



Volume 4, Number 3 - March 2023

Why Small Farms?

by David Fisher

When the world is frozen and dormant and covered with snow and summer's memories are but a distant blur, it may be easy to forget about our small farms for a while. After all, they will be there again when the world thaws. As sure as the geese will honk their spring greetings overhead, farmers will return to their fields, just as they have done every year since farms were invented. Or will they?



"What do you do all winter, anyway?" is a question commonly asked of farmers, starting as early as October. Though all may seem still on the farm to passersby, I can tell you that we are busy as beavers deep inside our den. While the plant world and aboveground activity may seem to be on pause, the inner realm of the farm is churning away with all brains working overtime to solve the perpetual puzzle: how to stay in business as a small farm today.

Short of writing a dissertation, for context I'll take just a moment to remind us of the drastic decline of the family farm in the U.S. over the past 70 years and the resulting collapse of rural communities, coupled with the rise of the corporate agribusiness empire, which has contributed generously toward ecological devastation and the climate crisis, not to mention our national health disaster and food system insecurity.

When I began farming in 1997 with a Wendell Berry novel in one hand and a hoe in the other, I was fortuitously riding the crest of a nationwide wave of young farmers full of inspiration and determination to rebuild and nourish our rural communities, restore ecological health, and reestablish a balance between humans and the earth. Many of us have weathered the test of time, built farm businesses, raised families, fed our communities, and stewarded our respective pieces of the ecological whole. These farms are many of those you might find represented at farmer's markets, in food coops, and at many grocers and restaurants, or as CSAs in your community. Businesses and networks that support these farms have also flourished in recent decades, and, at least in our area, awareness around the importance of supporting local agriculture has spread widely.

So it's no wonder that this winter I have been grappling to comprehend recent events in our farming community that don't align with all of the success stories. Beginning late last fall we heard the heavy news of a nearby organic farm, very well established for several decades and vigorously growing food for the community, that launched a fundraising campaign for \$250,000 just to cover their operating costs for 2022. Another local organic farmer, also well established for decades, with a CSA, wholesale business, and a well-situated farm store, is looking to sell the farm because it has proven to be financially unsustainable. And yet another farmer in the region, who has been well published and highly regarded as a model for regenerative agriculture, finished last year with such a significant financial loss they are having to completely reconfigure their farm business model.

What is going on?! How is it possible that in this time when the urgency for ecological stewardship has never been greater and demand for organic and local produce has soared that so many successful farms are suddenly struggling? These are well-run farms on excellent soils, situated in prime markets, each with an extensive list of supporting resources, run by highly intelligent, determined farmers who have college degrees in agriculture.

I can speculate about the global economy, climate change and its impact on farmers, and financial instability. I can rant about the federal government's agenda to incentivize corporate conglomerates at the expense of small farms. I can postulate about the priorities of our society and how health, ecological stewardship, and community are not at the top of the list. But ultimately I don't have a comprehensive answer. What I do feel clear about is that it is essential for individuals and communities to support their farms. There is no government safety net to catch these small farms in a bad year. Large farms? Absolutely. There are crop insurance and subsidies for large commodity and corporate farms, but for small farms there is no safety net.

To lose a local farm is not a loss just for the farmer, it is a loss for the entire community. To lose a farm is to lose a secure and accessible source of healthful food. To lose a farm is to lose ecological habitat and a means to sequester carbon in the soil. To lose a farm is to lose healthful and meaningful employment for members of the community. To lose a farm is to lose the inspiring beauty of a working landscape. We won't know just how deeply our local farms nourish us until they are gone and we are starving for them.

What is there to be done? The best answer I can come up with is to support your local farms! Whether you are a Natural Roots customer or whether you live somewhere across the planet, please buy your food and other products from small local farms. You, our community, are our safety net.

Scholarships

Conway Firemen's Auxiliary Scholarship The Conway Firemen's Auxiliary Scholarship of up to \$500 is awarded annually to one or two Conway residents who are graduating high school seniors. Awards will be made in May. Primary consideration will be given to students who are involved in community service, work, or extracurricular activities and are planning to further their education in college, trade school, or a certificate program. Secondary consideration will be given to grades and financial need. Applications are available on the town website, conwayma.gov/files/2021-Firemens-Auxiliary-Scholarship-App.pdf. Submit completed applications to Conway Firemen's Auxiliary, PO Box 46, Conway, MA 01341, by **Friday, May 5**.

