

# THE NEWSletter

The Newsy Little Paper That Supplements Other Media

Volume 31 Number 1      October 2021

POB 567, Housatonic, MA 01236      Tel: 413-274-6100

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Eileen W. Mooney, editor/publisher

## Flu, Covid Vaccines Available Oct. 27

FREE CLINICS for the high and regular flu doses, all three Covid-19 vaccines and the Pfizer booster shot will be **Wednesday, Oct. 27**, from 9 a.m. to noon in the Claire Teague Senior Center's parking lot.

The Pfizer booster shot is for anyone 65 years or older and anyone aged 18 through 64 who is at increased risk for severe symptoms or high exposure from work or a group residence.

People are asked to bring their insurance and vaccine cards and to wear masks.

Community Health Programs, the senior center and Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative are sponsoring the clinics.

If your face is red or green or blue and you get THE NEWSletter's printed version, please see page 2 about the status of your subscription.



People who get THE NEWSletter by email are notified individually.

No matter how you get your NEWSletter, if coronavirus means you lost your job or had to close your business, THE NEWSletter is free. More information is on page 2.

## Quote of the Issue

**"BHRSD is fortunate to be a local school district, under local control, in a well-resourced community where so many people are trying their best to figure out how the schools can serve a vision where every child gets what they need to thrive. While there is little agreement on the reason or the solution, we heard this sentiment from everyone at every level of the system: the concern that some people are not getting what they need to thrive, and that this is a problem. This shared concern is where we will begin."**

-From the conclusion of "Critical Assessment Toward a Relational Culture and Community Engagement Plan" by the Stoke Collective. More about this is on page 3.

## School District Planners Have a Survey for You

THE EIGHT-TOWN REGIONAL DISTRICT PLANNING BOARD wants residents, including those with second homes, to take a survey.

This is the board that is considering pros and cons of combining all, part or none of the Southern Berkshire and Berkshire Hills regional school districts.

The survey is on the board's website, [www.8towns.org](http://www.8towns.org).

Three surveys are available:

-One for **students** in grades 9-12 at either Monument Mountain or Mount Everett regional high schools and for **alumni** who graduated from either high school from 2018 to 2021.

-Another for all **faculty and staff** who work in either school district.

-And a third for **anyone who lives in one of the districts' eight towns** or who lives in a **different town but has a child attending** either district.

Survey responses are due by **Oct. 12**.

More information is available on the planning board's website or from project manager Jake Eberwein at [jakeeberwein@gmail.com](mailto:jakeeberwein@gmail.com).

The eight towns are Great Barrington, Stockbridge and West Stockbridge in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District and Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough, and Sheffield in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

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# What Boards Meet in October



VIRTUAL OR HYBRID MEETINGS, have returned because of Covid variants.

Virtual meetings are entirely by Zoom and/or telephone. Hybrid sessions have committee members and perhaps an audience in person while other people attend by Zoom or telephone.

## *Mason Open Evenings, Ramsdell on Sundays*

GREAT BARRINGTON LIBRARIES are open for more weekday hours and on weekends.

**Mason Library** on Main Street, Great Barrington, is open Mondays through Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Youth services in Mason is open Mondays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Ramsdell Library** on Main Street, Housatonic, is open Mondays through Wednesdays from 1 to 6 p.m., Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.

Three programs for adults and one for children are planned in October. They are:

**-German Colonial Rule and Resistance in Southwest Africa, Oct. 14, 7 to 8:30 p.m., virtual.**

**-Houseplants 101 with Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens, Oct 21, 7 to 8:30 p.m., virtual.**

**-Fiction in the Kitchen, Oct 28, 7 to 8 p.m., virtual.**

**-Halloween Take Home Craft for Kids, at Mason, Oct. 19 to 22.**

More information and registration is on the libraries' website at <https://gblibraries.org/>.

Books, CDs and other items can be ordered by calling Mason at 528-2403 or by emailing [masonramsdell@gmail.com](mailto:masonramsdell@gmail.com) or going to [bark.cwmars.org](http://bark.cwmars.org).

Ramsdell's number is 274-3738.

Meeting agendas tell how and where to attend. THE NEWSletter sends agendas to its email list. If no agenda is sent, the meeting is not being held.

Records of some meetings are on Community Television for the Southern Berkshires, [www.ctsbvtv.org](http://www.ctsbvtv.org). You can watch on your computer or on Spectrum cable channels 1301 (public), 1302 (education) and 1303 (government).

Other websites are town, [www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org); town libraries, [www.gblibraries.org](http://www.gblibraries.org); and Berkshire Hills Regional School District, [www.bhrsd.org](http://www.bhrsd.org).

The town, its police and fire departments and the school district also have Facebook pages.

## October

**-Selectboard meets Oct. 4, 6 p.m.**

**-Town manager virtual coffee hour, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.**

**-Board of Health meets Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m.**

**-Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee meets Oct. 7, 6 p.m.**

**-Indigenous People's Day, aka Columbus Day, is Oct. 11.**

Town buildings will be closed. A gathering will be held at the Town Hall park from 11 a.m. to noon.

**-Selectboard special meeting to discuss Housatonic Water Works, Oct. 12, 6 p.m.**

**-Annual meeting of Department of Veteran Services, Oct. 12, 1 p.m., Claire Teague Senior Center.**

**-Library trustees meet Oct. 14, 5:30 p.m.**

**-Planning Board meets Oct. 14, 6 p.m.**

**-Parks Commission meets Oct. 18, 5:15 p.m.**

**-Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force meets Oct. 19, 5 p.m.**

**-Finance Committee meets Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m.**

**-Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee meets Oct. 21, 6 p.m.**

**-Council on Aging meets Oct. 27, 1:15 p.m.**

**-Planning Board meets Oct. 28, 6 p.m.**

## *Senior Center News*

THE CLAIRE TEAGUE Senior Center at 917 South Main St. provides transportation for elderly and disabled people.

People needing a ride can call the center at 528-1881. At least 48 hours notice is requested. Covid-19 precautions are required.

### Center Offers Some Activities

The senior center is open by appointment and offers some activities.

Staff is available Mondays through Fridays to answer calls, offer SHINE counseling and, with a suggested \$2 donation, ready-to-go meals. Big Y donations are available Mondays and Wednesdays.

THE NEWSletter sends "Grapevine," the center's monthly newsletter, to people who have requested it.

## *Recycling Center*

FREE household hazardous waste collection will be **Oct. 16** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and bulky waste collection will be **Oct. 23** from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the town's recycling center off Stockbridge Road.

More information about the collections is in this NEWSletter.

The recycling center is open Fridays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Saturdays, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

It is part of the town's Department of Public Works, available at 528-0867 and [www.townofgb.org/public-works](http://www.townofgb.org/public-works).

Great Barrington residents can get permits by calling the town clerk's office.

# How To Stay on NEWSletter Mailing List – Or Get It Free

PLEASE NOTE: No matter how you get your NEWSletter, **if Covid-19 means you can't work, THE NEWSletter IS FREE.**

Just send an email to [the-newsltr@gmail.com](mailto:the-newsltr@gmail.com) or call me at 274-6100 so you aren't billed. You can pay when your economic security is restored.

If you get the printed issue and your face on page 1 is **green**, your subscription ends with the next issue or the one after that.

If your face is **blue**, it's time to renew.

**Red** face? Your free trial subscription or your paid subscription ended and you're about to come off the mailing list, including for emailed agendas, etc.

### How To Subscribe

Twelve issues (one year) are \$35 for the print version within the 012 zip code or \$30 for the emailed one anywhere.

Cost to get the printed TN by bulk mail **outside the 012 zip code** is \$38. Cost to mail **first class** for a year (12 issues) is \$50.

You can also pay for as many issues as you want at \$3 an issue for either the emailed version or the print version in the 012 zip code.

Checks go to THE NEWSletter at Post Office Box 567, Housatonic 01236.

**Both the written and emailed versions include free emails — agendas, news updates, forwarded material — sent between issues.** Your name and email address

are kept confidential unless you're an elected or appointed public official.

You can forward all emails to as many people as you want. **Having THE NEWSletter send them is \$5 a year for each added name.**

Cost to receive THE NEWSletter in **large type** is \$30 for 12 issues, **plus** the annual print subscription.

### Available FREE Online

The website for Mason and Ramsdell libraries has a link for THE NEWSletter so you can read it free, online. The website is at [www.gblibraries.org](http://www.gblibraries.org).

**Question?** Email me at [the-newsltr@gmail.com](mailto:the-newsltr@gmail.com). -Eileen W. Mooney

*News of Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee*

# Educational Structure, Approach Changing at MMRHS

THE BOSTON-BASED Barr Foundation's has given the Berkshire Hills Regional School District a one-year, \$300,000 grant "to support the continued redesign of Monument Mountain Regional High School."

The district's application for the grant shows how it is changing its structure. Sections from the 23-page application for the grant are quoted on page 4.

District superintendent Peter Dillon and Monument Mountain Regional High School principal Kristi Farina have said during recent months that change is coming to the high school's approach to teaching.

Covid-19, which caused last year's remote, then hybrid school days, overshadowed talk of the changed approach.

THE NEWSletter's April issue reported that starting in September with grade 9, the high school would move to heterogeneous grouping in classes, with students enrolling regardless of the program they're in — standardized, college preparatory, honors or advanced placement.

The grant ends Sept. 16, 2022.

### Agreed-Upon Outputs

The Sept. 1 letter announcing the grant states that agreed upon outputs include:

"By January 2022, the pilot student government team and the school governance team will have a final plan for governance in the 2022-2023 school year."

Also:

"By March of 2022, there will be a schedule for the 2022-23 school year that builds in at least four days of advisory with an action plan for how the time will be used effectively."

### Agreed-Upon Outcomes

Outcomes include that by January 2022, 20% more parents will feel their voices are heard and 40% of parents will be able to tell how they contributed to a policy or decision.

By June 2022:

-50% of total teachers and students, and 75% at the grade 9 level, will report improved student learning and growth towards at least two identified proficiencies ..."

-10% more ninth graders in a high needs subgroup will complete honor distinction ...

-90% of students will report they understand how decisions are made at Monument and 50% will be able to cite how they contributed to a policy or decision.

-At least 50% of students will better recognize, name and regulate their emotions.

When the grant term ends, the school district is expected to submit a final report with a financial account of all project expenses and income.

