 Issue

- The Journal Register • Ware River News • Barre Gazette

Tuesday, November 25 at 2 PM for November 28 Issue

- Town Reminder • The Holyoke Sun • Chicopee Register

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GUEST COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



Consider the 'wearing out' factor while deciding when to claim Social Security

Dear Rusty:

Enjoyed your recent article on claiming SS benefits.

I feel, however, any decision making should also include what I call the "wearing out" factor. Yes, financial need, health and longevity are definite criteria for a decision. The inevitable problem, I just turned 83, is the speed at which many of us descend down the back side of that hill after we hit around age 65.

Yes, one might live to 85-90 but as you age after 65, many physical limitations begin to appear. Only then does one realize their earlier retirement decision, waiting to max out SS, might not have been honestly evaluated to the extent needed.

I speak from experience: after having reached 60 in excellent health, I took early retirement from work, then Social Security at 62 and glad I did so. I figure the degree of slope on the backside of that "hill" will increase with age (it did quickly for me), so one best start enjoying a retirement life as soon as financially possible.

Signed:
Glad I claimed at 62

Dear Glad I Claimed at 62:

Thank you very much for your excellent perspective on the "wearing out" factor. And please know that I wholeheartedly concur with your opinion that waiting for a higher Social Security benefit is not always the most prudent choice. For perspective, however, we have found that far too many people claim Social Security as soon as they are eligible at 62 simply because "it is there," without fully analyzing whether that is the best option considering their personal circumstances.

You are correct, enjoying your retirement life while you are still physically able is a valid consideration. And that is why we always suggest that evaluating both your financial needs as well as your health and life expectancy is important.

Fulfilling one's "bucket list" is, indeed, an important consideration

and if claiming Social Security at age 62, after evaluating all factors, enables one to do that, then that is exactly the right choice. It obviously was for you.

Age does, indeed, tend to slow us down, so if taking the SS money early means being able to enjoy life while you still can, then that is a good decision. But having more money as you age can also make your "golden years" a lot more comfortable.

As we have recently witnessed, inflation has an insidious way of reducing our financial comfort in retirement. Despite having a retirement pension from your primary working career, imagine how another 25% in your monthly Social Security payment, had you claimed at full retirement age instead of age 62, would help make your senior years more comfortable.

The fact is that no one can predict how long they will live nor whether they will do so in good health. All we can do is evaluate all our options under varying circumstances and make our claiming decision based on that analysis. And that is precisely what we advocate for at the AMAC Foundation's Social Security Service. In no way did I intend to say that claiming at 62 was never the right choice; only that everyone should look at their complete personal circumstances when deciding when to.

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.

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.

OPINION



GUEST COLUMN

A healthy orchard begins in the planning phase

It was a lot of fun to take part in a "meeting of the minds" this past week, where we were discussing key maintenance tasks in the young orchard at Old Sturbridge Village.

I left the meeting inspired for my own young orchard, and with renewed interest in heirloom apples altogether.

I must make a trip to Cold Spring Orchard to get some Caville Blanc for the Thanksgiving pies before they are all gone! They are surely the best pie apples, to me at least!

Perhaps indulging in your favorite apple varieties have inspired you to consid-

er a home orchard as part of your landscape. If so, this column, straight from the archives, is for you. Enjoy the re-visit, as you ask yourself some important questions. We all know that the key to successful home apple orchards appears to be forethought. Purchasing fruit trees should not be an "impulse buy."

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



What variety do you want to grow? While I like

heirlooms, you may prefer some of the newer, disease resistant types.

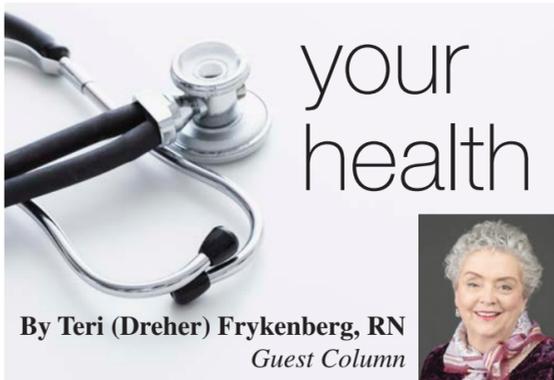
Or maybe you want apples that span the seasons, say Paula Red to start, Honey Crisp for mid-stream and Gold Rush to finish it off. Perhaps you'd like to make cider or bake lots of pies.

There are apples that are specifically suited to how you'd like to use them. My favorite place to buy trees by mail order is through Fedco in Maine. Call 207-426-0090 or log on to fedcoseeds.com/ trees to request their "Trees" catalog.

You will glean lots of useful information within the pages of this catalog. I am

GARDEN, page 5

Are you a complex patient?



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

With more people living longer, it's becoming likelier than an individual will be dealing with more than one chronic health condition, such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, any number of autoimmune disorders (such as lupus) – the list is practically endless.

Your doctors – you probably have more than one – may not tell you to your face that you are "complex" or "complicated," so how do you know if you are? What are the possible implications of complexity, and what can you do about it?

Here are some typical characteristics of complex patients, in addition to having multiple health conditions:

- You take multiple medications.

- You have a lot of health-care providers, including specialists.

- You are in the hospital frequently.

- You struggle to manage your own health care because of its complexity.

- You lack the family or social network you need to manage your health care.

Health-care providers are seeing more patients with complex conditions than ever, but there's little consensus among doctors about how to deal with them. Aside from the characteristics I listed above, patient complexity is aggravated by a number of other factors.

- Our health care and social care systems are fragmented, and the gaps are continuously growing.

- The scope of individ-

uals' needs are constantly growing.

- More patients are living alone, as family and community connections weaken.

- There is a global shortage of caregivers in the workforce.

Researchers have also noted the impact of socioeconomic factors, such as lack of nutrition, poverty and access to care.

"All of this poses great challenges and the need for a paradigm change in proposing possible solutions and interventions," three European researchers wrote in 2023. "We have to invest, mobilize and implement harm reduction interventions in the care of complex patients."

Easier said than done, obviously.

One positive I'm seeing is the emergence of patient-centered care as a pathway to better health outcomes. Using a patient-centered assessment lets providers understand not only a patient's physical health, but also their mental health, lifestyle, behaviors, social factors (education, employment) and ability to understand their symptoms and treatments.

