



Volume 3, Number 4 - April 2022

Candidates for Conway Selectboard

Town Hall was abuzz on February 28 as the Annual Town Caucus got under way! A group of about 50 Conwayans gathered to nominate and support candidates for the town election. Many of the available offices are uncontested. However, Bob Armstrong's decision not to seek another term on the selectboard resulted in two candidates running for the vacant position: Christopher Waldo, a relative newcomer to Conway, and Conway Fire Chief Bob Baker.

Christopher Waldo moved to Conway from Philadelphia in April 2021. In his youth he attended school in Hurricane, West Virginia, a relatively small community of about 7,000 people. He appreciated the pleasures of spending time outdoors and the pace of life that a small community offers.

After graduating high school, Waldo enlisted in the United States Army and served as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division. The four years he spent in the service were all at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. During this time he gained skills in the telecommunications field. Following his discharge, he embarked on several years as a self-proclaimed "road warrior," moving from place to place setting up telecommunications systems along the East Coast. As his eagerness to pursue a life on the road began to wane, Waldo found himself living the fast pace of life in Philadelphia, where he met his girlfriend, Conway resident Jenny Smith, when two groups celebrating events with friends were at the same gathering spot. During the early years of their courtship,



Waldo visited Conway several times. He found that, as during his youth in Hurricane, Conway could provide him with a renewed joy in small-town life. He eventually joined Jenny here in Conway and says that life is good.

While at the transfer station one day, Waldo began conversing with Troy Lucier and Frederic Brown, who noticed the military insignia on his car. As their friendship grew, the pair approached Waldo with the idea of running for the selectboard. He had been looking for opportunities to give back to his new community, and this just fit the bill.

When asked what things he loved most about Conway, he spoke of the civic involvement that he sees here in town and the importance of land conservation in the town. He said that his role on the selectboard would be to support the needs of the town and its community, and he is hoping through this position to encourage younger community members to become involved on committees and in local government. He also hopes to bring businesses and commerce into town without losing the small-town feel and flavor of Conway at its best.

Waldo is confident that his 25 years in project management and heading operational teams honed the many skills he can draw on would he be given the opportunity to serve on the selectboard. If you would like to contact him, you can email him at christowaldo@gmail.com.

Bob Baker, Conway's fire chief for more than

40 years, has decided to run once again for a seat on the selectboard, having served for a three-year term six years ago. Bob has lived in Conway for 70 years. He feels that he knows at least 70% of the community, and although he doesn't know many of the newest residents, he is planning on introducing himself to them in the coming weeks. "I know the boards in Conway and understand their function and their membership."



What is Bob passionate about? He notes that he is most passionate about the citizens of Conway and their vision for the town. Serving on the selectboard will help him support projects that are important to the

community. Bob has been identifying what he sees as Conway's specific needs. A primary need is to get more people involved in local government. He feels that some areas of Conway are underrepresented. "For example, I would love to see people in the Poland District of Conway get involved. They often have expressed that they do not even know much about what is happening in town."

Bob is a member of the Economic Development Committee, which is working both to bring more businesses to Conway and to spotlight existing businesses. The number of businesses in town with which people are unfamiliar is surprising.

Another group on which Bob wants to focus is the farming community. They are an important part of life in Conway, and it is important not only to support them but to help them thrive. If he is elected to the selectboard, Bob wants to explore ways to curb tax increases in town. For our senior community and others on a fixed income, dealing with higher taxes is often difficult. If you have concerns, Bob would love to hear from you. He can be reached at 413-522-9251.

Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity Building Affordable Home in Conway

Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity is pleased to announce that applications are available for a three-bedroom, single-family home to be built in Conway, MA. The application deadline is Wednesday, May 11, 2022. Eligible applicants will have incomes up to 60% of area median income, which is adjusted for family size.

People interested in submitting an application are invited to attend one of the following Zoom information sessions to learn more:
Thursday, April 7, 2022, 6:00 p.m.; Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

During the information session, potential applicants will learn about Habitat's selection criteria and how to prepare a complete application. The selection criteria include housing need, ability to make mortgage payments of \$600-\$1,200/month, and willingness to partner with Habitat, such as participating in the construction of the

home and other Habitat projects. More at <https://www.pvhabitat.org/apply/>.

All homes will be built to ENERGY STAR standards and are designed for visitation by someone in a wheelchair. All Habitat-built homes are restricted to income-eligible buyers in perpetuity.

Since 1989, Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity has built decent, affordable homes with 48 low-income families in Hampshire and Franklin Counties. We build our homes with volunteer labor and donations of material, supplies, land, and services. At the onset of homebuilding, a family is selected and enters into a long-term partnership with Pioneer Valley Habitat. Future homeowners contribute 250 hours of labor during the construction of their home alongside volunteers from the community. Upon completion, the home is sold to the family with an affordable mortgage. Habitat is a hand up, not a handout. The organization has a perpetual legacy in that all mortgage funds received are reinvested in building more homes. We are a housing organization helping to bring stability to families, bringing more stability into our neighborhoods and communities.

Contact: Megan McDonough, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity, 413-517-8326
megan@pvhabitat.org or www.pvhabitat.org

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. in Town Hall. Next meeting will be April 6. For more information, contact Patricia Ann Lynch, COA chair, at 369-4284 or email patricialynch@earthlink.net.

Senior Calendar for April

"First Friday" Walk-in Wellness Clinics Clinics are held on the first Friday of the month in Conway Town Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Regional public health nurses Lisa White, RN, and Meg

Ryan, RN, staff the clinic. There are no out-of-pocket costs to residents for this service, which is provided through the town's membership in FRCOG Cooperative Public Health Service. For more information, call 413-665-1400 x 114.

