

"There is nothing more important than a good, safe secure home." – Rosalynn Carter

# 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

### Gateway Education Foundation seeks support

Wendy Long  
Correspondent

With Giving Tuesday approaching, the Gateway Education Foundation Board of Directors announced that they are in need of funding to sustain and grow in their mission "to fund educational endeavors that enhance and inspire students in the Gateway Regional School District."

Three times each year, the Board releases applications for funding to teachers and staff for projects they wish to do, but need funding for. After each round, the board reviews and approves projects that fit the GEF mission, meet the needs of a wide range of students and will inspire students while elevating their education.

GEF's ability to fully fund all of the requests is challenging. Superintendent Kristen Smidy is an ex-officio member of the board; her knowledge of the district's budget ensures that GEF is awarding funds that are beyond the district's resources. As part of good stewardship, she and the Board also ensure that things like technology projects will work within the district's technology infrastructure.

That said, the last three rounds of applications have



Preschool students model their outdoor gear, courtesy of the Gateway Education Foundation.

Submitted photos



World History students speak with a Holocaust survivor and have the opportunity to hear their story and ask questions, in a project funded by the Gateway Education Foundation.

EDUCATION, page 3

## Montgomery Library hosts wreath making



Laurie Flechsig and Julie Pike taught a wreath making workshop at the Montgomery Library Saturday, Nov. 18



This woman attached pinecones to the greens.

Submitted photos

## HUNTINGTON

### Senior Citizen Brunch and Concert open to Gateway town residents

By Wendy Long  
Correspondent

Superintendent Kristen Smidy announced that Gateway Regional Middle High School, 12 Littleville Road, will hold its annual Senior Citizen Brunch and Concert on Wednesday, Dec. 6.

This event is free of charge to all senior citizens from the Gateway hilltowns. Brunch will be served in the Gateway Middle School High School cafeteria at 9:30 a.m. Director Tasha Hartley reports that her department is "thoroughly excited, once again, to be hosting our annual brunch." On the menu is savory vegetable quiche, sausage patties, fresh fruit salad and freshly baked in-house cinnamon rolls. Coffee, tea and juice will also be provided.

At 10:30 a.m. student musical groups, under the direction of Gateway Regional Middle School/High School Instrumental Music Director Beth Guertin and Elementary Music/Choral Director Daniel Rose, will offer a concert in the Gateway Performing Arts Center. The final program is still under development, but Guertin reports that the concert is likely to open with an elementary song, followed by the high school jazz band, a choral set, seventh and eighth grade band, the high school show choir, and conclude with the high school band.

"As for highlights, the grade 7 and 8 band will bring lots of energy to play a fun program and the jazz band will be highlighting their work on solos with some combo performances," said Guertin. "Concert Band will bring the strength of a well balanced group to the stage."

Those who wish to attend are asked to R.S.V.P. to their town's Council on Aging Coordinator no later than Friday, Dec. 1. They may call Margit at 413848-4279 extension 400 for Blandford; Kiersen at 413-354-7735 for Chester; Kat at 413-512-5205 for Huntington; Lois at 413-623-9990 for Middlefield; Anne-Marie at 413-862-3257 for Montgomery and Carrie at 413-862-6217 for Russell residents.



PAGE 3

Becket.....12	Hilltowns .....2	Otis.....8	Schools & Youth.....3
Blandford.....6	Huntington.....3	Plainfield .....7	Westhampton .....7
Business Directory.....8	Middlefield.....12	Pittsfield .....8	Williamsburg.....8
Classifieds.....11	Northampton .....6	Public Notices.....10	Worthington.....6
Goshen.....10	Opinion.....4, 5	Puzzle Page.....9	



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 1 7 8 6

## HILLTOWNS

# MBI seeks public feedback on Internet for All Plan

WESTBOROUGH – The Massachusetts Broadband Institute launched a public comment period to gather feedback about the state's Internet for All Plan, which began Tuesday, Nov. 14 through Friday, Dec. 15.

In order to deploy over \$145 million in funds towards broadband and digital equity allocated to the state through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, MBI is gathering input from residents, municipalities, and organizational stakeholders across Massachusetts both online and via mail. A year of planning efforts has established two documents to guide the state's Internet for All Plan – a Statewide Digital Equity Plan and the Initial Proposal for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program.

Residents are encouraged to review the plans and provide direction, suggestions, and data in response to direct future digital equity efforts and community investments. The Executive Summary of these plans is available in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole,

Portuguese, and Simplified Chinese.

The SDEP is a vision for state-wide digital equity that will guide broad strategies and goals. The plan is in response to federal requirements for the Digital Equity Act, a \$2.75 billion federal program part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The Initial Proposal for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program outlines funding and deployment of high-speed internet access across the state. The document is in response to federal requirements for the BEAD Program, created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and provides \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed internet access across all 50 states.

Together, these documents will serve as the roadmap for millions of federal dollars and invest in those most impacted by the digital divide. To provide input, it is recommended to read the Executive Summary or the plan in full detail. After reading the plan documents, submit comments electronically or submit typed or written public comments using the printable form which

can be mailed to:

Massachusetts Broadband Institute, Attn: MBI Public Comment, 75 North Drive, Westborough, MA 01581

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) suggests the following tips for an effective comment:

Support your comment with substantive data, facts, and opinions. When possible, provide your lived experience in your comment.

Clearly identify the section within the Plan that you are commenting on and include the section number. Although comments should be clear and concise, there is no minimum or maximum length for an effective comment.

If you disagree with an aspect of the Plan, suggest an alternative and include an explanation and/or analysis of how the alternative might meet the same objective or be more effective.

Include pros and cons and trade-offs in your comment. Consider other points of view and respond to them with your views. Include examples of how the proposed programs and activities would

impact your life and work positively or negatively.

In addition to these plans, MBI is conducting digital equity work across the state through its Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program and the Digital Equity Partnerships Program. The Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program is currently accepting applications and provides technical assistance to 62 cities and towns statewide. The Digital Equity Partnerships Program consists of six connectivity initiatives, including enhanced WiFi Access, modernization of public space internet, connectivity initiatives for those facing economic hardship, digital literacy efforts, device distribution and refurbishment, and education, outreach, and adoption programming.

In October, MBI launched the Gap Networks Grant Program, supported by \$145 million in federal funds, to expand access in unserved and underserved locations throughout Massachusetts. The program is currently accepting applications and the deadline for the first round is Dec. 11.

## Westfield Athenaeum to host wine taste fundraiser

WESTFIELD – The annual wine taste fundraiser to support the renovation campaign for the Westfield Athenaeum has been set for Friday, Dec. 1 from 6-8:30 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Westfield Athenaeum, 6 Elm St.

"A Storybook Holiday" has become the unofficial kickoff for the holiday season. Super Phipps Liquors has agreed to be the lead sponsor once again and will offer a varied sampling of selected wines for the event. Super Phipps, a locally owned company in business since 1973, carries an exceptional array of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, including an extensive selection of imported and domestic beer, hundreds of different wines and a wide variety of liquors and mixers to meet every taste and budget.

Hot and cold hors d'oeuvres will be served with the assistance of the Westfield Technical Academy Culinary Arts program. Live music will be offered by Pete

Grimaldi's Third Millennium Trio and a popular fresh holiday floral arrangement raffle will be held.

Tickets are \$50 each and are available now, at the main circulation desk or online through Paypal by visiting westath.org. Online tickets will be held at the door.

This is the major fundraising event organized by the all-volunteer Board of Trustees of the Athenaeum. Monies raised through this fundraiser will support the restoration and upgrade of the main room of the Adult Library, the Great Hall, which is the third phase of the total building renovation project begun in 2016.

The Athenaeum, a private, non-profit organization in continuous service to the residents of Westfield and surrounding communities for over 150 years, is grateful to receive much of its funding through city and state grants. Private donations, restricted endowments and fundraising efforts are needed to close the budget gap.

## Berkshire County forum scheduled for Nov. 29

SHEFFIELD — State Senator Paul W. Mark and state Rep. William "Smitty" Pignatelli invite the public to a "ReMarks and Refreshments" forum on Wednesday, Nov. 29.

The legislators welcome the public to ask questions or offer up comments about opportunities and/or challenges facing the Town of Sheffield and Western Massachusetts. Senator Mark and Representative Pignatelli will also share some legislative updates from the State House. This event is open to the public and will be held at the Sheffield Town Hall, 21 Depot Square, on Wednesday, Nov. 29 from 9-10:30 a.m.

