



NEWS FROM South Williamstown

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Green River Cleanup Walk Saturday July 11 at 1 PM

If you're able bodied and not afraid of slipping on wet stones, join us for a cleanup walk along the Green River. This is a project we've done in collaboration with the Hoosic River Watershed Association for the last few years to address the debris washing into the river from a former town landfill located behind the Hart farm on New Ashford Road (Route 7). Park at the Hart Garage and cross the road to walk down the driveway at the Thaisz's house, 340 New Ashford Road. You'll need rubber boots and gloves and don't forget to spray yourself with insect repellent. The Town will provide us with garbage bags and arrange for disposal. (There is an update on measures being taken to remediate the problem on page 2 of this newsletter.)



Norman Burdick singing outside Sweetbrook Nursing Home
Photo :Gillian Jones/The Berkshire Eagle

SWCA Sings & Cheers For Sweet Brook

Accompanied by his son, Todd, on banjo, South Williamstown's Norman Burdick sings and plays guitar for his wife, Betsey, in April on his 88th birthday, at Sweet Brook Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Williamstown. It was recently announced that Sweet Brook will close on August 18 and the 65 residents, including Betsey, will have to be relocated. It was especially hard on Norm to be able to visit his wife only remotely during Covid restrictions. On June 15, Debbie Windover organized several SWCA members to stand outside holding thank you signs to show appreciation at the 3pm shift change for Sweet Brook employees. Debbie and Karen Charbonneau went back to cover the 11pm shift change as well.

Williamstown Farmers Market Open Online

We miss the music and conviviality, but at least we can still buy local fresh produce and prepared foods from Williamstown Farmers Market Essentials – the online version at <https://www.wfmessentials.org/>. The market opens virtually Mondays at 10 am for orders to be picked up on Saturdays at Williamstown Youth Center (enter on School Street) between 11am and 1pm. It's a good time to give it a try because this is definitely harvest season for many local delectables.

News From South Williamstown

July 2020

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**Contribute to the next
SWCA Newsletter, due
out by September 30,
2020.**

Email suggestions or
articles to
swca32@gmail.com

Find SWCA on Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/
South-Williamstown-Community-
Association-1684158335160201/](https://www.facebook.com/South-Williamstown-Community-Association-1684158335160201/)

Hart Landfill Site Update

(On June 8, SWCA Board Member Mark Thaisz obtained the following report from Chris Lemoine, Williamstown Director of Public Works.)

On May 1, 2020, MassDEP approved the Hart Landfill Preliminary Comprehensive Site Assessment (PCSA) submitted to MassDEP on behalf of the Town of Williamstown by the Town's consultant CDM Smith Inc. The PCSA contains information relative to the landfill site encompassing a number of topics such as site ownership, land use, geology, hydrology environmental receptors, investigation results and recommendations of further work. The PCSA work included the installation of a groundwater monitoring well, testing of groundwater samples, testing of Green River water samples upstream and downstream of the site, and testing of water samples of two private wells located at 321 and 340 New Ashford Road. CDM Smith concluded that the landfill does not appear to be adversely affecting the environment around the Hart Farm Landfill. Recommendations include the removal of large surficial debris from the landfill, the riverbank, and monitoring of the riverbank.

Specific to the site, the Town must limit access to the site with the installation of a gate at the entrance and signage. Any future use of the site will require written approval from MassDEP, so it is very doubtful that the site will ever be used again. Environmental monitoring will continue and a report containing logs must be submitted to MassDEP prior to June 1, 2021. The Town is required to hire a professional engineer (PE) to perform an annual third party inspection.

Within two years the Town shall relocate the surficial waste present at the landfill for appropriate off-site disposal and submit a (PE) report to MassDEP no later than April 1, 2023. The Town shall assess the existing conditions along the riverbank and propose action to stabilize the bank no later than April 1, 2023.

To date the Town has paid CDM Smith Inc. \$63,495 for the engineering services related to the Hart Landfill and has committed another \$13,005. To date the Town's Highway Department has removed 34.42 tons of surficial metal waste from the site and delivered it to Apkins and Sons metal recycling facility in North Adams.

This month, in compliance with the MassDEP CSA report, the Town's Highway department will be excavating approximately 10 additional test pits on site with CDM Smith Inc.

This year the Highway Department will be installing a swing gate at the landfill entrance, posting of the property, and continuing removal of surficial debris as time permits.



Screen shot from SWCA Annual meeting on Zoom at 7:24 PM on June 11

Jason Hoch Speaks at SWCA Remote Annual Meeting on June 11

Town Manager Jason Hoch spoke at the South Williamstown Community Association Annual Meeting held remotely on Zoom because of Covid-19 restrictions. He first commended town citizens for sheltering in place, wearing masks and social distancing. Hoch said adopting these measures made a real difference in the transmission of the virus here, with known cases spread through community transmission never growing beyond 10 at a time (apart from the cluster at Williamstown Commons Nursing Home).

