

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose." – Dr. Seuss

# Country Journal

*Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns*

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

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## HUNTINGTON

# Army Corps begins to remedy landslide

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Those who enjoy running or walking at Littleville Dam in Huntington have been pleased to note recent significant repairs to the pavement leading across the Dam and around a circle at the end. Some years ago, a washout from a dirt road that starts at the circle and leads to the Dayville boat launch in Chester washed a couple of inches of silt onto the pavement. When damp or wet, the silt had been extremely slippery resulting in sliding and, at times, falling in the mud.

Interim Park Manager Keith Goulet was on hand to oversee the work, which included removing debris and resurfacing a significant section of the roadway across the dam. Goulet says the damage was created by a blocked culvert on the dirt road leading to Dayville. While the washout on the dirt road is still evident, there is a contract in place that will allow it to be repaired and prevent further washouts. They are just awaiting the release of funding to continue the project.

While there had been some public speculation that the old dirt road was being allowed to just grow back in, Goulet confirmed that this was not the case. It is important to

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Interim Project Manager Keith Goulet and Park Ranger Marrison Eisnor, who work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Littleville Dam and Knightville Dam, both in Huntington, stand by the Littleville Dam.  
Turley photo by Wendy Long

## HUNTINGTON

# Local Veterans present special assembly for Gateway schools

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Students at Gateway Regional High School, Middle School and Littleville Elementary School attended a special assembly about the significance of Veterans Day, on the Friday, Nov. 8 before the Nov. 11 holiday.

Veterans Ruth Kennedy and Jim Cortis planned the presentations, which included Steven Connor, Director of Central Hampshire Veterans' Services in Northampton visiting the upper schools. Senator John Velis visited students at Gateway's second assembly for middle school students.

Kennedy is a Past Commander of American Legion Post 338 in Southwick and is a former Gateway School Committee member. She welcomed students and explained that she and Cortis had put this together because they felt that Veterans Day is a holiday that kind of gets lost.

Cortis is a member of the VFW and American Legion and is a Navy veteran from the Vietnam era. He and Kennedy co-lead the town of Russell's Memorial Day Program. He gave students the history of Veterans Day in America. Originally called Armistice Day after World War I, it marked the 1918 agreement signed between the World War I allies and Germany that called for the conflict to cease on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower renamed the holiday "Veterans Day." In the 1960s, President Richard Nixon sought to move the holiday to a Monday in November each year, following similar changes to Presidents Day and Memorial Day. Veterans groups strenuously resisted and the holiday kept its Nov. 11 observance.

People aren't always clear about the difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day, they said. Memorial Day honors service members, who died during their military service. Veterans Day honors all service members, living or dead, and regardless of whether or not they served in conflict.

Connor is also a Navy veteran who served in the late 1970s. He now serves as the Director of Central Hampshire Veterans' Services, which covers a number of towns in Western Mass. His agency was created by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 115, which dates

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## MONTGOMERY

# Moose Meadow fire continues to blaze



Massachusetts Air National Guard helicopter scoops water from the Westfield Reservoir to drop on the fire.  
Courtesy photo of Montgomery Firefighter Flechig

On Friday, Nov. 1, one ill-advised campfire near the Westfield Reservoir in Montgomery likely started a blaze that is still ongoing.

"We believe that's how it started as we found empty cans," says Montgomery Fire Chief Christian Galipeau. "People were probably fishing that Friday night and were careless. By the following morning, a town resident called it in as they smelled smoke."

Now, conditions like the recent drought, which is being reported as the driest October in recent memory, are contributing to a fire that is spreading underground and is contained,

but not over.

"It's so dry deep down that it is burning underground," says Galipeau. "The fire is 19 inches deep. This area has not burned in so long that the build up underneath of decayed leaves and branches is intense. It normally never burns this deep."

The fire extends south and east from the Westfield Reservoir towards Pitcher Street in Montgomery just south of Main Road and is in a remote area. The state has named it the Moose Meadow Fire.

"The best thing to do to

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## HILLTOWNS

# Town clerks announce unofficial election results

By Ellenor Downer  
Editor  
edowner@turley.com

Voters in Goshen, Middlefield and Otis followed the state trend with the majority of votes choosing the Harris/Walz team for President/Vice President over the Trump/Vance team.

They did not follow the national trend, which elected the Trump and Vance ticket as President and Vice President. Blandford voters went with the national trend for the top office.

In Blandford, there was an 80% voter turnout. Unofficial results were 489 for Trump/Vance and 308 for Harris/Walz. Warren received 283 votes and Deaton received 520 for Senate in Congress. Neal got 326 votes for U.S. House District 1 and Milleron 443.

At the state level, Mark received 334 votes and Rosa 432 for State Senate and Boldyga ran unopposed for State Representative and got 613 votes. Jacobs got 502 votes for Councillor and Gentile received 507 votes for Clerk of Courts. Coakley-Rivera got 333 votes and Collamore 396 votes for Register of Deeds.

Blandford voters said yes 546 and no 223 on Question 1 to allow auditor to audit legislature, 517 yes and 279 on Question 2 to allow transportation network to form union and 355 yes and 419 on Question 3 to repeal MCAS. They said 355 yes and 419 no on Question 4 to allow psychedelic substances and 207



yes and 584 no Question 5 to increase minimum wage for tipped workers. The final Question 6 regarding single payer universal health care was 372 yes and 382 no.

The town of Goshen had an 83% voter. Unofficial results were 390 for Harris and Walz and 256 for Trump and Vance. Warren got 384 votes for Senator in congress and Deaton 276. McGovern received 425 votes and Shea 203 for Representative in Congress. At the state level, Jacobs had 487 votes for Councillor. Mark got 411 and Rosa received 213 votes for Senator in General Court. Sabadosa ran unopposed for Representative in General Court and got 502 votes. Carey got 504 votes for Councillor, Olberding got 496 for

Register of Deeds and Ames received 497 for Register of Probate to fill a vacancy.

Ballot questions votes were 427 yes and 194 for Question 1 and 461 yes and 191 no on Question 2. Three hundred forty three said yes and 283 no on Question 3 and 267 yes and 374 no on Question 4. Vote on the final questions, Question 5 was 187 yes and 454 no.

In Middlefield, voters followed the state trend for President/Vice President with 185 votes for Harris/Walz and 126 for Trump/Vance. Warren received 177 and Deaton 137 for Senator in Congress. Neal got 154 and Milleron 146 for Representative in Congress. At the state level, Mark got 191 and Rosa 108 for Senator in General Court.

Boldyga, running unopposed got 224 for Representative in General Court.

Other positions were 236 votes for Jacobs for Councillor, 239 votes for Carey for Clerk of Courts, Olberding had 241 votes for Register of Deeds and Ames 239 for Register of Probate. In Middlefield, 222 said yes and 74 no on Question 1, 213 yes and 95 no on Question 2, 185 yes and 113 no on Question 3, 119 yes and 173 no on Question 4, 108 yes and 192 no on Question 5 and 183 yes and 93 no on Question 6.

Voter turnout in Otis was 78%. They also went with the state trend rather than the national trend for the President and Vice President position with 547 for Harris/Walz and 487 Trump and Vance. Warren received 532 votes and Deaton 491 for Senator in Congress. Neal got 512 votes and Milleron 458 for Representative in Congress.

Jacobs got 670 votes for Councillor and in the Senate in General Court race Mark got 560 votes and Rosa 404. Davis had 465 votes and Mitts 485 for Representative in General Court. Denalut-Viale had 680 votes for Clerk of Courts and Harris 688 for Register of Deeds.

In Otis, the ballot questions were 636 yes and 331 no on Question 1, 643 yes and 382 on Question 2, 504 yes and 462 no on Question 3, 410 yes and 594 no on Question 4, 355 yes and 645 no on Question 5 and 585 yes and 381 on Question 6.

## MassDOT announces upcoming I-90 road work

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announces lane closures on I-90 eastbound and westbound for drainage work, bridge repairs, guardrail installation and tree trimming.

The work will take place now through Friday, Nov. 15.

In Otis and Blandford, drainage work will be conducted on I-90 westbound from mile marker 21.0 to 24.0 Thursday night, Nov. 14 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. concluding by Friday morning, Nov. 15. Bridge repair work will be conducted on I-90 eastbound and westbound at mile marker 22.5 now through Thursday night, Nov. 14, from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. concluding by Friday morning, Nov. 15.

In Becket, bridge painting will occur on I-90 westbound at mile marker 18.4 now through Thursday night, Nov. 14 from 7 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. each night, concluding by Friday morning, Nov. 15.

In Stockbridge, guardrail installation will take place on I-90 eastbound from mile marker 6.0 to 7.8 now through Thursday night, Nov. 14, from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. each night, concluding by Friday morning, Nov. 15.

In West Stockbridge, bridge repair work will occur on I-90 eastbound and westbound from mile marker 1.0 to 3.0 now through Thursday night, Nov. 14 from 7 p.m.-5:30 a.m. each night, concluding by Friday morning, Nov. 15.

Drivers traveling through these areas should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution.

Signage, law enforcement details, and advanced message boards will be in place to guide drivers through the work areas. All scheduled work is weather dependent and/or may be impacted due to an emergency.

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to: Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit [www.mass511.com](http://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.

## Clark screens 'Bonnie and Clyde'

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Thursday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. in the Manton Research Center auditorium, the Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., kicks off its ten-part New Hollywood Auteurs free film series with a screening of “Bonnie and Clyde” (1967).

Presented in partnership with Images Cinema, this series captures the explosion of creativity, critical acclaim and box office success that Hollywood directors found after the fall of the studio system. Each film is introduced by a staff member of the Clark or Images.

Half comic fairy tale, half brutal fact, “Bonnie and Clyde” is based upon the Barrow Gang that terrorized the South in the 1930s. Part of the changing of the guard in Hollywood, the film ushered in an era of violent and sexually lib-

erated film making. Although Truffaut’s style was a primary influence, it reclaimed the American gangster movie from the nouvelle vague. Reflecting both folk legend and the affinity of the anti-war generation for outlaws, “Bonnie and Clyde” has a glee then so new, now so imitated.

Accessible seats available; for information, people may call 413-458-0524. Images Cinema has received funding support from the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation’s Arts Build Community grant to co-present/co-produce this series. For more information, people may visit [clarkart.edu/events](http://clarkart.edu/events).

The next screening in this series is A New Leaf (1971) on Thursday, Dec. 12 at 6 p.m. in the Manton Research Center auditorium.

## Gas prices decrease penny

Gasoline prices continue to dribble downwards as demand dips on seasonal trends and global petroleum markets digest the results of last week’s elections in the United States.

Supply and demand forces suggest new yearly lows for gasoline prices could be on the horizon. With 28 states now showing average retail prices of below \$3 a gallon, demand is dropping along seasonal expectations. Last week, domestic demand fell to 8.8 million barrels a day, down more than 400,000 barrels a day week-to-week, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Trading activity was light in commodities markets last week both before and after the polls closed, keeping oil and gas prices from making dramatic moves for now.

Here in the Northeast, while there was a drawdown of about 700,000 barrels of gasoline last week, inventories are still running about 1 million barrels higher than last year. And supplies could soon increase after Irving Oil completes seasonal maintenance at its St. John refinery in New Brunswick, which produces 320,000 barrels a day. The large refinery is a key supplier of gasoline to the Northeast.

The average gas price in Massachusetts is down a penny over last week (\$3.04), averaging \$3.03 per gallon. Today’s price is four cents lower than a month ago (\$3.07) and 43 cents lower than this day last year (\$3.46).

Massachusetts’s average gas price is four cents lower than the national average.

“As domestic demand experiences autumnal cooling, global demand is acting like an anchor for global oil and gas prices as well,” said Mark Schieldrop, Senior Spokesperson, AAA Northeast. “Cheaper oil and lower demand could push retail gasoline prices to yearly lows if the trend continues.”