The Barr Foundation's website is at [www.barrfoundation.org](http://www.barrfoundation.org).

### How To Read Complete Application

The complete grant application, a public document, is available from the office of school district superintendent Peter Dillon, [peter.dillon@bhrsd.org](mailto:peter.dillon@bhrsd.org), or 413 298-4017 ext. 719.

THE NEWSletter can also email it to subscribers. It is too long to reproduce in an issue.

### District Seeks More Attention To Diversity Equity, Inclusion

The quote on page 1 tells what the district and the Stoke Collective will work on this school year.

The Stoke Collective presented its initial report at the Sept. 23 school committee meeting, which can be seen at [www.ctsbvtv.org](http://www.ctsbvtv.org).

The report also is available from Mr. Dillon's office or, by email, from THE NEWSletter. The Stoke Collective website is [www.thestokecollective.org](http://www.thestokecollective.org).

In its first phase with the school district, Stoke consultants met with students, parents and staff and listened.

"Over the course of our interviews and focus groups, we heard repeatedly that the district has good 'talk'; the Stoke Collective (Stoke)'s focus is on helping develop the 'walk,'" consultants wrote in their introduction to the report.

"Our general finding is that teachers are viewed by students as kind, well-intentioned, and effective," they state.

### Gap Found Between Values, Results

They found:

"There are a lot of DEI-relevant (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) initiatives and projects in BHRSD, and the district is contracting with many different groups and people to accomplish its aims. Nonetheless, there remains a gap between the school district's stated values and its results."

\*\*\*

"...there is near consensus that two-way communication between parents and district schools is not where anyone wants it to be. This was uplifted time and time again in interviews as a central challenge the district faces, especially when it comes to meaningfully engaging parents of marginalized backgrounds."

\*\*\*

The consultants recommend that the district "develop a more equitable sense of belonging, recognition, opportunity, and agency. Relational trust is the key concept that underlies all of our recommendations."

\*\*\*

Besides the quote on page 1 of this NEWSletter, the report's conclusion states:

"The idea of a school system in which everyone gets what they need to thrive is a powerful vision that is simple to say and extraordinarily complicated to enact. It cannot be delegated. It cannot be contracted out. It cannot be the job of only some staff in the system, nor can it be accomplished once and for all. As the world shifts, the work of the school to shift with it remains surprisingly clear: meet people where they are. Create space for the public — *everyone* — to engage together in helping young people become adults capable of making their contribution to the communities and to their families, and capable of working toward their own visions. For predominantly white, middle-class and class-elite schools to become truly *equitable* institutions requires not only strong intentions but some significant re-wiring, learning, and ingraining new habits of interaction. It requires an everyday form of courage, which is practiced together." (Bold italics by The Stoke Collective.)

(BHRSD continues on page 4)

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# Some Quotes From Application for \$300,000 Barr Grant

*The following quotations are from the Berkshire Hills Regional School District's application to the Barr Foundation, which gave it a one-year, \$300,000 grant to implement the proposed changes. Quotations are not always presented in the order they appear in the application.*

"We envision a district that champions the belief that there is a better way of preparing each high school student for the world ahead and of presenting them to colleges and employers."

\* \* \*

"The school will be broken into various academies: ninth grade and tenth grade for students' first two years of high school, leading to pathways in Humanities, STEM, Design & Career Vocational for those in eleven and twelfth grades. The academy approach will shift the focus to student achievement and the response to student behavior will be removed from assessment to allow for alternate techniques to improve our work with students."

\* \* \*

"Our goal is for every student to experience an equitable, rigorous, and personalized learning experience. We will ensure that each student graduating from BHRSD has the skills, habits and dispositions necessary to continue on their post-secondary path. ... We wholeheartedly believe this work should live at the core of our school and the public education system." (Italics in application.)

\* \* \*

"We have created a grade nine academy consisting of two teachers from each core academic area (math, science, social studies

and ELA) and one special education teacher. These teachers will be working with grade nine students in heterogeneous groupings (except math where students are enrolled in geometry or algebra based on their mathematics background) and all students will be offered the opportunity to earn honors distinction in their coursework versus being pre-assigned to tracked classes. Embedded in this work is the shift in practice towards a proficiency based model of assessment with changes to both instructional and assessment practices to build more personalized student learning opportunities and student ownership of their own learning. This model will build into the Monument Mountain program over the next three years."

\* \* \*

"The tenth grade team has also been formed with common planning time as it is getting a jump start in preparation for the shift in 2022-23."

\* \* \*

"In five years Monument Mountain Regional High School (MMRHS) will be a substantially different school than the MMRHS of today. MMRHS will have a clearly articulated, agreed upon, essential mission and vision with institutional norms for academic excellence grounded in Portrait of a Graduate (PoG) and an overarching culture that values equity of outcomes and provides support for student growth and their social and emotional development.

"Our vision brings us to heterogeneously grouped classes in cohorts that are carefully configured so that their composition reflects our community's demographic and socioeconomic constituencies, implementing team- or co-teaching to build staff capacity to be responsive to student need, often with the assistance of paraprofessional staff, in order to assure that the academic, intellectual, and emotional needs of each of our students is taken care of responsibly and with fidelity. Teachers will use formative assessment as a means of developing student self reflection on growth and progress and encourage struggling students to stay engaged in the work until they reach proficiency rather than give up due to time constraints."

\* \* \*

"The pandemic also accelerated our move to heterogeneous groupings in order to create cohorts and limit the mixing of students. That is not remarkable. What is, is the fact that we were able to leverage that move into the Equity, Access & High Expectations for All proposal and presentation and gain approval by the school committee and community. This was a substantial step forward in our work of developing a ninth grade academy with heterogeneous groupings for next year."

\* \* \*

"Additionally, and most critically, we need to bring students to the heart of this work. Student voice will be central to the

advisory experience and the work with Up for Learning, a Vermont-based organization focused on engaging youth in their own learning and in reimagining and transforming education through research-based models that reshape the student-teacher relationship to one of shared ownership and shared responsibility, must continue."

\* \* \*

"Connected to this is the continued building of a governance structure that includes equal representation of staff and students as well as parent/community reps and administration."

\* \* \*

"As the District completes the Portrait of a Graduate, we will build greater community involvement in the development of our proficiencies and the tools we will use to provide feedback to students and families. The completion of the PoG [Portrait of a Graduate] will also bring the K-8 community into the conversation and allow for alignment conversations vertically across schools."

\* \* \*

"Each senior will produce and share evidence of the acquisition of knowledge and skills embodied in a portrait of a graduate through a senior independent learning experience."

\* \* \*

"Our full shift to proficiencies will take multiple years to implement. Our grading system will shift from feedback centered on points, averages and credit accumulation to one centered on feedback on skill development and student growth. ... Fundamental to this shift will be equity and the belief that each student has the ability to succeed."

\* \* \*

"Building a shared student and faculty voice into a true culture of 'we' will also be a necessary structural change. ... The overall sense of community and ownership will be felt by all members of the community."

\* \* \*

"The final frontier of engagement and buy-in comes now at the parent and community level. This is an area where we continue to struggle, both broadly, and even more so with our more marginalized constituents.... Finally, we need to look for access points to leverage community involvement. For example, engaging families in evening dialogue when they are already present for presentations connected to other student activities such as sports, musical performances or theatre productions."

"Social emotional learning remains a top priority for Berkshire Hills K-12."

"As the feeder school for MMRHS, the middle school's transition into a 'deeper learning' community will serve as an excellent introduction to the new MMRHS programs and its emphasis on equity and students' input on their learning."

## Seeking Real Estate?

Tom Doyle  
Broker Associate

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Great Barrington

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Email: [scarnaghtom@gmail.com](mailto:scarnaghtom@gmail.com)  
Cell: 646-438-1329



# HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE



For Residents of:

Alford Becket Egremont Great Barrington Lee Lenox Monterey Mount Washington  
New Marlborough Otis Richmond Sheffield Stockbridge Tyringham West Stockbridge

**When:** Saturday, October 16th, 2021, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Where:** Great Barrington Recycling Center  
601 Stockbridge Rd. Rt 7, Great Barrington, MA, 01230

## What to Bring

### From The Yard/Garden

Pesticides, Fungicides  
Herbicides  
Insect Sprays  
Rodent Killers  
Muriatic Acid  
Flea Powder  
No-Post Strips  
Chemical Fertilizers  
Lighter Fluid  
Moth Balls

### From The Workbench

Rust Proofers  
Wood Preservatives  
Wood Strippers & Stains  
Paint Thinners  
Lead & Oil-Based Paint  
Varnish  
Full Aerosol Cans  
Sealants  
Adhesives  
Solvents

### From The House

Drain Cleaners  
Oven Cleaners  
Floor Cleaners  
Metal Polish  
Arts & Crafts Supplies  
Photo Chemicals  
Chemistry Kits  
Rechargeable Batteries

### From The Garage

Fuels/Gasoline/Kerosene  
Brake & Transmission Fluids  
Car Wax, Polish  
Engine Degreaser/Motor Oil  
Swimming Pool Chemicals  
Driveway Sealer  
Antifreeze  
Car-Lead Acid Batteries

### Mercury Products:

Thermometers  
Thermostats  
Other mercury  
Button Batteries

## DO NOT BRING

Latex Paint, Medical Wastes, Asbestos,  
Fireworks & Explosives, Ammunition, Construction  
Debris, Gas or Propane Cylinders, Smoke Detectors,  
Radioactive Material, Fire Extinguishers, Fluorescent Lamps,  
Electronics, PCB's, Medications, Medical Sharps

**Pre-Registration is required.**  
Please register online at [www.tritownhealth.org](http://www.tritownhealth.org)

For additional questions, call  
Tri-Town Health Department at 413-243-5540

## News of Town Boards

# Health Board Hearing Oct. 7; HWW Meeting Oct. 12

THE BOARD OF HEALTH will hold a **public hearing Oct. 7 at 6:30 p.m. on a proposed moratorium on the use of glyphosate on town properties.**

The proposed moratorium, posted on the board's page on the town website, states:

"In finding that there is an increasing body of scientific evidence that glyphosate poses harm to developing children, bees and other pollinators, pets, domestic animals, and wildlife and in alignment with the 2017 affirmative Town Meeting vote for the resolution committing Great Barrington to a pollinator friendly town, this moratorium protects our food and ecological systems.