The projected \$600,000 revenue from lodging and meal taxes will probably not go down to zero, but will be strongly impacted. State aid to towns will also be reduced because its revenues are dropping, too. On a more positive note, Hoch views Williamstown as better off than some other communities because “We have a rainy day fund and we will benefit from the Williams College eco system, with the Clark Art Institute being another strong anchor. We’ve already benefitted from a high rate of property tax payments and the fact that many Town employees were able to work remotely because we had already placed a number of documents in the cloud. Willinet has been great in making meetings available to the public.” He commented that the school community was the first in the county to offer pick-up lunches and meals and that this will continue through the summer.

Local farmer Brian Cole was elected as a new SWCA Board member. The remainder of the slate of Board members proposed by the nominating committee included Matthew Baya, Pam Burger, Alison Case, Katie Case, Karen Charbonneau, Bette Craig, Tom Cragg, Mindy Hackner, Anne Hogeland, MaryEllen Meehan, Mark Thaisz, Mickey Thaisz, and Carolyn Umlauf. The slate was unanimously elected by the membership attending the Zoom meeting. Karen Kelly resigned from the Board and was warmly thanked for her service. Officers elected by the Board include: Bette Craig, President; Pam Burger, Recording Secretary; Tom Cragg, Treasurer; and Katie Case, Corresponding Secretary.

Covid-19 and Older Adults

By Pamela Burger, Chairperson of The Williamstown Council on Aging



SWCA Board Member Alison Case wearing one of the more than 100 she made for free distribution to the community, including the Harper Center.

There have been a myriad of epidemics in our history. Twentieth century ones have typically targeted specific age groups. The Spanish Flu, for example, largely affected those between twenty and forty. The Polio epidemic mostly affected children. Covid-19 is honing in on those of us 65 and older. (There are, of course, exceptions to these age groups for all three viruses where people outside the age parameters have become ill and sometimes died.) There is general agreement that Covid-19, in serious cases, attacks the respiratory system. The first symptoms can include losing one's sense of smell and taste, a persistent dry cough, or becoming feverish. The most serious cases progress to difficulty with breathing often requiring hospitalization, and for some, being placed on a ventilator there.

Individuals who reside in long term care facilities are at highest risk. They are usually in these settings due to underlying conditions combined with age. Once the virus is introduced into such a setting, it spreads quickly due to its high contagion. A recent figure for deaths of this population puts them at around 40,600.

Of course, others of us who are also older and living in the community are at risk and must practice serious caution especially if we have underlying health issues. Wearing masks, maintaining social distancing and diligent hand washing are all essential where indicated.

Some of us have chosen to shelter in place; that is, remain at home with necessities like food and medications being delivered. This can be tough for individuals living alone. We are social creatures and having social contact with others is often stimulating and enjoyable. Not having that interaction, no matter how big or small, can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. When this is the case, sometimes busying oneself with a project can be helpful. There is, for instance, a 93 year old woman who lives in a small housing complex in North Adams. Though she must not go into the public square, she has decided to help her neighbors, many of whom are elderly too, by planting, at a low pedestrian traffic time, a dozen tomato plants in a bed usually reserved for flowers. She'll tend to the plants (when others aren't around) until they're ripe when residents can then pick them for their own enjoyment. Others are passing time doing large jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, Sudoku, etc. and even though being with family isn't always possible, contact with them continues to be important. Many older people communicate regularly with family members either electronically or by now old-fashioned land line.

For many of us who comprise the young old, (70's on down to 65), our choices of activities vary. Some feel safest sheltering in place while others of us are comfortable running errands, doing food shopping, taking walks at the Spruces; e.g., albeit carrying hand sanitizer and wearing masks.

Overall, the community of Williamstown has escaped serious outbreaks. Town Manager Jason Hoch recently reported that in recent months, there were never more than 10 cases here at any one time. He attributed this to residents' sheltering in place when requested, and continuing to socially distance and wear masks. Harper Senior Center Director, Brian O'Grady, has kept all who wish to be, well informed with thrice weekly email updates about events, developments and reopening phases.

Let's Get Virtual: Putting Your Best Face Forward

By Lisa Argento

It's All About Camera Placement,
Lighting and Appearance:

Whether it's Zoom, Google Hangout, Skype, FaceTime or something else, connecting virtually is the new normal in today's world for work and school, and staying connected with family and friends. We all must learn how to be camera ready and look great from the waist up.

I've been fortunate to be working from home in South Williamstown during the pandemic. My company is now operating with a 100% remote work staff.