Senator Mark's Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin, and Hampshire District consists of 57 municipalities in

western Massachusetts. He is the chair of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts, and Cultural Development.

Representative Pignatelli's Third Berkshire District consists of the Berkshire County towns of Alford, Becket, Dalton, Egremont, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Richmond, Sandisfield, Sheffield, Stockbridge, Tyringham, Washington, and West Stockbridge. He is the vice chair of the Joint Committee on Rules and vice chair of the House Committee on Rules.

The Sheffield ReMarks and Refreshments event is one in a series of public forums Senator Mark is organizing in an effort to reach all 57 communities.

## Fraudulent phone calls warning

BOSTON – Illegitimate calls are being made claiming to be from the Massachusetts Office of the State Treasurer.

The calls state, "you owe money to the Treasury to avoid an arrest for drug possession." According to Treasurer

Goldberg, these calls are a scam and have not been made by Treasury.

The Treasurer's office does not call people to collect money. If people receive a call like this, they should call the Treasurer's office immediately at 617-367-6900 to confirm legitimacy.

## Senator Mark announces staff office hours in Hampshire County

BOSTON – State Senator Paul W. Mark announces today that his staff will host office hour in Williamsburg on Tuesday, Nov. 28.

Residents of any of the 57 municipalities in the Senator's Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire

District are encouraged to ask for assistance with issues involving any state agency or to share ideas on current or potential state legislation. Appointments are not required. Hours are Tuesday, Nov. 28 from 1-3 p.m. Town Offices, 141 Main St., Haydenville.

## Clark Art Institute to host historical avante-garde lecture

WILLIAMSTOWN – On Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 5:30 p.m., the Clark Art Institute's, 225 South St., Research and Academic Program presents a free lecture by Rakhee Balaram (State University of New York at Albany / Clark Fellow).

In it she questions the historiography concerning Rabindranath Tagore's

art to open up new questions about the historical avant-garde and its limits. This lecture looks to South America and Japan to consider the genesis of Tagore's drawings and paintings, which were exhibited in Paris in the wake of the celebrated African and Oceanic exhibition in Paris in 1930. Balaram draws on scientific, economic and legal

discourses, and both cross-cultural analysis and popular culture to examine Tagore's erasures, drawings, and paintings, which offer revolutionary perspectives on current debates in the field.

Balaram is associate professor of global art and art history at State University of New York at Albany. In spring 2024, Balaram will be a Scholar-

in-Residence at INHA (Institute National d'Histoire de l'Art) in Paris. Accessible seats available; for information, people may call 413 458 0524. A reception will be held at 5 p.m. in the Manton Research Center reading room precedes the event. For more information, people may visit clarkart.edu/events.

## Enrollment now open in Barnes' Aviation Explorer Post and Club 1903



WESTFIELD – Aviation Explorer Post and Club 1903 meet monthly all year at Westfield-Barnes Airport Conference Room.

The program led by Heather MacInnes is beginning its second year of operation this month. Youth enrollment is now open for all youth ages 11-20.

Youth hear from speakers in all

aspects of aviation as well as participate in hands on learning. Field trips to aviation businesses and attractions occur at least quarterly or more. Upcoming trips include a trip to MedFlight Ambulance Service, a training weekend at H.A. Moses Reservation and a trip to Washington D.C. in April to visit aviation museums and attractions.

Aviation Exploring compliments other programs for youth that serve young people in aviation careers. Exploring is year-round, however, youth may participate based on their own availability.

For more information and to join, they should visit [Tinyurl.com/BAF-Explorers](http://Tinyurl.com/BAF-Explorers).

# HUNTINGTON

## RUN FOREST RUN



This flock of wild turkeys were roaming around Huntington.

Turley Photo by Deborah Daniels

## Parking ban runs now through April 15

HUNTINGTON – The Huntington Police Department, in conjunction with the Highway Department, has announced that the town's annual parking ban is now in effect.

It began on Nov. 15 and will remain until April 15, 2024. During the parking ban, it is unlawful to park on any street in the town of Huntington between the hours of 8 p.m.-7 a.m.

"Basically, the parking ban is to allow clean up for the Highway

Department to provide faster service, without waking people up at 2 a.m. to move their cars," explained Police Chief Robert Garriepy.

Exceptions are that parking is allowed in the parking area on Federal Street behind Town Hall along the river side and the public parking lot on Prospect Street behind Huntington Liquors on the side closest to Prospect Street.

The Police Department, and in

cases where snow removal is impeded, the Highway Superintendent, will order all vehicles in violation to be towed at the owner's expense. Violators will pay a fine for each violation to the Parking Clerk, as set in Chapter 90, Section 20A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Anyone with questions may call the Huntington Highway Department at 413-512-5204 or 413-667-3504 for more information.

## EDUCATION

from page 1

only been able to fund between 37% and 62% of requests. Projects have either had to be scaled back or have gone unfunded completely.

"We are still struggling to bring GEF back to its former glory," Board President and Gateway Art Teacher Avery Wing reported. "Covid was tough for us."

Gateway staff design projects that "bring the world to Gateway, and bring Gateway to the world." These have included a visiting planetarium at Littleville, zoom interviews with Holocaust survivors for High School World History classes, outdoor rain gear to help preschoolers enjoy the outdoors every day, field trips and books and materials to fully engage students in the Visually Impaired Program and Spanish classes.

GEF asks all grant recipients to

issue an impact statement at the conclusion of their project. For example, the VIP staff reported that students were excited to be able to read braille editions of high-interest books when required for book reports. Teacher Kristina Schultz collected quotes from students who had visited the planetarium that came to Littleville. One student said, "I learned that some of the constellations have names that are zodiac signs and they tell a story." "I learned that the sun is our largest star but it isn't the largest star in the universe," another student said. "I always thought it was the biggest star."

On Monday, Nov. 13, the board held a meeting to review and determine funding for the latest round of applications. Chester Elementary School teacher Mikayla Menin requested \$500 to have Mystic Aquarium come

to the school with "touch tanks" that will bring sea animals to the 120 students at the school. At the other end of the district, Kelly Bartolo, who teaches in one of Gateway's two Chapter 74 (vocational) programs, was awarded \$255 to purchase three official jackets for this year's Skills USA competition. Skills USA is an organization that enables vocational students to demonstrate leadership and professional skills in their career areas by competing at the district, state and national levels. Competition rules state that students must wear an official "Skills USA" jacket during competition. Gateway's early childhood and welding students have been eligible to compete in Skills USA since 2022, but have had to wear outdated jackets donated to Gateway by Smith Vocational High School. Now, Gateway students will compete wearing

new and updated jackets.

All total, Gateway staff applied for \$8,971 in funding; thus far, the Board has awarded \$2,955 and is working on approving an additional \$3,555 once other possible sources are exhausted.

Anyone interested in supporting the Gateway Education Foundation may send checks payable to GEF, 12 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA 01050. People may also visit the Foundation's website at <https://www.gatewayeducationfoundation.org/> and donate online by clicking on the donate button and using a credit cards. People should save the date for the GEF Annual Trivia Night, which will be held Saturday, March 23 at Stanton Hall. This fun event pits teams of supporters against each other for bragging rights on general knowledge and this year will feature a new host, Steve Nagle.

## SCHOOLS & YOUTH

### Students statewide encouraged to submit contest applications

BOSTON –TheMassachusetts Department of Transportation announces the second annual, "Name A Snowplow," contest for statewide elementary school students in Massachusetts.

The contest seeks to solicit names for 12 vehicles of MassDOT snowplows that will be in service for the upcoming 2023/2024 winter season. The purpose of the contest is to celebrate the snow and ice season and to help recognize the hard work and dedication shown by public works employees and contractors during the winter season. Winning applicants will be announced by Friday, Dec. 22.

"This contest is a great way to celebrate the winter season in New England,

encourage the creativity of our young people, and to thank all the dedicated members of our crews who keep our roads and bridges cleared during severe weather," said Acting Transportation Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbits-Nutt. "We truly appreciate all the people who work on the front lines regardless of the weather in all sectors of the economy and this is one gesture of thanks."