AAA Northeast’s Nov. 12 survey of fuel prices found the current national average down three cents from last week (\$3.10), averaging \$3.07 gallon. Today’s national average price is 13 cents cheaper than a month ago (\$3.20) and 29 cents lower than this day last year (\$3.36).

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with offices in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing more than 6.5 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, finance and auto-related services.



## Clark holds holiday concert

WILLIAMSTOWN – The Clark Art Institute, 225 South St., kicks off Williamstown’s 41st Holiday Walk Weekend with a festive concert on Friday, Dec. 6 at 6 p.m. in the Manton Research Center auditorium.

The concert features one of Berkshire County’s favorite singers, Wanda Houston and the Wanda Houston Project. Houston kicks the season off in style with a spirited concert blending holiday music with her signature song styl-

ings. Houston’s powerhouse voice and mesmerizing mix of jazz and R&B influences give every tune a distinctive sound.

Tickets \$10 general, \$8 members, \$7 students and \$5 children 15 and under. Accessible seats are available; for information, people may call 413-458-0524. For tickets and more information, people may visit [clarkart.edu/events](http://clarkart.edu/events). For more information on Holiday Walk Weekend, people may visit [DestinationWilliamstown.org](http://DestinationWilliamstown.org).



# HUNTINGTON



State Senator John Velis, left, addressed middle school students. On stage were Veterans Ruth Kennedy Jim Cortis and Steven Connor. Courtesy photo by Kristen Smidy

## VETERANS

from page 1

back to 1861 and the American Civil War. This act says that every city and town in the state has to have somebody in town hall to address the needs of veterans, their widows and families.

Connor told students that we've seen a very different military over the last 20 years. "Less than 1% of our population today actually serves. In other countries, you are required to serve. In this country, it is all volunteer." Connor added that there has not been a draft since 1972; as a result, service members to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were often redeployed to serve two to three tours of duty, unlike any other time. "As years go on, you will see fewer and fewer Veterans," he said.

He also informed students that Vietnam and Korean War veterans are now senior citizens. Part of his work is to help veterans file claims to address health needs caused by toxins they were exposed to, such as agent orange. Veterans had to "fight like crazy" to get help for these ailments, Connor said.

Dr. William Sullivan, principal of the middle and high schools, then read off questions that students had submitted. The first question was, "Why did you serve?" Cortis explained that he was likely to be drafted. He felt it was his duty to serve and decided to enlist in the Navy. Kennedy said she signed on because every generation of her family, male and female, had served in a military role dating back to the American Revolution. Connor also had a family history of grandparents serving in World War I and his father and uncles in World War II. His dream was to join the Peace Corp, but a college education was required. He did not have the resources to go to college so he also joined the Navy and served in Asia. "It was really quite exciting," he said. "But there were also bad things that you don't want to remember."

Another question was what their roles or jobs were. Cortis was trained as a crash and rescue firefighter in Florida, but then moved to an amphibious assault ship out of San Diego that went onto Vietnam. While he wasn't in direct combat, he was exposed to agent orange. He served most of 1971 and part of 1972, and attended college afterwards.

"My story is disappointing for me," said Kennedy, who went on to explain that she was injured in boot camp and told that she wouldn't be allowed to continue. She felt deeply ashamed and asked to at least stay in a desk job. I was told, "We don't allow women to stay if their legs swell because it doesn't look uniform when units march." She left the Air Force and joined the American Legion.

Connor said he hadn't been able to do all of his time, either. He served on an AirCraft Carrier. Because the deck was so dangerous with planes landing and taking off, like most personnel he worked below deck, often going days without seeing the sun.

Connor said the fastest growing Veteran population in Massachusetts is women, many of whom have seen combat. Cortis urged students to thank Veterans for their service. "Talk to them. Thank them. It means a lot," he said. "Ask them about their experience." Connor added that one of his uncles had gotten really ill and needed the Holyoke Soldiers Home. While helping pull his military records together, he discovered that his uncle had received the Medal of Valor, but

never learned the story behind it.

Cortis further acknowledged that Huntington Police Chief Robert Garriepy, who happened to be at the school, was also a Navy veteran. Cortis concluded that he "strongly supports the Bill of Rights and our Constitution."

Massachusetts Senator John Velis was able to stop in for the middle school assembly to join the trio. Velis is a major in the Army Reserves.

Later in the school day, Littleville Elementary School students walked over to the Gateway Performing Arts Center for their assembly, which Kennedy and Cortis had planned for a younger audience. It opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and all remained standing for a special song about the pledge, which acknowledged four great freedoms: freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion. A number of parents and community members-some currently serving-were given front row seats and acknowledged.

Kennedy read a book to the students called, "Rolling Thunder" by Kate Messner, illustrated by Greg Ruth. Pages and illustrations were cast onto the auditorium's large screen for everyone to see. The book told the story of motorcyclists who assemble and go to the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. every Memorial Day.

Cortis again encouraged students to thank Veterans for their service. "Coming back from Vietnam, we weren't treated the best sometimes," he said. "Enough said about that."

Another thing that went a little differently in the children's assembly was when Cortis and Kennedy opened it up to questions. The first question, "Can I go to the bathroom?" was met with chuckles by the adults. Another student asked why schools were closed for Veterans Day? Cortis said that schools close so that young people can spend the day with their parents and grandparents and celebrate their lives.

A student asked what was written on the wall that the motorcyclists rode to in the book. Cortis answered, "The names of everyone who died in the Vietnam War. Over 56,000 men and women died in Vietnam and visiting the wall is very moving."

Principal Melissa McCaul had a surprise for the Veterans, inviting fifth graders to the microphone to thank them for protecting the freedoms of religion, press, speech, assembly, and voting. They then recited "Veterans Day" by Jessica Hawkins.

All assembled sang the National Anthem as children waved small American flags. McCaul handed over artwork and thank you letters made by students, and asked that they get them to Veterans.

Kennedy closed the day by thanking the students and staff. "Everyone today has warmed my heart, and I know it's warmed Jim's too. Thank you to the whole school system for allowing us to do this."

Superintendent Kristen Smidy expressed her appreciation for the assemblies. "The students had lots of good questions and appreciated learning about the history and learning the stories of the veterans," Smidy said. "I am thankful that Ruth and Jim wanted to put this together for us and they really made it special and personalized for our students."

## LANDSLIDE

from page 1

keep that trail open and passable for fire and emergency/rescue access.

Goulet said that the funding for work like this comes out of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers budget for Littleville and Knightville Dams in Huntington. This Operations and Maintenance Budget falls somewhere between \$900,000 and \$1 million annually, and covers everything including fuel, lights, dam repairs and maintenance, and personnel. Larger projects-such as this one-can involve a multi-year process of encumbering and carrying over unspent money, which requires continuing resolutions for funding to be earmarked and released.

The first monies for the paving were originally allocated in FY 23. As a Federally funded budget, fiscal years run from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30. Goulet said this project was initiated by the previous manager, who left to take another position in the Army Corps of Engineers. As a first time Interim Project Manager, Goulet says he is very much learning as he goes. He is presently working on the FY 27 budget, which will be collected by the New England Army Corps and submitted as part of a regional budget to Washington D.C. in January.

Goulet has been a Park Ranger with the Army Corps since 2014 and had previously served in Huntington. In 2022 he was assigned to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Concord;

when the previous manager moved to another position, he was asked to take the Interim post because he was already familiar with the operations.

Staffing for Littleville and Knightville Dams consists of a Project Manager and three permanent, full time Park Rangers. They add temporary hires to help cover the active summer months.

Littleville Dam was created to ensure flood control along the Westfield River, provide recreational opportunities for the public and as a possible back-up water supply for the City of Springfield. If ever put into use, water would be pumped from Huntington to Cobble Mountain Reservoir and then to Springfield.

Work of the park staff includes operating the dams, conducting routine maintenance, managing special projects when such funding is available and promoting public safety. Goulet said that one of their biggest safety efforts is checking boats to ensure that every passenger out on Littleville Lake has a life jacket. "It can be problematic for people who drive 25 to 30 miles to take their boat out, only to discover they've forgotten a life jacket," he said.

Park Ranger Marissa Eisnor manages their "public facing programs." This month, she applied for funding from the Sea Tow Foundation to create a life jacket loaner program at Littleville Lake. Such a program would save boating plans while keeping people safe.

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## OPINION

### GUEST COLUMN



### Working septuagenarian asks about disability benefits

#### Dear Rusty:

I retired at my full retirement age, am now 79 and will be 80 in December.

I have been working consistently since. I get a meager Social Security benefit, only about \$800 due to my federal retirement offset. Most jobs I have held since filing and collecting SS have involved very labor-intensive work, to include my current position. This has taken a toll.

My question is there any provision in Social Security that permits re-evaluation of Social Security benefits for disability after one has collected and paid into the system for some 15 years? I suspect not but thought I would ask, since at my not so tender age, I am faced with having to cease employment that generates needed income.

Signed: Working Still at 79

#### Dear Still Working:

I'm afraid that Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits are no longer available once you reach your SS "full retirement age" or "FRA," which for you was age 66. Indeed, anyone collecting SSDI at full retirement age is automatically converted to their regular SS retirement benefits at the same amount they were previously receiving on SSDI. That's because SSDI benefits are intended to sustain workers up to their SS full retirement age, but SSDI goes away once FRA is attained.

Thus, the provision to apply for SS disability allows only those who have not yet reached their full retirement age to seek disability benefits. Once FRA is reached, SSDI benefits are no longer available. Simply for your awareness, there would be no financial advantage for you to receive SS disability benefits anyway, because the most you can get on SSDI is your full retirement age amount. Thus, since you retired and claimed SS at your full retirement age, no additional disability amount would be available anyway.

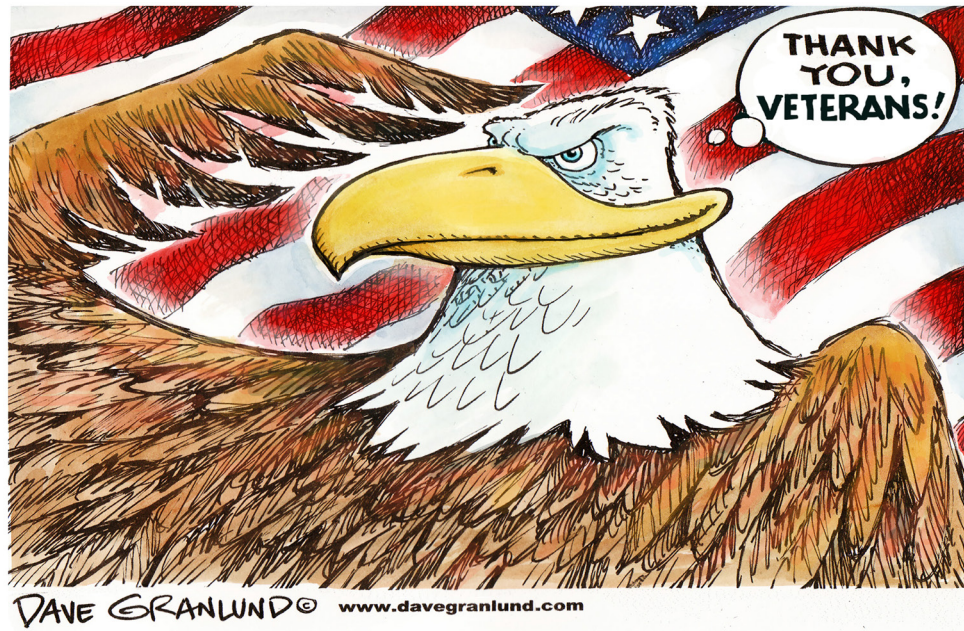
FYI, I admire, at your "tender age," that you are still actively working, but I'm afraid you cannot claim more now on Social Security disability because you've already reached your FRA. However, from what you've written, your SS retirement benefit has been affected by the so-called Windfall

SECURITY, 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](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com), or call us at 413-283-8393.

