

Annual Town Election

Tuesday June 30, 2020 – 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road, Conway

The elections personnel will be making all efforts to keep the area sanitized and safe for all voters.

Voting by mail is available due to COVID-19. You can download an application from the town website or contact the Town Clerk at 369-3235 ext.4 or at clerk@townofconway.com for an application to be mailed to you.

If you are not registered to vote and would like to participate in the Annual Town Meeting and/or Annual Town Election, there will be a final voter registration session on June 10, 2020, at the Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road, Conway, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. You may also register to vote on-line (vote.org), by mail, or in person (once open to the public) with the Town Clerk up until this date. The offices and terms on the ballot this year are:

- 1 Selectman for 3 years
- 1 Assessor for 3 years
- 2 Members, Board of Health for 3 years
- 2 Members, Local School Committee for 3 years
- 1 Member, Local School Committee for 1 year
- 2 Members, Planning Board for 3 years
- 1 Tree Warden for 3 years
- 1 Moderator for 1 year

From the Selectboard

Many thanks to the Newsletter Committee (Kathy Kennedy Llamas, Chair; Patricia Lynch, Editor; Veronique Blanchard, Treasurer; and Louise Beckett, Design and Layout) for their outstanding work to provide Conway residents with *Conway Currents*.

On the coronavirus pandemic front, Franklin County continues to do well compared to other counties in the Commonwealth. According to the MA Department of Public Health (DPH), from May 1 to 18 in the Commonwealth, the number of hospitals using surge capacity is down 38% and the 3-day average of COVID-19 deaths is down 46%. These are very encouraging trends and seems to indicate that the Commonwealth has passed the peak of the outbreak.

Other data from the DPH indicate that if you are over 70 years of age and/or have underlying conditions including high blood pressure, diabetes, are excessively overweight, or have a compromised immune system, you need to take extra precautions to stay healthy. Over 98% of those who died while infected with COVID-19 in the Commonwealth had at least one underlying condition.

We have again postponed the Annual Town Meeting until Saturday, June 20, at 1:00 p.m. at an outdoor location to be determined. We hope that the Commonwealth will have a better idea by then about the amount of state aid we can expect to receive for FY2021 starting on July 1. We are making every effort to develop a FY2021 budget that will be financially flexible, provide for essential services, and have low impact on property taxes.

Although town offices remain closed to the public, we are working on a re-opening plan in accordance with the Governor's guidelines for re-opening. The town staff is working and available by phone and mail for any needed public services. Please access the town website (townofconway.com) for updates on the pandemic and town business. Please stay healthy and safe.

Respectfully submitted,
John P. O'Rourke

Town Meeting Now Slated for June 20

Town Meeting was originally postponed to Monday, June 8, but has now been postponed further, to Saturday, June 20. The Selectboard has not chosen a location, but this will be outside to allow for social distancing. Rain dates are June 21, June 27, and June 28. Please check the town website, townofconway.com, for updates.

You should have received your 2019 Annual Reports. We will mail the warrant when it is ready; we are still trying to deal with a potential revenue loss next year. Please bear with us as we try to manage town affairs during this difficult time. Thank you for your understanding and patience, and we look forward to seeing you in person as soon as we can.

No Pre-Town Meeting Dessert Potluck and Discussion This Year

There will be no Pre-Town Meeting Dessert Potluck and Discussion this year. The three organizers (Jimmy Recore, Ruth Parnall, and Mary McClintock) made this decision due to restrictions on large gatherings and the concern that a virtual meeting can't replace the special spirit and style of community conversation that is common at the Pre-Town Meeting Dessert Potluck and Discussion gatherings. We will miss the opportunity to gather and look forward to future years when we can be together again for this great community event.

From the Tax Collector

Taxes Second-half Real Estate and Personal Property Tax bills were initially due May 1; however, the state allowed an extension of the due date until June 1, which the town accepted. We also accepted the section of law that allows for waiving fees and

interest for bills due after March 10 and paid on or before June 29, including Motor Vehicle Excise, Real Estate, and Personal Property bills.