Conway Sportsman's Club Scholarship Awarded to any graduating Conway senior or member regardless of postgraduate plans. Seniors must complete an application to be eligible for an award. **Application deadline: April 15 of the year of application.** No applications received after this date will be considered. Download the application at conwayma.gov/files/Sportsmans_Club_Scholarship_App.pdf. Applications should be delivered or mailed to the Conway Sportsman's Club Scholarship Fund, PO Box 202, Conway, MA 01341.

Festival of the Hills Scholarship Conway Festival of the Hills Scholarships are awarded to all graduating Conway seniors, regardless of their postgraduate plans. Seniors must complete the application to be eligible for an award. Download the application at conwayma.gov/files/2020-FoH-Application.pdf **Application deadline: last day of April that falls on a weekday.** Please note: No application received after this date will be considered. Applications should be mailed to: Conway Festival of the Hills Scholarship, PO Box 431, Conway, MA 01341.

Mark & Mildred Boice Germain Fund Scholarship - 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.” He 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.” **Application Deadline: no later than noon on Friday, April 21.** Applications available at the Conway Town Office, 32 Main Street or online at conwayma.gov/files/Germain_2023.pdf.

UCC Conway Scholarship The United Congregational Church of Conway will award a scholarship to a graduating high school senior in 2023. 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 and not based on academic record or financial need. Students may obtain applications by contacting Tina Burnett at 369-8035 or 16xcmom@gmail.com. Completed applications must be postmarked by **April 14** and mailed to UCC Conway, Attn: Scholarship Committee, PO Box 214, Conway, MA 01341.

Wells Trust Scholarship Applications are now available for academic scholarships, as well as health and agriculture awards, funded by the Fred W. Wells Trust. Anyone who has resided or whose parents have resided in Ashfield, Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Conway, Deerfield, Gill, Greenfield, Hawley, Heath, Leyden, Monroe, Montague, Northfield, Rowe, or Shelburne for not less than two years prior to the date of application is eligible to apply for funding. Awards are determined by an independent scholarship committee whose members consider, among other factors, each applicant’s scholastic ability, need, character, leadership ability, integrity, and participation in work and/or extracurricular activities.

Applications can be obtained from town clerk’s offices, high school guidance offices, Greenfield Community College, Greenfield Savings Bank Vice President and Trust Officer Prudence Blond, and online at wellstrustscholarship.com. With questions, contact Ms. Blond at pblond@greenfieldsavings.com or 413-775-8243. The mailing address at Greenfield Savings Bank is 400 Main Street, PO Box 1537, Greenfield, MA 01302. **Completed applications must be postmarked by March 20.**

Birds of Prey Presentation

The Open Space Committee presents “The Outlook for Birds of Prey in Conway” by Tom Ricardi on **March 19 at 3:00 p.m.** at the Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road. The presentation will include information on Conway's bird population: which are doing well and which could use some help, what we can do to help, the dos and don'ts of interaction with birds in the wild, and the current and future plans at Tom Ricardi's bird sanctuary. The presentation includes the beautiful birds that are cared for at the sanctuary. This event is free to all. Donations to the sanctuary are gladly accepted. See you there!

Conway Historical Society News

On Tuesday, March 14, at 7:30 p.m. the Conway Historical Society presents local resident and boat-builder Thad Danielson’s talk “Building Wooden Boats” at the museum at 50 Main Street. Thad’s powerful attraction to boats began on a voyage from New York to East Africa when he was nine. For the next four years, the Dar es Salaam, Tanzania waterfront became his playground, and he observed all types of boats, from ships and yachts to tugs, dhows, and dugouts. Years later, his interest turned from woodworking and home construction to building wooden boats. He was drawn to their beauty, history, complex integrated structures, and the tools, materials, and skills required to make them.

Thad, the author of *An Introduction to Wooden Boat Building: Always More to Learn*, will talk about building boats in a town with

a long boat-building history and the people who helped him. Free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. Check our website, www.conwaymasshistory.org, for weather updates.

Once again, the Historical Society has two season passes to Historic Deerfield and is making them available to all Conway residents. Each pass will admit up to four people. To reserve contact Joseph Zadroga at 369-4375; best if you can give 24-48 hours notice.