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



### GUEST COLUMN



A Brimfield resident, who emails quite often noticed three turkey vultures on Sunday, Oct. 20

He said, "I went outside and I saw soon seven turkey vultures flying by along the ridge east of the house. The birds drifted off to the south east. A few minutes later a group of ten vultures drifted slowly south about a half a mile west of the first group. These birds flew around for awhile, circling and gaining altitude until they were quite high. The ten birds then drifted out of sight."

The turkey vulture is 26 inches tall and has black feathers. The trailing end of the wings are silver and the head has no feathers and is red. Immature turkey vultures have gray heads. They are often seen soaring with wings held in a V. They rock side to side, but rarely flap their wings.



Turkey vulture

Turkey vultures feed by scavenging on carrion, fresh or decayed. They find their food by both sight and smell. Sometimes, they are seen in roads feeding on road kill. They are often seen coming or going to nightly roosts. They use thermals of warm air and updrafts to stay in the air. When the thermals and updrafts end and they have to flap, they usually stop flying and land.

When perched, they will spread their wings. I saw one several years doing this against a high tension pole in Oakham.

The female lays one to three dull white

BACKYARD, page 6

### Surprise squash or is it a pumpkin?



Compost the lazy person's way – no thermometers, frequent turning or aerating is done at my house.

I simply pile my vegetable refuse, leaves, coffee grinds and plant parts in a pile with copious amounts of chicken bedding. Once in a blue moon I'll mix it all up with a pitchfork, but that is all I do.

I'm not saying it's the right way, but it's my preferred way. After a certain point in the fall, I start a new pile and let the old one sit until spring when I use the compost in the garden.

Often, I end up with some surprise plants growing in the pile from the previous year after I've taken what I need. I call

them volunteers.

For the last two years I've grown my best tomatoes in the compost pile. No accolades need to come my way, I did nothing to earn the luxury of garden fresh tomatoes in November.

Well, maybe covering the plants with layers of cloth on the few cold nights has helped some, I guess, otherwise they would be frosted like the rest of the tender plants.

But alas, once again I digress. I am not here to talk about the tomatoes that grew in the compost pile, but the squash that did. I may have mentioned in an earlier column, but as I sit here devouring a squash muffin, they deserve another mention.

While my hills of butternut were not very prolific, the white pumpkin lookalike squash were unbelievably so. Honestly, I am not sure how many plants sprouted. Maybe three at the most, and I easily ended up with maybe two dozen, so the average is seven or

GARDEN, 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](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that

Friday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

#### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

paper 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.

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



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# OPINION

## HILLTOWN HISTORY

### Hilltown hikers find trash and treasure in the woods

By Deborah Daniels  
Correspondents

Lying half buried in the ground was a white mug found and kept as treasure while hiking with the Hilltown Hikers.

It was the kind of mug people used to find in diners; they know the one that doubled as a weapon. It weighs a solid 14 ounces of skull fracturing china. Lord knows the staff of those all night diners needed some form of protection.

Only there wasn't a diner in sight nor was there ever one here in Becket. It had a very distinct china mark showing an Indian painting a pot in green dye, stating Shenango china, Newcastle, Pennsylvania. Since, I had noticed a trampled and much abused by time in the dirt can of Chase and Sanborn Coffee while hiking the day before a coffee exploration was in order.

Diving into Shenango china Company history revealed a Pennsylvania company that made only china for restaurants and hotels since 1901. It started making what it called Incaware china which is where the logo came from.

They made semi vitreous hotel ware china. Vitreous china was chosen because it was denser and a more durable ceramic material with a glass like enamel coating. Yes in a word indestructible. Think toilets and sinks as these items were made of vitreous china or porcelain. These mugs were known to resist wear and tear, be stain resistant and easy to clean. All the attributes you want in a fine diner's china.

The mug filled all the way to the brim holds 6 ounce. A 6 ounce mug o' Joe today would probably get one eye open and you can understand how the bottomless cup of coffee came about in diners.

Shenango China did make china for Haviland China Co. of England fame briefly in 1936. It was displayed in the 1939 New York World's Fair and then donated to the White House where Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman used it. The company shut down in December 1991 due to tough competition from cheaper imported china, increased labor costs and a declining economy. This mug dates from the 1920s - 1950s manufacturing period. It seems like a good mug for the office for sipping or otherwise. That is if you can get your hands on one. It was most likely used in the Baird Tavern, read on.

Next up consider the Chase and Sanborn coffee can. Caleb Chase (1831-



This chart shows the Shenango china trademark history with appropriate dates the mugs were made and sold.

1908) and James Sanborn (1835-1903) teamed up in 1864 to pack and ship roasted coffee in sealed tins for the first time. It became the first nationally distributed coffee brand in the US by 1908.

Sanborn was from Maine. He worked first as a traveling salesman and then became a spice and coffee merchant. Caleb Chase had a tea importing and coffee roasting business in Boston. It was their idea to package the ground coffee to sell all over New England. The coffee can featured their portraits on the can. They supplied all the coffee for the Chicago's World Fair in 1893.

They promoted their coffee with small paper booklets aimed to entertain people as they drank their evening coffee. The topics were about subjects such as the history of the American flag, North American Birds; Animals and Butterflies. Chase & Sanborn coffee was a best seller in the 1930s-1940s. Chase & Sanborn had been acquired by New York based Standard Brands Inc. in 1929.

They used Rudy Vallee to sing the praises of their coffee and big advertising had arrived. Chase & Sanborn had 40% of the retail market by 1950 and continued to sell well to restaurants and offices, but lost consumer sales to other brands. They never stopped urging consumers to drink five cups of coffee per day, up from the typical two cups a day. Your average cup of coffee was six ounces and Chase and Sanborn sold coffee in 1 and 2 lb. cans. They had a mission to sell coffee and they did.

The Company was bought and sold many times after 1981. It was sold to Nabisco, General Coffee Co., Hills Brothers, Nestle, Sara Lee and others. Apparently you can't hold a hot coffee product for long. This stamped on coffee can was trash from the 1950s.



Hikers found this Shenango china mug in Becket.



This mug shows the china trademark.

Photos by Deborah Daniels

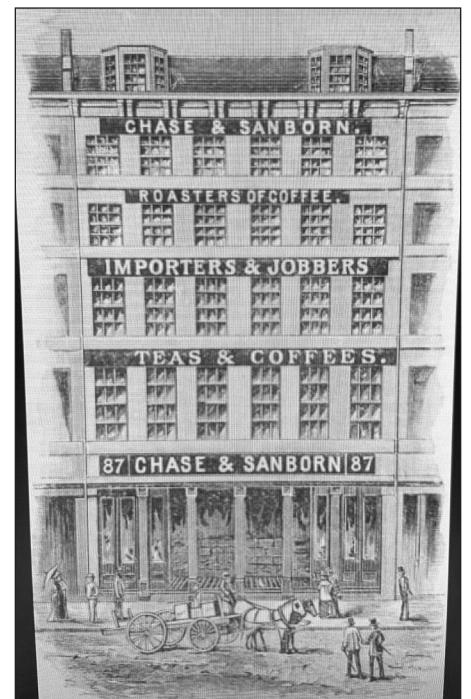


Chase & Sanborn Company located in Boston, sold coffee. This old can was found a recent hike.

The mug was found in Becket on the grounds of Baird Tavern. This tavern was built in 1790 near Old Chester Road. It became a toll gate house for the Farmington River Turnpike built in 1800 and the Becket Turnpike built in 1803.

These turnpikes were part of the Boston to Pittsfield/Albany commute. According to the Becket Historical Society they are equivalent to routes 20 and 8 today. From the Hilltown Hikers perspective the tavern sat next to the Huckleberry Trolley line in later years. It must have been a busy locale.

Hilltown Hikers found considerable china, bottles and cooking debris at the site. It bears out the story that the tavern which had a ballroom on the second floor had placed lots of bottles in the ceiling to



This is a photo of the Chase Sanborn Company in Boston.

Submitted photo

improve the acoustical properties in the tavern! Not that a tavern would have any shortage of bottles (whiskey, brandy, gin, beer) and a vexing problem of where to dump them.

There is nothing to see that would indicate what a bustling area this once was. The tavern and trolley station are gone. There is a tiny quarry located nearby, abandoned by time and leaf debris, definitely hidden in the woods. The secrets of the past can only be discovered by getting out and hiking. Oh and it helps to have a fearless, map studying leader like Liz Massa.

## SECURITY

from page 4

Elimination Provision (WEP) which affects those with a separate pension earned without contributing to Social Security.

If you've been separately working and contributing to Social Security since you left government service and you now have more than 20 years contributing to SS from other non-government "substantial earnings," it's possible that you can request a reevaluation of your WEP penalty.

WEP provides relief for those, who have more than 20 years contributing to Social Security. So, if you have more than that over your lifetime, you could ask that your WEP reduction be reevaluated to consider your additional years contributing to Social Security. If that is the case, your monthly amount would be increased to consider those additional years contributing to SS since you first claimed.

I suggest, if you now have more than 20 years of contributions to Social Security from your non-government work over your lifetime, that you call Social Security to request reevaluation of your WEP retirement amount. FYI, you can see exactly how many

years of SS-covered work you have by requesting an "Earnings Statement" from Social Security. You can get this Statement by calling 1-800-772-1213 or you can also get it at your personal "my Social Security" online account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). Social Security will also be able to tell you this directly when you call. In any case, I wish you good fortune, and hope that reevaluating the WEP reduction to your SS benefit may offer some small financial relief as you go forward.

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

## GARDEN

from page 4

eight fruit per plant!

I bought the original at a local farm and as it turned to an imploded pile of mush, it got chucked into the compost pile last fall. After sprouting it took no time flat for the vines to cover the pile and adjoining fence and lawn, much to my husband's dismay.

After a quick internet search, the white pumpkin lookalike squash still doesn't have a name. It could be part acorn squash, or a variant of a white pumpkin.

All I know is that they made excellent fall decor!

Just for the fun of it I cooked one up, in the same manner I do butternuts, by slicing in half, removing the seeds and roasting cut side down in a 400 degree oven for about an hour.

The pale yellow flesh caramelized a little. Perhaps I should have finished the cooking cut side up to attain more of that caramelization.

While not incredibly sweet, it didn't taste bad or bitter, so I whipped it up with the immersion blender and decided I'd try it in my favorite squash muffin recipe. Not bad, not bad at all.

My husband asked if I was going to

raid the porch of it's decorations to process more of them, but I don't think I'll go that far. If November is mild, I'll certainly have a windfall once we switch over to a Christmas theme.

What do I learn from the compost pile? Although the garden is right next to the compost pile, the white squash pumpkins had virtually no damage from the squash vine borer.

The plants were so much healthier than those I planted in the garden. The leaves were large and deep green.

I've said it before and I'll say it again times three: Nitrogen, nitrogen, nitrogen. That's one thing my compost pile has that the garden needs. I will definitely not skimp on that nutrient come springtime so that maybe, just maybe, I can grow my beloved butternut squashes on purpose and healthily!

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 32 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### Colleges, universities announce President's and Dean's lists

#### PRESIDENT'S LIST

##### Southern New Hampshire University Manchester, New Hampshire

Jessica Giarolo of Becket, Mikaela Spence of Worthington, Michelle Rodriguez of Westfield, Andrew Brown of Westfield, Joe Manolakis of Westfield, Raphaella Dupras of Westfield, Yasmeen Reyes of Westfield, Felicia Dearborn of Westfield, Craig Kickery of Huntington, Dominick Nomakeo of Easthampton and Cody Leveille of Easthampton

#### DEAN'S LIST

##### Southern New Hampshire University Manchester, New Hampshire Madeline Kresiak of Otis

### Owen Ouimet enrolls at University of Albany

ALBANY, NY – The University at Albany welcomes students back to campus for the start of the fall 2024 semester, including some 5,430 new ones.

