



# NEWS FROM *South Williamstown*

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### Williamstown Town Election is May 14

Town Election is set for Tuesday, May 14, from 7am-8pm at Williamstown Elementary School gymnasium. Deadline for registering to vote is 10 days before an election.

## Five Corners Roundabout Construction Begins

By Bette Craig



Photo Credit: Gillian Jones-Heck, The Berkshire Eagle

Utility work first in early April, and then major construction is set to begin mid-April by contractor Morais Concrete Service, Inc. of Springfield. It's all weather dependent, of course.

The Massachusetts

Department of Transportation pledges that traffic flow will be maintained throughout construction which will probably continue through the fall of 2026. And then, there it will be, the Five Corners Roundabout.

Bloedel Park, which will be connected by a crosswalk to The Store at Five Corners, will incorporate a feature that engages and educates the public on the history and significance of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community in the region. Bonney Hartley, the Stockbridge-Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation Manager based in Williamstown, collaborated with George Batchelor, Supervisor of Landscape Design for the MassDOT Highway Division, in suggesting a bear claw and a leaf motif that was used to decorate early baskets crafted by the Mohicans. The design will be expressed in a curved granite wall emerging from the earth incised with the leaf and bear claw.

## Repair Café Saturday, April 27



Most of your favorite and skilled fixers are going to be present for Repair Cafe, co-sponsored by SWCA and Williamstown Rural Lands at Sheep Hill, 671 Cold Spring Road (Route 7) Saturday, April 27, from 1-4pm. Our volunteer fixers will be standing by to do small electrical repairs, blade sharpening, costume jewelry, leather,

furniture and window screen repairs and darning and sewing. There'll be refreshments, a computer expert, and the Purple Bike Coalition from Williams College will be on hand to do simple bike repairs. We are continuing to partner with the BagShare Project to make reusable shopping bags.

Repair Cafe is free, although donations are gladly accepted. It's all about helping our neighbors and helping our planet.

**News From  
South Williamstown  
Volume 2024, No. 2  
April 2024**

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

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Contribute to the next SWCA Newsletter, due out by June 30, 2024

Email suggestions or articles to [swca32@gmail.com](mailto:swca32@gmail.com)

Find SWCA on Facebook:

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or visit

<https://facebook.com/southwilliamstown>

# Williamstown Litter Cleanup Action Day!

**Saturday, April 20, 9am - 12pm**

Field Park, Williamstown, and Bloedel Park, South Williamstown

**IF HEAVY RAIN CANCELS,  
NEW DATE WILL BE POSTED ON FACEBOOK & EMAIL**

It's spring Litter Cleanup Action Day! Volunteers are needed to pick up trash along roadways, parks, and riverbanks all across town. Check-in at Field Park or at Bloedel Park anytime between 9 am and noon for instructions and a trash bag.

Please wear bright clothes and appropriate shoes and work gloves. Come for an hour or more.

## Fishing Derby at Wendling Farm on May 18

Averill Cook, who has been organizing the Fred Windover Memorial Fishing Derby at Wendling Farm says, "Wendling Farm invites all 4-14 year olds to experience four hours of fun from 8am to noon catching fish, salamanders and other aquatic beasts. We can provide poles and goodies, but bring your worms. Look forward to your being here.

**That's Saturday, May 18, 753 Oblong Road."**

## Winter Social Silent Auction

Someone on the committee had the bright idea of including a Silent Auction as part of the festivities for SWCA's Winter Social on February 29th. Here is a view of some of the objects that raised \$1,835 (minus the cost of refreshments) that will help fund our summer reading tutor program and other activities. Sixty people attended and a good time was had by all. Thanks to all of our generous donors.