"This contest was well received last winter and we know there are many good suggestions out there once again for naming our plows this season," said Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver, "We want to use the contest as a way to recognize our dedicated workforce and at the same time give students

an opportunity to have some fun naming plows as it helps connect young people with the public servants who do the work."

Applications for the Snowplow Naming Contest are due on Friday, Dec. 1 by 5 p.m. They may be submitted by visiting an online portal at <https://www.mass.gov/forms/name-a-snowplow-contest-submission>. There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted per school. The contest winners will be invited to participate in a scheduled snowplow unveiling event.

A selection panel composed of MassDOT employees will choose two elementary school classroom winners that are located within each of the six

Highway Division districts. The winning submissions will be evaluated based on two grade-level categories: kindergarten through fourth grade and fifth grade through eighth grade.

During the first snowplow naming contest last winter, the winning names were: Flurry Fighter, Luke Snowwalker, Plower Ranger, Sherlock Snowmes, Snowdrop, Arctic Beast, Sled Zeppelin, Snow day No Way, Blizzard Wizard, Snow Big Deal, Snow Time to Lose, and Blizzard of Oz. These names which were placed on the sides of plow trucks a year ago remain on those vehicles.

For more information on the contest, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/name-a-snowplow-contest-2023-24>.

### Exchange program offers students opportunity to study abroad

Qualified high school students are offered a unique opportunity to explore the world by spending an academic year, semester or summer in Europe, Asia, North or South America, Australia or South Africa as part of the ASSE International Student Exchange Program.

A non-profit, public benefit organization, ASSE is dedicated to promoting closer ties of friendship between the United States and other countries by fostering intercultural understanding

through youth exchange programs.

Students, 15 to 18 years old, qualify on the basis of academic performance, character references and a genuine desire to experience life abroad with a volunteer host family. Prior knowledge of the host country's language is not a requirement. Scholarships are available and are based on academic performance, leadership skills and financial need.

Families abroad are carefully screened and students do not need to know the language of the host country

prior to departure, but will acquire the language skills through experiencing the day-to-day local culture and attending regular high school classes along with their new teenage friends.

ASSE also provides the experience of a lifetime to American families, who are interested in hosting an international student from Spain, Italy, Germany, Ukraine, Thailand, Japan and many other countries. These exceptional young students will attend the local American high school for an academic year or semester.

Students or families interested in learning more about becoming an ASSE exchange student or host family should call ASSE at 1-800-677-2773, visit [www.asse.com](http://www.asse.com) or send an email to [asseusaeast@asse.com](mailto:asseusaeast@asse.com).

ASSE International, formerly American Scandinavian Student Exchange, is a non-profit, public benefit, organization was founded by the Swedish Ministry of Education and cooperates closely with the Canadian Provincial Ministries of Education.

This paper publishes birth, engagement, wedding and significant anniversary announcements free of charge.

Simply log on to our web site, choose the paper you want the announcement to appear in, then use our SUBMISSION link to email your information.



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# OPINION

## GUEST COLUMN



## Can I voluntarily suspend my Social Security payments?

Dear Rusty

*My wife retired in 2015 and is receiving Social Security. I am past my full retirement age and I still work. I recently filed for Social Security benefits and received my first payment earlier this month and my benefits are around three times my wife's. I now find that, due to other income, I am having some regrets about filing for Social Security, as the taxes will be complicated. So, my questions are:*

*If I do a "Voluntary Suspension", can my wife still apply to get up to 50% of my benefits, or do I have to be "actively" receiving Social Security benefits? In other words, does the "Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015" prevent this?*

*If I do a "Voluntary Suspension", how soon could I "restart" my benefits?*

**Signed: Having Second Thoughts**

### Dear Second Thoughts

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 closed a loophole which previously allowed someone to file for their Social Security retirement benefit in order for their marital partner to claim a spousal benefit, after which the primary beneficiary could suspend their own benefit and allow it to grow to maximum at age 70. That "file and suspend" option went away in April of 2016; thus, your wife cannot claim her spousal benefit while your Social Security retirement benefits are suspended you must be "actively" receiving benefits for your wife to get benefits on your record.

Nevertheless, because you've already reached your full retirement age, you can voluntarily suspend your benefit payments at any time to allow it to continue growing by simply calling Social Security at your local office or at the national number 1-800-772-1213 and asking them to do so. Your wife will not receive her spousal benefits for any months your benefits are suspended, but she would continue to get her own SS retirement amount, only the spousal portion of her monthly amount would be suspended.

You will be able to restart your benefits at any time by calling Social Security again and asking that your benefits be resumed. You can suspend and restart your benefits as needed (no restriction on how many times), but they will only start/resume the suspension effective with the month following the month you call. And, as you likely already know, for each month your benefits are suspended you will earn Delayed Retirement Credits resulting in a higher payment amount later.

Just for clarity, voluntary suspension of benefits is only available to those who have reached full retirement age but is an excellent way to increase your monthly Social Security payment. Your benefit will grow by .667% for each month suspended and, if your benefit is still suspended when you turn 70 years old, Social Security will automatically resume payments at that time, at your higher maxi-

**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.



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Biden administration must strengthen Packers and Stockyards Act

As we sit down to our holiday tables to consume turkeys, hams and roast beef, we should be mindful of the corporate abuses and anti-competitive behaviors in the livestock and poultry industry.

This unprecedented control has driven livestock and poultry farmers out of business and

off their farms at alarming rates. Consumers are facing skyrocketing prices at the grocery store while corporations like JBS, Smithfield, and Tyson Foods line their pockets with record profits. It's enough to give a hungry diner some serious heartburn.

The Packers and Stockyards Act is a 102-year-old law that was intended to protect farmers and ranchers from concentrated, abusive monopoly power in the livestock industry. Initially the P&S Act was very successful at leveling the economic playing field, but in the 1980s the courts began eroding its power, allowing corporations to gain unprecedented control over meat and poultry production.

In June of 2021, President Biden issued the historic Executive Order Promoting Competition in

the American Economy, in which he charged the U.S. Department of Agriculture to strengthen this landmark law. So far the USDA has published two very promising rules which will make important strides in strengthening the P&S Act, however, there is still a lot of work to be done and they are running out of time.

Currently, producers who have been

harmed by unfair practices must prove harm to the entire

industry — a prohibitively high burden of proof that protects monopolies from legal action. In

addition to defining unfair practices and undue preferences, the executive order directed the

USDA to clarify the law's original intent by removing this misinterpreted requirement to

demonstrate sector-wide harm in order to bring action for market abuses.

With the election only one year away, the USDA must issue this rule as soon as possible or risk

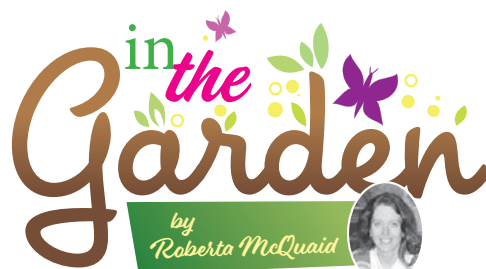
losing this window of opportunity. USDA Secretary Vilsack previously failed to accomplish this critical task under the Obama administration. The longer they delay, the more farmers we will lose. Since 1970, the farmer's share of the consumer dollar has plummeted from around 70% to 37%. Between 2002 and 2017, the U.S. has lost 40% of its dairy farms, 20% of hog farms, and 68% of feedlots. Today, the four largest processors in each sector control 70% of the market for hogs, 60% for chicken, 62% for sheep and lambs, and 85% for cattle.

So urge your elected officials to put pressure on the USDA for a swift release of the missing Packers and Stockyards Act rules.

**Matt L. Barron**  
Chesterfield

## GUEST COLUMN

### Garland and wreaths a fun DIY project



I spent the morning wrapping garland around lampposts in preparation for Old Sturbridge Village's "Christmas by Candlelight" program.

Although I used to balk at decorating prior to Thanksgiving, it's a must at work, where so much needs to be ready for the first day of the program, next Friday, Nov. 24. The garland is beautiful - a mix of cedar and fir.

The smell of the cedar isn't at all familiar from my childhood Christmases, but I love it as an adult. What makes the garland so pretty is the variation in textures.

After the decorations are up at the Village, I turn to decorating at home. I love to sit on the floor of my living room with all types of greens strewn before me on an old bed sheet.

