



NEWS FROM *South Williamstown*

Potluck Bar-B-Q is on the Horizon

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We'll be able to meet in person, get to know some new neighbors and share some good food on **Monday, August 30, from 5:30 to 7:30pm**, outdoors under the tent at Waubeeka Golf Links.

Norm Burdick has already volunteered to serve as auctioneer for the home-made baked goods array that we expect to have. (Photo below is of Barbara Winslow's Lemon/Blueberry Cake from 2019.)

We'll grill burgers (including veggie burgers), hot dogs and chicken to go with potluck side dishes that we're requesting that you bring. We'll provide beverages, tableware and melon for dessert.

Waubeeka will be providing a cash bar and local string band Rosin the Beaux will be making music. It's all free, but donations will be accepted. Guests are welcome.

Green River Cleanup Walk Saturday July 10 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 Thaiszes' house, 340 New Ashford Road. You'll need rubber boots or water shoes and gloves and don't forget to spray yourself with insect repellent. The Town will provide us with garbage bags and arrange for disposal.

Mark your calendars:
Monday, August 30th, 5:30 to 7:30pm



News From South Williamstown

Volume 2021, No. 3
July 2021

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COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
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SWCA Newsletter is distributed quarterly, mostly by email.

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Melanie Mowinski,
Mark Thaisz, Michelle Thaisz,
Carolyn Umlauf

**Contribute to the next
SWCA Newsletter, due out
by September 30, 2021.**

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/)

Two New Board Members Elected at SWCA Annual Meeting on June 16

Van Ellet and Melanie Mowinski were elected as new SWCA Board members at the in-person annual meeting on June 16. The remainder of the slate of Board members proposed by the nominating committee included incumbents Matt 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 40 or so members attending the meeting.

There was joy exhibited as people had a chance to meet new neighbors and renew acquaintance while enjoying delicious appetizers and soft drinks catered by Waubeeka as well as Maggie's Round and Berkshire Bloom cheese from Cricket Creek.

SWCA president Bette Craig reported on the in-progress video of notable local women begun as a celebration of the 100th anniversary of woman suffrage in collaboration with Willinet, invited all able to participate in the Green River Cleanup on July 10 and got a resounding "yes" when she asked if attendees were in favor of an August Potluck Bar-B-Q.

Treasurer Tom Cragg gave a financial report. Matt and Emily Baya were thanked for having facilitated the continuation of reading tutor support for local elementary school students and Alison Case pledged to pursue organizing a Repair Café for the fall at Sheep Hill.

Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2021

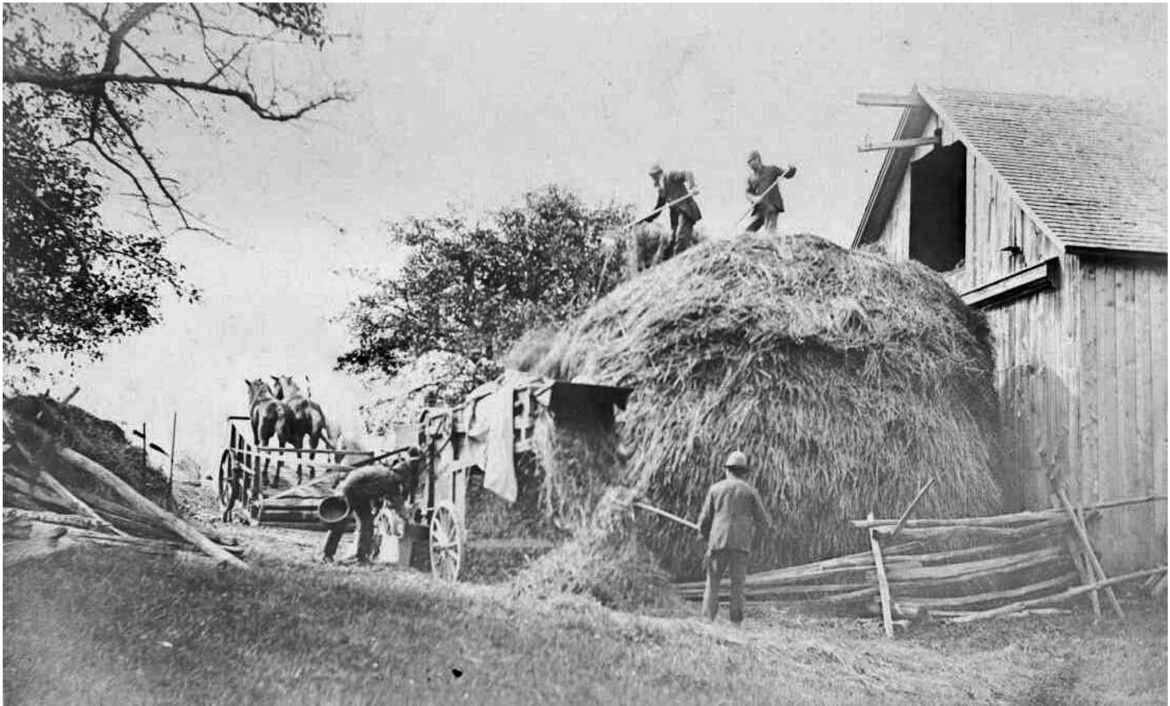
By Tom Cragg, Treasurer

The financial results for the South Williamstown Community Association (SWCA) were strongly affected by the pandemic. While revenues from membership fees and donations remained steady, the inability to hold community events reduced expenses.

SWCA began the fiscal year on July 1, 2020 with cash reserves of slightly more than \$13,000. During the following twelve months, it received membership fees and donations of almost \$5,900. Expenses came in at around \$3,600, resulting in a gain for the year of around \$2,300. Accordingly, the organization ended the fiscal year on June 30, 2021 with strong cash reserves of almost \$15,300.

Expenses included costs for printing, postage, food for the annual meeting in June 2021, and insurance. Also included were donations to sister organizations such as Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, Hoosic River Watershed Association, Willinet and the Williamstown Historical Museum. Finally, as in last year, SWCA supported a summer reading tutor for several local grade schoolers.

All in all, now that the pandemic is ending, SWCA is well positioned financially to offer interesting, fun and valuable community events.



HAY DAY FAIR

**Sunday,
August 15
11 am - 3 pm**

**Games
Live Music
Food
Silent Auction
Petting Zoo**

**ADMISSION
\$10 Immediate
Family
\$5 Individuals**

**Williamstown Historical Museum
32 New Ashford Road (Rt. 7 south), Williamstown MA**



Welcome to Our New Neighbors: Tyran and Tamanika Steward

By Lisa Argento

A suggestion was made at the SWCA Annual Meeting that it would be nice to learn more about newcomers to the neighborhood, so we expect this to be a regular newsletter feature. We sat down with new South Williamstown residents, Tyran and Tamanika Steward, to learn about their family, new roles at Williams and how they enjoy their spare time.

Tell us about your family: We are an academic family of four. Tamanika is the Dean of Sophomore Year Students at Williams. Tyran is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Williams. We have two wonderful daughters: Niara, the elder, is an avid reader, strong student, video game player, student of Mandarin Chinese, and talented dancer. Saniya, the younger, is our precocious spirit who loves cooking, art, green vegetables, fruits, making potions, eating sushi, and dreaming about a world full of candy.

Where are you from originally?

Tyran: New Orleans, LA.

Tamanika: Los Angeles, CA, specifically Altadena, which is in the foothills of the mountains north of Pasadena.

Tamanika, what inspired you to pursue a career in academia?

Most of my family are K-12 teachers and administrators. I grew up watching my parents prep lessons and interact with students and families. My first seating chart was of my teddy bears and dolls. I thought that I was going to teach in K-12 until I had an opportunity to teach at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, MI after being awarded a King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship in graduate school. I found that I really enjoyed teaching adult learners and that became my professional and intellectual interest.