Grab-and-Go Meals The COA offers fully prepared meals from LifePath most Thursdays at noon for curbside pickup at Town Hall. Menus vary, April 7 will be a lunch of homemade sandwiches. For more information or to sign up for a meal, call Carolyn Thayer at 369-6948. LifePath suggests a voluntary donation of \$3.00 per meal ordered. NOTE: There will be no grab-and-go-meals from May through August.

Healthy Bones & Balance Classes These free classes, sponsored by RSVP, offer a combination of upper body, lower body, core, and balance exercises. Classes meet on Tuesday from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. and Friday from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. on Zoom. Contact leader Gary Fentin at 369-0001 for information and the Zoom link.

Monthly Foot Care Foot clinics are usually held on the first Monday of the month in Town Hall by appointment only. The next clinic will be April 4. There is a \$20.00 fee. For information or to schedule an appointment, call Peg Tiley at 369-4010.

Senior Meals On Thursday, April 28, there will be a sit-down meal in Town Hall at noon (with an option to take it home). The menu is to be determined. For May through August, you can expect ice cream and strawberry shortcake socials, picnics in Memorial Park, and an outing at the Sportsman's Club.

Walking Group Spring is finally here, and beginning in May the walking group will again be taking to the streets of Conway for companionship, conversation, and exercise. Join the group at 9:30 a.m. in front of the library every Monday, weather permitting. For more information, call Phylis Dacey at 369-4326.

Yoga for Seniors Led by Jody Fontaine on Wednesdays in person at the library and on Zoom. Class times: mat yoga 10:00-11:00 a.m., chair yoga 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Call Jody at 413-824-9435 for information or for the Zoom links.

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. Owing to lack of storage space, we are currently unable to accept donations of equipment.

Home-Delivered Meals Meals on Wheels are provided by LifePath for Conway seniors seven days a week. Call LifePath at 773-5555 for further information and registration.

Transportation for Medical Appointments and Shopping The Shelburne Falls Senior Center provides curb-to-curb van transportation within Franklin County for seniors 60 and over, for in-county medical appointments and grocery shopping. Call the center at 625-2502 to make an appointment at least 48 hours in advance or for information about reservations and fees. A short application with a copy of a photo ID is needed to be pre-approved for ridership. Fares range from \$.75 to \$2.25 each way. For rides to out-of-county medical appointments, call the FRTA at 774-2262 x 163 for information and reservations.

COVID Update from the Board of Health

Franklin County is now in the enviable position of being in the LOW category for community COVID transmission. According to the CDC, those of us who are “up to date on vaccinations” may now go about our business without a mask, even indoors, in all those places where masks are not required. Masks are still required in hospitals, on public transportation, and in any place of business that requests them. Masks should also be worn when in contact with someone who is symptomatic and awaiting test results or who tests positive. Consider wearing a mask in the presence of those at risk of severe infection, such as the elderly or immunocompromised persons. Many individuals are still more comfortable wearing a mask indoors in public, and this should be supported as a matter of choice.

Many of us are casting a weary gaze toward Europe, the UK, and China, which have all seen a huge uptick in COVID cases. Past history predicts that we here in the states may expect to see the same in the next few weeks. Hopefully, with warmer weather upon us and windows open, any uptick of cases will be quite mild.

New Community and Economic Development Committee

There's new energy coming to town! Conway's new Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC) had its first monthly meeting in November. Tasked with exploring how to support Conway's businesses, create new opportunities to welcome makers and creators to Conway, and promote our town as a great place to live and work, the CEDC aims to improve the quality of life for all Conway residents. Meeting every month at the town offices at 32 Main Street, the committee has five seats, currently held by four members: Mikayla Reine, chair; Geoffrey Baker, secretary; Bob Baker, and Eileen Schneider. One seat is currently open. If you'd like to be a part of our group, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact Geoffrey Baker at geoffreybakermusic@gmail.com.

We'd also really like to hear what you think about living and working in Conway or if you have any ideas or suggestions. How can we better support our do-ers and creators, promote Conway as an attractive place to live or start a new business, or just help bring us together more as a town? Is there anything you'd like to say? If so, please send Mikayla Reine an email at mareine525@gmail.com.

Free Child Care at Town Meeting!

This year's Annual Town Meeting on **Saturday, June 4, at 1:00 p.m.**, will offer free child care so that Conway parents can attend the meeting, advocate for things important to them, and know that their children are also having fun! Care will also be available for the regular Pre-Town Meeting Dessert Potluck and Discussion (date in May to be determined). Details to follow.

If you want regular updates about Town Meeting, go to the "Get Notified! - Latest News" section of the town website and click on the link to register for specific updates and news, including Town Meeting. <https://townofconway.com/get-specifically-notified/>.

Children's Advocacy Center Flag Raising

In honor of the one in six children who will experience some form of abuse before their 18th birthday, we will be raising a flag at the Conway town common on Friday, April 8, at 1:00 p.m. in observation of April as Child Abuse Awareness Month. Childhood is such a special phase of life, and the Children's Advocacy Center's mission is to create a community that is safe and in which our children are protected from harm. Please join us in both celebrating the beauty of childhood and remembering those who have experienced abuse. This is also a special event, as two of the four CAC staff members are from Conway! Comments by District Attorney Dave Sullivan, Representative Natalie Blais, Clinical Director Samantha Staelens, and others. The CAC staff will be available with resources.