The Historical Society has returned to its in-person schedule of bi-monthly presentations in March, May, September and November, usually on the second Tuesday of those months. At this time, masks are optional. To arrange a visit to the museum at other times, please visit our website - www.conwaymasshistory.org - or write to us at chs@conwaymasshistory.org.

Conway Festival of the Hills

Announcing the 2023 Festival of the Hills! This year the festival will be on Sunday, October 1, with some pre-festival events held on Saturday, September 30, including the ever-popular Bake Sale! Long-time festival favorites will be held on Sunday, including log-splitting and skillet-toss, a 10-kilometer/6.2-mile road race through Conway's hills and hollows, and a classic New England fall parade down Main Street. An arts and crafts market, demonstrations, local musicians, mouth-watering food, an art show featuring expert local artists, fun activities for kids and the young-at-heart, a raffle for chances at prizes, and merchandise and candy tables round out the attractions.

Mark your calendars for October 1, 2023, Conway Festival of the Hills! For more information, including volunteer opportunities, please visit the festival website, <https://www.festivalofthehills.com/> or email festivalofthehills@yahoo.com.

All proceeds from the festival go to the Conway Festival of the Hills Student Scholarship Fund, which has supported hundreds of graduating Conway students over the past 50 years.

Save Items for the Un-Tag Sale

Specific plans for the Un-Tag Sale in the spring are pending. Stay tuned for more information in future issues of *Conway Currents*. Enjoy your winter purging and save those items for the Un-Tag Sale!

All proceeds from the Un-Tag Sale go to the Conway Festival of the Hills Student Scholarship Fund, which has supported hundreds of graduating Conway students over the past 50 years.

Public Forum on Land Conservation and Open Space

On Tuesday, March 28, Hilltown Land Trust is hosting a public forum on local land conservation from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Street in Huntington. This event is part of an effort by the land trust to ensure the needs and priorities of community members inform their conservation and land stewardship work in the 13 towns they serve: Ashfield, Chester, Chesterfield, Conway, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Windsor, and Worthington. The program will include group discussions and a brief presentation from Hilltown Land Trust staff.

“Public input into our work is essential to make sure we are meeting the needs of the community,” said Sally Loomis, executive director of Hilltown Land Trust. She continued, “We hope anyone interested and invested in the future of land in the hilltowns will show up to be part of this conversation.”

The forum is free and open to all. Light refreshments and childcare will be provided. Accessible parking is available behind the building. The building is accessed using a 35-foot ramp or a set of outdoor stairs. The building has single-gender bathrooms, with ADA-compliant wide stalls, accessible sinks, and low sink and hand soap dispensers. A PA system will be used for the presentation portion of the forum.

Preregistration for the event is encouraged on the land trust's website: www.hilltownlandtrust.org. The snow date is Tuesday, April 4, at the same time and location.

This event is made possible through a grant awarded by the MA DCR Service Forestry Program through the Working Forests Initiative, implemented in part by UMass-Amherst and the North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership, fiscally sponsored by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust.

Land Trust Seeks Volunteers

Hilltown Land Trust is looking for a few good volunteers. “We were founded in 1986 as an all-volunteer organization, and volunteers have been a driving force behind all our work since then,” said Sally Loomis, executive director of Hilltown Land Trust. “We are looking for engaged and motivated individuals who care about land and the future of the hilltowns to help conserve and care for land, habitat, and trails in this special place.”

The land trust is a 501c3 nonprofit that conserves and stewards land in Ashfield, Chester, Chesterfield, Conway, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Windsor, and Worthington. Help is needed in many aspects of the organization’s work, from building and maintaining hiking trails, to making sure public events run smoothly, to strategic planning, policy setting, and more. The land trust is hoping to fill open positions on committees and the Board of Directors, in addition to looking for people who are interested in giving input into a new strategic plan or becoming regular volunteers. Learn more and sign up at <https://www.hilltownlandtrust.org/announcements/want-to-make-a-difference>.

