



**Volume 4, Number 6 - June 2023**

## **In Praise of Town Meeting**

by Philip Kantor, Chair, Conway Selectboard

Residents of Conway will gather once again for our Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, June 3, at 10:00 a.m. at the Conway Grammar School. It is more important than ever that you attend and participate. We are blessed to live in a town that still holds a traditional open town meeting in which all of a town's registered voters come together as equals to decide on community priorities and how our tax dollars will be spent in the next year. In the *Citizen's Guide to Town Meeting*, Secretary of State Thomas Galvin writes: "The purest form of democratic governing is practiced in a Town Meeting. In use for over 300 years and still today, it has proven to be a valuable means for many Massachusetts taxpayers to voice their opinions and directly effect change in their communities. Here in this ancient American assembly, you can make your voice heard as you and your neighbors decide the course of the government closest to you." Let's not let this tradition wither and die for lack of participation.

Differences of opinion can and will arise over warrant items. These opinions should be presented and discussed in a rational form of argument without descending into interpersonal conflicts. This is why Town Meeting has a Moderator to whom all comments are addressed. It's also why the Moderator implores us to "disagree without being disagreeable." The goal of public argument is to persuade the audience of the wisdom of your priorities or policy recommendations, not to prove another person wrong.

The broad contours of much of our public argument at Town Meeting would be familiar to Socrates. This year the town must

decide how best to manage a situation in which fixed cost increases (health insurance premiums are up 6%) collide with reduced income (town revenue is up only 1.9%). Thus the coming public debate will often be between increasing our costs by keeping services level versus decreasing services to keep the costs level. Both of these viewpoints are as old as the hills and quite legitimate. And Town Meeting is where we decide which course of action we prefer.

To be effective at public argument is a daunting task. Not only is the fear of public speaking a near universal human experience, but most of us will have only one brief opportunity to speak at Town Meeting on any given topic. Confidence in public speaking abilities comes from practice and knowledge of subject matter. And keep in mind that the town budget is not composed of random or arbitrary numbers. Rather, the budget contains the services the town seeks to provide next year and the estimated costs of those services. The provision of services is the purpose of town government. So advocating for or against a specific service is both more honest and more effective than arguing for or against an out-of-context budget figure.

Finally, some suggestions to collectively improve our Town Meeting experience. First, bring a water bottle. Second, bring seat cushions. Third, leave the cuss words at home. And last, bring your sense of humor. See you all on June 3rd!

## **Candidates for Board of Assessors**

### **George Forcier**

The first question people ask candidates running for local office is "Why?" Why are you running, and why should I vote for you? For most of the 40 years I've lived on Baptist Hill, I relied on many volunteers and longtime civil servants like Joe Strzegowski, Ginny Knowlton, Ken Ouimette, Bob Baker, and Malcolm Corse to make the town work while I focused on two jobs and raised a family with my wife, Ann. Freshly retired and with other recent changes in my

life, I now have the time to pay forward what others have done for my family. Conway's a small town, and we all should pull together if we are going to get the town's business done efficiently and effectively.

Why the Board of Assessors?

Having been a local journalist for nearly 50 years, I believe the skill set that makes good journalists – objectivity, attention to detail, strong people skills, concern about fairness and accuracy, and a willingness to work hard – are the same that you want in an assessor. In addition, the assessors' work with current property values dovetails nicely with two other town organizations to which I belong: the Conway Historical Society, with its concerns for the past, and the Conway Planning Board, with its concerns for the future.



So why vote for me? From decades of work experience as a news editor and editor in chief at the *Greenfield Recorder*, I will bring to the Board of Assessors:

- Dedication to accuracy and fairness, so that all taxpayers shoulder a fair share of the local tax burden
- Interdepartmental management and budgeting experience
- Strong people skills
- Strong organizational skills
- A broad understanding of how local government works from decades of covering local news

What else? Well, I've completed the real estate course required of licensed real estate agents in Massachusetts. I have learned how to teach and to learn from others after 35 years of teaching journalism at UMass Amherst. And I served on the committee that built the Conway

Grammar School and currently serve on the Planning Board and Conway Historical Society.

### **Roxanne Parent**

I was elected last year to a one-year term on the Conway Board of Assessors. Since then I have completed the course required by the state and have taken several Zoom classes from the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers. I'm eager to continue with more education and be part of our assessing process. I believe in promoting transparency on how our property assessments are computed. One way in which I believe I can achieve this is by holding a Zoom workshop to go over what's on your property card. I have proposed this to the board, and we're still working on putting it together.