As a patient advocate, I have to take all of these factors into consideration when working with a client and

HEALTH, page 5

Country Journal TEAM



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@ Country Journal



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

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



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@ Country Journal

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Country Journal welcomes Election letters to the editor

The Country Journal welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Country Journal, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to countryjournal@turley.com.

Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by **noon Friday** to be considered for the following Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the

newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's

Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Country Journal.

OPINION

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Milkweed floss collection helped wars effort

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Have you been out walking and thinking to yourself, get down a few pounds before the holiday season.

How is that for smart thinking? Then you must have noticed the milkweed pods gushing their fluff, aka launching the milkweed floss. That floss carries the seeds for future milkweed plants that must catch the wind and be dispersed.

So, big deal huh. It was a big deal in 1942 when sailors and soldiers fighting WWII needed life jackets. Life preservers were made from a silky fiber from the fruit of the kapok tree that grew in Indonesia. Japan occupied that region and cut off the kapok supply chain. So U.S. Government scientists went to work looking for a kapok substitute. Milkweed floss has a smooth, hollow fiber that makes it difficult to spin, eliminating it as a sewing fiber.

However it makes up for this problem in buoyancy, as it proved to be six times more buoyant than cork. It is also water repellent. So it was deemed just the ticket for filling life preservers. Immediately a campaign was created to have the public collect milkweed pods.

Children were encouraged to pick ripe milkweed pods. They were given gunny sacks to collect pods that were then slung over

a fence to dry. Slogans like, "Two Bags Save One Life," "Don't Let Our Soldiers Sink" and "Collect Milkweed" posters were prominently displayed.

Rural stores and small businesses would be collection points for the bags of pods. Children would be paid 15 to 20 cents for each full bag of pods they picked. It took two 20 lb. bags of milkweed pods to make one life preserver.

A former lumber company in Petoskey, Michigan was appropriated by the government in 1942 to process the pods. The bagged pods passed through a dryer at a rate of 1,000 bags per hour, then lifted and emptied into a hopper and gently crushed to free the floss which was collected in a bagging chamber while the pods and seeds fell through a grate into collection bins below. It was estimated that children had picked over 2.5 million pounds of milkweed by the end of the war, making some 100,000 life jackets for the freedom fighters.

You know those children were proud to help the war effort. Now there is one more remarkable trait to milkweed pods. The leaves of the milkweed plant are the only food that nourish monarch caterpillars. You know those caterpillars that turn into beautiful stained glass like butterflies.

Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on the milkweed plant for just that purpose.



This milkweed plant is about to flower. Tiny, pink blossoms are about to open.

Turley Publications photos by Deborah Daniels



Milkweed floss grows in the fields of Chester and Huntington.



These milkweeds seeds are ready to be carried by the wind to grow more milkweed plants.

Monarch butterflies are the only butterflies that migrate south every fall to hibernate in Texas and Mexico for the winter. It is estimated they fly about 50 miles per day using the sun as their compass. It is only the fourth generation of monarch butterfly that has to make the journey south to hibernate. The previous three generations live and complete their life cycle over one summer. A butterfly only lives two-six weeks. The butterflies that are born in late August are the chosen ones, who will fly 3,000 miles south to continue the species. How is that for a miracle? Celebrate our Veterans and your local milkweed plants.



Boys picking milkweed pods in Dane County, Wisconsin circa 1943, taken from Wikipedia.

Submitted photo

GARDEN

thrilled to know that they are grafted on site and accustomed to our climate!

How tall to you want your trees to get? Apple trees are available in dwarf, semi-dwarf and standard size.

Their ultimate size is determined mostly by the rootstock onto which the named variety is grafted.

Each has their pros and cons. Dwarf trees can generally be maintained without a ladder. They come into bearing sooner but because of their size produce fewer apples than larger trees.

Staking and irrigation

are often necessary, because of limited root systems. They can be planted relatively close together (six-eight feet) and are generally short-lived.

Semi-dwarf trees are midsized, bear well and are most productive for two or three decades. They are usually spaced 12-14 feet apart from one another.

Standard, or full-size trees are those beauties of our grandparent's era. Extremely hardy, many are still around and might even be bearing fruit! Plan on 18 feet or more between trees, with a mature height of 15-20 feet tall!

Where will you plant them? With the size of the trees determined, you can now figure out how many will fit in the space designated for your home orchard.

The best spot is one that receives six-eight hours of full sun per day.

Deep, well-drained soil is ideal; never plant where you know the water table is high. In my opinion, a few trees positioned close to the house will be maintained better because they are in eye-shot as compared to those placed strategically out in the back-forty. They tend to nag

you as you walk by: "Time to prune!" "Why are those leaves curled?" What is that orange spot?" You get the idea.

Is my soil any good? Fall is a great time to take a soil test.

First, slice a six-inch core of soil from your intended orchard with a stainless steel trowel. Remove surface debris and air dry.

Repeat several times and mix the cores together. Then, measure out a cup of soil to send to the lab. If the locations you plan on planting your apple trees vary consid-

erably, test them separately.

Official directions and an order form are found on <http://soiltest.umass.edu>. The standard soil test is \$20. Mention on the test that you are growing apples and pH and fertilizer recommendations will be specific to that crop.

You can do something this fall to make planting easier next spring. Mark out where your trees are to go and dump a generous amount of compost on top of the grass in a circle three feet in diameter. This will start to break down the sod and get

the microbes in the soil working.

With the planning part behind you, it will be a lot of fun to await the arrival of your trees come springtime.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

HEALTH

communicating with their care team. Even the smallest problem in any of these dimensions can dramatically worsen a patient's health outcome.

But patient advocates and health-care providers cannot do the job by themselves. If you fall within the definition of "a complex patient," it's important for you to take the bull by the horns and participate in your own health care to the best of your ability. The same goes for your loved ones, your primary care provider and caregivers.

This is not easy in our fragmented health-care world. Still, there are actions a complex patient can take to help themselves and (one hopes) improve their health outcomes.

1. Coordinating care. Each health-care provider has to know what the others are diagnosing, treating and prescribing. It's likely that one or more of your providers is accessible through a patient portal that also con-

tains test results, notes and electronic health records.