Grave Matters

In the spring of 2020, the Town of Conway established a volunteer Cemetery Commission to oversee the management of the seven historic town-owned cemeteries within our borders: Boyden, Cricket Hill, Maynard Farm (Poor Farm), Poland, Pumpkin Hollow, Shirkshire, and South Part. Notably, that list does not include two of our largest local cemeteries, Howland (on Cemetery Hill Road) and Pine Grove (Reeds Bridge Road). These two cemeteries were turned over by the town to private management by the Conway Cemetery Association in 1901. Inquiries concerning burials within them may be addressed to Phyllis Dacey at 413-369-4326.

Of the town-managed cemeteries, Pumpkin Hollow Cemetery will be familiar to many, as we pass its location in what was once the center of town (near the site of the first meetinghouse on the corner of Maple Street) en route to the Transfer Station. Its oldest tombstone dates from 1772, and its most recent burial was in 1838. If you travel southward

past Pumpkin Hollow on the Whately Road and make a right up Cricket Hill Road, you will soon discover the picturesque Cricket Hill Cemetery on your left. Cricket Hill contains over 80 burials, with the oldest interment in 1790 and the most recent in 2011. Heading toward Shelburne Falls, near the intersection of Wilder Hill and Shirkshire roads you will find Shirkshire Cemetery. Approximately 210 burials are marked here, the oldest going back to 1792 and the most recent in 2005. Clear across town, South Part Cemetery may be reached via Roaring Brook Road and turning onto South Part Road. There are 110 burials in South Part, the oldest in 1769 and the most recent in 2015. South Part has the distinction of being the town-owned cemetery with the most space available for future burials. Not far away on Roaring Brook Road is the small Boyden Cemetery. This peaceful spot has only 19 burials, with the oldest taking place in 1832 and the most recent in 1904. Finally, there are Poland and Maynard Farm cemeteries. Buried within Conway's forests (pun intended), both of these are inaccessible to vehicles and require a map and a bit of a hike to locate. Indeed, Poland Cemetery has limited access at present out of consideration for a private landowner. It is the larger of the two with 89 extant graves marked (oldest burial 1795 and the most recent 1935). Maynard, located near the old town "poor farm," has only seven discernible burials, but it is suspected that there are more in unmarked graves. Its oldest burial was in 1785 and the most recent in 1876.

As part of its mission, the Cemetery Commission will be developing plans and standardizing practices that will allow certain of these legacy graveyards to once again receive burials, whether traditional casket burials, "green burials," or the interment of cremated remains. The commission is also tasked with considering and exploring additional uses for the town-owned cemeteries as recreational spaces and points of historical interest. Several of the above-mentioned cemeteries are in picturesque locations and contain burials reaching back to the 18th century, often marked by fine examples of 18th- and 19th-century gravestone carving. Sadly, most of these cemeteries have suffered from the ravages of time, weather, and vandalism, but with town support the commission hopes to maintain and develop this resource for all residents.

Information about burial lot purchases and guidelines for the use of town-managed cemeteries will soon be available on the town website,

townofconway.com, and in hard copy at the town offices. Until such time, inquiries may be directed to the Cemetery Commission at cemcomm@townofconway.com.

Yours in service, the Conway Cemetery Commission
Peter Freisem, Chair; Stephen Jackson, Jack Harrison

Guided Walk Through Town Forest

The Forest and Trails Committee and Conway Historical Society will be sponsoring a guided walk through the Conway Town Forest to the old Maynard Cemetery on Saturday, April 30, with a rain date of Sunday, May 1. Please check the town website <https://townofconway.com/> for details.

30th Annual LifePath Walkathon

LifePath's 30th Annual Walkathon will be held Saturday, May 7, 2022. We are planning an in-person event to take place at LifePath's headquarters, located at 101 Munson Street in Greenfield. At this time we are still developing what the event will look like. Our goal is to create a festive environment. If you have connections to performers, resources, or other highlights, please contact giving@lifepathma.org with your ideas. Here's how you can participate in this year's event:

Businesses Sponsorship is the backbone of this event! This year's opportunities include sponsorship levels starting at \$250 and an option to be with us on event day. You'll be recognized as a company that cares about community members and their quality of life as they age.

Community Organizations We depend on each other each day, and when we stand together, we change the lives of more people. Because of this, we want to celebrate our partnerships. We're looking for you to join us on event day. Help us tell the story of why this collaborative community is a great place to grow older together.

Teams and Individual Fundraisers We can't say it enough: you are the heart and soul of the Walkathon. It's time to gather your team members, call on your donors, and do what you do: craft and send email messages, make phone calls, and WALK! Asking and giving may again

be done through an online personal fundraising link, through the website, or by using donation sheets. Share your activity on social media (Facebook! Instagram! Twitter!) to secure more support. Our hope is to have the majority of teams return and secure new teams from schools, social organizations, businesses, and more. (Know someone looking for a great project that will keep them moving?) We are so grateful for your spirit, effort, enthusiasm and generosity.

Donors We know that so many of you look forward to connecting with your favorite team and supporting their fundraising effort. When they reach out, please show them love with your continued generosity or first-time donation.

The needs LifePath tries to meet are continually changing, and we feel fortunate to have this source of funding to answer those needs. Unrestricted funds give LifePath the flexibility to make independence an option in every way possible. Receiving funding in this way offers LifePath the flexibility to take care of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers when and where it is needed across our programs and services.

While providing an unrestricted donation offers LifePath the greatest flexibility to allocate resources to the most in-need programs, donors are welcome to specify a program if they wish. Those funds would then be "restricted" and spent only on costs related to the specified program.