Owen Ouimet of Westfield, majoring in business administration, is attending the University at Albany for the fall of 2024. More than 2,800 first-

year students from 32,320 applicants, are joining UAlbany's Class of 2028, with 223 students selected to be part of the University's Honors College and 226 students enrolled as Presidential Scholars. In addition, more than 1,000 transfer students and 1,630 new graduate students are joining the campus

community this fall.

The Class of 2028 is among the most diverse in University history, with 55.6% coming from historically underrepresented groups. Students also hail from 23 different states and 33 countries. The class boasts an overall high school average of 90.3%.

### Elms College announces August 2024 graduates

CHICOPEE – Elms College announces students, who graduated in August 2024.

Among the 101 graduates are local students Cheryl Pittsinger of Williamsburg, a Doctor of Nursing Practice and Aisha Rasheed of

Westfield, a Bachelor of Science degree

Elms College is a co-educational Catholic college offering a liberal arts curriculum that prepares students holistically for a purposeful life in a diverse and interconnected world. Founded in 1928 by the Sisters of St. Joseph, Elms

College has a tradition of educating reflective, principled and creative learners, who are rooted in faith, educated in mind, compassionate in heart, responsive to civic and social obligations and capable of adjusting to change without compromising principle.

## GREAT BARRINGTON

### Mahaiwe's Performing Arts receives Avangrid Foundation grant

GREAT BARRINGTON – The Avangrid Foundation, the primary philanthropic arm of Berkshire Gas's parent company Avangrid, Inc. (NYSE: AGR), which supports cultural, environmental, educational and community partnership programs that positively impact the communities it serves, has deepened its commitment to the Berkshires through its most recent grant to the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center.

The \$10,000 grant includes, for the second consecutive year, \$7,500 to reach children and families through the Mahaiwe's Performing Arts Education and Community Engagement Programs. In addition, and to support

Avangrid's priority goal of increasing equitable access to the arts, the donation also includes a \$2,500 challenge grant to underwrite free and deeply discounted tickets to the Mahaiwe for individuals who are not able to pay the full cost of admission.

"The Avangrid Foundation works to ensure prosperity for everyone in the communities where we operate by supporting the most vulnerable and increasing equitable access to the arts, education and culture," says Pablo Colón, director of corporate citizenship at Avangrid and executive director of the Avangrid Foundation. "Through our most recent grant to the Mahaiwe, we are delighted to strengthen the theater's

educational and community engagement programs while also directly empowering the families who might not otherwise be able to attend the Mahaiwe's performances."

The Avangrid Foundation grant, designated to support the more than 5,000 free and steeply discounted tickets the Mahaiwe offers each year, will be invested through the Mahaiwe's Leonhardt Community Access Fund, created in 2023 by the Leonhardt family and the Frederick H. Leonhardt Fund of the New York Community Trust.

"When my family established the Leonhardt Community Access Fund, we wanted to encourage other donors to join us, so that anyone who wants to

can participate in the Mahaiwe's wonderful programs and attend its performances," explains Melissa Leonhardt. "The Avangrid Foundation's grant is a demonstration of its mission to advance the arts, heritage, and culture in support of vibrant and sustainable communities. I hope others will help match the Avangrid Foundation's \$2,500 grant by contributing to the Community Access Fund at the Mahaiwe to make sure its programming remains accessible."

For information on how people can help match the Avangrid Foundation's challenge to provide more access to audiences and artists, they should email Diane Wortis, Director of Advancement at [diane@mahaiwe.org](mailto:diane@mahaiwe.org).

## OPINION

### BACKYARD

from page 4

eggs, occasionally with dark marks in a nest scraped on bare ground, in a hollow stump, cave, cliff edge or old building. Grunts and hisses are heard at the nest site often during competition over food.

#### Pond tour

The Brimfield resident sent an emailing and reported he and his wife did a tour of some of the ponds in Brimfield, Holland and Warren on Sunday, Nov. 3. He said, "In Brimfield (Sherman Pond) and Holland (Holland Pond) we saw a few pairs of hooded mergansers and a belted kingfisher at the pond in Warren on South Street. Other ponds had lots of Canada geese and mallards."

He also said, "In the yard recently the most exciting sighting was a Carolina wren that showed up briefly a couple of times. Then yesterday we had an immature accipiter was seen sitting on top of one of our feeding stations." He wrote, "The bird was either a female sharp-shinned hawk or a male Coopers hawk based on size, it was a little bigger than a mourning dove, the bird's

size was in the area where the sizes of the two species overlap. The tail shape is suppose to help differentiate the species but I'm not confident about the tail shape, I'm not sure which species we saw?"

Later in the day he saw a fox sparrow doing the sparrow feeding behavior, jumping back and forth to stir up ground looking for seeds. He said, "That was the first fox sparrow seen this fall. One or two are usually seen during fall migration."

#### Moose

Although not bird related – no feathers on this critter – I saw a moose cross New Braintree Road in Oakham one evening. It was dark, but I did get a good view of its rear portion as it went over a stone wall and into the woods.

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

## CHESTER



These young children enjoy playing together. They also got a bear sticker, fire safety card and a bear paw hand stamp. Submitted photo

### Children enjoy working on puzzles at Story and Fun time

CHESTER – Hamilton Memorial Library, 195 West Main St., holds a weekly Story and Fun time on Thursdays at 11 a.m.

With all of the brush fires breaking out, library staff thought it would be a good idea to talk about Smokey Bear and fire safety with the children and parents. The group read two stories, "About Habitats: Forests" by Cathryn Sill, donated by the Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee

where the group talked about the importance of keeping forests safe for people and animal life and "The Firefighters' Thanksgiving" by Marabeth Boelts.

Children also made a craft showing a firefighter putting out a fire. The children also received a Smokey Bear sticker, fire safety card and a bear paw hand stamp. The children then had fun working on puzzles and playing together. It was a fun morning.

*Submissions are always welcome.*

Send us your engagement, wedding, baby, anniversary and graduation news and photos.

**Country Journal**

24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069

email: [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com)



## RUSSELL

## Strathmore Mill #1 roof collapses, three injured

By Kathryn Koegel  
Correspondent

RUSSELL – On Tuesday, Oct. 29, concerned residents of Woronoco in Russell warned the town's select board that the demolition work on Strathmore Mill #1 was unsafe and described workers without hardhats, steel-toed safety shoes or visibility vests.

Less than two weeks later, on Monday, Nov. 11 at approximately 3 p.m., a building collapsed with seven workers inside. One with a head injury was transported via Life Star helicopter to Baystate Medical trauma center in Springfield, one was taken via ambulance to the same facility and another was treated on the scene by Hilltown Ambulance, according to Russell Fire Department Chief Ed Renaud. Westfield and Huntington Fire departments were also called to the scene.

The owner of the building, Donald Voudren, Sr. of Huntington, did not respond to calls for comment about the safety of the building made prior to its collapse. His wife and son were on site after the collapse and said that Voudren was unreachable on Monday in a remote area of Maine.

Lieutenant Sean Shattuck of Russell Police noted that "Occupational Safety Health Administration has been contacted. The State Police are investigating." He spoke shortly after he left the scene.

Who were the workers? Woronoco residents concerned about the lack of safety equipment, off the record said that they were foreigners from Ecuador. No further information about them is available. According to Shattuck, the crew supervisor had left the site before the building collapsed. The uninjured workers freed their colleagues from the rubble.

A Woronoco resident said that "the entire site was a working OSHA disaster." He had heard the building collapse and witnessed the removal of the injured from the mill rubble. He saw several construction workers without any type of safety equipment. "If you are stupid enough to remove the floor joists and supports to salvage the old timber, of course the building is going to collapse. Just look at the photos of what is left. Where are the support columns?"

Huntington Fire Chief Joshua Ellinger, who was on the scene with his crew, said that the mill collapse was not unexpected. "With all these old mill buildings, with little to no control over access, it's just another accident waiting to happen. This particular mill complex had a fire and the mill across the river was set on fire multiple times, but nobody seems in a hurry to take them down even though they have been compromised by fire."

The once picturesque Mill #1 was the lifeblood of the hamlet of Woronoco, which was designed as a paper mill and modern worker village by Horace B. Moses, the founder of Strathmore Papers. Moses bought the former Woronoco Paper Mill and according to company archives, in 1914 built the then state-of-the-art mill that has now collapsed. Strathmore Papers were and continue to be high-end paper used widely by artists.

The building was closed in 1999 by International Paper that owned it then. It has sat for over 20 years as a hulking, but picturesque memory of the industrial days of the Hilltowns and was increasingly vandalized. A photo taken of Mill #1 on Saturday, Nov. 9 shows a complete four story building with cracks in the brick, but a fully intact roof. Now, half the building has collapsed and the bricks strewn about make the site look closer to Dresden after the War than anything else in the Hilltowns.

In 2022, the storehouse brick building just across Woronoco Rd from Mill

#1 was destroyed in a fire when owner Voudren was using an acetylene torch and accidentally set it ablaze. That same year, Voudren was interviewed by a local newspaper and said that he was planning to turn Mill #1 into 60 – 80 market rate condominiums at a redevelopment price of \$22 to \$26 million. With workers hospitalized and a collapsed roof, there is no telling what the future holds for the building.

When contacted, the State Police said they were turning any investigation over to the Russell Police. The Woronoco resident who spoke out expressed frustration about how the mill's owner and the town of Russell had handled the property. "This is just more sloppy, cheap work, just like when he removed the walkway illegally and caused the fire that burned the storehouse across the street. All he got was a small fine and a slap on the wrist. Never cleaned up that mess and now created a new one. Most likely he will do nothing – send it into tax lien – have the building taken by the town and us taxpayers have to pay to clean it up."

Another Woronoco resident placed blame directly on Russell. "This is the Town of Russell's fault. Did the building inspector know about this? Shouldn't OSHA have been involved? Weren't there supposedly chemicals as the reason it was closed down? Why was a salvage crew allowed in there? Now they will close off the road again and the Woronoco community has to alter their route. Parents and kids can't walk to the mailbox for exercise if they close the road. This should have been taken care of a long time ago. Russell has let Woronoco go to shambles."

When Jason Fogue, the Russell Town Building Inspector, was contacted, he said that: "all indications are there were several individuals working over the weekend removing parts of the building that eventually led to its collapse. No permits are in place for demolition although I had been told numerous times that they were on their way. They should have had permits for doing what they were doing but until this time they said they were only removing floor boards which would not require a permit."

"It is an unfortunate event that could likely have been avoided if proper steps were taken," says Fogue. "Notice has already been sent out concerning the required demolition of the building itself, which the owner has 72 hour to respond to or the town will have to take action as it sees fit. The second notice for working at the site without a valid permit will be sent to the property owner within the week."



Strathmore Mill #1 is shown on Monday, Nov. 11 at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Courtesy photo of Russell Fire Department



Remains of Strathmore Mill #1 is shown on Nov. 11 from the millpond.

Courtesy photo by Megan Ellinger



Strathmore Mill #1 on Saturday Nov. 9.

Turley photo by Kathryn Koegel



This is view of Strathmore Mill #1 from the millpond on Oct. 25, 2022.

Turley photo by Kathryn Koegel



# BLANDFORD



Shown from left are John Gust Sr, Catherine Bessette, Glen Bessette, Tim Tribula and John Gust Jr. at the Veterans' Dinner sponsored by the Council on Aging.



Joyce Collins, from left, Jen Girard, Greg Girard, Tom Coury and Ron Collins enjoy a special meal honoring Veterans in Blandford.