We recognize that not all individuals and families are in the same position, and many have become unemployed and are unable to pay their bills at this time. Please contact the office at 369-4235 x1 or taxcollector@townofconway.com if you are unable to pay your bill. We can set up an installment program to fit your needs.

Board of Health The Board of Health will be selling annual transfer station stickers online for \$10.00 beginning June 1. See the payment information on our website, townofconway.com. Once you pay, simply print out the receipt or bring the receipt on your mobile phone to the transfer station to receive your sticker. You may also pick it up at the treasurer's office on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. FY2021 stickers are effective July 1 and will be required after August 1. If you do not have online access or have any difficulties, you may come to the town office and we will assist you.

Conway Currents We are setting up online payment for donations and advertisement payments for *Conway Currents* similar to those already available for taxes, youth sports, and transfer station stickers. Please stay tuned: visit our website at townofconway.com and click on the "view or pay a bill" button in the upper right hand corner of the page. You will soon see a *Conway Currents* bar that allows you to select advertisement and donation options.

Conway's Electricity Aggregation Program

by Bob Armstrong

For over three years, people in town have asked, "How's that electricity program coming along?" Our plan has finally been approved, and 13 local towns all went out to bid together for power.

It's a strange time to be doing this, in the middle of the pandemic, when everything is shut down and natural gas and oil prices are at an all-time low. Eversource just announced their "summer rates," about 2 1/2 cents below the winter rates, and our bids came in even lower! Eversource rates last only six months and ours for over three years. We expect that this super low rate will last only until next winter, so we got separate bids for five months starting in August and then for the three years after that.

We will be doing some education over the next few months and then, in August, if you are currently on Eversource Basic Service you will automatically move into the aggregation. Your bill will look the same and be collected by Eversource, but if you look closely, you will notice that it will cost you slightly less. For that price, the electricity we will be buying will be 5% "more green" than what Eversource provides. Next fall, when Eversource raises its prices back to "winter rates," we expect that the price difference will be greater, and we will buy power that's even "greener."

This plan is Conway's "default product," and you can keep this for the entire 41 months. Or you can opt into either of two other products, the cheapest (no extra green) or one that is 100% renewable but that costs a few cents more. I'll try to answer some common questions next month.

Thanks for your patience. It's been worth the wait.

New LifePath Service: Grocery Shopping and Delivery

LifePath is offering volunteer grocery shopping and delivery in Franklin County and the North Quabbin areas for people over age 60, people with physical illnesses or disabilities, or people who are immunocompromised. If you know someone in need, call 413-773-5555 to make a referral.

Conway Council on Aging

The COA receives a grant from the state Executive Office of Elder Affairs and an appropriation from the town. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. During the COVID-19 crisis, the council is meeting by conference call. The number to join the meeting is 369-1541. Callers will be asked to input the participant ID, which is 1541. For information, contact Patricia Ann Lynch, COA chair, at 369-4284.

Senior Calendar for June

With town buildings closed to the public, all regularly scheduled activities have been canceled except for classes being offered on Zoom and the walking group. A nurse from Foot Care by Nurses is available for home visits. To arrange an appointment, call 413-367-8369 or email EmailAdmin@FootCarebyNurses.net. Town Nurse Lisa White is unsure when the drop-in wellness clinic will resume, but she is still responding to calls at 413-665-1400 x 114 and is available by phone consult and for home visits (wearing mask and gloves) in case of need. Check the Council on Aging page on the town website, townofconway.com, for updates.

Healthy Bones & Balance Class The class meets Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. Contact leader Gary Fentin at 369-0001 for a link to the Zoom class.

Walking Group The group meets at 9:30 a.m. Monday mornings in front of the library, weather permitting. Social distancing will be maintained during walks. Call Phylis Dacey at 369-4326 for information.