Will they have time to read everything? Maybe not, but you should, so you can convey your understanding of what other doctors are saying. This is where medically-trained patient advocates provide a valuable service, by reviewing the records and then conveying that information to doctors in medical terminology.

2. Being honest. As humans who want to appear competent and in charge of our lives, we sometimes hesitate to tell our providers everything that's going on. Maybe there's an emerging mental health issue. Maybe you're taking a drug that hasn't been prescribed. Maybe there's been a break-up in a marriage. Maybe you're drinking more. All of these things can impact your well-being, and your doctor needs to know about them.

3. Taking notes. I've said it before and I'll say it again. Take someone with you to medical appointments and

have them take notes, or even keep a journal yourself. You can keep track not only of doctor discussions, but also note your mental, emotional and physical symptoms on a daily basis to share with your provider.

If you are a "complex patient," or you know someone who is, recognize that fact and take a stronger hand in your care. You may be helping yourself or a loved one live their best life.

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

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Send Us Your Photos!

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**Pioneer Valley
Assembly of God**

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

Hilltown Community Church

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

**First Congregational Church
of Williamsburg**

Rev. Jack Kraaz
4 North Main St., Williamsburg, MA 01096
413-268-7557
burgychurch@gmail.com • burgychurch.org
Facebook: First Congregational Church of
Williamsburg
YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyH1EA-fduamqHYeekxw5w
Office Hours: Tues. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 12 noon
Days and Hours of Services: Sun. at 10 a.m.

Holy Family Parish

Rev. Ronald F. Sadlowski, known as Fr. Ron
5 Main St., Russell, MA 01071
413-862-4418
Office Hours: No set times.
Please call, leave a voice message or
email: holyfamilyrussell.org
parish@holyfamilyrussell.org
Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m.
Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. & 11 a.m.

CHURCH
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Community
Church

**Pioneer Valley Mennonite
Fellowship**

Deacon Jerald Reinford
400 Huntington Rd.
Russell, MA 01071
(413) 297-6037
Sunday worship at 10am
Visitors appreciated.

**First Congregational Church
of Blandford**

Pastor Ciprian Droma
91 Main St.
Blandford, MA 01008
413-848-2052
Sunday service 10 a.m.

BLANDFORD

Residents have busy first weekend in December

BLANDFORD – The first weekend in December promises to be one of Blandford’s busiest times. First is the Volunteer Firefighters Association’s annual Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, Dec. 6 at the Town Hall from 8:30-11:30 a.m., with a visit from Santa.

Then, after breakfast, a

short walk up Main Street will take visitors to the annual Craft Fair held at the Historical Society. Jess Ripley and Becky Greene are organizing the Craft Fair which will run from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Pet animals can have their photos taken with Santa at the Blandford Animal Hospital from 10

a.m.-1 p.m. At the Porter Memorial Library drop in between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to decorate a giant gingerbread cookie, go on a special scavenger hunt and hear a special story. And on Sunday, Dec. 7 the annual Christmas Tree lighting with caroling, cookies and cocoa at 5 p.m. at the Historical Society.

Blandford Country Store offers free soup on Wednesdays

BLANDFORD – During this time of universal food insecurity, the Blandford Country Store will provide fresh hot soup

to any Blandford resident every Wednesday, which started Nov. 12 and will continue through Wednesday, Dec. 10.

Soup will be available to eat in the store or take out during the hours of 10 a.m.-3 p.m. There will be no charge.

Sarah Malanson appointed to town’s Finance Committee

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

BLANDFORD – The Appointing Committee met last Monday, Nov. 3, during the Select Board meeting to appoint a new member of the Finance Committee.

Sarah Malanson will serve a three-year term on Finance through 2028. The Appointing Committee consisted of the Select Board, Moderator and Town Clerk.

Malanson holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Western New England University where she was also an adjunct instructor for Computer Science and Business Information Systems and was their Senior Manger Customer Support and Office

of Information Technology Operations.

She has been teaching programming and web development at Pathfinder Technical High School in Palmer since 2018 and has several years of involvement with technology education.

She was honored in June to receive the Harold Grinspoon Excellence in Teaching Award at a ceremony at the Log Cabin in Holyoke on May 13. This is awarded to one teacher once every three years at Pathfinder.

At the meeting, Malanson said she had heard



Sarah Malanson

so much about the need for a quorum on the Finance Committee and the need for people in town to be involved, she thought she would “step up and give it a shot. And I know Debbie Brodie and I know she needs help.”

There is still a need for more people to serve on Finance Committee and anyone interested should contact Brodie or Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera.

Malanson is the daughter of Jim and Sue Webster of Herrick Road. She and her husband John live on Main Street.

Blandford Select Board appoints Michaela Smith as an assessor

BLANDFORD – Michaela Smith has only been the administrative assistant to the Board of Assessors for two months and now she has been appointed to that board.

The Select Board appointed her as an assessor at the Monday, Nov. 3 meeting.

She is a fourth year accounting student at



Michaela Smith

B a y p a t h University and will graduate in the fall of 2026.

Although she plans to take the Certified Public Accountant exam on graduation, she is not interested in that field. “I

just like finance,” she said, and added that she is “much more interested in community” and is really excited

about all the new growth in town.

“There’s a lot of good happening in town,” she said. She is looking forward to serving the town as an assessor and is “excited to bring some organization to that department. I bring fresh eyes.”

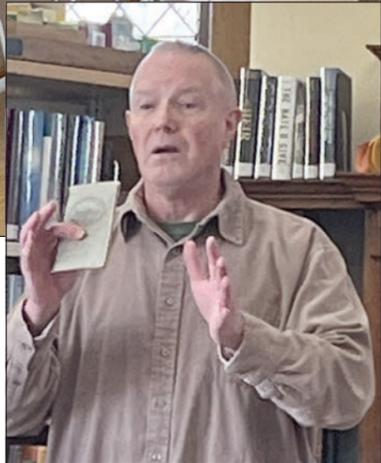
She is already taking the Assessing Class 101 on line through the Department of Revenue. She and her husband Geoffrey and their children live on Russell Stage Road.

JOHN CRANE SPEAKS ABOUT GRANDFATHER’S WAR JOURNAL



John Crane speaks about Thomas Crane, his grandfather, who served in the United State Army in WWI. He referred frequently to the table of memorabilia. Right, Crane holds the actual copy of his grandfather’s WWI journal, which he transcribed to printed format in the 1980s.