I make a wreath or two for our house and I always make one to give to a dear friend as an annual birthday present.

I encourage you to try your hand at wreath and garland making. It's really the same principle, with one made on a circular frame and the other made on a cord of ribbon or rope the length you need for decorating.

As mentioned, the key to success in wreath and garland-making is having a variety of greens to choose from. From airy white pine to rigid spruce, wispy arborvitae to dense juniper, pointy-leaved holly to minute boxwood, all look great together.

Balsam and fir tips pruned from the Christmas tree are a logical addition. Then add some budded Pieris, gilded birch branches and voila! - you have a unique combination.

Top it off with pinecones, winterberries and even sumac for a stunning grouping.

It's not hard to find different types of greens. First, scour your neighborhood.

Many of the plants I mentioned make their homes in our landscapes. I regularly prune this time of year purposely to use the clippings in my decorating.

**GARDEN**, page 5

## EDITORIAL POLICY

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# OPINION

## HILLTOWN HISTORY

### Pumpkin pie and Thanksgiving

By Deborah Daniels  
Correspondent

Thanksgiving is upon us and our thoughts turn to our stomachs because pretty much that is what we do on this day, eat.

For sure we gather and share a bountiful table with friends and family. While turkey is the main event, pumpkin pie is the happy closer to this meal. Mince meat pies once reigned right up there with pumpkin pie as a tradition. The original mince meat pie was nothing like the sweetened one your grandmother served.

People should read all the ingredients they used in the mince pies back in 1916. The harvest celebration would never have come about if it hadn't been for Sarah Josepha Hale (1788-1879). She was a woman who tirelessly campaigned to five Presidents for a Thanksgiving holiday to be established. She was a persistent pain in the pumpkin you might say.

It was President Abraham Lincoln, who finally heeded the call and established Thanksgiving as a national holiday in 1863. He wanted this holiday to help heal the nation recovering from a Civil War. Washington's birthday and Independence Day were the only other national holidays at this time.

Alas Southerners chose sweet potato pie boycotting the northern pumpkin pie, which was associated with New England, so, so much for bridging the north and south with a Thanksgiving holiday.

Sarah Hale was the editor of Godey's Lady Book for 40 years. She was considered a very important influencer of American taste. It must be pointed out that her Lady's Book had over 150,000 subscribers in both the North and the South. It also bears highlighting that she organized a craft fair at Quincy Market in Boston and raised \$30,000 for the construction of the Bunker Hill Monument. And that was a lot of quilts and pies sold. She was a mover and shaker for her time and she liked a pumpkin pie on the Thanksgiving table. She wrote often of this conviction.

Early versions of pumpkin pie consisted of alternating pumpkin slices with apple slices between pie crust.

Sometimes the pumpkin was fried. The French were the first to sweeten pumpkin pie with milk, sugar and butter. The colonists were known to hollow out the pumpkin and cook the puree with milk and spices inside the gourd.

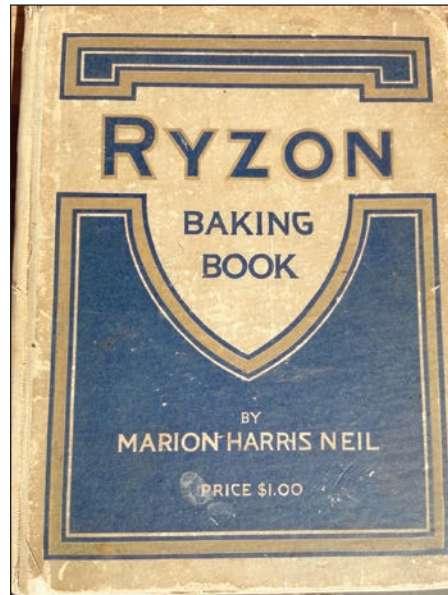
Pumpkins were easy to grow and required little care so they became an important food source. Pumpkin was substituted for flour in bread making, they added it to flip, a beverage of beer, rum and sugar that was heated with a red hot poker iron so it would froth and they made pumpkin ale. Oh those early Americans were creative and they were hungry.

Consider how that orange orb was transformed into a pumpkin pie. It had to be gutted of seeds, peeled of its skin, cut up and boiled for hours to create that pumpkin puree or it was roasted and strained, not much of a holiday for the cook.

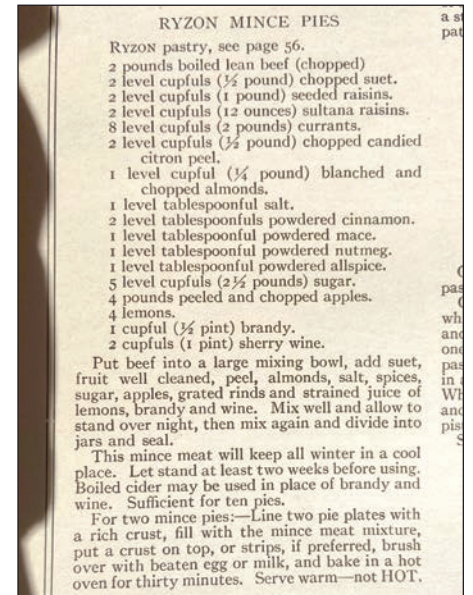
It was a lot of work so everyone was relieved when Libby's meat canning business in Chicago came up with the idea to can pumpkin. They first started canning pumpkin in 1920. They put the first pumpkin pie recipe on the back of the can in 1929. It became the accepted standard recipe for pumpkin pie. Oh everyone has their secret version of pumpkin pie, but the tradition was set with Libby's recipe. It also made Illinois the pumpkin capitol of America in terms of pumpkin production.

The Dickinson pumpkin is the preferred pumpkin, selected for its superior texture and flavor. Hold onto your fork because these pumpkins aren't orange. They are tan pumpkins with smooth skin, more the color of butternut squash. They are more flavorful than orange pumpkins. Libby's canned pumpkin delivered the pumpkin taste you expect, some 90 million pies worth of canned pumpkin sold each year.

What of pumpkin spice? This is the traditional spice additive to pumpkin pie: cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg. These have been used from early on and gave the pie its signature taste. It has morphed into many fall recipes for bread, cake, pudding and beverages. Pumpkins do grow on all the continents except Antarctica. People can plant the seeds



This Ryzon cookbook is from 1916. Ryzon was a manufacturer of baking soda.



This recipe for mince pie was a labor intensive effort. Submitted photos



Jumbo pumpkins on display. Imagine trying to peel and cut up that whopper for a pie.



A slice of pumpkin pie is enhanced with some whip cream.

of their pumpkin in June and in 90 -120 days they will be able to harvest their own home grown pumpkins.

Another pumpkin treat is to bake the seeds in a little butter and salt for a superfood snack. Did I mention how pumpkin is a low fat, low calorie, high

fiber, rich in Vitamin A, C and potassium food? It is.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving feast. Be grateful for the abundance of farmers, who work hard to bring food to our table. Pass on the attitude of gratitude.

Happy Thanksgiving!

## SECURITY

from page 4

mum monthly amount.

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 [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC. . NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org).

## GARDEN

from page 4

The key to a good cut is not to leave stubs- always snip next to a side branch.

Cemeteries and vacant lots are also great spots to get a variety of greens. But be sure to ask permission beforehand.

Regardless, kindly take only what you need and space your cuts out evenly around the plant.

Making a wreath is easy. Start with a wire coat hanger opened up into a circle.

Attach some pliable wire to it - 22 gauge is a good choice. Then, wrap little bunches of greens to the base one after another.

Be careful to lay them alongside, not on top of each other. You can make a wreath of just one type of green at a time, or make mixed "bouquets" for your bunches.

When you reach the end of the wreath, hide the last bunch under the first and secure the wire. You can easily make a loop for hanging, or use the hook that came with the coat hanger.

You can attach a bow to the front and insert some berries or pinecones on wire picks to jazz it up a bit.

Garland making follows the same principle. Working on a taut cording or rope is important for success.

If you are going to be making a lot of garland I recommend "tying off" the ends of the cording or securing them somehow to your work surface. I've done it with duct tape or with the cord knotted to nails in my work bench.

For me, working in a left to right manner seems natural. I use the pliable wire to secure the bunches of greens one after the other to the cording.

Sometimes I wait to embellish the garland with cones or berries until after it is set up around my doorway or wrapped around the lamppost. That way you'll be sure they aren't hidden or bending funny.