"In 2015, the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) concluded 'Glyphosate is probably carcinogenic to humans,' and that there was a positive association between glyphosate exposures and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

"The Great Barrington Board of Health issues this moratorium on the application of glyphosate by employees, volunteers, or hired contractors of the Town of Great Barrington or any other organization charged with the care and maintenance of town controlled properties.

"This moratorium will become effective immediately and remain in effect until October 31, 2022.

"The moratorium can be lifted at an earlier date if the Board of Health concludes that the benefits of glyphosate application outweigh the risks.

"Variances to the moratorium for specific uses of glyphosate will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Health.

"Those requesting a variance may contact the Health Department and request to be placed on the agenda of any regularly scheduled meeting. Our meetings generally occur on the first Thursday of every month.

"During the period of the moratorium, the Board of Health will conduct an evaluation of all pesticide use on Town owned and operated properties.

"In order to ensure that a broad representation of views are present during this evaluation period the Board requests that a working group form for the duration of the moratorium. The intention of the working group shall be to conduct an outreach program to local businesses and to discuss potential policy pathways post moratorium."

### **Board Advises: Wear Masks More**

The board at a Sept. 15 meeting updated its Covid-19 mask advisory by recommending that regardless of their vaccine status, people wear masks in crowded outdoor settings and in public indoor spaces.

Health agent Rebecca Jurczyk noted that Great Barrington had had 17 active cases of Covid in the past week, compared with 20 cases in the past three weeks combined.

The onus for enforcement is on businesses open to the public, she said.

During citizen's speak, resident Dena Fisher questioned why President Biden had mandated vaccinations against Covid but the town hasn't.

Ms. Jurczyk said she wants to be consistent with neighboring towns and none of them mandates vaccinations.

### **Authorized To Mandate Masks?**

Board chairman Michael Lanoue and member Dr. Ruby Chang said they weren't sure the board is authorized to issue mandates.

Mr. Lanoue said the board will report at its Oct. 7 meeting what rights it has.

The Sept. 15 meeting was held to approve wording of the updated mask advisory. During the monthly Sept. 9 meeting, Ms. Fisher proposed that vaccinations be required for indoor gatherings such as movie theaters.

Mr. Lanoue said he did not favor "at this point" ordering any mandates.

At the end of the Sept. 15 meeting, resident Dattatreya Haynes said children aren't safe when they wear masks. Dr. Chang, a pediatrician, disagreed.

\* \* \*

THE SELECTBOARD will have a virtual community meeting about **Housatonic Water Works on Tuesday, Oct. 12**, at 6 p.m.

Information about Zoom and telephone connections will be provided on the town website ([www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org)) and by THE NEWSletter.

The session will include reports on talks with local state and HWW officials.

Those talks are being held as a response to complaints about "dirty" water, inadequate hydrant flows and reports by two consultants.

### **Where To Read Reports**

The AECOM and DPC reports are under "Housatonic Water Works" on the Selectboard's page on the town website.

That site also includes how anyone with concerns about the company can reach the state departments of Environmental Protection and Public Utilities, state Rep. Smitty Pignatelli and state Sen. Adam Hinds, and Senators Ed Markey and Elizabeth Markey.

### **AECOM: Pipes, Hydrants Concern**

An AECOM official reviewed its report on the water company at the selectmen's July 12 meeting.

Doug Gove, AECOM's Stoneham-based vice president and manager of New England water operations, told the Selectboard discoloration will not stop until old iron pipes are replaced.

He also said that about two-thirds of HWW's pipes need replacement and pressure in some areas is not adequate for fire hydrants. An estimated \$31 million in capital improvements is needed, he said.

### **Prickett: Not Pay More Than \$1**

Dave Prickett of DPC consulting firm presented a report on the company and its value at the Aug. 9 Selectboard meeting.

He "wouldn't pay more than a dollar" for the company because of work that needs to be done, he said after presenting his report.

The water company would cost about \$55 million to build today, has an estimated value of probably \$5.8 million and as a standalone utility, an estimated value of **negative** \$25.2 million, he said.

"A good deal of the assets are at the end of their useful life" and the system does not have a lot of life left in it, he stated.

### **Mercer: Plans Improvement**

Jim Mercer, who owns the company with his father, Fred, and is its treasurer, said in a March 29 news release that he plans "a major improvement and modernization of the company's drinking water treatment plant."

"The project is expected to cost about \$1.7 million, and HWWC will require DPU approval to allow the costs to be supported through the customer rate structure," the release states.

\* \* \*

THE AMOUNT HASN'T BEEN SET but the town will have a fee for users of its **four electric-vehicle charging stations** being installed, two in the Taconic parking lot behind Main Street and two at the Town Hall parking lot.

The Selectboard voted 3-2 Sept. 27 to charge for the chargers and have a report in a year.

A report on the stations by Chris Rembold, assistant town manager and director of planning and development, is reproduced in this NEWSletter.

When town manager Mark Pruhenski presented the project, selectmen Garfield Reed and Leigh Davis asked why no fee was mentioned.

At the Sept. 27 meeting, Mr. Reed said the stations affect taxpayers and however little money it might be, "it's still money."

Eric Gabriel disagreed with a user fee. The stations help advance new technologies, greener options and a healthier environment, so having them be free is fine, he felt.

It wouldn't hurt to charge, but this is new, green technology, Ed Abrahams said.

Board chairman Steve Bannon said he agreed with Mr. Abrahams but could go either way.

Ms. Davis, Mr. Bannon and Mr. Reed voted to charge, while Mr. Abrahams and Mr. Gabriel voted against.

# Stations cont., HIC, Finance Com., Housing Subcom.

Mr. Rembold said he'll return with potential charges when costs to operate and maintain the stations are known.

## 'Ludicrous' To Take Parking Spots

Sharon Gregory said she was on the former Parking Committee for two years and it is "ludicrous" to take two parking spots. The intentions are good but she "vehemently disagrees with this, she said.

Citizens should speak out about this, she added.

"We have numerous charging stations at Big Y, the Co-op and other places. The town center still has traffic and parking problems," she wrote THE NEWSletter after the meeting.

## School Work May Be Done

Also during the meeting, Department of Public Works superintendent Sean VanDeusen said the contractor who provided the original estimate of about \$25,000 to put a tarp on Housatonic School's roof and board windows still thinks that's possible.

A bid is being finalized, he explained. An earlier bid for the work from another contractor was \$90,000.

It looks as though the vast majority of the work can be done late this fall or early this winter, Mr. VanDeusen told the Selectboard.

\* \* \*

THE HOUSATONIC IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE will sponsor on **Saturday, Oct. 23**, a review by architects of possible new uses for the former, now vacant Housatonic School building.

The review, called a charrette, is tentatively scheduled to go from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with presentations of proposals starting about 12:30 p.m.

The event will be open to a virtual audience. The architects are donating their time.

Still being determined is how many architects will participate and where the review will be held.

## To Present Report To Selectboard

At the Selectboard's **Oct. 25** meeting, HIC will recommend how to proceed with the building

As THE NEWSletter has reported, members have ruled out razing the building.

## NEWSletter Offerings

Subscribers to THE NEWSletter can get, by email, meeting minutes and obituaries when THE NEWSletter receives them, plus newsletters for the Chamber of Commerce, Railroad Street Youth Program, Cultural District, Great Barrington Historical Society, Claire Teague Senior Center, Nick Diller's weather reports, and all news releases from the Berkshire County District Attorney's office, whether or not they are about Great Barrington.

Just email [thenewsltr@gmail.com](mailto:thenewsltr@gmail.com) and tell what you want. This is part of your subscription.

They are expected to recommend issuing a request for proposals.

## Two New Members on HIC

The committee has two new members. Both live in Housatonic, a requirement to be on the HIC, and both told THE NEWSletter their particular concerns are the school building.

**Louise Goldsmith** of 1026 Main St. said she is concerned about how the building's "development would impact the Housatonic community."

She is also concerned about Housatonic sidewalks and rail trail, she said.

She has lived in Housatonic since May 2016. Her training and background are in architecture and she now works in the insurance industry, she noted.

**Daniel Bialowas** of 205 Meadow Lane wrote that he is a carpenter and has lived in Housatonic with his family for the past eight years.

He's "concerned about many issues and aspects of Housatonic, including the former school building. I want to be on the HIC because I care about Housatonic and the community, and I hope to contribute to its future," he wrote.

Denise Forbes and Leah House also applied for the committee.

Other members are chairman Dan Bailly, vice chairman Eric Gabriel, Beverly Nourse, Angela Lomanto and Patrick Barrett.

The committee's Sept. 30 started to be interrupted by a Zoom blast but chairman Bailly cut off the offenders.

\* \* \*

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE spent much of its 90-minute meeting Sept. 28 deciding what information members want about a proposed senior tax deferral program.

A fact sheet prepared by Finance Committee chairman Anne O'Dwyer is reproduced in this NEWSletter.

Principal assessor Ross Vivori will confirm for the committee's October meeting how a town adopts and operates the state program, known as Clause 41A.

It enables people 65 or older to defer property taxes until their home is sold or conveyed.

Resident Vivian Orlovski, who proposed the program be used in Great Barrington, emphasized that interest charged on a deferral could earn a higher rate than another investment of town funds.

## Deferrals Not Like Investments

Ms. O'Dwyer agreed that a deferral does not seem risky. But, she said, it's not known when the money will be paid back and the intent is not to make money on a deferred payment as it is on an investment.

When the town invests, it can always take its money back when it wants, but this is intended as a support system for seniors needing financial help, committee member Philip Orenstein commented.

## Orenstein: Many Expenses Ahead

The town has many expenses ahead, including the Housatonic Water Works, a new high school and bridge repair, he said, and "We need to strike a balance."

"It's time to take care of our seniors," selectman Garfield Reed stated.

Now is the time to ask questions and get information — not at 9 p.m. at a town meeting, Michelle Loubert said when Mrs. Orlovski and Mr. Reed seemed impatient that committee members had more questions.

It's a complicated topic but she knows more about it now than she had, Ms. O'Dwyer said.

## Need New Officers

The Finance Committee agreed to have a special meeting to vote on new officers as Ms. O'Dwyer, a professor at Simon's Rock, said she lacks time to continue as chairman.