Turley Publications Photos by Mary Kronholm



The entrance decorations for the Saturday, Nov. 8 Veterans dinner as well as the table centerpieces were by Maggie and Jan Zajko.

Submitted photo



Lorrie Bean, Bert Pease, Pam and Paul Dirschka, Joe and Kelly Paul and Fred Benda.



Lucia Sullivan, Mary Burns, Sue Racine, Ron Racine and Jim Burns.



Volunteering with the rest of her family, Maureen Boomsma, checks on the carrots.

Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm

WATER DEPT

the Select Board. The fifth change order deals with upgrading the plant’s electrical system in order to assure safe working conditions and proper circuitry for equipment on site by including safety

emergency shut-off switches throughout the plant. This will be added to the Water Department’s Capital Plan request. According to Water Commissioner Brad Curry, there are grants available for funding in the future.

Also discussed was the construction of a new water holding tank on North Street. This will provide adequate water and water pressure in case of a fire emergency and will regulate pressure throughout the sys-

tem. Wright-Pierce representatives attending were Senior Project Manager Professional Engineer James Papadimitriou, Professional Engineer Michael McManus and participating remote-

ly Professional Engineer Mariusz Jedrychowski. Water Commissioners Brad Curry and Peter Thayer attended as well.

Select Board member Jackie Coury also participated remotely.



Wright-Pierce PE Michael McManus, Finance Committee Chair Deb Brodie, Assessor David Hopson, Water Department Administrative Assistant Jasmine Ortega and Water Commissioner Peter Thayer.

Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm



Water Commissioner Brad Curry and Wright-Pierce Senior Project Engineer PE James Papadimitriou.

from page 1

DINNER from page 1

COA Director Margit Mikuski said, “The success of this annual event really depends on all the volunteers. Many hands make light work.”

Our advertisers make this publication possible.
Let them know you saw their ad in the **Country Journal**

OTIS

COA list events and schedule

OTIS – Council on Aging Director Karen Yvon announced the upcoming December schedule for the Council on Aging.

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

Regular COA events will continue on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the month. The center is open from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Exercise class for strength and balance is every Monday

at 10:30 a.m.

Haircuts will be available on Monday, Dec. 1. People may call the COA at 413-269-0100 for an appointment.

Food Pantry is available every Wednesday from 9-11 a.m. Items include fresh vegetables, fruit and non-perishable items.

Tri-town health will conduct a blood pressure clinic on Wednesday, Dec. 3 at 9:30 a.m. The foot nurse will be available Wednesday, Dec. 10 from 9 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.; people may call 413-269-0100 for an appointment.

Holiday potluck is set for Wednesday, Dec. 17 at noon. Solar Eclipse will perform holiday music. Attendees should bring a dish to share.

A brown bag available for pick up on Friday, Dec. 19 from 11 a.m. to noon. Chair Yoga is every Thursday at 10 a.m. and Mat Yogo is every Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Because the trip to Lancaster, Pennsylvania was so successful this year, the COA is planning another trip May 12 to 14, 2026 to see the Biblical story of Joshua performed. For more information about any of the events, people may call Kendra Rybacki or Director Karen Yvon at 413-269-0100, extension 5 for more information.

Also, If anyone needs a blood pressure cuff, they may call COA at 413-269-0100. Yvon said there are some available for people that need to check their blood pressure.

Otis church to hold harvest supper

OTIS The First Congregational Church of Otis, 46 North Main Road, will be hosting a community Harvest Supper on Saturday, Nov 15 from 5-7 p.m. in the fellowship hall of the church. Dinner will include

turkey and all the fixings, with gluten-free options available. The cost is by donation. People may email any questions to FirstCongChurchofOtis@gmail.com.

The First Congregational

Church of Otis is an independent non-denominational church, pastored by Nelson Crapser, a Baptistical Evangelical. Sunday services are 10:30 a.m. with free lunch served in the fellowship hall after the service.

PITTSFIELD

Hilltown Hikers host group hike Nov. 22

PITTSFIELD – The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers will host a group hike at Pittsfield State Forest to Twin Ponds and Cranberry Pond, both the Taconic Skyline and Taconic Crest trails, on Saturday, Nov. 22 at 10 a.m.

This is a moderate 3.5 mile loop with 800 feet of elevation. People will the beauty of Mount Lebanon, Pittsfield and Hancock on the ridge line and see views of Doll mountain across the ponds. They will learn about the Shaker history here including their relation to twin ponds. The Taconic Skyline Trail was originally blazed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps as a hiking trail, 25 miles long, from Massachusetts

Route 41 in Richmond to the northern end of Brodie Mountain in Williamstown.

The Taconic Crest Trail is a 37 mile trail in the Taconic Mountains. Much of the route has been conserved as state forest, conservation easement, or forest preserve. Participants will discover hidden history here as they hike through hardwoods and metamorphic rock. They will hike rain or shine.

Registration is required. Participants should register per car load by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com under the events tab. Maps and bottled water are provided.

Well behaved dogs allowed. The event is volunteer lead. Suggested donation is \$15. More details are

available by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com.

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

People who want to hike every weekend year-round should consider becoming a Hilltown Hiker member. They can sign up by visiting www.HilltownHikers.com under the membership tab.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Tees, hoodies, hats, patches and bags will be for sale by donation at the event. People may see all their events, maps, blog and photos by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com.

CHESTER



Maureen Suriner reads a story about fall fun entitled "Jump! Jump! Jump! Stacy" by Candelaria Silva. Submitted photo

Library to hold open house Nov. 15

CHESTER – On Saturday Nov. 15 from 9 a.m.-1 pm., Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St., will be welcoming the community for an open house.

The open house will celebrate new building updates and participants will learn

about all of the many resources the library has to offer. The museum will be open, featuring historic artifacts and crystals from around the world.

John Marge, a local history and geology enthusiast will be available from 10 a.m.-noon to answer questions. Events will include a

book sale and light refreshments. Photographer, Erin Pierce, from Inspired Life by Erin, will be taking personal/family portraits free of charge and participants will receive digital images. People should call the library at 413-354-7808 to sign up for their photo time.