When elected last year, I joined a board that has not changed for over 15 years. Sometimes it's a challenge coming in with a different point of view and questioning the process that has not changed for many years. But I think it's necessary to ask questions and take a deeper look at what has been going on, for this is how we discover how to improve our system. Moving forward, I'm excited to continue to work together with the board and to work out several problems we have found with our new Tyler assessment program. My goal is to make sure that everyone in town is assessed fairly and correctly.

I appreciate your confidence in voting for me last year, and I would like to ask for your support in the upcoming election so that I can continue to promote transparency, assure better understanding of our assessments, and work as part of the board to make improvements.

## Conway Festival of the Hills Sunday, October 1, 2023

**Calling All Crafters!** If you are a crafter interested in participating in the Craft Fair at the 2023 Conway Festival of the Hills, please obtain a crafter application form by visiting the FOH website, [festivalofthehills.com](http://festivalofthehills.com) (under “Events,” click “Craft Fair”), or by contacting the Craft Fair Coordinator, Adria Elskus, at [conwaycrafters@yahoo.com](mailto:conwaycrafters@yahoo.com) or 413-325-4883.

All crafts must be handmade by the exhibitor. No manufactured, imported, or made-from-kits goods are permitted. Applications must be postmarked by August 14 and will be juried for craft balance and replied to by August 28. Crafters must provide their own canopy tent, tables, chairs, and other means of display. The fee for a crafter space (12' x 12') on the ball field is \$50, which supports the FOH Scholarship Fund for graduating seniors from the town of Conway.

**Festival Planning Meeting:** Thursday June 1, at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. To get the Zoom link, email [festivalofthehills@yahoo.com](mailto:festivalofthehills@yahoo.com).

**Want to Volunteer?** It takes 120 people to run this event. Volunteer opportunities abound! (See the list below. The number of volunteers needed is in parentheses following each item.) For more information, go to the “Volunteer” tab at [festivalofthehills.com](http://festivalofthehills.com) or contact us at [festivalofthehills@yahoo.com](mailto:festivalofthehills@yahoo.com)

**Prefestival Setup:** Saturday, September 30, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Assemble and mount feather banners, put up parking signs, set up tables for children’s activities, assemble tables and chairs for music area. (10 volunteers)

### **Festival Day Volunteer Opportunities**

One- to two-hour time slots from 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. – Greet crafters as they arrive in upper parking area. (9)

Two-hour time slots from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Children’s Games: fishing,” frog-on-a-lily-pad, ring toss, coin toss, pumpkin painting, and more! (30)

Information Booth (6)

Cider Tent (9)

Café Conway (9)

Fried Dough (9)

Merchandise Table (6)

Green Team (19)

One-hour time slots from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Take down: Remove feather banners; pack up children’s games; retrieve parking signs, tables, and chairs; and more. (10)

## Painting Conway Live!

Free artist demos in downtown Conway! Do you want to watch a landscape painting created from start to finish? Would you like to try out the medium of soft pastel for yourself? With support from the Conway Cultural Council, pastel painter Hannah Harvester will be all around Main Street the weekend of June 16-18, painting Conway *en plein air*. She’ll describe what she’s doing and why, and will have a second easel set up for you to give the medium a try. Look for her on Friday, June 16, from 5:30-8:00 p.m., all day on Saturday except noon-2:00 p.m., and on Sunday morning from 9:00 a.m.-noon. Then come to her open studio at 46 Delabarre Avenue on the following weekend, June 24 and 25, and vote for your favorite painting from the downtown series. The winning painting will be donated to the Field Memorial Library. Open Studio 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, June 24-25. In case of rain everything will be moved to the following week.

## Irish Road Bowling June 10

Be part of Conway’s fifth annual Irish road-bowling tournament! Last year over fifty players bowled the half-mile Elm Street course and raised a whopping \$1,250 for the Conway Sportsman’s Club scholarship fund and the World Kitchen. The same will hold true this year . . . that is, with your participation.

To those who have participated in the past, you know what this tournament is about: fresh air, a leisurely stroll with friends and neighbors, the realization that the little cannonball has a mind of its

own, and the cold beverages and pizza that await you back at the Conway Inn. To those who have no idea what this is all about, just go to YouTube and search “Conway’s Irish Road Bowling 2016.” You can also check out “Irish road bowling” on Wikipedia if you’re curious about its origins. OK, here’s how it all happens:

- Come up with or be a part of a four-player team, age range 12-75. If it’s just you or you and a partner, you can sign up and we’ll assign you to a team. You don’t have to be from Conway to participate.
- Text me, Mike Haley, at 413-537-9149 with your name, text and/or email and leave the names of the players. If you have a team name and team color, let me know.
- On Saturday, June 10, rain or shine, have everyone show up at the Conway Inn to register by 11:00 a.m. Entry fee is \$20 a player. All proceeds go to the aforementioned charities. The tournament averages about three hours in length.