Ms. Loubert said she lacks the time to continue as vice chairman.

Also at the meeting were member Meredith O'Connor, selectmen Steve Bannon and Ed Abrahams and finance director Susan Carmel. Committee member Tom Blauvelt was absent.

\* \* \*

THE SEPT. 20 MEETING of the **Selectboard and Planning Board housing subcommittee** was ended prematurely by a Zoom blast before a **proposed short-term rental zoning bylaw** was discussed.

The bylaw draft is available from Chris Rembold at [crembold@townofgb.org](mailto:crembold@townofgb.org) or THE NEWSletter at [the-newsltr@gmail.com](mailto:thenewsltr@gmail.com) can email it.

## What Bylaw Proposes

The three-page short-term rental proposal would limit short-term rentals to 90 days a year, consecutive or nonconsecutive, a year if the home's owner resides in it or 45 days a year if not and be for not less than seven consecutive days for each rental.

A resident short-term rental permit fee, available from the Board of Health, would be \$150 or, if not for a resident, \$500 a year.

Selectman Leigh Davis had asked that the subcommittee consider such a bylaw proposal and Planning Board member Pedro Pachano prepared it, using material gathered from proposals in Nantucket and the bylaw in Lenox.

They, selectboard member Garfield Reed and Planning Board member Jonathan Hankin represent their boards on the housing subcommittee.

According to the recently completed Housing Needs Assessment for Great Barrington, of the 954 rental properties in Great Barrington, including Housatonic, 151, or 20%, are listed as short-term rentals, Mr. Pachano said.

Short-term rentals are having an adverse impact on long-term housing, including price and availability, Mr. Hankin noted.

(NEWS continues on page 7)

# Planning Board continued, CPC and ZBA

This isn't just a Planning Board problem, observed Malcolm Fick, who ran the meeting in the absence of chairman Brandee Nelson.

"Better pay would also help," Mr. Fick said.

The three board members at the virtual meeting — Jeremy Higa was also absent — agreed to postpone a discussion of whether to consider a zoning bylaw for home occupations and commercial event venues.

That now can be done with a special permit, Mr. Hankin said, and he does not feel comfortable saying anyone can do it.

Venues already exist at Wyantenuck Country Club, the Eisner Camp and Butter-nut Ski Area, he noted.

He did, however, think "commercial event" might be defined in the bylaws.

Why define if it's not permitted? Mr. Rembold, assistant town manager and planning and development director, asked.

Board members agreed to table the discussion.

The board is preparing amendments to the floodplain overlay district zoning bylaw. A copy of them is available from Mr. Rembold.

They are proposed for voter action at the 2022 annual town meeting. A public hearing will be held before then.

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**DEADLINE FOR STEP 1**, or initial, applications for **Community Preservation Act funds** is **Nov. 5** at 4 p.m. at Mr. Rembold's office on the second floor of Town Hall.

The Community Preservation Committee will meet **Nov. 9** at 5 to p.m. to review them.

Step 2, or final, applications are due **Dec. 17** at 4 p.m. in Mr. Rembold's office.

The deadlines are about three weeks later than past years. Because they're later, more applications might come in, CPC citizen member Martha Fick observed.

CPC funds come from a surcharge of 3% on local real-estate taxes and the state Community Preservation Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Revenue.

In June, town-meeting voters approved the CPC's recommendations that they give a total of \$652,959 to nine applicants.

## Climate Change, Housing Addressed

The CPC held a public hearing Sept. 7 on its plan that states its priorities for funding in three categories — affordable housing, historic preservation and open space and recreation.

Members agree that climate change should be addressed in applications for open space and recreation. Agricultural Commission chairman Vivian Orłowski thanked them for including that.

## Planners: 'Think Outside Box'

The Planning Board wrote that after reviewing the plan, it "supports affordable housing and increasing the affordable housing stock in Town. The Board encourages

the CPC to think outside the box and amend its 2021 Plan to:

"encourage developers to support and propose projects that address people making 100% of the median income,

"consider projects that may seem to be outside of the community's character, and "encourage projects that contribute to diversity in the neighborhoods."

Planning Board vice chairman Malcolm Fick (spouse of Martha Fick) attended the CPC meeting to enforce the letter, he explained.

How should "community's character" be determined? asked Jeremy Higa, who represents the Planning Board on the CPC.

Evaluate each project on its merits, Mr. Fick answered.

Some projects, such as tiny houses, won't completely fit into a neighborhood, observed Leigh Davis, the Selectboard's CPC representative.

She and Mr. Higa noted that as construction costs increase, some developers are using shipping boxes as houses.

It's not up to the CPC to initiate applications, stated Karen Smith, who represents the Parks Commission on the committee.

Mr. Fick is assuming a limitation that does not exist, CPC citizen member Patricia Sharpe said.

"What's harmonious and diverse?" Don Howe, Historic District Committee representative, wanted to know.

Tom Blauvelt, who represents the Finance Committee, said he does not think the CPC has ever considered an application's character.

Members agreed to revise part of the plan so it reads:

"Given the deep cost burdens in Great Barrington, the greatest housing needs are for those households earning 80 percent or less of the area median income, and new subsidized housing units for this level of income or less are eligible to be counted on the state's Subsidized Housing Inventory. However, CPA housing funds may be used to serve the needs of households earning up to and including 100 percent of the area median income, as determined by the US Dept. of HUD, and the Committee will consider proposals that do so."

The plan is on the CPC's page on the town website, [www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org).

\*\*\*

THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS voted unanimously Sept. 21 to **uphold a cease-desist order** issued by Ed May, town building inspector and zoning enforcement officer.

Mr. May on July 16 wrote Abigail Henderson of Hermosa Beach, Calif., to stop using her property at 145 Hurlburt Road as a commercial event venue.

The property is in a residential district and such venues are not allowed, he wrote.

"Operation of a commercial event venue is evidenced by your website advertisement

## How Much Did They Spend?

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER by name, here a report from candidates who turned in reports on donations and expenses for the May 11 town elections.

**Kate Burke, selectman**, Signs on the Cheap, Austin, Texas, campaign signs, \$488.09; Uprinting, Van Nuys, Calif., bumperstickers, \$111.10.

**Eric Gabriel, selectman**, Blue Point Design, Sheffield, for advertising/t-shirts, \$728.40; signs, signs.com, advertising/yard signs, \$374.31 and \$596.55; Shoppers Guide, and print ads, \$249.

**Philip Orenstein, Finance Committee**, Staples, lawn signs, \$36.10.

**Gabriel Reed, selectman**, Signs on the Cheap, Austin, Texas, \$592.44, \$237, \$137; Shoppers' Guide, ads, \$5 & \$48.10; WSBS radio ad, \$58.78; Kwik Print, campaign platform printing, \$53.13 & \$53.13; Shoppers Guide, thank-you ad, \$48.40; WSBS campaign ad, \$48.

Mr. Reed reported donations from Sharon Gregory, \$100, and unspecified in-kind, \$100.

He was the only candidate to report a donation.

and numerous neighbor complaints of non-resident commercial event venue creating excessive traffic, loud music and noise not in keeping with a residential setting."

## Use Not Stated Is Not Allowed

If a use is not stated as allowed, it is not allowed, David Doneski of KP Law, town counsel, stated during the hearing, held virtually.

Justin Henderson of Hermosa Beach, Calif., explained that the house at the property is used for short-term rentals, which has included weddings, perhaps four, since he bought the site in 2017.

He and Abigail Henderson, his wife, were married there 10 years ago, he said. She grew up there.

Mrs. Henderson said no more than 150 people have attended a wedding there.

## What Is Fee Charged for Event?

ZBA member Michael Wise asked what fee he charged for the property's use. Between \$2,500 to \$7,500 for an event, Mr. Henderson responded.

He said he has advertised the property for corporate events but has never had any there.

A neighbor who shares a common drive with the Hendersons wrote that he supports the events but several other neighbors were opposed. THE NEWSletter sent their letters and the cease-desist order to the email lists; anyone who didn't get them could write [thenewsltr@gmail.com](mailto:thenewsltr@gmail.com).

(NEWS continues on page 8)



# ZBA, Housatonic School, Conservation Commission

## Unanimous Vote To Uphold Order

Voting unanimously to uphold the cease-desist and deny the use as a commercial event venue were chairman Ron Majdalany, Carolyn Ivory, Steve McAlister, Mr. Wise and Madonna Meagher.

Mr. Henderson said he understands the vote, is always reachable and doesn't live here so he hadn't had a chance to campaign.

This is "happening en masse in Great Barrington -- in hundreds of homes," he said.

The property's website is <https://manorlanehouse.com>.

## Another Venue Stopped

In June, Mr. May issued a cease-desist order to stop 250 Long Pond Road as a commercial event venue.

The selectmen had agreed June 21 to let Kenneth D. Alpart withdraw without prejudice — meaning he can reapply — his request for a special permit to use the property for commercial events, as he had been doing.

However, only full-time residents may get such special permits. Mr. Alpart resides in Tenafly, N.J.

A report on this was in THE NEWSletter's Volume 30, Number 10.

\* \* \*

CONSERVATION COMMISSION members at their Sept. 22 meeting approved plans for Wendy Pearson to build at 269 Blue Hill Road.

The plans call for building a house in the developed area of one to be removed. A condition of the approval is that a wetlands biologist prepare an invasive species management plan.

Commissioners agreed Barbara Watkins may build a single-family home, garage and driveway at 38 Kalliste Hill, near bordering vegetated wetlands. The BWV may not be mowed, they said.

## What Happens To Beavers?

The state Highway Division was told it may uncover and clean a drainage pipe under Stockbridge Road.

Commission David Shanahan asked what will happen to beavers in the area.

"They will live happily ever after," the state engineer presenting the project, assured him.

Andrew Mankin recused himself from the discussion and vote because he is an owner of the adjacent Barrington Brewery.

A certificate of compliance was given for Egos South Realty, which owns Berkshire Eye Center at 409 Stockbridge Road. The work, completed in 2015, converted a drive-through window into enclosed office space.

A compliance certificate also was given for the Daniel Jusidman property at 9 But-tondown Lane, where native trees were planted in 2011.

Commission agent Shep Evans said he must reschedule a site inspection of 160 Christian Hill Road. A neighbor is requesting the inspection because, as reported in the last issue, she feels unpermitted work was done there.