ASSEMBLY

from page 1

an explanation of the importance of upholding the principles of our constitution and its four great freedoms of speech, religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

Gazda then reminded students that they have a day off from school, which was met by rapturous applause from the students. He went on to explain that on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of the year in 1918, World War I ended. One year later, the country celebrated its first holiday, originally called Armistice Day, to honor the people, who fought in that war.

The former social studies teacher went on to explain that Congress declared Armistice Day as an official national holiday in 1938. In 1954, the holiday's name changed to Veterans Day in appreciation for the men and women who served, "to keep us safe, and

defend our values and way of life."

Fifth grade teacher Anne Marie MacDonald then led her students to the front of the Chester gymnasium. Students read from essays they had written explaining why they are glad to celebrate Veterans Day, why they appreciate veterans and why veterans deserve to be honored.

Local members of the American Legion Ruth Kennedy, who served in the U.S. Air Force and Jim Cortis, U.S. Navy, were called to the microphone, where Kennedy read the picture book "Rolling Thunder" by Kate Messner, illustrated by Greg Ruth. Kennedy explained that the book tells the story of the annual motorcycle ride to Washington D.C. to keep the memory of Missing in Action and Prisoners of War alive.

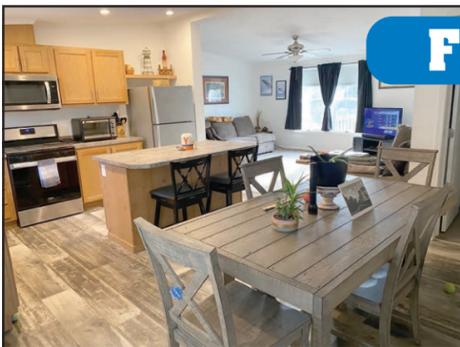
A very moving tribute

followed that showcased photos of staff and student family members, who served in the armed forces-including Dr. Gazda's grandfather.

Kennedy and Cortis returned and presented Gazda with pins from the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy, before thanking everyone for attending. "I want to thank you all for letting us come here. The letters were fantastic." Jim Cortis said, adding, "If you see a veteran, thank them for their service."

Everyone stood as Gazda surprised those assembled by playing the National Anthem on his saxophone. Students then handed out letters to those veterans who were present.

"Thank you for coming today," the principal said, concluding the assembly. "Thank you for your service. Boys and girls, when you have Tuesday off, think of what it is for."



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News, photo publication policy

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

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

Deadline is Friday at NOON.





Turley Publications, Inc.



Logan Distler
September 22, 2024
Parents: Daniel & Lisa Distler, Brimfield
Grandparents: Christopher & Michele Mues, Warren
Carole & the late Bruce Distler, Long Island, NY

Turley Publications would like to help you show off the newest member of your family this Christmas, FOR FREE!

Mail to:
Turley Publications
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069
Attn: Jamie Joslyn
Include a self addressed/ stamped envelope if you would like the picture returned or email photo to: jamie@turley.com with subject line: BABY'S FIRST.
This offer is available to all babies born in 2025.
Pictures will be published the week of December 23-26, 2025.

Baby's Name: _____
Birthdate: _____
Parents' Names: _____
Parents' Town of Residence: _____
Grandparents' Names & Town of Residence: _____
Telephone #: (not to be printed - for office use only) _____

Please check the newspaper you would like your announcement to appear.

<input type="checkbox"/> Agawam Advertiser News	<input type="checkbox"/> Quaboag Current
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<input type="checkbox"/> Chicopee Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Sentinel
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<input type="checkbox"/> The Holyoke Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> Ware River News
<input type="checkbox"/> Journal Register	<input type="checkbox"/> The Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Deadline for photos and forms is Friday, December 12, 2025

WORTHINGTON

Override questions fail

WORTHINGTON – On Saturday, Nov. 8, 335 of the 1,038 registered went to the polls to vote on two override questions.

On question 1A, 127 voters said yes and 207 no to assess an additional \$195,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of operating the municipal government and

public schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025.

On question 1B, 92 voters said yes and 239 no to assess an additional \$290,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of operating the municipal government and public schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025.

Gardeners host wreath making workshop

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Gardeners are hosting their annual wreath making workshop on Sunday, Nov. 30 at 1 p.m. at the Worthington Town Hall.

This is a fundraiser for the Gardeners. All supplies will be provided including fresh greenery, pine cones, berries, wreath frame, florist wire and ribbons to make a beautiful two-sided wreath. Instructions

and guidance are provided. Participants should bring their own clippers and scissors.

Cost is \$30 per wreath frame. Cider and snacks will be served.

The event will be inside and numbers are limited. Reservations are required to insure a space and greenery. They should RSVP to Elodi McBride 413-238-4466 by Monday, Nov. 24.

COA to serve meal Nov. 20

WORTHINGTON – The Council on Aging menu on Thursday, Nov. 20 from noon-1 p.m. at the Town Hall will be a choice of stuffed shells or meat pie with broccoli, butternut squash, chocolate cookie and milk.

To reserve a meal, people may call or text 413-238-1999 by Sunday, Nov. 16 and tell them their name, number of meals and the name of the person also receiving the meal and their meal choice. New enrollee forms can be downloaded from the town

website and are also available at the Town Hall bulletin board and the COA bulletin board at Corners Grocery. People can also fill one out when they come to pick up.

People should bring a bag with them to carry their meals to the car. If people have any questions, they may call Phyllis Dassatti at 413-238-5962 or email The Worthington COA. The meals are sponsored by the Worthington Council on Aging and Highland Valley Elder Services.

Hilltown Holiday Help accepting applications

WORTHINGTON – For more than twenty five 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 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 Programs staff from now through Friday, Nov. 21 via telephone, email or by stopping by Play to Learn groups, the Gateway School-Based Health Center in Huntington or the Hilltown Community Health Centers located in Worthington. Families with children from newborns through the age of twelve, may be eligible. Gifts will be distributed Wednesday, Dec. 10, through contactless curbside pickup or delivery. People may call 413-667-2203 for more information.

Donors should arrange

for a drop off time with staff or send monetary donations via U.S. 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 HCHC(Hilltown Community Health Centers) with Holiday Help in the memo. People may visit their website to send electronic donations: Hilltown Holiday Help - Hilltown Community Health Center at <https://www.hchcweb.org/hilltown-holiday-help/>. They should put "Holiday Help" in comment line to distinguish from other program

donations.