Photo Credit: Bette Craig



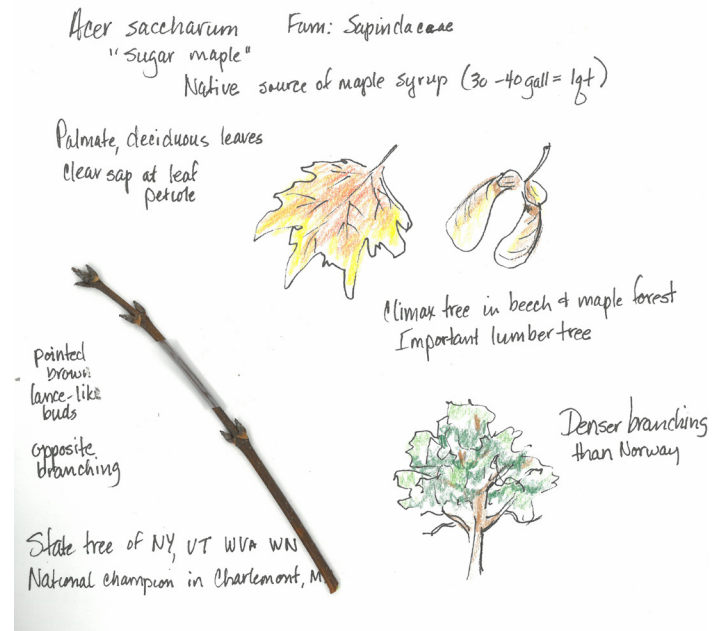
# Life-long Learning Can Be Exhilarating

By Mindy Hackner

Here in Williamstown we are fortunate to have access to one of the finest colleges in the country. We can take advantage of Williams College's largesse if we choose wisely and with thoughtful preparation. If you are interested in auditing a course at Williams, the first point of entry is the instructor. They will let you know right away if their class is suitable. Auditors may take many of the general lectures available to first and second year students. After that, courses become more specific, rigorous and generally off limits to the public.

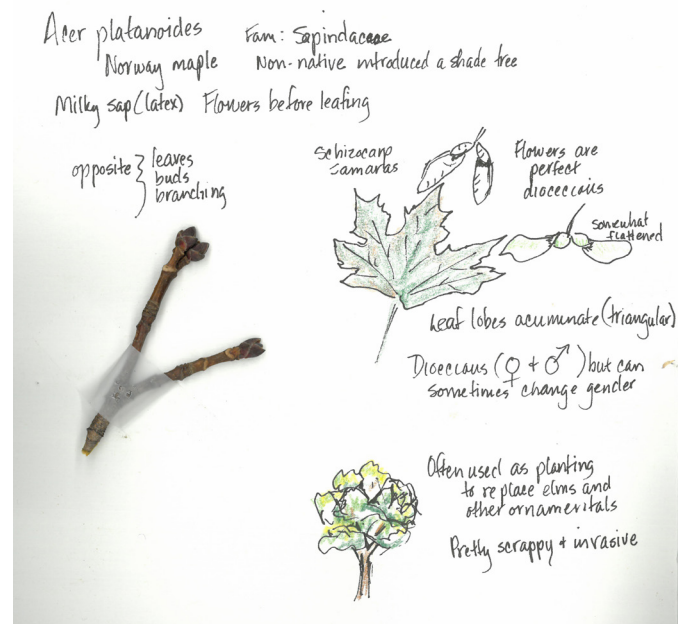
This December I emailed Professor Joan Edwards about *Botany/Environmental Sciences 220*. She welcomed me to her weekly lectures and walked me through the process of linking to the class web portal for notes and assignments. What happens when a seventy-year old brain sits in class with a roomful of intelligent, inquisitive college kids? Growth. They don't seem to mind us (three auditors) sitting in the back. We don't engage in class and we create our own labs by going solo into the field. There are opportunities to interact with the students, and auditors do bring something to the class -- a little familiarity, a sense of home (think absentee grandparents) and even years of experience in our chosen field.

I wanted to take Botany because Edwards is outstanding in her field and Botany 220 revolves around our local flora. For almost thirty years I've been walking the old farm roads of Mount Hope, Stone Hill Trail, Hopper Road and Harmon Pond in South Williamstown. Spurred on by a budding interest in art, I began sketching the old barns in the neighborhood. One day I realized I knew very little about the local plants. I couldn't tell a white pine from a spruce, ferns were -- well -- ferns and the die-off of ash and maple was bringing me down.



Pages from Mindy Hackner's field sketchbook.