Residents Remember – and Correct Errors

Editor’s Note: In the February issue, we printed the following: “In 1935 the post office made its final move into what had been the town’s Methodist Church.” This was a typo; it was supposed to read “1938.” However, that date was also incorrect. I misinterpreted the following information from Deane Lee’s history of Conway, Conway 1767-1967, to mean that the post office moved in 1938: “The church building was sold in 1935 to John

Williams. He built the present post office building inside the church and took down the church building in 1938.” Ron Hawkes and Phylis Dacey have corrected this.

My mother and I feel that there is misinformation in the article in the February *Conway Currents* about the post office. The article states the post office moved to its present location in 1935, which is very incorrect. . . . I can remember, as a teenager, the post office still in the Masonic building in the late '50s - early '60s. We have talked to multiple people, and no one can remember, and there seems to be no record of exactly when it moved, but the consensus is circa '60-'62.

Other tidbits: Charles J. Dacey (Richard's father) retired as postmaster in 1956 after 37 years in the position. He was followed by Harry Cousins and Sydney St. Peters as postmasters. When Syd took over as postmaster [in July 1958] the post office was still in the Masonic Hall.

Thanks, Ron Hawkes, Phylis Dacey

The staff of *Conway Currents* appreciate Ron’s and Phylis’s correction and especially their personal recollections of a part of Conway history. We hope that other longtime Conway residents will contribute to “Residents Remember” and that this will become a regular part of our town newsletter.

Hands All Around Quilt Show

Hands Across the Valley Quilters Guild announces their 18th Hands All Around Quilt Show:

April 22-23, 10:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. each day
Robert Crown Gymnasium, Hampshire College
895 West Street (Rte. 116), Amherst MA - Free Parking

Admission: adults \$10.00, 12 and under free, when accompanied by a paid attendee; students and military \$5.00 (must show ID)

American Quilt Study Group Exhibit of Framed Center/Medallion Quilts: History of Style 2022, raffle quilt, raffle baskets, mini-quilt sale, vendors, snack bar with grab-and-go selections, Visit handsacrossthevalley.org for updated information and to make arrangements for groups.

Open Space Options

Spring is just around the corner when outside life reemerges. Opportunities abound for you to help our local ecology. Perhaps you've heard that native plants are important for local pollinators and wildlife. But determining what's native versus invasive can be challenging – especially around the edges of our yards, where many of us face tangles of thorns and vines. Smartphone apps make this task much easier: try *LeafSnap* or *PlantSnap*. Some, such as *iNaturalist* and *PictureThis*, identify plants and insects. Local folks can help too: An Open Space Committee member or affiliate will visit your place if requested to offer options for habitat enhancement. Contact openspace@conwayma.gov or 413-768-7416.

Beneficial options for everyone:

- Leave plant matter under trees, shrubs, and flowers until early May, because that debris is home to overwintering larvae that will become pollinators.
- Turn off outside lights at night or use motion detector lights to save insect lives.
- Create brush piles for wildlife – also known as bunny piles – in a log cabin or tepee structure that allows openings underneath.
- Leave dead trees (snags) for bird nests and perches.

Firearms Safety Class

The Conway Police Department will be conducting a firearms safety class on Sunday, April 23. Classes may be used for certification to obtain a Firearms License, to clarify many of the changes to the Massachusetts Gun Laws, or to gain additional knowledge and confidence in your handling of firearms. Electronic weapons are now legal in Massachusetts provided you have a valid LTC. This is a one-day class. Registration prior to the class is required, and seating is limited. For additional information or to register contact Chief Ouimette at 369-4710.

Notes from the Town Administrator

This month I want to remind folks that not only do we have a new website, but we also have a section where you can subscribe to get updates

for any department you wish. On the home page of conwayma.gov, in the middle of the page if you scroll down just a little you will see “Email us / Subscribe.” If you click on that link it will take you to the page where you can sign up for information from the boards, departments, or committees of your choice. You may also sign up for important news. And while you're on that home page, don't forget to sign up for emergency alerts, the town alert system that will notify you of any townwide emergency, health emergency, or an issue at the transfer station. The Emergency Alert System link is directly below that for “Email us / Subscribe.”

The annual citizens' caucus will be held on March 16 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. The following terms that are expiring are:

- Selectboard - Three Years
- Board of Assessors - Three Years
- Board of Health (2 members) - Three Years
- Local School Committee (2 members) - Three Years
- Moderator - One Year
- Planning Board (2 members) - Three Years
- Tree Warden - Three Years

More information about which elected positions are up for reelection can be found on the website under “Latest News” as well as on the town clerk's page. I would also encourage you to look at the openings on various committees and boards, which are listed under “How Do I . . . ?”: “Apply for . . .” and “Town Employment and Volunteer Committees.”