I hope that you will be encouraged to try your hand at wreath or garland making this year! It's quickly become one of my favorite Christmas traditions and it can be the same for you, too!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



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## WORTHINGTON

### COA hosts holiday luncheon

WORTHINGTON – The Worthington Council On Aging is hosting a dine-in holiday luncheon on Monday, Dec. 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the Comfort Kitchen and Bar, Main Street, Huntington.

The menu includes stuffed chicken breast with sides and dessert. People should RSVP by calling 413-238-1999. They should clearly state their name,

phone number and number of meals and address if they are need of transportation on the answering machine. Seating is limited.

Donations of unused socks would be appreciated to be distributed to local homeless shelters.

People may call Phyllis Dassatti at 413 238-5962 for additional information if needed.

### Town holds tree lighting ceremony

WORTHINGTON – The holiday tree lighting ceremony will take place Sunday, Dec. 3 at 4 p.m. at the Town Pond.

Lighting will take place once it is dark around 5 p.m. Santa will arrive with help from the Worthington Fire Department at 4:45 p.m. with sirens blaz-

ing. Sant will have something special for the children. There will be carolers throughout the evening.

The Worthington Parks and Recreation Department hosts the event. There will be a fire pit and light refreshments, coffee, hot chocolate, cookies, soup and more.

## BLANDFORD

### Blandford hosts seasonal activities

BLANDFORD – The seasonal activities will continue at the Blandford Country Store and Bistro the first weekend in December.

Along with the Firemen's Association Pancake Breakfast and the Craft Fair, Jennifer and Greg Girard

will have their special warm apple cider donuts, hot chocolate, and a special decorate and ornament activity for children. Saturday, Dec. 2 promises to be a very full day. All the goodies and activities at the store are free and all are invited to taste and participate.

## NORTHAMPTON

### Library announces programs

NORTHAMPTON – Forbes Library, 20West St., will host "Job Readiness Workshop: Resumes that Rock," on Wednesday, Nov. 29 from 1:30-2:45 p.m.

Participants will learn about three types of resumes and which one will market them best; how to add value with accomplishment statements and how to make their resume look professional. During this workshop, participants will learn the best practices for resume writing and how to make theirs rock. Examples and a handout will be available for viewing and for future reference.

People may register on JobQuest or call the Greenfield office at 800-457-2603 or 413-774-4361 on Wednesday, Nov. 29 at 10 am the day of to sign up. This will be a "hybrid" workshop.

"Power of Women in Science Fiction: Naomi Alderman on Writing Dystopian Worlds" will be a virtual author talk on Thursday, Nov. 30 from 3-4 p.m. People must register to attend. Bestselling and award-winning author, Naomi Alderman will join us to talk about her new book, "The Future."

Local author Maureen Callahan Smith will be reading from her memoir, "Grace Street: A Sister's Memoir of Grief and Gratitude," on Thursday, Nov. 30 from 6-7:30 p.m. Clinical social worker Callahan Smith writes from the heart about her experience accompanying her sister, Kathy, through a late-stage cancer diagnosis, sustained by friendship and family love. The author will be signing copies of her book, also available at her website, Andover Bookshop, or wherever people buy their books. This book is co-sponsored by the Cancer Connection with 15% of book sales going toward supporting their work.

"The Power of Truths: Cinematic Chronicles of Racism and Resistance" with Self-Evident Education will take

place Tuesday, Dec. 5 from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Smith College Campus Center, Carroll Room, 100 Elm St.

This is a double film screening with Self-Evident Education: "If You Cross This Boundary We All Die," about Ellen and William Craft's journey of self-emancipation, and "A Mother's Bond," the story of Catherine Linda, an enslaved woman who was brought to Northampton in 1845.

Following the films will be a panel discussion featuring Ilyon Woo, author of Master Slave Husband Wife (about Ellen and William Craft) and Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor, Associate Professor of History at Smith and author of Colored Travelers: Mobility and the Fight for Citizenship before the Civil War. Ousmane Power-Green, Director of Africana Studies at Clark University, will facilitate the discussion. Books will be available for purchase courtesy of Broadside Books and available to borrow at Forbes Library. This program is sponsored by Self-Evident Education, in partnership with Forbes Library, Smith College History Department and several community partners.

People are invited to stop by the library lobby and reading room to view a selection of art from the creative arts therapy program at the VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System in Leeds and from veterans at the Soldier On residential community. These pieces offer a lens into the creative capacity of veterans, all of whom are doing the important work of introspection and emotional healing - just "a stone's throw" from downtown Northampton. This is part of "A Stone's Throw: A Northampton Festival of Visual Art and Performance illuminating the experiences of Military Veterans and their Families." In partnership with A.P.E. and Central Hampshire Veteran Services.

### Cooley named one of top women led businesses

NORTHAMPTON – Cooley Dickinson Hospital was honored as one of the top women-led businesses in Massachusetts during an award ceremony last week.

The hospital, which is led by president and chief operating officer Lynnette Watkins, was ranked #21 on the list of 100 businesses statewide. The list was assembled by The Women's Edge, a non-profit organization that works to advance women in leadership positions. It was featured in the Boston Globe Magazine's annual "Women & Power" issue.

"Being acknowledged among the top 100 women-led businesses in the state is a testament to the dedication of Cooley Dickinson Hospital and our system Mass General Brigham,

to transforming the healthcare landscape with an emphasis on inclusivity and innovation," said Watkins. "Recognitions like this one fuel our commitment to advancing the quality of our care across the Pioneer Valley."

The Women's Edge ranks organizations by examining a number of variables including their revenue, diversity, operating budget, number of employees, and innovative projects.

The announcement was made Nov. 3 at the Boston Marriott Copley Place, with Mass General Brigham serving as presenting sponsor. The entire list can be found by visiting online at <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/11/03/magazine/this-years-top-100-women-led-businesses-in-massachusetts/>.

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# WESTHAMPTON

## Library lists December programs

WESTHAMPTON – The Westhampton Public Library is open Monday and Thursday from 2-8 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The library will be closed Saturday, Dec. 23 in observance of Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec. 25 in observance of Christmas Day and Monday, Jan. 1 in observance of New Year's Day. The library is open for in-person browsing and materials pickup as well as curbside pickup. To place a request for curbside pickup, people may either email westhampton@cwmars.org or call 413-527-5386.

Ongoing programs include COA Computer Class with Bob Miller on second and fourth Mondays from 10 a.m.-noon unless a holiday, Knitting Group on Mondays at 6 p.m., Scrabble Group on Tuesdays at 2 p.m., CFCE Playgroup on Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m., Book Group on the Fourth Tuesday at 7p.m., Walk-in Wellness Clinics with Westhampton's Public Health Nurse first and third Wednesdays from 10-11:30 a.m., Storytime on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. and Coffee and Chat Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-noon

After School Fun takes place Thursdays at 3:30 p.m.; LEGO Club first Thursday; Craft Club second Thursday; Nintendo Switch Happy Hour third Thursday; Comics Club fourth Thursday and Teen Craft Thursday, Dec. 21 at 6 p.m. This month's craft is a glitter snow globe. Materials are limited to eight participants and registration is required. Teens may register by emailing Emily at ewayne@cwmars.org.

Angela Griefen is the December / January artist. She is a member of the Hilltown Plein Air painters.

This current show at Westhampton Library is a compilation of paintings over the past several years.

Community Movie Night on Friday, Dec. 1 at 6:30 p.m. will be "Little Women" (2019) PG Directed by Greta Gerwig

The Yoga of Being will be held Monday, Dec. 4 from 6-7:30 p.m. This yoga session will be infused with meditative music and poetry. This is an especially helpful practice as we enter the winter season when bodies naturally begin to slow down but busy schedules urge us to speed up. No yoga experience required. Yoga mats, bolsters, and pillows will be provided. People should bring a blanket. They may bring their own yoga mat if you have one.

The class will be led by Westhampton resident, Teri Anderson. Teri is a certified interdisciplinary yoga instructor and Body-Mind Centering® somatic movement educator. She has been teaching yoga and movement for 20+ years. Her approach to yoga is slow, gentle and meditative with attention to body-mind awareness, comfort, and ease of movement. This program is sponsored by the Friends of Westhampton Public Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund.