We promise music, great edible prizes this year, our 50/50 raffle, laughter, and a day that will remind you of why you love Conway.

NOTE: If you want to give us an hour or two of your time helping us set up the course, let us know.

## Conway Sportsman’s Club Events in June

Thursday, June 1, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Members monthly meeting in the beautifully refurbished club farmhouse. Dinner followed by our business meeting. NOTE: For all club information go to [conwaysportsmansclub.org](http://conwaysportsmansclub.org).

Thursday, June 8, noon to 2:00 p.m. Luncheon for Conway seniors, Here’s where the real news of Conway is presented along with laughter and a great meal. For more Information and reservations, call Carolyn Thayer at 369-6948.

Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10. Volunteers are needed for several hours to help set up the Irish road bowling course and help register players You don’t have to be a member to help. Contact Mike Haley at 413-537-9149.

Saturday, June 10, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Club-sponsored Irish Road Bowling Tournament. Meet at the Conway Inn. We need “Uber shuttlers” with Kubotas or golf carts to shuttle the incurably incontinent.

Sunday, June 11, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Firearms training class at the Sportsman’s Club: a complete and comprehensive course run by Chief Ouimette for all who are interested in the safety of, laws about, and handling of firearms while in pursuit of a license.

Saturday, June 17. Private party in the pavilion.

Sunday, June 25, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. First clay shoot of the year. To preregister and have questions answered, please text Cyndie Ouimette at: 413-475-0280. When texting start with the word *clays*, or you may not get a response.

## Conway Swimming Pool News

What does it take to maintain a community swimming pool? It takes folks showing up at meetings, people contributing funds in any amount. It takes people of all ages showing up at a work-bee bringing doughnuts or their own tools, networking, making suggestions, lending a hand to get the pool ready for another swim season. It takes brand-new residents helping alongside lifelong Conway residents. It takes a village like Conway. Thank you to all!

The Swimming Pool Committee’s current president, Jimmy Recore, will be retiring from his position in July. Thank you for your years of dedication, Jimmy. We are seeking new officers. Contact Michelle [sangerm@mac.com](mailto:sangerm@mac.com) for more information. We hold monthly meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month, either at the pool or the Grammar School, depending on the weather.

Check the pool website, [conwayswimmingpool.org](http://conwayswimmingpool.org), or Facebook for opening date.

## Firemen's Auxiliary

The Conway Firemen's Auxiliary invites people in the community who may be interested in joining our organization to join us at our next scheduled meeting on August 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the firehouse. Some think they need to have a family member on the fire department but that's not true: It's a community service group that does not require a huge commitment. We meet probably 10 times a year at the firehouse.

## Vote Yes on Article 35

At Town Meeting on June 3, vote yes on Article 35 to designate Conway as a pollinator-friendly community. What does this resolution actually do? My neighbor David asked this question before signing a petition to designate Conway as a pollinator-friendly community. It's a fair question, since the resolution is nonbinding and has no enforcement mechanism. The answer is straightforward. If Conway voters approve it at Town Meeting, it will put on record the town's commitment to the creation and protection of habitat for insects and other pollinators essential to the web of life.

The resolution, in part, states: The Town of Conway is hereby declared a Pollinator-Friendly Community. The town encourages, to the extent possible, the adoption of policies and practices that support ecological health by prioritizing the planting of native species in landscaping, land management and restoration efforts; reducing pesticide use; and encouraging property owners, residents and town departments to adopt these best practices:

- Avoid planting flowering plants treated with systemic insecticides.
- Plant diverse grass mixes for lawns that include low flowering ground covers.
- Reduce lawn-mowing schedules to allow flowering ground covers to bloom, thereby lowering maintenance costs and pollution.
- Consider replacing excess turf-grass areas with low-maintenance flowering shrubs, wildflowers, and trees.

- Minimize the harmful effects of light pollution.
- Allow fallen leaves to remain under trees and shrubs as overwintering sites for insects.

Adopting these practices is a departure from showcasing nonnative, ornamental plants in highly manicured gardens. Some experimentation and a shift in traditional landscape esthetics may be required. But eco-gardening is a practice that can make a big difference locally over a relatively short period of time. You may see dramatic changes in the wildlife that visits: turtles, butterflies, moths, bees, frogs, and birds that are new to you. Using native plants is a way to harness the power of nature's intricately interconnected relationships. Pollinators are essential to a sustainable, balanced, and resilient ecosystem.