## Hello, Folks ...

## On Birthdays, Site Inspection, Nightmare

THIS ISSUE STARTS THE NEWSletter's 31st year.

A huge thank you to many of the elected and appointed officials and employees in town government and the Berkshire Hills Regional School District for answering my questions and sending information and to copy editor Barbara Bailly, without whom every page would have a mistake.

And, of course, a bushel of thanks to all of you for supporting THE NEWSletter, some for all 31 years, some who just subscribed.

\* \* \*

DURING A RECENT Conservation Commission meeting, members discussed site inspections, and I flashed back to one that seemed to signal big problems — and ended being just fine, depending on one's perspective.

It was in the early 1980s and I was commission chairman. Winn Development wanted to buy Egremont Golf Course and, including on the part of it in Great Barrington, build a high-end condominium project with a golf course.

To show how high-end it would be, Winn proposed a helicopter pad because residents would need transportation.

Commission members thought the area planned for the buildings had wetlands and intermittent streams. We were all quite annoyed when Winn's lawyer said a site inspection to determine where the condos would go had to be held in, I think, late February.

You can't tell where wetlands are when snow covers the ground and the usual wetlands plants aren't visible, we grumbled.

The site inspection was held on such a freezing day that even the snow seemed to shiver. Tom Seiger and I were there for the commission. Winn's lawyer, verbally capitalizing his words, introduced us to its Esteemed Biologist who worked for A University and was considered Tops in His Field.

Tom and I looked at each other. It was obvious we were about to be rolled over. Told this area had no wetlands. Approve the plans now, before a spring thaw, or we'll have cause to sue you.

The botanist was noncommittal as we walked (slid, actually) on the site. He saw

no sign of a wetlands or a stream, he said several times.

Then we reached the site of Condo Building 1.

For heaven's sake!" he exclaimed. "That's quite an area. Definite wetlands." (These quotes are not verbatim.)

"How do you know?" the lawyer asked, sounding a tad grim.

"By the wetlands plants," he said, pointing to a few dried-up stalks. "They're ..." and he rattled off several plant names, all known to live in wetlands.

"Are you sure?" the lawyer asked, rather sharply.

"Of course! I got my doctorate in these plants. Wrote two books on them. Lecture on them. No question!" (I forget his exact words.)

That took care of Condo Building 1. Condo Building 2 had intermittent streams and bordered the wetlands of Condo Building 3. The helicopter pad **might** have had a vernal pool in its center.

If you're not the developer, that was one delightful site inspection.

\* \* \*

A MEMORY of quite a different kind also returned recently.

The news coverage of Haitians recovering from another hurricane and trying to come into this country reminded me of a communication workshop my husband and I conducted several years ago at a small company in, I think, New Hampshire.

During lunch on the second day, an employee shared an experience that, he said, still gave him nightmares.

He was in the Coast Guard, not on his usual deployment, when, off the coast of Florida, his ship came across what was basically a raft of Haitians trying to make it to shore.

Had they been Cubans, they would have been helped on board and given shelter and food, he said.

But they weren't so they were left on the raft. He and other crew members gave them water and bread — and the chief officer reprimanded them for it.

The raft and the people were left to float away — if they didn't all sink.

-Eileen W. Mooney

**READERS:** To avoid the appearance of conflict of interest, I do not report on the Great Barrington Housing Authority as I am an elected member of its board. -EWM

# Police Reports During August

Police can be reached by calling **911** for an emergency or **528-0306**. The department's website is <https://greatbarringtonpolice.com> and its Facebook page is [www.facebook.com/GBPDMA/](https://www.facebook.com/GBPDMA/)

The police station is at 465 South Main St.

TWENTY-SIX ACCIDENTS involving motor vehicles were reported to Great Barrington police during August.

A car and a motorcycle collided in one accident. Two other vehicles hit deer and one hit a pole.

One person was arrested for driving while intoxicated, second offense, marked lane violation and negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

Police ran radar a total of 106 times. That included 27 times on Main Street, including South Main, and 20 on Stockbridge Road.

Also, nine each, VanDeusenville Road, East Street and Monument Valley Road; seven, North Plain Road; six, Park Street.

Also, four each, Division Street and State Road; three times, mobile and Egremont Plain Road.

## 16 Reports of Gas Leaks Fire Department's Report for August

The Fire Department is at **528-0788** or, in an emergency, **911**. Its website is [www.townofgb.org/fire-department](http://www.townofgb.org/fire-department) and its Facebook page is [www.facebook.com/gbfireddept/](https://www.facebook.com/gbfireddept/)

LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS responded to 128 calls during August, including 16 reports of gas leaks within 13 hours.

Fire Chief Charles Burger explained that "Berkshire Gas put too much mercaptan (odor) in the gas so every little leak that was undetectable or barely detectable to people's sense of smell became readily apparent."

The department "ran calls nonstop" from 10 p.m. Aug. 27 to 1 p.m. Aug. 28, he told THE NEWSletter. It was exhausting, he said.

"Most of the leaks found were extremely minor. A couple had the potential to be serious over time so it is good they were found."

Other calls included:

-Helping Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad 53 times, including at a motor vehicle accident with injuries.

-Responding 41 times to calls for smoke, carbon monoxide or fire alarms that malfunctioned or went off accidentally.

-Two reports of the smell of smoke. One of those turned out to be the homeowners' dog being sprayed by a skunk.

Firefighters also helped invalids twice.

Also, once each, Alford, Seekonk Cross and Monterey roads, Maple Avenue and Front Street.

**Readers:** Anyone who wants radar used for a particular street can call the police station, 528-0306.

### Some Other Police Actions

Police stopped 17 vehicles, resulting in 12 citations/warnings issued.

They had ongoing problems with parked cars and outdoor dining on Railroad Street.

The owner of Rebelle marijuana dispensary said that since she pays 3% of her sales to the town, she wanted an officer to direct traffic at her location. She was informed that pay for police details does not come from the 3%, according to the police report. (More about that 3% is elsewhere in this NEWSletter.)

Police helped with the report of an attempted suicide. They helped get to hospitals a possibly suicidal male from another town and a party threatening suicide and to use a knife.

Someone reported being punched in his face on Bridge Street. Someone else was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon — a knife, vandalizing property and disorderly conduct.

Someone was arrested for operating under the influence, third offense, after causing a disturbance when a local liquor store refused to serve him.

Police helped someone leave a home after a tree fell against a door and another door wouldn't open.

Disturbances were reported at local motels.

An illegally parked car on Railroad Street had "no parking" written on its side in paint.

Distracted driving is dangerous driving. Rubbernecking, taking photos of an accident scene, taking your eyes off the road such as texting or answering your phone are examples of distracted driving. This puts first responders working at an accident scene at risk. It also places you, your passengers and others on the roadway at risk for a secondary accident.

Keep your eyes on the road, your hands on the wheel and your attention on driving. Thank you and be safe!

-Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad operations director Bill Hathaway.

**THIS IS ARCHER,**  
the new police  
comfort dog.

He is about six  
months old now  
and still in training  
but hopes to meet  
people soon.

The hand belongs  
to officer Elias  
Casey, his handler.



Police charged a woman with destruction of property.

For the third time, someone set off fire extinguishers on the third floor of the Berkshire Block, according to the police report.

Packages were reported stolen off a front porch on East Street.

Purple paint was sprayed on a motor vehicle.

A caller said someone purporting to be from "ATT" needed her last four Social Security numbers or her phone service would be cut off. She didn't provide any number and her service wasn't cut. It was a scam.

### Pigs, Cows, Bears, Fox, Turtle

Cows were reported on Stony Brook Road, Blue Hill Road and railroad tracks on North Plain Road.

Twenty pigs were reported in a yard on Christian Hill Road.

A bear was reported in garbage on Higgins Street and in a dumpster at Bostwick Gardens on South Main Street.

A fox bit a woman, who was taken to Fairview Hospital. A neighbor killed the fox. Another fox, found with a broken leg, was taken to a local veterinary hospital by a passerby. About six cats were reported missing over the last several weeks in the Fairview Road area.

## SBAS Report

Great Barrington police at **911** handle ambulance dispatch.

Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad is based at Fairview Hospital. Its website is [www.sbvass.com](http://www.sbvass.com).

The squad covers Great Barrington, Alford, Ashley Falls, Egremont, Monterey, Mount Washington, and Sheffield.

The squad goes primarily to Fairview Hospital but also to Berkshire Medical Center, Baystate and Albany Medical hospitals.

### Total Calls in July

Squad personnel responded in August to 275 calls, including 95 in Great Barrington.

Of the total, 241 calls involved transportation to a medical facility, including 77 calls in Great Barrington.

Fourteen people were evaluated or treated at the scene or care was transferred to another EMS professional and 11 refused an evaluation. Two were dead at the scene.

# Recent Real Estate Transactions

*The Southern Berkshire Registry of Deeds is in the Great Barrington Town Hall and open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Documents are online at [www.masslandrecords.com](http://www.masslandrecords.com).*

*Following are recent transactions of \$35,000 or more in Great Barrington (including Housatonic), Egremont, Monterey, Alford & West Stockbridge. Stockbridge transactions will return in the next issue.*

-Thomas A. Race trustee, Terra Ferma Nominee Realty Trust, to David Harris Koota & Vina Patil-Koota, trustees, Koota Living Trust, property on Terra Ferma Drive, Egremont, \$170,000, and lot 10, Terra Ferma Drive, Egremont, \$130,000.

-Dennis J. Downing & Dianna Downing to Daniel Studwell, 91 Railroad Ave. & 91 High St., Great Barrington, \$252,000.

-John M. Miller to Gillian Elizabeth Wells & Howard Swanson, 15 Lake Ave., Monterey, \$256,000.

-Beatrice Kudler, trustee, Howard Kudler & Beatrice Kudler Revocable Living Trust, to Athena Dratelis, unit 12, 6 Burning Tree Road, Great Barrington, \$820,000.

-Kristine Bahr to Kashmir Madhuwala & Krunal Madhuwala, unit A-25, 6 Emily Court, Great Barrington, \$184,000.

-Educational Consultants Inc. to Hunt Slonem, 389 Main St., Great Barrington, \$3.25 million. (NOTE: This is Searles Castle.)

-Adam Hersch & Jennifer Hersch to Daniel Brenner & Heather Thompson-Brenner, 50 Shun Toll Road, Egremont, \$1.9 million.