People may contribute to the Gateway High National Honor Society's and Huntington Fire Department's fundraising boot drive in Huntington on Saturday, Nov. 15 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. or consider "adopting a family," donating money or volunteering to deliver, a great opportunity to channel the inner Santa.

People interested in donating or have questions, they may call Kate McKenney at 413-299-5056 or email kmckenney@hchcweb.org or Kim call at 413-685-3500 or email ksavery@hchcweb.org.

Food drive benefits Hilltown Food Pantry

WORTHINGTON – A food drive to benefit the Hilltown Food Pantry will be held Saturday, Nov. 15 at the Worthington Highway Garage on Huntington Road (Route 112) from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

The event is sponsored by Indivisible Hilltowns, a local volunteer community organization. The pantry is

located in Goshen and serves 11 surrounding Hilltowns. The holidays are coming and groceries are a costly part of family budgets.

A number of local residents are facing uncertainty due to the loss of SNAP

benefits. In Worthington alone 11.9% of residents use SNAP benefits. Other town SNAP percentages include: Huntington 17.5%, Cummington 10.9%, Goshen 5.6% and Chesterfield 6.6%.

Pantry Director Julie Lemieux said the following items are in demand at the local pantry: nuts, trail mix, canned ravioli, baked beans, cup of noodles/instant noodles, women's sanitary pads, dog/cat

food creamed corn, tea/hot chocolate/coffee, stuffing mix and boxed cake/cookie/brownie mix.

Other shelf-stable foods are also welcome. People should make sure the donations are unopened and not expired. Monetary donations are also accepted. Checks should be made out to Northampton Survival Center with "Hilltown Pantry" in the memo line. Supermarket gift cards are also useful.

For more information about the drive and to volunteer to help on the day of the drive, people may email indivisiblehilltowns@gmail.com.

For more information about the Hilltown Pantry, they may call 413-268-7578 on Wednesday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



EASTHAMPTON

bankESB supports West Springfield Boys and Girls Club

EASTHAMPTON – bankESB announces its continued support for the West Springfield Boys and Girls Club as a \$6,400 Season Ticket Holder Sponsor.

This sponsorship helps provide critical funding for youth programs that empower and inspire local children to reach their full potential. In addition to this support, Michael Oleksak, senior vice president of Commercial Lending at bankESB, has been named the Chairman of the Board for the West Springfield Boys and Girls Club. Oleksak has been an active member of the board, bringing leadership, community focus and deep commitment to youth development.

"I am deeply honored



Shown are Victoria Larriva, assistant development coordinator, West Springfield Boys and Girls Club; Sarah Calabrese, resource and philanthropy director, West Springfield Boys and Girls Club; Michael Oleksak, senior vice president, commercial lending team lead, bankESB and Dan D'Angelo, executive director, West Springfield Boys and Girls Club. Submitted photo

to take on this role with the Boys and Girls Club," said Oleksak. "I've seen firsthand the positive impact this organization has on our community and I look forward to working with my fellow board members, staff, and supporters to expand opportunities for the youth of West Springfield."

He added, "bankESB is honored to support the Boys and Girls Club, an organization that plays such an important role in the lives of young people in our community."

The West Springfield Boys and Girls Club provides a safe and nurturing environment for children and teens, offering programs in academics, athletics, the arts, and leadership

development. Contributions from sponsors like bankESB help ensure continued access to these impactful programs.

This contribution is part of bankESB's community giving initiative, The Giving Tree, which supports local organizations dedicated to helping our neighbors grow and thrive.

For more information about the West Springfield Boys and Girls Club, people may visit www.wsbgclub.org.

Founded in 1869 as Easthampton Savings Bank, bankESB is headquartered in Easthampton. In 2024 alone, The Giving Tree donated nearly \$515,000 and over the past decade has donated \$4 million.

FLORENCE

Florence Bank and employees donate to United Way charity

FLORENCE – The Florence Bank announces a gift of \$73,520 to the United Way of the Franklin and Hampshire Region.

Florence Bank provided direct support of \$50,000 and its team members pledged an additional \$23,520 as part of the bank's annual workplace campaign. The combined gift will be used to support the annual Diaper Drive, food insecurity efforts, the Ski United event and several event sponsorships.

"Once again, our team members stepped up and showed how much they care about helping their fellow neighbors," said Matt Garrity, president and CEO of Florence Bank. "I'm humbled by their generosity and proud

of their dedication to help those less fortunate."

In addition to financial support, Florence Bank will help lead the United Way's 2026 Annual Campaign, which kicked off on Oct. 9. Garrity will serve as campaign co-chair along with Eric Mills, vice president of sales and marketing at Mayhew Tools in Turners Falls.

"I'm excited to be out in the community, supporting the United Way and asking organizations and individuals to join us in supporting such a great organization," Garrity said. "The need in the community is real, and supporting our neighbors is integral to Florence Bank's mission, vision and values."

Holly Martineau, United

Way's director of development, said the financial goal is to increase giving as much over the \$1.2 million raised in 2025 as possible, and to encourage organizations and individuals to Double Down, doubling their gifts from last year.

"Our efforts this year are to have as many people double down as possible," Martineau added. "We're trying to do as much as we can as an organization to support our partners in the community who do so much for individuals in need. Our partners are being asked to do so much more with much less. The social safety net is diminishing every day."

Geoff Naunheim, executive director of United Way, said he hopes that Florence

Bank's commitment will encourage other organizations and individuals to consider increasing or doubling their pledges.

"It's early in the campaign, but we're already seeing an increase in employee giving," said Naunheim. "People know it's a hard time. They're helping us support a healthier, more resilient community."

Florence Bank has a long history of supporting United Way, and these current team members are taking part in various efforts: Christina "Chris" Mullen, loan servicing manager / assistant vice president, and Ryan Hess, commercial team leader / vice president, are United Way Campaign Committee

members, and Mullen also writes 50 to 100 thank you letters to donors each month on behalf of United Way; Jenna Rahilly, chief human resources and strategy officer / senior vice president, sits on the Community Investment Committee; and Kim Baker, commercial loan operations and compliance specialist / vice president, helped found Ski United.