Checks in support of the effort are always welcome! Checks made out to LifePath with "Walkathon" in the memo line can be mailed to LifePath at 101 Munson Street, Suite 201, Greenfield, MA 01301. If you have questions, contact Carol Foote, Outreach and Development Director, at 413-829-9199 or giving@lifepathma.org.

Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Seeks New Conway Representative

The Woodlands Partnership's mission is to support rural economic development and forest conservation in order to preserve the quality of life in western Franklin and northern Berkshire counties.

Conway is one of 20 towns currently represented on the partnership's board. Hopes for this collaborative effort are to (a) increase forest land conservation with practices that encourage and support sustainable forest management and intact forest ecosystems, (b) support and increase sustainable natural resource-based economic development and employment, and (c) promote and support the long-term social and fiscal sustainability of communities in the region.

Private and public forests are 82% of our region in western Franklin and northern Berkshire counties. They are essential to our scenic beauty and agricultural, recreational, and tourism economy. Forests in the region hold an essential ecological role locally and globally and can aid the climate resilience of northeastern states, cities, and communities. Conway is seeking a new representative to serve on this local organization's board. The term would begin July 1, 2022. For more information, please contact Beth Girshman, bgirshman@gmail.com.

South River Watershed Assessment Plan

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has funding from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop a watershed assessment plan for the South River watershed. This project is part of NRCS's National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) program, which offers financial and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners interested in improving water quality and aquatic habitats in priority watersheds.

This spring, FRCOG will be reaching out to landowners and agricultural producers in the Conway portion of the watershed about opportunities available to them that could improve farm viability and water quality simultaneously. NRCS provides targeted funding in small watersheds most in need and where farmers can use conservation practices that promote soil health, reduce erosion, and lessen nutrient runoff to make meaningful progress on protecting and improving water quality.

For more information and a NWQI Fact Sheet visit https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/water/?cid=stelp_rdb1047761. Please contact Kimberly Noake MacPhee, Land Use &

Natural Resources Program Manager at FRCOG, kmacphee@frcog.org or 413-774-3167 x 130, with any questions or comments.

Conway Swimming Pool News

The Conway Swimming Pool Committee will meet at the Grammar School on **April 5 at 6:30 p.m.** All are welcome!

We are interested in hiring a certified swim instructor. If you or anyone you know is interested in this part-time summer position, please contact Michelle Sanger sangerm@mac.com.

Date Change for Festival of the Hills Un-tag Sale

NOTE: The Festival of the Hills Un-tag Sale date has been changed to Saturday, May 14, with a rain date of Sunday, May 15. The sale was such a success last year that we have decided to do it again this spring to raise money for the festival scholarship fund and allow us all to get out and do some spring cleaning after the long winter. Do you have any items lying around your home that could use a second chance at life? Gather them up and get ready for the Un-tag Sale! You'll set up at the end of your driveway if you live near the center of town, or we will be arranging for another location where those farther out can bring their items. All signage and advertising will be provided by the festival. No prices: all items will be sold for donations as set by the buyer, with all proceeds going to the scholarship fund. More reminders and details will come as we get closer to the event date, but feel free to reach out to Pixie Holbrook pjholbrook1@gmail.com in the meantime with any questions.

UCC Bake Sale

UCC Conway will have a bake sale on Friday, April 15, from 10:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. outside Greenfield Savings Bank on Route 116 in Conway. Donations of baked goods are welcome. Rada cutlery and utensils will be available for purchase. We are also looking for volunteers to help at the table during the bake sale. Our thanks to the community for your continued support.

Conway Creators: Megan Hart, Potter

by Carol Baldwin

Sitting atop one of our hills is a lovely, well-maintained farmhouse with a sign in the driveway that reads "Hart Pottery." The sign is in the shape of a large vase with a horse on it. After parking in the gravel driveway, I was greeted by her dog as Ms. Hart emerged from the doorway. After some casual conversation, we settled in to discuss her work and the genesis of Hart Pottery. A Conway resident for over thirty years, Ms. Hart and her husband, Mark, contribute to mail delivery (Mark) and the pottery Ms. Hart has been creating ever since she was in college. She had chosen printmaking as her college major but was drawn to making pottery after taking a ceramics class, so she switched her major to ceramics, a decision she now knows was the right one for her, as it has brought her a lot of joy over the years.

The studio is a quiet, orderly place, filled with natural light and all the tools and equipment necessary for creating pottery. Near one of the many windows stands an electric potter's wheel labeled "Whisper" because it runs almost silently. I asked how she acquires her clay, and she said that while at one time she ordered a ton at a time, now she orders half a ton, delivered in 50-pound boxes. The clay is either porcelain or stoneware clay, best for homeware such as platters, bowls, vases, and mugs. She refers to her pottery as "functional work, which becomes part of my customers' lives." It is that combination of usefulness and beauty that has had lasting appeal over the years.



It takes weeks to create a piece from start to finish, due to the time required for drying and firing. Once she has added a glaze, she then paints designs in soft hues of blue, sage green, or peach, then fires the pieces in her kiln. All her work is microwave and oven safe. Ms. Hart originally added flowers to her pottery, then animals, such as birds, farm animals, and horses. She told

me that folks have commented that her graceful, rotund horses resemble those found in ancient cave art, but her inspiration actually came from the horses she has owned over the years. Flowers and leaves are incorporated into the animal shapes, adding a touch of whimsy and movement to the designs. As my visit to Hart Pottery ended, I wandered toward shelves and tables to admire the pottery. I spotted twin vases decorated with peach-colored flowers and a soft aqua inner glaze, which I happily purchased.