We are always very interested to hear from residents, so please do email us with any comments or concerns.

Happy Spring!

Véronique

Public Hearing on Wireless Facilities Bylaw

To keep pace with evolving telecommunications technology, the Conway Planning Board proposes to update the town's Wireless Facilities Bylaw. Article 8 of Conway's Protective Zoning bylaws was last updated in 2005, although the cellular communications industry has grown and changed since that time. The original bylaw was adopted in 2000.

The board will hold a public hearing on the proposed changes on March 30 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall at 5 Academy Hill Road. The session will be recorded and available for later viewing/listening on the Conway town website. Full text of the proposed changes will be posted on the town website, conwayma.gov.

The current telecommunication bylaw was written broadly and relies on separate site plan review and special permitting rules to help regulate cell towers and similar installations. After considering and approving three cell phone facilities in Conway, the Planning Board has used that experience to enhance the rules under which wireless facilities may be built.

The proposed changes add a measure of specificity, which may help applicants understand the town's expectations in advance. The bylaw is intended to protect the scenic, historic, and natural resources of the town while accommodating the wireless telecommunications needs of town residents and businesses. The revision adds some definitions and removes some language that dates back to the early days of the cell phone industry. Proposed revisions add more detail to certain requirements, e.g., specific protections for historic buildings or neighborhoods. Proposed changes also stipulate that landowners and developers of wireless facilities ensure protective screening by creating a no-cut zone around proposed facilities. The proposal adds some basic provisions governing so-called "small cell" 5G telecommunications facilities that – not unlike streetlights – may someday be proposed along public road rights-of-way.

All interested persons are invited to attend the public hearing. For more information, contact planningboard@conwayma.gov.

Drop Box at Town Office

Conway has installed a drop box at the Town Office at 32 Main Street. We hope that this will be convenient for you, so please feel free to use it for tax payments and other documents you want to leave for departments at the Town Office. The Town Hall offices (town clerk, assessors, and Board of Health) may also add a drop box at some point and will make an announcement when it is available.

When date-sensitive items such as tax payments are left after business hours, they will be marked "received" on the next specific department business hours. For example, if a tax payment were dropped off Monday night at 8:00 p.m., it would be marked "received" on Wednesday morning, as the tax collector is open only Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All office hours are posted outside the door for your reference. We make all efforts to remain open during posted hours, but if we miss you, be sure to leave a note of the date and time you were here.

Please do not leave cash, election paperwork or ballots in the box.

Meet Me at the Station

by Kathy Llamas

Well, believe it or not, my wonderful travelers, it is almost time for those trains to return to the station for another season of adventures! The translation of this "Station-ese" is, of course, the news that the Conway Mall is nearly ready to throw open its door for spring. The favorite place to gather, shop, and converse with friends will be open on March 5 for shopping only, but on **April 2** we will resume our normal operations!

The mall was left intentionally sparse, but I am sure that with all the travelers combing their closets to make room for the latest spring collections, it won't be long before we are up and humming at our usual pace. If you're looking for something in particular, bring in a note that we can post on our wall. Have an item too big to leave here? Let us know about it, and we can try to help you find a taker.

I have always said that the mall has its own magic. Truth be told, friends, it is all of YOU who are the magic . . . and those wonderful mall mavens who keep everything so tidy. What a crazy, disordered place the mall could become without them!

So watch the timetables and come aboard! We'll see you all soon! Until then . . .

Update from the Field Memorial Library

Our barcoding count has now reached over 12,000 items and is still climbing, although we are closing in on declaring victory. It is such a great benefit to be able to search our own collection in seconds, let alone the eight million held by all participating libraries. This is an enormous change from the days of analog, handwritten records.

Another gratifying outcome of opening our collection to all the CWMars communities has been to see the quality of our collection based on the numerous requests for our books from other libraries and patrons. Although this means a significant escalation in our work, it is rewarding to know that we have immediately become a contributor to the CWMars network. Our once secluded collection is resonating with library users throughout Western Mass.