-Michael R. Gilmore & Sandra G. Gilmore to Stephen Feingold, 124 Egremont Plain Road, Egremont, \$875,000.

-John Bevan & Patricia A. Bevan to Alison Chan-Bevan & Julian Bevan, 147 Green River Road, Alford, \$576,000.

-Martha Klay to Isabel A. Gregg, 135 West Ave., Great Barrington, \$395,000.

-Blue House Properties LLC to Bright Street Properties Inc., 392 & 394 Park St., Great Barrington, \$730,000.

-Donald J. Ward III to Berkshire Natural Resources Council Inc., property on State Road, Great Barrington, \$15,000.

-Silver Mine LLC to Dominick A. Luchi Jr. & Michelle A. Luchi, property on Silver Mine Lane, West Stockbridge, \$200,000.

-Jason Blackwell & Nanci Haddad-Blackwell to Stacy L. Case, 300 Maple Ave., Great Barrington, \$537,500.

-Bruce D. Cutter & Eileen Cutter to PGA Holdings LLC, 21 Wyantenuck St., Great Barrington, \$475,000.

-James Ketchen Revocable Trust, James B. Ketchen, trustee, to Michael S. Anglin & Paulette J. Truman, 70 Castle Hill Ave., Great Barrington, \$1,085 million.

-Paul R. Morgan to 48 State Road LLC, 48 State Road, Great Barrington, \$520,000.

-Hue Van Nguyen to Joel Simon Davenport, 5 Hotel St., West Stockbridge, \$210,000.

-Jeremy Rawitz to Andrew J. Bevaqua & Aimee A. Bevaqua, 165 Stevens Lake Way, Monterey, \$640,000.

-Peter Armata & estate of Susan M. Armata to Ellies Holdings LLC, 9 State Line Road, West Stockbridge, \$182,000.

-Toms Toys Building LLC to Toms Toys Realty LLC, 291-297 Main St., Great Barrington, \$2.6 million.

-Craig M. Martin & Julia H. Martin to Kevin Molloy, trustee, Kevin Molloy 2021 Revocable Trust, & Alice Phan, trustee, Alice Phan 2021 Revocable Trust, 30 Main St., Egremont, \$580,000.

-Elizabeth A. Jones & EA Jones & Associates LLC to Yaron Sadon & Stacey Sadon, unit 26, 9 Burning Tree Road, \$1.36 million.

-Carly Jane Shafiroff to Carter VanAllen Forringer & James Matthew Earl, lot 2, Lake Avenue, Great Barrington, \$160,000.

-Thomas A. Gladwell & Andrew R. Reynolds to Carter V. Forringer, James M. Earl & Rachel Ann Forringer, 26 Prospect St., Great Barrington, \$640,000.

-Joan A. Wenz & Anthony J. Ferrari to Joseph H. Carpenter & Jacqueline A. Ivory, 17 Maple View Drive, West Stockbridge, \$299,900.

-Donald W. Gulick & Claire E. Gulick to Scott T. McFarland & Rebecca McFarland, property on Christian Hill Road, Great Barrington, \$96,000.

## Stockbridge

*The Middle Berkshire Registry of Deeds is at 44 Bank Row, Pittsfield. It is open from 8:30 a.m. to 3:59 p.m. weekday s.*

-Wilma Michaels 1999 Revocable Trust & Wilma Michaels, trustee, to Steven J. Krebs, unit 7A, 19 Hawthorne Road, Stockbridge, \$885,000.

-46 Interlaken Road Realty Trust, Gregory & Bulger & Richard J. Dix, trustees, to Andrew S. Clayman & Nancy M. Clayman, 46 Interlaken Road, \$1.049 million.

-11 Mahkeenac Heights LLC to Mark A. McCormick-Goodhart & Theresa McCormick-Goodhart, 11 Mahkeenac Heights Road, Stockbridge, \$381,000.

-Terry L. Chamberlain & Judith Chamberlain to Jeffrey R. Minkler, property on Old Tree Farm Road, Stockbridge, \$220,000.

-Jennifer M. Lindsay to William J. Heridan III & Eve Sheridan, 38 Church St., Stockbridge, \$750,000.

-Leonard Snyderman to Kimberly Kay Towey & Francis Vincent Towey, 94 East Main St., Stockbridge, \$150,000.

-Petite Maison LLC to Baruch Sachs & Rose Sachs, 9 Mahkeenac Heights Road, Stockbridge, \$360,100.

## Building Permits for August



Building Commissioner Ed May issues permits and inspects projects. He is also Great Barrington's zoning enforcement officer.

Assistant building inspector is Matthew Kollmer.

Their office in the Town Hall is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The telephone number is 528-3206. Mr. May's email is [emay@townofgb.org](mailto:emay@townofgb.org).

### Inspectors; What Needs Permit

Other inspectors are gas, Robert Gennari at 274-0267; plumbing, Robert Krupski, 229-8019; and electrical, Theodore Piontek, 274-6605.

Permits are needed for siding, roofs, signs, foundations, fences, and temporary structures; to demolish structures; and to install chimney linings, alarm systems;

Also, new windows, wood stoves, insulation, sprinkler systems, photovoltaics;

Also, tents, pools, hot tubs, spas, alarms, sprinklers, sheds, solar installations, and home occupations.

### Building Permits in August

Forty-six building permits were issued in August with fees paid of \$7,857.50 and estimated construction costs of \$1,179,803.

*Following are permits during August with estimated building costs of \$35,000 or more and the contractor if not the homeowner:*

-Martha Klay, replace most windows, replace siding, add insulation & install new gutters at 30 Gilmore Ave., Alex Komlev contractor, \$45,300.

-American Institute of Economic Research, partial roof replacement at 250 Division St., Bruce Gore, \$55,800.

-Barrington Partners LLC, new partitions & stairs at 924 Main St., Richard Guyette Jr., \$90,000.

-Zoe Greene, build free-standing garage

with bedroom apartment & loft with side deck at 227 East St., Paul Greene, \$127,000.

-Matthew Amstead, build three-bedroom house at 131 Lake Buel Road, \$169,500.

-Melanie Greenberg, install ground-mounted photovoltaic tracker system at 267 Long Pond Road, Thomas Torrico, \$45,900.

-Trustee, Thomas M. Hankey, repair & replace water damage, add shower, & replace two windows at 224 State Road, Anthony Troiano, \$37,500.

-Ruby D. Aver, repair & paint 204 Highland St., Robert Hinton, \$37,260.

-Christopher Rowland, replace roof & gutters at 227 Prosect St. North, Robert Hinton, \$38,990.

-Alan Rivenson, replace roof, 2 doors, furnace, sump pump and hot water tank at 5 Highland Drive, Robert Hinton, \$37,030.



## Betty E. Annecharico

Betty E. Annecharico, 89, formerly of Sandisfield, died Sept. 13 at her home in Merrimack, N.H., where she had recently moved.

She had worked at voting polls in Sandisfield for many years.

Mrs. Annecharico leaves her children, Constance Slater, Frederick Slater, Gregory Slater, Irma Annecharico, Robin Annecharico, Rudolph Annecharico, Sonja Gray and Andrew Annecharico; 18 grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and great-great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband, Rudolph Annecharico; her daughter, Wendy Slater; her brother, William Surdam; her sister, Florence Pisiakowski; and her former husband, Frederick Slater.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to Home Health and Hospice Care, 7 Executive Park Drive, Merrimack, N.H. 03054, or HospiceCare in the Berkshires, 877 South St., Suite 1W, Pittsfield 01201.

## Roger E. Bailey Sr.

Roger E. Bailey Sr., 74, of Great Barrington died Sept. 18 at Berkshire Medical Center.

He had served in the Navy during the Vietnam War.

He was an oil burner technician for John B. Hull for 21 years and owned Roger Bailey Heating from 1990 to 1999.

Mr. Bailey leaves his wife, Sally Farnum Bailey of Great Barrington; three sons, Roger Bailey Jr. of South Egremont, Eric Bailey of Housatonic and Brian DeLand Jr. of Ashley Falls; two brothers, Albert Dupont of Housatonic and Stanley Dupont of Sheffield; a sister, Patricia Borelli of Lee; and three grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his second mother, Anna Dupont Webster, and his brother, Ken Dupont.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

## Barbara Mary Bersaw

Barbara Mary Fallon Bersaw, 92, of Great Barrington died Sept. 2 at home.

She graduated from St. Joseph's School in North Adams in 1946 and from Massachusetts State Teachers College in North Adams in 1950 with an education degree.

She taught in North Adams and then in Stamford, Vt., stayed home to raise her six children, and in 1967 began teaching again.

She and her husband, Robert J. Bersaw, both taught at Roe Jan Central School in Hillsdale, N.Y., and were involved in many scouting and parish activities.

They moved to Castle Street in 1969.

Mrs. Bersaw leaves her sons, Douglas of Richmond, N.H. and Daniel of Great Barrington; her daughters, Dr. Eileen L. O'Leary of Blarney, Ireland, Carolyn V. Bersaw, Marian T. Hasset of Housatonic and Patricia A. Noon of Brandon, Vt.; 14 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren.

# Recent Obituaries

She was predeceased by her husband of 50 years in 2001 and by her sister, Claire Mahony.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to St. Peter's Parish or HospiceCare in the Berkshire through the funeral home.

## Patricia Lorraine Ciolina

Patricia Lorraine Ciolina, 96, of Canaan, Conn., died Aug. 28.

The former Patricia L. Baumann, she graduated in 1943 from the former Searles High School and worked at the former Monument Mills and Bill Carroll's grocery store.

She and her husband, Enrico Ciolina, lived on East Street, Great Barrington, for many years.

Mrs. Ciolina leaves her children, Thomas Kelly Ciolina of Gulfport, Fla., and Christopher Ciolina of Colebrook, Conn.; four grandchildren; several great-grandchildren; her brothers, Joseph Baumann of Cape Cod, Gerald Baumann of Lee and Peter Baumann of Housatonic; and her sisters, Joan Clark of Camden, S.C., and Mary Whitbeck of Salisbury, Conn.

Besides her husband, she was predeceased by her brothers Thomas, Jim, Paul, George and John Baumann, and her sister Ann.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention in memory of Nicole Lostocco through the funeral home.