Hart Pottery has an annual holiday sale in December, and pieces are available via Etsy and at Pinch Gallery in Northampton www.pinchgoods.com. Ms. Hart will be co-exhibiting with Donna McGee at the Asparagus Valley Potters Trail from April 30-May 1 www.asparagusvalleypotterytrail.com. Megan's website is www.hartpottery.com.

Gardening Beyond the Catalog

Wild Geranium: Out of the Woods, Into Your Garden

Beginning in April and continuing into early summer you might see drifts of wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) blooming along roadsides or deeper in woodlands. Also called wood geranium or cranesbill, wild geranium is a woodland perennial native to much of eastern North America. Well-adapted to shade, it prefers moist woodlands but will also grow in full sun and is frequently cultivated in home gardens. Once established, it will slowly form colonies by sending up shoots from underground rhizomes.



Plants grow to a height of one to three feet and produce five-petaled flowers about an inch across, ranging from pale pink through rose-purple to violet. Birds eat ripening seeds from the distinctive, beak-shaped seed

capsule that springs from the center of the flower, giving rise to the common name *cranesbill*. (The name *geranium* is derived from the Greek word *geranos*, meaning "crane.") All geraniums are easy to recognize by their palmately lobed leaves.

Indigenous peoples recognized the value of wild geranium as an astringent and hemostatic (an agent that stops bleeding through mildly coagulating skin proteins) and used it as an ingredient in many medicines. Among other uses, a poultice made from the pounded roots was applied to burns, and the leaves and roots were used to treat sore throats and hemorrhages and, in the form of a tea, for diarrhea. Today, wild geranium extract is marketed as an anti-inflammatory and antihemorrhagic treatment.

The primary pollinators of wild geranium are honeybees, bumblebees, many types of native solitary bees, and syrphid flies, the most common visitor to flowers of all sorts. (*Syrphidae* are often referred to as "flower flies.") Butterflies, ants, and beetles also visit these plants.

Wild geranium is an excellent garden plant, fitting in well with hosta, ferns, and mixed perennials in shady borders and woodland gardens. Numerous cultivars have been developed to appeal to home gardeners. Plants are easily grown, and while they prefer moist, humus-rich soils, they tolerate average, well-drained soil. For best growth, provide plenty of moisture.

Got Jumping Worms?

by Kendall Clark

The name *jumping worm* may sound funny, but these worms are no joke, and they're here in Conway. Alas, we now have another invasive, nonnative species to manage, and this one really packs a punch: It changes soil into mineralized rubble at an alarming rate, impacting gardens, lawns, and forests. But don't despair; you can help stop the spread! Many of us already have jumping worms in our gardens and lawns, but we can try to protect the forest ecosystem that is most at risk. When you buy, exchange, or transport any potted plants or landscape material this spring (or purchase worms for fish bait or composting), you should be aware that these might be contaminated with this pest.

What are they? Jumping worms (*Amyntas* species) – also known as crazy worms or snake worms – are native to eastern Asia and resemble common European nightcrawlers except that they're bigger and appear in larger numbers. Strong and rubbery, they slither like snakes and thrash wildly when disturbed. They live in the top layer of soil or under leaves and mulch. Any adult worms you see in early spring are unlikely to be jumping worms, which don't grow to adult size until at least midsummer. It's easiest to identify them at maturity by the telltale flat, light-colored band (the clitellum) that wraps around the body near the head. The saddle-shaped clitellum of nightcrawlers, in contrast, is reddish-brown and raised. Jumping worms have an annual life-cycle: They hatch in spring, produce mustard seed-sized egg capsules called cocoons in late summer, and die with the first freeze; the cocoons survive the winter.

What's the problem? The presence of earthworms has long been considered a sign of healthy soil, but the opposite is true with jumping worms. They alter the structure and chemistry of soil by devouring the organic matter in the topsoil, which prevents the growth of seedlings and damages plant roots. The damaged soil, which resembles large coffee grounds, can't hold water, leading to erosion. This characteristic degradation is often the first sign of jumping worms. Gardeners can rebuild soil and replace mulch and plants if needed, but when the rich duff layer of leaves and debris in a forest is lost, a cascade of damaging effects on the entire woodland ecosystem results, including reduced forest regeneration and decreased habitat for myriad organisms.

Jumping worms were first identified in California in the 1870s. In the last few years, they have been reported all over New England. Their establishment in new areas is mainly due to accidental transportation of the worms and/or their cocoons in soil, compost, mulch, and potted plants. Sometimes worms sold for bait or vermicomposting may have jumping worms mixed in.

What can you do to stop the spread? There is currently no way to get rid of this invasive pest. Chemicals that would kill them would also kill beneficial organisms. Here are some steps you can take:

- At the very least, check potted plants for worm castings before purchasing. It's best to buy bare root plants or grow your own from seed. When exchanging plants, wash the roots and repot in sterile soil.
- To reduce the quantity of worms in your garden, collect them by hand, seal them in a bag, and dispose of them in the trash.
- Purchase bulk mulch or compost only from a reputable source that has heat-treated it to a temperature of 130°F for at least three days, which destroys the cocoons.
- High heat kills the worms and cocoons. You can solarize purchased mulch and compost by enclosing them in a clear plastic painter's dropcloth and leaving them in a sunny location for three days.
- Never release unused bait worms into the environment; bag them and put them in the trash.