Distribution of the FML's first ever library cards since its opening in 1901 has been going well with some glitches here and there as we all get acclimated to going to the CWMars catalog site and logging in using your card number and password. We have set up our patron computer with a one-click image to go to the CWMars catalog page and a scanner so that you can scan your card instead of typing in all the numbers.

Last month I reported on our effort to recycle some of the drawers in the card catalog with a Seed Bank. Due to the generous efforts of Conway resident and UMass agriculture professor Renee Ciulla, the Seed Bank is taking shape. We have a collection of seeds and many resources to help you in growing from seed, harvesting, and collecting and storing seeds to keep the process going. Please stop by to peruse our seed bank and let us know how it looks to you.

One of the unanticipated outcomes of joining CWMars is finding more than a few curious titles:

If you have food on the brain: *Here Today, Gone Tamale; Fudge & Jury; A Waffle Lot of Murder*

Our four-legged friends: *Doggie Homes: Barkitecture for Your Best Friend; Wrong Side of the Paw; The More the Terrier*

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

31st Annual LifePath Walkathon

LifePath's 31st Annual Walkathon season is upon us! The "Path for Life" Walkathon is planned for Saturday, May 6, at LifePath's headquarters, 101 Munson Street in Greenfield. This event is LifePath's biggest fundraiser of the year. We engage sponsors, community partners, fundraisers, and walkers for the benefit of LifePath's programs, services, and those our agency serves.

Create a Walkathon Team The heart and soul of the Walkathon is the teams and their fundraising. There are teams rooted in their local COAs like the South County Senior Center (hooray!), the Orange Council on Aging (yesss!), Gill/Montague Senior Center (alright!), and others. For some help or further information about starting a team, please go to <https://lifepathma.org/events/lifepath-walkathon/walker-information> and to watch a twelve-minute video from 2022 about starting a team.

Once your team is formed, please register for the event on the LifePath Walkathon website, where you will find donation forms, and send an email to giving@lifepathma.org to request an online giving link. For more information about how to use the online giving link, click on the website link to watch a nine-minute video from last year. In brief, sending your personalized online giving link through email or social media offers recipients the opportunity to click through to the specific giving page that supports your fundraising effort.

Got Volunteers? The event requires a number of volunteers so that it may come together. From Friday evening, early on Saturday morning, and through the afternoon we are looking for volunteers to set up, check in walkers, give out t-shirts, staff food tables, monitor the route, direct traffic, and more. If you know of someone or could round up a few willing individuals, we would appreciate that support.

Carol Foote, Outreach and Development Director
giving@lifepathma.org 413-829-9199

Senior Snowshoe Hikes

Hilltown Land Trust is partnering with All Out Adventures to offer a series of senior snowshoe treks this winter. Join us Wednesday mornings for one- to three-mile snowshoe walks along beautiful trails through the DAR State Forest in Goshen. We will have two treks per day, departing at 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon, divided into multiple groups by ability level and interest. Please arrive 15 minutes early to sign in and get geared up. In the event of insufficient snow cover, we will hike together instead. Beginners are encouraged to attend!

There is no cost to attend, although a donation of \$5.00-\$20.00 in support of All Out Adventures programming is appreciated. Snowshoes, poles, and traction aids will be provided free of charge.

Remaining Wednesday Senior Snowshoe Hike Dates are March 8 at Bullitt Reservation, Ashfield, and March 15 at the DAR.

RSVP required by phone or email: 413-584-2052
info@alloutadventures.org

Questions? Email Sarah: sarah@hilltownlandtrust.org. Find us on social media! Visit hilltownlandtrust.org.

Conway Council on Aging

Council on Aging meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in Town Hall. The next meeting will be March 1. For more information, contact Patricia Ann Lynch, COA chair, at 369-4284 or email patricialynch@earthlink.net.

Senior Calendar for March

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

"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.

Healthy Bones & Balance Classes Classes meet on Tuesday from 9:00 to 9:45 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 on March 6, Beginning this month the hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There is a \$20.00 fee. For information or to schedule an appointment, call Peg Tiley at 369-4010.

Senior Meals In most months meals are held at Town Hall on the second and last Thursdays of the month. For more information and to be added to our email or phone list for announcements, call Carolyn Thayer at 369-6948.

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: 11:15 a.m.-12:00 noon. Call Jody at 413-824-9435 for information or for the Zoom links.