## Gizella Anne Doyle

Gizella Anne Doyle, 78, formerly of Great Barrington and most recently of Dalton, died Sept. 21 at Berkshire Medical Center.

She graduated in 1961 from St. Gabriel's High School in New Rochelle, N.Y., where she played basketball and the violin. She graduated in 1962 from Berkeley Secretarial School.

In 1997, Mrs. Doyle graduated from Berkshire Community College with an associates' degree in business administration. She graduated cum laude in 2001 from Massachusetts College of the Arts and was a member of the National Honor Society.

She was an emergency medical technician with the Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance Squad before losing her ability to speak in 1987.

Mrs. Doyle leaves her children, William E. Doyle Jr. of Brooklyn, N.Y., Thomas Arthur Doyle of Mount Washington, Anne Louise Darie of Mount Washington and Christopher William Doyle of Hunstville, Ala; her siblings, Louise Garrison of Falmouth and Stephen Andrew Heintz of Guilford, Conn.; and two grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her parents and her brother, Peter Joseph Heintz.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to Berkshire County Arc through the funeral home.

## Phoebe Eisenberg

Phoebe Rosenberg Eisenberg, 97, of Stockbridge died Aug. 27 at home.

She taught English for many years at Monument Mountain Regional High School. She had a bachelor's degree from Wells College and two master's degrees from New York University.

She and her husband, Norman Eisenberg, moved to Great Barrington from Westchester, N.Y., when he joined the staff of the former High Fidelity magazine, based on State Road.

Mrs. Eisenberg was predeceased by her husband and her long-time companion, Larry Wasserman.

She leaves her brother, Harold Jay Rosenberg of Sarasota, Fla..

Birches-Roy Funeral Home is handling arrangements, which will include a memorial service to be scheduled.

## George S. Gorham

George Stephen Gorham, 73, of Great Barrington died Aug. 26 at home.

He graduated from the former Searles High School and served in the Air Force for four years.

He was a mason and a bartender at 20 Railroad St. until he retired.

Mr. Gorham leaves his sister, Barbara Duffany of Denver, Colo.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

## Evelyn H. Haile

Evelyn Henderson Haile, 107, formerly of Great Barrington, died at her daughter's home in Bloomfield, Conn., Aug. 29.

After graduating from Lenox High School, she attended nursing school at Freedmen's Hospital School for Nurses at Howard University.

After graduating, she worked at Fairview Hospital until she retired.

Mrs. Haile leaves her children, Barbara Manier, Debra Vallarta, Myrtle Haile Suber, Henry Haile, and Patience Haile; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband of 71 years, Moses Haile Sr.; their eldest son, Moses Jr., and his wife, Joanne; and their son-in-law, Francisco Vallarta.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to Masonicare Charity Foundation through the funeral home.

## Michael C. Lennon

Michael C. Lennon, 34, of New Marlborough died Aug. 26.

He leaves his parents, Richard Lennon and Gail Donaldson, and his siblings, Ryan, Keegan, Aaron, Matt and Stefanie.

(OBITUARIES cont. on page 12)

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

## Brian R. Litchfield

Brian R. Litchfield, 50, of Sandisfield died Sept. 2.

He had attended Lee High School and had worked for the Eisner Camp and Dolby's Florist and done carpentry work.

Mr. Litchfield leaves his wife of 23 years, Claudette Daigle Litchfield; his mother, Patricia Borelli, his brother, Leon E. Litchfield Jr.; and his sister, Brandi Page.

His father, Leon E. Litchfield Sr., predeceased him.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to HospiceCare in the Berkshires or St. Jude's Children's Hospital through the funeral home.

## Genis Melendez-Delaney

Genis Melendez-Delaney, 84, of Egremont died Sept. 10 at Albany (N.Y.) Medical Center.

She taught elementary school and then became principal of PS 151 in Manhattan, and taught at SUNY Albany and Hostos Community College in Bronx, N.Y.

She had been president of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education.

She retired as director of the Principals' Institute at Bank Street College.

Mrs. Melendez-Delaney had been elected to the Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee and was a translator for Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires.

Mrs. Melendez-Delaney leaves her husband, Chet.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to VIM or the Hispanic Federation through the funeral home.

## George H. Mielke Sr.

George H. Mielke Sr., 94, of Sheffield died Sept. 13 at home.

During World War II, he was stationed with the Army in Okinawa.

In 1963, he and his sons opened the George H. Mielke salvage yard and used auto parts, which his sons will continue to operate.

Mr. Mielke leaves his sons, George Jr., Theodore and Donald Sr.; his sister, Virginia Mielke Race; a grandson; and a great-granddaughter.

His wife of 45 years, Mary Katherine, died in 1994.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Berkshire Humane Society through the funeral home.

## George E. Ritter Jr.

Dr. George Edward Ritter Jr., 76, of Great Barrington died Sept. 11 at Fairview Hospital.

After graduating from the University of Rochester, he attended medical school at Georgetown University and completed an internship at Buffalo (N.Y.) Children's Hospital.

# Obituaries continued

In 1974, he entered the Navy Reserve as a pediatrician and he and his wife, Kathryn Swanson Ritter, moved to Media, Pa.

The family then moved to Great Barrington, where Dr. Ritter opened his practice, first in The Doctors' Building at Fairview Hospital, then at 17 Taconic Ave. and then in a house he renovated on Maple Avenue.

Dr. Ritter was joined in his practice by Dr. Dennis Tresp and then by Dr. Richard Heck. The practice is now known as Macony and owned by Berkshire Health Systems.

In 1983, Dr. Ritter was diagnosed with kidney disease. He had an unsuccessful kidney transplant in 1986 and remained a dialysis patient for the rest of his life.

Because he could no longer actively practice pediatrics, he educated himself on healthcare operations and was named vice president of quality and safety at Saratoga Hospital in 1994.

He later accepted a similar position at Baystate Medical Center.

Besides his wife of 53 years, Dr. Ritter leaves his daughters, Keira and Kate; his son, Andrew; his sister, Janet Wheeler; and a granddaughter.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home is handling arrangements, which will include a private gathering in the fall.

Memorial donations are suggested to Fairview Hospital in Dr. Ritter's name for a fund to support and promote excellence in care for children.

## Phyllis A. Samuels

Phyllis A. Samuels, 95, of Sheffield died Sept. 14 at Mount Carmel Care Facility in Lenox.

She had worked for Maplewood Fabrics in Ashley Falls for many years. She also made quilts that she donated to many charities, including the SPCA and St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Mrs. Samuels leave two daughters, Sue Fulco of Lakeland, Fla., and Dawn Samuels Curtis of Beverly; her son, Shawn Samuels of Great Barrington; a brother, Walter White of Torrington, Conn.; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband, Richard Nelson Samuels, in 2000 and by brothers and sisters.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to Berkshire Humane Society or St. Jude Children's Hospital through the funeral home.

## Mildred T. Shmulsky

Mildred Tatsapaugh Shmulsky, 93, died Aug. 13 at her daughter's home on Berkshire School Road, Sheffield.

She graduated in 1946 from the former Sheffield Center School and then was a telephone operator.

When she married her husband, Alexander A. Shmulsky, her wedding dress was made

from the silk of the parachute he used in World War II.

Mrs. Shmulsky leaves her brother, Horace Randall Tatsapaugh of Greensboro, N.C.; her sons, Alexander Theodore Shmulsky of New Marlboro and Stephen Shmulsky of Sheffield; her daughters, Elle Sable of Princeton, Maine, and Nancy Shmulsky of Sheffield; eight grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Besides her husband she was predeceased by her daughter Cheryl Kane Shmulsky in 2008, her son Daniel in 2007 and her grandson Matthew in 2002.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

## Donald James Ward Jr.

Donald James Ward Jr., 89, of Great Barrington died Sept. 6.

He was raised in Bronx, N.Y., Stamford, Conn., and Westchester, N.Y., and spent summers with his family in Hillsdale, N.Y., before settling in Great Barrington.

Mr. Ward served in the Korean War.

He and Matt Tomich began Ward's Nursery and Garden Center in 1957. He turned it over to his sons in the late 1990s and a third generation now operates it.

Mr. Ward was a past president of the New England Nursery Association.

He had served on the Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee and the St. Peter's Parish finance committee.

Mr. Ward leaves his wife of 63 years, the former Lorraine Wells; his sons Donald III, Gregory, Michael and Tim; his daughters Maureen Barnaba, Eileen Ward Fauci and Colleen Souza; 16 grandchildren; a great grandchild; and his sisters, Mary Alice Welch and Dolores Viebrock.

He was predeceased by his parents and his brother Joseph.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to St. Peter's Parish through the funeral home.

## John H. Weiland III

John H. Weiland III, 77, of Great Barrington died Sept. 6 at home.

He graduated from Millbrook (N.Y.) High School in 1962.

He was an Army helicopter mechanic in Germany during the Vietnam War.

After his service, he graduated from California Polytechnic State College and sold farm equipment.

After moving to Great Barrington, he established an office supply company.

Mr. Weiland leaves his wife, Clarice Gillfillian Kahlstrom; three sons, Mark, Jeffrey and William; a daughter, Brenda Weiland Le; his former wife, Bonita Sherlock Weiland of Housatonic; a brother, Arthur Weiland; three stepchildren, Edgar L. Kahlstrom Jr., Jack Kahlstrom and Lucinda Kahlstrom-Race; eight grandchildren; seven step-grandchildren; and five step-great-grandchildren.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to HospiceCare in the Berkshires through the funeral home.



## **NEWS BRIEF**

### **Bulky Waste Collection at the Recycling Center**

The Town of Great Barrington will accept bulky waste at the Recycling Center on **Saturday October 23rd, 2021** regular hours, at no charge to residents of Great Barrington. No businesses will be accepted. The facility is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

#### **Disposal items include:**

- Furniture, including couches, recliners, tables and chairs;
- Mattresses and box springs;
- Rugs and carpeting;
- Window and door frames, windows, doors, screens, etc.

#### **Items that will not be accepted during this special collection include:**

- Demolition debris;
- Household trash;
- Household hazardous wastes;
- White goods (washers, dryers, refrigerators without Freon);
- CRT's (computer screens and televisions);
- Household appliances such as vacuum cleaners and toasters;
- Tires and auto batteries
- Yard waste.