For more information, check out the links below, including the clever claymation video first on the list! Note: UMass does *not* want reports of jumping worms, because their existence here is well established.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AB1ATzbGWKU>

<http://csetompkins.org/resources/jumping-worm-fact-sheet>

<https://ag.umass.edu/landscape/fact-sheets/jumpingcrazysnake-worms-amynthas-spp>

Update from the Field Memorial Library

"Let the barcoding begin!" I houted quietly to myself on our first multiple-person barcoding session March 3. After months of preparation, we began the process of tagging all of our approximately 14,000 items. This was another major step forward on a long journey, as a two-hour session with three expert coders yielded about 100 items tagged. These are the ones for which a record already exists in CWMars. The FML has many items that none of the 155 libraries in CWMars has already coded. This means we must either make a new record of some old books or

discard them, a decision that can take time to consider the item's value. We're delighted to be at this phase and profusely thank all who have volunteered thus far while looking forward to working with many of you as the barcoding unfolds.

One wrinkle in the process was learning that barcoding needs to be done *when the library is closed*. Too many details need to be dealt with while serving patrons, and we also need the computers for routine library work when open. This means staff need to work many additional hours to manage the project. During some of these hours in the library, I imagine that Marshall Field could never have anticipated the digital universe in which we now live, heightened during the pandemic, when residents had drastically limited access to the library's resources based on its organization through the card catalog 121 years ago. Digitizing records of what is in the collection through barcoding as well as offering digital versions of numerous resources directly to your devices will change all that.

Despite the change that joining CWMars represents, it is remarkable how little impact this has on the physical structure of the library. Now that we have the digital infrastructure in place, patrons can look forward to in-person use of our library without there being any obvious modifications to it! The walls and interior are just as stable as Marshall Field envisioned them more than 120 years ago, and yet the reach of the collection will be ensured as things are commonly done in this age, that is, digitally. A source many agree was the first vision of what we now refer to as the internet or the web occurred in 1945 in an article written by Vannevar Bush, then Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development under President F. D. Roosevelt, 44 years after the library opened. Visit our website for a link.

While more and more electrons spin faster at the library, we are hopeful that our calendar of physical events can resume soon and that COVID cases will not rise again. On May 25 the FML will feature Conway's Natural Roots farm, which operates like the farm in *The Dirty Life* by Kristin Kimball, the subject of this year's Libraries in the Woods community reads project. We also hope to reschedule our event with Jonathan Boschen, producer of a documentary on Marshall Field, to

consider life in Conway past and present. Performance events are scheduled for June 11, July 16, and September 3 with details coming soon. The library is open Monday 3:00-6:00 p.m., Wednesday 2:00-7:00 p.m., and Saturday 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

David Whittier, Director, Field Memorial Library
director@fieldmemoriallibrary.org 413-369-4646
<https://fieldmemoriallibrary.org>

A Look into Conway History

Fifty Years of Conflict

The growth of frontier settlements in New England was halted by Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) – the second in a series of conflicts called the French and Indian Wars, which were fought between Great Britain and France for control of North America. British military aid to colonists was devoted mainly to defense of the area around Charleston, South Carolina, and the New York – New England frontier with Canada. English settlements in Massachusetts were subject to raids by French forces and their indigenous allies, the Wabanaki Confederacy, a confederation of four principal Eastern Algonquian nations: the Mi'kmac, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot.

In 1712 Great Britain and France declared an armistice, and a final peace agreement was signed the following year. According to *History of Conway (Massachusetts) 1767-1917*, ". . . the cessation of hostilities, proclaimed at Boston in 1712, encouraged the people of Deerfield, the mother town, to drive another wedge into the wilderness and thus secure suitable commons and more lands for early settlement." The grant from the General Court of the Province of Massachusetts awarding this land reads as follows: "Nine miles from ye River into ye Western woods." ". . . Thus Conway, two hundred years ago, was carved out of the primeval forest and appropriately given the name of Deerfield Commons. It was officially known, however, as South West District. . . ." However, more than fifty years of conflict passed ". . . before any attempt was made to settle the pleasant hills and fertile bottom lands of this last grant to the Proprietors of Pocumtuck [Deerfield], from whom all land titles in Conway are derived."

Conflict with France continued, and the Seven Years' War, called the last French and Indian War in the colonies, which lasted from 1756 to 1763, prevented settlement of South West District. British forces, pitted against those of France and Spain, were ultimately successful. According to *History of Conway*, ". . . with the fall of New France her Indian allies ceased to threaten New England, and the belated settlement of many hill towns, like Conway, began at once and continued to progress until the lines of the clearings reached to the very hilltops. The giants of the forest which had held undisputed sway over the pleasant hills of Conway fell rapidly before the axe of the pioneer, and as early as 1790, Conway, with more than two thousand inhabitants, had reached her high tide in population."

Scholarships

Conway Festival of the Hills Scholarship Although there was no festival in 2021, we will still be awarding scholarships! Applications for the Conway Festival of the Hills Scholarships are currently available on the town website under [Scholarships](#). Scholarship applications (hard copy only) must be postmarked by **Friday, April 29**, and mailed to Conway Festival of the Hills Scholarship, PO Box 431, Conway, MA 01341. Please note that no applications received after that date will be considered.

Festival of the Hills Scholarships are available to all graduating high school seniors from Conway who submit complete applications, regardless of school attended or postgraduate plans. Primary consideration is given to a student's community service, extracurricular activities, and academic achievement. Financial need, work history, and Festival of the Hills service are also considered. Questions? Please contact Phyllis Jeswald: 369-4410 or pjeswald1@gmail.com.