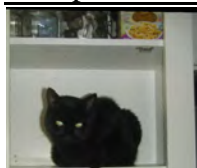
Currents Advertisements & Notices

Rates for ads up to 150 words are: one month \$8.50, three months \$16.50; six months \$26.50, twelve months \$45.50. 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://conwayma.gov/> > How do I . . . ? > Pay for > Newsletter Advertising; or send a check to **Conway Currents, PO Box 240, Conway, MA 01341**. Send the text of your advertisement to Louise by email at lmbeckett@crocker.com. **Deadline is the 20th of the preceding month.**

Employment Opportunity - Town of Conway

Assistant Treasurer/Collector - The Town of Conway seeks qualified candidates for a part time Assistant Treasurer/Collector position for 18 hours per week. This highly responsible bonded position involves local tax collections, tax billing, treasury, local revenue collections, cash management, payroll/payables disbursement. Applicants should possess an associate degree in accounting, finance or a related field, plus four years of finance work. Certification by Massachusetts Collectors & Treasurers Association (MTCA) preferred, or willingness to work toward certification. Hourly rate \$20-\$24. Visit conwayma.gov for complete job description. Send application and resume to treasurer@conwayma.gov.



FREE - healthy and adorable kittens Two males remaining. They are indoor kittens and anyone interested must always keep them inside. Call Doreen at 369-0219. Healthy and adorable kittens of Conway.

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 and now also the third Thursday of each month! Starts 7-ish. 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: Monday-Friday 6 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Find a variety of homemade desserts and baked goods – freshly baked cakes, muffins, pies, and cookies – and a large selection of last-minute items. We now have gluten-free bread and bagels! Check us out on Facebook: [facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store](https://www.facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store) for today's specials. **March 19th: Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner!** \$25.00 per person. Sit-down 4 p.m. or take-out 4:30-5:30 p.m. MUST reserve ahead - call 413-369-4936.



Join Natural Roots Farm - Delicious, organically grown vegetables right here on our horse-powered farm along the South River in Conway. Enjoy this beautiful, bountiful farm and the vibrant community that we feed: Sign up for a vegetable CSA share today! We have several CSA share options, including flexible part-time shares, low-income shares, and winter shares. CSA pick-up and retail vegetable shopping is available during our main season, June through October on Tuesdays and Fridays from 3-6:30pm. Our farm store is open to the public year-round, self-serve during daylight hours. We offer eggs from our own pastured hens as well as other local items including beef, chicken, pork, dairy, baked goods, honey, maple products, coffee, tea, ice cream, snacks, beverages and more! Details on our website: www.naturalroots.com. Natural Roots, 888 Shelburne Falls Rd., Conway, MA 01341, 413-369-4269, farmers@naturalroots.com.

Jan and John Maggs Antiques - specializing in 17th-century English oak furniture, Queen Anne and Georgian jewelry, paintings, carpets, and small accessories in our new barn in Pumpkin Hollow. We're open these days by chance or appointment. Stop in when you see the blue doors. You can also visit our shop online at www.jmaggs.com, or you can arrange an in-person visit by calling 369-4256 or emailing jmaggs@jmaggs.com. On March 11 & 12 we'll be exhibiting at the Spring Fox Valley Antiques Show, sponsored by the Suburban Chicago Antiques Dealers' Association. This show is virtual only, and you can shop with no admission fee by clicking the link on our website, which will be live at 11:00 on Saturday, March 11.



Wilder Hill Gardens - Spring is definitely on the way and already we're thinking about ways to improve our landscapes. How about a privacy hedge of flowering shrubs or replacing those antiquated specimens in your yard with hardy, new varieties? We propagate and grow our own flowering and evergreen shrubs, small fruits, trees, perennial flowers, annuals, herbs and cut flowers. Varieties are selected for foliage, flowers, habit and ease of cultivation, ensuring that you'll have plants especially suited for Conway's climate. The nursery is open weekends beginning mid-April, Sat./Sun. 9-6. Our annual Mother's Day Weekend Sale is Saturday May 13 and Sunday May 14. Wilder Hill Press



Gallery will be open too: original prints, books and ceramics will be on display. Stop by any weekend for gardening advice from Lilian Jackman, an experienced landscape designer, and view the stone stupas, gallery, and display gardens. Lilian Jackman, 351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway, MA. 413-625-9446. lilianjackman@gmail.com. Website: wilderhillgardens.com.