Thanks to a perpetual journal and some budding awareness, I knew the change of seasons – succession – well enough but I wanted to know so much more. Now I'm struggling with Latin names and complex family trees that include such things as Lycopods, Tracheophytes, Monilcots and Eudicots in an increasingly complex web that rivals any great symphony. Along the way, I'm learning a taxonomic classification system based on plant evolution, methods of reproduction, DNA sequencing, and defining characteristics of major plant families. Using a tiny hand lens and armed with a field sketchbook, you may someday see me bent over a tiny patch of green. If you do, stop by and find out what else I've learned by drawing endless varieties of leaf buds, noticing whether a branch is opposite, alternate or whorled and getting to know the riot of green that surrounds us.



For more information on auditing classes at Williams, contact your nearest neighbor. You may already know people who have taken advantage of this wonderful perk. Or just reach out to faculty. The worst they can say is that their class is full or not suitable for an audit. I also highly recommend *Art History 101 and 102* for a deeper understanding of the art in our local museums.

## South Williamstown Community Association New on New Ashford Road

Amy Russell was looking for a place where she could keep her horses when such a house with a barn became available on New Ashford Road. It was a house that had belonged to only one family – Lee and Sandra Rhodes, who built it in the 1960s.

Amy Russell first came to Williamstown as a Williams College freshman in 2004 from her hometown of Medway, Massachusetts. She graduated in 2008, but stayed on with a neuroscience fellowship for two years, thinking she would probably pursue a Ph.D. in the field. A summer job at the Williamstown Theater Festival changed her direction. She headed to New York City for internships with the Labyrinth Theater and the Public Theater and eventually returned to town as Director of Finance for the Williamstown Theater Festival from 2014-2022.



She has been Director of Payroll Systems for Williams College since May 2022 and all the while has been pursuing her love of horses. She bought her first horse when she was in college and competed in the field of low adult jumpers until recently when she took some time off to pursue her MBA.

Cara, who will soon be 10, is an Argentine Warmblood, and Amy has had her since she was born. She acquired Kabuki, her Belgian Warmblood in the spring of 2019, and her miniature horse Pancake in 2017. If you've attended 4th of July parades here, you might have noticed Pancake dressed as a Revolutionary War soldier.

Amy hopes to get back to competing in the horse world when she finishes her MBA from the University of North Carolina in May of 2025.

John Lacy, a postdoctoral research fellow and lecturer at Williams College, and two cats, Orion and Rigel, round out the household. John came to Williams in 2019 to pursue his research in Atomic Physics after finishing his Ph.D. in the United Kingdom. He's found Williamstown welcoming and said "It helps if you have an accent. It's a conversation starter. I'm in the Dart League at The Log. My team is in fourth place."

## A Williamstown Historical Museum Update

By Michael Nixon

After a winter closure, the Williamstown Historical Museum reopened April 6th. The museum has been open, however, for research appointments and a school field trip from the Berkshire Waldorf school. The students visited the 1753 house, learned how to make wooden roof shakes, and viewed the post and beam structure of the 1800s barn at the museum. Education continues to be a focus at the museum.

As the weather warms up, and our pollinator garden begins to bloom, the WHM is planning some outdoor events, when families can gather and hear old time music. Dates to be announced.



# Community Paper Shredding Event



&



## Zero Waste Day

No registration is needed!

**Saturday, May 11, 2024**

9:00 am to Noon

**Location:** Town of Williamstown  
Simonds Rd, (near Transfer Station)

**Saturday, Sept 14, 2024**

9:00am to Noon

**Location:** Town of Dalton  
40 Field St, (COA)

**Open to all Berkshire County!**

5 Box limit for Paper shredding. No charge for residents of NBSWMD 14 member towns. All Donations made will go back to NBSWMD and Dick Demeyer Scholarship fund. Questions 413-743-8208; lcernik@nbswmd.com

## HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION

**SATURDAY, April 20, 2024 ~ 9:00AM-1:00PM**

ADAMS DPW GARAGE, 92 NORTH SUMMER STREET, ADAMS

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED: CALL 413-743-8208 OR E-MAIL YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER TO: lcernik@nbswmd.com

NORTHERN BERKSHIRE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT CONTRACTOR  
Clean Harbors Environmental Services

### Please follow guidelines.

Items must be stored in trunk, rear cargo area, truck bed, etc., not on seats, not handed to us. District volunteers this year cannot offload materials. This will be provided by Clean Harbors staff only.