## Council on Aging honors Veterans with special dinner

BLANDFORD – Almost 70 Veterans from all members of the armed forces attended the annual Council on Aging Veterans' Dinner Saturday evening at the Town Hall.

During dinner, COA Board Member Judy MacKinnon asked for a round of applause in appreciation for COA Director Margit Mikuski and JoAnn Martin, the master of the kitchen.

Pamela Rideout was responsible for table decorations and the Blandford Historical Society had a display table featuring local veterans, complete with photographs.

Town Veterans' Agent Joe Hennings read Governor Maura Healey's proclamation honoring Veterans' Day in Massachusetts. He also spoke about benefits and where to find information. He is available by telephone and welcomes calls. His contact information is on the town's website.

Select Board Chair Cara Letendre and Board Member Theodore Cousineau also attended the event. Martin again prepared a meal to be remembered; pot roast, baked potato, carrots, salad and dinner rolls. Beverages included hot mulled cider and sodas, and coffee provided by Starbucks. The Blandford volunteer fire department donated apple and pumpkin pies, served with whipped cream.

lamation honoring Veterans' Day in Massachusetts. He also spoke about benefits and where to find information. He is available by telephone and welcomes calls. His contact information is on the town's website.

## Tree lighting to be held Dec. 8

BLANDFORD – Historical Society President Chips Norcross announced a change in the date for the annual Christmas Tree lighting and caroling at the Historical Society building.

Usually scheduled for the first Sunday in December, this year it would

be Dec. 1. But because it is a Leap Year, Thanksgiving is a week later, on Nov. 28, which makes the long holiday weekend include Sunday, Dec. 1.

Therefore, the Tree Lighting will be the following Sunday, Dec. 8 at 5 p.m.



The Boomsma family served dinner at the Veterans' Dinner.

Turley photos by Mary Kronholm



Blandford Select Board member Theodore Cousineau and Chair Cara Letendre attended the Veterans' Dinner Saturday evening, Nov. 9.

**READY TO COOK!**

## THANKSGIVING DINNER

STUFFED TURKEY - SIDES - DESSERT

**DINNER FEEDS 10 PEOPLE**

\$69<sup>99</sup>

USDA INSP. FROZEN PORK SHOULDER PICNIC ..... \$1<sup>39</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS CENTER CUT PORK LOIN ..... \$2<sup>22</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN 1/2 SPIRAL HAM ..... \$1<sup>29</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH KAYEM BUDABALL WHOLE SMOKED PIT HAM..... \$3<sup>66</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH SKINLESS & SHANKLESS HATFIELD OLDTIME WHOLE HAM ..... \$2<sup>89</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH LEG LAMB..... \$5<sup>99</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TENDERLOIN ..... \$9<sup>99</sup> CUT FREE

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF SIRLOIN SPOON ROAST ..... \$5<sup>99</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS WHOLE EYE ROUND ..... \$3<sup>99</sup> lb

USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY DIET LEAN GROUND BEEF ..... \$4<sup>99</sup> 5 LB BAG

USDA INSP. FROZEN TURKEY BREAST ..... \$1<sup>69</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST 10 LB BAG ..... \$1<sup>88</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FRESH CHICOPEE PROVISIONS BLUE SEAL KIELBASA ..... \$4<sup>99</sup> lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN SWEET POTATO PIE ..... \$2<sup>99</sup> ea

USDA INSP. FROZEN BACON WRAPPED SHRIMP 15 COUNT ..... \$8<sup>99</sup> ea

USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN COOKED SHRIMP 31/40 COUNT 2 LB BAG ..... \$14<sup>99</sup> ea

VETERANS DAY

★ HONORING ALL WHO SERVED ★

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# MONTGOMERY

## FIRE

from page 1

contain it is find good fire line breaks," says Galipeau. "Sometimes we will let it burn to a dirt road. It's still burning right now with over 65 acres burned. Ninety-percent of that burned from the time the campfire got out of hand to Saturday, Nov. 2 at 6:30 a.m. when we were first on the scene."

The fire is being tackled by the all-volunteer, twelve person Montgomery fire department with the mutual aid of neighboring fire departments and various state agencies. Water from helicopters is being scooped up from the reservoir and dropped by the National Guard.

"We're having a record drought for this time of year," says Galipeau. "Normally we see burns in early spring on the top layer of leaves. We've never dealt with this before. We need to get at it with large apparatus including attacking with portable tanks you wear on your back. We're using 1000s of feet of fire hose hitting hot spots every day." They are drawing water down from the Westfield Reservoir which was built in Montgomery back in the 1870s to service the town of Westfield.

Fighting this fire is an ongoing effort. "We're putting out different hot spots every day till we get significant rain or snowpack. The fear is that it will jump the fire line we created," he says. "If it were to jump, the next fire line is a road."

"We have brushfires all the time. But we've never had this many," says Galipeau. This fire is taxing the lives of his fire personnel who typically are having to leave their 40+ hour a week "day jobs" early – and take time off – to continue to manage the blaze. Putting out the fire also requires the help of neighboring departments from towns like Huntington and Russell along with state agencies, for



This shows the Moose Meadow fire line. which Galipeau and his team are grateful.

Just how dry is it in the Hilltowns? According to Keith Goulet, Acting Project Manager of the Knightville Dam/Littleville Lake from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "neither Knightville Dam or Littleville Lake have received a significant amount of precipitation since Oct. 15, 2024. The dams are below the amount of precipitation that they would have expected to receive by this time in the year. Littleville Lake, despite being filled with water, is at 0.8% storage. This time last year Littleville was fluctuating from one-to-two feet above the weir depending on precipitation events."

The Knightville basin is even lower. "For all intents and purposes Knightville is currently at 0.0% storage as there is barely one foot of water in the river channel. This time last year there was approximately six feet of water in the river channel," says Goulet.

The Moose Meadow fire is just one of the over 200 in the state that the Massachusetts Chief Fire Warden has been dealing with. In comparison, the fall of 2023 saw only 20 brushfires.

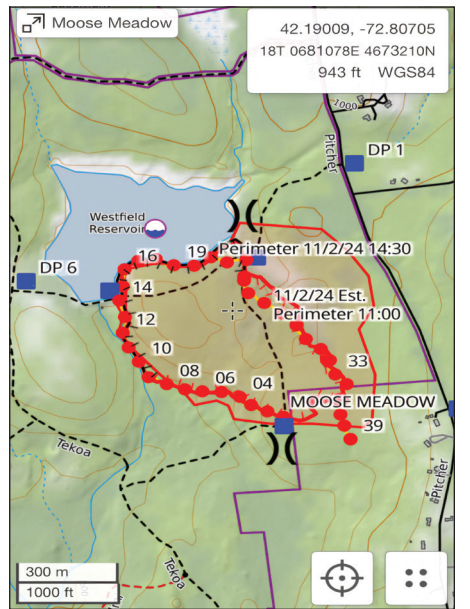
Courtesy photo Montgomery Fire Department

There is no end in sight for the drought and Chief Galipeau asks for increased vigilance and caution from all residents. "Please, no outdoor burning. No outdoor charcoal. No wood-fired cooking. People do not realize how quickly it spreads." He also cautions to "watch for sparks from lawn mowers and chain saws. These brushfires are taking millions of dollars and resources throughout the Northeast." He projects that unlike fires in places like California, which are often caused by faulty power lines or lightning strikes, the vast majority of brushfires in the Hilltowns are caused by human error.

Residents should also avoid walking in the woods anywhere near a fire zone. "Several Massachusetts firefighters were hurt this week and two tragically died in neighboring states due to falling trees and branches," which he says result from the underground fires' impact on the roots of parched trees. "Steer clear of the area. There will be days where the smoke drifts in different directions. And please, if a neighbor is burning a campfire, step up and talk to them. Call 911 if you see any kind of fire or smoke."



MFD Chief Christian Galipeau checks persistent hot spots of the Moose. Courtesy photo of Fire Lieutenant Frye



The Moose Meadow fire map supplied by the Montgomery Fire Department. The red dots are the fire lines.

Courtesy of Montgomery Fire Department

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**Deadline for photos and forms is Monday, December 16, 2024**



## OTIS

### Notice Otis features The Sirens, a musical trio

OTIS – The Otis Historical Commission and Otis Preservation Trust will host the second Notice Otis cultural event of the 2024-25 year, featuring The Sirens musical trio, performing live in person on Thursday, Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. at Otis Town Hall.

A question and answer session will follow the talk. Admission is free but pre-registration is required. To register to attend this in person only event or for more information, people may visit [www.otispreservationtrust.com](http://www.otispreservationtrust.com) or [www.townofotisma.com](http://www.townofotisma.com). There is no charge to attend this event but pre-registration is required. Donations are welcome.

The Sirens are three powerhouse women of song: legendary performer Wanda Houston, talented guitarist and solo artist Elizabeth Berliner and gifted singer/songwriter and comedienne Liv Cummins. These magical muses combine to seduce audiences with gorgeous voices and enticing harmonies with catchy melodies and clever, heartfelt lyrics of Sandy McKnight's original pop songs, with a little folk, rock, jazzy blues, bluesy jazz and country thrown in the mix.

Sandy McKnight, band creator and guiding light, was a 50-year veteran in the music business, songwriter,

bass player, producer and solo artist. He toured with multiple bands including The Truants and Numbers; worked with notable artists including Dennis Diken (Smithereens), Todd Rundgren, Earl Slick, Graham Maby and '80s TV legend John Davidson.

McKnight created the three-woman group to show off their powerhouse voices and his melodic, heartfelt songs through catchy hooks, clever lyrics and tight, juicy harmonies, along with a fun, joyous spirit. From the start, it was magic.

Wanda L. Houston has lived and performed professionally throughout the U.S., Europe and Australia. She has performed on Broadway, in films, recordings and television. Working in varying capacities with Michael Jackson, Barbara Streisand, John Turturro, Eddie Izzard, Natalie Cole, Eartha Kitt, Patti LaBelle and Sam Harris, brought her to the stages of Pasadena Playhouse, Universal Studios, Radio City Music Hall, Madison Square Garden and Carnegie Hall.

Singer/songwriter Elizabeth Berliner's music career spans more than four decades. Her solo work includes the Albums "Burns Like Fire," "All As It Comes" and the Theme Song "PAWNS" from her award-winning indie film of the same name. Elizabeth has worked

with or opened for luminaries including Bob Weir, Dwight Yoakam Don Was, Joe Schermie, Bobby Taylor, Roger Fischer (Heart) Lester Chambers and Tommy Chong.

A Minnesota native, Liv Cummins is a singer/songwriter, comedy performer and musical theater dramatist. She teamed up with songwriter and musician Sandy McKnight on her first solo album of original songs, "Some Days," produced by McKnight. The album received critical acclaim and aired on radio stations across the country as McKnight and Cummins toured the U.S. and played in legendary venues from Margaritaville in New Orleans to The Bitter End in NYC.

Otis Preservation Trust works with the Otis 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. OPT is a not-for-profit (501c3) organization operated for fundraising and educational purposes. 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.

### Otis holds tree lighting

OTIS – The town of Otis will hold the second annual community tree lighting event on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 4 p.m. at Otis Town Hall.

All are invited to attend. There will be a hot chocolate station, holiday caroling and a visit from Santa.



## BECKET

### Kevin O'Hara to read from story collection 'A Christmas Journey'

BECKET – Author Kevin O'Hara will launch the holiday season with readings from his story collection, "A Christmas Journey," at the Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, on Thursday, Nov. 14 from 5-6 p.m.

The stories range from growing up in Pittsfield to a Christmas celebration in Dublin with his donkey Missie. O'Hara is also the author of "Last



Kevin O'Hara

of The Donkey Pilgrims," "A Lucky Irish Lad" and "Ins and Outs of a Locked Ward," which chronicles his three decades as a nurse in Berkshire Medical Center's psychiatric ward.