*Pollinate Conway!* is a team of volunteers working to foster Conway's transition to a more pollinator-friendly community. We created a demonstration pollinator garden on the Town Common, removed invasive plants from town property, and recently proposed new native tree and shrub plantings for Veterans Memorial Park. On Conway's town website, look for resources to learn more about native plants and pollinators: see the *Pollinate Conway!* link on the Open Space Committee page. Native Plant Trust's Nasami Farm in Whately is a noteworthy resource, selling plants native to our region and offering a variety of classes on the subject.

We encourage you to take steps toward creating more pollinator-friendly yards by adding more native plants. As Doug Tallamy, an entomologist and the leading expert in a movement to bring nature back to our landscapes, says, "every little bit helps" and "garden as if life depends on it."

*Original article written by Janet Jensen of Monterey, MA. Revised and adapted by Pollinate Conway! with the author's permission. Monterey approved their resolution in May 2022.*

## Notes from the Town Administrator

An important update for all is the new transfer station policy that was recently voted on by the selectboard. For those of you who attended or

watched the two public forums held by the board, this information will not come as a surprise, but for some of you it might be completely new information.

The main goal the board is addressing with the new policy is the large tonnage of trash coming into the transfer station, which is much higher than in surrounding towns. Conway is the only town in Franklin County not to have some form of pay-as-you-throw. We in town consider our trash to be free, but the truth is that payment for it comes out of the transfer station budget, and it costs upward of \$100,000 annually for proper disposal of materials coming out of our homes. There is also concern that, because we think of our trash as free, some of us might be accepting trash for family and friends who do not live in town, thereby increasing the costs to all Conway residents.

To try to curb costs, the board has voted on a new system whereby each household will pay \$20.00 for a car decal (the current cost is \$10.00) and at that time will be given 104 bag stickers or the equivalent of two 35-gallon bags' worth of trash per week. These stickers will need to be wrapped around the neck of your trash bags before they're thrown away at the dump. Trash will still not actually cost you anything, unless you need more than two bags' worth of trash per week, in which case each additional sticker is \$1.00, so this system is really more about having everyone be accountable for what we dispose of. The way in which car decals will be sold will also be different this year, as they will no longer be sold at the transfer station and will be available only at the town office – not at Town Hall – either in person, through the drop box, or by mail. Please see the transfer station webpage for more information.

The town is also hiring an assistant to boards and commissions and on-call transfer station attendants. Please go to “How Do I?” on the website [conwayma.gov](http://conwayma.gov) for employment information.

Happy June! Véronique



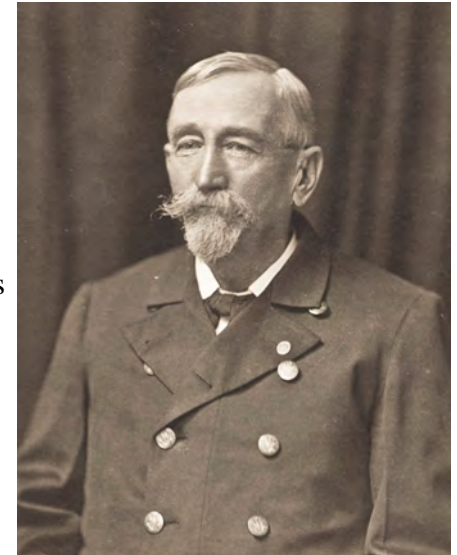
## Tales of Gordon Hollis Johnson

by Nancy Reed Bovio and Lester Reed

Our great-grandfather, Gordon Hollis Johnson, was a long-time Conway resident and hero of the Civil War. He was born in Windsor, Massachusetts in 1842 but lived in Conway for 70 years. He was the maternal grandfather of Cullen Johnson Reed. At age 19, Gordon enlisted in the Union Army and fought his first battle at Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1862. After reenlisting at age 21, he bravely fought in 18 more Civil War battles. His portrait is held at the Conway Historical Society Museum.

The property at 36 Main Street in Conway was purchased by the Johnson family from Phineas Bartlett as a livery stable and harness shop. His son, Theodore, built the house in front of the stable in 1852 and used the front room as an office. When the paper on the living room wall was removed, the plaster revealed where much of the figuring for prices at the stable was done: right on the walls! For a time the post office was in this building as well. Gordon Johnson ran the livery stable there from 1869 to 1916.