**For more information, call the D.P.W. Office at 528-0867.**

# Report on Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

When the following report was presented at the Sept. 27 Selectboard meeting, Selectboard chairman Steve Bannon said stations will have a two-hour time limit. Information about the discussion and vote on charging a fee to use a station is elsewhere in this NEWSletter.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**TITLE:** Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

**BACKGROUND:** An electric vehicle (EV) charging station will be installed in the Taconic parking lot as part of the current reconstruction project. It will be located in the portion of the parking lot immediately to the left of the entrance driveway that comes downhill from upper Railroad Street. The station will be a "Level 2" station. It is specified to be a Charge Point model CT4025 or equivalent, equipped to charge two electric vehicles at one time. A similar dual EV station will be installed at Town Hall when that parking lot is reconstructed (location and schedule to be determined).


An EV station of this type delivers about 7.2 kilowatts of power and can charge any EV currently on the market, and this station could provide an operating range of approximately 20 to 25 miles per hour of charge. Depending on the size of the EV's battery and other factors, a full charge could be achieved in approximately eight hours. At our current electric rate of \$0.15 per kWh (only \$0.10 per kWh with our aggregation discount), the cost of one hour of charging time at our station would be \$0.75 to \$1.10.

Some public EV stations allow customers to charge for free. This sometimes reflects a commitment, and a marketing effort, to promote environmentally friendly practices and be a more green community. (This would be particularly true in Great Barrington, because under our aggregation agreement, 100% of the electricity is supplied by renewable wind power.) A municipality or a business also might install a free-to-the-customer EV station in order to draw potential customers to the business/area, hoping that the EV owners will support local businesses while the EV charges.

At other EV stations the customer must pay to charge the EV. The fees might be basic, simply covering the cost of the electricity, or, the fees might reflect the fact that the EV charging spaces are "premium" parking spaces that are centrally/conveniently located and are reserved only for EV users. Costs can be billed per hour, or even at 15 minute increments, depending on the software. Also, an EV station could charge a premium at busy times/on busy days, or could be free at certain times of day or days of the week. Our EV stations will be equipped so customers can pay with a credit card, if the Town decides to charge.

**RECOMMENDATION:** A specific recommendation from staff is not made at this time; the purpose of this summary is to provide information to the Board for further discussion.

**WRITTEN & APPROVED BY:**

  
Assistant Town Manager / Director of  
Planning & Community Development

**DATE:** 9/24/21

# Pot in Great Barrington and What Teens Say

Selectman Ed Abrahams prepared the following report on legal marijuana in Great Barrington after presenting it from notes at the Selectboard's Sept. 13 meeting.

Several years ago the selectboard appointed me as the point person for the legal cannabis businesses in GB so I'm giving this quick update.

There was an article in the Berkshire Edge (8/25/2021) with the headline, "Since 2019, Great Barrington has raked in \$6.7 million in cannabis revenue." The sub headline referred to the Community Impact Fee as "legalized extortion."

I want to address that locally and, since I wrote the host agreements which allow the local cannabis businesses to operate in town, assure the board that it is not extortion.

The Community Impact Fee is the extra 3% tax on marijuana businesses that the town is required to use to mitigate the negative impacts. In the article it was the Massachusetts Cannabis Business Association that called it a "legalized extortion fee." The article referenced an opinion piece in Commonwealth Magazine which said it's "hard to make a case" that there's a negative community impact. Specifically, they said we have not seen:

- sales to minors,
- crime around cannabis stores,
- an increase in driving under the influence (DUI),
- negative impacts on nearby businesses or neighborhoods,
- staffing or budget increases in police, fire, or health departments attributable to cannabis stores."

Fortunately, all of that is mostly true. There are even positive impacts of legal marijuana:

- Employment
- Real estate taxes
- Tourist dollars spent elsewhere

But there is definitely a negative impact to legal marijuana and I want the SB and the town to know that GB is spending the community impact fee legally:

- according to the Cannabis Control Commission regulations,
- according to the host agreement,
- and specifically to target those negative impacts.

## **Negative Impacts of Legal Marijuana:**

- Increased police costs are minor but not nonexistent. An officer was trained in identifying DUI since, as of now there is nothing like a breathalyzer for cannabis. That cost was not paid by community impact funds, although it certainly would have been eligible.

- Increased DUI has not been detected but as of now, there's no real way to prove it.

- Medical. According to the *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine*, two medical syndromes, Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome and Cyclic Vomiting Syndrome, (both of which present as recurrent nausea, vomiting, and cramping abdominal pain), and other marijuana-related visits to emergency rooms have been seen to increase dramatically in states that have legalized marijuana.

### **HERE'S THE BIG ONE**

- Youth acceptance of this now normalized behavior. It's way too early to say there's no impact on youth cannabis use. We know that there's a perception among our youth that the adult community is friendly to substance use. Here are three examples from the South Berkshire Community Health Coalition's 2021 Prevention Needs Assessment Survey of south county high school students. These questions were asked of all students in grades 8, 10 and 12. The answers given here are for 12th graders.

**How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to use \_\_\_\_\_**

They were asked this question about several substances. For alcohol, 11% said it's "not wrong at all." For marijuana that percent doubled with 22% saying that.

**How wrong do your friends feel it would be for YOU to have \_\_\_\_\_ nearly everyday?**

1 or 2 drinks, 69% said it was "wrong" or "very wrong." For marijuana that number dropped to 38%.

**In the past year, about how many adults have you known personally who have used marijuana or other drugs?** 63% knew at least one and 17% knew 5 or more.

There's very little good research on the long term health impacts of pot but we know with certainty that marijuana use by people younger than their mid 20s can have permanent impact on still developing brains.

Legal marijuana makes spreading that fact to teens important and that's what our community impact money has been used for.

The same opinion piece from the Massachusetts Cannabis Business Association recommended "...permitting collection [only] for actual costs—which towns would need to verify through annual reports—while protecting cannabis businesses from making payments beyond what the law allows."

Again, I'm happy to report that everything the town does is open and verified, and expenditures of community impact funds are reported annually.

Town Meeting gave the town manager the authority to decide how to spend the money. He, in turn, created a committee of citizens to advise him. Each year, Town Meeting decides how much of the money collected is to be used that year. Last year, the first year that money became available, grants were given to Berkshire Hills Regional School District, Railroad Street Youth Project, Berkshire South Community Center, Volunteers in Medicine (VIM), and Construct.

All of them are required to report back to the town, publicly, about how they spent the money. This year there are clear application guidelines all of which relate specifically to mitigating the negative impacts. All public, all justified.

**Let me be clear that our local cannabis retailers have not called this legalized extortion, nor have they balked at paying the agreed upon fee. On the contrary, they have been great neighbors and partners.**

- Theory Wellness built a new (taxable) building and was very responsive in addressing early traffic and parking problems..
- Calyx has painted that beautiful mural on their building and they were a major sponsor of the Berkshire Busk.
- Farnsworth and Rebelle have both spruced up older buildings in town and both are operating successful businesses.

**I just want GB voters and the Selectboard to know that the host agreements we have approved are legal and the money we have spent is actually already working to, among other things, help parents and teens address substance use.**



# National Hispanic Heritage Month

The Selectboard approved the following proclamation at the Sept. 13 meeting.

## PROCLAMATION

### Celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month

#### Town of Great Barrington, Massachusetts

- Whereas,** The Town of Great Barrington joins the Nation in celebrating Hispanics who have made outstanding contributions to the United States of America; and
- Whereas,** Since 1988, the United States has observed National Hispanic Heritage Month, commemorating the independence of Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua from September 15 through October 15; and
- Whereas,** Hispanics in the United States have helped establish America as a place of freedom and opportunity, and their contributions such as; serving in the army, providing medicine, providing architecture styles, improving economic life, and by providing food – continue to enrich our Nation's character; and
- Whereas,** America's cultural diversity and optimism for a brighter future has always been one of our nation's greatest strengths; and
- Whereas,** Together we recognize the Community of Hispanics in Great Barrington, whose love of family, strong work ethic, and sense of community have helped unite us all.

**Now, therefore be it resolved that the Selectboard of the Town of Great Barrington, do hereby encourage the citizens of Berkshire County to join us in celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month.**

**IN WITNESS THEREOF, We have hereunto set on this 13<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021**

Town comparisons re: Senior Tax Deferral (41A)

from .... 2019 Census Data\*

	Population	# of Homes	Median Property Value	Median Household Income	2020 Property Tax Rate	% 65+ yrs (# homes by 65+ %)	% of 65+ residents below poverty	Program 41A Info/Data		
								Max Income Allowed	Interest Rate	Total Annual Amount Deferred (& # partic)
<b>Great Barrington</b>	<b>6,901</b> <small>(7,027 in 2020)</small>	<b>2,813</b>	<b>\$353,800</b>	<b>\$55,478</b>	<b>\$15.75</b>	<b>23%</b> <b>(647 homes)</b>	<b>6%</b>	-----	-----	-----
Chatham	1,428	840	\$778,600	\$81,630	\$4.62	55% (462 homes)	9%	\$40,000	8%	'20 = 0 '21 = \$2,333 (1)
Sandwich	3,002	1302	\$372,700	\$93,333	\$14.31	26% (339 homes)	3%	No info for 2021		'20 = \$19,718 (4) '21 = no data
Manchester-by-the-Sea	5,400	2,075	\$852,400	\$148,854	\$11.70	24% (498 homes)	4%	\$40,000	8%	'20 = \$7,482 (2) '21 = \$5,716 (1)
Norwell	11,054	3,666	\$608,300	\$157,987	\$16.63	16% (660 homes)	5%	\$61,000 -> \$92,000	2%	'20 = \$38,020 (4) '21 = \$42,325 (8)
Sudbury	19,122	6,386	\$720,800	\$191,310	\$18.45	16% (1022 homes)	1%	\$90,000 <small>(also has not 60 as min age)</small>	2%	'20 = \$102,831 (16) '21 = no data
MA STATE								\$20,000	8%	

\* <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US2500326815-great-barrington-town-berkshire-county-ma/>  
<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2512960-chatham-ma/>  
<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US2500937995-manchester-by-the-sea-town-essex-county-ma/>  
<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US2502350145-norwell-town-plymouth-county-ma/>  
<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US2501768260-sudbury-town-middlesex-county-ma/>  
<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2559700-sandwich-ma/>