A writer-in-residence at Herman Melville's Arrowhead in 2020. Part of the BAC's Speaker Series, the event is free for members and \$5 for non-members. For more information, people may visit [www.becketartscenter.org](http://www.becketartscenter.org).

### Art Center offers felting workshop

BECKET – The Becket Arts Center, 7 Brooker Hill Road, will offer a felting workshop with Tina Sweet on Saturday, Nov. 16 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Sweet has been felting for 18 years, and her commissioned work has included stylized gnomes, personalized penguins, life-sized chickens and a super-hero. In this beginner-friendly class, participants will be introduced to the tools and techniques of needle felting and then will create a small sculpture of their own.

All materials and tools will be provided. The fee is \$75 for non-members and \$20 to \$60 for members. For more information, people may visit [becketartscenter.org](http://becketartscenter.org).



This owl is an example of needle felting. Tina Sweet will offer a felting workshop on Saturday, Nov. 16 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Submitted photo

## WILLIAMSBURG

### Meekins Library announces upcoming news and events

WILLIAMSBURG – The Meekins Library, 2 Williams St., will host Read to Dog on Saturday, Nov. 23 beginning at 11 a.m.

People must sign up for a 20 minute scheduled time with one of three dogs by either calling 413-268-7471 or stopping by the Meekins Library. Reading to a therapy dog can be less intimidating than reading to a human. Reading to a certified therapy dog can provide an instant sense of calm because the dogs have "non-judgmental ears." The dogs don't mind if a child mispronounces a word or is slow to read; they love to sit by and enjoy a good book. The "Read to a Dog" is a reading program great for early readers, struggling readers (Title 1), children with dyslexia or students learning English as a second language.

The Spice Club meets monthly and the next meeting is Wednesday, Nov 20 at 6 p.m. Each month, participants pick up a "take-and-make" kit featuring a different herb or spice. The featured spice for November is cinnamon. Bake, cook and experiment with the featured spice at home. People can try one of the featured recipes, check out a library cookbook or find one online. They then bring a copy of their chosen recipe to the meeting. The library will have one of the featured

recipes available for sampling. This program is open to cooking enthusiasts of all ages. Spice samples are available on a limited first-come, first-served basis.

The Seasonal Meekins Market Opens on Saturday, Nov. 23. Everyone's favorite Meekins Market is returning soon. Starting on Saturday, Nov. 23, the traditional Meekins Market will run through Saturday, Dec. 21. Donations from library friends and long-time Market enthusiasts have been coming in all year. Help make the Meekins' very own special-in house tag sale a joyful success once again.

Holiday Community Read takes place Sunday, Dec. 10 from 1:30-3 p.m. People will join friends and neighbors for the annual reading of holiday classics that celebrate this time of wonder at the Meekins Library. People may visit the website at <http://www.meekins-library.org> for a list of this year's selections. Please note the new time.

Everyone is welcome. Come read or listen and enjoy holiday treats and warm drinks. People are asked to bring something to share in the Williamsburg

Neighbors-Helping-Neighbors Pantry or a warm something for the warm clothing collection.

## SOUTHAMPTON

### Robert Floyd Gallery and Learning Center to hold final celebration

SOUTHAMPTON – The Robert Floyd Gallery and Learning Center, 2 East St, Route 10, announces its final celebration for its 23rd anniversary on Sunday, Dec. 8 from 1-5 p.m.

The Gallery will remain open until Sunday, Dec. 15. Due to the building being put on the market, it would be unfair to schedule exhibits for local photographers amidst this uncertainty.

Pat Crutchfield, the Gallery's curator and Robert Floyd will host exhibits

at e-media in Easthampton's Eastworks during May and June. Floyd will also remain available for speaking engagements at camera clubs and other events. Many courses and workshops will continue to be offered online and in local libraries and on-site field trips will continue. Floyd has successfully taught in-person photography courses at St. John's University, UMass and Massachusetts Audubon for 11 years.

Crutchfield and Floyd plan to

interview and record local artists in e-media and on-location. Sharing their stories can be healing for artists. Their goal is to create a near-weekly broadcast series. Over the past 23 years, they have instructed hundreds of photography students and exhibited numerous artists, gaining a valuable understanding of their needs for support and promotion.

All remaining artwork prints and furnishings will be significantly dis-

counted in the coming weeks.

They hope the spirit of The Gallery will continue to shine brightly for all who were part of it and many intend to stay connected.

When The Gallery first opened on Dec. 8, 2001, the mission was to raise awareness of photography in the Pioneer Valley. While endings can be complex, they often make way for new beginnings. They look forward to the next chapter.



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## REGION

# State's Disabled Veterans benefit from HERO Act

BOSTON – Ahead of Veterans Day 2024, the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles and Executive Office of Veterans Services are reminding veterans they are eligible to receive fee waivers for various transactions at the RMV due to the most comprehensive piece of veterans' legislation in Massachusetts history, which was signed into law by Governor Healey in August 2024.

The HERO Act, An Act Honoring, Empowering, and Recognizing our Servicemembers and Veterans, includes over 30 provisions positively impacting veterans, including specific transactions veterans may conduct at the RMV.

"The expansion of the HERO Act enables us to show additional gratitude toward veterans who served and sacrificed for our country," said Transportation Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbitts-Nutt. "While these benefits are just a small token, we hope all

qualifying individuals will make full use of them in their dealings with the Registry. On behalf of all our MassDOT employees, we say 'thank you' to veterans for your service."

"It is an honor for all of us at the Registry of Motor Vehicles to facilitate the expansion of the HERO Act on behalf of Massachusetts veterans," said Registrar of Motor Vehicles Colleen Ogilvie. "With our service documentation requirements now even more seamless, I encourage disabled veterans and their family members to familiarize themselves with the available benefits and to reach out to us with their questions."

"We're incredibly thankful for our partners at MassDOT for supporting the HERO Act's provisions that bring real relief to our disabled veterans," said Secretary Jon Santiago of the Executive Office of Veterans Services. "Waiving these fees is a concrete step toward eas-

ing the daily burdens veterans face, and from excise tax exemptions to waived license fees, we're working to show that Massachusetts stands firmly committed to them."

Every motor vehicle registered in Massachusetts is subject to the annual excise tax, unless exempted. Under the HERO Act expansion, all Massachusetts residents who qualify as a disabled veteran are now eligible to receive the excise tax exemption. To qualify, they must present a letter from the U.S. Veterans Affairs Office to the city or town where their vehicle is garaged.

In addition, disabled veterans are no longer required to pay a vehicle registration fee for any vehicle registered in their name. Previously, this benefit could only be applied to one vehicle registered in their name. Also, all of these veterans are no longer required to pay a transaction fee for a passenger driver's license or for

a passenger driver's license renewal.

A disabled veteran is determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to either have a combined service-connected disability rating of 100 percent or be individually unemployable due to their service-connected disability.

The legislation signed into law by Governor Healey in August 2024 increases benefits, modernizes services and promotes inclusivity for veterans in Massachusetts. In addition to provisions impacting veterans who drive, the legislation expands access to behavioral health treatment, supports businesses that hire veterans, updates the definition of a veteran, expands the Veterans Equality Review Board's scope, and codifies medical and dental benefits.

RMV information for military service members veterans, and their families can be found by visiting [mass.gov/military-and-veteran-rmv-information](https://mass.gov/military-and-veteran-rmv-information).

## Clean Water Trust Board announces grants and loans

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust's Board of Trustees approved \$96,541,936 in new low-interest loans and grants at its meeting on Nov. 6.

They, 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.

Local towns' receiving Asset Management Planning Grants are Great Barrington \$150,000, Huntington \$83,325, Lee \$150,000, Lee \$119,579

and Lenox \$150,000. Receiving a Lead Service Line Planning Grant was Easthampton \$323,100 and receiving a Cybersecurity Improvement Grant was the Dalton Fire District \$30,000.

For more information on the different loan programs, people may visit the SRF Programs page at <https://www.mass.gov/srf-programs> and for more information on our Loan Forgiveness Program, they may visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/the-disadvantaged-community-loan-forgiveness-program>. People may visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/board-of-trustees-meeting-information-about-past-meetings-and-find-project-descriptions>. 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 \$9.1 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.

## Fire Safety Education grants support children, older adults

STOW – The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced that applications are being accepted for \$2 million in grants to support fire and life safety education for children and older adults, the people most vulnerable in the event of a fire at home.

The Student Awareness of Fire Education and Senior Awareness of Fire Education grant programs are administered by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and the Department of Fire Services. They send local firefighters to schools, community groups, senior centers, Councils on Aging, and other venues to teach age-appropriate safety lessons to children under 18 and adults 65 and older.

"The SAFE and Senior SAFE grants are a smart investment in fire protection, fire prevention, and fire safety for the most vulnerable members of our communities," said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. "I want to thank Governor Healey, the Executive Office of Public Safety, and the Legislature for supporting these programs, and I encourage every fire department to apply."

The SAFE grant program has con-

tributed to the steepest decline in child fire deaths in Massachusetts history. In 1994, there were more than two dozen child fire fatalities; the SAFE grants were launched the following year and child fire deaths never again reached even half that number. Massachusetts recently went more than two and a half years without losing a child to fire.

The Senior SAFE grants were created in 2014 to provide education, smoke and carbon monoxide alarm installation, and other services to reduce fire-related fatalities among older adults, who now represent the age group most likely to die in a fire.

Fire departments of every city, town, fire district, and eligible state authority can apply to share in funding for SAFE grants, Senior SAFE grants, or both. Departments must meet certain requirements, including mandatory fire data reporting, to be considered. The Notice of Funding Opportunity, grant application, and eligibility requirements are available on the Department of Fire Services' website. Applications must be submitted by Tuesday, Dec. 10 by 5 p.m.

## Bidwell House Museum presents 'Dressing the Christmas Tree'

MONTEREY – On Thursday, Nov. 21 at 4 p.m. antiques expert Lorraine German presents "Dressing the Christmas Tree" at the Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road.

There will be a wine and cheese reception after the program. The cost is \$40 per members and \$50 for non-members. At the reception, guest can ask German questions. The program and reception will last approximately 75 to 90 minutes. Due to limited seating, pre-registration for this program is required. Guests can register on the

Museum website by visiting <https://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org/event/dressing-the-christmas-tree/>.

This program is a fascinating look at both antique and vintage Christmas decorations. German will discuss the history of adorning holiday greens from their pagan beginnings through the mid-20th century and will provide examples of ornaments from her own collection. An avid collector of Christmas antiques for almost 40 years, her interest began with an early 20th century German Santa and sleigh that she inherited from her grand-

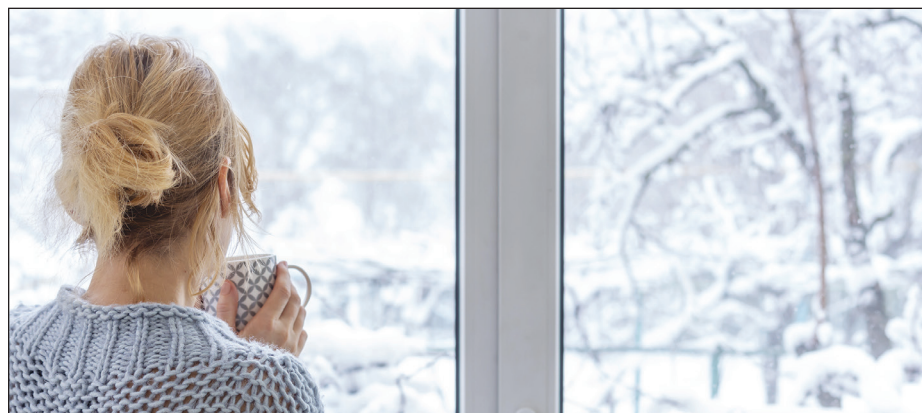
parents. Christmas is German's favorite season and each year she decorates every room of her home with an assortment of treasured family heirlooms, early decorations and contemporary folk art.