After his return from the war, Gordon was appointed deputy sheriff by Sheriff Solomon Clapp Well. He held that position for 50 years. He had wide acquaintances with lawyers and court officials throughout the state. He was a shrewd observer of men and affairs and had a remarkable memory for names and dates and a fund of anecdotes and war reminiscences. He was the undertaker and sexton for 40 years.



During that time, he buried about 1,400 people. Gordon took a keen interest in politics and was active in the political affairs of the town and county until his death in 1919. In the early 1880s, when Bardwells

Ferry was accounted as “the toughest place on the map,” he went there to make an arrest. A scuffle ensued, and a whole table of dinner dishes was thrown at him. He was badly cut up, but he got his man. Years later, a Conway man on a trip to Jamaica met a man who asked him if he knew Gordon Johnson. He proved to be the man whom Gordon had arrested at Bardwells Ferry years before. Gordon had given the man some wholesome advice. He told him to serve his sentence and when he was released to give up his bad habits and try to make something of himself. The man took the advice seriously and had become a useful member of society. He was running a hotel in Jamaica and doing well.

After serving his town of Conway throughout his adult life, Gordon was given a pension due to injuries suffered on January 20, 1889. That night, while Gordon was driving a four-horse team, an axle on the wagon broke, and Gordon and others were thrown out. He received a severe concussion. He died at home on February 2, 1919, at age 76 after four years of poor health. We remember him as a war hero and a man who dedicated his life to serving others, especially those in his beloved town of Conway.

Information cited from the *Greenfield Recorder* 1919 obituaries; the Reed Genealogy of June 17, 1998; the *Springfield Republican*, Feb. 4, 1919; [springfieldmuseums.org](http://springfieldmuseums.org); and the [31st Massachusetts Volunteers](http://31stMassachusettsVolunteers.org) on WordPress.com

## Fournier’s Market

by George Forcier

For 34 years during the middle of the 20th century, Fournier’s Conway Thrift Store operated at 50 Main Street, the current home of the Conway Historical Society Museum. Constructed about 1840 by Gen. James Whitney, it was eventually purchased by George M. Darby in 1900, and he ran it until 1908. Harry Hassell ran it from 1910-1931, and in 1939 it became Fournier's Market. The Conway Historical Society purchased the building in 1981.

Between 1939 and 1973, the grocery and meat market run by Harold and Edwina Fournier was a place to meet your neighbors and catch up on the town’s news.

In the photo at right Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and playwright Archibald MacLeish is doing just that with the proprietors. The couple initially lived in a small apartment at the rear of the store. Harold, a butcher by training, provided that service, but the store also rented freezer lockers to customers in a time when home freezers weren’t yet a thing.

The Fourniers had half a dozen competitors when they started, but theirs was the last store standing when they retired in 1973 to raise sheep on their Route 116 farm. They sold the farm to the town around 1990 when it needed a home for its new grammar school. Today the property is also used for educational hiking and is home to the highway department off Fournier Road.



## Residents Remember

*A Facebook Conversation with Conway Resident MLC*

*MLC:* I can remember my grandmothers' use of most anything. My Dad's mom was a master of reusing. My Mom's mom was also a pro at it. My own mother was the same & my dad was too but not as good as the women. Never knew my granddads, but I am sure they were too. Those days this "throw-it-away" & "gotta have new" generation would be chastised for wastefulness. I try to reuse but nowhere near as good at it as they all were back then.

*Conway Currents:* My grandmother was a great influence on me too! She saved everything reusable, and so do I: bag ties, rubber bands from produce. My grandmother taught me to use leftover bits of yarn knotted together to crochet on wire hangers so that they’re kinder to clothes.

*MLC:* Yes, my mother was like that too. I am to a point but nowhere near as thrifty. I do wash plastic bags & have clean, meat only, plastic bags I wash & reuse for "meat only." Always try to make sure the washer & dryer are used to capacity & make sure our new dishwasher is loaded as full as possible before running. Use the "half-load" setting if there is not a full load. Those things sound trivial, but if we all do what we can, it will add up & make a difference for our pocketbooks & our environment.

*CC:* Frugality is a New England tradition, especially for farming families, which mine was in my grandfather's youth. And I was a schoolchild during WWII: participated in scrap metal and paper drives, was all-too aware of rationing. I lived with a great-aunt & -uncle at the time, and we siphoned the cream off milk & churned out own butter, because all that was available was lard with a yellow dye button to squeeze into it. They had a bit of farmland outside town that we all worked on, vegetables only.