Yoga for Seniors Led by Jody Fontaine on Wednesdays. Class times: mat yoga, 10:15-11:15 a.m.; chair yoga, 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Call Jody at 413-824-9435 for links to the Zoom classes.

Senior Services

Durable Medical Equipment Loans The COA has items of durable medical equipment available for loan, including wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, tub and shower chairs, commodes, and raised toilet seats. Call Hank Horstmann at 369-4405 to borrow equipment or if you have equipment to donate.

Free Home Repair Program Ended The Council on Aging regrets to announce the end of its program offering free home repairs for seniors. If you are in need of minor home repairs, contact LifePath at 413-773-5555 for assistance.

Home-Delivered Meals Meals on Wheels are still being provided during the COVID-19 crisis by LifePath for Conway seniors up to seven days per week, using a new "Smile and Wave" method for the safety of both drivers and recipients. Call LifePath at 773-5555 for further information and registration.

Emergency Management Department Update

We would like to make sure that all residents are aware of the following services that are available for residents who need help with meals or with grocery shopping:

- For seniors or those with disabilities, LifePath provides Meals on Wheels seven days per week. LifePath is also offering volunteer grocery shopping and delivery in Franklin County and the North Quabbin areas for people over age 60, with physical illnesses or disabilities, or who are immunocompromised. Please call 773-5555 for more information.
- Seniors in need of help with shopping, picking up prescriptions, and so on should contact Pat Lynch, COA Chair, at 369-4284.

- Baker's Country Store provides delivery of groceries and meals in town. For more information call 369-4935.
- The Conway Inn has pizza for takeout daily from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Call 369-4428 to order.
- The farm store at Natural Roots is open to everyone, not just farm share members, from dawn to dusk seven days a week. Check the farm's website, naturalroots.com, for information.
- There is also an online service called Instacart, which allows a user, for a fee, to order groceries for delivery. See following article for details.

We hope everyone continues to stay safe, and we thank all residents for their cooperation in complying with the governor's orders to social distance by staying at least six feet apart and by wearing a face covering or mask when in public and keeping six feet apart is not possible. The reason for wearing face coverings is to protect others around you, and we thank you for your continued respect for your fellow residents and for your continued help in preventing the spread of COVID

A Grocery Shopping Option

by Pixie Holbrook/John Rioux

Big Y is offering grocery shopping and delivery services through Instacart, which is willing to deliver to certain parts of Conway near the center of town. Barbara Llamas from the Conway Inn is willing to offer her address for those deliveries. Thank you, Barbara!

Here's how it works:

- Go online to [Instacart](https://www.instacart.com) or download the Instacart app on your cellphone. For the address, use the Conway Inn, 43 Main Street. Choose Big Y as your store. (Instacart also offers Aldi's, CVS, and BJ's). You will find hundreds of items, with clear photos, descriptions, and prices. Scroll through and choose your items, which will appear in your online cart.

- Select your delivery date and time. It's often a few days later, so plan ahead. However, you can continue to add to your cart during that wait time. The delivery times are within a two-hour period. Pay online with your credit card. There is a \$10.00 charge and a small tip for the shopper. You will get an email confirmation and will be notified about an hour before shopping begins.
- We recommend using texting for notifications rather than email. Once the shopping begins, the shopper is identified with their name and photo. If the items you chose are not available, the shopper will choose a replacement. You can approve or disapprove of their choice. Stay near your phone as they make their way around the store; they need your input. You can also watch to see what items are in the cart. Another text "ping" will tell you they are at the cashier, and then you will be given the exact delivery time.
- Go to the pickup place, the Conway Inn, and your grocery bags should arrive on time. We recommend arriving earlier to confirm the driver's and your names. We wave and thank each other! We have done this twice and have found it to be very helpful to us and to serve as added income for the Instacart shopper/driver. Barbara has also generously agreed to pick up your delivery for you if you were to call her in advance.