Conway Firemen's Auxiliary Scholarship The Conway Firemen's Auxiliary scholarship is awarded annually to a Conway resident who is a graduating high school senior. Primary consideration will be given to students who have been involved in community service and/or extracurricular activities and who plan to further their education in either college, trade school, or a certificate program. Grades and financial need will also be considered. Applications are available on the town website

under [Scholarships](#) and at the Frontier Regional High School and Franklin Technical School guidance offices. Send your completed application to Conway Firemen's Auxiliary, PO Box 46, Conway, MA 01341, by **Friday, May 7, 2022**. For additional information contact Heidi Flanders, president, at 413-369-4219.

Conway Sportsman's Club Scholarship Conway Sportsman's Club Scholarship is awarded to any graduating Conway high school senior or member of the family who is in good standing with the club, regardless of postgraduate plans. Seniors must complete an application to be eligible for an award. The deadline is **April 15** of the year of application. No applications received after this date will be considered. Applications are currently available on the town website under [Scholarships](#). Applications should be delivered or mailed to the Conway Sportsman's Club, Scholarship Fund, PO Box 202, Conway, MA 01341.

Friends of the Field Memorial Library Scholarship 2022 The Friends of the Field Memorial Library wish to encourage and support the continued education of a graduating Conway high school senior. Applications are now being received. To be eligible for this scholarship, currently \$500, the applicant must be a resident of Conway, MA, be a graduating high school senior (school or homeschooled), have maintained good academic standing throughout high school (grade point average), and demonstrated good communication skills through the presentation of information for this application.

Please complete an application by downloading it from the website, fieldmemorallibrary.org, saving it with your name in the title, and either returning it as an attachment to FieldMemLibraryScholarship@gmail.com or by printing it and either dropping it off at the library or mailing it to Friends of the Field Memorial Library, PO Box 189, Conway, MA 01341. Please do not submit a handwritten application. Application due date is **May 1, 2022**.

The Mark Boice Germain and Mildred Boice Germain Fund: A College Scholarship Fund for Residents of Conway, Academic Year 2022-2023 This Charitable Trust was established in 1985 under the will of Mark Walter Germain and is known as the "Mark Boice Germain and

Mildred Boice Germain Fund.” Mr. Germain directed that this fund be established “. . . to grant funds to those Conway residents whose parents or guardians cannot afford such child’s college expenses, and any applications that such applicants have made for other private and government scholarships have resulted in an insufficient amount of funds to allow the furtherance of their education without additional monetary support.”

Applications are available at the Town Office, 32 Main Street, Conway, or on the town website under Scholarships by clicking to download and print: Germain-Scholarship-Application-22-23. The application deadline is Friday, **April 15, 2022**.

UCC Conway Scholarship The United Congregational Church of Conway is awarding a scholarship to a graduating high school senior in 2022. This scholarship is not limited to just those continuing on to college; it includes those who may be pursuing a more nontraditional career path, work-study, or training. Recipients will be chosen strictly on the basis of character, not on academic record or financial need.

Completed applications must be postmarked by **April 15, 2022**, and mailed to UCC Conway, Attn: Scholarship Committee, PO Box 214, Conway, MA 01341. Students may obtain applications by contacting Tina Burnett at 369-8035 or 16xcmom@gmail.com.

Currents Advertisements & Notices

Rates for ads up to 150 words are: one month \$7.75, three months \$15.75; six months \$25.75, twelve months \$44.75. For cost of longer ads or to include images (limited), call or email Louise at 413-559-1180 or lmbeckett@crocker.com.

Pay by checking account or credit card through the town's website: <https://townofconway.com/> > View or Pay a Bill > Pay Newsletter Advertising or send a check to **Conway Currents, PO Box 240, Conway, MA 01341**. Please send the text of your advertisement to Louise by email at lmbeckett@crocker.com. **Deadline is the 20th of the preceding month**. If you want to discuss your ad or have any questions, please call or email.

Town of Conway: Administrative Assistant – Boards, Commissions

The Town of Conway is seeking a part-time Administrative Assistant, reporting to the Town Administrator and serving the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals, with further work possible. The position averages 5 hours per week. The successful candidate will have good written and verbal skills to effectively communicate with other municipal employees and the general public, and demonstrated clerical skills, including familiarity with computers and MS Office programs. The successful applicant will post meetings, take minutes and perform bill tracking and record keeping. Compensation rate is \$18/hr. Candidates should submit a letter of interest and résumé, along with the Town’s general job application to: **Administrative Assistant: Boards/Committees, Attn: Selectboard, PO Box 240, Conway, MA 01341**. Position open until filled. The Town of Conway is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Town of Conway: Clerk/Administrative Assistant – Highway Department

The Town of Conway is seeking a Clerk/Administrative Assistant to support the Highway Department (includes buildings and grounds). The successful candidate will have good written, verbal, and other clerical skills, be able to communicate effectively with other municipal employees and the general public, and be familiar with Word, Excel, internet, and e-mail applications in a Windows environment. 8 hours per week, \$18/hour (unbenefitted). Applications will be accepted immediately; position open till filled. **E-mail application to highway@townofconway.com or mail to Highway Superintendent, P.O. Box 240, Conway, MA 01341**.

To view the job descriptions and the general job application, go to <https://townofconway.com/employment-volunteer/> The Town of Conway is an equal opportunity employer.

The Conway Inn - Open for pizza, chicken wings, and breadsticks, Friday and Saturday, 4 - 10 p.m.; Sunday 5 - 8 p.m. Call 413-369-4428 for takeout. Live music jams, second Friday of each month! With the warm weather approaching, we hope to have the jams outdoors whenever possible. Look for the blue flag on the porch.