March is a great time - to think about grafting and OESCO has what you need to get the job done! Stock up on grafting essentials like the BAHCO folding grafting knife or the FELCO Victorinox curved knife. Gashell grafting wax, Parafilm grafting tape and Doc Farwell's grafting seal are all in stock now. If you're not familiar with grafting or need a little extra assistance, *The Manual of Plant Grafting* is a perfect comprehensive guide; or stop by and get the latest trends in grafting from Gemma, Rebecca or Tim. It's also the perfect time to see what tools you're going to need when



growing season hits. Rakes, shovels, sickles, trowels, sheers; the list goes on and we have them all! Shop where the pros shop and thanks for buying locally! OESCO, Inc. (Orchard) M-F: 7-5; 369-4335.

Deb Hoyle at Debra Hoyle Studio Gallery - offered a Saturday afternoon collage workshop on February 18. We had lots of fun telling our stories in collage and learning new techniques from each other. We were artists with and without experience creating unique, individual 'frameable' works of art! You can check out some of these great multi-layered pieces on <http://instagram.com/debhoyle.art.rockpaperscissors>. More workshops to come this spring, stay tuned to announcements here in the *Conway Currents*! Spring is time to try something new or renew old interests. And if you find yourself at the National Seashore on Cape Cod this spring or summer, take the time to stop at Blake & Co. on Main Street in Orleans. Deb will be showing her collage paintings there this season. Blake & Co. www.blakeorleans.com is 'where color and design meet' and is full of 'beautiful objects' as well as the fun and whimsical.

Conway Quilts - Quilt repair, restoration and cleaning – bringing new life to old quilts. Contact Carol Baldwin at 413-345-8977 – hummerzinger@gmail.com

Conway Artist Hannah Harvester - offering a limited number of custom landscape and portrait commissions for spring, summer and fall. Contact

me to inquire, or make an appointment to visit me in my studio at 46 Delabarre Avenue where you can view original pastel paintings of Conway scenes and fine art reproductions of my most popular paintings. I also offer private and small group lessons in drawing, printmaking and pastels. Lastly, I am looking for a digital native to help me with my website, social media and marketing. Do you know a young art lover who might be interested in some part-time work? Ask them drop me a line! hannahharvesterfineart@gmail.com - visit my website at www.hannahharvester.com/

Handmade one of a kind jewelry - made out of pounded metals, semi-precious stones and glass. I also repurpose materials I come across that need a new life! Reasonably-priced gifts for special gifting: Come see me at my Conway home on Manning Road. Please call ahead 413-387-9296. Denise Dwelley Designs

Two ways to work with eco-dread, grief, and anxiety - Drop-in Support Group Monday, March 6 and Monday, March 27, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 46 Delabarre Avenue. Suggested donation \$15. Must register in advance by emailing hannah.harvester@gmail.com. **Active Hope Practice Group:** April 10-May 22. Seven meetings; **no session May 1**. Join a small group of neighbors to learn techniques for increasing your capacity to make a difference even if you feel hopeless about the future. \$200; \$260 to support a scholarship fund. Contact Hannah to learn more, to register, or to inquire about tuition assistance.

Conway Currents is available through the town's website: <https://conwayma.gov/g/67/Newsletter-Committee-Conway-Currents> - send the link to family and friends outside of Conway!

We welcome input from the community! Do you have a story to tell, a column we might publish or a suggestion for something you'd like to see included as a regular feature? If so, get in touch with Kathy at newsletter@conwayma.gov.

The deadline for articles in the newsletter is 11:59 p.m. on the 20th of the preceding month - earlier submissions always appreciated! Please send your content by email to newsletter@conwayma.gov. Thank you!

Unheard Melodies

by Nicole Braden-Johnson

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

Cosmic Vibrations

The human ear, a skin and cartilage conch
Scooping waves from the air,
To drip down an abyss no larger than a spider's den,
Onto the membrane drum
Beating to the rhythms of the world.

Waves become an electric surge
Traveling highways of nerves
Through a neuron constellation
Of dendrite hands reaching out
To catch and decode the ionic signals of the world.

Town of Conway
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