Hope this can work for many of you, especially for those seniors who have concerns about exposure. Stay well. Stay home.

From the Conway Grammar School Principal

I would like to thank the Conway community for your tremendous support of Conway Grammar School (CGS). Community support makes all the difference. We thank you! I would also like to send a very special thank you to the grammar school families, students, and staff as we continue to not only navigate our way during this unprecedented time but also excel in so many areas.

Remote learning and teaching have been happening at the school since March 16. We quickly introduced a remote learning plan at the start of the COVID-19 closure. We called this Phase 1: Connecting. During those early weeks, we worked on and succeeded in connecting with students and families as everyone tried to proceed in a positive manner for the sake of the children. Not seeing the children in person each day has been difficult for us as educators. Thankfully, we are "seeing" the children remotely. During Phase 1 we made it extremely clear to parents that this was our "temporary new normal," and even though the children would be receiving many invitations for learning experiences, individual families should always do what is best for them.

The governor announced an extended closure during which we entered Phase 2: Connections through Learning. We have been offering Google Meets for direct teaching and learning. We offer Google Classroom for further instruction and assignments. We offer menus of learning options from which parents and students can choose and hands-on materials for students who learn best in that manner. We are very proud of our participation rate throughout this time.

Soon after Phase 2, the governor announced school closure for the remainder of the year. We entered into Phase 3: Connections through Student Growth. Accountability and feedback continued to be high-priority areas for students. In addition, DESE put out the *essential standards for learning at each grade level*. This gave us a clearer focus on teaching and learning.

In addition to the remote teaching at CGS, we offered many other options for students. Among these were a virtual concert by Tyler Conroy that integrated mini-life lessons; Reading, Writing, and Math Clubs; recess times for socialization; support groups for students, staff, and parents; read-aloud sessions; a poetry week; scavenger hunts; book clubs; reading, writing, and math interventions; arts and crafts; music, PE, and art; and strings and band lessons.

One of our top goals at CGS is supporting children and families emotionally. This is a very difficult and frightening time for many of our children. Many have been at home since March 14. The only time most of the children "see" each other is during our Google Meetings. We continue to keep our finger on the pulse of our students and families emotionally and offer support in many different ways. This is the most important thing that we can offer students and families. We will continue to do so throughout remote learning and upon our return to CGS.

At the start of remote learning, we handed out approximately 70 devices (Chrome Books and iPads) that have been essential for remote learning. However, we also try to get books and paperwork into the hands of students in a safe manner.

During this school closure time, we are offering free breakfast and lunch to any child under the age of 18 who lives in Conway. Pickup days are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at CGS (in back of the school) for a total of five breakfasts and five lunches each week. If you are interested in receiving breakfast and lunch, please email Principal Kristen Gordon at Kristen.Gordon@frsu38.org

We are still unsure about summer programming for our students. We will wait for guidance from Governor Baker and the Task Force.

It is a pleasure, privilege, and honor to be the educational leader of Conway Grammar School. I call CGS the "hidden gem" of schools. It is the best place to be with the best students, staff, families, and community. Thank you for your confidence and support. Wishing you all a wonderful summer that I hope brings all of us peace, comfort, and a "new normal" that allows the children to return to school safely in the fall.

With appreciation,
Kristen Gordon, Principal

Update from the Field Memorial Library

The Field Memorial Library remains closed until further notice at this writing. We are now preparing for reopening under the "new normal" guidelines established May 18 by the governor's office and the Massachusetts Library System. These guidelines have prioritized outside patron pick up and return of resources and further delayed physically entering the library. At FML we will first establish a system for outside pick up by appointment and then work out the interior space to accommodate four areas of the new normal: physical distancing, hygiene protocols, staffing and operations, and cleaning and disinfecting. We will post our process details on our website as soon as possible.

Because our inventory is not online, we have no way for you to request something you know to be in our collection until we can open the library for admittance. To work around this limitation, you are invited to send a request to the director at director@fieldmemoriallibrary.org for *any* title you wish to borrow. We will do our best to supply this title either from our collection or through other means.