Cooley Dickinson VNA and Hospice Information Series will hold Session 2 Navigating the Journey of Grief and Loss on Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 10:30 a.m. Session three is Making the Right Choice – Learn Options for Home Health Care on Tuesday, Jan. 2 at 10:30 a.m.

# PLAINFIELD



Mass. State Police Fire and Explosion Investigation unit members, from left, LT. Eric Desrochers, Sgt. Mark Reidy and Tpr. Michael O'Conner with K9 Greyson present program at the Plainfield Public Safety Complex Tuesday evening. Submitted photo

## Local firefighters gather to participate for fire training

PLAINFIELD – Fifty-one Hilltown firefighters from seven fire departments, Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Williamsburg and Worthington gathered at the Plainfield Safety Complex this past Tuesday evening to participate in a fire training program led by three members of the Mass State Police Fire and Explosions Investigations Unit.

This included LT. Eric Desrochers, from the Fire Marshall's Office in Stow, Sgt. Mark Reidy and Trooper/K9 handler Michael O'Connor with K9

Greyson, who stole the show!).

The program included a two hour power-point presentation, question and answer and a live demonstration of the K9 at work. The course was titled "Fire Investigation for the 1st Responder," a topic most hilltown firefighters have little training on. The MSP instructors showed ways firefighters can look at fire scenes and help investigators determine fire origin and cause. The K9, fresh out of the fire academy K9 program, showed how they are a real asset to investigators on a fire scene.

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**Deadline for photos and forms is Friday, December 6, 2023**

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## OTIS

# COA lists upcoming events

OTIS – The Otis Council on Aging lists upcoming events.

The Otis Senior Center will be open Wednesday, Nov. 29; Wednesday, Dec. 6; Wednesday, Dec. 13 and Wednesday, Dec. 27 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. and Monday, Dec. 4; Monday, Dec. 11; Monday, Dec. 18 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Senior Center will close early at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 20 for the holiday lunch at Pittsfield Country Club.

The Senior Center will be closed Monday, Dec. 25. The Food Pantry will be open Wednesday, Nov. 29; Wednesday, Dec. 6; Wednesday, Dec. 13; Wednesday, Dec. 20 and Wednesday, Dec. 27 from 9-11 a.m.

On Monday, Dec. 4; Monday, Dec. 11 and Monday, Dec. 18 Exercise Class will be held from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Exercise Class is open for all and is a free class. On Wednesday, Dec. 6 the foot nurse will be at the senior center from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

On Monday, Dec. 11, there will be haircuts from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. On Wednesday, Dec. 13, there will be the Carpenters Christmas Trip to Aqua Turf. On Friday Dec.15 there will be a Brown Bag lunch from 10-11 a.m. and CHP Wellness Van from 10 a.m.-noon.

On Wednesday, Dec. 27 Dietician Sherry Iodice from Elder Services will be at the Senior Center to give some tricks on health food options.

# Gingerbread house workshop scheduled for Dec. 9

OTIS – The Parks Commission will host a gingerbread house workshop on Saturday, Dec. 9 with two session 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and from 1-2:30 p.m. in the Otis Town Hall, One North Main Road.

A third session may be added at 3 p.m. if needed. Registration is required by visiting <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084BACA823A4FBC34-45406776-gingerbread>. Registration closes Saturday, Nov. 25.

There will be no drop ins.

The first gingerbread house per family is free for Otis residents and taxpayers. There is a cost of \$15 for each additional house for Otis residents and taxpayers and for non-Otis residents.

All payments are required to be received at the Otis Town Hall by Monday, Nov. 27. The Town Hall is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Mailing address is Town of Otis, P.O. Box 237, Otis, MA 01253.

# Community Health Programs to hold flu/COVID vaccine clinic

OTIS – The Community Health Programs mobile health care van will be at Otis Town Hall, 1 North Main Road, on Friday, Dec. 15 from 10 a.m.-noon for a COVID and flu vaccine clinic.

Walk-ins are welcome, but people

also may schedule an appointment by calling 413-528-0457.

The mobile health unit also does wellness checks, sick visits and will assist with signing up for SNAP benefits, Mass Health and more.

# Tree lighting to be held Dec. 2

OTIS – The first ever community tree lighting ceremony will take place Saturday, Dec. 2 at 4:30 p.m. at the Otis

Town Hall. Everyone is invited to attend. There will be a hot chocolate station, holiday caroling and a visit from Santa.

## PITTSFIELD

# Berkshire Green Drinks holds virtual gathering Dec. 13

PITTSFIELD – Berkshire Environmental Action Team Green Drinks will hold a virtual gathering by Zoom on Wednesday, Dec. 13 from 6-7:15 p.m.

BEAT staff will talk about the organization's important work of this past year and explore what comes next as the new year approaches. The discussion will be about BEAT's new Breathe Easy Berkshires program that is monitoring air quality in Pittsfield; the organization's continued work in improving aquatic and terrestrial wildlife connectivity and how volunteers can help; its efforts to eliminate plastic bags from local grocery stores, plus other Berkshire Zero Waste Initiative projects; the first phase of completed renovations at its Environmental Leadership and Education Center and what they have planned for this community space and its fight to prevent the construction of the Enbridge Project Maple pipeline and the expansion of private jet services in Massachusetts.

Pre-registration is required to attend this free event. People should register by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/Dec2023-Berks-Green-Drinks>.

Berkshire Environmental Action Team was established in 2003 when a

vernal pool at Berkshire Community College (BCC) was being threatened by the development of soccer fields on the campus. Over the past two decades, BEAT has taken on many fights and projects, often leading them and creating a path for environmental change and progress. BEAT's mission has remained the same: To protect the environment for wildlife in support of the natural world that sustains us all. However, the organization's vision and goals have continuously expanded and evolved.

Berkshire Green Drinks (formerly Pittsfield Green Drinks) is an informal gathering that takes place once a month. A guest speaker talks for about 30 minutes beginning at 6 p.m. and the presentation is followed by a discussion and question and answer. These nights are free and open to everyone with any environmental interest. The drinks aren't green but the conversations are. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join and bring along questions!

Berkshire Green Drinks is sponsored and organized by the Berkshire Environmental Action Team. For more information regarding Berkshire Green Drinks, people may email Chelsey Simmons, [chelsey@thebeatnews.org](mailto:chelsey@thebeatnews.org) or call 413.464-9402.

## WILLIAMSBURG

# Library offers holiday classics

WILLIAMSBURG – People are invited to join friends and neighbors for the annual reading of holiday classics that celebrate this time of wonder at the Meekins Library, 2 Williams St., on Sunday, Dec. 10. They include: "A Child's Christmas in Wales" by Dylan Thomas, "Sleep, Black Bear, Sleep" by Jane Yolen and Heidi E. Y. Stemple, "Cobweb Christmas" by Shirley Climo, "Chanukah Lights Everywhere" by Michael J. Rosen, "The Longest Night" by Marion Dane Bauer and "Latkes and Applesauce: A

Hanukkah Story" by Fran Manushkin.

Everyone is welcome. People may read or listen and enjoy holiday treats and warm drinks. People should bring something to share in the Williamsburg Neighbors Helping Neighbors Pantry or a warm something for the warm clothing collection.

For more information, people may call 413-268-7472 or 413-538-6489, email Daria D'Arienzo at [ddarlenzo@me.com](mailto:ddarlenzo@me.com) or visit the Meekins Library online at: [www.meekins-library.org/](http://www.meekins-library.org/).

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# THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

**ARIES**  
Mar 21/Apr 20  
It's important to pay attention to your physical health. It's key to give your body plenty of rest and healthy foods to strengthen your immune system.

**CANCER**  
Jun 22/Jul 22  
Cancer, do not turn anyone away if they come to you looking for assistance. Someone in need is likely to seek you out in the days to come and you should be ready.

**LIBRA**  
Sept 23/Oct 23  
Libra, you could feel sluggish a few days this week. Once some friends urge you to get out and do something, you'll quickly feel re-energized and ready to have a good time.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec 22/Jan 20  
Things may work out if you give them another chance. Don't throw in the towel on your ideas just yet. Figure out a new angle and then get started on a new course.

**TAURUS**  
Apr 21/May 21  
Something out of the ordinary may happen to you this week, Taurus. You don't know what to expect, but be aware of your surroundings and the people you meet.