*MLC:* Yes, our family did much of the same, but we only farmed small animals like chickens, ducks, geese (only once, though, they were too nasty & dirty), & rabbits. My dad & uncle raised 150 rabbits for market, but that too was only once. I would get to nurture the baby rabbits that the does rejected. We raised a huge garden & canned fruits & vegetables. We reused what we could, recycled what we could. My mom used to use the chickenfeed cotton bags as pillowcases. So much we did to survive, & we had a great life.

*CC:* My great-grandparents had a farm in East Bridgewater. I have a photo of my grandfather and one of his brothers plowing a field with oxen.

*MLC:* Those "Good Old Days" . . . they were to teach us how to survive in difficult times, have self-made fun, & to appreciate all the "good" parts of those good old days.

## Changes at the Conway Mall

by Kathy Llamas

The Conway Mall has made some changes this season! Here is what you need to know:

- New hours of operation are: Wednesdays 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Saturdays 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., and Sundays 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- We **DO** take clothing for adults and children that is **clean and free of animal fur, rips, cuts, or stains**; **gently used** shoes, boots, and **seasonal** footwear; books for adults and children (NO encyclopedias); housewares and linens; seasonally appropriate accessories; toys that are in reasonable condition; intact puzzles; and DVDs and CDs.
- We **DO NOT** take paint, pesticides, herbicides, chemicals of any kind, electronics and computer equipment, or mattresses. By law these items must be put in secure places, and that is not the Mall! We also do not accept food products or teas. All of these items are potentially harmful, especially to unattended children.
- Children should not be unattended while at the Mall. Even when a Mall Maven is present, they cannot supervise children who come in. This is especially important in case someone has left potentially harmful products to which they might be exposed or if a glass or china item is accidentally broken.

I cannot make a stronger request than to **PLEASE bring unacceptable or unusable items to the appropriate places, NOT to the Mall!** Mall Mavens must sort out unacceptable items and dispose of them elsewhere. The Mall attendants should be concentrating on displaying donated items properly on shelves and hangers or in bins, **NOT** dealing with unacceptable trash. If you have any question about what the Mall will accept, please do not hesitate to ask. If no Maven is present, the transfer station attendants know the basic criteria.

Currently the Mall has a crew of four, but we could use more help. Please contact Kat Llamas at 413-695-5626 for more information.



## Update from the Field Memorial Library

The Friends group and the library are busy planning events for the spring and summer. First up is a free concert by Sarah Clay & the StarCats on Saturday, June 10, at 2:00 p.m. on the library lawn, weather permitting. Check our website for details if the weather looks threatening. Sarah and her group typically bring a theme to their concerts, and this year's is titled "Whisper Not." It will feature "Songs that tell an intriguing story: Is it true history or tall tale? Love song or kiss-off? Social justice or social call?" Selected standards, retro-pop, and Latin jazz are featured. Their concert is supported in part by a grant from the Conway Cultural Council, our local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

We will also sponsor a multifaceted celebration of the 122nd birthday of the library. On Saturday, July 15, beginning at 2:00 p.m., we will celebrate the completion of our joining CWMars by honoring the many volunteers who gave so much time to make this possible. We will also celebrate the 10th anniversary of our current Friends of the Library group, who make so many resources available to the library and its patrons. These acknowledgments will be followed by refreshments and a concert by The New Blue, who will perform at 3:00 p.m. on the lawn.

The FML now offers a Seed Library. Please stop in and pick up some seeds for your gardens.

As you use CWMars through the FML, please check your email for notification that item(s) you requested have arrived at the library. Deliveries arrive on Wednesdays, so you should receive a notification on a Wednesday afternoon. Some titles that patrons have requested are coming in but then remain on our "Holds" shelf without being picked up. These items need to be returned within three weeks. The normal borrowing period is three weeks with one automatic renewal for another three weeks. After that, CWMars does not allow any further renewals. If the item is not returned within 28 days after the end of the second renewal, the patron's account is charged for the item.

Titles of interest in our Vintage collection include *New England Legends and Folklore*, beginning in Boston in 1628 by Samuel Adams

Drake (1900) and *Indian Story and Song from North America* by Alice C. Fletcher (1900), who wrote down the music and words of Indigenous musicians in an 1898 musical conference in Omaha, Nebraska. Both provide authentic descriptions of their subjects.