Most of us had never heard of Zoom before March, and now it's a part of daily life--both for meetings with coworkers and clients. I'm sharing some tips I prepared for my colleagues:

- **CHOOSE YOUR CAMERA ANGLE WISELY** – Adjust your device so that the camera is roughly at eye level. Too high, and viewers will feel like they're looking down at you. Too low, and you get an unflattering below-the-chin angle.
- **LOOK DIRECTLY INTO THE CAMERA** – Especially while speaking -- to create a direct connection with your audience. It can be challenging to focus on a camera lens, but for important meetings, you can increase the impact of your points by looking directly into the dot that is the camera lens.
- **FIND YOUR LIGHTING / BACKLIGHTING** – Your main light source should be in front of you, not behind you or from the side. Lighting from the front helps create a clear, crisp image -- just be aware that too intense of a light can wash you out. Avoid sitting with your back to a window as the camera will adjust for the light and may make you into a silhouette. Instead, face a window, which will give you a soft people-pleasing light.
- **DRESS FOR THE OCCASION** – Dress appropriately:
 - Neutral colors (i. e. warm or dark blues, pastels or earth tones, gray, etc.).
 - Be aware of your background – and avoid wearing a color that blends into your background.
 - Avoid patterns, stripes, plaids, white, black, green, or bright colors such as red or orange.
 - Avoid jewelry or any accessory that may jingle when you move.
 - Powder make up can help reduce shine.

- **BE MINDFUL OF YOUR POSTURE** – Sit up and square your shoulders to convey a sense of positive energy. Refrain from moving around unnecessarily.
- **CLOSE ALL OPEN PROGRAMS** on your device and disable email pop-ups.
- **REINFORCE YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION** – Video calls require a lot of power and bandwidth, so check your WiFi connection, perhaps turning off any unnecessary devices that use WiFi for the duration of the meeting. Ensure your device is fully charged, and leave it plugged in if you can.

And most importantly, remember to smile to light up your face!

SWCA Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Report

By Tom Cragg

Fiscal year 2020 for the South Williamstown Community Association ends on June 30th. Even though there are still a few more days left to go, we can safely report nearly final financial figures now.

SWCA began the fiscal year on July 1, 2019 with cash reserves of almost \$13,500. During the following twelve months, it had revenues of slightly more than \$5,800, and expenses of slightly more than \$6,300, resulting in a loss of approximately \$500. Accordingly, the organization will end the fiscal year on June 30 with cash reserves of almost \$13,000.

Revenues primarily came from annual dues, plus other donations. Expenses included costs for printing, postage, food for events (such as the picnic and the winter social), and insurance. Also included were donations to sister organizations such as Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, Hoosic River Watershed Association and the Williamstown Historical Museum. Finally, as discussed in a previous newsletter, a major donation was made to support a reading tutor for several local fourth graders.

During fiscal year 2020, SWCA successfully completed its collaboration with a number of South Williamstown residents, led by Regina Rouse, in funding the repair of grave markers at the Southlawn Cemetery. SWCA acted as the fiscal agent for the Southlawn project. Currently, SWCA is acting as the fiscal agent for a Northern Berkshire Suffrage Centennial Coalition initiative led by Bette Craig.

If you have any questions about SWCA's financial results, please email Tom Cragg, SWCA treasurer, at tlcragg@aol.com.

Covid Comfort Food

By Judith Summers

This recipe doesn't really have a history, but it's an excellent example of the very strange view of the "foreign starches," rice and pasta, by the British working class before Indian, Pakistani and Italian immigrants changed peoples' minds after World War II. They were previously useful for milk puddings, but precious little else. Now, we can't live without them.

Rice Pudding

- 1 large can Carnation evaporated milk
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 generous tbsps white sugar
- 2 generous tbsps brown sugar
- 3 tbsps butter
- 1 cup medium grain white rice (River brand is fine).

Cook for 10 minutes in lightly salted boiling water (much more water than rice), drain in a colander, rinse the excess starch off briefly with cold water and place in oven proof baking dish. 3 qt, 9' x 11" is about right.

Set oven at 350. Pour about 3/4 of the Carnation milk over the rice and stir in the white sugar and 1tbsp of the brown sugar. Cut the butter into little lumps and scatter over the surface and then sprinkle over the remaining tbsp of brown sugar. Put the dish on the middle oven shelf and cook for 30 minutes.

Reduce heat to 325, add the remaining Carnation and up to the whole cup of regular milk. The mixture should not be allowed to dry out. Cook for another 15 minutes. The pudding should be a little liquid, with a creamy skin with brown splotches on the surface.

If you want to add spices, a very little nutmeg or some ground cardamom could be added before cooking. Suggest serving with maple or rhubarb syrup. Bart eats it for breakfast with cold milk!

Covid Easter

By Anne Tiffany (who was born in South Williamstown in 1929 – in response to a bunny)

Here am I staring at a darling chocolate bunny and thinking this is my only connection to the most loved holiday.