Once we have our system in place, your item will be placed outside for you to pick up by appointment only with a 20- or 30-minute window for you to pick it up. The item will have a three-week loan period, and you may return it to the book drop. Our updates are by necessity virtual, starting with the news that FML has installed a new Wi-Fi system. This system extends our signal outside the library to the steps, the sidewalk, and Elm Street. You may gain access to the internet through FML at:

Site: FieldML Guest
Password: FIELDMLIB (all caps)

We continue to update our website at fieldmemoriallibrary.org with links to a variety of resources. Please visit it for updates on our reopening process, information, and links.

Library Scholarship Applications Deadline Extended to June 15

The Friends of the Field Memorial Library in Conway announces an extension for their Scholarship2020. We want to encourage and support the continued education of a graduating Conway high school senior. Applications are being received, and the extended deadline is set for June 15, 2020.

To be eligible for this scholarship (currently \$500), the applicant must:

- Be a resident of Conway, MA
- Be a graduating high school senior, either from a school or home schooled. Have maintained good academic standing throughout high school (grade point average)
- Have demonstrated good communication skills by submitting an application

For an application go to fieldmemoriallibrary.org/ or contact Thad Bennett at FieldMemLibraryScholarship@gmail.com

Register for a Special Gift and Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment

Every female resident of Conway who turns 18 years of age and is eligible to vote for the first time on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, will receive a special gift at the Under the Dome Celebration on Saturday, October 3, at the library. This event is a Friends of the Library fundraiser, the opening of the Conway Art Exhibit and Sale, and the culmination of our celebration of a woman's right to vote in the United States: the ratification of the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920.

To receive your special gift, you must register with the Friends of the Field Memorial Library by giving us your name, address, and birth date at FieldMemLibraryScholarship@gmail.com; dropping the information off at the Field Memorial Library, 1 Elm Street, Conway; or mailing it to Friends of the Field Memorial Library, PO Box 189, Conway, MA 01341.

Garden Club Notes

June brings to mind the beginning of the closing prayer from the Navajo Blessing Way Ceremony:

In beauty I walk
With beauty before me I walk
With beauty behind me I walk
With beauty above me I walk
With beauty around me I walk
It has become beauty again

Here are a few tips to maintain your garden's beauty:

- This is the time to plant summer-flowering bulbs, such as dahlias, for a showy warm-weather display.
- Deadhead annuals weekly. Removing faded flowers encourages some varieties to keep on blooming throughout the season.
- Regularly monitor your garden for damage from Japanese beetles (*Popillia japonica*); skeletonized leaves are a telltale sign. The most effective way to control Japanese beetles is by hand picking or shaking them off onto a dropcloth or into a bucket of soapy water. The best time to do this is early in the day.

The aims of the Conway Garden Club are to stimulate interest in gardening and related skills, to enhance the natural beauty of our area, and to educate and promote environmental improvement. The

club welcomes suggestions for new projects that would benefit the town. Contact Pat Lynch at 369-4284 or email patricialynch@earthlink.net.

Conway Festival of the Hills

by Sue MacDonald

Last month we announced that the Conway FOH board made the difficult decision to cancel this year's Festival of the Hills. The current COVID-19 situation is severely hurting our planning time, and there is also uncertainty as to what the fall will bring regarding social gatherings. We will continue to give scholarships for both 2020 and 2021 graduating seniors. Please consider donating to our scholarship fund by sending a check to:

Conway Festival of the Hills, PO Box 431, Conway MA 01341

We are a 501c3 organization, and your donations are tax deductible. We are still looking for volunteers to help make our 2021 festival a success. Please contact festivalofthehills@yahoo.com for more information.

A big thank you to those who have already donated!