German and her late husband Steve established Mad River Antiques, LLC in 2001, with a concentration on 18th, 19th and 20th century Americana and decorative arts. She has been a guest speaker at antiques shows, museums, and antiques organizations, where she has covered a variety of topics, including stoneware, redware, quilts, Christmas ornaments and

Santa Claus. She is also the author of "Soil and Shul in the Berkshires: The Untold Story of Sandisfield's Jewish Farm Colony," published in 2018.

The Bidwell House Museum grounds-194 acres of woods, fields, historic stone walls, self-guided trails and picnic sites-are open every day, dawn until dusk, free of charge. The house is open for guided tours from Memorial Day to October by appointment only. The program of events can be found by visiting the museum's website at [www.bidwellhousemuseum.org](http://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org).

## Better Business Bureau gives advice on cold weather tasks



The air is getting more relaxed, and the leaves and cornfields are turning yellow. Fall is here. With the change in weather comes a list of home maintenance that all homeowners should tackle before the icy stuff sets in.

BBB offers these tips when preparing your home for the colder weather:

- Clean those gutters. A build-up of leaves and other debris can cause your gutters and downspouts not to drain correctly. Improper draining can make water spill over your gutters, leading to foundation/basement damage and damage to your fascia boards. In the winter, ice

dams can form that can let snow melt underneath your shingles. Get a listing of gutter contractors near you.

- Inspect your roof and gutters. Inspect your roof for loose or damaged shingles and make any necessary repairs. Damaged or loose shingles can let in water and ice during the winter, creating interior damage. Clean out gutters to prevent ice dams and water build-up. Visit [BBB.org](http://BBB.org) to get a listing of roofing contractors near you.

- Test your smoke and carbon mon-

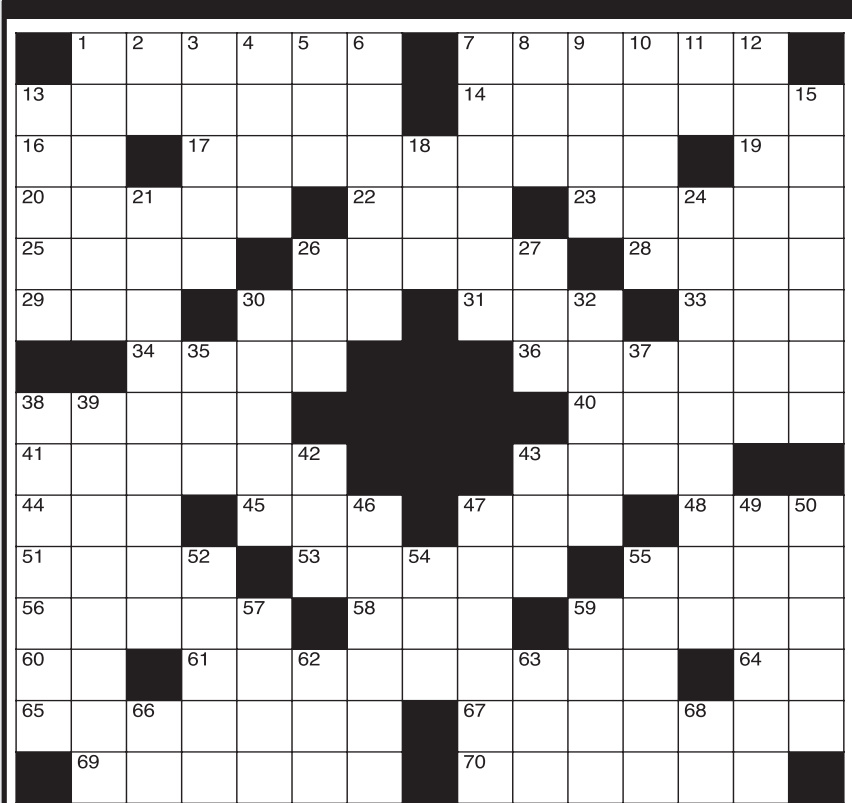




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**CLUES ACROSS**

- Schoolhouse tool
- Martens
- Slags
- One who scrapes
- Centiliter
- White wine
- Of I
- Former Syracuse great Warrick
- Relating to the ear
- Sandwich shops
- Victories
- White (French)
- Self-immolation by fire ritual
- Genus of parrots
- Unhappy
- Talk incessantly
- Type of Squad
- Unit of perceived loudness
- Violent seizure of property
- Agave
- Sound units

**CLUES DOWN**

- Removes from record
- Partner to Mama
- Mythological bird
- Dash
- Hair product
- Two-year-old sheep
- Signs a deal
- Conifer
- Autonomous republic in NW Russia
- Wife of Muhammed
- British Air Aces
- Ears or ear-like appendages
- Not caps
- Deep-bodied sea dweller
- Rural delivery
- Feeling
- Study of relations of organisms to one another
- Room to argue
- Question

**CLUES DOWN**

- Cream puff
- Road open
- Stressed syllable
- Thailand's former name
- Cologne
- Recounted
- Garment of cloth
- Airborne (abbr.)
- Reproduced
- Emits coherent radiation
- "Westworld" actor Harris
- Smallest interval in Western music
- Unstressed central vowel
- Lives in
- When you expect to get somewhere
- Storage bags
- One who covers with plastic
- Cast out
- Automobile
- Repaired shoe
- Belonging to the bottom layer
- Possesses
- Soda
- Programs
- In an unexpected way
- A bag-like structure in a plant or animal
- For each
- Unbelief
- Seized or impaled
- Arrive on the scene
- Especially happy
- Classic western film
- Split pulses
- Frida \_\_\_: Painter
- Start again
- Employee stock ownership plan
- Young women's association
- Frozen water
- "The First State"
- Computers need one

# THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**

**Mar 21/Apr 20**  
Think about resting and being a bit introspective, Aries. Focusing on your inner world can help you to recharge your energy levels. Solitude also may provide some clarity.

**CANCER**

**Jun 22/Jul 22**  
Try to engage in some thoughtful conversations with greater frequency. Accepting that you can learn from others is a great way to grow personally and professionally.

**LIBRA**

**Sept 23/Oct 23**  
Don't let work and routines catch you off guard. Try to streamline your tasks and find more efficient ways to handle your responsibilities.

**CAPRICORN**

**Dec 22/Jan 20**  
Showcase your talents and ideas at work this week, Capricorn. Others can benefit from your experience and it may inspire changes or discussions that prove fruitful.

**TAURUS**

**Apr 21/May 21**  
Personal growth and self-improvement may be on your mind. Set some new goals that align with your values. You may want to take a class to learn new skills as well.

**LEO**

**Jul 23/Aug 23**  
You might want to stay closer to home. You've been burning the midnight oil quite a bit lately. Family matters need attention right now, so prioritize them.

**SCORPIO**

**Oct 24/Nov 22**  
Scorpio, important negotiations or projects will certainly put your communication skills to the test. Keep an eye on the details and stick to the facts to avoid any misunderstandings.

**AQUARIUS**

**Jan 21/Feb 18**  
Aquarius, stick to your personal values and don't make concessions, whether with friends or in the workplace. It's important to have conviction in what you do.

**GEMINI**

**May 22/Jun 21**  
Gemini, focus on long-term financial goals in the days to come. If you don't have a plan for investing meaningfully, you could sit down with an expert and get some ideas.

**VIRGO**

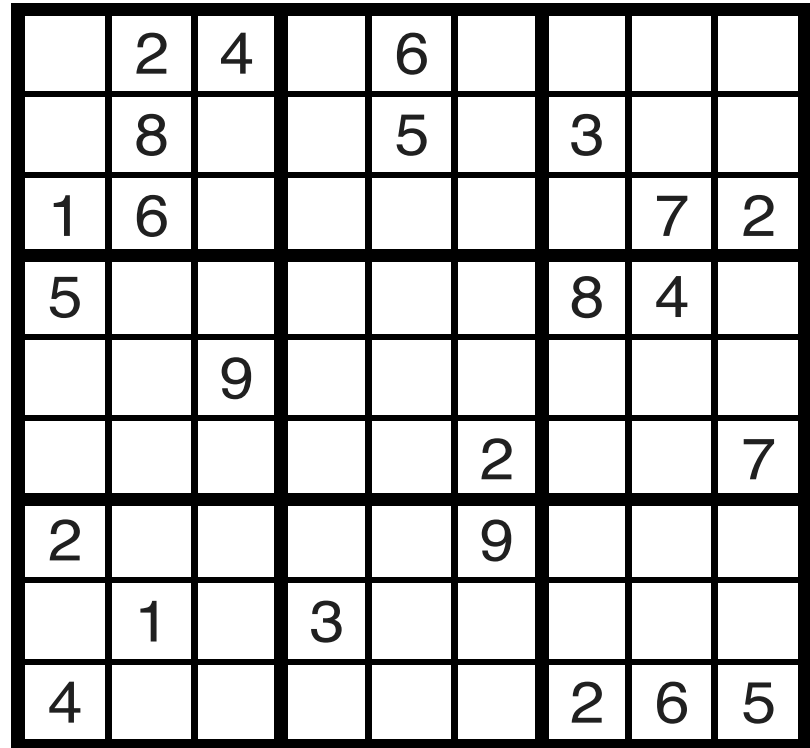
**Aug 24/Sept 22**  
Virgo, romance takes center stage for you, and you may find yourself suggesting new date ideas with your partner. Or this might be an opportunity to find a new romantic interest.

**SAGITTARIUS**

**Nov 23/Dec 21**  
Sagittarius, if you have been having any difficulties, voice your concerns to those who are willing to lend an ear. Keeping it all bottled up inside is not a healthy path forward.

**PISCES**

**Feb 19/Mar 20**  
Use any momentum you have for tackling new projects, Pisces. There's much to do between now and the new year and you will have to get busy sooner than you may have thought.



# SUDOKU

**Fun By The Numbers**

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

**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!

**answers**

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

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# OBITUARY

## Susan M. Ulrich, 79

WORTHINGTON – Susan M. Ulrich, 79, beloved wife, mother and mentor to many, died peacefully on Oct. 27, 2024 in Great Falls, Virginia.

Born in New York City on April 27, 1945 and raised in Tenafly, New Jersey, she dedicated her life to teaching others. As a graduate of Immaculata College, she started her career as a home economics teacher in Englewood, New Jersey and married the late George Ulrich in 1966.

In 1977, they moved to Worthington with their two daughters. For over 25 years, she taught vocational special education at Gateway Regional High School where she creatively blended her love for cooking with teaching. Together with her students, she opened “The Cracked Pot” restaurant to serve teachers and staff breakfast and lunch as a means of teaching life and professional interpersonal skills. She finished her career at Gateway as a middle school guidance counselor and retired in 2005. Even after retirement, you could find her walking the halls of Russell H. Conwell as she volunteered in the classrooms.

As a mother, Susan was active in her daughters’ lives and her community. She was instrumental in the



creation of the children’s reading room at the Worthington Library; a space for kids to fall in love with reading. She followed in her mother’s footsteps and served for many years as a Girl Scout Troop leader and designed the official badge for Worthington Girl Scout Troop 83.

Susan volunteered throughout her daughters’ school years as a chaperone for countless field trips and as the faculty sponsor for the Gateway Regional High School class of 1992. Susan was a strong role model for her daughters and others to follow.

Susan leaves behind her daughters, Adrienne Mikolashek and her husband James (Trip) Rice, of Clifton, Virginia and Meghan Ulrich and her husband Michael Wijdoogen, of Herndon, Virginia and her two grandchildren, Thomas and Kirsten Mikolashek.