As a child, I awoke at 4:00 a.m. to walk to church for the sunrise service (held on the hill adjoining the church). The minister, Rev. Maris, played his cornet for the singing and gave a brief sermon. Afterward, we had a snack at the church, and then hurried home to put on our finest for the 11:00 service.

The clothing had to be all NEW from panties to white gloves. (The items were purchased well in advance, taken out for inspection and adoration for weeks ... waiting for that special day.) I remember well the first stockings and heels worn from handling before being on feet!

How it has all changed in recent years. The "sunrise service" is now at 7:00 a.m. and a hearty breakfast follows, but very few ever make it back for the regular service (which now is at 9:00). The clothing is much different too ... Anything goes!

Well, there is no service this year, and no new clothes, and no service of those special hymns and prayers.

Thank God there are friends that can be counted on ... no matter what! I appreciate what that Easter bunny has done for me and I do want to thank the giver for the loving gesture that came with ..



BLOOD DRIVE

SOUTH WILLIAMSTOWN
HISTORICAL MUSEUM
TUESDAY, JUNE 30TH
9AM-2:30PM



Give Life. Give Hope. Give Blood.

To sign up, please

contact 413-447-2597 x2 or camuso@bhs1.org

Please remember to eat a well-balanced meal and to drink plenty of water before arriving to donate.



Get Involved in SWCA

Here are some ways you can do it. Would you like to:

- Work on helping organize a community event.
- Help plan our celebrating woman suffrage project
- Write about South Williamstown history or local events for the newsletter
- Fix things at our Repair Cafés.
- Track local land use issues or other topics of interest.
- Represent SWCA at community events like the Farmer's Market.
- Post posters about our events around town
- Tell your local friends and family about SWCA and point them to our website at <https://southwilliamstown.org/>
- Share news about our events with your friends or via e-mail, Facebook, etc.

Or, maybe you have a good idea to suggest for something the South Williamstown Community Association should be doing as a 501(c)3 organization devoted to historical preservation, building community and being a neighborhood voice.

Email us at swca32@gmail.com. Visit our website at <https://southwilliamstown.org/>

South Williamstown Community Association Membership Form

Historical Preservation + Community + Neighborhood Voice

Print and mail this form or join online at <https://southwilliamstown.org/membership>

I/We wish to join/renew our membership in SWCA for the year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

Suggested dues are

\$25/household	\$25
Additional donation \$	_____
Total enclosed \$	_____

SWCA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Your dues and donations are tax-deductible and your cancelled check or email confirmation will be your receipt.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email (used only for SWCA announcements): _____

____ check here if you want to receive emails about other South Williamstown news/events

Business Name: _____

if your business is located in South Williamstown and you would like a link on our website

I would like to volunteer for an event or committee _____

Mail to SWCA, PO Box 432, Williamstown, MA 01267

Email us at swca32@gmail.com. Visit our website at <https://southwilliamstown.org/>

Thank you!

Snippets of News About South Williamstown and Dates to Note:

July 11 1pm Green River Cleanup Walk in collaboration with Hoosic River Watershed Association

The Store at Five Corners is open on a limited basis for takeout Thursday through Sunday. In addition to regular items on hand, you can order platters and dinners if you call 48 hours in advance (413) 458-6105.

Waubeeka Golf Course is open for outdoor dining and takeout.

Cricket Creek Farm at the end of Sloan Road is continuing all farm operations and the Farm Store remains open every day from 7am-8pm. <http://www.cricketcreekfarm.com/>

A Frame Bakery hours during pandemic are Thursday and Friday 8am-4pm; Saturday and Sunday 8:30 - 4:00. Call 458-3600, email aframebakery@verizon.net or use Facebook message to order for curbside pickup.

Anne and Andy Hogeland welcomed a new granddaughter Faye Laramie Hogeland, born June 13 in Bennington, Vermont to Anna Hogeland and Shelby Kinney-Lang. Faye and her parents live in Jamaica Plain (Boston), but they'll be spending this summer enjoying life in Williamstown.

Karen Charbonneau welcomed a new grandchild on May 1. Silas Joseph Charbonneau Bateman's proud parents are Abbe and Joe Bateman of Pittsfield.

Sherwood Guernsey closed his law practice to be of counsel to the Aaronson & Mach law firm in Pittsfield. He also has a new kayak and a new bicycle and hopes to use them both this summer.

Sarah Foehl's grandson Toby Foehl was chosen by the faculty as a class speaker for Mount Greylock Regional School 2020 graduating class.

Beverly Hertzog, long-time resident and wife of Robert Hertzog of Oblong Road, died on April 20.



Some of the SWCA members who joined the more than 500 who gathered for mourning and reflection at Williamstown's Field Park on June 5th. Anti-racism vigils will continue every Friday at 5pm.