Funny titles about money in CWMars include these: *Isn't It Their Turn to Pick Up the Check?: Dealing With All of the Trickiest Money Problems Between Family and Friends – From Serial Borrowers to Serious Cheapskates; The Cheap Book: The Official Guide to Embracing Your Inner Cheapskate; and How to Get Approved for the Best Mortgage Without Sticking a Fork in Your Eye.*

David Whittier, Director, Field Memorial Library  
[director@fieldmemoriallibrary.org](mailto:director@fieldmemoriallibrary.org) phone 413-369-4646  
[fieldmemoriallibrary.org](http://fieldmemoriallibrary.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 June 7. For more information, contact Patricia Ann Lynch, COA chair, at 369-4284 or email [patricialynch@earthlink.net](mailto:patricialynch@earthlink.net).

### Senior Calendar for June

**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 413-774-3167 x 156 (Lisa) or x 158 (Meg).

**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 June 5. Clinic hours are 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** On June 4, the Conway Sportsman's Club is hosting a special luncheon for seniors at the club on Elmer Road, off Newhall Road. There is a suggested donation of \$5.00 to the club. For reservations call Carolyn Thayer at 369-6948. There will also be a meal at Town Hall on the last Thursday of the month as usual. For more information or to be added to our email or phone list for announcements, contact Carolyn.

**Walking Group** The walking group has been enjoying the group's conversation and companionship while indulging in healthful exercise. Join the group on Mondays at 10:00 a.m.in front of the library, weather permitting. For more information, contact 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 11:15 a.m.-12:00 noon. Call Jody at 413-824-9435 for information or for the Zoom link.

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## Currents Advertisements & Notices

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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](mailto: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**. Please send the text of your advertisement to Louise by email at [lmbeckett@crocker.com](mailto:lmbeckett@crocker.com). **Deadline is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.** If you want to discuss your ad or have any questions, please call or email [lmbeckett@crocker.com](mailto:lmbeckett@crocker.com).

**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 7 p.m.-ish, and third Thursday - starts around 6 p.m. - of each month! Look for the blue flag on the

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**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. Memorial Day hours: 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 flavored iced and hot coffee, fruit smoothies, gluten-free bread and bagels, and ice cream! Find cold plants, hothouse tomatoes, cukes, squash and peppers; flowers including geraniums, hanging baskets and local asparagus. Check us out on Facebook: [facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store](https://facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store) for today's specials.

**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](http://www.naturalroots.com). Natural Roots, 888 Shelburne Falls Rd., Conway, MA 01341, 413-369-4269, [farmers@naturalroots.com](mailto: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. New Summer Hours: most Sundays 10:00 – 4:00. Also open by chance or appointment. Feel free to stop in whenever you see the blue doors. You can also visit our shop online at [www.jmaggs.com](http://www.jmaggs.com), or arrange a visit by calling 369-4256 or emailing [jmaggs@jmaggs.com](mailto:jmaggs@jmaggs.com).

**Wilder Hill Gardens** - is now open weekends Sat./Sun. 9-5! 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. Wilder Hill Press Gallery is open too with original prints, books and ceramics on display. Stop by any weekend for gardening advice from an experienced landscape designer, and view the stone stupas, gallery, and display gardens. Lilian Jackman, 351 South Shirkshire Road, 413-625-9446. [lilianjackman@gmail.com](mailto:lilianjackman@gmail.com); [wilderhillgardens.com](http://wilderhillgardens.com).

**It's June** - Time to start protecting your crops from birds, deer, and insects. SmartNet is fresh off the container, and we are stocked up on all sizes of overhead, insect, and deer netting. Our range of Solo, Jacto and Osatu backpack

sprayers are great for small to medium sized jobs and can be used with organic or non-organic herbicides and pesticides. Training trees and vines is easy with our rubber band tree ties. They're long lasting, UV resistant and expand as the tree grows. Did you know we have agricultural ladders to help you get to those hard-to-reach places on the farm, orchard or in the yard? We carry aluminum and wooden ladders in a variety of styles and lengths! Call or stop by and talk with Gemma, Rebecca or Tim! Shop where the pros shop and thanks for buying locally! OESCO, Inc. (Orchard) M-F: 7-5; 369-4335.

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

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**Open Studio: 46 Delabarre Avenue** - Saturday and Sunday June 24-25, 11-5. Come see what painter Hannah Harvester has been working on and enjoy the South River from the studio deck. Pastel Painting Sundays in June, 2-6 p.m. Soft pastel is a wonderful medium for working outdoors and beginning color work. Each afternoon will begin with a demo, followed by a couple hours or more for painting, and end with a critique. In case of rain we will meet in the art studio and practice skills that will be useful when painting outside. Sundays: June 4, June 11, June 18, \$75/session. Learn more and register at [hannahharvester.com](http://hannahharvester.com), or write with any questions to [hannahharvesterfineart@gmail.com](mailto:hannahharvesterfineart@gmail.com) Look for Hannah downtown during the weekend of June 16-18 for free demos and a chance to try some pastel painting yourself.