Martineau said, "The partnership with Florence Bank is invaluable to us. It's one of our greatest gifts in the community. They're involved with us in so many different ways. Every nonprofit in the Valley would say they feel supported by Florence Bank, and we are so grateful that we are able to

partner in this way."

To donate through the website, click Donate on the Home page or mail a check to P.O. Box 123, Northampton, MA 01061; make checks payable to United Way of the Franklin and Hampshire Region.

Pledges made will be payable by June 30, 2026.

Florence Bank is a mutual savings bank chartered in 1873. Currently, the bank serves the Pioneer Valley through 12 full-service branch locations in Florence, Northampton, Easthampton, Williamsburg, Amherst, Hadley, Belchertown, Granby, Chicopee, West Springfield and Springfield. A Holyoke branch will open in the spring of 2026.

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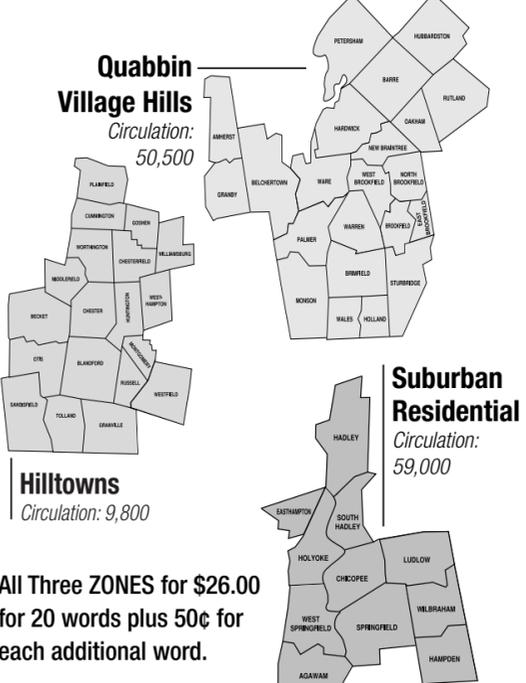
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LEE

Towns receive SRF grants

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust's Board of Trustees approved \$139,004,264 in new low-interest loans and grants at its meeting on Nov. 5.

Lee received \$105,424 and Lenox received \$146,241 for asset management planning grants. The Trust, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection 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.

For more information on our different loan programs, people may visit the SRF Programs page at <https://www.mass.gov/srf-programs> and for more information on the Loan Forgiveness Program, they may visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/the-disadvantaged-community-loan-forgiveness-program>. For information on how to apply for an SRF loan, people may visit MassDEP's website at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/state-revolving-fund-applications-forms>.

Since its establishment in 1989, the Trust has loaned nearly \$9.6 billion to improve and maintain the quality of water in the Commonwealth. An estimated 97% of Massachusetts' residents have benefited from the financial assistance of the Trust.

NORTHAMPTON

Library to show 'Changing Main Street'

NORTHAMPTON – Main Street in Northampton is an iconic New England streetscape and the heart of the city.

People may explore Northampton's changing Main Street with documentary filmmaker and photographer Stan Sherer and Forbes Library's local history specialist, Dylan Gaffney at Forbes Library, 20 West St., on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. "Changing Main Street" features a screening of Sherer's "The Gilded Cage: Northampton's Last Water Powered Elevator," followed by an illustrated talk by Dylan Gaffney, "The Evolution of Main Street, 1887-1987" with rare photographs from the library's special collections. This event is free and open to the public.

In the late 1800s, Northampton's Freemasons borrowed \$110,000 to construct the Masonic Block on Lower Main Street, 25 Main St. This four-story building, which opened in 1898, featured an elevator powered by Northampton city water pressure. Although hydraulic elevators weren't unusual at the time, this was no ordinary elevator. The walls and ceiling were made of oak and featured ornately carved panels, with stained glass windows at the top. The stairway wound its way around the open hoist way, which was framed by mesh wire. Until it was decommissioned in 2017, the operator-run elevator was in service Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and the elevator operators were an important part of the

social fabric of the building from the start.

In his documentary, *The Gilded Cage: Northampton's Last Water Powered-Elevator*, Stan Sherer shows us through a series of interviews what the historic elevator and its staff meant to the people in the building and the city of Northampton. Now, we take elevators for granted, yet they have literally transformed our world. If not for Elisha Otis's invention of elevator safety brakes in 1852, the cities of the world wouldn't have developed vertically. Before Otis, five stories were the limit; by the early 1900s, buildings were rising 20, 30, 40 stories and more. The 47-story Singer Building in New York City, completed in 1908, was the tallest building in the world

at the time. The Gilded Cage brings this lost history to life, showing how the safety brake works, how a hydraulic system pushes an elevator, how the elevator counter-weight works, and much more.

Local history specialist Dylan Gaffney will present an illustrated talk about the evolution of Main Street, Northampton from 1887-1987. "I chose this time period because it is well documented in our photo archives and represents a century of both constant change and lasting memories for those who lived, worked, shopped, and visited downtown," said Gaffney. People will learn about the businesses, architecture, economics and cultural changes that have both shaped and been shaped by the unique city center.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

PUBLIC NOTICES

Town of Huntington
Hydrant Flushing Notice

The Town of Huntington Massachusetts Water Department will be flushing fire hydrants beginning Tuesday, November 17, 2025 through Friday, November 25, 2025 between the hours of 9:00 AM- 1:00 PM.

You may see them operating hydrants and valves and notice water running down the street. Although it may appear to waste water, this is an important preventative maintenance activity we undertake to maintain the integrity of the water system and allow us to continue to deliver the highest quality water possible to our customers. The primary purpose of this program is to verify the proper operation of our towns fire hydrants through periodic inspections, flow testing, and preventative maintenance.

Secondarily, a proactive hydrant flushing program is the key to mitigating water quality related aesthetic problems by removing accumulated iron and manganese mineral deposits from the water line. Fire hydrant flushing may cause temporary inconveniences such as a reduction in water pressure and aesthetic issues such as discoloration of the drinking water. Discolored water poses no threat to the public's health, but it will stain laundry and if consumed it may have an unpleasant taste. Residents should be certain all discolored water is out of their home's plumbing and hot water heater prior to laundering clothes or drinking. If you notice discolored water coming from your fixtures, please flush the cold-water side for approximately 5 minutes. Although residents may experience some temporary inconveniences, the flushing program is necessary to maintain a good water supply for both fire-fighting and domestic purposes. Your cooperation with this program is appreciated.