Honoring the families’ wishes, there will be no visiting hours. Please join the family to celebrate her life at the Worthington Congregational Church, 159 Huntington Road, Worthington on Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024 at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Susan’s name to The Worthington Library, P.O. Box 598, Worthington, MA 01098 or online at theworthingtonlibrary.com.

## DEATH NOTICE

### ULRICH, SUSAN M.

Died Oct. 27, 2024  
 Celebration of Life Saturday, Nov. 16 at 11 a.m.  
 Worthington Congregational Church  
 159 Huntington Road, Worthington

## 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.*

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Town of Huntington will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, December 2, 2024 beginning at 6:00 pm in Stanton Hall.**

The Public Hearing is for the Special Permit Application of Pioneer Assembly of God (PVAG) for a sign for the Huntington Food Pantry at 63 Old Chester Road (Parcel # 255-17-A).

A copy of the application will be available for review (by prior appointment) by contacting the office of the Board of Selectmen in Town

Hall during regular business hours.

Zoning Board Of Appeals  
 Town Of Huntington  
 11/07, 11/14/2024

### Town of Williamsburg Accepting Sealed Bids for Town Office Renovations

The Town of Williamsburg, Massachusetts will receive sealed Bids for Project No. 11062024\_TO, Town Office renovations until **2:00pm local time on Wednesday, 11 December 2024** at the office of the Town Administrator, 141 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Haydenville, MA 01039 at which time and place said Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The work consists of renovations to the Williamsburg

Town Offices at 141 Main Street, Haydenville, MA. Contract Drawings are available on request by emailing [edmSTUDIO \(twidman@edmstudiocreates.com\)](mailto:edmSTUDIO@twidman.com) beginning on 13 November 2024.

There is a non-mandatory pre-bid conference at the site, on **November 19, 2024 at 9:00AM. Bidders are encouraged to make any additional arrangements to visit the site as needed to familiarize themselves with the contract area and existing conditions.**

This Contract is being bid under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 149, 11/14/2024

**Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.**

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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

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

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

## EARLY DEADLINES FOR PUBLIC NOTICES

Thanksgiving will bring early deadlines for all public notices to run in **TURLEY PUBLICATIONS** the week of November 25-29, 2024.

### Wednesday, Nov. 20 at 2 PM for November 27 issue

- Agawam Advertiser News • Sentinel • The Register • Wilbraham-Hampden Times

### Thursday, November 21 at 2 PM for November 28 Issue

- Barre Gazette • Country Journal
- The Journal Register • Quaboag Current • Ware River News

### Friday, November 22 at 2 PM for November 29 Issue

- Town Reminder • The Holyoke Sun • Chicopee Register

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



## REGION

### COLD WEATHER

from page 12

oxide detectors. Making sure these essential safety tools are in proper working condition is manageable and vital to ensuring the safety of those in your home. The National Fire Protection Association offers excellent information on installing and maintaining smoke alarms. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has information on carbon monoxide detectors.

- Check your window and doors for air leakage. Adding caulk and weather stripping helps prevent cold air leakage into your home and prevents spiders and insects from entering. Also, check where pipes and wires enter your home.

- Organize your garage. You will undoubtedly use your garage a lot more in the colder months. Get rid of trash and clutter, and make sure your snow shovel and other winter-use items are easily accessible. Fill/repair any cracks or holes you see to prevent bugs and rodents from entering that will be seeking refuge from the cold. Find garage organizers near you.

- Inspect your driveway. The frequent freezing and thawing conditions in many areas, along with tree roots and ground shifting, can cause driveways to develop areas of needed repair. Fall is a great time to fill cracks and seal coats to prevent wintertime water/ice damage. Find driveway repair contractors near you.

- Schedule HVAC maintenance. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, preventive care can help save you up to 25% in energy costs. Heating contractors near you can help you professionally service your heating unit. Having your heating system serviced and filters replaced will ensure your system works efficiently.

- Tend to the outside water supply. Cover up your outdoor water fixture (s). Spigot covers are reasonably priced at your local hardware store and help keep the exterior pipes from freezing. Empty hoses of any water and move them indoors.

- Protect pipes. Insulate pipes in unheated areas, like attics, basements,

and crawl spaces. Running a slow drip of water from faucets during extremely cold weather can also help prevent pipes from freezing.

- Prepare the garden and yard. Trim trees and bushes away from your home to prevent heavy snow or ice damage. Clean up leaves and debris to prevent pests from finding shelter. Find BBB Accredited pest control if needed.

- Store patio furniture and other outdoor items. Put away or cover outdoor furniture, grills, and other summer items to protect them from winter weather.

- Stock up on winter supplies. Have salt or ice melt, shovels, and other winter supplies for snow and ice removal. Find BBB Accredited snow removal companies near you. Learn more about weatherizing your winter life.

- Sweep your chimney. If you have a fireplace, clean and inspect the chimney before using it. Ensure the damper works properly to prevent drafts when the fireplace is not used. Having the soot and possible blockages or creosote build-up helps reduce the risk of a chimney fire and can improve the efficiency of your fireplace. BBB.org is a great place to find a chimney sweep near you.

- Reverse ceiling fans. In the colder months, you want your fan to move the warm air down, which means having your blades turn clockwise.

- Test backup generators. If you have a backup generator, test it to ensure it’s in working condition in case of power outages.

- Review your emergency plan. Review your family’s emergency plan, including how to stay warm, communication, and evacuation procedures.

- Check for BBB Accreditation for any professionals you may hire. Go to BBB.org to check the trustworthiness of a business. Do a general online search on a company to see what reviews and other information may be available.

## Country Companions

If you have a special animal companion in your life, send us a photo by email to [countryjournal@turley.com](mailto:countryjournal@turley.com) or by mail to Country Journal, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069. We look forward to hearing about your pet.





# Classifieds

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comcast.net.**

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**Retro World**  
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**Indian Orchard, MA**

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es, Musical instruments, type-  
writers, sewing machines, tools,  
radios, clocks, lanterns, lamps,  
kitchenware, cookware, knives,  
military, automotive, fire depart-  
ment, masonic, license plates,  
beer cans, barware, books, oil  
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1	2	3	4				
5	6	7	8				
9	10	11	12				
13	14	15	16				
17	18	19	20	Base Price \$26.00			
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00	23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00	27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00	31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00	35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00	39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ X per week rate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card:  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  Cash  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  
Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of charge: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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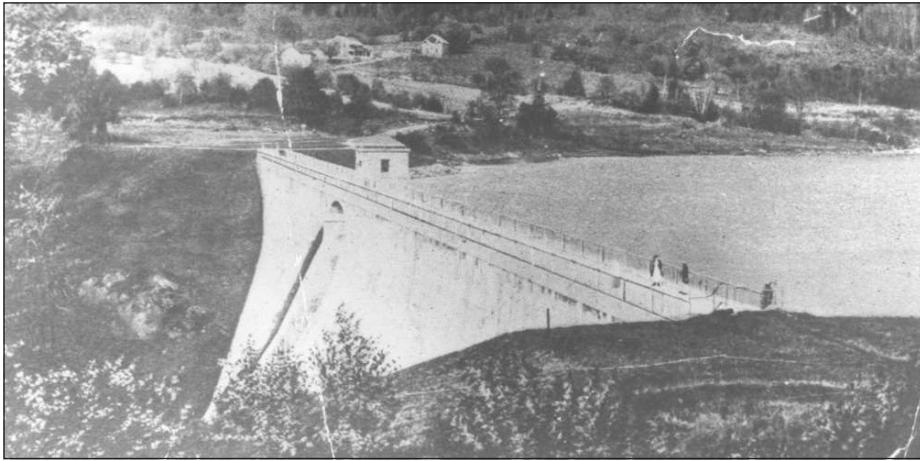


# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES

## Guided group hike explores history of Washington



Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers group hike, narrated by Tom Hoffman of Washington Historical Commission, stop a Farnum Dam, the scene of a murder.



This photo shows the new Farnum in Pittsfield shortly after it was built. It is now part of the October Mountain State Forest.



The Hilltown Hikers explore Dewey's iron quarry where stone from here was used to make hearths for furnaces in Lenox, Dalton and Bennington, Vermont.



This is a piece of what is believed to be a desk from the Congdon School.

Tom Hoffman of Washington Historical Commission and Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers Director narrated the November Guided Group Hike.

The hikers explored the once booming community around Sikes Mountain including the cellar holes of Richard Congdon, John McMahon, the Congdon School and Darius Dunham. They also toured the Chauncy Dewey Firestone Quarry for a four mile loop.

The town of Washington was incorporated in the year 1777 and was one of the first towns named after

George Washington, then still only a General. It is located in the hills of Central Berkshire County along what was once the main stage route from

Boston to Albany, New York. It has a population of just under 500 residents.

With more than 20,000 acres of forest and conservation land, including October Mountain State Forest, Washington is a great place to enjoy the natural beauty of Western Massachusetts. People may learn more about the history of Washington by visiting the town website at [www.washington-ma.gov](http://www.washington-ma.gov). Under the Historical Commission tab where Tom Hoffman has compiled interesting facts about its original residents including Richard Congdon.

Every day is a great day of history hiking in Western Massachusetts, now that the leaves are down. So people should consider getting outdoors and hike to find those cellar holes of our ancestors.



The Hilltown Hikers explore the cellar hole of the Richard Congdon's home.

*Submitted photos*

## WORTHINGTON

### Library lists upcoming events

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Library, 1 Huntington Road, hosts family playgroups on Mondays at 8:30 a.m. for infants and 9:45 a.m. for toddlers.

The Hilltown Family Center hosts the two playgroups each Monday morning for young children and their caregivers. This is a great space for infants and toddlers to socialize, be creative and develop early literacy skills. Gross motor skill development and beginning math, science, engineering and art are also incorporated. All are welcome.

The Spinning group meets every other Tuesday at 7 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 19. Participants should bring their latest spinning, knitting or crochet project. All are welcome.

On Thursdays at 6 p.m. a Community Bible Study will be held. The Hilltown Community Church hosts a weekly community bible study open

to the community. For questions, people may call Pastor Nick at 413-685-5934 or visit <https://hilltownchurch.churchtrac.com>.

A genealogy group meets the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m.-noon. The next meeting will be Saturday, Dec. 7. Participants will uncover branches of their family tree to learn their family's history and deepen connections with their ancestors. Also on Saturdays, the Dungeons and Dragons for children meet from noon-2 p.m. They will crawl dungeons, slay monsters and amass treasures with a fun group of adventurers.

Maker space is a dedicated space with a variety of craft materials, tape and glue and is open anytime the library is open. Donations are accepted for supplies. Unaccompanied children are welcome. The last Saturday of the month, Nov. 30 at 4 p.m. the Book Club will meet. This month's pick is "All Systems Red" by Martha Wells.

### Wreath Workshop on Dec. 1

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Gardeners are hosting their annual Wreath Making Workshop on Sunday, Dec. 1 at 1 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, 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. The event will be inside and numbers are limited. Reservations are required to ensure space and greenery. People should RSVP to Elodi McBride by calling 413-238-4466 by Monday, Nov. 25.

### Holiday show, sale this weekend

WORTHINGTON – The Hilltown Artisans Guild will be holding their 2024 Holiday Show and Sale at Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Road, Route 112. on Saturday, Nov. 16 and Sunday, Nov. 17 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. both days.

There is no charge for admission and light refreshments will be provided. The show and sale will be featuring the special work of talented artists

and craftspeople from the Hilltowns and beyond. Available works will include fine art (paintings, photography and prints), handcrafted cards, pottery, jewelry, tote bags, clocks, adult coloring books, art calendars, woven, fiber and wood items and many more unique products.

For more information, people may email [HilltownArtisansGuild@gmail.com](mailto:HilltownArtisansGuild@gmail.com).