What excites you about your positions at Williams?

Tamanika: I get to continue my work in student support by interacting at a deeper programmatic level with representatives from different parts of a college. And I enjoy that I can build relationships with extremely talented students and assist them at a critical juncture in their undergraduate journey.



Tyran: I work with first-rate scholars and students who are deeply committed to both the liberal arts education and the life of the mind.

What was your first impression of Williamstown?

Tamanika: As an African American coming into Williamstown, during a very tumultuous time socially and politically, seeing the Black Lives Matter signs helped me to feel that Williamstown had allies who were interested in engaging publicly in an effort to discuss issues that were important to our family. My family really needed those signs of welcome and belonging.

Tyran: There were mountains everywhere, and the winter, visiting Williamstown from Northfield, MN, felt bearable.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Tamanika: I love hiking, snowshoeing, kayaking, cooking, learning about food origins and foodways, listening to music and reading. During the pandemic, I read a lot of books, watched a lot of lectures on a range of subjects, listened to a lot of jazz, watched a lot of opera, and did a lot of puzzles.

Tyran: I enjoy reading and writing, and American politics, labor and sport. I am a huge New Orleans Saints fan and love watching football, as well as consulting with NFL teams. I am a CSPAN junkie, and especially like The American History Channel, which is on CSPAN 3. Lastly, I am a foodie, enjoy interior decorating and viewing real estate.

Black & African American History Reading List

We also asked Tyran to share his book recommendations for those who want to expand their understanding of systemic racism and the legacies of slavery and white supremacy in American history. He was generous with this list:

Slavery

- Walter Johnson's *Soul by Soul*
- Stephanie Jones-Rogers' *They Were Her Property*
- Edward Baptist's *The Half Was Never Told*
- Ira Berlin's *Generations of Captivity*

Black Labor History

- Terra Hunter's *To 'Joy My Freedom*
- LaShawn Harris' *Sex Workers, Psychics, and Number Runners*
- Robin D.G. Kelley *Hammer and Hoe*

Black Capitalism and Citizenship

- Brenna Greer's *Represented*
- Marcia Chatelain's *Franchise*
- Martha Jones' *Birthright Citizens*

Crime and Mass Incarceration

- Kali Gross' *Hannah Mary Tabs and the Disembodied Torso*
- Khalil Muhammad's *The Condemnation of Blackness*
- Elizabeth Kai Hinton's *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*

Housing Inequality and Violence

- Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor's *Race for Profit*
- Kevin Boyle's *Arc of Justice*

Civil Rights and Black Power

- Taylor Branch's *Parting the Waters*
- Jeffery Ogbar's *Black Power*

Migration and Mobility

- Davarian Baldwin's *Chicago New Negroes*
- Mia Bay's *Traveling Black*

Racial Passing

- Allyson Hobbs' *A Chosen Exile*



One Year Anniversary for the Williamstown Front Porch Forum

Last year at this time we were busy drumming up enough support to convince the folks at Front Porch Forum to let Williamstown join. Before us Front Porch Forum only operated in Vermont and a few towns in New York, we were the first town in Massachusetts to join their service and it took a lot to convince them we were worth the trouble. On July 29, 2020 we finally met the requirements and our first daily FPF Newsletter was e-mailed out.

If you're not familiar with Front Porch Forum it's like an electronic community bulletin board. Unlike other services, it only sends one e-mail a day with a 'digest' of all that day's posts. Over the past 11+ months 240 digests have been mailed out with announcements about local events, tag sales, free items, items for sale, requests for recommendations for plumbers, carpenters, snow plowing services, information about elections and much more.

You can sign up and see all the past newsletters at

<https://frontporchforum.com>

Williamstown MA FPF

 Launched Jul 29, 2020

 413 Members

 941 Postings

 0 Local Officials

The Williamstown MA FPF encompasses an area containing 2,308 households.

This Front Porch Forum is open to the residents of Williamstown, Massachusetts.