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**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

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**Personal Care Aide (PCA)/ Caregiver** - needed in center of Conway. Assist with activities of daily living and some shopping, transportation and companionship; Provide medication reminders. Must have a valid driver's license. 15 -20 hrs./week; \$17/hour. Please contact David at 413-768-8751.

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**Tea at Two Gift Shop** - 85 Whately Road, Conway. Handcrafted goods - jewelry, pottery, woodenware, baby items and more. See RADA cutlery and the line of Stream2Sea products: sunscreen, body and bath essentials - all ecologically friendly. Open Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons or by appointment. Call 413-834-2339.

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**Home organizing** - room design, and small repairs. I'd love to help you stage your home for sale, spruce up for an event, or prepare for the next chapter of your life's journey. I'll see you through with efficiency, privacy and "the heart of a midwife." Jiyanna Vagedes, Home Consultations, Main Poland Road; 413-387-8934

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**Blazing Star Herbal School** - Conway, MA offers in-person, 10-month Beginner/Intermediate Herbal Apprenticeships and Botanical Art In-Studio programs, holistic health lifestyle consults and more. For openings for our 2023 season see <https://linktr.ee/TonyaLemosArts> or contact Tony(a) Lemos [blazingstarclinic@gmail.com](mailto:blazingstarclinic@gmail.com) for more info. 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.

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**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 28th-December 1st. 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](http://www.conwayhartfarm.com), [conwayhartfarm@gmail.com](mailto:conwayhartfarm@gmail.com), 413-453-9098.

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**I want to buy your record collection!** - Hi, I live in Conway and I am a record enthusiast who wants to fill out my record collection. I love all genres including 60's, 70's, 80's rock, new wave, jazz, country and reggae and just about everything else. I am more than willing to pay for excellent records. I also love any kind of music paraphernalia. If you want to sell your collection, large or small, call me at 1-413-522-4919 [billbrad@gmail.com](mailto:billbrad@gmail.com) (Bill).

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**Looking to sell or buy a home?** - Conway native Laura (Kuzdeba) Dziura is here to help you navigate today's real estate market, while providing exceptional support along the way. Buying and selling throughout the Pioneer Valley - contact Laura today: [laurad@delaprealstate.com](mailto:laurad@delaprealstate.com) or 413-695-3743

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**Conway Fine Arts Events** - WxNW New England Festival June 9-11. Three different programs with string quartet and dramatic narratives. Music of Gershwin, Haydn, and Amy Beach with verse by Virginia Woolf and Aleksandr Pushkin. Friday 6/9, 7 p.m. in Ashfield at the First Congregational Church; tickets \$20; Saturday 6/10, 6 p.m. in Goshen at Three Sisters Sanctuary, dance and movement workshop for kids with ballet dancer Mikayla Archambeau at 4:30 p.m.; tickets \$20; Sunday 6/11, 6 p.m. in Greenfield at Hawks and Reed, wine tasting from Provisions at 4:30; \$25 for the concert/ \$50 with wine tasting. For more information or tickets please visit our website <http://www.conwayfinearts.com>.

# Unheard Melodies

by Nicole Braden-Johnson

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

## Death of a Plum Tree

There is a different sense of Death in these hills,  
Away from the attempts to anaesthetize Life  
By ushering our dying into facilities of every sort,  
With their linoleum halls, endless bland linens,  
And the ever-present scent of disinfectant.

In Nature too Spring brings Death into view:  
The baby bird limp and bare on the ground.  
Impossible to say whether it fell by accident,  
Or was born incompatible with wild life.  
I push it under a blanket of leaves by a tree,  
So the newborn creature may return quickly to the earth.

In the toolshed, we frighten a mother mouse  
And her nest and babies scatter on the ground.  
Pink mouselings the size of my smallest toe  
Bare but wiggling and squeaking with Life.  
My Love reassembles the nest and we wait,  
Happy when the babies are gone,  
Taken to the safety of a new nest by their mother.

Sometimes you have to cut the dead weight off  
So that the rest might grow and blossom:  
The spotted tomato leaves to prevent blight,  
The long peach branches to prevent breakage.  
But the plum tree has a crack right down the trunk  
And mushrooms sprout all along this line.  
It's a slow death, but the tree is doomed,  
And the tree is magnificent with its purple foliage.  
There is such beauty in tragedy.