### Registration OPEN Now!

Register between April 1 to April 17 or until at capacity. (space is limited) per HH 25-gallon limit. Motor Oil limited.

### WHAT TO BRING TO A HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION?

Pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, insect sprays, small quantities liquid mercury products, rodent killers, muriatic acid, used motor oil, flea powder, no-pest strips, chemical fertilizers, lighter fluid, swimming pool chemicals, rust proofers, wood preservatives, wood strippers and stains, paint thinners, oil based paint, varnish, aerosol cans, sealants, adhesives, fiberglass resins, drain cleaners, oven cleaners, floor cleaners, toilet cleaners, carpet cleaners, metal polish, moth balls, chemistry kits, antifreeze, old gasoline, kerosene, brake fluid, transmission fluid, engine degreaser, carburetor cleaner, radiator flusher, roofing tar and non-latex driveway sealer.

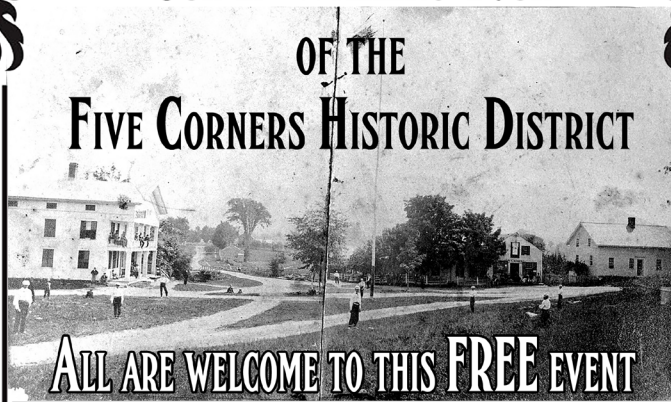
### WHAT NOT TO BRING?

Empty containers, latex paint, pharmaceuticals, medical waste, fireworks, flares, propane tanks, lightbulbs, batteries

## GUIDED WALKING TOUR

### OF THE

# FIVE CORNERS HISTORIC DISTRICT



**ALL ARE WELCOME TO THIS FREE EVENT**

**SUNDAY, MAY 19TH AT 1:00PM**

**STARTING AT THE STORE AT FIVE CORNERS, 4 NEW ASHFORD ROAD, WILLIAMSTOWN, MA**

1:00pm: Meet at the Store for introductions and a free map  
1:15pm: Depart in small groups for a guided walking tour  
2:15pm: Return to the Store for free refreshments, Q&A and discussion

This outdoor walking tour will include highlights of the Five Corners Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1993, including The Store at Five Corners, 1700s - 1800s houses, the South Center School (Williamstown Historical Museum), and sites of the former William A. Morey Store, Greylock Institute boarding school, Idlewild Inn and more.

For more info contact  
[info@storeatfivecorners.org](mailto:info@storeatfivecorners.org)

## Du Bois and The Door of No Return

By Barbara Winslow

In February I went on a *Nation* magazine tour of Ghana, Togo and Benin. We began in Accra, the capitol of Ghana. Our first stop was to visit the home of W.E.B. Du Bois, born in Great Barrington. He was a leading 20th century activist and intellectual, first African American to earn a Ph.D. at Harvard, a founder of the NAACP as well as one of the fathers of the modern Pan Africanist movement. As a historian, I read and used much of Du Bois' writings and admired his editorship of the *Crisis* as well as most of his political stances. The visit to his home was moving.

All of his belongings – his books, photographs, paintings, even his Harvard graduation robe --were there. Kwame Nkrumah, another founder of Pan Africanism as well as the first president of an independent Republic of Ghana, invited Du Bois to celebrate his inauguration in 1960. In 1963, Du Bois died in Ghana, the night before the historic March on Washington.

We visited other museums and memorials to Nkrumah, Ghana's Independence Square, plus markets, museums, as well as Ghanaian restaurants (delicious spicy food) and music venues. The next day we went to the Cape Coast to visit the infamous forts and dungeons that dot the coast of Ghana. We toured the horrific Elmina Castle, built in 1482 by the Portuguese, which soon became the center for the European enslavement trade. In 100 degree heat with 95% humidity, 15 of us sweltered in one of the dungeons in which over 500 humans were corralled, until they walked through the Door of No Return.