A Local Native, Indian Hemp or Dogbane

By Pamela Weatherbee

It was difficult to find a native plant in bloom, as the season seems to be in between the first flush of spring and the plants of full summer. In searching for one I found a large patch of densely packed stems with clusters of greenish white or white flowers. This was Indian Hemp, a kind of Dogbane. It is closely related to our Common Milkweed, beloved of the Monarch butterfly. It has the same thick white sap as the Common Milkweed, and like it, is poisonous to both dogs and humans, but it is not likely that they will come in close contact with this plant. It is not poisonous to the touch. Even the Monarch caterpillar will not eat it.



Its name tells you a lot. *Apocynum cannabinum* means “away dog” and “like cannabis” the true hemp. It is not related at all to cannabis, in case you may suspect something smokeable here. “Hemp” implies that there are strong fibers in the stem that can be used for twine and weaving of mats. It was used in that way by Native Americans.

It is not a showy plant -- about three feet tall, the stems branch oppositely, as do the leaves. One can see the similarity to the Common Milkweed. The leaves are a simple oblong with noticeable veining. The overall aspect is of brightly green leaves and a cluster of tiny white flowers. The flowers are attractive to many small insects, including small butterflies. Nectar is never poisonous; that would be quite self-defeating. Its related Spreading Dogbane *Apocynum androsaemifolium* is famous for attracting butterflies. When I was watching the patch, a big Tiger Swallowtail butterfly came by and enthusiastically began nectaring in the clusters. Later in the summer, the seed pods appear, and they are like the Common Milkweed, but slender and delicate.

It is found throughout North America, but mostly in the eastern half, favoring open fields, trail sides, and disturbed areas with moist soil. Here in Williamstown, there is a large patch near the pumphouse for the swimming pool and along mowed areas near the birdhouse at Field Farm, a property of The Trustees on Sloan Road. Take a few minutes to see what kinds of insects are active in the flowers. Some milkweed flowers have the ability to trap insects, who get a leg stuck in between flower parts. The stronger insects can free themselves but find a packet of pollen attached to their leg, which they will distribute to other flowers. This seems like an unnecessary contrivance, but it seems to work. Plants are amazingly inventive.

This small plant is just another link in the immense diversity of the living world.

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/>

It's Time To Renew Your Membership

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/>

Snippets of News About South Williamstown

- July 10 - **Green River Cleanup Walk** starts at 1pm. Park at Hart Garage and cross the road to walk down the driveway at the Thaiszes' house at 340 New Ashford Road.
- August 15 - **Hay Day** at Williamstown Historical Museum from 11am-3pm.
- August 30 - **SWCA Potluck Bar-B-Q** outdoors under the tent at Waubeeka Golf Links from 5:30-7:30pm. Bring a side dish.
- Need a ride? Roaring Brook Road resident **Bill Bump** drives for Uber/Lyft and takes private bookings to the airport. Message him at bbump01@gmail.com to schedule a ride.
- **Nick and Stacey Pesce** of New Ashford Road welcomed Layla June Pesce on June 27. Layla (tipping the scale at 6lbs and 20oz) and Stacey are doing well. Here's her picture:
- **Anne Tiffany** is at home recovering from a broken femur and rehab at Williamstown Commons. She was able to staff the costume jewelry table at the Second Congregational Church's Fun Day.
- **Barbara Chadwell Hart** passed away unexpectedly on March 24 at the age of 85.
- **Sam Edgerton, Jr.** passed away on April 25 at the age of 95.
- **Germaine Rhodes** passed away on May 9 at the age of 91 at Albany Medical Center after suffering a stroke.



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South Williamstown Community Association

Hello neighbor - If you're not already a member of SWCA you might be surprised this newsletter arrived in your mailbox today. Usually we distribute this via e-mail and only print a few copies, but for this edition we're sending a copy to all households in South Williamstown in case you weren't aware of us. We hope you enjoy this and if you'd like to receive future newsletters and other announcements via e-mail please consider joining us.

SOUTH WILLIAMSTOWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 432
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