**LEO**  
Jul 23/Aug 23  
There is no shame in taking a day off or slowing down for a breather. Spend the day in bed or lounging on the couch if you desire. Give yourself a break if you've been running around.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct 24/Nov 22  
Scorpio, failure can be a tough pill to swallow, but if you don't succeed at something you have to get back up and simply try again. Don't let one setback eat at you for long.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan 21/Feb 18  
Take the blinders or rose-colored glasses off. You can't handle a situation unless you know all of the facts and have a clear grasp of reality.

**GEMINI**  
May 22/Jun 21  
This is a perfect time to review your goals or to-do list, Gemini. If you don't have things jotted down, brainstorm with friends on what you may want to accomplish, then make plans.

**VIRGO**  
Aug 24/Sept 22  
If emotions are high, Virgo, you might need to figure out a way to relieve some stress. Turn on the music loudly and dance around in your home while singing along.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov 23/Dec 21  
Don't let your pride get in the way of rekindling a friendship Sagittarius. Rather than drum up old news, talk about the things you look forward to doing together.

**PISCES**  
Feb 19/Mar 20  
If things are starting to feel boring, it might be time for a change of pace, Pisces. Simple things like changing around the furniture or taking a new route home can help.

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															64				65

- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Nocturnal S. American rodent
  - 5. Requesting
  - 11. Give temporarily
  - 12. Happiness
  - 16. Military branch
  - 17. -, -, denotes past
  - 18. Middle Eastern city
  - 19. Air hostesses
  - 24. Partner to Pa
  - 25. Percussion instrument
  - 26. Popular computers
  - 27. Decrease light
  - 28. Valley in the Osh Region
  - 29. "To \_\_\_ his own"
  - 30. Absence of difficulty
  - 31. Notice announcing intended marriage read out in church
  - 33. Trims by cutting
  - 34. Impact
  - 38. Military member
  - 39. A French river
  - 40. Member of prehistoric people in Mexico
  - 43. Messenger ribonucleic acid
  - 44. Musician Clapton
  - 45. Greek sophist
  - 49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
  - 50. Narrow valley
  - 51. A way to disentangle
  - 53. Indicates not an issue (abbr.)
  - 54. Recommending
  - 56. Genus of legumes
  - 58. Friend to Larry and Curly
  - 59. Off-Broadway theater award
  - 60. Fencers
  - 63. Small Eurasian deer
  - 64. Denoting passerine birds
  - 65. Separate by category
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Colorless fluid part of blood
  - 2. Of a main artery
  - 3. Photographic equipment
  - 4. Confirms a point
  - 5. Developed over time
  - 6. Not the leader
  - 7. \_\_\_ Lang (country singer)
  - 8. Adults need one
  - 9. Nests of pheasants
  - 10. Antelopes
  - 13. One quintillion bytes (abbr.)
  - 14. Japanese three-stringed lute
  - 15. Type of cat
  - 20. Cools your home
  - 21. The ancient Egyptian sun god
  - 22. Pouches
  - 23. Trigraph
  - 27. Form of Persian spoken in Afghanistan
  - 29. \_\_\_ route
  - 30. Body part
  - 31. Bridge building degree
  - 32. Indicates position
  - 33. Political action
  - 34. Tasty snack
  - 35. Part of a quadruped
  - 36. Locate
  - 37. Pitching statistic
  - 38. Of I
  - 40. City in Utah
  - 41. Football players in the trenches
  - 42. Hammer is one
  - 44. A "nightmarish" street
  - 45. Performers
  - 46. Slang for cut or scrape
  - 47. More breathable
  - 48. Most slick
  - 50. Provokes
  - 51. Home to college's Flyers
  - 52. Sodium
  - 54. Large fish of mackerel family
  - 55. Zero
  - 57. \_\_\_ and behold
  - 61. The Palmetto State
  - 62. Popular Tom Cruise movie franchise (abbr.)

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								3
		2		9			8	
							1	
	8	6	4			3		

# SUDOKU

**Here's How It Works:**  
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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answers

T	R	O	S	E	N	I	C	O	S	O									
S	E	O	R	N	E	W	S	D	R	O	M	S							
I	B	O		O	W	V	L	V	D										
A	R	O	T	D	N	E	W	O	C	C									
T	I	O	C	N	U	E	N	E	L	G	E	D	E	O					
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E	N	I	R	V	M														
S	E	V	P	F	S	N	N	V	B										
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W	M	S	E	S	S	E	A	W	E	L	S								
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S	K	I	N	G					A	C	A								

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# GOSHEN

## Council on Aging announces upcoming December events

GOSHEN – A Holiday themed luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at noon in the Goshen Town Hall

Jerry from Spruce Corner Restaurant will cook a choice of Prime Rib or Vegetable Lasagna, along with potatoes, vegetables, rolls, and salad. They will also have a special dessert. A favorite guest, Santa and his helpers will be handing out holiday treats. Seniors should call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 by Tuesday, Dec. 5 to let her know their choice of meal. The Council on Aging hopes seniors will stay for lunch but to-go containers are available. Suggested \$5 donation is appreciated.

The Caroling tradition continues this year. A group ensemble will travel door to door singing holiday songs to Goshen seniors on Thursday, Dec. 7 starting at 2 p.m. Inclement weather date is Friday, Dec 8 A Goshen senior, who would like to hear some festive holiday music at their doorstep may call Nancy Wood at 413-268-7973 to schedule a time. Also anyone who would like to join the Carolers in bringing joy to others through holiday songs should call Nancy. All ages and abilities of Carolers are welcome.

On Friday, Dec. 1 Community Connections Group meets from 10-11 a.m. in the dining room on the second

floor of the Town Hall. This month they will be joined by Nancy Ronan and Cathie Parsons from Bright Spot Therapy Dogs. They will be bringing Comet, a Golden Retriever and Yukon, a Samoyed, to provide a bit of pet therapy. They will educate us about the work of the therapy dogs and their trainers. Nancy will bring some children's books that have been written about Comet's adventures and these will be available to purchase.

On Tuesdays, Dec 12, and 19 Tai Chi class will continue with two classes in December (no class Dec 5 or 26) with instructor Richard Larson at 9 a.m. in the Town Hall. He will be teaching us the Eight Ways. There are many benefits to Tai Chi practice including improved balance, improved flexibility, and improved peace of mind. Please wear comfortable clothing and supportive shoes. All abilities are welcome and we can modify the approaches as needed so that everyone can benefit.

In person exercise class continues with Joan Griswold on Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. in the Goshen Town Hall. People should wear supportive footwear and bring water and free weights if they have them. There is a brief health questionnaire Joan will have you fill out. This class is also offered simultaneously

on Zoom, so if people prefer this method they may email Joan for the link at joan@bybhealth.com.

Wednesday, Dec 6 Knitting and Crafts Group will meet in the upstairs Dining Room at the Goshen Town Hall from 1-3 p.m. Occasionally they meet in the library so check in there too. People should bring whatever craft or needlework project they are working on. The group members have experience in knitting, crocheting, sewing and more so bring any questions to the group and problem solve together.

On Tuesdays, Dec 19 and 26, Highland Valley Elder Services lunch is held. The HVES lunch is on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month, pick up is from noon-12:30. On Tuesday Dec 19, the meal will be Mulligatawny Soup or Macaroni and Cheese and on Dec 26 the meal will be a Breaded Fish Sandwich or Chicken Stew plus vegetables, milk and dessert. If people have not signed up and would like to for January, they may call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$3 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.

On Wednesday, Dec 20 the Games Group will be from 1-3 p.m. and continue on the third Wednesday of each

month in the dining room on the second floor of Town Hall and occasionally in the library. If people have any board games in good repair that they would like to donate, let us know or better yet bring one in and play it with us.

The COA has paper applications for Fuel Assistance through Community Action at the COA office. People may call Kerry Normandin 413-268-9354 at the number and email on top of this newsletter if they need an application or if they need more information. They can also learn more about this program by visiting the website communityaction.us or by calling 413-774-2310 and choose option 1.