The next day we went to Donkor Nsua, the former Slave River and market, the last stop on the slave trade route that originated in Northern Ghana. Africans, captured by Europeans as well as other African chiefs, were marched to Donkor Nsua. They were then brought to the river, there to be cleaned up before Europeans bought them, branded them, marched them to the Elmina dungeon, and then shipped them off to the horrors of western hemispheric enslavement.

Africans from the diaspora, including one of our tour members, experienced a coming home ritual. The African American member of our tour walked with a Fante religious figure down to the river, where the ceremony included the washing of hands and feet. The rest of us on the tour, all Euro-Americans, surrounded him with supportive prayers. He then wrote his family's name on the Wall of Remembrance. I was able to put Shirley St. Hill Chisholm's family name on the Wall of Remembrance. I wanted to honor the 100th anniversary of her birth. Shirley Chisholm was the first African American woman elected to Congress and the first African American and the first woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. Her family originally came from Barbados. I realized that in all probability her ancestors had been kidnapped and brought to the Caribbean via this route.

It was an extraordinary, yet grueling trip, and it enlarged my understanding of both African history and the diasporic impact on local as well as national US history. Coming back to Williamstown, I remembered that Regina Rouse, author of [Guide to Southlawn Cemetery](#), had told me that there are a number of African Americans buried in the Southlawn Cemetery. I wonder if their ancestors came from this area of Ghana that I just visited.

*Barbara Winslow is Professor emerita, Women's and Gender Studies program, Brooklyn College/CUNY. She is the founder and Director emerita of the Shirley Chisholm Project of Brooklyn Women's Activism, which contains the largest archival collection of materials about Chisholm and the author of "Shirley Chisholm: Catalyst for Change."*



Photo of 'The Door of No Return' by Barbara Winslow

# Get Involved in SWCA

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

- Work on helping organize a community event.
- 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 promoting civic engagement.

Email us at [swca32@gmail.com](mailto:swca32@gmail.com). Visit our website at <https://southwilliamstown.org/>

## South Williamstown Community Association Membership Form

*Historical Preservation + Building Community + Promoting Civic Engagement*

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 2023- June 2024.

**You don't have to live in South Williamstown to join SWCA**

Suggested dues are

\$35/household      \$35  
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](mailto:swca32@gmail.com). Visit our website at <https://southwilliamstown.org/>



## Snippets of News About South Williamstown and Dates to Note:

- April 20 **Williamstown Litter Cleanup Action Day**, 9 am-12 pm  
Field Park or Bloedel Park
- April 20 **Household Hazardous Waste Collection**, Saturday 9 am-1 pm  
Adams DPW Garage, 92 North Summer Street, Adams
- April 27 **Repair Café**, 1- 4 pm at Sheep Hill, 671 Cold Spring Road
- May 11 **Community Paper Shredding**, Saturday 9 am-Noon, Simonds Road  
(near Williamstown Transfer Station)
- May 14 **Town Election**. 7 am-8 pm at Williamstown Elementary School gym
- May 18 **Williamstown Farmers Market** opens for season,  
Saturdays, 9 am-1 pm at Spring Street parking lot
- May 18 **Fred Windover Fishing Derby** at Wendling Farm, 8 am - Noon
- May 19 **Guided Walking Tour of the Five Corners Historic District**  
Meet at the Store at Five Corners at 1 pm
- May 23 **Town Meeting**, 7 pm at Mount Greylock Regional School  
Check-in begins at 6 pm
- May 27 **Memorial Day Parade**, Monday at 10 am on Spring Street

### Irish Dancers at the Store at Five Corners on St. Patrick's Day.

The **Scoil Rince Breifne O Ruairc Irish Dance School** from Pittsfield brought St. Patrick's Day to life at the Store at Five Corners on Sunday March 17. The musicians and young dancers from the group were joined by a large group of traditional musicians who play at The Store monthly on the third Sunday from 1 PM - 3 PM.



Photo Credit: Gillian Jones-Heck, The Berkshire Eagle