The Conway Inn

by Barbara Llamas

I would like to thank the community for its continued generous support during the COVID-19 dine-in restaurant ban. The inn will continue to be open daily from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. during the current crisis for takeout pizza, chicken wings, and breadsticks. Orders may be placed starting at 4:00 p.m. The inn has been approved to sell bottled beer and single-serve wine with food orders. Call 369-4428 to place your order. Thanks again for the hometown spirit you've shown toward your local businesses.

Baker's Country Store and Luncheonette

The store is open seven days a week for take-out breakfast (served all day) and lunch during the COVID-19 ban on dining-in restaurants. Current hours: Monday-Friday 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Call 369-4936.

Along with our delicious breakfast and lunches, we have a variety of homemade desserts and baked goods, as well as a large selection of last-minute items. We feature freshly baked cakes, muffins, pies, and cookies. Put in your order today for one of Helen's famous pies!

Flower and vegetable plants are in, and we have fresh vegetables and produce daily. Check us out on Facebook: facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store for today's specials. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

Conway Swimming Pool Seeks Donations

Please make a donation to the Conway Community Swimming Pool and help keep the pool open this coming summer! No contribution is too small. Send payments to Conway Swimming Pool, Inc., 309 Whately Road, Conway, MA 01341. Donations may also be made at the Greenfield Savings Bank in Conway or online by PayPal or credit card at conwayswimmingpool.org.

FOUND 5/8/20, along sidewalk near Conway town field: one french hook earring with a small bead and two pendant squares of graduated size. Colors reminiscent of a Maxfield Parrish sky. Contact libbymaxey@verizon.net to claim.

Unheard Melodies

by Nicole Braden-Johnson

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard /Are sweeter"
– John Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

Monotropa Uniflora

*"That without suspecting it you should send me the preferred flower
of life, seems almost supernatural, and the sweet glee that I felt at
meeting it, I could confide to none."*
– Emily Dickinson, L769 to Mabel Todd (1882)

Weary hiker's boots tread softly through
Brown leaves mulching in the wet heat
Of summer days after rain.
The footfall fades at an ephemeral find:
Between the dark roots and emerald moss,
Under branches' twilight shadows,
Rises from the black forest soil a ghost-like stalk,
Atop which demurely bows a bell-shaped head,
A flower encased in translucent petals
Made of living glass as though shaped by elven-hand.
This tender plant asks nothing from the sun,
And but a kiss from a passing *corbiculate apinae*
In which it finds joy enough to look to the sky and die
Only to give life anew.

What Does Conway Mean to You?

This month's image (page 22) courtesy of Bill Bradley. Send us your photo of that special place in Conway! We will publish an image each month as long as you want us to and as long as we have space. Images may be either in color or black and white and should be sent via email to conwaycurrents@gmail.com. Either a .tif image in 300 dpi or a high-resolution .jpg will be fine. Send a brief description of your photo and add a few words telling us why this place is special to you. We look forward to your submissions!

Interested in Volunteering for the Newsletter?

Do you have a story to tell, a column we might publish regularly, or time to spare? Interested in serving as a volunteer with the newsletter committee?

Conway Currents will run advertisements beginning with the July issue. For information on advertisement payment contact Janice Warner at treasurer@townofconway.com or call 369-4235 x 2.

The deadline for articles and ads in the newsletter is the 20th of the preceding month. Please send your content, comments and suggestions by email to Kathy Llamas at conwaycurrents@gmail.com. Thank you!

Disclaimer: *Conway Currents* does not endorse any specific product or service mentioned in its pages and is not responsible for the reliability of any service.

If you find any errors in this issue of *Conway Currents* please let us know by contacting Pat Lynch at patricialynch@earthlink.net. Our aim is to present clear and accurate information of interest to the community.

Forest Stewardship Management Plan

by Long View Forest and Wigmore Forest Resource Management

What's all this fuss about our trees? Really, during a pandemic, you ask me about our trees?!