Baker's Country Store - open seven days a week for all-day take-out breakfast and lunch. Hours: Monday-Friday 6 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Saturday 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.; and Sunday 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. Call 369-4936. Find a variety of homemade desserts and baked goods and a large selection of last-

**BAKER'S
COUNTRY
STORE**

minute items. We always have freshly baked cakes, muffins, pies, and cookies - put in your order today for one of Helen's famous pies! Look for flowers for Easter and for your summer garden. Check us out on Facebook: [facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store](https://www.facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store) for today's specials.

Join Natural Roots CSA - for delicious, fresh vegetables grown right here in Conway. We have several CSA share options, including part-time and low-income shares, main season (June through October) and winter shares. Our farm store is also open to the public year-round during daylight hours. We offer eggs from our own pastured hens as well as other local items like beef, chicken, pork, dairy, bread & baked goods, honey & maple products, coffee & tea, ice cream, snacks, beverages and more! Support a horse-powered farm in Conway and enjoy this beautiful, bountiful farm and the vibrant community that we feed. www.naturalroots.com, Natural Roots, 888 Shelburne Falls Rd., Conway, MA 01341, 413-369-4269, farmers@naturalroots.com.

Your Home Town Realtor - As a Conway resident for over 20 years, I provide local, attentive and trustworthy service for both buyers and sellers in our community. Previous experience as a licensed residential architect is valuable for my clients. Please contact me for a free, no obligation consultation! Sarah Newman, Realtor with Coldwell Banker Community Realtors. Call or text: 413-548-6525 or email sarah.newman@cbcommunityrealtors.com - Thank you!

Jan and John Maggs Antiques - specializing in 17th century English oak furniture, Queen Anne and Georgian jewelry, paintings, carpets, and small accessories. We're open these days by chance or appointment. You can visit our shop online at jmaggs.com, and you can arrange an in-person visit by calling us at 369-4256 or emailing jmaggs@jmaggs.com. On the weekend of May 7th and 8th we are holding our Spring Opening, in which we'll offer our latest acquisitions,



including things found on our recent buying trip to England. We'll be open online only on Saturday the 7th and in person in the shop on Sunday the 8th. This will be our second in-person opening since the beginning of the pandemic, and we're looking forward to seeing many old friends.

Support your local church - Shop for Rada Cutlery! All cutlery is made in the USA and includes a lifetime guarantee. Not just cutlery but knife sharpeners, cookbooks & giftbooks, non-scratch cooking utensils, baking pans, cutting boards, gadgets, nifty tools and quick mixes. Choose from many options, sure to help you in performing any kitchen task and creating all your favorite recipes! And your purchases will support the United Congregational Church! Paper catalogs available by request. To order, call Muriel Antes at 369-4350 or Tina Burnett at 369-8035, or use this link: bit.ly/3mTpO18.

Wilder Hill Gardens - your local plant nursery. Open for the season mid-April, weekends 9-5, other times by chance or appointment. Our annual Spring Dig Sale is on Mother's Day weekend, May 7-8. Enjoy touring the demonstration gardens, buy plants directly from the field, directly from the grower. Hardy perennial flowers, native and flowering shrubs, trees, annuals and herb plants, all grown without pesticides/herbicides. Consultations, expert pruning and tutorials, landscape design and installation. Contact: Lilian Jackman, 351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway, MA. 413-625-9446. wilderhillgardens.com. Email lilianjackman@gmail.com

*WILDER HILL
gardens*

It's April - and garden cleanup begins! Check out the tools you have in your shed. Need a replacement? Clear out weeds, mulch and debris in the garden – you'll need tools. We have a very helpful 8" wide rake that you can easily steer around plants without harming them. Divide perennials like daylilies with a new, sharp spade and clean up the lawn with a Made in the USA edging tool. Shop where the pros shop and thanks for buying locally! OESCO, Inc., Orchard Equipment. M-F: 7-5; 413-369-4335.



Blazing Star Herbal School - Conway, MA offers in-person, 10-month Beginner/Intermediate Herbal Apprenticeships and Botanical Art In-Studio programs both beginning in April 2022. Holistic health lifestyle consults and more. Openings for our 2022 season; Free monthly newsletter. Blazing Star Herbal School is dedicated to teaching traditional herbal medicine in a way that supports a more sustainable future for all members of the green world and shows respect for the integrity of nature. We offer a unique perspective on herbalism, weaving social and political aspects of health and healing through the study of medicinal herbs and food practices. We inspire students to find their own healing path by creating a personal relationship with the plant world. The school also serves as a local and national resource for education and networking. www.blazingstarherbalschool.typepad.com or email Tony(a) Lemos. blazingstarclinic@gmail.com for more info.

Fresh, local farm food - delivered right to your door! Hart Farm CSA boxes are filled with veggies, fruits, flowers, eggs, bread, cheese, meat and more. Choose from 3 different box types and then choose your delivery dates. Delivery throughout West Franklin/Hampshire Counties every Friday, April 29th-December 2nd. Pay with card/check/SNAP. We provide an accessible, convenient and flexible schedule farm box program to the community that we love. You can expect high quality, freshly picked, delicious produce infused with good vibes and delivered with a smile. More info at www.conwayhartfarm.com, conwayhartfarm@gmail.com, 413-453-9098.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor, the organizing committee or town officials and should not be construed as such. Although we work to produce accurate and typographically correct copy, we cannot be responsible for errors or accuracy of materials submitted. *Conway Currents* does not endorse any specific product or service mentioned in its pages and is not responsible for the reliability of any service.

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. Send your advertising requests to Louise at lmbeckett@crocker.com. Thank you!

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

Presort-STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT No. 701
Greenfield, MA 01301

ECRLOT
BOXHOLDER
Conway, MA 01341