If you experience continued loss of pressure or water discoloration, please contact the town Water Department at 413.512.5207, or email WaterandSewer@HuntingtonMA.us. 11/13/2025

Commonwealth of
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The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampshire Probate and
Family Court

15 Atwood Drive
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Docket No.
HS25P0704EA

Estate of:
Louise M. Hewes
Date of Death: 08/31/2025
CITATION ON PETITION
FOR FORMAL
ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Lisa M. Cintron of Chesterfield, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Lisa M. Cintron of Chesterfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/10/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED
ADMINISTRATION
UNDER THE
MASSACHUSETTS
UNIFORM PROBATE
CODE (MUPC)

A **Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.**

WITNESS, Hon. **Diana S. Velez Harris**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: November 05, 2025

Mark S Ames,
Register of Probate

11/13/2025

NOTICE OF
MORTGAGEE'S
SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Matthew F. Montague and Happy Montague to Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust, said mortgage being dated June 6, 2014, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 11659, Page 145, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, December 9, 2025**, upon the premises described in said mortgage, namely 61 Chesterfield Road, Westhampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

A certain parcel of land in Westhampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, with the improvements thereon, located on the easterly side of Chesterfield Road, and being shown as Lot A on a plan of land entitled, "Plan of Land in Westhampton, Massachusetts Prepared for Peter E. Montague," prepared by Holmberg & Howe, Inc. dated May 17, 2013 and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 229, Page 121, to which plan reference may be made for a more particular description.

Containing 6.50 acres of land, more or less

Being the same premises conveyed to the Mortgagees by deed from Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust, Dated July 2, 2009, recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds immediately prior hereto, and subject to the right of first refusal in said deed.

Said premises will be sold subject to and/or with the benefit of any and all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax title, municipal or other

public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, rights of parties in possession, and existing encumbrances of record created prior to the mortgage, if any there be, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the Deed.

No representations, express or implied, are made with respect to any matter concerning the premises which will be sold "as is".

The successful high bidder will be responsible for paying the Massachusetts State Documentary Tax Stamps, all closing costs and all recording fees.

TERMS OF SALE: The highest bidder in the sale shall be required to deposit cash, bank treasurer's check or certified check in the amount of **TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$25,000.00)** at the time and the place of the sale of the premises to qualify as a bidder (the present holder of the mortgage is exempt from this requirement) to be held by the Mortgagee. The successful bidder will also be required to deposit an additional sum equal to ten percent (10%) of the amount bid less the \$25,000.00 deposit (but no less than \$25,000) with the Mortgagee's auctioneer, Aaron Posnik & Co., Inc., 31 Capital Drive, West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089 or the Mortgagee's attorney as may be directed within five (5) days of the date of the sale to be held by the Mortgagee, and the balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified or bank treasurer's check at the closing which shall occur within thirty (30) days after the date of foreclosure sale, time being of the essence, unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The successful bidder at the sale will also be required to pay a buyer's premium of 5% and shall sign a Memorandum of Terms of Sale containing the above terms at the auction sale.

In the event that the successful bidder at the public auction shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of this Notice of Mortgagee's Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale executed at the public auction, the Mortgagee reserves the right, at its election, to sell the property to the second highest bidder at the public auction provided that Mortgagee, in its discretion, may

require (1) said second highest bidder to deposit the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within three (3) business days after written notice to the second highest bidder of the default of the previous highest bidder, (2) the second highest bidder to execute a Memorandum of Sale, and (3) the closing to occur within twenty (20) days of said written notice, time being of the essence unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The Mortgagee reserves the right to sell any parcel or any portion thereof separately, or in any order that Mortgagee may choose and/or to postpone this sale to a later time or date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the sale and to further postpone any adjourned sale date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the adjourned sale date.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the time and place of the sale.

The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust
Present Holder of said Mortgage

By:
Francis R. Mirkin,
Its Attorney
BACON WILSON, P.C.
33 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
413-781-0560
11/13, 11/20, 11/27/2025

NOTICE OF
PUBLIC HEARING
Town of Worthington
Planning Board

The Worthington Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing regarding a Special Permit application from BWC Wades Stream, LLC / BlueWave Solar for a Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation at 190 Ridge Road. The proposed project overlaps the Water Supply Protection District, therefore requiring a Special Permit.

The Hearing will be held **Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 6:30 PM**, at the Worthington Town Hall. Remote public access will be provided utilizing GoToMeeting virtual software: <https://www.gotomeet.me/Plan->

ingBoard. To attend via phone dial (224) 501-3412; access code: 845-552-877.

The full proposal, including plans, can be reviewed at the Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road, Worthington, between 10 AM and 2 PM, Monday through Friday. Please contact Katrin Kaminsky at (413) 238-5577 x110 or townclerk@worthington-ma.us for more information about reviewing the application. 11/06, 11/13/2025

TOWN OF RUSSELL
MASSACHUSETTS
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION
NOTICE OF PUBLIC
HEARING

The Russell Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act MGL Chapter 131, Section 40 to consider a **Request for Determination of Applicability** filed for work involving the replacement of thirty (30) existing utility poles and the installation of two (2) midspan poles within or near areas subject to protection under the WPA on Blandford Road (Route 23) in Russell, Massachusetts.

The hearing will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 6:00pm at 65 Main Street in Russell, Massachusetts. To view the Request for Determination of Applicability, contact the Conservation Commission at Concom@townofrussell.us.

Any person interested or wishing to be heard should appear at the time and place designated 11/13/2025

TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD
LEGAL NOTICE

A Public Hearing will be held starting at **6:30 PM on Monday, December 8, 2025** in the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Road to consider a Special Permit Application for Hilltown Anonymous Theatre, represented by Erica Tarpenting-Romeo, for a 2-day per year use of the horse barn located on 92 North Road (Assessor's Map 14, parcel 14-25-0), under Use 3.025 Commercial and Non-Profit Recreation Development. Special permit is required by Section 7.2 pages 102-7 of the Chesterfield Zoning Bylaw.

Sarah Hamilton, Acting Chair
Chesterfield Planning Board
11/13, 11/20/2025

Country Journal
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