One goal of this program is to lend durable medical equipment that people may need on a short or long term basis. Before going out to purchase items like walkers, tub seats, or commodes, please call as we may just have what you need for free. And if we don't we will contact other agencies to help find it! This group also works with TRIAD to deliver buckets of sand for seniors to spread on icy surfaces in the winter. They also have knowledge about various services and agencies in the area. Henrietta Munroe is the leader of this program, call 413-268-7465 if in need of any of these services.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Legal Notice: NOTICE OF

#### PUBLIC HEARING

The Middlefield Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Saturday, December 16, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.** at the Middlefield Town Hall, 188 Skyline Trail, Middlefield MA to present proposed standards and condition bylaw changes:

**Article 1:** Bylaw Section 3: General Use Regulations Table 3.0 Use Regulations, Town of Middlefield, Types of Land Use Standards

and Conditions for 3.05,3.052,3.054,3.055

**Article 2:** Bylaw Section 3 General Use Regulations: 3.2 Non-Conforming Uses, Discontinuance, Alteration Extension, Reconstruction

**Article 3:** Bylaw Section 7 Definitions: Adding definition for Accessory Building and Conforming Residence

**Article 4:** Section 4 Special Land Use Regulations: Mobile Homes, Travel Trailers and Camping 11/23, 11/30/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23P2326EA**

**Estate of:  
Stephen P Frye  
Date of Death: 12/06/2017  
CITATION ON  
PETITION FOR  
FORMAL  
ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Laurie A. Frye of Montgomery, MA**

requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Laurie A. Frye of Montgomery, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00**

**a.m. on the return day of 12/12/2023.**

This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED  
ADMINISTRATION  
UNDER THE  
MASSACHUSETTS  
UNIFORM PROBATE  
CODE (MUPC)  
A Personal Represent-**

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: November 14, 2023  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
11/23/2023

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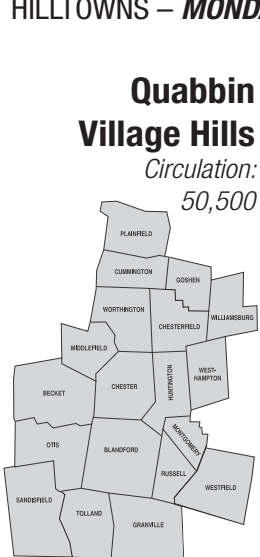


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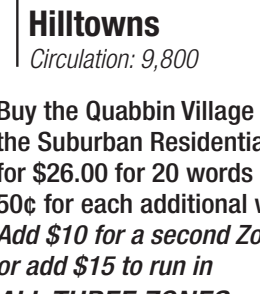
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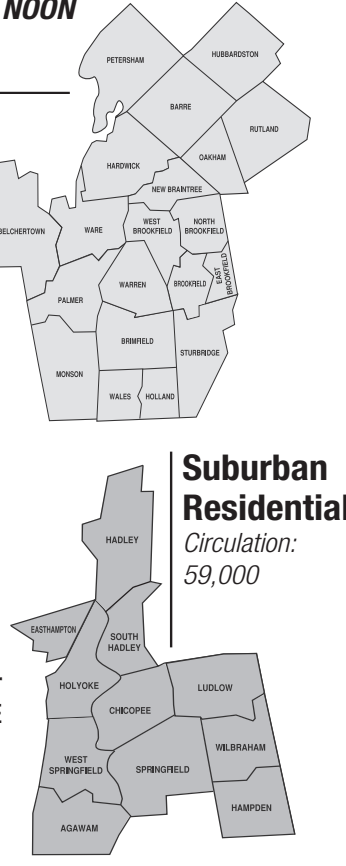
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# HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES

## Following the old Eighth Massachusetts Turnpike

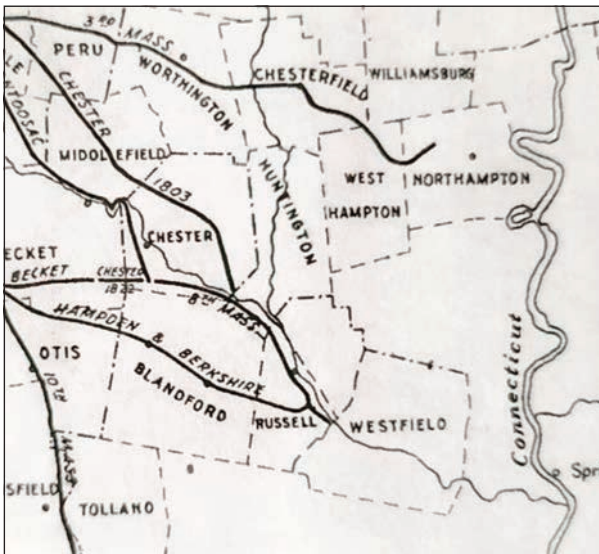
RUSSELL – The Eighth Massachusetts Turnpike, this section in Russell across from the old Whipperton was the location of a recent Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers event.

Not much left of it now but a few stone lined portions, it continues here to the Lane Quarry in Westfield. The first road West was on the opposite side of the Westfield River as Route 20 is now, when the Western Railroad was built, most sections were destroyed however we drive many sections today here and there.

An Act concerning the Rate of Toll on the Eighth Massachusetts Turnpike reads, “Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the Eighth Mass. Rate of Toll. The Massachusetts Turnpike Corporation are hereby empowered to demand and receive six and one quarter cents, and no more, for wagons drawn by one horse over their road and through their gates.” It was approved by the Governor on March 6, 1834.



When the Western Railroad was built most sections of the Eighth Massachusetts Turnpike were destroyed.



This map shows the Eighth Massachusetts Turnpike, which the Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers followed.



Not much is left of the Eighth Massachusetts Turnpike, just a few stone lined portions.

Submitted photos

### MIDDLEFIELD

## State Director of Rural Affairs visits town

MIDDLEFIELD – On Friday, Nov. 17 Anne Gobi, Governor Maura Healey’s newly appointed Director of Rural Affairs visited with officials from Middlefield.

Town Administrator Sean F. Curran said, “It was a really productive meeting.” Director Gobi got a tour of town buildings after an hour long discussion.

Director Gobi met with Middlefield Select Board members Curt Robie, Ann Marie Visconti, finance committee member Adair Cafarella and Curran to discuss possible grant funding opportunities for the town hall and senior center. Gobi mentioned the possibility of an increase in Chapter 90 funds, specifically for rural communities, such as Middlefield.

Curran said, “Governor Healey’s emphasis on increasing road funds will be a game changer for Middlefield and all of the Hilltowns.” Town Administrator Curran said, “rural communities, such as Middlefield, are a priority of the new administration.”

On Nov. 15, Middlefield was awarded \$10,000 from the Governor’s Office of Public Safety. The grant will be used to purchase tasers for town police officers and laptop computers for their cruisers.

“I think the new administration sees that current local aid formulas short change rural communities struggling with increasing budgetary items such as school transportation. There is an emphasis in making up for this funding disparity with grant opportunities.”

While in Middlefield, Gobi toured the town’s DPW yard and met with Highway Superintendent Skip Savery. She learned about current paving projects and also inspected department’s vehicles.

Select Board Members Curt Robie and Ann Marie Visconti provided Gobi



Curt Robie, Anne Gobi, Ann Marie Visconti and Sean Curran are shown on Friday, Nov. 17 when Anne Gobi visited Middlefield.

Submitted photo

a tour of the Middlefield transfer station and discussed the possibility of improving its design and functionality.

Director Gobi got to see progress on the Town Center Park. The park is being funded with a \$10,000 grant from the state.

Gobi wrapped up the day with a walk through of the town’s senior center, where she met with Town Clerk Suzanne Lemieux. A former school teacher, Gobi

was enthusiastic about Middlefield’s history museum and was noticeably interested in many of its artifacts.

Town Administrator Curran said, “It’s great to have a member of the Governor’s staff in Middlefield this morning. She has a good sense of the challenges facing our town and I am confident she is going to make sure that Middlefield’s concerns are voiced at the state level.”

### BECKET

## Athenaeum hosts movie night Dec. 2

BECKET – The Becket Athenaeum, 3367 Main St., will host a free Movie Night for Adults on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. with the movie starting at 7 p.m.

The choice of movies are “White Christmas,” “Strays” and The Night Before.” The movie with the most votes will be shown. People may vote for the movie by visiting [bit.ly/BA-Dec-movie](https://bit.ly/BA-Dec-movie). Popcorn, candy and non-alcoholic beverages are provided. People are welcome to bring their beverage of choice including alcohol. Older children age 13 plus may come with an adult at the discretion of their guardian.

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