Conway received funding from the Commonwealth for the development of a Forest Stewardship Management Plan (FSMP) for the town forests. You own two wooded properties: the Fournier Lot (40+ acres) behind the elementary school and the 100+-acre Old Town Farm forest on Cricket Hill. We were hired to help you with the development of the FSMP. While we understand the timing might not be ideal right now for this project, we are making the best of it and could use your help along the way!

These forest ecosystems do what forests do for you: clean your air, filter the water, pull CO₂ out of the air, provide homes and food for wildlife, offer quiet sanctuary or a rugged trail for recreation, shelter game, and provide homes for humans or our fuel. Day in and day out, your forests are showing up, doing their job, quietly, taking care of life.

So, why do they need a FSMP? A written management plan helps a community protect and support a healthy, resilient forest with its continual delivery of social and ecological benefits. A FSMP creates a community vision for the future forest. It provides the tools to define that vision and sustain the forest's vibrant functions. It documents your value system about the forest. Of course, your plan may change, as the forest changes, and your community's thinking changes with time too. Yet there is some continuity achieved in the plan, and it helps guide stewardship moving forward.

How do we create the FSMP? All FSMPs have three main parts:

1. The professional study of the forest ecosystem – a deep look at its nature, its heart, and its potential.
2. A Statement of Goals and Purposes – what you want for these community forests – blended with the reality of what's on the ground there now. This creates the

- future vision.
3. Presentation of Stewardship Activities in a Plan – the steps to get the community to that vision.

A forest study (inventory) collects data and generates biometrics about trees (species, size, health, and vigor), other plants (some rare or endangered), habitat benefits and characteristics, soils (type and how good they are for growing plants), natural communities (e.g., vernal pools or young forest), forest resilience or ability to survive change, and the forests' ability to serve as a carbon pool. All these facts are organized in maps, charts, and narratives. Done well, they do not overwhelm you but rather teach you about the nature and heart of your town forests.

The science is the relatively easy part. Yes, all our fussing about the survey comes in here – at the more complicated part! The science illustrates the forest ecosystem and what it can do when functioning well. The Statement of Purpose and Goals weaves your collective voice into a philosophy that guides you toward the vision for the forest. Once you know what plants grow here, how healthy they are, what songbirds shyly hide here, and who lives in the vernal pool, you can take responsibility for the future. You may think about adding an equestrian trail to visit a neat feature or letting older trees collect more carbon. A FSMP takes the facts and your input and merges the science with your values.

Finally, it all gets written down into the FSMP. The FSMP provides a list of stewardship activities (sometimes called silvicultural projects, which simply means working with the vegetation in the forest) that steer you toward your vision. The list may include trail building for connection into the Conway State Forest or creating a set of rules for trail use and maintenance. It might guide you to grant programs for the creation of a “forest classroom” on the Fournier woods. Or it may also plan sustainable forestry practices to improve forest resilience and tree health and vigor.

We appreciate your willingness to help us with this project. You took the survey, and we hopefully saw you at the first Zoom forum.

Please come to our next Zoom meeting in June. Keep your eyes on the town's web page, and we will send another postcard. It is a privilege to get to know your town forests and to hear your vision for this resilient ecosystem.



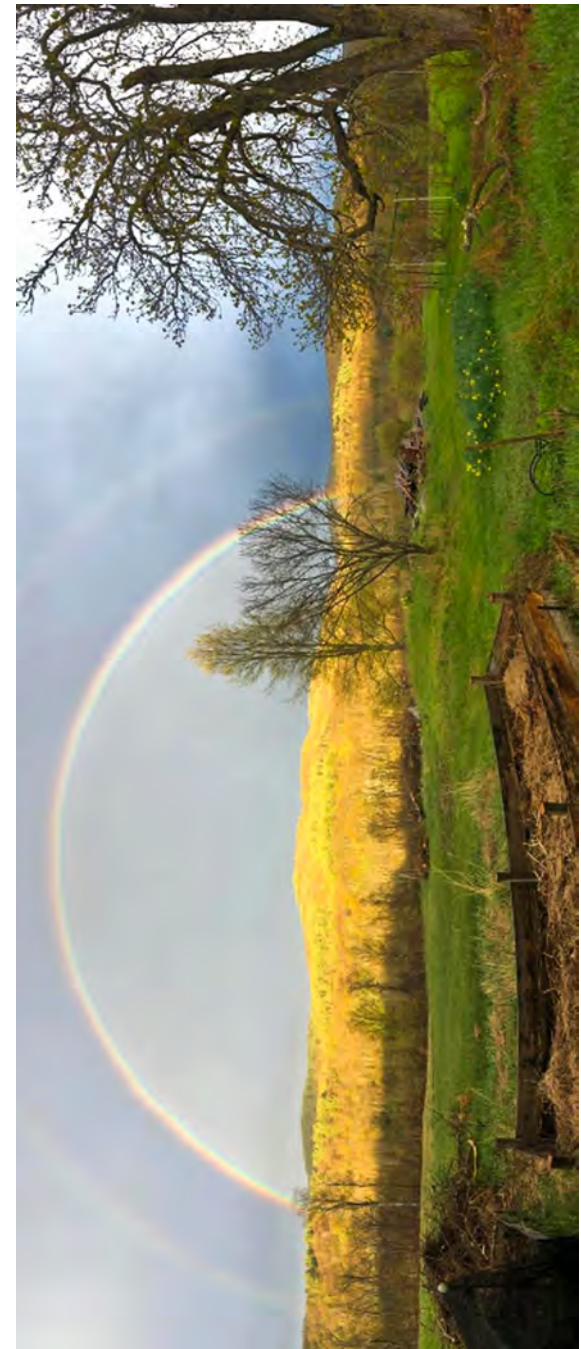
A baby timberdoodle in a young forest at Old Town Farm. Photo by Alex Barrett.

Hilltown Churches Food Pantry

The Hilltown Churches Food Pantry is located at 429 Main Street, Ashfield, in Friendship Hall, downstairs in Ashfield Congregational Church. It serves the eleven hill towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Monroe, Plainfield, Rowe, and Shelburne. The only requirement for joining the food pantry is proof of residency in one of these towns and a simple statement of need. There are no income requirements. If you need food, please come and sign up

Food distribution is held every other Tuesday from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Emergency food is available during off hours. For detailed information on the procedure being practiced during the COVID-19 crisis, phone 413-625-0020.

The pantry relies on donations of both money and food for our continued operation. We are able to stretch our money by shopping at the Food Bank of Western Mass., as they provide most foods free and a few for 19 cents/lb. Last year we gave out 85,616 pounds of food to those in need. We spend 96–98 percent of our budget directly on food.



Double Rainbow, Conway, MA, Bill Bradley

Town Office Personnel and Hours

Call 413-369-4235 and follow the instructions to reach the appropriate office.

Conway Select board: John P. O'Rourke, Chair, Robert Armstrong, Philip Kantor

Newsletter Committee: Kathy Llamas, Chair, Louise M. Beckett, Vice-chair, Veronique Blanchard, Treasurer, Patricia Ann Lynch, Secretary

Town Administrator: Tom Hutcheson
Mon.-Thur. 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Fri. 9:00 a.m. - noon

Asst. to Town Administrator: Lisa Turowsky
Mon. 2:00 - 8:00 p.m., Tues., Thur., Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Town Clerk: Laurie Lucier
Tues., Thur., Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Treasurer/Tax Collector: Jan Warner
Mon., Wed., Thur. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Asst. Treasurer/Tax Collector: Lynn Kane
Mon., Wed., Thur. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Accountant: Michael Kociela
Monday afternoons or by appointment

Assessors' Clerk: Laura Hutt
Mon.-Wed. 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Thur. 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Board of Health Clerk: Ginnie Knowlton
Thur. 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m. - noon

Town of Conway
P. O. Box 240
Conway, MA 01341